CHICAGO AREA COUNCIL BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

October 7, 1985

TO: Brock Bigsby
Sheridan Nunn

The attached materials relating to the history of the Owasippe Scout Reservation was typed by my secretary from notes provided by Whit Lloyd.

I trust some day he will finish this project and we will be able to read the history as seen and remembered by Whit.

Dr. Stephen J. Horvath, Jr.

SJH/jft

Attachment

THE OWASIPPE CHANT

LEADER	SCOUTS
Scouts come listen to my tale	Hail Owasippe!
Let it ring from every hill and dale	Happy scouts are we
Leave your cities far behind	Hail Owasippe!
On the trail a whole new life you'll find	Sons of Owasippe
-CHORUS-	
Out where pines grow straight and tall	Hail Owasippe!
Where the rippling, singing waters fall	Happy scouts are we
There you'll find our happy scouts	Hail Owasippe!
On the ancient, time-worn indian routes	Sons of Owasippe
-CHORUS-	
Down stream flashes our canoe	Hail Owasippe!
O'er the waters flowing swift and true	Happy scouts are we
White, and Pine, and Manistee	Hail Owasippe!
All the streams of the Pottawatomie	Sons of Owasippe!
-CHORUS-	
Praise our great and mighty chief	Hail Owasippe!
Let us sing his name and feel no grief	Happy scouts are we
Once he ruled this wonderous land	Hail Owasippe!
Now the scouts have joined his loyal band	Sons of Owasippe
-CHORUS-	
Sing out loud and strong, with a heart thats brave and free	
Let us sing our joyous, care-free song	
Sons of Owasippe!!!	

THE AUTHOR

In 1916 as a lad of 12, he was a Lone Scout for a short time but was not exposed to Scouting again until he was older, when he completed his requirements for Eagle.

He became a brave in 1944, and was received into the Moqua (Bear) tribe of the Owasippe Lodge in 1945.

He was made a Chief in 1952, and was given the name "Na'juman" which means "Burden Bearer" or "he shoulders his brothers burden".

As an aging Sachem, he was assigned to record the history and happenings of the lodge.

This information was gathered from many sources. Some of our brothers reported accurately; some with many embellishments; some reported with forked tongues.

While the tale reports as accurately as possible, it may contain some tall tales, legends, and altered facts beyond our control.

In addition to word of mouth, information was obtained from many other sources: old publications, magazines, newspapers and old records, as well as visits to museums such as the Chicago Historical Society, Montague Museum, Muskegon Museum, and of course, the Owasippe Museum.

Other information was obtained from the Michigan Historical Society, Smithsonian Institute, and the Jesuit Relations Letters.

The Author says: "In service to my brothers and sisters of Owasippe, I write --- "SONS OF OWASIPPE"

Signed:

"SONS OF OWASIPPE"

CHAPTER ONE

"Scouts come listen to my tale." Hail Owasippe!
We return so faithfully each year - Sons of Owasippe!

Around the campfires and in the dining halls of Owasippe, these words are sung by thousands of voices when the "Owasippe Chant" is sung.

This is a story of the oldest scout camp in America. Perhaps a half million boys have camped here. Many of our country's leaders have received important training and experience at this camp which was named after the old Indian chief whose two missing sons have been replaced by thousands who "return so faithfully each year."

Let us start our tale with the missionary Pere Marquette, who came through the White Lake Country around 1650.

The Jesuit missionaries wrote and recorded their travels in a group of letters to their superiors, which became know as the "Jesuit Relations." Going back to Marquette who died in Ludington in 1675, the letters continued until just before the twentieth century.

They tell of a trail, used by the Indians, which followed the shore of Lake Michigan from Wisconsin around the southern end, then North to the Straits of Mackinac. When this trail reached the White River, it was forced to detour east because of White Lake so that the traveler could ford the river. This ford was located at a bend in the White River near where Silver Creek joins from the south and Carlton Creek joins from the north, about four miles up the river from its' mouth at Montague.

Long before the advent of the white man, this was a favorite camping place for the Indians.

When the first French trader came into the country, he selected the spot for a trading post and built a long cabin there.

Here at Owasippe, we had a trading post antedating a great many of those in the land of Buffalo Bill.

Many interesting stories are told of this place which at times was wilder than any of the wild west saloons.

The name of the original founder is in doubt, but the post is said to date back to the early French days when Champlain made his original trip of exploration through the Great Lakes.

Investigations by a Mr. H. L. Spooner of Whitehall, brought to light the possibility of it having been founded about 1800 by a Frenchman named Etienne Lamaranandier.

While the exact time of the log cabin was built is unknown, it was already in a bad state of decay when Charles and Albert Mears came in 1837.

Captain James Dalton, Jr., came to the White River country about 1844. His original intention was to continue on up to Manistee, however, after hearing the Indians tell of the wonderful lumbering country around the White River and Silver Creek area, he decided to go there and if the country

proved to be as favorable as it was painted, to settle. This he did, and after much exploring, decided to locate on Silver Creek close to the White River across from the trading post.

He was opposed in this enterprise by Charles Mears who claimed that there was not enough timber in that part of the country for more than one mill. However, Mears was wrong, inasmuch as before many years had passed there were eleven saw mills and five shingle mills on White Lake as well as many smaller ones scattered throughout the woods. Every stream big enough to float logs naturally or artifically, boasted its mills.

In 1845, Dalton, with the aid of his two brothers, erected a dam and water power mill. These remained in operation thirty-six years, till 1881. The site of Dalton's Mill is now privately owned. The dam is kept in repair in order to keep the pond above it, which is used quite extensively for fishing. This dam along with a small apple orchard and a row of locust trees, are all that remain of this industrious mill. A residence now occupies the site of the mill.

This old Indian trail which led to the ford at the trading post, became a road following about where Whitehall Road (old 31) is located. Going north at what is now the junction of the Expressway and Holton-Whitehall Road, it passed Burying Ground Point about a mile below the trading post.

Burying Ground Point was an old Indian burial place, that was used by them for many years before the white man arrived.

During the last of the lumbering period, the river changed its course and washed out many bodies. Over 200 bodies were recorded and there are probably many still left. The Michigan Historical Society has quite a history of this place.

The site is a city park and can be reached by following the two track near the junction of Holton-Whitehall Road and the expressway.

This road, being an important location to the early settlers, lead north through the State instead of swinging west to Whitehall and then east again, and went past this trading post. This road remained in use until the development of the Fruitvale project at which time those interested in Fruitvale persuaded the people of Whitehall that the town would gain so much from their trade that they would be justified in taking out the bridge across the White River at this point, in order that the launches could carry the patrons of Fruitvale (later known as Rochdale Inn) from White Lake to the hotel. The bridge was accordingly taken out and the road abandoned (about 1920). Long before this, however, the main road had been started through the village of Whitehall and the importance of the trading post as a village had thus disappeared and all except one of the houses had been removed or deserted. One house remained in occupancy, however, until about 1920, although the use of the location for trading purposes had ceased many years before that.

In 1845, Charles Johnson selected the old trading post site and built a combined eating house, saloon

and store. Indians paddled to it in their canoes, and lumberjacks from surrounding camps frequented the place.

Johnson grew wealthy and sold out to Johannes Gustaves, whose son John was born there. When his son grew up, both managed the place. An old river driver remembers seeing as many as 300 Indians camping around the post, having a hilarious time as long as their money lasted.

To rivermen, the place gradually became known as the "Snubbing Post".

How many of the "true stories" about this place are true is now known, but we will tell some of them in later chapters.

In the letters to their superiors, known as the "Jesuit Relations", the missionaries, who followed Marquette, tell of a Great Chief whose tribe lived "where the beautiful creek (Bisigangdan) ran into the White River (River Blane).

His name was written AUA-CIPI or OUA-CIPI. The sound AUA or OUA is translated to mean "over", "up", or "beyond". The word CIPI or sippi means running water or river.

We can say then that Ouacipi or Owasippe means up, over, or beyond the river. But we ask, over, up, or beyond what? Possibly the ford of the Burying Grounds.

The letters tell of the old chief having two sons. They left in canoes to go on a journey and when they did not return, the old chief died of a broken heart.

He was buried in a sitting position on the high bluff overlooking the junction of the creek and the river that he might continue to look for the return of his two sons.

From the letters and historical records, we place the time at about 1815.

With the exception of a few trappers and traders, only Indians were around the White Lake area.

In the records of the Michigan Historical Society, the Indians around this part of the country were able to harden copper, weave baskets, and provide salt as well as being good farmers. We will expand on these arts in later chapters.

The many legends of Owasippe will be told in a later chapter.

One day in the fall of 1909, a Chicago newspaper publisher named William D. Boyce was lost in the fog in London, England. Out of the gloom appeared a boy and asked if he could be of help.

"You certainly can" replied Boyce. The boy took him to his destination and Boyce reached into his pocket for a tip for the boy. "No thank you sir, I am a Boy Scout. I can't take anything for helping" said the boy. Boycewas imprssed and the boy upon further questioning, led Boyce to the office of Baden Powel, the famous British general, who had founded the scouting movement.

Boyce returned to America and on February 8, 1910 in Washington, D. C., in company of a group of outstanding men, founded the Boy Scouts of America.

Among the founders of the Boy Scouts were several men who had started programs that boys liked: Publisher Randolph Hearst and William D. Boyce; authors Ernest Thompson Seton and Daniel Carter Beard; lawyer James E. West; and famous architect A. Stanford White. In 1910, A. Stanford White became the first Chicago Council President.

That same year, Mr. White sent a group of men to Whitehall to examine the choir camp being conducted on White Lake by Gordon Weddertz and to check possible camp sites there.

Businessmen of the Whitehall Chamber of Commerce suggested a 40 acre tract on Crystal Lake, some three miles out of town. Major H. H. Simmons and his party drove out to the site in buggies and were entranced with the possibilities. Mr. White pushed the idea; the Chicago Council accepted the GIFT of land naming it Camp White.

In 1911, Major H. H. Simmons bought a small group of scouts and a number of workmen. They cleared a site for a permanent camp, dug a well, erected a mess tent and named the camp after the old Indian chief -- OWASIPPE WAS BORN!

It is Monday, June 28, 1912, and about 100 Boy Scouts are hurrying to the old Rush Street bridge in Chicago, to board the Goodrich Line steamer for their first experinece in a Boy Scout camp. At 8:00 A.M., the boat moans its intention to depart. Crossing Lake Michigan on the S.S.Carolina of the Goodrich Line under Captain McCaully (a hospital ship during the Spanish-American war) the Scouts are impressed with the smooth roll of the boat, the blueness of the sky, the brightness of the water, and the thrill of going on a trip.

At 5:00 P.M., they reached their destination: the Colby dock at Whitehall, Michigan, a small town they visualized as the home of lumberjacks and trappers, farmers and tradesmen. The Scout left the boat and walked through the streets, their duffle and packs carried to camp by a wagon.

It is a quiet street, and the Scouts looked as questioningly at the villagers as they looked at these boys of twelve years dressed in khaki uniforms.

The Scouts, oblivious to the conversation walk through the town with their bugles and drums and into the countryside. In about an hour, they have walked three and one half miles through forests of tall pines and scrub oak, over fragile ferns and past straffly maples.

At last they came to the camp site at Crystal Lake. The spring-fed water is clear and sparkling. The Scouts solemnly salute an American flag flying from a center flag pole and then look at the camp which will be their "home" for at least two weeks.

On all sides of them is the forest. There is very little clearing. The camp is neat, with rows of tents. Scouts are told to pick their tents, so with a war whoop the boys race for the 9 x 12 tents which are nothing more than canvas stretched from a center pole. Then they look at the double-deck cots. Not all of the tents have cots however, for many of the campers prefer to sleep in sand pits. The Scouts spread large canvas sheets on the sand and over them their own blankets and bedding. They came out to "rough it."

The Scouts line up for roll call. Major H. H. Simmons, who came to Chicago Scouting from the Hearst boys organization know as "American Boy Scouts", greets the Scouts. He tells them the site was chosen by members of the Chicago Council. That the old farmhouse nearby would be used as a General Headquarters. This farmhouse was owned by Mr. E. B. DeGroot, Park Commissioner of the Chicago South Park Board and a member of the original Scout founding committee. (This farmhouse and land were donated by Mr. DeGroot in 1925 and was G.H.Q. or as it was later dubbed "Double O" - O.O. Owasippe Office. This famous farmhouse was the main office of the Owasippe system until the Wolverine Club was obtained in 1961.)

He tells them that the forty acres of land through which they hiked from the station to camp was donated to them by the Whitehall Chamber of Commerce.

He introduces them to Assistant Camp Director Major R. W. Teeter, a member of the staff of the Morgan Park Military Academy. (The following year Teeter and D. W. Pollard became Camp Directors.)

Families of Scouts could stay at a farmhouse about two miles southwest of the Scout camp, the Scouts are told. A cheer is given to Troop One, of Park Ridge, Illinois, for having sold the greatest number of tickets to the Chicago Board of Trade - Illinois Trust and Savings Bank Charity Baseball Game, proceeds from which originated the Chicago Council camps.

The Scouts enjoy hearing about the camp, but they are more delighted to hear the call to "mess". They have already seen a big white circus tent which was erected on the camp grounds. The Scouts hurry over there for food prepared in a cooking shanty which has the honor of being the first erected on the camp grounds.

After eating and resting, the Scouts are allowed to go for a swim. A volunteer scoutmaster watches. There is no pier, so the Scouts are extremely careful.

At the close of the summer, the Scouts have accomplished one project: they have built a pier using logs and lumber taken from the camp site. It is a difficult task because the lumber and forests are so thick that getting the logs down to the beach is not easy.

The program is top-heavy with drill, inspection and organization, leaving not too much room for individual expansion and development.

During the 1912 summer camping season, 723 Scouts register, 51 Scout leaders, and 65 visitors, making a total of 839, representing 63 different troops. Of this number, 235 stay one week and the rest remain the full two weeks.

The following summer, 1913, the Goodrich steamer is again tooting its farewell to the Chicago dock and lumbering eastward to Michigan. The camp site has been improved and the program is better. Reveille is at 6 a.m. Everybody dashes down to the lake and takes a dip (raw), - man are they awake.

The cook shack has been torn down and through the money raised by a charity baseball game, the Chicago Board of Trade sees that an administration building is erected. Lumber for that building comes from "deadheads", logs which had for years lain at the bottom of White Lake. Whitehall is an old lumber town, and White Lake is lined with several thousand logs which had sunk to the bottom.

This administration building is a combination dining room and office. The former, with a seating capacity of 300 scouts, includes kitchen, wood-fired ranges, and utensils. There is also an ice house and cooling room which contains 70 tons of ice cut from Crystal Lake during the previous winter.

In 1913, Ralph H. Nobine was Quartermaster. He later became a District and Council Executive (1936-1938). In 1914, camp opened with L. L. McDonald as Camp Director. He later became National Camp Director.

Some of the staff members are:

C. K. Warner, Scoutcraft

P. R. Brooke, Woodcraft

O. E. Smith, Waterfront

O. K. Hunter, Quartermaster

Scouts are surprised to see that tent groups are arranged to form model troops and patrols of uniform size. Five tents are assigned to a model camp troop, four of which are occupied by a partol of eight boys and one patrol leader each, the fifth tent is to be used as troop headquarters.

During this year, an attempt is made to train older Scouts so that they might be of more service in their home communities. A final training camp of one week's duration is held, and Scouts from forty troops spend a profitable week learning the principles of Patrol Scouting.

A step towards advancement is made this year with the installation of a handicraft setup which gets its start in the basement of the administration building. Supervising the Scouts' artistic abilities is the job which befalls a manual training instructor in the Chicago public schools, who is also a Scoutmaster. Because of his instructions, most of the art work by the Scouts is along woodworking lines.

In comparing notes with Scouts who attended the first camp, Scouts discover that the camp program is greatly changed. Drill and formal retreats continue, however, all military emphasis is definitely abolished. Terminology is changed; patrol banners replace tent numbers, patrol take the place of a tent unit; and outdoor features gradually supplant military interests. Hiking, nature study and pioneering projects develop.

Horses are available.

In 1915, L. L. McDonald, Camp Director, acquired 160 acres at Collins Field, east of Merit badge lodge.

This year, a 14 year old scout named Douglas "Dud" Schneider (Troop 621) from Auburn Park, is hired to help the engineers. His job is to keep the one cylinder gas engine going. It pumped the water, ran a generator for lights and with the help of a ropebelt, ran a wooden washing machine. We'll tell you about "Dud" later. A pioneering Merit Badge project was finished in 1915. It was called Merit Badge Lodge and was a large log cabin with a fireplace. It was built on top of the hill across the lake from the camp. It became a gathering place of the scouts on day hikes.

Merit Badge Lodge was used as the office when Camp McDonald came into existance in 1921, and was the office for Camp McDonald and Camp Stuart until it became unsafe and was torn down in 1960. When winter camping became popular in the 1930's, Merit Badge Lodge was one of the cabins used by the Scouts in winter.

World War I started in 1914, and the United States became involved in 1917. It ended November 11, 1918. As with later conflicts, the camp was affected by the loss of some leadership with the younger men serving in the military.

In 1916 and 1917, J. P. Fitch was Camp Director. The sight of Scouts marching from the boat to camp was no longer a novelty.

The year 1916 saw the organization of swimming into four classes: beginners, swimmers, junior life-savers, and safety police.

In 1918, there was a tendency towards troop camping. Paul B. Samson, as Camp Director, is familiar to Owasippe campers through 1920.

By 1919, the war had ended -- a new era begins with the return of our leaders.

In 1920, we celebrated our tenth anniversary. Up till now, each District was a separate council as far as camping went. Camp Checaugan was at Palatine, Illinois, for northwest District Scouts; Camp Yotanka for Stockyards; Cedar Lake, Indiana, for Calumet Scouts; Camp Keesus for Hyde Park Scouts at Grand Haven, Michigan; Camp Shabbona for west side Scouts on the Desplaines River; Camp Wabash for Douglas Scouts used a YMCA Camp in Indiana which they named Camp Belnap. There were two other camps used by scouts: Camp Wagansu and Camp Jackety at Diamond Lake, Illinois. And finally, Camp Owasippe for North Shore Scouts.

Chaos?

Bringing this to a solution was the work of several unsung heroes similar to the Unknown London Scout, but in 1921, two new camps came into being. Camp Owasippe became Camp Daniel Carter Beard. Camp West with 12 campsites and a dining hall 31' x 71', seating in excess of 300 scouts was opened just 1/4 mile

south of the original dining hall.

Camp McDonald near Merit Badge Lodge also opened with 12 campsites and a 31' x 71' dining hall.

During the 1921 season, the "Board of Trade" dining hall at Camp Beard was used to feed the two new camps. In 1922, since McDonald had Merit Badge Lodge, the Beard campers built Saddle Bag cabin and the west campers, not to be outdone, built Park Manor Lodge. Park Manor Lodge was still in use in 1972. Saddle Bag cabin was used as the camp hospital until the 1930's when it became the Catholic Chapel, and clergy residence until 1966. It was torn down in 1970.

C. B. Stephenson was Camp Director from 1921 to 1924. In 1925, E. Urner Goodman, founder of the Order of the Arrow and a devoted camper, became Camp Director.

Things began to happen.

700 acres on Big Blue including the Point Comfort Hotel were acquired to add to the 350 acres at Crystal Lake.

The Alfred Stern Lodge at Blackhawk was started.

Camp Pioneer, which later became Camp Wilderness, was established - at the location of the new Blackhawk Dining Hall.

The old farmhouse which has served as the "OO" Owasippe Office since the camp was founded, was donated to the council together with the acreage surrounding it by Mr. E. B. DeGroot. A galvanized storage shed was built which was used until 1960.

The 1926 manual says -- H. W. Haun was Camp Director.

Northwest district moved their camp from Palatine to the Point Comfort Hotel on Big Blue, with Carl A. Bryan as Camp Director. Also on Big Blue was Camp Blackhawk using the Alfred Stern Lodge for west side Scouts (Allan Carpenter was Camp Director), as well as Pioneer for older Scouts from any district.

On Crystal Lake, Camp Beard, using the Board of Trade Dining Hall for North Shore Scouts. W. H. "Pop" Gunn was Camp Director. Camp McDonald dining hall was for southwest Scouts with G. H. Schulz and south central Scouts with Harry Eby as Camp Directors.

Camp West Dining Hall was for South Shore Scouts with F. O. Berquist as Camp Director, and Calumet Scouts had C. A. Edson for Camp Director.

Camp Belnap on the hill between Lake Ojibway and Lake-O-wat-isee had a new dining hall for Douglas Scouts. Mason Fields was Camp Director.

In 1927, Paul Samsom was Chief Camp Director, assisted by Herman Mayhew, Ted Shearer and Harold Noel.

Of the 12,000 Scouts registered in the Council, 2,200 Scouts attended camp for 3,100 (2 week) periods. That is 6,200 camper weeks.

The last trip of the old steamship Caroline bringing Scouts to Owasippe and back home took place this year. For the first time we used the Pere Marquette Railroad. Fourteen old commuter cars, which had seen better days were borrowed from Chicago Suburban Lines and were pulled by a puffing steam engine. A volunteer crew loaded some 1,000 Scouts at the old B&O Station, chugged out to 63rd and Oakley, then to South Chicago, and then off to Michigan. The Scouts carried box lunches which, of course, were eaten at Michigan City, Indiana, since we were almost there.

A good part of the trip was spent in marking the baggage with the colored tags showing which camp the baggage was to go.

Puffing and tooting, the train finally arrives at SCOUT CROSSING where the tracks cross (old) Route 31, and stops at Lakewood Road.

The "Station" was a five acre field, where the Scouts assembled under signs bearing the name of their camp. After their baggage is loaded on to trucks, the Scouts line up to march to camp, following the Order of the Arrow Indians, over the Yellow Trail -- 4 to 4½ miles.

Scouts from the Blue Lake Camps and Belnap traveled in luxury to camp in their "air conditioned" buses -- stake body trucks with 2 x 12 planks on 5 gallon cans -- no tops on trucks. There were no paved roads and often times the overhanging branches brushed the passengers hair.

Hiawatha Beach, on Scout Cove at the west end of Big Blue, was added as a new camp for second year campers in addition to waterfront, Indians (in teepees) and Foresters (in tree houses). These were all on Big Blue near the present (1980) Blackhawk Dining Hall. Family Camp was at the 248 Club (Deremo State Park).

A kosher kitchen was established at Camp Blackhawk, under the supervision of a Rabbi, the extra cost being subsidized by the United Synagogues.

In 1929, Al Nichols, Jr., was Camp Director. We had 5,952 camper weeks.

C. A. Edson, Walter "Pop" Gunn, Jere Levy, and George Mozelous combined the Owasippe stories and legends in a pamphlet "Owasippe - its Yarns and Legends". We have included most of them in this book.

After camp closed in November, 1929, the Great Depression occurred. Next year started our 20th year, so lets stop here and reflect:

During these early years of Owasippe, a close relationship grew up between the Scout officials and the men on the main street. The camp troubles, when there were any, were freely discussed. There were times when the Scout budget ran into the red and some of the merchants in the village were asked to

wait until the next budget was raised for their money. Perhaps the first dire necessity to face camp was the need of telephone service. A scout might break a leg, contract a disease or infection. There might be a death either at camp or at home and four miles of wilderness was a long way to relay a message. That year there were no funds in the Scout budget for such a necessity. The telephone company refused to build a line for one phone unless they were paid for it so the case was presented to the Whitehall businessmen.

The outcome was that the Boy Scouts themselves cut the poles and set them, the Whitehall business interests purchased the wire and insulators, the Scouts strung the wire and the telephone company installed the instrument. It was a big adventure for the Scouts and the Whitehall men had made a worthwhile contribution. As the years passed and one Scout executive after another came out to the camps, the friendly relations continued to grow. There was the pleasant exchange of dinners each year at which we put our feet under the same table to discuss our common problems.

The next great need that presented itself as an emergency was a pasteurization plant. The Scout commissary had been having trouble keeping an adequate supply of wholesome milk on hand. Again some financial assistance was needed. The problem was brought up at one of the dinners and the boys from town raised a fund to make the pasteurization plant a reality.

The years rolled on, the camp grew, unit after unit had to be added to accommodate the ever-increasing number of boys coming to Owasippe. The camp began to feel the need of more land for expansion. Again, the boys along the main stem of Whitehall were consulted with the result that 40 acres of adjoining property was bought and presented to the camp. From time to time the assistance of the Scouts was needed in town to help police some special event or to help put over some program. Again, the dinner table conference or a call made by the committee ironed out the difficulties and the Scouts came to our assistance in any number desired.

We had a complete darkroom where Scouts could develop and print their own pictures.

We had a wireless station where the scouts could contact home but in those days it was dots and dashes - no microphones and it had to be operated by a licensed operator.

The overnights were at Spillway Dam, Burying Ground Point, and Headwaters.

Since there were no paved roads and no marked trails, all hiking was over old lumber roads.

There was a burro to carry duffels on overnights. Anyone who has used a burro knows how patience is learned -- the hard way.

Canoe trips on the White and Muskegon Rivers were common.

In the good old pre-inflation days, the 1914 application says "2 weeks in camp - 3 meals a day including transportation -- $10.00". But in 1928 it went way up -- 2 weeks, meals, transportation $15.00.

O is for the Good Old Days. A Scout could spend 10¢ per day on candy and pop - such squandering. (The camp clerk was required to be the camp banker, collecting all the Scout money and doling it out in dribbles.)

In 1930, the depression was felt by everyone. Many Scouts and leaders could not afford to come to camp. Many programs were curtailed. In 1931, Al Nichols, Jr., was Camp Director and attempted to keep all of the camp operating. Beard - West - McDonald - Blackhawk - Checaugan - Belnap - Family Camp at 248 Club (Deremo State Park). But in 1932 he was forced by the economic condition to retreat. We reprint his 1932 directive verbatim:

A LITTLE PAST HISTORY -- AND A PRESENT EVENT

OWASIPPE SCOUT CAMPS

Twenty-one years ago, the first of the Owasippe Scout Camps was operated. It was then known as "Camp Owasippe," and is the present Camp Dan Beard. Over the twenty-one years the attendance grew, necessitating the development of Camp McDonald and Camp James E. West.

In order to have an equal distribution of attendance, certain districts were assigned to particular camps. Years later when Crystal Lake could no longer hold the group, Camp Checaugau and Camp Blackhawk were added on Blue Lake. Camp Belnap was also developed for the Douglas Division.

During the course of the years a few camps operated elsewhere wefe discontinued so that all of the camping of the Chicago Council was done at Owasippe with the exception of the Forest Preserves camps now in operation. As camps were needed because of the growth in attendance, the districts were re-arranged. In 1931, Camp McDonald accommodated Scouts from Southwest and South Central Districts and Camp James E. West took care of the South Shore and Calumet Scouts.

1932 has temporarily halted the growth of the camps, the economic conditions cutting down the attendance at Owasippe as compared with previous years. It has been deemed necessary by the Camp Committee and the Executive Staff of the Council to operate Camp Blackhawk and Checaugau as a combined unit in 1932. It will be known as Camp Blackhawk-Checaugau. It will be under the joint direction of District Executives James Hiner, Jr., of the West Side District, and George Schnier of the North West District.

The staff will be the finest ever, being composed of men selected from both camp staffs. The expected personnel will be:

Co-Directors.....James Hiner, Jr. - George Schnier
Assistant Director.....Norman Dobin
Aquatic Director.....Herbert Northrup
Assistant Aquatic Leader.....Schiller Colberg
Steward.....Charles Heaney
Clerk.....Harold Noel

Naturalist.....Peter Kukelski

Hikemaster.....Robert Staab

Handicraft and Q.M.....Walter Christensen

Provisional Scoutmaster.....Roy Wait

Provisional Scoutmaster.....George Kraus

Doctor.....Armand Mauzey

Chef.....Billy Gregory

Assistant Chef.....Jesse Lewis

The Checaugau site and part of the Blackhawk site will be used. Practically all of the features of the two camps will be retained in its-operation.

The "Blue Lakers" are enthusiastic that they are privileged to continue on old Big Blue Lake and those who have been consulted thus far have expressed themselves as determined to put the "Blue Lakers" far ahead of the Crystal Lake Camps. They further say that Old Man Depression can't defeat them and despite what he does, they're going to have the best camping season ever in 1932.

Al Nichols

Chief Camp Director

In 1933, it was necessary to close the Blue Lake Camp. However, Gerry Blake took advantage of the situation. He brought his troop 607 to the Blackhawk site and began a trend which continues today -- the Lone Troop.

This program is what the founders had in mind. Each troop supplies the entire program, supplying their own equipment, doing their own cooking, and doing their own thing with their own personnel.

Over the period of almost 40 years, Gerry's troop has camped in many of Owasippe's best campsites (Hiwatha Beach, Wilderness, 248 Club, Bass Lake). If troop 607 had one of the old time troop plaque hanging in a messhall, it would start prior to 1927 at Camp McDonald and contain 40 years of Lone Troop camping.

Camp McDonald was renamed Camp Robert E. Stuart. James Heiner was Camp Director.

Things began to recover in 1934 under Al Nichols who assigned Al Carpenter to be Camp Director. George Schneir directed Camp Stuart.

A group of Scouts found a depression on a hill near the place where Silver Creek flows into the White River. Digging uncovered some bones (it was never established that they were human). However, recalling the Jesuit Relations letters and the stories about Owasippe being buried where a creek joined the river, they assumed that this was the old chiefs grave -- and so it was for 25 years. Thousands of Scouts hiked to this spot, bringing with them a stone to place on the grave.

In 1935, the Scouts chipped in and bought a granite stone which they placed on the grave. It remained there until 1973 when it was removed and placed in the museum.

Jack Copeland, who later became a District Executive and Camp Director at Beard, recalls his first year at Owasippe as a boy.

In 1935 they were camped at Wilderness. Carl Handel was conducting a campfire at Wilderness when a glow was observed in the sky to the east.

When they got to the glow, it turned out to be the Camp Checaugan dining hall - the Old Point Comfort Hotel - burning down. Forming a bucket brigade, they fought the blaze, returning the buckets by sliding them down the ice chute which was used for hauling ice from the lake in the winter.

They were kept busy putting out all the small fires which were started in the woods by the sparks. A lot of tired Scouts hit their bunks in the wee small hours of the morning.

Al Nichols, Jr., was Camp Director in 1936. 6,206 Scout weeks were recorded. Al Nichols called for the elimination of District camping at Owasippe. He wanted to open up the camping to any troop for any camp that wanted to attend. It took 10 years before this became a reality.

The old custom was to have each District provide most of their own staff, with the District Executive as Camp Director. Where a camp was shared with another District, there were two Camp Directors - one for each of the periods the District had use of the camp. If District A had the first two periods (July) and District B had the last two periods (August) the poor Scoutmaster had to gage his vacation to agree. The District Executive of A would be the Camp Director and would bring a staff from his District. Then District B would take over the next period with their Executives and their staff.

So entrenched was this policy that one District, using the Alfred Stern Dining Hall (Blackhawk) called their camp Pioneer during the first two periods while the other District called it Belnap during their occupation with an entire new staff.

Because of the District closeness, it was possible to have a troop composed of several troops and even individual Scouts from the District. This provisional troop often times would stay for several periods and even the whole summer.

Changeover weekends required a special program for these holdovers, since the staff change left the camp with no leadership during the changeover weekend.

During 1936, construction was started on the Adirondack shacks and K-D units. Four kitchen dining (K-D) units were built and a dozen shacks. (An Adirondack shack is a log cabin having an open side. It had 8 bunks for a complete patrol. The K-D units had a screened in area for cooking and would handle a troop of 32.)

These campsites were in the area of the 1979 Blackhawk Dining Hall, on top of the hills on both sides. The camp was called Wilderness.

On the site of the present (1979) Blackhawk Dining Hall was a very large Adirondack shack having a beautiful fireplace in the center and a room on each side. This was called the Ranger Factor Shack. It served as a commissary - Office of the Camp. These campsites were first occupied in 1937 by who else but Troop 607 and Gerry Blake where they camped each year until 1947.

A large ice house held ice sawn from Big Blue during the winter. Ice lasted until August.

In 1938, Al Carpenter was Camp Director. Programs for older campers included Tree Houses, Waterfront Camp, Indian Teepees, and Adirondack shacks.

In 1939, George (Moze) Mozealous became Camp Director. George had started on the staff as a young Scout, holding the job of Steward. That job lasted until the Camp Director found out he could type whereupon he became Camp Clerk. George finished school, went to college, graduated and became a professional Scouter. He joins with several others who started as Scouts to become staff members, and even Camp Directors. Three of our Chief Camp Directors started as Owasippe campers and many members of the Council Executive Board started as campers.

George Mozealous contributed many ideas including a book of legends, most of which are included in this book. George was Camp Director during 1939 - 1940 - 1941 and 1942.

World War II was in progress and we became involved. Because of the war, many activities were curtailed. Camp Belnap used the 248 Club facilities.

In 1943, Jack Conley was put in charge of Camp Operations and continued until 1949 sometimes acting as Chief Camp Director and sometimes appointing someone else. While never serving officially as Chief Camp Director, Bob Pagel was in charge of program and for more than 10 years, was the voice of authority if one reads the directives written during that time. The program during this difficult period was excellent.

In 1944, Jack Conley appointed Victor Leroy (Roy) Alm to be Camp Director. Roy Alm was responsible for a great improvement in a camp health problem.

The latrines were simply the old fashioned "Chic Sales" with a pit covered by an outhouse. Roy introduced a concrete tank containing water which acted as a septic tank. True it needed to have the water replaced ever so often, but it was cleaner and less odorous.

Rationing was in force and the camp worked with the Army and was able to obtain some Army surplus food. Of course many problems were encountered by the war conditions. Some of them are related in the Tall Tales Chapter.

Leadersip was thin, resulting in many troops coming to camp without leaders. Provisional troops outnumbered the troop with their own leaders. The camp supplied a Scoutmaster and a program.

All camp periods were 2 weeks and the cook staff needed a day off. Cooks day off was a special day. All kinds of things were dreamed up to get the Scouts out of camp on that day. See the Tall Tales Chapter for some of them.

As yet in 1944, there were no paved roads and only a couple of "gravel" roads. All the roads were "two track" sand roads. Drivers would have to pull off and go around a couple of trees to pass each other. Most of the hiking trails followed these two track lumber trails. These trails were color slashes on the trees.

The yellow trail started at the "Railroad Station" at Lakewood and Old 31 (Whitehall Road). Some four miles later it came to Camp West where it turned and passed just below Camp Beard. A white trail from there led to Camp Stuart. The yellow trail continued north past Kpeck Lake, north on Hyde Park Road to Silver Creek. It followed the creek to the Spillway Dam climbed the hill across Silver Creek Road to "Owasippe Grave" then to the White River bearing east following the river to Cleveland Creek where a bridge permitting crossing to Paradise Valley. Climbing out of Paradise Valley and crossing Russell Road at the Fire Tower we continued to Hiwatha Beach. It turned north crossing Fruitvale Road and again picked up the White River at the Grave of the Unknown. Following the river past Diamond Bend, Rattlesnake Point and Twin Rollaways, it continued past Scotts Gulley, Flowing Well, Sugar Bush, Cisco Rollaway to Pines Point.

The red trail started at the Beard Watertower went north past Mud Lake to Headwaters, then east to Marl Bend, north to Eagle Nest, then across Cleveland Creek to Deuces Wild, north to Boot Lake, and ended at the Ranger Factor Shack.

The blue trail started at the Stuart Mess Hall went east through Collins Field, past Canfield Lake across Russell Road past the schoolhouse, turned north to Lake Crystal, Square, Nine Acre, and Bass Lake continuing past Mayo Lake to the Alfred Stern Lodge.

Canoe trips started at Scotts Gulley. Pumps at White River lumber camp, Diamond Bend, Hinchman's Half Way Camp, Rochdale Inn, Petakay Lodge for overnights with takeout at Trading Post with pump. There were also canoe trips on the Pine, Manistee, and Muskegon Rivers. There were pumps at 40 Acres, Headwaters, Owasippe Grave (Locust Grove on Silver Creek at Spillway Dam), Lake Crystal, Ergany Lake, Pine Island Lake, Marl Bed, Deuces Wild, Bass Lake, Eagles Nest for overnights.

In 1945, the war created another problem. No trains were available and to make matters worse no buses were available on weekends.

Imagine the Scoutmaster whose vacation started on Saturday and ending two weeks later being informed that his 2 week camp period started on Wednesday and ended on Wednesday.

In addition, because of the scarce bus situation, half of the camps started on one Wednesday, and the other half started on the following Wednesday.

What to do?

We were still using the District system where the District Executive was Camp Director so why not use the District Commissioner as Camp Commissioner. What we now call Commissioners in 1980, were called Rangers in 1945. So in addition to the Ranger staff, the District and neighborhood commissioners were pressed into service.

They met with the troops before going to camp and coordinated all the programs so that when they got to camp no time was lost getting started. They also made arrangements for the overlapping leadership to fill in for the late comers and early leavers. It worked so well that the old timers on the staff were caught two days behind at the start of the period.

Among the first Commissioners were Bert Auerback, Whit Lloyd, and Pop Miller. The success of the program created a change which resulted in the present Commissioner staff.

The name of the lake at Beard West and Stuart was changed from Crystal Lake to Owasippe Lake.

1946 saw another innovation. Jack Conley was Director of Program and he appointed Ed Cain as Resident Camp Director. He was not only the Director during summer camp, but also moved to Owasippe and lived there year around, becoming a local citizen and taking part in local politics. The house behind the ranger residence at the east end of Big Blue which was used for a staff residence, was his home.

Ed was Director during the 1946 and 1947 seasons. He was another of the Directors who started as a camper then a dishwasher, grew up to join the professional staff and become Chief Camp Director. The cove at the east end of Big Blue is know as Cains Cove.

Another of the staff who started as a camper, then a lowly staff man, and later Chief Camp Director took over his duties in 1947, Jack Perz. Perz Bay, where Saugers Boating area is located is named after Jack Perz. Originally, it was a lake but the level of Wolverine Lake was lowered by removing the boards at the Dam and bulldozing a channel between Perz Lake and Wolverine Lake. Perz Lake was formed when the dam at Wolverine was build, filling up to the same level as Wolverine from underneath. Jack Perz was Director until 1949.

Perhaps the biggest change took place at this time. District Camping came to an end. Any troop in any district could go anywhere in Owasippe at any time the camp was open. Of course, splitting the original seven districts into some 25 districts helped.

The change also ended the 2 week periods and the District provisional camping. It took several years to restore the Provisional troop. The Camp Committee tried to offer the troop leader many options.

Some of these options were: Heres a pump, a waterfront swimming and boating area, and a latrine --- you do your thing; and, bring your Scouts on the transportation we provide and we'll provide all meals in a dining hall, all programs, all tents, and you can lay in your bunk and take the credit.

In 1949 we had four dining halls: Beard, West, Stuart, and Blackhawk. Each camp cooked their own meals and washed their own dishes. Real plates, not paper, were used and also pots and pans, and silverware. Everybody sang for their supper and lunch and still do in the mess hall.

In 1950 Jack Conley again sent Roy Alm to be Camp Director. We still did not have flush toilets anywhere but we did have hot showers, provided by a coal fired little boiler. We still had kerosene lanterns and many a city Scout found that they had to be cleaned and trimmed to provide light.

Red lanterns were hung on the Kybo's (latrines) and new Scouts were sent to the Quartermasters for Red Lantern Oil in addition to some 50 foot of shoreline.

No one was supposed to keep their money -- it was turned into the Camp Clerk who doled out the ten cents per day the Scout was allowed to squander.

One had to go to town for flashlight batteries, and since most Scouts used up their flashlights the first night, the lanterns were welcome. The kerosene was free.

Back in those days, there was a saying: "A Scout comes to Owasippe with one dollar and one shirt and don't change either of them."

Total profit from the trading post for the summer probably was less than a days profit today. The trading post was only open for 15 minutes a day which may account for some of it.

After two weeks at Owasippe before the 50's, a city slicker found that he could do without almost everything and still go home happy and satisfied.

Jack Conley again took over in 1951 and 1952. Schiller Colberg took over in 1953 and 1954. Dave Michelsen was Director in 1955 to 1958. In 1958 two scouts from Troop 699 were trying to get a job on the camp staff during staff training week and came to camp. They had been camping with their troop the year before.

Eagle Scouts Bill Petrossi and Mike Baldwin decided to go hiking along Cleveland Creek. While Bill followed the creek at the bottom of the hill, Mike went along the top of the bluff.

Mike stumbled over a stone which he found was apparently a gravestone laying almost flat. He called to Bill and the two of them examined the inscription. A crudely chisled inscription read: OUACIPI XIVI.

They came back to Camp Stuart where the staff training was in progress. They approached the table where the staff clergy were seated (2 Catholic Priests, 2 Protestant Ministers and their wives, and a Jewish Rabbi).

Mike told them that he had found something and suggested that they look. So the group of 10 people returned to the site and after examining the stone and the surrounding vegetation, said that it probably had been there for many years. Vines and vegetation were growing over the stone. The stone was a piece of Indiana Limestone - a common material for gravestones in the 1800's.

The location fit the description related in the Jesuit Relations -- "He was buried on the high bluff where the beautiful creek runs into the river."

The inscription OUACIPI would be the French Canadian trapper and trader spelling of Owasippe. The XIVI could be 15 or 1815 -- the year Owasippe died.

So it was decided that if it might be the place where Owasippe was buried we should straighten up the stone and mark a trail to it. Since no one knows for sure where the old chief was buried, at least we could dedicate this spot as a memorial to our Great Chief. The location fits if made by an uneducated trapper or trader. If it is not the actual grave, it still remains a good memorial.

Bill Petrossi joined the Marines and was killed in Viet Nam. Mike Baldwin is a lawyer -- married to a lawyer.

In 1959 Alden Barber was Scout Executive, and Joe Anglim was Camp Director. Wint Hartman was assigned to head up the Camp Restoration group. He instituted the negotiations for the acquisition of the Wolverine area. There was no thruway yet. Double O (Owasippe Office) still occupied the old DeGroot Farmhouse near Camp West. And, Family Camp was at Barrett Wendell Lodge.

The camp started the Commissioners in Training (C.I.T.) Program under the leadership of Steve Horvath and Larry McBride in 1958. Whit Lloyd was Scoutmaster and Pete Norg was Assistant Scoutmaster. Troop 607 moved to Bass Lake with Gerry Blake as Scoutmaster.

In 1960 Joe Anglim was Camp Director.

In 1961 we celebrated our 50th Anniversary. Tommy Thomas was Chairman of the Camp Committee. Joe Anglim was Deputy Scout Executive. Don Rylander was Reservation Director, Steve Horvath was Assistant Reservation Director, and Larry McBride was Program Director. We swapped the 248 Club for land next to Blackhawk and started an Indian Village for 3rd year campers.

Located on a flat below Camp Crown and behind Sauger Lake Camp, several large teepees each sleeping 8 Scouts were used to house the campers. Lacrosse, bows, indian cooking were all part of a program of living like an indian for 48 hours. The Village was moved to the site of the present Wolverine south area the second year.

In 1962 Don Rylander was Camp Director, W. R. (Bob) Blew was Chairman of the Camp Committee, Joe Sibley was Chairman of Properties, and John Crown was Chairman of Long Term Camping. These men guided the up-dating of the Owasippe Scout Camps.

Bob Blew first attended Owasippe in 1919 as a Scout and was active in Scouting until his death in 1979. His ashes are buried at the Stone Soderholm Chapel at Camp Robert Crown. Camp Robert Crown was one of the new camps and was named after John Crown's brother Robert. John is a Circuit Court Judge. When Bob Blew retired as a partner in the Accounting firm of Ernst & Ernst, he spent full time handling the 29,000 pieces of property owned by the Scouts. Scattered over 12,000 acres in pieces from 25' x 100' to whole sections, it required a constant check to be sure the taxes of over $100,000 per year were paid. He had a desk in the Scout office and was there everyday until his health failed.

Bob, in addition to Silver Beaver and Vigil Honor, was the first honorary member of the Owasippe Staff Association. He received his award from "Chauncey" (Phil Niziol) in his hospital bed at Palos Community Hospital several months before his death.

Thus Bob joins the Sons of Owasippe in the land that he loved and "returned to so faithfully each year." A true "Son of Owasippe."

Joe Sibley guided the complicated process of acquiring the Wolverine properties. A complete chapter tells of this unusual deal. Joe was an outdoorsman. A large powerful man, his handling a canoe was a pleasure to see. His powerful strokes created a wake resembling a power boat. He also guided the Oil Exploration process which netted a tidy sum in options and when the survey was completed and no oil was found, the Council made money on oil which did not exist. Joe died in 1979, and now joins Bob and Stone in spirit at our campfires. Another "Son of Owasippe."

On July 25, 1962, we tore down the rat infested 4 K-D units and the 12 Adirondack shacks which were built in 1937.

Camp Wilderness was still used as a partial lone troop camp but with an aquatic staff and a Ranger Factor acting as Camp Director.

Camp Kiwanis in Palos Hills was still in operation as a summer camp and the construction was started at Crete.

Alden Barber talked Belton Murphy into coming to Owasippe from California. Belton was a unique character. He wore a beaded vest, leather shorts, and a Smokey the Bear hat and taught craft. Not only taught it, but was able to get Scouts and staff to completely rebuild the campfire circles at every camp. The results of his work is still evident: Totem Poles and Indian shields, etc.

He brought with him two trailer truck loads of "horns and hoofs." Neckerchief slides made from the hoofs adorned every other Scout and the "blowin horns" made from the cow horns were heard all over.

We moved the Administration Center (Owasippe Office) from Owasippe Lake to the Wolverine Club House.

In 1963 we moved the Chicago Office from 9 West Washington to 300 West Adams.

We began to recognize that there were Scouts in the suburbs. As an example, troop 699 sponsored by the Palos Park Presbyterian Church had provided the Council with campers from 1919, several members of the Executive Board, 2 Chairman of the Camp Committee, 2 Assistant Chief Camp Directors, 5 District Executives, the Eagle Scout that found Owasippe's grave, and the leadership responsible for much of the Owasippe programs. This district, located 25 miles southwest of the Scout Office, was neglected until some complaints caused the Council to accept the fact that it was the Chicago Area Council.

At camp, Don Rylander was Camp Director. Work started on the Administration Center. This year, we still used the old Wolverine Club for headquarters. It was located at Cleveland Creek and Russell Road.

Wolverine Lake from the dam looked weird. Tall tress devoid of foliage were sticking up through the water. Not much use was made of Wolverine because the litigation had not been completed. The dam was leaking and was condemned. Family Camp was under construction and work had been started on the Wolverine Camps and Chapel. The hospital and maintenance shed were being completed. West, Beard, Stuart, and Blackhawk, Wilderness, Hiwatha Beach, and Bass Lake were well attended.

In 1964, Don Rylander was Camp Director when camp opened. The new Family Camp was opened with 40 cabins, Olympic size pool, huge Administration Lodge, and full staff.

It is estimated that the new camp is 59% completed.

Wint Hartman is supervising the building of a new dam, 2 new camps and the Administration Complex consisting of a food preparation center, a trading post, office, ranger residence, and hospital. Mike Loeffel was engineer in charge, assisted by Ferris Hale.

In August, Minnesota offered Don Rylander an offer he could not resist.

Joe Davis took over for the rest of the summer as Camp Director. Joe left after the summer to become Director of Philmont.

With the opening of the new camps with their flush toilets, hot showers, swimming pools, and large camping area, we marked the end of the old camping ways.

CHAPTER 4

THE NEW CAMP - 1965

We opended camp this year for the 54th time. A far cry from the mess tent in 1910. Two new camps with 12 campsites each. Each campsite covered over an acre and some were as much as three acres. Every campsite has a water supply, a sanitary unit having two flush toilets, two shower stalls with hot and cold running water, a long urinal and a stainless steel sink long enough to handle several boys at a time, and all well lighted.

Each camp has a trading post, housing for the staff, a lodge, and a huge swimming pool and a boating area.

In addition the camp has a 14 bed hospital, a large maintenance building, 2 ranger residence's, an administration building, a huge trading post and central lodge with snack bar, a food preparation center capable of feeding 5,000 meals at one time or an average of 2,000 meals a day, 7 days a week.

A lake made by damming up Cleveland Creek which is as much as 1/2 mile wide and several miles long is also available.

Between the camps is a beautiful ecumenical chapel.

All this plus the 40 cabins and huge lodge and swimming pool and wading pool at Family Camp comes to some three million dollars.

On July 10, 1965, the new camp was dedicated.

Chief Scout Executive Joseph A. Brunton, Jr., presented Frank W. Braden, Regional Scout Executive with the flags of Illinois and Michigan in the names of Governor Otto Kerner of Illinois, and Governor George W. Romney of Michigan. These flags were presented to W. R. Blew, Chairman of the Camp Committee.

The list of VIP's would fill a book. In addition to the National Scout Executive, the Regional Scout Executive, the Governors of Illinois and Michigan, there were corporate executives, judges, many clergy including a Bishop, the Chicago Area Council Executive Alden Barber and his deputy Joe Anglim, Wint Hartman, and many more.

Josephine Hercik McCabe was there in all her finery - not the latest Paris creations. Ralph Spaulding was Camp Director.

The first Owasippe Wood Badge course was held at Camp West, Park Manor Lodge in 1966 and Ralph Spaulding was Camp Director.

In 1967, Dave Lefeber became Camp Director. The all time record of 10,003 boy weeks was recorded this year.

In 1968, Dave Lefeber again was Camp Director. 9,736 boy camper weeks were recorded.

On October 16, 1968, the oldest Scout dining hall - the Original Owasippe - later called the Beard Dining Hall, was torn down.

In 1969, Dave Lefeber was still Camp Director. Sauger Lake Camp opened.

In 1970, Charles Largent became Camp Director. Camp West Dining Hall was torn down.

In 1971, Dave Lefeber was Camp Director. On July 30th, Camp Robert Crown was dedicated by Otto Kerner.

In 1972, Ed Black became Camp Director. During his administration, many new programs were introduced and many old ones reinstated, (the Outpost Camp, the Horse Corral, the Indian Village to mention a few).

Ed Black was Camp Director in 1973. We bought the Old Town Hall, built in 1905, and dedicated it as an Owasippe Museum. The first object to be placed in the museum was the Old Owasippe gravestone which the Scouts had purchased in 1935 and placed on the depression on the hill above Spillway Dam. We were allowed to remove the stone with the permission of the men who had purchased the property.

In 1974 Ed Black was Camp Director. One of the highlights of the Horse Corral was an overnight horseback ride to the Deer Meadow accompanied by a chuck wagon. This was one of the finest experiences a boy could encounter.

Accompanying the chuck wagon, singing and riding, the boys took a short cut to the campsite - only to find the chuck wagon had beaten them there. After removing the saddles and tying up the horses, they had to feed them. Having finished this chore, they gathered around the back of the chuck wagon for chow. A campfire followed and then the Scouts bedded down, of course using the saddle for a pillow. Breakfast from the tailgate of the chuck wagon and a happy ride back to the corral.

The museum was opened with a full-time curator - Whit Lloyd.

Each year, the Whitehall Chamber of Commerce is invited to a steak dinner. This year, Gordon Wedertz attended. When the first group were sent by Stanford White to check the area, Gordon was operating a bible camp in Whitehall. He was here before Owasippe began.

Also present were several Whitehall businessmen: H. J. Pillinger, Ed Wessie, Jack Darron, and Lawry Hermesdorf who was on the waterfront at Beard from 1930 to 1934.

CHAPTER 5

A THUMBNAIL SKETCH OF THE CAMPS

1910: We had Camp White which became Camp Owasippe in 1911, and became Camp Dan Beard in 1921.

1921: We had Camp West and Camp McDonald which became Camp Stuart in 1933.

1925: We bought the old Point Comfort Hotel which became Camp Checagau. We started Camp Pioneer which became Wilderness. However we bounced Pioneer around a bit. It was at the 248 Club site and in 1947 it was at Blackhawk.

1926: We started Blackhawk. We moved Belnap from some place in Indiana to Lake Ojibway and Owatisee, 5 miles east of Owasippe Lake.

1927: We opended Hiwatha Beach, which at times was used as Camp Pioneer and Camp Belnap during various camp periods.

1928: We had: Big Blue; waterfront camp (Wilderness); Indian Lore Camp (Indian Point) in teepees; Foresters (in tree houses); Pioneers in Adirondack shacks (Camp Wilderness) Hiwatha Beach; Blackhawk; Checagau; in addition to Beard, West, McDonald (on Crystal - Owasippe - Lake) and Belnap (on Lake Ojibway).

1932: The depression. Blackhawk combines with Checagau.

1933: Pioneer. McDonald renamed Douglas Stuart. Blackhawk and Clecagau closed.

1936: Point Comfort Hotel burned.

1937: Camp Wilderness built 12 Adirondack shacks and 4 K-D units.

1942 to 1947: Camp Belnap was at 248 Club (Deremo Park) which moved to Hiwatha Beach. Then Camp Blackhawk became Camp Pioneer except when it was Camp Belnap.

1948: District camping ended so you could go to Camp Dan Beard, Camp West, Camp Stuart, Camp Wilderness, Camp Pioneer 248, Camp Hiwatha Beach, Camp Blackhawk, Bass Lake was used as an overnight spot, and later as a lone troop site.

1961: We sold Deremo Park.

1962: Adirondack shacks torn down.

1965: Wolverine North - Wolverine South.

1968: Beard torn down. Sauger Lake in operation.

1969: Camp Frontier operated.

1970: West torn down.

1971: July 30th, Robert Crown dedicated.

1979: Stuart torn down. Camp Akela opened for Webelos at Robert Crown.

1980: New dining hall at Camp Blackhawk. The Alfred Stern Lodge was torn down.

CHAPTER 6

FAMILY CAMPS

In the first years, staff families were housed in farmhouses nearby. As time went by and more Scoutmasters and married staff family attended camp, a camp was established between Camp Stuart and the Protestant Chapel. Both Scoutmasters wives and staff family were housed in screened in tents and a small building served as Lodge, mess and meeting house. When we bought the Deremo Farm, on Big Blue Lake, the house was used as a mell hall for family camp. When Checagau burned down, Barrell Wendall Lodge became the mess hall for the Blue Lake family camp. By this time the ladies were the ones getting the Scoutmasters to bring the kids to camp and we had two family camps. So when the new camp was built, family camp was the first to open.

Being mere men, we are not permitted to know the details of the ceremonies and rituals performed by the Order of the Spoon (a female version of the Order of the Arrow), but we hear that it is much more terrifying than the Arrow.

With so many family camp staff returning each year, we must assume the old Chief Owasippe must also have had a few granddaughters.

Authors Note: Family Camp was always "out of bounds" when I served on the staff and I was not privilaged to meet the lovelys so if I fail to mention the names of the Daughters of Owasippe, it is not because I am ignoring them, but I've never had the pleasure of meeting them. Perhaps one of you will write a sequel to this: Daughters of Owasippe?

CHAPTER 7

TALL TALES AROUND CAMPFIRES

Campfires have been the source of many stories in the past and some of them are worthy of re-telling to give everyone an idea of the way things were. Some of these were picked from the Old Owasippe Camp Manuals, some by word of mouth from old timers.

SNOW'S TRAIL AND MOUNDS

LOCATION: South of Big Blue Lake

There are many old lumbering trails throughout the entire White River region which were used primarily to haul logs to the various rollaways. Generally speaking, these roads wind from tree to tree and keep as far as possible in the low land in order to avoid the necessity of hauling the trees over ridges.

One such trail was built by Don Snow along the south side of Blue Lake along Gerken Creek to Cleveland Creek. This trail, which has not been used since about 1890, is known as Snow's Trail and much of it had been cleared out as a hiking trail by the Scouts.

When the trail was built, there was discovered a series of mounds that were evidently graves. These are located at a spot perhaps two hundred yards west of where the trail crossed the outlet from Blue Lake (Gerken Creek) and lying southest of Pickerel Pond. When the trail was being cleared it was necessary to cut off one corner of one of these grave mounds, and an old musket was unearthed. It was thought at first that this was an Indian cemetery, but the general formation and lay of the mounds make this doubtful.

It may be that back in the very early days before this region was settled at all, some exploring bands of pioneers had a battle with the Indians on this spot and lost several of their number and buried them in the woods.

Don Snow did not confine himself to lumbering activities on Cleveland Creek, but built another mill about a half mile south of the upper White River near Skeels Creek. It is situated in Section 29 of Greenwood Township, Oceana County. This mill was used until 1925. Neaby was an artesian well which flowed into the creek. North of the mill is Snow's Rollaway, and a few hundred yards to the east is another rollaway. At this second rollaway occurred a death strange even to this strange country. On top of this rollaway is a concrete flooring upon which there once stood the home of an old man who lived alone. During an unusually severe winter when the Straits of Mackinac were frozen, a pack of wolves driven out of Canada by lack of food and the intense cold, went south through the Upper Peninsula and crossed the Straits into the Lower Peninsula. Coming down the White River these wolves came upon the home of this old man at the time he was desperately ill and in bed. Since he was unable to defend himself in anyway, the wolves ate him alive in bed.

A butcher travelled through this country going from farm to farm slaughtering hogs for the farmers.

Early one evening he had occasion to go from one farm house to another and after a few miles, he started off across the filed. The next morning, the farmer started out to find him. About midway between his place and that of his neighbor, he came upon a most gruesome sight which told the story of a man's heroic struggle against death. Against the tree he found the remains of the butcher, picked clean to the bone and about him were nine wolves, each with a knife through its body. The butcher, overtaken by the wolves, had backed against a tree and used all his knives in a vain attempt to escape, but the wolves being desperately in need of food, pressed on, and when his weapons were gone, well, so was the butcher.

Right behind the old firehouse across from the museum there is a concrete dugout. During the First World War, a deserter from the U. S. Army hid there for more than a year and a half. Looking at it one is lead to believe that he suffered more in his hideout from lack of food and company, than he would have at the hands of the toughest sergeant of the mule brigade. An older "Deserter Cave" is located quite a ways from camp and at one time was used as an overnight camp. This "cave" was also a large fruit cellar dug into the side of a hill. It was used during the Civil War as a part of the underground railroad and later got its name from a war deserter who was hidden there. About the only remains of the farmhouse and "cave" is a brick circle which is the remains of a dug well. The house is gone and the fruit cellar has caved in.

CUSHMAN'S SETTLEMENT

This place is typical of many other in the White River country where people attempted to settle and soon discovered that there was little for them to live on.

Cushman's settlement covered a territory of several miles around Cushman's corners. It is located in the northeast portion, Section 21, Green Township, in Oceana County. It developed into quite a community, at one time having a population of 250. However, the land proved to be poor for farming and the people were soon "starved out".

A fire burnt down Cushman's place in May of 1930. The cause of the fire is unknown.

Lumber occasionally is used for the grim purpose of building gallows but at Cushman's stands a tree that was used for this purpose, without being moved from its home. Near the mill site is a large oak called "Suicide Oak". Here Mrs. Cushman hanged herself, using an apron as a noose. She was thought to be insane. No other reason could be found for her act.

FOREST CITY POST OFFICE

The road from Silver Creek to Big Blue Lake was used for the transportation of mail long before the Owasippe camps were established.

Today our postmaster bounces over the road in his tin horse -- not many years ago a man named

Clark carried mail on horseback for the Pony Express on the same trail.

He travelled between Whitehall, Michigan, and Forest City (located near County Line Road in Newaygo County on Boland Creek). The mail route led west from Forest City on County Line Road to Big Blue Lake, from there to Spillway and thence to Whitehall. Several people still have letters marked "Forest City".

FROM SOME OLD CAMP NOTICES: SLAB LAKE SQUARE LAKE MARL BED WOOD LAKE BASS VIRGIN NORWAY PINE

A very interesting spot related the early lumbering days in Slab Lake. This is situated in Section 26 of Blue Lake Township and is reached by following the Holton Whitehall Road east to Blue Lake Road. The lake is in plain sight to the right of the road.

On this lake there was for some years a Shingle Mill which burned and the ruins of which may now be seen. Logs were cut in short pieces, the correct size for shingles and were then sawed into the shingles themselves. The operation, of course, collected large amounts of sawdust which was stored on the edge of the lake and gradually filled out into it. Interspersed through the sawdust are the small blocks of logs which were not suitable for shingles and therefore were not sawed up.

In Section 21 of Blue Lake Township, on the blue trail near the headwaters of the west branch of Cleveland Creek, there is a marl bed. At one point the stream has worn a small waterfall which makes a musical tinkle that can be heard a considerable distance. In a country which is all sand, it is both interesting and surprising to fine a real waterfall.

Just over the hill to the east is 9 Acrea Lake. In the southwest corner of Section 22 of Blue Lake Township is Square Lake, lying just to the north of the road. A trail just east of this leads north to Bass Lake where a few primeval pines may be found. These are well worth a trip to see.

Following east on the blue trail are Dam #1, and a trail to Dam #2. These are both a good hiking route.

A few virgin Norway Pines may be found in a valley north of Canfield Lake in Section 29 of Blue Lake for about a quarter of a mile, the road leads down to a former lake bottom. Diagonally to the northeast, across the lake bottom is a beautiful dense grove of young white pines scattered through which may be found the old Norways referred to.

CHAPTER 8

Whitehall, in the lumbering days from the time when White Lake was first settled by white men in the early 40's, for a period of about fifty years was essentially a lumbering town. With the end of the local lumber trade, due to the fact that all of the available forests had been lumbered over, there came a long period of slump during which the population decreased, trade dropped to a low point, real estate was a drag on the market, and the town seemed to have passed its best days. Only with the development of the region for resort purposes in the 1920's had Whitehall begun to again develop and to rapidly approach the prosperity far exceeding that of early days.

Originally, the entrance from Lake Michigan to White Lake was not at the point where it now is, but was through a narrow winding channel approximately one-half mile to the north. This channel was known as the Mouth, and in the early lumbering days, quite an important village flourished there. Large sailing freighters would come up Lake Michigan to load up with lumber from the mills in White Lake. Being unable to track through the winding channel, it was necessary that they be towed in by tug boats. The sailors, therefore, went ashore at the Mouth and did their trading, etc., there while the vessels were being towed in and loaded. Similarly the crews of the tug boats lived in the vicinity waiting for trade. There were boarding houses for the sailors, stores, and saloons, as well as residences. Finally, the lumber trade became so important in White Lake that the government dug the present channel which lays straight from Lake Michigan to White Lake.

This immediately eliminated the only reason for the existence of the village at the Mouth, and in one winter's time it was entirely abandoned. Some of the buildings were moved bodily to new locations, while still others were torn down and their lumber salvaged for reuse. The foundations of some of these buildings are still visible.

The location of the Mouth may still be seen, being located close beside the old Channel Inn at the point where the lake drive on the north shore of White Lake turns north. On top of the hill as you turn north on a dirt road just east of the bridge by the old Channel Inn is the old cemetery which was used by the village at the Mouth.

Old-timers tell many interesting stories connected with this village. One is of a sailor who in a drunken fight, killed a man and was hung from a large tree one night. Immediately after hanging him, the drunken party which had done this left and a woman friend of the victim cut him down in time to save his life.

Perhaps the most dramatic story connected with Mouth and one which illustrates the hardships and perils of the old sailing days is that of a large freighter coming down from the north in the winter, which was caught in a terrific winter's storm while still far north of White Lake. The seas broke over her time and again, and in doing so swept overboard one or more of the crew. The vessel could not long stand such pounding and it was necessary for the ship to make port if it were to be saved. White Lake was the only possible port which it could reach. The captain, therefore, set sail for White

Lake in the desperate hope of being able to reach it in time, but as the seas kept breaking over the ship, his crew was reduced again and again until only he and one other were left.

It was night and he could see but a few feet. Sending the one remaining member of his crew aloft, instructing him to lash himself to the top mast and act as lookout, he attempted the impossible -- to single handed sail his vessel through the winter's storm, through the winding channel to White Lake. Lashing himself to the wheel so that he could not be swept away, he made the desperate effort. After safely making the entrance to the channel, however, he was unable to swing his vessel fast enough to clear a bend and she went hard aground, being driven high up on a sand bar by the storm. When the village awoke the next morning, there in the middle of the channel they found this big freighter with all sails set, the captain lashed to his wheel, and the sole remaining member of the crew aloft, both standing frozen to their posts.

The biggest single lumberman of the region was Mr. Covell of Pike Lake Region, the father of the former president of the Whitehall Bank, the latter being one of the most interested and generous friends of the Owasippe Scout Camps. Rivalry between the various lumbering groups was intensely keen. The Covells in order to develop their trade, built a tug boat for the purpose of bringing freighters in through the old channel. Naturally these boats would give their trade to the one bringing them in and so it was that year that the Covells got the bulk of the White Lake trade.

His several rivals realizing that they were unable to compete with the Covells individually combined to form what was known as the White Lake Log & Boom Company, and the following year they built a larger, stronger tug, thus getting the bulk of the trade. The Covells immediately countered by producing a still larger one in the following year and for a space of several years first one group and then the other kept putting larger and larger tugs on the lake, the old ones immediately becoming obsolete because they were outclassed.

These are the tugs which were generally grounded at some out-of-the-way point and either burned or allowed to rot to pieces. The remains of the first tug of the White Lake Log and Boom Company could still be seem a few years ago on the shores of a little stillwater bayou near the trading post. By following the foot and wagon trail which connects Burying Ground Point and the Spillway, crossing Silver Creek on a bridge, the boat itself was on the edge of a clump of bushes which grows on the edge of the bayou.

The old dug-out canoe, a portion of which hung on the Beard porch, was originally owned by the White Lake Log and Boom Company, being hollowed out of a single log. It was used by the lumbermen to keep the logs moving when they were coming down the river. The lumbermen would stand up in the boat with their heavy calked boots and with their long pike poles would push the logs around to keep them in the current. When abandoned for that purpose, it was taken over into Schneider Lake where it was

used for several years by the Snyder family who lived nearby. Finally being caught and crushed by a fallen log that end was chopped off and the boat allowed to remain half submerged in the lake. It was found there by some Owasippe Scouts who with Mr. Snyder's permission brought it to camp as a souvenir of the early logging days. It originally had the full initials "W.L.L. & B. Co." stamped on one side. Most of this, however, was cut off in the part that was crushed but there can still be seen a bit of the "& B. Co." showing definitely to whom it originally belonged. The bottom of the canoe was entirely covered with the marks of the calked boots of the old lumbermen who originally used it. When the Beard dining hall was torn down, it was thrown out with the rest of the debris.

* * * * * * * *

The lumbermen were a burly lot of hard working, hard drinking, hard fighting men and Whitehall was the scene of many a pitched battle between the different groups or individuals. Two or more gangs would come into town from their spring drive, be paid off, and immediately head for nearby saloons, traveling from one saloon to another until they were keyed up to a point where they were ready to battle the world. As they drank, they would begin boasting of the prowers of their various gangs and the fighting ability of their gang leaders. Then when two such groups met on the streets moving from saloon to saloon, a battle would ensue either between the gangs as a whole or between the gang bosses, who were men who had risen to their position very largely on account of their fighting ability and therefore their ability to compel the other men to do their will.

On one such occasion their two champions stripped to the waist and went at it with bare knuckles for nearly two hours of steady exchanges of blow for blow - do dodging, feinting, or boxing, but straight stand-up slugging. The sheriff, seeing a scrap going on, started down the street toward it but was met at the corner by a mob and escorted in the other direction. He wisely kept going. Finally when the two battlers were covered with blood, exhaused to the point that they could hardly stand or move a hand, sobered by the fight which they had been in, each agreed that the other was a good fighter and a good fellow, shook hands, went into a nearby saloon and washed up out of the same basin, and then proceeded to renew their carousal to which they were joined by the now united gangs. This incident was typical of hundreds which happened in that town during this period.

* * * * * * * *

In the lumbering days, one gang would go up into the woods in the early fall and lumber off the territory assigned, trim the trees, cut them to the proper length, and in the winter when the snow was on the ground, skid them to some high precipitous bank of a stream and make a big pile on the edge of the bank. With the spring thaw, when the ice went down, the streams would flow over the banks on account of the melting snow. These log piles would be dumped into the stream which would carry them down to White Lake.

When the logs were piled up on the bank in this manner, there was always some key log or king log, as it was called, at the bottom which is so situated that if it is knocked out, the entire pile will start falling, leaving a few logs individually to be rolled in. It was, of course, exceedingly dangerous working around these log piles when they become big because if by any chance the king log should slip out when anyone was on the pile, he would be ground to pieces by the rolling logs.

It was an incidnet of this sort which happened at Dead Man's Rollway as it is called, for the high banks where the logs are piled preparatory to being rolled into the river are known as rollways.

The lumber camps served as ports of missing men. Very frequently some man who had had trouble at home, whether family trouble or trouble with the law or financial difficulties, would disappear from his hometown and go to the lumber camps, securing employment there, frequently under an assumed name. No questions were asked of any applicant for a job as to who he was or where he came from or why he was there. If he was physically able to do the work and would carry out orders, he was employed.

There came to one of the lumbering gangs such a man who gave no name and told no one about his personal affairs. He was a mysterious fellow with few associates but a good worker and a hard fighter. It happened that his gang was lumbering off a tract of territory on the White River, only some eight or ten miles from the village of Whitehall, and there came a Saturday when he could take the time to go to town which he did, as did some other members of his gang. There they drank and danced as was the fashion. Getting into a violent quarrel over one of the dance hall girls, they fought it out and the unknown worker won. He enjoyed his evening of triumph, but on returning to camp was sent out to inspect a pile of logs which was nearly ready to be sent into the river. He never returned. The next morning on going out, the gang found that the pile had rolled, and as they cleared it away, they found his body crused underneath, and the general supposition was that while he was on the pile, the man whom he had bested might have knocked out the king log and so had his revenge.

He was buried close by the rollway and a crude fence was built around the grave, above which was mounted a wooden cross on which was carved "To the Unknown". This fence and cross remained standing until about 1924, when during the winter, they rotted into the ground. They have since been replaced except for the carving on the cross, and the grave of the Unknown may be found to this day on the river just east of the County Line Bridge, Dead Man's Rollway being the high bank just west of the grave.

When the logs were being sent down the river, they would be followed by the main part of the lumber gang whose job it was to see that they kept moving, for there was grave danger of the logs becoming jammed across the river so that it would be a very difficult matter to release them and get them moving again. Thus in the last big drive of down snow, one of the big lumber men of the region into which he brought down some 200,000 logs took 63 days to get them down the White River into White Lake.

As the main drive of logs passed, there always was a considerable number of logs that would become stranded along the banks, so a certain group would stay behind to follow up and roll these back up into the stream and so keep them going. These men were known as the Stackers and they had really the hardest job of the whole lot.

When the logs got down into White Lake, they were run through a sluice way formed by two big booms of logs joined end to end. Every few rods there would be a gateway in these booms and other booms running out at right angles to the main ones formed a series of pockets in each of which were collected the logs belonging to a given company.

As the logs were first cut, they were marked with what corresponded to a branding mark. This had some letter or symbol raised on the head of a heavy iron mallet which was hit smartly against the end of the log making an indentation on it with the symbol of the individual company. As the logs came into White Lake and went through the sluicway, men working along the booms on either sides with long pike poles would examine the markings on each log, and when they found one belonging to their company, would spear it with their pike pole and head it into the particular bend where their logs were being assembled.

In their mad rush to make money in the logging operations, many lumbermen did not hesitate to practice various forms of thievery. Thus, in some cases they would saw off the end of a log which had the mark of a rival company on it and put their own mark on the log. Very frequently in lumbering off a given forty acres of land which their company owned, they would actually lumber far beyond the boundaries of their territory, in some cases taking in the forty acres on each side of theirs.

Many of the forms of cheating were used. Thus one man was hired by another to lumber a certain territory and told that he could have title to the land after he had lumbered it off. He agreed to the proposition, went into the woods, got out his logs, and turned them into the mill. He reported to the owner that the job was done and received the title papers to the land. He then returned and lumbered off an additional million feet of lumber which he had carefully left standing for that purpose.

It was not always profitable in lumbering operations, however. Thus, one Chicago man, owning a tract of land on what was Camp West, hired a Mr. Klett, the father of the man from whom we later bought what is known as the Klett Farm, to lumber off the land. In those days it was possible to take a boat from Austin Lake around through the low spot now wooded to the west of Grasshopper Hill, in through the old lake bottom (Echo Lake) through the low land of what is now Camp West Arena and the Camp West campus, to Crystal Lake, from there to the low land to what was known as Kopec Lake where there now is a marl bed near the Kopec house, and from their out into Silver Creek, down Silver Creek to White River, to White Lake, to Lake Michigan. In order to float these logs, however, there was a big dam at what is now the Spillway. This formed a lake which backed up Silver Creek so that it could carry

the logs. Mr. Klett cut the logs on the tract assigned and was about ready to haul them to the pond to be floated down through the streams, but a violent storm washed out the dam and so lowered the level of the water in the stream that the logs could not be floated. Lumber was so cheap in those days that it was not worthwhile hauling the logs four miles overland to White Lake and therefore, were left to lie and rot into the ground. Many of the old sumps with their sawed-off tops were visible for years with a dark brown streak of the earth running away from them, showing where these logs were allowed to rot. The man who owned the land went bankrupt on account of this failure and Mr. Klett was never paid for his labor. At a later date, however, a saw mill was established on the side of the sand swale which lies between Echo Lake and the west dustbowl. A great deal of rubbish resulting from this mill was collected there during the early years of the establishment of Camp West.

There was an old lumbering boat in the mouth of Sand Creek a number of years ago when a heavy storm took out the dam of the sand creek point by Rochdale in beside where the Rochdale Inn now is. The flood that resulted moved the boat well up on the bank away from the current of the stream. When the dam was rebuilt, the channel was changed to a different course so that the old channel became nothing but a marsh which became overgrown with a thicket of elder and other brush. The old lumber boat, therefore, remained stranded in the old channel where it is now entirely surrounded by brush, much of which is growing up through the center of the boat itself.

It was not long before some pioneers began following the old Indian trails along the shore. The first band of settlers to do this was headed by a man by the name of Sweet who came just in the fall of the year to a natural clearing on which there was a fine crop of Indian corn or maize. He decided that this offered a fine location for him to make a home. He therefore stopped, harvested the grain, and built himself a cabin. Others followed until the Sweet Settlement as it was called had some seven or eight houses closely grouped. None of these houses are now remaining, which were located at the intersection of the Lakewood Road and the east and west road one mile south of the camp roads.

About a quarter of a mile west is the Old Sweet Settlement Cemetery, the stones of which were set upright again and carefully preserved by the Scouts.

There was also another cemetery connected with the Sweet Settlement, the exact location of which has been so difficult to determine that it is known as the lost cemetery. There were probably not more than a half dozen graves in this cemetery that had any prominent markers and there was a fence around it. Both stones and fence, however, are rotted in the ground. It was first located by a group of Scouts during a Red and White War in 1921. Afterwards, they were unable to relocate it. It was again found by one of the leaders, Russel Shuler, in 1925, but has again been lost. The location is about where the White Lake Drive cloverleaf is on the expressway.

The Sweet Settlement itself continued in existence for about thirty years by which time the village of Whitehall had become so important that most of those living at the Sweet Settlement moved over to the

larger village.

Early in the history of this section of the state, a stage coach road was build along the west coast of the state, this being the predecessor of the famous West Michigan Pike known as U.S. 31. This old stage coach road may be seen on the old maps of the region as, for example, in the old Muskegon County Atlas, a copy of which is in the Owasippe Museum. Some sections of the old stage coach road had been incorporated in the old U.S. 31 as, for example, the section running immediately northwest from the Green Lantern.

With the coming of the white man to the region, lumber mills spring up at every suitable location. The first one along the White River country was the Dalton Mill located on Silver Creek at a site between the present spillway and the present bridge across Silver Creek. Some remains of this old mill and of the sluiceway that went with it can still be found. Soon after the lumber mill was built a grist mill was added to it. The second mill in the vicinity was established further upstream. This was located just a few hundred feet upstream from the concrete bridge over Silver Creek. Other lumber camps and mills were established on other creeks in the vicinity. The Coles had a big lumber camp on the site of the Blue Lake Town Hall. Some of the old foundations and remains of these may be found immediately in the rear of the town hall building. About half a mile upstream from this there was a dam and mill at what was known as the Lower Dam. About two miles above the town hall on the east branch of Cleveland Creek there was an old log bridge across the creek and immediately above this was another dam known as the Upper Dam. Another half mile east of this was still a third dam the sluiceway of which can still be seen. This was formerly known as Dam #1, the so-called Upper Dam being known as Dam #2.

STORY OF ERRGANG'S LAKE

George Hubert Errgang was one of the last survivors of a family of tragic memory in this area, burned to death December 24, 1945 in the cottage overlooking Errgang Lake, which played a part in the nine family deaths during the last decade.

He was working for Harry Hague in the Hague cabins since his discharge from the Navy several months before. On Saturday, before Christmas, Mr. Hague drove him out to the cabin. When Mr. Errgang failed to show up for work Tuesday, Mr. Hague went out to find him and found the charred body among the ashes of the cabin. No inquest was called.

Mr. Errgang was born October 7, 1900, in Nekoosa, Wisconsin, and served for 17 years in the Coast Guard. He served in World War II as a Navy Machinist until he was dischaged and since then had lived in the cabin in the woods.

Graveside services were held by Reverend Earl I. Prosser in Oakhurst Cemetery. Surviving Mr. Errgang

were his brother, Paul, in Twin Lake, and a sister, Mrs. Peter Morgan, of Melrose Park, Illinois.

The Errgang family tragedy on December 20, 1931, made front-page headlines in all the newspapers in this country. Little Orville Errgang, 7, slid down the hill in front of the cabin on his Christmas sled and out onto the thin ice of Errgange Lake. He broke through and screamed for help and one by one, six members of his family went through the ice and drowned in an attempt to rescue him, while their aged grandmother and a three-year old sister, Gloria, watched helplessly from the bank.

Some years later the grandmother wandered back to the cabin in the wintertime and was found dead by friends.

THE WHITE RIVER ROLLAWAYS

We hear so much about rollaways that we'll take this opportunity to describe them and their purpose. First as to the name "Roll-away"- some spell it "Rollway" - not much difference as I see it, but I prefer the former. You can take your choice.

The White River roll-aways were usually high banks on the river's edge. Logs were gathered during the winter and hauled on sleighs to these banks and were piled in such a manner as to permit their being pushed off the roll-away and into the river whenever the spring flood had reached its highest point.

The entire pile was controlled by one log known as the "King" or "Key" log. When the time for the shove-off arrived, the key log was pushed from its position and started all the others tumbling into the river. A few logs usually remained on top and these were pushed to the edge and allowed to "roll-away".

At the foot of the roll-aways the water is usually deep, especially where the river makes a bend as it hits the roll-away. At the foot of these roll-aways logs can usually be found stuck in the mush of the river. Generally these logs were too close-grained and therefore too heavy to float. Along the river can be found other logs which had snagged and stuck.

Several old lumbermen say that quite a number of men died while working on the river. Causes of death were numerous. Some died in fights, others in straightening out log jams, still others from sickness, some on the roll-aways and in the mills and some, while drunk, stumbled and fell to their deaths. The men who died while working on the river were buried in the woods bordering the river near the spot where they died. These graves are unmarked.

When you gather around the evening campfire, "You may be sitting on the grave of a lumberjack."

THE SALT MARSH

LOCATION: Section 35, Otto Township

Legends surrounding the Salt Marsh vary as to the exact time men attempted to drill into the earth for this white condiment. Some claim this was done the same year that Captain Dalton built his mill at Silver Creek (1844) others say this was first attempted during the Civil War when salt became scarce. Nevertheless, long before the white men started operations, the Indians knew of the salt marsh. Animals too frequented this place to lick the brackish tasting water.

Preparation of the salt necessitated the use of large iron kettles. These the Indians borrowed from the settlers, and in return for this favor, would bring them back full of salt, but refused to divulge the place where they obtained it.

Upon hearing that the White Lake region was underlayed with salt water, a man named Hulbert came from Grand Rapids with his two sons and attempted to set up a salt well at the marsh. However, after boring into the earth for eighty feet their drill became jammed and they were forced to abandon the project. Some say they succeeded in sinking the well, but found that it was unprofitable. They had installed an iron pipe which was surrounded by a jack pipe , made from maples drilled lengthwise (early water pipes in Chicago were made by drilling logs in this manner). Later the grass in the surrounding marsh was cut for hay, and Obe Nichols, who lived close by, said that the workmen used to set their jug of fresh water on this pipe to keep it cool. For may years this pipe stood about three feet above the ground, but gradually both the pipe and the derrick rotted away. The land was owned by the Fruitvale Company, and the well has been plugged up so it no longer runs, but the natural springs still seep up with an abundance of the saline liquid. The remains of the derrick can be found northeast of Oil Well Campsite.

Hulbert and his two sons later built a mill on Carleton's Creek which they sold to the man whose name the creek now bears.

BROWN'S POND - A CACHE OF WATCHES

A man named Brown built a dam on Sand Creek where Rochdale now stands. Close by he built a water power saw mill.

Having dammed the creek, he thus formed a pond, which still remains and bears his name. This pond was the scene of the last big lumber drive in the White River country. The Covells, who made this last drive, built a railroad which ran from Ferry to the Pond.

In 1894, there was a wreck on the line near Ferry, in which seven were killed and two injured. This road was used until 1895, the year of the last drive, and then torn up. Remains of it can yet be seen, though the track clearing has since overgrown with bushes.

About 1910, or 1912, a group of Chicago promoters bought the property and subdivided it for lots. A new dam was built and the course of the creek changed, but one can still see the site of the old dam and creek bed.

The boarding house of the mill hands was used as the nucleus for the large Inn on the spot. Rochdale Inn was a famous spot used by Chicago people. Coming by steamer from Chicago, the guests were transported by motor launch to Rochdale Landing. Weekend trips were common.

Rochdale Inn burned down in the 1930's, and although it was rebuilt, it was never used. Gus Kopp was the last manager.

Patsy Moran, a local character, while taking out stumps for the Fruitvale Company, found a large number of watches under a stump, so corroded by exposure they were worthless. What local highwayman, or Uncle Ike the money lender, put them away for safe keeping and neglected to mark the hiding place?

THE SWEDE'S TREASURE

In the early lumbering days different bands of lumbermen were composed chiefly of men of similar nationality. One group would be French-Canadians, another Irish, another Swedish. These latter furnished probably the largest single group of lumbermen in the region.

Whitehall in the lumbering days, was a wide-open town. Many of the leading citizens and so-called "respectful element" not only tolerated but encouraged these conditions in the belief that it helped trade and therefore prosperity to the element. At one time there were from thirty to forty saloons in the little village and connected with practically every saloon was a dance hall of none-too-savory reputations.

The lumbermen as a whole were in an improvident class. A man would drift into town in the fall "dead broke" obtain a job on some lumber gang, go to one of the trade's people and get the merchant to stake him (at an exorbitant price) to his necessary winter's supply of clothing, tobacco, etc., and go off into the woods for his winter's work. All winter he would be laboring in the lumber camps and in the spring when the spring floods were on and the logs were rolled into the stream, would follow these downstream to White Lake, deliver them to the proper mill and receive the pay for his winter's work. In most cases, he would then pay the merchant for the clothing and supplies which he had purchased the previous fall, and then head for the nearest saloon. In a few days of drinking and gambling, he would again be "dead broke" and looking for a stake for his next winter's supplies.

Some, however, were not so improvident and determined to carefully save as much of their wages as possible. Frequently such men would carry their hoard of money with them in order to be sure of its safe keeping, as banks were not established in those days. The carrying of such sums of money in a town full of nameless, desperate men, however, was dangerous business, and more than once when morning dawned, there was found down by the foot of the bridge between Whitehall and Montague the body of some lumberman with his head split open and his roll gone.

Under these conditions, therefore, one Swede, whom we will call Olie, determined that he was going to

better safe-guard his funds. There was a boarding house run by a Swedish couple where he stayed during the summer season while there was no work. The good woman of the house took an interest in him and helped him on many occasions, and so he finally decided to intrust his money to her.

He took a small tin box and placed his money in this and on leaving for the next winter's work, gave her this box with the request that she heep it until his return. For several years he did this until there had come to be a very considerable sum of money in the box.

Finally, one winter the husband died and in the spring when Olie returned, the widow told him that she could no longer run the boarding house and could no longer, therefore, take care of his money. He was seriously concerned, but determined on the next best course which was to bury his hoard. He therefore, took his tin box and went up along the White River until he found a large beach tree and buried it at the foot of this tree. The following year, on his return to Whitehall he learned that the widow's funds had been exhausted and that she had found it necessary to reopen her boarding house. He therefore gladly returned and she told him that she would be glad to again take care of his funds.

The next morning he went out with a shovel to dig up his treasure. He was gone all day and returned that night carrying his jug but with a deeply worried look upon his face. The next day he was off again and the next and the next. All summer he spent in vainly searching for the little tin box buried beneath the roots of the tree which had been cut during the winter and whose stump he could not locate among the thousands about. When winter came, a discouraged and broken man, he moved on to other fields and never again returned.

It was many years after this when an Indian fishing along the banks of the White River stubbed his toe against an old rotting stump and hearing something jingle, stooped down and found that he had kicked a tin box, the contents of which jingled. Opening the box he found some few coins which he appropriated and a wad of old mildewed paper closely stuck together, the value of which he did not at all know. Seeing, however, the possibility of some gain to himself, he went to town and going to one of the merchants, showed him this paper and asked him how much it was worth. The man looked at it scornfully, and replied that it was practically worthless but that he would be generous enough to give the Indian $5.00 and a jug of whiskey for it. Highly pleased, the Indian went off with his five silver dollars and his jug.

The merchant sent the wad to the treasury at Washington where it was carefully dried, separated, the numbers checked, and in due course of time, he received a check for several thousand dollars, an amount which set him up in business on a much bigger scale so that he and his sons are now among the most prominent merchants of the town.

THE BRASS PISTOL

A sudden, heavy downpour struck the city of Muskegon, driving people off the streets, and a considerable number took temporary refuge in the Occidental Hotel. Amongst these was a group of traveling

salesmen who sat down in a corner of the lobby and began chattering first about the weather and then reminiscing about other storms which they had experienced. From there the conversation drifted by natural degrees to tales of adventure and then to tales of mystery. When these had been going on for some time, one of the men told of an experience which he had had as a boy.

He said, "There is one mystery that has been in our family for some thirty years. When I was a lad, I lived in the village of Whitehall and used to go fishing along the banks of the White River. While doing so one time, I was standing on the very edge of the bank slightly above the edge of the water. I got wet all over and pretty well muddied up, but on recovering my balance and starting to climb out on the bank, I was surprised to get a metallic gleam of something which had been uncovered by my foot as I slid down. I stooped to pick it up to see what it was and was very much surprised to find an old brass Derringer pistol of very curious design, which, when I later polisted it, was found to have on it very intricate scroll work, and was apparently of German make. On finding this pistol, I naturally explored around with my fingers to see if I could find anything in addition and succeeded in uncovering two or three bones which were apparently human bones, and an old beaded moccasin. I was, of course, very much excited at this discovery and immediately ran home and told my father about it.

He got the sheriff and they came out and dug thoroughly around the vicinity and succeeded eventually in uncovering nearly a complete skeleton of a man together with a mate to the moccasin which I had found. They were unable, however, to determine any clue as to who the man was or how he had died so they gave the bones such decent burial as they could, and my father permitted me to keep the pistol as a souvenir, but we always have wondered to whom the pistol and moccasins belonged and how he came to meet his death. We at first supposed that it must have been an Indian on account of the beaded moccasins, but the appearance of the bones seemed to indicate that it had been a white man."

During the telling of this story, one man had been listening very intently, leaning further and further forward into his chair. On its conclusion he said to the speaker, "I am very much interested in your story and I wonder whether it would be possible for me to see the brass pistol. I have never seen but one of the kind which you described, and I should like very much to see whether this one resembles it. I wonder if you would be willing to go to your home at Whitehall to see it." The other man replied that it would not be at all necessary for him to make a trip as he always carried the pistol along with him in his grip. He then produced it and gave it to the other man to examine.

He took the pistol and examined it very closely, turning it over and over in his hands. Finally he straightened up and handed back the pistol saying, "Well that explains a mystery that has long puzzled our family.

Some fifty years ago my father was in charge of a lumber gang that was working on the White River. There came to Whitehall a Swede who was known only as Jense. He was a peculiar chap, never talking about himself and mixing very little with those about him. He signed up as a member of my father's

group and went up into the woods with him. He had very little to say and made few friends. However, he did have a knack of making friends with the Indians who frequented that region, and after some time a local chief presented to him a pair of beautiful beaded moccasins which he highly prized.

Jense was a man of quick temper, rather sullen but a good worker, doing faithfully his share of the work. However, he was not willing to be imposed upon and resented being asked to do more than he felt was his share. He would come in from a hard day's work in the woods or on the river, draw off his heavy lumbering boots with their calked soles, slip on these Indian moccasins, and sit and smoke his pipe for a while before going to bed. He had no active enemies of which we knew, but he always by day and night carried with him a curiously designed and highly ornamented German Derringer pistol which was made of brass. We often wondered whether he was afraid of some enemy tracking him down and so perhaps carried this pistol for his self-protection.

One evening as the men were sitting around the fire, word came in to my father that the logs which we were floating down the river had started to form a jam and that unless this was broken up immediately a serious jam would form during the night. My father turned to Jense who seemed to be best in a position to meet this situation and ordered him to go down the river and break up the jam. Jense protested but my father insisted on his orders being carried out. Jense got up suddenly and grabbed his pike pole which he would need to break up the jam and started for the river without stopping to put on his heavy calked boots such as are always worn by the lumbermen when riding the logs. He never returned and we never heard anything further from him. We had always wondered as to what had become of him, the general idea being that probably in his anger at being asked to do this extra work he had simply deserted the gang, abandoned his pay and struck off to find employment elsewhere.

I can see clearly now, however, what happened. This pistol which you have found is unquestionally the one which Jense always carried and the moccasins were his. He undoubtedly went down the river, walked out on the logs to break up the jam, but being angry and therefore not cautious and having on the slippery moccasins instead of the calked boots, slipped and was buried by the logs."

CHAPTER 9

Camping to the city Scout is different than that of the Scout from the small town. In years past the difference was more marked because the Scout was not exposed to the same environment as his country cousin. Todays "camping" is a far cry from the first days of Scouting.

The first years of Chicago Scout camping were on a troop basis and the Council leadership was confined to the distribution of Boy Scout Handbooks.

Many of the boy pioneers in Scounting tramped the trails under their Scoutmaster's leadership.

In 1912, the Council began to recognize that every troop was not ready to "go it on its own" and that the camping experiences lacked richness and variety, as well as subjecting campers to dangers to health and life itself.

However, the first camp reflected the previous military experience of its leadersip. The first attendance was by home troops under Scoutmaster leadership.

In the process of evolution with stress on staff training, some of the Scoutmasters were left in the background and began to feel as if they were unnecessary.

Likewise, the staff began to think in terms of their conducting this program completely, the Scoutmaster being considered an intruder. In fact, Camp Directors were known to say as much directly as well as by implication, inviting the Scoutmasters to stay away from camp.

Camping goals changed as personnel changed Executive Board, Camping Chairmen, Camp Directors, and even outside organizations weilded their influence. Some well meaning but misguided persons caused programs to be adopted which were not in the best interest of the campers.

Owasippe had its share of ups and downs. Two world wars, a major and several minor depressions, the Korean and Viet Nam wars, in addition to many changes in the Chicago leadersip. Some of these leaders considered camping as a necessary evil - a nuisance while others were more receptive, some even considering it the backbone of Scouting.

Camp leadership has run the full course from squads right, squads left type of strict discipline to the complete lack of it.

Many of the excellent programs which were successful were dumped by succeeding leaders without replacement. Lets list a few:

We once had an amateur radio station at Owasippe, where interested Scouts could talk to the whole world. Records of conversations to Europe, Africa, South America, and Australia are shown. In fact, the first airplane flight over Mt. Everest was heard by a Scout at Owasippe. We had a complete photographic darkroom. Printer and enlarger and wash tank. Scouts could develop and print their own pictures.

Only third year campers could carve their names and troop numbers in the totem pole, which became several totem poles because of the number.

Third year campers were taken on special trips - fishing boat and sailboat expeditions as far as Ludington. Some of the programs failed because of poor leadership or just plain apathy.

For example: A third year camper could spend 48 hours in a genuine Indian village and was encouraged to bring nothing but his knife. He was to live in the type of housing that was common to his assigned tribe (Sioux - teepees; Potowatami - hogan; Iriquo's - long house). He learned to cook without utensils and ate a variety of indian dishes - roast corn, roots, snake -- and made lacrosse sticks and played the other tribes. Many indian lore subjects were covered and the boy became a brave and was entitled to wear a feather. Bows and arrows were provided and he could make his own. Deer and buffalo targets were provided. War canoes holding 10 boys were used.

The program lasted two years after being diluted to 24 hours and lack of leadership.

The custom of buying a white Sea Scout belt and having stencil award emblems was very popular. Camp achievements were recorded on the belt and was an indication of the Scouts activity and tenure.

It took three years for a Scout to fill the belt until one leader decided to leave the boys stencil their own belts. Some first year Scouts wore two belts - filled.

One camp had an old timer Scroll where a 3rd year camper could sign his name and troop number. It was pretty big. Why somebody had to "borrow" it from the museum we will never know.

For many years the Owasippe "O" was the most important achievement. From the start sometime in the 30's, the emblem could not be purchased. It was given free to the Scout who had earned it. Each Scout was given a little booklet which had to be signed by a number of camp staff members to attest to the Scout having passed the many tests. Finally the Scoutmaster had to sign the line that said he was a model camper. Some Scoutmasters had all the members of the troop vote if they would like to camp again with "Scout Willie".

All Scouts did not earn the "O" which made it a worthwhile award.

Some older campers have reported long forgotten customs which were excellent until we made it so easy to do that there was no challange. When you can buy the award for a dime, why knock yourself out working for it?

The voyager award was a small canoe paddle. You must be a third year camper. It required you to spend 48 hours visiting the entire reservation. Check point at the various camps as well as the food prep assured the staff that you had hiked and paddled the 50 miles required. It must be with a buddy but not more than two Scouts together. The general idea was to acquaint the Scout with the entire reservation.

When it got to the point where it got too expensive and had the participants chauffered around the reservation, the whole idea was lost.

Some of the other programs are mentioned in the tall tales chapter.

Occasionally, a program goes awry. In the leaders manual one year was included a sample program, for the benefit of the green Scoutmaster.

It must have been well liked because it was followed by exactly 75% of the troops in camp. One of the items was "on the first Wednesday, the troop hikes to Bass Lake and spends the night."

Bass Lake had a pump about 20 feet from the lake. The only latrines were the nearest bushes. There were 680 Scouts registered during the first period -- 400 of them were at Bass Lake the first Wednesday.

Between having most of the latrines uphill from the pump and the Scouts habit of using a box of detergent to wash his mess kit (at the pump) the water was not the best.

Thursday morning, the first bucket of water looked like a scooner of beer. The suds were so thick that there was very little water in the pail. Fortunately, outside of a little diarrea all ended well.

P.S. The program was not reprinted and Bass Lake was out of bounds until the next year.

A Bobcat trail was laid out behind Camp Stuart. Reflective paint was used to paint two dots (cats eyes) on the trees, some at eye level, some way up in the trees (the cat waiting to jump), and some down on the roots. They were invisible during the day and could be seen only by flashlight, and then only 20 degrees each side. Scouts could follow the trail for about a quarter mile. It was a very successful trail. As with everything else, there were complaints that the poor little Scouts might get lost if encouraged to use this trail. Jim Marshall painted several miles of Bobcat trails which were never used because of this objection.

There was also an area carefully laid out so that a signaling circle could be used. Eight campsites permitted two boys minimum or 4 boys maximum to camp overnight and communicate with flashlights or solar mirrors to his buddies. Campsite #1 could only see Campsite #8 and Campsite #2 - #2 could only see #1 and #3, etc. In that way, a message could be sent around the circle and checked for accuracy. A lot of work went into the layout but failed because of apathy.

CHAPTER 10

PEOPLE

Northwest of the junction of Crystal Lake Road and Russel Road, Will Teall and his wife Marge owned a farm which they sold to the Scouts.

When Rue Miller left, Will Teall became Head Ranger. Marge was postmaster at Owasippe for many years. Will retired after twenty years as head ranger about 1970.

Ferris Hale had been a surveyor who laid out a good deal of the section lines in Blue Lake Township in the 1930's. He was hired to help build the new camp. When Will Teall retired, Ferris Hale took over as head ranger. Orville Hawk was hired to assist Will Teall and later Ray Hale.

Orville became fire chief of the Blue Lake Fire Department which has three engines across from Blackhawk and another in the southern end of the township. Of course, some of the other Owasippe rangers and staff are called upon to be firemen at times (1980).

Ray Hale, Ferris Hale's son, took over as head ranger when his dad retired.

Rue Miller was ranger back in the 30's and 40's. Rue had several "moonlighting" activities to supplement his ranger income. He hauled fruit in the fall and did other hauling in the spring. His trucks were surprisingly similar to the camp trucks which the staff had jacked up and set on blocks for the winter but the camp trucks were always still there when camp opened in the summer, so they probably were not the same.

Rue lived up on Big Blue Lake (back of the present ranger residence) and had some trap lines to catch fox. He caught a couple of wolves and kept them in cages behind his house. During winter camp, he "allowed" the boys to run his trap lines, paying off in fox tails. Sometimes twenty Scouts came home with fox tails in their hats. Shades of Tom Sawyer and his whitewashed fence.

Wilbur Brightwell has a store just west of the White Sands Restaurant. At one time, Wilbur owned all the property on the north side of Colby Road where the gas station, the store, and the White Sands is located. Wilbur delivered fresh meat to the Camp during the first days and during World War I, and provided transportation to the various resorts. First horse drawn thenbig limosines. He can recall many of the people who ran the camp in the past. He had a large freezer and meat locker and handled much of the wholesale meat business in Whitehall. He is semi-retired, handling refrigerators both new and used mostly for restaurants and stores.

Ron Temple started as a Scout and got the job on the staff as steward, whose job was to supervise the dishwashing chores in addition to the waiters.

At that time we used real plates, real "silverware" and big bowls in addition to the pots and pans. Each table was required to provide a waiter and a dishwasher. The two boys did both jobs, the waiter

helped wash dishes and the dishwasher waited on tables. Ron became an expert on instructing the Scouts in the proper way.

Quoting Ron as he stood with one foot on the seat and one on the table: "Now 99 and 44/100 of you have never washed a dish and even if you did, you did not do it properly. I am going to instruct you in the proper method and when you get home, your mother will be proud to let you help her."

And no dish was ever returned to the cabinet unless it met his approval. Ron "returned so faithfully each year" and became Director of Camp Stuart.

As Camp Director, of course, he was aware of bed check every night.

Now the trail committee put a test Trail out east of Camp Stuart. It was called the "Bobcat Trail". It consisted of 2 dots, located in various sports, the middle limb, the trunk, the roots, sometimes one on each fork of a small limb. Reflective paint was used and a flashlight focused on it made it look like 2 cats eyes.

As one followed the trail by flashlight after dark (it could not be seen in the daylight), he entered the woods and followed from tree to tree.

One minor thing, after a city block into the woods, there appeared a small sign in reflective paint "the end", and no more "eyes". There was no return trail.

After a week of rounding up dozens of Scouts who were lost in the woods after bed check, Ron found some of the reflective paint and painted the trail out into Collins Field so the Scouts could find their own way back.

Ron became National Chief of the Order of the Arrow and Dean of Men at the University of Cinncinati.

Along Holton Whitehall Road about a mile west of Russell Road, is a cemetery. West of the cemetery a sign proclaims "Hercik Reservation - Owned and Protected by the Chicago Council BSA".

Josephine Hercik McCabe was a recluse who lived in a trailer across the road from the Old Hercik farm. Hercik owned about a section of land and Josephine was his daughter. The old farm house burned down in the 1950's. Josephine Hercik had married a man named McCabe and eventually they parted. Josephine moved back across from the old farmhouse location in a trailer. She raided the garbage dumps at camp and became a familiar figure around camp during the summer. Back in the 40's, the Order of the Arrow had a "banquet" after each ordeal session. The cooks prepared a lot of sandwiches, a cake, and bug juice and left it on the table while they went to bed.

The arrowmen having completed their ceremonies, returned to the mess hall and had their banquet.

Some of the banquets were rather skimpy because Josephine knew when they were held and "borrowed" some

of the goodies.

Josephine bought a new Chevy and parked it next to her trailer. It was used mainly as a residence for her family of cats.

One rainy day one of the staff was driving by her trailer shack and noticed Josephine standing on the roof. She informed him that the roof leaked and that she was fixing it. But said he "with no clothes on". And she responded that there was no point in getting her clothes wet also.

When it was decided on duying the Hercik property for the Scouts, it was suggested that we would buy the property Josephine lived on, and she could live there for the rest of her life. She finally agreed after we put up a sign "This property protected by BSA."

Josephine was deaf and wore a hearing aid. However, she would not buy batteries so it was the practice for anyone going to talk to her to carry batteries with them .. go up to Josephine, take her hearing aid and install the batteries. Also after the interview remove the batteries for the next encounter.

When the final deal was to be closed, Josephine insisted on being paid cash -- in one dollar bills. The bank provided a place for her to count the monies (several thousand dollars) and she proceeded to spend a half day doing just that. Satisfied that it was all there, she signed the deed. Many stories grew out of this happening. Many a hole has been dug around the old location because the story was that Josephine had buried this and other money in shoe boxes.

Josephine became too feeble finally, and the ranger staff would take her into Whitehall to the doctor. Eventually she entered a home and died there a couple of years ago.

Josephine was at the dedication ceremonies together with the other dignitaries in her best "bib and tucker" -- not exactly the latest style.

CHAPTER 11

NAMES AND PLACES

What's in a name? Many names come up in our history of Owasippe. Some go back long before the Scouts arrived.

Alden Barber once asked what he should tell the mother of one of the campers who asked if the camp was safe. It seems that the Scout had returned from a hike and canoe trip and explained that after visiting Deserters Cave, near Suicide Oak, they started down the river near Lost Scout Bayou; spent the night at Poison Spring; and started again in the moring passing Rattlesnake Point. They ate lunch at Deadman's Rollway; then visited the grave of the Unknown where the sign said he had been found under a pile of logs.

There are many other names along the Scouts route but those are the only ones he remembered. Some of those names were given before 1910 but some were given by Scout leaders.

We are very concious of the computer mentality that uses such romantic names as Section Camp #4 - Campsite #12 - Tent #6, Bed 2.

From the beginning, when we called our camp after the legendery chief, and our campsites after the patrol names we have tried to put some romance in the names. Camps bore the names of famous people; campsites bore the names of the scout law, the tribes of indians, the famous pioneers, etc.

A Scout from campsite Brave at Camp West met a Scout from campsite (Kit) Carson at Camp Beard - not campsite 10 at section camp 2 meeting campsite 4 at section camp 1.

Many aldermen can recall the name of their campsite and the name of their camp when they had names instead of numbers. We include this chapter because many of the old campers complain that we are letting the old places be forgotten by numbering them or by calling them by another name.

One example of this is "Mud" Creek, "Turtle" Creek, "Frog" Creek, or several other names for the creek that starts at the new Blackhawk Dining hall. This creek was named :

Gerken Creek and appears on several maps as such. It starts at Big Blue and runs into Cleveland Creek. The Gerken family goes back before the Scouts came to Big Blue or Cleveland Creek. They have a home on the creek on the southwest side of Russell Road.

Perz Bay is named after a man who started at Owasippe as a camper and later returned to be Camp Director. Jack Perz was Director in 1946. Robert Crown was a member of a family who did a great deal in steering the new camp development.

James West
L. L. McDonald
Robert Stuart
Dan Beard

) Camps

Alfred Stern Lodge -the Blackhawk Mess Hall

Saddle Bag Cabin - Camp Bear Health Lodge and Chapel

Park Manor Lodge - Camp West Office

Merit Badge Lodge - Camp Stuart Office

Barrett Wendell Lodge - Family Camp Office

Saddle Bag Cabin, Park Manor Lodge, Merit Badge Lodge and Barrett Wendell Lodge were used for winter camps for many years.

Cains Cove is the east end of Big Blue.

Colby Road and Pine Island Road were renamed when Deadmans Curve was created on Holton-Whitehall Road.

The Hercik farm and all the romance surrounding the place went with the death of Josephine Hercik McCabe.

Headwaters (of Silver Creek) is no longer the main overnight spot since the closing of the Lower Lake (Owasippe Lake) camps.

Owasippe Lake was Crystal Lake until the 40's.

Crystal Lake Road became Canfield Lake Road when they changed the name. If you find an old map, you may not recognize the names. Crystal Lake Road was the main artery to Twin Lake.

Automobile Boulevard was a sand two track and a main road from Whitehall to Fox Lake.

Slab Lake was the site of a "Slab Mill", a shingle factory.

Pine Island Lake was a favorite overnight site.

Deuces Wild, the original shack burned down during a card game brawl and the latest place to burn in the vicinity, becomes the New Deuces Wild. We have visited seven Deuces Wild since we have been at Owasippe.

Deserters Cave - the original is in the middle of Section 32, Otto Township, near Skeels Creek. There were trails leading to this spot but have been lost over the many years. Another deserters cave is just southwest of Cleveland Creek and Russell Road (a caved in fruit cellar which was occupied by a WWI deserter for many months).

Cisco Rollaway was a put-in point for canoe trips for many years.

Scotts Gulley was also a put-in point for canoe trips.

White River Lumber Camp was at the junction of the north branch and the White River (See Canoe Trip chapter).

Oil Well Campsite was named because just back of the campsite was a derrick thought to be an oil derrick. However, it was a water drilling rig which found a salt well. The area is known as the Salt Marsh.

Poison Spring has a salt spring flowing down to the river.

Diamond Bend was known as 2 Diamond because it was marked with a 2 diamond marker back in the 30's.

Hinchman Half Way Camp was a lumber camp in the 1860's. It was marked with one diamond.

Deadman's Rollaway and the Grave of the Unknown (see Stories).

Dock 8 - an old logging spot.

Rochdale Inn - famous from the 1900's to about 1940 when it burned.

Petakay Lodge was an old summer resort. When the lodge was torn down, it became an overnight spot on canoe trips.

Cedar Landing and Cobbler Creek are still used as overnight stops on canoe trips.

Lake Eerie is a beautiful spot in the woods actually a bayou of the White River. A quiet spot with thousands of birds and can only be reached by portage.

Trading Post - formerly the take out point for canoe trips for 40 years. The site of the original Wild Trading Post of the 1800's.

Silver Creek - the original Saw Mill site.

Burying Ground Point - the site of an indian cemetery of the 1800's.

Pines Point - once known as Snows Pines. A bend in the river where one can throw a stone left then right and hit the river. The two points where the stones hit takes 10 minutes of paddling.

Podunk was once a settlement and a bridge once crossed the river at this place. A ford makes it possible to cross at this point.

40 Acres - the 40 acres south of Camp West which was donated to the camp by the Whitehall Chamber of Commerce. Scouts planted evergreens in the area and it was used as an overnight spot for many years.

Deer Meadow - a campsite on Silver Creek east of Hyde Park Road.

Many Springs - a place where the water gushes from the ground and the side of the hill, and is the east leg of Cleveland Creek - the headwaters (the west branch of Cleveland Creek) starts beneath a huge tree near the Family Camp on the Blue Trail. The creek flows north and at one time formed a lake. Vegetation grew in the lake which today forms a Quaking Bog.

Quaking Bog - the creek runs through a -

Marl Bed - Marl is a mixture of clay and calcium carbonate. It is used as a fertilizer and in the making of cement.

Eagles Nest - over the years, several families of bald eagles have lived at Owasippe. They move from place to place because they are disturbed by stupid people. There are a number of places where the eagles have been observed.

Beaver Dam - the beaver builds new dams every couple of years. The remains of one is on the west fork of Cleveland Creek just south of Wolverine (south of old Campfire Circle).

248 Club - this club started back in the 20's and used a lodge located where the Deremo State Park Marina is now located. The lodge was bought by the Scouts in 1927 and was used as Camp Pioneer, Senior Scout Camp, Family Camp, and Camp Belnap. The 248 Club moved their operation to the Point Comfort Hotel and when the Scouts bought it they started to build a new club near Cleveland Creek where the bridge crosses to Paradise Valley. The pillars can still be seen. They had completed the basement

and laid the floor for the first floor. Work was stopped temporarily and they used the basement as a place to meet. Then somebody "borrowed" all the flooring, the windows, and doors. The project was abandoned. The Scouts own the property now.

Owasippe's Grave is about a quarter of a mile up the hill from the 248 ruins.

Pierres Bayou is about one mile due south of Owasippe's grave and about 1/2 mile north of the museum.

Cole's Mill is about 100 yards north of the Museum.

Wolverine Club - the headquarters of the Wolverine Club were across the road from the museum and was used as the Camps headquarters for several years while the new camp was being built.

CHAPTER 12

HOW WOLVERINE LAKE CAME TO BE

Back around the time the Scouts first came to Owasippe, several groups of promoters began subdividing the land in Blue Lake Township. There was some fruit orchards near Brown's Pond and Rochdale Inn.

With so many Chicago visitors at Rochdale it was easy to suggest that this might become a thriving community, and Fruitvale was born. The land was subdivided into lots mostly 25' x 100' and streets laid out. Of course if you have hiked or canoed around the area you know that very few "streets" existed except only the through roads like Fruitvale and Sand Road. In a second subdivision, there were 30,000 lots in all, some of these lots were right on the banks of Cleveland Creek in the area from Owasippe Road to Holton-Whitehall Road and Russell to Blue Lake Roads.

In order to promote the sale of these lots, some were offered as "premiums".

For instance "Buy a years subscription to the Chicago Tribune and get a lot in Michigan free". Or on Dish Night at the local movie show in Chicago, the "first prize" was a lot in Michigan.

When you sent in for your deed to these lots, it was explained that a 25' x 100' lot was pretty small, but by chance the lots on both sides of your lot was available for a small fee. As a matter of fact, for a few dollars more you could buy the whole block or you could exchange your lot for a lot right on the creek if you bought 3 or 4 lots next to it.

Over the period of years, Chicago people bought most of these lots, paid the taxes each year and some left them to their sons and daughters. Most of these people never saw their lots or even know where they were. Today to find one of these lots requires the services of a surveyor, who must start at a section marker maybe a mile away and locate a very small area. The cost is from $700 to $1,000. The lots are worth approximately $10 today. Many of the lot owners did not pay their taxes and the lots were sold at tax sales. Some of the lots were sold for $5. The average cost of tax sale purchases ten years ago was less than seven dollars a lot. Many lots were donated to the Chicago Council to gain the tax advantage.

For example: A woman flew to Chicago from Florida. Picked up her lawyer and flew to Muskegon, Michigan, rented a car and showed up at Scout Camp. She did not want the Scouts to tramp all over her property. She assumed we knew where it was. When we pointed out that even if we knew exactly where it was, it would take a 4-wheel vehicle to get within a half mile of the lot and then from there you would have to hike up a hill.

She had paid the taxes for almost 50 years and now wanted to sell it. When she found that we were buying the same kind of property for seven dollars, she was ready to cry.

When we suggested donating the property to the Scouts, her lawyer jumped at the chance. We got the lots (which we still cannot pinpoint) and she wrote the loss off her income taxes.

During the first thiry years of operations, some of the lots changed hands many times. The promoters used many tactics (some shady) to sell property.

There is an "oil lake" locate east of Blue Lake Road and north of Holton Whitehall Road. Unbeknown to anyone around, they gathered several tank truck loads of crank case drainings and dumped them in the woods. The idea of dumping several tank trucks of crank case draining was to create the impression that there was oil on the property. Nobody said there was but.....many people bought this worthless property hoping to get rich when oil was found. Oil has been found nearby but only in such small quantities that it is not economical to drill for it.

So, after 30 years, the property was still not being used except for some excellent trout fishing in Cleveland Creek, and some deer hunting in the fall.

A good deal of the property was sold for taxes and very few of the lot owners were ever seen around. So a group of promoters looked at a survey made by the Scouts back in the 30's which showed that if Cleveland Creek could be dammed up a fair size lake could be formed.

It seemed simple enough. They formed the Wolverine Club and got deeds on several thousand lots. They bulldozed alot of sand into the creek and water began to back up. Then they sold rights to build hunting and fishing cabins around this lake. All of the staff cabins at the north end of Wolverine Lake are the result of the members activities. They built a Club House across from the Town Hall (now the museum) and called it the Wolverine Club.

Several problems surfaces -- the dam leaked and they did not cut the trees down prior to building the dam. One could canoe between the hundreds of dead trees. It was an eerie sight seeing hundreds of trees without foliage jutting up out of the water.

In the course of time some of our lot owners found that their lots were in the bottom of the lake -- not a very useful place to be. So a group of owners got together and filed a class action suit against the Wolverine Club. Neither side had the money to pay the huge legal fees to fight for some property having so little relative value. The Chicago Council heard of this and proceeded to buy both sides of the lawsuit. In doing so, they gained control of 80% of the property. They decided to rebuild the dam and relocate the administration area and also build two new camps. Wint Hartman got a crew together, removed the dam and cut down thousands of dead trees. They built a reinforced dam at the old location and present Wolverine Lake was formed. It was a higher dam and formed a much larger lake.

Before the Wolverine Club decided to dam up Cleveland Creek, the local citizens found it to be one of

the finest trout streams in Michigan. The cold springs which fed the creek provided an excellent environment for trout.

Needless to say the local folks were not charmed with he building of the dam. Shortly after it was built, a dynamite blast blew a hole in it. It was repaired but every couple of months a new dynamite blast occurred. Somebody did not like to lose their best fishing hole.

When Wint Hartman built the new dam it was reinforced so that it would take a lot more dynamite to wreck it. Even so, the new dam was the object of a blast which did some damage but did not wreck it.

There are still some trout in the east fork occassionally, but not the beautiful specimens that were caught back in the 30's and 40's.

Camp Wolverine North and Camp Wolverine South were built and Family Camp was built south of the lake. The new dam was named after Gus Kopp who was one of the original promoters and who later worked for the Scout office handling the properties in Michigan. He assisted Wint Hartman in handling the building of the new camp. Gus was manager of the Rochdale Inn when it burned down. Gus worked for the Scouts until he died. The Wolverine Club office was used as the Owasippe Office until the new administration building was built in 1961.

When the dam was filled, the water backed up all the way to the beaver dam. Sauger Marsh which was a swamp, filled up from below and became Sauger Lake. Another depression filled in and became Perz Lake. It was decided later to join the Perz Lake with Wolverine. The level of the lake was lowered by removing the planks in the dam and bulldozing the sand bar at the entrance to what is now Perz Bay. Perz Bay is the location of the Sauger Camp waterfront. At one time it was suggested to do the same to Sauger Lake but objections by the naturalists stopped it. It seems that Sauger Lake contains some very rare vegetaion which would be lost if disturbed by the Wolverine waters.

CHAPTER 13

TOWNSHIPS

The major portion of Owasippe is in Blue Lake Township. The original Camp Owasippe was in Whitehall Township. The dividing line between Whitehall and Blue Lake Townships runs through Owasippe Lake.

A Township usually consists of 36 Sections each 1 mile square. A Section contains 640 acres. The law requires that a 5 acre plot be set aside for the Township school. For many years, this school was located on the north east corner of Russell and Crystal Lake Road. It later became a residence and finally burned down.

The Township was primarily a farming community after the lumbering ceased. An attempt to use the area as a summer resort resulted in subdividing a large portion of the Township.

Fruitvale - north of the river - was first subdivided shortly after World War I.

The area between Owasippe Road and Holton Whitehall Road from Russell to Blue Lake Road has parts of 9 Sections. This area contains some 35,000 lots and the area had dozens of streets laid out. Of course, many of these lots and streets are in the bottom of Wolverine Lake. The old Town Hall was sold to the Scouts after the new town hall was built on Owasippe Road.

The new town hall is attached to the new firehouse. Meetings are held at least once a month and are sometimes quite noisy as the people try to get more protection with less taxes.

Our trails go through Whitehall, Blue Lake, Montague, Dalton, and Holton Township in Muskegon County and Otto and Greenwood Townships in Oceana County.

CHAPTER 14

MAPS

In the museum are trail maps dating back to 1923. One of the first printed maps was drawn by Ted Shearer.

Jack Perz made the first colored trail map which was updated several times.

In looking at these maps, you can see the changes which have taken place.

The first map follows the old logging trails. Ted Shearer's map shows roads which do not exist today, or exist as overgrown logging trails. The first Perz map does not have a paved road, and no Wolverine Lake. Some of the main roads are still there and are still just the two tracks there were then. Looking closer we can follow the history. Some of the roads were paved and some were relocated as the maps were updated. Wolverine Lake began to appear and the trails through that area disappeared due to the no trespassing signs erected by the Wolverine Club. Very few people realized that they did not have the authority to do this.

The first map drawn to scale and showing some of the contours was produced by Jim Marshall in the later 1950's.

The commercial maps of the area were not the best due to the lack of aerial photos of the area. The geodetic survey maps were made from 1956 aerial photos.

Several maps were printed by the Council to show the new camps and the trails leading to them. In 1972, a contour map based on the geodetic maps and the former trail maps was issued.

Most of the maps were prepared by volunteer leaders requiring a great deal of time, trouble, and expense. The Council printed the final maps and sold them in the trading post.

An investigation was made to Rand McNally and other map makers as to the possibility of bringing the reservation maps uptodate with the intentions of using it as an orienteering map. The only problem is that the price was prohibitive. The best maps available for the area were made by the State of Michigan West Shore Committee and the Muskegon Records Office.

CHAPTER 15

WAR CANOES

Sometime in the late 30's, the camp acquired 3 war canoes. These canoes were so large that they were able to hold 10 people. One canoe was assigned to each camp around Crystal Lake.

The rivalry between the camps found an outlet in the War Canoe Races.

At first, each camp provided the ten boys from their campers. Each period, 10 campers with canoeing merit badges were chosen from each camp. They practiced and when the final day came, the race was run from Stuart to West.

The canoes were available for troop use and we found that each camp had their own set of rules for its use.

The Red Cross system of buddy tags was used in operation: #0 for non-swimmers, #1 for 25' swimmers, #2 for 50 yd. swimmers, #3 for 150 yd. swimmers, #4 for Swim Merit Badge, #5 for Life Saving Merit Badge, #6 for Junior ARC, #7 , #8 for Senior ARC, and #9 for Red Cross Water Safety Instructor or Member of Aquatic Staff.

The boating rules said:

0 must be in boat with #9

1 must be in with #3 or more

Rowboat - 3 points (alone) or 2-2's

Canoe - 6 points or 2-3's

War Canoe West - 25 points (9-2 pointers and Senior ARC)

" " Beart - 30 points

" " Stuart - 60 points

This assured that Stuart would have the edge in the War Canoe Races. But the West Campers had the most fun with them.

CHAPTER 16

When the new campsites began to appear at the old Wilderness site in Blackhawk, the staff constructed a suicide ride from the top of the hill to the lake. A trolley riding a cable from the top to an anchor pole in the lake allowed the rider a hair-raising ride. Shades of the dustbowl in Camp West where a similar trolley existed from Grasshopper Hill across the dustbowl. While not quite as steep a ride, it ended in the sand instead of water.

CHAPTER 17

YARNS

HEY did you hear this.....

Long ago two of our future citizens, bored with the camp program "borrowed" a 25 pound container of Strawberry bug juice (bug juice is sugar soft drink) and proceeded to empty it into the Beard Water Tower. Since this was the entire water supply for Camp Beard, Camp Stuart, and Camp West (drinking, cooking and showers), a whole day went by before the red tinge disappeared. (P.S. The ladder to the top of the tower was removed by the maintenance crew.)

In 1946, the two week camp period was staggered. The menu's were prepared before camp opened. Each camp was provided with the food for its menu for day one thru fourteen.

Staff members who found themselves in a distant camp could eat in any dining hall nearby.

At West there was an excellent dietitian who prided herself on nice looking and tasting dishes. At another camp, there was a man and wife team who cooked for a construction crew. When we found that we were going to have chop suey, we were delighted. They had that the week before. Individual scoops of fluffy rice, a dish of dark brown meat and Chinese vegetables not only looked beautiful but tasted as good as any Oriental place in the country.

When we said to the local staff that we were delighted, they informed me that in their opinion I should see a shrink. The chop suey that they had been served, looked like something that had already been eaten and regurgitated. (Gooey rice in a yellow green mess was what we saw.) As a cooking merit badge counselor, we have witnessed some wierd dishes but nothing as bad as this. Here we were -- two groups provided with exactly the same materials, one prepared it fit for a king and the other not fit for a dog.

The central food prep solved that problem -- NONE MAY BE FIT FOR A KING BUT THE STAFF AND SCOUTS CAN EAT IT.

In 1974, a 76 year old gentleman appeared at the Information Lodge and asked "Where is the camp?" His name was Douglas "Dud" Schneider. It seems that he had been on the staff in 1915 and 1916 and had not been back since. He was sent to the museum where the curator filled him in. There had been some changes. Unfortunately, the camp he knew was no more. He told of being hired to help the engineer operate the single cylinder engine which operated the generator used for lighting and pumping the water at Camp Owasippe (Beard). The engineer was not very efficient and "Dud" wound up as Chief Engineer at age 14. He had one of the old hand turned wooden washing machines and succeeded with the help of a homemade rope belt to operate the washing machine with the engine.

He tells of hiking from Whitehall over the Corduroy roads - logs placed crosswise across the road - on the way to camp. He said that the apple orchard operators like the roads. They loaded the apples in the wagons, drove to town over these roads and all the big apples were on top -- very profitable.

All the dining halls did their own thing. So to get them a day off, "Cooks Day Off" was started. Staff members dreamed up all manner of things to get everybody out of camp.

On one of these occasions just as dinner ended the night before, two grubby staff men in prospector attire staggered in and dumped a sack full of "gold" on the table. They told of finding a "Mother Lode" in a sand dune south of camp.

Early the next morning everybody gathered grub and headed for the "strike".

Assay offices were set up and tokens worth candy were exchanged for the "gold". Everything went fine but when the staff began to check the "gold", there was more of it than had been "salted". Some smart kids had found the can of gold paint that the staff had been using on the rocks to make the "gold".

When the three camps were around Owasippe Lake, each camp had a little brass cannon which was used sometimes at retreat. The main use of this cannon, using a 12 gauge shotgun blank, was to wake up the camp at 7:00 a.m. Then everybody set their watches. Someone at each camp was appointed for this chore, each camp taking turns.

The Assistant Camp Director at West had the chore of getting the cooks up at 6:00 a.m.

One of our beloved Assistant Camp Directors got the cooks up on the first day of the period after checking in the new arrivals for half of the night. He laid down for a minute and dozed off. He awoke with a start and looked at his clock. It was five minutes after - he grabbed the cannon and fired it! Then he took another look at his clock - he had only dozed off for five minutes. The staff at all three camps depended on this cannon so much (radios did not work well and did not give the time every half hour as now) that there was chaos for the rest of the day. (Sunday) The first bugle was supposed to be reveille. Each morning it was blown (in person no less) at each camp at 7:00 a.m. But the first call this day at 6:35 a.m. was for waiters at Beard, followed by Mess from Stuart and Reveille from West. However, since West had shot off the cannon, the kids were lined up for breakfast at West at that time.

For the next eight hours, things were all fouled up. Beard had lunch two hours after breakfast, Stuart had lunch at 3:00 p.m., and supper just before taps. Being the first day of the period, the new Scouts established a complete new schedule of operations.

In those times, bugles were blown for Reveille, Waiters, Mess, for all three meals and taps at all three camps. The bugle calls from each camp carried over the water. One of our fondest recollections

was one clear night after taps, the sounds of a trumpet playing Brahms Lullaby came over the still night air. One of the Stuart Campers had a father who was a famous band leader and he played his trumpet for his son.

Some of our old customs were not so bad.

Someone started the custom of appointing a night guard and each troop had to post a watch for one full night each period. Depending on the size of the troop, each paid would spend from one to two hours for each watch. Some of the advantages were that it gave one the sense of responsibility and was an experience for city kids to spend the quiet wee small hours in the darkness "guarding the camp".

Several incidences are of interest:
One night a Scout, sleeping in a jungle hammock, felt something under his hammock. He reached down and grabbed it - by the tail. He hollered and guards came and found him holding an animal with a black and white stripe down its back. He could not let go or the skunk would "let go", so the guard got a burlap sack and rescued him.

On the first night in camp, a new camper went into the latrine and could not find his way back to his tent. Becoming panicy by being in the dark in the "wilderness", he started hollering. The guard came and took him "home". It seems there were two doors from the john and he went in one and came out another - into a strange world.

Church services were offered every morning for the Catholic Scouts. If you wanted to attend, you placed a towel over the end of your bunk. The guard would wake you up in the moring in time for Mass. The inevitable happened - some joker put towels over the end of all the bunks in camp ....

On a day hike, a Scout found a windshield from a sheriff's car near one of the sand banks, full of bullet holes. The staff man came up with this explanation: A German prisioner had escaped from the prison camp in Ludington and had been cornered near the spot. A running gun battle ensued.

Now staff men have been known to exaggerate so we checked. The sheriff's car windshield had been chipped by a rock and when they replaced it, they took the old windshield out to the sand bank and tried all their guns on it to find out how bullet-proof a windshield was.

On a canoe trip, a young Scout awoke to find a "puff adder" in his sleeping bag. He picked it up, put it in his mess kit and brought it back to camp. Bringing specimens back meant point towards awards.

When the staff men took the mess kit, it rattled and after gingerly transferring the specimen to a larger container, it was found to be a Massanga rattler about three feet long with several rattles on

his tail.

Each camp had the responsibility to maintain one of the trails.

We had always painted the trails with a single color. Someone suggested that all trails be painted white with a color slash in the middle. Someone else suggested that we have a trail marking weekend.

In addition, there were to be white trails joining other trails. The program was carefully thought out -- all of five minutes. The painters were handed a can of paint and brushes and told to "go". It took three years to undo the mess. Three trails came together at one point, With six crews, one starting at each end of the three trails the point at which they met had six crews painting trees. The three trail junction had every tree for 1/4 mile with at least two slashes of white paint -- a white forest.

Another time two crews were to paint the white and yellow trails. Starting from the maintenance lodge in a truck, the two crews discussed the trails and agreed to change their assigned trails. One small minor detail was forgotten -- to exchange paint. So the yellow trail was painted white and the white trail was painted yellow. The two trails crossed one another and many a Scout got lost.

To make matters worse, the one trail followed a two track for several miles then branched off. The crew, absorbed in something else, followed the two track for another mile and one half. Then seeing their error painted their way back. We had people going around in circles until a crew spent several days painting out trails.

A crew assigned to paint the exisitng trail began following the river bank and they came to a deadend at Rattlesnake Point. The trail they painted back was 40 feet from the trail out for one half mile. One of the old maps shows the Blue trail near Bass Lake forming the letter "N" 1/2 mile high. The southbound crew painted the trees on the left (west) side of a ridge. The southbound crew also took the left (east) ridge with the valley in between. Both stopped at the end of the valley. Then, instead of painting out one of the trails, they joined them in the valley. And when cream colored paint was interchanged for white, white trails became yellow, yellow trails became white. Trail marking does require some planning.

We miss an old time award, a candy lifesaver suspended on a string around the neck indicating membership in the wet fanny club, i.e., paddlers who learn the hard way not to stand up in a canoe.

How about the commissioners conference many years ago when the district commissioners were invited to Owasippe on Memorial Day weekend. A special canoe trip was arranged and a half dozen canoes were launched at Diamond Bend at about noon. Our beloved commissioners were to meet at county line road

bridge -- a two hour paddle downstream. Several hours later, frantic staffmen began looking for them. About 10:00 p.m., they found a group of tired old men at Twin Rollaways. They had paddled upstream instead of downstream.

CHAPTER 18

THE LEGEND OF OWASIPPE

When the missionaries wrote of the great chief Owasippe who lived where the beautiful creek ran into the river and whose two sons did not return after leaving their camp, they opened up great possibilities.

There are many "Legends of Owasippe". One of them says "Owasippe had two sons, ages 5 and 6. They left shortly after breakfast. When they did not return for supper, a search was made. They were never found and the old chief died of a broken heart."

The following is taken from "The Indian Legend of White Lake The Beautiful" by John O. Reed, of Whitehall, Michigan:

"A great many years ago, my father followed a blazed trail through the "MICH-SAWG-YE-GAN"* wilderness and settled a timber claim near the upper end of what is today White River. There he built a log cabin and established the first trading post in that vicinity.

One afternoon a band of Indians came to the store to swap the prizes of the chase for the food, guns, baubles, and trinkets, of the pale face. While the braves of the tribe were bartering in the store the old Sachem, Owasippe, and his grandson, Deerfoot, came out to a nearby spring, where the author was playing. The old chieftain squatted Indian fashion at the base of a large beech tree close to the cool spring, and taking from his wampum belt his opauganog, or pipe, and filling it with osemau, or tobacco, he lighted it and after smoking awhile, and curling white rings of smoke upwards in the autumnal sky, he leaned back against the tree and closed his eyes. Deerfoot and the white boy played till almost tired out and then the young Indian asked his grandfather to tell us the story of the Great Chief.

The old Sachem roused himself, and with a far-off look in his eyes, told us the following legend: 'Many, many - a great many - moons ago, there lived and ruled over all the Indians in this territory a Sachem who was so wise and good, and whose counselings were so just, that during all the years of his long reign his subjects enjoyed pease, prosperity and happiness.

One afternoon, in the late sunset of the old man's life, while setting outside his wigwam watching the sun as it sank towards the west horizon, an Indian runner came to his wigwam with the report that a hostile tribe had come into the territory for the purpose of driving his subjects from their hunting grounds. The runner asked the old chieftain to come to the headwaters of the river, where both tribes were encamped on the opposite banks, to see if he could persuade the invaders to forego their demands and let the tribesmen remain in peace. The old warrior and the young brave launched a birchen canoe and paddled swiftly up the lake and into the river for a great many miles, at last reaching the camping grounds of the two tribes.

(*Indian name meaning Country of the Lakes)

He immediately called a council of the tribal leaders, and after smoking the council pipe, and listening to a discussion of the claims of both tribes, he was able to effect a peaceable settlement. After leaving the council and returning to his canoe, the old chieftain's spirit was suddenly called by the Great Manitou to his home in the Happy Hunting Grounds.

It was generally understood by his tribesmen that should he be called to the Great Beyond at any time while he was away from his lodge, that his body should be taken back and there laid away with traditional Indian rites. Accordingly, his body was wrapped in deerskin and placed in his canoe, along with his tomahawk, bow, arrows and other weapons of the chase. The canoe was then set adrift, with the thought that the Great Spirit would guide it to the old Sachem's wigwam. For many hours the canoe drifted down the river, followed by the mourners in their canoes. The animals of the forest came to the banks and gazed on the strange spectacle, while the birds in the tree tops carolled their sweetest songs, and the night birds sang their plaintive lay.

After many hours of drifitng with the current the canoe finally floated out upon the bosom of a beautiful lake. The Indians were startled upon hearing a strange whirring noise, like the sound of distant thunder, and gazing upwards they beheld the sky filled with myriads of white and silver winged birds.

Immediately, they exclaimed "See, the Gread Manitou has sent his white winged angles to guide and guard our great Sachem to his last resting place." Upon looking at the water they saw it had been changed from a deep blue to a silvery white, and with one accord they raised their eyes and hands heavenward and cried" "Wab-a-gun-a-gee, Ne-bis, Bise-gain-dang."

"White Lake - The Beautiful".

The canoe drifted gradually to the shore, near the old chieftain's wigwam, and there the body was buried with great ceremonial reverence.'

From that day to this, the lake has always been called "WHITE LAKE - THE BEAUTIFUL."

There is a book in the museum entitled "White Lake Reminiscences" compiled by the Ladies Aid Society of the Congregational Church, Whitehall, Michigan, published in 1898. In it is a story entitled "An Aboriginal Spot" by Fred Norman.

"Along the banks of White Lake are many beautiful points that were once the abode of a prehistoric race whose existence is proved by the numerous relics they left behind, buried in the earth and which the plow or the shovel brings to the surface in the shape of arrow points, stone hatchets and bits of quaintly shaped pottery, ornamented in a way that is truly wonderful for a people who, taken as a whole, could have had but little opportunity or material for ornament.

Sometimes a copper knife or string of beads is picked up where the cows have tramped their paths along the banks or side hills and the searcher after those relics is seldom disappointed if he looks closely for them.

One of the finest spots, as well as one of the most interesting, is Burying Ground Point, about three miles above the village of Whitehall. Just why it came to be called by that name, no one seemed to know as there was nothing there to indicate that it had ever been a place of burial for human beings. The numerous mounds that are found on the high grounds just back of and overlooking the places where the homes of these people were made, show plainly where their dead were buried.

But nevertheless it was known to all, from the earliest settler down to the present time, as Burying Ground Point.

Legend there were, as there always is concerning such places, and I will tell you one that was told to me by one of the aborigines who was a familiar figure in these parts at an early day.

Near the mouth of Silver Creek which the Indians called Bishegaindang (the beautiful) stood a village presided over and governed by an aged chief, who at the time of my story had two sons just grown to manhood. These boys were the pride of the old man's heart for they were great in the chase, and excelled in the fames that these primitive people knew; the bird in the highest tree was not safe from their arrows, while the finny tribe of the river and creeks paid tribute to their skill.

One morning in autumn when the wood and marshland was all aglow with the red and gold of an Indian Summer, these young men, taking their canoes, started for the great water (Lake Michigan) and promised the old father that they would be back before the fog and shadows of night fell; a promise that was never to be fulfilled, for the shadows of night fell, and the days came and went, but the pride and life of the old chief's heart never came.

Leading straight up from the bank of Silver Creek was a high bluff from the top of which one could see for many miles, and every afternoon as the day was waning, the old man would climb to the top of the hill and seating himself under the huge pine that crowned the summit would gaze across the wood and marshland towards the open waters from whence his boys should come.

But, alas, being doomed to continual disappointment and brooding over the uncertainty of their fate his life went out. His people found him dead under the tree where he had daily watched, and buried him where he died, his face still turned in the direction he had looked for their coming.

A few years ago some boys who were fishing at the point, noticed the partially decayed prow of a canoe projecting from the bank where the waters had undermined the soft sand and exposed it to view. Their curiosity was aroused and going down to the village told of their find. A party with shovels went to the Point and digging into the bank unearthed two canoes, each of them containing the skeleton of a man. A few simple implements and copper ornaments was all there were to tell that these were not

remains of white men. But the mystery of its name was now apparent, and it was plain what became of the old chief's sons. They had undoubtedly got that far back from their trip when the shades of night and the thick fog settling over the marshland detained them from going farther, and so had pulled their canoes up under the projecting bank, making of them a bed for the night, and while asleep were caught by the treacherous bank caving over them.

The mound at the top of the hill on Silver Creek near the ruins of the old mill, is still plainly visible. But the huge pine that stood close beside it, has fallen and lies decaying there. But enough of it and the old mound are still left to show their immense proportions."

Fred Norman had a daughter named Mabel and she too was a writer. She compiled quite a history of the Whitehall area. She said that Fred had not been aware of the history of Burying Ground Point and was not aware that Indians did not go in pairs to become braves. His story was based on the original Jesuit Relations letters which mention only that Owasippe had two sons who went on a journey and that he watched for their return from a high bluff where the Bishegaindang joined the River Blanc. John Reed did not know that the trading post was in existance prior to 1800.

Since everybody has their own version, lets write one based on some very well documented facts.

Burying Ground Point was a well known place of burial as documented by the Michigan Historical Society. When the lumbermen came and built their many dams and the logs began blocking the river, the river changed course and washed out many bodies. Perhaps a canoe containing two skeletons could have been found since the Indians buried a persons possessions with them.

If you start at Hesperia and go down the White River there is only one place where a "high bluff" overlooks the junction of a creek and the river. That place is the junction of Cleveland Creek and the river.

In Mabel Norman's history of the area, she tells of the hardened copper tools which the local Indians made. This process was so rare that the tools uncovered along the White River are now in the Smithsonian Institute.

Referring to the story of the salt marsh - salt was a very precious commodity but the local Indians were able to get it.

Mabel tells of the basket weaving using the straight grained trees and peeling long slivers for materials.

The Chicago Historical Society tells of two Indian boys from the other side of the lake visiting the trading post in Chicago around 1815. They brought with them hardened copper tools, salt, and woven baskets. When they started back home, they were beaten and robbed.

Armed with this information, let us tell the story which has been told around our campfires for many years -----

Picture if you will our narrator, an ancient brave who opens the campfire by calling upon the Great Spirit and the four winds to make light and warmth. The fire is lit and our story teller begins -- usually a pantomime of Owasippe and his two sons follow the action as the old Sachem unfolds the story.

"We welcome you to the oldest Scout camp in the United States, the Owasippe Scout Reservation. The camp is named after an old Indian chief who lived many, many years ago in a village where Bis-e-gain-dang, the beautiful creek, ran into the River Blanc. Blanc is the French name of the White River. The French Canadian missionaries, starting with Father Marquette, visited this land for almost 200 years and they tell of the great Indian chief, who lived in the vicinity.

His name was Owasippe. Owasippe had married rather late in life and had become the proud father of two boys. He taught them all the necessary skills for survival; how to build a dugout canoe, how to hunt, how to fish, how to use nature for their own advantage.

As Owasippe's sons grew older and had passed their manhood tests and become braves, they were sent by their father on a particular quest, a journey to the land of the Wild Onion near the southwestern end of the big lake. Storing their furs, salts, and copper trinkets, which they planned to trade into a canoe which they were to tow behind their own canoe, they set out down the creek into the White River, out into White Lake and then into the big lake, which they knew as Lake Mich-sawg-ye-gaw.

They hugged the shore of the lake all the way down and around the end of it until they came to the land of the Wild Onion, which was known to the Indians as Checaugau, which literally means "stinking plant." They paddled along until they came to the mouth of what we know as the Chicago River where there was a trading post operated by John Kinzie.

The post was known as Fort Dearborn. A couple of years before the boys visited there the inhabitants had been masacred by a group of Algonquian Indians under the leadership of Chief Blackhawk. Owasippe was a Potawatomie and had refused to take part in the war party.

Owasippe waited for his sons to return and when they were due to return, he would climb to the top of the hill where the bluff overlooked the junction between the creek and the river. He would sit there day after day and watch for his two sons, returning down to the village each night. After several moons had passed and Owasippe's sons failed to return, Owasippe finally climbed to the top of the hill and sat and refused to move from the spot until his sons returned. He was fed by the members of his tribe and finally when the sons did not , and the autumn cold chilled his bones, Owasippe died of a broken heart sitting waiting for his sons to return.

The members of his tribe and the trappers and loggers who had been friends of Owasippe, decided that they would bury him there so that he could continue to watch for his sons. He was, therefore, buried in a sitting position overlooking the junction between the creek and the river so that he might continue to watch for his sons return.

Piecing together the little bits of information from missionary records, pieces of data from the Chicago Historical Society and conversations with old timers (including Indians), we find that the sons of Owasippe had apparently returned in the spring of the following year after their father's death. Finding that their father had died and that the tribe had dispersed they decided to return back to the land of the Wild Onion. Their story was that they had been waylaid on their way back in the fall by the Algonquians and had been left for dead. They had become separated and were found by two different families neither knowing of the other's existence. Word got around that there was another Indian boy who had met the same fate and eventually they were reunited.

By this time winter had set in and they were unable to make the journey back until the following spring. Having come back to live with the families which had nursed them back to health, they remained with them.

It has been the custom to bring a small stone to place on the grave on your first visit. As the words of the Owasippe chant say "We return so faithfully each year" perhaps being drawn by this mysterious force to return to the land of Owasippe.

And so, those of us who return faithfully each year are proud to be known as the Sons of Owasippe. Today the spirit of Owasippe's sons still roam these woods to join with the many happy Scouts who come here each year. There have even been occasions when they have been known to answer when called to.

Hail, Owasippe!"

THE OWASIPPE CHANT

LEADER	SCOUTS
Scouts come listen to my tale	Hail Owasippe!
Let it ring from every hill and dale	Happy scouts are we
Leave your cities far behind	Hail Owasippe!
On the trail a whole new life you'll find	Sons of Owasippe
-CHORUS-	
Out where pines grow straight and tall	Hail Owasippe!
Where the rippling, singing waters fall	Happy scouts are we
There you'll find our happy scouts	Hail Owasippe!
On the ancient, time-worn indian routes	Sons of Owasippe
-CHORUS-	
Down stream flashes our canoe	Hail Owasippe!
O'er the waters flowing swift and true	Happy scouts are we
White, and Pine, and Manistee	Hail Owasippe!
All the streams of the Pottawatomie	Sons of Owasippe!
-CHORUS-	
Praise our great and mighty chief	Hail Owasippe!
Let us sing his name and feel no grief	Happy scouts are we
Once he ruled this wonderous land	Hail Owasippe!
Now the scouts have joined his loyal band	Sons of Owasippe
-CHORUS-	
Sing out loud and strong, with a heart thats brave and free	
Let us sing our joyous, care-free song	
Sons of Owasippe!!!	

THE AUTHOR

In 1916 as a lad of 12, he was a Lone Scout for a short time but was not exposed to Scouting again until he was older, when he completed his requirements for Eagle.

He became a brave in 1944, and was received into the Moqua (Bear) tribe of the Owasippe Lodge in 1945.

He was made a Chief in 1952, and was given the name "Na'juman" which means "Burden Bearer" or "he shoulders his brothers burden".

As an aging Sachem, he was assigned to record the history and happenings of the lodge.

This information was gathered from many sources. Some of our brothers reported accurately; some with many embellishments; some reported with forked tongues.

While the tale reports as accurately as possible, it may contain some tall tales, legends, and altered facts beyond our control.

In addition to word of mouth, information was obtained from many other sources: old publications, magazines, newspapers and old records, as well as visits to museums such as the Chicago Historical Society, Montague Museum, Muskegon Museum, and of course, the Owasippe Museum.

Other information was obtained from the Michigan Historical Society, Smithsonian Institute, and the Jesuit Relations Letters.

The Author says: "In service to my brothers and sisters of Owasippe, I write --- "SONS OF OWASIPPE"

Signed:

"SONS OF OWASIPPE"