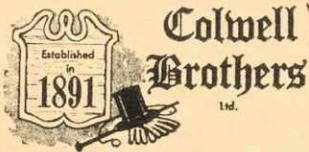


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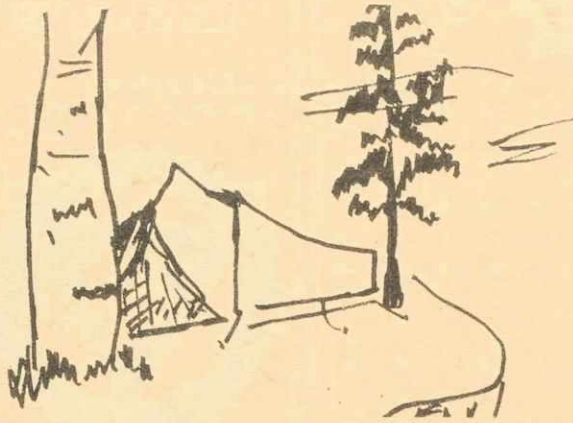
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Outdoors

OUTDOORS

"As the world's human population continues to expand...."
M. Rosen

by Kevin Moore

The media is promoting the outdoors and its associated activities as good physical and mental exercise. Disney and other film companies are promoting it as something worth keeping. And thanks to all these people more and more people are taking to forest and field.

Unfortunately, most of these promoters forgot to inform people on how to approach the wild. The mass public must undergo re-education in dealing with the outdoors. Most people still live with the idea promoted by the boy scouts, "In just so far as he substitutes the ready made of civilization for the wit-made of the forest." (S.E. White **THE FOREST** 1911)

The notions of the lean-to, 1001 types of fireplaces, and the bough bed are dead. Sorry.

My three younger brothers, my younger nephew and myself went on an overnight trip on the Lake Echo Hiking Trail and the philosophies of Cunningham and Saijo were brought home to us clearer than ever. Leave **nothing** behind.

As we walked the Salmon River section of the trail, we passed an area in which all the small trees had been cut for firewood and lean-tos. This completely destroyed the local scenery, leaving only jagged stumps.

We passed old lean-tos that had since fallen but the wood alone would have lasted us for three days of fires.

We passed other lean-tos that some bright individual had built using large sheets of orange and green plastic. Apparently, he didn't figure that he had to take his plastic back home. He left behind a perfect example of what we all try to escape from when we go into the forest.

With the new lightweight tents, and camper mats, the need for this waste of wood is obsolete. Heaters and stoves replace the fire so the axe has no place in today's woods.

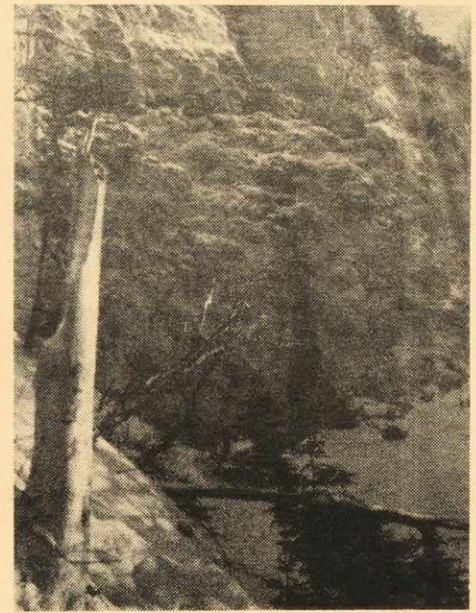
To eliminate fire is a hard step. For most it is the most enjoyable aspect of camping to sit around a fire and tell stories, drinking something warm. This should be tea, coffee or chocolate since alcohol bottles never

seem to make it back home. Also a fire, fragile forest, and alcohol do not mix.

But this fire need only be small, made of sticks found on the ground or broken, dead trees. If it is too long, then it can be slowly burnt down till it is completely consumed.

The ideas presented in G.A. Cunningham's **HOW TO CAMP AND LEAVE NO TRACE** are almost unique in the field of camping literature. The idea, or challenge, to camp somewhere and leave it so that no one could tell that you were there, is easy to comprehend but hard to accomplish. To find a pop can or a plastic bag spoils your dream of being the first and forces on you the reality that some one was there before.

To return to our fire as an example, if it is small then our fireplace is corresponding small. If all the rocks that make up the wall are allowed to have only one side burnt then they can be replaced face down in their original spots leaving behind no fireplace or blackened rocks to give you away. The ashes are scattered and will be dissolved in the next rain but only after particular care is taken so that all wood is burnt and no charcoal left behind that'll last forever. How do you think



archaeologists date their findings?

When you have left the firebed covered with fresh needles and leaves and extra firewood scattered so that it is close at hand for the next person, yet not in a well-stacked pile, then you have succeeded in the hardest part of the problem.

If you carry garbage in, then at the end of the trip when it's empty, it will be lighter to carry out. Paper can be burnt as long as it is not wax coated but all else must come out. Burning plastic produces fumes detrimental to many plants.

Burying garbage is also a dead idea. It is easier to carry this non-biodegradable material out and localize its disposal. Though hopefully as we "progress" new ways of recycling everything will be found.

As you hike out, pick up as much as you can. Often you'll have to stop because you can't carry any more but there usually is still plenty left.

It's not hard and to protect our wilderness if you are not prepared to even try then you shouldn't even think about entering the forest. You are the kind of person we're trying to eliminate. If we work together we can keep our environment clean. If we don't...

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