

With Paddle and Portage

By H. Mortimer Batten

CHRISTOPHER DAWSON, age fifteen, millionaire owner of White Bar Oil Fields, looked across at his sleeping tutor and muttered "sluggard!" He

said it with all the pent up venom of three days of utter contempt, for while the train had rattled and jolted its way westward through the finest scenery of the world, while Christopher had gazed entranced through the window at wonderful lakes, dotted with countless fairy islands, at pine capped ridges and forests eternal, while he had felt in his soul thrill after thrill at the thought that this was the land in which he had so long dwelt—the land of Redskin, trapper and bear—his tutor had slept!

Christopher Dawson was sick of tutors, sick of the miserable, cooped up life he had spent since the death of his parents, sick beyond words of New York city and everything civilized. For two years now his life had consisted of staid motor rides behind a liveried chauffeur, of solemn meals with his solemn tutor served "just so," of conventional strolls through the park, and of swotting—chiefly of swotting! Each exam. he passed meant an increase of salary for his tutor and Christopher Dawson, the son of a free frontiersman, had at first rebelled, then it slowly broke his spirit; now, according to a New York specialist, his health was breaking, too.

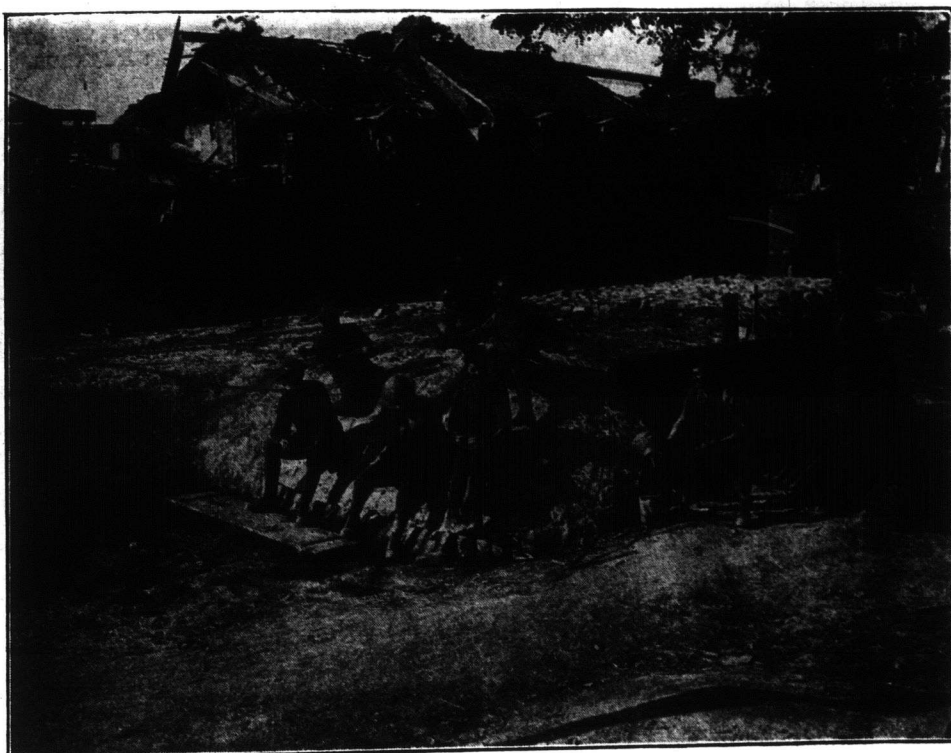
brightened. A gigantic resolution had suddenly come to him. Freedom and happiness were his for the taking. By gad, he would take them!

II

It was many hours later, just as dawn was breaking, indeed, that the transcontinental came to a stop after a series of short, savage jerks. Christopher Dawson slipped from his bunk. He was fully dressed and wearing his heavy overcoat. Deep snores came from behind his tutor's curtain, and Christopher lightly slipped a note through a nick above the curtain rod. On that note was written: "If you ever wake up you'll find I've done a bunk, but just take my tip and do a bunk yourself or Uncle Sam will give you socks for letting me escape. I'm leaving you \$500 in my grip to buy some nuts. I'm off for a real holiday. So long, Old Cock!"

Christopher then glided silently down the Pullman into the sweet morning air and slipped into the deserted refreshment room. A minute later the train clanged out of the station, and Christopher was alone—and free!

Thrusting his hands into his pockets and whistling jauntily Christopher strolled out of the now deserted station into the straggling main street of the tiny forest settlement, and almost the first person he collided with was an Indian—a real forest



Canadian troops outside a large boche concrete dug-out.

A week ago Christopher's guardian, a grim old uncle, had sent for him. "Well, my boy, the specialists say you want a change of air," announced the uncle grimly. "Where would you like to go?"

Christopher's heart gave one great leap. "To Algonquin," he answered readily. "I'd like to go and live for six months with one of the game warders away back in the bush."

But his uncle's stern look instantly swept away his hopes. "Tush!" hissed the uncle. "That's out of the question. You must continue your studies. I have partly arranged for you to go to Banff with your tutor and continue your studies there for a time. The mountain air will do you good, and—"

But at this juncture Christopher had turned very white, and was hurried away between a porter and liveried footman to spend two days in bed.

And now they were on their way across the continent to Banff, Christopher and his tutor, but the sight of the wilderness, with here a group of wigwags flashing by, there a real voyager, wearing the beaded moccasins of the wild, had created a stronger longing in Christopher's soul than ever before. He thought of his parents, would they have wished him to live a captive life like this? Not much? Had not his mother often told him that happiness and freedom were the only things worth living for? He cursed his huge fortune which prevented him from running wild like other boys, and suddenly he was possessed of an overwhelming desire to kick his tutor. Then his eyes

Indian wearing a deerskin shirt, blue leggings made of stroud, and a pair of moccasins ornamented with stained porcupine quills. He was aware of a little thrill of pleasure for the Indian's face was kind though perhaps a shade sheepish, and almost before he knew it the boy was speaking to the stranger.

"What's your name?" was his first enquiry.

"Wabawaba," smiled the red man, showing his magnificent white teeth. "What's yours?"

"Christopher. Say, can you take me out into the bush?"

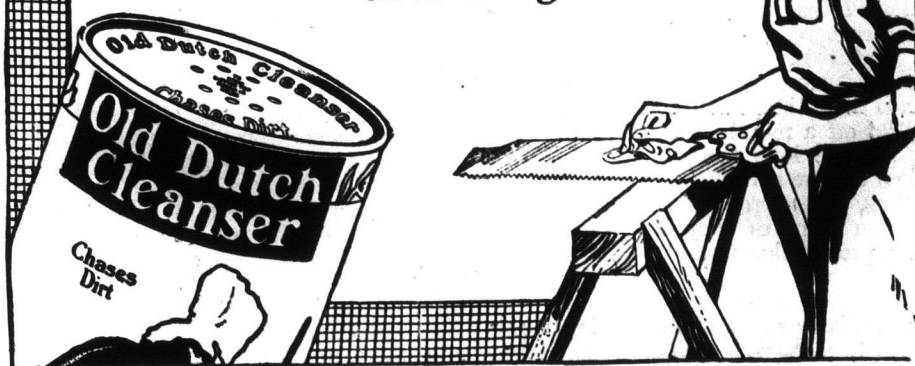
Waba regarded him gravely. "How far to?"

Christopher thought. That question had never occurred to him. "O—Hudson's Bay," he answered airily. "It don't much matter. I've plenty of money. See here!" And Christopher drew a huge wad of ten dollar bills from his pocket, sorted out a handful and thrust them into the hands of the much bewildered Waba. "Buy all the gear necessary," he stated, "but let's get out of sight—quick. I've run away from my tutor, and if I'm seen here they'll sure haul me back. Which way?"

The Indian merely understood that unless they got a move on the deal was off, in which case he would lose what bore every promise of being a highly remunerative job, and being, like all Indians, plenty keen on money, he led the way over a garbage heap into the bush edge. A minute or two later both he and Christopher were squatted over a scented

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