UNCLE SAM'S FOREST RANGERS

Episode #13.

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11:30 to 12:30 A.M. C.S.T.   MARCH 31, 1932   THURSDAY

ANNOUNCER: "Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers."

(ORCHESTRA:QUARTET)

ANNOUNCER: Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers, the men who manage and protect the national forests, are with us again today.-- There are certain areas in the national forest which have been rendered barren and unproductive by fires. On many of these areas a forest cover is of extreme importance as a protection to the watershed, as well as a means of making the area productive. To bring back timber growth on such areas, the United States Forest Service each year is planting trees. -- Now that spring has come to the mountains, planting time has arrived, and today we find Ranger Jim Robbins and his young assistant Jerry Quick, busy with tree planting work. They have secured the young seedlings from one of the Forest Service nurseries, hired a crew of men, established a planting camp, and are getting what they hope will be a good stand of trees started on a barren mountain side in the national forest. We take you now to the planting camp. Here they are --

(MUSICAL INTERLUDE)

JERRY: (Coming up) Hasn't Slim showed up with those trees yet, Mr. Robbins?

JIM: Not yet, Jerry. I don't know what's keeping him. -- But then there's lots of things can happen to delay a pack string of mules in country like this.

JERRY: Well, I hope he doesn't hold us up.

JIM: He'll be along soon, I guess -- Last year we planted an area we could reach with trucks, and it was duck soup. This machine age of efficiency kinda spoils us, Jerry. It frets us when we have to go back to the old horse and foot methods, with all their delays.

JERRY: Yeah. This is the age of efficiency all right. I wish this job was in a place where we could use one of those planting machines. I'd like to see how it works.

JIM: The trouble with those contraptions is that they won't work on a mountain side like this, where just climbing the slope is half the labor.

JERRY: Well, if Slim doesn't show up pretty soon my gang'll be out of trees. They're planting the last of 'em now.

JIM: Well, maybe I can let you have a few to keep you going till Slim gets here. -- Say, Jerry, how come your gang's working so much faster'n mine? Are you checking up to see that they tamp the soil down snug around the roots?

JERRY: Oh yes, I keep working back and forth behind the men, testing the trees, -- and when I find a man isn't tamping 'em tight enough I bawl 'im out.

JIM: Are they getting their holes deep enough so the roots can be planted deep, in natural position?

JERRY: Sure, I'm watching that too. (Laughs) I'll tell you why they're beating your gang - you know that big Finlander they call Arvo?

JIM: Yes, he's a good man. I hire him on the planting work every year.

JERRY: Well, I put him at the head of the line for a pacemaker, see? And then I keep prodding the other fellows to keep up with him.

JIM: Oh, I see.

JERRY: And boy, can he plant trees! Every time he socks his mattock in the ground he buries it clear to the handle. And he's quick, too. He has a knack of flipping the roots down into the slot and then, about two punches with the heel of his number twelve and he has the tree tamped in solid as a rock. (Laughs) I heard one guy try to bawl 'im out. He said "Hey you big Swede, what you trying to do, kill us all off"? -- Old Arvo never even straightened up. He just said: "Oo-oo yah," and kept right on planting.

JIM: Hmm. -- I see.

JERRY Gosh, it's great stuff to see him work. I wish we had a whole crew like him.

JIM: (Seriously) Yes, Arvo's a good man. He's had a lot of experience in planting work.

JERRY: He must've had.

JIM: But there's one thing you'd better keep in mind, Jerry. -- Not all of these men are as strong or as experienced as Arvo. You see, they have to work harder than he does to plant the same number of trees. And after all a laborer is a human being. He can't work like a machine, you know, and stand up under the strain. -- So you'd better let 'em straighten up once in a while, Jerry -- to ease up their backs and give 'em a breathing spell. -- All we want is an honest day's work, and they're all of 'em able to give you that.

JERRY: I guess you're right, Mr. Robbins. I never thought of that.

JIM: Planting trees is hard on a fellow's back, you know.

JERRY: I know all right. -- I did some planting when I was in forest school.

JIM: One thing we must insist on, though, is <u>careful</u> work, Jerry. Keep the roots moist, plant the roots deep, and tamp the soil firmly around 'em.

JERRY: Yes, I know. They sure drilled those three points into us at the Forest school. -- I'm watching that carefully enough.

JIM: Listen (Pause) Hear a bell, Jerry?

JERRY: Yes, I hear it. I guess that's the bell on the leader of Slim's mule train, all right. -- Yeah, there they are. See 'em? Just coming in sight around that rock ledge.

JIM: Surprisin' how far the sound of a bell carries, isn't it?-----

JERRY: Well, I'm glad he's here. I was beginning to wonder if he wasn't having some trouble.

JIM: Hello! -- Jerry, maybe you're the one that's having trouble.

JERRY: How do you mean?

JIM: Look up there. -- See? Arvo's working all alone. The rest of your crew's all bunched up talking.

JERRY: (Wrathfully) Well, can you beat that! Just the minute my back's turned. (Starts off) I'll put a stop to that, all right.

JIM: (calls) Jerry. Just a minute.

JERRY: (Brusquely) (coming back) What is it?

JIM: Remember what I said about human beings not bein' machines.

JERRY: Yes, that's right. -- Say, come on over with me, will you? We'll see what they're up to.

JIM: No, Jerry. I want you to handle your men without any interference from me. -- Maybe they're just taking a breathing spell, but at any rate remember to be fair with 'em.

JERRY: (Going off) Thanks, I will.

(SOUND OF BELL ON WALKING HORSE AND NUMEROUS HOOF BEATS)

SLIM: Whoa thar. Whooa.

JIM: Hello there, Slim.

SLIM: Whoa! -- 'Lo thar.

JIM: Well, you finally got here. Have any trouble?

SLIM: (Petulantly) Trouble enough - thet gray mule's name's goin' to be "Trouble" fron now on.

JIM: (Chuckles) What happened, Slim?

SLIM: Well, fust place, he's round as a barrel. Yuh can't keep a pack on 'im noway. An' besides he's plumb ornery. He sidles up to every tree or rock along the trail an' scrapes his pack. (Angrily) He makes me so all fired mad, I'd like ta use my Winchester on 'im.

JIM: (chuckles) Don't get excited, Slim. You got here anyway.

SLIM: (Still angry) Yeah. But he slipped his load three times and I had to repack the hull works every time. (Grumblingly) I knowed he was no good fust time I seen 'im and then I bought 'im anyhow. (Jim chuckles) 'Sides that he's got me in dutch with the cook. (Exasperated) Look at 'im look around at me with those taller (i.e. "tallow") eyes O' his'n. I tell yuh he's a she devil.

JIM: (Laughs heartily) What do you mean, he got you in dutch with the cook?

SLIM: Aw, the cook sent in by me for some fancy stuff or hisself. Oranges and mixed candy an' such like, an' I had it in thet mule's pack. Well, the second time I unloads 'im one of the panniers dumped an' all the cook's fancy fixin's rolls out on the ground, see? An' while I was messin' around gittin' things together, 'fore I knowed what he was uptuh he turned around an' et up all the oranges, an' walked all over the candy.

JIM: (Laughs loudly)

SLIM: Now the cook'll think I et 'em. -- Wisht he'd learn tuh eat his own cookin', like the rest of us do.

JIM: (Laughs) Well, that's tough luck, Slim.

JERRY: (Running up excited) Say, Jim - Mr. Robbins, - that gang's gone on a strike! They've all quit, except Arvo.

JIM: That so?

JERRY: Yeah! There's one fellow - that one they call Ivar - started the whole thing. -- They say they won't talk to me - that I'm a slave driver, and they want you to come right up there.

JIM: Slim, take your string up above the cook tent and unload the trees there. Jerry'll send Arvo down to unpack 'em and heel 'em in that moist ground.

SLIM: Aw right, chief.

(SOUND OF BELL AND MULES MOVING OFF)

JERRY: Let's go up there, Mr. Robbins. You'll have to help me straighten things out.

JIM: No, Jerry, you're in charge of that crew and I want you to handle it.

JERRY: Yeah, but - but those fellows are so darned unreasonable. They say they won't work with Arvo, and they won't do anything I tell 'em.

JIM: Well, you can take Arvo down and put him to work heeling-in the trees as Slim unloads 'em. He understands how it's done, but be sure he picks a moist place for 'em.

JERRY: Yeah, but what about the rest of the gang?

JIM: Well, just let 'em cool their heals while you're taking Arvo down. Give 'em plenty of time. Then go up and talk to 'em reasonably. Tell 'em all you want is an honest day's work, and offer to put Ivar, the ring leader, in the lead as pacemaker.

JERRY: Yeah, but ----

JIM: When Arvo finishes heeling-in, have him put in the rest of the afternoon at chores around camp. Tomorrow I'll just quietly put him in my gang and give you one of my men.

JERRY: But what if this guy Ivar loafs on the job? He'll disorganize my whole gang!

JIM: Don't worry about that. -- Just go right along with him and talk about the job. Point out the erosion on this burned area to him. Tell him how the new forest is going to change that, - how the trees hold the soil and gradually build up a mulch on the surface. And explain to him how that coaxes the water to soak into the ground and reduces the run-off that causes floods.

JERRY: Yeah. ---- I see.

JIM: Sure. Discuss the fine points of the planting work. Get him interested in his job, Jerry, ---- and first thing you know he'll be speeding up so much you'll have to call a breathing spell. ---- You know, Jerry, nothing cures radicalism so quickly as responsibility. -- Give Ivar some responsibility.

JERRY: Well, ---- I'll try it. Thanks, Mr. Robbins.

JIM: Go to it, boy.

(MUSICAL INTERLUDE)

JIM: (calls) Oh Jerry.

JERRY: (Coming up) I was just looking for you.

JIM: Here, come over here and sit down on this tarpaulin with me. The ground's too wet to lie on.

JERRY: Thanks, Mr. Robbins, I guess I will. (Grunts and sighs as he sits down). By George, I'm tired and I don't care who knows it.

JIM: (Chuckles) Planting is hard work.

JERRY: I'll bet I climed that slope a thousand times today - But I didn't realize I was so tired 'til I started for camp tonight. I feel a lot better since I got washed up and a good supper under my belt.

JIM: It's wonderful how such things ease up tired and aching muscles. -- I noticed your men went back to work without any trouble.

JERRY: Yes, I followed your suggestion - and it worked fine. (Laughs) You should've heard me. I got to explaining the influence of forest on erosion and steamflow, and they got interested all right. Coming in tonight, two of the fellows asked me how they could learn to be forest rangers.

(BOTH CHUCKLE)

JERRY: Look, Mr. Robbins, - at that sunset. Did you ever see anything like it?

JIM: I've been looking.

JERRY: Look! The sun's coming down through that streak of cloud like a big red pear - and look at Cloud Peak over there - and the lights and shadows on the snow fields. It -- It sort of grips your throat doesn't it?

JIM: It does, Jerry. -- I've been watching the changing tints on that sky. See how it lights up the big snow bank.

JERRY: Does that snow bank stay there all summer?

JIM: The upper end of it does. -- I used to have a snow scale at timber line just below it. I made snowshoe trips up there every month during the winter to measure the depth of the snow.

JERRY: That must've been a tough trip. Did you go alone?

JIM: Yes. The last time I went up I started an avalanche. It came awful near being my last trip anywhere.

JERRY: Tell me about it.

JIM: Some other time, Jerry. Right now I'd rather just stretch out and watch that sunset while it lasts.

JERRY: It's ---- it's a beauty, all right.

JIM: It's moments like these, Jerry, that make me content with my lot in life. That old mountain rising up there so big and silent-like ---- it lifts you up out of your worries and weariness. ---- There's one word that such a scene always brings to my mind.

JERRY: What is that, Mr. Robbins?

JIM: Peace. (Pause) Jerry, today when you were a little worried you called me Jim.

JERRY: (Apologetically) Why - yes, I guess I did, Mr. Robins.

JIM: I've been wondering, Jerry, -- how long it was going to take for you to get down to my level.

JERRY: (Expostulating) Oh, now you know I wasn't trying to high hat you. You're my boss, and ----

JIM: (chuckles) Jerry - we have no bosses among us Forest officers. We all work together, man to man. -- I've often noticed that the man who always needs a boss never seems to make good in the Forest Service.

JERRY: Then you mean ---- I can call you ----- Jim?

JIM: Most of my friends do, Jerry. ---- Look. There's the last rays of the sun on Cloud Peak.

(PAUSE)

ANNOUNCER: Who doesn't envy Jim and Jerry the peace of the spring evening, there with the snowcapped mountain reaching up in a brilliant, glowing sunset sky? While life in the remote fastnesses of the national forests is rather strenuous at times and not without its hardships and dangers, nevertheless these things are easily forgotten in the keen enjoyment of the rewards of life in the open. We will now leave our two friends quietly enjoying the wonderful sunset on Cloud Peak until the last faint glow has faded. Then they will snuggle deep into their warm sleeping pockets for the hearty sound sleep that only the out-door man knows. Next week at this same time we will join them again in another adventure in developing and protecting Uncle Sam's National Forests.

This program is a presentation of the National Broadcasting Company, with the cooperation of the United States Forest Service. Harvey Hayes plays the role of Jim Robbins - Others in today's cast were:

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March 30, 1932.