UNCLE SAM'S FOREST RANGERS

Episode No. 26.

( ) - ( )
11:30 to 12:30 A.M. C.D.S.T. JULY 21, 1932 THURSDAY

ANNOUNCER: And now - "Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers."

(ORCHESTRA: QUARTET)

ANNOUNCER: Well, folks, Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers are on the job today, as they always are, working to keep the national forests green and growing for the benefit of the people of the United States. Today Ranger Jim Robbins, and his young assistant, Jerry Quick, are doing some improvement work at the Big Tree Campground, which is one of the free, public campgrounds maintained by the Forest Service for the comfort and convenience of visitors to the National Forest. Here the camper may pitch his tent, and find water and sanitary facilities provided. He will also find fireplaces built, where he may make his campfire without endangering the surrounding forest. --

Well, here we are at the Big Tree Campground. --

JIM: (CALLS) Jerry.-- Oh, Jerry.

JERRY: (OFF) Yo -- Want me, Jim?

JIM: Yes -- See if I didn't slip a can of paint in my pack. I reckon we'd better give this fire tool box a new coat while we're here.

JERRY: (OFF) Okay, Jim. -- Yeah, here it is -- (COMING UP) I hope you didn't get that paint mixed up with your lunch like I did with the candy Mary gave me, a few weeks ago.

JIM: (CHUCKLES) Don't worry, son. I looked after the lunch.

JERRY: (LAUGHS) That's good. -- Want me to put the paint on? I can put 'er on in a jiffy, while you're tending to something else.

JIM: All right. Go to it, Jerry. -- I reckon I'll check the fire tools in the box first though - to see that they're all here.

JERRY: Yeah. -- Doggone! They sure put the lids on these cans tight! (GRUNTS)

JIM: Use my jack-knife, here.

JERRY: Thanks. -- There we are. - Now for a swell paint job.

JIM: Start on the other side, Jerry, so I can finish checking these tools. -- Let's see. We seem to be shy a Pulaski. (RATTLE OF TOOLS) No. Here it is. -- These Pulaski tools are mighty handy for fighting fire, Jerry.

JERRY: Were they named after Ranger Pulaski?

JIM: Yes, he invented them as a special fire tool.

JERRY: He was the hero of the 1910 fire, wasn't he?

JIM: There were plenty of heroes in that fire, Jerry. Lots of the boys performed acts of heroism that nobody ever heard of. But Ranger Pulaski showed about as much cool nerve as anyone ever did in the Forest Service.

JERRY: I believe I heard once that he was a descendent of Count Pulaski - the Polish officer that helped us out in the Revolutionary War?

JIM: Yes, that's right. And he certainly lived up to the traditions of the family. That summer of 1910 it seemed like the whole Northwest was on fire, and Ranger Pulaski had about a hundred and twenty men, working on fires up on the St. Joe-Coeur d'Alene divide. But the fires were getting too much for 'em. The men were getting kinda panicky, and pretty soon, in spite of all Pulaski could do, about fifty men broke away and rushed down the St. Joe Big Creek, and every last one of 'em was burned to death that night.

JERRY: Gosh! Think of that!

JIM: Well, Pulaski started out toward Wallace with the rest of the crew, but the smoke got so thick he couldn't tell whether he ought to go on or not, so he left the men in a mining tunnel and went ahead with two men to see if they could get through. About a mile downstream he found another tunnel that looked a little safer, so he got the men down there along with their two horses, and herded 'em all in. They just got in in the nick of time, 'cause the fire swept down through the timber, making a regular furnace of the whole canyon. It got so hot in the tunnel that one of the horses' tails was burned right off. Several of the men went wild and were all for rushing out of the tunnel. But Ranger Pulaski ordered 'em all to lie down on their faces, and he stayed at the mouth of the tunnel and held 'em back at the point of his gun.

JERRY: Gee! That sure took nerve!

JIM: So it did. -- Well, soon as the fire spent its force outside, he brought 'em out in the air. Five of the men had been suffocated in the tunnel, but in every case it was because he hadn't followed Pulaski's orders to lie down. A few days later they found the body of another man up the trail. He was the only one that hadn't reached the tunnel.

JERRY: I guess Ranger Pulaski saved the lives of the others all right.

JIM: He sure did. They wouldn't've lasted two minutes outside the tunnel. -- Next morning, he brought the whole crew into Wallace and got 'em all into the hospital. Pulaski was in the hospital for two weeks himself, and the heat and smoke injured his eye sight so that he never got over it. But he kept on and served as ranger on the same district up till just a few years ago. And he was a mighty good ranger too.

JERRY: Gee! It sure makes you proud to be a member of a service with men like that.

JIM: Well, we like to feel that wearing the Forest Service badge means something. That pine tree badge you're wearing now - that means quite a bit to us old timers who've been wearing it a long time. We try to make it mean not only that the fellow who wears it is a member of the Forest Service but that he's a real man.

JERRY: Well, I'm sure proud to be able to wear it. I hope I can live up to what it means.

JIM: I hope you will to, Jerry. -- Just like a lot of other things in the Forest Service, that badge came from the ground up. Back in 1905 when the Service was first organized in its present form, they had a committee in Washington to select a design for the badge, and a lot of fancy designs, drawn by experts, were being considered, but none of 'em seemed to quite fill the bill. One night, though, three of the old boys out in the field were having a gab-fest about it and one of 'em went to work and traced out a shield on a cigarette paper and sketched a pine tree on it. Then they put in the letters "U.S." and the words "Forest Service, Department of Agriculture," -- and that design, sketched on a cigarette paper, was the origin of the badge that Forest Service men wear now as the emblem of service and authroity on a hundred and fifty national forests scattered all over the United States - and Alaska and Porto Rico. That old pine tree badge has come to mean a lot to us.

JERRY: It's going to mean a lot to me.--

(PAUSE)

JIM: Well - the fire tools check up okay. - While you're finishing up this painting job, I reckon I'll go have a look at the garbage pits.

JERRY: All right. I'll be through here pretty quick now. - How's that look?

JIM: Nice job, Jerry.

JERRY: Thanks. Here comes a party of auto-campers.

JIM: (GOING OFF) You can look after 'em. I'll be back in a minute.

(SOUND OF MOTOR AND SQUAL OF BRAKES, OFF, AS AUTO-CAMPER'S PARTY ARRIVES)

JONES: (OFF) Say, Ranger!

JERRY: Yes, sir.

JONES: (OFF) Can we camp here?

JERRY: Yes, sir. This is a public campground.

JONES: (COMING UP) Very pretty spot here. - Hmm. - Doing some painting?

JERRY: Yes sir.

JONES: That's interesting. What is the box for?

JERRY: This is one of the boxes we have, to keep fire-fighting tools in.

JONES: I see.

MRS. JONES: (OFF, EXCITED) Marcus! -- Marcus!

JONES: What's the matter now?

MRS. J: (OFF) The car's rolling back down the hill!

JONES: Pull the brake on tighter, can't you?

MRS. J: (OFF) Where's the brake?! Oh, dear! Help!

JERRY: Here, I'll chuck a rock under the wheel. - There. That'll hold 'er.

MRS. J: Oh, thank you.

JERRY: That's all right, ma'am. Glad to be of help.

KITTY: (THE JONES' DAUGHTER) Oh, Mother, you'd think you'd never been in a car before.

KITTY: (THE JONES' DAUGHTER) Oh, Mother, you'd think you'd never been in a car before

MRS. J: My land, Kitty. I was frightened to death. These mountain roads are so dangerous. Don't you think so, Mr. Ranger?

JERRY: Well, not if you --

KITTY: (CUTTING IN) Oh, are you a Ranger? I've just been dying to see a real ranger. Oh, I'm so thrilled!

JERRY: Well, ma'm -- I -- uh --

KITTY: Oh, but where's your pipe? I thought all Rangers smoked pipes.

JERRY: (LAUGHS) Well, you see, ma'am, I'm only an Assistant Ranger

KITTY: O-oh. - Where can I see a real Ranger?

JERRY: Well, here comes Mr. Robbins. He's the Ranger in charge of this district. - (CHUCKLES) Maybe you can get him to smoke his pipe for you.

JIM: (COMING UP) What's that, Jerry, about me smoking my pipe?

JERRY: (LAUGHS) The young lady here wants to see a real ranger - smoking a pipe and everything.

JIM: (CHUCKLES) Well, now, ain't that a shame, Miss. You see, I left my pipe and tobacco in my pack.

KITTY: Oh - (SOTTO VOICE) Oh, Mother, isn't he handsome!

MRS. J: Be still, Kitty. -- (GROANS) oh -- oh -- oh dear!

KITTY: What's the grief now, Mother?

MRS. J: My legs are so cramped from that long ride I can hardly get out of the car.

KITTY: Mother has so much stuff packed in here we can't move.

MRS. J: Now, Kitty. It won't be any joke when you go to wanting things in this wilderness -- and Daddy wants his hot water bottle.

JONES: Hot water bottle! -- I thought we were supposed to be roughing it on this trip.

MRS. J: I know, but you do get those attacks of indigestion, you know.

JONES: Well, I know, but --

KITTY: Say - when do we eat?

JONES: Well, Kitty, I want to do a little fishing first, but we can unload the car now - Say, Ranger Where's a good place to fish near here?

JIM: Well, Mr. --- ?

JONES: Jones is the name. And this is my wife - and my daughter, Kitty.

JIM: Glad to know you all. - Well, Mr. Jones, the streams's been fished pretty heavy right around the campground here, but if you're lucky, you might manage to pull out a few up the Fork there a little ways.

JONES: That's fine. I'll bring you back a nice mess of fish for supper, girls. How's that?

MRS. J: Well, in case you didn't catch any, I put a can of sardines in the car.

(JIM AND JERRY LAUGH)

JIM: She don't trust you as a fisherman, eh, Mr. Jones?

JONES: Evidently not. - Well, let's see. - Maybe we'd better have a cup of coffee before I start out

MRS. J: Did you put that can of coffee in the car, Marcus?

JONES: No. I thought you were going to tend to that.

MRS. J: I left it on our kitchen table for you to put in.

JONES: Oh, you did? Well I guess it's still there on the table. -- Anyhow we can heat some water and have a cup of tea, I guess.

KITTY: Yeah - if we haven't forgotten the cups

JIM: You'll find water up the trail there about a hundred yards, Mr. Jones, and I guess you can pick up enough dead wood around here for your fire. Don't cut any live trees though. We don't allow it - and besides I reckon you'd have trouble making the green wood burn.

JONES: All right, sir. Thanks.

JIM: We can't offer you all the comforts of home here, folks, but there's plenty of wood and good water, and a safe place to build your fire. By the way, do you have a bucket to carry water in?

JONES: A bucket? Do we have a bucket, Bertha?

MRS.J: A bucket? Oh dear no. I never even thought about that.

JIM: Well, there's three things that every camping party always ought to take along - a shovel, and an ax, and a water bucket. You'll find they're about the three most useful pieces of camp equipment you can have. And besides that, they'll come in mighty handy in an emergency - in case your camp fire gets away, or in case you discover a forest fire starting in the woods, for instance.

JONES: I guess you're right, sir. We do have a hatchet, don't we, Bertha?

MRS. J: Yes. We have a nice little hatchet.

JIM: You'll find a good stout, sharp ax is a lot more useful. And if you should want to get a campfire permit to camp anywhere outside of the improved campgrounds, we require you to have a shovel and ax and water bucket, on most of our national forests.

JONES: I see. Well, I guess we can get along all right this time. We can get water in one of the pans.

MRS. J: Oh say, Mr. Ranger --

JIM: Yes'm?

MRS. J: Are there any wild animals around here?

JIM: (CHUCKLES) Well, ma'am, there's quite a few chipmunks and --

MRS. J: Any bears?

JIM: Yes, we have a few bears and mountain lions on the forest here, but don't let that worry you, ma'am. The bears aren't apt to bother you if you leave 'em alone, and the lions are pretty scarce hereabouts.

MRS. J: Oh, I'd be frightened to death if I saw a lion.

KITTY: Were you ever attacked by a lion, Mr. Ranger?

JIM: (CHUCKLES) Well, Miss, I've been on kinda close terms with 'em a couple of times - but nothing very serious though.

KITTY: Oh, tell me about it!

JIM: (CHUCKLES) Well, I'll tell you about a narrow escape one of our boys had, instead. You see, one of our grazing specialists was working in a wild part of the country up here one time, and he found he was being followed by a great bit mountain lion.

KITTY: Oooh! Isn't that exciting!

JIM: (CHUCKLES) Yes'm. -- He didn't have any gun. So he speeded up and zig-zagged and everything, but the big cat kept right on following him. Looked like it was waiting till dark to make an attack -- Well, this Forest officer had a copy of the "Manual of the Plants of North America" in his pack, so finally he got out the book and opened it up to page four hundred and twenty six.

MRS. J: Why did he do that?

JIM: Well, he tore the page out and threw it behind him on the trail, - and when the mountain lion came along, it saw the page out of the book and got so interested in the description of Nepeta cataria that it forgot about everything else - and the Forest officer escaped.

KITTY: What is Nepeta catar - or whatever it was you said?

JIM: (CHUCKLES) That's the botanical name for catnip, Miss.

MRS. J: Why, isn't that the most interesting thing you ever heard!

JONES: Why Bertha, that's only a story. -- Isn't it, Mr. Ranger?

JIM: Well, of course I can't vouch for the truth of it myself, not being there at the time, but anyway, I wouldn't worry about mountain lions around here, Mrs. Jones. - They're so destructive to livestock and deer that we keep 'em pretty well down. -- Well, folks. I hope you make out all-right. We'll be glad to help you any way we can.

JONES: Thank you, sir. I think we'll make out.

MRS. J: Oh, Mr. Ranger, can't you stay close by. I feel much safer when you're here.

JIM: Sorry, ma'm, but Mr. Quick and I have a few other matters to 'tend to. You needn't be afraid though It's safe enough here.

MRS. J: (SCREAMS)

JONES: What's the matter, Bertha?

MRS. J: Something's crawling on my neck!

KITTY: Oh, Mother, it's only a little bug.

MRS. J: A bug! Take it off, quick!

JERRY: If you'll allow me, ma'm. -- I'll brush it off. -- There.

MRS. J: Oh thank you.

JERRY: Well, Jerry, we'll have to be moving on. -- So long folks.

JONES: Good bye.

MRS. J: (FADING OFF) Oh, dear, I can't stand things crawling on me -- (ETC.) (JONES' VOICES FADE OFF)

JIM: (CHUCKLES) Well, I noticed that Assistant Ranger Jerry Quick was right there ready to come to the rescue of the lady when a bug got on her neck.

JERRY: (LAUGHS) Well, that's one way of performing public service, isn't it?

JIM: Yep. I s'pose that comes under the heading of public service all right. - Evidently this is the Jones's first camping trip.

JERRY: Yeah. They've got everything packed in that car but the kitchen stove.

JIM: Everything but the things they need -- I'll bet they're back in the hotel before the night's over.

JERRY: I wouldn't be surprised.

JIM: Well, let's get busy and line out places for a few more tents. We'll need 'em this summer. The campground was full up last week-end.

JERRY: Okay.

(MUSICAL INTERLUDE)

JIM: Well, that's a good job done. Pick up your tools, Jerry, and we'll head for home.

JERRY: Suits me.

JIM: All set?

JERRY: Yeah.

JIM: I reckon we'd better stop by and see how that Jones party's getting along. Most likely they'll be needing some help.

JERRY: Yeah. I'll bet they will. --

(PAUSE)

JIM: Hello! -- Looks like they've pulled stakes already.

JERRY: They've left, sure enough. -- There's another camping party over there in the next clearing. Maybe they can tell us what became of them.

JIM: Maybe so. (CALLS) Hey, there, Mister - What became of the party that was settin' up camp here?

CAMPER: (OFF) They left. -- The Missus kep' insisting she wouldn't stay here, so they packed off to the hotel.

JIM: (CALLS) I see. -- Thanks, pardner. -- (TO JERRY) (CHUCKLES) What did I tell you, Jerry?

JERRY: Yep. You were right. They sure were tenderfoots, weren't they?

JIM: Well, you can't be expert woodsmen right off, Jerry Everybody's green when he first starts out.

JERRY: That's right, too. -- Gosh, look at all the trash they left lying around on the ground here, though. - It's sure a mess! -- We ought to stop by the hotel and jump on 'em for it.

JIM: (CHUCKLES) Not this time, Jerry. I reckon they've had trouble enough, already. It won't hurt us to clean up the campsite here ourselves.

JERRY: All right. We'll clean 'er up right now.

JIM: I think I will stop by the hotel tonight though, and give the Joneses a few pointers on camping in the woods. (CHUCKLES) Maybe with a little help and encouragement they can have a nice pleasant outing after all.

(FADEOUT)

ANNOUNCER: Big-hearted Ranger Jim! -- Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers always stand ready to help visitors to the national forests in any way they can. They are glad to give advice on the best places to camp and the outstanding points of interest in the forests. All that they ask of the visitor in return is that he observe the rules of the forest; that he use constant care with fire -- smoking only in safe places and making sure his match or cigarette or pipe ashes are dead out before he discards them; that he build his camp fire in a safe, cleared place and never leave it until he has put it out with water; - and that he leave a clean camp for the next visitor.

Next Thursday at this same hour, Ranger Jim and Jerry will be with us again. "Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers" comes to you as a presentation of the National Broadcasting Company, with the cooperation of the United States Forest Service.

The role of Ranger Jim is played by Harvey Hays. Others in today's cast: