



VOL. XLXXIV 1962

Supplement to THE WHITE BIRCH

Published by and for the members Of Camp Pasquaney

THE ANNUAL BOARD

Chairman Robert D. Bulkeley

Business Manager Richard H. Beyer

Photography Editor John M. Buffum

Editorial Assistants Robert R. Thompson

William C. Howe

John H. Stites, III

Graham H. Hinchliffe

ANNUAL EDITORIAL

(This Editorial consists of excerpts from Mr. Charlie's Memorial talk on "Pop", delivered in Chapel on July 8, 1962)

Ernest Bradlee Watson— "Pop" to generations of Pasquaney campers— died on December 6, 1961 at the home of his son in Anacortes, Washington. He was eighty- two years old. Although he had not been with us as an active member of the Camp since the summer of 1959, he had been happily and enthusiastically welcomed by his host of friends when he visited us briefly during the season of 1960; and some of us were privileged to be with him last September when he left his hospital bed to spend a night at his beloved Kef-Yali. Although he must have known at that time that his illness was incurable, his confident serenity, his witty conversation, and his evident enjoyment of each moment in life made us forget everything except how good it was to be with him. In his presence, we had always felt this way; and as his memory lives in this spot to which he was utterly devoted, so will his influence continue to shape the Pasquaney tradition...

At this point, I must necessarily and apologetically become somewhat autobiographical, for Pop was my own cherished friend. From 1924 (when his affectionate and good-natured encouragement enabled me to overcome a case of hopeless stage-fright) through the years to last autumn (when his courageous and irrepressible humor shamed me out of my selfish sorrow at what was to be our last meeting), Pop was, in the true sense, an inspirer. He was certainly no flatterer, and he could be a caustic critic; yet he had a sure ability to make us want to be our best —and to give us confidence to try to be so. I can think of many, many occasions when this quality of his was indispensable in my life. Perhaps it will be sufficient to say that without Pop a frightened and unprepared young Director could never have gotten through the season of 1940; nor could that same Director have preserved his sanity during the polio epidemic of 1947. This is my own very personal testimony, but I know many others—both boys and counsellors—who feel that Pop challenged and supported them in precisely the same way. I have in mind particularly those young counsellors who had to assume mature responsibility far beyond their years during the Second World War when Pop depended upon them for the preservation of Pasquaney. Pop elicited their best, and they could not let him down! Always when things looked blackest, Pop could tell

hilarious stories which would restore our scale of values; when selfless dedication was necessary. Pop could produce it himself and arouse it in others with eloquence and deep sincerity. Always he reminded us by indirection and example that life—each moment of it—was worth living to the full, was to be savored and cherished. We never saw Pop bored. He could sit down on the porch of the Shack and reminisce with as much gusto and enjoyment as he settled himself to watch a hit play on Broadway. From every situation, every contact with another human being, he derived meaning and undistracted joy. He refused to let the welter of complicated modern life intrude upon his unhurried progress from one delightful moment to another. Little wonder that (probably without knowing it himself) he kept us all on an even keel. His deep and philosophic faith in the kind of life we loved at Pasquaney strengthened our own convictions and kept us on a true course through the maze of directionless theories which have beset modern education.

How can we memorialize this man who was both symbol and substance of the Pasquaney tradition? How shall we pay tribute to his unselfish willingness to assume the directorship of the Camp during the difficult war years when one crisis after another elicited from him a skillfulness which belied his usual unconcern with business affairs? How shall we properly weigh his wisdom as a Trustee of the Pasquaney Trust? How shall we count the countless lives he touched and left happier and better?

He will, of course, live on in the hearts of us who knew him. For not only was Pop admired and respected, he was also universally loved. He inspired deep and abiding affection. We loved his warmth, we loved his infectious humor, we loved his love for us, we loved his lovable foibles. Despite our sadness and our sense of loss, our memories will be happy ones. We shall think of the words he spoke to us in this chapel, we shall smile as we recall his merry laugh; we shall chortle when we try to recapture the hilarity of some of his fabled exploits on the Pasquaney stage. He himself would not want us to forget his story of the night he and Teddy Jackson were caught by Mr. Ned as they extracted a watermelon from the old Commissary; nor would he want us to forget his description of the night he was unexpectedly called upon to play an organ prelude for President Woodrow Wilson in a Paris church. I am persuaded that he might even encourage us to tell tall tales of his exploits with that recalcitrant and incomprehensible thing called a motorcar! To recall such episodes is to summon up a gleeful Pop, bursting into merriment and the sheer happiness of sharing laughter with his friends. And beneath it all, who of us will ever forget the natural, unassuming dignity of the man—his inherent ability always to put first things first? Who of us will not be the stronger and more independent because we once knew a man who was too big in spirit to worry about material things? He enjoyed good food and luxurious living as much as anyone, but he was equally content when, past the age of seventy, he camped out beside the road on a motor trip to the Pacific Coast.

Yes, how shall we memorialize this man who was both symbol and substance of the Pasquaney tradition? We shall, of course, have a plaque in his memory on the big rock by the flagpole with Mr. Ned's and Mr. Teddy's. But mostly it will be in our hearts that he will live on. He will live in our determination to preserve the values and ideals he helped build into Pasquaney. He will live far into the future as each generation of campers is molded partially in his image. This, I am sure, is, above all, what he would want. Tennyson might have been speaking for Pop in these memorable lines from "Ulysses" :

"Yet all experience is an arch where through
Gleams that untraveled world whose margin fades,
Forever and forever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnished, not to shine in use!"

