



MY PAPER COMMITTEE

Dear Front Line Stuff:

I'VE GOT ONE! I've got a great big paper-committee. Oh, they look great on paper, but what can I do with paper men? My wife Betsy tells me that I ought to stop worrying about it and quit. Like all women she has a million and one things for me to do around the house; and since I took this job I've found it a pretty useful alibi. It is about the only redeeming feature though.

Seriously, I want to do a good job because the kids want Scouting and they need it. But I don't seem to be able to give it to them; not the way it should be at any rate. Here's an example: Last fall we had a district camporee. We were there; but what a rag tag outfit we were. The Troop has all sorts of equipment or I should say had. At the last minute I had to go out and borrow an army squad tent — ever try to set one of those things up with 24 atomic-bomblets threatening to make a May-pole out of the center stake?

That next morning — oh, was it a longtime coming — Fred Jenks came over with a steaming cup of coffee. I managed to get one eye open and he introduced me to Bill Travers and Sam Gwynn. Fred told me they were Committeemen. "COMMITTEEMEN"! I yells, "and not made of paper — HOW COME?"

"Calm down, friend, you've had a hard night . . . have another cup of coffee."

My other eye opened up and we moseyed over to 82's camp. Fred began to tell me how Troop 82 was set up. Fred's Committee meets every month, Bill Travers is chairman and Sam is the camping expert. As a matter of fact their last Committee

meeting was held right out at the camporee site on Sunday afternoon the week before. And even though my vision was none too clear I could see that 82 was organized. Their camp site was a model. It looked as though it had come straight from the *Handbook for Boys*. Everyone was busy and what a cheerful bunch of Scouts! Fred boasted that during the day every single Committeeman of 82 would visit the site and each one would check with him on some part of the camporee. As proof he pointed to a fellow following up on equipment. He was showing some of the Falcons how to mend rips in their kitchen fly. I really woke up when I saw Draper, a man who works in our office, checking the Patrol kitchens, food storage and latrines. Imagine! Paul Draper taking time out for a Committeeman's job — I was impressed!

I wanted to stay longer and pick up some more ideas from Fred, but over at our place a can of beans exploded in Bert Wood's face. We had an awful time combing the beans out of his hair. And then Jimmy Wilson played mumblety-peg too near his foot and we practiced First Aid. Jack Story and Bud Wilkins got into a fist fight over cleaning up their dirty mess kits; before that was over a half-fried egg was smeared over my borrowed tent.

Oh, I had a dandy time all by myself. Let me tell you I wished I had stayed home and put the storm windows on for Betsy.

There was one good thing to come out of the camporee. I came away determined to get my Committee to work. Fred Jenks had made 82 a show Troop and half the battle was a working Troop Committee.

I've been after my chairman to call a meeting since the middle of November. He finally called one for last night after the Troop meeting. You guessed it: No one was there. Even the chairman forgot about it.

I just got through talking with Fred Jenks and he's smoothed my feathers down a bit. Fred didn't inherit a paper-Committee from a work-horse-Scoutmaster though and he doesn't know the answer. That's the reason I'm sending this problem to Front Line Stuff. Maybe one of the readers of SCOUTING Magazine has the answer. Maybe it's you — I need your help!

(Signed)—K.D.Q., S. M.





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