

Personally Speaking

"I Just Sent!"

IT WAS a typical Saturday morning in a typical small town, the streets crowded with shoppers. Then all of a sudden things started happening. There was a loud explosion of an aerial bomb—the Fourth of July type—followed by long blasts on the local fire department whistle. In a few minutes the streets were being cleared by the police, and fire engines and ambulances were racing through the business district. Then came Scouts, racing to mobilization points and on into action in the "emergency."

In a few minutes rescue units were carrying "victims" from office buildings to the Courthouse Square, where first aid workers were hard at it taking care of pretended injuries as described on tags attached to each "victim." A Boy Scout Week mobilization was under way.

Among the groups in such busy action was a Troop which had been asked to train and equip itself to handle communications. The Communications Scouts received sealed messages which they were to open and transmit when they reached their assigned posts. Then they scattered and soon reappeared in action on top of some of the highest buildings, with red and white Morse flags waving purposefully. It was a very impressive sight. So much so that the mayor and a group of city officials wanted to see the activity closer. So they climbed up the stairs of an office building and out to the edge of the flat roof, where a young Scout was busily whipping his flag.

"What message are you sending, Scout?" asked the mayor.

The boy stopped, looked blank for a moment, then blushed.

"I guess I don't know, Sir," he said. "I was so excited I forgot to open my envelope. I just sent!"

Lots of us who have taken part in these make-believe disaster situations can recall similarly humorous developments. Everybody gets a good laugh out of them.

But times have changed in the world, and there's nothing funny now in emergency service demonstrations that go haywire. It doesn't take much imagination to visualize a time when trained emergency service workers could be of untold importance to our homes. So the demonstrations that will be staged this Scout Week and in the months to come will have a great deal of meaning.

Scouting, with its skills, and all that it stands for, has never been more important to America than it is today.



Editor

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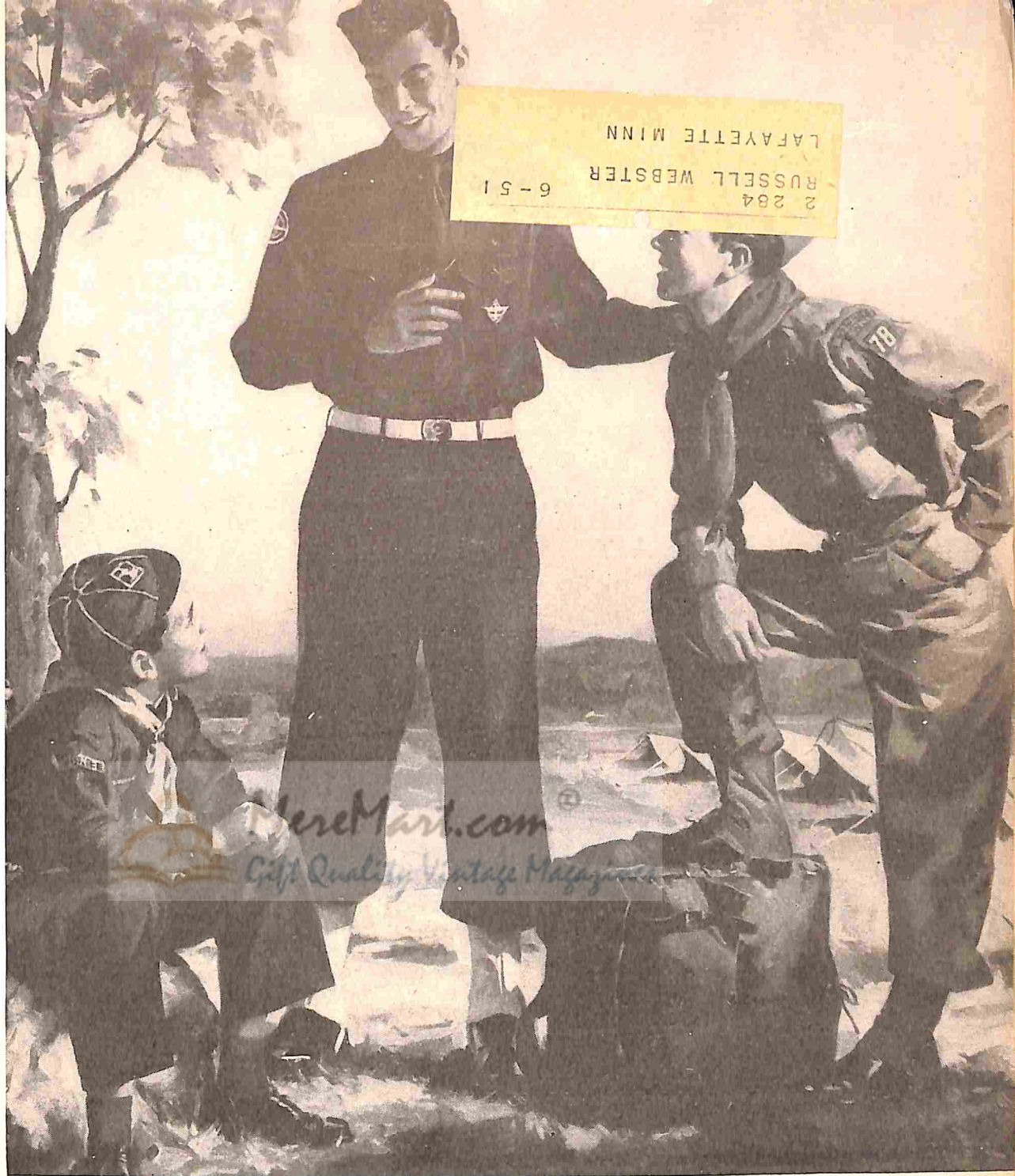
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