

# Lawyer remembers camp life

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## Boys came by train to YMCA camp on Green Lake

### The Site on Green Lake

As everyone who has explored the State of Minnesota knows, there are within the boundaries of Chisago County several large lakes which have attracted campers and fishermen for many generations. One of the largest of these lakes is Green Lake which is about 45 miles northeast of St. Paul near the town of Chisago City until quite recently a little crossroads of some four or five stores and perhaps three or four hundred permanent residents. In the summertime it was buzzing with tourists and summer residents who owned cottages in the surrounding countryside. On Saturdays the town was filled with shoppers.

In 1908 the men who managed the Minneapolis YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association) purchased a tract of land on Green Lake and established on its eastern shore a summer camp for boys. Will Carlidge was the Boys Work Secretary at that time. Later Stony Koehler and Dad Tripp held the post of Boys Work Secretary and Camp Director; both men added much to the camp. Dad Tripp was followed by Ben Chapman who was a clean-cut, earnest and precise young man a graduate of Coe College in Iowa. His contribution was inestimable. There were many others who added much to the success of the camp among them Paul Bremeker of the Southside Branch and Sig Christiansen of the Southeast Branch.

This camp was named Icaghowan which is an Ojibway or Chippewa word meaning "Growing in Every Way." It was an appropriate name and it added an element of adventure as

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### Transportation to Camp

Most of the campers boarded the train from Minneapolis at the old Milwaukee station on Washington and Third Avenue. This train carried the boys to the little town of Wyoming 40 miles northeast of Minneapolis where the travelers changed to another train which took them 12 miles east to Chisago City. Every mile of the ride in the old day coaches was filled with excitement and anticipation.

The camp bulletin listed these articles as essential for the ten day vacation: blankets, extra trousers, shirt, underwear, towels, soap, tooth brush, gym suit, handkerchiefs, pajamas, sweater. Articles which were suggested as useful were: baseball gloves, tennis racket, fishing tackle, camera. The fee for the boy campers was \$1.00 per day and this fee was often paid by some businessman.

Each boy had a variety of luggage, some had old-fashioned suitcases, some had cardboard boxes that anxious mothers had carefully and prayerfully packed; all were well supplied with exhortations and instructions from father and mother.

There was always a waiting period between trains at the station in Wyoming, but it was never spent in idleness. On the roof of the railway station there was a large iron bell which was not overlooked by restless eyes. No sooner had the train stopped than this bell was peppered by volley after volley of rocks hurled by a determined task

force who seemed to have made the trip for this one purpose.

This assault aggravated the local constabulary who of course were out-numbered by the dauntless bombardiers who popped out of railway car windows to hurl rocks then retreat under cover of shouts of encouragement from their comrades.

I distinctly recall that dinner at camp was delayed one Sunday afternoon as we awaited the arrival of a new group of campers. When they did arrive at sundown we learned that three or four of their number had been taken into custody and briefly confined in the jailhouse at Wyoming. These boys were a bit shaken but modestly proud of their notoriety. After all in 1920 there were few whites in Minnesota who had been seized by force, incarcerated and held without bond all in violation of the federal Constitution.

Anyone who contemplates extensive research into the history of penal institutions in the State of Minnesota and wants a realistic description of a typical small town jail and its facilities in the year 1920 may find his best source of information to be a distinguished and venerable resident of the town of Mahtomedi who at first may be reluctant to display his knowledge, but if pressed will become surprisingly communicative - even loquacious upon the subject.

### Camp Buildings

There was nothing elaborate or even attractive about the camp buildings. The largest building was the dining hall, square frame building about 40 x 40 feet painted dark green. At the east side of the hall was the kitchen,

12 feet wide and 24 feet long. Near the kitchen was a small room used for storage of canned goods and supplies.

The boys lived in tent houses, wooden frame buildings with wood floors, and siding to a height of four or five feet. The sides were of wire screening' and there was a wooden roof covered with composition roofing paper.

On each side of the tent house interior were four beds or bunks built of 2 x 4's with heavy canvas stretched between them. It was a double-decker arrangement; some boys preferred the upper bunks as they were more private and others liked the lower bunks as handier. A few old mattresses were at a premium as they added a small touch of comfort and a bit of warmth when the nights were cool.

When the boys were getting settled in the tent houses, on the first day in camp, an old hand would feign (that he was having) trouble spreading his blankets properly in his bunk. He would tell one of the newcomers to run over to the cook shack and ask the cook to let him borrow the bunk stretcher. Some days the cook had so many requests for the bunk stretcher that he would lose his temper.

The large log lodge had a large fireplace at one end. At the other end in a small area was the camp store. Open for a short time each day, it sold such items as toothpaste, tooth brushes, shoe laces and candy bars. Adjoining the store was a small room that was especially neat and sunny. I recall that Oliver Aas the former center in the Minnesota football team lived in this room for several summers. He was manager of the store, and in charge of the little Ford truck. He also kept the canoes and rowboats in good condition, and supervised any repairs to the tent houses.

"Headquarters" was in a small wooden building standing in the center of the camp at the head of the stairway leading down to the lake. The camp director lived in this building where he had a desk, a table and a first aid

cabinet. Outside his door, a big bell on top of a post was used to signal every daily event from reveille to "lights out."

Two or three clay tennis courts were near the lodge but back on the flat land. Every morning one of the work teams was assigned to work on the courts to keep them in good condition. Tennis was a favorite sport and many first class players developed their skill on those courts.

Farther east on the flat land two baseball fields were set up for soft ball. Soft ball was preferred to hard ball as it did not require as much equipment and was an easier game for most young players.

The toilet facilities, housed in a small building off the edge of the woods about 50 yards from the tent houses, had chemical equipment and were cleaned thoroughly every morning by a crew of boys who had the lowest score in tent inspection. This group was called the "Icker" Crew.

I remember one summer when a new toilet building was installed with more modern plumbing. It was dedicated by a solemn ceremony presided over by Bud Howe who made an address and christened the edifice as KYBO Castle. Anyone interested in learning the significance of the initials will have to ask Bud Howe. He was affectionately known as the King of KYBO Castle.

### **Kitchen Equipment**

The equipment in the kitchen was convenient, but primitive. The kitchen stove was a tremendous flat top range which burned wood. There was a large wood pile under the trees behind the dining hall which the neighboring farmer had set up during the winter, but it had to be sawed and chopped into kindling and carried into the kitchen. A new supply was stacked up for every meal.

Potatoes were cheap and plentiful and of good quality and were served every day. In August one of the favored chores

was digging potatoes in the field. There was a bench and a couple of log seats back of the cook shack and every morning a little group of boys could be seen and heard around a tub full of potatoes. The boys were armed with small potato knives with which they slashed the peelings off a half bushel of potatoes in an hour or two. "Peeling spuds" was one of the easiest chores, but most boys detested it - would rather push a wheelbarrow full of clay or sand around the tennis court or move rocks on the shore line.

The easiest and quickest way to cook potatoes is to boil them and every day there was a ten-gallon aluminum pot on the stove in which the lowly spuds were cooked. Sometimes they were served as plain boiled potatoes or with a thin creamed sauce. If they were to be mashed the water was poured off and the heavy pot set on the kitchen floor. A small baseball bat was used as a potato masher. This was a most efficient utensil. It was the right weight and size and it would not clog and could be readily cleaned. It should be observed that this bat was used for no other purpose and was carefully sterilized. But most visitors who witnessed this operation did not believe this.

There was a large ice box in the kitchen. This was not a "refrigerator" but held real ice. A farmer came in about three times a week in an old truck and he carried in two or three large chunks of ice - putting in a total weight of about 100 pounds every other day.

We installed a drain pipe under this box to carry the water down through the flooring. This saved the troublesome task of emptying the "ice pan" every day.

The farmer cut the ice from the lake in the middle of the winter and with a team of horses hauled it to the shore where it was stored in an old shed or barn where it was buried in several layers of sawdust. A crop of ice harvested . continued on page 13

# at Icaghowan in the 1920's

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in January and stored in this manner would last until October or November.

## Food Enough for Paul Bunyan

The food was plain, but plentiful. A dairy farmer delivered some 10 or 20 gallons of milk to the kitchen every day. There was a vegetable garden cared for by the campers.

A daily trip was made to the grocery store in town in an old Ford truck. It was a lark to go to town for groceries and mail. There was no windshield on the Ford truck but since its best normal speed was about 42 miles per hour the absence of a wind shield was not much of a problem. There was a wire cable on the dash board which was hooked into the carburetor and if this hand choke were discreetly used to thin down the gasoline, the speed could be coaxed up to 50 or 55 miles an hour when the road and the wind were favorable.

In the early days the cooks were men who cooked on the railway dining cars in the winter and took advantage of a summer job in the country. Some years the dining car chefs became so exasperated with the boys that they quit in the middle of the summer. For many years a Mr. Chavitz was cook, and his wife served as camp nurse, - both were very pleasant and capable.

Every week or two weeks there was a new group of boys at camp from a different part of town so there was no particular reason for variation of the menu from week to week. On Sundays there was chicken - boiled or baked; Monday, wieners and sauerkraut; Tuesday, Irish stew; Wednesday, roast beef; Thursday, vegetable dinner; Friday, scalloped salmon; Saturday, baked beans and bacon. Breakfast was either oatmeal, cream of wheat,

cornflakes, pancakes or scrambled eggs. On Sunday morning we had French Toast. There was always plenty of bread and butter.

The kitchen was separated from by a high counter. In the dining room there were ten or twelve large wooden tables and at each table two wooden benches on which the diners sat. The tent leader sat at the head of his table in an old fashioned kitchen chair.

The boys took turns waiting on table. The waiters came early to each meal and set the table and put out the cold food such as bread and milk. The hot food was placed on serving dishes by the cook and his helper and placed on the counter where it was picked up by the waiter and carried to the tables. The waiters ate with the others, but their meals were constantly interrupted by shrill demands from their peers that they needed more potatoes, more milk, more bread, more pancakes.

Desserts were for the most part canned fruits - such as sliced peaches, and apple sauce. Now and then a corn-starch pudding made an appearance, and ice cream was served on Sunday. Store brand cookies were served with the sliced peaches. Vanilla wafers and coconut bars were the old stand bys.

Young mothers who visited the kitchen always expressed surprise at the quantities of food cooked and served. A normal healthy boy would want eight pancakes for breakfast and since there was about 100 boys at breakfast, this meant that the cook made 800 pancakes for that meal which required "quick hands" and agility standing in front of a red hot stove.

This was before the days of bread sliced at the bakery and slicing the bread was a job of some proportions. The bread was always sliced about an hour

before mealtime so that the cooks could concentrate on the more serious and hazardous operations around the hot stove.

The plates and cups were white enamel and they took plenty of abuse. China and glass could not have survived.

Attached to the kitchen was the "dish washing porch." It contained a tremendous metal sink in which the dishes were washed and another even larger sink in which they were rinsed in hot water. There were two large flat tables on which the dishes were stacked. Some boys enjoyed the dish washing job and the dish washers worked at break neck speed to keep ahead of the boy who pulled the dishes out of the hot rinse water and flipped them onto the table where they were snatched up and dried by the rest of the crew. This porch and the kitchen were always swept and mopped after each meal. There was nothing fancy about the kitchen but it was certainly sanitary.

## The Water Supply - Bathing Facilities

On the north edge of the camp there was a water well which had an old fashioned pump handle on it for the first year or two. This was operated by boy power which was plentiful and energetic but sporadic and haphazard. After a few years a gasoline motor was installed and also a stand by motor close by; if one "conked out" the other was hooked up.

Just north of the pump about ten yards away on the fence there was a high wooden bench and on this bench there were four water faucets and four enamel wash basins. This was the place for brushing teeth and washing hands and faces and was a busy place at any time of the day.

Water pipes ran underground - from the pump to the kitchen and from there on across the field to the toilet. There was no water in the tent houses or in the lodge.

There was no laundry and anyone who wanted any washing done had to send it over to one of the adjoining farm houses or mail it back home to the city.

Out side of the lake itself there were no bathing facilities at camp. After reveille there was a morning dip which could be a pretty chilly affair, and every day from four to five there was an hour of swimming - all of this in birthday clothes. And if this did not keep a boy clean enough he took an extra dip with a bar of Ivory soap and came out bright and clean.

Some years in late August the water would become crusted over with pollen which would cause skin irritation - nowadays called allergy. It was found that the best way to guard against this

was to work-up a heavy lather of soap upon first entering the water and then soap off again when leaving the water. Sometimes the precautions were not effective and I recall one boy who was covered with red welts and who was driven frantic by the itching.

Local remedies proving ineffective it was decided that he would have to be taken to the physician at Center City - some ten miles away. I recall the trip, how he lay in the back of the small truck on a mattress, pink and exhausted - not uttering a word. When we got to the out skirts of Center City he sat up and, said: "Hey, I'm better, I don't itch at all." We drove into town, got a round of ice cream cones and retraced our route.

That night the story of his miraculous recovery was preserved for posterity in the pages of the Evening Whangdoodle.

We improvised and installed a hot water shower bath. We punched holes in the bottom of a large lard can and nailed it up in the crotch of a handy tree about six feet from the ground. We attached a length of garden hose to the hot water boiler in the kitchen and ran it out the kitchen window and over to the lard can. By this simple device we managed to get a hot shower at least once or twice a week. Some years later this kind of open-air shower was in common use by U. S. Marines in the South Pacific.

**To be concluded next year**

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# Lawyer remembers life at Camp Icaghowan

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By **John W. Beveridge**  
**PART TWO.**

As everyone who has explored the State of Minnesota knows, there are within the boundaries of Chisago County several large lakes which have attracted campers and fishermen for many generations. One of the largest of these lakes is Green Lake which is about 45 miles northeast of St. Paul near the town of Chisago City until quite recently a little crossroads of some four or five stores and perhaps three or four hundred permanent residents. In the summertime it was buzzing with tourists and summer residents who owned cottages in the surrounding countryside. On Saturdays the town was filled with shoppers.

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"Growing in Every Way." It was an appropriate name and it added an element of adventure as American boys have always been fascinated by Indian lore and legend. Not too many years ago the tepees of the Chippewa could have been seen around the shores of Green Lake.

## Daily Program

Each day at Camp Icaghowan was filled with fun and excitement. The daily schedule for many years was as follows: 6:30 Reveille; flag raising setting up, dip; 7:15 Breakfast; 8:15 Bible study; 9:00 Work hour; 10:00 Athletics and games; 12:00 Tent inspection; 12:30 Luncheon; 1-2 Rest hour; 1:00 Leaders' meeting; 2:00 First-aid, signaling, camp craft, wood craft, varied recreation; 4:00 Swim; 6:00 Dinner; 6:45 Boating, canoeing, group games; 8:00 Campfire, social stunts, music, Whangdoodle; 9:00 Call to quarters; 9:00 Tent devotions; 9:30 Taps.

The Schedule was well-planned. There was the right proportion of supervision, work and chores, free time, swimming, baseball, and field events. The directors always had in mind that the campers were small boys; the work and play and the pace of it all were geared to the age and strength of the campers.

## Athletic Program

Athletic events were not overemphasized. There were no records to be made or broken. Games were played for the fun and exercise. Errors and arguments were soon forgotten.

I cannot recall that any boy was ever seriously injured at the

camp in any game or sport. Although a great deal of time was spent swimming and diving and canoes and boats, there was never a drowning. This is a remarkable record.

Many good ball players displayed their prowess. In my mind a stand-out was Ward Gray, a husky red-head who could swing a bat with tremendous strength and whose good nature always outstripped his desire to win.

Many of the boys at camp developed into great athletes and later became well-known in high school or in college. I have the clearest picture in mind of two young brothers, Sam and Mickie Schwartz. Both were blessed with great coordination and excelled in such manly sports as baseball, boxing, swimming. In the wintertime they performed on the tumbling and gymnastic teams at the Y. Mickie was the kid brother – small, but a tough competitor. Both were modest and kindly, the best examples of good sportsmanship.

## The Beach and the Boats

The beach was perfect, sandy and clear with easy gradual slope from the shore line out into deeper water. A steep wooden stairway led down to the lake shore and a wooden dock extended out into the lake for about 50 feet. A boy could wade out 50 or 60 yards before the water was over his head. A diving platform was anchored farther out where the water was about ten feet deep.

A swimming meet was held every Saturday afternoon and besides swimming and diving there were races in the canoes and rowboats. The camp produced many good swimmers

who later became members of college swimming teams.

Foremost among those campers who became excellent swimmers was my particular friend Brownie Langworthy who went on to Dartmouth college. I recall many occasions when I was in a small boat or canoe and Brownie would swim alongside, grab a rope and tie it around his waist, then swim ahead pulling the boat behind him at a fairly fast rate.

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The camp owned 10 or 12 canoes eighteen feet in length which were kept on a wood rack onshore. The frames were wooden and covered with canvas painted a deep green. One of the jobs of those who came early to camp in the summer was to repair and paint the canoes.

There were only a couple of outboard motors on the entire lake. Power was furnished by small boys with calloused hands grasping an oar or a canoe paddle.

### Overnight Trips

The camp had one large canoe called a "war canoe." It held about 24 boys and was used on over-night camping trips to a camp site across the lake or out on an island.

The overnight trip was set up as a treat or reward for a tent house that had done something outstanding during the week. But the experience was not always as pleasant as promised. The boys slept on blankets on the ground around the camp fire. Supper and breakfast were cooked around the camp fire and that meant not only a restricted menu but burnt food and smoke in your eyes.

A snipe hunt was always a main event on these trips. The uninitiated had been brainwashed for several days on the notion that the island was a nesting place for hundreds of snipe. The snipe was described as a legendary bird, a sort of

cross between a raven and a wild turkey. The sure way to catch a covey of snipe was to go out on a dark night, and set up a blind with one or two boys holding gunny sacks to toss over the birds. Meanwhile the rest of the crew would go off in the woods with pans and sticks and make a great noise to drive the birds into the blind where they would easily be captured. The hunters would disappear into the woods, meet on the shore and pull away leaving the noviates sitting out in the woods waiting for the elusive snipe. As the years went by snipe hunting became a lost art as very few boys had not heard about the phony hunt.

Boys who went on these overnight trips learned one of the basic rules of the northwoods – if you have found a comfortable place in the woods stay there. Nothing is gained by pushing on to another site where you will not have a decent shelter or bed.

### Camp Fire

The tempo slowed down at supper time. After supper there was time to play an easy game of tennis, go down to the shore and take a canoe out for half an hour, or visit with friends.

The only order of business after supper was the meeting at the Camp Fire. Everyone was expected to be there. At these meetings the director presided, announcements of the program for the next day were given, and camp leaders made speeches or remarks on various subjects which might be classed as inspirational or educational, or boring and unnecessary, depending on the mood of the audience.

If some famous or wealthy person visited camp, he might be induced, with slight urging, to make a speech. But there were few drop-in overnight visitors as accommodations for guests were rugged. A middle-aged, affluent business man accustomed to being pampered at home, was apt to be greatly disappointed in the Spartan fare he found on his plate at breakfast.

Now and then a visitor came along who had photo slides of Yellowstone Park or some other natural wonders. Such slide shows were enthusiastically received at Camp Fire.

In every group of campers were two or three boys who had an interest in writing – perhaps some were budding columnists. These boys took over the job of writing and editing the camp newspaper which was called the Evening Whangdoodle. A Whangdoodle was read at the Camp Fire in the lodge every evening. It was one of the last items on the program and its announcement was always greeted with a bust of cheers and jeers. The Whangdoodle reviewed the outstanding events of the day, the failures as well as successes. When a budding and braggart Ty Cobb dropped three fly balls in center field, his performance was not over looked by the editor. Caustic remarks were made about the umpires, and the quality of the food. The service and any gustatory feats received attention. The unctuous hypocrisy of leaders and speakers evoked appropriate scorn.

Now and then threats of censorship loomed over The Whangdoodle but the paper weathered every storm, perhaps because it reflected so well the views of its constituents. No one ever cancelled a subscription! Too bad that it was not preserved for later generations of campers. Of its editors, Harry Copps will always be remembered as the most entertaining and imaginative.

I have memories of the boys scurrying away from the lodge after Camp Fire carry flashlights and lanterns and stumbling along to their tent houses where there were tent devotions and round robin prayers. Those in the upper bunk always fell asleep while those in the lower bunks were bringing the Deity up to the minute on the events of the day. The prayers for those at home were earnest and touching and often opened the door on the life

that some of these boys had left for a short week.

### **The Spirit of Icaghowan**

Camp Icaghowan had its own spirit and traditions. The atmosphere was fair play, friendliness, and good fellowship. Any rivalry or competition was confined to the baseball field. And when the game was won or lost it was forgotten.

The boys developed a desire to improve their physical condition and learned that fresh air, plain food, and regular rest combined with good sport would make each day pleasant and happy. It was remarkable to see how, within a couple of weeks, a boy could improve his swimming, his tennis game, or his batting and fielding. His accomplishments gave him assurance and confidence which carried over to his school work when the fall term commenced.

A couple of weeks at camp instilled in most of the boys a feeling of good fellowship and concern for the other boys in camp. They made fast friends and learned of the benefits of outdoor life and sport.

On a recent vacation trip to Minnesota we drove out to the old camp site. It was difficult to find and none of the old buildings were standing. But we were pleased to learn that Camp Icaghowan is not really gone. There is a new camp called Icaghowan located near Amery, Wisconsin about 15 miles east of St. Croix Falls. There the traditions and spirit of the old camp are maintained and fostered.

### **Names of Early Campers**

Some of the campers in the years right after World War I were: Clarence Hall, Rolf Ueland, John Morton, Charles Drew, Bill Newberry, Bill Moses, John Hanley and Bill Holmes.

During the period 1920 to 1926 these names come to mind: Ward Gray, Bud Howe, Oliver Aas, Sam and Mickie Schwartz,

Larry McLaughlin, Frank Bessessen, Steve and Joe Fleming, Ed Benjamin, Dean Sutton, Ben VanSant, Rodli Erling, Milton Skobba, Bill Plummer, Dick Balch, Sturt Leck, George Beveridge, Tom Morton Don Rogers, Mel and Einar Anderson.

Could this be the same man - from the PoliticalGraveyard.com? **Beveridge, John W.** — of Texas. Republican. Candidate for [U.S. Representative from Texas](#) 18th District, 1940. Still living as of 1940. (cmg 2005)

Could this be the same man - From the ssi.genealogy.rootsweb.com?

JOHN W BEVERIDGE	24 Jun 1904	11 Nov 1991	78624 (Fredericksburg, <a href="#">Gillespie, TX</a> )	(none specified)	451-09- 0550	Texas
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(cmg 2005)