

Fendler Boy Found Alive in Woods Eight Days After Becoming Lost

Cries of Westchester Lad, Sore and Nearly Naked, Heard by Maine Camp Owner— Lived on Berries, He Tells Parents

By The Associated Press.

SHERMAN, Me., July 25.—Using his mother, nearly hysterical with nature lore he learned as a Boy Scout, 12-year-old Donn Fendler of Rye, N. Y., emerged today exhausted and almost naked from the Mount Katahdin wilderness in which he had wandered for eight days while the object of one of Maine's greatest searches.

The boy, who became lost on the chilly summit of the mile-high mountain, was found moaning and crying in underbrush near the East Branch of the Penobscot River, thirty-five miles from where he disappeared.

Clad at the outset only in light hiking clothes, the lad scrambled over rocky trails and through dense thickets down the side of the mountain, through thick woods and over tangled tote roads until his thin screams attracted the attention of Nelson McMoarn, owner of a sporting camp.

McMoarn put across the river in a boat and carried the blue-eyed boy back into camp in his arms. Mrs. McMoarn asked his name.

"Donn Fendler. I was lost on the mountain," he replied weakly.

Given some coffee, he appeared somewhat refreshed and insisted on telephoning his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Donald Fendler, to assure them of his safety. They were reached at a Bangor hospital.

"I'm all right, mama," he told

his mother, nearly hysterical with joy.

"I love you" was all the father was able to say, and the mother set out at once for the camp, eight miles from the Millinocket-Houlton highway. The father, suffering from an eye infection resulting from participation in the hunt, was unable to leave his hospital bed.

Hope that the boy would be found had flagged, and his father had become resigned to the possibility that Donn might not be found alive.

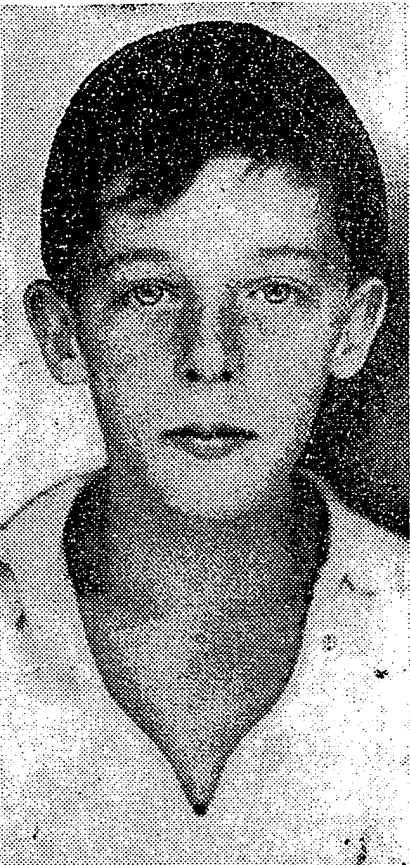
The searching party in the past few days had been diminished in the belief that further effort was useless. At first, more than 300 National Guardsmen, mountain climbers, policemen and volunteers took part in the hunt up and down the mountainside.

The worst of the boy's injuries was a hip sore, apparently suffered in a fall. His body bore many deep scratches and he had been bitten badly by mosquitos and flies.

He had subsisted on berries and drank stagnant water from pools in the rocks until he reached fresh water, the boy told McMoarn. At one time he heard an airplane but he could not remember which day it was.

Nor could he say definitely when his aimless wanderings through

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FOUND IN MAINE WOODS

Donn Fendler

BOY LOST 8 DAYS IS FOUND ALIVE

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dense forest growths had ended and he reached a stream, Wassataquoik.

"I followed down stream," the boy told the McMoarns, "until I came to a telephone line. Then I followed that until I saw the river and the camps."

Donn said he had slept each night wrapped in an old burlap sack which he had picked up.

A tattered coat, which he found also, was all that covered the boy's slender body. His battle with matted undergrowth on the mountain slopes had torn all his own clothes away, even his underclothing, and his shoes had fallen off his feet.

Dr. Ernest T. Young of Millinocket who hurried to the camp with Chief of Police Allan Picard and a nurse, ordered the boy to stay with the McMorans at least for tonight. He thought it might be several days before the boy could leave.

Kenneth McMoarn, son of Nelson McMoarn, quoted Donn Fendler as saying:

"If I'd lain down just once again I think it would have been the last time. I never could have got back on my feet."

The lad thought today was Sunday and said he had prayed yesterday "until I was all worn out." In his travels he found an old bedspread in an abandoned fire warden's camp and "lugged it till I was too tired."

Without matches, he tried unsuccessfully to light fires with sticks and stones, and saw "a lot of deer and two bears. One was so close I could have touched him."

The slightly built boy became lost Monday afternoon last week when he went ahead of his father and some other companions in starting a descent of the rugged mountain. A few minutes later, just before a hail storm swept the summit, his companions rushed to overtake him but did not find him.

How many miles Donn might have traveled was hard to estimate, although it must have been many more than the thirty-five miles "airline" between the mountain and where he was found.

Sherman is a community of 1,027 inhabitants thirty-eight miles southwest of Houlton, in Aroostook County. It is located almost in the geographic center of the State.