



A BOOK OF SCOUTING ADVENTURES

By
JACK BLUNT

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Editor's Note:

The reader is reminded that these texts have been written a long time ago. Consequently, they may use some terms or express sentiments which were current at the time, regardless of what we may think of them at the beginning of the 21st century. For reasons of historical accuracy they have been preserved in their original form.

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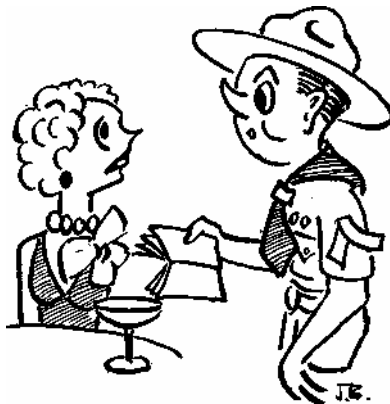
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PREFACE

MAY I OFFER A FEW BRICKS?

A dash of romance, some spice of adventure, a bit of mystery, a colouring of boyish pride, the sweetening of human appreciation – they are all in Scouting. Keep them there. When Romance dies out of the heart, youth is gone. When life holds nothing more of Adventure, it holds nothing more. If there is no mystery in the things around us, there would be no interest in them. And when what we do and what we are mean nothing to anyone but ourselves, we are nothing. Unless Scouting keeps these things alive in the Scout and for the Scout while he lives, it FAILS.

JAMES E. WEST.



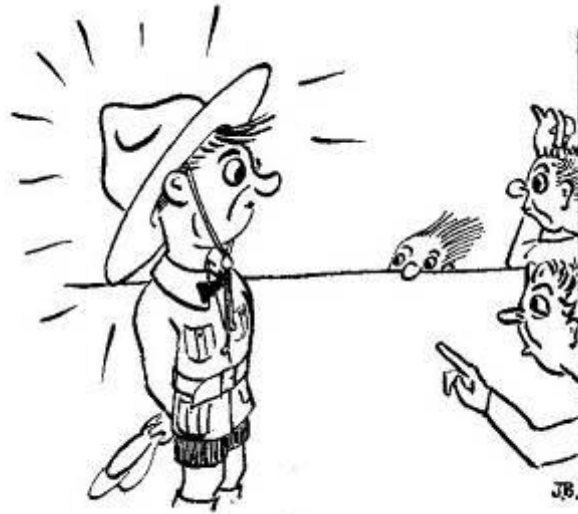
Hunting autographs of moving-picture stars.

So you want Adventure? You want Romance, Mystery, the Colouring of Pride?

I wonder if you do – you who delight in the radio, the cinema, in watching twenty-two men kick a football around on Saturday afternoons, in hunting autographs of moving-picture stars. Or in filling up football coupons.

I wonder if you want Adventure?

SCOUTMASTERS of 1908 vintage, in their more profound moments, soliloquise on the passing of the “good old days.”



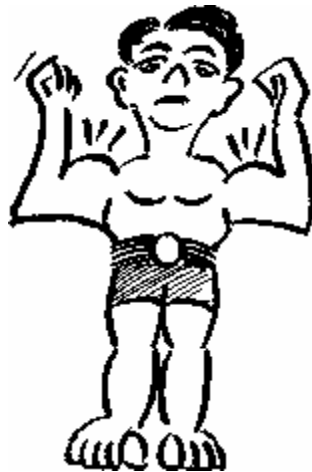
The mere putting on of a “cowboy” hat.

Yes, old man, there’s no doubt about the fact that the boy has changed. You know, in the old days, the mere putting on of a “cowboy” hat and a green tie was exciting. Going out on a Saturday afternoon with a tent and an old tin-can to serve as a billy was the greatest dream of adventure.

Tracking, ambulance work, signalling – these were exciting adventures in the good old days.

You know, frankly, old man, I don’t know what is wrong with the youngsters of to-day. I’ve been running my Troop for nearly twenty years, but things were never so difficult as they are to-day. Somehow, the boys of to-day don’t seem interested in signalling, in first-aid work, or in the normal Scout activities.

I have to admit that some of my boys would be quite ready to miss a meeting to go to the cinema or to listen to a big fight broadcast. I don’t know what it is. . . .



*A very much bigger, healthier,
And more splendid piece of work!*

HO! So you want Adventure, eh? Well, what is wrong with you, anyway? Are you different from the 1908 bloke? Has Scouting lost its appeal in the face of modern wonders like the radio, the cinema, or mass sporting entertainment? Don't you like signalling, ambulance, and drill? Don't you want to be a Cowboy or an Indian?

What is it all about?

This Adventure

IN our own incompetence we deceive ourselves. There was a saying, beloved of the Victorian father, which went something like this: "What was good enough for my father is good enough for me."

Scouters sometimes translate this saying, roughly, "What was good enough for Scouting in 1908 is good enough for Scouting today." It is here that we may find the answer to failure.

Boys have changed – physically and mentally.

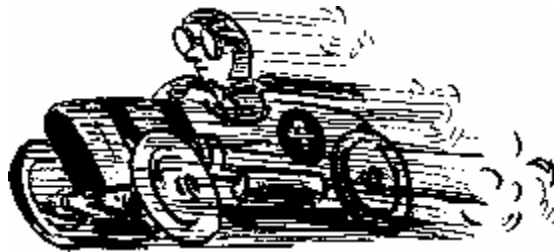
Physically, because the boy of to-day, with improved school conditions, greater facilities for outdoor activities and games, increased medical knowledge, is a very much bigger, healthier, and more splendid piece of work than the boy of yesterday. Argue about this as you please; Ministry of Health statistics prove it.

Mentally, he has probably changed for the worse. Modern hustle, noise, changed home-life, increased necessity for study to equip him for the fierce competition in the labour market – these things have brought something new to juvenile mentality . . . nerves.

The radio, the cinema, the annihilation of space and time, cars, and all the other scientific wonders that have changed the face of the world in a matter of forty years have changed the mentality of the whole of mankind. The boy brought up with these wonders has naturally a different mental outlook from the boy of thirty or forty years ago.

Who are the heroes of the boy of to-day?

The daring motor-racing driver, the man who can work miracles with a ball at his feet, the celluloid being who performs the startling deeds the boy himself might care to emulate, the man who knocks spots off a world boxing champion, fast men on the cinder-track. Strange heroes . . .



Strange heroes . . .

And who were the heroes of yesterday?

The pioneer, the great soldier, the explorer, the men whose daring deeds made their names household words, the men whose exploits made songs for the poets.

Ask, finally, who are the men who make front-page news to-day?

The pioneers and explorers?

No! The film stars, the footballers, the boxers, the dictators – these are the men who are glorified to-day.

Here, then, is our answer to adventure. We have given the boy film stars, speed-men, footballers, and boxers for heroes, and it is their deeds that he would emulate. Why should we now grumble if the boy has changed his notion of adventure?



Clifford Bastin waving a couple of signaling flags.

Adventure for the boy of to-day is to travel round Brooklands at 100 miles an hour, to act a part such as his hero does on the films, to watch his hero score the goal that wins a cup-tie. His dreams are made for him by the films, the radio, the newspapers.

We have sold the boy a new adventure. What is camping when big brother takes his girl friend to a holiday camp every year, and Clark Gable only makes a joke of it? Would you ever see Clifford Bastin waving a couple of signalling flags? I wonder what Tommy Farr would think of having to tie knots?

The world has changed, you and I have changed, adventure has changed, the boy has changed. What has Scouting done in thirty years?

Scouting Adventure

THERE is no doubt that the boy of 1908 found exciting adventure through Scouting. He put on a sort of cowboy outfit, when cowboys were still figures of romantic adventure. He went camping, when camping was something startlingly new for England, with a touch of exploring and pioneering that smacked of heroics. Tracking and signalling and ambulance work, as portrayed in the fortnightly series called "Scouting for Boys," were things that spoke of Indians, of war scouts, of daring deeds in the far-flung outposts of Empire.

Scouting, as such, *was* adventure.

To-day Scouting is not new. The boy has grown up with it. It is something you go into automatically – because it is good for you; like Sunday School, for instance. Camping is a pastime for the millions, and a commercial proposition. Nothing particularly exciting or adventurous. Semaphore signalling is out of date when you come to think of the radio and television. Ambulance work is well looked after by the public authorities.

A depressing picture.

What of Scouting to-day, then? Is it dead, or useless . . . or what?

PROBABLY the wisest man of this generation is Lord Baden-Powell. He wrote a *framework* of a scheme called "Scouting for Boys" for the benefit of youth organisations to introduce into their training schemes. It was purposely a framework, so that men of imagination could take it, clothe it in their own way to suit local conditions and times, and use it for the benefit of boyhood.

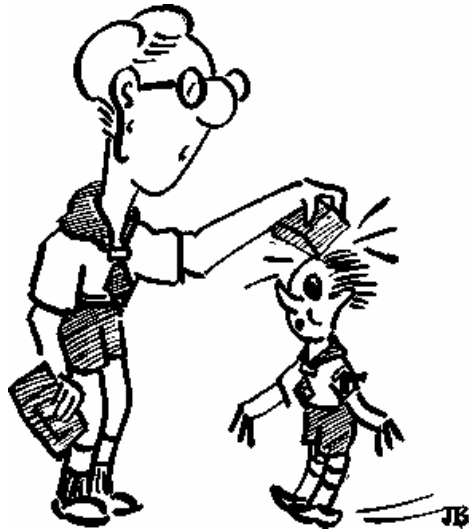
That the boys themselves seized on this strange new scheme and gave birth to this mighty organisation we call Scouting is beside the fact. What remains is that the Chief Scout gave the world a framework of character training for boyhood which could be built on to suit any age or place. That it can serve as the basis of training for a boy in Wigan, Karachi, Nairobi, Paris, Buenos Aires, or Helsingfors is sufficient illustration.

Scouting is designed for any place or generation. The framework can form the foundation on which to build to suit the time and the place.

If Scouting is difficult now, if Scouting does not appeal to the modern boy, it is not Scouting that has failed, but the builders.

WE still suffer from too many men who lack imaginations in whom romance is dead, and to whom adventure is something that stinks in the nostrils of efficiency.

Scouting is not something for a boy to enjoy. It is the stern, serious business of life – a hard, upright, good, and sensible way of life. We don't want a boy to come to a Troop meeting because he's going to get some *fun* out of it. He must come because he knows it is good for him; that it is his duty to come.



May I offer a few bricks?

Signalling is signalling. It wants no cheap stunts and comical theatricalities adorning it. To have boys running about the streets acting as spies or giving ridiculous passwords over the telephone cheapens the Movement.

And this is no fairy-story. There are even men who talk like this – and believe it.

What then? If Scouting is to return to the romantic adventure and good fun it once was we must confound their politics. We have, just as the Chief Scout gave it to us, the whole solid framework of Scouting. With our own spirit of romance, adventure, and mystery we must build a new house about that framework or foundation.

You need the bricks of adventure, the concrete of romance, the plaster of mystery. Mould them and shape them to your own particular needs. Raise such an edifice that your Scouting becomes the high and courageous adventure that the boy of to-day is waiting for.

This book, poor effort though it is, offers a few building materials – a few bricks. . . .

JACK BLUNT.

CONTENTS

- I. INDOOR ADVENTURES FOR TROOPS AND PATROLS:
 - THE TROOP MEETING
 - ADVENTURE IDEAS
 - TROOP GAMES
 - NEW ADVENTURES
 - ADVENTURE NIGHTS

- II. SCOUTING IN THE OUTDOORS:
 - ROMANCE IN THE SCOUT TESTS
 - ROBINSON CRUSOE ADVENTURE

- III. ADVENTURING FOR OTHERS:
 - STORIES WITH AN IDEA
 - SOLID GOOD TURNS
 - LITTLE ADVENTURES
 - BIG ADVENTURES

- IV. HIGH FINANCE:
 - IDEAS FOR RAISING MONEY
 - SIDE-SHOWS
 - ALL THE ADVENTURES
 - NO ADVENTURES AT ALL

- V. ADVENTURING THROUGH THE SCOUT TESTS:
 - INTRODUCTION OF A SCOUT
 - THE TENDERFOOT TEST
 - SECOND AND FIRST CLASS TESTS
 - THIS IS PROFICIENCY
 - THE PATHFINDER

- VI. BACK TO THE BACKWOODS:
 - PIONEER CAMPING
 - THE PATROL IN CAMP
 - THE TROOP GOES CAMPING
 - A WET DAY IN THE BACKWOODS

CHAPTER I

INDOOR ADVENTURES FOR TROOPS AND PATROLS



I might refer to you as a hothouse plant!

IF I were not the perfect gentleman that I am I might refer to you as a hothouse plant. Certainly, when I come to think about it, you are no hardy annual. But we will not split hairs over the matter. I shall call you a half-hardy annual, and you may consider yourself lucky.

Eighty per cent – or, for the benefit of nit-wits, halfwits, or those with no wits at all, eighty hours out of every hundred – of the average Troop's activities are spent within the confines of our walls. We may pride ourselves on being an outdoor movement, but with our subtle love of contradiction we spend most of our time *indoors*.

Of course, we know all the excuses. Troops are too far from any spot of grass to enable them to get out into the great open spaces before lighting-up time on week nights during the winter. And even in the summer, when there might be time to get out past the local gas-works, there is the problem of money for fares.

We know about Scouts who have to work on Saturday afternoons, we know about Scouts who have to play cricket – or football in season – for their school; we even know about the difficulties of week-ends. . . .

Yes, we know all about these things, and it is not our purpose to argue over them here. You will agree from the start, however, that as things stand the larger part of our Scouting is carried out indoors. A pity – a devastating pity – but nevertheless true.

For a start, therefore, we will go into a huddle over the question of Scouting indoors. . . .

A CERTAIN Visiting Commissioner from Imperial Headquarters once made a survey of two hundred Troops in a particular area of the country. He discovered, from enquiries and as a result of personal investigation, that the indoor meetings of the Troops consisted of nothing more than a mere weekly repetition of Scout Badge work from books, and odd games thrown in to divide up the sessions in badge work. A dull, uninspired rendering of the same thing over and over again, week in and week out. And this was the great adventure we call Scouting!

THE TROOP MEETING

PEAK event of indoor Scouting activities is the Troop meeting. Every Troop holds at least one indoor Troop meeting a week – some, and these are the lucky people, are able to hold more.

How can we bring adventure – and modern adventure – into the Troop meeting? How can we make our meetings such that even the lukewarm kind of Scout *wants* to come to them every week, such that even the cinema, radio, and other “abominations” which worry so many people, do not drag down our attendance records?

In a word, how can we build on the framework of indoor Scouting planned for us by the Chief Scout?

For a start, let’s get out of our heads right away the idea that *all* Scout Badge work and the gaining of such is the pure and simple object of the indoor Scout meeting. Even if you haven’t got a Troop Headquarters of your own and meet in the local schoolroom only once a week, it still doesn’t apply. Much of Scout Badge work, which is certainly the foundation of Scouting practice, can be done in the clubroom during a Troop meeting, of course, but most should be done at Patrol meetings, in the outdoors, at week-end camps, or on Saturday afternoons.



How can we bring adventure into the Troop meeting?

Having got that straight, we can think of the Troop meeting programme without getting all hysterical about “Where’s the badge work?”

The Programme

HERE is what I consider a well-balanced and interesting programme for a Troop meeting, with one or two short comments:

7.30 p.m. Parade. Games until 8 p.m. Good games; not picked haphazard from a book. Work them out beforehand, and always be on the look-out for new ones. Read *The Scout, The Scouter*; get the new books of games as they are published. Try to draw up a schedule of two hundred or so, and go through them in rotation during the year. Reason we start with games is that this allows fellows who are late through work, homework, etc., to get into headquarters before the meeting proper commences.

8 p.m. Parade. Subs. Roll. Patrol Leaders inspect their own Patrols and mark as they see fit. Inspect for uniform, appearance, etc., not for dirty ears, dirty finger-nails; Scout Law 10 takes care of that for ordinary Scouts.

8.10 p.m. Surprise Item, on the lines of my own notorious “stunts.” My three books will provide you with nearly sixty – more than sufficient for Troop meetings all through the year. Sit down quietly on Sunday afternoons and think some out for yourself. The method is to get a normal Scout game, introduce a little Scout test idea into it, mix it all up with a spot of modern Scotland Yard practice, and evolve a “Surprise Item.”

8.30 p.m. Scout test games to keep up with Tenderfoot, Second Class stuff, and other Scouting business which might otherwise be forgotten in one’s efforts to become a King’s Scout. If you’re

keen on the competitive spirit – though not everyone is – most of them can be presented as Patrol competitions and marked for the weekly, monthly, or annual competition.



Not for dirty ears!

8.45 p.m. Patrol Corners, or badge work under the experts for twenty minutes. Stuff like whipping, knotting, lashing, ambulance work is best for sessions of this type. Keep outdoor subjects for the outdoors. And I don't mean maybe.

9.05 p.m. Rowdy game, Dumb Crambo, mock trials, half-minute handicrafts, staff carving, play-acting, or what you will. Stuff with definite interesting "movement" in it.

9.15, or thereabouts, p.m. Canteen, or sing-song, or what you like in that way. If you like to finish with a mug of cocoa and buns, there's nothing against it. Specially is such an idea good for country Troops in the winter, when Scouts have long distances to go from Troop Headquarters.

9.30 p.m. Notices, Prayers, and Dismiss.

I have left out things like flag-break, staff drill, and such-like, since they are small, individual adornments which people use according to their own ideas. But, blankly, the programme is a skeleton which can be twisted and turned from week to week, and by its very nature will never get dull.

Planning the Programme

THE keynote of an adventurous Troop meeting is to avoid repetition. The mere fact that a Scout knows what to expect *before* he comes to the Troop meeting is courting failure. If you can make a meeting full of surprises, with something new and unexpected on *every* occasion, you will capture the imagination of the boy. He will *want* to come to the meeting, and that is very much better than having him come because it is his *duty* to come, and the right thing to do.

It is not difficult to find new things to do, not difficult to juggle your programme so that it appears bright and new. And, with it all, you can still keep as the foundation the framework devised by the Chief.

My system, if it is any sort of system, in planning a programme for the main Troop meeting of the week, is to write down the figures 1 to 8, and fill in an activity against each of the figures. As I do it I keep beside me a list of the essential things I want to put across that evening.

For instance, I may think it is time to polish up signalling throughout the Troop, to teach a new form of whipping, to spring a surprise test on the Scout Laws against the moment when the local Commissioner will come a-visiting.

My rough list would look something like this:

Signalling. Polish up Semaphore. Patrol test game of some sort.

West Country Whipping. Round-circle demonstration. Patrol competition.

Scout Laws. Polish up. Test game if possible.

If I had only this one meeting a week, which – fortunately – I haven't, I should have to take into account the progress of every boy. From my records book I would know how each Scout stood, and I should have a list beside me of the new step I wanted each Scout to take at that particular meeting.



Against the moment when the local Commissioner comes a-visiting!

Personally, I don't like this idea. It is the job of the Patrol Leader, and should be taken care of at Patrol meetings, but we must take everything into account. If I had only one meeting, and no opportunity for Patrols meeting individually, I should have to take care of it myself.

With these two lists I could then plan my meeting. Provided I introduced these essentials into the meeting, the rest of the evening would not matter. The more interesting and surprising I could make it the better. If it automatically introduced Scouting test practices, all to the good. But this would not be essential.

Spot of Everything

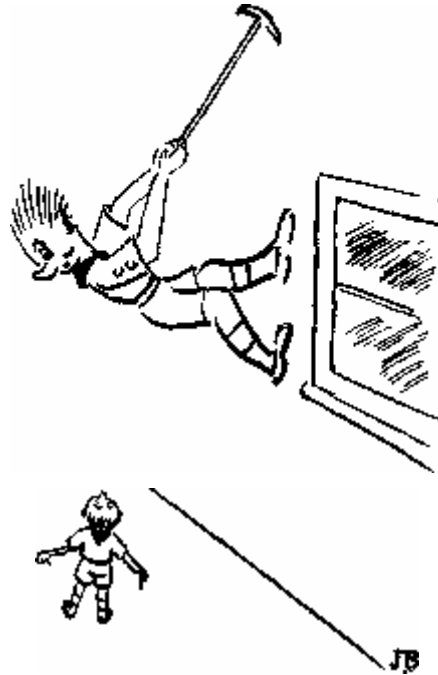
ALWAYS be ready to experiment. For instance . . . It is said, notably by psychologists, that no boy can concentrate fully on one particular thing for more than twenty minutes. I have disproved it many a time, notably when I saw our latest recruit trying to light a fire at camp this year, but there's still a lot of truth in it. Everyone likes a change, and if – in Troop meetings and Patrol meetings – we can provide plenty of changes every fifteen minutes or so, things will brighten considerably. The other night, just for fun, I ran a programme of "change" every fifteen minutes, with "action" interspersed with periods of quiet subjects. And to make it more useful I set myself the problem of making every "action" period cover a badge-subject. Funnily enough, it only meant finding eight things to do, four of them active subjects. These were they:

Action

1. Clove hitch relay, which explains itself, and bowline rescue, with which everyone is familiar under the title "Throw out the Lifeline."
2. Find the height of the clubroom wall by means of knowing the length of your pace. Scouts who didn't know this had to measure it, and since clubroom wall is fifteen feet from floor to roof they couldn't pace that; had to use a "First Class method."
3. An ambulance relay, with head bandage first go up, knee bandage second go.
4. Semaphore Game. Instructions given by signals – such as "Touch Red," and so on. Last man each time drops out.

Peaceful

1. General Scouting Knowledge Game. I have always had a horror of this sort of game, but decided to give it a chance. Surprisingly, it proved successful. Idea is T.L. stands up, points to someone, asks "What is seventh Scout Law?" "Where will the next Jamboree be held?" and so on. If wrong, or no answer, someone else is asked. When a correct answer is given (S.M. is referee!) the fellow who answered stands up and asks the questions, and thus it goes on.



Couldn't pace the wall.

2. Quiet Surprise Item, such as you will find later on in this chapter.
3. Everyone taught how to make a West Country whipping; everyone had to produce three inches of the whipping.
4. Mapping Game with squared paper. "Start at bottom East corner; draw line five squares West, seven North-west" and so on. Good game for compass sharpening.

You may have noticed that the whole lot were games; nearly all covered Scouts' test work. Yes, that was the idea. You may like to try it in your Troop.

ADVENTURE IDEAS

NOW let us consider how we can bring adventure into the Troop meeting, or weave a skein of romance about the rough framework of Scouting practice in the light of modern thought and conditions.



*An exclusive and hitherto unpublished picture
of Jack Blunt when he was so high – asleep!*

When I was about so high I used to read *Nelson Lee*, *Sexton Blake*, and every other infamous detective book I could get hold of without the parental wrath catching sight of me. I used to wallow in “The Clue of the Blood-stained Putty-knife,” or “The Frightful Adventures of the Half-sucked Acid Drop.”

Nowadays, when I tire of reading Emerson’s *Essays* (whoopee!), Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall*, Strickland’s *Queens of England*, or *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, I smuggle a good thriller to bed and read into the still and silent hours of the night., whilst my hair stands on end and every creak in the room becomes a terrifying nightmare.

Lots of people are afflicted in the same way. Bishops, Cabinet Ministers, Judges, and County Commissioners sometimes confess, in unguarded moments, to the dangerous habit of reading detective stories. Very low-brow!

The truth is that everybody loves a mystery, and everybody secretly delights in anything secret; things marked “Very Confidential,” strange ciphers and secret codes, special branches of secret police, and so forth.

The boy is no exception.

The detective, the pioneer flyer, diplomatic couriers, daring motor-racing drivers – these are the ministers of adventure who have come to take the place of the Cowboy and Indian in the imagination of the boy of to-day. We can harness this imagination to our own purpose just as we truly did the Cowboy and Indian of yesterday.

Surprise Adventures

EVEN the B.B.C. is guilty of “Surprise Items” – things you don’t know anything about until they actually happen. It would be good fun to include a “Surprise Item” in the Troop meeting each week. Something queer and mysterious which will get everyone guessing.

The Patrol Leaders of Twickenham and District hold a meeting every so often, and half the programme is fixed by the Patrol Leaders and the other half by the Scouters. The Scouters’ part of

the show is always in the nature of a "Surprise Item," and none of the Leaders knows what the Scouters will concoct until it is concocted. At one meeting of the Twickenham Patrol Leaders I happened to be the "Surprise Item," but whether I surprised anybody doesn't matter here; that's another story.

Now for some surprise adventures. . . .

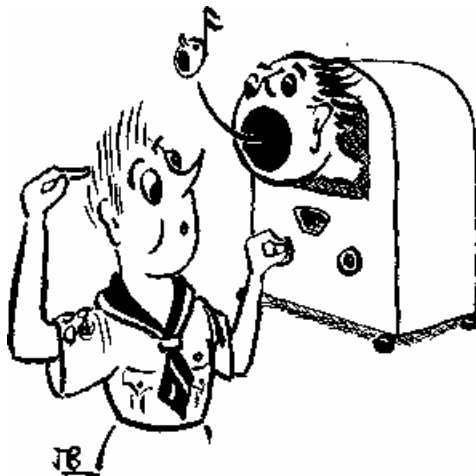
Plain Nuts

SCOUTS on arrival in Troop Headquarters are staggered to find a beautiful loudspeaker-cum-radiogram-cum-superhet-what-not sitting pretty in a corner of the room. Surprise No. 1. "Skipper's gone all gaga, and we're going to have Lew Stone instead of 'Ambulance.'"

Not so, my hearties, and it is not until the moment set aside for the Surprise Item that the radio is switched on for a nice little talk on "Foundations of English Literature," or what-not. Unfortunately, in the midst of the foundations of thingumijig the radio cuts dead, and in comes the announcer with a police message:

"We have been asked by the Commissioner of Police to announce . . . that a patient has escaped from the County Mental Home and is believed to be wandering on Salisbury Plain, Hampstead Heath, the Yellowstone Park, or where you like. He has stolen an electric torch and has a strange habit of posting notices on trees. Organisations such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides are asked to assist in searching for the patient."

Well, being Boy Scouts and all that, the Troop must immediately set out to capture the escaped patient. They will find all sorts of queer notices posted on trees, and eventually, if they are very lucky, will see a funny light dancing like a will-o'-the-wisp. When they follow this over hills and dales, through ditches and mud, and in and out of duck-ponds they may eventually capture the patient.



Skipper's gone all gaga, and we're going to have Lew Stone!"

This is an idea useful only to country Troops, which serves town Troops right, and has been invented by the 1st Westbury (All Saints') Troop, in Wiltshire. When they played the game the police gave certain meeting-places, one of which was situated about a quarter of a mile from the Troop's H.Q. When the Scouts arrived at this spot they found nothing less than a blooming charabanc waiting, which conveyed them to Salisbury Plain for the hunt. They hunted all over the place, but the patient led them such a dance that they have to give up owing to the hour getting late. But did they have fun?

Of course, it grieves me to have to state here that the aerial leading to the loudspeaker in the clubroom led somehow or other to the Rover Den, where there was an ugly-looking fellow behind a six-and-ninepenny microphone, and the escaped patient turned out to be one of the Dads.

Now don't write and ask me how to fit a circuit to your radio to take a mike to make your own speech. I don't know. Write to *Practical Wireless* about it.

Hundreds and Thousands

IT was Ian Forbes with a packet of "hundreds and thousands" who gave me the idea. You know those sweets. Little round things of all colours – hundreds and thousands of them. I don't know whether that's the right name, but that's what we always called them.

Anyway, it is necessary to obtain 50 red, 35 blue, 20 white, and 10 yellow hundreds and thousands . . . if you have three Patrols. These are hidden all over the clubroom, in nooks and crannies and what-not, before the Troop meeting. If someone finds one on the off-chance, that's just unlucky; he'll probably eat it!

When the game begins each Patrol goes hunting for the hundreds and thousands. When they have obtained either 20 red, 15 blue, 10 white, or 5 yellow they can go haring off to Little Popham Street, where A.S.M., disguised as a door-knocker, will be waiting. He is the Rajah of Jam-Sandwich. You can tell him by his turban. When he receives a particular set of the hundreds and thousands, 20 red, or 10 white, etc., he will hand over the secret instructions.



The A.S.M. disguised as a door-knocker

The instructions are obviously as follows:

"In the Street of a Thousand Lanterns is the house of a hundred veils (7, Acacia Avenue, you fool!). Knock thrice at the door, and say 'The Rajah has sent us.'"

The wizened old man who opens the door will demand that each Scout in the Patrol tells him what Good Turn-adventure he has done that day. If the answers are to his satisfaction he will hand the Patrol a key and tell them that it will open the treasure. If they cannot give good answers then he will tell them to "Go back to thy master, for I have no need of thee."

The key is naturally the key that will open a box in Troop Headquarters, and inside the box will be a half-pound slab of Cadbury's Nut Milk (*advert.*). The Patrol that makes the grade over the Good Turns will get the slab . . . and the points.

That's the gist of the thing. Put on any trimmings you like. Three Dads – one for each Patrol – will take the replies on the Good Turns if you ask nicely, and probably give a report afterwards, so that the other two Patrols can be marked according to their answers.

A jolt on the Good Turn business which will do more three hours of lecturing . . . or yarning.

So What?

I GOT the idea from my newspaper. Staring in front of me on page six was a large advertisement – “Ten Minutes to Wait so -----” So what? Goodness, thought I, that's an adventure. And so it was. I went through half a dozen papers, and cut out bits:



Ten minutes to wait – So what?

I thought my shirt was white until I saw ——! Saw what?

Better buy —— They're blended better! What are? Leslie Howard and Norma Shearer in ——!
In what? —— is good for you! What is?

Fit —— and be satisfied. Fit what?

Leave your cold in a —— bath. What sort of a bath?

If you go through a few papers they spring at you. Sentences that appear so often in advertisements that they become catch-phrases. Cut them out, stick them separately on bits of paper, numbered 1-20, and hang 'em on the wall. Then let Patrols compete to find the answers. You'll be surprised.

Ten minutes to wait, so ——! So what?

Pearls of Great Price

NOW this is very complicated, and is going to take some explaining, but I'll do my best to keep it simple and understandable. We had it one week, and it was alarming.

It all began during Patrol Corners. Patrols were asked to select one representative from their Patrol – not the P.L. – and, whilst the Patrol Corners carried on, these representatives were instructed to go to a certain lock-up garage about a quarter of a mile from Troop H.Q., open it up (they were given the key), and then search for three pearls (one for each Patrol) hidden somewhere in the garage. As soon as one of the Scouts had discovered a pearl a notice in the garage would instruct him what to do next. The notice read something like this:

“IMPORTANT. When you have found a pearl, do not worry about the other two Scouts, but come back to Headquarters immediately and pick up your Patrol. Then you must all go to Queen's Road Tube Station and, whilst the rest of the Patrol remains in

hiding, the Patrol Leader must hand the pearl to the man who sells newspapers outside the station. It is essential that the rest of the Patrol are not seen by this man.”

Since the notice had to be left in the garage, it was a matter of memorising a message as well.

Well, the pearl being duly given to the newspaper man, he in turn handed a sealed envelope to the Patrol Leader (there was one envelope for each Patrol, but not any special envelope for each).

The envelope revealed a matchbox, and inside the matchbox was a message, naturally folded small, but unfortunately the paper on which the message was written had been scorched in a fire so that it had cracked at all the folds. Thus ensued a sort of jig-saw puzzle business in order to piece the message together. Here is one of the messages, which was written in bold printing and lined up with daggers and black hands and skulls-and-cross-bones, etc.

“Somewhere or other there is a guy named Allison. He has been muscling-in on our racket, and the Chief would like to have a little talk with him. Bring him in at all costs.”

This boy Allison is a youngster who left the Scouts to join the Terriers, but is still friendly with the Scouts, and fairly well known to most of them. The business was done unbeknown to him, and I hadn't the slightest idea where he was to be found, but it just so happened that he was in the cinema that night and the Patrol concerned couldn't get him.

It is still a raging controversy in the Troop as to whether, once they discovered he was in the pictures, they should have got the manager to flash a notice on the screen so as to get Allison out in order to bring him in, but we won't go into that here.

Another message charged a Patrol to get the Scout uniform of a boy who had been in the habit of not turning up in uniform just lately. The Patrol got the uniform, and what happened to the boy and his uniform afterwards is no concern of yours.

The third message was for the Patrol to get a set of boxing gloves which had been lent to a boy for his club about a year before – and which we hadn't seen since. The gloves were Troop property – and the Patrol got them back all right. An excellent method of recovering missing Troop property.

Well, there it was. The garage happened to be my own, so that was all right, but you can use any sort of old shed for that part if necessary. The newspaper man played his part for a bob, but if you are a country Troop a shopkeeper may help, or you can have a man planted at the corner of the wood to take the pearls and hand over the messages.

The messages can give any instructions, but keep them pretty difficult, and as far as possible outrageous! That adds to the fun.

And don't blame me.



Here's Allison, Mr. Blunt, where will you have him – here, or in the coal-cellar?"

What's in a Name?

KNOCKING around somewhere or other there are series of photographs representing all sorts of common objects taken from unusual angles, and a further series of photographs of wild animals taken from out-of-the-way angles.

The names of the objects or animals are not given on the cards, but are contained in a key.

If you get hold of these series of cards you will have a couple of quiet adventures all ready. Patrols to identify the objects or animals. Register points in order of difficulty, and tot up at the end. Patrol getting most right, with largest number of points, wins the competition.

Cards can be hung round the walls of the clubroom and a time limit set for looking.

Don't know who publishes the cards, but if you go along to your booksellers, and tell them the tale, they will get them for you. If all else fails Messrs. Selfridges, Oxford Street, London, W., can get them for you.

When you've used the cards for the Patrol Competition they will come in nicely for a competition among the people attending a social, party, spree, or what you will.

Yo! Ho! Ho!

YOU may, or may not, have heard of the little ditty:

*"Fifteen men on a dead man's chest,
Yo, ho, ho, and a bottle of Turn!
Drink to the devil, have done with the rest,
Yo, ho, ho, and a bottle of rum!"*

Well, for this adventure you need one of those dead men's chests. If you haven't got one handy about the house you'll jolly well have to make one. An old trunk does admirably. It can be painted, battered, and stained, decorated with rusty iron chains, or what you will, but essentially it should look like a pirate's chest, with "Dead Man" written all over it, and a most substantial lock with one key.

Now the best artist in the Troop, under the S.M.'s instructions, cooks up three parchment maps, all old and nasty. S.M. will work out the map, so that the business will be secret. Parchment can be produced grand by scorching paper over a fire. It goes brown and horrible and looks all 1740. Then we're all set.



“
Yo, ho, ho, and a bottle of rum!”

The “Dead Man’s Chest” is duly produced from nowhere when the competition is due to begin, and S.M. says in deep, sepulchral tones: “This is the sea-chest of old Ben Jones, pirate and filibuster of the Caribbean. All that is missing is the key, and until it can be found the treasure chest cannot be opened. Now, old Ben left a map giving clues as to where the key can be found, and here is the map for each Patrol. Go out – and find that key. The first Patrol to return with the key will unlock the treasure.”

Get it? The map can lead to anywhere, or anything. We set a trail round the neighbourhood that was colossal to behold, and three of the parents who elected to help only succeeded in making it more difficult by getting the instructions mixed up, but it all came out all right in the end. One of the Patrols found the key – in the tool-box of the S.M.’s car outside the Headquarters – and secured the treasure. What was the treasure? Mind your own business – though I will admit it disappeared with terrific speed. Choose your own treasure; you don’t expect me to think of everything for you, do you?

Murder in Pioneer Hall

FOR this strange and alarming Surprise Item I am indebted to Mr. F. G. Clarke, G.S.M., of the 1st Dunmow Troop, in Essex.

The Scoutmaster comes into the clubroom (late, if possible), looking hurried, worried, and flurried. He looks furtively round, and informs everyone around that he believes someone has been following him. When he has sufficiently recovered his breath he sends the Patrols out to see if they can see anyone suspicious lurking around. He also directs the Assistants to go out too, or else gets them in the know.

When the Scouts return empty they find the clubroom in darkness, and when a light is secured see the Scoutmaster huddled in a chair and head slumped forward over a table, knife in back (says Mr. Clarke, *but do be careful!*), and grasping tightly a slip of paper in his right hand.

The Scouts secure the paper and find on it the words, “*You have betrayed our cause and must pay the penalty*” or what you will. S.M. duly recovers after suitable application of buckets of cold water, and informs Patrols that they must now deduce what has happened, work it out, and submit a report. Report counts in Inter-patrol Competition.

The start is the “surprise”; you can work up any “crime” story you wish.

The Man with the Whiskers

FOR better or for worse, this was our Surprise Item one week. It was mild and gentlemanly. Please don’t add mysterious knocks on doors, men with whiskers snooping around Headquarters, and gentlemen in pink socks looking up railway time-tables. You’ll get me hung!

The three Patrol Leaders did not turn up at the Troop meeting. To all intents and purposes they were taking their best girls out. But . . .

Each Patrol, under its Second, was given sealed instructions, thus:

“PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL. Code Cipher A7. Marcus Oppenheimer, private agent of the Paris Sûreté arrives from Bristol at Paddington, G.W.R., at 8.15 p.m. He will wear a sprig of mimosa. Make contact with him, and if you give the password ‘There is a body on the line,’ he will give you your instructions.”

Marcus (a Patrol Leader in disguise, of course), once contacted, gave instructions for the Patrol to ring up a certain telephone number, ask for the Yellow Mimosa, and give the password, “The flowers are blooming.”



“The flowers are blooming!”

The Yellow Mimosa, duly rung up, instructed the Patrol to proceed at once to Scout Headquarters, where each was to tie a different Tenderfoot knot round the lamp-post outside. This was the sign for Action.

The Patrol which carried out all instructions, tied six correct knots, and got back to Headquarters first, won the points. Each Patrol had separate instructions, which led them to different places, where Patrol Leaders, heavy with disguise, were waiting, and each Patrol had a Leader from some other Patrol. Counted in the pointage was the matter of the Patrol Leader’s disguise. If it was penetrated it counted against his own Patrol. He was in the know beforehand, of course, and understood the fact concerning the disguise.

A good game. Excellent for the Seconds, who got an opportunity of leading the Patrol on their own; useful for the P.L. – who got an opportunity of dressing up, and seeing Scouts at work from a spectator’s point of view; and gave the Scouts useful knots revision.

One of the fathers was the “Yellow Mimosa” – in the know beforehand – waiting at the end of the telephone with a paper telling him exactly what message to give the Scouts.

This is an Elephant

A MILD, sit-down Surprise Item after a hectic bout of games is useful. Here is an idea. Every Scout in the Troop is given a plain postcard. On it he has to draw six dots with a pencil. This completed, the cards are collected from each Patrol and exchanged between Patrols so that the Eagle Patrol will have the Owls’ cards, and the Owls the Eagles’ cards, and so on.

Then the cards are handed out to the Scouts in the Patrols, and each has to draw some object, using the dots as the principal points of the artistic effort. They are then collected, points awarded, and the cards displayed for everyone’s amusement.

Drawing need not be taken into account, but rather originality or ingenuity in the use of the dots.

Dirty Work

MY DEAR WATSON,

“HOLMES AND I ARE ON THE TRAIL OF THE THIEVES WHO RECENTLY BROKE INTO THE LOCAL BANK AND STOLE TWO BAGS OF GOLD. GO TOCO

BEEREDDYLINKESSESHACK BEERED-DYACKCORKON ACKNDON PIPINKCORKK UPIP TOCRACKINKL. DR. WATSON.'

For better or for worse, this was the message given to Patrols by the Scoutmaster of the 96th North London at Troop Meeting one night. For the benefit of Mr. Pottsacker, of Heckmondwike, the gibberish at the end of the message is simply Morse alphabet written out. I don't know what you call the method, but it's like the stuff you shout over the telephone: "A for apple, B for bottle, H for Heckmondwike." And in Morse to distinguish the letters which sound alike, such as "E.B.T." use a word instead, such as: B – Beer; E – Eddy; C – Cork; T – Toe; and so on. Now you will be able to read the message – I hope!

Anyway, to get on with the story. Mr. Seaman, of the 96th North London, explains: "The trail led the Scouts round the neighbourhood, and eventually finished at the door of the basement of Scout Headquarters. The last note informed them that the gold was hidden in a room, and whilst they were searching for it, the bandits – armed to the teeth with knives, daggers, revolvers, and tommy guns – held up the Scouts, compelled them to find the gold and hand it over.

"With this the bandits backed out of the room and locked the blooming door. They immediately mounted a motor-cycle (in the 96th's case it was a bicycle, but a motor-cycle sounds better to the Scouts inside!) and went out with flames stabbing from the exhaust.

"A few moments later in the awful sequence of events the Scouts were released by Dr. Watson and told that the gold had been hidden again by the bandits near a row of young poplars. Since the poplars were a well-known row of trees in the next road the Scouts duly went off and captured the swag. Dr. Watson was, of course, the perspiring A.S.M., the bold bad men were the Rovers – as usual! The Patrol, or Scout, who brought back the swag was the winner . . . and X marks the spot."

To my feeble brain there seem lots of snags in the story – mainly the difficulty of timing – of getting all the Scouts into the room ready for the bandits to do the hold-up, and the danger of the Scouts finding the gold and running off to Sherlock Holmes with it before they were all rounded up for the grand hold-up, and finally – after the release by Dr. Watson— – there would be little less than a grand race for the poplars.

However, don't let that disturb you. The 96th people enjoyed the fun no end, and Mr. Seaman tells me that they are now yelling forth for a series of Holmes-Watson adventures. Not a bad idea. If you've got brains enough a whole series of adventures with characters behind them each week would be pretty hot. In fact, if you've got super-brains you might start a "serial" adventure running through about six Troop meetings. When everything is chaos at its climax the Scoutmaster would yell out "To be continued. More exciting adventures next week!"

Just for Fun

HERE'S a stunt that gives me the willies every time I think of it . . . but you'll love it to death.

It applies equally well to camp or to the clubroom. In camp S.M. announces that the circle of tents is a white man's encampment in the bad old days, and in exactly ten minutes by his watch the Indians are due to attack. During that time the Troop has to put the camp into a state of defence!

If the camp is being run by Patrols, as of course it should be, each Patrol can become a unit on its own, defending its own camp, and a competition can be made of the stunt. Improvise anything you like.

A clubroom can become a Western Ranch-house due for the attention of the Indian marauders in exactly the same way. I can't see any particular value in the stunt, but it's colossal fun – and a good spot of make-believe which many of my good friends seem to dislike so much!

Morse in the Barnyard

MAKE a noise like a bee and buzz off. ... However, here's a Surprise Item played by the Guides of the Jesmond Baptist Company, Jesmond, Newcastle. I have twisted the idea a bit to improve it but the credit is to Jesmond.

S.M. burns midnight oil writing out in Morse on to little square pieces of paper the names of twelve animals. These are duplicated, so that there are twenty-four pieces of paper, two sets of twelve animals. These he proceeds to hide in odd corners of the room. When Troop is lined up they are given word "Go," and they have to search for the bits of paper, and, having found one, start for all they are worth to make noises like that of the animal given (after they have solved the Morse, of course). Object is to pair up with animal making a similar noise. Every pair correctly joined earns two points each for their various Patrols.



The rabble may be quelled with a maroon!

The rabble may be quelled with a maroon or siren after the game has gone on long enough. When we played it none of the Scouts could make a noise like a goldfish, and went about mouthing dismally, like lost souls. I was *most* annoyed with them. Whoopee!

"Dumb Talkies"

A VERY mild and short one for a busy evening, but funny nevertheless. Every member of each Patrol in turn has to portray in dumb show (that means without talking) some film star, old or new. If the rest of the Troop and Scouters discover who he is portraying first go off he gets ten points for the Patrol. Varying number of points if he takes hours to discover, or he has to tell you himself in the end.

Patrols have few seconds to think it out, and then put on show, while rest of the Troop plays audience. And since you can't talk you can't say "Ay tank ay go home —." Serves you right!

At our show Harry Bryant's Zasu Pitts brought the house down!

Great Sale

WITH a care that was worthy of better things I cut from my evening newspaper three large advertisements, and with my small penknife chopped them into jig-saw puzzles. The fact that there were also bits of different advertisements on the opposite side amused me no end. Then I mixed them all up together and hid them all over the ground floor of the Church Hall in which our Headquarters is situated.

Then, when the appropriate moment arrived, we murmured to the three Patrols that they had to search for bits of paper, and piece them together to make complete advertisements. They could swap individually one piece at a time, but were not to pinch, snatch, or otherwise obtain pieces of jig-saw from other Patrols. First Patrol with a complete advertisement won ten points in the Inter-patrol Competition.

So there you are.

TROOP GAMES

THE larger percentage of Scouting practice can be taught through games; indeed the Chief Scout calls Scouting itself a game.

It is curious, therefore, that we do not pay more attention to games. Most things can be wrapped up in games form; and it almost constitutes criminal negligence to force dull learning on a boy when the same object can be achieved through a game. And, incidentally, the boy is more liable to *learn* through the game than by the mere cramming of knowledge.

We are men of so little imagination that we arm ourselves with a book of games and hurl the games haphazard into our programme without thought or care of their use or value. I recommend you to a book called *Scout Test Games*.

Get into the habit yourself of experimenting with games. Take the nucleus of a game and wrap it round a Scout test. It is easy if you are ready to give it a little thought. For instance:



General Knowledge Tests are pretty lousy!

General Knowledge Tests on Tenderfoot work are pretty lousy as a blank classroom conference. But think around the idea for a moment and go to your book of games. What sort of a game could we wrap round such a test? Well, here's our old friend "Dog and a Bone." How can we merge the two? A little thought and here you are:

Yes and No

SCOUTS sit on chairs by Patrols or teams in rows opposite each other, and number off from the same end. A card with "Yes" written on it is placed at one end of the rows, in between, and a card with "No" on it goes to the other end.

Questions are then asked by the leader of the game, and he calls a number at the end of each question. "Is the Scottish flag a blue cross on a white background? Three!"

The Number 3 which grabs the "No" card first wins a point for his side.

Or perhaps you want a revision of compass work. Well, you *could* give every Scout a piece of paper and pencil and tell him to draw out the compass and mark in the points. But it savours of the classroom, and Scouting *should* be an adventure, not schooling. If you have the mind for it, you can invent all sorts of simple compass games. For instance:

Nor'-East-by-Nor'

TROOP forms into a circle with the leader of the game in the centre. With a wisdom for which he is noted the leader points out the compass direction from where he is standing – picture of Christopher Columbus is North; window is South; fireplace is East; notice board is West. Then, with an air of abandon, he shouts out various compass directions in turn. Immediately the Scouts have to run in that direction and stay there.

Anyone taking the wrong turning goes out; if all go the right way then the last man to arrive there takes his departure. Last man left in wins the game.

Yes, you have recognised it. Just a sort of variation of musical chairs!

Again, you may want to make use of the Scout staff during a meeting. You may want to give your Scouts some lessons in staff drill. Well, *you* might just give them Scout staff drill, and leave it at that. But far better to introduce the staff drill and end up with a game making use of the staves. That is what is known as *planning* your games. A staff game? Well, why not this? Just the sort of lively game to finish up a dull bout of programme:

Snatch and Grab

PLAYERS – as many as you like – stand in a circle, each about a yard from the man on either side. The distance increases as you get more proficient at the game. Every player has a Scout staff, which he holds upright with his hand, so that it stands steady on the ground. At the word "Move," he has to let go of his own staff – just leave it standing, so to speak – and rush to get hold of the staff just left by the man on his right. If the staff falls before he can grab hold of it he is out of the game.

It is great fun, and the variations incredible. Distance can be increased as you get nippy, the calls can be "Left," or "Right," instead of "Go," and always moving to the right, and you can make it three falls and "out" instead of one if you want the game to last longer.

Try it!

And you Scouts who don't have staves, get 'em!

WHEN you want to introduce into your programme just ordinary games with no particular training value, plan them carefully in just the same way. Keep your rowdy games to follow quiet activities. For instance, after a quiet session of ambulance work, try a game like this:

Get Your Man

ALL you need are a couple of buckets, a football, and plenty of hope. Troop divides into two, or you play it by Patrols. A pail, bucket, or other receptacle is placed at either end of the clubroom and



No biting!

the two teams line up on each side of a centre line. Rules are simple. The game is played like “near-Rugger,” and when the ball is thrown into the “scrum” the object of each team is to get the ball into the opposing team’s bucket and, alternatively, to stop the other team getting the ball into its own bucket.

No biting, scratching, kicking of the person or ball, and no sitting on your own team’s bucket. The bucket may not be kicked, lifted, or secreted on the person. The game ends when (a) one team scores five goals, (b) a clubroom window is broken., (c) the police arrive.

This game is the origin of the expression “Get your man!”

NEW ADVENTURES

THE Chief Scout in his wisdom gave in his framework of Scouting a secret sign for every Scout, secret signs and calls for Patrols, and even for Troops. We use them little enough; but do we ever build on the framework?

Secret Signs

MAKE use of secret signs in the Troop. If you take delight in them, and look upon them as serious and important, the boy will, too. But if you, in your awful wisdom, consider them silly and childish, don’t blame the boy for thinking so. Many good ideas fail in a Troop because Scoutmasters think them a bit daft. Every Scout has his own secret sign. Let him make use of it. Let him sign it at the bottom of letters or reports when he writes to his Patrol Leader or to you. Tell him that it is important!

In Troop headquarters, camps, and places where Scouting is done, do away with words, and for all notices such as “Troop Den,” “Cub Lair,” and so on substitute signs. In camp do away with “This Way to the Latrine.” Put up the Indian Sign for “Latrine.” That’ll get ‘em groggy, too. Koodoos and secret signs are just wonderful. The Patrol can make use of them as well.

Secret Codes

IT’s much easier to write things out in plain English, but it’s more fun to write them in secret code. Invent a Troop Code and post all notices on the notice board in that peculiar code. Then you’ll be sure of no one reading them! It is such fun to come into the Troop room and see on the notice board:

IMPORTANT NOTICE

EYGTHL ZJUTGB ARNTXL ETDNIS AUSGIT VBTGKY
SDFGHK QWERTY YUIOPL ASDFGH ZXCVCN
ADHKLS AND BE EARLY!

Inventing secret codes is easy. I wrote a book about them once! The fundamental principle is the following simple transposition:

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN OPQRSTUVWXYZ
ZYXWVUTSRQPONMLKJIHGFEDCBA

In writing a message you simply transpose the letters as you see them. A becomes Z, I becomes R, P becomes K, and so on. The next step is to juggle the key letters about, or to use ciphers instead of letters. The code which has always amused me, and which I believe was used by secret agents and people before they invented decoding departments and were ready to solve anything is like this:



With this key you can write your messages like music, and actually buy blank music paper for the job. And if you know anything about music you can so fix your message that you can play the blooming thing on a flute, or harp, or something!

That's a nice idea. Now, just to amuse yourself, try solving the message below by the use of the key. Ignore piano parts. That's just put in to get 'em guessing. . . .

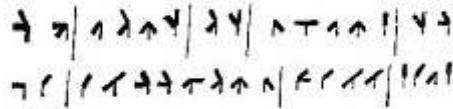


Play the blooming thing on a flute.

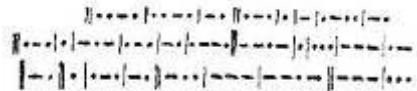
Not-So-Secret Codes



SOMETIMES it's amusing to give notices and send messages in the Semaphore or Morse Code. There is never so much scramble to solve these, but if you receive a postcard done in a signalling code you automatically have to decipher it; that's known as man's curiosity. I have received many such postcards in my time, but the blitherers usually give the name and address in the Morse Code, too – which isn't so funny for the postal people. How d'you write Semaphore? This way, silly:



Morse messages are obvious, thus:



Invisible Ink

IT was funny the other week. The Patrol duly received their instructions for the Surprise Item in envelopes. When they opened the envelopes they found – blank sheets of paper. Did I laugh!

When they had duly heated self-same blank paper they found the message came out in nice brown words. You see, I'd written the message in milk instead of ink. Such fun! Make use of invisible ink in your games, or in your messages to your Scouts.

Invisible ink can be made in all sorts of ways – some I know of with terrific chemical formulas, too difficult to worry about. The easiest are: Milk, juice of lemon, and juice of onion.

You just use a clean nib and write the message in the ordinary way. All these three are brought out by heat. But don't write to your District Commissioner that way. He won't understand!

Secret Knocks

EVERY Patrol which has a den of its own should automatically have secret knocks. Three taps, and a half a tap, or something. Only the Patrol should know it; Scouts should be careful no one is about to listen before they give it on the door. Have a blooming big lock on the den, and don't admit anybody unless they give the right taps,

Passwords

IN games and things passwords are always good. They are fairly obvious. Giving passwords over the telephone in hushed and mysterious voices, and getting passwords back, is the very stuff of which adventure is made. "Is that the house of a thousand sighs?" "No, this is Messrs. Snodgrass, Snodgrass, Hopcod and Snodgrass, bootleggers. What do you want?" Ain't life wonderful?

ADVENTURE NIGHTS

THE precise moment when energy leaves off and luck begins to take a hand in the affairs of life is hard to describe. I once heard a Scoutmaster say, "Oh, but you're lucky. You can hold as many meetings a week as you like."

How far are the Troops who can hold "as many meetings a week as they like" lucky? I'm willing to argue that in the greater number of cases luck has very little to do with it. Energy has probably had more to do with gaining of headquarters and facilities for meeting than all the luck in the world.

You might think that out some time. . . .

I have, for my sins, written largely in other places on how to obtain headquarters, or facilities for holding meetings whenever you please, and there is no space here to go into the matter again. We will take it for granted, therefore, that you can meet when and how you please. So . . .

Having used up one or two evenings of the week for Troop meetings, how can we find adventure for the rest of them? Let me give you some ideas:

Cashing-in on Hobbies

IN spite of the cinema, radio, football matches, evening classes, and such “abominations,” a boy can still find time to enjoy a hobby. In the past twenty years or so he may have changed his ideas on hobbies, but the urge is still there.

And hobbies are part and parcel of Scouting. Isn't every Proficiency Badge designed to give a lead to the boy in the matter of hobbies, and possibly, later on, a pointer to the career he may like to adopt? Perhaps we have forgotten that! I often think that a Troop which aims at putting as many Proficiency Badges as possible on the arms of its Scouts hasn't quite grasped the idea. But no matter.



To give a lead in the matter of hobbies.

The point is that it can be, and is, a good idea to set aside one night at least to the matter of hobbies. Don't be afraid of modern ideas, and don't be hesitant in grouping the Scouts into small sections to follow as many hobbies as they please.

If five boys in the Troop want to make model aeroplanes, give them a corner of the room to cut up wood, splash glue all over the place, and generally create havoc until they have achieved a *Percival Gull* which they can take out on to the local common on Saturday afternoon. If you encourage them they may even want to win their Airman Badge, and you might be able to arrange a visit to the local aerodrome, or fix up a real flying class, as some go-ahead Troops are doing. It is all very great adventure – and still Scouting.

I think that is sufficient to give you the idea. I might go all through the rest of the book to cover the whole field of hobby adventures as they apply to Scouting. Let the boy give his own lead. If he delights in model yachts, in printing magazines, in writing poetry, in keeping bees, in gardening, try to give him facilities to indulge his hobby through Scouting. Scouting is not a compartment of the boy's life. It is his whole life.

Film Shows

THAT last thought leads on to the matter of the cinema. I wouldn't like to tell you how many Scoutmasters have complained to me of the growing menace of the cinema. Boys seem more interested in going to the pictures than they do in coming to the Troop meeting. You've probably heard that yourself.

Why make that complaint? We can embrace the cinema in Scouting. The schools are doing it; even the Church has finally achieved it. You can't fight against progress. The cinema has become part of the business of life, and as such we must find its correct place in Scouting.

We can use moving pictures. We can – if we have the facilities – introduce a movie evening into the Troop programme. Small projectors are getting cheaper than ever, and the film libraries provide a never-ending source of entertaining and educational films on a cheap basis. Many Troops already have movie evenings at a penny a go. Why not?

If you want to make your own films, and provide a still more startling adventure, which even the local picture palace cannot hope to provide, why not?

Dancing Lessons

THE problem of the local dance isn't much of a worry to the Scoutmaster. It's usually the Rover Leader's pigeon. But dancing is a lively activity, and there's no reason why we shouldn't make use of it.

Folk dancing, Morris dancing, and dancing traditional to your own part of the world can make quite an adventurous evening, and if you are so minded you can join with the Girl Guide Company in this activity. If you want some help, write to Cecil Sharp House, Regent's Park, London, N.W. That is the home of English Folk Dancing. But you'll probably find that your Girl Guides will be able to teach you all you want to know about folk dancing!

Social Evenings

WHILE we are on the subject of girls (were we?) we might as well go the whole hog. Scoutmasters complain sometimes of "girlitus," especially as it attacks Patrol Leaders. Personally I have never met the problem, but I am not blind to the fact that some Scouters must meet it.

The trouble is that they try to fight it – and that is where they go wrong. Just as you cannot fight progress, so you cannot fight nature. And "girlitus," which someone or other called it, is the most natural thing in the world. If you do come across the problem, once more, just as we do progress, let Scouting embrace it.

I know of one Troop which solved the problem as long ago as 1910. The mother of the Scoutmaster gave her son the answer when he took his trouble to her. She held a party in her own home every Saturday evening to which every elder Scout had to bring a girl – either his sister, someone else's sister, or his girl friend. The mother eventually started a Guide Company for the girls. It was all very matey. It is certainly an idea. But don't try to fight the girl problem. Many leaders of youth have been foolishly trying to fight it for generations. They have never succeeded.

You want to help it along!

Keeping Fit

I AM treading on delicate ground here – as things stand. In this new campaign for national fitness where a dozen cranks and faddists rush in to make us all bigger, better, and healthier men, every person with an idea is looked on with suspicion.

Certainly, however, we should set aside some part of the Scouting adventure programme to the matter of keeping fit. I shall not advocate any system. That is for you to worry about.

But whether you choose Swedish Drill, Free Exercises for Physical Development, the Goose Step, Gymnastics, Tumbling, Folk Dancing, Weekly Swimming, or Scout Games, work out some scheme for the physical training of your Scouts. Don't worry about the adventure side. Every boy, good, bad, or indifferent, has a desire to be a strong healthy specimen, and the building of strength is an adventure for which even the modern boy is ready. Perhaps you didn't know!

YES, there are plenty of adventure bricks to build round the girders of Scouting if you are ready to think about building.

For a final evening of adventure, sit down in your own study, den, bedroom, or sitting-room – and just think. You'll be surprised what a difference it will make to your programme . . . and to your Troop.

CHAPTER II

SCOUTING IN THE OUTDOORS

OUT of the fug and mustiness of the indoors, let us turn to the fresh wholesome breath of the outdoors. Now that we have got off our chests the adventures that may be found within four walls, we may reveal – privately of course – that only in the outdoors is *real* adventure to be found.

In his primitive state the boy is essentially an outdoor animal; he flourishes best in the open air. It is notable, also, that the modern boy spends more of his tune in the outdoors than did the boy of yesterday. Increased facilities for travel, more playing fields, the popularity of cycling, hiking, and camping – all these things have taken the boy into the outdoors more than ever in recent years.

This very fact has increased the difficulties confronting the Scoutmaster. It is now no *adventure* to light a fire in the open and cook a pot of water; the boy does it automatically when he goes out with the family in the car for a picnic. Hiking as such is no new experience; a boy can go out with the local rambling club, or take a cheap-day ticket with a pal. The day-in-the-outdoors, with games and adventures, is nowadays as much an activity of the local Sunday School, the Choir, or the School, as it once exclusively was of a Scout Troop. Even the modern schoolmaster takes his boys on nature study rambles.

The truth of it is that our thunder, in the shape of Scouting adventures, has been stolen by our contemporaries. There is no harm in it; one does not object. But at the same time it makes it difficult for us to prove that Scouting is an adventure a boy cannot find elsewhere.

Pioneering in Adventure

CURIOSLY enough we can find the solution to this problem in Scouting itself. Go back to the framework of Scouting, and see what you can find. Tracking; pioneering; bridge-building; signalling by hand, heliograph, smoke; observation and deduction; map-making; stalking. These are a few things a boy cannot find anywhere but in Scouting. They are ready-made for us. We have just to cloak them in our own modern guise.

So many Troops have been content to draw tracking signs on pieces of paper that they have forgotten that Scouts can go out and lay a *real* trail with tracking signs, for others to follow – and find adventure in doing it. If you feel that the old form of tracking favoured by Indians and Army Scouts is out-of-date – though I doubt this – then modernise your methods of tracking. Use bloodstains (red ink or red beads of course!) for “This road to be followed”; use a piece of barbed wire (electrified of course; marked 33,000 volts) across a path for “This road not to be followed.”

It is only a matter of using your imagination. In the past we have often failed – and training centres are no exception – because we were content blindly to use Scouting practice as it is found in text-books. We have forgotten that this is a framework on which to build to suit our own environment – and modern conditions. We have built our house of girders and have forgotten to add the bricks.

Now let us scan briefly a few outdoor practices and see how we can build them towards adventure.

Observation

LET us first take the simple Scouting practice of observation. What hundreds of *modern* adventures we can weave round this! For instance:

It is first necessary for the Scoutmaster, Troop Leader, or some other intelligent person (!) to go out armed with a camera and photograph about a dozen features of local interest – the west door of the church, the crooked telegraph pole, the blasted oak, the local pub, and so on. When these are developed and printed you can play the game.

The Scoutmaster goes out first and lays the trail. Then to each of the Patrols he shows a snap of the local blacksmith’s shop, or what you will, with instructions that somewhere in this scene they will find the next clue to the treasure.

So it is. When the Patrols set out they probably find another photograph pinned to the smithy’s door. This is a photograph of the blasted oak, and when the aforesaid oak is located another picture is found hidden in the undergrowth . . . and so the game goes on until you get a photograph of an old tin-can lying under a well-known water-trough. In the tin-can is the message that leads to the large bar of nougat. First to get to the nougat eats it!

Patrols should be instructed to leave photographs where they find them for the benefit of other Patrols following, and that’s about all the rules there are.

For blokes who are hard up and can’t afford to take photographs an excellent idea is to buy ordinary postcard views of the local haunts and cut the names off the top or bottom. This latter idea would prove an excellent method of playing the game at camp, with the problem of actually finding the spots which are naturally not so familiar to you.

Nothing remarkable though. Just observation! And again, let me recommend you to an idea evolved by the Girl Guides of Dunmow, Essex, if you want observation with a new touch. The idea was related to me by Mr. F. G. Clarke, G.S.M. of the 1st Dunmow Group.

“The Guides went round to all the shops in Dunmow,” says Mr. Clarke, “and asked them to display something out of the usual in their windows before closing on their particular meeting night, such as a jam-jar in an outfitter’s, a dog biscuit in a draper’s, a flower-pot in a confectioner’s, and so on. I got wind of it (being a Scout), and as their meeting night is the same as ours I sent out all the Scouts except the Leaders to find these peculiar displays.



A ladder gives you such a rakish look!

“It was a good stunt, and I varied things a bit by keeping the Leaders back; then sending them out slightly disguised as extras. They picked up all sorts of things to carry to make disguise more effective. . . . Ladders, steps, packing cases, etc., were all to be seen carried through our somewhat sedate little town after dark on this particular night.”

Well, there you are. If you have sufficient nerve, or the required amount of *savoir-faire* (Ceylonese for “blooming cheek”), to persuade your local modistes to put jam-jars or flower-pots among the latest Paris creations, then there’s a spanking idea for you.

It is more suited to Troops in small communities than those in large towns, which have hundreds of shops surrounding the Troop headquarters, but it is a pretty hot idea. Mr. Clarke’s suggestions on the matter of disguise are also very cute. You’ve no idea what a rakish look a ladder can give you!

Signalling

IT is amazing how much people grumble about the interesting matter of signalling. I have even been to important Scout Conferences where important people got up and made important statements about the advisability of having signalling in Scout tests at all.

And this when we can have so much fun, find so much adventure, and gain so much good training in signalling. It only means getting back to the framework and building our own adventures about the practice. Apart from signalling across valleys, smoke signalling adventures, whistle signals, secret signals, and such, about which I have written in my previous books, what of an adventure like this?



A message relay in the best American style!

I have been reading that Memphis, Tennessee, America, Scouts every year relay a message across the roof-tops of their home town. They make a real “do” of it, and hook up with a local

newspaper. The Editor of the newspaper writes a message, and this is dropped from an aeroplane on to an island in the river. Here Scouts are waiting for it, and they signal the message to Scouts on the top of an hotel building. From here it is signalled from one roof-top to another until it reaches the newspaper office. The message is then printed in the paper. Now we may not be able to do anything as ambitious as that, but it is at least an idea for us. The Scoutmaster writes a message. A Patrol Leader signals it to another man about half a mile away, and so it is relayed across hills – if you can find them – until the message reaches headquarters, after travelling possibly a matter of eight miles. It is a good stunt, and active signalling practice. It is signalling the way signalling should be done, and what is more – to a boy – it would be something adventurous.

Such a dull subject, signalling!

The Compass

I HAVE already mentioned how we can use the compass adventurously indoors. What can we do with it out-of-doors, apart from using it on hikes? Well, just a little brain work:

One afternoon we can do a “Compass Hike.” You’ve maybe never heard of it. Well, you get an Ordnance Survey Map, 6 to 1 and pick out some queer-named place about five miles from camp. Such a place we chose once was “Caesar’s Well.” Then you start at the road outside the camp and take the bearings of the spot by map and compass. Next you throw away the map, and agreeing not to look at a signpost or ask anybody the way, you set out, armed only with the compass, to find “Caesar’s Well,” or whatever it is. Just for fun you can go in pairs, starting off at intervals, and S.M. can plant “Catches” on the route, such as a man with a heavy bag who asks you the way to somewhere and sees how you deal with the question, whether you give him a lift with his bag, and what-not. All good fun, all active work on the compass test.



Compass Hike.

Axemanship



Let's

Let's chop down a tree, eh?

LOOK at it which way you like, from the Victorian, Georgian., or Edwardian angle, it is still a great adventure to fell a tree. It is a wonder we don't do it occasionally. It is one of those things which doesn't need much trimming on the original framework!

If we can get permission from a local landowner, we're in clover. If there are no trees down for felling, then see if we can get a job of limbering a tree that has fallen during the winter. It will be a good turn to the landowner, and useful pioneering practice for us. Bridge-building may be out of the question owing to lack of timber, but what about making a small bridge over that gully which you have to cross to get to the water in camp, cutting and building steps with stakes and cross-pieces up the hill the farm people have to walk. Get permission, and there's another good turn and a spot of active pioneering.

First Aid

APART from first aid obstacle games, of which you already know, there are any number of ways of bringing first aid into adventurous games. To show you this, let us digress for a moment. Let us talk of flag-raiding, one of the oldest games known in Scouting.

First of all, to refresh your memory on the game. They used to play it in 1908, so it may be new to you. There are two Patrols or teams – one defenders, the other attackers. The defenders have three flags – signalling flags if you like – which they plant at about twenty yards apart in a given piece of country. Then they spread out in a circle two hundred yards away from the flags, and must not enter this circle unless in pursuit of an attacker who has entered the circle. The defenders have to defend the flags, the attackers have to steal them. The defenders can capture an attacker if at least two of the defenders are within ten yards of him. Then they must cry "Hands up!" and he is a captive. No fighting. Get it?



A flag-raider up to his tricks.

Now put a first aid angle in. Anyone captured in the flag-raiding game has an opportunity of asking his captors a question in the First Class First Aid Test. If the captors cannot answer it he goes free. If they can he goes to prison. You can reverse the process if you like, so that the captors ask the captive the question, and if you find there is any argument over the business then all questions may be asked before an umpire after the capture has been made.

Tracking

WE have already spoken vaguely of tracking. But if you would like to find adventure some afternoon, take your Scouts to the edge of a stream and search for tracks. You will find scores of prints of birds, voles, sheep; maybe a fox. What fun if each Scout is given plaster of Paris and allowed to make a plaster-cast of a track he finds for himself. Maybe he has never seen a track beside a stream before. And it's marvellous how interesting anything can be when you haven't seen it before.

Just tracking. And we haven't worried about blood-stains, woollen trails on trees, nature trails, rice trails, and the scores of other ideas roaming around. Isn't it marvellous? All these outdoor adventures waiting.

Map-making

IF we can forget the higher theory of surveying, which some people would wish on us poor specimens, then we might one day make a map.

Just a mile of road, shall we say? A prismatic compass, which you might learn to use some time, some graph-paper, a pencil, and your two good feet to use for Scout's Pace measure (and that's another fine test we've included in our outdoor adventures) and you can have quite an interesting afternoon mapping a mile of road.

Now you don't want me to tell you how to do it, do you?

The Whole Bag of Tricks

FINALLY, you want an outdoor adventure to embrace the whole of Scouting practice? Something startlingly adventurous that will prevent your Scouts from sleeping the night before in anxious anticipation? Then let me recommend you to Mr. Robinson Crusoe.

It is an idea I evolved some little time ago when seeking a new adventure for the outdoors which might suitably compete with the modern craze for camping. The idea was carried out with the 1st Chesham Bois Troop, in Buckinghamshire, and since the Patrol Leader, who was the chief actor, had all the fun, I will let him describe it in his own words:

Patrol Leader Maurice Harding, of the Pigeon Patrol. . . .

The Shipwreck



Patrol Leader Maurice Harding.

“ON this first day of June, in the year of grace Nineteen Hundred and Thirty . . . , we – six Scouts of the Pigeon Patrol of the 1st Chesham Bois Troop – were shipwrecked off the Bois Reef, and cast away on this uncharted island. Our belongings – rescued from the jetsam of the wreck – were a large groundsheet and blankets, an axe, a case of food and odd stuff from one of the wrecked longboats, and our knives. We wore only the clothes in which we stood. Such was the resourcefulness and ingenuity of my men that we were able to exist in comfort for twenty-four hours before we were finally rescued by Captain G. A. C. King, skipper of the S.S. Pioneer, and First Officer Jack Blunt, who saw our fire and recognised our signals at 5.30 on Sunday, June 2nd. – Maurice Harding, Patrol Leader.”

Thus reads the log-book of one of the jolliest week-ends my Patrol has ever spent. For twenty-four hours we became real Robinson Crusoes, shipwrecked sailors cast away on a desert island, forced to make a shelter, to make or improvise cooking and feeding utensils, to set up signal-fires to

attract the attention of passing ships, and to live in strange and unusual conditions. Let me tell you about our alarming adventure:

The idea started from a suggestion made by Mr. Jack Blunt to our Scoutmaster, Mr. G. A. C. King. He asked my Patrol how we'd like to be cast away on a desert island for a week-end with only the clothes we stood up in and a box of food. We said we'd like it very much, and that was that.

On the Saturday afternoon of June 1st we all got into shorts and shoes, were given our sheath-knives, an axe, and a large box, nailed up and wired. It was then that our ship foundered and we – as six sole survivors – were cast on to the desert island that usually forms our Troop camping-ground.

It was a bright, warm afternoon, and in the sunshine we took stock of our new home. The island sloped gently down to the sea (the railway line to tell the truth), and at the back of us was a well-wooded piece of ground. Quite a nice spot on which to be cast away. In happier circumstances we might have enjoyed camping in such a place.



The Robinson Crusoes (from left to right): Norman Pearson, Dennis Southam, Bill Pearson? Gordon Fountain, Ray Eayres, and Maurice Harding.

The Will to Live

THE immediate problems that confronted my men were to make efforts to gain rescue and to live comfortably for as long as we were destined to remain on this strange island. On opening the wooden box which Gordon Fountain, my second in command, had rescued from the stove-in long-boat, we found food and – wonder of wonders – a box of matches. They were soaked through, which in itself presented a problem, but in any event they were a means of making fire, both for signalling and for warmth and cooking. The next vital problem was fresh water. It was Bill Pearson who found the stream (a tank of fresh water), while he was roaming round the island. Things began to look brighter.

We took stock of our possessions:

- A large groundsheet.
- 12 blankets.
- A canvas bucket.
- Two towels and a valuable bar of soap.
- Six toothbrushes – and one tube of paste.
- 1 axe.
- 2 sheath-knives.
- 1 box of matches (wet).
- 1 wooden box, with wire and nails.
- 1 bag of flour.
- 1 large piece of bacon.

1 large piece of steak.
Salt.
Coffee.
2 tins of condensed milk.
1 bag of sugar.
1 large tin of baked beans.
1 large tin of pineapple.
1 extra large tin of water biscuits.
Cheese.
Cocoa.
1 bag of potatoes.
A quantity of string and rope.

For castaways we weren't doing badly.

Signalling and Pioneering

RESCUE was the most important matter that faced my men, and it was Dennis Southam and Bill Pearson who built and lighted the signal-fire at the top of the island. The matches were dried by means of rubbing the heads in our hair, and two fuzz-sticks gave us the first blaze – a welcome sight.

While the fire was being built, the rest of my men and I set to building a shelter. We chose the bivouac type before going in for anything more elaborate, and, after cutting stakes and withies, made the framework. We allowed a back wall, and made the bivouac wide, to give room for all six men, and eventually thatched the roof and sides with rushes, starting at the bottom and working upwards on the slated-roof principle. With the ground-sheet in and our blankets laid out we had a home, and that was a good beginning.

But men must eat. We made a fire, cut forked sticks, and had a cooking-place ready. The next problem was for something in which to boil water. We had nothing – until Ray Eayres got a brainwave. The tins. The biscuit tin was biggest, and after emptying out the biscuits, we took some of the wire from round the sides of the box and made a handle for the tin. A sheath-knife made a couple of holes for the wire, and we had a serviceable billy. Water was soon bubbling on the fire.



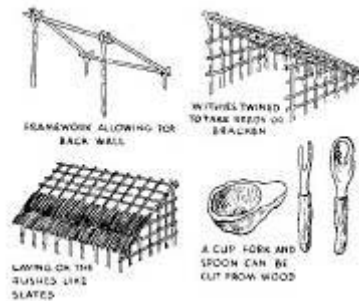
Raising our flagstaff outside the shelter.

The bacon we sliced and cooked on a broiler. Norman Pearson made a couple of twists, and that was grand bread.

Coffee, twist, and bacon made a hearty meal for six seafarers. We took it in turns to drink out of the billy. The grounds of the coffee were awkward for the last man – me! – but I dodged them fairly well.

Carving

EATING with your hands isn't such fun. We decided we could do better than that. We therefore set out to find suitable sticks, and after a lot of hard work cut serviceable spoons and forks and spent over an hour making a couple of mugs from beech knots. They were not at all bad to use, but tasted a bit woody.



We were beginning to feel at home now. We kept the signal-fire blazing all evening, and used our blankets when the night got chilly and when we had a camp-fire sing-song. We sang mostly sea chanties, to add to the effect.

We had three watches during the night in order to keep the signal-fire going, each couple of men serving a three-hour trick, so that we all got six hours' sleep (or some of us did!).

In the morning we made another billy out of the baked beans tin, made a couple of stools out of the wooden box, and cooked a store of bread to last us for some time. We explored our island, collecting specimens of leaves, plants and flowers, and then decided to make a log of our adventures. We had nothing on which to write, so decided to use a real log. Norman Pearson and I cut a log, shaped a square by cutting off the bark, and then burnt out our log in the wood with a piece of wire heated to redness in the fire.



We put in some hard work with our knives to cut serviceable spoons and forks. Mugs were even made from beech knots. Pictures of our handwork are on the page above.

The trouble was that time went so quickly. I had planned to have some games, but the morning went like lightning. While we were writing the log, Dennis Southam and Bill Pearson started to make pits for getting rid of our unburnable rubbish and wet stuff.

It was an awkward and difficult job with knives, and not so good for the knives, so they found a stone and chipped away at it with another stone so that they got some sort of an edge – rather like the old weapons the ancient Britons used. This was all we could think of, but it didn't work very well, and Dennis had to use the knives after all – and his hands!

Cooking

COOKING dinner was our next problem. We had steak and onions and potatoes, and some fresh fruit. At first we thought of cooking the steak over a broiler, but the broiler wouldn't work. You need string of some kind. We tried plaiting grass, twisting grass, and stringing reeds, but it was all pretty feeble. We finally abandoned the idea, and thought about cooking the steak in the embers, between large leaves. This didn't seem so good, though, so we finally decided on kabob.

We got about four green sticks, fairly thin, stripped the bark off them and heated them over the fire. Then we cut the steak into small bits and threaded it on to the sticks, placing a lump of onion between each bit of steak.

The potatoes we left in their jackets and cooked directly in the live coals of the fire. They came out good, but you have to watch they don't burn right through. It needs judging nicely. The kabob we ate directly from the sticks, and it was better than we expected!

The fresh fruit solved itself!

After dinner we decided to enlarge our "home." It wasn't big enough to hold all of us, and if we hadn't kept watches during the night I don't know what we'd have done. We'd probably have slept on top of one another! Which is not altogether comfortable.



Writing the Log on a log.

The obvious solution was to make another side to the existing shelter and put a wall at the back. In this way we'd have a very large hut, big enough to hold ten if necessary. We made the framework, completing the back, and taking away one of the sides of the shelter so that an open end would be left, and then thatched the whole thing. It made quite a nice hut.

I'm not sure how it would have stood up to rain, because it didn't rain over the week-end, but I reckon we'd have been all right, and anyway if we'd have been staying longer on the "island" we'd have made a more permanent affair, covering the roof with mud.

Our water lasted out fairly well. Washing was done in the canvas bucket, and one filling had to do the lot of us. It got pretty thick in the end, but nobody minded. There was also scarcely any washing-up to do, which certainly is one thing in favour of Robinson Crusoe camping.

Adventure can be Fun

LATER on in the afternoon we found some good clay and started to make plates and cups, but they cracked as they dried, and weren't a very great success. With time we could probably have got them to set all right, and could have baked them over the fire, because we're doing a bit of pottery work in our Patrol in the ordinary way.

And finally we decided to see what we could do about clothing, supposing we had been without any. We dressed up Dennis Southam in a rush skirt and hat, and he looked the dead image of Robinson Crusoe. Ray Eayres took his pants off and did the Man Friday stunt, but Robinson Crusoe didn't like his face and gave him the sack!

Rescue

OUR signal-fire was kept going all day, but it was not until five-fifteen on the Sunday afternoon that we saw a steamer's smoke. We built a bigger fire, and eventually our hopes were raised when we saw the ship put about.



*Man Friday (Ray Eayres) does a salaam before
Robinson Crusoe (Dennis Southam). What do you
think of the rush skirt and hat?*

She was the S.S. *Pioneer*, and as she came nearer we signalled by Semaphore. We were answered, and a cheer went up from my men when Skipper King put out a boat to take us aboard.

We were rescued!

We had a grand time. I wouldn't mind being really shipwrecked at all now. If we had had more time we could have made a real hut, and all sorts of other things.

If your Troop wants to do something different, have a go at being Robinson Crusoes. It's great sport!

Well, if one Patrol Leader can lead his gang on such an adventure, thousands more should be able to do so. There is something mighty romantic about Old Man Crusoe's adventures which appeals even in these modern times. Any librarian will tell you that *Robinson Crusoe* is still one of his best circulating lines in juvenile fiction. Isn't that just one more reason why we should cash in on him – Crusoe, I mean, not the Librarian.

Oh, and there's another book well worth reading if you can get hold of a copy. It is *Alone in the Wilderness* by a man named Knowles. This man Knowles went naked into a forest and without food to prove that he could live without help from outside. His experiences make thrilling reading, and he passes on some good Scouting tips.

CHAPTER III

ADVENTURING FOR OTHERS

HAVE you ever felt you wanted to murder someone? Of course you have. And so have I. People I have most ardently and cheerfully desired to "bump off" – with as long and lingering a passing as possible – were people who said to my Scouts individually, "And what good turn did you do to-day, my little man?"

As far as I am concerned an equal fate is desired for Scoutmasters who hold competitions to see who does the best good turn of the week; or who question their Scouts at each meeting on what good turn they have done during the previous week.

Such men are a pestilence and a plague.

No self-respecting boy likes it to be known and advertised by himself that he has done good. Far sooner, for his own pride's sake, would he let it be known that he has done something fine and bad!

Have you ever heard a group of boys talking together? What do they boast of? Not of the good deeds they have done; not of the lame dogs they helped over stiles, or the blind men they assisted across roads. No. They brag of the windows they broke, or the door-bells they rang before scooting, of the policemen they were chased by, of their hundred-and-one minor evil deeds!

There now! Heresy. But still the truth. All we Englishmen are rather inclined that way. We like to do good, but have a horror of being caught doing it. Far sooner would we boast of our misdeeds.

The boy is much the same. He has a horror of *being* good, but has quite a passion for *doing* good, provided we don't talk too much about it.

So don't let us talk about doing good turns any more. Let us rather think of "adventuring for others." There is something exciting about that – even for the sophisticated boy of to-day. Mysterious Robin Hoods, Dick Turpins, knights in armour, and all that sort of thing.

How can we go adventuring for others? Let me tell you a few stories – adventure stories:

Fairy Godmother Touch

THEY called it Paradise Street, but that is only their little joke. It is a forgotten street, a lost street – a street without a soul. Only one man in that whole street is in permanent work . . . and he could draw more money if he went on the dole. There is no sunshine in Paradise Street. . . .

Mrs. Edwards is down on her knees cleaning the doorstep of Number Seventeen. She is a frail, tired-looking woman – she has a family of seven to tend – but she likes cleanliness, and scrubs the bare stone step with vigour.

Into the cobbled street rattles a cart, and comes to a stop beside Number Seventeen.

“Edwards?” calls the man.

The tired little woman looks up and nods vaguely.

“Hundredweight of coals,” shouts the man.

Mrs. Edwards shakes her head. She gets to her feet and wipes her hands on her coarse apron.

“No, I didn’t order it. Not for me. . . .” She looks wistfully at the sacks on the cart.

“Paid for,” returns the man. “For Mrs. Edwards.” He hefts one of the sacks on to his shoulder. “Where d’you want it?”

Mrs. Edwards does not understand, but she leads the man into the house. His dirty boots leave ugly marks on the clean step, but she does not worry. The coals are deposited in a cellar that has long been empty, and Mrs. Edwards follows the man out.

“But —?”

The man takes off his cap and grins. “Told to say it was from Father Christmas – that’s all. Don’t know nothing else.”

The woman watches him climb up into his cart again, and the vehicle rattles away. What does it matter? To-morrow the children will have a real fire. . . .

The coalman has ten such cranky orders. He doesn’t know who they’ve come from. The boss doesn’t talk much. Only a certain Troop of Scouts and the boss are in the know . . . and they rather like the fairy godmother touch.

Santa Claus Comes to Town

IT was Christmas morning – a cold, bleak, and cheerless day. A thin drizzle of rain drove along the narrow and squalid street. The place was deserted, lifeless. Nothing but cold wind – and driving rain.

Behind the drab curtains that hung from the window of Number Three Porter Street was a damp and chilly room. A man sat beside the meagre fire in the broken grate and gazed unseeingly at a week-old newspaper. At the table stood a woman washing a threadbare jersey. Huddled on a low bed in a corner of the room were two small bundles of humanity, pinched cheeks and heavy eyes showing above the covering.

No one spoke . . . no one had spoken for the past hour. There came a heavy knock at the outside door, and the woman looked up listlessly.

“It’s the door, Davie.”

The man nodded, put aside the paper, and went across to the front door. He was back in a moment, and he carried a large parcel in his hands.

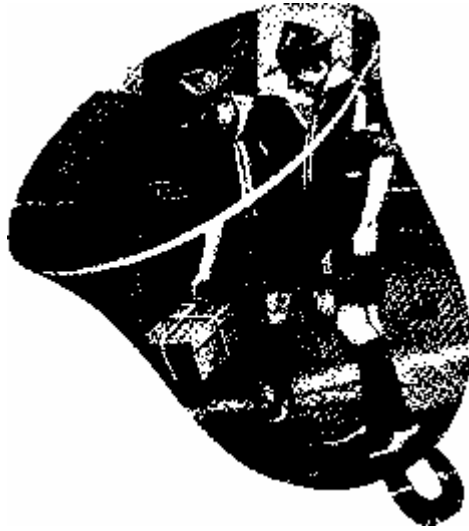
“There’s no one there, Mother, but this was on the step. There must be a mistake. . . .”

The woman looked at the parcel.

“It’s addressed to you. Go on, open it.”

The two little kiddies threw aside the covering and, shivering slightly, came across as the man commenced to untie the parcel. They looked on without speaking, without a glimmer in their dull eyes.

The man took the card . . . “From Father Christmas,” was all it said. Beneath it were neatly packed parcels – bread, jam, tea, tins of milk, sugar, a pudding, cakes . . . and a couple of toys. A doll, and a small model train.



This is mysterious – and ADVENTURE.

The little girl grabbed the doll greedily and leapt back to the bed. She sobbed over it. The boy took the train and pushed it across the worn oilcloth on the floor.

The woman looked at the man for a moment . . . then she burst into tears. The man went back to the street. There was no one there. Only the cold wind and the driving rain.

By that time the Eagle Patrol were laying a parcel on the doorstep of Mrs. Higgins, at 5 Arlington Street. . . .

Happiness

“HURRAH! Finished!” Jimmy Evans laid the last card on the vacant plate and grinned up at his mother, who was busy fussing with the flowers. “All ready now, Mum.”

Mrs. Evans smiled.

“That’s right, you rascal. Now go and ask your Dad if everyone’s here. What about those little boys . . . ?”

“They haven’t come yet, Mum. We’ll have to start without them. Although Tom said.”

But he was gone . . . and next moment the electric bell shrilled. Jimmy gave a shout and went racing to the door. The hall was warm and bright, and decorations hung from the roof. Little Jimmy pulled open the door.

Standing on the step were two small boys and an old gentleman. The boys had no coats and their jerseys were thin and well patched. But their faces were bright and clean – shining as if polished. The old gentleman was thin and haggard, and a threadbare coat hung about him.

Jimmy looked at them for a moment, and then one of the boys spoke.

“Please, Mikey is too ill to come. He said could his grandfather come in his place? He needs it more than him. . . .”

Little Jimmy looked at the old man awkwardly. “I’ll ask Mum,” he said. He was away a moment, and then came back with Mrs. Evans. She smiled cheerfully at the old gentleman and the two boys.



On the road TO Adventure.

“Come away in, all of you. Jimmy, show them where to put their hats and – and – well, show them where to put their hats, and don’t stand there looking silly. Now everyone’s here. Mary!”

It had been a good idea of Jimmy’s Scoutmaster. A dozen of the Scouts in the Troop were at that moment each entertaining three small boys in their own homes. Mothers and fathers had thought it a capital idea.

And somewhere a small boy who had sent his grandfather instead was lying sick – but very happy. . . .

Complete with Whiskers

MRS. HUGHES looked at her son and roared with laughter.

“You look terrible!” she said.

One of the Scouts turned to her in dismay.

“It’s all right, isn’t it?” he asked.

Mrs. Hughes smiled.

“It’ll do, but, John, you look a sight.”

Johnny Hughes, in red cloak trimmed with white and putting the finishing touches to the Santa Claus mask, grinned hugely, and plonked the mask on to his face.

“There now!” came from behind the whiskers.

“Fine!” said one of the four Scouts who had been watching so anxiously.

“All ready then?” asked John. “No, wait a minute. I mustn’t forget the list.”

Just then the ‘phone bell rang, and John went racing for the door, red cloak flying out. He grabbed at the ‘phone, but the whiskers got in the way. He laughed and took off his mask.

“Hallo?”

“That you, John? Good. One address just come through. Am I in time? O.K. Mrs. Johnson, Lisson Street – number seventy-two. Two little girls. Make it a couple of dolls.”

John grinned mischievously.

“O.K., sir. I’ll make ‘em black ones. They like those.”

There was a chuckle from the other end.

“Just off *now*, sir,”

“Good. Best of luck. See you at the hospital this afternoon.”

A few moments later Santa Claus and four Scouts were setting out with the trek-cart of toys which had been standing outside Johnny Hughes’s house.

It was Christmas morning, and Santa Claus had a busy time before him. The Bulldog Patrol were seeing to that!

Not Forgotten

HE was sitting quietly in front of the fire, gazing vacantly into the leaping flames. He was not good to look upon. He was a ghastly caricature of what had once been a strong and healthy man.

Legs – there were no legs. Only one arm showed under the blanket that was wrapped around him. His face – no, it does not matter. . . .

For years he had lived in this quiet and restful place . . . this haven. He knew no one; no one knew him. He had remembered nothing after that shell had obliterated all somewhere on the Western Front.

“Parcel for you, Bill!” A man in blue interrupted his reverie.

“For me?”

He took the parcel and slowly untied it. It was an ounce of tobacco, and there was a card with it. “From the Scouts, wishing you a Very Happy Christmas.”

A warm glow stole over the heart of that man who was so hideous to look upon. He was a forgotten man . . . who had not been forgotten.

Knight without Armour

HE was a human derelict, a piece of flotsam drifting with the tide. . . . He had walked from Manchester, full of hope, getting lifts from kindly lorry drivers, scratching a meal here and there, but very often going hungry.

London had laughed at him. It had been all right at first, while his savings had lasted. But there had been no work . . . only wandering. And then his money had gone.

After that he had taken to begging . . . and worse. Now he lay curled up on a bench on the Embankment, newspapers covering his threadbare clothing.

A cruel biting wind cut through him, but he did not feel it; he was past feeling.

Then someone was shaking him . . . speaking to him.

“Here you are, old man. You’ll have some, won’t you?”

The human derelict sat up and looked dazedly at the man in Scout uniform. Yes, it was a man all right, even though he seemed to be in a small boy’s outfit. He held a jug of tea in one hand and a bag in the other.

The man took them greedily, muttering his thanks. All along the Embankment the Rovers were serving out hot tea and bags of food.

It was Christmas Eve. . . .

Clean-up Week

AND now, if you’re tired of stories, let us contemplate some more ideas in the matter of general adventuring for other people. First, a clean-up adventure. One week every month should be set aside in the Troop programme for a “Clean Up.” Doesn’t matter what you clean, so long as you clean something that is dirty and looks rotten that way. Start with your own Troop headquarters and the bit of ground at the back. Go on to the local beauty-spot – clean that up after the week-end debacle. Clean up the church grounds, the local War Memorial (with the necessary permission); the dirty stained-glass windows in the Church. In fact, clean up anything that looks dirty.

Bricklaying

SOME time ago I saw a picture of a clergyman somewhere up North who had himself got down to the job of rebuilding a broken-down wall round his church. It was just the sort of job Scouts would revel in. The clergyman wasn't using bricks – he had got hold of old lumps of stone such as are used in field fences in the North. Bricks or stones, it doesn't matter. If there's an old wall falling down anywhere, get some bricks or stones and mortar and build it up again. It's a good hobby. Winston Churchill, the famous Statesman, goes in for bricklaying as a hobby, so you'll be in good company.

Church Grounds

NOT very far from my own home in London is a church with a garden all round it. For years now the garden has been in a terrible state, rotting and overgrown with weeds. A few weeks ago someone had a brainwave, and now the garden is allotted out in sections, one for the Scouts, one for the Cubs, one for the Guides, one for the G.F.S. (Girls' Friendly, you fool!), and they jolly well have to get on with the business of planting dandelions and things. It's a good idea. If your church has a garden round it with lots of weeds, see what you can do about it. That's the start of a good turn.

Adventure in the Garden

IN the hot weather, birds feel the heat just as badly as we do – in towns. In the cold weather, when water is frozen, they get pretty thirsty; with snow on the ground they find it difficult to get food.

Quite a fine adventure for any Scout or Troop is to set up a bird bath and food tray in the garden at the back of the Troop headquarters, in the garden at home, or on the window-sill in the mews.

Short of anything else, put out a large dish of water, but, better still, make a concrete bath which will also serve as a decoration for the garden. Set it fairly high, out of the way of cats, and you'll have enough adventures for a year just watching the visitors that come to your feast.

Put fresh water in the bath once a day, new food on the tray.

Little Adventures

YOU want ideas? All right. Here are some that individual Scouts can do. They need no description:

1. Chop up a large supply of firewood for Mother – or an old lady who perhaps lives on her own – once a week.
2. Collect tin-foil for your local hospital.
3. Keep your old books, and take them regularly to the local children's hospital.
4. Make and fix a bird-box in your garden.
5. Collect your old copies of *The Scout* and send them to poorer Scouts in other parts of the country, or to Scouts abroad.
6. Run Mother's errands without grumbling. Quite an adventure.

Big Adventures

TROOPS and Patrols can, of course, embark on bigger good turn adventures. There are plenty of ideas for fellows with the will to do them:

1. Give a concert in aid of a poorer Troop, or in aid of a poor boys' club.
2. Take a couple of poor boys from your neighbourhood to camp some week-end – or to the summer camp.
3. Look after the repairs and painting of your own church.
4. Put on a show, or take care of the sideshows, at your church or hospital bazaar and fete.
5. Collect your old clothing, and regularly send bundles of it either to a distressed area of your own choice, or to the Personal Service League in Victoria, London, S.W.
6. Invite a Troop from a poorer neighbourhood than yours to a social in your headquarters. If they are really hard up – jolly well pay their fares. Make them feel at home. This is a very big adventure.

There are plenty of adventures waiting – if only you will look for them. Adventures don't just come to you. You have to go out and find them!

Moral

IT is calamitous to point the moral at the end of a good story, but you're going to get it here whether you like it or not.

As Scouts we seem to have forgotten that originally the Chief said every Scout should do one good turn every day. That was the framework of the good turn, but someone or other in recent years had the assumption officially to add to that framework, so that it now looks a bit top-heavy with "Every Scout is expected to do *at least* one good turn every day."

The mere fact of making it a sort of haphazard affair caused us to forget all about it, and now some Scouts don't seem to bother at all. If we can't find a good turn to do to-day, they will say, then we'll find one to-morrow. And, as you may have heard somewhere before, to-morrow is the most elusive word in the dictionary. You can never find it, because it never comes.

Let us go back to the original framework, "Every Scout is expected to do one good turn a day." And to give it the modern touch, we'll say:

EVERY SCOUT IS EXPECTED TO FIND ONE ADVENTURE TO DO FOR SOMEONE ELSE EVERY DAY!

Curiously enough, when you find one adventure to do, you usually find that half a dozen more come tumbling on top of it. Let us do our ONE good turn every day – the rest will follow.

CHAPTER IV HIGH FINANCE

NOW I don't really know whether there is anything particularly adventurous about money. For the most part it is rather a sordid subject, and the height of dullness is probably struck when one is broke.

Yet, the search for money leads men into strange and dangerous adventures. Fundamentally, the quest for money must engage the attention of every living person, and when it comes to Scouting we find no exception.

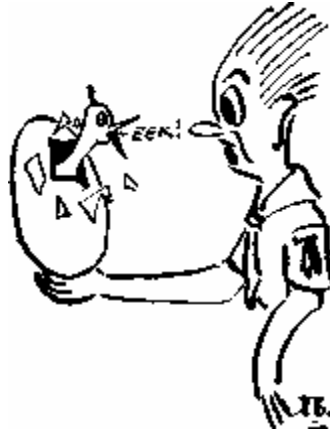
Unless we are financed by some rich patron – a ghastly state of affairs which, unfortunately, seems to exist in some parts – we are all faced with the problem of "raising the wind" as soon as we form a Troop. Money has to be obtained, whether we are building a headquarters, buying camp equipment, paying the annual subscription to the local Association, or purchasing a piece of rope with which to tie knots.

And since this beastly necessity of raising money exists we might as well make an adventure of it as make it the dull business it so often is.

To go back to the Scouting girders, we find the Chief advising Scouts to *earn* money, and not to *beg* for it. On that simple foundation of “earning” we can build all the adventures we please. From the boy’s point of view – and, incidentally, while he has a few coppers in his pocket, he isn’t really interested in the raising of money – the adventure of earning money is much more satisfying than the money itself.

All right. Let us think up a few adventures – and let the money take care of itself:

Egg Day



Each brings an egg.

INSTEAD of subscriptions, each Scout brings an egg along to Headquarters on Meeting Night. The Patrol Leaders collect the eggs, and they can be sold on behalf of funds. This idea was carried out once a month by a country Troop I know, but you needn’t stop at eggs. Find something for which there is sufficient demand to create a market.

Family Service

SCOUTS go out in pairs, and stay with small children while their parents go out for the evening, to the pictures or to a dance. If you have reliable fellows on the job they will get permanent weekly engagements and collect a small fee each time. Contacts can be made among friends, through the church, and so on.

The Vacuum Parade

SOME Scouts in your Troop may have vacuum cleaners in the home. If Mother is willing – and Scouts can be very persuasive with mothers – these fellows can build up a list of customers for whom they will vacuum the house every Saturday – for a small fee.

Swap Market

YOU may have heard of the “Swap Market” run by *The Scout*. Well, a Troop I know has opened a Swap Market among the Scouts, parents, and friends of the Group. The Troop publishes on duplicated sheets each week a list of things people have to swap, things they want to obtain. If necessary people can buy the things instead of offering something else as a swap, but in every exchange of goods or money 2d. must be paid by each party to the exchange. The money so gathered goes to Group Funds.

They've just started the game, so I can't tell you yet whether they make any money out of it, but it's an idea other Troops may like to explore as a money-raising activity.

Pancake Suppers

THIS is an idea very popular in America among Scout Troops. Older Scouts act as cooks, the serving being done by the younger Scouts. Charge about a bob. The supper is of pancakes, sausages, coffee, or tea, etc. Entertainment if you wish. Flour mills or grocers (says America, but I'm not so sure) are often willing to donate enough pancake flour for advertising. One Association in America served 350 people and made a profit of £14. All of the suppers, I am told, make money. It is nice to know!

Doughnut Sales

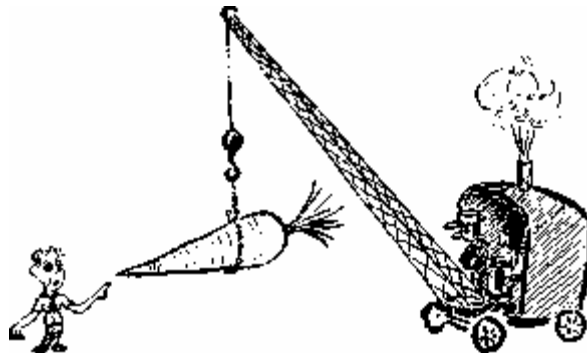
AN idea successful in small communities like villages, or the suburbs. The doughnuts are made by Scouts – under the supervision of mothers – and sold to people in the community by the Scouts.

Have a Carrot

A TROOP in Australia – which is a long way away, so you can't argue – some time ago held a Carrot Club Show.

The idea was a sort of competition in things horticultural or agricultural. People paid entry fees, and brought along their pet carrots, or tame marrows, and prizes were awarded for the most choice examples of these earthy creatures.

There were forty-nine sections in the show – the longest carrot, the heaviest pumpkin, the largest sunflower, the blackest tulip, and so on. And so that nobody should be left out in the cold the Troop also arranged sections for the best drawings of a flower or veg., and for gadgets connected with *flora* and *fauna*, Entry fee for each section was 6d. for adults, 3d. for half-adults, or 2s. 6d. per adult put you in all the sections you desired. A shilling put the children into everything, too.



Bringing home the carrot!

Now I don't for one moment suggest that you should hold a Chelsea Flower Show, or something, but if country Troops are searching round for a money-raising racket, here you are.

If you combine the business with a Fete, it seems it ought to go down well.

Penny Carnivals

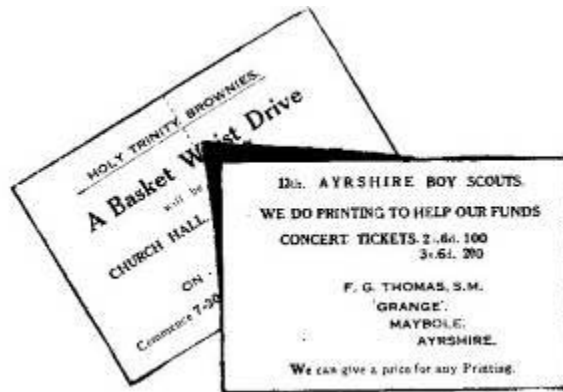
RATHER like bazaars. You have fortune-tellers, cinema, minstrel shows, "hot-dog" stands, snake charmers, tea gardens, strong-man stunts, sell balloons, ice-cream cornets. It costs a penny to get

into any of the exhibitions. One Troop made £40 out of such a show. Like a bazaar – only much more action; more adventure!

Printing

FOR telling you this I shall get it in the neck from every professional printer, but I can't help it. We can make and sell sweets in competition with the local confectioners, so I don't see that printers should hold a monopoly. The 13th Ayrshire Troop told me about it, so they might as well tell you. Here is Second William Hearton of the Squirrel Patrol, 13th Ayrshire, to give you the whole low-down:

“When our Troop,” says Bill Hearton, “was reorganised in 1934, our Scoutmaster bought a second-hand printing machine. This machine has helped us to raise our funds a great deal. After we had had the machine for a few weeks most of us were able to print whist tickets and concert tickets. We are also able to print our shoulder tabs with the machine at the cost of 1d. for the whole Troop.



Some samples of printing done by the 1st Ayrshire Troop.

“Our Scoutmaster has been a great help to the Troop in many ways, but chiefly in the printing line, for he does most of the advertising of the printing among other Troops, and generally succeeds in getting many orders. So we have been very busy for the last month or two on Wednesday nights, as this is our printing night.

“The largest order which we have received was from a Troop in our own district, the number being about five thousand altogether. During the year we have printed about ten thousand tickets. We not only help to raise our funds by the printing machine, but also help others by supplying them cheaply. They are pleased and so are we!”

Second Hearton doesn't tell you much about the financial side, but perhaps I can help there. In my own Troop we've been printing for some years, but have never attempted to make any money out of it. We didn't think the results we achieved were good enough for that.

The new machine costs about 45s., but on top of that you have to buy type. (I should think a workable supply will cost about £2, but in that I'm guessing.) We bought our machine second-hand for £1, and it's a pretty ancient model now, missing on a couple of cylinders!

Once this outlay has been made there is little other cost. Printing ink lasts for years, and tickets are very cheap. The 13th Ayrshire print concert tickets at as. 6d. per 100, or 35. 6d. per 200, which is certainly a modest charge.

All types of tickets can be printed – headed notepaper, billheads, and such things. We tried printing a Troop magazine once, but it took us about three weeks to set up one page of type. We didn't try any more!



Second William Hearnton turning out a printing job on the Troop machine.

We use our machine mainly for printing our own concert tickets and such-like, and as such it is an asset, and worth the money.

If you are interested, the Adana Printing Co., of Twickenham, are the people who make the machines and supply the type. Whether you make any money out of the game or not, printing is certainly a good hobby, and many a chap has gone on to earn his £10 a week as a printer from the modest start he made on a little Adana.

Have a go. . . .

Dog Washing Department

DOG washing is a messy business at the best of times. Dog owners would enjoy a dog washing service. Patrols could do it. Get out handbills, and personally deliver them to dog owners in your neighbourhood. Charge according to weight of dog, 1s. 6d. a 10-lb. dog is a fair idea. Once a start is made you can soon build up a clientele (high-brow word meaning collection of customers.)

The Repair Shop

ADVERTISE and distribute handbills showing how Scouts are willing to repair toys, broken furniture, china, crockery, etc. A good adventure for the Scouts; a money-making business.

Flag-poles

MAKE and erect for people flag-poles or radio masts. Make arrangements to get the timber cheaply, in quantity, through a timber-mill or factory. Sounds a bit like pioneering to me. Funny.

Raising Plants for Window-boxes

THIS needs some skill in horticulture (I believe that's the word!), but will show good returns. Scouts may even make the window-boxes for sale, and then keep their customers supplied throughout the various seasons.

Sheer Swindles

FOR my sins, just after Christmas I went to see Bertram Mills' Circus at Olympia. Having seen men and women hurl themselves across space with an abandon that was horrible to contemplate, seen horses dance and elephants do the Highland fling, seen men curl themselves into knots and throw themselves to the lions, so to speak, it was necessary for us to "do" the fun-fair next door.

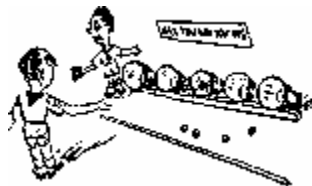
That little jaunt knocked me back nearly twenty good shillings . . . and all we got for the cash was a rabbit (stuffed!), one broken coconut, a packet of French fondants, and a pain in the neck from peering over the "Wall of Death."

Oh, yes . . . and some ideas for getting money out of people's pockets. I give them with some hesitation, because I have been "had" by all of them, but since people are continually asking for ideas for sideshows, who am I to argue?

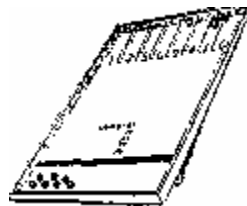
Ball in the Bucket. – This, I believe, is an old idea, but organisers of fun-fairs tell me it is a "money-spinner," whatever that is.

You lay half a dozen pails on the slant against the wall, and people stand about a yard and a half away, or farther if you like (that makes it harder!), and have to throw wooden balls into the buckets. They get five balls for 2d., and if three of the balls stay in the buckets they win a colossal prize. I understand the secret of success is to stand sideways to throw the balls, and put them in with a rolling motion, but it would have been all the same if I'd thrown them in whilst standing on my head – for all the balls I got into the buckets.

Roll 'em and Win – which really means "Roll 'em and Lose" only they don't tell you that. You need six boards – easy to make, and a collection of thin nails or gramophone needles. The sketch shows what the board looks like. The idea is that you get seven balls for 2d., 3d., or what you will. Each alley-way was given a certain number, haphazard from 1 to 6; and you just rolled the seven little black balls down from the top line. Whatever alleys they went into counted in your score. You had to use all seven balls, and if you scored 21, 11, 29, and so on, you won a prize. I can't remember the scores, but you can work out the most improbable ones for yourself!



*This is Ball in the Bucket, and it's
a "money-spinner"*



Roll, Bowl, or Pitch – which is similar to the last one, but instead of alleys you use holes big enough for the balls to stay in. Holes are numbered, and all balls must be used. Certain particular scores win prizes, Balls are as large as tennis ones – use tennis balls if you like. Seven balls for 2d. again. Roll ‘em from the top line. Decide your own winning scores. Holes are 1 to 6.



All the Adventures

AND, finally, just to show we have nothing up our sleeves, a collection of all the money-raising adventures which need no description, but are here just to refresh your memory:

1. Concerts, revues, gang shows, and such. Hard work, but high adventure.
2. Bazaars, olde worlde funne fayres, and things of that sort. More hard work.
3. Cinema shows, television demonstrations (Whoopee!).
4. Selling junk – old bottles, newspapers, tin- and lead-foil, unless such work interferes with funds for your local hospital.
5. Toy-making, sweet-making, jam-making, pickling onions!
6. Selling service – boy-job days, and so on.
7. Upholstery, where the Scouts have the necessary talent. Covering chairs, settees, car seats.
8. Gardening, and selling the produce.
9. Poultry, bee-keeping, and all the other “farming” ideas.
10. Tailoring, if any Scouts are interested in the work.
11. Woodworking, and all other forms of badge work which may be turned into money-making ideas.
12. Breeding – dogs, chickens, rabbits, mice – anything people like to buy in the way of pets.

There’s a round dozen to be going on with. Don’t do men out of jobs, but get hold of work and ideas that won’t get you in bad with local traders. Times are hard, and we don’t want to deprive people of their livelihood, no matter how hard up we may be as Scouts.

No Adventures at All

WE would not complete this chapter without a thought on the money-making ideas that are no adventures for Scouts at all. In fact, they are just “rackets.”

1. Begging, in all its vicious forms.
2. Putting half the Troop funds on a “dead cert.”!
3. Football pools.
4. Whist drives. “Devil’s visiting cards” (Whoopee!).
5. Jumble sales.
6. Bad concerts.
7. Er – dances! Except, perhaps, for Rovers.
8. Sales of work – when the work is lousy.
9. Gramophone recitals.

10. Scoutmaster paying out of his own pocket.

There is plenty of adventure waiting in legitimate money-making ideas, however. Make it an adventure. Remember the story of the old gentleman who came across a number of men laying bricks, and asked them in turn what they were doing.

Said the first: "I'm earning fifty shillings a week."

Said the second: "I'm laying bricks."

Said the third: "I'm building a cathedral."

There seems to be a moral there somewhere. Perhaps you can find it!

CHAPTER V

ADVENTURING THROUGH THE SCOUT TESTS

THOUGH it is rather a loose generalisation, it would probably be true to say that the basis of Scout training is set on a scheme of proficiency tests. The practical training side depends largely on the gaining of knowledge in order to pass a certain test and gain a certain badge.

The badge, of course, is only the means to an end; the training and the qualifying in specific subjects so designed to assist the boy to better and fuller manhood is the root of the matter.

In the framework of Scouting, therefore, we are given an imposing scheme of training. The scheme is plain and unadorned. "Know the composition of the Union Jack and the right way to fly it." It is very simple and easy to understand.

The very simplicity of the scheme is often a large stumbling-block for the unimaginative.

Take such a simple test as "Know the signs and salute." Well, if the tracking signs are drawn on to a piece of paper and explained to the Scout, and he is shown how to make the correct salutes and when to use them, he has been taught the necessary knowledge. One has kept to the letter of the training; one has done one's duty as it were.

In this lies the fallacy of taking the tests baldly as your basis of training. When the Chief designed the scheme of training he meant it as a framework on which the imaginative Scouter could build. "Knowing the signs" doesn't simply mean drawing them on a piece of paper. Of course the boy might learn and *know* them that way, but we have lost the whole value and point of the test.

Now to my mind all this has always been very elementary; it may be to you, who are reading this book now. Yet in spite of this the greater proportion of Troops go through the letter of the tests with no adornment whatsoever.

You can go into any district and see Scouts at their Troop meetings drawing tracking signs on pieces of paper, on the floor with chalk, tying clove hitches round their arm, signalling across the headquarters, playing "Kim's Game" because it is much easier than the real test, explaining *where* the splints should go – "Because we don't happen to have any splints knocking about this evening."

These things are not isolated cases. They are happening all over the country.

Although, as I have explained, the scheme of the tests and their application appears very elementary, hundreds of Scouters, and in turn their Patrol Leaders, don't seem to have grasped it.

And, oddly, scores of Scouters come away from training-camps still without having grasped this simple – not subtle – idea behind the scheme of practical Scout training.

More odd still is that all this is in spite of the fact that the Chief Scout gave many pointers in the matter of practical application of the Scout tests, so devised the scheme that subsequent and higher tests automatically introduced and embraced the practical use of

previous tests passed. The tracking test in Second Class would not be possible without the knowledge of the signs test in the Tenderfoot. Perhaps that is why so many Scouters skip the tracking test and make shift with “Kim’s Game.” I’ve often wondered.

However, I begin to labour the point. Let us take a brief glance at the Scout tests and see if we can’t throw a few bricks on to the foundations. It can be no more than a brief glance, for an exhaustive survey of the practical possibilities of turning the Scout tests into big adventures would need half a dozen books of this size.

Adventuring through the Scout tests. . . .

INTRODUCTION OF A SCOUT

HAVE you ever studied the mind of a new boy entering your Troop? Have a look at him. There he is – Master John Williams, age 12, fair-haired, blue-eyed, C. of E., Marylebone Central School, no previous service as Cub or Scout, introduced by Scout Keith Burgess.



Burgess is a funny sort of guy, always getting into mischief – too full of life probably. Maybe he’s told young Williams that you can have a good lark in the Scouts. Perhaps he’s told him that he’ll be able to go camping at week-ends with the Patrol.

Look at Johnnie again. Perhaps his father has made him join. “Do you good, my boy. Open-air life, and all that. Something to do at nights. Keep you out of mischief. I don’t like you hanging round the streets so much at night.”

Maybe Johnnie is the quiet sort. Perhaps he thinks there is going to be something adventurous in being a Scout. His cousin, who lives in Worthing and is a Second in the 999th Worthing Troop, has told him of the big stunts they get up to.

Perhaps Johnnie doesn’t want to join the Scouts anyway, but is just coming at Mother’s request to see what it’s like – with the firm determination of getting out at the first opportunity. Yes, Johnnie might be any of these characters. But what happens to Johnnie?

In a hundred Troops he is displayed before the Scoutmaster, or the A.S.M., who smiles kindly upon him. “Yes, we’d like you to be a Scout. What’s your name? Here, wait a minute till I get a piece of paper to write it down. There. Now let me see. Hi, Jim, here’s a new boy – he can go into your Patrol. You’re one short. There you are, Williams – you go with Jim.” And Johnny passes from the ken of the Scouter, who, heaven knows, has enough to do running the Troop meeting without worrying about odd few boys who come in.

But let’s pursue Johnnie. Into the tender mercies of Patrol Leader Jim Glover he is now committed. For a brief moment or two he is lost in a welter of Troop games, and then he appears again seated precariously in the midst of six or seven other boys in a corner of the room.

He listens a little abstractedly to what is going on, and then is suddenly caught up in the stream. “Now you. Fred – you go over there and show this new chap the knots.”

With Fred Hartley, Johnnie now retires to a distant spot. A piece of string – no, perhaps that is going too far – we’ll say a piece of rope, is thrust into his hand, and Fred proceeds literally to tie him into knots. Fred himself is a little doubtful about the bowline, but he makes a



mighty fine effort. When the effort fails, he says, "Hmm. We'd better do the signs." He feels on safer ground here. "Got a bit of paper?" he appeals to Johnnie, and Johnnie, having a little fearfully disgorged a piece of paper from his pocket, hands it over. A stub of pencil, and Fred is drawing mighty fine hieroglyphics. "This road to be followed – see?"

But that's enough of that. Perhaps I have exaggerated a little – but not too much. Very similar introductory scenes take place in hundreds of Troops.

The peculiar characteristics of Johnnie don't matter very much; the introduction usually follows the same lines. What is Johnnie's reaction? If he came expecting some sport, he was unlucky. If he expected adventure like his cousin, he was unlucky again. If he didn't want to join the Scouts anyway, he was offered a mighty fine helping-hand to keep out. Probably the only idea that nearly applied was Father's suggestion: "Do you good, my boy!"

And, funnily enough, that is the only thing – no matter what his characteristics – that we can be sure Johnnie wasn't at all concerned about.

THE TENDERFOOT TEST

FIRST impressions count for so much. A Scouter's interest – or apparent disinterest – in a new boy may make all the difference whether we gain another fellow for Scouting or not. Schoolroom methods offered to a boy who comes seeking adventure will kill an illusion.

The Tenderfoot Test – a boy's first introduction to the fundamentals of Scouting – should be one of the major adventures of badge work.

It is a good idea, if you can so arrange it, for the new boy to spend no more than half an hour at the first Troop meeting. Let him join in the games at the beginning of the meeting, and afterwards take him aside. Offer him a "Glad-to-meet-you-old-man" yarn, with a few brief words on Scouting adventure. Don't worry him with tests and badges; excite him with tracking and pioneering, thrilling games, and adventurous camping. And then tell him that you think you'll put him into Jim Glover's Patrol. Jim Glover, of course, is one of the best Patrol Leaders in the Troop, and it's some honour to go into his Patrol. Speaking privately, of course, you think that Jim's Patrol is one of the best in the Troop – and that's why you think Johnnie will like Jim's Patrol best.

"Hi, Jim. This is a new fellow I want you to meet. Johnnie Williams. I think you'd like to have him in your Patrol. Have a yarn with him now, and see if you can't arrange to take him out with some of your fellows this Saturday. . . ."

Of course, you may have your own methods. You may like the Court of Honour or Patrol Leaders' Council to settle which Patrol the new boy shall go into – even to decide whether a boy shall be accepted into the Troop at all. Those are bricks you can make for yourself.

Personally, I like the hail-fellow method, and I think a boy does too. But be guided by your own experience. What may work excellently in my Troop may fail miserably in yours.

After Johnnie has had his yarn with the Patrol Leader and arranged to meet some of the Scouts on Saturday afternoon, he should leave the meeting. His appetite has been whetted—and that's an excellent start.

Signs and Salute. – On Saturday afternoon the Patrol Leader and one or two other Scouts can take Johnnie out into the woods or the fields and the P.L. can lay a trail. Of course Johnnie will have to be shown how to make signs with natural objects, like twigs, grass, and stones, or else he'll never be able to join in. But then, right from the start, he will see the signs in action, will make practical use of them himself, and with



the help of the other fellows will actually follow a trail made with Scout Signs.

On the way home Jim will show the new fellow how to make the Scout salute, and tell him when to use it. He will give him his own secret sign, tell him about the Scout handshake (“And don’t tell anybody else about this, Johnnie, will you, because it’s a secret only known to Scouts. You will always be able to tell another Scout by the way he shakes hands with you”).

Quite an adventure for Johnnie that Saturday afternoon. And, oddly enough, he’s learned the test about “Signs and Salute,” without any schoolroom atmosphere. He is just learning it, because he wouldn’t be any jolly use in the tracking game unless he knew the signs. And that’s incentive enough for any boy.

Knots and Whipping. – Next Saturday afternoon Jim can take the same gang out again and lower Johnnie from a cliff, so to speak. When Johnnie wants to lower someone else he’ll of course have to learn the *bowline*; he’ll stragulate the fellow with any other knot. Since we’re making an afternoon of it, we’ll put up a hike-tent. “But we’ve left the poles behind. Still, the staves will do. See, Johnnie, this is the way to attach a rope to a pole so that it won’t slip up or down. A *dove hitch*, see. Go on, you have a go.

“But this guy-line’s a bit long. We can shorten it, though, with a hitch like this. I’ll show you, if you like. We call it a *sheep-shank*. See? It shortens a rope.

“This other guy-line’s a little short – won’t reach the peg. Better use another bit of rope. Hi, Fred – see if there’s a bit of rope in my ruck-sack, will you. Thanks. But, gosh, this is thicker than the other rope. We’ll have to use a *sheet-bend* for joining them together. This is it. You try it, if you like. You have to know all these little wrinkles if you go camping with Scouts.

“Golly, look how some blighter left this end of the rope – all frayed out. Better *whip* it now, to prevent it fraying any more. I’ve got a bit of twine in my pocket. Yes, I’ll show you how it’s done, if you’d like to know.

“There now. We can attach the rope to the peg with a *round-turn-and-two-half-hitches*. This is easy. You try it.

“What? Haven’t the others finished cooking the tea yet? While we’re waiting I’ll show you how to tie a Scout knot – a *reef knot*. Oh, by the way, you have to know all those knots for the Tenderfoot Test, which you’ll want to pass soon. D’you think you know them?”

If Johnnie is the boy I think he is, he’ll be tying those knots at brief intervals all the next week – and without any heavy words of advice from the Scouter or Patrol Leader. And, strangely, he has learned the uses of the knots without any chatter – and in a way he’ll never forget. He’s seen the knots in action.

Oh, yes, the Patrol Leader naturally had the guy-lines fixed, and the rope ready frayed out. Why not? That was part of the adventure. Oh no, the Patrol Leader didn’t devise the training himself. He can’t be expected to think of everything. The Scouter planned it, and passed the advice on to his Patrol Leader, That’s what is known as giving your Patrol Leader a useful lead.

Scout Staff audits Uses. – On the second afternoon’s outing, Johnnie, of course, had to come armed with a staff. It was much too long for him, but the P.L. passed



on the hint that he should cut it so that the top reached his nose.

Johnnie saw his staff used to keep up the tent, he used it himself for jumping over a ditch, he saw one of the other Scouts use it to help another fellow climb a tree. Jim explained a few other uses for the staff on the way home. Told Johnnie it would be a good idea to carve his Patrol animal on the top.

On the second afternoon, too, since Jim has put up a camp he naturally puts up a flag as well. A couple of staves and a small Jack. (Another use for the staff.) “Oh, by the way, Johnnie, see the flag? That’s another thing you have to know about before you can become a Scout,”

The Flag. – It is then very simple for the Patrol Leader to explain the composition of the flag, and show Johnnie the right way to fly it. If Jim himself has learned from someone in this way before, he will strike the right note. That is what is known as carrying on tradition.

The Scout Laws. – Probably the only “indoor” activity concerned with young Johnnie Williams’s introduction to Scouting is the learning of the Scout Laws. I have always felt – and still feel – that this part of the Tenderfoot Test is the Scoutmaster’s personal job.

When the Patrol Leader is satisfied that his new charge knows the Tenderfoot Test inside out from his own practical experience, the Scoutmaster takes the boy aside, and asks what he thinks about Scouting now that he’s been in the Troop three weeks. If the boy has had such experience as we have described he will obviously say, “Fine, sir” (skipper, or whatever it is you have your Scouts call you).

That is the moment to say, “Well, look, Johnnie, there’s one last thing you have to hear about before you really join us and are enrolled into the Troop. You’ve probably, as you say, found Scouting a jolly fine game. Well, so it is, and like every other game, it has to have a set of rules. Well, here are our rules, and I want you to get to know them thoroughly.

“A Scout’s Honour is to be trusted. That’s the first one. We have this rule because it’s essential to the game that you and I should be able to trust and rely on each other, and so that each Scout will be able to trust and believe absolutely in the word of another Scout. We can’t be real friends and brothers without we are able to trust one another. You see the idea? If you tell me something I will always believe it absolutely – because, being a Scout, I know your word isn’t to be doubted. You never tell a lie. I can trust you. It is a fine thing to have anyone think that about you, but it can never fail while you are a Scout – because it is your honour, your reputation. You see what I mean?”

There is no need for me to go all through the Scout Laws. You will know what they mean as well as I do. But try to put yourself in the mind of the boy while you are explaining them. Make the idea behind each as simple and understandable as you can.

Don’t rely on your own standard of knowledge. I have personally found that the average elementary schoolboy of 11-12 often hasn’t the foggiest notion what the word “honour” means from the mere point of view of dictionary explanation. “Thrift” is usually a new word to him. “Loyalty” is something, as a word, which he has never met with before. The word “Courteous” is another stumbling-block.

Yet I have come across Scouters who interpret the First Scout Law to a boy something on these lines: “Well, you know what your honour is, my boy. Honour. An Englishman’s word is his bond, and all that. See what I mean? I can trust you on your honour. If you say it is so, well, it jolly well is so. I trust you on your honour.”

“Yes, sir,” says the boy, and hasn’t the slightest notion what it’s all about. Ten to one when he is next asked what is meant by “A Scout’s Honour is to be trusted,” he will remember one phrase, “An Englishman’s word is his bond, sir.”

My own Association, for better or for worse, used to have what was known as an examination board for people applying for Scouter’s warrants. Part of the examination was a rough survey of

the major points of the Scout training scheme. I happened at one time to be on the Executive Committee of the Association and in such capacity had to serve on the examination board and ask prospective Scouters – men who had often been serving as Scouts, Patrol Leaders, and Rovers in the Movement for many years – to interpret for me the Scout Laws.

I used to say, “Imagine I am a small boy and you are explaining the Scout Laws to me. Just carry on as you would do in that case.”

My hat! I am not exaggerating in any way when I say that 80 per cent, of the explanations were quite unintelligible to me (and I am of fair intelligence, and able to grasp most things), let alone to a small boy.

I will not point the moral.

Promise. – Well, now we have fairly well embraced the Tenderfoot Test in an adventurous way. Trimmings and bricks of your own design and fancy can be added to please yourself and to suit your own local needs. I have explained quite the simplest and mildest structure.

As the final step in the new boy’s introduction to Scouting there is the Enrolment and Promise. What you make of the enrolment ceremony, whether you hold it in the open air, in the clubroom; whether you make it full and elaborate, or short and simple, these are things to decide for yourself. Personally, I like it to be simple as possible. The more simple it is the more impressive. If it can be held in the open air so much the better. After flagbreak in camp is an ideal time.

Don’t introduce any Indian ceremonies or naming, don’t add any dangerous or fearful initiation ceremonies, don’t make it too long, don’t hold it in a church – as some Troops do.

Before the ceremony take the boy aside again and explain the Promise quite boldly. Make sure he understands that the Promise is important, and that he intends to stick by it. Introduce briefly, at this moment, the religious side of Scouting; his Duty to God.

If you can introduce Johnnie Williams into your Troop in this way, you won’t have to worry much about him. He’ll make a jolly fine Scout, and he will have learned quite unconsciously what a mighty big adventure Scouting really is.

SECOND AND FIRST CLASS TESTS

WHEN I am angry, temperamental, or depressed – and even a Jack Blunt has such moments – I make soap. There is no particular significance in my choice of diversion. Some people like to ease their minds by throwing the crockery about, having hysterics, or counting up to a hundred. I prefer to make soap. It is very simple. Soda, fat, and a salt solution. Just the things one has about the house.

Odd, perhaps, that I should choose to make soap, but fairly reasonable, all things considered. Having had a very expensive education, at a very expensive school, I partook of chemistry lessons. Now, not so very many years after pursuing the subject of “stinks,” as we indelicately termed it, all I can remember of the whole wretched subject is how to make soap.

Looking back on it now, this fact becomes very interesting and significant. The making of soap was one of the few experiments we really did ourselves. I can remember listening for hours to lectures on physical and practical chemistry, but the only thing I remember actually doing for myself was making soap. Now, after all these years, I can remember precisely nothing of the lectures, but I know exactly how to make soap.

You notice the inference. Of course. Really to learn and remember anything one must do it for oneself. Five minutes of “doing” is worth five hours of listening and theorising.

In this simple – and very elementary, let it be added – fact we can find the real key to all Scout Badge work, and especially the Second and First Class Badges. Every test in these particular badges is passed more quickly and thoroughly by practical work than by all the classroom theory.

Perhaps you don't believe that these badges *are* gained by theorising. Happy man if you don't. But, actually, the greater proportion of Second and First Class Badges gained this year, for instance, were earned on theory rather than practice.

How many Scouts passed their signalling tests in both badges by signalling the length of a clubroom, and facing an examiner who shouted what he wanted from a distance of no more than ten yards? How many in your district? Eighty per cent, or even higher, would probably be the average figure. Yet this was theory – not the practical application of the signalling test.

How many Scouts chose “Kim's Game” instead of tracking – because it was easier and could be done in the clubroom? How many presented an article made at woodwork or metal-work in school rather than pursue the doubtful test of axeman-ship? How many Scouts were told – just told – how to treat and bandage a wound, and in turn *told* the examiner just how he would do it? How many found every pressure-point, and actually stopped the flow of blood in the arteries, when they studied the circulation of the blood?

You can answer these questions how you please. The answers may give an excellent line on why things may be failing, or why it is difficult to raise interest in badge work.

It has always been difficult to create interest in a lecture. It savours of the classroom, from which Scouting should actually provide an escape for a boy.

Let me scan some of the Second and First Class Tests from a practical point of view then. I have lumped the two badges together in one chapter because so many of the tests are a following on and higher grade of the same subject. The brickwork we can build about them applies to both badges.

Service, Savings Bank, Training a Recruit, and such tests, are necessarily so practical and elementary in themselves that I shall not touch on them. Let us rather consider some of the subjects about which we weave such high and remarkable theory.

First Aid. – Some years ago, in my own district, an errand boy on a bicycle was knocked down by a private car. His thigh was simply slashed open by the metalwork of his own machine, and he died from loss of blood within a few minutes.

Five hundred people collected at the cross-roads where the accident occurred, according to the report in the local papers, and the Coroner, at the subsequent inquest, pointed out that it was a pity there had been no qualified First Aid man in the crowd, for prompt action would undoubtedly have saved the boy's life.

That story has always created a big impression on my mind. I wonder vaguely even now whether they were any Scouts in that crowd, and if there had been whether they would have been able to do anything.

It is this sort of moment that we want to keep in mind when giving a Scout training in First Aid. If a First Class Scout in your Troop – or my Troop – couldn't have simply and quickly dealt with that emergency, then all our First Aid training is wasted.

Pursue the First Aid adventure from this angle. Whether the Patrol Leader gives the training, the A.S.M., or you, make sure that the Scout *does* everything for himself.

It is not sufficient to tell him how to stop bleeding from the nose. He must be shown – and do for himself – all the actions necessary for the treatment of the offending nostril. Similarly, he should actually treat and bandage a wound, even though there are no practical wounds about at the moment of training. If you like realism, use red ink!

Let the boy use a roller bandage, apply iodine, roll back an eyelid with a matchstick. In fact, leave nothing to chance. If he does everything himself he will never forget, and in First Aid especially is this important.

The First Class First Aid Test is even more important. It is not sufficient for a boy to be shown the circulation of the blood, and to have the pressure-points indicated to him on a chart. He should hunt for and discover each pressure-point, and definitely stop the flow of blood by pressure, flexion, and by the use of the tourniquet.

The practical use of splints, stretchers, and such, seems to have gained a bigger hold within recent years. The necessity is obvious.

Doing instead of *seeing* is the secret of First Aid. In this way it can be – and is – a big adventure. There will be no dullness in First Aid – if you make it a practical subject.

Adventures can be introduced, however. Bring practical application of the subject into some of your Surprise Items. If the A.S.M. has “fainted” during some game, let each Patrol treat him in turn.

If he can manage to break a leg during a weighty moment it can be quite a useful attainment. My infallible method of dealing with dull bores who come to the Troop meeting and insist on “just saying a few words to the boys” is, after the fifteenth minute of the few words, for the A.S.M. to come into the Troop Room, trip over the mat, and break his leg. Immediately I call each Patrol in turn to treat the fracture.

“Just a Surprise Item to try them out, sir,” I explain to the dull bore. “You don’t mind me breaking in on your yarn? I think you’ll be interested.”

It always works. The dull bore is invariably most impressed. And of course there isn’t any time for him to say any more after it’s all over.

To continue, the practical application of First Aid will make a useful “obstacle” throughout games in the outdoors. For a Patrol to come on a smuggler with a cracked skull is useful practice. Or across trails we can lay bodies with notes pinned to them announcing, “I have just been brought out of the water unconscious. Deal with me.”

In all these games, of course, you must observe care. I know of a Scout who took things too literally, and during one of our mock accidents actually went to fetch the doctor. It required a lot of explaining . . . to the doctor!

Signalling. – Just now there is much talk of war, of air raids, of big guns, and bigger battleships . . . and I don’t know how it is with your district, but in our district, in common with all other London Boroughs, A.R.P. is making things quite exciting. We have had several “black outs,” mock air raids, and other startling events, and the Scouts have of course joined in.

And while we’re on the subject, I reckon I look mighty cute in a gas mask. But that’s neither here nor there. Just now it occurs to me that in the event of war – which Heaven forbid – Scouts with a knowledge of the Morse signalling code will be mighty useful.

Therefore, right away, let us all learn Morse. Semaphore is all very well, but it’s a bit out-of-date, and the shame of it is that most Troops learn Semaphore in preference to Morse.

Now, just for the fun of it, let’s all learn Morse – no matter whether we know Semaphore or not. Let each Patrol rig up a Morse buzzer outfit, running from one room to another, and let us signal messages across on it.

For still more fun, as we get hot at the business, let us bring a radio set into Troop headquarters and pick up the Morse – and try to read that.

Now, all that seems as good an introduction to adventure as any.

A thing can become of far greater interest when it has a purpose. The mere learning of signalling – because you have to in order to pass such and such a test is not such fun as learning it because you want to listen in to trawlers on the high seas, or to be ready to offer your services in the event of a war.

It is more fun and adventure, incidentally, to learn any other subject – First Aid, for instance – because it has a purpose behind it. Better to learn First Aid because we may one day be able to save someone’s life instead of because we have to do it in order to gain our First Class Badge.

But signalling. . . . Make it a Troop activity rather than a piece of badge work. To go out into the open and signal even by Semaphore, but better still by Morse, from one hill to another, is adventure. Signalling across the clubroom isn’t. To improve the afternoon we can light a fire, put on some damp leaves, and make smoke signals. We can catch the sun and signal by heliograph. We can wait till it’s dark and signal with lamps. Adventures? Yes, of course they are, even to the modern boy.

Yet I have heard men – important men – suggest that signalling should be taken out of the tests. You can’t indicate to the boy any purpose in it, they say, and therefore it is useless.

Purpose? Adventure? You can find both in the signalling test if you are prepared to make a few bricks.

Cooking. – There is little, perhaps, to say of cooking, although I have heard tell of Scouts who passed the test on the stove in the clubroom! Most fellows, however, will cook their half a pound of steak and two potatoes and find it quite an adventure – especially in the eating.

But too many Troops leave it there. It is only lack of imagination again. The test is there not simply to get a boy to cook some steak and potatoes. It is there to serve as an introduction to the whole subject of cooking and the fending-for-himself of we which sometimes loosely speak.

The First Class cooking test takes the subject a step farther, and that should be the idea in cooking. Most boys are interested in cooking for themselves. You might let them do it sometimes.

How often does the ordinary Scout get an opportunity of cooking for himself in *your* Troop? In many Troops I have seen the Scoutmaster proudly point to one boy and say, “He’s our cook. Always does the cooking, you know.” It is tragic. Every Scout should have an opportunity of adding to his cooking experiences at week-end camps and at the summer camp.

And don’t be afraid of adventuring in cooking. Making bread in one’s jacket is still a mighty fine adventure, even though the Chief invented it hundreds of years ago. At camps, present each Patrol with a packet of sponge-cake powder and let them get on with it. Be ready with surprises. Omelettes for breakfast are not impossible.

Ovens with roasts, cakes, and pies, hay-boxes, frying a kipper on the end of a green stick, roasting a bird in clay, baking potatoes in leaves, cooking an egg in half an orange peel, boiling water in a paper bag. These are some of the little adventures you can find in cooking. And for the boy they *are* adventures.

Tracking. – If you can get over the hoodoo of “Kim’s Game,” you might try tracking some time. It is the next step on from the “Signs” test in the Tenderfoot.

The actual test, “follow a trail for half a mile,” needs little explanation – it is an adventure anyway. But – and it is here where many of us go astray – this simple little test is just an introduction to a huge adventure. It is a sort of whetting of the appetite, put into the Scouting scheme as the *start of* the whole field of tracking.

So many Troops, where they *do* make use of the tracking test, make it a matter of conclusion. When tracking is introduced into the Troop programme at any other time it comes as a sort of Surprise Item, or a new kind of game we’ve just found.

Whereas, having given your Scouts a start in tracking, you should go on weaving the subject in your programme as a progressive adventure. From ordinary tracks we can go on to the use of stones and grasses, of danger signs, of natural trails and sign.

From there we go to the “reading” of *sign*, the setting of tracking problems, leading on to deduction. On again to the use of plaster-casts for recording *sign*, to the study of animal tracks, of wheel marks.

All are adventures. We can weave games into them, man hunts, and a hundred exciting *modern* stunts.

It is all just a matter of building a few bricks on the tracking foundation the Chief gave us in the Second Class Test.

And yet some of us choose “Kim’s Game.” . . .

Axemanship. – In these days of Primus Stoves and other contraptions there doesn’t seem much call for axes. In fact, many Troops seem to get along very well without them. After all, there doesn’t appear to be much sense in carrying an axe about as an ornament.

Perhaps that is the reason why Troops disregard such things as axemanship tests and make do with models and things made during school lessons. It is very much easier – and seems to satisfy examiners – so why go out of one’s way to make things difficult.

In such ways as this do we abandon adventure.

For, after all, axemanship *is* adventure. Probably the boy’s first really important possession is a pocket knife. When he buys his Scout uniform it is much more important to obtain a sheath-knife than to secure a hat or a scarf. There is something adventurous about a knife; you can “do” things with it.

It is much the same with an axe. A boy is *proud* of his first axe. He wants to chop everything in sight – even if it is the grand piano at home or the chairs in the clubroom. Yes. You can “do” things with an axe.

If we have the inclination and are ready to take the trouble, we can capture this fundamental spirit, mould it to meet our own training scheme.

I know there are difficulties. For town Troops especially is it problematic to know where to find trees to fell, or even light timber to trim. But with the increasing facilities for regular camping, the spread of Troop, District, and County permanent camp-sites throughout the country, there are plenty of opportunities for those who like to make the effort.

And here again, as in all these other tests, let your imagination embrace the subject. Trimming light timber is not the end of the business. Let the boy’s interest develop. The study of trees and woods, afforestation, planting schemes for your own Troop camp-site – all these are a natural development from the First Class Test.

Carving, an inherent trait in every boy, even though it may show itself only in the carving of his initials on his school desk, is another idea springing from the axemanship test. We are inclined to look on all these things as isolated activities to be dragged in when the normal Scout scheme palls, but actually they are all part and parcel, and natural developments, of the bare framework of the tests.

The simple carving of a Scout staff may lead to far bigger results – if we provide opportunities. A winter hike in search of sticks for staves and thumbsticks is an activity that follows on, and is part of, the axemanship test. It may even lead to a new activity for one of the Patrols.

The ideas are there – if we are ready to bother ourselves. And they are all adventures . . . unusual adventures, too, for the average boy of to-day. Why should we be afraid of them?

Estimation. – To my eternal discredit I frequently go to professional football matches, to watch twenty-two men kick a football around. I see no good reason why I shouldn’t. And many of my Scouts go too. They also *play* football for their schools, or for their firm’s clubs. Provided the professional football match, which has become a form of entertainment for many millions in this country, is put into its rightful place, I can see nothing wrong with it.

These normal public entertainments in which a boy can see no wrong, no matter what morals you like to point, are not things to be fought. They are things to be looked at sensibly and given their rightful place in our scheme.

But that is all beside the point. The point is that I sometimes go to professional football matches – and often with my Scouts. My peculiar taste is for Chelsea!

To while away the time before kick-off we entertain ourselves by estimating how many people there are in the various blocks, grandstands, and in the whole ground. We count ten heads, or twenty heads, and compare this group with the assemblage in the normal “estimation” manner. It is quite interesting; the boys enjoy it.

We talk about it when we consider the subject of estimation. It is a natural, sensible introduction; gives point to the test. Of course, if you don’t like football matches, you can do it at rallies, and things like that, but rallies are so few and far between.

It is interesting to notice, however, that there is adventure to be found even in such a seemingly dull subject as estimation. I find it is a test that is inclined to be skimmed. Scouters are often ready to leave the whole thing to the boy, and without any instruction send him up to the examiner – on the off-chance. If he passes, all well and good. And, sad to record, he quite often does.

Sad, because he has missed quite a number of very excellent adventures. I won’t bother you with a survey of the badge, but will refresh your memory with a few adventures:

1. Personal measurements. The taking and recording of personal measurements makes quite an adventure in itself. An indoor activity with a purpose. Yes, you can find out all about it in *Scouting for Boys*.

2. The multitudinous (and that’s another nice word to have learned) methods of finding height without direct measurement as an aid to estimation is another good adventure. You’ll find several of the methods in my previous books. The Practical Course at a training-camp will provide you with lots more. Get your Scouts out on Saturday afternoons to size up church steeples, local gas-works, or the Tower of London. On hikes, make finding the height of the village church a hazard for your journey. Little adventures like this make the hike take on a new interest.

3. How far away from a person are you when you can still distinguish his eyes? How far when the features are distinguishable? To go out for the practical purpose of discovering things like this will be a new adventure to many Troops, but it is all part of the business of estimating distances. The use of Scout’s Pace takes the Second Class Badge a step farther when we go on to estimation. Consider its many uses in estimating distance, I don’t have to tell you. Estimation by comparison, with the distance from headquarters to the post office, from home to school, or the tube station, or the factory—these things are all part of the test, and make very nice activities for a Troop ready for adventure.

4. When you consider weight you may care to get your Scouts to turn their staves into weighing machines. I have described the idea somewhere or other; won’t repeat it here. It is a neat adventure for a Troop meeting some time – and all part of the estimation of weights.

5. Get into the crowds for real practical estimation of numbers. Bring huge packs of postcards to Troop meeting some night and show the First Class testers how to compare by counting twenty or so and dividing. It is all very simple.

Many more ideas will suggest themselves to you. But the point is – there *are* adventures to be found in a test like estimation. We have only to look around for them.

The Journey. – Having described the First Class Journey very thoroughly from an adventurous point of view in my second book of stunts, there does not seem much use in repeating it all here. I would, however, like to recall for you the fact that the First Class Journey is – and should be – the biggest adventure in all the Scout tests.

Perhaps you didn't know the real reason for the journey. Well, it was put at the end of the First Class Test because the Chief Scout considered it the culminating point of the whole Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class scheme of training. It was the moment when the boy had learned all the Scout scheme and was sent out on his own to put it into practice.

Now, keeping this fact in mind, you will see how utterly futile and impossible is the method some Troops have of sending their Scouts out on a fourteen-mile hike (seven miles there and seven back), or a cycle ride to nowhere in particular, all in the same day. You will see how ridiculous it is just to send the Scouts out "to do their journey" after they have passed a couple of First Class Tests.

The journey must be a great adventure; must be the culminating point. Give the Scout sealed instructions, and as far as is possible frame your instructions to introduce as much of the fundamental training scheme as your imagination will allow you to plan. If you want some ideas, read Jack Blunt's *More Stunts and Ideas*.

If your Scouts don't find the First Class Journey one of the biggest adventures of their whole Scouting career, then do not deceive yourself – you have failed. And with this knowledge, now is the time to build for success!

THIS IS PROFICIENCY

IF it were possible, I would like to build for you an adventure round every Scout Proficiency Badge. There are so many mighty big adventures waiting in this field. But since there are sixty-odd Proficiency Badges and this book has so few pages, the impossibility is rather obvious.

Let me, therefore, show you some adventures in a few odd Badges – and leave the rest to you.

Don't let your Proficiency Scheme be a haphazard affair, as it is in so many Troops. I know it is easy to let a schoolmaster sign a boy's badge form and hand him his Carpenter Badge, but that is not the real idea behind it.

Proficiency Badges have been introduced into the training scheme, as I have already explained, to give a boy "tasters" that may lead to a useful and valuable hobby, and perhaps eventually show him a square hole into which he can fit his square peg. The Public Service Badges are possibly an exception to this idea, but their value is still obvious, and the adventures even more useful.

Try to plan your Proficiency Badge work. Give your Scouts leads. The result will be worth the effort, and in adventure and ultimate lasting value repay that effort a hundredfold.

Let us look at a few badges. . . .

Airy Adventures

IN 1849, when I went to school, we had a thoroughly disgusting habit of getting pieces of exercise book, the property of the London County Council, folding them with much care and precision into what we chose – with complete lack of modesty – to term gliders, and propelling them across the classroom.

Those gliders caused much trouble – and pain! – but we persisted, and made bigger and better gliders. And that is how gliders were invented!

However, in spite of that, the fact remains that we made gliders, and it was a sudden memory of this that set me going on a completely ridiculous competition for the Troop meeting one evening.

All the Scouts were given a square piece of fairly stout typewriting paper as they stood in Patrols – a matter which caused some speculation, incidentally – and then the competition was explained. Each had to make a glider, and then a longest-distance flight would be held for each Patrol. The two winners in each Patrol – those whose gliders flew farthest from where they stood – would compete in a final. Loops and circles and things wouldn't count, but the distance from the "take-off" would be the deciding factor.

Boy! It was colossal! For the life of me I couldn't remember how you make gliders out of paper, but all the Scouts seemed to know, and some pretty nifty little 'planes were produced. The competition was held, and caused great fun. I even made a glider myself, but it came down for a crash landing! A few made "darts," I think they are termed, which went so far that they tried to penetrate the wall at the opposite end of the club-room – but these were disqualified as not being gliders within the meaning of the Act.

Of course, daft as usual! But the stunt had its value. It is the first step to the Airman Badge. The next step will be to make an elastic-powered model aeroplane, and then – when we get enough money – a really sensible job with a petrol power-unit. From those who were interested on the night of the glider stunt, we got a group of ten who will meet once a week to start on model 'plane making. If the interest doesn't slacken, we'll make a visit to an aerodrome. And I know a man – etc., who will show us the innards of a real 'plane, and possibly take some of the class up if they're very lucky.

Now, whether you're high-brow or not, that is the best way of starting any sort of badge work. A Scouter has been writing to me lately, grumbling that his Scouts don't seem to be interested in gaining badges. What could he do about it? I told him that the fault is undoubtedly his. If he offers badge work as if it *is* "work," then he can't blame his Scouts for not being interested in badges. They savour too much of school.

If you are anxious for your Scouts to develop interest in badges, then try a few "tasters." They will make good adventures for the Troop anyway, and will also point out the fellows who show a certain aptitude for or interest in the particular subject. Form these into a group to pursue the subject – and the badge. You may find only two fellows interested, but for those two the subject may be of the greatest importance. You may have started something big. Who knows?

And on the following week you can introduce a new "taster."

THE PATHFINDER

Y'KNOW, I rather like the Pathfinder Badge. It is one of the few badges for which a Scoutmaster cannot give very much instruction, but which Scouts have to jolly well do for themselves. It is a badge that you cannot sit down and mug up in the clubroom. You have to get out – and work it out for yourself. Certainly an adventure badge.

Let's have a look at the blooming thing first. Fortunately, we've been on it with my own gang for the past month, so I nearly know it off by heart. Here it is – verbatim, which means the whole blooming lot:

(1) Have an intimate personal knowledge, as a result of his own exploring and investigation, of the locality round his headquarters or his home, especially in regard to public buildings, the provision of public services, in regard to fire, transport, communications, etc., and the residences of doctors, responsible public officials and (in country only) well-known people, rights of way, footpaths, playing fields and other public property.

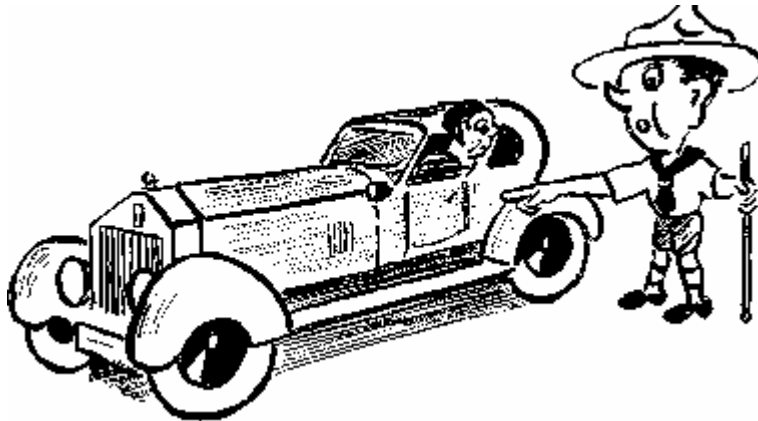
NOTE. – The area over which the above intimate knowledge will be required is a two-mile radius from the Group Headquarters in country or towns up to 20,000 inhabitants; one mile in towns between 20,000 and 200,000; half a mile in towns over 200,000. The D.C. may at his discretion vary the area to exclude undesirable neighbourhoods, parks or other open spaces., and include an equivalent area.

(2) Have a general knowledge of the district so as to be able to guide strangers by day or night within a five-mile radius, and give them general directions how to get to the principal suburbs, districts or towns within a twenty-five-mile radius.

Or, *alternatively, in London area:*

Have a sound general knowledge of what parts of the country are served by the main-line railways and how to reach the principal London termini and motor-coach stations, and twelve important places (The Tower, Zoo, etc.) by tram, bus, and train from his headquarters or home.

- (3) Have some knowledge of the history of the place and any buildings of historical interest.



You should be able to put travellers right.

Put very simply, all it means is that you must know something of the history of the place you live in, know all the streets and turnings round about your headquarters so that you can direct strangers without looking like a gump, know where the fire alarms and police stations and ambulance posts, and things like that, are, know where to find the doctors, undertakers, and so on. It's grand exploring stuff.

Being a bit crackers, we always start at the finish, and mug up the history of the place first. It is a good idea to put up some notes about the history of your district in the Troop headquarters, with a picture of what the old home town looked like in 1803.

There are two methods of finding the history of the place, and it's best to work at them yourself.

(1) Go to the reference part of your public library, if you live in a town, and ask the librarian for a book that gives the history of your particular area. He will be glad to show you the book, and you can make notes from this until you've got the full story. Find out why it was called Oswaldtwistle, what it was like in 1803, and what its population was then, which is the oldest church, any good and sticky stories in its history, any juicy murders, which famous people were born, lived, or were buried in the old place.



Looking up your local history.

And while you're at the library find out the population at the last census, how many Members you return to Parliament, and who they are just now. It's almost like detective work.

If you live in the country, try the library at your county town. If that's a thousand miles away, or the librarian has never heard of your home village, you'll have to try the second method.

(2) Visit the village church and talk to the verger, or ask your S.M. to talk to the vicar. If that fails, try to find the oldest inhabitant and talk to him. If another blank, go to the Rural

District Council, Urban District Council, Borough Council, or County Council which covers your area and see if they can help. Most Councils publish some sort of guide book to their own district, and this guide invariably gives the history of the place.

Most boroughs in London issue a similar guide, which London Scouts should certainly get hold of. My own district has a good one.

Finally, visit the village church, or the oldest church in your neighbourhood, and look around at the tablets and brasses and graves in the churchyard. Most of the old village life centred around the church, and much history is contained in old churches.

And if you can't find out all there is to be known about your old home town by either of those methods you're pretty dumb.

Now we can go back to the beginning again. First of all, get a map of your own particular part of the country. The 1-inch-to-1-mile Ordnance, at 1s. 6d. a time, may suit your requirements, but it is better, if possible, to get a larger scale. These are done, at the present time, as follows:

50 inches to 1 mile, giving $\frac{1}{2}$ square mile for some parts of the country, 7s. per sheet.

25 inches to 1 mile, giving 1 square mile for all parts of the country, except certain areas such as mountain-sides, etc. 6s. 8d. per sheet.

6 inches to 1 mile, done in what is known as Quarter Sheets. Each sheet being divided into four – N., S., E., and W., and sold separately at 2s.

These larger scales are useful for the $\frac{1}{2}$ -mile radius people in the big towns. The country fellows will find the 1-inch-to-1-mile or the 6-inches-to-1-mile best for their own particular job.

They can be ordered through your local bookseller, or direct from H.M. Stationery Office, at Adastral House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2, or at Provincial branches.

With a map in front of you, put the point of a compass on your headquarters, and, using a radius of half a mile (which you have taken from the scale of the map), draw a circle round your headquarters. If it takes in a bit of park, you will have to consult your S.M., and get the true location. If you live in the country, then you'll have to use a two-mile radius, or a mile radius.

Then look in this circle and make a list of all the main roads or streets, putting them down one each at the top of a separate page in a notebook.

Now throw the map in the dustbin or somewhere, and go exploring. Journey down all the main roads you have marked, and note the turnings out of them, marking them down on the left- or right-hand side of the page in your notebook as they come. Finally, mark the names of the streets in which this particular main road begins and ends, and start on another street.

It's best to do this exploring on a bicycle with a pal, but there's nothing to stop you hiking. Good for you!

Once you've done this, you will find you've got the name of every road and mews and street in the circle, and you can throw the notebook away if you like, because you'll find that writing them down has just helped you to remember them, and you know them all without having to consult the notebook. Then, on your final exploration, get your pal to cross-question you about the roads. "Where's King Street?" "How would you get to Sevington Street from Bristol Gardens?" And so on. If you fall down on this, try some more hiking.

If you live in any other part of the country except London you will have to study some small-scale maps as well. Study the five-mile radius. Arrange some hikes in that neighbourhood. It'll be good fun, and hiking with a purpose. Then a smaller scale map still, to get the low-down on everything in the twenty-five-mile radius.

And then you ought to know everything about the streets and towns about your area, and be able to show people how to find their way on dark and stormy nights.

First of all, the town angle. Go along to the offices of your local council and see if you can get a list of public officials. Most councils issue them. If not, find out for yourself. These are the ones to discover:

The Mayor and Mayoress. Who they are.

The Medical Officer of Health.

The Town Clerk.

The Sanitary Inspector.

The Registrar of Births, Deaths, and Marriages.

Also discover; The public libraries in your neighbourhood, the swimming baths, the tennis courts, recreation grounds, parks, the hospitals, cemeteries, mortuary, undertakers, the police stations, ambulance posts, fire stations, post office, telegraph office, fire alarm nearest to H.Q. Nearest pillar-boxes. Next discover nearest doctor to your headquarters, and three others round about. The nearest doctor to your home, and two others. All this stuff comes under the heading of "Useful Information," and only detective work will enable you to discover it all.

Finally discover something about transport. The trams and buses. Where they go to. The times of the first and last trams and buses. If an aerodrome comes in your neighbourhood, discover something about that. Which parts of the country it serves, how much some of the journeys cost. Find out nearest way to the railway station, whether taxis are available to it and where they can be obtained.

And now the country angle. Most of the foregoing will come into your department, but you have also to discover something about rights-of-way, footpaths, and so on. The Ordnance Survey will give you most of this information, but see how old your "Survey" is and check up on its information. Many footpaths and rights-of-way have gone into disuse since the surveys were last made.

An hour's work on your local directory (in the county town library) will give you the names and addresses of well-known public people, or a talk with the vicar of the village church will supply the information. The local council will be able to tell you about playing fields and public property if you do not already know all about it.

Well, there I have given you in fairly full detail all you are likely to be required to know for the Pathfinder Badge. Tick them off as you discover them, and you won't go far wrong.

Finally, for you Cockneys! Buy a good "Guide to London" and half your troubles are over. The rules require that you should know twelve places of interest, but, since most examiners ask the questions themselves and may have thought of twelve that are quite different from the twelve you know, you've got to know the whole blooming lot.

I should say, at a guess, there are about fifty places of interest in London. The "Guide to London" will give you most of them, and will also show you a map of London giving the situation of them. It's easy to mug 'em up, and the cross-questioning game with a pal will put you on the road to knowing them thoroughly. The trams, buses and tubes all publish (FREE!) maps of London, showing their routes, and, if you get these, you will soon find out how to get to the various places.

Last on the list is the business of the main-line railways, and this I always think is the most difficult of the lot. Examiners vary on it so much. Some give a list of small towns in all parts of the country, and ask which railway you'd take for them, and which station you'd go from.

It doesn't seem the right idea to me, but there it is. The thing to do is to get hold of a copy of the ABC Time-table. In this you will find a very fine map of the whole country, with the railway systems shown and the names of towns marked. Study this for one or two evenings and you'll soon get to know which towns are served by the various railways. There are only four main-line railways

actually – G.W.R., L.M.S., L.N.E.R., and Southern – but some of them have a number of terminal stations. Get to know these, and how to get to them from your headquarters and from your home, and that should be sufficient.

The Free Guide from a Green Line bus conductor, and from the main coaching station in Victoria, will tell you all you need to know for the main motor-coach stations.

And then it seems that you have covered everything. Not a very difficult badge, but one with a lot of exploring and detective work behind it. But that – mugwump! – is the real object of the badge.

Strong-man Stuff

WITH so much “keeping fit” going on in Britain, it is a wonder we don’t take more interest in the Master-at-Arms Badge. Apart from being quite an adventure for any real boy, it can introduce the physical training feature in an interesting way. Let’s look at it. The Scout has to be good at a couple of the following:

Single-stick, quarter-staff, fencing, boxing, ju-jitsu, gymnastics, and wrestling. That’s all.

I don’t know much about single-stick, beyond the fact that all you need are a couple of light sticks with sort of basket-work handguards at the end, and must endeavour to paste the other chap with this handy weapon, but if you’re interested you’ll find all you want to know about the game in any good sports book at the local reference library.

Quarter-staff play we all know, and since staves are the only weapons required, it’s a game within the reach of everyone.

Fencing is a more expensive business. I have done a bit of it with some village fellows at Croxley Green, in Herts, but it’s no use attempting the game without proper equipment-jackets, masks, etc. The Commissioner of my own district lost an eye while fencing, so you’ll understand it can be dangerous.

Boxing needs no introduction. Most districts have their championships, and there’s generally hectic training for the few weeks beforehand. You will need a good instructor if you’re going to take up the game seriously.

Ju-jitsu is a great sport if you can get a qualified man to teach you, and its blood-brother – Judo – is even better. I’ve done some Judo at the Japanese home of Judo in London – the Budokwai (nice name).

Some little time ago the Budokwai, which lives at 15 Lower Grosvenor Place, London, S.W.1, helped to start Judo classes in one or two Troops and Associations in London, and Major-General Ninomiya, who was Military Attache to the Japanese Embassy at the time, put up a challenge cup for Scout competitions in Judo.



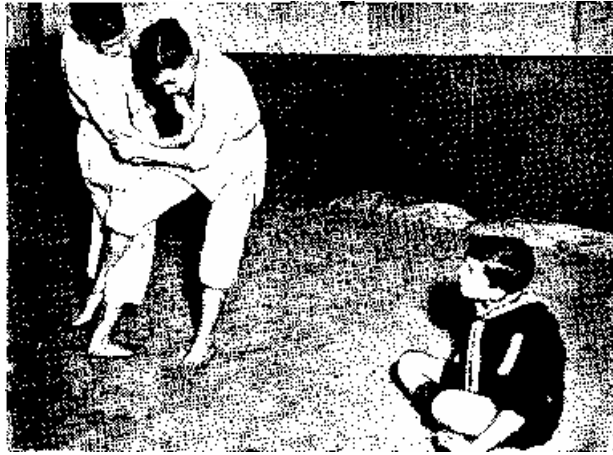
Judo.

Unfortunately the movement among Scouts faded out, but the challenge cup is still there to be won, and if Troops like to start in with Judo, the Budokwai would be only too willing to start the competition up again.

It is a good sport. You wear over-grown shorts and a jacket with very wide lapels as a costume, and have a go at one another on mats. You learn first of all how to fall correctly (most important . . . as I found very quickly!) and then go on to learn all the defence and attack tricks, the holds and locks, and whatnot. In some of the literature the Budokwai sent me I learn this, which tickles my fancy: – “There are hundreds, if not thousands of tricks with which Judo enables you to overpower, injure, or, if necessary, exterminate your opponent!”

Nice for Patrol Leaders (and others!) to know!

The Budokwai is willing to help any Troop which wishes to start Judo, provided the Troop is within the limit of its activity, which comprises the Metropolitan area of London, where a member of the Budokwai can conveniently attend. For those who can attend, the Budokwai is open daily from 5-9.30 p.m., except on Saturdays and Sundays (Tuesdays and Thursdays reserved for ladies). Visitors are welcome, so you can go along and see some real Judo if you wish.



He'll be on the floor next!

Gymnastics are the pet subject of many Troops, and if you can get hold of the necessary apparatus and a qualified instructor, it's good sport.

The same thing applies to wrestling. Personally, I know nothing whatever about it, and you'll have to get an expert in the subject, anyway. The half-nelson and scissors grip are as bad as they sound. Don't try all-in stuff. Bill Snooks hasn't any hairs on his chest to pull out!! And he might not like you biting his ears off.



Who's master now?

Anyway, if you – like us – haven't been able to find a physical training expert yet, you might take up one or two of these Master-at-Arms subjects. Good P.T., and there's always the badge at the end of it.

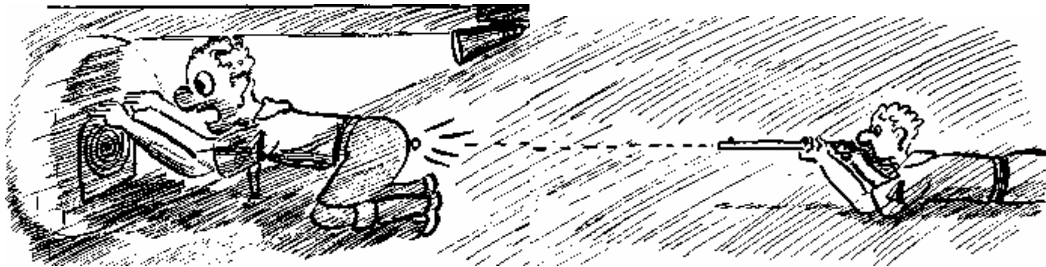
Pot Shot

SOME little time ago I paid a visit to my old friends, the 1st Chesham Bois Troop. They were in the midst of putting up a rifle range underneath their headquarters. They were digging out the foundations I believe, which seemed an alarming sort of business to me, but I never argue.

Anyway they have a whole length of space doing nothing in particular, and here the Pigeon Patrol is fixing up the range. They've floodlit the target board, and are constructing a pulley arrangement to carry the board backwards and forwards. At present they're shooting at targets stuck on the wall, but by this method you have to crawl up to the end to see how many you haven't scored, and there is the possibility of getting a shot in the rearguard from some over-zealous marksman. At the moment, also, the Chesham Bois fellows are using air-guns, but they are aspiring to heavier artillery.

It's good sport, and if you're looking for something new for the Troop you might try it. Boys and guns are two things which seem to go together, even if the gun is only a water-pistol!

You'll need a fairly long space, but height and narrowness don't matter very much. I've seen ranges in the basements of houses, under churches, and under headquarters.



Effect —

— and cause!

Take the thing seriously or don't do it at all. Rigid supervision is necessary, and a responsible person must be in charge whenever firing is on. I suggest you join up with the Society of Miniature Rifle Clubs, whose offices are at 23 Water Lane, London, E.C.4 ('phone: City 4589). They supply standard targets, and can give good advice on rifles and ammunition. Don't go in for cheapjack stuff. Use the best, and there will be no accidents.

There's the Marksmanship Badge awaiting for Scouts who take up shooting, and lots of folk don't know that I.H.Q. offer a Challenge Shield for Marksmanship each year. Particulars can be obtained from I.H.Q. if you are interested.

NOW, although we have only touched on four very dissimilar badges – four out of the whole sixty-odd – I think I have shown you fairly simply what a wide field any one of the badges covers, the many unique adventures you can unearth, and the particular value that can be obtained from a badge.

Don't think the whole sixty or so badges were meant for your Troop – they were not. They were designed to cover as many varied interests and localised hobbies as possible. Many will be quite impossible for *your* Troop. The Journalist Badge may be just ridiculous when you consider your Scouts; the Pilot Badge might be just double- Dutch to your fellows.

Sort out the badges that apply to your Troop and locality. Explore them for yourself. Then, having exhausted the subjects in your own mind, see how you can introduce them into your own Scouting scheme. See how you can use them to carry on the training you have started in the

Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class Badges; see how they can be moulded to bring the most useful service to *your* Scouts.

If you are ready to look for them, there are a hundred adventures – and very big adventures – to be found in the Scout Proficiency Badges.

CHAPTER VI

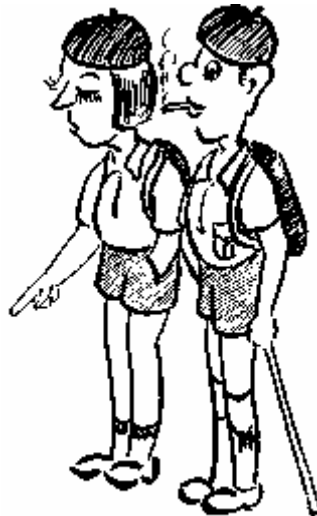
BACK TO THE BACKWOODS

ISN'T it fun – camping? There Uncle Bill prodding a sausage on the Primus, there's Grandpa wearing a natty line in shorts and picking the feathers from the sleeping-bag out of his beard. There's Dad putting in a spot of Bradman stuff down on the beach, Mum taking it easy in the deck-chair, and Betty making eyes at the young man in the white flannels who arrived yesterday.

Such fun, . . .

Yes, that's the trouble with camping – camping to-day. You see, it isn't such an adventure any more. Anybody can go camping, and everybody seems to be doing so. Families go off in cars and pitch the old tent in some lonely – or perhaps not-so-lonely – field; Big Brother or Big Sister goes off to some holiday camp, bungalow, camp chalet, or with a cycling camp party; half the school goes to the school camp, which is probably much cheaper than the Troop camp can possibly be; clubs hold their own camps. The real truth of the matter is that you haven't got to belong to a Scout Troop any more in order to go camping.

As I have related earlier in the book, the ordinary folk have stolen our thunder. Everyone is now doing the things the Scouts started. We began hiking way back in 1908; and now every body hikes or rambles. We started camping in England, and now any old person goes camping. And, curiously enough, we seem to have caught the fever of this modern, civilised camping. We think in terms of lorries, forms, and tables, silk tents, marquees, afternoons at the local fun-fair, or an evening with Mr. Butlin. Ice-cream and ginger-pop camping.



*Oh, but camping is SUCH
FUN!*

This is no adventure. Go back again, as we have done so much in this book, to the framework of Scouting woven by the Chief Scout. He gave us Scout camping that was a matter of “fending for yourself,” of chasing whales in open boats, of cooking things in tin-cans, and making bread in

your coat lining, of fighting natives, of tracking spies and smugglers, of fishing in streams for your breakfast, of finding your way by the stars and outwitting excise men in the dead of night. Adventure!

Frankly, when it comes to camping there is little we can do in the way of modernising. Of all Scouting activities, camping is the one that has definitely *suffered* from modern tactics. The boy of to-day can find in camping – if we direct him in the right way – an escape from the eternal march of progress. Camping may even be – if we like to think of it in that way – a brief return to the “good earth,” a momentary release from the hurly-burly of the Town and Civilisation.

Not that I would suggest a search for the primitive state, but there is some sense and truth in that much-abused slogan, “Back to Nature.”

In these modern times let us by all means get “Back to Nature,” let us get back to Scout camping, back to the backwoods . . . where real Scout camping was born.

How shall we find *adventure* in camping? In *Scouting for Boys*, our original framework, in a new spirit in our camping, in any modern and practical ideas that will bring a new touch of adventure to the original framework. Let us look over the whole field of camping:

PIONEER CAMPING

FEW men go alone into the backwoods. Not only is it dangerous, but the loneliness is more than men can bear. Ever since men hunted and explored they went in pairs, partly as a safeguard against the danger of attacks from hostile natives or wild animals, but mostly for companionship’s sake. Solitude, loneliness – these things have killed more men than wild animals or hostile tribesmen.

It is much the same with us to-day. We like to go about in gangs, but always we choose from out of the gang one especial friend, one man we like so very much better than all the rest of the gang. He is our companion, he is the man we want to take when we go into the backwoods.

Two men in the backwoods can have all the fun in the world; more fun even than a big party. It is dangerous, thrilling. You must fend for yourself, put up your own camp, cook your own food, make your own adventures. It is real life!

Preparation

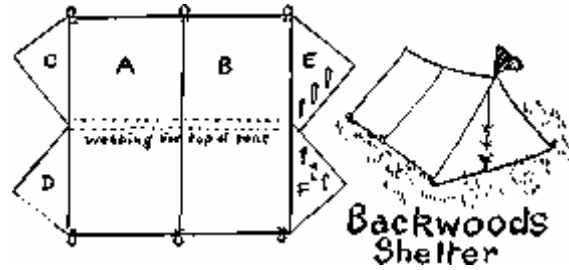
FOR a start, let us forget all we know of modern camping. Let us start afresh, as if going into the backwoods for pioneer camping was something new – as indeed it is to many Scouts. What do we need in preparing for the backwoods?

Shelters against the Stormy Blast. – In the days when men went out exploring there were no Scout Shops in which they could buy tents and marquees. Either they had to go without a covering for their heads and make shelters of natural material when they had need to rest, or they took with them a shelter of skins which they made themselves. White pioneers made natural shelters, the Indians made permanent homes of skins and furs.

The weather in England makes the natural shelter a poor covering, so our first job is to make for ourselves an artificial shelter of some sort. It is a challenge to every Scout Patrol. They, as a group of pioneers, should make a shelter for themselves, or several shelters to cover the whole Patrol. Call them tents if you like, but the true pioneer will make them himself.

It is a hard job to make a tent, but that’s all the better. The picture shows you a simple design for a shelter. Plan it out with newspapers as material beforehand, and then set to work. Cloth can be bought from any outpost; sew on a machine, and waterproof the finished job. This sort of shelter will hold two men, but don’t necessarily stick to that design. Invent designs of your own. They

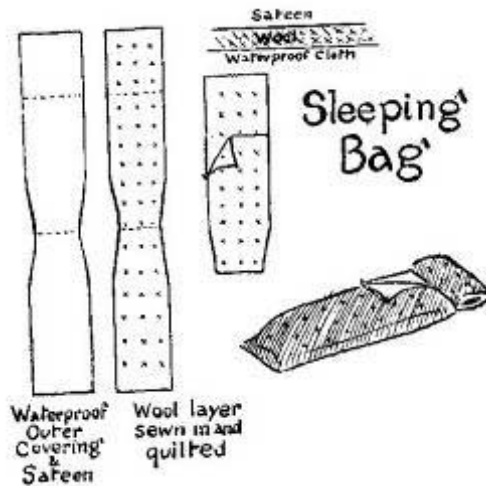
did in the old days, and made the design that best suited their purpose. That's how you should work.



Don't say it's too hard; that's only laziness. Of course it's hard, but there lies the challenge.

Sleeping-bags. – The pioneer carried sleeping-bag or blankets, but he usually favoured the sleeping-bag, which he could roll up and tie to the back of his pack. You can make just the same kind of sleeping-bag. See the design, and you will get the idea. Use waterproof cloth for the outer covering, sateen for the inner, and a lining of wool or feathers in between. If you can get hold of an old eiderdown, then the feathers out of that will be just the thing. A zip-fastener will add to the usefulness of the bag, and it can be easily bought.

You will need no other covering with such a sleeping-bag – it will keep you warm in the coldest weather – but if you cannot afford to make such a bag, then sew a couple of blankets into a sleeping-bag in much the same way.



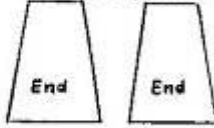
Grub Bags. – There are no shops along the backwoods trail, so food must be carried. The pioneers carried their food in bags which they made themselves. They were generally of linen, and held tea, sugar, coffee, flour, and such food. Let's make some of those. They will be useful for hikes and week-end trips into the backwoods. You don't need a lot of explanation of how to make a small bag, but the design will show you the way. Use coarse linen, and sew with a fine stitch. Tapes threaded through the top seam will serve to fasten the bags.

Water and Washing Buckets.—Of course we'll have to make these, but buckets of all sorts are easy to make. You'll need a couple of water buckets and a washing bucket. See the simple designs; work others out to suit your needs. Make them of heavy canvas, sew with waxed thread, and melt paraffin wax into the seams with a hot iron until the buckets are completely watertight. If the canvas is not waterproof, paint them with melted paraffin wax on the outside and iron them with a hot iron.





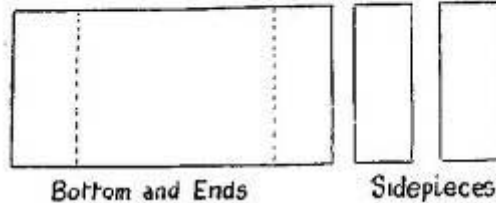
A - Leather pieces to reinforce



Water Bucket
Size to suit requirements



Washing Bucket



Cooking Pots. – In the same way that tents could not be bought, so also there were no stores for selling billy-cans. Either the explorers used simple household utensils, or more often they made them themselves out of tin-cans and from odds and ends.

Of course, there is nothing to stop you buying your billy-cans, but it will be much more sense if you make a few. You want to get hold of a large circular tin, rather like those used for holding big water biscuits. Strip off the label, and clean out thoroughly. Make sure it is watertight, and if necessary re-solder it. Then fix a piece of wire to each side for a holder, and use a piece of wire for a handle to the lid.



Cooking pot out of an old tin-can

If you are any good at all at metalwork you can even make your own cooking pots. One boy, a sheet-metal worker by trade, made any amount for his Patrol in my Troop.

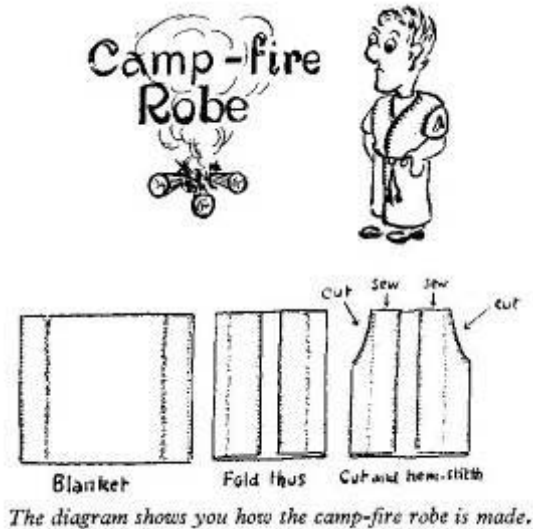
Axes and Knives. – Axes and knives you will have to buy, but the pioneers bought these things as well. The same thing applies to ground-sheets, frypans, and other items of camp gear, but here we suit our needs to present-day conditions. And we can be content that few ordinary campers take axes and knives to camp anyway!



An axe like this is only good for opening condensed milk tins.

Start right away now to collect and make ready your Patrol's backwoods gear. It is possible for every Patrol. You won't have to lay out lots of money – only sufficient for material, and the rest is up to you. In this way any Patrol can start getting a stock of gear in its possession.

Personal Gear. – First on the list will come your staff. Most pioneers carried a staff of some sort, and mighty useful they found it. It should be of rough ash, and if you can cut it yourself so much the better. It may be a bit late in the year for the job when you read this, but in the winter, when the sap is down, you can have a go.



Let your staff be a constant companion. Never go into the backwoods without it. Carve or write your adventures on it. Everyone isn't good at carving, so slice out small sections, smooth them off, and draw or write in the space the records of your adventures, first with pencil – and then with Indian ink.

Your clothes will naturally be Scout uniform. It is the uniform of the backwoods. Pioneers going into tropical countries wear much the same outfit . . . it has been tried, tested, and found the best for the job. Haven't most of the hikers and campers copied our shirt and shorts?

From your belt hang a hank of cord – for that will come in mighty useful in a number of ways. Make a leather sheath for your knife, make a leather pouch and wear it from your belt for your money.

Finally, make yourself a camp-fire robe. The best material to use is a plain, coloured blanket, and the simplest design is that shown in the diagram. If, once you have made it, you wish to weave strange designs on it, so much the better.

What to Take

NEXT, what shall we take in the way of gear? It depends on how we're going. If we plan to go into the backwoods and set up a permanent camp we will travel with a fairly heavy load; if we are going to explore, setting up camps each night, travelling by day, then we will go lightly. The first lists give personal gear for the permanent camper and for the light traveller.

Permanent Camper (Personal Gear):

Week-end in the backwoods:

- Rucksack to take all the gear.
- Groundsheet.

Sleeping-bag (or two blankets, sewn into bag).
Pyjamas.
Soap and towel and flannel.
Toothbrush and paste.
Hairbrush and comb.
Overcoat (or raincoat).
Sweater, or small warm jacket.
Pair of rough shorts (white footer ones, for instance).
Canvas shoes or plimsolls.
Handkerchiefs.
Enamel plate and mug.
Knife, fork, and spoon.
Notebook and pencil.

Long period in the backwoods:

All in the above list.
Spare stockings.
Spare vest and pants.
Spare shirt and shorts.
Spare shoes.
Stationery and stamps.
Needles, cotton, wool, buttons.

Light Traveller (Personal Gear):

For any period, long or short, the list is the same. If you desire change of clothing in a long exploration, arrange for the gear to be sent to a certain spot *paste restante*, and collect it on arrival, sending home the dirty clothing from the same post office. You'll need:

Rucksack to take all the gear.
Sleeping-bag or two light blankets.
Light groundsheet.
Pyjamas.
Soap and towel.
Toothbrush and paste.
Comb.
Raincoat.
Sweater, or small warm jacket.
Spare stockings.
Canvas shoes or plimsolls.
Enamel plate and mug.
Knife, fork, and spoon.
Notebook and pencil.

The rest of the gear can be divided between the two men, and such things as shoe-cleaning kit need not be duplicated, but one set used for the two. Here are the lists:

Permanent Campers (General Gear):

Week-end in the backwoods:

Shelter (tent or two bivvy sheets).
Spare groundsheet for grub shelter, to keep out the wolves!

- 2 small paint-pot billies.
- 1 small handleless frypan.
- 1 canvas bucket (for washing).
- 1 hand-axe.
- 1 entrenching tool.
- Hank of rope and some string.
- First Aid outfit.
- Swab and teacloth.
- Mirror.
- Shoe-cleaning kit.

Long period in the backwoods:

- All in the above list.
- Extra water bucket.
- Extra (large) paint-pot billy.
- Torch.
- Butter-muslin (for covering food).
- Extra teacloth.

Light Travellers (General Gear):

Gear will be much the same as that for week-end permanent campers, for any period of light travelling. You may dispense with extra groundsheet, hand-axe, and water bucket, and rely on washing in streams or at pumps, if you want to travel really light, but it is not advisable.

There is a method of using your groundsheet as a bowl for holding water by laying a circle of stones and hollowing the groundsheet inside it (rubber side to the water), but it is not particularly brilliant.

Types of Pioneer Camps

IN the old days the pioneers either went into the backwoods on foot or rode on horses. Sometimes they went carrying their own gear, sometimes they had pack-mules, sometimes they took natives for portorage.

We can use the modern equivalent of these things; it just depends on the style of camp we plan.

Greatest adventure of all is to tramp from London to Plymouth Hoe; Middlesbrough to the Border, or where you will, taking your gear on your back, putting up your camps at night at spots you find for yourself, sleeping in barns on friendly farms, spending the night in shacks or in Youth Hostels. That's the nearest approach we can get to the real exploring the old pioneers used to do.

But there are many other ways of going. Instead of a horse you can ride a bicycle; sling your gear from pannier bags on each side of the carrier at the back. That is exploring in comfort, and if you are fairly robust you can cover a vast distance in a week. If you must have a horse, there is nothing to stop you hiring a donkey, travelling through the country while your donkey carries the load. This means added responsibility in the way of cost of hire, food for the donkey, and traffic difficulties, but it is a mighty fine adventure for a change. Further, if you don't like a weight on your back, you can build a trike cart and pull it as you go.

Or you can find your site, set up your camp, and just stay put, doing your exploring each day in a different direction, sometimes leaving camp for a whole day and night with light equipment and returning to the base camp next day. There is plenty of choice.

Setting up Camp

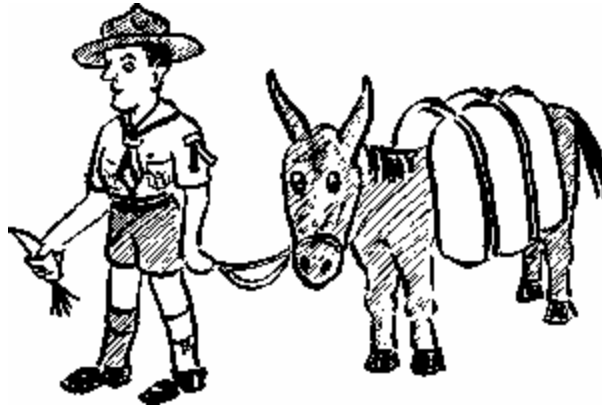
IF you are cycling, tramping, exploring with a donkey, triking, pull in early each evening, and find your site before it gets dark. Set up your camp while it is yet light. Few spots in “England’s green and pleasant land” belong to the public, so you will have to find someone from whom to get permission. Don’t just pitch your tent on a bit of land and hope for the best; the best won’t happen.

If you’re stuck, ask the farmer whether you can spend the night in one of his barns. He will probably give you permission.

It is a good idea if you plan tramping to join up with the Youth Hostel organisation. Get a list of their hostels on your route, and lay your path so that you can spend some of the nights in the hostels. They give excellent accommodation, and are good fun. You meet merry trampers, just like yourself, and many yarns are spun before bed-time.

If you want to know more about it, write to The Youth Hostels Association, National Office, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire.

Many Associations and Counties in the North have Guest Houses and permanent camp-sites these days. If you plan to tramp in the North, get in touch with the local Scout people – through your Scoutmaster – beforehand, and lay your route in the direction of these homely points.



ME – and my donkey!

A shelter, a fire, and food – that is all you need to worry about when tramping. Don’t forget to clear the site up carefully when you leave each day; make it better than you found it; thank the farmer or owner for allowing you to camp.

If your site is permanent, you will have to rig up a latrine screened by woods, make a kitchen, washing-place, and what-not, but you will know all about that without further explanation from me.

What to Do

SO much to do one hardly knows where to begin. Imagine – a couple of pioneers in the backwoods . . . and all the world to conquer. Let us first think of the trampers.

Exploring. – The pioneer’s job is to explore ; that is the object of his tramping. The man who just sets out to walk from here to there because it’s a long way away, and tries to travel as far as possible each day, is just wasting his time, and he will soon get fed up with himself, his companion, and everything about him.

Stroll, saunter, keep your eyes open, wander into old-world villages, look inside the churches, explore the tombstones for interesting people buried there, look over old windmills, ask for permission to go over water-works, saw-mills, and such places. This world is full of helpful people – if you ask nicely – and there is much to be discovered. What matter if you only travel four miles a day, provided you have *seen* something, learned something that is new to you? Better than travelling twenty miles and seeing nothing.

Talk to old people; learn the local legends. Just as the old pioneers came to villages and parleyed with the natives, discovered their customs and ways of living, we can do the same – only in a modern fashion.

Making Collections. – In the old days they used to collect relics of the places they visited. A man I know has just come back from exploring the Polynesian Islands, and he has brought back skulls thousands of years old with false teeth, proving that the natives knew how to care for their teeth thousands of years ago. The teeth, incidentally, are made from polished coconut shell.

In much the same way we can make our own collections and gather our own relics. We can collect the leaves of trees in places we visit, paste them into books, note the tree, the place found, and the date. Flowers, small plants, woods – all these things we can collect. It is good fun making a collection of picture postcards of each place you see and visit. One man I know collects crests of the villages, towns, and counties he visits. Where he cannot get them in books, on cards, or by other means, he buys bits of china with them on.

A Scout friend of mine does much the same thing, only he paints the crests on to his tent as a permanent record.

Much depends on your own particular interest. If you are interested in those queer brass slabs and effigies in churches, then you can collect brass rubbings as they call them. But you might think this daft; it's all a matter of taste. If your particular job in life is wrought-iron work, and you are interested in it, you will explore for old gateways, for relics in old village smithies. These things make exploring worth while. I know one old fellow of eighty-five who has been collecting horseshoes all his life. He's got an amazing collection now, some of them as much as two thousand years old. Find the thing that interests *you*—and explore for it.

Stalking with a Camera. – If you like photography, take your camera with you, and once more decide on the subject that interests you. Wild folk, flowers, old churches, queer village signs, country inns, oldest inhabitants. Go stalking with your camera. The old pioneers used to use a gun—you can use the modern and more sensible weapon in the shape of a camera, and get your big “bags” in just the same way.

I know a man who takes pictures of nothing but inn signs. I thought he was crazy – until I learned of the strange stories back of many of the signs. Ever heard of the “Silly Men of Gotham”? They found a cuckoo in a bush, and decided to build a fence round the bush and the bird so that they would trap the cuckoo – and have summer all the time! Unfortunately, fences aren't much good for trapping cuckoos, and the bird just flew away, and all the country laughed at the “Silly Men of Gotham.”

Now the whole story is recorded on an inn sign which hangs over an inn at Gotham, in Nottinghamshire. There are hundreds of other such stories behind the inn signs. The man wasn't so crazy after all.

But it doesn't matter so much what the subject is, so long as you are really interested in it. Then go out and hunt!

With a Sketching-block. – If you're anything of an artist, take your sketching-block and pencil and make your own pictures. The subject again is for your own choice. I once tramped in Devon, with a sketching-block, drawing nothing but landscapes.

Judging and Mapping. – The old pioneers used to search for trails. Survey routes across mountains, or round mountains, judge distances, and roughly map the trails they found. I have just been reading about the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway. The story tells of how the early explorers went out to find routes for the Iron Way, passes through the mountains, and faced death in the search for a trail across the great continent of Canada – glorious adventure. When things pall on our tramps let us map a bit of our road, judge the distances by Scout's Pace and personal

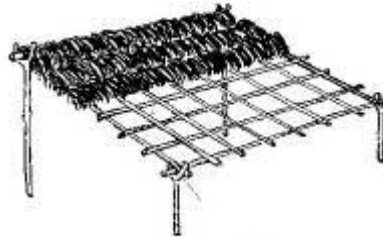
measurements, and use the compass. It is pioneering just in the same way as it was hundreds of years ago.

AND now for the permanent campers. So much to do. . . .

Shelters. – No matter whether we have taken tents or not, let us build a natural shelter when we are in camp. One of the biggest adventures of a pioneer's camp is the building of a shelter and a bed with our own hands. It smacks of independence. Simplest shelter of all is the one the Chief describes in *Scouting for Boys* (C. Arthur Pearson, Boys' Edition, 1s.). It is a shelter made round a tree, as shown below. One or more uprights of branches laid round the tree and laced with withies makes the foundation, and the whole thing is thatched with bracken, reeds, or leaves.

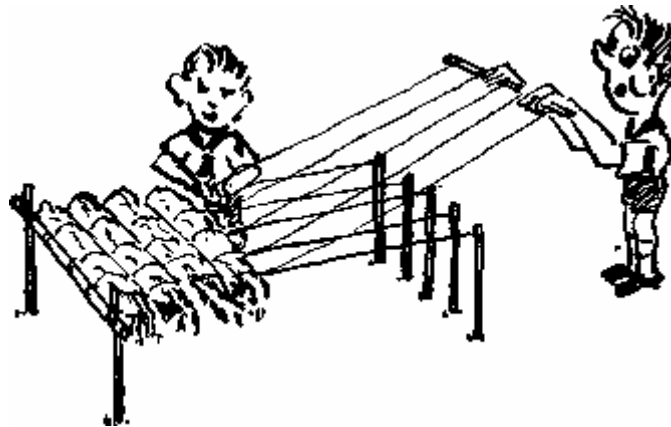


The Chief's shelter.



The lean-to shelter.

More ambitious is the shelter shown in the second diagram.



At work on a camp loom.

It is better known as a lean-to, and the framework is best thatched with reeds. If you wish you can thatch the sides, and if the night is at all cold you can build a reflector fire for the front of the shelter.

Beds. – Few Troops use the old camp loom ; it is a pity. The picture shows you what it is.



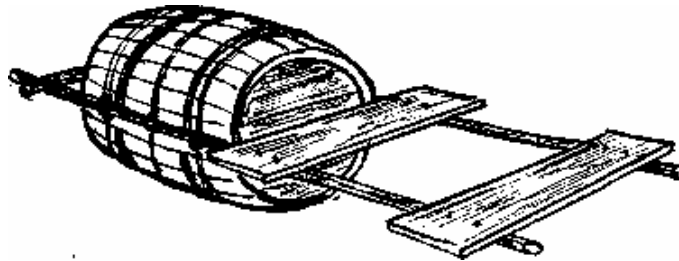
The brush bed.

Ferns or bracken are laced under and over the strings, and the ends of the strings are tied. It is a pretty long job making a bed in this way, and needs a lot of ferns, but the effort is well worth while. A fern bed is backwoods camping *de luxe*!

A brush bed is another idea. Build a frame of branches, with head log, foot log, and two side logs, staked down on the ground as shown. Collect any kind of small thornless brush to make the bed. Lay the twigs into the ground in rows, all pointing the same way, and double the rows for a pillow, and you will have a fine springy bed. See the picture.

Clearing the Jungle. – Any pioneer worth anything at all had to be able to fell a tree, cut down brush and timber. Often he would never have made a trail unless he had done this. Talk to the farmer on whose land you are camping. Ask him if he wants any trees brought down, or any fallen trees limbered. Maybe he will lend you a cross-cut, and you can saw up logs. That is good pioneering too.

Crossing the Water. – If you are near some water, you can have good fun making a raft to cross the water. Don't mess about in the water if you can't swim, but, if you can, make a two-man pioneer raft such as you see in the picture:



Barrel-raft.

Just a barrel, a couple of planks, some stout branches, and some rope – and your raft is complete in an hour. What fun you can have with such a raft, and it's a pioneer-backwoods job.

Adventure with a Knife. – That sounds dangerous, but I don't mean what you mean. Whittling is die game. Sharpen your knife on a stone; keep it sharp. Get queer bits of wood, carve them. Beech noggins, useful for cups, will do for a start. Then paper-knives, candle-sticks; anything you like.

More Collections. – Exploring and collecting are not for trampers alone. The permanent campers can do much the same thing. Leaves, plants, and flowers, and all the other things. Add to that, twigcraft. Collect twigs for model pioneering next winter; for rustic bits round picture-frames and notice-boards. Search for queer-shaped twigs which will make a twig-alphabet for decorating the clubroom when you get back home.

Track-craft. – A collection open to permanent campers rather than the trampers is that of tracks. Plaster of Paris for making the casts, and then a day spent exploring beside streams – and you will have the basis of a tracks collection. You will know how to make plaster-casts without any help from me. The idea's the thing.

Fishing. – It's no mean achievement to have caught a fish yourself, cooked it, and eaten it. If you are near water, have a shot. That's how the early pioneers got their food, and if you can do the same thing you will never have to starve – even though you are stranded in the backblocks some day!

Dawn-hike. – Sometimes the pioneers went by night. Slept in the terrific heat of the day; travelled in the cool of the night and early morning. We can try the same thing from our permanent camp sometime. Start out at eleven o'clock, hike till the dawn. Make your arrival at dawn on some spot high up; watch the dawn from a hill-top. It is the grandest sight all Nature has to offer, and the man who has never seen the dawn from a hill-top has missed something in life.

If you want to make it more adventurous, find your way through the night by means of the stars. Dispense with maps and go by the sky-signs. Yes, it's big adventure.

THE PATROL IN CAMP

WHEN a party of men go exploring in lonely places they call it an expedition. The job on hand is usually too difficult for two men to tackle; it needs the assistance of many men, experts in their job. Such parties go exploring the Arctic and Antarctic, searching for buried treasure, climbing mountains.

Not very long ago Sir Malcolm Campbell, the famous racing motorist, went with such a party to hunt buried treasure in the Cocos Islands. Almost every year a party of men go to Tibet to assail the unconquered Everest. One day they will succeed.

It is into this class of pioneering that I place the Patrol when I think of them going into the backwoods. We do not search for treasure, we do not explore the Poles, nor do we fight the spirits of the mountains, but we go in search of adventure in much the same way as do those intrepid explorers.

The Patrol goes into the backwoods . . . a backwoods filled perhaps with cinemas, slot-machines, and ice-cream cornets. But what does it matter? We can forget them easily enough—if we make our own backwoods. Let us take the trail. . . .

Types of Camps

THE Patrol can embark on many kinds of adventures. First, the straight camp, where we travel to our site, set up our shelters, build our fires, cook our food. Secondly, the tramping expedition, where the Patrol goes in pairs, linking up at a chosen camping-spot, spending the night, and setting out again on the following day for fresh fields and pastures. Thirdly, the Robinson Crusoe game, of which I have spoken in a previous chapter. And, finally, the great adventure in the form of a gold-rush! We go in pairs, setting out together at a given time to hike five miles to a chosen spot. First to the site stakes the best claim, sets up their camp on it. The hike is a race—and a big adventure. The Patrol which just goes to camp and leaves it at that lacks imagination, and is missing all the fun in the world. Try some of the ideas I have suggested for different types of camp; work out ideas for yourself. There is all the world to explore . . . let us explore it!

What to Take

MOST Patrols go into the backwoods for week-ends. It is seldom that a Patrol is lucky enough to be able to camp for a week on its own. In our lists, therefore, we will confine ourselves to week-ends in the backwoods.

Personal Gear (for a week-end):

Rucksack to take all the equipment.

Sleeping:

Sleeping-bag or two warm woolly blankets.

Groundsheet.

Pyjamas.

Cleaning :

Soap and towel (and flannel, if you like it).

Toothbrush and paste.

Hairbrush and comb (and a mirror, if you wish).

Shoe-cleaning kit.

Wearing:

Overcoat (or raincoat).

Sweater, or small warm jacket.

Pair of spare shorts (white footer ones are best).
Spare pair of stockings.
Canvas shoes (for wear in wet grass, without stockings).
Handkerchiefs.

Eating:

Enamel plate and mug.
Knife, fork, and spoon.

Accessories:

Notebook and pencil.
Camera.
Compass.
Hank of cord.
Bathing-trunks (if near swimmable water).

General Gear (for the whole Patrol of eight, for a week-end):

A Patrol-tent, or five small hike-tents (one for grub).
Patrol-tent, groundsheet, or 8 small ones, unless carried individually.
2 large paint-pot billies (10-pint).
2 small paint-pot billies (4-pint).
2 handleless frypans, or 1 large frypan.
1 hand-axe.
1 entrenching tool.
Screen with ropes and pegs (for latrine, unless you are camping on a permanent site, with permanent latrine).
Butter-muslin (for a camp larder).
Plenty of rope and cord.
Prayer-book.
Patrol First Aid outfit.
Swab and two tea cloths.
Lantern and a torch.
And, perhaps, signalling-flags, Morse-lamps, and any other gear you will find useful for activities in the backwoods.
2 canvas buckets (one for washing).

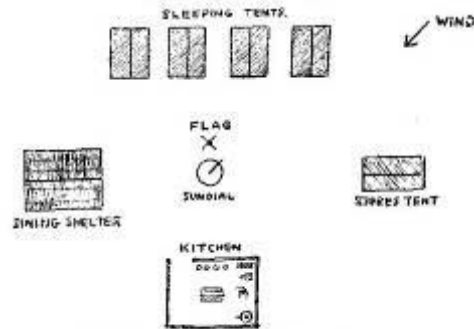
These two lists are, of course, for the standing camp. If you plan two-men expeditions, then the lists given for pioneer camping will be the ones to use.

Sites, transport, and how to get to camp, we won't worry about here. They have been dealt with at length in *The Scout* many times, and you will no doubt be able to work them all out for yourself.

Setting up the Backwoods Camp

THERE are all sorts of ways of putting up a camp. If you were on an expedition to the Arctic, climbing Everest, or seeking treasure in the Cocos, you'd have a pretty hot time of it! You'd be knocking in pegs at forty below, cooking over a Primus in the confines of a small explorer tent, or frying a sausage with the danger of a cobra taking a friendly interest in you.

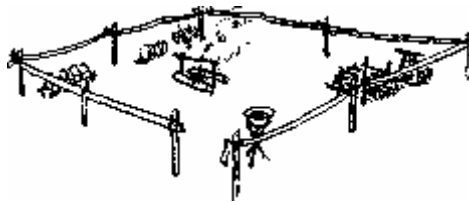
We can set up our camp in comfort, without fear of cold or cobras, therefore it should be a very much better camp than the pioneers are or were ever able to achieve.



Laying out the Patrol's backwoods camp.

Choose your site with care. Let it be high and dry, never at the bottom of a slope (it's marshy down below!). Avoid camping on sand or on clayey ground, pitching tents in long grass, camping in a field with cattle, or near houses. If you can find a corner sheltered from the cold north and north-east winds, and looking towards the south, so much the better.

Lay out your site in this order – starting from the way the wind is blowing (and it is usually south-west in Britain) – tents, stores, kitchen, refuse-pits, washing-place, latrine.

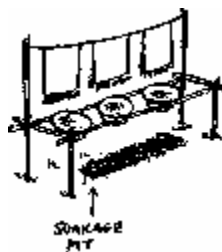


Backwoods kitchen.

Lay it out in some sort of orderly design. The picture shows the idea.

Backwoods Kitchen. – Make a wall for your kitchen with thin branches roughly laid along uprights, as you see in the sketch. It is very much better than rope or sisal – if the wood is available. Let your gadgets be simple and workmanlike. Don't go in for crazy and elaborate "dressers," as they call them. They look like Heath Robinson creations usually. Have a chopping-block in one corner. Keep the axes buried in it. This will keep the "chippings" in one spot, which is very much better than spreading them all over the kitchen. Have a tripod somewhere handy in the kitchen, bearing some sort of bowl in which the cook may wash his hands. The early pioneers were scrupulously clean, in spite of anything you may have heard to the contrary. Just as Mother at home is proud of her kitchen, and always keeps it clean and orderly, so is the backwoods camper.

Backwoods Washing-place. – A simple washing-place can be rigged up with stout branches, or even with staves. See the picture. Keep everything simple – and woodcrafty. That's the ideal for the backwoods camp.



Backwoods washing-place.

Flag-staff. – A useful if slight piece of pioneering is to rig up a flag-staff. It was one of the first things the early pioneers did. If you have seen photos of these men setting up a flag-staff you will notice that the staff was usually a rough piece of wood they found lying about. You can

do the same. Find some rough branches, and rig up a staff. Then fly the Jack from the top. Another bit of old England.



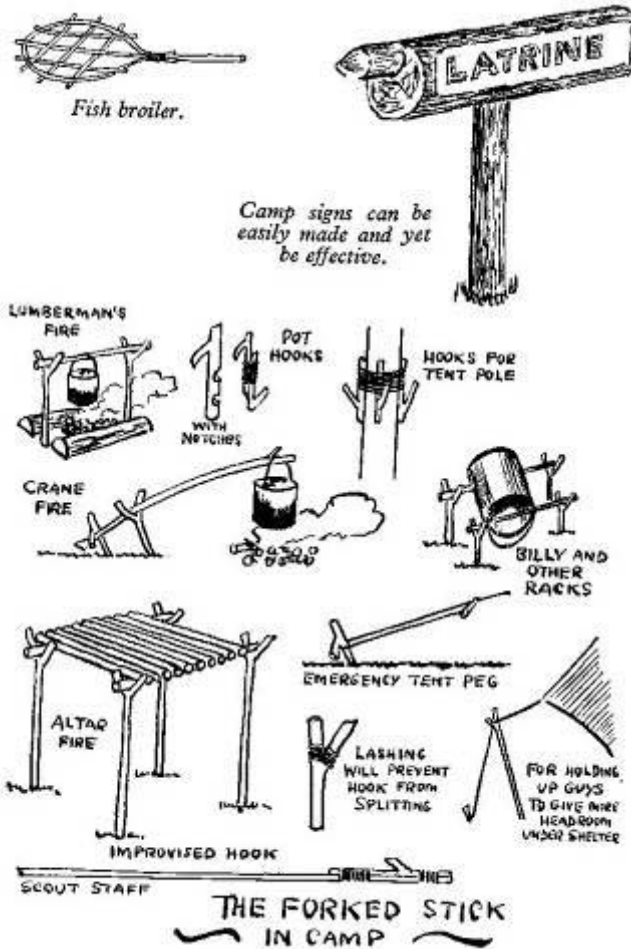
A suggested kitchen-shelter.

Shelters. – A good challenge is the erection of a dining- or kitchen-shelter. The diagram shows the simplest form. It is built cottage shape and thatched in the same way as the previous shelters. On permanent camp-sites Patrols might like to build such shelters for dining-places, and for covering the kitchen, to last the whole season. In the case of a kitchen-shelter the roof should be built as high as possible, so that the roof won't send down the smoke,

Gadgets. – Fortunately, we are right up-to-date with camp gadgets, and no one seems to have got ahead of us. Let all your gadgets be made of rough wood, and avoid the use of rope and string as much as possible. Plate-racks, mug-trees, and such-like, you will be familiar with. They all naturally find their place in a backwoods camp.

Try inventing gadgets of your own. Make self-shutting gateways, camp lathes, and other more ambitious kinds of gadgets.

Make cooking gadgets, such as camp broilers, shown in the picture, for broiling fish and things. Make a rough wood sundial for your camp. It has been described many times, so I won't repeat it here. Put up camp signs which you have carved yourself. It is a good stunt for a rainy day. With an axe and knife cut a flat surface out of a log, and carve the sign on the surface.



Fires

ONE way in which a Scout or backwoods camp differs from an ordinary school or holiday camp, is that we light our own fires and cook our own food. We should, therefore, pay some attention to fires and cooking. Every good backwoodsman should know which are the best woods to burn, which are the best fires to make.

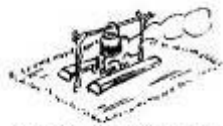


Cooking-fires. – The good cooking-fire is a small one, and if you take care in building it first go off, you won't lose time and temper by having hurriedly-made fires keep on going out. First turf the ground about a yard square, and make your fire in the centre of the exposed earth.

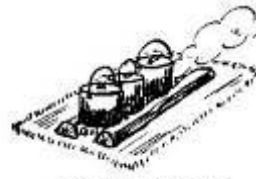
Start with "punk," in the shape of paper, birchbark, bits of dead ivy, dried orange peel, or frayed-out rope. Apply a match so that the kindling starts a good blaze, and quickly add small dry wood. As it catches apply bigger sticks until you have a good fire. Then you can add even wet or green wood. In this way you can light a fire with one match every time. Don't pile on thick stuff at the start, and let the fire have plenty of air spaces.

Wood to Use. – The golden rule is: Hard woods for good hot coals over which to fry or roast; soft woods for fierce flames but dead coals with no heat. Best woods are: birch, ash, beech, oak, or chestnut. They will burn green or dead. The dead twigs of holly, fir, pine, or thorn are also good. Don't use poplar or elm. Dead ivy makes a fierce flame, but burns away quickly. Split wood burns

faster than round sticks. If it has been raining, and wood is wet, cut away the bark. It will be dry inside.



The Lumberman's fire.



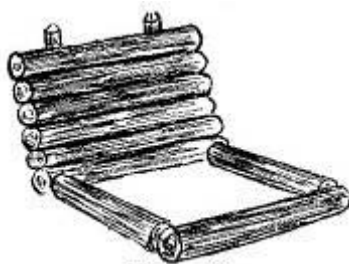
The Hunter's fire.

Types of Fires. – There are all kinds of fires, many of which you will know already, but two types commend themselves for the backwoodsman – the lumberman's, and the reflector. The lumberman's is made from two forked sticks and a crosspiece, as you see in the picture. The fire is built between two logs, new ones being added as the old ones burn away. The reflector is built as shown in the picture. It is very simple, and can be used for reflecting heat into a shelter in cold weather, or for roasting.



The Pyramid.

Camp-fires. – Just as a small fire is necessary for cooking, so a camp-fire, from which we want light and heat, should be a big one.



Reflector fire.

It can be built in the same way as the cooking-fire, but, as the fire burns up, add bigger and bigger sticks. Remember, flames go upwards, so use long sticks. Turf a large space, so that the grass won't take fire. If you want to build a fire so that it can be lighted while all the Scouts are assembled, erect it in the form of a pyramid, with kindling, small twigs, and the larger stuff piled around. Have plenty of small stuff in the pyramid or it will all burn away and leave your circle of large branches untouched – a calamity for any camp-fire.

Cooking

ANYONE can make tea, cook bacon and sausages, and even boil potatoes; but not everyone can skin and cook a rabbit catch and grill fish, make coffee, make camp bread, cook meat on a spit, cook food without utensils of any kind. That's what we've got to take care of if we would be real backwoods campers.

Rabbits. – The thing is – first catch the rabbit; but we won't discuss that here! To skin the rabbit, first slit up its belly and remove all the organs. Then, starting from the edges of the slit, remove the skin by sort of turning the whole business inside out. You will find it comes off quite easily, and will slip off the legs almost to the end. Cut off the legs at the last joint as you skin them. The head will skin easily enough, and you will find you have only to cut round the eyes for it to come right off. Clean the rabbit out, and let it soak in warm water for as long as possible. The real length of time is two hours.

There are about a hundred methods of cooking and serving rabbit, but the simplest is to boil it. It can be boiled trussed (with the head laid back and the legs skewered to the body), or be cut up and boiled. Please yourself. After soaking, put it into the pot and cover with water, add one or two onions, and a little salt and boil for thirty to forty-five minutes. If you like to boil bacon with it, so much the better for the flavour.

When you get expert at the job you might borrow Mother's cookery book and try stuffing and roasting a rabbit, making rabbit pie, rabbit pudding, and so on.

Bread. – The Chief tells us that the backwoodsmen used to mix the dough for their bread inside their jackets (where the mess wouldn't be seen afterwards) and if you can get past Mother's wrath after the operation it's good fun to try this. Make a heap of flour in the lining of your jacket. Add some baking powder, a pinch of salt, and then make a hollow in the centre of the heap. Pour in water (carefully) and mix to a nice dough. Cook your bread in the form of dampers, or as a twist on a green stick.

Coffee. – There are many ways of making coffee. The one I like best is to boil the water and then to drop in the coffee and let it go on boiling . . . until you are ready for it. That's the way the old hands used to do it, but if you like to try out other ways – apply to Mrs. Beeton!

Fish on a Broiler. – When you have caught your fish, cut off the head and tail, slit it, clean it out, swarm on some fat, and place it on the broiler. Hold it over glowing coals, and turn when one side is done. Don't cook it too fast.

Meat on a Spit. – Kabob you'll know all about. That's one way of cooking by backwoods methods. Try another. Get a long green stick, fairly thin, and skewer the meat on to this. Place over the glowing coals suspended between two forked sticks. Turn as you would if it were on a spit. That's how they roast whole oxen!

Freaks. – If you want to be funny you can try cooking water in a paper bag – yes, it works all right – cooking potatoes by placing them between green leaves and dropping into red-hot coals, and cooking eggs in a cup made of orange peel. It's crazy cooking, but good sport to try out.

Activities for the Patrol

MANY of the activities I outlined for pioneer campers earlier in this chapter will apply to the Patrol in camp, but there are still many more which the Patrol alone can do. Those I shall tell you about. Let your camp be full of activities. Real pioneers never have an idle minute. Plan things well beforehand, and try to keep to that plan throughout the camp. The leader of the expedition – the Patrol Leader – has a special job here, and he should consider himself honoured and privileged to lead his fellows into adventure.

Hunting Expeditions. – From our base camp let us hunt. That's how they used to do it. What to hunt? There isn't much treasure hidden in Britain, but there are all sorts of natural treasures. Let us hunt the blue mountain flower, the branch with four forks, branches that will make staves and thumbsticks. It is an afternoon activity. Don't be afraid of it. The P.L. can announce the expedition – to hunt for staves, or whatever it is – and then we go out in pairs, or as a whole, to search for staves, returning for tea in the late afternoon.

Treasure Hunts. – We can make our own treasure hunts – if the mood suits us. In the early morning the P.L. buries a treasure, and lays a trail from the camp to the treasure. If he is brainy, as he probably is, he can work out some compass directions, and make it like a real treasure hunt. If he can find a few old bones to lay on the ground, that adds spice to the adventure. "*Twenty yards nor'-nor'-east by the bones of old Bill Bloggs, pirate and cut-throat (Heaven rest his soul!), dig deep.*" Good sport. The Patrol divides into pairs, complete with clues, and sets out to find the bones of old Bill. The treasure of the Cocos is nothing compared with this.

Trails. – Blazing trails was a part of the sport of pioneering in the old days. Let's have a go. The Patrol divides into two, and the first half goes out to blaze the way through the jungle silence as it were. If you want a change in trail methods let half the party be murderers, thieves, and cut-throats; the other half Mounties. One of the murderers is mortally wounded, and leaves a blood-stained trail. Bread-crumbs (which the birds will eat afterwards) or sugar (which the rain will wash away) can be used for "blood." Who will "get their man"?

Fire by Friction. – The Indians used to make fire by friction. Many backwoodsmen did the same thing. You need a bow, spindle, and block of hardwood, and tow for tinder, and the rest is easy. There's no particular value in the stunt, but it's useful to know how to do it; one day – caught without means of lighting a fire – you may be glad you learned. If you cannot find hard woods, buy your fire-by-friction set. The Scout Shop used to sell them some years ago, but stopped doing so because there was no demand for them. Your only method now – as far as I know – would be to send to America for them. Boy Scouts of America, 2 Park Avenue, New York City, U.S.A., is the address.

One Troop, which used to be run by Major M. D. Mawe, D.C.C. for Worcester, made the fire-by-friction sets for The Scout Shop, so there is nothing to stop you making them.

Totem Poles. – With an axe and a knife a Patrol can cut itself a marvellous Totem Pole. It is a good stunt, and if you have a permanent camp-site, can be erected in full glory. Put your Patrol animal on top – carve the weirdest figures you can imagine down the rest of the pole. See the sketch to give you the idea.

Flag from a Tree. – It's a good challenge to fly a flag from a high branch of a tall tree – and may be useful some time when you're without materials for a flag-staff. Estimate the height of the branch by three methods first of all, double it for the length of rope you will need, and then set it out. Climbing, throwing a line with a weight attached – there are all kinds of methods. Work it out for yourself. It is a backwoods job.

Signal-fires. – At night the ancient Britons used to signal by beacons. Try the same thing, with the Patrol divided into two, from the tops of a couple of hills. A good evening adventure. Take a blanket, and work out a code of signals by showing the light for long or short intervals. Morse will be difficult and slow this way. Work out your own code.

A Morse Treasure Hunt. – At night, from the hill-top, the lamp flashes the clues for the treasure hunt. When you reach the spot where the first clue led – lo and behold! – there, in the distance, is the lamp flashing out another clue. Got the idea? A treasure hunt in the darkness, with clues coming from all over the place out of nowhere, is a big adventure.

Yes, there's plenty to do, and plenty of fun and adventure waiting for the Patrol in the backwoods.

THE TROOP GOES CAMPING

PREMIER adventure of the Scouting year, whether you have no more than a weekly meeting, no headquarters of your own, scarcely any outdoor activities, or whether you have your own meeting-place, get together every night of the week, and go out Scouting on every fine evening and Saturday afternoon, is still the Summer Camp.

There is something adventurous, I will admit, in the mere sound of it. Have I not myself, as a Scout, lain awake all the night before we left for Summer Camp, conjuring up adventures? A thousand boys do the same every year.

We must not lose this spirit. If, instead of adventure, the boy finds a mere holiday camp, such as he might have with his school or choir, who are we to blame him for losing interest?

Let us get back to the backwoods, pioneering and adventure. This is what the real boy – ancient and modern – expects of *Scout* camping.



Preparing for Summer Camp

DULL and unimaginative though we ourselves may be, we must think and talk adventure when considering Summer Camp. Don't let it be, "Summer Camp will be held at Sark from . . ." Why not, "Our Expedition to the Unexplored Isle of Sark in the English Channel"?

There is greater appeal there. "Explorers over 14 – 25s. Explorers under 14 – 20s." The idea captures the imagination. Let your notices about camp in the Troop headquarters "speak" in this way. Get the Troop artist to paint a ship into the notice. It may make no difference to the number of Scouts who camp; the boys may need no encouragement to come anyway, but it is good to make the Scout camp something different, something to talk about, something to dream about. That is the spirit we want to get back into our Scouting.

Getting down to more mundane things, there is much we can do to prepare the boy for Summer Camp, especially the new boy. There is the week-end camp, a useful taster for the Tenderfoot. He can learn much of the "tradition" of the Scout camp in a week-end, and wherever possible the youngster should get this chance of experience.

Another useful practice I adopt in my own Troop is the potted yarn by Patrol Leaders at the weekly Troop meetings for six or seven weeks before Summer Camp. The yarns concern some safety or hygiene rule for camping, and while they are valuable as reminders for the old campers and hints for the new fellows, they also have their value for the P.Ls. They are talking about something they know inside out, and find this a good introduction to the art of yarning.

The care of axes and knives; how a Scout washes in camp; getting rid of rubbish; personal health and hygiene in camp – are the things they can talk about, and there is no reason why the yarn should not be given out-of-doors, with practical demonstrations wherever possible. A few yarns beforehand, and we won't hear of any more Scouts washing with their overcoats on, or tearing live branches off trees for firewood, burying axes in the ground, or such like.

It is good to give Scouts some help in the choice of camp gear beforehand. We are inclined to present them with a list of things to bring to camp and leave it at that, trusting in the wisdom of anxious parents, who know so very little about camping. Why not let them have advice on things well beforehand, so that if they want to sew blankets into bags, make camp sandals, mark their gear with their name, or make bags to hold their toilet stuff, they will have the opportunity. Just a little thought may make a new youngster's taste of Summer Camp so much more enjoyable.

Weekly swimming parades all through the season suggest themselves as preparation for Summer Camp. The more good swimmers in camp, the less danger in water activities. Patrol week-end camps before the big show are good training for the time when the Patrol will be working as a unit at the main camp. Weekly sing-songs at Troop meetings will have their value in making camp-fires better shows. This year we have been learning a new song every week, going through the chorus until all knew it, with a couple of Scouts learning the verses. It's a good idea.

All Scout training leads to culmination-point in the Summer Camp. Preparation, therefore, from the boy's angle is an all-the-year-round job. Let Summer Camp be the greatest adventure of the whole year!

Camp – and the Parent

PARENTS are funny folk. Books on camping speak of parents being anxious for the safety of their sons, wanting to know what they will sleep on, what they will eat, how it will be cooked. My experience has been absolutely contrary to this. Parents will place their youngsters into your care with a sheer disinterested abandon that staggers me. It is for this reason, I personally feel, that we should get the interest of the parents in the Summer Camp. Go and talk to them, and ask if little Johnny is in the habit of walking in his sleep, or learn if he has ever slept without a night-light. A chat in this mood, and you will gain the eternal confidence of the parents. All the work

they have done for my own Troop has started from the moment I went to see them about the Summer Camp.

If you haven't the time to visit them, or fight shy of the "district visiting" touch (as some of us naturally do), then organise a "Troop Meeting Open Night," when parents are invited to come along and see their boys during a normal Troop meeting. Plan things on demonstrative lines (this is the occasion for displays of ambulance work – not the annual concert), and introduce into the programme a yarn about the Summer Camp. Then, while the Patrols are working at something, get around and talk to the parents. "Ah, Mrs. Snooks, pleased to meet you. Angus is getting on very well, don't you think? Looks very smart in his new uniform. . . ." And so on. Contact with the parents is vital to a Scout Troop, and the preparation for Summer Camp provides the opportunity.

I believe in three notices to parents concerning the Troop Camp. The first should go out about a couple of months before, and talk of the value of the Scout camp both as a holiday and as a healthy adventure, of the responsibility the Scoutmaster will accept, of the place, the date, and the cost. I make my first notice the big one, covering about a couple of pages of typewriting. It can be duplicated. At the bottom of the second page is the tear-off Application Form (I dislike "Permission Form"), with declaration of good health over the past six months, and "Yes" or "No" clause for the question "Is he allowed to bathe?" I don't believe in a doctor's examination of all the boys beforehand, since it sounds rather like an army medical inspection, and such thoughts are far from Scouting.

The second notice goes out to those who return the Application Form, duly signed. It is sent about a month before camp, and gives a list of the personal kit the boy will require. This gives plenty of opportunity for parents to get the gear together in the case of the new boy. Mothers do not believe in that "self-reliance" idea, and we must give in to their wishes. Final Camp Notices go to parents a week before camp, and give all final orders.

The encouragement of confidence is the best preparation for parents, and we can get it by means of clear and simple camp notices, and yarns with the parents themselves. It is worth while.

Camp – and the Scoutmaster

VISIONS of Forms P.C.1 and P.C.2; of hurried visits to the camp-site; of hundreds of letters to be written; of camp menus to be got out and sent to tradesmen; of arrangements for transport; of a thousand and one other things – that's your job.

Do not make too much of it. I find this is just what Scouters do. The month before Summer Camp is always a nightmare to me. I find that I have concluded almost all my arrangements for the camp, and there are only the final details to take care of. Then I come across Scouters with worried looks, groaning under the weight of their burden, complaining that they were up until two o'clock the night before working out camp details. I go all hot and cold, imagining that I have left hundreds of things undone, since I cannot possibly be doing all the things the other Scouters are. Yet my camps go off just as well as any others. Don't let us make our work more difficult.

Many Scouters work out their tables of quantities of food to the last quarter of an ounce. I never have done so, and the good caterer has no need. Rough estimation is the best idea, and work in three- or four-day shifts in the ordering of food. You get it fresher, are able to watch how things are going, and allow for changes in appetite. Rules cannot be laid down as far as boys' stomachs are concerned!

What to Take

MOST Troop camps last a week or a fortnight, and in giving lists that's how we shall think of our stay in the backwoods. Here is a list of kit every pioneer will need:

Personal Kit (Troop Camp for a week or fortnight):

Rucksack or a kit-bag. (Rucksack is much better. You never saw a pioneer carrying a kit-bag!)
Groundsheet.
Sleeping-bag or two woolly blankets (one sewn into a bag).
Pyjamas.
Overcoat or raincoat.
Sweater or small warm jacket, or lumberjacket (for wear in camp).
Spare pair of shorts (white footer or khaki drill).
Spare vest and shirt.
Spare stockings and shoes.
Canvas shoes or plimsolls (for wear without stockings in wet grass and first thing in the morning).
Soap and towel, and flannel, if you like it.
Toothbrush and paste.
Shoe-cleaning kit.
Hairbrush and comb.
Two enamel plates, and an enamel mug.
Knife, fork, and spoon, and a teaspoon. Handkerchiefs.
Swimming costume or trunks.
Needles and cotton, wool and buttons, etc.
Notebook and pencil.
Notepaper, envelopes, and postcards and stamps.
Accessories, which are not essential, but which you may like to take, are as follows:
Sheath-knife and axe.
Mirror.
Camera.
Camp-fire robe.
Compass and torch.

General Gear (Troop Camp for week or fortnight):

So much depends on numbers camping, and the gear available, that it is impossible to give any really definite list. Valuable to the Troop, however, will be a list of items to be conveyed to a Troop Camp in the backwoods:

Tents.—Patrol- or bell-tents. Patrol-tents are best. Hike-tents are certainly no use, unless the camp is of the “tramp” or “hike” nature.
Groundsheets. For all tents, and half a dozen spare small ones.
Billies. Large dixies are out-of-date for Scout camps, useless for backwoods camping.
Frypans.
Pails and water buckets.
Washing bowls.
Hand-axes.
Entrenching tools or spades.
Latrine screen, with poles and pegs.
Lath tabletops for dining-places.
Poles and stakes for:
 Dining-tables.
 Dining-shelters.
 Washing-place.
 Flag-staff.

- Rope and sisal for guys, lashings, etc.
- Swabs and dishcloths.
- Mops and pot scourers.
- Teacloths.
- Ladles and wooden spoons.
- Baking-tins (useful for serving food).
- Butter-muslin (for covering food, and for teabags, if you like it that way).
- Boxes for Patrol larders.
- Lanterns and torches.
- Troop First Aid kit.
- Primus (for use in emergencies).
- Bible and Prayer-book.
- Signalling-flags., tennis balls, cricket gear, and football. (I have it on record that pioneers played both cricket and football in the backwoods. British pioneers in Canada in the time of General Wolfe actually invented the game of ice-hockey after trying to play football on the ice.)

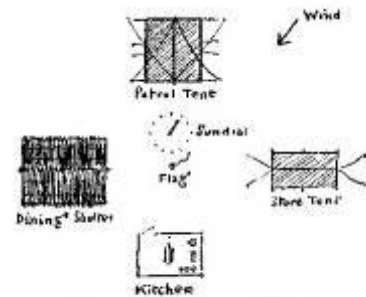
Work out your list according to the number of Patrols in camp. One set of everything for each Patrol. The Patrol lists given in the section on Patrol Camping in this chapter will be helpful.

Laying Out the Site

WHEN men were men – real he-men – camping was a matter of “Death or Glory, boys.” The pioneers had to cut and build shelters midst jungle terrors, while lions and tigers roared around them. They hunted and cooked their food while the weird music of tom-toms beat a monotonous tattoo, and while natives lurked in the undergrowth, ready to hurl spears at them.

There was no time to grumble about who washed-up last; little opportunity to argue about who should gather the wood or fetch the water. There were more important things to worry about!

Unfortunately – or perhaps fortunately for us – we cannot reproduce such conditions here in England. There are no lions and tigers in Margate, and precious few cannibals knocking around Brighton! But there is nothing to stop us from capturing the spirit of the camping of those early pioneers in the way we set out our camp and in the way we erect it.

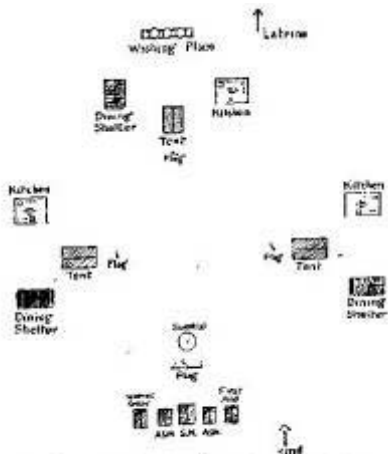


How to lay out a small site.

Let us see how we can set up a real backwoods camp.

On the Pioneer Plan. – If it is a large camp, then let each Patrol be its own party of pioneers or explorers. Let them have a separate encampment to themselves. Centre of the site will be the General Headquarters, with the Scouters’ tents, flag-staff, and general parade circle, and dotted all around, in clearings if the nature of the site allows it, will be the separate encampments of the Patrols, with their own tents, kitchens, washing- and dining-places. If the various camps can be out of sight of one another, so much the better. It will be good for the Patrol spirit; good from an adventurous point of view.

If you are one of those Troops which delight in things Indian, then you can call each encampment by the name



The lay-out of a backwoods Troop Camp.

of an Indian tribe. General Headquarters can be the centre of the Indian village. The First Aid tent can be the witch-doctor's hut, presided over by the witch-doctor himself! A tom-tom by the flag-staff for summoning the tribes will add to the fun.

In the pioneer encampment there is nothing to stop you laying wires from General Headquarters to all the Patrol camps, setting up Morse buzzers, and S.M. can then convey all his announcements by Morse. It would be good practice, and fine sport. A circuit could be so arranged that one sending apparatus would sound in all the camps.

If your camp is a small one, then set it up in a circle, something like you see in the diagram, Patrol-tent, kitchen, food-tent, and dining-shelter surrounding the flag-staff. It will be something like a backwoods camp then.

Into the Poison Swamp. – Good fun at the Summer Camp, or at any other sort of Scout camp, is the camp within the poison swamp. All you need is a jolly little clearing in a clump of trees. This is the only habitable spot within the poison swamp, which entirely surrounds it, and the pathway to it makes a winding track indicated by real Scout signs.

During the run of the camp each Patrol spends a day and a night in the poison swamp, going in at the start with only the clothes they stand in, blankets and groundsheets in rolls, washing kit and utensils for cooking, and food in the shape of flour, meat, coffee, and other stuff the pioneers carried. The Patrol must erect their own shelter and make beds on a camp loom, and generally fend for themselves in the way the pioneers did. Yes, that's adventure!

Routine

THAT'S a horrid word to use in connection with adventure camping, but you will know what I mean. The erection of gadgets, shelters, and so on, we have dealt with in other sections of this chapter; they will apply to the Troop Camp in just the same way. But let's take a specimen day in a backwoods camp:

- 7.0 a.m. Cooks tumble out.
- 7.30 a.m. Everyone gets up. Washing. A P.T. game before:
- 8.15 a.m. Breakfast.
- 8.45 a.m. Washing-up, cleaning tents and the site, airing bedding, fixing latrine and washing-place, etc.
- 10.0 a.m. Big Chief inspects the tribes. 10.15 a.m. Flag-up and prayers.
- 10.20 a.m. A swim in the lake.
- 11.0 a.m. Scouting adventure.
- 12.0 noon. Prepare dinner.
- 1.0 p.m. Dinner. Clear up.
- 1.30 p.m. Rest for an hour. Write up logs, write home, etc.
- 2.30 p.m. Exploring, or adventures out of camp.
- 5.0 p.m. Back to camp for tea.
- 6.0 p.m. Free time, or general camp games. Scouting games, cricket or football.
- 8.0 p.m. Light supper.
- 8.30 p.m. Camp-fire sing-song, or Scouting games in the dark.
- 9.30 p.m. Prayers, "good night," and prepare for bed.
- 10.0 p.m. All lights out and quietness in camp.

If the weather is very hot it is wise to cut out midday dinner. Make it a light lunch at one o'clock, and have dinner at six o'clock. There's no necessity to be hidebound by programmes. Just plan each day to suit conditions.

Now let's think about Scouting and adventures for the Troop in the backwoods.

Troop Camp Adventures

WITH a party of pioneers in camp, there is no end to the man-sized jobs we can tackle. In the pioneer camp it was impossible, with the Patrol it was difficult; now we have the Troop it is simple. Just think:

Preparing the Way. – With staves and rope you can build a bridge; with block and tackle you can build an aerial runway. If you have done it before and want realism let one Patrol build a bridge whilst another Patrol act as a party of Indians, making desultory raids and attempting to stop the building. If the white men cross the canyon, then they triumph. If the way is still impassable and the white men lose their scalps (scarves), then the Indians have won the day. That's how early bridge-building was really done!

If your camp is a permanent one make a roadway through it with logs or stones. That's the kind of thing the pioneers did. Carve a totem – the Indians did it. Make shelters, as I have already described – the pioneers made them. Build a raft from logs, or from groundsheets and straw, or from old oil-drums – backwoodsmen had to cross rivers in this way. Climb trees, make rope-and-wood ladders, erect a signalling tower; they are all jobs the early pioneers tackled. We can do them just as well.

Trailing and Tracking. – I have spoken of tracking before. At the Troop Camp let one Patrol be a party of pioneers laying a trail. Let another Patrol follow the trail with a trek-cart done up as a covered wagon. The third Patrol will be the Indians lying in wait to slit the gizzards of the white men. It's nearly the real thing, and good sport.

If you are near the sea – and sand – read what the sand has to tell. Our old pal Robinson Crusoe did this – and found Man Friday. You may not find a Man Friday, but you'll get plenty of good fun. If there is no story in the sand then S.M. will soon set one.

Lay a Nature trail, with Nature mixed up, with pieces of wool hanging on thorns, and such-like. The Indians used to follow a white man's trail through the woods by means of the little bits of wool he left behind when his clothes caught on the thorns. So it's the real thing.

Exploring. – Just as the Patrol, in our previous article, was able to find so many adventures in exploring, so also can the Troop, but in a very wider field. Visits to ships, factories, and local places of interest are always big adventures, and have a backwoods flavour, but we can also go out exploring woods, streams, old windmills, farms, timber-mills, and such interesting places. S.M. will arrange it all, and the adventure is ours. Few people trouble to explore a farm, for instance, but what a glorious place it is to learn the secrets of the land. If the farmer is not too busy he will be pleased to show you round.

On the Water. – If you are near water, more adventures are waiting. We have spoken of rafts and bridges. Why not build up a bank. I have seen photographs of Troops doing such work, putting up a wall where the bank of a stream is falling away. That's real pioneer work.

If you have the use of boats, then there is the Chief's famous "whale hunt." The "whale" is a log of wood. Patrols in boats go after it with "harpoons" in the shape of staves to which ropes are attached. That's big adventure.

In all water events, however, watch the Scout rules in regard to boating and bathing. Pioneers are wise birds.

Scout Adventures. – Most Scout activities are concerned with the out-of-doors, the open air, the backwoods. Most of our tests are tests of pioneering or backwoodsmanship. That's why, with a little imagination, we can find adventure in all the Scout tests. We can bring Scout's Pace into our games, use signalling in our excursions, make simple maps, and explore and survey unknown ground. We can map a railway line from here to there, plan great bridges. We can follow trails, use a compass . . . these are all backwoods adventures.

Most Scout activities in the shape of badge work are dull affairs in a Troop clubroom. They are meant for the out-of-doors, and here they become the real adventures they certainly are.

Try a “Danger Trek.” Each Patrol a party of explorers beset with difficulties in the way, S.M. will set the “difficulties” – a shelter to be made at a certain point, a stream to be bridged, a fire to be made and a meal cooked, a man to scald himself and be attended to, a base-camp to be signalled to. This is a day’s adventure for the camp, and any Scout would revel in it.

War Dancing. – You have probably gathered from my various writings by now, if you haven’t gathered the idea many years ago, that I am a little – er – peculiar, shall we say? Not entirely certifiable, but —

It is therefore feasible that I should take delight in war dancing. High-hats look on the idea with very righteous horror, but if we go back to the framework of Scouting we find the Chief suggesting war dances as a useful activity for Scouts. So it is.

When I am imposed upon to run camp-fires, I horrify everyone by leading terrible and horrible war dances. I always start coldly and calmly, choosing ten or so meek-and-mild-looking Boy Scouts to come out and join me in the circle. Then, commanding them to follow my lead in song and dance, I work myself – and them – into a frenzy that is colossal to behold, a state of excitement that even the reddest-blooded Red Indians in their most deadly dances of death could not rival.

We always start with the “Eengonyama Chorus,” and for want of better action make up our own. Then it’s “Hold him Down, you Swaziwallahs!”, “We’re Out for Gore!” and anything else that comes to mind.

But of course it is not necessary to wait for the camp-fire to begin dancing – and war dancing. There is still a spirit of mysticism and romance in the war dance that we can harness for our own use in present-day camping. For instance, the New Zealand Scouts make use of the ancient Maori dances. They call them “hakas.” As another Troop Camp activity I offer the description given to me by a Scouter from Timara, New Zealand.



War dancer – war dancing

In the “haka,” as the dance is termed by the Maoris, the body, arms, and hands are vibrated and swayed constantly. This is called “Aroarowhaki.” In most cases the leader calls for preliminary attention and action by the long-drawn cry: “Tenei pakia” (slap the thighs), “E ringa pakia” (slap together, or keep in time), then – “E ringa pakia wae wae takahia” (slap the thighs and stamp the feet).

First, the legend of Maui’s fishing-up of Aotea-roa.

Maui’s brothers were going fishing, and Maui wanted to go with them, but they did not fancy that as they thought that he might bewitch their hooks, etc. They would give him no hooks or bait, so he went to his grandmother, who was well up in witchcraft, and begged a bone from her. She

gave him her jawbone. He then hid himself in the canoe, and when his brothers had put to sea he put a spell on the sea and they found themselves out of sight of land. They started to fish, but Maui, who had by this time shown himself, used his bone for a hook, and struck himself on the nose, causing it to bleed, using the blood for bait. He cast his line out, and it went down, down, down to the bottom of the sea and caught in the gable-board of a house. He pulled and pulled, and by means of enchantments and supernatural strength pulled up the land, so that the canoe was out of the water. This was good fishing, but Maui was not satisfied; he wanted his people to come and live on this beautiful land, which was flat and fertile. Bidding his brothers keep guard and not to touch the land, he went for his people. As soon as he had gone the brothers forgot his warning and started to walk about on the land and cut it up. The land, being alive still, resented this, and with much groaning and shaking, heaved itself about and thus formed the hills and valleys. Maui returned and made the best of a bad job, and “everybody lived happily ever after.”

LEADER: Tenei pakia! E ringa pakia wae wae takahia!!!!

ALL: Maui mua, Maui roto, Maui taha, Maui tikitiki Ate-rangi. (This is a recital of the actors in the story, the brothers Maui. Our hero is Maui tikitiki a terangi, or Maui, who was formed in the topknot of his mother.) Kapai! I haere ano Tikitiki A terangi ki tona tipuna, kia homai te ngakau. Kia homai te kauae, Ka hoe ki te moana. A ha ha! Ka whiua te matau ki te wai, Mau ake tona ika ko Aotearoa. Hutia ka eke kei runga ko Nui Tireni, I aue Hi!

LEADER: Aotearoa e ngurunguru nei (Aotearoa is groaning).

ALL: Au, Au, Aue, Ha, Hi! (This represents the groaning.)

LEADER: Aotearoa e ngurunguru nei.

ALL: Au, Au, Aue, Ha, Hi!

A ha ha. Ka tu te ihiihika tu te wanawana Ki runga ki te rangi, e tu iho nei, e tu iho nei. Hi-i-i!

The next is the story of a famous chief by the name of Rau-paraha, who was in flight from his enemies. Rauparaha was a very hairy man (Puhuruhuru). In his flight he came across another tribe and asked the chief for shelter. The chief hid him in the Kumera pit (a food store where the Kumeras, a kind of sweet potato, were stored). This was tapu to all except the chief and the Tohungas. When the pursuers arrived they asked if the chief had seen the fugitive, and he sent them on the wrong trail. He then called Rauparaha to come out, and as he came up from the pit he wondered just why he had been given shelter. Perhaps the chief had his eye on him as a likely meal (they were cannibals in those days). As Rauparaha came out he started reciting his prowess and saying aloud his doubts. Was he to live? Kamate. Or was he to die? Kaora. However, his doubts were set at rest when he saw the chief standing with his hand outstretched, ready to give the sign of friendly greeting, “Te Hongi” (nose rubbing or, rather, pressing). His cries turn to words of joy as he says: “Upane, Upane, Whiti te Ra,” or “Hooray, the sun is still going to shine!”

The opening can be the same as above, although there are several different openings. Then:

Kamate! Kamate! Kaora! Kaora!

Kamate! Kamate! Kaora! Kaora!

Tenei te tangata puhuruhuru Nana nei tiki ma whaka Whiti te Ra,

Upane! Upane! Upane! Kaupane! Whiti Te Ra.

These two “hakas” were performed by the whole New Zealand contingent at the Australian Jamboree (240), all dressed in Maori dress. Strange to say, there was only one “pukka” Maori amongst them, by name Bob Haraki (he was also at Arrowe Park), and he had the job of instructing the others in Maori lore, etc.

Well, there you are . . . and whatever occurs don't blame me. For your added benefit, Mr. Manthorp, who, by the way, is not a Maori himself, but a Britisher who has lived in New Zealand for

fourteen years and learned to love these fine natives, gives some guidance as to the pronunciation of these jaw-breaking words:

A is pronounced as in far,

E is pronounced as “a” in mate.

I is pronounced as “e” in *even*.

O is pronounced as in code.

U is pronounced as “oo” in *coop*.

WH is pronounced not quite as *white*, but with the addition of “f,” and spoken well back in the mouth. Try saying *fw*, not with the lips, but in the mouth.

NG, these two letters are invariably together and the “g” is silent, but has the effect of making the “n” less nasal and more pleasing.

There are no “l’s,” “b’s,” “z’s,” and several other letters, whose absence you will notice.

All letters are given their correct pronunciation, different from English, where the addition of “e” alters the sound of the previous vowel, etc. “Mate” is “mah-tay.”

Bible Stories. – Sunday evening in camp is often a problem. One cannot hold an ordinary camp-fire, and night Scouting is hardly the thing. Try this idea.

Hold a special Sunday Camp-fire, with a few well-chosen hymns, and get each Patrol to enact a Bible story, carefully planned and rehearsed during the Sunday afternoon. End with hymns and “Taps.” If you can invite some of the village people to the camp-fire it will go much better, and can be made very impressive.

I haven’t tried out the idea because I’ve only just heard of it, but the Sunday Camp-fire on these lines is used extensively in America.

Care should be taken to see that the subject is treated with due reverence, and in the matter of clothing and props there should be no question of burlesque. If this cannot be ensured, don’t attempt the idea.

Adventuring for Others. – A spare day in Summer Camp can usefully be spent in adventuring on behalf of others. The owner of the camping-site can usually find a jolly interesting job, which may be work to the local folk, but comes as good fun to us townspeople. Don’t wait to be asked, for you never will be. Go and see the owner, and ask him if he’s got a job for you all to do.

We camp many week-ends in a delightful little spot near Croydon, in Surrey, and have done many good turns to the owner of the ground. Huge trees have a habit of falling in his parkland, and we then have the job of trimming them. If the tree is a colossal beech or a tall elm it is no light task. But with axes and billhooks the Scouts delight in the job. An anxious Scoutmaster directs operations with one eye on the axes and the other on the First Aid equipment!

If the owner hasn’t a job for you to do, or if you’re paying for the camp-site (as many Troops have to these days), then have a go at the village. All the Scouts can go out into the village one day with the express purpose of finding a good turn to do. Careful you don’t do men out of a job, but there’s usually plenty of work waiting to be done which people won’t employ men to do. This is the sort of job to get hold of.

Games for the Backwoods

WE can find much fun in games that naturally adapt themselves to the backwoods. They are easily invented, but here are some ideas.

Pioneer Relay. – Each Patrol is a rescue party getting food back to the main party, and is spread out over a mile of difficult country. The first man in each Patrol sets out with food (a rucksack full of wood, for instance) and hands it on to the next man in his Patrol. Each Scout meets some

previously fixed obstacle such as the necessity to light a fire, signal to the next man that he is coming, deal with an arm cut by thorns, and so on. First Patrol to the rescue wins the game.

Dog Team Race. – For Patrols. Five Scouts act as “dogs,” and the sixth acts as driver. The sled is a flat piece of wood on which the driver stands. To the sled are attached ropes on which the “dogs” pull. The race is over uneven country, and the first team over the line with driver intact wins the game. If you can’t get a flat piece of wood, use a log.

Murder in the Backwoods. – Crimes staged in the woods are good fun, and the sort of things the Mounties come up against. The A.S.M. will make a good “body,” and broken branches, footprints, message pinned to the chest of the “victim,” make good clues. Observation and deduction, the greatest assets of the backwoodsman, can be tested to the full in games of this nature.

Bears and Wolves. – With scarves hanging from their belts as “tails,” half the Troop become bears, and the other half wolves. The object of the game is for the wolves to attack the bears, and the “tails” are their lives. The animals with the greatest number of “tails” at the end of the game win. Anything goes!

Guarding the Temple. – An old hut, shelter, or even a clearing serves as a native temple, with the golden idol (a nice log) standing in the centre of it. Half the Troop become natives, with wool armbands for “lives,” and the other half white men after the idol, also with woollen “lives.” The object is to secure the idol, and the white men have a given time in which to do it. At the end of that time if the whites have secured the idol they win; if they don’t, the natives win. Change over after one game, and make up your own rules.

Through the Jungle. – In an open square a number of twigs are stuck upright into the grass. Each Patrol stands in relay formation at one end of the square, and the P.Ls. stand opposite them at the other side. Now the Scouts in each Patrol blindfold themselves and squat on their feet, clutching one another round the waist. By shouting orders at the word “Go” the P.Ls. have to guide their own Patrols through the “jungle” of twigs. The Patrol wins which gets through by knocking down the fewest twigs. Rather like “Ships in the Fog.”

Night Adventuring

AT night, when the woods are hushed and only the soft sigh of the wind is rustling the leaves, or the call of a night-bird disturbs the silence, we can still find the backwoods touch. Ideas again:

Finding the Way. – In strange country, with no maps and no compasses, the early pioneers had only the stars to guide them. Let’s try the idea. A treasure hunt with compass directions in sealed instructions, and only the stars to guide us. Find North by the Great Bear, or Plough, and measure distance by pacing, and the treasure is ours.

Night Raid on the Indian Village. – A night raid on an Indian village, with torches flashing, Patrol-calls echoing through the stillness. What a thrill. The Indians have to defend their village; the whites have to attack and capture it. Scarves are lives, and we count the “dead” afterwards.

Fire-signalling. – A cold dark night is just the time for fire-signalling. A base is formed, and the three Patrols go out to high ground at equal distances in different directions. The first Patrol to light a fire and give a prearranged signal back to the base (blotting out firelight by blanket or groundsheet at intervals) wins the game. Good sport.

Through the Stockade. – Half the Troop guards a square of ground (the fort). The other half have to get through this cordon (the stockade) and fire off a rocket, or light a torch. Scarves serve as “lives,” and the attackers and guardians can change places after a specified time if the attackers do not get through.

Indian Camp-fire. – At one camp-fire during camp we can all go dressed as Indians. This means yells, chants, Indian war dances, an Indian yarn from Skipper, and a “Feathering the Brave” ceremony as a fitting close.

A WET DAY IN THE BACKWOODS

BRITISH weather being what it is, our chapter on adventure camping cannot be complete without the story of a rainy day in the backwoods camp. Most camps experience rain in some form or another, and lucky indeed are you if you choose a week or fortnight for your Summer Camp when there is no rain whatever. Funny stuff, rain. We grumble about it when we’ve got it, and pray for it when we haven’t got it. But six weeks of drought gives us some idea of how badly off we should be if we didn’t have rain at all. People in villages who had to have their water carted in tanks from distant towns during a drought aren’t ever likely to grumble at rain.

Neither should we grumble at rain. If it rains all the blooming time at your backwoods camp you can call it the rainy season, or an expedition into the Rain Forest, where it rains from the trees all the time. You can call it a good experience, and have plenty of fun, with the rain as the medium.

When it snowed and lay three inches thick at Easter Camp one year, we didn’t grumble. It was something entirely new for us, and therefore greeted as an experience.

Let’s think how to make the best use of a rainy day in the backwoods.

Precautions Beforehand

YOU can be comfortable in camp during the rain as well as during any other weather. It only needs care. Make sure your tents are waterproof before going to camp. If you are a bit doubtful about them give them a coat of waterproofing. You can buy this from The Scout Shop in tins, or make it yourself. Here is the method:

Boil an ounce of isinglass in a pint of *soft* water until it is quite dissolved, and strain through a piece of linen into a second saucepan. Dissolve a quarter of an ounce of white Castile soap in a pint of water, strain as before, and add to the first solution.

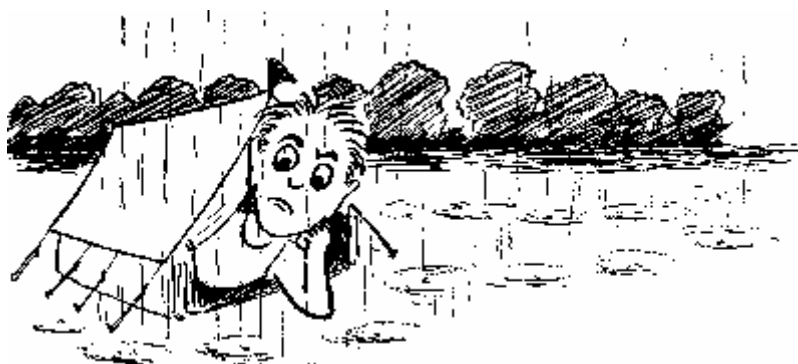
Dissolve an ounce of alum in two pints of water, strain and add. Stir and heat the combined solution over a slow fire until the liquid simmers, when it is ready for use. The solution should be applied while still hot to the outer surface of the tent with a small flat brush, care being taken to work it well into the seams.

This quantity is sufficient for about eighty to one hundred square feet of material. In proofing a tent, one should be careful not to overproof it, which is worse than not proofing it at all.

To waterproof the tent, erect it in the garden, or backyard, or even in the clubroom, and paint the mixture on. Leave the tent standing until it is quite dry. The tent will be perfectly waterproof then.

Make sure, also, that the sod cloth – the canvas cloth at the bottoms of the walls of the tent – is complete and not torn, and repair if necessary. When you erect the tent and lay in the groundsheet, or groundsheets, see that the sod cloth goes *under* the groundsheets, and then the rain won’t run underneath the tent on to the groundsheet.

If you take these precautions before going to camp you won’t have to worry much about keeping dry during the heaviest rain. Unless you are camping on very marshy ground, or on thick clay, which you obviously wouldn’t do if you’ve got any sense at all, there will be no necessity to dig trenches round the tent to take the rain, as I have heard of people doing. When the weather becomes so bad in Britain that you need to dig trenches to take the water it is time to break camp!



Rainy day in the backwoods.

Rainy Conditions

IF you find the rain is incessant during the camp, then it will be necessary to take other precautions. It will be wise to erect shelters over the kitchens, and over the washing-place. If you can take spare waterproof sheeting to camp, then you can rig up shelters from that, but if not, you will be presented with a fine opportunity of erecting natural shelters which I have described earlier in this chapter. You will have to make the shelters extra thick on top, so that the rain will not trickle through. Bind the reeds, or leaves, or bracken into sheaves before laying them on.



Maybe it will be muddy!

Continual walking on wet ground brings up mud, as anyone who went to the Arrowe Jamboree, in 1929, will know. Therefore, if the rain keeps on, it is necessary to prevent mud as far as possible. Lift the groundsheets of the tent back so that you won't have to walk on them, and create a rule that everyone takes his slippers off whenever he enters the tent. This rule will also have the purpose of preventing fellows running in and out of the tent more than is necessary during wet weather.

If the tent has doors at each end, use a different door on alternate days. That will keep the entrance in better condition. The entrance to the kitchen is another source of mud-supply. Try changing the entrance to a different corner each day. That will solve the problem fairly well.

Of course, if the ground gets in a really bad state you will have to lay down straw, or boards, but this is only a last extremity, for it makes the ground in a rotten state, and straw is the world's worst stuff to collect up afterwards.

It is a good idea during wet weather, if you have sufficient wood, to keep at least one fire going continually during the day, and always have a large billy of water on it, replenishing when it begins

to boil away. In this way you will always have hot water during the day, and if Patrol fires are swamped away, tea and a meal can be got quickly for everybody.

Some time during the late afternoon gather together as much dry wood as possible, or cut off the bark of wood that has got wet in the rain, and store the wood away under cover for the next morning. This will do away with any difficulty in lighting fires.

If you are using the normal backwoods fire you won't have any difficulty in making a fire – even in the rain – but if you are using the trench variety you may find a pool of water in the trench in the morning. This need not bother you. Scoop out the water, lay a few stones – not flints – in the bottom to make a dry surface, and proceed as usual. We have got a fire going, where there was first a pool of water, within five minutes – with one match. You might like to make a test of it.

Put knives and axes under cover during really wet weather, or you will find they will go rusty. Plates, mugs, and other cutlery, which are usually out in the open, can be left there and dried before each meal, but watch that you keep your tea cloths in a dry place. If you are using boxes for Patrol larders, see that the top of the box has a waterproof cover, or water will get through and soak the food.

If you take care of all these things you won't have anything to worry about, no matter if the heavens fall out and it rains “cats and dogs.”

Taking Care of Yourself

DOCTORS, and people whose business it is to know about such things, will tell you that there is less illness in a camp during wet weather than during hot weather. Therefore we haven't got much to worry about in that direction. Nevertheless, it is necessary to guard against chills and colds through foolishness,

In all wet weather go about without stockings and in sandals or loose canvas shoes. Don't worry about water squelching in your shoes; that won't hurt you. Either wear as little as possible on yourself, or cover up with something sound and waterproof. Don't go about in a sweater alone, or in an overcoat. Now all that sounds ridiculous, but it is perfectly correct. Colds are caused through clothes getting wet and drying on you through your bodily heat. If you wear little or nothing there won't be anything to dry on you, whilst if you wear clothes and a waterproof the wet won't get to your clothes (Q.E.D.)!

When you go into the tent for any long spell kick off your shoes, dry your feet and hair by brisk rubbing with a rough towel, and put on light, dry clothes.



*Best to wear a waterproof – or next to
nothing – when it's wet!*

If you begin to feel chilly whilst out in the wet, run about to get warm. That's better than crouching over the fire, or getting into a blanket in the tent.

Don't sit on the wet grass, or even on very wet logs. If the rain has cleared and you want to sit down, put a groundsheet over the logs.

All these are simple, common-sense precautions, but many fellows forget all about them. Only Tenderfeet get wet and uncomfortable in a rainy camp. Wise fellows can have the time of their lives.

Rain for Adventure

THERE'S no need to stick in the tent all the time – just because it's raining. The rain will, in itself, provide opportunities for adventures that are not possible when it's fine. Here are the ideas:

Forest of Eternal Rain. – In certain jungles of South America water drips from the trees all the time. Where it comes from I am not sure. In Abyssinia, as you may have heard, they have what is known as rainy seasons – certain periods in when it rains for weeks on end without stopping. So we have an exploring stunt:

For a first, simple event, clothe yourselves carefully in waterproofs and strong boots or shoes, take hiking kit with you, and set out in the rain. Hike seven miles, set up a tent, light a fire, and cook a meal. If you can manage it, sleep the night, and return in the morning. Have some purpose behind the journey, and make it as realistic as possible. Men have gone into the jungle to hunt for choice orchids, rare animals. You can hunt unknown flowers, unknown leaves and plants. Bring them back to camp, and try to find someone to identify them. You will then have added a bit of nature study to your adventure.

Shelter from the Rain. – If the weather is warm, get into bathing-slips and go out and build a hut with branches, withies, and reeds. Pioneers have done this a hundred times, and it is good fun. A brisk rub down after the business is over, and you will come to no harm.

Rain in the Desert. – Rain in a desert has often saved many an explorer's life. Imagine you are in a desert and it has just begun to rain. Fix up means for collecting all the rain-water you can. It is a good challenge. The water can afterwards be used for washing – it is the softest water you can get! If you collect it in a clean vessel you can taste it. You will find it has a rotten taste. Strangely enough, it is the nearest thing you can get to tastelessness!

House in the Trees. – If you have plenty of timber, and the ground gets very muddy, build a hut on the top of four poles. You will need to make very good lashings, and fix up good foundations, but it is good fun, and unusual pioneer work. In parts of Africa people live in such homes. It is a job for when the rain has ceased, but a muddy ground makes it all the more realistic.

Fire in a Puddle. – As I have already suggested, have a competition between the Patrols to see who can light a fire in a puddle in the shortest possible time. If it is raining into the bargain, all the better. Two matches only allowed, but dry paper will be supplied.

They're Biting. – If you are near a stream or lake, hold a fishing competition one morning. Make your own hooks, and lines, and things. They tell me that fish come to the surface when it's raining, but I don't know very much about angling, so can't vouch for it. See you have good macs. Be careful of "Fishing Rights," and things like that.

Strike a Light. – If you want a good game for a rainy day, try the following relay. Each Patrol is given one candle and a match. At the word "Go" the first man lights the candle in the rain, and runs with it a selected distance – about fifty yards. He comes back with it, and hands it on to the next man, and so on. The Patrol wins which keeps its candle alight longest!

Hill-billy Band. – When parties of men are prevented from getting on with their pioneer work by rain they often amuse themselves by forming a band. You can do the same. Harmonicas, combs

and paper, and things to bang on, a lively male voice choir, and you can have an hour of good fun. I think you must have violins – or fiddles, rather – to form a hill-billy band, but don't let a little thing like that worry you.

Carving a Lump of Wood. – If you've ever seen pictures of these old lumberjacks or backwoodsmen you will know that they usually have beards and are shown carving up a lump of wood with a knife. There's a good idea for a rainy day. Everyone secures a lump of wood, gets his knife, and a lump of stone on which to keep it sharp, and whittles or carves the wood to please himself. You can make a competition of it if you like.

Ship-building. – If the carving amuses you, cut out some model boats. Start with a branch to represent a tree-trunk, and carve it into a boat. The natives did this full-size, and you can do it in miniature. There is plenty of water about, and you can float the models – have a race with them if you wish.

Signals in the Rain. – If the rain is heavy it will provide plenty of smoke from fires. It presents an opportunity for smoke-signalling *de luxe*. Don't use blankets, but find a substitute in the shape of groundsheets. Work out your own code of signals. Cover plenty of distance. Wet leaves will bring up the smoke!

AND now our story of adventure camping seems to be complete. If you, as pioneers, Patrols, or Troops, do only half the things I have described in this chapter you will have more fun camping this year than you have ever had before.

If you want to go holiday camping, then the best thing to do is to go with Mum and Dad, with the school, or with the choir. If you want backwoods and adventure camping, then the thing to do is to go with the Troop.

That must be the keynote for Scouters, and it is up to every Troop to see that its camps are backwoods camps – adventure camps. In that way we will get back to real Scout camping, and set a lead that will make the Scout camp the big adventure it once was and still should be.

The foundations are there, and we can find plenty of good sound bricks to use. We have only to build. . . .