

Boy Scouts Association of Canada
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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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THE RAMBLER'S BADGE

RULE 327 – P.O. & R.

The Rover Scout must ramble and aggregate of 100 miles outside towns during week-ends or holidays (or alternatively trips aggregating 200 miles by canoe or 400 miles by bicycle) and must keep and hand in a log of his journeys. This log should give dates, places and distances, and preferably contain information of use to other hikers, such as places of interest to be visited en route, good camping spots, directional hints at difficult points, etc. Sketches, maps, other forms of illustration and nature notes should be included.

The object of this badge is to encourage the Rover to hike for sheer pleasure. It is not an athletic feat.

INTRODUCTION

Rambling can be an exciting journey of discovery into the world of nature – plants and animals; rocks and minerals; the weather and the firmament; or it may turn towards history and architecture. The expeditions and explorations undertaken can disclose the interesting and important facts about such things as the blades of grass, spider webs, the flight of birds, or the majesty of the night sky.

Rambling seeks more than that the adventurer bring home “specimens” or learn the names of trees or birds. Its purpose is to gather many varied experiences together to create a feeling of enjoyment and awareness of the out-of-doors. It reveals something of the order, vastness, complexity and majesty of the world of nature to those who live in it. It fosters growing hobby interests and finds room for wonder and enthusiasm, the spirit of adventure and a spontaneous delight in discovery.

These notes, it is hoped, will stimulate your thinking, so that you produce ideas of your own. When starting on your Rambler's Log it is not necessary or expected that you will lay out things exactly as shown here. It *is* expected that your report will record not only where you went and the purpose of your ramble, but what you did and possibly why you did it.

What we hope you will endeavour to achieve is the grand spirit of adventure that Rambling can produce. It is not sufficient just to fulfil the requirements for these should be undertaken in the spirit in which they were meant to be carried out.

Rambling is the finest way of seeing your own countryside, or for that matter, any other country. It should not cost very much except in the effort we take to do it properly. We hope that every Rover Scout who undertakes to ramble will regard the earning of the Rambler's Badge as the beginning of something that will continue to grow throughout the years.

After reading these notes, we hope you will feel as we do that to undertake the Rambler's Badge as a part of your “Rover Questing” is a necessary step in the personal development of every Rover Scout.

These notes are not written to deprive a Rover Scout from doing his own thinking; but rather to help him know what is essential and what is considered trimmings in the preparation of his “Rambler's Log”. The following pages will therefore highlight the essential factors; the trimmings will only be lightly touched upon for it is there that the Rover Scout has his greatest opportunity of personal expression.



FOREWORD

RAMBLING – The art of walking without a definite objective; but with a purposeful consideration of one's surroundings – The key activity of a Rover Scout, might also be described as "Wondering while Wandering". It is based on the habit of observation, on a comprehension of what is observed and the ability to record what is seen and comprehended so that permanent records of your experiences may be kept. The late Lord Baden-Powell refers to Rovering as a "Brotherhood of the open air". If we, as Rover Scouts are to carry out this purpose of our branch of the Scout Movement, there must be increased interest developed in the out-of-doors, an urge to see new things, to adventure into strange places and to learn more about nature. The seed of Rambling should be sown as soon as the Rover Scout enters the Crew, and if the seed is well sown it will go on growing in breadth and depth throughout a Rover Scout's life. All that is needed to start the seed growing is direction – direction from someone who can encourage sympathetically the Rover Scout's sense of wonder and excitement at discovery. The source of this wonder and excitement is not found indoors. It is some living creature observed in its native haunt, alive and happy in the company of other living animals and plant life. The practice of observation and the process of deduction is an important ingredient towards gaining the Rambler's Badge, because it is through your ability to observe and deduce that the success of your Rambles is assured. It is up to you to think for yourselves, and to discover the whys and wherefores of the daily happenings about you, helped to a certain extent by the advice and experience of others, but not dependent on them.

KEEPING A RAMBLER'S LOG

There are, of course, many reasons for keeping a "Log" besides providing nostalgic memories of past events or for the inspiration and encouragement of the new members who enter into your Crew's life and activities. Properly planned and maintained, the keeping of a Rambler's Log can give each Rover Scout a chance to express himself in his own way, by means of the written word, by pen or pencil sketches, or with the aid of a camera.

Almost everyone, no matter what his station in life, is expected to have some writing ability. In fact, to a very real extent, your success in today's world depends on your ability to express yourself on paper.

For instance, when you are applying for that first job, or maybe a new one, you may be required to write a letter outlining your qualifications, or past experiences. The person to whom you send this material has never met you or even heard of you before; he has nothing to go by other than what you have written. If this fails to interest him or get your message across clearly, if it gives an impression of sloppiness, or coldness – you're out of the running.

There are many who won't face up to the effort required to record their hikes or rambles. Why this lack of interest? Is it that they can't be bothered; or that they find difficulty in putting their experiences on paper; or that they find the challenge of preparing a Rambler's Log too great?

When you don't know what to write in your reports, it may be an admission that you are leading a dull and empty life. Report the things you see, hear and do. Write to express your thoughts and ideas on some aspect of your own choosing, be it natural life, architecture, forestry, history or anything that may be of interest to *you*.

You may think of writing as somehow different from talking. It isn't. Talking is an expression of thoughts and ideas in spoken words. Writing is, or should be, those same words on paper.

The more your writing follows your own characteristic pattern, the more engagingly it reflects the colour and warmth of your personality.

Assuming that you have retained the elementary rules of grammar, spelling and composition you learned at school, you need only a little extra effort to make yourself an effective writer.

What you will learn, no matter how you go about it, is that all good writing has three main ingredients. These are Clarity, Force and Personality. Here's what these three mean.

CLARITY – Say what you have to say. Make it just long enough to get all your ideas in and to avoid being curt. Be sure that you present your thoughts and ideas in logical order. Keep in mind what you want to say – develop it along lines of clear, simple reasoning. Use short words, and sentences and active verbs.

FORCE – Virtually everything you write is designed to get some kind of active response from the reader – even though it is only an emotional one. Does what you say make one take action? That is what is meant by force. How do you create force? First, decide exactly what response you want to get. Ask yourself “What am I trying to get this fellow to do?” When you have done this, you have built the backbone of your report.

PERSONALITY – The average person, when writing, can manage to sound like the most pompous bore who ever lived. The reasons are academic English, long words, tangled sentences, mossy phrases – and the disastrous, notion that you must not write as you speak.

The whole secret is to write in an easy, natural way – without self-consciousness – like one friendly human being talking to another. Make your reports sound the way you sound... and they will reflect your personality. Here are some helpful tips:

1. Use the personal pronouns, ‘I’ and ‘you’.
2. Don’t be shackled to formal grammar.
3. If you come to a point where a slang word or colloquialism expresses your meaning better than anything else, use it. Be natural.
4. Avoid the wishy-washy tone that comes from too much use of the passive voice.

None of these points will make you a Shakespeare, but they will help you make yourself understood and get the responses you want. Equally important, they’ll help your Rambler’s reports present you as the kind of crisp, clear thinking, decisive fellow you think you are.

Remember – your writing represents you. Be sure it represents you to the best advantage.



PLANNING THE LOG BOOK

There is no standard method of preparing your Log, nor is it desirable that there should be. Select a binder and paper of standard size and of good quality to hold your rambling reports. Don’t make the mistake some Rover Scouts have done and use any old discarded book for the purpose. If you want others to take pride in your “Rambler’s Log” then prepare a book they will be pleased to handle and read. Make it something to be proud of; something that will last and not just meet the requirements.

Thought should be given to the type of cover which will be durable enough to protect it adequately as in most cases, a Log Book receives a great deal of handling. You cannot do better than select a loose leaf binder. This type of book makes it convenient to work on each page separately.

There are three sizes of binders satisfactory for this purpose. The largest and most common uses a page size of 8½ x 11 inches. The other two are not so common but are considered suitable; one using a page size of 6 x 9½ inches, the other pages of 5½ X 7½ inches. All these are readily available at most stationers.

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Purchase sufficient quantities of paper so that you can complete your reports without running short. After a year or so it is not always possible to purchase exactly the same kind of paper, so get all you think you will need the first time.

A casual glance at the range of paper available may create a feeling of bewilderment as to what is most suitable. What you select will depend to a large extent on how you decide to prepare the Log Book.

The cheapest and lowest quality papers are not sturdy and will not withstand much handling, nor can they be expected to last very long without becoming dog-eared. Good quality paper is important if you want your work to last.

If you are going to write or print your reports then you should select two kinds of paper for your Log – ruled pages for written or lettered notes and plain (unruled) pages which can be used for maps, sketches or for mounting photographs. If you are able to typewrite your reports, then plain pages should be used throughout. All writing and/or printing in your Log should be done in ink, and for continuity should be done in the same kind of ink throughout.

To make your pages as attractive as possible some thought must be given to “layout”. This means that the page must have balance, that is, create a pleasing effect. Don’t crowd the margins. Leave a wider margin at the bottom of your page than at the top or sides. A well balanced page never creates the impression that the copy is crowding the edges of the paper.



Now let us consider the types of pages which should comprise a good Log. These can be described as the frontispiece or introductory page; the index page; the report pages, and those used for maps, sketches and photographs or postcards, etc.



The Introductory page should give the title of your report, your name and Rover Crew. Some small sketch or symbol gives the page more interest and provides an opportunity to introduce a bit of colour to the page. The use of colour emphasizes important details or features and gives a pleasing effect.

An index page is an excellent way to keep track of your rambles in a neat and orderly manner. It presents a quick method of locating a particular ramble for reference when required. A summary of

RAMBLE	MILES LOGGED	PAGE
1. NIAGARA ONTARIO-LAKE RAMBLE RIVER RESTORATION PROJECTS	5	1
2. NIAGARA RIVER REGION RAMBLING RIVER TO THE RIVER LOGGED 8	12	7
3. ALGONQUIN PARK CANOE FROM FRANKLIN RIVER TO CLEAR LAKE RIVER RIVER LOGGED 110	25	24
4. RAMBLING TO GOODYEAR FALLS TRAIL - RIVER TO STONE HENGE & PORTLAND RIVER RIVER LOGGED 40	77	40

total milages could be shown on this page. It must be remembered that two miles by canoe equals one mile walking and that it takes four miles by bicycle to equal a walking mile. The method of showing this is up to you. If your rambles are all walking, or all by canoe, there is no problem. It is in the preparation of report pages that the Rover Scout has the best opportunity and scope for individual expression. It is recommended that each new ramble start with a heading to identify it and begin on a new page. A suggestion as to the information that should be in this heading is given here:

ROVER SCOUT RAMBLER BADGE

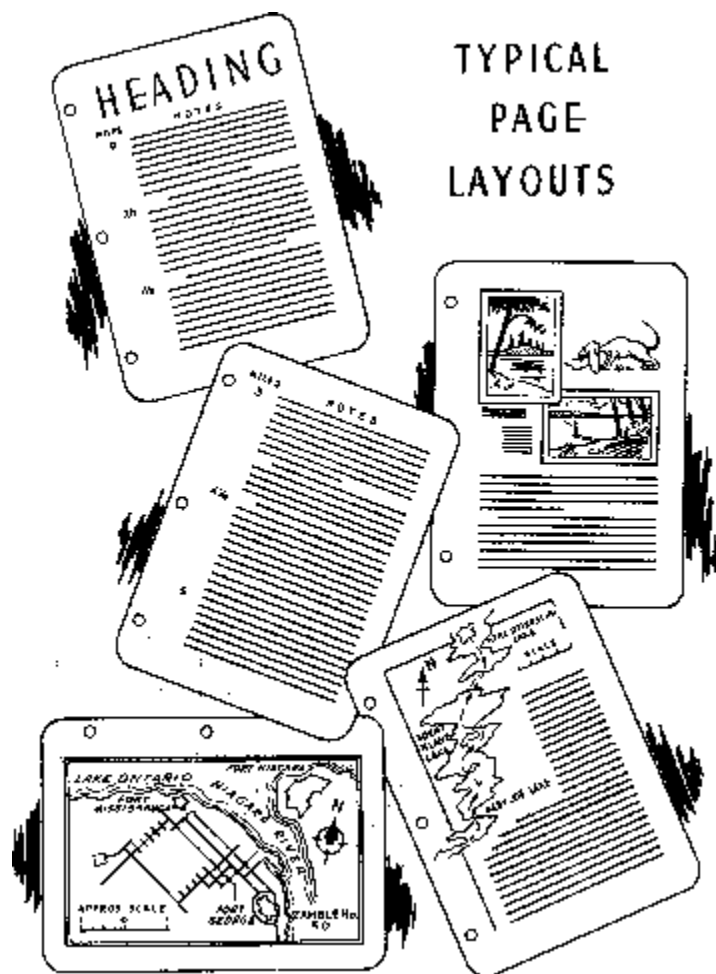
Ramble No.30

Cycle Trip: Halifax to Windsor and Lunenburg, Nova Scotia.

Approximate milage: 80 miles.

Date: Saturday, August 20th, 1960.

General Weather Note: Sunny, for a change.



Copy material should only be placed on one side of the page. Maps, sketches, photographs, etc., may be placed separately or on the same page as your report. This is up to you. Each ramble report you enter into your Log should be assigned a number so that all material pertaining to that report can bear the same identification.

What Shall I Put In My Log?

Have an objective for each ramble.

Here are a number of important points which should help you in your planning.

1. Begin with local materials – Look to find the romance of things close at hand. Too often we are apt to stress strange animals and plants, or distant places, ignoring the fascinating objects in our own backyards.
2. Take full advantage of what the moment or season brings – Thus, if you start on a bird ramble and find some other interesting facet of nature at work, stop to watch. You can go on with the bird ramble

later or save it for another day. Focus your attention on what is important and different about each aspect of nature at a particular time or season.

3. Observe everything – Use all your senses in discovering what is interesting and important about the things you see. Use not only sight and hearing but also the neglected senses of taste, touch and smell.
4. Fit your program to your own natural interests. – Nature is enjoyed in different ways by different age groups. Very small children are often most interested in shapes and habits of familiar plants and animals and in stories about them. Boys of Scout age have a very intense interest in all of nature and enjoy making collections, going on hikes and cooking out. You, as a Rover Scout should not miss the opportunities to enjoy the same things but you should extend your interests possibly to such “Service” projects as developing a nature trail. Your activities should further be directed towards the inter-relationship of living things and conservation.
5. Direct your rambles to seek out important principles. To develop a real understanding and appreciation of nature you must open your eyes to the fundamental principles of natural life. A study of the inter-dependence of all natural objects will bring out the need for a “Balance of Nature”. This should lead you towards an interest in conservation, a most important element in good citizenship.
6. Outline a definite long range programme. Although you will need to adapt your rambles to your changing interests, it is important to have a general plan mapped out in order to keep your activities from becoming too scattered or one-sided.

You are expected to report on some aspect of your own choosing, be it natural life, architecture, history, forestry, or in fact, almost anything that appeals to you personally. The important thing to remember in the preparation of your “Rambler’s Log” is that you must keep it human and full of your own personality and humour.

The test of a good Log is, does it give the information wanted? It should include such information as route covered, general weather notes, how far you rambled, who attended and the object or theme.

Remember, Rambling fosters growing hobby interests and finds room for wonder and enthusiasm, the spirit of adventure and a spontaneous delight in discovery.

THE SKETCH MAP

A map is the beginning of all adventure. Travels and treasure hunts, wars and explorations all open to your view with its unrolling. In your home or Crew den a map can be a magic carpet, taking the mind in a flash anywhere you desire to go. You may journey over the entire world without any inconvenience.

What hopes, what dreams, what achievements have been pondered over a map. Imagine the spirit aflame in the hearts of those lonely adventurers as they sailed out from their homelands in search of spices, riches and new lands to conquer. What must a map have meant to them.

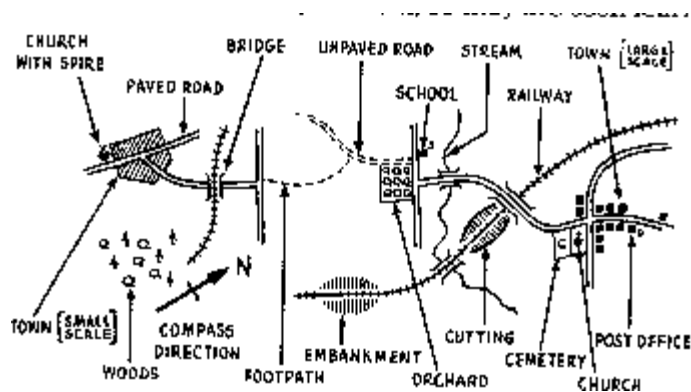
Today, we are apt to take maps for granted. Road maps are freely given, but at one time maps were closely guarded. Any man who was caught revealing their secrets was often tortured or even put to death. The history of mapping can be an interesting subject in itself. A study of the great explorers will show how they added to man’s knowledge of the world by making maps of their voyages and explorations. The explorations of Cabot and Cartier along the northeast coast of Canada, of LaSalle on the Mississippi, of the Spanish in Florida, Texas and Mexico opened up the vast continent of North America. As the early pioneers travelled west, the map unfolds and we are able to read their findings.

First, there was a wilderness, unknown to these adventurers, a challenge to their skill. The moccasined feet of the frontiersmen made the first trails which were later followed by the settlers who left routes well defined by their wagon tracks. These later became roads. Now the whole country is crisscrossed with highways. To be able to make a rapid and accurate rough sketch map is a useful accomplishment.

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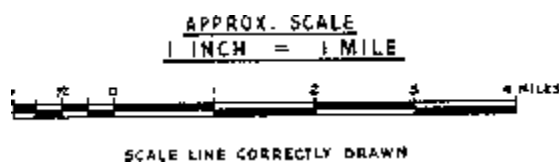
There are maps and maps! Mapping requires practice, and it is one of the things that you can do on your own. There is no reason why you should not get down to it, and by practice, become able to draw neat and understandable sketch maps.

To make a map understandable to someone else you have to use symbols that he can read, and for that purpose certain signs called “Conventional Signs” have been agreed upon. There are not many of them, so they are soon learnt.



To get used to the symbols you can draw imaginary maps, but it is better to get out as soon as possible and work from actual terrain.

When you draw a map do it neatly. Do not make the lines representing roads too far apart – one sixteenth inch is plenty for any size map. Any lettering you put on the map should be done in small capital letters – they are most easily read. Although your maps should have a certain freedom they should be kept to an approximate scale. If you look on most maps you will find a scale line. This represents the distances on the ground to which the map was drawn. See that a scale is included on all your maps.



Also important on your map is the compass direction. Without this it is not possible for anyone else to orient your sketch map with the country it is meant to represent. As your maps should be kept simple, there is no need to draw an elaborate compass rose – an arrow with “N” at the top is sufficient. Usually a map is orientated to true North and not to magnetic North.



Each ramble should have its own sketch map, keyed by number, to the description of that ramble.



Summary – or Let's Sum Up!

As you may have gathered by now, Rambler reports, whether submitted for the Rambler's Badge or not, should have some serious thought given to their presentation. They should not be written into any old scribbler or notebook which happens to be conveniently at hand. They should reflect the Rover Scout's pride of accomplishment.

The purpose of these reports is not to test a Rover Scout on his powers of composition, spelling, artistry, etc., but rather to encourage him to express his findings and interests in his own way. It must be remembered, though, that it is quite permissible for the examiner to assess the standard of a report on the educational background of the applicant.

The point to keep in mind is that the Log is a personal record of what you did, where you went and what you observed. Another thing. Logs are supposed to contain illustrations of interesting things. Why do we place so much stress on sketching? You might reply that it is all right for those who can draw, but you couldn't do a decent sketch to save your life. Well, sketching is good observation training. You really see something if you've got to sketch it. A sketch, accompanying a verbal description helps give a more complete idea of an object. Lots of people who think they can't draw find that they are much better than they thought they were when they really try.

If you aren't very good at sketching do not overlook other possible methods of introducing pictorial information into your Log, i.e. photographs, post cards, souvenir booklets, etc.

A final piece of advice. Undertake your Rambles with your eyes wide open. Give a clear indication of the nature of the countryside through which you pass, permanent landmarks, peculiar features seen en route such as a roadside memorial or shrine, a novel gateway or any other object or place of interest to you.

Before ending these notes may we say to you, that should you be encouraged to Ramble and undertake the preparation of a Log to record such Rambles, we sincerely hope you will find enjoyment and a whole world of new experiences.

The great thing about Rambling is to take it as a challenge to one's Rovering and to enter the game determined to get as much out of it as possible and to have a wonderful time doing it.