

THE SCOUTER'S BOOKS — No. 12

# **SOME TRAINING IDEAS FOR SCOUTS**

By

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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 21<sup>st</sup> century. For reasons of historical accuracy they have been preserved in their original form.

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PREFACE.

You occasionally hear someone say "There are too many Scout books now: why print another?". He is invariably someone who (a) has never run a Troop or Pack or (b) ran one very indifferently a long time ago.

For the good, practising Scoutmaster knows that he can't have too many new ideas to make his Troop meetings and camps the fresh, lively, exciting occasions they ought to be. They prevent him from getting stale and the boys from getting bored.

It is in this belief we offer those who care to buy and use it, this little book.

L.T. & R.H.



*Look at this picture; then look at the picture on page 8; then do what idea No. 33 tells you to do.*

## **SOME TRAINING IDEAS FOR SCOUTS.**

### **1. The Scout and himself.**

There have been several Scouts in the history of Scouting who have (or the most part) trained themselves by their own efforts. There have been several millions who haven't. A Scout is more likely to train himself to some extent if he:

- (i) realises from the first moment of his contact with Scouting that it is expected of him (something that should be remembered from time to time when Group policy is discussed at Group Councils).
- (ii) is given a target for individual parts of Second or First Class as well as for the whole Badge.
- (iii) has a personal record card.
- (iv) colours in himself his progress on the Troop Progress Chart on the Notice board,
- (v) has access to such books and minor pieces of equipment that he may not be able to possess himself. (The wise Troop has a small expendable library of text books – Badge books, Patrol books and the like, which can be borrowed easily by the Scouts).

### **2. Work Period.**

The Scout's technical progress in Scouting then will depend mainly on the training he receives under the Scoutmaster's direction. Again he will not get as far as he should as quickly as he should if this is confined to Troop Bights only. Another "Work period" or "Training time" is essential: it must be left to the Scouts themselves whether they attend or not. There should be nothing compulsory about it but it should be laid on regularly – at least once a fortnight and preferably on some such time as Saturday evening when boys are often free and at a loose end – so that those who want it can have it. And it should be concentrated instruction, because it can be so with a small group, voluntarily attending, and with time to spare.

### **3. This week's special**

A weekly 'something' to revise at home – the middleman's knot, the knee bandage, the Troop code – helps to polish up small details and guides the Scouts in self-training.

### **4. Tree Census.**

How many different kinds of trees can you list within a quarter of a mile radius (say) of your H.Q.? Let Patrols quarter area and list. (A seasonal report on the trees – buds, flowers, fruits, etc. – might follow).

### **5. Tape Recorder.**

Why not use this modern invention? Nearly every Group will have some member (or friend of a member) with one. (a) Record "sounds" – easier to manage than the old "noises behind a screen" method and allows for greater variety, (b) Get members (or well known associates of Group) to record some words on tape. Troop to recognise speakers.

### **6. Bombardment time challenge.**

Scouts must tie knots under difficulty! One Patrol in centre of H.Q.; one of their number sits in chair with three pieces of rope to tie three named knots; rest of Troop round edge of H.Q. with half-a-dozen tennis balls. At Go! they bombard knot-tier whose Patrol must try to protect him by catching and stopping balls and throwing them back. Knot-tier stands on chair as soon as he has tied three named knots, being timed by Scouter. Each Patrol in turn takes centre position.

**7. Timber hitch Relay.**

A piece of cord and a small log, baton or piece of broomstick, for each Patrol. Each Scout in turn to run with cord from relay position, up to other end of H.Q. where log (or equivalent) awaits him. Ties cord to log with timber hitch, drags logs to his Patrol, whom he touches before returning to other end where he leaves log and runs back to pass on cord to next member of his Patrol. (If timber hitch comes unstuck, Scout must stop and repair it before proceeding).

**8. Running Knots.**

Patrols in relay formation. Each Patrol has a length of knotting rope. Scouter calls a knot, e.g. fisherman's and 'Go!' No. 1 must run to end of room and back and tie his knot running, and keep on running till knot tied. Shows to Scouter, unties knot, hands rope to No. 2 who continues.

**9. Tie Up.**

Each Patrol to be given one minute to tie up P.L. of another Patrol. Points given by Skip for knots and leadership under Patrol Second.

Patrol then have to untie their own P.L. Points given for speed, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th. (N.B. No tying up above shoulders).

**10. Belay.**

Skip gives a climbing yarn (or reads a piece from a climbing book) and explains what a belay is. Divide Patrols into threes. The problem is for the leader to secure the rope, tie a bowline round himself. No. 2 to use a middleman's knot to tie himself to the rope and No. 3 another bowline. Variation 1: do the tying while lying on the floor. Variation 2; do it blindfold.

**11. Law and Promise.**

Each Patrol in Council for four minutes to give an example of *two* laws either being *kept* or being *broken* – actual incidents observed by or known to the boys themselves during the preceding week.

This can be used once a month profitably (different laws each time: possible combinations of 10 laws taken two at a time – 45!) and keeps the laws in front of the Scouts without preaching. (The Law and the Promise is learned best of all perhaps from the *atmosphere* of the Troop room).

**12. Street Survey.**

Have cyclostyled plan showing streets only (double lines) of reasonably large area around H.Q. Each Scout within given time to fill in names of streets and principal landmarks.

**13. Sign Cards.**

Make a set of cards (on postcards or half postcards) of conventional signs, one set per Patrol.

Patrols in relay formation: set of cards at end of room in box or other container. Scouter calls out a sign "marshland," "church with tower" etc. No. 1 runs to cards and finds appropriate card and hands to Scouter. Points for first. Then with No. 2, 3, etc.

**14. My Height**

Each Scout told to discover his exact height before next meeting. At this Troop meeting required to jot down height of most of Patrol, using only the knowledge of his own height.

**15. Local Congestion.**

Scouts to estimate number of people in:

(a) local cinema.

(b) Church or Chapel known to Scouts.

(c) local Public Hall.

when full. (Scouter must remember to obtain correct answers beforehand from Manager, Minister, caretaker, etc.),

#### **16. Hospital Theatre.**

Have a patient and doctor (Scout good at First Aid). Patient's accident is announced and "doctor" does the First Aid, explaining to assembled "students" (rest of Troop) who sit round, what he is doing and why.

#### **17. Make up – and mend.**

Make up – in the stage sense – the patients who are to receive First Aid. Full details can be obtained from the Casualties Union organisation, but you'll get by with these props. Naturally, "blood" is well up on the list, and as the real thing is not transparent, no straight dye such as cochineal, red ink or pot.perm. in water is ever convincing. As a start, a fifty-fifty mixture of water and glycerine coloured with red poster paint, can form the basis for experiment. The latter can be obtained in small jars for about 1s. 6d. A dash of ordinary blue ink gives that vague purple which is much more convincing than the authentic "brick red" which oozes from capillaries. Of course it depends how you like your blood, but remember it has to be thicker than water, a little sticky and opaque. Flesh-coloured plasticine is obtainable from most toy shops, but where difficulty is experienced go direct to the manufacturers. A half-pound pack will last quite a few accidents if you keep it off the floor and avoid kneading it with dirty paws. Don't bother with crimson plasticine to begin with: blood soaked cotton wool is more effective for filling gashes. Next, a few sticks of grease paint will be very useful. Leichners No. 1 (white) is much better than flew for making people look pale and "shocked," No. 5 and 9 are used to blend the plasticine to the patient's flesh colour, and a blue stick and a Lake liner completes the list. Some cold cream should be applied first to the real flesh to ensure easy removal of the paint, but don't apply it where you propose to place any plasticine because it won't stick. Some "off white" powder will also be required to dust over the make-up (big sisters might be of some use here). Someone interested in amateur dramatics would be of great assistance to start with, but no great skill is required. Other requirements are some crepe paper and a translucent jelly (Tannafax jelly for burns.)

There are now also on the market plastic wound replicas, a set of which would enliven any First Aid teaching. (Details from General Editor, I.H.Q.)

#### **18. Gentlemen of the Jury.**

The rest of the Troop are the Jury, Skipper is the Final Court of Appeal: the prisoner has dealt with a given accident and he's given full details of all he did. His P.L. is allowed three questions as Counsel for the Defence after three questions by another P.L. as Counsel for the Prosecution. The Jury acquit the Prisoner if they consider his treatment correct (or even adequate) but condemn him to pay a small forfeit if he is 'guilty' of incorrect or inadequate treatment. The prisoner may appeal.

This is an especially good way of revising First Aid among fairly knowledgeable Scouts. The prisoner is any Scout who has been instructed in the necessary First Aid.

#### **19. Folding Money.**

Every Scout has ten minutes to draw a 10s. 0d. note from memory. (Points for main features achieved: e.g. correct signature, wording, etc).

**20. Visit of the Stranger.**

Scouts view a stranger (friend of a friend) for three minutes. The stranger goes and they answer a series of questions: height? size of shoes? colour of eyes? or tie? Which side hair parting? etc.

**21. Kim's Kim.**

Kim had to *describe* the objects not just make a list as so often we do. Have four (reasonably big) objects only for Troop to view, e.g. vase of mixed flowers, table-lamp, chocolate-box, framed picture, etc. Then at end of one minute ask a series of questions about the four objects. Answers by individuals or by Patrol.

**22. Police Report**

Patrols to write one composite description of person well known to them, Vicar or Minister; Rover Leader; etc.

**23. True or False Kim.**

Troop goes outside Troop H.Q. and stays for two minutes or so. On re-entry are asked a number of 'True' or 'False' queries (which if false must be corrected) e.g. There are three steps opposite our H.Q. (False: there are four). There is a laburnum tree in Mrs. Jones' garden next door (true), etc.

**24. Pathfinder Artists.**

Let each Scout draw from memory e.g. the outline of the Parish Church, the outside of the station, a local monument, *etc.* (check by photograph which can often be borrowed from local paper or by Patrol going off to check their *own* sketches).

**25. Who's Who**

This needs co-operation of Rovers and appropriate facilities. Idea is for half-a-dozen Rovers or people well known to the Troop, to disguise themselves (or be made up by local drama make-up experts). They come in one by one: must walk around and answer three questions. Patrols to try by observation to guess their real identity.

**26. Missing dominoes.**

A set of dominoes on a table. After a moment or two's examination, while Troop turn backs, one or two dominoes are taken away. Troop to view again and decide which. (Patrol competition: first to get correct answer wins points).

**27. I passed by your window.**

At an agreed time at 30-second intervals, six members of the Church or friends willing to oblige, come into Troop H.Q. say "good evening" to Skip and walk out. Skip has already a dozen questions of this sort: What tie was Mr. C. wearing? Which of the six had brown shoes on? Who had the bandaged finger etc., (all arranged beforehand). This project brings home the lesson of *automatic* observation as part of a Scout's make up and like all such training should be repeated within the month – with different people of course.

**28. A One-mile Patrol hike.**

P.L. to suggest a one-mile Hike in the neighbourhood which he and his Patrol should then do together, each Scout drawing sketch map as they go (but helping and advising one another as this is a first practice and not a test) and keeping log in accepted form.

When convenient these “miniature logs” might be discussed by the T.L. or A.S.M. with individual Scouts.

**29. Cook’s Book.**

Encourage each Scout to try and keep a small notebook of recipes and cooking methods. Cooking should be an art and not (as it so often is in Scouting) an accident. Link this up with the building (in camp) of various types of fires and camp ovens. Camping should be a continuing experience and experiment.

**30. Alphabet Collection.**

Patrol given 12 minutes to collect 12 objects beginning with 12 given letters of the alphabet (e.g. A.C.E.F.H.J.K.N.P.R.Y.) one object per letter, (It is helpful to have the letters written out on cards, one for each P.L.). Points awarded: four if article does not appear in any other Patrol’s collection, two if in only one other Patrol’s collection. Excellent training in leadership, observation and ingenuity.

**31. What would you do chum?**

Patrols given five minutes to discuss their solution to a given problem. Points awarded by Skip according to correctness and possibility etc., of solution, e.g.

(i) Your Patrol arrives at camp to find tents which should have arrived not there.

(ii) You go to be examined for a badge and find the Examiner’s house on fire and nobody seems aware of it. *etc.*

**32. Wool Trail.**

It isn’t easy for the ordinary Troop to do the sort of tracking in natural surroundings that might be done say by African Scouts. But a wool trail can easily be laid. If four or so Rover or Senior Scouts are available a trail with four (or so) different coloured wools can be achieved. If only one helper is available then let the Patrols be started off at five minute intervals. The length of the trail (½ mile to a mile) must depend on time and circumstances. Small pieces of wool can be tied to railways or twigs, affixed to bricks and so on. If several trails are laid its rather pleasant if they can arrive at the same destination by varying routes.

**33. Change please.**

Examine picture on page two and then on page 8. Now without looking *at the* pictures again write down the three changes in the second picture. (The Group Artist can produce either large drawings of this type or smaller ones which can be cyclostyled).

**34. The Unfinished Story.**

Training lies as much in the undefinable atmosphere of the Troop room as in technical facts. The quiet yarn round the make-believe-fire after a strenuous evening carries its own benediction with it. As a change occasionally begin a story one week and ask the Patrols each to provide a possible and plausible ending next week. (It need not necessarily be the P.L. who supplies it or tells it). Here to start you off are two examples: –

(i)

One rather cold winter night Peter and Tony were returning from a visit to town. They were young men of about 17 years of age and had been to the theatre and then had a little snack afterwards and so by the time they got in to their suburb from central London it was after midnight.

They lived not far from one another and as all the buses had gone they had to walk to their homes, and their walk, as it happened, led them past the Methodist Chapel which they both

attended. They were busily arguing in the way friends do when they arrived at the Chapel, and as they always did, and as folk always do, they just glanced up at it and to their surprise they saw that there was a light within the hall. This was odd: surely there was no meeting at this time of night, or rather morning, for it was almost half past twelve.

“Let us go and investigate” said Tony.

Very quietly they crept up the side of the building. Yes, there was undoubtedly a light. They moved slowly to the door and Peter turned the handle. To the surprise of the young men the door opened. They moved very gently inside and a strange sight met their eyes.

The chairs had all been moved from the floor of the hall round to the edge, excepting for four around the table, and seated at the table were four men in masks.

After a moment the young men had no difficulty in recognising that one was the Minister and the other three were Chapel Trustees. On the table in front of them were . . . . .



(ii)

There are many small pleasant Squares in London with trees and gardens in the middle, and surrounding these, fine old houses which once held prosperous families but which now have become offices. During the day these Squares are busy enough but in the early evening the offices become closed and except for an odd caretaker only pedestrians seeking a short cut pass across them. They are quiet and pleasant oases in London's noise and clamour.



One spring night such a small Square, however, did receive visitors.

It should be pointed out that there were four entrances to the Square, one almost directly North and the others East, South and West.

It was about two minutes to midnight on this particular evening when a man from the northern entrance came slowly into the Square. Within two or three minutes three other men arrived, one coming from each corner. When they were within speaking distance of one another they stopped and for a moment there was silence. Then the first man said: "I have kept my word, you see," and the man from the East corner said: "So have I." And the man from the West corner said: "All four of us." And the other man merely nodded and smiled.

And now let me tell you why these four men came in this way, into this Square, on that spring night. ....

**35.     Pioneering without rope.**

This is a form of pioneering without rope (or nails!) immensely popular in continental Scouting circles. You need a drawknife and a Scotch-eyed auger. The basis is simply to bore a hole in one piece of wood, shape another piece of wood to fit into the hole and knot them together, using small wedges if necessary. This is a project which can be used to interest Scouts in camp or Troop room – or on their own. You need a rule or tape. The great virtue of this is working to measure which does appeal to older boys.

**36.     Mimicry.**

B.-P. was a great mimic – and mimicry comes from observation. Let Scouts from each Patrol in turn try demonstrating ideas like these:

Walking with a high wind behind you.  
Pushing through a crowd.  
Walking as a old man.  
An old man getting up from an arm chair.  
Knocking in a nail while balancing on a high ladder.  
Walking on a tightrope.  
Carrying a heavy basket.  
Changing the wheel of a car.  
Mending a fuse.  
Meeting someone and suddenly recognising him.  
Waiting for a girl friend who's late.  
Walking on snow.  
Walking through water.  
Receiving bad (or good) news, etc.

**37.     When did you last try.**

panoramic sketching?  
memory sketch (or plan) of last year's camp site?  
plaster casts of badge or fancy button?  
imprints from plasticine?  
match-men drawing competition?  
splatterwork?  
Scouts coming to Troop meeting disguised to avoid detection by Rovers 100 yards or so from H.Q.?  
Cooking on primus at Troop meetings?  
Short and long splicing?

**38. Sleight of hand.**

You can lay on many variations of “double” observation tests one of which may (at first anyway) be unexpected. The classic instance is of the A.S.M. who brings in a tray of objects which the boys are allowed to observe from a distance for a moment. He then departs and the boys are asked questions about the A.S.M.: were both his garter tabs showing? which button was undone? what colour were his shoes? What had he on his belt? and so on. You can easily think out others.

**39. Thrift.**

The old thrift qualification has gone but the thrift law hasn't. Scouts should be aware of (a) the cost of camp equipment (b) the costs connected with their H.Q. Several ways of doing this can be devised – pricing everything at a camp for example; having a chat from the Group Treasurer; giving each Patrol an imaginary £50 to spend on equipment for Troop, or Camp, or H.Q. And so on. But it ought to be done every so often especially in this age of spoon-feeding and ‘couldn't care less.’

**40. Camp Sign.**

A visiting D.C. may have difficulty in finding your camp in his area – or may not. But why not get the Group's handyman to construct a pleasant Scouty signboard which reads: “This is the camp of ... Troop: we are proud of it.” It will be a visible reminder to the Scouts of what they have to live up to.

**41. Inspection.**

For a change form the Troop into a circle and let each Scout inspect *himself*, i.e. give himself points out of 10 (say) and then try to justify any criticism of his appearance, etc.. by other members of the Troop.

**42. Holger Neilson.**

Teach the H.N. method of artificial respiration, (see *The Scout*, May 6th, 1955 or *The Scouter*, July, 1952).

**43. Alertness tests.**

These can be lighthearted or more serious but can be brought frequently into a training programme: –

a) Required chairs and old tennis balls. Sit half Troop on chairs a yard or two apart, each Scout with another Scout standing behind him with a tennis ball. Suddenly the ‘standing’ Scout bounces the tennis ball: his ‘sitting’ partner has to leap up and catch it before it hits the floor again. Change places for second go.

b) In middle of strenuous activity give “freeze” signal (whistle, or Troop call, or what is usual in your Troop – if you haven't one institute one *at once*: it's as essential to good Scouting as anything there is) and say “The H.Q. has caught fire. You have to do anything you want to and get out – exactly 30-seconds from NOW.”

Watch Scouts' behaviour and discuss.

(c) Go suddenly ‘dumb’. Just as Scouts are expecting some vocal instruction from you, you give it by sign only.

**44. Colour blindness.**

A recent report stated that the incidence of colour blindness amongst males was infinitely greater than it used to be. Interesting Kim's games can be devised by arranging coloured discs

or patches on cards, displaying them to the Troop for a few moments and seeing how they get on in describing the colours. A more elaborate form of the game is to have identical discs differently arranged on a series of cards and see how the Scouts spot the change in arrangement. Now, obviously Scouts with a tendency to colour blindness won't be able to do this very well, but as most people who are colour blind don't know of their defect, it is helpful for their future safety to be made aware of this, and Kim's game technique might well discover something about our Scouts that they don't know themselves.

**45. I belong to a Chain Saw Gang.**

The use of the chain saw for lopping dead timber from tall trees is well known; the problem, of course, is to get the chain saw up over the bough you wish to cut as easily as possible. Some trees, of course, are climbable, but others present a real problem. A good activity is to use a bow and arrow to shoot a light line over the dead bough of a tree, so that the saw can be hauled up and put into action. This is probably the most modern practical use of the bow and arrow that has been devised.

**46. Gates.**

Ornamental gateways have always been a feature of Jamboree sites and many Troops for their summer camp like to do the same kind of thing. Now, a gate which has some deliberately moving parts is obviously more fun than one that just looks nice. Ideas we can experiment with are: –

- a) Lifting level crossing type of gate.
- b) Gate on the turnstile principle.
- c) A gate which can be opened by remote control.

**47. Strops.**

This is worth working into an Inter-Patrol Competition:

Join three staves together, so that they can be used as a tripod without using any lashings or any knot, neither must you use nuts or bolts or any mechanical device.

(In case Scouters don't know the answer to this one, it is really quite simple – make a strop by joining two ends of rope together with a short splice and by twisting the strop around the staves, they will be held perfectly secure.)

Now that we have got you interested in the use of strops, try making an ordinary trestle as in the Second Class Test by using a strop twisted tight for two of the four corners. If you can manage to use the method on all four corners, you might let us know, because we haven't been able to work it out!

**48. Seats.**

This is quite a useful piece of emergency training and makes a pleasant relay race between Patrols:

Carry in the three lightest members of your Patrol, one by each method –

- (a) a two-handed seat
- (b) a three-handed seat.
- (c) a hand stretcher using all Patrol members over a given course.

**49. Camp Ingenuity.**

a) Rig up some sort of an alarm which can be set to go off at any given time with a 10 minute error on either side, the alarm to be clearly audible at a range of 50 yards.

b) Make a self-supporting hat and coat rack for use either in the tent or the dining shelter.

c) If you can get hold of any old cart-wheel, and there are plenty about in farmyards these days, encourage two of your Scouts to build a platform on it and then pitch their tent on the platform. Then with a simple sail they can arrange that their tent is always ideally pitched relative to the wind.

**50. Notebook,**

The best advice we can give: make time each month to enter ideas from *The Scouter* and *The Scout* or anywhere else in a special looseleaf notebook. You'll never regret it – nor will that young Scouter to whom one day you can pass it on.

**51. Varying fee Yam**

Two useful ways of bringing a Troop actively into a yarn:

(1) With objects. Gear required, a sack containing miscellaneous articles, e.g., a bicycle pump, a pipe, a book, a Scout knife, a piece of cheese rind, an oak leaf, etc.

The Scoutmaster begins a yarn and allows himself two minutes. At the end of the two minutes the first Scout puts his hand into the sack and takes out one of the objects, which up to now he has not seen. He has to continue the yarn, and during the course of it, introduce the object he has taken from the sack. He is allowed two minutes and then passes the story to the next Scout who does likewise until all the objects have been used. The Scoutmaster then rounds off the story.

(2) A similar idea, but using hats. You can often get a variety of hats from a theatrical costumier or by getting the Scouts to take a look around their homes. For example, a Special Constable's hat, an Army forage cap or beret, a straw hat, a woman's hat, a child's hat, and perhaps one or two foreign Scout hats. In this case the procedure is the same except that the Scouts in turn draw one of the hats from the bag, wear them, and introduce themselves into the story as the character whose hat they are wearing.

If you say "What is the training purpose of this activity?" it is simply this: one of our jobs is to try to get Scouts to express themselves clearly and intelligently in front of their fellows. There is no use in merely being skilful technically; you have to be able to present your skill to other people.

Either method of course is applicable to the "serial" yarn.

**52. Indoor Axemanship.**

We start by admitting that this is not appropriate to all circumstances. A great many Troops however have their own headquarters and quite often such buildings are raised above the ground on brick piers so that there is a space between the floor and the ground. If you have a trap door somewhere in the middle of the floor (it need not be a large trap door) you can then have a socket in the ground and when you do want to do axemanship (and we are fully aware of the difficulty of felling trees in this country) you simply get hold on a spar or scaffold pole, open the trap door, put the pole in the socket, mark it where the Scout has to cut it, and let him swing his axe and fell the spar in the Troop room.

This is also an economical arrangement, because as soon as No. 1 Scout has taken off two or three feet you can fix the spar again and let the next Scout have a go. One spar, which does not cost very much, will enable several of the boys to have real experience of using an axe on standing timber.

Just a word of warning: if the spar is thick or heavy you will not want it crashing down on the floor of the headquarters. This is easily overcome by securing the top with a block and tackle so that when it is cut away at the base it lowers slowly and under control.

### **53. Waste Ground.**

In our view one of the most useful things a Troop can have is permission to use a piece of waste ground, however small, near to their headquarters. A number of districts have organised this provision for their Troops and this is a good "second-best." There are many uses.

For example, the artificial tree-felling we described above can be carried out ad infinitum on waste ground with a socket permanently bedded into the ground and a supply of spars readily to hand. Then, of course, all the activities of fire-lighting are impossible indoors and we cannot always, from the centre of a city, get into the country, but a young Scout gets tremendous satisfaction out of laying and lighting a fire out of doors, and the centrally-situated waste ground gives him a chance to do this.

Such a piece of ground can be used for simple pioneering projects and for practice in making camp gadgets and practice in pitching tents.

We want it to be clear that we are not thinking of some valuable piece of land but merely one of those odd corners, perhaps no larger than a small suburban garden; one of those spots of land which in building development often gets overlooked or on Church property has no other use, and where it is often easy to get permission to do these things. A good Scouter looks round and finds it and then puts it to good use.

### **54. Firewoods.**

The well trained Scout can do these things in relation to firewood:

- a) He knows the best wood to use and therefore how to identify them.
- b) He can recognise a wide variety of woods.
- c) He can light a fire with unsuitable woods if the necessity arises.

A good training method is to bring bundles of wood and sticks of different kinds, pass them round the Troop and see how the Scouts get on with identification, and then, on the waste ground, at camp, or perhaps on a hike, let the Scouts test out these same woods from the point of view of their burning properties.

An old Scout game is to try to burn through a piece of string, but it is not really a very good test of the burning properties of various woods: it is much better to take a billy with half-a-pint of water in it and see how long it takes to boil it from the lighting of the first match.

Many boys will be interested in this kind of activity, especially if they are encouraged to keep records and, indeed, to make records. In the process they will be learning how to identify the woods, how to choose the best woods, and how to use the unsuitable woods.

### **55. Estimation at Night.**

This is really a little more than estimation: it is a pretty exact measurement.

Nowadays many Scouts have really first class torches or electric lights, and so the apparatus is no problem. All you need is two fairly high-powered torches capable of throwing a narrow beam.

Suppose you want to measure the height of a flag pole, You need a long pole or a series of Scout staves tied together. This is placed at the base of the flag pole and parallel to the ground. To each end of the pole you fix one of the lamps and you move the lamps until the two beams cross at the

apex of the pole. Keeping the angle of the lamps rigid you roll the spar or pole so that the beams from the lamps are on the ground. Obviously, where the two beams cross on the ground, measured from the base of the flag pole, will be exactly the same as the height of the flag pole.

Here is another idea:

A torch throws a circle of light and the further away from the object the torch is the greater is the area of the circle thrown on to the object. A Scout with his own torch ought to be able to learn how to judge distance by practising on a series of objects placed at different distances from him. For example, if at the distance of 10' his torch throws a circle of light 3' in diameter and at 20' throws a circle of light 4' 6" in diameter, then his torch becomes a useful measuring rod. He might even be able to estimate the width of streams by throwing the beam of his torch on to the side of a barn across the stream. The general point we would make here is that the more Scouts can be trained to use the articles they normally carry about with them the better equipped they are to deal with all sorts of situations.

**56. Have you Tried?**

a) Silhouettes of Patrol birds and animals (cut from an old *Scouting For Boys* and mounted on cards for Kim's game?

b) Badge designs from an old P.O.R. used in the same way?

c) Recognition of tree "fruits" (berries, seeds of all kinds) and associating them with the correct leaves? (These can be brought by the Patrols or make a nice purpose on a hike or expedition).

d) Tree identification from a distance, say 200 yards (5 points for correct answers), then 150 yards (4 points) and so on? Needs preparation by Scouter viewing the scene beforehand.

e) Paper bag cooking, aluminium foil cooking, baked eggs in hollowed out potatoes etc.?

f) Ten-minutes Cubbing? (It is not a bad ingredient for a Troop Meeting if you concentrate for a short time on the physical tests in the Cub Stars. We wonder just how many First Class Scouts, for example, are still proficient at skipping, balancing, leap-frog, and hopping. We sincerely hope the cricket playing members of the Troop are even more proficient at ball-throwing and catching than when they gained their Stars).

**57. Lightweight Catering.**

No doubt you regularly have your Scouts bring along their camp kit and weigh it – or give them a maximum weight to get under and let them decide what they'll leave out. (There are many variations of this weighing idea – such as comparing weights of different types of dishes, shoes, etc., or concocting an official Troop Camp Kit Weight Record). But have you tried the same with a hike menu? If all food is to be carried let your Scouts:

(a) Concoct a menu for a week-end hike consisting of (say) two suppers, two breakfasts, two main meals – or whatever appeals to you – for either a Patrol or a pair of Scouts. Variety of food and proper food values count but so does the weight of the food. This gives you (or a grocer friend) a chance to tell them and show them such things as dehydrated vegetables, mustard and cheeses in tubes, soup mixes – and other modern lightweight ways of carrying foods.

**58. Sharpening an axe.**

The American Scouts hardly ever use a grindstone on hand axes. Instead they use a flat file, finishing off with a carborundum stone. This is a very good technique which is worth adopting but Scouts should be taught how to handle the file and how to rest the axe with the bit upwards firmly on the ground, keeping it in place with one foot on the haft.

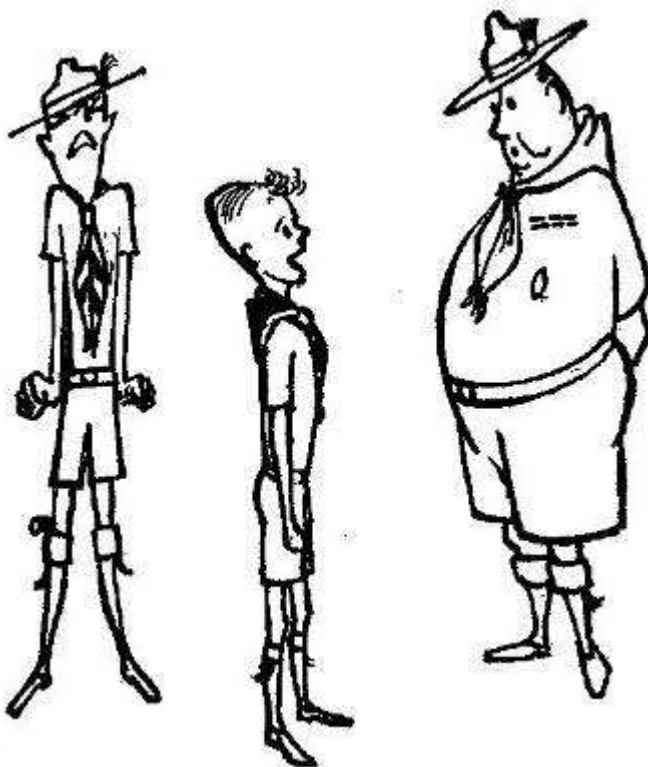
**59. More Kim's Games.**

Try:

- (a) a set of model conventional signs (which the Scouts can make).
- (b) Accumulative Kim, placing articles one by one on a table.
- (c) articles on a draught board – Scouts to remember which articles in which squares.
- (d) reproduction, of simple sketch map.

**60. The unusual takes longer.**

There are many Scouts who with a little encouragement will amuse themselves with the less usual Scouting skills. Why not have a special woggle or lanyard or button for the Camp Fire robe or design allowed to be stencilled on a pack for a Scout who produces by his own effort such things as a cringle, a grommet, a beggarman's knot, invisible writing, a rope ladder, a plaster cast of leaves, etc. – and other things an evening's thought or discussion with your Scouter's will soon provide.



*I haven't any Proficiency Badges, Sir, because I've been too busy helping Skip run the Troop.*