

CHAPTER VIII SAVING LIFE

CAMP FIRE YARN NO. 23

BE PREPARED FOR ACCIDENTS

The Knights Hospitallers of
St. John – Accidents -
Boy Heroes - Life Saving
Medals



HINTS TO INSTRUCTORS

The subjects in this chapter should not only be explained to the Scouts, but should also, wherever possible, be demonstrated practically, and should be practised by each Scout in turn.

Theoretical instruction in these points is nothing without Practice.

The knights of old days were called “Knights Hospitallers” because they had hospitals for the treatment of the sick, poor, and those injured in accidents or in war. They used to save up their money and keep these hospitals going, and although they were brave fighting men they used also to act as nurses and doctors themselves.

The Knights of St. John of Jerusalem especially devoted themselves to this work eight hundred years ago. The St. John Ambulance Corps and the Red Cross today represent those knights.

Explorers and hunters and other scouts in out-of-the-way parts of the world have to know what to do in case of accident or sickness, either to themselves or their followers, as they are often hundreds of miles away from any doctors. For these reasons Boy Scouts should, of course, learn all they can about looking after sick people and dealing with accidents.

My brother was once camping with a friend away in the bush in Australia. His friend was drawing a cork, holding the bottle between his knees to get a better purchase. The bottle burst and the jagged edge of it ran deeply into his thigh, cutting an artery. My brother quickly got a stone, wrapped it in a handkerchief to act as a pad, and tied the handkerchief round the limb above the wound, so that the stone pressed on the artery. He then got a stick, and, passing it through the loop of the handkerchief, twisted it round

until the bandage was drawn so tight that it stopped the flow of blood. Had he not known what to do the man would have bled to death in a few minutes. As it was he saved his life by knowing what to do and doing it at once.

Accident.

Accidents are continually happening, and Boy Scouts will continually have a chance of giving assistance at First Aid.



TOMMY THE TENDERFOOT No. 10
TOMMY ON THE ROAD

Tommy's a "Road Fool". He steps off a bus
Without looking round and then there's a fuss.

We all think a great deal of any man who, at the risk of his own life, saves someone else's. He is a hero.

Boys especially think him so, because he seems to them to be a being altogether different from themselves. But he isn't. Every boy has just as much a chance of being a life saving hero if he chooses to prepare himself for it.

It is pretty certain that nearly every one of you Scouts will some day or another be present at an accident where, if you know what to do, and do it promptly, you may win for yourself the lifelong satisfaction of having rescued or helped a fellow-creature.

Be Prepared

Remember your motto, BE PREPARED. Be prepared for accidents by learning beforehand what you ought to do in the different kinds that are likely to occur.

Be prepared to do that thing the moment the accident does occur.

I will explain to you what ought to be done in the different kinds of accidents, and you must practise them as far as possible. But the great thing for you Scouts to bear in mind is that wherever you are, and whatever you are doing, you should think to yourself, "What accident might occur here?" and, "What is my duty if it occurs?"

You are then prepared to act.

And when an accident does occur remember always that as a Scout it is your business to be the first man to go to the rescue. Don't let an outsider be ahead of you.

Think It Out in Advance

Suppose, for instance, that you are standing on a crowded platform at a station, waiting for the train.

You think to yourself, “Now, supposing someone falls off this platform on to the rails just as the train is coming in, what shall I do? I must jump down and jerk him off the track on to the far side—there would be no time to get him up to the platform again. Or if the train was very close, the only way would be to lie flat and make him lie flat too, between the rails, and let the train go over us both”.

Then, if this accident happened, you would at once jump down and carry out your idea, while everybody else would be running about screaming and excited and doing nothing, not knowing what to do.

Such a case actually happened. A lady fell off the platform at Finsbury Park Station in London just as the train was coming in. A man named Albert Hardwick jumped down and lay flat, and held her down, too, between the rails, while the train passed over both of them without touching them.

On the other hand there was that disgraceful scene which occurred at Hampstead, where a woman drowned herself before a whole lot of people in a shallow pond, and took half an hour doing it, while not one of them had the pluck to go in and bring her out. One would not have thought it possible that a lot of men could only stand on the bank and chatter—but so it was, to their eternal disgrace. The first man on the scene did not like to go in. More came up, but finding that those already there did not go in, would not go in themselves, and so let the poor woman drown before their eyes.

What a Scout Can Do

Had one Boy Scout been there, there would, I hope, have been a very different tale to tell. It was just the opportunity for a Boy Scout to distinguish himself. He would have remembered his training.

Do your duty.

Help your fellow-creature, especially if it be a woman.

Don't mind if other people are shirking.

Plunge in boldly and look to the object you are trying to attain, and don't consider your own safety first.

Boys have an idea that they are too young and too small to take part in saving life. But this is a great mistake.

Since I wrote this book many thousands of cases have occurred of Boy Scouts plunging in to save drowning people where the crowd was afraid to help.

In the Scouts, we have medals for gallantry, which are granted for acts of heroism and life saving.

Let every Boy Scout prepare himself to win one of these. Some day an accident may happen before you to give you your chance. If you have learned beforehand what to do, you can step forward at once and do the right thing and possibly earn the medal. In any case, you will have what is far greater than a mere medal—you will have the satisfaction of having helped a fellow-creature at the risk of your own life.