# PATROL ACTIVITIES

THE PATROL BOOKS . . . . . No. 1

PRICE 9D

## CHAPTER ONE
## "HATCHING THE PLOT"

Running a Patrol is rather like running a business. A businessman who is slack in his methods cuts no ice with his Bank Manager. Similarly, a Patrol Leader who is content to muddle along without a plan will never make the grade.

"... cuts no ice with his Bank Manager."

Think of your job in terms of POWER. Five or six fellows are looking to you for a lead. Because you are their leader they are prepared to place their time and talents at your disposal. That's power. But they regard it as a sort of investment and expect to draw dividends in the shape of better Scouting. If you abuse that power, if you muck about with their capital, it will be withdrawn and invested elsewhere. If you use it wisely and well, it will develop under your control.

Arthur Mee, the famous editor, once wrote this of a book he had been reading: "I have given it the most precious thing I have to give – an hour of my time."

The chaps in your Patrol may not place such a high value on the hour or so they give *you* every time they come along to Patrol Meeting, but that's because they haven't yet realized how very valuable it is. They'll learn! And if you accept their time, and the power that goes with it, you must accept something else too – RESPONSIBILITY.

How you carry that responsibility is a matter for yourself. You may be one of those born leaders who wear it like a glove, but the chances are you'll find it more like the rucsac you shoulder at the outset of your First Class journey. Like the ruksac, it's a bit of a burden, but just as the hike without the pack would seem rather pointless, so leadership without responsibility would give you very little real satisfaction. Anyhow, you can't avoid it, so you might as well shoulder it with gusto. You'll find it a reasonable load.

"...automatically adjusted your centre of gravity."

You know how, when you take off your pack at the end of a long hike, you have the feeling that you are falling forward on to your face. That's because you have automatically adjusted your centre of gravity to allow for the weight on your shoulders. When you shoulder new responsibilities, an adjustment of the same sort takes place in your moral bearing, and it is in this process of adjustment that you find out about yourself – about your strong points and your weak points. Responsibility does things to you! It may give you swelled head, or cold feet, or heart failure. On the other hand, it is much more likely to give you increased confidence, to quicken your powers of decision, to make you more resolute, to give you self-respect.

What's more, it is something you can *enjoy* if you tackle it in the right spirit.

The secret of resolute leadership, of course, is to know where you are going: to see your objective in front of you, and having seen it to plan your route towards it. A plan of some sort is essential.

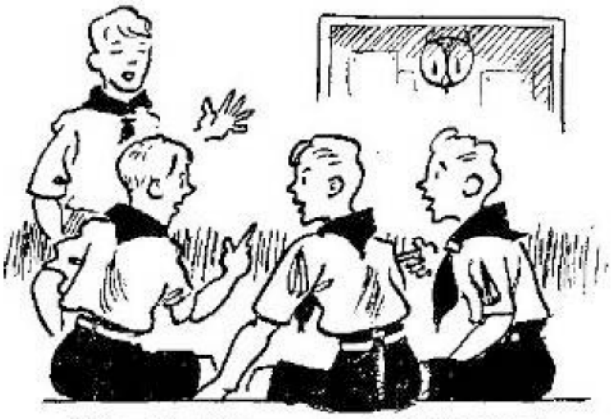
A mistake many new Patrol Leaders make is to set off at too hot a pace. Leading a Patrol is definitely "distance" work – cross-country rather than track running. If you go haring off at a mad gallop you will soon find yourself running alone.

On the other hand, a slow jog-trot is apt to grow rather monotonous.

Probably the best idea in laying out the course for your Patrol is to adopt Scout's Pace technique – a series of short sprints alternating with a brisk walk. By this I do not mean short bursts of enthusiasm and a cavity, punctuated by periods of slacking. But just as in a cross-country run you have your ultimate objective – the winning-post – and your immediate objective – which might be the gate at the corner of the field, the signpost at the crossroads, and so on – so in laying out the programme for your Patrol you should have

The long-term plan need present no difficulties. The Founder arranged that for you when he designed the First Class and Queen's Scout Badges. All *you* have to do is to fix the time-chart for the Patrol!

The short-term plan is more difficult. It must be thought out, talked over, approved, and put into action. Most of the thinking will probably fall to you. Most of the talking may safely be left to the others. And then you will have to get busy to make the plan work.



"Most of the talking may be safely left to others."

In hatching the plot you will find your Second invaluable. Even if he is not much good at producing bright ideas himself, you will find that in chewing things over with him, your own ideas will flow much more freely. Added to which, of course, there is the importance of having him with you from the word go. Your Second should be in on the ground floor of everything that happens. By all means spring surprises on the Patrol from time to time, but never on your Second. I will repeat that. *Never on your Second.* Your aim should be to work in double-harness with him all the way.

In fixing your short-term objective one or two points should be borne in mind:

(1) Don't be over-ambitious. Keep your target within reasonable striking distance, bearing in mind the standard of the chaps you are dealing with, and their moral stamina (which has not been stimulated as yours has by responsibility, remember, and may therefore be a trifle flabby!)

2) Don't plan too far ahead. Two months for any one project is probably reasonable.

3) Keep it flexible. The golden rule should be to leave nothing half-finished, but there is no reason why your original plans should not be altered or modified in the light of experience.

What might your objective be? Apart from the sort of "specialist" stunts mentioned above, the normal Scouting programme should, of course, receive a good deal of attention: Patrol camps,

hikes, expeditions; displays of one sort or another – quarterstaff work, tumbling, rope-spinning, stockwhip cracking, fire-by-friction, partner contests and activities, rescue work, and so on. Or you may like to concentrate on some particular badge, or train yourselves up to a special standard of efficiency, such as the Junior St. John.

Having agreed upon your objective, your next job will be to lay out your Patrol Meeting programmes so that a progressive course is covered, each meeting taking you a step nearer the end. This does not mean that *all* your time should be devoted to one subject. Not at all. On the other hand, you must keep your eye on the target.

When the plot is hatched and all preliminary details have been arranged, you will undoubtedly find it worth while to prepare a chart of some sort showing the different stages of progress you hope to attain. Stick this up on the wall of the den, and tick off progress as you go along. You will no doubt find progress much slower than you had hoped and expected, but that doesn't matter a great deal. The fact that you *are* progressing is the important thing.

## CHAPTER TWO
## RINGING THE CHANGES

Variety is the spice of life, and a wise Patrol Leader, while fully appreciating the value of stickability and of progressive training, will never miss an opportunity to ring the changes by introducing a new idea into his Patrol Meeting programmes. He might even consider it worth while to set aside twenty minutes or so each week for diversions of this kind.

Stunts, both indoors and out, games, physical activities, feats of agility, competitions, problems and puzzles, experiments (scientific and otherwise) – all these might be included in these weekly off-the-beat periods. The great thing is that they should provide a sharp contrast to the more serious side of the business. If they give the opportunity for a bit of "letting off steam" so much the better.

Patrols in country or suburban districts will have no difficulty in fitting in a few outdoor activities, and even in the middle of a town a resourceful Patrol Leader can usually find some quiet corner where he can put his chaps through the hoop without the embarrassment of an unwanted audience. The following activities will be found suitable for most surroundings.

### OUT OF DOORS

**Land-mines:** Each Scout is given a tin with a press-in lid containing an inch or so of water. At the signal, each man lights a small fire and heats up his tin so that pressure of steam blows the lid off. (Warning: Do not ram the lids on too tight, or the tins might explode. You will find that they will pop quite satisfactorily without that.)

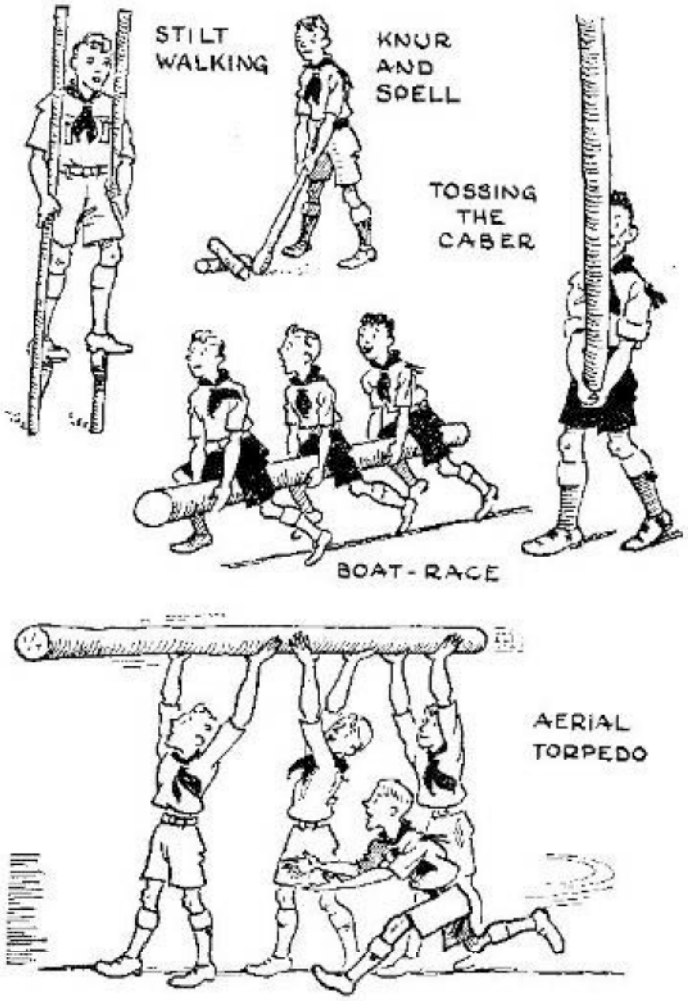
**Stirrup-pump Jousting:** Place lighted candles in a row of two-pound jam jars numbered from left to right. Rival stirrup-pump parties stand on either side at a distance of six or seven yards, and the object is for one side to put out all the "odd" candles while the other puts out the "evens". (If you put out the wrong candles it's just too bad.) As soon as all the candles are extinguished by one side or the other, they may turn their stirrup-pump on the other team, who, however (this is important), may not retaliate until they have finished putting out their own candles. This, as you can see, is a fine sporting contest, but an umpire is absolutely necessary. He should wear a bathing-suit, or cape groundsheet and carry an old umbrella. Players should, of course, be suitably clad (or unclad) for the occasion.

**Pendulums:** Hold a ten-minute contest to see who can rig up a pendulum of some sort that will swing of its own volition through an arc of at least six feet for a minimum of 90 seconds. (Not so simple as it sounds.)

**Kite-flying:** On a breezy day hold a kite-flying competition with improvised kites. Materials should be provided. Materials should be provided.

**Stilt-walking:** A fine old English pastime which must not be allowed to fall out of use. Improvise your own stilts.

**Knur and Spell:** Suggested by the ancient and honourable Scottish game. A short billet of wood is rested across another so that one end overlaps and the other touches the ground. The free end is tapped smartly with a club of some sort so that the billet spins merrily into the air, when it receives a terrific clout from the club.




**Spar Activities:** (1) *"Tossing the Caber."* The caber is a fairly weighty spar about nine feet long. It is held butt downwards in cupped hands in front of the thrower (arms at full downward stretch) and is tossed at the end of a short run so that it turns over in the air and falls with its tip towards the thrower. (2) *"Boat-race."* While you have the spars, try a boat-race *a la* Scout staff but with man-size timber. (3) *"Aerid Torpedo."* The Patrol is divided into two teams, each with a spar. The teams stand alongside each other with the spar held above their heads so that the tip points towards the finishing line, twenty yards away. At the word go the players stand

fast but pass the spar forwards through their hands, the man at the rear running forward as it passes out of his hands and taking up the weight at the front of the team. This is repeated continuously until the finishing line is crossed. (4) *"Timber!"* The spar is held at arms-stretch above the heads of the team, and thrown into the air and caught again six times. Each time it descends all hands yell "Timber!" (5) *"Limber up."* Two teams in line facing each other toss the spar (or two spars) to and fro.

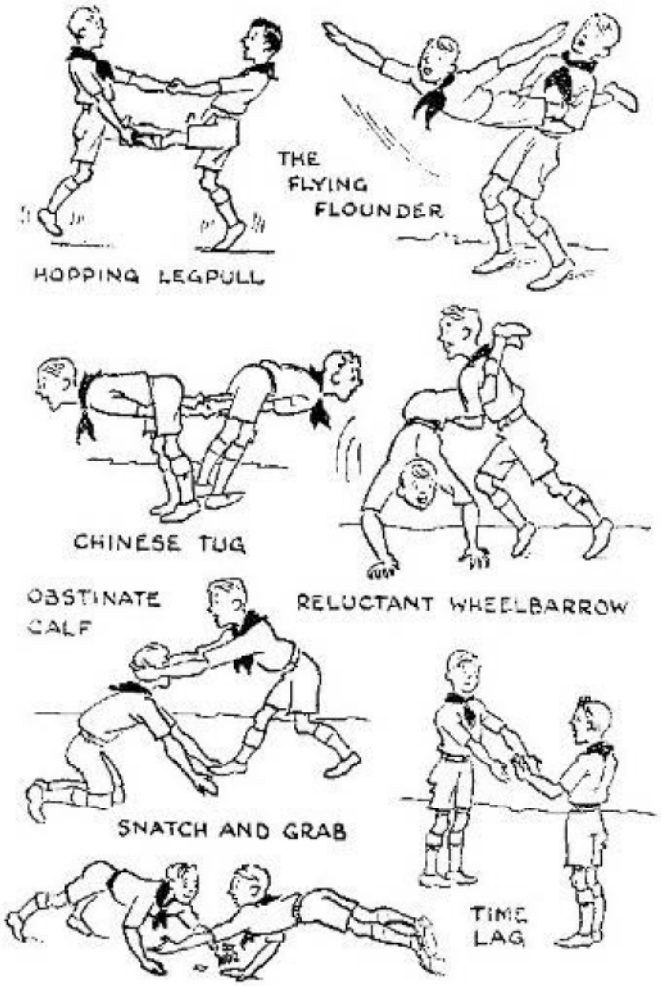
**Weapon Drill:** Practice javelin-throwing with Scout staffs. Make boomerangs and hold flight competitions. Improvise blow-pipes (a four-foot length of electric conduit is ideal) and darts or clay pellets, and practice target shooting. Improvise bows and arrows and try flight shooting – the Patrol flag is stuck in the ground some little distance away, and the object is to shoot the arrows into the air so that they fall near the target. Make bolases (short lengths of rope with mallet heads or similar weights at both ends) and practice throwing them at a post so that they wrap themselves round it. Quarterstaffs and Singlesticks are good fun, but you would need instruction from an expert. No doubt your Scoutmaster could help in this way by getting in touch with the local representative of the Central Council of Physical Recreation, who is always ready to help and advise.

**Wrestling for Lifts:** This is a grand scientific activity and is growing very popular in enlightened circles (or so I'm told by people who are keen on it!) Again your C.C.P.R. friend will be able to put you on the right road.

**Potted Night Stunt:** The Patrol Leader informs the Patrol that in five minutes time precisely two masked conspirators will meet at a given spot to discuss a crime they are about to commit. Scouts must get into cover near the meeting-place where they can see without being seen and hear without being heard, and must then take what action they think necessary to forestall the crime *without coming into actual contact with the conspirators.* It might add to the fun if they are told that the conspirators are armed and, being desperate men, will shoot at once if they see or hear any eavesdroppers. The "arms" could consist of water-pistols, pea-shooters, or small pellets of powdered chalk wrapped in paper.

**Partner Contests:** There are scores of these, and you can have fun by inventing your own. Scouts pair off according to size and weight. *"Hopping Legpull":* Players face each other, clasp left hands, raise left legs and grip ankle of opponent with right hand. Take the strain by lying backwards, and hop round in circle. At signal from Patrol Leader, reverse direction of hop. At second signal, hop and pull. At the third signal, hop and push. *"The Flying Flounder";* Players as for the wheelbarrow race. The "barrow" springs upwards on hands, while the "wheeler" lifts and pushes forward. *"Chinese Tug":* Players stand back to back, leaning forward with legs apart, and grasp both hands through legs. At signal, pull. *"Reluctant Wheelbarrow":* At signal, the "wheeler" tries to push "barrow" forward (pulling strictly prohibited) while the barrow tries to turn in his tracks and go off in precisely the opposite direction. *"Obstinate Calf":* The "calf" kneels down with hands braced forward while partner clasps his hands round the back of his head and tries to pull him forward. *"Snatch and Grab":* Players face each other in front support position – weight resting on arms, legs at full stretch behind. At signal each tries to knock other's wrists so that he bites the dust. *"Time Lag":* Players face each other, one man holding arms out straight in front with palms turned inwards. Other man holds empty matchbox between opponent's palms, and drops it. First man tries to catch box before it strikes ground.

**From Nature's Colour-box:** Each Scout is provided with a plain postcard and is required to paint on it a recognizable picture using only natural pigments – namely, the juice of leaves, pollen of flowers, blood of insects (or self), juice of berries, earth and water mixed, etc. Improvised paint-brushes only.




**INDOORS**

**Blind Spider:** A good game for the Troop-room where an overhead beam is available. Each Scout has a knotting-rope, one end of which is made fast to the beam. One Scout is blindfold and becomes the "Spider". The object is for the Spider to catch as many "flies" as possible by touching them. Everyone, including the Spider, must keep hold of his own rope. When caught, the flies drop out. This is quite a subtle game. The whole secret, of course, lies in the cunning way in which the spider entangles his own rope with the others, while the flies skip nimbly to and fro to dodge him – and in so doing get their ropes hopelessly entangled,

**Indoor Snowstorm:** Without saying a word to anyone, simply deposit a piece of smouldering paper in the hearth and lay on it a small portion of "Meta" (solidified paraffin). Within a few seconds "snow" will begin to fall.

**Indoor Barbecue:** A Barbecue, according to the dictionary, is, among other things, "a social picnic at which animals are roasted whole." In this case the animals are "hot dogs". Each Scout is provided with a sausage and a meat skewer. The rest is left to him.

**Late Night Final:** A large sheet of brown-paper with ruled columns and a space for the heading, is pinned on the wall. Slips of paper sufficient to cover the column-space, and a pot of sticky-stuff. Slips are marked "Letter to the Editor," "Leading Article," "Cartoon," "Advertisement," etc. These are handed out at random to the Scouts who are given ten minutes

to prepare their contributions and hand them to the Editor (the Patrol Leader). The Editor meanwhile designs the heading for the newspaper and makes up the page as the contributions pour in (!) The finished newspaper is allowed to remain an exhibition for one month only.

**Profile Portraiture:** A sheet of drawing paper is pinned on the wall of the den and a Scout stands in front of a strong light so that his shadow, in profile, falls on the paper. (Some sort of rest for the back of his head should be provided to ensure that he keeps perfectly still.) The "artist" then draws round the outline with a soft pencil, afterwards blacking it in with charcoal or Indian ink. With reasonable care, very accurate silhouettes can be made in this way.

**Crime Wave:** The idea in this one is to plan a murder so that it looks like suicide. For the purpose of the stunt let us suppose that you have decided to bump off your Scoutmaster and want to arrange it so that, when Scotland Yard arrive, they will find him lying over the table in the Court of Honour Room, neatly shot through the head. He will be in his shirtsleeves, and the revolver will be in his right hand hanging down by his side. The door of the room will be locked (it is NOT a self-locking door) and the one and only key will be found in the pocket of the Scouter's jacket, which will be hanging on the back of the chair in which he is sitting. The window will be shuttered and locked on the inside. There is no fireplace in the Court of Honour Room and the table is twelve feet from the door. Above the door is a glass fanlight which opens inwards for exactly four and a half inches. Scotland Yard will have to decide how, having shot the Scoutmaster, you walked out of the room, locked the door behind you, and then inserted the key in the pocket of his jacket. Meanwhile, it is *your* problem. All you are allowed to use in the way of gear is a piece of chewing gum, a needle, a wooden meat-skewer, and a reel of cotton.

**An Invisible Kay Machine:** A nice little experiment for a wet night. It throws an invisible ray across the room and puts out the candle. Its name – "The Vortex." All it consists of is a fairly stout cardboard box (square if possible) with a round hole about three inches in diameter cut in the bottom, and the open top of the box covered with a sheet of tracing linen stretched taut and firmly stuck down with gum round the edges. To carry out the experiment, place a lighted candle at one end of the room, aim the Vortex so that the round hole points towards the flame, and give a sharp tap on the tracing-line diaphragm. A "ray" of converting air will scurry out of the machine and snuff out the candle.

"Shoots an invisible ray—

—across the Den."

**Mixed Pickles:** Each Scout thinks up a ticklish situation and writes it on a postcard. These are shuffled and dealt round the Patrol. Chaps must then say what they would do in the various predicaments. For instance: "You are standing outside the station waiting for the rest of the Patrol to turn up when a man dashes up, thrusts a dispatch case into your hands and asks you to hold it while he telephones. Ten minutes later you are still waiting for him to return. The Patrol have turned up and your train leaves in three minutes. The stranger is not in any of the telephone booths. There have been a lot of burglaries lately. On the other hand, the stranger may be quite on the level. What would you do?" Or another one: "You are in the chemistry lab at school (where you have no right to be), experimenting with fizzy drinks. Suddenly your pal, having taken a goodly draught from a foaming beaker, grips his throat and turns purple in the face. Obviously he has taken crystals from the wrong bottle. What would you do?" Or this: "Scene – St. George's Day Parade. All the local Youth Organisations have turned out in strength, but the honour of breaking the flag has fallen to the Scouts! The Troop Leader is standing by the halyard on the platform and is just about to give the tug that will break the flag when you notice that the toggle is on the *underside* of the flag at the masthead. Thousands of people are looking on. What would you do?" If you give your chaps a few examples like this to show the general idea, they will soon begin unbottling pickles of their own.

**Music Hath Charms:** It goes without saying that the average Scout takes a good deal of pride in the fact that he can't croak a note, but it's a poor state of affairs really. Ever thought of trying to teach your chaps a new song at a Patrol Meeting? It would require a certain amount of courage, but it *can* be done. The idea is to get them going with something they all know, then switch over to some song of which they probably know the tune but not the words – as for instance, the Eton Boating Song, or the Trek-cart Song. It will help if you have made copies of the words beforehand.

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This chapter, obviously, could go on and on ... but enough has been said to give you a start at ringing the changes.

Remember – YOUR OWN IDEAS ARE THE BEST, even though they may not always work out as you expect. Sometimes an idea that takes the wrong turning is the best fun after all.

A good plan is to keep a notebook in which you jot down new ideas as they occur. You are bound to forget some good ones otherwise.

## CHAPTER THREE
## FOLLOW ON!

In the long run, of course, the success or otherwise of your leadership will show up in the distance you have travelled with your chaps along the Scouting trail. Distance implies progress, and progress can only be achieved by a certain amount of determined slogging along a set course of training.

Something has already been said about the need for progressive planning, and in this chapter an attempt will be made to show how one subject can become the dominant theme in a series of Patrol meetings without necessarily taking up a lot of time or becoming monotonous and yawnful.

The theme in this case – just by way of example – will be Tracking and Observation, and the idea will be to spread it over a series of twelve meetings so that some part of each meeting is devoted to the subject in hand, leaving lots of time for other activities.

And, just to make it difficult, let us suppose that the Patrol concerned is meeting in the middle of winter and in the middle of a large industrial town, far removed from such natural facilities as woods, fields, sandy beaches, and nice convenient tracts of marshy ground for tracking stunts. Conditions, in fact, are pretty grim. Let's see what can be made of them.

### 1st PATROL MEETING

Start with an outdoor observation stunt – "Blind Trail."

The Patrol is divided into two equal parts, one led by the Patrol Leader and one by the Second. Scouts are blindfolded and taken to a quiet spot some few hundred yards from the Patrol Den, where they are spun round to confuse their sense of direction. The two parties are then led away in opposite directions along a circular course which has previously been agreed between the P.L. and Second. They must move slowly and in absolute silence, the idea being that on their return to the Den they should draw a rough-sketch map of the route they have followed, with a list of the "clues" which enabled them to identify it. The route should be planned to include such places as fish-shops, petrol stations; restaurants, etc., where the sense of smell

would provide the clue, and others such as bus stops, traffic lights, picture palaces and so on, where their ears would be brought into play. It might help, too, if at one or two chosen spots on the route, the Scouts were allowed to use their sense of touch – to explore a distinctive gate-post, pillar box, iron fence, or a clump of evergreen in somebody's garden. At one stage along the trail the two parties will pass each other, and this point should be indicated on the completed sketch-maps. This little stunt is really a potted adventure and is worth a good deal of preparation on the part of the Patrol Leader and Second,

**2nd MEETING**

Indoor. Demonstration and yarn by Patrol Leader or Second on the art of Plastercasting. Each Scout is given the necessary materials and asked to make a plaster cast of his own booted track, using twigs or teased-out rope to strengthen the mixture. The best casts can be put into the Patrol Museum.

**3rd MEETING**

Another little outdoor frolic – a sort of "Outdoor Kim." In preparation for this, the Patrol Leader has dished out at a previous meeting a number of slips of paper each bearing the names of three different objects in the neighbourhood of the Den, say within a radius of a quarter of a mile. The Scouts are required to come to the Patrol Meeting with small thumbnail sketches of these objects on a plain postcard. The objects must be quite distinctive. For instance, it would obviously be pointless to ask for a sketch of the chimney pots on the house called "Roselea" in Station Road if all the chimney pots in Station Road are identical! Apart from that, almost any object would do, as for instance a carved door, a broken window, the profile of a building, a weathercock, and so on. At the Patrol Meeting the sketches are numbered and stuck up on the notice board, and Scouts are given fifteen or twenty minutes to identify them – either from memory, or by dashing out and looking for them. The winner is the Scout with most correct answers in the quickest time.

**4th MEETING**

Indoors. Make a foot-printing frame – a sheet of 1/16 in. rubber stretched tightly between two wood frames screwed together. One side of the rubber is inked with rubberstamp or duplicator ink (the latter is cheaper), and prints are made by placing the frame inkside down over a sheet of paper on the floor. A Scout then steps on the rubber with his bare foot, leaving a clear impression on the paper beneath. Even better results are obtained *without* a foot-printing frame if the Scout steps *into* the ink and then on to the paper. In this case, of course, the ink should be evenly spread over some smooth surface first – a sheet of glass is ideal, but care should be taken that the surface on which it rests is perfectly even. The ink will wash off the foot quite easily (a drop of methylated spirits will help) and the sole will be so much purer afterwards!

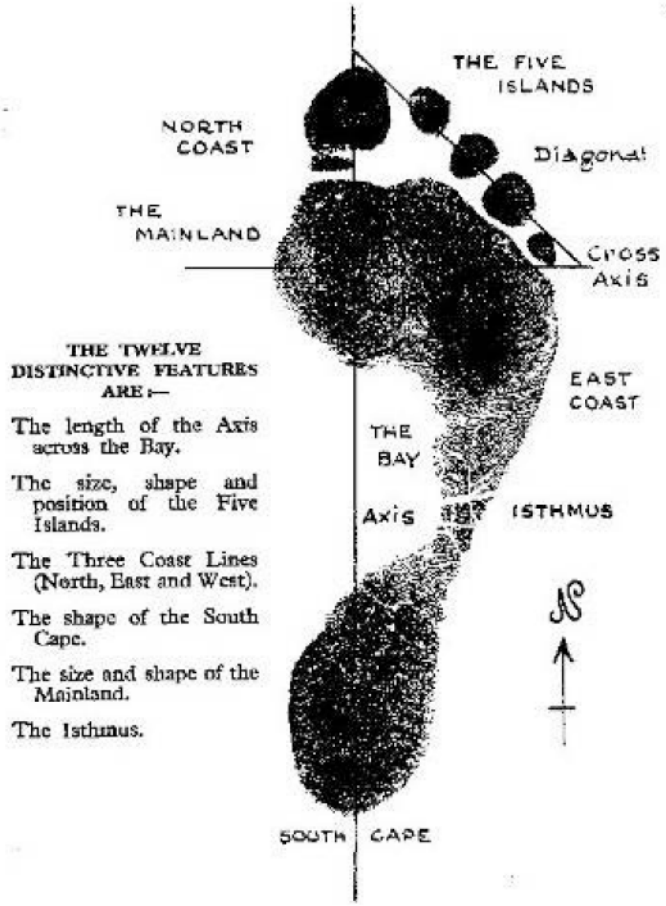
The datum lines should then be drawn in with a straightedge and set-square, and the track scientifically measured. Each Scout makes two prints of his own right foot. One print is filed for future reference, the other he takes home to show his proud parents. (They are entitled to know what goes on, anyhow!)

**5th MEETING**

Another outdoor Stunt – "Shadowing."

For this the Patrol Leader ropes in one or two friends and relations – such people as the Group Scoutmaster, an elder brother, the P.L. of the Guide Daffodil Patrol, and anyone else who is

prepared to spare twenty minutes or so of a winter's night for the good of the cause. All these excellent people are carefully and efficiently briefed beforehand, and watches are synchronized so that they all act in concert.




The idea is that at a given time they should leave their own homes and proceed by various routes in such a manner that their paths cross at certain points and meet at others. If desired, a complication may be introduced in the shape of a mysterious dispatch-case which changes hands at various points and is finally deposited at the left luggage office or (by arrangement with the sergeant-on-duty) at the Police Station; but the plot should not be made too involved and the whole thing should not last more than twenty minutes from the time the characters leave their home till the moment of their return.

The Scouts are merely given a list of the addresses from which these people will emerge, and are told that action will commence at such and such a time. They must arrange among themselves so that each character is shadowed for every inch of the way. Afterwards, the Scouts compare notes and make a verbal report. It adds to the interest if the characters attend the "inquest" in person.

This, let me tell you, is a grand stunt. It never fails.

**6th MEETING**

Indoors. Scouts prepare finger-print powder by charring a stick and pounding up the charcoal into a fine flour. Prints are taken by scattering the powder lightly over a sheet of glossy

paper which has previously been handled by the victim, and then blowing off the surplus powder. Copies of prints are filed.

**7th MEETING**

Indoors. "A Murder Has Been Arranged." Materials required – several sheets of newspaper, drawing pins, fingerprint powder, foot-printing materials.

Once more the Patrol Leader invites the co-operation of someone from outside the Patrol. Before the meeting, the two of them stage a crime, involving finger-prints, barefoot impressions, etc. (not forgetting the bloodstains, of course). The newspapers are pinned down on floor, table, etc., to "take" the clues. The outsider then withdraws from the scene before the Patrol arrive, and the Scouts are invited to solve the mystery and identify the criminals. The Patrol register of foot- and finger-prints is available for inspection.

**8th MEETING**

Indoors. Scouts in pairs are given five minutes to think up the best method of fitting an automatic trail-layer to a push-bike – as, for instance, paint dripping from a tin on to the back tyre. The best method is agreed upon at a brief meeting of the Patrol-in-Council, and the proud inventors are instructed to report at the next Patrol Meeting with a bike all fitted up for work.

**9th MEETING**

One member lays a cycle-trail which the others follow by lamplight.

**10th MEETING**

Indoors. Invite someone along to give a *short* talk and demonstration on the art of make-up and disguise. (In most civilized communities there will be no difficulty about this.) It is astonishing how many people are interested in amateur theatricals, and quite a lot of them have had some experience of "making up" and will welcome an opportunity to air their knowledge and skill. If you don't know of anyone yourself, your Scoutmaster will help. (That what he's there for!)

**11th MEETING**

Run *a* short and snappy tournament of sense-training games, each Scout being responsible for one game. For instance:

*"Verbal Kim."* No. 3 in the Patrol prepares a 24-article Kim, and reads out the articles in a certain order from a list, missing out one or two articles and substituting others. Scouts, with the Kim on view, must write down the articles *in the order in which they were read out.*

*"Touch Spelling Bee."* No. 4 prepares a number of cut-out letters. Scouts are blindfolded and the letters are passed round and they try to identify them by sense of touch only. They then remove the blindfolds and write down as many words as they can think of using the letters.

*"Song Recognition."* No. 5 taps out the rhythm of a well-known song with a stick on the back of a chair. The first Scout to recognise it wins.

*"Pong Recognition."* A number of small bottles containing distinctive smells (paraffin, T.C.P., vinegar, mint, etc.) are handed round and Scouts must identify them.

*"Listening Post."* The Patrol Leader and Second retire behind a screen of some sort and produce various sounds – sharpening a pencil, blowing soap bubbles, leap-frogging, striking a dead match, etc. – which Scouts must identify.

**12th MEETING**

Patrol Treasure Hunt, involving a simple code-rnessage, the use of the telephone, a morse message flashing from an attic window, a printed notice in a shop window and so on. This could very well occupy the whole of the Patrol Meeting, with hot cocoa and buns and a meeting of the Patrol-in-Council at the end of it.

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It will not have escaped your notice that every single part of this programme contains a definite activity of one sort or another: something the chaps can get their teeth into – a game, a stunt, a bit of apparatus they can make for themselves, something with which they can carry out simple experiments. *Some* talk is unavoidable, of course, but the Scout method is to train by doing rather than by watching or listening, and even if we agree that watching and listening are necessary at times, the Patrol Meeting is certainly not the best place for it. Your chaps may think the world of you (I hope they do), but they'll soon tire of your voice if you yarn too much. Action should be the keynote of your leadership.

The time occupied by these "main theme" activities will vary considerably, and the rest of the programme can be balanced in any way you please. Balance, of course, is important. The law of compensation must be observed. You compensate work with play, activity with rest, theory with practice, physical effort (brawn) with mental effort (brain), and so on. It's just horse-sense, really.

## CHAPTER FOUR
## PUTTING IT OVER

The Patrol Leader and his Second together form the Patrol Training Team. The stripes you wear on your left pocket are a sort of "Honourable Charge" from your Scoutmaster equivalent in a way to the "Honourable Charge" the members of the Gilwell Training Team receive from the Chief Scout. Their job is to train Scouters, yours is to train Scouts. It amounts to the same thing in the end.

Training can be dull or lively – just as you make it. Take, by way of contrast, the case of two Patrol Leaders teaching two Tenderfeet the use of the magnetic compass.

P.L. Black has drawn a chalk circle on the floor of the den and having quartered it like an orange is putting in the cardinal points. "That's North," says he. "South is down here. Then you have East on the right and West on the left. North-east is halfway between North and East – that's why it's called North-east – and the other end of this chalk line is South-west."

Terence the Tenderfoot looks on politely. It all looks a bit corny to him, but he doesn't say so. He just wonders.

Next door P.L. White is doing the same job in his own way.

"That's a pocket compass," he says, handing it to the Tenderfoot. "Two and a kick at the Scout Shop. It doesn't look much, but it'll get you home next time you are lost on the moor in a fog."

The Tenderfoot blinks. It had not occurred to him that he might one day be lost on a moor in a fog. He examines the compass with interest.

"What's up with the pointer?" he asks. "It keeps dodging about."

"You mean the needle. Too much magnetic interference in this room – radiators and things," the Patrol Leader explains. "Never mind, we shan't need it just now. Shove it in your

pocket and try it out on the way home – I'll tell the Q.M. I've lent it to you. (Dick! I've lent young whosit the compass.) Come on, let's do some navigation."

Navigation! The Tenderfoot hasn't the remotest idea what it is all in aid of, but it sounds good.

The Patrol Leader has produced a stick of chalk and is drawing a shape like an outsize potato on the floor of the den.

"That's supposed to be a desert island," he explains. "This arrow points due North, so we'll call the top bit the North Foreland and the bottom bit the South Cape. The lagoon is on the East Coast, and just off the West Coast there's the wreck of a Portuguese schooner.

"So far so good. The next thing is to build yourself a canoe and go for a sail. That's soon done. Here – catch!" He empties a box of matches into the Tenderfoot's hand. "We'll start off from the end of the coral reef here. The matches represent the wake of the canoe across the water. One match represents one nautical mile and so on. So if I sing out, 'Three miles due East,' you lay three matches end to end in the right direction. Look, I'll show you."

Within a few minutes the line of matches is straggling out across the floor of the den – round the North Foreland and back round the South Cape. The Tenderfoot, once he has got the hang of it, is quite entranced – not for long, perhaps, because in the Tenderfoot stage the novelty of anything soon wears off, but long enough,, at any rate, to give him a thorough grasp of the use of compass directions.

In the Patrol next door, meanwhile, Terence the Tenderfoot has learned to box the compass in much the same way as he learned the seven times table at school. He is completely browned off. So is his Patrol Leader. They are both glad when the session is over and they can turn to something else.

In due course both these Tenderfeet are tested in the use of the compass, and both pass with ease. But whereas for one the compass is just something you have to know about to qualify for a badge, for the other it is something you use when you are out Scouting, something that "will get you home in a fog." It makes all the difference in the world.

Said B.P., "In training Scouts, the right end to start is the end with the jam on it" – the jam being, of course, just a foretaste from the big jampot called OUTDOOR SCOUTING.

It follows from this that having sampled the contents of the jampot, your Tenderfoot will be impatient for more – not just imaginary desert islands and dream-stuff of that kind, but the REAL THING; and unless he gets it pretty soon he is bound to feel disappointed.

Having mastered the use of the compass, therefore, he should be given an early opportunity to put his newly acquired wisdom to practical use. A Saturday afternoon compass-hike, with perhaps a bit of fire-lighting and a damper-bake at the end of it, might be just the thing. (It is always a sound plan to link one training activity with another, rather than to keep each one in a watertight compartment.) From that beginning other things will follow: compass bearings (including back bearings), mapping, surveying, direction finding by sun and stars, and so on – a trail that runs on naturally towards First Class and the Thong.

Similarly with all other departments of the training programme. Let your training be realistic. Let it be practical and active. Keep theory and talk to a minimum.

Even the use of the right words is important. You would notice that P.L. White talked about "Navigation" instead of "learning the points of the compass"! Why stick to the commonplace labels? Why not "Ropes and Cordage" instead of just "Knotting"? It amounts to the same thing in the end, but somehow words do help to conjure up atmosphere.

The use of technical jargon, too, can help a lot in putting it over. How much more interesting it is to "make fast to a spar" than merely to tie a piece of rope to the back of a form! Why say left and right, back and front, when you can as easily sing out port and starboard, or fore and aft?

Mind you, nothing sounds worse than the right word in the wrong place, and to overload your instruction with technical terms you don't understand yourself is asking for trouble. "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing." On the other hand, with skilful use "a little goes a long way," provided the "little" is dead accurate

So far as I know there are no golden rules – apart from the golden rule of commonsense – to guide you in training your Patrol, but here are a few tips that might come in useful:

**Ropes and Cordage:** Knots, bends, and hitches should be shewn *doing their job.* Don't say, "This knot is for making fast under strain," and then proceed to demonstrate the round turn and two half-hitches in a slack rope! Much better to get him to apply the strain, by tugging hard on the rope, while you belay the free end round the gatepost and then shove on your half-hitches at leisure. Use ropes, lines, and cords of different thicknesses – other materials, too, if necessary. To demonstrate the reef properly, for instance, you will certainly need a triangular bandage. Remember that knots are "made," not "tied," and that they are all made sailor-fashion.

**Signs and Symbols:** The Scout signs should be demonstrated out of doors with natural materials. Chalk and bits of pencil and paper are definitely out. Having learned the signs, your Tenderfoot should be given a chance to use them without delay, first by laying a short trail himself, then by following a trail laid by someone else. (His own trail will probably be much too difficult to follow, and perhaps you will be able to drive the lesson home by asking him to follow it himself! The chances are he won't be able to.) Follow up with Indian picture-writing (the Patrol log-book is the place for this) and a bit of simple code-writing.

**First Aid:** Rub in the vital importance of cleanliness from the word go. Make your Tenderfoot wash his hands (without drying them) before commencing work. This will certainly be a shock to his system and will make a deep impression on his mind. The patient should simulate shock and react to rough handling by wincing or calling out. Wounds should be indicated with indelible pencil or, better still, grease paint, candle grease, etc. (Improvising wounds is an art in itself.) Follow up first aid practice with simple rescue stunts, including dragging unconscious persons downstairs, over rough ground, etc., and in the dark.

**Axemanship:** Once your chaps have mastered the use of the hand axe and satisfied you and your Scoutmaster that they have a thorough grasp of the safety rules, the sooner they are given an opportunity to swing a felling axe the better. The trouble is that even the lighter (2¼ pound) axe is a bit on the heavy side for young Second Class Scouts. One good way of overcoming this difficulty is to put an ordinary hand axe head on to a long haft. This is a job for an experienced carpenter and hardly one that you could attempt yourself unless you are specially gifted that way. See that your carpenter friend gives you a good ash haft with a straight grain and that the head is true and securely wedged. Then look round for a bit of fallen timber or an old railway sleeper (free from rusty bolts, etc.!) and get swinging.

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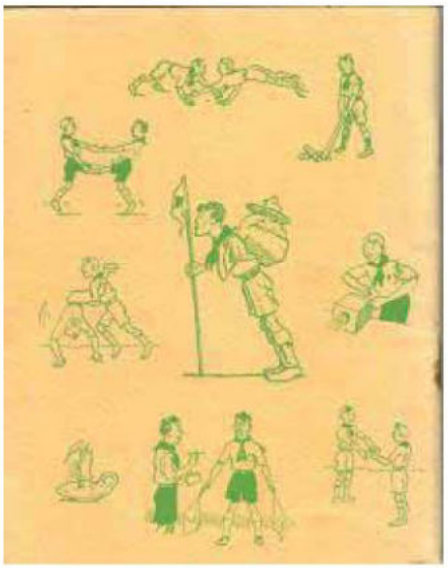
In all training activities, the plot must be hatched and detailed preparations made *before* you begin. It all means extra work for the Patrol Leader and his Second, but after all that is one of the obligations of leadership. What's more, it can be jolly good fun in itself.

Remember that first impressions are always important. The Tenderfoot's first impression of Scouting will be YOU and the activities you put in his way. He comes to you keen. Will your leadership keep him keen, or blunt him, or make him keener than ever? A good deal will depend on your training and your way of "putting it over."