The duty of a SCOUTER

THE BOY SCOUTS ASSOCIATION
25 Buckingham Palace Road, London, SW1

THE DUTY OF A SCOUTER

The fact that you are about to read this pamphlet means that you have already become attracted to Scouting, with all the fun and activity it provides for boys, and that you are disposed to take a hand in the game as an adult leader.

You will recognise, however, that this means not only enjoyment and activity in congenial company, but is a responsibility to be measured before it is undertaken.

This pamphlet, therefore, sets out to place before you, quite plainly and seriously, the qualities of leadership within the principles and methods of Scouting which are required of those who are granted 'Warrants' appointing them as adult leaders (Scouters) in the Scout Movement. Quite apart from acquiring some skills and practical ability in Scout activities, those who seek the opportunity to become Scouters must be clear about the obligations which this entails. Membership of the Scout Movement is voluntary, and the acceptance of a Warrant by an adult is a voluntary act. On the other hand, the holding of a Warrant involves certain obligations, the carrying out of which is not optional, but is a commitment assumed of your own free will, and, therefore, binding upon you so long as you are a Scouter. You will appreciate that it

is important to understand these obligations from the beginning.

When you have read this pamphlet, you may wish to ask further questions and your District Commissioner, who represents the Chief Scout in your area, will be glad to answer your queries.

SCOUTING'S PURPOSE

Like a good many other organisations, Scouting aims at developing good citizenship among boys. It uses its own methods of character training and these are clearly set out in Rule 1 of the Association's Rule Book, 'Policy, Organisation and Rules', which our Founder called 'Rules on how to play the Game of Scouting for Boys':

(i) The aim of the Association is to develop good citizenship among boys by forming their character - training them in habits of observation, obedience and self-reliance - inculcating loyalty and thoughtfulness for others - teaching them services useful to the public, and handicrafts useful to themselves - promoting their physical, mental and spiritual development.

(ii) The characteristic method of training the Scour is by admitting him a member of a desired fraternity which, guided by adult leadership, is increasingly self-governing in its successive age-groups; by opening to him a succession of congenial activities and achievements in a largely outdoor

setting and opportunities of service to others; by putting upon him progressively increasing measures of responsibility for himself and others, so that he acquires competence, self-reliance, character, dependability and powers both of co-operation and of leadership.

THE SCOUT PROMISE AND LAW

The principles and practice of the Association are based upon the Scout Promise and the Scout Law which you will find on the next page. Stated simply, they are together a code of living placed before every member of the Movement. The Cub Promise and Law are simplified versions suited to the 8-11 age group.

Every person, on being granted a Warrant, is asked to make or reaffirm the Scout Promise as an outward expression of his or her intention to try to live up to the principles and ideals of the Movement. It is important to realise that the implications of the Scout Promise and Law - although they are expressed in terms a boy can understand - apply in adult terms to adult leaders no less than to those they lead.

RELIGION

The acceptance of the Scout Promise by an adult implies a personal religion; it also assumes that the Scouter practises his religion, and here it is well to remember that the Founder of the Movement, the first Lord Baden Powell of Gilwell, made it very clear in the early days that ‘a Movement of this

nature would fail in its purpose unless it brought its members to a knowledge of religion'.

Scouting is inter-denominational, not non-denominational. It will be realised that part of its strength lies in the fact that it acts in support of the work of all religious bodies, not in competition with them. It is not a 'new religion'!

The leader must accept that Scouting stands for a forthright, purposeful attitude towards religion and that Scouters are expected to set an example. In terms of practical leadership, this involves the leading of prayers at meetings and in camp, the active personal membership of a Church or religious body and the personal effort to bring unattached boys to a knowledge of religion through Scouting.

PERSONAL EXAMPLE

The most telling quality in a leader is personal example. This shows itself in Scouting through the behaviour of the Scouter, and his or her attitude to life, not only during Scout activities but in private life. It is important to appreciate that the leader's personal qualities reflect themselves through pretty well every activity of Scouting. It does not hurt any of us to examine our standards of behaviour and attitude to life regularly, and, in fact, a Scouter will be concerned with standards in connection with all that he does.

STANDARDS

DISCIPLINE - *The* Scout Movement has never been a military organisation, but this does not imply indifference to good order and a high standard of smartness. Scouting tries to inculcate an inward discipline in every boy, and does this partly by means of its attitude to 'turn-out' and by its use of simple ceremonial.

CLEANLINESS AND THRIFT - Sloppiness and a casual attitude to life are in fashion. Scouting tries to place before a boy the need for a different attitude of mind and by insisting on high standards of cleanliness at meeting places, in camp and in uniform, as well as care of communal equipment, youngsters are shown how to set themselves a standard in this direction, which will be of benefit to them as they take their place in adult life.

PUNCTUALITY - Nowadays there is a tendency to discount punctuality as an attribute, but that is not the Scout way of things. Every effort should be made to ensure that Scout Meetings start and finish on time, to have organised programmes and to see that they are conducted in such a way as to avoid waste of time. Similarly all Scout activities, including hiking and camping, benefit much from the care which is taken to time them and to ensure a purposeful attitude towards them from all concerned. Aimless programmes made up merely of a few recreational pursuits are of little or no value.

PRACTICAL SCOUTING

It is obvious that a leader must have a practical knowledge of what he expects to teach. The 'skills' of Scouting are not difficult and you may already have some of them. In any case, your District Commissioner will ensure that you get some practical experience through the informal Pre-Warrant Training which precedes the issue of a Warrant. The important thing that the leader has to know is *how* as well as what to teach. It is also essential that a progressive scheme of training is introduced into successive programmes, so that individual boys feel a sense of personal achievement.

The District Commissioner will, during your Pre Warrant Training, ask you to watch other leaders at work and indeed throughout your Scouter service you will add to your own ability by observing how others have developed their capacity to put across Scouting to their boys.

An essential feature of the Scout method of training is the use of the outdoors. One of the most important aspects of this is camping. Except in the Cub Section where camping is optional, a Scouter will have to play his part in weekend camps and the Annual Summer Camp. Training in camping is usually gained from taking part in camps run by others when the Warrant has been issued.

UNIFORM

The Scout Movement is a uniformed organisation and naturally its leaders are expected to wear correct uniform when attending parades with their boys.

The rules governing the uniform are set out in P.O.R. and you will find they include a number of alternatives for Scouters, to items like shorts, hats, etc.

ADULT LEADER TRAINING

The quality of Scouting in any area reflects the quality of its leadership. Without training, this leadership must obviously lack something even though the personalities and the characters of the leaders are of the highest order.

The Movement has developed both formal and informal schemes of adult training. An applicant for a Warrant signs a declaration that he will do his best to 'avail himself of any facilities offered for training . . . '. Acceptance of this principle is merely a matter of commonsense as all leaders realise that the interests of youth change as the years pass, and the good leader wants to keep himself up-to-date. The pamphlet 'The Training of Scouters' available from the Headquarters Training Centre at Gilwell Park, or the Training Department at H.Q., sets out in detail the various Courses available to leaders; besides the Courses of a general nature, which are referred to as the 'Wood Badge Training Scheme', there are from time to time Technical Courses, dealing with particular Scouting subjects, and Specialist Courses for those who hold particular appointments. The persons who lead these Courses are members of the Training Team, who have been specially selected for their ability to teach and their knowledge of Scouting.

It will be realised from a previous section that informal training also plays a part in a Scouter's life, and such opportunities as Scouters' Meetings on a District basis or

within the Scout Group (the latter meeting being known as a Group Council) are provided in order that every leader shall benefit from his colleagues' experience.

THE TIME FACTOR

Leadership in Scouting is an absorbing pastime and a very worth-while one. The Scouter will do well to recognise that whilst there may be only one official evening meeting a week, time will be needed for planning programmes and in addition occasional Saturday afternoon activities, as well as camps, will claim his time.

It must be stressed, however, that a Scouter is expected to have other interests and hobbies and his family life like anyone else. It is quite wrong to think that all one's spare time should be given to Scouting.

ADMINISTRATION

Whilst it is recognised that adults accept Warrants in order to give leadership to boys, it will be realised that without an efficient administration a Scout Group cannot do its job to the full. It, therefore, often falls to leaders to carry out certain paper work in connection with the activities of the Group. This administrative work need not become an intolerable burden and every effort should be made to encourage lay persons, such as parents of boys in the Group, past members of the Movement who are now members of the B.-P. Scout Guild, and friends of the Group, to join Supporters Associations and Group Committees, and other bodies at District

and County level. These lay persons do a fine job and relieve Scouters of much of the business side of Scouting, leaving them free to do the job for which they hold Warrants, in other words, leading boys.

APPLYING FOR A WARRANT

During your probationary period, or even before it starts. the District Commissioner on his own account, and the Local Association (probably through their Warrants Committee) will inform themselves of your background and suitability as a leader. It is clearly right that the Movement should accept only men and women whose influence on boys is going to be of the best.

Part of the Warrant Committee's enquiries will involve meeting you. The interview will be quite informal, and is designed to enable you to satisfy them that you are a fit and proper person to be in charge of young people.

When your probationary period, usually three months, has been completed to the satisfaction of your District Commissioner, you will be asked to sign a form applying for a particular Warrant with a named Group. You will subscribe to a declaration on this form that you understand and accept:

(1) The Scout Law and Promise as the foundation of Scouting.

(2) That Scouting prepares boys for citizenship by training them in character, health and handcrafts, with special emphasis on the outdoors.

(3) The religious policy of the Scout Movement as defined in P.O.R. Rule 10.

You also give an assurance that you are prepared to do your best to avail yourself of training facilities as described in a previous paragraph and to make or renew the Scout Promise as an adult leader.

The significance of this declaration may appear evident, but it is vital that all those undertaking Warrants should be clear as to the implications of each part of the declaration, and you would do well to discuss it fully with your District Commissioner.

The completed application form for the Warrant is sent by the Local Association Secretary to Headquarters who prepare the Warrant for the Chief Scout's signature and send it back to the District. There will then be a short interval between the forwarding of the form and the receipt of the Warrant itself. The Warrant will be presented to you, probably by the District Commissioner.

THE BEGINNING

You are ready to start, armed with the knowledge that the Chief Scout has shown his confidence in you by the grant of a Warrant. The task you have undertaken is one of great opportunity. Through your efforts, boys can enjoy the fun and adventure which Scouting offers.

May you have many happy years in the service of these men of tomorrow.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

There are a great many books on Scouting. The attached list is not exhaustive, but contains the names of a few books which will be of value to the newcomer in Scouting. Your District Commissioner will readily advise you which to read for a start.

Policy, Organisation and Rules.
Running a Scout Group.
Running a Senior Scout Troop.
Running a Rover Crew.
Scouting for Boys.
Wolf Cub's Handbook.
Aids to Scoutmastership.

The following pamphlets are available from H.Q.:

What is Scouting.
Air Scouts.
Cubbing - A word to Parents.
Scouting - A word to Parents.
Over 15.
Rover Scouts - What they are and what they do.
The Training of Scouters.
Smartness in Scouting.
Scouts of Tomorrow.
Sea Scouting.