

THE SCOUTER'S BOOKS SERIES No. 19

SETTING THE FIRST AND SECOND CLASS JOURNEYS

By N.W. NEWCOMBE

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Editor's Note:

The reader is reminded that these texts have been written a long time ago. Consequently, they may use some terms or express sentiments which were current at the time, regardless of what we may think of them at the beginning of the 21st century. For reasons of historical accuracy they have been preserved in their original form.

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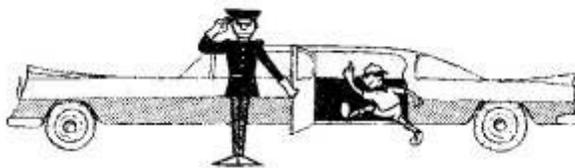
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There is, thank goodness, plenty of room in Scouting for the individualist and the man with ideas, and this booklet is not intended to do more than offer suggestions about the approach to the First Class and Second Class Journeys of those entrusted with the responsibility of setting and judging the tests, and of training the Scouts who carry them out. Certain basic principles may emerge in the course of what is said, but two of these are of such vital importance that it may be worth while to pick them out and state them before going any further.

First, then, THE JOURNEY IS MEANT TO BE ENJOYED.

Second, IT IS THE JOURNEY WHICH CONSTITUTES THE TEST, NOT THE LOG.

Due regard to these two principles will remove most of the difficulties which so many Scouts and their Scouters find in the Journey. All too often, boys undertake it after inadequate preparation; they carry excessive amounts of kit; they are set uninteresting and unimaginative tasks – and we wonder that they aren't enjoying themselves! Then they go home and sit resignedly down to write a stereotyped Log, of no interest to themselves or anyone else, and made as much like a school exercise as possible; and if they struggle through this task to the bitter end they may (unless the D.C. takes exception to their spelling) join the heroic 8.73 per cent (1959 Census figures) who proudly wear the First Class Badge. That figure is almost a tragedy – and the writer is convinced that it could be enormously increased without any lowering – indeed, with a raising – of standards if the approach to the First Class Journey were made with the boy's interests and enjoyment in mind.



The Journey, like everything else in *P.O.R.* paragraph 436, is a test. It should be testing, but that is not the same thing as saying it should be difficult. A fair analogy might be with a school examination, in which a candidate who has been properly trained and knows his subject ought to be able to obtain very high marks without finding the examination difficult; and, if such a well-prepared candidate *does* find the paper difficult, then it is almost certainly a badly-set paper. It has been well said of examinations that a fool can easily ask questions which a wise man cannot answer! But, if the Journey is not to seem difficult to the boy who is undertaking it, he must be capable of looking after himself competently for a couple of days, and he must know his technical Scouting well enough to find his way, carry out the tasks set him, and remain healthy and cheerful even if conditions should be adverse. And he cannot do these things unless his previous preparation has been adequate. Only in this way will he find the experience of his First Class Journey an enjoyable one.

The D.C. ought, in fact, consciously to be seeking signs in the Scout's Log that he has enjoyed himself. This obviously does not mean that every log should end with that wearisome chestnut "And so we reached home, tired but happy"! The statement is, indeed, unlikely to appear in so many words, but it should be implicit. Take, for example, these two extracts from an actual Log, written by a very ordinary boy:

"Before going to bed we went up on the hill to have a look round us at the scenery. We had not been there long when we saw a thick mist rising, so we ran back to our site and went to bed."

"While changing from camp kit to my Scout uniform, I went in the river for another dip."

Would this boy bother to climb up a hill after a longish day's hike, just to look at the scenery, or run down to the river for a splash in the morning, if he were not having fun? And that is what we want him to do.

Of course, there is more to the Journey than just having fun, important as that is. It is a significant milestone in the boy's Scouting experience, which, as it were, gathers up all he has learned and provides it with a purpose. Thus a well-set Journey should include as many items of First Class work as is reasonably possible. There can be no hard-and-fast rule about this, for the details must depend on the boy, the area in which he is hiking, and so on; but the instructions will be so worded that he has to use his knowledge of map-reading, the rules themselves, prescribe that he must know how to light a fire and cook a meal, it is easy to put in one or two questions involving recognition of trees or birds or asking for the estimation of a height or distance. A plaster-cast of an animal's track may be asked for; or the Scout may be told to report on anything he can discover about people who had used one of his foot paths before him.



First Aid is more difficult; the D.C. can hardly organise a convenient accident on the Scout's route! But he can notice whether or not a First Aid Kit is included in the gear taken, for, after all, our motto is "Be Prepared."

Beyond all these specific questions too, the wise D.C. will learn from the Log a good deal about the Scout's general competence; if the last four miles of the Journey were done along a main road because the footpath was missed, or if the boy reports that he went to bed without a proper meal because he couldn't get a fire to light after a shower had made the wood damp, he will legitimately have his doubts about the boy's right to call himself a First Class Scout.

The Log will also tell him a great deal about less tangible things; about the boy as a person, whether or not he is maintaining good Scouting standards in his life, standards of courtesy, good manner, smartness, and so on. Take, for example, this extract from another boy's Log:

“We were all ready to leave, but we first went to the house and knocked on the door. There was no answer, so David wrote a message thanking the owner for his hospitality, which he slipped under the milk bottles.”

Passing over the fact that it wasn't the hospitality which was slipped under the milk bottles, that sentence shows plainly that David was a good Scout – he could so easily have shrugged his shoulders and turned away from that unresponsive door. Even better perhaps is this one, from a boy who had sometimes appeared to his Scouter to be slightly boorish:

“After breakfast we went to the nearby village and purchased some chocolates for Mrs. B. and some provisions for ourselves.”

Mrs. B. was the farmer's wife, and the Log had earlier reported that she had been very kind to the two Scouts.

It is to be feared that sometimes Scouts unconsciously give themselves away in a bad light in their Logs. Not all these cases are as extreme as the one once mentioned – was it in the pages of “The Scouter”? – who produced a wonderful Log and then marred it with the final sentence;

“Arrived at the station. We told the booking-clerk we were still under 14, so we were able to travel at half-fare, which saved us a shilling each.”

Quite properly, that boy did not pass his test. Usually, however, the sins are rather ones of omission than of commission; and here a word of warning is perhaps desirable: it is just possible that the Scout takes courtesy so much as a natural and normal part of his life that it never occurs to him to mention it in a report which only asks for the unusual or specially-significant things! It would be possible to misjudge a boy sadly in this way – which underlines the importance of knowing the boy with whom one is dealing.

It is sometimes possible, though only rarely, for the D.C. himself to go out and have a look to see whether the Scouts are in fact camping properly or carrying out some other part of their tasks. But he is a busy man, and this is in any case not perhaps wholly in keeping with the dictum that “A Scout's Honour is to be trusted.” If we believe this, then, by and large, we must trust our Scouts. The same applies to another possible idea, that of including in the instructions for the Journey a recommendation to a camp-site whose owner is known to the D.C. or a suggestion that the Vicar – also a friend of the D.C.'s – should be visited for



information about his Church. Both of these are excellent and useful devices, if wisely used; but nothing should be done that savours of snooping on the boys.

It is highly desirable that the D.C. and his Scouters should have a clearly-understood system for the carrying out of this test. Nothing is more confusing to the boys and to their Scouters than a haphazard way of doing things, resulting in delays, uneven standards, and general frustration. The following suggestion is based on a system successfully used in one District, and probably something very like it is widely used. It is capable of modification to suit local circumstances, and it is to be understood that when “D.C.” is written, the term may also include A.D.C.s where delegation is practised by the D.C. of a large District.

Setting The First And Second Class Journeys

When the Scouter has a boy or boys requiring to be tested, he should approach the D.C. on their behalf, giving him the following information:

Name of Scout wishing to be tested.

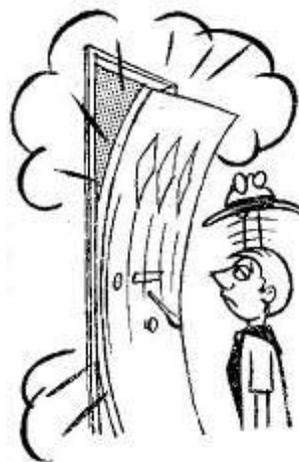
His age.

The school he attends.

Brief statement of any special interests, or special difficulties, he has.

The D.C. will then consider which of the many possible Journeys he has prepared will be most likely to suit the boy concerned, and will then, if possible; see the boy himself to discuss the Journey with him. When the Journey is completed, the Log will be sent to the D.C., who will assess it, and will then see the boy again to make his comments personally.

The advantages of this system are numerous. If the Journey is to be a fair test, it must clearly be adapted to the boy's capacities, both physical and mental. This cannot be done unless the D.C. is informed by the Scouter for even the most enthusiastic D.C. can hardly be expected to know personally every Scout in his District. The personal interview before the Journey is useful because it enables the D.C. to make any late modifications that may be necessary (the actual sight of a boy can sometimes be disconcertingly different from the mental picture formed of him from the Scouter's notes!) and it also allows the boy to ask any questions he thinks necessary ... though the D.C.'s answers may not always, be quite what he expects. If the D.C. honestly feels that he cannot make time to see the boy twice, however, he would do well to dispense with this preliminary interview, sending the boy's instructions to him by any means he likes, and retain the second interview, which is probably the more important.



At this second meeting, he may point out to the Scout faults in his Log, or in the way he has carried out his instructions. He may ask him questions to clear up points not made plain by the Log itself – and this may sometimes be vitally necessary with the kind of boy who is really inarticulate on paper: indeed, it is not too much to say that sometimes a D.C. may find himself almost conducting an oral test for the badge! He may be able to offer an immediate opportunity for the test to be re-taken, should the first attempt not have been up to standard; and this is immensely important, for the boy may be feeling disappointed, and this is the moment to offer him the best form of comfort, an opportunity to try again and do better. Finally, if the test has been passed, this is the D.C.'s chance to help the boy plan his future Scouting; to offer him, perhaps, a challenge to win his Scout Cord within the next six months, or to help him choose the Senior badges that will bring him eventually to the goal of Queen's Scout. This is not to suggest that the D.C. should usurp the S.M.'s job, of course; but the D.C. will be a less familiar figure, and, possibly, one whom the boy sets on something of a pinnacle, and a few friendly words from him can mean a lot.

This method may seem on paper to involve a great deal of trouble; in practice, it has not proved excessively burdensome. A.D.C.s exist, after all, to help with these things! Nor need the D.C. fear that the task of choosing a suitable journey to fit the individual boy's needs will be beyond him. After a time, he will have up his sleeve a large stock of possible routes in his area, unless he is in Charge of a District in a completely built-up area, in which case he will have to seek further afield. From



this stock of ideas, it will be only a moment's work to pick out the one most likely to suit the boy concerned. Obviously, if a boy's interests are completely off the beaten track, even the brightest D.C. is unlikely to be able to think of anything perfectly suited to him; but experience has shown that most boys are either cheerfully prepared to have a go at anything they are offered, or have interests which follow pretty predictable lines – natural history, outdoor sports, agriculture, history, architecture, for example. All these can be quite easily catered for. A boy with a passion for rivers, for boating, or for fishing, could be given a route involving the following of a river to its source, reporting as he goes on the uses of the water, the wild life seen, and the condition of the banks; or one interested in railways might be told to catch a train to the junction, wait there until the midday express has passed, and then set off along the disused branch line, reporting on the condition of the stations, the state of the bridges, the extent to which the site of the former line has become overgrown, and so on. (The actual track or its course will probably be private property, and of course the boy must not be encouraged to trespass, but it is generally possible to approach the track quite frequently by footpaths and country lanes).



It is good for the Scout to be sent outside his immediate home neighbourhood for the journey. Provided that due thought is given to the question of expense – and there are many



worse uses for Group funds than the payment of traveling expenses to Scouts doing their First Class Journeys – it is more fun to the boy to start with a ‘bus or a train journey, and to feel that he is really hiking in unknown territory. Or, of course, the Journey may be done from summer camp, and these are often the Journeys of all. There is something about setting off from one's campsite, rucksack on back, with the rest of the Patrol shouting encouraging remarks as you reach the gate, which delights most boys; and to return on the evening of the following day, to find either that

your Patrol have forgotten all about you and have eaten your share of the stew, or that they have thoughtfully been keeping it warm for you in the camp oven, has all the charm of dicing with fate!

This raises a technical point for the D.C. According to the “Handbook for Commissioners,” he must not delegate the testing of a Scout in this one matter to a Scouter of the Group to which the boy belongs. But the Troop may be going to the other end of the British Isles for its camp – is the poor D.C. for Margate expected to be able to set journeys in Caithness, then? Well, the rule does not say that he mustn't consult with the Scouter concerned, and there lies his solution; he can say to S.M. Bloggs “Look, Bill, you have a look at your maps, since you know the area and I don't, and sketch out a possible route; then, if I'm satisfied that it complies with the requirements for the test, as I'm sure it will, I'll initial it and young Ken can go ahead and do his journey from camp.” After all, it will be the D.C.'s job to read the Log, and decide whether the journey is satisfactorily completed.

Alternatively, the Scouter may, with the approval of his own D.C., ask the D.C. of the area in which he is camping to set the Journey, thus obtaining the benefit of local knowledge. Many experienced Scouters feel that this is the best answer to the difficulty.

Anyone who has read the last few paragraphs carefully will have noticed that “Scout” has usually been written in the singular. Scouts may, of course, do their journeys either alone or in pairs, but the use of the singular is not to be taken as meaning that the solo effort is to be preferred. Occasionally, it may be necessary for special reasons for a Scout to go alone; but obviously, it is more enjoyable, and probably wiser, for a boy to have a companion. But this companion need not, and preferably should not, be taking the test himself. An ideal arrangement is for the Scout taking the test to be accompanied by a slightly junior Scout who is doing the journey for practice ; something will be said later about practice journeys and other forms of training for the test proper.

II

The general principle of suiting the Journey to the boy having been accepted, the D.C. may still exercise a good deal of individual enterprise in the actual tasks he asks the Scout to carry out on his hike. A word of warning here is desirable: the Journey must not be an opportunity for the setter to show how clever he is, nor must he allow the bees in his own bonnet to escape and buzz loudly round the head of the unhappy candidate all through his expedition! Some people try to introduce excitement and romance into the Journey by equipping the Scout with “sealed orders” – envelope No. 1, “to be opened at the Bus Station,” directs him to catch a No. 67 bus and alight at Hogsnorton Crossroads, where he opens envelope No. 2, which says “WYVJLIK AV JOBYJO ZZD VUL TPSL.” At this point he spends forty-five minutes trying every substitution code he can think of and eventually discovers what he is supposed to do. (No, you work it out for yourself!) Justifiably browned-off by all this business, he carries out stage two of his enterprise, and then opens envelope No. 3. This proves to be written in the Morse Code which, being a Degenerate Modern Type Scout, he doesn’t know; however, with the aid of his Scout Diary he discovers that he should now continue to the Pig and Whistle, where he must sketch the signboard and then open his next clue. By now it is raining, so that when he has completed his work of art and has opened envelope 4 to discover in it a limerick beginning “There was a young man of Clovelly” he consigns the remainder of his stock of envelopes to the nearest waste-paper basket, and catches the next ‘bus home, somewhat discouraged.

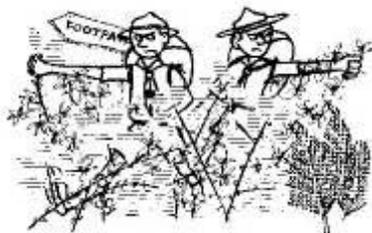
This is all very well, but it overlooks certain simple facts of life. One of these is that a lad of about fourteen really doesn’t find this kind of make-believe as romantic as his elders sometimes suppose. Another is that if he is given a straightforward job, interesting in itself, and has been trained to do it, he will find it far more fun than fetching the signboard of the Pig and Whistle in Morse Code.

Give him plenty to do. Hiking by itself is, let us admit, not as attractive at the age of fourteen as it may well become a few years later: for an active and eager boy there must be an objective in view, and preferably a lot of objectives. It is possible to err in the opposite direction and set too many, so that the list is daunting to the boy at the outset, and he starts with the feeling that he isn’t going to accomplish much: on the other hand, more Journeys have been spoiled by not having enough to do than by having too much. The point at which to draw the line is a delicate one, and requires experience; it is another reason why we should know our boys before we prescribe for them, for what is insufficient for one boy may be far too much for another.

Always leave scope for the boy’s own initiative; do not spoon-feed him with instructions. On the other hand, make sure that those instructions you do give are clear and unambiguous. For example, don’t bother to say “Go four miles N.N.W. to Ightham (596567)”; it is sufficient to

say “Go to Map Ref. 596567”, for the boy will soon discover where that is, in what direction it lies, and how far he has to walk. On the other hand, there are three Kingsdowns in Kent, so it might be insufficient to instruct a Scout to “go to Kinsdown”.

Sometimes it may be necessary to include a definite prohibition in the orders, such as “Between and you must not touch any roads”, but more usually the same effect can be



achieved by asking for some information, or a sketch, which can only be done by taking the footpath route between the two places. We should discourage the use of roads in our hiking as far as possible; not only are footpaths far more pleasant, but there is a positive duty on us to keep boys off the roads nowadays. But, since footpaths are also more trouble, and more difficult to find, and liable to be muddy, and overgrown with nettles, and infested by cattle, and unexpectedly obstructed by barbed-wire fences, there is an understandable tendency in the young to fight shy of them;

and that we must resist if we possibly can.

The precise nature of the instructions given must depend on the local situation, of course, but it is possible to provide some general ideas which may be of use. For example, the “theme” type of journey is possible: in this, the Scout is asked not to carry out a series of individual tasks related to one another only by geography, but to perform one single extended piece of research throughout the journey. He might, perhaps, be asked to report on the types of farming seen (this would be a good one for a boy with agricultural interests or background); or to report on the suitability of the countryside for camping, with special reference to certain named sites; or to note everything he met which would (or would not!) have been there in, say, 1860 or 1930; or (this would be a very tough one and only suitable for an exceptional boy below Senior age) to use as his only map one originally published a hundred years ago, reporting as he went on the changes which had taken place. There is a danger with this type of Journey that it may develop into a “bee in the D.C.’s bonnet,” however – so it should be used sparingly, and only in appropriate cases.

The more usual type of Journey will ask for one or two sketches, with others to be added to taste by the Scout who really enjoys sketching; a bit of mapping; the carrying out of a few tasks based on the First Class tests (as suggested in the previous chapter). The route will be not less than 14 miles, with a point approximately halfway along the route where the Scout will have a good chance of finding a suitable camp-site; it will take him through pleasant and interesting country, principally by footpaths. This is all there is to it and it is not really very difficult to fulfil these conditions in most areas. (The Sea Scout, of course, may do up to nine-fourteenths of his journey by water, if he wishes, and the D.C. who has Sea Scout Troops in his care will be prepared for this possibility, which does not materially affect the general principles he will follow).

The following are some suggestions which may help in setting the Journey: –

(1) A Scout may be asked to report on

Ancient monuments; archeological sites; battlefields; birds; bridges; churches; farm buildings, fences and stiles; fishing; historical associations; insects; inns and signs; memorials; mills; people met; public services; shops; transport services; trees; weather; wild flowers; woodlands; etc., etc.

(2) A Scout should do without being asked

His religious duties; his good turn.

(3) A Scout may be asked to

Make a map of part of his route; sketch objects of interest; estimate height of a tower, etc.; estimate width of a river; estimate distance to a landmark; estimate depth of a stream; draw a panorama from a viewpoint; make a gradient profile of his route; make plaster-casts of footprints, leaves, etc.; make a collection of leaves, fruits, flowers, etc.; obtain specimen of some local speciality; etc., etc.

(4) Some special ideas, for use by special Scouts!

Reports on land utilisation; industrial development; farming; conditions of footpaths or waterways; uses of woodland or water.

Follow the course of a waterway; a disused railway; an ancient trackway. Hike by a map a century old; report on things that were/were not there a century ago; try to see the landscape as it may be fifty years hence.

Imagine yourselves escaping prisoners-of-war; avoid all roads and habitations and report on suitable cover, hiding-places, sources of natural food, etc.

The area through which you are hiking is to be used for shooting a film of "Robin Hood" (adapt title to locale!). Report on its suitability for specific episodes.

Hike entirely by night.

III

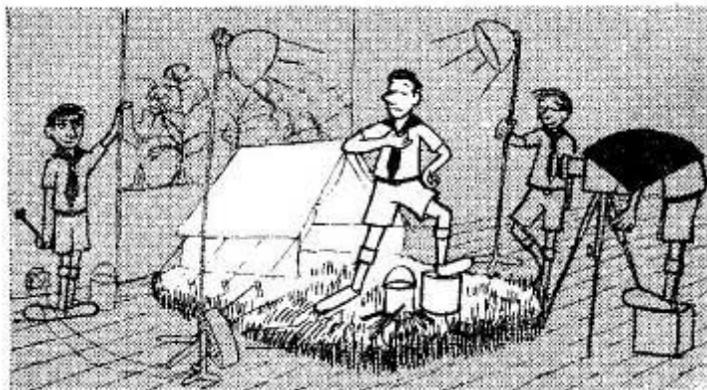
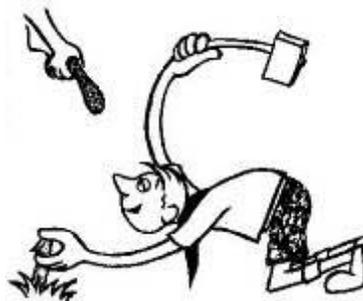
The Log is NOT the test. We have said that before; let us now repeat it, so as to make quite sure. P.O.R. states that the Scout must **"carry out any instructions given by the Examiner as to things to be observed en route, and make a Log of his journey sufficient to show he has carried out those instructions."** That is all; and it puts the emphasis clearly where it belongs, on the Journey itself. The Log must be sufficient to show that the Journey has been properly done. Of course, if the boy enjoys writing, and wishes to delight the D.C. with an account of his conversation with the Oldest Inhabitant, why on earth shouldn't he do so? We say we want him to enjoy himself, after all! But he doesn't *have* to do so, and his Log must not be despised for lack of such refinements.

Presumably, the origin of this Log lies buried in Scouting's military origins; the Founder, as a practising soldier, was well aware of the immense value of being able to size up a situation, briefly report the essentials of it, illustrate where necessary with a sketch or a plan where the written word was insufficient. Nowadays the soldier would probably do this with a miniature camera or a pocket radio transmitter; but the habit of keeping a personal record of where you have been and what you have done as a sort of diary of the expedition is one well worth cultivating and teaching to boys; such a record, to go alongside the photographs in the album, enriches the retrospect of many a holiday, for example.

But the writing of Logs is regarded by many boys as something of a chore; it is so much like the less interesting parts of their school life, the writing up of the Geography notes or the listing of the Chemical formulae. This is an attitude we have to try to combat, and the best way of doing so is undoubtedly to have sensible standards ourselves of what a Log should be. We have all heard sad stories of good Scouts who did good Journeys, and then failed the test because their Logs were rejected as inadequate, or ill-written, or badly-spelled. But surely the point should be: has this boy *done his best*? If he is an able boy, in the top stream of a

Grammar School, his best may be something superb, and he ought to be asked to do it (but be careful – in July, say, he may be working for an important examination, and simply not have time for the painstaking Log he could have given you in October!); if he is in the C stream at the Secondary Modern School, it may be a triumph of hard endeavour on his part that has produced a few pages of comparatively neat, though sadly ill-spelled, writing. Again, it comes back to knowing the boy with whom you are dealing, and expecting as your standard the best *he* is capable of. Not that we need under-rate what any boy is capable of, given the urge to do it well; the best Log, I think, that has ever come my way was done by a Secondary Modern school boy.

The layout of the Log need not be standardised. The generally-accepted method is, however, a useful practical way of ensuring that important details are not left out – the data on the front page of name, Troop, date, companion's name, map used, and the like; the division of the main pages into columns for map references, mileages, and times. Nevertheless, a boy ought never to be failed because he has not set his Log out in this way; he may have very strong personal reasons for finding the pattern unsuitable. The time may indeed come when a boy will take a pocket tape-recorder with him and hand in a tape instead of a notebook – and why not? A clever boy could produce a fascinating documentary of the sounds he had heard, birds singing, the ripple of the water, sausages frying in the pan and his companion's snores at night.



Similarly, photographs are a perfectly acceptable substitute for sketches, if they are really good photographs – but it is just as hard to take a good photograph as to make a good sketch, which few boys seem to realise; blurred and lopsided snapshots are no ornament to a Log. A poor writer might type his Log – which would be a great deal more courteous than expecting the D.C. to decipher an illegible hand! Incidentally, certain Handicapped Scouts might find it more possible to do Journeys if such methods as these were used; there are few Scouts for whom some sort of Journey, followed by some sort of Log, is physically impossible, and the literature dealing with Handicapped Scouts will be found to offer suggestions.

Maps form a very important part of the Log, but again, our thinking is in danger of becoming stereotyped. If the Scout has stated in his title-page that he has used 1 in. O.S. map sheet 99, and has given correct map references to that map, is there really any point in his spending a long time solemnly copying the relevant part of the map into his own Log? The time would be far better spent in drawing a simple, formalised diagram of the whole route (rather on the lines of the London “Underground” diagrams), with really large-scale, careful maps of

the difficult bits – the points where a continuation of the track which appears on the O.S. map to be a straight line is, in fact, not quite straight; or where the path peters out into a thicket; or where it takes off invisibly from behind a barn. The object should be to enable a person who is trying to follow the route the Scout took to do so without undue difficulty.

Brevity in a Log is not necessarily a fault. The art of saying all that needs to be said in as few words as possible is a very difficult one, and if a Scout can do so, he should be cherished, not discouraged! Of course, a perfunctory and scrappy Log is bad; but a concise one may be very good indeed. We must keep a sense of proportion and an open mind about the whole question: then, when a bright lad offers us a Log written in blank verse, or in the form of a strip-cartoon, we shall neither accept nor reject it without due consideration.

But, while we may justifiably admire brevity, we must take care that it has not been achieved at the cost of leaving out important material. Nor must we assume that because the Scout *has* included, say, a kit-list, it is a complete one: take this, for example:

“Kit List: Full Scout uniform, spare socks, pullover, spare shirt, sleeping-bag, two billies, frying-pan, matches, groundsheet, plates, cutlery, mug, first aid material, tent.”

All complete, you say? But doesn't he intend to wash or clean his teeth? Things of this sort can easily be overlooked! Equally, let it not be forgotten that it is almost as bad to take too much equipment as too little: this is a point that can be discussed with the Scout when he is being interviewed, if necessary.

It should also be noted that the regulations for the test are quite specific about the necessity for the Scout to “cook his own meals (one of which must include meat) over a wood fire in the open.” What the D.C. should do about a vegetarian Scout who has a conscientious objection to eating meat is not stated, but no doubt he can be trusted to use his discretion to accept a suitable substitute. But from an ordinary Scout he should surely not accept sausages (even assuming them to contain meat, which is by no means beyond controversy!), or even, possibly, bacon? Again, though strictly perhaps not contravening the regulations, which do not specify that the meal itself must be cooked, is cold tinned luncheon-meat acceptable? Surely not! The intention of the rule must be that the boy shall cook himself a chop, a piece of steak, some stew, or the like; and we ought not to encourage the all-too-prevalent view that anything which is not actually forbidden by the rules is approved by them.

The point of this regulation is not difficult to appreciate. For the test which is the culmination of the First Class stage of the boy's training, he ought to be able to do a moderately-difficult piece of cookery, and not just get by somehow with sandwiches or fried sausages. If he is not competent enough, or experienced enough, to do this, ought he to be attempting the test at all?

Unfortunately, it is all too true that a number of boys every year take the First Class Journey test before they are really ready for it, sometimes even at the age of 12 or just over. They are usually the bright and keen youngsters, with high intelligence, to whom the First Class tests are relatively easy. They romp through these and come to the Journey at a stage when they are still lacking in experience, stamina and responsibility. They have done relatively little hiking, perhaps none at all with rucksacks, and their knowledge of scouting techniques, though adequate to take them through a test perhaps, is superficial and breaks down under strain. To send such boys on their First Class Journeys is no service either to them or to the Movement. The Scouter may ask how he is to stop them from coming forward for the test if they are ready for it; there is no easy answer, but it may be suggested that he should tactfully slow down the progress of such a precocious boy by setting him really high standards in all the individual parts of the First Class tests, and that the adoption by the Troop of a proper

programme of training for the Journey will also act as something of a brake on the over-eager youngster. However, with that 8.73 per cent figure in mind, it must regretfully be accepted that the problem is more likely to be that of urging on the reluctant than holding back the impetuous!

The situation sometimes arises that a D.C. is asked to waive the requirement that the Journey should be the last test taken. As with all such rules, a discreet blind eye may sometimes be turned, for example, when a boy is very anxious to take his journey from camp and still has a couple of other tests to pass. To refuse him may mean that he has to do his journey in much less suitable country, and it would then not be in his interests to insist on the exact letter of the law. Or again, a Scout may reach, say, the end of September with a couple of tests still outstanding; if he does not make his Journey within about a month, he may find that the weather is unsuitable until the following April, a matter of six months ahead. This postponement could then cost him his Scout Cord if he is coming up to 15. The wise D.C. will give his blessing to the Journey in such circumstances. But he will also set a firm time-limit, insisting that the remaining sections of the badge must be completed within, say, two or three months – not more. He would be well advised to think carefully before granting permission to a Scout who has not learned to swim, for experience shows that this is a test which often causes a long hold-up before success is achieved; here again, however, if the boy can in fact swim a few yards, but not the full fifty, it may be right to let him do his journey on condition that he extends his few yards to fifty within a month, say – which ought to be easily manageable.

Finally, we come to the very important question of training for the Journey. Insofar as the Journey is an epitome of all that the Scout has learned, of course, he is already trained in a technical sense. But he will still need to be trained in hiking, and in reporting. A good Troop will hold Patrol Expeditions or Quests from time to time, and these form one of the best ways of training for the Journey. The Patrols are sent out for a day hike, with objectives similar to those required for the test, and are asked to produce a brief report to which every member must contribute something. If outings of this kind are held, say, two or three times a year, every Scout will, by the time he has been three years in the Troop, have had from six to nine experiences of hiking with an objective, and as he has risen in the Patrol, his own contribution will have increased. Probably further similar journeys will have taken place in the course of Troop camps. Sometimes a meal will be cooked en route, providing a further point of resemblance to the First Class Journey.

But these expeditions, valuable as they are, and indeed essential as they are to build up a Troop atmosphere favourable to hiking, do not normally include a night under canvas (not that our hike-tents are made of canvas, but perhaps some people's are!). Therefore, a practice journey is, if not essential, at any rate highly desirable; ideally, an older Scout taking the test should be accompanied by a younger one seeking practice, the latter rendering a report to the S.M. only. Or, if the number of Scouts requiring practice exceeds those wishing to take the test, as it probably will, the S.M. can devise his own suitable instructions and send a pair of novices off together for practice.

IV

However well trained Scouts may be, and however good their Troop's traditions, the time will come, alas, when one of them will fail his test. In the hope of reducing the frequency of this regrettable state of affairs, some notes on reasons for refusing to accept a Journey may be useful, though they are perhaps implicit in what has already been said.

Setting The First And Second Class Journeys

It will be noticed that it is the **Journey**, not the Log, which is refused; that is because it is the Journey which constitutes the test, and not the Log. The Log may indeed be rejected, but if it is, it will not usually be necessary to ask for the repetition of the Journey, assuming that this be satisfactory in itself.

The Journey may be failed for two main reasons. The first of these is, happily, rare; it is failure on the Scout's part to behave on the Journey in a Scout-like way. The case has already been quoted of the boy who cheated the railway of part of his fare. A D.C. will not hesitate to refuse the award of the First Class badge to a Scout who has behaved in this way, or to one who is known to have shown lack of courtesy or good manners, or has camped so badly as to impair our reputation as a Movement for good camping, or has evidently infringed the Highway Code or the Country Code. This point may seem obvious, but it needs to be emphasised none the less. The S.M. is entrusted with the duty of ensuring that a boy recommended for the First Class badge "understands the Promise and Law in accordance with his age and development, and is a satisfactory member of his Patrol." Can he honestly recommend a boy in this way when his Log bears clear evidence to the contrary? And if he does, the D.C. may still quite properly decide that he is mistaken in his charitable assessment of the Scout!

The much more common reason for rejecting a Scout's Journey will be serious failure to carry out the tasks set him. Remembering that the purpose of the Journey is to test the boy's fitness to be considered a trained Scout, we must not award the title lightly. A feeble "We couldn't find the Old Bridge at 345678," when you know perfectly well that it is there, waiting to be discovered by anyone with the most elementary skill in map-reading – that is the kind of thing that should go a long way towards disqualifying a Journey. Inability to read a map is a serious failing in a Scout; so is inability to light a fire and cook oneself a decent meal. Obviously, however, a Scout should not be failed merely because he has omitted some quite minor item; nor should he be rejected when the uncompleted task is something he was prevented from achieving by illness, accident, or really shocking weather. Moderate rain will not hurt him, but there is no point in encouraging him to go on through a cloudburst or a blizzard in order to discover the date carved on the wall of a church three miles away! Should the D.C. be in doubt, and the objective not too distant, he might suggest that the Scout went back, minus kit, to complete his allotted task, perhaps.

Because anything worth winning is worth taking trouble to win, the Log should be carefully done – to the extent of the Scout's known capacity and perhaps a bit beyond it! But if it is unsatisfactory in some way which the Scout can put right, it should be returned to him for amendment, or possibly complete re-writing; then, if satisfactory, it can be accepted. Only in the case of a really slovenly job should it be rejected outright. If no trouble whatever has been taken, the Log is proof that the boy is not prepared to pay his Troop the compliment of representing it worthily, nor the D.C. the compliment of treating him courteously – both grounds more than sufficient for denying him the right to call himself "First Class."

In general, the principle of rejecting the Journey altogether for faults implicit in the Journey, but the Log only for faults in the Log, will probably be found to work satisfactorily. If the D.C. works on these lines, the Scouters will know what to tell their Scouts, and the Scouts themselves will know where they stand and what is expected of them, with obviously beneficial results to Scouting.

When the D.C. rejects a Journey or a Log, it is a testing moment both for him and for the Scout, is the Scout's respect for him great enough to make him loyally accept a disappointing decision; is the Scout himself man enough to take it cheerfully? It may indeed be that the good D.C. will learn a lot about his boy in that moment! Care should always be taken to explain why

a Journey has not been accepted, and to give credit for whatever has been good in the attempt; and, most important of all, perhaps, the D.C. should offer the Scout an opportunity to put matters right as soon as possible. "I want you to have another shot at this test in a couple of weeks' time," is one approach; though, of course, it may not always be as easy as that, for it may be necessary to say "I'm afraid you will have to have some more practice in map-reading" (or fire-lighting, or whatever it may be!) "before you go again, so come and see me about the end of next month." Even if the appointment suggested seems a rather long time ahead, it is a good idea to make it, for it helps to convince the Scout that you have not lost interest in him, and that he is still moving forward, despite this temporary setback.



V

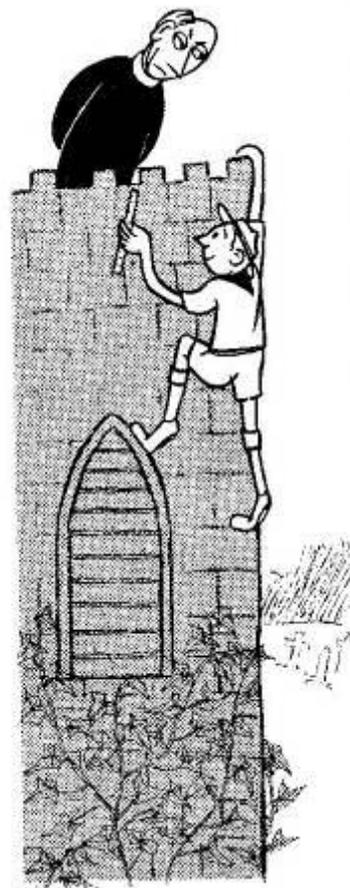
The Second Class Journey is a recent innovation, and the Scout Movement has hardly had time yet to become accustomed to it. It seems desirable to point out first that it is intended for small boys of about 12, and so is not in any sense a cut-down First Class Journey. It differs from the latter in eight main ways: it must be done by day; it may not be done alone; it should be only eight miles in distance; the test is set by the S.M.; a verbal report only is asked for; this must be made immediately on return; no meals have to be cooked; the journey need not be taken at the end of the Second Class tests.

Some of these differences are highly significant. For example, it is not intended to be a summing-up of the Second Class training in the way that the First Class Journey sums up the First Class tests; its objectives may therefore be much more limited than would be set for the older Scout. This is not to say that something of the same nature may not on occasion be used; if a Troop is camping near a place of historic interest, say, the opportunity should be taken to send Second Class hikers to it just as much as to send First Class, so long as it is within their reach. To make a sketch, or a plan, or to draw a simple map, may be as reasonable a part of the Second Class Scout's work as it is of his older brother's. But his S.M. should remember what he is, and what he is not, supposed to know: it is hardly sensible to ask him to estimate the height of a church tower, say!

There is surely no reason why the Second Class hikers should not cook a meal on their way if they would like to do so; small boys enjoy frying "bangers" wherever they are, and if they don't mind carrying the frying-pan it will add to their fun. Nor is there any reason why something brief should not be put on paper – the tests asks for notes, after all, which will be much the same as those from which the First Class Scout composes his Log – but the Second Class boy should not be expected to write a formal Log, of course. The writer knows one experienced Scouter who directs his Second Class hikers to make a record of their Map

Reference position every half-hour of their Journey. This is an excellent idea, but for one minor snag – officially, Second Class Scouts are not required to know Map References! In fact, they usually do know them, because they form a staple item of the geographical diet in most secondary schools during the first year course, so the S.M. need have little compunction about including them. In any case, they have to be taught sooner or later if they are not known, and it seems sensible to teach them early rather than late, for it is of little use the Second Class Scout being able to set his map in accordance with P.O.R. 433(8) if he can't read it.

The verbal report asked for need not be an inquisition. The idea is that the S.M. should interview the Scout as soon as is reasonably practicable after the Journey has been done, and find out what sort of time he has had. Did he meet with any difficulties? Did he have trouble in finding the way? What happened when he got to Cuckoo Wood (this being a spot where the S.M. knows the path is not very clear)? How long did the whole trip take? Did he have any trouble about catching a 'bus back? Did he meet any interesting people on the way? See any wild life? Any flowers out in the wood? What about the information the S.M. asked him to bring back – the date of the Church, the name of the village storekeeper, the colours of the village football team, the times of the 'buses to town? All that need not take more than a few minutes, but it will enable the S.M. to tell whether the youngster had an enjoyable day, and whether he has brought back the right answer to the questions.



In choosing a route for the Second Class Journey, the S.M. should bear in mind that he is dealing with small boys. While it should be made as interesting as possible, it clearly would not be wise to send them on any route which might expose them to difficulties or even danger, however safe such a route might be for boys a couple of years older. The writer was once asked by an anxious mother whether the other boy accompanying her son on his Second Class Journey was “a bit more sensible than Michael is – I hope so, anyway, for Heaven help anybody who had to trust to Michael's map-reading or general common-sense to get him to his destination!” She was an understanding mother, and she took the point when I replied that I was sure Michael and his friend had often been out together on their bicycles for the day – incidentally, a much more dangerous thing, roads being what they now are – without coming to harm. But her worry was not unjustified, for it would be hard on a 12-year-old to have to cope with a friend who had sprained his ankle and couldn't walk, three or four miles from anywhere in rough country. Toughness is all very well, but we must exercise the same reasonable care of other people's children that we should expect them to take of our own, and then a little more. Accidents do happen, if not, perhaps, as often as the more pessimistic parents may fear!

SPECIMEN INSTRUCTIONS FOR A FIRST CLASS

JOURNEY

From your camp-site follow the road W. to the junction at 788672. Take the footpath towards the River Cress, crossing by bridge at 773694. Ascend to ROMAN ENCAMPMENT 763700 and draw a plan of its outline, scale 1 in. equals 50 yards.

Continue to HACKWORTHY CHURCH. Estimate the height of the tower. Sketch at least one object of interest in the Church or Churchyard. What are the trees growing S.S.W. of the porch? Look for memorial to Isaac Cooke, and try to discover who he was.

From here, go to HANGING ROCKS 738659 and sketch the view from there towards the S.E. How far away is the river?

Find a site near here and camp for the night.

Make a bee-line from your camp-site to the OLD BRIDGE at 737650. Follow the river to its source at 671676. During this part of your hike, carry out the following tasks: (1) draw an accurate sketch-map of the course of the river; (2) sketch the bridge at 704662 and say how it is constructed; (3) sketch the source of the river; (4) record all birds, animals, insects and fishes seen.

Go by track E.N.E. to COMPTON HAMWOOD. What famous man was born here? Report on his birthplace. Continue eastwards through DARCOMBE WOOD, reporting on the condition of the wood. At main road 706697 you can catch a 'bus back to your camp.

SPECIMEN INSTRUCTIONS FOR A SECOND CLASS

JOURNEY

Follow road W. from your camp-site to the junction at 788672. Take footpath towards River Cress, crossing by bridge at 773694. Ascend to ROMAN ENCAMPMENT at 763700 and draw a plan of its outline. From here go to HACKWORTHY CHURCH; sketch at least one object of interest there. What are the trees growing S.S.W. of the porch? Find Isaac Cooke's memorial, and discover something about him.

Return to camp by way of BARRAFORD and SATWELL. Draw a sketch-map to show clearly the correct route from Satwell village to Satwell Church.

You might also be interested in

Patrol Book No. 11: –

*Journeys: the Second and First
Class Journeys*