

# THE PALIMPSEST

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## Marching to Manhood

Boy Scouts are loyal, brave and clean,  
Just little men — That's what I mean —  
Intent on doing good.  
One thing of which there is no doubt,  
It's mighty fine to be a Scout,  
Promoting brotherhood.

Jacob A. Swisher

The Boy Scout movement is a forward marching, aggressive, and ever advancing program. Its motto is "Be Prepared," its method, "Learning by Doing." Every task in Scouting is "a man's job cut down to a boy's size." The appeal to a boy's interest is not because he is a boy, "but because he wants to be a man." In Scouting every youth is a boy "marching to manhood."

The basic idea of the Boy Scout program was first conceived by Robert Baden-Powell, a Colonel in the British Army, serving in South Africa. The idea migrated quickly to England and became the basis of a civilian youth movement there — The Boy Scouts of England. It was quite by chance that William D. Boyce, a Chicago pub-



lisher touring in England, was befriended by an unknown lad, who declined payment for his services, saying: "A Scout never takes anything for being helpful." "How far that little candle throws his beam!" "So shines a good deed" in a modern, busy world. So favorably impressed was Mr. Boyce that he returned home to become one of the founders and promoters of the Boy Scouts of America.

Founded in 1910 and chartered by Congress in 1916, the Boy Scouts of America has marched steadily forward.

Scouting was originally designed for boys from 12 to 15 years of age. In accordance with recent changes, however, boys from 8 to 11 are Cubs. Boys from 11 to 14 are Scouts, and boys 14 years of age and older may be Explorers. Cubbing is primarily a home and neighborhood activity in which the parent is closely tied. Although the high point in every Scout's life is his camping experience, Scouting is built around the romance of the out-of-doors and the emphasis on both self development and "good turns" or community service. Exploring embraces a program that presents a challenge to the older boy and young man.

As a Tenderfoot Scout acquires skills he advances to Second Class and First Class rank. Then as he earns merit badges he moves on to the higher ranks of Star, Life, and Eagle Scout.

A significant factor in the Scout program is the



Scout Oath — subscribed to by every Boy Scout upon becoming a Tenderfoot.

On my honor, I will do my best —

1. To do my duty to God and my Country and to obey the Scout Law;
2. To help other people at all times;
3. To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.

Supporting and strengthening the Scout Oath is the Scout Law, with its twelve vital points.

A Scout is trustworthy,

A Scout is loyal,

A Scout is helpful,

A Scout is friendly,

A Scout is courteous,

A Scout is kind,

A Scout is obedient,

A Scout is cheerful,

A Scout is thrifty,

A Scout is brave,

A Scout is clean,

A Scout is reverent.

### *Scouting in Iowa*

The Boy Scouts of America maintains a national office in New York City and twelve regional offices in various cities throughout the United States. The states of Iowa, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, and Wyoming constitute the Eighth Region, with a regional office in Kansas



City, Missouri. Scouting in Iowa is administered through its twelve Councils, with a Scout Executive for each Council, and with field executives and volunteer helpers working in every part of the state.

Historians of the Scouting movement must confess that there is no accurate knowledge of just how and when and where the first Iowa troop was founded. It is known that in 1910, only a few months after the organization of the Boy Scouts of America, there were scattered troops operating in Hawkeyeland. All of the troops were apparently chartered about the same time, although in a few cases the troops were meeting before they were formally chartered. In that first year, L. O. Thompson was Scoutmaster of the Waterloo troop, Britton L. Dawson served a Cedar Rapids troop, and Walter Fiss was the Scoutmaster at Ames. The Rev. W. G. Muhleman of Alden in Hardin County, and Prof. A. E. Wilcox at the State University in Iowa City, also had troops in 1910. Other Iowa troops may have sprung into being during that first year, but the early records are admittedly incomplete.

The popularity of the Scouting program was spreading. By 1912 troops had been organized in Davenport and Mason City. In 1913 Murray McMurray had a Scout Troop at Webster City. MacKinlay Kantor, who later became a well-known novelist, was one of the boys in that troop.



The lure of the outdoors, coupled with the supervision of interested community leaders, was catching on everywhere. Who will dare say how many boys have enjoyed a better boyhood and a more stately manhood because of the influences of these devoted early Scoutmasters?

With the growth of the Scouting movement, the next natural development was the selection of camping sites for outdoor excursions. It is through the camping program that many of the qualities which Scouting exemplifies are brought to the foreground in a setting which combines the beauty of nature, the romance of outdoor life, and the fellowship of young men. In camp the Scout is taught to be self-reliant, dependable, and resourceful. Teamwork which forms the highest goal for Scouting, and for life itself, is instilled through the camp community with its shared duties and joys. Here swimming, life saving, first aid, and nature studies help prepare the Scout for more useful manhood, while hiking, woodcraft, canoeing, and marksmanship classes provide the recreational balance which makes camp life an unforgettable experience for the Scout.

All these activities require a financial outlay. Formerly, each Scout troop stood alone, and quite often money was needed. In more recent years the financial needs of Scouting in the larger communities have been combined with those of other community enterprises and financed through a Com-



munity Chest program, known as the "Red Feather" campaign. Independent "Friends of Scouting" campaigns were conducted in the other communities. In 1951 Governor William S. Beardsley headed the Iowa drive for funds to advance the interest of Boy Scouts. In 1952 Fred Maytag II headed this over-all committee, and in 1953 Virgil M. Hancher, president of the State University of Iowa, will be general chairman. Since the idea of concerted action in Scout financing originated in Iowa, it is frequently referred to as the "Iowa Plan."

Thus it is, with organization, leadership, encouragement, and helpful support afforded them in every community, thousands of Iowa boys — thrifty, loyal Boy Scouts of America — are steadily "marching to manhood."

JACOB A. SWISHER