

For Organisers and Scoutmasters



SEA
SCOUTING
FOR
BOYS

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Price 6d.

What is Sea Scouting?

Sea-Scouting is one of the several forms of work carried out by Boy Scouts in further development of their Scout training. It does not necessarily mean their taking to the sea as a profession afterwards.

By teaching boat management, seamanship and coastguard work, it gives a form of training which has special attractions for a boy, and which at the same time includes almost all of the manly and character-making qualities that parents could wish to see their sons develop. It is also of value to the Scoutmaster, as adding an attractive and useful variety to their training of his Scouts.

Employed on a more elaborate scale, it could also be used with the greatest advantage where there is need to sound the “call of the sea” in the ears of boys, and to attract them to take up seafaring as a profession — as, for instance, in Overseas Dominions, where men are wanted for their rising Navies.

It is different from the usual training ship education, which only fits a boy for the life of a sailor by means of drill and routine work, so that if he comes to find that profession over-crowded, distasteful, or uncertain — as he so often does — he is unfitted for taking up any other line.

The Sea-Scout training merely inculcates the best attributes of the seaman, such as handiness, resourcefulness, pluck and discipline, together with a modicum of sea-knowledge. It is training in “character” such as would be valuable to a lad whatever line of life he might adopt later on. It helps him for all, and unfits him for none.

Scheme of Training — Principles

The principle of training is much on the lines of that of the Scout training of the boys.

In training them as Scouts, we endeavour to instill into the lads the attributes of colonial frontiersmen, explorers, and others — to give them, in fact, a character-training through the attractions of Scout craft and backwoodsmanship.

In this way they are led to learn for themselves and to practice the development of —

- (1) Personal character and individuality
- (2) Handicrafts and professional training to make a career.
- (3) Collective duties for the public good.

In Sea Scouting we are able similarly to teach them —

- (1) Personal character: individual handiness, pluck, patriotism, and especially intelligent discipline through sense of duty.
- (2) Individual knowledge towards making them self-supporting, viz, knowledge of seamanship, boat handling, marine engineering, ship carpentering, ship mechanics, sail-making, signalling, etc.
- (3) Collective work of public utility, such as coast guard duties, life-saving, and salvage at wrecks, or in floods, by Patrols or complete Troops trained and equipped for the work.

Sea Scouts are of two kinds, viz. (1) Coast Guard Scouts; (2) Seamen Scouts.

The Troop is styled Ship's Company.

1, Coast Guard.

Boy Scout Coast guards are being recognized by the Marine Department of the Board of Trade as assistants to the Coast Guard and coast watchers.

For such duty the Company can be trained for watching the coast and reporting to coast guard or lifeboat stations any vessel in distress by day or night. If equipped with rocket or other life-saving apparatus in a light hand-cart, a Troop of Scouts can be of real value on coasts or

estuaries where coast guard stations are far apart. In war-time they can also be of value watching and reporting the movements of warships.

This work opens up to the Scoutmaster a very practical line of varied duties for his troop, for which units within the troop can be specially detailed and trained. Thus he might assign to each patrol (styled "Boat's Crew") its own definite work, with its leader or coxswain, such as:

No. 1 Crew — Lookout men, of strong, healthy boys, with good eyesight.

Nos. 2 and 3 Crews — Life-savers, with rocket apparatus, life-lines, boat, whatever may be possible.

No. 4 Crew — Signallers or field telephone, wireless telegraph, cyclists, etc.

No. 5 Crew — Ambulance, with restoratives for half-drowned people.

The disposition and practice of such a Company in this work would afford them a great deal of useful and attractive outdoor training.

The distinguishing badge of a Coast Guard Scouts is this:



The tests in which a Second-class Scout has to pass to gain the badge are as follows: —

To distinguish the different classes of vessels by their form and rig, including war vessels.

To know the different forms of ship's signals by lights, sound or flags, and how to respond to them, including Board of Trade Distress Signals.

To know how to use the rocket apparatus; how to launch a lifeboat.

To be able to manage a boat single-handed by rowing, punting, and sculling on the stern.

To be able to throw a life-line.

To be able to swim and know how to save life in the weather.

To know how to treat apparently drowned people by the Schafer system.

2, Seaman.

Organization — A club “Guardship” is of first importance. Any odd hulk or vessel which the boys can fit up as a floating club will do. It should have a supply of boats of similar sizes with a view to their being used in competition, etc., of one Crew against another. The training can be carried on in inland places where there is a river or lake, just as well as on the coast.

The guardship is named after some historical ship.

The Scouts are organized, as always, in their Crews, which can for part of the watches.

The ship’s company could in many cases be usefully subdivided into specialized Crews.

For instance:

- 1, Able Seamen.
2. Engineers, fitters, and firemen.
3. Electricians, carpenters and handymen.
4. Cooks, stewards, storemen, sick – bay attendants.

The training is carried out almost entirely by games and competitions, and by the reading and acting of nautical adventures and incidents.

The games include those of opposing forces in “Cutting-out Expedition,” “Pirates’ Raid,” “Smugglers and Preventive Men,” “Slave Dhows,” “Whale Hunting,” “Shipwreck,” etc. (See “Scouting Games”)

The Badge for an “Able Seaman” is this:

The tests which a second-class Scout has to pass to obtain his Badge are:



Swimming and Life-saving in the water.

Boat management: rowing and sculling single handed or with others; paddling. Punting, and screwing; towing, steering, sailing.

Knowledge of different rigs and types of vessels.

Raft building.

Signalling: Morse, semaphore, ship's flags, flares, etc.

Ship Carpentry: repairing, painting, caulking, etc.

Sewing and Cutting sails, clothes, etc.

Cooking in the open or in a galley.

Knotting and Splicing, sea anchors, etc.

Engineer's Work: knowledge of marine engines, steam and hydraulic winches and hoists, electricity, etc.

Elementary Navigation: steering, box the compass, stars, sounding, chart-reading, tides, weather wisdom, cone-signals, etc.

Ranks of Sea Scouts

Coxswain = Patrol Leader

Bowman = Corporal

Leading Seaman = First-class Scout who passed the tests for both Coastguard and Seaman.

Able Seaman ("AB") = Second-class Scout who has passed the test for either Coastguard or Seaman.

Ordinary Seaman = A Scout of over one month's service who knows eight points of the Compass, and can send the alphabet by Semaphore in addition to having passed tests as a Tenderfoot.

Greenhorn is a Tenderfoot who can swim. (For Scout tests see "*Scouting for Boys*")

Cruising

In lieu of camps, cruises are the best possible means of putting the training into complete practice. This can be carried out by hiring a coasting brig for a week's voyage, or taking a Crew on a small yacht or fishing-boat.

Even inland the cruising can be carried out to a useful extent on board a barge or boat down a canal or river, or camping out.

Uniform

The ordinary Scouts' uniform is worn by Sea Scouts, substituting a man-of-war-man's cap or sou'wester for the Scout's hat; trousers or oilskin overalls can be worn on watch instead of shorts.

Coxswains carry a boat hook with patrol flag on it.

The Need.

There is need of such training now, as our Mercantile Marine, which ought to be the backbone of the Royal Navy, especially in war-time, is largely manned by aliens. And the British personnel in it is not as good as could be desired, owing to the want of discipline among the men. Officers of the Mercantile Marine say that in the event of war, where merchant ships would be wanted to run risks in bringing food supplies, the improved discipline and patriotism among the British-born men would be of paramount importance, especially in view of the considerable proportion of foreigners in our crews.

Discipline is equally essential whether in the Royal Navy or in the Mercantile Marine. But discipline and good spirit are not things which can be drilled into a man after he is grown up; you want it all ingrained in him while he is yet a boy and can assimilate it so that it becomes a habit and part of his nature.

The country which relies solely on the veneer of drill-discipline will be liable to get a rude awakening.

The British Mercantile Marine as a profession is a poor one at present, and does not attract a numerous or particularly efficient class; it requires considerable improvement in its conditions by Parliamentary legislation to enable it to offer a secure and desirable career to its officers and men.

For this reason we should not at present train many Scouts to go to sea. At the same time a boy trained on these lines, coupled with his moral and practical training as a Scout, would probably be much sought after by shipmasters, and would thus have the best opening for taking up the sea as a profession should he desire to.

But in Overseas Dominions conditions are different. With the development of their future War navies there will be a need for willing hands and disciplined men to come forward to man their ships. For these the training of Sea Scouts should give considerable help, namely, in sounding the "call of the sea" in the ears of the lads, in teaching them the rudiments of the seaman's life, and in instilling into them the great essentials of loyalty and discipline at a time of their lives when they are capable of imbibing them, and of service for their country and for others.

Already Canada has one guardship manned by Boy Scouts at Vancouver, and more are shortly to be established. I venture, therefore, to offer this short sketch of our Sea Scouts' training, in the hope that it may receive consideration not only of Scoutmasters, but also of those interested in the development of their country and of the boys.

A detailed book of instruction on the subject is being brought out by my brother, Warrington Baden-Powell, K.C., late Royal Naval Reserve.