

A HISTORICAL TREATMENT OF BOY SCOUT  
TROOP NO. I OF COMMERCE, OKLAHOMA, AS  
AN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY IN A  
SMALL OKLAHOMA HIGH SCHOOL

TO MR. W. A. JACOBS WHOSE PIONEERING  
GENIUS AND SELF SACRIFICE MADE SUCH A  
GREAT CONTRIBUTION TO THE YOUTH OF MANY  
BOYS NOW MEN.



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AN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY IN A  
SMALL OKLAHOMA HIGH SCHOOL

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Mrs. W. A. Jacobs of Commerce, Oklahoma, made possible the securing of records of Boy Scout Troop No. 1 of Commerce, Oklahoma, from 1915 to 1930.

Mr. Albert Stewart, principal of the Central Grade School of Commerce, Oklahoma, and present Scoutmaster of Troop No. 1 contributed records from 1930 to 1938.

Mrs. August Mayerhoff, editor of the COMMERCE NEWS made available the files of the COMMERCE NEWS and assisted in securing source material.

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## PREFACE

The purpose of this thesis is really three-fold. First of all, the author wishes to show how one man, Mr. W. A. Jacobs, in the midst of adverse circumstances, with the equipment available to the high school of any small town was able to initiate and perfect an extra-curricular activity whose worth measured in terms of inculcation of worth while ideals, proper standards of conduct, and instigation of health building habits can be measured only by a survey of this type.

Second, to describe and discuss representative activities in which this troop engaged. These activities are to be regarded not only in the light of their effect upon the participants but from the standpoint of service to the community.

Third, a resume of the adult activities and status of members of this troop, who, since its inception have left it to take their place in society with a view to evaluating the importance of a Boy Scout Troop as an extra-curricular activity.

The author does not wish to attempt in this treatise to give a complete chronological listing of activities and events pertaining to this troop in its twenty-three years of existence; however, as much of the actual history will be included as is available and compatible with the general scheme of the thesis.

A study of this nature is believed to be important



from two standpoints; first, as a contribution to the study of extra-curricular activities in Oklahoma secondary schools; second, as an addition to the history of the Scout Movement in the United States.

Due to the fact that the author was unable to find any published reference work on Scouting in Oklahoma, it has been necessary for him to write this history from material collected and compiled by himself.

## CHAPTER I

## HISTORY OF ORGANIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Commerce, Oklahoma, in 1914, presented the appearance of a typical mining camp in the West. Due to a war in Europe and the discovery of a large lead and zinc field in this locality, the most charitable comment that could be made is that conditions were unsettled. The rapid influx of population, largely of a transient type, along with those who intended to make this settlement their permanent home, brought about many maladjustments which are herein described.

First of all, housing conditions were deplorable. The residences of a large percent of the people were hastily thrown together with little regard either to convenience or appearance. Wages were high and every one who desired to work could find employment. Every one was in a mad rush to accumulate money, and in a still greater hurry to spend it.

The business district consisted of Main Street, a lane of deep mud flanked by a number of frame buildings which housed the various business enterprises. A high board walk extended along each side of the street which made "navigation" possible in rainy weather. The sight of wagons loaded with ore from the mines bogged down to the hubs in mud was not an uncommon one.

Churches were organized by a faithful few, but received little support or attention from the public at large. Sunday School and church was held for those who

were interested in attending, but most of the youth of the community spent their Sundays in the streets looking for whisky bottles and searching for cigarette butts.

Schools were not forgotten, but were badly neglected, the only one available being located about a mile from town. It was housed in a large frame building where a group of teachers did the best they could with the material at hand. Many students were lured from school before they had completed the first eight grades by the high wages which could be earned in the mines.

Commerce, the boom town of Oklahoma, naturally drew a type of population which was shocking but not surprising. Besides the men who brought their families to this "Eldorado", came a rougher element composed mostly of professional toughs, women of the street, gamblers and bootleggers. Licentiousness flourished, speakeasies and gambling dens operated unchecked by the feeble efforts of such law enforcement agencies as were in existence. Murders and maimings were too common to afford an interesting topic of conversation for more than a few days.

The town boasted of two theaters at this early date which showed the blood and thunder type of films, interspersed with vaudeville of an immoral nature.

The old livery stable, forerunner of the modern garage, was very much in evidence. It served not only as a very busy source of transportation, but as a house of assignation and distribution point for the caustic intoxicant which served as whiskey.

One can readily see that many parents gave little attention to the rearing of their children. Like Topsy, they were just allowed to grow. The streets were open to them and many of the homes were far from pleasant. Being a small boy in this atmosphere, I have tried to give an indication of my reaction to the many sights which, although fascinating and glamorous, were dangerous and far from constructive as a source of character development.

The development of the Boy Scout Movement in England is due to Lieutenant General Sir Roberts S. S. Baden Powell, who, during the siege of Mafeking (1879) had seen the boys under Lord Edward Cecil's command organized and drilled into an efficient messenger service. When Baden Powell returned to England in 1902, the idea was fostered and received popular support, and a general plan of organization was adopted. The first Boy Scouts Organization was formed in 1908, and a royal charter of incorporation was granted in 1910, the organization being recognized as a nonmilitary, public service body.<sup>1</sup>

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1 The Encyclopedia Americana, Vol. No. 4, p. 370.

The administration of the movement is decentralized, each county in Great Britian having at its head a county commissioner responsible to headquarters. Under him are a district commissioner, local associations, and Scout Troops. The troop numbering from twenty to forty boys is divided into a patrol of six or eight, each under its own boy leader. The troop is purposely kept small in numbers in order that the Scoutmasters may have personal knowledge of each of his boys, and so develop individual character. The movement is subdivided into three groups.

1. Rovers - Scouts of 17 years or over.
2. Boy Scouts and Sea Scouts - from 11 to 17.
3. Wolf Cubs - juniors from 8 to 11.

The principles underlying the training are identical for each group, but the details differ to suit the different stages of development. The training is carried out generally under four main headings.

1. Character and intelligence.
2. Skill and handicraft.
3. Physical health and self care.
4. The practice of service for others and for the state.

From a trial experimental camp in 1907, the movement has spread with remarkable rapidity to every part of the world. By 1910, the movement in the British Empire numbered over 123,000 members and had been taken up in many foreign countries.

In 1920, an international meeting or jamboree was held at Olympia London in which Scouts of twenty-six

nations took part. A second international jamboree took place in 1934, at Copenhagen, at which thirty-three nations were represented. The greater public schools of Great Britian have taken up Scouting as a means of developing <sup>2</sup> the spirit of service to the community among their boys.

The Boy Scouts of America was incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia, February 8, 1910, by Mr. W. D. Boyce, Edward S. Stewart, and Stanley Willis.

Mr. W. D. Boyce employed the attorneys and brought together the men who participated in this initial step. It is significant that Mr. Boyce's interest was occasioned by an actual experience which he had in London, typifying the basic "Daily Good Turn" principle of Scouting. While seeking a certain location in a foggy, congested part of London, a lad noticing his bewilderment, saluted and asked if he might be of service. Mr. Boyce accepted his offer, and upon reaching his destination offered the boy a shilling. The boy courteously refused the offer by saluting and saying, "A Scout accepts no reward for a courtesy or good turn." Mr. Boyce inquired as to what he meant, and the boy, expressing astonishment that everyone did not know of Baden Powell's Boy Scouts, asked permission to take him to the headquarters of the English Boy Scout Association. This resulted in Mr. Boyce bringing with him a trunk load of literature to America and taking steps for the subse-<sup>3</sup>quent incorporation of the Boy Scouts of America.

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2 Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 5, p. 370, 14th edition.

3 Handbook for Scoutmasters, pp.471-472.

The Boy Scouts of America is nonmilitary and interdenominational in character, the movement being supported by Catholics, Protestants and Jews alike.

The administration of the Boy Scouts of America is in the hands of a national council working through an executive board. The council includes many men of national prominence and has the president of the United States as honorary president and ex-presidents of the United States as honorary vice presidents. The national headquarters is at 200 Fifth Avenue, New York City.<sup>4</sup>

Mr. W. A. Jacobs, the first Scoutmaster of Troop No. 1 of Commerce, played such an important part in the development of Scouting in Commerce that a brief biographical sketch is not out of place. He was born May 31, 1877, in Battle Creek, Michigan. During his youth he led a varied existence, seeming to search for a way of life which would afford him an opportunity to exercise the special talents for which he was well known. He worked as a street car conductor, construction worker, superintendent of an orphanage, and a government photographer for archeological expeditions. He spent much of his time in the outdoors and amassed a fine collection of Indian relics gathered from the entire Southwest. He came to Commerce, Oklahoma, in 1914, and set up a photographic gallery. He possessed many of the personal attributes which not only make for a good leader but make

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4 The Encyclopedia Americana, Volume No. 4, p. 371.

it impossible for a person of his temperament to endure conditions such as have been outlined without doing something about them. Despite the fact that he had no children of his own, he had an understanding and sympathy for youth which drew young boys to him, and his real affection and interest in the seemingly trivial affairs of adolescence caused him to exert himself in their behalf. Having his business on Main Street of this rapidly growing mining town, he received first hand knowledge of the lives and living conditions of a number of boys whose only playground was the streets. The tragic mistake of allowing boys to grow up in an atmosphere of this sort was brought to him with startling force. He knew that all these boys needed was a proper and appealing outlet to their energies. There were no existing institutions which could do this. Sunday School attendance was not encouraged in the homes of many of the boys, and the activities of a Sunday School could hardly be expected to appeal to a growing boy. The schools were over-crowded, the teachers were over-worked, and extra-curricular activities were unknown with the possible exception of crude games devised by the boys themselves. It was only natural, therefore, that as soon as the activities of the Scout Movement came to the attention of Mr. Jacobs that he should organize a troop of Scouts from the boys of Commerce.

Following is a clipping from the COMMERCE NEWS published April 27, 1916.



TROOP OF BOY SCOUTS ORGANIZED

—

Last Thursday night at the Baptist Church, a meeting was called for the purpose of organizing a troop of Boy Scouts in Commerce.

Mr. Horace Durant, the Scoutmaster, in company with some Scouts from Miami was present. He explained the movement after which the Boy Scouts of Commerce were organized with W. A. Jacobs as Scoutmaster. The troop committee was appointed as follows: Walter McCracken, Guy Blackmer, Rev. John R. Warren, Rev. J. S. Bottoms, C. H. Morgan, and D. A. Hampleman. As yet, no assistant Scoutmaster has been appointed.

\*

At present about twenty boys have been enrolled, and we hope for others to join so we can start with a full troop of thirty-two boys.

The Boy Scouts of America is not a military organization as is supposed by many people. It is for the moral training of the boys along lines that will have a tendency to develop good character and make better boys, and by so doing make better men in the future. Any boy over twelve years of age may become a Scout by paying the small sum of twenty-five cents.

For further information call on Mr. Jacobs. I wish to thank the business people who so liberally contributed to this movement.

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5 COMMERCE NEWS, April 27, 1916.

\* Records show fifteen boys in original troop.

The troop was organized under the rules and regulations of the Boy Scouts of America which briefly outlined is as follows: A troop shall consist of four patrols of eight boys each. Each patrol shall elect a patrol leader and assistant patrol leader. In addition, there must be a senior patrol leader who is responsible for the direction of the patrols, and who must be over sixteen years of age. There must be an assistant Scoutmaster who is responsible for the activities of the troop, and who must be twenty-one years of age or older.

Technically, a permanent institution, a church, a settlement house, a Y. M. C. A., or a business man's association initiates the organization of a troop of Boy Scouts.

The duties of this institution are:

1. To provide a meeting place and to supply needed equipment and funds.
2. To select a troop committee of three adult and male citizens. This committee will be responsible to the institution and to the Boy Scouts Organization for the work, progress, and permanence of the troop.

The Boy Scouts of America, after meeting certain requirements, are enrolled as tenderfoot Scouts; other examinations must be passed before they can be promoted to second-class

Scouts, and still harder tests must be met before they can graduate into first-class Scouts. Then comes an opportunity for further broadening their usefulness through preparation to meet the requirements for securing each or any of the sixty merit badges.

The Scout plan - as a Scout, the boy willingly adopts as real and vital the universally accepted principles of life as set forth in the Scout oath and law. This effectively influences the boy's nature and character so as better to prepare him for that which the church can best do.

The motto of the Boy Scouts is "Be Prepared". This means that the Scout is always in a state of readiness in mind and body to do his duty.

Before he becomes a Scout, a boy must make the following promise: 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.

When taking the oath the Scout will stand holding up his right hand, palm to the front, thumb resting on the nail of the little finger, and the other three fingers upright and together.

The Scout law is then taken as follows:

1. A Scout is trustworthy. A Scout's honor is to be trusted.

If he were to violate his honor by telling a lie or by

cheating, or by not doing exactly a given task, when trusted on his honor, he may be directed to hand over his Scout badge.

2. A Scout is loyal. He is loyal to all to whom loyalty is due; his Scout leader, his home, parents, and country.
3. A Scout is helpful. He must be prepared at any time to save life, help injured persons, and share the home duties. He must do at least one good turn to somebody every day.
4. A Scout is friendly. He is a friend to all and a brother to every other Scout.
5. A Scout is courteous. He is polite to all, especially to women, children, old people, and the weak and helpless. He must not take pay for being helpful or courteous.
6. A Scout is kind. He is a friend to animals. He will not kill nor hurt any living creature needlessly, but will strive to save and protect all harmless life.
7. A Scout is obedient. He obeys his parents, Scoutmaster, patrol leader, and all other duly constituted authorities.
8. A Scout is cheerful. He smiles whenever he can. His obedience to orders is prompt and cheery. He never shirks or grumbles at hardships.
9. A Scout is thrifty. He does not wantonly destroy property. He works faithfully, wastes nothing, and makes the best use of his opportunities. He saves his money so that he may pay his own way, be generous to those in need, and helpful to worthy objects. He may work for pay, but must receive no tips for courtesies or good turns.

10. A Scout is brave. He has the courage to face danger in spite of fear, and to stand up for the right against the coaxing of friends or the jeers and threats of enemies, and the defeat does not down him.
11. A Scout is clean. He keeps clean in body and thought, stands for clean speech, clean sport, clean habits, and travels with a clean crowd.
12. A Scout is reverent. He is reverent toward God. He is faithful in his religious duties, and respects the con-<sup>7</sup>victions of others in matters of custom and religion.

The principal equipment of the Boy Scout Troop No. 1 of Commerce, Oklahoma, and of any Boy Scout Troop for that matter, is the great outdoors and a great amount of energy on the part of the boys. Most of the activities which required any setting other than a meeting place are the hikes, camps, and wild life projects engaged in by the members of the troop.

In as much as none of the boys who attended the first meeting had as yet become members of the Boy Scouts of America, no officers were elected. The registration of these boys as Scouts was the first task. Any boy of twelve years of age who had the consent of his parents and the registration fee was allowed to join. Several boys could not get the twenty-five cent registration fee. In this case Mr. Jacobs paid it himself, and

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<sup>7</sup> Boy Scouts of America, Twelfth Annual Report of Boy Scouts of America, Washington Government Printing Office, Washington D. C., May 1, 1922.

gave the boys an opportunity to work it out later. The first officers in the troop were not elected. They were selected through competition. Those who showed the most rapid advance and the best promise of leadership were appointed to the offices by the Scoutmaster, an arrangement entirely acceptable to all the boys. Thursday night was selected as a permanent meeting night, and the First Baptist Church was selected as a meeting place. It was decided that the expense of the troop was to be met by the assessment of five cents per week on each of the Scouts. Such uniforms as were bought, were bought by the Scouts themselves. Only a few were able to afford uniforms. As soon as these preliminaries had been disposed of, the troop began to engage in the activities which will be discussed in a separate chapter.<sup>8</sup>

The immediate reaction of the community to this pioneer effort was varied. First of all, such existing institutions as were interested in the welfare of the boys were unanimously in favor of the movement. The churches all offered the use of their buildings as meeting places, and two ministers voluntarily became members of the troop committee. The superintendent of schools, J. M. Coday, allied himself with the movement by excusing boys from school when Scout duties made it impossible for them to attend; however, this effort was received rather suspiciously by the parents of many boys

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<sup>8</sup> Troop Records, Commerce, Oklahoma.

of eligible age for joining the troop. At this time the World War had been raging in Europe for some time, and America had been made the target for a great deal of inflammatory propaganda. Many parents felt that because of the use of uniforms and the fact that the whole Scouting Movement had been initiated by a British soldier, that this was a military organization designed to prepare their boys for participation in a foreign war. It is not difficult to understand how a person not familiar with the aims of Scouting might fear these conclusions. This had to be overcome by patient and tactful education of the parents to the ideals of Scouting. Unfortunately, few of the boys for whom Scouting was primarily intended had been so victimized by unfavorable social conditions that they were unwilling or unable to join. They could not get their parent's consent because of their unwillingness to assume responsibility of any sort. Some of the boys, toughened by the life they led, regarded any activity which was void of vulgarity, profanity, petty stealing, and other forms of minor vice as effeminate or unworthy of their time and attention. This was an obstacle which was never entirely overcome; however, after twenty-three years of existence of a Scout Troop in Commerce, there is just a small number of boys to whom Scouting does not appeal because of an unsatisfactory background.

Between 1915 and 1924, there were no changes in the organization of the troop with the exception of addition of new members and the promotion of younger boys to fill offices vacated by the boys leaving who had reached maturity or left Commerce.

The regular program of hikes, camps, and tests was engaged in and this will be discussed in more detail later.

On March 9, 1924, Mr. Jacobs died at his home as a result of a heart attack. His demise was totally unexpected in as much as he was just forty-seven years of age and was still very active and young in heart. It is difficult for a casual reader of an obituary in a newspaper to realize the grief wrought by the passing of one so beloved by a community. Most of the boys to whom he had been a second father, could not have felt the loss any keener if he had been a member of their family.

Due to his efforts, Scouting had been too firmly entrenched in the heart and minds of the community to perish with his death. Immediately following the death of Mr. Jacobs, his work was assumed for two years by Mr. John L. Miller, a merchant in the town who had been interested for some time in Scout work. Due to the press of business he was unable to continue as Scoutmaster.

In 1926, the position of Scoutmaster was taken over by Arthur Shamblin who had registered as a member of the original troop in 1916. Mr. Shamblin, having been a member of the troop with Scoutmaster Jacobs for ten years, was well qualified to serve as Scoutmaster. He successfully supervised the activities of the troop until 1930.

During the administration of Mr. Shamblin, the area organization of Scouting was perfected. Previous to this time the only connection of the local troop with other Scout troops was through the national headquarters at New York City. In the



spring of 1928, the northeastern part of Oklahoma was organized as a definite division or area. Miami, Oklahoma, was made the headquarters of this area, and Mr. W. J. Brady served as advisory head.

Unfortunately, the organization of this area was doomed to failure. All progressed well enough until the fall of 1929. The occurrence of the depression struck a very severe blow at Scouting nationally, and nowhere was this more severely felt than in this mining territory. Troop charters were allowed to lapse and the membership of those troops that held on dwindled to nothing. The area headquarters which had relied for the most part on private donations for maintenance was left entirely without support. Both Scouts and parents were badly demoralized by the adverse economic conditions. The charter of the Boy Scout Troop at Commerce was prevented from lapsing only by the heroic efforts of the committee, the Scoutmaster, and a few Scouts. In 1930, Mr. Brady, head of the area, was killed in a railroad accident. Shortly after this, the area of which he had been head, merged with the Cherokee area with headquarters at Bartlesville, Oklahoma. The activities of this area as a functional unit of Scouting will be discussed later. The number of Troop No. 1 of Commerce, Oklahoma, was changed to Troop No. 58.

Mr. Shamblin left Commerce in 1930, due to a change of employment. His place was taken by Mr. Jesse W. Martin, teacher of a nearby school, who had been a member of the original troop. It was at this time that Scouting definitely became one of the

activities of the school. Previous to this, the Scout Movement had been an extra-curricular activity in the sense that it had enjoyed the encouragement of the school authorities, but there had been no administrative connection. At this time the Scouts were given the school gymnasium to use as a meeting place and Scouting was made a part of the school activities.

In 1933, due to the urgency of duties incurred by his being superintendent of schools, Mr. Martin resigned as Scoutmaster. His place was taken by Albert H. Stewart who joined the troop in 1926 and at the time he accepted the Scoutmastership was employed as a teacher in a nearby school. The following year he accepted a position as principal of the Central Grade School in Commerce, Oklahoma. Much of the success and expansion of the Scout work since 1933 has been due to the efforts of Mr. Stewart as Scoutmaster. He has the rare combination of youth, wisdom, vitality, sympathy, and interest that make for the ideal Scout leader.

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9 Troop Records, Commerce, Oklahoma.

## CHAPTER II

## PERSONNEL OF TROOP

Before going into the personnel of the troop, it is advisable that an explanation be given of the basis of selection of members whose backgrounds are to be abstracted. It would be impossible to give a report on each individual who has been a member of this troop; however, thirteen of the original fifteen will be abstracted.

The background of later members, representative of the development of the troop, will be given solely to add to the scope of study and to make the history more complete. An attempt has been made to choose individuals from all levels of the development of the troop which would be truly characteristic of the membership of the troop at the time they were Scouts.

An explanation of terms for these abstracts is necessary. The wages of the average citizen and the cost of living in this community fluctuated violently with business conditions and the price of lead and zinc; however, over this period of twenty-three years, the earning power of the average family was about one thousand dollars per year, and the cost of living above that for the entire country. The customary procedure was to spend the weeks wages on Saturday night. The economic status will be expressed in terms of the average.

The average educational opportunity of the parents of these Scouts was very limited. Any variation from this average will be expressed in the following abstracts.

\*SCOUT GLEN COVERT, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joe Covert. Parents' education limited. He was the only child. Father's occupation: ground foreman in the mines. Economic status of parents: slightly above average. Joined the troop in 1916. Became a first-class Scout. Was graduated from the Commerce High School in 1923.

\*SCOUT CLARENCE TOMLINSON, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Tomlinson. Parents' education limited. He was the oldest of three children. Father's occupation: hoisting engineer. Economic status of parents: average. Joined troop in 1916. Became a second-class Scout. Completed the eighth grade in Commerce, Oklahoma.

\*SCOUT HARRY PIERCE, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ed Pierce. Parents' education limited. He was the second oldest of four children. Father's occupation: miner. Economic status of parents: average. Joined troop in 1916. Became a first-class Scout. Was graduated from the Commerce High School in 1926.

\*SCOUT LANDY TURNER, son of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Turner. Parents' education limited. He was the oldest of two children. Father's occupation: miner. Economic status of parents: average. Joined troop in 1916. Became a second-class Scout. Was graduated from the Commerce High School in 1922.

\*SCOUT WALTER NELSON, son of Mr. and Mrs. W. S. Nelson. Parents' education limited. He was one of four children. Father's occupation: hardware merchant. Economic status of parents:

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\* Original member.

above average. Joined troop in 1916. Became a second-class Scout. Completed the eighth grade in Commerce, Oklahoma.

\*SCOUT LLOYD LEE, son of Mr. and Mrs. Lon Lee. Parent's education: above ordinary. Oldest of three children. Father's occupation: owner of lumber yard. Economic status of parents: above average. Joined troop in 1916. Became second-class Scout. Was graduated from Miami High School in 1923.

\*SCOUT GEORGE LEE, son of Mr. and Mrs. William Lee. Parents' education: above average. One of six children. Father's occupation: owner of lumber yard. Economic status of parents: above average. Joined troop in 1916. Became second-class Scout. Was graduated from Commerce High School in 1921.

\*SCOUT LEONARD VANFLEET, adopted son of Mr. and Mrs. Ivan VanFleet. Parents' education: limited. Oldest of two children. Father's occupation: miner. Economic status of parents: average. Joined troop in 1916. Became a star Scout. Was graduated at Miami, Oklahoma, in 1922.

\*SCOUT DENZIL KEIGHLEY, son of Mr. and Mrs. O. E. Keighley. Parents' education: above ordinary. He was the only son. Father's occupation: merchant. Economic status of parents: above average. Joined troop in 1916. Became a first-class Scout. Was graduated from the high school at Joplin, Missouri, in 1923.

\*SCOUT CHESTER BOWERS, son of Mrs. Edna Bowers. Mother's ed-

ucation: above ordinary. He was the oldest of two children. Mother's occupation: pharmacist. Economic status of mother: above average. Joined troop in 1916. Became first-class Scout. Was graduated from Commerce High School in 1923.

\*SCOUT ARTHUR SHAMBLIN, son of Mrs. Nellie Shamblin. Mother's education: limited. He was the oldest of four children. Mother's occupation: housework. Economic status of mother: below average. Joined troop in 1916. Became an eagle Scout. Was graduated from the Commerce High School in 1923.

\*SCOUT VERNON ROBERTS, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Roberts. Parents' education: above ordinary. One of four children. Father's occupation: banker. Economic status of parents: above average. Joined troop in 1916. Became first-class Scout. Was graduated from Commerce High School in 1922.

\*SCOUT DWIGHT ALLISON, son of Mr. and Mrs. James Allison. Parents' education: limited. One of two children. Father's occupation: groceryman. Economic status of parents: above average. Joined troop in 1916. Became a first-class Scout. Was graduated from the Commerce High School in 1923.

SCOUT ALBERT STEWART, son of Mr. and Mrs. Bert Stewart. Parents' education: above ordinary. He was the only child. Father's occupation: salesman. Economic status of parents: average. Joined troop in 1926. Became an eagle Scout. Was graduated from the Commerce High School in 1930.

SCOUT MILTON SANDERSON, son of Mr. and Mrs. Billy Sanderson.

Parents' education: above ordinary. He was the oldest of three children. Father's occupation: welder. Economic status of parents: above average. Joined troop in 1924. Became an eagle Scout. Was graduated from Commerce High School in 1928.

SCOUT WAYNE SANDERSON, son of Mr. and Mrs. Billy Sanderson. Parents' education: above ordinary. He was one of three children. Father's occupation: welder. Economic status of parents: above average. Joined troop in 1925. Became an eagle Scout. Was graduated from the Commerce High School in 1928.

SCOUT OREN CROW, son of Mr. and Mrs. William Crow. Parents' education: limited. One of five children. Father's occupation: miner. Economic status of parents: average. Joined troop in 1924. Became an eagle Scout. Was graduated from the Commerce High School in 1929.

SCOUT CHARLES VETETO, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Veteto. Parents' education: average. The only child. Father's occupation: owner of theater. Economic status of parents: above average. Joined troop in 1926. Became an eagle Scout. Was graduated from Commerce High School in 1931.

SCOUT CHARLES CHESTNUT, son of Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Chestnut. Parents' education: above average. Youngest of three children. Father's profession: lawyer. Economic status of parents: above average. Joined troop in 1925. Became an eagle

Scout. Was graduated from Commerce High School in 1928.

SCOUT CLARENCE SMITH, son of Mr. and Mrs. Mark Smith. Parents' education: limited. Oldest of two children. Father's occupation: miner. Economic status of parents: average. Joined troop in 1928. Became an eagle Scout. Was graduated from Commerce High School in 1932.

SCOUT GEORGE HEISKELL, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ed Heiskell. Parents' education: limited. The only child. Father's occupation: miner. Economic status of parents: average. Joined troop in 1927. Became a star Scout. Was graduated from Commerce High School in 1930.

SCOUT JIMMY NOEL, son of Mr. and Mrs. Clint Crow. Parents' education: limited. Oldest of three children. Father's occupation: driller. Economic status of parents: average. Joined troop in 1928. Became an eagle Scout. Was graduated from Commerce High School in 1932.

SCOUT DAMON RALPH, son of Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Ralph. Parents' education: above average. One of four children. Father's profession: dentist. Economic status of parents: above average. Joined troop in 1932. Became a first-class Scout. Was graduated from Commerce High School in 1938.

SCOUT J. B. HAMPTON, son of Dr. and Mrs. J. B. Hampton. Parents' education: above average. Oldest of two children. Father's profession: physician. Economic status of parents: above average. Joined troop in 1932. Became a star Scout. Was



graduated from Commerce High School in 1938.

SCOUT JAMES CAMPBELL, son of Mr. and Mrs. Cal Campbell. Parents' education: limited. One of eight children. Father's occupation: peace officer. Economic status of parents: average. Joined troop in 1929. Became a second-class Scout. Was graduated from Commerce High School in 1932.

SCOUT GEORGE HILL, son of Mrs. Nettie McCleery. Mother's education: limited. Only child. Mother's occupation: housework. Economic status of mother: below average. Joined troop in 1932. Became a tenderfoot Scout. Attending Commerce High School.

SCOUT CHARLES MCBEE, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles McBee. Parents' education: limited. One of six children. Father's occupation: miner. Economic status of parents: below average. Joined troop in 1931. Became a tenderfoot Scout. Was graduated from high school at Columbus, Kansas, in 1934.

SCOUT ROBERT PELSUE, son of Mr. and Mrs. R. L. Pelsue. Parents' education: average. One of four children. Father's occupation: miner. Economic status of parents: average. Joined troop in 1927. Became an eagle Scout. Was graduated from Commerce High School in 1932.

SCOUT ARNOLD SHAMBLIN, son of Mr. and Mrs. Sherman Shamblin. Parents' education: limited. One of four children. Father's occupation: miner. Economic status of parents: average. Joined troop in 1931. Became a tenderfoot Scout. Was grad-

uated from Commerce High School in 1936.

SCOUT ELDON SWEEZY, son of Mr. and Mrs. A. G. Sweezy. Parents' education: above average. Oldest of two children. Father's profession: school superintendent. Economic status of parents: above average. Joined troop in 1930. Became second-class Scout. Was graduated from high school at Inola, Oklahoma, in 1933.

SCOUT CONRAD CALDWELL, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. O. Caldwell. Parents' education: above ordinary. Oldest of two children. Father's profession: teaching. Economic status of parents: average. Joined troop in 1923. Became a second-class Scout. Was graduated from Commerce High School in 1926.

SCOUT PAUL RALPH, son of Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Ralph. Parents' education: above ordinary. Oldest of four children. Father's profession: dentist. Economic status of parents: above average. Joined troop in 1928. Became a star Scout. Was graduated from Commerce High School in 1932.

SCOUT ROBERT LYKINS, son of Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Lykins. Parents' education: above ordinary. Oldest of two children. Father's occupation: wholesale gasoline jobber. Economic status of parents: above average. Joined troop in 1933. Became a star Scout. Attending Commerce High School.

SCOUT JOHN COWHERD, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ray Cowherd. Parents' education: limited. Oldest of two children. Father's occupation: salesman. Economic status of parents: above average.

Joined troop in 1930. Became a tenderfoot Scout. Completed tenth grade in the Commerce High School.

SCOUT JACK FISHER, son of Mr. and Mrs. Chauncey Fisher. Parents' education: limited. Youngest of two children. Father's occupation: miner. Economic status of parents: average. Joined troop in 1932. Became a tenderfoot Scout. Was graduated from Commerce High School in 1935.

SCOUT JOHN WALKER, son of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Walker. Parents' education: limited. One of four children. Father's occupation: miner. Economic status of parents: average. Joined troop in 1932. Became a tenderfoot Scout. Completed ninth grade in the Commerce High School.

SCOUT BASIL BAKER, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Baker. Parents' education: limited. The only child. Father's occupation: miner. Economic status of parents: average. Joined troop in 1918. Became a first-class Scout. Was graduated from Commerce High School in 1923.

SCOUT WILLIAM POTEET, son of Mr. and Mrs. A. B. Poteet. Parents' education: limited. Youngest of two children. Father's occupation: merchant. Economic status of parents: above average. Joined troop in 1923. Became a second-class Scout.<sup>1</sup> Was graduated from Commerce High School in 1927.

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1 Troop Records, Commerce, Oklahoma.  
High School Records, Commerce, Oklahoma.  
Records of Boy Scouts of America, New York City.  
Records of Boy Scout Area, Bartlesville, Oklahoma.

CHAPTER III  
PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES

The program of activities of Boy Scout Troop No. 1 of Commerce, Oklahoma, was in conformance with the program of the Boy Scouts of America and was much the same as the activities of any Scout troop of a small town. The idea behind this program was the organization of a series of events of a constructive character in which all of the members of the troop could participate, and which would appeal strongly to the greatest number of boys. It was not expected that each activity of the troop would appeal to each member in the same way or with the same intensity. For these reasons, the program was made as diverse as possible. In discussing the activities of this troop, no listing of each activity engaged in by this troop has been attempted. An effort has been made to select representative activities and discuss them as a group giving detailed accounts of a few from each group by way of illustration. Since the program varied somewhat with the period of development of the troop, activities of different years will be described.

To facilitate discussion, these activities might be divided into three classes - Scout meetings, outdoor activities, and civic projects. These will be discussed in the order named.

The meeting place of this troop, although constant for a long period, changed considerably during the history of the troop. For the first year it met in the Baptist Church. In 1917, the meeting place was changed to the Methodist Church,

and continued there until 1930. Since that time they have met at the high school building.

In order to illustrate the manner of conducting these meetings, the minutes of several meetings taken from the record books of the troop are as follows:

Commerce, Oklahoma

April 28, 1918

Regular meeting of Boy Scout Troop No. 1 of Commerce, was held with nineteen members and two visitors present. The meeting was opened by repeating the Scout oath and allegiance to the flag. Roll was called and each Scout answered by giving a good turn that he had done for someone during the week. The possibility of getting some new equipment for the summer camp was discussed. We need some new kettles and two new pup tents. Three Scouts have passed tests during the past week. One Scout was given a merit badge in reptile study. Meeting was closed by Scout benediction. After the close of the regular meeting, those who wished to pass tests were examined by the Scoutmaster, and those who did not, played games until time to go home.

Commerce, Oklahoma

December 20, 1925

Regular meeting of Boy Scout Troop No. 1 of Commerce, was held with thirty members and one visitor present. Mr. Miller called the meeting to order and the roll was called, each Scout giving a good turn as he answered. Plans were completed for the distribution of Christmas baskets to the poor on the day before Christmas. Mr. West has consented to furnish a truck and a driver to help deliver those that

live in the outer part of the town. Two boys, Scout Crow and Scout Sanderson were given first-class Scout pins. Meeting was closed by giving Scout benediction. After the meeting we played "Are You Ready, Brother?" and "Three Deep" until nine o'clock and then went home.

Commerce, Oklahoma

November 17, 1928

Mr. Shamblin called the meeting to order. Every one stood at attention while they repeated the Scout oath. Lloyd Frisbie and Jimmy Noel asked to join the troop. They were elected to the troop. We discussed the hike for next Saturday. Everyone is supposed to take food for two meals and a first aid kit. Everyone who is a tenderfoot and has not passed signaling is supposed to be able to pass it by then. We are going to patrol the football field for the game on Thanksgiving Day. Meeting adjourned with Scout benediction. <sup>1</sup>

Following is a series of newspaper clippings from local newspaper concerning Scout meetings:

#### BOY SCOUT ANNIVERSARY

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On February 8, 1917, at the Methodist Church, the Boy Scouts of Commerce will celebrate the anniversary of the Boy Scout Movement in America, at which time a special program in Scouting will be given. Prof. Coday, superintendent of schools, will talk to the boys on "Good Citizenship." The President's message to the Boy Scouts will be read at 8:15 o'clock. Every Boy Scout in the United States of

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1 Troop Records, Commerce, Oklahoma.

America, of which there are nearly 250,000, will stand in troop formation, salute the flag, and repeat the Scout oath. Everybody is invited to attend this meeting; be sure and remember the date, February 8, 1917, 7:30 at the Methodist Church.

W. A. Jacobs, Scoutmaster.

#### BOY SCOUTS

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The second-class Scout Investiture Meeting will be held Friday evening in the Methodist Church at 7:30. At this time a class of Scouts will receive the second-class Scout's degree. There will be a special program, and special Scout lore will be put on such as first aid, boxing the compass, semaphore signaling, and many other Scout tests; also songs and recitations. The public is invited to the meeting, especially the parents of boys. Be sure and come and encourage the boys in this movement.

W. A. Jacobs, Scoutmaster.

#### BOY SCOUT LIBERTY MEETING

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To show their appreciation and thankfulness for the signing of the Peace Treaty, the Boy Scouts of Commerce, called a meeting Saturday at 8:00 o'clock on the gravel pile of the Emma Gordon mine, and gave the following program: At eight o'clock several bonfires were lighted; Lincoln's speech at Gettysburg by Arthur Shamblin; a talk on the "Value of Peace" by Scoutmaster Jacobs; reading,

"In Flanders' Field" by Orville Harris; talks from various Scout members on Scouting closed the meeting.

NOTICE

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At a recent meeting held by Troop No. 1, Commerce Boy Scouts, it was decided to ask the people of Commerce to cooperate with us in trying to keep the sidewalks free from banana peelings. We feel that these peelings are a danger to life and limb, and for many months we have been trying to keep this litter off the walks and now we ask your cooperation. Please throw your banana peelings in the gutter.<sup>2</sup>

Boy Scouts of America, Troop No. 1  
Commerce, Oklahoma

By an examination of these minutes and clippings, one can see what the general nature and purpose of the Scout meetings were. In addition to the regular business of the meetings, an opportunity was provided for instruction and the passing of the tests. Scouts are divided into three classes - tenderfoot, second-class, and first-class Scouts. Promotion in these classes is conditional upon passing certain requirements, after which the goal is the attainment of merit badges given for special proficiency in such subjects as first aid, life saving, civics, tracking, signaling, cycling, nature study, seamanship, woodcraft, handicraft, etc.

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<sup>2</sup> Commerce News, Feb. 8, 1917.

Ibid, Nov. 16, 1916.

Ibid, July 3, 1919.

Ibid, June 2, 1925.



In all, sixty merit badges are provided. When a first-class Scout earns merit badges for first aid, physical development, or athletics, personal health, public health, and life saving or pioneering, he becomes a life Scout. When a first-class Scout qualifies for ten merit badges including the five merit badges of the life Scout, he becomes a star Scout; when a first-class Scout has qualified for twenty-one merit badges including first aid, life saving, personal health, public health, cooking, camping, bird study, path finding, pioneering, athletics or civics, physical development, and any ten others, he becomes an eagle Scout. This part of the Scout program, the promotion of Scouts from one rank to another was an important part of all activities, and no opportunity was missed in practice by the candidates for these examinations.

Another important part of the Scout meetings was the recreation period. This always took place after the regular meeting had closed so that boys who had other engagements could leave if they had to. This period consisted of indoor games of athletic character. This was entered into very whole-heartedly by all of the members and afforded an excellent opportunity for the Scoutmaster to establish friendly contacts with the Scouts. Another form of play was the initiation of new members. The purpose of this was to afford entertainment to the members and to make the new members feel that they were members of the group. The initiation usually consisted of blindfolding the boys and subjecting them to all forms of harmless pranks. After this had gone on for a time, the blind folds were taken off and all of the Scouts filed by and shook

hands with the newly initiated members and congratulated them.

Other than the regular meetings there were many types of special meetings - commemorations, dedications, banquets, and special days were celebrated by the Scouts. Many meetings were held for parts of the troop which were interested in particular projects. Within the troop there was an Audubon Society which was interested in bird life, a group of boys interested in handicraft, another group interested in building radio and telegraph sets. These will be more fully discussed in public service projects. The problem of obtaining financial assistance for the troop was usually taken care of at special meetings. Paper collection, candy sales, cake sales and other means of getting funds were commonly employed to take care of the expense of new equipment. The value of these meetings will be discussed in a later chapter.

The second main division is that of outdoor activities. These consisted mostly of hikes and camps. In order to illustrate the method of conducting these hikes and camps, a number of photographs, newspaper clippings and extracts from the records of the Scout Troop will be included in the following discussion:

The phrase "Scouting Is Outing" is perhaps trite, but it expresses exactly the feeling of the Scout. In troop No. 1 of Commerce, good weather was considered wasted unless the troop was upon the open road or at some nearby camp site engaging in woodcraft and nature study. The most available opportunity for hikes was the Friday nights and Saturdays during the fall and spring, while it was neither too hot or

cold. Within a five mile radius of Commerce, there are approximately eight camp sites that afford the facilities of woods, a good stream, and an available water supply which are sufficiently remote from farm houses and roads to give the impression of being in the wilderness. In all of these hikes, the Scouts walked to and from their destinations carrying all of the equipment they used on the trip. The first type was the short day hike. The purpose of this type of hike was to provide some pleasant recreation for the boys, and an opportunity for them to pass tests which must be taken out of doors. In order to illustrate the type of activities engaged in, I wish to give here an account of a short one day hike of this sort.

Eighteen Scouts, with their Scoutmaster, Arthur Shamblin,



Hiking

assembled on the steps of the Methodist Church at 8:00 o'clock, October 11, 1929. When this number had gathered, the troop started. They proceeded two and a half

miles west and one half mile south to a camp site on Elm Creek. They arrived at 9:15. On the way, opportunity was afforded those interested to look for fossils and queer rock formations in the

crushed rock with which the road was paved. On arrival, the officers present were assigned their duties. Senior patrol leader, Carl Wafford, was given charge of a group of boys who wished training in signaling. Patrol leader, Clarence Smith, was given charge of a group of boys who wished to receive training in sign reading and trail blazing. Two boys



Sign Reading

til 11:00 o'clock. The bugle was blown and all of the Scouts assembled. Although the season was rather late, all who wished to do so were permitted to swim for half an hour before dinner. At 11:15 the call for dinner was given. Every boy cooked his own dinner, and no one was permitted to bring prepared food other than bread or fruit. At this time Scoutmaster Shamblin gave instructions in cooking to the younger Scouts and passed the older ones who were ready for their making tests by sampling their "grub". After lunch all members of the troop rested

were dispatched to replenish the water supply. The Scoutmaster remained at the camp site giving instruction in shelter building, fire making, and knot tying. This continued un-

for an hour. They were then permitted an hour of liberty in which they were allowed to do what they wished, hunt for arrowheads, look for fossils, explore the creek and woods, or to remain at camp practicing for tests. Between 3:00 and 4:00 o'clock, tests were given in signaling by Scoutmaster Shamblin. Senior patrol leader, Carl Wafford, and patrol leader, Clarence Smith, laid a trail across the country. Those who could follow the trail to its end were given credit for a test in sign reading. At 4:00 o'clock they started home, arriving in Commerce at 5:30 and being dismissed at the city limits.

The second type of hike which was frequently used was the blind hike. This type lasted for only a few hours. It usually consisted of all the members other than the Scoutmaster, assistant Scoutmaster, and senior patrol leader being blindfolded and led in lock step out of town to a prepared camp site where the Scout meeting was held and supper prepared. The hike never started until dark and the stumbling and tripping of the Scouts was a source of merriment to all.

The main event of every Scouting year was the longer camp which occurred in the summer. From the first year of the troop this was made an annual event. It usually occurred in the month of August and lasted from five days to a week. An account of two such camps, one, the first to ever be held and another one given at a later date. The following account of a camp is given from an abridged newspaper clipping taken from the Commerce News, August 31, 1916.

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3 Troop Records, Commerce, Oklahoma.

## BOY SCOUTS TO CAMP MAYBRINK

According to pre-arranged plans the Boy Scouts of Commerce and their Scoutmaster, Mr. Jacobs, accompanied by Mr. H. Mackey were ready for a weeks outing, their destination being White Bluff on Little Sugar River in McDonald County, Missouri. The hour for starting was 5:00 A. M., and needless to say the twelve boys were ready before the hour came. Mr. Lon Edwards and Harve Holderman of the Commerce Motor Company had extended the use of their Studebaker touring cars, as well as their own services, to take the Scouts to camp Maybrink. After a very eventful and exciting trip, especially for a group of boys who had never been so far away from home



Scoutmaster Jacobs



The Swimming Hole

before, they arrived at their destination. The first task after arrival was putting up tents and making camp. Mr. Jacobs then told the boys that they might swim for a little while, and that he would begin preparation of the evening meal. No time was lost by the tired but happy boys, and they were soon splashing and swimming to their hearts' content. Mr. Jacobs, being familiar with the countryside, had made very definite plans for the entire trip. A regular routine of camp life was followed each day. Every boy knew his duties and performed them willingly. Time passed much too quickly with the boys participating in the various ac-

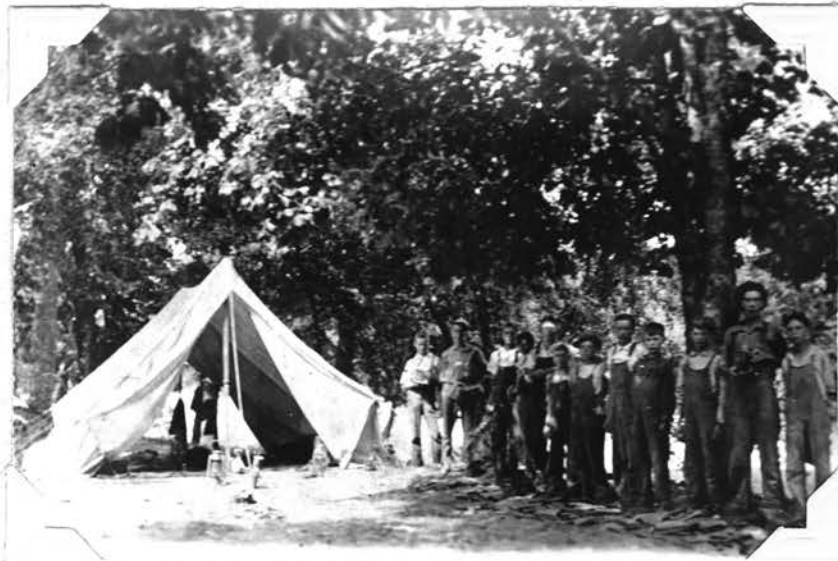


Mess at the First Camp

tivities that Mr. Jacobs planned. One day they visited Mr. John Coffee, an old gentleman seventy-five years of age.

At his place the boys visited a cave, going back into the hillside a quarter of a mile or more. The walls and roof were of solid rock, lights were very beautiful, and many and varied were the different forms of rock found in the cave. Mr. Coffee showed the Scouts the beds and scratches of bears that used to infest the cave when he was a boy more than sixty years ago.

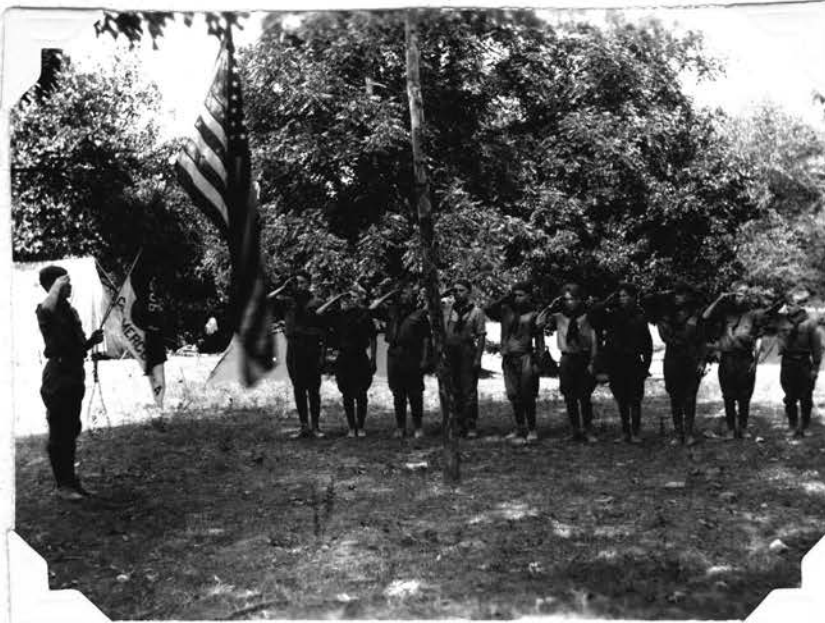
Camp Maybrink was situated on Little Sugar River just south of White Bluff, with the river running between and along the base of the cliffs that rise almost perpendicular to the height of more than one hundred feet. In the face of this cliff or cave was the home of a pre-historic race; relics found gave evidence that the cave had been used by our own North American Indians. Numerous arrowheads were picked up by the Scouts. Mr. Jacobs was well acquainted with places of interest as well as the history of the locality, and after an exciting day of fishing,



Inspection at the First Camp

swimming, hiking, and gathering around the campfire, he told the boys interesting stories and bits of history. Added to this were the pranks of the boys whose spirits were irresponsible until bed time, which came before anyone seemed to be ready. Thus one day after another would crowd themselves upon the boys until all too soon the day of their return came. Mr. Edwards and Mr. Medlin came to camp on the morning of the 23rd, and thus ended the first Scout camp.





#### Inspection at Cave Springs

The following account of the fourteenth annual camp of Boy Scout Troop No. 1, Commerce, Oklahoma, has been taken partly from troop records and from the memory of those who attended. On July 29th, the troop assembled at the city hall with equipment and supplies. Each boy had the equipment that he was to use personally in his own duffle box. This consisted of clothes, \$1.50 in cash, dishes, soap, first aid equipment, Scout manual and books, a length of rope, a Scout ax or sheath knife, bathing suit, an extra pair of shoes, tooth brush, and other miscellaneous equipment. The camp was located at Cave Springs, a small spring fed stream in the foothills of the Ozarks about twenty miles east of Commerce. The tents and cots were taken to camp the day before. The Scouts were taken there by a number of citizens who donated the use of their cars. The camp was reached by ten o'clock that morning, and the rest of the day was

spent making camp, swimming, and perfecting the organization of the camp. In order to give an idea of the system used to regulate the activities of the camp, a typical days schedule will be given.



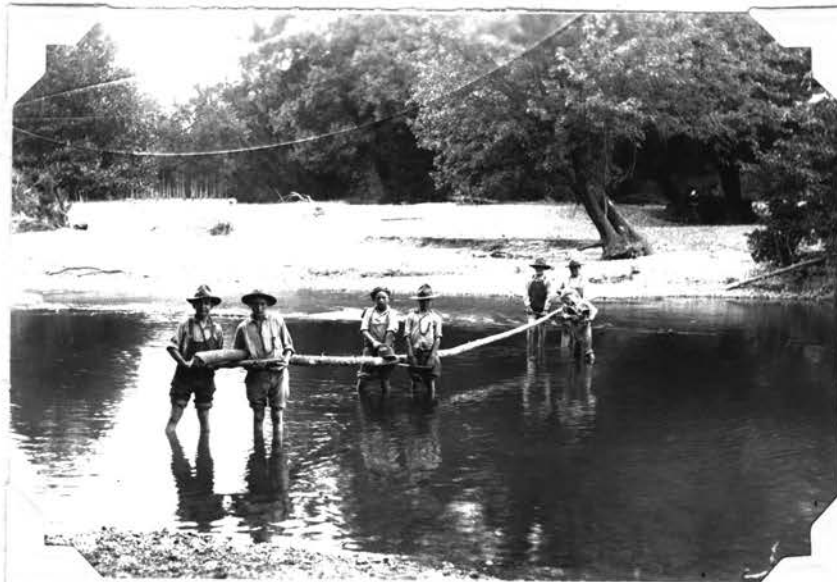
#### Kitchen Police

- 6:30 Reveille or first call. All Scouts had to report fully dressed on the parade ground fifteen minutes after first call for inspection.
- 6:45 Inspection.
- 7:00 Salute to the colors. This consisted of raising flag on a pole and repeating the pledge of allegiance to the flag.
- 7:15 Appointment of officers of the day. It was the duty of this officer to remain in camp and superintend activity. No one, not even the Scoutmaster was allowed to leave camp without his permission. He supervised the work of the kitchen police or camp cooks and mis-

cellaneous duties such as supervising the gathering of fire wood and replenishing the water supply.

7:30 Breakfast. After breakfast each Scout washed his own utensils and tidied up his part of his tent.

8:00 Arrangement of hikes for the day. Most of the troop was organized into parties under patrol leaders for hikes, test practice, projects, and camp duty; for instance, bridge building, digging drainage ditches around tents, searching for arrowheads, removing refuse from swimming pool, building shelters, etc.



Bridge Building at Cave Springs

8:15 Departure upon morning projects.

11:00 Swimming hour.

11:45 Close of swimming hour.

12:00 Lunch. After lunch each Scout washed his utensils.

- 1:00 Rest hour, writing letters, reading, visiting, and comparing activities.
- 2:00 Free period. During this period the Scout was permitted to do as he pleased. This period was usually used for the practice and passing of tests.



Looking for Relics at Cave Springs

- 4:30 Swimming hour.
- 5:30 Close of Swimming period.
- 6:00 Supper. After supper each Scout washed his utensils.
- 8:00 Campfire. The campfire every night was used as a combined business and entertainment session. The activity for the next day was outlined, and the remainder of the evening spent in singing and telling stories.
- 10:00 Taps.



### The Water Supply

This schedule was repeated with minor variations for the seven days of the camp. Friday evening, a group of parents came out to the camp and brought a picnic supper. After supper, the boys presented a program of songs, first aid demonstrations, and a demonstration of building fire by friction. The individual Scouts also showed the arrowheads and fossils<sup>4</sup> they had found.

Much good work was accomplished on this camp. Three boys completed work which gave them eagle Scout badges, and one received a star badge. Five became first-class Scouts, and seven became second-class Scouts.

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<sup>4</sup> Troop Records, Commerce, Oklahoma.  
 Jimmy Noel, Interview, June 11, 1938.  
 Albert Stewart, Interview, June 1, 1938.

The next large class of activities was that of public service projects. Because of the very diverse nature of these, the discussion will consist simply of listing a number of these with a brief description of each. Since the Scout Troop is a very vital part of the Commerce Schools, many of their activities are in form of services to the school as follows: Planted trees on school ground, and gave them proper attention, thereby improving the appearance of the school ground. Marked football field before each game. Having no fence at the field, they assisted in patrolling grounds and collecting admissions. Acted as junior traffic officers, assisting the children across the highway. Made and posted advertising material for athletic contests. Provided color bearers at all high school chapel programs. Arranged chairs at school auditorium for school and community programs. Raised and lowered flag each day at school.

Due to the fact that the troop was organized before the World War and was active during the war, many of the activities of the troop were based on the idea of "Doing Their Bit". Sold Liberty Bonds and War Saving Stamps. Collected old papers, tinfoil, and rags for the government. Located and reported walnut groves for use in airplane propellor manufacture. ( A letter from President Wilson commended this service.)

Some of the civic projects were: Two different times renumbered houses in Commerce. Maintained a Scout volunteer fire department. Directed traffic during funerals. Held regular city clean up weeks. Had charge of the display

of flags on holidays. Searched for, discovered, and destroyed over two thousand tent moth colonies. Built and maintained a bird refuge on Elm Creek, two and one-half miles west of Commerce. In this refuge there were placed approximately twenty bird houses of various types. Houses were constructed by the Scouts. From this project the boys formed a permanent organization known as the "Bird Club". One of the most interesting projects of earlier days was the circulation of a petition by the Scouts to remedy immoral conditions. A copy of this petition is as follows: We, the undersigned citizens of Commerce, Oklahoma, do hereby petition the honorable mayor and council of the city of Commerce, to discontinue issuing a license to all immoral shows; especially, we urge them to bar all 49 shows, cabaret and oriental shows. We believe that they are injurious to the morals of the young men and women of our city. This petition is being circulated by the Boy Scouts of Commerce. Approximately six hundred signatures were secured on this petition.

**Welfare projects:** Built own work shop in Scoutmaster's garage. During the Christmas season, Scouts repaired broken toys and made new ones for poor families in this shop. Distributed Christmas baskets to the needy.

**Emergency activities:** Helped in search of drowned persons. Blockaded bridge pass and put up warning signs when a bridge collapsed; stayed on duty until contact was made with officials. Searched for lost children. At the recent tornado at Columbus, April, 1938, twenty Boy Scouts with

their Scoutmaster answered the call for assistance. Scouts patrolled city to prevent stealing, helped locate lost property, ran errands for Red Cross, directed traffic, and guarded restricted areas.

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5 Troop Records, Commerce, Oklahoma



CHAPTER IV  
ADULT ACTIVITIES

The manner of discussing adult activities will be much the same as that employed in the chapter on personnel of the troop, that is, a brief abstract of the activities of each boy since leaving the Scout Troop. Original members will be starred and listed first; others have been added for the reasons previously mentioned.

\*SCOUT GLEN COVERT--After graduating from the Commerce High School attended the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, Stillwater, Oklahoma. Was graduated with a degree in engineering. Married, and now holds an executive position with a major oil company at Seminole, Oklahoma.

\*SCOUT CLARENCE TOMLINSON--After completing the eighth grade in the Commerce School, worked at various jobs in Missouri and Texas. Now resides at Commerce, Oklahoma. He is employed as a motion picture projector operator at Picher, Oklahoma.

\*SCOUT HARRY PIERCE--Left school at Commerce at the end of tenth grade and joined navy. Returned to Commerce, and was graduated from high school in 1926. Received A. B. degree from Northeastern State Teachers College, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, 1934. Taught school at Grove, Oklahoma, later being principal of Commerce High School. Now teaching in schools of California.

\*SCOUT LANDY TURNER--After graduating from high school, received B. S. degree from Northeastern State Teachers College, Tahle-

quah, Oklahoma, in 1934. Taught school at Picher, Oklahoma. Married and now junior high principal at Wyandotte, Oklahoma.

\* SCOUT WALTER NELSON--After completing the eighth grade in Commerce Schools, worked at various jobs in Oklahoma. Married, and now operates a service station at Webb City, Missouri.

\*SCOUT LLOYD LEE--After graduating from the Miami High School, joined the U. S. Navy. On expiration of his enlistment, was married. Now lives in Commerce, Oklahoma, and is employed as bookkeeper for the Commerce Mining and Royalty Company.

\*SCOUT GEORGE LEE--After graduating from Commerce High School, went to work in the First National Bank of Commerce, Oklahoma. Married, and is now cashier and part owner of the Galena State Bank, Galena, Kansas.

\*SCOUT LEONARD VANFLEET--After graduating from high school in Miami, Oklahoma, entered Northeastern State Teachers College, Tahelquah, Oklahoma, and received A. B. degree in 1928. Was principal of junior high school at Galena, Kansas; later, high school principal at Nowata, Oklahoma. Married and is now employed by an oil company in Texas.

\*SCOUT DENZIL KEIGHLEY--After graduating from the Joplin High School, moved with his parents to Denver, Colorado. He was graduated from the University of Colorado. Married, and was employed in Denver Schools at time of his death in 1937.

\*SCOUT CHESTER BOWERS--After graduating from the Commerce

High School in 1923, he moved with his mother to Winfield, Kansas. Was graduated from the Southwestern College at Winfield, Kansas. Took up radio work. He is now a radio technician for one of the major steamship lines.

\*SCOUT ARTHUR SHAMBLIN--After graduating from Commerce High School in 1923, attended Northeastern State Teachers College, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, for one semester. He worked at various jobs in Commerce. Served as Scoutmaster of Troop No. 1, Commerce, Oklahoma from 1926 to 1930. Married and is now living in California.

\*SCOUT VERNON ROBERTS--After graduating from the Commerce High School in 1922, attended the University of Oklahoma at Norman, Oklahoma. Now practicing law in Miami, Oklahoma.

\*SCOUT DWIGHT ALLISON--Was graduated from Commerce High School in 1923, and later received a degree from Northeastern State Teachers College at Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Was principal of a grade school for number of years at Commerce, Oklahoma. He is now an elementary principal at Bartlesville, Oklahoma.

SCOUT ALBERT STEWART--After graduating from Commerce High School, attended Northeastern Junior College at Miami, Oklahoma, Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College at Stillwater, Oklahoma, and Northeastern State Teachers College at Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Taught one year in a rural school. Has taught school in the Commerce Schools for the past five years. Now principal of junior high at Commerce. Mr.

Stewart is the present Scoutmaster of Troop No. 58, taking that office in 1933.

SCOUT BASIL BAKER--After graduating from Commerce High School in 1923, attended Northeastern State Teachers College, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, for one semester. Took up study of music for his vocation. Lives in Commerce, and directs his own orchestra.

SCOUT WILLIAM POTEET--Was graduated from high school in 1927. Attended Northeastern Junior College at Miami, Oklahoma, later graduating from the school of law in the University of Oklahoma at Norman, Oklahoma. Served one term as state representative in the Oklahoma State Legislature. Married, lives in Commerce, and is prosecuting attorney for Ottawa County.

SCOUT CONRAD CALDWELL--After graduating from Commerce High School in 1927, attended Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College at Stillwater, Oklahoma. Took an active part in athletics, becoming national wrestling champion. Tried out for the Olympic Games in 1932. Now lives in California.

SCOUT MILTON SANDERSON--After graduating from Commerce High School in 1928, moved with his parents to Lawrence, Kansas, and attended the University of Kansas. He was an eagle Scout, and based on his Scout activities, he received the Harmon Foundation Award. This award, based on citizenship, scholastic ability, leadership, and various other characteristics necessary for success is awarded each year to the fifty-two most outstanding Boy Scouts in the United States and its pos-

sessions. Outside of the fact that this is one of the greatest honors which can be bestowed upon an American boy, the award also grants to each recipient five hundred dollars which is to be used in gaining a college education. Milton graduated with honors from the University of Kansas. He is now head of Biological Survey of U. S. Government, working out of University of Arkansas.

SCOUT WAYNE SANDERSON--After graduating from Commerce High School in 1928, moved with his parents to Lawrence, Kansas, where he was graduated from the University of Kansas. He is now employed by the Phillips Petroleum Company as draftsman. He is also Scoutmaster at Bartlesville, Oklahoma.

SCOUT OREN CROW--After graduating from the Commerce High School in 1929, was an outstanding football player at Haskell Indian School at Lawrence, Kansas. He is now teaching in an Indian school in North Dakota.

SCOUT CHARLES VETETO--Was graduated from Commerce High School in 1931 with high honors. Was a talented musician. Made application to accompany Admiral Byrd to the South Pole, receiving honorable mention. Was selected as alternate to West Point. Studied voice in Joplin and Kansas City, Missouri. Now lives in New York City where he broadcasts and does movie work.

SCOUT CHARLES CHESTNUT--Was graduated from Commerce High School in 1928. Attended Northeastern Junior College,

Miami, Oklahoma. Was graduated from the school of law at George Washington University, Washington, D. C. Now employed by the federal government, Washington, D. C.

SCOUT CLARENCE SMITH--Was graduated from the Commerce High School in 1932. Attended Hills Business College at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma for two years. Married, and is now employed by a mining company in Miami, Oklahoma.

SCOUT JIMMY NOEL--Was graduated from the Commerce High School in 1932. Was graduated from Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College at Stillwater, Oklahoma. Now employed as an accountant for the Mid Continent Petroleum Company of Tulsa, Oklahoma.

SCOUT ELDON SWEEZY--Was graduated from the Inola High School in 1933. Was graduated from the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College at Stillwater, Oklahoma, in 1937. Now employed in the Diplomatic Services of the United States Government.

SCOUT PAUL RALPH--Was graduated from the Commerce High School in 1932. Graduated from Westminster College in 1936. Was graduated with M. A. degree from Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College in 1937. Received Phi Sigma award for the outstanding piece of biological research at Oklahoma A. & M. College for 1937-1938. Given graduate assistantship at University of Michigan for years 1938 and 1939.

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1 Abstracts compiled from School Records, Commerce, Oklahoma, and personal investigations.

## CHAPTER V

## EVALUATION AND SUMMARY

In evaluating this study, the problem arises of finding some objective means of determining the results of a program of this type. The statistical method is not adapted to the estimation of value of a Boy Scout Program. For a method of evaluating this program the opinions of a number of people who are acquainted with and capable to judge the value of this organization are used. The first part of this chapter will consist of a number of depositions by citizens of Commerce and a statement by an individual of national prominence and are as follows:

It is my opinion that no community should be without a Boy Scout Organization. A community that has a Boy Scout Troop may profit in many ways by services rendered in putting over various campaigns.

The leisure hours of a boy's life, especially during the summer months can never be spent in a more profitable manner than in Boy Scout work. The summer camping trips afford more pleasure and profitable entertainment than would be possible for most of the boys to have.

The training that my boy and other boys have received while a Scout will make them better citizens.

Mrs. J. B. Hampton, Clerk  
Board of Education  
Commerce, Oklahoma

I wish to give my observation, opinion, and evaluation of the Boy Scouts here in Commerce during the past fourteen years, which is the length of time I have been in this city.

When you consider that this is a mining community and as such attracts a great number of undesirables as well as some few cultured and educated families, one is favorably impressed by the character, morality, and clean manliness of the boys and young men who are and have been connected with this organization.

It seems to me that the Scout oath coupled with their motto, "Be Prepared", have left indelible impressions for the best upon the minds and souls of the sturdy Americans.

The organization as a whole has meant much for the good of our homes, schools, and community. As a physician, I am in a position to evaluate, perhaps, a little bit more fully than the ordinary lay person, what this great Boy Scout Organization means to the home, character upbuilding, and citizenship. It pays big dividends in everything that is noble and true.

J. S. Jacoby, M. D.  
Commerce, Oklahoma.

It is my understanding you wish a letter from several parents of this city relative to the Boy Scout Movement. As a father of two boys who are themselves



Scouts, I find it hard to express myself along this line without seeming a bit prejudiced.

Scouting is something that every mother, father, and community should promote, as there are certain character building qualities produced within their organization that the homes either overlook or do not teach. Perhaps, I should set forth some of the individual achievements of our troop. As I have just said, to me, the most important quality of Scouting is the character building spirit it instills in each boy; a spirit that makes them distinguishable on into manhood. From these teachings I find that the real leaders in our schools are former Boy Scouts, who now find their training very beneficial in the various class rooms.

If there were some concrete method of weighing the value of this type of training, I am sure that it would rank among the very highest, and as this method has not been found, we should say to every young boy, "Don't you want to be a Boy Scout?"

W. E. Lykins, President  
Board of Education  
Commerce, Oklahoma

When I came to Commerce in 1915, this was a rough mining camp. As a doctor and a father of a boy one year old, I watched with interest and anxiety the development of institutions such as churches, schools, and the Boy Scout Troop No. 1. I know a lot of men who were Scouts here when they were boys. Most of them

are successful and all of them are honest and upright citizens that any community could be proud of. When I think back over the past twenty years and what the Scout Movement has meant to the boys and citizens of Commerce, I believe that I can say that no other organization has given as much real help to the development of the city of Commerce.

H. B. Ralph, D.D.S.  
Commerce, Oklahoma

I have been teaching in the Commerce High School for the past fifteen years. For the last six or seven years I have observed that the morale of the boys has been much above that of former years. I feel that the principles and traits developed while the boys were Scouts has been responsible for this. Our junior high principal is Scoutmaster of our Scout Troop. His example of living and work with the boys of this age develops a good character which is still encouraged by the faculty while they are high school students. These boys are honest, prompt, courteous, and show a willingness to help others.

Mrs. A. J. Speaker  
Principal of High School  
Commerce, Oklahoma

The best friends I have had, the ideals toward which I would like to think myself striving, my college degree - all, the most important things in my life, are direct results of my membership in the Boy Scouts of

America. To me, as to all other Scouts of all nations, the association with real comradeship and worth-while idealism, has served as a "dry-cell" to furnish the necessary spark to my oft-times dampened enthusiasm and ambition.

Jimmy Noel, ex-Scout  
Commerce, Oklahoma

I have been associated with the Boy Scouts for seven years. During this time I have held the positions of patrol leader, senior patrol leader, and assistant Scoutmaster. I have also attained the rank of a life Scout.

In the time that I have been a Scout, the Scout program has been a strong influence in my life. I believe that it has made my life more full, more interesting, and more useful.

Scouting has helped me in three different ways. It has helped me physically by giving me health rules to follow and games to play. It has helped me mentally by directing my work in the right channels, by awakening my intellectual abilities and making me more conscious of my fellowmen and their rights and obligations. More than all has Scouting helped me morally. The oath I took as a Scout and the Scout laws I promised to obey, have all the elements and ideals of the desirable and worth-while citizen. These ideals and the ideals I gain in my association

with a clean and upright group of boys have formed the foundation of my life.

Damon Ralph, Scout  
1938 H. S. Graduate  
Commerce, Oklahoma

It is for these reasons, therefore, that I declare the Boy Scout Movement to be the most significant educational contribution of our time. The naturalist may praise it for its success in putting the boy close to nature's heart; the moralist, for its splendid code of ethics; the hygienist, for its methods of physical training; the parent for its ability to keep his boy out of mischief; but from the standpoint of the educator, it has marvelous potency for converting the restless, irresponsible self-centered boy into the straightforward, dependable helpful young citizen. To the boy who will give himself to it, there is plenty of work that looks like play, standards of excellence which he can appreciate, rules of conduct which he must obey, positions of responsibility which he may occupy as soon as he qualifies himself - in a word, a program that appeals to a boy's instincts and a method adapted to a boy's nature.

This is not the place to discuss the Boy Scout Program. Most of you know it much better than I do. But I would consider myself a prince among school men, if I could devise a school program in which the curriculum should appeal so directly to a boy's interests

and the courses of study apply so serviceably to adult  
needs.<sup>1</sup>

Dean James E. Russell  
Teachers College  
Columbia University

As a member of the original Troop No. 1 and present superintendent of schools, I believe that the benefits of Scouting as an extra-curricular activity is evident in a number of ways, first to the community. The Scouts while engaging in their regular program of activities have carried out many projects of value. The Scout Movement in Commerce has performed a more indirect but much more important service. It is trite to say that idle hands are the devil's workshop. At twelve the average boy is just beginning to realize that there is a world outside of his home. The break from parental authority has begun. In his first venturings from his home circle, he naturally pays the most attention to gratifying the natural urges of a boy of this age. He is a being with almost unlimited energy and great curiosity. If unguided in his search for new and startling experiences, he is almost certain to get into mischief of a more or less serious nature. The Scout work affords the most satisfactory outlet for energy. In the hikes and explorations he sees himself as a Daniel Boone, a Magellan,

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1 James E. West, The Boy Scout Movement and the Public Schools, Chicago, Illinois, February 28, 1924.

or Kit Carson. The stimulating study of nature opens his eyes to the world about him and shows him a way to knowledge that he does not find in other places. He is given a chance to think for himself and is encouraged to do so. He is afforded a set of ideals that are not only constructive, but are general enough to permit some freedom of thought. Ideals of morality, physical well-being, and service to the community are made to seem important. Health habits are encouraged, and the exercise and fresh air he gains as a result of Scout activities are of untold benefit to the boy. In participation in group activity, he learns to live and work with other people. He develops a respect for their desires, and a friendly interest in their affairs. He becomes prepared for citizenship in his community. Through his passing of tests and receiving of awards, he develops confidence in himself. These success attitudes are of untold value to the self-conscious adolescent. The accomplishment of these ideals is more than can be expected from any other single extra-curricular activity. It is of great benefit to the school. An activity of this kind can be conducted with little equipment other than that provided by nature. It can be sponsored by any school, large or small.

Having been the superintendent of schools for the past six years at Commerce, I can say that it has been my experience to observe that members of this Boy Scout

Troop have excelled nonmembers in scholarship, leadership, and participation in other activities.

In making this study an attempt has been made to accomplish the following things: first, I have given a brief history of Troop No. 1, Commerce, Oklahoma; second, the background of the Troop by giving abstracts of the lives of members of the Troop at different stages of its development; third, an outline of the activities engaged in by this Troop during its history; fourth, some concrete evidence of the results of Scouting by giving summaries of the adult activities of a number of these Scouts; fifth, an evaluation of these activities by presenting depositions and statements from citizens, and professional people of Commerce, ex-Scouts and present members of the Troop, and national authority; all, who have had opportunity to observe the work and know something about the value of Scouting.

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