

Butte's Soul-Building Play Lands

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THERE is probably no section of the entire country more richly endowed by nature in all of the things that appeal to Boy Scouts than that section of the Rocky mountain country surrounding Butte. Wild forest-laden stretches of mountain plateaus; rocky canyons through which mountain streams flow down to the lower levels; great slopes, barren and rock-strewn, where one may ascend up, up, up to the age-worn summits; these are the things of grandeur which find in the heart of youth a responsive chord. And sometimes in the hearts of men there is an echo to the vibrant call of the red gods of the mountains; such men are youngsters still; to them comes understanding.

Only the hardest of the hunters have explored the fastnesses of the Rocky mountain region. Upon those great stretches of higher land, undefiled by man since the prospectors of 50 years ago searched there for gold, is provided limitless space for pioneering in all the simplicity practiced by those earlier scouts. Mountain peaks, snow-covered till late July and with 100-mile horizons, test the sturdiness of the climbers. There is much that is body-building and soul-building in the mountains surrounding Butte.

About 70 miles further north than the northern boundary of the state of New York and at an elevation of more than a mile above sea level, Butte's climate ought naturally to be as rigorous as that of any section of the northern states; but the sheltering mountains provide a unique protection; so that mid-winter travelers, dropping into the valley from any direction, find an agreeable rise in temperature. Zero weather is common, but the extreme cold of the sections just over the range seldom reaches Butte.

Cradled by Mountains

Butte's peculiar geographical position with reference to the continental divide is a fortunate circumstance for the scouts of the city. A four-mile air-line from the city's eastern limits carries one to the top of the range. Swinging to the south, west and then north again, the divide forms a horseshoe-like basin, the north end swinging westward also; and Butte, although somewhat above the 5,000-foot level, seems to be hugging the eastern side of a valley which covers some 600 square miles. The remark of the easterner who said, "Butte is surrounded by the continental divide," was not far from the truth; for, no matter which way you go from the city—north, east, south or west—you are bound to cross the divide and encounter flowing water, which eventually finds its way into the Mississippi. Only to the northwest can one find egress from the valley to the Pacific slope.

The twin peaks of the Highlands, Red mountain and Table mountain, look down from the south over 30 miles of hill and valley; Mount Fleecer, at like d^lr Lance, stands guard over the southwest, while further away Haggin and Powell are the sentinels of the western gate. The rocky, rugged, main range of the Rocky mountains, only four miles to the eastward, rims the valley in that

Elemental Desires

In the heart of a boy there is a longing for the wild, an antagonism towards the customs and conventions of society. Atavistic, perhaps, is his desire to escape from the restraints of his little circle, to fling aside the niceties and the careful order of his surroundings, and, as a savage or as a pioneer, to thrust himself into the elemental struggle for existence. This is not a new order of things; age-old has been the call of the red gods to the youth of the world; and age-old has been the answering make-believe. The spirit of the pioneer is but the spirit of youth; and his primitive efficiency is but added experience. Too softening have been the influences of the modern home; mental and physical molly-coddling has resulted in a moral apathy, appalling by the indulgencies it permits.

The men who are behind the Boy Scout movement, men who have made a study of the needs and the desires of youth, have provided in the scout program a means of putting the red gods to work. Old prospectors and hunters wave a friendly greeting from the doors of their secluded cabins to the hail of the scouts as they swing by on their path-finding hikes. Forest officials furnish maps for a region to be explored, forest cabins are thrown open for scout occupancy; for the scouts are trained in fire-prevention and in forest conservation. World-famous naturalists attend the hikes and camps and teach the youngsters all that can be learned of what they see. Men trained in wood-craft and camp-craft give freely of their services so that the scouts may become proficient in all of the things which make life in the open agreeable. The scout program calls for a rugged out-of-doors, an out-of-doors that is comparable to the wilderness of the pioneer days; and in western Montana the scouts are fortunate in this respect.

Camp Sites

In devising a best means of utilizing the admirable mountain and forest surroundings of Butte, the local scout officials have planned an extensive and original program. Cooperating with officials of the Deer Lodge national forest, who see in the Boy Scout organization an exceptional opportunity provided for the teaching and practicing of forest protection and conservation, they have secured many camp-sites both near and far. A veritable chain of cabins and open camp-sites extending through the forests in every direction from the city, has been made available for the use of the scouts. The use of these camp-sites, and the care and protection of them entails a responsibility which the scout organization is more than willing to accept, for in itself it is a distinct asset to the scout teaching. And the use of them will provide an opportunity for the scouts to answer in full measure the call of the wild. Through their use, and the forests and mountains surrounding them, the primordial love of the open is turned to account and made to fit into the groove of human progress.

Trails leading to the cabins and from one to the other will be plainly marked by the scouts so that the tyro in woods-lore need have no fear of being lost.

The responsibility for the up-keep of a cabin or chain of cabins will probably be assigned to each troop of scouts. Contests between troops as to which will secure the greatest number of visitors will probably be put into effect, handicaps being given for the poorer locations. Just what the prize, if any, will be has not been decided.

A Chance for “Dad.”

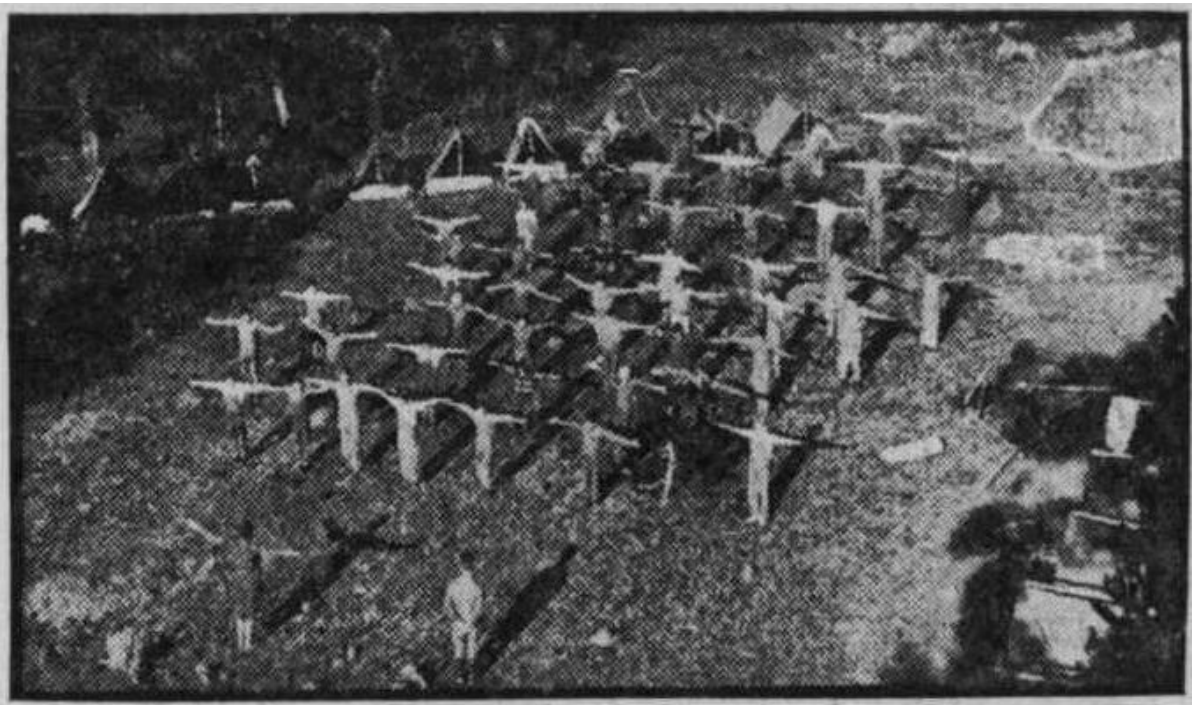
The scouts will be used not only as guides, but as special instructors in the “Art of Winter Camping.” Most anyone can take care of themselves in the woods in summer, but in winter—well that’s another story. The proper use of snowshoes and skis and how to be comfortable on three or four feet of snow is knowledge that need not be despised by anyone. Here’s a chance for “dad” to show a little red blood—if he has any—by taking to the woods and learning some of the things he should have learned years ago. To be a “good scout” is a high goal to reach, but to be a “good old scout” in every sense of the term is the perfection of human virtues. Can you qualify? Show a scout—he’ll know.



Boy Scout Log Cabin in the Highlands.



Calisthenics for Boy Scouts in the Great Outdoors.



A Nature Study Class Under the Supervision of Boy Scout Executive Benjamin Owens.



The Eighteenth Amendment Doesn't Cause Any Sleepless Nights for this Sturdy Boy Scout.

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