

Sunday Be prepared



June

THE BRITISH-POLISH
GUIDE AND SCOUT FRIENDS

1946



"FLUMINAQUE ANTIQUOS
SUBTERLABENTIA MUROS"



archiwum

THE DURHAM MEETING

*" *Fluminaque antiquos subterlabentia muros* "

Members of the Committee of the British-Polish Scout and Guide Friends met in Durham on November 3rd and 4th, 1945. On Saturday, November 3rd a meeting was held in St. Oswald's Church Schoolroom, attended not only by the Committee members, but also by the Durham Rangers and Rovers. Lt. K. Sabbat, the Polish Scout Chief Commissioner, newly returned from some weeks spent in Italy and Germany, gave a very interesting speech on the conditions obtaining in the Displaced Persons Camps. He pointed out the almost inevitable reaction of a war-weary world towards this problem of the thousands of unfortunates now housed in these camps; the lack of interest and the disinclination to brood over yet more horrors, shown by the more fortunate. Yet this policy was a mistaken one, for the atmosphere of hopelessness he had observed in the Camps was its direct result. These people were most apathetic and had little confidence in the outside world. Accommodation in the Camps was often of necessity bad, and the only change observed after the coming of peace was that guards of a different nationality stood by the barbed wire which enclosed them. Though the food was in the main adequate, the clothing position was bad and the moral conditions tragic. People who have nothing whatever to do for weeks and months are inevitably subjected to a vast demoralisation.

Lt. Sabbat then went on to speak of the excellent work being done by Scouts and Guides in the Displaced Persons Camps. With the coming of peace, Scouting sprang up spontaneously in almost all the camps in Germany, and by November 1945, there were approximately 25,000 Boy Scouts and Girl Guides in the Camps. The authorities looked upon the Movement with favour, realising the good influence it exerted and the quickening of idealism it inspired. With this sudden influx of large numbers—Scouters sometimes had to accept 60 to 100 boys at a time!—there was great difficulty as regards equipment. Material help of any kind was sorely needed, but simple human friendliness was of even greater value to these people who felt themselves unwanted and forsaken by the whole world.

The business meeting of the Committee was held on Sunday, November 4th, 1945, in the Durham Rover Scouts Den, by the kind invitation of Mr. Bob Allen. The Rover Den is a most fascinating place—the very embodiment of all one would wish for a Rover Den. From the outside one looks at the low white building, once a mill, which stands on the banks of the swiftly flowing Wear, across whose waters can be seen the serene grey towers of the Cathedral. The scene itself is an inspiration, the haunt of ancient peace. The main room has sturdy oaken beams, and a huge, deep-breasted fireplace, in which on this autumn day great logs were burning. Round its whitened walls are hung all kinds of trophies collected by the Durham Rovers. One of their most treasured possessions is a framed letter written by a Pole many years ago. There is an atmosphere of friendliness and welcome on this charming old place, and we count ourselves lucky to have been able to hold our meeting in such sympathetic surroundings.

archiwum Rivers flowing beneath ancient walls.

BRITISH-POLISH GUIDE FRIENDSHIP AT CLIFFORD

In the Spring of 1943, about one year after we had established our Guide company at Clifford, we read a story in the "Guide" about the Warsaw "Orzel" Patrol. We were all very interested in this story and the marvellous way the Polish Guides were carrying on under the terror of the German onslaught, so in memory of this Warsaw Patrol we changed the name of our Nightingale Patrol to that of "Orzel." About this time too, we heard from Madame Malkowska that she was already collecting supplies of clothing and other things in readiness for Poland as soon as it would be possible to return. Since then we have collected clothing and medicinal supplies, which we know will be of great use to our Polish Allies when the war is over, and this week we have dispatched our fifth parcel—a tea chest full of clothing—to the warehouse in Manchester where these things are being stored until they can be sent, along with hundreds of other similar parcels, to Poland.

In the Autumn of the same year news of the plans for the adoption of a Polish Guide Company reached us and we fell in with the idea immediately, as we are very eager to do all we can for these Guides. Through Madame Malkowska we are able to start at once and in December of that year we received the name of the Polish commissioner for East and South Africa. Early in 1944 the First Clifford Company—"Our Lady's Own"—made contact with the Polish Guide Company in Uganda, where a number are settled at Kojja on the shores of Lake Victoria. We received the names of some of the Guides who were desiring to correspond with English Guides and now we are receiving some interesting letters, which sometimes contain photographs.

In July 1944 we had the honour of a visit from Madame Olga Malkowska. She spent the week-end with us here at the school, and what a happy week-end! We enjoyed every minute that we spent in her company. On the Saturday the 1st and 2nd Companies assembled in the gymnasium to meet Madame Malkowska who had arrived the previous evening. Six of the Patrol leaders formed a guard of honour at the entrance door. After Madame had inspected our patrol notice boards and corners, all the Guides stood in a circle while bouquets of red and white roses were presented to her by the two Guide Companies and the Brownie Pack. Then we all sat round on the floor while Madame Malkowska told us about Poland and Polish Guides as well as her thrilling story of her escape from Poland, some events of which were truly miraculous, as she so simply put it "Our Lady had her mantle spread over her." She sang to us in Polish and taught us a Polish lullaby, and we sang some of our songs, finishing with the Polish National Anthem, in English.

That week we received our first letters from Uganda, and Madame translated them for us; since then most of them have been translated by Mrs. Wilson-Ross of Leeds, while a few of them have been done at school by joint work helped by a Polish dictionary—hard work but great fun.

In February 1945, we formed yet another link with Poland, when Miss Halina Tomaszewska, a Polish girl from London came to

us. She could only stay a few hours, but we had a very enjoyable time. In the afternoon, the group of Y.C.S. at the school produced a Polish play. The play gave a vivid picture of the life of six Polish girls working in the underground movement of their country during the war from 1939 to 1942. After the concert Halina told us about school life in Poland and then we had a little party for which some Polish dishes had been prepared. Since the visit we have been making plans for the adoption of a Polish school in Posnan.

We are very anxious to keep up the friendship between our own Guide Company and our Polish friends. We greatly appreciate the international side of Guiding and hope for closer links in the future with the country.

The correspondence with our Polish Guide friends is growing and three or four letters are received each month. During the Summer they sent us a lovely souvenir of Thinking Day—Dzien Mysli, containing photographs and a lovely water sketch of the houses in which, as they so pathetically say, they are "waiting for return to Poland," a happiness which we hope and pray may be theirs.

CZUWAJ!

THE FIRST TRAIL

by Feliks Tomeczak ("The Wild Cat") from "The Council Circle,"
published in Lubeck

This extract, describing a Scout Test, is taken from Druh Tomczak's book, "The First Trail," published in Sweden. Till last Autumn, Druh Tomczak was living in Lubeck and working with the Scouts there.

When the meeting was over, the P.L. said, "Tomorrow we shall go for an excursion, and there will be a Third Class Test. We assemble at the Scout Hut."

Stas and a few other boys from the same Patrol were taking the test. At two o'clock next day they were ready, and the P.L. came to the Hut. "Czuwaj!" he said, and "Czuwaj!" answered the boys.

There were 12 candidates. They took the tram as far as it went, and got out. The stuffy town was far behind; all around were cultivated fields and strips of woodland . . . "Czuwaj!" Their Scouter was waiting for them. "Have a good look round, boys," he said, and disappeared. The boys searched quickly . . . "Here it is!" Yes! there was an arrow, pointing to the woods. They raced along, seeing several more signs on the way. They came to a wayside cross, at the edge of the wood, and beside it, on a fallen tree trunk, sat their Scouter. "Czuwaj!" "Sit down, boys." They sat down, and began to talk about their Patrol emblems, and then to sing. Meanwhile, Stas and Julek were given a piece of paper, told "Go further away, read this and do what you are told." The instructions were "March 150 paces to the North . . ."

Stas took his compass and set it and off they went. They came to a small clearing, and there was the Instructor. "Ah, here you are! Name all the trees you can see." "Pine, fir, birch, oak, and so on," the boys named the trees. "Good; and what kind of grain do you know?" "Rye, barley, wheat, oats." "Good. Now follow that footpath."

Off the boys went, keeping a sharp look out. They came to a road. There was a farm cart, with a small boy sitting helplessly on it, and the horse had broken loose, for the reins were broken. Stas hesitated, "Come on, we must help him." He got the horse back to the shafts and held its head, while Julek made a join in the reins. "Be sure it is firm," said Stas. "Of course, I have made a reef knot," said Julek. "Thank you" said the small boy, very pleased.

"Look over there," said Julek suddenly. A man was sitting on the banks of a pond, furiously waving a fishing line. "What is the matter?" asked Stas. "My line is broken, and every time I mend it, it comes undone again. Then the fish take the bait and escape."

"I will help you. Please let me," said Stas. He remembered the Fisherman's Knot. "If you think you can mend it, show me," said the man. Over and under and through . . . the knot is done. The man tries it . . . Yes! it really holds! "Oh, thank you," he says and casts his line again.

"Where do we go now?" asked Julek. They looked round, as the Instructor appeared from behind a tree. "Well done boys! Your knots were good. Now you go on, in this direction."

At the edge of the forest they came upon another Instructor.

"What Company do you belong? Who is your Patron? Who was he? Do you know the Scout Law? What is the meaning of the Scout Lily? and the Scout Cross?"

Stas and Julek answered carefully . . . "Thank you. Now go and report to your Scoutmaster."

They found the Scoutmaster sitting alone in the same place. He told them that all the others had followed them in pairs to do their tests. They sat and talked until the others had all returned.

"Czuwaj! Now boys, each pair is going to light a fire. You have three minutes to do it in, and not more than three matches! Who will be first?"

"Bring me some birch bark," said Stas. He broke up small sticks and arranged them with larger ones round, with the birch bark in the middle. He lit a match. Flames leapt up merrily, and wisps of smoke curled upwards. The flames burnt steadily. "Hurrah! We have done it!"

The others had also lit their fires . . . the testing was over.

The Scouts stood up to sing "Wszystko co Nasze" and "Jeszcze Polska nie zginela" . . . and then went home. How pleased and proud they were to have passed their tests!

POLISH SCOUTING ABROAD



INDIA (from the Scout paper in Valivade).

On Christmas Eve, the Rover and Ranger Crew members met at their H.Q. Each one brought a decoration for the Christmas tree and some wood. They went to the hall of the Settlement where they decorated the tree and the fire was lit. The Commandant gave a short talk and then broke, and shared with everyone, a wafer which had been blessed in Bethlehem. All the well-loved carols were sung, and then all the Rangers and

Rovers went together to the Midnight Mass. Nearly every Troop in Valivade district had its Christmas wafer ceremony.

Some of the boys spent the holiday wandering, this time on bicycles, on a five-day trip to Belgaum. The 6th Troop went a three-days' trip to our Scout Centre at Panhili. The Cubs and the Brownies had a whole day for themselves.

The "Vagabonds Club" organised two Carol evenings in which all the "Vagabonds" took part. At the New Year, some of the Troops finished the Nursing Test. We want all Troops to do this test, and there will be a Nursing Course at a camp in the holidays.

Some of the boys have gone to High School in Bombay—we wish them good luck.

The "Vagabonds Club" is giving a course of lectures on the subject "What Poland has given the world" and then two literary evenings.

The Scout shop moved to new quarters in the Main Street. The Rev. Father Dallinger blessed the new place on 24th January. The shop sells Scout equipment, writing materials and fancy goods.

A new Rover Crew has been formed in Bombay, named "Jungle Fire"—the members are boys from Valivade who are now studying at the School of Commercial Art. There are nine of them. They publish a fortnightly called "Youth," which was formerly published in Valivade. They are very enthusiastic about their publication.

Contacts with young Hindoo friends of Poland have given occasion for some very pleasant evenings. The Hindoos showed their very interesting dances and the Poles sang their folk songs.

A second Patrol of this Crew is at Panchgani, where six Scouts are doing a Commercial Course.

NEW ZEALAND.—Who would have thought seven years ago that Polish Guides and Scouts would go to New Zealand? Now, about 800 of them have found shelter there, after many trials and much ill-treatment in the North of U.S.S.R. Near Wellington, these children have a very well run camp. The "Christian Science Monitor" writes that this is a very lively colony and Scouting is its most lively activity. Last September, the numbers were 235 Guides, 81 Scouts, 82 Brownies and 51 Cubs.

Polish Students in *GERMANY* (from "The Guardian," published in Celle).

According to the latest information, the following universities in the British Zone will take in Polish students from D.P. and ex-P.O.W. camps—Bonn, 150; Cologne, 90; Munster, 66; Kiel, 90; Technical School in Brunswick, 60; Technical School in Hanover, 21; and Miners' Academy at Clausthal-Zellerfeld, 24; Total 579 Polish Students. They will have no fees to pay, and will be quartered in camps near the University towns.

SCOTLAND.—The Rover and Ranger Crew (Polish) have formed a Musical Troupe, and have already given three performances.

There have been parties given for Scottish Guides, and return invitations to their parties.

On January 14th, nearly 30 Rovers and Rangers of the Crew called "Poznan" made their Promise. There was a celebration of Mass, and then the Ceremony of Making the Promise. There were also performances of a Toy Theatre, and a Sing Song.

DENMARK.—Polish Scouts and Guides from Skodsborg gave a present to the Bishop there, on the occasion of his 50th Birthday. It is a Polish Eagle, on whose breast is seen our Lady of Czestochowa. On either side are the Scout Cross and Lily.

A Cub and Brownie Pack has been started in the Polish Centre at the Frederick VII Palace at Skodsborg. The children are tremendously enthusiastic. Their leader took part in the Warsaw Rising.

On the 1st January, four Polish Scouts and three Guides were invited to come to carry the Polish flag in the New Year Parade in Copenhagen. This took place on the Parade Ground in front of the Rosenborgslot Castle. 5,000 Danish Scouts and Guides were present.

A Visit to the Polish Scout and Guide Headquarters

On Saturday, October 13th, the Guiders, E.L.s and Seconds of the 1st Stoney Stratford Girl Guide Company went to London. While we were there we were lucky enough to be taken to the Polish Scout and Guide Headquarters. We were shown round by Scout Commissioner T. Piechaczek, a Scouter of many years' experience, who has carried on his Scouting in several countries. We were impressed by the collection of flags, some beautifully embroidered, which have been presented to the Poles by Scouts of various towns of England and Scotland. We were then asked if we should like to visit the Scout House. To this we joyfully agreed, and after a somewhat perilous descent from the fifth floor of Chantrey House in an overloaded and not too modern lift, we emerged into Eccleston Street and made our way towards Belgrave Mews North.

When we reached the Scout House, the first thing we noticed from the large framed photographs and charts which hang on the walls of the staircase, was the amazing increase in numbers of the Polish Guides and Scouts in the happy years 1920 to 1939, when Poland was free to organise its movement without fear of persecution. We then saw the Scouters' room, which has a large coloured photograph of B.P. in a prominent position, and over the fireplace a wonderful

Polish white eagle, made by rolls of paper arranged in a most intricate design. In the Guiders' room are many photographs of Polish Guides in camp in various parts of the British Isles—cooking, marching, performing their national dances, etc. Here is also a tiny shrine, made of smooth sticks, and a number of log baskets ingeniously made in camp by the Polish Guides. Round the walls are coloured garlands and patterns made by the Polish Brownies.

Mr. Piechaczek told us many stories of the devotion to their country and their flag which has been shown in this war by the Polish girls and boys. One wonders what our own attitude would have been if England had been forced to endure all that Poland has suffered. Should we have come through as proudly?

At the end of our visit we were presented, much to our surprise and pleasure, with a keepsake in the form of a map of Poland, carved in wood, painted red, on which was mounted the white eagle of Poland. It now has a place of honour on the wall of the room in which we hold our Company meetings.

We shall always remember our visit and we wish our Polish brothers and sisters the best of luck, and every happiness in the future.

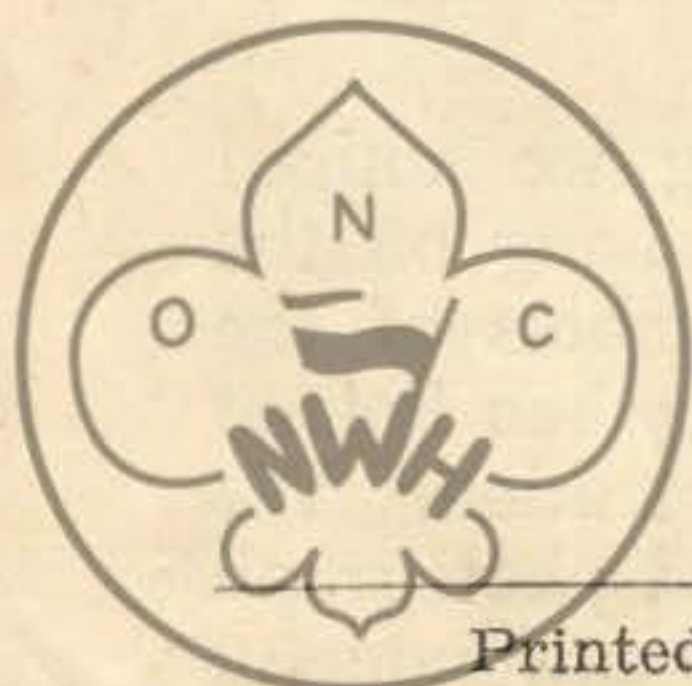
MARY KNIGHT.

THANK YOU

The Treasurer wishes to thank the Polish Guides of the 2nd Polish Company for their willing and valuable help with translating letters.

If undelivered, please return to

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