

SCOUTING

A Magazine of Information for All Scouters

DECEMBER, 1938
Vol. XXVI, No. 11



Copyright, 1938, by
Boy Scouts of America

35,857 Acres of Wilderness Presented for Scout Camping

A GIFT from Mr. and Mrs. Waite Phillips, Tulsa, Okla., of 35,857 acres of land a few miles northwest of Cimarron, New Mexico, and \$50,000 to be used in improving and developing the land for camping purposes, was accepted by the Executive Board of the National Council, Boy Scouts of America, at its October meeting.

When he made this announcement Walter W. Head, President of the Boy Scouts of America, said, "Mr. Phillips offered the property without any restriction whatsoever save that it is to be used for the benefit of members of the Scout Movement. As a matter of fact, he specifically stated, 'If this proposal were being made to any other organization, whose rating was inferior to the record of service made by the Boy Scouts of America, I would be inclined to be more particular in outlining the program, to be assured that the property would be put to full beneficial use as I visualize it.' In accepting his gift the Executive Board has in mind the establishment of a Boy Scout mountain area for the development and furtherance of wilderness camping."

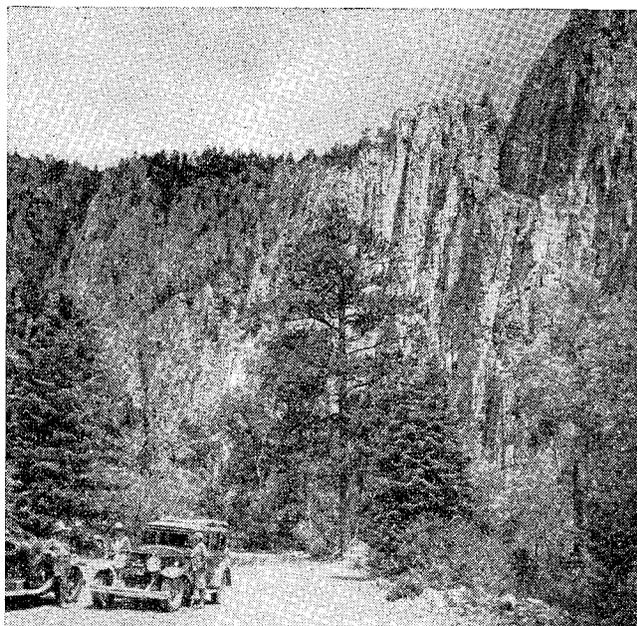
Kit Carson Country

Before formally proposing that the Boy Scouts of America accept the property, Mr. and Mrs. Phillips and their son Elliott entertained a party of

Scout officials at Philmont Ranch near Cimarron, immediately adjacent to the new Scout camp site. The party included, besides President Head, Dr. James E. West, Chief Scout Executive, and Arthur A. Schuck, Director of the Division of Operations. The entire group was greatly impressed by the scenic beauty of the area and its usefulness for Scout camping purposes. Mr. Phillips has proposed, in accordance with general Boy Scout practice, that the property immediately be designated as a game preserve.

Senior Scouts' Paradise

In a statement issued to the Executive Board Dr. West said: "The property is in the Rocky Mountains, all above an elevation of 7,000 feet and rises in spots



Courtesy of Santa Fe R.R.

Ute Pass Palisades near New Scout Wilderness Campsite

to at least 11,000 feet. It is the Kit Carson territory through which passes the old Santa Fe trail that was used as a trade route for the exchange of goods between Old Mexico and the United States. This old Santa Fe trail was opened up in 1822 immediately after Mexico gained her independence from Spain and at that time all the western country lying beyond Kansas and what is now the Panhandle of Oklahoma belonged to Mexico. It was at Santa Fe where the Mexicans and the Americans met to barter and trade.

"There are nine main canyons on the tract con-

verging either at the Cimarron River or the main branch of the Ponil River, which later flows into the Cimarron.

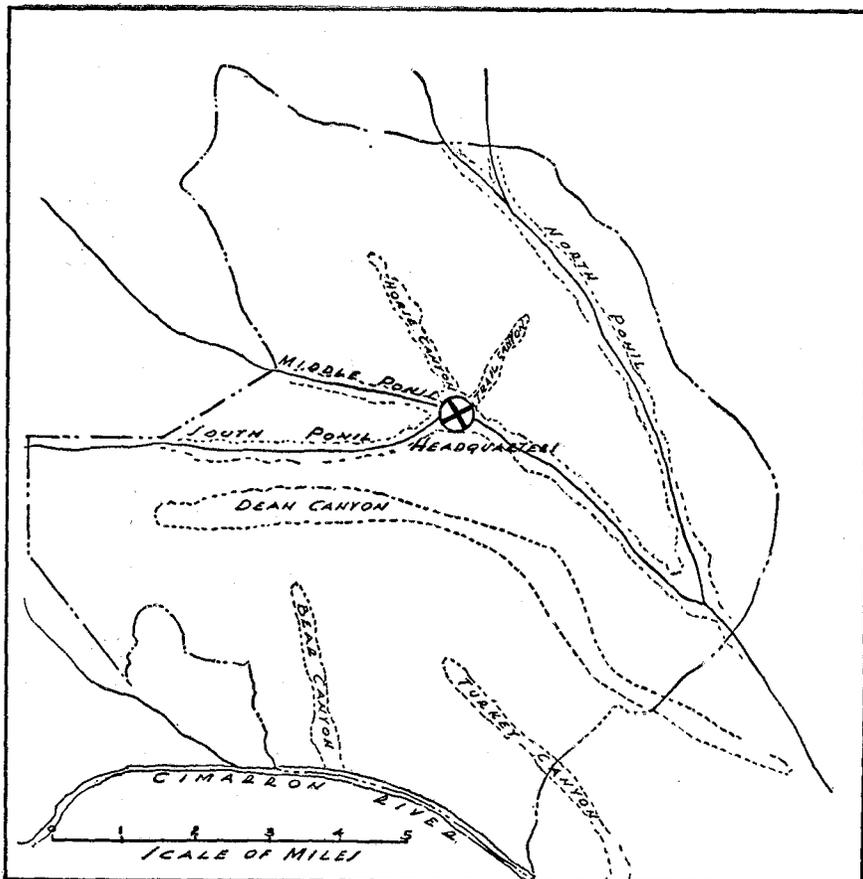
"Each of the canyons is of the same general makeup, flanked on each side by everchanging vistas, rock palisades, timber growth, and with smaller canyons in endless numbers fingering out from the main ones. There are also several high land meadows or mesas, offering excellent additional camping area spots. Bear Canyon, Dean Canyon, and Turkey Canyon have an extensive amount of timber growth, comprised, principally of western pines, Douglas fir, balsam, quaking aspens and cottonwoods. It is the natural habitat of deer and while on the property we saw mule deer, wild turkeys, and dozens of beaver dams and many evidences of bear.

Unique Camping Opportunity

"While there are few Boy Scout Local Councils throughout the country which do not have camps both for short camping trips and for summer vacation camping," Dr. West continued, "there is a need of opportunities for Troops and Patrols with experience, training, leadership and proper equipment to secure the benefits of wilderness camping, which I believe will appeal to older boys in all parts of America. By this is implied a more rugged experience with 'nature in the raw' than is possible in the customary local Boy Scout Council camp but at no sacrifice of our essential safeguards of health and safety."

A recent digest of Scout membership records revealed that more than 100,000 Scouts in nearly 4,000 Troops live within a 600 mile radius of the property. From this group will come those who use the property most frequently, although Senior Scouts from all parts of the country will head for it on tours under adequate leadership and according to provisions stated by the National Council.

Before reaching a decision to accept the Phillips gift, the National Council sought advice from Local Councils in the area. Forty



The map above shows principal streams and canyons and the approximate outline of the new Scout Property. Its location in north-eastern New Mexico is shown at the right.

Councils indicated that they would begin to make use of the spot in the next camping season and many evidences of enthusiasm and offers of active cooperation in the development of the property were received.

Wilderness Camping Popular

George W. Olmsted, Chairman of the Camping and Activities Committee for the Boy Scouts of America, reports great need in the Rocky Mountain section for facilities for Troops from far away which seek wilderness camping. The Pikes Peak Council of Colorado Springs, Colo., last summer had requests from New Orleans, Shreveport, Toledo, Chicago, five towns in Texas, four in Kansas, and many individual requests for camping places in the Rocky Mountains. They were able only to help one Troop from Kansas and this demonstrates that there is great need for a place where these

Troops can have adequate facilities for mountain camping under proper supervision.

As an evidence of the magnitude of this problem and how the Waite Phillips' property will help solve it, Mr. Olmsted has pointed out that in 1927, about 200 touring permits were granted by the Camping and Activities Service at the Home Office. To date, in 1938, 338 Touring Permits have been issued with an estimated attendance of 7,098 Scouts and 1,115 Scouters. Eighty-nine of the tours during 1938 traveled more than 1,000 miles. Thirty-six traveled more than 2,000 miles.

