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Military Training in the Polish Scouting and Guiding Association's Programme During the Inter-war Period

Introduction

The Polish Scouting and Guiding Association's tradition derives from Scouting, which was established in England and encountered a fertile ground in the form of youth communities, organised at first in self-training circles, and subsequently in "Zet", "Pet" and "Zarzewie".

Activities of Polish scouts during World War I

When the war broke out, young scouts and guides definitely opted for the pro-independence orientation and massively joined the Polish Legions. The effectiveness of the scout and guide education was proven during the war, with regard to both the development of patriotism and military preparation. This can be illustrated with an example of hundreds, and, in the course of all operations, thousands of scouts participating in the warfare. According to Władysław Nekrasz, 9 thousand scouts served in the Polish troop formations in the years 1914–1920, from which 584 fell¹.

While venture scouts enlisted in the army, girl guides and the younger scouts provided social service, cared for the injured, the runaways and later also for internees

¹ W. Nekrasz, *Harcerze w bojach w latach 1914–1921. Przyczynek do udziału młodzieży polskiej w walkach o niepodległość ojczyzny w latach 1914–1921*, vol. 1–2, Warszawa 1930–1931, pass.

and the prisoners of war. They organised emergency services and efficiently operating post offices, as well as replaced the employees of various institutions who had been called into the army. Besides, the younger prepared themselves for soldier's service and girls became members of intelligence services, as liaison officers they organised and provided services in hospitals, sewing rooms, kitchens and first aid stations. Thus, the scouting and guiding movement's achievements in this field were significant even before the creation of the reborn Polish state.

Take-over of power from Austria, struggles for the determination of borderlines and the Polish-Soviet War

The beginning of independence was the participation in taking over the power from the Austrian hands and then fights in defence of the Polish land with the Ukrainians and the Czechs. Remarkable services were rendered by scouts during the defence and relief of Lviv and the defence of Przemyśl. This was the time when the Scout Battalion in Warsaw was formed, as well as scout companies in Kalisz and Poznań. The Scout Battalion was formed in Vilnius, during the Bolshevik raid, and then after a few months of fights it was renamed into the 6th Scout Infantry Regiment.

In July 1920, in response to the proclamation of the Council of National Defence, the Polish Scouting and Guiding Association announced general mobilisation of its members, making all older boys join the ranks of the Volunteer Army, directing the younger ones to the auxiliary service and the defence of western borders. Total number of volunteers who enlisted in the service with weapon in their hands reached 9 thousand. 15 thousand guides and scouts participated in the volunteer auxiliary and alternative service².

It is worth mentioning here about a barely known episode of the scouting and guiding activities in that period. According to Jerzy Gaj, it was the time when cooperation between the organisation and the 2nd Unit of High Military Command Staff. Near and outside the front line the scouts were engaged in strictly military intelligence, counter-intelligence and courier service. The above objectives were fulfilled by newly established conspiratorial Scouting and Guiding Intelligence Organisation (HOW)³.

Military training of the Polish Scouting and Guiding Association until the May Coup

After the end of the war, the scouting and guiding movement was affected by an ideological and organisational crisis. After few years of warfare the youth lived in constant tension, continuous standby, in preparation for what tomorrow brings, wondering whether it will eventually give the longed-for freedom. This was the most

² M. Fularski, *Przysposobienie wojskowe w Polsce*, Warszawa 1929, p. 151.

³ J. Gaj, *Główne nurty ideowe w ZHP w latach 1918–1939*, Warszawa 1966, p. 86–87.

important mission of the scouting and guiding movement. When the mission was accomplished, there was an outburst of joy and the tension subsided. Many senior scouts did not return from the army, others could not get used to the new living conditions and new tasks of scouting and guiding, where military preparation wasn't most important anymore. Notwithstanding the above, actions taken by the scouting and guiding authorities did bring a slow improvement⁴.

Military preparation within the scouting and guiding area was suggested at the 2nd General Assembly in 1921. However, both the suggestions and the draft *Act on compulsory training for the defence of the Republic of Poland* of 1922, prepared by the Ministry of Military Affairs, faced with opposition from part of the instructors. They believed that such training should be provided as part of normal scout activities by their own instructors⁵.

ZHP liaised with Physical Education and Reserve Training Departments of the Ministry of Military Affairs, which were the supporters of scouting and guiding and promised to provide it with extensive support. Military training was deemed an inseparable part of the scout education programme. Relevant regulations were implemented for this purpose applying to the preparation of scouts for military service. Programmes were established for scout tests for particular ranks and proficiency/activity badges, providing for deepening of general military training for the youth of higher grades in secondary schools and for making them familiar with particular weapon types⁶.

At the end of 1922, as a result of long-lasting conferences, a bilateral agreement was signed to regulate the rules of cooperation between ZHP and the Ministry of Military Affairs, which agreement was subsequently supplemented by remarks regarding the training of girl guides for the purpose of auxiliary military service⁷. Whereas the Ordinance of the Ministry of Religious Denominations and Edification of the Public of 1923 on military training for the youth recommended that the posts of BMT managers in schools should be filled by persons with scout and guide skills⁸.

In the summer of 1922 the 8th Corps District Command (DOK) in Toruń in agreement with the Pomeranian School District's Education Authority and the Pomeranian Boy Scout Region Headquarters organised in Rzucewo a scout camp, in parallel with school camp, for Section Leaders. 50 scouts aged 13–18 arrived there. Participants were dressed in scout uniforms and the training was conducted by Scouters. The 8th DOK assigned 2 officers and 4 non-commissioned officers to exercises including physical education and military training. They conducted among others such practical activities as: picket duty, scouting, patrol, secret intelligence and sense of direction. The 8th DOK military units also supported the Regions in Poznań and Warsaw

⁴ W. Błażejowski, *Z dziejów harcerstwa polskiego (1910–1939)*, Warszawa 1985, p. 160.

⁵ Central Archives of Modern Records, the collection of ZHP records (hereinafter: AAN, ZHP), vol. 356, fol. 108–109, *Stanowisko „Chudego Wilka”* [H. Glass]; M. Żychowska, *Harcerstwo Ziemi Tarnowskiej 1910–1939*, Tarnów 1972, p. 86.

⁶ M. Fularski, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

⁷ W. Błażejowski, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

⁸ J. Hendler, *Przysposobienie wojskowo-obronne w harcerstwie kieleckim w latach 1912–1939*, Kielce 1987, p. 12.

in organising similar camps in Hel, Gdynia, Jastarnia, Wejherowo and in Wielka Wieś Helska⁹.

According to Marian Fularski in the following years numerous efforts were made to achieve the best results in the field of military training. In 1924 it was made necessary for Scouters and Guiders to obtain a BMT rank. BMT scout camps and the first training course for liaison Leaders produced hundreds of military trained Scouters. Training courses were organised in the communities to prepare for gaining military proficiency badges, e.g. shooting or first-aid. BMT Departments were established in almost all Region Headquarters¹⁰.

However, in the opinion of M. Fularski, the military training programme in scouting and guiding was carried out only remotely¹¹. This is denied by Adolf Heidrich, in the article published in 1926 in the pages of *Harc mistrz* entitled "Falszywe poglądy na harcerstwo" ["False views on scouting and guiding"], by writing that

Military training in many environments was implemented as an integral part of the troops programme. Further works in this direction are continued. Currently we have several dozen independent scout and guide BMT branches, in which approx. 1000 young scouts and guides receive training. The scouting and guiding authorities have already issued regulations to organise such units in each scout community. Besides, several dozen scouts receive military training in school Scout and Guide Districts. In the summer this year there were 250 boys at the military training camp and we intend to extend this action next year¹².

There were also signals coming from the field about implementation of BMT training, such as this one: „In Bochnia they also paid more attention to military training, forming a permanent military training team, which received theoretical and practical training in liaison and shooting service once a week, under the guidance of an instructing officer of the 16th Infantry Regiment”¹³.

Cooperation with the army after the May Coup

The Girl Guide Headquarters in agreement with the Physical Education and Military training Office aimed to organise military training for girl guides with the use of their own resources, according to their own methods which were better adjusted to the concept of scouting and guiding. Military training Department was established in the Girl Guide Headquarters. A brochure was released entitled *Przysposobienie wojskowe harcerek* [Military basic training for girl guides], which included an article written by Zofia Wołowska *Przysposobienie wojskowe dziewcząt w harcerstwie* [Military basic training for girls in scouting and guiding movement], explaining, among others, the

⁹ W. Frąckowiak, "Wychowanie fizyczne i przysposobienie wojskowe na Pomorzu w latach 1920–1930", *Wojskowy Przegląd Historyczny* 1981, no. 1, p. 164.

¹⁰ M. Fularski, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

¹¹ *Ibidem*.

¹² A. Heidrich, "Falszywe poglądy na harcerstwo", *Harc mistrz* 1926, no. 12, p. 120.

¹³ M. Żychowska, *Harcerstwo bocheńskie 1912–1939*, Tarnów 1990, p. 14.

attitude of scouting and guiding movement to military training for girls and women. The brochure also contained the National Council's decisions:

1. The National Council deems the issue of military training immensely important;
2. The scouting and guiding movement should perform the work of military training in agreement with the Physical Education and Military training Office.

Under this resolution, at the conference of Scouters and Guiders convened by the Girl Guide Headquarters in Wyszkowo by the Bug River, it was decided to:

1. conduct military training in girl guiding as normal work of troops;
2. implement BMT programme to scout and guide tests.

In accordance with the resolution, on the basis of the Chief Guide's order, a few elements of military training were introduced to the requirements for guide test.

The first military training course for Guiders took place in the summer of 1929. It concentrated representatives of nearly all Regions and initiated BMT direction on a broader scouting and guiding area. For many years such training courses have provided qualified BMT Guiders for the area; often the same Guiders gained the special activity of military training and became part of the staff¹⁴.

The effectiveness of that work in the field is confirmed by facts noted in many sources, such as this one; in the school year 1927/28 girl guides from the 3rd Troop in Toruń participated in a training organised by the Scout and Guide District Committee. The first aid training course was attended by 13 girls and the anti-aircraft defence training course – by 7. In 1929 in Toruń there was a military training department, which consisted of 27 girl guides and functioned at one of the middle school Troops. In the same year the Scout and Guide District in Toruń was placed first in Region's military training competition and in national competition gave place only to the representation of the Warsaw Region¹⁵.

Shooting special activity was developed, which is confirmed by participation of many scouts in the 1st Scout Association Shooting Competition that took place in 1928¹⁶. Significant contribution of military training activities in the scouting and guiding programme is confirmed by requests made by Alojzy Pawelek for the liquidation of the excess of military formations in ZHP work, which were published in *Płomienie* being in opposition to ZHP authorities¹⁷.

Development of cooperation

In 1930 Military training Department was established at ZHP Headquarters, and in headquarters of particular Regions – merged departments of Physical Education and Military training¹⁸. By the decision of the Ministry of Military Affairs, „officers on the active and retired officers were allowed to join ZHP”¹⁹.

¹⁴ J. Kamińska, *Rozwój organizacyjny harcerstwa żeńskiego*, [in:] *Harcerki 1911–1939. Historia, program, wychowanie*, ed. J. Raniecka-Bobrowska, Warszawa 1990, p. 70–71.

¹⁵ J. Jankowski, *Harcerstwo Pomorza Gdańskiego i Kujaw 1911–1945*, Warszawa 1987, p. 165, 168.

¹⁶ W. Błażejowski, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

¹⁷ J. Gaj, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

¹⁸ Order of the Commissioner of Boy Scout Headquarters L. 7 of 20 March 1930, *Wiadomości Urzędowe* 1930, no. 4, p. 22.

¹⁹ Order of 5 May 1930, *Dziennik Rozkazów* no. 7, [as cited in:] J. Gaj, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

Huge effort was made the same year in the development of programmes regarding physical education and military training in scouting and guiding. Programmes of the ZHP Shooting Badge and Scout and Guide Military training Badge were developed and announced. Elements of the programme of the National Sports Badge and 1st and 2nd degree Military training were approved by an order of the Boy Scout Headquarters as part of requirements for tests for scout and guide ranks²⁰.

The issue of military training was addressed at that time among others in Kraków, where Dr Władysław Szczygieł in the article "O przyszłość naszej Chorągwi" ["For the future of our Region"] demanded to organise Scout and Guide Districts and military training camps and proposed that the ZHP Supreme Authorities implement new scout proficiencies connected with military training²¹.

Julian Hendler describes the scout and guide activities in the field of military training in that period in the Kielce area in the following way:

In the late 20s and early 30s Lt Col S. Jażdżyński, a great enthusiast of scouting and guiding, was a garrison commander and the 4th regiment. For a few years he was President of the Management Board of the ZHP Branch. [...] This fact contributed to the development of scout and guide work, in particular military training. The garrison lent the necessary equipment for camps and camporees. He also delegated his instructors to camps. Furthermore, he granted subsidies, if military training exercises were conducted at such camps. Master sergeant Jan Szczygłowski – military training instructor responsible for physical education – took part in several Troop camps in Kielce. The Troops being at the forefront of military training were provided at the camps with sets of rifles and liaison equipment²².

In Tarnów, Troops organised various actions connected with military training, such as demonstration of anti-gas defence or service in mask during an improvised gas fight as part of the "The week of Airborne and Antigas Defence League propaganda". The training of Troops was conducted in respect of shooting, rescue, archery and gas defence. The Troops camping on the area of the Border Protection Corps often sent gifts on the occasion of Christmas to friendly military units²³.

The situation in the Polish guiding movement was assessed by Janina Kamińska, who wrote:

Unfortunate signs of depletion of supervisors and patrols of older girls appeared in the 30s; at the same time our Section Leaders and Guiders moved to similar social organisations. The Organisation of Military training for Women started from collecting older girls above the age of 16; it exerted pressure on school in this direction. It was necessary to overcome the difficult situation mostly by organising military training courses on its own and preparing its own instructors. [...] Since then, training courses in particular BMT proficiencies such as shooting and archery could be independently

²⁰ Order of the Commissioner of Boy Scout Headquarters of 29 October 1930, [as cited in:] W. Błażejowski, *op. cit.*, p. 229.

²¹ T. Gaweł, *Władysław Szczygieł ps. „Zawisza”, harcmistrz, polonista, pedagog, w XXX rocznice śmierci*, Kraków 1990, p. 16–17.

²² J. Hendler, *op. cit.*, p. 11–12.

²³ M. Żychowska, *Harcerstwo Ziemi...*, p. 86.

conducted by Region Headquarters on their areas, in agreement with the BMT links in the field. Centrally, the Headquarters organised training courses of higher level, both instructor and subinstructor, and at the beginning, also gas and air defence training courses. This action was gradually taken over by Regions²⁴.

The issues of programme and organisational offensive, which among others referred to military training and physical education, were the subject of the briefing of Section Leaders, which took place in 1930 in the Pomeranian Girl Guide Region in Toruń²⁵.

On days 12–14 June 1932 the Polish scouting and guiding movement took part in the youth jamboree organised on the occasion of the Polish day of physical education and military training in Spała, the official residence of the President of the Republic of Poland. ZHP representation for that jamboree included 648 scouts and guides²⁶.

The Polish Scouting and Guiding Association as an independent organiser of military training

Significant changes in the performance of the tasks in the scope of military training in scouting and guiding took place in 1934, when ZHP received from the State Office for Physical Education and Military training the right to conduct defence preparation on its own. Particular Scout and Guide Districts formed scout and guide branches of military training, which consisted mainly of older youth from non-school troops. Scouts and guides from middle and secondary schools were organised in school BMT Scout and Guide Districts and they underwent proper training there. In accordance with the Supreme Authorities' decision, a scout and guide BMT branch should consist of 15 people and didn't have to overlap with the Scout and Guide District²⁷.

In the same year a liaison training course was organised in the Scout and Guide District in Kielce, where scouts familiarised with a new type of Polish field telephone set and learned about the construction of a telephone line in the field, as well as an optical signalling and the functioning of a radio station. The training course was conducted by a Polish Army officer. As written by J. Hendler: "Scouts in Kielce mastered the knowledge and soldier skills at the level of command and control by at least a military team. The scouts called up to military service usually completed Officer Candidate School with a military award"²⁸.

After the release of the Ordinance of the President of the Republic of Poland on auxiliary service by women²⁹ the Girl Guide Headquarters obliged all Guiders to

²⁴ J. Kamińska, *op. cit.*, p. 80–81.

²⁵ J. Jankowski, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

²⁶ W. Błażejowski, *op. cit.*, p. 232–233.

²⁷ Z. Zahorski, *Pogotowie harcerek i pogotowie harcerzy we wrześniu 1939 roku*, Kraków 1999, p. 53–54.

²⁸ Letter of 22 March 1934 of the Scout District Committee in Kielce, [as cited in:] J. Hendler, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

²⁹ Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland, 1934, no. 86.

undergo a one-off compulsory training in the scope of Civil Defence Training badge throughout the year 1933/34. This was the outcome of the slow pace of obtaining that proficiency badge so far and the efforts of all Region Headquarters to obtain independence in this scope³⁰.

At the briefing of Region Guiders, which took place in Toruń in September 1935, a programme for the Region was accepted, the mission statement of which was the slogan: "Keeping guard over the sea". It was decided to implement it through obtaining badges of proficiencies preparing for state defence, such as: shooter, anti-gas rescue, wireless operator, firewoman, telephone operator and rescuer, as well as by propagating the relations of Poland with the sea³¹.

Intensification of activities in the face of an increasing threat of war

The 16th ZHP General Congress, which deliberated on 23 and 24 May 1936 stated that due to complicated political situation in Europe the issue of full readiness for state defence was urgent and had to become the objective of organised effort of Polish society as a whole³².

Air and gas defence training sessions were taking place in this period, which were attended by numerous girl guides, and particular Troops received their own English gas masks. Similarly, a first aid training course was organised by PCK (Polish Red Cross) instructors³³.

In Wejherowo a two-day field games course took place, which was connected with a briefing of Section Leaders and Guiders of the Pomeranian Region. Location of the activities was to highlight the Polish nature of the area and the participation of girl guides in guarding the endangered section³⁴.

In January 1937 the Council of Ministers announced its Ordinance on civil defence during peace. It set requirements regarding enhancing fitness of the youth for state defence. It was followed by relevant orders given by ZHP. They noticed greater pressure on the training in defence techniques and conducting regular training courses in shooting. The established requirements were increased as regards gaining ranks for older youth, starting from the fourth rank – "ćwik" for boy scouts and "samar- ytanka" for girl guides. They demanded, among others, a relevant class of the National Sports Badge (POS) and Shooting Badge (OS), which should be gained consecutively one rank per year. The propagated slogan was: "Train your eye and hands in defence of your Homeland"³⁵.

Intensifying the work within the scope of military training in District Committees across the whole country, Departments of Physical Education and Military training

³⁰ AAN, ZHP, vol. 2184, fol. 33–35, 139.

³¹ J. Jankowski, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

³² W. Błażejowski, *op. cit.*, p. 298.

³³ J. Hendler, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

³⁴ J. Jankowski, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 86.

were organised. Military authorities, seeing the organisation as an ally, were always willing to support scouting and guiding units, not only by providing equipment, but also, if needed, by delegating instructors to conduct relevant specialist courses or practical exercises in the scope of sports and defence activities³⁶. Scout and Guide Troops were visited by military instructors, who during assemblies with the youth discussed issues related to state defence³⁷.

In the Pomeranian Boy Scout Region the number of military training departments increased from 4 in 1936 to 13 in 1937. They numbered 688 persons in total. A concentration of departments was organised to conduct exercises on a larger scale. Scout platoons were formed from among older boys, also the whole Scout Troops formed military training platoons. The programme for such units envisaged four types of activity: social, military, commercial and self-education³⁸. Whilst in the Pomeranian Girl Guide Region in 1937, among others, 200 badges were gained in the scope of first aid, along with 190 badges in the scope of physical education and 307 in the scope of military training³⁹.

Plans to use scouts in the event of war

At the end of 1937 the Chief Armed Forces Inspectorate developed a few variants for the use of scouting and guiding in case of war, occupation of certain area of Poland and undertaking actions in conspiracy. This work was obviously of confidential nature⁴⁰. At the turn of 1938 the so-called "staff movements" were performed. They aimed at the preparation of commanders of large military units for warfare. In scouting and guiding they resulted in even higher pressure on conducting activities from the scope of preparation of the youth for defence of the State and performance of tasks for the army. Some of Scout and Guide Troops were tipped for the potential tasks, mostly those middle and secondary schools, whose students received training in BMT Districts during the school year⁴¹. Particular persons were also designated for future functions. Scouters and Guiders were successively trained in military centres in preparation for special duties. Participation in the activities was voluntary and their nature was highly confidential⁴². The Troops, which were designated to perform special duties in case of armed conflict included: the 16th Gen. J. Bem Boy Scout Troops in Poznań and the 21st Tadeusz Rejtan Boy Scout Troops in Poznań and others. A number of leaders of scout and guide anti-Nazi conspiracy comes from among the members of the mentioned Troops⁴³.

³⁶ ZHP *Hufiec Poznań Wilda. Monografia harcerstwa Wileckiego wydana w 70 rocznicę jego powstania*, Poznań 1983, p. 14.

³⁷ J. Krężel, *Szare Szeregi na Rzeszowszczyźnie*, Mielec–Rzeszów–Kraków 1987, p. 6.

³⁸ J. Jankowski, *op. cit.*, p. 115–116.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 153.

⁴⁰ A. Fersten, "Głosa do hasła", *Motywy* 1983, no. 41, p. 3.

⁴¹ A. Fersten, "Rozkosze historycznych dociekań", *Motywy* 1985, no. 7, p. 31.

⁴² A. Fersten, "Głosa...", p. 3.

⁴³ A. Fersten, "Rozkosze...", p. 31.

Military training

In April 1938 the Sejm of the Republic of Poland adopted a resolution on general compulsory military service for women. Fulfilling this obligation in guiding movement, girls were intensively prepared for auxiliary services for the army in case of war. The Girl Guide Headquarters conducted training, an extensive informative action and were in contact with the army, the Ministry of Social Welfare and the Central Board of Airborne and Antigas Defence League in the matter of training for girl guides in the passive gas defence, air defence, rescue and first aid. An article was published in the Guiders magazine entitled „Skrzydła”, which agitated for voluntary enlisting in Military Training for Women (PWK) aged 19–45⁴⁴. Many venture guides joined the organisation, being its backbone and staff. Others contributed in the work of the Polish Red Cross (PCK), the Polish White Cross or worked in the Committee for Social Self-Defence (KOR).

At that time in 10 cities and towns within the Pomeranian area there were 12 scout and guide branches of military training, where 1219 received the training. In June 1938, during the visit of Edward Rydz Śmigły in Toruń, these branches paraded with their sabres up, which were then gifted to the army. The honorary scout companion performing in full equipment and armament demonstrated great proficiency⁴⁵.

Scout campaign in Zaolzie

Girl guiding movement within the Zaolzie area conducted an extraordinary and special action. It undertook to provide care and awareness on the newly acquired territories. Here are the most important fragments of the report entitled *Pogotowie Harcerek na Śląsku* [*Girl Guide Emergency Service within the Silesian area*]:

In connection with the situation within the area of Śląsk Cieszyński, the Chief Guide established, as of 21 September 1938, the Girl Guide Emergency Service, appointing the scout master Józefina Łapińska, the Head of the School for Guiders in Bucz, the Commissioner of the Emergency Service. The whole girl guiding organisation was put on standby and 4 Regions were put on the state of alert, namely the Regions in Kielce, Kraków, Łódź and Silesia; there was a regulation implemented within these Regions, according to which all Guiders (active, on a leave and in reserve), as well as Venture Guides (above the age of 16) should come forward, stating their readiness to: 1) auxiliary local work, 2) travel to the area of Silesia. The Girl Guide Emergency Service operated near the border and within the area of Śląsk Zaolziański, forming 86 establishments in total, of which 34 behind the Olza River.

The work of the Girl Guide Emergency Service establishments was carried out depending on the local needs, e.g.: listing or assisting in listing of children to go to Polish school, replacements for teachers by the time of their arrival, running kindergartens, after-school clubs, organising fun and games for children, training courses for adults

⁴⁴ Muzeum Harcerstwa w Warszawie [The Museum of Scouting in Warsaw], A. Libionka, *Pogotowie harcerek 1939 r.* – relation, typescript, p. 2

⁴⁵ J. Jankowski, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

and older youth, carrying Samaritan aid, providing food and clothes, organising fun and performances on Sundays and patriotic celebrations.

13 November 1938 was the beginning of gradual liquidation of Girl Guide Emergency Service establishments in the places where normal social and educational work had already been organised [...]. A ceremonial hand-over of the work of girl guides on the territory of Zaolzie to the Silesian Region took place on 26 February 1939 in Cieszyn⁴⁶.

At the same time the Chief Scout established Boy Scout Emergency Service at the Silesian border, appointing Aleksander Jamrozek its Commissioner. The Emergency Service covered the area of four districts [*powiat*] near the border. The action was joined by the Polish scouting and guiding in the Czechoslovakia and from the area of Zaolzie. The work of the Emergency Service was rendered in 92 cities by 116 Scout Troops and approx. 2000 boy scouts⁴⁷.

Plans to create a conspiracy network

In order to acquire people, and especially the trusted Leaders for possible fights in the rear of the enemy, in case it crosses the border of our country and occupies – as was assumed – for a short period of time some areas of the country, the army, represented by major Edmund Galinat from the Commander in Chief's Staff and other officers of the 2nd Division, held secret talks with selected Scouters to recruit them into the established secret network⁴⁸.

At the turn of 1939 the management of the then Armed Forces carried out vetting in ZHP. Briefings were held in district commands, and a sort of "small war game" was organised for selected Scouters. Their importance is confirmed by the fact that such "game" in 7th DOK in Poznań was attended personally by Marshal E. Rydz Śmigły. The selected Scouters and Guiders were then sworn in⁴⁹. Similar briefings took place in Toruń with the participation of General M. Karaszewicz-Tokarzewski and General W. Bortnowski, and in Katowice, which was attended by officers from a subversive group operating outside the frontline [*dywersja pozafrontowa*] and representatives of the Union of Poles from Racibórz, Gliwice and Opole⁵⁰. Such briefings were highly confidential and still little is known about them.

Faced with an immediate threat

At the beginning of 1939 the threat was even greater. The Chief Guide's Order of 10 January 1939 contained an instruction on improvement and service. Item III of the

⁴⁶ *Pogotowie Harcerek na Śląsku*, [in:] *Sprawozdanie Naczelnej Rady Harcerskiej za 1938 r.*, Warszawa 1939, p. 298–299.

⁴⁷ W. Błażejowski, *op. cit.*, p. 321.

⁴⁸ Z. Zahorski, *op. cit.*, p. 395.

⁴⁹ A. Fersten, "Głosa...", p. 3.

⁵⁰ A. Fersten, "Rozkosze...", p. 32; J. Jankowski, *op. cit.*, p. 83–84.

Order regulated the activities of Girl Guide Emergency Service. It was to be a form of a Girl Guide Organisation in case of war. Girl Guides were supposed to get prepared for service in Emergency Service in the course of their normal work as Girl Guides. Girl Guides, especially Guiders, Venture Guides and Rangers should take one of the following duty assignments in case of war: 1) auxiliary military service, 2) service in Girl Guide Emergency Service, 3) alternative service similar to that in Emergency Service⁵¹. The cooperation between Girl Guide Organisations and Organisations of Military Training for Women was bilaterally established in April 1939⁵².

A briefing of Commissioners of Girl Guide Emergency Service establishments of all Regions took place on 30 April 1939 in the School for Guiders in Bucze⁵³. On 10 May the same year the Chief Scout nominated members of the Committee of Boy Scout Emergency Service and a month later, on 10 June, he nominated Commissioners of Emergency Service in all Regions. Preparations for war had already been made before. Air defence exercises, organised by civil and military authorities, had been performed for a few months. The scouts taking part in them exercised their duties perfectly, which is confirmed by numerous words of thanks addressed, among others, to Scout District Committees in Lviv and Lublin⁵⁴. Approx. 150 venture scouts received training in Scout District in Kielce for the purpose of auxiliary military service and civil defence. Regardless of that, a large number of younger Scouts and Guides was trained in basic defensive skills such as: liaison, sanitary rescue, postal service, childcare, gas and air defence. It was approx. 500 persons who participated in active civil defence⁵⁵.

The 17th ZHP General Congress, which was held on 20 and 21 May 1939 in Lublin, adopted, among others, the following resolutions:

ZHP General Congress, which deliberates in the time when the Polish nation, facing an attempted attack on its rights and vested interests, gave the whole world an example of unity, cherishing the honour and an express will for the highest sacrifices, states that more than 300 thousand scouts and guides in the country and abroad, being faithful to the great traditions of the previous generations of scouts and guides that were able to reach out for the honourable name of the Soldiers of Independence, are ready to fulfil all orders of the Commander-in-Chief in the fight for greatness of Poland and the fame of the Nation [...]. Every post occupied by a guide or scout, in peace or in war, should be an example of civic responsibility, sacrifice and soldier bravery⁵⁶.

Before the end of school year scouts and guides participated in inspecting residential buildings and in preparing school shelters, in managing the evaluation of students in case of air-raids. At the same time some scouts with few guides were already prepared for subversion outside the frontline.

⁵¹ Chief Guide's Order L. 1 of 10 January 1939, an appendix to the Chief Guide's Order L. 1 of 10 January 1939, *Wiadomości Urzędowe* 1939, no. 1, p. 4–7.

⁵² Chief Guide's Order L. 4 of 12 April 1939, an appendix to the Chief Guide's Order L. 4, *Wiadomości Urzędowe* 1939, no. 1, p. 79–81.

⁵³ *Leksykon harcerstwa*, ed. O. Fietkiewicz, Warszawa 1988, p. 349.

⁵⁴ W. Błażejowski, *op. cit.*, p. 332.

⁵⁵ J. Hendler, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 331; J. Kamińska, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

The last camp campaign, Scouts' Emergency Service

The 1939 camp action took place under the slogan of military training and preparations for the defence of the State⁵⁷. Both Headquarters – Girl Guide Headquarters and Boy Scout Headquarters – issued special guidelines for scout and guide camps. In July and August girl guides organised numerous Girl Guide military service camps, of which 75 were located on the German borderline; 3 thousand girls participated in the camps, which were a practical form of training for particular types of services. A field liaison network was also organised as part of the Girl Guide Emergency Service⁵⁸.

The Boy Scout Emergency Service envisaged training to be conducted at the camps in the following proficiencies: first aid, exploring the surrounding environment through scouting, information service, liaison, air and fire defence. It was recommended that every scout should gain at least two badges of proficiencies useful in military terms or connected with defence.

In July 1939 B. Grzymowicz was trained at the training course organised in Toruń by military intelligence. After the training course he was appointed Commissioner of a secret subversive group. The group was sworn in in the building of the People's Reading Society in Lubawa. Weapons and explosive materials for the group were buried in various places. They were supposed to start subversive operations at the order from the headquarters. In the middle of summer a liaison came to B. Grzymowicz with an order for the group to go to Płońsk⁵⁹. Other scout group from Lubawa, headed by fellow scout Orzechowski, was also prepared for redeployment behind the enemy lines⁶⁰.

Boy Scout Wartime Emergency Service was established at the end of August 1939. Both Girl Guide and Boy Scout Emergency Services were put on the state of alert and subordinated directly to military authorities. Once again scouts and guides were to pass a practical test from the military training conducted within the organisation. They were soon to prove themselves and they did brilliantly.

Conclusions

Right before the regaining of independence by Poland, scouts already had certain achievements in military training. This was due to the fact that the organisers of the Association pursued the goal of regaining independence. Scouts participated in military efforts during WWI and then in struggles for the determination of borders and preservation of independence. During the inter-war period, forms of work adapted to differing age of the Association members were developed. The best results were achieved in patriotic education, which resulted in the formation of scouting underground movement that was recorded in history as the "Grey Ranks" (Szare Szeregi).

⁵⁷ Cf. W. Szczygieł, "Nasza gotowość", *W Kręgu Wodzów* 1939, no. 7, p. 105.

⁵⁸ *Leksykon harcerstwa...*, p. 349.

⁵⁹ B. Standara, "Tradycje harcerstwa lubawskiego", *Z dziejów harcerstwa na Warmii i Mazurach* 1982, no. 1, p. 17–18.

⁶⁰ Idem, "Harcerskie Pogotowie Wojenne w Lubawie", *Harcerstwo* 1982, no. 6, p. 18.

The use of the staff and senior scouts for the purposes of intelligence, for acting in the ranks of the enemy and in conspiracy were also considered and such acts were implemented to a certain extent. It can be concluded that the Association passed the test in patriotism.

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Military Training in the Polish Scouting and Guiding Association's Programme During the Inter-war Period *Abstract*

The article presents the activity of the Polish Scouting and Guiding Association during the inter-war period with regard to the military training of its members. Right before the regaining of independence by Poland, scouts already had certain achievements in military training. This was due to the fact that the organisers of the Association pursued the goal of regaining independence. Scouts participated in military efforts during WWI and then in struggles for the determination of borders and preservation of independence. During the inter-war period, forms of work adapted to differing age of the Association members were developed. The best results were achieved in patriotic education, which resulted in the formation of scouting underground movement that was recorded in history as the "Grey Ranks" (Szare Szeregi). The use of the staff and senior scouts for the purposes of intelligence, for acting in the ranks of the enemy and in conspiracy were also considered and such acts were implemented to a certain extent. It can be concluded that the Association passed the test in patriotism.

Key words: military training, Polish Scouting and Guiding Association (ZHP), regaining of independence, struggle for the determination of borders, cooperation with the army, Male Scouts Emergency Service and Female Scouts Emergency Service, preparations for the war

Przysposobienie wojskowe w programie związku harcerstwa polskiego okresu międzywojennego *Streszczenie*

Artykuł prezentuje działalność Związku Harcerstwa Polskiego okresu międzywojennego w zakresie przysposobienia wojskowego swoich członków. Harcerstwo u progu niepodległości miało już pewne osiągnięcia w szkoleniu wojskowym, co wynikało z przyjęcia przez jego organizatorów celu, którym było odzyskanie niepodległości. Uczestniczyło w wysiłku zbrojnym w czasie I wojny światowej, a potem walkach o kształt granic i utrwalenie niepodległości. W okresie międzywojennym wypracowało ono formy pracy dostosowane do zróżnicowanego wieku jego członków. Najlepsze wyniki osiągnięto w wychowaniu patriotycznym, co zaowocowało powstaniem harcerskiej konspiracji, która przeszła do historii pod nazwą Szarych Szeregów. Rozważano także i w pewnym zakresie wdrożono wykorzystanie kadry i starszych harcerzy w wywiadzie, działaniach na zapleczu wroga i wreszcie w konspiracji. Można uznać, że w pełni zdało swój egzamin z patriotyzmu.

Słowa kluczowe: Przysposobienie wojskowe, Związek Harcerstwa Polskiego, odzyskanie niepodległości, walki o kształt granic, współpraca z wojskiem, przygotowania wojenne

Militärausbildung im Programm des Polnischen Pfadfinderverbandes in der Zwischenkriegszeit *Zusammenfassung*

Der Artikel stellt die Tätigkeit des Polnischen Pfadfinderverbandes der Zwischenkriegszeit im Bereich der militärischen Ausbildung seiner Mitglieder vor. Das Pfadfindertum an der Schwelle zur Unabhängigkeit hatte bereits einige Erfolge in der militärischen Ausbildung vorzuweisen, die daraus resultierten, dass sich seine Organisatoren das Ziel der Wiedererlangung der Unabhängigkeit annahmen. Es nahm an den bewaffneten Bemühungen während des Ersten Weltkriegs und dann an den Kämpfen um die Gestalt der Grenzen sowie um die Festigung der Unabhängigkeit teil. In der Zwischenkriegszeit wurden die Arbeitsformen entwickelt, die an das unterschiedliche Alter ihrer Mitglieder angepasst waren. Die besten Ergebnisse wurden in der patriotischen Erziehung erzielt, was zur Bildung eines Pfadfinder-Untergrundes führte, der unter dem Namen Graue Reihen in die Geschichte einging. Auch der Einsatz von Kader und älteren Pfadfindern im Geheimdienst, Aktivitäten im Hinterland des Feindes und schließlich im Untergrund wurde erwogen und teilweise umgesetzt. Es kann davon ausgegangen werden, dass es seinen Patriotismustest vollständig bestanden hat.

Schlüsselwörter: Militärausbildung, Polnischer Pfadfinderverband, Wiedererlangung der Unabhängigkeit, Kampf um die Gestalt der Grenzen, Zusammenarbeit mit der Armee, Kriegsvorbereitungen

Военная подготовка в программе Союза польских харцеров *в межвоенный период* *Резюме*

В статье представлена деятельность Союза польских харцеров (скаутов) в межвоенный период в области военной подготовки членов этой организации. На пороге независимости скаутинг уже имел определенные успехи в военной подготовке – это было результатом основной цели организации: восстановление независимости Польши. Скауты участвовали в военных действиях времен Первой мировой войны, а затем в боях за формирование границ и укрепление независимости. В межвоенный период организация разработала формы работы, адаптированные к разному возрасту ее членов. Наилучшие результаты были достигнуты в патриотическом воспитании, в результате чего удалось создать скаутское подполье во время Второй мировой войны, известное как «Серые шеренги». Кадры скаутов были задействованы в разведке, действиях в тылу противника и в подполье.

Ключевые слова: военная подготовка, Союз польских харцеров (скаутов), восстановление независимости, борьба за границы, сотрудничество с армией, подготовка к войне