

Bill Wicksteed  
dates this to  
1963.



# FOREST SCHOOL CAMPS

## NOTES ON GLEE

### CONTENTS

	<u>Page No.</u>
Introduction ..	1
A. Role of Glee at Camp ..	1
B. Role of the Gleeman ..	2
C. The Glee Programme - Beforehand	2
- Camp Fire Programme	3
D. Other Staff ..	3-4
E. Songs - Camp fire programme	4
- introducing songs	5
- teaching new songs	5
- treatment of songs	6
F. Divisions for glee ..	6
- pathfinders ..	6-7
G. Role of the Gleeman in dancing	7
H. Preparation ..	7-8
I. Organisation of dances ..	8
J. Treatment of dances ..	8
K. Function of Drama at Camps	9
- group activity ..	9-10
- preparation for Merrymoot	10
L. Material available ..	10-11
M. Conclusion ..	11

FOREST SCHOOL CAMPSN O T E S      O N      G L E E

These notes have been written for the help of new gleemen and for the interest of the more experienced. Formerly, glee was the natural exuberant expression of a small united community, and there were some people who were leaders of glee, and who were part of the original tradition of Forest School Camps. Now, more and more children come to camp, and because the gleeman is dealing with larger numbers, his role should have become more specialised. As it is, it has in many ways become less so, for often the gleeman is called upon at the last minute, with little incentive to prepare for camp, and obliged to muddle through as well as possible. However admirably he manages, he may find it difficult to feel that glee is important in its own right. Therefore we have prepared these notes with the help and comments of experienced gleemen, and other staff and Pathfinders who have been the 'consumers' of glee for many years, so that the gleeman need no longer feel he is completely on his own, nor that glee is a secondary activity.

This may make it seem that glee, which you have always thought of as being a cheerful relaxing thing, is really an awesome responsibility, demanding versatile talents and personality. This is not true at all. At camp you are not doing a personal stage performance, nor are your seventy singers supposed to be a professionally trained choir! The job of the gleeman is like that of caterer: there are one or two natural caterers, but on the whole most people are capable of catering provided they have the interest and do the necessary preparation. It helps to be able to sing, but it helps far more to have enthusiasm and a capacity for organising your material, and if these are the alternatives, the second qualities will make you a better gleeman. Basically, the qualities of a gleeman are reasonable musical ability, enthusiasm which can be communicated, patience, confidence based on preparation, a capacity for dealing with people, and for encouraging their ideas. It helps to be able to play a musical instrument and to be capable of improvising at a moment's notice. It is essential to have a good knowledge of a number of songs and/or dances.

It is hoped that in the future there will be sufficient gleemen to have two at each main camp, each with different specialisations. It is hoped that there will be enough staff for the gleeman not to have much responsibility in an age group and certainly not to be an acting group chief.

A. The Role of Glee at Camp.

Glee, in particular singing, is not only an activity but an important social feature. Thus it is the feeling of participation in an activity of which everyone is capable to a greater or lesser extent, that should be the aim of the gleeman in his leading of glee. It is something also which should develop. Children come to camp with a few songs collected from previous camps. Each camp should add new songs, not only to the books of the enthusiastic song-collectors, but to the bulk of songs sung night after night

If glee has its proper place in camp, children & staff should feel like singing the songs they sing at camp-fire during the normal daily activities, and on hikes,

This group function applies particularly to singing and dancing. Drama, on the other hand, deals more with the individual, and apart from the enjoyment factor, is an excellent means of encouraging a wide range of talents and stimulating the imagination.

## B. The Role of the Gleeman.

The role of gleeman, then, is that of impresario. It is his job to organise his own material so that it provides a reserve on to which he can easily fall back at the necessary moment, and to tap the resources of the entire camp, bringing out what every person can give. This involves a fair knowledge of the individuals, but especially of the age-groups, which itself is surely best obtained by working on glee activities within the groups.

The gleeman is also a leader, and consequently should work out in detail any project he wishes to carry out to give himself the confidence to cajole people into helping him. This kind of leadership which a gleeman has is not the same as group leadership. It involves an initial effort of encouraging individuals and groups to contribute ideas, which he must then immediately help to develop. This effort, for the sake of the gleeman, ought to be followed by a period when he is a consultant, available to give help when asked, as the plans take shape. The very nature of the gleeman's job means that he is unable to relax any of the time he is dealing with children, and he cannot make up a large amount of energy by going to bed early as he must spend time with the staff in the late evenings in order to keep them informed and to ensure their co-operation (see section on Other Staff). By making himself available for consultation at certain periods of the day, rather than running around trying to organise groups, he at least has a chance to recuperate a little.

To a certain extent the gleeman should also be a performer. There are some songs which are only effective in solo performance, and the occasional solo by the gleeman or other person is a valuable contribution to camp-fire programme. It is also easier to teach songs if the gleeman can sing them through beforehand.

## C. The Glee Programme.

This falls into two parts, preparation before camp and the individual camp-fire programme.

### (1) Beforehand.

The first thing is to make two lists, one of all the songs you know well enough to sing and lead at a moment's notice, and one of all the dances you do not need to look up to lead. The first should be pasted durably on your guitar or the back of your song-book, to be referred to in dim camp-fire light. The second should be equally as firmly attached to the gramophone or record container.

These two make life much easier. It is also an advantage to make a list and copies of a number of songs you would like to teach during camp.

To plan the glee events of the camp, you need to know roughly how much time there is which is not occupied by full camp activities, and when hikes are, and so forth. This of course you can find out from the camp chief beforehand. (In many cases the Camp Chief will have planned glee periods during the camp). Obviously, without having met your material, you yourself cannot finally decide what you want to do, but if you go with a number of ideas worked out and an estimate of how many days each one will take to prepare, you will be able to offer something where the children's imagination fails. This particularly applies to drama. Until drama becomes more widespread in Forest School Camps, you will not be able to rely on enthusiastic Trackers bringing their own copies of 'Stirring Border Ballads' or similar. It is worth taking a few copies of books of ballads, story plots of Shakespeare and so forth, to provide ready material for dramatisation. It is also possible to have simple scripts stencilled beforehand by F.S.C. if you plan something ambitious.

Children are asked to say on their application forms what musical instruments they are bringing, so it would help to find this out also.

#### (11) The Camp-fire Programme.

There has grown up a tradition in many camps that every camp-fire should be singing, and that only on the last night, at Merrymoot, should there be any variation. There is no reason why this should happen at all. If everyone is involved in a non-musical entertainment at some time during camp, Merrymoot will probably be of a much higher standard, and this also creates more interest in drama. There is also a place at camp-fire for story-telling, and poetry. It would be possible to make it the accepted thing for some group to put on some sort of entertainment most nights, which could be prepared during the Glee period.

The question of songs and the method of introducing new ones is dealt with more fully later, but here is an appropriate moment to say that it is not necessary to feed the Woodlings and Elves only on the very hackneyed old songs which are tedious in the extreme, like "Quartermaster's Stores", at least not every night. You must expect young children to have favourite songs, but they have become favourite simply because everyone knows them well. If you introduce a policy at the beginning of camp, that a less uninteresting and more musical song appears almost nightly on the programme, there is no reason why they should not cling to that as faithfully. It is also possible to sing one or two more advanced songs which you might feel belong really to Trackers or Pathfinders, while the younger children are still up, as they like listening even if they cannot sing, and the older children are less restless.

It is advisable to have an idea of how many songs (and also any entertainment) you are going to have time for before the first group go to bed, as this is the main part of camp-fire, and you may find yourself having only half the camp present when you want to teach the new song for the evening. So that younger children have maximum enjoyment from camp-fire, you should insist on a prompt start.

#### D. Other Staff.

The position of gleeman can be a difficult one. If he is going to carry out his function properly he has to make certain that the various groups preparing entertainments spend enough time on them, without it interfering with clan or group activity. This is where it is essential to co-ordinate with the staff of the group. This applies even more to clan; the gleeman must be aware of the clan list and bear in mind not only the immediate day but two days hence. Provided that the Group Chief of each group is asked the night before, whether he can spare the children you want next day, you will have his co-operation.

There is also another, more ticklish problem, that of members of staff who have no interest in glee and whose attitude to it may have an effect on some children, making your job very difficult. This is especially true of the problem of Tracker boys. Tracker boys are in the stage where they are acutely embarrassed about practically everything and terribly afraid of making fools of themselves. Thus they do not sing anything slightly 'cissy', and sometimes refuse to dance. The problem is often aggravated because some of the male staff whom they tend to idolize are themselves not over-fond of dancing. The best way to overcome this is to attack it before it starts, by having a meeting of all the staff, especially new staff, early in camp, and giving an outline of what you hope to do during camp, what sort of times during the day you expect to be doing it, and asking for their full co-operation, whatever their personal attitude to it may be. You will probably find you get a lot of extra help this way also. You should, of course, discuss your plans with the camp chief.

You should urge the staff to co-operate with you in giving a lead to children at camp-fire and dancing.

### PART I. SINGING.

#### E. Songs.

You do not have to know all the songs, but you should have a reasonable knowledge of enough to get you through the fortnight and give you some suitable for teaching to all age-groups. It would help to have lists of songs particularly suitable for each age-group, or to mark your list appropriately, bearing in mind that Pathfinders can be taught a very great number of new songs but however many suitably Elfish songs you have Elves cannot manage more than two or three.

The tradition of Forest School glee formerly included a number of little-known English folk-songs and the majority of the well-known traditional American ballads. These have recently been supplemented by an influx of American protest songs and songs stemming from the Aldermaston march. Although many of these (in particular the genuine universal protest songs) have been valuable additions, one should guard against an "Aldermaston clique" taking over.

Another difficulty is not so obvious. It is a good thing that more people are growing to know more folk songs through the records of Pete Seeger and Joan Baez - among others, but it is surely rather a pity if the impression on campers' minds is that "We will now sing that song of Joan Baez", rather than

"This is an old Anglo-American ballad about ....."

This means that the gleeman, if he is using this method of obtaining new material, should take as much note of the detail on the sleeve of the record as of the words of the singer.

#### (i) The Campfire Programme.

It is useful to have a rough idea of how many songs you are likely to get through in the evening. Also you can have a general programme in your mind in order to vary the songs. It is a good thing if all the gleeman's suggestions are the better sort of song, and not necessarily the most well-known. It is a safe bet that all the popular well-known songs will be asked for anyway and the gleeman is the only one who has a chance of widening the campers' range. There are a lot of really good songs; it is a pity they are not sung more. It is as well to start off with a well-known song or two, suggested by the gleeman, and led with gusto, to get people singing. Fairly soon, ask for a request, preferably from a young child. From then on requests can alternate with gleeman's suggestions, or as the gleeman wishes. After a night or two, the gleeman will be able to sense whether a quiet song or an energetic one is called for, and when Rounds are appropriate -- they are an excellent means of getting everyone involved. It should be possible to teach one song each night, if not to the whole camp, to Woodlings upwards. This includes T Rounds, and does not mean a long ballad of six verses every night. Also there is probably sufficient talent (which it is the gleeman's job to hunt out) to have a solo or duet from among the children, and it is useful sometimes to introduce a new song by teaching it to a Group first, who perform it at campfire. (see later)

After the younger children have gone to bed, the gleeman can be a little more ambitious, and introduce more difficult songs. The question of Pathfinder campfire is dealt with later. By half-way through the evening the gleeman has ceased to be the active leader and has become more the co-ordinator of a group activity.

(ii) Introducing Songs.

Every time you sing a new song, the message fails to get through to a small percentage of the listeners. Every time you sing an old one, a similar proportion do not think about the words they are singing because they are so familiar. In the first case it is due to the incapacity of many people's minds to absorb anything by ear, and in the second case it is simply force of habit. One way of overcoming these problems is by introducing songs, not only as words and music but as stories or as expressions of something. The origins of folk-songs are tremendously interesting, quite apart from their content. But even their content is something that adults take for granted forgetting that a large number of children really know a rather garbled version of what the gleeman is actually singing, which means little to them.

The introduction need only be brief, but it helps a lot with new songs and wakens new interest in old ones. The method of introduction will be an individual thing, depending on how much the gleeman knows about the song, but an example would be "FOLLOW! THE DRINKING GOURD". 'This is a song sung by the Negro slaves before the Civil War. The slaves often tried to escape from their slavery, and really this is a message in code. Do you know what the 'drinking gourd' is? A real drinking gourd is the hollowed skin of a vegetable like a marrow, but here it means the Plough or Great Bear, which the message tells them to use to guide their escape. The rest of the song is the secret directions to the escape route and the person who is going to help them. It is also a work song; you can feel the rhythm".

Sometimes it is a help just to explain a single word. How many younger children know what a tarrier is, or the meaning of most of the words in "Waltzing Matilda"?

(iii) Teaching New Songs.

There seems to be no one best way of teaching songs. Each gleeman has his own preference and develops his own method. However, there are five general methods, each with advantages and disadvantages:

- calling; the gleeman calls out the line of the song while the singers are finishing the previous line. This is not much use unless the gleeman has a loud clear voice, nor if the song is completely new, but it is useful as a reminder for songs partially known.
- teaching of chorus, singing of verse; the chorus is learnt and practised, and the gleeman sings the verses for a night or two until the words have sunk in. This is probably the best way of teaching chorus songs with interesting words. It is not much fun if the chorus is just 'o-o, heave-ho', or similar.
- a verse each night; the gleeman sings the song right through the first time to put the story over, and teaches one verse each night by repetition until the song is known. This is obviously good where the verses are complicated, and without a chorus, but the song has to be interesting to hold the attention. It is probably better to teach it to a small group and people can sing as far as they know each night until it is known.
- teaching of groups; teaching Trackers (for example) a song during Group Campfire (see later) or daytime, and they sing it as a group, first night as a performance, later as Their Song which everyone joins in as they get to know it. This has the advantage that other children will ask the Group for the words during the day.
- solo until known; gleeman or other persons sing the song solo several nights until people can remember it. This is good with small groups but at a large campfire with young children it is much more of a performance that is pleasant to listen to, rather than teaching. However, it does make the younger children familiar with good but difficult songs where your real intention is to teach it to Pathfinders. The exception would be an amusing song, which ceases to be so if split up, and which also bears repetition. This also applies to the 3rd method.

(iv) Treatment of Songs.

There are a few songs, like rounds and "question and answer" songs, (e.g. "There's a Hole in my Bucket") which need to be sung in parts. Some songs sound well only as solos, others only when the whole group sings together. There are many good songs which can be sung in a variety of ways, but at camp they tend to be sung in one traditional way.

One of the banes of camping with young children, as previously mentioned, is their conservative choice and treatment of song. The tedium of this can often be overcome by a new approach, such as splitting the song between boys and girls, or some other way, introducing an 'echo' where there is repetition, or even by using actions. This not only breaks it up but makes children more aware of the content and meaning of the song.

e.g. "On Ilkley Moor B'ahrt 'At."

Girls: Where hast thou bin since I saw thee?

Echo: (I saw thee)

Boys: On Ilkley Moor B'art 'at. "

and so on.

It is often the case that the less interesting songs have a more interesting version, which is just as much fun as the usual one. 'The Great American Railway', though popular, is not really a very easy song to sing, and it is never sung very well. A similar story with a pleasanter rhythm, tune and words is 'poor Paddy Works on the Railway', which any child above eight years should be able to manage. Another method is to alter the tempo of the song, or experiment, with different tempos during the course of camp.

F. Divisions for Glee.

Group fires provide opportunity for a smaller group and the greater freedom of action that this implies. Of course on hikes away from standing camps the groups have this, but there is some value in having one evening before the groups go out on hike when each group has its own fire led either by group staff or a Pathfinder who is keen on glee, with the gleeman visiting each group in turn, and possibly taking advantage of this to teach a different new song to each group. In this way the gleeman can get to know each group as a small unit, and also plant seeds of ideas for Merrymoot. The group fires need not replace Campfire, and in any case it is more pleasant singing round a fire in the twilight than in the middle of the afternoon.

Pathfinders: Every night there is in a sense one group campfire, that is to say the Pathfinder group and their staff, after the rest of the children have gone to bed. The problems of doing glee with Pathfinders are of course akin to the usual problems involved in Pathfinder leadership, but one or two will suffice, as in this more than any other group the individual gleeman must follow the dictates of his experience and own personality.

Firstly Pathfinders tend to be a fairly closely knit group which rather resents outsiders especially if they show any signs of authoritarianism. If they are in the main old campers, they probably feel with justification that they are quite capable of running their own glee sessions without any leadership. There is a temptation for very young gleemen here to 'muck in' with what is virtually his own age group anyway, in order, as he thinks, to break the ice, but it is pretty certain that he will find himself in a midden of dirty songs -- and probably jokes -- instead of doing what he really intends; taking advantage of the musical capacity and knowledge of folksongs in the group by singing and teaching some really good songs, and of using a guitar intelligently.

This is not an indictment on the low tastes of Pathfinders in general. It is just that one of the ways by which insecure people in a tolerant group make themselves feel at ease is by telling dirty jokes or stories. The main problem is that it is very contagious and ruins the atmosphere for anything else. Probably it would be as well to treat seriously any suggestion for such a song at the beginning of the session, because the sort of person who would make it would be shy and needing to feel part of the group, which he will not if the gleeman frostily implies that such a thing is not done. It is the job of the gleeman to steer immediately afterwards on to a selection of interesting songs and to draw on those members of the group whom he knows have camped for several years for suggestions. In this way he will get their support and also draw in the newcomers who will have a certain dependence on the old campers and a desire to know the customs. This way the leader remains tacitly 'staff', yet does not dominate.

After the initial session or two, some pattern will emerge. Either the gleeman will be expected to run a short glee period, after which the Pathfinders and their staff have their supper, to which the gleeman may or may not be invited, and carry on discussions and so forth on their own, or else the period after the trackers have gone to bed is regarded as free for anything which may come up, in which case here would be an opportunity to interest Pathfinders in leading glee with younger children - a benefit for all concerned -- and any other schemes he may have in mind.

It is, however, important to note that not all Pathfinder groups are interested in continuing singing after the Trackers have gone to bed. They may feel that the gleeman's attempts to prolong camp fire are unwelcome, and that their activities during this period should be in their own hands and those of their leaders.

## PART II.-- D A N C I N G

### G. Role of the Gleeman.

In leading dancing the gleeman is much more the positive director than in the case of singing. It is so much easier for things to go wrong. He needs at all times to be extremely well prepared, and cannot afford to experiment with a half-known new dance except with a small and proficient group. In order to keep the attention of the dancers, they must be constantly aware of his presence, even if he is not actually speaking, so he cannot afford to fiddle with the record-player or his notes. This sounds very authoritarian, but it need not be. It is simply that the dancers are waiting to hear directions for the next dance, and become naturally impatient and talkative if left to stand around.

### H. Preparation.

It is hoped that in the future each camp, standing and mobile, will be equipped with a portable record-player and a selection of popular country dance records (45 r.p.m.)

It is also hoped that a dance book, containing a large number of dances will be produced alongside the song book.

Hence, on the whole, the job of the gleeman will be easier.



Experienced campers will all at some time have danced nearly every one of the usual dances in the FSC repertoire. However, they will all need reminding of the movements. Also it is very unlikely that all the dancers will be experienced campers, even on a mobile camp, so the gleeman needs to give clear instructions and directions before each dance. Hence preparation. It is an idea to practice calling in time to the record before camp, if this is available.

#### I. Organisation of Dancers.

It is never safe to assume that your dancers are capable of organising themselves. In other respects they probably are, but unless they are keen and experienced dancers most of the concepts you are dealing with will be totally new or but dimly remembered. At the first session of camp, therefore, there is little point in saying 'Form longwise sets of four couples, boys facing girls.' It needs to be done in easy stages: e.g. 'Everyone take a partner; (here it helps at first to have other staff putting the shy ones in twos); now, each couple find three other couples, and the boys make one line and the girls make another, so that each person is now standing facing their partner. This is called a longwise set of four couples.' For the first few dances, it is advisable to get everyone to walk through, otherwise some children will never grasp the technical terms which make things quicker later on. Make them do the movement (e.g. right hand star) and tell them afterwards what they have done; it sinks in, and prevents impatient people who know the movement from pushing the less experienced through it without giving them a chance to work it out and thus learn it.

Two dances done thoroughly in this fashion should suffice for the session. After that you should be able to walk them through a dance quickly, simply calling out the movements, and of course calling them again during the music. After the first session it should be enough to walk them through the first dance of the session slowly enough to see that they remember the technical terms. But the 'easy stage' approach of organising the sets applies all the time. By the time it is no longer really necessary you will need it for the psychological effect that everyone will be so pleased with themselves knowing exactly what to do that they will be a very receptive group.

The gleeman's approach is important. Shouting is not a good idea. It is hard on the gleeman, who may have to sing in the evening, and it is difficult to sound pleasant and amiable when shouting. If you cannot make yourself heard easily then you have too large a group, and should make arrangements to deal with smaller numbers next time, perhaps by arranging with the staff to stagger the times of arrival. The best method is to give loud, clear sounding instructions, speak slowly, which gives extra resonance even in a field. You should feel and appear in command, even if you secretly doubt that you are. There is also a certain advantage in dancing in twilight or artificial light, when people are naturally quieter.

#### J. Teaching of Dances.

It is up to the gleeman to assess the difficulty of the dance and the capabilities of the dancers. If a dance is obviously rhythmically complicated and/or involves more than the standard movements, then it is best for everyone to walk it through once without the music. On the other hand this can be a tedious process, and after the dancers have had a few sessions' experience it should be enough to have one set of people who know the dance or at least are quick at picking it up, either just dancing it to the standard calls, or perhaps walking it through and then dancing it. Then that set should split up among the less experienced sets, partly to assist, and partly because having one proficient set and three muddling ones is not very encouraging for anyone, however much the good set enjoy themselves,

With the exception possibly of 'Strip the Willow' and 'Cumberland Square Eight', it is a good idea for the gleeman to go on calling the movements for at least five sessions. It will at least save someone the job of re-teaching the same dances again next year.

## PART III. --- D R A M A.

K. The function of Drama at Camp.

The word 'drama' usually seems to conjure in people's minds either the image of a proscenium stage with elaborate props, or of rather 'arty' individuals trying terribly hard to 'express themselves'. The two are very different, and what is involved in drama at camp is very different again. Some props are necessary to assist the imagination not of the audience but of the child; and what the average person is likely to express of himself will probably be a vivid reflection of such cultural influences as television, and pretty tedious to all. The real value of camp drama is the encouragement of all age groups to express ideas, and characterization.

Camp drama falls into two groups, a group activity and preparation for Merrymoot. In a sense they are inter-related, of course, but for the gleeman they present separate opportunities:

(i) Group Activity: Here the gleeman has the group for a period during the day. Here is the opportunity to involve each child in an exercise of imagination. One method of doing this would be to put the children in pairs and suggest they act or mime a scene from everyday life, for the benefit of the others. This plays down the impression that drama must be unreal and exaggerated. A development of this could be that the gleeman or one of the children suggests a theme, e.g. a quarrel, a court scene, a person seeking friendship but rebuffed. This gives endless scope for imagination.

Another possibility for group activity is the dramatisation of ballads or the development of a story sequence given by the gleeman. Here you must be careful to consider the tastes of each age group. Elves of both sexes respond to the supernatural, though boys prefer a little robustness, not too much 'fairy tale'. Woodlings of both sexes like blood and thunder, demanding lusty action and lots of imagination. They may however also respond to a ballad, which being a little closer to life would be appropriate for Trailseekers also, provided it was not at all 'soppy'. By the time a child is ten years old he is capable of acting a part and working out fairly adult situations. It will no longer be a matter of playing an imaginative game. Between the ages of eleven and about fourteen it is probably better to steer clear of anything too fanciful and to use either the child's own experience or a basically realistic situation which has some link with the child's own experience or a basically realistic situation which has some link with the child's cultural experience, e.g. some incidents from Shakespeare, legend scenes from Resistance stories, historical events and so forth. It is useful to remember that in this age range there are the children who giggle, and those who take things seriously. The type of child who giggles finds more expression and feels more at home in comedy. This is not really as obvious as it looks; giggling has nothing to do with humour. However, whatever causes the giggling seems to be given healthy rein in developing a comic situation.

By the time a person is a Pathfinder he is capable of an adult approach to drama, and of having some idea of the history of the theatre, and some appreciation of the techniques involved in putting over situations. This Group can be expected to work out the details of its activities and preferably to have the ideas in the first place. The most the gleeman should do is to suggest a theme. They are past the stage of simply acting out impromptu a story told by the gleeman. The kind of impromptu scenes suitable would be where the gleeman suggests an abstract concept such as loneliness, fear, panic; which members of the group act or mime either individually or in small groups, not merely expressing the feeling but developing a scene to put over the idea. This is quite a demanding task. (One useful source of material for this group is the War Poets - Auden, Owen, etc.)

These suggestions give some idea of what we had in mind when introducing drama as an activity. The possibilities are of course great and the field is virtually untrodden.

This form of drama is an activity in its own right but it is a preparation for Merrymoot in the sense that it teaches a greater awareness of drama, widens the range of the children's ideas, and increases their facility for doing it.

(ii) Preparation for Merrymoot: Merrymoot practically always suffers from being forgotten until the last minute. This results in insufficiently rehearsed scenes, repetition of previous years' stunts and a generally rather low standard, considering the talent that is actually available. People frequently complain of lack of time to prepare things, but it really amounts to lack of prompting earlier in the camp and non-use of what time is actually available. The one time when the children's bodies are forcibly inactive and their minds correspondingly active is rest hour. If the gleeman can arrange to do so, it is often useful if he visits a group per day after the period of "staff cuppa" when Camp Chiefs like to discuss matters with the staff, assisting in the development of good, well-thought out and later well-rehearsed schemes for Merrymoot. Necessary physical rest is not interfered with but useful mental energy is channelled.

This accounts for time in which to prepare, but what should be prepared? Here the emphasis is no longer on the development of the imagination, but on presentation before an audience. There has been a tradition that Merrymoot stunts should amuse, and indeed bend over backwards in the attempt. This is all to the good, provided it is successful. Intelligent children are capable of conceiving bizarre and highly amusing situations, without any sort of prompting. This has always been evident at Merrymoot. With a little preparation and some tactful pruning from the gleeman (and encouragement of the more original aspects which are often played down through lack of confidence) some of these scenes should be outstandingly good. Stock stunts have their place of course. They must be good to have survived in the children's memory, but they can only be somewhat second best to spontaneous originality.

Sometimes it is easy to forget that serious pieces can have their place. It is difficult to put over a straight playlet in the short time available for each item, but there is tremendous scope for dramatising songs, or linking together songs in a theme, with perhaps a few words. A somewhat complicated example would be a sort of pageant of progress, using the ample supply of protest and oppression songs to trace a history of struggle from the American Negro slave through various oppressions of the twentieth century such as industrial strife, colonial struggles, and perhaps ending in the tone of the original with a representation of the Washington March. This example would be too complicated for Merrymoot, and may not be advisable in that form, but it provides an instance rich in possibilities for development on a smaller scale.

#### L. Material available.

Your primary origin of material will be children. People have doubted this, and have suggested that the gleeman will be overworked thinking up new ideas. With a little encouragement practically any child who comes to camp is capable of producing most original ideas, and will in many cases make a far superior job of developing them than the gleeman can with a group who simply does as he tells them. Most people, however, need a little help and some suggestions about expanding their ideas, but this does not make much demand on the average adult imagination. On the other hand, it is advisable to have some workable ideas in reserve for emergencies.

This applies to impromptu group activity and to Merrymoot. You will almost certainly want to use other material though as a basis for children to act out scenes. Some hints of suggestions have been given, but here are some more:

Scenes from Shakespeare: any short, complete scene where the story can be easily told,  
e.g. Henry IV (i) scene where Falstaff robs the carriers at Gadshill and Hal robs him,  
(tragic mime) death of Romeo and Juliet, death of Hamlet (dramatic) conspiracy and  
death of Julius Caesar.

Ballads: plenty available in any anthology of English and Scottish Ballads.

Belloc: Cautionary Tales.

Legend: King Arthur's Knights, Beowulf, Greek myth, Aeneid, Odyssey.

History: best source is probably primary school history book (or own knowledge!) Also modern  
tales of Resistance.

Early Drama: Chester Cycle, York Cycle, Wakefield Cycle.

N.B. Mostly in Middle English: try for translations.

Modern Poetry: War Poets, Auden, Owen, Brooke.

#### M. Conclusion.

These notes have provided a general, and, it is hoped, a comprehensive introduction  
to Forest School Camps glee. It is however something where field work is the primary concern and  
theory a useful guide. The subject has been dealt with generally, using particular examples,  
and not much has been said about mobile camps or special camps. To these the same  
principles apply, but a gleeman should certainly find it easy to accommodate to any situation  
less strenuous than the basic one of a large standing camp.