

THE "OVIDIU" SCOUT COHORT AT THE FIRST NATIONAL JAMBOREE (PIATRA NEAMȚ – 1930). IMPRESSIONS' ALBUM

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Summary: *This article presents the "Ovidiu" Scouts Cohort from Constanta through an „impression album” from the First National Jamboree (Piatra Neamt - 1930). The album is part of the patrimony of the National History and Archaeology Museum of Constanta, being a donation of Marin Gh. Benghieuș, a scout and author of Romanian scout history.*

Keywords: *„Ovidiu” Cohort, jamboree, album, 1930, Romania.*

Globally, the Scout movement was founded by Lord Baden-Powell in England in 1907. In Romania, this movement was “imported” by Professor Gheorghe Munteanu-Murgoci, who also got the Romanian Royal House involved in this movement. The first scout patrols were formed at the “Gheorghe Lazăr” High School in Bucharest and the movement gradually spread throughout Romania. In April 1915 the first Scouts’ Regulation was issued and, on 8 April, the law was passed which created the Romanian Scouts Association as a juridical body under the high patronage of King Ferdinand I. The Commander of the Great Legion was Prince Carol II, while the President was Adj. Col. Grigore Berindei¹.

By Decree no. 961 of April 8, 1915, the Romanian Scouts Association, with 34 legions in all the counties, with 58 cohorts, 192 commanders and 12966 members was established. In Dobrogea, the "Queen Elizabeth" Legion, based in Constanta, consisting of the Constanta and Medgidia cohorts, was set up, while in Tulcea the "Ion Voda the Terrible" Legion was established, with the headquarters in Tulcea and the cohorts of Tulcea and Măcin.²

The scouts participated in the battles of the First World War on all fronts.

Romanian Scouts Association representatives attended the first two World Jamborees (London - 1920 Paris - 1922), Romania became a founding member of the World Organization of Scouting.

In 1922, prince Nicolae took the lead of the scout movement. In the same year, the Association of War Scouts 1916-1919 was established. A delegation, headed by Prince Nicholas, participated in the Third World Jamboree (England -1929).³

Taking as model these jamborees, Prince Nicholas organized such meetings on a national level, to be held every two years. Their preparation was entrusted to General Ion Manolescu, Deputy Commander of the Grand Legion, and Colonel Ulisse Sâmboteanu, Director of Scouting. The first national jamboree took place in 1930, in Piatra Neamt. They were followed by jamborees in: Sibiu - 1932, Mamaia - 1934, Brasov - 1936.

In 1937, King Carol II abolished the scout movement, replacing it with the guard movement.

The beginnings of the scouting movement in Constanța began in the autumn of 1915. The committee was chaired by magistrate V. Popovici, vice-presidents N. Negulescu - the Principal of "Mircea cel Bătrân" High School in Constanța - and Lt. Colonel Grigorescu.⁴ The cohort was established by a teacher of the same High School, N. Constantinescu-Pană. The Legion was given the name "Queen Mary". The cohort originally consisted of 152 people, the vast majority of them being high school students. The motivation of the founder of the cohort for a small number of scouts was for it "not to be endangered in its beginnings by an agglomeration of unselected

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¹ Murgoci, Diaconu, 2015, pp. 59-62.

² Benghieuș, pp. 17, 91, 93.

³ Murgoci, Diaconu, 2015, p. 63.

⁴ Benghieuș, p. 37.

elements." The activities organized by the Mircian scouts were aimed at making the principles of scouting and fundraising known. In this sense, they met every Friday at "Mircea cel Bătrân" High School, their gatherings including music shows, lectures, and conferences. On 8 March 1916, the swearing in of the "Ovidiu" cohort was attended by scouts from Sinaia, Bucharest, Galați and Focșani. This solemn event - transformed into a true celebration of the whole town - enjoyed the significant presence of Prince Charles II, that of Prince Nicolae and founder of Scouting in Romania, Professor Gheorghe Munteanu-Murgoci.⁵

The Constanța scouts participated in World War I battles, many bringing their ultimate sacrifice for the establishment of Greater Romania. Among them there were students and teachers of the "Mircea cel Bătrân" High School in Constanța.⁶

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In this article we stop on a "memo notebook" from the first national jamboree, held in Piatra Neamt, between August 5-25, 1930. 27 cohorts and 7 legions participated in this assembly, totalling ca. 2000 scouts. There were also representatives of Germany, Poland, Hungary, France and Czechoslovakia.

Marin Gh. Benghiuș wrote that *"the main purpose of the Jamboree was to establish friendship between scouts, to learn and compare the understanding and improvement of each individual in relation to the collective life of the camp."*

The secondary goal was to make scouting and the benefits of the life in community known to the audience. Each cohort has organized its tents in the necessary terrain. In the tents the scouts prepared the food and ate and that is also where they slept."

The official opening of Jamboree took place on August 6, 1930, at 9 o'clock. The leadership of the Romanian Scout was represented by the commander of the Great Legion, prince Nicolae, his deputy, Ion Manolescu, Colonel Ulisse Samboteanu - the director of Scouts, Lt. Col. Panaitescu⁷ - the director of the Jamboree. There was also N. Ioaniu, the host town's mayor.

The Jamboree program included: the raising of the camp, the opening ceremony, contests, hiking, and the dismantling of the camp.⁸

Among the participants were representatives of "Ovidiu" Cohort from Constanta. The most prominent person in this "notebook" is the secretary of the mentioned cohort, Gheorghe Dragan. At this jamboree, the Marine Scouting Team of the "Ovidiu" cohort was responsible for the watch within the Direction for the Organization and Supervision of the Camp.⁹

The "album" of memories¹⁰ is part of a donation by Marin Gh. Benghiuș, the "historian" of the Romanian Scouts, who had the good will to sell the "Romanian Scouts History", photo albums and important documents of the association to several museums in the country, including the Museum of National History and Archaeology from Constanta.

The cardboard document has ... pages where we find impressions of the jamboree participants. Among the signatories, we find names of scouts from different parts of the country and from abroad. I have not been able to decipher the signatures of some of those who have completed the pages of the book, but I have found some of the readable names in Maron Gh. Benghiuș's History.

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⁵ Negulescu, 1934, passim; Benghiuș, p. 37; Murgoci, Diaconu, 2015, pp. 59-60.

⁶ Dumitrașcu, 2017, pp. 227-236.

⁷ Benghiuș, p. 307.

⁸ Benghiuș, p. 307; Dimăncescu, 2011.

⁹ Benghiuș, p. 309 – MINAC (National History and Archaeology Museum Constanța), inv. no. 4249.

¹⁰ MINAC, inv. no. 4234.

Notebook

Title page *ACR – National Jamboree P. Neamț 1930* signed Drăgan

Fighting oneself/Is the most wonderful victory illegible signature

• *Woe of those who have/ A small soul and a big house!/Happy the one who can lift up/ His grand soul in a small house! Vasile Militaru 24/08/1930*

• (illegible) *del Polska*
• *Craiova prof. Stahie*
• *prof. Livezeanu – Bacău*
• *Prof. M. Lefteriu – commander of Leg. Bucur the Shepherd Bucharest*
• *P. Lințescu – Colony of the Regular School, Piatra Neamț*
• *Congratulations on behalf of the Lady Ileana Cohort Prof. Maria Mangri Cernăuți commander of the cohort. Piatra Neamț, National Jamboree 23/8/1930*

• Text in polish. Illegible signature.
• Text in polish. *Jedisejenski*
• *Comander Adjupei (illegible) 23.VIII.930*
• *Major Deria from Budapesta delegate of the Hungar. Feder. 1930/VIII/23/ Dr. Alex Leucree (?) – com. of the Bucharest IV Verde centuria*
• *D. V (illegible) – primary physician Red Cross Hospital*
• *For my dear friends (illegible) illegible signature architect 23.VIII. 930*
• *Illegible of Molnar – Comun. Int. de Hongrie*
• *Constanța illegible*

Best health Al. I. Goia – Coh. „Fântânele” Cluj

Your effort in this respect will reach far and wide and its result will be satisfactory Al. Bistriceanu – com. Cluj

With all my heart and offering my life-long friendship Gheorghe Dinică 1930, august 23 P. Neamț general I. Manolescu

• (illegible)
• *Victor C. Mihăilescu*
• *C.N. Mihăilescu*
• *Nicu Gabor Ploiești*
• *Prof. Anatole P. Mihailovici, Chișinău, Insp. Gl. of Bessarabia*
• *Jamboree de Sibiu 25 Jullet 1932 D.V. Lapan chef Adj. Delegation Francais*
• *Prefect Chișinău*
• *Prof. illegible com. Coh. Kișinev*
• *3 illegible signatures*
• *Gh. Isacescu Prefect County Neamț*
• *Illegible French text.*
• *„Romanian Book” Delegation, in memory of the days spent together during the P. Neamț jamboree, with love and affection Ionel Alexandrescu*
• *Giovanni de Francesco*
• *23.08.1930 Pleasant memory for the centuria of the sailors from the <<Ovidiu>> Cohort-Black Sea and all the sympathy for the secretary – Mr. Drăgan*
• *Cpt. Hăimă (illegible) – cmd. of Cuza Vodă cohort (Covurlui)*
• *As a token of admiration and respect for the work of Mr. Drăgan, in the organization of his centuria Șt. Constantinescu – editor of „Cuvântul [The Word]” newspaper.*

- *For Mr. Drăgan the sympathetic commander of the centuria of the „Ovidiu” scout cohort from Constanța as a token of remembrance C. Vlad journalist editor of „Opinia [The Opinion]” and „Vremea [The Times]”*

- *The able and objective cinematographic eye (?) has sympathized with the „Ovidiu” cohort from Constanța and will show the country its discipline. Film director Marius Iacobescu 23/8/1930 illegible signature*

- *Good health wishing comand. of Botoșani Legion N. Adam 23 Aug. 1930 Command. of the Netty Adam Girls Scouts cohort Margareta Gheorghiu*

- *Valentin V. Grasa (illegible- Physical education teacher.*

- *Gerhard Albvich... (illegible)*

- *With friendly affection illegible signature – Head of Office. P(illegible)*

- *Vasilescu Ioan Bucharest Coh. III Blue A Memory from the Piatra Neamț Jamboree 23/VIII/1930*

- *Affectionately for Drăgan prof. Simionescu – com. of Alex. Depărățeanu – Roșiorii de Vede cohort – Teleorman, Dora Simionescu 24.VIII/930 P. Neamț”*

- *I am very pleased as in Constanta too there are many scouts with great souls not high ranks, a living proof being Cdt. Drăgan good health illegible signature*

- *With all my love, a friend writing, one made through scouting at scouting gatherings Bucharest and P. Neamț Vărbănescu Blue Coh. Bucharest. Grădiștea – Vlașca*

- *To „Centuria” Commander Drăgan Gheorghe I wish to become at least the commander of the Black Sea Land and the admiral of the Marine Scouts Al. Dumitrescu from Bucharest¹¹*

- *Mr. Drăgan is an able scout. Illegible signature*

- *Affectionately to the able scout group commander Drăgan Gh. of the „Ovidiu” cohort with (illegible) work, honour and discipline” comand. Tabri Albastre Colinsec (?) –National Jamb. 1930 P. Neamț 21/VIII 930*

- *Pleasant memory from 23 August – visit of the Prince at the Piatra Neamț Jamboree M. Costescu*

As sign of recognition for fulfilling the duty cdt. Cent. Coh. „Grivița” (?) Gheorghiu - Ploiești

f. 18 prof. illegible „27 Martie 1918” Chișinău

V. Draganof – Chișinău L. Hajdeu

illegible 25 July 1931

f. 19 „To my most dear friend centuria commander Drăgan who fulfilled his duty at all times but who has unlucky, I admire his organization and tactics. With great love I wish him good Huber Tiberius (illegible) group commander IInd Negru Vodă cohort Buc.

- *24 august 930 Drăgan – P. Neamț*

I keep a pleasant memory of my friend and scouting comrade Mr. Drăgan Gh. Comandt. of the Coh. Ovidiu from the Piatra Neamț Jamboree 4 August-25 August 1930 and I wish him progress in his determination for the education of youth in scouting. Grijina Filip – cdt. Grivița Cohort, Ploiești N.I. Bărbieru (?)

With the most pleasant remembrance for the activities performed during the Piatra Neamț Jamboree 23/VIII/930” illegible signature – member in the Arbitration Committee

- *For you scout Drăgan I can only show admiration. I admire you because you have tried to impose order when it was required. Please keep the pleasant memory of the host who has tried to offer you a good welcome. I wish you that, in time, you will develop the character and strength to succeed in Scouting. Good health. Illegible. 24.VIII. 1930*

- *A wonderful memory of the marine scout from the older commander of the Com. Leg. Botoșani. (illegible) Petrescu*

¹¹ Teacher - IInd Negru Vodă Cohor Bucharest.

- 24.VIII.1930 *Let this be a wonderful gathering and the future ones the same in Piatra Neamț Lt.col. Cojocaru – cdt. Legion Tulcea County*¹²
- 23 August 1930, *Undoubtedly you are an admirable scout. Looking forward to a brighter future of scouting, I advise you to remain „Modest and hardworking” your entire life, I wish you to remain just as I have met you. Cpt. Marin Georgescu General Secretary of the Jamboree (stamp)*
- Newspaper „Dacia” through its envoy conveys salutations to the press in Dobruja at the scout jamboree F.B. Udr (illegible) 23 August 1930
- 23 Aug. 1930. *To be a man in this life / You have to work/By working I stay alive/ (illegible) you make for yourself. Panțu (?) P. Neamț*
- f. 23 *Good health and honour in everything I wish to a good scout. Commander of Coh. „Ceahlău” P. Neamț N. Pascu*¹³ *teacher 24 Aug.1930”*
- 24 Aug. *With amazement I admire the accomplishments of the <<Ovidiu>> Cohort from Constanța. Honour to the distinguished Lt. Mircescu. Thank you to Mr. Ionescu group commander and Mr. Drăgan Centuria commander and cohort secretary, who for a few minutes immersed us in a sublime and sweet atmosphere, one that only the Black Sea may produce. Good health! prof. illegible – cdt. „Voievodul Mihaiu” Cohort from Bucharest*
- *Honour to the „Ovidiu” Cohort for the way they have fulfilled their scouting 24 Aug. P. Neamț” D. Cioro... (illegible) – artist*
- *Visiting the „Ovidiu” Cohort from Constanța I have had the opportunity of witnessing the relentless efforts of my young colleague Drăgan Gheorghe secretary and commander of the cohort centuria. I wish him to maintain his current love of scouting forever „Mind, virtue and iron will” Cța, 26 Sep. 1930 Centuria commander in the Great Legion of Romania (illegible) Severin*
- *Czech text/ de Prague Tchecoslovaquie avec une Escursion de Petite Entente de Etudiants. Le 21 Marz 1931*
- *Work and character. Ahead with best wishes. Amiral Dantazzi (illegible) 1930*
- *H. illegible*
- *E.H. Crețulescu*
- *About lazyness, the truth/Was revealed by my grandma:/A man is just like water/ If he’s always still he spoils. Vasile Militaru Victoria V. Militaru*
- *I have a wonderful memory of the marine scout – who proved real scouting spirit Viorica Litzica 8.6.1931*
- *Marine scout Drăgan Gheorghe could be an example for anyone for he works tirelessly with all his dedication. From a scout who wishes him “good health”. 9.VI.931 illegible signature cent. I. „Voievodul Mihail” Bucharest*
- *9/VI.931 Centuria commander Drăgan from Constanța deserves love as his name is Drăgan and may he be worthy of the name of his cohort Lt.col. C. Ionescu – R 15 Inf. – P. Neamț*
- *9 June 1931 București - illegible singature – journalist*
- *9 June 1931 București - Gheorghiu – journalist „Basarabia” newspaper*
- *We’ve known you since you were little/Thrifty and hardworking/Always considerate and able today/Scout under a glorious banner/ Centuria commander/ of the scout cohort./ He is gladly looked upon/ In our Romanian country/ We wish you prosperity/ Wisdom, good luck and mirth/ And great health/ And to your parents as well. Brebenel and his family 28/7/931*
- *Work uplifts and elevates a man; honest work is the guarantee of success! Romanian! Love your country and kinsfolk!*

¹² „Ion Vodă the Terrible” Legion Tulcea.

¹³ Prof. Pascu, the commander of the Ceahlău cohort, was responsible for the Administrative Direction during this jamboree. Marin Gh. Benghiuș, *Istoricul cercetășiei din România [History of Scouting in Romania]*, p. 307 – MINAC, inv. no. 4249.

- *With faith in God, hope in duty and love towards your brethren, that's the way a Romanian, mine and your kin, should be! Constanța 12/III/1932 N.B.Mesian (?)*

On the last verso page of the notebook the following dates are:

On 17 Sept. 1935 entered service at the Federal Bank quit on 1 April 1936

16 April 1936 at DPM

1 November 1936 –DPM Social Office

15 Sept. 1937 DPM – Ovidiu Quarry (?)

13 April 1939 – IVth Division Secretary, Deputy Head of office III

1 April 1939 – (illegible) General Pensions Office

1941 – Deputy Head of office II

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