

# THE EARLY DAYS OF HONG KONG SCOUTING—PART 23E

## George Turner WALDEGRAVE MBE (1889–1966) (Colony Commissioner 1921–1934) Part V

*continued from Hong Kong Scouting Vol. 258*

"..... When Rev. George Turner Waldegrave took over the Colony Commissionership from Lieutenant Colonel Bowen in November 1921, scouting in Hong Kong was in her lowest ebb. A census taken in September 1920 shew a strength of only 139 members. Lieutenant Colonel Bowen worked very hard to revive scouting in Hong Kong. When Lieutenant Ramolf of the Dutch Navy was passing through Hong Kong, he had brought along with him some slides of scouting activities in other parts of the world. He gave lectures to naval and other expatriate communities about scouting and membership was dramatically increased. By the time Rev. G. T. Waldegrave took over the total membership of Hong Kong Scouts stood at 384.



Sea Scouts in 1930s

Rev. Waldegrave was a keen Sea Scoutmaster. This is hardly surprising in view of his earlier experience with the 1st Royal Naval Brigade and his posting to Hong Kong as the Chaplain of the Seaman Mission. Sea Scouting in Hong Kong was started in May 1921 with the assistance from the naval personnel from H.M.S. Tamar. Sea Scout training was started by selecting 4 members from each of the then existing scout troops for training by officers and ratings of H.M.S. Tamar. It was then left to Rev. G. T. Waldegrave to start the 1st Sea Scout Troop in October 1923. The 1st Hong Kong Sea Scout Troop was the winner of all Prince of Wales Banner Colony-wide competitions right from its beginning till the outbreak of the Second World War and the fall of Hong Kong to the Imperial Japanese Army on the Christmas day of 1941.

Rev. G. T. Waldegrave also revived the 1st Hong Kong Troop which was started by Lt. Col. Bowen (then a Major) in 1912. Lt. Col. Bowen himself was a devout Catholic and the

1st Hong Kong Troop was run as a Roman Catholic troop. It was an extremely well organised and large troop before the outbreak of the First World War with its own magazine published periodically. With the calling up of its scoutmasters for active service, the 1st Hong Kong Troop became dormant during most part of WWI. When Lt. Col. Bowen returned to Hong Kong and became the Colony Commissioner, he did all he could to bring it back to shipshape and membership was once again gone back to 80. However it was still suffering from an inefficient Scoutmaster. One of the first task of Rev. G. T. Waldegrave as Colony Commissioner was to resolve this problem and to bring better governance to the 1st Hong Kong Troop. ...." (to be continued)



1st Hong Kong Group circa 1920s



Sea Scout in 1920s