

PORTRAIT OF B.P.

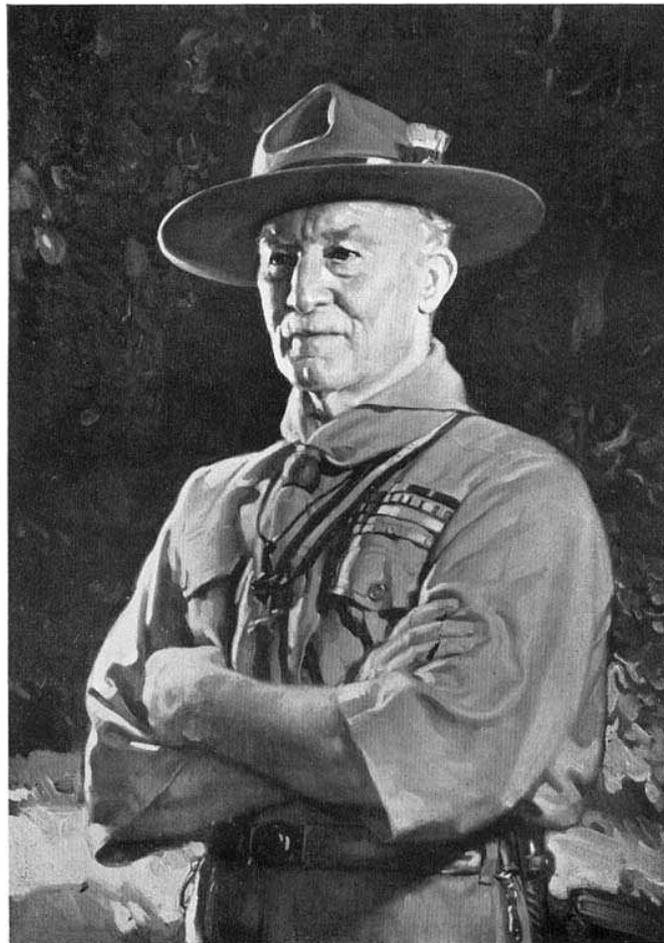


The life story of Lord
Baden-Powell of Gilwell,
Founder of the Scout
and Guide Movements

★ ★ ★ ★ by JACK COX ★ ★ ★ ★

EDITOR OF BOY'S OWN PAPER

Portrait of B.-P. is based on the radio script of the same title by Jack Cox which was first broadcast by the B.B.C. in the Home Service (all regions) on Sunday, February 24, 1957. The part of B.-P. as a man was played by Howard Marion-Crawford and the narrator was Deryck Guyler. Among those taking part were Olave, Lady Baden-Powell, G.B.E. (the Chief Guide), Lord Baden-Powell (Peter, B.-P.'s son), Colonel J. S. Wilson, C.M.G., OBE. (Hon. President of the Boy Scouts' International Committee) and Mrs. E. K. Wade, B.-P.'s secretary for twenty-seven years. The programme was produced by Trevor Hill, and was first repeated in the B.B.C. Home Service on June 2, 1957. A thirty-minute version for Overseas use was also produced in 1957.



from the portrait by David Jagget

LORD BADEN-POWELL OF GILWELL

1857-1941

PORTRAIT OF B.-P.

The Life Story of Lord Baden-Powell of Gilwell, Founder of the Scout and Guide Movements

by

JACK COX

Editor of Boy's Own Paper and Commissioner for Boy Scouts, London

First published 1957

EDITOR'S NOTES:

The reader is reminded that these texts have been written a long time ago. Consequently, they may use some terms or expressions which were current at the time of writing, regardless of what we may think of them at the beginning of the 21st century. For reasons of historical accuracy they have been preserved in their original form.

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This is particularly applicable where matters of safety or First Aid are concerned. Where in these books instructions regarding health and safety are different from those in your Association's current policies and manuals, you **must at all times follow the current practices** of your Scouting Association.

No matter what you do, your safety and especially the safety of those entrusted to your leadership is of the most importance.

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Portrait of B.-P.

A shabby street musician played his flute gently outside a basement kitchen window in a Paddington street on a sunny morning in the early spring of 1857. He was well known in the neighbourhood and coins were soon thrown to him from upper windows. A light horse carriage or two clipped past smartly while children played “whip and top” fitfully on the dusty, uneven pavement. In a narrow alley near by, there was some competition from a small barrel organ, whose owner was getting it in trim for the day’s toil in the West End.

The man with the flute continued to play outside No. 6 Stanhope Street (now 11 Stanhope Terrace, London, W.2.) because he never went unrewarded there. The keen-eyed, upright lady with the large family, whose home it was, loved old Welsh folk songs, and a flute well played in a minor key could be very attractive in London, even if the player was a street musician.

Suddenly a baby began to cry lustily. The basement window was flung open wide and a few coppers were passed to the musician, who knew it was time to go. As he went down the street and on his way, the baby, not for the first time, serenaded him. The children in the street played their games more noisily in the bright spring sun, scattering a winter’s dust in the gutters with their leather-thonged whips.

In the kitchen of No. 6 Stanhope Street, Iris, the maid-of-all-work, burst in with a loaded tray to tell the cook the latest news from upstairs. She had jotted down the new baby’s names on the back of an old envelope. Mrs. Powell, the lady in the upper room, had just revealed what they were to be. “Robert—Stephenson—Smyth—Baden—Powell” read the note. Cook knew at once that Professor Baden Powell had named his new son after his closest friend, Robert Stephenson the engineer; Smyth was Henrietta Powell’s maiden name, and Baden the Professor’s own Christian name.

THE PROFESSOR WHO MADE WINDMILLS

Young Robert was born on February 22, 1857; he was the fifth son and eighth child of the ten children of Professor Baden Powell and Henrietta Smyth. Professor Powell was a man of astonishing talent; he had friends in all walks of life, many of them influential in London and Oxford, and was a gifted mathematician who had resigned his living as Vicar of Plumstead at the age of 31 to become Professor of Geometry at Oxford University. He had a wide, practical knowledge of Nature, especially the wild life of the hedgerows and woods, and knew countless country customs of Kent and East Anglia. The Powell family had lived in the Suffolk countryside for centuries. Professor Powell was also a skilled painter and caricaturist who loved making toy models from odd scraps of wood, cardboard and waste materials. His speciality was a working model windmill. Children loved him simply because he understood them.

Professor Powell was a widower of 50 with three children, aged 8, 5 and 3, when he married the lively and intelligent Henrietta Smyth, a determined girl of 21 who was a daughter of the famous, though rather eccentric, Admiral William Smyth, a descendant of the Elizabethan explorer, Captain John Smith, who went to Virginia and became one of the first American colonizers.

Robert Powell never knew his clever father, for he was 61 when Robert was born, and he died only three years later. Henrietta Powell was left at 35 to bring up or supervise a family of five sons and a daughter of her own (four of her ten children died in infancy), and three step-children.

She never re-married and devoted herself to her family, several of whom became well known in a variety of pro-

fessions and were a great credit to her. Robert was devoted to his mother and since she lived to be almost 89 she had a very deep and lasting influence on his life and work.

DERVISH DANCES AT PADDINGTON

Robert Stephenson was Robert's godfather. From baby days the family called Robert "Ste", which was the nickname used by Professor Powell for his old friend. So young "Ste" soon became interested naturally in railway engines. Although the family moved to No. 1 Hyde Park Gate South soon after Professor Powell's death, they kept up their Paddington friendships. As a small boy "Ste" spent hours with his brothers standing on the dirty bridges spanning the railway tracks near Paddington station. They waited for the expresses to envelop them in thick yellow smoke as they started on their long journeys. "Ste" and his brothers then performed wild dervish dances on the bridges, yelling away at the top of their voices. Young "Ste" was frequently reported to his mother by her genteel Victorian neighbours for this shocking behaviour in public. Wisely, she paid no attention to them.

Robert went for long daily walks in Hyde Park with his mother and family, and for country holidays in the summer to Wiltshire, the Wye Valley and Suffolk. He learned much about birds and plants from his mother and became closely attached to his grandfather, Admiral Smyth, who did not die until Robert was 8 years old. Admiral Smyth was a writer who paid his grandchildren a penny for every four errors they could find in his proofs. Robert was not very good at it and much preferred to go on long walks with his jolly naval granddad and listen to stories of the sea.

Admiral Smyth believed that no man needed more than five hours sleep each night. This idea fascinated young Robert. From his teens to the end of his long life he developed the same habit of needing only a few hours rest.

The emphasis in the Baden-Powell home (the hyphen was used from 1870 onwards) was on practical outdoor life rather than book learning. Robert helped his four brothers to build kites, model boats and yachts. Then they went to Hyde Park to operate them. The boys made dozens of model boats and had a fleet of their own on the Serpentine, where they all learned to swim. Crowds gathered on fine summer evenings to watch boat races organized by Robert's eldest brother, Warington.

PEASHOOTERS MADE FROM GAS PIPING

When the boys tired of boats and boating, they would send their home-made kites soaring into the sky. The Baden-Powells could always fly their kites higher than anyone else in Hyde Park. Sometimes they climbed trees to launch them from the topmost branches, risking a chase by portly park-keepers because they knew they could always out-distance them. Robert, lean and wiry, with a mass of freckles and sandy-red hair, was an expert tree-climber. He carried two or three homemade peashooters made from lengths of old gas piping and often peppered the park-keepers with them.

Mrs. Baden-Powell somehow found time to do social work in London and she talked about it to her family in the evenings. Young Robert listened intently, and at 8 he wrote *Laws For Me When I Grow Old*. This is what he said:

I will have the poor people to be as rich as we are, and they ought by rights to be as happy as we are, and all who go across the crossings shall give the poor crossing sweeper some money and you ought to thank God for what He has given us. I can tell you how to be good. You must pray to God whenever you can. You cannot be good with only praying but you must try very hard to be good.

February 26, 1865

R. S. S. POWELL.

When B.-P. was 10 his mother noticed that he used both hands when painting and drawing. He even had brushes and pencils in both hands — at the same time. This worried her and she called in her friend John Ruskin, the art critic, to see him. Ruskin watched the boy carefully, gave him some useful advice, and then said: "Let him draw as he will, Madam." He knew the ambidexterity was a natural gift.

A FREE PLACE AT CHARTERHOUSE

B.-P.'s first school was in Kensington; then he went to one at Northwich in Cheshire for a short spell while alterations were being made to their London home. But when B.-P. was 11 he was sent to his father's old preparatory school at Rose Hill, Tunbridge Wells. Two years later he won scholarships to both Fettes College in Edinburgh and Charterhouse in London. B.-P. would have preferred to go to Scotland but there were many objections. The family had no connections there and finance was a pressing problem.

So B.-P. was sent to Charterhouse for two main reasons. The first was economy. The Baden-Powell family always had to be very careful with money. They improvised games and practised thrift. Throughout his life, in fact, B.-P. was never a rich man. He went to Charterhouse because it saved his mother money.

Secondly, the author William Makepeace Thackeray, who died in 1863, had been a close friend of the family and was also a celebrated old boy of Charterhouse School. (The circle of family friends also included Browning and R. L. Stevenson.) Mrs. Powell arranged a dinner party of friends to discuss the future of her children after her husband's death. Young "Ste" managed to slip into the dining-room in his night attire among the guests. Thackeray bribed him with a shilling to go back to bed before his mother saw him. From that moment it was clear that Thackeray liked the red-haired young "Ste" and wanted him to go to his old school. Mrs. Powell respected the wishes of her husband's old friend. The large Powell clan agreed with her decision.

FREE FIGHTS AT SMITHFIELD MEAT MARKET

B.-P. was a rather serious boy for his age. He loved to join in all the strenuous hobbies and interests of his older brothers, but had no close friends apart from his brothers. His curly red hair, fresh complexion and mass of freckles made him stand out remarkably among his fellows in his first year at Charterhouse. He had a pair of eyes that would twinkle at the slightest chance; he could run very fast but was never outstanding in physique.

Charterhouse was still in London, near Smithfield, when B.-P. first went to the school in 1870. A schoolboy war had gone on for years between the Charterhouse boys and the apprentices of Smithfield Meat Market. The celebrated headmaster of Charterhouse, Dr. Haig Brown, known as "Old Bill", did nothing to stop it, and, in fact, seemed to enjoy the constant skirmishes.

He found B.-P. and some other first-year boys watching one of the endless scraps. The scene can well be imagined . . .

1ST BOY: I say, they are outnumbering us. Are we allowed to join in?

2ND BOY: Baden-Powell, do you think we ought to join in?

B.-P. We are outnumbered. And look at all the stones and brickbats those Smithfield chaps have got on top of the wall!

1ST. BOY. Cave, here's "Old Bill".

(Dr. William Haig Brown appears on scene)

HAIG BROWN (*booms*). And what, pray, are you boys doing here? You, Baden-Powell, answer me at once.

B.-P. Please, sir, we are watching the fight.

HAIG BROWN. *Watching the fight?* Does it never occur to you, Baden-Powell, to join in a fight?

B.-P. Oh, yes, sir. But we are outnumbered, sir. It would be madness just to join in on this side of the wall.

HAIG BROWN. Then, Baden-Powell, you shall show us how good you are at tactics. If you boys go through that door in the side wall you could easily outflank them.

1ST. BOY. But the door is locked, sir. We've already tried it.

HAIG BROWN. My boys, I have the key in my pocket; here it is! And you, Baden-Powell, are responsible for returning it to me. Now I must go. I have some very important papers to read.

(Dr. Haig Brown disappears)

B.-P. Come on, chaps, quick! Attack 'em from the rear!

Raucous shouting and thuds continue. A pane of glass is broken somewhere.

SENIOR BOY ON WALL *(shouting in triumph)*. Reinforcements have arrived ! Oh, well done, Baden-Powell. It's hand-to-hand fighting, chaps ! Over the wall, now ! Up, Charterhouse !

That was B.-P.'s first lesson in tactics, and he had many opportunities at school to improve on them. Two years later Charterhouse moved to new buildings at Godalming in Surrey. There were then 120 boys in the school, and B.-P. was placed in Mr. Girdlestone's House.

Dr. Haig Brown paid special attention to the serious-faced, red-haired boy who seemed so popular with his school fellows and yet so much apart from them. He showed obvious signs of leadership to his headmaster, who discussed it with Mr. Girdlestone ...

DR. HAIG BROWN. Oh, Mr. Girdlestone, I want to talk to you about young Baden-Powell. We must watch him, you know. He has no father and our revered Mr. Thackeray had a close interest in him.

MR. GIRDLESTONE. He is an intelligent boy, sir. He was, perhaps, rather too ready to dash off to his home at Hyde Park Gate when we were in London, but now I can keep my eye on him better. He did well on the move here. I put him in charge of ten boys, eight desks, two footballs and a large quantity of bed linen and blankets.

DR. HAIG BROWN. He proved most useful, and lost nothing. Did you notice his liberality of feeling? He made a large pan of steaming hot cocoa for his boys as soon as we arrived here, before the rooms were even allocated. Most boys are so conservative by nature. Baden-Powell has a natural warmth for his fellow creatures, like his father and mother. Keep your eye on the boy closely, Mr. Girdlestone.

THE GOALKEEPER WHO ROARED DEFIANCE

B.-P. was neither a brilliant scholar nor an outstanding sportsman. In a school report Dr. Haig Brown wrote: *Your son's ability is greater than would appear by the results of his form work. In mathematics he appears to have lost interest in the study; during French he frequently seems to fall asleep.*

He loved cricket, cross-country running, hockey and Association football. He played for Charterhouse as a goalkeeper though he was not really tall enough for the position. His methods were quite unconventional. As soon as the opposing forwards were within twenty yards of the goal he would suddenly start roaring at them — blood-curdling Indian whoops of joy and defiance, just as he did on the railway bridges near Paddington station when a small boy. This would take the forwards by complete surprise. When they stopped, B.-P. would nip in at once and slam the ball upfield hard! Masters from other schools complained about “that odd goalkeeper”, but Dr. Haig Brown shrugged his shoulders and said blandly that football was really a game of tactics.

Two of B.-P.'s aunts presented him with football boots. Rather than offend either, he used to wear both pairs in any match in which he played, changing them at half-time. He served on the Committee of the Boat Club, the Hockey Club, the annual Sports Day and the School Museum. He upset his mother one day by taking part in a school debate and opposing the motion “that Thackeray is a greater writer than Dickens”. Throughout his six years at Charterhouse, B.-P. was not outstanding at anything, but was clearly an all-rounder. His masters said that his skill was above average in most things but not good enough to take him to high positions.

Out-of-school interests claimed most of his attention. A stretch of woodland near the school playing-fields, known as “The Copse”, was out of bounds. It became B.-P.'s early training ground in Scouting. Fifty years later, he said

that in “The Copse” he learned to snare rabbits and cook them in secret over a bushman’s fire, so tiny that no smoke ever gave him away. He learned to use an axe and how to walk across a gully on a felled tree-trunk. He hid his tracks, climbed trees to escape prowling masters, watched birds, stoats and water voles. B.-P. said, significantly: “It was in The Copse that I gained most of what helped me on in after life to find the joy of living.”

After school work was over for the day, B.-P. practised rifle shooting and markmanship, but spent much more time in a secret society in Mr. Girdlestone’s House known as “The Druids Club”. Each member had a special nickname. B.-P. was called “Lord BathingTowel”. The minute book, decorated with sketches by B.-P., read:

Any brother not producing a song or speech (within a minute after being called upon) the latter in length not less than 5 minutes (or one yard) shall be fined a bottle of lemonade.

B.-P. loved concerts. He studied wild animals and birds so closely that he could imitate their cries and calls with accuracy. This was always a popular turn at concerts. Dr. Haig Brown encouraged plays and musical entertainments in which the masters and their families also took part. B.-P.’s favourite parts were Cox in *Box and Cox*, and Dogberry in *Much Ado About Nothing*. At one concert B.-P. found himself sitting next to Dr. Haig Brown. There was a very long pause between two items and the audience grew restive.

Haig Brown whispered: “We must do something. Can’t you fill the gap, Baden-Powell?” B.-P. at once rushed on to the platform and gave an impromptu demonstration of a school French lesson. It brought the house down and remained one of B.-P.’s best stage turns for more than thirty-five years.

THE JOURNEY THAT COST NOTHING

During the long school holidays B.-P. revelled in the companionship of his brothers. Three of them, Warrington, George and Frank, went to St. Paul’s; George and Frank had then gone on to Oxford. B.-P.’s younger brother, Baden, followed him to Charterhouse.

Warrington Baden-Powell, B.-P.’s eldest brother, planned the family sailing holidays. He was the natural leader and imposed a strict naval discipline on his crew. Mrs. Baden-Powell was fond of the Wye Valley where she had family connections. Warrington decided the brothers should go there by water from London. They paddled up the Thames from Hammersmith to its source in three light folding canoes (two were made by themselves and a third was borrowed). Then they hiked seven or eight miles across the Cotswolds to the Severn, carrying their canoes, and at length joined their mother at Llandogo. “The journey cost us nothing,” said B.-P. with pride.

As the boys grew older they were attracted to yachting. They enjoyed many fine holidays around Poole Harbour and the Solent in a 5-tonner. B.-P. was often detailed as cook. If his meal did not meet with general approval he was made to eat it all up, even if it took two or three days. Warrington then bought a 10 tonner named the *Koh-i-Noor*. In this yacht the Baden-Powell brothers sailed all round the coasts of Scotland and England, from Poole to Aberdeen. They cruised in the Western Isles and in the English Channel, and had a dangerous but exciting adventure in a storm off Torquay. In talking of these sailing trips B.-P. first used the word “patrol”. They even went across to Norway in the *Koh-i-Noor* and had an exhilarating holiday cruising in the fjords.

THEIR BED WAS A HAYSTACK!

During the Easter holidays, and sometimes in the summer as well, the Baden-Powell brothers went hiking in north and central Wales, and sometimes in Scotland, carrying food and groundsheets in their knapsacks, and sleeping rough in the hay lofts of farms. In high summer they slept out in the open, top to toe, alongside hedges or haystacks, with a groundsheet below them and old newspapers and a blanket on top. B.-P. kept well illustrated log-books, making careful notes of all birds, animals, plants and flowers. He wrote, with pride and enthusiasm:

On these hikes we had to make our way by the map we carried. At night we used to learn to find our way in the dark by using different sets of stars as our guide. We made sketches of any old castles, abbeys or other

buildings that we saw and either read up or got someone to tell us their history.

When we arrived at a town we visited factories to see how cloth is made from sheep's wool, how paper is made from logs of wood, iron from lumps of stone, china from bones and flints powdered up, mixed in a paste and then turned on a potter's wheel — how furniture is made, how engines work, how electricity is used and so on.

In this way we got to know something about most trades and learnt to do some of them ourselves in a small way, which often came in useful.

At 19 B.-P., now a sixth former at Charterhouse, had still not made up his mind about a career. He wanted to travel but there was no one in the family who could help him. Two of his brothers were up at Oxford, where George had just won the Chancellor's Prize. Robert was interviewed but was found to be below the standard of Balliol College.

This did not please Dr. Haig Brown at all. He said tartly: "This shook my faith in Jowett's judgement of men." Dean Liddell of Christ Church was much more impressed with B.-P. but delayed his decision too long. B.-P. sat for an open examination for commissions in Her Majesty's Army. The results came out while he was on a yachting trip, and it was Dean Liddell who saw the pass list; 700 boys took the examination, B.-P. taking second place for cavalry and fourth for infantry. The first six names on the list were exempted from Sandhurst and given immediate commissions with two years' seniority. B.-P. went straight to Bombay from school to join his regiment, the 13th Hussars. He was then 19 years and 10 months old.

THE STAR TURN WHO HAD NO MONEY

In India B.-P. lost no time exploring a strange new world. With no resources except his pay of £120 a year he set himself to live on it. He always had the lowest mess-bills and shunned expensive parties and outings. Yet he rapidly became very popular in the regiment because he talked and listened well, and was interested in all the soldiers who served under him.

B.-P. sent his mother a long weekly illustrated diary-letter. He had plenty of time to practise his violin and a fluty-toned, bird-shaped musical toy known as an ocarina. He taught many songs to the local children, and studied birds and wild animals so closely that he soon had a new range of calls for his concert appearances. He literally did everything for the regimental concerts, acting in sketches and performing single acts. He also designed and painted the scenery.

For Christmas pantomimes B.-P. learned new tricks, and especially how to dive through a window or clock face painted on the scenery. He spent months learning to dive right across a wide stage through a paper hoop from one wing to the other. He found he could pack himself so small that he could be carried off a stage in a suitcase! Senior officers even called him "The Portmanteau". The skilled horsemanship of polo attracted him, and to save money he would pick up a raw pony cheaply at a village fair and train it himself as a polo pony.

On sick leave in London he learned *H.M.S. Pinafore* and *The Pirates of Penzance* by heart. When he returned to India he lost no time in putting on the Gilbert and Sullivan operas, painting the scenery and designing the costumes. The tempo of active service now quickened considerably. B.-P. learned the art of tracking from skilled natives, and became a competent surveyor and map-maker. His military sketching was now of a high standard; it was both rapid and accurate.

Unconventional ideas in the training and handling of men were encouraged by B.-P.'s brilliant Commanding Officer, Colonel Baker Russell, and the young subaltern revelled in the opportunity. Like Haig Brown at Charterhouse, Baker Russell encouraged B.-P. to use his own initiative even at the risk of making mistakes. He was sent out on long and lonely rides by himself in the deserts of North West India. Pigsticking, as wild boar hunting was called, thrilled him so much that at 26 he won the much-coveted Kadir Cup.

B.-P. was still very short of money but found a welcome supplement to his pay in writing illustrated articles on

life in India for magazines and newspapers in London. This soon became a steady source of income. The articles quickly made him a popular contributor; they also formed the basis of many of his later books.

In India B.-P. was frequently seen at work with both hands, but he usually wrote with his left hand. If papers were brought to the left-hand side of his desk for signing he would sign them with his left hand. If they were brought to the right side of the desk he used his right hand. That always amused his men.

THE BEARDED JOURNALIST MADE MAPS BY NIGHT

The carefree life of India came to an end when the 13th Hussars were sent to South Africa. Trouble with the Boers of the Transvaal seemed likely. Colonel Baker Russell gave B.-P. his first important role as a spy in the Drakensberg Mountains, and told him to get as much information about the mountain passes as he could. B.-P. grew a beard, disguised himself as a journalist and set off alone on a 600-mile ride. All his selftraining as an actor and an artist now stood him in good stead. He put up at Boer farms and studied the people and their ways. He corrected all the old British maps, made many new ones by night in his room, returned safely and was sent with much valuable information to England.

LUNCH-TIME IN A RUSSIAN BALLOON

Spying was in B.-P.'s blood, and he studied the role of a military spy very carefully. It had all the adventure and excitement which he loved, and enabled him to use his many talents to the full. B.-P.'s younger brother Baden was an officer in the Scots Guards who specialized in the study of balloons, kites and searchlights. Agents said that the Russians were using a new kind of searchlight and a balloon of strange design. Robert and Baden decided to try and find out more about them. B.-P. was 29, Baden 26. Disguised as simple tourists they went to Russia and stayed at an inn near the fort where experiments were taking place. B.-P. managed to climb into the balloon car while the Russian soldiers were having a meal and sketched the instruments. Then the brothers crept into the fort by night to watch the new searchlights in action, and escaped easily. They heard that the Tsar himself was to attend a further demonstration and, thinking something special was afoot, decided to enter again. This time the fort was alive with police. When B.-P. failed unaccountably to salute the Tsar's carriage in a road near the inn he was arrested at once and taken to St. Petersburg for questioning.

B.-P. asked for permission to return to the inn for his personal belongings. There a waiter, who was a German officer in disguise, warned him that a detective was watching the brothers closely. B.-P. at once told the detective that he and his brother were leaving for England, and ordered a cab from him to take them to the station. He relied on the detective making arrangements to pick up the British spies at the station. As soon as the cab left the inn, B.-P. ordered it to go to the quayside instead, where a small boat was waiting for them. Soon they were aboard a ship under steam and on the way to London. Once more bluff proved to be a trump card for B.-P.

A POLICEMAN SAW VITAL EVIDENCE BURN

After this incident B.-P. did not mind being arrested. He knew that he must never have evidence on him. He spied in Germany, Austria and central Europe. Once a village policeman arrested him on suspicion in Germany. B.-P. asked for permission to smoke, although he was in reality a non-smoker. He rolled himself two cigarettes and smoked them both while waiting for an escort. The vital military sketches he had made were on the two pieces of cigarette paper. The evidence was burnt in front of the policeman.

B.-P.'s adventures in Europe were cut short by the news that his uncle, General Henry Smyth, had been appointed G.O.C., South Africa, and wanted his nephew as aide-de-camp. B.-P. planned the Intelligence operations so well that the Zulu warrior chief Dinizulu soon surrendered and B.-P. confiscated his wooden bead necklace. Many years

later the same Dinizulu became President of the local Boy Scouts! (The wooden bead necklace is now the Scout Wood Badge, a symbol of the Gilwell-trained leader.)

B.-P.'s reputation as an unconventional Army officer was now considerable. Senior officers discussed his exploits as a spy while the N.C.O.'s and soldiers who served with him talked only of his skill as an entertainer. In Malta he even learned to be a hula-hula dancer! He spent his time at official dinners drawing caricatures of guest speakers on menu cards and passing them up to the top table. Soon he was Intelligence officer for the Mediterranean. In Dalmatia he first used his famous role of a butterfly hunter to obtain secret information. Gun positions were plotted with accuracy in his sketch book in drawings of the wings of butterflies.

B.-P. made a close study of mountain warfare by going for a sketching holiday in the very area where Alpine troops of the Austrian Army were using new equipment. Staff officers gave him breakfast and showed him their maps. In the evening he taught them how to do the hula-hula.

Then he went to the Dardanelles disguised as the nephew of the skipper of a grain ship, and arranged for the ship's engines to fail near the vital defences. While they were being repaired he went fishing in a small boat and obtained all the military information he needed.

“HE OF THE BIG HAT”

After some exciting skirmishes in Ireland, B.-P. was sent to Ashanti in West Africa; war threatened in an area where human sacrifice was practised. B.-P. wore the large hat with a broad brim which he had found so useful in South Africa. The Ashantis called him Kantankye, which meant “He of the Big Hat”. This appealed to B.-P.'s sense of humour. He stuck so closely to his big hat that it soon became as much a part of him as the cigar is to Sir Winston Churchill.

Mr. Bennet Burleigh, the official war correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, complained bitterly because six active British officers had part-time jobs as newspaper correspondents. He went to see the adjutant at headquarters....

BENNET BURLEIGH. Sir, it is monstrous that your serving officers are also working for British newspapers. It gives them an unfair advantage over myself and other bona fide correspondents.

ADJUTANT. But many officers have to supplement their modest pay in some way, Mr. Burleigh. What can I do about it? Is there—er—any one officer to whom you object?

BENNET BURLEIGH. Your Intelligence Officer, Baden-Powell, is both an artist and a writer, sir; his reports are exceptional. Take Kumasi, for instance.

ADJUTANT. What happened at Kumasi, Mr. Burleigh?

BENNET BURLEIGH. Only the *Daily Chronicle* and the *Graphic* carried news of the occupation. Baden-Powell was their correspondent, sir.

ADJUTANT. But the telegraph line was open to all correspondents!

BENNET BURLEIGH (*icily*). The telegraph line was broken down, sir, it is said, by a storm up-country immediately after Baden-Powell had sent his report to London.

ADJUTANT. You are not—er—suggesting, Mr. Burleigh, that Baden-Powell organized either the storm or—er—the breaking of the telegraph line?

BENNET BURLEIGH. Sir, this Baden-Powell is capable of *anything*. When a scoop occurs it seems very odd that it is always Baden-Powell who secures it.

THEY SLEPT WITH THEIR BOOTS ON

Colonel Baden-Powell soon went to Southern Rhodesia, then called Matabeleland, as Chief of Staff. The British Forces had the services of the most famous of all military Scouts, the American Fred Burnham, later “Chief Scout” to Lord Roberts. B.-P. and Burnham became great friends. B.-P. wrote:

Burnham and I had several scouting trips together against the Matabele, and in the course of these I learned a lot from him, especially from his experience of the Red Indians and their methods. Owing to his wonderfully quick eye in taking “sign” whether far away or close by, I gave him the nickname of “Hawk Eye”, and he gave me the name of Sherlock Holmes for piecing together the meaning of the sign after he had discovered it. So we worked in close accord with the happiest results.

We only differed in one detail, and that was the pace at which to ride one’s horse. He maintained that to walk and go slow saved the horse. I held that to loup fairly fast over the open ground and to halt when under cover was the better way. And neither of us convinced the other.

B.-P. wrote to his mother: “Burnham much approved of the results of your early development in me of the art of inductive reasoning.”

Burnham was equally impressed with B.-P. He wrote: “Baden-Powell is keen, cautious and courageous. He is an expert in hunting and finding dry, and almost smokeless, woods. He can even conceal a good-sized fire.”

It was in Rhodesia that people first began to comment openly on B.-P.’s need for very little sleep. He never slept more than four or five hours a night at any time in his adult life. But on service in Rhodesia and South Africa he rarely had more than two or three hours. In later years he described the time he saved by sleeping so little as his “extra” life. His working day in Rhodesia and South Africa averaged twenty hours a day seven days a week. B.-P. did not even allow his men to take their boots off at night. Every night he prowled round the tents tapping the blankets with his cane to see if his men were ready.

THE SUPERB BLUFF OF MAFEKING

The Siege of Mafeking made Colonel Baden-Powell world-famous at the age of 42. Lord Wolseley asked him to raise two battalions of Mounted Rifles and to organize the Police Force of Rhodesia and Bechuanaland with as little fuss as possible. B.-P.’s chief of staff was Major Lord Edward Cecil, son of the Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury.

B.-P. himself described Mafeking modestly as “a game of bluff from beginning to end”. In the early days of B.-P.’s assignment life can only be described as extremely funny. Horses and volunteers arrived from all parts of the veldt. Yet many men had never seen horses before, and certainly many of the horses had no respect for men. The main camp was a pantomime. Horses raced through tents and stores, or disappeared into the brown veldt, sometimes with riders but more often without. In all directions men were seen hitting the dust! B.-P. soon altered all this and in less than two months he trained 700 men to ride and shoot.

Mafeking was the depot for stores, arms and equipment; the risk of siege had therefore to be accepted. B.-P. had permission to place an armed guard there, but as the strength of the guard was not stated, he moved a whole regiment in at once, thus bluffing his way in.

The natives and Boer agents soon realized who the new resident of Mafeking was: *Impeesa* they called him, “the beast that prowls in the night; the wolf that never sleeps.” It was B.-P.! The Boer War broke out and he was surrounded in Mafeking. Compared with epics of the two World Wars, Mafeking was a very small show, but the defence of the town became historic because the tiny garrison of less than a thousand men, with few arms, equipment or food, held out against ten times their number for 217 days. Forces which could have inflicted great damage elsewhere were thus “bottled up”. B.-P. was everywhere. In his own words:

The whole thing was, and had to be, a game of bluff from start to finish. It was not what you would call a proper military feat of arms, but just a minor episode in the course of the greater campaign.

One bit of bluff was a megaphone we manufactured. It carried twelve hundred yards, so in order to give the enemy no rest at night we used to act a little ventriloquist's stunt for their entertainment. Through the megaphone an officer would adjure his men to "come on quietly"; "have all your bayonets fixed; no firing, mind"; and so on, till volleys of musketry told us that the enemy were thoroughly awake and so nervous that their reserves in camp had to stand by. All the time our men were sleeping comfortably!

B.-P. spent much time at Mafeking watching Ned Cecil drilling the keen boys of the Cadet Corps. Wearing Fred Burnham's American hat with its four dents he inspected them regularly. The boys ranged in age from 9 to 15; they wore forage caps and long trousers, played cricket and football, and took part in bicycle races and mule-team driving. For a time they even went about the town on donkeys. When the donkeys had to be eaten they turned out on bicycles, delivering the post and carrying messages, often under fire, until they were worn out with fatigue.

B.-P. drew large crowds to Sunday-night concerts to hear his songs, comic turns and imitations of birds and animals. The boys of the Cadet Corps delivered the *Mafeking Mail*, which appeared on any kind of paper that was available — brown paper wrappings, wallpaper, sugar bags, anything. All this helped to keep up morale.

THE STAMP THAT NEVER WAS!

When the supply of stamps ran out in the town, Ned Cecil, Alexander Godley and the postmaster, unknown to B.-P., produced a stamp with B.-P.'s head on it. To their dismay he was not pleased. "I don't like it," he said, shortly. A new design was substituted showing a Cadet Corps messenger delivering letters on a bicycle. There is no foundation for the hoary old legend that Queen Victoria was angry about the B.-P. stamp. She never even saw it.

B.-P.'s game of active bluff continued and he went to endless pains to keep up morale. His "light, running figure" was seen everywhere, and this habit of half-running, half-walking later became the well-known "Scout's Pace". If the weekly concerts made people laugh and forget the soup kitchen with its vile smell, it was B.-P.'s Sunday cricket match that brought a breath of England to the dusty and tired garrison.

If boys of the Cadet Corps stole out to no-man's-land at night for a breath of excitement they would be sure to run into B.-P. watching behind a rock and asking gravely, but kindly, what they thought they were doing. The boys in the town always found him whistling softly; usually it was something from *The Pirates of Penzance*. Most important of all he was never ruffled. What little leisure he had was spent in an old deck chair, sketching, or reading a letter from home, or writing an article.

B.-P.'s courage and tireless energy kept the Boers occupied for almost eight months. But for him there would have been no siege, no defence and no final victory: the British Forces would have met fierce disaster elsewhere.

Late on a Friday evening in mid-May, 1900, the news of the relief of Mafeking reached Fleet Street by cable. Within half an hour the Strand, Trafalgar Square, Piccadilly and Pall Mall were packed like a modern Cup Final crowd. In Mafeking itself bonfires were lit, banjos strummed and accordions played all night, while men and women danced in the dusty streets.

London simply went mad! Whistles blew incessantly; handbells and muffin bells were produced and clanged continuously. Loud cheering continued all night. Paper "squeakers" were used by the theatre crowds to add to the noise. "Land of Hope and Glory" and "Soldiers of the Queen" were sung again and again. Fire crackers, tug hooters on the river, railway engine whistles at the stations, fog signals somewhere, and police whistles all added to the cheering and singing. The National Anthem was sung repeatedly in Trafalgar Square and a man on the top of Nelson's Column called for "Three Cheers for the Queen". A new verb, "to maffick", was added to the English language. Queen Victoria showed her appreciation of B.-P. by making him at 43 the youngest Major-General in the British Army.

WINSTON CHURCHILL JOINED B.-P. FOR A RIDE

Meanwhile in South Africa B.-P. was on his way to report to Lord Roberts. He was joined by another younger

man, eager and red-haired like himself, with a stoop and some difficulty in pronouncing the letter “s”. It was a war correspondent named Winston Churchill, and for an hour they rode together across the veldt. The two redheads knew each other already. Three years previously Winston Churchill had been a subaltern in India. In a polo match he had shouted angrily at another player: “Don’t talk to me, talk to the Umpire!” That night B.-P. introduced the phrase several times into his concert act to the joy of all, including Winston. This is what the young Churchill said of B.-P. after Mafeking :

We rode together for at least an hour, and once he got talking he was magnificent. I was thrilled by the tale, and he enjoyed the telling of it. I cannot remember the details but my telegram must have filled the best part of a column. Before dispatching it I submitted it to him. He read it with concentrated attention and some signs of embarrassment, but when he had finished he handed it back to me, saying with a smile: “Talking to you is like talking to a phonograph.” I was rather pleased with it, too.

B.-P. was feted everywhere but one boy at Cape Town was not so sure. He went to B.-P.’s room in the house where he was staying and looked at him, very disappointed. Then he said: “Please put on your hat, sir.” B.-P. obeyed the order. The boy nodded happily and said: “Oh, yes, you’re B.-P. all right,” and off he went.

B.-P. returned home in 1901 on sick leave. King Edward VII summoned him to Balmoral to be presented with the C.B. They got on extremely well together and the King gave him a walking stick (B.-P. collected them as a hobby). His Majesty said: “I have watched you at meals and I notice you don’t eat enough. When working as you are doing you must keep up your system. Don’t forget — eat more.” He gave him a haunch of venison to take home to London. B.-P. gave most of it away. The truth was that he ate so much horse and donkey meat during the siege of Mafeking that he did not eat meat again for many years.

B.-P. became Inspector-General of Cavalry at 46 despite the fact that he had never been through Sandhurst or the Staff College at Camberley. He said, with characteristic humility: “I don’t think I’m cut out for a general really. I’d rather be a regimental officer with men to look after.” At 50 he retired from the Army on half-pay.

B.-P. LIVED SIMPLY, WITHOUT FRILLS

In the years following the South African War B.-P. found himself much too famous for his personal liking. Yet he always replied to the most humble letters and invitations. The Weston-by-Runcorn League of Health and Manliness was formed in Cheshire, for instance. All its members belonged to a choir and were pledged to be non-smokers. They invited B.-P. to be their President. He accepted the invitation by return post and began to write long and detailed monthly letters to League members. This resulted in so much publicity that the League had to be disbanded! Every newspaper in Cheshire wanted to publish the letters.

B.-P. had been a great admirer of Talbot Baines Reed, a superb sportsman and writer of boys’ stories and the first sub-editor of *Boy’s Own Paper*. He died unexpectedly at 41. George Andrew Hutchison, who edited *B.O.P.* from 1879 to 1912, invited B.-P. to be President of the B.O.P. Anti-Smoking Society in 1904. Once more B.-P. applied himself to a problem of the day. He wrote such fierce letters and articles about the evils of smoking by boys that the society had to be discontinued in 1906. The president was so active that he upset the boys’ parents!

B.-P. lived a Spartan life despite his fame and popularity. He went for long walks in Hyde Park soon after dawn to avoid crowds. A portrait painter went to his home to paint him and found him asleep on an ordinary soldier’s camp bed in an upper room with hardly any furnishings. It was, indeed, the humility, sincerity and stark simplicity of his life that appealed to so many people. He put on no airs or graces and was completely at home with everyone. In addition he was a man of deeply religious feelings, a tolerant and broad-minded Anglican like his father. He believed in the power of prayer and was always encouraging boys to do good turns and pray hard.

B.-P. was a man of novel ideas in peace and war. In South Africa his brother Baden had fitted a mast and sail on to a light four-wheeled trolley on a railway track. When the wind was in the right direction, the trolley moved at a spanking pace. B.-P. wanted to try out the same idea on the Great Western Railway, but the authorities were horri-

fied.

B.-P. never had any interest in party politics. When he was invited once to stand as a Member of Parliament he wired back: “Delighted — which side?”

BOYS’ BRIGADE RALLY INSPIRED B.-P.

When he had turned 80, B.-P. said he had had three lives. One was his Army career, the second his Scouting and the third the time he saved by rising very early. What was this “Scouting”? In its early days B.-P. himself was not sure what he wanted to do!

“Scouting”, said B.-P., “grew up of itself and in 1910 I had to give up the Army to take charge of it.” He first trained *boys* in Scouting in 1897 when he was training young soldiers in the 5th Dragoon Guards. The beginnings of it all, however, can be seen clearly in his own boyhood. He wanted all boys to have as much fun as he had had himself as a boy. At Mafeking he saw the amazing results in the Cadet Corps when Lord Edward Cecil organized the boys of the town to undertake responsible jobs. Then, in 1902, B.-P. found that his Army book, *Aids to Scouting*, was being used in schools and the Boys’ Brigade.

B.-P. greatly admired the inspiration of Sir William Smith, founder of the Boys’ Brigade. B.-P. went to a rally of the Boys’ Brigade in Glasgow in 1903, and was so impressed that he told Sir William he would willingly change places with him. Sir William felt they could get far more boys to join the Brigade if more variety could be put into the training. B.-P. thought about it; his rewritten book for boys, *Aids to Scouting*, was his answer.

Even after the famous experimental camp in 1907 at Brownsea Island, B.-P. did not intend to set up a separate organization for boys, but hoped that the Boys’ Brigade and the Y.M.C.A. would make good use of his ideas.

THE EXPERIMENT AT BROWNSEA ISLAND

In the summer of 1907 B.-P. ran his experimental camp at Brownsea Island in Poole Harbour, where as a boy he had enjoyed so many grand times with his brothers. He discussed his ideas with Mr. C. Arthur Pearson, the publisher, and his Literary Manager, Mr. Percy Everett. B.-P. knew that Pearson was the business man, lively and enthusiastic, who could help him to bring Scouting before the public.

There were twenty boys at the memorable camp on Brownsea Island. Ten boys came from the local Boys’ Brigade branch, and ten were the sons of old friends of B.-P., who ran the fortnight’s camp himself with help from Percy Everett, Kenneth Maclaren, an old Army friend, and his nephew, Donald Baden-Powell. There were four Patrols of five boys each — Wolves, Curlews, Bulls and Ravens — and they wore any old clothing they had. No one wore shorts at all. The boys were disappointed at first that B.-P. himself wore a trilby hat turned up at the front instead of the famous big cowboy Stetson of his Army days.

B.-P. roused the boys every morning at 6 a.m. with a fierce blast on the Kudu horn he had captured in Matabeleland. The boys practised knots, lashings, tracking, stalking, life-saving, fire drill, and played ingenious water games in dinghies. They all rested for an hour each day after lunch. In the evenings they played basket-ball and then “dressed for dinner at 8 p.m.” This meant being as smart as possible! After dinner B.-P. told yarns round the camp-fire and taught the boys to sing the Eengônyama chorus, which he remembered vividly from his Zulu days. There was not much singing at Brownsea Island. The boys were too tired!

Percy Everett, who became B.-P.’s right-hand man and was later knighted for his services to Scouting, wrote a first-rate pen-picture of B.-P. at Brownsea Island:

I can see him still as he stands in the flickering light of the fire — an alert figure, full of the joy of life, now grave, now gay, answering all manner of questions, imitating the call of birds, showing how to stalk a wild animal, flashing out a little story, dancing and singing round the fire, pointing a moral, not in actual words,

but in such an elusive and yet convincing way that everyone present, boy or man, was ready to follow him wherever he might lead.

The most important feature of Brownsea Island was that B.-P.'s ideas really worked in practice. The idea of boy patrols with elected boy Patrol Leaders was a huge success. B.-P. wrote *Scouting for Boys* between June and December of 1907, some of it at the Izaak Walton Hotel in Dovedale during a fishing holiday, some at Middleton-on-Teesdale, but most of it at the Mill House on Wimbledon Common. Percy Everett supervised the publication of the book in six fortnightly parts of 64 pages, price fourpence each, and the publisher was Horace Cox of Windsor House, Bream's Buildings, London, E.C. A typical note from B.-P. to Everett read: "Please delete the story I sent you of the lad who saved his mother's life from poisoning. Subsequent inquiry shows he half-killed her with the wrong remedies."

The idea of "Scouting for Boys" swept the country and B.-P. soon had to design a uniform for many thousands of boys. The one he chose was his own dress used in Kashmir in 1897 down to the last detail. The familiar fleur-de-lis badge was taken from the North point on the many maps he had made and used. The idea of the Scout staff came from Ashanti, where B.-P. had used it, in native fashion, to ford wide shallow streams and part jungle trails.

Visitors to Britain saw the Scouts and started the Scouting idea themselves when they returned home. A Chicago publisher lost his way in a London fog and was taken to an address he was trying to find by an anonymous London Scout. He returned to the United States with a trunkful of pamphlets and started Scouting there.

There were no less than 26,000 boys at the huge rally in Windsor Great Park in 1911 reviewed by King George V. It brought Scouting into the public eye and B.-P. was a very happy man. Yet complete personal happiness still eluded him.

"DANGLE TOES PIER" AT PAX HILL

B.-P.'s acute power of observation had been the secret of his success as a master spy. It also led to his marriage. On a voyage to Jamaica in 1912 he saw a girl walking on the deck of the liner in front of him. There was something familiar about her firm and springy stride. Did he know her? Where had he seen her before?

Her face was unfamiliar so B.-P. decided it must be the way she walked that he had seen before. (He made a special study of this characteristic in people throughout his life, and could disguise his own gait in a variety of ways, a trick that helped him constantly as a spy.) B.-P.'s card-index mind soon had a solution. Two years earlier he had seen the same girl exercising her dog — a brown and white spanie — early one morning in Hyde Park. He simply remembered the way she walked — the walk of a country girl, unusual in London. So B.-P. challenged the girl on the liner in mid-Atlantic. He was right. The girl was Miss Olave Soames of Derbyshire, born in Chesterfield, who had learned to love walking in the dales of that beautiful county.

For many years a piece of wood stood in the Baden-Powells' home at Pax Hill, Bentley, Hampshire. It was called "Dangle Toes Pier" and was part of the jetty on which Olave Soames and B.-P. had sat dangling their feet in the warm sea of Jamaica at the end of that voyage.

The marriage of B.-P. and Olave Soames was remarkably happy, despite a difference of thirty years in their ages. They shared the same birthday (February 22) and many interests and hobbies. A shrewd compliment was paid to Olave Soames by a Boer leader, General Beyers, who happened to be in London at the time of the dinner held to celebrate the engagement. He toasted "the lady who has captured the man we could never catch!"

The B.-P.'s were blessed with three fine children — Peter, the eldest, and two younger daughters, Heather and Betty. The joy of happy family life was clearly seen by all who visited them at Ewhurst, Horley, or that world-famous home of theirs at Pax Hill.

The Scouts now occupied much of B.-P.'s time, but he also found time to be Honorary Colonel of his old regiment, president of three societies for the welfare of old soldiers, and Master of the Mercers' Company. A few days before war broke out in 1914 B.-P. offered the services of the Boy Scouts to the War Office and soon they were acting as

messengers to Government departments, guarding railway and river bridges, patrolling railway lines, acting as first-aid patrols in hospitals and casualty posts, collecting waste paper, salvage, flax, hay and root crops and even running a bugler service to sound the All Clear after air raids.

ENORMOUS BILLS FOR BOOT REPAIRS

B.-P. had great confidence in his boys. After visiting some Night Patrols of Coast Watching Scouts he wrote:

The lads completely won my admiration, not only by their smartness in appearance and their keenness, but by their reliability. Their healthy faces and their enormous bills for boot repairs show the work they do. It all proves what boys can do when their heart is in their work and when they are trusted as reliable human beings.

Yet B.-P.'s activities in the First War were the object of controversy. The War Office made little use of him officially, probably because the Scouts were doing such good work and kept him fully occupied. In 1916 an American Press agency wrote to B.-P. and asked if he really was in the Tower of London! B.-P. replied:

I regret that the report that I am sojourning in the Tower of London, under a charge of espionage, cannot be correct, as I was taken out and shot over a month ago (according to a Chicago newspaper). I am not clear which country I was spying for, but at the moment I am fairly busy on work for Great Britain.

Another American newspaper carried a report in 1916 that B.-P. had been shot as a spy and printed a most eloquent obituary. B.-P. said: "It was really worth being shot as a spy to gain so sweet an epitaph as that!" B.-P. had to issue a most emphatic denial that he was a spy in Germany during the First World War, although a British Naval officer declared that he *had* taken B.-P. across to Germany and taken extra special care of him! He refused to accept the denial, no matter what B.-P. said.

B.-P. in fact enjoyed a happy family life during the war on a farm in Horley, when he could get there from London. There was an acute shortage of milk. The Baden-Powells kept two goats named "Mrs. Brown" and "Roughtor" and took them for daily walks in search of grazing. B.-P. enjoyed being "a goatherd in the midst of war," and regretted he had not used the disguise in his military life.

B.-P.'s first civilian Private Secretary, Eric Walker, became a pilot and was shot down and imprisoned in Germany. His letters were found to be in code; B.-P. quickly deciphered this and said that Walker was asking for wire cutters to be sent to him inside a ham! Hams were as hard to get in 1916 as gold, but Miss Nugent, his secretary (later Mrs. Wade) received this note from B.-P. "Miss Nugent, Please get a ham, remove bone and put wire cutters in its place."

She finally ran a ham to earth on a pig farm in Yorkshire and the wire cutters reached Walker. Then B.-P. decoded another letter: "Please send me a compass inside pears." B.-P. did not rest until he had carried out that request.

Many girls were attracted to Scouting from 1908 onwards and B.-P. searched for a name for them. He used to tell his sister Agnes about a regiment he had known in Northern India called the Guides who were keen, courageous and resourceful. Their job was to find a way and blaze a trail and find out what lay ahead. They were fit and cheerful men, good cooks and signallers and able to look after themselves without medical help. Their self-reliance was magnificent.

When B.-P. looked for a name for the girls who were attracted to Scouting and its methods, he knew that "Girl Scouts" was not practical. "The Guides" came naturally as a result of his Indian memories.

The B.-P.'s home at Pax Hill became a symbol of Scouting and Guiding, particularly after Lady Baden-Powell became Chief Guide in 1918. She said: "We called it *Pax* because that meant Peace and all we were doing in Scouting and Guiding was to work for peace. The *Hill* was for the wide vision we needed for our work and also because there was such a grand view from the house." The B.-P.s always rose very early. B.-P., who slept on a veranda at the front of the house, had usually been up since dawn working and writing. He and Lady Baden-Powell would then go for a two-mile walk with their Labrador dogs before breakfast. The three children had any number of pets; in fact, B.-P.

called it the Pax Hill Zoo at times.

B.-P. believed in close family ties. His boyhood had been spent in a large and busy family circle, and his mother encouraged her children to keep together. B.-P. wrote regularly to relatives and visited them. On his return from South Africa in triumph, the Powell clan, 170 strong, even gave him a dinner at the Mercers' Hall.

“MIX AND LAUGH WITH OTHER PEOPLE!”

After 1918, Scouting progressed rapidly and B.-P. gave more and more attention to the international and world-wide aspect of the movement. His approach to his remarkable work for young people is seen in his favourite quotation from the Bible: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hangeth the whole law, and the prophets.”

His simple philosophy can be summed up in his own words, which he wrote when he was 63:

If you can enjoy rambling and angling, what more do you want? Personally, I am happiest when I am alone, and that is why, when fishing, I never take a gillie with me. All the explorers and big-game hunters that I have known have been what you call solitary men, i.e. self-sufficing in the best sense of the word. So keep on with your camping and hiking in your own way. You will be developing an individual character of your own, all the better for not being shaped by others, but don't keep aloof from other people with an idea of being different. Mix when you can and laugh with others.

The Scout word for a large international Scout gathering is *Jamboree*. B.-P. picked the phrase up somewhere on his travels and it caught on rapidly. The huge World Jamborees at Olympia, 1920, Denmark, 1924, and Arrowe Park, Birkenhead, 1929, showed the value of the Scout idea in international relations. It was no surprise when B.-P. became Lord Baden-Powell of Gilwell in 1929.

THE DAY'S WORK ON THE DOORSTEP!

B.-P.'s closing years were spent in encouraging young people to think and fend for themselves, to live simple, sincere and happy lives in peace with their neighbours, and to think of other people and their needs all the time. He stressed the Good Turn as a daily obligation for all Scouts, and lived up to the Scout code himself. His secretary, Mrs. Wade, recalls how the B.-P.s found her a cottage near Pax Hill. When she went to live there she found that the B.-P.s had dug and planted the garden, while Lady B.-P. even made the curtains, taking them up to London to stitch in the train on her way to some conference or other.

When Mrs. Wade collected her morning milk she often found a few trout on the doorstep as well as a huge pile of work for attention, left there hours before by B.-P. He was a skilled angler and angling remained one of his liveliest interests. He found the peace of it ideal for planning books, and most of his thirty-five works were “born in mid-stream”, as he put it. Many of his books were illustrated by himself in black and white. His method was to have large blocks of white paper, two feet square, specially made for him. He wrote all his scripts slowly with his left hand, and illustrated them with his right hand on the same paper. B.-P. was passionately fond of travel and his book royalties often paid travel agency accounts. If he wanted to visit some country or other he just wrote a book to pay for the trip. He drew no salary as Chief Scout.

His son, Peter, the present Lord Baden-Powell; recalls the simplicity of his father's everyday life, the sincerity of his religious beliefs and his conception of Duty to God. His father never ceased to tell him stories of his service days in Africa and India; his memory for detail was as remarkable as his powers of observation. Colonel J. S. Wilson, his aide for twenty one years, and Mrs. Wade, his secretary for twenty seven years, are two more close associates of B.-P., who knew to the full the simplicity and the humility of B.-P.'s character. Yet Colonel Wilson emphasizes that B.-P. was not a saint, and could be very angry on occasion like any other normal person. Once he found himself on

a long train journey in India without any sketching materials. He had, in fact, put them in the van. His comments can be described as “soldierly”! Throughout his life B. P. was at heart a man of simple tastes, revelling in the simple joys of life, and the gifts of friendship, humour and loyalty on which he placed so much stress.

The year of 1937 was the Coronation Year of King George VI. B.-P. received the Order of Merit and made a special appeal for Scouts to become King’s Scouts. One Lancashire Scout Troop achieved the distinction of eight King’s Scouts and received an invitation from the late Lord Somers, then Deputy Chief Scout, to camp at his home, Eastnor Castle, in Herefordshire. After setting up camp the Scouts discovered that B.-P. was also at Eastnor Castle and intended to inspect them! In fact, he never inspected them at all. He simply asked them to build him a monkey-bridge over a dry gully, and when they did so he tested it out by walking across it himself, despite his 80 years.

THE MOVING “GOOD-BYE” MESSAGE

The World Jamboree of 1937 was held in Holland; it was B.-P.’s last personal appearance at a world gathering of Scouts. His spirit was as gay as ever and he was still ready to listen to the problems of Scout leaders, particularly overseas Scouters, offering a solution or a method that might work. His “Good-bye” message at the close of the jamboree was both vivid and sincere:

I want you to lead happy lives. You know that many of us will never meet again in this world. I am in my 81st year and am nearing the end of my life. Most of you are at the beginning and I want your lives to be happy and successful. You can make them so by doing your best to carry out the Scout Law all your days, whatever your station or wherever you are. I want you all to preserve the badge of the jamboree which is on your uniform. I suggest that you keep it and treasure it and remember for what it stands. It will be a reminder of the happy times you have had in camp; it will remind you to take the ten points of the Scout Law as your guide in life; and it will remind you of the many friends to whom you have held out the hand of friendship and so helped through goodwill to bring about God’s reign of peace among men. Now good-bye. God bless you all.

As he gazed around that vast colourful arena with boys of all nations cheering him to the echo for minutes on end B.-P. must have felt a happy man. Here was his dream come true. The young people of the world were living together in harmony and peace, regardless of their class, colour or creed.

In the autumn of 1938 the B.-P.s went to live in the sunshine of Kenya, in a simple bungalow near Nyeri, where B.-P. could watch birds and wild animals in the Africa he loved so much from his own veranda. He spent his time reading, writing and sketching; when war came he followed the activities of Scouts eagerly, longing only to be in the midst of things at home. He died peacefully on January 8, 1941, almost 84 years young, as he might have put it himself. Scouts and soldiers, both white and dark-skinned, carried him to his last resting-place in the garden of his simple home. Today his grave is tended beautifully by a local troop of dark-skinned Scouts.

The most significant feature of Scouting and Guiding is their universal popularity in so many countries and among all kinds of young people. They are truly international youth movements for peace, the most successful that the world has yet seen. Today there are more than eleven million members in a hundred countries ... seven million Scouts and four million Guides. In addition there are more than forty million former members of the two movements. B.-P. would be most happy about one very important point: the world Scout membership has doubled since his death in 1941. B.-P. left not only a living memorial to his work and ideas but a blue-print for world peace.



FURTHER READING

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Adventuring with Baden-Powell (Blandford). Collection of yarns and stories by B.-P. Foreword by Colonel J. S. Wilson.

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