

***The original of what follows, and the references, can be found at  
<http://www.netpages.free-online.co.uk/sha/origins.html>***

These notes do not claim to be an exhaustive treatment of the origins of Scouting but they seek to shed some light on the influences that came to bear upon Baden-Powell as he developed his scheme, and to seek to account for what is seen by some as the movement's miraculous growth. According to the popular historical myth, Baden-Powell was the founder of Scouting. He ran the experimental camp in 1907 on Brownsea Island, he wrote the scout's bible 'Scouting for Boys' in 1908, he set up the Boy Scouts organisation. Some people may know further that he claimed to be the Scout movement's originator, to the point whereby he swore an affidavit - 'Deposition as to Origins of the Scout Movement' #1.

Once the scheme was underway it achieved great success, not only in the UK but in other countries also. Yet, in spite of what was world-wide acclaim for Baden-Powell, there were other individuals who laid claim to be the founders of Boy Scouting. The fact that B-P had to provide such an affidavit demonstrates that the matter was not straight forward and there was some dispute in the early period, which has received attention from authors in recent years #2. Several authors agree that in developing his Boy Scout scheme, there was a gestation period, although the length of this period varies from author to author. Rosenthal places the beginning in 1904 #3, Dedman in 1904, Springhall in 1906 #4. Tim Jeal although deciding a particular month for a determined effort to produce the scheme for the Boys Brigade (December 1905) #5, he deals with the complexity of events and influences leading to the publication of 'Scouting for Boys' (1900-1908) #6.

Although Martin Dedman and Tim Jeal tend to favour the civic aims of the movement as being the controlling factor #7 several other authors such as the late William Adams, conclude that the defence of the British Empire formed a very important motive in the creation of the Boy Scouts #8. As an example Baden-Powell was impressed by the contribution of the Mafeking Cadet Corps which features in camp Fire Yarn Number one in 'Scouting for Boys'. The Cadet Corps had been founded prior to the Boer War and was not in any way unusual. It gained fame, as B-P did, through its work during the siege. Baden-Powell's interest in Boys and the welfare of the young began before then, when in 1899 he began to take an interest in his nephew Donald, playing the part of a perfect Uncle #9.

As a hero his patronage was sought for a number of Boy's organisations; In 1900 he lent his name to the Baden-Powell League of Health and Manliness. In 1901 more 'B-P' organisations existed; The B-P Boys of Greenock, the B-P Brigade and the B-P Anti-Cigarette League #10. In 1903 he became Honorary Colonel of the Southport Cadets #11. Of interest to the beginnings of the Scout Movement is the fact that in May 1903 he accepted an invitation to become a Vice-President of the Boys Brigade #12, after he had chaired the annual demonstration at the Albert Hall. B-P was invited to review the Boys Brigade a year later at Glasgow and at Liverpool and was impressed with the numbers in the Boys Brigade (then 54,000) but felt that with a more varied programme within 20 years the number could be ten fold #13.

William Smith challenged B-P to prepare material along the lines of his popular military handbook of 1900, 'Aids to Scouting'. Apart from a report published in the Boys Brigade Gazette in June 1904 advocating the character forming qualities of scout training, nothing emerged in terms of a Boys Brigade scouting programme in

that year, but invited by Dr Edmond Warre, Headmaster of Eton College, Baden-Powell gave a lecture on 'Soldiering' 24th November 1904 to an audience of Boys intending to make the army their career #14. This was followed up by a letter published in the Eton College Chronicle on the 22nd December 1904 concerning a training scheme for Boys. Baden-Powell suggested that during the Christmas holiday each of the Eton Volunteers should bring together a small squad in their town or Village, read to them books about the Knights, and teach them: -

- (1) How to aim and shoot miniature rifles;
- (2) How to judge distance;
- (3) How to Scout;
- (4) How to drill and skirmish, take cover etc.

Members of the squad were to sign a paper containing the following: -

- (1) To fear God;
- (2) Honour the King;
- (3) Help the weak and distressed;
- (4) Reverence women and be kind to children;
- (5) Train themselves to the use of arms for defence of their country;
- (6) Sacrifice themselves, their amusements, their property, and, if necessary, their lives for the good of their fellow-countrymen. A promise was to be made; I promise on my honour, to be loyal to the King and to back up my commander in carrying out our duty in each of the above particulars. (Each member will sign his name in the space below this.)

Baden-Powell further pointed out in the letter "If two hundred volunteers carried out this idea and each trained ten boys this Christmas, we should have 2,000 retainers trained and ready to defend their country.....I shall be very glad to hear from any boy who succeeds in getting together a squad as I should like to keep a register of these. And I would gladly come and inspect the one which attains the highest strength this winter" #15

Tim Jeal dismisses the letter as amounting to the 'first version of the later Boy Scout programme' since scouting is only mentioned 'en passant' and it omits mention of character forming properties of observation and scouting, with the main aim being that of interesting young men in rifle shooting #16. Against this view, whilst the character forming stress of Scouting was absent from the Eton scheme, the scheme was being recommended to a public school - a character forming institute. Conversely the scout scheme of 1908 was offered to form a 'esprit de corps', to impart 'how to play the game', to boys at large - all part of the public school ethos. An emphasis of the Eton scheme was indeed rifle shooting, because Baden-Powell was writing for a particular audience - the Eton Cadets. Never-the-less it was

intended that the Eton cadets further the scheme in their home localities. The letter does prefigure ideas which became a part of the 1908 version of Scouting for Boys.

It opens like 'Scouting for Boys 1908' with an appeal to patriotism "There is an opening for English Public School boys to do their country a good turn" (Compare "I suppose every British boy wants to help his country in some way or other"). Items 2, 3, and 4 in the Eton scheme (3 out of 4) can all come under the heading of 'boy scouting' and scouting is not therefore 'en passant'.

In comparison 'Scouting for Boys 1908' reflects some of the emphasis on rifle shooting in Camp Fire Yarn 27 'Citizenship' which devotes a chapter to marksmanship. The imposition of a moral code, whilst not unique for Victorian or Edwardian boys clubs or societies, also prefigure the moral code for Scouts. There is no evidence that any squads were formed as a result of the letter or of an abbreviated version submitted to the 'Union Jack' boys paper and 'The Marvel' boys paper in 1905 #17.

In May 1905 Baden-Powell produced a report for the army about the value of scout training in boys organisations and it was probably this report that reminded him to produce a scheme in reply to Smith's request #18. He finally submitted a scheme to the Boys Brigade which was published in the Boys Brigade Gazette of June 1906. The scheme was directed like the Eton scheme to a particular audience and was, as requested, an adaptation of B-P's 'Aids to Scouting'. The end product for the Boys Brigade was only the equivalent of a proficiency badge subject, but lacked the seriousness of a proficiency badge, as no badge was issued for the ten part test. No further encouragement appeared in the Boys Brigade Gazette (or from the Boys Brigade headquarters) to further interest in the scheme of scout training as a result of Baden-Powell's direct submission.

The introduction of the Boys Brigade Scout Badge and Certificate in 1909, came a year after the general publication of Baden-Powell's scheme sponsored by Pearson's in 1908, and was modelled on the 2nd Class and 1st Class tests of B-P's Boy Scouts 1909 and followed in the wake of popularity of the Scout Movement. The BB Scout Badge was not a development of the 1906 scheme.

Whilst some authors may argue that the Eton scheme was not a precursor to, or an early example of, the Boy Scout scheme of 1908, what is inescapable is that both the Eton scheme and the Boys Brigade scheme were attempts by Baden-Powell to promote scouting as a means of youth work with which to encourage patriotism. Both schemes bear similar hallmarks;

a) use of scouting,

b) enjoins patriotism,

c) uses existing structures through which to promote the scheme - Eton College Cadets, The Boys Brigade,

d) Seeks a wider audience through publications - The Eton College Chronicle, Union Jack and The Marvel, The Boys Brigade Gazette.

There were differences ie. in the Boys Brigade scheme no moral code was needed - the Boys Brigade had their own 'Objects', Motto and Watchword. The Eton scheme featured rifle shooting. Training in rifle shooting did not form part of the BB programme and was not therefore included. The Eton scheme included drilling; the BB already excelled in drilling. Patriotism and an outline of a person's duty was included in the Boys Brigade scheme, values very much of public school, and therefore not in the Eton scheme.

A summary of the Boys Brigade Scheme of June 1906 scheme is as follows:

Detective tales to be read (Sherlock Holmes etc,.),

Instruction to be given on:

noticing details and remembering them, passers by and deduction of character and occupation;

compass, direction by sun or stars, tracking;

lighting a fire;

ability to swim;

patriotism, Union Flag and its meaning.

Need of good citizens, Duty etc.

Qualifying examination 10 parts

1. Write from memory contents of shop windows.
- 2 Describe passers by from memory.
- 3 Remember numbers of first two passing cabs.
- 4 Compass direction by Sun or Box Compass.
- 5 Read tracks.
- 6 Paper chase.
- 7 Light Fire.
- 8 Cooking without utensils.
- 9 Draw Union Jack.
- 10 Scouting race.

The type of programme B-P had developed in 1906 was not untypical of the age as this comment and letter in 'Truth' #19 reveals;

"The following letter has come to me from Cape Colony apropos of Major-General Baden-Powell's scheme of boy scout's, which was referred to in TRUTH a few weeks ago" #20. The writer is Dr P.C.De Wet of Cradock, and it is rather interesting to learn that general Baden-Powell's idea of training boys has been in some respects anticipated by a bearer of that historic name. Dr De Wet's little game only covers a fraction of the programme of "B-P's", boy scouts, but within that limit the two seem to be almost identical: -

It was about a year after the war that the idea suggested itself to me. The principle of the game was not original, but the method, so far as I know, was my own. I wrote to the headmaster of the local boy's school and offered a yearly prize for an "observation race". As a matter of fact, there were to be two prizes one gold medal and one silver medal. The first-and alas! the only-race took place shortly after my letter was sent. Most unfortunately the Head had developed the spirit of laissez-faire, so common in our semi-tropical country, and simply allowed the whole thing to slide after this first race. The modus operandi of our initial attempt was this: a road about a mile in length was selected in the outskirts of the town. Along the sides of the road were placed, at varying distances, certain animate and inanimate objects. As far as I remember, the total number amounted to sixty, and covered a wide range. For instance, next to a Cape cart, with a pair of bay ponies (one with white hind feet), one might find the stock end of an old carbine; beyond that possibly a black and white cow with a heifer; then twenty yards further a coil of rope, and so on. We also placed several natives of different ages along the course. The Boys were then marched along the road in single file and brought back along the same road, and wrote a list of all the objects they could recollect. No literary polish was required, and it was explained to the boys that the prize was to be given to the one who recorded most of the objects, with a very brief description of each. I was most agreeably surprised to find how well the work was done. Even minute details were in many cases not overlooked."

Whether Baden-Powell was discouraged by the lack of enthusiasm at Eton, or in the Boys Brigade, towards his suggestions for scout training or not, remains a question, but his enthusiasm was warmed by a meeting with Ernest Thompson Seton #21. Seton was born in Durham but had been brought up in Canada and the United States. He had founded an organisation in 1902 called the 'Woodcraft Indians'. During that meeting on the 30th October 1906 both men were seeking and offering mutual help. Future reflections on the understanding of the discussion differed between Seton and Baden-Powell.

In October of 1904 Seton had visited England and lectured on his Red Indian Woodcraft scheme in numerous places. This was followed up by a camp in Eccles in November.

Other Camps followed later at Hove, New Brighton and Kent Hatch #22. Having heard of Baden-Powell's interest in Scouting, Seton planned a further lecture tour for 1906 and wrote to B-P in July of that year asking for help to popularise his Woodcraft Camps in England and enclosed a copy of his latest edition of the Woodcraft Indian Manual. Baden-Powell suggested that they should meet, adding that he also was working on a scheme on much the same lines as Seton's #23. In the same month that Baden-Powell had received Seton's letter, he had fulfilled a long standing engagement by a weekend visit to Arthur Pearson, the newspaper owner #24. It was at this meeting, plans were discussed for Baden-Powell's training

scheme and Handbook 'for the education of boys as scouts' #25. Nothing had become of B-P's initial draft for the Boys Brigade. The 'Scouting for Boys' of 1906 had only amounted to an addition to the BB programme and was not a stand alone scheme. Seton's gift of the booklet on the Woodcraft Indians was for Baden-Powell "a providential windfall" #26. It had provided Baden-Powell with a workable framework for a stand-alone scheme. Before this B-P had little to offer in the way of a boys training scheme for publication. Both the Eton Scheme and the Boys Brigade Scheme could be contained on a single page. Seton and Baden-Powell continued to correspond throughout 1906 and 1907 #27.

<b>A comparison of the training schemes between Ernest Thompson Seton and Robert Baden-Powell;</b>	
<b>Birch Bark Roll 1906</b>	<b>Scouting for Boys 1908</b>
<b>Main scheme 'Campercraft'</b>	<b>Main scheme</b>
1 Group of tests consecutively numbered.  No sub division but achievements of two grades. Those in the record making class are first class braves (p45)	1 Group of tests consecutively numbered.  Sub-divided 1-5 Second class, 6-12 First Class (p36)
amongst the subjects are: -  Knots, Fire lighting, First Aid, Hike, Know and use signs, Taking latitudes from the stars, Camping, Chopping down trees, Naming star groups,	amongst the subjects are: -  Knots, Fire lighting, First Aid, Hike, Scout law and signs, Compass, Union Flag, Tracking, Canoeing Estimation, Boat Building.
<b>Proficiency tests called Honors</b>	<b>Proficiency tests called Badges of Honour</b>
Fishing, Bait-Casting, Riding, Shooting, Archery, Mountain-Climbing, Eyesight, Athletics, Nature Study, Geology, Photography;  Each part of the main scheme counts as an honor	Signalling, Stalking, First Aid, Merit;  Additional Badges added in Later Scheme
24 honors count the member as a Sachem	Later scheme:  24 proficiency badges count for the Silver Wolf.
Honors:  Badges two forms of award  1) feather to go in bonnet and also  2) round badge for ordinary wear with a symbol of the subject encircled, if first class standard.	Honours:  First and Second Class Badges to be gained (see Main scheme).  Badges of honour consist of a badge with a symbol of the subject encircled.

Vow and 10 Laws	Oath and 9 Laws (10th added 1909)
On joining a 'scalp' of horsehair is issued. Represents a members honor. Can be lost in failure in competition or task. New one can be issued by Tribe Council.	The First Class Badge represents Scout's 'life'. Can be lost for failure in difficult task. Can be regained by some good work as judged by the Court of Honour.
<b>Organisation:</b>	<b>Organisation:</b>
Basic Unit:	Basic Unit:
Bands of 10-50 Identified by a Totem of any bird animal, tree or flower.	Patrol of 6-8 Identified by a Totem of any bird or animal.
Members use left handshake #28	Members use left handshake
Tribal Council organises internal affairs. Consists of Sachems and elected members.	Court of Honour organises internal affairs. No details given on membership. Later scheme restricts membership to Patrol Leaders and Seconds
Activities divided between practical scoutcraft, test work, and games.	Activities divided between practical scoutcraft, test work and games.

An examination of the shape of both schemes reveals identical elements. It would be impossible to say that Baden-Powell's 1908 'Scouting for Boys' training scheme did not in some measure reveal a dependence upon Seton's work. The chart reproduced above places the common elements of both schemes side by side.

Baden-Powell also had access to Seton's other books. In particular anyone who has read 'Scouting for Boys' (SFB) and then turns to 'The Two Little Savages' of 1903 (TLS) will find the illustrations familiar;

<b>A comparison of the training schemes between Ernest Thompson Seton and Robert Baden-Powell;</b>	
<b>The Two Little Savages' of 1903 - to be found in the book;</b>	<b>Scouting for Boys 1908 - to be found in the book;</b>
Game: Quicksight - spots on a card	Game: Spottyface - spots on a card
Indian signs	Scout signs
Identification of trees by their leaves	Identification of trees by their leaves
how to make a bed at camp	how to make a bed at camp
how to light a fire	how to light a fire
how to estimate the height of trees	how to estimate the height of trees
how to find direction by the stars	how to find direction by the stars

Quite clearly, Seton's "The Two Little Savages' of 1903" had become a resource for Baden-Powell in the compilation of his own Book, "Scouting for Boys".

Absent from 'Aids to Scouting' in 1900 (an Army manual for mounted Scouts written by Baden-Powell - also not free from the criticism of plagiarism), and absent from

the Eton College scheme of 1904 and the 'Scouting for Boys' scheme in the Boys Brigade Gazette of June 1906, is any use of the word 'Woodcraft'. Although as Tim Jeal points out, Baden-Powell was not a stranger to the word and had used it at least twice as far back as the 1890s #29, no further examples are forthcoming until after contact with Seton.

By November 1906, Baden-Powell had sufficiently advanced his plans that he undertook a visit to discuss scouting with members of Birkenhead YMCA #30. The YMCA held more promise than Eton and the Boys Brigade in advancing a youth training scheme. B-P held an experimental camp 25th of July to the 9th August, on Brownsea Island, Poole, run in liaison with Pearson who sent Percy Everett his senior editor to experience the camp for 24 hours #31. After the camp, B-P met Mr Charles E Heald, National Secretary for YMCA boys work, at the YMCA National Headquarters. Mr Heald in liaison with Mr W B Wakefield the Honorary Secretary of the Boy's Department, arranged for B-P to address a number of public meetings, to be organised by the YMCA #32, the first of which was held on the 8th November at Hereford. Between November and December further meetings were held at such venues as Harrogate, Swansea, Radcliffe (Lancs), Leeds, Exeter, Plymouth, Carlisle, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Scarborough, Cardiff, and London #33. Further meetings were held in the new year at such centres as Birkenhead, Manchester, York and Nottingham.

In all Baden-Powell had delivered more than fifty public lectures on his Boy Scouts Scheme #34. In particular a passage in 'Scouting for Boys' singles out the YMCA as a possible growth point;

"Y.M.C.A.-Everyone recognises the keenness and go-a-head manliness of the members of the Y.M.C.A. and Polytechnics in all parts of the kingdom, and I am convinced that if these men could see their way to do a good turn to the rising generation of their countrymen they would take it up with ardour, especially since this kind of work is becoming part of their policy. It is these gentlemen that I have specially in my eye in suggesting this scheme, as being the men who can, if they wish, get hold of practically the whole of the British boyhood by means of scouting. If every member of the Y.M.C.A. took a friend as second in command and six boys as pupils, each required to bring another recruit, and then acting as leaders and instructors to further patrols of six, there would at once be the commencement of a great 'snow ball' movement for good" #35.

The YMCA had replaced Eton and the Boys Brigade in the affections of B-P in the drive to launch a successful training scheme. Although YMCA Troops feature amongst the first formed in the country, once the scheme was underway the number of Troops organised by Churches and other agencies was to outstrip the troops organised by the YMCA #36.

The discussions and correspondence with Seton, the business arrangement with Pearson to finance the launch of a scheme, the successful experimental camp at Brownsea Island and the practical help and encouragement of the YMCA, coupled with the successful ideas for his handbook would have impressed upon Baden-Powell the viability of his own scheme, which in fact became a reality.

The possibility of some sort of separate organisation must have been in B-P's mind from the moment he sorted out details of the scheme with Pearson #37. An Office

from which to administer the scheme existed before the publication of 'Scouting for Boys' ! In addition a 'get out' clause with (and from) Pearson had been negotiated, so that the scheme could be truly independent.

The first public admission that there was a separate organisation occurs in a pamphlet published early 1909 'The Boy Scout Scheme' #38. In other words all the infra-structure of an organisation was in place well before 'Scouting for Boys' launched the movement, or that it was admitted that this was the case.

Scout historians favourable to the Baden-Powell organisation, see the Brownsea Island Camp as the 'germ' - the 'acorn' of the movement. Seton's understanding of the relationship between himself and Baden-Powell, as voiced several years after their initial contact, would view the Brownsea Camp, and the launch of the Scout movement in a different light. Seton had already run Woodcraft Camps in England and sought out individuals to popularise the movement, hence his contact with Baden-Powell, with whom he freely shared his experiences and expertise. In the light of Seton's previous work in England and their agreement to work together, Baden-Powell's camp could be seen as part of a continuing movement - albeit - with an influx of his B-P's ideas and experience, but a movement which was begun by Seton.

In 1909 with Baden-Powell's Boy Scouts having become highly successful as a separate organisation, and by name being contradistinctive from the Woodcraft Indians, Seton complained about "what he saw as the wholesale unacknowledged borrowings from his work that went into the writing of Scouting for Boys." #39

To be fair to Baden-Powell, 'Scouting for Boys' was not just 'Birch Bark Roll' and 'Two Little Savages' rewritten, containing elements from both these books in addition, it contained earlier material of B-P's. Baden-Powell's own claim was that 'Scouting for Boys' was 'Aids to Scouting' rewritten #40. Although material from 'Aids to Scouting' was incorporated within the pages of 'Scouting for Boys', the contribution from this source, given its size, could only amount to one eighth of the new book, reaching in its fortnightly parts nearly 400 pages #41.

Although the idea of a training scheme for boys based on scouting was Baden-Powell's idea, Seton's scheme provided the right shape as well as many of the ingredients. However B-P's 'borrowings' were not restricted to Seton and even the 'Aids to Scouting' within the pages of 'Scouting for Boys' may have originated in a similar process due to his contact with Burnham, an American Scout working in South Africa in the late 1800s #42. Other influences from various sources are detectable within 'Scouting for Boys', but it may not be clear as to whether B-P himself imported all the ideas or how much, if any was due to Pearsons #43. The book was a compendium of ideas, and at least the shape of the Boy Scout bible had been highly influenced by Pearson, who had sent his senior editor - Percy Everett to lend Baden-Powell a hand. Scouting for Boys adopted a pot-pourri approach, a highly successful formula used in 'Tit Bits' and Pearson's Weekly.

Baden-Powell leaves oblique clues as to his sources by the provision of the further reading lists at the end of each section in the earlier editions of 'Scouting for Boys'. A further clue to Baden-Powell's plagiarism is contained in a comment by Percy Everett on Baden-Powell's authorship of 'Scouting for Boys'; "He is an omnivorous

reader of books and papers, and was quick to find and use any fact or incident which would be helpful..." #44

In setting down his scheme in 1908, B-P used many ideas that were current. That is why his completed scheme struck a chord with so many people.

## **Examples of ideas of the period used by Baden-Powell.**

### **1) The Name of the Scheme.**

The choice of the name 'Boy Scout' did not occur in a vacuum, it was a name already invested with the image of a hero and frontiersman. Originally the words 'Boy Scout' were coined towards the end of 1899 in the 'Buffalo Bill Library' to describe one of; "Buffalo Bill's most trusted Scouts.....Harry White a youngster of seventeen" #45 Following in the wake of the Boer War the 'True Blue War Library' #46 recast the name 'Boy Scout' to describe the adventures in the Transvaal of the heroic figure of a young man serving his country out in the colonies. This invested the name 'Boy Scout' with an image and made the 'Boy Scout' a cult figure of Boy's literature. The hero of our story which was serialised for the best part of six years was called 'Harry St George' !

In the first story there is a description of him: - "The youth was barely eighteen, with well marked fair features and light auburn hair, which the close crop could not avail to conceal had a tendency to curl. It was a noble face, and gazing upon it one could not refrain from remarking that the possessor was well born. There was courage and chivalry stamped upon every line and determination was strongly depicted in the low jaw" #47 Harry St George having been sent to South Africa by his Guardians to gain experience abroad. He joined the border police, rose to the rank of sergeant and then gained a commission in Colonel Scarlett's irregular cavalry. Other adventures were such as 'The Boy Scout as Spy Tracker' and 'Boy Scout joins B-P's Police'. The series of Boy Scout adventures ran weekly for the first year then periodically for a further five years up to a year before the Brownsea Camp #48.

To commend 'Boy Scouting' was to commend unselfish service to ones country. Howard Spicer editor of the boys' paper 'Boys of the Empire' took up the theme by serialising Baden-Powell's 'Aids to Scouting' under the title of 'The Boy Scout' from November 1900 to early 1901. Alongside the serialisation was a Scouting competition that of finding Newsagents that did not stock the periodical. Those taking part were commended "Our Boy Scouts have been a huge success. They have taken Baden-Powell's hints and have tracked down every culprit who ignores BOYS OF THE EMPIRE". They were further described as an "army of Boy Scouts" #49.

The image of a 'Boy Scout' whilst partly inspired by B-P was not created by B-P but by the media of Boys' Papers, and in particular the True Blue War Library. In 1908 further use of this image was employed in 'Scouting for Boys' by Baden-Powell. The Boy Scout of the colonies-depicted in the adventure stories of 'The True Blue War Library' and in his serialised 'Aids to Scouting' could be available to the boys of the Nation everywhere with his first hand seal of approval.

### **2) Chivalry and Moral Codes.**

In the late eighteenth century there began a revival of chivalry which permeated the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries #50. Tennyson's 'Idylls of the King' written in 1859 onwards is but one example of the revival's impact on poetry. Such poetry further fuelled the interest in Chivalry. This revival had its impact on the late nineteenth century/early twentieth century. For example, it would be unusual for a boys organisation not to have a moral code. Baden-Powell wove this feature into his Scout scheme. In addition to the fact that to don a Boy Scout uniform was to step into the identity of a frontiersman serving his country, there was the idea, that to be a Boy Scout was to adopt a moral code. In this B-P was a product of his age.

The 'True Blue War Library' which published the Stories of the Boy Scout in 1900 also ran a club possessing some the elements that were to be found in the Boy Scout Movement less than a decade later. The members of the 'Trusty Band' were bound by a number of laws amongst them were: - To be true to themselves and to their friends; To do their best to help one another in time of trouble and distress; To be humane to animals and prevent cruelty to creatures by others. 'The Boys of the Empire' also ran a club 'Boy's Empire League' with its own moral code. It is this club that sponsored the Scouting competition describing its participants as 'Boy Scouts'. Seton's Woodcraft Indians were also bound by a moral code consisting of a vow and 10 Laws. Some authors discount any dependence by B-P on Seton's Laws as B-P's are couched in positive terms and Seton's in negative terms. ie 'A Scout is..' rather than 'A scout must not'. Yet it is a simple task to rephrase a moral code. ie Seton's 'don't rebel' can become B-P's 'A Scout obeys his .....'. It is doubtful that Seton influenced B-P's use of a moral code, as he had chosen a similar code for his Eton College Volunteer's scheme in 1904 before meeting Seton.

A more direct origin is provided by Mark Girouard who traces many of B-P's Scout Laws to the Book 'The Broad Stone' #51. Baden-Powell saw his scouts as the young Knights of the Empire, and in this thinking he was probably partly inspired by a successful American youth organisation begun in 1893 by the Reverend William Byron Forbush, called the Knights of King Arthur #52.

### **3) Court of Honour and Self Government.**

In 1889 the Children's National Guild of Courtesy had been founded in elementary schools. The Reverend John Paton sought to extend this work with 'The League of Honour'. The governing unit of the organisation was a 'Court of Honour'. The Court bound its members by a confederacy of honour. The organisation never really got off the ground. An isolated example existed for a short while at Dalston, North London. The idea was crowded out by the Boys Life Brigade, Paton founded in 1899 and by the emerging Boy Scouts and the successful Alliance of Honour, which B-P recommended for its literature in his Camp Fire Yarn on the rules of health. The ideas on the League were passed around for discussion and publicised widely #53. The 'Court of Honour' recommended itself as a suitable principle and name for inclusion in B-P's Boy Scout scheme.

Girouard claims "If Forbush and Ernest Thompson Seton are mixed together, something not unlike the Boy Scout movement emerges." #54. In confirmation of this, it can be noted that both Digby and Forbush appear in B-P's bibliography in Scouting for Boys #55. The Court of Honour principle happily merged with ideas from other authors and were evidenced in Scouting for Boys, such as the principle of self government #56, adapted from a guide on establishing boy's club published by

Charles Stelzle in 1904 #57. Stelzle's book gains the usual reference in the further reading section #58.

#### **4) Mottoes.**

Not unconnected with moral codes is the adoption of mottoes, a contemporary example of which, is the Lovat Scouts. At the end of 1899, after gaining permission from the War Office, Lord Lovat raised two companies of Scouts made up of Volunteer for use in the Boer War. These Scouts proved their worth in the war by the use of scouting skills. As a result of his achievements Lord Lovat was awarded the military CB. In August 1902 the Boer War ended the Scouts returned and disbanded but in June 1903 two Regiments of Yeomanry were raised called 1st and 2nd Lovat Scouts adopting the Lovat motto 'Je Suis Prest' (I am ready). During their first camp they were inspected by General Baden-Powell #59.

Other contemporary examples are The Trusty Band of the True Blue War Library with its motto of 'True as Steel' replaced by 'Honour' in 1903. The Boy's Empire League sported 'Many Countries but one Empire' as its motto. In 1908 B-P furnished the Boy Scouts with their own motto based on his initials 'Be prepared' following in the fashions of the day.

#### **5) Secret Signs.**

A further idea, current at the time, which recommended itself to Baden-Powell's Boy Scout scheme was the idea of a junior 'Freemasonry'. The True Blue Trusty Band of the True Blue Library which had featured the Boy Scout stories, had its own secret hand signs, known only to the purchasers (or readers) of the True Blue paper ! In the same way B-P had developed a scout sign from his Boy Scout salute.

In the first edition of Scouting for Boys, B-P describes a second salute and sign for members who had received the 'Wolf' award. The index finger and thumb only were extended. The same hand sign as drawn for members of the Trusty Band that signified 'Beware we are being watched'. The 'Wolf' salute was dropped from later editions of Scouting for Boys.

The ritual revealed to purchasers of 'Scouting for Boys' was as follows: the scout's sign is exchanged, the scouts shake with the left hand, and upon revealing a scout badge or other proof, the scout can be counted and aided as a brother-scout #60.

It was also suggested by the editor of the True Blue Library, that the members of the Trusty Band form themselves into companies with groups of six to eight under a Captain. In addition there was a membership badge and medals to be won. The Trusty Band was not just a paper membership as the Editor suggests that actual bands had been formed #61. The True Blue Trusty Band, with its moral code, motto, badges, signs, organisation and heroes did not in any real sense prefigure B-P's Boy Scouts, but may have provided a model and demonstrated various ingredients to be found in many boys organisations of that period.

#### **6) Nationalism.**

Elliot E Mills' pamphlet 'The Decline and Fall of the British Empire' that was published anonymously in 1905, encapsulated the xenophobic fears of tory England. Early in

the same year of 1906 that the Scout's bible began to take shape, Baden-Powell urged an audience to show their patriotism to the extent of spending sixpence to buy the pamphlet #62. This, plus the Scouts being treated to excerpts of the pamphlet's themes in 'Scouting for Boys' #63 re-enforces the point, that 'national defence' was a prime motive of Baden-Powell.

Another author who had provided a focal point for those same fears in his poem of 1902 'The Islanders' #64, Rudyard Kipling, also provided Baden-Powell with the story of 'Kim', and a test of observation, later absorbed as part of scout test work #65.

Yet additional ideas can be traced in subsequent editions of 'Scouting for Boys' #66, not so much as to improve or modify the scheme as suggested by Martin Dedman #67 but to improve the 'pedigree' of the scheme, by demonstrating that it was in conformity with current educational and youth work.

In terms of the nationalistic values of patriotism and imperialism, although some critics see the Boy Scout scheme as seeking to encourage these, it also appealed to those loyalties, hence the scout scheme being offered as a practical means of patriotism as stated in the beginning of the book.

## **7) Scouting.**

'Scouting' the ingredient at the heart of B-P's programme was an attraction in itself. As early as 1900 Baden-Powell was aware of the romance the title of 'scout' carried. In his introduction to 'Aids to Scouting' Baden-Powell writes; "The very name 'scout' carries with it, even among civilians, a romantic idea of a man of exceptional courage and resource, while among soldiers the title is so much sought after, that small bodies of mounted Volunteers and companies of Light Infantry skirmishers have within recent years demanded to be called 'scouts'." #68

The success, a uniformed organisation could achieve was plain to see with such as the Boy's Brigade. The added image of Boy Scouting to a uniformed organisation in many ways guaranteed its success.

## **Mushroom Growth !**

There was a social vacuum for such a youth movement as the Boy Scouts #69, not only in Britain but abroad as well. The society of the period was fertile ground for its emergence.

Two similar schemes are to be noted in South Africa. Dr P C Wet's ideas outlined above and a scheme B-P knew about as early as 1902. Edward P Carter of Johannesburg had devised a scheme for Boys entitled 'The Boys' Guide Brigade' #70 consisting of an amalgam of Seton's training scheme for his 'Woodcraft Indians' and the military drill of the Cadet Corps. Carter's scheme included a motto 'In omnia paratus' (in all things ready). According to one newspaper claim B-P saw Carter and his Brigade in 1902 at Johannesburg Station and asked for details of his scheme and was sent them. He acknowledged receipt by a reply 14th February 1903 #71.

In Germany, Dr Alexander Lion who had served as a Staff Surgeon in German South-West Africa, like Baden-Powell made much of the importance of scouting,

reconnaissance and pioneering skills #72. On his return to Germany, Dr Lion became a leader of the well established 'Wandervogel' which had been founded in 1901. Baden-Powell had equated the Wandervogel as a German boy scouting movement and was in correspondence with Dr Lion in the Autumn of 1908 #73. Exchange visits took place between B-P's Scouts and the Wandervogel in 1909 #74.

In the United States of America, in addition to Seton's Woodcraft Indians, there existed another outdoor organisation founded in 1905 by Daniel Carter Beard, The Sons of Daniel Boone. Daniel Boone had been a pioneer American scout #75. In the same way that the name 'Boy Scout' evoked a romantic image, Beard had used Boone's name.

Nearer to home on the Isle of Wight J H Burgess a Sergeant in a Territorial Regiment had decided late 1907 to set up a scout corps along military lines. Before he was able to set up his organisation 'The Vectis Juvenile Scouts' (Vectis being Latin for Isle of Wight), he came across the fortnightly parts of Scouting for Boys at a local Newspaper shop. Thereafter he used his energies in furthering Baden-Powell's movement #76.

So well chosen were the ingredients that made up Baden-Powell's 'Scouting for Boys', that it had an universal appeal, so much so, the Boy Scout empire was able to attract, incorporate or swallow up other organisations, or their leaders.

In 1910 the Woodcraft Indians, the Sons of Daniel Boone, along with various independent Scout Troops and Patrols formed the Boy Scouts of America.

In the same year Dr Lion formed the German Boy Scouts separate from the Wandervogel. In 1911 Carter's Boy Guides had become part of the British Boy Scouts.

The disappearance of the Catholic Boys Brigade in the UK by 1927 probably owes itself to the fact that its companies may have become Catholic Scout Troops #77. In 1910 a good number of Canadian Boys Brigade Companies had transformed themselves into Scout Troops #78.

Some of the immediate success experienced by Baden-Powell in the launch of his scout scheme owed itself to a professional and well financed launch. Pearson had provided the initial money and free publicity in the Daily Telegraph and sponsored a national lecture tour #79. Boys Literature formed a significant part of Edwardian youth culture #80. The power of such media could not be ignored. Baden-Powell was to harness this power by entering the world of the 'penny dreadfuls', first with the fortnightly parts of 'Scouting for Boys' (at 4 pence) followed by a regular diet of 'The Scout' (at 1 penny). The expertise needed for this operation was provided by Pearson. Not to be forgotten as a fact, is that Pearson had gained another boys paper launched by person who was a hero of the Empire. It was in the knowledge that the scheme was a success, and an organisation in its own right, as well as being an additional programme for existing youth organisations, that Baden-Powell broke from Pearsons #81.

Had the scheme not attracted such as the Churches who saw it as a means of providing an activity for young people it might have been destined to remain (and decline) as a boys paper, which sponsored an interest club. Baden-Powell had

offered other youth agencies his scheme as a means of training young people. Leaflets and pamphlets about the training programme were issued in 1907, prior to the publication of 'Scouting for Boys' #82. The Boys Brigade as an example, had been provided with a scout programme in 1906. In other words the scheme did not present itself as another organisation in competition, but as a 'public domain' youth activity. A large measure of the success in the UK owes itself to the fact that these agencies did adopt the scheme #83. Dedman's PhD identifies that in two local studies on scout troops in Manchester and Southampton that at least 70% of Scout troops were run by Churches, with others operated by schools #84.

Much acclaim is afforded to the scout movement's rapid expansion abroad. The scouts were not the first youth movement exported. Many home organisations were duplicated throughout the empire. After its foundation in 1883 the Boys Brigade expanded abroad almost immediately and by the outbreak of the first world war was found in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, United States of America, Africa, India, Ceylon, China, Hong Kong, Burma, Japan, Belize, British Guiana, Panama and throughout the Caribbean #85.

In September 1910 while in the presence of Seton at a Dinner to promote the Boy Scouts of America, Baden-Powell, in answer to Seton introducing Baden-Powell as the father of Scouting, Baden-Powell voiced "...There are many fathers. I am only one of the uncles, I might say." #86 Eight years later with his scheme well established, when he swore his affidavit - 'Deposition as to Origins of the Scout Movement', Baden-Powell made himself the undisputed founder, reducing the roll of living individuals such as Seton and Smith #87.

## **Conclusion.**

In making an assessment of the background to the rise of the Scout Movement is not to deny the genius of Baden-Powell but to place it against its historical perspective and to account for the rapid rise of the Scout Movement. Certain ideas were already at play at the time of the movement's inception. Whether or not B-P's scheme consisted of unacknowledged 'borrowings', even outright plagiarism, B-P's genius consisted in the way he brought about a workable scheme in which he orchestrated much of what had been of value before and so produced the Scout movement which became unique in its own right and has been a major contribution in the field of youth work.