

## Baden-Powell Story Relay

Words

1 – Robert & Baden Powell

2 – Scouting

3 – Scouts

4 – Army

5 – B.-P

6 – Patrols

**Robert Baden-Powell** was born February 22, 1857 in West London. When **Robert** was only three his father died.

**Robert** was not very scholarly and at the end of school saw an ad for an Open Competition Examination for commissions in Her Majesty's **Army**. For nearly two weeks, in July 1876 he sat a variety of examinations. **B.-P.** surprised everyone and out of 718 entrants, he finished fourth for the infantry regiments and third in the cavalry listings. So **B.-P.** joined the **Army**.

In **Baden-Powell's army** career he saw service in India, Afghanistan, South Africa (twice) Malta and the Gold Coast (now Ghana).

His ability to **Scout** (in the true **army** sense of the word) was recognised quickly. The most famous of his **scouting** exploits when, being sent to spy out the enemy's strength he disguised himself as a butterfly collector and set off into the hills. Wars were fought in a more gentlemanly manner then. He was stopped once or twice but showed his drawings of butterflies and chatted on so much about butterflies that the **patrols** were glad to send him on his way. What the **patrols** did not spot was that inside the butterflies were the plan of their fort and the placement of guns.

At this time **B.-P.** started developing his ideas for training individual soldiers in the art of **scouting**. That is of stalking, spying, hiding up trees where no one would look, and working in small groups or '**patrols**' as he called them under the direction of an officer or non-commissioned officer.

In October 1899 **Baden-Powell** was in South Africa. The Boers, South African Farmers, could ride and shoot far better than our **army** imagined and a number of British defeats were suffered in the early part of the Boer War. Kimberley and Ladysmith were relieved but it took seven months for the relieving force to reach Mafeking. That is 217 days under siege.

**Scouting** owes much to Mafeking. During the siege **Baden-Powell** pretended to set explosive traps around the town of Mafeking. Some of the traps had explosives in them and were set off as examples, but the majority did not. Binoculars in those days were not very good so the deceit worked and the town remained under siege.

It was here that **Baden-Powell** saw the possibility of putting responsibility on to young boys and treating them seriously. They, for example, were used to carry orders and messages so the military men could do **army** things. The siege was a deadly game of cat and mouse as the **army** was outnumbered four to one.

Before the siege **Baden-Powell** had written a book called Aids to **Scouting** for the Boy's Brigade. After the siege ended **Baden-Powell** returned to the UK and on inspecting the Boy's Brigade he was not happy with the way **army** style drill was being used. He suggested that more variety in training would be good. He wrote **Scouting** for Boys and published it in six fortnightly parts through the Boy's Brigade Gazette. The response from young people was immediate. The Gazette sold out quickly. The book was intended for Boy's Clubs but boys not in clubs bought the book and set themselves up as **patrols** of **Scouting**. All wanted to be **Scouts**.

From the beginning **Scouting** could not be called an Organisation. **B.-P.** said "It is a movement, because it moves forward. As soon as it stops moving, it becomes an Organisation, and is no longer **Scouting**." We see this today in the recent changes in **Scout** uniform and badges.



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Originally **B.-P.** thought of **Scouting** as a movement for boys between the ages of 11 and 18. In 1909 at the Crystal Palace Rally **B.-P.** met a **Patrol** who claimed to be Girl **Scouts**. So in 1910 he set up the Girl Guides movement.

Younger brothers wanted to become Junior **Scouts** and in 1916 Wolf Cubs were formed. In 1917 **B.-P.** set up a scheme for Senior **Scouts** called Rover **Scouts**. In 1986 Beaver **Scouts** became a part the **Scout** Association.

**Robert Baden-Powell** was the first and only Chief *Scout* of the World. After that no one person held that responsibility. In September 2004 the UK invested the eighth Chief **Scout**. Peter Duncan.



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