

Origin and Growth of the Guide Movement

Certainly you would feel elated when you realise that you are a member of a worldwide Guide Movement, which is more than 100 years old. Naturally this great feeling would lead to an urge within oneself to get to know how and where the Movement originated, who has been responsible for this and how did it spread all over the world. This module has been prepared to meet this purpose.

Objectives

At the end of this Module, you should be able to:

1. Narrate the history of the Guide Movement.
2. Explain how Guiding spread to various countries around the world.

Thought for Reflection

I have over and over again explained that the purpose of the Boy Scout and Girl Guide Movement is to build men and women as citizens endowed with the three H's namely, Health, Happiness and Helpfulness. The man or woman who succeeds in developing these three attributes has secured the main steps to success this Life.

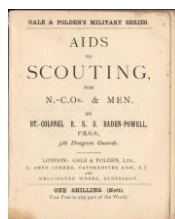
- Baden-Powell

Birth of Scouting

Scouting's history commences with a British Army Officer, Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell. It is not merely one act or initiative of Baden-Powell that led to formation of Scouting but a number of events, prevailing conditions in England at that point of time, and influences which attracted the attention of Baden-Powell to draw up a plan to be of service to society, particularly the young boys. We shall explore them one by one. These influences are not presented in a sequential order.



Influence 1: While stationed in Lucknow, India as an Army Officer in 1876, Baden-Powell (B.-P.) found that his men did not know basic first aid or outdoor survival skills. They were not able to follow a trail, tell directions, read danger signs, or find food and water. Hoping to teach his men resourcefulness, adaptability and the leadership qualities demanded by frontier conditions, in 1896, Baden-Powell began to write a small military handbook titled ***Aids to Scouting***.



Influence 2: In 1896 a rebellion broke out in Matabeleland, or Rhodesia as we now call it. On 19 May 1896 B.-P. arrived at Cape Town on a new assignment which he afterwards called "the best adventure of my life". He was the Chief of Staff of Sir Frederick Carrington in the operations against the



rebellious tribes of Rhodesia's Matabeleland. On April 11, 1900 the Boers bombarded Mafeking for four hours. On 16th May, an advance party of the relieving force rode into Mafeking. Amongst them was Major Baden-Powell.

Baden-Powell became world famous during this South African Boer War. He held the small town of Mafeking during a 217-day siege. The relief was hailed with delight throughout the Empire. As soon as the news of the Relief was brought to Queen Victoria, she had the following telegram sent to Baden-Powell:

'I and my whole Empire greatly rejoice at the relief of Mafeking after the splendid defence made by you through all these months. I heartily congratulate you and all under you, military and civil, British and native, for the heroism and devotion you have shown.'

Influence 3: The boys of Mafeking from nine years up were organized into the Mafeking Cadet Corps, which was eventually recognized as an official part of the Mafeking defences. They took over all manner of duties such as message-carrying, orderly work in the field kitchens, anything that could free a trained man for combat duties. B.-P. had noticed how useful these boys were and how they responded to responsibility being put on them. The courage and resourcefulness shown by the boys in the corps of messengers at Mafeking made a lasting impression on him.



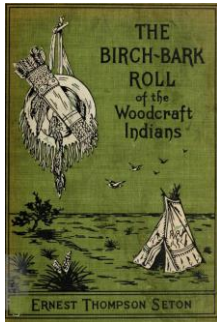
Influence 4: When B.-P. returned to London as a national hero, he was promoted to Lieutenant General. In England, he found that his little handbook written for soldiers was being used to teach observation and woodcraft to members of Boys' Clubs and Boys' Brigade. It had captured the imagination of English boys and was widely read. B.-P. felt the need to rewrite the book especially for boys.

Influence 5: On 30th April 1904, Baden-Powell inspected the Annual Drill Inspection and Review of the Boys' Brigade on the occasion of the organization's coming-of-age. The Drill Inspection and Review was an impressive affair, with seven thousand youngsters performing before eleven thousand 'ticket-holder onlookers'. As the boys marched off the field, Baden-Powell turned to congratulate the Boys' Brigade founder William Alexander Smith. He also added that the Brigade, to his way of thinking, should have many more members than it had-and would have ten times the number with more variety and attraction in the training.



Without a moment's hesitation, Smith agreed and instantly challenged Baden-Powell to develop a programme that would provide that added 'variety and attraction'. He specifically suggested that it might be done through a boys' version of B.-P.'s small book, "Aids to Scouting".

Influence 6: At the end of July 1906, Baden-Powell received a small book by mail titled: 'The Birch-bark Roll of the Woodcraft Indians' written by Ernest Thompson Seton, a British citizen living in the United States.



He was very much impressed with the content of the book. On 30 October, the 46-year-old naturalist-writer and the 49-year-old general lunched together. The day after their meeting, Baden-Powell sent Seton his 'Aids to Scouting' and a copy of the material he had prepared earlier that year regarding his ideas on 'Scouting for Boys'. Seton secured B.-P's promise of assistance in revising the Campcraft section of The Birch-bark Roll for the sixth printing and Baden-Powell got



Seton's permission to use some of the games of the Woodcraft Indians in his programme.

Influence 7: A report of conditions in the British capital, just published after exhaustive study, revealed the shocking fact that 30% of the population of London -a city that prided itself on being the richest in the world -were suffering from malnutrition. Another report showed that of more than two million school boys, only about a quarter of a million were under any kind of 'good' influence after school hours. Poverty, squalor, overcrowding, marginalization, exploitation, crime, etc., were prevalent in the poor areas of London. This bothered many especially Baden-Powell who returned to London in 1903 after spending several years abroad as part of his military career. He could not believe that nearly a third of London's population was under-nourished. He was shocked with the fact that alcoholism, vandalism and crime rate were becoming increasingly rampant.

B.-P. termed these as "failings". He believed that such "failings" sap the very foundation of society, thus placing it in danger and compromising its future. Such harsh realities prompted B.-P. to offer something concrete to such dehumanizing situation and particularly to the young boys of the country.

B.-P. believed that it was necessary to "develop character" to tackle such problems. The educational institutions failed to do this – they merely transmitted knowledge. He basically believed that "education aims to draw out and develop from the inside 'the good', to the exclusion of the bad". He therefore proposed a twin plan – a **purpose** – to improve society by improving the individuals of which it is composed, and a **method** intended to "draw out" rather than "impress upon".



Baden-Powell was determined to give his Boy Scouts scheme a thorough test before he developed the final details. Since one of its main characteristics was to be adventuring outdoors the only way of doing this testing was by camping with a group of boys. This, in itself, was a revolutionary idea at the time. Hitherto, camping had been reserved almost exclusively for the military at home and abroad, and for explorers and sportsmen overseas.

Now, for the first time, it would be made generally available to British boys on their home ground.

The result crystallised in the form of an experimental camp in Brownsea Island, in Poole Harbour, Dorset, England in August 1907 organised by Baden-Powell. He wanted to see how far his scheme would interest boys of different upbringing and education and therefore recruited his 20 campers from various walks of English life. Some were from large public schools, others from the slums, shops or farms.

To the boys, the Brownsea camp became a thrilling adventure. They were having fun and excitement.. They were organized into patrols. They played games, took hikes, cooked without utensils, learned stalking and pioneering skills. In the evenings, around the magic of a campfire, they were spellbound by B.-P.'s stories of his army adventures. Scouting had begun in earnest and was destined to spread around the world.



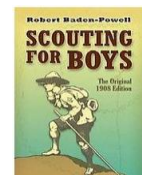
B.-P. himself considered the camp a success. Within a few days of his return B.-P. began to receive letters from the boys and their parents. The boys expressed themselves enthusiastically about the marvelous time they had experienced. The reactions of the parents were of the greatest importance to Baden-Powell. They had trusted their boys to his care for an experiment. The parents felt that their boys had not only picked up useful knowledge but had become more resourceful and more independent.



After the Brownsea camp, B.-P. rewrote his earlier handbook and called it Scouting for Boys. He incorporated many ideas from two American programmes for boys: The Woodcraft Indians, and The Sons of Daniel Boone.

Scouting for Boys was first published as a six – part series of magazine articles. People liked the series so well that it was published as a book in

1908.

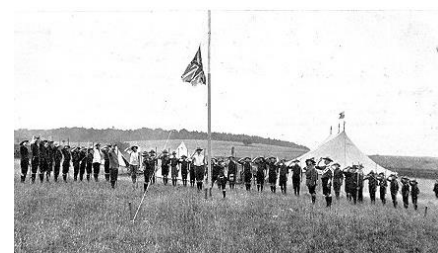


Spurred by Baden-Powell's enthusiasm and personal magnetism, Boy Scout patrols started to appear in each of communities in which the General had stopped on his countrywide tour to describe his Boy Scouts scheme. By the time the sixth and final part of the book made its appearance at the end of March, Boy Scouting had swept like a tidal wave across the length and breadth of the United Kingdom.

The general doubt that is likely to arise is as to when exactly Scouting was born. The conduct of the first experimental camp by Baden-Powell at Brownsea Island in 1907 is considered to be the birth of Scouting.

Growth of the Movement

Scouting spread throughout England and began spreading to other countries. The first recognized overseas unit was chartered in Gibraltar in 1908, followed quickly by a unit in Malta. Canada became the first overseas dominion with a sanctioned Boy Scout program, followed by Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. Chile was the first country outside the



British dominions to have a

recognized Scouting program. Scouting came to India in the year 1909. By 1910, Argentina, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Malaya, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the United States had Boy Scouts.

By 1909 the Movement had taken firm root. "Scouting for Boys" had been translated into five languages.

Birth of Guiding

1909 is the memorable year in the history of Scouting to have the first gathering of Scouts at Crystal Place, London. Over 11,000 Scouts in uniform who attended the rally proved their willingness to play the game of Scouting.

Along with these 11,000 Scouts, there were a handful of girls who too wanted to join the game. It was a surprise for Baden-Powell to see girls at the rally, wearing uniforms like Boy Scouts. When he asked them "Who are you?" they replied, "**We are Girl Scouts!**" They said they too wanted very much to be in the game like their brothers.



He tried to persuade the girls to give up the idea, but he found enthusiasm in those young girls and determination to follow their brothers. So he separated the girl section of the Movement into a new section and put his sister Agnes Baden-Powell in charge to look after it, calling the branch as Girl Guides. Thus was born the Movement for girls.

Baden-Powell picked the name Girl Guides—from a famous corps of guides he knew of in India, 'distinguished for their general handiness and resourcefulness under difficulties, and their keenness and courage...a force trained to take up any duties that are required of them, and to turn their hand to anything'. The name also had a symbolic value as implying that guides know the way and lead others in the right direction.

The Girl Guide Movement was officially recognized in 1910. Miss Agnes Baden-Powell became the President of this organisation and the Girl Guide Headquarters was established. With the publication of "How Girls Can Help to Build up the Empire" written by Miss Agnes Baden-Powell and Lord Baden-Powell in 1912, the Movement gained momentum.

Baden-Powell married Miss Olave St. Clair Soames in October 1912. In 1914 plans were suggested to meet the needs of children below the Guide age group. The name suggested was 'Rosebuds' which was later renamed as 'Brownies'. In 1916, Olave began to take an interest in the Girl Guides. Appointed in 1916 Commissioner for the County of Sussex, England, and later that year Chief Commissioner, she worked tirelessly to recruit adult leaders. Senior Guides (for those aged 15-25 years) were first set up in 1917 (renamed as 'Rangers' as in 1920).



In 1918 B.-P.'s "Girl Guiding" was published. In 1919 Olave Baden-Powell set up an International Committee and an Overseas Council to help her as more and

more countries began to take an interest in Guiding. The first International Conference was held at Oxford in 1920. Delegates from all parts of the world attended the conference. The dream of World Guiding was realized. In 1924 the first World Camp was held at Foxlease, England. Forty countries were represented.

The idea that there should be a World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts was first mooted at a Conference in Hungary in 1928. In 1930 Olave was chosen as Chief Guide of the world.

There is a World Bureau in London; there are Five World Centres at Our Chalet in Switzerland, Sangam in India, Our Cabana in Mexico and Olave House in London, Kusafiri, Africa. By 1975 the World Association comprised ninety-one Member Organisations.

Guiding celebrated its Centenary Year in 2010. Today there are more than 10 million girls around the world involved in the Movement.



The fact that celebrities such as Queen Elizabeth II (then Princess), Princess Margret, Hillary Clinton, Secretary of State, US, Sally Ride – the first American Woman in Space, Venus Williams – Tennis Player were actively involved in Guiding during their younger days; and also the fact that many countries having brought out postage stamps on Guiding as well as coins on Guiding on various occasions, adds to the Value of the Guide Movement and makes each one of us proud to be associated with such a great Movement.



Thought for Reflection

Most of us who have been sowing the seed will not, in the nature of things, be here to see the harvest; but we may well feel thankful, indeed jubilant, that our crop is already so well advanced....

- Baden-Powell

An Attempt to Recollect

Having read through so far, you can now try to test your memory by answering the following questions:

1. What is the full name of the Founder of the Scout Movement?
2. Where was the First Experimental Camp held for Scouts?
3. In which year was the Experimental Camp conducted?
4. In which year was the Crystal Palace Rally held?
5. When B.-P. as the girls assembled at the Crystal Palace Rally “Who are you?” what did the girls reply?
6. From where did Baden-Powell pick up the name Girl Guides?
7. Who looked after the Girl Guide Movement in the initial phase?
8. Who took charge of the Girl Guide Movement 1916 onwards?
9. When was the idea that there should be a World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts was first mooted?
10. In which year was Olave Baden-Powell chosen as Chief Guide of the world?
11. What was the name given to the Senior Guides in 1920?
12. What is the world Guide Centre in India known as?

For further Reading:

1. A Complete Handbook for Flock Leaders*
2. Girl Guiding in India*
3. Leslie’s Guiding History Site
4. The Story of Girl Guides by Rose Kerr, Published by The Girl Guide Headquarters, London

* Books published by The Bharat Scouts and Guides, National Headquarters, New Delhi.

How much have I got it right?

Here are the answers to your memory test:

1. What is the full name of the Founder of the Scout Movement?
Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell.
2. Where was the First Experimental Camp held for Scouts?
Brownsea Island, in Poole Harbour, Dorset, England.
3. In which year was the Experimental Camp conducted?
1907.
4. In which year was the Crystal Palace Rally held?
1909.
5. When B.-P. as the girls assembled at the Crystal Palace Rally "Who are you?" what did the girls reply?
"We are Girl Scouts!"
6. From where did Baden-Powell pick up the name Girl Guides?
From a famous corps of guides he knew of in India.
7. Who looked after the Girl Guide Movement in the initial phase?
Agnes Baden-Powell.
8. Who took charge of the Girl Guide Movement 1916 onwards?
Olave Baden-Powell.
9. When was the idea that there should be a World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts was first mooted?
At a Conference in Hungary in 1928.
10. In which year was Olave Baden-Powell chosen as Chief Guide of the world?
1930.
11. What was the name given to the Senior Guides in 1920?
Rangers.
12. What is the world Guide Centre in India known as?
Sangam.