

The Development of Scouting

The Scout Movement was founded by Sir Robert Stephenson Smythe Baden-Powell, or B-P as we call him for short. B-P was born in London, England on February 22, 1857. His father died when he was only three years old. He and his brothers had no money to buy their pleasures and they were encouraged by their mother to make their own fun.

During his school years, and particularly at Charterhouse School, he entered into many activities including acting, singing, cadet corps, sports, art and the orchestra. He was very good at drawing – in fact he was ambidextrous, which meant he could draw equally well with either hand.

During school holidays, B-P and his brothers travelled far and wide on camping and boating trips. He learned much about outdoor life on these trips.

B-P learned more about the outdoors at school. He used to ‘escape’ to a bush area near Charterhouse School called The Copse. Here B-P studied nature, trapped animals and learned to cook them. He imagined himself to be a hunter or an Indian scout. He also learned how to avoid capture by his teachers because the Copse was out of bounds.

After leaving school, B-P was encouraged to sit the exam to join the army. He passed extremely well, gaining second place out of 700 candidates and was immediately commissioned as a sub-lieutenant in the 13th Hussars. He was sent to India in 1876.

B-P’s army career was outstanding. He proved to be a good soldier and served in India, Afghanistan, Southern Africa and several other countries.

In 1897, B-P was given command of a regiment, the 5th Dragoon Guards. He introduced new training methods to make life more interesting for the men in the regiment. Those who successfully completed their training were awarded a badge in the form of an arrowhead at the north point of the compass. B-P later used this design as the symbol for the Scout Movement, and we use a modern version of it today. B-P wrote a book about his training methods called ‘Aids to Scouting.’

In 1899, B-P was posted to South Africa to fight in the Boer War. He was in the town of Mafeking with 1000 men when it was besieged by 9000 Boers. B-P used all sorts of tricks to hold out for seven months before the town was relieved in 1900. Some of the tricks B-P used included a biscuit tin search light which was turned on, then turned off and moved to another spot, then turned on again. The Boers were fooled into thinking there were many searchlights guarding the town. B-P also used grenades made from old tin cans, imaginary barbed wire and dummy mines buried around the town. Special money and stamps were printed for use in Mafeking during the siege.

There was also a cadet corps of boys who were used as messengers and orderlies to relieve the men for fighting. They used donkeys and bicycles to do their duties.

When Mafeking was relieved, B-P became a national hero and he was promoted to Major-General. At 43, he was the youngest Major-General in the British army.

B-P was surprised to find that his book ‘Aids to Scouting’ was being read by many more people than the military men for whom it was intended. It was being used in schools to train boys in observation and deduction. B-P thought his ideas would be useful to youth organisations so he began to rewrite the book as a book for boys. But he needed to test his ideas.

In August 1907 he held a camp on Brownsea Island with 20 boys from different backgrounds. The boys were divided into four patrols and learned about camping, hiking, stalking, boating and many other things. The camp was a great success and B-P wrote a book called 'Scouting for Boys' which was originally published in six fortnightly parts. When the book appeared, patrols of Scouts formed of their own accord, all over Britain. Some sort of organisation was obviously needed.

B-P had to make a difficult decision – the army or Scouts. King Edward VII influenced him into choosing Scouts, and B-P retired from the army to work full time organising the Scout Movement in 1909. It was at that time that he was knighted by the king and became Sir Robert Baden-Powell.

In October 1912, B-P married Olave Soames who was his constant help and companion in all this work and by whom he had three children, Peter, Heather and Betty. Olave was known throughout the world as World Chief Guide, and died in 1977.

In 1916, Wolf Cubs were officially recognised as a Section of the Scouting Movement.

In 1919, Mr de Bois Maclaren donated the Gilwell Park estate to B-P as a camping ground for London Scouts and a training ground for leaders. A small patch of the Maclaren tartan is used in the Gilwell scarf, which leaders receive when they complete a certain level of training.

From these beginnings, Scouting spread all around the world. The first Jamboree was held in London in 1920 and here B-P was proclaimed Chief Scout of the World.

B-P received a peerage in 1929 for his work for Scouting. He took the title Lord Baden-Powell of Gilwell, which was taken from Gilwell Park, the international training centre near London.

In 1932, the first London Gangshow opened, written and produced by the leading theatrical producer Ralph Reader.

In 1938, suffering from ill-health, B-P returned to Africa, which had meant so much in his life, to live in semi-retirement in Nyeri, Kenya. On January 8, 1941, B-P died at the age of 83. He is buried in a simple grave at Nyeri within sight of Mt Kenya. On his headstone are the words, 'Robert Baden-Powell, Chief Scout of the World' surmounted by the Boy Scout and Girl Guide badges.

Scouting in New Zealand

It was a man named Major (later Colonel) Cossgrove who was responsible for the early organisation of Scouting in New Zealand. Major Cossgrove had served in the Boer War, and it was during that period that he met B-P.

In Jun 1908, Major Cossgrove wrote to B-P asking for more information about his scheme for training boys. B-P replied to his old acquaintance without delay, and said that he hoped that Major Cossgrove could start the scheme in New Zealand.

Copies of 'Scouting for Boys' had already reached New Zealand and patrols of Scouts were beginning to be formed. The first patrol to be officially part of the Scout Movement in New Zealand was formed in early 1908 in Kaiapoi by Mr T Mallasch. It consisted of four boys plus the Scout Leader, Mr Mallasch. The patrol was officially sworn in by Major Cossgrove on July 3, 1908. By 1909, there were 500 troops registered in New Zealand.

Major Cossgrove went on to organise Scouting, and became the first Chief Scout of New Zealand.

B-P visited New Zealand three times as the Founder of the Scout Movement, in 1912, 1931 and 1935. In all of these trips, he visited as many cities as he could, seeing as many Scouts and delivering many speeches and lectures.

The first National Jamboree, the New Zealand Exhibition Jamboree, was held in 1926 at Tahuna Park, Dunedin, and was attended by over 1000 scouts and 100 leaders.

Girls were officially admitted into the Venturer section in 1979, into the Scout section in 1987 and into the Kea and Cub sections in 1989.

The Evolution of the Scout Badge

Lord Baden-Powell wrote: “Our badge we took from the ‘North Point’ used on maps used for orienting them with North. So our emblem helps remind us that a Scout is to be as reliable and true as a compass in keeping to his Scouting ideals, and in showing the way to others.”

In Scouting the three tips of the emblem are said to represent the three main points of the Scout Promise. The two five-pointed stars represent the original 10 points of the Law (and in some countries they also stand for truth and knowledge).

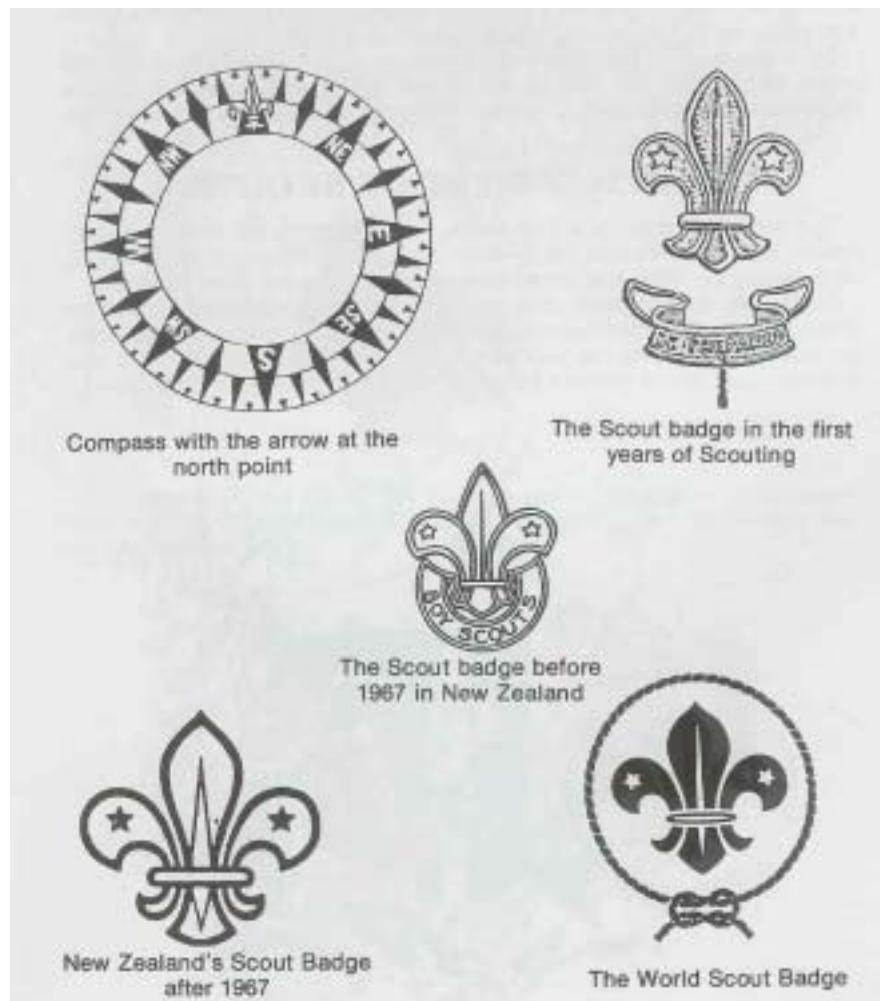
The World Scout Emblem utilises the arrowhead surrounded by a rope in a circle, tied with a reef knot to symbolise the unity of world brotherhood throughout the World Scout Movement.

“Even as one can not undo a reef knot, no matter how hard one pulls on it, so as it expands the Scout Movement remains united.”

The arrowhead and rope are white on a background of royal purple, the colours chosen by the Founder. In heraldry ‘purity’ is the virtue most frequently symbolised by white, while the royal purple denotes leadership and helping other people.

Direction pointing is only one traditional use of the arrowhead design. It has also been used in very ornate designs on the coats of arms of old, wealthy families. Sometimes the design was intended to represent a lance, a spear, a lily (a fleur-de-lis) or even a bee or a toad.

So today, even as the arrowhead continues to point the way for compass users throughout the world, the same arrowhead selected by the Movement’s Founder, points the way to service and brotherhood to scouts.



History of Scouting Quiz

Name: _____

1. When and where was Baden-Powell born?
2. Where did Baden-Powell take the emblem used on the Scout Badge from?
3. Who was responsible for the early organisation of scouting in New Zealand?
4. Why did Baden-Powell originally write his book "Aids to Scouting"?
5. What knot is used on the World Scout Badge, and what does it represent?
6. When and where was the first Scout camp held and how many 'Scouts' attended?
7. Where and when was the first patrol to be officially part of the Scouting movement in New Zealand formed and who was the Scout Leader?
8. When and where was the first Jamboree held?
9. When and where was the first New Zealand National Jamboree held?
10. What were two of the tricks Baden-Powell used to trick the Boers during the siege of Mafeking?
11. When was the first Gang Show held, and who produced it?
12. What does the purple background of the World Scout Emblem represent?
13. Who influenced Baden-Powell into choosing organising Scouting over staying with the army?
14. When did Lord Baden-Powell visit New Zealand?
15. What is the name of the tartan used on the Gilwell scarf?