

SCOUTING FOR BOYS

Introduction - written by B-P in 1932

I WAS A BOY ONCE.

The best time I had as a boy was when I went about as a sea scout with my four brothers on the sea round the coasts of England. Not that we were real Sea Scouts, because Sea Scouts weren't invented in those days. But we had a sailing boat of our own on which we lived and cruised about, at all seasons and in all weathers, and we had a jolly good time - taking the rough with the smooth.

Then in my spare time as a schoolboy I did a good lot of scouting in the woods in the way of catching rabbits and cooking them, observing birds and tracking animals, and so on. Later on, when I got into the Army, I had endless fun big-game hunting in the jungles in India and Africa and living among the backwoodsmen in Canada. Then I got real scouting in South African campaigns.

Well, I enjoyed all this kind of life so much so that I thought, "Why should not the boys at home get some taste of it too?" I knew that every true red-blooded boy is keen for adventure and open-air life, and so I wrote this book to show you how it could be done.

And you fellows have taken it up so readily that now there are not only hundreds of thousands of Boy Scouts but millions about the world!

Of course, a chap can't expect to become a thorough backwoodsman all at once without learning some of the difficult arts and practices that the backwoodsman uses. If you study this book you will find tips in it showing you how to use them - and in this way you can learn for yourself instead of having a teacher to show you how.

Then you will find that the object of becoming an able and efficient Boy Scout is not merely to give you fun and adventure but that, like the backwoodsmen, explorers, and frontiersmen whom you are following, you will be fitting yourself to help your country and to be of service to other people who may need your help. This is what the best men are out to do.

A true Scout is looked up to by other boys and by grown-ups as a fellow who can be *trusted*, a fellow who will not fail to do his duty however risky and dangerous it may be, a fellow who is jolly and cheery no matter how great the difficulty before him.

I've put into this book all that is needed to make you a good Scout of that kind. So, go ahead, read the book, practise all that it teaches you, and I hope you will have half as good a time as I have had as a Scout.

Baden-Powell of Gilwell Chief Scout

Scout Promise

On my honour I promise that I will do my best -
To do my duty to God and to the Queen
To help other people, and
To keep the Scout Law.

Scout Law

A Scout is to be trusted.

A Scout's Honour is to be trusted. He is the kind of person of whom everybody can depend. If you ask a trusted friend for help, you know that you can rely on getting that help. If you want to be trusted yourself, you have to behave all the time in a way that shows that they can count on you. When you agree to go on a hike, you are there on time. If you become ill, you let your Patrol Leader know. If you have a job to do for the Patrol you do it to the best of your ability and by the time promised. If you are told something in confidence, you keep it to yourself. If you are trustworthy you will never lie, cheat or steal. If you are doing the family shopping you always bring back the correct change. Above all there is no need for your parents, teachers or Scouters to check on you for they trust you.

A Scout is loyal.

Loyalty means faithfulness to someone or something. You have decided that some things are right and you will speak up for them even when they are not popular. It may mean doing things that others don't like. Loyalty starts at home. You behave as your parents would like you to behave. You show appreciation for what your parents do for you and you speak to others about your home so that it is evident that you love it. A Troop can only be at its best when every member is loyal; you have decided to be in the Troop so you are loyal to your Leaders. A Scout is also loyal to the government of his country. This means keeping the laws which are made for everyone's good, and doing what he can do for the community in which he lives.

A Scout is friendly and considerate.

Friendship is like a mirror. It gives back what you are. When you smile at a person and offer a helping hand, you receive a smile in return and help when you need it yourself. You make a friend by being one. Being considerate means thinking of other people's needs rather than your own. It is hard not to be selfish sometimes, but it helps to ask yourself what the other person is thinking and what he may need. You can train yourself to be observant and notice when people need help; then you can offer it before they have to ask. Not everyone is as strong and active as you are. Watch especially for the needs of old or sick people and help them when you can. By helping the other people you are also keeping part of the Scout Promise.

A Scout is a brother to all Scouts.

When you join a Patrol you become part of a world-wide brotherhood in which every member has promised to keep the Scout law. Because of this it doesn't matter that they speak different

languages, are of different colours or hold different religious beliefs. When you meet Scouts at large gatherings, remember that they are your brothers and show by your actions that you regard them as friends. You have a special opportunity to meet brother Scouts from other states and countries at Australian and World Jamborees. Don't miss the chance when it comes your way even if you have to work hard to earn enough money to go.

A Scout is cheerful.

A Scout looks on the bright side of everything that happens especially when everything seems to go wrong. Even in the toughest situations, if you look hard, you will find something to be cheerful about.

At first, if you try not to grumble and complain, that may be all that you can do. After awhile you may be able to crack a joke in a difficult situation, your Patrol will laugh, and suddenly everything that seemed so hard becomes easier. See whether you can get the reputation of being the one who always cheers up the Patrol.

A Scout shows courage in all difficulties.

Very few people have the chance to show their courage by rescuing someone who is drowning or is caught in a burning building. Yet courage shows itself in other ways. If you look about, you will see people who are brave and cheerful even though they have heavy responsibilities or are physically handicapped.

It takes great courage sometimes to speak the truth or to admit that you are wrong and apologise. It also takes courage to do firmly what is right when others are trying to make you do what is wrong. You should be brave enough to do these things and always stand up for your friends and beliefs.

A Scout makes good use of time, possessions and property.

You possess the ability to think, to reason and learn. You should make good use of these abilities.

It is important to make good use of your time. If you have homework to do, get it done at once, and save time for something more pleasant. By planning to use every moment, you will be able to fit in all kinds of interesting things into each day.

You should look after your clothes, your bicycle and sporting gear; look after them just as carefully as if these things belonged to someone else. Public property, such as trees in parks and seats at bus stops, belong to us all and a Scout takes care not to damage them.

A Scout takes care of natural resources.

Our natural resources are the land, air, water, plants and animals. As these resources are limited we have to use them carefully. There are some people in the world today who thoughtlessly waste them.

A Scout can help when he goes camping. He should try to leave his site so clean and natural that you cannot see where he has camped.

A Scout has respect for himself and others.

Self-respect comes from doing to the best of your ability what you know to be right.

Respect for others means taking for granted that they are also doing their best to live according to their beliefs. Even if their efforts seem funny a Scout doesn't laugh at them. Even if their beliefs are quite different from his, a Scout treats them seriously and tries to understand. He practices seeing the other fellow's point of view and so learns to respect him.