

The Seton Book Lecture

Delivered on 7 February 2002 at the Gray Owl District Roundtable

(Edited parts included)

OPENING

Fellow Scouters, tonight I'm going to continue the story that I started last February about the development of the Scouting Movement, through the life of Robert Bay-den-Pole. I say Bay-den-Pole because that is the way that he and most of his immediate family pronounce his name. Last year, I was in contact with his last living daughter, Betty, and she confirmed that she does, in deed, pronounce her name as Bay-den-Pole, although her husband, Gervis, pronounces it Baden-Powell. Therefore, in support of Betty, I am breaking myself of saying Baden-Powell and will pronounce it as she does, Bay-den-Pole.

The artifacts that I have brought with me are all from my personal Scouting collection, and illustrate tonight's story. They are **ALL** originals, except for one, which will be made known later. The rest are **NOT** fakes...and **NOT** reproductions. That being said, please **LOOK**... all you want.

Tonight, in the great district of Gray Owl,... here in Garland, Texas...I am going to present, a new, groundbreaking discovery that relates to Scouting's first great, unresolved arguments, **“Did Robert Baden-Powell publicly give credit to Ernest Thompson Seton for Seton's contributions to the Worldwide Scouting Movement?”**

If one goes to the Ernest Thompson Seton Institute website, his short biography states that, and I quote, “Baden-Powell founded the Boy Scouts, borrowing much material and many concepts from Seton without giving him credit.” Well, if one studies Baden-Powell, it's obvious that he tried to close the issue by publicly stating on the 23rd of September, at a Boy Scouts of America dinner at New York's Waldorf Astoria Hotel that, “You have made a mistake, Mr. Seton, in your remarks to the effect that I am the father of (Scouting)...There are many fathers. I am only one of the uncles, I might say.” Soooo...is Baden-Powell a plagiaristic uncle or is Seton jealous egomaniac?

Tonight, I enter the fray with new information that I have recently uncovered and put-up on the World Wide Web. Unfortunately, the only reactions that I have gotten are more like astonishment, rather than critique. So, let's see if I can stir-up some real bees...

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Fellow Scouters, I once heard radio commentator Paul Harvey talk about how one man's trash is another man's treasure on his syndicated program "the Rest of the Story." Well friends, this is **my** tale.

Last year I was mucking around in a rare issue bookstore, when **this** little book caught my eye. It's Ernest Thompson Seton's classic 1903 Scout story that is regarded as **the** prototype Scouting novel of its time. It's about two teenage boys who go into the woods and spend their evenings and weekends living as Native American Indians, and it's entitled *Two Little Savages*. Well I already had a reading copy of this book, but, like any normal, inquisitive collector, I picked it up for a look anyway. "Nice cover, good condition," I thought, "standard Seton book," That was, of course,...until I opened it up.

That's when it hit me. On the inside cover, I found the most amazing writing that absolutely floored me. My eyes got bigger and bigger as I read it over and over again. I inspected the ink, checked the spelling, and noted the characteristics of the penmanship. "Decision's made, it's mine," I said, quietly. As it turned out, this book absolutely **never** left my hand until I had paid for it a couple of minutes later and immediately left the shop...all the while, looking around for the hidden cameras that **MUST** have been taping my reaction for a segment on the BSA's version of Candid Camera.

A couple of weeks later, I e-mailed a fellow collector in the United Kingdom named Colin Walker, because, to me, he has written the finest collection of scholarly Scouting works of any pure collector or enthusiast that I have read. He shot back a reply and requested scans and permission to use it as documentation on his Scouting website and in his ongoing research. To this request...I did oblige.

OK, so why all the fuss?

Well, in short, this newly found book finally sheds light upon... (for what can be considered the first time in recent history)... upon the validity of Seton's claims of plagiarism. For years now, Seton supporters have expressed their disdain of Baden-Powell and the nobility of **their** hero, Ernest Seton, without knowing all of the facts. But up until last year, some of the facts weren't known. Which leads me to...

...the rest of the story...

The Celebration

It was the 19th of May in the year 1900. Ordinary Britons were cramming into the streets of London, cheering wildly and celebrating the Relief of Mafeking. Mafeking, as you may remember, was a small, little undermanned British garrison in South Africa during the Second Anglo-Boer War. This silly little town was supposed to be steamrolled by the superior firepower and manpower of the Boer Army...but it was not. As it turned out, to

the Britons, the miraculous defense of this little nothing town represented everything that was right with the British Empire at the time. Their National Pride had been at stake. So, when news that Colonel Mahon's Flying Column had relieved the town two days previous on the 17th of May...well...pandemonium broke out...creating what was to be regarded by later historians as one of the most famous party nights of the 20th Century. As is documented by witnesses, this legendary Relief of Mafeking party was pure, unadulterated jubilation. Of note: a short, little ditty of the time was:

Mother, may I go and 'maffick'
Tear around and hinder traffic?

The Garrison of Mafeking was commanded by a plucky career military officer named Colonel Robert Stevenson Smyth Baden-Powell. And the sly Colonel's brainpower had just enabled the Brits to completely and psychologically defeat the overwhelming Boer Army by withstanding their offensive bombardment for 217 days. His method was by creating and executing a multitude of very creative, deceptive ruses designed to confuse and to frustrate the enemy, thereby avoiding the travesty of a British surrender. By the end of the Siege, although the population of this small township was starving and, thereby forced into consuming daily rations of horse and donkey meat in the form of two nifty little Soup Kitchen sludges called "Brawn" and "Sowen," they were very grateful and very lucky to be alive on that bright May morning in 1900.

As it stood on the 19th of May, 43-year-old Robert Baden-Powell, was instantaneously known as the "Hero of Mafeking" and the "Defender of the Empire." He was **the** national hero. His popularity, in fact, rivaled the Queen herself, that being the legendary Victoria Regina. Incredibly, his accomplishment was so dramatic, so huge and so utterly spectacular, that she promoted him, on-the-spot, to the rank of Major-General, making him the youngest man ever to reach that rank in the British Empire. Hereafter, I refer to him as B-P.

Within 2 weeks of the Relief, B-P had turned the control of Mafeking back over to the civilian government and took his leave to his next assignment in the town of Rustenburg, about 145 miles to the northeast. En route, he briefly stopped in the British-occupied, former Boer capital of Pretoria, where he gallantly entered the city to great pomp and fanfare. The citizenry just went crazy-happy to see the Hero of Mafeking. Before leaving, he graciously granted an exclusive interview to a young war correspondent from the *London Morning Post*. As the story goes, immediately after the text had been completed, the journalist gave it to B-P for his approval. After reading it, B-P blushed and told the newsman that, "Talking to you is like talking to a phonograph." Yet another scoop for cub reporter Winston Churchill.

While stationed in Rustenburg, several interesting things happened. First B-P began receiving bags of mail from British boys asking for his autograph; along with letters from adult admirers congratulating him on his magnificent defense of Mafeking and asking

him to speak to their boys' organizations. One letter from the Cheshire choirboys is of particular Scouting importance. This letter, signed by all 15 of them, asked B-P to become the patron of their non-smoking association. Coincidentally, B-P had given-up smoking when he was 20, after having started it for medicinal reasons as a 13th Hussar in India. Unbeknownst to him at the time, by accepting their invitation, he unknowingly planted his first worldwide seed of Scouting.

Here's what he said in his letter back to them, "Be active in doing good. By doing good I mean making yourselves useful and by doing small kindness to other people. Make up your mind to do one 'good turn' to somebody every day, and you will soon get into the habit of doing 'good turns' always. It does not matter how small the 'good turn' may be – even if it is only to help an old woman across the street, or to say a good word for somebody who is being badly spoken of." Pretty good stuff, I'd say. After all, as you may know, it was a "good turn" that brought Scouting to the United States in the form of Chicago publisher William D. Boyce in 1909.

On a side note, I submit to you tonight, that this is the letter that the Boy Scouts can thank for inspiring thousands of cartoonists and comedians to tirelessly re-create the "helping granny across the street" gag. However, I digress.

The second interesting thing that came out of Rustenburg in July in 1900, more funny than significant, was that the Boers ended-up surrounding the town, again putting B-P in a Mafeking-like situation whilst he was stationed there. Calm and commanding, B-P started organizing the defense of the town to the complete disbelief of the bad luck of the other officers. On the 2nd of August, the British Commander-in-Chief Lord Roberts, who recognized the irony of the situation, wrote that, "Baden-Powell has a strange fancy for being beseiged." It did not, however, turn out to be another Mafeking, and B-P was able to leave for his new assignment back in Pretoria in late August.

The Inspector-General of the S.A.C.

On the 22nd of October 1900, B-P had his new post...that being the Inspector-General of the newly created South African Constabulary, hereafter referred to as the S.A.C. This organization, made up of about 6 to 10-thousand officers and enlisted men, was charged with "acting as a police in and throughout the Transvaal and Orange River Colony." During the whole of November and December, B-P organized his command and tackled many issues. One of the most pressing issues was a standard uniform. So, he designed it.

After great thought and analysis, he ultimately decided on comfortable and informal khaki. In fact, it looked a lot like this. I had this one made to spec last year in Britain. My model tonight is Sgt. Bob. **(UNVEIL BOB the MANNEQUIN)**

He started off with a long sleeved, gray vyella fabric shirt with a soft, removable collar on a shirt with sleeves to be rolled-up as needed. He added khaki lace-up cavalry breeches that could be tucked into the boots by the Officers or worn with khaki puttees and lace-up ankle boots by Enlisted men. He designed a khaki tunic with military rank on the sleeves, with a roll down collar instead of the common British military stand-up collar. He finished-off the uniform with his favorite broad-brimmed, Montana Peak Stetson hat with a tall, chicken feather cockade on the left-hand side called a “Jay’s Wing.”

One fun fact was that this particular style of hat was known in the field as the “Boss of the Plains” style or just simply as a BP for short...coincidence?...or not? Well, regardless of that, B-P was very protective of his BP’s. In fact, when the train that was to deliver the first few thousand BP’s was derailed by the Boers, a very upset B-P, who worried that the Boers would adopt the BP for their own uniform, had signs written in Dutch and put up throughout the region stating, that any Boer found to be in possession of a BP would be shot on site. Well, no Boer was ever shot over a BP, so, I guess, that B-P never lost a BP.

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If you were wondering what an early BSA uniform looks like and how similar they are, I have an early 1920’s version here. This is Ken. (**UNVEIL KEN the MANNEQUIN**)

I’m going to digress for a couple of minutes because I think that what this uniform represents is very important.

This is the Official BSA uniform from 1923. It was proudly worn by a young man of 14 named Kenneth MacLean of Springfield, OH, who was only in Scouting for a short time due to his father’s illness and disability. He was forced to quit Scouting shortly after joining, to take a job at Kroger Foods Company to help earn money for his family. During his brief time in Scouts, however, he did manage to lovingly rough-up his uniform as any active scout would do...but not so much as to destroy the integrity of the material itself. It is, in fact, in much better shape than I would expect for an experienced 1923 uniform to be in. The breeches, as you may see, have some worn and dirty spots, but they will never be cleaned because I love the idea of having 1923 dirt installed by a Roaring ‘20’s Boy Scout.

*Later on in adulthood, Kenneth, always the patriotic American, was a member of the Ohio State Guard and an Air Raid Warden during World War II. Additionally, he took care of his sick wife, sick sister and elderly mother, each...for at least 10 years prior to their deaths, but he never complained. Although he suffered through many hardships, one Great Depression, and a multitude of lifestyle changing experiences... stowed away neatly in his closet...for the rest of his life...hung **this**...his Boy Scout uniform, properly protected for almost 70 years, whereupon his death in 1993, it passed to his son, Richard, who eventually sent it to me this past year.*

I find it very sad that the people who attack Scouting are the same people who will never, ever understand the classic moral lessons that Scouting teaches the boys of today or recognize how it reinforced the basic family values that were preached by the parents of the earliest Boy Scouts like Kenneth MacLean. The fact that this 1923 Boy Scout uniform is here today convinces me that it is more than just a few yards of khaki material, actually, it is a living testament to Kenneth's desire to permanently preserve his most important item from a lost childhood. Scouting artifacts can do that.

If you look at the comparison of the two uniforms...you will notice, the buttons were detachable on the BSA uniform, whereas the collar is detachable in the S.A.C. version. The hats look pretty much the same, both are Montana Peak styles, with the B.S.A. version being low-peaked, instead of its counterpart that's high-peaked. That's the very short version. I'm sure that you can see the other similarities.

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The second fun fact was that since the S.A.C. soldiers knew that their duty was to respond to problems swiftly and effectively, their chosen slogan was "Be Prepared." Funny, it too was abbreviated "BP." Coincidence?...I don't think so.

In December, B-P had the pleasure of hosting his beloved Mother Henrietta and Sister Agnes into Cape Town. Amidst the typical family banter, they told him of the wonderful parties in the streets and the impact that his little red Army instruction guide was having on the young men in London. The manual, called *Aids to Scouting*, which he had finished just before the Siege had begun, was written to instruct rookie army recruits in the intricacies of scouting tactics and techniques. It had, in fact, sold almost 100,000 copies...and to whom?...not to soldiers, but to British boys, of course. Furthermore, the little guide was being featured in a new boys magazine entitled *Boys of the Empire*, under the title "The Boy Scouts." B-P was intrigued.

Meanwhile back at the S.A.C., B-P started to train his fresh recruits in frontier soldering. He organized his 5 divisions of men into 4 subgroups of districts. The districts were chopped into troops, each of which consisted of patrols of 6 men each, with one chosen leader. Sound familiar? Training consisted of an intensive course of drills, tactics, riding and musketry. Additionally, the rookies learned to build huts, dig trenches, lay mines and put-up barbed wire. B-P's techniques were highly new and also highly frowned upon by Army traditionalists at the time...but they worked. By July of 1901, his S.A.C. was so well trained and so well prepared for its job, that a very ill B-P was ordered home to London for 6 months to recuperate from a serious bout with influenza and bronchitis.

When he arrived in the British port of Southampton, a huge crowd was gathered to greet the Hero of Mafeking. Amidst flag-waving and loud fanfare, B-P was forced to hear a speech from the mayor welcoming him back home to Britannia. When B-P eventually got

on the road to London, he was informed that another ceremony awaited him there, too. So, like any man wishing to avoid large crowds, he skipped London altogether and toured the British Isles for a couple of months under the moniker... "Colonel Nicholson,"... which was in fact, the name of his Chief-of-Staff, with whom he had left control of the S.A.C. upon his departure.

When B-P finally did feel strong enough to enter London months later, he was informed of a welcoming party that he needed to attend, which was being thrown by his Powell cousins. In total, 167 "cousins" showed-up, all with invitations in hand. The police force in charge of crowd control outside of the London flat was instructed to let in only those with invitations. So, when one gentleman showed-up without an invitation asking to get in, the policeman guarding the door told him to go away. The gentleman politely answered, "My dear fellow, you can't have a funeral without the corpse." So, after a couple of minutes of convincing, the policeman allowed the "Hero of Mafeking" to enter his own party.

After enduring several months of relaxation and recuperation in London, B-P appealed to the Army's medical board to allow him to return to work a couple of months early, to which they agreed in late 1901. By May of 1902, the Boers admitted defeat and agreed to the British terms of surrender...thereby ending this British dubbed "unnecessary war" in only two years and eight months.

As a military Police Force, the S.A.C. was relieved of its duty as an arm of the British Army and turned over to the civil government of South Africa. However, prior to that happening, B-P, addressed his soldiers and he unknowingly planted his second seed of Scouting.

Specifically, he urged them to be 'gentlemen' not in the sense of having money or the right background, but as men "who could be trusted on their honour to do a thing; who are guided by a sense of what is their duty rather than by their own inclination; who are helpful and kind, especially to the weak, and who by their personal self-respect and avoidance of bad habits give themselves a manliness and dignity which no humbug can attain too." To me, that sounds like the origin of the Scout Oath and Laws.

B-P, however, remained in charge of the new-look S.A.C. for a little bit longer until Lord Roberts gave him a new and more highly regarded post, that being the Inspector-General of Cavalry for Great Britain and Ireland, also with responsibility of the cavalry in Egypt and South Africa. As Lord Roberts later wrote, B-P earned this post for writing, "quite the best book I have ever read on scouting, and he is undoubtedly clever." In the meantime, however, B-P excitedly oversaw the re-assignment of the S.A.C. into civilian duties because he was eager to make-up with his Boer friends and to help them to re-establish their lives again. During those 10 months, the S.A.C. performed a multitude of tasks. They vaccinated babies, delivered mail, inoculated cattle and policed small towns. They collected customs, stopped illicit liquor violations and controlled gold rushes. They

were highly visible, and very important to the re-building process of the war-torn country. Yet B-P's time at their helm was limited. London was calling and it was his duty to respond.

The Inspector-General of Cavalry

On the 9th of March 1903, B-P was in residence at the War Office in London as the newly appointed Inspector-General of Cavalry, where he would, undeniably, be a captive of the city....or would he? It's not like he could just disappear and not be noticed. In fact, as much as he may or may not have wanted it, wherever he went, his Boer War fame followed. So, instead of fighting it, he used it as a tool to entertain audiences, all the while, dutifully performing the requirements of his office, as demanded by Lord Roberts. When B-P was honored at dinner parties, he would tell grand stories of his adventures and spin yarns from his military Scouting experiences in South Africa and India...all to vast applause and absolute wonderment from his audiences. When he traveled across the Empire, he presented medals to South African War veterans and inspected various local youth groups. He was a staple in parades and always on the "A" list at receptions. Oh yes, B-P was in great demand...but no more so than in his new position as the Inspector-General of Cavalry. But, to do it properly, he had to go on an aggressive series of inspection tours. So he did.

During the spring and summer of 1903, B-P was on the road. His objective was to establish the current state of the British cavalry. However, he would not do as it had been done previously. Instead of his inspections being announced many weeks in advance and lasting for just hours, B-P preferred to contact the Commanding Officer within a couple of days of arrival, live in the barracks and observe the regiments in work and play for several days. He lived as the lowest soldier would and absolutely had no use for "spit and polish" **appearances**. Furthermore, he demanded absolute regimental efficiency. Along the way, B-P made copious notes and suggestions for these regimental improvements, and in the next four years, many would be installed.

In terms of Scouting, one particular "thinking outside of the box" improvement comes to mind. That is the creation of the *Cavalry Journal*, a quarterly publication for the dissemination of information on the latest in cavalry training techniques. As the Inspector-General, B-P wrote a column for many issues, a practice that he would continue in his other magazine and book publications up until his death in January of 1941. In fact, the very popular *Cavalry Journal* was the precursor to B-P's two other very successful magazines called *The Scout*, (published every Thursday without fail), and *Scouting Magazine*. I would be willing to bet that *The Scout's* success helped to prompt Dan Beard, the National Commissioner of the Boy Scouts of America at the time, to buy the rights to a little regional magazine called *Boys' Life* in 1912, to use as a propaganda tool for the fledgling BSA.

On a quick side note, the BSA was only one of many boy scout-type organizations that popped-up from 1900 - 1910. It was, however, the one that survived the longest. Who here has ever heard of the Rhode Island Boy Scouts? Well it was Rhode Island Boy Scout Joseph Lane who originally created Boys' Life Magazine, which was eventually purchased by publisher George Barton in early 1911 and re-issued as a twice-monthly regional magazine starting in March of that same year. And, thanks to Uncle Dan's foresight in 1912, Boys' Life Magazine has delighted millions of young men ever since.

But back to the inspection tour.

Whilst on site at the French Cavalry School in Saumur, France, B-P was particularly impressed with the quality of the officers and the badge that they wore on their arm. It was in the form of a star and was only awarded to a "trained scout." When he inquired further, the commanding French officer replied, "But, Monsieur, it is your [own British Army scout] badge except, we cannot use the fleur-de-lis because of its political significance in France, and thereby, we replaced it with a star."

Well, B-P knew what the fleur-de-lis meant in the rest of the world. In India, it was a symbol that meant life and resurrection. In Egypt, it was the attribute of the god Horus. To him, it symbolized a trained scout. Why? Because the fleur-de-lis was the north point of the compass and B-P's trained 5th Dragoon Scouts could execute orienteering in any strange country. B-P later wrote that, "When the Boy Scouts started...I used the same badge for them, for, just as with soldier scouts, ...the Boy Scouts could give equally valuable service to their countrymen." He added that, "The actual meaning to be read from the fleur-de-lis is that it points in the right direction (and upward) turning neither to the left nor the right, since these can lead backwards again."

An interesting point that my friend Colin brings up is that B-P chose the word "scout" and the symbol of the "fleur-de-lis" as descriptive words in his new movement. Yet neither could be copyrighted because they were both in normal, free use vocabulary. So, B-P added 2 stars to the curved ends of the fleur-de-lis with a total of 10 points for the original 10 Scout Laws and thereby, created a symbol that could not just be used on common wallpaper in someone's den. Again, I digress.

His Eyes are Opening

On the 30th of April in 1904, in between cavalry inspections, B-P was asked to review a very popular boys' organization called the Boys' Brigade at the request of their founder, William Alexander Smith. This event turned out to be the "fertilizer" for the Inspector-General's seeds of Scouting.

The Boys' Brigade, an organization of Scottish origin created in 1883, was founded by Scottish-born merchant, lieutenant in the 1st Lanark Rifle Volunteers, and dedicated

Sunday school teacher, William Alexander Smith. Lieutenant Smith, after finding that many of the unruly and unwashed boys in his Sunday school class were entirely beyond the range of proper discipline, was inspired to turn the young lads into small soldiers. So, Smith put uniforms on their backs and rifles in their hands. According to various reports, the transformation was so dramatic in terms of manners, morals, and discipline, that his experiment caught on throughout the Empire and prompted Smith to declare that the purpose of his Boys' Brigade was: "the advancement of Christ's Discipline, Self-respect, and all that tends towards a true Christian Manliness."

By 1904, his Boys' Brigade had 54,000 boy members in the British Isles alone. Their premier event was the Drill Inspection and Review, to which up to 11,000 citizens in the community would buy tickets to witness. Of note, according to the *Glasgow Gazette*, the most riotous applause occurred when "the youthful soldiers, many of whom were hardly as tall as the toy guns they carried, marched past the inspecting officer in quarter column, almost in perfect step, carrying their heads erect, and maintaining a well-balanced line as they crossed the field before the inspecting officer."

This event opened B-P's eyes to two very important concepts. First, "that boys would come eagerly in the thousands to be trained if the training had its attractions for them." And second, "that hundreds of adults were willing to sacrifice time and energy in the service of training these boys." What he greatly disliked, however, was the traditional Army training methods, drills and instructions that were being used. Through his service at the S.A.C., he knew that alternative training methods could be used to great effect. He wanted, not to create little soldiers, but young men with pluck, initiative and a spirit of adventure.

When the boys marched off, B-P turned to Smith, both on horseback, and congratulated him on creating such a great organization but 'chaffingly' added that it really should be much larger by now and would have ten times the number with more variety and attraction in the training. Smith, without a moment's hesitation agreed, and challenged B-P to develop a program that would add the alleged "variety and attraction" that his program lacked. Furthermore, Smith suggested that B-P develop a boy's version of *Aids to Scouting*.

Before doing so, B-P wrote up a report and sent it off to Smith. In it he wrote some very prophetic things. Among them,

Boys should try to do everything to make themselves strong and healthy so as to become good, able-bodied citizens when they grow up. A great step towards this would be to encourage the practice of free gymnastics or physical exercise more frequently on parade, and also with various opportunities at home.

Something might, I think, also be done towards developing the boy's mind by increasing his powers of observation, and teaching him to notice details. I believe that if some form of scout training could be devised in the Brigade it would be very popular and could do a great amount of good. Preliminary training in this line might include practice in noting and remembering details of strangers, contents of shop windows, appearance of new streets, etc. The results would not only sharpen the wits of the boy, but would also make him quick to read character and feelings, and thus help him to be a better sympathizer with his fellow-man.

Additionally, B-P visualized his boys as emulating "the duties of knights" and they should read patriotic literature and be chivalrous, like St. George, the eventual patron Saint of Boy Scouting. Although B-P was beginning to **really** formulate his new movement, but it would have to wait for the next couple of years because the duties of his office were pressing.

Fateful Week-end

In July of 1906, B-P made a fateful decision that would impact him for the rest of his life...and dare I say it...impact the entire world for years to come. He accepted an offer to vacation for a weekend at the very luxurious home of noted publisher and alleged philanthropist, C. Arthur Pearson. That, in and of itself was no big deal, but what happened to him while there, is. Specifically, two monumental events took place. First, and metaphorically, B-P's infant seeds of Scouting were philosophically watered... second, and realistically, the controversy over who should get credit for founding the Worldwide Movement of Scouting officially began.

As the record shows, B-P was relaxing one morning when he received a curious little...unsolicited... parcel in the mail. It contained a 480-something page book entitled *The Birchbark Roll of the Woodcraft Indians*, sent with compliments by its author, Ernest Thompson Seton. How Seton knew that B-P would be there is anyone's guess. That's the fate part. But the rest is history. On its opening page, B-P read, "This is a time when the whole nation is turning toward the outdoor life, seeking in it the physical regeneration so needful for continued national existence. Only by living the simple life of primitive times could the ills caused by the grind of the over-busy world be cured." How right Seton was.

B-P immediately recognized that Seton had successfully created an aggressive outdoor program for 8 –15 year old boys by identifying **them** with Seton's vision of the ideal man...the Red Indian brave. Without getting into the minutia or history of Seton's program, (which could be a future talk), his Woodcraft Indian Tribes had been around in the United States since 1902, but had still not made much of an impact. B-P, however, thought that this "woodcraft appeal" problem could be rectified. As the Inspector-General

began to look closer into Seton's program, he saw some very interesting items. Of note, Seton's Indian Tribes were led by an adult called the "Medicine-man." There was an oath of loyalty, 10 laws, multiple lessons in woodcraft, star-craft and woodsmanship, and numerous clever games like 'Bear Hunt,' Old Spotty-Face" and "Spear the Great Sturgeon."

What B-P especially liked about Seton's program was that all of these activities kept the boys occupied and excited while they were out in the woods. What he didn't like, though, was the emphasis on the Red Indian. B-P thought that when he started his own boys' organization, he would found it on the principles of a self-confident frontiersmen rather than "a culturally doomed Red Indian." (His words, not mine). Yet, the "natural man" **would** be represented in his program, but not as an American Indian. Instead, the "natural man" would be represented as something that B-P knew a great deal about,...the Zulu warrior.

Within two weeks of receiving Seton's parcel, on the 1st of August 1906, B-P wrote to the world-famous naturalist stating that he was busy writing plans for drawing-up his own 'scheme' with a handbook for the education of Boys as Scouts. OK, let it be known, that this was the world's first mention of a boy scout handbook... more specifically, **the** boy scout handbook that would not only become one of the world's best sellers, but also act as a Boy Scout's own personal outdoor Bible. In fact, on one level, this handbook was a simple "how to do it manual" on woodcraft. But on a completely different level, it was a well-thought out treatise on the purpose and principles for youths to follow throughout life. B-P added in his letter to Seton that, "[my Scouting scheme] runs essentially on the same lines as yours...and I should be very glad to meet you." And it was made so.

On the 30th of October 1906 in London's Savoy Hotel, these two visionaries for Scouting met for a quiet lunch. During their brief encounter, the 46-year-old naturalist-writer and the 49-year-old Inspector-General discussed each other's ideas in great detail. B-P came out of the meeting with several important concepts. First, "each tribe is ruled by it's own council." Second, "a boy gains feathers and badges by qualifying in various subjects (all outdoor)...no competition, only qualifying... because Scouting practices good." And third, "each band is identified with a totem, usually either an animal or bird whose cry can be mimicked by the members."

Although the two planned to meet for a second time, Seton's lecture schedule and B-P's inspection schedule prevented this from happening. But B-P's mind was churning.

As the Inspector-General mulled over his "scouting scheme," he was reminded of a humorous story that was told to him by Brigadier-General H.H. Allenby, whilst inspecting his 4th Cavalry Brigade in Colchester. General Allenby told of his son, Maurice, who had been given instructions in scouting from his governess Miss Katarina Loveday. Well one day, General Allenby was riding home, when he heard his son shout, "Father, you're shot! I ambushed you. You didn't see me." Allenby looked up to see his

son sitting on a tree branch high above him. But what really amazed the startled General was that on a branch even higher above the boy, sat his Edwardian governess, Katarina. Allenby asked Miss Loveday, “What on Earth are you doing up there?” to which Miss Loveday responded, **“Oh, I’m teaching him scouting.”** As it turned out, B-P’s *Aids to Scouting* had been a textbook on the curriculum at Miss Charlotte Mason’s Teachers’ Training College at Ambleside, where Miss Loveday had trained as a governess during the previous year.

After a quick chuckle, the Inspector-General was off the South Africa and Egypt for the last time as a career military officer.

Whilst in South Africa, the Inspector-General inspected cavalry units at Middleburg, Johannesburg, Pretoria, Kimberly and, of course, Mafeking, into which he entered very obscurely, so he could have a good, quiet look around. What he found was very different compared to what he had left 6 years before. In fact, there was little sign of the Siege and the entire defense works had been pulled-down. He methodically made his way to the home of an old friend in town and took up temporary residence. When word got out that B-P had returned, visitors by the score began to arrive. His most favorite visitor was a strapping young lad of 19 named Warner Goodyear, the former Sergeant Major of the Mafeking Cadet Corps, whom at 13, appeared on bicycle on the 1d Mafeking Siege stamp, and is internationally regarded as the world’s first Boy Scout. It would, however, be the last time that B-P would see the young man alive. Sadly, Goodyear would be dead within the span of 7 years.

Finding a Publisher

On the 5th of February 1907, during his trip home from his inspections, B-P put the finishing touches on his Scouting idea in the form of 2 four-page circulars, entitled *Boy Scouts – A Suggestion* and *Boy Scouts - Summary of a Scheme*. In them, he used and defined the terms “Boy Patrols,” “Patrol Leader,” “Troop,” and “Scoutmaster” for the first time. But he needed a publisher. He thought of each of the publishing houses that had processed his work in the past but he settled upon C. Arthur Pearson. Ltd. In fact, the deciding factor turned out to be that Pearson supported numerous children’s causes like the Pearson Fresh Air Fund, which gave holidays in the country to thousands of slum children from the big cities every summer, and the Guildford Crippled Children’s Hospital. B-P thought of Pearson as a children’s advocate, so he decided that he must be his ideal publisher.

Although to B-P, Pearson was quite the philanthropist, if one asked around, opinions varied. When noted British statesman Joseph Chamberlain was asked about the character of Pearson, Chamberlain retorted, that Pearson was “the greatest hustler that I have ever known.” One thing is certain, profits were the most important item to the publisher, and this Scouting thing smelled pretty profitable. After all, when a shrewd businessman looks

at a deal, he examines two things first; the personalities at its helm and the potential market. The personality was...a War Hero...and the market was...a few million boys...War Hero...few million boys...Cha-Ching.

On the 16th of February, B-P arrived back in his London War Office, after **this**, his final inspection tour as the Inspector-General for Cavalry. As for his performance rating while in office, he was lauded as having done more as the Inspector-General than any one of his predecessors, and thereby was awarded the rank of Lieutenant-General for the Cavalry and placed on the Reserve at half pay pending his next assignment. Yet, that assignment was not to come in the British military. In fact, there was kind of a big money problem. I bet that all of you veterans out there can probably attest to a certain type of rigid military pay scale.

Well, since B-P's promotions had come so quickly, there was no pay precedent for him as a 50-year-old Lieutenant-General, so something had to be created for him...and B-P had an idea, "How about working at that Scouting fad?" So he did.

NOW WOULD SOMEONE LIKE TO SUMMARIZE UP TO THIS POINT? OK, HERE GOES...

*Local boy makes good and comes home a war hero. Gets promoted, gives lectures, inspects troops and gets a nifty idea. He makes a plan. He leaves the security of the Army due to pay constraints, and walks away with a half-pension. Now he's on his own in the private sector with only an idea and a pen. He gestures his scheme, hires a publisher who is a noted shyster, **and** who rewards his brilliance with a raw-deal book contract, **and** who expects him to create an organization's infrastructure and eat at the same time...**all** by surviving only on monies from book royalties...from his yet UNWRITTEN treatise on juvenile morality...**all** without letting his fellow countrymen think that he's using the Scouting Movement and his Boer War fame as a profit making scheme to advance his ultimate agenda of strengthening the weak-minds of Edwardian boys....Whew.....*

OK, did y'all get that?

Anyway, that's what he set out to do...and he did it...with the help of the very greedy, C. Arthur Pearson. Say what you want about Pearson's greed, but that was the impetus that got B-P working on the actual handbook, the one that would be entitled, Scouting for Boys, and the same book that eventually would become the world's #2 best seller behind the Bible.

Well, in 1907 Pearson did not know that. So, he used an old advertising trick and created a demand by having the handbook brought out in serial, fortnightly parts in the New Year of 1908. If enough interest was generated, then he would print a "Complete Edition" in the early summer, just in time for the camping season.

*On a side note, although Pearson never admitted it, he unknowingly was responsible for producing Scouting's first consumer sentiment survey. In retrospect, Pearson claimed that he **always knew** that Scouting would be a smashing success...however, he shrewdly covered his bets in case it didn't. In fact, that's why you'll see Pearson's subsidiary company, Horace Cox, as the fortnightly publisher of Scouting for Boys. It was only after those fortnightly part sold out did Pearson produce a complete edition under his own name, C. Arthur Pearson, Ltd.*

However, B-P knew that he couldn't just throw a program together and advertise it as the "save-all" for the soft-skinned, weak-minded youth of the Edwardian Era. He had to try out his scheme somewhere, and he knew just where that somewhere was.

As luck would have it, during the previous month on an Irish fishing trip, B-P had met a stockbroker named Charles van Raalte, who owned a castle on a small 500-acre island in Poole Harbor named Brownsea. Van Raalte told B-P that whenever he wanted to hold his "Experimental Camp," this would be the perfect place. B-P, who had illegally sailed through and landed upon the beaches of Brownsea Island as a boy, agreed.

In late June of 1907, in order to appease Pearson, B-P began feverishly working on Scouting for Boys in a small, picturesque cottage under a windmill on Wimbledon Common...a short ways from where the tennis tournament is held every June & July. He stayed there for 10 days writing and dictating the first complete draft of the classic handbook to a succession of shorthand writers.

On the 18th of July, B-P breakfasted with Pearson, at which the publisher presented the General with a packet of stationary with the heading:

Boy Scouts, Scout Camp
Brownsea Island, Poole.

Less than 2 weeks later, B-P would make Scouting history with the world's first experimental Scout Camp. However, many details still had to be accomplished before that could happen. Specifically, he needed experimental Scouts and an experimental Staff...and he knew just where to get both.

The Brownsea Island Experiment

By the end of July 1907, B-P had invited 21 boys, between the ages of 13 and 16 to attend his experimental camp. Let it be known that this "invitation" was more like a royal command and that the boys were simply told by their parents that they were going. B-P started by asking the boarding school boys of his privileged friends, to which he added selected Boys' Brigade members and working-class lads. He chose a mix of youths

because he wanted to see how these different classes of boys interacted together. As a final invitee, he asked his 9-year-old nephew, Donald, to attend.

His staff was longtime Army friend Major Kenneth McLaren, who had been with him in the military in India as well as at Mafeking. Please note that this was **not** the McLaren who donated the land for Gilwell Park...that was DuBose McLaren, this is Kenneth McLaren.

Well, now that B-P had assembled experimental scouts and an experimental staff, the island awaited...and the boys just couldn't get there fast enough. To them, Brownsea Island was equivalent with the great island adventure novels at the time like *Treasure Island* and *Robinson Crusoe*. They were excited and they were giddy...because the chance to live in a place entirely surrounded by water for a week with the "Hero of Mafeking"...was quite simply overwhelming. And, as luck would have it, they would do just that.

On the 29th of July 1907, B-P opened his experimental Scout Camp for set-up...and the world changed forever. B-P and McLaren along with a few of the boys, arrived on Brownsea with the supplies and set-up the bell tents for the participants. Why did they use the big clunky bell tent? Well, other than the fact that Kelty & The North Face hadn't been founded yet, that's really all that they had at the time. In addition to these tents, there was an army cook tent and an open sided marquee tent for foul weather shelter. Each patrol had its own tent and there was no standard uniform.

Two days later on the 31st of July, after the Official Opening Campfire, the participants were divided into 4 patrols of 5 or 6 members each, given a long wool streamer to be pinned on their left shoulder in their patrol color, and presented with a flag with a painted animal on it, rendered by B-P himself. Additionally, each boy was given a brass fleur-de-lis to be pinned upon his coat. The 4 patrols were named the Wolves, the Bulls, the Curlews and the Ravens. The most senior member in the patrol was the Patrol Leader, all of whom, coincidentally, were boarding school boys.

On the first full day of camp, the 1st of August, the Scouts had the opportunity to complete a few tests...knots, tracking, knowledge of the flag, etc. After successful completion, B-P presented each Scout with a brass, scroll-shaped pin with the words "Be Prepared" on it, to be attached to and worn below the fleur-de-lis. Khaki scarves were also then issued to each camper.

The daily schedule was as follows.

At 6 am every morning, B-P would arise from his tent and give a blast on his African kudu horn, the same one that he had obtained whilst in the 5th Dragoon Guards on the South African Matabele Campaign in 1896. In front of his tent, attached to a cavalry lance, flew the actual Union Jack that had flown over his Headquarters in Mafeking. His

impromptu uniform was a $\frac{3}{4}$ length sleeve, gray vyella S.A.C. pullover shirt with below-the-knee length shorts, golf stockings and a trilby hat with a fleur-de-lis pinned to it.

Upon hearing the wake-up call, the boys would tumble out of bed, grab a quick glass of milk and a biscuit and have a wash. Afterward, they cleaned-up their campsite and received a demonstration on the subject of the day, which had been introduced at the campfire the night before... topics like pioneering, signaling, first aid, tracking...you know, the Scouting basics. Next, they performed physical drills for half an hour, followed by hoisting the flag and prayer time...all of that in the 2 hours before breakfast at 8 am sharp. After breakfast, there were more Scouting Exercises, games, and what was known as “bathing,” up until 12:30. Please note that B-P’s version of “bathing” included the use of water games like “Spear the Great Sturgeon” and two boats. I have yet to find a reference to soap.

After lunch, there was a mandatory 1 hour and fifteen minute rest time, followed by patrol competitions and games based upon the day’s Scouting theme up until teatime at 5 pm. Afterward, the pace slackened and the campers got their compulsory rub-down and changed clothes for supper at 8 pm. However, the best part of the day came after supper, which featured the hour-long campfire hosted by B-P himself. At it, B-P introduced the Scouting topic for the next day and captivated the boys with his very elaborate yarns from his Scouting adventures in Africa and India. After the campfire, there was just enough time for 15 minutes of prayers followed by lights out at 9:30.

One thing is for sure, B-P always kept his Scouts active and challenged. In fact, during one campfire, B-P told the campers that he might “invade” the island at night from outside the boundaries and that they were to stop him. When his night “invasion” came, one alert boy shouted, “Halt!” from high above in a tree, and, with that, B-P was “imprisoned” by his own nephew, Donald. For many years after that, the Hero of Mafeking used this story as his personal illustration for looking up as well as around whilst campaigning.

Another aggressive challenge issued to the 22 Edwardian boys was the Survival Test. As the final days grew near, B-P gave a lesson in survival skills. Afterward, he sent off each patrol with uncooked rations with the objective of “surviving” for one day. Since the boys had recently been taught to make fires and other basic survival skills, one patrol ended up making dough on the insides of their jackets and cooking it on an open fire. In fact, one Scout internalized this lesson all too well. As the story goes, upon arriving home, this upper-class Scout was so excited about showing off his newly found survival skills, that his mother had to physically stop him from making his “armpit survival bread” in his fine jackets because, “this talent was just not needed in civilized society.”

All things considered, the camp was a complete success. Although a Board of Review (for Improper Conduct) was in place, it was never needed. B-P did find that there was a tiny bit of class-based conflict between the boys. Specifically, the working-class boys

found the upper-class boys to be “prissily over-polite.” In fact years later, one Brownsea Island Scout named Arthur Primmer recalled that one upper-class boy raised his hand one day and asked permission to leave the room. To which one working-class lad said, “Silly fool, doesn’t he know he’s in a tent?” But all was well again when the working class boys astonished the boarding schoolers with their grand feats of eating raw oysters...yum, yum.

The last full day of camp ended with a “Parent’s Day” on the 8th of August. Along with the parents;... the van Raaltes and the Editorial Manager for C. Arthur Pearson, Percy Everett, were also invited. The Scouts organized a display of the skills that they had learned, along with a tug-of-war challenge. Time and time again, the appreciative audience broke into applause. The events were completely boy-planned, boy-led and boy-executed. After the demonstrations, the van Raaltes invited the whole lot up to their castle on the Island for a banquet-like tea, complete with a brass band from Poole playing on the terrace.

The next morning, it was all over...and the Boy Scout Movement was launched.

B-P planned to run the camp on a fee of 1 pound per boy for all 10 days, but he was not able to do it. So... the camp ran a deficit. Some parents, who never believed that he would be able to break-even anyway, sent him an extra 1 pound note or more in their thank-you letters. So, I guess that...here it is...for your gee-whiz file...the very first Friends of Scouting campaign officially began on the 9th of August 1907.

The one unfortunate claim that came out of Brownsea was lodged by Ernest Seton himself. Specifically, Seton fervently believed that B-P had stolen his ideas without giving him due credit. Although, it **is** true that B-P extensively used Seton’s *Birchbark Roll* as a resource for Brownsea, there is also a case for pervasive paranoia by Seton and possibly some professional jealousy on his part because, in the Big Picture, B-P’s program worked a lot better than Seton’s. Although it is true that Seton’s Woodcraft Movement is alive and well today in the Czech Republic and Canada, B-P’s Boy Scout Movement is much more internationally recognized.

I’ll address Seton’s claim shortly.

Final Notes

When researching the Brownsea Island camp, I was particularly interested in the Wolves Patrol. It was led by Patrol Leader Bob Wroughton, and had 5 patrol members, one of whom was named Cedric Curteis. Although not much is known about them, it is known that Bob was one of B-P’s favorite scouts and that he was tragically killed-in-action in France in October of 1914. Also, of note, Cedric distinguished himself in the Great War by being awarded the Military Cross, and ultimately passed-way at the age of 68 in 1962.

With regard to the rest of the boys and their priceless Island experience, it is apparent that they all were completely captivated by B-P and devoured his philosophies and teachings. As members of the world's first Boy Scout Troop, these young men all personally experienced one of the greatest visionaries of the 20th Century and ultimately, got to take something away from it, both physically and mentally. Through their participation in B-P's experimental program, he was able to fine-tune his Scouting product and, thereby, introduce it to the rest of the world...to the benefit of you and I...and our sons...and our daughters. And, as for myself, my life has forever been changed because of it.

All of which leads-up to what I alluded to about 50 minutes ago...this Seton book and his vehement claims of plagiarism.

Well, at the final campfire on the 8th of August, it was theorized that B-P **may** have given a memento to each of the scouts at the Brownsea Island Scout Camp. Yet, this was pure speculation. It came about because at the 2nd Scout Camp, or the first OFFICIAL Scout Camp, the following year in Hunshaugh, England in 1908, B-P handed-out inscribed copies of his newly published and complete handbook, *Scouting for Boys*.

With respect to Brownsea, there was a difference of opinion among Scouting scholars as to what might have been presented. Some believed that B-P gave the campers signed copies of his *Aids to Scouting*, while others disagree and suggest something else because *Aids to Scouting* was already 8 years old and outdated. Speculation raged because scholars knew that B-P loved traditions and symbolism, and that he used them to great effect throughout his life...like sprinkling the ashes from one campfire to another, and the kudu horn, and the Mafeking Union Jack.

Of course, many of his lasting traditions and symbolic creations live with us today, like the Wood Badge, and the left-handed handclasp, and the giving out of "at-a-boys" and thank-you gifts. But there were only 22 Brownsea Island Scout Camp gifts. Would any eventually surface to possibly clear-up the picture?...

...So I repeat from earlier...

This Seton book entitled *Two Little Savages*, well...I already had a reading copy of the book, but, like any normal, inquisitive collector, I picked it up for a look anyway. "Nice cover, good condition," I thought, "standard Seton book," That was, of course,...until I opened it up.

That's when it hit me. On the inside cover, I found the most amazing writing that absolutely floored me. My eyes got bigger and bigger as I read it over and over again.

I bet that you're thinking, "OK, Scotty, nice story, so what's in the book?"

Well, on the inside cover of this book, probably treasured by a young English boy before going off to war, and then...probably sold by his family sometime after his death in 1962...only to be purchased by a local bookstore and found by me... is simply inscribed...in typical British fashion at the time...in Baden-Powell's own hand:

C. Curteis from Robert Baden-Powell
Scout Camp, Brownsea Island
8 August 1907

...a simple inscription...in a simple book...that was **in** B-P's possession...**on** Brownsea Island...**during** the first week of August of 1907...**at** the birthplace of Boy Scouting.

Now, you might be thinking "Big Deal," what does that show." Well, the twist in this pretzel is that...I know of no time at which B-P **overtly** said, "I must thank Ernest Seton for giving me the idea of Scouting." He did it all covertly...up until his Waldorf Astoria speech in 1910, when he had to speak-up or risk endangering the success of the fledgling BSA. Even then, he never specifically said that Seton greatly impacted his program, which annoyed Seton to no end.

Furthermore, I believe that the facts show that B-P came-up with the idea on his own...over time...starting in Mafeking, but he continually used his resources to piece together segments of other successful programs to create his own Scouting Movement... and Seton was an important part of that process. That is why this book is so historically important.

Without this book, Seton and his supporters could effectively claim that B-P left him out. But, with this book, it shows that B-P credited Seton's contributions all the way back in 1907...to the first troop of Boy Scouts...at the world's first Boy Scout camp.

Unfortunately, Seton probably never knew of the *Brownsea Island Inscription*...and it probably would not have made any difference anyway. But it still happened, and the Seton advocates today will continue to argue his case, regardless. And that's probably the way that it should be. In reflection, I think that it's kind of like chanting, "the Dallas Cowboys are #1," knowing full well that they never even made the playoffs.

So, what happened next? Well, after the Brownsea Island Camp concluded, B-P returned to Mill House cottage under the windmill on Wimbledon Common to complete the project that he had started writing in July of 1907. He finally completed *Scouting for Boys* on the 6th of January 1908, and sent the proofs off to Pearson for immediate publication. By the end of the month, the first installment was issued, complete with a note at the conclusion of the First Camp Fire Yarn. Specifically, B-P suggested that those who wanted to learn more about Scouting should read any one of 8 other notable publications. One of those books listed was Seton's *Two Little Savages*.

By April of 1908, Scouting for Boys was in wide release nationally and Lieutenant-General Robert Stevenson Smyth Baden-Powell was well on his way to his second career...that being the Chief Scout of the World.

...And now you know... the rest of the story...

I hope that you all have gotten something out of tonight's presentation...and now ask for any questions that you may have....