

HISTORY OF THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

SCOUTING CAME TO AMERICA because a boy did a *Good Turn*—an act of kindness for which he expected no reward. It happened many years ago on the foggy streets of London, England, when an American named William D. Boyce lost his way. A boy walked up and asked if he could be of assistance.

Mr. Boyce explained where he wanted to go. The boy led him to his destination, but when Mr. Boyce offered to give him some money, the boy said, “No, thank you, sir. I am a Scout. I won’t take anything for helping.”

William Boyce was so impressed by the boy’s kindness that he met with Lord Robert Baden-Powell, the founder of the Boy Scouts in Great Britain. He liked what Baden-Powell told him, and he knew that boys in the United States would want to be Scouts, too.

On February 8, 1910, Mr. Boyce and a group of businessmen, educators, and political leaders founded the Boy Scouts of America. Scouts celebrate February 8 as the birthday of the BSA.

No one knows what happened to the boy who guided Mr. Boyce through the London fog, but he will never be forgotten. Like many acts of kindness, what was done proved to be far more significant than who did it. The boy’s Good Turn helped bring Scouting to America.



An early Boy

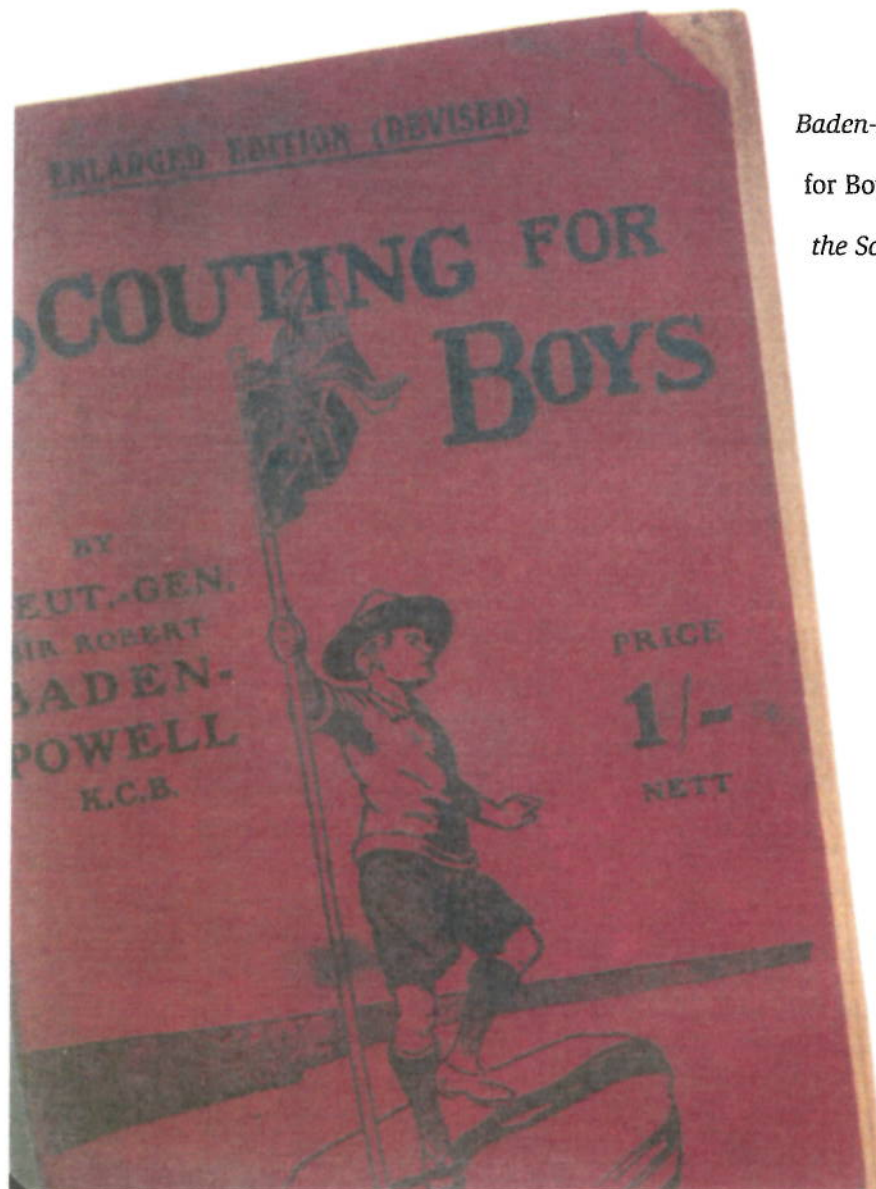
Scout uniform

and handbook

BADEN-POWELL— SCOUTING'S FOUNDER

ROBERT BADEN-POWELL was a general in the British army who became famous for his leadership during the Boer War in South Africa between Britain and the descendants of Dutch settlers, the Boers. After the war, Baden-Powell wanted to use his fame to help boys become better men and to have fun while they were doing it.

In 1907, Baden-Powell invited a group of boys to Brownsea Island off the coast of England to attend the world's first Boy Scout camp. Its success led him to write a book called *Scouting for Boys*. Thousands of boys read it and wanted to join the new organization. Scouting spread like wildfire throughout England and, before long, around the world.



Baden-Powell's Scouting for Boys helped launch the Scouting movement.



SCOUTING'S EARLY LEADERS

Lord Robert Baden-Powell

In 1907, Lord Robert Baden-Powell founded the Boy Scout movement in Great Britain.



Ernest Thompson Seton

As the first Chief Scout of the Boy Scouts of America, Mr. Seton made nature study an important part of the Scouting program.



Daniel Carter Beard

A woodsman in a buckskin shirt, "Uncle Dan" helped establish the outdoor skills that are still at the heart of Boy Scouting.



James E. West

Mr. West was a dedicated leader who guided the Boy Scouts of America for over thirty years as it grew into a vigorous national organization.

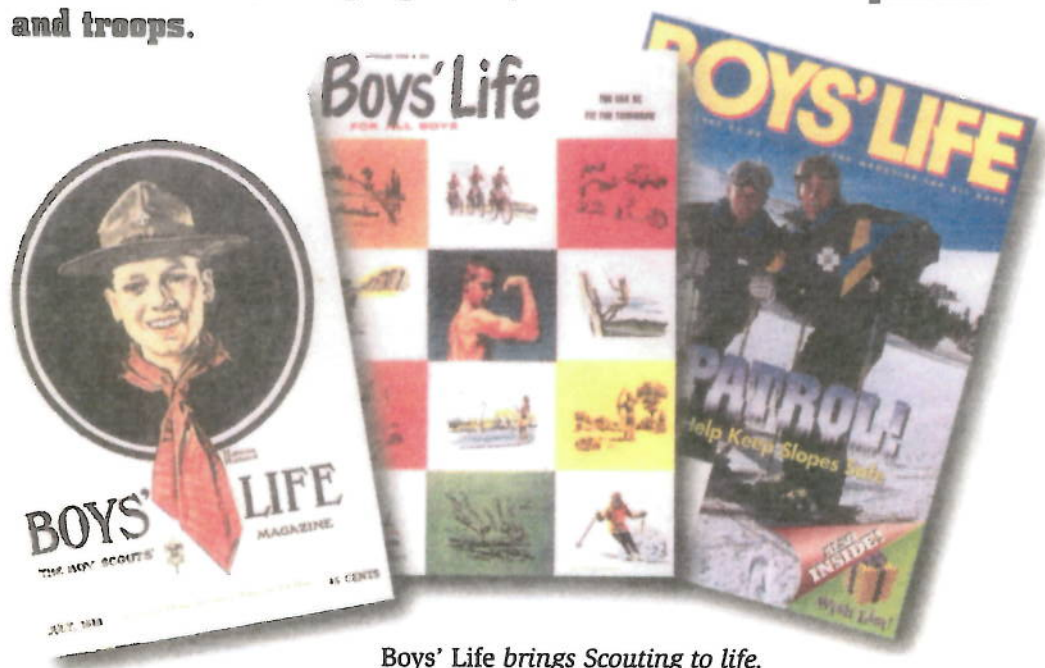
THE BOY SCOUT HANDBOOK

BADEN-POWELL'S BRITISH SCOUTS had *Scouting for Boys* as their manual, but American Boy Scouts needed a guidebook of their own. Ernest Thompson Seton, a well-known author, artist, and wildlife expert, wrote the first edition of *The Boy Scouts of America Handbook for Boys* in 1911. It was packed with information about camping, hiking, swimming, wildlife, and other subjects Mr. Seton knew boys would like. The book also explained how to form troops and patrols, and listed all the requirements for Boy Scout ranks and merit badges.

The BSA has revised the handbook every eight or nine years to include the latest information about Scouting and outdoor adventures. The handbook you are reading is the eleventh edition, written to carry Scouting well into the twenty-first century. Nearly 40 million copies of *The Boy Scout Handbook* have been printed since 1911, making it one of the most popular books of all time.

Boys' Life Magazine

In 1912, the Boy Scouts of America began publishing a magazine called *Boys' Life*. Today, *Boys' Life* is received by 1.3 million Scouts every month. Each issue is filled with terrific stories, camping hints, and information for patrols and troops.



Boys' Life brings Scouting to life.

BOY SCOUT SERVICE

SERVICE TO OTHERS has always been a central part of Scouting. During World War I, Boy Scouts throughout the country collected paper and metal for recycling, and sold bonds to raise money for the war effort. In 1916, the United States Congress showed its thanks by granting the Boy Scouts of America a special congressional charter.

Scouts today carry on this tradition of service in their homes, communities, and nation by gathering food and clothing for needy neighbors, building playgrounds, and repairing parks and public buildings. They assist fire and police departments, aid disaster victims, and clean up after storms.

Many Scouts also complete conservation work that protects and restores the land. The service projects required for different BSA ranks remind Scouts of the importance of contributing their time and energy to worthwhile efforts.



And in support of the President's Summit for America's Future held in 1997, the Boy Scouts of America committed each youth member to provide a minimum of twelve hours of community service annually through the year 2000. This will result in a total of two hundred million hours of community service rendered by the BSA and its youth.

The BSA Crime Prevention Program was created to use the collective resources of our youth, adult membership, law enforcement agencies, and the community to address the problem of crime in our communities.



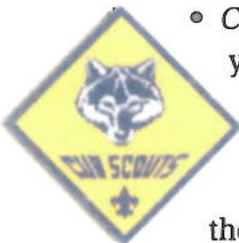
Recycling efforts allow Scouts to practice community service as they learn about wisely using natural resources.

The artwork of Joseph Csatari reflected the excitement and meaning of Scouting in the 1970s and 1980s.



THE SCOUTING FAMILY OF OPPORTUNITIES

IN ADDITION TO BOY SCOUTING, the BSA has developed programs for young people of different ages and interests:



- *Cub Scouting*, started in 1930, offers exciting activities for younger boys. *Tiger Cubs BSA* is for first-grade boys and their parents or guardians. Boys in the second and third grade (or ages 8 and 9) are *Cub Scouts*. Fourth and fifth graders (or boys who are 10) can join a *Webelos* den that prepares them to be members of a Boy Scout troop.

- *Varsity Scouting*, which began in 1978, allows older boys to add to their Scout experience by forming teams that take part in sports events and challenging outdoor adventures.



- *Venturing* is a program for young men and women ages 14 through 20. Venturing traces its origins to Sea Scouting, begun in 1912 as a branch of the BSA for older boys. Eventually it became Senior Scouting, then Exploring, and in 1998, Venturing was created. Venturing crews often choose an area of special interest such as sailing, mountaineering, youth ministry, sports, the outdoors, or arts/hobbies.



- *Lone Scouting.* The Lone Scouts of America was founded by William Boyce to provide Scouting experiences for boys living in sparsely populated areas of the country. Mr. Boyce's organization merged with the Boy Scouts of America in 1924. Today, the Lone Scout plan serves boys who cannot take part in the activities of a Boy Scout troop on a regular basis because of distance, disability, or other unavoidable factors.



- The *Direct Service Council* was established to make Scouting available to U.S. citizens and their dependents who live in countries outside the jurisdiction of the Transatlantic Council and the Far East Council (the BSA's two overseas councils).



It is administered by the BSA's International Division at the national office in Irving, Texas.

More than 4,500 youth members and 1,700 adult leaders belong to over 140 Direct Service Council units or are registered as Lone Scouts in isolated areas of the world.

The program of Direct Service Council units is basically the same as that in the U.S., with some modifications when necessary due to circumstances and customs within a given country.

From its beginnings with a Good Turn by an unknown Scout to the present day with millions of members across the nation, the Boy Scouts of America has had an exciting history. Now that you are a Scout, the future of the BSA depends in part upon you. What you put into Scouting will help shape the organization in the years ahead. In return, Scouting will help you shape yourself into the person you want to become.

