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LORD BADEN-POWELL

The World Chief Scout.

His Visit to New South Wales



ORD BADEN-POWELL, the founder of the Boy Scout Movement, and the World-Chief Scout, arrived in Sydney on 17th March, 1931, accompanied by Lady Baden-Powell, the Chief Guide. In a broadcasted message the same evening, the Chief Scout said :— “Since my arrival I have heard the same old report I heard years ago, that the Boy Scouts is a military organisation. I don’t know how it is that such a story persists. It may be because I was a soldier once, but a soldier after he leaves the Army, makes as good a citizen as anyone else. People who have never seen war, hate it, and never want it again; but what about those men who saw the brutality of it? They want war least of all, and they try to see that there is no more war.

“Then our critics ask why we dress our Boy Scouts and Girl Guides in uniform. Certainly soldiers wore uniform, but then so do football players and many other people. The uniform was to make them all look alike – younger and older brothers played together in one uniform. The uniform eliminated any class distinction. People ask us whether we drill the boys. No, we do not drill them, for that turns them into a machine. We try to teach them to act and think and work for themselves, to be individuals, to make them good citizens.

“I believe that our system is right. We now see that boys who were trained as scouts have become men, and they have proved to be good citizens. Boy Scouts and Girl Guides are a power for goodwill and peace.”

A Civic Welcome

Next day, the Lord Mayor of Sydney (Alderman Jackson) and many leading citizens welcomed Lord Baden-Powell at the Town Hall. The Chief Secretary, Mr. Gosling, who represented the Premier and the Government, said:—

“Any man who can win domination of the hearts of millions of boys must be a man of far greater power and importance than a mere citizen.”

“The aims of the Scout Movement,” he added, “were for peace.” In an interesting address the Chief Scout said:—

“I feel myself at home amongst you, and indeed I am at home, for we are all one nation.”

Sydney University Honors Lord Baden-Powell.

After an inspiring parade of more than 7,000 Scouts, Cubs, and Rovers through the city on the Friday afternoon, the Chief Scout took the salute in Macquarie Street amid a large assemblage of citizens who have him a most enthusiastic welcome. Immediately thereafter, Lord Baden-Powell proceeded to the University, where in the presence of the Governor and Lady Game and a brilliant gathering of Senators, Professors, and other citizens, the Chancellor, Sir William Cullen, conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Laws.

In presenting the distinguished visitor to the Chancellor, Sir John Peden, Dean of the Faculty of Law, said:—

“From time to time the University has welcomed the opportunity of paying its tribute to those who have rendered distinguished service to the British Empire. It has also been eager to do honour to those who by their eminent talents and virtues, and by the inspiration of their precepts and example, have made a signal contribution to the cause of education, and to the advancement of the standards and ideals of life throughout the peoples of the world. To-day the University desires to enrol among its members one of whom all these things are true, and whose life and work have gained the admiration, the reverence, and the affection of young and old in the Commonwealth of Australia, as well in other dominions, countries, and territories under the sovereignty or protection of the British Crown, and in many other lands.” (Applause.)

The Chief Scout Acknowledges the Honor.

“I feel very deeply sensible of the great honour that has been bestowed on me,” said Lord Baden-Powell. “It is one I have never looked for in my wildest dreams, because for one thing I have never studied law, and it seems to be almost ridiculing that high office to give me the degree. I do not think it is entirely for me that this honor has been given. I look upon myself as only one of the vast army of men and women, trying to bring the next generation to the idea of a better manhood and womanhood. So, on behalf of those men and women, to whom I look as my brothers and sisters, I thank you. This will be a great encouragement to them to go on with the work they are doing in spite of many discouragements.

Service and Sacrifice.

“After all, service is very little good without sacrifice, sacrifice being the soul of service.

“I do not think I have any pretension to a knowledge of law, but perhaps it may be because we have organised a code of laws of our own that I have been honoured. The scout law runs into

the principles, and they are laws of 'do,' and there is no law of 'don't,' although we have an eleventh law which may be taken as 'don't'; it is not written. That law is that the Scout must not be a fool, and it covers a great many real troubles in this world. The law of 'do' means rendering service, and all our law leads up to rendering service to the community and to the country." (Applause.)

"I would like to feel myself still more closely associated with the University, and I appeal to some of the undergraduates to join me in rendering this service among their younger brothers and sisters." (Applause.) "At Oxford and Cambridge and at other universities the undergraduates have strong associations of Scouts. In these depressed times we should look to the character of the men and women of the future.

"This is a great opportunity to come to the rescue of the Empire, not to prepare for war, but to prepare for peace and prosperity and happiness in the land. The girls and boys want to join up, but we have not the older people to take them in hand. I shall look forward to seeing a Scout Association started here.

"I thank you. I shall never forget this wonderful day." (Applause.)

Final Demonstrations.

Scout Week was brought to a triumphal termination by magnificent demonstrations at Randwick Racecourse on Saturday, the 21st March, 1931, and at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Sunday, the 22nd March, 1931.

The Rally.

Before addressing a wonderful gathering of Brownies, Guides, Cubs, Scouts, and Rovers, the Chief Scout took the opportunity to decorate Cubmaster Thomas for his bravery in outwitting two bank robbers. He related how Thomas, though badly hurt, feigned death, released himself, and gave the alarm to the police, who arrested the men. "The men got penal servitude for their pains, and the Cubmaster now gets our badge for his pains," said the Chief Scout.

Message from the Prince of Wales.

The Chief Scout then conveyed greetings from the Scouts in England, and read a message from the Prince of Wales. It said:—

"I have had the good fortune to visit all the British oversea Dominions in my time, and in each of them I have been glad to see the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides on a promising foundation, and on very much the same standard of efficiency and spirit as their brothers and sisters in the Old Country...I desire you will give the Scouts and Guides my cordial wishes for good camping.

"Yours sincerely, Edward."

“Scouts’ Own.”

Few, if any, more brilliant or impressive spectacles have been witnessed at the Sydney Cricket Ground than that presented by Sunday’s Thanksgiving Service. The organisation was perfect, and the service was attended by an enormous number of people, who watched with sustained interest the marshalling of 10,000 Guides and Scouts into their allotted positions.

At the commencement of the service, Rovers, carrying national flags of countries affiliated with the International Bureau, advanced to the salute.

Chief Commissioner, J.M. Maughan read the Scout and Guide Law, and speeches by the Chief Guide and the World Chief Scout followed.

The Chief Scout’s Final Words.

“Scouts, Guides, and Cubs:

“This is a wonderful day for all of us, for it is one day that you will carry in your memory for many years to come, because, in a word, I do not think you will ever see a day quite like it again. I do not want to keep you long, but just to get you to carry away with you a reminder of the promise that you made as Scouts and Guides, and also a reminder of your motto, ‘Be prepared.’

“I came, last week, from New Zealand, where your brother Scouts and sister Guides, all looking exactly like you, are playing the game in the same way as you are playing it here. They had had a terrible disaster there. That earthquake at Napier came upon them with terrible suddenness. It was an awful catastrophe. They were entirely unprepared. It was just an ordinary day, when everybody was going about his business in the ordinary way. Suddenly every house began to fall about them, and everything was wrecked in a few moments. Many people were crushed and killed, and very many were injured. One troop of Scouts lost three and one Scoutmaster.

“That might have taken place anywhere, and to other troops; a sudden disaster like that, with three killed without any opportunity of making their peace with God and suddenly dashed into the next world. I hope those Scouts were prepared. I hope they had carried out their motto, because that motto means to be prepared for life and for death. I want you Scouts to think of it. At any moment death may come; an accident, sudden disease. Be prepared for it, and then I think any Boy Scout or Girl Guide, when the time comes for them to die, may say to themselves, ‘Have I made the best of my life? Have I tried to do good turns to other people? Have I tried to do my duty?’ If you can say, ‘Well, I have done my best,’ that is all that is necessary. You will feel comforted, for no one can do more than his best. To be prepared for death is carrying out your Scout Law to the best of your ability.

Scouts in the New Zealand Earthquake.

“There was one pleasing feature about the disaster in New Zealand. We had it from a sailor who had landed immediately after the disaster. He said that he saw Boy Scouts in all directions getting into their uniforms and doing what they could to help. They tackled the work of extricating injured people, giving First Aid, and rigging up shelters. The Girl Guides were active, too, working

in pairs, getting hold of little children, helping with cooking, giving First Aid. And this at a time when grown-up people were still confused and apparently helpless. I don't think I was ever more proud in my life than when I got this information, because it showed that the Scouts and Guides were carrying out their promise.

"In order to be prepared for any emergency you must learn life saving, and keep up your practice. As Scouts and Guides you must be prepared for any accident, any trouble, any disaster that may turn up. Listen to your promise and think it over as never before. 'On my honour – (on your honour, mind) – I promise that I will do my best to do my duty to God and the King; to help other people at all times; to obey the Scout and Guide Law.' I ask those who will do their best to carry that out to rise their hands. Now, will you do your best? Answer me." (Loud chorus of "Yes," and prolonged cheering and applause.)

Lord Baden-Powell: "God bless you, and help you to carry it out." (Renewed applause.)

In the Bush – "B.P." sees Scouts at Work

- Informal Visit.

Camp fires, totem poles, carved logs, weird shouts – all the youthful mysteries of a boys' camp were unfolded to the Chief Scout and the Chief Guide (Lord and Lady Baden-Powell) when, prior to departing for Brisbane, they inspected the Scout training camp at Pennant Hills. With them was the President of the Girl Guides in New South Wales (Lady Game). They were shown over the camp by the Camp Chief, Mr. H. MacAllister.

With an agility that would put to shame many men of half his age, Lord Baden-Powell descended steep tracks, clambered up rocks, walked along paths above which rain-wet scrub hung heavily. With the eye of the pioneer he looked appraisingly at camp and fire-places. He saw packs and spare clothes folded nearly underneath tents. He saw bridges of sturdy workmanship, steps cut in rocks, swing gates made of rope and small tree stems. He saw a water system that would have done credit to a Board of Works engineer. He saw camp sites levelled out in the face of a steep hill, and protected from the winds of winter and the heat of summer by a thick mantle of trees and scrub.

The sun was setting when he arrived. As he went from one to the other of the forty-eight different camp sites, here and there fires glittered through the gathering gloom, blue smoke curled into the still air. And the smell of frying sausages was wafted through the bush. Billies of boiling water bubbled merrily. Thick slices of bread were toasted at the end of sticks held by brown little hands. Smiling boyish faces shone in the flickering light of fires.

It was all delightfully informal. Many of the Scouts seemed unaware that the Big Chief was among them. "Hey, Jack, I dodged you!" yelled one youngster from the top of a rock to a mate who chased him. They did not see the keen-eyed Big Chief watching them from a path above them. "Hey, Jacky, you can't cat—" Suddenly he saw Lord Baden-Powell – stopped in the middle of a word, and came as nearly to attention as he could on his precarious perch.

But when the Scouts did realise that their idol was there they were all eagerness to be near him – some touching him with sticks, and told their mates that they would keep those sticks as souvenirs. To all, the Big Chief had a kindly word of praise or encouragement.

In the centre of a large cleared space stood a heap of dried firewood. He was asked to light it – around it, later in the evening, was to be a “wood badge” investiture. Now the Scout rules say that no Scout must use more than two matches in lighting a fire. “B.P.” took several, and in the end had to invoke the aid of a *Herald* representative’s copy-paper. At that moment the Chief Guide appeared.

“I took more than two matches,” said “B.P.,” shamefacedly.

“Awful!” replied the Chief Guide, and “B.P.,” true Scout that he is, did not excuse himself by saying, as he could have said, that the laying of the fire was not his doing, nor did he blame the dampness of the wood.

Young Vivian Smith, of 1st Parramatta Troop, presented to him a home-made boomerang, inscribed with the words: “Bon voyage.”

“Thank you,” said the Chief Scout. “I will throw it at my son if he does not behave himself.”

Among the show places inspected was the special camp used only by the winners of the Fairfax Challenge Flag, this year the First Hurlstone Troop, who were there.

After the inspection the guests were entertained at dinner by Mr. Robert Dixon (Chairman of the Camp Committee) and Mrs. Dixon. Lord Baden-Powell presented the Medal of Merit to Scoutmaster Milton Boyce, of the Baden-Powell Rovers, and the Scout “Thanks Badge” to Miss MacAllister, sister of the Commissioner of Training.

In a very happy speech, Lord Baden-Powell said that when he had seen the Scouts marching on Friday and Saturday, he had had just a doubt whether they were not too much “parlour Scouts” – but the visit to the camp had impressed him with their knowledge of woodcraft and the true scouting attributes.

“You are giving up a lot to train the younger generation in a good cause. God bless you all.”

Before catching the Brisbane train at Hornsby, Lord Baden-Powell, in an interview, said he was delighted with what he had seen of the Scouts in Sydney. “I hop many more men, worthy of the name, will come forward and help the movement, which is doing so much to build the characters of the youth of to-day and the men of to-morrow,” he said.

“I am very pleased indeed with all I have seen of the Guides,” said lady Baden-Powell. “The work is splendid, and it bodes well for the future of Australia. I look forward to hearing of many women joining the Girl Guide Movement.”

By courtesy of The Sydney Morning Herald.

THE PROMISE.

On enrolment a Scout makes the following promise:— “On my honour I promise that I will do my best –

To do my duty to God and the King,
To help other people at all times,
To obey the Scout Law.”

THE LAW.

1. A Scout's honour is to be trusted.
2. A Scout is loyal to the King, his country, his officers, his parents, his employers, and to those under him.
3. A Scout's duty is to be useful and to help others.
4. A Scout is a friend to all, and a brother to every other Scout, no matter to what social class the other belongs.
5. A Scout is courteous.
6. A Scout is a friend to animals.
7. A Scout obeys order of his parents, patrol leader or Scoutmaster, without question.
8. A Scout smiles and whistles under all difficulties.
9. A Scout is thrifty.
10. A Scout is clean in thought, word, and deed.

Scout Motto . . . “BE PREPARED.”
