

BADEN-POWELL, GILWELL AND SCOUTING

The late Lord Baden-Powell

It was not by chance that the Founder of Scouting ultimately became Baron Baden-Powell of Gilwell, and not by chance that when the late King George V expressed his desire to confer a title upon our Founder, both he and the International Committee whom he consulted separately decided that it could only be Lord Baden-Powell of Gilwell. All this happened back in 1929 at the time of the great World Jamboree at Arrowe Park in England.

Of course the difficulty is that many many people have jumped to the conclusion that Gilwell was B.-P.'s home. Well, spiritual home it may well have been, but physical home never; although he was a very frequent visitor, and in his later years, complete with his entire family based on his caravan, he was a familiar and loved figure at Gilwell Reunions, but he never actually lived on the property.

It is worth recording here that he evolved Wood Badge Training. In truth, the Founder created two significant things - Scouting itself, and then the method of training the Adult Leaders which would ensure its continuing success. He did it, in his own words "to make quite certain that when I am gone the future Leaders of Scouting will really understand what it is all about and what my intentions have been."

It is not out of sentiment that we respect and honour the memory of the Founder, but out of a continuing recognition of the soundness of what he gave to us.

GILWELL AND SCOUTING

It has often been said that Scouting began with a man, an island and a book; it might be said that Gilwell began with two men and their dreams. As the Scout Movement emerged smiling, vigorous, from the dark days of the first world war, holding the future confidently in its hands, great schemes were forming in the imaginative mind of Robert Baden-Powell, and one above all: the need to add training to the enthusiasm of his Scoutmasters: good intentions were not enough. At the same time another man, Mr. de Bois MacLaren, the District Commissioner for Roseneath in Dunbartonshire, was concerned that the Scouts of the back streets of East London, whose love of the new game could be surpassed by none, had only the unlikely pavements and the inhospitable parks for their Scouting: what they needed was a camping ground which belonged to Scouts where they had a right to go when they liked. It must not be too far out: he would find £10,000 if B.-P. would find the place.

Undoubtedly more than one person came across Gilwell or knew about it - a derelict estate on the edge of Epping Forest, next door (one might say) to London's teeming east end, near Chingford, a village then with village ways and memories and not more than 4,000 people living there. The war just over, B.-P. and Gilwell came face to face for the first time on the afternoon of November 22, 1918.

Now B.-P. persuaded MacLaren that their two dreams could be one: a training centre for Scouters could also be a camping ground for Scouts. And so it was. MacLaren bought Gilwell for £7,000 and later gave £3,000 to make the house habitable. On the 25th of July, 1919, Mrs. MacLaren cut the ribbon of Scout colours hung across the entrance, Mr. MacLaren proudly wore the Silver Wolf B.-P. awarded him, and the Founder and his wife had tea with the guests in the garden. A unique story had begun.

THE FIRST GILWELL PARK GROUP

These notes would be incomplete if reference were not made to the 1st Gilwell Park Group and its place in the world-wide brotherhood of Scouts; those many men and women who have passed through Wood Badge Courses at Gilwell and elsewhere in the Scouting world, have accepted the responsibility of setting an example to all other adult members of the Movement.

The 1st. Gilwell Park Group is not, as is sometimes feared, a kind of superiority class, but there is a common bond between members who have shared and equally enjoyed an experience. It is important to realize that the scheme of Gilwell Training in its broad outline, greatly as the details have changed, remains fundamentally as B.-P. laid it down when the first courses were run; and it is this living together on a course, this learning to be self-reliant and self-sufficient that is the real bond of sympathetic understanding that exists between all wearers of the Wood Badge.

Of the Badge itself it is sufficient to say that intrinsically it is valueless. Two pieces of wood hung on the end of a bootlace, but reasured by the aged, coveted by the young and worn with just pride by those in the middle years. It is a symbol of the universality of Gilwell and Gilwell Training. The beads themselves are copies of those taken from a necklace which B.-P. captured from Chief Dinizulu during one of his many African campaigns.

The woggle or leather turkshead is awarded for successful completion of Part I Wood Badge and the parchment, beads and scarf for completion of Part II Wood Badge.

The Gilwell Scarf is the colour of the 1st Gilwell Park Group of which Baden-Powell is the perpetual group Scouter. The tartan on the back is that of the Clan MacLaren to commemorate the generosity of Gilwell's donor.

The 1st Gilwell Park Group members are proud to be members and, however far away they may be from their Group Headquarters, they recognize their responsibility, not just to Gilwell, but to the whole world of Scouting.

This, then, is the Group and if you, reader, are not yet a member, the only way to become one is to take the hard way, of completing your Wood Badge Training and in that, as in all things, Good Luck, but the effort must be yours.

IN MY DREAMS I'M GOING BACK TO GILWELL

When in the glow of a fire burning low,
There are moments I recall,
Back to my mind come the days far behind
And the time that hold me over all.
Then the years fade away and again I can stray
To paths of a brighter hue,
Where boys' voices ring, where Youth is King,
And the skies again are blue.
In my dreams I'm going back to Gilwell
To the joys and the happiness I found
On those grand weekends
With my dear old friends,
And see the Training Ground,
Oh, the grass is greener back in Gilwell,
And I breathe again that Scouting air,
And in memory, I see B.-P.,
Who never will be far from there.

71.

From the musical play,
"We Live Forever," by Ralph Reader

For Every 100 boys who join Scouting:

12 will have their first contact with a church

1 will enter the clergy

2 will earn their Eagle

1 will save a life by using the Scouting Skills

8 will enter professions first learned about through
Scouting's Merit Badge Program

Scouting's Alumni:

65% of the Air Force Academy graduates

68% of the West Point graduates

70% of Annapolis graduates

72% of Rhodes Scholars

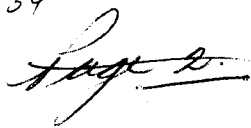
85% of the FBI Agents

85% of the Student Council Presidents

89% of the Senior Class Presidents

26 of the first 29 Astronauts

Thanks to Boyd Critz (Scouting Forum – Compuserve)



THE BOY SCOUT PROGRAMME REMINDERS

Use common sense and the Scout Programme as laid down by B.P.

Use the rules as laid down by B.P. in "Scouting for Boys". These are still up-to-date.

We do not have to apologize for Scouting if programme followed.

ADVENTURE is needed in Scouting.

- A - Action - not dull, but moving - avoid staleness - dramatize instruction.
- D - Devilment - include reasonable risk - BE PREPARED.
- V - Variety - get out of rut - use vision - keep an eye on the long view.
- E - Energy - in leadership and exploring, programme, training.
- N - Nature - move out into nature - use natural objects.
- T - Truth - interpretation of law - B.P. Pattern.
- U - You - in adventure of Scouting - be an example of enthusiastic, live Scouting.
- R - Religion- in Scouting - holds first place in Scouting.
- E - Earnestness - sincerity of and in Scouting.

F.C. Ford