

Scout Neckerchief Story

PRESENT DAY NECKERS

It wasn't until around 1915 that the necker was recognised as a necessary part of the Scout uniform. Now each troop wears a coloured necker to identify who they are.

But the necker has many more practical benefits, and it is these that make it an invaluable part of a Scout's uniform. For a look to see just how many different uses this simple piece of equipment has take a look at our page "101 Uses".

From humble beginnings, the necker has come to symbolise what a Scout is, and many Scoutmasters have taught the values of the Scout Oath and Law using the neckerchief.

"While wrapping the neckerchief up for wear, he said to wrap it tight in smalltwists, twelve in fact. And to repeat the twelve points of the Scout Law as you did so. Then as you placed your neckerchief around your neck for wear, the elements of the Oath and Law were with you. They were in fact part of you."

This is only a very brief outline of how the necker has evolved, and the recognised uses have grown so much that the Scout is now able to deal with whatever situations may face him. Perhaps by visiting our page "101 uses", you will find that there is a use that will help you and/or your troop.

NECKERS OF THE PAST

Buckskin Scout and Wood-running Scout both had to maintain good camouflage amongst the leafy undergrowth of the woodlands, so their neckers would have been subdued compared to the ones worn by our Scouts today. As they hunted their prey, or were indeed hunted themselves, being invisible was paramount to their survival.

Only when these Scouts were seeking rest and relaxation did they opt to wear brighter colours. Entering a settlement with a colourful necker was an instant indication to the people that this was a Scout taking a rest from the trail.

Later on when settlers moved out on to the plains, neckers were used once more to great effect. Riding on horseback across such dusty terrain was hazardous for breathing, and so the neckerchiefs were worn across the mouth and nose, filtering out the dust.

In other less pleasant circumstances, bandits on the plains would cover their faces in the same manner with their neckers, making identification of these villains virtually impossible for the poor victims and the law.

HISTORICAL

The scouts of the world today can thank their predecessors, like the Buckskin Scout, and the woods running scout. In the wilderness they had to blend in with their surroundings and the necker / scarf was more of a subdued colour as not to give away their position while hunting. Brighter colours were introduced like Crimson, and was used to tie back their hair on festive occasions. It became apparent over a short period of time that if such a scout entered a settlement wearing a bright coloured necker, they were their seeking rest and relaxation.

In later times the convenience and possible uses of the necker / scarf grew in popularity. The plains scouts trackers on horseback, rode the dusty plains with their necker wrapped round in reverse covering the mouth, helping them breath more easily. The railroad workers were thankful as the plains scouts provided food and protection. On a more festive note though many colours

began to appear such as bright red, green, blue or yellow and could easily be acquired by the poorest of them.

Baden-Powell of Gilwell * Chief Scout of the World

The name Baden-Powell is known and respected throughout the world as that of a man who, in his 83 years, devoted himself to the service of his country and his fellow men in two separate and complete lives, one as a soldier fighting for his country, and the other as a worker for peace through the brotherhood of the Scout Movement.

Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell was born at 6 Stanhope Street (now 11 Stanhope Terrace), Paddington, London on February 22, 1857. He was the sixth son and the eighth of ten children of the Reverend Baden-Powell, a Professor at Oxford University. The names Robert Stephenson were those of his Godfather, the son of George Stephenson, the railway pioneer.

His father died when B.-P. was only three years old and the family were left none too well off. B.-P. was given his first lessons by his mother and later attended Rose Hill School, Tunbridge Wells, where he gained a scholarship for admittance to Charterhouse School. Charterhouse School was in London when B.-P. first attended but whilst he was there it moved to Godalming, Surrey, a factor which had great influence in his later life. He was always eager to learn new skills. He played the piano and fiddle. He acted - and acted the clown too at times. He practised bricklaying, and it was whilst a scholar at Charter house that he began to exploit his interest in the arts of Scouting and woodcraft.

Unofficially, in the woods around the school, B.-P. would stalk his Masters as well as catch and cook rabbits, being careful not to let the tell-tale smoke give his position away. His holidays were not wasted either. With his brothers he was always in search of adventure. One holiday they made a yachting expedition around the south coast of England. On another, they traced the Thames to its source by canoe. In all this, Baden-Powell was learning the arts and crafts which were to prove so useful to him professionally. B.-P. was certainly not a 'swot' at school, as his end of term reports revealed. One records: 'Mathematics - has to all intents given up the study', and another:

'French - could do well but has become very lazy, often sleeps in school'. Nevertheless, he gained second place for cavalry in open examination for the Army and was commissioned straight into the 13th Hussars, bypassing the officer training establishments, and subsequently became their Honorary Colonel for 30 years. His Army career was outstanding from the start. With the 13th Hussars he served in India, Afghanistan and South Africa and was mentioned in dispatches for his work in Zululand. There followed three years service in Malta as Assistant Military Secretary and then he went to Ashanti, Africa, to lead the campaign against Prempeh. Success led to his being promoted to command the 5th Dragoon Guards in 1897, at the age of 40. It was to the 5th Dragoon Guards that B.-P. gave his first training in Scouting and awarded soldiers reaching certain standards a badge based on the north point of the compass. Today's Scout Membership badge is very similar.

In 1899 came Mafeking, the most notable episode in his outstanding military career, by which he became a Major-General at the age of only 43. B.-P. became famous and the hero of every boy, although he always minimised his own part and the value of his inspiring leadership. By using boys for responsible jobs during the siege, he learned the good response youth give to a challenge. During the 217 day siege, B.-P.'s book *Aids to Scouting* was published and reached a far wider readership than the military one for which it was intended. Following Mafeking, B.-P. was given the task of organising the South African Constabulary and it was not until 1903 that he returned to England as Inspector General of Cavalry and found that his book, *Aids to Scouting* was being used by youth leaders and teachers all over the country. He spoke at meetings and rallies and whilst at a Boys' Brigade gathering he was asked by its Founder, Sir William Smith, to work out a scheme for giving greater variety in the training of boys in good citizenship.

The Beginnings of the Movement

B.-P. set to work rewriting Aids to Scouting, this time for a younger readership. In 1907 he held an experimental camp on Brownsea Island, Poole, Dorset, to try out his ideas. He brought together 22 boys, some from public schools and some from working class homes, and put them into camp under his leadership. The whole world now knows the results of that camp.

Scouting for Boys was published in 1908 in six fortnightly parts at 4d a copy. Sales of the book were tremendous. Boys formed themselves into Scout Patrols to try out ideas. What had been intended as a training aid for existing organisations became the handbook of a new and, ultimately worldwide Movement. B.-P.'s great understanding of boys obviously touched something fundamental in the youth of this and other countries.

'Scouting for Boys' has since been translated into many different languages and dialects.

Without fuss, without ceremony and completely spontaneously, boys began to form Scout Troops all over the country. In September 1908, B.-P. had set up an office to deal with the large number of enquiries which were pouring in concerning the Movement.

There is no need to describe the way in which Scouting spread throughout the British Commonwealth and to other countries until it was established in practically all parts of the free world. Even those countries where Scouting as we know it is not allowed to exist readily, admit that they used its methods for their own youth training.

As Inspector-General of Cavalry, B.-P. considered that he had reached the pinnacle of his career. The baton of Field Marshal was within his grasp but he retired from the Army in 1910 at the age of 53, on the advice of His Majesty King Edward VII, who suggested that he would do more valuable service for his country within the Boy Scout Movement (now Scout Movement) than anyone could hope to do as a soldier!

So all his enthusiasm and energy was now directed to the development of Scouting and its sister Movement, Guiding. He travelled to all parts of the world, wherever he was most needed, to encourage their growth and give them the inspiration that he alone could give.

In 1912, he married Olave Soames who was his constant help and companion in all this work and by whom he had three children (Peter, Heather and Betty). Olave, Lady Baden-Powell, until she died in 1977, was known throughout the world as World Chief Guide.

Chief Scout of the World

The first international Scout Jamboree took place at Olympia, London in 1920. At its closing scene, B.-P. was unanimously acclaimed as Chief Scout of the World. Successive international gatherings, whether of Scouts or Rovers (now called Venture Scouts) or of Scouters, proved that this was not an honorary title, but that he was truly regarded by them all as their Chief. The shouts that heralded his arrival, and the silence that fell when he raised his hand, proved beyond any doubt that he had captured the hearts and imaginations of his followers in whatever country they owed allegiance.

At the 3rd World Jamboree, held in Arrowe Park, Birkenhead, to celebrate the 21st Anniversary of the publication of Scouting for Boys, the Prince of Wales announced that B.-P. had been created a Peer. He took the title of Lord Baden-Powell of Gilwell - Gilwell Park being the International Training Centre for Scout Leaders.

Scouting was not B.-P.'s only interest, for excelled at pig-sticking and fishing, and favoured polo and big game hunting. He was also a very good black & white and watercolour artist and took an interest in cinéphotography and sculpture. In 1907, he exhibited a bust of John Smith, the colonial pioneer, at the Royal Academy.

B.-P. wrote no less than 32 books, the earning from which helped to pay for his Scouting travels. As with all his successors, he received no salary as Chief Scout. He received honorary degrees

from Edinburgh, Toronto, Montreal, Oxford, Liverpool and Cambridge Universities. He also received Freedoms of the cities of London, Guildford,

Newcastle-on-Tyne, Bangor, Cardiff, Hawick, Kingston-on-Thames, Poole, Blandford, Canterbury and Pontefract, and of other cities in various parts of the world. In addition, 28 Foreign Orders and decorations and 19 Foreign Scout Awards were bestowed upon him. Every minute of B.-P.'s life was 'sixty seconds worth of distance run'. Each new adventure was the subject for a book. Every happy incident or thought, every fine landscape might be the subject for a sketch.

In 1938, suffering from ill-health, B.-P. returned to Africa, which had meant so much in his life, to live in semi-retirement in Nyeri, Kenya. Even here he found it difficult to curb his energies - he still produced many books and sketches.

On January 8, 1941, Baden-Powell died. He was 83 years of age. He is buried in a simple grave at Nyeri within sight of Mount Kenya. On his headstone are the words, 'Robert Baden-Powell, Chief Scout of the World' surmounted by the Boy Scout and Girl Guide Badges. His memory remains for all time in the hearts of millions of men and women, boys and girls.

It is up to those who are, or have been, Scouts or Guides to see that the two Movements he so firmly established continue for all time as living memorials to their Founder.

Baden-Powell's Last Message

Towards the end of his life, although still in comparatively good health, he prepared a farewell message to his Scouts for publication after his death. It read:

"Dear Scouts - if you have ever seen the play 'Peter Pan' you will remember how the pirate chief was always making his dying speech because he was afraid that possible, when the time came for him to die, he might not have time to get it off his chest. It is much the same with me, and so, although I am not at this moment dying, I shall be doing so one of these days and I want to send you a parting word of goodbye.

Remember, it is the last time you will ever hear from me, so think it over. I have had a most happy life and I want each one of you to have a happy life too.

I believe that God put us in this jolly world to be happy and enjoy life. Happiness does not come from being rich, nor merely being successful in your career, nor by self-indulgence. One step towards happiness is to make yourself healthy and strong while you are a boy, so that you can be useful and so you can enjoy life when you are a man.

Nature study will show you how full of beautiful and wonderful things God has made the world for you to enjoy. Be contented with what you have got and make the best of it. Look on the bright side of things instead of the gloomy one.

But the real way to get happiness is by giving out happiness to other people. Try and leave this world a little better than you found it and when your turn comes to die, you can die happy in feeling that at any rate you have not wasted your time but have done your best. 'Be Prepared' i this way, to live happy and to die happy - stick to your Scout Promise always - even after you have ceased to be a boy - and God help you to do it.

Your friend,

With the compliments from: The Public Relations Department at Baden-Powell House, London, England courtesy of Simon Pearce, Author of ScoutNet UK - THE Scouting Web Pages

THE NECESSARY NECKERCHIEF

The Neckerchief a Heritage from Scouts of Old

The smart and necessary neckerchief is the only spot, apart from the badges and insignia, in which the practical, earth-hued uniform of the Scout flowers into color. Like the painted sails of the boats of Venice, the age-old fez of Cairo's bazaars, and the paint box sweaters of a college campus, the Neckerchief, "a heritage from the Scouts of old, the pioneer and the plainsman," gives life to the sober dress of the Boy Scout. And that touch of color is the one thing needed to catch the eye and to stir the enthusiasm of the spectators when the parade swings down the avenue and horn and drum and cymbal stir the soul.

The Neckerchief is a passport for the Scout. Scouting says that at Santa Barbara following the earthquake, and in Illinois and Indiana during the tornado disaster, the Scouts' Neckerchief was a passport for any Scout through the police and hospital lines.

The Scout Troop which is uniformly and colorfully neckerchiefed stands out as a beautiful unit in a crowded hall, on parade, and in the summer audience in shady woods. The adoption of a Troop Neckerchief makes it easy for a Scout to find his own crowd, for the Neckerchief both identifies and promotes Scouting.

When help is needed in a hurry, the Scout with his colored Neckerchief is quickly recognized, and his Good Turn is done with grateful swiftness.

The Neckerchief is the thing by which Scouting is most quickly recognized the world over.

Emergencies call loudest to the Scout for the Neckerchief, for life itself may depend upon it. In a moment it is a bandage, a smoke mask, or a lifeline.

THE TESTED NECKERCHIEF

So much depends upon the Neckerchief that it is subjected regularly to careful tests and inspections before it can qualify as the Official Scout Neckerchief.

The Tested Neckerchief

The complete Scout Uniform requires it, and requires it worn correctly: **not under the collar**; not rolled and worn half way down on the chest; but flat, according to Scout regulations, *over the collar of the shirt* and held in place with the quickly available and necessary slide or "woggle."

Out of his rich and pictured experience Daniel Carter Beard, the National Scout Commissioner, speaks with his usual aptness when he declares that "the Neckerchief is first and last a necessity."

THE PROPERLY FOLDED NECKERCHIEF

The following standard for folding the Neckerchief has been adopted upon advice from plainsmen, cowboys, out of doors men, and experienced Scouts throughout the country.

Folding the Neckerchief

First, fold the Neckerchief once to get the triangle. According to the size of the boy, turn the long edge over about three inches smoothly, once or twice, or even three times, to insure the Neckerchief's lying smoothly at the back and hanging correctly in front. Place around the neck over the collar of the shirt, insert the slide, or woggle, up over the ends to the point where the knot would be if tied as a four in hand necktie. Then tic the two loose ends in an overhand knot, as if it were one piece of material. This lower knot is a constant reminder to do your Daily Good Turn.

THE SLIDES FOR THE NECKERCHIEF

The Woggle

Always wear the slide, or woggle, with the Scout Neckerchief. The advantages of the slide are that in hot weather and on the hike the Neckerchief can be loosened around the throat, while in a cold wind or snowstorm it can be drawn up closer to serve as a muffler. When necessary to use the Neckerchief in emergencies, the slide can be drawn down instantly, permitting the Neckerchief to be whipped off over the head. When the slide is not used, a knot must be tied, and as it is seldom tied twice alike or at the same position at the throat, a very untidy appearance results. The slide is an immense convenience and adds distinctly to the appearance of the Neckerchief.

The Neckerchief Slides are made in this pleasing variety of colors: white, khaki, gold, royal blue, brown, black, gray, green, orange, purple, yellow, red, and a combination of red, white and blue. Each Troop should adopt a color to be worn by all its members with the Neckerchief of harmonizing color which has been adopted for the Troop, District or Council.

THE COLORS OF THE NECKERCHIEF

Neckerchiefs Growing Like Flowers in an Old Fashioned Garden

The Scout Neckerchief grows like the flowers in the old-fashioned garden, "Out at Old Aunt Mary's. "

The single color Neckerchiefs grow in these shades: plum; red; maroon; orange; lemon; tea green; moss green; dark green; navy blue; royal blue; violet; khaki; dark brown; gray; black; sky blue; gold.

The double color Neckerchiefs grow in these shades: red, gold border; gold, navy border; green, red border; gray, green border; sky blue, maroon border; navy blue, gold border; red, black border; gold, red border; orange, black border; purple, orange border; royal

blue, sky blue border; black, red border , lemon, navy blue border and maroon, gray border.

THE USES OF THE NECKERCHIEF

"Be Prepared" tells the Scout never to be without his Neckerchief and therefore to be ready for any emergency. There are fifty six practical uses among many others for the Necessary Neckerchief.

Some Uses of the Neckerchief

SQUARE NECKERCHIEF USES

GENERAL

Rope for tying animals
Mosquito covering for head
Sweat-band for games
Identification for teams in games
Tie for three-legged races
Swatters for running the gauntlet
Red kerchief on projecting poles in transit
Padding for carrying load on head
Repairing harness
Substitute for hat or cap.

SCOUTING

Signal flag by attaching to stick (Morse) (1)
Signal flag (no sticks) (Semaphore) (2)
Life line (Troop)
Rope ladder (Troop)
Bag (hobo style) (1)
Lashing for canvas or bundles
Caulking for boat
Sail for boat (4)
Covering for food
Belt emergency (1)
Knot tying practice
Substitute for clothing (4)

Trunks for bathing (1)
Apron for kitchen police
Troop or District identification
Good Turn reminder (1)
Guard rope (Troop)
Emergency sock (1)
Distress signal (1)
Smoke signals (1)
Flare (1)
Torn strips, trail marker
Bathing cap to denote classes of swimmers; red, beginners; blue,
fair swimmers; white, life savers.

TRIANGULAR NECKERCHIEF USES

Pressure on armpit artery
Arm sling (10)
Collar bone fracture (3)
Ankle sprain dressing
Fractured hip (7 to 9)
Kerchief stretcher (5)
Padding for splints (several)
Chest carry (1)
Tump line carry (1) (pack strap)
Hand bandages (1)
Head bandages (1)
Foot bandages (1)
Support for sprained wrist
Tourniquet uses (1)
Trench bandages (1)
Compress
Smoke mask for fires or gas
Fireman's drag-- free wrists
Tied hands carry (1)
Tied hands across over turned canoe
Tying good ankle as splint to broken one (4)
Guide rope to find way out of smoky room (Troop)
Sun shelter for injured people (one for each person)