

Aids To Scouting: for N.C.O.s and Men

Robert Baden-Powell



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In 1899 while serving in the 2nd Boer War, Robert Baden-Powell penned his sixth military book, *Aids To Scouting*. It was a non-typical training manual filled with personal stories of intrigue and even games. Its goal was to encourage the development of light reconnaissance scouting skills within the British Army. The book was well received by various armies of its time, including the French Army.

His successful defense of Mafeking (1899-1900) in South Africa made Baden-Powell a well-known national hero in Britain. But what completely surprised Baden-Powell was that his book was eagerly taken up by teachers and youth groups to help organize outdoor activities and sport. He eventually embraced the idea of adapting his work into a new youth-oriented book, *Scouting for Boys* (1908) which went on to sell approx. 150 million copies to date. It was that follow-on book that firmly launched the international Boy Scouts movement.

Aids to Scouting contains sections on the characters of a scout, as well as practical advice on observation, stealth/camouflage, map reading, sketching, tracking, reporting and care of horses. It presents these topics is a simple conversational style that makes it easy to read, and is illustrated with personal anecdotes of military adventures by the author. It gives scholars clear insights into his mindset and beliefs that served him well in the siege of Mafeking and shows a clear lineage to the formation of the tenets of his formation of the Boy Scouts. Anyone interested in the history of Boy Scouting will definitely want to read this interesting and formative book.

(Note - Appendix C contents is missing in this Kindle version - but we hope to update the ebook with it once a suitable facsimile can be referenced).

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John Smithers:

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