



The Hero

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In 1899, stretching his talents and astuteness to the full, Colonel Baden-Powell saved the South African village of Mafeking, after 217 days under siege by the Boers. He had only 1,000 men against 6,000. One of his side's strengths which made all the difference were the youngsters trained as sentinels and runners. On his return, the English acclaimed him as a hero and the Queen made him a General.

The spy and adventurer

A secret agent in Europe, the Mediterranean and the East, B-P successfully navigated many risky situations. His talent for disguise, artistic genius and exploration and trail-finding abilities stood him in good stead.

The colonial explorer

While in the army during the colonial period, B-P got to know the landscapes and the people of India and Africa. He discovered their cultures, learned about their customs, sketched their personalities and never stopped learning about them. From these peoples he loved, he retained many symbols and elements which he would later make part of the Scouting culture.

An innovative military man

In India, B-P proposed a course for soldiers based on exploration. In Africa, he trained the Mafeking cadets and the South African police. In both cases he made use of games, teamwork and trust. He became an innovator, creating systems based on personal initiative.

Key Dates :

1877 : After being accepted as a cadet, B-P arrived in India on 1 January.

1884 : His regiment is sent to Natal, in South Africa.

1903 : He is made Inspector General of the Cavalry.

1910 : B-P retires from the army.