


WALTER HANSEN

The Wolf that Never Sleeps

A large bonfire at night, with several silhouettes of people gathered around it, illuminated by the fire's glow. The background is dark, and the fire is the central focus, with some sparks or smoke rising from it.

The adventurous life of
Robert Baden-Powell,
Founder of the Scout Movement

Walter Hansen

The Wolf that Never Sleeps

The Life and Adventures
of Lord Baden-Powell

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The founder of the Scout Movement
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The Wolf That Never Sleeps

Preface by Hartmut Keyler

I certainly do not doubt that Robert Baden Powell, with the founding of the world's largest youth organization, is one of the outstanding personalities of the twentieth century because he envisaged an educational goal that was closely related to his personal life experiences, because he found a method to achieve this goal and because he was able to successfully apply this method during his lifetime.

One tried to approach his adventurous life story. His invention of the scout movement was regarded as an ingenious breakthrough. Anecdotes have been circulated, reported, interpreted, poeticized and heroized, even fabricated – depending on desire, inclination or alleged need.

My friend Walter Hansen, an old scout, renowned writer, youth book award-winner and committed investigator, recognized the connections between the life and work of Baden-Powell.

We studied sources for hours and tried to separate essential details from marginal ones - it was an interesting and exciting collaboration.

Above all, Walter Hansen has achieved something few authors had achieved before: he penetrated and worked through the history of Baden-Powell's life and work in every chapter.

His style of writing appeals to young people in particular. I wish that many of them would read this book and be fascinated by the story of a personality that has presented millions of boys and girls with perspectives for their own lives.

Munich, August 2017

Hartmut Keyler

Member of the European Scout Committee 1968 – 1972 and 1977 – 1980

Member of the World Scout Committee 1971 – 1975 and 1985 – 1993

The Scouts and Me

By Walter Hansen

“You’re a Scout”, the publisher said to me, “and you’re a journalist and an author”. You wrote the biography of Lord Baden-Powell. So why don’t you write about what the Scout Movement means to you, about the role it plays in your life?”

All right then:

It all started with me and my friends at the age of around eleven years old, sitting in a field in front of a man who introduced himself as a Scoutmaster. He was wearing a green and yellow shirt with a sewed-on fleur-de-lis symbol, a neckerchief and an unusual, wide-rimmed hat – the traditional Scout hat I am sure you are familiar with. But none of us had ever seen a hat like this before. We thought it was great. It conveyed a sense of adventure, trappers and red Indians – all at the same time. The man with the hat told us about the Scouts, the biggest youth organisation in the world, which had been founded by the British general Baden-Powell, a war hero who turned into a freedom fighter. And who strongly believed that wars could only be avoided if young people were able to develop friendships across borders and if boys and girls were allowed to come into contact with each other as early as possible. And so he founded the international youth movement of Boy Scouts Girl Guides. Every Scout is the brother of all other Scouts!

A few weeks later I made the Scout promise in front of a huge campfire. The Scoutmaster said the following: „I hereby welcome you to the huge brotherhood of Scouts“. And today I still feel a connection to this big brotherhood. When I bump into a friend from back then and we greet each other from afar with the Scout whistle, I immediately relive the joy I experienced during my time as a Scout. There was so much to do and experience then!

We spent most of our time playing in fields, forests and in the mountains. We spent our holidays in tent camps. And in the process, we learned all about map reading, following tracks, making fire without matches, Morse code, meteorology, survival techniques, emergency signals, secret codes and more. We sang Scouting songs. We wrote short plays, put them on as theatre performances and acted in them ourselves. We met Scouts – boys and girls – from different countries

and learned about one of the key principles of Scouting education: that differences in terms of nationality, race, religion, traditions and ideology are not a problem.

Finally, there is one particular success story from this time that I would like to talk about. Our geography teacher was working on an unusual doctoral thesis – a geologically annotated map of a mountain massif. On occasion he used to take pupils with him to help with the survey work. And he was completely bemused when I showed him that geographic north could not only be found with a compass and a set of survey instruments, or with the aid of the sun or Ursa Major in the night sky, but also by looking at the growth of moss on trees, beetle colonies under tree bark and distortions in the growth rings that can be seen on the stumps of felled trees. Or from the wind erosion in the mountains we were climbing in.

After graduating from high school in Germany, I studied at the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich. I became a journalist, editor and very soon head of department at big daily newspapers. Occasionally I went on reporting trips across countries like Turkey, Syria and Iraq. And Scouting came into play again here! In those days, anyone who travelled like me as a journalist to the Middle East was immediately introduced to the local „high society“. In particular, nearly all of the local politicians and industrialists were Scouts, as were the British and US diplomats. Whenever it somehow came out that I was a member of the Scouts, the warm hand of friendship was immediately extended to me – as if was „among brothers“ – and a special trust was offered that provided unique advantages for a journalist far away from home.

One day, I found out by chance that there was no Scout Book in Germany. So I set out to write one. I remembered back to my Scouting days, visited young Scouts in tent camps along with adults who had made the Scout promise and now worked either professionally or on a voluntary basis within the individual Scouting organisations. Straight away we used the informal German „du“ when addressing each other, extended our left hands for the Scout handshake, and all of them offered tips to help me with my book. I felt it clearly that there was a willingness to help, itself one of the most important virtues of a Scout. After spending a year researching the world of Scouting, it was a great pleasure to write „*Das große Pfadfinderbuch*“ (The Big Scout Book)

based on my own experiences and up-to-date information. It became a standard reference work and sold upwards of half a million copies.

My scouting skills, in particular my skills at map reading, proved invaluable to me when I toured the active volcanic regions of Iceland over the

course of several summers armed with just a tent and a sleeping bag. One of Europe's last wilderness reserves, this is a wondrous world of volcanoes, solidified lava flows, sand deserts, glaciers and rivers that demanded a smart approach in order to navigate them in off-road vehicles. In these volcanic zones I searched for the sources of the Edda legends, following the paths of the writers who had recorded the tales of Northern mythology while wandering through this isolation and solitude many centuries ago. I then wrote my book „Asgard“ and a 16-page report for GEO magazine.

Since then, the books I have written have all covered a wide range of different and unconnected topics: Medieval knights for example, and Eugène François Vidocq, the inventor of criminology; the Minnesingers (who formed a tradition of lyric and song writing in Germany in the 12th–14th centuries) and Daniel Boone, the most famous trapper in the Wild West; survival techniques and Richard Wagner, the world-famous composer and a dazzling figure in cultural history; or the Thirty Years' War – and Baden-Powell, the founder of the Scouting Movement.

When I researched Lord Baden-Powell and started writing about his utterly incredible adventures on three continents, about his philosophies and about his theory of education, I was particularly moved as a Scout. I learned at first hand how Baden-Powell had arrived at the understanding that more trust than is generally assumed should be placed in young people. How he evolved from a war hero to a friend and spokesperson for peace. And how his Scouting Movement conquered the whole world.

There is nothing more to say about my book. You are already holding a copy of it in your hands – I hope you enjoy reading it!

Introduction

Nicknames, Swear Words, Orders, Honors

Baden-Powell had four nicknames: Katankya – the man with the wide-rimmed hat. Larkwei – the man who holds his head high. Impeesa – the wolf that never sleeps. And Sherlock Holmes – because his powers of reasoning and acumen were indeed comparable to those of the famous fictional detective.

Some people also had many rude names for him. His enviers called him an over-protected child, a braggart and a megalomaniac, a dreamer with his head in the clouds, a vain peacock, a soldier of fortune or even the Pied Piper.

But Baden-Powell was completely adored by his supporters as an exemplary character, as a hero, an artist, a best-selling author and as one of the most significant youth educators of the 20th century. University professors described his educational system as brilliant.

He was not a good pupil at school. He only managed to get through secondary school by the skin of his teeth, but then failed the entrance exam required to study at the world-famous university of Oxford. But later on in life he received an honorary doctorate not only from this university, but also from the University of Toronto, and he was also made an honorary citizen of London and granted the title of a Lord.

He was one of the most-honoured personalities of his day, receiving the Order of the Bath, the Royal Victorian Order, the Order of the Garter, the Order of Merit, the Order of the Foreign Legion and many other decorations and medals.

Rumours have followed him around all of his life. Twice it was even claimed that he was dead. The first time, it was said that he had fallen as a hero aged 42 – bleeding to death as the victim of an assassination.

On another occasion, Fama reported that he had been executed in 1916 and hastily and informally buried outside a cemetery – as a traitor to be despised even beyond his death. The fact is that he died peacefully in 1941 at the age of 83. It is also a fact that six years after his death – in 1947 – a memorial stone was erected in his name in Westminster Abbey, which is one of the most venerable sites in England, a place where Kings and Queens are crowned and memorial stones bear inscriptions with some of the most famous names in the history of Great Britain, including



Baden-Powell's first drawing of a Boy Scout

William Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, David Livingstone, Charles Darwin and Isaac Newton.

The man we are talking about here is Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell, Lord of Gilwell. He is the founder of the Scouting Movement, the biggest and most successful youth organisation in the world, a brotherhood that welcomes 48 million boys and 20 million girls in 178 – plus around 180 million former Scouts who made the Scout promise in their youth and will thus always remain members of the large brotherhood for the rest of their lives.

Since this youth organisation was first founded there has been a total of some 250 million Scouts around the entire world, including significant and famous personalities, artists, sportsmen, scientists and politicians. Most US presidents, members of European ruling families or astronauts are or have been at some point in their lives a member of the Scouts – including, for example, John F. Kennedy, King Carl Gustaf XVI of Sweden or Neil Armstrong, who wore his World Scout Membership Badge under his space suit when he was the first man to set foot on the moon on July 20, 1969.

Other prominent Scouts included Thor Heyerdahl, who made the adventurous journey from Peru to the Eastern Islands of Polynesia on a hand-built raft named Kon-Tiki in 1947; or Folke Graf Bernadotte, who was murdered in 1948 as a peace negotiator of the United Nations; or Werner Heisenberg, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1933.

So who was this Lord Baden-Powell who founded the large brotherhood of the Scouts? Who was this man who responded with the same equanimity to all of these nicknames, the name-calling and the medals and honours?

Childhood and Youth

Adventurer, Artist, Scientist

In his temperament, the inherited talents of highly different ancestors were present. One of his forefathers was, for example, John Smyth of Willoughby (1579-1631), Captain of Her Majesty the Queen Elizabeth of England, an adventurer, a seafarer and a hunter of legendary reputation who sailed to North America in 1606 on behalf of the British Crown, met with Indian warriors and escaped death at the stake in the very last second. Little is known of his immediate descendants, except that they had inherited the temper, the bravado and the thirst for adventure of old Smyth. More precise details are known about one of his



Baden-Powell's father, Professor Baden-Powell, in the academic gown as the Savilian Professor of Geometry at the University of Oxford.



Baden-Powell's mother Henrietta, Professor Powell's third wife. She was a socially involved woman who always wanted the best for her children.