

**SCOUTS-L**

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**SCOUTING  
HISTORY &  
TRADITIONS**

**Date:** Tue, 12 Sep 1995 11:45:19 -0700  
**From:** Jim Carter - HCI Project <hci@CS.USASK.CA>  
**Subject:** FREE Patch CHALLENGE #4  
**To:** Multiple recipients of list SCOUTS-L <SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>

I'm very honored to have been awarded the opportunity to pose the next Scouts-L challenge. It gives me an opportunity to go after the explanation of more Scouting traditions for my session on Scouting Traditions to be held at this fall's North Saskatchewan Region multi-section (in Canada you can get a Woodbadge in any section [Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Venturers, Rovers] or in Service Team - my session is a joint one at a Woodbadge with programs for B,C,S,V where I am coordinating the Cub section).

I hope that the results of this challenge can help form the basis for a new on-line museum of Scouting Traditions that I am planning. So here's the CHALLENGE:

A free Canadian District Badge (the Canadian equivalent to a BSA CSP) will be awarded to the individual who posts the "best" explanation of a Scouting Tradition that goes back to a "Founder" of Scouting (B-P preferred, but others like Thompson Seaton are also welcome). I like the 5W's & H approach to information, especially when it's info that will be passed on, so am imposing the following formatting requirements on this challenge.

The posting should include a brief explanation of WHAT the tradition is; a discussion of WHO started the tradition and WHEN it started; an explanation of WHY the tradition was started; a reference to WHERE others can go to verify the authenticity of the historical information; and HOW the tradition is still relevant today.

Determination of the "best" will be made by a committee of local Rovers and Scouters between Oct 4 and 8. They will judge all contributions on the basis of: uniqueness, interest level, and compliance with the above formatting requirements. In the event of a tie I am willing to award up to three prizes.

Jim Carter <hci@cs.usask.ca>

**Date:** Thu, 14 Sep 1995 12:55:57 -0500  
**Reply-To:** SCOUTS-L Youth Groups Discussion List <SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>  
**From:** KIM BOLICK <KHBOLI@MUSCTN.MONSANTO.COM>  
**Subject:** Re: Wood Badge Ticket & Free CSP Path #4  
**To:** Multiple recipients of list SCOUTS-L <SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>

>At 08:39 AM 9/12/95 -0400, DEBBIE FREELE wrote:

>>I think the term "ticket" and the way they arrive at receiving their  
>>beads after Woodbadge Training, is related to BSA almost exclusively. I  
>>don't know the history of the song "Back To Gilwell" but my guess would  
>>be that it originated from an American Scouter, long ago. I'm sure  
>>others will fill in the blanks.

>

>Marc Soloman Replied:

>  
>It was explained to me by the Scoutmaster of my Wood Badge course that the  
>term "working my ticket" came from the USA Calvary. During the days of the  
>Wild West, when a soldier left the Cavalry, the Cavalry did not make  
>arrangements to bring the soldier home. The soldier was stranded wherever  
>he was when he finished his tour of duty. Since many soldiers either sent  
>all their money home to their family or otherwise disposed of it ;), they  
>usually had no money to buy their ticket home. Therefore, they had to work  
>for their ticket and hence the term "working my ticket".

>  
My version is similar, but attributed to Lord B-P himself. The British Army  
was the group that mustered folks out at the remote locations. "Working their  
ticket" was a way to earn passage to the next outpost or station a little  
closer to back home (i.e. Britain, hence "Back to Gilwell"). Similar, I  
suppose, to military standby nowadays or the practice of allowing the outgoing  
President the use of Air Force 1 to get home.

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*****  
*  
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*****  
*  
** Good Ole Beaver...(also ASM, Unit Commissioner, Eagle'67)**  
*****  
*
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Date: Wed, 13 Sep 1995 22:49:45 -0400  
Reply-To: Lisa Varner <lvarner@freenet.columbus.oh.us>  
Sender: SCOUTS-L Youth Groups Discussion List <SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>  
From: Lisa Varner <lvarner@freenet.columbus.oh.us>  
Subject: Re: FREE Patch CHALLENGE #4

> The posting should include a brief explanation of WHAT the  
> tradition is; a discussion of WHO started the tradition and WHEN  
> it started; an explanation of WHY the tradition was started; a  
> reference to WHERE others can go to verify the authenticity of  
> the historical information; and HOW the tradition is still  
> relevant today.

Well Jim, and others, while I understand your request for  
background on a tradition, I am unable to quote text because I do  
not have possession of our troop books. Also since I'm a GSUSA  
leader, this contest really doesn't apply to me, BUT, I would like  
to relay some GS info to interested list readers to show we too  
go back to BP.

Lord Baden-Powell believed you could gain a greater understanding  
of the world by looking beyond yourself. His quote, "Look wide  
and when you think you're looking wide, look wider still,"  
inspired the term "Wider Opportunities". These provide girls of  
all ages opportunities outside the troop/group setting. For

younger girls it may be a day at the zoo, for older girls it usually means national or international travel!

Today these are well known among older girl scouts mainly, as Wider-Ops.

(taken from the "WIDER OPS Adventures for Older Girls 1996" catalog...)

"Wider opportunities. They can be around the corner or around the world. Anytime a girl does something outside her troop or group she's on a wider opportunity.

But Girl Scouting also offers girls the chance to travel and learn with other girls from every part of the globe. Individual Girl Scout councils sponsor national wider opportunities; international wider opportunities are implemented by Girl Guide associations in other countries. Both are open to all registered Girl Scouts ages 12-17 or graduating high school seniors.

Wider ops are planned around the interests and needs of young women today and vary in size, theme, and cost. Of course, as with all other aspects of Girl Scout program, health and safety issues are the first consideration."

Food for thought...  
YiS,  
.signature

Lisa Varner << lvarner@freenet.columbus.oh.us >>  
Haven't been there. Don't want to go. Don't need another t-shirt!

Date: Fri, 22 Sep 1995 23:16:44 -0400  
From: Randy Worcester <RandyWoo@AOL.COM>  
Subject: Re: FREE Patch CHALLENGE #4  
To: Multiple recipients of list SCOUTS-L <SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>

As a firm believer in Scouting traditions, I accept Jim Carter's challenge.

What: The hiking staff, stick, stave, fingerstick. The first piece of Scout equipment.

Who : The Chief Scout felt that it was an essential tool. Scouts and Scouters worldwide use the staff while on the trail. According to John Hargrave in the September 1917 issue of The Scout, "I was talking to the Chief only the other day and he is very keen that the picturesque part of Scouting should not be neglected. In the Gazette and on his "Scout Yarns" page he is urging us to make the staff not merely a broomstick but a part of the Scouts costume."

When: In telling of the origin of the staff, Sir Robert Baden-Powell says:  
"It was in Ashanti, on the West Coast of Africa where my particular job was to organize and command a corps of native Scouts and Pioneers. "We were accordingly working two or three days in advance of the main body of European

Troops and in the densest primeval jungle and forest, without roads or paths of any kind to guard us. "In order to circumvent the enemy much of our advance had to be carried out by night, which meant difficulties at nearly every step among fallen timber, boggy streams, tussocks of reeds and bushes, etc. "Without a staff, one could not have got along at all.

**Why:** A more useful tool does not exist. According to Baden-Powell, "I need not say how vastly staves properly held improve the appearance of any large parade of Scouts, apart from the actual individual value of the Scout Staff."

**Uses:** To sit upon. As a flag-pole. As a punt pole. As a measuring rod. As an upright for a hike tent. As a ridge pole for a hike tent. To carry anything over the shoulder. To carry anything slung between two.

With one or more others, to carry logs. As a turning post for a race.

Lashed to trees, as a hitching rail. As a lever. As a ski-pole. To signal with. To align anything. As a vaulting pole. As a signal flagstaff. A tripod to hold a kettle. To find North by the Sun at noon.

As emergency football goal posts. As a long split for the body or leg.

To replace a broken pitchfork handle. A fishing rod. Mast for a canoe.

Temporary splits. As a broom handle. To make a teepee. To make a light bridge. Handle of a trek cart. To beat out a prairie fire. As a weighing "balance". To practice lashings on. To test the depth of water.

Spar for small sailing boat. As a leveling rod for surveying. To feel your way with in the dark. To hold in hands for physical training exercises. Framework for a brushwood windbreak. As a help in hill or mountain climbing. Two, as frame of improvised stretcher. For carrying, crossing dangerous ice. Several, lashed together, as a flagstaff. To discover the nature of a river bottom. For feeling way over marshy ground.

Throwing to a drowning person at the end of a rope. To hang clothes on to dry, placed between bushes or trees. As a means of defence against wild animal or vicious domestic animals.

**Where:** Anywhere your feet will take you. Across mountains, fields, and prairies.

**How:** Grab a sapling and off you go! Again Hargrave said in 1917, "Put your Sign on it - brand your Mark on it, and make it a record of your Scout life - and if you lose it, if you break it, if you don't carry it - you're a - you're a - a - MUMBLEBUMP!"

The source for this was a posting from Scouting Magazine, 1929 and a posting from several September, 1917 articles in The Scout.

Randy Worcester  
Pack 15  
Webelos Den Leader  
Andrew Jackson Council  
Jackson, Mississippi

**From:** Bruce Ward <Bruce.Ward@SMTPGWY.AGRIC.NSW.GOV.AU>  
**Subject:** Re: World Badge

I was interested to read Mike's posting about the world badge. I

suspect we are losing a lot of the symbolism in Scouting, which the founder used to emphasize important points.

Mike said about the design of the badge:

The patch has always had the same design. The patch is one-inch in diameter, in the same two colors. The design is the international fleur-de-lis (flower of the lily), with two stars symbolizing "truth" and "knowledge" and alluding to the outdoor nature of Scouting, surrounded by a rope symbolic of unity and one-ness tied at the bottom by a square knot, a symbol of service. Those white items are on a deep purple (not maroon, but royal purple) background.

My understanding is that the symbol is certainly very similar to the fleur-de-lis, but is in fact an arrowhead. BP's explanation of this was that the sign points the way ahead.

I also have heard some additional symbolic links, that are often told to new Scouts at investiture, to ram home some of the key elements of Scouting.

1. The symbol is an arrowhead, pointing the way ahead.
2. The three points represent the three parts of our promise.
3. Each star has five points, and together, these stand for the ten Scout Laws.
4. The square knot (reef knot) symbolizes the bond of international Scouting, and will not come undone, unless you undo it.

How much of this is local interpretation is hard to say, but I for one will be adding the bits from Mike's version to my investiture yarn.

In Australia, the World Badge is worn in the centre of the left hand pocket, over the heart.

Bruce Ward  
Orange, Australia

Date: Wed, 10 May 1995 19:57:55 -0400  
From: Randy Worcester <RandyWoo@aol.com>  
Subject: Re: Boy Rangers of America

RobinC7172@AOL.COM (Robin Chambers) asked:

>My father is desperately looking for information on the Boy Rangers >of America, a group of which he was a member in the early 1930's.

According to the "History of Cub Scouting", the Boy Rangers was the creation

of Emerson Brooks. He founded the first "lodge" of Boy Rangers in Montclair, NJ in 1913. They played "Indian" and practiced pioneering skills. Their "Great Laws" copied the 12 points of the Scout Law. Their aim was to graduate into Boy Scouts, the Woodcraft Indians, or the Boys Clubs. At its peak in the mid-twenties, the Boy Rangers of America had 8,000 members and 700 lodges in 47 states. It was the largest of the younger-boy programs prior to the Cub Scouts. Chief Scout Executive James West had been helping Emerson Brooks incorporate the Boy Ranger program for possible adoption by the BSA. West had been against the younger Boy program in fear that it would take away from the Boy Scouts. Other BSA leaders objected to some of the things in the Boy Ranger program which led to the founding of the "Cubbies" based upon the British "Wolf Cub" program and Indian lore borrowed from the Boy Rangers and Seton's Woodcraft Indians.

I'm glad that your Dad fondly remembers this program. Its important that we not forget our Scouting heritage.

Randy Worcester  
Randy Woo@AOL.com  
Andrew Jackson Council  
Webelos Den Leader, Pack 15  
Madison, Mississippi

Date: Wed, 13 Sep 1995 10:07:43 -0600  
From: John Oakes <joakes@UNM.EDU>  
Subject: Re: FREE Patch CHALLENGE #4

John Oakes skillfully writes:

What is the tradition:

The actual meaning of the left handshake

Who started this tradition:

Baden-Powell and the Ashanti chieftain

Explanation:

When B-P approached the chieftain that he had just captured, he held out his right hand as a greeting to shake hands. The chieftain stopped him and replied that in his culture only the bravest of warriors shook left hands, you see to do so a warrior has to put down his shield.

When did the tradition start:

The Ashanti campaign of the 1880's

**Where information about the tradition can be found:**

**Two lives of a hero, and Autobiography, Baden-Powell**

**How is the tradition relevant today:**

**Lineage and history are relevant to our existence as scouts belonging to this world community of scouts. Our lineage dictates to us the very life breath of its founder, and doing so, we attempt to carry on in the vision that he had for the lads...and ourselves as leaders.**

**We must pass on to our youth during our transitions from Weebelos to Boy Scouts the lore and "mystique" of this vision that B-P had, to form men of worth from boys.**

**John Oakes  
5223 Vista Bonita N.E.  
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87111**

**Date: Tue, 26 Sep 1995 13:04:46 EDT  
From: Stephen Symons <symons@BY.GENIE.UOTTAWA.CA>  
Subject: Re: FREE Patch CHALLENGE #4**

**Another Scouting tradition:**

**WHAT: The Gilwell Woggle**

**WHO: Francis Gidney, Camp Chief at Gilwell Park**

**WHEN: about 65 years ago**

**WHY: Before the introduction of the Gilwell woggle the neckerchief was usually knotted at the throat. As part of Wood Badge training in those days every candidate had to learn to light a fire by friction.**

**The main piece of equipment needed was a leather thong about 30 inches in length - just long enough to make a 2 strand Turk's Head woggle so that Scouters would always have the necessary equipment to make a fire by friction.**

**Stephen Symons ( Hawkeye)  
14th Gloucester Colony A**

**Date: Mon, 5 Feb 1996 02:59:42 -0500 (EST)  
From: "Michael F. Bowman" <mfbowman@CapAccess.org>  
To: SCOUTS-L - Youth Groups Discussion List <SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>**



**cc: Multiple recipients of list SCOUTS-L <SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>  
Subject: Re: Akela: Wolf or Great Indian Chief (was Native American Regalia)**

**Baden-Powell originally included the Jungle Book story in his Wolf Cub program. When BSA started developing a Cub Scout program in 1929 Ernest Thompson Seton persuaded BSA that an American Indiana emphasis was needed and so borrowed heavily from Woodcraft Indians, Wolf Cubs, and Boy Rangers in developing an Americanized version of the legend of Akela.**

**In the 1962 Wolf Handbook, probably like the one you saw, the story of Akela began "Many moons before the Palefaces came to America in their big ships with sky-wings, the Red men lived and hunted in the great woods and upon the broad plains of America. . . "**

**Mowgli was an "Indian boy." In the legend which runs several pages, Akela is described as a Chief. In this legend there are stories of the first Chief's bravery in fighting a grizzly bear, attacking the war canoes of enemies, fighting a bull, etc.**

**This legend changed a little, but the main features were the same as late as the 1977 handbooks. 1979 the Wolf Handbook was rewritten and the emphasis shifted from Akela being a chief to Akela being a leader, such that any parent or older sibling could be an Akela. With this change the legend shifted back to Kipling's original story.**

**Now if you read the story of Akela, it is clear that the events described are in India, etc.**

**Speaking Only for Myself in the Scouting Spirit, Michael F. Bowman a/k/a Professor Beaver (WB), ASTA #2566, OA Vigil Honor '71, Eagle Scout '67, Serving as Deputy District Commissioner for Training, G.W.Dist., Nat. Capital Area Council, BSA - mfbowman@capaccess.org**

**Date: Sat, 10 Feb 1996 00:46:42 -0500 (EST)  
From: "Michael F. Bowman" <mfbowman@CapAccess.org>  
To: SCOUTS-L - Youth Groups Discussion List <SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>  
Subject: Re: origin of blue and gold**

**Jon,**

**You asked about the origins of the colors Blue and Gold in Cub Scouting. In 1929 when the first experimental Packs were authorized in 102 communities there was great concern that this "experimental" program not be confused with Boy Scouting or take leaders away from Boy Scouting. The visible signs of the program had to be different. The first uniforms were designed in Blue and Gold to distinguish this program from the Boy Scout program. Now to sell the colors concept it was integrated into the Akela legend and it appears that Seton developed the idea of what the colors would represent.**

**In the 1951 Den Mother's Handbook, the Blue and Gold are explained thus:**

**"The Cub Uniform is entirely different from the Scout Uniform. Blue and Gold are the Cub Colors and signify the loyalty as symbolized by the true blue of the eternal skies, while its gold represents the brightness and worth and light of the Cub's smile and happy ways. These are the same colors, therefore, which appear in the Cub Flag."**

**Seton's influence is evident in the Cub Scout advancement ceremony frequently promoted in early Cub Scout literature.**

**From the "Cub Scout Program Quarterly" Spring 1961:**

**"THE STORY OF THE CUB SCOUT COLORS: AN ADVANCEMENT CEREMONY**

**"Personnel: Akela, two Indian Braves, a narrator. Equipment and arrangement: Tripod with pot suspended over fire; small container --such as coffe can-- that will fit inside the large pot and hold a Cub Scout neckerchief and any awards; dry ice to pack around the small container. Dry ice will vaporize and cause a smoking effect and it looks as if the pot were boiling. The smoking increases when water is added. You will need two clear bottles. Fill one with diluted yellow food coloring to color the water gold. In the other use blue food coloring to tint the water a sky blue. Have an Indian headdress for Akela.**

**"Narrator (speaking to audience, seated in a circle with Akela standing behind the smoking ceremonial fire): Many moons ago the great chief Akela called a council to see what could be done to make the Webelos tribe the best of all the tribes. After many hours, Akela called his two most trusted braves to the council fire.**

**"(He continues as two Braves come in and stand on each side of Akela.) He told the first Indian Brave to climb the mountain and tell the great eagle to fly high into the sky and bring back part of the beauty of the sun. (First Brave leaves.)**

**"He told the Second Brave to go into the forest and tell the sparrow to fly high into the sky and bring back part of the beauty of the sky. (Second Brave leaves. Then, both Braves return immediately. One carries a bottle of blue water and other a bottle of yellow water that were located just outside the room. They come in and kneel, one on each side of fire, and hold up the bottles of colored water for everyone to see.)**

**"Akela (orders First Brave): Pour some of the beauty of the sun into our council mixing pot. (The Brave with the yellow water pours some of it into the large pot containing dry ice, being careful not to pour the water into the small container. The water causes the dry ice to smoke more, and it seems as if the pot is boiling faster. Akela signals the Second Brave.) Pour some of the beauty of the sky into the council mixing pot.**

**"(The rapid boiling action starts again. Then raising his right hand, Akela speaks.)**

**"From this day forward, blue will stand for truth and loyalty. Yellow will stand for warm sunlight, happiness, and good cheer.**

**"(Then Akela stirs the pot, reaches in, and pulls a Cub Scout neckerchief from the small container. He holds the neckerchief open so everyone can see it, and speaks.) And that is why the Cub Scouts use the colors blue and gold. Now let us meet the Cub Scouts and parents that helped us keep the blue and gold of Cub Scouting alive and growing this month.**

**"(Akela stirs the pot again and takes out the boys' awards from the container in the middle. Boys and parents are called forward to receive them.)"**

**BTW this same issue of Cub Scout Program Quarterly announced that the June 1962 monthly theme would be "Noah's Ark." :--**

**Speaking Only for Myself in the Scouting Spirit, Michael F. Bowman  
a/k/a Professor Beaver (WB), ASTA #2566, OA Vigil Honor '71, Eagle  
Scout '67, Serving as Deputy District Commissioner for Training,  
G.W.Dist., Nat. Capital Area Council, BSA - mfbowman@capaccess.org**