

## **William D. Boyce and the Unknown Scout**

A foggy day in London. Narrator Announces: "London, 1909."

**Narrator:** One day in 1909 in London, England, a Chicago businessman, publisher William D. Boyce, lost his way in a dense fog. He stopped under a street lamp and tried to find his way.

Boyce enters stage, wanders around, then stops under the lamp post. A scout enters and approaches Boyce.

**Scout:** "May I be of help, sir?"

**Boyce:** "Please. Which way is 111 Downing Street?"

**Scout:** "I'll take you there."

Scout leads Boyce back and forth across stage. Then Boyce reaches into his pocket for a coin.

**Narrator:** When they got to the destination, Mr. Boyce reached into his pocket for a shilling tip. But the boy stopped him.

**Scout:** "No thank you, sir. I am a Scout. I won't take anything for helping."

**Boyce:** "A Scout? And what might that be?"

**Narrator:** The boy told the American about himself and his brother Scouts. Boyce became very interested. After finishing his errand, he had the boy take him to the British Scouting Office.

Scout leads Boyce to other side, where he shakes hands with B-P.

Unknown Scout leaves, while Boyce and B-P talk.

**Narrator:** At the office, Boyce met Lord Robert Baden-Powell, the famous

British general who had founded the Scouting movement in Great Britain. When he boarded the steamship back to the United States a short while later, Boyce had a suitcase full of information and ideas on boy scouting.

Boyce came home determined to start Boy Scouting in America. On February 8, 1910, Boyce filed incorporation papers for the Boy Scouts of America in the District of Columbia. The purpose, he said, "shall be to promote, through organization, and cooperation with other agencies, the ability of boys to do things for themselves and others, to train them in Scoutcraft, and to teach them patriotism, courage, self-reliance, and kindred virtues, using the methods which are in common use by Boy Scouts."

What happened to the boy who helped Mr. Boyce find his way in the fog? No one knows. He had neither asked for money nor given his name, but he will never be forgotten. His Good Turn helped bring the Scouting movement to our country.

One Good Turn to one man became a Good Turn to millions of American boys. Such is the power of a Good Turn.