Early LifeÂ

Frederick Russell Burnham was an American Scout, as well an adventurer and world traveler.Â  He was a horseback messenger with Western Union by age 13.Â

After ranging over much of the American southwest and Mexico, he offered his services to Cecil Rhodes and the British South Africa Company.Â  He made his way to Africa, where the fought for the British. Â

This is where he first encountered Robert Baden-Powell, and they served together during the Matbele Campaign.Â  Â

He achieved the rank of Major in the British Army, despite refusing to give up his American citizenship, which was very rare.Â  He was also awarded the Distinguished Service Order, the second highest decoration in the British Army for his work as Chief Scout on the successful March to Pretoria, and several other medals.Â

He spent 1897-1900 in Alaska during the Klondike Gold Rush, before returning to the war in Africa.Â  After the war, he led mineral expeditions in both Africa and the United States.Â  He also became an oil exploration businessman.Â

Burnham was also a conservationist, promoting the founding of national parks in Africa and the United States.Â  He became friends with former president Theodore Roosevelt, who shared his passion for the outdoors.Â

He married Blanche Bick Burnham, and she their three children shared his adventures in Africa.Â

He lived in Pasadena, California after retiring, and was fascinated by treasure hunts and archaeological expeditions all the way up to his death.Â

His Role in the Scout MovementÂ

Burnham was said to be an expert Scout before he fought for the British.Â  He could see his horseâ€™s ears prick up, or watch the way

the wind was blowing, and figure out what was coming next.Â

Baden-Powell was fascinated by Burnhamâ€™s knowledge of Native Americans and the American southwest.Â  They camped together and shared many ideas.Â

While Baden-Powell is one of the founders of the Scout Movement, Burnham is surely one of its inspirations.Â  He and Baden-Powell remained lifelong friends.Â

Mt. Baden-Powell, a mountain in California near Burnhamâ€™s home, was dedicated in May 1931.Â  Burnham gave a moving speech about their time in Africa, and Baden-Powellâ€™s dedication to youth.Â  Â

In true Scout spirit, Baden-Powell sent Burnham a letter shortly after the dedication.Â  About Burnhamâ€™s moving account of his friend, his friend wrote back,â€□ â€¦It makes feel I ought to buck up and nearly try to deserve the high status you have accorded meâ€¦..â€□ Â  An adjoining mountain, Mt. Burnham, was dedicated in 1951.