

SCOUT MOVEMENT

THE LEFT-HAND HANDSHAKE



As we know Scouts across the world all greet each other with a left-handed handshake and that it is a sign of trust and friendship but why did and how did Baden Powell come to decide to use it when he formed the Scout Movement?



There is a story that when Baden Powell entered Kumasi, the capital city of the Ashanti he was met by one of the Great Chiefs of the Ashanti, he saluted him and then offered his right hand out as a sign of friendship, but the Chief lowered his shield which he held in his left hand. His right contained his spear so he offered his left hand as a sign of friendship. When asked why, Baden Powell was told that by offering his left hand, which traditionally was used to hold a shield for protection, he was showing his trust to his enemy or friend. For without the shield for protection he was open to attack.