

How Juliette Low Started Girl Scouts

CHARACTERS: Juliette Gordon Low (Daisy)
Elinor Gordon, her sister Janet
Mrs. Gordon Katie
Mr. Gordon Cindy
Lord Robert Baden-Powell Cathy
Narrator

(Scene 1) Juliette Low's Living Room; Mrs. Low and Lord Robert Baden-Powell chatting as Mrs. Low works on clay figure.

NARRATOR: The scene is a castle in Scotland, the time, several years after the death of Juliette Low's husband. When Mrs. Low's husband died, she felt that everything was over for her. She tried to do the things that she and her husband had done, but she didn't enjoy the riding, the hunting or the parties. Her friends told her she needed a new interest. One weekend one of her guests was Lord Robert Baden-Powell. At this moment they are in Mrs. Low's living room. Lord Baden-Powell is admiring the figure Mrs. Low is sculpting.

JULIETTE: Oh, it's good enough. But my heart isn't in it. How I wish there was something new to do!

LORD POWELL: New things are not always easy and pleasant. I've discovered that in my work to establish the Boy Scouts in England.

JULIETTE: Oh, I've heard about the program, Robert. People are calling it a great game for boys. Tell me about it.

LORD POWELL: You are really interested?

JULIETTE: Very much. I love young people and this sounds like such a splendid thing for boys.

NARRATOR: Lord Baden-Powell told Juliette how the idea had come to him when he was in the army stationed in South Africa. The new soldiers he had to train knew little about nature or outdoor living, and could not stand the hard life. He described the games and activities he used to teach the boys how to be self-reliant and resourceful. He explained how his program would build character, promote friendship and an understanding love for the outdoors. Juliette is obviously very interested. Suddenly she interrupts Lord Baden-Powell.

JULIETTE: Robert, why should a program of this kind be limited to boys? Girls could benefit from the same program. I would like to begin such a program for Scottish lassies here!

LORD POWELL: Funny, my sister Agnes felt the same way. She has already organized the sisters of the boys in our troop. They call themselves Girl Guides.

JULIETTE: That's splendid! I could start a troop here in Glen Lyon. Robert, I could even take Scouting across the ocean to America. I know eight or nine little girls in Savannah who would adore it.

(Scene 2) The Gordon Living Room. Mr. and Mrs. Gordon and Elinor, Juliette's parents and sister, reading letter.

NARRATOR: Our scene changes to Savannah, Georgia, Juliette's hometown. When Juliette announced her plan to her family, they wondered if she would be successful in carrying it out.

ELINOR: But Daisy is so impractical.

MRS. GORDON: She isn't really impractical. She just does things differently than most people.

ELINOR: Won't her deafness be a handicap in such a project?

MRS. GORDON: I don't think Daisy's deafness has been a handicap to her when she has wanted to complete a specific task. Anyway, she will never hear the word "no" even when it is shouted very loudly.

MR. GORDON: Daisy's always been willing to give a great deal of herself to make young people happy. I think it is a splendid idea for her to start this work with girls. We mustn't discourage her.

(Scene 3) Juliette with a group of girls at tea,

NARRATOR: On reaching Savannah, Juliette wasted no time getting her plans underway. First she phoned several of her friends, told them what she wanted to do and asked for their assistance and support. A few days later she invited the girls from a nearby school to tea. She showed them pictures of the English Girl Guides and told them about the organization as she had seen it working. The Savannah girls were enthusiastic and eager to form a troop. So many girls asked to join Juliette Low's Girl Guides that two troops were formed on that afternoon of March 12th, 1912. Soon there were 6 active troops in Savannah. That fall it became necessary for Juliette Low to return to England. While she was gone, the Savannah troops worked hard.

(Scene 4) A Girl Scout meeting

JANET: Do you suppose this is the right blue for our uniforms?

KATIE: No, I think this is closer to the blue in this picture.

CINDY: I really like this color best, and I think the material would make a better looking uniform.

CATHY: All right, let's get material and try to make a uniform just like the one in the picture.

NARRATOR: So with the help of the picture given them by Juliette Low, uniforms were made. They also used the English Girl Guide handbook to plan their meetings.

KATIE: We can start our meeting by saying our Promise and the Girl Guide Laws.

CINDY: We can plan to go on hikes, as the English girls do, and I'd like to keep a notebook of the birds we see on our hikes.

JANET: Maybe we can meet with some of the other troops once in a while. This handbook has some games that would be good for us to try with other troops in Savannah.

NARRATOR: The girls had a great deal to report when Juliette Low returned. She attended their meetings and with great interest she watched the activities of her first troops of Girl Guides. She saw that they had their first experience at camping out --- five days of sleeping under the stars, cooking over open fires, fighting mosquitoes and avoiding poison ivy. In 1913, Juliette Low changed the name to Girl Scouts. Soon girls from other parts of America heard of the Girl Guides and asked Mrs. Low for information to start troops. Other people who had learned about Scouting in England brought Girl Scouting to their neighborhoods. A national Headquarters was set up in Washington, D.C. and the name, Girl Scouts of the United States of America, was adopted. So Juliette Low's dream of bringing Girl Scouting to the United States came true.