

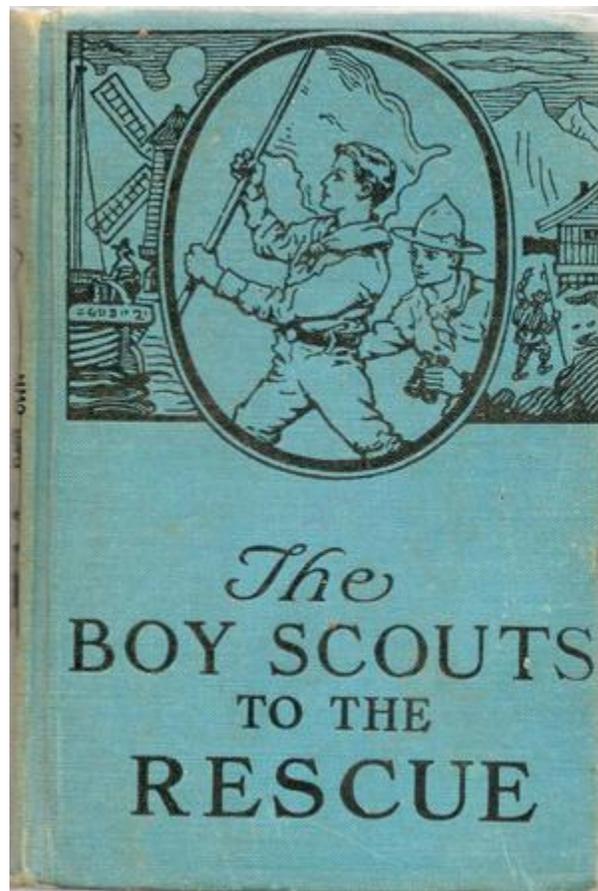


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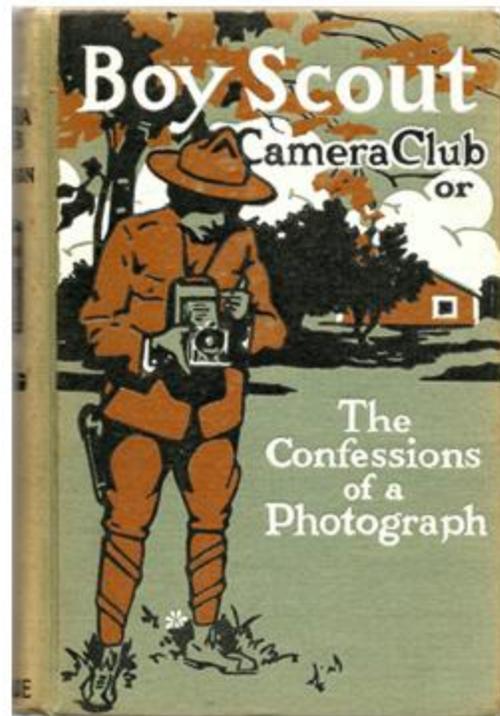
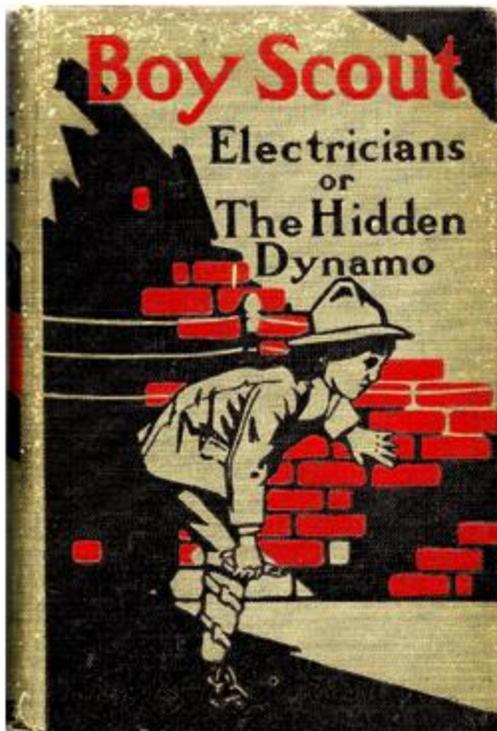
READ ALL ABOUT IT!

Boy Scouts save the world, one word at a time!

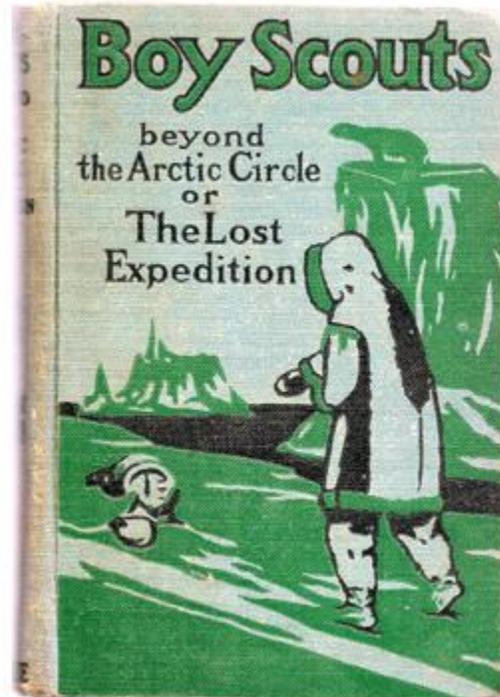
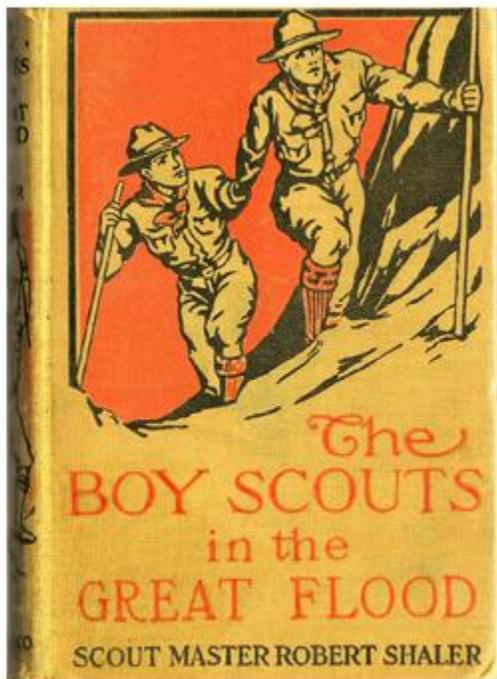


Pow! Zowie! Ka-blam! Boy Scout Novels

The Boy Scouts of America began in 1910, long before radio, television, or movies with sound. Many boys found entertainment in books of lively adventure stories. Noticing the rapid growth of the BSA, publishers cashed in on Scouting's popularity by issuing novels with Scouts as main characters.

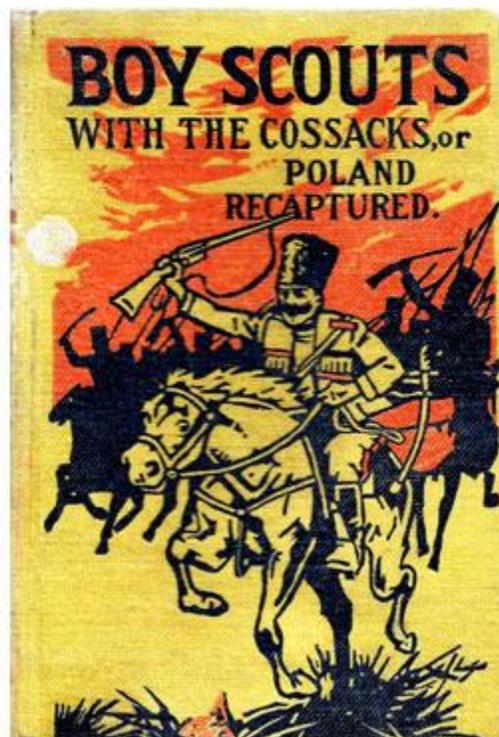
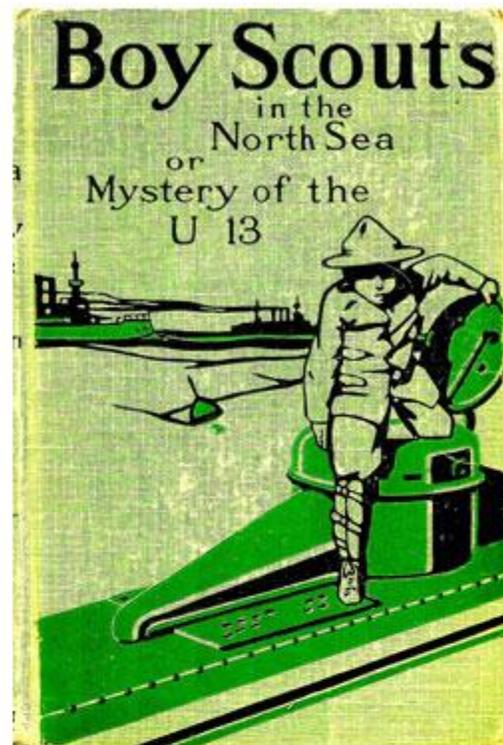
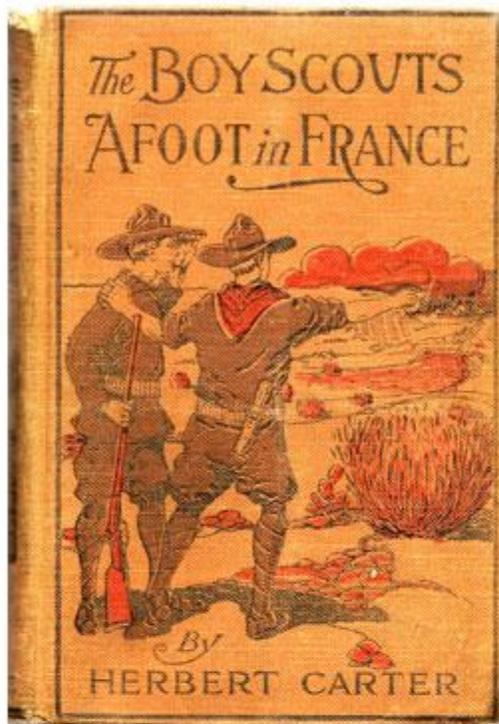


First came Ned Nestor and his New York City troop. They were expert marksmen, mechanics, electricians, and America's best detectives. As inventors, they could build and operate machines for traveling across the land, on the water, or through the air.



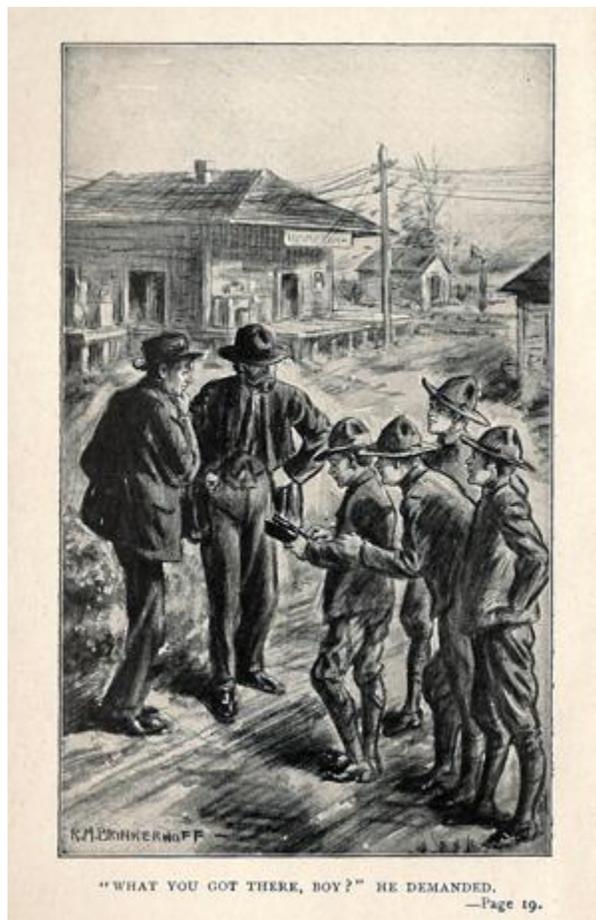
In more than a hundred books, the fictional Scouts traveled the world to solve mysteries and lead people out of trouble. They saved the Panama Canal from terrorists and dealt with unrest in the

Philippine Islands. In China they guarded a shipment of gold, and they freed a kidnapped American in Mexico.



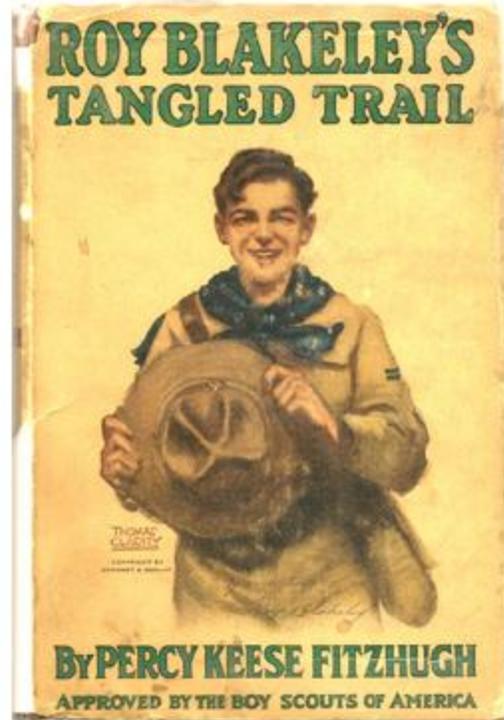
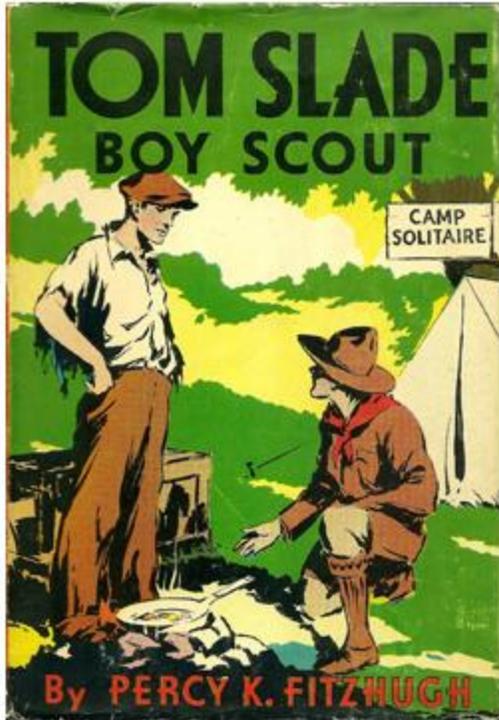
When World War I broke out in Europe, Ned and his fellow Scouts joined the battle. They protected French troops from ambush, dealt with German submarines, and rode with the Cossack cavalry to rescue Poland.

Wherever they went, the Scout heroes encountered villains, thieves, and enemies of America. By the last page of each novel the boys had always outwitted evil doers and saved the day.

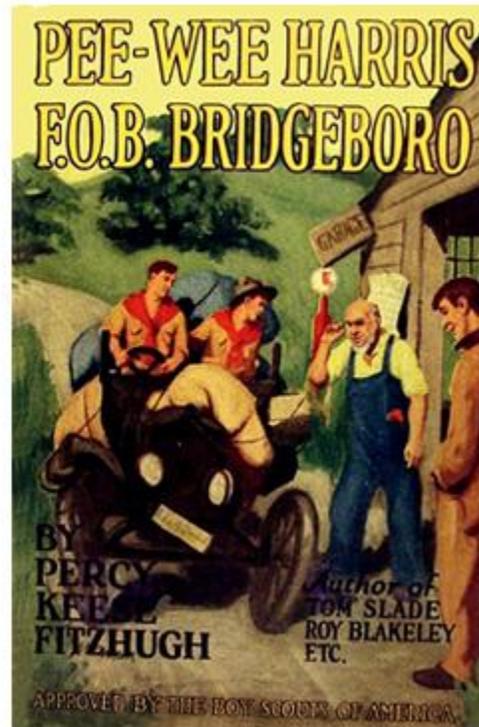
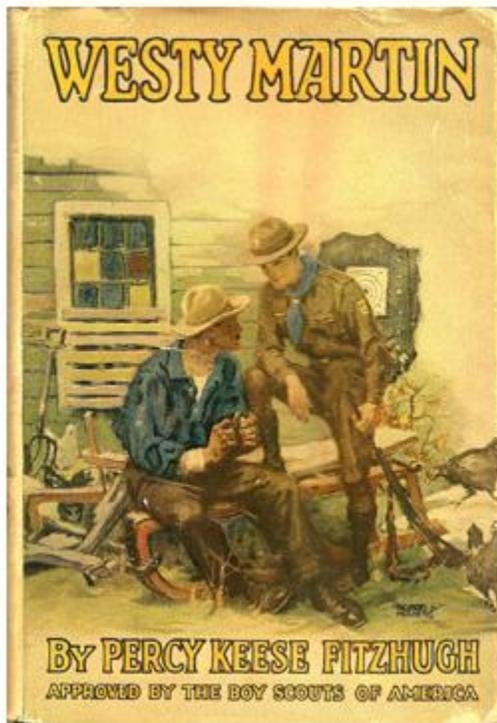


Stories about these khaki-clad superheroes were thrilling, but the BSA national office feared readers were getting the wrong idea about the true values of the Scouting program. To give an honest picture, the Chief Scout Librarian encouraged authors to write novels featuring more realistic Scouts being of service in their communities and council camps.

Among the first of these new fictional characters was Tom Slade. Without parents to guide him, Tom was portrayed as a boy headed down the wrong road in life when he happened to join a Scout troop in his hometown of Bridgeboro, New Jersey. Tom was never perfect and he didn't always have the answer, but he tried hard to be guided by the Scout Oath and Law.



Beginning in 1920, Tom's friend Roy Blakeley got his own series of novels that continued the adventures of their troop. A few years later that happened to troop member Westy Martin, too, and then to the troop's smallest member, a rambunctious lad named Pee-Wee Harris.



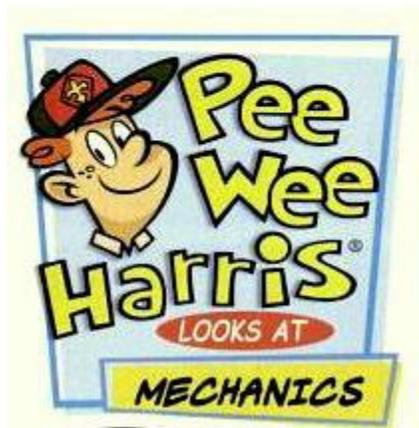
As youth of the late 1920s turned to the new movie theaters and radio programs for amusement, Boy Scout novels lost popularity. In their time, the books had sold millions of copies. Tom Slade had been

one of the most famous fictional characters in America.

And Pee Wee Harris? He moved from novels to illustrated stories in Boys' Life Magazine where you can still find him, 85 years after he joined Tom Slade's troop.



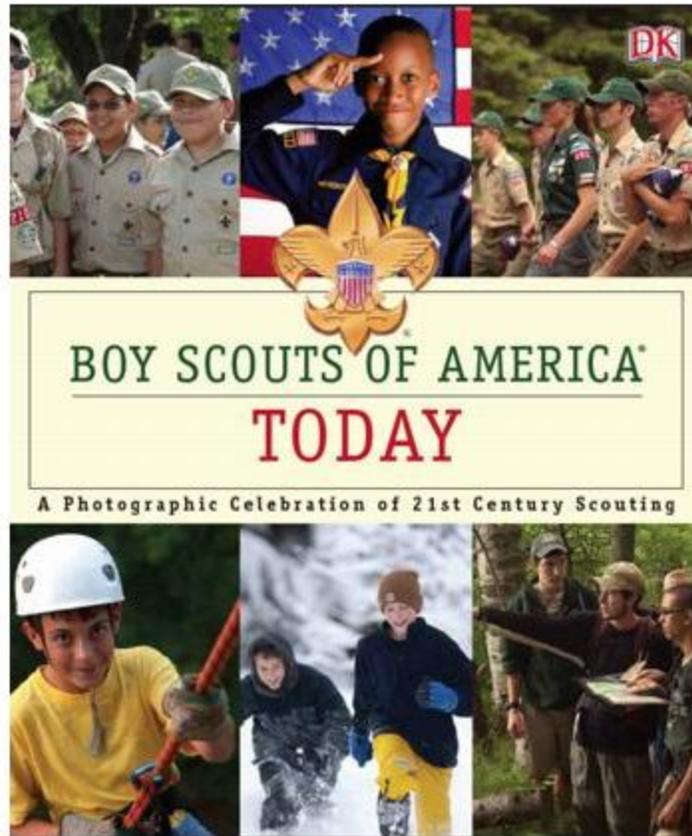
Pee-Wee Harris then...



...and now

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA TODAY

Modern Scouts don't need novels to find real adventure. It's all around them in the rich excitement of the BSA program. Want to take a look? *Boy Scouts of America Today* is a big new book packed with hundreds of color photographs showing Scouting at its best.



Featuring winners of last winter's national photo competition for Scouts and Scouters, the first 12 chapters illustrate the points of the Scout Law. A final chapter explodes with spectacular, never-before-seen photographs from the 2010 National Scout Jamboree.

Boy Scouts of America Today is a magnificent book for families and friends of the BSA. It is sure to be at the top of many holiday gift-giving lists for those who love Scouting.

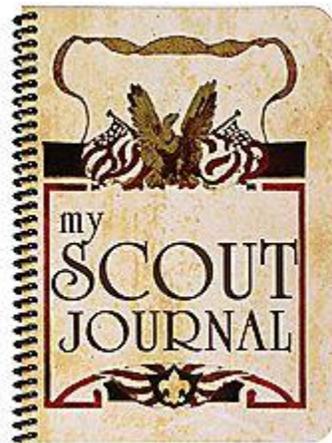
READING AND WRITING

Something that hasn't changed since the days of Tom Slade and Roy Blakeley is the joy of reading. Getting lost in the world of a book is one of life's great pleasures. To receive BSA recognition for the time you spend with books, check out the Reading merit badge.



Serving as your troop's scribe is a good way to improve your writing skills, too. With digital photography and computer programs, you can add pictures and videos to your troop's record and share it at courts of honor and other BSA events.

Why not write your own stories? Writing well takes practice, just like getting better at a sport or learning to play a musical instrument. Keeping a daily journal is a terrific way to have fun writing down what interests you.

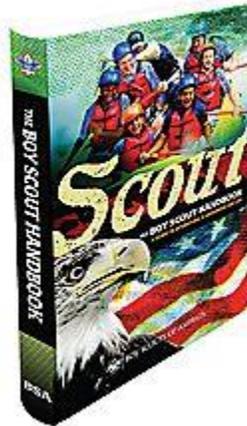


Need a good pen to go with your journal? www.scoutstuff.org comes through again with writing instruments you'll be proud to carry and happy to use.



DIGITAL HANDBOOK

Technology brings fresh ways for everyone to create, research, and share information. Joining the digital revolution is as easy as going online to download the entire *Boy Scout Handbook* as an app for the iPhone or iPod Touch. Imagine what fun Tom Slade and Ned Nestor would have with that!



What will tomorrow bring? Perhaps you'll be pitching a hi-tech tent in a virtual campsite and crawling inside to take shelter from pixels of rain. Whatever your Scouting future holds, it is sure to be exciting, full of adventure, and worth writing about. Ka-pow!

(This edition of the Be Prepared Newsletter was developed and written by Robert Birkby, author of the Centennial edition of the Boy Scout Handbook.)