



Travel

Surinam

It was in 1949 when I was a very inexperienced commissioner in the Sudan that we had the very great honour and pleasure of a visit lasting several days from Lady Baden-Powell. Although we were, of course, a bit overawed at first, she soon put us at ease with her charm and lack of formality.

We had had a very successful rally in Khartoum and she had officially opened the new guide headquarters when we flew her, in a small 'Dove' aircraft, to Atbarra, some 300 miles north across the desert, to visit a Sudanese girls' school guide company. After a happy and successful day, including generous hospitality from parents and local association members, we took our seats in the plane for the homeward journey.

While we were waiting for take-off, Lady Baden-Powell was telling me how, after just such a day in, I think, Cyprus, they had been sitting in the plane, just like this, when the pilot came along and said that he was very sorry but the plane would not start and they had to troop out and descend once more upon their unfortunate hostesses of the day, who had thought they had seen them safely off, but who had to entertain them again until another plane could be sent out... she had hardly finished speaking when, lo and behold, our pilot came along, full of apologies, to say that he was very sorry but the plane would not start and we too had to return to our kind hosts of the day, and be given hospitality until another plane could be sent out from Khartoum to fetch us!

By now, however, it was late, completely dark and the desert air-strip had no lights. So how were we to take off? The problem was finally solved, once more by our kind hosts, who brought their cars up on either side of the plane and shone their headlights along the runway. Final departure of the World Chief Guide and company, to a chorus of cheers from our very relieved hosts and hostesses of the day!

A.C.T. Leader