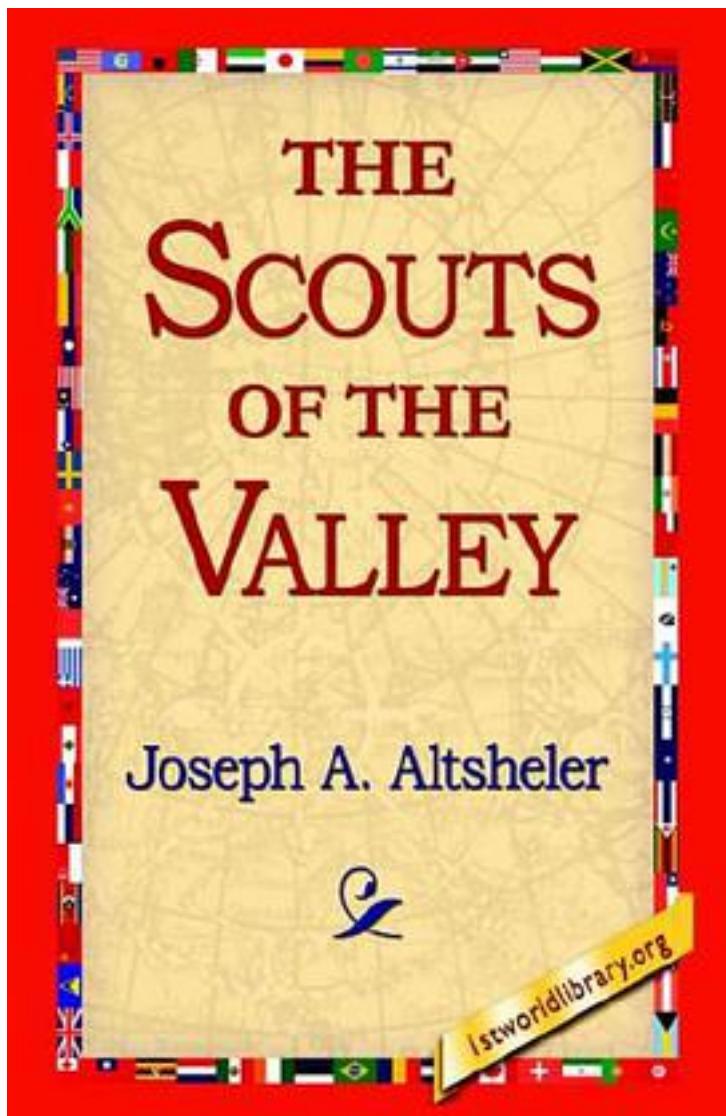


The Scouts of the Valley



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著者:Altsheler, Joseph A.

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Purchase one of 1st World Library's Classic Books and help support our free internet library of downloadable eBooks. Visit us online at www.1stWorldLibrary.ORG -- A light canoe of bark, containing a single human figure, moved swiftly up one of the twin streams that form the Ohio. The water, clear and deep, coming through rocky soil, babbled gently at the edges, where it lapped the land, but in the center the full current flowed steadily and without noise. The thin shadows of early dusk were falling, casting a pallid tint over the world, a tint touched here and there with living fire from the sun, which was gone, though leaving burning embers behind. One glowing shaft, piercing straight through the heavy forest that clothed either bank, fell directly upon the figure in the boat, as a hidden light illuminates a great picture, while the rest is left in shadow. It was no common forest runner who sat in the middle of the red beam. Yet a boy, in nothing but years, he swung the great paddle with an ease and vigor that the strongest man in the West might have envied. His rifle, with the stock carved beautifully, and the long, slender blue barrel of the border, lay by his side. He could bring the paddle into the boat, grasp the rifle, and carry it to his shoulder with a single, continuous movement.

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