

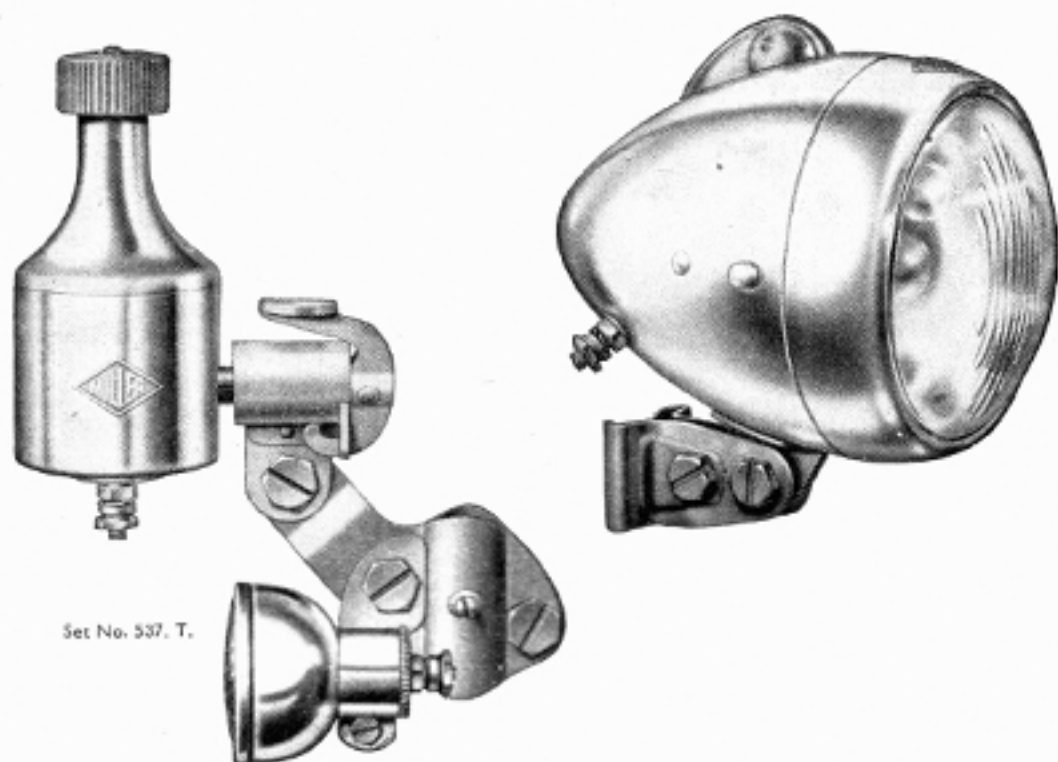


January 1955

9d

The
SCOUTER

THE SCOUTS' SYMBOLS OF EFFICIENCY



Set No. 537, T.

★ The Despatch Rider or Messenger Badge is something to be mighty proud of. So are Miller Dynamo Lighting Sets, whose efficiency and reliability—like the famous Scout Motto “Be Prepared”—is second to none.



CYCLE DYNAMO LIGHTING



DESPATCH RIDER BADGE:—“The bicycle must be properly fitted out with front light and rear lamp.”

(Note to Scouts taking this Test: Examiners appreciate the smartness and efficiency of Miller Cycle Dynamo Sets.)

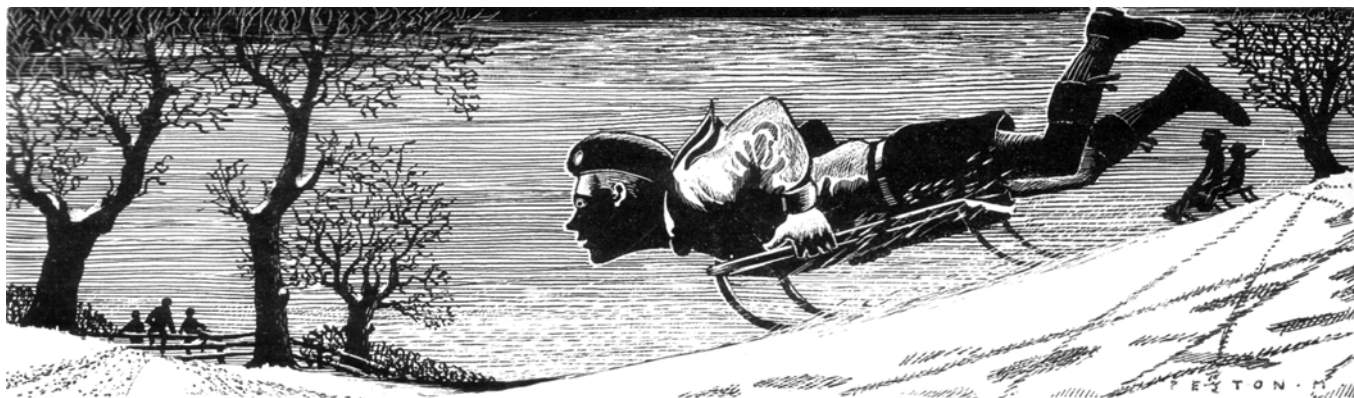


MESSENGER BADGE: “The Scout must keep on his bicycle a front light and tail lamp in good working order.”

(Note to successful messengers: — Miller Cycle Dynamo Lighting Sets give a strong white beam at all speeds.)

Write “Scout Badge Series No. 20.”





THE OUTLOOK

By **THE DEPUTY CHIEF SCOUT**

The Chief Scout is safely back from his visit to the Far East. He had a strenuous time, but it was a very worth-while tour. He will soon be writing a special article for THE SCOUTER telling us something of his experiences out there. I am glad to be able to tell you that he is well, but is going to "sit back" for a bit and take a well earned rest. Meanwhile, he has agreed to my deputising for him in "this column."

Another Gang Show has come and gone. Ralph Reader has done it again! Once more we owe him, the Gang Show Committee, "The Gang," and all concerned with the production of this year's show, a great debt of gratitude for happy entertainment and a grand contribution to Scouting.

In the Scouter for November last I asked for your support to Jamboree, the journal published by the Boy Scouts International Bureau. By the time this "Outlook" appears in print, Jamboree will have changed its name to World Scouting. This, I think, is a far better title, which makes it clearer to everyone what the journal is about.

Now for another type of publication. We have all been hearing and reading a lot recently about "horror comics."

Most of us, I expect, have some personal knowledge of certain "comics," even if that knowledge goes as far back, as my own does, to the days of Buffalo Bill and Sexton Blake!

But I doubt if many of us have seen any of the sort of "comics" which are causing such concern in many circles to-day. I have not for one. But I *have* heard from a number of very sensible people, including a wise and experienced Scouter, who have seen these sort of papers how truly deplorable some of them are.

The National Union of Teachers has called upon all teachers to do all they can to combat the effects of such comics and to prevent children reading them. The Union is also urging all parents to satisfy themselves that what their children read in their leisure-time is unlikely to harm them morally or emotionally. The Union also asks parents to do all they can to encourage their children to read material which will lead them to appreciate *good* literature.

Scouting is primarily an outdoor activity, but it came into existence because boys read the fortnightly parts of Scouting for Boys. Most boys, in fact, do like reading. The Scouter, as well as the teacher and the parent, has, therefore, a duty to help his boys to the joys to be found in reading good stuff. "Reading maketh a full man." It is our job to make full men. The National Union of Teachers has asked us for our assistance in their campaign to prevent or discourage children from "reading comics of a harmful nature." The Committee of our Council has agreed that we should give it: will you please do your utmost to help in this important matter?

ROB LOCKHART.

INVESTIGATION INTO LEAKAGE IN THE SCOUT GROUP

The Committee of the Council have received the report on "Investigation into Leakage in the Scout Group," and have set up a Committee to consider the facts contained in it and to make recommendations.

The members of the Committee are:-

Mr. F. Dennis Smith, Headquarters Commissioner for Wolf Cubs (Chairman).

Mr. G. V. H. Boerlein, County Commissioner, Manchester.

Major-General J. G. Elliott, C.I.E., Assistant D.C.C. Kent.

Professor N. Haycocks, Chairman, Nottingham Boy Scouts Association.

Mr. D. A. Hume, A.D.C. Streatham.

Mr. H. N. James, D.C. Ipswich.

His Honour Judge Johnson, Assistant Commissioner, N. Ireland, and D.C.C. Belfast.

Mr. A. Knox, A.L. Durham.

Mr. M. H. Lamb, Field Commissioner, Birmingham, etc.

Mr. C. F. Maynard, Assistant Headquarters Commissioner for Boy Scouts.

Mr. H. C. Thompson, A.D.C.C. Glasgow, and S.M. 110th Glasgow.

Mr. R. F. Thurman, Camp Chief, Gilwell Park.

Mr. G. F. Witchell, Training Secretary, I.H.Q.

Mr. J. F. Colquhoun, O.B.E., Headquarters Commissioner for Relationships (Secretary).

The Committee of the Council hope that all Local Associations and Groups are studying the report, and considering the questions for discussion set out at the end of it.

If any major changes in Scout methods or organisation are thought to be advisable, considered statements should be sent to the Secretary, Investigation Committee, at 1.11. Q., not later than the 28th February. The views of Counties and Districts will be especially welcome.

A. W. HURLL,
Chief Executive Commissioner.

VISUAL YARNS

I. INTRODUCTION

By REV. E. J. WEBB

One of the most familiar problems that besets Scouters is that of talking to boys in a way that arrests and holds their attention. Years ago, books of so-called object lessons were provided for teachers, because it was known that eye gate was important as well as ear gate. Although visual-aids are now all the rage, and rightly so, little help is given in the way of what I call visual yarns. Let your boys see and hear. Use some object, draw the thing on a blackboard, make a simple moving model. All this is easily said. What we need are some indications of the line along which to go. Very well. I will give you some in this article, and in the following months a number will appear in greater detail.

The human hand is always in evidence. The thumb says, "I hold"; the index finger says, "I point"; the centre finger says, "I work"; the ring finger says (careful here), "I love"; the little finger says, "I pray." Have you got the idea? If you want something for Seniors, what about a line, a square and a cube? Each introduces a new dimension and a richer element. Let the line represent life on the physical level; the square be the greater mental life and the cube, with its depth, stand for the spiritual. Or once again, use a companion set - tongs, shovel, poker, brush. The "pair" of tongs have to work together; the shovel adds fuel to the fire and keeps it burning; the poker stirs to greater flame, while the brush tidies up. They are good companions, each needed, each helping the other.

Advertisements will often give you a starting-point. Take the familiar sign, "Electricity for Light, Heat and Power." Here are the necessary elements of an all-round life. The light of knowledge, the warmth of friendship, the ability and energy to get things done, are all suggested. Who could not pitch a yarn on "Attempting the Impossible," after reading the advertisement:

"Melting steel inside a paper bag! - by using the radio frequency system of heating." By all means have the newspaper with you, and show the illustration and caption. If you are giving a word on cleanliness, what about, "I thought it was white until . . .?"

It is easy or possible either to make or to borrow objects that suggest a subject: a wishing well; the "gold" key of the Church, the silver key of the birthday card (life), the iron key of the workshop; a flag - its staff for uprightness, its spearhead pointing Godward. On the Scout flag, its colour of green representing the outdoor nature of Scouting, the two stars for Scouts and Cubs, the ten points for the Scout Laws, the fleur-de-lis for direction, the cord, reminding one of the beginning and ending of life, and the two tassels, goodness and mercy. Paper, pen and ink have each a story worth telling. The tool-bag, with say, a rule, a set-square, a trowel, a saw - each of which suggests a different point.

The flannelgraph has become very popular and is good for building up a picture. It is cheaper to make your own and can be more effective. The principle is that flannel sticks to flannel. For background, either strips (at least a foot wide) of lint which can be dyed blue for sky, green for earth, yellow for desert: or a wider strip can have a simple bold scene painted on it. Figures and objects can be cut from magazines and pasted on to bits of lint. If you can draw your own, so much the better. Make your figures large enough and have plenty of them. Bible stories are particularly easy to illustrate in this way. The figures and objects can be placed on the lint background (itself on a blackboard) and removed or replaced at will.

Have you used invisible ink in your talks? You can make characters appear as they come into the picture. If you use the familiar technique of the revolving gardening card, which as you turn shows what plant to sow during the month, when it will bloom and what it looks like, in various pictured squares, you know another way of making items appear as you need them.

Be imaginative. Be on the look out. One day I wanted a talk on the fact that all sorts and conditions of men are won by God for His service. The jingle, "Tinker, tailor," came into my head, and I had just what I wanted. A tinker - John Bunyan; a tailor - John Woolman; soldier - Oliver Cromwell; sailor - Lord Nelson; rich man - the Earl of Shaftesbury; poor man - St. Francis; beggar-man - Sadhu Sundar Singh; thief - the Dying Thief.

Philo said long ago: "While the human voice is made to be heard, the Voice of God is made to be seen." God gave us His story, not in an abstract way, but in the Life of Jesus, where it could be seen as well as heard. Thus the Christian Story-Teller declares "We cannot but speak the things we have heard and seen." (Acts iv. 20.)

OUR DISTRICT *By A.D.C.*

"It was decent of you," said George, "to have me round to tea, and I've liked chatting about old times, but I'm not taking up Scouts again just yet. I want to be free for a bit."

George is twenty, and has just finished his two years in the army. For years he was a member of the 18th, ending up as P.L. of the Seniors, but since he has been away the 18th have fallen on evil days, and when I met George in the High Street a fortnight ago I felt that he was the answer to an A.D.C.'s prayer. So I had him round to tea and tactfully directed the conversation to the plight of the 18th.

"The Cubs are still going strong under Miss Gargle," I said, "but the Seniors have died off altogether, and since Dave Turpin went to Manchester the Scout section has dwindled alarmingly. The new curate has been lending a hand and is willing to take an A.S.M.'s warrant, but he has never done any Scouting and is rather at sea. The vicar is still G.S.M., of course, but he is far too busy to run the Troop himself, and he says that unless we can find him a good S.M. he will get the curate to start a club instead."

George shook his head.

"It isn't that I cannot spare the time," he admitted honestly, "because I knock off at 5.30 and I've no exams, or anything, but I just do not want to tie myself down. The army isn't so bad, but a fellow feels sort of in chains, if you know what I mean, and I want to be really free for a bit."

He went away, and I was sad, for he is by no means the first young fellow who, in similar circumstances, has given me the same answer. Nor could I blame him in my heart, for the feeling was natural enough.

On the other hand I have noticed that if a fellow does not come back into Scouts very soon after he returns from his National Service, he usually does not come back at all.

He returns, in a way, to a sort of vacuum so far as his leisure is concerned, and if he can be lured back right away he easily fits Scout service into his new life, but every month he defers his return sees a bit of the vacuum filled up. He is invited to play snooker at the Social Club, and gets keen on the game, and goes on the committee. Or he takes up cycling, or lawn tennis, or cricket or football. No harm in any of these things, of course, but when Scouters are so badly needed, it is sad that we have lost him.

George was so very definite in his answer that I was amazed, only a week later, to meet him in uniform.

"I have taken on the 18th, after all," he said. "I just could not help it in the end, because the old 18th are really in a terribly bad way, and it broke my heart to see them. They are hardly a Scout Troop at all . . . just a lot of wild monkeys, without any idea of discipline I was puzzled.

"But what made you visit them?" I asked.

"It was quite an accident, really. I had a chat with the vicar on Sunday, and he promised to lend me his copy of *The Wooden Horse* which I've always wanted to read but never managed to get hold of. He said he'd give it to the curate to give to me if I dropped in at the Parish Hall on Tuesday evening. Scouts used to meet Wednesdays and Fridays so it was just a chance that I stumbled on them, as they have changed their night to Tuesdays. The curate was doing his best, but he really didn't have a clue, and he wanted to go and see a sick aunt, so I could not help offering to run the Meeting, just for once, and, do you know...."

I knew. That old vicar used to be a D.C. himself and he obviously had not lost his touch.

A ROYAL OCCASION

There have been many great days in the history of "The Gang Shows" but none so great as December 9th, 1954, for that was the occasion when "The Gang" had the very great honour to give a performance before Her Majesty The Queen.

The theatre was packed from stalls to balcony when precisely at 7.30 p.m. Her Majesty entered the Royal Box. The atmosphere was electric, and when the curtain went up on the opening scene it was evident that the cast were going to give the performance of their lives. The Queen saw the same show that had delighted audiences at the previous ten performances but there was that extra polish about it that only such an occasion can produce. One outstanding memory - of many pleasant memories - of the performance was the absence of any glances by members of the cast towards the Royal Box. The temptation to have just one look must have been very great but it was resisted by youngest to oldest.

The First Act over, "The Gang" had the great honour and joy of welcoming Her Majesty backstage. A few presentations were made - original members of "The Gang" who continue to serve Scouting through these shows, in addition to their other Scout jobs, and the sons of past and present members. It was an unforgettable experience and that The Queen was enjoying herself there was no doubt. Before returning to her Box, Her Majesty was graciously pleased to sign "The Gang's" Visitors' Book.

And so on through the Second Act to the Finale. One or two of this year's songs were sung and, of course, "Crest of a Wave." Then came, perhaps, the most moving moment of the evening. Ralph Reader made his way down to the footlights to remind us that "The Gang Show" had always been a family affair and to-night we were honoured by the presence of the Head of that great family we call The British Commonwealth. He then bade us pray for Our Queen. "The Gang" turned half left so that for the first time, while the curtain was up, they were facing their Queen; spontaneously, every member of that vast audience also turned to face the Royal Box. Their prayer, "God Save Our Gracious Queen," came from very full hearts.

Whatever greatness may be ahead, December 9th will remain the red-letter day in Gang Show history.

A. W. H.



BE PREPARED

The first of a series of extracts from the book

By **RICE E. COCHRAN**

an American Scoutmaster

It is sub-titled "The Life and Illusions of a Scoutmaster."

When a man arrays himself in a Boy Scout uniform and stands up to confront a Scout Troop for the first time as its leader, he is due very soon to undergo the emotional equivalent of getting hit in the face by a custard pie. This is only one of the stresses awaiting him.

Within his first half-hour as a Scoutmaster, he will probably be trapped in an unpleasant dreamlike fix of inability to understand, or control what is happening around him. If he rallies from his first feelings of imbecility and martyrdom, and stays on as Scoutmaster, then the passing weeks will bring more bizarre ordeals. It is a stolid man who can sleep without a strong sedative on the night he returns from his first Troop meeting, on his second, or his tenth. Personally I find, after some twenty years of weekly encounters with my Troop, that I still need soothing music and lukewarm baths and sleeping pills after each meeting. Yet I do not consider myself otherwise jittery, and I sleep soundly on non-Scout nights. I even enjoy being a Scoutmaster, part of the time - enough of the time, in fact, so that I would never willingly quit.

My point in all this preamble is that any man who undertakes the leadership of a Boy Scout Troop should be steeled against strange embarrassments and jarring surprises. The only comfortable way to enter upon Scoutmastership is by gentle stages beginning around the age of eleven; anyone who is first a Scout, then a junior officer of a Troop, and later an Assistant Scoutmaster can eventually don a Scoutmaster's crown without much concussion. I was not so well prepared.

When the minister of a church, reinforced by certain vestrymen and parishioners, proposed that I become Scoutmaster of the church Troop, I felt pleased and confident. I liked boys. I had done some teaching and some athletic coaching, and subsequently had become a radio writer. Who could be better suited to sway, ignite and cultivate young minds? I accepted after hesitating no longer than the minimum necessary to show my callers that I was modest and dignified.

On the appointed evening I went forth to meet the boys.

The meeting took place in the church basement. As I made my way downstairs, a few minutes before the time set, there was noise all around me. It was the mixture of sounds which are familiar to Scoutmasters as the tuning-up discord preliminary to Scout meetings everywhere. The clash and clatter of bicycles being propped against anything handy. Shrill conversations. A rope being snapped like a whip. Running feet. Intermittent, experimental blating on a bugle. The thud of balls and other missiles. Shrieks of annoyance. Laughter. Occasional sounds of splintering or ripping.

Into this tumult I strode. I could see it was going to be fun. A muffled voice from somewhere behind me said, "Look at Big Shot."

My face and neck suddenly felt hot. I lessened my chest expansion slightly and stopped holding in my stomach. Glancing around curiously, I looked for the source of the remark, but all the boys seemed intent on their own gyrations, although there had been a significant slackening in the noise.

From somewhere in the welter of wrestling matches and foot races Reverend Stone materialised, threading his way to me. He had a police whistle in his hand.

"In about three minutes I'll be handing this over to you - a consummation devoutly to be wished," he said gaily. "I'll get the Troop lined up, tell them you're the new Scoutmaster and why we picked you. After that, you're on your own." He had the bedraggled yet peaceful air of a man emerging into the sunshine after a long period of stormy weather.

When at last he gave me the floor, to a spatter of polite hand clapping from the Scouts, I plunged into a keynote speech which I had mentally prepared during the previous week. It was full of nifty aphorisms, strong man-talk couched in what I felt sure was boy-language - such maxims as "Cheaters never prosper" and "Play the game, don't play the heel."

Before I had neared my peroration, the gaze of most of my audience was wandering. Two boys were methodically stepping on each other's toes. Another had locked hands with his neighbour in some random test of strength. Here and there among the ranks, quick jabs and kicks were being given and returned.

I stopped and blew the police whistle. This restored order, and I resumed my monologue. In a few seconds my listeners were again writhing and jerking. My voice began to be orchestrated with counterpoint, *sostenuto*, from the rear ranks.

Suppressing impulses to stamp my foot and pass sentence of dire punishment, I merely blew the whistle again. This time it did not completely quell all disorders. I threw back my head, opened my mouth to its full width, and trumpeted "QUIET!"

Startled momentarily, everyone came to rest and gazed at me. I could feel the veins in my neck throbbing. For an instant I tried to think of some crushing reprimand, but an instinct warned me against it. Instead I smiled, and gave voice to a rather stale hyperbole I suddenly remembered from my youth:

"Let's hold the noise down to a steady-roar, fellows."

This seemed to convulse my audience. The laughter was explosive and mysteriously long-continued.

I waited, for what seemed several minutes, but the howls of mirth pealed on, steadily and determinedly. Slowly I surmised that my audience was no longer laughing with me, but at me. Moreover, there were signs that an unspoken conspiracy had leaped into existence - a telepathic agreement to prolong the laughter indefinitely, as a test of my dignity.

I forced a renewed smile to my lips, and waited. My rage had been displaced by shame, but I could think of nothing to do except stand and grin like a simpleton.

After a moment, seeing no further change, the Troop tired of this experiment, and the laughter dissolved into scattered conversations, all loud-voiced and merry.

I had planned that the peroration of my inaugural address should be its most stirring part. Now I lacked the stamina to give it. Leaving the address forever unfinished, I blew several piercing blasts on the whistle, then shouted through the tumult, "Okay!" Now we'll play Bull in the Ring! Form a circle! Come on now!"

I glanced appealingly at the Patrol Leaders. They rallied their underlings, and eventually we got a game started.

After the game I proclaimed map-sketching practice in the vacant lot outside, and the Troop thundered up the stairs into the unconfined night.



"Yes. we're on the right trail: here's where Skip knocked his pipeout."

The mapping session proved to be far more confused than I had thought possible, but somehow I carried it through at the top of my voice, and eventually led the Troop back indoors. This latter manoeuvre was a difficult one, requiring nearly ten minutes, and at its completion I noticed that the Troop was numerically diminished by about one-fifth.

"Where are the others?" I asked.

It was as if I were standing before a foreign tribe, speaking a language it had never heard. I searched the impassive, uncomprehending faces. Turning to the senior Patrol Leader, I repeated my question.

"I guess they left," he said vaguely.

I shrugged with assumed nonchalance, and was about to propose a new game when there was a deafening bang. A giant firecracker had been tossed down the stairs.

Again there was laughter, but this time not so prolonged. Everyone was more interested in watching to see what I would do.

I had no idea what ought to be done. I stood at bay. My churning thoughts cast up some recollections of college days, of mice turned loose in crowded classes, and hidden alarm clocks set off behind professors in mid-lecture. How had the most adroit educators met such onslaughts?

"Well - somebody tried to surprise me, and certainly succeeded," I said slowly, searching my memory for the words of an honoured professor.

There were snickers.

I went on, "I'm specially surprised, because I didn't think any of you were that kind of guys."

The snickers faded, and some of the grins grew weaker.

"You can see I'm not much good at running a Scout Troop," I continued, "I don't know anything about Scouting. But I'd like to learn. I sort of thought you fellows would want to help me. I figured we were all going to be friends, and work together to make this the best Troop in town."

Most of the boys were staring at the floor. I decided - wisely, as I know now - against a lengthy continuation of my remarks. "This still looks a swell gang to me," I lied bravely, "I think when we get acquainted, we'll have a lot of fun together. Now, how about showing me one of the games you like best?" I turned to the senior Patrol Leader, who nodded and set in motion some violent and complex shindy.

I sank on to a bench to watch. In a moment Reverend Stone, who had withdrawn some time ago into a far recess of the church, reappeared in the doorway. Clearly he had heard the firecracker.

He hastened to my side. "We can't allow fireworks in here," he told me kindly but firmly.

"You disappoint me," I snarled. "I was enjoying them."

Recoiling a little, as he saw my mood, he patted my shoulder, "Just try to keep the boys busy. Lots of action. Then they won't get out of hand."

Undoubtedly this was good advice, but I still felt waspish. "I didn't realise what kind of boys you had hear. You didn't warn me these were slum kids."

"Oh, my dear man, these aren't slum boys!"

"Then what are they? Hand-picked problem children?"

He laughed appeasingly, "I'm sure they seem so at first impact. Actually they're just an average cross-section. A few from very humble homes, a few quite well-to-do. The bulk are simply run-of-the-mill middle class."

I gave an angry grunt and turned back to watch the game.

"Don't get discouraged, Mr. Cochran. This sort of trouble happens in every Troop, until the leader gets the hang of things. Boys improve on acquaintance. There are training courses for Scoutmasters. If you'll take advantage of them, you'll learn a lot." The implication that I had a lot to learn - which I had - annoyed me further. "Evidently it takes a great deal of time to be a satisfactory Scoutmaster. This looks like more than I bargained for."

"Mr. Cochran, running a Troop is much the same as any sport - or any art. The more you plug away at it, and the more you study it, the more skilful you become. As you get skilful, you enjoy yourself more and more."

He departed again. The game seemed to be slackening, so I began to think ahead to the final event I had planned for the evening's programme. It was to be an observation contest - a thinly disguised version of the old game of I Spy. Patrols were to vie in locating a tiny silver elephant I would hide somewhere in the room. But now I found myself frustrated before I even began.

The silver elephant, which I had placed on a table at the beginning of the meeting, was gone.

I looked underneath the table, and around. It was not there. Undoubtedly someone had taken it.

It was a rather costly little trinket, which had been a gift to me and had adorned my desk quite impressively. The double annoyance of losing it and of having my plans spoiled nearly choked me. I arose like Zeus preparing to throw a thunderbolt. I would bar the doors and have all these insufferable urchins searched, if necessary, to recover my elephant. Then I would resign as Scoutmaster.

I signalled the senior Patrol Leader to stop the game and line up the Troop. As usual, this took several minutes, giving me time to reflect. A few moments before, I had apparently salvaged some dignity from the firecracker episode by treating the boys as friends and helpers. Perhaps the same approach would work again.

"One of our Scouts has been really helpful and thoughtful," I told the Troop. "I carelessly left a little silver elephant on the table. Somebody noticed that it might get knocked off in all the roughhousing, so he took it for safekeeping."

There were sardonic smiles, but I maintained my trusting air. "I'm certainly glad somebody was looking out for me, and I want to thank him. Now, if he'll produce the elephant again, we can all use it for another game."

There was an instant of silence. Then a Scout stepped forward, digging the elephant from his pocket, and handed it to me. I thanked him calmly. "What's your name?" I asked.

"Ace Atkinson," he said, giving me a genial smile as he returned to the ranks. There were mingled reactions among his colleagues. Some seemed confounded. Others chuckled knowingly. The majority put on expressions of virtuous tranquillity, to indicate they, too, had shared my assurance that honesty was enthroned.

There were no further insurrections that evening. The meeting came to a close. Most of the Troop stampeded out immediately afterward, but a few boys were more leisurely gathering up jackets and balls and handbooks in preparation for departure. They ignored me completely, except for Ace Atkinson, who drifted to my side and asked me when the Troop would take a hike.

Having no clear idea on this subject, I said something vague and cheery. He moved off.

"Chickening up to him, huh?" a young voice said in an undertone, as Ace and several others started up the stairs.

"Aw, pivot," Ace replied.

"He's strictly a stupe," the other voice said.

"He may wise up," predicted Ace.

[To be continued]

THOSE of us who knew Miss Angela Thompson, Chairman of the Guide Religious Panel and also of the Guide Publications Committee, were very sorry indeed to learn of her sudden death. To her was due much of the very effective co-operation which has taken place between the Scout and Guide Religious Panels, and our deepest sympathy goes to our sister Movement in their great loss.

39. BEYOND THE END OF THE ROAD (2)

By CEDRIC BURTON

S.M., 9th Epsom (Epsom College)

Well, as you see, the Editor has managed to find space for me to tell you something about the organisation of our camp in the French Alps. You will remember that we wanted to get right away from civilisation, not only because we thought that it would be an interesting thing to do, but also because the knowledge gained from a successful camp without the necessity of daily contact with food suppliers would greatly increase our camping range for the future. The fact that all went well, that we were well fed and that everyone remained in perfect health is not due to any particular merit of ours, but to the excellent advice which we were given by all those who were kind enough to take an interest in our venture. Part of the purpose of this article is to express our very great appreciation of this advice by passing it on to others.

The limit of £16 which we set for the whole expedition meant that journey expenses had to be very carefully considered. We found that French railways issue a special Colonies de Vacances ticket which gives a reduction of 50 per cent to all members of the party under twenty-one - and quite big reductions to those over twenty-one, too. This only applies to the French part of the journey; but it includes the free transport of baggage except for the registration fee. We found that we were able to save money, time and trouble by arranging for a motor coach to take us and our gear to and from the British Channel port. We had a good deal to take with us, and the fact that we merely had to load up at our H.Q. and then unload at Folkestone was a very great convenience.

The normal routine of visiting the site before the camp was, under the circumstances, impossible. In any case, these high areas, even if they are accessible in the spring, look so very different then that they would give very little useful information for a summer camp. The Map House in St. James's Street took a good deal of trouble over getting us exactly the type of maps we wanted, and it was from these excellent 1: 50,000 maps published by the French General Staff that most of our plans were made. We did, however, make rather a stupid mistake when planning by judging the steepness of slopes by the closeness of the contour lines, without remembering that these maps have the contour intervals marked in metres, not in feet. It is surprising what a difference it makes, and some of our plans for Patrol expeditions had to be drastically revised when we arrived. In one way this added an interest to the camp, because the actual country looked very unlike the mental picture of it with which we had become familiar.

Quite early in the year a letter to the mayor of the nearest town to the proposed site for the base camp produced authority for the camp, a list of the local doctors, forestry officials, grocers, bakers, butchers, transport owners and so on, as well as a very cordial letter offering us any further help we might need. The list itself was rather embarrassing. Of the doctors available, for instance, we had no idea which would be the least upset by a sudden call to our rather inaccessible camp; and it seemed likely that some of the fourteen grocers named might be much better able to meet our needs than others. Once I.H.Q. had put us into touch with French Scouting this difficulty was soon resolved, and a Scout of the region gave us some very useful confidential information. As a matter of fact we found it possible to buy nearly all our food supplies in bulk and at wholesale prices. Other letters arranged for meals on the journey (we decided against the complication of carrying our own journey rations) at very reasonable prices. These meals added a good deal to the interest of the journey itself. Quite late in the course of the preparations we realised that our baggage would contain much that was liable to duty at the French Customs. The thought that we would possibly have to unpack our fortnight's supplies and then pack them up again so appalled us that a letter was sent to the Head Office of the French Customs in Paris explaining exactly what we were bringing with us and why.

A most courteous reply assured us that, despite the regulations, we should be passed through the Customs without delay if we showed the letter to the officer in charge. All this correspondence took a great deal of time, and our sincere advice to anyone who is thinking of doing anything similar is - get somebody who is really good at French to volunteer to help with the correspondence. But it is not merely worth it; it is absolutely necessary. To give just one example: had it not been for our correspondence with the doctor who agreed to look after the camp we should never even have thought of the danger of Malta fever from cattle and mountain goats; nor should we have taken precautions against it. A point to remember is that postage from France to England is more expensive than in the other direction. The inclusion of an International Reply Coupon with all letters which require an answer prevents the correspondence from becoming a burden to those whose help we ask. These coupons are obtainable at main post offices.

Once the preliminaries had been dealt with our main problem was, of course, food. We knew that it would be a tough camp from the point of view of the physical effort involved. It would have been foolish to combine this toughness with a sort of hunger endurance test. Our doctor told us that we should aim at four thousand calories per boy per day. Just in case you don't know, calories are the units by which the energy producing value of food is calculated; vitamins have very little to do with this side of feeding, especially over such a short period as a fortnight. The doctor told us to take plenty of sugar, meat, bread, potatoes, chocolate and so on: and he lent us a book in which the calorie equivalent of every imaginable food-stuff was listed. It is not difficult to reach this level of feeding at a camp where bread, fresh meat, fresh milk, potatoes and so on are easily available. For us there were one or two rather difficult problems. In the first place, our plans involved the movement of all food and equipment by our own efforts over the final stages of the journey. Weight was therefore an important consideration. Secondly, we could not rely on perishable food except, possibly, for the first few days of the camp. Thirdly, we had to provide two quite different types of rations; those for the base camp could be stored in bulk and plenty of time given to their preparation; those for the patrol expeditions had to be easily transportable and capable of rapid preparation. Fourthly, we had five pounds each left after the fares had been paid, all of which could not be spent on food. Finally, we wanted the meals to be palatable if only to ensure that the boys ate enough. It would take too long to describe all the argument and discussion which went on. The Scouters were firm on one point: they were not going to live on dampers for a fortnight! We eventually decided to make staples and pulses the bulk of the diet, and to supplement these with dehydrated vegetables and such tinned meat as we could afford. The great advantage of these foods is that they are light; they gain considerably in weight when cooked: they do not spoil easily - and they have a very respectable calorie value. They can be combined in a number of ways to make a variety of palatable dishes, and they certainly kept us well fed. A letter to the firm which supplied the Everest expedition with sausage brought us a supply of very informative literature, as well as complete price lists and a very welcome offer of about twelve pounds of the same type of sausage as was supplied to the expedition itself. We obtained all our meat from this firm. It was varied and of excellent quality. To make things still better, they arranged to have it delivered to the point at which we left the railway so that we could collect it on the way through. The dehydrated vegetables were a great success. They have, of course, been used on many major expeditions and modern methods of preparation preserve practically all the vitamins. If properly prepared for cooking they are almost indistinguishable from the fresh product. We obtained ours from Farm Products Ltd., and they certainly added a great deal to the interest and palatability of the menus, as well as being very light to carry and of insignificant bulk. For breakfast we depended on porridge supplemented by the French sausage. We had hoped to do up the porridge in ounce packets as was done for the Everest assault rations. This proved to be impracticable except for the expedition menus. With good advice from Quaker Oats as to how to make up these packets so as to avoid spoiling and waste we made up enough before leaving England for each Scout to carry his own supply on expeditions.

Ordinary business envelopes sealed with cello tape and packed standing on edge in strong cardboard boxes kept the oats in very good condition during transit. We kept the base camp supply in bulk. Incidentally we found that, even though water boils at a considerably lower temperature at this height, the "Minute" Quaker Oats made excellent porridge even at the higher camps. For milk we used tinned unsweetened milk at the base camp and tubes of sweetened milk for the expeditions. The great advantage of the tubes is that, like toothpaste, they can be sealed after use and carried without any risk of spilling or deterioration. For sweet things and luxuries (always with an eye on the food value) we looked up the Everest menus again. Mapleton Fruit Bars of varied ingredients and flavours pleased all of us and gave us some concentrated calories; the Kendal Mint Cake which Sir Edmund Hillary and Tensing nibbled on the top of the world was one of the features of the camp; Huntley and Palmers made available to us some of the special tinned fruit cake which was supplied to the expedition - you will have to accept our verdict that it is first-class, as it is not available on the open market. For drink we relied upon cocoa and - the only item in the menu without a food value coffee. Tea does not make well at this altitude, again owing to the low boiling point of water. Besides all this, we had enough packets of soup to give everyone a good plateful each day. We found that the price of butter was prohibitive in France; so we decided to bank on some means of refrigeration and take our supply with us from England. This worked very well, and the refrigerating basin fed by the spring which supplied the camp kept our supply hard and fresh for the whole of the fortnight. Our one compromise was bread. Previous correspondence with the local baker had persuaded him to bake very large loaves for us of a type which does not go stale for a relatively long time. At the same time we felt that a fortnight was too long to expect any bread to stay edible. We could have made our own, or cooked dampers; but this would have taken a great deal of time from the real object of the expedition. Eventually we compromised and arranged for a lorry on a regular run to deliver a supply at the nearest point on the main road twice during the camp. Since this meant an eight mile walk before breakfast (the collecting time was 6.50 a.m.) with a large quantity of bread to be carried for the return half of it, we felt that the effort involved atoned for our weakness. In addition to the ordinary supplies each member of the party was supplied with a sealed packet of emergency rations for use in case of stranding or accident. These contained Kendal Mint Cake, glucose tablets, chocolate. Ovaltine tablets and barley sugar. Fortunately it was not necessary to use these - though they were eaten with great enjoyment on the way home!

In order to prevent waste and to avoid shortage the menu for every meal was worked out in detail before we left. When purchasing supplies allowance was made for the fact that the expedition menus were to be carried in rucksacs and, as far as possible, supplies for these menus were obtained in packings small enough to be finished by a Patrol in one meal. The base camp supplies were in larger packings and consequently rather cheaper. There is no doubt that this previous working out of menus did a very great deal to strike the balance between necessary economy and sufficient feeding. We maintained our four thousand calories per day and, apart from some bread which was really too stale for chewing, there was very little left over. Another advantage of the menus was that the actual distribution of rations, both for the expeditions and for the base camp, was very much simplified.

The camping equipment which we took did not vary greatly from that of a normal camp. Primus stoves were necessary as some of the higher camps were above the tree line. Each Patrol was supplied with a stove and a wind-shield of non-inflammable canvas. A pressure cooker can be a great time-saver when cooking such things as haricot beans, rice and so on - especially since they take so very long to cook when the water is not really at normal boiling temperature. We took one with us to use in the base camp. Long trousers, extra pullovers and winter-weight underclothes and pyjamas helped to counteract the frost at night and the sudden chill which one felt when, hot from climbing, one stopped to rest - there was a brisk wind for nearly the whole of the camp.



The pullovers, particularly, were very necessary on the higher expeditions. Footwear was carefully checked, of course. Most of us wore a light nailing pattern or "Commando" soles. For tents we took our ex-government Mountain Patrol Tents, reproofed for the camp. Unfortunately these, excellent little tents are no longer obtainable. They are strong enough to give full protection, yet light enough to be carried by their occupants.

At the base camp they took two Scouts with full baggage. On the expeditions they usually accommodated three. We had hoped to get the spiked staves or thumb-sticks used by the French Scouts as we went through Paris. This proved impossible, so we bought spiked walking-sticks instead. This turned out to our advantage as the crooked handle could easily be hooked on when, as was often the case, one had to use both hands when scrambling.

Since English prices are generally much lower than French we took practically all our food with us - all, in fact, except the bread, meat and milk.

This, with the equipment, made an impressive quantity of baggage and provided us with a dilemma. The bigger the individual packages, the less we should, have to pay for registration, since the charge is by packet, not by weight. On the other hand, the bigger the packages the more difficult it would be to man-handle them when transport was no longer possible. Our solution was to make everything up into small rope-handled packets (biscuit tins are ideal for the purpose) which we numbered.

The numbers corresponded with a list of contents and made it easy to find supplies as required. These small packets were packed in tea chests for road and rail transport and broken down into individual loads when we left the road.

One point worth remembering about the transport of baggage is that the French railways require an interval of eight hours to transport registered luggage from one Paris terminus to another.

On the way out this was less than we had to spare and we had to arrange to take it across Paris ourselves (this was when the trek-cart collapsed) and re-register it at the Gare de Lyon. This took more time than we expected and we very nearly failed to get it on to the train.

All this must seem very elementary to those who take this sort of camp in their stride; but it is not for them that this article is being written. It is for those who, like ourselves, have often thought of doing something like this, but who felt that they had not the necessary experience.

We hadn't much experience; but we took advice, planned in great detail and used our common-sense when we got there. Looking back on it one feels that the element of actual risk was very small provided that the Scouts did not play the fool and that the Scouters realised their limitations - probably the chief of which is that they are not likely to know better than the local inhabitants in matters concerning the safety or otherwise of particular routes or expeditions, especially in as far as this is affected by the weather.

Much has necessarily been omitted; probably much has not been very well expressed. I should be very glad to answer letters from other Troops who may be thinking of similar camps though I would rather do so during the school holidays than during term time.

40. THE TRIKE-CART

By J. ALAN BLAKE, S.M.(S), Maidstone Grammar School Scout Group

"Well, this is what we came for," remarked Joe, as torrential rain started again and we shouldered our rucsacs for the next stage of our journey. A strange philosophy? Yet one which will perhaps stand him in good stead if he can face life's difficulties in the same spirit. What Joe did not say, of course, was that we had also come to explore a fine stretch of mountain country; to camp in different places each night, often miles from civilisation; to revel in a wonderful sunset; to get our camping gear over swollen rivers and bare passes, and to enjoy each other's companionship in the circle of the Senior Troop. In short, we were ON TREK; and these two words recall some of our happiest and most rewarding memories.

Why do we go on trek? Mainly because we believe that when the Scout has had three or four years' experience of standing camps he should be ready to use his campcraft as a means to larger exploration and adventure. Such an opportunity is given by the moving expedition, covering a wide tract of country, usually remote and mountainous. The fact that such country nearly always has a high rainfall is just one of the hazards of the game. Here there are natural obstacles to be overcome and problems of transport to be solved: horizons are ever changing, and each day brings its rewards. Mallory said that men climb Everest "because it is there"; we, in our small way, explore our trekking country for the same reason.

If you decide to get a Senior Troop on the move, you appear to have a choice of two methods, each of which has some disadvantages. You can hike, carrying everything in or on rucsacs. You will then be free to go anywhere, but your complete kit for fifteen days will be of such a weight that you can rarely forget that it is on your shoulders. Cooking gear for the Senior Patrol or Troop does not pack very conveniently in rucsacs, and the quartermaster has a considerable problem when his stores have to be collected from sixteen rucsacs each evening. Alternatively you can take a trek-cart of the old two-wheeled variety. This solves the weight problem, but limits your route to roads or tracks of fair width and surface - a severe disadvantage in mountainous country. Such a trek-cart must also be dismantled if the Troop travels by train.

Fortunately there is a third possibility which provides a successful compromise between the first two, and we feel that it deserves to be more widely known than it is. This is the use of the TREKE-CART, a small one-wheeled cart in which the load is supported directly above the wheel (as in the Chinese wheelbarrow, we are told). One man steers the cart from behind by means of two shafts, and the motive power is supplied, when required, by two drag-ropes attached to the centre of the front.



On the level the drag-ropes can be detached, and going downhill the steersman can have the pleasure of "galumphing" - a combination of running and floating through the air peculiar to trekking with the trike-cart!

This vehicle meets our previous criticisms of the other schemes. It will go practically anywhere; certainly over any path, however narrow. If you want it to go up a mountainside or over peat-hag-ridden moors, it will; but of course you must allow more time. Our crossing of Urra Moor, the summit ridge of the Cleveland Hills, in a torrential thunderstorm, will always remain an epic in the annals of the Group. The cart can be lifted bodily over walls, and carried stretcher wise through bogs and rivers. Ultimately, if the going becomes too rough for even this to be practicable, the cart is light enough to be dismantled and distributed, with its load, among the members of the expedition. On rail journeys, a loaded trike-cart is accepted as personal luggage, and it goes bodily into a guard's van without any difficulty.

But the most important advantages of trike-carts are less tangible ones. Firstly, with all tentage, groundsheets, bedding, cooking gear, and food on carts, the weight of a rucsac, containing only clothing and other personal kit, can be reduced until one is hardly conscious of it.

The work of pulling the cart, when necessary, can then be shared between older and younger members of the Patrol according to their capacity. Secondly, and most important, the cart keeps the Patrol together as a team, providing a focal point for the day's activity. There can be none of the straggling, the feeling of getting left behind, or the irritating waiting for the slow walkers which are always liable to occur on hikes.

When strangers first see the trike-cart, they exclaim "It's impossible: you can't balance it!" If you feel like saying this, I can only reply that we can and we have done on several expeditions and over hundreds of miles.



In the past four years, thirty-three Senior Scouts and Scouters have trekked with our carts: I believe every one has mastered the steering and balance in a matter of hours, and some have become incredibly expert at it, and able to keep the cart upright under practically any conditions.

It is as easy as learning to ride a bicycle - or easier, for one at least has one's feet on the ground - and it depends on exactly the same principle: one steers the cart towards the side to which it leans. We have seen porters of the Swiss Federal Railways, after a moment of wild incredulity, grasp the shafts and steer the cart into the luggage office with complete ease.

It has been suggested that the centre of gravity should be lowered by constructing panniers to hang on either side of the wheel, or that a second wheel should be added, close to the first. Both these modifications would destroy essential features of the trike-cart - its ability to go along a narrow path, and its lightness. Sooner or later a pannier would hit a boulder and its bottom would drop out; and a second wheel would only increase weight and reduce ability to manoeuvre.

The trike-cart can be used for either Troop or Patrol expeditions. For the Senior Troop of three Patrols, we take three carts, each the responsibility of a Patrol. The first carries all the tents and groundsheets, contained in a large canvas bag; and the second takes the sleeping-bags, similarly enclosed. The third cart carries a light box which contains cooking gear and food supplies. If a Senior Patrol goes off on its own with one cart, this box, which has three separate sections, will contain food, cooking gear, and bedding, while the tents are roped on outside.

We do not claim to be by any means the originators of the trike-cart, which already has a history of some thirty years. It would be interesting to know how many other Groups have constructed trike-carts during that time: we know of six, but there are probably others. The idea was originated during the '20s by Dr. G. F. Morton, then Headmaster of Leeds Modern School, who used the carts on magnificent treks with his Scouts in Scotland, the Alps, the Pyrenees, and the Rocky Mountains.

When we decided to build our trike-carts in 1951, we adopted the principles of Morton's design, but made several modifications, notably in the method of frame construction and the type of wheel used, suggested by modern engineering practice.

After four years of testing, we can say with confidence that these developments have been fully justified, and that the carts have stood up to all demands made on them. As no proper description of a trike-cart now exists in print (as far as we know), we think that the following details may be worth recording.

1. The whole cart weighs only 60 lb., and can be dismantled into the following parts: the body, the wheel and axle, the two shafts or handles, and the box or bag used to contain the load.

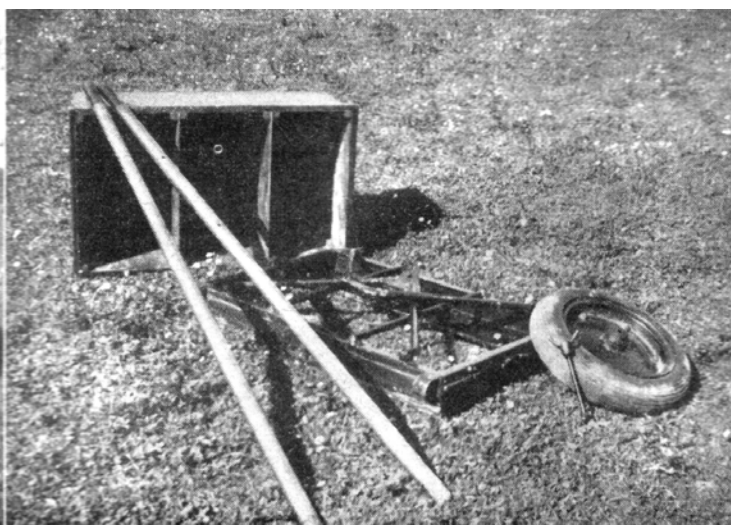
2. The frame of the body measures only 33 in. x 20 in., and is made of 2 in. x 1 in. angle steel welded at the corners (in place of the wooden frame of earlier models). Two cross-members of $\frac{3}{4}$ in. diameter conduit pipe help to support the load, and also ensure absolute rigidity.

3. The sides. Inside this basic frame is screwed a wooden lining, 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. high, to the sides of which are hinged wooden "flaresides," 4 in. high. The angle of these to the vertical depends on the size of the load being carried. Hardwood such as ash is recommended; plywood tends to get water into it and flake off.

4. Securing the load. We replaced the rings used in earlier models by three open hooks (like those used for fixing lorry tilts) on each flare-side. The securing ropes slip easily under these, and finish off round cleat-hooks welded to the front of the frame.

5. The undercarriage is tricky to design, as the "legs" must slope downwards and inwards at exactly the right angles. Each side-member consists of a triangular plate which forms the axle housing, and to which are welded the two "legs" of in. diameter conduit pipe. These are hinged to the under side of the frame in such a way that when the wheel is removed the whole side-member folds up flat underneath the frame. It can be tied in this position for carrying the body, which weighs 29 lb. in all.

6. The wheel. Here we made the biggest change, by adopting a rubber-tyred wheel running on ball-bearings, in place of the old wooden wheelbarrow-type wheel. Our choice was a Dunlop disc wheel with a 16 in. x 4 in. industrial cushion (i.e. solid) tyre, which we argued could never puncture and would never need pumping up. This weighs 18 lb., but the smoothness of running and the absorption of shock make the extra weight well worthwhile. Others may prefer to try a pneumatic-tyred wheel of similar dimensions. This is springier still and weighs only 13 lb., but in remote country one would need to carry a repair outfit and foot pump, which would probably nullify the saving of weight. The method of fixing the wheel is pleasingly simple: a long bolt fitted with a wing-head runs clean through a longitudinal hole bored in the wheel's axle, and with a wing-nut clamps the axle between the triangular plates - after the fashion of a bicycle wheel suspension.



The axle is thus fixed: the wheel turns on its ball-race.

7. The shafts are 68½ in. long and made of 1½ in. diameter steel tubing. This is extended at the back by a shaped wooden handle, and terminates in a wooden knob at the front. The shafts slide through two U-shaped loops welded to the sides of the frame, and can be locked in two positions - one for normal steering, and the other for carrying four-handed - by spring-loaded door bolts fixed to the back of the frame. These engage in small cross-tubes welded into the shafts at the appropriate points. As the shafts cannot be painted, and so tend to rust, we should like some day to experiment with aluminium alloy for this purpose, though of course it would be much more expensive. Each shaft weighs 6 lb.

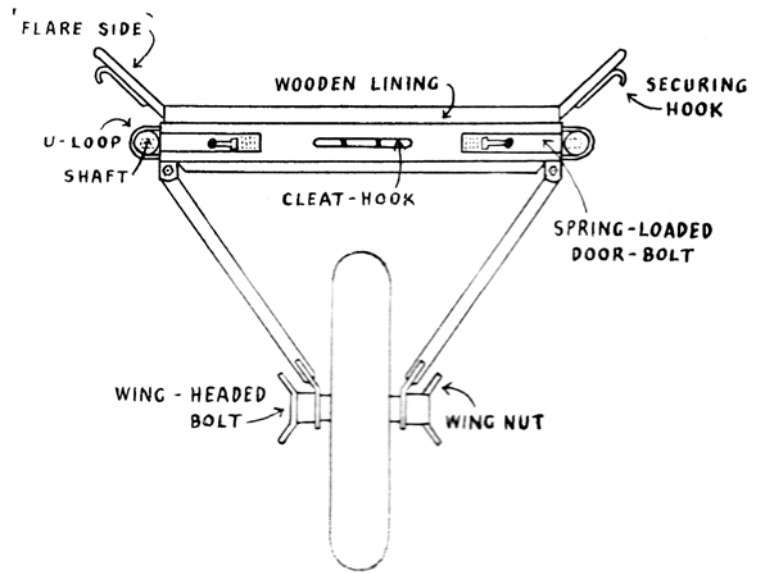
8. The two drag-ropes are 2½ in. circumference rope, and 7 yards long. This sounds very long, but is found to be right for three Scouts on each rope, as is sometimes necessary with a heavy load or a severe gradient. The ropes end in a thimble, ring, and spring-hook, which hitches on to a ring welded centrally to the front of the frame.

Cotton rope would be very comfortable and does not go hard when wet, but its price is at present prohibitive. Ours are sisal ropes, with leather handholds for comfort. These are located by simple thumb-knots in the rope; we do not find manharness or other loops necessary, except perhaps at the front.

9. The box is made of plywood on a strong frame, like a tea-chest, with corners strengthened with aluminium plates. It measures 31 in. x 18 in. x 15 in. high, and fits exactly into the frame. It is divided into three sections by plywood partitions which slide out for cleaning. Aluminium cooking gear, chosen to nest conveniently, is carried in one end in black oilskin bags, which are soot-proof as well as waterproof. (Cooking gear is cleaned outside at the end of each trek.) A green canvas cover, shaped to the same size as the box, provides complete protection from rain, even if the box is piled up some way above its rim.

10. The two green canvas bags are so enormous that when they arrived they were at once christened the camp baths; and they could no doubt be used as such, though we have not tried it yet. One carries hike-tents and groundsheets, and the other sleeping-bags. The latter are packed in individual oilskin bags to ensure that they keep really dry, especially as the canvas bag may have to be packed or unpacked in pouring rain.

11. Tentage is hardly a part of the trike-cart, but all the above remarks assume that the tents are of the lightweight variety, housing two Scouts each. Most of ours are of the usual two-pole design, with an apse end which conveniently houses rucsacs; but we have recently tried a new model of a famous single-pole tent, and are so impressed with its roominess and lightness that we shall adopt it as our standard trekking tent.

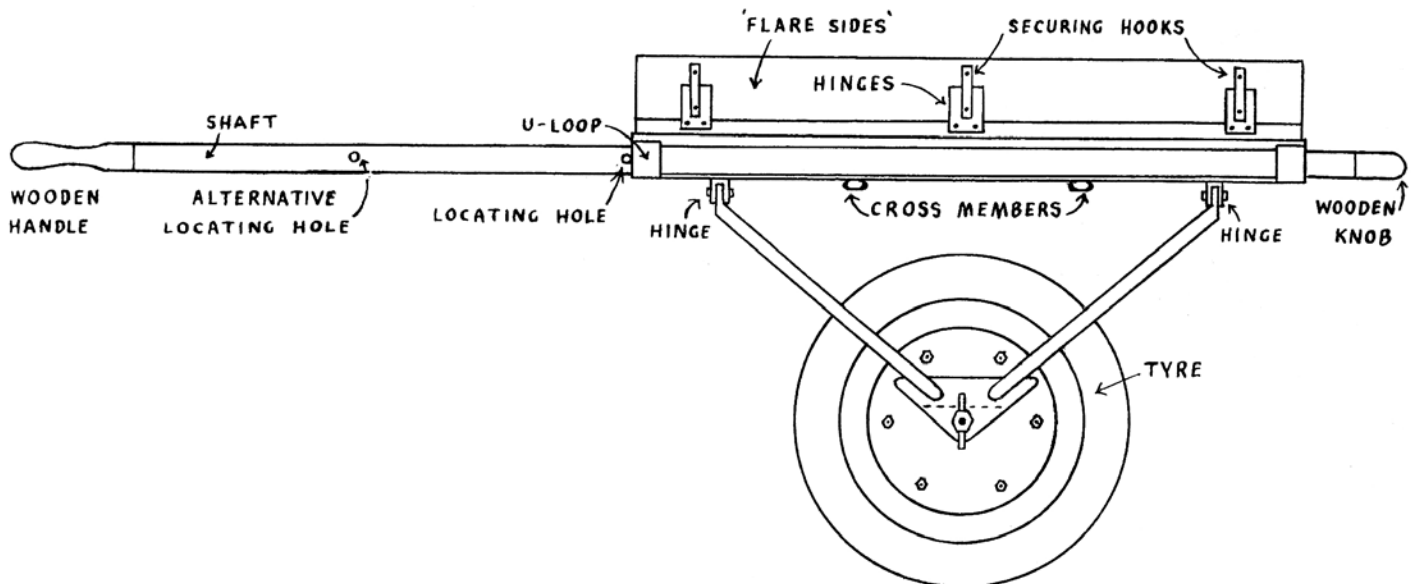


In both cases, after due consideration, we have added flysheets, and we consider the extra weight well worthwhile.

We specialise in notoriously rainy localities: with a flysheet you are absolutely watertight (unless you pitch your tent where a river will run under the walls). In addition, you may have to strike and fold your tent in a downpour, and pitch it again that evening under the same conditions: you can do this under a flysheet without getting the tent itself wet at all.

The construction of trike-carts depends to a considerable extent on getting the help of a friendly engineering firm with facilities for welding and brazing. We were exceedingly fortunate in finding such a firm, which in addition had on its staff two members of our Parents Association. One of these obtained all the parts, and the other suggested many of the detailed modifications of the design, and carried out the whole of the construction as a spare-time service to the Group. To them both we shall always be grateful. As we had no labour charges, we can only give an estimate of the present cost of the materials for a trike-cart. The complete wheel and tyre now cost £3 6s., and the remaining items should be obtainable for about £6. This is for the cart itself, without the drag-rope, box or canvas bags.

If any other Groups consider the construction of trike-carts, we should be glad to give them further information about the Maidstone design. We do not claim that it is the last word, and they may enjoy devising their modifications. But the main lines of the design, as devised by Dr 'A' ... are now established as successful. The trike-carts have ... us and others, over hundreds of miles of fine country, and give us many days of valued experience to look back on. Perhaps they may do the same for you.



AQUATIC AMBLINGS

By **PERCY W. BLANDFORD**
A. C. C. (Training), Warwickshire

I did think of calling this "Knautical Knowledge," but as it Ideals mainly with inland waters I must be careful of my terms - as was brought home to me when I gave competitors a Leicestershire Rover competition the job of collecting the largest specimen of marine life. The winners collected me (a Sea Scout), pointing out that the things in the local pond were "aquatic" and not "marine."

A lot of Scouters have regarded me as the bloke with all the answers when they want to take their Scouts on some sort of an inland voyage, usually by canoe, but often by barge, skiff, punt or - this year - a bicycle on two floats! Of course I am glad to oblige, but many questioners want the same answers, hence this article, in the hope that it will answer others of you before you write me that letter (with s.a.e.).

First of all, where can you go? Apart from practical considerations of transport and possible portages there is the question of rights of way. This is not very simple if brought to law, but luckily commonsense prevails. You have a right to use a boat anywhere that the tide flows. You can go as far up any inlet or estuary as the tide normally reaches without asking permission or paying for the privilege. The only payment you may have to make is a few coppers harbour dues.

If the water is non-tidal, legally it belongs to someone. This is normally the owner of the banks. If opposite sides have different owners, the river is divided down the middle. A number of rivers have become rights of way through long usage, often dating back to coracle days. This is a right of passage, in the same way as on many footpaths over private land. The canoeists' Wye from Hay down, the Severn for most of its length, the Avon from Stratford down, are examples of rivers with rights of way.

Elsewhere the owner can prohibit boating if he wishes. Where streams are preserved for fishing, it is natural that canoes are not wanted. Even then, many owners do not mind in the off-season. In many cases, the owners do not bother about stray canoeists. Where the position is unknown it pays to be diplomatic. If someone orders you off, he is probably right.

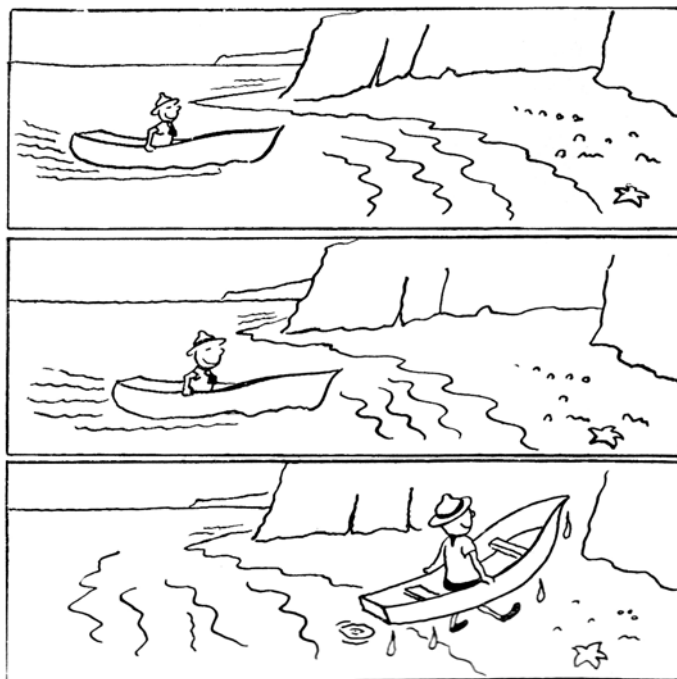
Some rivers are in the hands of authorities other than the riverside land owners. Usually the authority has gone to the expense of making the river navigable by building locks and weirs. Naturally, they expect payment for their work, and you have to pay lock fees and maybe an annual registration fee. Amounts vary considerably - on the upper Thames you pay 15s. per year for a canoe registration and 9d. at each lock; on the Severn there is no registration fee and you pay 4d. at each lock.

Canals are all private and you have to pay for using them. The majority are nationalized and you must get a permit from the local office of British Waterways (see your telephone directory). Scouts get a half-price concession, but boating on canals is not cheap. You can get an annual permit or pay by the mile (at rather more than going by train!).

Lakes are similar to rivers. On a few large ones a right of way exists, but elsewhere you must get permission. Reservoirs all belong to someone, and you must get permission to boat on them, even if they are out of use.

The sources of information on waterways are not as thorough as we might wish. The best book is the Guide to the Waterways of the British Isles, published by the British Canoe Union at 15s. Unfortunately you can only buy this if you are a member of one of their affiliated clubs. In any case I should always advise a Scouter intending a canoe cruise to join the Canoe-Camping Club. Apart from the benefits he gets from membership of the club he automatically gets full benefits of Camping Club and B.C.U. membership (Canoe-Camping Club, 38, Grosvenor Gardens, London, S.W.1).

If you are not a club member the next best book is Canoeing, by William Bliss (Methuen, 12s. 6d.). You may find this in your local library, but make sure you get the latest (1947) edition, in which the waterways information is reasonably up-to-date.



There are two general waterways maps, both published by Stanfords. "Stanford's Canoeing Map of England and Wales" to a scale of 14 miles to 1 inch, at 3s. 6d., covers all of the rivers worth canoeing, with the canal system, and an indication of main towns and upper canoeing limits. The other map is "Stanford's Inland Cruising Map of England for Larger Craft." This is to a scale of 8 miles to 1 inch and costs 8s. 6d. it shows rivers, etc., as far as the first obstruction up-river which would prevent the passage of a boat that could not be portaged. It also shows all locks, and is the first map to do so. Road and rail are shown on this map, but not on the first one.

A large book called Inland. Waterways of Great Britain and N. Ireland, by L. A. Edwards (Imray, Laurie, None and Wilson, 30s.) was published in 1950. If you plan a cruise in a barge or other large craft on the canals or major rivers, this book will give you distances, locks, etc.

Another problem is getting boats to waterways. A folding canoe may be taken by rail without payment. A rigid canoe must be paid for at excess, luggage rates, if it at companies you. The longest canoe that you can be fairly certain of getting into a luggage van is 14 ft. in this country. In Ireland 11 ft. is the limit as they have small doors in the middle of short vans! It is usually simpler to send your canoe ahead at "passenger parcels rate." This is quite cheap - only a few shillings - and you do not have to wrap it up. Allow three or four days for most journeys.

A dinghy or skiff can travel in the same way as a canoe. Larger craft taken overland are best taken by road. Surprising distances can be covered with canoes behind cycles - one end tied to the saddle and the other end resting on a pair of pram wheels arranged a couple of feet in from the end.

A frequent inquiry is about hiring. This is broadly the position. There are two or three firms hiring out canoes of the folding and rigid types, but they get booked up six months ahead for the school holiday period. Skiffs and punts may be hired from riverside yards. Most of their owners are not publicity-minded and as both to answer letters as some Scouters I know.

The only way to fix up anything with them is to go to your chosen water and ferret them out. There are not many places where you can hire sailing dinghies, unfortunately. If a barge is your ideal, they are still possible, but not so easy to get as pre-war, except some that have been made into respectable cruisers, that command a good fee. Cruisers and sailing yachts are offered for hire on the Broads, Thames and many other waters. The best place to look for their advertisements is in the columns of the monthly Motor Boat and Yachting.

This country is a mass of waterways and you can have a marvellous holiday exploring them. That well-plugged bit by the Water Rat about messing about in boats is certainly true. Let me know if I can help your aquatic amblings.

WHY?

Have you ever wondered why your many Scouter friends came into Scouting? I believe that some of the reasons would make fascinating reading. Personally, although to my disgust being born a girl, I was a passionately devoted "Scout" from the age of about six!

My mother and I used often to stay with my uncle in the country, and one day he told us that some peculiar things called Boy Scouts were coming to use his paddock that evening. I do not remember what I expected, but the real thing far exceeded my wildest dreams. We heard a far-off tootling noise and into the village rode a string of God-like beings, whom I now know to have been little boys dressed in queer clothes with floppy hats. Their left hands gripped their handlebars, their right hands held shining brass bugles to their lips.

These wonderful creatures rode round and round my uncle's paddock, bumping and blowing and completely captivating the heart of one small girl. I had never before heard the magic word "Scout" - I was accustomed to watching smart and well executed Military Parades, WHY should these few little boys on bicycles have completely enslaved me? I plagued my parents until they gave me Scouting for Boys which thrilled me more than any book has done since - it became the Bible by which I lived, it became the fountain of all wisdom, and it certainly became the bane of my small friends whom I jockeyed into raiding their parents' larders, stealing the handles of the family brooms and cooking the most revolting messes on smouldering fires, lit, for want of anything better, with elder wood! Why?

Later I became a Girl Guide; it was never what I really wanted, but I did not dream that I could ever get within the magic Scout world which I imagined was strictly for "men only." Then one night in a "Paul Jones" I danced with a nice man who was a Scout (I did not then know the term Scouter). I naively told him how interested I had always been in Scouting, and of course did not realise that it must have seemed like Manna from Heaven. The nice man was the local D.C. who had been searching for years for just such a sucker, in fact he wanted an A.D.C. Cubs - he got one!

One of my friends told me the other day how he came to be a Scouter. In the days when Scouting was new he noticed some little boys arranging a camp on the common just outside his garden.

The next morning when he and his wife were having breakfast two small boys came to the house with some eggs in a hat and said: "Please Sir we think your hens laid these eggs in our camp." My friend thought: "Hello! here is something new, small boys bringing these eggs to us when they could have had them for their breakfast;" and he asked them who they were. "Please, Sir, we are Boy Scouts," they said - and so my friend was drawn into the magic Brotherhood; today, after many years of wholehearted service he wears the Silver Wolf and still carries on the good work. Some small boys and a few eggs - why? But I am afraid that I have strayed miles from the subject about which I am supposed to be writing - which is of course "Handicapped Scouting," how DID you guess? Well, once again WHY? Why spend hours and hours of time trying to get a mentally or physically handicapped boy through his 1st Star or his 2nd Class? Defeatists might say: "What is the use? he will never amount to a row of beans anyway" - but dear me! how different is the answer of the Scouter who KNOWS his onions; and whilst we are in this plant world let me quickly say that even though the acorn be damaged still may the oak tree emerge from it.

Why? I will tell you why, because they are BOYS, and our job is BOYS. Our Founder gave us the finest boy-training the world has ever known, and it is up to us to offer it to ALL boys despite difficulties and disabilities. How I wish that I could make those of you who do not know handicapped boys realise that underneath the severest disability lives the heart, mind and soul of a BOY - the same hopes and fears, the same ambitions, the same sense of fun, the same potentialities for good and for evil. Did you ever stop to think that handicapped boys still want to be naughty and to have fun? Jolly difficult in a hospital ward or when you cannot see or cannot talk or when your limbs will not answer the orders of your brain.

I remember so well visiting a Cub Pack in an orthopaedic ward, all the Cubs in plaster from the waist down, and that afternoon the devil did enter into them - all Akelas will know what I mean; it is something that usually happens when someone comes to visit! Everything these Cubs were given they threw onto the floor, they made holes in their pillow cases and pulled out the feathers, and finally, when Akela and the local A.D.C. were nearly in tears they finished up with a glorious pillow fight - and thanks to the holes in the pillow cases turned the ward into what looked like one of those glass balls which you turn upside down to make a snowstorm.

Shortly afterwards I visited a very badly handicapped Troop where the Scouts were practically unable to move hand or foot. They just lay in bed with mirrors over their heads to enable them to see the world go by. Amongst other things I told them about the naughty Cubs, and as I was leaving one very sick boy called me over to his bed and said: "Thank you for telling us about those Cubs, we want to do the same thing" - Just BOYS you see although called upon to suffer so dreadfully.

Why do we do it? Some may say because it is Christ's work here on earth - well of course it is, so is all decent Scouting, but we do it although we may all at times get a bit disheartened, because we KNOW that the defeatists are wrong - many of these Handicapped Scouts' will amount to much more than a row of beans, Giant Scarlet Runners at that. Only the other day I met a young man, an ex-Scout, who has just taken out an A.S.M's Warrant - he is completely blind. Last month I talked to a Warranted C.M. whom polio has put into a wheeled chair.



Again last month I received a letter from a Spastic Scout whom I had known at one of the Agoons - he said: "You will be interested to hear that I am now helping with a Handicapped Troop." Why? You know the answer as well as I do if you will think about it honestly.

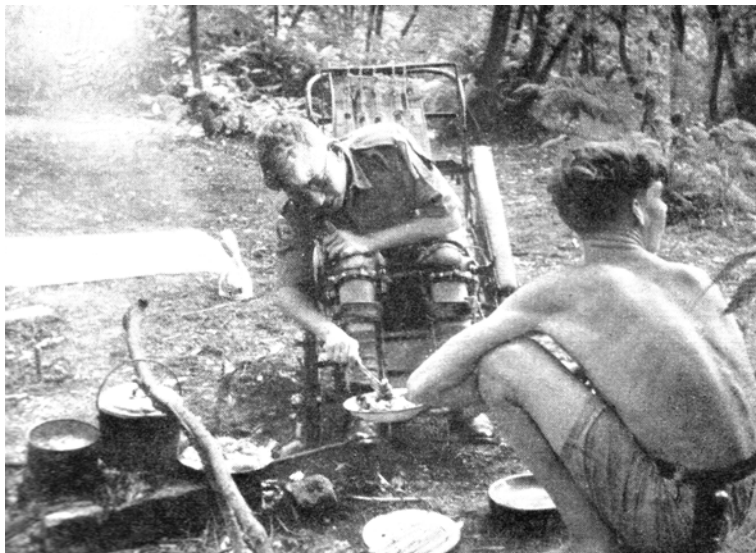
So Brother Scouters please let us hear a little less of the difficulties of Scouting with badly disabled boys and a little more of the joys of bringing the normal fun of boyhood to these lads, who, through no fault of their own, have of necessity to carry a severe handicap over the running-track of life. And now the sting within the tail, I am going to ask you to make yet another New Year's Resolution:

For County Commissioners. - If I have not already appointed a C.C. for Handicapped Scouts I will really try to find one. This also goes for the C.C.s who have now been telling me over a period of eight years that they do not want to make the appointment until they find the RIGHT man or woman.

For District Commissioners. - To really encourage Handicapped Scouting in my District, both in Special Groups and within normal Groups, and above all to deal with transfers at once.

For Troop and Pack Scouters. - To be ready to accept a handicapped boy into my Pack or Troop or Crew even though it may be difficult, and after taking him to treat him as nearly normally as humanly possible.

For Old Scouts. - I will be ready to help with transporting badly disabled boys if wanted, and be ready to visit boys in their own homes to help with their Test work..



Remember dear Dom Bernard Clements:

"Do not get discouraged by failures.... Watch a train leaving the station. The puffs are few and far between at first, the train scarcely moves, but the engine-driver does not therefore shut off steam and get down from the engine and say "It is no good: we shall never get to Truro at this rate."

URSULA RICHARDSON,

H. Q. Commissioner for Handicapped Scouts.

HURRYING FEET

I. INTRODUCTION *by HUBERT BLORE (D.C. Salford)*

"For all time will youth set out on the road of life with hurrying feet. The way for all is rough and false trails are many. To some a Pathfinder is given - one who has found the way and come back to help the others. The majority stumble on alone trusting to chance. The travellers truly are many but the Pathfinders few. The dry bones of those who have fallen by the wayside are innumerable."

This quotation is from a book called *Hurrying Feet*, written by Jack Hood* in the early days of the Movement, it is a book to which I turn whenever I feel depressed, for it is the story of a handful of boys in a very simple Scout Troop playing the game as the Founder meant it to be played. They were led by a Scouter who did not try "to look too good or talk too wise" and Scouting to them was a game and not a "Pre-Service Organisation."

It seemed, therefore, a suitable title for this series, for we are all concerned, not with the herding of multitudes, but with directing the hurrying feet of a few on to the right trail. And when their feet are on that trail our work with them is done, and as Pathfinders we turn back for another party. This is our chosen way and in it there is one great danger, and that danger is boredom. As I have written elsewhere, "To boyhood's eyes the game is new and green," but to our eyes the game is old and can be at times very drab unless we are ceaselessly on the search for new things and new ways of doing old things.

For there is nothing wrong with Scouting and nothing wrong with the boys, but at times there are plenty of things wrong with us who lead them. And we must put those things right, for our boys deserve only the best of Pathfinders.

And if we cannot keep our leadership keen and exciting we must give it up, for pathfinding is a high calling. It was to help us to keep an edge on our leadership that Wood Badge Training was devised; and over the years those who needed it least have rushed to take it, and those who needed it most have stayed away, as was to be expected.

But surely the Wood Badge should be, not the end of a Scouter's training, but the beginning - a matter of putting HIS feet on the right trail and then leaving him to develop the idea by his own initiative. We were surely never meant to sit back and eke out our Part 2 notebooks over several years of Troop nights with never an original thought of our own to add to their sum-total of knowledge.

As a D.C. I look on this with a D.C.'s eyes, and a D.C. should, I feel, be not just a fisher of men but a fisher of hidden talents, and these lie all around in the brains of his Scouters.

The present generation of Scouters have been reviled on many occasions and I have done some of the reviling myself, but they have one great advantage over their forebears. Out of evil can come forth good and through their experiences in the last war they are the most widely travelled and worldly experienced Scouters we have yet had. They have seen strange things in strange places and they are a veritable breeding-ground of new ideas for us who are short of them. These ideas are lying dormant, largely because their owners have not thought of applying them to their Scouting, and because we have not fished for them.

The ideas developed in this series belong to friends of mine here who are just normal Scouters and citizens, to Charlie and Bill and Albert and Fred and Chris and Eric and others - Pathfinders all. They may not be new to you, and you can probably better all of them in your L.A. For the sake of your boys we hope you do. We have put them on pacer to make you think as we have had to think, remembering that

There are far, far better things to do than we have ever done,
And far, far better ways of doing them than any we have known.

NEXT MONTH: Pioneering Without Rope.

[* Jack Hood was the pseudonym of J. Hood Phillips, our H.Q. Commissioner for Education.]

FROM 25 B.P. ROAD

When the report on the investigation into leakage was being discussed at a recent Conference of Scouters, several speakers mentioned the large number of *Scouts* who move from one district to another and the need for more attention to the Movement's system for effecting transfers. Someone referred to Form T. 1 and, to the surprise of the member of I.H.Q. who was there, the majority of those present had never heard of it, while several who knew of the existence of the form confessed they had been unable to obtain copies. The discussion ended with the suggestion that some information on the subject of transfers might be published in THE SCOUTER!

At the risk of someone saying: "What, again," the special form (T.1) for the transfer of a *Scout* from one Group to another can be obtained from I.H.Q. free of charge. Normally, L.A. Secretaries obtain supplies for distribution to G.S.M.s, but there is no objection to a G.S.M. applying direct to I.H.Q. for copies; the reason we prefer to supply them through Secretaries is that the number of postal packets is reduced and, thereby cost.

The form is completed by the Scouter and sent to the Commissioner of the *Scout's* new District who passes it on to the nearest suitable Group. Sometimes the name and address of the D.C. of the new District is not known. In such a case, the form should be sent to him via 25 B.P. Road for forwarding. In the case of a *Scout* going to a country within the Commonwealth and Empire, the form should be sent to the Overseas Commissioner at I.H.Q., and for a *Scout* going to a foreign country to the International Commissioner.

There is a widespread view that too many *Scouts* are lost to the Movement because the transfer system is ignored either through the Scouter at the departure end neglecting to complete Form T.1 or the Scouter at the receiving end not taking action when he receives it. If only more attention can be paid to this business of transfers, the less we will hear of *Scouts* being lost to the Movement because they leave the district.

A short while ago I had the suggestion that sometime a note might appear in this column about the arrangements for the Annual Meeting of the Local Association. This appears to be the time.

The first consideration is the place, and real effort should be made to obtain the use of suitable accommodation; the Council Chamber of the Town Hall or something similar. The programme can be divided into two or three parts according to taste: the business part of the meeting, refreshments and finally, a speaker, a demonstration or a Scout film. In some places, refreshments may be a problem so that part may have to be left out; but there is value in a short break for a cup of tea and a bun.

The business part of the meeting is of greater appeal if it is completed fairly briskly than are those long drawn out affairs we sometimes hear about. Reports and accounts should, if possible, be printed and circulated with the agenda so that at the meeting it is only necessary for the D.C. or whoever is dealing with reports to draw attention to a few highlights of the year's work; and the Treasurer to refer to any special items in the accounts. With a little preparation elections can be dealt with expeditiously. The names of those to be elected to the various offices and committees might be recommended by the appropriate bodies - the Executive Committee, Scouters' Council and so on - and proposers and seconders warned in advance. At the end of the business part of the meeting, the handing in of Bob-a-Job payments might be included. The D.C. could announce each Group in turn and a member - perhaps a P.L. - will step forward and hand an envelope containing the money to the Chairman. This item is much welcomed by L.A. Treasurers!

The shortest time I have known for completing the business was twenty-two minutes! A bit too brisk perhaps, but I think forty-five minutes should be about the maximum for this part of the proceedings.

Refreshments have been mentioned so it only remains to deal with the final part which, from some points of view, may be the most important. The speaker may be a member of the County staff, a Scouter from a neighbouring District or, in fact, anyone who has something interesting and appropriate to say.

One of the best talks I ever heard at an Annual Meeting was given by a First Class Scout who had attended a World Jamboree and talked of his experiences. As an alternative to a speaker, a short, well-prepared Scout demonstration cannot fail to interest and another possibility is a Scout film. A list of films available in the I.H.Q. Film Library can be obtained from the Publicity Secretary at a cost of 3d.

The A.G.M. can be one of the outstanding events of the Scout year if the object is clear; to receive a good report of the year past and to be encouraged and inspired for the year ahead.

A. W. HURLL,
Chief Executive Commissioner

THE GILWELL LETTER

Quite recently I have been going right through the Tests from 1908 to the present day with a view to seeing when, and if possible why, the various alterations and additions occurred. I found it to be a fascinating study and was interested to find, for instance, that we are demanding a good 50 per cent more in quantity of tests to be learned and passed than was demanded in 1909. Actually, the greatest increase in quantity was made in 1938 and also at that time the tests became very wordy indeed.

I suppose a certain amount of change was inevitable and a great deal of it was and is beneficial, but perhaps some of the random thoughts I have had about the changes might provide a topic for discussion at a Scouters' Meeting.

The very strong impression I have about the tests of the early years is that they were all based on a firm assumption that a Scout's honour was to be trusted. There was very little attempt to define in detail the exact requirements. For example, in 1912 the Second Class requirements state, "Have a knowledge of elementary First Aid and bandaging"; it was left to the boy and his Scoutmaster to decide what "elementary" meant and presumably the test could be adapted to the ability of the boy and the stress laid on the degree of effort which he displayed, which in my view is very proper. In the First Class Test appeared, "Be able to swim fifty yards or some equivalent selected by the Scoutmaster." Here, surely, was a real example of "leaving the rest to the common sense of the Scoutmaster." As a matter of fact, with the exception of the First Class Journey, to-day's Second Class Test is more comprehensive and rather more difficult than the whole of the Second and First Class Tests together in 1909.

I do not think I am alone in regretting the passing of the easy tests, easy in the sense that a great many boys - and I know this from my own experience as a Scoutmaster - could, on the very night they were enrolled, get a signature on their Test Cards. There was, for instance, a stipulation that a boy must have at least 6d. in the savings bank. The enthusiastic recruit could go home from his investiture with that requirement fulfilled and proudly show his card to his parents, which seems to me to be sound sense. Is there any test nowadays that a boy is likely to pass on the night of his investiture? To-day he has to go away and learn and practise something, which is very right for most of it, but I wonder if it is right for all of it. I have more than a nostalgic hankering for "Bring a recruit trained by himself." The return of that would at least ensure co-operation with the Pack!

I had a look at the Cub tests, too, and had even more fun with them. The first year in which tests for Cubs appeared was 1917, and there is a gorgeous phrase in the Second Star Test which reads, "Tidy a street or road." I cannot help feeling that Wolf Cubs in the vicinity of the Cromwell Road, for example, certainly had to earn their Second Star!

Some of you might like the pleasant spare time activity of compiling tests for Tenderfoot, Second and First Class, and for the Cubs. Might it not be worth trying on the Court of Honour? I believe we have to try to devise the sort of tests that B.-P. would have offered to-day's boys in the world of today.

We shall probably find the majority of what we already have is about right, but I have the feeling that we are asking rather too much in quantity and that a few of the things we ask boys to do are not really as interesting to the boys of to-day as we older people fondly imagine. It is a simple matter of observation that all boys, whether or not they are Scouts, like to pitch tents, light fires, do what they call cooking over the said fires, and make things. I have yet to meet a boy who, given a piece of wood and an axe, does not only enjoy himself but becomes convinced of the desirability of a little First Aid training. The present, and indeed the continuing, problem is "What does the modern boy like doing and how, through getting him to do what he likes doing, can we preserve the true spirit of Scouting and its character forming purposes?"

I have used the phrase "What can we get him to do?" rather than "What can we teach him to do." In Scouting for Boys B.-P. said, "The principle on which Scouting works is that the boy's ideas are studied and he is encouraged to educate himself instead of being instructed."

JOHN THURMAN,
Camp Chief

LUCK OF THE MONTH

By **TILE EDITOR**

Dec. 1. - Fred (Hurl) told me to-day that some of the backstage members of the Gang Show went in to the theatre at half past ten on the Saturday evening before the Monday opening, and worked all through Saturday night, and all Sunday without sleep and with only brief interruptions for meals. For them no glamour, no limelight no applause: only the satisfaction of being a part of something supremely worth while supremely well done.

Dec. 2. - After scrambling through the mail and spending the rest of the morning at a Publications Board meeting, I was tempted by the rare sunshine, pale as the driest sherry, into ten minutes in St. James's Park. I would put trees in a wintry park very high on a list of earth's constant enchantments: especially when there is ornamental water nearby for them to gaze into.

Dec. 3. - I wonder how many Scouters cut out from their daily paper the story of the 19-year-old New Zealand seaman, George Porter, who after swimming about in the sea for 24 hours after his ship went down in a gale, climbed on to a floating door and for three hours held a shipmate (but he died) and sang every song he could remember until he was picked up. This is the sort of cutting to go into a Scouter's scrapbook or log: a well-kept scrapbook is the half-way house to a well-run Troop. (And a nice job of service for a Rover Scout.)

Dec. 4. - Received first Christmas cards, including one from a Japanese Scouter inscribed: "THE SCOUTER leads me to wonderful Scouting," which cheers the editorial heart.

Dec. 6. - Talking to Mark Bonham-Carter: he suddenly asked "Why was Scouting so successful? Why does it appeal to a boy in Pakistan equally with a boy in Peru? Why to the boy of 1954 as much as - or more than - the boy of 1908?" As any answer I could have begun to give would probably have lasted three days and (hen been wrong, I said "I have no idea." (Have you, dear reader?)

Dec. 7. - We have reached agreement with Messrs. Letts on the contents and general make-up of the first Wolf Cub Diary - for 1956.

Dec. 8. - The print order for the December SCOUTER received today is 36,000-1,000 higher than last month. I have felt for a long time that a monthly for the younger members would be equally successful. Certainly our experience shows that apart from the early days there has never been any real enthusiasm for a weekly, whatever the contents or the price.

The Chief looked in for a chat: on a morning almost invisible because of the rain, back from his strenuous - too strenuous - tour of the Far East, he says: "You don't know what rain is!"

Dec. 9. - Arthur Catherall sent me in the first chapter of his new serial for The Scout. It is called Quick sands and I hope we can begin it on February 26th.

He tells me that he has just sold the film rights for his recently published and very successful adult novel Vibrant Brass. It is nice to see a life-long brother Scout having such a deserved success.

Dec. 10. - It seems to me, reading the morning's paper, that the time has come to re-emphasise the true meaning of "A Scout's honour is to be trusted."

Dec. 13. - Came across a nice definition of "perpetual motion":
"A piece of paper with P.T.O. written on both sides."

Looking through the 1916 bound volume of THE SCOUTER, I noticed that in January and February all the correspondence columns were devoted to the theme "Why are not our Scouts First Class?"

Dec. 14. - At lunch a colleague described a certain D.C. known to us both as a typical "walker-round." I replied "Unlike who is a 'strider-across' or who is a 'leaner-on.'"

Dec. 15. - One of life's minor pleasures is getting up and starting off to work (as I have been doing this week) by moonshine. As I walked down the hill to the station with the great yellow moon in the sky, Belloc's lovely verse came comfortably to my mind:

The Moon on the one hand, the Dawn on the other.

The Moon is my sister, the Dawn is my brother.

The Moon on the left, and the Dawn on my right;

My Brother, good morning; my Sister, good-night.

Dec. 16. - I was delighted to hear that my colleague Ted Wood (Publicity Secretary) took part in the "Find the Link" television programme last night. Although it's rather late, our congratulations are due to him on being born in the Tower of London, "the link" which attracted the B.B.C.

Dec. 18. - From the Manchester Guardian of to-day: "Printing costs are high for journals which by their very nature cannot hope for a large circulation." And paper costs too: and now we hear that there will be a considerable increase in the cost of paper next year.

Sprained my left hand by slipping down the stairs of a bus and so have to find new ways of performing simple and familiar things. Washing, shaving, dressing, all present little problems. There is a moral for Scouters in that somewhere.

Dec. 20. - Saw the Swedish nature film "The Great Adventure." It is a lovely film which should it come your way you should see at all costs. Two delightful small Swedish boys keep for a brief winter a pet otter and the story is told against the wild and lovely background of Sweden and the four seasons. It is enchanting.

Dec. 23. - More television news. We are in the "Find the Link" programme again. Cyril Goodhind, our Administrative Secretary, and one of the Gang Show young men, Cohn Burn, appeared linked with Richard Greene, the film star. The link? They had all been Scouts as boys.

Dec. 28. - Return to office: fantastic post - and press day! But the walls, crammed with Christmas cards, glow and twinkle with friendship.

Dec. 30. - The Auckland Star (quoted there from the New Zealand Post-Primary Teachers' Journal) quotes this recent schoolboy howler:

Q: With what is the name Baden-Powell connected?

A: It is connected with a hyphen.

REX HAZLEWOOD.

LETTERS FROM CANADA - I

The fall is a very beautiful time here in Eastern Canada. The masses of trees and shrubs are a blaze of colour after the touch of the first frost - a blaze of colour which if reproduced on canvas would be called loud or overdone. Yet, here in the great arena of the countryside, it seems to blend into the atmosphere when, for all its glory, there is a touch of melancholy, a hint of nostalgia for the brilliance of summer passed on perhaps, like the rainbow, a promise of good things to come before nature curls up for the winter.

It was as I gazed down in wonder at this colourful panorama from the comfort of the great T.C.A. "North Star" that was sweeping me westward to Regina, that I began to think about the next World Jamboree. Next August hundreds of British Scouts will be flying over this area just before touching down at Toronto. What lucky chaps they will be to have such an experience! A night flight from Britain with the mosaic of city lights bidding them "au revoir," a good night's sleep over the Atlantic, an awakening to see a new continent slipping by beneath. With any luck they will cover a lot of a little part of Canada before they land. What a fine way to see a new country - perhaps the best way in the time available.

Then the Jamboree itself at historic Niagara-on-the-Lake. The visits to the Welland Canal with its huge ship locks, the enormous hydro power plants, Niagara Falls and so on. But most important of all, the fellowship - the realisation that the Brotherhood of Scouting is more than just words - that it is in fact, a wonderful reality.

These were pleasant thoughts in which to indulge floating on high, but more practical ideas soon came to mind. Cooking with charcoal. I enjoy eating and I know the thought of this strange form of cooking would have caused me some concern in England. However, rest assured it is very simple and very pleasant. Although I often saw evidence of the charcoal burners' work, especially in Sussex and the Lake District, I cannot ever remember seeing this fuel so used for cooking. In the United States and in Canada, outdoor grills for cooking steaks or barbecuing are very popular both in back gardens or on picnics. Charcoal is excellent for this and much used. It is light, clean and smokeless and above all, presents very little forest fire hazard in a land where fires destroy millions of acres of forest every year. This latter is one of the reasons why charcoal will be the only fuel available at the Jamboree - so leave most of those axes at home.

Cooking at the Jamboree will be on the Patrol system - each Patrol drawing fuel and rations and cooking for itself. Approximately 10 pounds of charcoal briquettes will be issued to a Patrol each day, but you will have to provide your own stove. So it occurred to me that a few words on the subject now will give you a chance to experiment a little before leaving for Canada.

The principle of charcoal fires is quite different from that of wood fires. With wood you have a quick fire at first and a slow fire later as the fuel turns into glowing embers. In charcoal cooking you have a slow fire at first, and the heat may be increased by increasing draught.

This is done by containing the charcoal within the walls of a small stove - a pail, a piece of stove pipe, square can, even a collar cut from a tin can - and causing the air to sweep through the charcoal.

To cook meals at the Jamboree, you must know how to produce three types of fires from charcoal.

1. An intense lasting fire for boiling.
2. A quick short fire for heating.
3. A slow steady fire for frying and broiling.

The pail-and-wash-basin charcoal stove will provide all these and will give an idea on which to expand and experiment. Cut a large draught-hole in the side of a 10-quart galvanised pail near the bottom. Top the pail with a 10-inch diameter tin wash-basin, perforated with a large number of holes punched with a nail (4-inch) or larger. Three quarts of water will boil on it in 20 minutes leaving it alone, in 9 minutes with fanning - in both instances using one pound of charcoal.

A converter ring is necessary for quick boiling. The idea is to concentrate the charcoal and therefore the heat under the pot. The illustration shows a converter ring, a grill and a special boiling stove.

Now it is up to you to experiment and design your own charcoal stove. You will realise at once that a round stove has its limitations for Patrol use - something long and narrow like the trench fire is most useful. Whatever your design be sure to have an ash tray to collect the ash as it falls through the burner thus saving the ground and making disposal easy.

A charcoal fire needs a starter. A little stump of candle serves well. Light the candle and pile a few lumps of charcoal over it - add more as soon as the charcoal starts to burn. At the Jamboree milk will be issued in waxed containers. These make excellent lights if torn into strips and crumpled.

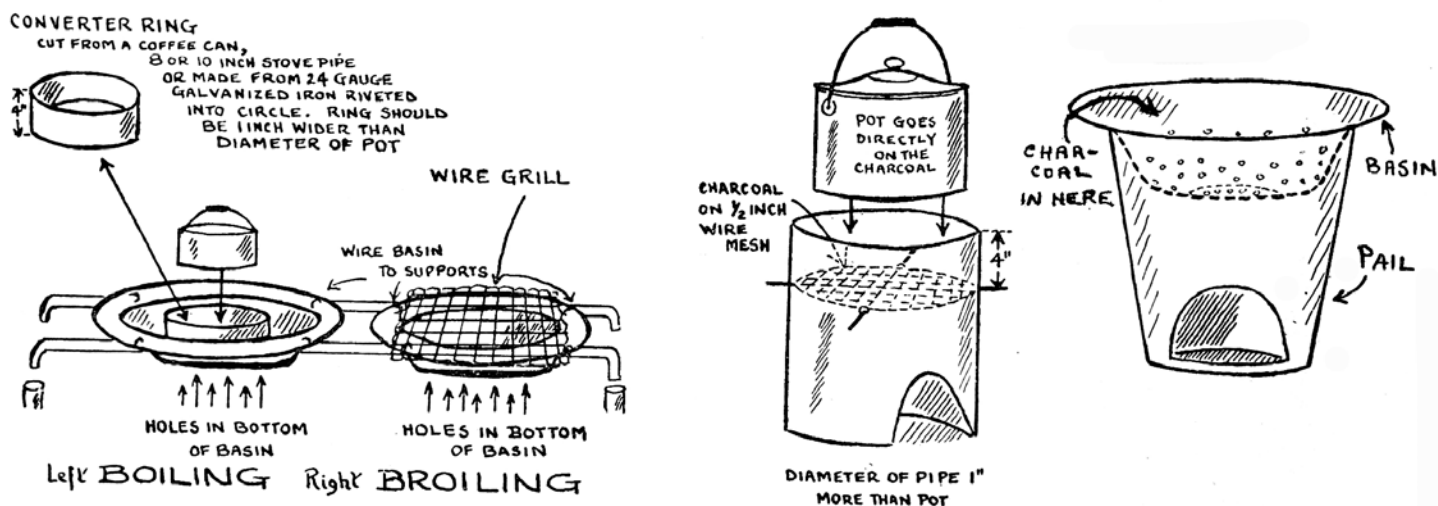
A form of bellows is necessary to produce intense heat. Charcoal has a habit of spitting out minute hot particles when subjected to draught, so that blowing by mouth can be dangerous. Charcoal forms an excellent fire for tinfoil cooking - and no pots to wash up in this method! When you have finished cooking douse fire with water and spread out charcoal - it will be reusable again in a few minutes.

We are now coming down over the Prairies preparatory to landing at Regina. Next month I hope to tell you something about Scouting in the vast province of Saskatchewan. In the meantime, good luck with experiments in charcoal cooking - why not try it whether you are Jamboree bound or not?

C. B. STAFFORD,

Assistant Executive

Commissioner for Training, Canada.



TO SENIOR SCOUTS AND SCOUTERS(S)

In view of the changes which the announcement in Headquarters Notices in this issue will bring about as far as Senior Scouting is concerned the Editor has kindly allowed me space for a few words of explanation.

The new ruling will mean that, from now on, there will be no differentiation between Scouts over 15 and Senior Scouts. It has been brought about because of the feeling, fairly widely held, that it is unfair to deprive a Scout of the privileges of becoming a Senior Scout if, because of no fault of his, there happens to be no Senior Patrol or Troop attached to his Group. As a result, everyone between the ages of 15 and 18 will have an opportunity of being invested as, and called, Senior Scouts and will be permitted to wear the same uniform.

It should, however, be clearly understood that if a Senior Scout continues to remain in the Boy Scout Troop he will not be allowed to wear Patrol patches or maroon P.L. stripes. I should also like to stress that should a Scout not wish to be invested as a Senior and to continue in the Boy Scout Troop he will wear the uniform applicable to Boy Scouts.

The procedure then, is this. When a boy reaches the age of 15 he must pass the Initial Test before he becomes a Senior - and I should like you to note, particularly, the changes in this Test. Having passed this Test, and not until then, he dons Senior Scout insignia, i.e. the maroon beret, the embroidered epaulette and maroon garter tabs. The plain maroon epaulette is therefore "out" and there should be no one from now on wearing Senior Scout insignia, unless he has passed the Initial Test. I hope that this is all quite clear, and I know everyone will accept loyally these decisions of the Chief and the Committee of the Council. It should be mentioned that these amendments do not apply as far as Scotland is concerned, for our friends in the North are, of course, responsible for making their own rules and regulations.

One more point on this matter. The whole object of these new rules is to benefit the individual boy and to raise the standard of Senior Scouting. It is not, I hope, going to be interpreted as an excuse for not continuing with your efforts to form Senior Patrols or Troops. If this happened it would be a retrograde step for, whatever else the recent Leakage Report has shown us, it has proved beyond all doubt that boys over 15 are held for a considerably longer period in the Groups which possess Senior Scout Troops or Patrols. Many of us have been confident that this was the case and now we have had factual proof.

There are one or two other matters that I wish to bring to your notice. The first concerns "night wide-games." I know how very popular this form of training is with Seniors and would be the last one to discourage them from any enjoyment or pleasure they may derive from such activities. May I make one very strong plea though - it is that you will make absolutely certain when you plan your operations that there will be no possible chance of your disturbing or interfering with other people's rest whilst you are having your fun.

I should like to draw your attention to what the Chief said in his "Outlook" for September regarding possible expeditions to Lapland and Sweden. If the invitations are received what about it? If you write to me saying that you would like to be considered for such an expedition I will keep your names by me for future reference. It should be stressed though that, at the moment, no details are available regarding these projects, but that they will be published if and when the invitations are received. In passing, I must mention with what pleasure I read the Log book which was compiled by the party of London Seniors who visited Berlin last August.

This Log was very well written and prepared and showed just how much value can be gained by such visits, and the Scouts in this case seemed to get just the right angle on things. I am sure that both they and the Scouts they met in Berlin benefited considerably from this visit.

I take this opportunity of wishing all Scouters (5) and Senior Scouts happy and adventurous Scouting during 1955.

LAURENCE E. STRINGER,
Headquarters Commissioner for Senior Scouts.

ROVER ROUNDABOUT

Many years ago I remember seeing one of the celebrated Aldwych farces named *It Pays to Advertise*. How true, and yet how little do we of the Rover Section do anything about it. One of the most useful of jobs, for a Rover who has leanings towards journalism, is that of publicity man in his area. One of my own fellows did such a job for about two years, married, moved away, has come back and is picking up where he left off.

How about following the footsteps of the modem "Good King Wenceslas" of Gloucester who has been elected by his county to be the newsman to the County Rovers. I look forward to other notes not only from him but from any other fellow holding the same sort of post. His news, a week-end camp at Cromhall, near Thornbury, and a cookery competition (a three course meal for four costing not more than seven shillings and sixpence) to be cooked over an open fire. This was won by Leckhampton (Cheltenham), and with Morris dancing, an indoor social with the local Scout Troop and the Church of England Youth Fellowship Service on Sunday morning, it made a great week-end.

"How often have I wished that training in camp cooking and food management could be stressed to a greater extent in our Movement. I earned my Cook's badge in camp and the thrill of turning out a good meal and the planning of menus has always been for me a worth-while job. I have used pressure cookers, hay boxes, a portable altar fire, home-made ovens, thermos flasks, all to provide food worth eating, but my real pleasure is a week-end camp alone with a Gilwell Cooker, two bricks and a supply of wood enough for a handful of fire." Thanks, Gloucester, for a good idea for next summer's outdoor activities.

As for news coming along, I have for some time seen a news letter from a brother Rover whom I first met at the 3rd Tuesday Club (we celebrated our 100th meeting a couple of months ago) at St. Martin-in-the-Fields, one named Alec Tatnall, who after serving in the International Scout Relief Service has taken himself off to Georgetown, British Guiana, as a padre. He sends out his news letter and the one I have just seen, number 12, tells of his work in general and his Scouting activities in particular. He tells of a Rally attended by 420, with much rain, which curtailed some of the programme, and mentions him speaking on the radio on the S.I.R.S. work during the last war. His strenuous life seems to suit him and his efforts on behalf of Scouting are much to be commended.

In the same post comes a letter from a Rover, late of my District, whom I met with the R.A.F. Rover Crew who travelled to the Norwegian Moot from Germany. He is now a Scoutmaster in Canada and writes of the British Columbian Rover Moot. Out of their deliberations came the thought that Scouting is too easy, and therefore, does not appeal to the elder boy. He avows that the lack of Senior Scouting, the bridge from boyhood to Rovering, is missed greatly and tells me that if you are not a Rover by the age of 23 you have had it. Although one is not subject to an age limit, a general encouragement to finish round about this age is the unwritten rule. They take Squires in during their seventeenth year but the members of the section feel in the main that 17½ is early enough. He writes proudly of their work during the Empire Games. It certainly was a thrill for those of us who saw the lads on the Tele-film to know that Scouting can be used on such occasions.

London Rovers are still actively engaged in good work and the Polio Fellowship party saw a crowd of willing workers clearing one of the large dance halls at 9 a.m. one recent Sunday morning, it with tables and chairs to seat 950 handicapped, but very jolly, people. The transformation of the bare floor to a colourful spectacle of good cheer will remain long in my memory.

And of course the Gang Show has shown us once again the "green epaulettes" especially to the fore in a sketch showing the bright-eyed youth compared to our own period teddy boys. It struck me as I listened to them what a great power of good the Rover "bod" can be, as an example to the youngsters, at his work and within his group, just by his demeanour and general way of life..

How many of us have prized possessions no money could tempt us to part with; that old copy of S. for B., a Group show programme, a Rover Moot Handbook and so on. My latest is two gramophone records made by B.-P., bought up in a sale of junk, and never put on the market. He speaks of our training in health and religion and the extraneous noises noted on their labels are nothing to the thrill of his voice as . clear and unmistakable it comes into a room where a few of us sit enraptured by his sound common sense. Definitely not for sale.

In this category comes a log that has been produced by one of the Rovers who went to Kandersteg. It makes grand reading. and in the days to come will give renewed pleasure to its author and inspiration to the younger generation to whom many will be only names in Scouting when they read them. Logs are not very much to the fore in these days of hustle and haste; in fact the writers of such things are regarded as rather queer birds in the main, but they are portraying history if only in a narrow field.

I have been working this week on some drawings made by a German artist who came to London in the early 1800's and sketched men doing their everyday jobs and rebuilding parts of old London, and enlarging our growing city, the greatest in the world. He never thought how much pleasure and interest his sketches, mostly on odd pieces of paper, would give anyone after over a century of time. Yes, the things you and I do will matter to somebody; rather frightening and yet thrilling, don't you think, for 1955.

JACK SKILLEN.

The Rovers World

5. ROVERING AND THE HILLS

One of our greatest real leaders in Scouting to-day, Colonel Ronnie Campbell, has said that the natural place for a Scout is the wilderness. It is only when we get away from the crowded cities and the countless minor worries of everyday town life that we begin to see ourselves and others in a true proportion. It is not merely a question of a nicely laid-out camp - and a good report from a visiting Commissioner - which matters, but the necessity to all of us of the spirit of challenge and adventure in our training and in our lives. When we were small, adventure lay hid round every corner, but as we get older we are more and more in danger of losing the real excitement of seeing and doing things for the first time. Our senses tend to become blunted by synthetic thrills and we have lost "the first fine careless rapture."

A friend of mine, who was climbing Arthur's Seat the other day, saw, as he neared the top, three small boys climbing up a rock gully, each with a piece of thin cord wound round his shoulder after the fashion of a climbing-rope. To them it was not Arthur's Seat, a hill in an Edinburgh public park, but Everest itself, and they were Hunt, Hillary and Tensing. It is this spirit that we must regain in Scouting, and especially in Rovering, if we are to bring it to its real-place. As Blake said, "Great things are done when men and mountains meet. They are not done by jostling in the street."

Rovering is a brotherhood of the out-of-doors and of service, and the former is a preparation for the latter. We in Britain are at most a few generations removed from our forbears who lived in the country and their knowledge and strength lies in us. We live, whether we like it or not, in a welfare state, and safety first is a maxim which can kill all initiative. It is too easy for an average citizen to sit down and be carried along safely from cradle to grave, and Rovering is equally in danger of becoming armchair Scouting and parlour tricks. "Men will live in vain, however comfortable their way of existence, if they allow the spirit of adventure to die in their souls.

For such there can be no more progress in. penetrating the strongholds of nature and the spirit. They will live like fat cattle and will die no better." The moments of adventure and achievement, the firelight in some camp in the high glens, the reaching of the summit cairn in cloud and storm, are the real peaks which stand above the clouds, which will mould our everyday life and actions, often without our knowing it.

The essential feature of the upbringing of a Rover is that it teaches him to see life from the viewpoint of a man. The Rover is a grown-up member of the community and it is in him that the community will encounter the real spirit of the Movement, for he belongs to it. It is through his character and enthusiasm that the Scout spirit will be carried into the world outside Scouting. This character training is no easy matter, and it would be useless if it were. Body and spirit must be welded together under hard conditions, and there are no forms of training so well fitted to form and test character as expeditions to the hills or on the sea. It is under such conditions that a Crew really becomes a Crew, like Kipling's "ship that found herself," and not just a band of individuals. If only for this reason, every Rover Leader should himself go on expeditions with his Crew, for it is only there that he will see them as they are - and they will see him as he really is. It is useless to make such treks easy, for the higher the challenge the greater will be the response. and the achievement gained will bind them together in a real comradeship, which has its roots in difficulties shared with others, for on the hills every man counts, and discipline is essential for the safety of the team. There is no form of sport or training so certain of removing the little inhibitions and conventions with which we are enmeshed as that of putting oneself against the forces of nature, and it is in the big hills that this may be done to the best advantage. There is great reward in it, especially for the leader. He can make his team see and hear things to which their senses are not attuned - the slow swinging glide of the eagle, and the white flash of the dive of the fishing solan goose. They will hear the grating call of the ptarmigan and will smell the scent of heather and pine trees to which the reek of petrol and smoke has made them insensitive. Above all they will gain a new sense of values, for in the hills you are with the things which endure.

Such expeditions are not merely a question of stuffing some things in a rucksack and walking out. Every trek must be thoroughly planned, and some training is necessary before it can be carried out. The big hills seldom give a second chance to anyone who is foolhardy. Every Rover must have a thorough working knowledge of the use of the compass and the one-inch map, for without this on the hill he may become a danger to himself, and, which is much more important, to the rest of the party. With it he can go on the hills freely in sunshine or cloud. He must be equipped with suitable clothing and boots, for in bad or even doubtful weather, shorts, or even a kilt, are definitely unsuitable, and an anorak or some form of protective clothing should always be worn. The commando toggle rope is also a useful aid in emergencies, and can be easily made in the den.

Hill-training can also have a very practical connection with service. In the past two years a survey of weather conditions in the Cairngorms has been carried out by the Cambridge University Rovers, and has produced much valuable data. Other surveys of this nature have been done, and it is a fine way in which any Rover Crew can combine its annual camp with a very useful job of Rover Service.

It is not even necessary that such work need be done at a long camp. Surveys of green roads, local historical sites and traditions, 'and similar projects, could easily be undertaken by Crews in their own areas over a series of weekends. Another excellent job for Rovers situated near hill country is that of mountain rescue. This calls for a high standard of mental and physical training and is, of course, limited to certain Crews, but it is a form of Rover Service which will make the Crew a definite service unit in the community, as, of course, every Rover Crew should be no matter where it is situated.

It is a cheering sign for the future of Rovering that many Senior Scouts head for the mountains in large and small parties for their summer camps and for expeditions.

They will be amply repaid for the labour of preparation and training by a new outlook on life, and a continued desire to find what is beyond the skyline, and will return home with a host of new things to talk about, which they have accumulated themselves and not at secondhand. It matters little if their hills overtop Everest in the telling, and if the storms which they encountered showed with more than Himalayan violence, for they have regained their sense of wonder and the real excitement of being alive. Such projects as the winter camp carried out on Carnedd Llewellyn a few years ago are a magnificent test of character.

No part of Britain is more than a day's journey by road or rail from fine hill country.

It is our national heritage, and if we neglect it, it is ourselves who are the losers. There are always some of us who are ready to give advice and help to any Rovers or Senior Scouts who are planning such an operation, for we know that in doing so we are introducing someone else to something new of great beauty and value. Many years ago King David said, "I to the hills will lift mine eyes from whence doth come mine aid," and he knew what he was talking about. Follow his advice, and you will also find help there, and beauty, and adventure, and a hundred other things, which are not found in towns.

ALISTAIR ERSKINE-MURRAY.

JUNGLE DAYS - I

AKELA used to tell wonderful stories. It is a fortunate gift to possess when having much to do with young people. However noisy the games we had been playing - however loudly we had all been laughing - as soon as Akela called for that final Pack circle the Cubs were arranging themselves round her waiting for her to begin. I used to wonder where she collected all her yarns, and one day when we were talking about it together she surprised me by saying how very nervous she was when she first began yarning to Cubs. I found, too, that even now she took a great deal of trouble in selecting suitable tales and learning the details so that she could tell them easily. I expect we had this talk after my own first effort at telling a yarn - for Akela made her Old Wolves try everything in turn.

I remember looking forward to telling the Cubs a story. I had thought it would be quite simple, because I had very often made up stories for young friends of mine; but that was for one or two at a time. I soon discovered that yarning to a whole group was very different - and no easier than trying to run a game. You have to prove yourself with small boys. They have a disconcerting way of savouring a new thing and then passing judgment, by the simple expedient of beginning to do something else! They didn't treat me like this, though, with my first story. They were very quiet. And as they sat there so still, watching me with amused eyes, I had to struggle for dear life to get that story to come out the right way round. I had chosen it with care, and browsed over it at home all the previous week, and learnt its sequence, as I thought, but it happened to be an extremely complicated folk tale, and about as difficult a one as I could possibly have chosen for a first attempt! Next time, pride having had its fall, I brought a book with me and fortified by its presence, found that quite soon I did not need it!

It is much better to read a story than try to memorise one and get all tied up, until you know your boys and they know you, when you can reach that greater intimacy of just seeming to chat with them, while holding their attention. It comes in time, and don't forget to let the Cubs have their say sometimes. We need not do all the talking!

A few years ago I re-visited a former Pack of mine, and prepared myself with a story for them, as of old. It was a story that I felt sure they would like. We sat down and the Cubs fidgeted themselves into comfortable positions, then one of them noticed my beads. So I had to tell them a little about B.-P. and how we Old Wolves went into training. Then - far more exciting - another Cub discovered a picture on my belt. So I had to tell them about that, and all the others round the side.

I tried to begin my story. "Why don't you come to see us more often?" asked a voice. So we talked about that. Time was on the wing. I began the story again. "I've only one more thing to pass before my Second Star," smiled an old friend. This called for congratulations and a general check-up of progress. Then it was time for prayers. And so the story was never told, and I went home just a little crestfallen. How blind we can be! "You've lost the knack," I told myself, "that's what comes- of doing District work." It was true up to a point, for I had become so used to visiting other Packs and telling them stories that it never occurred to me that my own old Cubs would rather "just talk!"

It is fun to make the Cubs tell yarns sometimes. Have you tried that game where someone begins a tale, but as soon as he uses the word "and" his neighbour must continue the plot? Another time give them all a handful of beans and, if you can prevent them from either eating the beans or bombarding you with them, give the Cubs three minutes to go around talking as hard as they can to each other without using the words "Yes, no, or nay - Black, white, or grey." Of course each will be trying, by asking pertinent questions, to make his friend say these fateful words. The penalty for using them is to give up a bean! After "time's up" see who has won the most beans. Old Wolves should join in this, for in the Jungle Old Wolves join in everything. There are no walls to lean against or chairs to flop in, in the Jungle.

B.-P. was so wise, too, in giving all Cub leaders Jungle names. It sends us off to a flying start really, and does away with "Miss" and "M'am" or "Sir" or worse still "Joan" or "Bill." So when the Jungle has given you an appropriate name do live up to it - which means getting down to it!

I've growled about on various floors - beg pardon - Jungle clearings, since my first acceptance into "the Pack" without very much loss of dignity except on the one occasion that still makes me feel a little hot around the collar. That was when, in my early enthusiasm, I crawled into a Parents' Evening on all fours to join with the Cubs in a Jungle display, while they suddenly decided to run in and "be themselves." It didn't take me long to get to my feet I can tell you, but I sometimes wonder what the parents must have thought. Probably they were each of them looking for their own "Johnnie" and never noticed me at all.

To get back to Jungle names - new Cubs should always have these carefully explained to them, and see them spelt, but, for the sake of the mothers, Akela should also remember to let them know his own real name and address. Although lots of parents do not seem to bother - which may be a compliment to our Movement - there are many who will want to know who really is in charge of their boys at "Cubs," and at all events we should see that they do know.

And, as an afterthought on the subject of loss of dignity, I must tell you another thing that happened once. Our Pack, like many another, shared the Church Hall with Guides and Brownies. We all had our own special evenings. On one memorable occasion the Brownies had to give up their evening to a Church bazaar; and Akela, as a Pack good turn, invited them to join us, and so not have to miss a week. Everything went off very creditably. Of course we had spent more time than usual planning games of gallant rescue for the Cubs to show their paces, and some relay races that were fair to all. I don't know whether our Grand Howl startled the Brownies more than their tu-whitt tu-whooh shattered us, but we survived. Then came a game, also carefully planned, in which we took our places in a circle, Cubs and Brownies alternately. Here Cyril became difficult. "I'm not holding hands with any girl" he muttered, coming and standing sullenly next to me. "Well, what am I then?" I asked, just for fun. "You're not a girl, you're a lady," he growled, and took my hand.

A. M. DOUGLAS.

THE GAMES CHEST: CUBS SHOPS

1. WHAT DO YOU SELL?

Gear: Nil.

Purpose: Signalling.

Each Six chooses some type of shop (grocer, greengrocer, stationer, chemist, etc. - should be one that sells a wide range of goods). Akela signals a letter. Each Six decide on an item beginning with that letter sold in its shop (e.g. sugar, sprouts, sealing-wax, salts) and first Six to send a boy to Akela with the name of the item wins a point.

MARY SMITH.

2. WHAT SHOP'S YOURS?

Gear: Nil.

Purpose: Memory training and common sense.

Each Sixer becomes a shopkeeper and is told privately what sort of shop he is to run (ironmonger, greengrocer, chemist, etc.). The Cubs go from shop to shop, in the corners of the den, each asking the shopkeeper for only one article at a time, before moving on to another shop. The object is to discover what sort of shop each one is, by process of elimination. They may strike it lucky the first time, but will probably have to make repeated visits to some shops, asking for different articles each time, and remembering what they have failed to get there on previous visits.

HAZEL ADDIS.

3. DUMB SHOPKEEPERS

Gear: Chairs or benches.

Purpose: To encourage observation and acting.

This game should be introduced first to Sixers and Seconds at a Sixers' and Seconds' Meeting, in order to let them think up a few "turns" to start off with.

A shop is built, according to fancy, with a few chairs or benches. Pack squats on the ground in front of shop. Selected actors go into the shop and get busy in make-believe, and Cubs must try to guess what sort of shop it is. As soon as a Cub thinks he knows what the shop is selling, he may go up as one of the customers and buy something - also in dumb show. If, for instance, he guesses it to be a greengrocer's shop, he may try by his own actions to ask for a pound of bananas, or oranges, or anything else he feels he can act. The shopkeepers must try now, to guess him rightly. If the shopkeepers can guess what he wants, and it is something in their shop, then the shop has to change to another sort of shop, and the game goes on as before. If, on the other hand, he has guessed the shop wrongly, the whole Pack must go on trying to guess rightly, and another Cub should have a turn at buying something.

A. M. DOUGLAS.

4. CLOSING TIME

Gear: Nil.

Purpose: Developing memory and aiding agility.

In an area of the Den you draw six small semicircles in chalk. Each of these semicircles represents a shop and you name them butcher, baker, grocer, etc. Everybody wanders about all over the Den shopping, when suddenly the cry goes up "the baker is closing," or "the butcher is closing," etc. Meanwhile Cubs have to remember which semicircle is the baker and so on, and dash for the particular semicircle; even getting one foot in before the shop shuts. Those who fail to reach the shop named have to turn their scarves round but can still stay in the game. The winner is the one without his scarf turned round.

Alternative: Cubs walk round shops pretending to push prams. End game by saying "the rent man is coming" when all Cubs rush to one end of Den.

A. K. MUSGROVE.

5. SPEED SHOPPING

Gear. A number of tins each bearing the name of a shop, e.g. grocer, greengrocer, draper, ironmonger. An identical set of cards for each team (with different coloured cards or ink for each team), each set consisting of the names of six articles for each shop.

Purpose: Observation.

The tins are hidden over a given area, the Sixes in files with a shuffled set of cards in front of each file.

The first Cub in each Six takes one card from his heap and runs with it until he can post it in the correct shop. He then returns and touches off the second Cub. This is repeated until all the cards are exhausted. Points are given for speed and for accuracy.

C. M. CLUTTERBUCK.

6. DUMB SALESMAN

Gear: Table.

Purpose: Imagination.

One Cub stands behind table, in front of Pack in semicircle. He demonstrates the uses of an imaginary article to his "customers," but no word must be spoken. The first Cub to buy, i.e. the Cub who guesses the article, takes the place of the salesman, and tries to sell his own wares.

IAGOO.

7. BUY, BUY, BUY!

Gear: Four envelopes approximately 10 in. x 8 in. and eight drawing pins. Any number of slips of paper each containing the name of article which may be bought at any of the shops.

Purpose: Alertness.

The four envelopes are all drawing-pinned to a wall or chair back, each envelope being marked "Fishmonger," "Butcher," "Grocer," "Greengrocer" respectively.

Each Six has a pile of slips of paper on each of which is written the name of an article which may be purchased from any one of the shops. The slips should be a different colour for each Six. On the word "go" each Cub takes a slip and puts it into the "shop" from which he thinks he would purchase the article. When all the slips have been used each shop should be checked by an Old Wolf. Each correct "buy" scores a point for Six. Six with most correct "buys" wins.

W. N. PAUL.

8. WHICH SHOP?

Purpose: Observation test.

The Cubs are lined up in Sixes and numbered off, with a chalk circle at a distance from each Six. Akela asks for a pound of butter, or a box of matches, or anything else he can think of, and calls a number. Cubs of that number run up, jump into the circle, and give the name of the shop where the article can be purchased. They should be able to give the full name of the shop, not simply "the butcher," or "the baker," etc.

W. M. PEIRCE.



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PATROL ANIMALS AND BIRDS

By MICHAEL BLACKMORE

XIII - THE BLACKBIRD

Since I started to write this series of articles a year ago some readers of THE SCOUTER have written to ask me the best ways of organising a Troop to watch certain birds and mammals. It has not always been easy to give a helpful answer because so much depends on the habits and distribution of particular species. Nocturnal creatures are rather difficult to watch even if you live in a district where they are fairly numerous, and when it comes to studying the habits of falcons and hawks, for example, I have hesitated to suggest that even an adventurous Patrol should be encouraged to climb tall trees and cliffs which these birds generally choose for their nesting sites.

But the blackbird presents no difficulty at all. It is common everywhere, is easily recognised, and because it lives in our gardens all the year round its habits can be observed without moving far from one's own doorstep. If every Scout were to keep a diary in which he wrote down everything he noticed about blackbirds over a long period it might well contain facts that are new to science or at any rate rarely recorded. I mention this because it is a curious fact that many of our common garden birds have been neglected in favour of rarer species. Indeed, there are plenty of bird-watchers who pride themselves on their knowledge of rarities but have seldom bothered to devote any time to the life-history of the blackbird.

The blackbird belongs to the same family as the thrush, and although the male is distinctive enough with his jet-black plumage and bright yellow bill his mate is sooty brown in colour and has a brownish beak, which is why she is sometimes mistaken for a song-thrush. But it is quite a simple matter to distinguish the two species if you remember that the female blackbird's speckled underside is always darker than that of the song-thrush. Again, the songs of the two species may cause some confusion at first but the lower pitch and more liquid tone of the blackbird with its unbroken phrases are quite distinctive. To put it differently: the thrush brings out each note clearly with staccato brilliance and a good deal of repetition, whereas the blackbird runs through his song passage in a much more leisurely manner and sings with a more flute-like tone.

Some blackbirds are better performers than others and occasionally you may hear one that has added to his repertoire by imitating the calls of other birds. The most versatile specimen I have heard lived near the sea-front at a popular coastal resort where an orchestra used to give an open-air concert during the summer months. This bird soon mastered the first two bars of the national anthem with which the orchestra ended each performance and it even learnt to whistle a few notes from popular tunes such as "Rule Britannia," "Land of Hope and Glory" and "I do like to be beside the Sea-side"!

Another blackbird who lived in the garden at my old home could mimic perfectly the whistle which the dairyman made when he delivered the milk every morning. This specimen always nested in a small shrubbery at the side of our house, and if he saw a rival cock anywhere inside his chosen territory he would chase it with all the fury he could command until the intruder disappeared. There was nothing very surprising about this because it is well known that many species of birds will guard their territory jealously during the nesting season, but this particular blackbird seemed quite unable to tell the difference between a genuine rival and his own reflection. He often used to perch on a branch just outside the window and if he caught sight of his reflection in the glass he would break off his song abruptly, fly down to the window-sill and start attacking his imagined enemy by vigorously pecking the glass! He kept up this performance for several minutes until something distracted his attention elsewhere, but he would return to his favourite perch two or three times during the day and begin the whole thing again until the window was opened and the offending rival "removed"!

Although blackbirds often fight each other these battles are not very serious affairs as a rule. On one occasion, however, I watched a fight in which the loser was completely pecked to death and the surprising thing was that the victim was not a cock, as one might have expected, but a hen. Female blackbirds will also chase each other away from the nesting territory but the incident I have just described is the only one I have seen in which a cock has killed a member of the opposite sex.

Although one often comes across blackbirds that are partially white in colour, true albinos with pink eyes are very uncommon. The most unusual brood I know of was reared in Devon in 1946. and consisted of four youngsters. Two were complete albinos with pink eyes, the third was light cinnamon and only the fourth was normal in colour. The parents were also normal-coloured birds but both of them must have carried a factor in their reproductive cells known as an "albino-gene." All inherited characteristics are caused by genes of one sort or another and in this case the "albino-gene," though not strong enough to affect the colour of either parent individually, became very powerful indeed when they mated and produced offspring. Although the subject is too complicated to explain briefly it is an interesting fact that the chances of two blackbirds mating, each carrying an "albino gene," are extremely unusual. With tame animals, however, it is quite another matter because in captivity selective breeding experiments can be controlled fairly easily with the result that certain abnormal strains, including albinos, are often developed.

Blackbirds eat a mixed diet of insects, earthworms and vegetable matter, and during the summer they can be rather a nuisance in orchards. Thirst is probably the reason for their fruit-eating habits but if you provide birds with plenty of water they seem less inclined to damage ripe fruit. A friend of mine who has a large garden always makes sure the bird-bath is full during dry weather and he tells me that because of this he rarely loses any of his raspberries and gooseberries. It is certainly an idea worth trying if you happen to grow fruit.

Blackbirds occasionally develop a taste for unusual items of food. They have been known to catch elvers or young eels in shallow streams and I have seen a cock bird during winter digging in the sand at low tide and pulling out marine worms.



DEAR EDITOR

Scouting Today

DEAR EDITOR,

I have just read Lionel Pope's letter in the December SCOUTER. Three loud and hearty cheers for him. He has socked the hammer right on the heads of many interfering Scouters and I can only hope it will put them out.

Too much of our Scouting is run by Scouters and not the boys. The trouble is that a huge number of Scouters are not content with just helping a boy plan his life. They want to run it for him. Yes, even live it for him. Too many of them practise Amateur Svengalism. Only the simple boys fall under this spell; the others, being wise, clear off.

The best Troop is where the Patrol Leader has more to say than the Scouter.

The worst Troop is where the Scouter says, "You'll do as I say - or else."

Filey Conferences (and likewise others) are grand get-togethers and they do help a Scouter, but I am still not certain as to how much they do for the boy. To every one row among the boys there are a hundred among Scouters. A boy can forgive in a second - a Scouter? I believe in Senior Scouting, for it is then the boy is of an age to stand on his own feet. Too many Scouters still feel they want to carry them. The average Good Father allows his son far more freedom in Thought, Word and Deed than many a Scouter who not only wants to plan too much but wants to know too much.

What has happened to the trust we once preserved for a boy? What has happened to the faith we have in him? Much of it is being warped by too much planning, by thinking for him instead of him. If he falls, let's be there to pick him up but for heaven's sake don't wrap him in cotton wool. Give him his head now and then for he might have more in it than you have.

If you want a boy to trust you, give him ample proof that you trust him. Be a Scouter and not a doting mother. . . . We've got too many mothers of both sexes in the Movement.

Mr. Pope asks, "Can we go back?" We don't have to - we don't want to. Remember the Boy is To-morrow, we are Yesterday. Let the Boy play the most important part in our Game Today.

RALPH READER,
Chief Scout's Commissioner

Patrol Leadership

DEAR EDITOR,

At a session on Court of Honour during a recent P.L.'s' Weekend organised by the University Scout Group in Oxford the P.L.'s were asked a few questions which we pass on to you as being an honest report of the state of the fifteen groups represented.

Although 91 per cent of these Groups have Courts of Honour, only 50 per cent of the total meet more than once each month. Only 14 per cent of the total have any control over the expenditure of Troop funds. Only 7 per cent of P.L.'s ever consult their Patrols before going to the Court, which probably arises from the fact that only 28 per cent of the Troops seem to have an agenda. In 35 per cent of the Troops the Scoutmaster takes the chair, although in almost every case the P.L.'s act as secretaries; in 7 per cent of the Troops no records of any useful sort are kept.

Figures being notoriously deceptive, we are hesitant in drawing any forthright conclusions from those we quote herein; yet it would seem that one point clearly arises: Scouters are in many cases failing to develop their P.L.'s through the Court of Honour. If brother Scouters feel that they have advice to offer on the subject we would be glad to learn. The matter of the part played by P.L.'s in the Court of Honour is a vital one for the future of the Troops.

DAVID ALLEN,
*Scout Training Secretary, O.U.S. Group,
S.M., 8th Oxford.*

Queen's Scouts

DEAR EDITOR,

I have just read the letter on "Queen's Scouts," over the name of Andrew G. Dickson, and wonder why he should be so dismayed over the presentation of the Queen's Scout Certificate to a Senior Scout who was fifteen years plus three days old at the time?

I see nothing to be dismayed over; such an award need not necessarily strike a blow at the Senior Scout system.

Take heart Mr. Secretary Dickson, and, if the following facts and dates culled from this Association's records come to your notice, your faith in those who trained your Senior Scout will surely be restored.

Our particular Scout was enrolled as Tenderfoot about one month after his thirteenth birthday, the enrolment date being February 2nd, 1941 - ignoring the various intermediate steps, the King's Scout Certificate was presented on September 1st, 1942, eighteen months plus from enrolment and at the age of fourteen years seven months. Now following along the lines of your letter this effort at the age of adolescence should have had an adverse effect on his character - well let's continue the record and see how things "panned out?"

He became Troop Leader, Instructor and A.S.M. in due course, and at the age of twenty years six months took his degree, no mean feat whilst keeping up full Scout activities.

It just boils down to this, that none of us who have taken on the task of training these lads, can assume that any two boys are alike in character, capabilities or disposition and what is hard work for one boy is dead easy for another.

A. SUMMUS,
A.D.C., Long Eaton and District.

Heraldry in the Troop

DEAR EDITOR,

I have followed with interest in The Scout your recent series of articles, by Michael Andrew, on "Heraldry in the Troop" and feel that they deserve a word of appreciative comment, both for their content and for their attractive presentation.

I am in no way connected with your Movement. I am a teacher of Art, and have devoted a reasonable amount of time to the study of heraldry. I feel, as evidently do your contributor and yourselves, that if Troops, clubs, etc., are going to produce their own badges or arms, then wherever possible they ought to be well designed and carried out, should do no less than justice to the organisation they represent, and should offend as little as the knowledge of their designers permit the traditions of the art.

I am prompted by my love for the traditions of heraldry to make the suggestion which follows, at the, same time wishing to make it clear that in no way do I want to appear to be poking my nose into business which has nothing to do with me. If any Troop or Troops you may know of, or come to hear of, whilst having a good idea for a coat of arms, find that they lack the necessary local skill for carrying their design out, or for some reason require something verging more on the "professional" standard of execution, I shall be very pleased to assist by carrying out the painting of their arms for them. Since I am a graduate teacher of art. I am naturally not unskilled with the brush, and of course there would be no question of payment of any kind being made for the service. I have tried on many occasions asking classes of boys to design a badge (after, of course, suitable advice being given on the suitability of various types of treatment, and stressing, as did your correspondent, the desirability of a simple approach) and have been horrified by the mass of irrelevant details they seem always to squeeze into their shields. It may even be that a word of advice here and there on the design itself might not be out of place.

If my suggestion seems to you to be a sensible one, I should be glad to visit the Scouter of any Troop within reasonable reach of North London to discuss the matter with him, or to correspond if the distance were prohibitive. It will be appreciated that I should be unable to cope with large numbers of "orders" at once, although each one should not take more than a week or so in its execution. Any Troops that might be concerned could write to me through you.

May I conclude, Sir, by offering my best wishes as an outsider for your very interesting periodical, and for the Boy Scout Movement in general.

B. T. TARR, A.T.D.

The Transfer System

DEAR EDITOR,

Three cheers for the Transfer System. In April I issued a transfer form for a Wolf Cub emigrating to the United States, this month part of the form was returned saying the Cub was now a member of the 404 Pack, Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A.

B.-P. would have liked it this way.

D. M. SMITH,
C.M., 7th Acton, Middlesex.

The Crux of the Problem

DEAR EDITOR,

I have been interested in the correspondence running through The Scouter and I feel prompted to ask - What should a Scouter's policy be over the "bad lads" in his Troop? Should he stand no nonsense and turn them out or is that a confession of failure? It is obviously impossible to lay down a hard and fast rule, as circumstances vary so much from Troop to Troop and from boy to boy, but I think we can draw a few general conclusions.

Let us bear in mind all the time our main purpose - We are a character-training Movement and our aim is the welfare of the boy. Obviously if we turn away all the weak and bad characters and retain only those who do not need much help we are not allowing ourselves much scope for carrying our main purpose out. How *do* we carry out this purpose, however? How do we bring our influence to bear? I would say ultimately through the Scouter, either directly or (more often) working through the influence of the Troop traditions. A simple example to show what I mean - A boy joins the Troop who is in the habit of using foul language. The Scouter may never know, as the offender will probably curb his tongue when the Scouter is about, and even if the Scouter does reprimand him the lad is used to being reprimanded by adults and his chief reaction will probably be to take more care not to get caught out. But his fellows are bound to hear him, and if they round on him how much greater will the effect be! Very nice, you may say, but how is one to get this sort of tradition? I would say through the attitude of the senior boys - who in most cases will be the Patrol Leaders and Seconds. I said it ultimately depended on the influence of the Scouter. He must have the complete trust and loyalty of his leaders so that they know his wishes and will do their best to carry them out. If he can obtain that he has it in his power to do great things. Suppose, however, that his senior boys are cynical, slack or indifferent. In those circumstances the Scouter has a most difficult task, and if he cannot inspire a better spirit I think a major operation is necessary. The senior boys are the salt of the Troop, but if the salt hath lost its savour.....

I knew a Troop once where the Scouter was very strict. Nothing but the best was good enough, and any boy who got slack was turned out forthwith. He got a jolly good Troop, but it did seem to me that he was retaining only the boys who would have made good anyway. They produced several King's Scouts, won the camping competition year after year and developed a very fine spirit. One of their Patrol Leaders once said to me that if they contemplated any activity they considered various ways of doing it and then chose the hardest. "Anybody can do things the easy way," he said, "but like to feel we're a cut above that." What a grand instrument a Troop with traditions like that could be in training a boy of weak character! But weak characters found it hard to keep the pace, and those who could not make the grade were not tolerated.

Going to the other extreme, how is the fellow with a bunch of slack and cynical seniors ever going to get any spirit at all? And if he does not, what hope has he of influencing his youngsters? That seems to have been G.S.M.'s problem, and I think he did right to perform his "major operation." It is all very well to talk of the one sinner that repenteth, but if the sinners are setting the standard what is one to do? I would say to start with be as strict as you like. Do all you can to get established that tradition of trust and "doing things properly," even if you have to eliminate some of your weaker brethren in the process.

Then, with strong traditions well established, try to keep your "bad lads" all you can. Scouting will do them a power of good. But if your Troop is young and the traditions weak, so that the influence of the "bad lads" is stronger, I think the major operation is necessary. Get rid of them. They will poison the Troop traditions and do harm that it may take years to eradicate. It may seem a confession of defeat, but - if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off.

C. O. L. FINLOW,
G.S.M., 11th Stafford.

BOOKS

LEISURE READING

The Blue Continent, by Folco Quilici (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 21s.); *Danger My Ally*, by F. A. Mitchell Hedges (Elek, 18s.).

The Blue Continent is the name given by an Italian expedition led by the author to the vast depths of the Red Sea, where sharks, mantas, and barracudas abound. It was J. B. Priestley who, in one of his fine broadcasts in the starry and stormy days of 1940, said: "There are people who really enjoy being in danger. They fall in love with what seems to them its beautiful, bright face." Here is a tale of such men. Although underwater-escapade stories are becoming not uncommon, here is one that ranks with the very best. Exciting incidents as one would expect through its pages, but the book is educational in the very best sense as one explores vicariously this strange new world. There are excellent photographs in colour and black and white. There is no lack of adventurous living in the world to-day for those who are interested in finding it.

Mr. Mitchell Hedges has been interested in finding it from his early schooldays when he threw an inkwell at a headmaster of a public school who was about to trash him before the whole school, and in the excitement which followed ran out of the school for ever. From that time he has not been able to resist for long the new trail and the call of the far horizon. Fighting, gambling, exploring, he was forever tumbling into adventures, most of them laced with peril, many of them almost incredible. The little boy who had courage enough - moral and physical - to go his own way was indeed the father of the man. The incidents of his life make good and unusual reading.

R. H.

Thames Estuary, by William Addison; *The Vale of Pewsey*, by H. W. Timperley. (Robert Hale: Regional Books, 18s. each.)

Mr. Addison's book is immensely entertaining. He knows his region back to front and inside out, through space and through time. If Thames is history, so are its foreshores and creeks and its riparian towns and Mr. Addison lights our way, offering his learning with ease and delighting us with all manner of curious knowledge. There are the usual fine photographs one associates with this series. This is altogether a book which enchants as it informs and those far from the Thames will enjoy the pictures, pageantry and personalities of this book as much as those who gaze upon sweet Thames every day.

The Vale of Pewsey is in Wiltshire, a county of austere beauty. It lies near enough sandwiched between the Marlborough Downs and Salisbury Plain, and Mr. Timperley discovers to us his rather miniature region in detail. He writes in sentences as leisured and beguiling as a summer's day:

"The creamy-white foam of meadowsweet was there, and drops of cream, green-tinged comfrey bells hanging above spreading clusters of large leaves, and upright arrays of the water-side willow-herb called codlins-and-cream.... and again:

"On this early November afternoon there was yet no winter in the Vale. If the sun was a waning fire, the air was mild. The deep-toned coppery brown of the beeches had become a dwindling smoulder in the smudgy darkness the groves and clumps made on the open valley sides..."

Lovely country pictures to comfort those of us immersed in towns. Why, the whole lovely countryside surrounds you as you read.

Both these books add great distinction to scenes which will long give delight.

R.H.

Franklin of the Arctic, by Richard S. Lambert (The Bodley Head, 10s. 6d.).

In these days, I wonder how many people could really tell us much about Sir John Franklin. During the last century he was acclaimed a national hero for his attempts to find the elusive North-West Passage and the North Pole.

This illustrated book is a biography of a great man, with a fearless adventurous spirit, keen scientific brain and a deep and trusting faith in God. Even as a boy he served under Nelson at the Battle of Copenhagen and afterwards sailed with Capt. Mathew Flinders on a voyage of exploration along the northern coast of Australia. Subsequently he took part in the Battle of Trafalgar as a midshipman on H.M.S. *Bellerophon*. In 1819 he was commissioned to go on an overland surveying expedition to find the North Pole and made a second unsuccessful attempt in 1825 but added invaluable information to our knowledge of the Arctic. Finally, in 1845 he attempted to find the North-West Passage and his body lies somewhere in the frozen wastes of King William Land.

The story is written clearly and does justice to the rich and incredibly exciting life of Britain's greatest Arctic explorer. The book is particularly recommended to Senior Scouts. **G. F. W.**

You'll Die in Singapore, by Charles McCormac (Robert Hale Ltd. 12s. 6d.).

If you are busy and come by this book, don't start to read it, for, once you have commenced to do so, you will have to finish it. This is sufficient recommendation. The story concerns the escape, and what an escape, of the author from a Jap P.O.W. cage, and his subsequent adventures. The book is written in a pleasant and attractive manner. It is frank, factual and unadorned and leaves one with a feeling of great admiration for the men who endured so much and displayed such courage.

It does not attempt in any way to glamorise war, the book has the opposite effect and because of its frankness - there are no details omitted - I can only recommend it to Rovers and adult members of the Movement and, of the latter, male members. The book contains a good annotated map which makes the story easy to follow from start to finish. **L. E. STRINGER.**

Crocodile Fever, by Laurence Earl (Collins, 12s. 6d.).

This is a story of an unusual man whose one ambition in life was to shoot crocodiles. In the process of doing so he sacrificed home, wife and family, made and lost large sums of money and became a sick and neurotic man. But he certainly found adventure, and this tale of how he developed his methods of hunting crocodiles by night, often wading into the Zambezi River to shoot them at close range will thrill the hardiest reader.

In other ways, however, this is an unsatisfactory book. Mr. Earl adopts the method of recounting his first meeting with Dempster the hunter and then, from the information acquired from him, purports to tell his life story. This does not always ring true. Mr. Earl's imagination and the liberal doses of local colour which he adds leave one with the feeling that good material has been over "written-up." A simpler, more straightforward tale would have carried greater conviction for adventures such as Dempster's will usually speak for themselves. Unfortunately, too, one does not altogether like the picture of the man that emerges from this book and his blind craze for the indiscriminate slaughter of crocodiles and hippos which seems to have ruined his life - not to mention that of his wife and children. **ROBIN GOLD.**

Single or Return, by Fritz Wentzel (William Kimber, 15s.).

One would be doubtful about recommending another new escape story at this time of day unless it were both unusual and very good. This is both. Told by U-boat Commander Wentzel, it is the story of a group of prisoners who attempted to escape from a camp in England and later in Canada. The story is both entertaining and of interest: these might so easily have been young men of our own families: which again recommends to our attention the futility of war. **R. H.**

General Gordon, by Lord Elton (Collins, 25s.).

"Chinese" Gordon will always attract biographers: the British prefer their heroes slightly eccentric and Gordon was much more than slightly - he was definitely odd. A sword and Bible man, unstable and abnormal, with a set of values all of his own, he was nevertheless a guerrilla warfare leader of genius. His faith in God gave him a sense of compassion as well as a sense that he was, in a very special way, divinely inspired: he understood boys better than adults and in a later age might have founded a Movement!

Lord Elton has written with great clarity an excellent biography which you will very much enjoy reading. It may also lead you to read other accounts of this extraordinary man (the incidents of whose life make romantic fiction seem pale and unreal), and whose intricate character is of such absorbing interest. **R. H.**

For Rover Scouts

The Criminal Law, by F. T. Giles (Penguin Books Ltd., 2s. 6d.).

How many times have we listened to arguments in the den which in the first case arise because Fred has got a summons for riding down a one-way street, or Skip, his mind some other place, has driven his car over a crossing when the lights were red? The very mixed ideas on the rights and wrongs of the law, expressed not by Fred or Skip but by the Knowalls makes most interesting listening (but not if you happen to have been "bashing the beat" at one time).

Now comes along a Pelican book, *The Criminal Law*, by F. T. Giles, who as Clerk to the Clerkenwell Magistrates Court knows all the answers. Lucid and simple in its explanation of the offences, points on prosecution and defence, with references for those who want proofs and quotations for the whys and wherefores, plus what can be dished out in the way of penalties, make this book a helpful one for the Crew library. Added to this is at the commencement of the book a detailed account of a trial for murder, which will assist those Crews who indulge in mock trials as part of their training at least to make the proceedings authentic, and if your interest leads you to attend the courts this book will undoubtedly help you. Read it beforehand to get the idea of procedure and court language. After all the courts are quite a big part of everyday life even if the majority of us only attend them if we have to. **J. S.**

A History of Modern China, by Kenneth Scott Latourette (Penguin Books Ltd., 2s. 6d.).

I always feel that real history of a country can only be found in the knowledge of the way of life and the results of the influence of their leaders' machinations on the common or garden folk.

This book is to my mind not easy reading. The author jumps from one period to another all in the space of half a page, but certainly he produced in me an intense dislike for the methods used to "modernise" a country. There is no doubt that by and large the Greater Powers, all anxious to "muscle in" on an untapped source of wealth, in a country backward in many ways and with a huge population (all prospective customers for commodities), used as pawns those young intellectuals who sought to be leaders of their race.

The last thirty odd pages proved, to me, to be the most interesting part of the book. Its frank statement of what has and is happening under the leadership of the Communistic regime and its influence on the life of the ordinary folk certainly proves that Marx was right when he wrote "that man in his endeavour to emancipate himself would explore every avenue of error." China has had plenty of help from the Western world in its "exploration" and the author of this book as an American has been very fair in his writings.

A good book for any Rover who is not quite sure how China has got to where she is. **J.S.**

DEAR EDITOR

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At a session on Court of Honour during a recent P.L.'s' Weekend organised by the University Scout Group in Oxford the P.L.'s were asked a few questions which we pass on to you as being an honest report of the state of the fifteen groups represented.

Although 91 per cent of these Groups have Courts of Honour, only 50 per cent of the total meet more than once each month. Only 14 per cent of the total have any control over the expenditure of Troop funds. Only 7 per cent of P.L.'s ever consult their Patrols before going to the Court, which probably arises from the fact that only 28 per cent of the Troops seem to have an agenda. In 35 per cent of the Troops the Scoutmaster takes the chair, although in almost every case the P.L.'s act as secretaries; in 7 per cent of the Troops no records of any useful sort are kept.

Figures being notoriously deceptive, we are hesitant in drawing any forthright conclusions from those we quote herein; yet it would seem that one point clearly arises: Scouters are in many cases failing to develop their P.L.'s through the Court of Honour. If brother Scouters feel that they have advice to offer on the subject we would be glad to learn. The matter of the part played by P.L.'s in the Court of Honour is a vital one for the future of the Troops.

DAVID ALLEN,
*Scout Training Secretary, O.U.S. Group,
S.M., 8th Oxford.*

Queen's Scouts

DEAR EDITOR,

I have just read the letter on "Queen's Scouts," over the name of Andrew G. Dickson, and wonder why he should be so dismayed over the presentation of the Queen's Scout Certificate to a Senior Scout who was fifteen years plus three days old at the time?

I see nothing to be dismayed over; such an award need not necessarily strike a blow at the Senior Scout system.

Take heart Mr. Secretary Dickson, and, if the following facts and dates culled from this Association's records come to your notice, your faith in those who trained your Senior Scout will surely be restored.

Our particular Scout was enrolled as Tenderfoot about one month after his thirteenth birthday, the enrolment date being February 2nd, 1941 - ignoring the various intermediate steps, the King's Scout Certificate was presented on September 1st, 1942, eighteen months plus from enrolment and at the age of fourteen years seven months. Now following along the lines of your letter this effort at the age of adolescence should have had an adverse effect on his character - well let's continue the record and see how things "panned out?"

He became Troop Leader, Instructor and A.S.M. in due course, and at the age of twenty years six months took his degree, no mean feat whilst keeping up full Scout activities.

It just boils down to this, that none of us who have taken on the task of training these lads, can assume that any two boys are alike in character, capabilities or disposition and what is hard work for one boy is dead easy for another.

A. SUMMUS,
A.D.C., Long Eaton and District.

Heraldry in the Troop

DEAR EDITOR,

I have followed with interest in The Scout your recent series of articles, by Michael Andrew, on "Heraldry in the Troop" and feel that they deserve a word of appreciative comment, both for their content and for their attractive presentation.

I am in no way connected with your Movement. I am a teacher of Art, and have devoted a reasonable amount of time to the study of heraldry. I feel, as evidently do your contributor and yourselves, that if Troops, clubs, etc., are going to produce their own badges or arms, then wherever possible they ought to be well designed and carried out, should do no less than justice to the organisation they represent, and should offend as little as the knowledge of their designers permit the traditions of the art.

I am prompted by my love for the traditions of heraldry to make the suggestion which follows, at the, same time wishing to make it clear that in no way do I want to appear to be poking my nose into business which has nothing to do with me. If any Troop or Troops you may know of, or come to hear of, whilst having a good idea for a coat of arms, find that they lack the necessary local skill for carrying their design out, or for some reason require something verging more on the "professional" standard of execution, I shall be very pleased to assist by carrying out the painting of their arms for them. Since I am a graduate teacher of art. I am naturally not unskilled with the brush, and of course there would be no question of payment of any kind being made for the service. I have tried on many occasions asking classes of boys to design a badge (after, of course, suitable advice being given on the suitability of various types of treatment, and stressing, as did your correspondent, the desirability of a simple approach) and have been horrified by the mass of irrelevant details they seem always to squeeze into their shields. It may even be that a word of advice here and there on the design itself might not be out of place.

If my suggestion seems to you to be a sensible one, I should be glad to visit the Scouter of any Troop within reasonable reach of North London to discuss the matter with him, or to correspond if the distance were prohibitive. It will be appreciated that I should be unable to cope with large numbers of "orders" at once, although each one should not take more than a week or so in its execution. Any Troops that might be concerned could write to me through you.

May I conclude, Sir, by offering my best wishes as an outsider for your very interesting periodical, and for the Boy Scout Movement in general.

B. T. TARR, A.T.D.

The Transfer System

DEAR EDITOR,

Three cheers for the Transfer System. In April I issued a transfer form for a Wolf Cub emigrating to the United States, this month part of the form was returned saying the Cub was now a member of the 404 Pack, Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A.

B.-P. would have liked it this way.

D. M. SMITH,

C.M., 7th Acton, Middlesex.

The Crux of the Problem

DEAR EDITOR,

I have been interested in the correspondence running through The Scouter and I feel prompted to ask - What should a Scouter's policy be over the "bad lads" in his Troop? Should he stand no nonsense and turn them out or is that a confession of failure? It is obviously impossible to lay down a hard and fast rule, as circumstances vary so much from Troop to Troop and from boy to boy, but I think we can draw a few general conclusions.

Let us bear in mind all the time our main purpose - We are a character-training Movement and our aim is the welfare of the boy. Obviously if we turn away all the weak and bad characters and retain only those who do not need much help we are not allowing ourselves much scope for carrying our main purpose out. How *do* we carry out this purpose, however? How do we bring our influence to bear? I would say ultimately through the Scouter, either directly or (more often) working through the influence of the Troop traditions. A simple example to show what I mean - A boy joins the Troop who is in the habit of using foul language. The Scouter may never know, as the offender will probably curb his tongue when the Scouter is about, and even if the Scouter does reprimand him the lad is used to being reprimanded by adults and his chief reaction will probably be to take more care not to get caught out. But his fellows are bound to hear him, and if they round on him how much greater will the effect be! Very nice, you may say, but how is one to get this sort of tradition? I would say through the attitude of the senior boys - who in most cases will be the Patrol Leaders and Seconds. I said it ultimately depended on the influence of the Scouter. He must have the complete trust and loyalty of his leaders so that they know his wishes and will do their best to carry them out. If he can obtain that he has it in his power to do great things. Suppose, however, that his senior boys are cynical, slack or indifferent. In those circumstances the Scouter has a most difficult task, and if he cannot inspire a better spirit I think a major operation is necessary. The senior boys are the salt of the Troop, but if the salt hath lost its savour.....

I knew a Troop once where the Scouter was very strict. Nothing but the best was good enough, and any boy who got slack was turned out forthwith. He got a jolly good Troop, but it did seem to me that he was retaining only the boys who would have made good anyway. They produced several King's Scouts, won the camping competition year after year and developed a very fine spirit. One of their Patrol Leaders once said to me that if they contemplated any activity they considered various ways of doing it and then chose the hardest. "Anybody can do things the easy way," he said, "but like to feel we're a cut above that." What a grand instrument a Troop with traditions like that could be in training a boy of weak character! But weak characters found it hard to keep the pace, and those who could not make the grade were not tolerated.

Going to the other extreme, how is the fellow with a bunch of slack and cynical seniors ever going to get any spirit at all? And if he does not, what hope has he of influencing his youngsters? That seems to have been G.S.M.'s problem, and I think he did right to perform his "major operation." It is all very well to talk of the one sinner that repenteth, but if the sinners are setting the standard what is one to do? I would say to start with be as strict as you like. Do all you can to get established that tradition of trust and "doing things properly," even if you have to eliminate some of your weaker brethren in the process.

Then, with strong traditions well established, try to keep your "bad lads" all you can. Scouting will do them a power of good. But if your Troop is young and the traditions weak, so that the influence of the "bad lads" is stronger, I think the major operation is necessary. Get rid of them. They will poison the Troop traditions and do harm that it may take years to eradicate. It may seem a confession of defeat, but - if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off.

C. O. L. FINLOW,
G.S.M., 11th Stafford.

BOOKS

LEISURE READING

The Blue Continent, by Folco Quilici (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 21s.); *Danger My Ally*, by F. A. Mitchell Hedges (Elek, 18s.).

The Blue Continent is the name given by an Italian expedition led by the author to the vast depths of the Red Sea, where sharks, mantas, and barracudas abound. It was J. B. Priestley who, in one of his fine broadcasts in the starry and stormy days of 1940, said: "There are people who really enjoy being in danger. They fall in love with what seems to them its beautiful, bright face." Here is a tale of such men. Although underwater-escapade stories are becoming not uncommon, here is one that ranks with the very best. Exciting incidents as one would expect through its pages, but the book is educational in the very best sense as one explores vicariously this strange new world. There are excellent photographs in colour and black and white. There is no lack of adventurous living in the world to-day for those who are interested in finding it.

Mr. Mitchell Hedges has been interested in finding it from his early schooldays when he threw an inkwell at a headmaster of a public school who was about to trash him before the whole school, and in the excitement which followed ran out of the school for ever. From that time he has not been able to resist for long the new trail and the call of the far horizon. Fighting, gambling, exploring, he was forever tumbling into adventures, most of them laced with peril, many of them almost incredible. The little boy who had courage enough - moral and physical - to go his own way was indeed the father of the man. The incidents of his life make good and unusual reading.

R. H.

Thames Estuary, by William Addison; *The Vale of Pewsey*, by H. W. Timperley. (Robert Hale: Regional Books, 18s. each.)

Mr. Addison's book is immensely entertaining. He knows his region back to front and inside out, through space and through time. If Thames is history, so are its foreshores and creeks and its riparian towns and Mr. Addison lights our way, offering his learning with ease and delighting us with all manner of curious knowledge. There are the usual fine photographs one associates with this series. This is altogether a book which enchants as it informs and those far from the Thames will enjoy the pictures, pageantry and personalities of this book as much as those who gaze upon sweet Thames every day.

The Vale of Pewsey is in Wiltshire, a county of austere beauty. It lies near enough sandwiched between the Marlborough Downs and Salisbury Plain, and Mr. Timperley discovers to us his rather miniature region in detail. He writes in sentences as leisured and beguiling as a summer's day:

"The creamy-white foam of meadowsweet was there, and drops of cream, green-tinged comfrey bells hanging above spreading clusters of large leaves, and upright arrays of the water-side willow-herb called codlins-and-cream.... and again:

"On this early November afternoon there was yet no winter in the Vale. If the sun was a waning fire, the air was mild. The deep-toned coppery brown of the beeches had become a dwindling smoulder in the smudgy darkness the groves and clumps made on the open valley sides..."

Lovely country pictures to comfort those of us immersed in towns. Why, the whole lovely countryside surrounds you as you read.

Both these books add great distinction to scenes which will long give delight.

R.H.

Franklin of the Arctic, by Richard S. Lambert (The Bodley Head, 10s. 6d.).

In these days, I wonder how many people could really tell us much about Sir John Franklin. During the last century he was acclaimed a national hero for his attempts to find the elusive North-West Passage and the North Pole.

This illustrated book is a biography of a great man, with a fearless adventurous spirit, keen scientific brain and a deep and trusting faith in God. Even as a boy he served under Nelson at the Battle of Copenhagen and afterwards sailed with Capt. Mathew Flinders on a voyage of exploration along the northern coast of Australia. Subsequently he took part in the Battle of Trafalgar as a midshipman on H.M.S. *Bellerophon*. In 1819 he was commissioned to go on an overland surveying expedition to find the North Pole and made a second unsuccessful attempt in 1825 but added invaluable information to our knowledge of the Arctic. Finally, in 1845 he attempted to find the North-West Passage and his body lies somewhere in the frozen wastes of King William Land.

The story is written clearly and does justice to the rich and incredibly exciting life of Britain's greatest Arctic explorer. The book is particularly recommended to Senior Scouts. **G. F. W.**

You'll Die in Singapore, by Charles McCormac (Robert Hale Ltd. 12s. 6d.).

If you are busy and come by this book, don't start to read it, for, once you have commenced to do so, you will have to finish it. This is sufficient recommendation. The story concerns the escape, and what an escape, of the author from a Jap P.O.W. cage, and his subsequent adventures. The book is written in a pleasant and attractive manner. It is frank, factual and unadorned and leaves one with a feeling of great admiration for the men who endured so much and displayed such courage.

It does not attempt in any way to glamorise war, the book has the opposite effect and because of its frankness - there are no details omitted - I can only recommend it to Rovers and adult members of the Movement and, of the latter, male members. The book contains a good annotated map which makes the story easy to follow from start to finish. **L. E. STRINGER.**

Crocodile Fever, by Laurence Earl (Collins, 12s. 6d.).

This is a story of an unusual man whose one ambition in life was to shoot crocodiles. In the process of doing so he sacrificed home, wife and family, made and lost large sums of money and became a sick and neurotic man. But he certainly found adventure, and this tale of how he developed his methods of hunting crocodiles by night, often wading into the Zambezi River to shoot them at close range will thrill the hardiest reader.

In other ways, however, this is an unsatisfactory book. Mr. Earl adopts the method of recounting his first meeting with Dempster the hunter and then, from the information acquired from him, purports to tell his life story. This does not always ring true. Mr. Earl's imagination and the liberal doses of local colour which he adds leave one with the feeling that good material has been over "written-up." A simpler, more straightforward tale would have carried greater conviction for adventures such as Dempster's will usually speak for themselves. Unfortunately, too, one does not altogether like the picture of the man that emerges from this book and his blind craze for the indiscriminate slaughter of crocodiles and hippos which seems to have ruined his life - not to mention that of his wife and children. **ROBIN GOLD.**

Single or Return, by Fritz Wentzel (William Kimber, 15s.).

One would be doubtful about recommending another new escape story at this time of day unless it were both unusual and very good. This is both. Told by U-boat Commander Wentzel, it is the story of a group of prisoners who attempted to escape from a camp in England and later in Canada. The story is both entertaining and of interest: these might so easily have been young men of our own families: which again recommends to our attention the futility of war. **R. H.**

General Gordon, by Lord Elton (Collins, 25s.).

"Chinese" Gordon will always attract biographers: the British prefer their heroes slightly eccentric and Gordon was much more than slightly - he was definitely odd. A sword and Bible man, unstable and abnormal, with a set of values all of his own, he was nevertheless a guerrilla warfare leader of genius. His faith in God gave him a sense of compassion as well as a sense that he was, in a very special way, divinely inspired: he understood boys better than adults and in a later age might have founded a Movement!

Lord Elton has written with great clarity an excellent biography which you will very much enjoy reading. It may also lead you to read other accounts of this extraordinary man (the incidents of whose life make romantic fiction seem pale and unreal), and whose intricate character is of such absorbing interest. **R. H.**

For Rover Scouts

The Criminal Law, by F. T. Giles (Penguin Books Ltd., 2s. 6d.).

How many times have we listened to arguments in the den which in the first case arise because Fred has got a summons for riding down a one-way street, or Skip, his mind some other place, has driven his car over a crossing when the lights were red? The very mixed ideas on the rights and wrongs of the law, expressed not by Fred or Skip but by the Knowalls makes most interesting listening (but not if you happen to have been "bashing the beat" at one time).

Now comes along a Pelican book, *The Criminal Law*, by F. T. Giles, who as Clerk to the Clerkenwell Magistrates Court knows all the answers. Lucid and simple in its explanation of the offences, points on prosecution and defence, with references for those who want proofs and quotations for the whys and wherefores, plus what can be dished out in the way of penalties, make this book a helpful one for the Crew library. Added to this is at the commencement of the book a detailed account of a trial for murder, which will assist those Crews who indulge in mock trials as part of their training at least to make the proceedings authentic, and if your interest leads you to attend the courts this book will undoubtedly help you. Read it beforehand to get the idea of procedure and court language. After all the courts are quite a big part of everyday life even if the majority of us only attend them if we have to. **J. S.**

A History of Modern China, by Kenneth Scott Latourette (Penguin Books Ltd., 2s. 6d.).

I always feel that real history of a country can only be found in the knowledge of the way of life and the results of the influence of their leaders' machinations on the common or garden folk.

This book is to my mind not easy reading. The author jumps from one period to another all in the space of half a page, but certainly he produced in me an intense dislike for the methods used to "modernise" a country. There is no doubt that by and large the Greater Powers, all anxious to "muscle in" on an untapped source of wealth, in a country backward in many ways and with a huge population (all prospective customers for commodities), used as pawns those young intellectuals who sought to be leaders of their race.

The last thirty odd pages proved, to me, to be the most interesting part of the book. Its frank statement of what has and is happening under the leadership of the Communistic regime and its influence on the life of the ordinary folk certainly proves that Marx was right when he wrote "that man in his endeavour to emancipate himself would explore every avenue of error." China has had plenty of help from the Western world in its "exploration" and the author of this book as an American has been very fair in his writings.

A good book for any Rover who is not quite sure how China has got to where she is. **J.S.**

HEADQUARTERS NOTICES

SENIOR SCOUTS

The Committee of the Council has decided that all Scouts between the ages of 15 and 18 should in future have the opportunity of being invested as, and called, Senior Scouts and be permitted to wear the same uniform - the only difference being that those in separate Senior Scout Patrols will wear Patrol patches instead of shoulder knots, and maroon P.L. stripes.

To be invested, the Scout must hold the First Class Badge or pass the initial test.

If he holds the First Class Badge, he must re-affirm the Scout Promise and satisfy his Scouter that he understands the Scout Promise and Law in accordance with his age and development.

If he is not in possession of the First Class Badge, the Scout must complete the initial test before he is invested.

The initial test is now as follows:-

(a) Pass or re-pass the Tenderfoot and Second Class tests.

(b) Hike or row a boat with a Senior Scout a distance of eight miles. He need not necessarily camp for the night, but will, in all cases, carry a pack properly packed by himself, erect a tent, light a fire, and cook meals for himself and his companion. On his return he shall give a verbal report to the Troop or Patrol.

(c) Satisfy his Scouter that he understands the Scout Promise and Law in accordance with his age and development and make or re-affirm the Scout Promise.

(d) (This test to be passed only by those who are new-comers to the Movement.) Have spent a total of at least three nights away from home in the company of Scouts (Senior Scouts where possible), sleeping in tent, hut, barn or similar shelter.

Note. - Should a boy not elect to be invested as a Senior Scout he will continue in the Boy Scout Troop but will only be permitted to wear uniform applicable to Boy Scouts.

GILWELL PARK

Applications are invited for the resident appointment of Training Instructor at Gilwell Park. Applicants must hold the Wood Badge, have recent experience as a Troop or Senior Troop Scouter, and be between 24 and 30 years of age and unmarried. There is no accommodation available for a married man.

The salary scale for the appointment, which is pensionable, is £450-£500 p.a., less a charge of £150 p.a. for board and lodging.

Applications should be made in writing to: The Camp Chief, Gilwell Park, Chingford, London, E.4.

PRESENTATION OF QUEEN'S SCOUT CERTIFICATES, 1955

The Royal Certificate, authorised and signed by H.M. The Queen, will be presented to Scouts who have gained the Queen's Scout Badge at two Receptions to be held at Gilwell Park over the weekends May 7th-8th and October 1st-2nd, 1955. The Certificates will be presented by Chief Scout's Commissioners and Headquarters Commissioners in the presence of the Chief Scout. The Chief Scout will be at Gilwell Park during the whole of both week-ends. When the Queen's Scout Badges are issued to Badge Secretaries, by the Equipment Department, each badge is accompanied by a prepaid postcard asking for details of the recipient's name, address, rank and Group, and whether he will be attending a Chief Scout's Reception. Should there, for any reason, be a delay in obtaining the card a letter will suffice. The Scout's name should be written clearly in block capitals, as otherwise the name may be inscribed wrongly on the Royal Certificate.

The completed card should be sent to I.H.Q. as soon as possible and applications must be received by April 9th for the May Reception and by September 10th for the October Reception, at the latest, in order to permit the necessary arrangements to be made. It will be appreciated if the card is sent to I.H.Q. as soon as it has been completed. If the Scout is unable to attend the Certificate will be completed and sent to his County Commissioner, who will arrange for its presentation locally. In order that the Queen's Scouts may avail themselves of the opportunity of attending one of the Chief Scout's Receptions, Local Associations and Group Committees might consider the possibility of helping with the cost of travelling.

Queen's Scouts will be responsible for their own tentage, cooking gear, etc., but detailed arrangements will be sent to them direct at least 14 days before the Reception. It is regretted that no arrangements can be made for Scouters or parents to attend. Some Scouts will have reported for their National Service before the Reception, but it is usually possible to obtain leave in order to receive the Queen's Scout Certificate. It is hoped that Queen's Scouts will take this opportunity of meeting the Chief Scout, and of camping at Gilwell Park with Queen's Scouts from many parts of the United Kingdom.

NATIONAL BOB-A-JOB WEEK, 1955

As announced in THE SCOUTER for August 1954 the National Bob-a-Job Week, 1955, will take place during the week April-11th-16th, which is Easter Week. In special cases where a Group or members of a Group are unable to do their jobs during the actual Bob-a-Job Week, they may do them immediately before or after, but in no circumstances later than April 22nd, 1955.

"BOY SCOUT"

The pageant play "Boy Scout," written and produced by Ralph Reader, will be presented in the Royal Albert Hall from June 13th to 18th, 1955. Further details will be published in due course.

COMMISSIONERS' DINNER

A Commissioners' Dinner, open to all Commissioners, will be held on Friday, April 22nd, 1955, at the Strand Corner House, Charing Cross, London, W.C.2, at 6.30 p.m. for 7 p.m. Tickets, price 17/6 each, may be obtained on application to the Administrative Secretary at L.H.Q.

H.R.H. THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT'S CHALLENGE SHIELD COMPETITION, 1955

This competition for rifle shooting will again be run under the control of the National Small-bore Rifle Association.

Full details, conditions and entry forms may be obtained from I.H.Q. The closing date for entries for the United Kingdom teams is March 28th, 1955; for the Overseas teams, May 3 1st, 1955.

Entries will be made in either the Junior Section for the competitors all under 16 years of age, or in the Senior Section for those under 25 years of age, on the day of the shoot. The competition is for teams of four competitors, two cards each.

The Secretary of the National Small-bore Rifle Association, Codrington House, 113 Southwark Street, London, S.E.1, would be pleased to put any Scout Troop in touch with its nearest rifle club, who may be able to provide training facilities and expert coaches. The club also may be able to assist with rifles, but Scouts would have to purchase ammunition used.

For a nominal annual subscription of 5/-, Groups who regularly practise rifle shooting may affiliate direct to the N.S.R.A. Particulars may be obtained from the Secretary of the N.S.R.A.

CAMPS AND VISITS ABROAD, 1955

Individuals and Groups of Scouts requiring help and advice from National Headquarters abroad are reminded that they must make application to the International Commissioner at I.H.Q. as early as possible and not later than March 31st next.

Those making their own arrangements with a Scouter or other person abroad and not requiring assistance from either I.H.Q. or National Headquarters abroad are asked to make application to the International Commissioner not later than one month prior to their visit.

CAMPING IN EIRE

For all camps in Eire approval of the International Commissioner at L.H.Q. must be obtained. Applications to camp must be sent to him by not later than May 1st whether or not help is required from I.H.Q. or from the National Headquarters in Eire. Before booking any site seek advice from the International Commissioner.

C. C. GOODHIND,
Administrative Secretary

NOTES AND NEWS

JANUARY PHOTOGRAPHS

This month's cover photograph is by Peter Pridham, of East Molesey, and was taken by the River Wey at Guildford. The lettering this year will be by Jack Trodd. The photos on page 3 are by Barratts Photo Press Ltd.

A.I.S.R. BRANCH OF THE B.-P. GUILD

The Annual General Meeting of the All-India Service Rover Branch of the B.-P. Guild of Old Scouts will be held on Saturday, February 5th, in the Girl Guides Library. The President of the Branch is General Sir Frank Messervex, K.C.S.L., K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O., and the Guest Speaker at this meeting will be Brig. E. E. Mockler-Ferryman, C.B., C.B.E., MC.

Following the Annual General Meeting, the Annual Re-union Dinner will take place at the Windsor Castle, Victoria, at 7 p.m., when the guest of the evening will be the Deputy Chief Scout, General Sir Rob Lockhart, K.C.B., C.L.E., MC.

METHODIST SCOUTERS' WEEK-END

The Third Annual Week-end of the uniformed organisations of Methodism will be held at Felden Lodge, Berkhamsted, Herts., on Friday - Sunday, February 11-13th. Scouters are earnestly invited to attend and can obtain details from District Youth Secretaries, The Association of Methodist Scouters, or from "Felden Lodge Week-end," M Y D. Ludgate Circus House, London, E.C.4.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCOUTERS' WEEK-END

A Scouters Week-end for Church of England Scouters will be held at Whalley Abbey near Blackburn, on March 12th and 13th. Assemble 4 pm. Saturday. Stamped and addressed envelope for programme and application form can be obtained from The Rev. H. Hardman, Chatburn Vicarage. Nr. Clitheroe, Lancs.

JAPA'FSE SCOUTER

A Japanese Scoutmaster. Michio Miyake, 196 2-Chome, Kita-izuocho Taisho-Ku, Osaka. Japan. would like to exchange letters with British Scouters.

THE SOAP BOX DERBY: 1955

All over the country Scout Groups are busy making their cars and trying them out ready for this great event. Is your Group taking part? It is not too late to enter.

This year, for the first time, there will be Two SECTIONS. SECTION 1 will be for FIRST YEAR ENTRIE, and will be open to any Scout Group which has not previously raced a car at any Soap Box Derby since 1939. There will be classes for Cubs, Scouts and Senior Scouts, with a special FIRST YEAR ENTRY TROPHY for the Champion in each class at the Regional Semi-Finals.

SECTION 2 is open to any Scout Group which has previously raced a car and the Champion Driver in each of the three Classes at the Semi-Finals will receive the REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TROPHY.

Heat winners in both sections will go forward to the Finals to compete for the Championships.

The Finals this year will be held at Morecambe, Lancs., on Saturday, September 3rd.

Send a postcard to "Soap Box Derby," The Boy Scouts Association, 25 Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1. for full details of the contest and an entry form.

I.H.Q. SPEAKERS' VISITS FOR FEBRUARY

5th	East Anglia Training Team Conference
12th/13th	Sussex Wolf Cub Palaver
12th/13th	North Wales Senior Scouts "Action and Ideas" Week-end
17th	Cambridge University Scout and Guide Club
19th/20th	Herefordshire Scouters' Conference
26th	Wood Green, Southgate, and Friern Barnet Patrol Leaders' Conference
26th	London Senior Scouts "Get-together"

GILWELL PARK

An Open Day of Work will be held at Gilwell on Sunday, February 27th. Offers of help from Rovers and Scouters, male and female, are welcome. A sandwich lunch will be provided for those who notify their willingness to come. Old clothes and a readiness to try a hand at anything are the only qualifications.

Specialist and Technical Courses will be held at Gilwell Park as follows: -

Specialist Courses

Group Scoutmasters' Training Course, March 5th/6th, 1955.

Technical Courses. *Open to all Scouters of the Troop and Group Scout-masters. Preference will be given to those who have been through the Part 2 Wood Badge Course.*

Training and Testing for Second Class, February 5th/6th, 1955.

Training and Testing for First Class, February 19th/20th, 1955.

All Week-end Courses assemble at 3.30 p.m. on the Saturday and finish at 4.30 p.m. on the Sunday. The Inclusive Fee for any course is £1. All Courses are housed in the Gilwell or Gilwellbury Hostels and all meals are provided.

Wood Badge Part I

Papers relative to Part I of the Wood Badge are obtainable from Gilwell Park. The fee for the Course is 4s. Applicants should state whether they wish to enter for the Cub, Scout or Rover Course. S.M.(S.) and A.S.M.(S.) should normally take the Scout Course. New questions are now available.

Wood Badge Courses, 1955

Cub Courses are open to all appropriate Warrant Holders of eighteen years of age and over:

No. 134 Monday, March 21st—Saturday, March 26th (Indoor).

No. 135 Sunday, May 22nd—Friday, May 27th

No. 136 Monday, June 13th—Saturday, June 18th

No. 137 Monday, July 4th—Saturday, July 9th

No. 138 Monday, July 18th—Saturday, July 23rd

No. 139 Monday, August 8th—Saturday, August 13th

No. 140 Monday, August 22nd—Saturday, August 27th

Scout Courses are open to all Warrant Holders or Scouters on Probation of twenty years of age and over:

No. 236 Saturday, April 16th—Sunday, April 24th

No. 237 Saturday, May 14th—Sunday, May 22nd

No. 238 Saturday, June 4th—Sunday, June 12th

No. 239 Saturday, June 25th—Sunday, July 3rd

No. 240 Saturday, July 23rd—Sunday, July 31st

No. 241 Saturday, August 13th—Sunday, August 21st

No. 242 Saturday, August 27th—Sunday, September 4th

No. 243 Saturday, September 17th—Sunday, September 25th

Rover Courses are open to all Warrant Holders of twenty-one years of age and over:

No. 13 Saturday, July 9th—Saturday, July 16th

Applications to: The Camp Chief, Gilwell Park. Chngford, London, E.4.

COMMISSIONERS' COURSES, 1955

The following courses have been arranged and are open to all Commissioners, including Cub Commissioners, District Scouters and County and Local Association officials:

No. 94 February 19th/20th, 1955 Cheshire (Chester)

No. 95 March 19th/20th, 1955 I.H.Q.

Courses commence at 3.30 p.m. on the Saturday and end at 4.15 p.m. on the Sunday.

Application form and full information can be obtained from: The Camp Chief, Gilwell Park, Chingford, London, E.4.

CLASSIFIED

COMING EVENTS

40th Chingford Group present "The Story of Mike," by Ralph Reader, February 4th and 5th at 8 p.m. Produced by Alf Wingrove and Ronnie Holman. Ticket order form from E. J. Gathercole, 129 Dryadale Avenue, Chingford, E.4.

"Riding On" - 33,52nd Epping Forest South Groups' 5th Annual Show, Woodford, E. 18. February 10/11/12/15/18/19th. Order forms 142 Clayhill Ave., Ilford.

The Baptist Scout Guild has arranged a Conference at Stock, Essex, February 26th-27th. Details from Mrs. G. Robinson, 86 Orchard Grove, Edgware.

S.W. Lancashire and Liverpool Conference at Southport, Saturday and Sunday, March 5-6th. Principal speaker - Sir Rob Lockhart, Deputy Chief Scout.

EMPLOYMENT

The Church Army offers a Free Two-Year Course of Training, with small allowance, to suitable keen Christians, between the ages 18-30; Church of England Communicants. After training, a salaried post is found as an officer in the Church Army (Mission Vans, Parish Workers, in Youth Centres and Mens Hostels, etc.). Apply to Captain J. Benson, 55 Bryanston Street, London, W. I.

Merchant Navy Training School, Overseas House, Brooks Bar, Manchester.

Required, Rover Scout or young Scouter as Assistant Camp Warden for Gilwell Park for 1955 camping season. March to October. Apply:

The Camp Chief, Gilwell Park, Chingford, E.4.

Assistant Office Manager required by old established tent and camp equipment firm. Applicants should have thorough knowledge of office routine, bookkeeping, mail order, stock control, and be able to answer correspondence. Applications, giving full details of experience, should be in by February 3rd. Thos. Black & Sons, Ltd., 22 Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1.

Keen Christian couple - take charge Holiday Camp (100 youths). Practical experience of administration and catering essential. Further particulars - Secretary, Men's Social Dept., Church Army, 55 Bryanston Street, London, W.1.

ACCOMMODATION

S.M. and C.M. marrying shortly urgently require accommodation in London area. Both out at business. Box 196, THE SCOUTER.

12 Hans Road, London, S.W.3 (Kensington 5951), has been opened as a hotel by Adeline Willis, formerly Warden of the International Guide Hostel in London. Rooms (some with private baths) and breakfast from 17s. 6d. to 25s. Dinners by arrangement. Special weekly terms. Convenient for main line stations, I.H.Q., shopping and sightseeing. Scouters and their families specially welcome.

Camp site required for two weeks - August 1955, within 30 miles radius of Birmingham, for handicapped Scout Troop. Preferably near river and other amenities. Write full particulars, including site fee and other charges to Secretary, Coleshill Hall Hospital, Coleshill, Birmingham.

Scouters (or potential Scouters) who are in need of a home in London and are prepared to serve Scouting in East London and take a share in the life and work of Roland House, are invited to write for terms to the Honorary Warden, Roland House, 29 Stepney Green, London, E1. Camping. City of Nottingham Boy Scouts Association camp site of 250 acres woodland and open country, near Sherwood Forest. Particulars from the Warden, Walesby Forest, Nr. Newark, Notts.

PERSONAL

Wigs, Perruquiers, Any Production, lowest rates. Make-up materials. S.A.E. with inquiries, "Bert," 46 Portnall Road, W.9. LAD. 1717.

Cord Shorts by Dover have been reduced in price for the next 3 months to enable you to buy now ready for the season ahead. S.A.E. for patterns to Ossie Dover, "The Cycling Tailor," 160 Kensington, Liverpool, 7. Phone: Anfield 1683.

Theatrical costumes and accessories. Costumiers to the London Gang Show. Special rates of hire to Troops for all productions. West End Costumers (Peter Dunlop), Ltd., 18 Tower St., W.C.2. Temple Bar 6806. Theatrical and fancy-dress costumes. Artistic, fresh, colourful. Moderate charges. Black Lion Costumes, 25 Sommerville Road, Bristol, 7. Phone 41345.

A.S. Vaissiere Bugle and Trumpet Makers. "What," never heard of us? Well, now is the time to get in touch with us in regard to your instruments that need repairs. You will never regret the day. Note our address: 16b Georges Road, Liverpool, 6. Phone: Anfield 3343.

May we help to dress your show or your chorus? Large selection of shirts, scarves, etc. Please send stamped addressed envelope for complete price list of costumes available to 33/52nd Epping Forest South Groups, do 142 Clayhall Avenue, Ilford, Essex.

Wild Life. A 16 mm. sound or silent film depicting the wild life of the British countryside. Particulars of hire from Secretary, L.A.C.S., 58 Maddox Street, London, W.1.

The Scouts' Friendly Society offers excellent terms for endowment, whole life, sickness and annuity insurances. Descriptive leaflet will be forwarded on application. S.F.S., Roland House, 29 Stepney Green, E.1.

Lady C.M. uniforms made to measure from 65/-. Dress, skirt, battle-blouse and/or shirt. Send S.A.E. for patterns and self-measurement form to Miss Puttock, Upcotts, Everton, Lymington, Hants.

Rover has been able to arrange with Lloyd's Underwriters specially reduced premiums for private and commercial motor insurance for warranted Scouters. Apply Rover Scout Mills, 123 Queen Victoria St., E.C.4.

To be or not to be - simple talks on the Christian religion by E. J. Rowland, G.S.M., 9th Hastings (author of *Be Ye Perfect*, talks on the Scout Law and Promise). "Admirable and practical instruction ... well balanced, definite and constructive." - *Church Times*. "Should be right in content and presentation for Scouts' Owns or similar occasions." - SCOUTER, September, 1954. Christ Church Publications, St. Leonards-on-Sea, price 3s. Obtainable through Scout Shop.

Be Prepared with your Pennants and badges for the coming season's events. Send now (with 2jd. stamp) for full details from: P. & R. Publicity, The Broadway, Pitsea, Basildon, Essex. Prompt attention. Speedy delivery.

A Happy New Year to all my postal service clients. Hayden Carr, S.M.(S), Photographer, 7 Blenheim Place, Brighton.

Scouts. Why not organise a Paper Salvage Drive. We buy newspaper, magazines and cardboard cartons flattened and tied in bundles. Write for quotations and collection arrangements to: Richardsons (Salvage Merchants) Ltd., St. Ann's Wharf, King Street, Norwich. Tel.: 21865.

Wanted to buy - 1924 - 5 "Scout" Annual. Owner to name price. C. Lochhead, Upeross Hotel, Reading, Berks.

"Scout-Ink Catalogue" No. 35. 32 pages illustrated. Group Progress Records: District Records: Certificates: Camp Bank Cards and Forms Envelopes and Postcards: Posters: Programme Blanks: Letter Headings: Duplicated Magazines: Receipt Books: Compliment Slips: Birthday Cards: Rubber Stamps: Badges: Armlets: Rosettes: Nametapes. Send postcard to Stacy Ltd., 99 Kingsland High Street, London, E.8.

STAMPS

Requests invited from general collectors for approval selection of fine used and mint stamps. Albums, accessories and new stamp catalogues in stock. Approval selections can be sent overseas against a minimum deposit of £1. Prompt and courteous service. P. F. Gray, 4 Old Palace Road, Weybridge, Surrey.

FOR SALE

Ex-Army Nissen and other buildings available. Also, manufactured buildings. Universal Supplies, Crabtree Manorway, Belvedere, Kent. (Erith 2948.)

CROSSE & BLACKWELL Marvellous Offer!

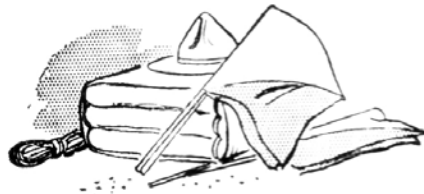
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BONUS for BOY SCOUTS**



Give 'em Beans
C & B BEANS

Super flavoured and nourishing

2/6 for every 50 Bean labels returned to Crosse & Blackwell.



Why not organise a combined action by your Pack, Troop or Group — collect together and get that piece of equipment you have your eyes on.



Start Collecting to-day!

WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO

READ THESE RULES CAREFULLY:—

- 1 Collect as many labels as you can from any size tin of Crosse & Blackwell Beans. You can collect individually or with your Pack, Troop or Group.
- 2 Crosse & Blackwell will send, in return for every complete bundle of 50 labels received by them, a voucher for 2/6d., which may be spent at any Scout Shop in the United Kingdom.
- 3 The labels must be reasonably whole; no part labels will be accepted.
- 4 Take your labels to your Scoutmaster or Cubmaster (with these Rules), and he will send them in to Crosse & Blackwell.
- 5 The Scoutmaster or Cubmaster should send parcels of labels, made up in bundles of 50, to:—
“Beans for the Boys”,
Crosse & Blackwell Limited,
20, Soho Square, London, W.1.
with a note of:—
(a) His name and address in BLOCK LETTERS.
(b) The total number of labels enclosed.
The corresponding Vouchers will then be posted to him.
- 6 This offer will run for the three months of October, November and December, 1954, and the last date for posting labels will be the 31st December, 1954.
- 7 The decision of Crosse & Blackwell Ltd., will be final and binding on any question arising out of this offer.

RECORDS



Start the New Year with a Clean Sheet! Now is the time for Scouters to look towards new Group Records. Here are a few examples of record cards and charts we can supply, these records are easily maintained and are made for quick reference.

● MEMBERSHIP CARDS

and Record of Progress. Opens out into full personal Chart.

CUBS	Ref. C.1	2/8d. per doz.
SCOUTS	Ref. B.1	2/8d. per doz.
SENIORS	Ref. S.1	2/8d. per doz.

● INDIVIDUAL TEST CARDS

These show a complete record of all stages of 1st. Class and 2nd. Class tests, giving details of all test requirements, and space for official signatures. Price 5d. each.

● TROOP ROLL & SUBSCRIPTION BOOK

Ref. S.13 size 6" x 4½". Thick card covers, space for name and address of each boy in the Troop. Pages for attendance and subscriptions. Price 9½d.

● PROGRESS RECORD SHEETS (LOOSE LEAF)

size 5½" x 8" punched holes.

CUBS	Ref. C.3	2/8d. per doz.
SCOUTS	Ref. B.3	2/8d. per doz.
SENIORS	Ref. S.3	2/8d. per doz.

● PATROL PROGRESS CHARTS

Essential item for Scout and Senior Scout P.L.s, complete record of all tests and badges for each member of your Patrol Ref. BS.6. Price 8d.

● TROOP PROGRESS CHARTS

Each boy in your Troop's progress at a glance. A record laid out for simplicity, easy to maintain. Complete details from Tenderfoot to Queen's Scout. Ref. BS.7. Size 22" x 15½" Price 8d.

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A new book of yarns for Cubs by J. B. Gearing, known to readers of the 'Scouter' for his series of articles "Akela, Stories for the use of." This volume is a welcome successor to the "Akela's Yarn Book" which is now out of print.

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104 HINDES ROAD, HARROW

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Also at Local Association Shops and Agents