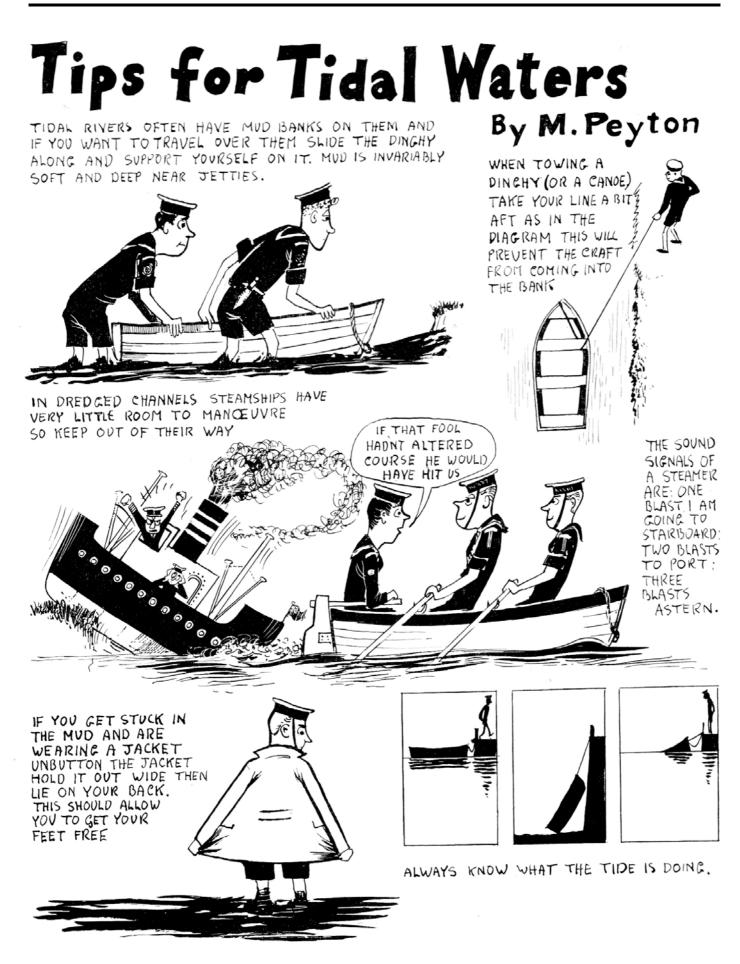


Vol. LVIII



Skipper Sympson's Diary=

=by D. H. Barber

MIKE'S CHRISTMAS EFFORT

Monday Evening:

Most Troops, I suppose, make an extra effort at Christmas to show people that a Scout is really "a friend to all" by combining in schemes to help others, and our Troop is no exception. The Court of Honour arranged to run a party for the children in a local hospital, we raised money by a Jumble Sale to buy coal for needy pensioners, and each Patrol agreed to do a separate Good Turn on its own.

Mike the Menace, however, was a bit disgruntled when he called round this evening.

"It's pretty hard," he said, "my Patrol is absolutely bursting with energy to do Good Turns to people, but we simply can't find any people who want Good Turns done to them. We spent the whole of Saturday evening knocking at doors down at the slummy end of the town, with hardly any result."

"How did you set about it?" I asked.

"We went in pairs," said Mike, "and when the door 'was opened we just said politely 'do you want any Christmas Good Turns done?' but there wasn't any what you could call enthusiasm at all. Some of the people were quite rude because they said we had interrupted them watching the Telly just at the most interesting part, but most of them just looked blank and shut the door."

I tried to comfort him.

"They just couldn't think of anything on the spur of the moment," I said. "In Bob-a-Job Week people have read in the papers that Scouts will probably be calling, so they have time to think out what they want doing, but your call was a surprise. Didn't anybody give you anything to do at all?" Mike groaned.

"The only customer," he said, "was an old chap who asked Henry Truckle to fetch his supper beer, but unfortunately Henry's family are rabid teetotallers, and Henry is a leading member of the Band of Hope, so he refused, and instead gave the old man .a tract he happened to have in his pocket about the Evils of Alcohol. The language the man used was simply frightful, quite unsuitable for young Henry's delicate ears."

"I'll put an advertisement in the local paper," I said, "asking pensioners and disabled people to let me know if there are any jobs they would like done, and if any answers come I'll share them out among the various Patrols."

Friday Evening:

The advertisement was in the paper yesterday, and live letters came this morning, and the District Nurse called round .and gave me the addresses of seven old people she thought would be glad of help of various kinds, so at the Troop Meeting tonight I passed on the addresses to the P.L.'s.



After the Meeting' Mike came up rather indignantly.

"You've given my Patrol - one address less than the others," he said, "which seems a bit hard as the thing was partly my idea."

If smiled mysteriously.

"As a matter of fact," I said, "I've got a special job for you yourself to do in the morning, for a very deserving case, but I can't give you the address tonight. You can call round at my house in the morning about nine o'clock, wearing your oldest uniform, and I'll give you the address and you can go along and get on with the job. How much time can you spare tomorrow?" Mike pondered.

"I was going hiking with Silvester in the afternoon," he said, "but if it's a really deserving case, and urgent, I don't mind giving up the whole day

"That's the spirit! "I said, "see you at nine o'clock."

Saturday Morning:

Mike turned up punctually, eager to get to work, and seemed rather bored when I asked him to come into my study and sit down for a chat.

"If there's a lot to do for this pensioner," he said, "the sooner I get on with it, the better. Just give me the address and I'll get cracking . ."

"Don't be in such a hurry," I said, "I want to read you the man's letter. 'Dear Scoutmaster, I am not a pensioner or particularly old, but I was in hospital for an operation recently and the surgeon told me I must not risk straining myself for a bit, so I have not been able to do a lot of the jobs that I usually do.

My back garden is a wilderness, and I would be grateful if one of your Scouts could clear away the dead stuff and burn it. My garage is in a filthy state, and there are quite a lot of jobs about the house that need doing. I may say that I have a son of my own, and I have dropped some pretty broad hints from time to time that it would be a graceful gesture if he would help me out a bit, but he is so busy with his own affairs that he just turns a deaf ear'."

"He must be rather a mean little cad," said Mike virtuously. "I'll get along right away. What's the address?

I concealed a grin.

"51, Laurel Road," I said.

Mike jumped out of the chair.

"But that's where I live!" he said.

"I know," I said. "But, like a lot more chaps, you've forgotten that good Scouting, like Charity, should begin at home."



FOR NEW READERS: The Eagles are camping a: Woodvale Manor, owned by the widowed Lady Wykeham-Smith, and staffed by Herbert (the butler) and Catherine (the maid). Crossways Farm is leased by the Manor to Mr. Jenks, who runs a Jaguar though is in arrears with rent. The Manor opens as an hotel and Nick (the P.L.) learns that Madam owes death duties. Guests arrive, one of whom (the lone man) insists his car is left in the drive. Jim, who works in the house with Tiny, discovers the lone man's car comes from Manchester. Fish sees smoke over the Manor, the Scouts raise the alarm, and the lone man volunteers to get the fire brigade as there's no 'phone. The fire in the stable is under control before the tenders arrive. The fire officer deduces the cause of the fire is a short circuit in the generator. When the lone man returns he claims he ran out of petrol and his spare can is missing, but Fish finds it in the rushes. As it has a Manchester label and the man went for a walk before breakfast, Nick tells Madam that the Patrol suspects the man of arson, but when she finds his name is Sanders, she tells them to stop prving on the grounds he was a friend of her late husband's. On collecting the milk from the farm, Taffy and Sandy meet a sinister Mr. Craddock, and Sandy remembers a bit of charred notepaper he found in the stable headed Craddock, Son and Jenkinson, which he retrieves. Nick and Sandy find a Papicio picture in the stable loft. In the village Fish and Taffy overhear the postman saying he saw Jenks returning from Dorford two days before; then Taffy recalls that it was on that morning that Jenks had claimed he was in a field in another direction.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN Midnight Rendezvous

Taffy and Fish left their shopping in the stores tent and hurried off to the Manor. They found the rest of the Patrol sitting on the log in the stable eating their sandwich lunch. Tiny was still hard at work in the kitchen, but Jim had just come out with the inevitable pot of tea, having finished him lunchtime duties.

"Had a good trip you two?" enquired the Patrol Leader. "You must be ravenous. We've left enough food for you, I think! And we've got quite a lot to tell you."

"We had a most interesting jaunt into Oakmere. In fact we think we've probably found the missing clue to the fire," replied Taffy slicing two hunks of bread off the loaf for Fish and himself.

"Things haven't been altogether quiet here, either," said Bob. "We've got some pretty conclusive evidence as well or so we think," he added.

"This is going to be a Patrol in Council and' a half!" chuckled Nick. "Let's take one at a time. I suggest that Fish and Taffy start."

The Patrol listened to what the shoppers had to say. Taffy explained the fact that Farmer Jenks had been seen by the postman coming back from Dorford when he had told them that he had been looking at one of his fields. Between them they pieced all the evidence tog ether starting from this episode, and put forward the following theory. Jenks had got up in the middle of the night and had left the light on in his house. He had gone to the boot of Major Sanders' car, taken out the can, lit the fire in the stable and had returned to the farm over the bridge by the boathouse. He had not only thrown the petrol can into the rushes, but had also left the gate open so that when he had let out his cows the next morning, they had been able to wander through the gate into the vegetable garden.

"I feel sure that Jenks's going into Dorford has something to do with it as well," Fish said, continuing the certain. I think that bloke Craddock must have something to do with it as well," Fish said, continuing the theory he and Taffy had constructed.

"It certainly sounds plausible," Nick meditated for a moment "But what's Jenks's motive?"

"I admit that I can't think of one," said Fish somewhat despondently, "unless it's some personal feud we don't know anything about. You must agree that Jenks and Lady Wykeham-Smith don't appear to see eye to eye."

"Before we try and solve that one, we'll tell you what we ye found out," said Nick.

"By the way, did you ever find the petrol can?" asked Taffy.

"We looked everywhere, but it hasn't come to light yet," replied Sandy.

Nick and Sandy related their discovery of the Paprcio picture, and their seeing Jenks looking through the dustbin before carting it off to his trailer. Bob added that they thought the motive could be to claim insurance on the picture.

"There's one snag there," stated Fish. "Surely it wouldn't be necessary to set fire to the house to get some money for the Papicio. If it's genuine couldn't she just as easily put it up for sale by auction? She'd get the money just the same without damaging her home, which I thought we'd agreed she probably didn't want to do."

It could be a forgery, couldn't it?" suggested Taffy.

"I think our imaginations are getting the better of us!" laughed Nick. "We'd be in a real hornet's nest if it isn't genuine. I've got a feeling it isn't, so perhaps we'd better not consider that possibility just yet. As for selling the picture in the ordinary way do you know in the heat of the moment we'd never thought of that! Jim, did you manage to find out anything from Herbert?"

"He's a pretty gen chap on pictures. I casually asked him about one of the large paintings in the dining room when we were doing some cleaning up, and he not only explained it in detail also gave me the life history of the artist!" "Did you get any information about the Papicio?" Sandy asked eagerly.

"Hold your horses!" retorted Jim with a grin. "I was just coming to that! Evidently the Colonel was a pretty good artist himself, and you were right when you thought that he used the room above the stable as his studio. But more than that he was very interested in collecting paintings. Herbert said he used to take periodic trips to Southerby's in London to attend the auctions"

"He must have been very rich to do that," Bob commented "I didn't say he bought anything," replied Jim. "Herbert said he accompanied the Colonel on all his trips, but that his boss never actually made a bid. But Herbert thought the Colonel must have worked through a dealer or an agent."

"To keep anonymous?" queried Fish.

"Precisely. He must have purchased some because all the valuable ones were sold after his death to go towards paying off the death duties."

"You've got more out of Herbert than I would have thought possible," Nick said with a pleased smile. "What about the Papicio though?"

"I don't think he knows anything about it."

"What?" protested Sandy. "But he must do!"

"I obviously didn't say you'd found one, but I asked him whether the Colonel liked modem art and whether he had bought any of Papacio's works. Herbert replied simply, 'Sir Christopher did not care for modem art'. I don't believe that anyone but us knows about it," he concluded.

"How exasperating!" exclaimed Nick. "Every theory we've had leads to a dead end with either a bit of factual evidence or a motive missing. If only we could find out where Craddock fits into it all."

"There's one thing we haven't cleared up yet, and that's where the petrol can has got to," said Fish.

"We'd forgotten about that," agreed Sandy. "Have you any ideas?"

"I reckon that Jenks must have it," said Taffy.

Though where it is now we haven't a clue. He could have seen it when he delivered the milk last night. It was in the courtyard, and the sight of such damning evidence could have been too much for him; so he made the excuse of collecting the dirty milk-can from the kitchen and picked it up then."

"Your guess is as good as mine," Nick sighed. "I shouldn't imagine he'd try to throw it away again in a hurry, and it's not the type of thing which can be easily destroyed."

"I reckon it's in a fairly obvious place," Fish stated with conviction. "I wouldn't mind betting it's in one of his outbuildings."

"If we could only find it there, we'd have sufficient proof to go straight to the police. At the back of my mind I still can't help feeling that Lady Wykeham-Smith, Major Sanders and perhaps even Herbert or Catherine might have something to do with the whole affair, so I wouldn't want to let them know what we're doing," Nick considered thoughtfully.

"Did I hear Catherine mentioned?" a voice said cheerfully from the doorway.

"You did. You've been released at last, have you?

You'll have to claim for overtime, Tiny I" said Sandy.

"We've been discussing all our various detective activities."

"You mean about the picture and the bit of Sandy's notepaper?"



Tiny could not help seeing one particular piece of paper

Amongst other things," replied Taffy. "Fish and I found out something, a bit more about Farmer Jenks."

"I haven't been idle either," said Tiny proudly.' "I think I've found some very valuable information."

"You haven't told Catherine what we're doing, have you?" questioned Bob with a tone of suspicion.

"Of course not! I wouldn't do that," retorted Tiny sharply. "Do you want to listen to me or don't you?"

"Come on, Tiny." Nick encouraged. "Don't take Bob's remarks to heart."

"The reason why I'm late is that Catherine asked me to help her do some dusting and - sweeping in Lady Wykeham-Smith's room."

"Do you mean her bedroom?" asked Nick. "No, she has a sitting-room-type-study which leads off to her bedroom. Anyway I was tidying up the papers on her desk, and though I know I shouldn't have been nosey and have looked at the letters, I couldn't help seeing one particular bit of paper half hidden under the blotter." Tiny paused to take breath making a dramatic silence. His colleagues listened so intently the atmosphere was positively electric.

"The heading was Craddock, Son and Jenkinson."

Goodness, gracious me!" exclaimed Sandy. "So there is some connection between Jenks, Lady Wykebam-Smith and Craddock. What did it say?"

"As I said, it was mostly hidden under the blotter.

All I could see was the heading," Tiny continued.

"It read 'Craddock, Son and Jenkinson. Property Development', and on the other side '20 Imperial Avenue, Dorford!' I as very tempted to read what the letter said, but Lady Wykeham-Smith came in, and I had to get on with dusting. She hadn't left the room by the time Catherine and I had finished, so I didn't get another opportunity."

"It is rather unethical conduct, Tiny. All the same it does provide some very valuable information," said Fish. "And I think it does mean that we mustn't breathe a word of this to Lady Wykeham-Smith."

"Under the circumstances, I would agree," said Nick. "Have you any ideas about finding the petrol can, Fish?"

"I'd suggest that two of us go over to the farm about midnight tonight. If they do find it - and of course there's no guarantee that they will - then they'll come back to camp and let the others know, and we can report it to the police first thing in the morning," Fish said.

"Will the can be brought back to camp?" asked Tiny.

"No. We mustn't do that on any account," emphasized Fish. "If we do find it, I should have Jenks' finger prints on it, and that will be the conclusive proof."

"But won't yours be on it as well?" Sandy enquired. "After all, you got it out of the rushes."

"Mine might be there, but Farmer Jenks's will be the top ones," replied Fish. "And that'll prove he was the last to touch it."

The Patrol agreed unanimously, and Nick closed the meeting, saying "We'd better get on with the gardening, otherwise they'll begin to wonder what we're up to."

The Eagles made good progress on the right-hand border by the drive. Even though they were all excited with the prospect of solving the intriguing mystery of the fire within the next few hours, they had time to make a start on the overgrown flower bed which stretched along the entire north-eastern wall of the manor.

Taffy left earlier than usual to collect the milk from the farm, but had nothing unusual to report to the Patrol when they sat around the fire to eat their supper. In fact, no one had noticed anything extraordinary.

Everything was so normal that Sandy was prompted to comment, "I'm beginning to wonder whether there was a fire at all!" to which Taffy replied, "It's the lull before the storm!"

Night had closed in by the time they had finished washing up. The frogs were in full voice down on the banks of the lake, and a pair of night owls hooted at regular intervals from the trees which surrounded the small encampment

As there were still two hours to go before Fish and Taffy set off on their journey, Sandy took the initiative and told & yarn, which was followed by a song, and so on until a quarter past eleven. Nick then said he thought they should make it look as though they were going to bed in case Jenks could either see or hear them. Fish had noticed, however, that the light in the farmhouse had been extinguished soon after eleven.

Fish borrowed Sandy's jeans and Jim's black sweater as camouflage. Taffy had a jet-black tracksuit of his own. Jim took great delight in smearing charcoal over their faces.

"The few hints I picked up from making up for the school play seem to be useful," he joked.

By midnight the "two commandos" (as Sandy called them) were ready, and as black as pitch from head to toe, apart from their eyes. Nick gave them a final briefing in the tent.

"For goodness sake be careful. If we are right and Jenks catches you, he could turn nasty. . . very nasty. We'll give you an hour exactly, and if you're not back by one o'clock half of us will come over to the farm, and the others'll have to make all speed into Oakmere to knock up the police," said Nick. "The police station is next door to the post office," informed Fish. "But I don't think you'll need to worry them tonight. Tomorrow maybe."

"Synchronise your watches," ordered Nick. "It's midnight exactly. Good luck. . . and good hunting."

NEXT WEEK: CAUGHT IN TE ACT



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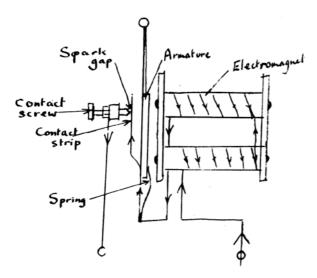
Excerpts from this Years' GANG SHOW .will appear on Independent Television on Wednesday, 19th December, at 9.45 p.m.

A Scouter Writes

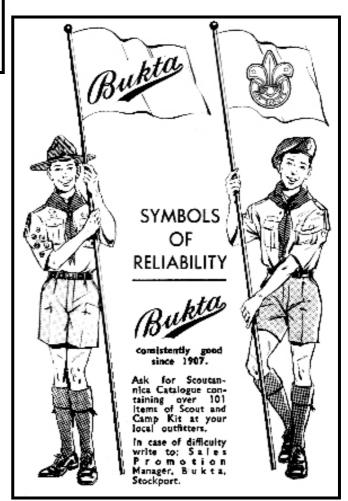
Dear Editor.

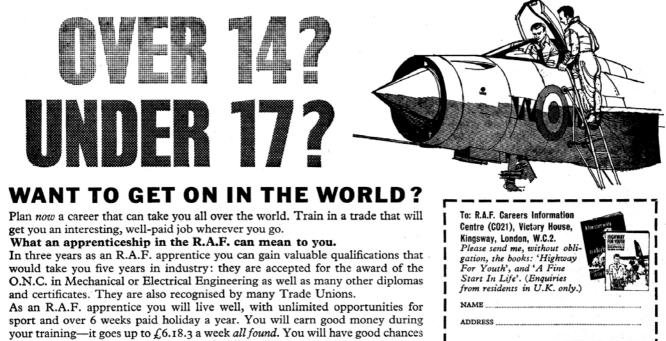
I am afraid that the bell circuit shown in The Scout (24th November) would give one "ding" and then stop, with the current still flowing. I enclose a corrected diagram.

S.M. P. Siddons, 46th Fulham.



(Mr. Siddons is so right and our artist apologises profusely for this slip. - ED.)





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Stick to it!

I've just been reading the November issue of *The Scouter* and I was very taken with this quotation:-

You are writing a Gospel, A chapter each day, By the deeds that you do, And the words that you say, Men read what you write, Whether faithless or true, So what is the Gospel According to you?

"You are writing a Gospel, a chapter each day ! " The first time I really understood this, that I was being judged by what I was doing each day, it was a great shock to me. Yes, it applies to you also, in everything you do with your Patrol. What is its Gospel? One to be proud of and one that puts over all that B.-P. wanted us to do, as given in our laws?

One of your chaps is the Patrol Treasurer. He wouldn't buy much if he did run off. with the cash, but no one thinks of that happening. He keeps his books in a rough and blotty way, but after all, he is a Scout. Trust? Yes, an important part of our Gospel.

Your gang enjoy weekend camps. Last season you had arranged a super one on a splendid site, when you discovered that on that very weekend Skipper needed your Patrol to represent the Troop at a District event. He had forgotten your camp and was most upset at his carelessness. Did your chaps go to camp? There were grumbles, of course, but they didn't go, Loyal? Very.

Do we really observe what we see? I sometimes doubt it. Get a used copy of each of our stamps, up to the l/6d. issue, and mount them on a sheet of white paper, about six inches apart. After a challenge to the Patrol as to their capabilities, put the sheet up at the other end of the room. See that the values are well mixed. Ask each Scout to write down the colour and the face value of each stamp. Surprising what ignorance there is. What part of our Gospel is observation? Well, I don't see how we can really do effective Good Turns until we have trained ourselves to observe and deduce the need of others.

The Court of Honour asked Skip to organise a joint evening with the Boys Club, alternate items for all to take part in, being provided by the Club and the Troop.

It was a great evening, and it almost looked as if you would have some recruits.

An easy one this time? Yea, we practice being a friend to all.

At the beginning of the season, six Cubs came up to the Troop.

Skipper had a word with the P.L.'s beforehand and asked them to make the Cubs very welcome, by insisting that they (the Cubs) joined in all games. and then take tremendous care that the Cubs did not get hurt and were able to help their Patrol to victory. Your P.L.'s passed this on to your Patrols, and strange to say you found this special job, for one night, added a zest to the programme. Yes, another important part of our Gospel, courtesy.

The Patrol in Council, after an argument about the difference between pleasure (from outside yourself) and happiness '(from inside yourself), asked each Scout to bring to the next Patrol Meeting the thing which had given them the greatest happiness in recent weeks. The show included a budgie, a school report card, a painting (by the Scout who bought it), a record of Fingal's Cave and a piece of cheese. Pip was sorry, but his Mum would not come. Yes, happiness is in our Gospel and our friends the animals start us off on the simple track to it.

Ever tried an inter-Patrol competition where each Patrol, at its own evening, times itself in building some pioneering structure? It's wonderful how long the first attempt takes. Far too many bosses. Soon the minutes are being lopped off as you learn to work as a team. Yes, obedience to orders is an essential to us.

Give each Scout in your Patrol the same parcel of scrap materials and suggest that they make a toy for Christmas. You will get some awful results, but someone will have real initiative -and, produce a winner. He will have made the best of. what he has, and isn't that just what is intended by smiling and whistling?

Start a Patrol discussion on careers. They Will vary from bus drivers to doctors and nuclear scientists. I was once surprised by John's answer. He said he would like to be a boy's club leader, for the only thing he was really good at was getting on with people. Thrift is truly a part of our Gospel when we apply it to our talents.

Ever noticed that when your Patrol Meeting programme is so full that there isn't time for everything, you have little larking about? Some would say that the devil finds work for idle hands. It's the same with our day to day life. A full life means that "clean in thought, word and deed" is easy.

So, P.L., by your busy, exciting and unexpected Patrol Meeting programmes you will declare our Scouting Gospel. Stick to it.

Each week a member of the secret Council of Thirteen writes on this pare for Patrol Leaders. If you have any problems or queries, or want advice or ideas, write to "COUNCIL OF THIRTEEN, c/o The Editor, 25 Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1.

Nature Notes

The Heron

By

Jeremy Lingard

(photograph by John Markham)

For a moment the tall, grey form stood motionless; perfectly aware of my presence, but hoping to pass unnoticed. A snipe rose suddenly from the stream edge, and his harsh cry and swish of wings alarmed the heron. With a croak he rose on broad wings from the shallow water, and with head withdrawn and legs trailing behind, he left the stream and slipped into the gathering dusk.

The heron is a regular visitor to the river near my home particularly around the watercress beds, where the stream is shallow and food abounds. In such surroundings he lives a fairly peaceful, solitary life during much of the winter, after which he migrates to some well established breeding ground, which is shared by innumerable other herons during the Summer.

The nest of the heroin is not built on the ground as might be expected, but high up in the branches of trees, such as oak, ash and elm. Here the three to four pale blue eggs are laid and incubated, and the rather hideous and very hungry young are fed on the regurgitated remains of fish, and other animals. The reader may have seen the film by Heinz Sielmann on the birds of the Peruvian coast of America. The feeding₁ habits of these large birds are really very similar to those of our native heron. There is something almost primitive about the curious beak snapping and sounds emitted by the young, and their habits are certainly not endearing.

The food of the heron consists basically of fish, but he is an adaptable bird, and will take voles, rats, shrews and frogs just as readily. On the Lea at Batford his choice of fish food is limited to sticklebacks arid minnows, and it is probable that mammals figure quite largely in his diet. The heron's normal method of finding food is to simply perch in the shallows of a stream, river or lake, and wait for his prey to come to him. Should a fish or other animal come within range, the heron snaps it up with a lightning lunge of his sharp and pointed beak and swallows the creature whole.



Young Herons in their nest in the tree tops

The powerful beak of a wounded or cornered heron can easily be used in self defence and I was surprised' when someone telephoned me to say that they had found a wounded heron on the local golf course, and were trying to feed it in the clubhouse.

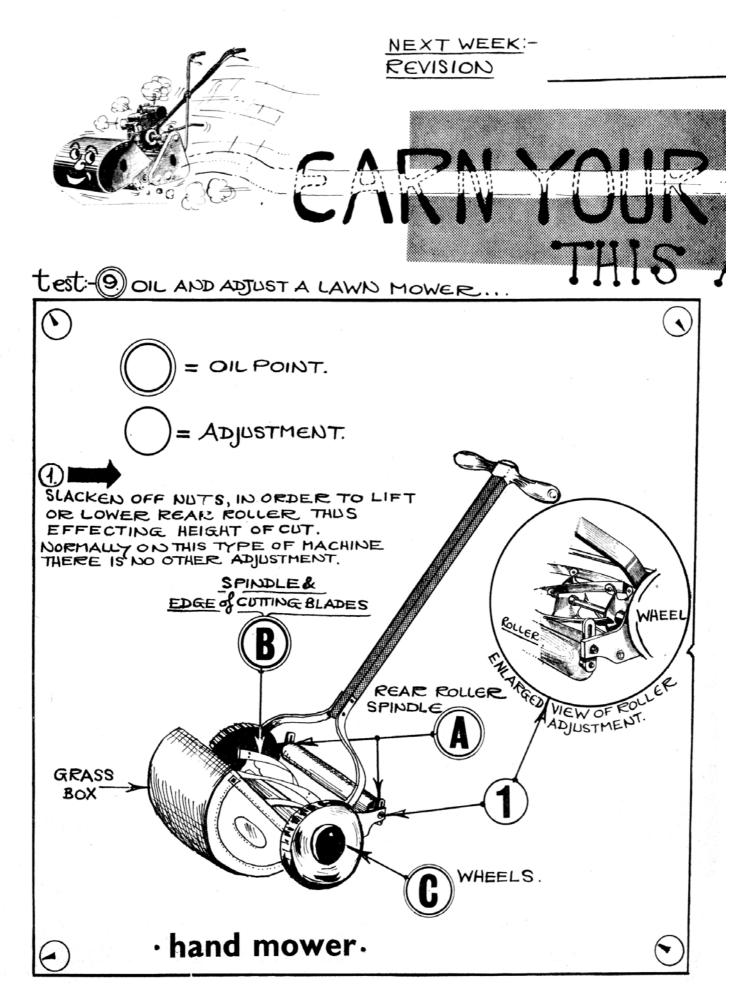
Unfortunately the heron died a minute or two before I arrived, despite the kindly efforts of the golf club members. I sent the heron to a pathologist in order to try and find out the cause of death.

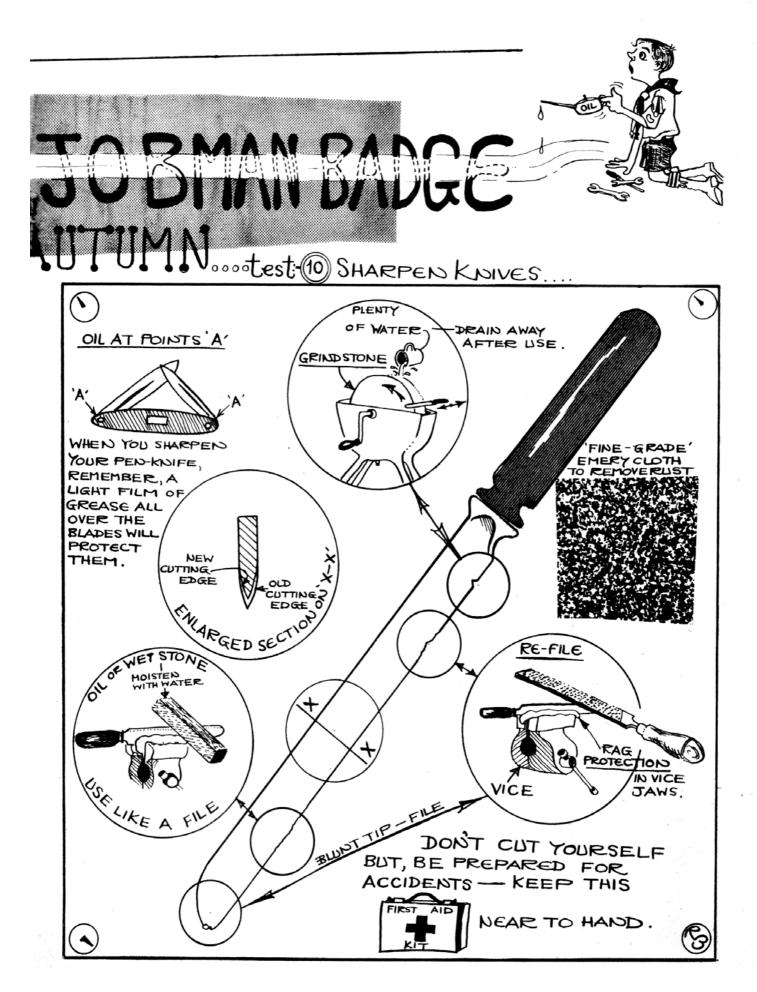
Winter always brings its toll of bird casualties, and while some of these are better painlessly destroyed, many can be nursed back to health. Some are unfortunately killed quite unintentionally, either by unsuitable food, or by the wrong treatment. I would advise anyone wishing to help a wounded bird to first seek advice, either from a text book, or better still from someone with a knowledge of bird habits, and the treatment of injuries.

It seems that the heron is particularly difficult to deal with in captivity, since when first caught it refuses to feed voluntarily, and has to be forcibly fed. The procedure is to prize open the beak, and gently push the food into the bird's throat. It is then advisable to retire very quickly from the room, since otherwise the awkward patient simply brings the food up again. In time the heron becomes tame enough to swallow the food when one is in the same room.

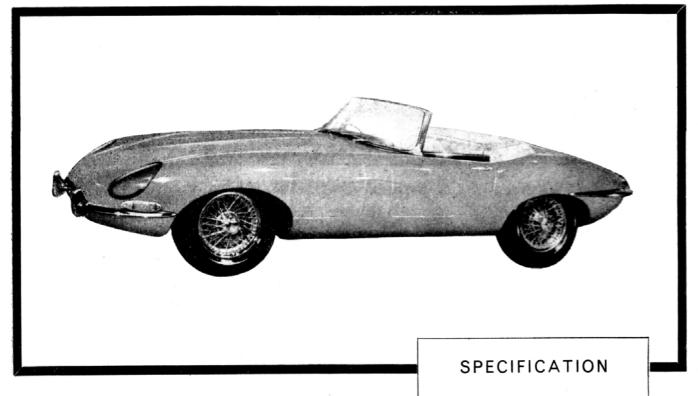
Fortunately the majority of birds are not as difficult to handle and care for as the heron, and will often feed by themselves straight away.

Feeding birds during the Winter is a rewarding occupation, not only because it helps them to survive the perils of Winter, but because it brings one into more intimate relationship with the wild life of the garden.





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LATEST SCORE

Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scouts were apparently busy last summer. Between April and October 207 reached Gold Standard and a further 446 the Silver. Since we joined the Scheme in January, 1960, nearly 2,400 Scouts have landed one or the other of these coveted Awards.

WET FEET

Territorials crossing the River Thames on improvised rafts recently received quite a lot of publicity in the newspapers. But this kind of exercise has long been an activity with Senior Scouts and comparing the picture of the Army's experiment (with the men up to their waists in water) with that of a Scout-made raft, I know which one I would prefer to sail in.





incidentally, the Scouts in our picture carried all their materials 2,000 feet up a Welsh mountainside before crossing a very deep, ice-cold lake near the summit. Quite an achievement.

2,600 MILES IN RUBBER BOATS

I read the other week that ten Swiss Scouts successfully sailed the entire length of the River Nigerin Africa, 2,6 00 miles of it. They paddled through four countries in inflatable rubber boats, shooting dangerous rapid sand navigating through schools of hippos and crocodiles. A gentle nip from one of the latter and they would have sure been in trouble.

NEW SCOUTING ANGLES

The Senior Scouts of the 2nd Melksham Group (Wiltshire) under their resourceful leader, David McCoombe, are always up to net tricks.

This winter they are running a series of activities entitled "Other People's Jobs" which kicked off in November with an evening at the town's largest fried fish shop and restaurant where for two-and-a-half hours they prepared, fried and served the choice pieces and chips under the guidance of the proprietor.

Rovers in my home district, members of the 1st Purley Crew, Surrey, hit on an original stunt' back in October. They carried out a week-end hike along the Pilgrim's Way - ON STILTS! They had to keep off the ground for 36 hours. I haven't yet discovered how they spent the night.

SPACE SCOUTS

My friend Reb Robertson of American -Headquarters tells me that Astronaut Walter Schirra, who orbitted the earth six times, is the fourth of the U.S. space team to have been Scouts in their boyhood days. The other three were Alan Shepard, Virgil Grissom and Scott Carpenter. The very first American spaceman, John Glenn, was never a Boy Scout but he has been serving as an adviser to Explorer (Senior) Scouts for some time and has recently lent his support to a big national drive on behalf of the Boy Scouts of America.



Hoardings all over the country will soon be displaying this picture on giant posters reading "Astronaut John Glenn says SCOUTING IS ALL O.K. - JOIN TODAY!"

And we wouldn't argue with him on that score, would we?

THOUGHT FOR THE 0LD FOLK

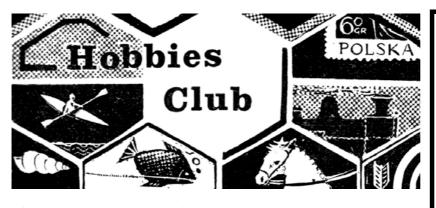
Scouts and Cubs of the 60th Rotherham Group have organised a scheme of help to the aged. "They 'distributed cards printed with "60th R" on both sides which they asked local old age pensioners to place in their windows when they are in need 'of help or require any jobs to be done. The boys have undertaken to go into action wherever they see one of these cards on View.

Arrangements have also been made for Scouters to be called upon in cases of real emergency. A splendid idea worth spreading.

THOUGHT FOR THE HUNGRY

Derek Thomas of the 3rd Tynemouth Group, Northumberland, refused his breakfast one morning a month or two ago and asked his Dad' for cash to the value of the meal. Puzzled father eventually paid up quite willingly when Derek explained that he wanted the money to give to the "Freedom from Hunger" Campaign. It appears that the other members of the Group did much the same for they raised a total of £73 in less than four - hours! Have YOU given any thoughts to this hunger fund?

A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL 'Bye now! TED WOOD.'



Too soon for ______ Christmas ______ by Howard L. Fears

Every year the season of Christmas is commemorated by postal administrations throughout the world. Sometimes the emphasis is placed on the commercial aspect of the season, resulting in a special cancellation reading: "Post early for Xmas". I expect you will have seen such a cancel yourself and you may like to think of forming a special small collection devoted to this topic. In recent years both Australia and New Zealand have issued special stamps, the designs being most attractive. I am illustrating the release from New Zealand this year which is a reproduction of a famous painting entitled "The Madonna in Prayer". The design is in full colour and as the face value of the stamp is very low, it would not be expensive to purchase the stamp mint or used to start your collection.

Thinking of Christmas your mind might also run to holly berries, and if you have a chance, look out for a commemorative stamp recently issued in America, which uses this as a design.



STAMP CLUB

> At this time of the year also, I expect you will have seen Christmas labels or seals. These have no postal value, but are often very attractive and when used on an envelope sometimes receive part of a cancellation, and without much cost you could add to the attraction of your special collection.

You must remember, of course, that such stamps have not filled any postal purpose and you cannot call them "postage Stamp".

It is sometimes said nowadays, that in the world of commerce Christmas starts before the summer ends, and you may think this is so, when I tell you that most of the special Christmas stamp issues appear at the beginning of November.



BIRDS FROM HUNGARY

On 18th November an attractive set of eight stamps, all depicting birds, was released by the Hungarian Post Office and if you can secure examples of these they would make an. attractive addition to your collection. Perhaps von will be, able to recognise some of the birds without trouble - I like especially the eagle and owl. These stamps are also illustrated, but to buy the whole set will cost you several shillings so you may have to content yourself with the lower values.

LUCKY DIP

Club members whose numbers. have been drawn to receive a packet of stamps this month are:-

1177	1380	1644
1794	1926	2141

A COVER COLLECEOR'S CHANCE

This month we are able to give Stamp Club members the opportunity of obtaining a First Day Cover issued by the Austrian Scout Association to mark their 50th Anniversary. Bearing a special Scout Stamp and cancellation, this unique offer is available for is. 6d. Send, your postal order for this cover to:-

> First Day Cover, The Scout Stamp Club, 25 Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1.

N.B. If you missed previous Special Offers we can still supply First Day Covers from Hiati at 8s. each, a pair from Lebanon for 6s. 6d. and one from Ceylon at 3s. each.

PDF Created by BRIANJ group_shorts@yahoo.co.uk

Plastic Model News



CAPTAIN COOK'S barque "The Endeavour". in which he made his famous voyage in 1768 to claim the East Coast of Australia in the name of Great Britain, now becomes the first in a new Airfix series of Historical Ships.

This kit consists of 107 parts, including such real-life touches as the water pumps, belfry and completely rigged tiller - even wooden-legged seamen on deck. There is also an extremely effective plastic rigging. When made up, the Endeavour measures 15" long and 13" in height. The kit costs 12s. 6d

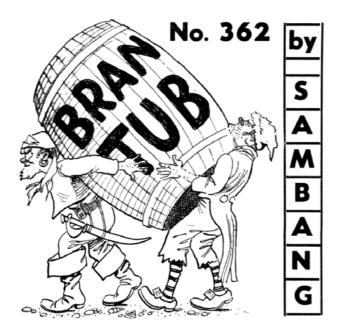
If it's ships you're after you'll be glad to know that the world-famous Cunarder, the R.M.S. "Queen Elizabeth" has been launched for modelling enthusiasts all over the world - just in time for a Christmas voyage.

This is the second in the Airfix range of British liners made to the constant scale of 1 600 - the same scale as their warships - and is accurately detailed even to the correct flags to be flown from the port and starboard yard arms. Length of the completed model is 20 5/8" and the kit contains 131 precision-made parts. This kit costs l0s. 6d.

For the record, the Queen Elizabeth (83,673 tons) is the world's largest liner, 1,031 feet long and nearly three times as high as St. Paul's Cathedral. As a troopship during the war she steamed 492,635 miles and carried 811,324 passengers.

The model aircraft enthusiast is also remembered among the new releases from Airfix with the introduction of the Eying Fortress. The kit of this famous bomber aircraft of the last war in the well-known series of 1/72nd scale costs 7s. 6d.





NUMBERS WITH A NAME

Do you collect car numbers? Most boys (and sometimes



girls) go through a craze for collecting the registration numbers on cars. I gave it up some time ago, but I've started a new

idea. I collect numbers with a name. One day passing through the town 'f Ayr, I saw three cars sitting side by side. There was HAG 467; SAG 309 and RAG 183, and I decided to col-

lect all the different three letter words that I could find on car registration plates. There are hundreds of



them and some of them are quite amusing. I saw together on one occasion FUN 664 and JOY 361. I was sorry I didn't have my camera with me, but I did get a snap of LEG 278 and also PEN 425. Now I am looking for a car with an INK registration - if you live in Hertfordshire perhaps you have seen one. Among the many on my list, there is MUM and DAD, BOB, SUB and HUG. If you want a change from the usual have some fun at this new game.

ARCHIE'S FRIENDS

I have told you before about Archie my Wolf Cub friend, but I often wonder why I call him my "Friend". He gets up to so many tricks and very often succeeds in making a fool of me.

Do your friends do that?

Have you got any friends?

What kind of friends do you like best?

What kind of friend are you?

It can make so much difference to our Cubbing and our lives if we have good friends and if we are good friends to others.

Archie was talking to me about some of his friends the other day and this is what he said:

"Take *DVD*, he is a good friend: always good for a laugh, and he can laugh at himself as well as at other people."

"Why call him DVD?" I asked.

"That's his name, Sambang. Well, actually, he should have some vowels stuck in somewhere, but I like to call him DVD. Most people call him DAVID but, as you well know, I like to be different! "GRG is another good friend of mine. When we are playing at any game, GRG always enjoys himself and he never seems to worry whether he wins or loses.

"JLN is a bit bigger than I am, but I like him. Some of the Sixers are a bit rough and they like to bully the smaller boys; but not ILN. He likes us to look upon him as a friend and he is always ready to help us or to show us where we have gone wrong."

Slowly I worked out the "correct 'names for Archie's other friends without interrupting him. When he gets started there's no stopping him, and he was obviously enjoying the little puzzle he had set me.

He mentioned NGL and JMS and there was something about PL but he wasn't a Patrol Leader. I particularly liked what he had to say about BRN.

"You can always rely on BRN, Sambang. He's been a good friend to me and I would trust him with my life."

What a wonderful thing to say about anyone. Rely and trust are two of the most important words when it comes to real friendship. I hope you have a friend like BRN, and that you are a friend like that to someone else.

Have you worked out the real names of Archie's friends? You'll find a correct list at the foot of the page.

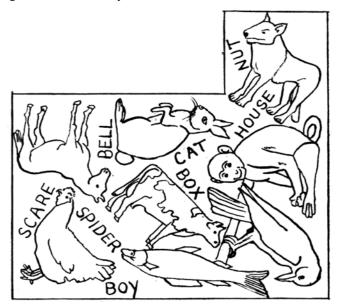
Oh, by the way, Archie did mention someone else to me in strictest confidence. I can't think what the "correct" name should be, but perhaps you'll know.

This is what he said:

"There is a character known as SMBNG whom I tolerate among my friends. He's a bit of a clown, but then you know how fond I am of a bit of clowning myself!"

"PAIR THEM OFF"

Can you make eight new words by joining the name of each animal to one of the words supplied? e.g. "Cow" and "Boy" together make Cowboy. Answers below.



ANSWERS

"PAIR THEM OFF"

Wolf-spider; Harebell; Monkey-nut; Catfish; Scarecrow Horse-Box; Hen-house; Cowboy.

ARCHIE'S FRIENDS

DAVID, GEORGE, JULIAN, NIGEL, JAMES, PAUL and BRIAN.

THE GREY SEVEN

FOR NEW READERS: The Grey Six have a new chum Lionel, baa he is rather spoilt. They go on an expedition to Angle Tarn which has dried up in the hot weather. On the way they rescue some of Farmer Thatcher's sheep which have got into a clover field and are eating too much of the dangerous stuff. Once at the Tarn, Lionel, longing to show off, makes his way out on the mud and sticks. Dick and the others get him off and he is really grateful and loses some of his grumpiness. On the way home they realise that the moors are on fire and that the hill sheep may be trapped.

CHAPTER FIVE Flight from Fire

"The sheep?" Lionel wailed. "Oh, oh, what can we do for them?"

Even in his own distress, the Sixer smiled his appreciation as he noted that the new recruit had wakened to the fact that there were plenty of duties in life for even the smallest Cub.

"Well," be said crisply, "they can't be behind us - the fire would have scared them into a stampede. They must be ahead."

"They are," Jumbo said, "look there - all massing and bunching like a white sea. There's hundreds of them."

"Well, charge them for all you're worth," Dick said. "Yell like Red Indians. If we can get them on the run down to the lower ground where the road may check the fire, well and good."

"Are we heading right?" Ginger said uneasily. "I never remembered this part before."

"Yes," Dick said forcefully, "there's the upland track leading to the ridges and up there, I remember, there's a 'phone box for motorists. You keep going - I'm going to alert the town fire brigade just m case no one has noticed the moors are on fire."

"But that will mean heading back a bit," Frank remonstrated anxiously.

"I know," Dick snapped. "I'll take a chance. Get cracking. This is an order. Charge those sheep and get them on the move!"

With wild yells of blood-curdling strength, the Wolf Cubs obeyed. The terrified sheep gave way to wild baa-an-mg. bunched in fear and then broke and galloped down the hill with six demented boys screaming at their heels. It seemed quite dark for the smoke had paled the sinking sun. Dick lost sight of the boys in ten seconds. Not that he had time to stop and watch.

He was racing for the ridge where the call box stood but he began to doubt if be could find it. Smoke billowed blindingly around his head and he began to find he could not breathe properly. He found the call box by running slap into it, cutting his head on the angle. But he did not care a rush. A wave of thankfulness warmed him for it would have been so easy to have missed it. H. scrambled inside and called up the brigade.

"What's that?" a voice said at the other end. "You sound like a small boy. Sure you're' not hoaxing?"

"I'm not," Dick said sharply, and the authority in his voice was unmistakable.

by Philip Briggs



He was racing for the ridge where the call box stood

"The fire seems to be heading down on the valley where Thatcher's farm is. You'll reach that best by the Downland road!"

He burst out of the call box just in time for the fire had reached and was passing it. Head down, and trying not to think of what would happen if he stumbled and fell, Dick tore through the flashing wall and in his excitement never felt a thing though afterwards he found he had lost his eyelashes.

"Keep going," he told himself grimly. His one idea now was to catch up with the others and, get their woolly charges to safety. It was almost ironical to think that this was the second time in one day when the Grey Six had had to help Thatcher's flocks. Dick imagined now that he could hear shouts and yells ahead. Yes, that was Jumbo's bellow. No one could yell quite like him. Thai, suddenly he saw that someone was coming his way.

"Why, Lionel!" he exploded, "what on earth -?"

"Don't scold," the boy mumbled. "I was worried about you and they didn't need me anyway. Those sheep won't stop this side of Christmas I - I wanted to be sure you were all right."

Dick's face was a study. "Well, that was simply awfully nice of you," he said as they ran. "What about the others? If they miss you and come back and get caught, that won't be too bright, will it?" "Oh, no," Lionel said almost tearfully. "I didn't think of that"

"Don't look so shattered," the Sixer cheered him. "They are all there. I can count the figures against the glint of water."

Next moment they were all together again and the sheep well ahead, splashing and squelching through the Thatcher's water meadows.

"We'll have to mind they don't get bogged," Ian was shouting. "Oh, there you are, Dick. They should be safe here but we'll get them out as far as we can."

"This soggy ground should stop the fire, I should think," Ginger said.

"It had better," Dick replied and helped to herd the miserable and bewildered beasts to where the swampy meadows were wide along the riverbanks. What they had taken for hundreds of sheep, however, turned out to be about fifty but that was quite enough for them. They looked back the way they had come and agreed that it was a pretty terrifying display. Even in the half they could see the smoke rolling up and streaming in long banners. A reddish light played on it and they could hear snaps and cracks as bushes and telegraph poles caught.

The fire was rolling nearer and Dick was thankful he had got his message through before the wires came down in tangled wreckage. He hoped the Thatchers were all right, but by now the engines ought to be there to deal with things in case the blaze spread that way. He could hot leave the others for it needed all seven of them, on alert all the time, to keep their charges in one place.

The remaining flocks must be on the other side of the farm in the home paddocks and so were safe.

They're very dodgy and panicky," Bob said, just stopping a dash for freedom on the part of a little bunch of sheep he was watching. He headed them successfully, but Dick wondered how long they could go on as they were all getting tired out by now.

Ian shaded his eyes against the distant glare, which seemed to be moving towards them down the lower slopes of the hills towards the river. If the sedges were to catch, the fire would run along the riverbank and they would all be trapped. Anxiously they watched in the gathering darkness. Frank coughed sharply.

"Smoke's getting thicker," he said and had to hold two of his sheep by their ears to stop them breaking back in a kind of crazy suicide. Jumbo grunted.

Thicker?" he groaned." I can't breathe properly *now*. Hi, there, no you don't! Ginger, catch that brute. I think the smoke is scaring them."

A black cloud of it was pouring down towards them all tinged with the bonfire smell of scorching grass. The very air seemed to grow warmer. And now came an army of little creatures fleeing before the terror of fire stoats, rabbits, voles and mice, their eyes bulging with fear. There were even two foxes leaping from tussock to tussock, light as golden brown thistle fluff.

The sheep were bleating, pushing and jostling. In that swampy ground with roots and sedges tangled underfoot, it was difficult not to be knocked down and trampled on.

Dick was really frightened now. He could not see any of the others and knew that they could not see him for darkness and smoke combined had blotted out everything. All he could hear were shouts and he kept shouting himself to keep the Cubs together.

A cold hand clutched at him and a voice, trying vainly to sound offhand, sounded just near him.

"How - how are we doing, Dick?"

"Hello, is that you, Lionel?" the Sixer replied as cheerfully as he could. "I'm afraid this is rather a rough first outing for you."

"Oh, I'm enjoying it," Lionel said with well-meaning deceit. "It's - it's so exciting

Computcion smote Dick as he remembered poor Lionel's bare feet. He hoped the boy would not tread on anything rough or spiky. But there was nothing he could do about it.

"Look, here it comes," Bob exclaimed out of the murk and the Wolf Cubs saw a flash of red begin fizzing up along the river bank where the thick masses of dry sedge was like so much paper.

It'll stop before it reaches us," Dick shouted. "There's no grass left where we are. Hold everything hard

"Even if it reaches us," Ginger was calling encouragingly, "it's not very deep - just a yard or two."

"And it may bum out before then," Jumbo muttered. But the fire swept on.

Next Week: CONVERSION



With effect from 1st January, 1163, a charge of 6d. will be made for each insertion in these columns and must be sent with your application.

······ WANTED ······

Scott Patrol, *c/o* P.L.(S) B. Foster. Old Bakehouse. Stratton Audley. Bicester, Ozon. - Wish to correspond with another Senior Patrol anywhere exc. G.E. (English, German or French speaking) 15-16. Hobbies: Camping. hiking, sport, music, languages. aero-modelling.

Stephen Hopton (13). 15. Pound Lane. Fiahponds. Bristol. 5. - Scout or Guide pen-pal in Australia or New Zealand.

Gordon Harnett (17), 37. Waverley Avenue. Bedlington Station, Northumberland. - Guide pen-pal in France. Hobbies: swimming, music.

SM. Enrique Garcisi, Matias Rornero 87-B. Mexico 12 D.F. - Wishes to exchange ideas with other S.M.'s. Hobbies: photography, postcards, stamps, walking, swimming.

Edmund Fox (13). "Bryn Glas." Elinwood. Tredegar. Mon. - Scout pen-pal in British Commonwealth. Hobbies: microscopy, archaeology. Scouting.

Diane Warby (141), 9, Willow Green. Boreham Wood. Herts. - Pen-pal anywhere. pref. Gt. Britain. Hobbies: pop music, cycling, languages.

N. Ratnaraja (13), Dispensary Rd., Valvettitursi. Ceylon. -Pen-pal. Hobbies: Stamps, view cards, gardening, football, coins, Scouting.

P /2nd Ronald Fraser (12). 66, Charter St.. Accrington. Lancs. - Pen-pal in U.S.A. Hobbies: Scouting,. camping. photography, archaeology, Egyptology. Photo if poss.

Desne Harris (10). 24. Kawiti Ave. Panmure. Auckland. N. Zealand. - Pen-pal anywhere. Hobbies: reading. Brownies, records, cooking.



VERY IMPORTANT! If you write to one of these Scouts enclosing badges you should also ENCLOSE A STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE. When writing to a Commonwealth country, instead of stumps enclose "Commonwealth Reply Coupons" (5d. each) or if to a country not in the Commonwealth, "International Reply Coupons" (If- each). These may be obtained at main post offices. I, may be some tame before you get a reply because your correspondent may get a large number of letters. Any Scout who asks for his name to be put in "Swops" us expected on hit Scout's honour, to reply to all enquiries resulting from it.

With effect from 1st January. 1363, a charge of 5d. will be made for each insertion In these columns and must be sent with your application,

S.S. John Bewley, 12. Kmghtscroft Dr.. Rothwell. Leeds. Yorks. - Has Yarka. Central or 20 duff, stamps for other C.B.'s. Stamp Album containing over 350 stamps for best offers, or one Yorks Central D.B. for 10 Rugby League programmes.

Q.S. Allan Wilbers. 84, Carrington Ave., Hurstville, Sydney. Australia. -Has numerous Australian B.'s for other,. anywhere. Any number.

S.S. M. Lewis. 363, Hangleton Rd., Hove 4. Sussex - Has Sussex C.B.'s for others exc. Wiltshire. Kent (no name tapes please).

P.L. R. Ingham. 114, Halton Moor Ave., Leeds, 9, Yorks. - Has C. Yorks. B.'s for B.'s from America. Holland, Africa.

T.L. S. C. B. Tinton, 52. Rectory Ave.. High Wycombe. Bucks - Has Bucks. C.B.'s for others esp. Welsh, Scottish! Also 12th High Wycombe (Union Baptist) name tapes for others.

Paul Felton. 92, Appleton Ave.. Great Barr, Birmingham, 22K - Has S. Staffs. C.B.'s for Sussex C.B.'s.

S.S. R. J. Hall. 5, Baswich Crest. Stafford. - Has N. & S. Staffs.. B'ham. Warwicks., Guernsey, for Northants., Westmorlrnd, Rutland, S.O. Peterborough. Huntingdon, Cumberland N. & E., Welsh, Scottish D.B.'s and foreign B.'s. Please state alternatives.

T.L. J. Grimsey. 72. Bishop St.. St. Pauls, Bristol, 2. - Has Bristol C.B.'s for others. Also 10 postcards including foreign for 1 C.B.

P.L. Derek Boyes. 22. Saltisford, Warwick - Has Warwick C.B.'s for others exc. London, Welsh Dragons. Birmingham. Bucks.

Ranger F. Panis. P.O. Box 961, Nairobi, Kenva, E. Africa. - Has Kenva Lion B.'s, East African stamps (15). beer mats, some American B.'s for C.B.'s exc. S. Africa G.G. (B.'s accepted in-steal of Reply coupons [Air mall answers).

P.L. E. Billington. 124. Grovesnor Rd., St. Paula, Bristol, 2. - Has 1 foreign tourist badge for 1 English C.B. Also 1 foreign Scout belt for 1 English Scout belt.

P.L. J. R. Vann. 9, Handsworth Wood Road, Handsworth Wood. Birmingham. 20. - Has Birmingham. S. Staffs.. Warwicks. B.s for others.

P/2nd John Bell, 12, Desmond Rd.. Crossacres Wythenshawe. Manchester, 22. - Has 5 foreign coins and 8 match box labels f or every C.B. received, or 8 foreign coins or 10 match box labels for every D.R received.

S.S. Mike Stocker. 56. Eastifeld Rd., Bordesley Green East. Birmingham. 9. -Has Bham. S. Staffs.. Warwicks., also B'ham Guide for Cumbs., Westmorland. Rutland. Cornwall. Northants, Rants., Herts, Dorset. Berks.. Bucks., Cambridge, also Scottish, Welsh. Irish.

P.L. John Mowbray. 67. Messines Rd.. Wellington. W.3. N. Zealand. - 6 N.Z. Pictorial stamps all duff, and used, or 3 Pacific Island stamps, mint, for every C.B. received.

Mrs. B. J. MacDonald, Trevoec, Dornoch, Sutherland. - Up to 6 Lanarks. C.B.s for others exc. E. & W Glam. and Sutherland.

I. Brown. 171, Chorley New Rd.. Bolton, Lancs. - Scout pennant for 3 duff. Scottish C.B.'s.

Michael R. Betteridge. 28. Oakmount Rd.. Chandler's Ford. Hants. - Has Bucks, and Rants. C.B.'s for others, esp. Scottish. Irish, Welsh. Rutland.

Q.S. S. J. Penfound. 118. Woking Rd.. Guildford, Surrey. - Has Surrey. I.O.W. C.B.'s and also name tapes for other C.B.'s or name tapes.

P/2nd H. Turner. 641. Liverpool Rd., Ainsdale, Southport. Lancs. - Has many American and English match box labels, will give 4 for 1 C.B.



May We	Sug	gest	
	G	IFTS FOR CHRISTMAS	
Silver Cuff Links	16/9	Tie. Scout Badge. "Terylene"	11/6
Bible, Scout Badge	14/-	Tie, Scout Colours, "Terylene"	9/6
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Treasury Note Case, Chestnut	13/6	Pal O'Mine Sleeping Bag	115/-
Lady's Sling Bag	18/6	College-type Scarf, Scout Colours	21/6
Square Scarf, Rayon, Scout Colours	16/3	Spoons, 6 in case, Scout or Cub	30/-
Tray Purse, Leather	8/3	Gilwell, Junior Tent, Green	87/6
Car Badge, Fleur de Lys	12/6	Bleuet Camping Gaz Stove S200	41/-
Cuff Links, Enamel	8/6	Book Ends, Natural Oak	27/6
Compass and Map Measurer	13/6	Tea Cloth, Scout Design	4/11
Tie Clip	3/9	Moccasin Kits, Sportsman	from 26/6
Tie, Wolf Cub, New All Rayon	6/-	" " Ranger	from 29/11

DO-IT-YOURSELF

DO-IT-YOURSELF

LINK BELT

Makes up into a wonderful leather belt. Really simple to make. this kit contains enough pre-cut leather links to make a belt up to 38in., with a metal buckle and keeper. PRICE 9/11 Postage 7¹/₂d.

"MONEY MOC"

This easy to make kit contains five pre-cut leather parts, plastic lacing and complete directions to make a compact coin purse which fits neatly into your pocket, when opened it looks like a small moccasin.

PRICE 6/11 Postage 6d.





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- 183 Clapham Manor Street, S.W.4.
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- 20 Richmond Street, Liverpool.
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- 104 Hindes Road, Harrow.
- 5 Tacket Street, Ipswich.
- 17 Turl Street, Oxford.

STAFF

Apply in writing, giving age and experience, to: General Manager, Equipment Department, Boy Scouts Association, 25 Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1.