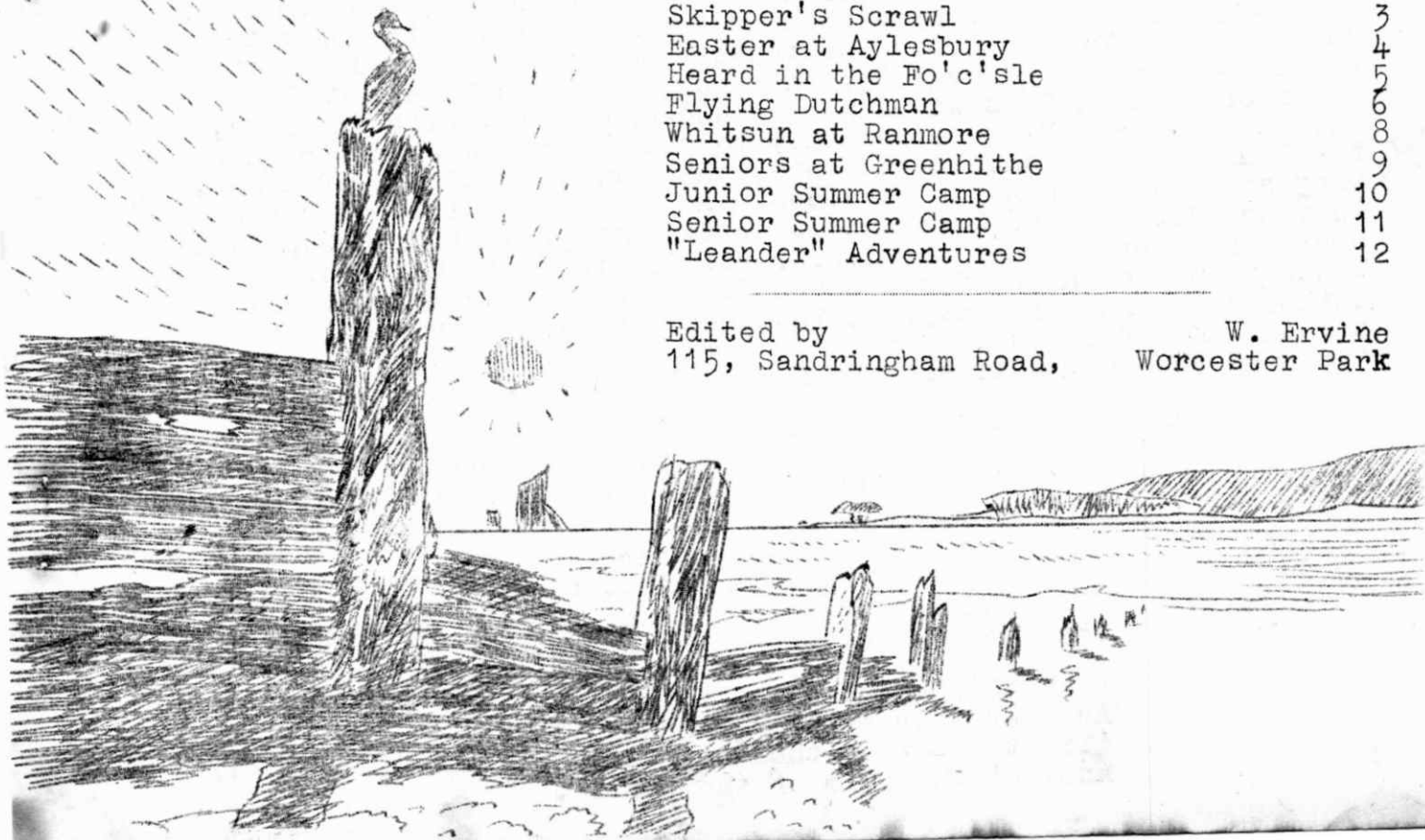


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Edited by
115, Sandringham Road,

W. Ervine
Worcester Park



E D I T O R I A L.

The Scout Movement is now 40 years old, and old man time is taking toll amongst the original Leaders and Supports of the Organisation. They are not being replaced in sufficient numbers and the shortage of Scouters is a matter of great concern. It is not healthy for a Youth Organisation to be run by old men. They are out of touch with the boys, and of course, with a few outstanding exceptions, cannot hold the respect or gain the confidence of young boys who look upon them as back numbers. It is perhaps an advantage for the Group Scoutmaster to be an older man, but no Scouter should be over 35, and then he should have a good staff of young A/S/Ms who can camp weekends, etc. with the lads, but the problem is where are they to come from? Just at the age the Senior Scouts should take over the responsibilities of A/S/Ms, they are called into the Services, and in the majority of cases they are lost to the Movement as active members. From Groups all over the country comes the S.O.S. for Scouters of the right age. Without them even the first class Troops must deteriorate, and although the numbers may be maintained, or even increased, the standard of efficiency on which the whole benefit of the Scout training depends, will sink to a very low level.

The Boy Scouts Association is faced with a crisis and if it is to survive, must go out into the highways and byeways and find new Leaders to relieve the older ones. IT MUST DO THIS OR DIE!

One ship goes East, another West,
 With the selfsame winds that blow:
 'Tis the set of the sail and not the gale
 That determines the way they go.

Like ships of the sea are the ways of men,
 As they journey along through life.
 'Tis the set of the soul that determines the goal,
 And not the calm or the strife.

S K I P P E R ' S S C R A W L .

Once more we must offer apologies to our readers for the late publication of an issue of the "Water Rat", due, as last time, to circumstances outside our control. Most of the material was to hand at the right time, but the Editor has asked me to re-write the Scrawl which was to have been published, in order to bring news up to date, and to include the above apology. We are hoping for your kind consideration.

You will be sorry to hear that Mr. Ervine is having to work overtime most evenings, Saturday mornings and Sunday mornings, and is therefore unable to organise our BAZAAR this year. We all appreciate the hard work which he has always put into this event, and ask you to make a note of the date which has been booked for

SATURDAY 19th NOVEMBER, 1949,

at St. Peter's Hall, Norbiton, and ask you all, to show practical appreciation of Mr. Ervine's work, by helping the Group to make this show a success, in order that it may come up to his expectations. We have two months in which to get Stalls arranged and "furnished", and Sideshows planned, and all the hundred-and-one other details, such as publicising the Bazaar, etc. We are still in need of funds - and like all good Scout Groups - always will be.

We know of several supporters who are working for the Bazaar, (even before they knew the date) - that shows the right "Leander" spirit. What about YOUR help. It will be greatly appreciated. If you can give us any assistance either in a practical way, or by helpful suggestions, we shall be pleased to hear from you at 82 Eden Street, Kingston.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT - A DANCE in aid of Group Funds on FRIDAY 28th OCTOBER, ALL SAINTS HALL, Ashdown Rd, Kingston, Tickets 3/6 each. We are expecting a large gathering of Leander "Old Boys" and their wives.

E A S T E R A T A Y L E S B U R Y .

by D.Farley.

Aylesbury was once again the rendezvous at Easter, and after a late start, owing to a multitude of punctures, we arrived at the camp site about 10 o'clock that evening. Incidentally I was the "Pilot" and somehow managed to take a wrong turning which "accident" by, of course, pure luck, although taking us a further 10 miles, brought us to my Aunt's house, where we got a free tea!

The camp site was a super one, a clearing in a miniature jungle, and was the permanent camp site of the 1st Aylesbury Troop, who were already there. Alongside ran the river Thaine, the crossing of which, on a Raft, was quite an achievement. This river consisted of about 4ft. of water and 6ft. of mud, which was a bit of a drawback, but as the weather was nice, did not prevent some of us swimming.

At dinner, I poured some methylated spirit on the fire to liven it up. It did! A sheet of flame caught Nobby on the leg, and he leapt across the fire like one possessed, muttering strange words. Fortunately he was not really burnt, but just singed, and a little upset.

On Sunday two Rovers arrived from Princes Risborough, on a battered and very old motor bike, and were the cause of much fun and leg-pulling, which, together with the raft on the river, not to mention mud, made a very enjoyable camp.

* * * *

There was once a Sea Scout so daft
 That he put out to sea on a raft
 A storm broke en route
 And the raft followed suit
 Which damped him a lot - fore and aft.

H E A R D I N T H E F O ' C ' S L E .

The Group has recently lost some old friends and supporters, and our sympathy goes to the Skipper whose father passed away in June. Many of us older members of the Troop remember the days when Mr. Ebbage, Senr, was a member of the Kingston Association, and always a ready helper, guide, and philosopher to the "Leanders".

The Group has also lost a great friend in Mr. Harling. His cheery presence at the Whist Drives was always welcomed, and in spite of his duties as Verger of the Parish Church, he always found time to help us at our Bazaars, &c. He passed on, after a long illness, and we extend our sympathy to Mrs. Harling on the loss of a grand partner.

Another of the stalwarts to go, was the grandfather of Arthur Hall, Mr. D. J. Hall, when in business as a Corn Merchant, in Park Road, was an enthusiastic worker for the 1st Kingston Hill Group, and was a member of the Kingston Association.

We were sorry to hear that Arthur Langridge has been in hospital for an operation, and we are glad to be able to report that he has now recovered, and is his old self once more.

Paul Clements, (at present serving in the R.N.) had a very unfortunate experience recently, when a plane in which he was travelling, crashed into the sea. Paul, who sustained numerous cuts, was eventually rescued, but the pilot of the plane was lost.

Roy White, who has been connected with the Group over a period of years, first as a Scout, later as an A/S/M was married in August. We wish Mr. & Mrs. Roy White every happiness.

Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. J. Knight on the safe arrival of a daughter, Lesley Ann, on September 5th. We understand that Akela was hoping our ex-Akela would provide a future Wolf Cub instead of a Brownie!

THE FLYING DUTCHMAN.

Most of you have heard of the phantom ship "The Flying Dutchman". Well, I want to tell you of the time I saw it. But first of all, for the legend.

About 300 years ago a certain Captain Vanderdecken was in charge of a big Dutch three-master, on the way home from India, with a cargo of silks and spices. On reaching the neighbourhood of the Cape of Good Hope, he encountered very heavy weather, and spent a whole week beating to and fro against a westerly gale and mountainous seas in an endeavour to round the point. The crew were driven to the last stage of exhaustion, but Vanderdecken, a man of iron determination, could not bear to be thwarted, and constantly refused to hear of turning back for shelter. Finally the Master came to him and reported that the continuous pounding had started the stem post, so that the vessel could not be expected to live another 24 hours under the same conditions. At this the Dutchman flew into a violent rage, cursing the Master, the rest of the crew, the weather, blaspheming even against Almighty God as the author of this setback. Almost at once the crew were astonished to see the figure of the Holy Ghost descend upon the poop to admonish the Captain for his audacity. No whit abashed, however, Vanderdecken fell to cursing the Holy Visitor himself. As punishment for this offence, the story goes, he was condemned never to reach port, but to sail on. A ghost commanding a ghost crew in a ghost ship, - eternally engaged in a fruitless struggle to round the Cape. Further, he was to bring bad luck to his fellow men, being the portent of death and disaster to all who should see him.

It is some years now that I joined a new ship up in Port Glasgow. She was still fitting out under the dockyard mateys, but was due to sail on the Thursday afternoon. Some delay, however, prevented her getting away till the Friday morning's tide, which was regarded by the more superstitious among the seamen, as an omen of misfortune.

Nevertheless, we made a good voyage out to Sydney, and nothing exceptional occurred until we left Cape Town on the homeward run. Here the ship ran into dense fog, and it was necessary to proceed at half speed, with the siren going every minute. During the afternoon of the second day out, I was at the wheel. I could scarcely see beyond the fo'c'sle head, but the sea was flat and calm, and it was easy enough to keep the boat on her course. Suddenly the stillness was broken by the look-out's hail "Ship on Port bow", followed by the 2nd Mate's staccato "Hard-a-Port". As I spun the wheel, I glanced over my left shoulder, and there, not two cable lengths away appeared a dim shape of a three-masted sailing ship. Every sail was set and hanging limp in the dank atmosphere, but no sign of life could be seen aboard as she drifted slowly past our quarter, without answering our Skipper's frenzied hail. Ghostly she looked indeed in that glimpse we had of her, before the swirling mists swallowed her up astern. That we had actually seen the "Flying Dutchman" was the current opinion that evening amongst the hard cases of the foredeck, who recalled with a shake of the head, the fact of our sailing on a Friday. Such a combination of portents, they declared, could only mean disaster.

At about 8 bells, the next morning, I awoke with a start. The engine room telegraph clanged urgently, followed after a brief interval by a sickening lurch which nearly threw me from my bunk. I reached the deck in time to hear the 1st Mate order "All hands to the boats". We got the boats out, but could not launch them owing to the confused seas. It appeared that we had piled up on Jacob's Reef, just outside Walvis Bay. Next day a Government tug took us and our gear ashore, leaving the ship in the hands of the salvage experts.

Was the cause of our misfortune actually Vanderdecken's ghost vessel, or had we sighted the German barque "Elfreda", that docked in Cape Town the following day?

W H I T S U N A T R A N M O R E .

On Friday evening the Seniors and Junior Patrol Leaders cycled off to establish our Camp site, with an overcast sky, and pitched tents in between cloudbursts. On Saturday morning Mr. Burton shot off on his "Stinkwagon", and arrived in good time for morning tea. The Juniors, shepparded by Mr. Elms on his mobile tank, left H.Q. shortly after 10 o'clock, - did some shopping in the market, and then "set sail" for Ranmore, making several stops for minor breakdowns, and of course a well-earned cup of tea at Leatherhead. After stopping on the hill leading to the Common, to purchase ice cream, we arrived in nice time to sort out our gear before tea.

I am very pleased to say that "Leanders" set a very high standard of camping, and D/S/M. Purdy could find no reason to dock points. Well done, Leanders.

In spite of many oppressions, we had a good camp, and even "Sticky Varnish" who was suffering from a boil situated on his transome, agreed, and on Monday the "Casenovas" were turned loose, and by the time the convoy of Juniors reached Kingston, were flashing about in their "Spiv" suits.

The only sad thing to note here, is the news regarding the Skipper's father. The whole Group has asked me to offer the Skipper and his relatives their condolence and sympathy.

* * * *

A young man saw a notice "This cottage for Sail", and couldn't resist the opportunity for a little leg-pulling, so he asked the owner when his cottage was to sail.. The old man looked the youth up and down. "Just as soon as somebody can raise the wind" he said.

* * * *

SENIORS AT GREENHITHE.

Two parties of Seniors went to Greenhithe at Easter. The first party of six slept at Headquarters on Friday night, and sailed on the morning tide to R.R.S. "Discovery", and then on to Greenhithe. They were accompanied by "Podge" and "Stuer" in a canoe (Podge was seen to be nursing several rollers during the passage which he swears were over thirty feet in height whilst paddling away in the bow of the canoe.)

The second party travelled to "Discovery" by road or rail on Saturday, where they stayed the night before boarding the MY Guillimot which arrived at Greenhithe in good time for lunch.

After a visit to see the Duty Officer aboard H.M.S. "Worcester", camp was pitched, and a very pleasant weekend enjoyed, particularly as the weather behaved remarkably well.

On Sunday "Snowey" and "Blunt" were observed trying to sail away from the hard, with the after painter secured well below water level (this was done as the tide was ebbing, and we wanted the boat to stay afloat).

On Easter Monday camp was struck in time to sail away on the morning tide, towing the three dinghies and the canoe, and Headquarters was reached at 18-45 hours.

* * *

JUNIOR TROOP SUMMER CAMP 1949.

It was a fine morning on 30th July when the Junior Troop left by train for Herne Bay, Kent, where their Summer Camp was being held, through the kindness of Mr. Davis, who let them have a site at Studd's Farm.

The train party arrived before the lorry, with "Nobby" Hanley, Colin Ford, Bob Dodge, Charlie Bishop and Dave Farley aboard. It didn't take long to have tents pitched, and everything else in order.

Apart from high winds and a little rain, the weather was fine for the whole of the camping period. A few brave spirits started getting up at 6.30 for an early swim, but after a few days, decided to postpone this pleasure until a little later in the day. There was the occasion of the midnight swim which we all enjoyed particularly when some enterprising people took the clothes belonging to Mr. Elms, who was forced to go back to camp wrapped in his towel. It is understood that a passing policeman gave him a "look".

Camp was struck on 13th August, and after an uneventful journey, both the train and the lorry party reached home without accident.

In case Arthur Davis reads this, I should like to say how much everyone appreciated the way in which he helped the campers throughout their stay.

The Scouters present included Mr. Burton, Mr. Elms, and Rovers Pratley, Bishop, Dodge, and the Brothers Dean, and on behalf of the Juniors I would like to thank them all very much.

DAVE FARLEY.

SENIORS SUMMER CAMP.

A party of Seniors, Fentiman, Mustoe, Vaizey, Scott and Brown left the H.Q. at 9.30 on Saturday morning, 23rd July, 1949, in the big Gig, and pulled to Sunbury Lock. They were lucky in getting a tow from Sunbury right up to Runnymede, and then, with half hourly changes, pulled from Runnymede up to the camp site, on an Island at Marlow, and arrived there at 10.30 p.m. This was the headquarters for the whole of the camp, and except for occasional visits into the town either for getting in stores, or visiting the Cinema, no further excursions were made, except of course to Cookham, where a party of Sea Rangers from Great Missenden were camped. How is it that Sea Scouts manage to track down Sea Rangers? We were invited over to the Cookham camp for cocoa.

On the return journey the gig left on the Friday morning at 11 o'clock, and we pulled down to Boulter's Lock where we were again lucky in getting a tow as far as Weybridge. From there we pulled to Molesey, and were again fortunate in getting another tow right back to Kingston Bridge. We arrived back at the Clubroom at 10.30 p.m. The weather was fairly fine over the whole period, with about a couple of wet days, and four very sunny ones.

The Dinghies left on the "outward" journey on the Friday evening, and the crews spent the night at the home of one of their members, and arrived at Marlow on Sunday at about 4 p.m.

In view of the long journey, the return was started on the Thursday but here again the crews were fortunate in getting a tow from Cookham Lock right through to Kingston, and arrived home the same day (Thursday).

D. BROWN.

SOME "LEANDER" ADVENTURES.

Ten little Leander boys, standing in a line,
One left his cap behind, then there were nine.

Nine little Leander boys, went home very late,
One was on roller skates, then there were eight.

Eight little Leander boys, went to camp in Devon,
One burn't the dinner, then there were seven.

Seven little Leander boys, got in such a fix,
One fell off a raft, then there were six.

Six little Leander boys, on building jobs did thrive,
One banged his finger, Oh! Then there were five.

Five little Leander boys, racing on the shore,
One slipped on a jelly fish, then there were four.

Four little Leander boys, bought doughnuts for their tea,
One had all the other's share, then there were three.

Three little Leander boys, couldn't think what to do,
One went to weekend camp, then there were two.

Two little Leander boys, thought hiking overdone,
One went on his bicycle, then there was one.

One little Leander boy, thought he'd get recruits,
Soon there were crowds of boys belonging to the Group.

STOP PRESS: After an interval of many years, a "Leander" Rover Crew has again been formed. This now has a membership of eight. Congratulations to M.PRATLEY, B.DODGE and C.BISHOP, to whose initiative this splendid development is due.