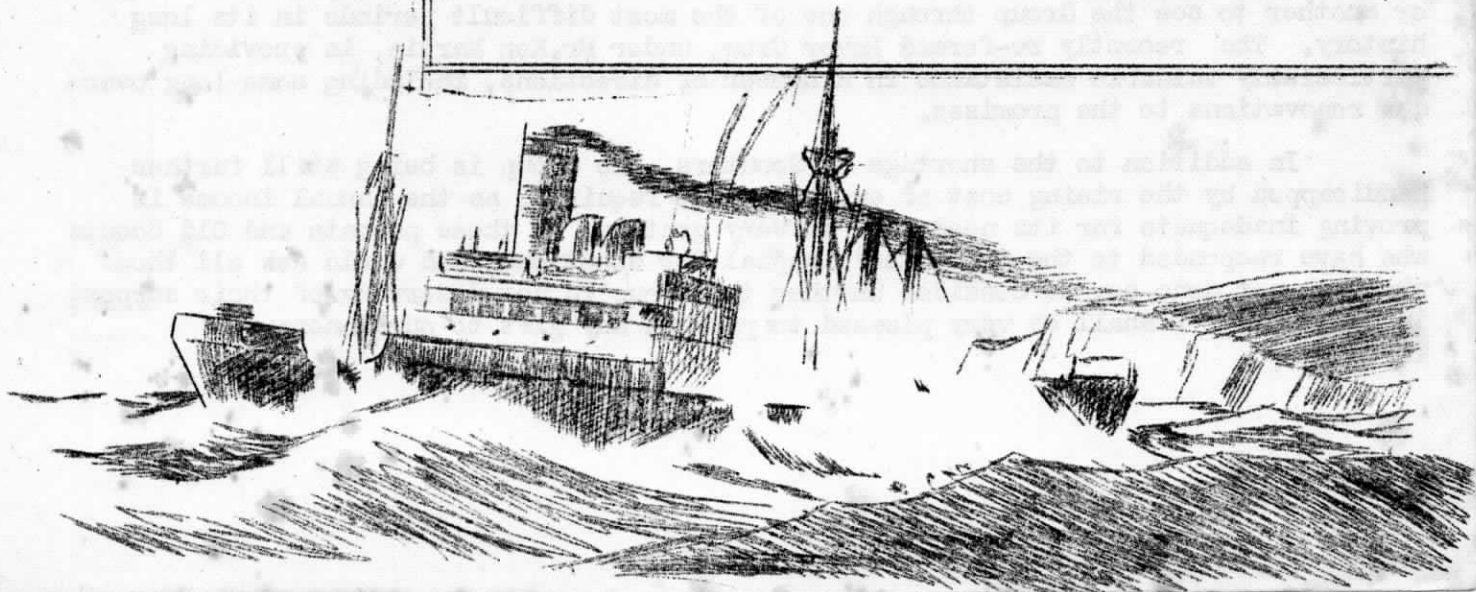


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## SKIPPER'S SCRAWL.

The last issue had scarcely reached our readers when circumstances again intervened to hamper the work of the Group. Miss Draper found herself unable to take up the appointment as Cubmaster, and Mr. David Argles had to relinquish his work with the Senior Troop, owing to removal from the district. Fortunately Miss Pam Hollis, who is the sister of a "Leander" Rover, and has had several years' experience of Cubbing as assistant to Mrs. Batson of the 1st Norbiton Pack, has now taken on the duties of Cubmaster. "Leanders" are greatly indebted to Mrs. Batson for suggesting this appointment, and for so unselfishly giving up a valued assistant. I trust that her reward will be to see the "Leander" Pack once more living up to its fine traditions.

The report of the Admiralty Inspecting Officer (which appears on another page) shows that, in spite of the serious shortage of Scouters, the Scout Troop and Senior Scout Troop are continuing to provide Sea Scout training of a very satisfactory standard. My thanks are due to all those who are helping in one way or another to see the Group through one of the most difficult periods in its long history. The recently re-formed Rover Crew, under Mr. Ken Martin, is providing particularly valuable assistance in a number of directions, including some long overdue renovations to the premises.

In addition to the shortage of Scouters, the Group is being still further handicapped by the rising cost of everything it requires, as the annual income is proving inadequate for its needs. I am very grateful to those parents and Old Scouts who have responded to the Committee's appeal for donations, and would ask all those who have not done so, to consider whether the Group is not deserving of their support in addition. I shall be very pleased to pass on any gift to our Honorary Treasurer.

## ADMIRALTY INSPECTION - 13th DECEMBER, 1949.

Being a dark evening I rather anticipated that the Inspection would be held indoors. I was wrong. Kingston are quite determined to show themselves off on these occasions and, during the evening, they certainly succeeded.

I was met on the river bank outside Headquarters by Mr. Ebbage and taken in to the largest compartment of the ship where both Troops were assembled for my preliminary walk round. Over 70 boys were on parade and every Scouter and Instructor from both Troops was present. It took me a considerable time to walk round every Patrol, and I would have liked to spend even longer doing so. However, with so many other things to see, on with the more serious work of the evening.

For Patrol work and Instruction every available compartment was used. All the boats had been taken out and moored to the river bank for the purpose of making more room inside, or so I was told. With all this space and so many expert Scouters and Instructors, there was every chance of giving full scope to the many subjects and activities displayed. The Unit is extremely well supplied with good, practical gear for both indoor and outdoor work and they certainly showed me how to make the best use of it.

At the same time as I was visiting the classes, I did a conducted tour of the entire Headquarters. These are even more extensive than last year and never seem to stop growing. The Unit is obviously never content to stand still for a moment. As soon as some job is completed, another is started. This time I was shown a new and spacious storeroom. Built by the Troop themselves, the neat layout and easy access to the numerous shelves and bins, the well stowed gear and the security from pilfering would all gladden the heart of any Central Stores Officer in one of H.M. Ships. A really grand piece of work.

Towards the end of my tour, I visited the Gym. Here a muscular party of

#### 4. ADMIRALTY INSPECTION (contd)

Seniors were carrying out a very advanced table of P.T. under an expert Instructor. The boys were carrying out exercises which were really intended to develop the body and they certainly seemed to benefit from them. I was taking a keen interest in this party of miniature strong men, when there were two violent explosions at the back of the buildings and all the lights went out. There was a strong smell of smoke and I was thinking of doing something about it when I heard a small voice out of the darkness report to the 'Skip' "there has been a bad explosion, there are several casualties and the place is on fire". Hands to Fire Stations and First Aid Parties to muster was piped. In a short time there was a chain of buckets being passed to Headquarters from the river, and the casualties were being attended to. The next report was that the fire was out of control. Abandon Ship was ordered. All the boats were alongside the bank and, having embarked the casualties, the remainder of the Ship's Company were quickly aboard. All the boats then shoved off and, as an exercise, pulled round a nearby island and then returned to the landing stages. This 'General Drill' had not been rehearsed and, considering the realistic conditions and the darkness, each part was very well carried out. This finished off one of the best evening inspections I have seen and showed me that, in the future, I have 'nothing but the best' to expect from Kingston and District.

Kingston (LEANDER) and 1st Cuddington work very well together to form a first class Group. They are recommended for continued Admiralty Recognition.

C.E.P. HARRISON, Commander, R.N.  
Inspecting Officer for Admiral Commanding Reserves.

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**BOB-A-JOB WEEK:** 10th - 15th APRIL, 1950.

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Every member of the Group is expected to take part in this effort, of which further details will be announced later.

A WEEK-END WITH THE 23rd PORTSMOUTH SEA SCOUTS  
by "Screwy" Whitworth.

As I was called on to write this at rather short notice, I decided the best thing I could do was to write an account of my last week-end at home. This week-end was fairly typical of the more quiet week-ends.

On arrival at the Rover Den at the bottom of the Skipper's garden (situated at the head of Portsmouth Harbour) one finds a rather confused crowd of Rovers, Seniors and "Youngsters" (Scouts), the Youngsters are apparently busy sorting out oars for the whaler, whilst Tom, who is to take them out, stands bawling at them. The Seniors are also trying to sort out gear, in order to go sailing on the tide. When at last the various boating parties are away (usually not without mishap, such as young Ledpeter falling in), the remaining Rovers start on their various jobs. George decides to make a spar, while the Den Warden decides to have a tidy up, so proceeds to clear out everything (and everyone) from the Den. A pleasant two or three hours are spent in this way until the "Youngsters" come back - naturally famished - a huge mass of them, struggling into the galley - the Den Warden dancing with rage in the background. With one fell swoop they claim all the primus stoves and sundry dixies left knocking about - the camp dixies being safely hidden from their prying fingers. Out come the sandwiches, and in five minutes the den is as bad as ever it was. Some time later the Seniors come in, having narrowly missed being left stranded by the tide, and scorning the offer of a battered primus, hike off to "Bert's Cafe" for a proper tea. By the time they get back, the "Youngsters" have gone, and all set to clear up the den again. At about 7 o'clock the various Ranger friends start rolling up for a Social Evening, that has been arranged. This consists of games, country and ballroom dancing, and an American Supper. Promptly at 10 o'clock, the girls are shown the door, the Seniors retire to the houseboat and turn in, the Rovers doing likewise in the Rover Den.

The next morning, bright and early (9 a.m.) the "duty Wallah" of the Seniors gets up and cooks breakfast, and serves it to the rest, who are still in bed. The

6. WEEK-END with 23rd PORTSMOUTH SEA SCOUTS (contd)

same thing happens in the Rover Den, I believe. By 10 o'clock the place is once more thriving with activity, the Seniors have decided the houseboat needs a "lick o' paint", on the outside, so leaving the "duty Wallah" to prepare dinner, they commence to paint. The Rovers do various similar jobs. One of the Rovers decides to paint a dinghy, so swiping some of the Seniors' paint, whilst they aren't looking he gets on with his job, and so passes a quiet morning!

After a brief dinner, the tide is high enough to enable us to go out, this time the whole sailing fleet goes with as many Seniors and Rovers as possible. A rendezvous is made at Peewit Island where all boats make for. Here everyone enjoys a swim and picnic tea, then the boats are sailed back to their moorings. Once ashore, there is a mad dash by everybody to wash and brush up, and get to evening "Church Parade", held once a month, arriving in time to creep in the back during the first Hymn. After Church, the Rovers and Seniors join in with the other young people of the Church, and a pleasant social evening ensues.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO:-

BILL MANNING, CHARLIE BISHOP, BOB DODGE and GEORGE GOODALL, who have been awarded the Bronze Medallion of the Royal Life Saving Society.

Bronze Medal Classes are being held at the Kingston Schools Group Hut, and we hope to be able to report some more successes at the conclusion of them.

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(Several of our readers have drawn the attention of the Editorial Staff to the fact that a van should be driven into the river, not "drived". Sorry, but my typewriter is very old, and my typing not so hot. EDITOR)

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## MY FIRST DAY IN THE ARMY.

On my reaching the age for National Service, I received a letter instructing me to report, between 9 a.m. and 12 noon, on a certain date, at Devizes in Wiltshire. Enclosed in this letter was a travelling warrant, and a postal order for 4/- for expenses. There were many others on the same errand travelling on the train from London, and on arrival at Devizes station, we found lorries waiting to take us to the camp, where we received a cup of tea and cake. A Sergeant, who was quite human, took charge of us and shepherded us to the various depots to which we had to go. First came "Documentation", where we said 'Goodbye' to our civilian documents, and received in exchange our Army Paybook and an official number. Then on to the M.O. who gave us a short medical examination. Having passed satisfactorily, we were handed a printed letter for home, which we had to sign to say that we were O.K. (even if we were not) All this time our Sergeant was gradually putting the screw on, and we now had to march, ("Try to keep in step"!!!! Sergeant) to the stores to receive our uniforms, boots, (like coffins), greatcoats and tin hats. We lined up again, for the Barrack Room this time, and put on our uniform, whilst outside the Sergeant, who had now reached the stage when he informed us that "if we broke our mothers' hearts, we were not going to break HIS", was showing some poor unfortunates how to wear their gaiters, etc. Having been previously issued with string and brown paper, we made parcels of our civilian clothes and handed them in, to be sent home.

Now came our first meal - Dinner! How often we had wondered what the grub would be like. Of course, where a large quantity of food is mass-cooked, you must not expect it to be exactly like Mother's cooking, but after we had had it, we all pronounced it to be very good. We lined up at the Cookhouse and received a plate of soup, hot and good. Returning our soup plates, we had, for the next course, the choice of four kinds of meat, potatoes, choice of one of four kinds of vegetables, and gravy. On returning our plates again (the washing up is done by a special staff with machines) there was the choice of two different kinds of sweets.

The afternoon was spent "square bashing", to the uninitiated - drill! After

## 8. MY FIRST DAY IN THE ARMY (contd)

this we received our first T.A.B. (typhus and anti bacteria) inoculation. Now a warning about this! You will find amongst the older hands chaps who will tell you harrowing tales about the effects of inoculation, and generally "put the wind up you", so that by the time it is your turn for the needle, you are ready to flop out. Don't take any notice of these silly asses, for, apart from a temporary stiffening of the arm, there is no ill-effect from inoculation.

Tea time had now arrived! and lining up again, we received a plate of either baked beans on toast, or sausage and potatoes, bread and butter, and tea. On most evenings this is our last meal of the day, but on two evenings a week, Supper generally consisting of Cottage Pie, is served. There is, however, in the camp a very good "NAAFI" where, besides all kinds of things such as sweets, writing paper, boot polish, etc. hot drinks, snacks and meals, can be obtained at reasonable prices. Thus, our first day in the Army ended, with lights out at 10.30 p.m., and we were quite ready to turn in.

Now, as this article has been written to help those chaps who are approaching calling-up age, here are a few tips which you will find useful. Don't take a lot of gear, but DO take plenty of rags for cleaning, etc., and plenty of hankies. Boot-cleaning is very important, and the Inspecting Officer will look between the uppers and the soles, along the welt, to see if they have been cleaned there. The best method of doing this is with a tooth brush. Keep your teeth clean, and MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL, for success and your own happiness - take an interest in the work, and do as you are told. Good luck!

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(Unfortunately, the Navy is no longer open to National Service men, and only takes recruits prepared to sign on for long service periods, but I understand that in the Royal Air Force, the routine is much the same as described in the above article.  
EDITOR)



## DID YOU KNOW THAT - ?

The term "STEEPLECHASE" was born in the late 18th century? A party of fox-hunters were returning, not having a kill. One of them saw a church steeple in the distance. He challenged all the company to race to the steeple in a direct line, taking all obstacles, the winner to be the one who first touched the stone of the steeple with his riding whip.

The word "TEETOTAL" owes its origin to Mr. Joseph Turner, an artisan of Preston, Lancs, who in September 1833, was addressing a meeting on total abstinence. But Mr. Turner stuttered badly in moments of excitement, and the concluding lines of his address were as follows: "N-n-nothing but t-t-total abstinence will do - that or nowt". The stutter was seized upon by his opponents in the crowd, who christened the new movement t-t-totalism. His supporters good-naturedly accepted it. It has now become a noun in our language.

"TO HAVE ONE OVER THE EIGHT" comes from military source. In olden times a soldier in a garrison town was judged not to be drunk until he had had eight pints of beer, no matter what his condition appeared to be. Thus a man who was drunk had had one over the eight.

"TO SLEEP LIKE A TOP". A spinning top is said to "sleep" when its gyrations are at their acme, and the top is so steady that it seems to be not moving.

"LYNCH HIM". Lynch law was originally the type of law administered by Charles Lynch (1736-96) a Virginian planter, who in the early days of the Revolution, in company with his neighbours, Adams and Calloway, undertook to protect society in the region where he lived on the Staunton River, by punishing with stripes or banishment, such lawlessness as was alleged against persons. But the death of offenders (which is now recognised as Lynch Law) was never inflicted by Lynch. And Lynch Law has nothing to do with a Galway Mayor hanging his son in 1493.

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A SHORT STORY: An Irish tram driver had been warned against sending in long reports of mishaps, and to be as brief as possible. His car went off the rails. This was his report: - "Off ag'in...on ag'in....away ag'in.....Flamigin."

## A WEEK-END IN THE GREEK MOUNTAINS, by Brian Hill.

One week-end six of us decided to go for a little trip into the mountains. The object was to climb to the summit of Mount Kilene. We approached the O/C for his permission, and to arrange some transport. On discovering where we were going, he was very keen to accompany us. We started out early Saturday morning, the lorry loaded up with bedding, food and seven people. The journey out was very interesting, passing through several villages where practically everybody turned out to watch us. The road ran along the seashore for 30 - 40 miles, steep mountains on one side and sea on the other. All along the seashore could be seen the wreckage of trains blown up by the bandits a year ago. About 1 o'clock we stopped for lunch. This was cooked and eaten out of mess-cans as we thought it would be too risky to bring plates along with us. The fire we cooked our meal over was the usual Desert Army method, we filled a large can with sand, and then poured petrol over it. Pushing on, we passed Corinth, one of the ancient cities of Greece. About 4.30 we could see Mount Kilene in the distance, and finally arrived at the little village at the foot of the mountain. The road to the village zigzags backward and forward, and in 400 yards horizontal distance it climbs 2,000 ft. Where we were staying the night was a ski-hut further up the side of the mountain, which we had to climb with the aid of mules. After some tea, we loaded up the mules and started up the mountain. After 2 hours climbing, we reached the ski-hut, expecting to find it empty. But to our surprise there were some people already there, sitting round a huge fire. They made us very welcome, and we were soon swapping tins of jam, &c. for Greek cheese, and wine. Soon after 9 o'clock we were joined by another Greek man and woman, this making up the number to 6 English soldiers, 4 greek men and 2 women. Seeing that we were starting early in the morning, we got ready for bed. But here came the first snag, - how to get undressed in front of the Greek women? We could not go into another room because there wasn't another, and it was too cold outside in the snow, to undress. Then the O/C suggested that we got into bed and took our trousers off, and then put our pyjamas on. This was finally accomplished much to the amusement of the women, and some acrobatics on our part. We awoke next morning at

6 o'clock, and had a very quick wash in a stream outside the hut, cooked some breakfast and made some sandwiches for lunch. Then we started to climb the mountain; about 9 o'clock we decided to split up into two parties and try two different routes, but not before dividing the sandwiches. The sun came through the early morning mist, and soon we were pretty hot, even though there was thick snow underfoot. We arrived at the summit about midday before the others, and settled down to eat our lunch and wait for them, and examine the trigonometrical point. (7,789 ft.) After a little while we heard a shout, and looking down, we saw the other three. One was well in the front, and the other two following on behind. The front one nearing the top, turned round to egg the others on. He stood up, and slipped on the snow and went sliding down for 200 ft. We just stood and watched him, laughing. When he stopped, we told him to come on up, but he was so disgusted that he just sat down and waited for us to join him. We started climbing down, more sliding than climbing, and at last reached the ski-hut. Loading up the mules, we started on the last lap to the village, where we returned the mules, packed all our kit into the lorry, and after thanking the villagers with cigarettes and tinned food we had not eaten, we were off. We had only covered about 7 miles when the engine started back-firing and then finally stopped. The driver tinkered about with the engine and it started again, but was very shaky; we could just about crawl along. The O/C then told us that we were to stop. The reason being that he was enjoying himself and wanted to stop another night. Two of us had to hitch-hike as best we could back the Athens, so we drew lots. I was drawn with another chap, we managed to get a bus to the Corinth Canal, we then spoke to the Guard, and told him as best we could that we wanted a lift to Athens. At last we managed to stop 2 lorries and get on them. The journey back was exciting, and any moment I fully expected to feel the lorry dropping over the edge of the road. Halfway home, the drivers decided to go into a Terverma (pub) and have some refreshment. A few miles from Athens the lorries were stopped and searched by Greek police, but seeing that we were British, they just waved us on. The drivers were very pleased, so I expect that they were carrying something they shouldn't, but they insisted on stopping and having some more drinks. We arrived back at Camp about 11 o'cl, and went straight to bed. Next morning we went out in a Mack (a tank recovery craft). The mack is about 50 ft. long, and on some of the

## 12. WEEK-END IN GREEK MOUNTAINS (contd).

bends it seems impossible to get round them. We reached the others and found that they had spent a very enjoyable evening in various Police Stations and had a very good breakfast. We pulled the lorry on to the trailer, and all clambered on to the trailer. We finally arrived back in camp about 5 o'clock. But for all our breakdowns, we had a very enjoyable week-end.

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### SOAP BOX DERBY!

Just in case some of you do not see "THE SCOUT", our very own weekly paper, published by the Boy Scouts Association, we would like you to know that the Editor of that famous paper is organising a

#### NATIONAL SPEEDSTER RACE (Soap Box Derby)

the finals of which will be held at Brighton on Sat. September 2nd, 1950.

Competing Groups or Troops will have to build a Speedster and the one car can be entered for the 3 classes; A - Wolf Cubs (10-11); B - Scouts (11-15); C - Senior Scouts. Full details are given in "THE SCOUT".

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ROVER NOTES: Leander Rovers are now making themselves known again, and I hope, never to fall into obscurity, as in the past few years. We have started the New Year with big ideas and aim to make ourselves a pillar of strength to the Group, which, by the way needs help in many directions.

I was asked by the recently formed Crew to become Rover Leader, and in my limited capacity shall do my best to fill this office. But, this still leaves the Troop and Seniors very much under-staffed for Officers and Instructors, so if any past member of the Group can possibly see his way clear, if only for a short period, to come along and offer his services, - then he will be most welcome!

K.M.

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