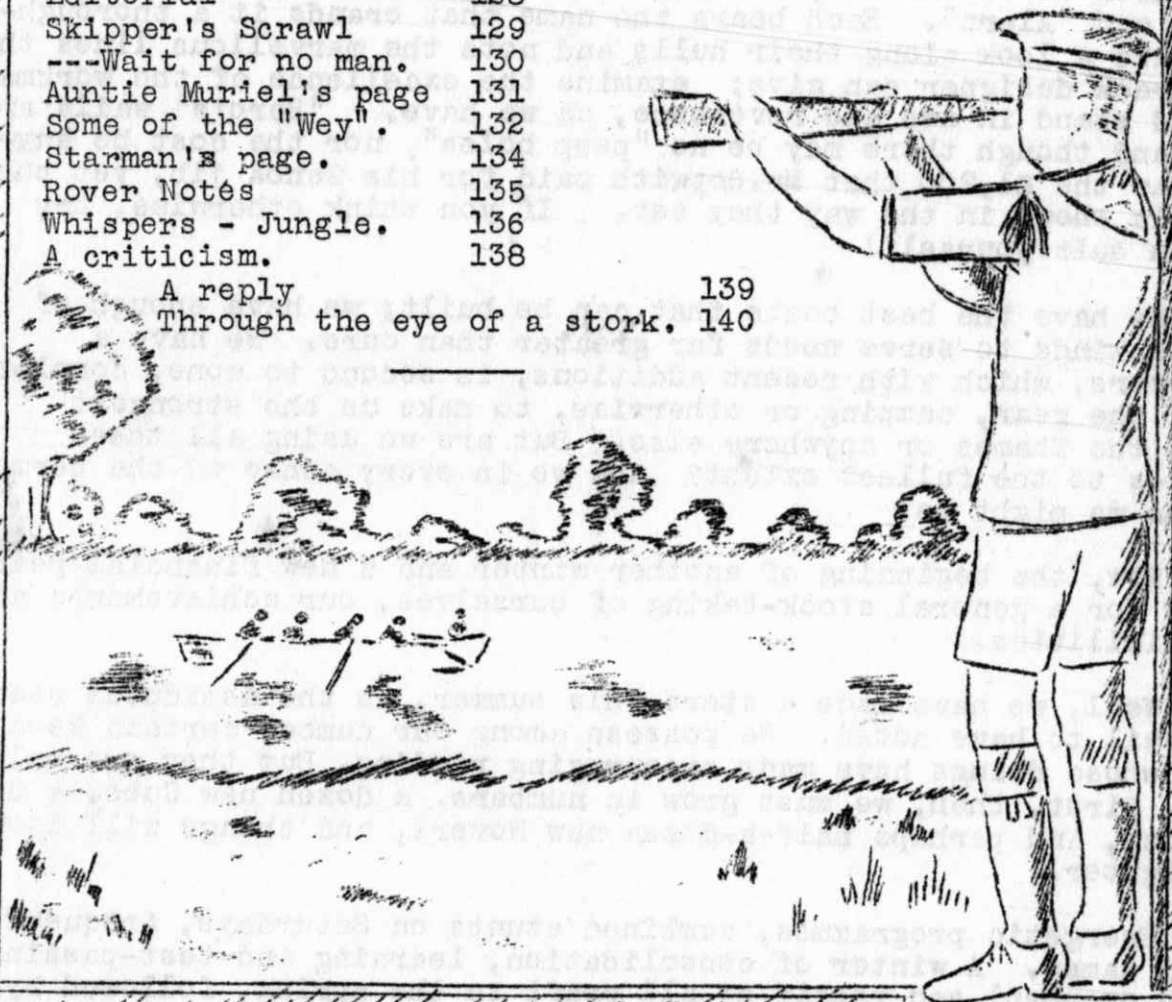


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E D I T O R I A L .

Endeavour has not won the America's Cup. Without going into details, however, or admitting any partisanship whatever, we can quote Mr. Nicholson, her designer, as saying that as far as the boat herself goes, she COULD have won it. Without a doubt she is the finest boat ever sent across the Atlantic for that race. Camper and Nicholsons built her, at their yard at Gosport, where have been turned out some of the most beautiful and seaworthy yachts of recent years. (Deeply cunning advertisement this, for which we charge fabulous sums).

Did you know that this Group has boats by Camper & Nicholson?

Look at the metal plate in the stern of "Hero", or of the gigs "Active" and "Alert". Each bears the name that brands it a thoroughbred. Take a look along their hulls and note the marvellous lines that only a crack designer can give; examine the excellence of the workmanship, and stand in awe and reverence, as we have. "Hero's" sails are by Ratsey, and though there may be no "peep holes", nor the cost be anywhere near the £1,200 that Mr. Sopwith paid for his Genoa jib, yet their quality is shown in the way they set. If you think otherwise, try cutting a suit yourself!

We have the best boats that can be built; we have enough of them, all kinds to serve needs far greater than ours. We have a Headquarters, which with recent additions, is second to none, complete with all the gear, camping or otherwise, to make us the strongest Group on the Thames or anywhere else. But are we using all these facilities to the fullest extent? Are we in every sense of the term, as "live" as we might be?

Now, the beginning of another winter and a new financial year is the time for a general stock-taking of ourselves, our achievements and our possibilities.

Well, we have made a start this summer, as the assiduous reader cannot fail to have noted. We possess among our number certain keen members whose doings have made encouraging reading. But they are only a nucleus. First, then, we must grow in numbers. A dozen new Cubs, a dozen new Scouts, and perhaps half-a-dozen new Rovers, and things will look much brighter.

Energetic programmes, combined stunts on Saturdays, frequent week-end camps. A winter of consolidation, learning and test-passing, a thorough overhaul and repair of all craft in the spring, followed by a few months' intensive practical work in home waters, leading up to a combined Scout and Rover camp during the whole of August, so that everyone can get a chance to be there. Site, somewhere up the East Coast, with as many boats as can be taken.

To chase a Rainbow such as that, and find the hidden gold at its base, must from now on be our Endeavour.

THE SUB-EDITOR.

T H E S K I P P E R ' S S C R A W L.

At a recent meeting, the Officers of the Group decided that it would be desirable to hold another money-raising "stunt" such as our combined Bazaars and Fun-Fairs of recent years. As the most suitable time is just before Christmas, we must go ahead at once with the arrangements. The date suggested for this year's BAZAAR AND FUN-FAIR is December 1st. I shall be glad if anyone among the parents of the Group who feels that he or she is able to help in any way, will come along to 59, EDEN STREET, on SATURDAY OCTOBER 6th at 8 o'clock, to discuss the matter. Holidays have combined with the one-hundred and one ordinary hitches to make this issue the few days late which we are coming to look upon as 'normal', however, I DO hope that, in spite of the short notice, a large number will find it possible to attend. We want all the helpers we can muster.

During the month, Tom Carter and Peter Fullick have "gone-up" from the Pack to the Troop, and I can see that it will not be long before they become firm friends with all their older brothers. There are one or two others who have recently ceased to attend Pack Meetings, whom we have not yet seen at Scout musters. They, and any other boys of similar age will find a warm welcome. We are at the commencement of a new Scout Year, and this is by far the best time to join the Troop as it will leave more time for river games and expeditions in the summer if preparation for the Scout Tests is begun now. This work, together with Boxing, Football and other activities is now in full swing.

As there is no room left on the Editorial Page, it falls to my lot to say that we are always grateful for sincerely-meant criticisms such as that on page 138. Most of the points mentioned have already been under consideration, and some may be adopted before long. I am afraid that the method by which the Magazine is duplicated is quite unsuited to the reproduction of Lino-cuts, but we should all like to see more illustrations of other kinds. At present we have to depend largely on one artist, and now that Joe Bunkin has started both work and evening classes, his spare time is extremely limited. Blame for the occasional typing and grammatical errors must be laid at the doors of those whose contributions do not reach us in good time. On several occasions manuscript, in some cases almost indecipherable, has been sent in as late as 9 o'clock on the evening appointed for "printing". Pity the poor typist! Of what avail would an "army of proof readers" be under these conditions? Anyway, some members of the "staff" would like to see "A.RANGER" take over the production for a month or two.

W A I T F O R N O M A N .

Those of us who live on the upper reaches of the Thames know very little of the lower parts, below Tower Bridge, where the tide sweeps strongly five hours' flood, seven hours' ebb, never ending, always with the same regularity. We do not see the important uses to which the tide is put, how ships come and go with it or pass in and out of dock at high water, and how lesser craft make use of its strong current instead of motive power. The whole of River life revolves on the tides, and thus we had to consider them when "Hero" was being brought up river to her home, our Headquarters.

I arrived at Greenwich at approximately 12.36 a.m. and made promptly for the barge of our good friends, the Greenwich Troop. However, not finding Bob and Joe there, I made for Greenwich Pier, met them on the way, and had a little grub and repaired to the pier, to don warmer clothes and await the turn of the tide, from ebb to flood.

The tide turned at 2.30 a.m. By 2.45 we cast off our moorings and got under way, the breeze was light and the night cold, - bitter cold. We sped like a great white winged bird out over the dark Thames, setting our course by lights or landmarks ashore, passing ships, lighters laying in the roads, sailing barges against every wharfside. 4 o'clock found us passing under Tower Bridge just at dawn, an unusual experience, while an hour later we passed the Houses of Parliament and saw the light switched off inside Big Ben.

Progress was getting slower, for with the coming of day, the wind died down to a mere breeze, and shooting bridges became more arduous owing to the rise of water under them. However, by nine o'clock Putney was reached, and here we moored alongside two lighters as the flood tide was nearly spent.

Breakfast was prepared and eaten, we enjoyed ourselves in the warm sunlight after the very cold night, and then, much to the surprise of the onlookers on the bank, we rolled into our blankets and slept, undisturbed by the hot rays of the sun beating down on us. At 3 o'clock lunch was served, and soon after we got under way again, the tide having turned, and the breeze became a fine wind, giving us some very brisk sailing near Chiswick, however, as we approached Kew Bridge the wind died on us again, and we took to rowing. At Richmond Tide Lock it began to rain, and continued until we reached H.Q. about 9 p.m.

It may seem strange to the landlubber to travel during the whole of a bitterly cold night, and then sleep in the fierce heat of the midday sun, but that's just how it happens on the London River. "Time and Tide wait for no man".

R. E. T.

L I S T E N - I N T O A U N T I E M U R I E L .

I hope, Len W...d that your bicycle enjoyed its train-ride, when you went on your "cycling-tour", recently.

... ..

I had always looked upon Fred H.....t as a "sweet" boy, and was very surprised therefore, to hear just lately that he needs 5 nobs of sugar in his tea. The well-known Kensington firm will surely be out-of-pocket if this continues.

... ..

I was interested to hear that the "Skipper" had taken a hint from this page a few months ago, and has invested in a new bathing costume.

... ..

On the strength of Les E.....s becoming a telephone subscriber, the P.M.G. has now been able to make a general reduction in all rates.

... ..

Peter Fu....k.- Is it true that you are going to stand the Troop free ginger-pop in the Cup you won at the Kingston Swimming Baths recently?

... ..

Now that Joe B....n has really begun to be an "artist", I do hope he won't go in for long hair, large hats and flowing ties.

... ..

Tom C.....r. - I hope that when you swam in the river in your clothes a little while back, you didn't suffer from "cold feet". Anyhow, a few rounds in the Boxing Ring will soon warm them up.

... ..

Tom R....s.- When you are boxing, try hitting one your own size, old chap, and leave the little boys alone.

... ..

It is rumoured that the Troop, generally, is looking forward with relief to the 1st October, and also that "Blanco" shares are going down with a bang! I also have it on the best authority that the Skipper's wife is looking forward to a slack time, now that she will not have to wash, starch and iron the Skipper's cap covers every Tuesday tea-time and Saturday lunch-time.

... ..

Now that the Rover Crew are having their own Den, I hear that an advertisement is to be expected, viz.- Wanted, - Waitress to serve the Rovers with suppers on Thursday evenings.

S O M E O F T H E " W E Y " .

One Saturday recently a party of Leander Sea Scouts were gracefully holding up the windows of Dorothy Perkins' Shop in Clarence Street, Kingston.- Anon a Trolley Bus glided to a stop and the said Scouts swarmed up the stairs, but the conductor was of the energetic type, and fares were collected.

Disembarking at Hampton, the Scouts tripped gaily to the Hampton Sea Scouts' barge and strewed themselves over the deck, until some became tired of this pastime and set off down-stream in the small gig, whereupon, not to be outdone, the remainder set out smartly upstream until out of sight, when they became natural.

After smartly passing through Sunbury Lock, the upstream crew had to battle against a head wind which reached gale force at times, until one bright spark suggested turning round, going backwards, and getting blown upstream. After said remark had been thought out it was declined with thanks.

Walton Swimming Club hove into sight, and the boat was put hard to Starboard to avoid rowing down members of the club who were competing in a long distance race. After leaving these hardy specimens behind, the small gig appeared, going like steam, with the crew increased by a rather long person who had been floating about somewhere near Molesey Lock.

As the boat drew nearer, it was observed that the "Camahawi" (Carpenter, MARTIN, HALLETT, WILD) steering gear had been pressed into service. This, I may say, consisted of the yokelines being attached to Stroke's feet, who was supposed to regulate them. It was indeed a great invention, for it enabled the gig to escape by a hair's breadth from under the bows of a river-steamer.

Pulling ahead, the gig appeared to be tacking against the wind. I quietly thought this was queer, but waived my opinion against their superior experience.

A halt was made below Chertsey Lock for tea, much to the annoyance of a lock-hand who had made up his mind that we were going through. A Ladies' Regatta was in progress, the various crews being followed by a selection of the general public exercising their lungs. Between events we were entertained with Sweet Music from an unseen source. After tea the lock-keeper was further annoyed on being politely informed that we were going through the lock. Without further incident Hamm Court was reached, but on pulling in to some rushes, Bow seemed more inclined to jump into the river than on the bank... Queer tastes some blokes have!

Len Wild was carefully stowed aboard the small gig and taken to Chertsey Bridge whence he was despatched home per bus, carriage paid and marked "Fragile".

Arriving back at Hamm Court, our celebrated Mr. Edwards' launch "Renee" was found to be moored alongside the large gig.

After salutations had been passed and prayers had been said, the covers were erected, and we retired, with the exception of the long person who felt the call of Walton's wilds.

Breakfast was a rough house, with everyone trying to do their own cooking at the same time, on two Primus stoves.

Rowing to the mouth of the Wey, the small gig was moored, and the whole party proceeded up the tributary in the large gig. A lock key was procured from the ancient lock-keeper and the gig carefully navigated into the first lock, Tom Carpenter (Bow) being neatly crowned by the Skipper with the bow-line.

At the second lock we turned into Weybridge Cut, but unfortunately on emerging from this lock, a fend-off was brushed away and lost. After proceeding leisurely up the canal for some time a halt was made under a bridge for a swim, it being then as wet outside as in.

Dinner was eaten under another bridge, owing to a further downpour, and we were entertained by the Skipper telling us of his unfortunate encounters with thunder-storms at this point years ago.

During the return journey down the Canal, the weather was again inclement and shirts were shed, much to the amusement of various spectators.

At the mouth of the Wey, the party split up and manned the two gigs as before. After a stop for tea, the large gig forged ahead to catch up with the Hampstead's crew, returning from Great Windsor. Recognising our superior strokes, they pulled in to the bank.

The pull was uneventful down to the Hampton's barge, the small gig being left behind until it dropped out of sight. Suddenly a launch - "Grey Heron" rounded Thornycroft's Island, and was seen to have the small gig in tow. Sundry expressions of disapproval were made, causing the occupants to hide their blushes behind their caps. However, we pulled up to them and entered Molesey Lock at practically the same time.

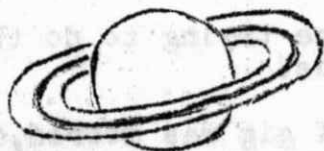
Pulling out, the Isle of Aran signalled to ask if we required a tow. Blushing in our turn, we accepted. From there on there was little to do but laugh at the small girl exercising her facial muscles to a considerable extent in the stern of the launch. In sight of the club-room we shouted our thanks and were cast-off.

A smart finish to an enjoyable week-end, despite the unfriendly weather.

C.R.

THE STARMAN'S PAGE.

Looking South the planet SATURN is now the most conspicuous object in the late evening sky. Very few stars are brighter.



Seen through a telescope it is a charming object, its unique series of rings, two bright, and one dusky, being of special interest. These are composed of small solid particles, probably fragments of a shattered moon. The width of the belt is about 40,000 miles, but its thickness is less than 100 miles.

Saturn is the least dense of all the planets, being about 1/8th that of the Earth, and less than that of water.

It is over nine times the distance of the Earth from the Sun, round which it revolves in about 29½ years, at a speed of about 6 miles per second. It rotates in about 10¼ hours.

Its polar diameter is 67,000 miles, and it is more flattened at the poles than any other planet.

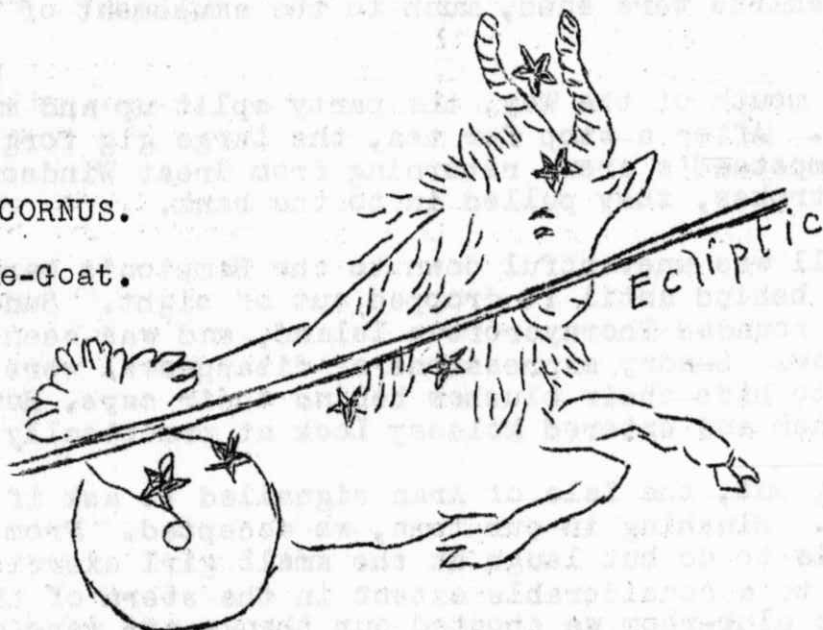
A white spot detected on Aug. 3rd, 1933, is probably a cloud eruption. Similar spots have previously been seen.

There are ten moons revolving outside the rings, one of which revolves in the opposite direction to the others. The largest, Titan, is 1½ times as large as our moon.

Saturn is now in the Constellation CAPRICORNUS, the He-Goat.

CAPRICORNUS.

The He-Goat.



Saturn is in Conjunction with the Moon on Oct. 18th.
METEORS from a radiant point in DRAGO may be looked for about Oct. 9th.

"ONLOOKER".

R O V E R N O T E S .

COLLECTING BOATHOUSES.

Some people collect stamps, others amass large quantities of cigarette cards, coins or antiques. Leander has the strangest collection of all. We are endeavouring to form a collection of dilapidated boathouses. When I first drifted into the Group, it was very content in an ancient loft at the rear of a pub. Soon after my entry we were unceremoniously thrown out of the pub, and the search for pastures new led us through periods of Church Halls, Railway Arches, sand-pits, and similar institutions until we arrived at No.4.boathouse. The entrance fee to the palatial H.Q.left us in a state of financial exhaustion.

There followed an orgy of jam-jars, bottles, newspapers, etc. Then came No.3.boathouse. This acquisition brought forth much labour with picks and shovels, cement and sand, passed through the stage of thought, acquaintance, familiarity and contempt until we emerged an older and wiser crowd, rested on the proverbial laurels, became Rovers in the hope of achieving a haven of peace, just in time to drop in for a series of boat-scraping efforts.

At this stage the jam seemed to be satisfactorily settled on the bread. Weather, as we have never had before, sunshine and warm waters, deck-chairs, Lidos, sea voyages were the order of the day. Then **like** the return to waking after a glorious dream the crash came. Some idiot, and on a chilly Thursday evening too, brought up the subject of Winter programme. "Time we had a place of our own," said he. "We could rent next door". This mad scheme was investigated, expanded and generally pushed about. The halfpennies were counted, and now we are to inhabit No.2.Boathouse.

This has been partitioned into two, the front portion is to be a repair shop, the rear portion has been draped with curtains and whitewash, garnished with lino and furnished with everything for a poor man's comfort.

When these works are completed the new Rover Den will be hermetically sealed and raised to a high temperature by Mr.Therm. We will then call upon some very distinguished person to perform the opening ceremony. Seriously though, we consider this new home a long felt want and it should ensure that keenness is maintained throughout the Winter, and that the new members of the Crew, which we will soon be welcoming, will have better facilities for their very important time as Rover Squires.

UP RIVER.

A very successful camp was held in the company of the Greenwich Sea Scouts at Walton-on-Thames. R/M Burfoot turned up at H.Q.with all our down-river pals, and we were able to take two boats to the new site upon which we camped by the kind permission of Mr.Gittens of Walton. Apart from a soaking from the evening storm, as we emerged from Sunbury Lock, weather was ideal, and a very enjoyable camp was the outcome.

(continued at foot of page 137.)

W H I S P E R I N G S FROM THE J U N G L E .

CAMP SCRAP BOOK, LEANDER AND 3rd MALDEN CUBS AT HELE BAY.

A small cub, minus everything but trousers, towel round neck, swinging sponge bag wildly above his head, and singing "Clementine", at the top of his voice, nearly knocks down one of the camp cooks in his hurry to get down to the stream to wash. Other Cubs standing shivering on the banks wonder if Chil will notice that they haven't washed their necks, as the water is extra cold.

On one or two occasions "Eno's Parade" followed the washing. There was Camp Cook, with a bucket of water, and a ladle, Chil with a jar of "Eno's", and a spoon, a line of Cubs with mugs, and two spoons between the lot. A loud murmur of "Give us the spoon", or "Pass that spoon on", and again "A bit extra, Miss", and "I like this, it's like Sherbet!" and "Hurry, its nearly time for Prayers".

After a morning's ramble some Cubs complained to Akela of scratched legs. Akela's voice called out "Chil, have you scratches on your legs?". Chil and Grey Brother answered "No, Akela". Those who had been "hiking off the beaten track" after blackberries made no further comments.

SOME OF THE SIGHTS THAT CUBS' MOTHERS WOULD HAVE ENJOYED.

Helping Cubs to spend their fourpences, seeing who could get the largest variety of sweets for the money. Some came out of the shop with eight halfpennyworths; I think Mr. Warry will have to go out of business now Leaders have left Hele Bay.

Several Cubs learning to float, tummies well up, and faces screwed up tightly; and sun bathing afterwards, one in particular, I think the skinniest one in camp, choosing the highest point on the rocks, where he stood in a state of nature, silhouetted against the sky, rubbing himself lazily while he argued with a chum, to the intense amusement of visitors on the beach below.

Cubs eating bread and jam, and not ladies' slices either, real "he-man" wedges; eating all their fat, and coming up for second helpings of porridge, stew, suet pudding and anything else that happened to be going in the way of "eats".

Bathing the Cubs on Friday night before we went to Clovelly, out in the open on the Camp site, after which Chil gave each one a pick-a-back to bed. For those who like a picture:- In Hobby Drive, one day, were sundry Cubs, each armed with a Cornish Pasty nearly as big as himself, and to the question "Do Cubs like Cornish Pasties?" I should say "Ask Leanders".

There was a most glorious water-fight on the Saturday before we left, I think they used up all the mud as well as the water from the stream, so they all had to go down to the sea, shorts and towel

in hands, to get rid of it.

Camping with the Leander Cubs at Hele Bay was quite a new experience for me, and one that I am sure all Cubs' Mothers would have enjoyed thoroughly, if only to see how their lads are cared for, and how they enjoy themselves and eat anything and everything, and no grumbles. How they work, how they play, and how, at the end of the day they gather round the flag for their good-night Grand Howl, and the impressive scene when Akela in a quiet voice says "Now say a quiet prayer for those at home", and every head is bowed and the silence in that lovely valley where we camped can almost be felt, to be broken the next minute by wild whoops as the Cubs scamper for bed, and another day in camp ends.

B.T.

AND AFTER CAMP.

Away with the cricket stumps and out with the football. We shall have to choose a new captain now from amongst the smaller Cubs, as Fullick and Carter have gone up to the Troop to the "land of men". We hope they really will make men, their behaviour so far leads us to think they will. There is still Wilson, just too old for the Jungle, and we do not want to say good-bye to him from the world of scouting, so we hope it will be possible for him to decide to go on and follow the others. That leaves the Pack a bit small, but there are plenty of small boys about, perhaps a bit shy of coming along. Now Little Brothers, just get hold of your friends of Cub age, and tell them all about it, teach them their Tenderpad Tests out on the Rec' or in Canbury Gardens, or Latchmere Lane, if they do not want to come to our Jungle straight off, then bring them to join in the games, I'm sure they will not be afraid of any of us then.

By the bye, you small cubs who are in charge of the Sixes, though we have no Sixers at the minute, please do remember the jam-jars and papers, we need these extra shillings as well as the pounds we hope to raise at the Fun Fair, so D.Y.B.

CHIL.

ROVER NOTES - contd.

I am sure these hardy men from the tideway appreciated the joys of our quiet waters as much as we were charmed with the privilege of meeting them on our own ground. May we see more and more of them, both in our reaches and theirs.

GEORGE POTTEN AGAIN.

After a series of insulting letters which passed between myself and George of the 10th Croydon, it appears that we will not be able to fit in a joint camp this season. We have a very great love for George and his gang, and we do hope that we will see them a little more in future. It is hoped that we may arrange another Sunday morning walk with them. You will remember we had one last winter when we did about 14 miles in the Croydon area, concluding with an outrageous sing-song in a Cafe in Warlingham.

A.J.L.

C O R R E S P O N D E N C E .
-----A Criticism.

Dear Mr. Editor,

Speaking as a landlubber who hardly knows the difference between a boom and a jib-sail, I don't feel competent to comment upon your nautical adventures, but being more at home with animals, I will endeavour to suggest a few improvements I should introduce were I to run the "WATER RAT".

- 1.- I'd be extremely nice to the artist - perhaps treat him to the pictures - and then drop a few hints about more pictures of a different nature. Lino-cuts, for instance. Although not desirous of running a "Comic Cuts", I'd explain how illustrations do raise the "tone" of a paper.
- 2.- Bearing in mind that the cigars of the newspaper magnates are paid for by the sweat of the brow of the poor advertiser, I'd appoint an advertising staff and send them prowling round Kingston tradesmen in search of prey.
- 3.- Thinking for a few seconds (as even newspaper magnates do) of the extremely patient reader, I'd establish a column for correspondence, and would not only invite but compel criticism. (With the last remark there is, of course, hearty agreement).
- 4.- I'd want to raise the rest of the Mag. to the standard set by accounts of voyages etc. and I'd publish as much information as possible of ordinary musters - sort of balm to the minds of anxious parents. I'd get the scouts, and the cubs, to send in more notes of their doings - not leaving all the work to the P.L's.
- 5.- I would also look wider outside, (N.B. No rude remarks wanted about twice round the gasworks) and I'd appoint a long-distance or foreign representative, whose job would be to collect as much interesting, stirring and inspiring news of other Troops as he possibly could. Perhaps I'd get some of the staff to correspond with Troops abroad.
- 6.- I'd appoint a whole army of proof-readers. It is the little slips of the typist's fingers, the spelling and grammatical errors, that rouse a critic to fury, making him, or her, yelp forth condemnation even as a feline animal.
- 7.- Having undergone the experience of being a mere reader, I'd realise that the public might still be interested in the guys who run the paper. What about caricatures?

With the confession that I've only read two numbers of the "WATER RAT", I'll bring this epistle to an end, but you may take it as a very great compliment that the two numbers were read, marked, learned and inwardly digested.

With my best respects to Auntie Muriel,
Yours truly,
A. RANGER.

The Editorial Office,

"WATER RAT".

September, 1934.

Dear Readers,

I thought you might like a letter from the Printer's Devil - that's what they call me. Well, shall I tell you what it is like printin' this "WATER RAT"? Here goes - a chap who calls himself the Sub-Editor, (whatever that means) - sits in a chair, smokin' a pipe and tearin' his hair, and thinkin' and thinkin' what to write about. Presently he makes a funny kind of noise, that means he has thought what to say, then he starts dictating what he has thought about to a person called a typist, an' you should see what happens then. My word! Fingers hit little keys with the A.B.C. on 'em, and bits of paper keep shootin' out of the top of the machine-thing. Then after all that has been read through, the typist starts all over again, only this time, instead of makin' the words come on paper, it comes on a thing called a stencil, an' when that's all finished and read through, it - the stencil - is put on another machine, and the printer who has the devil, turns a handle, and pages and pages keep shootin' out of this machine-thing. When all the pages are done, usually there's 16 of 'em, they are put on a table in piles, and then the printer chaps have to run round the table till they have one page of each pile and then they are put together, put inside the covers and stapled together. After the covers have been dated the "WATER RAT" is complete, and you can get a copy price 2d. All this work is done in one evening, and when you think what is done, it's a marvel that it is so jolly well done, isn't it?

Yours truly,

THE PRINTER'S DEVIL.

THROUGH THE EYE OF A STORK.

Twilight in the South Seas. We are standing on the fo'c'sle of a tramp steamer, enjoying a few minutes rest. Our cargo consists of copra, bound for Port of Spain. On our port hand we see a group of coral islands from which is wafted to us the sickly smell of tropical plants and the sound of negro voices softly crooning. Under the swaying palm trees fires are twinkling here and there, where the housewife busily prepares her master's meal. To starboard as far as the eye can see, we have the ocean heaving restlessly as if in protest at the close of day.

Suddenly we smell smoke! When the hatch cover is lifted, a great tongue of flame bursts forth. "Fire!", the terrible cry rings out. The pumps are rigged, and water poured on the blazing inferno, but without avail. The hold is one raging hell from end to end. Blinded, scorched and choking, the men fall back powerless.

On the bridge, the ship's bell is ringing furiously. The Skipper's stentorian bellow comes to us, "Abandon Ship!" Swiftly two boats are launched and got away. An over-anxious hand at the falls of the large gig causes the Mate to injure his back. Groaning in pain, he is lowered into the boat. At the last minute the Captain tumbles over the side with the ship's papers, and all crews pull silently towards the nearest island, dimly seen in the moonlight.

The boats tear through the surf towards the sandy beach, one moment on the crest of a foaming breaker, the next in the hollow of a jet-black trough. The bows grate, and the crews jump ashore, to drag the boats beyond reach of the breakers. The roll is called; none is missing, but Maria, the ship's cat and seamen's pet, is nowhere to be seen. Every man volunteers, and the whole crew returns to the vessel, where the fire has mysteriously subsided and the cat is unsinged.

... ..

The above is how we imagined it when we had an "Abandon ship" manoeuvre in a recent Tuesday programme. H.Q. was our trusty vessel, Stephen's Ait the coral islands, while the cat which Nobby found, looked prosaically like a rolled-up tea-towel. The three boats were launched and got away inside eight minutes.

P. L. FRED HALLETT.

.....
 (In future, each Patrol Leader in turn will take charge of this page. He may write it himself, or give it to one of his Patrol, or collect material from them all, but his aim will be to report the ordinary doings of the whole Troop, not recorded elsewhere. - Ed.)