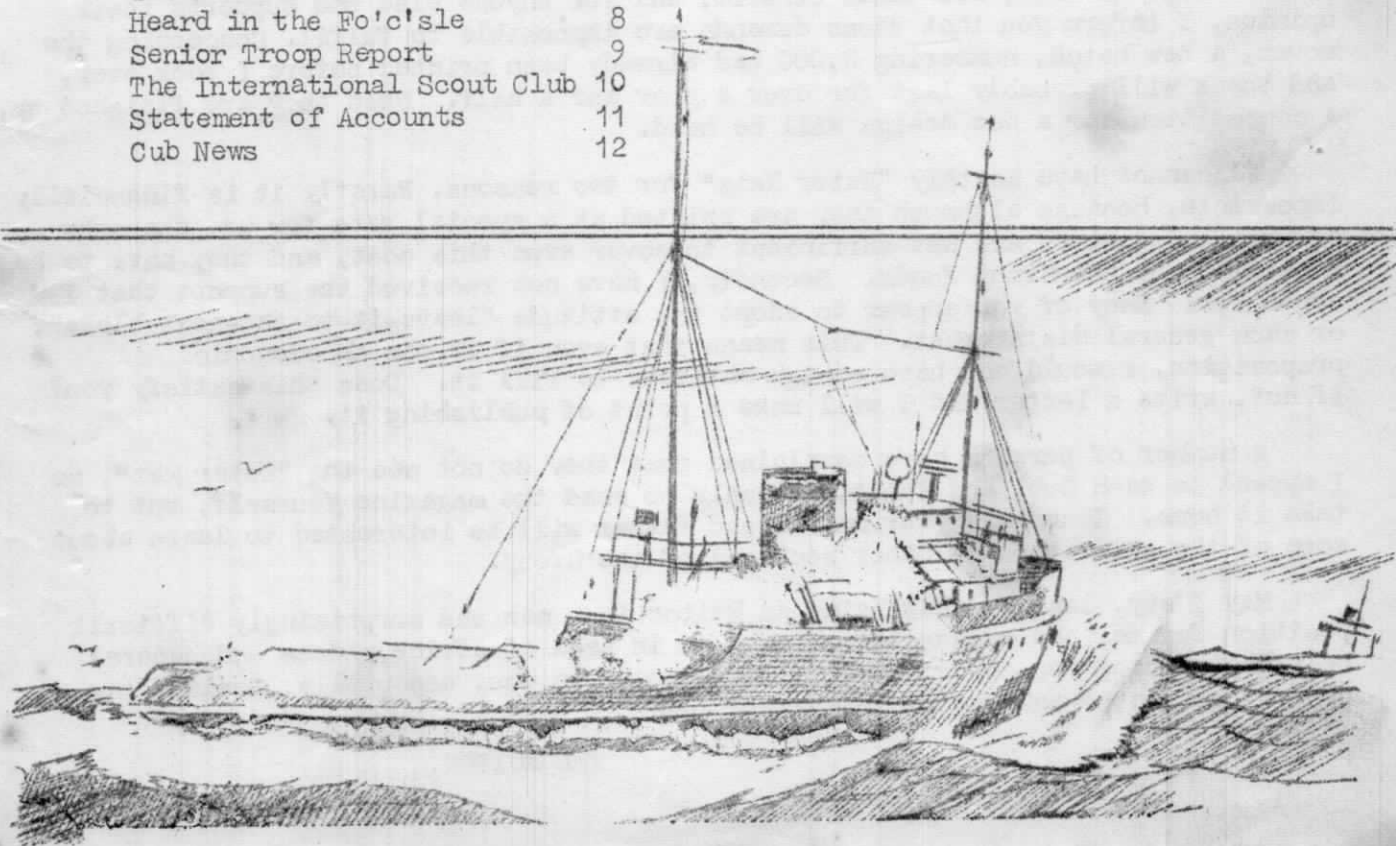


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Edited by  
188, Elm Road,

ARTHUR BUTCHER  
New Malden



2.

Firstly I apologise for the delay in publishing this edition, which was most unavoidably caused by "staff shortages". Owing to this delay, much of the material is "backdated", nevertheless, I hope you may at least find one item which will raise a spark of interest.

A few weeks ago, I was mobbed by a group of Senior Scouts, who informed me that unless I did not (for the next edition) produce a new cover, and thereafter an edition of the "Rat" every month, they would decline from purchasing any further copies. Now, for their benefit, and for anyone else who supports their opinion, I inform you that these demands are impossible to fulfil. Concerning the cover, a new batch, numbering 2,000 had already been printed before I took over, and these will probably last for over a year and a half. When they are finished up, a competition for a new design will be held.

We cannot have monthly "Water Rats" for two reasons. Firstly it is financially impossible, because although they are printed at a special rate for us, the subscriptions received are not sufficient to cover even this cost, and they have to be subsidised by the Group funds. Secondly, I have not received the support that I hoped for. Many of you appear to adopt the attitude "leave-it-to-the-next-bloke", or show general disinterest. This means that even if it was an economic proposition, I would not have enough material to fill it. Does this satisfy you? If not, write a letter and I will make a point of publishing it.

A number of parents have complained that they do not see the "Water Rat", so I appeal to each Cub, and Scout, not only to read the magazine yourself, but to take it home. I am sure your mother and father will be interested to learn about some of the activities of other sections of the Group.

May I say, lastly, that being an Editor is a new and surprisingly difficult position for me, and because of this, I am in need of advice, ideas and general help that any of you can give me. Can I appeal to you, especially, Seniors (my closest contacts) to give me this assistance?

THE EDITOR.

## SKIPPER'S SCRAWL.

A study of the Annual Accounts published on the back page, shows that each of our money-raising efforts during the past year reached an all-time record. We are tremendously indebted to all those who have worked so hard throughout the year to produce such highly satisfactory results, and thus render it possible to maintain the excellent facilities for Sea Scouting which are the envy of many of our Scout friends. As a result the keen-ness and enthusiasm of all members of the Group is at a high pitch. During the winter those of Rover age and over, spent a very large number of man-hours in refitting "Sandling", and making a number of alterations to the ship's gear which had been found desirable during last season's use. Those concerned are now reaping the benefit, and already this year some most enjoyable and instructive cruises have been made.

The other sections of the Group have been no less active, and some major improvements to the garden behind the Headquarters are now in progress. When completed these will make access from Albany Park Road more pleasant, and this we hope will lead to larger attendances at whist drives and other social events during the winter. In addition, the roof is being overhauled and the interior of the premises is about to be repainted. Our aim is to have all this work completed before September 22nd, as on that day we are to be honoured by a personal visit from the Admiral Commanding Reserves. On this day the Group will also be "At Home" to all parents who will thus have an opportunity of witnessing some of our activities and of viewing the improvements to the premises. To round off the day we hope that a large crowd of parents and friends will attend the Scout Association Swimming Gala at Kingston Baths in the evening.

The great event of the year for all Cubs and Scouts is the Summer Camp, and as far as "Leanders" are concerned, all except the final details have been arranged. The Cub Pack will be camping for the Bank Holiday week-end at Liphook. The Scout Camp will be at Chidham, near Chichester, from August 11th to 25th. During the same period the Senior Troop will be cruising on the Dutch canals. We look forward to reading all about these adventures in the next issue of the "Water Rat" in the not too distant future.

### THE BIG PROBLEM

The Kingston-on-Thames Local Association's Annual Report for the year ended 31st March, 1956, recently published, shows a total number of Cubs, Scouts and Scouters at that date of 628, distributed as follows:-

Cubs 226, Scouts 233, Senior Scouts 39, Rover Scouts 59, Scouters 71.

The Report gives a further analysis of the census figures, which shows that six out of the twelve Groups in the district have no Senior Scout and/or Rover Scout Section, and in only three Groups do the Seniors and Rovers number 10 or more. There is no reason to suppose that these figures are exceptional, in fact they are probably fairly representative of the position throughout the country.

Here is revealed very clearly one of the big problems Scouting has to face - the disparity in numbers between those under fifteen and those over that age. In some circles the word 'leakage' is used to describe this state of affairs, but the plain fact is that in a large number of Groups, Scouting is failing to hold the interest of many boys by the time they reach 15. Why? As the result of an enquiry conducted by an expert on Gallup poll lines, Scout Headquarters issued a report listing over 20 reasons, the majority of which were due fundamentally to lack of leaders with consequent lack of programmes and facilities to interest older Scouts. While the figures given above show on the average one Scouter to about 8 Cubs or Scouts, in practice many Scouters are not able to devote a great deal of time to Scouting. There is an urgent need for more assistance even if only a limited time can be given. The days when a troop could be run with some success by one or two Scouters (with subs of 1d a week, and a minimum of equipment) are over. If a Group is to retain a Scout's interest, it must be able to offer a progressive scheme of activities from age 8 to 24 (the new Rover age limit) with all that this entails in manpower, finance etc. Incidentally the Scout and Guide Movements are the only youth organisations which aim to cover such a long period of years. To do this a Group needs to be well-staffed with Scouters capable of dealing with each Section, and in addition to call on outside assistance from time to time. In our own Group we are well placed in these respects, but even so we sometimes find difficulty in getting the person with the right qualifications for a particular job. Some Groups however are wellnigh desperate. Most adults who read this will be already helping in some way, but do you know anyone else who might be willing to lend a hand if asked?

Whitsun Camp began, according to custom, with the lorry arriving half-an-hour late. When, eventually, it did get under way, it was nearly 7.15. Just past Reigate a felling axe fell out, and after much banging on the roof, the lorry stopped. Paul got out and rescued it from a lad in Edwardian dress (Ted), who was making off with it. The next incident was when Splunnee was sick in his new cap, he was more worried about his cap than being sick, and complained loudly. When we reached Broadstone Warren it was nearly dark. The trek-cart crew, however, decided to go on a tour of the camp-site, while the rest under the brilliant leadership of Mr. P. Burton, arrived at the site by a slightly less complicated route. Tents were put up, and two were taken down again the following morning, due to overcrowding; these two, Seals and Beavers, moved further up the hill. A fire was lit on the Seagull's camp-site, unfortunately not in the fireplace, but in an ant hill. Crasher and Whisky spent the next 24 hours extinguishing the same, with water. Ned got his catapult confiscated, after walking into the Provadore (shop selling sweets, etc.) with it round his neck. Jumbo, after coming out of the Provadore with a bottle of lemonade and a catapult, was asked by the Warden where he got it (meaning the catapult) and Jumbo said "In the Provadore" (meaning the lemonade). This put the Warden into a frenzy, and he shot off to the Provadore to have it out with the chap in charge.

On Saturday afternoon an excursion was made to the swimming pool. Soon afterwards the swimmers returned, and from interviews, it was found that the water was "!!/x?-<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>x!" cold! In the evening the Herons and Seals held a camp fire, singing such well-known scouting songs as "Robin Hood" and "Davy Crockett". Pluto's chief occupation seemed to be climbing trees, and breaking the branches under him, so being suspended in space by his arms, this operation being repeated three times (it is thought to have been due to the heat!) Masters Braye and Webb junior, on a wooding expedition, hit a tree with the trek-cart in which they were travelling. They took off in formation, and completed some aerobatics (which would have made any self-respecting fighter-pilot blush) making a three-point landing. There were no casualties.

On Sunday morning there was a Scouts' Own, and in the afternoon, Mac, Whisky, Paddy, and Pobble left, as they had to report to the workhouse (school) the following morning. The remainder of the camp was uneventful, and we returned home on Monday, after a good time had been had by all.

(Ian Dow)

## THE VICTORIA CROSS.

A hundred years ago, at the end of the Crimean War, the Victoria Cross was instituted by Queen Victoria, for a 'signal act of valour or devotion in the presence of the enemy'. Today over 1,000 men and women from all parts of the Commonwealth have won it. Scout Headquarters have reported -

"The number of Scouts awarded the V.C. is 35, 11 in the 1914-18 war, and 24 in the last war. The best known to Scouts, is John Travers Cornwell, the 16 year old London boy who served at the battle of Jutland in 1916. He was the youngest person to receive it. As a boy (1st class) in H.M.S. Chester, his job was to stand by his gun awaiting orders to pass to the crew. Enemy shells killed or injured the gun team and put the gun out of action, but despite wounds from which he died, John chose to remain at his post to await any further orders from the bridge. The Scouts own V.C. the Cornwell Scout Badge is named after him".

On 26th June, 1956, a centenary review by H.M. the Queen, of 300 holders of the V.C. was held in Hyde Park. The Admiralty invited four Sea Scouts to witness the Parade, and I had the good fortune to be one of those selected. First to arrive in the enclosure, lined 10 deep with crowds, was the Guard of Honour, which was composed of contingents from the Navy, Scots Guards, and the Royal Air Force, together with their respective bands.

To the cheers of the crowd, the V.Cs arrived, and formed up in front of the Guard of Honour, opposite the dais. The Queen Mother, and other members of the Royal Family arrived, and a little afterwards, H.M. the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, for whom the National Anthem was played. The Queen reviewed the V.Cs, chatted to some of them, and then walked over to the families of posthumous V.Cs. She then addressed the assembled V.Cs and others, and afterwards the V.Cs marched past.

The Royal procession, headed by the Household Cavalry, moved out of the park, and the Guard of Honour marched off.

BOB SHACKLETON.

ACTIVITIES ON "SANDLING".

7.

After fairly extensive use last season, "SANDLING" was brought to Kingston from her moorings at Gillingham last October, for general overhaul and refit. After much hard work and elbow grease, from all concerned, she was made ready for this season's sailing, by Easter. The main alterations being, apart from re-painting, varnishing and general overhauling, replacing her original bowsprit, thus increasing her performance at sea, by adding more sail area; re-stepping the mast in a tabernacle, thus simplifying the raising and lowering of the mast, which is necessary for the Thames bridges; carrying out extensive alterations to the galley, and the stowage of crockery and cooking utensils, and the engine exhaust system. Last, but not least, the dozens of jobs done in adding to and improving the general stowage plan of the many items which are essential to a properly commissioned yacht.

At Easter, she proceeded down river en route from Heybridge Basin on River Blackwater, in Essex, via Havengore Creek, some hopes!!! and ended up by being firmly aground on a mudbank in Havengore Creek, the crew having to abandon ship and making an emergency "Swiss Family Robinson" style camp on terra firma. After refloating her 24 hours later, she managed to make Burnham on the River Crouch, Essex, before dark, and the crew arrived back at Kingston about 1.30 in the morning, dead tired!

After that she was on hire for a party of Naval Officers for a week, who eventually left her at Pin Mill, near Felixstowe on the East Coast. Morris Buer then took a crew to "Sandling" at Pin Mill, and brought her back to Gillingham. The main item of interest apart from some of his crew feeling and looking a bit green, was being escorted into Brightlingsea by Clacton Lifeboat. Since then Morris Buer and his crew have had her for two more weekends, and Bob Dodge and his crew for the Whitsun weekend.

She has been booked for the whole of June, July and most of August, for complete week and week-end cruises.

Before she is brought back to Kingston in October for another refit during next winter, many more members of the Group will have gained Charge Certificates, enabling her to be used still more extensively during the 1957 season.

\* \* \* \* \*

## TESTS PASSED.

SCOUT TROOP.

Tenderfoot: M.Cole 6\* R.Williams\* D.Sharp 6 \* R.Marett 6\* I.Coghlan 6 \*  
 R.Warner 2, R.Bevan 2\* , D.Huckson 6\*

2nd Class: J.Fielder 6\*, C.Godsave 5, R.Brave 3, M.Porter 3\*, C.Young 8,  
 I.Coghlan 6, P.Cranch 1, R.Bevan 2, A.Dow\*

1st Class: M.Webb 4, A.Hockham 3, R.Huckson 3, R.Day 1, J.Fielder 5.

(\* All tests for Badge are now completed)

SENIOR TROOP.

Ambulance Badge: R.Adams, P.Duffin, G.Fennell, B.Garnish, I.Hunt, D.Lenthall  
 Despatch Rider: R.Shackleton, K.Sutherland.

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HEARD IN THE FO'C'SLE.

## CONGRATULATIONS

To "Snowy" and Joan Vaizey who were married on June 9th, and to Joyce and Keith Quinnen whose wedding took place on June 16th.

To Ron Pidduck, on his appointment to the Air Ministry Meteorological Station at Peas Pottage, Sussex. We hope that, in spite of the distance from Kingston, he and Dorothy will still be able to attend some of our social events.

To Senior Scout Barry Carr ("A 40") who has been awarded a Dartmouth Scholarship. He will be entering the Royal Naval College in 2 years time.

To Senior Scouts Graham Brave and Graham Fennell, who have been accepted for Engineering Apprenticeships in the Merchant Navy.

To our four Patrols which entered the Kingston Association Camping Competition and came 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 5th., and to "Mac" Dow, on thus taking part in the County Competition, with his Patrol.



## SENIOR TROOP REPORT

9.

Since September last, Arthur Butcher, Barry Carr, Colin Boyes, Richard Pearse, Keith Sutherland, Bob Shackleton, have come up to the Seniors from the Troop, and Rodney Maryan Green has transferred from the Brentwood School Troop. The troop now numbers seventeen, the highest for some time.

During the Autumn some Seniors attended First Aid Classes held by the Teddington Branch of the St. John Ambulance Brigade, with the result that six Ambulance Badges have been gained. Some of us went to the one-day Conference on Boat Building, held by the Central Council for Physical and Recreational Training - although some of the talks were rather technical, we spent an interesting day, seeing several new types of sailing dinghies and meeting well-known helmsmen.

The extensive repairs to "Hermes" are now complete, and we are greatly indebted to Bob Dodge for all the hard work he has put in on her.

Practically all the Seniors went to the London "Gang Show" at different times in December, to act as programme sellers, and to form part of the Guard of Honour for H.R.H. The Duchess of Kent, and Lord Louis Mountbatten. Two Seniors were on duty by Wanderer III, at the opening day of the National Boat Exhibition at Olympia. Social activities have not been neglected, and for our annual Christmas visit to town, we went to see "Dry Rot" at the Whitehall Theatre (quite the funniest show we have ever seen) followed by dinner at a West End Restaurant. In January, Seniors threw a party for their young lady friends, which was a great success.

Preliminary arrangements are well advanced for this year's summer expedition, which is to take the form of a cruising trip in the Dutch Waterways. For this purpose "Seamlight", a clipper (about 60 ft. in length) belonging to the Amsterdam Sea Scouts, is being chartered for the fortnight 12th/26th August. The vessel is a steel two-mast sailing ship, with a 25 h.p. auxiliary motor, so there should be good opportunities for practical seamanship. Gordon Jewiss, who is well-known to the older generation of "Leanders", has promised to come with us, and hopes to make a film of the trip.

January saw the arrival of the first motorcycle to be owned by one of the present generation of Seniors, and Sydney looked a very seasoned motorist in his crash helmet and driving suit. About two months later, Dereck arrived, looking equally dashing, on a similar model. During the winter months a good deal of time was devoted to P.T. in

(contd. foot of page 10)

## THE INTERNATIONAL SCOUT CLUB.

On Tuesday 8th May at Caxton Hall, Westminster, the International Scout Club held its first general meeting to discuss its aims, policies and future plans. The activities which are being arranged for this coming summer season, revolve around the principle of "brother scouts", in the way that the British section (it is hoped there will be a foreign section too) will meet and entertain foreign Scouts visiting this country. In turn, the foreign section will entertain British Scouts, who will be going overseas, either in parties, or separately.

The Club itself falls into two categories - the "stay at homes", i.e. the Scouts who will give hospitality to foreign visitors, and the Venturer section, who will go on visits abroad. Already plans have been made for a canoeing trip down the Danube; to go on a trawler trip to the White Sea, or Iceland; to visit Angora and Tangier; with the intention in mind of giving the Club a lecture on Scouting and life generally there, on their return.

For organised party activities, trips have been planned for a Rover Moot at Mulheim (Germany); canoeing and camping in Jutland (Denmark); to go on a tour of Vienna; to attend a Jamborette in Copenhagen; to visit the Tenth National Camp at Oporto (Portugal); to attend the International Camp of the Swedish Y.M.C.A; a flying visit to Finland; and also to attend the National Camp at Franches Montagnes (Switzerland). One could hardly wish for a more varied programme.

NOTE: If anyone is interested in any of these, ask a Venturer Committee-man for full particulars, or write to the Venturer's Secretary: G. Aylett, 67 Evelyn Avenue, Ruislip, Middlesex. Of course before one can partake in these activities, one must be a member, and details of membership can be acquired from the Editor, or from Mr. Goodger, the Senior Scoutmaster.

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#### SENIOR TROOP REPORT (contd.)

preparation for "Scoutorama" show. Charlie Bishop has also shown us something of what goes on at his Judo classes.

Easter camp took the form of a gig cruise up the River Wey, to Godalming, which everyone enjoyed. Graham Braye and Dereck Milner attended St. George's Day Parade at Windsor, and the latter received his Queen's Scout Certificate at the Chief Scout's Presentation Weekend at Gilwell, a fortnight later. Morrie Buer and Bob Dodge have offered to help with Seniors, and their assistance will be most welcome. F. GOODGER.

During the week-end 25th/27th May, Sixers and Seconds were in camp at Polyapes for the first time this year, and although the weather looked doubtful at the time of leaving on Friday, we were all cheerfully hopeful that it would improve. We were lucky, and it was so nice that by Sunday, when time came for us to pack our kits and return home, no one wanted to leave. Several Packs from other districts were camping too, so "Leanders" were invited to take part in a few activities, such as Camp Fire on Saturday night; Cubs' Own on Sunday; and some Sports, at which we showed up quite well. (We WILL win that Sports' Trophy yet, eh Cubs?)

On Saturday 5th May, six Cubs went to the Surrey Pack Scouters' Palaver to demonstrate how to make treble bamboo pipes. The rest of the Pack have also been busy making things for the Cub Exhibition to be held at Kingston Library during the week 18th/23rd June. Printed Guides are available 6d each and obtainable from any Wolf Cub, or Pack Scouter. WE have to sell 160, so will YOU please help?

Monday 4th June we went to the dress rehearsal of Royal Tournament, which was very exciting. The next item of interest to Cubs is the Sports, when we are hoping to do very much better. The great day is 7th July, at Kingston Barracks Sports Field.

We have several new chums in the Pack, Terry Odle, Colin Edwards, Ian Douglass and Nicholas Gerrish, all having been invested. Anthony Bennett is still awaiting his ceremony, but has been with us for a few weeks. Alistair Marrion has gained his 2nd Star and Leaping Wolf Badge, and so many other Badges have been gained, there is not room to list them all, but we will just say "progress has been most satisfactory", and after the Exhibition we hope there will be a large number of Handicraft Badges to add. David Sharp and Richard Warner have crashed their way through the jungle to the Troop, and seem to have settled down very well.

PLEASE BUY A "GUIDE" TO THE CUB WEEK ACTIVITIES, AND HELP THE PACK TO MAKE A MARK FOR THEMSELVES IN THE DISTRICT THIS SUMMER.

Good Hunting, AKELA.



STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1956.

Subscriptions -			Association Dues	2. 5. 6
Cubs	11.10. 1		Bank Interest	37. 7. 1
Scouts	34. 2. -		Rates	11.14. -
Senior Scouts	26. 5. 3		Heat, Light and Water	33.18. 9
Rovers	<u>53. 7. 3</u>	125. 4. 7	Boathouse Rent	15. - . -
Donations -			Boat Registration	3.10. -
General	32. 6. -		Moorings	3. 3. -
Supporters	150. - . -		Boat gear and repairs	34. 4. 4
6d. a wk.fund	<u>38. 4. -</u>	220.10. -	Camp Gear	26. 7. -
Canoe storage		9. 3. -	Instructional gear & film hire	21. 5. 8
Use of Premises and gear		33.14. -	Insurances	26.11. 8
"Bob-a-Job"	83. - . -		Competition expenses & fares	5. 3.10
Less pd.to Assn.	<u>22.15. -</u>	60. 5. -	Socials, Parents Day, etc.	15. 4.10
Other work done		2.10. -	Building Maintenance, etc.	13. 4. 5
Bazaar		80.10.10	Badges	7. 1. 2
Jumble Sale		49.12. -	Books, Stationery and postages	10.15.10
Whist Drives		10. 1. 9	"Scoutorama" Expenses	8. 5. 5
Catering Profit		21.17.10	Donation	10. -
Surplus on Camps		3.10. 2	1st Aid Gear	1. 1. 9
Sale of firewood and junk		1. 4. -	Crockery	2.16. -
Sale of 'Hero'	50. - . -		"Water Rat"(2 issues)less sales	6.10. -
Less Carriage			Purchase of "Y.W.Cadet"	52.17. 6
& advert.	<u>6. 7. 6</u>	43.12. 6	"Sandling"	1130. - . -
		661.15. 8	" extra Gear	138.10. 1
Excess of Expend. over Income		955. 9. -	" loss on year	<u>9.16.10</u>
		<u>£1617. 4. 8</u>		1278. 6.11
				<u>£1617. 4. 8</u>
Cash in Hand - 1st April,1955	33.10. 3		Excess of Expenditure over	
Outstanding Loans	1017. - . -		Income	955. 9. -
Camp Payments in advance	45. 7. 6		Cash at Bank and in Hand,	
			31.3.56	140. 8. 9
		<u>£1095.17. 9</u>		<u>£1095.17. 9</u>