

FOREWORD.

At the Jubilee Dinner I was able to announce that a fairly complete history of the Group's first 50 years had been compiled and I invited donations from the members present to help cover the cost of printing this. The tremendous response to this brought promises of £22; I can only say a very sincere thank you to all those members.

The list of the available log books, etc., at the end of this History reveal many gaps and should anyone know of the whereabouts of others I should be pleased to hear about them.

We are deeply grateful to Michael Roper for the many hours he has spent in carrying out the necessary research, often at great personal inconvenience, and also to the Printers for their generosity and willing co-operation.

P. GORDON BENTLEY,
Group Scoutmaster.

Halifax.

April, 1959.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

This History has been produced as a contribution to the Jubilee celebrations of the 2nd (H.G.S.) Halifax Scout Group. It must be stated at the outset, however, that it does not pretend to be a complete and detailed history of the fifty years between 1909 and 1959. In the first place my own connection with the Group dates only from May, 1944, and has been rather tenuous since October, 1951. In the second place the earliest record of the Group's activities which I have been able to consult is a passage in "The Heathen" for the Spring Term of 1920. Even after that date there are occasional gaps in the records. Group Council Minutes do not begin until 1928 and only one Log Book for the years before 1930 has survived. This has left a large gap which I have filled as far as possible by using the recollections of some of those who were connected with the Group in its early days. Even after 1930 there are some gaps in the records of certain sections of the Group. For instance, no records can be traced (except for occasional brief reference in "The Heathen") for the Cub Pack or for C Section, while for the Rover Crew and for D Section only one Log Book each has survived. If anyone has in his possession any Log Book, Minute Book, etc., which can fill these or any other gaps, the G.S.M. will be only too grateful to receive them on behalf of the Group. Similarly he will be pleased to accept written accounts drawn from personal recollection which will fill any gap or correct any mistake in this History.

As a consequence of the unevenness of the records, this History can only present a somewhat uneven picture. Even for those years which are comparatively well recorded it has been necessary, for reasons of space, to be selective rather than comprehensive. For those who would like to savour in fuller detail the escapades of their youth, I have appended to this History a list of those Log Books which have survived. These are normally in the possession of the G.S.M. and can be consulted by arrangement with him. They are usually available for consultation at the Annual Group Dinners.

The unevenness of the records and the limitations of space have also necessitated the omission of many names, especially those of the many A.S.M.'s who have served the Group over the years. To everyone who has served the Group in any way, large or small, without receiving due recognition in this History, I offer my apologies and extend here and now the thanks of the Group.

I should like to take this opportunity of paying a personal tribute to the Group. It has been a great pleasure and privilege to have been a member of the famous 2nd Halifax. Finally, I wish to thank the G.S.M., Gordon Bentley, for his encouragement and help, without which this History would not have been written.

MICHAEL ROPER.

Manchester, March 1959.

THE EARLY YEARS.

The origins of the Boy Scout Troop at Heath Grammar School are almost completely undocumented and can now be traced only from the recollections of the surviving founder members. In July, 1908, Lord Baden-Powell had inspected the Halifax Boys Brigade at Scarborough and in the late summer and early autumn of that year a series of articles concerned with Scouting had appeared in the Halifax Courier. By the middle of October there were fourteen Scout Patrols in Halifax, apparently divided into two troops, one or both of which being led by a Scoutmaster named Foster.

The earliest known documentary evidence of the existence of a Scout Troop at Heath is a mention in the Courier for 14th June, 1909. Here the Troop is called the 3rd Halifax and District and three patrols are mentioned: Peewits (P.L. Lionel Fox), Kangaroos (P.L. Oswald Fleming) and Woodpigeons (P.L. Wavell); the Scoutmaster was Mr. H. Seaton, a master at Heath. The basis of this Troop was the Peewit Patrol, which had been formed some time earlier by Lionel Fox, Ray Greenwood, Eric Brown, Harold Fawcett and Howard Hatch. Lionel had been chosen as Patrol Leader and Harold Fawcett as Corporal (as Seconds were then known) by lot. This Patrol had met in the garden of Ray Greenwood's parents at Heath Villas and had carried on for some time entirely alone, without any Scoutmaster and with no connection with any outside authority. As numbers had grown new patrols had been formed and a Troop had been organised under the leadership of Mr. Seaton. In addition to the three patrols mentioned in the Courier, early patrol names in use in the Heath Troop were Hounds and Owls.

From the beginning the ties between the Troop and the School were close, as they have remained ever since. Besides Mr. Seaton, another member of the staff, Sergeant Wheatley, gave the Troop much valuable assistance in these early days. The Troop's first camp, under the command of Mr. Seaton, was at Pateley Bridge, being attended by at least fifteen Scouts. In 1910, Lionel Fox, Harold Fawcett and Ray Greenwood attended a Scout Rally at Windsor Park, where they were inspected by the late King George V. By then Ray Greenwood was a King's Scout, probably the first in Halifax. Among the early members of the Troop was C. W. Rouse, who was later to become District Commissioner for Halifax and District. It is in connection with his receipt of a warrant as A.S.M. that the first mention of the Troop occurs in the Local Association's records. By this time the Troop was known as the 2nd (H.G.S.) Halifax, the title which it has kept ever since.

The first phase of the history of the Heath Scout Troop really ended with the outbreak of the First Great War. During the War the Troop continued to exist, although with reduced numbers, and

contributed both to Scouting and to the war effort, but it was seriously affected by the continual departure of potential leaders to the Fighting Services, some of them, unfortunately, never to return.

“THE BROWNING ERA.”

After the War, Mr. A. D. Phoenix, a new master at the School, became Scoutmaster in succession to Mr. Seaton, who still continued, however, to take a fairly active interest in the Troop. In 1919, the policy of registration with Local Associations was changed to one of registration with Imperial Headquarters and on 1st October, 1919, the 2nd Halifax (Heath Grammar School) Scout Troop was registered as Troop No. 6307. At the beginning of 1921 a third patrol, Otters, was added to the two which had survived the War, Owls and Peewits. At this period the Troop met in a box room above the School gymnasium, where a wireless set constructed by one of the Patrol Leaders was a great centre of attraction. Among the younger Scouts of this period was a certain W. E. Aske, better known to his contemporaries as “Askey” and to succeeding generations of Heath Scouts as “Bill.” He had joined the Troop at the beginning of 1921 and was destined to become Group Scoutmaster of the 2nd, an Assistant and, later Deputy County Commissioner and the holder of a number of awards for his services to Scouting.

The real recovery from the set-back of the War began in the autumn of 1922, when Mr. R. Browning, better known as “Doc,” became Scoutmaster of the Troop. In about six months the strength of the Troop rose from eleven to twenty-seven, a fourth patrol, Woodpigeons, being formed to cater for the increase. In October, 1922, the newly formed Cub Pack was registered with I.H.Q. as Pack No. 5504. The Pack rapidly attracted sixteen members, divided into three sixes. Nor was this increase in numbers the only reflection of “Doc” Browning’s influence. By Christmas, 1922, thirteen Second Class Badges (mostly started from scratch since October) and twenty-six Proficiency Badges had been gained. During the School Year 1922-23, eighty-two Proficiency Badges were gained. As a result of all this effort the Troop was second in the 1923 competition for the L.A. Progress Shield (now discontinued).

But the 2nd Halifax was not primarily concerned with “badge-hogging.” On fine Saturdays outdoor activities were arranged, usually at Norland, in order to give the members of the Troop a glimpse of what Scouting really had to offer. At first “camps” had to begin and end on the same day, for the Troop possessed no camping gear. However, early in 1923 a special effort raised over twenty pounds (a considerable sum in those days) in six weeks and this money, together with cash in hand, subscriptions and donations, brought Troop funds to over forty pounds, almost all of which was spent on the purchase of a Bell Tent, two Patrol Tents, several

Dixies, a stock of Plates and a Trek Cart. With this equipment it was possible to hold in the Summer Term of 1923 a series of weekend camps in a corner of the School playing field. These week-end camps were preparation for greater things to come. At the end of that term a dozen members of the Troop embarked upon one of the most ambitious Summer Camps in the history of the 2nd Halifax. This feat was a trekking camp in North-Western France, during which some seventy miles were covered on foot and many more by rail and water. The weather, which was rather mixed at the start, improved later and a very enjoyable time was had by all. Present members of the Group will be interested to know that the craze for canoeing is no new thing, but dates back to this expedition, during which a canoe, made by “Doc” during the war, was unearthed at Douriez and much used.

In 1924 the Troop uniform was standardised. The need for this reform had been apparent for some time, but the final impetus towards it was provided by the need to appear smart and uniform at that year’s Summer Camp, for 1924 was the year of the Imperial Jamboree, held in conjunction with the Empire Exhibition at Wembley, and, of course, the 2nd Halifax had to be represented at such a notable affair. Despite a rather boggy camp site and the need to fight for meals, everyone who attended the Jamboree enjoyed it immensely, for beside the Scouting activities of the Jamboree itself there were opportunities to visit the Exhibitions and to see the sights of London.

The year 1925 was yet another memorable one for the 2nd Halifax. The year began auspiciously with the gaining of four First Class Badges, the first in the Troop for many years. Three were won on the same day by Bill Aske, Syd Smith and Don Noble; the fourth was won a week later by Ken Breaks (renowned for his hearty appetite), who had been prevented by illness from completing his tests at the same time as the other three. This year the Troop again went to France for its Summer Camp, this time a standing camp at Douriez, attended by twenty-four Scouts. This was yet another excellent camp with only two day’s bad weather; again canoeing was extremely popular. This year also saw two other important events. The first of these was the formation in July of a Rover Crew of two patrols and the second was the transfer to new headquarters. It had long been apparent that the box room over the gym was inadequate for the needs of the Troop and new premises at Spring Hall were secured through the good offices of the Speaker of the House of Commons (Mr. J. H. Whitley) and Captain Nicholl.

In the following year the Rover Crew held its own Summer Camp, Scotland being invaded for this purpose. This summer also saw the Troop in camp at Broadstairs, Kent, where eighteen campers enjoyed ten days of perfect weather, which made sea bathing their

favourite occupation. A very high standard of camping was maintained throughout this camp, the cooking in particular being first class. In his account of this camp in "The Heathen" for the Easter Term, 1927, "Doc" Browning wrote: "Summer Camp of 1926 will stand out as one of our best efforts." Unfortunately it was to be his last camp with the Troop, for at the beginning of the Autumn Term, 1926, he had to retire from the post of Scoutmaster on medical advice. This was a most serious blow to the Troop. "Doc" Browning had probably done more than anyone else to establish the traditions which have made the 2nd Halifax what it is—the best Group in the North of England. The great successes of the Group in the following decade would never have occurred but for his influence during the years 1922-26. After his retirement from active Scouting the progress of the Group flagged a little, but fortunately there were at hand men whom he had trained, capable and more than willing to carry on his work. Moreover, even in his retirement he was not entirely lost to the Group, being ever ready to give help and advice when it was most required.

It was only natural that "Doc" Browning should be in the Chair at a most important meeting which took place at Group Headquarters on 4th October, 1928. This meeting, whose other members were Messrs. A. D. Phoenix (Hon. Treasurer), L. Corney (S.M. and C.M.), W. E. Aske (A.C.M.), and E. H. Stafford (A.S.M.), first of all "resolved in view of the declining rays of the 2nd Halifax Sun, to have a 'spring clean' notwithstanding the fact of the autumnal season!" The meeting then went on to constitute itself as the first meeting of the Group Council of the 2nd (Heath Grammar School) Scout Group, which has met ever since (with the exception of a short period during World War II) at regular intervals. At this meeting "Doc" was asked to become Group Scoutmaster, Bill Aske becoming the new S.M., Mr. Corney remaining as C.M. It was in this month that, in accordance with a new I.H.Q. ruling, the Troop and Pack lost their old separate registration numbers and the Group as a whole received a new registration number—975—which it still bears.

The first meeting of the Group Council also instituted a separate account for a New Headquarters' Fund and plans for a new Headquarters were discussed, since ejection from Spring Hall was imminent. "Doc" found a suitable site for the new H.Q. in the School yard and the next eight months were chiefly occupied with the raising of funds for the purchase of a sectional wooden hut to put there. By the end of June, 1929, the Hut Fund stood at sixty pounds, which happened to coincide with a tender for the type of hut required submitted by Messrs. Naylor of Lee Mount, who had cut out their profit in view of the cause. This tender was accepted, as was an offer by Messrs. E. & T. Bower to build the piles to support the hut free of charge. The negotiation and acceptance of these

offers were "Doc" Browning's last job as G.S.M. of the 2nd Halifax, for at the end of the Summer Term, 1929, he had to resign on leaving the district. In September he was succeeded by Mr. A. Bonham Edwards, who also succeeded Mr. Corney as C.M. at the same time. Thus ended the "Browning Era."

THE EARLY THIRTIES.

The new decade began with a new Scout Hut and a new Troop neckerchief. The new Hut was officially opened in January by "Doc" Browning, who had been specially invited to Halifax for the occasion. Before 1930 the Troop had worn neckerchiefs of Scout Green, but now new colours were adopted, namely claret with a gold border. After the Headmaster had refused permission for the use of a miniature School badge on the apex, the School cap badge was adopted instead.

Good camping still remained the major object of the 2nd Halifax. In 1930 there were the usual week-end camps at Kensington and a Whitsuntide Camp at Crimsworth Dean. At these camps the Troop used for the first time a portable oven, which was to give excellent service at numerous camps in the years to come. The summer of 1930 saw the introduction of the Camping Competitions organised by the Halifax and District Local Association, and in the first of these the 2nd Halifax took second place. At the end of June eight members of the Group attended the North-West Lancashire County Rally at Squire's Gate, at which B.P. was also present. Summer Camp was held at Runswick Bay and was as usual a great success. An abundance of bullocks in the vicinity of the camp caused some alarm, although actual contact with them was avoided (at times only at the cost of a hasty and undignified retreat). Rabbit catching, which was to become a popular camping pastime in Beavers in the Forties, was attempted by a couple of budding poachers, but without any success. Again the Rovers held their own camps, in Wensleydale at Whitsuntide and on Anglesey in Summer. The Crew was holding regular meetings twice a month, although these, as always, were affected by the demands of "Tech" and other outside activities. The strength of the Crew was eleven, seven of whom held warrants in the 2nd or some other troop. At this time the Cub Pack had a strength of seventeen. At the end of 1930 Mr. A. D. Phoenix resigned after eight years as Troop and Group Treasurer, although he still continued to take a keen interest in the affairs of the Group. Mr. Phoenix subsequently returned to active service with the Group during World War II, when he served for a time as Group Secretary. When he later retired from his post at the School and left Halifax for his native Wales, he was presented by the Group with a "Thanks Badge."

The year 1931 was another successful one for the Group. At Whitsuntide the Troop went further afield than it had done in previous years, one patrol going to Ulverston and the rest of the Troop to Appletreewick. Later in the Summer a week-end camp was held at Appletreewick. Again a team from the Troop was second in the L.A. Camping Competition, losing to St. Jude's by one mark. It had been hoped to hold this year's Summer Camp in Belgium, but plans had fallen through. Instead the Troop went to Dinas Dinlle, near Caernarvon. This camp, described in "The Heathen" as a "glorious wind-up to a good camping season," was favoured by perfect camping weather—only one and a half day's rain out of eleven. Sea bathing was, in these conditions, extremely popular, almost more so than the Girl Guides who were camping nearby. During this year the strength of the Crew rose to fourteen, eight of them also being warrant holders. September saw the appointment of the Crew's first Rover Leader, Mr. G. Hanson, better known as "Upper George." At the end of this year a Scout Concert was held, one of the items being "Calder Cannibals," for which Mr. T. K. Smith, a master of the School and an A.S.M. of the Troop, was very largely responsible. This play was later presented on numerous occasions and always proved an excellent money-raiser.

The following year saw yet another successful camping season. Whitsuntide Camp was held at Barden-in-Wharfedale, week-end camps also being held at Kensington and Hawksclough. In June a team from the Troop finally succeeded in winning the L.A. Camping Competition. For its Summer Camp the Troop again went to North Wales, this time to Bull Bay, Anglesey. Once more the camp was a great success from every point of view, the campers enjoying what the Log Writer called "an almost perfect week." Excellent weather again made sea bathing the most popular pastime. However, this year was notable not only for its camps. The steady efforts of the preceding years in the other aspects of Scouting at last began to bear fruit, for during this year no fewer than eight First Class Badges and several sets of All-Round Cords were gained. Meanwhile the Rover Crew continued to have a vigorous and independent existence, securing its own Rover Den in the form of an extension to the Scout Hut. Its most notable activities were an Easter Hike in Wharfedale and a Summer Camp on the Norfolk Broads.

In 1933 the Camping Season opened early with an enjoyable Easter Camp at Appletreewick. Once again a team from the Troop carried off the L.A. Camping Competition, while the Troop reached the final of the Progress Shield, being eventually placed fourth. It had originally been intended to return to Bull Bay for this year's Summer Camp, but the arrangements fell through. Instead a new camp site at Stainforth, near Settle, was tried and found to be excellent. River bathing proved an acceptable substitute for the

sea variety and other activities included the ascent of Pen-y-Ghent and the descent of the Victoria Caves (a forerunner of the spelæological mania which has afflicted the Senior Scouts and Rovers in more recent years). The year was crowned by the winning of three King's Scout Badges, the first since the early days of the Troop.

Early in 1934 it was decided that each member of the Troop should buy a stave and carry it on Troop meeting nights. This practice was continued for over ten years but has now been discontinued. The year 1934 witnessed a victory for the 2nd Halifax in the L.A. Camping Competition for the third successive year. Another excellent Summer Camp was held at Stainforth. This year also saw the completion of a canoe constructed by the Rovers. An innovation at the end of the year was the use of the School gymnasium for games on meeting nights, a privilege secured through the good offices of a new A.S.M., Mr. Ben Young, a member of the School staff. The highlight of 1934 was the Twenty-fifth Anniversary Dinner held on 2nd November at the Plummet Line Hotel and attended by some fifty past and present members of the Group, including five members of the original Troop. One of the latter, Mr. Woodsmith, was the principle speaker and he recalled some of his memories of the early history of the Troop. Unfortunately the only record of his speech is a brief summary in "The Heathen" for December, 1934.

The next year began inauspiciously. In March one patrol, Woodpigeons, had to be discontinued as a result of a fall in numbers, which at one time were as low as sixteen. But what the Troop lacked in quantity it made up for in quality. For the fourth time in succession the L.A. Camping Competition was won and the Troop also came fourth in the Beadon Cup Competition. For the third year in succession Summer Camp was held at Stainforth, river bathing being popular as usual and Pen-y-Ghent again being climbed. The Autumn Term began with a reorganisation of the officers of the Group, Bill Aske becoming G.S.M. in succession to Mr. Bonham Edwards, who remained as C.M., and John Cockcroft becoming S.M. in Bill's place. Following this reorganisation the Group's fortunes took a turn for the better. By the end of the Term the Troop strength was back to thirty-two, Woodpigeons being re-formed, and there was serious talk of starting a second section.

EXPANSION, 1936-39.

By the beginning of 1936 it was obvious that a single troop could not accommodate all the potential Scouts in the School. Consequently, on the 27th January, a new troop was formed. This new troop was known as B Section, the old one as A Section. Under the leadership of John Cockcroft, B Section started with a dozen raw

recruits, divided into two patrols—Rams and Bulls. Within less than two months numbers were more than doubled, fifteen Scouts had been invested and a new patrol—Foxes—had been formed. By the end of the year the Section had reached the optimum strength of thirty-two and a fourth patrol—Horses—had been formed. In its first year of existence the new Section put up a creditable performance in coming fifth in both the Progress Shield and the Camping Competition. Meanwhile A Section continued to live up to its high reputation, winning the Camping Competition for the fifth year in succession and being placed second in the Progress Shield. At this time the Section included one King's Scout and five First Class Scouts.

During this summer most of the camps were joint ones for both Sections. Week-end camps continued to be held for the most part at Hawksclough, where the aerials of the wireless enthusiasts constituted a menace to the unwary. A joint Whitsuntide Camp was held at Stainforth, the weather being so cold that a wet bathing costume left outside a tent overnight was found in the morning to be frozen. A very enjoyable Summer Camp was held this year at Sandsend, near Whitby. Except for one morning's drizzle the weather was very hot and sea bathing was consequently very popular, despite the experiences of two of the senior campers who suffered the discomfort of being stung by jelly fish. Another popular pastime was fishing, although nothing of any significance was caught.

As early as March the possibility of raising a third Section had been mooted and in November, with B Section already full and the numbers of those wishing to become Scouts still increasing, C Section was formed. This new Section was composed of two experienced Scouts from A Section and twelve new recruits, divided into two patrols—Hounds and Squirrels—two more patrols—Kingfishers and Hawks—being added as the Section increased its membership. The G.S.M., Bill Aske, took temporary charge of this Section. Besides the formation of the two new Sections, 1936 also saw the introduction of a distinctive Group Tie (still available) and the beginning of the association with the Group of Mr. N. J. Gain of the School Staff. Except for the years which he spent away from Halifax on War Service, Mr. Gain was Honorary Secretary of the Group (occasionally acting also as Group Treasurer) from 1936 until 1952 when he left Heath. During 1936 the Court of Honour of A Section suggested that the Group have a rifle range, but nothing was done about this at the time.

By Easter, 1937, A Section had four King's Scouts and two First Class Scouts. Of these King's Scouts two attended the St. George's Day Service at Windsor and the other two visited London for the Coronation. Two of them also attended this year's World

Jamboree in Holland. By November there were no fewer than six King's Scouts in the Section. This year A Section won the Progress Shield—the first time that it had been won by the 2nd Halifax. In the Camping Competition, however, the Section's long monopoly ended and it could do no better than come third. But the Camping Competition did not pass from the Group, for B Section, at only the second attempt, took first place. A team from the Group represented Halifax in the County Coronation Camping Competition and came second, in commemoration of which feat the Group was presented with a pair of stag antlers by Major Stoddart-Scott, the A.C.C. Training. At Whitsuntide the Patrol Leaders and Seconds of A Section camped at Great Towers Plantation, Windermere, the rest of the Section camping with B and C Sections at Stainforth. Later A Section held its own Summer Camp at Great Towers, while the other two Sections held a joint camp a week later at Wray Castle on the opposite shore of the Lake. C Section, now known as the "Webeces," had secured a permanent Scoutmaster in Mr. Barclay Fraser of the School staff, but in October A Section lost Mr. Young when he became C.M. on the resignation of Mr. Bonham Edwards. Gerry Denham, the present District Commissioner for Halifax, became the new S.M. of A Section. In November a Senior Sea Scout Patrol, the Seagulls, consisting of First Class and King's Scouts over the age of sixteen was formed under the leadership of Peter Walker. About the same time a fourth Section was formed. D Section was originally intended to be purely a recruiting and training Section, its members being divided among the other Sections after training. However, this plan was later modified and the Section was established on a permanent basis with four patrols—Lions, Eagles, Stags and Elephants (later changed to Tigers). By now it was obvious that the Group's accommodation was inadequate for its needs; consequently a committee of Scouters and Parents was formed to seek ways and means of raising funds for new premises.

In February, 1938, the Sea Scouts acquired their own Headquarters, a stone hut on the canal bank at Salterhebble, and they spent the next few months in making this "ship-shape." They also took charge of their first craft—a canoe—badly in need of repair, which occupied the rest of the year. This year the Group retained the Progress Shield, B Section being the winners, despite some last minute team changes. The same success was not experienced, however, in the other competitions. In the Beadon Cup the Group's best performance was by A Section, which could only come fifth, while the Camping Competition was lost for the first time since 1931, although C Section was second and B Section third. Camping was again the main summer occupation of the Group, even the Sea Scouts tearing themselves away from their nautical pastimes to spend a number of week-ends under canvas. At Whitsuntide a joint camp was held by A and B Sections at the usual site at Stain-

forth. This was the camp at which a visiting Commissioner was deferentially entertained until it was discovered that he was only a Rover from Bradford who was out hiking. This year the three senior Sections held their own separate Summer Camps, A Section going to Cushendall in Ireland and C and B Sections to Wray Castle in successive weeks; D Section did not hold a camp of its own, but some of its members camped with other Sections. This Summer saw the beginning of a craze in B Section for vast pioneering projects starting with mere tripods and signalling towers and graduating to pontoon bridges and aerial ropeways across the canal at Salterhebble. B Section also set up what was then a Section record by holding a week-end camp as late as the second week-end in November. Another B Section innovation was the formation of a separate patrol—Eagles—for those older Scouts who had left School. By the end of this year B Section had four First Class Scouts. In November, 1938, the Scouters and Rovers were involved in the search for the notorious "Slasher." By December the Hut Extension Fund, started at the end of 1937, stood at over £130. During the winter of 1938-39 two members of the Group, the Denham cousins, Eric and Jack, represented the West Riding at the Australasian Jamboree.

The fateful year, 1939, began with a visit from Mr. Claude Fisher who was collecting material for an article on the Group which was eventually published in "The Scouter" in June. Apart from the size of the Group, what most impressed him were B Section's "monetary" patrol points system, the "Den" of the Fox Patrol of B Section in the basement of the home of its P.L., "Da" Carlin, and the Exhibition of Models by which the Rovers were raising money for the Hut Extension Fund. One interesting piece of information which his article contained was the statement that G. W. Hanson ("Lower George") was "an original member of the 2nd Halifax Troop (founded in 1909)." If this were true, then how old would that make "Upper George"? B Section began the year with a blaze of glory in the form of two King's Scouts (the first in the Section), a third being added before the end of the year. For its Whitsuntide Camp this year B Section deserted Stainforth for a site recommended by John Cockroft at West Tanfield, near Ripon. This was not the site familiar to post-war campers, but another in the field above the weir. Despite the initial doubts of some about the qualities of the site, it proved to be a most enjoyable camp. B Section set up a Group (and possibly a Local Association) record by coming second in all three of the L.A. Competitions: Progress Shield, Beadon Cup and Camping Competition, the latter of which was won by C Section. During the first ten years in which the L.A. Camping Competition was held, teams from the 2nd Halifax had been first seven times, second four times and third twice. This year the cub

pack, which had a strength of twenty-two, was fourth in the Jungle Trophy. In June, Bill Aske, now an Assistant County Commissioner, felt that in order to devote himself fully to the duties of that office, he should resign from his position as G.S.M. of the 2nd Halifax. Regretfully his resignation was accepted and Mr. Barclay Fraser was chosen to succeed him. Shortly afterwards Bill was awarded the Medal of Merit.

Even during the early part of 1939 the shadow of the impending conflict had hung over the Group's activities. Scouters had been employed in assembling gas-mask boxes and several Scouters and Rovers had joined the T.A. The demands of T.A. camps had made it impossible to find sufficient Scouters to run Section Summer Camps, so a single Group Camp was held under Mr. Fraser at Great Towers. But despite the approaching war Mr. Young took a party to France to camp with some French Scouts at Roseloend and the Group was represented at the Rover Moot held this Summer in Scotland. At the end of 1937 the Sea Scouts had become involved in a scheme whereby Sea Scout Units were to be trained to act as emergency Coastguards. As part of this scheme they spent Whitsuntide, a week-end in July and Wakes Week in camp at Whitby helping the Coastguards there. During the Summer, however, the scheme fell through, so they were never called upon to act as Coastguards. When the Second World War did break out on the 3rd September it put an end to the most prosperous period of the history of the 2nd Halifax Group. At a stroke it deprived the Group of almost all its Scouters, and the steady drain of young men to the Armed Forces at the age of eighteen which continued for the next six years prevented their replacement. Several of these young men were not to survive the War; their names constitute a high proportion of those remembered on the School's Memorial Gates.

V. SCOUTING IN WAR-TIME.

The outbreak of World War II in September, 1939, seriously interfered with the activities of the Group. Thirteen members of the Rover Crew were called up immediately and since these included all the Scouters of A Section and all the A.S.M.'s of B Section, their departure affected not only the Crew but also the Scout Sections. Of those Scouters who remained, all were engaged upon war-work or A.R.P. duties which reduced the amount of time which they could devote to their Sections. At first meetings had to be held immediately after School and on Sunday mornings as it was some time before the Scout Hut could be "blacked out" and normal evening meetings could be resumed. The "black-out" regulations and food rationing also interfered for a time with camping plans. As the war progressed clothes rationing and the acute shortage of certain items of uniform, added to the rising cost of those items

which were still available, interfered to some extent with recruiting. Recruiting also suffered to some extent from the competition of the various state-subsidized pre-Service organisations. Despite all these difficulties, however, the Group carried on and made no small contribution to the war effort. Many of the older Scouts became A.R.P. Messengers, while even the younger members were able to help by acting as casualties for A.R.P. practices. All the Sections also participated in the management of an allotment on the School lawn and in the collection of salvage. The Hut Extension Fund moneys were invested in Defence Bonds.

Although the Rovers could no longer, through lack of time and numbers, hold separate meetings, all four of the Scout Sections were able to continue their separate existence for a time. The Sea Scouts, however, suspended their separate meetings to help with the running of A Section, which was worst affected by the call-up of Scouters. A Section was also fortunate to secure the services of the recently appointed Director of Education for Halifax, Mr. W. O. Bell, as its new S.M. B Section, now reduced to three patrols by the disbanding of Rams, continued under John Cockcroft until the beginning of 1940, when he left Halifax to work in Luton. Since no successor could be found, Bill Aske took charge of the Section. The other two Sections had, for the time being, sufficient Scouters for their needs.

The Group's first War-time camp was held at the Crimsworth Dean Hut at Whitsuntide, 1940, and was attended by all four Sections, B Section's plans for a separate camp at Stainforth having been cancelled because of the Dunkirk emergency. Later in the Summer the Sections held week-end camps under canvas at Hawksclough. This year the various Sectional Summer Camps were held on the same site at Burnsall on different weeks in August. D Section did not hold a camp of its own, but some of its members attended that of B Section. It was at this camp that the "Poachers Union" and several other unions which were to flourish at B Section's war-time camps were formed. At the end of the Summer B Section gained its fourth King's Scout. However, the numbers of the Section had declined to sixteen and another patrol—Bulls—was disbanded. D Section was having similar difficulties and was also suffering from a lack of Scouters, so in October, 1940, the two Sections were combined, the surviving members of D Section forming a third patrol—Stags—in B Section. A Section also was reduced to three patrols—Owls, Otters and Peewits. Meanwhile, the Cub Pack was having a very successful year, coming second in both the Wolf Cub Trophy and the Jungle Trophy. One Cub equalled the Halifax record for the number of badges won. Unfortunately, the C.M., Mr. Ben Young, was called up in October and although the Pack continued under a succession of C.M.'s until the Junior School was discontinued in 1946, it never fulfilled the promise which

it was beginning to show under Mr. Young's leadership. The end of 1940 also saw the departure of the G.S.M., Mr. Barclay Fraser, to another school and his consequent resignation. Bill Aske became G.S.M. once more.

In 1941 C Section began to publish a successful magazine, "The Webece." Despite the departure of its S.M., Mr. Fraser, the Section continued its separate existence, and by the end of the year it had three First-Class and two King's Scouts. Its numbers had, however, begun to decline and it was reduced to three patrols. A Section remained steady at three patrols, but B Section began to recover from its temporary decline, a fourth patrol—Bulldogs—being formed in July. This year both Whitsuntide and Summer Camps were for the whole Group, the former being held at Hawksclough. The latter, which was held at Wray Castle, was also attended by some Scouts from Derbyshire, but was, unfortunately, rather spoiled by the weather and by the separate tendencies of the three Sections, with their differing camping traditions. During the Summer of 1941 a team drawn from B and C Sections represented Halifax in the County Camping Competition. Despite the kicking over of the fish dixie by a certain small Scout, the team put up a very creditable performance to come second only one and a half points behind the winners. In October B Section began to hold a "Seniors Half Hour" after meetings for Scouts over fourteen. October also saw the last regular entry in the B Section Log Book by R. J. H. Collinson, better known as "Colly," who had been Section Scribe, except for a short break for examination work in 1940, since March, 1938. His Log Books are a model of full and interesting reporting, although some of his more libellous entries would now make his wig curl. His example inspired subsequent B Section Scribes and if this History should seem to dwell too much upon the affairs of B Section, then it is due not to any bias on the author's part but to the superiority of the series of B Section Logs begun by "Colly." At the end of October, 1941, B Section officially adopted the name of Beavers. Also in October a Sea Scout Section of two patrols—Puffins and Penguins—was formed with its H.Q. on the canal bank at Sowerby Bridge. This new Section was given a barge by the Calder and Hebble Navigation Co. and this was named "The Heathen of Halifax." The Section drew its members from both A and B Sections and at first attracted fifteen members, although numbers were later reduced to eight by order of the Group Council. The Sea Scouts did not cease to be members of their respective Sections and Patrols. An Air Scout Patrol was also formed on similar lines at about the same time.

Several of the more hardy members of Beavers held two short camps at the end of December, 1941, and the beginning of January, 1942, at the new H.Q. Camp Site at Bradley Wood. At the second of these camps the temperature reached a minimum of 32° F. At

Easter Beavers were again in camp at Bradley Wood, while at Whitsuntide they visited a newly discovered camp site at Askwith, near Ilkley. Later a Backwoods camp was held at Northowram. By this time there were two more King's Scouts in the Section and two more were added by the end of the year. A Section ended 1941 and begun 1942 with a series of hikes in the Halifax area (hiking was and long remained a traditional A Section activity). At Whitsuntide the Section held a camp at Hawksclough. In July C Section was disbanded due to lack of Scouters, its members being divided between the other two Sections. Those joining Beavers formed a new patrol—Eagles—while the influx of new members into A Section led to the formation of a fourth patrol—Curlews. The Sea Scouts, meanwhile, were building their own kayak. A Section held its Summer Camp this year with the 77th Derby Troop at Kelstedge, Ashover, near Chesterfield. For their Summer Camp Beavers went to Stainforth, eight members of the Section hiking there with the trek cart in advance of the main party.

At the end of 1942 the "Seniors' Half Hour" of Beavers had been transformed into a War Service Patrol. The older ex-C Section members joined this patrol, the younger ones being distributed among the other patrols and the Eagle Patrol dissolved. Some members of the War Service Patrol saw in the New Year at Bradley Wood where they had the experience of camping in snow. During the early months this Patrol met regularly after Beavers' meetings, much time being spent in learning the rudiments of unarmed combat. At Easter several members of the Patrol hiked and camped in Derbyshire in an unsuccessful attempt to find a site for the Summer Camp. In May the War Service Patrol was merged with the Sea Scouts (now almost entirely composed of Beavers) to form Beavers' Senior Sea Scout Section (B.S.S.S.S.), also known as Seagulls. Since the barge had sunk and subsequently broken up by the Calder and Hebble Navigation Co., the Sea Scouts had to look around for a new boat. They soon secured a rather broken down motor launch which needed numerous repairs before it would be seaworthy. During 1943 the Group had a spasm of co-operation with the Girl Guides of P.M.H.S., Beavers being perhaps the more "co-operative" (it is a pure coincidence that three of the P.L.'s of Beavers at this period subsequently married P.M.H.S. Guides). This co-operation took the form of joint camp-fires, hikes and a Gang Show; Beavers did not, however, neglect more "Scouty" activities. They came second in the L.A. Camping Competition and won the Field Day Competition (a War-time substitute for the Beadon Cup), the certificate for which was presented by the Chief Scout (Lord Somers), who attended the camp-fire held after the Competition. Beavers held their Summer Camp at Wray Castle, the Sea Scouts going there a few days in advance to prepare the site. Again two boats were hired for the duration of the camp and boating and swimming were

very popular, one successful and several unsuccessful attempts being made to swim across the Lake. An innovation at this camp was an overnight wide-game. Shortly after Summer Camp some of the members of the Section went on a trek-cart hike to Dacre Bank, getting rather wet in the process. In September Beavers formed a fifth patrol—Badgers. Meanwhile A Section had held a very enjoyable Summer Camp at Stainforth. Since 1941 there had been some intermittent discussion of the possibility of giving A Section a name, but no suggestions were forthcoming until the very end of 1943, when the name Badgers was adopted, Woodpeckers and Ants having been considered but rejected.

The New Year, 1944, again saw the older members of Beavers in camp at Bradley Wood. At Easter most of Beavers were again at Bradley Wood for an inter-patrol camping competition, won by Bulldogs, while some of the Seniors went to West Tanfield to survey the proposed Summer Camp site there. By now there were fifty-three members of Beavers and a sixth patrol—Wolves—had been formed in February. In May the Section was divided, the Seagulls becoming an entirely separate Senior Section, the remainder becoming a Junior Troop with its own P.L.'s. It was at the time of this reorganisation that the Badger Patrol changed its name to Squirrels to avoid confusion with the other Badgers. The Junior Section held its Whitsuntide Camp at Askwith. The Field Day Competition was again won by Beavers, this time without the help of the Seagulls. By the end of 1944 the Junior Section had two King's Scouts. Beavers and Seagulls combined for their Summer Camp, which was held at West Tanfield. This camp will be remembered for the aerial ropeway, the brushes with the local toughs, the ever-clean white shirts of certain Seagulls and the excellent work of the Q.M., D. B. Scott ("Scottie" or "Dabs"). At this camp the Poachers' Union caught its first rabbit. The method of its capture is copyright, but the members concerned might be persuaded to disclose it—for a small fee, of course. The weather was excellent, no rain falling throughout the camp (even so some people managed to get wet). Badgers were less fortunate with the weather at their Summer Camp, which was held at Buckden in Wharfedale. This camp is said to have been one of the coldest Summer Camps in the Section's history. In September the Seagulls launched their motor launch, although the engine was still not in working order and the only means of propulsion were towing and rowing.

Badgers began 1945 with their traditional Christmas and New Year hikes, but Beavers and Seagulls did not hold their usual winter camp. Early in 1945 the Seagulls found their launch on the canal bottom on three occasions, so she was removed from the water with the aid of the N.F.S. It was about this time that, one dark night, the T.L. of Seagulls, E. S. Thomas ("Toccer Jr.") was mistaken by an officious policeman for a sailor and asked where his trousers

were. He was only saved from arrest by the production of his civilian Identity Card. With their launch once more on dry land the Seagulls did more camping in 1945 than they had done in the previous year. They held an Easter Camp at Hawksclough, a snowy week-end camp at Bradley Wood at the end of April and a Whitsuntide Camp at Stainforth. In the Summer of 1945 the Halifax Cine Club made a short film about Scouting in which Beavers and Seagulls appeared. During the Summer of 1945 Badgers lost their S.M. when Mr. Bell was moved to Norfolk. For their Summer Camp this year Badgers went to Stainforth. Seagulls and Beavers again held a joint Summer Camp, but this was not as successful as the previous year's had been. It was held at Sandsend and was spoiled partly by the squabbles between the Seagulls and the older members of Beavers and partly by bad weather. It was unfortunate that the rain should choose to begin while Beavers were camping away from the main site during an overnight wide-game. When they returned wet through, they found that the site was sodden. The rain continued to fall steadily for the next forty-eight hours, which were spent in a barn and the granary above it. In the circumstances it was decided to end the camp on the eighth day instead of waiting the intended ten days. The one bright spot of this camp was the news of the Japanese surrender and the knowledge that the War was over.

VI. POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION.

Anyone who imagined that the end of the war would immediately bring about a restoration of the conditions under which the Group had flourished before September, 1939, was doomed to disappointment. Of the pre-war Scouters many returned from the Services to face family and business commitments which precluded their taking an active part in the affairs of the Group. Moreover, conscription (now known as National Service) has continued to take young men away from the Group at the age of eighteen, just when they should have been entering the Rover Crew and beginning to help with the officering of the Sections. In addition, the Group, since it is attached to a Grammar School, has been affected by the increase in the numbers of those going on to a University. This has meant that many, if not a majority of the Group's Rovers have for three years been available during vacations only and even thereafter have often taken up employment out of Halifax. As a result of all this there have been few periods since the war when the Group has not suffered from a severe shortage of Scouters. In comparison with this the continued rationing of food was a minor disadvantage.

The first important post-war event was the re-union of the Junior and Senior Sections of Beavers into a single Section. The experiment thus brought to an end had not been entirely unsuccess-

ful. It had shown that Senior Scout activities, not generally available in an all-age troop, interested and benefitted the older boy and that, under proper conditions, the Junior Troop need not suffer from the loss of its older members. It had, however, also shown that the separation would only work in the long run where conditions were suitable, and that the first and most necessary condition was an adequate staff of Scouters for both Sections. Re-union in the circumstances of 1945 was essential for the good running of Beavers but the idea of separation was by no means abandoned.

The year 1946 began with the formation of a Parents' Association, which has ever since performed valuable (and usually unobtrusive) services in the Group's interests. Beavers, who had four King's Scouts at this time, held a rather wet Whitsuntide Camp at Southowram. In this year's Beadon Cup Competition Beavers were third. Beavers' summer Camp at Talybont, near Bangor, North Wales, was held jointly with the 63rd Portsmouth Troop, the camp being run by D. B. Atkin ("Duggie"), the S.M. of the 63rd and a former A.S.M. of Beavers. A rather unsociable troop from Watford also camped in the same field. This camp lasted for a whole fortnight and the organised activities were many and varied. The two highest mountains in Wales, Snowdon and Carnedd Llewellyn, were climbed, Aber Falls, Beaumaris Castle and Caernarvon were visited and a single issue of an unofficial camp newspaper, "The Uscha Tyke," was produced. On the whole the weather was good and the only thing which spoiled the camp for a few was the ravages of a mysterious illness—possibly a mild form of the Paratyphoid which was rife that Summer. Badgers appear to have held their Summer Camp near Filey. Unfortunately no account of this camp has survived. At the beginning of the Autumn Term of 1946 both Sections secured new S.M.'s. Badgers secured the services of L. F. T. Hull ("Fishy" for obvious reasons), a pre-war member of A Section; upon his return to Heath Beavers secured the services of Mr. Ben Young, who had been C.M. until his departure to the Forces in 1940. Unfortunately, Mr. Young left at the end of the same term to take up an appointment in London, so Beavers were once more without an S.M. At the beginning of this Autumn Term Beavers had six patrols, but one—Squirrels—was disbanded during the course of the Term. At this time Badgers had three patrols—Owls, Otters and Curlews (who shortly changed their name to Squirrels).

For the first Term of 1947 Beavers had to manage without an S.M., but in April Mr. George Littlefair, who had succeeded Mr. Young at the School, was persuaded to succeed him as S.M. of Beavers. One of Beavers' King Scouts attended this year's St. George's Day Parade at Windsor. In May "Da" Carlin, recently returned from driving tanks, was appointed A.R.S.L. and given the task of organising a Junior (Training Stage) Section of the Rover

Crew. At Whitsuntide Badgers camped at Peckett Well, while Beavers held an inter-patrol camping competition (won by Wolves) at a site found by one of the patrols at Norwood Green. The 7th June, 1947, was celebrated as the 350th Anniversary of the School and among the activities which took place on the afternoon of that day was a display by members of the Group. This display took the form of the establishment of a model camp on the School lawn. Everything went well until the very end when the sump was filled in before the fire had been put out. Consequently the supposedly doused embers had to be taken away with the rest of the kit on the trek cart—as a result a certain Scout wore for many years a hat with a neat hole burnt in the brim. About this time Beavers were reduced to four patrols by the disappearance of Bulldogs. For their Summer Camp Badgers went to Sandsend, where after clearing up the debris left on the site by a previous B.B. Camp, an excellent camp was held. This camp was favoured with much better weather than that which Beavers had experienced on the same site in 1945. This year Beavers tried out a new camp site near Aysgarth in Wensleydale. Some of the older members of the Section did not attend this camp as they were going to the World Jamboree in France, and those sixth-form members who did attend had to return home early as they had been in contact with a suspected polio case. This meant that the camp P.L.'s were rather inexperienced, but fortunately there were numerous Rovers present, so the camp did not suffer too severely from this inexperience. This camp was attended by Mr. W. R. Swale, the first Headmaster of the School to attend a Scout Summer Camp. At the beginning of the Autumn Term, 1947, a Senior Scout Section, drawing its members from both Badgers and Beavers, was formed. This Section, which was composed of two patrols—Scott's and Mallory's—had "Fishy" Hull as its S.M.(S) and Ron Fawkes ("Funf") as its A.S.M(S). For the time being "Fishy" continued to supervise the activities of Badgers. In September several members of the Group attended the White Rose Rally at Bingley and there met the Chief Scout (Lord Rowallan). It was in the same month that the Training Stage of the Rover Crew held an Inaugural Dinner at the Crown Hotel. This was the first of a series of Annual Dinners (from 1950 they were to be Group Dinners).

At the beginning of 1948 Badgers secured a new S.M. in R. L. Mitchell ("Micky"), a pre-war member of A Section and a founder member of C Section. This enabled "Fishy" to devote his full attention to the Seniors, a few of whom held a rather wet camp at Bradley Wood at Easter. Meanwhile the Scouters, some of the P.L.'s and Seconds of Beavers were hiking and camping in the vicinity of Ripon. At the end of April "Da" Carlin was appointed Deputy G.S.M. to take most of the work of running the Group from the shoulders of Bill Aske, who was now fully occupied by his

duties as an A.C.C. At the same time the Group Committee was formed, composed of representatives of the Group Council, the Parents' Association and the Sponsoring Authority. Plans were also made for the repair, redecoration and refurnishing of the Scout Hut and for the renewal of the Group's equipment. This year Beavers held their Summer Camp in good weather at West Tanfield, again being accompanied by the Headmaster. Badgers had an enjoyable, if rather wet, Summer Camp at Wray Castle. Two members of the Seniors visited Austria with an I.H.Q. party, while the rest of the Section camped at Askwith. The Rovers crossed the Channel to camp in France, their transport being the new collapsible trek-cart. On the 18th September the Scout Hut was reopened by "Doc" Browning after its renovation by the Rovers and Seniors. At the beginning of the Autumn Term Badgers formed a fourth patrol—Woodpigeons. By this time Squirrels had changed their name to Peewits. On the 6th November the first of a more or less regular series of Group Plots was held at Kensington. On the following day the Rovers and Seniors, with some help from the Juniors, built a bridge across the Ryburn at Kebroyd in response to a challenge from the Parents' Association, their reward being a free tea and social at the beginning of 1949.

The Year 1949 began with the resignation through ill-health of "Da" Carlin, who later returned to active Scouting for a time, becoming A.D.C. Seniors. He was succeeded as D/G.S.M. by Peter Walker and as A.R.S.L. by N. Kidd ("Fred"), who had both been members of the pre-war Sea Scout Patrol. At the beginning of the year the Group was chiefly concerned with rehearsals for a Gang Show, which was presented in March and made £36 profit. At the end of March "Micky" Mitchell resigned as S.M. of Badgers upon leaving Halifax. He was succeeded by George Cobb, a former member of Beavers and Seagulls, who had recently returned from the Navy. At Easter two of Badgers' patrols held a short camp. In May Bill Aske resigned as G.S.M., being succeeded by Peter Walker. Bill was made a permanent Honorary Member of the Group Council in recognition of his long and devoted service to the Group. At Whitsuntide the Rovers held an enjoyable camp at Slaidburn. In July the first Group Open Day was held at Kensington. This has since become a more or less annual event, although the weather has on occasions enforced a change of venue. In this year's L.A. Camping Competition, Badgers took first place and Beavers were fourth. Later in the Summer, Badgers also won the Beadon Cup—the first time that it had been won by the 2nd Halifax (not counting Beavers' successes in the war-time Field Day Competitions). Beavers also put up an excellent performance to come second by half a mark. Badgers held their Summer Camp at West Tanfield. An enjoyable time was had by all, despite the wasp menace and a violent thunderstorm which made the river rise four

feet in a night, making swimming impossible for the rest of the camp. Activities included an overnight wide-game and an obstacle relay race which made use of the aerial ropeway. For their Summer Camp Beavers visited Burnsall. The weather was excellent and the food was good, so everyone had an enjoyable time. The Seniors did not hold a Summer Camp of their own, but two members went to assist with the running of Badgers' Camp. Meanwhile the Section's first King's Scout went to Finland with an I.H.Q. party. By the end of the year the Section had three King's Scouts.

VII. THE FIFTIES.

The end of 1949 had been mainly occupied with rehearsals for another Gang Show. This was produced in January, 1950, as "Scoutantics 1950." Although it was more ambitious and contained better material, it was not so successful financially as the 1949 Gang Show. At the beginning of 1950 the Seniors secured their own H.Q. when they rented the stone hut at Salterhebble which had been the H.Q. of the Sea Scouts before the war. Much time was spent in renovating this hut. At Easter four members of the Section spent a week on board a yacht on the Norfolk Broads. The Section's three King's Scouts attended the St. George's Day Parade at Windsor. Shortly afterwards a fourth member of the Section became a King's Scout. During the early part of 1950 a fifth patrol—Squirrels—was formed in Badgers. In May it was proposed that a history of the Group should be produced. Some steps were taken to collect material for such a history, but nothing was written. The 1950 Camping Season was rather a wet one, but nevertheless a number of week-end camps were held by both Beavers and Badgers at Peckett Well and Hawksclough. For their Whitsuntide Camp the Seniors went to Addingham, near Ilkley. In the L.A. Camping Competition Badgers were second and Beavers were again fourth. This year's Summer Camp was for all the Group and was held at the I.H.Q. site at Great Towers, Windermere, camping being by patrols on different sites on the heavily wooded estate. The distance between the sites, the inexperience of the P.L.'s and the rather poor weather combined to make this a not very successful camp, although there were many enjoyable moments.

By the beginning of 1951 the Rovers were experiencing a considerable shortage of active members due to the absence of many members at University or on National Service. Of the members who remained, almost all were also warranted Scouters. In March "Fred" Kidd resigned as A.R.S.L. as he was now working out of town. Shortly afterwards the Rovers sank slowly into a state of almost complete inactivity.

It was during the early part of 1951 that two of the Group's Scouters, George Cobb and Ron Fawkes, were presented with their

Wood Badges. During the first half of this year Badgers were again reduced to four patrols, Squirrels being disbanded. However, the Section maintained its high standards, four First Class Badges being gained during the year. This year the L.A. Camping Competition was run on different lines, only genuine patrols being permitted to compete. The Otter Patrol of Badgers did quite well to finish third. Both Junior Sections held a number of week-end camps during the Summer. At Whitsuntide the Seniors held a hike-camp in Wharfedale. Due to a shortage of Scouters this year's Summer Camp had once again to be for the whole Group. It was held at Burnsall in quite good weather. Hikes were held to Simon's Seat and other places and entertainment was largely provided by the river and by an aerial ropeway, one of the steepest and fastest remembered. In September George Cobb resigned as S.M. of Badgers on leaving Halifax. Since no successor was forthcoming and since three A.S.M.'s had also left the Group for various reasons at about the same time, the Group's Scouter strength was reduced to one G.S.M., one S.M.(S.), one S.M. and two A.S.M.'s. For a term the two Junior Sections continued their separate existence, but when it became obvious that the shortage of Scouters could not be remedied it was decided to amalgamate Badgers and Beavers.

The first meeting of the combined Troop was held on 12th January, 1952. The S.M. was George Littlefair and there were five patrols—Owls, Foxes, Woodpigeons, Otters and Peewits. Meanwhile the Seniors under "Fishy" continued to flourish, membership rising to seventeen. At this time the Seniors were engaged upon the construction of a canoe. Peckett Well and Mytholmroyd continued to be the main week-end camp sites. The Junior Troop was fourth in this year's Beadon Cup Competition. Summer Camp was held at West Tanfield. The weather was very good, only one day being spoiled by rain, and the river and the aerial ropeway were as usual the main attractions. After this camp George Littlefair resigned as S.M. and was succeeded by Gordon Bentley ("Nipper," etc., etc), a former A.S.M. of Beavers, who had just returned permanently to Halifax after a spell of travelling about the country on business.

During 1953 the Seniors purchased a second-hand collapsible canoe, in which they explored the Salterhebble section of the British Waterways. This year was, of course, the year of the Coronation and members of the Group participated both in the torchlight procession on the evening of the Coronation itself and in the L.A.'s Coronation Camp held in Shibden Park a week later. At Whitsuntide there was no Troop camp, but three patrol camps were held at Peckett Well, Shibden and Norwood Green. The Seniors held their Whitsuntide Camp in the Lyttondale valley, above Kilmsey. It was at this camp that they had their first taste of caving. Summer Camp this year was held at Wray Castle. Unfortunately the weather was

rather wet, but this apart, the camp was a good one. Two boats were hired for the week and provided much enjoyment, although the oars seemed rather fragile and there was some difficulty in obtaining a temporary mast. At the end of this Summer "Fishy" resigned as S.M.(S.), being succeeded by "Micky" Mitchell, who had recently returned once more to Halifax. At about the same time the lease on the hut at Salterhebble was terminated and the building razed to the ground by British Waterways. Under "Micky" and their new A.S.M. (S), John Iredale ("Pia"), the Seniors really began to "Look Wide." In September a midnight hike was held, the climax of which was sleeping in a cave near Walshaw; in October a week-end camp was held at Bradley Wood; in the last few days of December a hiking and caving expedition was organised with its base in a hut at Ribblehead.

At the beginning of 1954 John Iredale was presented with his Wood Badge. The 1954 census revealed that the Junior Troop had gained more proficiency badges during the year 1953-54 than any other troop in Halifax. At about this time the Group purchased a small printing press and went into the printing business in order to raise funds. At Easter the Seniors went on a six-day trek-cart expedition in the Yorkshire Dales. In order to silence certain grumbler at L.A. Meetings the Group this year entered a team for the Scouts Sports, the entry being so successful that both the Junior and the Senior Cups were won. By now the Seniors were badly bitten by the spelaeological bug and at both Whitsuntide and Wakes Week expeditions to the underworld were organised. In June three of the Group's Scouters attended a County Week-End Camp at the Blackhills Campsite, near Bingley, and there met the Deputy Chief (Sir Rob Lockhart). The Troop Summer Camp was held this year at West Tanfield. Unfortunately it had rained heavily for several weeks previously (on the way there the lorry had to negotiate flooded roads in some places) and the usual camp-site was completely waterlogged. An alternative site was found, however, in the field at the top of the hill, just above the farm. This field was comparatively dry, so after the first night, which was spent in a barn by all but two of the braver (or more foolish?) Scouters, a normal camp was established. The change of site meant that for once there was no aerial ropeway, while the height of the river prevented swimming until the very end of the camp. As usual the wasps were a menace. Fortunately the weather improved once the camp was set up and the camp proved very enjoyable. This Summer the Junior Section of the Rover Crew, which had been moribund for some years, was revived under the leadership of E. H. Stafford ("Ted"), an A.S.M. of the Troop in the Thirties. Accepting the fact that most of its members were either at University or attending night school, the Crew decided to restrict most of its activities to vacation time. In November the Seniors lost both their Scouters,

"Micky" once again leaving Halifax and John Iredale being called up for his National Service. Fortunately George Cobb had recently returned to Halifax, so he took over as S.M.(S). The Seniors spent the last few days of the year Youth Hostelling in the Dales.

The year 1955 began with the Troop reduced to four patrols—Owls being discontinued. In February the Seniors gained their first Queen's Scout for five years, another success being achieved later in the year. The Seniors still maintained their interest in pot-holes, Whitsuntide being spent in exploring Alum Pot and its neighbours. During the year the Junior Troop gained three First-Class Badges and came second in the L.A. Camping Competition. During the Summer the Rovers completed the canoe which had been begun by the Seniors some years before and also built another one. The first of these and the collapsible canoe were taken to the Group Summer Camp at Grinton, in Swaledale, where they were much used. The weather at this camp was very hot, many people suffering from sunburn, and swimming was an extremely popular activity. Attempts to build the traditional aerial ropeway were unsuccessful, although a new way of testing the resilience of Boy Scouts was invented in the process of trying. One of the Group's Queen's Scouts was chosen to attend this year's World Jamboree, held at Niagara, Canada. In September it was decided to merge the Junior and Senior Sections of the Group, the Seniors continuing, however, to carry out advanced Scouting activities as a separate patrol.

At the beginning of 1956, an increase in the number of available Scouters made it possible to end the temporary expedient of having only a single Troop and Badgers and Beavers were re-formed as separate Sections. Badgers, composed of the Otter and Peewit Patrols of the old Troop, had George Cobb as S.M.; Beavers, composed of the Fox and Woodpigeon Patrols of the old Troop, had Gordon Bentley as S.M. Badgers immediately formed a third patrol—Owls; Beavers also added a third patrol—Kingfishers. At Easter several of the senior members of the two Sections went hike-camping and pot-holing in the Three Peaks region. This year the newly re-formed Badgers put up a very creditable performance when they came first in the Beadon Cup Competition. Summer Camp was held jointly by the two Sections at Wray Castle; the customary two boats were hired for the duration of the camp. Games in, on and with water were extremely popular. Needless to say, a considerable amount of rain fell during the camp. Towards the end of the year A.S.M. Peter Allatt was presented with his Wood Badge, the fourth to be gained by Scouters of the Group since the War. The last few days of the year again found the Senior members of the two Sections hiking and pot-holing in the Three Peaks region, this time with their base at the Ribblehead Hut.

The recent return of John Iredale from his National Service enabled the Seniors to be re-formed as a separate Section under his leadership in January, 1957. This Section started with a strength of nine, divided into two patrols—Gibson and Mitchell. The 22nd February, 1957, was the Centenary of the birth of B.P. and on that date members of the Group joined with the rest of the Local Association and with the Girl Guides of Halifax in a Thanksgiving Service at the Parish Church. In March Peter Walker retired after eight years of devoted service as G.S.M. He was subsequently appointed Den Warden. He was succeeded as G.S.M. by Gordon Bentley; Chris Ambler became S.M. of Beavers. At Easter the Seniors again held a hike-camp in the Three Peaks region. One of Beavers' patrols also held an Easter Camp at Peckett Well. In May three of the Senior Scouts gained their Queen's Scout Badges. In June the Group and P.M.H.S. Guides organised a barbecue at the Youth Fair in aid of the P. N. Whitley Memorial Fund. At Whitsuntide the Seniors and some of the Rovers went pot-holing in the Gaping Ghyll system of caves. The Summer Camp for the Junior Sections was held at West Tanfield. Most of the Seniors and many of the Rovers succeeding in attending this year's Jubilee Jamboree at Sutton Park in some capacity or other. At the Group Open Day on 21st September, the Group was presented with a fine new Group Flag by the Parents' Association. In October the Seniors spent a long week-end hiking and caving in Derbyshire.

The beginning of 1958 saw the Seniors' strength up to twenty-two and a third patrol—Cook—was formed. The Seniors held two week-end camps at Overwood during the first two months of the year. At the second of these snowy conditions were experienced. At Half Term one party of Seniors held a pot-holing expedition with the Ribblehead Hut as its base, while another party set out to hike to Bolton Abbey, but was beaten by the very inclement weather when it had reached Goose Eye and spent two days in an empty cottage there before returning home. At Easter the Seniors held a hike-camp in the Lake District, during the course of which Hellvellyn was climbed and experiment was made with a home-made polythene tent. At the end of the hike some members of the party spent a couple of days at Wray Castle, hiring a boat for that time. Thanks to the hiring of this boat and the alertness of the Seniors' T.L., it was possible to save a yachtsman and his wife from drowning in Lake Windermere after their dinghy had capsized in rough weather. By about this time three more of the Seniors had gained their Queen's Scout Badges, bringing the number in the Section up to six, the greatest number in the Group for a considerable number of years. Of these six, four attended this year's St. George's Day Parade at Windsor. At Whitsuntide the Seniors again visited Gaping Ghyll. This visit was comparatively uneventful until the last day when an accident with some flash powder resulted in two

members receiving hand and arm injuries and being rushed to hospital at Lancaster, where one of them was detained for a few days. This left insufficient man-power to get the trek-cart from the camp to the station (in any event the trek-cart had developed a minor fault which made pushing it very difficult), consequently it was temporarily abandoned. When a van subsequently went to fetch it, the run of bad luck continued, the crankshaft of the van breaking. This year's Summer Camp was held at Powerscourt Demisne, Enniskerry, Ireland. The site was already fairly sodden when the campers arrived and subsequent rain and a rapidly rising river resulted in a hurried evacuation of the site in the middle of one night half-way through the camp. The last few days were spent in some huts on higher ground some two miles away. During the course of the camp Dublin was visited and various dutiable goods were purchased and brought home without having duty paid on them (although not, let it be said, without being declared). Meanwhile some of the Seniors were even further afield in Denmark and Austria. In September the Seniors' numbers were considerably reduced by the departure of some ten members to the Rovers. The reduction in numbers did not, however, lead to any reduction in the Seniors' activities. At Half Term a party hiked in the Dales, staying in Youth Hostels. The last few days of the year were spent in the traditional way at the Ribblehead Hut, although this year the main activity was not pot-holing but the ascent of the Three Peaks.

So we come to 1959, the Group's Jubilee Year. This began rather sadly with the announcement by George Cobb of his intention of retiring from his post as S.M. of Badgers at the end of March, thus ending twenty years of active Scouting with the Group. He will be missed by Badgers, for under his guidance they have won the Beadon Cup twice and the L.A. Camping Competition once.

THE JUBILEE DINNER.

At 8 p.m. on Friday, 20th March, 1959, sixty-nine members, past members and friends of the Group, sat down to dinner in the White Swan Hotel, Halifax. The reason for this gathering was the celebration of the Group's Fiftieth Anniversary. After an excellent meal, which consisted of Fresh Shrimp Cocktail, Cream of Celery Soup, Roast Norfolk Turkey and trimmings, Maple Sundae or Cheese and Biscuits and Coffee, the serious business of the evening commenced. After the Loyal Toast had been drunk, the G.S.M., who was in the chair, read a number of letters from past members of the Group who, although unable to be present in person for various reasons (in several cases the distance between Halifax and South Africa, Australia, etc., was the obstacle), were nevertheless present in spirit and wished the Group every success in the

future. Among these was a Fiftieth Anniversary Card from "Doc" Browning, who was unable to attend on account of ill-health, and a letter from A. D. Phoenix, similarly prevented from attending, paying an especial tribute to "Doc" for all that he had done for the Group in the Twenties. "Gerry" Denham, the District Commissioner, then conveyed to the Group the congratulations of all the Scouts in Halifax. He was followed by Mr. J. Foster Beaver, Jnr., the County Commissioner, who first read a letter of congratulation from the Chief Scout, Lord Rowallan (see page 29), and then went on to add the congratulations of the 11,656 Scouts in the County. He said that the 2nd Halifax was only the third Group in the County to celebrate its Jubilee.

The first of the main speakers was R. J. H. Collinson, one of the first Patrol Leaders of B Section (now Beavers) and a famous Log Writer, who proposed the toast of "The School." After suggesting several respects in which Heath, as a school, was unique, he dwelt on the rather more serious topic of the controversy between the advocates of "closed" and "open" Groups. He thought that, at least in the case of the 2nd Halifax, the connection with the School had been extremely beneficial because it had given the members of the Group a community of interest which it would have been difficult to inspire in an "open" Group. In conclusion he stated that although it was just possible that the School could have continued to exist without the Group, the Group as we know it could not have existed without the School. Responding to the toast, the Headmaster, W. R. Swale, said that his active connection with the Group was very largely confined to performing three tests—signing applications for Scouters' Warrants, writing letters to the Group complaining of the misdeeds of its members and writing letters to other people in an attempt to explain away those misdeeds. Nevertheless, his twelve years' connection with the Group had been a happy one.

The toast of "The Movement" was proposed by Ray Greenwood, a founder member of the Group and probably the first King's Scout in Halifax. He commenced his modest speech by stating that he thought that the Jubilee celebrations were being held one or possibly two years too late. He described how his chance purchase of "Scouting for Boys" had led him and a few friends to form a Boy Scout Patrol, the officers—Patrol Leader, Corporal, Cook and Bugler—being chosen by lot. By this method Sir Lionel Fox had become the Group's first P.L. and Ray Greenwood himself its first Corporal. The early appearances of the Patrol in uniform excited considerable attention, most of it of an unwelcome nature. Finding that people would not take them seriously, they decided that this might be remedied if they could find an adult to act as Scoutmaster. They approached Hugh Seaton, the youngest member of the School Staff, and he consented to accept the post on

condition that he did not have to wear uniform. From that time on the Troop began to prosper. In those days Scouting was much more military than it is today, but with the 1914-18 War just around the corner this was not such a bad thing. Mr. Greenwood said that he had found the experience gained at Scout camps of great value during his own war service. Finally he paid tribute to the great work which the Scout Movement was doing both in Halifax and elsewhere.

Responding to the toast, H. Lloyd Mitchell, the Assistant County Commissioner for Rovers, gave some figures for the strength of the Scout Movement both in this country and throughout the world. These showed that the movement was as strong now as it had ever been. Scouting still had an important part to play in the life of this country and the Group should look to the future, for the first fifty years were only a beginning. Finally he urged everyone present to re-examine his own life to see whether he was living up to the Scout Law and Promise.

The toast of "The Group" was proposed by D. J. D. Smith, who was Headmaster of the School from 1935 to 1946. He recalled the period of expansion which had fallen within his time at Heath, recounted some of the successes of the Group and remembered some of the personalities who had been connected with it, although he admitted that he was unable to connect names and faces with some of the nicknames which appeared in the reports in "The Heathen," which he had been re-reading recently in order to recreate the correct atmosphere. He read out verses from a poem written, while still a Wolf Cub, by one of the other main speakers.

Responses to this toast were made by all the previous G.S.M.'s who were present. The first to speak was Bill Aske, who had not realised until the dinner started that he was expected to do so. Notwithstanding his lack of prepared and ordered notes, he produced a series of most interesting and amusing reminiscences. He recalled the period when the 2nd Halifax monopolised the L.A. Camping Competition for so many years that the examiners imposed a handicap of ten marks. Despite this handicap the 2nd continued to win the competition. He also recalled the first camp which the Rover Crew held and another camp at which a certain person forgot to puncture a tin of peas before heating it, with the inevitable result—it exploded, scattering peas everywhere. He was followed by "Da" Carlin, who proceeded to point out a series of lessons which he had learned from his Scouting experiences—that enthusiasm without control is not sufficient; that it is no use being a genius if no one recognises it; and that headmasters are human.

Following him, Peter Walker struck a more serious note with his plea for the maintenance of the high standards which B.P. had

bequeathed to Scouting. People who said that "Scouting for Boys" was out of date might just as well say that the Bible was out of date. It was not the Book which was out of date, but they who had not the mental capacity to translate it into present day idioms. Scouting should apply itself in the first place to those boys who appreciated it and enjoyed it. If a Scouter was not the type to reform Teddy Boys, then it was a waste of time for him to try. Scouting was Scouting and would not benefit from any attempt to add to it attractions like those of other youth organisations. Concluding the evening's speeches, the present G.S.M., Gordon Bentley, gave three reasons for the success of the Group during the fifty years of its existence. These were the good relations which existed between the Group and the Local Association, the close link between Group and School and the constant interest of old members of the Group, who passed down their example from generation to generation.

The Boy Scouts Association,

25 Buckingham Palace Road,
London, S.W.1.,

20th March, 1959.

In 1957 we had wonderful celebrations of the Jubilee of Brownsea Island and the birth of Scouting. Now it is the 2nd Halifax (Heath Grammar School) Group's turn to celebrate your Jubilee; and what a great occasion it will be. Fifty years of making men ready to face up to life, to set standards which others will follow.

A time to look back with pride and gratitude to those who started the Troop, to look forward to the future when Scouting and all it stands for will be more needed than ever.

The first fifty years are past and I want you to remember Lady B.P.'s text at the close of J.I.M., "My end is only my beginning."

God bless you all and grant you success in your task.

ROWALLAN,
Chief Scout.

APPENDIX : LOG BOOKS SURVIVING.

Troop Log : from 1/10/22 to the end of 1924.

Troop Log : from 31/5/30 to Summer Camp, 1930.

Troop (later A Section) Log : from 27/4/31 to 11/2/38.

A Section Log : from 25/3/38 to 10/2/39.

A Section Log : from 17/10/41 to 8/12/44.

Badgers Log : from 20/9/46 to 21/3/50.

Badgers (later Combined Troop) Log : from 18/4/50 to 10/12/52.

Badgers Log : from 3/2/56 to 25/5/56.

B Section Log, Vol. I.: from 27/1/36 to Summer Camp, 1936.

B Section Log, Vol. II.: from 8/3/38 to 14/2/39.

B Section Log, Vol. III.: from 21/2/39 to 8/1/42.

Beavers Log, Vol. IV.: all but a few loose pages from this have disappeared.

Beavers Log, Vol. V.: from 23/12/42 to 15/11/45.

Beavers Log, Vol. VI.: from 22/11/45 to 18/6/50.

Beavers Log : from 10/1/56—still in progress.

Beavers, Bulldog Patrol Log : from 11/5/44 to 6/9/44.

D Section Log : from 22/11/39 to 30/5/40.

Combined Troop Log : from 12/12/52 to 25/2/54.

Combined Troop Log : from 5/3/54 to 21/12/55.

Senior Sea Scout Log : from 27/11/37 to 3/9/39.

War Service Patrol (later Beavers' Senior Sea Scout Section)Log : from 29/12/42 to 10/8/45.

Senior Scout Log : from 3/9/53 to 24/3/55.

Senior Scout Log : from 16/12/56 to 31/12/58.

Rover Log : from 6/7/47 to 22/4/51.