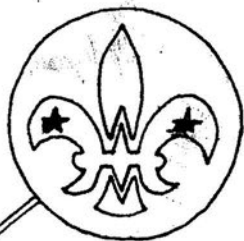
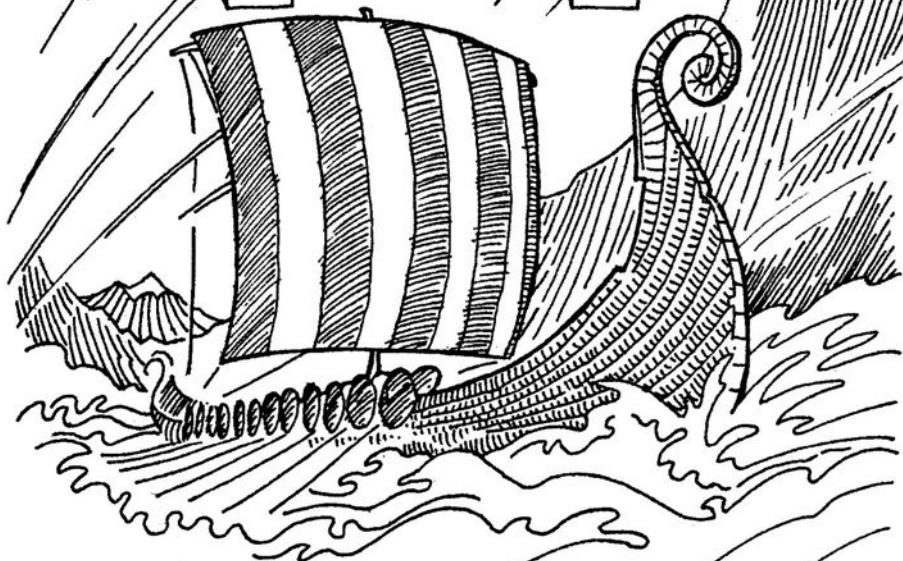


# VENTURE



# 44



NUMBER 49



VENTURE 44. The magazine of the 44th Gloucester  
(Sir Thomas Rich's School) Venture Scout Unit

NUMBER 49

NORWAY SPECIAL EDITION

DEC 1983

EDITOR

Yosh Cowmeadow.

The epic exploits of the twelve man Norway expedition are recorded in this magazine, with articles from almost all those who took part. There were many aspects to our stay ranging from the (semi-) working "holidays" at Nansen International Children Centres to scaling the peaks of Jotunheimen and sightseeing in and around the beautiful city of Oslo, all of which are reflected.

One part of the expedition not dwelt on is the North Sea crossings, the journey there being for some people a high spot of the holiday! The return trip was a very different story, though, with the sea making a few of us suffer after we had left the shelter of the coast.

The trip to Oslo on a rest day from the centres was a very enjoyable break for all of us. The city itself was so attractive, almost blending into the surrounding countryside that the sight-seeing was more enjoyable than a lot of us expected. This included a look at the imposing Olympic ski jump at Holmenkollen, which made me glad that I wasn't a ski-jumper! Visits were made to the Frogner Park where we marvelled at the sculptures of Gustav Vigeland, and to Nansen's ship "Fram". After this we saw an absorbing exhibition charting the voyages of Thor Heyerdhal on "Kon-tiki" and "Ra" before an all too brief excursion to the city centre. But I digress, let us hear from some other members of the party....

Y.C.

(Front cover design; Dave Seed,  
Photos, Bri Symcox and F.H.)

Monday 25th July (From the diary of Phil Brown, A.V.S.L.)

The party assembled about midday: In alphabetical order:-

Mark Collins  
 Yosha Cowmeadow  
 Simon Hawkins  
 Brian Herbert  
 David Seed  
 Tim Smith  
 Paddy Smith  
 Brian Symcox  
 Simon Williams  
 David Wilson

The V.S.L. and myself completing the motley crew, Twelve good men and true! With kit packed high and the suspension groaning in protest, our trusty Bedford steed sallied forth (or was it fifth?) on our epic adventure..

P.J.B.

### THE OUTWARD JOURNEY

This was my first expedition with the 44th. Were all the stories my brother told true? I would soon find out. The hut was a hive of inactivity when I arrived on a wet morning with a cold wind blowing. Kit was stowed in and on the Bedford and into Tav's car.

The trip to Harwich was marred only by the van break -ing down near Colchester, but eventually we got there. An R.A.C. mechanic and the disappearance of two members on mysterious business and an officious customs man held up our embarkation, but at last we were on board.

The Swedish ship was full of blue-eyed blondes, and as the sea was smooth, the voyage was enjoyed by all. It was dark when we arrived in Goteberg, where we split in to two groups - the young inexperienced ones with the V. S.L., and the old experienced men of the world with the A.V.S.L. who set off for the station to catch the night train to Oslo en route to Breivold

M.C.



Frogner Park, Oslo

Going up



Fannar&ki

### A PLACE IN THE COUNTRY

After leaving Gothenborg at 10 o'clock we proceeded to drive up through Sweden into Norway. At 1 o'clock the V.S.L. decided to have a kip, and so we all got down to some serious sleeping. Around 3 o'clock, it started to rain, and those outside quickly piled back into the van and we started on the road again. We arrived at the farm, at Krattebøl at 8 a.m. and had a typical Norwegian meal for breakfast followed by a look around, when we were told what we were expected to do. The rest of the day was spent doing nothing except eating and sleeping! When it was time to kip, the V.S.L. reminded us that we had to get up early as Yosh and Bri had to help ferry some of the children across the lake, and the rest of us had to start doing some work.

The next we knew was Margaret coming up the path towards the barn and shouting, "Frank, are you all right, it's 10 o'clock!" The VSL promptly jumped up and ordered everyone to do the same, and work finally started.

We spent the day collecting birch leaves, used as fodder for the animals in the winter. In the following days many other jobs were done, with chopping wood being our main occupation, and Bri taking photos. He was never seen without his camera, and it was rumoured that he even took it to bed.

One day was spent digging a hole which was then made into a duck pond, although we did not see it in use, as there were no ducks at the time. Working in our "Paddle81" T-shirts, this project was quickly christened "Puddle 83"

P.S.

\* Krattebøl, the farm used by N.I.C.C. is situated deep in rural Norway in a district called Nord Odal in Hedemark fylke (county). It is about 60 miles NE of Oslo near the Swedish border.

IMPRESSIONS OF BREIVOLD

Breivold is one of the Nansen International Centres situated about 20 miles south of Oslo, beside a fjord. It was here that six of us, led by Phil Brown spent an exhausting but very happy week.

Our main reason for coming to the centre was to give some muscle and in some cases ingenuity for numerous tasks, the first of which was to clear a rather large vegetable patch which had become overgrown. Many of the helpers had halfheartedly started work on it but finding it too daunting had given it up, so you can imagine how popular we were when, in true venture scout spirit, we sallied forth and cleared it within a couple of days. It was quite hard work, hence frequent 'Saft' breaks were taken. Saft is the cheapest fruit drink in Norway - but remarkably refreshing when working in the midday sun.

Many other jobs were undertaken, including the task of constructing a pig-pen for the resident pig, which is called affectionately M\*gg\*e Th\*tch\*r - this shows something about the state of Anglo-Norwegian relations! One of our hardest jobs was to excavate the floor of one of the cellars, quite a difficult job as a large portion of it was solid rock - Gneiss work...

One day Kjell, the leader at the centre, announced that a consignment of rabbits was arriving the following day, and would we please construct a hutch and run. So, with our usual reserved enthusiasm, we started building said hutch. Unfortunately Tim and myself had to make an unavoidable trip to Oslo to pick up a minibus, so we did not witness the hard work which was claimed to have been done. On our return that evening Kjell went to inspect the hutch and said yes, it was very nice but it wouldn't stand up to the Norwegian winter - the wrong wood had been used. As a result Tim and I duly demolished the offending structure and started work on Mark II, and by the assistance of the other disillusioned craftsmen we



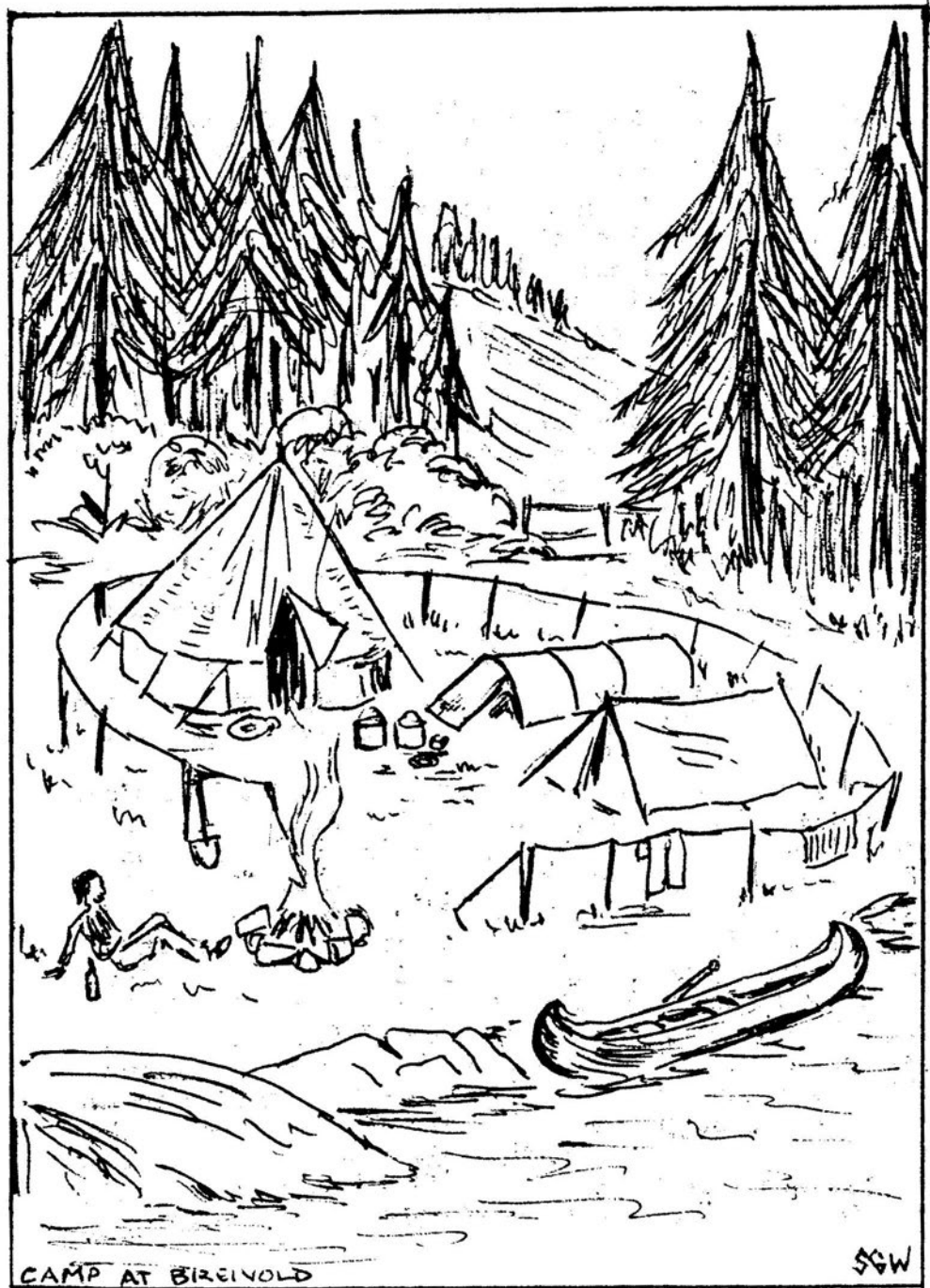
created a fine sample of British workmanship, Eventually the rabbits arrived from Krattebøl in a Volkswagon driven by the V.S.L. We learned that the Bedford was out of action, but that is another story.

Anyway, enough of the pigs and bunnies. Life at the centre was not all hard work, far from it. Many pleasant evenings were spent around the campfire, passing the Brigg ( a practically alcohol free beer which only had an effect on Paddy - making his hair curl), and swapping stories whilst we watched some of the most beautiful sun sets I have ever seen across the fjord. Plenty of use was made of the centre's canoes, especially by Dave and Pad when they learned of a nude bathing beach further down the fjord!

One afternoon the entire company set off - three to a canoe with a view to paddling up the fjord onto Oslo fjord some four miles away. 'Big Phil' only agreed to come on the condition that he was a passenger only, due to the intense pain from his sunburn. Phil will make a good indian chief but I hope he loses some weight if I have to paddle him anywhere again, and Mark will doubtless agree with this!

On arriving back at the centre I immediately noticed there seemed to be children everywhere. This was hardly surprising as the main object of the Children's Centre is to provide a sort of adventure holiday for problem children. At the time of our visit there was a group of 'hyperactive' kids in residence. Although only eight or nine years old there were some memorable personalities among them. One that sticks in my mind was a little lad called Øve, known to us as "Hoover", who was into Atom bombs, and anything electrical, and also very much into fighting venture scouts, who apparently look like trolls.

We did most of our own cooking with food provided by Peggy, the resident cook. The only real hazard was the goat, who is partial to the odd 'fisk-ball', and thought nothing of trying to sit on our laps- a rather friendly



CAMP AT BIREVOLD

SSW

All in all our stay at the centre was immensely good fun, and generally improved by the presence of Annikin and Karen, two of the helpers. I personally found my stay very rewarding, which is after all, one of the aims of venture scouting.

S.G.W.

### KRATTEBØI REVISITED

The only fools, sorry, Venture Scouts remaining from the last Norway expedition were the V.S.L., Phil and myself. Very little had changed at Krattebøl since my last visit, we still played games on Ernest's porch in our hour tea breaks during the national Norwegian past time of sawing and splitting logs in readiness for those long winters.

After an initial hiccup - the malfunctioning of the -at most trusted and respected member of the party, the Bedford, we bumpily made our way to Krattebøl from NICC Breivold. We arrived there to the usual goggle-eyed welcome from seemingly hundreds of kids surrounding the van. There was a choice of accomodation ranging from the rat infested barn - it was wasps this year not rats - to the gloomy World War two tent with numerous strategically placed holes. As the barn was occupied and the weather fine, we chose the tent; We being Bri H., Simon W., Mark C., Simon H. and myself.

The days were spent with the younger members of the party splitting wood and generally working hard with the exception of Simon Williams who obviously misread orders for the day and was caught trying to split his leg with the wedge. Mark was also seen disappearing into the big house at regular intervals, the suspected haunt of some foreign females, to practise his one Norwegian word.

Most evenings were spent in true 44th tradition in playing cards, consuming Brigg, and participating in a ritual of which Mark often made the comment "Oh horrible"

but it certainly kept the mosquitoes away. On the last night the other group appeared, having escaped from the evil slave master and overseer, Phil. That night a party was held in the big house. This was very nice but the second course of singing was a bit hard to swallow. We drummed up enough enthusiasm for several renditions of "Green grow the rushes O" and "Cockles and Mussels", but the "House of the Rising sun" left a bit to be desired! A most entertaining duet was provided by Simon H and the V.S.L. on guitar and harmonica respectively.

The next morning all traces of Venture Scouts were removed from Krattebøl as we split again into two groups and set off for the mountains for the real holiday(?).

T.S

#### THE VENTURE 44 GUIDE TO TRAVEL IN NORWAY...

- 1) Divide party into two groups, one with F.H., one with P.J.B.
- 2) Deliver group II to nearby railway station with as much excess baggage as possible.
- 3) Load van, avoid people sitting on ice axes, crampons, cartons of sour milk.
- 4) Discuss plans; typical discussion

F.H. "Of course all the seats wont be booked on that train, well they probably wont be."

P.B. "Where are we actually going to?"

F.H. "Otta on the train, then bus to Lom"

P.B. "What time is the bus"

F.H. "Dont know, but there is bound to be one. If not I'll drop my lot off at Lom and come back for you its only about 20 miles"(actual distance is 40 m)

P.B. "What if the van breaks down again."

F.H. "Dunno.... Look if we are not in Lom by say 10pm phone Krattebøl"

P.B. "What is the number"

F.H. "Dunno... anyway, have a good journey...."



Labouring at Breivold



Reindeer on ice



# Nansen International Children's Centre

Nansen International Children's Centre is a non-political, voluntary, humanitarian organization founded in 1969 by Ernest Davies.

We have a very simple worded philosophy - "to help children in need" Simple, but difficult to fulfill without the help of financial and practical assistance from people who care and wish to be related to such a need. There are no simple solutions to their need only conscious choices of involvement.

## NANSEN INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S CENTRE'S PROJECTS

### SHORT STAY HOME

for unaccompanied refugee children/youth from Viet Nam (boat people) living in Norway. The object is to give them a home from which they can pursue their education in the Norwegian language and culture. Periods of 2 years.



## RECREATIONAL EDUCATION

This project started in 1977 is planned to give immigrant children/youth in Norway the opportunity to be in a residential milieu as a school class with their teacher for one week periods. Seasonal recreational activities, hobbies, nature study and leisure time activities are programmed to introduce the children/youth to the relevant activities of Norwegian children. It is the fervent hope that this may lead to some form of integration through recreation. This project continues for 30 weeks of a year.

## SUMMER PROJECT

Holiday periods of adventurous activities are organised to give the children a wide experience of open air pursuits, farm and animal care. Children in care, from Norway and the United Kingdom, immigrant and refugee children living in Norway participate in this project. The children stay at NICC for 3 to 4 weeks.

## FOURTH WORLD PROJECT

These children come from the lowest level of society where the lack of culture, recognized work, adequate income, health care and political power constitutes a series of inextricably interwoven hardships. NICC offers these children holiday periods and other forms of education.



## INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY HELP

Professional and student personnel from all over the world come to NICC and give their time, energy and skills to the children.

## "FRIENDS"

### OF THE CHILDREN AT NICC

An invitation is extended to you to be a "FRIEND" of NICC.

Further information on the children's projects, voluntary work at the Centre and membership to the "Friends" may be obtained on request from:

## NICC

Krattebøl, 2120 Sagstua - NORWAY  
Tel. Nord Odal (066 66100 line 2043).



«Barnet skal ha full anledning til lek og atspredelse, som bør fremme de samme formål som undervisningen. Samfunnet og myndighetene skal søke å fremme utførelsen av denne rettighet.»

Prinsipp 7 i De Forenede Nasjoners Erklæring om Barnets rettigheter



Project started in the International Year of the Child 1979.





Workers at  
Krattebøl



Mountain farm

THREE MEN IN A BOAT

Well, it is not surprising that we overslept after the events of the previous 48 hours, but it came as a rude shock to realise that it was 10 o'clock and we had a rendezvous on an island in Storsjoen at that time.

Bri, Yosh and I piled into the old Ford Transit and bumped along the track to the beach beyond Svenneby. We heaved the motorboat into the choppy waters of the large lake, filled up with fuel and started on the 4 mile trip dodging between rocky islets into the open water into a strong headwind. We were heading towards a remote island where a group of kids with kayaks were camping, to collect their kit and escort them back to base.

The high wind made it difficult to land our craft, but when we did we were able to join in a late breakfast and learn of a change of plans. The motorboat at the camp was holed - could we get it back to Svenneby quickly as it would surely sink if it were to go slowly along with the kids in their kayaks - Oh, and would one of you paddle back the spare kayak.

Luckily by the time that we had absorbed all this and argued as to the best way of sorting things out, the wind had dropped and the lake calm. Our deliberations resulted in this plan; Yosh would take the kayak, I would take the big boat, towing a small fibreglass dingy, and Brian would take the boat with the leak on the understanding that if anything went wrong he was to abandon ship. The fact that Bri had never handled a boat with an outboard before was not regarded as a serious drawback by Peter, the jovial dutch party leader. A quick course on how to keep the motor going and avoid collisions and we set off. I, knowing the route and the hazards led the way. Brian, with the motor on full throttle was probably wondering what he was doing miles from home in a leaky boat!

Despite the build up of dark clouds, all was going well until I noticed when we were about maximum distance



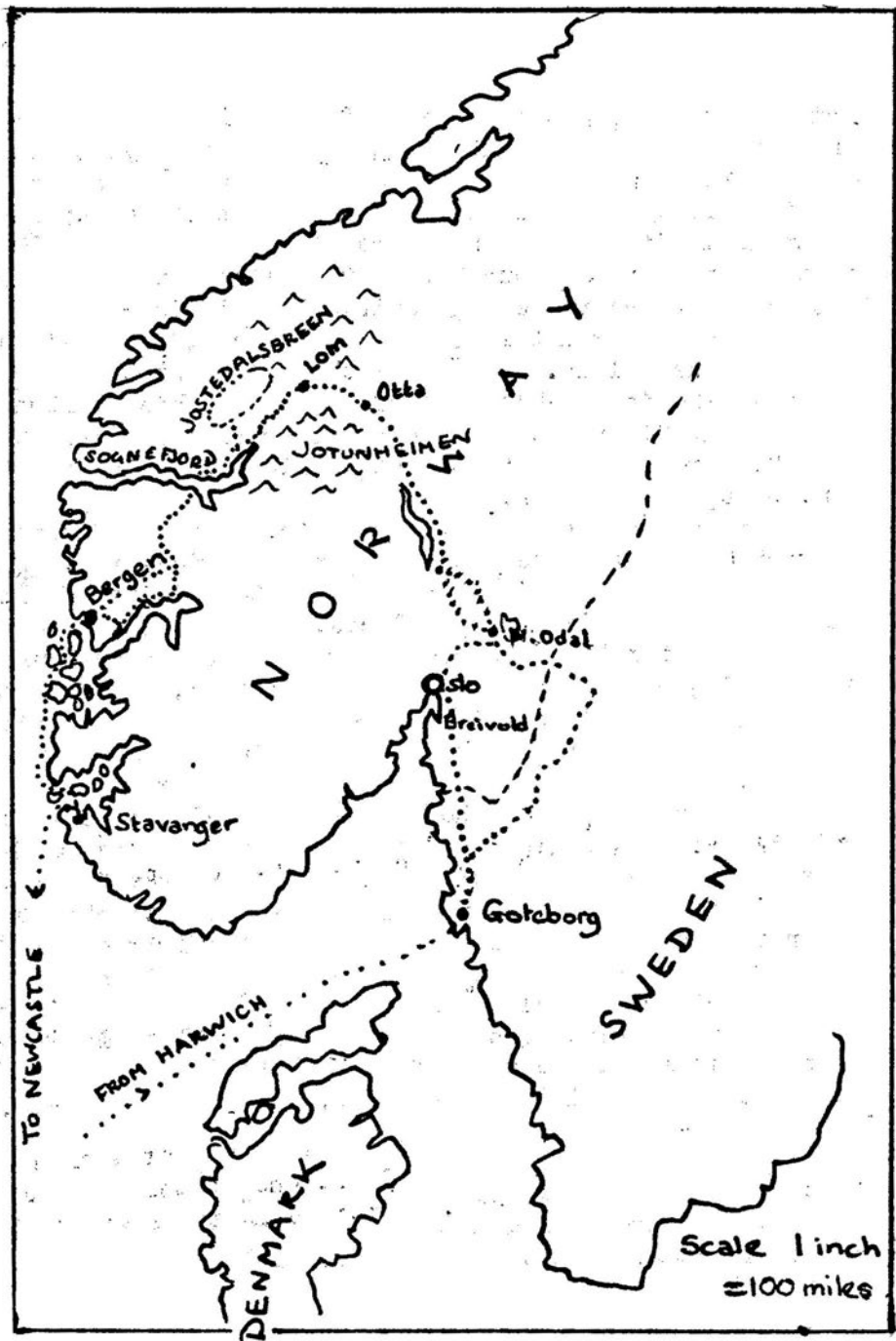
from land that my dingy was rather low in the water. I slowed - a mistake, as the bow dipped and to my horror I saw the dingy disappear below the surface, and its buoyant contents floating away. We had anticipated a boat sinking, but not this one! In the ensuing activity (panic) I discovered that the built in buoyancy of the dingy was such that by hanging precariously over the stern of the motorboat, I was able to haul the dingy up, and after a great deal of effort, empty it sufficiently for it to float once more. Meanwhile Brian had come to my aid, but, unfortunately his propellor had snagged on a rope and he was floating helplessly with a sheared key on the main shaft. Then the wind started up again. Things cannot get worse, I thought and started to sing in a low voice that hymn about "those in peril on the sea". Eventually after some very unseamanlike manoeuvres, punctuated by some very seamanlike language, we managed to get all three craft tied together and chugged slowly across the lake like the leftovers from the Spanish Armada.

Luckily the temporary patch stuck on Brian's boat held and we had no further adventures. By the time we'd unloaded all the kit on to the beach the flotilla of kayaks appeared round the headland. Yosh and the rest of the party were soon ashore. Needless to say, we were rather reticent when asked by the paddlers how our journey had gone....

F.H.

### GALDHØPIGGEN

It had been a long day's travelling from Odal to Lom which lies in the Norwegian mountains. Thrust up some 400 million years ago, these mountains were now to set a challenge to a few members of the party. The V.S.L had warned of the dangers of climbing Galdhøpiggen, at 8400' the highest mountain in northern Europe, and the final expedition party consisted of V.S.L., Yosh, Bri H., Tim,



Bri S, Dave and myself. We set off from Lom at about 7pm and drove up to the mountain some 15 miles away, partly up a narrow dusty toll road whose steep gradients tested the faithfully Bedford and the nerves of its occupants to their limits. We finally reached our base camp 6000 feet up and consumed our Mars Bars whilst watching a sun set of great beauty before retiring at midnight.

It was approximately 6 a.m. when the V.S.L. rose and soon woke us all up. We got all the equipment together - consumed the inevitable meal of porridge (which left much to be desired) and set off on the long trek across the glacial scree to meet the mountain glacier which was to lead us up to the peak.

Upon having reached the glacier, we roped together and equipped ourselves with crampons and ice-axes. The snow was crisp and firm which made the walking fairly easy, although slippery in places. All the time we kept a look out for hidden crevasses which could have caused serious injury to anyone falling in them. It took us almost two hours to climb the 2000ft to the summit with the glacier and final rock slope testing those tired muscles.

As soon as we reached the top the clouds began to roll in from the south west, so after the obligatory photos, we decided to descend, pausing on the way down to investigate some of the open crevasses. Our attention was drawn to a herd of reindeer on the snowfield below us and once again cameras were out before they were scared off by another party of climbers.

The final drive down the toll road resulted in overheated brakes, but we got safely back to Lom to be greeted by the faithful farmhouse stew.

S.H.

N.B. It was whilst we camped at Lom that we met a group of three Venture Scouts from Bolton. One of them was ill and their stove didn't work. We were able to offer them

company, sympathy, food, and lend them a small stove. We left them next day in better spirits saying goodbye to them and our stove. In September a small package came to school containing the stove and the letter you may have read in the last issue. We wont reprint it here except for one line - "I must say for once we really felt privileged to be part of the Scout Association.."

Monday 8th August (Two weeks away from home)

Up <sup>o</sup> early and drove up to mountains and at foot of Fannaråken set up base camp with Dave S., while Frank took both Brians, Simon and Mark on the ascent of the mountain. He estimated an 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ -9hr round trip anticipating a tricky climb due to fresh snow.

The mountains looked truly resplendant in their capes of snow, with here and there blue traces of ice glinting through in the morning sun. After sorting out kit, drove back in Bedford, hotly pursued by a bus around the hair pin bends and steep winding roads with drops down to raging torrents! Waited at Elvseter for bus to arrive with rest of group. 6 buses came down, but none from Lom. Drove down to next settlement. Lunch - orange juice and cake. Wrote postcards. Decided at 3.20p.m. to drive to Lom. Arrived at bus station to meet lads. Despite Frank's claims there was no One o'clock bus that day! We drove back up to Jotenheim Fjellstasjon. Coffee. Back to camp. Still sunny, but mist starting to form. Fannaråki party arrive back at 7.30pm. as supper is prepared - Chicken Orientale and new potatoes cooked in Unit's pressurecook-er, (duplicated wedding present!). After clearing up Tim Simon W. and I walked along road 2 miles to Sognefjell Fjellstasjon. A pleasant hour with coffee and beer watch-ing people coming and going - where from, and where to at this hour and place? Returned at 11.15pm. and retired

P.J.B

N.B. Altitude of Sognefjell camp = 4468ft

FANNARÁKI

Leaving the rest of the party at Lom the V.S.L., Phil Bri Symcox, Simon Hawkins, Mark Collins, Dave Seed and myself set off towards the highest point on the winding road across the Sognfjell. Five of us then left with the intention of climbing Fannaraki, leaving Phil to collect the others, and Dave to set up camp.

Before we reached the mountain itself we had to make our way around a large lake which alone took us almost two hours. We had not been too happy about the snow and ice prospects on the icefield although when we reached it we found that the going was quite straightforward, even if crampon trouble did slow us down a bit. We decided to abandon the "tourist route" after a while and instead go on a route we had seen another party follow - this proving to add a bit of excitement to the climb. We arrived at a point where in order to continue we had to climb an almost sheer snow face about 100 feet high. This turned out to be manageable, however, with extensive use of our ice-axes. After this the rest of the ascent was quite easy as there was hardly any snow which meant we could discard our climbing equipment until returning.

On the descent the only problem encountered was the steep slope which we found to be a lot more difficult than coming up. It was at this point that the necessity of a rope was demonstrated when Simon fell, and would have gone a long way had he not come to a gentle stop at the end of the rope between the V.S.L. and Mark above him who was not in the safest of positions himself! When we had all carefully negotiated the obstacle the rest of the long journey back to camp was uneventful, if quicker than the ascent, and uncomfortable because of rapidly melting snow. We eventually arrived, exhausted after 8 hours and were glad to find all the others at our roadside camp. We slept well that night.

B.H.

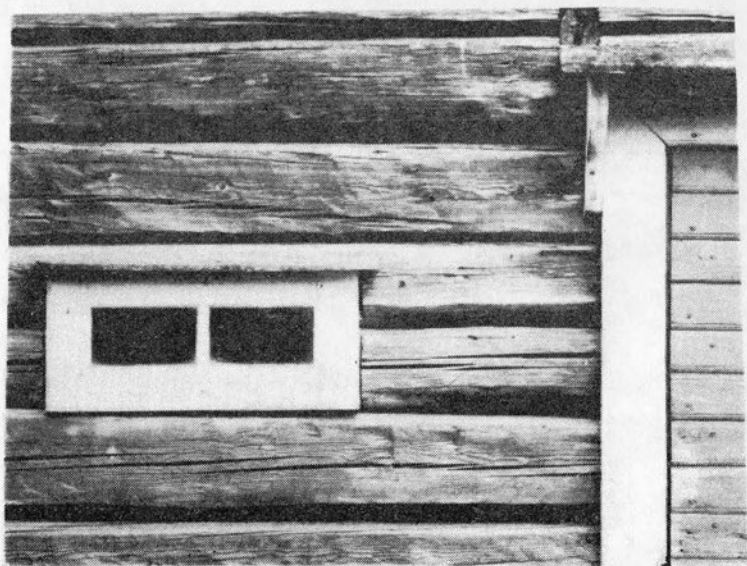
Going down



Galdhopiggen



Skagastølstinden, Jotunheimen



Norwegian wood...



The approach of bad weather caused us to abandon plans of further mountain climbing, and so we dropped down to the fjord country, and next day arrived at Gaupne, from where we were able to reach the Jostedal Ice-cap....

### A DAY ON ICE

As we neared the end of our expedition around Norway we visited the Nigardsbreen glacier, about an hours drive from our campsite. Our first impressions were of a mass of dirty blue-grey ice, rather inferior to the kind of glacier one pictures in the mind. However, as we got nearer to the snout after a longer-than-imagined walk round the meltwater lake and over the ice smoothed rocks we began to realise just how big it was. Standing at the nearest 'safe' place to the ice we couldn't hear ourselves speak as a sinister looking tunnel disgorged thousand of gallons of meltwater along with rocks and ice at a fantastic rate. Having spent some time photographing and merely taking in the spectacular sight, the party made its way over the rocks until we reached the bridge which spanned the raging torrents below.

Once parted from several members of the party who had opted out, the remainder carried on up the slopes of glacial deposits. These made our walking very difficult since the grains and fragments spread on the smooth rock made conditions very slippery. When we arrived at the edge of the ice, we prepared ourselves for what was potentially a very dangerous trip.

Having secured all our ropes, buckles and karabiners we set off at a steady pace, testing the ice at regular intervals with our ice-axes, valuable pieces of equipment in such conditions, as were crampons. The ice was brittle and shattered like glass when struck with an axe but surprisingly enough was not as slippery as we had expected.

The views from the top were quite soectacular look-



ing across the lake to the main valley, observing the classic U-shaped, flat-bottomed valleys with large and frequent moraines of glacial material, deposited as the glacier gradually melted back. As time was getting on we picked our way back carefully around deep crevasses and high pinnacles, avoiding the thin looking sections!

D.W.

An Epilogue;

ALPHA PERSONA

As he wandered through the forest one winter's day with the snow gently falling from the heavens, he saw a small bronze sculpture set into a pedestal at the place where two paths formed a junction. When he stopped and looked closer at the sculpture he saw it was a face with beautiful and serene eyes. Gazing into these hypnotic orbs, he began to see shapes moving in their depths. The longer and harder he gazed the clearer his vision grew until he saw people skating on a frozen river with a town on its banks

Everything seemed so happy and joyful until a member of one of the groups fell through the thin ice. Then confusion reigned with everyone skating over to help but more and more people fell through the ice and into the deathly water. Even as he was watching helpless through his window in the heavens, he saw the water freeze over leaving only bronze sculptures on the surface of the ice.

The vision faded, and as it did so he recognised the face as his own. Only then did he understand.

B.S.

The next issue of Venture 44 will be Number 50. What started off as a news sheet for a dozen or so members of the Unit 15 years ago has developed into a magazine with a circulation of about 100. We hope to make Number 50 a memorable edition, and would welcome contributions, particularly from ex members as soon as possible.



