

THE LAUNCHING

Written by Alexander Eagar Sea Scout in December 1933 – Age 16

T'was the sixteenth of December
Nineteen hundred and thirty three
Or so it has been written
In the annals of History
For on this very memorable date
Two small Snipes took to the sea

The morn was hot and sultry
Not a cloud in the sky
The old slip looked very nice
Because the tide was high

And all the stoutest workers
Had gathered for the fray
And the stoutest of all was Diddams
Speaking figuratively anyway

For there was still a lot to finish
Before the hour of two
And Lee desired that his Patrol
Should know just what to do

The fatal hour grew very near
The tide was ebbing fast
The people started rolling up
For the Band was in full blast

And soon the lawns were crowded
For the news it simply flew
That the entrance fee was nothing
To see the Sea Scout Crew

For they were the first in Australia
As the papers proudly wrote
For they unlike the Mowbray Mob
Built their own boat

The Mowbray Mob they scrounged both theirs
Because they could not build one
And although they have been going longer than us
They still have only a keel done.

Then suddenly a shout went up
A boat had come into view
And soon we saw the Mowbray Mob
“Paddling their own Canoe”

Now that our most honoured guests had all come
There was only one left to arrive
For Doc Streeter would not risk his life in their boat
He thought it much safer to drive

And when at last Doc Streeter came
The tide could ebb no more
“They’ll never do it” cried the Doc
Looking dissentingly at the shore

But he was judging from his mob
Who naturally could not do so
But that did not mean that we would stop
Just because the tide was low

And also many boats had gathered
And anchored off the shore
The *Forceful*, *Eileen*, and *Marion*
The *Iona* and many more

The launching ceremony then commenced
The tide would not yet flood
And Monty turned and nervously asked
“Just how deep is that blinking mud?”

But he would have know very well
If he had helped to lay the rails
For all one Saturday afternoon
We spent in mud right over our tails

The bottle of beer was then broken
And Cobbo smacked his lip
The chocks were taken out of the wheels
And the *Swift* slid down the slip

For now she was known as the *Swift*
Now that she was done
And after that memorable afternoon
She ceased to be just No. 1

Although in all the competitions
This number was found to be true
For the *Swift* was always The Patrol
And *Orion* number two

With the aid of a rope from the *Forceful*
The *Swift* slid into the sea
Leaving one of its crew on the slipway
Who was not as quick as he should be

Mrs Day then nearly fainted
When she saw poor Skipper there
And promptly started an argument
That the damn thing was not fair

Then up came good old Jumbo
And the rest of the *Iona* crew
And rowed him out beside the *Swift*
Where he really belonged to

The sails were then all hoisted
With a fair bit of a delay
For there were fully twenty in our boat
So we got in each others way

But eventually we were ready
And started on our sail
And were soon travelling very well
In a wind which was nearly a gale

And our friends upon the Jetty
Watched us slowly disappear
For we were going far away
We who they held so dear

The *Orion* was next to be christened
And started off down the slip
But when coming off the cradle
She had rather a rough trip

And together we sailed down the river
For rather a strong breeze now blew
Leaving a foaming wake behind
As the waves we furrowed through

And soon we caught the Mowbray Mob
Out for a gentle row
And when they saw how fast we went
They asked us for a tow

And Monty very obligingly
Handed them a rope
And so to keep up with *Orion* still
We had not the faintest hope

And having seen Mowbray safely home
We continued once more on our way
For we were not sorry we'd been left behind
For we'd done our good deed for the day

And then we returned to the Depot
Midst thunderous cheers from the shore
That we thought all the Point were there gathered
But Cobbo was all that we saw

And then the *Swift's* crew all got busy
And soon had their boat on the slip
After what we all acclaimed
Was quite a successful trip

The *Orion* came up a little later
And was soon pulled out of the Sea
And then we all went up to the Loft
To finish off the Afternoon Tea

And thus ended December the Sixteenth
Which I hope you all now know
For as Cobbo aptly summed it up
“T’was a Good show lads, Good show’

Maybe You’ve heard some Learned folks say
Why pick a boat like that anyway
I’d prefer a so and so any day
Snipes are slow and ugly, they won’t pay
And when you hear that question turn and say

- S** Stable, Safe and Steady, but not too slow
- N** Not too much sail for learners you know
- I** In Bay work their decks make them safer still
- P** Places a plenty for gear to fill
- E** Ever so many have been successful each season
- S** So Snipes were not picked without a good reason

After the launching ceremony
When we saw how fast we could mote
We decided to go for an X’mas Cruise
And chose the beautiful Isle of Goat

And so

The first Cruise of the Snipes
CHRISTMAS 1933