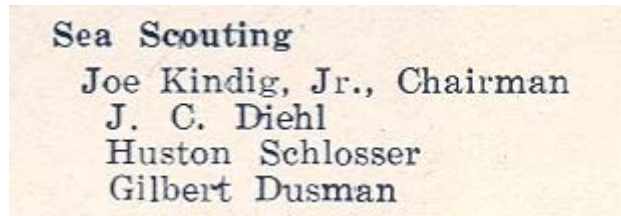


Chapter 4 – Mahlon N. Haines, Our First Squadron Commodore

Chapter 4

Mahlon N. Haines – Our First Squadron Commodore

Although the Boy Scouts of America adopted Sea Scouting in 1912 as its older youth program, Sea Scouting did not begin to really flourish on a national level outside certain coastal communities until the late 1920's and early 1930's. The earliest reference I have been able to find in the official records of the York-Adams Area Council and its predecessors, the York County Council and the York Council, is a copy of an official Committee list for 1930 which showed the existence of a Sea Scouting Committee.



Sea Scouting
Joe Kindig, Jr., Chairman
J. C. Diehl
Huston Schlosser
Gilbert Dusman

Local York Countians, and many national readers as well, will immediately recognize the name of Joe Kindig, Jr., the Chairman, a very famous local antique dealer. The other names are not so well known. In any event, as will be explored in more detail in Chapter 14 – Registration Data, the 1930 effort did not bear fruit.

According to an unidentified newspaper article, Sea Scouting in the York-Adams Area Council began, apparently for the second time, in January 1932.¹

SEA SCOUTING FEATURE OF BOY SCOUT WORK

----- o -----

NATIONAL COUNCILOR HAINES HAS SECURED RIVER SITE FOR "MARINE BASE"

----- o -----

DROP FIELD EXECUTIVE

----- o -----

Sea scouting will be inaugurated as a feature by the York-Adams area council, it was learned last evening at the annual meeting of the executive committee of Boy Scouts in the social rooms of Trinity First Reformed church. Mahlon N. Haines who was again elected national councilor, announced he has secured a tract of land along the Susquehanna river near the Safe Harbor dam, which will be used as a "marine base." The site is about three-fourths of a mile north of York Furnace. The base will have a renovated house for its headquarters and will be tentatively known as the "John Paul Jones" base. Charles Weaver, of this city, was named district commissioner of sea scouting patrols.

....

Despite the pen notation of "Jan. 1932" on the clipping, we have no further clue as to the exact date of this historic Council meeting. As of the moment, I have been unable to

¹ Photocopy of the original article received from John Seville of the York Hiking Club, 2002. Grammar and spelling as in the original article.

Chapter 4 – Mahlon N. Haines, Our First Squadron Commodore

locate the official Minutes of the Council for January 1932. Another unidentified newspaper article, also unfortunately undated, makes reference to the same event.²

FARQUHAR HEADS SCOUTS COUNCIL

Announced That Edwin Moul Will be
Relieved Of Field Executive Post

SEA SCOUTING LAUNCHED

Francis Farquhar was elected president of the York-Adams counties area Boy Scout council at the annual meeting of the members of the council and Scout leaders last night in the social rooms of Trinity First Reformed church. ... About fifty men leaders in the scout movement of York and Adams counties attended the meeting. A supper served at 6:30 o'clock preceded the business session.

....

Will Form Sea Scouts

The meeting which for the main part was featured by the launching of a new era in local Scout program, namely, Sea Scouting. Instrumental in its launching is Mahlon N. Haines, who last night was reelected national councilman. Mr. Haines stated that he acquired a marine base for this purpose along the Susquehanna river, about three-quarters of a mile north of York Furnace

Haines, with his typical flair for action, did not lose any time moving forward. Another unidentified and partially damaged newspaper article marked in pen, "Feb. 25 – 1932" reports:

FIRST SEA SCOUTING CONFERENCE AT CAMP GANOGA ON SATURDAY

The first Sea Scouting conference for the York-Adams Boy Scout [council?] will be conducted at Camp Ganoga this Saturday afternoon and evening, it was announced yesterday by Ray F. Zaner, scout executive. Len Callahan, regional director of Sea Scouting of Philadelphia will be the instructor. A number of Scouters have already registered for the conference.

The Sea Scout patrols are organized by Scouts who are fifteen years of age or older. In this [new?] activity the boy is kept interested in Scouting following his [graduation?] from the troop. A few of the [troops?] of this city have organized [such?] patrols. Mahlon H. Haines, commodore of sea scouting in this [area?] is offering a week's cruise in his newly completed yacht, the "Seniah", to the first registered patrol that qualifies as ordinary seamen.

The base for the Sea Scout facilities in this area is along the Susquehanna river, where a house is being remodeled into headquarters. The base has been named "John Paul Jones" and will be acquired for the activities.

Charles Weaver, of this city, has been named district commissioner for Sea Scouting.

² Photocopy of the original article received from John Seville of the York Hiking Club, 2002. Grammar and spelling as in the original article.

Chapter 4 – Mahlon N. Haines, Our First Squadron Commodore

Observant readers will note that “Seniah”, the name of Haines’s new yacht, is “Haines” spelled backwards.

The Sea Scout base on the Susquehanna continued to figure in the news of the day. An unidentified newspaper article with penned date of “Mar. 24 1932” announces that³

SEA SCOUT BASE
OFFICIALLY NAMED
“JOHN PAUL JONES”

“John Paul Jones” was officially adopted for the Sea Scout base along the Susquehanna river during a meeting of the executive committee of the York-Adams area Boy Scout council last night at Ralph’s. Ray F. Zaner, scout executive, in submitting his monthly report to the council told of the progress being made at the sea scout base.

....

Another event a few weeks later brought Sea Scouting to the attention of over 1,500 Yorkers. An unidentified newspaper article dated in pen “Apr 11 – 1932” gives the details.⁴

SCOUTING EXPOSITION COMES TO CLOSE

Attendance On Saturday Afternoon and Evening Was Fifteen Hundred

BOYS’ BAND CONCERT

An audience estimated at 1,500 attended the Boy Scout exposition Saturday afternoon and evening [] closing day. The afternoon program consisted of fire by flint and steel by troop [] of Red Lion

....

The Sea Scouts in their naval uniform attracted much attention and many Scouts expressed their desire to become Sea Scouts, work which has recently been started in the York-Adams area. Mahlon N. Haines has been made the local commodore.

In yet another unidentified and undated newspaper article, but most likely dating from the summer of 1932, Haines is again in the spotlight.⁵

MAHLON N. HAINES
PRESENTS LIFEBOAT
TO CAMP GANOGA

Mahlon N. Haines, national councilman from the York-Adams Area council, and member of the camp committee of the council, yesterday presented a new lifeboat to Camp Ganoga. Mr. Haines, who has taken a keen interest in the activities of the Boy Scouts, is encouraging the movement for a sea scout unit of the York council, and it was this that led him to present the life boat to the camp. He appeared in a natty sea scout

³ Photocopy of the original article received from John Seville of the York Hiking Club, 2002. Grammar and spelling as in the original article.

⁴ Photocopy of the original article received from John Seville of the York Hiking Club, 2002. Grammar and spelling as in the original article.

⁵ Photocopy of the original article received from John Seville of the York Hiking Club, 2002. Grammar and spelling as in the original article.

Chapter 4 – Mahlon N. Haines, Our First Squadron Commodore

officer's uniform to make the presentation. Scout Executive Ray F. Zaner, who is personally conducting camp, accepted the boat on behalf of the camp and the council.

Mr. Haines was a guest at the daily inspection of the camp, and after the inspection and dinner the Scouts presented a special program in his honor. Mr. Haines gave a short talk on "Do We Appreciate the Things We Have?"



York-Adams Area Council
Squadron Commodore Mahlon N. Haines⁶
Born in Washington Ohio on March 5, 1875.
Died in _____ on October __, 1962, at the age of 87.

⁶ Image cropped from an undated black and white photograph loaned by Dale Grove showing Haines meeting with Sea Scouts. The three silver stripes on the sleeve are correct during the 1930's and 1940's for a Council Squadron Commodore (volunteer chairman of the Council Sea Scouting committee). It also appears he is wearing the rare Regional B.S.A. Silver Antelope award around his neck, one of only two ever received by York-Adams Area Council Scouters, so the photo date must be 1944 or later. Horace G. Ports was the other York-Adams Area Council recipient in 1963.

Chapter 4 – Mahlon N. Haines, Our First Squadron Commodore

Obviously, Haines was a man of huge ego who relished the limelight. He was, however, genuinely philanthropic towards Scouting, and seriously interested in getting Sea Scouting under way in the Council. An unidentified news article dated in pen “Nov. 17 – 1932” reports:⁷

HOST TO SCOUT LEADERS

----0-----

Sea Scout Commodore Mahlon N. Haines
Entertains Group at Haines Acres

Mahlon N. Haines, commodore of the sea scouts of the York and Adams area council, last evening was host to the scout leaders of the district at his home at Haines Acres. The 10-year program for scouting was discussed. Mr. Haines addressed the group in which he stressed the importance of carrying out the plan of reaching one out of every four boys in the community and keeping them interested in scouting for a period of four years. Mr. Haines is an advocate of the sea scouting movement in this area. This particular branch of scouting is planned for older boys, the minimum age being 15 years.

To further promote the idea of sea scouting in this community, Mr. Haines made an offer last evening to furnish a sea scout uniform to the first four boys to enroll as sea scouts from each troop. His offer was accepted by eight troops last evening.

....
Following the meeting, refreshments were served by Mrs. Haines

An undated article from what appears to be *The Scout Duffel*, a periodic York-Adams Area Council newsletter (a predecessor to today's *YAAC*), reports on the same meeting.⁸

SCOUT LEADERS MEET WITH HAINES

Forty-three Scout Leaders met at the home of Commodore, M. N. Haines, Wednesday night. What a host he is, and what a talk he made on “Sea Scouting.” Every man present became conscious of his larger responsibility of not only getting one of every four boys in Scouting, but holding them four years.

The Commodore offered to provide a Sea Scout Uniform to each Patrol of four Scouts in eight different troops who accepted the challenge of organizing Sea Scouting. Now keep your eyes open for the new uniform.

A further apparent *Duffel* article dated in pen “Jan. 1-1933” notes:

To each Patrol of four Sea Scouts registered by January 15th, Sea Scout Commodore Mahlon N. Haines will give a white uniform. The first Bridge of Honor and Sea Scout Ball will be held the middle of February. Now, heave ho my lads, we're off.

Haines carried through on his promise. An unidentified newspaper article dated in pen “Jan. 10 – 1933” reports:⁹

⁷ Photocopy of the original article received from John Seville of the York Hiking Club, 2002. Grammar and spelling as in the original article.

⁸ Photocopy of the original article received from John Seville of the York Hiking Club, 2002. Grammar and spelling as in the original article.

Chapter 4 – Mahlon N. Haines, Our First Squadron Commodore

HAINES TO PRESENT SEA SCOUT TROOP WITH UNIFORMS

Troop No. 11 Sea Scouts of America will be presented with uniforms by Mahlon N. Haines, a national committeeman and a member of the executive committee of the York-Adams council of Boy Scouts, when a meeting of the troop is held in the Crispus Attuck [sic] Community Center, West Princess street, this evening at 8 o'clock. The local troop is one of the first to be organized in this Chapter of the state. Fourteen youths have been studying sea scouting under the direction of Ivan Reeves.

The program which will be rendered in connection with the meeting this evening is as follows:

Song, "America," assemblage; pledge of allegiance to the flag; Sea Scout oath; Scout law led by First Mate Alonzo King; history of our Sea Scouting, Leo White; address and presentation of uniforms by Mahlon N. Haines; acceptance of uniforms by John Diggs, chairman of the Sea Scout committee; presentation of awards, Chief Executive Ray F. Zaner; remarks, member of troop committee; and taps, Benjamin Stokes.

Commodore Haines apparently did enjoy going to sea. In an article dated in pen "Feb. 15 1933" most likely from *The Scout Duffel*, we learn more.¹⁰

COMMODORE HAINES BACK FROM CRUISE

Our Commodore returned in time to attend the Scouts and Dads Supper in York and tell all about his cruise to Jamaica and his visit to a bullfight. Two hundred and fifty Scouts and Dads' enjoyed the evening together and the program provided.

The bull, or part of him, apparently joined Haines on the return voyage, for from a similar clipping dated in pen "Mar. 1933" we are told:¹¹

HAINES GIVES CHIEF HORNS

While in Kingston, Jamaica on a recent cruise, Commodore Haines secured a pair of horns (worn by a vicious bull in his last fight). These the Commodore presented to Chief Zaner and they now adorn the walls at Scout Headquarters.

Where these horns are today is unknown.

Haines' Caribbean cruise was apparently more extensive than the initial report, for in another unidentified newspaper article, dated in pen "Feb. 11 – 1933", we learn more details:

⁹ Photocopy of the original article received from John Seville of the York Hiking Club, 2002. Grammar and spelling as in the original article.

¹⁰ Photocopy of the original article received from John Seville of the York Hiking Club, 2002. Grammar and spelling as in the original article.

¹¹ Photocopy of the original article received from John Seville of the York Hiking Club, 2002. Grammar and spelling as in the original article.

Chapter 4 – Mahlon N. Haines, Our First Squadron Commodore

SCOUTS AND DADS DINE

National Councilman M. H. Haines Tells
of Recent Cruise – Skit Is Presented

About 265 Scouts and their dads and scout leaders of the York district of the York-Adams area council took part in the scouts and dads' supper last night in the gymnasium of the First Presbyterian church. The scouts are celebrating the 23rd birthday anniversary of the founding of the scout movement.

....
The program following the supper was featured by an address by Mahlon N. Haines, national scout councilman, and sea scout commodore, who spoke of his recent trip to Mexico, Haiti and Jamaica, from which he returned yesterday. Haines told of the beauties of the countries visited and humorously narrated his impressions of the bull fights he witnessed. [The bulls presumably were not amused]. He displayed the horns of a bull he will present to the local scout headquarters.

....
Walter Davis, of Chambersburg, scout camp chef, entertained with selections on a harmonica. Flowers were sent to Ray F. Zaner, scout executive, who is ill.

....

Through the vigorous efforts of Commodore Haines and others, Sea Scouting was starting to take hold. An unidentified newspaper article dated in pen "Mar. 16 1933" announces that Sea Scouts will be giving a public demonstration.

DEMONSTRATION BY SEA SCOUT MEMBERS

Members of Sea Scout Ship Matthew Henson No. 5011 will give a Sea Scout demonstration at 7:30 o'clock tonight in the Rotary troop hall, Lehman and Wellington streets. District Sea Scout Commissioner Charles Weaver will have charge of the program. Other district sea scout officials will be present, including Commodore Mahlon N. Haines, and Sea Scout Commissioner Meads, of Red Lion. Ivan Reeves is skipper of the ship. All Sea Scout patrol members and leaders have been invited to attend.

This is the same "Sea Scout Troop" that received their uniforms from Haines a little over two months earlier. The article is all the more interesting to contemporary eyes when you realize that the group giving the demonstration just a little over a year after the launching of Sea Scouting in our essentially a land-locked community is a Sea Scout Ship comprised of what were surely black youth connected with York's inner-city Troop 11. The prior article noted this unit was "one of the first to be organized in this Chapter of the state." Their ship was named for the famous black arctic explorer Matthew A. Henson, a former cabin boy on an ocean steamship, who assisted Commander Robert E. Peary reach the vicinity of the North Pole in 1909.¹²

¹² Booker T. Washington, in his foreword to Henson's 1912 book, *A Negro Explorer at the North Pole*, states, "Matt Henson, who was born in Charles County, Maryland, August 8, 1866, began life as a cabin-boy on an ocean steamship, and before he met Commander Peary had already made a voyage to China. He was eighteen years old when he made the acquaintance of Commander Peary which gave him his chance. During the twenty-three years in which he was the companion of the explorer he not only had time and opportunity to perfect himself in his knowledge of the books, but he acquired a good practical knowledge of everything that was a necessary part of the daily life in the ice-bound wilderness of polar exploration. He was at times a black-smith, a carpenter, and a cook. He was thoroughly acquainted with the life, customs, and language of the Esquimos. He himself built the sledges with which the journey to the Pole was

Chapter 4 – Mahlon N. Haines, Our First Squadron Commodore

Sea Scout Ship 11, SSS MATTHEW HENSON, may have been one of the first, if not the first, Sea Scout ship ever organized in our Council. However, HENSON was not alone. By April 1933, Sea Scouting was under way in the Red Lion area, too. An unidentified incomplete April 1, 1933 news article reports the following:¹³

Three Sea Patrols Organized by Boy Scouts – Other Borough News

RED LION, April 1. – At a meeting of Boy Scouts of Red Lion and vicinity, held in the office of the Meads Tobacco company, the Red Lion district of Sea Scouts was organized. Arthur M. Meads and Charles Weaver, Sea Scout commissioners, were in charge of the meeting.

During the evening patrols were organized and breeches buoys were made. All Sea Scouts are uniformed, and Sea Scout Commander Mahlon N. Haines has furnished uniforms for four boys of each of the three troops.

The following Sea Scouts patrols were organized; St. Paul's Evangelical church, Joseph Hidebrand, skipper; Kenneth Laucks, Clyde Sinclair, Bert Stein, and Richard Eline; Bethany United Brethren church, Curvin Ness, skipper; Thomas Lloyd, Charles Wallick, Charles Myers and Dale Smith; and Springvale troop, Charles Kyle, skipper; Joseph Fauth, Henry Smith, John Fauth, and Charles Smith.

The members of the district Sea Scout committee are: Arthur Meads, Charles Weaver, Prof. G. B. Wesler – [].

Meanwhile, work was proceeding “full speed ahead” on the John Paul Jones sea base, and plans were also underway for the Council's first-ever, though apparently delayed, Sea Scout Ball. An unidentified article dated in pen “Apr. 2[8?] 1933” reports the following:¹⁴

SEA SCOUT BASE TO BE PREPARED FOR COMING SEASON

At the meeting of the Sea Scouts executive committee, held yesterday at the Hotel Yorktowne, it was decided to arrange for the immediate cleaning up of the Sea Scout base at Camp John Paul Jones. Patrol 3 and 6, under Coxwains Kenneth Mundis and James Weeks, have been assigned the duty.

Roland M. Fulton was chosen by the committee to be chairman of the Sea Scouts ball committee and C.C. Cox has been placed in charge of the officers forum. Commodore Mahlon N. Haines presided at the meeting which was attended by the following: Mahlon N. Haines, Arthur Meads, C.C. Cox, Ralph P. Wilton, Roland M.

successfully completed. He could not merely drive a dog team or skin a musk-ox with the skill of a native, but he was something of a navigator as well. In this way Mr. Henson made himself not only the most trusted but the most useful member of the expedition.”

¹³ Photocopy of the original article received from John Seville of the York Hiking Club, 2002. Grammar and spelling as in the original article.

¹⁴ Photocopy of the original article received from John Seville of the York Hiking Club, 2002. Grammar and spelling as in the original article.

Chapter 4 – Mahlon N. Haines, Our First Squadron Commodore

Fulton and George Hay Kain, Jr.¹⁵ Ray F. Zaner, Scout executive of the York-Adams area, was present at the conference.

There is another story about Commodore Haines that is certainly worth retelling. An unidentified and undated news article, probably from the late 1930's or early 1940's, tells of the excitement that attended at least one voyage on one of the Commodore's personal yachts. From the article, it may be assumed that Haines had two yachts: a motor yacht, the *Seniah*, and a "motorized sailboat" called the *Wizard*.

YORKERS BATTLE STORM ON BAY

Scout Leaders Have Thrilling Experience In Gale on Chesapeake

HELPLESS ON SAILBOAT

A group of Boy Scout leaders from the York-Adams area emerged "drenched, but happy" after a thrilling battle with a severe electrical, rain and hail storm which swept the Chesapeake bay yesterday afternoon.

Jump Overboard

Twelve of the Scouters on Mahlon N. Haines' motorized sailboat, "Wizard," with Commodore Haines at the helm, received the drenching. Some of them jumped from the craft when it was thought the boat might capsize.

With Commodore Haines in the boat were Dr. W. L. Tilberg, dean of Gettysburg College; Prof. L. C. Keefauver, superintendent of Gettysburg schools; Dr. A. G. W. Schlegel, supervising principal of Red Lion schools; Dr. W. A. Pennington, York; Alfred Uhler, scoutmaster of Troop 1; Scout Commissioner Paul Aumen, Hanover; Horace G. Ports, scoutmaster of Troop 15; John Throne, chairman of the board of area scout commissioners; Harvey Becker, David Malcolm, Fred LaMotte and Joseph Hildebrand.

You see it was this way. Our own Mahlon N. Haines invited the Executive Committee and some Scout Leaders to be his guests on a cruise down the bay, on his yacht, the "Seniah." Well, when they boarded the boat and were all set to go, the motor refused to move. Not to be outdone by a balky motor, the Commodore orders out his sailboat, rigging and all. "Jump in," says he, but only a few jumped in, we mean the boat. The others had their one eye peering in the direction of a gathering storm which seemed to be heading their way.



To make a long story shorter, the wind caught the sails and away went the Commodore and the crew, out and out, but the waves rolled higher and higher, and things happened. The Commodore says, "Men put on your life preservers and jump overboard; I'll stick to the ship like a loyal captain." "You won't stick alone," says Commissioner Throne, as he tightly hung to the mast, clad in a life preserver. Seeing their plight, the others on shore chartered a motor boat to go to their aid. They hadn't gone far from the pier until their

¹⁵ George Hay Kain, Jr. is my father, and at this time would have been in his senior year as a student at Harvard Law School at Cambridge, MA. Why he would have been in York, PA for this April meeting I do not know.

Chapter 4 – Mahlon N. Haines, Our First Squadron Commodore

motor stalled and there they were. They too had to be rescued. It may have been one of this party who gave the Salvation Army their slogan, “A man may be down but he is never out,” we might add, until he has been rescued.

If you can identify any of the fellows on the picture, ask them to tell you the story.



This news article, being written in a humorous vein, makes it hard to be certain whether it is also strictly factual, or whether some poetic license may have been employed. A recommendation to jump overboard from a vessel still proceeding under way, albeit in a storm, is probably not good advice, at least by modern safety-at-sea guidelines. A person should normally stay with a vessel in distress to make it easier to be located by rescue parties. I seriously doubt that an apparently competent sailor such as the Commodore would have seriously given such an order. However, it does make a good story.

As with many things about our beloved Commodore Haines, fiction was sometimes better than truth.