

THE COMMUNICATOR



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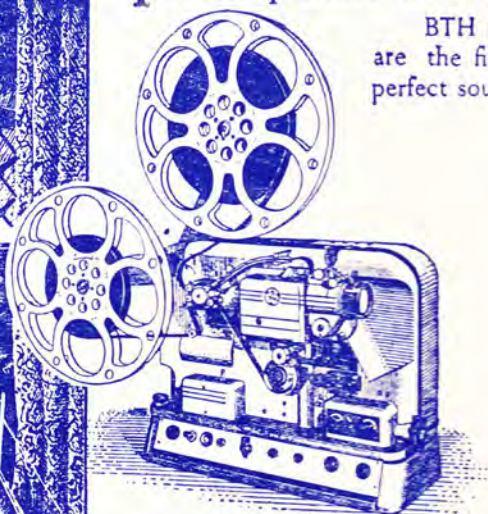


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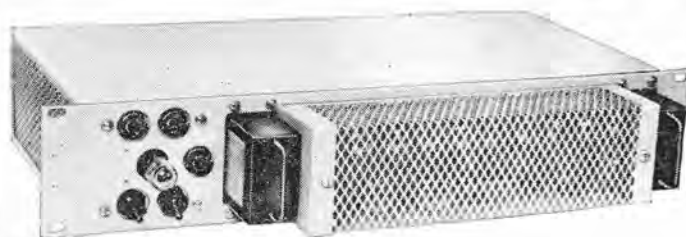
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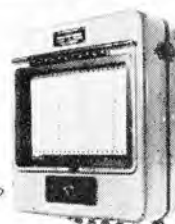
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THE COMMUNICATOR

The Magazine of the Communications Branch, Royal Navy

EASTER, 1957

VOL. II, No. 1

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Photo by courtesy of Chas. White.

The First Sea Lord unveils the portrait of Her Majesty The Queen in H.M.S. "Mercury"

EDITORIAL

An apology is due for the Christmas Number, because the Ceremonial Disc was overtaken by Chapters 12 and 13 of Q.R. and A.I. Unfortunately for the Editorial Staff, minor amendments were made to these chapters after their last visit to the Signal School. We hope that no major crises have occurred as a result of these errors. A revised Disc is included in this number.

Communicators have responded well to the call for stories about the Suez Affair. However, I would like to point out in answer to the various innuendoes, that H.M.S. *Mercury* managed to stay open all the time and that the Christmas Number of the Magazine was produced with no more than the usual hectic rush. However, Suez has had its effect on the Magazine insofar as the delivery is concerned. I hope that all our avid readers have now been satisfied even though there might have been a longer wait than usual.

Among a variety of entertaining contributions we welcome articles from past Communicators, including Commander H. P. Mead and "Hotspur" of the Daily Telegraph. Prizes are once again offered for the best article, photograph and cartoon submitted for the Summer Number. Full details are contained on page 64.

In recent numbers we have tried to cover various sports and now it is the turn of Soccer to be featured. The Editor would therefore be very pleased to receive an article from someone in "the know" or to be put in contact with a Soccer expert.

FOREWORD

by

CAPTAIN A. H. C. GORDON LENNOX,
D.S.O., R.N.

Although I said in the Christmas number that I should not have the opportunity of writing to you all again, I find that I am in fact still in the chair on the Editor's deadline date for contributions.

There is little I can add to the main points that I set down in December. We are still suffering from the aftermath of the Suez crisis and a delayed recommissioning programme. The Drafting authority is doing his best to provide the very large numbers we require to put on course and has made an excellent start, but it is already clear that the training targets will not be met in full, and that the shortages forecast in Petty Officer Telegraphists, Leading Telegraphists and Leading Signaller are likely to be serious.

The Advancement Rosters have now all been centralised and the first B.13's from the new Rosters have been issued. I think it will probably interest you to know the state of the Advancement Rosters on 1st March, 1957, which was as follows:—

To Petty Officer Telegraphist	Dry
To Leading Telegraphist ...	Dry and minus 34
To Yeomen of Signals ...	12
To Leading Signaller ...	Dry and minus 69

You will no doubt have seen or heard about the Temporary Manning Standards promulgated in Admiralty Fleet Order 517/57. The cuts imposed are severe, and will inevitably give the impression that the seagoing Communicator is going to have to work even harder than he does at present. Every possible step is being taken however, to ensure that no greater burden shall fall on the reduced complements, and I hope that it is generally realised that these manning standards are the only way in which we can get through this critical period and at the same time take active steps to improve the ratio of U.K./overseas service.

Another important development which has now received official approval is that many of the jobs in shore M.S.O.'s in the U.K. at present undertaken by civilians will in future be filled by communication ratings. This is a further step to improve the shore/sea ratio, but it will take quite a long time to implement.

The special new National Service intake at Devonport Signal School is running well and the first classes will be at sea during the latter half of the year to help relieve the load.

The communication drafting office in Portsmouth shortly moves up to Haslemere with the New Central Drafting Authority. This move will in no way alter our present close contact with the drafting team. The Communication Divisional Officers will remain available as your local contact at Chatham, Devonport and in H.M.S. *Mercury* and all will have direct access to the new Central Authority.

I would like you to bear in mind the importance of filling up the new Preference Drafting cards with care and attention. The smooth running of the new scheme will depend a great deal on the clarity and accuracy of the information you provide.

To all of you who are in shore billets and who do not receive Preference Drafting cards, it is important that if you wish to volunteer for any particular ship or station you should do so well in advance. The Drafting Authority tells me that he has already received practically all the volunteers he wants for ships commissioning in the next four months and recommends that anybody contemplating volunteering should endeavour to do so six months ahead.

The new accommodation block at *Mercury* is going ahead well and I think that there is now little doubt that it will be ready for occupation in November, 1957.

Due to the necessity for economy it is most unlikely that we shall be able to get our new Instructional Block as originally planned and a new interim scheme has now been proposed for a less lavish building with the prime object of being able to evacuate the many old and broken down nissen classrooms as soon as possible.—Good luck.



H.M.S. "Mercury" in the van, 1625

H.M.S. "MERCURY" AND HER FORBEARS

With the erection of the Mess and Recreation block, H.M.S. *Mercury* enters a new era and I thought it would be interesting to give a brief history of the various ships which have borne the name *Mercury*.

No fewer than eleven ships have borne this name prior to the present Signal School. Even though the only Battle Honour earned was that of "HAVANNA 1762" the forbears of H.M.S. *Mercury* have been involved in numerous actions of British Naval History.

There has been a *Mercury* in the Navy List for a greater part of the time since 1592 to the present day. Not much is known about the first two ships except that *Mercury* number one was built in 1592 and sold in 1611. Number two was purchased into the Naval Service in August 1622, and is depicted in the picture above, which is in the wardroom in H.M.S. *Dolphin*.

The next entry in the Navy List is in 1693 when *Mercury* number three, an advice boat, was built at Portsmouth. She came to an unfortunate end four years later when she was captured by a French privateer.

After a gap of forty-four years *Mercury* reappears in the Navy List. Number four was an eight gun fireship and in 1739 she was commanded by Lord George Gordon, whose famous picture by Hogarth is in the National Maritime Museum. In 1744 she formed part of the squadron under the command of Admiral Mathews, which was blockading Toulon. She was lost during these operations, but it is not clear from the records whether this was due to intentional burning or not.

Mercury number five was a 24 gun ship built at Liverpool in 1745; she did not appear to have lasted long for in 1756 we find number six being built at Harwich. Number six was a 20 gun ship and had a very much more distinguished career than her predecessors. Her first warlike appearance was in the St. Lawrence River in 1759 when she formed part of

the fleet, commanded by Admiral Sir G. Saunders, which co-operated in the capture of Quebec. During these operations a considerable hydrographical survey had to be undertaken, and this was carried out by James Cook, later to win fame for his discoveries in the Pacific, who was then serving in H.M.S. *Mercury*.

Mercury next formed part of the squadron supporting the attack on Cuba and it was during this campaign that the "Havanna 1762" Battle Honour was earned. *Mercury*'s main role was bombarding forts and supporting the landing of the troops. However, she sprang a leak on August 4th and was unable to take much part in the final struggle which culminated in the surrender of Havanna on August 14th. *Mercury* number six came to an untimely end when she was wrecked in the North River, near New York, in 1778.

She was replaced in the following year by a 28 gun ship built on the Thames. The seventh *Mercury* took part in several smaller actions and cutting out expeditions, including the capture of the *Sans Pareille* of 20 guns in June, 1801. In September of the same year, when in company with *Santa Dorothea* of 36 guns, she recaptured the British ship *Bulldog*. She took part in further inshore operations in the Mediterranean in 1809. The National Maritime Museum have two presentation swords which were awarded to Lieutenant Watkin Owen Pell for his part in two of these actions. These were the cutting out of the French *Leda* at Rovigno in April 1809, and the French *Pugliese* at Barletta in September, 1809. She was taken out of the Navy List in 1812.

The next three vessels had slightly less distinguished careers. The eighth was the Commissioners' Yacht in Portsmouth in the early nineteenth century; the ninth was built at Chatham in 1826 and ended her days as a coal hulk at Sheerness and the tenth was a tender, whose name appeared in the Navy List between 1837 and 1862.

Mercury, number eleven was launched as a dispatch vessel at Pembroke on 17th April 1878, and was the second steel ship built for the Royal Navy, her sister ship, the *Iris*, being the first. Except for a few months in commission in 1885, she spent the years up to 1890 in reserve in Portsmouth. She was 3,720 tons, 300 feet long and her armament consisted of thirteen 5-inch guns and four torpedo tubes. It was therefore hardly surprising that she was reclassified as an unprotected cruiser, 2nd class.

In 1890, she went to China for five years. On her return she went back into reserve at Portsmouth until June 1903, when she became the Instructional School for Navigating Officers. April 1906 brought

another change and she became the depot ship of the Portsmouth based submarines. She carried out this duty until 1911 when she was sent to Harwich as a hulk. However, with the advent of the First World War, she was refitted at Chatham and became the depot ship at Rosyth, but was renamed H.M.S. *Columbine* in the process. From there she went to the breakers in 1919.

As the present *Mercury* is well within the span of present day Communicators, suffice to say that she was commissioned on 16th August, 1941, when the Signal School moved from R.N. Barracks, Portsmouth, to Leydene.



H.M.S. "Mercury" 1878

Official photograph

COMMISSIONING FORECAST

May	H.M.S. <i>Gambia</i>	Home/East Indies G.S.C.	July	H.M.S. <i>Loch Fyne</i>	Home/East Indies G.S.C.
May	H.M.S. <i>Newcastle</i>	Far East	July	H.M.S. <i>Alert</i>	Far East
May	H.M.S. <i>Solebay</i>	1st D.S. G.S.C.	August	H.M.S. <i>Protector</i>	Home/S. Atlantic and S. America G.S.C.
May	H.M.S. <i>Hogue</i>	1st D.S. G.S.C.	August	H.M.S. <i>St. Brides Bay</i>	3rd F.S. Far East
May	H.M.S. <i>Lagos</i>	1st D.S. G.S.C.	August	H.M.S. <i>Puma</i>	Home/S. Atlantic and S. America G.S.C.
May	H.M.S. <i>Burghhead Bay</i>	Home/S. Atlantic and S. America G.S.C.	August	H.M.S. <i>Sheffield</i>	Home/Med. G.S.C.
May	H.M.S. <i>Cossack</i>	8th D.S. Far East	August	H.M.S. <i>Duchess</i>	Home/Med. G.S.C.
June	H.M.S. <i>Blackwood</i>	A.T.T.S. Home Sea Service	August	H.M.S. <i>Decoy</i>	Home/Med. G.S.C.
June	H.M.S. <i>Opossum</i>	3rd F.S. Far East	August	H.M.S. <i>Diana</i>	Home/Med. G.S.C.
June	H.M.S. <i>Owen</i>	Surveying G.S.C.	August	H.M.S. <i>Diamond</i>	Home/Med. G.S.C.
July	H.M.S. <i>Cavalier</i>	8th D.S. Far East vice Consort G.S.C.	August	H.M.S. <i>Bermuda</i>	Home/Med. G.S.C.
July	H.M.S. <i>Troubridge</i>	Home/West Indies G.S.C.			



FAR EAST

H.M.S. "CHEVIOT"

Cheviot is still at the start of her commission, and most of the unusual happenings that come to our minds seem to be connected with our arrival on board. Due to some "disturbance" in the Middle East, our route as originally planned, out to the Far East, involving flying for four days to Singapore, had to be "scrubbed". We were delayed and had to accept the hospitality of R.N.B. Chatham for a fortnight's "mark time", then instead of the well worn route, the ship came half way to meet us, and we joined her at Mombasa, following in the footsteps of *Crane* and to be followed by *Comus*.

The new Communicators for *Cheviot* arrived on board the ship in two batches, having flown half way round Africa in the process. The first lot, consisting of three Leading Tels., "took over" from the old commission who, very kindly, lent a hand long after it was their turn to go ashore to the transit camp. The second batch, the bulk of the Communications complement, arrived late due to their plane developing engine trouble, which gave them a wonderful excuse to drink in the scenery of Marseilles. The "Airwork" organisation catered for their requirements. A case of Communicators falling on their feet again!

The passage to Trincomalee found both V.S. and W/T departments becoming familiar with their surroundings and jobs. C.Y.S. Rosenberg made a very good King Neptune for the "Crossing the Line". Then, having had a quiet but very pleasant Christmas at Trinco, we set course to the East once again; to "Regain our station" After arriving at Singapore on New Year's Eve we had ten days rest alongside. Quite a few of the junior members of the staffs spent a satisfactory week gaining experience up at Kranji, helping in the watch room and generally being useful. We were nearly caught out by Burma National Day, a Burmese frigate being in harbour, but Yeoman Riddle and L/Sig. Whitaker turned to and constructed the required Ensign over night.

Then we began three weeks of "work up" in the Puolo Tioman area off the East coast of Malaya.

There was bathing and sailing in plenty, and after dark, Banyans and picnics ashore. During the preparations for these, a small V.S. station was established ashore to signal "logistic requirements." Two large sharks were caught from the stern of the ship only about half a mile from the favourite bathing beach, which made some of the more cautious think very carefully before entering the water.

All went well, even with up to six or seven ships under our direction in the closing stages of the work up.

Leading Signalman Barrett left us in Singapore in exchange for L/Sig. Theato, who comes to us from the "backwoods" of Phoenix Park. We just had time to spend a few days in harbour with *Comus* and *Concord*, before we had to depart for the familiar climes of Hong Kong for three weeks self-refit.

At Hong Kong Leading Tels. Thwaites and Tanton and Tel. Fox went ashore for a week with the Army to learn all about Naval Gunfire Support, and now are ready to go with a forward spotting team into any ditch or up any hill. During the stay Tel. Chilton, Ord. Tel. Harris and Ord. Sig. Large have all been to H.Q.B.R. for varying times to study for advancement, and we expect great things of them in the future. The remainder were kept amply occupied on the usual routine.

As regards sport, we are well represented in the ship's hockey team by P.O. Tel. Anstey, Yeoman Riddle, Tel. Chilton and O.Tel. Adams, and the Signal Officer has even been known to play goal for the second XI. In the ship's water polo team. Leading Signalman Bidwell and Tel. Fox represent the Branch. We reached the semi-finals of the inter-Part Soccer League. In the one and only lost match we lacked the inspiration of C.P.O. Tel. Snowden at right-back.

H.M.S. "CONCORD"

When we last wrote, we were living in the F.A.B. Hong Kong, with the ship in dry dock, undergoing a three month modernisation refit. During this period we Communicators had a fairly easy time,

the 'buntings' keeping steady watches in the Shore-side M.S.O. and the 'sparkers' either watchkeeping in H.Q.B.F. or out on loan.

In the Ships' Athletics held at this time the Combined Communication and Secretariat Branches came second and we also managed to come third in the tug-o-war championships, which, considering the weight of our team, was pretty good. We got knocked out of the inter-Divisional Soccer Shield by our Stokers, but since then our football has improved, and we hope to do better next time.

We moved back onboard the ship on December 27th and then commenced a hard period of working up and getting used to all the new modern gadgets.

We sailed from Hong Kong and came south to the Singapore Area. On arrival we were put through our paces by Captain 'D' in *Cheviot*, exercising with *Comus*, *Cardigan Bay* (F 3), and two Aussies, *Queenborough* and *Quickmatch*. After a weekend in Singapore, we went out for more exercises with *Telemachus* and *Comus*. During this period the ship had a 'banyan' at Pulo Tioman, with swimming and a barbecue, with roast lamb over a spit, baked "spuds" and "bangers". This was enjoyed by all and was helped along with a double ration of beer. We found all the exercises were hard going after our three month "holiday", but have now settled down to the life of a fully operational destroyer, running through the week and in harbour for weekends.

Since *Comus* recommissioned recently, we have risen to the dizzy heights of "Half Leader", our title, COMDESDIV 16.

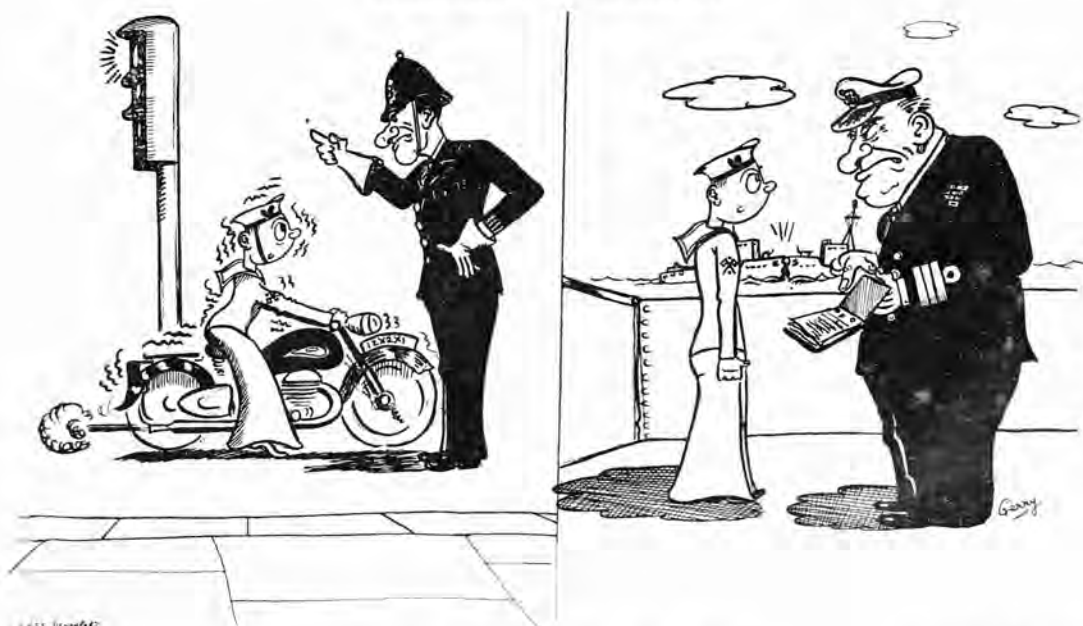
Our future programme includes three day visits to Port Swettenham and Malacca, small ports up the Malayan Coast, then a 10 day exercise, "Trade-winds", with something called a Fleet Concentration. We are wondering just exactly what that means for us. But with two major exercises following this, it looks as if we are in for a busy time. We have heard a buzz that Mr. Mylton (A.C.O.8) will be with us during this period, so we hope he will have the weight.

We are just coming up to our half way mark and, as Captain 'D' said when he spoke to the ship's company, "You in *Concord* are round the bend." Whatever he meant, we feel like it at times.

H.M.S. "COMUS" / "COSSACK"

We are, we think, the first ship to be commissioned since centralised drafting was brought in officially for Communicators on October 1st. We realise, however, that there are ships which commissioned previous to ourselves with mixed depot staffs, but we like to think that their centralisation was more of a matter of convenience between depots. At any rate, our Yeoman and P.O. Tel. were drafted to *Comus* on draft notes numbered 1 and 2 of the combined Communication drafting roster.

ASHORE and AFLOAT



"Did you—or did you not, Pass That Signal?"

(Winning Cartoon)

Our staffs have settled down nicely, and, typical perhaps of the adaptability of Communicators, all thoughts of Port Divisions have gone, and we are truly centralised.

In the midst of a ship's company made up of the Portsmouth Port Division we have Yeoman Kelly and P.O. Tel. Rothwell, stanchions of Q.H.M. Plymouth and R.N.S.S. Devonport respectively; L/Tel. Carter, late of R.N.S.S. Chatham; L/Sig. Firstbrook; and a sundry mixture of Tels., Sigs., Ords. and Juniors from Devonport and Portsmouth. L/Tel. Carter is original inasmuch as he is the only representative of Chatham to be with us.

Having assembled, with the rest of the ship's company, in R.N.B. Portsmouth on, of all days, New Year's Eve, we left London Airport on January 6th, and travelled luxuriously in an air conditioned, pressurised, Britannia of B.O.A.C., on the first leg of our journey to Algiers. We were due for a mere three hour refuelling stop in Algiers, but local workmen somehow managed to make a hole in the hull of our Britannia, and to fly on was out of the question—and so, at the expense of B.O.A.C., we lived highly in Algiers for 24 hours, staying at the Hotel St. George, which is definitely recommended!

The next stage of the journey took us to Kano, where we met ex-P.O. Tel. Davies, late of R.N.S.S. Devonport, now performing as Radio Officer in Air Traffic Control at Kano Airport.

From Kano to Entebbe—and rather warm on the Equator in comparison to the Pompey of three days earlier—a quick change into tropical rig and to Dakotas of East African Airways, and on to our destination—Mombasa.

At Mombasa *Comus* awaited us, so too did C.P.O. Tel. Ferguson, Yeoman Collins, and their respective staffs. Our turnover was a rush job—but complete in itself, as we had the prospect of our 14 day trip across the Indian Ocean to Singapore in which to "get things sorted out."

The trip was uneventful, sea calm, weather pleasant if rather uncomfortable for our younger members, and we arrived in Trinco a.m. January 21st. A quick trip inshore to scrounge typewriter rolls, etc., then back to the ship to sail late afternoon.

Between Trinco and Singapore, however, we learned that we were to reign in *Comus* until, at the latest, mid-April, then to transfer to *Cossack*, now almost at the end of her long refit in Singapore Dockyard, and that *Comus* is to be steamed back to the U.K. by the crew of the *Modeste*. We only hope that *Modeste's* people aren't too 'threadbare' at the prospect of steaming someone else's ship home via the Cape—no pressurised Britannias for them!

Still, in *Comus*, we are beginning to learn our capabilities, and the move to *Cossack* won't be too heavy a load. We understand that she is rather more modern than *Comus*, but we only hope that the W/T Office is, as in *Comus*, air conditioned.

Our work up programme is going with a swing, we kicked off with A/S practices, working with

Cheviot, *Concord*, *Telemachus*, *Auriga*, and various frigates of the Third F.S.

Our future programme, both in *Comus* and *Cossack*, is very much a Singapore one, with no high living jaunts to Hong Kong to look forward to—but we are getting a spell in *Terror* between ships, which will make a change.

Our "first time foreign" members of the staff are really getting organised, fast blacks, night clubs, etc., and our Junior Sig. has announced that he intends to be tattooed in every port he visits on the F.E.S.—who says that the age of Francis Drake is past!!

Still, to close with a selection of our most howling howlers (and we've had plenty already!):—

- (a) L/Tel. "What was the time of despatch of ---- DTG ----?" (there being no entry on message form).
Junior Tel.: "It was after pipe-down Hookey."
- (b) P.O. Tel.: "What is a Codress message?"
Ord. Sig.: "A message with some code in it."
- (c) Yeoman: "How do we know when *Concord* is under way?"
Junior Sig.: "When her anchor is clear of the water, and can be seen."

FOSIC'S FOLLOWERS

Of all the members in the Communication Branch, we can—for a while at least—say we have been among the lucky few. Pierhead jumps to the scorching regions of the Red Sea, or to the tideless royal blue waters of the Mediterranean were unknown to us. We may not be fortunate enough to have salty sea yarns tucked beneath our belt, to be held in reserve until the "beer flows free", but our stories of the Australian visit and of the 1956 Olympics will be pleasing to the ear of most sports enthusiasts for quite a time to come.

Early in November, bound for the land of the Southern Cross, our host ship H.M.S. *Newcastle*



sailed from Singapore as the Flagship of the Royal Escort Squadron and contingent of the Olympic Squadron. Exercises and drills with the Royal Yacht *Britannia* and other escort ships helped to make the trip through the Java and Flores Seas a pleasant one. After saying "Au Revoir" to the *Britannia*, the mountainous coast of Queensland and the Islands of the Great Barrier Reef provided us with a most picturesque journey to Sydney whose gay lights and hospitable people welcomed us and helped us to shed much of that "Foreign Commission" feeling.

The next three weeks were spent at Melbourne where everyone had the opportunity of watching the Olympic Games either at the Stadium itself or on T.V. (three sets were supplied to *Newcastle* for the period of the Games). Perhaps this wonderful and unforgettable sporting spectacle was only exceeded by the friendliness and hospitality accorded to us by the people of the Olympic City. The arrangements for entertaining the Squadron were outstanding and the items far too numerous to mention; suffice to say that they far exceeded our expectations.

When the finals of the Olympics were over and the athletes were departing, we were brought back to reality by a quick recall to Hong Kong, where the Christmas, New Year and Chinese New Year festivities were enjoyed.

We said farewell to *Newcastle* in mid-January only to bid "Hello" to the *Newfoundland* where we now—temporarily—reside. The Fleet Concentration at Pulau Tioman, a month on shore at Singapore, and S.E.A.T.O. Exercises in early May, promise us a lively future.

In closing we would like to say "Bon Voyage" to P.O. Tel. Gardner, whose return to U.K. was hastened by illness, and also a farewell to Tel. Bosomworth.

FUNAFUTI FROLICS or DESERT ISLAND RISKS

The fact that ten years had elapsed since last the island of Funafuti in the Ellice Group had been visited by a ship of the Royal Navy made our courtesy call there a Red Letter Day for the natives as well as the ship's company.

On anchoring in the deep blue waters of the lagoon we were informed of the arrangements for our reception. A cricket match, swimming contest and canoe races had been organised for the afternoon, whilst in the evening a firework display from the ship was to be followed by a reception and dance in the local meeting house known as the Meneaba.

In the cricket match and swimming contest the natives charmingly displayed their superiority, whilst the "canoe racing" must have been regarded as a walk-over by the brawny islanders, for though two out-rigger canoes were provided for our sport no native crews so much as put paddle to water. The first canoe manned by the scratch crew of volunteers from *Cockade* suffered disaster soon after



launching, only 50 yards or so from the beach. The second was more fortunate and succeeded in circumnavigating our anchored floating home. The distance to the ship was about a mile, and our crew had some difficulty in steering a straight course due to the drag of the out-rigger. Alas—their triumph was short lived; while still some distance from the beach on the return trip, high spirits on the part of one of the paddlers caused the canoe to capsize depositing all five into the warm water. A cry of "sharks" was greeted with the customary high pitched reply but in fact no sharks were present. The unintentional swim was, however, much enjoyed and a laughing company of islanders waded into the shallows to help retrieve the over-turned canoe which had been pushed to the shore.

The members of the ship's company were then invited into the palm thatched huts and presented with drinking coconuts, for which most soon acquired a taste. As dusk fell the crew and islanders gathered on the shore in front of the open sided assembly room to watch the firework display and illumination of the ship. From the excited cries of the children and approving "ahs" of the adults it was easy to tell that they thoroughly enjoyed our efforts. When the last coloured stars and rockets faded we were ushered into the Meneaba and sat cross legged on the woven palm-leaf matting to watch the local equivalent of a Saturday night "Hop". Grass skirted dusky maidens formed the front line of the Chorus, with the male "Corps de Ballet" squatting behind and around the orchestra. The music was provided by a circle of muscular musicians with a matting covered tea chest and tin box "tynpany" beaten with the palms of many hands, whilst the noise of string and wood wind instruments was simulated by other muscular and tuneful Funafuti natives. The welcoming speech intimated that our hosts expected us to provide alternate songs and dances, but first they regaled us with many samples of their "rock 'n roll", albeit much more enchanting than the "civilised" Western version. Fortunately a member of our company, P.O. M. E. Jock Cameron, had brought his bagpipes, and the islanders soon warmed to this strange instrument.

The dusky maidens soon began the local version of the "Snowball Waltz", dragging one after another of the assembled matelots to the centre. Great amusement was caused by their antics in attempting to follow the motions of the complicated and symbolic dances at arms length, cheek to cheek style being definitely taboo. P.O. Tel. "Snake Hips" Burdall was prominent and even the Coder's contortions called for a cat call or two.

Speech making and exchanges of gifts occupied the later part of the evening, our Captain receiving locally made necklaces of shells, and other produce on behalf of the ship, giving in return a case of "Steak and Kidney Puddings" amongst other items. This may seem a rather mundane gift but food of this sort is very limited on these islands, and any additions to their diet of coconuts and fish are much appreciated. Then there were more songs and dancing to cement our cordial relationship with these intensely loyal folk.

All too soon we had to leave, laden with green coconuts and bunches of bananas, singing with great feeling our parting salute "Auld Lang Syne", and a little number which is more often heard in Union Street than the South Pacific entitled "The Oggie Song".

All of us will remember the wonderful people and their tropical paradise for as long as we live.

"Thinking of a holiday, chum? Try Funafuti for Sunny Fun and Frolics."

H.M.S. "NEWCASTLE"

Since our last report we have covered quite a large expanse of ocean. We escorted the Royal Yacht *Britannia* part of the way to Australia and before parting company in the Arafura Sea we did a real "man overboard." Happily the man was recovered

thanks to *Consort*, who had BRAVO LIMA TWO hoisted in a twink.

The Olympic Squadron comprising *Newcastle*, *Consort* and *Cockade* did much to further the goodwill and to show the Flag in the Antipodes. *Newcastle* was fêted in Sydney and Melbourne, where we managed to stay for the whole of the Games. Our smaller sisters, however, saw more of Australia. Those who have been to Australia before know how well our "Cobbers" entertain. We went back to Hong Kong for Christmas as our visit to New Zealand was unfortunately cancelled.

Having completed a self-refit in Hong Kong, during which time we successfully conducted V.S. exercises from the bottom of a dry-dock, we said "farewell" to the Flag of F.O.2 F.E.S. and became plain H.M.S. *Newcastle*. We sallied forth to Singapore to prepare ourselves for service on the East Indies Station.

In Trincomalee we took the Flag of C-in-C East Indies, Yeo. Carter having renewed, tested and dusted the Main halyards for the occasion. F.C.O., having already spent much time in the Persian Gulf, decided his presence at Trinco was his more essential commitment and he is joining us at Karachi. This, of course, gives the S.C.O. his big chance to see how many hoists we can get up before we pull another dipole down. C-in-C has brought a small staff, headed by those stalwarts Yeo, Jupp (whom it is believed came to the E.I.S. just before Marco Polo!) and P.O. Tel. Temple.

We are now in the middle of our Persian Gulf cruise and after the not so bright lights of Muscat, Du Bai and Umm Said, are now at Bahrein looking forward to the possibilities of Basra and Abadan. We have made the discovery that the Persian Gulf presents a wonderful opportunity for a brush up on Ceremonial. It is understood (according to the



Communication Department H.M.S. "Newcastle", 1955-1957



Hong Kong Communications Staff

HONG KONG M.S.C. AND W/T

Events in the Middle East were felt even as far as 114 degrees 10 minutes East, particularly as regards depleting our staff and we are now running on a "shoestring". The trouble with "carrying on as usual" is that the powers that be naturally decide that you must have been vastly over-staffed in the past and this has now been adjusted by events.

Sub-Lieutenant Dartnell has now returned to the U.K. after what is probably a post 1939-45 war record for a foreign service commission, three years and four months; we miss him, especially as his relief is a "liver in". We are very sorry to be losing our B.C.O., Lt.-Cmdr. Lloyd, about Easter time.

Yet another "Kung Hai Fat Choy" (Chinese New Year), and the accompanying explosions has been safely negotiated and the Tels' ear drums are back to normal again.

On the sporting side, hockey is our monopoly out

here. The Communications provide no less than five regulars in the Navy side, P.O. Tel. Leach, P.O.R.E. MacDonough, L/Tel. McGeowen, Tel. Perry and Sig. Taylore. MacDonough, McGeowen and Perry are Combined Services players and MacDonough and Perry play for the Colony. It is little wonder that we are confident of winning the inter-Part Knock-out Competition.

We have a strong soccer team which is doing well, although with a full watchkeeping complement, it is not always easy to get all eleven off at any one time. The Chinese Communicators have won the inter-Part 7-a-side and a most impressive shield now graces our trophy case.

At rugby, although we are unable to field a team, we take pride from the fact that the Navy are the colony champions and the B.C.O. captain's the side.



Hong Kong Communications Staff

WHO WAS THE GREATEST SIGNAL OFFICER?

(The old-fashioned specialist designations are used below, as (S) for Signals, (T) for Torpedo, and (N) for Navigation).

This is bound to be a controversial question, and it may well be said that it all depends upon what one means by "greatest", and also by "signal officer". Is it an appreciation based on greatness in history, as in the case of Lieutenant John Pasco handling Lord Nelson's "immortal message", or greatness as a pioneer, as Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry Jackson; or greatness in invention and research, or as a signal department administrator, and so on? Strictly speaking "signal officer" should be confined to one who graduated in a highly professional course at a naval signal school, but that would rule out many famous signal experts such as Popham, Pasley and Marryat. The best plan is to consider each person in the Services who has contributed in his own way to communications at sea. This brings in the question as to whether officers of the Army and Royal Marines should be considered; because of their important work in this sphere some of them certainly should be included.

To take the Royal Marine wireless officers first; from the time they were appointed for W/T duties they abandoned or eschewed all further Corps service, and it is doubtful whether they ever sat on a court-martial, for instance, or attended a funeral as a member of the general list thereafter. More than any other officers of their branch, except warrant telegraphists, they were entirely bound up in wireless, while the naval officer of the same branch was liable to go back to general duties at any time, and might find himself in an executive position before resuming specialist duties. The first Marine officer was Lieutenant C. G. G. Crawley, R.M.A., about whom an Order-in-Council was issued in August 1903 in regard to his appointment and allowances as an instructor in wireless telegraphy in the Torpedo School at Portsmouth. This was followed in December 1907 by another Order authorising further appointments, and by July 1909 there were as many as three Royal Marine Artillery and twelve Royal Marine Light Infantry, acting as W/T officers or assistants. Many of them held the highest positions in the Fleet in the Old War of 1914-18, and while it would be invidious to single out any one as the greatest, it could be said that Colonel B. C. Gardiner, as a G.S.O.2, was Head of the Wireless Board in 1921. Another of the original R.M.L.I. majors was E. G. Cheesman, who was a qualified (S) officer in addition to W/T. Owing to their somewhat anomalous position in the Corps it was decided in October 1920 to transfer those who remained, to the number of twelve, to a Special Supplementary List.

In the Army, some names were so important that they must be given a place. Signalling, stemming from the telegraph, was from the first the business of the Royal Engineers, in the same way that they

dealt with roads and bridges and so on. It was not till 1920 that the Royal Corps of Signals was formed and took over this part of the duty. First comes the redoubtable Colonel John Macdonald, the fourth son of the romantic heroine of the Hebrides, Flora Macdonald. He held rank in all sorts of regiments and Corps, among them the Bengal Engineers. He was said to be by far the most persevering and voluminous writer on telegraphs and he was the author of a tremendous Treatise, dated 1817, containing a mass of inventions, the climax being reached with his Terrestrial Telegraph consisting of no fewer than thirteen shutters, a vane and a ball. A large part of the book is devoted to naval sea communications. He worried the Admiralty (among other bodies) to adopt some of his Heath-Robinson-like inventions, but was told that Their Lordships wished for no other better or worse than their existing telegraph. Later they said, in 1816, that telegraphs were now wholly unnecessary.

There was then the very famous Charles W. Pasley, colonel of the Royal Engineers, born in 1780, and dying as a General in 1861. His chief claim to signal achievement was his semaphore which is used universally to-day. He invented it in 1816, and perfected it gradually, but it was not till about 1874 that it came into operational use in the Fleet. When mechanical semaphores were removed from H.M. ships in 1943 they only differed from Pasley's design by the omission of the subsidiary "indicator" arm. At one period the mechanical semaphore was in constant service, being fitted with an electric light reflector for night use, and equipped with three arms for evolutionary communications. These were not Pasley's inventions but they were modifications of his machine.

The next military man to be considered was not a Royal Engineer but a "foot-slogger" of the 12th (East Suffolk) Regiment. He was Captain F. J. Bolton, who had a natural flair for signalling, and specialised in night communications, adopting lime-light as his medium. In the year 1863 he claimed to have signalled 35 miles from the Crystal Palace to Aldershot, from Dover to Calais, and from the Isle of Wight to Portsdown Hill, attaining a speed of 17 words a minute. The advantages of electricity were admitted, but since there was no means of carrying it about, Bolton had a splendid portable lamp for lime-light with compressed gases in a knapsack. From the naval angle Bolton is chiefly remarkable for his association and co-operation with Colomb (referred to later); these two, of the same age, worked along their own lines for the Army and Royal Navy respectively, but collaborating for the common good. Bolton became a Colonel, was knighted in 1884, and died in 1887.



By courtesy of The National Maritime Museum
Vice-Admiral Philip H. Colomb

Now to turn to the naval officers who have fostered and forwarded the art of signalling. Earlier methods were too primitive to consider here, and for a starting point one need hardly go further back than the days of Rear-Admiral Richard Kempenfelt. He was, however, not a signal officer in a particular sense; but he has been called a great chief-of-staff, on account of his reforms in all kinds of directions afloat, signals being only one of his many enthusiasms. None-the-less, Kempenfelt raised the art of communication by recommending clear designs for his flags, and by simplifying the signal-book so that meanings were not solely to be found from the position in the rigging where the hoists happened to be displayed. His career was cut short when the *Royal George* capsized in 1782. It was left to Earl Howe, "Black Dick" of the lower-deck, to complete the work begun by Kempenfelt, and Howe's name goes down to posterity as a great signal-book reformer. But again, he was not a signal officer! Next in fame must be Sir Home Popham, mainly celebrated for his invention of the Telegraphic Vocabulary from which the principal signals were made during the Trafalgar operations. The discovery of this method of communication was nothing remarkable; it is only amazing that nobody thought of it earlier. Once flags had been invented to represent numbers it was the natural sequence that a numbered dictionary could be introduced for signal conversations. That Popham's ingenuity could be called in question was shown by a ribald reference to the subject in a contemporary naval novel, where Popham appears as "Captain Sir High Topham" and his signal-book is compiled by a midshipman with the help of the marine drummer! Popham's work as a signal reformer cannot be dismissed so lightly, however, because he had a far greater contribution to the art in his excellent semaphore which was used for telegraphing messages across country

between the Admiralty and Portsmouth, and functioned highly successfully from 1824 to 1847.

Captain Frederick Marryat, the novelist, is the next officer with a great deal to his credit, though now it was in the interests of the Merchant Service rather than the Royal Navy that he achieved so much effect. This was his famous Code of Signals which flourished from 1817 to 1879, and was truly the forerunner of the International Code of to-day. Marryat was a "salt-horse" officer who never served even as a flag-lieutenant, and so does not qualify in our stipulated role. He died in 1848.

Rear Admiral Sir Edward Inglefield died as recently as 1945, but here at last is an officer who was of the old-fashioned flag-lieutenant-cum-signal-officer regime. At my request he put on record the story of how he came to invent the celebrated Inglefield clips, and although this piece of apparatus may seem a trivial thing, it had far-reaching reactions and spread throughout the seafaring world. He was also a reformer of flag design in connection with the International Code.

If the *DICTIONARY OF NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY* is any guide to fame then Sir Henry Jackson must bear the palm, for the article on his life therein is very lengthy and important. He is called the "pioneer of wireless telegraphy". He first specialised as (N), then turned to the *Vernon* and became qualified in (T). In 1890 he thought of the possibilities of wireless, and in 1895 commanded the torpedo-school ship *Defiance* and experimented extensively with coherers, the first type of receiver. In 1896 he established communication by wireless waves from one end of the ship to the other, a matter of several hundred yards. In 1902 he described the experiments by which distances of 140 nautical miles were attained. He was back in the *Vernon* in 1904, in command. Like many another specialist he had to forsake his metier on advancement to flag rank, so that after 1905, when he held the highest appointments till he became an admiral-of-the-fleet, there was no more heard of W/T from him for the present. Nevertheless when he retired in 1924 he was able to resume his experimental work, and was chairman of the Radio Research Board of the Department of Scientific Research. Needless to say he is considered one of the greatest contributors to progress in the communications world. Although he appears to have been both (N) and (T), he was not qualified as (S).

It is almost impossible to think of Jackson without Everett, but whereas Jackson has four columns in the *D. N. B.*, Everett does not even have a mention. His work, however, has been well recorded. He was flag-lieutenant to three famous admirals, Sir Compton Domville, Sir Henry Stephenson and Sir Harry Rawson. The late Humphrey Hugh Smith in one of his amusing books, "A Yellow Admiral Remembers", refers to the year 1897 and mentions that Admiral Stephenson brought with him as flag-lieutenant "the celebrated Allan Everett, the finest

signal officer that the Navy had hitherto produced." History does not relate whether Everett introduced any startling innovations in communications, but he had the great distinction of being the first Superintendent of Signals Schools, and held that office from 1901 to 1904, and from 1906 to 1908.

Consideration must now be given to Philip Howard Colomb, and the suggestion that *he* was the greatest signal officer on record. He was born in 1831, and died as a Vice-Admiral in 1899. He was flag-lieutenant to Sir Thomas Pasley (uncle of the semaphore inventor) and Sir Thomas Symonds, and it is said that this determined his whole career. To him is attributed the application of the Morse code, hitherto meant for the electric needle, to visual and audible methods, and there is no doubt that he was the founder of flashing signals by night and day, adopted in the Navy in 1867. Whereas committees of experts were generally set up to revise and redraft such things as signal books, Colomb was selected by the Admiralty to carry out by himself complete signalling reforms. These included the "Manual of Fleet Evolutions" in 1874, at a time when precise, barrack-square sort of movements were to be applied to ironclads, proceeding entirely under steam power, and in fleets consisting of many battleships. It is impossible to read contemporary reports of progress without coming across evidence of Colomb's activities, which covered the whole field of communications. His lectures at the Royal United Service Institution on 29th May and 1st June, 1863, aroused great interest and gave rise to wide discussion. As far as is known such lectures on signalling and communications at the R.U.S.I. have never been imitated or surpassed. The D.N.B. devotes three columns to Colomb, and although this does not equal Jackson's record in the same biography, it gives a clue to the amount of importance that was accorded to Colomb by his contemporaries. H.M.

PRIZE WINNERS—EASTER 1957

SPECIAL FEATURE COMPETITION

C.Y.S. D. Clare, Devonport. Page 39

CARTOON COMPETITION

Ex C.Y.S. J. Gerrard, Devonport. Page 9

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

Wren W. Salter, M.M.S.O. Page 33

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

1057 Keith Avenue,
Berkeley 8, Calif.,
23rd January, 1957

Dear Sir,

I read with much sympathy your "The Lay of the Last Signalman", which was reprinted in the December 1956 issue of the U.S. NAVAL INSTITUTE PROCEEDINGS. As you may know, the U.S. Navy has been without the able services of the Signalman rating since 1948, when Quartermasters were envisioned as being able to handle both navigation and V/S. Since that year signal bridges have become increasingly less proficient and Commanding Officers are hesitant to use them when maneuvering, whether it be a division, squadron or task force. The collision between USS *Floyd B. Parks* (DD884) and USS *Columbus* (CA74) in the South China Sea was blamed, I believe, entirely on faulty V/S.

The cry for the restoration of the SM rating was initiated almost immediately after its disestablishment, and eight years of letter writing and pleading with Type Commanders, the Chief of Naval Operations and the Secretary of the Navy have finally been rewarded. On October 19th, 1956 the Signalman was re-established as a general service rating, and we sincerely hope it will not again be thought of as an "ancient craft".

As for the British Communicators, I had heard nothing but praise for them from my brothers-in-arms who served in the Second World War and the Korean conflict; I was not disappointed when H.M.S. *Superb* arrived in San Diego in mid-1955. To compare their efficiency with that of the average American would be to compare the fire power of a battleship and a frigate. However, within a very few years we hope to be in the same class we were during World War II.

Since I was released to the Reserve in 1955 my interest in the problems of communications has not lessened—in fact I may still become a radio amateur someday. I would be very interested to become acquainted with the Royal Navy's slant on communications and wonder whether you could send me information as to the possibility of subscribing to THE COMMUNICATOR. I would appreciate very much any help you might be able to give me.

Sincerely,

JOHN C. HAU,
Signalman Second Class
U.S. Naval Reserve.

SUMMER EDITION, 1957

Closing date for Contributions, 28th June, 1957.
Closing date for Bulk Orders, 12th July, 1957.

We take off our hats to...



Junior Telegraphist
AVERY for winning
the Portsmouth
Command Junior
Cross-Country
Championship Race



Photograph
by
Portsmouth
Evening News



The Locally Entered Personnel Communication Football team
for winning the Seven-a-Side Soccer Cup in Hong Kong



Lieut.-Commander G. MANN for
winning a Bronze Medal at the
Melbourne Olympic Games whilst
sailing *Bluebottle*



Jr. Sig. BRADY of H.M.S. *Ganges*
for winning his weight of the Inter-
Service Boys Boxing and in the
Quarter-finals of ABA Jr. Champs



EAST INDIES

CEYLON WEST W./T.

After the Christmas rush, Ceylon West has at last resumed its normal tempo. No records have been broken, but what unsupplemented man-power we had during those difficult days amply vindicated itself and did more than well for the thousands of Christmas-greeters who unwittingly availed themselves of our services.

With the inauguration of the rank of Sub-Lieutenant (S.D.) (C.), we have gained Mr. P. A. Williams who is now well established as station Signals Officer, his predecessor, Lt. Bloodworth, having moved up to the vacant First Lieutenant's billet.

Social life is on the up-grade thanks to the stalwart efforts of Tels. Fulman and Snell backed by the R.E.A. with his bag of lighting effects. We shall long remember the New Year's Eve social when Father Time was found asleep beneath the proverbial bench and was absent from his place of duty as the last 2359 of the old year became the first 0001 of the new. Even now, as we write, we have hardly recovered from a Valentine Day dance for which the canteen resembled something reminiscent of the Chelsea Arts Ball in a bamboo boutique. All we lack to turn our socials into a general uproar is a pianist.

Two new regular features have been introduced to our social programme in the form of whist drives and "musical" evenings, the latter being the aftermath of a six week run of "Rock Around The Clock" in Colombo.

Our main diversion, however, is on the sports field. In a climate which allows an all the year season in most sporting activities, our opportunities are abundant, and the station standards are still high in comparison with those of most local clubs. But drafting commitments are, alas, denuding our ranks of soccer and hockey stars, and our hope now lies a great deal in the new blood which Their Lordships deem fit to send us. Our best wishes go to C.P.O. Tel. Manns, our general sports factotum, who is on the departure list, and those of the hockey team to L/Tel. Winter, its captain, bound for Civvy Street. A newly instituted "Blood Shield" is bringing even our non-sporting types into lively combat, though the shield seems to spend a large proportion of its time hanging in the C. & P.O.'s Mess. The inmates see in this proof that there is life in the old dogs yet, but it is whispered that the lower lower-deck hasn't got the heart to challenge the poor souls.

H.M.S. "LOCH KILLISPORT"

After General Service leave we awoke one morning to the tread of heavy boots on the upper deck, and became the first frigate to carry a detachment of Royal Marines as part of the ship's company.

On leaving Portsmouth August 16th we sailed for the Persian Gulf via the Cape, and were the first ship to be diverted as a result of the Suez Crisis. En-route we spent one day at Gibraltar and one at Freetown. These were followed by two much more enjoyable days at both Cape Town and Mombasa and was our last look at civilisation before arriving in the Gulf.

Following routine patrols of the islands, we were called to the assistance of two grounded tankers on the same day, S.S. *Olympic Games* and *Athel Monarch*, during which time the only thought was "Salvage Money."

A few interesting days were spent at sea exercising with the other serving members of the Gulf Squadron, and the *Superb*, flying the flag of C-in-C E.I. Our oft-promised trip to Basra then materialised and we all enjoyed a very good but expensive week.

Leaving Basra we sailed for Karachi where we did a 14 day docking, and where the whole ship's company was entertained exceptionally well by the British residents.

There was a wide range of sport laid on for us, with Yeoman Burnand playing hockey every other day, and Sigs. Lister and Ford playing rugby and soccer. We were challenged at basket ball by Karachi W.T., which we are sorry to say we lost.

H.M.S. "LOCH LOMOND"

Let's not dwell upon the period spent in Chatham Dockyard, except to state that, contrary to expectations, we were NOT fitted with RATT, CAW or any of the modern conveniences so dear to a "sparker's" heart, all we did get was a new locker for the stowage of dressing lines and the furniture of the M.S.O. so arranged that it now accommodates a camp bed, which, in turn, accommodates a very large Yeoman.

We recommissioned at Chatham in July '56 but it wasn't until September that we finally cleared the ship of the last dockyard matey and left for Portland and work-up. Details of the work-up are the same for any ship, but why is the Communication department expected to be 100 per cent perfect from the beginning? Surely we are not that good, or are we?

In mid-November we left Chatham and started the long trek to the Gulf, via the Cape. The voyage had its compensations with very brief stops at Gibraltar, Freetown, Simonstown and Mombasa, and, at the last two ports of call, everything possible was done for the entertainment of the ship's company. My own thanks go to C.P.O. Tel. Ford, now of the Royal East African Navy, for two delightful days spent in the company of his family.

We reached Bahrain on Christmas Eve and shared the festive season with *Loch Insh*, *Loch Killisport* and *Superb*.

The Gulf appears to have changed considerably since the last commission with all three frigates and the Flagship doing almost permanent duty within its boundaries. Vast changes have also taken place at MAW and, instead of visiting the M.S.O. I found myself trespassing in the married quarters, the M.S.O. having been shifted to new quarters, fitted up with B40s, an 89Q and sporting a C.P.O. Tel. in charge instead of a Ldg. Tel. I think that everyone who knows MAW, and the volume of traffic handled, will agree that the station warrants this change.

H.M.S. "SUPERB"

Shortly after our inspection, *Superb* departed, ostensibly on the annual joy ride with C-in-C E.I. and Staff to the choicest of the Persian Gulf, Indian and Pakistan ports. However, the fates dealt us yet another of the crushing blows to which we have become inured. We did get to Bahrain and C-in-C did fly from Colombo to join us, but henceforth our cruise dissolved into thin air, and we had to resign ourselves to the usual humdrum changes of programme, periods of frantic activity, and bored frustration which are the lot of any Naval Force whose role is a waiting one.

We also found our own consolations. Despite the monotony, the cordial friendships inspired between the Gloucester Regiment, King's Shropshire Light Infantry and the Companies of *Loch Fyne* and *Loch Insh*, will be long remembered. The fishermen amongst us, Sig. Last and Ord. Tel. Chandler in particular, found much sport, whilst our Communicator Captain landed a couple of gigantic sailfish off Khor Kuwait. The craze even spread to Lt. Argent who, although he personally didn't fish, was espied so often at the controls of the motor cutter full of fishermen that, on the evening of 1st January, the union of Yeomen of Watches presented him with a Blue P.O.M.E. Badge, bearing below it the caption (SD)(E)(C).

One incident of particular note during the pre-Christmas period was the hurried commissioning of *Jawada* (an ex-Med. L.C.T.), which was taken over at virtually no notice from the Bahrain Oil Company. The Communication contribution was L/Tel. French and L/Sig. May who did a splendid job and were recompensed by a hectic Christmas at Umm Said, where we gather they were thoroughly spoiled by the British population. As at this time Sig. Sparham and O/Sig. Godfrey were helping out at *Jufair* M.S.O., and Tel. Clements had managed to wangle his way to Aden, our numbers were somewhat thin and our absent ones sadly missed.

C-in-C E.I. and his Flag Lieut. arrived on Christmas Day, ostensibly to attend Church and

walk round the Flagship messes. By strange coincidence, their advent spelt also much M.S.O. and Crypto work, and increased Ship/Shore traffic. However, our seniors rose to the occasion splendidly and the whole Communication Mess Deck was able to sit down together to Christmas dinner, and enjoy a quiet snooze afterwards, whilst Lt.(C), the C.P.O. Tel., C.Y.S., P.O. Tels. and Yeomen held the fort up top. We are so grateful to our gallant seniors for their magnificent gesture that we feel that undue mention of the missing Broadcast numbers and the M.S.O. re-distributions would be taking unfair advantage.

After Christmas we proceeded to Khor Kuwait for landing exercises. Who told us that we would be almost static, and that Type 622 and spare battery would be the order of the day? Up hill and down dale, from ridge to ridge, and from crevice to crevice, we wended our weary way in a vain effort to keep up with our respective Company Commanders in their haste to complete the winking out of M.I.L.O. (Major Peter Krell of the South Lanes.) and his merry band of oddly assorted guerrillas. L/Tel. McGregor, our Royal Marines Company H.Q. operator, was most impressed with their solicitude for his welfare, as they virtually carried him and his set from crag to crag all the long weary day, until he received the magic words "Exercise completed, re-embark forthwith."

We returned to Bahrain for fuel and passed on to Sir Abu Nair for yet another landing exercise, which coincided with a fire in the boiler room and a wire round *Jawada's* screw.

We finally left Bahrain on January 21st for home, glad to go but feeling that our many friends on the frigates and in *Jufair* were probably well pleased to be rid of us.

And so to Simonstown via Mombasa, where we paused to renew old friendships. Simonstown had heard that *Superb* needed a little light relief to brighten them up a bit, and how well they all responded, from C-in-C S.A.S.A. down to the humblest junior rating.

We would like to take this opportunity of thanking them all for their wonderful welcome and their overwhelming hospitality. As Communicators, we particularly thank Slangkop W/T for their friendly co-operation on Ship/shore, and Lts. Whiffin and Armstrong and their senior ratings and instructors for the many kindnesses bestowed on us by both Slangkop and S.T.C. Klaver Camp.

Although homeward bound, we would have gladly tarried longer. The happy memories of our visit will remain with us a very long time. Leaving Simonstown on February 12th we called in at Freetown for fuel, and into Dakar on February 24th for two hours to greet H.M.S. *Ceylon*, our ultimate relief as East Indies Flagship, *Ceylon*, we say you really were a tiddly ship—you looked a picture!

THE BRIDGE ON THE RIVER KWAI

Starring: ALEC GUINNESS, WILLIAM HOLDEN, JACK HAWKINS, JAMES DONALD

The film opens as two or three hundred soldier prisoners, half starved, unclean and unshaven, are emerging from the tropical jungle after a 500 mile trek up from Singapore, and getting their first glimpses of the prison camp which is to be their home.

It would be hard in the extreme to imagine the members of Ceylon West Receiving Station, who are, for the most part, well-fed, plump and in fact, disgustingly healthy, as portraying these soldier prisoners, but that is the case, and the wonders of the camera and make up teams worked miracles of transformation.

The film of the above title will be generally released in Great Britain in September this year, barring accidents, of course.

The film tells the story of British prisoners of war in a Japanese P.O.W. camp in Burma, and of their work on the Burma Death Railway and, in particular, of their work on the Railway Bridge over the river Kwai, from which the film gets its title.

Also threaded through the story is a battle of wits between the Senior British Officer, Colonel Nicholson, who is played by Alec Guinness, and the Japanese Camp Commandant, Colonel Saito, who seems to think that the Geneva Convention is to quote him, "A coward's code". It also tells of the cold war of the officer prisoners, to gain their rightful status in the camp, and how, although they are sorely put to it, what with solitary confinement and the loss of one of them through machine-gun fire, they eventually get their rights.

If I say much more about the story I shall be spoiling the effect of seeing the film, so I shall leave it at that. However, it remains to be said that with a director like David Lean, who directed "The Robe", and the stars mentioned above, there should be no

doubt as to the final calibre of the film. It should, in fact, be extremely good.

The film company have been employing the majority of the staff of Ceylon West, during their 24 hours off watch of course, as extras for about two months, the pay being £3 a day, which was very welcome.

The work which we were called on to do was to fill in all the prominent places before the camera in crowd scenes, such as parade ground or hospital group scenes, where Europeans had to appear in the foreground.

Those of the cinema audiences who have friends or relations in Ceylon West, and who go to see this film, will, if they are fairly quick witted and have sharp eyes, probably see fleeting glimpses of them.

The only "matelot" who will be seen more than once or twice is P.O. Tel. Lowe, who has landed himself the job of Sergeant Major for the film, thus enabling him to speak in the film and also to gain more money than the rest of the Film Star Staff.

Sparkers who have already done a commission out here in Ceylon, at C.W.R.S., will probably not be able to recognise the prison camp as being the Quarry at Mahara Prison, just slightly over three miles from the station, but they will of course be quick to realise that there is no river, of the size of the river Kwai, near Mahara; this river is situated about 72 miles away between Hatton and Avisawella, thus making the march to work from the prison camp slightly more than the 10 minutes walk which you will see in the film.

I will say nothing of what happens during the building of the bridge in the film, except that in actual fact the building is costing approximately £17,000, rather a lot considering what happens to it. But then, of course, it has to take the weight of a



The C.W.R.S. "Prisoners"



ALEC GUINNESS
"No, I wouldn't advise filming as
a career".



L/Tel. Mott, L/Tel. McKinnon,
L/Tel. Morgan, P.O. Tel. Bradley
and L/Tel. Ashby.

troop train and about 200 men marching over it during the actual shooting.

The conditions under which the extras from the C.W.R.S. are working are, to say the least, very far from being in keeping with the atmosphere of the film. The meals, for instance, which although eaten on the Quarry Railway lines, were on a par with the Ritz or Waldorf Astoria in quality and, if I may be allowed to say so, equally as agreeable in quantity, the meal allowance per man per day being about 15/-, out of which comes breakfast, lunch and a small tea.

The Stars of the film are for the most part very co-operative; Alec Guinness, being far from as reserved as he would have you believe, would always stop to speak with any of our members and on odd occasions has been known to stay talking for over an hour during the slack periods of filming. He could and would talk on any subject and, when asked by a budding Kirk Douglas what he thought of filming as a career, he said, "I don't think that I would advise filming as a career." Not even for the money it brings in.

But having been amongst them now, and working with them for the past two months, I feel that the majority of the chaps out here now know a little more of what it actually takes to make a film, both in Sweat and Patience, Patience being, I think, the main paying quality for the Big Stars.

If, and when, you see this film I think you will be favourably impressed by it, as it is a true story in very real surroundings, even though our chief was heard to say, "Ee I wuz in a Jap camp durint war, but it wernt nowt like this."

And finally, as a parting word we will quote James Donald, when asked if he would go to see the finished article, "I'm paid to make 'em, not to see 'em."

Now I will leave it to your own judgment.

A.G.W.

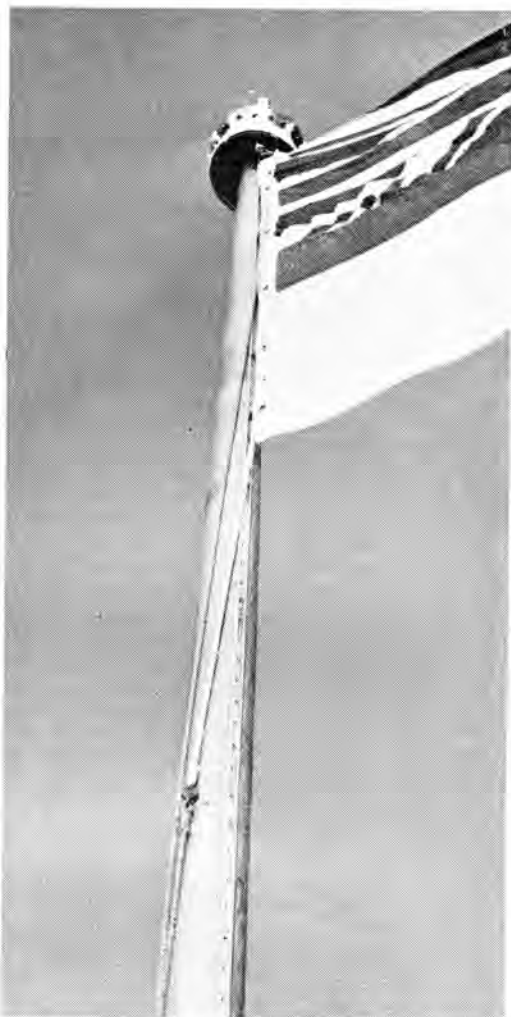
TRACKS FOR JACK AND ENSIGN STAFFS

Several ships in recent years have had metal tracks fitted to Jack and Ensign staffs and in case ships want to know details, they are given below:—

Track at 1/6 per foot	} As fitted in yachts/dinghies and obtainable at any ship chandler.
Slides at 10d. each	

In the Home Fleet Flagship, the bill for the above was met by the Improvement Fund (total £5). It can be fitted by anybody capable of wielding a screw-driver.

A certain amount of extra work is involved in sewing the slides onto the canvas of the flags, but this outweighs the anxious moments for Signal Officers, Chief Yeomen, and others when at colours they would otherwise invariably have the flags jamming. With the track, flags lie close to the staffs



Ensign Staff with track fitted (Halyards pulled aside so that track can be seen).

all the time, there is no jamming and when halyards stretch it is easy to rehoist close up.

Headsticks are still required. One slide to each lacehole.

THE VERY LATEST

Chief Wren to a L/Sig.: Each night I pass the Signal School I notice a light going on and off. What is it?

L./Sig.: For ratings reading a backward flashing exercise.

Chief Wren: Don't be silly, how can people read when the light keeps going off!

NOTE.—This is a TRUE story.

THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER SQUADRON



The N113 on the starboard catapult of H.M.S. "Ark Royal" ready for take off.

H.M.S. "ARK ROYAL"

The *Ark's* re-commissioning service, which was recorded for radio and television, took place at Devonport on November 1st last year.

At that time we were facing a long G.S.C. in the Med., and no-one even imagined that by the time the Easter edition of *THE COMMUNICATOR* was available, we would be lying alongside the wall at Guzz. I'm sure that after a "long and arduous foreign", our "bird-class" friends will be only too glad to take our place.

The first job on our hands was bringing the department up to standard after the long refit which the ship had just undergone, and initiating it into the new methods of communicating, such as RATT and the 600 series, equipment which some of us had never even seen, far less operated. Not only was the equipment new, but carrier organisation in general was new to the majority, although some members of the staff had previously enjoyed a commission in the *Eagle*.

After four months in commission, I think I can safely say that our department is fairly well up to scratch. No comment from *Albion* please! That, however, is the opinion of a 'sparker', and as for our "short-sighted" friends—well, perhaps the less said the better. However, even the 'sparkers' must give them credit for the strenuous flag-hoisting exercises that take place daily—normally at colours and sunset. I understand that when we arrived in Malta the signalman couldn't find the halyard for the Flag of F.O.A.C.

Malta—glorious, if somewhat distorted visions of runs ashore, but our short stay of ten days in the sunny isle, before back-tracking to the Rock, seemed an anticlimax and unreal, but there it was . . . "E.T.A. Plymouth February 25th."

During our stay in Malta we welcomed onboard a contingent of W.R.N.S. Communicators from Lascaris who were, I am sorry to say, more interested in the aircraft than in our beloved transmitting rooms. Our only complaint is that there were just too many of them for the escorts.

Let it not be thought that the commission so far has been just a Mediterranean Cruise. On the contrary, an intensive daily flying programme kept everyone, particularly the V.H.F. team, on their toes, and our transmitters were constantly in use, with a great deal of ship/shore traffic.

While exercising off Gibraltar, the ship was honoured by a visit from H.R.H. Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, who at that time was onboard *Britannia* at Gibraltar, prior to joining Her Majesty The Queen for the state visit to Portugal. His Royal Highness witnessed an impressive display of rocket and machine-gun fire from our aircraft and I am sure he left with a good impression of the *Ark*.

H.M.S. "EAGLE"

At the time of writing, the *Eagle* is commencing a long and much needed refit, with the overworked staff eagerly discussing their respective drafts.

The majority of us seem to have been rather favoured by the new central drafting system, with six going to Admiralty and six to *Afrikaner* among the numerous rather choice drafts. Of course, errors do occur from time to time, especially when a new system is in its infancy, such as the Tel. who volunteered for aircrew and is now serving in submarines, but by and large it seems to be quite a success.

It has been an eventful commission with the numerous fleet exercises, flying trials and, of course, the "Egyptian Campaign" in which *Eagle* covered herself in barnacles.

Our original arrival home date had to be postponed, however, from October until January; but, after spending Christmas and New Year at sea, we at last saw good old Plymouth Hoe.

In the field of sport, success followed success, and the curtailment of our sports programme due to the ship's movements was met with heavy hearts and sad faces in the Communication department. Our regatta crew pulled a fine race to finish a close third in the Med. fleet championships, and all praise is due to H.M.S. *Duchess* for a very fine performance throughout the competition.

The soccer team was still in the knockout competition after beating the Electricians' team on aggregate after three games, but pride of place goes to our cricket team which won all of seventeen matches played against other ship and establishment teams. C.R.I.

"SIGNAL CELIBATES"

We are still at Basegram Hall, in fact we have been there for a period of twelve buzzer exercises and some of us know a "tiddly pudding" when we hear one. Our Course is even beginning to look like a conglomeration of Signal Officers.

The point about Signal Officers is that, in company with Gunnery Officers, Navigation Officers and Executive Officers, they consider themselves the cream of the Service. But whereas with the others you can identify them from handy booklets, price threepence, you need special knowledge to pick out a Signal Officer.

There are small points to be observed—the top left-hand button is left undone, the white handkerchief shows brazenly from the breast-pocket, and the hair is worn long. But the real, the infallible sign, is the Signal Officer's waistcoat. For hours, days, weeks this may lurk modestly beneath the monkey jacket, until suddenly the coat is thrust open and there, like a primrose, is the waistcoat—trim, brass-buttoned, the ultimate sign.

No one in our Course, not even Lieutenant Flake, has dared to buy a waistcoat yet, but we watch our instructors enviously and wait the day.

Tone, you see, is the watchword of the Signal Officer, and we are fortunate in having a fitting abode in Basegram Hall. There can be little wrong with a Course of Officers who receive instruction in a room marked "WALNUT SUITE" in black painted letters on the door, even if the naval authorities try to call it 8AB.

Unfortunately this relic of past splendour has created internal problems. Lieutenant Flake, whose cabin is called "The Tassel Room", is all right. But what of Lieutenant Copping? He inhabits the Third Footman's Bedroom, and it has produced a distinctly Socialistic outlook.

This outlook did not immediately show itself. It ate unobtrusively into Lieutenant Copping's soul until one day he came upon an advertisement for a College of Telegraphy in an official manual. Prior to this he had done nothing more radical than pin up a cutting entitled "Methods of Communication. No. 1 Message in Bottle" on the ward-room notice-board, but the College of Telegraphy really fired his imagination and he gave much thought to it during lectures. In the most thrilling moment of "World Cable Systems" he could be seen thinking of how the principal of the Minerva College had first established Morse communication between the branch in Acton and the main college at Clerkenwell.

Most of the Course, let it be understood, think of happier days during lectures. Our front row knew all the answers before they ever came to Basegram Hall, and the back row do not care if they do not know them when they leave. It has made things very difficult for Lieutenant Lumping, our instructor,

"Flake" he says, "explain how you would split a converging di-pole?"

Silence.

"Lanyard?"

Deeper silence.

"Crimp?"

Sub-Lieutenant Crimp has a cheerful approach. "I've absolutely no idea whatever, sir", he says with admirable frankness.

Lieutenant Lumping then comes to Windy Corner, which he always takes at speed—"Playfair? Widgeon? Copping?"—and arrives with relief at the front row. None of the three members of Windy Corner has ever been known to answer a question, with the exception of Lieutenant Copping, who once remembered the number of henrys in a millihenry and was immediately kicked by Lieutenant Widgeon and nudged by Lieutenant Playfair so that he bore the bruises for a week.

Any danger of ever answering another question, however, was at once removed upon Lieutenant Copping's discovery of the Minerva College of Telegraphy. He dreamed, instead, of how in a modest mansion in Streatham he would start his own college. He even appointed a staff: Lieutenant Lanyard (Headmaster), Sub-Lieutenant Crimp (Games) and Lieutenant Playfair (Visiting Staff), (Music).

But the main point about Copping College, the corner stone on which it would be founded, was that everyone connected with it would be thoroughly common. The great thing, Lieutenant Copping said, was for the world to be able to point to a Copping College man and say, "There goes the sweepings of Whitechapel."

Thus it was with great delight that Lieutenant Copping discovered the teleprinter room. In times of peace the teleprinter was a respectable instrument, adorning bookmakers' offices and printing nothing more offensive than "Gay Gertie walks it in the three-thirty." Now, however, a strange and barbaric language has crept on to the paper and the operators hurl guttural syllables, reeking with false sentiments, at each other.

R. Uther? they say.

G.M.O.G. Ere I am.

Can u take for Plip, pse?

Tic. Sorry, O.G. Plop takes for Plip.

Plop is O.O.O., O.G.

This seemed admirable to Lieutenant Copping, and he adopted it for his college. In fact, being a man who never did things by halves, he startled the Mess on Guest-night by saying, "Ave u the salt, pse? Tks." So much so, that Lieutenant Flake was thoroughly upset and told Lieutenant Copping he was letting the Course down. Asking for the salt like that, Lieutenant Flake said, was not the way to win the war.

Lieutenant Copping said nothing at the time, but everything comes to the patient man. Next morning at Morse practice it was Lieutenant Flake's fate to

have to make him urgent cries for help. For some moments Lieutenant Copping considered and then laboriously hammered out his reply.

As a matter of fact few could read it, but an expert declared that it ran:

"Ave u no waterwings IMI ave u no waterwankles. Tiddly pudding. G.M.O.M. Calling-up sign."

At any rate, Petty Officer Postagram thought it was funny. And he has been in the Navy fifteen years.

(Editor's note:—The author takes no responsibility for the topicality of his article which was written during his wartime Long Course. However, it bears a striking resemblance to the present day).

Reproduced by permission of "Punch".

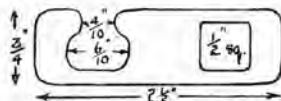
EVER TAUT

While I was in the Chatham Signal School before coming to *Ocean* I developed a system for keeping signal halyards taut in any weather conditions without attention. It is primarily intended for shore station ensign halyards, but might prove of use for Admirals' flags, etc.

The device was very simple to manufacture, using naval store items, and proved very effective throughout a trial period of about three months. It consisted of a length of porthole seating rubber three feet in length and a half an inch square, having at each end a clip as shown in the illustration. This rubber was attached by its centre to the cleat or staghorn on which the ensign halyards were normally secured. The ensign being hoisted in the normal manner, a loose turn was taken around the cleat, the rubber was then stretched to about twice its normal length and attached to the halyard by the clip, care being taken that more tension was placed on the head halyard so that the ensign remained close up. The halyards were then coiled up and laid over the cleat, without further turns being taken to allow for shrinkage in rain.

The clips were made by the blacksmith and filed and cleaned up in the Signal School. The problem of attaching them to the rubber was overcome by placing the clip in the jaws of a vice and stretching the rubber as much as possible while a second person applied a whipping of sailmakers' twine as close to the clip as possible.

N.W.H.



THE TELEGRAPHIST (S) BRANCH SMART YOUNG MEN REQUIRED FOR EXPANDING BUSINESS!

Interested? Want to know more about us? Well read on.

We've had quite a few Leading and Petty Officer Telegraphists joining us in recent years. Now we want more young Telegraphists and Ordinary Telegraphists.

We are a small Corps d'Elite within the Communication Branch. Much of our work is confidential. We have a reputation for carrying it out with considerable efficiency and for being able to tackle almost anything in our own sphere. We have a strong team spirit within our Branch, and it's almost a family affair.

Our job is interesting and at times even exciting. Our main requirement is reliability. For most of the time even junior ratings work on their own and have to get on with their job without supervision.

Because our Branch is at present still too small to have its own advancement rosters, we all have to qualify for advancement just as if we were normal general service Telegraphists. At first sight you might think that this would place us at an unfair disadvantage in the race for promotion because of our more specialised activities. However, it doesn't work out like that in practice. Examination results over the past three years have shown that over 95% of us have passed out in the top half of our advancement courses.

The reason for these perhaps surprising results is probably the fact that Tels.(S) are fairly carefully selected before transferring to this Branch.

Another reason is that the concentrated course in Radio Theory that we get in our conversion course helps us a lot in dealing with any kind of radio equipment.

Because of the rather special aspect of many of our jobs, all nominations for drafting have to be done in *Mercury*. This has the advantage that any Tel.(S) can always write to R1 himself to find out just how he stands on the drafting roster, and is in fact encouraged to do so. As a result you can usually get a forecast of your movements for some time ahead. Recent expansion of our Branch has meant that a fair drafting cycle has been set up for all ratings and what's more, we can usually stick to it. All this, of course, makes one's domestic arrangements easier.

Incidentally, anyone with linguistic qualifications or aspirations will find not only a warm welcome to the Branch, but also extra cash as well.

Now that nearly all ships in the Home and Mediterranean Fleets have a small Telegraphist (S) complement, the old days of being constantly on the

move are largely over. This means that ratings can usually settle down to a General Service Commission in the same ship throughout.

So, if you are keen on a job that is different and in joining a crack Branch that is expanding, let's hear from you, or ask your Communications Officer to recommend you. Anyway, that's our advice to any up and coming young Telegraphist with a mind of his own. B.R. 1066, Serial 25, Part III, gives all necessary details. Of course, if you're already on a General Service or Foreign Commission you won't do a conversion course until your present commission is over, but make certain your recommendation is in well before the end of the commission.

HOW TO BE A CONSULTANT

A problem faces the matelot who first sets foot on the golden pavements of civilian life. There is a limit to the number of jobs as scene-shifter in the Windmill, taster at Haig distillery and Collector of Jaunties' super-tax.

An advertisement that you are a pensioned sailor will produce many replies from maiden ladies offering almost everything but work. Fight your way into the Chairman's Room at Rolls Royce or I.C.I. and your initiative will receive its reward—you will be kicked out by the Chairman personally. A letter politely requesting consideration of your services is only appreciated by firms who sell paper pulp.

No, to-day you must *create* your profession: this, fortunately, is simple.

First choose a name for the job, one fitting this scientific age. What was your favourite occupation in the Andrew? Kye-making? Admirable!

Kye-making, I recall, was achieved by mixing cocoa and milk—Coca-Lactic Affiliation. You get the idea, you are an expert at Quantitative Coca-Lactic Affiliation. But it will suffice to call yourself a Coca-Lactic Quantitative Consultant—you do not want to become pompous.

The next problem is premises. You must have a "good" address. How about "The Lodge, Hyde Park?" I don't doubt that the man there will willingly accept letters for you: his other duties (changing the rolls and so on) are not strenuous. Or use one of the ancient London clubs. Nobody knows all the members' names. Go along weekly on some imaginative errand—take a wreath for one of them (they are always dying unnoticed in their armchairs)—and collect your correspondence.

It used to be impossible to set up professionally without a string of degrees. Fortunately there are now organisations who will give you imposing "letters" quite cheaply. Or call yourself an L.T.R. (Leading Tel., retired), or L.I.B. (Lollobrigida's Boy).

Getting customers is easy. Advertise! Don't say "Bloggs knows his job!" or "Consult Bloggs!"—but "Sabrina's aunt likes Bloggs", or show a picture of the lady herself with the caption, "Yes, thanks

to Bloggs". Look at the daily papers (or even some recruiting posters) for confirmation that this technique is successful.

Consultants are rich. But you must earn your astronomic fees. This is done by delivering a report, which must be unintelligible. For example, if you are writing about marketing lampshades in Leichtenstein, say: "Though resources are ever-changing, quality of inspiration has not developed. Its tide rises and falls with the spirit of man." This is taken out of the article "Music" in Chamber's Encyclopaedia, and can be used for a scholarly treatise on almost any subject.

Another idea is simply to walk into Admiralty, find someone whose job you fancy, then hand him a chit instructing him to jump into the river. Such is the discipline exacted by Their Lordships that he will go at once—and such is the organisation, that no-one will notice. It is important, however, not to carry this out with the man who makes the tea, because they'll miss him. H. D-M.

PERSONALITY PAGE

We felt that with Communicators more than ever in the public eye, it was high time that the Magazine turned the spotlight on the Branch personalities. No Personality Page would be complete without mention of the First Sea Lord; but as he featured in the Summer 1955 edition we have taken the liberty of not including him. However, a photograph of him at a recent signal occasion appears in the frontispiece.

ADMIRAL SIR RALPH EDWARDS, K.C.B., C.B.E.,
The Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean.

Qualified in Signals in 1927. Promoted Commander in June 1934 and Captain in June 1939. During the war he served in the Operations Division from 1939 to 1941 and from 1941 to 1944 on the Staff of C-in-C Eastern Fleet, first as Deputy Chief of Staff and finally as Chief of Staff. Became Captain of H.M.S. *Gambia* in 1945 and attended Imperial Defence College in 1946. Captain of H.M.S. *Illustrious* 1947 to 1948. He was promoted Rear Admiral in July 1948 and has since served as Assistant Chief of Naval Staff, F.O.2 Med. and Third Sea Lord. He was promoted Admiral in April 1955.

ADMIRAL SIR ALAN SCOTT-MONCRIEFF, K.C.B., C.B.E.,
D.S.C., AND BAR

The Commander-in-Chief, Far Eastern Station.

Qualified in Signals in 1926. Served as Fleet Signal Officer, Mediterranean, from 1932 to 1933. Promoted to Commander in December 1934 and Captain December 1940. In 1942 he became Captain (D) 8 in H.M.S. *Faulkner*. Captain H.M.S. *Mercury* 1943 to 1945. Attended Imperial Defence College in 1948 and was promoted Rear Admiral in 1950 and has since served as F.O.2 Far East and Admiral Commanding Reserves. He was promoted Admiral in June 1956.

PERSONALITY PAGE



Admiral
Sir RALPH EDWARDS,
K.C.B., C.B.E.,
Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean.



Admiral
Sir ALAN SCOTT-MONCRIEFF,
K.C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O. and Bar,
Commander-in-Chief,
Far East Station.





H.M. Royal Yacht "Britannia" in company with H.M.S. "Protector" in Antarctica. Official photograph

H.M.S. "PROTECTOR"

In all an eventful half-commission for the "ship with the peat shed aft."

We sailed from Portsmouth in October last year bound for the Antarctic and, on the day of our departure, we were visited by the First Sea Lord and a large collection of reporters and photographers, the result being a Television appearance for some of the Ship's Company and our picture in print.

En route to the deep South we called at Gibraltar, Freetown and Rio de Janeiro, our stay in the last two places being cut short by the isolation of two men and nine huskies on an ice floe near Roux Island. We proceeded post haste to the area and very soon our two helicopters had located and rescued the occupants of the ice floe and returned them to their Base nearby.

This was the first of our few trips into the Antarctic Circle and made us the second ship on record to cross the Circle in November. The first time was in 1893 by a Norwegian ship. Incidentally, she crossed on the same day too—November 9th.

Christmas Day was celebrated in the ship on the 23rd December as we were required to sail on Christmas Eve to rendezvous with the Royal Yacht *Britannia*. A force nine gale was met on Christmas Day so perhaps it was best we had had our turkey and good things prior to sailing. On the 30th December in the same gale and in torrential rain we joined the *Britannia* South of Cape Horn. *Protector* acted as escort for the Duke of Edinburgh's lightning tour of the Falkland Islands and her Antarctic Bases in the Dependencies. Everyone was keyed up expecting plenty of work, and in general all communications went off smoothly with no major hitch.

And so on the evening of the 13th January we said farewell to *Britannia* at South Georgia as she sailed away into the night to continue her tour in Africa.

Now came the highlight of the commission, our return to the "flesh pots", a short rest period in Montevideo where, as I write, we bake in a temperature of 100.

Yeoman North and Tel. Moseley deserve a mention for figuring prominently in the Ship's football eleven which, as a matter of interest, beat the Royal Yacht 5-2 in a match played at Grytviken in South Georgia. M.S.



Tels. Parkes and Dear with Penguin at Leith, South Georgia

NOTES

TO BE PASTED ON THE BACK OF THE GUIDE

1. Officers of the rank of Rear Admiral and above, and Commodores, not entitled to fly a flag or broad pendant are to be received with a guard and band according to rank when paying a formal visit and when attending a court martial as President or Member. In the latter case they fly a masthead pendant.
2. The Duke of Gloucester, Princess Margaret and the Princess Royal have a personal standard. Other members of the Royal Family are provided with a standard for their collective use.
3. **Royal Marine Officers** are treated in exactly the same way as naval officers of equivalent rank except that they do not receive a pipe, and gun salutes are inapplicable. The musical salute is The Garb of Old Gaul.
4. **The Gun salutes** refer to salutes to flag, but personal salutes may be given to the following when visiting a ship (with the limitation in the case of the Board of Admiralty and the First Lord, that only one ship in any one port is to fire a salute to a particular authority on any one day.)
Royal personages; The Board of Admiralty; First Lord of the Admiralty; Foreign naval officers of the rank of Rear Admiral and above or serving as a Commodore.
5. **The Alert and Pipe** are only used between colours and sunset except when:
 - (a) Ships are underway (sunrise to sunset);
 - (b) Piping the side for foreign naval officers (day and night).At the reception of a naval officer they are only used if the officer is in uniform.
6. **Guards and Bands** are paraded:
 - (a) When passing or being passed by a ship or boat flying a standard, passing or being passed by a foreign warship, or when entering or leaving harbour—Weekdays; from colours to Sunset or 1800, whichever is the earlier. Sundays; from colours to 1200.
 - (b) In other circumstances—as above, except that they will not be required between 1200 and 1315 Monday to Friday, after 1315 on Saturday, during Divine Service on Sunday nor from 1½ hours before carrying out general drill until 1 hour after. Local or Station Orders usually give instruction regarding parading guards and bands when entering or leaving harbour.
7. The still is piped in lieu of sounding the alert where a bugler is not available. The bugle is not used on board the Royal Yacht.



MEDITERRANEAN

AMPHIBIOUS WARFARE SQUADRON

The highlight of our exercise year was our trip to Turkey at the beginning of July. Exercise "Medtacex" began and finished at Izmir and consisted of two separate landings by a Turkish Army battalion supported by Turkish destroyers and minesweepers. Although most of us had met the Turkish Navy before during NATO exercises it was our first meeting with the Army and we were very impressed indeed. They were tough and well trained, while their discipline was the strictest we have ever seen. During our stay we had several opportunities for a run ashore. A lot of people went to see the ruins at Ephesus, while the rest became ruins in the night clubs of Izmir.

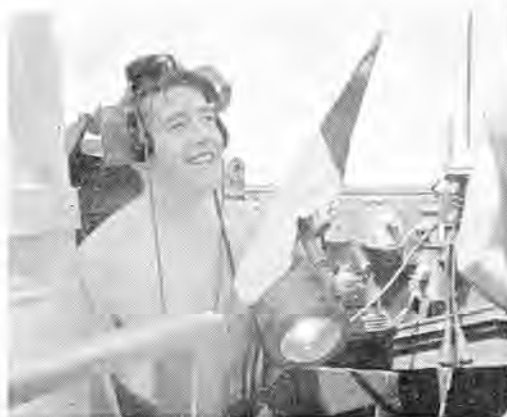
The remainder of our programme for the year was rather upset by a gentleman called Nasser. Instead of our cruise to the Riviera followed by a Fleet Amphibious Exercise, the programme became a major Fleet amphibious operation, and we buckled down to a very full working up programme. Almost overnight we found ourselves a squadron of twenty ships instead of our normal six, and the signal traffic rose correspondingly. *Meon* achieved the dignity of a Broad Pendant for the last four months of the year, and the Communication division attained the dizzy strength of eighty including all three Services. As *Meon* is basically a river class frigate, those of you in *Mercury* may even have heard of the river, this and other increases in complement resulted in a miracle of compression. We squeezed 200 people in a ship designed for about 120, and nearly had to resort to sending back some of the larger signalmen in exchange for smaller ones. Although a bit cramped we still managed to spare a bit of sympathy for those in the LSTs and LCTs who had commissioned straight from Supplementary Reserve.

When we settled down to rehearsals in *Meon* we found the bridge staff to be 100% Submariners, the older hands having been banished to the M.S.O. because they knew at least some of the people on board, and could even guess who should see which signal. I believe submariners don't use halyards, but after unravelling ours only a few times and nailing the fourth substitute to the masthead, we

found we could get the squadron moving in the right direction most of the time. The Telegraphists passed their days knitting with patching cords and after trying several patterns found we could man twenty lines and keep them manned in three watches. Changing the watches over was a major evolution owing to lack of space but that was one of the first evolutions perfected, aided by the keenness of those coming off watch.

We finally sailed for the operation on the 31st October with 40 Commando, 42 Commando, and the 6th Royal Tank Regt. embarked and after a quiet, although cryptographic voyage landed them over the beaches at Port Said at 0445 on the 6th November. The squadron of course had ringside seats of the battle and very interesting it was when we could see for the smoke. In *Meon* we even knew what was going on as we were in touch with everyone ashore, afloat, and overhead. I don't think it is necessary to describe what went on because I'm told that nearly all the Communicators in the Navy were there, and after seeing *Tyne* I can quite believe it.

After the battle the Squadron spent about six weeks ferrying in Port Said; and to and from Port Said, Malta, and Cyprus. Fortunately for *Meon* she was too full of Communicators to do any ferrying and she and M.L. 2583 were the only members of



You have to be versatile to be a R.M. Sig. in M.L. 2583

the Squadron to spend Christmas in Malta. *Striker* stayed behind after the evacuation and acted as H.Q. ship for the United Kingdom Salvage unit under the United Nations flag. She managed nobly using her normal LSTs' resources. At the time of writing she is in Naples "recuperating."

Now the Squadron is back to its normal strength and the Communicators down to A.F.O. 1232/56 strength and life is a lot quieter. Although our programme for the year is not yet final, and the start delayed by postponed refits, we or our reliefs can look forward to another interesting year of cruises and exercises with our friends of the Commando Brigade.

H.M.S. "DARING"

The new ship's company of *Daring* found themselves sitting in Guzz without a ship to commission. At the invitation of Colonel Nasser, *Daring*, together with many others, paid an unscheduled visit to Egyptian waters and there joined the screen of the Carrier Force until the decision was made to recommission by air in Malta. She returned to Malta with the shrapnel riddled whaler belonging to the imprudent Egyptian frigate which had ventured too near Israel and had been captured for its pains. The falls of the whaler had been shot through and it was found drifting by *Albion's* aircraft. The new ship's company duly arrived by air and the ship recommissioned on December 3rd with Captain G. I. M. Balfour, D.S.C., R.N. in command.

The work-up followed with one day of glory as Fleet Flag Ship when Admiral Sir Ralph Edwards, K.C.B., C.B.E., arrived in Malta to take over Commander-in-Chief Mediterranean. At the end of January we set sail for Fleet Exercises on the way North for a welcome visit to Marseilles, where the ship berthed at the "Vielle Port" in the centre of the city, and coped with 14,000 visitors in two days.

From Marseilles we followed *Albion* to Gibraltar, on the way picking up a disabled Spanish fishing vessel, drifting without a propellor, which was towed to Gibraltar.

The arrival of H.R.H. Prince Philip in the Royal Yacht set a poser for the senior members of the flag deck fraternity; hurried and whispered phone calls were made between Chief Yeomen, much stalling took place, of course everyone had seen the flag she was wearing at the mizzen before and even had it on the tip of their tongues, but it seemed to have slipped everybody's memory for the moment. Then the buzz spread, it was the flag of the Admiral of the Royal Gibraltar Yacht Club.

And so, as innumerable dockyard maties pour onboard and more and more of the ship disappears onto the dockside to join our beautiful big funnel which has gone for ever, leaving behind a utilitarian stovepipe, we say farewell from the bottom of No. 2 dock, Gibraltar.

H.M.S. "DEFENDER"

We officially commissioned on Sunday, December 3rd. For about ten days previous to this the Ship's



H.M.S. "Daring" entering Grand Harbour

Company had been arriving by air, at all times of the day and night.

On the Thursday after commissioning we left Dockyard Creek and began the work up, which continued until January 18th, with a break of four days over Christmas which was spent in Sliema.

Whilst exercising one day towards the end of the work up, we received a visit from a "chopper" chappie, saying another "chopper" had ditched in our vicinity. Needless to say all appropriate frequencies were manned. The Chief then went to have a look and found that the crew of the helicopter was already on the fo'c'sle and another "chopper" was taking the two remaining crew members ashore. All this happened in about five minutes. Our air/sea communications on board were excellent.

On the 30th January we sailed for Taranto to join *Jamaica* and *Delight* for a five day official visit.

On the Friday morning at Taranto, Tel. Taylor sidled into the office and suggested a staff bus trip. Numerous people were approached and it was found that we could get a 35 seater free of charge from the Italian Navy provided we could fill it. Needless to say with our whole staff numbering only about 25 it was impossible. The trip was then thrown open to the ship as a whole and the response was quite good, in fact when we started off on the Monday morning there were just over seventy in the party. The itinerary of the trip was as follows. Through Bari to Castel de Monte (Castle on the Mountain) where we stopped for about an hour to take photographs and refreshment, then back to Bari again where we stopped for another hour. On then to the Grotto at Castellana, which proved very interesting and finally back to Taranto.

On the following day we challenged the comms. staff of the *Delight* to a game of soccer. When the teams mustered on the jetty we found that the *Delight* had raked in their Chief Cook to make up the team. Our S.C.O. queried his eligibility to play and was informed by the *Delight's* Chief Yeoman that there was a crypto machine in their galley. On checking up we found that there was a weird and wonderful machine for making chips which bore the word "CRYPTO" on it in large letters. This being a unique case the Chief Cook was allowed to play. The teams then proceeded to the Italian Naval Sports ground and the game commenced under the jurisdiction of Uncle Tom, our Chief. The result was three goals each, but our rather robust L/Sig. still maintains he was "seen off" with one of the two goals he scored, both of which were disallowed. We are now looking forward to the replay.

The following day we left in company with *Delight* for Cyprus, where we duly arrived on the following Saturday.

Whilst we are on patrol we are affiliated to R.A.F. Akrotiri and on our two days "stand off" we manage to get in practically every sport going.

Every week we exchange a number of the ship's company with our opposite numbers at Akrotiri, last week for example the "Captain of the Top" was an R.A.F. Sergeant.

FOURTH DESTROYER SQUADRON

We are now just about to leave Malta at the end of the Mediterranean half of the commission.

Agincourt, *Corunna*, *Alamein* and *Barrosa* are together again for the first time in seven months. All the Squadron except *Alamein* have spent some time refitting at Malta or Gibraltar.

After the New Year *Corunna* and *Barrosa* went to Cyprus for a long spell of patrolling, and returned just as *Agincourt* and *Alamein* carried out an investigation into the life and customs of North Africa, by way of a visit to Tripoli. The natives, and others, notably the British Army, turned out to be most friendly.

This week we sail for Exercise "Springex", ending up at Genoa, after which we leave the Med. Fleet and return home via Nice and Gibraltar, looking forward to some leave before joining the Home Fleet in May.

Basic English

One Log-Req we received in this M.S.O. requested a supply of "COLE FLOUR".

FROM. COM HONG KONG ROUTINE
TO NEWFOUNDLAND UNCLASSIFIED
150659Z.

CANCEL MY 140205Z.
CHUSAN UNABLE TO RAISE STEAM.
REF. CRICKET VERSUS R.M.S. CHUSAN.
SUNDAY 17th.

D.T.G. 150659Z/FEBRUARY 1957.



"All I did Chief was tell this fat old gentleman I couldn't pass his private signal till I'd cleared all the Service signals!"

SIXTH DESTROYER SQUADRON

Since the last article was written we have hardly been a squadron at all. *Contest* has been refitting at Gibraltar and *Comet* at Malta. *Carysfort*, after escaping from the Clyde, reached Malta at the end of January to start her work up, which she has just completed. So it has been left to *Cavendish* for the most part to keep the flag flying, though by the time this article is printed we will be resting in the dockyard from our exertions while the other three ships are active again.

Cavendish was heading for Suez when we last went to press, but after a week of arduous duty the line new gunnery system fell over, and we had to return to Malta. Some interesting comments were passed by the other ships at Port Said, some of whom were on the "home leg" of their general service commissions. The S.C.O., being the only Malta native at the time, was unjustly suspected of sabotage. *Comet* and *Contest* both had spells off Port Said before retiring to start their refits.

When operational once more, *Cavendish* headed east to make up for her holiday, and for the next 10 weeks spent only five days in Malta. We helped to entertain the new First Lord, Viscount Hailsham, on the way, and it seems a pity that we already have another new First Lord to impress. After chasing round with the carriers we got back to Malta on Boxing Day only to be shot off east again the following day. During this period we were playing the part of D.4., with two of the 4th D.S. under our wing. After a spell in Cyprus we had a weekend in Malta before setting off for exercises and our first visits of the commission, to Genoa and Toulon. Both places were appreciated, particularly Genoa. Entertainment varied from the Barbary Coast to bus trips, and our more conscientious friends were to be seen setting out to shop for their girl friends with a dictionary and a tape measure.

After Toulon we led the British contingent in 'Medaswex 17', a NATO anti-submarine exercise with the French and Italians. This time we were acting as F.5, with *Wakeful*, *Whirlwind* and *Wizard* to look after. The exercise went well with surprisingly little language difficulty. We stuck religiously to groups and the phonetic alphabet whenever possible, but learnt that Frenchmen and "Janners" do not say "HOTEL" or "BRAVO" the same way. There were occasional shouts of exasperation at the dim-wittedness of a foreigner who couldn't understand good plain English, but when a signal in French appeared it was a different story. We were actually dashing enough to make two signals in French ourselves but whether or not they were understood at the other end we never found out. The high standard of French in the Wireless Office also saved the day more than once. A Telegraphist trying for a repetition of a signal and only being given parts he didn't want made "IMI TOUT" while the P.O. Tel. on a voice net with a French submarine, unable to

persuade it to dive by any other means, shouted "Plongez, Plongez!" at it, which had the desired effect.

Cavendish is now back in Malta with one more trip about to come off before the refit. The Communicators yesterday reached the final of the inter-Part soccer competition with a victory over the Wardroom, but as most of the team have been in Sick Bay today it seems that there is only the score to show that they won.

F.O.2 MED.

A journalistic recording of the life of M.I.M.S.O. in any detail, over the past few months, would take up more space and time than *THE COMMUNICATOR* could comfortably spare. Therefore, I intend to give only a general outline of the happenings in this corner of the communication world.

Routine was completely disrupted (in all honesty only temporarily) when Colonel Abdul Gamal Nasser, contemporary Lion-baiter, commenced his grabbing tactics. One moment the Staff were preparing to partake of their customary 1000 refreshment and the next, eighty per cent of them were packing their kits. I cannot give an account of "Musketeer", not having been a participant, but no doubt it will be reported elsewhere. Minimise, Cancel Minimise and Re-Minimise caused a fluctuation in our normal amount of traffic, but generally work proceeded at its normal quiet efficient pace, much removed from the ever increasing flow at the eastern end of Mare Nostrum.

After the gladiators' return things were almost normal again, only to be temporarily upset by F.O.(F)'s cruise to Genoa and Toulon.

We have had our fair share of promotion and drafts. This is due to the rearrangement of Flag Officers' responsibilities in Malta. F.O.(F) has now been superseded by F.O.2 Med., who has taken over the F.C.C. F.O.2 is now away conducting 'Springex' and Malta is as empty as it was during "Musketeer". Work has slowed down slightly, but, unfortunately cruises make little difference to the amount of traffic coming for and from B.S.O. Malta.

REVISED CEREMONIAL GUIDE

The revised ceremonial guide (printed as enclosure) has now been brought up to date to conform with Chapters 12 and 13 of Q.R. and A.I. To prepare the guide for use, cut out the disc and cursor and paste them on to stout card. Paste the notes onto the back of the disc and pin the disc and cursor together with a bifurcated paper clip; as an alternative to the cursor, readers may like to make a cardboard disc of the same diameter as the thick ruled circle on the guide and cut out a segment to make a window, the appropriate labels being printed on one side of the window. To make a more durable job it is recommended that the bootmaker be asked to insert a brass eyelet at the centre-hole of the disc and cursor.



Nerve Centre

(Winning Photograph)

MALTA M.S.O.

Since we last appeared in print, Malta M.S.O. has been given a "new look": re-designed, re-painted, re-organised and with a brand new air cooling system as the photographs by our Wren Tel. Wendy Salter show.

We moved from the Tunnel on December 8th carrying most of our goods and chattels with us. Some new equipment and some old equipment with new covers fitted nicely into our new surroundings so that with yellow walls, brown furniture, grey flecked machines, red, blue and green message trays, we are really working in technicolour.

The move also brought a new Message Handling Organisation which, after a few teething troubles, has proved very effective. Briefly it revolves round an H shaped table with the C.Y.O.W. in one end of the H facing the Router across the centre bar. Down either side of the H you have on the left, the In Traffic section and on the right, the Out Traffic section. This organisation is still being modified as new ideas and fresh snags crop up but shows promise of being nearly foolproof eventually.



NATO at work

Not many changes have taken place in the C.R.R., though ex-mike operators would be envious of the new range of Receivers situated above the broadcast bay. A RATT bay has also been fitted so Med. bound sea-going communicators had better look through the Supplement to A.C.P. 127.

The RATT section has been re-sited and enlarged to cope with the increasing number of circuits transferring from CW. In view of this a modified form of Tape Relay is to be introduced in March. Modified language should also be introduced at some of our distant stations when the first through tapes from our out stations are received. With the Chief Tels. taking charge of the Tape Relay section and a separate System Control, signals should be speeded up considerably through this department.

On the sporting side, the avalanche of work during Nasser's fun and games plus the rather damping



Two advantages of tape relay

effect of working for long periods underground has handicapped organised sport. However, what we have attempted has been done reasonably well.

A fairly active social life has been organised by the various watches. X and Z watches particularly shine in this respect, having a combined Social once a month in Manoel Island Canteen.

INSHORE FLOTILLA MEDITERRANEAN

During our little altercation at the "bottom right hand corner" those who knew "Mum Wooha" would scarcely have recognised the matronly figure, pregnant with Communicators and skirts a 'pullin' with showers of CMS. We even ran to a C.C.O., now alas, lost to the *Corunna*—their gain! We have had quite a turnover in Yeomen too. Our original missed the execute to a turn nine while approaching Sliema roundabout at a rate of knots, so if anyone wants to buy an automobile with the engine in the wheelhouse, I know where he may get one cheap.

The new team has just taken over and we are now on our shake-down cum cruise.

We have been exercising off Sardinia with the 149th MSS of the I.N. together with representatives of our own 104th and 108th MSS and have been quite impressed by the standard of I.N. communications. Having said farewell to the 149th we are now bound for La Spezia to compare notes with our Italian Minesweeping counterparts, thence to Monaco.

H.M.S. "JAMAICA"

Soon after writing our last report we left our "home port" of Suez and managed to get into Malta for Christmas day—but only just, we arrived on Christmas morning; however it is well worth mentioning that the efforts of all Communicators in helping to tape up programmes and quizzes to help make Christmas more gay for the less fortunate ships who were either at sea or left behind, was very much appreciated: also in passing let us not forget the volunteers of the U.K.S.U., now disbanded, who did a magnificent job in furthering the just cause.

Our stay in Malta has been rather prolonged, although let it not be said we have been idle. In the latter half of January we took part in 'Janex', an exercise which thoroughly tested out the new circular screen called "Ringfence", since the rules are still in the melting pot nothing yet can be said about the adoption for general use. After the exercise we went on to Naples accompanied by *Delight* and *Dalrymple*. It was a pleasant change to have the Hydrographic Navy with us and her buff superstructure gave colour to our grey looks. Naples, of course, immediately brings to mind Rome, Pompeii, Sorrento, Capri and other favourite fleshpots. However, it was a very subdued staff, including a speechless C.Y.S., who left to carry on to our next port, Taranto. L/Sig. Hales formed part of the Medfoba

party which cycled between the two ports and we are told that he tried to introduce a cycling formation but never quite succeeded. Our stay in the Italian Naval Base with *Delight* and *Defender* was very pleasant and greatly assisted by the hospitality of the Italian Navy.

We arrived back in Malta to face a pretty rugged week of exercises in preparation for our Admiral's inspection which has been carried out by the new F.O.2 Med., Vice Admiral L. F. Durnford-Slater, C.B., and which, we are happy to say, went off very well. A "thank you" is due to the operator at G.K.U. who answered our weak call using a 602 on emergency aerial and supplies during General Drill.

Quite a few changes have taken place on the station and we are proud to have as our C-in-C, Admiral Ralph A. B. Edwards, K.C.B., C.B.E. We in *Jamaica* are sorry to have to say farewell to Rear Admiral D. E. Holland-Martin, F.O.F., Med., whose Flag we flew throughout the Suez crisis.

Very soon now we will be joined on the Station by our relief *Birmingham*, although unfortunately we will be unable to "help them into the ropes" since we are off on exercise 'Springex' followed by *Genoa*, *Villefranche*, and *Ajaccio*, the day after she arrives.

At long last RATT Broadcast MRA is coming to replace the MIKES and we hope that during this next exercise we will be able to "prove" the transmissions and so see it thoroughly introduced before we leave.

H.M.S. "TORQUAY"

Since our last contribution, we have taken the leadership of the Fifth F.S. in our stride, won most of our games, kept gun smuggling to a minimum in Cyprus and drank more cans of beer than there are R.A.s in *Mercury*. At present we are recuperating in Malta Dockyard.

Our period of duty in Cyprus waters was punctuated by hectic runs organised by the Oxford and Bucks. Light Infantry, who did much to relieve the monotony of the patrol. Some of the staff even went "pongo" for a few days and took part in anti-terrorist operations working with the Army. Fortunately, the only casualties were a number of thick heads after a particularly gruelling raid on the beer bar!

Worthy of a mention is the part played by our signalmen in the Ship's concert. L/Sigs. Patterson, Hughes, Davis, and O/Sig. Webb gave an interpretation of "Night Life in Hyde Park", which was considered one of the highlights of the show, and Sig. Denton's impersonations were superb.

As far as amusing incidents go, we can think of one that occurred during a recent examination for Provisional P.O. Tel.

Examiner: "Now what would you do if the telephone broke down?"

Answer: "Ring up faults, Sir."



H.M.S. "Tyne" at Port Said

H.M.S. "TYNE"

Now at last we in *Tyne* can tell you what it has all been about; why the Communicators' messdeck has been bulging at the seams, with over 70 junior rates and some 40 O.W.L.s, O.K.P.s and gentlemen in light blue.

As the General said to us as we sailed at our full 12 knots for Cyprus—"Well, if 'they' start anything, we're ready and we will give them what for. After all, none of us have a very high opinion of the Egyptians." It was only 103⁰⁰ in the L.R.R. when our most reliable and quickest rear link, the B.B.C., announced that Israel had invaded Egypt. Could that be something to do with us?

At sea astern of us were, to quote one newspaper,

"Five Admirals, seven carriers and the biggest Armada of landing craft since 1588."

After five days ashore in the Allied Headquarters at Episkopi, Admiral Durnford-Slater, General Stockwell, Air Marshal Barnett and their staffs (72 strong) came back on board and soon bumped our mere 400 signals a day up to a peak of 1110. We sailed from Limassol on 4th November and the following morning we were some 30 miles off Port Said when the first wave of Paratroops of the 16th Independent Paratroop Brigade flew over us towards Gamil Airfield. After an anxious wait of 1½ hours we got the first news that all was going well, with few casualties, but including their main transmitter. All day we kept in touch with them, not without some difficulty, and around 1700 received

the welcome signal "Surrender terms now being discussed."

This really stirred up the Joint Operations Centre. Army, Navy, R.A.F. and French staff officers grabbed feverishly for pads and pencils. The General deigned the use of carbon paper. The signal was passed to the Duty Signals Officer with the words "That one really IS Flash; the whole result of the Operation may depend on it." Hot foot the messenger rushed it to the M.S.O. (no pneumatic tubes here, thank you), and then down two decks to the L.R.R. in the well-tryed 'bucket'. The operator started pounding the key, only to stop half way—even the Duty Signal Officer in the L.R.R. (yes, another Officer there) could not decipher the vital word and rang up the J.O.C. Alas, the General could not remember what he had said, so the message was returned. But all was well; another message had meanwhile struggled in on Force Command A, plans had to change, surrender was refused. Excitedly, the Duty Staff Officer stuck his head through the hatch and called, "Stop that Flash—if it goes, all will be lost!"

None the less, it was a hectic and strenuous period for all; everyone was working flat out for long hours, many with little or no rest.

The layout of the ship made our work more difficult. Messengers carrying armfuls of signals staggered in the dark along an unfamiliar deck. Signals came so fast there was scarcely time to read them. "Just wrap your peepers around that little lot" the J.O.C. signalman was heard to say as he dumped a fistful on the Army Staff Officer's desk.

At dawn on November 6th the British and French fleets, to seaward of Port Said, launched the assault which all eagerly awaited, not only ourselves in the ships but also the Paratroops ashore, who had fought for 24 hours without reinforcement. With clockwork precision the waves of L.C.A.s headed for the shore, while to seaward supporting destroyers laid down heavy drenching fire on the beaches—reported mined.

The L.C.T.s steamed calmly into harbour, unloading the 6th Royal Tanks, and quickly the build-up got into its stride. The helicopters from *Ocean* and *Theseus* were soon airborne and silhouetted against the great pall of black smoke. They carried for the first time in history an entire Commando to the assault.

On board *Tyne* the tempo continued unabated; seventeen circuits were in full use. "Does a Flash have to be Top Secret?" enquired a senior officer in khaki as he handed yet another message to the Duty Signal Officer. But classification was not our only problem. "What rank for a Flash?" enquired an officer in light blue. His signals just had to get through.

As the battle progressed the J.O.C. was the scene of many an important conference. Everyone wanted to know, but it was standing room only and once in you could not get out. Our signalman, trapped in

the course of duty, nodded assent as the General expounded the latest plan for the advance to the south, and would doubtless have given his own opinion had he not been detected flicking his cigarette ash down the Brigadier's neck.

The tension on board mounted during the day. The Admiral and the General landed to discuss the surrender. Fighting continued unabated. Navy House was a strongpoint and resisted firmly despite many rocket attacks from the ever-present Fleet Air Arm. By this time we were in touch with several Army units ashore. The messages could give us a clear picture, but who were they from? "Really, this Army Callsign system is impossible," said the Signal Officer in the L.R.R. as he telephoned the Duty Signal Officer in the J.O.C. "I've got a signal here: it's from ONE to a HOT CROSS BUN—perhaps the Major can tell us who its from, the operator doesn't seem to know."

And so the weeks went by. Ships arrived, ships sailed. Some regiments landed, others re-embarked. Generals, Admirals, politicians—even the First Lord of the Admiralty—visited us and went away. But still *Tyne* stayed. We slipped to sea one day for a breath of fresh air, but they soon had us back, connected to that so important T/P line to the Canal Company Offices—or H.Q. 2 (BR) Corps.

Some ratings were drafted home—*Mercury* had to open up again, we heard, but those who stayed—Navy, Army or R.A.F.—worked steadily on without complaint.

As winter crept on, we changed the clocks. A common Naval practice, but not so familiar to all, and the following exchange of signals is recorded:

TOP SECRET EMERGENCY. PERSONAL FOR X FROM Y. WE ARE SOMEWHAT PUZZLED BY QUOTE CHARLIE TIME UNQUOTE AS WE DO NOT SEEM TO USE THAT HERE. 0800Z IS 1000 LOCAL.

The reply went back:

TOP SECRET FLASH. PERSONAL FOR Y FROM X.

I REGRET THE CONFUSION OVER TIMINGS. WE CHANGED TO CHARLIE TIME MIDNIGHT 21 NOVEMBER. PRESENT PROGRAMME IS BASED ON YOUR ARRIVAL 0800Z WHICH IS 1100 LOCAL.

We understand the visit was a success.

Eventually the time arrived for all of us to get away. Several dates were suggested but all hopes of Christmas in Malta faded when the date was given as 22nd December.

As the day approached, back we went to three watches and then for part of E-day itself to one watch (the Army left us at the last minute to travel in the comfort of the *Dunera*). To the accompaniment of tracer, the last troops were re-embarked and the harbour gradually emptied. The codeword was sent to Cyprus to say that the last troops had re-embarked, to which the reply flashed back

"ACK YOUR LOBSTER" (this is not rude, merely military phraseology).

Finally, the last ships of the Task Force steamed out of harbour, leaving a lonely huddle of ships of the Salvage Unit and their Support Group.

One by one the numerous circuits were closed down and by Christmas Eve we were back to the familiar '5 ton' and broadcast routine.

Christmas Day at sea meant making the best of a bad job; everyone dug out and all the messes sprouted Christmas trees, decorations and nuts. Rounds went through to a somewhat ribald accompaniment, after which a good dinner helped to make an enjoyable day.

Three days in Malta, a rabbit run in Gib. and now we have almost completed our leave. Only a few of the familiar faces will return after leave to form the very small complement of a private ship.

We are soon off to Northern waters for an exercise, calling at Oslo and Rotterdam on our way back for a refit.

A TOUR OF THE ITALIAN NAVAL SIGNAL SCHOOL AT TARANTO

The school is situated close to the sea front about 15 km from Taranto and comprises a large barracks with a new wing which, when completed, will be the new Signal School. Here the initial training is carried out and also junior refresher courses, but no senior advancement courses are held in this establishment, so it is almost another *Ganges*.

The classrooms are large and well constructed with many modern aids, and it is interesting to note how thoroughly Communications are taken to heart.

On the W/T side, the Practical Procedure classrooms are so constructed that the Instructor can control the class very easily; each operator has an undulator alongside his key to record each transmission he may make and so easily compare the quality of his morse. There is a large variety of transmitters available, L.F., H.F., V.H.F. and U.H.F., dating from their older models to their very latest. The Voice Training classroom incorporates a large Instructor's control panel where he can introduce interference to simulate "Sea Conditions" at will, namely, other voices in the background, morse or static, and quite frequently the instructions are carried out in English. Morse typing and T/P rooms are all equipped with modern Olivetti typewriters and T/Ps and the method of training is similar to ours—in fact it seemed strange and out of place to hear the familiar "begin after 8 taps".

A huge model T/P was on display which, when a key was depressed, went through in very slow time the transmission motions; the pulse travelled via coloured neon tubes to another model which, again in slow time, went through the receiving motions and printed the letter.

On the V/S side the main feature was the Fleet-work Practical room. Here any desired formation with its appropriate screen could be illuminated on a large screen and thus no "SET" formation could be learned "parrot fashion". The individual illuminated ships had the same facilities as in our model rooms of both directional and all-round lights. Around the classroom were many painted masts on metal boards so that Flag hoisting could be carried out individually and rapidly using metal magnetic flags; the Instructor's board is a large counter rotating disposition layout, again metallic and using magnetic ships.

In the four corners of the large Parade Ground are constructed "mock-ups" of Frigates' bridges and Flag decks, complete in detail with Pennant numbers, Navigation and Steaming lights, all necessary V/S equipment, W/T Remote Control Boxes and V.H.F. to use as T.C.P. The movement which would be experienced at sea is simulated by cams which work electrically beneath the Deck planking and so "Roll" the operators whilst reading or writing down.

The main emphasis throughout seemed to be to simulate sea conditions and the designers have gone into great detail to achieve this. Since many of the pupils will never have been to sea before they will certainly reap the benefit on drafting to their first ship.

The visit was very enjoyable and it is heartening to know that there is such keen competition in the Communication world, not only inter-service, but also "Inter-Navies".



The Gateway to Mdina

Heard in the office—

O/Tel. to L.Tel.: "Will you say go and clean the Bellini Tozzi's instead of the Loops, as it makes the other O.D.s think I'm doing a technical job."

Poser—

What is a Norfolk Broad?

Answer: N.S. O/Tel. from Norfolk.

THE COMMUNICATOR AT THE RACES

Racecourse communications are of two sorts—the tic-tac system, whereby bookmakers in one ring let bookmakers in another know how horses are being backed, and the 'blower' system, by which off-the-course bookmakers lessen their liabilities by backing horses at the last moment on the course.

The tic-tac men are merely human semaphore operators. By moving their arms in certain ways they transmit by signs the prices ruling against the different runners in a race. Supposing "Slim Henry" is at 4-1 and a man has £500 on him to win. The price will probably be reduced to 7-2. This news will be immediately passed to the other betting rings. Similarly a bookmaker in Ring A can back "Slim Henry" in Ring B via his tic-tac man.

On the other hand, the man who has put £500 on "Slim Henry" on the course may prefer to back the "Slim one" off the course with ten starting price bookmakers. He will ring them up near the time of the race, and perhaps have £50 on the "Slim one" with each of them. These bookmakers may feel it is "hot" money, and will decide to limit their liabilities to £10 each. They will get on to a telephone linked up with the course, known as the 'blower system', and the 'blower' representative on the end of a telephone near the bookmakers will bet on behalf of these off-the-course bookies a collective bet of perhaps £400, which will probably bring "Slim Henry's" price down.

So much for racecourse communications. This is the time of the year when one is wondering whether the English three-year-olds are going to beat the French in the classic races. I have picked out a dozen three-year-olds—six colts and six fillies—which I think may be worth following in the months ahead. Here they are.

The six colts—

BELLBOROUGH.—Trained by Noel Cannon—not quite in the top class on last year's form, but game, and he comes from a stable whose horses often win at a long price.

CREPELLO.—A half brother to last year's 1,000 Guineas winner Honeylight. This colt is bred to stay, and is, I think, one of the best English prospects for the Derby and St. Leger.

MESSMATE is also bred to stay. I think he and Crepello may be the two best Derby propositions in my list of 12.

MILITARY LAW may well prove a top class miler this year. If all goes well has 2,000 Guineas prospects.

NOBLE VENTURE.—A full brother to By Thunder, who was fourth in the St. Leger of his year. He looks like making a stayer also.

TEMPEST was backward as a two year old, but is expected to make his mark as a miler this year.

The six fillies—

ALMERIA.—Owned and bred by Her Majesty the Queen, is trained by Captain C. Boyd-Rochfort, a great expert with three-year-old fillies.

ANGELET.—Trained in Ireland, this filly is likely to be sent to run in the 1,000 Guineas and the Oaks. Probably in the top class.

CROCHET.—Some way below the best last season, but should do well when the going is on the soft side.

SARCELLE.—Unbeaten as a two year old; if she makes normal progress will not be easily beaten in the 1,000 Guineas and Oaks.

STREAM OF GOLD.—Lightly raced last season, is out of a brilliant mare Gamble in Gold.

STREET SINGER.—Trained by one of the few woman trainers in England, Mrs. Johnson Houghton, widow of well-known trainer Major Gordon Johnson Houghton, who was killed out hunting. Mrs. Houghton is not allowed to hold the training licence officially—women are barred—so it is held by a cousin, who assists her. B.W.R.C.



SO THAT'S WHERE THE DRAFTING MARGIN HAS GOT TO!

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From a Scottish Railway Timetable.

THE PENDANT

(Winning Article)

On reading "Flags and Fungi" in the Christmas number, one once again comes across that often used, totally erroneous term "Commissioning Pendant"; unfortunately it appears to be creeping more and more into common usage. No wonder the author thinks his ship appears to be a nudist,—she is certainly improperly dressed. I suggest he hauls down her so called "Commissioning Pendant" and hoists the "Masthead Pendant" in its place.

Surely more respect is due to "the Pendant," the most ancient of the Distinction Colours (Pendant, Ensign and Jack) proper to a British ship of war.

Through the ages it has borne many names, its present one being laid down in Q.R. and A.I., as the "Masthead Pendant", but I feel sure no reference will be found to a "Commissioning Pendant." In fact, for many years it was more often than not referred to as "the Pendant", a far more fitting and proper term than "Commissioning Pendant".

It dates back from as early as the twelfth century and probably even earlier, though it was not then used to denote that a ship was in commission nor was it necessarily of the same design or colour.

Originally, the Pendant (or streamer as it was then called) was displayed from the masthead of a ship of war to distinguish it from a ship not fitted out for war. In the latter half of the sixteenth century, when tactical skill and intelligence developed in warfare, the requirement arose for Squadron Distinction colours, and the Pendant in various colours was used for this purpose.

Early in 1653 the Fleet was divided into three Squadrons with red, white and blue ensigns and pendants respectively. About 1661 there was in addition a fourth pendant with the fly striped red, white and blue, used as the distinctive pendant of all H.M. ships in commission which did not form part of a Fleet divided into Squadrons by the red, white and blue colours. It combined the colours of the Union flag, and was called the Union pendant. By proclamation it was assigned to H.M. ships only, and was the first step towards recognition of the Pendant as the distinctive sign of a man of war. The Union pendant (afterwards known as the "Ordinary" or "Common" pendant) was practically identical to our present day Church pendant. It is probably about this time that the custom of hoisting the Pendant on commissioning the ship became established, though it is hard to say for sure. It is on record though that at a launching in 1676 "they hoisted a pendant to signify shee was a man of warre, and then at once thrust her into the water."

In 1824 King's Regulations for the Navy ordered that ships in commission were to fly a pendant, but the practice of flying a pendant continuously by H.M. ships in commission was probably established much earlier. The first edition of King's Regulations for the Navy (1731) directed, Captains' to husband

the ship's colours, and not to keep them abroad in windy weather, the Pendant being sufficient mark of distinction.' The following passage shows the practice in the Navy at the beginning of the nineteenth century: "In the meantime I must proceed to put my ship in commission. The first thing to do is to get hold of one of the warrant officers to 'hoist the Pendant'. The Pendant being hoisted shows that the ship is in commission and this part of the colours is never hauled down day or night. At sunset when the ensign is hauled down, a smaller pendant three or four yards in length, is substituted for the long one, which in dandified ships, waves far over the stern".

Our present edition of Q.R. and A.I. tells us that all Her Majesty's ships in commission not flying a flag or broad pendant, are to fly at the main a masthead pendant as described in the Admiralty Book of Flags of all Nations. Reference will also be found in a number of other articles in the same edition but it is always termed the masthead pendant.

So please, "Masthead Pendant" or even "the Pendant," but "Commissioning Pendant" never. D.C.

POLITICS MADE EASY OR COMMUNICATORS TAKE A HAND

The second round of port had been completed and the mood was mellow when the Staff Signal Officer burst into the Cuddy with a short telegram. It was for the First Lord from the United Kingdom delegate to the United Nations. It was a brief outline plan, and measured ten feet nine inches in its full stops. It came naked and flowing from the mouth of the teleprinter.

Port and nuts were forgotten as the First Lord, brushing a Port Said fly from his forehead, began to read FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM DELEGATE TO THE UNITED NATIONS MY TELEGRAM SAVINGS HERE NUMBERED THEN OF NO FIXED TIME, IN SO FAR AS THE UNITED KINGDOM DELEGATE (SIC) etc.

The First Lord read on. The Port Said fly executed a perfect stall turn on to his forehead. The Permanent Secretary to the Admiralty played with his pencil. The four Admirals and their Chiefs of Staff studied the remains of their walnuts and sipped their port. All ears were attentive.

BUT THE SEX SALVAGE

The heads lifted in astonishment . . .

THE SEX SALVAGE VESSELS OF THE 257
UNITED NATIONS £74&@63 -1

The First Lord was clearly puzzled by the two lines of figures which followed. The Staff Signal Officer murmured "Figure letter shifts . . . no time to edit", and blushed. The Port Said fly anticipated the automatic move of the First Lord's hand and re-alighted in safety.

The First Lord was relieved to find coherent words two lines further down and continued ROMAN I SUBPARA A (III) B ABOVE WILL GIVE YOU A CONCISE ACCOUNT OF OUR REACTIONS TO 71@ " 3HE BUT YOU SHOULD OF COURSE BE AWREEEEE AWARE, NOTWITHSTANDING ANY PREVIOUS COMMENT ON THIS SUBJECT, AND W

THOUT ANY PERTINENT REAAINING CONSIDERATION BEING O
ERRUL

D @ £ " 2475£

AS OLD MAN IM TRYING TO CORRECT THIS LOT AS I GO ALONG AND GERNEEEEE GENERAL WHEELERS POSITION IS UNDO

BTEDLY

@ " 5368QR BUT WE SHALL NOT

"Damn, I've upset my port."

The First Lord rolled up the first five feet and at the same time fainted at the Port Said fly.

The Commander-in-Chief refilled his glass and sent for another decanter. The Port Said fly scraped its back legs on the First Lord's forehead. The First Lord read on

PORT TEWFIK AND 7"@EELERS ESIMATE WAS SINE DIE £173. 6. (SIC) WHILE FULLY COMPRZNDING HIS POSITEON AS SHORN INAPPEDEEEEE APPENDIX AIFA ATTACHED ATTACHED . . .

The next yard was fairly readable

THE REPRESENTATIV% OF CONSORTIUM NSMITT INTERNATIONALE SLEEPDIENST ROTTERDAM AND MOREOVER THE USE OF THESALVAGE FLEET MUST BE DIRECTED AT ALL COSTS AND WITH ALL OUR RESOURCES T

WARDS THE QUICK AND TIMELY CLEARANCE OF THQEEEE THE SUEX CANAL
ITS A BIT OF AMESS OLD ON FOR REPS OLD MAN

The First Lord rolled up the telegram. Eyes left the walnuts and turned to the First Lord. The Port Said fly took off as a precaution and orbited. The pregnant pause was broken by the Permanent Secretary of the Admiralty who passed over a torn piece of paper to the First Lord.

"How is this for a reply, Sir?"

The First Lord read aloud:

"Have read your telegram New York 7536 in so far as its rather corrupt text" (the Signal Officer blushed again) "allows. It does not alter the views in my 141736Z."

"Brilliant, Secretary," said the First Lord. "Brilliant. I don't know how you managed to assimilate it all just like that on the first reading; brilliant."

"It's much easier, Sir, if you are listening and not reading."

The Staff Signal Officer made good his escape.

DAVID AND GOLIATH

Anyone who has been in a ship whose lot it is to carry out anti-smuggling patrols will realise what a boring and monotonous job it can be at times, especially when the weather isn't exactly as the 'posters' so often depict it. Sometimes, however, there is a small incident which more than makes up for all the hours of boredom and apparently fruitless searching and even provides a subject of conversation during night watches, and which can be guaranteed to raise a grin every time it is brought up—especially when one realises the enormity of it all. Such an event happened to us one night. At the time we were in deadly earnest, but in course of conversation later we came to think what outlandish cheek it was on our part, we being a mere 400 ton Coastal Minesweeper.

The Cyprus Patrol routine is primarily to prevent smuggling of arms and the exit or entry of "undesirables". All vessels encountered are examined—i.e., we "flash them up", find out who they are, and if not satisfied with the result go and board them, reporting the action taken to Maritime Headquarters. In this signal we say what ship it was, where it was from and where bound, mentioning whether it was boarded, searched and released, or interrogated by light and then released.

One night during that gayest of all watches, the middle, we were ambling along quite placidly, completely darkened, and the land a dark mass on our starboard beam, when suddenly, as is their wont, two white lights appeared on our port bow, quite close together and at such a distance looking like the lights of a merchant ship of some considerable size. A few moments later, to confuse the issue, two red lights appeared. By this time the radar indicated two contacts in line ahead, making good about fifteen knots. Things started to look interesting to say the least, the range between us rapidly decreased and, on reaching a favourable position, we opened the battle by making the normal challenge procedure at the foremost of the two white lights, the angle at which they were placed making it impossible to identify the contacts as either R.N. or Merchant ships. The challenge was made steadily for about five minutes or so without reply when suddenly a string of letters was flashed back which, to the signalman of the watch, was unintelligible so he reverted to the old favourite of "What ship, where bound?" The rather startling reply was, "Who wants to know?" 'Bunts', being rather a wit and I suspect by this time a little 'chokker', made back, "I do." This provoked no answer whatsoever so we decided to identify ourselves by making, "Warship *Floriston*, who are you?" The reply resulted in the following signal being sent to M.H.Q. "Priority from *Floriston* to M.H.Q. Interrogated by light in position . . . *Defender* and *Delight*. Para. 2. Released." !!

The following day we learned that *Defender* and *Delight*, Cyprus bound from Malta for their first-ever

patrol, while playing for time and in a fever of excitement had called for the boarding parties, roused the Captains, and had done various other things, including closing up "B" gun with one practically "up the spout"—fully expecting to shatter the peace and calm which is M.H.Q., by announcing the capture of a vessel attempting to smuggle!

The Flag Officer Middle East, reading through his signals at breakfast the following morning, was highly amused. Is there any wonder?

"WINDY"

ODE TO ROCK 'N ROLL

Young Jim, a Bunting
On the "Tyne",
Thought Rock 'n Rollin'
Rather fine,
Bill Haley Rocked him
through the Rye
Around the clock, and
Sent him high.

He rocked on Buzzer,
Rocked on Light,
Rock 'n Rollin'
All the night,
Rolled to Crypto
Typing too,
He even rocked
A T/P through.

He stomped to Schubert,
Bopped to Bach
Thought Hepping Haydn
Quite a lark.
But Elvis Pelvis
Was the goods
The Alligator
In the Woods.

One Middle Watch
He chanced to hear,
His hero Elvis
On the Air
A rockin' in his
Blue suede shoes,
Getting Gone
With the Crazy blues.

Well, Jim was hep,
He was real sent,
His very soul
Had been and went,
When came a flashing
Light from ship,
No notice our
Jim took of it.
Chief Yeoman then,
A classic creep,

Upon the Bridge
Did chance to peep,
And there saw Jim
In groovy Mood
and flashing light
Oh, something rude.

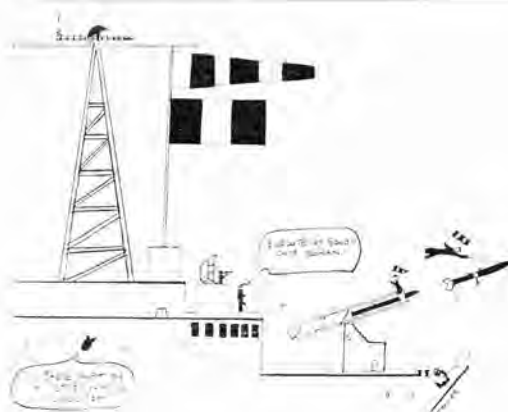
In temper then
Was said by him
to our poor Jazz Fiend
Hep-cat Jim,
Who jiving with
the gyro-compass
Took blind notice
of the rumpus.

Now Jim no more
Will Rock 'n Roll,
For five days Tens
He's on parole,
No longer Rockin'
No longer Rollin'
Much too chancey
He is now a fan
of Liberace.

From: S.O.P.A. Yokosuka	Unclassified
To: All ships present Yokosuka	Routine
Info: COMFLEACTS Yokosuka	131106z.
NAVCOMFAC Yokosuka	
COMNAVFE	

Circuits A2C and A2D frequently disrupted as result stations exercising improper discipline, unauthorised use of plain language, profanity, vulgar language, intentional interference, broadcasting music, unidentified transmission, general laxity in watch standing.

Commanding Officers ships present Yokosuka take immediate steps to correct improper use of communications circuits. Unit Commanders will assist in reporting incidents of poor circuit discipline.



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HOME STATION



H.M.S. "ADAMANT" —THIRD SUBMARINE SQUADRON

After giving Christmas leave in Portsmouth, *Adamant* started a three month refit and the Communication staff of S/M Three found themselves split between S/M 3(Clyde) and S/M Three (*Adamant*). Those allocated to the former opened up the Main Signal Office and W/T Offices of H.M.S. *Woolwich*, the base ship of the Reserve Fleet in the Clyde, and continued to operate the squadron. S/M 3(Clyde)'s traffic level has been considerably more than that usually handled in *Adamant* and as only half the normal complement has been available to deal with it, working hours have been long. The fact that one does not have to take a ferry to get to Glasgow from the Gareloch has been taken full advantage of, and only Rothesay natives have found commuting difficult.

The staff of S/M 3 (*Adamant*) have had their own problems of refitting the ship and living under the conditions always found in dockyards in the winter, but the natives of the south have voiced no strong protests.

In April the staffs combine again and *Adamant* sails north to operate the squadron from Rothesay once more.

Heard on HIC:

Depot ship: "Give me a short Tango Tango."

Submarine: "Slow-quick-quick-slow . . ."

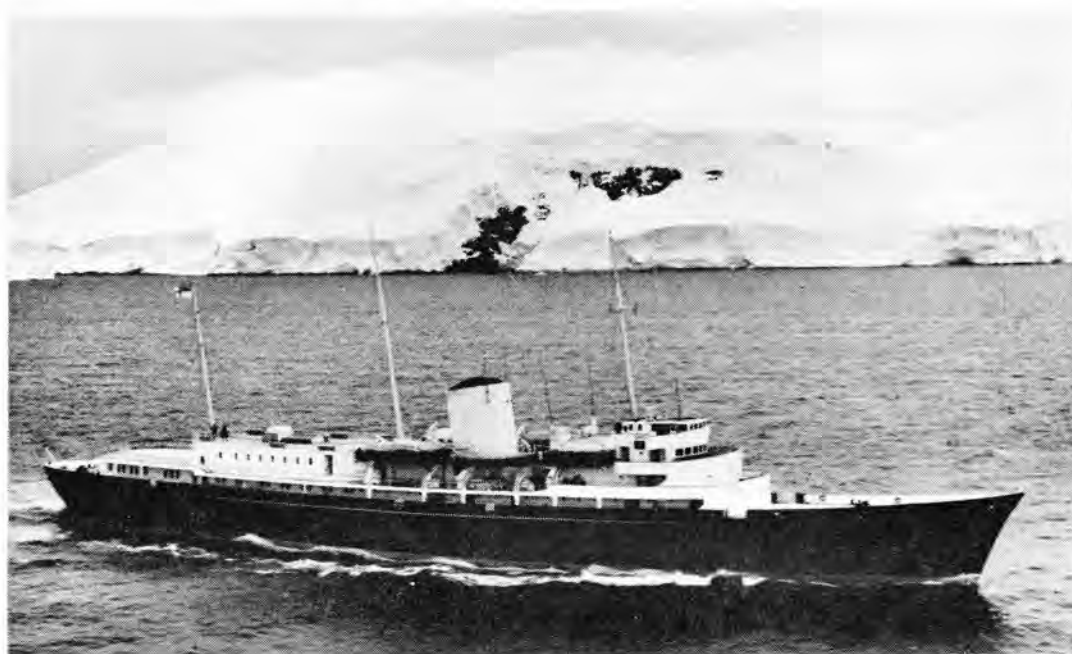
H.M.Y. "BRITANNIA"

Here we are rounding Ushant, marking the completion of our longest tour of royal duty since commissioning. When last this famous landmark was sighted it was raining as indeed it is now, but neither the precipitation nor the typically channel outlook can dampen the feeling of joy that comes with the knowledge that soon, instead of Antarctic wastes, volcanic isles and tropical flora, Nab Tower will be in sight. This is all that needs to be said about places visited due to the coverage given by the Daily Press, except maybe just to add for the statisticians that we have covered 39,550 miles since leaving Portsmouth in August. Any other details will have to wait and be told over a pair of pints of ye goodly English ale.

Our last literary piece took us up to Australia. Enough said!! The time spent there went well, with all Communicators upholding the standards of the Branch and behaving like gentlemen, in that they always took off their hats first. Upon leaving the land of the Digger the vastness of the South Pacific soon began to make itself felt with the increasing non-existence of other ships. It was a great pleasure eventually to meet our tanker *Wave Chief*, which was to accompany us for the greater part of the journey. She was in fact the only ship sighted from New Zealand onwards. The voice of her radio operator became well known, and the sight of him hoisting "ROMEO SINGLY" a welcome relief. By the time the shores of Antarctica were within striking distance, a quick flog up on morse cards was needed before it was possible to exchange identities with H.M.S. *Protector*.

As is often the case in the Branch, the work fluctuated between very little at times to almost too much on other occasions. Without a doubt the most responsible task was the relay of Prince Philip's Christmas broadcast. Being in such a remote part of the globe naturally led to a little apprehension, so that the original idea was to have three transmissions, one direct from *Britannia* and two others from Cable and Wireless in Barbados and Ascension respectively, with a comparator sorting out the best. As it turned out, our direct transmission was the one that you actually heard, and although reception varied throughout the country, we were not dissatisfied with the result.

Christmas on board proved quite an interesting and perhaps unique event. The V.S. Store was emptied of all bunting and flags to provide adequate decorations for every messdeck. The Duke of Edinburgh walked around the messes on Christmas Day in an endeavour to pick out the one which was best decorated. The coveted prize was finally awarded to the Communicators primarily because of the work put in with saw and hammer to produce a very realistic looking bar, short of only one ingredient, a state which happily did not last very long. Our special treat for Christmas came when all the Branch were summoned to the B.W.O. to hear the recorded voices and record requests of our wives and families. A letter of appreciation has already been sent but we would like publicly to thank the Captain of the Signal School, the Electrical



H.M.Y. "Britannia" near Port Lockroy

Official photograph

Officer and all others concerned in making this great thrill possible.

Communications in the Antarctic, as our chums on *Protector* will tell you, are anything but simple. All the various bases, and some of them are unbelievably remote, have no easy task to maintain radio contact, and as the "new boy" we had our problems, particularly as Prince Philip's programme was very elastic. Often, last minute changes cropped up, due to effects of weather in the main, and these had to be got to the people concerned, which is why we now have four bewigged P.O. Tels.

Life in Antarctica showed us much of interest, in particular the whaling industry. Most of us paid a visit to a whaling station in South Georgia and saw the whole process including the carving up operations. The most unforgettable thing was the stench which lingered about the yacht for days. After leaving South Georgia, we soon saw whaling in its initial stages as we met a chaser after its quarry. Formation one was assumed in the sequence whale, chaser and *Britannia* and this continued for some time with the whale taking violent avoiding action. Patience was rewarded eventually and another mammal met its end. What an end it was too. As the harpoon went home the whale heaved itself out of the water bodily, literally standing on its tail—an unforgettable sight.

Still in those chilly waters, the Chief Yeoman developed a maternal instinct, possibly because he

was fed up with the sight of his whiskered staff, and with the avowed intention of making history, he purloined an egg from an indifferent penguin mother. The egg was placed in a cardboard box under a lampshade and the long vigil began. Sitreps were issued at frequent intervals and anxious enquiries were received even from our distinguished guests. Days passed and still junior declined to emerge into this wicked world and finally he/she was given up as a bad job. Perhaps this was just as well, as expert advice from Sir Raymond Priestley, the eminent Antarctic expert, gave us to understand that the baby would require a diet of regurgitated shrimps, which would have meant breaking into two watches.

Of the various escorts that have followed us around it is thought that *Chieftain* will best remember their stay. It was whilst working with her that the use of standard phraseology with a marked Hampshire accent was proven to be useless. The signal, over Tactical Primary, was "FORM STBD 18", but by the time it reached *Chieftain* via the intercom in *Britannia*, it had developed into "FORM STBD WIDE". Just what is a ship to do in such circumstances?

And now we are back, none the wealthier and none the wiser, but with a beautiful pile of memories and photographs as a constant reminder of our round the world trip (the word cruise is not used for various reasons). About fifty per cent of the present

staff including the S.C.O. will soon be leaving us for posts back in Gens, and we hope to welcome their reliefs with the prospects of no further circumnavigations for at least two years. P.A.R.D.

S.T.C. "CHATHAM"

The reduction to S.T.C. status has not meant any decrease in the number of men accommodated, on the contrary, there has been a considerable increase.

With the departure of Sub-Lieutenant Haggard without relief we have no Training Officer. The duties of V1 and W1 are ably carried out by C.Y.S. Surridge and C.P.O. Tel. Laurie respectively.

Men wishing to take the provisional examination for Leading and Petty Officer rate are sent to *Mercury* for the necessary time to complete the exams.

We have had a gratifying response to our efforts to encourage men to go through for higher rating, but this has been offset to a great extent by the exodus of many others to civilian life.

As to the future, well it is expected that Prince Arthur Camp will continue to be the S.T.C. until July 1957, then the "School" will be transferred to the Drafting Office in the R.N.B., in fact back to where it was before the last war.

Cumberland Block will continue to be used for the accommodation of our Leading rates and below. W.

H.M.S. "DARTMOUTH"

This is only the second contribution from H.M.S. *Dartmouth* (alias Britannia Royal Naval College), and it has been deemed fitting that it should be sent by a "volunteer" from one of the two Communication Instructors. Therefore it seems proper that we should endeavour to enlighten sea-faring Communicators about the "C" knowledge which they may expect young officers of the future to have.

Let us look at a typical busy day in winter in the life at *Dartmouth*.

0630 Flashing Exercise (cadets). Twice weekly. (CYS or CPOT).

0710 Ditto or Semaphore (midshipmen). Twice weekly.

0820 Flashing (midshipmen). Twice weekly.

0850-1310 Five periods of instruction, Fleetwork or radio.

Afternoons Recreation or River.

1655-1830 Two periods of instructions, V/S or radio.

2000-???? Voluntary (senior terms). Four nights weekly.

As we have not yet been granted a five day week by Their Lordships, we still have instructions up to 1230 on Saturdays.

Dartmouth from a Communication Instructor's angle must be unique. Each instructional period lasts 45 minutes, and we will, after Easter, have 57

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such periods per week, plus Customs and Ceremonial, and NATO instruction. But what is really peculiar, is that, for 45 minutes, instructions may be given on Initiating and Drafting followed by a five minute "scattering match" to reach the Voice Trainer for a further period. Then back to the Communication Study or Crypto Office for Fleetwork or Crypto with another class. We see each class for two periods a week, so a strict check needs to be kept on "where did we finish off last week?" Rather different from the *Mercury* organisation. One often wonders whether after labouring on Force Org. for $\frac{1}{2}$ hour, the Colour Sergeant PTI will punch it all out of them during the following $\frac{1}{2}$ hour at the Gym.

When fuel rationing permits we man six power boats, supply each with a type 615, and proceed outside the harbour to do manoeuvres. These include the "Gridiron", so Seamanship, Fleetwork and Voice Procedure, not forgetting Customs and Ceremonial, are combined in out of working hours instructions.

Apart from the Officers, the rating instructors are mostly C.P.O.s who have accommodation below the College in the old Upper Yardmen's mess. They number nineteen and include the following branches: Gunnery, TAS, Seamen, Writer, RP, PTI and ABCD, so there can be little "shop talk" in such a varied mess. Whilst on this subject, we regret to be losing a Communication stanchion in the shape of C.Y.S. Hollett, who will shortly change the serge for the pin-stripe and bowler.

After Easter the first of the New Scheme officers will join the Fleet, and we feel that if not *everything* has "gone home" at least you chaps who may meet our Sub-Lieutenants will be able to converse in Communicator's jargon, and be understood. Remember that they have spent 18 months with us listening to everything from Callsigns to Crypto, and from Standard Distances to Screens.

DARTMOUTH TRAINING SQUADRON

Rumour has it that quite a number of people think that the D.T.S. spends most of its time swinging round the buoy at Dartmouth. Nothing could be further from the truth; this is very much a sea-going squadron.

The second division, consisting of *Jewel* and *Acute*, are based at Dartmouth, but even so, you will find them leaving or entering harbour at all hours of the day or night. We sometimes see them at Portland or across the other side of the Channel.

However, for seetime, you must visit the first division, consisting of *Vigilant* (Capt. D. Dart), *Carron* and *Venus*. We left Devonport on the 17th January for the spring cruise and returned on the 29th March, having covered many miles of ocean and having visited many interesting places. We will

have spent most of the cruise working from Portland carrying out gunnery and torpedo firings, casexes, midshipmen's anchorages, communication exercises and N.E.X.s, etc. Our weekends are spent in a variety of places such as Portsmouth, Brest, Den Helder, Southampton, Hamburg and Dartmouth.

We visited Dartmouth for two weekends during the cruise to disembark one term of midshipmen and embark another. This is also a splendid opportunity to get together with the college (H.M.S. *Dartmouth*) on the training of junior officers. All officers and ratings play some part in this training, from lecturing, practical demonstrations, helping them and mixing with them, everyone assists in one form or other.

Our recent visit to Den Helder was a most enjoyable one. The squadron midshipmen and cadets took on their opposite numbers at rugby, hockey, swimming, sailing boat pulling, soccer, and, although we came off second best in the overall score, some very firm friendships were made. It is the object of our foreign visits that our future officers should get to know the future officers of other navies and, to date, these visits have been highly successful and enjoyed by all.

H.M.S. "KENYA"

We are now on the Home Fleet portion of our G.S.C. and are due to pay off on April 4th. The ship now wears the third and last Flag of the commission, that of F.O.F.H. Including F.O.F.H.'s staff we now boast a total department of 57 officers and ratings, which in these days of reductions is a large number. Before you say "all right for some" it must be pointed out that we are acting as a pool for hard pressed ships and several officers and ratings have been sent off on loan drafts for varying periods.

Our football team, led by Sig. Barlow and re-inforced by F.O.F.H.'s staff, are hoping to end in a blaze of glory, at the moment being in the semi-final of the inter-Part competition.

After our far flung ventures of the foreign portion of the commission, it is a considerable change to be with a fleet, even if by the older members' standards it isn't a very big one. We trust that those in company with us did not find this change too obvious! The beginning of the Spring cruise was rather a delayed work-up for us.

We have found the new "exam without course for leading rate" popular and were very pleased that one Sig. and one Tel. got through in all subjects first time in the November '56 exams.

We have had very few personnel changes during our eighteen months which, of course, has been of the greatest help and we shall be very sorry when our team breaks up. Eighteen months goes swiftly by and allows all too little time in which to enjoy the benefits of having worked up together into a co-ordinated body with everyone really knowing everyone else.

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RATT IN THE DARTMOUTH TRAINING SQUADRON

In the D.T.S. RATT has now become part of our everyday life. When in Harbour to ease the "sparker's" burden of night watches, a Guardship and a RATT intercom is worked. (The bell on the RATT machine proving to be an excellent alarm clock...).

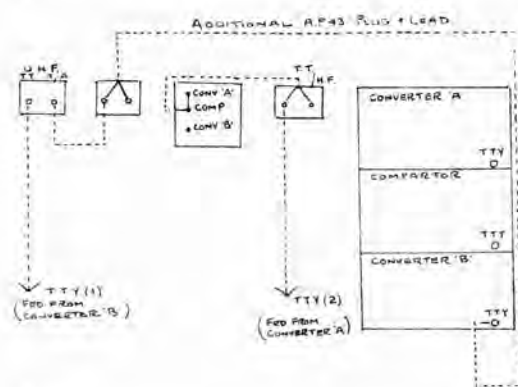
We consider that we have completely mastered the RATT "monster" and are well on the way to automation. We are now awaiting the introduction of F.S.K. units for H.F. (meanwhile we are using our own method for H.F.—see below).

With the addition of one in No. A.P. 142 Jack box and one in No. A.P. 43 Jack plug and lead to the standard RATT bay the following can be carried out:—

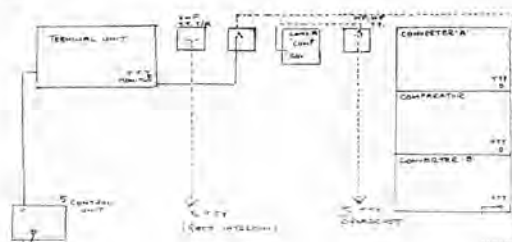
1. Receive Normal F.S.K. RATT ship Broadcast.
2. Receive two F.S.K. Broadcasts (or RATT transmissions) simultaneously.
3. Work a RATT intercom wave on H.F., V.H.F., or U.H.F.
4. Rebroadcast Ship Broadcast simultaneously over RATT intercom on H.F., V.H.F., or U.H.F.

The following Block Diagram, we hope, will assist any ships who wish to carry out 2 and 4.

2



4



Note.—For RATT H.F. the Transmitter/receiver are connected up to the TERMINAL UNIT (AN/SCC-1A) in the normal way (via C.C.X. as for UHF) both set to R.T.—(The terminal Unit tone oscillator modulates the transmitter carrier). On a recent test a range of 100 miles was achieved without difficulty.

Technical Section Comment

A very interesting and simple modification which illustrates how this equipment can be adapted to perform functions other than those for which it was designed.

The reception of two FSK signals or the automatic rebroadcast of one on intership RATT can both be done by using the connections shown for "4". The changeover from printing to rebroadcasting and vice versa can then be effected by the use of the control switch on the Terminal Unit.

It should be borne in mind, however, that the use of "2" means that the comparator, which is fitted to overcome HF fading, cannot then be used.

H.M.S. "GANGES"

It was only a chance remark by the Editor to the S.C.O., when he was visiting Leydene recently, that has produced this article from *Ganges*. Unfortunately Ed's mailing list must have come unstuck somewhere as the usual hastener never reached us.

Like every other Spring Term there is little exciting to write about except the weather, which this year will be remembered for its lack of snow and early appearance of spring flowers, lawn mowers and requests for leave to get married. What a difference from the deep snow and bitter cold of last year.

Sport has gone on practically uninterrupted with Communications Juniors playing their usual full part. Cross-country running took up everybody's time early in the Term and in February the inter-Services Boxing Association Boys' Championships were held here. The Navy were victorious partly due to one of our champions, Junior Signaller Brady.

This Term has seen the arrival of new instructors such as C.P.O. Tel. Smith, the "Defender Duet" C.Y.S. Clarke and C.P.O. Tel. Holmes, and C.Y.S. Thomas. We have sent on their various ways C.Y.S. Brown, Slaughter and Yule, C.P.O. Tel. Cottam, P.O. Tels. Briggs and Scudder, and Y.S. Edge, who all did yeoman service—not a pun—during their time here.

Sub-Lieutenant (SD) (C) Christie has left us for the Far East after nearly two years with two hats—that of W1 in the Signal School and Rodney 2nd Divisional Officer, where he had to suffer the ignominy of such things as Junior Seamen's and Mechanic's kits. Sub-Lieutenant (SD) (C) Collins has arrived to take his place and is still trying to work out what it is all about.

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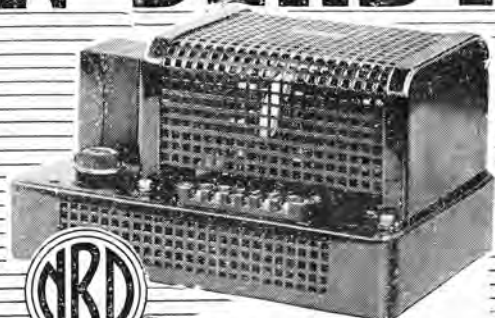
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FIRST DESTROYER SQUADRON

Some of our ex-First D.S. Communicators may have thumbed through the pages of the last issue in vain for news of their old squadron. We take this opportunity of expressing our regret at this and we are sure they will understand the reason when they recap the dates and find us at the far end of the Mediterranean. It was a morale raiser to us when Flag Officer Flotillas (Med) Rear Admiral Holland-Martin, said "If there is any trouble in the Middle East, there is no other squadron I would like to have with me more than the First D.S." And so "we were there".

We returned from Suez with mixed feelings, but these were soon forgotten on a well-earned period of leave at the best time of the year—Christmas!

Sailing again with the Home Fleet on the Spring cruise to Gibraltar, we felt a well seasoned bunch. The precision with which tasks were executed by Communication staffs caused no embarrassment to D.I.

At this time the names of the ships escorting *Britannia* for the Royal visit to Portugal came to light. We rightly regarded this as a bright feather in the squadron's cap and proceeded in the true naval fashion to rejuvenate ourselves. We meant to arrive at Lisbon as "spick and span" as ever, and we did. President Lopes' message of welcome was intercepted at the mouth of the Tagus. It was as follows:

"NRI LISBOA 67 18 84"

"Her Majesty The Queen *Britannia* Lisboa Radio BT

"At the moment *Britannia* approaches Lisbon, it is with the greatest satisfaction that we present Your Majesty and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh our heartfelt welcome and express the pleasure and joy felt to-day by all the Portuguese people thereby reflecting once more the strength of the ties which bind our two countries.

BT General Craveiro Lopes."

The visit was described in the Press as the happiest ever for the Queen. We too basked in her reflected enjoyment.

The mammoth efforts of the Portuguese Naval Signal School situated just outside the capital did much to make it a success from our point of view. We send our thanks to them through the medium of THE COMMUNICATOR, for many of their staff have connections with H.M.S. *Mercury*.

Whilst at Lisbon, most of us had the opportunity of seeing the floodlit football match between the local city team plus a few guest stars and Newcastle United. The ultra modern stadium, still being completed, had only a small crowd present, owing to the lateness of the hour, to witness a match notable for its good sportsmanship. The locals triumphed by the odd goal in three, which included a penalty goal for each side. The United left winger, Bobbie Mitchell, was the most outstanding player

on the field and delighted the Portuguese and British alike with many a "Matthews-like" run.

The Newcastle men expressed their surprise during the interval in the dressing room at hearing the Navy's rendering of that old North Country favourite "Blaydon Races".

First D.S.'s "Lisbon Story" ended in fine style, as the Queen sent us a special message via F.O. Royal Yacht, which included "Splice the Mainbrace."

Londonderry is the next on our agenda, and from there to home ports to pay off.



"FIRST and LAST"

Chief Wren Tel. D. Townsend, Wren Tels. S. Perkins, F. McDonald, J. Ricketts and D. Powell

R.N.S.S., DEVONPORT

As many of you will have read in the Christmas COMMUNICATOR, the Devonport Signal School took on a "new look" at the turn of the year. Since the beginning of January, National Service Telegraphists and Signalmen have been coming here for their Part II training (thirty weeks Telegraphists, twenty weeks Signalmen) at the rate of some twenty-five a month. Each group forms a division named after a famous explorer; at the moment we have three divisions, SCOTT, SHACKLETON and FRANKLIN. Scott Signalmen should be joining the Fleet in June and Scott Telegraphists in September—all congratulations on the ability of these highly trained operators should be signalled Op. Immediate to the Officer-in-Charge, Royal Naval Signal School, St. Budeaux, Plymouth, Information Sub. Lieutenant Daniels, P.O. Tel. Clapp, Yeo Sigs, Benfield; all complaints are to be addressed Basegram Deferred to Captain Scott, R.N. (Retired), Camp 12X, Antarctica, and stamped "To await arrival."

We said goodbye in February to the last Wren Telegraphists Class W 62 to be trained here and



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discovered with some surprise that their Instructor, Chief Wren Telegraphist 'Tiny' Townsend, was a trainee in the first Wren Telegraphist class to go through the Royal Naval Signal School, Devonport in 1952. We are sorry to lose you, girls.

The remainder of our training programme is filled with Refreshers, R.N.V.(W).Rs. and Crypto Courses, all of which keep the School fully occupied. We expect to reach our peak number of two hundred and eighty in the Signal School in September.

Since the last issue, Sub-Lieutenant Riggs has rejoined us after the Suez operations, and Instructor Lieutenant Commander Gilbert, Lieutenant Barlow and Sub-Lieutenant McCullough have joined to help us with our new task. We welcomed visits from Commodore Keys and Captain Gordon-Lennox in February.

HOME FLEET TRAINING SQUADRON

The definition of Squadron has been locally amended for our benefit, as we are now reduced to only one ship, which nevertheless tries hard to carry on the good work.

The days of swinging around the buoy in Portland are now long past and we find ourselves doing more sea time than the average Home Fleet ship, and carrying out tasks that are often far removed from training duties, although our complement remains that of a buoy swinging carrier.

The *Ocean*, together with her sister ship *Theseus*, now alas paid off, played a great part in putting the price of petrol up towards the end of last year, when the trainees were landed and we embarked a load of Pongo types and their "equipment various" to

transport them to Nasser's war. During this phase the ship almost reverted to a carrier, in as much as we operated helicopters and landed on Austers.

The current cruise has seen many changes in the department, including a change of C.P.O. Tel. and Sub. Lt. (C). Our ports of call have not been very exciting to date. At Milford Haven, where the weather defeated us, leave was only possible on three days. We finally gave it up as a bad job and took refuge in Rothesay, leaving forty of our ship's company, and of course the 622, ashore. After Rothesay we sailed up the Clyde, which looked very beautiful in the light of dawn, to Glasgow; the last part of the journey was unfortunately shrouded in fog, but we did get a glimpse of the ships building and undergoing repairs.

At the moment of writing the ship is in Rosyth preparing for our Antwerp visit, where we hope to make up for lost time and really let our hair down, and then it is back to Guiz and leave.

Communicators interested in ceremonial will be pleased to know that according to an answer on a test paper "The union flag is flown at sea in a ship on which there is a mutiny."

H.M.S. "MAIDSTONE"

Various goings on have taken place in the *Maidstone*. One of the torpedo parting shops now houses temporary offices (the Paper Mill). Senior Staff officers work at desks in the 'Gunroom' and even the M.S.O. has taken on a new look and after alteration goes under the title of Comcentre, handling signals of all security classifications.

The Communication Staffs of C-in-C Home Fleet and *Maidstone* have been working together since August and *Maidstone* now serves as Flagship to



Admiral Sir John Eccles, K.C.B., K.C.V.O., C.B.E., with the Communications Staffs of C-in-C Home Fleet, H.M.S. "Maidstone" and Home Fleet Submarine Squadron.



A cigarette and a cup of tea—two of the minor pleasures of life, but such as few would be without. This is as true of the members of Her Majesty's Forces as of most of us.

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C-in-C Home Fleet, C-in-C Eastlant and Depot ship for the Home Fleet Submarine Squadron under Captain S.M. 2. It is on record that at a peak period 27,000 copies of signals were rolled off in a 24 hour period—some muscles those Banda operators must have by now. A strong demand is being made for automatic duplicators for use in large M.S.Os. at sea.

The Submarine Squadron at present comprises *Subtle*, *Sturdy*, *Scorcher* and *Springer* and during the Spring Cruise *Andrew* and *Thermopylae*, and H.M.N.S. *Walrus* have been under our operational control. Our 'Slippery S' and 'Tiddlers' (X craft) have been handed into the care of S.M. 5.

HOWLER:—

Heard at Gibraltar on Local Command Voice:—
"EASTWEARE this is Pipsqueak. Radio Check. Over."

SECOND TRAINING SQUADRON

With every other New Year resolution well and truly broken, we hope our salvation will be this contribution to THE COMMUNICATOR.

It is a very long time since the largest Squadron in the Navy burst into print to announce that it is still alive and kicking. In fact, it has recently been rejuvenated. During the past year we have said goodbye to the last of the "Castles" and we now have a very modern Squadron apart from one or two old warriors. It consists of 6 Type 14s, 2 Type 15s, 1 Type 16, 1 Hunt Class Destroyer, 1 A/S Trawler and 3 S.D.B.s. In each ship the Communications Department is run by two men and a dog as those who read A.F.O. 517/57 will discover. The Ldg. Sigs. decided long ago that a Yeoman's lot is not a happy one in ships smaller than Cruisers and, when ashore, they can be found on the cliffs at Portland Bill wondering whether a jump would be

the easiest way out. The P.O. Tels., reluctant to face the fresh air, are searching for a better way.

No names are mentioned in this article as we know when we have a good number and intend keeping it, despite the V/S and W/T hazards. Besides, Weymouth does have its good points in the Summer.

THIRD TRAINING SQUADRON

A lot has passed under the 3rd Training Squadron bridge since the last issue of THE COMMUNICATOR, in fact let us introduce ourselves in our present form—T.S.3 in *Zest* (Type 15 frigate), *Whitby* (Type 12) and *Hardy* (Type 14).

Perhaps some of you stunted Suez types don't realise that we, too, have to be warlike at times. *Whitby* and *Hardy* got away to their home ports for Christmas, but *Zest* found herself refitting at Belfast over the festive period at the time when certain gentlemen in the Emerald Isle started getting trigger happy. Half the ship's company was recalled from leave and we were given the task of providing guards for Naval establishments in the Belfast area. Fortunately for us so far nobody has actually had to fire a rifle, but one of *Zest's* patrols did have the doubtful honour of being rounded up by the Ulster Constabulary on Christmas Night when their transport had to be abandoned in a snowdrift.

When the week's exercises are over and we return to Derry, life no longer pursues its previous blissful calm. It's on with the S.P.s, out with the guns and mind your Number One's don't get ruined by a police dog. It is understood Mr. Guinness will shortly be issuing the first campaign medals.

However, we got away from it all at the end of January and have just spent a pleasant month working with the Home Fleet at Gib. and taking part in Exercise "Shortfly".



H.M.S. "Hardy"

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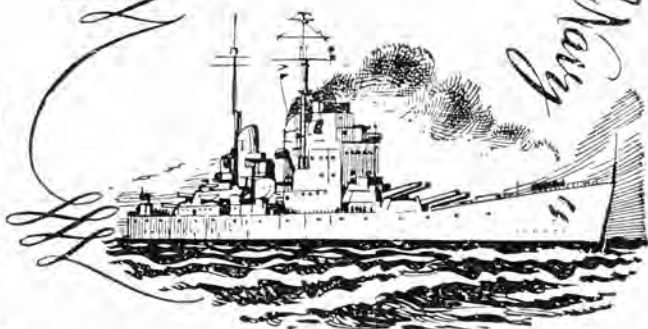
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R.N.A.S. BRAWDY

There has been a complete change-round of staff, for a short while we had the services of four W.R.N.S. ratings to help out with our watch-keeping commitments in the Control Tower, but these were whisked away to Whitehall, and we are once again an all-male staff! There have been busy moments, notably about the middle of last year, when we had our annual inspection, followed fairly soon by much squadron movement towards the Eastern Mediterranean! In mid-August 895 Squadron left us for *Bulwark*, in mid-September 800 Squadron left us for *Albion*, and later on 898 Squadron left us for *Ark Royal*. Now, after a brief respite, we are about to embark on another period of aerial activity that should prove sufficient to occupy us fully until next annual inspection.

For those who have served at R.N.A.S. Brawdy in the past, it will be of interest to learn that station amenities have improved considerably. We have the first of the new ratings' accommodation blocks in use (in which the Communicators live), the new Chief Petty Officers' and Petty Officers' Messes were opened in November, and there are also under construction new mess halls and galleys, canteens wet and dry, and T.V. rooms, which will shortly be completed. More blocks for the accommodation of ratings will be commenced shortly.

R.N.A.S. CULDROSE

The blank pages of the desk diary confirm that, this Term, coming between the glow of Christmas and joys of Summer has little to commend it. Our Winter days have been but different in their quantity of rain. However, much comfort is ours that we have been spared the rigours of icy roads, burst pipes and a P.C.B. isolated by snow drifts. The presence of front line Squadrons equipped with Gannet aircraft means that we have a good acquaintance with their Telegraphists (Air). 824 Squadron left us early in the year. 815 Squadron called in to say hello—departed, but are with us again while mother has a major operation. 814 Squadron are resident, being well occupied in their working up.

In February, 814 Squadron suffered the loss of one aircraft at sea. The Search and Rescue Organisation worked well but, unfortunately, without positive result. An outstanding communication feature was the excellent Merchant ship co-operation achieved by Lands End Radio and the VHF voice communication between searching aircraft and lifeboats of RNLI.

The occupants of our cramped C.R.R. in the control tower are looking forward to the new spacious office they have been promised. UHF, new control system and something called RATT are in the plans.

R.N.A.S. LOSSIEMOUTH

H.M.S. *Bramble* spent a three week period in our area recently, and working with a ship was a pleasant change from the endless QGH and YG routines. She was carrying out Fishery Protection Patrols in the Moray Firth, and aircraft from Lossiemouth were exercising with her as the opportunity arose. While in the area, *Bramble* offered to take visitors to sea for day trips, and two of our Sig. Wrens took advantage of this offer. Apparently one spent most of the day evaluating the Sick Bay's Seasick Tablets, and the other manned a V.H.F. net, on which she unintentionally tested the Pilots' sense of direction by using Lossie's call-sign for a while. It was soon established that Lossie was not all at sea that day, however, and things progressed smoothly for the remainder of the exercise.

Since the beginning of the Term flying has been fairly intensive. The Naval Air Fighter School is in continuous operation, and two frontline squadrons have formed and are hard at it, day and night. Two other front-line squadrons, who have Lossie as their home base, have recently returned from sea and are adding to the daily effort.

And for the future—muttered words have been heard about a National Defence Exercise, and for a few days in March we are taking control of Coastal Command from MTO.

Chief Tel. Mills is looking hopefully towards Barracks for his relief, as he intends shortly to "take his twelve".

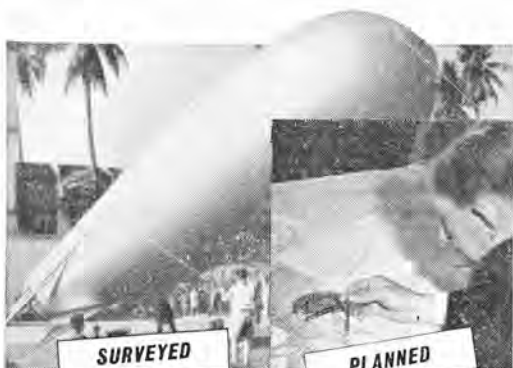
NAVAL AIR SIGNAL SCHOOL

No. 34 Telegraphist (Air) course were presented with their wings at a passing out parade at the school on Friday, 1st March, and their place has been taken by No. 35 course consisting of Telegraphists Hutchins, Ellis, Colclough and Lines, to whom we extend a hearty welcome.

We have said farewell to Sub-Lieutenant Flindell (an ex-sparker) and congratulate him on passing his Observer course with such high marks. We wish P.O. Tel. (Air) Hopps the best of luck in his new squadron in Cyprus.

Wrens who have passed through Culdrose will be interested to learn that their very patient voice instructor, Chief Petty Officer (Air) McCabe has joined H.M.S. *Bulwark* as the assistant to Lieutenant Commander (Ops.).

The petrol rationing has caused a rush amongst R.A. members to buy motor scooters and the first casualty from this craze has been P.O. Tel. (Air) Buckley, who came off second best in an encounter with a Boxer bitch on a hairpin bend and landed on his face. He was accused of being in the boxing team the next day.

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LC 17

GOING THE ROUNDS IN "MERCURY"

CHIEF'S CHATTER

The usual comings and goings haven't disturbed us a great deal this Term although five of our "old faithfuls" have swallowed the anchor and left us: C.Y.S. Farmer, C.Y.S. Stevenson, C.P.O. Tel. R. S. Jones, C.P.O. Tel. (S) Green and the President of the Mess, C.Y.S. Dixon, who has been relieved by C.P.O. Tel. Sullivan.

The Children's Christmas Party and the Christmas Dance were both a great success, and the monthly socials continue to be well attended.

Leave is almost upon us again, and we wish a happy time to all of you that can go, and to those far away, have a good time both "out there" and also on your F.S.L. B.W.S.

P.O.s' PATTTER

After several knocks from the Editor we have at last put pen to paper to keep all you ex-members up to date on the trials and tribulations of the Mess.

Owing to the dark evenings, very little has happened in the world of sport, although at the time of writing the inter-part Soccer League is in progress. So far we have played the New Entries and drawn 3 all, this being due mainly to our playing a 'deck ape' in goal. Indoor sports are restricted to Social Evenings once a month which are proving quite a success; the T.V. monster at last receding into the background from whence it originally sprung.

The Mess itself too, is well populated once more and we have a full committee for entertainment and various sports for the first time in months. With the Mess Committee in full control, a lot of fun has been lost to the ordinary members in the form of Mess Meetings, which were becoming, to say the least, hilarious. Also the age of miracles is not past; believe it or not, the Mess pantry is being painted out at last by, of all people, the Dockyard. This saves Yeoman (S.I.) Sam Wilcox from getting paint in his hair!

The W.I.s have finished their course at last and are gradually dispersing to various places, the whole class having been successful. The S/Lt.(SD)(C)"Q" are still plodding their way, rather wearily at times, to the half way mark; we wish them all the necessary luck.

SIGNAL SCHOOL MESS

The introduction of centralised drafting has made a tremendous impact upon the capabilities of those concerned in the "care, health and happiness" of all those fortunate enough to enter these "marble halls". In coping with the effects of the above, sterling work was done by all. One result is that even "Jimmy's" working party is more than just a name these days.

The mixture of the three depots has been without incident—so far, the "peace and tranquility" of the

"Hampshire Haven" only being broken by such cries as "Hi Jan!" or "Cop 'old of this tosh!"

Next week sees the departure of Captain A. C. H. Gordon Lennox, D.S.O., R.N., and we would like to take this opportunity of wishing him the best of luck, and a successful commission in H.M.S. *Newcastle*.

Our social activities have included a snooker championship, won by Cook (S) Wardle, and a darts championship won by L/Sig. Hartley. The "light entertainment" of the evening was provided by the "Mercury Rockets" adequately assisted by the consumption of two barrels of beer and sundry rolls.

At the time of going to press, two soccer teams from the Signal School Mess are in the league, "B" team being top and "A" team lying third.

TELEGRAPHIST (S) AT "MERCURY"

Of the original four C.P.O. Tels. who formed the re-established Tels. (S) branch in *Mercury* in 1949 only C.P.O. Tel. (S) Rees is still with us, C.P.O. Tel. (S) Green having left us to join the army of ex-naval civil servants. We wish the latter well in his new job, and know that our loss is the Civil Service's gain.

The Branch Re-union was held on February 8th at the "Bird-in-Hand" and was very well attended indeed. Mr. Couperthwaite and Mr. Pilley (older members of the team will remember the latter) even turned up from the wilds of Dorset. Of course Mr. Coles, the "Squire" of Hambledon, was there with his usual greeting—"Where's my pint!"

During the evening presentations were made to C.P.O. Tel. (S) Green and also to Lt.-Cmdr. P. C. Prince, who at the time of writing is on the verge of leaving us for *Eagle*. Everyone will join in wishing him the best of luck and he can be assured that he has left his mark on this small branch of ours.

We welcome our new R1, Lt.-Cmdr. H. S. Bennett, with the hope that his term of office will be both pleasant and satisfying.

Howler:—

From C in C F.E.S.

To C.T.G. 333.I

Info D.8. Tamar.

Request confirmation that Rev. Spence has been thrown to U.K.

= 210252/Jan.

New Entry to Class Instructor: May I visit the canteen sir?

Instructor: What do you want to buy lad?

New Entry: A laxative sir.

Instructor: Why aren't you Regular?

New Entry: No sir, NATIONAL SERVICE.

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APPOINTMENTS

EDITOR'S NOTE—Although every endeavour is made to ensure that the information in this section is correct, we ask readers not to treat it as authoritative in the strict sense.

Name	Rank	Whence	Whither
J. ADAMS	Lt. (SD) (C)	Staff of FOTS	Mercury
R. AITKEN	Lt. Cdr. (SD) (C)	Mercury	Staff of F.O. Malta
SIR P. ANSON	Cdr.	Staff of FOAC	Alert in cmd.
A. BARLOW	Lt. (SD) (C)	Staff of FOME	R.N.S.S. Devonport
H. S. BENNETT	Lt. Cdr.	Italy (Language Study)	Mercury
R. BENNETT	Lt. Cdr.	NP 2237	Mercury
R. D. B. BIRCH	Lt. Cdr.	Fulmar	R.N.B. Devonport
G. A. F. BOWER	Lt. Cdr.	R.C.N. Loan	Staff Course
C. B. BROOKE	Capt.	O i/c R.N. Party Oslo	Mercury in cmd.
P. J. BROOKS	Lt. Cdr.	Staff of C-in-C Nore	Mercury
J. A. BUCHANAN-WOLLASTON	Lt. Cdr.	Staff of C-in-C F.E.S.	Staff of FOMA
G. CHRISTIE	Sub-Lt. (SD) (C)	Ganges	Staff of C-in-C FES
T. W. F. CLARKE	Lt. (SD) (C)	Mercury	Kenya
E. W. A. COLLINS, B.E.M.	Sub-Lt. (SD) (C)	Staff of F.O. 2 Med.	Ganges
G. A. CURRIE	Act. Sub-Lt. (SD) (C) RAN	Mull of Galloway	Agincourt
J. W. DAURNEY	Lt. Cdr.	D.S.D.	Staff of SNOFG
A. E. P. DEANE	Cdr.	Staff of C-in-C Plymouth	Eagle
A. V. M. DIAMOND, M.B.E.	Cdr.	Staff of C-in-C Med.	Ursa in cmd.
D. DOBSON	Sub-Lt. (SD) (C)	RAN Exchange	Mercury
R. G. DREYER, M.B.E.	Capt.	D.C.N.S.	SNLO UKSLS, Canada
H. DRUMMOND	Actg. Sub-Lt. (SD) (C)	Tyne	Dainty
E. T. L. DUNSTERVILLE ...	Capt.	President addl.	Gambia in cmd.
L. G. DURLACHER, O.B.E., D.S.C.	Rear Admiral	D.C.N.S.	F.O. Cdg. 5th CS and FO 2 F.E.S.
J. DURNFORD	Cdr.	O i/c RNSS Devonport	Turkish Navy loan
SIR RALPH A. B. EDWARDS, K.C.B., C.B.E.	Admiral	Third Sea Lord and Controller	C-in-C Med.
P. ELLIS, D.S.M.	Sub-Lt. (SD) (C)	Staff of FOME	Vernon addl.
N. F. FAWCETT	Lt. Cdr.	Mercury	Newcastle
D. A. K. FINLAY	Lt. Cdr.	DCNS	Warrior
W. FITZHERBERT	Lt. Cdr.	Ganges	Staff of C-in-C Med.
R. H. FOXLEE	Lt. (SD) (C)	Sallyport	Mercury
M. J. L. FREEMAN	Lt.	Staff of FOME	Mercury
G. FROUD	Lt. (SD) (C)	Staff of C-in-C H.F.	BNTS Turkey
J. GOLDSMITH	Lt. Cdr.	Staff of FOCRF	RNZN Exchange
A. H. C. GORDON-LENNOX, D.S.O.	Capt.	Mercury in cmd.	Newcastle in cmd.
H. GORMLEY, D.S.M.	Sub. Lt. (SD) (C)	Staff of FO Scotland	Newcastle
C. F. GRAY	Lt. (SD) (C)	NASS Culdrose	Staff of FOCRF
N. W. HAGGAR	Sub. Lt. (SD) (C)	RNSS Chatham	Ocean
P. J. HALL	Lt.	Hornet	Kenya
P. HANKEY, D.S.C.	Cdr.	Chairman ECSA	DNI
ST. J. H. HERBERT	Lt.	Staff of Capt. F.3	Fulmar
H. R. KEATE	Lt. Cdr.	Staff of Capt. D.1	Ganges
VISCOUNT KELBURN	Capt.	SHAPE NATO Defence College	Staff of C-in-C H.F. (COF)
MISS M. R. KINGSNORTH ...	2/O W.R.N.S.	Mercury	RM Bks. Eastney
D. R. LEWIS	Lt. Cdr.	Staff of CINCEASTLANT	Staff of C-in-C Plymouth



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Name	Rank	Whence	Whither
W. C. LINK	Sub. Lt. (SD) (C)	Staff of Capt. D.4	Fulmar
MISS J. LITTLEWOOD	3/O W.R.N.S.	Mercury	Whitehall W/T
P. G. LOASBY, D.S.C.	Cdr.	BJSM	Barfleur in cmd.
J. D. MACPHERSON	Lt. Cdr.	Staff of C-in-C A.W.I.	Mercury for Exercise FAIRLEAD
G. H. MANN	Lt. Cdr.	Staff of FORV	Staff of FOAC
M. T. MARWOOD, D.S.C.	Lt. Cdr.	Staff of C-in-C Portsmouth	Mercury
MISS J. MATTINSON	2/O W.R.N.S.	Staff of CINAFMED	Mercury
E. MCKENZIE	Actg. Sub-Lt. (SD) (C)	Staff of FOAC	Striker
G. A. MILWARD, M.B.E.	Cdr.	Staff of FO Air Home	Peregrine
R. C. MORGAN	Lt. Cdr.	Undine	Staff of FOME
A. S. MORTON	Cdr.	Cheviot	Appleton in cmd. and SO M/S Sqdn.
K. MORTON, D.S.M.	Lt. (SD) (C)	Mercury	Gambia
D. A. P. O'REILLY	Lt. Cdr.	Staff of Capt. D.8	Mercury
W. L. PAYNE	Lt.	Staff of Cmdre Harwich	Mercury
A. H. PORTER	Sub-Lt. (SD) (C)	Kenya	Mercury
P. C. PRINCE	Lt. Cdr.	Mercury	Eagle
E. G. H. REUBENS	Sub-Lt. (SD) (C)	Coquette	NASS Culdrose
M. A. RICHARDS	Actg. Sub-Lt. (SD) (C)	Coquette	Eagle
J. J. RIGGS	Sub-Lt. (SD) (C)	Staff of FOME	RNSS Devonport
I. G. ROBERTSON, D.S.O., D.S.C.	Capt.	Capt. (D) 2 TS	Staff of C-in-C Portsmouth
J. C. RUSHBROOKE, D.S.C.	Cdr.	Staff of CINAFMED	Daedalus
J. A. SANDERSON	Sub-Lt. (SD) (C)	Fulmar	RNC Greenwich (Course)
C. D. SHEAD	Lt. (SD) (C)	Staff of FOAC	Staff of SNOI
N. T. J. SKITT	Lt. Cdr.	Mercury	RCN Exchange
R. A. STANLEY	Sub-Lt. (SD) (C)	Mercury	Staff of C-in-C FES
P. E. D. STEARNS	Lt. Cdr.	DCNS	Staff of C-in-C Portsmouth
J. C. STOPFORD, O.B.E.	Capt.	Vernon (SOTC)	RNAS Stretton in cmd.
MISS D. P. SWALLOW	3/O W.R.N.S.	Staff of C-in-C Med.	Staff of CINAFMED
W. SWANSTON	Sub. Lt. (SD) (C)	Eagle	Staff of FO Scotland
L. R. TANTON	Lt. (SD) (C)	Mercury	Victorious
K. M. TEARE	Lt. Cdr.	Eagle	DSD
E. C. THORNE	Cdr. RNZN	RNZN Service	RN Exchange Staff of C-in-C FES
C. B. H. WAKE-WALKER	Cdr.	Surprise	JSSC
M. E. ST. Q. WALL	Lt. Cdr.	HMY Britannia	Staff of SNOI
MISS P. A. WARD	3/O W.R.N.S.	Staff of C-in-C Med.	Mercury
F. C. WIGG	Sub-Lt. (SD) (C)	Staff of NOIC Londonderry	Mercury
A. WRIGHT	Sub-Lt. (SD) (C)	Ocean	Vernon for Diving Course

PROMOTIONS

To Captain

N. L. T. KEMPSON

To Commander

SIR PETER ANSON, BT.
A. E. P. DEANE
R. DURNFORDA. S. MORTON
P. H. PAGE
G. E. SAMPSON

D. L. SYMS

PROMOTIONS—continued

To Lieutenant Commander (SD) (C)
G. B. CLAXTON

To Lieutenant Commander
F. J. P. FRENCH, R.C.N.
D. A. P. O'REILLY

To Acting Lieutenant
Sub. Lt. (SD) (C) M. A. STOCKTON

TO CHIEF PETTY OFFICER IN THE COMMUNICATIONS BRANCH

To Chief Yeoman Signals
N. COX, P/JX 292908
L. LANGDOWN, P/JX 134144
S. MONCKTON, P/JX 246327
J. YULE, D/JX 245792

To Chief Petty Officer Telegraphist
J. ALDER, D/JX 581543
P. FLEMING, C/JX 371656
V. FUNNELL, P/JX 157333
R. KINGHAM, D/JX 802319
H. MANNS, P/JX 162757
E. MAY, P/JX 246022
H. SEATON, P/JX 138512
E. SLADE, P/JX 149288
D. SMITH, C/JX 148030
D. WEBSTER, P/JX 154198

RETIREMENTS

J. R. B. LONGDEN	...	...	...	Captain
E. A. NICHOLSON	...	...	...	Commander
D. A. FORREST	...	...	...	Lt. Cdr.
P. J. RUSHBROOKE	...	...	...	Lt. Cdr.
Miss J. L. P. BEVAN	...	...	...	2/O W.R.N.S.
Miss E. D. WILSON	...	...	...	2/O W.R.N.S.

SUMMER 1957 COMPETITIONS

1. Special Feature Competition

A prize of two guineas will be awarded to the best article sent in. Illustrations will count towards the prize.

2. Cartoon Competition

A prize of one guinea will be awarded to the best cartoon sent in.

3. Photograph Competition

A prize of one guinea will be awarded to the best photograph sent in.

ALL ENTRIES must reach the Editor by 28th June, the Rank/Rating, Name and Address of the Competitor must be clearly printed in block capitals.

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