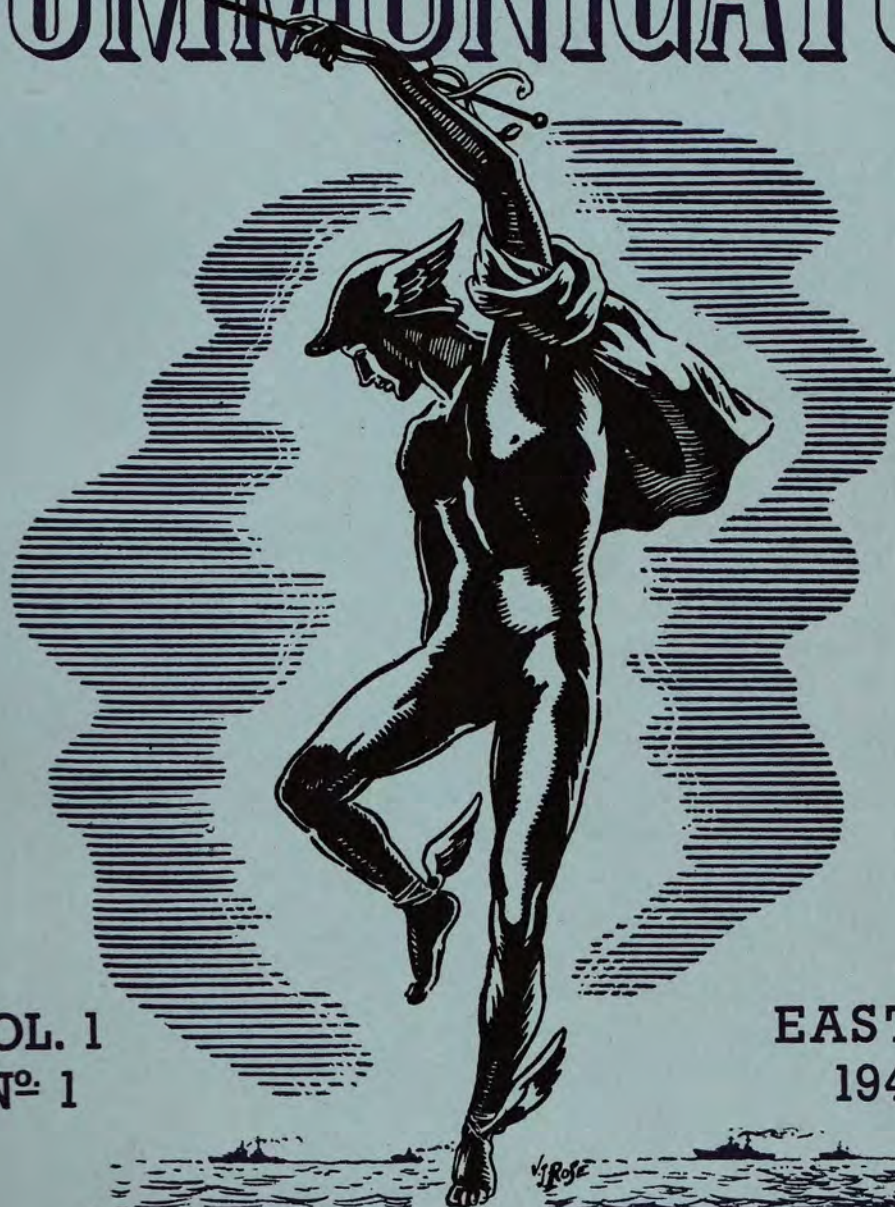


# THE COMMUNICATOR



VOL. 1  
Nº 1

EASTER  
1947



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## FOREWORD.

For quite some time a desire has been felt to exist for a Signal School Magazine, and with a return, more or less, to normality it has now been possible to meet this need by the production of the first number of THE COMMUNICATOR.

It is hoped that this magazine, which it is proposed to publish every quarter, will be of interest, not only to those at present in the Signal School, but to all members of the Communications Branch wherever they may be, for whom the Signal School stands as their "alma mater."

With this in mind I wish the launching of THE COMMUNICATOR every success.

C. L. FIRTH,

12th April, 1947.

*Captain.*

## EDITORIAL.

In presenting this first issue of THE COMMUNICATOR to the Naval Signal world, we do not feel quite so much of the pioneer spirit as perhaps might be expected. In December, 1946 a small band of heroes—an advance party as it were—tested the ground of literary endeavour in the production of a Christmas number of a magazine called "THE SPARKER."

Those of us who had our ear close to the ground realised from the way in which this experimental effort was received that there was a demand in the Communications sphere generally and in H.M. Signal School particularly for a more ambitious publication which would reflect faithfully the actions, thoughts and aspirations of all engaged in Naval Communications.

In this issue we have attempted much—to record, to interest, to amuse and even to instruct—but we have largely confined ourselves to people and events directly connected with Signal School. But this is only a beginning, designed carefully to lay the foundation of a wider association of Signalmen and their confederates. By the time that our Summer number appears we hope that our gospel will have spread at least to all Signal personnel based on Home Stations and that our columns will have become an open forum for the exchange of Signal intelligence of all types.

By the end of the year we expect our Subscription List to be almost a replica of the nominal list of all Naval Communications Officers and Ratings, and our pages to include contributions, both serious and humorous, from the uttermost parts of the earth.

Such is our policy—to what extent it will be realised rests with you, our readers and contributors. This is a time of paper and labour shortages and magazine production is not easy. THE COMMUNICATOR will thrive however, provided it is not beset also by a shortage of literary material and financial support.

It would be ungracious not to express our deep appreciation of all who have helped to launch our magazine—successfully we hope! Of the "happy few" who have formed the Editorial Committee, very special mention must be made of Wren D. J. Boyes who has typed the whole of the MSS in her spare time to such a standard of excellence that our printers are convinced of our efficiency. We are grateful to all those whose initials appear at the end of contributions throughout our pages for their co-operation in submitting copy so promptly and cheerfully. Also we must record the support and encouragement given by the Canteen Committee of H.M. Signal School in providing the necessary financial backing to enable us to go into circulation.

Acknowledgments are made to the Editors of GUZZ and POMPEY for copies received and to the major Film Corporations for so kindly presenting us with photographs of their stars. Particularly are we grateful to Mr. A. Francis of the *Evening News, Portsmouth*, for permission to use his signed portrait of Viscount Mountbatten of Burma, which is one of his treasured possessions.





Viscount Mountbatten of Burma, K.G., G.C.V.O., K.C.B., D.S.O., wearing the uniform of Admiral of the Royal Navy. This portrait was taken when he was Allied Supreme Commander, South-East Asia.

## THE NEW VICEROY.

Great satisfaction will be felt throughout the Navy that the choice of a new Viceroy of India should have fallen on a Naval Officer, Rear Admiral Viscount Mountbatten of Burma, K.G., G.C.V.O., K.C.B., D.S.O., R.N. but this should be felt more especially in the Communications Branch in view of the fact that Admiral Mountbatten is a fully qualified Signal Officer, and one of the leading lights of the Branch.

Some details of his signal career in the Communications Branch may be of interest.

Admiral Mountbatten did his Long Signal Course in 1924-1925 and passed out "Top." The only other members of this course still serving are Captain G. F. Burgard, D.S.O., now Captain Superintendent of the Admiralty Signal Establishment, Haslemere, and Captain A. M. Knapp, who is Director of Radio Equipment in the Admiralty. After completing his Long Signal Course, Admiral Mountbatten then went to Greenwich Naval College to undertake the Advanced or "Dagger" Signal Course lasting six months.

His first appointment as a qualified Signal Officer was as Flag Lieutenant and W/T Officer to Vice Admiral Sir Rudolph W. Bentick, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., then commanding the Reserve Fleet. This was followed by nearly two years as Assistant Fleet W/T Officer in the Mediterranean Fleet where soon he began to make his name in Naval wireless circles and to improve W/T communications of that fleet. On completion of this appointment Admiral Mountbatten became Flotilla Signal Officer in the 2nd Destroyer Flotilla on board H.M.S. "Stuart" then serving in the Mediterranean, where he remained for a little over a year.

Admiral Mountbatten next came to the Signal School as Senior W/T Staff Officer (W.1) during which time he took through a Long Signal Officers' Course in W/T, many of whom are still serving and are now Commanders or Captains. It was during this period of his service that he did a great deal towards improving the instruction and standard of efficiency of the Telegraphist Branch, including the first production of BR 222, so well known to all officers and ratings being instructed in W/T equipment.

After this period ashore, Admiral Mountbatten went back to sea again as Fleet Wireless Officer in the Mediterranean, where he achieved remarkable results in raising the standard of Naval W/T Communications. In fact, there is little doubt that due to his tireless energy and tremendous interest, the W/T communications of the Mediterranean Fleet at this time reached a state of perfection never seen before, or possibly equalled since. It is of interest to note that during this time Admiral Mountbatten's assistant was Commander Bonham-Carter, the present Commander of the Signal School.

On completion of two years in this appointment, Admiral Mountbatten gained early and richly deserved promotion to Commander in June, 1933, but unhappily for the Communications Branch this terminated his Signal career, as he has never held a further appointment solely connected with Communications, although he has never lost his keen interest in the Branch in all his subsequent appointments.

Admiral Mountbatten's wartime career as Chief of Combined Operations and Allied Supreme Commander, South East Asia, is well known, but perhaps it is not so well known that, realising the immense importance of Communications, he made certain of success by insisting on having a Naval Signal Officer as his Chief Signal Officer in both appointments; and it is understood that a Naval Signal Officer will again be on his staff in his new appointment as Viceroy.

Admiral Mountbatten has now a most responsible and arduous task ahead of him as Viceroy of India, but he will carry with him the best wishes of the whole Navy, especially the Communications Branch.

May success crown all his efforts!

C.L.F.

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There are two sorts of valves, in a triode the anode is positive so the electrons go to it, but in the diode the cathode is positive so the electrons go the other way.

\* \* \*

To stop a valve working you put positive on the grid. The anode is positive and so if you make the grid positive too, like charges repel and so it shuts down.





H.M. SIGNAL SCHOOL, LEYDENE HOUSE.

### EARLY DAYS AT LEYDENE.

For some years prior to the War, the necessity for H.M. Signal School to be a separate establishment, independent of the Royal Naval Barracks, Portsmouth, had become apparent, and plans were all prepared for erecting an imposing structure on the site where Stamshaw Camp now stands. The war, however, caused the project to be shelved.

With the commencement of the German air attacks on a large scale in 1940 and 1941 it became urgently necessary to decentralise as many Naval Establishments as possible from the Portsmouth area. The Signal School in common with other portions of the R.N. Barracks had received damage, and being so situated was an obvious target for further attacks, placing its effective continuance in grave jeopardy.

The experimental section of the Signal School, predominantly civilian, was transferred to Lythe Hill House, Haslemere, and about the month of June, 1941, Captain G. H. Warner, then Captain of the Signal School, visited Leydene House and decided that it would meet the requirements of an independent Signal School. Shortly afterwards, the owner, Countess Peel, vacated the premises for her Scottish residence, and Leydene House was requisitioned by the Admiralty.

An advance party under the direction of Lieutenant A. E. Cullimore was sent out to "make ready." Lieutenant Commander the Hon. R. Napier exercised general supervision of planning and Commander J. H. C. Willoughby was later appointed as Executive Officer.

During the period of preparation, what might have been a portent of things to come occurred with the dropping of a land mine on what is now the miniature rifle range, which

gave an obvious shake up to the building. The grounds had, on former air raids been treated to showers of incendiary bombs and a few bomb holes existed as a reminder of the Battle of Britain. Strangely enough, however, the land mine was the last sign of enemy activity in the vicinity.

On August 16th, 1941, the Signal School commenced to function on its new site, and was commissioned as H.M.S. Mercury. "Mercury," it will be remembered, was in classical mythology the Roman equivalent of the Greek "Hermes," the messenger of the gods, son of Jupiter and himself a potent deity. He led the souls of the dead to the underworld and was the patron deity of travellers, and of thieves and criminals. Of course reference to the underworld need not disturb the Ship's Company as it is well known that the souls of mariners change into sea gulls and squawk for "gash" on the lower booms of ships, and the souls of Wrens sky-lark!

The first contingent of ratings numbered about 300 and at this stage "improvisation" assumed its full significance. The men slept in tents covering the area now occupied by East Camp and their dining rooms were what is now the Wardroom Mess and Ante-room. Officers made use of the space lately occupied by the Instructional Production Office and the present Gunroom. Unfortunately it was a very wet summer, and the discomfort of the tents can be well imagined. Before the winter, however, Nissen huts had been hastily erected in sufficient numbers to accommodate all personnel, though at that time it meant sleeping 24 ratings in each hut as opposed to the present number of 14.



Some of the ratings serving at that time stand out as cheerful personalities who greatly helped in maintaining a sense of humour to reconcile the shortcomings of "improvisations." Such was C.P.O. Tel. W. Phillips (the "Mayor of East Meon") who livened up the social facilities at East Meon for the benefit of servicemen.

There was also Signalman W. Sinclair, R.A.N. (Digger), whose ability as a Signalman was uncertain, but was without equal amongst cars, motor-bikes and push-bikes. Of sturdy appearance and always good-tempered, Digger would take on despatch rider duties when the roads were in impossible conditions and get away with it.

O/Sig. D. Atkins, having been a Booking Office clerk on the Southern Railway, knew all about rail travel and lost baggage queries. It was generally conceded that he could have arranged a special Pullman for Signal School use had he been so called upon, and to the grumbles about the Southern Railway his invariable answer was that the best men were called up.

Then there was our own Chief Yeoman, Chief Buffer, in the impressive person of George Birchfield. He could smell a "bird" a mile away. By his constant watchfulness at the Admiralty he now frightens aliens and spies from that imposing edifice.

There were many others who contributed each in his different way to the successful functioning of the Signal School, but before leaving the invaluable work of the stalwarts it would be invidious to omit the sterling work of Chief Wren Clarke (fortunately still with us) both in maintaining *esprit de corps* amongst the Wrens and in the catering. Without her competence contentment could not have existed.

The numbers borne increased fairly rapidly and in peak periods the total numbers victualled rose to 1,200; this necessitated the hasty erection of more and more Nissen huts which sprawled along the West Road. Had not time been an important factor it is probable that more leisured planning would have produced the regularity and convenience exhibited in the later erection of North Camp.

One can still recall the consternation of newcomers when detailed for Siberia and the

question of warm clothing and Vodka trembling on their lips, before realisation that our "Siberia" was within the boundaries of Leydene.

The Theatre was completed in July, 1943 and has proved a tremendous boon for personnel who are situated so far from a town. The Quiet Rooms and Information Room have also contributed a great deal to the amenities of the Establishment and the improvement in Service conditions is still progressing.

Transport has been a most important feature owing to the isolated position of Leydene. It has had its humorous incidents and tragedies. One of our drivers was killed outright through collision with an obstacle following upon a skid. On another occasion a nervous Wren driver returning from a late trip from Petersfield took a wrong turning and ended up in a field, where she found to her dismay that she was being stalked by an angry farmer with a gun who was under the impression that the vehicle belonged to poultry raiders! Of recent date, Leading Radio Mechanic G. Penny and Leading Radio Mechanic V. Farthing returning to Leydene from Portsmouth boarded a bus and found they had nothing below a pound note, and that Conductor could not change. He was genuinely convinced that he was the victim of a leg-pull when on asking their names, he was given Penny and Farthing.

The days of the black-out, A.R.P. and anti-paratroop parties are now but a memory and H.M.S. Mercury, with teething troubles over, has become a unit second to none in importance and second only to R.N. Barracks in the number of personnel borne on her books. The undermentioned officers have commanded H.M.S. Mercury since her commissioning date:

Captain G. H. Warner, D.S.C.,  
16th August, 1941 to 30th Nov., 1943.

Captain A. K. Scott Moncrieff, D.S.O.,  
1st December, 1943 to 2nd January, 1946

Captain C. Firth, D.S.O., M.V.O.,  
3rd January, 1946 to—

In the summer of 1943, we were honoured by a visit from H.M. The King who lunched at the School and took the salute at the subsequent march-past.

A.H.B., Sig.-Lt.

## LET'S TALK SHOP!

Quite a few new developments and ideas are taking shape at the present time and since they may be of general interest a brief summary is given below.

*A/T (Automatic Telegraphy).*

This is the Service name for what is known as radio teletype in commercial circles. The general idea is to connect teleprinters by radio and signal by this means rather than by using the morse code.

As the lay-out of shore wireless stations and C.C.O.s will be considerably affected by this development, an A/T mock up is being established at Leydene this year to determine the best lay-out of the various signals offices required with this system.

\* \* \*

*I.T. (Instructional Technique).*

It is assumed that instructors know their stuff and the object of the I.T. is to teach them how to put it across. To that end an I.T. Centre was established at Leydene at the end of 1945.

There is no black magic in I.T. which merely sets out to demonstrate common sense methods of teaching. One of its principal axioms is that people learning can take in as much by the eye as they can by the ear and hence visual aids such as models and simplified drawings (called flap sequences) are being brought into use in increasing numbers.

\* \* \*

*New Signal Books.*

These are being written in the light of war experience by a committee who work in the Admiralty.

Two new features of the E.S.B. are :

- (a)—Based on international flags ;
- (b)—Tabled sections in the front for each of the principal pendants which will contain all signals appropriate to that particular pendant.

\* \* \*

*Touch Typing.*

Before the war, very few people in the Navy could type and they were self-taught and mostly of the two-finger variety.

During the war this factor made itself felt in two ways :

- (a)—Typing in busy S.D.O.s took unnecessarily long.
- (b)—Morse could only be copied by hand. This did not matter until the advent of the

B.P.F. who found that the Americans copied morse by typewriter and could thus receive at a speed well in excess of 25 w.p.m.

As a result it was decided that all Communication ratings should touch type and training in new entry courses was included from the beginning of 1946.

*New Faces. \* \* \**

The following new types of courses were started up recently.

*Air Signal Officers Conversion Courses.*

The duties of Air Signal Officers have been merged with those of Signal Officers and existing Air Signal Officers are being given a short course to qualify them fully as Signal Officers.

*Foreign Officers.*

Officers from various nations come to Leydene to a signal course which lasts about 6 months. One of these courses has completed and the second is about half-way through. The following nations have been represented in these courses : Belgium, China, Denmark, Egypt, Norway, Greece and Sweden

*Radio Conversion.*

Officers transferring to the Electrical Branch now undergo a course in Wireless Maintenance at Leydene.

\* \* \*

*W.R.N.S. (W/T & S.D.O.)*

The first lot of permanent peacetime Wrens arrived here in the Autumn, the S.D.O.s for 4 weeks training and the W/Ts for 18 weeks. They were the forerunners of a lot more and these courses will continue for the majority of 1947.

## V/S COMMENTARY.

At last we have a V/S Senior Rating touch typing class under way. One is amazed at the lack of finger trouble displayed—it must be in the blood.

Our S.D.O. Wrens are living up to the Wrens' tradition of being " shy retiring birds" This cold spell finds them perched on class room tables with feet on the stools. We expect a burst of song from them at the first touch of sunshine—even now they have their brighter moments ; witness Queenie Staylace who, when asked " What would you write on an L/T form to indicate that the Message was not to be sent by W/T ? " wrote the word " PHYLL."



## W/T COMMENTARY.

*The Post War Telegraphist.*

In the minds of many of us, the forming of the new Electrical Branch must have sounded like the death knell to the old Telegraphist Branch.

Let no one make this mistake, for the modern operator has much to learn to achieve the high standard now required of him by their Lords Commissioners.

To operate modern high efficiency radio equipment a sound standard of technical knowledge is necessary to get the best performance out of it ; and although the operator may not be required to tear a piece of equipment to pieces to discover a faulty component, he must have a good working knowledge of the equipment to be able to use each gadget to its best advantage.

The modern operator must also be an expert touch typist. The old laborious scribing out of broadcasts by stubs of dirty black lead pencil has gone forever, to be replaced by the efficient typewriter, providing a neat ready-to-use copy that can be read by all with ease.

The efficient operator must be quite at home on the teleprinter and learn the "Start-Stop" Code in addition to the Morse Code. He must be able to operate perforators, re-perforators, page printers, read tapes—both morse and "stop-start"—operate coding machines and codes correctly.

Then he is to be an expert D/F operator, able to give accurate bearings and home aircraft without hesitation by both aural and visual presentation methods.

He must be an expert Radio Telephone operator and to this end must become trained in voice culture as this is essential for successful R/T which is now being used almost exclusively in manoeuvring and aircraft direction.

Do not let us forget that, in spite of all the modern radio equipment provided, it will still be necessary for the operator to transmit by hand on occasion and practice in this must not be neglected. In this connection I have wondered quite a lot recently why we have not introduced the American Bug Key into the Naval Service ; it would seem

essential now, if hand transmitting speeds are to keep pace with typing.

So, Post-War Telegraphist, do not imagine you have lost your place in the scheme of things, for there is a lot to be learned yet before we attain our standards of efficiency ; in fact we have scarcely started.

I had almost forgotten Procedure. Good procedure is essential in operating almost all radio circuits and particularly necessary in R/T, D/F, manoeuvring and in commercial operating where words cost money.

As an old hand at the game I know there is much more fun to be had as an operator than as a repairer or maintainer of equipment.

You can get a tremendous kick out of R/T manoeuvring and controlling aircraft by R/T provided you are an expert and know exactly what you are doing.

The same applies to D/F operating, in Automatic Telegraphy and in Commercial operating.

A complete knowledge of why you do a certain thing a certain way adds 100% to the fun, so get your brains working and do not think you are going to get a nice C.R.E. to hold your hand every time you go on watch, because you won't. You are the user—he only provides. You get the kick out of using it—he gets the kick if it doesn't go !

\* \* \*

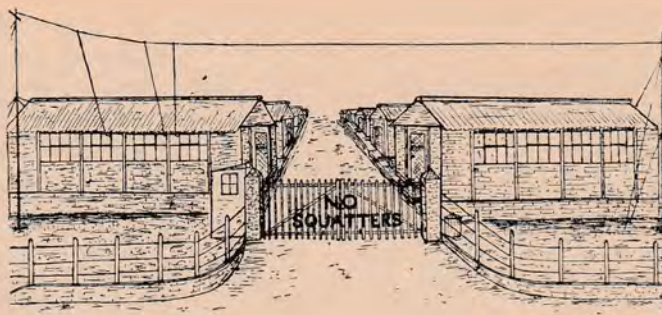
*Amateur Radio.*

H.M. Signal School is about to make itself heard on the air in the Amateur Band of Frequencies. A Licence has been taken out and our Call Sign is G3BZU. The site for the station is C-51 (Second hut on the Broadwalk). Transmitters installed at the moment are TCS and 5G. It is hoped later that members of the Club will build a set or sets to replace these. I trust all those interested will come forward and combine business with pleasure in delving into the mysteries of Radio. Your help is needed to make a mark in the Amateur Radio World equal to that achieved in Service Radio.

Progress Meetings will be held from time to time. All those interested in this field are requested to get in touch with W/T 2 at any time convenient to them.

Watch this column for achievements of the Leydene Amateur Radio Club.

The training of  
Radio Mechanics  
(W/T)—



—officially ceased  
on 30th November  
1946.

### “ L ” BRANCH COMMENTARY.

During the past few months numerous A.F.O.s and A.G.M.s have been promulgated on the subject of Radio Mechanics and their more modern counterparts, Radio Electricians, but to judge from the frequent enquiries received in the Radio Electricians' Office, it is apparent that a good many people are still in the dark concerning this branch of the Service, and it is thought that a brief summary of the position might be welcomed by the readers of this magazine.

The training of Radio Mechanics (W/T) officially ceased on 30th November, 1946, and its cessation marked the end of the temporary branch introduced early in the war to maintain W/T equipment in the Fleet.

On 1st December, 1946, all Radio Mechanics under training became Radio Electricians' Mates, and on 1st January, 1947, all CS, SS, and ES Radio Mechanics were transferred to their equivalent rating in the Electrical Branch (see A.F.O. 6525/46). Thus was the new and permanent radio maintenance branch born. Fully trained H.O. Radio Mechanics will serve out their time as Radio Mechanics.

Responsibility for W/T maintenance has been officially transferred from the Communications Branch to the Electrical Branch, but Telegraphist ratings will be required to maintain their own equipment until the necessary number of Radio Electrician ratings are available to take over.

In due course all radio personnel will be trained in the Electrical Schools. It will, however, take a considerable time to fit the necessary equipment, and in the interim period Radar and Workshop Practice are being taught in “Collingwood” and W/T in “Mercury.”

The present complement of the branch

comprises some eighty Chief and Petty Officer Radio Electricians who were transferred from the Telegraphist Branch to the Radio Mechanic Branch, and a large number of H.O. L.R.E.M.s. Thus the branch is sadly lacking in experienced Leading and A.B. rates. To meet this deficiency a number of Leading Telegraphists will shortly be transferred to the Electrical Branch, and in addition some more Chief and P.O. Tels. A.B. and Ordinary rates (Radio Electricians' Mates) will continue to be found from new entries.

In addition to Radio Electricians, an entirely new type of radio rating has been introduced in the form of the Electrical Artificer (R). These will be recruited from artificer entries, but here again an interim measure is necessary, and the rating has been thrown open to ex-Radio Mechanics serving on regular engagements. A class of these has already started a twelve months workshop course in “Collingwood,” to be followed by several months of radio theory and radar.

Radio Electrician ratings will eventually be capable of maintaining both W/T and Radar equipment, and in addition all makes of typewriters, duplicators (such as Ormig, Fordigraph, Gestetner) and machine cyphers.

For those with a technical bent, the Electrical (R) Branch offers a varied and interesting career. This can be appreciated when it is revealed that ratings are now under training in such a wide variety of subjects as radar, W/T communication equipment, navigational aids, shore stations, radio teletype, teleprinters, picture transmission, television and reception, typewriters, and duplicating machinery of all types, with a little gardening at Leydene as a diversion.



## MATTERS EDUCATIONAL.

The strain and rush of war-time conditions undoubtedly justified the claim made by so many that there had been no chance to prepare for examinations. With the return to more peaceful times, however, it will be difficult to maintain such a claim.

*Educational Test 1 (E.T.1.)* is the qualifying educational examination for advancement to Leading Signaller and Leading Telegraphist. It consists of two papers, Arithmetic and English, and is held in March, July and November. All Communication Boys should be capable of passing E.T.1.

*Educational Test 2 (E.T.2.)* is the qualifying educational examination for the accelerated advancement of Boys to Man's rating. The examination is held in March, July and November and consists of two papers, Practical Mathematics and a General Paper which includes English, General Knowledge, Geography, Naval History, Mechanics, Navigation, Magnetism and Electricity. The holder of an E.T.2 certificate is exempt from E.T.1.

*Higher Educational Test (H.E.T.)* consists of papers in General Knowledge, English History, Geography, Navigation, Military Topography (for Royal Marines), Practical Mathematics, Mechanics and Magnetism and Electricity. The examination is held in March and November. First class marks are 75 per cent, and second class marks are 55 per cent. Certain of these subjects form the qualifying educational examination for advancement to Warrant Rank. Candidates for Signal Boatswain must obtain first class marks in any one of the subjects General Knowledge, History or Geography, or second class marks in any two of these subjects, and they must also obtain first class marks in Navigation or second class marks in that subject together with second class marks in either Mathematics or Magnetism and Electricity. Candidates for Warrant Telegraphist or Warrant Electrical Officer (R) must obtain first class marks in any one of the subjects General Knowledge, History or Geography, and they must also obtain first class marks in Mathematics or second class marks in that subject and second class marks in either Mechanics or Magnetism and Electricity. A certificate is issued to, and is kept with the Service Certificate of a candidate who qualifies educationally for Warrant Rank.

## WHAT'S YOURS?

To the rapidly dwindling, but noble band of H.O. personnel the question of what career to take up on release is all important. The Service and the Ministries of Labour and Education have provided certain facilities for training you in the occupation of your choice.

These consist mainly of E.V.T. courses in a variety of subjects and Government Training Schemes which are longer and more comprehensive.

### Professions and Allied Occupations.

For entrance into one of the Universities, Matriculation or its equivalent is essential. The Services in consultation with the Universities have set up the Forces Preliminary Examination, which is accepted by the British Universities as of equivalent standard. The Forces Preliminary Examination may be taken while you are in the Navy or up to 6 months after release. It is held twice a year and is divided into two parts which can be taken separately. Special courses in subjects for Forces Preliminary are available in the E.V.T. Centre, R.N.B., Portsmouth.

Once you have fixed your place in a Training College or University you may be eligible to apply for a *Further Education and Training Grant* which covers the fees and provides a maintenance grant of up to £230 per annum.

While waiting for release why not take an *Advanced Education Course* in the subject you are going to read? Courses are of one month's duration held in H.M.S. Cabbala.

### Trades.

Perhaps you wish to be skilled in a certain trade. If so don't waste the last few weeks of your time in the Navy. Do an *E.V.T. Course*. Courses last for two weeks and are held in the E.V.T. Centre.

### Business.

If you fancy yourself as a business man there is a *General Business Course* lasting for 3 months or longer run by the Ministry of Labour, which you can take after release. Qualifications to take the course are normally School Certificate or Forces Preliminary or equivalent educational standards.

*E.V.T. Courses* in commercial subjects are available in H.M.S. Cabbala and R.N.B.

## PEEPS AT LEYDENE.

Weather Wizard  
 Put out Paw  
 Noticed Blizzard  
 Promised Thaw  
 Good Intention  
 Keen to Please  
 Didn't Mention  
 Record Freeze.  
 British Winter  
 Out of Place  
 Straight from Inter-  
 Stellar Space.  
 Inmates stop in  
 Queues to see  
 Shocking Drop in  
 Mercury.  
 Touching Zero  
 (Absolute)  
 Shades of Nero!  
 Lucky Brute.  
 Transport Trouble  
 Ten feet Drifts  
 Don Your Double  
 Arctic Shifts  
 Snowed up Lorry  
 Bus in Hedge—  
 Very Sorry,  
 Come by Sledge.  
 'Way on Easel  
 Schoolie Slid  
 Pop went Diesel  
 Bang went Grid.



Barrackmaster  
 (Cheerful Bloke)  
 Fresh Disaster—  
 No More Coke.  
 Huts of Nissen,  
 Cold as Death—  
 Come and Listen.  
 Hold Your Breath.  
 Distant Cursing  
 Driving Sleet  
 Hands are Nursing  
 Frozen Feet.  
 Wrens in Nylons  
 Feel the Draught  
 Ice-bound Pylons  
 Fore and Aft.

Shinwell Calling  
 Power Gone  
 Phone Lines Falling  
 One by One.  
 Teleprinter  
 Dead and Cold  
 (Normal Winter—  
 Good as Gold).  
 Direful Outcome  
 Signal Station  
 Quite without Com-  
 munication.  
 Someone Musing  
 In the Snow  
 Thinks of Using  
 Radio

(Not a Bad One—  
 That Idea!)  
 Sets? We Had One  
 Somewhere Here).  
 Takes a Glance at  
 Lease-and-Lends  
 From our Transat-  
 lantic Friends.  
 Ponders Shyly  
 Latest Shipment—  
 Tons of Highly-  
 Priced Equipment.  
 Faint Hope Dying  
 No Juice Yet  
 What Price Trying  
 Batt'ry Set?  
 (Try it—Then a  
 Make and Mend—  
 No Antenna  
 On the End).  
 Not a Feather  
 In his Hat—  
 Clerk of Weather  
 On the Mat.

Desecrating  
 Golden Rule  
 Isolating  
 Signal School.

R.S.





## WARDROOM REFLECTIONS

As evening approaches, most of the denizens of the Wardroom Mess melt away, and it passes quietly into the possession of the faithful few. The Long Course are rarely to be seen in the Ante-room. They dwell in their cabins, burning much midnight oil, and the standard of shove h'penny has fallen off dreadfully. Since the departure of Commander Hankey and Lieut. Commdr. Gasparro, the billiard table is as a flat tombstone in a deserted graveyard. Only the table tennis thrives. The game has progressed since our victory over a team of the Ship's Company, and the laurels are shivering on the brows of the old champions.

Soon, we hope, a warm sun will be shining. The little birds will be making their nests, and the first racehorse of the Flat will coyly poke its nose out of its box. Whether any nest eggs will accrue is doubtful, but certainly a twitter will be heard in high places, and those who speak of Courses will *not* be talking shop.

Shortly before Christmas, Lieut. Comdr. Graham was seen wandering about with a sprig of hazel. He did succeed in divining whisky, which added not a little to the gaiety of an excellent dance. Emboldened by this success, he appears to have tried the effect of a sprig of mistletoe.

Preparations for the Summer Dance are now in hand.

Much dignity and importance was introduced here by the presence of the Senior Officers' Technical Course, and the opportunity was seized to dine Rear Admiral Viscount Mountbatten, an occasion which was thoroughly enjoyed by all. We are very proud that he consented to become the first Life Member of our Mess.

At a recent Mess Committee meeting it was decided that all Signal Officers should be welcomed as "lunching members" at Leydene. It is indeed a pleasure to have old faces and figures drifting in, trimmed with an increasing quantity of gold lace. The first Signal Officers' Annual Dinner was arranged for 11th April at Claridge's Hotel.

2/O Wells denies that her motor bike is the foundation of a Wren Officers' Panzer Division, and 1/O Davies has abandoned the idea of forming a Wren Signal Officers' Alpine Corps.

## LONG COURSE (C) SITREP.

Numb r Obe Claddriom,  
Ketfene Hiude,  
Nwar Oeteysfird,  
Hanpsjite.

Feat Sir,

Wr hraed thar yoi woulf bery much loke to hace sime mewd of our progreww for inclucium in youf excellemt magaxinr.

Wr sre gettinm on bery well anf have noe starged typinh, and we akk like thid bery much: It is suvh fum because the chier whi tajes is more iften them mot plays musix ti is amd we jink thay wr rae making spemdif prohresw ws yiu nac see frmo thsi liltle peixe of prsoe½.

Wr musr niw go anf stamd ni het swon for sime time amd os will habe to stop whicj is a nuicanxe.

Wr dre           Yours veyr sincetcky  
Lo Ng? Cour3e KKKKKK

The education of the present Long Course is proceeding at a brisk pace. Some of us are apparently gifted with a negative educational background, and if the mutual characteristic of the group could be drawn, the curve would approach saturation twice daily with the point of maximum mental resistance occurring on Mondays. Visitors from "Dryad" were impressed by the display of mathematical erudition on our blackboard, little realising that it was an effort at Pool Permutation!

Typewriting instruction forms a light relief. We are supposed to press the right key while our feet dance a jig, and this leads to embarrassing "typist's twitch" at intervals.

With this brief note we leave you, standing firmly by our motto "Nunc est bibendum."

---

A bow-legged Wren with a humpity back  
Looks doubtful in a Pusser's mac.

\* \* \*

Radiation Resistance is the disinclination of an aerial to radiate.

\* \* \*

Heard at a V/S policy meeting:

"What! Can't I do Compass Robert Nuts any more?"

## GOING THE ROUNDS IN MERCURY.

### ENTERTAINMENTS.

#### "Fanfare"

The first big theatrical event of the New Year was "FANFARE" on Wednesday, 15th February. The bill was headed by Geraldo who, together with his full dance orchestra and vocalists, Dick James, Sally Douglas, Archie Lewis and glamorous Carol Carr, justified his position in the Dance Band World.

Tip-top humour was provided by Jackie Hunter and Terry Thomas. Emilio entertained brilliantly on his accordion, and the show was compered by Roy Rich.

Our heartfelt thanks go to Miss Elsie Cohen who made this outstanding broadcast possible. Indeed, "FANFARE" will long live in the memory of those lucky ones who were able to attend the show.

#### Cinderella.

Perhaps "Mercury" is unique in that the majority of its shows are written, acted and produced by personnel serving in the establishment.

Cinderella, played by Joyce Ace and Prince Procedure played by Sue Bradshaw were two charming feminine leads. The Ugly Sisters, Percy Hancock and Basil Smith, rocked the audience with their portrayal of two scheming WRENS.

The Hairy Fairy—Ken Herbert-Gustar, managed, as all good fairies do, to spoil the dirty tricks of the acid old Witch—Tony Hook.

Others taking part were Alma Atkinson, Cynthia Cook, Jonnie Dudley, Elizabeth Balmer and Toni Hall.

The tour of Cinderella, though cut short by the weather, was a great success.

#### Drama—"The Distant Drum."

This was produced by "Mercury" and played in the Mercury Theatre on Tuesday, 25th February. It was intended primarily for the Drama League Festival which was held in R.N.B. on 25th, 26th and 27th February. The festival was won by Fort Southwick. Our heartiest congratulations to them.

Mercury, however, did quite well in the competition and as this was our first attempt at drama we can console ourselves with the fact that we were well placed.

The cast was as follows: Alan Sarne (Roy Hobday), Olive Siddal (Sue Bradshaw),

Lord Sarne (John Hart), Lady Sarne (Jean Ward), Captain Kenley (Ken Herbert-Gustar).

### Visiting Shows.

#### "LOVE IN A MIST."

The Victory Players once again displayed their versatility by following up "Ten Little Niggers" with "Love in a Mist" which they presented in the Theatre on Wednesday, 19th February, and carried off with the slickness and sophistication for which the company is well known.

#### "GASLIGHT"

Which was most ably presented by the Kestrel Players on Monday 3rd March, was one of the best productions we have seen on the stage of our theatre.

### DANCES.

Apart from the weekly Ship's Company Dances, at which from now on a mobile canteen will be in attendance, two dances have taken place in Petersfield.

Normally dance proceeds are devoted equally to W.R.N.S. Benevolent Fund, Leydene, and the Royal Sailors' Home Club, Portsmouth, Building Fund.

Anyone wishing to serve on the Dance Committee please communicate with Hon. Dance Sec., P.O. Tel. Rogers.

### DANCE BAND.

Unfortunately since the New Year opened the Ship's Dance Band, which was just coming into its own, has been reduced from fifteen to three members. The remaining stalwarts are L.R.M's Hardcastle, Penny and Telegraphist Mitchell.

Anyone who is interested and can play an instrument of any kind is invited to contact the Entertainment Officer.

During the past year the band has played at over fifty dances and more than fifteen thousand dancers have danced (both up and down hill) to their music.

### CHILDREN'S PARTY

On Saturday, 7th January, nearly 300 children had the time of their lives at the Annual Christmas Children's Party. Each child went home tired but happy with a toy and two bags of sweets.





"Come on, Pincher, do as the Captain asks,  
just to please me."

### GRAMOPHONE RECITALS.

At about eight o'clock on Mondays and Thursdays you will notice a motley crowd of strangers making their way into the Wrens' Mess (Transport Yard). The uninitiated will shrug their shoulders and mutter something about "Gramophone Concert" as if it were the root of all evil.

In spite of advertising, many still miss these concerts who would greatly enjoy them. On Mondays our aim is to put on something different; perhaps a rarely heard work, or a new recording, but it has to have the approval first of the regulars, an informal select committee as it were.

Thursday is request night for standard works and popular favourites. As they become available, operas find their way in on Mondays: La Boheme, Die Walkure and Tosca have all made their debut. Probably La Boheme will come on again after Easter Leave, since it was easily the most popular concert of all. Verdi's Othello and Mozart's The Marriage of Figaro are also booked, and the Messiah is hoped for at Easter.

"Highbrow" is not a popular name here; on more than one occasion Spike Jones has been enjoyed with Naafi coffee during the Interval. If you don't like what you hear on Monday, come and tell the E.V.T. Office—but bring some suggestions with you—and if we can, we will put them in a request programme.

K.R.S.

### THOSE WERE THE DAYS!

Way back, when P/L was "*en clair*" (from the French)

In the days the old-timers recall,  
A few simple gadgets were screwed to a bench  
(Supporting a photo of somebody's wench)  
And others were stuck on the wall.

We'd no mass-produced super-heter-o-dynes  
In the dear, distant days that are done.  
Components were built on magnificent lines  
And tuning condensers were made from designs

For the breech of a fifteen-inch gun.

The Tel. knew no type-writing-tape-reading  
trick

(He may not have heard of R/T).

He had to be accurate—tried to be quick,  
But he wrote all his messages down with a  
stick

Or punched them all out on a key.

By present-day standards equipment was  
rough

And quite undesirably strong.

Belaboured or cherished, that primitive stuff  
(Like a favourite child or a pet bit of fluff)  
Was never allowed to go wrong.

The self-contained key-thumping coder-  
technician

Has outlived his brief little day.

The Tel. now appeals to the Chief Electrician  
Who calls in a somewhat less skilled Mechan-  
ician

With testing equipment but no erudition  
And, bent on upholding the 'L' Branch  
tradition

Of swift diagnosis of faulty transmission,  
Adopts an aloof and strategic position  
To talk of mis-matching and loss of emission,  
Defective alignment and nuclear fission,  
Then hailing his henchmen, he gives them  
permission

To throw the transmitter away.

A.A.



We can even get the third programme. . . .

### "GZO" COMES TO LIFE.

The old familiar call sign GZO can now be heard again from the Far East, for on that quaint little island of Stonecutters nestling between Hong Kong and the mainland our Naval W/T station is once more very active after the Japanese occupation. I shall to the best of my ability, describe what happened during the rehabilitation period from September, 1945 to February, 1946 to make Stonecutters one of the vital links in our vast communication network. Unfortunately I was not among the first to step ashore so my story cannot commence until about 10 days after the first party landed. I had spent many pleasant hours at the station during the years 1931—1933 and as I walked around the buildings this time my memories went back to those years. Yet the main buildings were just the same—there was the mess room, and there the billiard hall where I had played many a game on that very table, but the table was now denuded, the cloth had been taken, the rubber cushions gone; all that remained were the legs and slate top.

The Japanese had made use of the station, but apparently not in a very serious way, for only two transmitters were found. The living quarters had been in more general use and the dormitories and rooms were

very well equipped with furniture; they even left us quite a sound piano, which became very useful. Everywhere we found general neglect and filth. Grass round the buildings was three feet high. The galley was shocking; smoke had poured from the damaged chimney, open fires had been used and the walls and ceilings were grimed with black. The ratings however, soon set to work and a general "Spring Clean" began. Soap, water, disinfectant and elbow grease soon transformed the living quarters into clean and comfortable dwellings. Coolies were engaged to cut the grass and soon the old flower gardens appeared. Two gardeners who had previously been employed at the station came back for their old jobs, were taken on, and very soon had the gardens in ship-shape condition.

Now let us take a look at the technical side of things. There were two Main Transmitter Rooms. The apparatus in the second would have been in full working order, had the Japs delayed their entry another few weeks, as it was all new gear and installations nearing completion. When I saw it, however, it looked far from new, for our lads had well and truly smashed it up before they evacuated.

Well, there we were to make a start and re-build. No. 1 TR was fairly clear and the



two Jap sets were thrown out. In this room we made a start on our English version of a W/T Transmitting Room. Equipment was landed from ships and some larger sets came up from Australia. The phrase "Equipment was Landed" sounds very ordinary, but it was no ordinary task to perform, for to get this from the boat to the jetty we had a portable crane which was capable of lifting one ton, and some of our loads weighed far more than this. We used to put heavy slabs of stone on the back of the crane sometimes to anchor it down; and when the first case had been successfully landed that was put on the top of the stone slabs for extra anchorage and by this means hundreds of tons of stores were landed. We found also, to our disgust, that when we needed our gallant crane for lifting inside the TR it had to be partially dismantled to get it through the doors.

With the first equipment safe inside the TR, installation began. Fortunately the under water cable between Stonecutters and the Mainland had not been cut and with the aid of the Army, cores were traced and numbered already to join up to our Transmitters. We found several old "Creed Relays." These were overhauled and put into use and they worked remarkably well until replacements could be obtained. Our first Remote Control Table was rather a primitive looking affair; nevertheless it functioned and we were able to key simultaneously the four broadcast transmitters quite easily. During my period at the station two other control tables were built, the last being very "de luxe," enabling us to put any transmitter to any line, and any line was able to key five Transmitters simultaneously. The work of installing the transmitters was very interesting. Normally one goes to a ship and either the work is completed or is being done by the Dockyard, but here everything was done by us, and I can truthfully say we found few wiring mistakes. Inside four weeks of commencing our task we had four transmitters on the Broadcast, 2 Ship/Shore, 2 on Port Wave Broadcast (1 L/F)—in fact we beat the clock and were able to put the broadcast on the air for 48 hours trial. Some of the sets sent to us required DC for operation. Unfortunately this was not available. The electricians, however, overcame this difficulty and used old rectifier elements found around

the station to construct one large rectifier to enable us to use one set. Actually two sets were installed, provision being made for the supply to be put to either set. The main AC supply to the island from Kowloon did not often fail; when it did we were able to run an old Diesel Generator (at least 15 years old to my knowledge) and so keep on the air.

Here I might tell of one arduous task we undertook to ensure that the diesel would run if required. To supply the circulating water for the diesel house and the sanitary system of the station, there was a 100-ton salt water tank on a hill at the back of the station; and the pump supplying this broke down, as did another pump on the island supplying the Fire Main System from which we could have filled our tank. So one afternoon about thirty Coolies were equipped with buckets and anything capable of carrying water, and they carried water from the sea to the tank. When it was done it appeared just a drop in the ocean. Soon after however, a portable pump was procured and our worries were at an end.

By this time a Monster Station had arrived from the East Indies. This was landed from a landing ship and two SWB.s set up on a football field about 1,000 yards from the station. Remote lines were run from these to the Station, and connected up to our control table. The transmitters were used for Fixed Services to Belconnen and Colombo.

The next phase was moving the SWB vans from the football ground into the station compound so that more supervision could be exercised over them, and also to put them on the main supply as opposed to portable generators. This was a difficult task as the roadway was narrow and awkward, sharp bends and odd trees in the way. However, the offending trees were cut down and the journey negotiated. One set-back was lack of space for good aerials. The sides of the triangle formed by the tower masts gave us roughly 400 feet of usable space on two sides, the third being unusable. A plan was set forth on paper to see what could be done and the result was several horizontal dipoles, these forming part of the triatic, the spacing between each being 22 feet (maximum distance that could be allowed) and at different intervals of the triatic blocks were inserted for hoisting single wire aerials.

The whole array was made on the dock by Chinese Riggers and we were given eight hours off the air to make the complete change—the old ones down, the blocks on the centre mast put up another 100 feet higher and the new array up and feeder lines connected. I had to congratulate the Chinese riggers and the Station Staff, for the job was completed in five minutes over the stipulated time. To complete the technical aspect, here is a summary of the transmitters on the air when I left on 18th February: 4 Type 89.s, 4 T 1190.s, 3 TBL.s 5 TE 435.s, 1 G12 T, 2 SWB 8.s, Three other 435.s were standing in their places ready for AC supply and aeriels.

Great thanks are due to one of the dockyard S.E.E.'s Staff who had been interned during the occupation, for his valuable assistance during our re-building period.

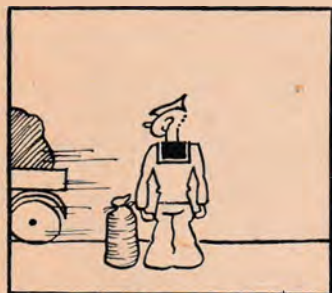
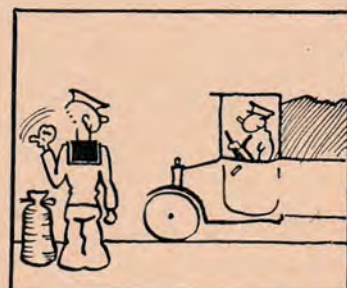
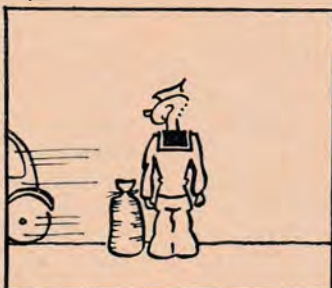
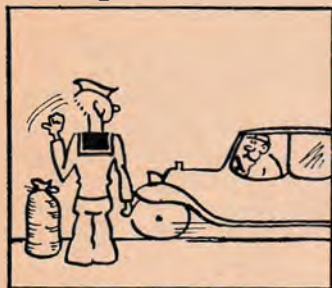
Before I close I will give you some of the

Station amenities. We had our tennis court and swimming was abundant. A stage, including footlights, was constructed out of old packing cases, etc. and several ENSA concerts were given; also a show by the "Great Levant" (Magician) from the "British Centre" in Sydney. Pictures were shown once a week. On Christmas Eve 1945, a small Tea Dance was held, so you can gather we had our playtime as well as worktime. I trust I haven't bored my readers with this little episode and as you may gather I am no book writer, but I am glad to have been given the privilege of writing a few lines for this magazine and am more than satisfied that I had the honour of doing my bit in putting GZO on the air once again and of seeing the White Ensign flying over the station.

W.R.S.,

Commd. Electrical Officer (R)

## KNOCKER WHITE



## LEYDENE DIARY.

20th January.

Rear Admiral the Viscount Mountbatten of Burma, K.G., G.C.V.O., K.C.B., D.S.O., dined in the Ward Room Mess.

5th March. Leydene icebound.

13th March.

Visit from Rear Admiral (S) G. H. Bankart, C.B.

29th March. Easter leave.



## HEARD IN SIGNAL SCHOOL.

Chief Steward (on point of retirement) :

"Yes, I've just joined the A.A. and I got a salute yesterday for the first time in my life."

\* \* \*

In the Cosham Liberty Bus :

"Struth, Chiefy!—is that genuine Dung-hill you're smoking?"

\* \* \*

In the Wrens' Canteen :

"We have a lovely Instructor; he says my procedure is very good and I'm bound to pass."

\* \* \*

First W/T Wren : "He says I'm driving him to drink."

Second ditto : "What's the matter with his legs?"

\* \* \*

In the Wardroom :

"... A sort of poor relation, like our beer to the Chiefs."

\* \* \*

In the Gun Room (Dangerous Words !)

"Here's to the health of Cardinal Puff Puff for the third and last time."

(continued at foot of next column)

## PENT-ODE.

O Cathode, humblest as electrodes go,  
But for the heaters burning there below,  
Their hearts afire more fiercely to excite,  
The dense electrons to their outward flight.

O Grid Controller, with thy naked wires  
Embracing, unashamed, the virgin fires,  
O Screen, with innocent yet potent links  
Characteristically making kinks,

O thou, suppressing with thine outmost grid  
Those kinks thy predecessor foully hid,  
O Anode, zenith of the structure's peak  
Speak to me, Pentode, O my Pentode, speak.

(With acknowledgments)

In the Schoolies' Office :

"... And there was the rain coming down horizontally..."

\* \* \*

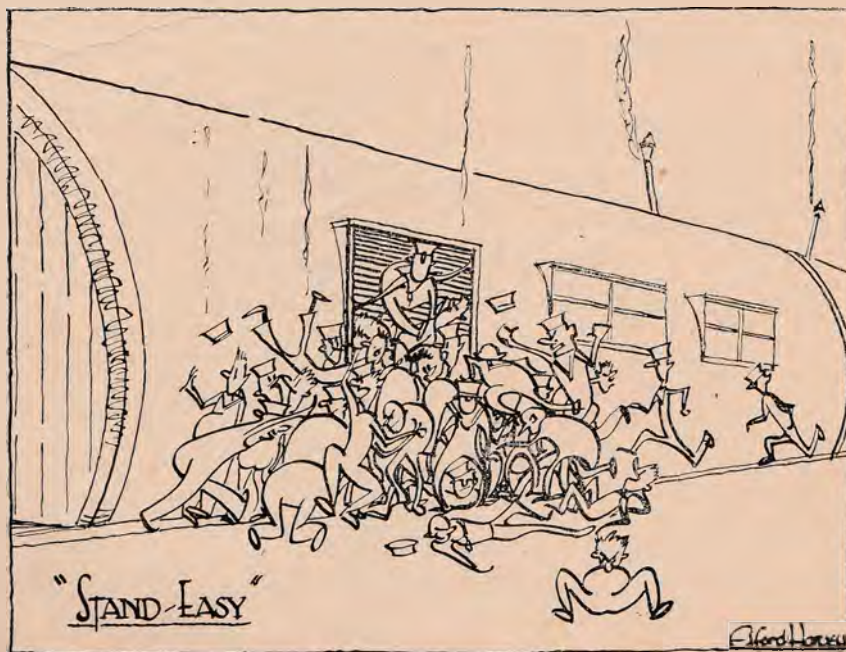
In the Classroom :

"A Dipole consists of two ends joined together in the middle."

\* \* \*

In the Wardroom . . . after Latin Grace by the Padre :

Commander (aside) : "That comes out of the new Signal Book!"



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

*Letter from the Sullage Horse.*

The Editor,

Sir,—The appearance of your magazine provides an old Leydene stager like me with a chance to ventilate what is both a complaint and a suggestion.

During my five years between the shafts of the Signal School Sullage Cart I have observed many people rise from obscurity to positions of power—and very few of them seem to realise what they owe to me—the Sullage Horse. Isn't it time, Mr. Editor, that I also had my little place in the sun?

What Signal School wants—and I think I fill the bill—is a General Purposes Horse; a horse of experience and poise, adaptable, dignified, of smart appearance and endowed with lots of horse sense!

If I were given the chance of half an hour with the ship's hairdresser and were properly valeted by a couple of Wren Grooms, I feel I would do justice to a livery harness purchased out of Wardroom Mess Funds or the W/T Improvement Fund.

I would be willing to mess with the M.A.A.—at least temporarily until he found somewhere else—and I would feel most happy under the general supervision of the Training Commander (who understands horses).

I feel it would lend much dignity to the

occasion of Captain's Rounds if the Senior Officer rode on horseback, preceded by my friend the Jaunty with a lantern and followed immediately by the Heads of Departments.

Also it would save both time and money if a horse were used for the Wrens' Liberty Boat to Soberton—I would be willing to take small parties bareback, but would have to use my dray for larger groups.

In spite of the difficulty of practising on the Sullage Cart I have kept up my typing with a view to assisting the Captain's Office at special times. Also I would help out the Wardroom Stewards at table on Guest Nights, or do my share in the garden when required.

I am not a shore-going horse and would be most happy at week-ends to take Wrens for rides across the Broadwalk. Although not keen on hunting I am on good terms with the fox employed by the local hunt. I think I could considerably strengthen the ship's batting side at cricket but I'm afraid that I cannot bowl. I would run in the Annual Sports if provided with spiked shoes.

Finally Sir, I would be delighted to assist with the production of your magazine which is obviously work for a horse.

I am, Sir,

Most truly one of yourselves,

The Sullage Horse. (G.G.)

*Points from Letters.*

Many well-wishers have written to the Editor after reading "The Sparker" last Christmas. Unfortunately space does not permit us to print their letters in full.

Mr. L. H. Tyrode points out that Leydene House belongs to the Dowager Countess Peel, widow of the late Earl Peel, P.C., G.C.S.I., G.B.E. Also he corrects the mistaken impression that the staircase in the

Main Hall is spiral (take another look!)

He excuses the Royal Navy for not knowing the difference between spruce and mahogany—of which the staircase is actually made.

Mr. Tyrode apparently lived in the cottage near the Canteen. We thank him for his interest and hope that one day soon he will be back in his cottage.

*Editor.*



## PIN-UP.



Audrey Young—the star of “Monsieur Beaucaire”—gives some idea of what foreign service could be like.

(Photo by Bud Fraker).

## TRUE STORIES.

The Spanish War was on and H.M.S. Sussex was swinging leisurely at anchor off Palma in Majorca. Blacksmith Abel, leaning over the forward guard rails solemnly regarded the sunset. He was at peace with life. The sun sank lower and as it did so it tickled his nostrils—you know how it is—whoosh! Blacksmith Abel, frantically groping the air, failed to prevent his most treasured possession from sinking mystically in 16 fathoms with a sandy bottom.

Blacksmith Abel was a good diver and it was quite pleasant working in warm water at 16 fathoms on a sandy bottom. However, it was difficult looking for a small object, probably buried in the sand by now. In any case it was unlikely that the ship was in the same position as last night. He had not enjoyed his supper—not even his breakfast. What could he do? The sand was soft so he sat down, but jumped up as if he had been bitten. He picked up the offending object. Holy smoke! What a bit of luck! Blacksmith Abel had been bitten by his own false teeth.

E.J.B.

This story is told of one of the first exercises conducted with units of the American Fleet and the Home Fleet taking part.

After a long series of manoeuvring signals had been executed to the entire satisfaction of all concerned, the following hoist was observed flying in the American Senior Officer's Ship.

[CH INT (Church Interrogative).

Confidently the Flag Lieutenant assured the Admiral that there must have been an error in the hoist and suggested that the American ship should be asked the purport of the signal. This was done and the following reply received:

FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE WHAT NEXT?

ANON.

W.R.N.S. Officer—exasperated by her efforts to persuade a very efficient cockney Leading Wren Steward (G) to take her examination for Petty Officer Wren:

“I'm perfectly certain Snooks, that if you studied the syllabus and polished up your knowledge in your spare time that you would very easily pass the exam.”

To which the Leading Wren replied:

“It wouldn't be any good Ma'am, I never could squat.”

E.R.



## ATTENDING A CLASSICAL RECITAL

### *The Ensemble.*

Requirements are an intelligent discriminating frown surmounted by an unruly mop of hair—the latter easily acquired by surrendering the Station Card four pay days in succession—above two rows of gleaming white teeth—a long period observation of the Dental Department gash bin may disclose a discarded set. To display the g.w.t. to advantage, a pipe is necessary—Sherlock type for preference, in briar, bruyere, meerschaum or cherrywood—in the absence of an E.R.As' Mess gash bin, it may be possible to use a clay.

Dress must be markedly Bohemian in style, and, in the case of Continuous Service men, should be designed to convey the "£15-a-week-just-joined" impression—hence no medal ribbons, accurate creases outside trousers cut with drain-pipe drape, brown kid gloves, and blue spotted scarf—"borrowed from my brother—Spitfire pilot y'know."

### *The Approach.*

Ten minutes each morning on the Broad Walk should ensure a personality glide—hips swinging, hand frequently brushing forelock from left eye, nose at 45 degrees elevation—the Duty Instructor Officer may be induced to demonstrate the latter during evening study periods—nostrils distended, and eyebrows drawn together in i.d. frown—see under Ensemble.

On the evening of the Recital, a couple of "dummy runs" between the huts should precede the actual "run-in" which is made through the "Out" gate of T.O.'s castle—this marks the true Bohemian. At a convenient moment, wave the disengaged hand to a non-existent friend, exclaiming as loudly as possible either "Charho" or "Oh-ver-w-are," with a strong splash of Oxford accent. Properly executed, this cry should be quite as effective as the warning bugle at Rounds, thus giving due notice of the approach of a distinguished visitor.

### *The Entry.*

ON NO ACCOUNT walk straight in. Pause, open door firmly and widely, emit throaty cough, and accentuate i.d. frown. After slight interval relax frown, and with bold roving glance examine swiftly room, occupants and furniture. Re-muster frown, take a pace forward, close door without



Evelyn Keyes (Star of Columbia Pictures Ltd.) combines the classical with swing.

turning, thrust disengaged hand into breast, extend lower lip—Bligh fashion—then with the deportment as prescribed, but with an additional touch of hauteur, steer for a large easy chair near the radio gram.

Do not sit down immediately, but adjust position of chair relative to radio-gram several times—thus informing the company of their visitor's acute acoustic perception. Finally sink into the chair with the practised ease of the experienced listener. Now bring pipe to bear, display g.w. teeth, and dispose b.s. scarf in becoming folds. If at all possible, a few general remarks, such as "Opus Three—Fourth Movement—*andante sostenuto*—sheer virtuosity" etc., should be directed towards the immediate neighbours during the above process.

### *The Anti-Climax.*

When comfortably installed, turn negligently, and take stock of the company. It may perhaps be observed that they are not, after all, gazing in admiring awe as intended, but in complete bewilderment. Further survey will disclose that no other man is present, and a feeling that all is not well will undoubtedly arise. Next morning, having seen the Commander on a charge of improper entry into a Wrens' Mess, it will be appreciated that the Classical Recital was announced as taking place in the Wrens' Canteen.

TOMSIG



## SCRAP.

I loved this ship. The imminence of danger  
 Allied us closely, and the common bond  
 Of weary months of unrelieved endeavour,  
 The fruits of which lay often far beyond.  
 Smiles cheered my spirits when I was des-  
 pondent,  
 The aim of all my messmates was to please,  
 And now no more that hull will hold com-  
 panions  
 Whose friendship flourished in the distant  
 seas.  
 And so, grey ship, I see you, graveward  
 gliding,  
 Leaving behind you the familiar North,  
 Pass behind Rodney, reappearing distant,  
 Vanish forever down the misty Forth.

J.O.F.

## THE PROVERBS OF TOMSIG.

Beware then my son—for when playing  
 dice with Wrens—six may rear its ugly head.  
 \* \* \*

He who drafts last drafts longest.  
 \* \* \*

Tub not he that teaches thee—for it  
 takes a chief to catch a chief.  
 \* \* \*

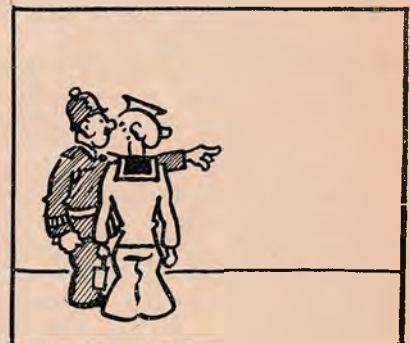
A tot in the hand is worth two in the jar.  
 \* \* \*

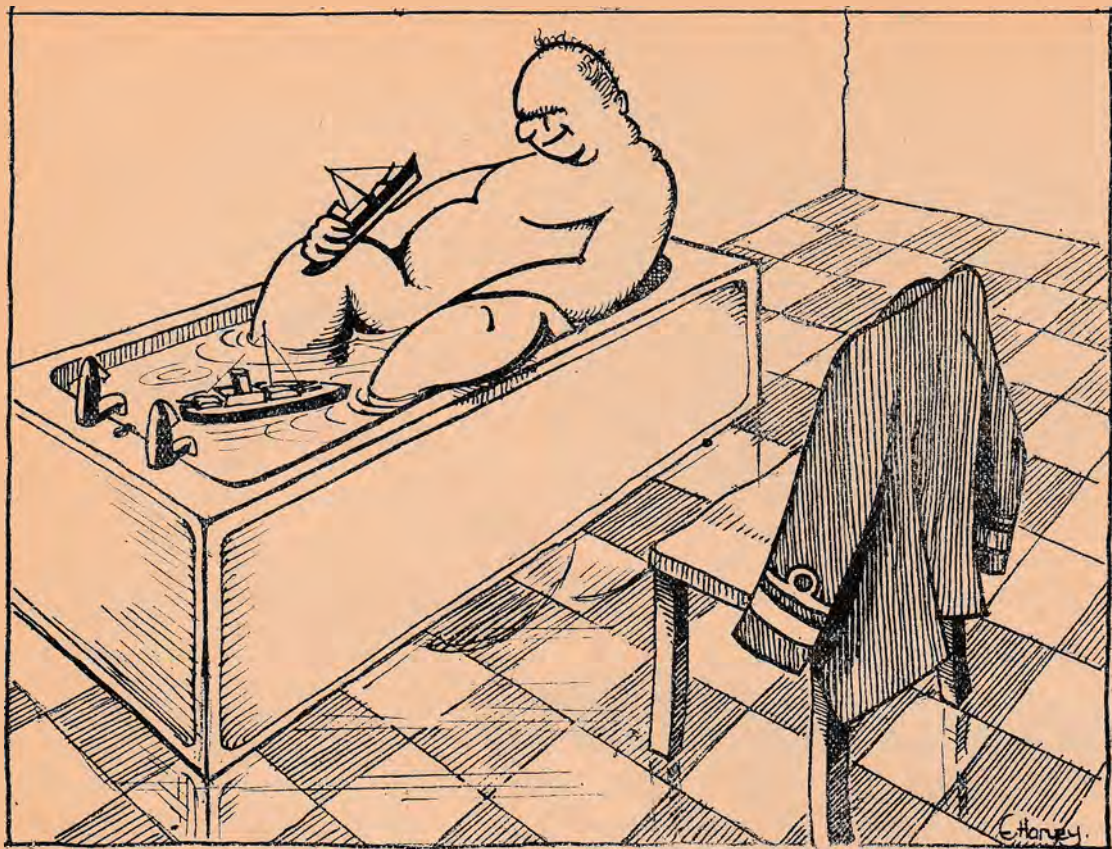
And Jenny spoke unto her chief saying :  
 " I careth more for he with wings than he  
 with flags—for does not he with flags say  
 ' down 'em all ' ? "  
 \* \* \*

He that knows not how to loaf is not  
 well bread.  
 \* \* \*

Be wary Jenny Wren of he that sayeth  
 thy face may be likened unto a poem—for he  
 may mean the lines.

## KNOCKER WHITE





### DEFINITIONS. No. 1.

A Radio Instructor is a person who passes as an authoritative expert on the basis of being able to reiterate with devastating certainty diabolical series of incomprehensible formulae calculated with micromatic precision from vague assumptions which are based on debatable figures taken from inconclusive experiments carried out with instruments of problematical accuracy by persons of doubtful reliability and questionable mentality for the curious purpose of annoying and confounding a hopelessly chimerical group of innocents referred to altogether too frequently as Radio Electricians.

---

An Officer must stay aloof ;  
 An axiom needing no proof.  
 So when the wife nags  
 I pick up my flags  
 And make my replies from the roof.

### A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME . . .

When we invited suggestions for the magazine title it was not realised quite what we were letting ourselves in for ! C.R.E. P. Hancock made sure of the ten-bob prize by registering 27 suggestions off his own bat —of which "*Misconduct of the Fleet*" was the worst !

Some thought we should go all heraldic and call our magazine after Mercury's wand —a *Caduceus*—whilst others, with painful penetration of Editorial weakness thought it could well be named *Scramble*.

The unkindest cut came from a hated member of the Writer branch who thought it appropriate to call our effort *The Tide* because—sting in the tail!—"You get a variety of things washed up with the tide."

For better or for worse we have played safe—but we are indebted to all who contributed to the sixty-odd suggestions sent in.

Ed.



### WRENS' PAGE.

It was with great pride that the W.R.N.S. learned of the decision of Their Lordships to allow them to continue to serve during peace as a permanent part of the Royal Navy. It was very gratifying to think that they had proved themselves worthy of this great honour and there is no doubt that the spirit of determination to carry on through any emergency during the war years will continue throughout the even more difficult years of peace.

In order to provide for requirements of the W.R.N.S. is placed on a permanent basis an extended service scheme has been introduced giving all serving and discharged members the opportunity of volunteering for a further period with the option of applying for transfer to regular W.R.N.S. in due course.

The Signal School with a total of 110 W.R.N.S. Officers and Ratings produced 40 immediate volunteers out of which 35 were accepted. Of the categories included in the

extended service scheme the Signal Branch of Wrens will comprise approximately one-eighth of the total, and this has meant a larger recruitment of new entries and in some cases re-enrolment of ex-Wrens of the Branch.

Training of Wrens in H.M. Signal School commenced again in October, 1946, and since then 18 D/F Operators and 156 S.D.O. Watchkeepers have successfully made the grade, and are now getting down to their jobs in all commands at home and overseas.

It is felt that these gratifying results have been very largely due to the patience and understanding of the Chief Instructors, to whom the teaching of Wrens must be a new but, we hope, a not too exhausting experience. Judging from the Wrens' reluctance in saying goodbye to the Chiefs at the end of their courses, it is proof that they at any rate have thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated the efforts which have been made on their behalf.

### WRENS' PIN-UP.



Pin-up, Wrens' dynamic Glenn Ford—Sorry girls he's married to Eleanor Powell.

### THOUGHTS OF A WREN IN HER BATH.

Leydene, February, 1947.

*(with apologies)*

At Much Sliding in the Slush,  
Mercury is nearly out of action,  
At Much Sliding in the Slush,  
Everyone is driven to distraction.  
Miles and miles of icicles are weighing down  
the wires,  
Coal is short, and lights are cut, no stoking  
up of fires,  
We're all browned off, or rather blued, and  
dripping till it tires,  
At Much Sliding in the Slush.

At Much Sliding in the Slush,  
We're due today to go on our vacation,  
At Much Sliding in the Slush,  
In this we'll never make the Railway Station,  
The Transport's off, the trains can't run,  
we'll have to face the facts,  
And stagger back to Camp again, and once  
more hoist our slacks,  
And spend our 48 in bed with bottles at  
our backs,  
At Much Sliding in the Slush.

J.W.

## SPORT.

## RUGGER, 1946—1947.

Rugger this season has been one long series of ups and downs, but none the less satisfactory and enjoyable.

All the drawbacks to fitness and coherent teamwork in life at Leydene are obvious; drafting, demobbing, swotting, lack of a home pitch—and the distraction of week-end leave. However, those who play Rugger are, perhaps notoriously, enthusiastic about it; and although the same fifteen was never fielded twice during the whole season, there was no occasion when it was not possible to raise a full side, largely by virtue of prompt press-ganging organised by Ch. Tel. Kerr (strategically situated in the Divisional Office) and Ch. R. E. Clarke. Amongst the enthusiasts it was impossible to find anyone not prepared to lay his tot that, given our best fifteen in one team we could beat any side in the Command (even Dolphin, who caught us on the most diluted of days and taught quite a lot of non-regulars the perils of bad marking as opposed to determined teamwork!).

The results so far have been :

Played 15; Won 7; Drawn 2; Lost 6.

Points: For 157; Against 111.

The bitterest struggles took place against *Collingwood*, lost 8—11; *Vernon*, drawn, 13—13; *Excellent*, lost 3—5; and *R.N.A.S. Ford*, won 6—0. The weakest performance was against Churcher's College who won 8—3 during a cloud burst; the average weight of our scrum on this occasion was

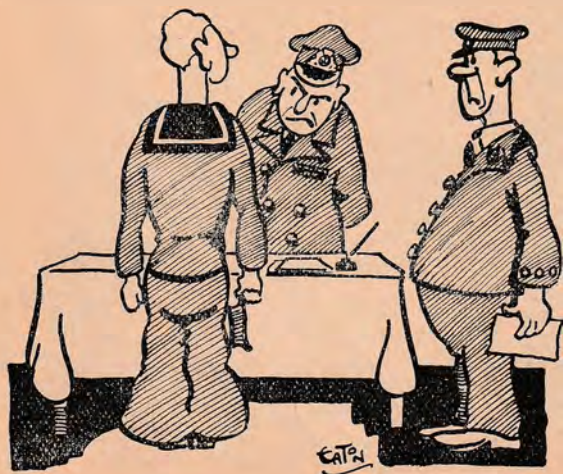
14½ stone, but a proportion of this turned out to be superfluous.

In almost every game the forwards excelled (*R.A.F. Tangmere* were beaten 26—3 by the pack practically unsupported by the three-quarters). Trouble was experienced time and again in finding a balanced set of outsides able not only to aggress individually, but also to handle and tackle. On the occasions, however, when it was possible to produce most of the three-quarter-line at the same time, very pleasing results ensued: against *Portsmouth Flotilla*, won 18—9; *R.N.B.*, won 20—6; *Excellent*, won 22—0; *Dryad*, won 24—0.

It is interesting to note that, as has been the case with so many civilian clubs, it is the experienced (one dare not say "veteran") players who have formed much of the backbone of the team: notably Ch. R.E.s Beesley and Clarke, Ch. Yeo, Floyd and Ch. Tel. Kerr in the Pack, and P.O.Tel. Paul in the centre. Paul distinguished himself by playing for Hampshire.

It was a sorry blow that deprived us (almost all at the same time) of Beesley, Clarke and Paul, Ldg. Sigs. Brogden, Jeffs and Morris, Lt. Marwood and S/Lt.(S) Winstanley, Lts. O'Riordan, Buller, Syms, Durnford and Page.

We shall miss Beesley's eternal criticism of his wife's attempts at cleaning his Rugger gear, and Clarke's guaranteed disagreement with any mortal interpretation of the amendment to the hooking laws. F.A. (Lt.(S)).



M.A.A.— "When I asked him why he was adrift, he told me to take it off my ruddy back, asked me if I was going to attend my father's wedding, and said that whoever made me a jaunty ought to make him a bleeding Admiral. After that he started insulting me."



## SOCCER, 1946—47.

Snow-covered pitches and frost-bound surfaces have severely curtailed Association Football fixtures since Christmas. The postponed games will have to be played before Easter so that, at the time of writing, a heavy programme lies ahead.

On 25th January, the position of the first team in United Services League, Div. I. was 8th out of 12 teams with 9 points from 11 games. The second team in Div. II. were 9th with four teams below them. They had 8 points from 12 games.

Although our position and prospects are not so good as we could wish, we have, nevertheless, put up quite a good show with the players we have been able to turn out. Unfortunately, drafting, courses, injuries and releases have prevented us from fielding the same team in consecutive matches. We sympathise with those who must choose between playing mid-week Soccer or attending lectures on which promotion may depend, but week-end games give us plenty of headaches too. Could we prevail on some of our players to catch a later train on Saturdays and so prevent a frantic lunch time search to raise a complete XI? Have those taking long week-ends tried the idea of requesting

for an extension till Tuesday and playing on Saturday? We still do not get enough recruits. If you have any ability with a Soccer ball, *do* let us know. Report to the Sports Store.

We had hoped to start playing on our new pitch this season but owing to the weather this is now out of the question.

The Inter-part Knock-out Competition was concluded at the end of January when the Chief Petty Officers emerged worthy victors defeating the Petty Officers in the final. It had been planned to follow this up by an Inter-part League but the weather again intervened. However, a start will be made in September when the new pitch should be ready.

Our thanks are due to Yeoman Edwards who spares no pains in his search for players and in preparing pitches.

A team thrives on support and in this respect we have had little encouragement, but hope for better things next season. Despite the depressing problems of our times it is up to all of us in Signal School to help put Mercury securely on the Soccer map, so please give us all the support you can either by playing or coming along to cheer.

E.J.B., Instr. Lt., R.N.



## THE THINGS WE SUFFER . . .

By day atmospheric noise is bad during the forenoon, improves during the dog watches, and is worst at sunset.

\* \* \*

The greenish-white fingers of the Aurora Borealis, the Northern Lights were spread across the sky and in some as yet unexplained way they plucked the radio waves from their paths, distorting them, twisting them, and sometimes making them vanish.

\* \* \*

The resistance does not remain the same value if the conductor is placed in an AC circuit. An AC voltage causes the length to increase slightly with heat, decreasing again at each zero of half cycle, whilst the cross-sectional area, again through alternate heating effects expands and contracts.

*Schoolie.*

## SPORT.

## CRICKET.

There is a cricket atmosphere in the camp just now. The Sports Officer is talking in terms of hundredweights of marl and lawn seed.

The First Lieutenant is feverishly working the price of repairing grass mowers, the C.P.T.I. has burnt all last year's score-books and is busily engaged in removing the moth balls from the cricket bags. Yeoman Edwards is limbering up for his herculean task of chasing the large mower round the ground, the Barrackmaster and the Shipwrights are constructing a couple of sight screens, so that there can be no excuse that "I didn't see the ball."

Cricket secretaries from all over the district drop friendly little notes on my desk asking for fixtures and even Warrant Officers (Qualifying) Courses are being lectured on cricket.

A pity about those burnt score-books! It isn't as if we did as badly as that, for on the whole we had a very successful season. We didn't win the Command Cricket Competition, but we might easily have done but for one or two "if onlys" that even the score-books wouldn't reveal. We did, however, have a most exciting win over our very dear rivals, the Petersfield C.C. It was an evening game of one and a half hours batting each and we won by two runs with the fourth ball of the last over. True it was nearly dark and we were doing the bowling, but we had to fight every inch for it; and in the second innings at the *Red Lion* only the call of the "last over" saved us from certain disaster.

Now for this season. During the war

we had the loan of the famous "Bat & Ball" ground outside the equally famous 'pub,' but last season Wadhams, who rent the ground, were able to raise a team once more and we were forced to find a new home. We were lucky to find the sports ground used when Soberton Towers was a Preparatory School was still available. After some hard work by the Soberton gardener, Mr. Watts, and the cricket enthusiasts, we had quite a reasonable wicket. It is not quite as good as the county grounds, but is a very interesting wicket, guaranteed to help both batsman and bowler in turn. A delightfully situated ground surrounded by tall shady trees where a snick off "the edge" can easily finish up in the Wrennery or a cosy little "pub" on the fine leg boundary.

There will be a lot of work required to get it ready again this season and the C. P.T.I. will welcome any offers of assistance.

For net practice it is hoped to have a net on the football field. We should be able to get off to a good start as soon as the Easter Leave period is over. Rumours are as rife as ever as to the amount of talent available, but we have a very full fixture list and there is room for everyone. We hope to have an Inter-part League running throughout the season and lots of pick-up games when they can be fitted in.

All that is needed now is for you to dig out your whites, watch the notice boards for announcements, and in a very short time that lovely sound of bat meeting ball and the frenzied scream of "Howzat" will be ringing out again.

J.W.M., Lt.-Cdr.

---

### OUR RACING CORNER.—Horses to follow on the flat in 1947.

TUDOR MINSTREL (3 yrs., *F. Darling*)

Brilliant colt, worth following until beaten.

ROMAN MAGIC (4 yrs., *E. Lambton*).

Good stayer, and should be even better next season.

CLOSEBURN (3 yrs., *N. Murless*).

Very fast. This trainer places his horses very cleverly.

PIMPERNELL (3 yrs., *F. Winter*).

Won two races at 20-1 and 100-7 last season. Right type for staying handicaps.

ADMIRAL'S YARN (4 yrs., *J. Dines*).

Useful handicapper at about a mile.

FIGHTER COMMAND (5 yrs., *J. Lawson*).

Won four races last season. May improve that score.

WINTER CROP (3 yrs., *W. Nightingall*).

Likely to be an Epsom money spinner.

KIRSCH (3 yrs., *T. Hall*).

Was handicapped last season by the prevailing soft going.

DIDIMA (3 yrs., *Boyd-Rochfort*).

She may be up to classic form.

BRITISH LION (3 yrs., *Elsey*).

Should do well in Northern sprints.

P.W.W.G., Lt.-Cdr.



## OTHER SPORTS AND ATHLETICS.

During the last six months, several improvements have been made in the sporting facilities at Leydene. Further to the provision of new sports grounds, there is the "commissioning" of a mobile canteen which will prove most useful for teams and spectators at sporting functions, especially cricket.

We hope the new table tennis outfit in the Canteen will make for much enjoyment and that ratings will take full advantage of the allocation of the Squash Court to their use at certain times every day.

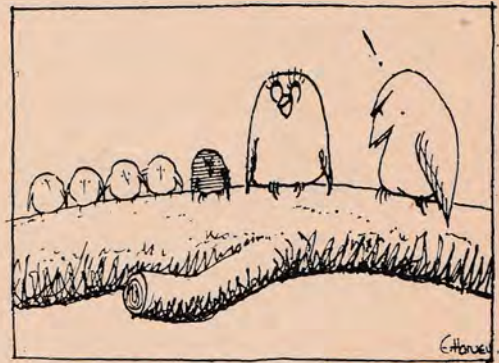
Hockey has not had a very successful season because of the early sunset combined with the difficulty of getting to distant grounds with sufficient light to play matches. Weather permitting, the better end-of-season light will make the remainder of the season more prosperous than the earlier part.

It is intended to hold the Annual Athletic Sports earlier this year than last. The 23rd September was too late. This year the sports will be held between Easter and Summer leaves; let's hope the weather will be more favourable than last year. We shall be able to lay out a better course this time as the Soccer pitch will be in good shape by

then. To make the show a real success a large number of competitors is wanted—particularly from the Wrens. Last year four or five girls cleaned up all the prizes to the tune of about £3 10s. 0d. each; that is not quite the idea and only more competitors will ensure sharing it out a bit.

Now that the Wrens have become an integral part of the Royal Navy, discussion is taking place with a view to giving them representation on the Portsmouth Command Sports Committee and enabling them to reap the benefits of the finances and support of the Service as a whole. Because their numbers are reduced they can no longer maintain a separate Sports Fund, but as we are very keen that they shall continue to defend the honour of the Command on the sports field, your representative will vote in favour of the Wrens joining up. During the past year the Command W.R.N.S. did very well against the W.A.A.F. and A.T.S. and the other two Ports in such events as Aquatic Sports, Netball and Tennis.

Whatever your idea of sport we wish you a successful season and a good run for your money.  
A.J.F., Sp. Off.



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*Tomsig.*

## AN INVITATION—AND MORE.

Unless you happen to be one of those people who always start a book or a magazine at the wrong end, you will, by the time you read this, have formed some opinion of the first issue of THE COMMUNICATOR. We are vitally interested in that opinion and would be very glad if you would let us know what you think. Only by this means can we learn about our faults and omissions; and only thus can we glean new ideas from the wide experience of our readers and incorporate them in our future issues.

If it should happen that this issue of the magazine meets with your broad approval, we would remind you that it can only continue to fulfil its happy function if it is constantly fed with new material of the best kind. That rather unusual experience you had; that good idea you thought of in your bath (like the Wren on a previous page); that extremely funny story you heard; or

that cartoon you roughed out in the Middle Watch—put it down on paper and send it in—it is the life blood of this publication.

On the other hand, you may think that ours is a poor show and that you could do better yourself. To you, our friend, we say "The remedy lies in your own hands!" Consider yourself co-opted forthwith and provided you produce the right answer we will make you a Sub-Editor—unpaid and unloved, as we are!

Whoever you are, if you are sufficiently interested to read THE COMMUNICATOR at all, this magazine is as much your show as ours. With the right support from you it can become a bond of fellowship in the Communications world.

So we invite you to join us, not merely with your subscription—though we rather care for that!—but also with your pen. Then at least we'll have your sympathy.

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