

# THE COMMUNICATOR



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Nº 2

SUMMER  
1950



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**THE COMMUNICATOR***The Magazine of the Communications Branch, Royal Navy*

SUMMER, 1950

■ VOL. 4. NO. 2. ■ ONE SHILLING &amp; THREEPENCE

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### CAPTAIN THE EARL CAIRNS, ROYAL NAVY

Qualified in Signals, 1933-34.

Fleet Wireless Assistant, Home Fleet, H.M.S. *Nelson*, 1934-35.

Advanced Signal Course, R.N.C., Greenwich, 1936.

Flag Lieutenant and Signal Officer to C.S.2, H.M.S. *Orion* and *Southampton*, 1937-38.

Experimental Department, H.M. Signal School, 1939-40.

Flag Lieutenant and Signal Officer to Admiral of the Fleet The Earl of Cork and Orrery in Norwegian Campaign, 1940.

Signal Officer on Staff of Captain (D) Halifax, N.S., for transfer of U.S. "Town" Class Destroyers, 1940.

Assistant Naval Attache, Washington, and for duty in U.S. Pacific Fleet, 1940-41.

Fleet Signal Officer, Mediterranean Fleet, and later to C.-in-C. Levant, 1941-43.

Promoted Commander, December, 1943.

Radio Equipment Department, Admiralty, 1943-45.

H.M.S. *Sheffield* (Executive Officer), 1945-47.

H.M.S. *Mercury* (Training Commander, later as Executive Officer), 1947-49.

Promoted Captain, June, 1949.

Senior Officers' War Course, 1949-50.

Deputy Director, Signal Division, 1950.



All good things come to an end, as the cannibal said when he ate the missionary, and my association with Leydene is one of them. When a member of the COMMUNICATOR Board receives a "billydoo" from the drafting authorities the usual thing is for him or her—we've had some charming "hers" on the Committee in our time; who can forget Dot and Carry?—to fade out quietly. But I feel an exception might be made in the case of the Art Editor. Not because he's very good (he is, of course), but because apart from the Editor, he makes more unknown enemies than an acid Jaunty.

Art Editors as a class are so poor that they need all the friends they can get in order to cadge cigarettes so, obviously, they make their enemies unintentionally. Here's the way it's done: Chats Harris, Telegraphist, no badges, second class for leave, is doodling on a signal pad whilst his oppo (who owes him a dollar) is making another copy of the SBX. After a while he realises that he has something good. A competent drawing, an original joke, and—quite possibly—better than anything that has yet appeared in these pages. So Chats carefully folds his effort, bungs it in to the COMMUNICATOR, and follows his unlawful occasions until the next issue, when he hopes to see it in print. But, woe is Chats, it never reaches print and the Art Editor has made another enemy.

"For," reasons Chats, "his own drawings are printed, and what's he got that I haven't?"

"Nothing, Chats. Nothing at all. But your drawing was in pencil and on the back of a signal pad."

"So what? I've seen pencil drawings in lots of magazines."

"Of course you have. We, too, can use good pencil drawings, but to reproduce them we have to use a process that would show every fold in the paper and the print on the other side. If your medium is the pencil, do your drawing on stout, white card and not on a signal pad."

"Why didn't you tell me what was wrong?"

"Couldn't afford the stamp. We don't make a profit, you know."

"But I'm at Leydene. You wouldn't need a stamp."

"That would involve meeting you during working hours. I have my own job to do and my boss, normally a very understanding bloke, understandably wouldn't understand. . . . Look here, I'd get a bottle off my head of department."

\* \* \* \*

Drawings of pretty girls are always welcome, but for Pete's sake don't crib them. The tracings we've had of Arthur Ferrier's lovelies would, if placed end to end, reach from Q Lab. to the clump of trees outside the gate where the Customs Officers hide. When I get a drawing that has obviously been cribbed, I fold it carefully and light a fag with it, having first borrowed a cigarette from the Editor (see paragraph two). An *original* joke, Indian ink, white card. That's the sort of thing we want.

And now, in conclusion, a story against myself. It was in those palmy days when civilians travelled with the elite in the Little Wonder coaches. I was next to an Instructor Lieutenant in the second seat from the front. Three seats were vacant at the back and the required number of Chiefs hopped aboard, one of them carrying a copy of the COMMUNICATOR. My ears are very keen, and while we were waiting to shove off I heard one say:

"That's the bloke who does the cartoons and writes the Knocker White stories."

"Where?"

"On the second seat, next to the Schoolie."

"What! That miserable B . . . ? He doesn't look as if he's got a joke in him."

\* \* \* \*

Ta-ta, well.

\* \* \* \*

EATON.

### CHEERIO, THEN ! !

Jack Eaton has filled two distinct roles for a long time: as Art Editor and prolific contributor from the start of the magazine, he is the longest serving member of the staff.

The COMMUNICATOR has been lucky indeed to have such an Art Editor. Also "Eaton" has regularly provided the Knocker Story, the Knocker strip cartoon, the Art page, illustrated headings, and cartoons, articles and verse over a variety of names. He has filled more space with his own works than any half-dozen other contributors.

All this excellent work has been literally voluntary. To persuade some people to "do something for the magazine" requires a sustained mixture of coaxes, threats and reminders. With Jack the very opposite is true. He can do lots of things really well, and what is more, his laugh and enthusiasm are always there.

We thank him very much and are very sorry he is leaving us. We wish him the very best and hope that the COMMUNICATOR will be hearing from him in many of the artistic fields which he fills so delightfully.

All Communicators join in congratulating Rear Admiral J. H. F. Crombie, D.S.O., on his promotion.



## TRINITY TERM

It does not appear that we in *Mercury* have any specific title for these weeks which span the period between Easter and Summer leaves except the somewhat general and optimistic appellation—Summer Term.

At Oxford this middle term is called Trinity—and this is a good alternative title to our Summer Term, firstly, because it contains a considerable number of those almost interminable Sundays after Trinity, and, secondly, because, together with Christmas and Easter, it keeps us in line with the Church calendar—if we are allying our other two terms with Christian seasons, surely it is logical for us to complete the process instead of turning to the seasons of the year for the middle term.

There must be some reason for this failure to use the Trinity season to mark secular time—we must admit that except in University and legal circles this is rarely done. The reason is not far to seek; it is surely because Trinity commemorates a doctrine rather than an event, and because, whereas Christmas and Easter conjure up to our minds definite historical events, Trinity does no more than remind us of a doctrine of the Church which is to us both obscure and difficult of comprehension.

Let us at once admit that the great Credal statements of the Church do little to illuminate the doctrine of the Trinity, at any rate to the average layman. This is best illustrated by the Creed of Athanasius, which follows the Order for Evening Prayer in the Book of Common Prayer, and which, it is laid down, must be said instead of the Apostle's Creed on all major Feast Days of the Church, a custom honoured more in the breach than the observance these days. The long words of this Creed and the attempt to make subtle distinctions between phrases which to the lay mind are synonymous has led one critic to add to its statement, "The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible," a new phrase, "The Athanasian Creed incomprehensible."

When we turn to the not inconsiderable literature on the subject of the Trinity, we find that very much the same considerations apply. The language is technical, and terms such as "persona," "substantia" and "procession" mean little or nothing to the layman. Rawlinson's admirable *Essays on The Trinity* mean about as much to the non-theologian as the handbook on T.B.F. would mean to the Chief Quartermaster. This is doubtless the reason why so many clergy shy off preaching about the Trinity—not so much because they are not clear in their own minds as to the implications of the doctrine, but because they find difficulty in expressing in words what they believe to be the truth.

There have been many attempts to show from illustrations the nature of the Holy Trinity and to

simplify the doctrine by linking it up with something known to and understood by the hearer. These illustrations include shamrock leaves, the tripartite nature of man (*i.e.* body, mind and spirit) the Trinity of light, life and love of St. John's Gospel, the three elements of consciousness and evidences of a Triad in some of the laws of Chemistry and of other sciences. They all have the weakness that no single finite illustration can ever adequately express the Infinity of God.

How, then, we may well ask, did the early Church come by its doctrine of the Trinity?—it is nowhere explicit in the New Testament, although implicit in some of the writings of St. Paul. Surely the answer is that it is learnt by experience. It came to realise that God had revealed Himself in three ways, and that each one of these ways lays within its own experience. That, of course, is the reason why St. Paul places the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ before the Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit in his valedictory words to the Church at Corinth. Here is a Trinitarian formula presented from the angle of Christian experience, in the order of that experience. The first focal point was the saving act of Christ, and this in turn revealed the love of God and led to a sharing in the Spirit.

To sum up. It is only in the light of our personal experience of God and of the way in which He works that we can understand His threefold nature. In that sense we are rather like the unfortunate Job. We may try as we will to understand the nature of God and to link up His Personality with the ordinary things of life. We may seek Him in theology, philosophy or mysticism, but short of an actual personal experience of Him we shall never find Him.

So Job, who listened to all that his gloomy comforters had to tell him about God and who tried to reconcile a belief in a Loving God with his sufferings and tribulations, completely failed to find an answer to his problems until he had a vision of God Himself. Then all that was obscure and incomprehensible became clear as day in the light of that all-revealing vision, and he cries "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." All his intellectual difficulties were solved by his living experience of God.

So, too, it can be with us. If we will allow God to illuminate our hearts and minds, we shall be able to look beyond the bare bones of Credal statements and theological speculations and see God as He is.

As R. H. Robinson wrote:—

"Holy blessed Trinity,  
Darkness is not dark with Thee;  
Those Thou keepest always see  
Light at evening time."

PADRE,



## ROUND THE FOREIGN STATIONS

### FAR EAST

The activities of the destroyers and frigates of the Far East Fleet have been outlined below. The general picture is one of "live operations" in support of the Army and R.A.F. on the Malayan Coast, and of British shipping on the China coast, interspersed with periods of intensive exercises.

These include, in addition to normal fleet exercises, joint Hong Kong Defence exercises with the Army and R.A.F. and combined exercises with the U.S. Navy and Air Force both in the Western Pacific and in Japan.

Opportunities of "showing the flag" cruises are rare, but visits have been made to Borneo, French Indo-China, and other places. The fleet is visiting Japan this summer, and at the time of writing *Belfast*, wearing the flag of the Flag Officer Second in Command Far East Station, *Triumph*, *Cossack* and *Consort* are at Ominato at the northern tip of Honshu, which is the fleet's summer anchorage. This has good sports grounds and a canteen and there are good facilities for exercises in the vicinity.

The combined exercises with the U.S. Seventh Fleet, held off Subic Bay, P.I., in March were most interesting, though our first experience with Task Organisations was rather confusing. We are, however, getting the hang of it now and are becoming used to senior officers having a multiplicity of titles. At present Flag Officer Second-in-Command Far East Station is also Admiral Commanding Fifth Cruiser Squadron, and the Commander of a Task Group, a Task Element and a Task Unit!

We have found little difficulty in talking to our American friends, and have been impressed by their rigid discipline on Tactical Voice Circuits, which is in contrast to reports of U.S. operations during the war.

Many Communicators recently took the opportunity of visiting Hiroshima where, at the exact spot where the first atom bomb burst, a Buddhist cemetery is being carefully preserved. An enterprising Buddhist priest still "gives away" "atom struck tiles" which are rough where struck by the atomic rays and smooth where sheltered by other tiles.

In sport the outstanding performer has been C.P.O.Tel. Stovell of *Black Swan*, who is now on his way home. He represented not only the Navy, but also the Combined Services and Hong Kong itself with good effect as a rugger forward.

### DESTROYERS IN THE FAR EAST

The old saying that destroyers are the maids of all work has never been more true than in the Far East during the past two years, and communications have, as always, played a vital part; in temperatures ranging from frozen Yangtse to humid Singapore the ships of the 8th D.F. have tried their hands at many things.

After Chiang Kai Shek's Government started to totter in November, 1948, one of H.M. ships was kept continually both in Nanking and Shanghai, and destroyers and frigates took their turn as S.B.N.O. (A) in these ports. They gave moral support and material assistance to the British community in times of unrest and assisted the Diplomatic Staff in handling the growing signal traffic and making plans for possible evacuations. Thicker and thicker grew the wads of pink paper, and Doc., Senior, Sec., and the rest took their turns on the books and machines ("shouldn't this come out in plain language?" said the Flotilla Supply Officer, after pounding for fifteen minutes). A circuit called North China H.F. was brought into being with Hong Kong W/T as Control, and proved more effective under these conditions than the use of broadcast and ship shore. The emergency plan for the evacuation of British Nationals from Shanghai, which was never actually brought into force, called for communication between ships, landing parties, embarkation and concentration points, and a net of transportable type T.C.S. was set up. A pool of telegraphists was kept in the Consulate to assist ships in manning this and regular tests were carried out. Trials were also carried out from vehicles in the streets and from buildings behind the skyscrapers on the Bund with some most intriguing propagation results. It was desired to be able to broadcast to British residents warnings which they could receive on their normal commercial receivers at pre-arranged times, and regular tests were made of this by S.B.N.O. (A). Some piece of plain language had to be used, the same each time, which would be instantly recognisable to the British Community tuning their receivers, yet would not disclose the purpose of the test transmission: we hoped Lewis Carroll did not turn in his grave every time the slithy toves gyred and gimbled in the wabe over Shanghai.

When the fall of Shanghai became imminent and the major evacuation plan was not required, the British guardship was withdrawn from Whangpoo to the reaches of the Yangtse below the Forts of Woosung. There, from a prudent distance, she watched the battle of Shanghai while other units of the fleet (Force 68) waited at Alacrity Anchorage, in the Saddle Islands off the Yangtse estuary. North China H.F. became Force 68 H.F., and touch was also maintained with A.N.A. Shanghai, who had retained some telegraphists in order to keep open a naval link in addition to the normal Diplomatic wireless. Over this link we heard the hourly details of the city's capture and were relieved to know that none of our many friends there came to any harm. When the battle was well and truly over the fleet returned to Hong Kong, leaving a guardship off the Yangtse, a duty that has persisted ever since, due to the Nationalist blockade, and at which destroyers

and frigates have all taken their turn.

At this time *Amethyst* was lying under Communist guns up the Yangtse. The part played by communications in every phase of her story is well known. *Consort* also suffered heavily in the original action; a shell in the main wireless office and hits on the fore superstructure causing a large proportion of casualties in the communication department. The emergency wireless position aft was brought into use, but visual signalling continued from the bridge throughout. When *Amethyst* made her escape, *Concord* was Yangtse guard and went up to Woosung to meet her, being challenged by the Nationalist guardship on the way, but replying with IMI until out of sight, a ruse which went against the grain. *Cossack* sailed from Sasebo in Japan and took over escorting *Amethyst* south from the Yangtse. An H.F. voice link and V/S were used between the two ships, with *Cossack* guarding the area broadcast and a fixed service with F.O.2 I/C F.E.S. The traffic was heavy, and unusual in that so much was congratulatory telegrams and messages in addition to the operational signals.

Malayan patrol is another duty performed by the small ships of the Far East. Ships and M.L.'s work with the police in their continual watch against bandit activity, using the police wireless net (with single-operator periods on the area B/C) and police codes. This duty is not so arduous as it sounds, and the hospitality of the small ports of Malaya is most generous.

Operational commitments have not prevented large-scale exercise programmes from being carried out. Requirements for the defence of Hong Kong entail a set plan for army support and exercises in this have been most valuable in co-operation with the Army and R.A.F. Bombardment and air communications in particular have gained from these. There have also been important exercises with the U.S. Navy. The 8th D.F., during their Autumn Cruise off Japan in 1949, exercised with U.S.N. units, including a cruiser, destroyers, a submarine and aircraft, while more extensive combined fleet exercises took place off the Philippines in the spring of 1950, during which Captain (D) was Screen Commander of five British and six U.S. destroyers. U.S. Signal Publications were used on each occasion; little difficulty was experienced and, although there had been extensive planning for these exercises, the general conclusion was that the two fleets could work together with little or no preliminary discussion.

There is, in fact, seldom a dull moment for destroyers in the Far East. One may be salvaging a tramp off the China coast one day (with a Russian Master, a Portuguese Mate and a Chinese Wireless Operator producing amazing signals), or recapturing a commandeered British merchantman the next. One comes to be surprised at nothing, even at the Nationalist gunboat which, when challenged with "What ship?" gave the ostrich reply, "There is no ship here." The wicket is a little sticky at times, but we have yet to be bowled by a Chinaman.

## AMERICA AND WEST INDIES

The Spring cruise and its tailpiece of exercises with ships of the Royal Canadian and the United States Navies at an end, the frigates *Sparrow* and *Snipe* reached Bermuda on the 3rd April, followed five days later by the Flagship H.M.S. *Glasgow*. From a period of duty well below the equator the *Bigbury Bay* showed herself to the Squadron for one week before happily hoisting a paying-off pendant and sailing for Portsmouth on the 1st May, thus concluding a much-travelled commission. The 1st June saw a change round of local craft when H.M.S. *Moorpout* paid off into Dockyard control, her hardworking crew commissioning the coal-fired *Barbecue* in which ship the work of buoy maintenance will be continued. The *Moorpout* with a few hands aboard, including one signalman, selected from the rush of volunteers ex-*Malabar*, will be towed to a home port by an H.M. tug in the near future.

Everybody must by now know that H.M.S. *Malabar* is to be paid off permanently; that all the beautiful, time-worn buildings that grace Ireland and Boaz Islands are to be closed; that H.M. Dockyard will soon be a memory and no longer the thriving industrial and social hub of the West End of the Bermuda Isles. The first visible sign of this break up took place on the 15th May, when with due and exaggerated ceremony the 20-in. signalling projector was dismantled and removed. A merchant vessel passing through Grassy Bay within a few days of this event was awarded high marks for keeping an alert look-out when, in response to the Signal Station's usual friendly signal she made "Wot! No twenty inch." The Main Signal Office and the Signal Station closed on 28th June, when touch had been lost with the Squadron sailing for the summer cruise. H.M.S. *Snipe*, at the end of May, undocked from A.F.D.5 to the accompaniment of much hooting and wailing of sirens large and small and of signals signifying her claim to be the last H.M. ship to know the lap of that grand old dock.

Sporting events have been numerous; the Governor's Cup (soccer) was secured by a team of Snipes who jubilantly informed H.M.S. *Jamaica*, last year's winner and now in the Far East, that the Cup remained in the West Country; the Road Race went to *Glasgow*; the Athletic Sports produced laurels for *Glasgow*; the Jeffery's Gold Cup is still at Kindley Air Force Base; the Command Rifle Meeting found Yeo. Edwards complete with his famous shorts and infamous "stummick" in his matter-of-fact good form despite the deluge of rain the first day and the brilliant sunshine the second; the pulling regatta ended with *Sparrow* crowing loudly, a grand achievement due in no small measure to the fine oarsmanship of Lt. (C) Kelly. *Snipe*, fulfilling a vow made a year ago, won the Communications whaler race in a very determined manner. The ocean racing yachts *Galway Blazer*, *Samuel Pepys*, *Mekoia* and *Cohoe* were very welcome



visitors preparing for the Newport—Bermuda race. Their very fine appearance and delightful handling on sailing from Bermuda for the United States to join the other British entrants gave rise to optimistic speculation as to Great Britain's chances in this year's race. H.M.S. *Challenger*, temporarily on the station, will act as the winning-post for this Ocean Racing classic.

The *Queen of Bermuda* passing the Dockyard bound for New York on 3rd May, was intercepted by a motor boat from the *Glasgow*, which gave a fanfare of miscellaneous noises and a shower of Very's lights whilst the flagship provided a background of more noises, a rocket bombardment and the flag-signal "Good Old Charlie." This operation constituted a farewell demonstration of the popularity of the ex-Commanding Officer of the Flagship and Chief-of-Staff, Captain C. L. Firth, an officer well known to Communicators.

Another officer soon to depart and of interest to the "C" fraternity is Lt. Cdr. F. H. Dunlop . . . a figure the mention of whose name, "Freddie," should bring a smile of reminiscent affection to the minds of all who have known and served with him. The end of this year will see him donning a bowler hat—or will it be a Glengarry?

One of the many reasons given by *Malabar* Signalmen for failing to repeat their performance of the previous year in the Communications Whaler race was that their messmate, Sig. Norman Collins, had chosen the Regatta Day, 4th May, as his wedding day. Thus culminated a romance which, it is declared, began with conversations on the telephone during night watches, the bride, Miss Jessie Tite, being an employee of the Bermuda Telephone Company, the impressive ceremony taking place in St. John's Church, Pembroke, with a reception at Clydedale, Hamilton. By 2300 that night the S.C.C.O. had learned that his staff could provide a most excellent male voice choir ably led by Yeoman Blaikie and accompanied by the bridegroom's song-producing wedding punch.

As a final paragraph, the following phonetically erring signal is offered:—"General from C.-in-C. Dress for officers attending Captain Parker's farewell party in the *Gold Ranger* tonight, Tuesday, CLEAN CLOTHES." C. S.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE DEPOT, H.M.S. "MALABAR"

Launched by Napiers on the Clyde in 1867, H.M.S. *Malabar* was one of a class of beautiful but uncomfortable troopers designed to go through the Suez Canal. Simple engines gave her 6,211 tons a speed of thirteen knots, but her shallow draught made her disagreeable in anything but the best of seas; she was also heavily rigged and, with a white hull, presented a particularly attractive picture under sail. Capable of carrying 1,200 troops, she was run by the Navy on behalf of the India Office and was employed almost exclusively on trooping trips to

India. In 1881, the ship was given a major overhaul which included the fitting of steam steering gear to replace the old hand gear which had called upon the exertions of sixteen men to put the helm over; a year later electric light was installed with great success. It was decided in 1894 to give up the Indian troopers and to charter liners from the P. and O. and other shipping companies instead, but *Malabar* continued to run with the hired troopers for two years after her contemporaries had gone to the scrappers or had been converted to hulks. She was then taken in hand and converted to a depot ship to replace H.M.S. *Urgent* on the Jamaican coast, but just before sailing for the West Indies, her orders were countermanded and she sailed for Bermuda to become a coal hulk. On her arrival at Bermuda, she was found to be so much better than the receiving ship, *Shah*, that the latter became the coal hulk and *Malabar* the receiving ship. In 1901, the old *Terror* was paid off and the *Malabar* assumed her name and role as the flagship at Bermuda until 1914, when she was put up for sale but reprieved when war broke out.

Throughout World War I she remained at Bermuda as the flagship and depot ship, being sold to the United States for conversion to an oil hulk shortly after the Armistice of 1918. On the way to America, she found a final resting-place by foundering in heavy weather.

Commissioner's house, the stone frigate of the present *Malabar*, appears to have been built between 1823 and 1836, although the site itself was probably first occupied towards the end of the seventeenth century by a Captain Florentio Seymour, an ex-Governor of Bermuda. Much heated and acrimonious correspondence was exchanged over the exorbitant cost of the building, but history does not relate upon whom the responsibility for this extravagance should rest. Convict labour was mainly employed, but most



"Regular old sea lawyer is Shorty"



materials, including Yorkshire stone, were shipped from England.

For a number of years the house passed into the hands of the Ordnance Department, but in 1862 it was returned to the Navy and became a barracks for Royal Marines for a period of up to forty years. Various Commissioners or Superintendents occupied the solidly built, hurricane defying house, and much of the original furniture still dignifies the present wardroom, while in the basement can be seen grim reminders of the days when disciplinary action required the solitary incarceration of an offender or his suspension by the neck. During the period between the twentieth-century wars the building was of ample size to accommodate the small base staff, but the personnel requirements of 1939-45 called for a conglomeration of huts and unornamental buildings to the rear of the main house. The Main Signal Office was erected in 1943 in front of the house and overlooking Grassy Bay, and three years later the Signal Station was built on the roof of the M.S.O. which, according to a fix made 114 years ago, is in position 32 19 North, 64 51 West.

## THE PERSIAN GULF

As this is our first contribution to the COMMUNICATOR we should like to say "Salaam alei Kum" to the editor and his staff and to all readers.

We feel we can describe life out here best by brushing aside a few moth-eaten myths about the Gulf, namely:

- (a) That it is an unimportant part of the world where the "bad hats" are sent.
- (b) That it is always unbearably hot, and there are no recreational facilities.
- (c) That communication with the outside world is difficult, if not impossible.

The Persian Gulf has never really been the back-water that people are apt to suppose. In the last century hardly a year passed without one of H.M. ships being called upon to knock down a sheikh's fort because he persisted in smuggling drugs into his country; or to intercept a dhow carrying wretches away into slavery; or to back, with a display of force, the political authorities in arbitration between two rulers quarrelling over the ownership of a piece of land. And the history of a hundred years ago is being repeated today, only modified firstly by the slow march of civilisation, which tends to deprecate, for example, people having their right hands cut off for stealing, and secondly by the discovery of oil, which makes even more complicated, heated, and long-drawn out, the squabbles over different sheikhs' claims to territories where the oil exists, or is likely to be found.

As for this part of the world being the unhappy hunting ground of the ne'er-do-wells, a glance at the ships' companies would soon dispel any such

illusion. We have three frigates in the Persian Gulf Division, *Wild Goose*, *Wren* and *Flamingo*, manned respectively from the Chatham, Portsmouth and Devonport depots. *Wild Goose* is the ship of the S.N.O.P.G. (who is also her Commanding Officer), and so on the communication side carries a C.Y.S. and a C.P.O. Tel. (at present C.Y.S. Scurr and C.P.O. Tel. Howarth—the former is about to be relieved by C.Y.S. Cole). The other ships have a Yeoman and P.O. Tel. each. Of junior ratings each ship carries two Leading Tels. plus four Tels. and one Leading Sig. plus two Sigs.

The apparently large telegraphist complement is necessary because each ship has to read the Ship Broadcast continuously, whether in harbour or at sea, and has to man our Persian Gulf Wave four times daily. Conversely, ships only have a small V/S staff because we do not often spend more than two nights running at sea. (*Wild Goose's* recent three-week cruise round the Oman Coast and down to Aden was an exception). Nevertheless, there is much for the V/S staff to do. Though we have not yet exhausted the possibilities of the F.S.B., because two ships are seldom in company for long, many flashing exercises are carried out with merchant ships and the P.G. Division are usually to be found in the list published periodically in A.F.O.'s. In *Wild Goose*, where signals are reproduced for Staff as well as ship's officers, the M.S.O. is always busy; their record is 100 signals a day for the five days that C.-in-C. was in Bahrein this January. Thus, on neither V/S nor wireless side is there any room for the idler or malingerer. There is plenty for all to do and every one counts.

Between the middle of May and the middle of October it is undoubtedly hot out here. At Basra or Kuwait, the shade temperature may rise to 120 degs., though it is then usually a dry heat. At Bahrein the thermometer mostly stays lower, but the air is almost saturated with water. However, air coolers are fitted on the mess decks and in the wardrooms, wireless offices and sick bays of the three Persian Gulf frigates, and there is often a refreshing (and sometimes all too forceful) north wind to cool the ships down. For the remaining seven months of the year the climate is delightfully temperate and may even become frigid. When *Wild Goose* was inspected by the C.-in-C. at Basrah in January of this year it was so cold that the Chief Yeoman's telescope registered several layers of frost and the "sparkers" teeth at divisions were making morse at a "steady rate."

Bahrein is our base and here there is a good N.A.A.F.I. canteen, tennis courts, sports grounds and swimming pool. The Naval Base area, which in wartime was commissioned as H.M.S. *Jufair*, is shaded by palm trees and has its own flower and vegetable gardens; it is far from being the arid waste that the name "Bahrein" seems to imply to many who have never been there or who have only

passed through by aircraft. At Basrah in the north we go alongside a jetty belonging to the R.A.F. and share their swimming, tennis, soccer, cricket and canteen facilities. Nothing is too much trouble for the R.A.F., and many are the sporting fixtures that take place followed by amicable pints of ale which help us to restore our strength and find out why we won or lost. The C.Y.S. particularly recommends the Sergeants' Mess (R.A.F.) for thirsty senior ratings.

The Communicators are naturally represented in the sports teams. In *Wild Goose*, for example, Sig. Lear and L./Tel. Pye play for the first soccer eleven and C.Y.S. Scurr represents the ship at hockey.

Both at Basrah and Abadan many friends are made with people ashore, and we always look forward to our times up the Shatt El Arab. But our newest-found friends are the representatives of Kuwait Oil Company. In the last few months our ships have been going alongside the company's new pier at Mena Al Ahmedi, which is much nearer their headquarters than our former anchorage in Kuwait Bay. *Wild Goose* is there at the time of writing and a big programme of games, parties and cinema shows had been arranged, but unfortunately had to be cancelled as we have been put in quarantine. However, we hope to return soon when we are "clean" again to establish more firmly our relations with the "oily boys" of Kuwait.

When we have spent some time among the bright lights of commerce and our money has run out, we slip away to some secluded island to fish and bathe or visit a few minor sheikhs on the Trucial Coast where those who are lucky are entertained in ancient regal style to a "Khuzi" party of boiled sheep set on mounds of rice, accompanied by chickens, dates, fresh fruit and other local etceteras.

There is thus quite a lot of variety in life out here, and, of course, we can always look forward to the next docking at Bombay or Ceylon, with the associated trip "up country" to Poona or Diyatelawa. (We regret to say Poona is no longer what it was in that former age, when a chukka before breakfast and a chota-peg at sundown was the order of the day).

We have already said a little about communications. The merry clicking of the typewriter or the steady drone of "GZH's" in the operator's ear testifies to the ease with which the broadcast is received; and Portishead and others are no strangers to us on ship-shore. Our area includes the shores of so many countries that programme signals must needs contain a nightmare number of non-naval addressees; Embassies and Oil Companies, Political Agents and Consuls; all must be told and many interesting circuits come to light in the struggle to avoid enormous commercial traffic bills.

Our "portables" also are exercised from time to time. A few months ago a whaler from *Wild Goose* was sailed between two Sheikhdoms on the Trucial Coast, a distance of about 30 miles, the ship having gone ahead. Good communication was maintained throughout between the ship and Tel. Pridmore

with his portable set. It was even found possible to relay football results from the B.B.C. to the voyagers, and when it turned choppy and some of the crew began to feel the motion, a spot of "hot bepop" was transmitted to take their minds off current events.

We hope that this introduction to life in the Persian Gulf will make the idea more bearable for those Communicators who are suddenly shot from the Barrack nest unto the unknown abyss. Those of you who get this far will be warmly (but not *too* warmly) welcomed—which reminds us that in *Wild Goose* at any rate some of us will soon be on top line for relief; so how about it, Chatham?

## SOUTH ATLANTIC H.M.S. "NIGERIA"

Except for a period at Saldanha Bay during which we carried out landing exercises, we have remained at Simonstown since our last article. We have just completed a period of three weeks in dry dock—on the whole not a bad three weeks: the first few days it was like hell let loose with "dockies" swarming all over the ship, but once they had found the usual corners and "caboozes" things began to quieten down a little.

During our stay at Saldanha the Chief Sparker (C.P.O. Tel. Hucker) organised a game of soccer between the C.P.O.'s and the Boys Div. Contrary to general opinion the Old-uns beat the Young-uns to the tune of 3-1; almost immediately the victors were challenged by the Wardroom. Accepting this challenge, the Old-uns went into training for what proved to be a very hard-fought game; Sparks and his band weathering the storm by drawing 3-3. Chief played centre forward—we have not had any offers from the Arsenal yet.



Yeo. Morgan, L./Sig. Allen and Sig. Wynne  
during exercises



In our last article we mentioned that the F.C.O. (Lt. Cdr. Bush) was to be relieved by Lt. Cdr. Bray; well, this is now a thing of the past. He is to be relieved by Lt. Cdr. Barrow. We know of one who is eagerly awaiting his arrival on the station.

When this appears in print we shall be well into our last East Coast Cruise, and we trust have backed the winner of "The July Handicap." On this cruise we are to visit Tamatave for the first time this "comish." On our return to Simonstown on 2nd August, after a little sprucing up we will pay a farewell visit to Capetown, returning to Simonstown five days later and leaving for the last time on 6th September for "Blighty," and will we be glad to see it?

Preceding us to "Guzz" will be C.Y.S. Lewis and C.P.O. Tel. Spencer, and we trust they have a good trip and look forward to seeing them soon.

To our chums in hospital, namely, P.O. Tel. Rule and L./Tel. Wood, we send our best and trust they are now well on the way to recovery. Keep us posted as to your whereabouts and if we are down your way we will be along to see you.

A few B13's have been handed out since our last article: among the "buntings" Lewis and Edwards are now Chiefs, Evans is Yeo., and Bradley L./Sig. The "sparkers" are holding their own with Spencer promoted to Chief, Tel. Cummins due to pick up his Leading rate any day now, and Cpl. Clark (R.M. Sig. attached W/T) stepped up to Sgt. To all we offer congratulations.

Well, Communicators, that's the lot from "The Nigger" this time. We should be in Reserve when our next article is published, and where yours truly will be then, only Their Lordships and God knows. Still, I'm keeping my fingers crossed. Cheerio and good luck.

L. C.

## SLANGKOP WIRELESS STATION

Our bush-fire season has now passed and the rains have set in, for which we are very thankful, as bush fires this season have been very plentiful and disastrous.

Recently our high-light has been the inspection of the station by the C.-in-C., South Atlantic Station, Vice-Admiral Sir D. McCarthy, accompanied by senior staff officers and the Captain-in-Charge, Simonstown, Captain Roy Hardy.

We were unfortunate in that on the morning of the inspection the heavens opened and we received three months' rain supply in three hours. This prevented us parading on our "lawn," which is normally the apple of chieff's eye, but on this particular morning looked more like Southsea Canoe Lake on a November evening. However, the C.-in-C. expressed himself well pleased with all he saw and, as that was the hoped-for result and the rain really was necessary, we forgave our meteorological shipmates.

One dramatic moment in the inspection is perhaps worthy of note. P.O. Tel. Taylor (since departed to Chatham) had worked very hard on the station grounds, etc., and had replaced some rather dead-looking shrubs surrounding the lawn by fresh and extremely attractive-looking clumps of white heather. This caught the eye of the Captain-in-Charge, Simonstown (who on occasion could be somewhat vitriolic), and he bent down to gather a few sprigs. We all expected the clump to "come away" in his hand, but to our great relief and for some miraculous reason the sprigs broke off and the clump remained safe in its earthy bed. It is said that the Officer-in-Charge's heart has not been quite right since.

We are about to bid farewell to our Fleet Communications Officer, Lt. Cdr. Bush, and we take this opportunity of thanking him for his great assistance and understanding of our difficulties during his time here. We also extend a welcome to his successor.

A considerable amount of drafting is taking place just now, and by the time our Christmas traffic rush arrives we shall have a completely new staff with the exception of our C.P.O. Tel., who is already wringing his hands in anguish and moaning, "Oh! what am I to do at Christmas?"

Most of our new staff continue to arrive from the United Kingdom with no experience of commercial traffic handling, which forms the bulk of our work here, and with present tight complements it is most difficult to provide the required training to bring new staff up to the necessary standard. (Home signal schools, please note!)

It is with regret that we learn that our long-promised football pitch is too ambitious a scheme and we have had to forgo it and be content with a practice kick-in goal. The goal itself is an excellent prefabricated affair kindly constructed by the C.E. boilermakers' shop and we are most grateful for it. The area in which it is erected has given us many mental headaches and physical backaches, for it is thickly overgrown with scrub, etc., and is taking a lot of clearing. In addition, some means of binding the loose, sandy soil has to be found.

One of our younger telegraphists has been very busy constructing a canoe for use in the Atlantic surf some half-a-mile distant. It is understood that his first launching was fraught with great peril owing to instability, and that recently he has been seen casting longing eyes at the stabilisers fitted on a local frigate, so we await the next launching with interest.

E. J. W.

## S.T.C., KLAVER

A qualifying class of Leading Telegraphists consisting of nine telegraphists—of whom no less than six belong to the S.A.N.F.—passed out in July. We are very pleased to see the Communication branch of The South African Naval Forces so well represented and hope to receive more candidates in future courses.



Besides holding qualifying courses for Communication ratings up to and including Leading Hand, the S.T.C. has been found a convenient centre from which to conduct the V/S and W/T exercises of the Squadron, both for ships in harbour and for those away on the East and West Coast cruises. During her absence from Simon's Town on her last cruise, the flagship H.M.S. *Nigeria* took full advantage of exercising her junior W/T ratings in long-distance exercises, manning up to as many as seven lines simultaneously. The exercises which were carried out during the fore and afternoons, involved procedure, enemy reporting, crypto, quiz and standard transmitting exercises, and there is no doubt that junior ratings obtained much valuable instruction as a result. It is hoped to extend the scope of these exercises to include the frigates as well as the outlying W/T stations when the squadron disperses for its next cruise.

The C-in-C. (Vice Admiral Sir Desmond McCarthy, K.C.B.) honoured us with a visit on April 11th and, with officers of his staff, inspected the School, showing a keen interest in all that he saw, and, in particular, with the touch typing and R/T classes. Commander the Viscount Kelburn, himself a Communicator (at present commanding H.M.S. *Actaeon*), also paid us a visit on June 7th.

It is pleasing to note that the enthusiasm shown by the *Mercury* Amateur Radio group has been echoed at Cape South W/T station, and also at the S.T.C.—the latter has been operating for some time as ZS1KA (C.P.O. Tel. Spencer). Spencer will soon be returning to the U.K., when he hopes to resume activities under his G3DXK call sign, and will be pleased to re-establish contact with old friends. S.T.C. spies report that Cape South are not lagging far behind, and that they too, are soon to form their own Amateur Radio Group, with possibilities of a regular sked with the "Home" depot Hams on 20 or 10 metres (not, however, in competition with fixed services!).

H.M.S. *Nigeria* sails for the U.K. (without immediate relief) on September 6th, and while we wish her Communicators good luck and a good leave when they reach home, we shall be sorry to see them go. Only through the co-operation of the flagship who supplied the necessary instructional staff has it been possible to run the qualifying courses at the S.T.C., and it is to *Nigeria* that a great deal of the credit must go for making these courses a success. We understand that H.M.S. *Bermuda* will arrive on the South Atlantic station in January, 1951, so it seems unlikely that in the absence of the cruiser it will be possible to hold any further qualifying courses this year, since the instructional staff will be returning to *Nigeria*. It may be possible to hold examinations for the "Able" rate, and to continue the exercise programme for the frigates and W/T Stations, thereby keeping the S.T.C. in a state of readiness which will enable courses to be restarted as soon as possible after the arrival of *Bermuda* on this station.

## MEDITERRANEAN

The Mediterranean Summer has burst upon us with surprising suddenness. Bathing and picnics are once again the main forms of recreation, and the annual subject of the temperature in Malta M.S.O. has again been raised.

The last three months have seen a great number of changes out here. All the flag officers except Flag Officer, Malta, have been relieved and at the same time the majority of the signal officers have changed. Among the many new arrivals are Lt. Cdrs. Bray and Somerville and five of the last long course. 2/O. Beer (now Mrs. Harrell), late of the Cryptographic Staff in Malta, has been married, gone home, been discharged from the W.R.N.S., and is now with her husband in America. Her job has been taken over by 3/O. Eunson, who, in her turn, has been relieved by 3/O. Huntley, who, out of her turn, has also got engaged! We wish her all happiness. There have also been changes amongst the Wrens. P.Os. Johnson and Kelly (the last of the old faithfuls) returned to U.K. with 2/O. Harrell. We wish them well in their new jobs. They were relieved by C.P.O. Wrens, Strong and Downard. The former left us in May to be married, this being the first of the weddings. Wren K. A. Hunt was the next bride, and we wish them both all happiness.

L./Wren Pearson, our one athletic enthusiast, was a member of the W.R.N.S. team which won the Relay Race at the Destroyer Command Sports in May.

H.M.S. *Gambia* has now joined the Fleet, bringing with her Cdr. Phillimore, the late Training Commander at *Mercury*, who is the Commander of the ship. Within a very short time of arriving out here, *Gambia* hoisted the Flag of the new C-in-C., Admiral Sir John Edelsten, and is flying the flag at present.

The Fleet returned to Malta after the Spring Cruise at the end of March. The Cruise had included a number of exercises with the Home Fleet, visits to ports in the South of France and French North Africa, a general "get together" with the Home Fleet at Gibraltar, and, for some ships, exercises with the French Navy from Toulon. While the Fleet was at Gibraltar, Vice Admiral Lord Mountbatten gave a signal officers dinner in the *Liverpool*, a most generous and welcome gesture.

During April there was another Communication ratings dance held at the Phoenicia Hotel in Malta. It was a most successful evening, being very well attended and enjoyed by all. Lady Mountbatten very kindly presented the prizes. Fortunately it was possible this time to hold the dance at a time when nearly all the Fleet were in Malta, so that many who had missed the previous dance were able to come.

The Fleet is now starting on the first Summer Cruise, which takes them to ports in the Eastern Basin of the Mediterranean. *Gambia*, wearing the Flag of the C-in-C., sailed from Malta on June 7th

for Alexandria, while the main part of the Fleet sailed on June 12th. In July the Fleet concentrates at Marmarice for the pulling regatta. A larger staff than has been usual, has gone with the C-in-C., and sixteen additional Communication ratings are embarked in *Gambia*.

## S.T.C., MALTA

Since the last issue a number of changes have taken place. Mr. D. A. Jones is now learning the finer points of V/S in the current conversion course at Leydene, which, we trust, he finds more restful than chasing non-existent stores in Malta Dockyard (or does he?). C.P.O. Tel. G. Baister, having arranged a convenient station relief, has departed (with his pipe) to spend his declining years under the same ancestral pile, where we feel sure he will be welcomed by many of his old friends and messmates. We miss them both, but wish them good fortune in their future undertakings.

C.Y.S. Setford, who in recent months has been getting in sea time on the receiving end of fleet work in H.M.S. *Glory*, is also on the list for passage home shortly. We likewise wish him a happy return home.

Among the new arrivals who emerged after the combined fleet exercises are Mr. E. Plimmer, C.C.O., and Sub-Lt. (L) D. A. Smith with a strong team of enthusiastic supporters. Whilst welcoming their appearance, we are beginning to doubt the ability of this ancient bastion to withstand their combined assault, though help in its defence may be forthcoming from H.M. Dockyard and the "Committee for the Preservation of Ancient Monuments."

Propos our remarks in the last issue regarding family accommodation, it is a pleasure to record that a number of our natives have recently acquired new flats at Marshall Court, Gzira, a block of buildings just erected and, according to their occupiers, tastefully furnished and well fitted, expressly for naval personnel. This is indeed a welcome development and heralds the dawn of a new era when the family man can confidently plan to get his family out beside him without worrying for long enough beforehand:

- (a) what sort of a place they will get;
- (b) whether the wife will be able to live in it; and
- (c) how much it will set him back.

For those who are fortunate enough to secure an Admiralty flat all these factors can be determined in advance.

The Fleet Lido, which conveniently abuts on our premises, was officially reopened for the summer season on 13th May, and provides a welcome relaxation for our Communicators after a "cryptic" afternoon in the upper gallery; so there is every reason to hope that our inter-Part water polo team will show good form.

Ricasoli Sports Day took place on 26th April, but despite a full team of entrants for every event,

largely provided by the leading rates' qualifying courses, we produced only two winners, which unfortunately did not count in the inter-Part competition. Miss Betty Hayston, of the clerical staff, won the Ladies' Race and Master Christopher Johnson the Boys' (five to nine years), and both showed a very good pace. C.Y.S. Fowles, as usual, put in some useful track work and had the distinction of representing the ship in several events in the Destroyer Command Sports which took place the following week. For a "veteran" and a non-native, one may well ask how he maintains the technique.

Between other training commitments we managed to get in a very satisfying day recently with mobile equipment. Communications were entirely successful despite the apparent failure of the officer in "Mob Four" to differentiate between the Blue Grotto and Qrendi Airfield in making the second rendezvous.

Owing to the decline in the number of V/S ratings under instruction, our signal masts do not wear that gaily decorated aspect as often as one would like to see it. One reflects rather sadly on the exciting "bunting battles" of bygone days for which the Mediterranean Fleet was famous, but modern ship construction, even more than communication development, restricts this effective and picturesque method of signalling.

An Inglefield clip, in many a ship, is nothing but a name,

And an M.R.U. by voice, it's true, will get there just the same.

The young O.D. may never hear the once familiar cry

When the S.B.'s blast shook the "First and Last" as he yelled "Mastheads—stand by!"

And "Ho! you Sea Scouts, clear away," and "You there, look alive!"

. . . But when he does his typing test he clocks in forty five.

## THIRD D.F.

As this is the first occasion that news of the Third D.F. has appeared in the COMMUNICATOR, perhaps a brief record of the changes that have occurred in the flotilla since early last year is not inopportune. At that time the flotilla consisted of *Troubridge* (leader), *Verulam*, *Venus*, *Virago* and *Volage*. It was decided, however, to replace these ships by four others of the "Battle" class which were then in reserve at home; *Saintes*, *Vigo*, *Gravelines* and *Armada* and which now form the Third D.F. Until the latter were ready for service, six ships were lent in pairs from the Home Fleet. *Jutland* and *Aisne* were the first, followed by *Corunna* and *Alamein*, then *Sluys* and *Cadiz*. Each pair served in the Mediterranean for periods varying from six to ten weeks, spending their time mostly on detached duties in the Adriatic, Cyprus and Akaba areas.

The four present ships arrived at Malta during August and September last year, where they worked



up for several weeks before joining the fleet for the latter half of the Second Summer Cruise, which took them to Amalfi and Capri. The exception was *Armada*, who suffered a considerable amount of teething trouble on being brought forward from reserve and spent most of the first few months in dockyard hands. The Communicators had the usual worries of newly-commissioned ships, but were worked-up gradually under the skilful guidance of Lt. Morton who has now left the flotilla for the wilds of Leydene.

Christmas found *Saintes* and *Armada* enjoying the flesh-pots of Cyprus and Beirut, while *Vigo* and *Gravelines* (to the delight of the natives) were firmly secured between buoys in Sliema Creek. During January *Vigo* and *Gravelines* paid a courtesy visit to Philippeville in Algeria lasting five days.

The next event of note was the Spring Cruise, which included Exercise "Symphonie" with our French friends at Toulon and Oran. Some of the accents over TBS were a joy to listen to, although it must be admitted that they would have sounded far worse had communications been conducted in French. Five days were spent at Gibraltar, during which took place the usual get-togethers between "opposite numbers" in the Home and Med. Fleets.

Came the beginning of April and the Fleet was back in Malta, negative *Gravelines* who had wangled her way into a cruise of all the hot-spots in the South of France; Cannes, Villefranche for Nice, culminating with five days at Monaco (Monte Carlo) for the occasion of the coronation—and celebrations—of the new Prince of Monaco, Ranier III. The whole affair was comparable to a scene from an Ivor Novello show with gorgeous uniforms and a Ruritanian atmosphere. This visit was balanced, however, by a trip to Akaba for several weeks during May.

At the beginning of May, *Vigo* had her annual Captain(D)'s inspection, after working-up madly for it for several weeks. The flotilla staff descended on the ship like a flock of locusts and proceeded to tear everything to pieces and bring out all the little snags that they had been thinking up for the occasion. The Communication staff was kept furiously rushing about rigging jury aerials and masts, running emergency leads, landing portable sets and generally adding to the confusion. *Armada* had her inspection later in the month, leaving *Gravelines* still to come. After the inspection *Vigo* was sent off on a cruise by herself to work down and recover her breath. Places visited were Corfu, Bari, Trieste (very popular indeed) and Venice. During this period, which brings us up to date, *Saintes* spent a long period in dock for her annual refit while *Armada* mostly loafed in Sliema Creek.

The flotilla now awaits the commencement of the Summer Cruise, which will take it to Greece, Turkey and Cyprus, interspersed with numerous exercises cooked-up by the Flag Officers of the Med. Station.

During the past year the Third D.F. has had the

good fortune to be under the command of Captain L. G. Durlacher, O.B.E., D.S.C., R.N., himself an ex-Communicator and soon to be succeeded by Captain P. Dawnay, M.V.O., D.S.C., R.N., also an ex-member of the branch. Communications have been guided by the friendly if firm hand of Lieut. (C) Morton and latterly by Lieut. (C) Packenham, assisted by Mr. Clarke, C.C.O.

W. S. C.

## FONTAINEBLEAU

After having won the Soccer League Championship and St. Leger Cup, Unimer entered for the Soccer Challenge Cup, presented by the R.A.F. This was a knock-out competition with an unsatisfactory ending, the Navy drawing with the Army after extra time. No replay was envisaged because of leave, postings and the fact that hot weather was thought to be on the way. We know better now, but anyway it was agreed to share the cup for six months apiece.

The next sporting event on the calendar is the inter-Service Athletic meeting on 24th June. Our greatest weakness here is our small number, but the other Services have, this year, very sportingly given us a start of a third of the points required to win. This should give us an equal chance, so we are hoping to pull it off.

The weather has not been very kind to us at Fontainebleau this year; in fact, some of the British tourists I have spoken to have expressed surprise to find their very own brand of inclemency here. Perhaps the gaily-coloured travel posters have led them up the garden path.

The sun did break through, however, on the morning of Saturday, 17th June, for the very colourful wedding of Lt. Cdr. (S) Baseden, R.N., Secretary to Rear Admiral Dick, and Mlle. Huguette Steverlynck, of Fontainebleau. Practically the whole of the Naval Staff were present with some Army and R.A.F. guests and a capacity crowd to watch proceedings. We kept up the Naval tradition by hoisting a garland from the archway at H.Q., and officers formed an arch of swords outside the church. Perhaps the French have seen that sort of thing before, but we introduced drag ropes to tow the bridal car away. No one had seen this before. The drag ropes were made for the occasion, and matelots of the French, Dutch and British Navies formed the team and marched off with naval precision. One lady in the crowd was completely at a loss, and was heard to say, "Oh! What a pity the car has broken down at such a pretty wedding." It is regretted that a picture of the tri-national drag-rope is not available.

We welcome Lt. Cdr. Peyton-Jones, Chief Writer de Frias and Tel. Millie to our fold and say good-bye to Lt. Cdr. Stanbury and Tel. Sparkes, wishing them the best of luck in their new ventures. Tel. Millie is thoroughly bi-lingual and should be a great help to us, especially if we lose our Chief "Sparker," the Maitre Radio Gouillou, French Navy, as I hear he is in the running for promotion.





## KNOCKER GETS THE MONEY!

The Big Sailor was already in his place when I arrived at our usual table in the bar parlour of the "Pick and Pencil." I have already told you that my over-sized friend is a bit of a pessimist, but this evening he looked gloomier than ever. In his depression he had forgotten to order the drinks. Repairing the omission, I invited him to take it off his back, a phrase I have picked up since becoming a customer at the "Pick."

"Cheer up," I said, and with incredible fatuity added: "It might never happen."

"It's already happened," he said sombrely.

"What's wrong? Has the cold war reached boiling point? Has Russia started fighting?"

"Worse than that. You remember Wilfred Pickles was broadcasting from the *Intolerable* last Thursday? Well, Knocker was one of the party. He won 38s. 6d. and the jackpot; enough for a nice little run ashore. Did you hear the broadcast?"

"Unfortunately, no. I had visitors on Thursday and couldn't very well put my set on. But I'd very much like to hear about it."

The Big Sailor took a gargantuan pull at his pint.

"Well," he said, "as you might have guessed Knocker is one of those blokes who knows all the answers, and he figures that nothing was going to be easier than taking a couple of quid off Mr. Pickles. So, on the night of the quiz, if you'd switched your set on, you'd have heard:

"That applause, ladies and gentlemen, was for a handsome, intelligent sailor now standing at the mike. May I ask your name, please?"

"White."

"And your first name?"

"Nobody would recognise it if I told you. Everybody calls me Knocker."

"Can I call yer Knocker?" asked Wilf.

"Aye, lad, tha can that," answered Knocker, having picked up a smattering of the language in the old "Yorkshire Grey" before Hitler put a "sold out" notice on it.

"How old are yer, Knocker?" asked Mr. Pickles.

"Well, the lads on the messdeck say I'm an old

The B.B.C. engineers faded out the remainder of the sentence.

"Are yer married?" asked Wilfred.

"Not ruddy likely," replied Knocker. "I don't want a wife hanging round the dockyard gates on my pay day. Besides, the judies round here know to a ha'penny how much a sailor gets. There wouldn't be a snowball in hell's chance of sticking to a few bob."

"A handsome Tar like you is bound to be courting," suggested Wilfred.

"I'm courting, all right," said Knocker, "but I'm not telling this crowd of wolves anything about her."

"Not for publication, eh?" laughed Wilf. "Reminds me of the yarn about the Bishop who was giving a series of lectures on his experiences as a missionary. He was a jovial chap and lightened his talk with some very good stories. When the lecture was over he asked the reporters present not to print his anecdotes as he proposed giving the same lecture in another part of the town. Imagine his horror when he read in the local rag next night: 'The Bishop of Blank, lecturing at the Guildhall last night told some excellent stories which unfortunately cannot be printed.' . . . Tell me, Knocker, is there anything you'd like to see before you die?"

"Not half," said Knocker. "I'd like to see the Jaunty in the rattle."

A stir in the centre of the audience indicated that the Joss man had got his little black book out, and that he and Knocker would discuss this little pleasantry anon.

"You've been around a bit, Knocker," said Wilfred when the noise had died down. "Is there anything you've done or seen that makes you laugh every time you think of it?"

Knocker burst into a roar of laughter that lasted fully a minute.

"There is something," he gasped when he was capable of speech, "but it's a long story."

"Well, let's hear it," said Mr. Pickles. "I'll let you know if you take too long."

It happened some years before the war (began Knocker) when the old *Insufferable* visited a place called Ragusa in Yugoslavia. She was a happy ship and the officers and men got on well together. At least, they did until we got a new "divvy" officer in the Main Top, a feller called Lieutenant Bole-Dover. Looking back on it, I suppose he was all right, but a bit too pussers for us. He decided that the division needed a shake-up, and from then on we had a pretty thin time of it. We used to use what spare time we had figuring out ways of getting our own back, but there wasn't much we could do about it.

We noticed that whenever we had visitors aboard, which was pretty often in those days, Bole-Dover would pick out the best-looking judy and make her his guest. He was a good-looking bloke, and just couldn't go wrong with them foreign janes. Fairly hung round his neck, they did. Well, we got to this Ragusa place I'm telling you about, and me and a fowl called Ghandi Jenkins went ashore to test the local brew and discuss Bole-Dover.

"I've got an idea," said Ghandi over the third pint. "You used to take the part of a judy in the concerts back in barracks. How about going aboard as a luscious visitor and taking Bole-Dover out for a trot?"

"Couldn't be done," I said. "He'd rumble it in a minute. My voice would give me away."

"Don't you believe it," said Ghandi. "Once the Glamour Boy gets near a nice bit of homework he loses his bearings. Besides, all these Mediterranean judies speak husky. What d'ye say?"

"Forget it, Ghandi. Let's get out of here."

We went for a walk round the place, Ghandi chatting away the whole time, but I didn't pay much attention to him. I was thinking over his scheme, half inclined to have a go. What finally decided me was the lodge. As we were walking we saw a lodge house inside a pair of beautiful iron gates, and in the distance was a whacking great mansion. The lodge-keeper was leaning out of the window taking the air, and me and Ghandi stopped to make friends with him. A couple of ticklers did the trick. Make at least one friend wherever you go, I always think, and you're ready for any emergency.

"O.K., Ghandi," I said. "He's a pal of ours now. Let's get to the town and find out where I can get some female togs. We'll try this stunt out."

The next day was a Saturday, and I went ashore at 1230. I'd parked the togs with the lodgekeeper, and at 1400 I was back aboard the *Insufferable* as a glamorous popsy. In the meantime I had had an extra close shave and plastered on plenty of make-up. The high-heeled shoes nearly crippled me, but Ghandi said later that they gave me a mincing walk that was very effective. I could hardly breathe, my stays were laced that tight but, no doubt about it, I was a real chunk of glamour.

As per plan I went straight to Ghandi Jenkins and slipped my arm through his affectionately. Bole-Dover wasn't far away.

"It will be a pleasure to show you round the ship, Miss Conchita," said Ghandi, loudly. "Would you like to see the Golden Rivet, and where the Marine was buried?"

In a shake the Glamour Boy was at our side.

"Jenkins," he said, "the Chief Buffer wants a volunteer to do some humping. Get going."

The way old Ghandi's face fell was a masterpiece. Off he went pronto.

"Awfully sorry, ma'amselle," said Bole-Dover, "but duty before pleasure, y'know. Will you be my guest for the afternoon?"

He'd fallen headlong into the trap.

"Ze capitaine is most kind," I said. "You 'ave rescue me from ze sailor, no? He was boring me, that one."

"Oh, I say, look here, I'm not the Captain, y'know I'm just a lieutenant."

"Zat is most injustice," I fluted. "In my country handsome man like you would be Admiral, My fathair, he is big man. He write to your King George about it, no?"

"Great Scot! No. Look here, come down to the ante-room for a drink."

That scared me a bit, but I'd started this thing and meant to see it through. Down to the ante-room we went.

"May I ask your name?" said Bole-Dover after his third pink gin. "Nobody heah to introduce us y'know. Awful bore."

"Conchita Rosita Esmeralda Alexandrina Gratzl Offna Snickervitch, but you must call me Toots."

Before the afternoon was through, Bole-Dover was madly in love with me. He tried a bit of cape-work, of course, but I held him off and promised to come aboard the next day.

The second day was a replica of the first. What with getting subs when I was duty it was an expensive week, but it was worth it, and Bole-Dover was sure piling up a bill for pink gins. Well, the *Insufferable* was due to sail on the Sunday, and I decided that Saturday was to be my big day. I was extra liberal with the perfume. The occasion called for something more subtle than Evening in Paris; I used a new blend by Coty called Dinner Time in Fratton Road.

Bole-Dover was 220 degrees Fahrenheit that afternoon. All his usual lines of approach had failed, and there was only one way left.

"Toots," he breathed, "will you marry me? I love you to distraction."

"Ah, ze foolish Capitaine," I said, blushing prettily. "You are so young. This is—how you say? calf love."

"No, no, Toots. Believe me. You are a lovely woman and I am a strong virile man."

He opened his shirt and showed me the hairs on his chest to prove it.

"I loff you, too, Capitaine," I said demurely. But in my country there are certain formalities to be observed by a young man paying court to a lady. To-night you must call on my parents. There is our



house. There, on the hillside. You can see it through your—what you call?—telescopes.”

Bole-Dover trained his telescope on the house. Needless to say it was the place where we had made friends with the lodgekeeper. He was tremendously impressed, but I gave him no time for comment.

“When a man calls on his girl’s parents for ze first time,” I said, “he must obsairve ze proprieties. So to-night you bring presents for my beloved fathair and mothair. Something good for they are very proud.”

“What shall I get them?” asked Bole-Dover.

“For my fathair, ze wrist vatch is good, and for my mothair, ze kneel ons.”

“Kneel ons?”

“Oui. Ze kneel on stockings. For size, *regardez*.”

I lifted my skirt as far as my stocking tops and the Glamour Boy’s eyes stuck out like hat-pins.

“All right, Toots,” he gasped. “I’ll be there about seven o’clock.”

“Zen I must fly,” I simpered. “Much is to be done. One thing more, Capitaine. Do not bring ze presents up to ze house, but giff them to ze keeper of ze lodge. Then you come to ze house. There I meet you and present you. After a drink we drive through the town in company wiz my parents. At ze gate, ze keeper come out and giff my parents ze presents. A foolish way, *mon capitaine*, but you must not give ze presents direct. It is ze custom of my country. And now, *au revoir*.”

I flew ashore and made for the lodge. Old Ghandi got there half-an-hour later. We gave the lodgekeeper the Yugoslav equivalent of a quid and told him to go for a couple of pints. He was hardly out of the gates when Bole-Dover arrived in an ancient taxi. I hid myself behind a door and Ghandi hastily donned the lodgekeeper’s coat. Putting on a large hat to hide his face, he opened the gates.

“Not speaka da English too much,” he grunted. “Miss Conchita, she up at house.”

Bole-Dover thrust a couple of parcels into Ghandi’s arms and, dismissing the taxi, started for the big house.

“Let’s go, Ghandi,” I said, and within the hour we were back on the *Insufferable*, a gold wrist-watch and a couple of dozen pairs of nylons to the good.”

\* \* \* \*

“What happened at the house?” asked Mr. Pickles.

“I never found out,” answered Knocker, “but we discovered in the town that it belonged to three maiden ladies who were man haters. They must have given him a thin time when he asked for Conchita.”

“And the presents?”

“Well, the watch still keeps perfect time,” said Knocker, looking at his wrist, “but I had a hell of a time getting those stockings through the Customs.”

“Give him the money, Barney,” said Mr. Pickles.

\* \* \* \*

“Well,” I said, lifting a finger to Flossie, “that was a pretty profitable masquerade, if not a very honest

one. I suppose Knocker is busy spending his quiz money to-night?”

“He is not,” said the Big Sailor. “The morning after the ‘Have-a-Go’ programme, Knocker was given orders to report personally to the Drafting Commander. That wouldn’t bother him normally, for Knocker has ways of dealing with unwanted draft chits, but when he got to the office door he saw written on it in gold paint:

COMMANDER D. J. BOLE-DOVER, D.S.C., R.N.  
Knocker at this moment is on his way to Malaya. Gawd knows when I’ll see him again. You see,” he went on, “once you get mixed up with judies, even if you only play at being one, it leads to trouble. Don’t have nothing to do with them, pal; they’re poison.”  
“I’ll be seeing you next week, as usual?” I asked, rising to go.

“Sorry,” said the Salt. “Me and Flossie are getting tied up on Tuesday, and she says I can’t afford to patronise the ‘Pick and Pencil’ no more. So long.”

EATON.

## FOR TO PLOUGH AND SEW

“V/S MATERIAL . . .

Ormig, typewriters, SEWING MACHINES, Ges-tetner.”  
(Extract from a recent syllabus.)

Excavation has brought to light this old test paper.

EXAMINATION FOR ORDINARY SEWERS QUALIFYING  
FOR CHIEF SEWER

Time allotted:—28 days. Technical paper

Instructions to candidates—

- (1) Attempt not more than 3 and not less than 5 questions.
- (2) Use both sides of your paper.
- (3) Candidates will be searched for sewing machines before commencing the paper.
- (1) (a) Draw a block diagram of the essential parts of a cotton reel.
- (b) How long is a piece of cotton? (20 marks)
- (2) What would you do if you were repairing flags for an Admiral’s inspection and you found you had made a bloomer? (10 marks)
- (3) Describe a shuttle service. Embroider your answer (10 marks)
- (4) What is the essential point of a needle? (5 marks)
- (5) Describe the process of sewing wild oats with special reference to the seamy side of your material. (10 marks)
- (6) Sew what? (5 marks)

Total, 60 marks

Pass mark 70. Any candidate failing to show sewer-like qualities in his answers will remain an O.D.



# ROUND THE HOME ESTABLISHMENTS

## R.N.A.S., ST. MERRYN

This airfield is situated about seven miles south of Padstow in Cornwall, and is the Home Air Command's busiest station. Of the 16,500 flying hours completed in the Air Command last year, 4,900 of these were flown by St. Merryn aircraft, quite a large percentage considering that there are fifteen naval air stations.

The station flying commitments at present consist of "The Observers' School" (Midshipmen under training for Observer), the working up a Carrier Air Group prior to their embarkation and a Target Towing Section, the latter having several Tels. (Flying) attached to it.

It naturally follows from these tasks that the Communicators have an exceptionally busy time here ("Of what avail the loaded tube, etc."), so should any Communicator be looking around for a quiet number, St. Merryn should not even be considered.

The S.C.O., Lt. Cdr. R. D. B. Birch, left us over the Whitsun week-end to take up an appointment at *Mercury II*. There not being any relief available until the end of July at the earliest, the duties of S.C.O. and assistant S.C.O. are being carried out by Mr. A. V. Salter, C.C.O.

And now a few lines on departmental organisation for the benefit of those not acquainted with life on a Naval Air Station.

### W T Department

Here we have P.O.Tel. Brewer for instructional and D/F duties and P.O.Wren Evans in charge of the C.R.R. in the control tower. We should have two leading hands, but owing to the shortage, Tel. Reynolds and Wren Green are carrying out these duties and being paid as such. This leaves two Tels. and four O./Tels. from the Devonport Division and twelve Wrens. The department works in two watches from 0800 to 1800 (these being the hours that the airfield is open), plus night flying at least two nights per week, which normally finishes about midnight. The watch off go to instructions except after night flying when they are given a make and mend.

### Signal Department

P.O. Wren Brown is in charge of the M.S.O. and Teleprinter room (two machines). L./Wren Mathews is away on a qualifying course at *Mercury*, which leaves us with seven Wrens. The odd one was actually allocated for the Air Traffic Control Teleprinter in the control tower, but now that this is officially manned by a Chief A.H.I. (Ex. C.Y.S. Stanford) our complement will probably be reduced to six. This department also works in two watches, but from 0800 to 2100, the opposite watch keeping their hand in at cryptography during the forenoons.

### Switchboard

P.O. Wren Jones is the supervisor; we should have a leading hand, but once again there is a shortage and at present we have only seven operators instead of eight. The switchboard being manned twenty-four hours a day, these are the only real watchkeepers in the whole department, although all Wrens like to describe themselves as watchkeepers from a leave point of view.

### Electrical Department

Here we have three ex-P.O.Tels: R.E. Hanlon responsible for radio maintenance at our remote transmitting station on St. Breoc Moors; R.E. Jones for radar maintenance and R.E.M. Tidswell for radio maintenance in the control tower.

Of interest to the West Country reader will be the fact that Chief A.H.I. (Tiny) Small is what one might term, "Chief Buffer" of the control tower and area.

In the near future W/T Wrens on voice channels and D/F duties are being replaced by Signal Wrens (A.F.O. 1395/50 refers), and very soon we expect to see some of our Tels. being relieved by Sigs. Our two newest arrivals on the signal staff are voice and D/F trained, and although drafted here for M.S.O. and Teleprinter duties will be given opportunity to put into practice what they have learnt of these subjects.

We are holding an Air Display on the 22nd July (admission free) when the cream of the Naval Air world will demonstrate to the public their prowess in the air. During this display and apart from their normal duties the Tels. will be engaged in sending telegrams for the benefit of visitors who wish to see their best wishes transmitted into space. Actually they will be transmitted from one part of the airfield to the control tower and on through the usual G.P.O. channels by telephone from these.

This article would not be complete without a word of praise for our friends on the other end of 3150 Kc/s. The *Opportune* is attached to St. Merryn for Air Target Training Ship and Safety Vessel duties for the benefit of the Observers' School, and we do appreciate that it must be rather a monotonous job steaming up and down the North Devon and Cornish coasts, but we feel certain that they must enjoy their Swansea week-ends.

## NAVAL AIR SIGNAL SCHOOL

The sound of leather on willow and the general air of activity in and around the cricket ground remind us that another Summer Term is well under way. Not that these sounds are necessary as a reminder—we have the course forecast for that—but they give added emphasis to an otherwise peaceful scene and leave no doubt as to the term we are embarked upon.

At the commencement of the term we had a "full house" with Nos. 2 and 3 Observers' Courses overlapping for a few days, the International Long "C," a S.M.A.C. Course of five officers, No. 5 Telegraphists (Flying) Course, followed closely by No. 10 W.R.N.S. Signal Course and No. 2 Wireless Instructors' Qualifying Course. At the same time there were some changes and movements in the rating Instructors which increased the pressure for the remainder. However, with an extra effort and some quick switching of Instructors we managed to cope with the instructional programme.

No. 2 Observers' Course completed on 26th April and departed for St. Merryn the following day. Meanwhile No. 3 Observers' Course commenced course on 24th April and at the time of going to press they have reached the half-way mark. This course comprises five Lieutenants, R.A.N., one Lieutenant, R.C.N., and ten Special Entry Midshipmen. The Australian officers are all ex-R.A.A.F. who carried out many operational sorties over Europe and the Far East during the last war.

The International Long "C" Course have passed through and they appeared to enjoy their five-week course at N.A.S.S., which is reflected in their results. We seem to remember one of these courses that was with us last year provoking discussions on the supply and quality of Argentinian beef and the status of Eire in the British Commonwealth. This course had a more Mediterranean flavour and confined their remarks to a comparison of the English and their own weather in the summer months.

In accordance with Admiralty message 418A, training courses for Telegraphist (Flying) will be discontinued after the present course has completed. Resumption of these courses will be promulgated as soon as first-line requirements have been ascertained. Meanwhile the training of No. 6 Course is proceeding smoothly and they will complete here on 16th June and depart for R.N.A.S., Ford, the following day.

The W.R.N.S. Signal and Telegraphist Courses continue to grace the sylvan scene, No. 10 W.R.N.S. Signal Course being the first of its kind to pass this way. We have noticed that there are no lack of volunteers from the male population to play rounders with the W.R.N.S. courses on Wednesday afternoons. No census has been taken of the numbers that go swimming, but we have no doubt there are quite a number who prefer the beach to chasing a soft ball.

There have been some staff changes among the rating Instructors since the Easter leave period, P.O. Airman Maddison having gone to pension and Aircrewman Newman completed his twelve years and, after completing a painting and decorating course, decided to try his luck at farming. We wish them both the best of luck in their new sphere. Aircrewmen McCabe and Basten joined in their places and, as both had been in the School previously, they have fitted into the instructional routine without any teething troubles.

Now that the weather has become more settled

we are producing a full out-door sports programme for the Wednesday afternoon recreational make-and-mends. Cricket, soft ball, rifle shooting, tennis and swimming are all catered for, not forgetting an interesting afternoon with the Agricultural Officer for the non-athletic types. Incidentally, our cricket team has been considerably strengthened by members of the Observers' Course and we are looking forward to a very successful season. We don't know whether the visit of approximately 150 Brownies and Girl Guides comes under sporting activities or instructional programme, but we recently entertained that number at N.A.S.S. For one afternoon the place looked like a Butlin's holiday camp but without the bathing beauties. Everything went swimmingly in the static-water tank until one wee lassie fell down the sump when we heard the unfamiliar cry on a shore establishment of "Man overboard!" We hear that apart from the annual visit of the A.T.C., we are expecting a visit from the Sea Scouts and Sea Cadets in August.

The new Wardroom ante-room has now been completed and was occupied after the Easter leave period, the Midshipmen taking over the old ante-room for use as a Gunroom. The other major alterations and additions—junior ratings' ablutions and the bigger and better static-water tank—were also completed around this time. Both are quite sumptuous affairs, particularly the ratings' ablutions, and the static-water tank, apart from its primary function of supplying water for fires, is ideal for a pre-breakfast plunge. We might mention in passing that a marquee and a smaller tent have been rigged for the various cricket games that take place during the summer. Some was suggested that when the tents are rigged to receive the A.T.C. boys in August the place will look like a Red Indian reservation and that a new chapter should be incorporated in the C.O.F. on "Smoke Signals."

Our autumn programme has not been finally arranged, but we have no doubt that the staff will extend the usual welcome to all those attending courses at N.A.S.S. We hope, too, to hear from our friends who have passed through N.A.S.S. on any subject of interest in the air communication line that will keep us on our toes at the instructional end. Meanwhile, to all types of Communicators everywhere we say, in cricket parlance, "Eye on the ball, elbow up and quick running between bars."

## R.N.S.S., DEVONPORT

The West Country is enjoying delightful weather. Vicarage Road Camp is consequently in a very dusty condition. Nevertheless, it is hoped that when the new surface to the main road is completed, dust in summer and mud in winter will be very much alleviated. Initial work on this project has commenced.

Since the last issue, the condition of the living quarters has been very much improved. New corticene has been laid down and new furnishings, including curtains, bedside chairs and mats supplied, which



does make each hut look far more like home. It gives much pleasure to observe that some of the men take a great pride in their living quarters. The Watchkeepers' hut is a typical example, for its gloss and spotlessness does them much credit. It is very regrettable though, that a certain element, irresponsible and ill-disciplined, still exists, which is content to burn corticene with cigarette ends and do other wanton damage to good furniture.

Navy Days at Whitsun were marked with the usual popularity and success. A few post-war records as regards general attendance and those boarding the *Vanguard* were broken. The number of radio-postagram-message greeting cards handled and disposed of by our Communication ratings was 1684, which netted a profit of £28 1s. 4d., this being a record also. Another feature, provided by the Signal School this time, was a display of marching manœuvres on the cricket ground. This immediately preceded the ceremony of "Beating the Retreat." Unfortunately, due to unsatisfactory broadcasting arrangements, a proportion of the public could neither hear the commentary nor the orders passed in Naval Signalese. Those who did were very impressed at what they considered an inspiring spectacle. It is true to say that it stole the thunder of the "Beating the Retreat."

Numbers in our classes are reasonably good, considering everything. It is such a pity, though, that the majority of the youngsters of to-day will not help themselves a little more by doing more study in their own time. Apparently, it does not strike them that a really successful career in the Royal Navy, as in civilian life, requires a large amount of hard work and study. What an era of appalling apathy and lethargy.

On Tuesday, 13th June, the Officers dined the Commodore of the R.N. Barracks. On Thursday, 15th June, the Establishment was visited and inspected by the C.-in-C. Both occasions were very successful, and it is thought that the C.-in-C. left feeling pleased with what he had seen. He showed much interest in the instructional technique as applied to modern communications and cryptography. It is hoped that lurking in the back of his mind will be the thought that, notwithstanding the standard of accommodation and instructional huts at Vicarage Road, as he saw them on a fine day, the R.N. Barracks at St. Budeaux (the old H.M.S. *Impregnable*, and now W.R.N.S. quarters), with its parade ground, drill shed, gymnasium, super masts, far better accommodation, and other amenities, would be an infinitely better home for the Devonport Signal School. After all—who knows, it may be that



Scène at Leydene, 26th April, 1950

Nissen huts play a prominent role in the R.N. manning problem.

### SPORT

Activities in the field are quite commendable. We have Cricket and Water Polo teams entered in the R.N.B. League. Several of our players, as usual, play for the R.N.B. 1st XI. In the R.N. and R.M. Athletics, one of our competitors came in fourth in the mile, and another reached the final of the one hundred yards.

### R.N.A.S., HAL FAR

We were very grieved to learn that for the second time in six months Mrs. A. E. Williams (widow of the late C.Y.S. A. E. Williams), has been bereaved by the passing away suddenly of her only child on 28th May. The funeral was attended by C.Y.S. Burrows and C.Y.S. Bunkin who subsequently laid a wreath on the grave.

We take this opportunity of expressing our heartfelt sympathy to the families of Mrs. and the late C.Y.S. Williams.

### COMBINED SIGNAL SCHOOL

Although we have been subjected to a rather cold wind recently, number 13 Basic Course (other ranks) commenced its six weeks training in glorious sunshine. This weather, naturally enough, enables the various schemes with portable wireless sets to be thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Representatives from several nations have gathered together in the International Officers' Course which is now well under way. The lectures and demonstrations they have received have evoked from them a particularly keen interest.

Although our technical staff is small, we have successfully wired four buzzer rooms, containing facilities for voice training as well as the normal buzzer, and remote reception from a B28. This contributes largely to a greater efficiency in courses undergoing training here periodically.

The discovery that the big multi-cored cables connecting the Headquarters Ship with the transmitter room a few hundred yards distant, were in dire need of renewal, led to a squad of men from all four services being brought in to do the job. The cable renewal necessitated digging into the earth for quite five feet, from one position to the other. It proved to be no easy matter, but under the able supervision of Mr. Gray, C.C.O., the task of removing the old cables and replacing them with new ones was accomplished in a comparatively short period. We feel quite pleased that for the most part, wiring included, we did it ourselves. Dockyard workmen completed the job.

Once again it is time for us to take part in a Joint Communication Exercise. Although previous ones

have been keenly carried out, this one will be even more interesting to Combined Signal School. The reason for this is that, for the first time, we shall be conducting the exercise. The fact that we are to be the controlling station is appreciated by those taking part, and BJCP's are being pulled out and read through, so that the operators can really enjoy being the "boss"!

Unfortunately, our soccer team had to decline an invitation to resume play in the North Devon Senior League for season 1949-50, owing to shortage of personnel. Nevertheless, we acquitted ourselves honourably in the Junior League, and at the end of the season were lying fourth in the league table, and were really unfortunate not to have been more favourably placed. R.N. and R.M. personnel contributed in no small manner to our successes. Next season, instead of playing three different unit teams from the Combined establishment we are amalgamating with our Army opposite numbers, who now play in different leagues. Instead of Combined Signals A.F.C., this team will then become Combined Services Fremington, and should provide a useful combination; useful enough to "lift" one of the several trophies presented for competitive soccer in this area.

F. A. N. A.

### H.M.S. "GANGES"

Unless one has been in *Ganges*, it is hard to visualise the extent to which the preparations for the King's Birthday Review dominate and disrupt the normal routine during the first five weeks of the summer term. Instruction starts half-an-hour early, and finishes in time for a long evening session on the parade ground—dress rehearsals take precedence in the forenoons of the last week—a continuous stream of orders and information from the Gunnery School finally fill the K.B.R. pack with some forty pages of closely written foolscap, and as the day draws nearer, crowds of boys swarm over the establishment like locusts, trimming grass edges, touching up posts and chains and squaring things up generally.

To complicate matters still more, Sports Day takes place the day before the Review. Bunting round the arena, and sound reproduction equipment are naturally Signal School commitments, and require a certain amount of organisation.

Fortunately, all went well on both days—Communication Boys more than held their own on the sports field—and on the review ground. The weather was perfect, just enough breeze to keep the dressing lines clear, and to prevent the Royal Guard from feeling weak at the knees. The Divisional Cup in the Sports was won by ANSON by half a point from DRAKE in the last event. A fine finish in which P.O.Tel. Wilkinson coached his tug-o'-war team to victory.

However, life at *Ganges* is not all K.B.R. and sports, and the maximum training effort is still



sustained. V/S classes have settled into the short course quite nicely, and record practical results are hoped for from Yeoman Mitchell's 261 class which comes up for final examination shortly. Unfortunately, W/T classes are still finding things heavy going, and it is hoped that approval will be given in the near future to give them slightly longer on course.

The age-old question of why Communication Boys' initial results at sea are so disappointing keeps cropping up. Now that Communication Boys are prepared for foreign draft in this establishment, we can see at first hand the effect of two weeks' foreign draft leave on their practical averages. In some cases it is horrifying! There is no doubt that unless a boy commences watchkeeping or double banking on a busy line, two exercises a day are necessary to maintain good results, in his first ship, especially after a leave period or a long passage.

The modernisation of the Signal School continues slowly, and we really do hope to christen at least half of our voice teacher next month. Our Amateur Radio Club has taken a new lease of life with the arrival of another consignment of scrap radio equipment, which it is hoped will be converted by the keener members of the Club into one-valve receivers.

We congratulate Boy Tel. Punnett on winning the St. George's Prize which is awarded for general excellence in all subjects. We hope he keeps up the good work at sea.

## R.N.S.S., CHATHAM

"As from 7th June, 1950, R.N.S.S. *Cookham Camp* will be transferred to *Prince Arthur*." Official statement.

\* \* \* \*

How simple and straightforward—on paper. But what turmoil in actuality. Weeks of planning—conferences—headaches—more planning—more conferences—and more headaches.

Trainees depart for Leydene—Instructors return to home Depots—farewell parties—Class rooms stripped. Camp slowly empties—well-known faces missed.

Hard work—mistakes—and yet more hard work. Furniture and equipment to be moved—hot weather—a cheerful "humping" party—and more work.

1st June billiard tables moved—a tragedy. Messes close—noise subsides—local fauna reappears—rabbits increase—as "rabbits" do.

First party join *Prince Arthur*, 5th June—more problems—Dockyard maties everywhere—more humping—N.A.A.F.I. on the job—a welcome interlude—more humping—wet paint. Main party join—more humping—and wet paint and no "make and mend."

"Enquiry Bureau" overworked—C. & P.O.'s large trek—tempers ruffled—and pacified. Smooth working

re-asserts—rooms and offices take shape—from chaos comes order.

\* \* \* \*

Farewell Cookham Wood. It is with regret we leave you at this time of year. In summer you are beautiful and we forget that we cursed your cold and damp through the long winter months. As we leave you, we feel the pangs of parting, for does not the sailor say that "his LAST ship was his BEST ship."

In this parting we also say a sad adieu to our Independence and full Individuality for now we are a part and no longer a whole.

We also say "Au Revoir" to Commander Wagstaff and a host of officers and men, whose company we have enjoyed under the shelter of Cookham trees. May their onward journey be ever fruitful.

In *Prince Arthur* we look to the future with a hope that this change is for the better. As Chatham Signal School we are small in numbers but nevertheless intend to maintain our high standard. Our environment may change, but our quality—never.

## HOME SERVICE

330 metres (908 kc/s) ("Radio Times")

"That, I think, might be disputed,"

Said the Vicar of St. Peter's,

As he patiently transmuted

Kilocycles into metres.

"Grossly careless. Most misleading,"

Said the Vicar of St. Michael's,

Energetically kneading

Metres into kilocycles.

For these theosophic neighbours,

Erudite ecclesiastics,

Added to their other labours

Mathematical gymnastics.

And, accustomed to announcing

Services with more precision,

Felt quite justified in pouncing

On an error in division.

So they gazed, in outraged wonder

Unprovoked by graver crimes,

At the parenthetic blunder

Printed in the "Radio Times,"

Puzzled by its quaint appearance,

Vicar asking incensed Vicar

If official interference

Made the ether any thicker;

If colossal heathen stations

Had deliberately jammed a

Veto through the old relations,

"V" with "f," and "f" with Lambda;

Whether symbols seemed the same to

Engineers who ready-reckoned;

How three-thirty metres came to

Nine-O-Eight k.c. per second.

R. S.

# ROUND THE HOME FLEET

## HOME FLEET NOTES

In this day and age, in the tranquil hours of yesterday, before the arrival of such abominations as "V/S Intercoms," and "Voice," the Communicator's life was comparatively unchanging. So long as he knew that "CD does not answer," or that "Admin Code" was the only high grade system to worry about, life was perfect. In the Fleet to-day one is faced with a whirling vortex of change, with, at the centre, the calm water of fundamentals, which must always remain.

Not only in the communication world is this true; in the wider picture of the Fleet as a whole, we are faced with the same problem. It seems but a few months since *Implacable* created a precedent by becoming the first carrier to wear the flag of a C-in-C. as a permanent flagship. Now in a very few weeks that duty is to be relinquished. *Indomitable* is destined to carry on in the Home Fleet after Christmas, with the interim period in *Vanguard* for the Autumn Cruise.

So much for the future, what of the past.

Western Union has become very much a part of the Fleet's yearly exercise programme, this Summer Cruise being no exception. "Activity," the latest of these international co-operative exercises, really went with a swing. Under Vice Admiral Willinge in H.M.N.S. *Karel Doorman*, the combined forces of Great Britain, France and Holland carried through an extensive programme without a hitch. Fleet Wave presented no terrors for the linguists of the Netherlands, who controlled all voice channels in English, albeit somewhat gutturally.

At the post exercise-cum-social reunion held in Brest, many faces of several nationalities not unknown in *Mercury* were seen ironing out communication problems over a communal bottle(s) of vin blanc/rouge sec. Suddenly, like a theatre backdrop, the scene changed for us all; from the soft colours and the kindly verdant landscape of Brittany, the Fleet moved northwards to the mists of the Irish Sea, for the annual joust with Flag Officer Submarines and his Command.

There was in this exercise plenty of food for thought for all branches, and, as usual, plenty of practice in all phases of communication technology. We all felt that it would be a good thing if the meanings of MG Q and MG P could be changed, preferably once a day; by the end of it all most of us felt like violently attacking the next person who dared utter upon the air those battered, over-worked extracts from the signal books. Still, *everybody* knows their meaning now, which is quite an achievement.

Then, so suddenly, that one almost felt lost, came the end of the exercise. The A/S Barracudas, the night fighting Sea Hornets, and our old friend *Theseus* left for pastures new; in the case of *Theseus* very new, since she is bound for the Orient; for the remainder, the Western Isles and Invergordon.

From this Scottish demi-paradise, the Fleet departs upon the *piece-de-resistance* of the Summer Cruise, the traditional peace time visits to Scandinavian, Danish, Dutch and British holiday resorts, including Margate. Remember those pre-war cruises, all you stanchions?

You may have worked with the Fleet or instructed some of the present Fleet complement and may be inclined to be hasty, critical, or to sigh for "The old days." When you come to sea and find that youngsters, fresh from training establishments, are forming the greater part of a ship's company, it will in time become apparent that the Fleet is in pretty good shape and getting better every day. Remember, too, that the senior rating of to-morrow is faced with an organisation far vaster in concept and execution than ever before. Bear with us in patience.

The grapevine has it that Invergordon and points north, that in days past always welcomed the Fleet for the Autumn Cruise, will not have the pleasure this year. We are bound south, letting November and its inclemency become a vague memory as the bow wave testifies to the truth of the old advertisement: "Out of the blue comes the whitest wash."

Before concluding our contribution, may we tell you of one of our troubles? In the Fleet to-day, uneasiness is being caused by certain equipment failing to do "Wot it says in the book." We have a solution, provided by one of our brighter sparks, who, after consultation with the Electrical Branch, one Gypsy, and two crystal balls, states that "The darn thing has been on the same frequency so long it's burnt a 'ole in the ether and the wave won't go no further." A.S.R.E., over to you.

Have a good leave, all of you; perchance we shall have the pleasure of your company next cruise.

## H.M.S. "VANGUARD"

Since your correspondent last wrote, H.M.S. *Vanguard* has been comparatively static at Portland, except for a short self-refit at Devonport at the end of May, followed by a week-end at Torquay. In July we shall again be on the move: first Clyde Week, then an Admiral's inspection at Ballachulish, near Fort William, followed by a few days at Bangor, Northern Ireland, and finally Cowes week, where, even if the sailing wind is spoilt by our lee and the Queens have to find another way into Southampton Water, we are determined to put up a pre-war show. H.M.S. *Indefatigable* is at present delayed in Devonport and cannot now come with us to the Clyde.

The main comings and goings of interest are the arrival in April of Cdr. R. F. T. Stannard, O.B.E., D.S.C., as Commander, the relief of Mr. H. Streets, just promoted to S.C.C.O., by Mr. R. E. Hooper, S.C.C.O., from Cookham Camp, and our staff and instructional C.Y.S. Youngjohns has been relieved by C.Y.S. A. R. Johnson. The adult entry seamen



under training are beginning to be replaced in part by seamen boys, and again we have a class of twenty-eight Boy Tels. and Sigs.

In August and September we are expecting a further change of management when both Rear-Admiral E. M. Evans-Lombe, C.B., and Captain G. V. Gladstone are to be relieved.

The chief items of Communications interest are, that for the Devonport Whitsun Navy Days the greetings telegrams sent by visitors in the dockyard were received by wireless and teletprinter in *Vanguard* for onward transmission, and that arrangements are being made to transmit radio T/P greetings to Navy Day visitors at Chatham in August.

Tel. Sermon in our M. F. V. working *Vanguard* on the south coast on 4172 Kc/s using a 68 set was heard in H.M.S. *Maidstone* at Loch Ewe.

Whilst at Torquay the whole ship was electrically blacked-out for over an hour, and, amongst other tests, radio frequency was injected into the ship's mains in order to try to determine the exact sources and strength of ship-made R.F. noise.

In a preliminary verbal report to the ship's officers, Mr. T. Morgan, chief of the D.E.E. team onboard, said that the B.W.O. compares very favourably with a shore-receiving station, having less R.F. noise; but that the satisfactory reception of R.T/P in the Control Room is impossible due to the great amount of local interference, most of which comes

from the D.C. motors driving the A/T equipment itself. The R.F. noise field strength in the room is equal to the average B.B.C. field strength in the U.K.

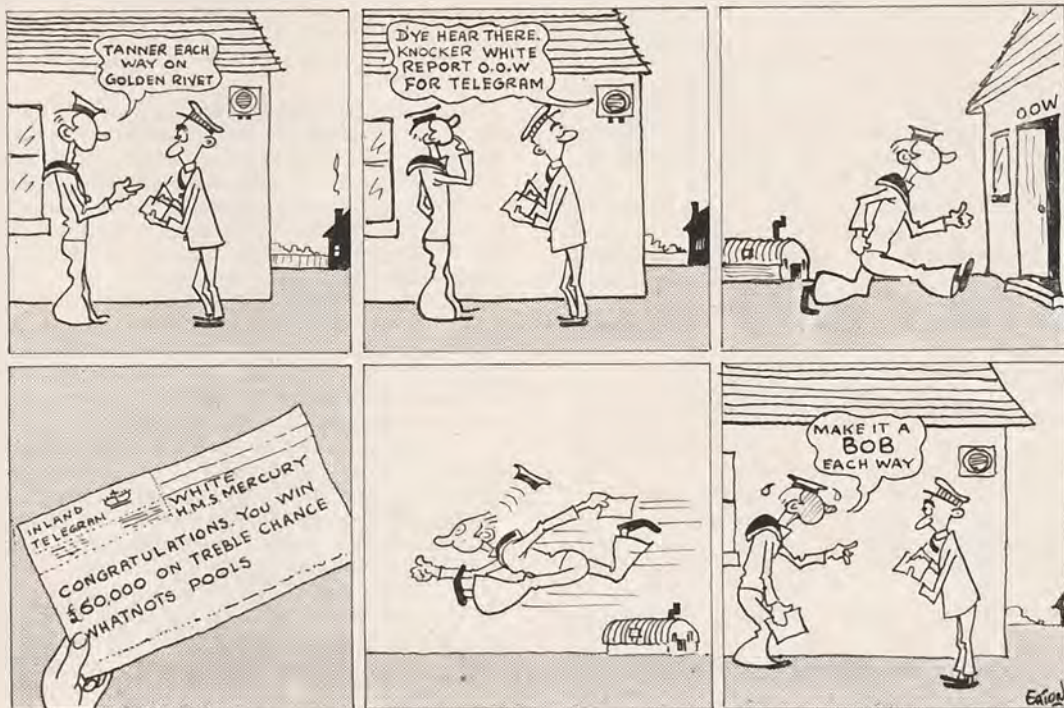
Cdr. (L) J. D. M. Robinson is determined to have both our type 682 ship/shore V.H.F. radio telephone links working during our visits on the forthcoming Summer Cruise, in spite of this set's reputation as an "impossible outfit." This has already necessitated the design of a new linking unit at the shore end. At Cowes the 682 links will be backed up by a duplex H.F. telephone link direct to Portsmouth.

The only "prize-remark" worth passing on this time is by the ship's (C) officer himself. Coming into the B.W.O. one day and seeing the C.P.O. Tel. rattling a key like mad and at the same time swinging off on a B40: S.C.O.: "Who are you trying to raise, Chief?" "The L.R.R., sir." We always thought this was a lengthy ship.

### CHATHAM WAR MEMORIAL

Chatham Port Division War Memorial will be unveiled by Her Royal Highness Princess Elizabeth on Sunday, 29th October, at 11.30. Bereaved relatives who wish to attend are requested to write to the Secretary, The Memorial Service Committee, Royal Naval Barracks, Chatham, for tickets, stating the number required and their relationship to deceased men.

## KNOCKER WHITE



## RADIO INDUSTRY NOTES

"If it embodies an electronic valve, Britain can make it." Discussing this proud claim, the Chairman of the Radio Communication and Electronic Engineering Association (one of the constituent bodies of the Radio Industry Council) recently gave, as an illustration of one instance in which Britain leads the world, some particulars of the accuracy achieved in frequency control. For the purpose of synchronising broadcast transmitters at considerable distances apart so that they may use a common frequency, an almost incredibly high order of frequency stability is necessary. "If," he said, "you have a watch which after a week's running requires the use of a magnifying glass to determine whether or not it is a tiny fraction of a second out by the Greenwich 'pips,' you may well think you have a very good watch. If it had been running since your grandfather was a boy, and was still less than a minute wrong (a monthly drift of less than two in a hundred million), you have accuracy comparable with that of the frequency control equipment produced by the British Radio Industry."

The Annual Report of the Association for 1949 makes interesting reading. During the first nine months of the year, commercial equipment was exported at the annual rate of £3½ million (approximately the Association's share of the radio industry's target). This covers equipment for radio communication, broadcast transmission, navigational aids, and industrial electronics, but excludes domestic radio, components, and valves, which are the responsibilities of other bodies. In addition, indirect exports in the form of equipment installed in ships and aircraft and in engineering installations amounted to another fifty per cent. or more. Another important aspect of the activities of the Association, disclosed in the report, lies in the preparations of specifications. Among the many items enumerated is one for transmitter-receivers for police cars, taxi-cabs and commercial vehicles, and one for portable radio in life-boats. A chassis wiring code, using ten colours, has been prepared for early publication, and as previously reported, specifications have been prepared for climatic and durability tests. A provisional agreement has been reached with the Services on drawing procedure for Service Equipment.

\* \* \* \*

The Seventh Annual Exhibition of the Radio and Electronic Component Manufacturers' Federation (another constituent body of the R.I.C.) was held in London from April 17th to 19th. It was very well attended, the number of overseas visitors being fifteen per cent. greater than in the previous year. The strongest contingents were from France, the United States, Holland, Denmark, Belgium and Sweden; the other countries represented were Australia, India, South Africa, Norway, Canada,

New Zealand, Germany, Argentina, Egypt, Iceland, Israel, Spain, Russia, Yugoslavia and Syria.

Much interest was shown in new components and improved versions of familiar types. There was once more a good deal of emphasis on components for television, among which transformers attracted considerable attention. The Plessey Co. showed transformers using "Caslam" cores; this material is in block form, and is claimed virtually to eliminate the magnetostriction effect common to the conventional laminated type. Another interesting item was a new wide-band I.F. transformer, suitable for either the London or Birmingham transmissions, designed to handle combined sound and vision channels. Among components for other applications, features were improved ceramic capacitors using new type seals, and T.C.C. fully insulated ceramic and paper capacitors using glass tubes, with enhanced endurance under all climatic conditions.

Painton & Co. exhibited improved vitreous enamel resistors giving a four-fold increase in rating for size; if forced cooling is provided, a still greater increase in rating is obtained.

A. F. Bulgin showed a new range of pilot and indicator lamps incorporating the flasher principle, making the light much more insistent. A number of items had been produced especially for the U.S. market; particularly interesting were a three-speed gramophone turn-table by Garrard, and a pick-up and tone-arm by Scharf, suitable for the two types of micro-groove records as well as the normal type.

\* \* \* \*

It has been announced that Her Majesty Queen Mary has again consented to be Patron of the Radio Industry Council's National Radio Exhibition, which will be held this year at Castle Bromwich, Birmingham, from September 6th to 16th.

In addition to the normal stands for exhibitors, there will again be a B.B.C. television studio, with glass walls, enabling the public to see "live" programmes being transmitted, and a sound reinforcement system will enable them to hear what is happening inside the studio. The R.I.C. studio will also have glass walls, and the control room, with sound control, television distribution and control, and, it is hoped, a film scanner, will be on view.

A communal television exhibit has been arranged, in which large numbers of television receivers of different makes will be seen working side by side. Great care is being taken to prevent any form of man-made interference: a strong technical committee is dealing with this and other technical points.

The R.I.C. expects that, as last year, the Services and Government Departments will show representative displays.

A. R. J.



# Book reviews

**SHORT-WAVE RADIO AND THE IONOSPHERE.** By T. W. BENNINGTON. (Iliffe and Sons Ltd. 10s. 6d., postage 4d.)

All who carry on radio communication over long distances by short waves—whether professionals or amateurs—must be interested in the role of the ionosphere, which is one of paramount importance.

This book presents all the available information in simple form, so that it is of use to those with only a limited technical knowledge. The author is a member of the Engineering Division of the British Broadcasting Corporation and has been able to draw freely on the Corporation's experiences in the development of short-wave overseas services.

The use of mathematics has been avoided and the physical processes involved are explained in simple descriptive language. The author has kept the practical side of the subject in mind throughout and shows how existing ionospheric data can be applied to everyday problems of short-wave transmission and reception.

This new edition of the work first published six years ago (under the title "Radio Waves and the Ionosphere") is to all intents and purposes an entirely new book. Mr. Bennington has completely rewritten it; it has been reset in new type and 56 new illustrations have been added.

**TELEVISION IN YOUR HOME.** By W. E. Miller, M.A. (Iliffe and Sons Ltd. 2s.; postage 2d.)

"Television in Your Home" will satisfy many enquiries. It provides all the information the viewer needs before and after he purchases a receiver; it will also, it is hoped, be of interest to the confirmed televiewer in answering some of the queries which may have cropped up during viewing experience.

The book is entirely non-technical, and assumes no previous knowledge whatever of television. In many ways it can be regarded as supplementing the instruction card or manual which is provided by the television receiver manufacturer.

There have been many books on various aspects of television, some of the simple explanatory type, some dealing with programmes and their production, many semi-technical in nature, and a few deeply technical.

All are of interest and value in their particular fields, but this is a book rather different in its scope, which tells every viewer just what television can mean to him (or her) in the home.

## SIGNAL OFFICERS' TIES

A stock of these ties is now available—price 8s. 6d. post free. Apply to the Assistant Secretary, H.M.S. Mercury.

# AGIFOLD

**"BRITISH and BEST"**



*Mr. Thomas T. Hall of Burton-on-Trent writes:*

"Having recently purchased one of your cameras (Agifold 4-speed f/4.5 lens) and developing my first film (Ilford 29) taken with it, may I take this opportunity of congratulating you on a wonderful instrument.

"I am more than satisfied with my first results, all of which were taken under poor lighting conditions, but the resulting snaps turned out sharp and clear, which speaks a lot for the magnificent lens. I used all distances from 3½ feet to infinity, and the results can be summed up in one word 'Excellent.'

"It is my firm opinion that there is no camera on the British market to-day to compare with it as regards price and performance.

"So once again may I offer you my congratulations on a fine camera, and remind you of the adage 'British and Best.'"

12 pictures 2½" × 2½" on 120 or 620 film. f/4.5 Anastigmat Lens (coated). Built-in synchroflash contacts. Direct and waist-level optical view-finders. Attractively finished in black Morocco leather with chrome fittings. Accessories include: "Ever Ready" leather or canvas case, Lens Hood, Filter mount, filters and flashgun.

4-speed shutter model £17 - 18 - 4.

8-speed " " £21 - 6 - 5.



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## ADVANCEMENT NOTES

### COURSES

During the first half of this year the following numbers have been given their courses for higher rating:

For P.O. Telegraphist .. ..	94
For Leading Telegraphist .. ..	177
For Yeoman of Signals .. ..	79
For Leading Signaller .. ..	120

From the above it will be appreciated that if this high rate of training is to be maintained the numbers volunteering for courses must be correspondingly high and, of course, the waiting period for a course is proportionately reduced. Thus it is imperative, if full advantage of the present opportunities for rapid advancement are to be obtained, that you do not delay in putting in your request for a course. You can do this at any time after you have served three months in your present rate.

*But* this alone is not sufficient.

It is no advantage to get an early course if you fail the examination at the end of it and have to start all over again.

It is quite evident from the number of failures which do occur that a great many ratings make no effort to prepare themselves for their course beforehand, but expect to be taught *everything* during their course.

The courses are not designed or intended to do this, and ratings who start their course unprepared have little hope of passing and are a handicap to the remainder of the class and the Instructor.

It is expected that all ratings on starting their course should at least have the full standards of knowledge required for their *present* rating (especially in practical, cryptography and procedure), and the course will then teach the additional subjects required for the higher rating and increase their knowledge

in those subjects in which a higher standard will be required. You would be well advised therefore to look up Tables 1 to 20 of the Signal Training Manual and make sure that you know what is expected of you.

### MORSE/COPY TYPING EXAMINATION

Cases are frequently arising where ratings who failed in Morse or copy typing in their examination for higher rating state that they had previously passed an examination in that subject and thought that it counted for advancement.

It is emphasised that ratings are required to pass in this subject at *each* examination for higher rating in exactly the same way as they do in all other subjects and any examination taken previously cannot be counted.

Where a rating passes the examination in all subjects except Morse or copy/typing, he is allowed, at a *subsequent* date, to take the examination again in that subject only, and if he passes will retain his original basic date.

But it must be on or *after* the date of the full examination.

J. S. W.

### NEW ENTRY TRAINING

The New Entry Training has now been transferred successfully to *Mercury*. At present there is a total under training of approximately 120, which includes S.S., Adult C.S., and N.S. entrants. This is a welcome addition to the hard core of more senior courses for which *Mercury* has been providing in the past and makes for, amongst other things, heightened activity in the sporting world.

Much thought is given to general training as well as to specialised communication matters. Trips to *St. Vincent* are made weekly to gain experience in boat-work. Indeed, as a preliminary to this the static water tank is shortly to become a synthetic trainer, and visitors to *Mercury* will, with this warning, perhaps temper their surprise when they see a whaler at its moorings outside the main door.

### FIRST NIGHT JET LANDINGS IN CARRIER

Two pilots of No. 702 Naval Air Squadron successfully landed in Vampire jet fighters in H.M.S. *Theseus* on 20th June. These were the first night deck landings to be made with jet aircraft. The aeroplanes were flown by Lt. A. B. B. Clark, R.N., and Lt. N. Perrett, R.N., who between them made five successful landings. The aircraft were catapulted off, the pilots being helped by the guide lights of a destroyer ahead. They circled the ship, dimly outlined by deck lights, and landed following instructions signalled to them by a batsman raising illuminated bats. Lt. Perrett made three landings and Lt. Clark two. Although these were the first night jet landings for the Royal Navy, it is believed that the U.S. Navy have carried out successful experimental landings with aircraft on a floodlit carrier deck. The deck of the *Theseus* had only small side lights along the runway.



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## AIR D/F WREN

My fond heart stalls as my true love calls  
from a Seafire Mark Fifteen.

He's all my own on the microphone,  
he's mine on the D/F screen.

I plot his track till I call him back  
in seductive tones and bland.

He wears two rings and a pilot's wings,  
and says absurd and exciting things  
While hurrying home to land.

Then loud and clear for the world to hear,  
as the tarmac takes his wheels,  
His wanton mike makes the noise I like,  
and it lifts me off my heels.

I walk on air when I meet him there  
on the wind-swept aerodrome,  
And still rejoice at my proud heart's choice;  
he calls me "Wren with the Golden Voice"  
And comes when I call him home.

My pulse grows weak as I hear him speak  
from a Fury hurtling by.

I hate it so when he dives too low,  
and shrink when he climbs too high.

He wanted change and a longer range  
and a speedier plane to drive.

And deadly fear and a silent tear  
are all my company while I hear  
My love in a fast low dive.

My make-up pales as my true love hails  
from the murk of an earth-bound cloud.

I lead him on till his doubts have gone  
and the beacon is clear and loud.

I talk him down with an anxious frown  
but I mustn't appear to mind,

Or tear my hair in wan despair  
or lay my maidenly feelings bare  
Or weep if he comes home blind.

He felt the need for a turn of speed  
no bus with an air-screw held;  
Forswore the gods of the piston-rods  
for a kite that was jet-propelled.  
It screamed and roared as he swooped and soared  
and I crouched in my chair appalled,  
And learned things then of the hearts of men,  
for though he homed on his D/F Wren,  
He went when the Vampire called.

Io.  
(Tel. W.R.N.S.)

### DEEP SEA ROVER SCOUTS

The object of this branch of the Boy Scouts Association is to enrol those old Scouts serving in the Navy or Marines who are desirous of taking an active interest in the Scout work of the Association in the ports they visit. There is an active group of Deep Sea Rover Scouts in Portsmouth, and the majority of members are now connected with local Scout troops or Cub packs, where they are giving valuable help and gaining interesting experience.

Meetings are held every Wednesday night at 1730 in the reading room of the Trafalgar Institute, Edinburgh Road. Anyone interested is welcome to attend, or get in touch with the Port Secretary, Lt. Cdr. F. A. J. O. Wiseman, R.N.(Rtd.), 57, Glenthorn Road, Copnor, Portsmouth.

### 2,000 DECK LANDINGS

A remarkable aviation feat, believed to be a world record, was accomplished by Lt. Cdr. J. S. Bailey, O.B.E., R.N., when he made his two-thousandth landing on the deck of an aircraft carrier. He was flying a Seafire from H.M.S. *Illustrious*.

Many of Lt. Cdr. Bailey's deck landings were achieved during war-time operations, but some were made during demonstrations and experimental flights. Early in the Second World War, Lt. Cdr. Bailey joined an Albacore Squadron and operated in the English Channel with Coastal Command. Later he embarked in H.M.S. *Victorious* and operated on strikes against the enemy in Norway. He served also in H.M.S. *Indomitable* while this ship was in the Indian Ocean, and in August, 1942, he took part in a famous Malta convoy operation.

In June, 1943, Lt. Cdr. Bailey took over a deck-landing training squadron, and during the fourteen months which followed he made 1,000 deck landings. Early in 1945 he was commanding a Barracuda squadron, co-operating again with Coastal Command. When hostilities ended in Europe he joined the Service Trials Unit, and by March of 1948 he had made a total of 1,850 deck landings.

Late in 1948, Lt. Cdr. Bailey took the Empire test pilots' course at the Royal Aircraft Establishment, Farnborough. In 1949 he joined the Aircraft and Armament Experimental Establishment at Boscombe Down, where he made a further eighty deck landings. In February of this year he joined the Naval Air Station at Culham as Lt. Cdr. (Air).





When, in 1520, Henry VIII embarked at Dover in the "Henri Grace a Dieu" she, and her high-castled sister ships, constituted England's first Battle Fleet.

In fact, to the "Great Harry", as she was more simply called, is traditionally given the honour of being England's first battleship, although the vessel in which the first great guns were mounted may have been the "Mary Rose" in 1513. Time has brought great changes to the proud fighting ships and it has also brought Naafi, the Forces' own catering organisation, to serve those who man them.

# NAAFI



*A typical Naafi Sports shop*



Please inform your friends that Naafi needs more staff for Canteens, both ashore and afloat. Applications to Staff Manager, Naafi, Esher, Surrey.

# GOING THE ROUNDS IN "MERCURY"

## CHIEFS' CHATTER

Number One topic in the last Chief's Chatter was the revival of sporting activity. It is no longer, having almost died, at least outdoor; but don't get us wrong about "indoor sports." At the moment we have a snooker tournament running in the Mess which has a strong entry, and every match is a needle affair. The four semi-finalists are C.P.O. Tel. Johnson, C.Y.S. Mann, C.P.O. Tel. Dugan and C.Y.S. Breeze, although there was nothing in the rules restricting the semi-finals to "Residents Only." Next there will be darts, and the ball will be kept rolling.

Social activity has improved somewhat. A dance on 30th May was by way of being a curtain raiser, and was a success. We have Sports Day in the offing, on 29th June, and we will be represented by C.Y.S. Roe and C.Y.S. Kelleway; not a big entry, due possibly to "pension pains," but we have confidence in retaining the Tug-of-War championship, with the proviso that we get the "down-hill" pull first. During and after the sports we hope to have a social, running concurrently with the Ship's Company Dance. In July we shall run an End-of-Term Dance and Social.

A friendly liaison has recently been established with the Third Training Battalion, R.A.O.C., W.O.'s and Sergeants' Mess at Hilsea. They have already attended a social evening here, as well as the dance on 30th May, and invitations have been received to attend their Fancy Dress Masked Ball on 23rd June. It is hoped that this friendship will be long continued.

Most notable "Out" was the President, C.Y.S. Pattison, to H.M.S. *Zephyr* (Portland Flotilla), succeeded temporarily by C.P.O. Tel. Roy ("Guzz," as if you didn't know), who in turn was succeeded by an elected member, C.P.O. Tel. Johnson. C.Y.S. Breeze recently took over the duties of Vice-President of the Mess. Count Hodge and C.Y.S. Dickinson are sunning themselves in Malta. C.P.O. Tel. Goulding has moved to a SHIP, C.Y.S. Saxby to R.N.V.R. Instructor and onwards to grass. New New Zealander A. C. Johnson, C.P.O. Tel., is on his way home, soon to be followed by C.P.O. Tel. Illsley.

Ins: C.P.O. Tel. Ellison (bar receipts up?) and "Ducks' Disease" Burton. C.P.O. Tel. G. Baister and C.Y.S. Floyd are soon to join us from leave to give first-hand accounts of distant and not too-distant places.

The present C.C.O. course is due to end on the last day of the term. They're a fine crowd both technically and socially. It has been whispered that most are due to bid farewell to this England of ours. God speed them (the Padre will like that), and may they establish themselves wherever they may go.

Chiefs (non-natives) due to come home soon will be pleased to learn that no longer do the teething troubles of the new accommodation haunt us. The Architects have solved the running water problem, and no longer does the taking of a shower bath

involve every one else in having a paddle. The even newer new accommodation is well under way. Within the last three months a bulldozer arrived and dug what we think will be a road. The workmen have put up for themselves a superb new brick hut to assist them in building. Those who have to plod on after 1955 may show interest. The wheels are turning.

The bar has been brightened, and there is always service with a smile from C.P.O. Tel. Dugan and C.Y.S. G. Smith, except on some picture nights, when one finds, to one's horror, provided it's not blank week, that the shutters are up.

Finally, heartiest congratulations to our late member, C.R.E. Hancock, on his being awarded the B.E.M. His work in brightening life at *Mercury* has not been forgotten, and the establishment as a whole is presenting "Our Percy" with an extension speaker, together with a table to stand it on.

## ENTERTAINMENTS

The addition of the Trainees from Cookham Camp has done much to enliven the *Mercury* entertainments world, and to swell the numbers attending the nightly cinema shows and Thursday dances.

Yeo. A. Block assisted by Wren Tel. M. Sulsh and P.O.Tel. Vaughan set the ball rolling soon after their arrival by forming a Theatrical Company, and early in June their first play—the 1914-1918 war epic "Journey's End"—was staged on two nights. The production—not an easy play even for professionals—was a great success. Despite our losses in the theatrical world forecast in the last number of the *COMMUNICATOR*, it is most gratifying to know that the theatrical motto—"We never close"—will apply to *Mercury*. Rumour already tells of further preparations for another play in August. A most important grounding for the *Mercury* Theatrical Company is provided by play-reading meetings arranged by Lt.-Cdr. A. McCrum.

As a contrast to the drama and warlike atmosphere of "Journey's End," a fortnight later the Strand Repertory Company visited us to put on "By Candlelight." It is a play full of humour and subtle cracks, which the audience never failed to appreciate instantly, and therefore everyone in the theatre, both in front and behind the footlights, had a most enjoyable evening.

In addition to the *Mercury* Theatrical Company, another small team, banded together by O.Tel. Atkins, was also using the stage for rehearsals, but making a little more noise, and painful to the ears at first. But when the evening of the *Mercury* Dance Band's debut arrived, they were an equal success, and have been booked for Thursday dances in future in lieu of recorded music.

The arrival of the Trainees raised again the requirement of dancing classes, and these are now conducted by Miss Jill Mansell from Portsmouth for all comers,



# NEW TALLIES

Some of the cap ribbons seen around lately don't mean a thing to many of us—yet. The bows, of course, are 'tied' as tiddley as ever and many O.D.'s wear specimens that would bring a gleam of envy to the eye of even the most ancient three-badger. It's the names that are unfamiliar: though the unknowns of to-day may well be the 'Renowns' and 'Enterprises' of tomorrow.

The name 'Redifon' may also fail to ring a bell with many in the Communications Branch. It's a fairly new tally in marine and shore-based radio that's sprung up since the war. You may forget

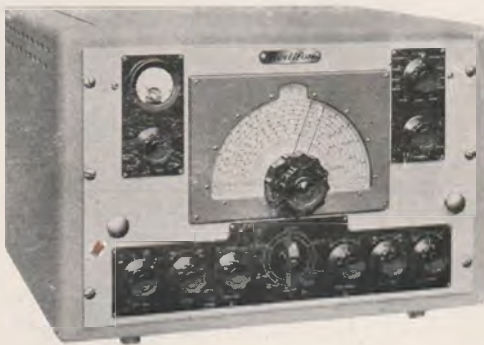
it shortly after you've read this—but not for long. There's a lot of Redifon equipment already in use all over the world, and those who have to use it seem to like it.

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at a small charge, before the Thursday night dances.

One or two members of the C.P.O.'s Mess have clubbed together their classical gramophone records and, supplemented by loans from the Command Musical Library, recitals provide yet another regular weekly evening attraction.

The Sports Day Dance is being held in the cinema this year and with Eddie Nash and his "Commanders," everyone is looking forward to a good evening, even if it is likely to be rather crowded and warm.

This brief account of *Mercury* entertainments would not be complete without a word of praise for the Ship's Company Wrens' Dance given earlier in the term, which was greatly appreciated by all those lucky enough to receive an invitation. The music, although not always very quiet and in keeping with the coloured lights and floral decorations of the theatre, was provided by Johnny Lyne and his band.

The sun has been shining here with good effect, and for the younger members who haven't yet been spoilt by bathing in the Tropics, coaches have been hired on most Saturdays and Sundays for bathing excursions to Hayling Island.

Finally a date for your diaries for those who will be here in August—a Children's Party is being arranged for 31st August. Besides a scrumptious tea and side-shows, there will be a "Punch and Judy" Show, Silly Symphony Cinema programme, and "crossing the line" ceremony.

## "MEONMAID"

*Meonmaid* undoubtedly reached her maximum speed on the very first day of the 1950 season, 32 knots was recorded. That this was on land rather than on water only gives her greater credit in that she still remains in one piece. The scene of this achievement was the hill down to Clanfield as dusk fell on the night of Thursday, 30th March. The brakes of the trailer and towing matador had difficulty in holding a total weight of 42 tons on such a slope. Mr. Watch did a splendid job fending off oak trees with a boat hook. A baby Austin, which must have escaped the notice of the policeman holding up East Meon-bound traffic, very prudently scuttled into a field gateway.

After this *Meonmaid* settled down for the journey, arriving at *Vernon* about 2130. The following day she sailed for Lymington and the first week-end cruise of the season. Reports indicate that an amply sufficient number of toasts were drunk to commemorate the occasion.

Bad weather later in April deterred even the most enthusiastic from anything more than an afternoon sail; but a fair May and early June has made for better things.

The Cherbourg race was a notable event. *Meonmaid* finished eighth out of 25 starters; but lost three places on handicap. On returning *via* Poole the ship's salvage officer, Lt. Stanbury, R.M., secured a very

nice pram dinghy in mid-channel. It has now been returned to the owner at his moorings off Camper and Nicholson's yard.

On present showing all the old traditions should be upheld this season. The sailing secretary has failed to reach Dartmouth in the passage race, and has also put *Meonmaid* aground in Wootton creek. This year it was on a falling tide!

Last year the wind for Dartmouth was too strong; this year there was none at all. A very long week-end was spent in drifting round the Island (clockwise). Acoustic echo Navigation proved a great success when coming to anchor in Freshwater Bay with visibility 200 yards. Judging the time interval from shouting "Hoy!" to reception of the echo needs some perception when you only have a wrist watch and the interval is around two seconds.

There have been quite a number of enthusiasts among ratings and W.R.N.S. With a target of three evenings a week, it should be possible to keep up an average of at least two provided we get a reasonable summer.

The first Monarch Bowl race was on 21st June and there are several more passage races on the fixture list. It is hoped that the new spinnaker and medium foresail will prove their worth.

## W.R.N.S. NOTES

We have enjoyed some modest success in both our social and sporting worlds.

Rifle shooting has flourished profusely, 1/O. Foster-Hall, L./Wren Greaves, and Wren Wagstaff shooting for the Command in the inter-Command Rifle Shooting Championships which were held at H.M.S. *Excellent*. At the full bore Port Rifle Meeting our four representatives collected eight medals between them—a notable achievement. The .22 range remains a popular lunch-hour resort, so we can look forward to more success in this field.

Our athletic enthusiasts are once again busy practising under the watchful eye of the P.T.I. for the forthcoming P.T. Display and Sports Day. Although we hardly think we possess a Fanny Blankers-Koen, we anticipate some "Mercury"-like sprinting. We have been fortunate enough to emerge victorious from the inter-Unit Badminton, Netball and Hockey Championships of last season, and we have started this season well by winning our first round of the inter-Unit Tennis Championship. *Mercury* W.R.N.S. Officers and ratings are also well represented in the Portsmouth Command Tennis Tournament, seven of our members taking part.

Wrens Thompson and Chadwick have already represented the Command in a recent swimming match, and we hope they will be chosen again for the inter-Command Matches.

We have also two representatives in this year's Portsmouth Command Cricket Team, about to play at Chatham.

The Ship's Company Dance took place on 1st June



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and was a huge success, largely due, we feel, to the untiring efforts of the Dance Committee and their numerous helpers. Everyone worked extremely hard and deserve a very big "thank you."

Play reading has been taking place every week since the beginning of April. An average of fifteen ratings attend, all of whom read, or have read parts. The plays vary from light comedy to the more serious, and it is hoped that several Wrens will be taking part in the next Dramatic Society Production.

The C-in-C. held a parade and inspection of the Portsmouth Command W.R.N.S. on 23rd June, at the Duchess of Kent Barracks. A large contingent of about ninety took part from *Mercury*.

## SHOOTING NOTES

This term commenced with intensive practice for the Command Rifle Meeting, at which we were determined to do better than last year. Without delaying further, we did! Unfortunately, we were unable to retain our grip of the Goldsmiths and Silversmiths Cup (although it only just slipped), but we replaced this with the Somerset Cup and added to that the Willis Trophy. In addition, we gained one miniature cup and twelve medals compared with only five medals last year.

For the Willis Trophy we have to thank our "Wrens and under 22" team, consisting of I/O. Foster Hall, L./Wren Greaves, Wren Wagstaff, and Tel. Kemp, this team gaining the highest total score for their class in the U.S. conditions event.

We must count ourselves fortunate in winning the Somerset Cup, as at first we thought we had been knocked out in the finals. The winning team, which had done some really magnificent shooting, found to contain two open class competitors, was disqualified, and so the cup and medals went to *Mercury*. The *Mercury* team was: I/O. Foster Hall, Inst. Lt. d'Authreau, and Lt. Main. The remaining medals were accounted for by I/O. Foster Hall and Wren Wagstaff, for aggregates in their class in other events.

Last, but not least, we contributed no less than six to those shooting in the Bisley selection trials on the Saturday morning—L./Tel. Begg, Inst. Cdr. East, I/O. Foster Hall, Lt. Main, M.A.A. Sharpe and Wren Wagstaff. Later, four from *Mercury* were asked to take part in regular practices for Bisley (I/O. Foster Hall, Lt. Main, L./Tel. Begg and Tel. Kemp), but of these four, only Begg and Kemp could be spared. We hope these two will go on to Bisley, and make the name of *Mercury* known there, and we wish them the best of luck.

In addition to those mentioned above, the following represented *Mercury* at the Command Meeting: A.B. Bennett, Ch. Wtr. Herring, C.P.O. Tel. Illsley, A.B. Ivory, Wren Murphy, P.O. Rudman, C.Y.S. Stanley and Instr. Sub. Lt. Wass. The success which attended our efforts was not lightly gained. It meant intensive practice in all weather (including a snow storm at Tipner), a considerable sacrifice of time, and hurried lunches. We must thank our Gunnery Instructor, P.O. Rudman, for his keen and efficient coaching.



"Mercury" Shooting Team





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The Command Rifle Meeting over, we turned our attention to '22, and once more the range resounded to pops instead of bangs, and Wardroom Officers and others found less disturbance to their after-lunch naps. There is little to be said about the '22, except that it started off and has continued with large numbers attending. In fact, every day a few would-be marksmen have to be turned away at the sound of "Hands fall in." To overcome this problem, shooting will also take place in the dog watches for most of the week. Due to the increase in numbers, and to provide further encouragement for the less expert, two silver spoons will be awarded monthly, one for the "expert" class, and one for the "beginner" class . . . those who have never won a prize of any sort . . . but there will be more to say about this in the next issue.

## SPORT

### Cricket

Last Easter, the writer of these paragraphs called on our batsmen to make some centuries. They have responded admirably—not with centuries but with victories. R.N. Barracks, Portsmouth, A.S.R.E. at Haslemere, *Dryad* and *Hornet*, Hambledon, Brockwood Park, East Meon, Warnford, the R.N. Writers, Petersfield and Burts Social Club have all lost to us. Another game with East Meon finished with a draw, and we lost to Haslar. But that was in the early days before the XI had settled down.

The team is well balanced. There are no stars but rather a "milky way" of capable batsmen and bowlers. L./Sig. M. Barrow stands out among the batsmen with an innings of 112 and another of 99, and there have been notable scores by Tel. Woodgate, Commander Wells, P.O.Tel. Pitchforth, Lts. Thrum and Shattock, Sigs. Hall and Deland, P.O.Tel. Blacklock, and Lt.(S) Colvin. Yeo. Dobson and the Commander, who are joint Captains of Cricket, Lt. Collacco of the Indian Navy, P.O.Tels. Blacklock and Pitchforth and Tel. Woodgate have taken the wickets.

As we go to press, the results of the first round of the Command Knock-out Competition have come in. Batting first against *Vernon*, we made 201, all out; L./Sig. Barrow put up another fine knock. Then *Vernon* went in to make 179, all out. There was some fine bowling by Tel. Woodgate. Here's to continued success in round two.

### Water Polo

*Mercury's* fine showing last year qualified us to move up into the "A" League of the Command. So we find ourselves pitted against the strength of the big establishments. No one would have it otherwise, but although we have a team at least as good as last year's, the going is indeed hard. Our defeats have done nothing to affect the determination and enthusiasm of the players who have been chosen from over forty who came forward for trial. R.E. Yeates has been tireless as Chief Whip, but we are

losing him soon and he will be greatly missed.

Yeo. Bovington, Captain of Water Polo, is strongly supported by P.O.Tels. Godley and Jobling, L./Sig. Bolam, Tels. Woodrow and Arben and A.B. Ivory. What we need is a hard-playing centre-forward, a goalkeeper to relieve P.O. Jacobs, who is unfortunately only temporarily in *Mercury*, and a swimming bath. We wonder if the rumour about some new static water tanks has any foundation in fact.

### Lawn Tennis

Down by No. 1 gate the new hard court is in use constantly during the dog watches. The new grass court alongside it is coming along well and should be in first-class condition for play in July. These courts are most popular additions to the amenities in *Mercury*.

The *Mercury* Tennis Tournament is in progress now, and our first match in the Command inter-Establishment Tournament will be played shortly—against either *Excellent* or *Hornet*.

### Soccer

In the 1948-49 season, *Mercury* finished third in the U.S. League Division II. This last season we went one better and finished second.

At one time it looked as if we might become champions, but the eventual winners, the R.A.O.C. (whose first team won the Army Cup and were champions of U.S. League Division I) played consistently well and finished deservedly top.

The scene then shifted to second place and *Mercury* became runners-up, with goal average over the Royal Marines, with the Reserve Fleet a close fourth.

The runners-up medals have been received and are being engraved with the players' names. (The cost of this has been kindly granted from the Canteen Fund.)

The eleven medals have been awarded to the following players with the most League games to their credit:—Sig. P. Philip (15), Tel. H. Beattie (15), P.O.Tel. R. Pomeroy (12), C.Y.S. L. Roe (10), L./Tel. R. Perrett (10), Joiner G. Fish (9), L./Tel. H. Spinks (9), L./Tel. S. Sydes (8), L./Sig. D. Pickering (7), L./Sig. J. Cunningham (7), and L./Tel. G. Cashmore (6), the last-named winning a ballot with P.O.Tel. M. Pay, L./Tels. G. Irvine and W. Spreadbury who also played six games.

What are our chances next season? It is again quite certain that good players will be with us one day and gone the next, but we are getting used to that. Forty-five players appeared for *Mercury's* first team last season, the great majority of changes being due to drafting.

We are likely to be better off next season. One or two very likely players have joined as Instructors, and if there is any talent amongst the newly-arrived New Entries Division from Cookham, we ought to have the nucleus of a good team throughout most of the season.

We intend to adopt the same tactics as last season—



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fitness, team spirit and as young a team as possible, and third time lucky, we're going to have a cracking good try to win *both* the League and the U.S. Junior Challenge Cup.

## SPORTS DAY

The Editor has allowed us to delay the mighty presses to let you know how Sports Day went. After overcast skies for three days, Thursday, 29th June dawned bleak and windy. But Fate was kind and by noon the sun had broken through, leaving only the wind to make a mockery of the loudspeaker arrangements.

At 2 p.m. the very full list of events began. Most of the track events were over by the tea interval, which was followed by a Display of Swedish Drill by Ship's Company Wrens, and a parallel bar exhibition by our two P.T.Is. and A.B. Browning. These two items were well received by the spectators and fully justified the strenuous preparations and rehearsals of the performers.

The Royal Marine Band of H.M.S. *Excellent* played during the tea interval, and before leaving entertained us with an amusing "spot" band race.

Later in the evening the team events took place. The Wardroom won the relay, and the P.O.'s defeated the New Entries in a hard-fought Tug-of-war.

Probably the most outstanding individualist was Lt. Thrum, R.A.N. He won the Long Jump, High Jump, Cricket Ball, and backed up by Lt. Goldsmith, these events brought home 10 points for the Wardroom, whose relay team also pulled off a win.

Second in the Aggregate Cup came the P.O.'s with 12 points. To add to 6 points for the Tug-of-war, they attained wins in the 100 yards and 220 yards with P.O. Jacobs and P.O. Tel. Roper. The latter tied with C.Y.S. Roe in a thrilling finish.

Roe was the star of the C.P.O.s team, but unfortunately pulled a muscle halfway through the programme. This was very bad luck after three consecutive days of serious athletics. The C.P.O.s finished fifth in the Aggregate Cup with three points.

Of the teams entered from Signal School Mess, the Sparkers came third in the Aggregate Cup with 7 points. O/Tel. Hughes pulled off 1st place in the "Weight" for them, and they attained 2nd places in the Mile and Relay.

The Mile was won by Cook Swallow. In the last lap he pulled 50 yards ahead of the next man and finished at a sprint. A fine performance.

The New Entries, competing in the Sports for the first time, scored 5 points by 3 second places. These were the 220 yards, Cricket Ball and Tug-of-war.

This year's obstacle course was one which made the spectators wonder whether the modern Communication rating was being trained for Commando Warfare. Its design was a joint effort of the Commander and First-Lieutenant, and the winner, L./Sig. Crouch, was removed in a van at the finish. However, no great injury can have been sustained as he was active at the Dance in the evening.

The indignities of the obstacle race were not confined to the men. The Wrens also were able to prove their worth. It is true that they were allowed to bypass the greasy pole, and it is true that the rubber tyres were nearer the ground, but the winners, 3/O. Cooke and Wren Duffield, looked just as sorry a sight at the finish as the men.

Mrs. Crombie presented the prizes at the end, and these included two prizes given by the Captain for the winners of the obstacle races. At the same time, the Captain presented C.R.E. Hancock, formerly of H.M.S. *Mercury*, with a loudspeaker and occasional table. In a short speech, the Captain explained that the presentation was a token of the gratitude of all those who enjoyed his theatrical productions whilst serving in H.M.S. *Mercury*.

After the Sports, there was a Dance in the Cinema until midnight; an enjoyable end to a most enjoyable day.

The four entries from H.M.S. *Mercury* in the Meon Valley Spring Flower Show held at Droxford won the following prizes:—

1st Prize—Daffodils.

1st Prize—Bowl of Spring flowers arranged for effect.

3rd Prize—Tulips.

3rd Prize—Jonquils.

## V/S COMMENTARY

The trouble with V/S from the point of view of writing a quarterly article is that new or startling developments don't often happen. And that is why so often one hears that monotonous dirge "V/S is fading away." In fact, it still is the solid basis of the communications of any group of ships at sea. Undoubtedly during the late war the use of V/S declined considerably; but anyone who has been at sea within the last two years and experienced the new developments in tactics has seen for himself how once again the ships are having to rely on visual methods of signalling.

We must not expect V/S to return to its full state of glory of the 1930's, but what we must all work out is the best way to use V/S in modern war. It may well be that we shall have to rely entirely on flashing and flags for all signalling when not actually in contact with the foe. This presents many problems.

How are we going to signal by night to remote screens? How can we best control a fleet in a widespread anti-atomic disposition by day?

Is fleet wave by night more or less dangerous than the use of blue lights? And, if it is, how can we speed up our night V/S signalling to be able to manoeuvre a modern group by night? Many such questions leap to mind.

Finally, when making visual signals, and particularly flag signals, I think we should always remember the words of Admiral Kempenfelt in 1781: "When in any project for signals they appear intricate and seem difficult to comprehend, you may be sure they are faulty. What is good must be clear and simple." In other words, don't hoist two flags where one will do.



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## RECENT PROMOTIONS AND 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, and to grant us their indulgence if occasional errors are made.)

Name.	Rank.	Whence.	Whither.
G. AFFLECK-GRAVES	Cdr.	Wren	A/D.R.E.
R. AITKEN	S.C.C.O.	Mercury (C.C.O. Conversion Course)	Mercury
P. ANSON	Lt.	Mercury (Long "C" Course)	F.L. to C.-in-C., Med.
C. K. ANTHONY	Lt.	Mercury (Long "C" Course)	Solebay
W. J. B. G. AYRES	S.C.C.O.	Vengeance	Mercury
F. A. BAKER	S.C.C.O.	Mercury	Mercury (C.C.O. Conversion Course)
Mrs. J. F. BEER	2/O. W.R.N.S.	St. Angelo	Re-appointed on marriage as Mrs. HARRELL and released
R. BENNETT	C.C.O.	Theseus	Promoted A/Lt. President
R. D. B. BIRCH	Lt. Cdr.	Vulture	Mercury II
C. D. BONHAM-CARTER	Captain	Pelican	Pelican and as Captain (F) 2nd Frigate Flotilla
H. P. BRADLEY	C.C.O.	Fort Southwick	Mercury C.C.O. Conversion Course)
R. W. D. BRAY	Lt. Cdr.	Mercury	S.C.O., F.O. Air, Med.
R. BROKENSHIRE	Lt. R.A.N.	H.M.A. Naval Depot, London	Victory
H. V. BRUCE	Lt.	Myngs	F.L. and S.C.O. to F.O., Malta
G. S. BUSS	S.C.C.O.	Pembroke	Staff of A.C.R.
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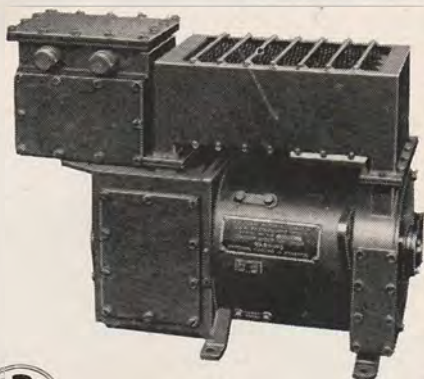
**BY THE NAVY — FOR THE NAVY**

Name.	Rank.	Whence.	Whither.
J. DICKSON, B.Sc.	Lt., R.N.V. (W)R.	No. 1 District, R.N.V. (W)R.	Transferred to List 1, R.N.V.R. (Sussex Div.) in rank of Lt. (L), R.N.V.R.
D. J. DONOVAN	C.C.O.	Philomel	Bellona
W. L. DRIVER	Comm. Lt.	Pembroke	Signal School, Chatham Barracks
R. DURNFORD	Lt.	Implacable	Mercury
P. T. EDWARDS	Lt.	Phoebe	Liverpool
J. H. ELLIS	S.C.C.O.	Loan to R.I.N.	Mercury
C. C. ENNEVER, D.S.C.	Lt. Cdr.	Glory	Mercury
Sir HERBERT FITZHERBERT, K.C.I.E., C.B., C.M.G.	Vice Admiral (Retd.)		Promoted Admiral on Retd. List.
R. H. FOXLEE	C.C.O.	Mercury	Theseus
R. D. FRANKLIN	Lt.	Mercury (Long "C" Course)	F.C.A., Home Fleet
D. F. GREENWOOD	Lt. Cdr. (Ce), R.N.V.R.	Sussex Div., R.N.V.R.	Flint Castle for training
L. L. GREY, D.S.C.	Lt. Cdr.	Mercury	Agincourt
H. E. HALES	C.C.O.	Tamar	Mercury
P. HANKEY, D.S.C.	Cdr.	President	Loch Alvie
J. T. HEADON	C.C.O.	Pembroke	Mercury
E. F. HILL-SNOOK	Lt.	S. Wales Div., R.N.V.R.	Mercury for training
M. HODGES, O.B.E.	Captain	President	Placed on Retd. List. (Med. unfit)
G. F. C. HOLLISS	C.C.O.	Mercury (C.C.O. Conversion Course)	Garrison Point Signal Station
R. E. HOOPER	S.C.C.O.	Pembroke	Vanguard
R. HUMPHREYS-JONES	Lt.	Mersey Div., R.N.V.R.	Mercury for training
G. H. P. HUNT	Lt.	Implacable	Promoted Lt. Cdr. and re-appointed
T. A. DE V. HUNT	Lt. Cdr.	Sea Hawke	Ocean
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E. F. HUTTON	Ty. A/S. C.C.O.	Loan R.A.N.	Promoted Ty. S.C.C.O.
W. JAUQUES	S.C.C.O.	St. Angelo	Mercury. Promoted Comm. Lt.
W. W. JACOMB	Cdr.(Retd.)	President	Reverted to Retd. List
D. A. JONES	C.C.O.	St. Angelo	Mercury (C.C.O. Conversion Course)
W. D. JONES	Comm. Lt.	Drake	Placed on Retd. List.
H. JUKES	Comm. Lt.	Pembroke	Mercury II
P. KEITH-WELSH	Lt. Cdr.	Mercury II	C.O.S.S., Fremington
R. E. KENT	S.C.C.O.	Mercury	Fort Southwick
B. H. KENT	Lt.	Agincourt	Falcon
R. B. KNIGHT	Lt. Cdr.	Pelican	Mercury II
J. K. LAUGHTON	Lt.	Mauritius	Promoted Lt. Cdr. and re-appointed
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G. H. MANN	Lt.	Mercury (Long "C" Course)	Mercury
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G. A. MILWARD, M.B.E.	Lt. Cdr.	Pembroke	S.C.O. to C.-in-C., Portsmouth
G. T. MOATES	S.C.C.O.	Mercury (C.C.O. Conversion Course)	Vengeance
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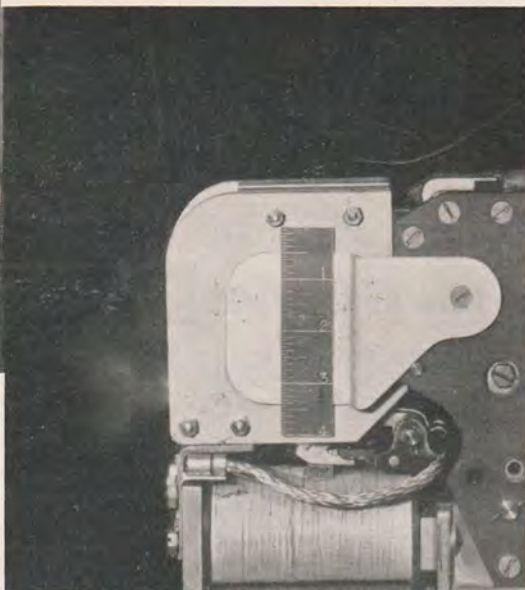
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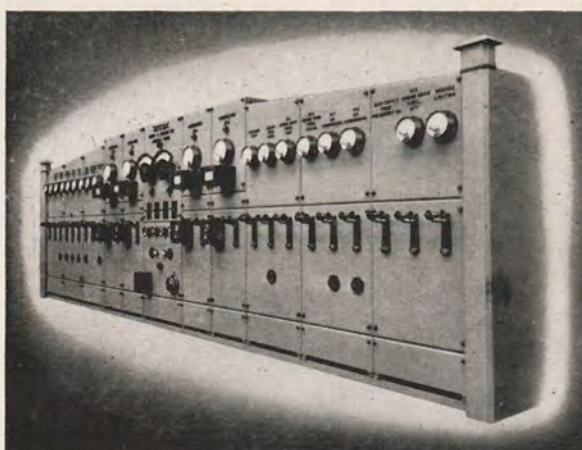
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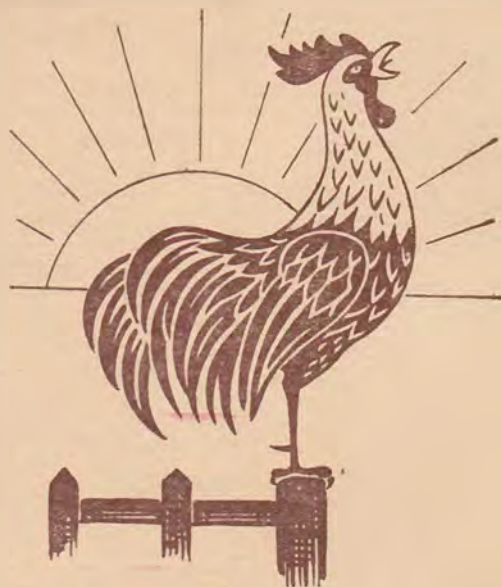
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