

## The Spirit Ration

Every rating over the age of twenty is entitled to be issued with a tot (one-eighth of a pint) of rum each day, or be given a cash allowance ("grog money") instead. The symbols "G" (grog) "T" (temperance) or "U.A." (under age) are entered against each man's name in the ledger and mess books. A man can exercise the option of receiving the ration or the money from the first day of the month following his twentieth birthday, and provision is made for him to be able to change from one to the other subsequently.

The rate of grog money is one guinea a quarter, or threepence a day for broken periods.

A man who draws the ration may have it stopped if he is sick or for punishment; grog money, however, is payable continuously. (It is not of course payable to men on leave and in receipt of Ration Allowance (which includes the grog money), or to deserters, or to men in imprisonment or detention).

*Issues are made as follows:*—The Duty Petty Officer has to attend, as he must all issues of provisions, as witness to quality and quantity. When "Up Spirits" is piped (usually about 1100), an officer detailed by the Captain draws the keys and he,

the Duty Petty Officer and a member of the Regulating Staff (who must always be present when the spirit room is opened) go to the spirit room with the duty stores rating, who measures out the total quantity of spirit required for the issue.

Chief and Petty Officers are allowed to draw neat spirit, so their messmen attend to collect the issues for their messes.

The remainder of the spirit is put into a barricoe which is padlocked and put under the sentry's charge.

At a time fixed by the Captain, usually just before dinner, the barricoe is drawn from the sentry and taken to the tub. The spirit ration for leading rates and below may only be issued diluted with two parts of water to one part of rum (the mixture being called grog). The issue has to be witnessed by an officer detailed by the Captain, and by the Duty Petty Officer. Under their supervision, the duty stores rating first takes out of the barricoe the rations for the men (if any) who are temporarily absent on duty; these are kept to one side and issued, mixed as necessary, when the men return onboard. Next, the proper quantity of water is put into the tub, the spirit from the barricoe added, and the whole well mixed. Then the issue is made to the cooks of messes. At the end of the issue the remains of grog are poured down the scupper.

*CAUTION.* It must be understood that the spirit ration is issued solely for consumption by the individual entitled to it, and that it must not be given away, bartered or otherwise disposed of. Quite apart from any infringement of the regulations, if too much naval rum is drunk it is dangerous. Naval rum is only 4.5 under proof, whereas spirits sold on shore are 30 under proof; an overdose of Naval rum may therefore *kill* a man by suffocation.

*Note for Cooks of Messes:* when drawing grog (or soup) do not hold the mess-kettle over the tub; there may be dirt on the bottom which will fall into the tub. Hold the mess-kettle against the edge of the tub, tilted so that the lip is within the tub's rim but the bottom is safely outside.