

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

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Editor : Instructor Lieutenant N. MACGREGOR B.Sc., R.N.
Assistant Editor : Mr. J. T. HEADON, C.C.O., R.N.
Art Editor : P.O. Tel. G. EVATT
Committee : Third Officer S. WILLOUGHBY, W.R.N.S. (*Treasurer*)
 L/WREN A. I. ROBINSON (*Secretary*)
Business, Production and Advertisement Manager : Mr. EDGAR SERCOMBE, 2 Station Hill, Farnham, Surrey.

CONTRIBUTIONS

ALL MSS., photographs and cartoons should be sent to the Editor at H.M.S "Mercury," as below. These will be returned to the senders only if asked for, and responsibility for them cannot be accepted by the Editor.

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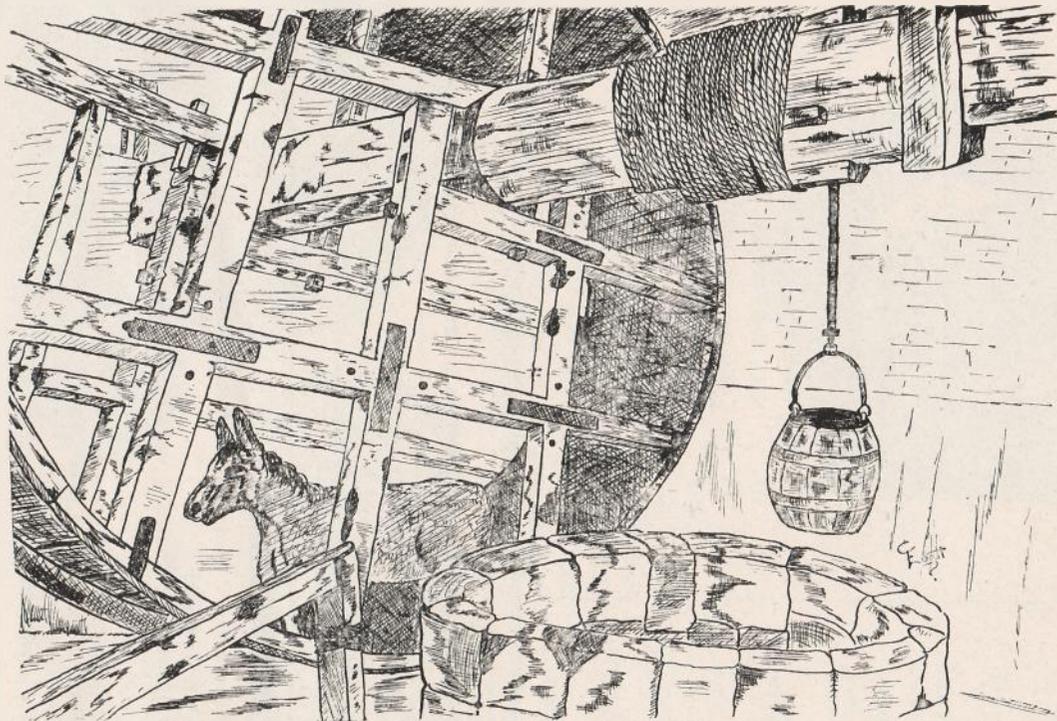
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The Well House

The well is 161 feet deep and is worked entirely by donkey-power. The animals apparently like the life, since one, who began work at the usual age of two, died at the ripe old age of 49! The wheel was made in 1588 and has an oak frame with a chestnut shaft.

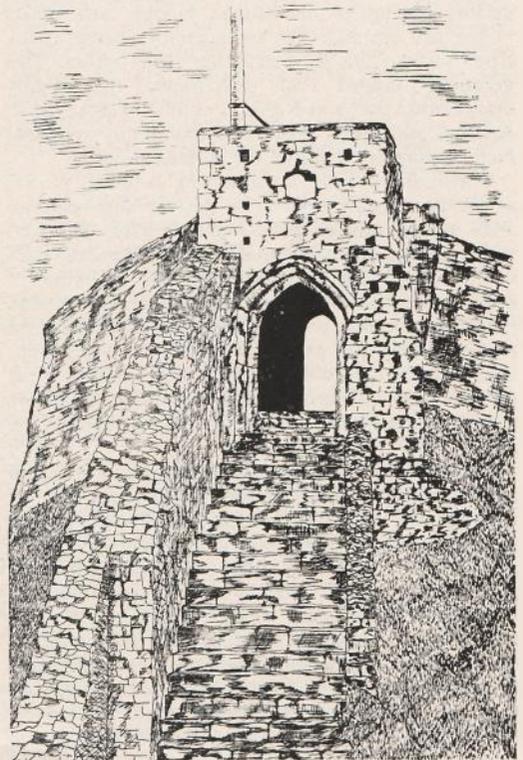
CARISBROOKE CASTLE

Carisbrooke Castle, on the Isle of Wight, extends over twenty acres, is probably one of the oldest, and certainly one of the finest, ruins in the country. It is thought possible that the castle is built on the site of British entrenchments, and there are certainly Roman remains there.

The sketches illustrate three of the more interesting parts.



The Gate House



The Keep
(The most ancient part of the Castle.)

THE VALUE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

In St. John's account of the miraculous feeding of the five thousand and on the far side of the Sea of Galilee, St. Andrew asks the question, "What are they doing so many?" in connection with the five barley loaves and two small fishes which a small lad possessed. The feeding of the five thousand people was a great problem, and St. Andrew did not see how the small boy's contribution of his scanty lunch could help to solve it. Our Lord's answer is interesting. He does not enter into a long discussion with St. Andrew as to how such meagre means could be enough to satisfy so many hungry

people—He simply says, "Make the men sit down." He knew that God could use this youngster's offering and multiply it so that there would be food for all.

In life today there are many people who fail to dedicate to God the talents they possess from this self-same sense of hopelessness. "What are they among so many?" They take up the attitude that among the world's teeming millions they count for little or nothing and therefore their contribution is not worth while. This is very true of many people in this country today who make excuses for their lethargy and slackness by maintaining that they

have no contribution to make to the common good.

This is a dangerous and fallacious point of view. In a democracy it must surely follow that each individual counts for a very great deal. It has been rightly said that the backbone of the nation is the family, and the basis of the family is the individual. A nation that possesses a virile and strong family life will be itself virile and strong, and a nation that possesses a weak and decadent family life will itself be weak and decadent. Gibbons points out that the decline and fall of the Roman Empire came about in the first instance not so much by enemy attack from without but by corruption from within. This gradually sapped and undermined the mighty organisation that was Rome, and finally destroyed it. Apathy, selfishness, greed and immorality were the main factors in the fall of the Roman Empire.

These same enemies are attacking us today. We are at the crossroads, and if we mistake our road we shall go the way of the Roman Empire. We need to realise that principles and beliefs matter tremendously because on them will depend the kind of families we raise and on the families will depend the kind of nation we are. Every individual must be ready to play his part without fear and restraint. This attitude of leaving it to the other fellow is far too common and so often results in things which we could have done for the good of all not being done at all.

We are faced today with a dangerous and powerful potential enemy. The reason for the strength of Communism is that its devotees are almost fanatical in the strength of their convictions and live up to them. We who believe in democracy and in Christian principles and ideals have got to be equally fanatical. "Who am I among so many," we may ask. The answer is unmistakably "You are a vital integer in the whole and you must dedicate your gifts and energies to the common good." You must be prepared to do your bit even at the cost of sacrifice, otherwise you may be holding up progress in the whole of your part of the field. As Clough so aptly puts it:

"If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars.

It may be in yon smoke concealed

Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers

And, but for you, possess the field."

We have had passed on to us a wonderful heritage. It was built up over the centuries by devoted individuals who had a sense of vocation and a realisation of their own importance. What of us?

"And we, shall we be faithless?

Shall hearts fail, hands hang down? . . .

Not so. Let us each one make use of our God-given talents, let us stand by our Christian principles and let us realise that we are tremendously important both to our God and to our country.

PADRE.

THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

By "Old East Indiamen," is meant the ships which used to trade between India and Europe during that great epoch in which these sailing ships revolutionised British trade. The East India Company, who owned these ships, remains in history as the most powerful trading concern the world has ever known. From 1601, when the first expedition of the Company set out from England, until 1830, when the Company finally came to an end, we read of an era full of romance, adventure, travel and the pursuit of wealth. During the whole of this period the Company had the monopoly of this trade—which speaks volumes for its organisation, backed by the courage, skill, patience and long suffering of the officers and men who manned its ships. The commanders of these vessels made their own charts and obtained by bitter experience the details which provided the first "sailing directions." They were at once explorers, traders, fighters and surveyors.

The Company rose from being a private venture of a few enterprising merchants to become a gigantic corporation of great political power with its own governors, its own cavalry, artillery and infantry; its own navy and yet with its unsurpassed regular service of merchantmen which were the largest and best built in the world. From being a small trading concern the Company progressed until it exercised a virtual monopoly of all trade with the East, with its own Civil Service and even a training college in England for its cadets.

It is difficult to realise all that the East India Company stood for. It comprised under its head a large shipping line with many of the essential attributes of a ruling nation, and its ships not only opened up India to our traders but, later on, China and Japan. They had, of course, to sail round the Cape; any moment they were liable to be plunged into an engagement, if not with French or Dutch men-of-war, then with roving privateers or well-armed pirate ships manned by the most redoubtable rascals of the time, who stopped at no brutality or slaughter—it was because they were ever-expectant of a fight that they were run practically naval fashion. They were heavily armed, they had their own special code of signalling for day and night, their gunners were well drilled and always ready for action, and in more than one instance these ships were too much for a French Admiral and his squadron. As a result, these East Indiamen could command just as much respect as a man-of-war.

Those were the palmy days of the Merchant Service, a skipper could buy or sell his command and there was so much money to be made that he could retire after a few voyages with a nice little fortune; also it was not uncommon for a Commander to receive a Knighthood and, as a reward for gallantry,

a good income settled on him for life. There was opportunity enough for gallantry, as it was indeed a serious task for them to bring their ships, laden with rich cargoes, safely to port regardless of weather, pirates, privateers and the enemies of the nation whose flag they flew.

The Portuguese were the first in the field and, as early as 1500, had established their first factory in Calicut. For close on a hundred years they kept the secret of the route *via* the Cape. However, the secret was revealed to Henry VIII by one Robert Thorne, a merchant who had lived in Seville and had somehow obtained one of the Portuguese "cardes" or charts. It appears, in spite of this, that we still went on trying to find a North-West passage, and it was not until the year 1582 that the first expedition, consisting of four ships, *Leicester*, *Edward Bonaventure*, *Francis* and *Elizabeth*, tried the southern route. This was a failure as, after finding themselves off Brazil and learning that a Spanish fleet was in the Megellan Strait, they abandoned the idea and returned to England. In 1591, the merchants again petitioned Queen Elizabeth to send another expedition, which she did, after a lot of persuasion. This also failed to reach India, but Captain James Lancaster, who was in command, gathered a great deal of information from the various Portuguese ships he captured.

During the time that Lancaster had been away, a Portuguese ship was captured and brought to Dartmouth in 1592. This ship had such a wonderful cargo of spices, drugs, silks, carpets, ivory, pearls and other precious stores, that it astonished the English merchants and gave a further incentive to try again to reach the land that possessed such vast wealth. As a result, the Levant Company, which had been founded in 1581 to trade with Turkey and the Mediterranean, now petitioned Queen Elizabeth for a charter to trade with India. She only granted it, however, for an overland route. Meanwhile the Dutch who were successful in finding the southern route *via* the Cape, were bringing back fine cargoes. The Dutch, however, wanted larger ships and came to England to buy them. This really was the last straw; here were our ships for most part rotting away in port or doing little more than coasting, while the Dutch, of whom we were very jealous, continued to prosper. This so fired the merchants, that in 1599, a number belonging to the Levant Company met in London and agreed to petition Queen Elizabeth for permission to send a number of ships to the East Indies, towards which the merchants subscribed £30,000. They were granted the exclusive privilege of Indian trade for fifteen years and were promised that neither the Queen nor her heirs would grant trading licences to any persons without their (the merchants') permission. This new body consisted of twenty-four directors under the governorship of Alderman James Smith, who was subsequently knighted, together with two hundred and eighteen merchants, aldermen, knights and esquires who went under the title of "The Governors and Company of Merchants trading unto the East

Indies"—or, in short, the East India Company. The charter granted, allowed of sending "Six good ships and six good pynoraces and 500 mariners, Englishmen to guide and sayle," although only four ships were prepared as it was found to be a costly venture. Owing to his previous experience, Lancaster was selected to be General of the Fleet and his flagship was the *Red Dragon* of 600 tons. To him Queen Elizabeth entrusted letters of recommendation addressed to "divers Princes of India." Other ships were *Hector* (300 tons), *Ascension* (260 tons) and *Susan* (240 tons). In addition, they took a victualling ship of 130 tons, named *Guest*. In their holds they carried such English products as were likely to be appreciated in the East, such as iron, lead, tin, cloth, while presents to be given to Indian princes were a case of pistols, plumes, looking-glasses, platters, etc.

They left Dartmouth in April, 1601. Off the coast of Guinea they fell in with a Portuguese ship, captured her, and taking all her wine, oil and meal, distributed them amongst the squadron. In June they crossed the equator and in July abandoned the victualler, *Guest*, taking from her everything of use. Now scurvy attacked the crews so badly that the merchants had to take turns at the helm and help with the sails. In September they arrived at Saldana Bay, and so weak were the crews of all but the flagship that Lancaster's men had to go on board and get out their boats. How is it, then, Lancaster's crew had escaped scurvy? The answer is that Lancaster, from the experience of his previous voyage, had brought with him "certain bottles of the juice of lemons, which he gave to each, three spoonfuls every morning." Why, then, had he not provided it for all the squadron before starting? One cannot tell—it may have been an experiment. However, here was proof of its value.

After laying in provisions, the squadron got under way and doubled the Cape in November, reaching Madagascar in December and remaining there until March of the following year. Actually this expedition did not sight India, but made the Nicobar Islands and thence sailed southward till it came to the north-west extremity of Sumatra on 5th June, 1602. Here Lancaster was entertained hospitably by the Dutch factors (or agents as we would call them today), who had already established themselves. The King of Acheen (for that was the name of the place they had actually called at) granted Lancaster freedom of trade for his country and immunity from paying customs. Thus a beginning was made, if not actually with India, at any rate with the East Indies.

Lancaster put ashore two factors to get together a cargo of pepper against the date of his return. Meanwhile the squadron sailed; strictly speaking they were sent to open up trade, but no Elizabethan sailor could content himself within such lawful limits, so, while waiting on the pepper cargo, they ran into the straits of Malacca and picked up a Portuguese ship returning from the East and relieved her of 950 packs of calico, etc., this took six days to accomplish; they then returned to Acheen, took in the cargo of

pepper, cinnamon, and spices, together with letters and presents from the King of Acheen to Queen Elizabeth. Lancaster then took his squadron to Java, and here again good business was done so that two ships, *Ascension* and *Susan*, were completed with cargoes and despatched to England. Lancaster, with *Hector* in company, then sailed for Java Major, and to begin trade he put ashore more merchants, who obtained more pepper in exchange for our iron and tin. Finally, a regular factory was set up by the merchants so that cargoes could be prepared for the next English ships that were to come out and trade.

Lancaster now set out for home—a journey that was to prove a very trying one for him. The two ships safely crossed the Indian Ocean, but on nearing the African coast, ran into a furious storm with raging seas, in which the ships were so shaken that both were leaking. This was overcome, but running into another storm, *Red Dragon*, Lancaster's ship, lost her rudder. Here was a terrible predicament. Lancaster remained cool. He ordered the mizzen to be unstepped and placed over the stern to port, but it was too great a strain on the stem and had to be brought in again. The carpenter was then told to fashion it like a rudder; this was done and when the storm subsided it was duly fixed. This good fortune was short-lived and another storm unshipped it; but, although the irons which fixed it were carried away, they were lucky enough to save it. Trouble now broke out amongst the crew, who were dissatisfied and wanted to abandon ship and transfer to the *Hector*, who was standing by. It took all Lancaster's qualities of leadership to handle them. He knew he could not continue like this, making no headway, running out of provisions and with the crew set against him; on the other hand, he realised he was responsible to the East India Company for the safety of the ship and her valuable cargo. He was prepared to go through with it, there was to be no flinching. He went below and wrote the following letter, having the intention to put it on board the *Hector* and send her on:

Right Worshipful, Director of Companie,

What has passed in this voyage, and what trades I have settled for this companie, and what other events have befallen us, you shall understand by the bearer thereof, to whom (as occasion hath fallen) I must referre you. I will strive with all diligence to save my ship and her goods, as you may perceive by the course taken in venturing mine own life and those that are with me. I cannot tell where you should look for me if you send out any pinrace to seek me: because I live at the devotion of the wind and seas. And thus fare you well, desiring God to send us a merrie meeting in this world if it be His goodwill and pleasure.

Your very loving friend,

James Lancaster.

He got this on board *Hector* by nightfall, but next morning she was still standing by and would not leave the flagship despite Lancaster's orders. Mean-

while the carpenter again prepared the rudder and now, fortunately, the weather became fine. The best swimmers and divers were sent over from *Hector* and the rudder was again fixed in position; it was a trial of patient endurance and pluck that the *Red Dragon* was again able to go ahead. Meanwhile, things continued to go badly on board: the ship had been buffeted about for weeks, many had fallen sick and the ship could not be properly worked. However, they rounded the Cape and this cheered them up a bit. Luckily, on 16th June they made St. Helena, where they anchored, took aboard fresh water, shot some wild goats and hogs and refitted the *Red Dragon's* rudder. During the stay all the sick recovered health, and on 5th July they set off again, finally arriving in the Downs on 11th September, as they said, "Thanks to Almighty God who had delivered us from infinite perils and dangers in this long and tedious navigation."

Thus the voyage begun in February, 1601, was completed in September, 1603. It was the first expedition to be sent out by the East India Company, and from the trade point of view was considered a great success, as 1,030,000 lb. of pepper had been brought to England by these four ships. We, who today receive "hard lying" money, would get a very rude awakening if we had to experience even a fraction of the frightful privations these men went through for long periods. It was their courage and endurance that forged the structure on which the power of the East India Company and later the wealth of Great Britain during the nineteenth century was built.



"I'll check on this H.T. Lead at Stand Easy!"

REHABILITATION FOR THE FEW

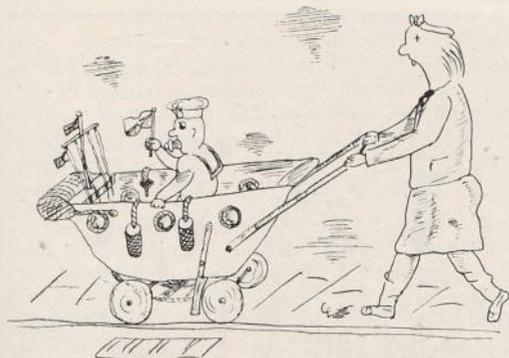
(BY THE SPIV)
A GUIDE TO CIVVY STREET

With a view to helping those who leave the comforts of the Service for the horrors of civilian life, the following is submitted for a daily routine. (This applies to married men only.)

- 0600 Call wife under nourishment. (Alarm clock having been previously set.)
- 0601 Wife under nourishment fall in. Change Junior Hand's nappy, and provide squeegees and brooms. Call remainder of family. (Stand fast father.)
- 0615 Family to cocoa and wash. One hand detailed to provide bedside cup for father.
- 0620 Out pipes.
- 0630 Family fall in. Air bedding, scrub and wash decks. (Brooms to be used gently to avoid waking father.)
- 0700 Wife to the galley.
- 0730 Family to breakfast. One hand detailed to provide bedside breakfast for father. Mother to ensure that hands are in the rig of the day.
0755. Out pipes. Cooks and sweepers clear up dining-room and kitchen.
- 0800 Family fall in. Pram's crew provide pram at gate. Provision party fall in. One hand from this party collect paper and deliver to father in bed.
- 0815 Hammock stowers fall in. Take up beds (negative father's). Remainder carry on work as detailed (not too much noise).
- 0900 Call father gently.
- 0915 Call father again. (If ex-Chief Yeoman, report "Captain wants the Log." This will ensure father rises.)
- *1000 Opening time. Car alongside with father's "oppo."
- 1001 Car carry on to local. Lie off and wait.
- 1020 Stand easy. Carry on smoking, wife to remain in vicinity of work.

- 1030 Out pipes. Pram expected alongside. Provision party to stow provisions in store.
- 1050 Pram's crew carry on, Junior Hand in charge. Sailing orders should be studied *re* public conveniences (i.e. Junior Hand).
- *1100 Up spirits. Duty Hand to local to obtain key of spirit locker. Packet of sandwiches to be taken for sustenance of father and "oppo." All spirits not consumed to be bottled for father's nightcap.
- 1130 Afternoon watchmen to lunch. Key of spirit locker to be returned to father by Duty Hand.
- 1200 Family to lunch if father is ready.
- 1230 Family to lunch if father is ready.
- 1300 Family to lunch if father is ready.
- 1400 Pram's crew man the wheelbarrow to collect father and "oppo."
- 1415 Family to lunch negative father.
- 1445 Cooks and sweepers clear up dining-room and kitchen. Noise now no objection.
- 1500 Mother to neighbour for sympathy.
- 1530 Duty Hand provide key to spirit locker for gin for mother and sympathetic neighbour.
- 1600 More gin, more sympathy.
- 1601 Family to tea negative father and mother.
- 1700 Duty Hand to neighbour's with tea and aspirins.
- 1749 Signal to be sent for "oppo" and car. Fender to be placed on kerbstone as requisite. Duty watch required for berthing.
- 1750 Ten minutes before opening time.
- 1755 Five minutes before opening time.
- 1759 Car alongside. Berthing party man doors and rig dickey seat.
- 1800 Opening time.
- 1801 Away car. (Duty watch stand clear.) Mother crammed in dickey seat.
- 1830 Junior Hand muster for bath, Senior Hand take charge.
- 1900 Family to supper, negative father and mother.
- 1930 Hands to pictures in cheap seats. Senior Hand to provide peanuts at tense moments.
- 2145 One hand to local returning with supper and beer. Saloon to be avoided.
- 2200 Closing time.
- 2210 Embark in car, zig-zag No. 15. Duty Hand to proceed ahead and divert traffic.
- 2214 Duty watch place extra fenders on kerb. Garden gate to be removed. Path to be clear of all obstruction.
- 2215 Car alongside. Duty watch disembark passengers and pacify neighbours.
- 2230 Father, mother and "oppo" to supper. Cold meat pies and beer to be provided. Spare hammock to be provided for "oppo."
- 2240 Duty hands assist "oppo" into hammock.
- 2250 Night boat's crew to place chambers in correct places and rig with anti-spill gear.
- 2300 Pipe down. I said pipe down.

Times starred to be reported to father,



FROM THE FAR EAST

FAR EAST STATION

As our last contribution was being typed, the bulk of the Far East Fleet was on its way from Korean waters to Hong Kong to enjoy a well-earned rest. However, hardly had they caught a glimpse of the bright lights, when they were recalled to spend an icy winter supporting the United Nations army retiring before a new enemy—the massed armies of Mao Tse Tung.

Christmas up north had only one thing in common with Christmas at home. It was both cold and wet.

The announcement of awards to officers and ratings for service in Korean waters caused us a lot of pleasure, particularly as Communicators, led by Commander Dreyer, the S.C.O. to the Second-in-Command, were so well represented. The following is a complete list of Communication Officers and ratings to whom awards have been made:

M.B.E.—Commander R. G. Dreyer, Mr. A. F. Symons, Commissioned Communication Officer.

B.E.M.—C.P.O.Tel. E. G. Elphick, C.P.O.Tel. R. F. A. Mitchell, C.Y.S. J. W. Robinson, C.P.O.Tel. H. S. T. Rockstro.

Bar to D.S.M.—Yeoman D. R. J. Clare.

Mentioned in Despatches.—Ldg.Tel. D. W. Burdall, C.P.O.Tel. E. G. K. Nash, P.O.Tel. R. L. Pomeroy.

Our pleasure in welcoming our new Commander-in-Chief, Vice-Admiral Sir Guy Russel, is tempered by our regrets at the impending departure of our present one, Admiral Sir Patrick Brind. Admiral Brind has always taken an especial interest in Communications which may or may not be for the reason that he presided over the Signal Book Committee in 1946.

HONG KONG

During the Christmas period we bade adieu to Lt. Cdr. J. D. Jackson and welcomed Lt. G. J. Hines as Base Communication Officer. We wish them both happiness and success in their new jobs.

Letters from home indicate far too much worry about us in Hong Kong. We are getting along quite nicely, thank you. It is true that the Americans have been advised to leave, but we have not, as yet, seen a flood of cheap American cars for sale. The embargo on raw materials has increased the price of nylon stockings, but there has been no lack of materials for the paint factories. What is noticeable, however, is the ever-increasing amount of building that is being progressed with everywhere. If a mountain is in the way of a contractor, he just hires a gang of coolies and before you can say . . . (or words to that effect) they have carried the mountain away in wicker baskets. But it does say something for the courage of business men that they are prepared to sink millions of dollars in hotels and business

houses at this time. We sank our money in the N.A.A.F.I. after the Communications football team won the Divisional Competition under the able leadership of Tel. Brownsell. Our cricket, rugby and hockey teams have provided representatives for the various Navy teams here.

In conclusion, we at Hong Kong wish all at home a pleasant leave and an enjoyable foreign commission soon. To those abroad we say "see you in U.K. soon—we'll play on the broadwalk together."

SINGAPORE M.S.O.

Despite a continued high level of traffic, a spell of very heavy rainfall and some local riots, during which we were without many of our Asian typists and teleprinter operators, life goes on much the same as usual.

It had been thought that festivities at Christmas in Singapore might be spoiled by a second round of rioting, but happily all was quiet and this Christmas was neither hotter nor cooler, neither wetter nor drier than at any other time, and differed from any other Christmas only in that there did not seem to be the usual days off, news came through that beer was to be rationed in the new year, and the squire of Kranji was presented with a handsome daughter on Christmas Eve.

The weather excelled itself in January when an incredible number of inches of rain fell in an incredibly short time, making roads impassable and tempers short. Many said that if it had rained like this when judgment was given in the case of Maria Hertogh, those tragic riots of December would never have occurred.

Happily there were no naval casualties during the riots, and except for some anxiety concerning the food supply from the Naval Base, we were not unduly worried. Anyone who saw Mr. Cottle depart in two heavily armed Jeeps to retrieve Ldg.Sig. Haick and hadwife from Beach Road Police Station where they his been marooned for forty-eight hours, was not in the least surprised to hear that no opposition whatsoever had been encountered.



Recent personnel changes include the arrival of Mr. Sproson to relieve Mr. Farrelly, Yeoman Vey from the *Charity*, and the advancement of Yeoman Langdown to Chief Yeoman and Ldg.Sig. Jupp to Yeoman.

The new Crypto Office is now complete, properly arranged and in full working order, although the layout has been compared unfavourably with the work room at St. Dominic's. The M.S.O. is still in the process of alteration—a certain watch spent most of the afternoon battering at walls with sledge hammers much to the amazement of the female Chinese cleaners—and brick dust is everywhere.

Keppel barracks is now "commanded" by Commissioner M. A. A. Sleep and the decoration of the mess and lounge were recently completed.

Cricket trials have been taking place on the local "ground" at Keppel in anticipation of the coming season. A lost ball, which easily occurs, is definitely "in and out." It is, however, hoped to muster two teams from the staff.

We are joining the S.A.F.A. Soccer league for next season, and have hopes of being able to put up a good showing. Signalman Ingam, one of the stronger supporters, returns shortly from his Leading Signaller's course at the S.T.C. Hong Kong.

Seven-a-side rugger is now in full swing, and we have an enthusiastic team in the local S.C.C. competition.

KRANJI

RADIOTELEPHONE—HONG KONG TO SINGAPORE

A Radiotelephone service is available between Singapore and Hong Kong for the use of Senior Staff Officers. Although demands for its use are at the moment small, we feel it will play a large part in future events.

The transmitters are situated at Suara (Singapore) and Shoocutters (Hong Kong). Transmissions from Suara are controlled from Kranji. Contact is established by any Officer lifting his office phone and making a call to the required authority. The station to be called is then informed by fixed service. Reception and transmission are controlled at Kranji and Shoocutters, where they are plugged into the local telephone exchange switchboard and are therefore operable from any phone in the area. Different frequencies are used between the two stations thus enabling a subscriber to interrupt without difficulty. Reception reports prove the service to be quite reliable and no doubt it will soon be in regular use.

THE CHRISTMAS PERIOD

Over the Christmas period traffic through the office reached a new record peak of ninety-six thousand groups a day. To one ship our broadcast operator had the pleasure of making "QTC 900. Contact us on — mc/s." This was the s.s. *Granada* carrying approximately one thousand

troops. Still more traffic arrived for her and, in all we despatched to her almost 1300 telegrams.

MODERNISATION

During the coming year Kranji is to be modernised and we expect to have much new equipment in operation, including the latest obsession of our Radio Electricians—a "panoramic adaptor" for use on ship shore waves.

The use of this intricate piece of equipment will eliminate the necessity for the ship-shore operator to "swing." All that will be necessary is to watch the screen of a cathode ray tube. A ship calling anywhere on the band will be visible and the operator will know at once by means of the position of his tuning dial the extent to which he must swing up or down to receive the ship's transmission.

FOOTBALL

Owing to the services in Singapore inaugurating a Combined Services League and their decision that there is not enough football strength to justify a Second Division, we have had to apply for entry into the civilian equivalent. Having a reasonably good eleven again, and hoping that there will be no "pier-head jumps" halfway through the season this year, we hope to make a show of it—if only to prove to the organisers that there is plenty of talent to form a Junior League.

None of our players have yet been selected to play for the Navy. Two have had trials and naturally, in our opinion, one should be playing. We look forward with every confidence to our opening game of the season.

RIOTS

During the month of December, the city of Singapore was disturbed by demonstrators rioting over a local court case. Several persons were killed and many cars, buses and motor lorries destroyed by fire.

Approximately one-third of our staff consists of Asian wireless operators, the majority of whom live in Singapore and are collected by bus each day. On the first morning of the riots the bus driver turned back when he encountered hostile crowds. Upon his return to the station (14 miles from Singapore town), two seamen were armed and travelled to the town in a second attempt to pick up the Asian staff. On this, the first day, they were successful, but for the three days following we were completely marooned and the station went into three watches. Our greatest difficulties were experienced in filling the vacancies left by absent Asians who normally man the taping machines and keep the M.S.O. fed with a constant stream of traffic via two teleprinters. These Asians, through years of constant practice, work at maximum speed obtainable from the machine in use and rarely make a mistake. Our own operators took the peculiarities of the new keyboards in their stride but naturally could not be expected to attain high speed. Routine traffic accumulated at these bottlenecks but no apparent delay was observed on precedence traffic,

FLOODS IN THE FEDERATION OF MALAYA

During the wet seasons this year rainfall has been unusually heavy. The native village at the base of the hill upon which the station is situated was flooded to the depth of four feet for the space of a week. Villagers moved their effects and as much furniture as was practicable up to the lower reaches of the hill, where they camped in sodden misery for nearly a week. At the best of times these people live in poverty but the rains deprive them not only of their supplies of firewood but of the numerous chickens which breed freely around their huts and provide a valuable food source. The worst is now over and life is steadily resuming its normal routine.

FAR EAST FLEET

At the time of writing the war is once again, or at least appears—for one has learnt caution from the setbacks of December—to be going better.

The Fleet in Korea has spent long periods at sea since the beginning of December. *Theseus*, for instance, who left Hong Kong, where she had been on a short visit, on 1st December, had only one night in harbour—and that ammunitioning—until 27th December, and *Kenya*, *Ceylon* and some of the small ships did even longer.

Theseus, who has worn the flag of Vice Admiral Andrewes on almost all her sorties, has added to her previous exploits by the 17th C.A.G. winning the Boyd Trophy for some outstanding airmanship, notably for 1,000 successive accident free deck landings, and has operated her aircraft in close support of the Eighth Army. Communications which are such a vital aspect of close army support have gone particularly well both with airborne and ground controllers, though the need for more than four channel V.H/F sets has been only too well proved.

Ladybird, Vice Admiral Andrewes' headquarters ship, had a particularly heavy pre-Christmas period, when in addition to carrying a heavy load of operational traffic, she relayed over 900 private radio-telegrams in the space of a fortnight. Some idea of the pressure on communication staffs may be gauged from the fact that on one day *Theseus* handled 4,500 encrypted groups of "IN" traffic and 3,500 groups of "OUT."

The lessons learnt up to date are on their way from the Fleet through the usual service channels and cannot be listed here in any detail. It may not, however, be out of place to mention that a detailed review of the communication complements is being prepared to decide in particular whether or not they are adequate to deal with a large volume of V/S and V.H/F traffic simultaneously. The policy of appointing Signal Officers and C.C.Os. to cruisers has been more than justified, since the Commanding Officers of the ships have usually been task element commanders with a paramount need for efficient communications with all their ships.

Theseus had every cause to celebrate New Year's

Eve at Kure, as not only had that day been fixed as the ship's Official Christmas Day, but also there were no less than six promotions to celebrate. The party began with the pipe "Brass hats are now being issued at the Naval Store," and never looked back after that!

H.M.S. "BELFAST"

Belfast, after re-commissioning in a matter of three weeks, sailed for the Far East on 28th October last year. We had quite a strenuous time working up at Malta but the staff survived to complete the work up at Hong Kong.

Another shock came upon us when we found that an entirely new procedure was in use with U.N. Forces. This came particularly hard to the ex-instructors of *Ganges* (there are a few on *Belfast* who, after a class or two knew a bit about B.J.C.P.), but alas it was a case of starting all over again; then that is nothing new. On behalf of the other ex-instructors of *Ganges*, we send you greetings from the Far East Station to the Signal School at Shotley. (Who sent the photograph to the Drafting Commander?)

We have quite a library of American books, in fact there are four safes to keep them in, and still more are occasionally added to our collection, corrections are very much like our books were during the war, in their numbers.

Many amusing things have happened with regard to equipment, control lines, etc., especially as we had a very quick turn round at Chatham, and the P.O.Tels. in charge of offices were like blind men finding out where perhaps this or that went to. Nevertheless, with the able help of the Signal Officer and C.C.O. in the B.W.O., many mysteries were sorted out—but not without fire and sometimes tattered tempers. In the U.T.R., due to excessive weight on the ship, the wavemeter outfit was taken away during the last commission; however, zoning fork procedure is now fairly familiar.

On the V/S side it can be noted that they too are living and learning as it were, with three time-expired Yeomen the meaning of "two blocks" is not quite clear, but regardless of the usual things that happen with the "flag tearers" they are settling down to working with U.N. Forces.

The C.Y.S. (yet another ex-Shotley man) is, I understand, in his spare time going to start touch typing classes, this will no doubt keep his hand in in case he returns to Shotley for another little spell.

In the way of sport, the department has quite a fair soccer team, although up to the present we have only played three games, but they were enough to show that we should do well during the commission.

Finally, on behalf of the Communication Department from the Signal Officer to the Boy Tels., we wish all Sparkers and Buntings past and present (we hear quite a few of the former are again joining our ranks) the very best of luck in the future and hope to see some of you soon—preferably in Home Waters!

THE MASTHEAD PENDANT

It's Place in Mourning

Is it in order to half-mast the masthead pendant? We shall see—or shall we?

When the goodwill mission headed by Admiral of the Fleet, Lord Fraser of North Cape, went to Scandinavia in the spring of this year, the party took passage in H.M.S. *Nepal*, which vessel, naturally, wore his admiral's flag. Very regrettably the British Broadcasting Corporation commentator on board, Mr. Richard Sharp, covering the cruise, died at sea, and in one of its news bulletins the B.B.C. announcer stated that on reaching Oslo the First Sea Lord flew his flag at half-mast as a last tribute to the deceased. One imagines the incident was incorrectly reported, as such procedure with a flag of this character would indicate the death of the person the emblem represented, which certainly was not the intention; and a mistake of this sort could not be expected from the selected signal staff of a flagship.

However, this news item started an interesting and controversial discussion which continued a long time. In the first place it emerged that not a few seasoned signal ratings and even some signal officers were unaware that King's Regulations and Admiralty Instructions provided, on his death, otherwise than in battle, for the half-masting of the flag of a flag-officer entitled to fly a flag.

This fact having been established, the query why commodores were not accorded similar recognition in like circumstances naturally followed, but no satisfactory explanation was forthcoming. The reason, it was suggested, perhaps rightly, was that the rank of commodore is and always has been a temporary one, those holding it figuring in the List of Navy among the captains, and that therefore, they were in no better position for funeral honours than any other officer below flag rank.

But the pow-wow got heated properly when, in coming down the line, the officially styled masthead or so-called commissioning pendant was reached. It was generally agreed that this distinctive piece—the badge of the majority of private ships—is also a personal, as well as in a more limited sense command, flag; but the admissibility of it being lowered in mourning for the person entitled to display it was another matter: nearly all boggled at such a revolutionary suggestion. Yet is there anything strange about the rightness of such a contention? True, Article 118 of K.R. and A.I. stipulates that all H.M. ships in commission must fly such a pendant at the main masthead when not wearing a flag or broad pendant; but, whilst there is approval for the half-masting of a flag, there is no prohibition anywhere in the Regulations, against the half-masting of the pendant or a broad pendant. The Regulations are only a guide in this respect and the omission of any guidance one way or the other should not be

construed as forbiddance. The funeral ceremonial is complete with the exception of the flag part of it.

On the death of a commanding officer the next in succession, be he commander, first lieutenant or gunner, assumes command by accident and not design with authority of appointment in support. If, therefore, the demise occurred otherwise than in action, and particularly in peace time, the next in command could have no ground for objection to the half-masting of the pendant as it would not be his to regulate. Neither is it the ship's pendant which K.R. and A.I. (although so styling it in one place) make clear without shadow of doubt in several articles: *it is the captain's or commanding officer's pendant*, and that is why it is struck to a superior command flag or standard—a case of the greater containing the lesser.

Under Article 162 (7) there is nothing to require the hoisting of a pendant in the flagship on the death of a flag officer, and the consequent half-masting of his flag, which shows Article 118 as being far from watertight in its apparent rigidity. The flagship would still be wearing the flag, though at half-mast, just as much as a private ship would be carrying out the requirements of the last-mentioned article with the pendant at half-mast. In this position it would be a quibble to say it was not at the masthead.

Another argument advanced was that flags, broad pendants, and pendants are not half-masted in cases of mourning in the ordinary way, which is another proof that these emblems are personal and not part, necessarily, of the ship's suit of colours, though they fit into that description. Against this the unofficial paying-off pendant was given an airing by the doubters, but their views were easily upset by reference to the analogous practice of flying over-sized forms of admirals' flags, sometimes of silk, in flagships proceeding to pay-off; another custom not sanctioned by K.Rs.!

And so the ding-dong of the debate went on. Article 109 proved to be the potent factor which finally persuaded those most difficult to convince. It may be as well to quote this article textually as it clearly indicates the pendant in a manner independent of the ship:

Flags and Pendants Ashore.—Under the provisions of Order in Council of 16th February, 1903, the Admiralty may authorize an officer entitled to wear a flag, broad pendant, or pendant afloat, to fly the same flag, broad pendant, or pendant ashore, at any naval establishment or other place on shore where naval jurisdiction may, for the time being, prevail.

In the earlier little composition, "The Church Pendant," it was seen how the forerunner of the present-day captain's pendant was a distinguishing arrangement according to colour, to meet the squadronal requirements of the times. There does not appear to be any direct evidence, but it is thought that these pendants did not become flags of command permanently flown by officers other than admira's

until late in the seventeenth, or early eighteenth, century when the practice of wearing the pendant continually was established. Perrin, in his "British Flags," writes:

"the first edition of the Regulations (1731) contained a direction to captains 'to husband the Ship's Colours, and not keep them abroad in windy weather, the Pendant being a sufficient mark of distinction' (i.e. of a man-of-war) from which it is clear that the latter was then flown continuously."

It should be mentioned that Perrin was Admiralty Librarian for some years during the early part of the present century, and his above-mentioned book of 1922 is of standard work calibre and a very valuable contribution to the subject. He also mentions two records in the diary of Teonge, saying that it was the custom in the Navy after the Restoration to observe the anniversary of the execution of Charles I. One is significant in relation to the pendant, but this was before it became a captain's command flag:

30th Jan. 1678. A solemn day, and wee keep it accordingly with jacks and pendants loared halfway.

MacGeorge—"Flags, 1881"—states:

"the Ensign and Pendant at half-mast are the recognised signs of mourning" (there is no mention of the jack).

An ancestor of the "Seamanship Manual," the "Young Seaman's Manual," 1901, under the heading

of Mourning, states:

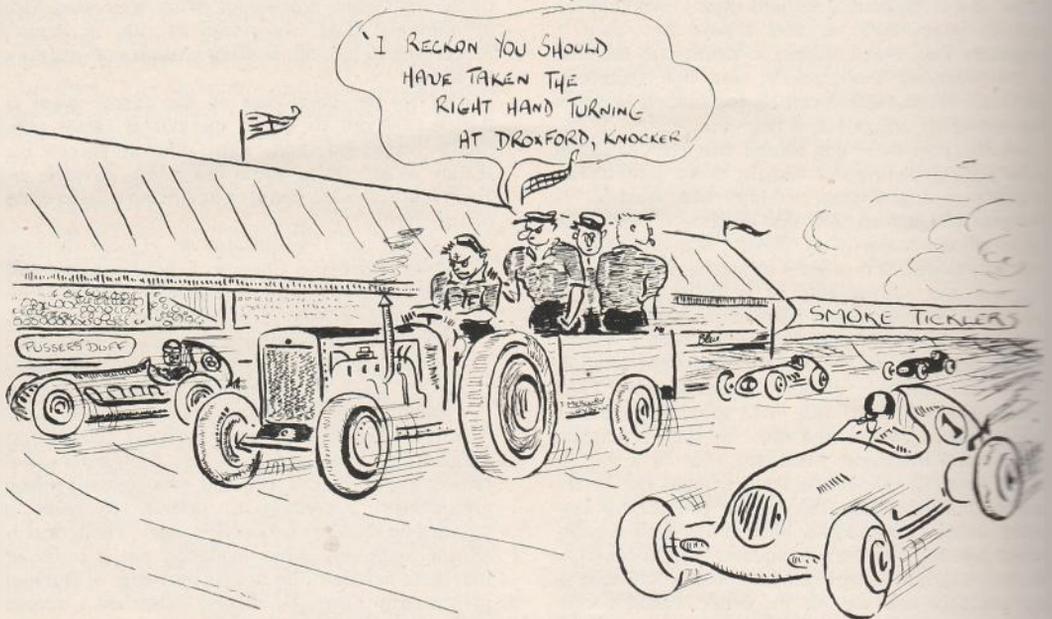
"a ship with her ensign and pennant half-masted is said to be in mourning." (Again there is no reference to the jack.)

These last two quotations do not refer to the death of the captain, but it is obvious the practice must have been well established at one time. In the old days the number of deaths which occurred at sea and on foreign stations was very high and the proportion of those of commanding officers must have been correspondingly great. The probability, therefore, is that it was a relatively common sight to see a captain's pendant half-masted as a mark of respect.

Finally, one more quotation as a parting shot, this time from Admiral Smyth's "Sailor's Word Book," 1867. This perhaps is the most valuable and certainly the most categorical of all: "When the pennant is half-mast, it denotes the death of the captain. When hauled down the ship is out of commission."

The confusion caused by the common use of the description "commissioning pendant" is at the root of the misconception of the true significance of the masthead pendant. The matter should be regularised as it is hoped it will be, together with other anomalies, in the new issue of K.R. and A.I. now being prepared. So to end as begun. Is it in order to half-mast the masthead pendant?

A. PEACOCK.



INDIAN NAVY

Since our last contribution appeared over two years ago, a great historical change has taken place. On 26th January, 1950, India became a Sovereign Republic within the framework of the Commonwealth of Nations.

The once familiar H.M.I.S. on cap ribbons has been replaced by I.N.S., short title for "Indian Navy Ship." The Royal Crown wherever it previously appeared has been replaced by the Asoka Lion emblem. This emblem which consists of four lions seated on a wheel is an ancient symbol of India.

The new Indian red, white and blue ensigns closely resemble the British equivalents, in place of the Union Jack in the upper canton next to the staff the national flag of India now appears.

The King's Colour presented to the Service in the early 1930s has found an honoured resting place, alongside many other King's Colours of famous Indian Regiments, in the Chetwode Hall of the National Defence Academy at Dehra Dun. The recent laying-up ceremony was indeed a most impressive one.

The navy, which has been in existence in one form or another for over 300 years, has great traditions and a proud of its association with the Royal Navy with which it has been so closely linked during this long period.

Since our last contribution to this Magazine a cruiser and three destroyers have been added to the fleet. We are very proud of our cruiser which was the *Achilles* before she was renamed *Delhi*. We remember so vividly that inspiring episode of the Battle of the River Plate in which the *Achilles* played such a gallant part. This triumph over our common enemy showed the silver lining amongst the dark clouds which were hovering over us during those early days of World War II when the Commonwealth was greatly fighting on alone, championing the cause of freedom everywhere.

Our Commander-in-Chief, Vice Admiral Sir Edward Parry, K.C.B., R.N., was the Captain of the *Achilles* when this historic battle took place. Needless to say, his old ship is just as ready to take on a bigger opponent than she ever was.

There must still be a few Communicators serving in the Royal Navy who remember our Signal School when it was situated in Bombay and known as *R.N.I.S. Talwar*. Courses were undertaken there both for the R.N. and the I.N. The school has since been shifted to temporary quarters at Cochin. Its permanent home will be at Rozi, near Jamnagar. A new school will be built shortly and when completed will be one of the most modern schools out East.

We often work with ships of the East Indies Squadron and pay visits to each other's ports. Eight of our ships visited Singapore recently and exercised with the R.A.F. and ships of the Far East Squadron. *C.N.S. Rajgar* (D.11) is now in Australian waters and hopes to visit New Zealand, which will be the

first occasion an Indian Navy ship has visited that country. Opportunity to meet Communicators in the Mediterranean may occur when the Squadron visits the Mediterranean at some future date.

Communicators of other Commonwealth navies have much in common with Communicators of the Indian Navy. We use the same equipment, speak the same language, wear the same uniform and exercise the same ceremonial. We know all about the B.J.C.P.I., F.S.B. and C.O.F., etc. B.R.1792 is our manual as well as that of the Royal Navy. We are perhaps not so warm at football, but will be able to give a good account of ourselves at hockey. When our ships are in port with yours do not forget to pay us a visit. A warm welcome awaits you.

BOOK REVIEW

TELEVISION RECEIVING EQUIPMENT. By W. T. COCKING, M.I.E.E., 3rd Edition. Published by Iliffe and Sons Ltd. for *Wireless World*. Price 18s. net; 375 pp.

The author has deliberately tackled television as a branch of the more general subject of Radio, thereby keeping a much-needed sense of proportion, and at the same time allowing him to assume a background of radio knowledge on the part of the reader. The subject-matter has also been rigidly confined to television receivers; this is a piece of solid common-sense, inasmuch as the book caters for those with practical interests in television—who will probably never ever see a television transmitter at close quarters.

The author has obviously gone to very great pains to present his information in as logical and simple a fashion as possible. Thus he starts with an admirably lucid statement of the fundamentals of television—a section which contains almost the only references to transmitters in the book—and the make-up of the television signal. From then on the various parts of the receiver are dealt with. Consistently with his assumption of a general radio background, only those parts of the equipment which are peculiar to television have been treated in any detail, the whole being welded together under the heading "the complete receiver," a chapter which includes complete circuit diagrams of typical receivers. A couple of chapters on faults and servicing greatly enhance the value of the book for the potential serviceman.

As was mentioned previously, the treatment is as simple as possible throughout—deceptively so, since the book is as complete as anyone could wish, in spite of this restriction. The author has also kept a practical air about the book by giving figures and numerical examples throughout. Prolific use has been made of diagrams, graphs and photographs, and the more mathematical parts, of interest to the designer, have been collected at the end as a series of appendices.

Altogether the book may be confidently recommended as a very competently written and pleasantly laid-out exposition of television receivers.

HOME FLEET NOTES

H.M.S. "INDOMITABLE"

Early in 1947, *Indomitable* came to rest in Portsmouth Dockyard after a varied and somewhat hectic career since commissioning in August, 1941. Her island superstructure became a local landmark for three-and-half years, the latter part of which was spent undergoing a major refit. A ship which has been in Dockyard hands for such a long period presents a dismal picture, and although one is confident that order exists somewhere, and that plans are being fulfilled, the manner of their fulfilment presents an indescribable picture of confusion and noise.

Such was the position in September, 1950, a few weeks before she was due to shift berth to South Railway Jetty, preparatory to putting to sea once more. There was much nodding of heads, rumours abounded, it seemed impossible that the ship could be completed to schedule. However, the final week produced an amazing transformation, and on 25th October, *Indomitable* proceeded to Spithead, a ship literally reborn.

The period until Christmas leave was spent working up in the Channel between Portsmouth and Portland. Teething troubles were the order of the day, and the Communicators in common with everyone else spent their time putting things right that went wrong, and slowly but surely finding their feet. Number One Carrier Air Group, consisting of 801 (Sea Hornets) and 813 (Firebrands) Squadrons, was embarked, and flying and almost every other type of trials were carried out. Two minor night interception exercises with the Second Training Flotilla were arranged, which enabled us to see just how many bodies could be squeezed into the B.W.O. (including our C.C.O.), without somebody passing out for lack of breathing space.

The King's Birthday provided us with an opportunity to Dress Ship Overall for the first time. Happily all went well, a previous trial run off Portland had revealed where the Gremlins lurked, awaiting their opportunity to rip into the flags and confound our efforts.

On 12th December we were honoured to receive a visit from Mrs. Churchill, who had launched the ship in March, 1940; in the words of our Captain, "To renew your initial blessing on the ship, as a good God-mother should."

During the Christmas leave period, as many junior ratings as could were sent to *Vengeance* to undergo refresher courses and much good value was obtained.

C.P.O.Tel. Goulding revealed his intimate knowledge of the Leyden countryside when he acted as navigator to the S.C.O. on an expedition with jeep and trailer to gather holly for decorating purposes. He was eminently successful, both in obtaining the holly and bogging down the transport in a deep snowdrift. However, outside assistance was not

required, and a muddy but triumphant party returned to the ship in good order.

On 15th January, *Indomitable* sailed from Portsmouth to continue working up in the Clyde and Moray Firth areas. Fair weather conditions have enabled the Air Group to carry out a successful flying programme, which continues at the time of going to press. *Kamikaze*, our faithful follower, has rendered yeoman service, and a good Communications liaison established between her, Lossie and ourselves has resulted in R99 all ways, always.

The Flag of A.C.3 was hoisted on 6th February before leaving the United Kingdom, and early in March the ship became the Flagship of Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet.

H.M.S. "VENGEANCE"

After a very much appreciated spell in Portsmouth for Christmas leave, we have now taken over the job of Trials Carrier, and are busy getting down to things. From the Communications point of view the work has decreased considerably compared with the recent work with the Fleet, but it does give time for all to settle down again and, more important, gives the new members of the staff an opportunity to find their way around before the busy period starts.

There have been many changes recently in the staff. The S.C.O., now Commander Ashmore, has gone to take up an appointment at D.R.E. We offer our congratulations on his promotion. Lt. Cdr. Edmondson and Mr. Strasser have also left us, the latter to start an entirely new life—on course for direct promotion to Lieutenant. Lt. Cdr. Richardson and Woolcombe have joined us as F.L.C. and S.C.O. respectively. Mr. Greet has relieved Mr. Strasser. P.O.Tels. White and Henwood have left for Leyden.

In the sporting field there has so far been an opportunity of showing our prowess this cruise, but we are hoping for opportunities soon. Our soccer team, under the able management of Ldg.Tel. Bell, has already been briefed and is more than ready for any sudden call to uphold the past high standard. Certainly, if keenness counts for anything, we should win every inter-Part trophy in the ship. Well, perhaps we will! Several inter-Part competitions are in the offing, and we face them with confidence. It is worthy of mention that in the current deck hockey competition that the Communications entered no less than three teams. One is still going strongly, and but for the bad luck to be drawn against each other, there might have been one more.

Whilst in Northern Ireland recently, we landed a TBY for local communication, and the results were excellent. The two ratings concerned gave much assistance, and judging by a certain reluctance to return the hospitality of the natives must also have been of a high standard.

The bush telegraph indicates that there will shortly

be three weddings in the staff. Accordingly our very best wishes are extended to Ldg.Tel. Miller and Tels. Smith and Stephenson in that connection.

There seems to be quite a minor wave of enthusiasm for advancement at the time of writing, and needless to say this is being encouraged. Unfortunately it is rather offset by the number of requests for E.V.T. courses from retained senior ratings.

As so many Communicators have been associated with *Vengeance* in the past, it is hoped to contribute as often as possible to COMMUNICATOR in the future so that some link might be preserved. By the time the next one is due, the tempo of life should have increased considerably, and consequently there should be more communication news than there is at present.

G. W. G.

THE SECOND TRAINING FLOTILLA

At a recent census, the S.C.O. discovered that there were 122 communication ratings in the Flotilla. Nearly all of these are junior ratings, and the most senior communication rating authorised for the Flotilla is a Yeoman and a Petty Officer Telegraphist! However, a very considerate Drafting Commander has allowed us one Chief in each department. These are C.P.O.Tel. Jones (the hockey player who so seldom has time to play) and C.Y.S. Harper ("Happy Harper" . . . in spite of the fact that he was due to go outside months ago). With very few exceptions, the senior ratings in the other ships are Leading rates and they do a sterling job. You can, though, imagine our difficulties.

Each ship in the Flotilla does nine days at sea in a fortnight, and so everyone is kept extremely busy . . . especially the Communication Branch (as usual). Communication exercises are usually conducted on a flotilla basis, and we also take part in those made by *Indefatigable* (FOTS) and *Maidstone* (SM2), both these ships often assisting in the weekly Flotilla Nex's (Tuesdays) by running the "enemy ship-broadcast and shore W/T Station. We also play with aircraft of Nineteen Group quite a lot, doing bombings, etc., and at the time of writing plans are being made for communication ratings to go flying with them. The idea is for the Sunderland to land in Portland harbour prior to an exercise, pick up the chaps, do the exercises and then return to Portland. When we can spare the time, we carry out Flotilla manoeuvres, and once last term mustered eight ships, one Division of "Z" class destroyers, the other of "Castle" class frigates.

In the past we have experienced great difficulty in getting a word in edgewise on Portsmouth Port Wave (no offence to Portsmouth), and so we have now given up this wave altogether and use Flotilla Wave (2865 kc/s) instead for all ship-shore and shore-ship traffic, as well as for communication exercises. So, if you ever want to raise us at sea, that is the wave to do it on. The shore end of this circuit is a TCS in

TF2's shore MSO and although Yeoman Sorrell (in charge of the MSO) objects to the increase in the noise level, the system has its obvious advantages; one being that the SCO can now conduct exercises without having to waste a whole day at sea—the weather has been awful recently.

THE CASUAL

"Can I have some money, sir,
I've spent a lot this quarter.
I want to buy a diamond ring
For your eldest daughter?"

"Can I have some money, sir,
Just ten or twenty thou.
I owe Aunt Maud an awful lot
And she's a mean old cow?"

"Can I have some money, sir,
I've killed three men today.
Their widows want a pension,
I've squandered all their pay?"

"Can I have some money, sir,
What am I going to do.
All my other means are gone,
There's only good old you?"

"Can you have some money, sir?
What a stupid thing to say.
How can I give you casuals . . .
When you've overdrawn your pay?"

Bad Luck.

P. W. S.



SOUTH ATLANTIC STATION

H.M.S. "BERMUDA"

In this, our first contribution to *COMMUNICATOR*, we send hearty greetings from the South Atlantic Station.

We left Plymouth on 23rd October for five weeks' working up at Malta prior to joining the South Atlantic Squadron as their new flagship on 18th December. From our point of view as Communicators, our stay at Malta was a somewhat hectic affair, exercises being the order of the day—and night too—with leave restricted to the week-ends. Full advantage was taken of any time ashore, and many were those who visited the Island's famous (or infamous) "Gut." Two at least of the Communications Staff found Malta's attractions so much to their liking that they offered to change ships with anyone preferring the Cape, but no offers were forthcoming.

By the time our working-up period at Malta was completed, we felt we had achieved a fairly high standard of efficiency in the department, and looked forward to our arrival at the Cape. *Bermuda's* passage to Simonstown included a call at Freetown to oil, although there was no opportunity for shore leave.

Arriving at Simonstown on 18th December, we found Slangkop Wireless Station about to begin their annual Christmas rush with telegrams, in which we were able to help by lending six ratings.

Although bush fire fighting does not normally fall to the lot of a "sparker," it plays an important part in life at Simonstown during the summer season. Every effort has been made by the Simonstown Municipality in co-operation with the Naval and Military authorities, to ensure that there shall be no repetition of the disastrous fire which swept the countryside in January, 1950, when two naval lives were lost. Today the control of bush fire fighting hinges largely around communications, and it is here that the Navy assists by supplying portable W/T sets and operators who dash away with their sets on receipt of the first alarm.

A series of minor exercises, in which we used up most of our batteries, culminated in a major exercise in bush fire fighting on 29th January, when civilians, and Army and Navy took part. Everything went according to plan. The same night a real bush fire broke out on Red Hill above "Tin Town" (the native hutments), and the organisation really had a chance to prove its worth. Despite a strong south-easter, the fire was brought under control in thirty minutes. Mr. Gay, the civilian in charge of the bush fire fighting organisation, informed the press that it was due to the part played by wireless communication that the fire was so quickly extinguished. Photographs of the F.C.O. (Lieutenant Commander Barrow), Lieutenant Webber, Mr. Armstrong and Telegraphist Cade appearing in the *Cape Argus*, and showing them on the job, convinced us that "nothing succeeds like

success."

Cricket holds sway in the sports line, and at the moment, we are in the throes of the squadron and ship's inter-Part knockout competitions. Our last inter-Part match against the stokers somewhat demoralised our opponents who could only manage fourteen runs. Telegraphist Booth, in taking five wickets for six runs, excelled in bowling, then opened the batting for us to pass our opponents' total in the first over. Telegraphists Booth and Coxon were the regulars for the squadron second team.

A short East Coast cruise to which we are now looking forward commences on 27th February and includes visits by the Flagship to East London, Port Elizabeth and Durban. A Tattoo at East London will include musical semaphore and training manoeuvres by our young buntings and quarters. C.Y.S. Allen is reported to be losing a lot of weight on the football field in getting them into shape. Communication Officers who watched one of the first trials agreed that the marching manoeuvres looked particularly smart.

H.M.S.'s "ACTAEON" AND "NEREIDE"

Actaeon left Simonstown on 29th January for a West Coast cruise which includes Mossambique, Port Thome, Lagos, Victoria and Pointe Noire. She is expected back in Simonstown on 27th March.

Nereide left Simonstown on 7th February for her East Coast cruise. She will be at Durban from 14th to 19th February when she leaves for Lourenço Marques and ports in Madagascar. *Nereide* will pay a second visit to Durban before returning to Simonstown on 22nd March.

H.M.S. "SIMONSTOWN"

Since we made our brief debut into *COMMUNICATOR*, our state of chaos (pronounced "Kay-Oh" and not "Chase Charley's Aunt or Something") has gradually subsided, and an even tenor of life has been seen (or so we like to think).

The outstanding feature of our Communicator bogey has been the Bush Fire Organisation. Now buntings, we like to think we make darned good wireless ops., and the different types of portable and other sets we have handled in the last few weeks would appear to make a "tall story" an understatement. Our Communicators even made headlines in the Cape Town press, and two of our "bods" had their photographs on the front page of the *Cape Argus*. We thought "Jan" Webber made a very good Boy Cornwall (trusting he does not take offence for referring to him as a "bod"). Also pictured was Lieutenant Webber is our Erk, with an expression of deep adoration in his eyes. The other photograph is the "Beehive"—or, to give it its proper name, the Bush Fire Control H.Q.'s. The F.C.O. and Mr. Armstrong are the two officers on the extreme right.

Our "Aviary" which normally had a delicious off-

white colouring, has been transformed by "Pussers Club" into Home Fleet grey, and true to our nightmare (last issue of COMMUNICATOR), we sail every day now for the north. Before we do so, we would like to say "Tot Siens," which, we understand, means "So long chum," and is not an abbreviation for "Tot seen off." And for the benefit of our bilingual predecessors:

"Slegs vir Blankes" on the door,
 "Moenie spunnie" on the floor,
 "Nie Rook nie" upon the seat,
 "Alle Stasies" to Retreat.

S.T.C. KLAVER

There are (regrettably) no training reports for the period August, 1950, to January, 1951, for inclusion in this issue, since it will be recalled that with the departure of *Nigeria*, organised courses at the Centre ceased—chiefly because there were no instructors. Always with an eye to the future, C.Y.S. Whitehouse was left to look after the school, during what might be termed its "Care and Maintenance" state, and the C.Y.S. with commendable initiative took off his jacket and rolled up his sleeves to get down to some real hard manual work. The zeal with which he wielded the paint brush, showed that when there was work to be done, the older and senior members of the branch do not necessarily consider it derogatory to their status, to undertake those tasks which would normally fall to the more junior ratings.

The most notable achievement was the painting of the floors of the entire S.T.C., which resulted in a big improvement in the internal appearance of the school and will, we hope, help to keep down the dust which formerly arose from the concrete carpets.

P.O.Tel. Bromage, Yeoman Glendinning and Log.Tel. Nash from H.M.S. *Bermuda*, joined the instructional staff of the S.T.C. in January and expressed surprise on finding such an up-to-date and smart establishment.

In January it was announced that a class of seven Log. Tels. (Q) would be commenced on 5th February, thereby making the S.T.C. once more fully operational, but the O. i/c's happiness was somewhat tempered by the rumours afoot that new ideas envisaged for advancement of Communication ratings might make the future of the S.T.C. problematical.

Communication exercises with H.M.S. *Mercury* were inaugurated on 11th January, since when daily attempts have been made to establish two-way communication. With assistance of Slangkop Wireless Station, using TFS31, and H.M.S. *Bermuda* using type 57, communication was established from the outset, although several days of trial and error elapsed before the S.T.C. could dispense with their assistance. At present the S.T.C.'s main transmitter is T.B.M.9 on 17555 Kc/s using a cut aerial of 70.5 feet. H.M.S. *Mercury* used a transmitting frequency of 19545 Kc/s, later changing to 20070 Kc/s, which was found to be a better frequency for reception. It cannot be claimed that the exercises

have been an unqualified success to date, the readability at the S.T.C. usually not being good owing to varying forms of interference, particularly from voice, but we continue to experiment and press on.

SIMONSTOWN WIRELESS STATIONS

The Christmas number of COMMUNICATOR, in an article on A.S.R.E. (whence our new F.C.O. arrived), gave us the clue as to where he acquired his driving principles, for his projects are legion, and his priorities all operational immediate—or higher. However, completed projects have borne good fruit, so the effort has been worthwhile, even if the projectionists do feel somewhat jaded!

In the international field, successful communication work has been carried out with the French Cruiser *Jeanne d'Arc*, and the Royal Danish Research frigate *Galathea*, the latter following the track taken by her namesake 100 years ago. *Galathea's* Radio Officer was most friendly and showed great interest in communication matters.

Slangkop Christmas traffic rush was as frantic as ever, and they were grateful to the South Atlantic Squadron for the manpower assistance received, which certainly helped to ease the burden.

With the advent of a Leading Tels. (Q) class at the S.T.C. the stations have managed to provide five candidates, but this was only done with the help of *Bermuda*, who again came to the rescue by providing reliefs.

Local Communicators were rather surprised that the infallible War Registry should have postagrammed three signals destined for M.S.O. *Bermuda* (West Indies) to M.S.O. H.M.S. *Bermuda*, Simonstown. However, the fixed service to Whitehall managed to return them to their source.



Cape South staff have been kept busy with Bush Fire Communications, and when a fire broke out nearby during a recent first watch, their successful relaying effort of the Bush Fire Officer's messages to the Fire H.Q.'s amply proved the necessity of using Cape South for the purpose. We bid farewell to C.R.E. Smith, Chief of Cape South, who leaves shortly for U.K. and wish him good luck.

Slangkop's crawfish vending telegraphist must have a most lucrative business, for he has now blossomed forth with a car, although he hotly denies he intends to hawk his wares in it.

May we administer a mild rebuke to Hong Kong from old 1941 Hong Kongites at present serving on this station, for saying that Hong Kong may not have been ready in 1941? As far as Naval Communications were concerned, the Communicators there at the time were very much on their toes and ready. As a considerable number lost their lives in the action, or subsequently as prisoners of war, and others remain maimed for life, it would be unfair to let this pass unchallenged.

SPORT

The long distances between wireless stations, and between wireless stations and the base, combined with constant watch-keeping, still make organised games a difficult business. Even so, considerable effort has been expended in this direction, and an inter-Station Tennis Tournament is now in progress for a cup presented by the F.C.O. Slangkop by sheer weight of numbers is in the lead, but some interesting games have been played; the transmitting stations using such subtleties as providing iced beer to the Slangkop visitors in an endeavour to put them off their stroke! As far as Cape East were concerned, this was quite unnecessary, as the death trap of a commando course which they call a tennis court is enough to put even Gorgeous Gussie off her stroke.

Cricket has been well patronised by Communicators and C.P.O.Tel. Wearmouth has been playing a fine game in the South Atlantic R.N. XI. Slangkop lost to *Glencairn* in the opening match of the season, but in the *Afrikaner XI*, in the current competition, the Communicators put up a very good show. In acrobatics some of the crew have begun to develop into miniature "Atlas" types, and Tel. Johnson excelled himself by attempting a Mills Circus double back somersault, some six feet in the air, and landing beautifully on his head! It was quickly diagnosed that he had not broken his neck, and during the following two months which he spent flat (or nearly flat) on his back in hospital, he used his time in teaching the ward Sister—a would-be Radio ham—the Morse code, in return for her teaching him sufficient Afrikans to enable him to make love to his pretty South African nurse.

At sailing the O. i/c achieved doubtful fame by assisting to sink the Commander-in-Chief's dinghy, hitting it fair and square in front of Admiralty House. What the Flag Lieutenant said is quite unprintable,

and why the F.C.O. so gallantly risked his future in rescuing the O. i/c from double pneumonia is an enigma.

Communicators who know P.O.Tel. Dicks, ex-Cape East, will be sorry to know that he is to be invalided from the service. Dicks contracted polio in the latter part of 1950. We wish him the best of luck in the future and a complete recovery from his illness.

Congratulations to Lieut. "Jan" Webber on his successful operation and recovery after discarding an unwanted part of his anatomy in the form of a decoupling condenser. According to "Jan," he being in the sparker branch, the doctor considered the appropriate tool with which to open him up was a screwdriver!

REFLECTIONS OF THE IDLE DODGER

The trains are late, there's fog about,
Some old Chiefs can feel their gout.
It's Friday morn, the fires are out,
Life at Chatham's good for nowt.
Drip! Drip! Drip!

The First Lieutenant's on the prowl,
Wants some bods for fork and trowel.
Where have you been, you loafing fowl,
Only went to mark my towel.
Drip! Drip! Drip!

The rain pours down, watch V.I. frown.
He had us booked for Mast, the Clown.
Bet he'll stop and dress me down
For walking past him in the town.
Drip! Drip! Drip!

Witex is off the air again,
Suppose some Pompeyite missed train.
No doubt it goes against their grain
Not to exercise my brain.
Drip! Drip! Drip!

Soon I'll have a draft chit for
China, or some foreign shore.
If only Gillingham would draw,
I'd shake old *Vernon* to the core.
Drip! Drip! Drip!

Say! Friday while, upon my card
So now I must be on my guard.
Life in Barracks is so hard.
Don't join us in the Depot, Pard.
Drip! Drip! Drip!

VOLUNTEERING FOR SUBMARINES?

The manning commitments of the Submarine Service have always been met with a good proportion of volunteers, particularly amongst the Communicators.

The motive behind the majority of requests to volunteer for service in submarines is naturally enough the extra money. It represents more "sherbet" for the thirsty, a faster motor-bike for the speedy, more suitings for the tiddly, bigger and better bank-books for the thrifty, and so on without end. But money is not the only reason for requests to volunteer. There are those who volunteer in the hope of ducking an approaching foreign draft chit. There are others who, believing devoutly in the old saying that "The first turn of the screw pays all debts," volunteer with the most earnest hope that they will be drafted immediately if not sooner. There are even some who volunteer from a genuine desire to lead a more adventurous life. However, whatever his reason for volunteering, by the time the average Communicator has completed his three weeks' training at Fort Blackhouse he is usually wondering, somewhat anxiously, whether he has been altogether wise. And after a week or two in his first submarine he is almost certain to be quite sure that he has not.

Life is completely different. The quiet, uneventful watchkeeping routine he has been used to is replaced by an irregular mixture of watchkeeping and day-work. He acquires a second overall suit and, probably for the first time in his life, does some really hard work. He embarks tinfish, wrestles with springs, wrests and shore-charging leads, chips and paints inside and out, stores ship, tops up main battery—again without end. The cramped interior of the boat, and enough in harbour, seems worse at sea, and if he is an indifferent sailor, neither the peculiar motion nor the smell of the boat are likely to stimulate his appetite. Nevertheless, whilst he admits to himself that he yearns for the wide open spaces of his last ship, he is rarely vocal about it. Having volunteered he is loathe to admit to his messmates, probably all seasoned submariners, that he "can't smoke it very much," and he philosophically gets on with the job and tries to make the best of things.

Time marches on. By the time a few pay days have gone by, and, according to taste his bank-book or his shore-going experiences have benefited, he unconsciously begins to settle down. Apart from hard work the life is free and easy. He makes friends among the seamen and stokers. He begins to think and talk submarines. When he gets his head down he "goes deep," and when he gets it up he "surfaces." He "pumps forrad," "blows aft," "crash dives," etc., on his every-day actions both ashore and afloat. He finds himself rarely, if ever, thinking of last commision. He has become a much better sailor and a useful seaman. He is quite at home in his boat and talks of her with pride. No submarine ever dived deeper or at a steeper angle. No "Skipper" could

possibly get in better attacks or elude the hunt more skilfully afterwards than his. No other "Jimmy" could be more fiendishly clever at outwitting the machinations of scheming matelots, and most certainly there never was a finer flotilla than the one he happens to be serving in at the time. In fact, his conversion is complete. He has become a real submariner and he would not go back to General Service even if he had the chance.

This is not only true of the average volunteer. Many of those conscripted to the Service settle down in the same way and long before their period is complete they themselves are volunteers. There are others, both volunteers and conscripts, who become efficient submariners and good messmates without ever really "going all the bundle" on the life. There is also the usual minority, happily very small, who are always moaning and wishing themselves "outside." However, the type is not peculiar to submarines.

In no other sphere is teamwork more necessary or evident than in submarines and the Communicators, consisting of one P.O.Tel., one Ldg.Tel., two Tels. and one Ldg.-Sig. or Sig., are usually useful members of the team, though it can never be said that they are overtrained. In addition to the Tels. and Sig. frequently being employed upon duties other than communicating, most of a submarine's seatime consists of daily running from the base or depot ship, which, while very nice for the natives, results in limited and stereotyped communications. Two or three times a year, however, large-scale exercises are held under war conditions. Submarines go out on patrol for from five to fourteen days and are hunted day and night by air and surface A/S forces. During these exercises first-class communications are essential if the patrol is to be successful, and in order that the Communicators may reach the required standard of proficiency, varied and as far as possible competitive harbour communication exercises are arranged. These frequently give rise to slight brushes between the Coxswain backed by the First Lieutenant on the one hand, and the P.O.Tel. backed by the Flotilla Communication Officer on the other, for possession of "the bodies," "the bodies" themselves (truth will out) regarding the outcome merely as the greater or lesser evil according to which work or exercise they are committed. However, these exercises, plus team spirit, unquestionably achieve the desired object, for analysis of patrol reports seldom brings to light a major communication blunder.

In conclusion, while it is true that during their period of submarine service many achieve little beyond increasing their liquid capacity, the very fair proportion of submariners who qualify for the higher ratings and subsequently go on to Branch rank prove that it is by no means a backwater for those who are keen to get on.

MEDITERRANEAN

FIRST CRUISER SQUADRON

Staff of *Euryalus* (You-Rely-On-Us?) reporting.

Having crash commissioned at Devonport in May of last year we, at the end of our first eight months in commission, are finding something worthwhile to chatter about and also have confirmed the navy maxim that "The first six months are indeed the worst." After the inevitable "Flap" and "Grind" of "working-up" there followed a welcomed relief, temporarily anyway, in the second summer cruise. First port of call was at Tripoli, home of strong beer and even stronger odours, to pick up members of the Imperial Defence College for passage to Malta. During our stay we took time out to do a shoot at Zuara. With our return to Malta and having safely delivered the "College" we resumed our cruise in company with *Phoebe*, destination Italy. We had three days' peace and solitude in Capri (where, incidentally, we had a welcome visit from "Our Gracie") whilst *Phoebe* had a hectic time in Naples. We then visited Naples and our opposite number took over our billet in Capri. Thence, Hey Ho! on to France and the Riviera. Our only port of call was Golfe Juan, but the neighbouring towns of Nice and Cannes were but a short journey away.

We bid this happy hunting ground a reluctant farewell after two all-too-short weeks for a flying visit to Malta before paying our last call, and this was the island of Corfu off the Greek mainland. What a contrast! Then back again to Malta, and to madness.

Our second cruise, if it can be so called, was a return visit to Greece, the port of call this time being Port Drepano, mainly with the object of carrying out a series of exercises. We had plenty of company as the fleet was out in force. This "cruise" lasted just ten days, from 2nd to 12th January, since which time we have been steadily silting up Grand Harbour with milk tins. At the time of writing we are awaiting the Combined Spring Exercises and looking forward to seeing old faces in the Home Fleet at Gibraltar plus a cruise round the North African "Riviera."

As for sport, we pride ourselves on a fine record. To date we are breaking even with the Royal Marines with a record as follows:

July. Inter-Part Aquatics. Winners—Comms. Runners-up—R.Ms.

August. Cricket Knock-out. Winners—R.Ms. (Comms. k.o'd First Round).

September. Water-polo Knock-out. Winners—Comms. (R.Ms. k.o'd by Comms. First Round.)

October. Inter-Part regatta. Winners—R.Ms. Runners-up—Comms.

January. Inter-Part cross country. Winners—Comms. Runners-up—R.Ms.

January. Seven-a-side Rugby Knock-out. Winners—E.R.As. (Comms. k.o'd Second Round.)

January. Inter-Part football. Winners—E.R.C. and P.Os. (Comms. k.o'd Second Round.)

The division supplies members for most of the Ship's teams. C.P.O.Tel. Bulch turns out for the Water Polo team, as does O/Sig. Freke. L.Tel. Wallace is a regular member of the ship's Rugby XI and a Navy reserve, and C.C.O. Sambourne. Wm. Holdsworth, Coder (Ed) Tudor appear in the "W" XV. P.O.Tel. Gilvray, who is no mean bowler, has made an appearance in the Cricket XI and L.Tel. Wallace and Davies and O/Tel. Keane can occasionally be seen wielding a hockey stick for the honour of the ship.

Lastly, our communication exercise record. Competition between ships of the First Cruiser Squadron is, as always, keen indeed, but with false modesty cast aside, our record is, we are proud to say, a worthy one.

R.N.A.S. HAL FAR

Those Communicators who still reflect on the happy days which they spent at Hal Far will be interested to learn that with the exception of the S.C.O. and S.C.A., we are all shortly losing our extremely soft (?) number. The Communicators and certain other branches are being taken over by our female collaborators, the Wrens. A few have already arrived, and the remainder are expected in the near future.

Hal Far can no longer be described as "the R.A. members' Paradise," as one can see on glancing round the glum faces of the staff—the R.A. members are gnawing their finger nails and offering silent prayers that their forthcoming drafts will still permit them to go home each evening after "secure." The single members of the community are equally far down in the dumps, and the majority of them are almost in tears because their frequent runs to the "Screech-hall" are rapidly drawing to a close.

Four Tels.—Dougherty, Lewis, Edgar and Weaver—and Sig. Gale, are leaving on the 10th February for



Gib., where they will help to man the A.C.H.Q. for the combined Fleet exercises; thence to U.K., lucky chaps.

Leading Tel. Ascroft is running around with a face as long as a wind-sock, bemoaning the fact that his doz. finishes in a couple of weeks' time, and still no sign of his relief. Let us wish him a happy time and all success in his civilian career, the political situation permitting. Apparently the political situation does not permit—since the last sentence was completed, we have an unwelcome visitor in the shape of 579"A."

The Wrens already here have now become a regular feature, and it is at last becoming possible to enter the office without having to carve a path through air-crews who have had a sudden desire for voice training. Even the Captain expressed his pleasure at having Wrens here by passing a remark to that effect whilst airborne. Although the Wrens attended the P.M.Os. joining lecture, it is reported that it was left to C.P.O.Tel. Camp to define "Dog" to them.

Since *Glory* has been away in U.K. recommissioning, night flying has become fashionable with the 14th C.A.G., and so our team have been "on the ball" with a vengeance. And to add to our worries we were recently blessed with the arrival of a U.S. Navy Patrol Squadron, who were here carrying out exercises with the Sixth Fleet. On the whole it was an interesting task, although on the first day of the exercise the Squadron Commander was almost in tears due to the fact that he had heard nothing from his aircraft which had been away for six hours—and for all their trying, the "Limey" key-thumpers just couldn't raise 'em. A diversion was created when one Privateer sank into an old bomb hole on the airfield during night flying. The station rescue equipment would not have had much chance with this hefty aircraft, but luckily a civil contractor had left his bull-dozer nearby and this was duly commandeered and the plane extracted from the crater.

We are in the process of erecting another hangar on the north-east corner of the airfield. Whilst digging the foundations for this, the aforementioned bull-dozer managed to rip up all the telephone and remote control cables between main site and Air Radio, thus at least proving that the cables were laid in quite a different place from that shown on the map.

The Chief Tel. (in civvies) met a few of our Wrens one evening (by chance, of course), and was greeted with the remark, "I'm sure I've seen you somewhere before."

We have not yet introduced the Homer into the lives of our Wrens, but we shall all be very interested to see how they will deal with the dogs on the Homer "goat track," which will doubtless turn many a brunette hair to a silvery grey.

Have you heard this one? The subject is homing at Hal Far:

Hal Far Tower: "Two zero four, transmit for Homing, Over."

Tel. (on phone from Homer): "No dip."

Naval Airman (on phone in Tower): "Well, let's

have the bearing without the dip."

The Sparkers, of course, are not the only ones to be affected by the arrival of the girls. Chief Yeoman Spear and his staff are handing over to a P.O. Wren plus several, and we hear they are very rapid learners. It is whispered that the Sigs. are turning over their duties to the Wrens in true Naval style, by taking them for a run to the "Screech-box"—the local bar patronised by 99 per cent. of our Communicators. Perhaps the reason for this is that it is probably the only bar in the village where we are allowed to go "on the slate" at the beginning of blank week.

Finally, to all those who have recently left Hal Far and those who are soon leaving, the best of luck. And to the new staff, may their stay here be an enjoyable one; it is anticipated that the combined efforts of the S.C.O. and S.C.A. should hold them well in check. And to all Communicators, wherever you may be, the Best of Luck.

H.M.S. "OSIRIS" M.E.L.F.17

We often wonder how many people in the U.K. know of our existence in the Middle East. A very small proportion of Service personnel and an even smaller proportion of civilian people is our guess. So, we decided to "commune" and let you know something of our life here.

We are few in numbers, officers, ratings and Wrens, and as usual in our Branch we work extremely hard. At least, that's our story! To say that our social life is madly gay would be stretching a point a bit, but we do manage to get some fun out of life.

It is a bit late to report on Christmas proceedings, but what else? The Wrens contributed to the festivities by holding a social evening in their Recreation Room, the Navy celebrated in traditional manner, and the evening was a great success. Shortly after Christmas we held our Annual Dance at the Olympia Stadium here at Fayid. This was a great evening and we all had a most enjoyable time.

While our days are still warm and sunny we are hoping that the winds now blowing are not fore-runners of too many sandstorms in February and March. Last year these caused great havoc with tents and other unstable erections. We might add that we do not envy all the U.K. "stanchions" their winter at home, and to get off the conventional subject of the weather, we will say goodbye for a while and hope that 1951 will prove a peaceful and happy year for all.

HAVE YOU HEARD . . .

Of the trainee who fell in with Clanfield libertymen with a broom in his hand, because the Block Office was shut and he could not retrieve his card, in lieu of the broom.

The Master-at-Arms took the broom in exchange for liberty.

ROUND THE HOME ESTABLISHMENTS

BURNHAM W/T STATION

All of us at Burnham W/T Station wish to convey our thanks to the many ships and stations who so kindly sent us Christmas cards and Greetings for 1951. The drafting situation appears, at least for the time being, to be somewhat easier, consequently changes in our staffing have not been so frequent of late. The stabilising effect thus achieved has enabled most of our operators to really "get to grips" with the job, and compete quite favourably with the more experienced of the Post Office operators with whom we work side by side in perfect harmony.

Mr. Salter, S.C.O.(SWS), on appointment to Whitehall W/T last June, was superseded by Mr. Thorpe, S.C.O.(SWS), who, though loath to leave the "Bluebells of Cookham," has now established himself and family at Burnham.

The station was honoured by several distinguished visitors during the last quarter of 1950, being visited by the Director of Signal Division in September, by the Commander-in-Chief, Plymouth, and the Colonial Telecommunications Board in October. All our visitors were very interested and impressed in all they saw at this comparatively new station.

An idea of the work carried out at Burnham W/T Station can perhaps be appreciated by Communicators from the following figures of traffic handled during 1950.

Total number of Naval and Commercial messages handled was 457,900. The total number of words amounted to 9,245,000. These totals taking no account of "Services" and "T.R.'s."

Total number of Naval messages received was 15,881 (443,531 words). A rapid calculation will show that each Commercial message averaged a little under 20 words per message, whilst each Naval message averaged almost 28 words per message.

During the "peak" period from 23rd to 30th December, 29,904 messages were handled by the staff, this being an average of 178 messages per hour. In addition numerous "Svc's" and "T.R.'s" were dealt with.

Of all traffic handled at Burnham W/T only 3.6 per cent. is Naval, so please spare us a thought when we appear to take some time in giving you a "K" for your "Routine" or below messages, as you may well be as low as ninth in the "queue" on the "Search point" operator's list on that particular frequency band.

It is to be hoped that you at sea will not be unduly alarmed and think Burnham have "gone mad" if you should receive such niceties as "R tks om," it will merely indicate that you are being worked by a G.P.O. Operator who has lapsed into "Doing wot comes naturally." So far as is possible we make every endeavour to work you with a Naval Operator if one should be free to do so.

HOWLER

Unnamed shall be the Telegraphist at GKL who asked a Merchant Vessel to repeat her signals letters, which he had missed when taking her "TR." The "TR" upon reaching the Ship's Bureau at GKL bore the Signal Letters "GN OM."

R.N.S.S. CHATHAM

CHATHAM CALLING AGAIN CHAPS

Since our lengthy effort in December, life seems to have pursued its weary way uneventfully through the winter months, leaving your correspondent biting the end of his pencil, and seeking inspiration from the bitter weather, the inconvenience of late trains on foggy days, power cuts, the repeated efforts of Gillingham to win at home, and the re-incarnation of the "bunting" versus "sparker" controversy resulting from AGM575A, with its abolition of the Copy Typing qualification for Senior V/S Rating.

Talking of Gillingham reminds me! Our very heartiest congratulations to our Alma Mater on reaching the semi-finals of the Navy Cup. Everyone here will have their thoughts (and their shirts) on *Mercury* when they take the field at Fratton Park on Wednesday, 14th February. Well done *Mercury*! We hope you go on to win the Cup, and if Lady Luck should prove perverse, well tried anyway! The efforts of *Mercury* Soccer Team have brought joy to the Communicators, whatever their Depot, throughout the world, and we at Chatham wish them well in League and Cup.

On 31st December, 1950, we were pleased to have our home banker materialise, in the shape of Commander Gray's brass hat. He is at present busily engaged in turning over the Chatham Signal School Garden Development Scheme to Lieutenant Commander Thomas. Whilst wishing Commander Gray *bon voyage* and a pleasant commission with D.S.D., we hasten to welcome Lieutenant Commander Thomas to the chair. Rumour has it that Commander Gray is already working on plans for a roof-garden at Admiralty. We have not yet discovered whether our new C.O. is also a keen gardener, or whether some other outdoor occupation will shortly appear on the agenda of unclassified-men awaiting draft.

During the past few weeks, No. 26 Ldg. Sig.'s and No. 16 Ldt.Tel.'s "Q" Courses have duly passed out and departed from our midst, and their successors in the Training Schedule have got off to a flying start, despite some initial dislocation of No. 25 Ldg.Sig.'s class due to non-arrivals on the opening day. However, as it was subsequently discovered that the draft note of one unfortunate individual had erroneously been dispatched to a Government office at Newcastle, we were not surprised that he arrived a little late.

The mast has at last been successfully erected, and is in use, thus causing many old-fashioned R.F.R.'s

to ponder deeply over the new colours and meanings. The weekly classes of R.F.R.'s come and go quite happily, envied by those unfortunates who are time-expired retained.

Thoughts are at the moment concentrated on Navy Days, and the problem of selling Communications to the public, with some simple plans, involving few ratings, thus thwarting the wiles of "Draftie," who would, we feel, be morally bound to claim the key men of any specially rehearsed set-piece.

Since our last article, Mr. Bales has left us for Staff of C.S.2 in *Swiftsure*, and Mr. Clarke has relieved Mr. Cox who is now in the throes of rotating the axis at *Mercury*.

The Fishpond is still fishless, but we have hopes of remedying this when the weather breaks.

In case the buzz has not reached everybody yet, Chatham has regretfully registered yet another record. We were fortunate in having eleven Ldg. Sigs. selected for No. 21 Yeo. Sigs. Course, and in due course all eleven candidates returned to us, having failed Part I of the Course, viz. Fleetwork and Procedure. Future candidates please take the lesson to heart. If you are waiting to be selected for a course, do try to prepare yourselves, and do not take the everyday things like "Colours and Meanings," "Procedure," etc., for granted. The more preparatory groundwork you tackle now, the better your chance of making the grade when the time comes.

COMBINED OPERATIONS SIGNAL SCHOOL

Exercise "Hermes II," which we mentioned in our last article, was a great success, and we were honoured by the presence of the Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Signals), Air Vice Marshal Addison, during the closing stages of the exercise.

As this article goes to press, Captain Swallow is visiting us and we are having the pleasure of showing him round our school.

As season succeeds season, and Easter is practically upon us, so appointment follows appointment, and it is with regret that we say farewell to both the Commandant, Commodore L. F. Durnford-Slater, R.N., and Signal School's First Lieutenant, Lieutenant Kelly, M.B.E., R.N. We wish them every success in their new appointments. S.C.C.O. Mr. E. F. Habgood succeeds Lieutenant Kelly, and a hearty welcome greets him from us all at the School.

Our Combined Operations signals demonstration Staff, with their particularly intricate and interesting job, are steadily becoming more in demand further afield. In January they went to Catterick Camp where the Army Signallers were provided with several aspects of what has to be contended with when the signal organisation is working at full pitch during a landing. In the near future another trip takes the Staff to Scotland and Northern Ireland, where it is hoped that many others will ultimately become more conscious of the great necessity for providing a really

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adequate and proven communication organisation during a landing operation, and subsequently, when the landing has been completed.

So far this term two more R.A.F. Officers courses and Special P.O.'s. Course have passed through the school. The latter, I understand, enjoyed themselves immensely during their stay, and were not at all perturbed at having to undergo the "wet" landing which culminates every such course.

"Bulolo," our dummy H.Q. Ship, has practically finished its "refit." With its new wiring completed, and the interior repainted, it promises to become an even more attractive demonstration "ship" than ever it has been previously.

It is understood that an L.S.H. (S) will be commissioning shortly and operating with the School. It will certainly give us and the students more opportunity to see what really happens when a headquarters' ship is working at full pressure.

If you happen to be in the "Awaiting Draft" pool in any of the depots during the summer, do not be surprised if you are attached temporarily to Combined Operations Signal School. The large-scale exercises being planned will require all available communication ratings.

It is expected that in the very near future a concert party, consisting of volunteers from the Centre, will start its rehearsals. If sufficient support is forthcoming, this concert party will become a regular part of life here, performing in Mountbatten Hall, which is normally used for Senior Officers' Staff Courses.

The Centre's premier soccer team continues on its winning way, not having been beaten at all this season, and, naturally, is at the top of the North Devon Junior League table. The Second XI, however, is not so happily placed, but with the enthusiasm of Yeoman Beckerly, Tel. Dunbar and Tel. Bevan, together with the representatives of the other Services to act as a spur, it will surprise none of us if they become world beaters!

• F. A. N. A.

R.N.S.S. DEVONPORT

Since the last issue of COMMUNICATOR a few changes in instructional staff have taken place: Instr. Lieut. Morton and Mr. Best have left for Courses at Greenwich and Leydene respectively; Instr. Lieut. Grundy taking over from the former, and Mr. Kennedy from the latter. Mr. Salter departed in H.M.S. *Glory* and Mr. Sproson left to take up his appointment in Singapore. With them go our best wishes and to all our other fellow-Communicators of the West Country Division, who are ploughing up the seven seas.

Of note, too, is the departure of the R.P.N. contingent who were accommodated at Vicarage Road. Their Communicators undertook Refresher and Qualifying Courses while here, and their keenness and enthusiasm was most pronounced. Although they have still a few weeks more in U.K. before sailing, we bid them *bon voyage*.

The New Year dawned quietly down West, the main worry for many in the School was how to get a ticket for the Argyle-Wolves cup-tie, but alas! once again the third round was the end of the road for the West team until next year.

In our own sporting sphere the Table Tennis "bug" has bitten a large percentage of the residents here. Matches are played in the local League, where the standard of play is high. We continue to shine in the Soccer and Hockey matches also.

Last month (January) saw some of the R.F.R. V.S. and Coder ratings back for a week's Refresher. The former consisted of C.Y.S. and Yeoman and amongst them was C.Y.S. Wootton, Blood Reed and Yeoman "Ginger" Richards, who were very well known in this Division before "swallowing the anchor."

Our classrooms are extremely busy these days. The policy of classing up Juniors for Refresher Courses and other instructions pay better dividends later from the Service angle, than being employed on jobs around the camp which show no return, e.g. chopping weeds in twain, etc.

Good results were obtained from our last Leading Sigs. (Q) class, all being successful. That's how it should be, but in passing let's face the fact that the basis of success in all these courses for both branches is a little "rub up" as often as possible. Even half-an-hour each day whilst waiting for a Course means up and imparts knowledge, which gives that all-important factor—*confidence*.

January was also the month for Commodore R.N. Barracks, Devonport's (Rear Admiral P. S. Smith), relief by Commodore B. Bryant, and during his final inspection of Divisions in R.N.S.S., we learnt from his farewell speech that Vicarage Road would continue to house Devonport Signal School for another five or ten years.

The School's oldest inhabitant (by virtue of tenancy), "Bunts," is still going strong, truly a democrat of the first order. It is incredible how he ignores completely anyone with a "cardboard foc'sle," and bribing in the way of victuals produces negative results, after consumption, of course. &



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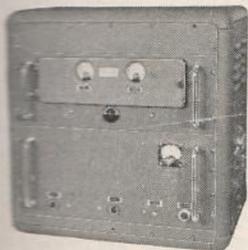
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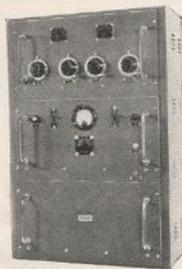


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change of time of falling in the Duty Watch got him foxed though, and "Bunts" stood baying loudly as No. 1 marker, but alas no "bods." He could not work that one out.

That it pays to advertise is true, and the B.B.C. using the spoken word as a medium, did impinge on the brain of one young signalman here who, during an oral examination, when asked where the signal letters of H.M.S. *Vanguard* could be found, emphatically stated the "Radio Times", and in the opposite branch one Telegraphist wrote in answer to a question on his Crypto paper that "the true starting point indicator is never used at all."

We expect the *Jamaica* home on 27th February, so we say "Welcome and well done indeed." To all other West Country Communicators, especially those engaged in the Far East Mission, "Happy Easter and success in all your activities."

C. K.

R.N.A.S. FORD

On 6th March, 1950, H.M.S. *Peregrine* recommissioned after a closed period of nearly two years. During this time the runways were entirely rebuilt and lengthened and an extra storey and a new wing added to the Control Tower. On 21st April the airfield reopened for flying operations.

As it must be a long while since R.N. Air Station, Ford, appeared in the pages of COMMUNICATOR it may be as well to remind readers that it lies near Littlehampton, in West Sussex, about two miles from the sea, roughly midway between Brighton and Portsmouth, and within two hours of London. This makes it a good proposition for "natives" and the rest can seek consolation in the pleasant Sussex "pubs."

The permanent flying task at Ford consists of the twin-engined Detached Flight of 771 (F.R.U.) Squadron and 703 (S.T.U.) Squadron which maintain a steady tempo with bursts during intensive exercise and carrier trials periods. During the latter we have a good opportunity of seeing some of the latest aircraft. An additional task is to accommodate disembarked Air Groups and Squadrons. We have the 17th C.A.G. working up before embarking in H.M.S. *Theseus* with whom they are now earning distinction in Korean waters, and 827 Squadron is at present forming here.

As there is no accommodation for W.R.N.S., the naval communications staff is all male and comes from Chatham Depot. The M.S.O. and P.B.X. are manned by civilian staff.

As far as communications offices and equipment are concerned a large scale modernisation programme is in hand. The C.R.R. is now situated in the rebuilt Control Tower instead of in a portable structure alongside. The V.H/F receivers still remain in the latter, but it is hoped that they will soon be moved into the new Receiver Room which is under construction. The mobile V.H/F D/F has recently been

replaced by a permanently fitted outfit which is a great improvement. Further additions hoped for in 1951 are G.C.A. and a new Transmitter Room. More nebulous is a major works proposal which includes a new M.S.O. and associated offices.

The Communications Division has taken its part in all Station sporting activities, combining at times with the Air Division on account of small numbers. Honour has been satisfied in Athletics, Rifle Shooting, Hockey and Cross Country. The football team has already won the Station Knock-out Competition and should, barring accidents, finish the season in its present position at the top of the Divisional League.

We look back on 1950 as an uneventful period in which we were able to work up. Perhaps 1951 will produce bigger and better things—not least some hot, dry weather.

In conclusion, the Communications Staff of H.M.S. *Peregrine* send their very best wishes to all their opposite numbers at home and abroad, ashore and afloat.

SIGNAL SCHOOL, H.M.S. "GANGES"

It has been said of one individual, that instead of having the usual "IN," "PENDING" and "OUT" trays on his desk, he had them marked "TOO EARLY," "TOO LATE" and "TOO HARD." Well, I am afraid our contribution for the Christmas Number of COMMUNICATOR must have been in the "TOO LATE" tray, so we shall have to cover the last two terms.

The main event was the selection of some fifty Communication Boys to be trained, in addition to their multifarious duties at *Ganges*, to dance the hornpipe for the Festival of Remembrance at the Albert Hall. The B.B.C. commentator actually mentioned that they were Communication Boys, and I can imagine some older Communicators saying, "Naturally, they picked Communication Boys," and others who said, "So that's what they are trained for in these days!"

Although the combination of communication instruction and hornpipe practice caused us some headaches during the "work-up" period, we were very proud of their final efforts, and we feel sure that in future years they will not let their children and grand-children forget that "I was in the *Ganges* Hornpipe Party which danced before Their Majesties King George and Queen Elizabeth, in 1950."

We are glad to say that the course for Communication Boys has now been lengthened to a full forty-five weeks—an extension which we hope should improve final results, and cut down the amount of back-classing of boys who fail to keep up with their classmates.

At the same time, we have taken the opportunity of revising the syllabus, with the aim of presenting the information in a more logical and systematic way.

The first classes to benefit from the full extension go to sea in July this year. Classes being drafted

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before that date have been granted the extension in part only, but are already giving promising results. Those of 202 Class (C.P.O.Tel. Taylor) and 203 Class (P.O.Tel. Waspe) were particularly creditable.

Nevertheless, much practice at sea is essential if the boys' standards of speed and accuracy are to be maintained and improved. And we trust that you Communicators at sea will welcome the boys to your staffs, and keep up the S.B.X. pressure.

We are gradually getting the Signal School re-wired, painted out and modernised as far as equipment and materials allow. Our Voice Teacher is proving a great boon to instruction in that subject, so on the whole things look rather brighter for the future.

Those of you who have recently been in *Ganges*, either as Instructors or Boys, will no doubt remember the discussions over the merits of the "House System," which superseded the "Class System" some two years ago. We do not intend to continue the arguments here, but some will no doubt be interested to hear that we are now back to the state of affairs where each Instructor has his own class in his mess. An attempt has been made to preserve certain of the advantages of each system in the new, and we feel sure that all will benefit, particularly those "not so bright" boys who need individual coaching and attention.

The St. George's Prize, which is awarded to the best all-round Boy for the term, was won by Sig. Boy E. Bigland (drafted to H.M.S. *Indefatigable* in November). He was closely followed by Sig. Boy W. Jones, who is still serving here as an Instructor Boy. We congratulate both these boys on such a fine effort, and hope they continue the good work at sea.

We were sorry to say good-bye to Mr. Habgood, S.C.C.O., who left us early this term for North Devon, at the Combined Operations Signal School, and to his chair as "VI" we welcome Mr. Burnham from the Staff of C.in-C. Home Fleet.

Over to our Amateur Radio Club for our final paragraph.

AMATEUR RADIO CLUB NOTES H.M.S. "GANGES" — G3DID

"Hull G3BZU, G3DID calling. Glad to make your acquaintance."

I trust we shall "see you" on the air shortly.

We have been licensed since 1948 and a constructional section was started the following year, based largely on a quantity of scrap radio equipment obtained from Risley. Unfortunately, most of this gear has been stowed outside for some months and was fit only for breaking down, but we found four RBJ4 receivers in quite good condition, and a dozen small transmitter chassis which have proved ideal for small receiver construction. Locker and bench space is limited, so membership is confined to Boy Tels. who have passed the Radio Theory Examination, normally taken on their 36th week on course.

The Club is open four nights a week and activities include operating and constructional work. Several films of interest to the technically-minded have been shown, and now that some of the receivers made by Boys are nearing completion, a series of lectures on their detailed theory is planned.

Our transmitter is a T.C.S., and we use B29's and RBJ4's for reception.

We have plenty of enthusiasm among the Boys, but are always short of genuine "hams"; so if any of you G3BZU's are drafted to *Ganges*, we shall welcome you with open arms. Best 73s to you all. G3DID.

NAVAL AIR SIGNAL SCHOOL

Shortly before our Christmas furlough, Naval Air Signal School had the pleasure of a short stay of Dutch Officers and Aircrewmembers for a Radar course. Our Western Union friends, fortunately, arrived in time for the Ship's Company Dance, which was a great success. This social occasion terminated a successful year of the Air Signal School's activities.

The festivities of Christmas being now pleasant memories, N.A.S.S. has settled down to its 1950 programme.

The fifth Observers Course have now departed to St. Merryn, to further their knowledge of naval aviation. Their successors, the sixth, which consists of four Lieutenants R.A.N., one Lieutenant R.N., three Midshipmen R.N., and one Midshipman R.C.N. have assumed residence at Seafeld Park.

At the time of going to press we have undergoing a three weeks' Air Familiarisation Course the 1950-51 Long "C" Officers, whose flying activities have been somewhat dogged by very inclement weather. Since the present term commenced No. 16 W.R.N.S. Signal Course have completed their D/F and have departed to various Naval Air Stations and M.S.O.'s throughout the United Kingdom.

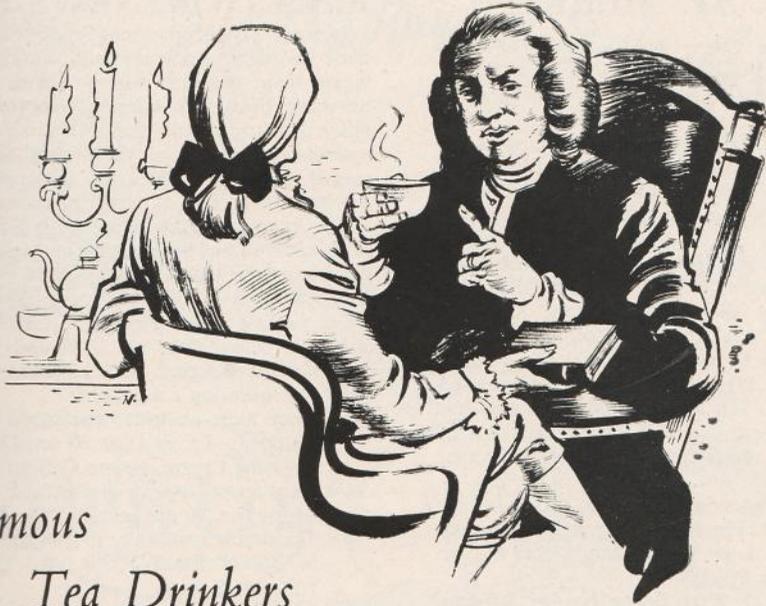
Wednesdays and Fridays we are visited by R.F.R. AR and AW ratings from Lee-on-Solent, numbers 2, 3 and 4 have already passed through the School. As from February 13th future R.F.R. training programmes incorporate Refresher Courses for T.A.G.'s.

Anticipated courses in the near future are the Dominion Long "C" Course (4 I.N. Lieutenants, 1 R.P.N. Lieutenant) and No. 17 W.R.N.S. Signal Course.

In the field of sport it is with regret we said good-bye to our two hockey full-backs, Lieutenant Tolley (N.A.S. Eglinton) and Mr. Clarke, C.C.O. (N.A.S. Ford). Shooting enthusiasts are now enjoying the comfort of our indoor range, and indeed our team are performing with greater proficiency since its introduction.

Agricultural aspects: Mr. Newman, C.C.O., our Agricultural Officer, has recruited the services of Mr. Claxton, S.C.C.O., another gardening enthusiast.

Our football team, alas, though very keen and willing, have not yet had the success they deserve.



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R.N.A.S. ST. MERRYIN

Since last writing to you from the county of liquid sunshine, Lt. Cdr. P. Davie has joined us as S.C.O. We trust his commission with us will be a long and happy one.

On 18th January, 860 Squadron, consisting of Sea Furies, arrived from Holland, to be greeted by typical English weather!! The Squadron have settled down speedily and are now flying approximately four sorties a day.

P.O. Wren Evans is still with us, coping with slight language difficulties on "OPS ONE." The CRR were very sorry to lose Wrens Rogers (*nee* Morgan), Wright, Tayler and Weeks on 2nd December and wish them all the best in Civvy Street. L/Tel. Reynolds is now on course in Plymouth, having been relieved in September by L/Tel. Street. Treligga Range has "borrowed" one of our five male telegraphists to man voice circuits . . . rumour has it that this is a quiet number!!

Mr. Salter is now serving in H.M.S. *Glory*, having been relieved by Mr. Franks last August. Mr. Franks has taken over the duties of Assistant Signal Officer and in charge of the P.C.B.

In the M.S.O., P.O. Wren Brown has lost L/Wren Mathews, who is now overseas at Fayid, and in her place welcomes L/Wren McKinnon. The overseas demand for M.S.O. Wrens will doubtless deplete the staff in the near future, but there is some consolation in the fact that any of our five Signal D/F trained Wrens can be lent to the M.S.O. should the necessity arise.

For the first time for many months, P.O. Wren S. Jones has a full complement to man our ever-busy switchboard. In exchange drafts and demob. we have lost Wrens Gow, Humphries, Civil, Osborne and Ramsay and take this opportunity to wish them success in the future. To our ranks we welcome Wrens Walters, Hall, Buckley, Heath and Coy.

A much-disillusioned P.O. Tel. Brewer, who thought his time in the Navy would finish in February, has now heard, in company with many colleagues, that Their Lordships require his services for a further eighteen months. The possession of a new motor-bike is some small recompense, however . . . the "Cornish Arms" is much nearer!!!

With Lt. Cdr. Davie as Rugby Secretary; Wrens J. Button and J. Frost, Station Hockey Eleven; P.O. Wren Jones and Wren D. Chapman, Wrens Air Command 1st couple Badminton; Wren A. Low, Station Netball team; and Wren B. Baker, Station Table-Tennis team, the Department is very well represented in the world of sport.

One last member of St. Merryn staff must not be passed over unmentioned . . . we would like to say that O/Tel. "Sparker" Evans should shortly be due for rating. After all, he has put in a fair amount of service at *Vulture*. To the uninitiated, may we explain that the reference is to a popular and well-loved canine friend owned by the P.O. Wren Tel.

R.N.V.(W)R. NEWS LETTER

In these days of National Service, we believe there must be many men, either still serving or who have taken their pension, whose friends and relatives bombard them with questions regarding the possibility of carrying out National Service in the Communication Branch of the Royal Navy. For this reason, we believe that a few important facts about the various schemes of entry may be of interest.

The important and basic fact is that, in order to carry out National Service time in the Communication Branch of the Royal Navy, youths must enter the R.N.V.R. or R.N.V.(W)R.

Let us first deal with the *R.N.V.(W)R*—Youths must join between the age of 17 and 17½, or, in the case of those deferred, at a sufficiently early age to fulfill the following obligations:

- (a) They must complete one year's training commitments, i.e. at least 80 one-hour drills at a Training Centre, before Call-up.
- (b) They must achieve a standard proficiency in Morse, i.e. 80 per cent. at 15 w.p.m.
- (c) They must undertake to join the *R.N.V.(W)R*, in lieu of the R.N.S.R., for their part-time National Service.
- (d) They must be recommended by their District Officer, R.N.V.(W)R.

THERE IS NO LIST II R.N.V.(W)R.

The conditions for a *R.N.V.R. V/S* rating are similar to those for a *R.N.V.(W)R.* rating with the exception that, in lieu of those in (b) above, they must be able to:

- (i) Read Semaphore at 8 w.p.m.
- (ii) Read Flashing at 6 w.p.m.
- (iii) Have a knowledge of Naval Flags and Pendants.

The passing percentage for all these subjects is 75 per cent. The recommendation in (d) above will, of course, be given by the C.O. of the *R.N.V.R.* Division.

Members of a Sea Cadet Corps Unit who have qualified for their Signal Badge, 1st or 2nd class, whilst still serving in that Unit, are permitted to join *List II R.N.V.R.* at the age of 17½ or over, providing that they can undergo 14 days' continuous training at sea, before they are called-up.

To avoid disappointment, it is important the application should be made as early as possible in reaching the above ages, as the numbers which can be accepted are limited.

Further provision is made for those youths whose educational commitments prevent their carrying out the qualifications outlined above. This is known as the "Schools and Universities Entry."

Should you require further details of any of these schemes of entry, you should apply to any *R.N.V.* Recruiting Office, *R.N.V.R.* Division or *R.N.V.(W)R.* Training Centre. If none of these are within reach, application should be made to the Admiralty Commanding Reserves, Queen Anne's Mansions, St. James' Park, London, S.W.1.



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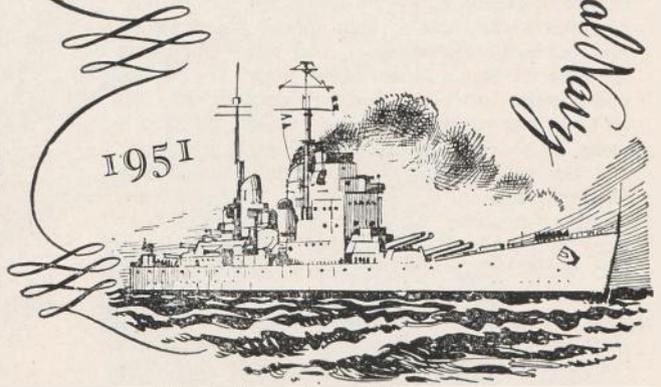
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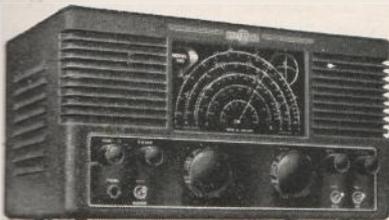
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GOING THE ROUNDS IN "MERCURY"

ENTERTAINMENTS

December was a busy month in the entertainments world, winding up on the day before leave started with the Childrens' Christmas Party. Instead of each mess organising their own, as in previous years, it was decided to run a combined party financed by the Welfare Fund.

The programme was planned to open with the customary end of term Decathlon, but cold and wet weather (how extraordinary) forced this to be cancelled. So on arrival, the 180 children, with no chance of expending on the Broadwalk any of their previous weeks' pent-up high spirits, descended on the rocking-horses, see-saws, and other side-shows rigged in the Signal School Mess lounge. The parents and side-show attendants heaved a great sigh of relief an hour later when Miss Murray announced "Tea is ready." The scene then shifted to Popham Messdeck, and the parents went "back stage" to the Petty Officers' Mess for a well-deserved "cuppa." Next, "Father Christmas" (C.P.O. Tel. Roy) with "Peter Pan" and "Alice-in-Wonderland" led the children into the C.P.O.'s Mess to distribute his cargo of presents. Some of the ages given by the children differed from those given by their parents prior to the party, so Father Christmas left for his much-needed "one-on-the-ice" very relieved to hear that only one child had thought plasticene was another dish on the tea menu! After a Silly Symphony Film programme in the cinema, the children, very happy and, alas, still not tired, left in a flotilla of "Little Wonders" trying to blow up their balloons with mouths full of sweets.

So, together with the C.P.Os., P.Os., and S.S. Mess dances on the three previous evenings, the Children's party gave our ensuing Christmas festivities a very happy and for many a "wet" launching.

A special word of congratulation is due here to the Signal School Mess Dance Committee and their week-end volunteers, who proved so successfully that in our country surroundings the products of our woods instead of the conventional products of the flag lockers can completely change the appearance of the cinema.

Despite the above activities, the old stagers greatly missed Percy Hancock's annual Christmas Pantomime. However, Yeoman Block and P.O.Tel. Vaughan with the *Mercury* Theatrical Company ably filled this gap in our entertainment programme with the war drama play, "Men in Shadow." Although it did not bring forth the customary panto atmosphere, the audiences on both nights imagined from beginning to end that the stage really was the loft of a French mill, and that they were Allied airmen in hiding.

With such a short term, and wonderful entertainment being provided weekly by our football team, the Entertainments Committee are finding their task easy at the moment. However, the following extracts

from our weekly programmes are of interest.

The Strand Repertory Company paid us their first visit early in February, and kept a well-packed theatre in hoots, not forgetting its female counterpart—giggles, of laughter. We hope to see them back again in May or June with another comedy—"Castle in the Air."

"Radio Mercury's" winter series of weekly programmes—the inter-Mess Knock-out Quiz Competition—came to a close with the C.P.O. beating the P.Os. in the finals. This term, "Radio Mercury" invites each week the different messes to put on their own programmes. On going to press we hear the Petty Officers have something very special "up their sleeves."

A Whist Drive is now held every Wednesday in the Ratings' Dry Canteen.

Finally, the *Mercury* Dance Band. Tel. Comber has introduced a violinist into his team, giving us a quartet once again. So the Thursday night "bops" are as popular as ever, with Tombola and a post or two at Mr. Brown's tavern beforehand.

A date for your diaries—Thursday, 28th June—the Sports Day Dance (possibly in Petersfield Town Hall).

Adios!

CHIEFS' CHATTER

The rapid approach of Easter this year found the Chiefs' Mess hardly recovered from the effects of Christmas before once again we have a term nearly at its close.

We are sure that everyone at Leydene will agree with us, that as far as the weather is concerned, it has been a little more than a wet winter, and we are looking forward to next term bringing us a glimpse of the sun occasionally.

Our little garden at the front of the mess, as may be expected at this time of the year, is particularly in need of attention, and armed with the necessary implements, several volunteers are just awaiting the first fine evening to commence its Spring Clean!

Undoubtedly the most important item of news is the very fine success which our ship's Soccer Team has achieved in reaching the final of the Navy Cup recently, and the mess are justly proud of its representation in Skipper C.Y.S. Rose, and not forgetting the valuable hints the whole team must have received from an old veteran, their trainer, C.P.O.Tel. Baister, which, we feel quite sure, has assisted them in no small way in their success.

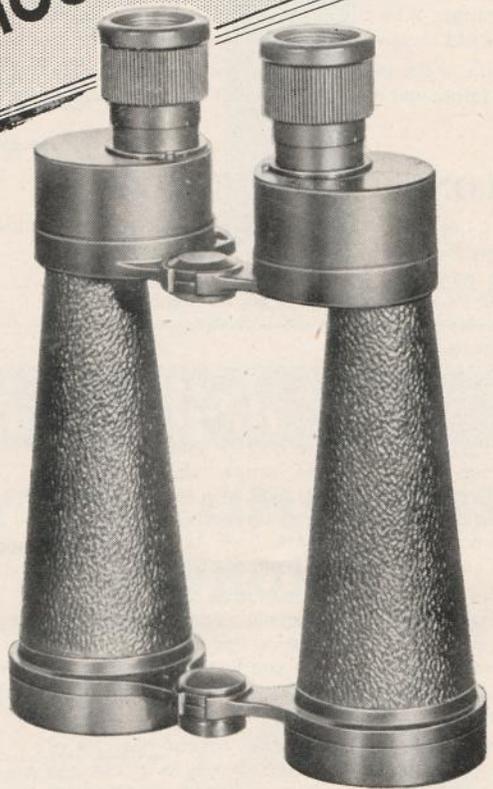
The Mess' training for the forthcoming Inter-Port Soccer has so far been limited to toeing the touchline as "chucking up party" for the Ship's team; however, pension pains and rheumatism aside, we hope to acquit ourselves and give as much as we receive.

Social activities, which included a most successful Christmas Social and Dance since COMMUNICATOR



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last went to print have been limited, this term, to a dart match played at Gosport, our hosts being Hunts, the building contractors, who are busily engaged erecting the camp's new accommodation. We are happy to say that we came away easy victors which included the two gallons of "wallop"!

A Social and Dance was again held on 8th February which, as always, proved extremely popular.

Departures (partings are such sweet sorrow!) include C.Y.S. "Shorty" Butler to R.N.V.R., Liverpool, C.Y.S. Pattison to the sunny Mediterranean, C.P.O.Tel. Dugan shortly to *Mauritius*, C.Y.S. King to *Sheffield*.

Arrivals, some old faces and some new here, include those of the current C.C.O.(Q) class, among which we welcome C.Y.S. J. Baird of the R.A.N., and those of the W.I.(Q) class. We will shortly have another S.I.(Q) class in our midst, so it seems that the old mess will be packed to capacity.

To all C.P.Cs. everywhere we send our best wishes for the future and may all their draft chits be pleasant ones!!!

LONG COURSE NOTES

The Long Course would like to say how glad they are once more to be writing about themselves. Having now been on course for over ten months and with two more months to go, we regret, however, that we are no longer to be considered accountable for our actions.

We have recently spent some time flying around in Anson aircraft sending Morse at each other. After three weeks of this, however, we chucked our hands in, decided postcards were quicker and went up to *Dryad* for a week's A.I.O. course. Here we had a very interesting lecture on T.A.S. by a gunnery officer, and a slight stroke by one member of the course who thought A.I.O. meant "aid to impecunious officers" and informed his bank accordingly.

One of the course has announced his engagement; a source of financial embarrassment to our book-maker, the odds being twenty to one against. Another has cleverly produced a son and heir and now knows more about "noise level" than he did when school explained it.

There being four more weeks to our next lot of exams., we cannot write more, except to include the invention of one member w.o., after being lectured to on warning radar, produced a new secret weapon in the form of a wooden M.F.B. firing a papier maché torpedo which would sink the fleet undetected by radar.

Thought for the next Long Course

To be a Flags
Don't dress in rags
Or gurk
In kirk.

SPORT

According to the calendar, the winter is drawing to a close. There is little corroboration from the weather, but every so often a break in the sky and a quietening of the roar of the wind gives a promise that spring will soon be here.

In spite of an unco-operative climate, sport in *Mercury* has gone from strength to strength and we approach the season's close with much pride. It is true that the shining light of our soccer successes tends to blind our eyes from what has been going on in other fields.

Rugger

The Rugby side has been doing well in spite of drafting difficulties. The New Entries have made a major contribution to the team, particularly Ordinary Signalmen Owen who has played for the Usant Services "A" XV and occasionally for their 1st XV. When Yeomen (Q) 21 class left we lost some well-tried players from the back division. But even if we cannot find experienced substitutes, there is a host of volunteers who will bring boundless enthusiasm which is, after all, an essential ingredient in any player.

There are only four games left to be played—the Port Seven-a-Side Competition. We have some gruelling matches before us.

Results to date are:

Played	Won	Lost	Drawn	Points for	Pts. Agt.
14	6	7	1	92	95

Hockey

The Hockey Team shows every sign of ending the season with a balance of wins over defeats. Much to the surprise of the Reserve Fleet, who had not lost a match this season, we beat them in the First Round of the Command Knock-Out Competition. A fine fillip for morale and, we hope, an omen for the future.

Our matches to date show the following results:

Played 12, Won 6, Drawn 1, Lost 5.

Shooting

The pace in shooting quickens! After a quiet season of .22 at the Hordean range, we are now turning our attention to .303. The covering for this point on our own open-air range has been erected and .303 practice for the Command Meeting in April has begun. Many aspiring marksmen and women have begun daily practice in the dinner hour. There are good signs and augur well for our keeping the trophies we won last year.

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Soccer

At Fratton Park, on Wednesday the 14th February, nearly all *Mercury* saw the birth of a new tradition for the Branch. For, on that day, on a field more like a moorland bog than a pitch, our eleven crowned a succession of victories by decisively out-fighting the Reserve Fleet, Devonport, and so entering the Final of the "Navy Cup."

Only one thing mars our joy and pride at this marvellous achievement. "Jackie" Condon, the patient and tireless architect of all this success, is no longer with us, having retired a bare seven days before this great match. He will be very sorely missed, not only as the mainspring of our football, but because of all he has done for *Mercury* and her company in the last two-and-a-half years.

Drafts have taken their toll of the team, and we have lost several grand players whom we could ill-afford to lose; but their successors well knit with our

veterans, have spared no effort to keep "the mercury rising"; and we are now in the glorious position of being in the Finals of the Navy Cup and the Portsmouth Junior Challenge Cup, and also of being well in the running for the Championship of the Portsmouth Second Division League.

It is not easy to mention the brilliance of individuals, for under the fine leadership of "Chiefie" Roe and with the wise guidance of "Chiefie" Baister, they have shown themselves to be true members of a fine team.

Those who have played recently are: C.Y.S. L. Roe (Captain), P.O.Tel. R. Blacklock, P.O.Tel. G. Cashmore, O./Sig. L. Patten, Tel. V. Woolley, Sig. T. Turner, Tel. J. Baggott, L./Tel. R. Knapp, Sig. W. Hunt, Yeo. of Sigs. M. Woodhall, L.Tel. D. Wilkins, Tel. T. Bethell, L./Tel. P. Thomson, L./Sea. R. Tedder, P.O.Tel. J. Liddle, L.Tel. R. Lawes.

NAVY CUP FINAL

"MERCURY", 5, RESERVE FLEET, CHATHAM. 2;

All those who were at Fratton Park on Wednesday, 11th April, were doubly fortunate, for not only did they see a glorious triumph of enthusiasm but also history itself in the making. This, the greatest sporting achievement in the annals of the Signal School and Communication Branch, has been well reported in the Press, and is too clear in all our minds to need any further record.

This great victory was gained through the determination and energy of the whole team, spurred on by magnificent support, and was a very fine example of how real team work can overcome mere individual skill.

Our rejoicing is damped by the absence of Jackie, the architect of all our success, from this great occasion, and because this may well have been the last occasion on which all this gallant band will play together in *Mercury's* colours. It is not possible to convey in mere words the great services rendered to our cause by such stalwarts as Turner, Wilkins, Bethell, Thomson and Patten. We wish them all the best of luck and hope they will often be able in the future to carry the Green and White to victory.

Finally, I am sure all will join me in congratulating those who have worked so hard to make the *Mercury* Broadcasting Corporation such an outstanding success.

NAVY CUP FOR "MERCURY"

By courtesy of the "Portsmouth Evening News"

"An inspired ten-minute period in the first half enabled H.M.S. *Mercury* to lay the foundations for

their 5-2 victory over Reserve Fleet (Chatham) at Fratton Park, and achieve their ambition of winning the Navy Cup," writes Nimrod.

"They became the first United Services second division team to do so. They were shaky at the start, and their goal during the opening twenty minutes often came under fire. Blacklock in goal and Roe at left-back were coolness itself, however, and by generally putting plenty of vim into their work, the defence gradually got the game under control. *Mercury* were perhaps a trifle fortunate to go ahead in the twenty-fourth minute. It was during an attack, when Bethell was challenging the Chatham right-back, Smith, for possession, that the defender passed back to Walton in goal. To his horror, he saw too late that the goalkeeper had come out to lend a hand, and despite all their frantic efforts, the ball trickled over the line. *Mercury*, except for a brief period in the second half, never looked back thereafter.

"Six minutes after the first goal, outside-left Tedder, who had already shown himself to be a dangerous man, scored with a well-directed shot. Almost immediately they had the ball in the net again with the best goal of the match, one for which Woodhall, Bethell and Thomson, the scorer, must share the credit.

"Maxted reduced the arrears before the interval, and in the second half, *Mercury* took things a little too easily. Hewitt scored for the Reserve Fleet, but after a spell the Signal School again attacked, and Tedder was brought down by Smith in the penalty area. Roe scored from the spot, and Bethell added the final goal."

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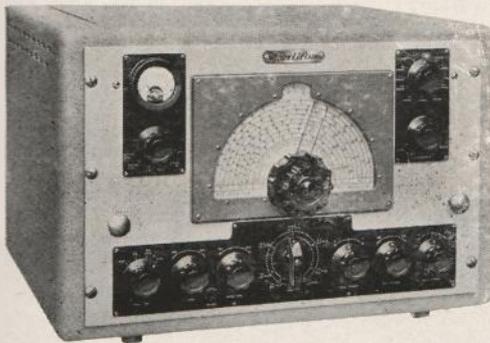
(EDITOR'S NOTE.—Although every endeavour is made to ensure that the information in this section is correct, we ask readers not to treat it as authoritative in the strict sense, and to grant us their indulgence if occasional errors are made.)

Name.	Rank.	Whence.	Whither.
K. S. ADEY	Ty. Lt.(Sp.) R.N.V.R.	—	Mercury for Ce. Refresher Course
G. AFFLECK-GRAVES	Cdr.	President (D.R.E.)	Mercury
Miss P. AHERN	1/O. (Ce.) W.R.N.R.	—	Mercury for Ce. Refresher Course
E. B. ASHMORE, D.S.C.	Cdr.	Vengeance	President (D.R.E.)
W. J. B. G. AYRES	S.C.C.O.	Mercury (Conversion Course)	Staff of C.-in-C., H.F.
D. J. BALDWIN	Ty. S/Lt. (Sp.) R.N.V.R.	—	Mercury for Cy. Refresher Course
E. G. BALE	S.C.C.O.	Chatham. S.S.	Swiftsure (Staff of C.S.2.)
F. BAMFORD	Ty. S/Lt. (Sp.) R.N.V.R.	—	Mercury for Cy. Refresher Course
E. W. J. BANKES	Capt.	President (Tactical Course)	Victory.
Miss J. BANNISTER	3/O. W.R.N.R.	—	Mercury for Cy. Refresher Course
A. R. BARROW	Lt. Cdr.	Afrikander	Bermuda
R. W. BELL	A/Lt. Cdr. (S.)	Mercury	Confirmed in rank
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A. E. C. BEST	S.C.C.O.	R.N.S.S. Vicarage Road	Mercury (Conversion Course)
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G. V. BOULT	Ty. Lt. R.N.V.R.	—	Mercury for Ce. Refresher Course
Mrs. W. C. BRAGG	2/O. (Cy.) W.R.N.R.	—	Mercury for Cy. Refresher Course
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A. J. CONDON, M.B.E.	Comm. Lt.	Mercury	Placed on Retd. List (age)
Miss M. A. CORBETT	2/O. (Cy.) W.R.N.R.	—	Mercury for Cy. Refresher Course

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.

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Miss C. J. DAVIS	3/O. (Cy.) W.R.N.R.	—	Mercury for Cy. Refresher Course
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P. H. DRAYCOTT	S.C.C.O.	Swiftsure	Mercury
H. T. DUFFY	Ty. Lt. R.N.V.R.	—	Mercury for Ce. Refresher Course
F. H. DUNLOP, D.S.C.	Lt. Cdr.	Victory	Placed on Retd. List (age)
D. O. DYKES	Lt.	Mercury	Promoted Lt. Cdr. and re-apptd.
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J. L. GOLDSMITH	Ty. S/Lt. (Sp.) R.N.V.R.	—	Mercury for Cy. Refresher Course
J. P. GORNALL, D.S.O.	Capt.	Victory	Placed on Retd. List
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G. GOULDING	C.C.O.	Mercury	Mercury (Conversion Course)
A. GRAY, D.S.O.	Cdr.	Chatham S.S.	President (D.S.D.)
G. W. GREET	C.C.O.	Mercury	Vengeance
Miss A. M. GRESHAM- WELLS	3/O. (Cy.) W.R.N.R.	—	Mercury for Cy. Refresher Course
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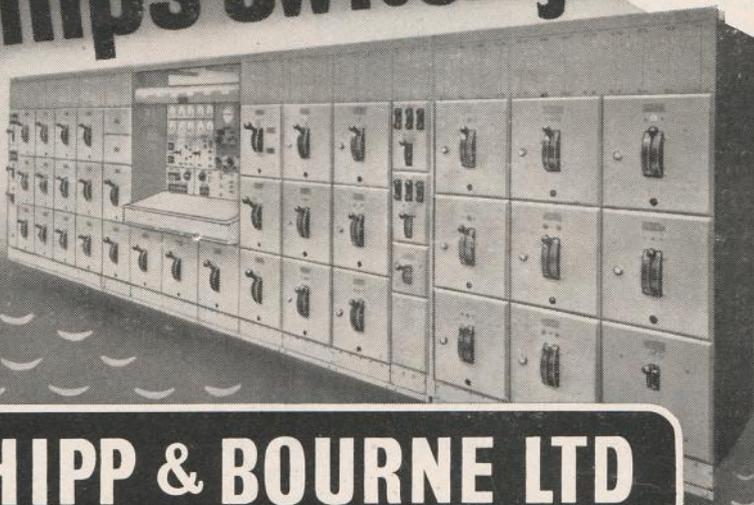
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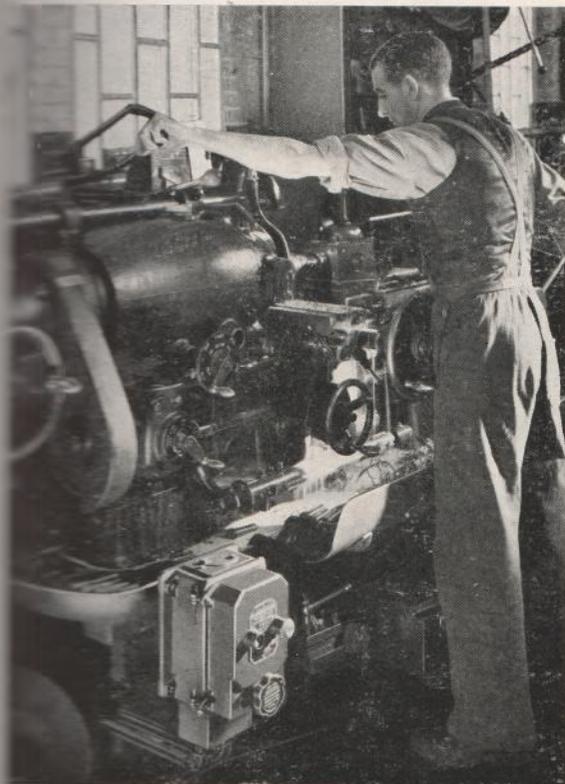
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N. A. P. C. JAMIESON	Ty. S/Lt. (Sp.) R.N.V.R.	—	Mercury for Cy. Refresher Course
A. G. JONES	Ty. S/Lt. (Sp.) R.N.V.R.	—	Mercury for Cy. Refresher Course
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The Viscount KELBURN, D.S.C.	Cdr.	Acteon	Royal Arthur
H. KELLY, M.B.E.	Comm. Lt.	C.O.S.S., Fremington	Mercury
N. L. T. KEMPSON	Lt. Cdr.	President (D.R.E.)	Mercury
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Miss B. R. MACDONALD	3/O. (Cy.) W.R.N.R.	—	Mercury for Cy. Refresher Course
A. MACKAY	Ty. Lt. (Sp.) R.N.V.R.	—	Mercury for Cy. Refresher Course
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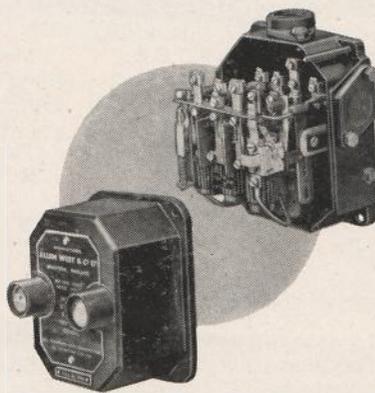


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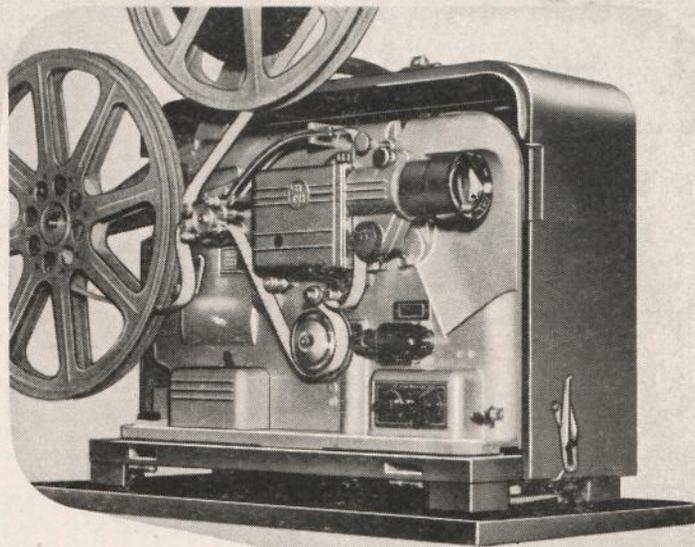
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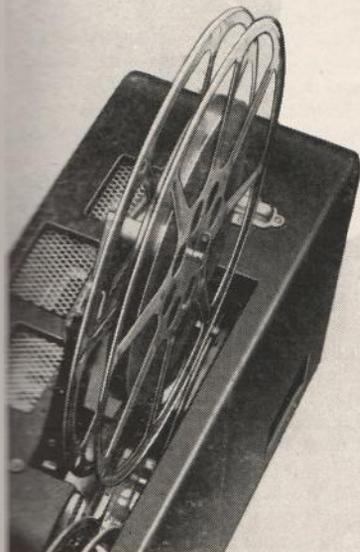


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NEWS FROM SOUTHEND

Many are the tales told of the sea, and of the men who go down to the sea in ships. Some are still being told—until an unimpressed sceptic cries "Steady Jack."

However, spare a thought for those of us who "go on the air" from Shacks—not Far Flung Outposts of the Empire (certainly not far flung enough in the opinion of some Television fans)—but the many R.N.V.(W)R. outstations grouped around their parent Training Centres. Like their large counterparts, they too are beset by their own trials and tribulations. The fuel restrictions have brought their brand of trouble and various ingenious methods have been employed to overcome the lack of heat.

Some are lucky in having the use of a spare room, though, here again, the coal shortage does not permit of a fire—we feel sure that the rating who has his equipment comfortably rigged in the airing cupboard, must have the full co-operation of his ex-W.R.N.S. "sparker" wife who, for all we know, may even stand a watch!

Several of our members teamed up with W.R.N.S. during the war. Consequently, some colloquialisms in current use among "sparkers" are definitely taboo. You cannot "flannel" these Wrens as they know all the answers. In self-defence, the writer hastens to add that, having met many Wrens in the Service, they were all easy on the eye and nifty on a key!

Modulating the 5G Transmitter has cut down, to

some extent, the interference to Television—though we wonder what happens when the T.1154 gets cracking at home? Incidentally, our modulating expert was persuaded to send the diagram up to the "powers that be." Query. How long does one sit on a diagram until it hatches?

Frequent exercises are carried out between Outstations and Training Centres, in conjunction with our affiliated ship—H.M.S. *Cleopatra*. One such exercise departed from the usual dry "Pussers" style and resulted in the following literary efforts prepared by normal headings:

- (a) " = Missing seaboard recovered 10 miles East position X. Rum barrel broached. Crew of five full of good spirits = "
- (b) " = Further to my 171515Z. Reference confinement onboard. This refers to punishment of rating concerned and is not to be confused with birth = "

It certainly stimulated interest!

An article from No. 9 District R.N.V.(W)R. would not be complete without a hearty vote of thanks to the W/T staff of H.M.S. *Cleopatra*. It is realised that their fine co-operation must have meant many hours of extra duty, and it is with great regret that we hear of their paying off. We hope to meet again should we once more embark upon the waters.

Our best wishes also go out to our National Service lads now at Leydene, to all other districts and "old ships"; with best "73's" to all those "Hams" within our midst.

F. P.

POPE

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