

THE
COMMUNICATOR



VOL. 13
N° 3

CHRISTMAS
1959

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THE COMMUNICATOR

The Magazine of the Communications Branch, Royal Navy

CHRISTMAS 1959

VOL. 13, No. 3

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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. Contributions for the Easter 1960 edition must be in the Editor's hands by 7th March.

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A Happy Christmas and A Prosperous New Year To You All

EDITORIAL

A better and brighter Magazine is our ambition and we hope, with your help, that we can raise the standard even higher than it is at present.

The old cover, which has done so well for over ten years is being redesigned and this should improve its appearance. What is more important than the outside is the contents inside and a start has been made on this with the introduction of "Searchlight" (page 122) where we hope to air complaints and circulate bright ideas.

Though we have had noble support from many, who no doubt have been detailed at the last moment to write a contribution from a ship, there is plenty of scope for improvement here. There is a tendency to produce a catalogue of places visited, exercises in which one has taken part and a list of sporting successes. Though all these are welcome contributions it often appears that the item which really is of interest is dismissed in two lines, probably because at the time of writing the details have been forgotten. We want to encourage a good write up of unusual places visited, for the benefit of those who have not been there, or a more detailed account of some incident. This can only be done successfully if it is drafted roughly at the time. If ships could keep a COMMUNICATOR log in the B.W.O. or in some other central position and note items as they occur it would help enormously. Please help to improve the Magazine. It cannot be done without your support.

In this connection, very few cartoons are received. We know there are a number of artists scattered around the globe and their efforts would be particularly welcome.

In the Summer number we asked what you thought about having two editions instead of three. Voting is strongly in favour of three, so there will be no change here.

Seasonal greetings to you all and best wishes for 1960.

THE RADIO SHOW, 1959

by Lt. Cdr. D. H. Cremer, R.N.

I enjoyed seeing this year's Radio Show with a free press pass in my pocket. This was not just because it saved me 3/6 entrance fee. What I liked best was strolling into the Press Office and writing "The Communicator" after my name, underneath "Wireless World" and the "Daily Mail".

There was no one development this year which stole the show, as stereophonic reproduction did last year. The Audio Hall was there again, however, with smooth-salesmen struggling to show you that their equipment reproduced sound more perfectly than anyone else's. Television sets were slimmer, radio sets smaller and there were more portable models of all equipment.

Everything in radio seems to be getting cheaper, one encouraging feature in a world of rising prices. A 17" television set—and incidentally 90 per cent of TV sets sold today are 17"—is on an average, £20 cheaper than it was five years ago. One reason for the reduction in prices is the astonishing number of sets being sold. The industry expect to sell 2½ million TV sets and 1½ million radio sets this year.

Now that nearly two-thirds of the homes in Great Britain have television sets saturation point may soon be reached, as there will always be diehards who "don't hold with such things." An effort was apparent this year to persuade customers of the need for more than one set in each house, and a model of the home of the future showed a screen in each room. With B.B.C. and I.T.V. here, and a third channel in the offing, this might solve family quarrels. Father could watch his boxing on B.B.C. in one room while Mother soaked up her romance on I.T.V. in another. Homes may no longer have a lounge and a dining room, but a "B.B.C. room" and an "I.T.V. room."

Features of the show are outlined on page 105.

Royal Navy Stand

This had no main theme but displayed all kinds of equipment, some of it—for example a diving suit—having little to do with radio. The most disappointing feature was the absence of any communication personnel, with the exception of a couple of Wrens who were sending free telegrams. Perhaps we are all too busy at our jobs, but it was irksome to find our latest U.H.F. transmitter being shown to the public by an R.E.M., who clearly did not know a great deal about the set.

Victorious and her so-called "3 D Radar" were much in evidence, and so were our latest guided weapons. The Royal Marines put up an interesting display, showing equipment used in all sorts of situations from a Landing Craft to the Jungle. They had a good Careers' section where you could listen on tapes to Marines from each branch of the Corps saying "Come and join us, mate, it's a grand life" or words to that effect. They also kept hordes of small boys amused by making two hand generators move trains round two tracks in competition with each other.

Royal Air Force Stand

This was obviously run by a team who spend their time going from one exhibition to another, rather than a few chaps detailed off too late putting up a jolly good show in the circumstances. All the same, considering the space occupied I did not think that there was all that much to see. The R.A.F. Amateur Radio Society had an interesting display of radio sets since 1914.

Other Displays

The G.P.O. concentrated mainly on research and the future. They also showed an operator at a Coast Radio Station taking calls from ships. The B.B.C. as usual put up a very polished performance with shows and displays. As far as TV. was concerned they seemed to vie with I.T.V. in seeing how many different celebrities could be interviewed per hour.

Television

The new 110° tubes were the main features. As the electron beam can now sweep through 110° instead of 90° the electron gun can be nearer the screen and hence the set slimmer. The portable set in the picture has an overall depth of less than 12". More portable sets are being made and a new departure is a set designed to hang on the wall.

Radiograms and Record Players

Like most items of radio equipment these days they are designed to be attractive items of furniture as well as being efficient. This includes the loudspeakers. A model to hold its own must be stereo or at least capable of adaption for stereo. The most depressing feature here is that whatever you decide to buy is sure to be out of date within months. There is always the hope however, that new sets, whose only fault is that they are last year's model, may be sold off at reasonable prices.

Tape Recorders

These are growing considerably in popularity, and have come down both in price and size. A neat portable model can be purchased for as little as 23 guineas.





Radio

More radios are portable and more are transistorised. An example of a transistorised portable is shown opposite. In an effort to think up something new one firm covered one of their portables in Canadian Sapphire Mink. This set costs £166, and you will be glad to hear the price is inclusive of battery. Another firm have made a radio cigarette box. As you open the lid to offer a cigarette a miniature radio inside the box switches itself on, rather like a Japanese musical box.

TECHNICAL NOTES

From time to time in *Mercury's* Technical Section we receive complaints about equipment or suggestions for improvement. We welcome these as some facts come to light only when equipment is used at sea. Any comments on how new equipment is behaving, for example the SSB set HSR 21, would be particularly helpful. If you feel in doubt about putting up some suggestion officially and would like a second opinion just let us know. It is important that we should all try to get the best out of our equipment, and pass on any useful hints we may have discovered.

The new scales of RATT equipment now being fitted are shown in CAFQ 76/59. This is worth careful study even if it does look rather like a crossword puzzle solver.

The first ships fully converted to U.H.F. will soon be at sea and Type 87 is being downgraded in all syllabi. We hope to be able to include a bit more for Petty Officer Qualifying courses on Shore Stations and Test Equipment.

Excerpt from a recent exam. paper: "A Control Unit design 8 is a grey box, fitted alongside a transmitter, with a lot of switches on it, marked 'Not in Use'.

MEON MAID II

The First Sailing Season, 1959

Ceremonial launching by Lady Grantham on March 11th.

Number of days sailed: 136 out of 193.

Number of days raced: 40 out of 136.

206 R.N. and W.R.N.S. Officers sailed in her as well as 300 ratings.

R.O.R.C. Ocean Races

No. 4. Morgan Cup Race (2nd).

No. 5. Lyme Bay Race (1st).

No. 8. Cowes to Dinard Race (2nd).

No. 9. Channel Race (7th).

No. 10. Fastnet Race (5th).

Passage Races

Lymington—Warner—Cowes (2nd).

Southsea to Dartmouth (2nd).

Dartmouth to Torquay (1st).

Round the Island Race (not placed).

Nab Tower Race (6th).

R.L.Y.C.—Cowes to Cherbourg (3rd).

Short Races

Monarch Bowl Series (five 1sts—16th abandoned due to lack of wind).

Round the Buoy Race off Dartmouth (8th).

R.N.S.A. Regatta, 27th June (3rd).

R.A.Y.C. Regatta, 28th June (4th).

Princess Elizabeth Cup, H.B.Y.C. Regatta (retired).

Cowes Week

R.L.Y.C. Race, 3rd August (not placed).

R.Y.S. Race, 4th August (2nd).

Cups and Trophies won:

Monarch Bowl.

Guernsey Cup (for the best performance by a Naval Yacht in the R.N.S.A. Regatta, 27th June).

Your Easter Communicator

ALL CONTRIBUTIONS MUST REACH
THE EDITOR BY MARCH 7th

and

BULK ORDERS BY MARCH 21st

THE DIRECTOR OF THE SIGNAL DIVISION



CAPTAIN E. T. L. DUNSTERVILLE, ROYAL NAVY

- | | | | |
|------|--|------|--|
| 1936 | Qualified in signals. | 1947 | A.S.R.E. |
| 1937 | F.W.A. Mediterranean. | 1949 | <i>Loch Quailh</i> in command. |
| 1939 | <i>Kelly</i> as Flotilla Signal Officer. | 1951 | Promoted to Captain. |
| 1941 | <i>Nile</i> (Alexandria). | 1952 | Signal Division as D.D.S.D. |
| 1943 | <i>Mercury</i> as W.I. | 1954 | C.S.O. and A.C.O.S. to F.O. 2 i/c Med. |
| 1944 | <i>Remson</i> as Force Signal Officer. | 1957 | <i>Gambia</i> in command and as Flag Captain to C-in-C. E.I. |
| 1945 | Chief Naval Signal Officer, East Indies. | 1958 | Director of the Signal Division. |
| 1946 | Promoted to Commander. | | |

'WE TAKE OFF OUR HATS TO...'



**ACT. COMMANDER (SD) (C)
P. W. SWINEY, M.B.E., R.N.**

The first (SD) (C) officer to wear a "brass hat",
and
For completing 39 years in the uniform of the Royal Navy

TRINITY HOUSE AND THE SIGNAL OFFICER

by **Commander H. P. Mead, R.N.**

The Corporation of Trinity House is comprised of a Master, Elder Brethren and Younger Brethren. The office of Master has been held by a royal Duke since 1866. The active Elder Brethren consist of members of the Merchant Service and one naval officer. The naval officer, Captain Sir Gerald Curteis, is the present Deputy-Master. A further ten or eleven honorary Elder Brethren are chosen from famous

men, including such war-time celebrities as Viscount Cunningham of Hyndhope, Earl Mountbatten of Burma and Earl Alexander of Tunis. There have always been a good selection, too, of Prime Ministers and First Lords of the Admiralty, represented today respectively by Earl Attlee, Sir Anthony Eden, and Sir Winston Churchill. Viscount Monsell and Viscount Alexander of Hillsborough.

Lord Fisher was on intimate terms with King Edward VII, they were almost old cronies and swapped naughty stories, but when King George V succeeded to the throne "Jacky" Fisher's royal favour declined sharply, and the latest volume of his Letters reveals him writing the most outrageous things about the King and what he describes as the palace backstair pimps. Jacky raised a rumpus because one of his chums, Reginald McKenna, then First Lord, had his name put forward for Elder Brother, and according to Jacky, the King (who had been former Master of Trinity House) had it scratched out and the Marquess of Crewe elected instead. Not a very likely interference. Be that as it may, that First Lord, Reginald McKenna was not one of the chosen.

The Younger Brethren, of an unspecified number but generally in the region of about 300, consist mostly of Merchant Service captains with an average of about one-third naval officers. It is not known on what principle these are selected. Some are senior officers elected late in life, while some are comparatively junior. Obviously one would expect most of them to be navigators but this is by no means the case. The curious fact emerges that signal officers seem to form a large proportion. Naturally the Corporation would prefer to choose "the elite of the Service" (vide "The Sailor's Word-Book" 1867), but it is doubtful whether Trinity House looks into an officer's records to see to which branch he belongs. It is just a coincidence, but a coincidence which is valuable not only to the signal branch but also to Trinity House. (Incidentally the writer was sworn a Younger Brother, before qualifying in (S), so the election could not have been on the score of signalling?)

It would be taking a liberty to give a list of signal officers who are Younger Brethren today, but it is common knowledge that those pillars of the branch, Captain J. B. Kitson and Rear-Admiral E. B. C. Dicken are in it, as also two former Captains of the Signal School, Vice-Admiral J. W. S. Dorling and Admiral Sir Alan Scott-Moncrieff. Younger Brethren of the past include the famous signal inventors Vice-Admiral P. H. Colomb, Rear-Admiral Sir Edward Inglefield and Admiral L. G. Tufnell; Tufnell was also the first commissioned officer to be in charge of the Signal School. In the past there were in addition two outstanding former flag-lieutenants, Rear-Admiral C. M. Staveley and Captain Nigel Deare.

HOME STATION



C.-in-C. HOME FLEET and H.M.S. TYNE

The Autumn cruise for *Tyne* was a short one, but included a fairly hectic Fleet assembly at Rosyth during which we had a communications meeting attended by all senior ratings. Lt. Cdr. Macintyre, the Communications Drafting Officer, was good enough to come all the way up from Haslemere to put us in the picture on current drafting problems and prospects for the future. After nearly two hours of discussion he left his customers apparently speechless, and on the whole very satisfied.

We took part in many sporting activities and even those who didn't actually play benefited from the two mile walk to watch the others. We got together a scratch (in every sense) team to play F.O. Scotland's staff at golf, and although the exact result is in doubt as the last few holes were played in pitch darkness (a novel experience), we think we won. The fact that one of his opponent's favourite clubs was subsequently found in the F.C.O.'s golf-bag had no bearing on this result.

It was necessary while at Rosyth to make a general signal prohibiting all radio transmissions between 1030 and 1130 on Sundays, due to the presence of a mischievous gremlin which (who?) relayed all signals loud and clear over the dockyard church organ. The possibilities of using this hitherto unknown means of communication on Mondays thru Saturdays are being explored.

After visits to Amsterdam (with the 7th. D.S.), Liverpool (weatherbound in Canada Dock for eighteen hours) and Le Havre (which allowed a 24 hour visit to the museums and art galleries of Paris by a busload of fifty), *Tyne* arrived back in Portsmouth on 2nd November wearing the flag of the Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet, for what may have been the last time. Sad to relate, the Commander-in-Chief and his operational staff are shortly moving to Northwood, which has for some years been his headquarters as the N.A.T.O. Commander-in-Chief, Eastern Atlantic Area. *Tyne* will still accommodate the administrative and technical staff who will also be attached to the staff of Flag Officer Flotillas, Home, who will embark in *Tyne* in the New Year.

It is perhaps appropriate at this point to mention the growing number of Reserve Communicators who

belong to H.M.S. *Northwood*, recently commissioned as the parent ship of the Headquarters Reserve. These men and women live within walking or cycling distance of the headquarters and are trained initially in such specialised tasks as message distribution, crypto, teleprinter operator and so on, and they form the nucleus (quite a sizeable one) which can be relied on to man the headquarters in an emergency. Training is carried out in the evenings, usually weekly and having taken part in two major exercises they are becoming quite expert at their particular jobs, and the training is being widened so that they can perform more senior and responsible tasks, and also to provide more flexibility in meeting day to day requirements.

We note that since *Tyne* commissioned for Home Sea Service in March 1958, no less than 116 Communicators have passed through the ship (sounds as if we must have rather a large staff) and those who remain send their many friends best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

H.M.S. TIGER

by Sub. Lt. (SD)(C) R. A. Thompson, R.N.



Polish girls at Gdynia.

At long last the equipment trials are over. We've admired them for something like six months this year while working up and, at least, the old refrain "know your ship" shouldn't worry us any more. I would hazard a guess that we've had something like



"Colours."

ten thousand visitors onboard, which includes almost everyone you can think of, from Earl Mountbatten of Burma to the Russian Naval Attache in London, and from manufacturers' representatives to Polish sailors. If you think 10,000 is an exaggeration, I can assure you that from Bath we had 3,000 in one day alone. The fact that we're rather green about the gills at the time of writing has nothing to do with the visitors. We are just getting to the end of a month's cruise, that has taken us to Poland, Sweden, Germany and Belgium. Now we can hardly face another brewery run (standfast the C.R.S.).

Well, what have we been up to since we last wrote. The day after summer leave ended we were off to Portland for a five week thrashing, which turned out much milder though much busier than we expected.

It was certainly an unexpected honour(?) to be the only department given two inspections by F.O.S.T. The explanation we were given was that if the communication department was inspected on the ship's inspection day, the result might be confusion for other departments. Despite it being only ten days after our arrival at Portland we saw the sense in that, and sailed into the inspection. "That clears us" we thought. F.O.S.T. obviously didn't think so, for he

sailed into us again, with the remainder of the ship, on the proper inspection day. This time, not being able to find anything wrong (we reckon) he heaved smoke bombs into the B.W.O. The only apparent damage was to one pusser's dustpan which is now as flat as a billiards table.

The working was, I think, much more enjoyable than one expects, especially as it was a minor Commonwealth venture. We had the Nigerian frigate *Nigeria* in company with us most of the time and the frigates *Kerfear* and *Kleppan*, not to mention the Israeli submarine *Tamir*, and the Turkish ships *Akar* and *Kille Ali Pashi*. After reading the flashing from the latter vessel we reckon it should be named Yeoman Ali Pashi. From Portland we came back to Portsmouth for one week's intensive paint ship, in preparation for our cruise. For some reason it failed

to rain and so painting was finished without all the normal torn hair and chaos. We managed to get a short weekend in and then on 5th October we sailed for Gdynia.

This took us via the Kiel Canal and the Baltic Sea where, on the first morning of our arrival we were met by a Russian frigate and escorted most of the way. The Russians seemed very friendly and were amused to see us photographing them. Possibly because they were doing likewise. Before leaving they closed and we exchanged salutes.

During all this time—the workup, paintship and the journey northwards—some of the youngsters had been hard at it, preparing for their 2nd class exams. Their own efforts and those of their instructors were crowned with success when all passed, but the arrival of the new Communication Training Manual a week beforehand caused some consternation, especially when the T.O.3s looked closely at the page marked Radio Theory. It was just before the exam that one T.O.3 was asked the frequency range of a 629. Very seriously he thought the question over and then replied "about 20 miles."

Our arrival in Gdynia was watched by an immense crowd of people, and far from being a formal, somewhat stiff visit, as expected, it turned out to be very

and variable. Perhaps the vodka had something to do with that. We were able to meet most of the English community there, and this being the first large British warship to visit them for several years, they made quite a fuss of us. We also met Polish naval personnel many of whom had served in England during the war.

From Gdynia to Stockholm, and what a sight for sore eyes. Every girl a film star, and very friendly to boot! Nobody seemed able to do a thing wrong in Stockholm—which has nothing to do with the shortage of beer either. We did hear, once, that the Swedes don't centrally heat their houses, because they have better ways of keeping warm. We found out that's true. The general impression obtained in conversation, was that "But you should have come in the summer." What we saw of the winter makes us think it was just as well we didn't.

It was during this visit that some of us had the experience of travelling with the confidential waste to the incinerator, in a Mercedes Benz. We have no facilities onboard for paper burning (new type of boilers, etc.) so we have to take every opportunity that we can to burn ashore. The Liaison Officer was asked to fix transport and lo, a gleaming Mercedes Benz limousine, all walnut wood and air conditioning putted up. Nothing loath, in jumped the paper burners complete with overflowing ornig covered mud hags. Pity Pompey dockyard can't follow suit.

The next stop was Kiel where we had the pleasure of berthing opposite the new German sailing training ship. This modern beauty is less than a year old, and apart from a small auxiliary motor held for entering and leaving harbour, the motive power is all canvas and wind. Feelings were mixed regarding its usefulness but there were few who would have wished to change places with the cadets, seen at 6 a.m. on the upper deck doing P.T. and bathing in buckets of cold water. Present day ships are far more comfortable. From Kiel to Antwerp should be 24 hours steaming, more or less. Trust us, we got caught up in all the Force Nines blowing across the German Bight in October, and it took us something more than 48 hours. After much black magic by the C.R.S. in the B.W.O. one morning we managed to get a radio link call through to the Consulate. Unfortunately for the Chief's valiant efforts the only man there was the sweeper.

It was about this time that the following signals were exchanged:—

From C.O.F.

To TIGER

Tiger Tiger burning bright

Can't get past Walcheren Light.

Reply from Tiger

To: C.O.F.

The pilot came, and at full belt,

We thundered up the muddy Scheldt,

But Antwerp's welcome makes us doubt

Now that we're in, if we'll get out.

(which all goes to show, doesn't it?)

So much for old 'stripes' Tiger. We're just off on another brewery run which although somewhat greener, is where we came in.

As soon as the Antwerp visit is over we shall be away on some "well earned" leave and then off we go for our Med. leg. At least the mighty "Brum" will be glad to see us in Malta.

V.M.S.

by R.S. J. R. Little

This, to the best of my knowledge, is the first contribution from the V.M.S. This is the short title for the Vernon Minesweeping Squadron, that hard worked and little known collection of Deltic and Mirrles powered craft operating from alongside the Isle of Wight vehicle ferry.

The squadron consists of 4 C.M.S. and 2 mine-layers, *Gavington* (SO), *Causton*, *Laleston*, *Monkton* are the C.M.S. Miner III and Miner IV the mine-layers. Attached to it are a further 2 C.M.S. *Bossington* and *Sheraton* for R.N.R. training. In charge of this motley horde is one R.S. who resides in the office of Staff Officer (Tenders). The sole piece of equipment is an ancient C.R. 300 which will only receive Radio Luxembourg on 6 mc/s and the cricket commentary on Network 3. As a matter of interest there is no sea time attached to the job.

The squadron has one or two good 'rabbit runs' to the continent each year, plus a 'jolly' here and there to non-naval U.K. ports (reduced S.O.P.s on C.C.N.). A great deal of work is carried out during the summer months on various exercises, and at the time of writing everyone is swotting up on French/English dictionaries trying to unravel the exercise orders for "Grande Sole" which arrived in 100% French.

Intermingled with our own exercise programme we do try to show a little interest in the communication world by allowing the Long 'C' and N.A.T.O. Long 'C' courses to play with our ships for a day, once in a while.

Offering a much appreciated helping hand are the two stalwarts of the M.S.O. (*Vernon*), C.Y. (Fred) Farrer, (ex-*Eagle*, now R.A.) and L.T.O. (Ben) Bryant, (ex-Med Fleet Pool *Mercury*), and our congratulations go to ex-R.O.3s Phillips and Austin for qualifying R.O.2. The writer, being relieved, will be facing the rigours of the Clyde when this is published.

A little thing was heard in the W.T. office from a Maltese O.Tel, when unpacking some wireless stores—

"What are these POTS?"

"Silica gel Crystals".

"Oh . . . what frequency do we use those on?"

H.M.S. BERMUDA

H.M.S. *Bermuda* recommissioned for General Service at Devonport on 30th April 1959. After working up at Portland the ship hoisted the Flag of the Flag Officer-Flotillas, Home Fleet, at Rosyth on



Glamour from Greenland.

23rd June and soon afterwards set out on visits to the Faeroes and Greenland with H.E. the British Ambassador to Denmark embarked.

This was the first visit of any British Ambassador since the end of World War II and both His Excellency and the Flag Officer Florillas, Home Fleet, were warmly welcomed by the Faeroese Prime Minister who gave a banquet in their honour.

The ship's stay at the Faeroes included thirty-six hours anchored off Thorshavn and brief stops at Transisvaag and Klaksvig. The two latter ports are very picturesque and colour was added by the attendance of Faeroese of both sexes, in National costume, at the receptions which were held on board.

H.M.S. *Bermuda* was the first cruiser to visit the Faeroes for many years and the ship's company were well received ashore and dances and football matches were arranged. At Thorshavn the combined *Bermuda* volunteer band and the Thorshavn Brass Band gave an inspired performance under a local conductor.

The ship's visit to Greenland gave many of the ship's company their first glimpses of icebergs and

entailed a short period North of the Arctic circle. Once again something of a precedent was set as no Royal Navy ship of any size has visited Greenland for many years.

It is easy to forget that Greenland is the world's second largest island and four times the size of France until passages along its wild shores have been experienced.

H.M.S. *Bermuda* visited Godthaab, the capital, and other smaller towns including Holsteinborg, Jacobshavn and Godhavn as well as paying a visit to the Danish Naval Base at Gronedal.

Libertymen enjoyed spells ashore at most of the ports of call and were able to see Eskimoes in their 'sunday best', glaciers and a wide selection of icebergs and ice formations. Considering the small size of the places visited hospitality was generous and everyone seemed to be delighted to meet strangers from the outside world.

The ship's soccer team found that their Eskimo opponents were formidable adversaries and that it is necessary to be resilient to master the contours and intricacies of the Greenland football pitches.

THIRD SUBMARINE SQUADRON

This has been a busy and exciting Term for both submarine and *Adamant's* Communicators. Mid-September our pride and joy—the "Porpoises" (*Narwhal*, *Grampus*, *Rorqual*, *Porpoise*) plus *Artful*, two of S.M.5's charges (*Artemis* and *Aeneas*), and one of S.M.2's (*Thermopylae*) sailed for Bermudan waters and Exercise "Fishplay IV", and there co-operated with other N.A.T.O. submarines for three weeks. Hurricane 'Hannah' intervened but the boats pressed on and great value and experience were gained, particularly communications-wise, from the exercise.

Adamant left the misty Gareloch two weeks after the last boat had departed and cruised along a great circle all alone, keeping a watching brief on the U.S. Submarine Broadcast 'WS' which now, by the way, hits the ears at 50 w.p.m.—so have those tape-recorders ready!

The Gareloch was not evacuated entirely, as the Shore M.S.O. manned by spare crew Communicators and a nucleus of Depot ship boys swung into action and provided the usual facilities for those submarines remaining. These included *Cachalot*, the latest accepted Porpoise class, now working up.

Very few of us had been to the United States before; our feelings on the matter en-route were mixed, and with no little trepidation did we attempt to make ourselves heard among all the other stations in the world, or so it seemed, on the local net as we approached New London, Connecticut—the American submarine base and birthplace of *Nautilus*, *Skipjack* and other up-and-coming nuclear boats.

Our fears were all allayed by the tremendous welcome we received on arrival. Jack was feted, and with the submariners who followed their depot ship into harbour two days later, was inundated by invitations to dances, tours, beer-busts, beach parties and to private homes. Not to mention a trip to the



H.M.S.s Porpoise, Rorqual, Narwhal, Grampus, Artful, Aeneas and Thermopylae lying alongside H.M.S. Adamant at State Pier, New London, Conn.

(Colours half-masted due to death of General George Marshall)

Connecticut Girls' College (a massive seat of learning) where a visit to the swimming bath and a peep at the girls in their 'tank-suits' made many wish for 'Diving Stations!' Nine glorious days did the 'British boys' spend at New London; at 0730 daily the State Pier was alive with lads padding back from night leave in New York, Boston, and points west. Amazing, how far they travelled. *Adamant* wore the flag of F.O.S.M. for four days from 12th October, and the Royal Marine Band of F.O. Air, Home, to whom passage had been given, attracted a large and awed crowd as it Beat Retreat and carried out Ceremonial Sunset on the pier alongside the depot ship, during a reception on board.

From U.K. *Adamant* had also given passage to the Field Gun Crew of the Fleet Air Arm who were bound for exhibitions in the U.S.A., and many was the shudder of a T.O. wending his way across the welldeck for the forenoon watch on the bridge as he saw these mighty men with weights held high and heard the raucous shouts of 'Heave!' We are sure the crew will add further to Britain's and the Royal Navy's prestige during their States tour.

Adamant's 'Sailor of the Cruise', chosen for outstanding work and example from 750 men during the outward passage, was, we are pleased to report, a Communicator and National Serviceman to boot: R.O.3 Brian Joy who was flown to Norfolk Va., then to Washington and given the full treatment of radio, TV, and press; in fact, treated like a V.I.P. This was indeed a boost to our department.

Looking back, our main impressions of the visit to the States are of huge steaks, huge cars, huge noises from the trains, streets bare of pedestrians and the terrific welcome and enthusiasm from the 'natives'.

Communications went very well on the whole although the participants in "Fishplay" had their initial troubles—who doesn't? It was found advantageous to keep Broadcast 'LR' constant in the depot ship while in harbour, and CGH was always immediately on the mark on ship-shore. On 21st October the squadron sailed from New London, the submarines joining in yet another exercise while *Adamant* made a short stop at Halifax (where she found an old friend, *Active*) and then plodded back through the fog Gareloch-bound, with many a heart looking back wistfully to EASTSEAFRON.

When this appears in print we shall have lost our C.C.Y. McDonald and C.R.S. Kennedy who have volunteered, and been selected to impart their profound knowledge and experience to the Ghana Navy and, incidentally to obtain a suritan! Inseparables ever, we shall miss them. Our communications staff changes with alarming regularity but we have much to offer anyone bound for Faslane. A modern C. & P.O.'s Club and Fleet Club complete with skittles alley, close proximity to Loch Lomond and the Highlands, and a busy, always interesting life in the world of submarine communications.



R.N.A.S. BRAWDY

by The Editor

We received these two photographs and were sorry that no background story was sent with them. The following comments and recommendations are therefore made.

1. This form of RATT bay does not meet the staff requirements and is to be discontinued.
2. It is suggested that Brawdy should put in for an outfit CAT to keep the RATT at bay.
3. Any establishments with a spare outfit, as above, should arrange for it to be drafted to the air station concerned.
4. Increase complement by one R.O. (Rodent Operative).

Though a type 617 in the eyes of the R.S.P.C.A. may rate high as a humane killer, this will not be accepted as a reason for installing further equipment of this kind in ships which may be afflicted with unwanted livestock.



R.N.A.S. LOSSIEMOUTH

Since our last appearance in these columns, two major events have taken place at Lossiemouth as far as communications are concerned. One is that we have relinquished Master Diversion Airfield to R.A.F. Kinloss. So no more long nights of waiting in the C.R.R. for the L.R.O.s and believe me they aren't sorry after last winter's experience. Number two is that the M.S.O. and teleprinter room are now manned by naval ratings. Mr. Watt the civilian supervisor has moved south to *Lochmar* and the typists have all been found other posts in the camp, so now they take great delight in sending signals down to the M.S.O.

The annual defence exercise took place this Term and as it was all third echelon support, communications had to be provided from the mobile column. L.R.O. Richardson was in charge of mobile TCS, but he thought it was a bit much to have to take a 3-ton 15 K.W. generator to provide 230 volts for this set.

The Autumn exercise "Floscot" took place in the Moray Firth area and gave our R.O.s plenty of practice on ship/NAS and reminded them that there are other means of communication besides voice.

Did I say two main events? I should have said three. 'Anna', the S.C.O.s bloodhound gave birth to eleven bouncing babies and to date all are doing well.

Departures: L.R.O. Lowe to Far East, R.O.2 Jubb to Cyprus, Wrens Cobb and Irving-Bell to Malta.

Arrivals: C.Y. Soden and Wright, L.T.O.s Head, Carnegie and Fenn, L.R.O. Duffy.

L.R.O. Duffy has been the departments main representative at sport playing regularly for the Fulmar rugby fifteen.

Cheerio from the far North and here's hoping we don't have to use all the winter clothing we have drawn, and that some of the Wrens will be able to find their ski-legs again.

VISIT TO THE ROYAL NETHERLANDS NAVY SIGNAL SCHOOL

Among the many activities, some of them best not mentioned, engaged in by the Communicators of *Dunkirk* and *Jutland* during the Home Fleet visit to Amsterdam was a tour of the R.N.N. Signal School for which thanks are due to our Liaison Officer, Lieut. J. Franke, R.N.N., who fortunately for us happened to be a Signal Officer.

The school is situated on a small island in the heart of the city, surrounded by some of the numerous canals which abound in Amsterdam. As some kind person had thoughtfully berthed both ships far away from such august bodies as Flagships and Squadron Leaders, a boat trip was necessary to reach the school. The R.N.N. kindly provided transport, and so all were able to see a little of Amsterdam's harbour and canals en route.

There are about 350 ratings in the school which is run on somewhat similar lines to *Mercury*, even to producing their own version of *THE COMMUNICATOR*. A refresher course in English Language is included in the curriculum, and of course all procedure is taught in English, though the actual instruction is given in Dutch. It was most amusing to hear an Instructor in the Voice Trainer giving an explanation in Dutch and then to hear his class carry out the correct procedure in perfect English.

It was a surprise to see so much British equipment in the transmitter room alongside such well-known American equipment as TBL and TCS, but envious glances were cast at a Dutch Phillips 50 Watt H.F. transmitter with automatic 12 channel selection.

Touch typing (in the initial stages) is taught to a rhythmic C.W. note as opposed to music, with the object of familiarising operators to typing to a C.W. signal. This was approved by some conservative member of the party who hinted that some sections of North Camp were more in keeping with Arthur Murray. The transmissions for touch typing, and all M.K.X. and M.M.X. transmissions are made on tape from a central office where a tape library is kept.

An unusual feature of training newly joined Telegraphists to make PERFECT morse was a system whereby the Instructor beats time with a wooden baton on a block of wood while the class transmit from a typed script and count out aloud the units for each symbol in time to the strokes of the baton. This takes place for forty minutes every day for the first seven weeks. Old fashioned? Monotonous? Maybe, but would it not be nice if all our Telegraphists could make PERFECT morse? This system is also used in Dutch Commercial Schools. It was interesting to note that the reactions of the eldest and youngest members of our party were the same. Yes! they both thought it a good idea.

Finally: some members of the party wondered how A.S.C.O. came to be the only one to visit the Teletype Relay Centre which is manned by Dutch W.R.N.S. Some people get all the luck.

NORE W.T.

by R.O.2 Barton

Since our report in the Summer edition, very little water has passed beneath the M.H.Q. Chatham. The switch to male staff is now complete and only one of 'les girls' remains, our Joyce, Sig. Wren.

How quiet it can sometimes be and then, in the next minute the world seems split asunder and every office disorganised. Everyone thought we were off to the Palais for dancing lessons when they learnt of 'Sideshow'. We had no dancing instructor, but, after Lt. Cdr. Ford had done all the spade work and then just had to cease through sickness, Lt. Ellis came up from Flowerdown at very short notice to keep the traffic moving. Some traffic cop! We are pleased to report that Lt. Cdr. Ford left us in good

heart and now occupies one of the many chairs at CINCHAN.

Our motley throng of Chatham based ships continues to ply on the high seas, coming and going merrily. Our work is mostly taken up by the E.C.E.S.U. who will soon cease their surveying activities for the winter.

Christmas looms up ahead, our problem being to get everyone on leave as soon as possible and still maintain the same watch in M.H.Q. We sincerely hope that S.T.C. will play ball with reliefs.

PITREAVIE PICTORIAL

Incorporating the "Daily Shirker"

Mansions for Matelots

If you should ever find yourself with one of the stately homes of Scotland on your hands, there are really only three things you can do with it.

(a) Open it to the public at 2/6 a head, but this involves you in such things as Punch and Judy under the portcullis, lemonade and sticky buns in the long gallery, and can be quite a messy business.

(b) Flog it to the National Coal Board as they are in the process of closing down pits and opening up stately homes for civil servants.

(c) Let the R.A.F. have it and then when they're asleep on watch one night, invite the Royal Navy to move in, thereby guaranteeing that one war at least will never cease and at the same time enabling yourself to collect two rents instead of one each week.

Pitreavie Castle is one of these Mansions for Matelots, or more correctly, Castles for Comms., inhabited jointly by the R.N. and R.A.F. and for the benefit of Communicators who may have their future draft chits stamped Rosyth, I'll tell you what you can expect to find there.

Your impressions of the place will depend to a

large extent on whether you arrive in summer or winter. For in summer you will find quaint chalets nestling on a carpet of wild flowers under the majestic trees which surround Pitreavie Castle, while in winter you'll find draughty huts situated in a sea of mud, invariably the greatest, wettest distance away from wherever you want to be.

You will live with roughly 16 other Communicators in one of these quaint chalets/draughty huts and you'll find it equipped with every mod, con., hot water in the taps, cold water down the walls, air-conditioning force ten whenever the door is left open, and television. You will eat in the Airmen's Mess and come back to the hut for television. You will work in M.H.Q. (more of that later) and come back to the mess for television, you will sleep in the mess when you aren't on watch and surface for only one thing—television.

You will 'work' and I use the word very loosely, in the PIT, which as its name implies is situated underground—a long way underground—and this experience will no doubt make you an ardent supporter of the National Association for the Propagation of Lifts and Escalators. And the work you will do will be exactly the same sort of thing that is done in any MHQ or Shore Station and I will not bore you by repeating what Malta M.S.O., Gibraltar M.S.O. and Admiralty have no doubt covered more than adequately.

Underneath the Arches

A report from our Foreign Correspondent at North Queensferry.

In one of the far flung outposts of the British Empire (some claim it wasn't flung far enough), five stalwart Signalmen led by C.C.Y. Maskrey keep their ceaseless vigil at the Signal Station North Queensferry which nestles under the towering arches

ROSYTH MINOR RELAY CENTRE

The Minor Relay Centre at Rosyth was opened on 21st October, 1959, by Flag Officer, Scotland, Vice-Admiral J. D. Luce, C.B., D.S.O. and bar, O.B.E.

The ceremony started with Vice-Admiral Luce cutting a tape, after which he sent a signal to

Singapore W/T. The time of despatch of this signal was 1507Z and the time of receipt in Singapore was 1509Z. He was then taken on a conducted tour of the Relay Centre.



T.O.D. of F.O. Scotland's signal to Singapore.



The "first" arriving in Singapore at 1509Z.

of the Forth Bridge. Or to be more accurate, four stalwart signalmen keep a ceaseless vigil, the fifth keeps his hand in as chief cook and bottle washer. This makes him more likely to qualify for the "Cordon Bleu" rather than "higher rate," but it makes a change from cooking the books and keeps Queensferry a self-contained unit.

Our heroes are mainly concerned with ships entering and leaving harbour, and as they frequently give assistance to merchant vessels this makes them a cross between an R.N. Signal Station and a Coast-guard hut. They also have a piece of equipment called a Dines Anemograph, which sounds pretty disgusting but is in fact Met. gear for measuring the velocity and direction of wind.

Most readers of THE COMMUNICATOR will have been instrumental at some time or other in directing a signal on to a ship or on to an administrative broadcast. But I think it is only North Queensferry that can claim to have routed a signal onto a British Railways Station Broadcast!! The captain of an R.F.A. was forced to anchor his ship to avoid bad weather. This was rather awkward as he'd arranged to meet his wife—who was coming up to join him—at Waverley Station in Edinburgh. He sent a signal to North Queensferry by voice asking them to assist, and the message was relayed to British Railways Waverley, along the usual railway 'lines' to be broadcast over the public address system when Mrs. Captain's train arrived. Whether correct broadcast procedure was used has never been established, but the message was received on the first transmission.

C.C.Y. Maskrey and his men keep themselves occupied off watch with gardening, this includes a vegetable garden, shooting (with an air rifle) and of course the inevitable—television. I wonder if future historians will divide history into three divisions, B.C., A.D., and B.T.—before television. I was rather surprised to find that none of them had ever taken up 'train spotting.'

S.T.C. CHATHAM

by C. R. Morton C.R.S. (R.C.I)

With C-in-C. Nore's visit over, we can now look forward to the Captain of Signal School's visit before seasonal leave commences. Meanwhile, ships in the dockyard keep us in bread and butter, with a few refresher courses for those passing through the depot. Once the New Year is here, our time in the S.T.C. is limited, and a gradual run-down is envisaged, with the whole of our communications complement being drafted to join *Mercury*, etc. (we hope). W.R.N.R.s and R.N.R.s keep us fairly busy, but these classes too will in turn be absorbed by *Mercury* and the S.T.C. Devonport.

Lieut. Nash is to be congratulated on his recent promotion, we wish him the best of luck in future appointments. At last we have a representative football team, coached by L.R.O. Roach but they fell easy prey to a Wren's team recently while we were still recovering from a surfeit of rounds in preparation for C-in-C.s visit.

S.T.C. DEVONPORT

The world wide distribution of this Christmas edition will be effected at the same time as the S.T.C. Devonport celebrates its first anniversary. The vital statistics of the Miss World competition are, no doubt, much more exhilarating than ours but the efforts of this year have brought to light some sobering facts which are well worth recording.

This is not the time or place for soul searching but perhaps our readers may spare a moment or two between the Christmas and New Year festivities to ponder the following:—

Examination	Exam- ined	Passed	Failed	Per- centage Failure
R.S. Provisional ...	2	2	0	0
L.R.O. Provisional	7	0	7	100
R.O.2 Q ...	81	46	35	44
C.Y. Provisional ...	2	1	1	50
L.T.O. Provisional	2	0	2	100
T.O.2 Q ...	29	7	22	76

It is a well-known maxim that figures can be used to prove anything but it appears that 'all is not well.' However, one bright boy will get top marks for initiative for handing in one S.1321 with the following notations: 'persons reading had fit of sneezing' and 'person writing down dropped pencil and could not find.'

All is not lost. The S.T.C. has fared quite well on the soccer and hockey fields and although the annual 'Round the Barracks' run has been designed this year as a running, swimming and shooting triathlon, which should prove whether or not a Pulheim assessment of one is humanly possible, we hope that our team will at least finish the course.

This Term we were pleased to congratulate Commodore Eddison (Combrax Devonport) on his promotion to Rear Admiral and shortly afterwards to welcome his relief Commodore Beloe. We were most sad to learn of the death in September of Lieutenant Jim Wright who was T.S.O. of R.N.S.S. Devonport until its reduction last December when he took his golden bowler.

We have also, this Term, been visited by the Training Commander, A.S.C.O. to A.C.R. and the Way Ahead Committee and despite various buzzes doing the rounds a shift is not contemplated. Usually reliable sources report that the S.T.C. will remain in its present site for many years yet. Indeed, although the signal strength has diminished slightly the exact opposite is happening to the camp itself. Chatham is rapidly taking up the cry 'if you want to get ahead—go west' and we have already been joined by the Hydrographic School. They at first had a little difficulty in re-orientating their plots until it was casually mentioned that the training mast which was accurately charted had moved to *Mercury*. Anyone holding a chart for Plymouth and Approaches thereto, which has an apparent error of 180 miles east is requested to mark same 'NOT to be used for navigational purposes!'

Next year the W.R.N.S. population will increase by about one hundred and twenty when H.M.S. *Ceres* moves west and then we will be well and truly outnumbered by the fair sex. The strange thing is that no objections to this have been heard.

SHORE BILLETS FOR ALL.

For long enough the Communications Branch has felt the lack of shore billets in the U.K. and this is being remedied at last. In August this year seven shore establishments in the Portsmouth area saw the navalisation of their M.S.O.s. C.C.Y. Bartlett and a staff of four C.Y.s and four L.T.O.s arrived in R.N. Barracks, Portsmouth and took over from the not too happy civil servants one of whom had been in the job for 22 years.

POTS IN THE ANTARCTIC (3)

by R.S. E. Clapp

A New Year arrived with a new base to go to, if the ice allows. This year it has been rather bad and has successfully prevented relieving the southern bases so far.

I am writing this on board R.R.S. *John Biscoe* and for the past two or three days all we have been doing is pushing our bows at fast ice which is about five feet thick, and not getting very far . . . still, more of this later.

I left you last time just after our midwinter party, well, the effects soon wore off and work was looked on with more favour.

Unfortunately, the good feelings of midwinter suffered a shattering blow with the loss of three members of the survey, they had been missing for some time and searches had been carried out by the southern bases over the area where they were last reported.

These three had left Base Y to go to the Dionne Islets to do a quick study on the Emperor embryo at the Emperor penguin rookery on these Islets. After the first night out of base, nothing more was heard from them. All bases kept a radio listening watch on the frequencies which the party might have come up on, but nil was heard. Then two dogs appeared at Base Y from the party's dog teams. The dogs were in good condition. Sledge parties from the southern bases started an extensive search of the route they would have taken and also of adjoining areas but nothing was seen or found. In the meantime more dogs turned up at a southern base and at Base Y again, in the same good condition. Searches carried on but in the end it had to be presumed that the party had been lost on the first night out. The most adequate explanation being that a heavy wind arose during the night in their area and the sea ice broke up beneath them . . . a terrible thing, and we at base were very cut up about it as we knew two of the chaps very well indeed, and we could imagine the feelings at their parent base.

Expectation of time in the job would appear to be from six months to a year and will make a welcome break between ships. It is a watchkeeping job it is true, but for the native of Portsmouth the hours work out very well. C.W. Bowing said, "It was nice while it lasted." By the time you read this he will be in the 'Ark' and he still cannot appreciate the joke.

We had a bit of bad luck when L.T.O. Sackfield on the point of being selected for the Command team, broke his ankle and is still on the sick list. We all wish him a speedy recovery.

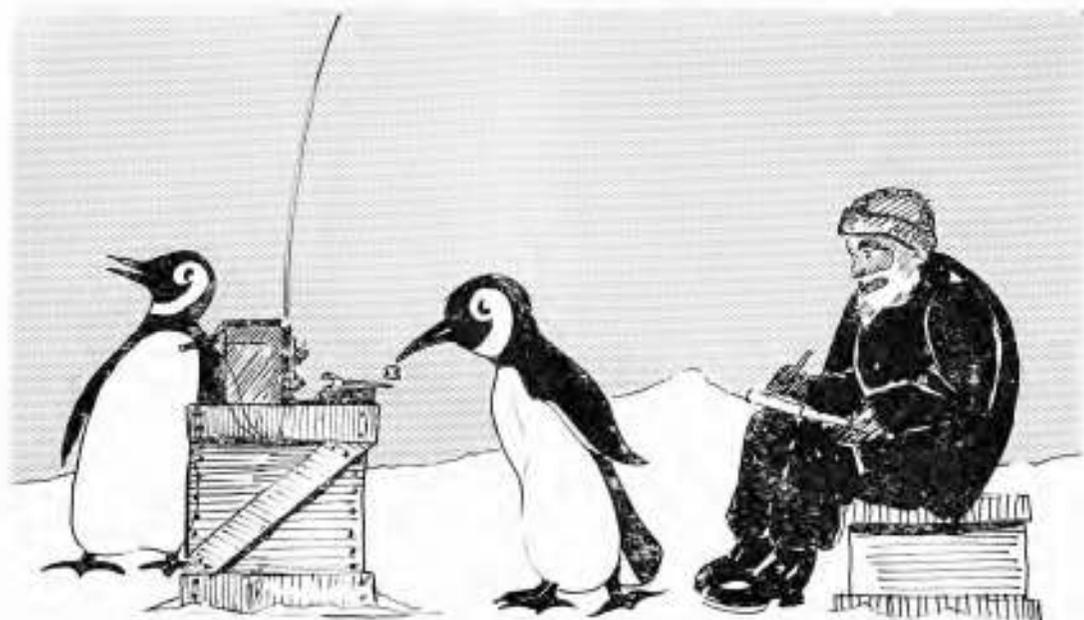
Finally, due to pressure of work we took on four W.R.N.S. Communications for training. This should encourage overseas readers to have their drafting preferences amended.

At Base F after midwinter, normal scientific and weather work carried on and some good results were achieved, the weather became more and more interesting with heavy snow, blizzards and as a contrast nice calm days. The temperature reached lower and lower until finally the bottom of the curve rested on -47°F ., and believe me, it was a bit parky on the old nose when we were outside. During this low period we had a small two man party out on one of the islands in the group, their official job was to measure the icecap accumulation, but unofficially they were on a recreational trip . . . some holiday in those temps.

The scientific work stepped up in crescendo with advent of the end of the I.G.Y. and also the radio sonde observations, both of which affected my work as The Royal Society base at Halley Bay was to be relieved of the I.G.Y. Staff and this meant a lot of schedules between the two bases to pass on results of



A husky pup down under.



"O.K, give him a 'K'."

the year's work. I.G.Y. results had to go to London from base via Port Stanley, and vice versa, there were quite a few signals flying around towards the end of the year. My equipment had stood up well to the hard usage although I did have the R.F. coils on one of my Eddystone Receivers burn out but that was soon fixed, and I did have a puzzling little defect on the speech amplifier of the 89Q, which promptly cleared itself when I changed the valves after an extensive check up on the wiring and components. That will teach me to go all technical when things go wrong, nothing like the old procedure of changing the valves first and if it still goes wrong . . . worry . . .

Being a static base and having a doctor on call all the time I came in for quite a few medical schedules, some amusing, some not so. We treated practically everything, from two dogs that died of a complaint we couldn't diagnose, to an appendix abscess. The abscess case was rather bad and we kept him going for four months on antibiotics and hope . . . he survived. Then we had a very interesting tooth extraction by radio, a buck molar and a very painful one, our doctor gave the instructions on what to do and told the patient's base to keep their radio on whilst the extraction was going on. It was a gory episode full of moans and squeals, the pantings and squirmings of the patient in the chair . . . all wonderfully climaxed by a mighty final grunt and the clang of the tooth as it landed in the bucket . . . I know two people who were very relieved when it was

finished, the patient and the person who extracted. He'd never done anything like that before, they both survived. Other complaints from bases varied between backaches, sleeplessness and frost bite . . . my own personal participation in all this apart from operating the set was that the doctor used me as a model while talking to the patients, such as, "Place the pinchers in the mouth and firmly on the tooth," (the pinchers would then be in my mouth to add reality to the doctor), then, "Press firmly into the gum and make the pinchers really grip and crunch into the bad tooth" . . . but there I used to draw a line and promptly resign from the whole proceedings . . . well . . . enough is enough after all . . . yes, we had a very interesting time with the medical side of things.

Winter gradually wore on and the daylight period got longer and longer, the sun began to make a more regular appearance climbing higher above the horizon every day, a very welcome sight. The temperature began to climb too, so warm sunny days were enjoyed.

Then we had our first visitor, a seal with her pup came up through a tide crack in the ice and began to enjoy a sunbath. Within a few minutes of sighting, all the base were around them clicking away with cameras and everyone quite excited to see something new. One seal and pup led to another and soon we had about thirty dotted around the islands basking away in the sun. Some were shot for food for the

dogs and for us, and how nice it was to eat fresh meat and liver again.

Then the birds started coming back. A few Dominican gulls to start off with, then the Skuas and Wilsons petrels. They all began building nests on the islands, and the air was once more filled with their raucous cries as they quarrelled and fought over our kitchen scraps . . . and finally the penguins. Long lines of penguins as they passed the islands over the sea ice on their way to the rookery just east of us. With their coming our animal life was complete. Then another welcome sign appeared as the fast ice slowly but surely began to rot and open pools of water were to be seen, a sure sign that summer had arrived.

But the even more welcome happening began with the arrival of the ships in the area. The first was H.M.S. *Protector* who tried to get down and take out the sick man we had been treating from Port Lockroy. I had a few talks with her and with the supervisor "Tom" . . . she had mail for our base and was going to try and fly it in by helicopter when she arrived at Port Lockroy, but alas, the ice beat her and she had to retire to Stanley without the sick man and without dropping any mail. A good attempt but she couldn't go against nature.

Very soon we were speaking to *Shackleton* who was relieving the northern bases. She came down to within fifty miles of us and evacuated the sick man from Lockroy. We did expect her to come to us but again ice and other commitments turned her north, for good this time, because soon afterwards she had an argument with the ice and sustained a damaged rudder post and had to retire to Stanley and eventually to Montevideo for repairs.

Then the R.R.S. *John Biscoe* arrived in the area and excitement on the base mounted and visions of sacks of mail were dreamt about as it became clear that the *Biscoe* could make it to us and there was only three days to go . . . two days . . . one day . . . tomorrow. Then on a perfectly clear day we heard a steady throbbing in the air; it was the *Biscoe's* diesels . . . then gliding around the corner of the island and finally up the Channel in front of the base was the ship herself . . . our relief, new faces, mail. Her launch came alongside and a horde of people came ashore, honestly, seeing so many new faces after a year with eleven men and no others, frightened me. I didn't know which way to turn, or whom to speak to . . . they were everywhere . . . and the babble of voices . . . and the questions.

I would like to say here and now my thanks to all those who wrote to me, and my particular thanks to L.R.O. Greene of G.H.Q. Cyprus for the parcel of magazines, they will come in very handy during next winter. Books are always welcome down here. I have sent off sets of stamps to all those that have asked for them and registered them wherever possible, so you should get them safely sometime in 1959, once more, thank you all very much for the "newsy" letters.

The *Biscoe* had also brought in the wireless op, who was to relieve me for the year, as I was being drafted to Base W on the *Loubet Casast*. This base is a sledging base and one with quite a heavy field programme for the year, so it looks like a lot of outdoor work for me, on the plateau of Grahamland and also searching for a route down the East coast of Grahamland into the Weddel Sea. This area has hardly been touched with regard to geology and is a priority on our programme, so it looks as if it's going to be a very interesting year, and one I am looking forward to very much, but as I remarked in the beginning, we have not got very far.

After we left Base F we proceeded south to relieve the next southerly base but after only ten miles we hit hard and fast sea ice two metres thick. This we charged and charged for some days but only made two or three ship's lengths a day; with forty odd miles to go it looked a lengthy business.

During engine rest periods we enjoyed a few games of football on the ice, and some nice long ski marches for exercise, but finally we gave up the struggle in this position and tried a new route to westwards out into the Bellinghousen Sea and southwards again. But after breaking through two miles of fast ice into open water we were finally hemmed in by heavy pack ice and had to retire even from that. By this time a little anxiety was being felt about ever getting to the southern bases so it was decided that *Biscoe* should return to Falkland Islands to restow her cargo for a revised schedule of calls at southern bases. This was entirely unexpected but very welcome, even if the week was spent in manhandling cargo (Oh! My back). Then it was back to south again . . . soon to run into trouble. As I'm writing this the *Biscoe* is shuddering and jarring as we are pushing ahead into heavy pack ice, there is no open sea visible and we can only push on and on in the hopes that we will come to an edge someday . . . at present we are making two knots . . . ah well, it's a pleasant if bumpy life.

And that's it again, by the time you read this I shall be at Base W and frozen in again and I will be thinking of all you lucky characters on your nice sunny foreign drafts . . . ah, shades of Kranji . . . and in your thriving metropolis . . . shades of Guzz . . . Cheerio then till next time.

N.A.T.O. ENGLISH

FromLCHQ Le Havre
ToCOMCHERCHAN
InfoCINCHAN
Exercise Sidestep Blue.

Following explosion of an A bomb at 190630 Z manipsersonal which was out of the shaft must be considered as lost. Confirmation will be made later. It is possible to envisage the disposition of Commander Chevallier Letourneur 4 Reserve Officers 3 Petty Officers and 9 men. Commander Guillin took commandment.

Prize winning photograph



CHURCH INTERIOR, MALTA

SEARCHLIGHT

(Controversial items and candid comments
are invited for inclusion in this feature).

WAKE-UP COMMUNICATIONS

by R. S. Lucas

To date we have taken part in four major fleet exercises as C.T.F. or C.T.G. of a large force, in all cases the communications COMPLANs have been poorly designed and very inadequate.

One of the problems is that of secondary nets and unfortunately we have found no cure as yet. On many occasions the force is spread out to distances of over 60 miles from the C.T.F./G., the distance between ships on opposite sides of the screen being up to 120 miles or more. To attempt to communicate satisfactorily over these distances using 50 watts on M.F./H.F. voice circuits results in heated words between ops room and wireless offices, and in many cases, time and man power wasted with useless frequency changes, in the hopes of finding a frequency that will give better results.

The biggest problem in the COMPLAN is that of handling signal traffic. During one exercise, in which nearly 60 ships took part, the only method of passing signals to and from the C.T.F. was a simplex two tone H.F. R.T.T. circuit. The chaos on this net was indescribable, and the circuit was overloaded with traffic, aggravated by bad reception conditions most of the time due to the ranges involved. After trying for 24 hours to clear 13 operational immediate signals, we took the bull by the horns, waited for a break in transmission, switched the two tone to permanent transmit, then transmitted all 13 signals by tape. Needless to say, the reply consisted of a nice string of references, but, also a "Roger".

The authorities who design the frequency COMPLANs seem to place great faith in two tone H.F. R.T.T. circuits as the primary means of passing signals to and from C.T.F. Sometimes allowance is made for a T.F. common tertiary "in case R.T.T. becomes overloaded". Other authorities have gone as far as ordering a two tone H.F. R.T.T. broadcast, and two T.F. common tertiarities. This latter organisation can handle a great deal more traffic than the former, but the delays are still too great, two tone H.F. R.T.T. often being unreadable to ships on the screen when in atomic disposition.

Before dealing with the remedy, study the present ship broadcast and ship-shore as used during a fleet exercise. The major portion of traffic run on the broadcast during an exercise concerns ships taking part in that exercise and, because broadcast is rarely ZBZS for 24 hours a day, the shore station struggles along endeavouring to rerun all traffic as ZFGs. Thus the broadcast is only operating at 50 per cent of its possible efficiency.

The ship-shore guard ship takes her turn with all other British warships and merchant ships throughout the world to try and clear his traffic to shore, trouble often being met because another shore station is working another ship on the same frequency. If no ship shore guard is allocated even greater confusion arises because of a number of ships all trying to clear high precedence traffic.

That is the general picture of communications as it stands today. What good is a ship with the finest sea-borne system in the world, what purpose is served in having modern small ships manned by highly skilled personnel and very highly trained sparkers, when the so vital communication COMPLAN cannot handle the requirement of the force?

The obvious answer would appear to be in a W/T control ship, similar to the U.S.S. *Northampton*. Unfortunately we have neither the money nor the requirement for a ship whose sole task is communications. In an attempt to speed up traffic, the following measures have been successfully adopted in *Victorious*:

1. Reperforation of the ship broadcast. Incoming messages are taped, weeded and all traffic for force re-broadcast on task force broadcast. It is considered that this could be further improved if during major exercises a fixed service (F.S.K. DUPLEX) with the appropriate shore authority was to replace ship broadcast and ship-shore; C.T.F. guarding for the whole force; a reperforator making five unit tape of all incoming traffic to be retransmitted as required.
2. A task force broadcast employing F.S.K. R.T.T. radiating on L.F. and J.H.F. frequency.
3. Two T.F. commons on C.W. and one T.F. common two tone. The number of T.F. common C.W.s and two tone circuits dependent on the requirement of the force.
4. Any ship of the force capable of keying two tone calls on T.F. common C.W. and includes "QFS VR" in the call (VR being the identity of *Victorious* T.F. broadcast) she is then told to shift to T.F. common two tone and radiate a call tape. When the T.F. broadcast is ready to transmit the signal, the operator in *Victorious* makes "ships call sign QRV—NRVR..." and then switches the radio teletype terminal set from transmit to receive, this permits the two tone signal to key the T.F. broadcast transmitters. The ship on receiving QRV will stop the call tape and run his message. In *Victorious* a page copy is received

on the T.F. broadcast teletype, so that if the signal also concerns *Victorious* copies are available and a 5 unit tape made so that reruns or repetitions can be made without cutting a tape manually (naturally this system is subject to the two tone signal being ZBZ5).

The above methods, particularly the direct keying of the task force broadcast by other ships, improved the handling speed of traffic to such a degree that it was hard to believe that a major fleet exercise was in progress.

Certain modifications have had to be made to existing equipment to carry out the organisation as mentioned above:

1. Ship broadcast R.T.T. bay to be fitted with a reperforator.
2. Inter-ship R.T.T. bay to be fitted with a reperforator.
3. One L.F. and two H.F. transmitters modified for FSK (this modification has been submitted to Admiralty for approval—technical details will be supplied on application).

Further modifications required to operate this system efficiently would be the fitting of a 5 unit auto and perforator to all ships.

INFLAMMATORY

by Antioch

Throughout my naval career numerous points have been impressed upon me regarding communications: be brief, prompt, procedure-ly correct, helpful and when the case calls, suggestive. These points have been designed to produce a communications efficiency second to none and have not only been imparted to me but to all Communicators in the Commonwealth and various alliances from O.D.s to S.D.(C)s upwards. How many are there that adhere, or better still, even try to adhere to what has been taught? Very few I can assure you. Since this letter was conceived I have studied incoming traffic from all parts of the world and the irregularities are immense. Some of the big stations that spread their arms to all corners of the earth are the most flagrant rule-breakers. To single out individual units would not only be remiss but libellous, on the other hand we know Partishead seldom errs and probably so because it is other people's money that they are handling and mistakes will not be tolerated. Passer is a big firm and a few mistakes are commonplace and go unheeded. The job is done, whether correctly or incorrectly is immaterial, so why grouse? Regrettably that is the general attitude in the R.N. You'd grouse if your house was not decorated as you specified. The signals you send are equally as important to others as your house is to you.

To Communicators in charge—no matter shore or afloat—can you say that your unit is efficient? When the C.Y. and R.S., F.C.O. and F.C.A. for that matter, find themselves in the same pub, are you sure that 'sparks' and 'bunts' can really be depended

upon? Your immediate answer is that "Mine is a Utopia", whether it be M.S.C., W.T. station or mobile unit. How wrong you can be, for many fall very short of the standard set and expected of us. Why though? Metaphorically this Navy has become a nine to four job for most. In any barracks, ship or establishment the picture at the gates is the same, only the portals and the faces are different. The reluctance to arrive and the relief at four o'clock or when the watch is over, is the same. The hours worked are not excessive, stand-easys forenoon and afternoon and an hour and a quarter for lunch, plenty of weekends, six weeks holiday a year with pay and better pay and pension than you'd get doing a similar job in civvy street. The Prime Minister, Sir Harold Macmillan, said, "You've never had it so good"—how true are his words. Therefore why can't Communicators ensure that the work done is in keeping with the generous conditions from which we benefit?

You all must admit you have seen lazy traits and cases of passing the buck and probably given it no more thought. If you find one Communicator following the rules you will seldom find he has a partner, for it is an all-about ship that has two such gems. Certainly I have erred and though I should not, I can boast of having had a reference chit in the past from the F.C.O. to C. in C.H.F. All parts of the world are not so fortunate in having such keen eyes to keep the traces hot for such chits are a good thing in as much that one extracts the digit faster than he would had it only been a blast from Navvie or the



"Stop acting so innocent Jack. You know very well what signals!"

D.O. Further still, heaven help us if we seek to advise our superiors, for no one else will. Often the man who should have his finger on the trigger is only a puppet and small points that need rectifying are seldom attended to even though it is his job. Yes, unfortunately, the general thought throughout the day, all over the world is not with the job but with the lads at the local, the party ashore or perhaps the roses and the front lawn.

A more rigid supervision should be carried out to ensure maximum efficiency and correctness, trifling L.C.A.F.O.s and corrections have little or no sway. In this Command the reins are tightening again towards this end but how exasperating it is to see a killick brought to order for leaving off a line one pilot or ZEF and then in almost the same breath see incoming traffic with more glaring violations. If the intermediate station is asked if a portion is correct he invariably says, even though it is incomprehensible gibberish, that that is how he received it and leaves the request for repetition up to you. Procedure for forwarding incorrectly received traffic is seldom used. Senior Communicators return to the School full of snags that they'll get sorted out but somewhere there's a stumbling block for very few of these snags get an airing. Well what can be done?

Recently a C.C.Y. was appointed lower deck drip chief. The Easter number of the noble Magazine boasted 82 chiefs in *Mesury* and the number of petty officers was probably similar. Since I always look forward to a stay at Leydene the less said about the employment of such numbers the better. However, four of these, say two R.C.L.s and two T.C.L.s that are genuinely interested in doing a good job, supervised if necessary, could soon make inroads into complete revision and correction of our publications and having accomplished that task commence looking for the minor snags that crop up. Since it would need someone higher up to think up such a scheme and suffer its arguments I leave it there hoping that someone will grasp the theme and set naval communications on the way to recovery.

FLEETWORK HAZARDS

by A Salt Horse

A letter to all Yeomen and all who aspire to be Yeomen, Dear Yeoman,

I congratulate you on your appointment to a destroyer: you are about to take on one of the most responsible and rewarding jobs in the Navy, success in which, will be reflected not only in the efficiency (and therefore the happiness) of your ship but in the prestige of our Navy in the eyes of our Allies.

As an elderly salt-horse, may I make some suggestions to you.

You will be your Captain's right-hand man at sea, and you must quickly establish that position. Be firm with him, just as a good Coxswain is. In the same way that the Coxswain tells him when to get his hair cut, you have to keep him on his toes at sea.

Be sure you know your Fleetwork backwards; never be slapdash; make your staff use their eyes.

There is much talk about the eclipse of visual signalling. This may be true as far as a Flagship is concerned, but you will find that in private ships, the S.P.s and indeed the flags are as much in use as ever: usually to tidy up the mess in which the Flagship has left the screen after a muddle in the voice signals!

Moreover it is you and your staff who can interpret the movements of ships in sight, to your Captain, and can save him many anxious moments.

You will find that your young signalmen are getting tied to their headsets and have lost the use of their eyes. With voice and V/S being used simultaneously, they tend to get flustered. You can ease the burden greatly if you educate your Captain into providing a seaman in each watch to help with the writing down of signals and other chores, and by getting the Navigator to teach his R.P. ratings how to read and write down voice messages.

I remember one very young Signalman getting so frightened by the task that he fled from the Bridge and hid on the Quarterdeck, just as a spreading signal was coming through.

It was always embarrassing when I found myself jockeying for place in the same bit of screen as another destroyer. These situations arise from the fact that our signal books build in complications such as—

- (a) There are at least three different ways of assigning ships to stations—in sequence from left to right, in sequence of station numbers, and by giving the station number at the same time as the ship's name. Now, while there is a screening signal coming through your Captain will be champing to know what his station number is so that he can go hard a port or hard a starboard and flat out. It is very easy to confuse the methods of ordering stations and you may well say "We're station 3", when you are really third from the left. Your Captain goes hard-a-starboard—crash! Better still, educate your Flagship always to use the same method of listing stations, preferably that of giving the name and the number together.
- (b) It is almost impossible to put accurately and quickly into an easily understood signal your Captain's order to form line abreast in the sequence "so-and-so, so-and-so and so-and-so". Just try it on your friends and see. Never hurry this signal, I have been within 10 feet of another ship at 25 knots in the resultant muddle.
- (c) The Signal Books, written by wise signalmen, say that the screen axis is always North unless otherwise signalled. But there are all sorts of other fancy screens, such as Ring Fence, which are written by other specialists and which tie the axis to something quite different. Be sure you note these differences, it is far from funny to find another destroyer racing for the same hole.

Unless you can get your electrical officer to fit a loudspeaker with a very clear tone on the Bridge, do not let your signalman of the watch rely on loudspeaker watch. Recently, while in line ahead, the Leader began flashing. So the signalman took off his headset, turned up the speaker and manned the 10-inch. Half way through the V/S signal the Leader made a rapid manoeuvring signal which the signalman reported as "Speed Two Zero". As I rushed past my Leader's stern, missing by about 4 ft, I got a check. The signal was "Speed Sierra. Never trust the standard Pusser's speaker!"

You may find that much of your time is spent working with American Strike Fleets. This is great fun, but you must be ready for their different ways. In the first place they still have signalmen who can flash and semaphore and get upset when we fail to keep up with them; and they have a fondness for carrying out middle watch flashing exercises.

In the second place they have an entirely different approach to voice frequencies. Like us they have strict discipline on manoeuvring waves, but they also man a host of other waves on an informal basis. Before a Fleet Exercise, get together with your Captain and Radio Supervisor and see how many of these miscellaneous waves you can man using every intelligent man you can lay your hands on. In one very large exercise, I found myself the senior British destroyer and arranged for every possible frequency to be guarded in our ships. I had a splendid time and managed to get the British ships into every action that took place. My Leading Writer was delighted to find himself talking directly to an Admiral, and the Leading Sick Berth Attendant once turned and asked "What does he mean by saying BRAVO ZULU to us?" Through all this, the British Flagship, sticking stolidly to the Communication Plan, was unaware of anything that happened.

You will find that working with carriers as plane-guard is very trying: each carrier interprets the operating cycle differently. One will use Charlie Bravo signals as well as Flag Foxtrot, another will use Flag Foxtrot only. All will be completely unpredictable over turning signals, usually turning in the opposite direction from that signalled. No two carriers have the same views about lighting procedures. The lesson is that you and your staff must keep your eyes open for strange behaviour by the carriers and must just try to educate their signal staffs when you meet them ashore. At sea their bottles must be taken philosophically.

Off Londonderry a few months ago I had to close a carrier for a transfer, and finished up uncomfortably close. On checking I found that the carrier was showing wrong speed flags and had signalled the wrong course. Please, never allow such mistakes to be made in your ship.

If you have not been to sea for a couple of years, there is one marked change which will strike you. The voice sets now work so well that signals are passed and heard accurately at the first attempt. As

a result you find that the Flagship, having taken half-an-hour to work out a signal, will pass it in a few seconds and then execute it at once. You must educate the Chief Yeoman to insist on, say a ten minutes pause before executing a new screening signal or even half-an-hour before executing a new RING FENCE.

I hope that what I have said will show you that the days of the Visual Signalman are by no means over and that a thorough knowledge of Fleetwork is all important. Destroyers nowadays move from one exercise to another in rapid succession, and, thanks to radar, exercises in close company continue through day and night and in all visibilities. Your Captain will soon be in a high state of nervous tension. You must help him all you can, and the best support will be to let him feel that there is always a pair of trained eyes on the bridge to back up the Officer of the Watch, not just as a look-out, but as one who by experience can spot what the rest of the Fleet is up to.

I am sure you will find your job rewarding and enjoyable and that you will want to help the next generation to get the same pleasure. Do, please, try and persuade them to go to sea as much as they can with the Fleet and, if they do come ashore, to resist the temptation to do non-signalling jobs such as swimming bath sweeper, etc.

A good yeoman with a good staff form a wonderful team. Any lowering of standards leads to collisions and risks the lives of hundreds of men.

HINTS TO SIGNAL OFFICERS

(Acting or otherwise)

The following hints will enable your gunnery exercises with air co-operation to become a roaring success.

Choice of Operators

- Examine the entire Communications Staff and find the rating with the least intelligible voice, preferably a Highland Scot or a Geordie whom not even his messmates can understand.
- If a foreigner can be found on board, preferably untrained in voice procedure, your flotilla or squadron lifemanship rating will be the highest in the Fleet.
- On no account should any of the above ever be told what the exercise is about, what their call-sign is, or in which direction the ship is travelling.

Position of Operator

- Always place the operator as far away as possible from the officer controlling the exercise. If a position can be found where a delay of at least five minutes can be expected while they find each other, so much the better.
- The successful Communications Officer places the operator next to a receiver emanating continuous morse at strength five on a loud-speaker, and sufficiently close to ensure feedback interference between mike and speaker.

Tuning

- (a) Easily the best time to tune on to the frequency in use is at the exact minute when the exercise should start. When absolutely certain that as much noise as possible has been made the following standard procedure must be adopted:—
- (i) Blow into the microphone not less than 10 and not more than 20 times.
 - (ii) Tap the front of the microphone with a fingernail (a small hammer can be drawn from the nearest Air Station on application, but this is an admission of weakness).
 - (iii) Repeat the word "hello" (or "hallo") as for blowing in (i) above.
 - (iv) Give a test transmission counting up to at least 20, tell off the days of the week and the months of the year. To impress, do this backwards as well.
 - (v) Having done all the above in the correct order, leave the transmitter "ON" and have two people nearest the microphone start a violent argument in Urdu. Extra marks are added for use of the lesser known dialects.
- (c) The next best position is near the muzzle of a gun, to ensure deafness; also, all important messages should be transmitted whilst this gun is firing.

- (b) Communication is now assured, everyone on the frequency is in the right frame of mind, the ship is now ready to proceed with the exercise. In the event of not being able to contact the aircraft, which is in perfect two-way touch with base and three other aircraft, tell the pilot that he is off tune. Always remember that the ship is *never wrong*.
- (c) Another good idea is to call the aircraft every five seconds half an hour before take off is due. This impresses the few who hear.

Procedure

- (a) Use full procedure, call-signs and words twice throughout the exercise, even though reasonable two-way touch has been established within the first half hour. Your exercise is far more important than any other on the frequency.
- (b) When carrying out firing runs *never* repeat *never* pass "end of run" to the aircraft. It will then fly so far beyond the ship that the maximum of time can be wasted.
- (c) Another very good way to waste time is to alter course as the aircraft is on the outward leg and tell no one. This ensures that aircraft being beautifully out of position.



H.M. CANADIAN COMMUNICATIONS SCHOOL

Her Majesty's Canadian Naval Communication School is situated at the large Naval Training Base at H.M.C.S. *Cornwallis* on the western shore of Nova Scotia. The base primarily serves as the New Entry training establishment for the R.C.N. and houses in its perimeter the Communication, Leadership, Seamanship and P. and R.T. Schools. The other professional schools are 150 miles to the north at Halifax which is the East Coast Naval Depot and Dockyard.

During the last war, *Cornwallis* was reputed to be the largest Commonwealth naval base of its kind. Although in peacetime the numbers borne are

considerably less, the base runs as a small self contained village community with its own railway station, married quarters area of 200 houses for officers and ratings, full scale ice rink, three indoor swimming baths, grocery store, games fields and so on.

Fishing for trout, bass, etc., in the summer is available for the asking, and hunting (shooting) for deer, pheasant, duck, geese, etc., is as popular in the autumn as watching a local football match in England.

The Communication School is housed in its own buildings with an Officer in Charge (Commander E. J. Semmens, C.D., R.C.N.). He has a staff of ten officers, including one from the U.S. Navy, one R.N. signal officer on exchange service, a civilian

AMERICA AND WEST INDIES



The Staff of H.M.C.S. "Cornwallis."

radio theory instructor, a civilian C.B. officer together with 25 C.P.O. and P.O.s. Although a number of the latter came at one time from the 'old country' there are no billets for R.N. exchange C.P.O. and P.O.s.

Visual and Radio rates (including W.R.C.N.S. but not the Specials) together with the Officers' Long Course, Sub Lieutenants, C.C.O.s, Reserve Officers and Cadets are trained at the school with an average of 160 under instruction at any one time.

Considerable changes are taking place in the structure of the R.C.N., and familiar terms such as 'Signalman' will be heard again on this side of the Atlantic. More of this another time.

Greetings of the season from the other British Commonwealth member of N.A.T.O. and from Nova Scotia where at this time of year toboggans and snow ploughs are as commonplace as bicycles and buses.

H.M.S. TROUBRIDGE

Since the summer edition *Troubridge* has completed the latter part of the first cruise, which included the Southern Islands of the Lesser Antilles, and the whole of the second cruise, as hurricane guardship. Fortunately, no British possessions were ravaged by hurricanes this year, so, with one exception, the cruises went smoothly and according to plan.

Whilst visiting Dominica, early in August, a request was received from the Governor of the Windward Islands, for *Troubridge* to proceed to Grenada and provide technicians to operate the power station at St. Georges, the local electricians being on strike. After a hurried departure, we arrived off St. Georges, and under the cover of darkness, landed a team, consisting of one Officer and ratings of the Engine room and Electrical

branches. In addition, L.T.O. Howell landed with the type 622 and communication was established each evening, when the ship returned to the St. Georges area. What he did with the rest of his time is still a mystery. During daylight, the ship kept well clear of Grenada and communications between *Troubridge* and the Governor was via a radio amateur (VP2GV) and his wife (VP2GY). The assistance given by these two, and at times other "Hams," was greatly appreciated. They saved us many routing headaches. The staff have since been brainwashed with ACP 125 and A.F.O. S15/59. The shore party was re-embarked when the strike was over, after five days ashore, and we proceeded to Bermuda. This diversion, caused us to omit three places on our itinerary, and a rendezvous for exercises with *Ulster*.

Troubridge left Bermuda again on September 12th to visit San Juan, northern islands of the lesser Antilles, Jamaica and the United States.

At San Juan there is a U.S. Naval base, and the usual calls were made and returned by the Commodore. The Ship's company took full advantage of the facilities offered by the "PX." From San Juan the ship then visited the islands of Anguilla, Nevis, St. Kitts and Tortola. These visits being very brief the staff took full advantage of the "rope yarn Sunday" leave to visit places of historical interest, such as Brimstone Hill and the church where Nelson was married to Florence Nesbit.

From the British Virgin Islands, we proceeded to one of the American Virgin Islands, St. Thomas, and found the contrast very marked. A message transmitted prior to this visit caused much speculation, "... British Virgin Islands use dollar currency due to close proximity and trade with the U.S. Virgins..." After a quiet stay we sailed for Jamaica,

On arrival at Kingston we berthed alongside *Ulster* and S.N.O.W.I. transferred to her for return to Bermuda. It was with a sigh of relief that we "slipped" all relevant communications. After being well beaten in various sporting activities, the *Ulster* sailed for Bermuda and *Troubridge* to Montego Bay for a restful weekend. At Bermuda, S.N.O.W.I. transferred to shore and *Ulster* proceeded to Devonport to pay off and recommission. We on board are now awaiting (rather impatiently) for *Ulster's* return. Meanwhile, *Troubridge* has proceeded to the States. The visit to St. Petersburg, Florida was the most looked forward to of the cruise, and it certainly exceeded our expectations. The Communicators more than held their own in the "Grippos" field. It was with deep regret that we sailed for Key West and A/S exercises. These were held in conjunction with units of the U.S.N. Fleet Sonar School. The purpose and organisation of this school being much the same as H.M.S. *Osprey* and the training Squadron at Portland, which we know only too well. However, we held our own and discovered we had not forgotten our Fleet organisation which was something not meddled with since "Square Bash I" last May. Everything worked too. All primary frequencies used were in the 692/CIJ band.

We left Key West for Bermuda, and arrived 26th October, to resume our duties as S.N.O.W.I. Flagship and commence a month's self refit prior to commencing the final cruise of 1959 returning to

our millionaires' playground in time for Christmas.

It is with regret that we say farewell to Commodore W. J. Parker, O.B.E., D.S.C., in January, we wish him every success in his new appointment as D.S.D.

It is noted with great interest that Ceylon West (page 93 summer edition) stated that they received calls from as far afield as the West Indies and welcomed calls from any ship. We would like to add that at times we welcome replies from any station, conditions on ship shore being a little difficult at times, to say the least.

Our most noteworthy ship shore operator is "Junior" who still awaits "your Morse is good on" from Portishead.

Note:—"Rope Yarn Sunday"—is the U.S.N. equivalent of "Make and Mend."

ALLIED COMMAND ATLANTIC

by Commander L. J. Smith, R.N.

The Allied Command Atlantic, with headquarters at Norfolk, Virginia, was established on 30th January, 1952, roughly a year after the Allied Command Europe.

During those seven-and-a-half years the size of the Communications Division, and its international composition, has remained the same. It consists of eleven staff officers drawn from five nations and from eight different services, from the navies of the



SACLANT H.Q. NORFOLK
Winter uniform (same latitude as Malta!)

United States, United Kingdom, France, Canada and the Netherlands; from the Air Forces of the United States and the United Kingdom, and to give a sense of balanced "integration" to the whole affair, from the United States Army.

The division is headed by a U.S. Captain with an R.N. Commander as deputy. The "Indians" who do all the work are Commanders, Lieutenant Commanders and Majors. This staff is supported by a U.S. Secretariat and Message Centre Staff.

It is said of most military organisations that when an order is given one expects it to be obeyed immediately and without hesitation, but it should be said of international military organisations that the giving of an order is merely the basis for further negotiation. A "manoeuvring board" is therefore an essential part of the international signal officer's equipment, especially if his own national authorities are not being very amenable.

The communications problems facing this international team are basically the same as those of their predecessors except that some have become more urgent and those that remain are due either to lack of money or to fundamental differences of methods of operating national forces.

The main methods of providing communications facilities for ACLANT are:

First, through negotiation with the nations to obtain circuits or to use headquarters on a common-user basis without direct cost to the N.A.T.O. command or much extra cost to the nations.

Second, to augment these facilities by hiring circuits and equipment either through the annual budget for day to day use, or through separate budgets for exercises for temporary use.

Third, to provide permanent facilities through the infrastructure programme where none are available and it is clearly not the responsibility of any one nation to construct and finance them.

In the Atlantic command, which has no permanently assigned forces the first method is clearly the best for all concerned and is used for a considerable portion of our needs. The budget method costs about £140,000 a year of which roughly half is for exercises. Infrastructure is by far the most expensive and difficult but in the seven annual programmes since 1953 approval has been obtained for about 40 projects. Few have been completed, some are under construction; others are still in the paper stage.

Climatically, Norfolk is pleasant most of the time and khaki is worn for roughly half the year. Though on the same latitude as Gibraltar and Malta, the temperature can reach the 100° mark in summer and go as low as 14° in winter with considerable snow as for example last winter. When not actively pursuing their primary occupations of visiting the capitals of Europe or of being incarcerated in working parties in Washington, the staff spend most of its time fishing, hunting or swimming. Occasionally the whole staff has been in the offices at the same time and this is the occasion for much use of the manoeuvring

board and large masses of paper are rapidly moved through the corridors to other desks. Nobody has yet had the courage to put it all in a large box and send it to S.N.S.O. Hong Kong.

Sometimes, as a result or way out of one of these bouts of frenzied activity, someone is incautious enough to release a message (after about the sixth or seventh draft) which usually arrives in some unsuspecting Ministry of Defence on Friday afternoon. This usually satisfies everybody because no self-respecting Ministry can be expected to answer such a missive within one month, if they do, the answer is clearly suspect.

BOOK REVIEW

"PRINCIPLES OF FREQUENCY MODULATION: Applications in Radio Transmitters and Receivers and Radar". By B. S. Camies. Published for "Wireless World" by Hife & Sons Ltd., Size 8½" x 5½" 147 pp., 87 diagrams in the text. Price 21/- net (postage 1ld.).

This book is intended for students and radio amateurs. It gives a comprehensive account of the fundamentals of F.M. and its applications. The first part of the book deals with the theory of the sideband structure and bandwidth of F.M. waves.

Circuits for the generation and detection of F.M. signals are included, but the main part of the book is on the construction and design of complete receivers.

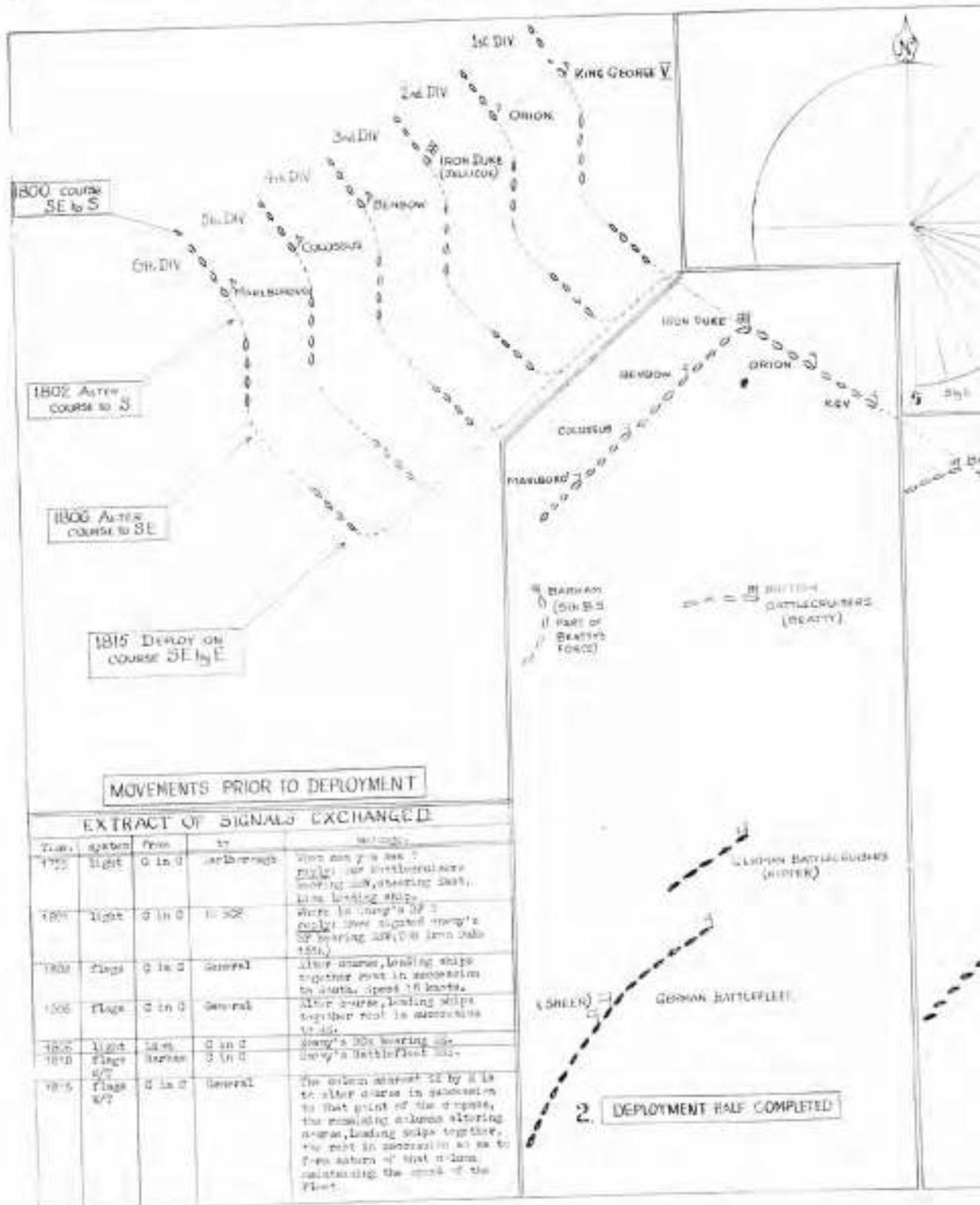
MECHANICAL SEMAPHORE

by Commander H. P. Mead, R.N.

Colonel Charles Pasley's mechanical semaphore was adopted by the Admiralty in 1827 and appeared in the Vocabulary Signal Book in its various editions between 1827 and 1882. It was not suitable for use on board ship because it was a cumbersome structure and it would have been a nuisance on the poop, the only obvious place for it, on account of interference with working the mizzen and so on. Its use therefore was limited to harbour occasions for telegraphing a spelt message from shore to ship. A well-known situation at Portsmouth was on The Platform next to the Square Tower, where a machine of this pattern stood for many years and gave its name to Semaphore Place, now Battery Row.

It took a long time to overcome the conception that it was a type of telegraph, but when superstructures and bridges began to form part of a man-of-war's upperworks, and sails had begun to disappear for good, it was found that the former prejudice against the machine was not so powerful, and in 1874 there began to be a demand for mechanical semaphores afloat. Their exploitation developed rapidly, by about 1885 they were in general use, and in 1888 had been provided with a third arm and an electric illuminator for night work. After the 1874 agitation for supply, the Admiralty established by enquiry at the Home Ports that three patterns of

[Continued on page 132.]



EQUAL SPEED CHARLIE LONDON

by Commander J. B. Paterson, D.S.C., R.N.

A masterpiece of fleet manoeuvre

The history of the Battle of Jutland is probably a closed book to most Communicators, and I doubt whether many of us, including the author of this article until starting some research, could give an account of the circumstances in which Admiral Jellicoe hoisted the famous signal "Equal Speed Charlie London", which is displayed over the entrance of the Signal School lounge in Mountbatten Block and is used as our distinctive blazer badge.

The story of the battle makes fascinating reading, and gave rise to endless controversy for many years after the war. The following account is no more than a very brief sketch of the events leading up to the deployment of the main Dreadnought Battle Fleet, which was effected by "Equal Speed Charlie London". To those of you who would like to obtain a clearer picture of the whole battle, I would warmly commend Captain Donald Macintyre's recent book "Jutland" which gives a most readable survey of the encounter.

In May 1916, both the British Grand Fleet and the German High Seas Fleet were spoiling for a fight. The German Commander, Admiral Scheer knew well that he had insufficient forces to take on the whole British Fleet, and had made plans to lure out the British Battle Cruiser Fleet from Rosyth and deal with it before the Dreadnoughts of the Battle Fleet could come south from Scapa Flow in support.

He did not however, take into account the efficiency of the Admiralty's radio intercept service, and when he made his sailing signal at 3.40 on the afternoon of 30th May, it was duly intercepted and was available in the Admiralty at 5 p.m. The Grand Fleet at Scapa under the Command of Admiral Sir John Jellicoe, flying his flag in the *Iron Duke*, and the Battlecruiser Fleet at Rosyth under the Command of Vice-Admiral Sir David Beatty, together with the 5th Battle Squadron immediately put to sea to await eventualities.

At 2 p.m. the next day, the Dreadnought Battle Fleet was in Organisation No. 5. Divisions in line ahead disposed abeam to starboard in the order 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th Divisions, screened by the Fourth, Eleventh and Twelfth Flotillas, with cruisers and destroyers some sixteen miles ahead, spread eight miles apart on a line roughly at right angles to the line of advance of the main body. Admiral Beatty's Battlecruisers and the 5th Battle Squadron were about 30 miles south-east of the main battle fleet.

At 2.20 p.m., the first enemy sighting report was made, and by 4 p.m. Beatty's ships were hotly engaged with the German Battlecruiser Fleet commanded by Admiral Hipper which was some way ahead of Scheer's High Seas Fleet.

Initially, Admiral Jellicoe received good intelli-



gence of the engagements, but as the battle developed, Beatty's force received heavy damage, and reports came less frequently. By 6 p.m. when Jellicoe was close enough to give full support, he was still ignorant of the exact position of the enemy main battlefleet, and could not therefore deploy his ships into battle line. At 6.14 he received the information he needed and at 6.15 he made his deployment signal.

The actual signals made during this critical period have been extracted from the official despatches of the battle and are shown in the Table. The actual formation of the battlefleet after each manoeuvre is shown roughly in Diagram I. (I am sorry if it bears a rather close resemblance to a resultant order problem in a Fleetwork paper!) The approximate relative positions of the two main fleets during and after the deployment are shown in Diagrams 2 and 3.

There was of course a great deal of argument as to whether Admiral Jellicoe should have deployed earlier, and whether he did in fact deploy the best way. Captain Macintyre's assessment is favourable: "The deployment of the Grand Fleet, in the nick of time and in spite of sparse and inaccurate intelligence, in the manner most perfect to bring a devastating concentration of fire on to a portion of the enemy fleet was a masterpiece of fleet manoeuvre that has rarely been equalled and never excelled." But there were many historians who felt that Jellicoe missed his chances and should have deployed to the southward thereby engaging the enemy on an opposite course. I think, an impartial study of the facts would tend to support Captain Macintyre's viewpoint.

There is however, one aspect on which all were agreed, and that was the efficiency of the communication departments. Here perhaps I may be allowed to quote the late Commander Holloway H. Frost of the United States. He stated "We must heartily commend the visual communication system of the Grand Fleet. We particularly like the laconic wording and the great rapidity with which the dispatches were sent from ship to ship. Radio communication was also very rapid and the errors were kept to a very small percentage. During nearly two years of war, the entire communication system had grown to be very efficient and it is doubtful that it can be equalled even today, despite many technical improvements."

As to the final outcome of the battle itself, here again there are many conflicting views. There is no doubt that we lost a greater number of ships and men than the Germans, but against this must be set the fact that never again did the German High-Seas Fleet venture to sea until its fateful scuttling in Scapa Flow at the end of the war.

References: Battle of Jutland 1916—Official Despatches, H.M.S.O., 1920.

The Battle of Jutland, Holloway H. Frost, Stevens and Brown Ltd., London, 1936.

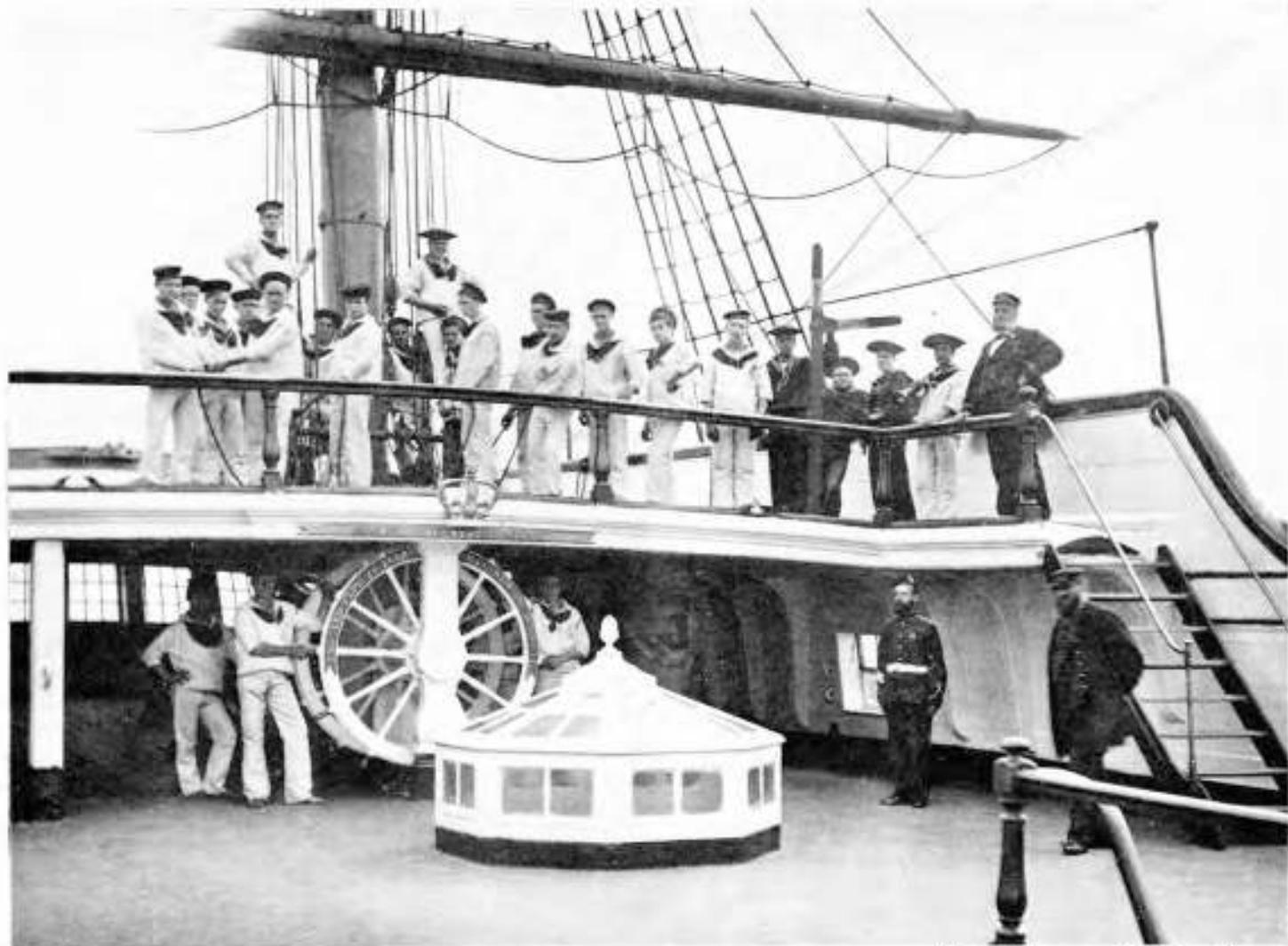
Jutland, Donald Macintyre, Evans Bros. Ltd., 1957.

MECHANICAL SEMAPHORE—(continued)
 machine would be needed. The lofty and massive semaphore that stood at the end of each bridge, 15 feet in height and worked by handles, sprocket wheels and "bicycle chains," was continued till the Old War of 1914-18; but meanwhile two smaller patterns were authorised, for use by hand. They were actually and veritably worked manually because the operator stood behind them and put the arms to the required positions by holding them there one in each hand. The two sizes were 5 feet high, with arms 2½ feet long, and 2 feet 8 inches high with arms 2 feet long. The smaller was for use in a socket on the gunwale of a boat. An instance of the first of these can be seen in the photograph, where a signal rating (in sennit hat) is putting the arms to "46" or alphabetical, to commence a message. The notion of these two manual semaphores to modern eyes must appear quite fantastic, but the idea of using the human arms to represent the arms of the machine does not seem to have occurred to anybody (ill about 1885. When it did occur, the Royal Navy originated the system of signalling with semaphore flags, and at the same time the small machines disappeared.

It is probably well-known that the two methods of semaphoring, mechanical and hand-flags, continued side by side right up to more modern times. The semaphore machines assumed more portable dimensions and the old solid massive types were abolished. It was a curious fact that the sprockets and chains were made to a special Admiralty pattern and it occurred to nobody that a good deal of expense could have been saved by making use of the ordinary shore-going bicycle chains and sprockets of commercial use.

It was left to the firm of Thomas Haywood and Sons, famous makers of railway signals, to discover the fact that bicycle gearing would be cheaper and just as efficient, and this firm in 1941 obtained an Admiralty contract to supply a new type of mechanical semaphore for universal use. It was a beautifully made affair, all the mechanism being enclosed, and could be used at very high speeds with a minimum of effort. At Chatham Signal School early notice was received of the impending supply of these machines, and a few were obtained for use there. At H.M.S. *Cabbula* in 1942 a supply of five new pattern semaphores delighted the V/S Wrens who were to use them. This was almost counting one's chickens too soon, because very shortly afterwards in 1943 mechanical semaphores were removed from sea-going ships on account of excessive weight of top-hammer, and presumably all Haywood's supplies were scrapped.

The photograph is supposed to have been taken in about 1875, and this may depict the first stirrings of H.M. Signal School; it was begun on board the *Victory* in 1888, and in 1905 was in the Royal Naval Barracks at Portsmouth. None of the individuals in the photograph is a signal officer. Signal Boatswains were not created till 6th March 1890.



H.M.S. "VICTORY" 1878

Photograph by courtesy of The Maritime Museum

PRIZE WINNING FEATURE—1

H.M.S. MALCOLM

Fishery Protection Squadron

"Fishery Protection Squadron," the dreaded draft.

We keep silent while we listen to them telling their stories. We are speechless, feeling so embarrassed. Little do we realise that we wear the same uniform. "How do they stick it?" I wondered. "Perhaps it's false, so many sailors' stories are."

I loathe the sea, but after being shore based for almost three and a half years, I had begun to like this modern Navy. Sailed to and from my last draft in a civilian passenger liner, as a tourist, I'd find it hard to believe that there was an F.P.S. at all.

Six weeks leave, then Barracks at Chatham. A very changed town, since I was last there four years ago.

I tried to recall the various suggestions I had given 'Draftie' on my last Preference Draft Card. I wanted *Aphrodite*, or *Flowerdown*, then a draft out to the Far East. I was hopeful, when I walked into Chatham Barracks.

My fiancée was pleased with my being drafted to Chatham. At last we would see something of each other. We had never been able to make reservations for the theatre, I was never sure where I would be. Of course I had put Chatham down as my preference home port.

I enjoyed the train journey to Edinburgh, where I changed trains. We had a coloured University student in the carriage, and we discussed the colour bar as I had recently returned from the land of its birth. I found the conversation quite enlightening.

Dalmeny is a small station, quite near the Forth Bridge; this is the station nearest to Port Edgar. I had to wait for transport. One always waits for Pusser's transport, ten minutes was pretty good, I thought. Perhaps the driver didn't drink, but then, being Scotland, the pubs would have been shut anyway. It was 1630.

Was it possible at this stage to catch up with myself? Try to realise that I was going to sea again? I was scared, already feeling sick. I was going to be an F.P.S. rating, me! who couldn't even sit on a swing as a kid, without feeling sick.

Perhaps a mistake had been made. No, the driver of the truck assured me, *Malcolm* would be at sea on Sunday.

I must have heard every sea story available, by the time we sailed from Port Edgar. I was feeling terrible, having swallowed too many of Doc's tablets to be of much use, anyway. I was sick about the time they piped "Special sea duty men, fall out."

Malcolm joined F.P.S. in March and we are employed on Icelandic patrols. It's a thankless job, patrols lasting for three weeks or a month, some-

times, seeing, but not quite reaching Iceland. There is nothing beautiful about Iceland. A flat dirty, brown piece of land, sometimes the monotony is broken by a cliff or two.

British fishing trawlers seem a peaceful enough crowd. Brother! you should see them when they have to 'repel boarders,' they throw everything at the crews of the Icelandic gunboats. That's where we come in. It's our job to discourage and make perfectly certain that none of our trawlers is arrested. You know of Iceland's intention to institute a 12 mile territorial water area, as opposed to the international three miles. We have compromised with them, by setting up three havens, small areas a few miles out, where our trawlers can fish inside the 12 mile limit if necessary. Any British trawler arriving in our area, has to spend at least 24 hours in our haven. He can then leave if he wishes, but must fish outside the 12 mile limit if he does.

For communications, we keep Haven Net (Voice), FP circuit (CW), and NLR broadcast. We refuel about every three days. Mail is rather frustrating, we have to rely on trawlers arriving in the haven, bringing it up from U.K. with them, consequently it is days late. Every matelot looks forward to his mail. The trawlers, they are a grand lot. The big trawler companies certainly look after us too, they send us fresh fruit and magazines. The fruit on this last patrol was the finest I think I ever had in Britain.

We get back into port and boast at having seen the Northern Lights, yet wouldn't have even noticed them, but for a pipe made by 'Jimmy.'

I can assure you that not very much exaggeration is needed to relive life at sea in *Malcolm*, this ship would roll in a mill pond. So, it's naturally hell in a gale. A corkscrew action I'm told, and after the last three weeks, more than believable.

The ship went to Hamburg last July and everybody had a fabulous time. Perhaps you have been to Hamburg?, remember the "Reeperbahn?" Every port Jack visits has its ReeperBahn; in Malta it's the Gut, and in Capetown the Savoy, to name but a few.

There are ten of us Communicators on board. Six R.O.s, three T.O.s and 'Pots.' Except for the latter, we can't help seeing a lot of each other, we all share the same mess (hardly large enough) and the B.W.O. serves as the M.S.O. on these A/S Blackwood Class Frigates.

We arrive back at Rosyth tomorrow, and undergo a three month refit. We shall be moving into quarters ashore, I am not sure what they are called, but it's either 'Fairleys' or 'Cochrane,' both are widely discussed at the meal table, but I have been too sick to care what's what!

Have respect for the lads of the F.P.S., they go through a lot more than most. We are a happy crowd on the *Malcolm*, deep down we have great respect for, and are proud of our ship, although one hears some quite unprintable comments on the mess-deck.

Who am I? Just a matelot, and I drip' drip' drip!
But give me my discharge and like all the rest, I'll
need to think about it, probably stay in too.

One consolation, I can now join in their 'Salty
Sea Tales.' For I am now a rating in the F.P.S.
Perhaps too, it will boost my ego.

My girl, she lives in London. I get to see her about
five times a year. She has lost all faith in 'Draffie,'
but I will fill in that card again when it's due, just
the same . . .

PRIZE WINNING FEATURE—2

"BUTTERSCOTCH BOUND"

by R.O.I. W. Bailey

All this would never have happened if I had not
had the misfortune to go sick on shore last leave
and miss my ship, which had sailed to Iceland to
take over the duties of "Haven Chief" in Butter-
scotch. On my return and consequent entry into
Barracks, I was informed that I would be sent to
rejoin her by the only available means—a trawler.
The receipt of this news was to say the least a bit
stunning and although I had seen plenty of trawlers
on previous Iceland patrols I had my doubts as
to their living conditions, etc.

However, I would soon find out the answer
because, hardly had I settled in Barracks than I
was on my way to Grimsby with instructions to
report to the Director of Fisheries for passage.

On my arrival I realised that the Navy hadn't
taken into account Civil Service working hours and
when I got there all I found were locked doors, so
after treating myself to the night life of Grimsby
I reported there next morning.

"Ah yes, we know all about you. You'll be going
up in the *Asbani*—she's sailing in four hours time.
Good morning. Have a good trip". Nice chaps
those Civil Servants!

Organisation certainly seemed the key word in
their department. Having no kit with me other than
a suitcase, I decided to have a stroll down to the
docks anyway and see what was in store for me.
After several inquiries I at last found the *Asbani*—
a coal burning vessel of mature age, and to say the
least not a very assuring sight.

There was no one on board except a very startled
watchman who most likely thought that he was
seeing things—a naval rating in his number ones on
board a trawler, surely not! Whatever his thoughts
were I don't know, for he kept them to himself.
However, he did tell me that the ship was sailing
on the "Boozing Tide" and I should come back then.
After depositing the suitcase in his hands and
finding out that the "Boozing Tide" was 2.30 p.m.,
which was, of course, when the pubs shut, I decided

to go back into town and follow the words of that
well-known proverb "When in Rome, do as the
Romans".

2.30 p.m. found me back on board alone, but after
about thirty minutes the crew of nineteen all rolled
up (literally!). Introductions were made and they
all eyed me curiously—after all who was this intruder
into their kingdom? Still in their best suits they
slipped the ship in about five minutes and we
sailed away up the Humber.

By this time I was clad in sea boots, jeans, shirt
and sweater (all borrowed) and I began to feel
more at home. The skipper then said that I was to
share his spacious cabin which was equipped with a
wash basin (the only one aboard) and a water tap
of the "Pump your own up" variety. I was most
pleased about all this and felt that I was certainly
getting the V.I.P. treatment and this was confirmed
when I signed on in the ship's log as "Super Cargo".

Meal times were a treat. I sat at the Skipper's
table together with the Mate off watch and the
Engineer off watch, and it was very enjoyable to
be waited on by the Galley Boy and the food was
first class—Wardroom style at last!

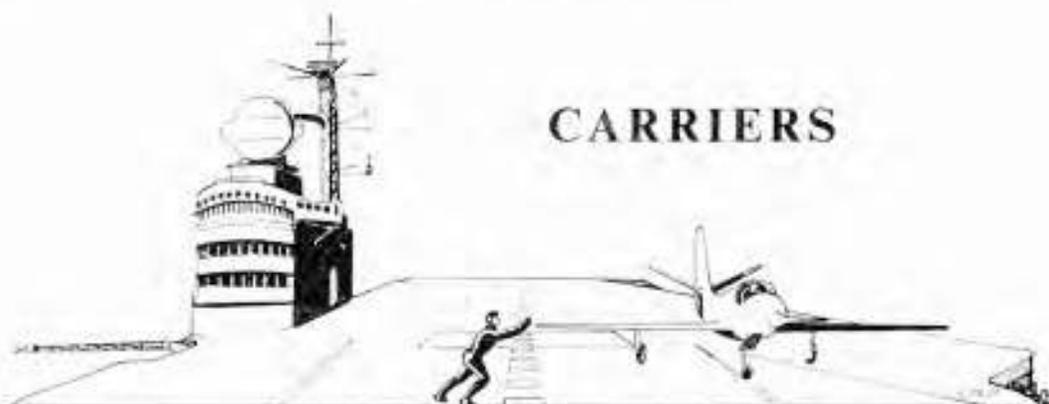
For all you overworked watchkeepers it might
be interesting to point out that for the three week
trip, the Engineers, Firemen and Trimmers were
in two watches and the remainder of the crew in
three except of course when they were fishing and
then they were quite likely to stay up on deck for
anything up to 15 hours a day.

The *Asbani* didn't carry a 'sparker' so in some
small way I was able to repay the hospitality shown
to me by working their R/T skeds with the coast
stations, and I also did a bit of "poaching" by
reading the Home Fleet Forecasts on NIs.

Luckily the weather kept fine all the way up and
I was fortunate enough to see them "shoot" twice
and watch the catch hauled on board.

By now we were back in the Haven and it was back
to the R.N. for me. It was certainly with regret
because I had spent a most enjoyable and interesting
week at sea; I'd had better meals than ever before
afloat, a lot of neatens and beer on frequent
occasions, and a couple of very profitable all night
card sessions. Altogether one could not have wished
to go to sea with a better crowd of men. So if any
of you on F.P. duties happen to see the *Asbani* up
in Iceland some day—look after her—she's one of
the best.

WE SHOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL
ADVERTISERS WHO SUPPORTED US
DURING 1959 AND WISH THEM ALL
A MOST PROSPEROUS 1960



CARRIERS

H.M.S. VICTORIOUS

With the end of our first commission fast approaching, conversation in the Department has turned, inevitably, to one burning topic "What will be my next Draft?" The Drafting Preference Cards left the ship a long time ago, and now it's just a question of waiting rather impatiently for the results. There are bound to be disappointments particularly for those hoping for a Foreign Accompanied Draft. Everyone else seems to want the same. However, C.N.D. already have one very satisfied customer on their books namely C.C.Y. Cox. He asked for a draft to Hove R.N.R. Division and, as luck would have it, he got it. Living as he does at Brighton, nothing could suit him better. C.C.Y. Cox leaves us in January and we think that the R.N.R. are very lucky. We wish his relief, C.C.Y. Ovenden, a pleasant new commission. Not everyone wants to leave the old ship. Two of the Department, T.O.2 Roberts and R.O.2 Duke can't bear the thought, and so they've volunteered to recommission. For the great majority of us, though, early March will see the break-up of what has been a happy commission. It's always sad to say goodbye but it's particularly so when nearly everyone concerned has been together for over two years. Looking back, what will we remember of the commission?

For Lieut. (SD) (C) A. Howell, the nightmare problems of internal radio interference together with all the many devices he invented to improve the ship's Radio Communications. For C.R.S. Clarke, the eternal chore of 'C' cleaning stations with the dirt accumulating almost as fast as his gangs removed it. For C.C.Y. Carter and C.Y. Stevens, together with all the MSO watchkeepers, the battle to persuade the right finger to tap on the right typewriter key. For C.R.S.E. Lowe and L.R.O. Knowles, the knowledge that the Direction Officers never had their VHF Communications so good. For R.S. Lucas, his concentrated drive on technical advancement courses for keen volunteers. For R.S. Eilbeck and his aerial team, the memory of hockey-sticks (radio masts to you non-carrier folk) misbehaving and the wire

aerial rigs having to be renewed at the rush. For R.S. Cokes and the Telephone Watchkeepers, the enviable reputation of running the most polite exchange in the Fleet. Many were the congratulations received. For C.Y.'s Ryan and Jackson, and the VS Department as a whole, the constant battle to keep the Flag Deck clean as funnel fumes poured down in an incessant stream. For C.Y. Mawdsley and the Crypto Watchkeepers, a record of accuracy blemished by only five "bouncers" over the whole Commission. For L.T.O. Dumont and L.R.O. Morton, the many congratulations they received at rounds on the cleanliness of their respective messdecks. The best in the ship.

All in all, the Department can look back with satisfaction at the results achieved since 1958. In some ways, we've had more than our fair share of troubles but even so, without being too modest, we can say that *Victorious* has stood for Progress with a capital 'P.' Sheer necessity made it inevitable. However, it wasn't all work. Who'll forget those too short visits to New York and Boston last summer? If you really want to meet experienced baron-stranglers, then just come and pay us a visit. We did spend rather too much of our time alongside the wall in Pompéy. As a result, our bachelor ranks suffered cruelly and, their numbers dwindled as one after the other became spliced. No less than twelve weddings altogether. And so the story ends. As we prepare to leave, so we wish our successors, a very happy commission.

H.M.S. CENTAUR

In continuation of the *Centaur* saga, we survived a very uncomfortable *four* weeks in the Persian Gulf during July and carried out various hot weather trials as well as some shopwindow displays for the benefit of the local Sheikhs and Oil Companies. Most communicators considered themselves lucky in that they were able to sleep either in the air-conditioned LRR/LTR or on the open Flagdeck area, and work in a cool BWO. Temperatures on the messdecks and throughout most of the ship were nearly always near, and many times over, the 100



"Centaur's" Communicators.

degree mark. It was reported that some communicators suffered from heat exhaustion, but it was later thought this exhaustion was caused by not being able to keep pace with the overwhelming entertainment showered on us in Men-El-Almsedi and Bahrain.

After the Gulf, Karachi should have proved a pleasant change but although our Pakistani friends provided us with excellent sporting facilities it did not really turn out that way. The ship was soon invaded by thousands of flies, closely followed by a large number of local dogs and life became very unpleasant. We were all very pleased to get back to sea even though the next four weeks meant very hard work for the communication branch during "Jet 59" when we exercised with ships of the I.N., P.N., R.C.Y.N., R.A.N., and R.N.Z.N. flying the flag of F.O.2 I/C F.E.S. We found ourselves manning numerous wireless nets and often wondered if there were any more in the Complans which had been overlooked! To illustrate this, we can proudly say that *Centaur* carrying the O.C.E., and carrying out an extensive flying programme, manned more or less continuously the following circuits in the B.W.D. LRR:—

"V" Broadcast, "IN" Broadcast and Met. Broadcast (All C.W.), Sub Safety Net, O.C.E.'s net, RATT Met, Broadcast, Tactical Tertiary, Air Diversion net, Fixed Service 151 to Ceylon West, and Ship/Shore for enemy reports.

In the operations room, our T.O.s were manning anything from two to four voice nets and on top of all this there were our usual aircraft communications as well, including one H.F. line for our Gannets. We believe we did so well that the powers that be intended to give us another go next year before we leave the Far East. Let this be a warning to our relief! We thank our Indian opposite numbers for the valuable help they gave us when watch-keeping alongside our own operators and hope they may have gained an insight to carrier operating from the communication angle. We shall not forget for a long time the sight of one very competent Sikh sitting at his bay with both turban and headphones

on and looking like the traditional operator with cloth ears. The Fleet's gathering in Trincomalee after the exercises enabled many of us to meet old friends and make many new ones, also to enjoy a few days relaxation in the way of sport.

Our next port was Singapore, where we had a well earned three weeks rest in *Terror* before the second-half of our foreign leg, which we have since been enjoying in much gayer and more interesting parts of the world. This to date has included an exercise with the American 7th Fleet and visits to Yakosuka and Hong Kong. Most of our communicators will long remember Japan and one has already thumbed through A.F.O.s to see whether it is possible to transfer to the Japanese Navy for cultural reasons, of course! Another tried to beat a Geisha girl at "Strip Zobbing" but didn't win even though she agreed to take off two garments to his one!

In the sporting world several of the *Centaur* communicators have represented the ship and the Far Eastern Fleet in many different spheres. T.O. Duncan at hockey (Ship and Fleet), R.O. Monan and T.O. Mackay (Ship and Fleet) at soccer Mackay again for boxing, L.T.O. Fouracre at rugby, J.R.O. Curd at boxing and T.O. Lines at cross country running. Although our whaler did not do as well as hoped in the Pulling Regatta, C.Y. Milligan more than made up for this by coxing it to victory the next day in the open whaler race of the Sailing Regatta. Our communication soccer team is still very much a force to be reckoned with and our most notable victims to date have been Kranji Wireless whom we beat 2-1.

All being well in the Far East, *Centaur* should be following in Captain Cook's footsteps round Australia when this article appears, and would like to end by wishing all other communicators a Merry Christmas from Sydney and a Happy New Year from Melbourne. Join a carrier and see the world! Funny

Heard on voice net.

First ship . . . "Have you heard *Centaur* on this net."

Other ship . . . "No! But I've heard a carrier."



FAR EAST

H.M.S. CEYLON

This article is being written on passage from Penang to Karachi. We are on our way home; and December 18th is the magic arrival date in Pompey.

Our passage to the Far East took no less than seven months. A three months' refit in Portsmouth, work up in the Med., a visit to Muscat to help repair the tanker *Melika* (hopes of tons of lolly) and a trooping run from Bahrain to Aden and Mombasa, via Aquaba are some of the reasons for our lengthy passage. The highlight of all this was the visit of King Hussein of Jordan who smilingly inspected us at Aquaba where we were to embark the Cameroonians for Mombasa. A rush to make an ensign for his boat was successfully completed by C. Y. Wright's versatile efforts on the donkeys with a strip from C. Y. Walker's No. 6 suit. It looked very good too.

We finally arrived in Singapore at the end of November, 1958, and the list of exercises carried out since then reads like a page out of the annals of the second world war. Since April, 1958, we have participated in nine Fleet exercises and we are about to finish with a Cento Pact exercise off Karachi. Of all these exercises "Jet 1959" was the heaviest. The staff looked pretty haggard by the end of it.

Our proudest moment was escorting the *Britannia* and H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh into Singapore in February. We paraded a Royal Guard in Hong Kong on three occasions in March, and this included a high proportion of Communicators.

We have worn the flags of four Admirals during the commission, and for six months wore the flag-ship of Rear Admiral V.C. Begg, the Flag Officer Second-in-Command Far East. This was an incredibly busy six months, and we were very thankful for the assistance of the Far East Fleet Pool and of the Admiral's Communications staff. At one stage during "Sea Demon" we had two Admirals' staffs on board.

Life has not been all hard work. The communications division is undisputed ship's tug-of-war champions. With heavyweights like L.R.O. Wallace and T.O.2 Kemp we could hardly fail. In other divisional competitions we have not been so successful, but have always produced a team and have

shown our opponents how to enjoy things if not always how to win them. We have produced several ships' players for many games, notably rugger, and *Ceylon* has had a very fine sporting record during her last commission.

Karachi, for exercise "Midlink," Aden, RAS off Malta, Gibraltar, and home on the 18th December will complete a very busy commission, which has not been without its lighter moments. To mention one of two: Scene BWO (fairly hectic). L.R.O. of watch to junior "Go down and shake my relief." Ten minutes later junior returns. L.R.O. of watch: "Did you shake him?" Junior: "No, he was asleep."

Here is a hint for the Visual section. Recovery balyards are a waste of time. Provided there is a slight wind to help casting there is nothing a 12-foot salmon rod, line and size 2 O Jack Scott cannot achieve. We've tried it, it works and it saves drawing all those man aloft boards.

H.M.S. COOK

On hearing the news that one has been drafted to a Survey Vessel operating in the South Pacific it is fairly natural to be besieged by visions of beautiful beaches, glamorous Hula-Hula girls and hoses spent luxuriously sunbathing and swimming amidst the tropical splendour of a Fijian Paradise.

The time has come to burst the "South Sea Bubble".

We commissioned H.M.S. *Cook* at Hong Kong in August of 1958 and spent the following three months undergoing refit there. Whilst there, all the Communicators attended a "comms do", organised by the staff of Commodore Hong Kong, and had a thoroughly good time. In fact our whole time in the Colony was wonderful except, perhaps, the fact that we were witnessing the slow but sure closure of the dockyard and a "good run".

In early November we took our leave of Hong Kong to the usual accompaniment of the side parties' crackers and turned our nose southwards, first stop Manus. This is a small Australian Naval Base in the Admiralty Isles, actually the population apart from the natives is Service personnel and their families. For those of you who have had previous experience of Australian hospitality in any form I need hardly say

now very welcome we were made to feel in this most northern of Australian Naval Bases. So much for an excellent weekend. Our next call was at Rabaul, New Britain, where once again we were made to feel quite at home. The pity of these small, but wonderful places is that one can only allow a weekend at a time.

We finally arrived at our ultimate destination which was Malaita, British Solomon Islands, in early December, there we set about taking the survey in hand. We were anchored at a then unknown place called Bina Harbour, which we were required to survey, to ensure safe anchorage for the Royal Yacht during the Duke of Edinburgh's world tour. This task took us well into February this year and meantime we were spending every third weekend at Port Moresby, to store, fuel and relax. It was here that we spent our Christmas period (but unfortunately not the New Year) and none of us will forget it in a hurry. The locals were wonderful to the whole ship's company, taking individuals away to have a celebration which, but for the absence of relatives, could hardly have been bettered at home.

On February 24th we left New Guinea and the Solomons for the last time and proceeded to Sydney for a fortnight's rest and to change the command. So far as the staff is concerned mention of Sydney nowadays brings nostalgic sighs and stars in the eyes, not to mention memories of some of the thickest of thick heads. But it would take a fortnight to tell you of our fortnight in New South Wales, suffice to say that we were sorry to leave yet eager for our first glimpse of Fiji, the next stop. After 10 days or so at sea our plans were changed rather suddenly by a complete breakdown of the starboard engine and a neat hole in the engine room, so around we swung and duly arrived in Auckland to enter their one and only dock for a month. Auckland is not exactly a matelots' paradise since the bars close at 6 p.m. and you are then left, apparently, to a choice between cinema and dancing. I say "apparently" because of course there are ways and means . . .

In early May, refreshed from a month in dock and raring to go, we left New Zealand and really did get to Fiji, to a small place called Lambasa. We are, at the time of writing, still surveying the Fijian Area and visiting such unlikely sounding names as Nambuwalu, Naingani, Levuka, Mbuu and Ndreki-Ni-Wai (it's alright we can't pronounce them either).

Now all we have to look forward to is a visit to the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, a trip back to Singapore for C.-in-C.'s inspection just before Christmas, and finally the flight home in the early New Year.

In case this reads too much like a pleasure cruise I may point out that whilst surveying there is no leave given except at weekends, and then very often there is nowhere to go except to a beach for the afternoon, so you see our greatest enemy is boredom.

The achievements of the staff make rather uninteresting reading. Early this year we congratulated R.S. Smith on becoming C.R.S. Smith, while we can congratulate the remainder of the "sparkery",

L.R.O. Rose, R.O. Cobbett, R.O. Hardy and R.O. Harbour on being recommended for higher rate together with T.O. Gillen, we might even congratulate the remaining member of the staff, L.T.O. Thornton, on obtaining his discharge. One "sparker", who shall remain anonymous, must merit high mention for daring to sample the pleasures of a Kanaka jail, while another, who shall also remain anonymous, has earned the undying devotion of a beautiful Maori maiden.

In the sporting world we have done rather better with representatives in the ship's hockey, soccer, cricket and rugby teams.

In closing may we send our very best wishes to all Communicators throughout the world, together with a small piece of advice, NEVER volunteer for a survey vessel.

H.M.S. HIGHFLYER

by C.C.V. H. B. Kitching

I could not do better than commence my article this time, by a hasty reference to the last one. By doing so, I must say that the palms are still swaying, and the beds are still comfortable (R.A. member writing). Seriously speaking the weather here, according to the locals, has gone haywire, for if they are to be believed, we should be in the middle of a hot dry spell. I'll leave you to guess what is happening.

Work has gone on with a steady plod, with the exception of "Jet 59", which I understand was really representative of the Commonwealth. The last week of this exercise meant hard work for our watchkeepers, but not as hard as they had expected. However, on the admin. side, it was almost decided to call us "Combrax" Ceylon. Of course at this time of the year, preparations are in hand for the annual rush, i.e., telegrams for Christmas and the New Year, to and from ships in area three. We did very well last year, and no doubt there are plans afoot to do better this time. By the time this goes to press, we shall have had visits from many ships, and we hope that when they read this, they will have dined and supped well with us.

Sport, since our last article, has centred mainly on soccer, but I regret to say that we did not win the R.A.F. inter-Wing cup, being pipped in the final by the odd goal, after a very disastrous start. However, we finished by fighting to the bitter end, and with a little more luck might have retained the trophy. Anyway we have started again, and won our first match against the Royal Ceylon Air Force by seven goals to one.

Hockey has taken a back seat I'm afraid, owing to our pitch being renovated, but the inter-Part competition should be in full swing very shortly.

We entered an eleven in the inter-Services Cricket Competition, and although we received a few hammerings, everyone enjoyed the cricket. This coupled with the fact that the Ceylon Services are only too pleased to have us play with them, makes a true Commonwealth relationship.

Our social life goes on apace. Apart from the cinema (six nights a week) the highlights have been, the play "See How They Run", all done by the members of the Establishment, with the C.O. playing the part of the Bishop to a "T" (we thought perhaps he had missed his vocation). After that we had another concert. This really started off as a talent night, but developed so rapidly, that we found ourselves with a full scale concert on our hands complete once again with chorus. This time the Ancient "Marine Hens" performed (Chorus). Needless to say they received the ovation they deserved.

I must go back to the sports day, which culminated in a Grand Ball. However, the rain, which appeared imminent all day, decided to descend upon us about half-an-hour after the completion of the sports, and thus ruined our outdoor decorations. However we carried on and I don't think anybody failed to enjoy the occasion.

The "Highflyer Old Boys" will no doubt, be anxious to know who was the Victor Ludorum this year. L.R.O. Lucas was the successful one, and a worthy and warmly applauded winner he was. His sheer determination merited a prize, then he would have won that as well. It was mainly due to him and L.R.O. O'Brien that the daymen won the aggregate shield, although we lost the tug-o-war, when everyone was confident that we would walk it. It was a case of brain over brawn.

Snag on Fred's Farm, some of his hens turned out to be cocks (nuff said).

Plea from the Editor of "Highflyer News" no "old boys" subscriptions yet.

HONG KONG

The closing weeks of 1959 show a great deal of progress towards what will be the New Base in a few years time. Where many time honoured buildings once stood in the Dockyard, there are now but scars, and daily can be seen the gangs of wreckers reducing the refitting sheds, power house and other familiar landmarks in this area to rubble. We are waiting for the day when the chimney comes down. The dry dock is now more than three quarters filled up and inexorably Hong Kong Dockyard is disappearing. The fact that a few lorries which used to tip rubble into the dock have themselves ended up near to the bottom has not stopped the advancing nemesis. *Tamar* is at the moment still intact but in turn it will disappear, sacrificed at the altar of naval reductions. The new administration and accommodation buildings which will appear close to the site of the old dry dock are planned and drawn, and indications are that they will be imposing structures with the added convenience that only a few feet will separate visiting ships from the nearest source of refreshment.

Currently, the Fleet is with us and we have seen many old faces and made some new friends. Our Communication Social, the first of this season, was well attended and quite a successful venture. These

will continue while the reserve capital stands the strain. In the local Bowling Alley competition for the Gladstone Trophy, the Communications team successfully eliminated two other contesting teams to become the representatives of *Tamar* on this occasion. Bowling (American fashion) has during the past year become a popular pastime for off watch Communicators.

Since our last report we have had many changes as the cycle has just been completed. Among those who have departed are C.C.Y. Adams, C.R.S. Henderson, C.Y. Finch, C.Y. Brunson, C.Y. Ellis and R.S. McCarthy. New arrivals include C.Y. Mills, C.T. Brogan, C.Y. Charles, R.S. Hawkes and R.S. Sydes. The Base Communication Officers have changed round and Lieut. Cdr. Atkinson departs shortly giving place to Lieut. Cdr. McPherson who has now taken the weight.

A wedding has taken place and we were all very happy to attend the nuptials of L.T.O. May and his fiancée, Miss Eugene Shaw who were married in the *Tamar* church. A reception held afterwards in the Fleet Club was well attended and enjoyed by all who partook of several toasts and then several more, to the happy pair. Departmental photographers produced some excellent records of the occasion.

With the cooler weather the social round becomes more intense and the periods between hang-overs a little shorter. Hong Kong is still a good place to visit for shopping and though we have had a record summer for rain, the winter season has started well with a high daily average of sun. There were many typhoons on the map but none came near enough to us to be uncomfortable. Despite the surfeit of wet weather, the reservoirs are still not able to cope and we are back on four hours of water a day.

Now we must leave you until the next time, hoping that we shall soon be meeting some of you prepared to enjoy a sojourn in the colony.

BOOK REVIEW

"WE JOINED THE NAVY" by John Wilton published by Michael Joseph, London, price 13/6.

Our attention has been drawn to this book by one of our readers, and we do not hesitate to recommend it. The book is an account of the training and experience of a group of cadets whilst at Dartmouth and in a Training Cruiser. Some of the would-be cadets have unusual reasons for wanting to join the Navy, for instance, at the Admiralty Interview Board,

"Why do you want to join the Navy, Maconochie?"
"It's not me who's all that keen, sir. I thought it was you. They told me you were short of recruits, sort of like the Salvation Army . . ."

Those cadets who are selected feature in many amusing incidents both amongst themselves and when in contact with the powers that be. It is hoped that John Wilton will follow up their careers in subsequent books.



MEDITERRANEAN

MALTA COMCEN

by R.S. K. J. Randall

It's surprising how quickly the time comes round for another COMMUNICATOR article to be written. It seems like only last month that we were penning the Summer article amid sweat, toil and sunburn. So here we are 'doing our bit' for the Christmas number amid rain, coughs and colds.

Having looked to the future with uplifted eyes (weary though they may be) let us look back and reflect on exercise "Sidestep" which occurred in September. This was the first major N.A.T.O. exercise to take place since we took up residence in our burrow. It showed that our handling capacity for traffic was far greater than in the old Comcen, but the handling times left much to be desired. This may have been due to a rather congested traffic centre, which is now in the process of being streamlined (on paper, anyway) and some people are murmuring darkly: "It's time we went back to -T-Z-!"

In the Summer edition, mention was made of our new ship/shore receiving equipment. This has proved far superior in performance to the old equipment, so much so, that on a number of occasions we have received complaints from Portishead that we have been 'pinching their customers'. We often pull in a merchant ship off South America or Australia with good readability but we still get the odd smart Alec trying to send an S.L.T. to a telephone number.

With the changes of ships, we took in some extra Communicators and it was quite amazing that some of them had recommends for higher rate dating back anything up to 18 months, and had never had the chance for a course or examination. This is difficult to understand as in the Comcen, as soon as a man is recommended, he often gets the next course. There are quite a few who joined the Comcen as R.O.2s and have gone home as R.O.1 or L.R.O. So if you want to get on, Malta Comcen is the place for you.

The other week, C.Y. Hunter and his gang on the bridge, came up on the Pools. They were all walking round with broad grins on their faces, planning to buy big cars, throw parties, etc., before the exact amount of their winnings was known. When

the cheque arrived, it was for over £500 and should they manage to cash the cheque in the near future, there will be some fireworks and thick heads, too.

This article would not be complete without a small howler. The reference given on the bottom of a signal in answer to a query about reception on 34's was typed as: 'Serious outrages on Malta-UK leg of FX34'. Laddered nylons perhaps?

And so, as there is no more material from which to add anything more, this little piece must be brought to a close. The writer would like to add that this is the last article he will pen, as he will be returning to the glories of U.K. very early in the New Year and would like to sign off with this short message: "U.K.—here I come." And with that warning we bid you all farewell until Easter.

P.S. Having lost a lot after the Summer article was printed, no more bets of that nature are being made. You've had it Chief.

H.M.S. BIRMINGHAM

It is with deep regret that we have to announce that this will be the last article from *Birmingham*. By the time the Xmas number appears we shall all be enjoying our G.S.C. leave and the ship will be starting to pay off into reserve. We feel that many Communicators will join us in wishing her a very fond farewell. Most ladies (we hope) are in their prime at 23 but the old 'Bram' matured early and there can be no question about it—she is now well past her prime. However, 23 years continuous service is something she can be proud of.

There are not many places of interest in the Med. that *Birmingham* has not visited during her life, the score this commission is quite good, too. Istanbul, Athens, Naples, Palma (Majorca) and Barcelona are among the best.

Of exercises, we have had a good share. Unfortunately we have not had much opportunity to partake in many N.A.T.O. exercises, Exercise 'Whitebait', being the only major exercise during the present year. For the greater part of the year *Birmingham* has worn the flag of Flag Officer Flotillas Med, and as such has been involved in a great many purely National Exercises.



F.O.F. Med. and "Birmingham" Communicators.

During October we shared with *Daring*, *Dainty* and *Defender* the unspice experience of carrying out exercises with two Spanish destroyers. Communications during these exercises went very well and thanks to the ability of the Spanish operators to understand English, Scots or Irish the Tactical Primary Operators are still of sound mind.

In the sporting world the Communicators have always been there, but regrettably without too great a measure of success. One thing however at which we can boast a good record is boat pulling. *Birmingham* Communications crew won the Misc. Race in the Regatta, held at Augusta in August and have been the means on several occasions of *Birmingham* retaining the "Saintes Trophy". For those of you who have not basked in the sunshine of the Med. for some years, we feel a short explanation of the "Saintes Trophy" may be of interest. The trophy is a replica of "The Saint" (Leslie Charteris) presented by H.M.S. *Saintes* and any ship in the Med. Station can challenge the holder to a whaler race, the race to take place within 24 hours of the challenge. During the "boating" season challenges are fast and furious but during the "off" season it is easy to get caught off guard, as several Communicators know to their cost—lots of nights on Blue and Hop Leaf are regretted when an unexpected challenge

arrives. 'Brum' has held this trophy for almost the entire time on the Med Station, thanks largely to the stalwart efforts of the Communicators crew, L.R.O. Kerr, L.T.O. Cooper, T.O.2 Warren, A/L.T.O. Abbott, R.O.3 Moyce and some good pushing from behind by C.Y. Hay.

All that remains now is to hope "Draftie" has been kind to us and that all those draft chits will be "gift edged".

S.T.C. MALTA

After twelve months we are firmly established in Manoel Island, a point more central than our Ricasoli home. Recently we have said farewell to C.R.S. Laurie, R.S. Stevenson and C.Y. Johnstone. The last two being members of the Med. Fleet Pool who have assisted us in no small measure. In the New Year we say goodbye to Lt. Cdr. Johnson who will then have held the chair three years. To his relief Lt. Cdr. Reynolds we say hello.

Our training programme continues to cater for at least 40 ratings and Wrens each week despite recent reductions through "a call from the East". R.F.A. Officers and a Turkish class all add to our variety. Provisional exams last August were disappointing after the whole staff had put in a fortnight's hard

work to bring the ratings up to standard. We look forward to a better showing in November. To newcomers we anticipate early information of your recommendations for higher rate. T.O.3 and R.O.3s are well catered for and providing your practicals are up to standard we will help you with your able rate.

The Forces Motoring Club is very well represented by the S.T.C. and our drivers have collected a fair share of the prizes. Even the new arrivals have caught the bug and we have yet to fail to enter a team for the treasure hunt. A recent treasure hunt was organised by Lt. Cdr. Johnson, C.R.S. Laurie and C.C.Y. Wilson. The making up of clues provided no difficulty to those cryptographic brains, but caused a headache to the 15 entrants who had to sort them out.

For the less active members the Chiefs' Mess boasts a darts team captained and organised by C.R.S. Hare. Early indications would show that they are equally proficient at darts and beer drinking.

The Phoenicia cricket team was organised and well controlled by C.C.Y. Surridge ably assisted by C.C.Y. Smith. The team was well supported by Communicators drawn from Lascaris under the captaincy of Lt. Wood (F.C.A.). Most sport-minded men are now busily preparing for soccer and hockey to be followed by rugby in the New Year.

Two bowlers during the Term. Firstly, the R.O., who on his examination paper stated that a cryptographic part was any piece of cryptographic equipment. The second, an R.O.3, who during an oral examination offered the D.D.B. service as an alternative to ship shore when exercising twenty miles off Malta.

H.M.S. GAMBIA

Well, well, one year to the day since *Gambia* commissioned and at last we find in our midst a literary genius (already nominated for Pulitzer prize — for benefit of Editor).

But alas fame is not the spur, merely the thought of a crinkly note to the value of ten shillings, the bribe that was put up by our S.C.O. (Sub. Lt. Kemp, R.N.). But nevertheless, the author's personal opinion is that it is high time we got an article into our own Magazine, since we appear to have been mentioned in almost every other worthwhile publication, such as "Navy News," "Ashore and Afloat," etc.

For a select few of our vast staff, the year began with a monotonous 18 hour rail journey from Portsmouth to Rosyth Dockyard, where we got our first view of the ship that was later to become known as the "Glam Gam". What a sorry sight she looked as she lay in the bottom of the dry dock, none would have thought that in just 12 short weeks she was to become the smartest looking ship afloat.

Twelve weeks, and what a wonderful 12 weeks they were, a period in which the whole ship's

company was made welcome by the people of Dunfermline and Rosyth, not to mention the great and wonderful city of Edinburgh.

At the time of going to press it is still a little early to forecast the numbers who will be joining the clans on our return to the U.K. But all good things must come to an end. Slowly but surely the eight thousand odd tons that go to the make up of *Gambia* came to life, and finally came the day that she sailed under the famous Forth Bridge under the discerning eye of the television cameras to become channel ten's biggest star. Headlines in the "Scottish Daily Mail" the following day proclaimed: "She's made it". Date, January 6th.

Our Christmas and New Year leave was at an end, it was now time to shake out the cobwebs and get rid of those "Hogmanay" hangovers. It was also to be a testing time for the department. How would we work together? Would the gear work? Much to the surprise of the Chief (C.R.S. Bumpstead) things went along smoothly, the just rewards of weeks of applied effort. A week of trials over we found ourselves with a visit from F.O.S. on our hands, this passed with the usual time-honoured phrases.

January 17th found "Glam Gam" en route for "The Rock" doing a "one night stand" in Portland and rendezvousing with "Bram" on the morning of the 20th for the passage to Gib., with of course the inevitable exercises. But drama was to enter into our jaded lives in the shape of H.M.S. *M. Tireless*. As a result of the rough weather in the Bay of Biscay she found herself in what might have been serious trouble, but glory was not to be ours, the task of shepherding her to calm waters fell to "Bram" while we carried on to Gib., arriving on the 24th.

January 26th, a fateful day for "Glam Gam," for this was the day we were to become a Flagship, the flag of Flag Officer Flotillas Home Fleet being transferred from *Birmingham* to *Gambia* and we were determined to be an efficient flagship. In the course of the next three weeks we in *Gambia* are of the opinion that we proved ourselves to the remainder of the Fleet, in spite of the fact that we had to undergo the normal pressures that became the lot of the ship that carries the flag.

February 16th, we find ourselves once again alongside at Gibraltar, with the prospect of a whole week in which to primp and preen prior to our visit to Vigo, a week in which we became engaged in a dour contest of sport with "Bram," a contest which covered almost every form of indoor and outdoor sports and a contest that "Glam Gam" won with comparative ease, the communications department being well represented. However, we feel that we must point out that during this period of friendly rivalry, the "Bram" was unfortunate in having half of her ship's company on leave in the U.K.

Following our sojourn in Gib., came a visit to Vigo, not a particularly lively run ashore as most of

readers will no doubt agree, the highlights of the trip being a children's party and a public performance on the ship's spring by two of our talented V/S ratings, needless to say this performance ended up as a rather wet affair.

Came the exercise, "Dawn Breeze IV", a comfortable three watches, but we were keeping everything and we were guarding for everybody. Such is the price of fame.

With "Dawn Breeze" over we found ourselves in Pompey for the dreaded Navy Days, and here again we turned out to be the star of the show, the number of visitors on board being far in excess of any other ship, including our modern counterpart, H.M.S. *Tiger*. With the conclusion of Navy Days we were once again due for a spot of leave. With the first leave party already away the remainder of the Ship's Company steamed "Glam Gam" up to Rosyth, a very quiet trip. Our colleagues up at Pitreavie being only too happy to welcome us back?

May 4th. Leave is over and we are on our way to wonderful Copenhagen where we stay a week, and what a week. Those of our readers who have enjoyed the fine hospitality of the Danish peoples will know just how much we enjoyed ourselves there. A successful combination of times enables the staff to enjoy a 24 hour non-stop tour of refreshment. And who was the Yeoman that walked out of a bar, looked up at the sky, saw the sun and said, "Good grief, I'm adrift." The time was then 0400. Needless to say, we were very sorry to leave Copenhagen, but for some of us compensation was at hand, we were returning to Rosyth for Navy Days.

Three days later we were bound for that delightful bit of Scottish countryside so well known to many of our readers, Loch "Orrible" and an intensive weapon training period. This period brought into action the N.G.S.F.O. team and it was soon fairly obvious there was a lot to be learned. In spite of this however, communications went extremely well and it is felt that a lot was learned as a result of this period. Strange to relate, the weather throughout our stay in the dreaded Loch was glorious.

But more was to follow, in fact a whole week of fine weather whilst the ship languished in the teeming metropolis of Invergordon. A week which saw the formation of the ship's cricket team with the communications department again well represented, a golf tournament against a local club for the Home Fleet cup, with a member of the department being fortunate enough to be chosen to play, and a general sports programme.

June 8th and we find ourselves on the way back to Denmark, this time to Aarhus, taking part in a small exercise ("Fairwind") enroute in company with a

number of N.A.T.O. ships, communications throughout this exercise were extremely good in spite of the language barrier and again it was felt that a great deal had been learned from our compatriots in other Navies.

June 18 and back to Rosyth and some more leave, if you've managed to stay with us this far you will no doubt have noticed that we have had our fair share of leave. On arrival in Rosyth we find one of our younger sparkers R.O.3 Morley frantically dhobeying his No. 2s in preparation for the transfer of the Flag of F.O.F.H to *Bermuda*, he having been detailed off by R.S. Bignall to take the flag across to *Bermuda* was of the opinion that it was high time that a firm as large as ours could afford more than one flag, especially for an Admiral.

Then to the Mediterranean and the Fleet Regatta at Augusta where for once, fame was not to come to "Glam Gam", the best we could manage was third but even then it was good enough to put us ahead of our old rival "Brum." But there'll be other regattas.

From the regatta we travel on the *Ajaccio* (Corsica) where we find in our midst a budding mountaineer, L.R.O. (Tensing) Turley, he being a member of a group from the ship which tackled the Corsican mountains as an Outward Bound activity.

September 17th we are in Trieste having spent the past couple of weeks just dodging in and out of Malta. Here we find yet another mountaineer in the form of none other than Sub. Lt. Kemp who was one of a party of Outward Bounders which went on a tour of the Dolomites. But it is regretted that very little can be said for Trieste, all eyes were on the return trip to Malta where we were to pay our farewells. In Malta we lose another member of our staff, R.O.2 Smith, who, because of an eye injury may yet have to face the grim prospect of civilian life. Remember us well, Councillor.

And now we say farewell to our compatriots around the world with the fervent hope that it will not be too long before you hear from us again, and with a final item on our protracted visits.

For Kay Hunt and her friends in Karachi, we'll be seeing you in the New Year. For our friends in the Far East, look out for us. For us friends in "Brum," go ahead, throw your snowballs at Christmas. And finally we say farewell to our Signal Officer, Lt. R. G. Franklin, R.N.Z.N., we hope he enjoyed his stay with us as much as we enjoyed having him. A trip down the West Coast of Africa as escort to H.M. the Queen during her visit to Ghana and followed by Christmas in South Africa regrettably was cancelled owing to the forthcoming happy event and our Christmas now should be spent at Mombasa.

EASTER 1960 COMPETITIONS

ENTRIES MUST REACH THE EDITOR BY MARCH 7th

- ★ Special feature: prize of 3 Guineas ★ Cartoon: prize of 1 Guinea ★ Photograph: prize of 1 Guinea

THE DECISION OF THE EDITOR IS FINAL.

H.M.S. CAMPERDOWN

It is now some months since we commissioned *Camperdown* at Devonport and this is our first contribution to THE COMMUNICATOR, an oversight for which we hope to be forgiven.

On commissioning, the W/T staff consisted of R.S. Enticknap, A/L.R.O. Sibary, R.O.2s Nicol, Brown and Burt, R.O.3s Day and Reynolds and J.R.O.s Hiden and Edwards. On the V/S side it consisted of C.Y. Humphreys, T.O.2s Elks and Scudder, T.O.3s Broadbent, Hawkes and Yetman. In our 10 months in the Med. both staffs have undergone considerable changes for one reason or another. A/L.R.O. Sibary went home for a foreign language course (although many people reckoned there was no need for him to do this as much of the language used in the department normally was practically foreign!). Burt left us on compassionate leave and eventual discharge. Nicol is now the A/L.R.O., R.O.1 and all the remainder are R.O.2s and 3s, T.O.3 Hawkes has been medically discharged and Yetman left us on completion of national service. In their places, have arrived T.O.2 Foggin and T.O.3 Lane, while Elks is now A/L.T.O. and Scudder a T.O.1. Early on in the commission, we asked for two J.T.O.s and were graciously given Drake and Simcock from *Avonia* (goodness knows why juniors are sent to depot ships which hardly ever leave harbour!). We have had various R.O.s(S) with us throughout the commission so far—amongst them A/L.R.O.(S) Blakebrough, R.O.(S)s Rankin, Block, Hicks and Smith. They never seem to stay with us long and their activities (if any?) are invariably shrouded in mystery. Last but not least we must not forget the tallest and most "learned" of those who communicate—L/Coder (E) Thoroughgood.

In our opinion our communications staff is a pretty good one from our Divisional Officer, Lt. Barrow, right the way down to the juniors.

So far, the commission hasn't gone too badly for us. We've had our "aches and pains" the same as everyone else, but have successfully come through them all.

I don't intend to bore you all with tales of the various exercises that we've taken part in for these are covered elsewhere in this edition, but suffice to say, that after getting everything ready to take part in "Dawn Breeze" and "Phoenix III", a big engine defect put us into Malta dockyard from January 1st until late March. (Actually there were big sighs of relief when we were told we wouldn't be taking part except from two R.O.s and two T.O.s whom we loaned out to *Saintes* and *Armada* to bolster their staffs for the duration of the exercise!) It was during this period in the dockyard that we got the opportunity of taking 10 days leave. We didn't let the opportunity go by and most of us flew home. The Communications Officer took a party (including T.O.3 Yetman) skiing in Northern Italy.

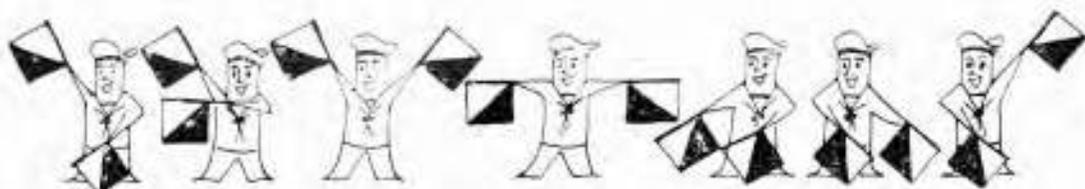
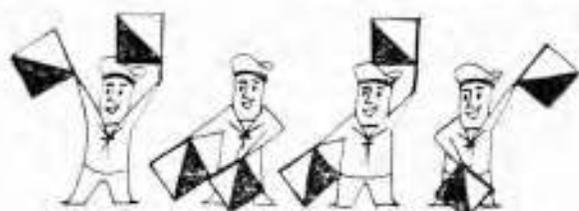


Banyan Party.

Another 10 weeks of the commission have been spent on Cyprus patrol. The first one, lasting from mid-November until Christmas Day was pretty grim (in the meaning of sleepless nights and sea time) chiefly owing to *Undaunted* colliding with the C.M.S. *Mixtron* which left us on our own as the only "big ship" in Cypriot waters. Mind you, I think the little C.M.S.s were even harder pushed but were always "on the ball". The big event of this patrol, was, I think, on the last day, Christmas Day, seeing *Saintes* and *Armada* arriving to relieve us whilst we went across to Beirut for a five day visit!

Our second patrol during April and May in company with *Saintes* and *Armada* was far better than the first, owing to the "ceasefire" in the island. For approximately five days a week, the ship was at anchor all day (patrolling only at night) and working a special routine which gave us all time off after 1 p.m. every day. Many of the staff spent their time lazing on the beaches or swimming. During this period of patrol, we got our Captain D's inspection over and done with, and I think we did pretty well in the department. (There's an old saying which says in effect "if you look long enough, you'll find something wrong" and boy did they give us a going over!)

As the department had "dug out" for D's inspection, it was unanimously agreed to have a "Communicators' Banyan". It was arranged in due course and at 9.30 on a really beautiful morning, a flamboyantly dressed "shower" (minus one unlucky watchkeeper on each side) piled into a motor boat laden with everything from salt to steak, biscuits to beer, and left on the outing. It took us 40 minutes to find a nice stretch of sandy beach on which to land and to unload the gear. Under the watchful eyes of Lt. Barrow, the R.S. and C.Y., a canvas tent was quickly rigged, wood collected and everything got ready for a good dinner. I've been on some banyans in my time but this was by far the best. Dinner was cooked by the heads of Department (with lots of advice from backseat drivers) and when it was ready we had steak, sausage, eggs, chips, peas and beans followed by tinned fruit for sweet and every-



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one had as much as they could eat. All agreed that our day's outing had been a great success.

In the field of sport, Communicators have had their fair share of representatives. The R.S. is a qualified soccer referee. The C.Y. captains the squadron soccer team. Elks, Scudder and Reynolds play cricket for the ship and J.T.O. Simcock is our representative in the hockey team. Oh, and lest we forget, Lt. Barrow captains the ship's rugby team and spends the winter season trying to make us play this curious "oblong ball" game.

As I write this screed, it is just five weeks to the day before we arrive back in "Guzz" and I must record that it is very hard luck on the two J.T.O.s (Simcock and Drake) both very good boys, who have been with us all commission except for the first month, that C.N.D. will not allow us to keep them and let them come home with us.

Throughout our time in the Med. we have, from time to time, been ably assisted by ratings from the fleet pool for various lengths of time. Their life is not very pleasant jumping from ship to ship at a few hours notice and not being settled in any one place for any great length of time. We would like to wish all the ones we had, the best of luck in the future, may your next draft be a very much better one and thank you for the services rendered to us.

Every ship has funny signals sent up to the bridge sooner or later. We've had a few, the funniest of which I think was this:

From VICTORIOLS
To S.M.I.
Info. CAMPERDOWN,
SURFACED.

THE SIXTH FRIGATE SQUADRON

To write an article about a G.S.C. is to travel a well worn path and that followed by authors far more accomplished than myself and for this I crave your indulgence. And if I dwell more on the doings of *Blackpool* than of the *Ulysses*, *Undaunted* or *Udine* it is because inevitably nowadays a squadron spends little of its time together and to follow all would take up more space I am sure than I am allowed.

The squadron commissioned in October 1958 under the command of Captain E. B. Ashmore, D.S.C., R.N., but *Blackpool's* story starts a little earlier—in August of that year, when she was accepted from Messrs. Harland and Wolff and commissioned under the command of Commander A. V. M. Diamond, M.B.E., R.N.—another Communicator. It is a rare and exciting experience to commission a new ship and I think we were all delighted with what we found. A very spacious B.W.O. which was promptly christened the Communicators' Ballroom by our envious mess-mates and an excellently designed Ops Room left

little to be desired. You have to be a bit of an athlete to defeat the ventilation trunkings which surround the flag lockers, but then you can't have everything. Before we joined the remainder of the Squadron and took over (F) we paid an adoption visit to *Blackpool* where a very happy liaison was struck up. The football team were all given *Blackpool's* jerseys and Stan Mortensen very generously gave his Cup Final badge to our goalie. In addition, all the team were introduced to the great Stanley Matthews. The number of Communicators giving addresses on leave which bear no relation to that of their next of kin also bears witness to the fact that the department did not neglect the more personal angle of this adoption business. As to who is adopting whom, is, however, a little more obscure.

After our work-up in the Med. which was rather staggered due to two of our number having had a slight disagreement on the way out, we all had trips to Messina or Catania where some of us tried out Etna as a ski-ing resort. Like our ski-ing it left much to be desired and anyone who has sat down involuntarily on a piece of conically-shaped fossilised lava will agree, I am sure, that volcanoes, extinct or otherwise are still capable of dealing a blow to one's pride and one's behind, second to none. The middle of January brought us our first Fleet Exercise and very good value we found it. In four days we covered everything which, in a work-up due to lack of ships, we were unable to do. At the end we were exhausted but very much more confident.

After "Janex" the squadron broke up—*Blackpool* going to Cyprus—of which nothing need be said except that the signing of the London Agreement coincided with our arrival, a fact which we found highly significant but which apparently went unnoticed by everyone else. We followed Cyprus by a visit to Beirut with *Ulysses* and other ships of the Med. Fleet. This was marred for most of us by bad weather necessitating our sailing in the middle of the night. There were, however, those Communicators who, playing their cards to a nicety secured a free night ashore in a smooth hotel leaving the rest of us gnashing our teeth in the bay. March saw us in Venice with *Udine* while *Ulysses* went to Gibraltar for a re-fit and *Undaunted* did another stint in Cyprus. It was a cold clear day when we entered the Sound and made our way up past the Doge's Palace, looking like something of a wedding cake, with the domes of San Marco behind glinting in the morning sun. It was a wonderful sight seeing it for the first time and although we were not there at the right time to ogle the film stars on the Lido beach there were other compensations. The S.C.O. and L.R.O. Copper found their ski-ing up at Cortina and came back looking revoltingly fit, without even a broken leg between them, whilst other less ambitious found their's on the Piazza San Marco, and others less ambitious still, found Harry's bar.

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Except for the usual crypto exercises N.A.T.O. had until now passed us by, but in April it came into its own with "Medflexguard" which gave the B.W.O. plenty to do sampling the various broadcasts. The E.W. boys also had themselves a ball with a CW Switch net. For the first few days the air was so thick with R.R.K.s, Z.D.K.s and I.M.I.s that there was certainly no time for trivialities like switching, and Pot's hair went a lovely snowy white. However, all bad things come to an end and before long order arose from the chaos, but it was clear that more practice was required in future.

The tenth anniversary of N.A.T.O. followed this closely and found all of us, except *Ulysses* who was still re-fitting, in Algiers learning to call it OTAN like the best of them. We were each alongside a 'chummy' ship and despite language difficulties, found much in common with our 'oppos'. Such was the exchange of ship's companies, that walking down the 'main drag' sometimes it was difficult to work out whether one was in a French or British ship. We dressed overall on the big day and duly admired the French method of hauling up on runners. Although it may not be quite so sensational when hauling over, it certainly keeps the flags cleaner and you can get it all ready the night before. This midnight curfew hit the night-birds on the staff pretty hard and no-one looked as ill as they after seven hours solid sleep alongside in a foreign port. Unheard of!

Valencia put all that right, however, and was probably the best run of them all. It's famous for its oranges apparently but frankly squash wasn't on the menu. Prices were very reasonable and taxis would take you miles—provided they didn't fall to pieces first—for a few pesetas. Most of us had our first taste of a bullfight here—and pretty gory some of it was. However, one couldn't help getting into the swing of it after a bit, and when the matador after a stirring fight with the bull dedicated to Captain (F), was presented with an ear, even the faintest hearts among us could 'scarce forbear to cheer'.

An A/S exercise with the Americans in the Straits was the next on the programme and so we

became Comfrigon 6. We had swapped *Undine* for *Ulysses* by now and the former was giving some well earned leave from Gibraltar. 'Alright for some' we felt, as we exchanged identities with the S.S. *Perconza* bound Zulu—Oh well . . . what the hell! We never did make the A.F.O. I suppose they didn't believe that half the ships we sent in existed. Frankly neither did we. *Undine* did get in, however—we always supposed she had a bloke sitting on the end of Europa Pt. flashing them up as they passed. Nevertheless the exercise had its compensations, for we fished two American birdmen out of the sea and got two gallons of ice cream in exchange.

In July with *Ulysses* and *Undaunted* we went to Istanbul with the remainder of the Fleet. Fourteen ships anchored off the Golden Horn and illuminated at night made a very impressive spectacle. It was quite a shock to be keeping V/S watch again. 'Chief' said it made him feel very nostalgic—or something. I didn't tell him what it made me feel. *Blackpool* went on to Samsun after this, while the others went off to Athens. Samsun is on the North coast of Turkey and it meant passing through the Bosphorous which was interesting, but having said that there's nothing else to say. We took in a Greek Island on the way back, and then off to Cyprus, whilst *Ulysses* and *Undaunted* did great things in the Fleet Regatta.

This was virtually the end. We returned to Malta and were inspected and all came home together via Gibraltar, splitting up again to visit Setubal and Lisbon and then home for leave.

Not very sensational I am afraid. We quelled no riots, arrested no gun-runners and relieved no famine-struck isles. But we enjoyed ourselves and showed the flag, and used that splendid S.T.C. to good effect. Our home leg looks like being somewhat truncated but we shall hope to give you Part II before we finally pack up.

Howler

After a rather fraught passage out to Gibraltar: FM F6 TO F.O. GIB. For Flag Lieutenant. When will it be convenient for me to wail on the Admiral.

Results of Christmas Competitions . . .

Winner of the Photographic Competition:

T.O.2 B. HADLEY (see page 121)

Joint winners of the Special Feature Competition:

*ANONYMOUS (see page 134)

R.O.1. W. BAILEY (see page 135)

*If the writer of H.M.S. 'Makohn' will contact the Editor, his prize money will be forwarded.

As there was no prize awarded for the Cartoon Competition, the prize money has been added to the Feature Competition and £2 2s. 6d. each has been sent to the winners named above.

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CHIEFS' CHATTER

Who was the Chief who put sixpence in the new coffee machine and got the coffee before the cup? And who was the one who, when the blood transfusion unit arrived, was turned down because his blood had a froth on it?

It has been suggested that if the Danish Chiefs are going to be on course for four months they should be in quarantine for three months twenty-nine days—preferably on Ailsa Craig. This suggestion was seconded by the Sick Bay Wrens who volunteered to look after them.

The long, prolonged howl that was heard over the Camp the other night was not the fire-siren but the victimal members of the Chiefs' Mess when they heard Corbin and Goulding were on duty together.

It has been proposed that the New Entries should have electric razor adaptors fitted, if this is approved the Chiefs' Mess want oxygen mask fittings in the lounge at the top of Mountbatten Block. It is not true that the C.P.O.s signature tune is "Stairway to the Stars".

Who is the single Chief who does his window shopping in the windows of the Halifax Building Society? Did you hear about the Instructor who told his class that "Special Parties" were Wren Officers? And the Stores Chief who thought "Bravo Zulu" meant "Well done the South Africans". That "Operation Slam" was thirteen tricks in spades and "E.W.2" was two-bob each way on the favourite. I was told of a T.O.2 who read the dhobeying on Knowles Block's washing line—and made sense of it.

But I find it difficult to believe that when they excavated the earth-works in North Camp that they found a papyrus which read:—"Learn Crypto the Appian Way". Or that the Joker who described *Mercurey* as "Fleet of Foot" had not watched the R.A.s at 1600.

There was an Instructor who hurried along when he was told he had to take Wrens for B.K.C. because he thought it meant "Backward Kissing Class" but his chum pointed out it only meant "Before the Klassroom Closes". I would like to scotch the malignant rumour that the telescope the G.I. uses when taking Wrens on the 22 range is in fact a downward pointing periscope.

Since the barbecue it has been proposed that the C.P.O.s lounge should be fitted with bat-wing doors and the car park replaced by a hitching rail. This suggestion received more support than the one that Chiefs should claim hard-lying money for spending the night under canvas during the Summer Dance. It is not generally known that when the marquee was unrolled we found two trapeze artists and a Pioneer Corps Sergeant who had been there since Dunkirk.

To pension

C.R.S. McInnes, C.R.S. Mairis, C.R.S. Hickey, C.C.Y. Corbin, C.C.Y. Langdown.

Ins

C.C.Y. Abbot from *Albion*, C.R.E.L. Hodges from *Callingtonwood*, C.R.S. Clifton from *Drake*, C.R.S. Mansfield from *FOFH*, C.R.S. Mills from *Albion*, C.R.S. Slade from *Cardigan Bay*, C.R.S. Harwood from *Drake*, C.C.Y. Yates Promoted.

Outs

C.R.S. West to *Albion*, C.C.Y. Atkinson to *Scarborough*, C.C.Y. Giddings to *C.N.D.*, C.R.S. P. Taylor to *Covendish*, C.R.S. K. Taylor to *Trafalgar*, C.R.S. Webster to *Scarborough*, C.C.Y. Barrett to *Whitehall*, C.R.S. Kingston to *Hermes*, C.C.Y. Blaikie to *Hermes*, C.R.S. D. Jones to *Phoenicia*, C.R.S. Cartmell to *Comdr. D.P.*, C.R.E. Hudson to *Chichester*, C.P.O. Ck Austin to *Hermes*, C.R.S. Godley to *Bahrain*, C.C.Y. Glendinning to *Duncan*, S.C.P.O.(S) Baird to bed.



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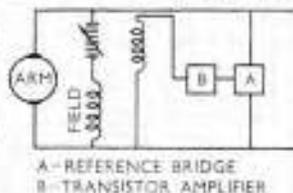
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P.O.'s PATTERN

This is your life

This article is a factual representation of mess life and all characters are true. If the names of any actual persons are used, such coincidence is purely intentional. Anyone wishing to sue will give my bank manager a laugh. Anyone wishing to do me harm, remember, your fist is so large and I am so small.

So back once again from summer leave of glorious weather, refreshed, invigorated and ready to go. Back to the gay "camaraderie," of sparkling mess life, until once again the witching hour of 1615 strikes up grips, beat retreat and the sound of engines dies away in the distance. The first morning's instructions, the wholesome, smiling faces of our budding new Navy, ready for the fray, "But you aren't allowed to thump us now Pats," "Crunch."

Yes, a few days are needed to get back in the swing, and for the nostalgia of home sickness to wear off from our keen young breed. Then the winter Term stretches before us, and life is in its proper perspective.

Already the S.D.s are carrying around their morocco bound brief cases, the R.C.I. (Q)s their brown cases, the R.S.(Q)s "Armdraulic." Books galore, as the usual invective from the football table is interrupted by the heated arguments, a constant aura surrounds aspiring candidates for promotion, as farms and turns are dissected and intersected.

It has even been known to silence the unrehearsed, or should I proclaim, spontaneous repartee indulged in by our friends, C.Y. Rust and C.Y. Jahme. Yes, they are still here, though for John, his tent awaits him in Aden next month, ACCOMPANIED, congratulations from us all. As for Jahme, his sea time habits are still restricted to Sunday afternoon visits with his youngsters to the Dockyard to see one of H.M. GREY WAR CANOES: you should laugh. **True or False**

Suggestions relayed for the fitting of a cruiserscope by the lounge windows, for the benefit of the "Sea shall not have them ratings." Scope to be removed when the Solent is rough. But back to more personal things, of C.Y. "Muscles" Chetwynd, whom we have heard on the grapevine, may have to leave the Service due to ill-health, I think all who knew him, will join me in wishing him well in his new vocation, characters are so rare these days.

On the social side we have nothing to boast about, with Ron Cull of "hor dog" fame in Malta, Connie Constantine of "pig roasting proficiency," on the *Belfast*, both connoisseurs of the "three man lift," you poor misguided fools, the organisation efficiency has decreased alarmingly. Good evenings were enjoyed by the home and away visits of the Camberwell cricket club concluding in R.S. Pitchforth, new Vice, and R.S. Farrar playing for the R.N.A. in London against a Show Biz XI for charity. They were right royally entertained by the Camberwell people, and now a football fixture has been added to the Mess entertainments.

But, a spark has been lighted and interest is beginning to abound again, so you sea-going sailors, if alongside the wall in Portsmouth, or near too, you are very welcome to join our Christmas Festivities on December 16th, R.S. Keith Smith is President and he's a sociable type in any language.

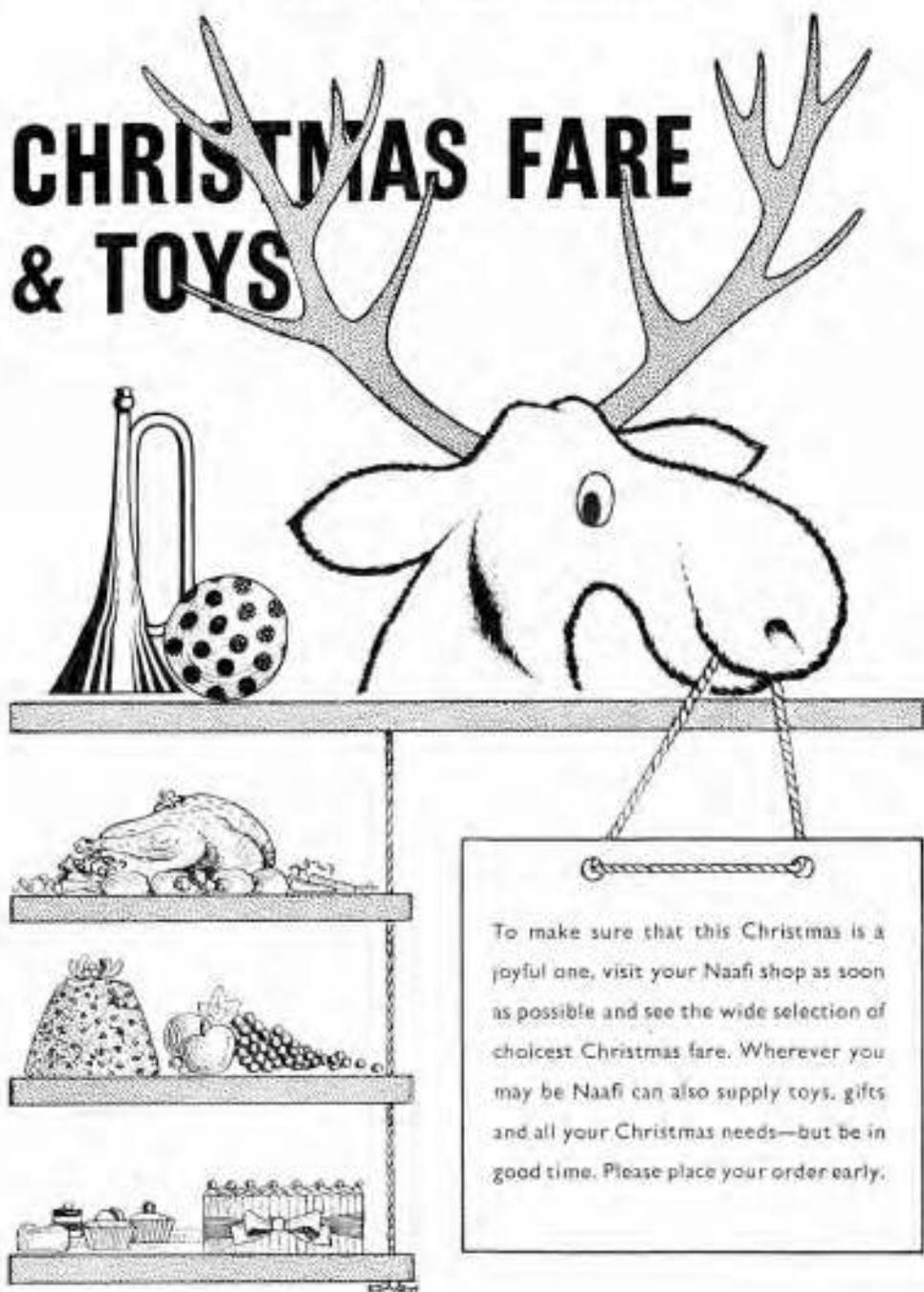
Mess night life is still rather tame, occasionally flaring up into sudden impromptu socials. These in turn being interrupted by the dedicated, blinking, groping, square-eyed people, as they dash their way diagonally across the mess at 9 o'clock for their wedge, then hurtle back to the shelter of the dark forbidding TV. room, just in time for the commercials to end. So beware the 9 o'clock men, be on your toes and keep clear that line to the man made monster.

Of course danger does not end there, especially when the SD(Q) potential are performing on the snooker table, R.S. MacIndoe, R.S. Bursley take a bow. It is the only time slip fielders have been set on each snooker pocket, safety nets would be preferred. R.S. Mulholland helped greatly at the impromptu socials with his professional touch on our new Bechstein. Woe betide you if a glass of hops strayed thoughtlessly on to its shiny surface, which he polished diligently. It was his "baby" and he lavished maternal affection on her. At the moment R.S. Mulholland is languishing in the sunny clime of South Africa, and his "baby" is silent. Oh for another musically minded maestro of dot and dash, Attention C.N.D. Now, just an aside for our non-communicators in the mess, at least the victimised ones, the others being too far removed, P.O. Healey and P.O. Wilcox joined our august presence for Part I training, your guess is as good as mine, and they trade the same thoughts on communicators as the remainder. But, not to be dismayed, they are playing their part well. Under our blonde heroes the Wrens have two alternatives, giggle or swoon. It is said, that our Whale Island friends joined by Arthur, our Wardroom accented C.G.I. (on occasions), are the only persons alive who can create stereophonic sound in 3D. Recognition also of our friends the chefs, Captain Morgan Skinner, Les Mathews, Bungy Williams and the remainder. We cannot praise their efforts too highly on behalf of the mess. With the spacious streamlined galley, worthy of the Ritz, food is served fit for a Queen. Eight choices for LUNCH you've never had it so good.

Oh, I nearly forgot, the civilian element is about to creep in, Horace, the Sweeney Todd of *Mercury*. Not for him short back and sides, one must cater for the modern Navy. It is now a Tony Curtis or a Burt Lancaster, the fringes of yesteryear is gone, sorry No. 1.

Horace is a great exponent of his art, and a snooker expert to boot. But one memorable night, *Mercury* shook to its foundations, the flood gates were released. Fifteen and eightpence, for drinks was freely, rashly, with hardly any reservation, paid over that red covered, ornamental, beer soaked bar, by

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our consorial artist. If you should disprove my statement, the illuminated address, with signatures, reigns proudly over the bar yet.

Still, N.A.A.F.I. do us proud, with Mary, Joy, Helen, Dez, Vicky and Dot doing a stint in turns, keeping the beer flowing and the language down, ladies, we salute you, you bear us well.

It now gives me great pleasure to announce to all members, that any back numbers of daily papers can be obtained, at any time, from henceforth. The reason for this, being, of course, "Stocks and Shares," C.Y. B. F. Davies has now departed for H.M.S. *Chichester*, small ships at last. Due to the booming shares after the last election, *Chichester* may become privately owned.

Plans are afoot to hold a vintage car race later in the year, P.O.s only. The age is indifferent, condition vital. Stirling C.Y. Haines and co-drivers C.Y. Rust and Jahme are joint favourites at the moment, but many more could easily, "crash", their way in. Their friends number magistrates, and police, so no obstacle could possibly be placed in their path. "After two weeks there is no cause for worry", a popular statement enjoyed by all. It is understood that the O.D.W. and P.C. Jones now work together in great unison, black books making for black books. Further to this R.S. Ashwell's Insurance Company have declared bankruptcy and Don Pinhoen's sense of humour has been stretched to the impossible.

Now let us cast our eyes to sport, to cricket at which we finished the season very well. Ken Pitchforth, Arthur Farrar, Keith Smith, Phil Leonard, Nobby Almond, to mention but a few, kept the flag flying high and we can say we won more than we lost. With football we have an excellent team, with R.S. McLean spearhead in attack, Jimmy Lunn prompting, R.S. Garrard flying down one wing and Barry Hari lumbering down the other. The defence has really proved itself with R.S. Buchanan blocking the centre successfully and R.S. Wenn the last line of defence. Only one game has been lost and that very narrowly. But as usual, duty calls, and Ron Garrard will be winging away to *Jutland*, Wenn diving away to *Balwark*, surprise, surprise, Buchanan to the Royal Yacht and Mitchell also to the *Jutland*. Still, replacements may enter these portals in time to uphold the prestige of the "old men."

BIRD WATCHING

Of all the interesting birds to be found in and around *Mercury* at this time of the year, one of the most interesting is also unfortunately one of the most raucous. This is the Greater Grebe or *Gunnus Laccii*. It is a large bird of drab hue its plumage is bluish black relieved by ruddy patches each side of the beak and splashes of red or gold high on the shoulders. It is most easily identified by its green legs and shiny black feet. Apart from the latter there is very little in its winter plumage to distinguish it from the genus *seepecohs*. One feature places this bird apart from all others of the species and that is its

raucous cry. Hard to describe, it can be heard when in full cry from Heyden Wood to St. James's. It is reminiscent of both the bark of the chough and the boom of the bittern and its hunting cry of "Garr-Yeow" strikes a chill in the bravest heart. Since early summer the Great *Gunnus Laccii* has been joined by several lesser Grebes, equally raucous in their call these birds are smaller and instead of the colour high on the shoulders they have a peculiar arrangement of bars and crosses on their wings. Though their call is not so loud as the Greater Grebe it is shriller and these smaller birds are swifter moving and faster in the hunt.

On the Broadwalk in summer and congregating in chirping flocks around the garage yard and Naval Store one can see the Treens or female of the species *trogloditus communicati*. In their summer plumage of black and white these are quite attractive birds but one needs to see the chrysalis-like transformation into their colourful display plumage to appreciate fully the colour they add to the scene. A predatory bird the Treen, and has very interesting migratory habits. Like the Fruite-Bats of Ceylon these birds leave their day time habitat and fly to the cloistered seclusion of Soberton which is obviously their main feeding ground. So regular are these movements to and from *Mercury* that one can set one's watch by them.

In addition to our native fauna around *Mercury* we have many passing migratory birds, amongst the most common are two branches of the same species. These are the Nayto and the Nayto Longcross, these birds vary so much in the colour and design of their plumage that they are barely recognisable as being of the same family. They do, however, have two traits in common, that is in disappearing at week-ends in clouds of blue smoke like a Phoenix rising from its ashes, and in the fascination they have for our native birds the Laydenes or Bungalow-dwellers. It is not unusual for an antipathy to develop between two species of like habits and this has happened between the Laydenes and the Treens. Very much alike in appearance and habit the Laydenes are non-migratory feeding on the local flora in *Mercury* and leaving their nesting grounds mainly on courting flights only.

Probably the most peculiar of the local birds is the Array; these birds nest in colonies usually some distance away from *Mercury* itself but in the mornings descend upon us in flocks and then almost immediately disappear into various nooks and crannies. At noon time they appear again mingling with and almost indistinguishable from the local male birds, yet for some reason they are highly protected by law, although local folk lore claims that if one is ever seen on a Saturday or a Sunday it may be shot, trapped or otherwise disposed of. Personally I believe this to be just another colourful old wives' tale with no basis of scientific fact, but then I never have seen one on a Saturday or a Sunday. As the winter evenings draw in, the arrays

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flock together again and as suddenly as they arrived, disappear from the *Mercury* scene and all is peace once more.

That, for the moment, is that. Next issue I shall tell you more about the fauna of *Mercury* and their peculiar habits—if I should live that long.

CX DX DE G3BZU MERCURY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB (G3BZU)

This Club was re-opened in July and is sited in the old canteen manageress's quarters. Just look for the aerial with a difference. The initial equipment was loaned by one member, plus an American communications receiver presented to the club by a C.R.S. and it has now expanded considerably. We have more spares than the Naval Stores, plus a good tool kit.

The original members made their own equipment from the many bits and pieces and their enthusiasm was rewarded by a large monetary gift from the

Nuffield Trust to purchase a transmitter, receiver and associated aerial. At the time of writing the Club has the following equipment:— 2 Receivers, 2 Transmitters, several Aerials, including a three band cubical quad for ten, fifteen and twenty metres (the spider's web). Another receiver plus a wave-meter is on order and should be delivered any day now.

Many QSL cards adorn the club walls showing the numerous contacts including U.S.A., U.S.S.R., South America and Clanfield.

Whether you are a licensed ham or not, why not come along and join. All members will thoroughly enjoy themselves either working C.W. or Fone (world wide) on the equipment they modify and improve; making new equipment; repairing old; or experimenting and making new aerials. There is no limit to the scope, enjoyment and friends to be gained from this fascinating hobby. Every port of call holds friends for the ham.

We would appreciate news and progress of any other R.N. Amateur Radio Club through the medium of this Magazine or through the ether.

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APPOINTMENTS

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

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R. CARROLL	A/S Lt. (SD) (C)	Mercury	Adamant
H. A. CHEETHAM	Li. Cdr.	R.A.F. Pucklechurch	R.A.F. Tangmere
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To Lt. Cdr. (SD) (C)

F. W. DENNY
C. J. J. KEMP, M.I.C.

To Second Officer W.R.N.S.

Miss C. M. EVANS
Miss E. M. M. PETHURAM

Radio Supervisor to Chief Radio Supervisor

G. CHAPMAN (6.6.59)
R. F. LOWE (15.6.59)
R. MACKENZIE (16.6.59)
J. D. FOSTER (16.6.59)
R. MILLS (16.6.59)
N. G. LODDER (29.6.59)
A. GORDON (30.6.59)

To Lt. (SD) (C)

P. A. CLARK
D. DORSON
N. W. HAGGAR
E. G. L. NASSE
W. C. WATERS

Communication Yeoman to Chief Communication Yeoman

W. A. GOW (7.6.59)
E. BURTON (16.6.59)
G. YATES (1.10.59)

RETIREMENTS

A. AITKEN ...	... ..	Commander
W. J. B. G. AYRES ...	... ..	Lieutenant (SD) (C)
W. C. BROWN ...	... ..	S/Lieutenant (SD) (C) (A.F.O. 1955/57)
H. F. CAMPBELL ...	... ..	Lieutenant
S. M. GOLDRING ...	... ..	2nd Officer (B.R. 1077. Art. 0320)
G. F. N. KNOX ...	... ..	Lieutenant Commander (A.F.O. 1955/57)
A. R. E. ST. Q. NOLAN ...	... ..	Lieutenant Commander
J. B. PATERSON, D.S.C.	Commander (A.F.O. 1955/57)
W. SWANSTON	Lieutenant (SD) (C) (A.F.O. 1955/57)
L. R. TAYLOR	Lieutenant (SD) (C)

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