

THE COMMUNICATOR



VOL. 14

No. 1

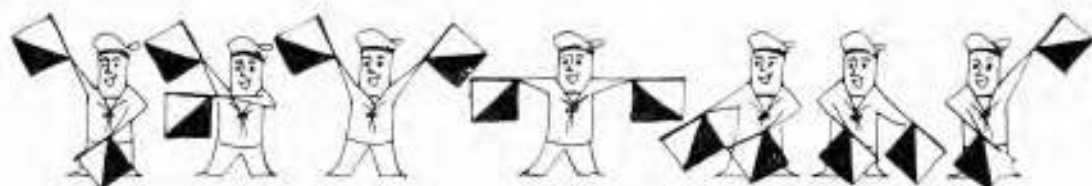
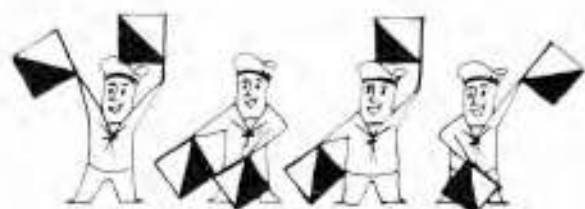
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THE COMMUNICATOR

The Magazine of the Communications Branch, Royal Navy

EASTER 1960

VOL. 14, No. 1

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Cover: R.F.A. "GOLD RANGER" REFUELLING H.M.S. "BELFAST"

<i>Editor:</i>	Lieutenant Commander W. F. PATERSON, R.N.
<i>Art Editor:</i>	Wren J. M. DOUGLAS-REID
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Lieutenant D. W. COGGESHAW, R.N.
<i>Editorial Staff:</i>	Instructor Lt. Commander J. PAYNE, R.N.
<i>Secretary:</i>	Wren M. ELLIS
<i>Business, Production and Advertisement Manager:</i>	MR. EDGAR SERCOMBE, 2 Station Hill, Farnham, Surrey.

CONTRIBUTIONS

All MSS., photographs and cartoons should be sent to the Editor at H.M.S. "Mercury", as below. These will be returned to the senders only if asked for, and responsibility for them cannot be accepted by the Editor. Contributions for the Summer 1960 Edition must be in the Editor's hands by June 27th.

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CEREMONIAL IN THE CITY



“ . . . to receive and attend . . . ”

EDITORIAL

How do you like the new cover? Any remarks, comments or suggestions you may care to make would be very welcome, not only about the cover, but also about the contents of your Magazine.

Since publishing the Christmas edition, we have had a financial blow. As a result of the strike in the printing industry last summer the cost of the COMMUNICATOR has gone up by about 4d. a copy in its old standard form. As the previous profit was only about 1d. a copy it is clear that a heavy loss had to be faced. This was discussed at a Welfare Committee meeting in *Mercury* and the following decisions were reached. First, an increase in cost to the readers would result in a heavy fall in sales and would therefore achieve nothing. In this connection it must be remembered that the main charge is that of setting the type, preparing the blocks and getting ready to print. The cost of the actual printing is relatively small, so it follows that the more copies we can sell, the cheaper the Magazine becomes. Here we ask for your support as officers and senior ratings in ships and shore headquarters can do a lot to encourage sales.

Secondly, to pay our way, which we must do, the number of pages in the Magazine must be reduced and this has been done. This means that we cannot print all that we would like but you will understand the problem. The quality of the paper has also been reduced, though this is only a very small saving.

Having done all we can at this end there remains the important question of advertising. In this connection, possible advertisers are always being asked to support the Magazine and we are most grateful to those who have already taken space. More can be done in this field and a few more advertisements would enable us to increase the number of pages again. You may be able to help and if you hear of anyone who might be prepared to take space please let the Editor know. We are the only Branch in the Royal Navy that continues to issue a self-supporting Magazine, as others such as 'Flight Deck' and the 'Electrical Review' are regarded as official publications and are supported by Admiralty funds. This is out of the question for the COMMUNICATOR as its character and contents would not admit its inclusion in this field.

Thank you all for your splendid support in the past, but even greater efforts are needed in the future if we are to survive.

CEREMONIAL IN THE CITY

In July, 1959, the 3rd Battalion, Coldstream Guards, which was disbanded in September, paraded at the Tower prior to handing their colours to the Lord Mayor at Guildhall for safe keeping in the Church of St. Lawrence Jewry. At the City boundary the battalion was halted by the City Marshal with the challenge: "Who comes there?" Riding forward the Commanding Officer answered: "The Third

Battalion, Coldstream Guards exercising their privilege and right to enter the City of London with drums beating, Colours flying and bayonets fixed". The City Marshal replied: "I have it on the authority of the Lord Mayor to receive and attend your battalion through the City". He then wheeled his horse and led the troops past the Mansion House where the Lord Mayor took the salute.

We print a photograph facing this page showing the City Marshal in plumed cocked hat and scarlet coat, mounted on a Police grey, performing this ancient ceremony because, for the first time ever, it was carried out by a Signal Officer. Captain G. M. Bennett, D.S.C., R.N., who here presents his back to us, was Signal Officer at Freetown, Alexandria, and in Force H during the last war, and has since been Commander of *Ajux*, in command of *St. Brides Bay* and Naval Attaché, Moscow. On his retirement from the Service in January, 1958, he was elected City Marshal by the Court of Common Council: as someone put it, he then exchanged the uncertain motion of a ship for the even more uncertain motion of a horse!

The Provost-Marshal for the City, to give the office—which dates from 1595—its original title, was once responsible for supervising the Watch and Ward of the City, for ridding the streets of rogues and vagabonds, and removing the sick to the various hospitals. But the introduction of police in 1839 left him with no more than ceremonial duties to perform. Now, however, he is one of the Lord Mayor's Household Officers or Esquires, sharing with the Swordbearer and the Common Cryer and Sergeant-at-Arms a task similar to that of an Equerry, in addition to ceremonial duties which include leading the civic procession on state occasions in Guildhall and St. Paul's Cathedral. Until 1939 he also rode in front of the Lord Mayor's carriage, but this once daily duty has since been reduced to the annual Lord Mayor's Show, when the First Citizen and Chief Magistrate (also, incidentally, Admiral of the Port) goes in his glass coach to the Law Courts to be sworn in.

Captain Bennett, who has recently exchanged the colourful uniform of City Marshal for the sober wig and gown of Common Cryer and Sergeant-at-Arms, in which capacity he carries the City Mace and makes Royal Proclamations from the steps of the Royal Exchange, writes that for a naval officer to lead a battalion of the Guards through the City from the eminence of a horse's back afforded him one special satisfaction. En route the sudden eruption of a couple of bell-clanging fire-engines from a side street caused his mount to shy, at which one onlooker was heard to comment: "How on earth does the *General* manage to stay on his horse when it does that?" But perhaps his only naval predecessor in this office had a greater satisfaction; on one occasion shortly before the last war, his mount insisted on carrying him up the steps of St. Paul's Cathedral—and no Sandhurst adjutant has ever ridden to such heights!

HOME STATION



H.M.S. CAMPERDOWN

Since our last screed to the COMMUNICATOR, *Camperdown* and her Communicators have practically come to the end of the road as far as the present commission is concerned.

Last July, in company with *Saintes* and *Armada* we started the long trip back to U.K., via Gib and Corunna, arriving at our base port, Devonport, on August 5th. As we were due to sail again on September 12th we were only able to get in 16 days leave each watch. Right on time on the 12th, we left Plymouth Sound with *Saintes* to take part in an N.E.X. against *Tiger* and then joined up with F.O.F.H. and the remainder of Flotilla Command for passage to Invergordon and extensive weapons training. This went off very well and we must congratulate L.R.O. Nicol on the splendid job he did during the absence of the R.S. during the whole of this period.

From Invergordon we sailed out into the North Sea as part of the troop carrying group to take part in Exercise "Barefrost". During this exercise we had a very varied time. One day in amongst the Norwegian firds and the next way out to sea acting as crash boat for *Victorious*.

On completion of the exercise we were detached by *Victorious* and sailed independently to Rosyth in time for many of us to take a L.W.E.

All of Flotilla Command stayed at Rosyth for a full week of various sporting activities at the end of which the 3rd D.S. sailed, *Saintes* and *Armada* for Derry and *Camperdown* for Faslane. Imagine our surprise, when, on entering the Gareloch, the O.O.G. arrived on board with a signal prominently displayed in his hand saying that *Armada* would now go to Faslane and *Camperdown* would go to Derry. And it was a big surprise to us too because we hadn't received the signal! Eventually things were sorted out, and, turning tail, we piled on speed and headed across to Derry.

For three weeks we operated in and out of Derry and believe me it was no picnic. Many of us had never seen the weather so rough! It wouldn't have been so bad if it had only been for a couple of days but this weather went on and on, culminating in a terrific storm during which we had to plod on and on into the sea as it was hopeless even to think of trying to turn. Eventually we managed to get into

the shelter of the Hebrides and there met up with *Saintes* and *Armada* and all three of us then manoeuvred in and out of the islands southwards before making a final dash across to Derry and shelter.

We only had three days in which to make good the damage caused by the storm before we sailed for Iceland and our three weeks patrol around its icy, gale-swept coasts. But it was done and in fact we managed to relieve *Trafalgar* a few hours earlier than was intended.

It was a good job that the weather for the whole of the three weeks was not as bad as the first three days there! It was terrible, the ship being practically holed to in a terrific snowstorm. During our patrol we gave assistance in many ways to the trawlers and although we sighted gunboats from time to time none of them gave us any trouble. On one occasion there we started to fuel from an R.F.A. at 0900, finished at 1230, started again at 1315 and completed at 1545 all for the sake of 65 tons of fuel!

Palliser relieved us on November 28th and we headed south for Rosyth. All was going well until we had an accident on board and we had to make for Thorshavn in the Faeroes to land an injured man. An emergency signal that we made during this period took only nine minutes to come out on the broadcast after being passed to Malta.

After having only three days in Rosyth, during which the ship was painted from top to bottom, the squadron sailed for Bremen. Although a good time was had by all during the five days there, the weather could have been a lot warmer and it was with great relief that on the 9th December the ships sailed for the sunnier climes of their home ports.

The 11th December saw the ship entering Plymouth Sound for the last time this commission and long leave for the ship's company.

At present we are lying in a basin in Devonport dockyard, more like a tramp steamer than a destroyer. Many of the ship's company have already departed and those of us who are left will shortly be following them.

At our ship's company dance on the 28th January, we had our last fling together. Before the dance, Lt. Barrow, our D.O., entertained the R.S. and C.Y. and their wives to dinner and by the time the dance ended at 1 a.m. a great time was had by all.

The communications division has been scattered far and wide across the country and I only hope that in their new billets they will carry on the good work. Under our energetic D.O. we had a great team, as good as any and better than most and I wish them all the very best of luck in the future. The best wishes of all the department go with Lt. Barrow in his new appointment as C.O. of *Causton*.

DRAFTS

Name	Rating	Whither
Enticknap	R.S.	<i>Sea Eagle</i>
Nicol	L.R.O.	<i>Adamant</i>
Day	R.O.2	Whitehall W.T.
Brown	R.O.1	<i>Miner IV</i>
Reynolds	R.O.2	<i>Mercury</i> (L.R.O.s Course)
Edwards	R.O.2	<i>Cambridge</i>
Mather	J.R.O.	<i>Bulwark</i>
Gooding	J.R.O.	<i>Bulwark</i>
Humphreys	C.Y.	<i>Ganges</i>
Elks	L.T.O.	<i>Mercury</i>
Scudder	T.O.1	<i>Malcolm</i>
Broadbent	T.O.2	<i>Mercury</i> (L.T.O.s Course)
Waterson	T.O.2	<i>Mercury</i> (L.T.O.s Course)
Nolan	T.O.2	<i>Northwood</i>
Norris	J.T.O.	<i>Bulwark</i>
Shiels	J.T.O.	<i>Bulwark</i>

There is one question that arises out of these drafts and that is:—

Does the drafting office believe that *Sea Eagle* and *Ganges* are in Devonport, Portland or South West Wales areas OR are they the accompanied foreigners asked for? This will be the R.S.'s fifth time to Derry and he's thinking strongly of changing his name by deed poll to Patrick Michael O'Flanagan Enticknap in the hopes that he'll get a draft somewhere in the "Guz" area next time.

MINE COUNTERMEASURES
FLOTILLA

The Mine Countermeasures Flotilla (Home) came into being at the beginning of September 1959, consisting of *Reclaim*, the 100th Minesweeping Squadron and the 51st Inshore Minesweeping Squadron, under the command of Captain N. H. Pond, R.N. The Flotilla is based at Port Edgar, South Queensferry, Scotland, and their base is *Lochinvar*, which provides base support and maintenance for it. It is hoped to have a small training centre established at *Lochinvar* to provide for instructional periods when the ships are alongside and the Communicators are not doing exercises, which are run by M.H.Q. Pitreavie.

The staff ashore consists of Sub-Lieut. (SDIC) H. Watson, R.A.N. as S.C.O. to Captain Mine-countermeasures and also Flotilla duties, Squadron C.Y. is C.Y. P. C. Sharkey and Squadron R.S. is R.S. J. P. Welsh and looking after those all-important signals in the Main Signal Office is C.Y.

Freeth Uc with L.T.O. Allen and L.T.O. Pritchard. We have just lost L.T.O. Beaumont to civvy street and L.T.O. Lonsdale to East of Suez. They took over when the Main Signal Office was Navalised last October.

100th Minesweeping Squadron

On the seagoing side there have been quite a few exercises already tackled and dealt with and also quite a few to be tackled this year. Ships of this Squadron have visited Germany, France and the Channel Islands since forming part of the Mine-countermeasures Flotilla and are visiting the Mediterranean during March, then off to Germany, Holland, Sweden and since we live north of the border, England.

The communications staff of the small boys consists of one R.O. and T.O. except, of course, the Leader, who has an extra L.R.O. and L.T.O. We have had five National Service R.O.s who have worked well and helped the bunts quite a bit, but they are leaving us in the next few months.

51st Inshore Minesweeping Squadron

Up until the closing months of 1959 it was not uncommon to see five little ships nosing their way out of the East Pier of Port Edgar and forming up, then with a throaty roar, following almost tip to tail behind their leader, under the bridge and away once again for a day, week or maybe a month's exercise or cruise. Now, sadly reduced by the withdrawal of two of its number, the 51st M.S.S. is, or so it appears, very reluctant to be seen in company, what with two of them in Rosyth Dockyard at the time of going to press, well it's all that one Inshore can do to stay on top let alone keep up a brave front for the others to hide behind.

OUR JENNY



"But chief, Dior says it's the fashion!"

This, however, is not a communications problem. These Inshores have only the barest necessities compatible with keeping in touch with the world outside their own formation, as for inter-ship communication, the loud hailer is extremely efficient and trafficators would be ideal for ordering 'follow round' alterations of course. You may say that this is rather far-fetched, but it is not every ship that requires its radio operator to keep a watch dressed in sea boots and oilskins. I don't think the Marine Radio manufacturers ever envisaged their sets being water cooled but they seem to get a fair share of saturation in 'boats'. Nevertheless they usually manage to keep going, with an extra crackle or fizzle here and there. Nowadays with so many stand-by circuits for emergencies it would not often seem necessary to resort to the old fashioned visual steam signalling; however, a rapid change of method often has to be effected on these vessels, especially if you are in the throes of a screening exercise: just to keep in touch of course.

I understand the Admiralty has promised another addition to the Squadron during March, so let's hope this will help to bring them all out of hibernation, to continue their wanderings up and down Forth and places.

S.T.C. DEVONPORT

A most refreshing sight, after a rather wet winter, are the spring flowers bursting into bloom in the brilliant sunshine in which the west country is now basking. This welcome change in the met, and the thought of 'heavy pounds' to be found in next

month's pay packets, makes the future outlook singularly bright.

So far this Term, the daily round has been mainly routine made more interesting by the odd howlers. The latest is that a SVC is a message between the three Services which leads to the sixty-four thousand dollar question.

The re-opening of our own rifle range has borne fruit in that we were able to enter three teams for the Captain Sell's cup. Unfortunately two of them came out of the hat in succession and consequently shot against each other in the second round. The 'A' team consisting of our aged gentlemen made a supreme effort and reached the semi-final, but found the strain a little too much at that stage. The soccer team having been purged by draftee, were knocked out of the Commodore's Cup in one foul sweep, but the hockey eleven has kept its head above water.

It was decided that the strain of the command cross country over a rugged five miles at Cremyll would have left us rather short handed and R.N.H. overworked, but we entered a team of budding grandstand commentators. After much technical improvisation and at the expense of some very wet shirts, the not so wet spectators, sensibly entrenched in the pavilion, were kept in the picture throughout the race, which was won by B.R.N.C. Dartmouth.

As always, there are far too many ins and outs to be recorded here, but we must record our best wishes to C.C.Y. Brown who has gone to pension, and to C.C.Y. Edwards and C.R.S. Wilson, who will shortly follow his footsteps into civvy street. Long may they enjoy the fruits of their labours.

CALLING ALL RADIO AMATEURS

If you are a licensed Radio Amateur, keen Short Wave Listener, or aspire to an Amateur Radio Licence, and would be interested in the forming of an Amateur Radio Society (similar to RAFARS), please send the following details to:—

Radio Supervisor M. J. Mathews,
P.O.s Mess,
H.M.S. Ganges,
Shotley,
Suffolk.

CALLSIGN; NAME; SERVICE ADDRESS; HOME ADDRESS; RANK/RATE; OFFICIAL NUMBER.

Over 250 names have been collected so far, how about adding yours?

R.N. Amateur Radio Clubs are already on the air at:—

Mercury G3BZU, *Adamant* GM3OAE, *Dartmouth* G6VJ and R.N. W/T Station Kranji, Singapore VS1HU.

Anyone who wishes to start a club, using Service funds, can get the details from me at the above address.

(see also page 18)



The Chicago skyline floodlit in honour of the Royal Visit.

H.M. YACHT BRITANNIA

Trying to find a starting point for this article took some sorting out, but finally it was decided that January 1959 would be the most appropriate.

On the 7th of that month we sailed from Portsmouth on what was to be our second world cruise in three years, wearing the flag of Flag Officer Royal Yachts who, only ten hours previously, had been promoted to Vice Admiral. Vice Admiral Dawnay may well be remembered as Captain of the Signal School during 1953 and 1954.

We were bound eastward and the journey as far as Malta went smoothly despite the lack of semaphore from *Lascaris* which spoilt the C.C.Y.s stay. After two very enjoyable days at Malta we were at sea once again, bound for Suez. Many of us had mixed feelings as to how the transit of the canal would go, but we need not have worried. The canal company excelled themselves in their arrangements, even to the extent of holding up convoys to allow us to take up Station One with the utmost despatch.

Having transited the canal safely we made our way to the Indian Naval Base—*I.N.S. Circars*—at Vizagapatam. The town itself had nothing to offer but the Indian Navy entertained us in no uncertain manner. The communication set up at *Circars* is quite surprising, and they were only too pleased to clear traffic for us.

There was plenty of opportunity for sporting activities, and if any reader has the luck to go there it is well worth practising whaler pulling beforehand, as it is their favourite recreation and they take some beating, although our combined Communication team under the able leadership of C.Y. Candy did us credit.

After Vizagapatam came Rangoon where His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh embarked and with Court Flags broken at the mastheads we commenced the cruise that was to take us completely around the world.

It was an unforgettable experience transiting the Panama canal and one must give credit to the U.S. authorities who handled the ship's passage through with great skill.

At Bermuda, the *Standard* was struck and we,

sailed for home, arriving at Portsmouth on 7th May, having steamed a total distance of 28,399 miles and visited 23 different ports during the four months we were away.

After seasonal leave, and short dockyard period during which special equipment for the transiting of the St. Lawrence Seaway was fitted, we sailed on June 6th for the Royal Tour of Canada.

On June 26th, the Seaway was officially opened by Her Majesty the Queen and President Eisenhower, and it was indeed an historic occasion to see the Royal Standard and the Personal Flag of the President of the United States flying alongside each other at the mainmast, and the Canadian Red Ensign at the mizzen in the place of the customary Union Flag, with the Admiralty Flag at the Fore.

During our passage up the seaway and the Great Lakes we were escorted by ships of the Royal Navy, Royal Canadian Navy and the United States Navy, not forgetting all the small craft, some of which contained 'barons' of great wealth for which purpose all 'strangers' were issued with a lanyard in the form of a noose.

This was an unforgettable, besides historic trip for all of us, and the hospitality of the Canadian people wherever we went was overwhelming.

The trip ended with a Review of the Canadian Fleet at Halifax by Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh. Ceremonial experts may be interested to know that the ships in the Review, all of whom were anchored, flew mast-head flags, Ensigns and Jacks, although the ceremony was after sunset.

On Saturday, 1st August, *Britannia* sailed from Halifax for Aberdeen where we were due to embark Her Majesty and His Royal Highness for a short tour of the Orkneys and Shetlands. However, owing to the news that all Her Majesty's public engagements were cancelled for that year, we were diverted and arrived at Portsmouth on Monday, 10th August.

We were soon to learn that the trip to Ghana which was to have taken place during November and December had been postponed and the Yacht would go into the dockyard for refit. Accordingly the Admiralty policy of reduction was brought into effect



"Of course it 'ad to be that one!"

and we bade farewell to many of our messmates who had been with us for the past two years. We wish them well wherever they may be.

Riveters, windy hammers and the like were to be our lot for the next few months until December the 28th when we recommissioned back to full strength.

On the 15th January we once again sailed from Portsmouth, this time wearing the personal standard of Her Royal Highness Princess Royal for a twelve week tour of the West Indies.

After visiting a number of the Islands, we finally met *Troubridge* (S.N.O.W.I.) which proved to be an occasion for good natured banter between the two departments as the C.C.Y. of *Troubridge* is an ex-Yachtie.

At the time of writing we are in Jamaica, nearing the end of the cruise and are looking forward to some well earned Easter leave.

On a final note we would like to point out that a discussion is still taking place between the S.C.O., C.C.Y. and the C.R.S. as to who will receive the new Responsibility Allowance (Charge Pay).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

I can contribute a curious incident in connection with the Jutland signal, "Equal-Speed C.L." At the time I was Assistant Squadron Wireless officer in the *King George V* (leader of the line after deployment), flagship of 2nd B.S., under Vice-Admiral Sir Martyn Jerram. My station in action was the Auxiliary W/T office (forward) with just sufficient room for the P.O.

Tel. and myself. The signal came through as "E S C L" instead of "W G C L." I sent a copy by messenger to my chief, Lieut. Cdr. G. C. Candy (S.W.O.) in the Main Office, and received a chit back "Gardiner on leave". This alluded to the assistant W/T officer of Jellicoe's staff, Major B. C. Gardiner (R.M.L.I.), due to whose absence the necessary supervision was probably lacking. Lieut. Cdr. R. L. Nicholson was the Fleet W/T officer in *Iron Duke*. He and Candy were both "torpedomen", not "signalmen". This was at the period when most W/T officers were R.M. or (T). The new combined (S) and W/T officers were only just coming into circulation.

During the battle, at about 7 p.m., we also intercepted, in the auxiliary cabinet, the signal from the *Marlborough*, "ZK" "Have been struck by a mine or torpedo", which was amplified one minute later by "BZ" "Have been struck by a torpedo".

H. P. MESS,
Commander, Royal Navy.

6 Liskeard Gardens
S.E.3.

Sir,

Reference the picture of *Victory* about 1878 in the Christmas issue I should again like to point out that the first officer who interested himself and so was the founder of our great Branch was Lieutenant William Eason. He was then a Signal Boatswain, serving in *Duke of Wellington*, Captain "Bully" Woodward. Eason asked permission to take a class of Signal ratings to *Victory* daily for semaphore and morse instruction. This was granted and that was the first start of our Branch. A photograph of Lieutenant Eason used to be hung in the Signal Boatswain's cabin in the Signal School, Portsmouth.

I served in *Victory* in 1900 soon after she was the Signal School and Lieutenant A. F. Everett was Superintendent of Signal Schools. I passed for Signalman under him.

W. R. PARIS,
Signal Commander Royal Navy,
4 Waterloo Crescent House,
Dover.



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

ECONOMY AND SUPPLY

by C.R.S. R. Baker

A common policy in Hong Kong for airing grievances, controversial points of view and a sure way of getting the required reaction from such official bodies as H.M. Government and Traffic Police and from the monopolies of Water Works, Gas Company and Electric Company is to write to the press. Through the ever open ear and mouth of the local press much is ventilated, which, through orthodox official channels, would become involved in the proverbial red tape and die a death of asphyxiation amongst dusty forgotten files.

"Searchlight", is the instrument of the Communicator's press, as evidenced by the first selection of "airings" in the Christmas '59 issue. Many will be the grumbles no doubt that reach the hands of the Editor. Some sound, some libellous and some frivolous. We can only hope that Our Lordships and the powers that be react as willingly and swiftly as the local perpetrators of justice in Hong Kong. In the Communicator's case though, may Their Lordships deal vigorously with sound criticism, close their ears to the libellous and enjoy a laugh with the frivolous.

Economy is apparently the crux of Naval existence these days. In the days of yore, one could rely on the stores to produce from stock the required item. In these days of enlightenment, what used to be the exception is now the rule. The invariable reply to demands is, "None in stock", or at the best, a percentage only of the full requirement. A book of S.156 forms was an important item at one time, now for all its usefulness we might just as well turn it over and use it for a scribble pad. Similarly, an S.1091—you can't return what you can't replace; efficiency must suffer in order to keep a circuit open at all costs.

Economy may sharpen the wits and give birth to a new awareness of responsibility to user and maintainer, but it can be taken to extremes. My

personal view is that we are fast approaching that extreme. Bases nearer to the source of supply may not feel the pinch so much, but the problem of adequate spares is a source of irritation and embarrassment to those of us at the far end. No one particular item can be isolated as the cause of complaint, it covers many items throughout the pages of the rate book.

The Hong Kong base of the past may be changing rapidly to an inferior role in many respects, but there is very little evidence that we Communicators are included in that supposition. The highest proportion of our equipment is elderly to say the least, and the present economy drive plus the difficulty in obtaining replacement stores, is a frustration to our efforts.

I wonder in many cases, if it is not a false economy, particularly when so many store items have to be flown to us from either Singapore or U.K.

My criticism is not directed against those here in Hong Kong who are responsible for our supply, but against the policy of economy in general. Certainly we must have a measure of economy but don't take it to the extreme of penny-pinching miserliness.

Another problem, not I think connected with economy, but with lines of supply, are corrections and amendments to publications. Never before have I found my books so much out of date. Signals are in evidence of changes, etc., to be brought into force, and those already in force. But of the changes, corrections and amendments themselves there is no evidence. Is this supply problem peculiar to Hong Kong? I sincerely hope so, or I fear the worst for those ships in a similar predicament, which are called upon to take part in fleet or NATO exercises. Lack of current communication policies and amendments is dangerous and not the least a worry to those whose job it is to direct the fortunes of the communication world.

Hong Kong may be at the end of the line, but endow us with the goods and we will continue to equal, if not surpass the efficiency of the fighting fleet and the large wireless and signal centres.

PRIZE WINNING FEATURE

ROGUE'S YARN

I suppose that if I hadn't had such a reputation as a skite this would not have been an article for the *COMMUNICATOR*, but the substance of some official report; and I would have got a medal instead of 14 days No. 10s. But then, if I hadn't been a bit of a skate I don't suppose I would have volunteered in the first place.

My name is Roger Frecker and I am—I mean was—an L.R.O. At the time I was serving in the *Brighton* and we were on Cyprus patrol—for the second time. It was July and flaming hot. We hadn't been allowed ashore, except for swimming parties, for a fortnight. Well, I am a normal sort of bloke and when the S.C.O. came into the office one morning and said that the Army wanted someone to go ashore for bombardment communications that afternoon, as they were unable to provide anybody, I saw the possibilities in the situation. They were a pretty dim shower in the office—quite happy building sand-castles and bronzing their beautiful torsos—so that when 'his nibs' intimated that there would be some climbing involved, there was, except for the shuffling of feet beneath the receiver bays, what I believe is generally known as a pregnant silence.

"I'll go Sir," I said, producing a look of cherubic innocence. "Good old Freckles!" chorused my relieved mates. The S.C.O. was pleased. "Good show," he said. He never did say much else. A 'square' of the first order, he had taken it upon himself to reform me and when one of our killicks had to be flown home, had persuaded the skipper, I suspect much against his better judgment, to rate me Local Acting. He said that the increased responsibility would finish the job of turning me into a respectable citizen. I hoped he knew what he could do with his increased responsibility, because I knew what to do with the increased lolly.

I don't know if you know Cyprus; but the range we were using was a desolate headland, the tip of which was called Cape Arnauti. The plan was for me to be dropped by a boat at a beach on the north side and to walk up about a mile to where there was a road which ran along the ridge to a small village. The spotting point was just beyond the village on the edge of a cliff, with the range running out beyond it to the sea. After the shoot, the ship was going round to Paphos to pick up the mail, returning for me just before sunset.

You could have fried an egg on the Quarter Deck when I left in the boat, armed with a 615 (you can never trust pongos' equipment), boots and gaiters (remember you are our representative amongst the Army), and I was beginning to regret my rash offer. If it hadn't been for the 'sippers' that I had just demanded from my mates for my selfless act, I would have balked even then.

My shirt was sticking to my back even before I was half-way up to the road; and I felt that the Duty

Watch might just have coped with the 615, but that as a one-man transportable—it was another of Their Lordships' macabre practical jokes. To make things worse, the jeep I had been promised wasn't waiting for me when I eventually got on to the road, so I had to stagger along to the village on my feet. It was rutted, white and dusty and the sun burnt down as though it had conceived a personal dislike for me. At last a cluster of white square blocks, which obviously passed for the village, hove into sight and one of them, with a Keo sign over the door and a faded Coca-Cola advertisement nailed to its wall brought all my homing mechanism into action. I left my gear with my cap on it outside, in case the jeep came by, and pushed through a beaded curtain, which in films usually hides the Harem. In this case I wasn't disappointed.

She was gorgeous. She swam into my vision like oases must to weary desert travellers. Only she was no mirage. She talked. "What can I get for you Sailor?" Her voice was like cool running water. I didn't talk. Looking was enough for me. If I were a poet and the *COMMUNICATOR* ran to several volumes, I could tell you what she looked like; I am not and it doesn't and so you'll just have to believe me when I say that she was all woman and then some. We were just getting acquainted when the horn sounded. "Stick around sister," I said as I climbed into the jeep, "the Fleet's in—see you at sundown." Robert Mitchum couldn't have done it better.

The bombardment was a bit of a shambles. They were right about Army equipment. Their 622 looked as though it had been retrieved from the local museum and sounded like a pre-war Ford when I switched on. I couldn't find any shade and to cap it all a goat insisted on eating my earphone leads when I wasn't looking. All this meant that we were twenty minutes late setting watch; for this I got a string of rude op. sigs, which fortunately I couldn't understand, but they were redolent of Chief's loathing for R.O.s in general and Frecker in particular. Then, of course, I had forgotten to bring that A.T.P. something or other, which I gather has something to say about bombardment communications. As a result of this, I think I must have got something the wrong way round, for we found out in the nick of time that I was adjusting the fire onto the spotter's position, instead of the target. At this juncture the pongo officer seemed to be having rather a lot of trouble with his moustache, which was fortunate, because otherwise I think he might have been almost as rude as I knew the op. sigs to be.

I wasn't sorry to see the jeep disappearing in a cloud of dust—I had them drop me in the village—for I couldn't help feeling that as an example of Army-Navy liaison it left something to be desired. However, I had an hour to spare before I needed to be moving down to the beach and I had every reason to believe that my next liaison job would not prove so barren.

She was more beautiful than ever, and I hardly

had time to notice the four thugs sitting in one corner of the bar, before I had a glass of Keo brandy in one hand and—I never did get her name—in the other.

When I came to, I saw stars. Real ones I mean, and four full moons which were slowly rotating. My mouth felt like old leather and I had a splitting headache. The moons eventually got bored with going round: turned into faces and one of them spoke. "Do what I tell you and no harm will come to you." (I took that with a pinch of salt, nothing very good seemed to have happened so far.) "Call up your ship, tell them you have sprained your ankle, which is why you are late, and ask them to send the boat for you." "But I haven't . . ." I started to protest, when the glint of a particularly evil looking knife persuaded me that I would soon have a sprained neck if I wasn't careful. I had arranged to call the ship on button Alfa if there was any trouble and as I was clearly overdue I presumed they would be keeping constant watch. I set up the 615—goats seemed only partial to 622s—and gave them a call. They came back very quickly—one of the buntings, with a note of exasperation in his voice. I felt cold steel between my shoulder blades and passed the message. "Roger. How much longer will you be?" "Half an hour," hissed an unsavoury looking specimen. "Half an hour. Over." "Roger. Service.

You've got something coming to you. Close down. Out." Too right buster, I thought.

"On your feet," ordered the spokesman. We set off down the hill, avoiding the road, in single file, with me the jam in the sandwich. I was very conscious of the knife, but felt it was time to show a little belligerence. The cool breeze off the sea was cooling my head and the winking light of Akrotiri seemed to inject a little sanity into a world gone mad. "Who the hell *are* you?" I demanded of the broad back ahead of me. "As you won't be seeing your friends again, I may as well tell you," it replied. "We are members of EOKA who have decided that the hospitality of your masters is becoming a little too warm for pleasure and are therefore taking a holiday. We felt sure you would want to lend us a boat to start us on our way." I suppose if I had really been Robert Mitchum I would have said, "So that's your game, you dirty swine!" In fact I felt that to prolong the conversation on these lines would have been at best foolhardy, so I maintained a discreet silence and made a mental note to pick a less aggressive film hero.

We were skirting round the nob of a hill and the sea lay like sheet metal through the trellis of the pines below us. The path was rocky and some of the rocks were loose. I heard a curse behind me and a scattering of stones. I leapt to my feet and found myself

PRIZE WINNING PHOTOGRAPH



Chapmans Peak from Kommetjie Bay

half-rolling, half-sliding down a steep incline. I let myself go and heard shouts above me. I came up all standing against a pine trunk. I could hear them all spreading out above me, cursing my unfortunate guard. I scrambled to my feet. There was a stream below me and I guessed it might be the one I had noticed run into the sea by my beach. I slithered on my side down towards it. It seemed an age before I dropped into it and I could visualise them cutting me off lower down. Being summer, it was a mere trickle and I dashed off down it, the stones making a fearful clattering sound as I went. I heard a crash and a splash and a howl of pain behind me. I plunged on, raking a genuine sprained ankle. My pursuer's accident had given me a bit of a lead, but my breath was coming in rasps as I suddenly came clear of the pines and saw the silvery strip of sand ahead of me. I just had time to wrench off my boots before they were on me.

The one thing I have always been able to do is

swim and I thanked God for it now. I heard one start after me, but they called him back and I was clear round the rocky point when I saw the lights of the boat on its way in.

Well, that's all there is. Of course they sent a search party in, but they didn't find anything except Fifi (or perhaps I should say Mata Hari) at the bar. She gave them my cap and the 615 and showed them two empty bottles of brandy and said she was sorry, but I had just passed out cold on her and so she had taken me outside to sober up.

The Captain's monocle dropped—we all knew what that meant at the table. "An interesting story, Frecker," the emphasis was too heavily laid on the wrong word for my liking. "Reverted. Fourteen days number ten." I suppose it was the S.C.O. who felt it most. He regarded me balefully and said, "I must say I feel very let down." I didn't say anything. I reckoned fourteen days was enough to be getting on with.



H.M.S. BATTLEAXE

At last, we have mustered up enough energy to write a few lines for the Magazine.

We commissioned on a typical Scottish day, with the wind and rain descending on Rosyth duckyard like something from another world. After a small work-up in the Forth, we went to Portsmouth for a few days leave, before leaving for Portland for the main work-up under F.O.S.T.

The Staff consists of 1 R.S., 1 L.R.O., 4 R.O.2s, 1 C.Y., 1 L.T.O., 1 T.O.1, 1 T.O.2, 2 T.O.3s, and on the (S) side—1 L.R.O., 1 R.O.2, 1 R.O.3.

A few days in Milford Haven, working with *Harrier*—almost completed the work in U.K. because shortly after we left for the Med. to join up with the 2nd D.S. at Malta. The Med. leg was quite interesting, with a couple of Cyprus patrols thrown in for good measure. We went with the Fleet to Athens and Istanbul, and later on we went independently to Athens again, where we were well received.

I think that the whole Staff will agree that Cannes was the best run, even if it was rather dear, and never have so many 'sparkers' been seen on the

MEDITERRANEAN

upper deck at any one time, and there is no need to ask why there was never a spare pair of glasses or telescope in the M.S.O.

By the time this is printed (if it is) we shall be exercising in the Atlantic on "Dawnbreeze" before arriving at Portsmouth at 0730Z on the 1st of April for a bit more leave.

It just remains for us to wish all Communicators everywhere our best wishes, and if C.N.D. gets hold of this, please take pity, and have a dozen or so shore stations ready on the draft chits for when we pay off at the end of the year.

H.M.S. TIGER

A good day to write this article. The Communicators have just won their first game of hockey, against the Green Empire too. As the commission will be one year old in a fortnight's time, we reckon it should definitely appear as headline news.

Little did we realise when we all fell in, in pretty much of a heap, a year ago this month on a cold blustery Clydeside jetty, just what we would be doing a year hence. It didn't need much imagination really. Wearing (or should it be flying) the Flag of

**"TIGER" COMMS FIRST XI**

Upton		Durnford		Reed	
Kinsey	Gardner	Skinley	Lindfield		
Langford	Hales	Hanson	Morrow		

F.F.F. Med. there is little rest from exercises in the Malta practise area and next week is no exception. We have to face the dreaded "Marjex" which has been on so many tongues for so long now that it almost rates with us a swear word. However, that will, we hope, be just a memory when we are reading this article.

The Christmas number of the *Communicator* found us floating alongside Parlatona Wharf for a self-maintenance period. I'm sure that was only a cover phrase to hide the real purpose of the visit—pantomime rehearsal. This was very much a 'stripsey' *Tiger* production and was well supported communication-wise. T.O.2 (Fatty) Langford made an excellent bear and really needed no make-up at all. T.O.2 Hayes would have been better cast as Miss Dick Whittington and as for the principle girl—the A.S.C.O. should have had a shave before he put in an appearance dressed like that.

The very next day F.F.O. Med. re-embarked and with the arrival of the new Admiral we got back to work once more. This took us out casing and gun firing until "Medadwex 34" overtook us. It started at 8 a.m. and finished at 1300. However, that was by design, not accident, in order that we could enter La Spezia in daylight. A weekend there was somewhat spoilt by rain but judging from the glop strains on shirt fronts the people that visited Florence and Pisa didn't spend too much time on culture.

We were quite impressed by the Italian Navy, and on the morning of our departure when *Tiger* and 4th F.S. left in company with them, it was quite like pre-war times to see ship after ship slipping and following in its leader's wake.

The bad weather followed us up to the Riviera where the Royal Navy had a long standing engagement to assist at the unveiling of a plaque to Queen Victoria. In fact, on more than one occasion we

thought we might have to slip and sail for a better anchorage. The boats were being tossed around so much that one howman stepped off his boat onto the boom without touching the ladder.

From Menton to Malta via "Febpass II" gave us a busy five days and most of that looked like a Communicators' benefit. Our apologies to the 4th F.S. if we seemed to go through every frequency in H.M.C.O. We reckon we did go through them all but not more than half a dozen times.

All in all a busy but not too eventful quarterly report but at least there's a consolation. We've only one more *Communicator* to read after this one before we're back at S.R.J. Pompey.

And during this time we haven't been too idle. Yeo, Stratton is now in zest passing on all the good ideas he learnt in *Tiger* and another three R.O.2's are R.O.1's—or soon will be—making four all told in the staff and L.T.O.s Warner and Thomas reckon they'll walk through their Yeoman's examination in April. Good luck to them both.

From the depths of the L.R.R. we've been hearing strange hammering sounds and what should be the latest electronic device thrown up by our wizard, R.S. Sanders, but an auto-morse gadget that will plug through to the Flagdeck and there, by simply inserting a paper tape in the L.R.R. transmit an FRX to the buntings. Yeoman Copper won't admit it, but we think this wireless stuff is here to stay.

And so, as we rush away to get dressed for the Communicators' Dance we leave one ship's company with one thought. "Hurry up *Lion*. The weather's better out here".

MALTA COMCEN

by R. S. PERROW

It is only when one looks through the Watch Bill that one realises what a large staff we have here in Malta, consequently we are forever seeing new faces and losing old ones. To list all departures and arrivals would take up too much space so I will only mention the more recent ones in Officers and Senior Rates. We bid farewell to Lieut. Morgan (Comcen (L) Officer), J/O Thurston (who undertook the hazards of going home by sea), J/O Harris, C.R.S. Cottam, C.C.Y. Walmsley, R.S. Randall and all Ratings and Wrens unmentioned, who have left for distant shores. A warm welcome is extended to Lieut. Harvey, J/O Horsey, J/O Holgate, C.R.S. Hall, C.C.Y. Coyle, R.S. Williamson, R.S. Wilmshurst and all those essential to the running of a Comcen, whom C.N.D. has sent to us.

Malta Comcen "Old Boys" will surely wish to join those of the present staff in congratulating Miss Fitt on 20 years service with the Comcen in Malta. For the benefit of those not in the know Miss Fitt joined the then M.M.S.O. on 18th December, 1939, as a cypher clerk, which occupation she pursued throughout the war years until 1946, when the clerks were disbanded. Since then Miss Fitt has been an



This sign over the entrance to Malta Comcen, resulted from a competition held last year to find something suitable to decorate the entrance of our new abode, and was won by L. Wren Sig. Hamilton. Photograph by A. C. Y. Howell.

integral part of the Comcen, devoting much of her time to the smooth running of the civil staff.

Being only a minor cog in the wheel of the Long Distance Ship-Shore Organisation our telegram returns are not comparable with our 'big brothers' in the game, but even we get our Christmas rush in commercial traffic. The past Christmas was no exception and December kicked off with a nice rise in ship-shore daily totals, until it was whispered we were 'pirating'. The resultant rigid enforcement of the QSPing rules brought our monthly total to not much above average. Call it what you like, but keen operators of equipment, which gives us an advantage over other stations, show we are not content to sit back and let the world, or should I say ships, go by.

To get away from Malta for a moment, I wonder how many of our readers know the origin of that well known phrase, "*Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of the party*"? Those fans of "steam radio" will know, if they heard a particular "My Word" programme on the B.B.C. in January, when it was a question put to one of the teams. The official answer is that when the first typewriter was built in America in the late 1800s, there was an election campaign in progress and, the inventor, wanting something suitable to test the capabilities of his machine, decided upon the above apt phrase.

An entry in the Chief of the Watch's log, I think it is worth recording here. "O.i.e Ankara says that he is having trouble due to wolves—can't get near the Wireless Station—seems like watch on stop on". Sure does. This, by the way, was true, and it wasn't the football team.

Malta Comcen, not having had a sailing signal yet, therefore being unable to report on any interesting places visited (Editorial of Christmas edition), we must fall back on old faithful, the sports page. First of all we offer hearty congratulations to L.T.O. Coquerel, our only representative in the Med. Fleet open, team and individual boxing championships, where we wish him every success. In the hockey world, at the time of going to press, our team has only to win or draw their next game to win the inter-Part league. R.S. Fuller is keeping up the good name of the Comcen in the tennis world, now that J.O. Thurston has left, getting as far as the semi-finals of

the men's singles and the finals of the mixed doubles before being defeated in *Phoenix's* championships. I might mention that J.O. Thurston, before leaving, won the ladies singles in the same tournament, and was also Med. Fleet mixed doubles champion in partnership with Captain Seymour Haydon, Assistant Chief of Staff (Communications) at HAFMED. Our football team are at present second in the League, and our soccer rep, informs me that that will, in all probability be the position at the end of the season.

A big date on the social calendar is 4th March, the Med. Fleet Communications Ball, where our distinguished guests will be Admiral Sir Alexander Bingley and Lady Bingley, Rear Admiral Dreyer and Mrs. Dreyer and Rear Admiral Hetherington and Mrs. Hetherington. A full report on the occasion will be given in the Summer edition of the *COMMUNICATOR*.

The female members of our staff, namely the Wren Comms., are putting the men to shame. None of this fancy flying home for them, but roughing it on scooters. One did the trip before Christmas, and by all accounts arrived in the U.K. in one piece and still astride her mechanical steed. Two more gallant girls are setting out in the near future, and our best wishes go with them.

How is this for originality. The reply given by a certain R.S. on being asked by the T.C.O. what he is doing—"Waiting for the 'phone to ring, Sir". Perfectly true. The R.S. of a ship in harbour had just been asked by light to ring up, which he did in a matter of minutes.

And finally our sympathy to D.O.i.e who, having recently spent over a fortnight in Paris on "Interchange of Traffic", is still trying to explain away why he had to go back again a week later! We suspect he considers his original explanation of, "Well someone had to go back and clear up the mess" a trifle unfortunate.

On that light-hearted note we must bid you farewell from Malta until the Summer edition, leaving you with this thought—Are M.O.D. Liability (NATO) personnel going to get their copies of the *COMMUNICATOR* duty free?

YOUR SUMMER COMMUNICATOR

ALL CONTRIBUTIONS MUST
REACH THE EDITOR by JUNE 27th
and
BULK ORDERS by JULY 22nd

NUTS and BOLTS

COMMUNICATION ON RATT

by C.R.S. J. A. Clark

In the Christmas edition of the *COMMUNICATOR*, R. S. Lucas gave an account of modifications which had been carried out in *Victorious* in an attempt to add to our efficiency and this article is intended to further emphasise the obvious advantages of intelligent use of RATT equipment. Experiments carried out in *Victorious* in the last eighteen months show that the standard RATT bay "as fitted" is capable of providing facilities far beyond those originally intended and the results of these experiments are shown here.

The first step was the reorientation of the Teletypewriter to permit printing of signals at 50 bauds, making it possible to print Dunstable Weather Broadcast and eliminating the copying of Rugby C.W. Met. transmissions whilst giving the Met. people a more efficient service. Step two was a logical development. If the equipment could be used to print 45 and/or 50 bauds why should not both be done simultaneously by using the bay as two units, making it possible for one operator to guard both the Ship and Met. broadcasts? A few inches of wire and one small switch did the trick and under normal reception conditions over the last eighteen months we have had consistently good results. The operators handle the extra line easily and an extremely boring C.W. line has been eliminated.

The next development arose from having to guard Ship Broadcast for ships in company. This posed a handling problem since we had to tape up not only our own outgoing traffic for the ships with us but in addition re-tape quite a bit of Broadcast traffic. It was reasonable enough with only one ship in company, but when it came to a major exercise we found things more difficult. There were two alternatives, either to forget the whole idea or to re-perforate the broadcast traffic. We decided to re-perforate but found that no perforator in service was capable of being used for the purpose. Working on the principle that anything is possible, we wheedled out of a sympathetic dockyard one unsuitable creed re-perforator and made it suitable by the simple expedient of fitting it with an inch long spiral spring. A power switch on the bay gave the operator complete control.

Simultaneously with the above, it was found possible to feed the broadcast signal into a teletype line extension, keying one or more of our own transmitters and thereby allowing Admiralty and Malta respectively to key our own *Victorious* broadcast. I must admit that we never did get around to tell them that we were poaching their customers. (On our broadcast you got two for the price of one.) The one drawback with this last idea

was that we did not have full control of the circuit and though it was used frequently when our own traffic was light, the reperforator, weed and transmit system proved vastly superior.

It was now decided that, short of making the broadcast bay boil the kettle and wet the tea, we had pretty well exhausted its capabilities and we turned to the transmission side of the business to see what could be achieved.

Victorious broadcast was already an accepted and well-tested fact. However, we still had to accept traffic from ships and tape it for re-transmission, with all the obvious delays this caused. If a ship could key two-tone (and everyone can these days) we would and could receive it, shackle it to our FSK broadcast transmitters (once more cutting out the middle man) and speed up traffic by eliminating unnecessary handling. We had our teething troubles but it worked.

Next item for investigation was the ship/shore circuit. Our visit to America gave us a chance to play with Halifax with a fair measure of success but it was not until our recent visit to Scotland that we really managed to show what could be done. Readers may remember the article in the last edition of the *COMMUNICATOR*, by Rosyth, mentioning that they were a minor tape relay station. We not only read the article but determined to take advantage of it should the opportunity occur . . . our visit north gave us the chance and for a period of two weeks we operated routines with Rosyth on FSK RATT, passing over 600 signals, which considerably relieved the pressure on our normally over-worked Ship Shore operators. Signals were taped as for tape relay and the speed with which our traffic reached its various destinations was both surprising and pleasing. We can only hope that the idea of minor tape relay (Rosyth version) spreads rapidly to other naval ports. In a carrier Flagship a circuit of this nature is a godsend and our thanks go to Rosyth for their courtesy, speed and efficiency in handling our traffic, especially in view of their small staff.

The use of RATT in ships at sea is still, after several years, more or less in the initial stages of development. It still offers a wide field for experiment and though we in "Vic" think that our efforts have not only eased our task but helped others as well, there is no doubt room for a lot more in the way of ideas which come not from the expert but from the man who is just a little curious and interested in his job.

My thanks to the S.C.O. A.S.C.O. and R.S. Lucas who made this article possible and to the equipment designers and suppliers who made it necessary . . .

TELEVISION AFLOAT

Passengers in the Orient Line's new 40,000-ton luxury liner *Oriana* will be able to enjoy local television programmes at ports of call throughout the world, and closed-circuit telecine and live television programmes while the ship is on the high seas.

Oriana, launched by Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra last November from the Barrow-in-Furness yard of Vickers-Armstrongs (Shipbuilders) Limited, will be the first passenger vessel in the world to be equipped with a completely co-ordinated internal and off-air television service. The order for the entire system has been negotiated by the Marconi International Marine Communication Co. Ltd., acting on behalf of Marconi's Wireless Telegraph Co. Ltd., who have designed and engineered a unique marine television installation, enabling standard and unmodified television broadcast receivers to be used for reception of local transmissions in any part of the world.

The installation provides for the reception of television broadcasts employing the 405-line system used in Britain, the 625-line system used in Australia and the greater part of Europe, and the 525-line system used in the United States, Canada, Japan and some South American countries.

Wherever alternative programmes are available, viewers can change from one channel to another by using the normal channel selector switch on the receiver. Thus, while the ship is in the United Kingdom area, either B.B.C. or I.T.A. programmes can be selected at the receiver; and elsewhere the same switch will select any of the local stations operating in Bands 1 and 11.

Initially, some sixty receivers will be installed in public rooms and first-class cabins and provision is being made for increasing the number up to a maximum of nearly 400 at a later date, without any alteration to the basic installation.

A major feature of the system is the use of standard proprietary receivers, the incoming broadcast programmes being processed as appropriate in a central television control room adjacent to the radio office before distribution to the receivers.

The processing equipment includes two Marconi Vidicon camera channels which also form part of *Oriana's* closed-circuit installation. While the ship is on the high seas this provides internal programme facilities mainly derived from a library of 16 mm. films.

Still pictures and captions can also be shown, and extempore captions and announcements can be made up on caption boards and inserted in the programme. Simple live studio sequences, interviews and outside shots can be arranged by employing either camera as a remote unit outside the control room. A commentator's microphone is also provided.

Each of the two camera channels is associated with a separate 16 mm. film projector and a separate slide projector. Indexed turntables allow the cameras to be rotated to view either the film or slide projector.

This comprehensive telecine system is not intended to replace the liner's cinema; telecine programmes will supplement the regular film shows which still form an important and popular part of the entertainment provided for passengers and crew. But local television programmes can reflect the life of a city far better than any guide book, and *Oriana's* passengers will be able to enjoy the unique experience of 'looking in' at every station along the liner's route.

"ROYAL NAVAL AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY"

by R.S. M. J. MATTHEWS

For some time now it has been apparent that the Radio Amateurs amongst Naval personnel require an "official body" to represent them, both with regard to the organising of their hobby and the operation of Amateur Radio stations onboard ships and in Royal Naval Establishments.

Too often a keen Radio Amateur is thwarted in setting up his station in Naval Establishments due to the fact that "those not in the know" regard his hobby as one for "cranks", or some Signals Officers hold the opinion that there must be something wrong with a person who does "24 on" and then goes home and spends a few more hours doing practically the same thing. I know because I, along with other Radio Amateurs, have come up against these ideas.

May I point out that Radio Amateurs are a section of the community who spend their spare time investigating all aspects of Radio Telecommunications. Some specialise in VHF/UHF work, and have investigated and produced results in this field, which the Telecommunications world have applied to commercial projects (Forward Scatter, for instance). Others specialise in Amateur Television, some have advanced to the use of Colour Television; even others are now experimenting with Radio Teletype, and equipment for the reception and transmission of this medium. Also for some time Single Sideband has been in use amongst amateurs, and the designs of this type of equipment, which you will admit, are fairly complicated, have been developed by Radio Amateurs and commercial firms alike. Then there is the Radio Amateur who builds and maintains his own transmitters and receivers and enjoys communicating with other parts of the world. So you can see that the Radio Amateur has a very important place in the community, especially in these days of Electronics.

I would also like to draw your attention to the fact that, no Radio Amateur can get a licence for a radio station without first passing the Radio Amateur's Exam., which is set by the City and Guilds Institute. Thus one can always rest assured that any station set up onboard ship or in a Naval Establishment will be operated and maintained efficiently and correctly by the owner.

In 1949 there were a large number of Royal Naval Amateur Radio clubs on the air. Most of these were at the Signal Schools and S.T.C.s, and were run by by one or maybe two keen amateurs. The pity of the whole thing was though, that when these people went on draft (as we all do from time to time), the station was *dismantled*, usually because the Buffer wanted the space for a tool shed or someone wanted to use the space for stowing some out of date files. The result was that any Radio Amateur who might come along in, say, three or four months time, would have to start again. Only to have the same thing happen to his efforts when he went on draft. This has happened to what was a very fine Amateur Radio Station set up in Singapore in 1957. The formation of an official society would help alleviate this problem.

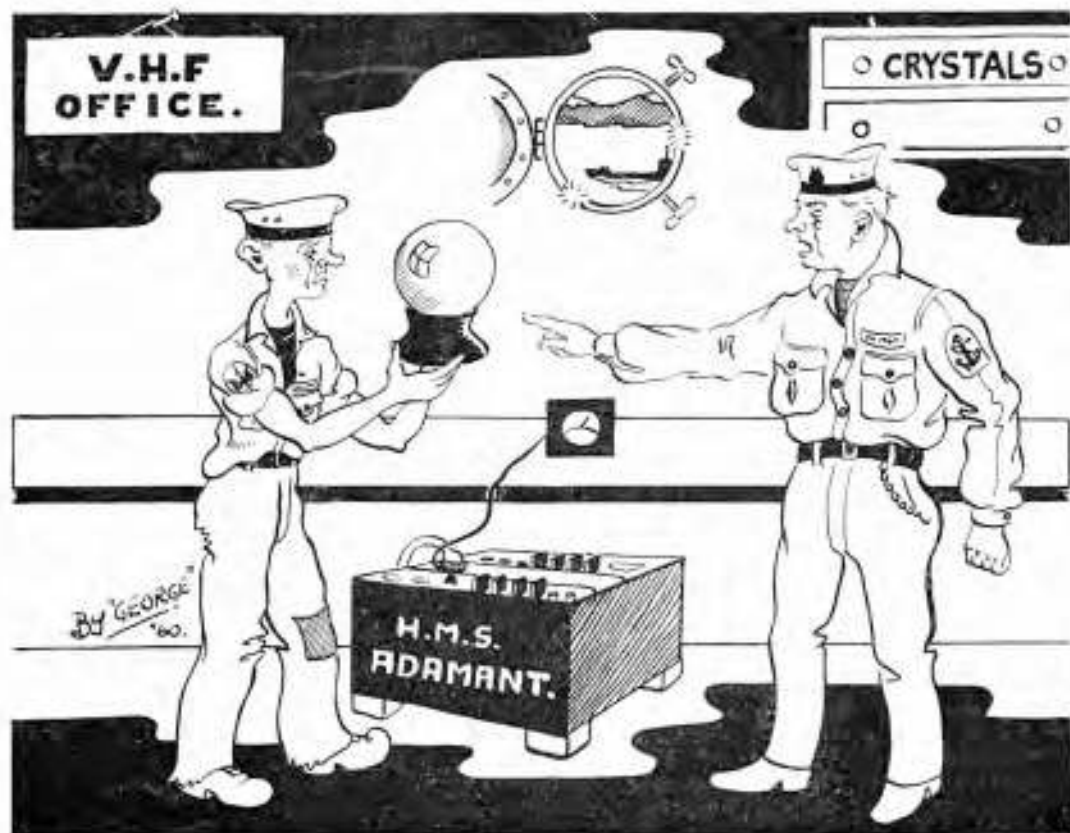
The Government, Telecommunications firms and even the Service Reserves (R.N.R., etc.) all held the

Radio Amateur in high regard. After all, the majority of Radio Operators and Mechanics who enlisted on the outbreak of the last war, and did yeoman service, were Radio Amateurs who had learned the subject in their own spare time.

For the last four months some R.N. Amateurs have been circulating a questionnaire to all known Radio Amateurs in the Service, and those who are now in civilian posts, and asking their opinion of a Royal Naval Amateur Radio Society. Many have had the type of experience I have written about, and think that this would be a good thing. Amongst the names I have are a number of Senior Officers of the R.N. Communications officers, and Senior R.N.R. Officers, not to mention other rates.

Remembering that *Mercury* is our Mother Establishment, so to speak, and that they have now

PRIZE WINNING CARTOON



"I don't care if your great grandmother *did* use one to receive messages—it's no damned good to me!"

got their Radio Club back on the air (reactivated by one of my old pupils!). I would like to ask if it is possible that official recognition of the Royal Naval Amateur Radio Society, when formed, would be forthcoming? And if this was so, would we be allowed to use the COMMUNICATOR to circulate some of our news and views? As there is no security restriction on that magazine, undoubtedly the circulation would go up! (See page 8 for detailed information).

I have thought of approaching D.S.D. with this idea, but thought that maybe a "feeler" put out in your direction first, would show us which way the wind is likely to blow.

I would be grateful for any views which may be forthcoming from *Mercury*, and what your feelings are on this subject.

I would also like to use the COMMUNICATOR to publicise the proposed Society, and would be grateful for your co-operation.

STEAM SIGNALLING

Though the term "steam radio" is now used as a light-hearted adjective, the following correspondence from an old pack in *Mercury* shows an interesting idea on the use of steam.

Admiralty,
14th October 1909

Sir,

I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit herewith, for report by the Superintendent of Signal Schools, a copy of letter, dated 7th October, which has been received from Mr. - - - respecting a method of Signalling which he has invented.

I am, Sir,
etc.

IMPROVEMENTS IN OR RELATING TO SIGNALLING DEVICES

(Provisional Specification lodged at Patent Office,
London)

This idea for use primarily at sea, is intended to utilise the extraordinary visible character of steam. To carry this into effect I propose that there be a small cylinder or exhaust at the top of the mast, which would be connected by steam pipe to the main steam supply, the discharge of steam from this cylinder or exhaust at top of mast being controlled by electrical contact mechanism from the bridge.

The message or signal would first be written on a tape in Morse characters, which tape would be operated by clockwork mechanism, so as to move at a definite and known speed.

The transmitting official in chart room watches the moving tape, and as each period (i.e., the space between the Morse characters) passes a certain marked point he would press an electrical contact, and thereby cause sudden discharge of steam from the mast head.

This discharge would be observed by the distant receiving official through telescope, and at each visible discharge of steam he, the receiving official, would press an electrical contact, and thereby imprint the periods between the steam discharges, on a tape moving at exactly the same speed as the transmitting tape, thus the two "Morse" records would coincide, and the message could be interpreted.

The electrical contact for the use of receiving official could be fixed on side of telescope, and be operated by one of the fingers of either hand.

From telescopic experiments I have made, I find that at a distance of 10 miles there is no difficulty in detecting a sudden discharge of steam, it is instantly visible; while in hazy weather when nearly everything is obscured a sudden discharge of expanding steam is readily seen. This latter point may be exemplified by watching a train in hazy weather some distance from point of observation, although it is impossible even with powerful telescope to see either locomotive or carriages, the steam exhaust, or discharge from funnel can be easily detected.

I respectfully submit that signalling at sea by this means could be carried on at greater distances than by flags or semaphores.



"Pale face him heap slow catchum idea!"

The liability of the "Wireless" system to occasional interruption by reason of the wilful activity of the enemy's transmitters, prompts me to respectfully lay this idea before you.

The property which steam possesses of instantly expanding when liberated, thereby presenting a surface of great area and size, coupled with its power of reflection and refraction of light make it visible at very great distances.

October 7th 1909.
School of Signalling,
Royal Naval Barracks,
Portsmouth.
30th November, 1909.

Sir,

With reference to Admiralty Letter M.11463 of 14th October 1909, Portsmouth No. 708/09, I have the honour to submit that I do not consider that the ingenious invention of Mr. would be of use in His Majesty's Service, as the searchlight is capable of being read at horizon distances and is far more simple than the method proposed by Mr. . . .

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

etc.

SOUTH AFRICA

M.S.O. YOUNGSFIELD

Here, in sunny South Africa, the weather remains fine, and all the staff are developing healthy sun-tans and brown knees. Things have been steady these last few months, and we have been kept busy. We have had a few staff changes, and the end of this year should see an almost new staff in business. L.T.O. Smallbone is next to go in April, ready for civvy life.

Some of us have been getting some seetime in—Yeo, Davies and L.T.O. Pratt on cruises with C-in-C. and R.S.(S) Bullock on exercises. The 'buntings' are busy getting the new routing procedure weighed off. Up to now our compatriots at Slangkop have obliged, but we are due to start ourselves in order to conform with the new procedure, so should have some fun then!

The next few weeks will see an influx of Communicators in M.Q.A. as our stalwarts, the Royal Marine Band sail for U.K. It will give us a longer lie-in in the mornings at least, and will also spare us the rigours of the local public transport, which is unreliable to say the least.

Socially, things are much the same—the usual sweat over tombola on Sunday evenings at the Social Club, and the occasional "sundowner" in the evenings.

S.A.S. VRYSTAAT

Greetings to all our friends both near and far from us Vrystaaters—quite a few numbers have passed by since we last took up some of the valuable space in the S.A. section, but the age old cry of "What about the COMMUNICATOR article?" is too often met with raised eyebrows and mute voices which seem to say, "Who me?"—"Not me!"—"Who then?"—shades of my man John!

Having been shackled to the M.S.O. desk and threatened with "stoppage of the lot" if I don't turn something in let me get cracking and maybe I'll still make the "first boat".

The year just ended has seen the 10th F.S. doing the rounds of the Coast ports renewing old acquaintances and making new ones. The visit of the *Albion* to our waters provided us with an experience which did us all a power of good, and we look forward to many more such visits from the bigger units of the Fleet. Apart from the sea-training value, we get the opportunity of meeting many of our old friends, for, with the visit of the "Newfie" over half of S.I. "Q" 17 together with the class instructor—the inimitable Ron Stew were able to get together on a run. During August the Squadron paid a visit to Angola and the Belgian Congo as far as Maladi—the thrill of this trip being the return run down the Congo with revs. on for 25 plus the current. Intending visitors please check the Africa Pilot for new span figures of the said river.

After the "plum" came "Capex" with our old friend *Lynx* together with the newly arrived *Leopard* and *Acheron*, joined later by U.S.S. *Jonas Ingram* and two Portuguese frigates better known (and easier) as "Foxtrot Golfo" and "Foxtrot Hotellie" and R.F.A. *Wave Knight* (C.C.Y. Stew). The six weeks passed without too many harsh words and, we would like to think that we did some useful work and learnt a few good lessons. I think everyone will agree that the Portuguese Communicators acquitted themselves admirably and it was good fun working with them. *Lynx* left us from Durban and returned to the fold. It is now Feb. '60 and *Leopard* is nearing the eve of her departure having just completed an exercise period with us which some wag titled "Alex 1960" (after leave exercises—are you kidding!).

Anyhow, all's well that ends well and we wish her a pleasant journey homeward bound and many happy reunions. At the same time we extend a hand of welcome and warm friendship to our fellow-Communicators in *Pama* on her arrival on the Station and look forward to many happy hours of work and play with them.

G.J.R.



FAR EAST

HONG KONG

by C.R.S. R. Baker

Time flies, particularly when one's attention is drawn to the fact that the next article for the *Communicator* is due. Hardly have we received and had a quick read through the glossy pages of the latest edition, than stern reminders glare at us from odd corners. "All contributions must reach the Editor by March 7th". Have a heart "Ed", that only gives us about three weeks from time of receipt. Can't you shorten the delivery time a bit! Still, your need is our need, to keep the *Comdimag* flourishing, so here goes. Being called upon to follow the wit and clarity of the contributions in the previous two editions is indeed a challenge.

Communication wise Hong Kong W.T. and M.S.O. are thriving as never before. Although the base of old is vanishing daily before our very eyes, the lot of the *Communicator* is reaching new peaks in message handling. The predicted fall in traffic has just not materialised, consequently the depleted staff are kept vigorously at work coping with their daily chores. Re-assessments of staff have already had to be taken although results in that quarter have yet to be realised. For those of you aspiring to gain Hong Kong as your Utopia for a time there is still hope. The lot of the unaccompanied will soon be greatly enhanced through the event of new modern accommodation and general barrack facilities. At present whilst final demolition is completed and whilst tons of soil and rock in the erstwhile dry dock is allowed to settle, a large proportion of the new base area has been loaned to the Government for use as an additional car park. Apart from the activities of hordes of local work ants the yard of old is dead. All base services are undertaken by *Tamur* personnel.

Little has been penned previously on Hong Kong's local flotilla, so perhaps a reminder that we have one would not be remiss. A stalwart body of six inshore sweepers who do a fair amount of sea time, perfecting their art of mining and mine counter-measures. They also provide a great service in

patrolling our rugged coastline and our island dotted seas to ward off Communist interference with shipping in coastal waters. The only grumble from that quarter appears to be that the various Skippers treat their little ships like greyhounds instead of donkeys. Still, what engineer doesn't bitterly cry out to the heavens against the alleged misuse of his precious charges. I suppose there must be some reason why they are always breaking down though!

A recent innovation and indeed a worthy one is the formation of the Naval Wives' Club. This meets in *Tamur* every Monday afternoon and apart from providing the many indoor activities for the ladies, it is a great help towards getting to know one's neighbour, and gives an added interest to those wives who are able to get out and about. The Club's activities are not restricted to indoors alone, but include visits to some of the colony's beauty spots and centres of civic interest.

A billet on the staff here should not be thought of as purely an R.A.'s paradise. There is ample opportunity for "victualled" types to enjoy to the full the vast amenities of the colony. Practically every form of entertainment can be found without excessive cost. The geographical composition of Hong Kong, Kowloon and the New Territories make it one of unique possibilities for those interested in photography. The whole area abounds in a large variety of subject matter; scenic or rustic, ancient and modern; the choice is yours for the taking. Equipment is no problem as the local shops have plentiful supplies of good, cheap bargains from world-wide sources.

Maybe you like swimming, water ski-ing, walking, mountain climbing or sailing. You want it—you name it—we've got it! For those interested in the brewer's art, what better than a cull at the Fleet Club or the thousand-and-one quaint bars, plush restaurants and magnificent night clubs. The gourmet, the cinema-goer, even those who wield a wicked club or a fearsome "bowl"—Hong Kong will supply your needs.

For those that mistake this for a travel agency's hand-out, take another read through; these are but

a few of the facilities the Hong Kong Communicator commands in his leisure hours.

H.M.S. BELFAST

Having missed the last issue, the Navy's largest cruiser hopes that Xmas went well for all Communicators and also the New Year so far.

Since last we wrote we have put the finishing touches to our work-up period at Malta, transited the Suez Canal (where we took the opportunity of doing regatta practice, which none of the local Egyptians seemed to understand—it was something about "Mad dogs and Englishmen . . ."), and arrived on our "Home" station, Far East, during mid-October.

Our November visit to Hong Kong coincided with the annual Far East Fleet regatta, held in Junk Bay. *Belfast* excelled all our hopes by winning the Fleet Cock. Things heated up over this period as we took over as Flagship to the Flag Officer, Second in Command, Far East Station (Rear Admiral V. C. Begg, C.B., D.S.O., D.S.C.) from *Centaur*. Such was the volume of signal traffic that we couldn't help feeling that *Centaur* was glad to hand over to us.

After the regatta it was back to Singapore, where we did a month's self maintenance alongside and the ship's company moved into *Terror*. Xmas saw us back up in Hong Kong with the Australian ships *Vendetta* and *Quickmatch* in company. Very tired and weary we sailed from Hong Kong for Singapore

after the New Year celebrations had died down, via Sandakan—North Borneo.

Then came the Indian cruise to Madras and Visakhapatnam (used to be called Vizagapatnam), where all ratings keen on grippos came into their own. The amount of grippos at the first named port was truly staggering.

Back to Singapore to prepare for our first big Exercise of the year "Jet '60", firstly by doing a local "Ship Window" which here was called "Oriel I and II". February came and so commenced Exercise "Jet", (39 ships of the R.N., I.N., P.N. and R. Cy. N., excluding Coastal Minesweepers, participating). *Belfast* wearing the Flag of F.O.2, F.E.S., was the control ship. For this Exercise a special fixed service was activated between Ceylon Wireless and *Belfast*, and produced good results. Also whilst in Trincomalee Harbour we have run the Jet Fleet broadcast, plus into the bargain we guarded for the whole of Jet Fleet during the time in harbour. Needless to say these little extras have given the Department plenty of extra work. With the "Jet" Exercise fast coming to a close we are looking forward to our next month's visits to Australian ports with pleasure—Freemantle, Hobart, Sydney and Darwin. It won't all be a bed of roses though, as we have to prepare for Admiral's Inspection and also carry out exercises with the home based Australian Navy ships. Still, as we lift a fully charged schooner glass filled with copious draughts of that well known liquid, we say, "Why worry?"



"Belfast" at home at Visakhapatnam

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Frequency range: 2-10 Mc/s.

Channels: 4 crystal controlled spots

in any part of the range.

Dimensions: $25 \times 21\frac{1}{2} \times 14$ in. deep.

Power supplies: 100-125v or 200-250v AC

or transistorised 12 or 24v DC

Power consumption: 280 VA for

60 watt output.

With all the advantages of single sideband, giving an effective power output of 500 watts double sideband, the GR.400 is still as simple to operate as an ordinary telephone. The first transistorised radiotelephone, this new model further enhances the wide range of Redifon radiotelephones—many thousands of which are in use all over the world.

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Local Transport

In the sporting world, the comms. soccer team playing in the ship's inter-Part league, remains unbeaten. Amongst the Department we have many supporters of water polo and boxing plus the one or two real keen participants. The C.C.Y. is now in full training with the Comms. regatta crew—as we hope for a win in the Jet Cruiser regatta in a few days' time.

H.M.S. CARYSFORT

Carysfort commissioned at Portsmouth on 8th September 1959, and did the usual work up at Portland which made us all realise how much we had forgotten. The Communications staff of F.O.S.T. did their best to jog our memories however and made a very good job of it as we managed to get through both inspections without too many adverse comments. Of course we may have had a slight advantage over the other ships in that A.S.C.O. 8 (S. Lt. Bryant) had just left F.O.S.T.'s Staff and knew the ropes. After the work-up each watch had a well deserved 7 days F.S.D.L. and we sailed from Pompey on November 20th.

Our trip as far as Colombo with calls at Gibraltar, Malta and Aden, was fairly uneventful but on sailing from Colombo we found ourselves S.W. instead of East to Singapore and ended up at Gan in the Maldives two days before Christmas. All the glamour of blue lagoons and palm fringed coral islands began to pall after a few days at Gan and most of the staff found all the enjoyment they wanted in the R.A.F. canteen.

Cavalier relieved us after three weeks and we went on our way rejoicing to Calcutta where the invitations came in so thick and fast even the most ardent "grippio run" experts couldn't keep up the pace. Singapore was reached on January 27th, over a month later than our original programme, and since then we have stayed alongside the wall self-maintaining F.O.2 did manage to get us to sea for one day during Phase One of "Jet", but after a couple of hours exercising *Carysfort* decided she'd had enough of this sort of caper and developed a boiler defect which necessitated being towed back to the dockyard by tugs. Since then we have propped up the walls licking our wounds and preparing to

have another go. At the time of writing *Belfast* and her retinue have sailed for Phase Two and Three of "Jet" and it's so peaceful here at the Naval Base. The buzz is that we shall be operational in time to take part in Phase Four from Trinco, but we have to get there first and that may be the rub. Anyway we have a three month refit to look forward to after "Jet", so we're not unduly worried and are looking forward to the luxurious living in *Terror*, plus the extra L.O.A.

In a Lighter Vein

What about our R.O.3 who advanced G.M.T. one hour when the ship's clocks were put forward?

Then our Coder(Ed) thought he had to have a white Barberry to wear with No. 10's.

WEST INDIES

H.M.S. TROUBRIDGE

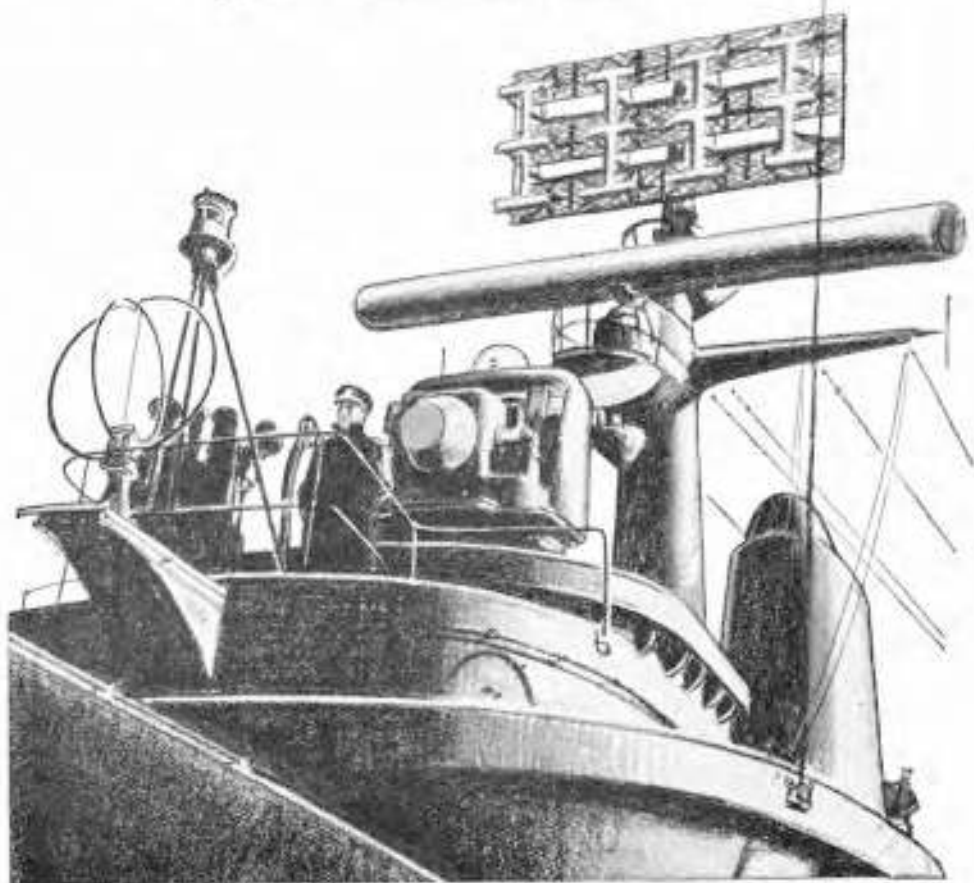
As we write, we feel sorry for folks at home in the cold and wet, while we enjoy the sunshine of the Caribbean, in company with such luxury liners as *Empress of Britain*, *Mauretania*, *Nieuw Amsterdam* and numerous others. We, of course, are paid for it.

To recap since December. We had a rapid winter cruise to Nassau, Barbados and Trinidad, arriving back in Bermuda on 18th December, for the Christmas period. We left our usual berth, among the ruins of Ireland Island, two days later, to spend the actual Christmas holiday berthed in the place of honour, alongside Front Street at Hamilton. The ship was decorated in the customary manner, and, with floodlighting each evening, added brilliance to the already colourful street decorations. The ship had previously arranged to send a party of carollers to the hospital. The Communication Department was extremely well represented. In fact they were "loud and clear". After a splendid Christmas in which most of the Ship's Company were invited "up homers", we returned to Ireland Island with the "ruins", at the end of the month.

Early in January, we welcomed visitors to our lonely outpost. Units of the Royal Canadian Navy, Atlantic Command, arrived for their Winter work up programme. The result of this visit enabled us to spend three days at sea, exercising with the 9th Escort Squadron, in the worst weather we have experienced this commission. It is not surprising therefore, that, during a middle watch R.O.2 Butler intercepted a distress message from S.S. *Bulk Mariner*. She had lost a rudder some 100 miles N.W. of Bermuda. Being the nearest ship, we "rogered" and proceeded towards her position. After several hours steaming in mountainous seas, we were very relieved to be told that our assistance would not be required, since U.S. Coastguard vessels had left Bermuda to assist. We did a rapid "Turn 18" and returned to Bermuda and the safety of Ireland Island.

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M9

Our current cruise is taking us to many ports of the Caribbean, for the second and third time. Two new places to be visited are the Cayman Islands and Curacao where we will meet the Royal Netherlands Navy. Our visit to Georgetown, Grand Cayman, was cut short on a Saturday evening, when, due to a sudden storm, we proceeded to sea, leaving large numbers of libertymen stranded, including 50 per cent. of the Communication Branch. While those onboard battled with the elements throughout the night, the refugees were well taken care of by friendly natives. The highlights of the cruise were the opportunity to see part of three Test matches, and a few days in company with the Royal Yacht at St. Kitts. The latter gave two Chief Yeomen the opportunity to shoot at each other with cartoons, referring to someone's alleged faulty dressing line. We return to Bermuda for a short spell in April.

Our final cruise takes us to four ports in the United States, returning to Bermuda mid May to await *Ulster's* arrival from the U.K. on Sunday, 22nd May. After a very quick turnover, we sail for Portsmouth the following day, arriving there on 2nd June. Unfortunately, our stay there is very brief, as a week later we proceed to Devonport for our annual refit and G.S.C. leave. A Portsmouth based ship too!

Some of the more ancient "sparkers" of the Chatham Division may remember a Telegraphist K. Dale. He is now a Chief Petty Officer Writer, serving on the staff of The Resident Naval Officer, Jamaica. We find him a useful asset, when working

our daily schedule with the Army, at the same headquarters. C.W. working was normally restricted to 8 w.p.m. (minus). Receiving a long "grouper" was a painful duty. The Chief Writer now "hops on and makes one", still at a very good speed too. Of course his procedure is somewhat obsolete, this was proved when R.O.2 Allen says, "Hey, Chief, why does he keep saying, 'Good Morning' when he obviously can't hear us yet?" It was, of course, accented N (that's the one before barred GM and the current ZGN).

Although we did not have the pleasure of meeting, the Dartmouth Training Squadron have spent several weeks in the peaceful waters of the Caribbean on a training cruise. One thing they learnt was that Government Telegraph Code was not made obsolete in 1958 on this station. Who has a red face?

This will be farewell from the Caribbean and au revoir from *Troubridge* until Christmas. We hope to be sunbathing during the Summer, so will have nothing to write about for the August edition.

CARRIERS

H.M.S. ARK ROYAL

In December the "Ark" recommissioned at Devonport.

During the year long refit alterations were made so that all types of the new generation of aircraft may be operated. Complete U.H.F. has been installed and two 86Ms are the remaining links with the V.H.F. world.

New equipment always requires more space than the old. We soon realised that our offices would be very full. There might be just room to insert some thin Operators, but a store for stationery was won after a hard tussle with the space allocating committee, though notice is hereby given to our reliefs that the space is earmarked for some other use in the next commission.

In January, to everyone's surprise, the Matey's tool chests and other obstructions peculiar to a refit, disappeared. Moorings were cast off and "Ark" glided down to the Sound with the elegant air of having done it all before. The sea trials programme went without a hitch. However, as the majority of the F.R.U. aircraft are V.H.F. equipped, our two 86Ms were called upon to give long service.

From sea trials to flying trials. Wearing our ear defenders we awaited the land-on of our Scimitars and Vixens. How easy it all seemed. So different from the days of frantic signalling by bats, fast wire hooked, and propeller ending up inches from the first barrier.

In February we have seven days leave and on March 3rd we sail for the Mediterranean.

A big thank you for all the good services we have had at Devonport and a loud and clear hello to all in the Med.

OUR JENNY



"... haven't you forgotten something?"



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THE GHANA NAVY

Those who have read the A.F.O. concerning loan service in the recently-formed Ghana Navy might be interested to have more information about it.

The fleet consists of two inshore minesweepers (originally *Madham* and *Ottringham*) named *Togana* and *Afadzato*, after two mountains. After a commissioning ceremony at Diligence in the presence of the High Commissioner for Ghana, these ships sailed in company via Lisbon, Las Palmas, Dakar and Freetown to Takoradi, under the command of Lieut. Cdr. M. I. Usher, Royal Navy.

The ships are at present based at Takoradi, pending the construction of a new base at Tema which should be completed in three years time. It is expected that two Seaward Defence Vessels and a Frigate will be ordered, but the situation is complicated as in Ghana the Army holds the purse-strings. In fact, the Navy has a struggle to avoid being regarded as an Amphibious Squadron of the Army.

Commodore A. G. Forman, D.S.C., has his office in Accra, while Lieut. Cdr. Usher is now N.O.I.C. Takoradi, with Lieut. E. S. Cobb, Ghana Navy, as his First Lieutenant and Training Officer. Some Communicators may remember Lieut. Cobb as C.C.O. Cobb, Royal Navy, which just goes to show that you can't keep a good Communicator down.

The I.M.S. each have a Lieutenant, Royal Navy, in command, and another as First Lieutenant. The C.P.O.s and P.O.s are all R.N. loan ratings, the ferry crews having returned to U.K. after holding the fort

for a long time. A.R.S. Lingard and A.C.Y. Hammond have laid the foundations of Naval Communications in Ghana by training the first four Communicators to a remarkable standard under difficult conditions. Incidentally, a good nucleus exists in the Ghana Navy Volunteer Force in which spare-time training has been going on for practically three years.

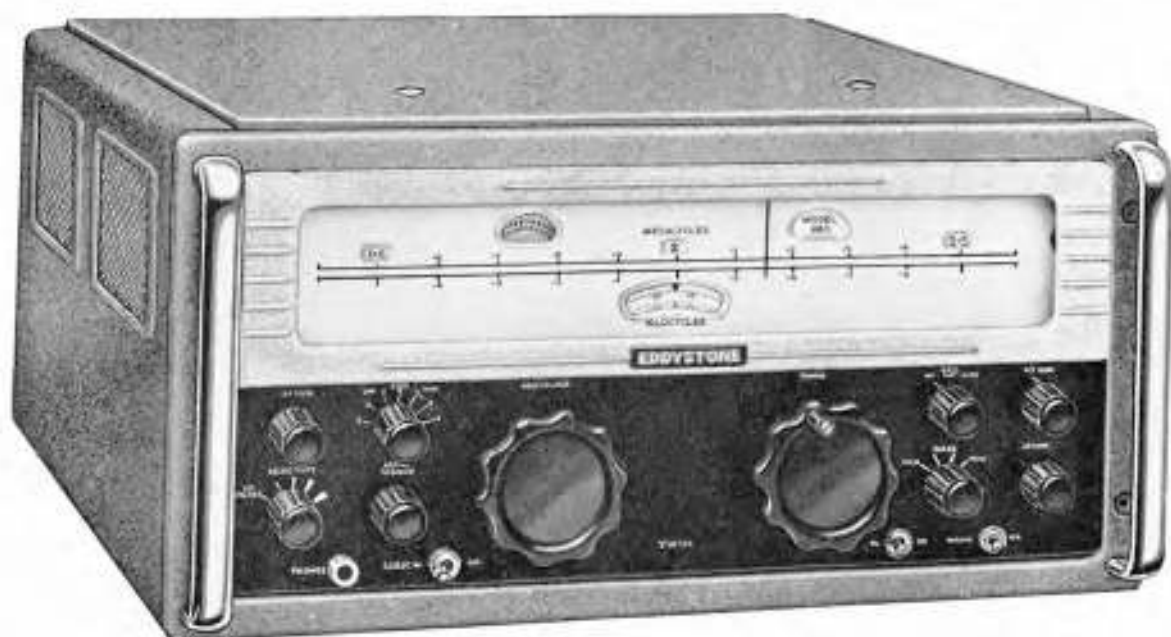
The programme at present consists largely, perforce, of training "on the job", as neither barracks nor classrooms exist as yet. The entire Ghana Navy (thirty-two ratings) lives on board the two sweepers as an interim measure. So it is day running for the boats with "Do it this way" for the hands. However, we should soon be in full production and turning out Communicators by the dozen. If the keenness of the present complement is any indication, there will be no lack of co-operation and instructions will not be wasted as they so often are elsewhere.

The expression "The entire Ghana Navy lives on board" may well give the wrong impression of living conditions. In fact, the R.N. loan ratings live in bungalows in a very beautiful little spot called Taywood Cove and they have an excellent Mess bequeathed to them by their predecessors, the Senior British N.C.O.s.

We are looking forward now to a visit from H.M.S. *Puma* in mid-March and will always be glad to meet any other visitors and give them a course of our anti-bonkers therapy—cricket! Drop in and see us any time.



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GOING THE ROUNDS IN "MERCURY"

SIGNAL SCHOOL MESS

Having dragged ourselves back from leave, with stomachs large and heads still fuzzy, we started off the Term very well. The first thing was the weather, it snowed, rained and froze. Just as well most of the First Lieutenant's gang had been on arctic patrol at some time or other in their lives. Still, a very good job was done by them in clearing the roads in time to let the R.A. buses in (much to some people's disgust). Since then, things have been looking a little brighter.

Dances, which have been arranged once a fortnight, were reasonably well supported, especially with the bar extensions. Next Term they will only be held once a month. As other items will be creeping into the programme, the end of Term dance this time will be held on April 5th. It is hoped that this time the M.C. will manage to remain sober.

It is hoped to start the car rallies again next Term, so anyone interested should start swotting up on their map reading.

Various coach trips have been laid on during Term, the best being to "Humpty Dumpty on Ice". The singing of David Whitfield was so good that certain members of the "crew" were singing and stamping in the aisles.

The last trip to London was marred by the coach breaking down just outside of Guildford, some say it was the weight of a certain S.A., who is known to all as "Ern" that caused it, but fair is fair, I always did want a ride on a train!

Dart matches have fallen over ever since the Pres. got beaten by a "Lady" of 65, and as a consolation placed his car into the arms of a very large tree.

The Signal School Mess is starting a laundrette which should be running within the next few weeks (months) all according on the Dockyard Departments. Once it is going, it will be run on the same basis as a ship's laundry, or at least is hoped to do so.

CHIEFS' CHATTER

There are so many Devonport ratings in the Mess now that it has been suggested that Mountbatten Block should be renamed "Drake's Drum". If it gets any colder in the lounge most of the "Westos" will willingly join Drake. Chief Clinton's car already has automatic steering fixed to 270 degrees.

On the Wednesday of the snows, obviously with the rail strike in mind, most of the Chiefs were practising being train drivers going down Clanfield Hill. By the look of their cars on Thursday most of them wanted to drive shunting engines. In fact one Chief, who shall be nameless, appeared to be doing an E.V.T. course for dodgem car attendant. It would be an idea if all Chiefs detailed for *Protector* were sent up to *Mercury* for a familiarisation course in Antarctic conditions, though the polar bear that was reported in the vicinity of the pig farm was the Buffer doing rounds.

When one of the NATO ratings heard that the Chief's dance was pronounced a success he wrapped up learning English.

The grape-vine spread a buzz that Bomber Wells is on his way back to *Mercury*. True or false it has taken us ten days to get some of the non-natives back out of the tall timber.

Chief Tyler has now taken up residence in White Lodge. Three more additions to the family and it could be called Snow-White Lodge. If Mrs. Tyler reads this—I'm only kidding, honest.

In the Mess the other night they were discussing the merits of battle-dress for the Navy. One lives and learns. I always thought battle-dress was a Wren's low-cut frock.

One of the snooker players complains that now the snooker table has been moved so close to the TV. set he has twice been advised by Joe Davis about what shot to play.

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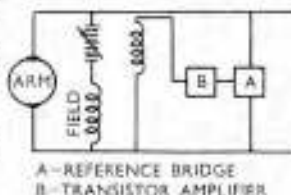


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The First Sea Lord's Visit.

At the end of this year and the beginning of next so many Chiefs are due to go outside that the Band has been forbidden to play "Colonel Bogey" at Divisions.

During one of the numerous arguments between natives and virtualised members one of the latter threatened to visit South Africa to get the low-down on Apartheid for the segregation of the natives.

IN	OUT
C.R.S. Wilkinson	C.R.S. Ayres
C.C.Y. Appleton (and out)	C.C.Y. Carter
C.P.O. Jones	C.R.S. Dudley
C.R.S. Goddard	C.R.S. Clapson
C.R.S. Deadman	C.R.S. Raven
R.E.A.3 Rooney	

SPORT

In spite of changes in the personnel of the P.T. Staff and the difficulties facing the various secretaries, *Mercury* has been well represented in every field of sport whenever the weather has permitted.

Staff changes have involved the departure of Inst. Lieut. Woodcock, by now probably in Malta or on his way to Aden. C.P.O. Denne has gone to the P.T. School to do a Staff P.T.I.'s course, having been relieved by P.O. Stretton. P.O. "Knocker" White from *Raleigh* has taken over from Leading Seaman Hodges and the staff has been temporarily augmented by two newly-qualified P.T.2's in A.B. Hudson and A.B. Barwise.

A constant source of interest and speculation is the question of when the Hyden Wood ground will

again be available. While the P.T. and ground staffs are to be congratulated on the way in which the Soberton grounds have been kept going in spite of the weather, the rugby and hockey secretaries will heave sighs of relief when "on-the-spot" pitches are again available.

Soccer

So far this has been *Mercury's* most successful season for ten years and the figures below indicate how tense is the position at the top of the United Services League, Division 2:—

	P.	W.	D.	L.	F.	A.	Pts.
<i>Mercury</i> ...	13	11	1	1	78	19	23
10th R.E.M.E. ...	13	11	1	1	71	19	23

The position is made even more interesting by the fact that *Mercury's* final match is at home against 10th R.E.M.E. What a game that should be.

These two teams will also contest the final of the U.S. Junior Challenge Cup. 10th R.E.M.E. have held the League and Knock-out Cups for the past three seasons. Now is *Mercury's* chance to break the spell and it hoped that an earlier 6-2 victory over R.E.M.E. is a good omen.

Of the team, which has scored 104 goals in 17 league and cup games, special mention must be made of the veteran captain, P.O.(P.T.I.) Jimmy Lunn, who has been an inspiration throughout. The formidable inside trio of R.O.2 Thomas, R.O.3 Young and R.O.3 Ferguson, assisted by R.O.3 Singleton on the left wing, put *Mercury* in a strong league position before Young left the Service and Thomas was drafted to Northwood. Ferguson and Thomas are to be congratulated on their selection for Portsmouth Command. The New Entries have been well represented, for, in addition to Ferguson and Singleton, R.O.3 Brown at left-back and R.O.3 Heseltine in goal have played consistently well.



H.M.S. "MERCURY" soccer team 1959-60

Back Row: O'Brien, Lunn, Heseltine, Wilkinson, Palethorpe, Brown.

Front Row: Foord, Bramley, Young, Ferguson, Singleton.

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L.R.O.s Bramley, Palethorpe and O'Brien, L.T.O. Foord, P.O. (P.T.I.) Stretton and R.E.M. Wilkinson have also given good support.

Stop Press

Mercury 0, 10th R.E.M.E. 4.

Rugger

It has not been possible to field the same fifteen in any two consecutive games this season. However, the changes necessary have not lowered the morale of the side, but rather have spurred on those playing to give that little extra something beyond their normal capabilities. A first-class team spirit has been evident.

Mercury retained the League Shield, played for in the Christmas Term, by beating R.M.B. Eastney, Reserve Fleet, *Dryad* and *Dolphin*, and losing only to *St. Vincent*. In the Command Knock-out Cup *Mercury* was beaten in the second round by the strong *Callington* side, the eventual winners.

Results to date are:—

PLAYED	WON	DRAWN	LOST
17	7	2	8

The club has valued the support, both on and off the field, of its President Captain J. A. C. Henley, and more than twenty Vice-Presidents whose interest has been vital to the entertainment of opposition sides after the game.

Hockey

No less than nine of this season's fixtures have been cancelled owing to bad weather. The record for the games played reads:—

PLAYED	WON	DRAWN	LOST
15	6	4	5

In the Navy Cup, *Mercury* played the Royal Marines at Deal and lost by 5 goals to 1. The score was not a true reflection of the game as territorially *Mercury* had a fair share of the play. However, the Marine defence was rock-like, if at times a little fortunate, and was only beaten by a bullet-like shot from Lieut. Cdr. Hosegood.

In common with other games, hockey has suffered from frequent changes and very rarely was it possible to field all the talent available.

The following players have turned out regularly:—

R. S. Maskell (goal), Lieut. Clarke (Captain, left-back), R. S. Buchanan (centre-half), Lieut. Cdr. Larkins (centre-half), Lieut. Cdr. Martineau (left-half), Lieut. Cdr. Hosegood (outside-left), Lieut. Balfour (left-inner), Lieut. Sergeant (right-inner), Inst. Lieut. Woodcock (outside-left).

They have been supported, when duty and fitness allowed, by C.C.Y. Abbott, C.C.Y. Tyler, S.C.P.O. Baird and a host of others.

Badminton

Players in *Mercury* are handicapped by having no court available, but, in spite of this, Establishment

teams have played in the Portsmouth Command League with the following results so far:—

	PLAYED	WON	LOST
Men	17	6	11
Ladies	13	5	8

The men's team has consisted of C.P.O. Denne, P.O. Stretton, P.O. Lunn and A.B. Barwise.

The ladies' team has been chosen from Wrens Sellers, Crawford, Howarth (*née* Cox), Second Officer Davies and Third Officer Munford. Second Officer Davies and Wren Sellers took part in Command trials.

More players are needed so any keen player joining *Mercury* in the future should contact the P.T. Office.

Squash

A much weakened *Mercury* team has enjoyed mixed fortunes in the squash world, being beaten early on in the Command Knock-out Competition by a strong team from *Atlet I*.

At present No. 2 Court is having a face-lift, so that when it becomes available even more people will be able to enjoy this excellent way of keeping fit.

W.R.N.S. Sport

The Wrens of *Mercury* have had a very successful winter season.

Nine Wrens were selected for the Command hockey team and one for the Service team. During the season, matches were played regularly against W.R.N.S. teams and civilian clubs. The *Mercury*



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team again reached the final of the inter-Unit Competition but this time had to surrender the trophy to *Excellent*, only, it is hoped, until next season.

The netball team has had a very successful season culminating in winning the inter-Unit Competition by beating *Excellent* after extra time in a very exciting final. Three Wrens were chosen for the Portsmouth Command team, which won the inter-Command event this year, and Wren Gorick was selected for the Service team.

Squash is a popular sport among the Wrens and two players from *Mercury* were chosen for the Command team.

Rifle shooting is another very popular sport. Many Wrens have had little experience of shooting when they arrive at *Mercury* but within three weeks the Chief G.I. has turned them into very competent shots. A strong team fires in the Portsmouth Command Postal League each week.

During the summer season facilities will be available for Tennis, Cricket, Swimming and Athletics. *Mercury* holds the W.R.N.S. Command Relay Trophy and every effort will be required to retain it.

BIRD LIFE IN MERCURY

Part 2

During the winter months our amateur ornithologists may still spend some profitable time surveying the fauna of *Mercury*. One bird that will well bear watching is the Snow-wren or Matelot Pristinus. It is a bird with bright plumage and varying and peculiar shaped coxcombs. This small bird seems to delight in rolling in the snow. Various theories are put forward to explain this. One says it is in place of the more usual dust bath to rid the bird of parasites. The other, and more likely reason, in view of its Shrike-like habits, is that it is a form of camouflage. The females of this species, and I have yet to see a male, form together in flocks to attack larger birds. On sighting a bird of another species these small hunters descend in shrieking hordes endeavouring to roll the stranger in the snow undoubtedly as a form of cold-storage in the same way as a Shrike will impale its victim on a thornbush.

The Jauntless or Sal is a comparatively rare variety of the Reneg which is more often found in the lowlands in the vicinity of Air Stations and Naval Barracks. There is, however, one of the species which may be observed in *Mercury*. This bird has an endearing habit of collecting odd items such as station cards, liberty tickets and request forms. This habit is believed to be part of the nesting ritual. Another peculiarity is that it makes an ingenious use of old tin cans as a form of transport. There is also a lesser variety of Poren which normally settles in the same colonies as the Jauntless although the only one sighted in the vicinity of *Mercury* is of a migratory species which whilst nesting around Soberton Towers uses *Mercury* as a hunting ground. An

attractive little bird it is easily recognised by the variegated blue patches on both wings.

The Buffer or Scavenger Bird is one of nature's gleaners. It can be seen hovering around dustbins, pig farms, etc., its hawk-like vision ranging the surrounding terrain. Bits of paper, cigarette ends, coils of rope, all are pounced on and borne away triumphantly. The eyrie of a Buffer-bird has to be seen to be believed. All is grist to its mill. The nest itself is lined with bits of bunting and oakum in a framework of old tins, broom-handles and squeegees.

One of the ubiquitous fauna found intermingling with the more common communicatus family is the Essayess or Jackdustus. This bird has the hoarding habits of the Magpie and the sense of humour of the Kookaburra. Its plumage is normally pale blue about the wings and breast and dark blue about the nether regions. There is a rarer Greater Jackdustus which is dark blue all over and has the bald pate of a Vulture. Both varieties can easily be recognised by their raucous cry of "Aintgotnion" followed by a peal of demoniacal laughter. Not often found in the open this bird will defend its habitat to the death rather than let anyone enter the inner sanctum.

A bird rarely seen in flight is the Petrol Pigeon or Entee. This bird seems to spend most of its time huddled in a dark corner obviously trying to keep warm. When flushed it is found to have legs covered in a peculiar rubbery substance. The female of the species, in this case, definitely deadlier than the male, is distinguished by yellow leathery encasements on its wing extremities.

We have recently lost sight of one of our regular inhabitants. A member of the Cornucopia family, the Lesser Ess appears to have deserted the bleak *Mercury* landscape for the warmer hinterland. Fortunately for the ornithologists its place appears to have been taken by the Greater Ess another of the same family. The Greater Ess is larger and fiercer than its predecessor and has a beautiful grey-mottled ruff such as one sees on a number of the sea-birds of the Matelot-Nautilus species and is thought to be a form of protective camouflage.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Mrs. D. G. CROWTHER, page 10 cartoon

C.R.S. G. STRAY, page 28 photo

Lt. Cdr. L. F. PUTTER, R.F.M., page 29 photo

EASTER PRIZE WINNERS

Feature: Rogue's Yarn—H.M.S. Blackpool, see page 12.
Author please send your claim to the Editor.

Photograph: R.O. B. N. Lee, H.M.S. Tyne, see page 13.

Cartoon: G. Hodgson, page 19.

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COMMUNICATIONS GAZETTE

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.

Name	Rank	Whence	Whither
R. I. ATKINSON	Lt. Cdr.	Tamir	Victorious
R. BENNETT	Lt. Cdr.	Birmingham	A.S.W.E.
S. F. BERTON	Cdr.	J.S.S.C.	Mercury
R. BRADBURY	Lt. (SD) (C)	Whitehall W.T.	Mercury
J. A. BUCHANAN-WOLLASTON	Lt. Cdr.	B.L.C.-E.B.	U.K.J.C.E.C.(W)
P. A. CLARK	Lt. (SD) (C)	Goldcrest	Autonia
R. T. CLARKE	Lieut.	Woodbridge Haven	Leveion in cmd.
G. CHRISTIE	Lt. (SD) (C)	Terror	F.O. Air (Home)
T. W. CLOWES	Lieut.	Ceylon	Mercury
D. W. COGGESHALL, D.S.M.	Lt. (SD) (C)	Dunkirk	Mercury
A. W. J. CRANDON	A/S Lt. (SD) (C)	Mercury	Woodbridge Haven
D. H. CREMER	Lt. Cdr.	Mercury	Staff of S.N.O.N.I.
W. G. DARTNELL	Lt. (SD) (C)	Mercury	Goldcrest
J. K. DIMPREY	A/S Lt. (SD) (C)	Mercury	Adamant
D. DOBSON	Lt. (SD) (C)	Portsmouth Sqdn.	Ganges
R. DURNFORD	Cdr.	Mercury	R.A.N. Exch. Svc.
D. O. DYKES	Lt. Cdr.	Mercury	Afrkander
E. EDWARDS	S.Lt. (SD) (C)	Staff of C.F.P.S.	Mercury
J. R. EDWARDS	S.Lt. (SD) (C)	Ceylon	Portsmouth Sqdn.
J. M. S. ECKIN	Lt.	Mercury	6th F.S.
F. W. C. ENDERS	S.Lt. (SD) (C)	Whitehall W.T.	F.E.W.A. Med.
P. FARRELLY, D.S.M.	Lt. (SD) (C)	Victory	AFNORTH
J. M. FINDLAY	Lieut.	7th D.S.	NAVCENT
W. FITZHERBERT	Cdr.	Staff Course	Signal Division
R. G. FRANKLIN, R.N.Z.N.	Lieut.	Gambia	Maori
R. J. GREEN	Lt. Cdr.	Mercury	Terror
L. L. GREY, D.A.C.	Lt. Cdr.	Cochrane	Highflyer
B. HANCOCK	Lt. (SD) (C)	E.O. Air (Home)	Terror
N. W. HAGGAR	Lt. (SD) (C)	Sanderling	Mercury
Miss S. HARRIS	3 O.W.R.N.S.	Phoenicia	Mercury
Miss A. HOLGATE	3 O.W.R.N.S.	Mercury	Phoenicia
A. E. HOWELL	Lt. (SD) (C)	Victorious	Mauritius W.T.
W. L. IRVING	Lt. Cdr.	Mercury	C.N.D. Haslemere
J. A. J. JOHNSON	Lt. Cdr. (SD) (C)	S.T.C. Malta	Drake
C. J. J. KEMP, D.A.C.	Lt. Cdr. (SD) (C)	AFNORTH	Fulmar
Miss M. R. KINGSMITH	2 O.W.R.N.S.	Whitehall W.T.	Mercury
D. D. KNIGHT, D.S.C.	Cdr.	Signal Division	Bermuda
A. J. S. KNOCKER	Lt. Cdr.	Dolphin	Mercury
P. A. LENNON	S.Lt. (SD) (C)	Ganges	Phoenicia
J. T. LORD	Lieut.	Mercury	F.C.A. to F.O.E.H.
J. B. D. MILLER	Cdr.	Signal Division	Rothsay in cmd.
A. S. MORTON	Cdr.	Signal Division	Undine in cmd.
A. C. O'RIORDAN	Cdr.	Mercury	Temeraire in cmd.
W. J. PARKER, D.B.E., D.S.C.	Captain	S.N.O.W.I.	D.S.D.
J. PEARCE	Lt. (SD) (C)	F.E.W.A. Med.	Whitehall W.T.
J. PENNY	Lieut.	Mercury	Staff of F.O.A.C.
Miss E. E. M. PETHERAM	2 O.W.R.N.S.	Mercury	AFNORTH
P. C. PRINCE	Cdr.	Ganges	Signal Division
L. REYNOLDS	Lt. Cdr. (SD) (C)	Mercury	S.T.C. Malta
C. RUBY	Cdr.	Ulster in Cmd.	Signal Division
K. SCHOFIELD	S.Lt. (SD) (C)	Osprey	Lion
J. SHACKEL	S.Lt. (SD) (C)	Tyne	Whitehall W.T.
T. J. N. SORGANI	Lieut.	Mercury	F.C.A. Med.

Name	Rank	Whence	Whither
B. K. SHATTOCK	Lt. Cdr.	Staff Course	Mercury
E. S. SPENCER	Lieut.	A.S.W.E.	Cochrane
P. M. STANFORD	Lt. Cdr.	3rd D.S.	Mercury
R. A. STANLEY	S-Lt. (SD) (C)	Terror	Sanderling
B. J. STRAKER	Lt. Cdr.	Mercury	Staff of S.N.O.W.I.
L. F. TATE	S-Lt. (SD) (C)	Adamant	S.T.C. Chatham
Miss D. M. THURSTON	3rd W.R.N.S.	Pheonicia	Whitehall W.T.
C. C. WAKE-WALKER	Lt. Cdr.	Saintes	Mercury
J. E. S. WALLIS	Lt. (SD) (C)	R.A.F. Tangmere	Victorious
R. F. WELLS, D.S.C.	Cdr.	President	A.L.O. Southampton
W. R. WELLS, D.S.C.	Cdr. (Act. Capt.)	Forth	B.J.C.-E.B.
C. J. WHITEN	Lt. (SD) (C)	S.T.C. Chatham	Staff of C-in-C The Nore

PROMOTIONS

To Rear Admiral	To Captain	Provisional Selection to Captain
A. H. C. GORDON-LENNOX, D.S.D.	L. E. SOMMERVILLE	J. E. POPP
To Commander		Provisional Selection to Commander
P. C. PRINCE		G. A. F. BOWLER
W. FITZHERBERT		P. MARTINEAU
Radio Supervisor to Chief Radio Supervisor	Communication Yeoman to Chief Communication Yeoman	
F. A. H. LANE (1.10.59)	C. E. STUBBS (1.12.59)	
R. L. DUDLEY (6.11.59)	A. T. SONGHURST (1.1.60)	
G. REED (1.12.59)		
R. WATKINS (21.1.60)		
J. STRONG (29.1.60)		

NEW YEAR HONOURS

M.B.E.	Lt. Cdr. (SD) (C) E. G. B. ANNIS
B.E.M.	C.C.Y. J. ROBERTSON
	C.R.S. D. A. YATES, D.S.M.

RETIREMENTS

E. G. B. ANNIS, M.B.E.	Lieutenant Commander (SD) (C)
M. BROAD	Lieutenant (SD) (C)
E. A. P. DEANE	Commander A.F.O. 1955-57
D. R. H. FERGUSON	Commander
L. G. J. HOWARD	Lieutenant (SD) (C)
Sir J. G. T. INGLIS, K.B.E., C.B.	Vice Admiral
J. W. MEADOWS, D.B.E., B.E.M.	Commander
D. M. PATCHETT	Lieutenant (SD) (C)
I. G. ROBERTSON, D.S.O., D.S.C.	Captain
P. M. SWINEY, M.B.E.	Lieutenant Commander (SD) (C)

LONG (C) COURSE

J. A. SANDERSON	J. B. GALLAGHER
W. L. R. E. GILCHRIST	M. D. M. SELLAR
A. A. WAUGH	J. M. BEATTIE
B. D. SALWAY	M. C. GWINNER
J. C. APPELYARD-LIST	K. H. JAY
R. M. BAIRD R.A.N.	C. R. L. PATTEN R.A.N.
C. K. CULLINS R.A.N.	P. N. WRIGHT R.N.Z.N.
G. BROS S.A.N.	

SUMMER 1960
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