

THE COMMUNICATOR



VOL. 3
Nº 2

SUMMER
1949

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THE COMMUNICATOR

The Magazine of the Communications Branch, Royal Navy

SUMMER 1949

■ VOL. 3, NO. 2. ■

ONE SHILLING & THREEPENCE

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**THE CAPTAIN SUPERINTENDENT,
ADMIRALTY SIGNAL AND RADAR ESTABLISHMENT, HASLEMERE
CAPTAIN E. W. J. BANKES, ROYAL NAVY**

Qualified in Signals, 1928-29.
Instructional Staff, H.M. Signal School, 1930.
Signal Officer, 5th D.F., H.M.S. *Wallace*, Atlantic Fleet, 1930-31.
Advanced Course in W/T, R.N.C., Greenwich, 1931-32.
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Squadron Signal and W/T Officer to Commodore, New Zealand Station, H.M.S. *Dunedin*, 1933-36.
Experimental Department, H.M. Signal School, 1936-37.

Fleet Wireless Officer, Mediterranean Fleet, 1937-39.
Promoted Commander, December, 1939.
Signal Division, Admiralty, 1939-44.
Executive Officer, H.M.S. *Victorious*, East Indies and Pacific Fleet, 1944-45.
Trooping Duties, 1945-46.
Promoted Captain, December, 1945.
Deputy Director, Radio Equipment Department, Admiralty, 1946-48.
Captain Superintendent, A.S.R.E., Haslemere, 1948.

EDITORIAL

We record with regret the departure of 2/O. Hilda Jones, who has acted as Treasurer of THE COMMUNICATOR for over two years. In this year's Portsmouth Command Lawn Tennis Championships 2/O. Jones won the Ladies' Singles and, with partner, the Ladies' Doubles. Congratulations on this splendid performance and thank you very much, Hilda, for your work for the magazine.

* * *

Will you please send in your bulk orders in good time? This was requested in the Easter number and it really is important, as it enables us to avoid wasting money by having too many magazines printed.

"ICHABOD"

Prostrated by the news of the death of her husband in battle, a poor Hebrew girl gave premature birth to a son and died of grief. But before she died, she gave the child his name. It was "Ichabod." It means "the glory is departed."

The glory is departed. Time compels us to that sad and wistful conclusion over most things. It is one of the eternal tragedies of this changing world. People and things grow old, they wear out, and what was once fine and strong becomes frail and feeble. Where their fathers looked with respect and admiration, the children look askance.

This was brought home to me the other day when I saw one particular pendant fluttering at the mast. It was the Church Pendant. I felt that the time had come for its renaming. It should be called "Ichabod," for its glory had departed too.

The Church Pendant first saw light of day in the seventeenth century. The English and the Dutch were engaged in a war which, at sea, at least, was being fought out in the way in which sailors have always liked to fight. Both fleets were manned by natural seamen whose conduct was ruled by the traditions and decencies of true naval warfare. Only such conditions could have given birth to the Church Pendant.

Take a look at it. It combines in one flag both the Cross of St. George of England and the colours of the Netherlands. It was the one symbol of unity whose hoisting, by common consent, immediately silenced all strife and discord.

In those days of long ago it must have been a wonderful sight to have seen two hostile squadrons hove to, with friend and foe, beneath the same flag, bowed in prayer. And how sad it is to remember that in these days that pendant has lost its power. Now it is not strong enough, in nine cases out of ten, to make a seaman stub out his cigarette, let alone go along to pray. Ichabod!

But though it has lost its former authority, the Church Pendant still remains for us a reminder of the force that Christianity once was, and yet could be in our discordant world. When the pendant was first

introduced it was the only thing in the world that could actually restrain the hands of men engaged in battle with honour to all. It could do so because, in spite of their differences, both sides did worship the same Prince of Peace in whose honour the flag was hoisted. It was as if He were once more standing in the tossing boat on the Sea of Galilee commanding the tempest: "Peace, be still."

So, even to-day, He could bring peace and concord to a quarrelsome world if we would let Him.

Of their own free will seamen obeyed the Church Pendant when it called for peace in the name of Christ. It was but the symbol of the Cross that our Master holds up before the world to-day. An invitation to live at peace together which we have the same freedom of choice to accept or reject.

Oh, that we had the wisdom of our forefathers in the Service!

PADRE.

SIGNALS

Signals

Cause elation,
Gloom, rage, vituperation,
According to each varied text
(Which is always what you least expect!),
But one emotion is always sure,
The hate that will my mind enfold
When I behold
Signals!

Signals

Give me nightmares,
Every time a ten-inch lamp flares
There's our pendants at the dip
(That'll make the Yeoman drip!),
Still, better than the M.S.O.,
There the paper falls like snow,
Confetti?—No!
Signals!!

Signals

Come in batches,
Over phones and out of hatches,
Teleprinters clank and clatter,
Outpouring screeds of signal matter,
Signals full of grief and woe,
"Reference your so and so,"
Copies and originals,
Signals!!!

Signals

On a long pad,
Enough to drive a Bunting mad,
Re solution Bitumastic,
Boiler tubes or sheets of plastic,
Requesting for a Chippie's mate;
First a dribble, then a spate,
How I hate
Signals!!!!

H. R. S. (L/Sig.).

THE R.N.V.(W)R.

Historical

After the First World War the R.N.V.R., which consists of twelve divisions at various sea ports, included the Telegraphist as one of its specialist branches, similar to the Signaller. But it was found impossible to recruit the necessary numbers into this branch, which, for those days, demanded a relatively high standard of education and technical knowledge. The problem was in fact very much the same as is now facing the R.N. Electrical Branch. A large potential source of the right type of man was known to exist in the form of the radio amateurs, but they lived almost exclusively inland round the radio industries of the Midlands, and were therefore remote from the training facilities offered by the R.N.V.R. and its purely coastal organisation.

In 1932 the Royal Naval Wireless Auxiliary Reserve was set up with the object of tapping this source of enthusiasts and directing part of their efforts along naval lines. This reserve was additional to the W/T Branch of the R.N.V.R., and was of a much less "Service" character. The Admiralty supplied them with little more than a room, called the Training Centre, which was fitted with a blackboard and buzzer circuits, a badge to wear in the lapel of their coats and official encouragement. Largely by their own initiative and enterprise they became a very valuable reserve, so that when the Munich crisis of 1938 finally shook us into the realisation of the imminence of war, it was thought prudent to bring the R.N.W.A.R. more into line with the R.N.V.R., to which end, among many changes, they were supplied with uniform and rechristened the Royal Naval Volunteer (Wireless) Reserve. At the outbreak they were, of course, called up, and many of their members distinguished themselves by rapid advancement and, in some cases, promotion to officer; many others, unfortunately, did not survive. *Courageous*, for instance, took with her nearly all the R.N.V.(W) Reservists from Exmouth.

Post-War Reconstitution

In 1946 the Admiralty approved the reconstitution of the R.N.V.R. and with it, "within the framework of the R.N.V.R.," as the legal phrasing reads, the R.N.V.(W)R. The new R.N.V.(W)R., they laid down, was to include the old W/T branch of the R.N.V.R.; that is to say, it is both coastal and inland in nature, was to be on pre-war lines, to consist of 39 officers and 1,200 men, with an additional 240 Electrical Branch included in it for maintenance of the equipment. It might be argued that a better and more uniform solution would have been to call it the Wireless Branch of the R.N.V.R. and to have organised it under the Commanding Officers of the R.N.V.R. Divisions, but many considerations involving pre-war precedent and the necessity of keeping a wireless organisation centralised dictated the reverse. The result is that in the Naval Volunteer Reserves

there are now two Electrical Branches, the main one in the R.N.V.R. and a subsidiary one in the R.N.V.(W)R., which introduces complications many of which have still to be settled by experience.

Organisation

The reserve covers England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. It is regionalised into nine districts—London (No. 1), Western England (No. 2), Midlands (No. 3), N.W. England (No. 4), N.E. England (No. 5), Scotland (No. 6), N. Ireland (No. 7), East Anglia (No. 8) and Thames Estuary (No. 9). In charge of each district is a District Officer, usually of the rank of Lieutenant Commander, who is responsible direct to the Admiral Commanding Reserves for enrolling, training and administering the reservists in his district. He is assisted by two or three Section Officers (Lieutenants) and a Warrant Officer.

The reservists are formed into "units" of ten to twelve in number, under a rating-in-charge. Active service Chief and Petty Officer Telegraphists are allowed as instructors on the basis of two per district.

Conditions of Service

Men sign on in the R.N.V.(W)R. for periods of five years, which can be renewed up to the age of about 50 depending on their rating. They are paid an annual bounty of £10, an efficiency grant according to their rating up to £3 per annum, and various allowances for travelling and cost of meals whilst under instruction. They are supplied with uniform and, by passing the necessary courses, examinations and completing the necessary amount of sea time, they are able to advance in rating in a similar fashion to the R.N. Telegraphist.

In order to qualify for these allowances they are required to carry out a minimum of eighty hours' instruction per annum and to undergo at least twenty-eight days' continuous training during each period of five years. This is being increased to fifty-six days to bring it into line with the R.N.V.R. The continuous



Vice-Admiral Sir Wilfred Patterson with L/Tels. L. J. Lester and A. Padfield at the R.N.V.(W)R. Centre, Admiralty

training may take the form of a course at H.M. Signal School or serving aboard an H.M. ship, and can be done by the week or fortnight.

Entry was originally opened to men between the ages of 18 and 45 who had had Royal Navy experience in the war. It was later extended to others between 18 and 26, and recently a youth entry has been approved for 17-year-olds, with the part object of attracting Sea Cadets at the time they leave the Sea Cadet Corps. The introduction of National Service raised many problems, and it can easily be seen that the numbers of men taken into any branch of the Royal Navy per year for National Service has a direct bearing on the numbers that can be entered into the Volunteer Reserves. In the case of the Wireless Branch, this problem was particularly acute, since the Royal Navy decided to take no telegraphists whatsoever owing to the length of time it takes to teach a man Morse. They have since agreed to allow an annual quota of 200 exclusively for the R.N.V.(W)R. This therefore governs the rate of enrolment of young men, since it is useless to start training a man who will subsequently be called up for the Army or R.A.F.

Equipment

Included in each R.N.V.R. Division and situated in the major towns throughout the United Kingdom are R.N.V.(W)R. Training Centres, to which the "units" of reservists are attached, and at which they carry out their weekly drills. A Training Centre consists, in the main, of two rooms—one is the lecture room, which is fitted up for buzzer and touch-typing instruction; the other is the wireless office, and contains two transmitters, types 89 and 60, three receiving bays, usually B 28's and 29's, voice-training equipment, recording outfit and cubicles, and two V.H.F. sets type 86. Shortly it is hoped to fit them for automatic Morse. They are of such a size as will accommodate at least twelve men (one unit) at a time.

Also supplied are a limited number of transmitters 5G and receivers HRO which are loaned to the more experienced ratings to carry out some instruction at home as satellite stations to the Training Centre.

All transmitters are crystal controlled, and a dozen frequencies are allocated to the R.N.V.(W)R. between 3 and 6 Mc/s.

Build-up

It is always difficult to get a reserve of this nature started, more particularly soon after a seven-year war, when the mood of the public suffers a reaction to the Fighting Services. Moreover, it is difficult to attract a would-be recruit unless there is something to attract him, such as some equipment, which requires some premises in which to put it. Owing to housing shortages, finding suitable Training Centre accommodation has been, and still is, extremely slow and disheartening, whilst shortages of material and labour and the complexity of the financial organisation add further delays to the work of re-equipment. The result was that just over a year ago, despite a year's efforts on the part of the Admiral Commanding Reserves, no Training Centre was near completion

and the R.N.V.(W)R. consisted of twenty-four ratings and about half as many officers. Since then, doubtless spurred on by the trend of world events, it has been going ahead satisfactorily, and now consists of 22 officers and 260 men, with the rate of enrolment showing an encouraging increase.

The first two Training Centres in London (Admiralty S.W. Tower) and Grimsby (Wreck Dispersal Offices) were opened by Admiral Commanding Reserves on 28th September last in a short ceremony at which he addressed the reservists in the London Training Centre and simultaneously those at Grimsby by voice radio, and was replied to by District Officer 5 from Grimsby using type 89's on a duplex circuit. (Incidentally, the speech quality was sufficiently good for Lt. Chapman at Leicester to receive and rebroadcast it on the Midlands district frequency, itself a commendable technical performance.) Many other Training Centres are now in hand in Bath, Northampton, R.N.A.S. Bramcote, Leicester, Manchester, Leeds, Bradford, Stockton, Aberdeen, Yarmouth and Southend, as well as in the twelve R.N.V.R. Divisions at London, Newhaven, Hove, Southampton, Bristol, Liverpool, Glasgow, Dundee, Edinburgh, Newcastle, Hull and Belfast.

Remarks

The first district off the mark to enrol recruits was No. 9 at Southend. This was due to the energy of Hon. Lt. Cdr. Burrows, who was one of the foundation members and whose name is doubtless remembered by many of the pre-war reservists associated with the original R.N.W.A.R. Unfortunately the search for premises in Southend proved particularly thorny, and it is only now, after two years and many false starts, being brought to a successful conclusion. It can well be imagined how exhausting this has been to the patience of the Southend reservists.

No. 5 District (N.E. England), under Lt. Cdr. Jackson, is well in the lead both in numbers of reservists and training centres. Jackson is to be congratulated on forcing through the work of re-equipment against the labyrinth of present-day controls and obstacles.

The London District, which is rather a misnomer, as it covers the Home Counties and down to the South Coast between Bournemouth and Hastings, is also going ahead well under Hon. Lt. Cdr. Rogers, who gained considerable experience during the war in the instructional side of Combined Operations Communications.

The resignations have been accepted with regret from three long-standing members of the pre-war reserve, owing to pressure of business: Hon. Lt. Cdr. H. B. Howell, Hon. Lt. Cdr. W. H. Marston and Hon. Lt. W. H. Martin, late District Officers, 2, 3 and 7. We wish them good luck and thank them for all their conscientious service before and since the war.

Activities, Present and Future

Organised activity on the air at present consists of weekly traffic handling between 2000 and 2100 (local time) on Wednesdays, when all districts capable of it

put a guard station on watch for clearing traffic to and from A.C.R. Signal School transmits one slow and one standard SBX each week for the R.N.V.(W)R. Within the districts training is progressing as arranged by the officers with the facilities available, which frequently consist of a room in their own home, or one loaned by the Sea Cadet Corps. Stress is being laid on reception of Morse on a typewriter and on voice procedure. When a few more Training Centres are complete it is hoped to start more carefully organised exercise periods controlled by Signal School, similar to their Witex exercises for R.N. Signal Schools and Air Stations.

During the summer R.N.V.(W)R. Telegraphists have been getting sea experience in the R.N.V.R. sea tenders, and in several cases have kept satisfactory touch with R.N. Port Wave stations or R.N.V.(W)R. stations during cruises round the coast and to Norway. Unfortunately, in many instances, the sea tender's wireless equipment is unreliable or totally unservice-

able. It will not be possible to rectify this situation fully until the R.N.V.R.(L) Branch builds up in strength and experience.

It is intended to reintroduce the pre-war practice of communicating with H.M. ships, which has already been done on a limited basis as a result of arrangements made by reservists whilst undergoing annual training.

Once the reserve is built up and re-equipped, it will be possible to put a comprehensive shore wireless network on the air at routine times for handling traffic between A.C.R., R.N.V.R. Divisions and R.N.V.(W)R. District Headquarters. In addition it should be possible to supply week-end facilities for the sea tenders to keep in touch with their base and exercise with one another whilst at sea via the same network. Exercises in long-distance communication will be arranged with the R.N. wireless stations abroad, and later, it is hoped, with reservists in other Dominions.

TELEGRAPH CODES

In 1844 Samuel Morse demonstrated the use of his telegraph code in the U.S.A., and when Marconi caused signals to span the Atlantic by wireless it was three dots from this code that did the trick. By flag, lamp, sound and wireless equipment the Royal Navy has been using the Morse code since 1865. Small wonder that many Communicators believed that dots and dashes held a monopoly in telegraphy. In recent years, however, the use of the teleprinter has brought attention to a rival.

To revise our knowledge of the Morse code: dots and dashes in combination will form any number of characters. If it were desired to use characters of not more than three symbols the total available would be fourteen. The railways use such a limited code with a few combinations representing prearranged words or sentences. Morse selected characters with up to five symbols and, from the sixty-two available combinations, arranged an alphabet and figures. Other people have adapted the code to suit the needs of their languages by adding different combinations, or by allocating different meanings to the characters. Longer characters decrease telegraph speed and are generally too cumbersome. Telegraph speed may be varied between wide limits provided the dashes remain three times the length of dots, with appropriate separation. This is an advantage with human operators, but for automatic operation it is better to have a fixed speed of operation and all characters the same length.

Instead of varying dots and dashes in time-length it is possible to vary the electrical condition of line or radio circuits. When this is done the signal conditions are referred to as "mark" and "space" and are built up of unit lengths, which are fixed for a particular code. Schemes used in the Cable Morse code are shown:

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| (i) dot mark | dash space |
| (ii) dot space mark | dash mark space neutral
(no traffic) two space
units. |
| (iii) dot mark space | dash space mark neutral.
two mark units. |

In all three schemes dots and dashes are replaced by signals of dot length, thus increasing the telegraph speed. A further increase is achieved by eliminating gaps between successive units. When transmitting on two channels over the same circuit, signals from Channel 1 (using scheme ii, say) might be interlaced with Channel 2 signals (say scheme iii), without any gaps. Yet another method of transmitting two messages simultaneously in one direction is achieved by reversal of current for one channel and by varying the amount of current (in either direction) for the second channel. That is, for a given amount of current a "mark" is transmitted and for a lesser amount (say half) a "space" is transmitted, quite independently of the first channel signals which are changing the *direction* of the current. Although the length of symbols has been equalised the length of characters still varies in proportion to their Morse length.

Our own language requires thirty-six characters for figures and letters, and provision must be made for punctuation symbols, functions such as line shift and carriage return when printing pages. The Murray code with five unit characters, used in teleprinting, is limited to thirty-two combinations, and, therefore, it is necessary that every character should represent two things, as is done with a typewriter keyboard. The "case" selection is then achieved by electro-mechanical means. Furthermore, for teleprinter operation, each character is preceded by a "space" signal which starts the receiving mechanism and is followed by a one and a half unit "mark" signal which stops the

machine. As unit length is fixed at 20 milliseconds, in the Murray code a complete character occupies 150 milliseconds. A standard word is considered to have five letters and a space, occupying a total of 900 milliseconds, thus telegraph speeds of 66 w.p.m. are possible.

Another code with five characters of equal length had appeared in 1874. This was the Baudot code which is still used on the Continent. Setting up the five units per character is a manual operation which is slower than typing the Murray five-unit code, and the allocation of meanings in the two codes differs widely.

A six-unit code will give sixty-four combinations. This avoids the need for case shift mechanism and results in time savings by eliminating the figure shift and letter shift characters. Seven- and eight-unit codes also exist, but these are basically Murray code with units added to provide error detection. An eight-unit example of this development would be obtained by adding "mark" and "space" units as necessary to produce four "marks" and four "spaces" in every character. If, now, a circuit fault causes one of the first five units to change condition, the balance is upset and this is indicated by circuits of the receiver. Lengthening of characters is uneconomical and the eight-unit code is likely to be used only on difficult circuits, where distortion is prevalent. Conversion from five to eight units, and reconversion, is accomplished automatically and a

message might be transformed on successive circuit links in being routed to its destination.

Another five-unit code is used in the transmission of speech! In the pulse code method of modulation the speech input signal is "sampled" 8,000 times per second. The amplitude at these instants is signalled to the receiver, where the impulses are grouped together again to form the reproduced speech. The range of values of the samples is divided into small portions and each portion has a representative five-unit character. The characters are allocated so that the more positive the signal the greater the proportion of marks to spaces in the character, maximum positive value being represented by five marks. Maximum negative value is signalled by a five-space character and combinations of mark and space elements represent intermediate values. The smaller the range of values covered by one code character the more accurately can the speech be re-formed at the receiver and it has been found that a five-unit code, of thirty-two characters, produces speech of acceptable quality. For high-fidelity reproduction a six-unit code of sixty-four characters is employed.

Other methods of transmission used commercially include mosaic and photo facsimile. However, since the signals transmitted by these methods are directly related to the printed words, they are classed as non-code and are not matter for this article. C. W.

WHITEHALL WIRELESS STATION

Since 1945, the Station Committee at Whitehall Wireless have organised, annually, a Reunion. Though primarily intended for members of the Communication Branch who have served at the station in the past, the Committee have decided this year to extend an invitation to all Communicators, past and present, and to their friends, not forgetting members of the Electrical Branch (R).

WHITEHALL WIRELESS ANNUAL REUNION

PORCHESTER HALL, PADDINGTON, LONDON

Friday, November 11th, 1949

1930 — 2345

Fully Licensed Buffet

Single Tickets 3s. 6d.

Dress Optional

Porchester Hall is one of the finest in London, large enough for six hundred dancers. There will be a fully licensed buffet throughout the whole of the evening.

"David Jack and His Collegians" have been engaged. This orchestra provided the music at the two previous Reunions and proved to be very popular.

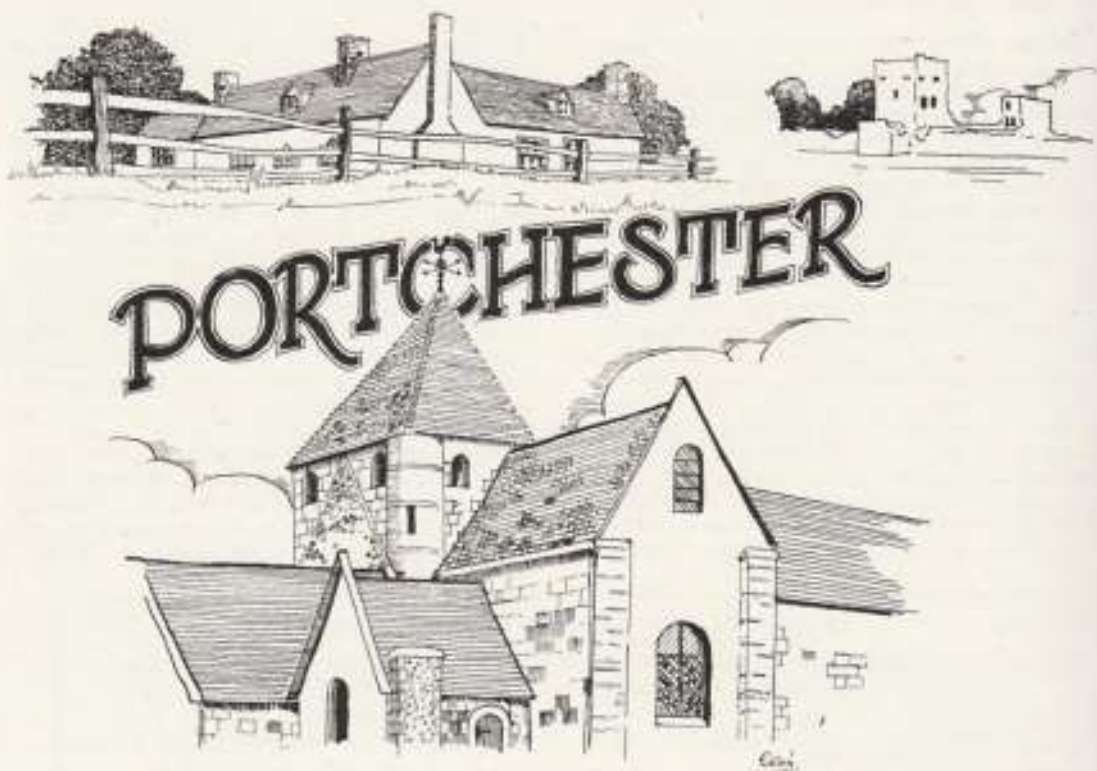
Porchester Hall is within easy walking distance of Paddington railway station, and is well served by buses.

Applications for tickets should reach:

**THE SECRETARY, WHITEHALL WIRELESS WELFARE COMMITTEE,
ADMIRALTY, LONDON, S.W.1.**

any time after September 1st but not later than November 1st. Cheques and postal orders should be crossed and made payable to "Admiralty Wireless Sports Club."

Greetings to Communicators the world over; and if we don't see you this year perhaps you will be home again in time for next year's Reunion.



PORTCHESTER

as the name implies, was a Roman settlement, and the castle walls date from that period. The path used by prelates on their journeys from the castle to Southwick Priory, the Abbot's Way, can still be traced. Legend says that the town was in existence for over 200 years before the Romans invaded England.

Our artist has chosen three scenes within the castle precincts for his illustrations.

LET'S TALK SHOP!

A Signal School's Conference

This was held in *Mercury* from the 27th to 29th April, 1949, with the object of discussing current training problems.

Lt. Cdr. R. J. Robertson, R.A.N., flew from Australia for it, but his aircraft was delayed *en route* and he arrived just too late. However, he visited *Mercury* several times during the following month and a number of other establishments, wireless stations, etc., and it is hoped that his long trip was worth while.

Another welcome visitor in April was Cdr. M. G. Stirling, R.C.N., Director of Naval Communications, R.C.N. He was unfortunately unable to stay on for the conference.

Lt. R. A. H. Panter represented the R.N.Z.N. Others who attended were Cdr. N. J. Wagstaff and Lt. S. F. Berthon (Cookham), Lt. Cdr. J. R. Phillimore (Vicarage Road), Lt. Cdr. J. N. Kennard (N.A.S.S.), Lt. Cdr. G. H. Culme-Seymour (Fremington), Lt. Cdr. R. W. D. Bray (Ganges), Lt. Cdr. J. C. Buckeridge (*Sea Eagle*), and Comm. Lt. S. G. Oxley (*Bunce*).

Besides the discussions, talks were given by members of the *Mercury* staff and officers from the Signal Division, A.S.R.E., and N.A.S.S., on the latest developments and policy in their particular spheres.

The conference produced a number of useful ideas, some of which are being tried out, a valuable opportunity for exchange of views, and as may be imagined, no unanimity.

The general feeling seemed to be that the conference was good value, and might profitably be repeated biennially.

"Trident" Exhibition

In conjunction with A.S.R.E., *Mercury* provided a stand for the exhibition which was held in April in the R.N. College, Greenwich, in connection with the Navy's top secret Exercise "Trident," at which the war of the future and its naval problems were discussed by what was probably the greatest concentration of senior naval officers ever assembled.

Mercury's exhibits, which were the result of much thought and hard work, came in for favourable comment. As far as practicable, exhibits and diagrams are being modified for instructional use.

"Verity"

One of our biggest headaches has been provided by Exercise "Verity," the Western Union Fleet exercises, for which it has been necessary to find no fewer than 222 Communication ratings for liaison and other duties. These exercises are taking place as we go to press, and are to last for three weeks; and to achieve it we have had to stop all United Kingdom Leading Signalmen and Leading Telegraphists' courses, while

in *Mercury* the Signal and Wireless Instructors' and the Yeoman of Sigs. (Q.) Courses have also been stopped. While this is a serious break in training, it provides all ratings with some sea-going experience and responsibility out of the ordinary, and many have taken the opportunity of brushing up their French. We feel confident that our liaison teams will do much to help the integration and co-operation between the nations that is so essential to the success of Western Union.

V/S COMMENTARY

It was suggested the other day that the standard speed of semaphore in the Fleet should be reduced, as it was too difficult to obtain. We flatly reject this proposal now as we did at the time, believing that twenty words per minute is quite reasonable for what is still the simplest method of short-range signalling.

There has been discussion recently on a new message form. By the time all inter-Service requirements had been met, however, there was little or no space left for the message. The debate continues.

The new VSI has at last gone to the printers and with any luck it should be out in the next four months. We do not yet know what colour its covers will be blessed with, but it is hoped it will not be another "yellow peril" inside. The new Signal Training Manual is much nearer completion and may well be out next month.

More comments had been expected on the steady stream of amendments to the new books now being issued; they are only minor corrections and will probably continue for some time. The Home and Mediterranean Fleets will already be familiar with the change from Force, Group and Sub-Group to Task Force, Task Group and Task Unit. Others will get the amendment before long.

Looking idly through one of the shiny papers the other day, we saw an Italian national flag defaced in an unusual way. A new "Flags of All Nations" is being published this year, but we should welcome here the description of any strange or unusual flags met with in any part of the world.

Lastly we gather that Red Ensign Mike, so recently recalled to service, is on its way out again and is to be replaced by a two-letter group from the International Code with the same meaning.

COMMUNICATION WRENS' TRAINING

The six W.R.N.S. Telegraphist and two Signal Courses at present in progress will shortly be joined by W/T 18 and Signal Course No. 5.

Since the last edition the first batch of Wren

Telegraphists and Wrens Signal have relieved male ratings in the C-in-C's Wireless Office and Central Signal Station, Portsmouth, respectively. Wren Telegraphists particularly will be glad to know that opportunities of employment in naval shore wireless stations are becoming more widespread, and as we hope that further similar vacancies will become available, it is important that Wrens serving in the Air Command should keep up their Morse. No Wren is considered for one of these vacancies until she has served for at least nine months at an air station, after which she may request a transfer from the Air Command. Names of volunteers are noted at Burghfield and from their number subsequent vacancies in shore wireless offices are filled, subject to a satisfactory test of their Morse efficiency.

The first Wren Telegraphists have recently arrived at Anthorn and Arbroath, which brings the total number of air stations bearing Wren Telegraphists up to eleven.

The training of W.R.N.S. Signal Course No. 3 has been interrupted for a fortnight, as this course was required for cryptographic duty in Londonderry during Flag Officer, Submarines, Summer War—an experience which is not given to many and which should prove invaluable to those taking part.

The advancement rules for the W.R.N.S. Signal category are still under discussion, and, although A.F.O. 1125/49 has been amended to include the proviso that one of the future qualifications for advancement will be professional examination after course, the date on which these courses will come into force is still in doubt, owing to the present policy of keeping training time at a minimum.

Wastage in the switchboard operator category has been so high during recent months that it has been necessary to recruit Wrens with no previous G.P.O. experience and they will be given a six-week course at A.C.H.Q., Devonport, which it is hoped will equip them with the knowledge necessary to operate as successfully as those with several years' experience behind them.

WIRELESS COMMENTARY

The aim of all in the Communications Branch is the accurate delivery of messages all the way from originator to addressees in the quickest possible time. "Addressees"—with the complexity of a modern staff or, say, the number of departments in an aircraft carrier, the word itself implies a big problem in rapid distribution alone. Much progress has been made in reducing the time a message takes in passing over wireless circuits, first by using high-speed Morse and now replacing this with radio-teleprinter. Further progress may be expected in this direction, but in the meantime a great deal of thought is being given to decreasing the time a message spends being processed in communications offices. These processes are complicated by the various degrees of precedence and security which messages may be given and also

by variety in the choice of route—wireless, teleprinter, V/S, telephone or post. Thus a simple production line is not easily arranged. Through-routing has to be considered too.

Various improvements in method are coming into use or having their merits considered. Tape-relay, for example, by taking advantage of the ability of radio-teleprinter equipment to reproduce punched tapes at any stage in the system, very much reduces the effort required for handling a message at intermediate stages on the route. Before long, too, it may prove advantageous to make use of internal teleprinters for making a rush distribution of particular messages.

At the same time some work is being done in a mock-up of a Main Signal Office in H.M.S. *Mercury* to secure improvements in the layout and general orderliness of communications offices of all kinds. The present mock-up represents a shore headquarters and all message handling other than distribution and cryptography is concentrated in a "traffic centre," which is the heart of the system. Live exercises take place quite frequently and it is possible, and often done, to reduce the scale to that of, say, a cruiser, so that experience of various kinds can be obtained. In this way it is hoped that some standard methods may, by degrees, and in conjunction with sea experience, be evolved.

Thought also has to be given to the smaller details. For example, standard distribution guides are being worked out to help the ratings responsible to reach a rapid decision on the right distribution of each message. Consideration has been given to two other methods of distribution. The first requires the originator to put the distribution on messages sent out. The second method would have the signal department distribute to heads of department and rely on each department for further sub-distribution. Both these two methods have been rejected, rightly, it is thought, on the strength of recommendations from sea.

Other details affect office machinery. It is hoped to standardise to some extent on such things as trays and racks. A further improvement in the handling of unclassified traffic comes from Morse typing direct on to an origimaster ready for duplication. A high standard of operating is required here, but no higher than that at which the Communication Branch has always to aim.

SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD (see page 92)

ACROSS—1, Despatch; 5, Shrimp; 10, Tempo; 11, Procedure; 12, Imps; 13, Stage; 14, Helm; 17, Columns; 18, Retail; 22, Needle; 23, Spinach; 26, Kerb; 28, Curry; 29, Poop; 32, Physicist; 33, Pride; 34, Talent; 35, Prosigns.

DOWN—1, Detail; 2, Semaphore; 3, Atom; 4, Capstans; 6, Heel; 7, Inure; 8, Preamble; 9, Rough; 15, Bully; 16, Penny; 19, Anchoring; 20, Snake Pit; 21, Operator; 24, Turin; 25, Speeds; 27, Royal; 30, Sign; 31, Opus.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COURSES

During the war it became impossible to provide reliefs in order that candidates for V/S and W/T qualifying courses should be classed up in accordance with their position on the roster, and in consequence the roster system for courses was placed in abeyance, and ratings were put on course as they became available, irrespective of whether they had been previously recommended or not.

As soon as it became possible it was decided to reintroduce these rosters and instructions were issued that, as from 12th May, 1945, recommendations for V/S and W/T qualifying courses were to be rendered on Forms S1303a (see A.F.O. 2852/45) and from these recommendations the course rosters were reconstructed.

It was soon found, however, that it was still not always possible to relieve a man to undergo the particular course for which he should have been selected, and to overcome this it was decided that the basic date of passing the examination should be the date on which the rating concerned was recommended on Form S1303a, instead of the date of actually passing the examination, as had been the pre-war practice.

It will thus be seen that the rendering of Form S1303a showing the date of a man's earliest recommendation for a course is most important, as, in addition to determining which course he gets, it also subsequently determines his position on the advancement roster.

In a number of cases it has been found that, although a recommendation was recorded on a man's signal or wireless history or S264, Form S1303a was either not forwarded or became lost in transit and in consequence the man's name was not placed on the course roster.

Such cases are few and the basic date of the man concerned is always adjusted to the date of his

original recommendation when he does the examination, but it may be the cause of his having to wait much longer than necessary to get his course.

If therefore you have been waiting a long time for a course, or have other reasons for suspecting that you have been overlooked, you should renew your application and request that the date of your original recommendation may be inserted on Form S1303a.

It must be emphasised, however, that your claim to have been previously recommended must be substantiated by *documentary* evidence.

Don't forget, too, that recommendations for lower standard leading rates to undergo the course for the higher standard leading rate are obsolete, such ratings now being allowed to take the course for P.O. Telegraphist or Yeoman of Signals without doing the intermediate examination (see A.F.O. 984/49).

If therefore you, as a lower standard, have previously been recommended for the leading rates higher standard course, you should (if you have not already done so) now apply to be recommended for the course for P.O. Telegraphist or Yeoman of Signals so as to obtain the earliest basic date for advancement to that rate. By following the above advice you can obtain the maximum benefits that the present opportunity for early advancement offers, provided of course that you do not overlook the other "general" qualifications (e.g., E.T.I., swimming, etc.) that are required, and which you should obtain *before* you do your course. As pointed out in the Easter number of THE COMMUNICATOR, there are large numbers of ratings who have not bothered about doing their E.T.I. until after they have done their course and they have thus nullified the advantage of an early basic date, as they are held up in their advancement until they have obtained their E.T.I. certificate.

J. S. W.

VERSE—OR WORSE!

I've studied long in much fleet lore,
Gazed at many lamps a-winking,
'Gainst waving arms kept high the score,
Can name coloured flags unthinking.

Keys have I tapped at rapid rate,
Voice of mine no error has made,
With ease an axis I rotate,
My "cryptos" never out of grade.

And thus, am I come, now to brag,
And wear the victor's laurel sprigs,
An anchor foul, star-studded flag,
One of Britannia's Leading Sigs!

But stay! On fevered brow not yet
May prized cooling laurels rest.
Recessional!—Lest we Forget!
There's still the Education Test.

R. J. T.

KNOCKER

BY THE ART EDITOR



The Big Sailor, with a miserable look on his face, mooched into the Bar Parlour of "The Pick and Pencil" for all the world like a man who's lost a quid and found a bent sixpence complete with hole. "Good evening," said I, chirpily. "You don't seem very happy to-night!"

"I'm chocker," he answered.

"Chocker?"

The naval man has a language all his own which never fails to baffle me.

"Browned off! Cheesed! Fed up!" he explained.

I made the V-sign to Flossie. Nothing is more calculated to loosen the Big Sailor's tongue than a B.B. split, and no sooner was the foaming tankard—well, pint glass—set before him than he opened his heart.

"It's these here ruddy Navy Days," he said. "Whoever thought of them ought to be done in. Must have been someone in the pay of a foreign power. If I had my way I'd —"

"Just a minute, sir," I interrupted. "I always thought the Navy Days were a splendid idea; encouraging recruiting, boosting morale, and comforting the smokeless, beerless, penniless taxpayer with the sight of a few aircraft carriers and a submarine or two."

I always call the Big Sailor "Sir." As he stands six feet two in his socks and is as wide as a picket boat, it is elementary caution for a five-foot journalist to show respect.

He looked at me out of a blue eye that hinted of distant seas and far horizons. The other one was a rich purple and semi-closed.

"A splendid idea?" he said witheringly. "If it hadn't have been for Navy Days, I wouldn't have got this here shiner; sugar the Navy Days."

That he was labouring under strong emotion was apparent from the fact that he ordered the next round, a phenomenon so rare as to merit the attention of Ripley.

The Big Sailor lighted a cigarette and leaned back in his chair.

"Navy Days started at 1230 on the Saturday," he said, "and me and Knocker White were watch ashore. Our ship was one of them open to visitors, and the point was, should we have a quiet run as usual or should we stay aboard and see what drifted

on the ship in the way of blondes? Well, the argument went first one way and then the other, and we just couldn't make up our minds. 'Let's toss for it,' I said.

"But Knocker didn't reply. He was thinking. When Knocker starts thinking it usually means trouble for somebody.

"'No,' he said, at length. 'We'll go ashore.'

"'And miss the Navy Days?'

"'No need to miss the Navy Days,' he grinned. 'We go from here to the 'Traf,' climb into civvies and come back aboard as visitors.'

"'And be spotted in two two's,' I said, sarcastic.

"'Not the way we'll do it,' Knocker said, laughing his head off. 'Listen! When we get changed in civvies we go to a little shop in Lake Road where we can get false whiskers and spectacles and things. Sort of theatrical shop it is. No one will recognise us. Think of the sport we'll get taking everybody out for a trot.'

"'Think of the rattle we'll get into,' said I. 'It'd be safer to pick a row with the Irish Guards. Nothing doing.'

"You know Knocker well enough to realise that argument has no effect on him. [This isn't quite true; I've never met Knocker White; and I've only the Big Sailor's word for it that he really exists.—AUTHOR.] I made a non-committal murmur.

"Well, we caught the first liberty boat," went on the Big Sailor, "changed into civvies and went on to this shop Knocker knew in Lake Road. Talk about laugh! I bought a black moustache, Flying Officer Kite style, eyebrows to match, and a piece of wax in my nose. Honest, my cooking chum wouldn't have known me. Knocker, being on the short side and modest with it, fixed himself with a flaming red beard as big as a house, and a monocle.

"'Who are we supposed to be?' I asked as we left the ship.

"'Couple of visitors from the country,' said Knocker.

"'We've never seen the sea before, let alone a ship. If we seem to be green we'll get away with it. Should be easy for you. Just act natural.'

"By the time I'd thought of a witty answer, we were back in the dockyard and on our way to the ship.

"'Look who's on the gangway,' breathed Knocker as we drew alongside. 'Whacker Payne and Slinger

Woods. If they don't recognise us nobody will."

"The innocent look on our faces would have melted the heart of a three-badger crusher."

"We started up the gangway."

"This way, Whiskers," said Slinger as we neared the top.

"Knocker fixed him with a stern glance through his monocle."

"If you are alluding to my hirsute adornments, my man," he said, "allow me to inform you that these were sprouting when you were stroke oar in a pram. Gangway, please!"

"The astonished Slinger stepped back a pace treading on the corns of Jumper Collins, who let out a stream of invective that blistered the paintwork on the after superstructure."

"Observe the uncouth language of the common sailor," said Knocker in a loud voice. "It speaks ill for the future of the Senior Service. Gone are the days of Nelson and his gallant tars. These evil-speaking yahoos have taken their place. I shall write a strong letter to *The Electrical Trades and Boller-makers' Journal* about this. Forward, Sebastian."

"We started forward."

"Coming towards us was the First Lieutenant, a kindly bloke with warts. He had no particular reason to be unkind to them."

"Leave this to me," whispered Knocker. "Good afternoon, Captain," he said, raising his hat and bowing so low that his nose scraped a ringbolt. "What a splendid ship you have!"

"Jimmy the One smiled politely."

"I'm not the Captain," he said, "but if there is anything particular you'd like to see, there are guides—"

"Not those awful sailors," protested Knocker. "Their language is so—so virile. My friend here has a rooted objection to strong language. Could we prevail upon you to show us the Golden Rivel?"

"The First Lieutenant smiled."

"I'm afraid somebody has been taking you gentlemen out for a trot."

"I beg your pardon?"

"Oh! er—somebody has been pulling your legs."

"Indeed!" said Knocker. "I knew we shouldn't have listened to those dreadful sailors, Sebastian. Oh, well, we'll have to content ourselves with seeing where the marine was buried."

"With a strangled sob the First Lieutenant escaped to his cabin and battened down."

"We've done all right so far," grinned Knocker. "Let's see if we can find the Old Man!"

"I was a bit dubious at that, but you can't sink Knocker."

"He'll never know us," he said. "He doesn't see us very often."

"You mean, he doesn't see *me* very often."

"Perhaps you're right. I could do with a smoke. Any ticklers on you?"

"No," said I. "I've left 'em in the Traf."

"Me too. We can't go to the canteen in this rig."

"The fact that we hadn't got a smoke made us more anxious for one than ever."

"I've got a new carton in my locker on the mess deck," said Knocker. "Let's go."

"So we sneaked off to the mess deck. Only one bloke was there and he had his head down. Well, Knocker doled twenty ticklers each."

"You'll owe me these," he said, charitably."

"While we were putting them in our cases the bloke with his head down came to life. Seeing a couple of apparent civvies making free with a box of ticklers, he decided to take a dim view of it."

"Hoy!" he shouted. "What you doing with them cigarettes?"

"Thinking this was a bit too much I fixed him with a stern eye."

"Can't a feller take his own —," I began, when I got a blow in the ribs from Knocker that would have felled an ox."

"Shut up, you fool," breathed Knocker. "D'you want to give the show away? If Jimmy the One finds out who was ribbing him we're for the high jump. Lets make a dash for it."

"The head-down feller was by this time making his way towards us, so without any palaver we made a beeline for the ladder and were off the mess deck in no time. Whacker and Slinger were still on the gangway, but having no time for pleasantries with them we dashed past."

"Blimey!" shouted Slinger. "Old Whiskers is in a hurry. What's the matter, mate; had a couple of Beechams?"

"By this time Whacker Payne had recovered enough to realise that something was wrong, and he shouted to a bloke that was standing at the bottom of the gangway."

"This bloke, quick in the uptake made a grab at the most prominent part of us, which was Knocker's whiskers, and in the struggle he put his elbow in my eye. The last we saw of him he was standing by the gangway looking pathetically at the red beard in his hand."

The Big Sailor eyed me gloomily."

"What was we to do?" he asked. "If we'd have stayed there as civvies we'd have got it in the neck for swiping ticklers, and if we'd have said who we were, we'd have been in the rattle for taking Jimmy out for a trot. I came straight up here to give this eye time to ease down. Daren't go aboard with it."

"What happened to Knocker?" I asked."

"He daren't go aboard either. When the feller at the gangway grabbed Knocker's whiskers, he took a piece of his lug with them. At the moment he's with an unfrocked chemist we know who's trying to patch it up for him."

I ordered two pints."

"Ah, well," said the Big Sailor, brightening. "Thank crapes Navy Week only comes once a year."

I looked at him compassionately."

"You're wrong, brother," I said. "They've split Navy Week into two parts, and they are having the second part in the summer."

With a groan of despair he collapsed into his pint. Leaving him in the capable hands of Flossie, I wended my way slowly home, pondering on the hazards of life in the Senior Service."

ROUND THE FOREIGN STATIONS

MEDITERRANEAN

There have been many changes in the Communication staff at Malta during the past few months, including Cdr. Stannard, the F.C.O., 2/O. Long, of the Secret Room Lascaris, and a whole bunch of other Communicators who have given us sterling (or should it be hard currency?) service during the past two and a half and more years. These include Chief Yeo, Bunn, Braxton and Oxley, C.P.O. Tel. Claridge, Yeo, Mayers, Fearon, Sims, Brown, Stabb and Coyle, and P.O. Tels. Stamp, Kelson, Dolphin, Tiller, Cotter, Barnden, Laws, Cooper and Lewenden, to name but a few. We wish them all the very best of good fortune in their next jobs.

Vanguard has returned to the fold for a short while and we never cease to wonder how she manages to get into and out of a relatively small Grand Harbour with such apparent ease. On one occasion a Wren officer, who shall be nameless, had to admit that she could not have done better herself.

The Third D.F. is at the moment in the chrysalis stage of becoming a "battle" flotilla. We are sorry to lose the old and faithful Ts. and Vs., but are very glad to welcome new boats with new equipment.

The First D.F. remains at full strength and now includes *Charity*, brought forward with faith and hope from the reserve fleet. In this flotilla *Chevron* has continued to show depot ships and bigger than competitive coding exercises are dead-easy when you know how.

Triumph, too, has returned to the station and we look forward to seeing its communication staff show their paces soon.

At Gibraltar last spring the Home and Mediterranean Fleets met for the combined fleet exercises. These went off well and it was refreshing to meet Home Fleet "oppos." and to hear the other chaps' views. A great deal of friendly rivalry was evident and we gather that the Home Fleet were shocked to see their flagship's pendants dangling from the yard of a private ship. Unfortunately we were not together for long enough to make further acquaintance or to achieve more than one combined fleet Communication exercise in harbour.

During the "battle for the straits" just before parting, C.S. One, Rear-Admiral Mountbatten, employed a useful *rise de guerre* by planting a spy in the form of the staff C.C.O. (see Warrant Tel.) on the Rock with a portable set before they left. This worked all too well and at one stage caused some anxiety to their own side, who had not been put fully into the picture. An object lesson.

The Mediterranean Fleet is now preparing for the first summer cruise and training hard for the pulling regatta, which takes place at Navarin. There are at least three ships who count on getting the "cock."

The Fleet Athletics in Malta have just been finished and in them *Ocean* was victorious, with *Newcastle* as

runner-up. Tel. Morris, serving in Malta M.S.O., has shown good running form during the season and on several occasions has won in mile, three-mile and cross-country races.

Malta Wrens

Fortunately there have been few changes in personnel since Easter. 2/O. Beer has relieved 2/O. Long, who has returned to the United Kingdom to take up an appointment at the Signal School.

Among the many activities indulged in by the Communication Wrens, one of the more memorable was a day spent at sea in H.M.S. *Wren*. Two ratings and one C.E. were fortunate in having their names drawn to join a party of twelve who spent an instructive day witnessing A/S exercises, A.A. firing, and a full-calibre shoot. When there was a lull in the programme the time was spent in the W./T. office finding out what it was like "at the other end."

The Communications Wrens have taken an active part in the entertainment on the station. An "all-Wren" show was put on for the Director, W.R.N.S., visit, in which the C.P.O. and one P.O. distinguished themselves—the former as an unfortunate bride who had been left "waiting at the church" (we sincerely hope this may never happen to her!) and the latter as a bathing beauty who seemed to have more success.

Besides swimming and picnics while "off watch," riding has become very popular and many of the Wrens are very keen. So far they have not aspired to playing polo, but one never knows!

S.T.C., Malta

Once again Malta is basking in beautiful sunshine. All thoughts of gales and stormy weather are put aside and every available "make and mend" and spare evening is put to good use either in the Fleet Lido (down the steps from Ricusoli) or on the cricket pitch.

Since our last communication we have had several new arrivals from our *Alma Mater*. Chief Yeo, Winder has joined the ranks of well-paid natives and is closely followed by C.P.O. Tel. Andrews. C.P.O. Tel. Baister arrived just too late to win the Football Shield for the Chief and P.Os. Mess, but in time to get away to a good start at cricket. Mr. Johnson, S.C.C.O., relieved Lt. Turnbull (congratulations on promotion) and made a very brave effort in the tug-of-war team when pulling for the Wardroom. Naturally they were beaten by the S.T.C. Junior Ratings.

As to the departures, we were sorry to see C.P.O. Tel. Parsons pack his bag. We found his decisions in the canteen invaluable, especially on the subject of sport. C.P.O. Tel. Carier is leaving and the touch-typing instructions are given by his very able relief, C.Y.S. Winder. We feel sure that the former will be remembered by many Communicators and we shall always have occasion to remember his slogan that

"Nobody ever failed to learn to Touch-Type."

We still cater for everybody interested in communications of any sort. Leading Signalmen and Leading Telegraphists' courses are unceasing and also touch-typing. The other classes are varied. In addition to "new books" plus "American books" we have refreshers for Signalmen and Telegraphists of all categories and voice technique is given to a variety of personnel from Captain to Cook.

Before closing, and for the benefit of old members, we inform you that our Officer-in-charge is a proud father, having been presented with a young communicator—lan by name. We should also like to congratulate C.Y.S. Broad on the recent addition to his family, and in our next contribution for THE COMMUNICATOR we hope to be able to give two or three other members of the staff our congratulations.

In closing, we send you the prize answer of the week from O./Sig. A. N. Other. Question: "What are the methods of promulgating information for the Fleet leaving harbour in groups?" Answer: "Two. By flags and by flashing."

Maltese Cross Talk

[This is based on fact as reported by Chief Yeoman Baker, but has been more than a little exaggerated.]

The scene is the traffic centre in Malta M.S.O. Blue, yellow, pink, white and green signals are flashing in and out, threading their way through cups of tea and sweating signalmen screaming to be stamped, transmitted and pinned together and finally, still twitching, lying in exhausted bundles in "files."

Seated amidst this chaos we find the king of it all, the Chief Yeoman of the Watch, scribbling madly on three signal pads each in quadruplicate, shouting at the traffic router and supervisor and vainly trying to read every signal that flashes past. A plane has crashed, the safety boat is broken down, a gregale warning has been hoisted and a ship is dragging down Grand Harbour.

Buzzers buzz, voices shout, leather containers dart up and down carrier pipes and the telephone rings.

C.Y.O.W.: (to telephone No. 1). "Chief Yeoman of the Watch."

TELEPHONE No. 1: "Hallo, George. This is Bert." (Telephone No. 2 also rings.)

C.Y.O.W.: "This isn't George and I don't know Bert." (Rings off.) (To telephone No. 2): "Yes?"

TELEPHONE No. 2 (female): "Can you tell me if Chequers is in yet? I can't cook supper until I know."

C.Y.O.W.: "Wait a minute, please." (Shouting to Router): "Is Chequers in yet?"

ROUTER: "Hold on while I get rid of this flash." (Telephone No. 1 rings again and the intercom shouts something incoherent.)

C.Y.O.W.: (to telephone No. 1): "Chief Yeoman?"

TELEPHONE No. 1: "Is that 9502?" (The intercom, mumbles something more and then shrieks wildly and fades into long-drawn howl.)

C.Y.O.W.: (to his assistant): "Tell the radio mech.

this b—— thing's bust."

TELEPHONE No. 2 (female still waiting): "I beg your pardon?"

C.Y.O.W.: (to telephone No. 2): "Not you." (To telephone No. 1): "Yes?"

TELEPHONE No. 2 (female): "I hope I'm not disturbing anyone."

TELEPHONE No. 1: "When are my glasses going to arrive?"

C.Y.O.W.: (to telephone No. 1): "What's that got to do with me?"

TELEPHONE No. 2 (female): "Well?"

C.Y.O.W.: (to telephone No. 2): "Not you."

TELEPHONE No. 1: "I should have had my spectacles last week. Why haven't they come?"

C.Y.O.W.: (to telephone No. 1): "Who is that speaking?"

TELEPHONE No. 2 (female): "Mrs. Spunryarn."

TELEPHONE No. 1: "Ord. Tel. Triode Tarzuta W/T."

C.Y.O.W.: (to telephone No. 1): "I think you've got the wrong number. This is the Chief Yeoman of the Watch, Lascaris."

TELEPHONE No. 2 (female): "That's right. That's who I want. Can you tell me if Chequers is in yet?"

TELEPHONE No. 1: "Is that 9502?"

C.Y.O.W.: (to telephone No. 1): "Yes."

TELEPHONE No. 2 (female): "Well, is she?"

C.Y.O.W.: (to telephone No. 2): "Not you. Please wait a minute."

TELEPHONE No. 1: "Well, I must have my glasses. I can't read without them and 9502 is the number I was told to ring."

C.Y.O.W.: (to telephone No. 1): "I can't help that."

C.Y.O.W. ASSISTANT: "It's sunk all right."

TELEPHONE No. 2 (female): "What! Is he safe? What's happened?"

TELEPHONE No. 1: "Well, what is the right number for spectacles?"

C.Y.O.W.: "I don't know. Find out yourself." (Rings off.)

TELEPHONE No. 2 (female in anguish): "Oh, what a rude man!"

C.Y.O.W.: (to telephone No. 2): "I'm sorry. I wasn't speaking to you."

TRAFFIC ROUTER: "Chequers has been alongside for the last week."

(Telephone No. 1 rings again.)

F.C.O.'S YEOMAN: "F.C.O. wants to know why —" (his voice trails away as a coding Wren walks slowly through the traffic centre looking for the answer to corruption.)

C.Y.O.W.: (to telephone No. 1): "Dockyard 9502."

TELEPHONE No. 1: "Is that 9502?"

C.Y.O.W.: (to telephone No. 2): "That's what I said."

TELEPHONE No. 1: "I should have had my spectacles last week. Why haven't they arrived?"

F.C.O.'S YEOMAN (recovering himself): "F.C.O. wants to know why you don't answer the intercom. He's been calling you for three minutes and both your phones are engaged."

H.M.S. "Triumph"

The ship completed commissioning on 21st April and sailed for Malta via Glasgow on 23rd April, arriving on 6th May. As quite a few of us had not visited Malta since before the war, we found it looking a little the worse for wear, parts of it (but for the goats) reminding one of Plymouth and its devastation.

The members of the staff who have been fortunate enough to secure flats, even though arrangements are very primeval, have settled down quite happily; the remainder have just settled.

Up to the time of writing we are still in the throes of self-refit, the time having been spent in ensuring that the S.T.C. has been earning its keep. We hear that our first cruise may be to the South of France; there is certainly one person who is all for that!

Our thoughts still fly to those at home, especially at 1600 on Fridays. Finally, we send our very best wishes to all and add a few points that we gather are from the very latest edition of the new books (no aspersions are cast on the training establishments concerned):

1. /DV, AN indicates half a division.
2. The M.L.A. is the course which ships steer in rough weather behind a straight line screen.
3. The Chief Yeoman told a junior rating to stick an S.P. correction in the C.B. chest. This was duly done with "gloy."



H.M.S. "Malabar" Communications Whaler.
Winners, A.W.I. Regatta, 1949.

Tennant came to an end, his flag being replaced by that of Vice-Admiral R. V. Symonds-Tayler. This change entailed for we communicators the loss of our cheerful, straight-battling F.C.O., Lt. Cdr. A. (for Archie) Grey. In his place we welcome Lt. W. A. B. Blund, fresh from *Mercury*. Other changes on the station have been the sudden departure of H.M.S. *Janus* for the Far East, H.M.S. *Sparrow* to Devonport to refit and recommission, and H.M.R.T. *Freebooter*, also to Devonport.

The weeks at Bermuda have been crowded with sporting events, of which the pulling regatta can perhaps be called the most notable. H.M.S. *Snipe* very finely secured the Squadron Cock, with *Glasgow* second. The Communications whaler race went to *Malabar* with a crew from Bermuda M.S.O. lengthily stroked by Yeoman Keen and expertly coxswained by Sig. Sowden. In other races were to be seen the S.C.C.O., C.Y.S. Burns, C.Y.S. Neale and C.R.E. Newell all on ours, whilst in the driving seat of another entrant was Lt. Cdr. Dunlop.

This contribution ends with an example of unconscious humour in signals which our jokemaster extracted from A.G.M. 151 A: "It is only the wives' declarations that go in an envelope, as the layout of their form is differently arranged."

EAST INDIES STATION

It was a sad and moving sight on the morning of 6th April when H.M.S. *Norfolk* sailed from Trincomalee homeward bound, on what may well prove to be her last voyage in full commission.

Recent months have not found her idle. After a cruise in the Bay of Bengal she spent Christmas in Colombo and sailed for the Persian Gulf on the last day of the year, wearing the flag of the Commander-in-Chief. A pleasant spell of cold weather in the Gulf quickly dispelled the discomfort of prickly heat, while balaclavas and winter woollies became the dress of the day at Basra. On the way back to Ceylon visits were paid to Pakistan and India, which included four days at Cochin, where the R.I.N. Signal School, though still under construction, is very much a going concern.

AMERICA AND WEST INDIES

With her communications team reinforced by a Senior C.C.O. and a Chief P.O. Tel. from Bermuda M.S.O., the flagship H.M.S. *Glasgow* exercised a combined R.C.N./R.N. force during the period 19th March to 1st April, including the station oiler, R.F.A. *Gold Ranger*, and a submarine specially sent from home waters, a total of thirteen ships and a carrier air group were led, coaxed and whipped into a glowing state of warlike and seamanlike efficiency by the Admiral.

From a full and varied programme which covered much of the water lying between Trinidad and Bermuda there is room here for passing mention of but a few events: spectacular strikes by aircraft from H.M.C.S. *Magnificent*; the thrilling and realistic sight of destroyers gallantly riding off a dusk attack by raiders on a convoy; officer of the watch manoeuvres; and white ensigns in close order entering and leaving an American naval base. Brief calls were made at Antigua, in the British West Indies, and the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo, Cuba, where, at both work and play, we enjoyed the use of every amenity and facility. U.S. signal publications were used with marked success, and one and all of the Communications world obtained a true appreciation of the U.S. Navy definition "Communications . . . the medium through which command is exercised."

Soon after the return of the squadron to Bermuda the lengthy commission of Admiral Sir William

Norfolk's departure signified the end of the annual exercise period—a busy time for all—in which for one glorious week there were as many as seven ships in the harbour, a phenomenon brought about by the presence of the Royal Indian Naval Squadron, consisting of *Delhi*, *Caverry* and *Sutlej*, which was spending three weeks in Trincomalee engaged on a concentrated programme.

In the regatta, *Birmingham* won the "cock" rather too easily, which included walking off with the cup for the Communications whaler, a race in which she was strongly challenged by *Highflyer* and *Loch Quich*.

During a recent visit to Colombo by the Indian Olympic soccer team, L./Sig. Laws was chosen to play for the Combined Services of Ceylon in their match against them. In the *Highflyer* League Soccer Competition, Communications "A" team were the winners.

A forenoon of mental gymnastics for Communications staffs occurred when the combined British and Indian Squadrons went to sea to exercise screening, using the old books for half the time, and switching back to the new when the Indian ships parted company to do independent exercises.

We now hear that *Mauritius* is coming out to replace *Norfolk*, which will afford her an opportunity for the first time since she was commissioned of visiting the island from which she takes her name. The station has been recently reinforced by the arrival of *Flamingo*, who has joined the Persian Gulf Division of *Wild Goose* and *Wren*. It is hoped that we shall see both the new arrivals in Trincomalee before very long.

CEYLON WEST RECEIVING STATION

We, "the jungle boys," introduce ourselves to readers of THE COMMUNICATOR. Perhaps for this our first appearance we had better give a brief history and description of our station.

Prior to 1942 one section of C.W.R.S. was housed in an old Customs building in Buller's Road and the other in a bungalow at Nedimala, which is about seven miles south of Colombo. From these, signals were "piped" to the basement of Baur's Building in Upper Chatham Street. In that decisive year lock, stock and rum keg were transported, with much perspiring and consequent loss of weight, to its present site.

Lt. H. S. M. Wilkins, M.B.E., who recently superseded Lt. Cdr. H. F. Battersby as O.C. Ceylon West Transmitters and Receivers, played a prominent part in the directing of building operations of the new station at that time.

The task of erecting the twenty-seven wooden aerial towers (twenty-four Adastral masts have been added since then) was carried out by Royal Marine Engineers helped by a countless number of coolies.

The C.R.R. and the most important buildings were, and still are, built of brick, but the men's living

quarters and dining-hall were native "bhandas" comprised of cement floors and waist-high side walls, roofs and shutters of palm leaves, and rough poles. We do not advise any fellow Communicator to choose one of these creations in preference to a pre-fab., for on the frequent occasions that it rained we were often much dampened, in fact and in spirit, while reclining on our beds or playing an innocent game of pontoon!

In the past few months the "bhandas" have been replaced by more solid erections, and when we are indoors Old Man Monsoon may rage without causing us great concern.

Ceylon West Receivers is situated about ten miles from Colombo in a district known as Welisara—which fact causes a few people to refer to us as Welisara Wireless. It occupies an area of 128 acres; although we know of no person who has had the energy to walk round and prove it. Sharing this vast expanse with us are the aerial masts, a maze of underground cables, numerous and various types of snake, many fearsome "long-legged beasties," and a score or so of anemic-looking cows of doubtful native origin.

We have, naturally, a large proportion of foliage and vegetation, and when we have a desire for sleep (which is very, very often) we are lulled by gently swishing palm fronds. Nice, don't you think? Personally, we would prefer being lulled to blissful unconsciousness by several pints of Brickwood's ale.

But we are rather proud to think that the 110, or so, of us maintain one of the world's largest wireless stations. I think even the Chief Mechanician and his two Stoker Mech. assistants, the most ruthless critics you could ever meet, have a secret share in this pride.

Unlike our "Fayd" friends, we have no fair members of the W.R.N.S. to help man the fourteen fixed continuous services (including R.T.T. to Admiralty and Waiouru, and local T.P. lines) and the ship-shore frequencies 8, 12, and 16 mc/s; although one of our number swears he feels the feminine touch issuing from the AR-88 when working "Fayd" on Service 32. But don't let that cause egoistic tendencies, ladies, for he has also been known to utter naughty words on occasions.

With regard to sport, we do not fare badly. Football and cricket have the usual strong support, and fixtures are regularly arranged with Service and civilian teams. Rugby has not so many enthusiasts, but the stalwarts are hoping to rear a team of champions in the near future.

Our small soccer pitch has been created by much toil, sweat and profanity, plus the aid of a bulldozer (which, incidentally, gave up the ghost two or three weeks after its acquisition) and many morphia injections. Mr. T. W. Pick, D.S.C., our present C.C.O., was a considerable help in enlivening morale and keeping the task and future benefits in proper perspective.

The pitch (nicknamed Welisara Stadium by some dubious humorist) has still to be turfed before we can

invite "away" teams without a prick of conscience; and this work is to begin shortly, so we are told, by a commercial firm.

Hockey is a game we have taken no part in for over two years, but rejuvenated by the enthusiasm of Lt. Wilkins we hope to be able to borrow a pitch in Colombo and revive, and add to, the glories of the past.

Owing to the high cost of hiring dance bands, and other items connected with social activities, we have been rather frustrated in this respect since the autumn of 1948. But by the time this appears in print we will most probably have held a dance or two under our new plan of campaign and Instr. Lt. A. J. Macmillan, who recently became permanent "Schoolie" in the Colombo area and made his headquarters at C.W.R.S., will have presented several classical concerts and, probably, some swing sessions.

That, be it rather short, seems to be a fairly accurate report, and a basis for future news and feeble satire from this nest of snores and land of "morning watches."

K. W. H.

HUNTIN', SHOOTIN' AND FISSION

A PLEA FOR THE ABOLITION OF CRUELTY TO ATOMS

Consider awhile the nuclear pile;
Just think what goes on in the core,
How the atoms, imprisoned in slavery vile,
Are subject to tortures galore.

Just think what you'd do if those atoms were you,
Bombarded each hour of the day
With neutrons and protons and gamma rays too
In a most indiscriminate way.

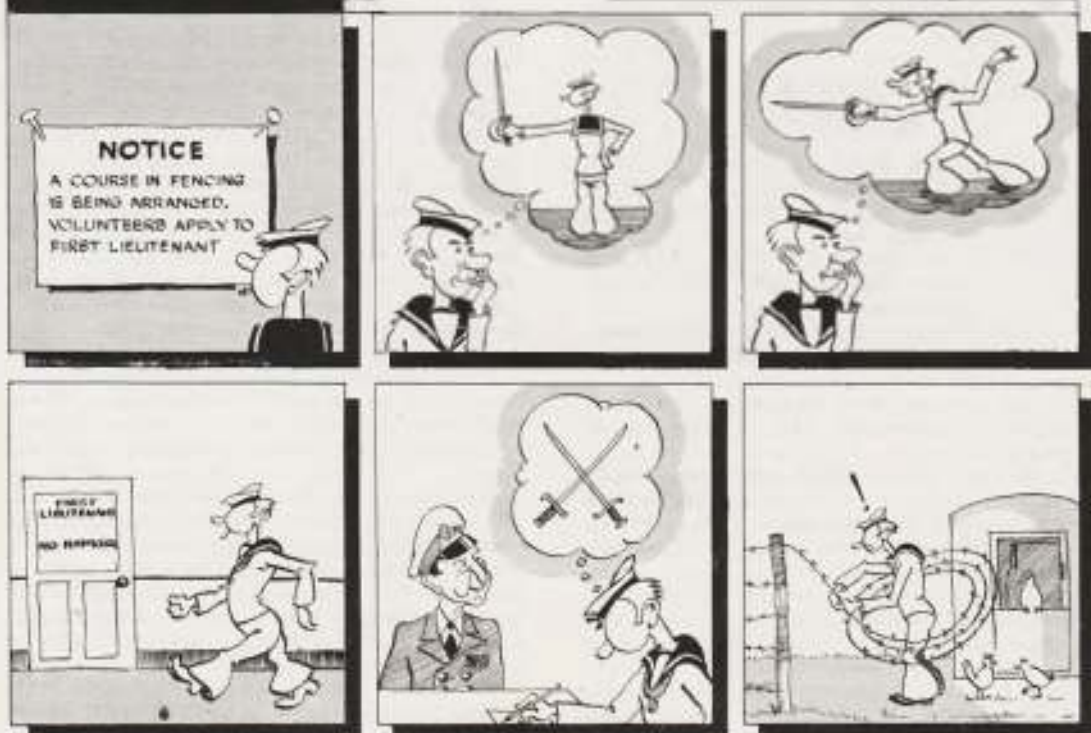
Those atoms, my friend, will one day make an end
To the treatment they're forced to endure.
And then you will find it most hard to defend
The view that your world is secure.

So exercise care with those atoms in there
Lest one day they decide to revolt
And give you at least an unpleasant scare
With perhaps a most earth-shaking jolt!

"NORTUEN,"

'KNOCKER WHITE'

Another cartoon by Eaton



'ARRY

Mrs. Malaprop existed only in an author's imagination, but most of us have, at some time or other, known a person who has the same gift of using the wrong word, though perhaps only occasionally. I have known a few, but the cream of them all was a man who was not content with doing it frequently but also coined words, often giving them two entirely different meanings.

Let us call him 'Arry. Whether or not that was his real name doesn't matter, nor does his rating, but for over two years we were messmates in a small ship on a foreign station. During that time I became thoroughly conversant with 'Arry's peculiar English, and was never surprised by any new "word," mispronunciation or malapropism uttered by him. In fact, I was very disappointed if he did not produce at least one gem in a day, and the remainder of our messmates also felt that they had been deprived of something to which they were entitled.

Though he was a Northerner he had, somehow or other, acquired a rich Cockney accent, and often prefaced his remarks with "nahrer," which meant "now er." His "wivah't det" meant "without that."

He was unaware of his peculiarities of speech, except on those occasions when someone would pass a humorous and pointed comment. Then, perhaps realising he had put his foot in it, he would try to extricate it by saying, "Ahr, I knows de proppa word. It's . . . I was only joking." Usually he made matters worse by uttering a word more remote in its meaning than the first word, or by unconsciously coining a word.

To explain what I mean I can do no better than to give an example of how he tried to wriggle out of one difficulty. We were discussing an Admiralty Order which stated that all ratings not dressed as seamen must increase their kit by two white drill suits. The problem was who was to bear the expense, the Admiralty or the rating?

'Arry's contribution to the debate was: "Well, I expects we'll get a gracious issue." When the resultant laughter had died down, one of the others said, "Good gracious!"

More laughter, then 'Arry said: "Ahr, I knows de proppa word same as you clever blokes does. Even a second-class stoker knows it's 'gratchitooitus'."

That was one of his "home-made" words. Another was "mizzultaneous" (phonetic spelling), which did duty for "simultaneously" and "miscellaneous." Thus it would be quite natural for him to say, or even to read aloud, "Mizzultaneously, a crowd of natives, armed with a mizzultaneous collection of weapons, came out of the jungle."

The Steenth Destroyer Flotilla was one day carrying out a gunnery exercise off Malta, and the gunfire was plainly audible in the harbour. 'Arry remarked: "Blimey, the Steenth ain't 'arf 'avin' a good time. You can hear the donations from 'ere." Someone's comment, "As the parson said, 'All detonations thankfully received'," made no impression on 'Arry. He was unaware of having said anything wrong.

During a debate on food preservation, which ranged from mother's pickled walnuts to tinned fruit and cereals in waxed cartons, 'Arry threw a new light on sardines by informing us that they are "aromatically" sealed in their tins.

He was a mine of information. From him we learnt that the reason for there being so much strife in Portugal was that the Portuguese people were in too many "fractions"; that Catholic clergy and religious orders lead lives of "celebration"; that "several" oranges are grown in Spain; and that the best way to run a business enterprise was to form a "sinecure."

The pronunciation of many everyday words was a stumbling block to him. "Seniority" became "seri-ony"; "theatre" was "threatre"; "bulworks" emerged as "bullocks"; "cutlery" to him was "cul-tery" and "captain" was "cupstan" in all its applications. For example, when preparing for entering or leaving harbour he would speak of "steam on the captain."

Once he had to render a written report on something or other and asked me to read it and let him know if it was all right. It was not. It was much too long and involved, and I told him so, asking, "Can't you abbreviate it?" He pondered a while and then said: "No, but perhaps I can shorten it a little."

When he was in favour of any proposal or suggestion he indicated it by saying: "I'm in agreeable wiv det," and on one occasion he expressed disapproval with the words "I'm in antipode wiv det." The meaning of the "Antipodes" was made clear to him by one of the others. Leaving out the accent, his reply was: "Well, that's all right; Australia's in the Antipodes, the opposite side to England, I'm in opposition to the proposal, so I'm in antipode with it." That was 'Arry's interpretation, and he was sticking to it.

Speaking of the Fleet boxing contest, he said that the finals would be the most exciting because all the weaker scrappers would be weeded out in the "illuminating" contests. He also said that big fights were always fast on the bill; the others were merely "pewlimmy" contests. The usual laugh brought the usual type of correction, this time to "pulmonary" contests.

All these, and countless others, I recorded as soon as I conveniently could, but in the intervening years I have lost most of the notes I made. Luckily, I still retain what I think was his best effort. True, it is not of the same class as the others, but I include it as a tail-piece.

A N.A.A.F.I. surplus had to be disposed of between two funds, one a charitable organisation and the other in aid of Fleet sports. For ease in allocation it was divided into ten equal parts. We had to allot so many shares to each fund, any combination, such as seven to one and three to the other. The debate was prolonged and rather heated. 'Arry settled the matter, to his own satisfaction at any rate, with: "There's no need for all this argument. Give six shares to the sports and four to charity. Fifty-fifty that's my motto."

YENOLAMP.

I WAS A SPY

To understand my story it is necessary to know the brief outline of the exercises which took place between the Home and Mediterranean Fleets. The 1st C.S., under the command of Vice (then Rear) Admiral Mountbatten of Burma, together with an escort of destroyers sailed from Malta for Gibraltar, where they put in for a few short hours on Saturday, 5th March. On sailing at 1900 the same evening they proceeded to an area "somewhere in the Atlantic," turned and attempted a penetration of the Straits and a link-up with the remainder of the Mediterranean Fleet. Between themselves and their goal stood the combined forces of the Home Fleet, the Rock defences, and radar and aircraft of the R.A.F. An almost impossible task. To make matters worse, the force in the Atlantic had no means of gaining information of the "enemy's" movements—and so it was that the age-old ruse of landing a "spy" was instituted.

Of the arrangements leading up to my eventual landing at Gibraltar little need be said, except that on Friday, 4th March, I clumsily "fell" down a ladder and "smashed" my wrist. Having been primed by the doctor, I knew exactly where it should hurt when he started examining it. An X-ray was ordered, a "doctored" plate substituted (unknown to the sick bay staff) and Doc. very gravely told me that I should have to have my wrist put in plaster. That evening and during the next day everyone was most kind and sympathetic—for which I had to pay when I rejoined my ship and it was known that my injury had been a fake.

During that Saturday afternoon, after the Admiral had paid his official calls, his car was sent to be garaged during the ship's period at sea—and in the boot there were stowed two portables, a six-volt battery and a pair of binoculars—the driver kindly consented to give me a lift to hospital. Once outside the dockyard gates we left Main Street and swung into a back street where, by previous arrangement, we had acquired a small room in which to establish our equipment. With it safely stowed away I made my way to an hotel where a room had been booked for myself and a telegraphist, who to outward appearance was to act as my servant.

For that evening at least I thoroughly enjoyed myself; my plaster hadn't become irksome and, in civvies, I made the most of my affliction, being literally spoon-fed by the waiters. But on Sunday we got down to the real business for which we had landed. The first thing was to check and ensure that our portables were in working order, though we refrained from actually going on the air. Having done this, we waited for the moment, during the dog watches, when the enemy were due to sail. In plenty of time we made our way to Europa Point, where we commanded a view of both sides of the Rock. Here, at our leisure, we watched and noted the movements and compositions of each force, and when we had a reasonable idea of what was happening I left the

telegraphist to continue the watch and proceeded to our small station, where, encrypting my message and disguising it to appear as a normal message from a ship at sea, passed it on ship/shore to Gibraltar W/T. Bearing a delivery group for C.S.I., Gibraltar, without question, passed our message by fixed service to Whitehall, where it was passed to Malta, who eventually put on the ship broadcast. In this way, six messages were sent from us to our flagship, although we heard after the exercise had been completed that we had caused many checks and repetitions to be originated along the line—the only authority who had been unperturbed and had managed to decrypt all our traffic was the one for whom it was intended.

On Monday, the 7th, we made an early report and then continued our watch throughout the day, but as all forces had passed out of visual sight, we decided to try to make an entry into A.C.H.Q. With this latter object in view, I changed back into uniform that afternoon and made my way into the dockyard. I didn't know where A.C.H.Q. was situated, but it was at this point that I had a bit of luck: a Lieutenant (A), accompanied by a sailor wearing a *Theseus* cap-ribbon and carrying a number of rolled charts, passed me. The *Theseus* was an enemy at sea—could they be working in A.C.H.Q.? I decided to follow them, but I pulled up short when they approached the entrance to a tunnel guarded by a policeman. They didn't appear to have shown any kind of pass, so, making a slow circuit of some buildings, I approached the policeman, quickening my pace as I got nearer—imagine my relief when I got nothing more from him than a pleasant "Good afternoon, sir."

Before me, stretching away into the distance, was the tunnel, dark and silent—where was I to go now? Feeling that the "bobby" might take more than a natural interest in me if I lingered and appeared undecided, I kept straight on—and it was then that I had my second stroke of luck: a young telegraphist loomed up out of the darkness, nearly knocking me over, and so, assuming my most official manner, I inquired the way to A.C.H.Q.—and was politely told to take the second turning on the left. Five minutes later I found I need not have worried. The letters, six inches high, stared at me from a doorway.

Inside A.C.H.Q. I encountered no one and had no difficulty in finding the operations room, where, very conveniently, maps showing the disposition of all forces were there for my perusal. In case I was being watched I waited no longer than was necessary for me to copy, on to my plaster, information which I thought might be useful, before leaving the tunnel. Once safely outside I almost ran back to our station and passed on all that I had gleaned.

My telegraphist and I made in all four trips to A.C.H.Q., though it was stressed at a later date that this couldn't possibly have happened in war time. But what we had set out to do was accomplished without detection, and not until our Admiral disclosed what we *had* done did the enemy have any idea that we had been around.

HOME FLEET NOTES

When the last number went to press, the Home Fleet were about to set sail for the Combined Fleet exercises. These have been reported elsewhere and it is sufficient to say here, that from the Communication standpoint, they were good value.

Gibraltar had an almost pre-war look during the Combined Fleets' visit after the exercises; these followed the traditional lines and included a discussion in the coal sheds, many inter-fleet sporting fixtures, and an "At Home" in *Vanguard*, and last but not least, a Signal Officers' dinner, at which some thirty-five officers were present, given with characteristic generosity by the Flag Officer Commanding First Cruiser Squadron (Admiral Mountbatten) on board his flagship, *Liverpool*.

The Home Fleet left Gibraltar on 14th March, and split up into various units to visit Lisbon, Oporto, Madeira and Casablanca. This provided a welcome break after a fairly strenuous six weeks at Gibraltar, as no doubt it did also for Gibraltar W/T, who, with a small complement, put in a great deal of good work on our behalf during our stay.

We returned to home ports on 25th March, carrying out a convoy exercise on passage.

Towards the end of the leave period the flag of the C-in-C. was transferred to *Implacable*, and shortly afterwards we sailed for Invergordon; since then the flagship has been at sea for twenty-two days out of twenty-eight. The pilots of modern aircraft have to do a lot of flying, and as it has refused to blow—except of course, at week-ends—we have done a good deal of high-speed steaming.

We are busily engaged at the moment in preparing and training for a large-scale Western Union exercise, which is due to take place early in July. It should be interesting to see how voice works under these conditions.

There will be a large number of liaison teams from *Mercury* taking part, and we shall look forward to seeing, and no doubt hearing, them.



Psychiatrist: "This dream you keep having about being pestered by a pretty blond—can you recall her phone number?"

EXCAVATIONS

Unfortunately, Diogenes,
What one hears and sees
Is most disheartening.
Crude imitation
Is no criterion;
Values fall and
Actualities are difficult to assess.
Mental stagnation,
By no means growing less,
Is everywhere.

Come, Diogenes! the public dump-heap
Awaits inspection.
(Why don't they label garbage "Treat with care"?)
The loathsome collection
Rather makes one creep.
Exhibits numbers one and two—
One, a much-maligned unserviceable shoe,
And, two, attached, a specimen of man.
Both are now discarded vermin—
The shoe, no heel; the man, no soul.
Tins and smells, sins and hell—
Hardly a subject for a sermon—
Move on, Diogenes!
Your light is confusing to the eyes.
This rubbish in disguise
Becomes as millions of men discarded.
Progress retarded,
There is no road back:
But only on, or down
For human garbage
And fragments of humanity.
It is hardly vanity
That allows one to expose
Such dirty linen to every eye and nose.
The fault lies further back.
Let's have authority on the rack—
Some light, Diogenes.
What one hears and sees
Is most disheartening.
The source of discordance
Is you and I, Diogenes.

WREN MOYMAN.

BY THE WORLD FORGOT

Of course that's all right for poets and such-like folk, but it is not much of a policy for business people.

And we are business people running this magazine, and we should hate to think that you would adopt this policy in respect to our Advertisers. They are our very good friends and yours as well, because without their support *COMMUNICATOR* would not be the fine magazine it is.

Please, therefore, remember to deal with them when you are in need of their goods, and don't forget to mention this magazine in doing so. Thank's a lot.

RADIO INDUSTRY NOTES

In common with British industry as a whole, the radio industry is playing its part in dressing the British shop window, as part of the export drive. The British Industries Fair was held in London and Birmingham from 2nd to 13th May, and the 16th National Radio Exhibition—generally known as "Radiolympia"—will take place in London between 28th September and 8th October, 1949. In both, many new and interesting products of the radio and electronic engineering industries—some designed for the special requirements of overseas buyers—show how "Britain can make it."

At the B.I.F., the London section contained, among its numerous exhibits, a combined console television receiver by E. K. Cole, Ltd., giving a high definition picture, ten inches by eight inches. R. N. Fitton Ltd. featured a console model designed to fit into the corner of a room; this is believed to be the only one of its type manufactured in this country. Among radio receivers, Mullards showed a new type, claimed to be the first to make use of the double superheterodyne circuit (familiar in V.H.F. technique).

Cloud and collision warning radar equipment for aircraft, and a super-light-weight V.H.F. communications transmitter/receiver, also for aircraft, together with a "walkie-talkie" transmitter/receiver developed for civil use, were demonstrated by E. K. Cole, Ltd.

An item of some naval interest was a marine version of the "V" radiogram unit (Garrard Engineering Co.). This was shown playing a record while undergoing a rolling motion as if at sea. E.M.I. showed a high-fidelity magnetic tape recorder, one reel recording for over twenty minutes. The only controlled neon discharge lamp manufactured in England (forming the basis of stroboscopic equipment) was shown by Ferranti, Ltd.

At the Birmingham section the world's first demonstration of a television transmission on the 625-line system was given by Marconi Wireless Telegraph Co., Ltd. Although the British 405-line system is widely accepted as the most efficient in relation to cost and band width, many overseas television authorities have not yet finally decided upon the standard of definition most suitable to their special circumstances. British manufacturers claim to be able to provide equipment to any required standard of definition. Marconis also exhibited their new image orthicon television cameras, for studio or mobile work. A similar camera mounted in a launch was used by the B.B.C. for televising the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race. This was the first time in the history of television that scenes had been publicly transmitted from a moving vehicle. Metropolitan-Vickers showed an electron microscope giving a magnification of 1,000 to 100,000 times, and a new system of accurate speed control of a number of motors working together, without mechanical coupling.

At Radiolympia the exhibits of the various Government departments will be among the most interesting. The Royal Navy, the Army and the Royal Air Force will be showing their new products, although so far strict secrecy has been maintained regarding the details. This has been interpreted by the Radio Industry Council as promising some striking applications of radio and radar. Great interest is expected in one of the exhibits of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, who are showing at Olympia for the first time. This will be a practical demonstration of the locating of storm areas by radio. The measurement of the height and density of the ionised layers, for forecasting the most favourable frequencies for communication, will also be shown.

A working model of the main runway at London Airport, equipped with all radio aids to navigation, will be shown by the Ministry of Civil Aviation. The position of a model aircraft, taking off in semi-darkness and making a circuit of the airport before landing, will be shown to the public on a control console arranged for direct viewing. Simultaneous "talk-down" instructions will be heard, so that visitors will be able to share the experience of an airport controller.

A B.B.C. television studio, expected to be one of the best-equipped and designed in the world, will be arranged to enable visitors to watch both the scene on the floor of the studio and the control arrangements and selection of the picture which goes on the air.

A large proportion of the exhibits by commercial firms will naturally be radio and television receivers. Little information about them has so far been released, but many improvements and new ideas are expected. Just after Radiolympia closes, the new Midlands television station will be opened at Birmingham. New receivers to be shown will include those built specially for the frequency of the Birmingham area transmissions, and models suitable for the fringe area, capable of receiving both the Alexandra Palace and the Midland transmissions, will also be on view. A demonstration of the effects of interference on television pictures is expected to make motorists and other offenders more sympathetic towards "televiseurs."

Few naval communicators need to be reminded of the effects produced in radio equipments and components by vibration, moisture, salt-laden atmosphere, extremes of temperature, and other conditions of life afloat and ashore in all parts of the globe. During the war considerable attention was devoted to methods of construction designed to overcome these little troubles: specifications were adopted on an inter-Service basis for acceptance tests which ensured, as far as was humanly possible, that equipment would have at least a useful "life" under all foreseeable circumstances. Manufacturers who hope to capture

and hold markets in all parts of the world have not been slow to realise that such durability is one of the features upon which many foreign buyers will insist, and the Radio Industry Council have now produced, for manufacturers' use, similar specifications for commercial products. Baking, bumping, freezing, vibration and humidity are applied under controlled conditions for fixed periods in regular sequence, each component being examined after each test to ensure that it is deterioration-free. Additional tests include infection with mould spores and salt spray corrosion. It is anticipated that the specification will ultimately become part of a British standard.

While exhibitions on such a gigantic scale as those mentioned above give a clear picture of general trends in the industry, the enormous amount of research and development which has been undertaken, frequently without hope of immediate profit, can best be appreciated by a visit to the works and laboratories of the manufacturers. Naval communicators are frequently privileged to pay such visits, both to industrial firms and to the research establishments of the Service departments and the Ministry of Supply. Among recent interesting tours, one at the Crewe Toll Works of Messrs. Ferranti, Ltd., at Edinburgh, deserves more than passing mention. The factory was completed in 1943, and has the largest research and development laboratories in Scotland for "light electrical engineering" problems. The majority of the work is associated with aviation communication and radar.

There are four laboratories. The radar laboratory deals with navigation and communication. Techniques on 1,000 Megacycles per second are being investigated, and a radar altimeter and miniature console navigational receiver are two pieces of equipment which have reached the stage of practical trials. The vacuum physics laboratory deals with special valves and allied problems. The work in hand at present includes the design of wide-band transmit/receive switch cells, vacuum capacitors, ceramic valves, cold cathode tubes, magnetrons and image storage tubes. The instruments laboratory is mainly concerned with design and development of precision potentiometers, servo mechanisms and gyroscopes. The applications laboratory is engaged on industrial electronic problems, and devotes considerable effort to such work as frequency-following servo mechanisms, electric measuring equipment, D.C. amplifiers, alpha particle counters and high-fidelity reproduction.

The production unit, equipped with the latest machine tools and modern assembly methods, is devoted mainly to the manufacture of the gyroscopic gunsight and ancillary equipment for the Services and for foreign countries. The design, development and production of small transformers, particularly of the miniature hermetically sealed type, are also carried out at this factory.

There can be little doubt in the mind of anyone who has been fortunate enough to come into contact with the work being done in the radio and allied

fields that the British radio industry is far from being in the moribund state that we are sometimes led to believe is the condition of British industry as a whole. It is heartening to know that, on the contrary, it is a vigorous infant, thriving and growing rapidly, and already playing an adult's part in British recovery.

A. R. J.

CONVERSATION PIECE

"We seem to be living in an age of initials."

"I beg your pardon?"

"U.N.O.!"

"I'm afraid I don't."

"No. No. U.N.O.—United Nations Organisation."

"Oh, yes, I say, I like that Johnnie who bangs the gong before the picture starts."

"That's the Rank Organisation."

"Eh?"

"Rank. Rank Organisation."

"Really, that's a bit strong. I've seen some pretty good —"

"I'm not talking about pictures. I'm discussing initials. Take B.B.B.C."

"You take it, old boy; I'm strictly teetotal."

"What do you suppose B.B.B.C. means?"

"Haven't a clue, unless it's a slip on the part of Stuart Hibberd."

"You're hopeless. Most people know what G.B.S. means. Do you?"

"Getting Better Slowly?"

"You're definitely not. What about W.C.O.?"

"Look here, I'm no prude and this is supposed to be a pretty toney magazine. Let's keep it clean."

"I'm trying to. That was the initials version of Warrant Communications Officer."

"Was?"

"Yes. It's been changed to C.C.O."

"I get it. They changed the W for a C. Tell me, were W.C.Os. the fellows who wore chains on their jackets?"

"No. They're Flag Lieutenants. Can you tell me the meaning of F.O.?"

"If you insist on being rude —"

"Not at all. F.O. means Flag Officer."

"Ah! of course. The Flag Lieutenant again."

"No, no. A Flag Lieutenant isn't a Flag Officer."

"A Lieutenant is an officer, isn't he?"

"Of course."

"Then a Flag Lieutenant *must* be a Flag Officer."

"I think I'm going screwy. We'd better change the subject. But before we leave the subject of initials, what's yours?"

"Thanks awfully. Mine's a B.B. split."

M. T. HEAD.

ROUND THE HOME ESTABLISHMENTS

HOME AIR COMMAND

The news from Home Air Command for this edition comes from Flag Officer, Flying Training's Command, and in the following paragraphs our special correspondent gives us a brief idea of the requirements and the task of the Command.

Find, Fix and Strike

"The eyes of the Fleet." Who has not heard that expression without conjuring memories of the historic hunt for the *Gruf Spee*, *Blumark*, *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*; and the ceaseless vigil against the U-boats, to quote only a few of the stirring achievements by naval aircraft and their crews during the last war. (Apologies to those "Buntings" who still lay claim to such a title.)

The Naval Air Service has now left the "Buntings" in undisputed possession, however; since they have shown by such actions as the sinking of the *Koenigsberg*, the crippling of the proud Italian battle fleet at Taranto in 1940, and many other achievements right up to the last naval air attack on the Japanese in 1945, that they are not only the Admiral's eyes, assisting him by finding the enemy and fixing his position (very important work in itself), but they can also strike hard, shattering blows at the enemy wherever he may be found, whether afloat or ashore, thus evolving a new motto and task—"Find, Fix and Strike."

It is to this task that flying training to-day is directed, and by such aids as faster and better aircraft, improved methods of training, and more efficient radio, radar, gunnery and bombing techniques it is certain that the Naval Air Service will live up to its new motto and do even better than before.

Flag Officer, Flying Training, who flies his flag in H.M.S. *Merlin*, a "stone frigate" situated in the kingdom of Fife, is responsible for this most important and complex training, being also the administrative authority for those naval air stations and carriers which are used for training the pilots and aircrew who man the naval aircraft.

Flying training has many aspects. Let us see what happens to the budding naval pilots and their crews. Before the prospective pilot does fly, there is a pre-flight training course designed to give officers and men a thorough knowledge of aircraft; this includes such diverse subjects as aerodynamics, aero engines, airmanship, air gunnery and meteorology. The would-be pilots also learn navigation and get a good grounding in air communications as well as the usual school subjects, mathematics, etc.

When they have digested all this, the course is concluded by an escape exercise. This is grand fun. They are first driven in a closed lorry for about an hour and a half to a bleak, remote spot. There they are released, dressed in a very sinister-looking rig and instructed to return by their own resources to

Donibristle, evading capture by police and civilians who have been previously warned of the desperadoes' intentions. Those who survive this part of the course and the subsequent jubiliations, proceed to the next stage. This consists of elementary flying training at Syerston, an R.A.F. station in the Midlands, using training aircraft which fits them for the following stage, the operational flying school.

Before a pilot or his crew can be called "operational types" they must be capable of handling their aircraft as a team in all the conditions which they may be expected to meet in war. This "operational" training is carried out in all types of aircraft in current service at R.N.A.S., Lossiemouth, the Navy's master airfield in Scotland, and is designed to accustom the pilot, first, in flying in various formations, then in individual weapon training and air combat, while his future crew are engaged in air navigation, radar and radio exercises. Eventually this training is completed and the crew emerge as a team, highly skilled in formation flying, fighter tactics, torpedo and dive-bombing, gunnery, photography, navigation and radio/radar techniques. All this training, however, has been carried out from land-based stations, and the expensive training which the crew has received is useless unless the pilot can land his aircraft and crew on a carrier, and, having landed, take off again.

This is vital training, when you consider that a pilot may have to land on a small patch of deck, sometimes in stygian blackness, with the carrier pitching forty feet or more every few seconds. It requires skill, nerve and split-second judgment, as well as blind obedience to the deck-landing control officer's orders. So once more the pilots must postpone their hopes of getting to sea until they have mastered this art. This they do at R.N.A.S., Milltown, not far from Lossiemouth, practising landings on a runway specially marked to simulate a carrier's flight deck. Incidentally, the deck-landing control officer is also trained at this station, so perhaps the D.L.C.O. doing his training while our pilots are here will be the same man to whom our aircrew will trust their lives every time they land on their first carrier.

When the dummy deck-landing training ashore is satisfactorily completed, the pilots get their first big thrill—a deck landing at sea on the training carrier. What a sigh of relief escapes each one as, bringing his aircraft in over the deck, he feels it bump in just the right spot; he feels his hook catch in the arrestor wire, bringing him to a sudden stop—he's made it! Now he tries again, and again, until he feels it's a "piece of cake"—at least in calm weather.

He is now a fully fledged naval pilot, and ready to team up with his crew and join his squadron. There is no time to sit back now: the squadron must work up for whatever role it is designed. For instance, they may go to the Joint Anti-Submarine School and learn the latest methods of detecting and attacking submarines. Here they get their first experience of

working with H.M. ships, usually frigates and destroyers, working from Londonderry. The fighter pilot, of course, joins his squadron as an individual member. It is now that he must get to know his fellow-pilots and weld himself, with them, into a team—a somewhat different problem from the pilot with his own crew flying in the same aircraft. Here, there is a feeling of closeness, of being "in it together." The fighter pilot is alone, but with good team work and strict flying discipline he, too, feels the close support his team can give him and he then, building up a confidence, without which a squadron in combat can be broken up and destroyed piecemeal.

To return to earth, and the communications side of life, the complement of the stations under F.O.F.T.'s command are made up of male and W.R.N.S. telegraphists. The latter are employed to quite a large extent, so releasing more men for sea service. These Wrens man the D/F and other air communications channels; during intensive flying periods the traffic in carrier and airfield control frequencies is probably more than that on any other communication channel, requiring a high degree of efficiency and attention to good operating, at which the Wrens of to-day are maintaining the standard which during the war earned them such high regard by all who worked with them. The majority of communication channels manned are V.H.F./Voice, although W/T is employed on H.F. and M.F. frequencies, particularly by master airfields, where world guard is maintained on R.N./R.A.F. Civil frequencies in addition to local naval channels. In order to maintain the requisite standard of all ratings, W/T coding exercises are also carried out daily with control of Northern air stations by F.O.F.T., except on Wednesdays, when they join in a general exercise with all the air stations in the net, each station controlling in turn. The air stations of the flying Training Command, though all are remotely situated, are surrounded by some of the most magnificent scenery in Britain, from Lossiemouth 'way up in the Highlands of Scotland, Eglinton, near Londonderry, to St. Merryn and Culdrose near Land's End. The communications facilities, too, are also widely dispersed at each airfield, so cycling and walking become second nature to any Communication rating at these airfields. For instance, one site in Cornwall is about fifteen miles from the air station, up on the moors (the nearest run ashore being downhill about five miles, so the time taken to nip down to the "local" averages about six minutes on a bicycle—negative brakes—and the two-hour uphill journey back is usually left until closing time).

Usually these sites are near farms, and most farmers and their daughters are ever ready to provide plenty of eggs and other wholesome farm produce, and some have opened their homes and shown great hospitality to the ratings on these remote sites. Many and varied recreational facilities are also provided at each station, from cinemas to sailing, and all the field sports. Some ratings have been known to take up "huntin', shootin', and fishin'."

It can be seen that communications, both air and ground, play a large part in the task of flying training; in fact, except for the elementary flying, no aircraft is allowed to leave the deck without being in constant communication by some means or other whether it be by voice or W/T, and the operators at all these stations feel, with every justification, that they are playing a vital role in the Flying Training Command's work in preparing the future aircrews of the Naval Air Service to carry out the task for which they have undergone such arduous training—a task which is becoming increasingly important with every new development in war at sea or in the air.

SIGNAL SCHOOL, ROYAL MARINES

The Signal School, Royal Marines, has been established in the Royal Marine Barracks, Eastney, since November, 1947, when it moved from Ringwood in Kent, the last of its war-time homes.

During the time we have been here we have witnessed vast improvements to the training facilities and fixtures in the main School building. The building, incidentally, was formerly a plain barrack block, in a not-too-good state of repair, and from that uninspiring foundation has risen a well-appointed and ideally fitted School capable of instructing up to 100 trainees at a time. On occasions we have topped the 100 mark, but that has always been a tight squeeze.

The School is well equipped with seven classrooms in the main building, each wired and fitted with plug-in headphones working to a receiving set, so that classes may be given reads either from the School or from outside broadcasts. Once students have achieved a certain basic rate, all Morse reads are passed over automatic transmitters, broadcast from a separate transmitting room. A specially fitted touch-typing instruction room contains its own automatic transmitter, together with a gramophone for teaching typing to music.



Official Photograph

Disembarking from an L.V.T.
Exercise "Camberley"

The voice instruction room and the twelve voice cubicles have just been completed and are a great help. The voice instruction room contains a G.P.O. recording apparatus connected to students' desks, each of which has a plug and socket for a moving-coil microphone so that traffic between students simulating a wireless net or group can be recorded and played back to the class. The voice cubicles are sound-proof, wired to take two trainees each, and can be operated from a central control room, either as one group of twelve, or two of six each. We have our own cinema and theatre, and a well-appointed model room.

Apart from our activities on the instructional side in the School, we frequently emerge to take part in outside occasions. Notable among these is our part in the annual demonstration by the Amphibious School, Royal Marines, to students from the Army Staff College, Camberley. Another is our own annual signal exercise for the Corps, which is being held this year in the Portsmouth area under the name of Exercise "Opportune."

Out of working hours we have much to offer those of the Corps—and others—whose interests lean towards wireless and communications generally. The Royal Marine Signal Club is constantly adding to its membership, and certain sections, such as the Radio Section and the Pigeon Section, are thriving concerns. The Radio Section has a membership of some fifty or more "hams" and would-be "hams," who foregather in our clubroom every Tuesday evening and invariably spend an interesting and pleasant social hour or two. We have our own Club transmitter and are now on the point of completing a home-made television receiver. The pigeon loft never fails to interest visitors. We breed and train our own birds and take part regularly in local shows and races with, we must add, highly pleasing results—as is proved by our display of prize-winning tickets.

It would be unfitting to end an article of this nature without reference to the close link which exists (and not by tradition alone) between Royal Marine Signallers and the Communications Branch of the Royal Navy. In these days of rapid technical development the need for the closest co-operation and understanding between every branch of the Services has never been more clear or pressing, and it is comforting to reflect that during and since the war that understanding and closer liaison between Royal Naval and Royal Marine communicators have been fostered and strengthened to their present most pleasing status.

A. L. L.

COMBINED SIGNAL SCHOOL

Since the Easter number all here in the Combined Signal School have been experiencing a fairly busy spell; No. 9 Basic Course for officers and No. 10 Basic Course for other ranks completed on 3rd June. The latter course was one of the largest we have had, and both courses were well representative of the three Services.

We have, with the recent arrival of three more L.C.As., been able to include further interesting exercises into the curriculum which have proved both instructive and popular.

Basic courses are gradually initiated by means of demonstrations and lectures (coupled with the practical application of the knowledge gained) into the build-up of a combined operation, with the emphasis upon combined communication organisation, combined procedure and portable equipment. The surrounding country and landing craft at our disposal provide the ideal facilities for this purpose.

Since our petrol ration, in common with most establishments, has been rather meagre of late, more "Shank's pony" has been necessary in the course of instruction, and this has often proved shanks with a vengeance when carrying some of the outsize portables. However, spring in the country more than compensates for this, and the novelty holds considerable appeal for those who go down to the sea in ships.

We appear to have had more than our share of fine weather in these parts, much to the chagrin of the cricket enthusiasts, who laid a fine new wicket and then had to abandon it for this season (*pas de pluie*). However, nothing daunted, they have succeeded in producing a good alternative, and all are intent upon enjoying the fruits of their labours.

The Combined Ops. soccer team had a rather lean season in the North Devon Senior League; the opposition was generally a little too strong for them, but by fighting doggedly they managed to keep away from the bottom of the League.

At hockey, the Combined Signal School team acquitted themselves well by securing second place in the Inter-Departmental League, and would surely, but for the last-minute postings, have been top.

Yeo, Rees and Williams have been besporting themselves in the Barnstaple rugby XV's, and we are glad to be able to say they are still sound in wind and limb.

Lt. Panter, Lt. Furlong, R.M., Mr. Brooks and Yeo, Smith have all departed in the past few weeks. We are all very sorry to see them go, and wish them every success and happiness in their new duties.

F. A. N. A.

H.M.S. "BRUCE"

The middle of the Summer Term finds us in the thick of seasonal activities. Our armed guard (this year provided by COLLINGWOOD division) and bugle band are at present contributing to the success of the Whitsun instalment of Rosyth Command Navy Week, after which they will be to the fore in *Bruce* on 9th June, on the occasion of H.M. The King's Birthday Review. This year the parade is being inspected by the Admiral Superintendent, Rosyth (Vice-Admiral A. E. M. B. Cunningham-Grahame, C.B., C.B.E.). Nearly half the number on parade will be embryo

Communication ratings, and as the Admiral is an old Signal Officer we shall feel particularly honoured.

The Inter-Part Pulling Regatta was won last month by ANSON Communication Classes 216 and 209 and 210, who obtained first and second places respectively in a fine race. All are now limbering up for the Annual Athletic Sports, which are scheduled to take place early in July.

In spite of all these commitments, however, we still find time for the odd spot of signal training. In fact, this our last full term will be a fairly busy one, as final examinations are due within the space of two months for all classes, 209 to 215 inclusive. The first two mentioned (209 and 210) have already made a good finish, and it is confidently hoped that the remainder will do as well or better.

Looking back since our last contribution, we have bid "God-speed" to quite a number of shipmates, beginning with the departure of C.P.O. Tel. Johnson for foreign parts, closely followed by C.Y.S. Aldredge and their respective classes 207 and 208. Aircraft handling technique has now claimed the interest of the Doughty Chief Yeoman, together with his erstwhile "oppo", C.Y.S. Maggs, and whilst wishing them success in their new venture, we cannot but feel their departure to be a real loss to the branch.

C.Y.S. Muspratt and P.O. Tel. Green are shortly to join H.M. Ships *Saintes* and *Armada* respectively, and another old *Bruce* stalwart, C.R.E. Bradley, has already "swallowed the anchor" and run aground. Our rapidly diminishing numbers are a direct result of the decision to close *Bruce* as a training establishment by the end of the summer, and it is a sad good-bye to so many staunch Communicators who have contributed in full measure to the happy spirit which has been the keynote of our small training section.

Congratulations to the following who are deserving of special mention:

Boy Tel. R. Armstrong (ex-205) on award of a St. George's Prize for the Spring Term.

Boy Tel. C. Hutchinson (209) and Sig. Boy V. Cannings (210) on winning both School and Technical Prizes in their respective classes.

Boy Tel. A. Carter (209) on becoming the Establishment heaving-line champion.

COLLINGWOOD 207 Class on their fine work in the recent Forth-Clyde exercise, and on their consistent steadiness on WITEX.

C.P.O. Tel. Noyes on training his own class for the Field-gun Competition.

C.P.O. Tel. Crossman on bee-keeping enterprise in importing a rare species for work in the East Neuk o' Fife: distinguishable by their pale-amber chassis and dark-brown striped sterns.

Some recent incursions, by a "Junia Cignull Klars" into brighter spelling of ships' names: Caladonya, Quontoc, Whilpoll, Sceirious, Suirious, Serious. No prizes are offered for elucidation of the above, nor for the latest definition of Admiral: "The C-in-C, who dedicated tactical command."

L'ENVOI!

The spider's eggs are hatching out, the brood are scattered wide.

The web will soon be derelict that once was *Bruce's* pride.

But spiders are a hardy brood, so shed no idle tears.

Attempt! Attain! Our motto bold has stood six hundred years.

So when you're up against it, and the work is running hot

Just take a swig of *Bruce's* brew, then give it all you've got;

No laggards we! to count the cost, or wilt at toil and strife,

But spiders true who learned their trade in the East Neuk o' Fife.

S. G. O.

H.M.S. "GANGES"

The King's Birthday Review is over and the Establishment is settling down to work again after the excitement.

By all accounts K.B.R. was a great success this year. The weather was perfect and the general standard of smartness was well up to usual. The salute was taken by the Vice-Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Sir John Edleston, K.C.B., G.B.E.

In the Communications department we are having a very busy time. The last classes on the old forty-five-week course are nearing the end of their time and the first of the new course are due to go on draft at the end of September. This presents a considerable problem in organisation, as the new course brings an increase in numbers, together with technical and housing problems. Our new cabinet voice teachers are nearing completion, so *Ganges* Boys coming to sea in future should be better on the microphone than those in the past.

This term we welcome Mr. Hahgood, S.C.C.O., and Mr. Brooks, S.C.C.O., and hope that they will enjoy their time at *Ganges*. We reluctantly said good-bye to Mr. Childs, C.C.O., and wish him every success wherever he goes. He will be missed by all who have worked with him.

The following classes have gone on draft this term so far: V/S 252 and 254, W/T 251 and 253, and we wish them the best of luck. Most of 253 and 254 have been lucky enough to go direct to the Second Training Flotilla for the Summer A/S exercises and I hope they will put up a creditable performance.

NAVAL AIR SIGNAL SCHOOL

The classroom windows are once more flung wide open, and not even the roar of aircraft engines can entirely remove that "post-lunch" drowsiness, when the mere thought of "Channel B" becomes abhorrent.

There are far more interesting things to do—the cricket table in fine condition, the beach only a stone's throw away, and, if tennis should prove too

exhausting, the static water tank is an excellent revolver. . . . Summer at Seafield again!

The horticultural activities of the School reached their peak in April and May. The prospects of rain and the merits of wood ash as an aid to bigger and better tomatoes became the number one topic for conversation throughout the Establishment.

Our instructional commitments have been heavy this term; they include No. 9 Aircrewmen's Course, No. 2 "F" Officers' Course—pilots qualifying to undertake jobs in the "back seat" of Naval Aircraft—a number of refresher courses, some consisting of ratings rejoining from civil life, and destined, after conversion, to aircrewman for the Royal Australian Navy, and the first Commissioned Observers' Qualifying Course.

The Signal School has added its quota to our summer programme; we have had No. 2 Commissioned Communication Officers' (C) and, a new departure, the first Wireless Instructors' Course to visit the School arrived in May to study air communications, and to glimpse the Meon Valley from the windows of an Anson. At regular intervals our D/F huts have been roused from their silence by the arrival of the Wrens for their fourteen days' introduction to their duties at naval air stations. At the time of writing, No. 11 Course has just left us.

We are now trying our luck in the Inter-Part Cricket League and have high hopes of winning the trophy. In view of the large number of classes at present in the School, baseball has been tried as an alternative to cricket, but from the results of these trials it would appear that the Englishman is still loyal to the willow.

For the purposes of the *Durdulus* Athletic Meeting this summer, Air Signal School has been merged with the squadrons, so that our individuality is merged into a group effort towards the Commodore's Cup.

Inevitably we have had our staff changes: Lt. Coates, Commanding Officer of 783 Squadron, departed for St. Merryn late in May, to be relieved by Lt. Parsons from Boscombe Down. July will see Mr. Wallington, S.C.A.O.(O.), and Mr. Curtis, C.A.O.(O.), pupils instead of staff in No. 10 Aircrewman Conversion Course commencing in that month.

The Instructors' Room will miss Aircrewmen Ward, Manchett and McColl, and the figure so familiar to the Wrens in the ground station, Aircrewman Bartle, is about to leave. We welcome Aircrewman Sims, Nichols and Roberts as reliefs.

Our social life, now that the light nights are with us, is confined to outdoor sports, with a fiesta in the Mess after battle. One wholly indoor function this term has been the Chief and P.O.s' Mess dance, which provided the Establishment with a most enjoyable evening. Many faces, once familiar in *Mercury*, were recognised during the evening. Although now the mainstays of the Air Traffic Control world, a Signal School function never fails to draw several

"Chief Yeomen at heart." Can we detect a trace of nostalgia?

Rumours and counter-rumours continue to circulate as to whether the Naval Air Signal School is to remain as such or to become the "Observers' School." Whatever the final decision may be, we still expect to have many Communicators visiting Seafield Park to study the air aspect of Naval Communications.

R.N.S.S., COOKHAM CAMP

Since the last issue, Cookham has assumed its "new look." The flower beds have blossomed forth, the trees have burst into leaf, and from a wintry scene of gnarled, bare trees, the seasonal change has transformed our home into a hybrid of Kew Gardens and a National Park which has been taken over by squatters. This impression is assisted by the main road running through the camp, with its trim, twisting pathways branching off, birds singing and the gay tune of the "Teddy Bears' Picnic" floating through the trees in the vicinity of No. 1 mast, where the "Buntings" practise their semaphore to rhythm.

We are now definitely committed to the training of all the 1949 National Service entry, and 130 of these have already arrived, leaving a further 250 to be expected during the remainder of the year. There has been considerable controversy in higher places on the subject whether it is practicable and economical to accommodate 600 trainees in Cookham, and present indications are that we may move to a certain establishment near the sea at present inhabited by those who, in our eyes, appear to be the "idle rich," and whose accommodation and instructional facilities are, as compared to Cookham, like a Rolls-Royce compared to a very overloaded Austin Seven.

During May, Captain J. H. F. Crombie, D.S.O., R.N., visited us, and we were gratified to receive a signal from him stating that he was "very satisfied to see that the good order and enthusiastic spirit of your Establishment continue in spite of difficulties." Captain Crombie also paid a visit to the aforementioned place by the sea.

In fact, we seem to have entered into a period of transition: officers are appointed, then later move on, classes commence training, qualify and leave, and to such events we have become accustomed; but to lose all our W.R.N.S. fills us with dismay, and we bewail their departure from "F" Area. Instruction proceeds satisfactorily, the number of N.S. classes under training steadily increasing; and one of the three platoons, representing Cookham at the King's Birthday Parade, will be made up entirely of N.S. men.

About to commence is an inter-divisional competition which will run for four weeks. A scoreboard will display the results and marks will be awarded under five sections: instruction, parade ground (drill, appearance), huts and areas (general cleanliness), defaulters (division will forfeit marks) and sport (it

is intended to hold inter-divisional cricket matches, the champions receiving a number of points).

Following a reputable football season, the cricket team is quite strong and has been very successful so far, although the ground is in a very poor condition. We have several star performers, among them O./Tel. Potts and O./Sig. Spence, who have produced some good bowling figures. The batting of O./Sig. Clayton has been outstanding and Yeo. Harris must be commended for his all-round ability. Our fielding has not always achieved a good standard, but we are improving in this direction. A little space must surely be spared for comment on the remarkable cricketing prowess of our C.O., who, whenever he bowls, has fieldsmen strategically posted a few yards inside the boundary. During his first over of left-arm slow stuff this proved to be a sensible precaution. In all fairness, however, it must be added that when the C.O. is battling the opponents need fieldsmen stationed outside the boundary. Every evening during the "dogs" the practice nets are kept busy by keen cricketers.

Also popular with our bronzed athletes are running, sprinting and jumping; and, judging from the training that takes place, we are expecting an eventful Sports Day.

The C.A.D.S. (Cookham Amateur Dramatic Society) gave a most realistic (?) performance of "Saloon Bar," but at the moment are rather static owing to many of the members going on draft, in particular the producer, 2/O. Smith, W.R.N.S. The departure of all W.R.N.S. personnel has also considerably cramped our style. Perhaps the "Queen Mother" would like to help in this respect by sending us their overflow of W.R.N.S. communications for training? After reading *Mercury's* last paragraph under "Entertainments" in the last issue, we feel it only fair to Yeo. Kitchen (baritone) and O./Tels. Crossley and Peacock (piano duet) to record their success in reaching first and second places respectively in the finals of the local Carol Lewis show.

Our Navy Day's section was again a notable success, so much so, that we ran out of the special postcards for "sending messages by radio." We felt quite bucked when we had a reply postcard marked "Washing Days, Hong Kong," in eleven days from our old friend "C2," alias "C Cure," alias Lt. (C) A. M. Ralph, and trust that his chopstick lessons at Cookham are serving him in good stead. "See and hear your own voice" was kept working from beginning to the end.

"COOKHAM FRY."

R.N.S.S., DEVONPORT

It would be invidious to portray life in Vicarage Road Camp, without first sparing a thought for our compatriots who quite recently withstood the murderous fire of the Communist guns in the "Yangtze incident." Their heroism and devotion to duty under such extenuating circumstances perpetuate the many gilt-edged annals of the Service, but in our

praise for one and all let us sympathise with the dependants and relatives of those who made the supreme sacrifice and wish those of our comrades who suffered injury in such a sudden manner a speedy return to health. In passing, I'm sure all communication ratings—whether Portsmouth, Devonport or Chatham—will join with us in extending a hearty congratulation to Tel. Jack French on his well-earned decoration, Well done, Sparks!

Here in the peaceful outposts of St. Budeaux, overlooking the "Brunel masterpiece"—Royal Albert Bridge—and ever-mindful of the prevalence of "curry," the smell of which continuously wafts towards us from the Pakistan section of the camp, we live under widely varying conditions to those imposed upon our "oppos." elsewhere, but to obviate the pangs of jealousy which would only serve to add distasteful anecdotes to the matelot's jargon regarding "those loafing land-lubbers" and "Vic. Road stanchions," I think it best to skip the rest and waltz around in general.

For many months the camp was the resting-place of the many Portuguese ratings who arrived in this country preparatory to taking over the frigates *Avon* and *Ave*. With their strange badges of distinction—three or four rings plus a departmental badge on the shoulders—the Portuguese Sergeants (Petty Officers) caused many a rating to assume that "brass-hats" were being distributed *ad lib*. On making their acquaintance, however, the Sergeants were by no means as strange as their uniforms, and many good friends were made, especially in the P.O.'s Mess, in spite of the early language difficulties.

With the advent of "willow and leather" on the village greens and on the county grounds of rural England, the cricketing enthusiasm of many ratings in the camp was very much to the fore. A team was eventually selected—which has since suffered many changes as a result of the Drafting Commander's requirements—and at the time of going to press they have given quite a good account of themselves in the Inter-Divisional League. Present position in the league is top with 100 per cent. record, having played and won all five matches. A creditable performance was the fine win over the R.N.B. Writers, when the latter—thanks to a fine spell of bowling by Sig. Mayne, who took 7 wickets for 15 runs in 8 overs—were beaten by 5 wickets. Rest assured that we shall be as active as weather conditions will permit, and every endeavour will be made to maintain our present position in the league.

Mr. Pattison—until recently W.I.—has left us to take up an appointment in the *Glory*. With his departure we wish him "God-speed and *bon voyage*"; to his successor, Mr. Annis, we extend a cordial handshake and trust that the environment of the camp will suffice to make his stay a happy one.

Were you to come to Vic. Road Camp for a look round you would immediately assume that Mr. Middleton's successor had been appointed to the camp as resident gardener, for the early signs of

vegetable life are ample proof that the smell of the soil has dug its way deep into the heart of the affections of the enthusiasts who have whole-heartedly joined the "Grow more Food" campaign.

Efforts have been, and still are being, made to add lustre to the camp. Rockeries, flower beds and lawns are, under the watchful eye of the C.B.M. and with the aid of his working party, nearing completion. Disaster often comes to the enthusiast, though, and the would-be gardener bites the dust as yet another effort of his is treated with the contempt it so richly deserves. For example, one soil-begrimed friend of ours was known to have sown his nasturtium seeds at a depth of about six inches, and then, after an officer had made inquiries about them, scratched and scraped amongst the sandy loam—all same hen fashion—to recover the seeds (and some of his lost glory) and resow them at the correct depth. Matelot's

yarn, you say? Well! I don't know, but this same rating, when asked for his number by the female shop assistant in the Co-op, at St. Budeaux, gave her his J/x number. I refuse to vouch for the authenticity of this tale, but it has been said that on one occasion our gardening friend was told to "swing" the transmission of a message, whereupon he immediately set to work and transmitted it at a much faster rate.

In conclusion, whether it be the sailor on the Yangtse, the man with bat and ball, the amateur gardener or the sower of nasturtium seeds—heaven help him!—we send in all sincerity a wish that everything you hope for may come true, and we trust that this little article may be our bond of friendship in the days to come, whether you are at home or overseas, so until the next issue of *THE COMMUNICATOR*, "au revoir" and smooth sailing.

T. E. K.

JACK'S THE BOY.



SIGNALLING BY FLAGS

This article is intended not for the "users" of flags but for the other people who may be a little attracted by this colourful system of communication.

Bunting being semi-transparent admits light and it is by this characteristic of bunting that we are able to distinguish colours at a great distance. If colours are painted on, say, canvas, then because canvas does not admit the passage of light, the colours, except at short distances, would mix one with the other and be indistinguishable. Half-tones of colour are not distinguishable at a distance. The colours used in flags are thus mainly limited to the primary colours.

To produce a code of about forty different flags with a limited number of different colours means that flags would have to differ in shape or pattern and some flags to be composed of two or more colours.

In shape flags may be rectangular, triangular or have a swallow tail known as a burgee. Pendant shape is much greater in length than breadth.

In pattern, flags or pendants are halved either vertically, horizontally or diagonally or quartered or divided by other divisions into portions.

In colour, adjacent portions or divisions of flags and pendants are different. In most flags and pendants the darker colour is in the fly, or end, of the flag or pendant.

Many people are puzzled by the ease with which a skilled signaller is rapidly able to read a hoist of flags even though parts of the flags are obscured. This skill is due not so much to the possession of eagle-like eyes as to the combination of known facts about flags, with average eyesight.

The good signaller knows well the pattern of all flags. Further, he knows well which colour is in each portion of every flag. Thus if a flag is not fully exposed, the signaller, by recognising one portion of that flag, knows that the design and colour of that portion are peculiar to one flag.

To signal efficiently by flags we are concerned with the amount of wind or the wind resulting from a ship's speed. We are also concerned with the number of ships that may be spread over an area who are required to read a signal displayed in one particular ship.

During the days of sail, if there was no wind the flags could not be read; also there would be insufficient wind to fill the sails and the ships would be practically at rest. Under these conditions it was the custom to send an officer in a boat to inquire the meaning of the flag signal. Today this may seem ridiculous, but we must remember that ships under sail becalmed were unable to close each other. The enemy may have been in sight, but action could not be joined until the wind freshened. Further, the time factor as regards interpreting the flag signal was not of great importance, the ships being immobile.

About 1840, ships driven by sail and steam were joining the Fleet. Fleets often consisted of some ships under sail alone and some under sail and steam. This introduction of steam had a great effect on flag

signalling.

It was now found that with a light following wind the speed of the steam ship neutralised the wind and the flags were never clear. The problem now was a flag signal not clear and the ships not immobile. The sending of a boat could no longer provide the answer. The time factor in interpreting a flag signal now became vitally important. A few minutes in time to a steamship became a mile in distance.

About 1848, Capt. Francis Liardet, R.N., gave much thought to this problem. He tendered a letter to the Admiralty headed "Signals, Calm," suggesting this solution: "Bunting corresponding to flags to be spread on wire hoops. A ball is to consist of two like hoops crossing each other in the centre at right angles. This will always give a ready spread of bunting that can be seen from every direction."

The experimental squadron of that time exercised using "Signals Calm" and reports were generally favourable.

The idea was not accepted. To the present-day signallers the main objection to Capt. Liardet's proposal would be the handling and stowing of these shapes. A flag when not in use is stowed in a pigeon-hole in the same manner as one's handkerchief in a pocket. A signaller surrounded by his "Signals Calm" shapes brings to mind the picture advertising a patent foam-producing soap powder.

The problems of little wind and many ships were overcome by the introduction of "Special Repeating Ships." These ships were light, fast vessels placed in such positions that ships-of-the-line would readily see any flag signals that they repeated from the Admiral's ship. If wind was lacking to clear the flags these ships, being fast, could at high speed steam up and down the line, the ship's speed creating sufficient wind to blow clear the flags.

The long battle lines of the Grand Fleet in the First World War called for many such special repeating ships. Freedom of movement was also given for ships to haul out of the line to enable the Admiral to have a clear view of an important flag signal that they had flying.

After the First World War great developments were made in flashing lights bright enough to be read at some distance in daylight. Today, by flashing the equivalent of a flag signal on a daylight signalling lantern the signal may be quickly passed in all directions throughout the Fleet.

To many the thought may now occur: "Why keep flags when there are voice wireless and daylight flashing?"

The stating of "the case for flags" would be too long for this issue of THE COMMUNICATOR. Sufficient now to remind ourselves that by flags when an Admiral's signal is received by the "Answer" close up, all captains not only understand his order but are prepared to carry that order into execution. This important assurance is not so readily obtained by the other systems of signalling and is an important factor when manœuvring at speed.

"FLAGON."

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of THE COMMUNICATOR
H.M.A.S. *Arunta*

DEAR SIR,

Your only comment on the photograph appearing in the latest number of THE COMMUNICATOR, apart from the facts of the incident, was to the effect that a heavy topweight of bunting for a destroyer was being flown. Is the position of the flags, during the salute especially, correct etiquette? The salute was evidently intended to be paid to Tonga as confirmed by the text above the photograph; but owing to the High Commissioner's flag being at the masthead it was by ordinary convention being paid to him by mistake.

I submit:

- (1) An Admiral's flag at a yardarm looks extremely out of place, is bad procedure and should not have been displaced at the masthead by the flag of the High Commissioner. It would have been correct to fly them side by side.
- (2) The Tonga national flag should have been at the masthead during the salute, with the High Commissioner's flag temporarily hauled down if necessary, but not that of the Admiral.

Yours faithfully,
A. PEACOCK.

[Mr. Peacock is right, of course, and according to the letter of the law the High Commissioner's flag should have been hoisted at the masthead alongside that of F.O.C.A.F. Similarly the Tongan national flag should have been broken at the masthead for the national salute. Shortage of masthead halliards and the congestion of three flags at the same position, no doubt prompted H.M.A.S. *Arunta* to take the action she did. A better solution (short of having all three together) might have been: masthead, Tongan national flag; starboard yardarm, High Commissioner, Western Pacific's flag; port yardarm F.O.C.S.F.'s flag.]

W.T. Staff,
H.M.S. *Alacrity*,
c/o G.P.O., London.
Wednesday, 4th May, 1949.

Dear Sir,

Appended is a copy of a signal passed by the Malayan native operator at Nenasik to the Police Sergeant in charge of Malayan East coast W.T. stations. We thought it might give COMMUNICATOR readers an idea of what to expect when their draft chit comes along for the Far Eastern Fleet.

Yours faithfully,
I./Tel. HAMLET.

P.S.—Fortunately the sandflies do not come to sea with us.

"Plenty of sandflies and mosquitoes here during the operating time. I could hardly operate. The sandflies especially, they get into the nose, eyes; please send a flit spray gun within a day."

To the Editor of THE COMMUNICATOR

SIR,

I am not endowed with the erudition and discursive ability of your former correspondent, my old friend the Leydene Horse, who I trust is enjoying in retirement the rewards which his merits deserve. It is not, therefore, my custom to seek publicity; on the contrary, I am of a shy and reserved disposition.

Judge my distress by the fact that I am impelled thus to state my views!

There has in the past been little friction between the Royal Navy and the Leydene branch of my family (who, incidentally, are by far the older inhabitants of this district). I may, indeed, claim that relations have been entirely amicable. We, for our part, have been most considerate, and have confined our activities to works of benevolence, such as keeping down the rabbit pests who commit frequent depredations in your lovely gardens; while the conduct of the naval personnel of Leydene House towards us has been beyond reproach.

I am compelled to regard as entirely unprovoked, and, indeed, unfriendly, if not hostile, the sudden change of attitude which allowed the grounds of Leydene House to be used as the venue of a meet of the Hambledon Hounds—the hereditary enemies of my family—at the end of March last. It is needless to dilate upon the personal inconvenience to which I was put; the most shocking aspect of the whole affair was, to me, the overwhelming friendliness shown towards the hunt, even by the Wrens, whom I had always considered my friends.

I trust, sir, that such an incident will not occur again.

Yours faithfully,
RUFUS REYNARD (FOX).



Hambledon Hounds at Leydene

GOING THE ROUNDS IN "MERCURY"

CHIEFS' CHATTER

The past few weeks have witnessed several notable improvements in the amenities of the Mess. The interior has been entirely redecorated and many new items of furniture are now on the Presidential "slop chit."

The visitor to the lounge will notice a number of easy chairs. These are really first class and so comfortable that even the Procedure specialists, taking their annual post-tot session stand-off, have only to give these "situpons" a cursory glance for *rigor mortis* to set in right away.

Closer inspection by the guest, coupled with good eyesight, will reveal a few square inches of Axminster carpet. Some hard-bitten R.A. member has had the effrontery to suggest that it is not Axminster, and that its only claim to inclusion in that illustrious family is the fact that one has to beat it. However, as yet, the carpet has not "beat it" and, in fact, it looks quite nice in front of the new brick fireplace—if a little lonely.

Straining his eyes, and peering beyond the billiards table, a couple of bar settees will be disclosed. These were "sited" close to the billiards table, only after a long secret session by the Mess Committee. It appears that the decision was made after the Secretary had pointed out that the lunch-time snooker Critics' Union could, after a particularly fortunate "snooker" had been laid, remark on the player's relationship with a tomato, in a certain degree of comfort.

Turning our eyes to the bar (and what better thing to turn them to?), we are informed by the President that the serving hatch is to be extended to the full length of the pub. This, of course, is a good thing, as it will simplify the dispensation of liquor, particularly in the forthcoming stampede when everyone will be consuming 150 pints of prize-money.

Consequent upon, and in anticipation of, the enlargement of the tavern, the President has had to move his "caboose." As he quite rightly pointed out, it is not in keeping with the dignity of his high office to have a barrel of bitter stowed underneath the Presidential four-poster, nor is it good for the head man's sleep to be shaken by one of his bucolic barmen, who, as the President is dreaming of what presidents do, would be rudely awakened by a rasping voice saying: "Just a minute, Pres., while I tap the barrel."

And so his new office has come into being; an excellent site has been chosen on the end of the Mess nearest the coal pound. Here, as the afternoon sun streaks in through the stained-glass windows, he has a magnificent view of the passing and ever-changing scene. To his left stretches out the wide expanse of the Broadwalk, in the centre the towering height of the coal pound (in summer) and, to his right, the Ministry of Information.

On the catering side a much-felt want has been

satisfied by the widening of the servery to double its previous size. The little "alcove" has, of course, been swallowed up by this scheme. Many members will remember the difficulty of negotiating the "alcove" with a plate of soup in one hand and a long week-end chit in the other.

Numbers in the Mess have somewhat reduced of late, owing to divers reasons. The transfer of "L." Branch training to *Collingwood* has seen the departure, among others, of George Pay. "Pensionitis" has claimed C.Y.S. "Sly" Fox, C.P.O. Tel. Yates and, shortly, C.R.E. Hamblin. Draft notes have expunged quite a few from the *rum list*. However, as one door opens another one closes, and we welcome a few old members back to the fold.

Among these we find C.P.O. Tel. "Spice" Healing, who came straight in one door and out of the other to Malta, although some members thought he had gone to Blackpool for the Conference. C.P.O. Tel. Hodges ("The Count") has just returned from his ambassadorial appointment in Greece, but here again, it was a case of "Hello" and "Goodbye," for he has now departed, complete with retinue, to Cookham. Also present we number the one and only "Mungy" Parsons, who has just returned with Malta (sorry, "from").

Sports Day has come and gone once again and this year our team has been under the capable direction of C.Y.S. Fletcher. There is an acute shortage of athletic talent in the Mess at the moment, Father Time having taken his toll. This is obvious to the casual observer, not only by the slight greying at the temples but also by the general trend of conversation regarding the "5th-five." However, to return to Sports Day. We didn't fare at all well, although the President performed his annual feat of "putting the weight," being all the more remarkable as for the remainder of the year he is busy "taking the weight." Our only other success was in the Tug-of-War. Here we had a very "strenuous" time. The first round saw us drawn against the "Miscellaneous," and we spent many anxious moments wondering if they would raise a team. We passed into the next round worn out with mental anguish, and eventually to the final. As you are all well aware, the pull is not on the "level," and the winning of the toss carries most of the weight. C.R.E. Hart (fortunately for him) won the toss and so we became tug-of-war champs. For the year, having the best out of three with the Petty Officers. The only other prizes to go to the Mess were Robert Hancock (children under 8) and Bruce Sharpe (their apparent to the Jaunty's Jewels) in the 8 to 14 class. As was to be expected the cry of "Racket!" and "Swindle" greeted the recipients. Everyone had a grand day, but as the Chief's team left the sports ground one reflected that there are some things the Chiefs are too old for.

Anyway, we are not too old to wish you all the very best wherever you may be and express the fond hope

that it will not be long before you are doing the "joining routine."

RIFLE AND REVOLVER SHOOTING

In this the first year in which such titles as "H.M. Signal School," "Leydene House," etc., have been superseded by "*Mercury*," it is good to know that that grand name has been recorded in circles more used to hearing "*Excellent*."

Which leads us to the happy circumstances in which we returned from the Portsmouth Command Rifle and Revolved Meeting, held at Tipner Range in early May.

Practice and organising of teams was left to a rather late date, owing to weather and various other inconveniences, but as soon as Easter had passed a small band of enthusiasts got going under the watchful eye of our new resident G.I., C.P.O. Sellick, and peace was disturbed by the sounds emanating from our 36-yard range in the valley.

Amongst our numbers were names already well known in this sphere, including that half-pint marvel Ldg. Wren Jane Stafford, M.A.A. Sharpe, Lt. Kelly from Haslemere, etc.

We were most fortunate, at the last moment, when O./Tel. Pidgeon came down from *Vengeance*, and though he represented her in the individual events we were glad to be able to include him in *Mercury* "A" in the team events.

This year's meeting was divided in two parts, Part I for the under 22's being held on Monday and Tuesday, and Part II for all-comers for the remainder of the week.

Pidgeon started off well in Part I by tying for first place in the aggregate score, but was finally awarded second place under the Bisley rules for "counting out."

Then on to Part II, where the following successes were scored:

Event 5.—O./Tel. Pidgeon, 1st; L./Wren Stafford, 2nd.

Event 8.—O./Tel. Pidgeon, 2nd.

Aggregate of Events 5 and 8.—O./Tel. Pidgeon, 2nd (having again tied for first place and been "counted out").

In the team events our single team entered for the Officers' Rifle Tiles was knocked out by sheer weight of numbers—*Whaley* alone having sent teams "A" to "V," by mustering every available gunnery officer.

In the Open Rifle Tile Team event, however, it was a different story. We were just able to make up three teams of four from the twelve of us attending, and all got off to a flying start. This competition was on the knock-out principle, the best team of the four in each heat going on to the next round.

By the time the quarter-finals were reached "C" team had been knocked out and "A" and "B" teams, still breathless from the number of times they had run that awfully long 100 yards before firing each time, found that they were both to fire in the same heat, the winner to go on to the semi-finals.

This was a pity—it would have been so much nicer if "A" and "B" had not met up with each other until the final.

However, "A" team won the quarter-final and lustily retreated to the starting-point to regain their wind before dashing off again in the semi-final (which, need we say, they also won).

And so to the final round. This was the last rifle event of the meeting and enthusiasm was growing apace as the fate of the last "Pot" hung in the balance. We were agreeably surprised to hear how many supporters we had—the cries for *Mercury* (with plenty of "Come on Jane's") were far in excess of what our defeated "B" and "C" teams could put forth unaided.

That final run-down and the precision with which each of the tiles fell were something we shall not forget in a hurry, nor the cheer that went up to announce *Mercury's* victory over the other fifty-nine competing teams. It is interesting to note that their time for the last run, from time of commencing the 100 yards until the tenth tile fell, was 29.2-5 sec., which, we are reliably informed, is only 3-5th sec. more than the best time ever put up for this event at Tipner. Congratulations to Ldg. Wren Stafford (team captain), Lt. Kelly (Haslemere), O./Tel. Pidgeon and P.O. Tel. Illsley (R.N.Z.N.).

In the Revolver events we were not so strongly represented, practice having been neglected in favour of rifles, but our team, consisting of C.P.O. Sellick, C.Y.S. Kellaway and Mr. Bloodworth, C.C.O., decided to "have a go."

Individual results were not outstanding, but great fun was had in the Revolver Tile event, where after another bout of running we managed to reach the semi-final, in which we met defeat at the hands of *Warrior's* crack team, who then went on to win.



The "Mercury" contingent at Tipner



"Mercury" "A" Rifle Team

This semi-final produced a great thrill, for when the whistle blew after thirty seconds it appeared that both teams had destroyed the same number of tiles. However, on inspection, it was found that *Warrior's* had just nicked one more of theirs, and so we retired, feeling not unsatisfied and remembering that thirty teams had started, of which ten or eleven were from *Whaley*.

So a very pleasant week ended with *Mercury* in possession of the Goldsmiths and Silversmiths Cup for Rifle Tiles, five medals for first places and four medals for second places.

All those who knew Jane will join with us in wishing her the best of good luck in "Chivy Street," to which she has now departed—in fact, she should have gone before the meeting, but elected to spend some of her demob. leave still dressed in bell-bottoms so that she could shoot with us.

Especially deserving of a big "chuck up" is O. Tel. Pidgeon, who did so very well. He is now, fittingly enough, on his way to bigger and better things at Bisley, having been selected for the Port 24. We hope to hear more of him in the near future.

And now from .303 to .22. Our range is well patronised at lunch time and in the "dogs," and the levy of 1d. per shoot just supplies enough cash for monthly silver prizes. But there is much to be done if we are to bring the name of *Mercury* into rifle league shooting, and to keep our marksmen in practice for next year's Command Meeting.

Immediate steps are to reduce our range (at present of some 36 yards in length) to the standard 25 yards, and to obtain the minimum of two rifles suitable for match shooting. Since the latter involves us in considerable expense, we can only hope the cash will be forthcoming.

Our more distant aim is an indoor 25-yard range, so that shooting can continue throughout the winter months, and provide both practice and entertainment. Optimistic though this aim is, we hope that it will be achieved in the not-too-distant future.

G. A. B.

SPORT

The warm weather doesn't seem to have taken away from the soccer players any of their keenness. No organised games have been played, but there has been a fair amount of practice "kicking around" on the broadwalk.

Our soccer ground has been under the care and attention of the First Lieutenant since the football season ended. It is getting expert treatment so that we can expect vastly improved playing conditions in September. We take this opportunity of thanking Number One for the keen interest he has shown in our affairs.

Yeo, Doubleday, apart from his prowess at cricket and tennis, is our expert boxer. It will be remembered that he was our only representative of the noble art at the Command Boxing Championships and did well enough there to be chosen for the Command boxing team. We give him the very best of wishes for his future bouts.

Cricket

The cricket team seems to be settling down after a fairly poor start to the season. We have entered for the Portsmouth Command Knock-out Competition and our first opponent is H.M.S. *Excellent*.

Lt. Murray spent a few weeks with us, but is now with H.M.S. *Dread*. We shall miss him. Instr. Lt. Cox and Tel. Castle have both made fifties and Yeo, Doubleday has had bowling success, capturing 12 wickets for 30 runs in his last two games. We look forward to a successful season.

Water Polo

H.M.S. *Mercury* is entered in Division "B" of the Command Water Polo League. This division consists entirely of outlying establishments who have no training facilities close at hand. An encouraging start has been made to the season, the record to date being: played, 5; won, 4; drawn, 1; goals for, 28; goals against, 1; points, 9.

This unbeaten record has in the main been due to two things. Firstly, we have a very evenly balanced side, with every player having slightly above average ability. Secondly, we are extremely fortunate in possessing adequate reserves, which is particularly important at this stage, when so many ratings are being called upon for the forthcoming exercises.

The following have represented *Mercury* in one or more games this season: C.P.O. Tel. Mitchell, C.R.E. Hancock, Yeo, Tyler and Rumble. P.O. Tel. Godley, L./Tels. Cardwell, Rowbottom and Taylor, L./Sig. Bush, Sig. Ingham and O.S. King.

Details of results up to 14th June:

- v. Portsmouth Flotilla, won 4-0.
- v. R.N.H., Haslar, won 8-0.
- v. *Siskin*, drew 1-1.
- v. *Indomitable*, won 7-0.
- v. *Vernon "B"*, won 8-0.

We have still one or two stiff hurdles to clear, but though we fully realise this fact, the team are

determined to put *Mercury* on the water polo map and prove that, though we are situated well inland, we can still be piscatorially proficient.

Sports Day was warm and sunny; there were ice cream and soft drinks in the refreshment tent and Mr. Watts again won the veterans' race. It was a very pleasant day and the Sports Officer thanks everyone who helped so much to make a success of it.

The winter games will soon be with us. We look forward to reports of crossbars "shaking like a jelly-fish," rugby balls bouncing the wrong way just on the line and hockey balls shaving the point from the outer edge of the upright.

Mercury has entered a team in the Command Inter-Establishment Tennis Knock-out Competition. In the first round we met *Dolphin* and beat them 4-2, which is a pretty good effort when we remember the limited facilities we have in Leydene.

To all teams and all sporting activities in *Mercury* we wish the best of luck for results. We know that the games themselves will be enjoyed.

ENTERTAINMENTS

The end-of-term revue "Close Up!!!" was presented to packed houses in the *Mercury* Theatre on Wednesday and Thursday, 30th and 31st March. The plot, as usual, was thinner than the present-day rasher of bacon, but amusing and hilarious situations were seized upon by Jake Sommerville, who, as Telegraphist Eddy Current, turned in one of his best performances to date. Beryl Nye added a touch of sanity to the proceedings in the part of Wren Violet Ray, her singing being first rate. In the portrayal of Professor Mark Contact (an absent-minded boffin), John Hart had full scope for his well-known ability to characterise. Buck Taylor revelled as Senor Lopez Vaselino (a sinister spy) and kept the house in roars of laughter during his contacts with "The Voice," while in the part of his assistant (Pepita) Margaret Kenyon excelled. Further comedy was provided by Percy Hancock as Signalmen Hal Yarde and Senor Flanelino, a Picador (full of bull fight). John Townsend in the role of the Chaplain (Rev. A. Surplus-Cassock) did everything bar take the collection, and at his "concert" introduced three first-class artists in Tom Liddell (tenor), Digger Shiplee (impressionist) and Dorothy Gardner (vocalist). Other parts were played by Watt Tyler (as R.P.O. B. Caustic), Max Horton (as Mr. Ivor Weedon), Marjorie Clarke and Walter Jarvis. Voted first rate were the chorus (the Leydene ladies) who gave an almost flawless display. Consisting of Wren Tels., their names were Olive Taylor, Pam Elliot, Rita West, Margaret Swan, Deirdre Clinton, Barbara Keefe, Margaret Heard and Beryl White. Denis Holden was at the piano throughout, with Tich Read (drums). Interval music was provided by Peter Thompson and Gordon Richards. Tom Atkins was responsible for the lighting, and sound plus effects were in the capable hands of Ken Hitchen.

The show was written and produced by Percy

Hancock, who had excelled himself by concocting a steady stream of side-splitting and typically topical wisecracks. Great credit is due to the cast and stage hands, who put in many hours of their spare time at rehearsal, and in particular to the chorus, who designed and made their own dresses under the direction of Margaret Kenyon. The infectious high spirits and good humour of Lt. Cdr. Sommerville went a great deal towards producing a hard-working but very happy cast.

In view of the many counter-attractions during the summer months it has been decided to waive the production of a concert for this term. Our efforts are now being directed towards the Christmas pantomime, the title of which has been provisionally fixed as "Aladdin and his Wonderful Amp."

A successful Ship's Company dance in aid of the King George V. Fund for Sailors was held in Petersfield Town Hall on the 17th May. Johnny Lyne's Band from Portsmouth provided excellent music and the 400-odd people seemed to enjoy themselves thoroughly. Well over half this number were residents of Petersfield and many villages in the neighbourhood; thus these charity dances, which are to be held about every three months, have an important secondary function—to enable us in naval circles to get to know the country folk around us.

WARDROOM NOTES

The big improvements in the ante-room are almost completed, much to everyone's relief, as the shuttle to and from the Gunroom is becoming monotonous. A big feature will be the new circular bar designed and executed by the Barrackmaster. A new mantelpiece has been installed to replace the marble one which has been returned at the request of Lady Peel together with the ones from the Library and Commander's office.

Two important guest nights have been held, one to say good-bye to Comm. Lt. E. J. Pearce, M.B.E., with some eloquent oratory in praise and defence of V/S, and the other to dine the Royal Marines. It is pleasing to report that the visitors were defeated in a series of gentle games where their proverbial brawn should have been to their advantage.

The Mess now dines once a week in an attempt to return to the normal pre-war practice. It appears to lead to more trouble than on an ordinary guest night, perhaps because the Mess President is not in the chair.

The Wardroom won the Seven-a-side Hockey Tournament, but was defeated in the Inter-Part Soccer League. The latter was noted for the flow of invective from the captain, the First Lieutenant for his team to run faster, and the breaking of Lt. Buller's nose in collision with an opponent while attempting to head the ball.

While these notes were being written, the Wardroom was victorious in the sports meeting, so we are the proud owners of a shield presented to *Mercury* by the late H.M.S. *Scotia*.

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"MEONMAID"

We got *Meonmaid* to Portsmouth from behind the squash court at Leydene without incident in the last week in April. A number of branches had to be lopped from trees on the Clanfield road and one set of trolley-bus wires in Southsea came perilously close, but all went well and she was hoisted into the water at *Vernon*.

The dry winter had opened her seams and she had to be removed quickly and white lead inserted to stop the jets of water which were coming in between several planks; these soon stopped, however, and she became perfectly sound below. Lying in Haslar Creek at her moorings (which are now of the "yacht pick-up" type forward) she was finally prepared for sea.

The season has started with a series of contrasts in weather, on days we have been out. Either there has been so much wind that we have been weather-bound (not always in Portsmouth and not always in harbour) or there has been no wind at all and the Spithead tides have played havoc with E.T.As.

In the cruising line so far, Beaulieu, Hamble, Newtown, Lymington and Cowes have been visited, while Chichester Harbour has also been made a port of call, it is believed for *Meonmaid's* first time.

Several W.R.N.S. and ratings crews have been away in the dog watches, and we hope that there will be many more while the evenings are long and the weather more kind. Signal officers from outside *Mercury* have also had her away and we welcome as many as are qualified to use her again.

There have been three races only so far: firstly, Lymington-Poole, in which *Meonmaid* featured about half-way down a list of twenty-five. On the return race she did better and crossed the line third to get a time corrected place of fifth out of twenty-five yachts.

The third event was the passage race to Dartmouth for ex-German yachts over Whitsun week-end. Only six yachts started, despite a race card consisting of seventeen entries. It may well be that this was because of weather forecasts, for soon after passing the Needles strong winds increased to gale force. We missed the gale warning, as the wireless was inadvertently put out of action by a bucket of bilge water intended for the sea!

Having crossed the line off Southsea with full sail, including the new Genoa jib setting beautifully, a succession of "strip-tease" acts took place—the discomfort of which is well known to those who have raced in bad weather—until by 0100 we were down to a storm jib the size of a cutter's foresail and no more. Even with this sail we felt over canvassed.

About this time H.M. Submarine *Andrew* closed us to ask if we needed assistance. This gesture was much appreciated, though the effect of her closing caused a 90° deviation to appear in our compass, thus causing rotations of the card and therefore of the yacht which must have looked (and indeed felt) most startling.

We now regretted the route we had taken, which

was rather more inshore than the other yachts, for the effect of Portland and its race, though seven miles off, made itself felt and we encountered some very steep and confused seas.

By dawn there had been no abatement of the seas and Portland Bill was only just past the beam; with fifty miles still to go to Dartmouth, and enthusiasm (to say nothing of bedding and clothing) somewhat damped, the skipper decided to turn for the shelter of Portland. It is always an unpleasant and difficult decision to make to abandon a race, especially when it is possible to go on. Looking back, however, no regrets are felt on this decision, as a depressing start ended in a most enjoyable week-end as a result.

Portland was reached at 1030 and we anchored under the lee of the "Mulberry" harbour. Sleep and food were overdue and welcome to us all.

The return trip was without great incident except perhaps when the skipper was dragged into Portland Harbour by his signet ring which he caught on Flag Officer Training Squadron's barge which had kindly been sent to ask if we needed assistance. His second soaking in twenty-four hours did no harm, as the bath was welcome and would certainly never have happened voluntarily.

The prompt and alert display of V/S (both semaphore and flashing) by H.M.S. *Zest* was noted with pleasure by the V staff in *Meonmaid* when a weather forecast was obtained from her.

Swanage was made the following day under a jib alone at a speed through the water of 6½ knots. The final hop from Newtown to Portsmouth via Cowes, on the other hand, was made with hardly enough breeze to fill the spinnaker.

At the time of writing we are about to hoist *Meonmaid* out for twenty-four hours to clean up the bottom, which is very green, so as to be on top line for the first Monarch Bowl race in a week's time.

The season is yet young.

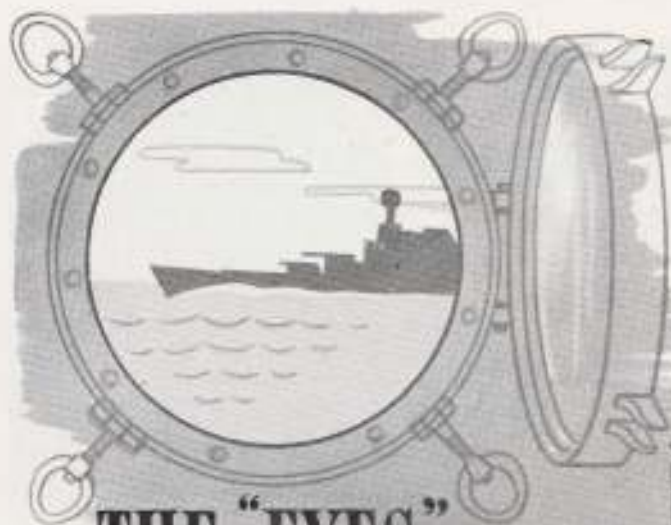
W.R.N.S. NOTES

The Summer sporting activities are not yet at the stage to be able to give any results of matches, but athletics, swimming and cricket are in full swing, and we hope to be able to report in the next issue that we have retained the cups we won last year.

Wrens Gillard and Parnell have already represented the Portsmouth Command in several swimming matches, and P.O. Wren McKaskie at athletic meetings.

L./Wren Stafford and Wren Shepherd were members of the Portsmouth Command rifle team which won the Inter-Command Competition. L./Wren Stafford also shot in the W.R.N.S. Inter-Service Competition and with the *Mercury* team at the Port Rifle Meeting.

Another *Mercury* show was produced at Easter in which several W.R.N.S. took part. These topical shows give much amusement to the cast and audience



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alike and we very much hope they will be continued next winter.

Several Signal Wrens were required to take part in the Navy Day programme in Portsmouth Dockyard over the Easter week-end. They enjoyed this experience and found that after a little persuasion the members of the public were willing to discard their shyness and to send messages to each other on a radio teleprinter circuit between two mobile W/T vans.

We now have quite a flourishing French class which meets every Monday evening and is instructed by Second Officer Colls—the W.R.N.S. Command Education Officer.

We have had a regular spate of marriages between Communication ratings and Wrens serving at *Mercury*. In fact, we sometimes wonder whether this really is the signal school or a marriage agency. However, we send our congratulations to them all and wish them every happiness.

AMATEUR RADIO G3BZU

The Ham radio world of Leydene has little to comment on in this issue. We have managed to acquire a few more enthusiasts and so rescue ourselves from complete stagnation, but the rapid coming and going of would-be Hams, coupled with the fact that whilst here they are usually feverishly working on a course for something or another, renders our numbers lamentably low.

With a new influx of QSL cards we have now cleared off our arrears and, we hope, owe no man. Should any Ham reading this disagree, please forward details and we'll remedy the defect. Talking of QSL cards, we have received a large number of overseas specimens and they provide an interesting study in the different designs and colour schemes. We had quite a few German cards, mainly from the British and U.S. Zones.

Recently the gardener and his staff have cut away the undergrowth from around the shack and revealed the fact that a coat of paint is badly needed to keep the Hams watertight.

The Ham shack at Leydene is a very pleasant place in which to work, with a magnificent view across the valley towards East Meon amid a truly rural atmosphere, and the quiet is broken only by the complaint of some Ham 3,000 miles away that so-and-so is getting in his way. So be careful, gentlemen; when you press your key you may be jamming a nightingale or at worst a Wren.

All the Leydene Hams, past and present, send their best wishes to all other Hams and wish them all the contacts they would wish themselves.

T. M. B.

CIVILIAN COMMENTARY

Once again the Sports Meeting has passed by and a good time was had by all. The Veteran's Race was won by Mr. Watts again, after, it is alleged, a day of

preparation and then a month to recover. It is with regret that we learn that it may be the last time he will compete in this event. (The powers-that-be seem to consider that he will soon have to start from the finishing line and run towards the start to be on the course at all.)

Consequent on the promotion of some members to C.O. grade, there have been changes in the Civilian Staff. We wish the departing members all the best of luck in their new posts: Mr. Jay and Mr. Winter to A.S.R.E., Haslemere; Mr. Cash and Mr. Dyer to *Collingwood*; Mr. Amor to I.P.O., *Mercury*; Mr. Rance to Central Records Office; and Mr. Collett to Upper Office of C.B.O. Mr. Collett's top "set" is expected to be in position any minute now so that there is a possibility of the soup in the canteen getting thicker.

We offer another pat on the back to Mr. Ness. He has lately been elected to the Horndean Council, Petersfield R.D.C., Parish Council Liaison Committee, Highways and Byways Committee, and Horndean Community Centre Committee. It is learned that he may take any of the titles applicable to the occasion. We welcome our new colleagues in the C.B.O., Mr. Fox and Mr. Gardiner, both on completion of their service stretch and both ex-Chief Yeomen. The latter may perhaps be well remembered as the last naval representative in the M.S.O., *Mercury*, prior to it being taken over by civilians. Welcome, and good luck to them both.

On 21st June we were honoured by a visit of Mr. Dawson, Chairman of Haslemere Branch, C.S.C.A., Mr. Fulcher, Vice-Chairman, Haslemere Branch C.S.C.A., and Mr. Munro, Secretary, Portsmouth Branch, C.S.C.A., who is also a member of the Executive Section of the Admiralty Committee. We were very impressed by a very enlightening address on the various aspects of the C.S.C.A. and kindred organisations.

After the address many perplexing queries were answered in a masterly and prompt manner by Mr. Munro, greatly to our satisfaction.

A local Whitley Office Committee is in the stage of formation in the near future. This Committee will greatly assist in smoothing out any differences between official and staff sides.

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See Easter Number page 48

that it will not be long before you are doing the "joining routine."

RIFLE AND REVOLVER SHOOTING

In this the first year in which such titles as "H.M. Signal School," "Leydene House," etc., have been superseded by "*Mercury*," it is good to know that that grand name has been recorded in circles more used to hearing "*Excellent*."

Which leads us to the happy circumstances in which we returned from the Portsmouth Command Rifle and Revolved Meeting, held at Tipner Range in early May.

Practice and organising of teams was left to a rather late date, owing to weather and various other inconveniences, but as soon as Easter had passed a small band of enthusiasts got going under the watchful eye of our new resident G.I., C.P.O. Sellick, and peace was disturbed by the sounds emanating from our 36-yard range in the valley.

Amongst our numbers were names already well known in this sphere, including that half-pint marvel Ldg. Wren Jane Stafford, M.A.A. Sharpe, Lt. Kelly from Haslemere, etc.

We were most fortunate, at the last moment, when O./Tel. Pidgeon came down from *Vengeance*, and though he represented her in the individual events we were glad to be able to include him in *Mercury* "A" in the team events.

This year's meeting was divided in two parts, Part I for the under 22's being held on Monday and Tuesday, and Part II for all-comers for the remainder of the week.

Pidgeon started off well in Part I by tying for first place in the aggregate score, but was finally awarded second place under the Bisley rules for "counting out."

Then on to Part II, where the following successes were scored:

Event 5.—O./Tel. Pidgeon, 1st; L./Wren Stafford, 2nd.

Event 8.—O./Tel. Pidgeon, 2nd.

Aggregate of Events 5 and 8.—O./Tel. Pidgeon, 2nd (having again tied for first place and been "counted out").

In the team events our single team entered for the Officers' Rifle Tiles was knocked out by sheer weight of numbers—*Whaley* alone having sent teams "A" to "V," by mustering every available gunnery officer.

In the Open Rifle Tile Team event, however, it was a different story. We were just able to make up three teams of four from the twelve of us attending, and all got off to a flying start. This competition was on the knock-out principle, the best team of the four in each heat going on to the next round.

By the time the quarter-finals were reached "C" team had been knocked out and "A" and "B" teams, still breathless from the number of times they had run that awfully long 100 yards before firing each time, found that they were both to fire in the same heat, the winner to go on to the semi-finals.

This was a pity—it would have been so much nicer if "A" and "B" had not met up with each other until the final.

However, "A" team won the quarter-final and hastily retreated to the starting-point to regain their wind before dashing off again in the semi-final (which, need we say, they also won).

And so to the final round. This was the last rifle event of the meeting and enthusiasm was growing apace as the fate of the last "Pot" hung in the balance. We were agreeably surprised to hear how many supporters we had—the cries for *Mercury* (with plenty of "Come on June's") were far in excess of what our defeated "B" and "C" teams could put forth unaided.

That final run-down and the precision with which each of the tiles fell were something we shall not forget in a hurry, nor the cheer that went up to announce *Mercury's* victory over the other fifty-nine competing teams. It is interesting to note that their time for the last run, from time of commencing the 100 yards until the tenth tile fell, was 29.2.5 sec., which, we are reliably informed, is only 3.5th sec. more than the best time ever put up for this event at Tipner. Congratulations to Ldg. Wren Stafford (team captain), Lt. Kelly (Haslemere), O./Tel. Pidgeon and P.O. Tel. Illsley (R.N.Z.N.).

In the Revolver events we were not so strongly represented, practice having been neglected in favour of rifles, but our team, consisting of C.P.O. Sellick, C.Y.S. Kellaway and Mr. Bloodworth, C.C.O., decided to "have a go."

Individual results were not outstanding, but great fun was had in the Revolver Tile event, where after another bout of running we managed to reach the semi-final, in which we met defeat at the hands of *Warrior's* crack team, who then went on to win.

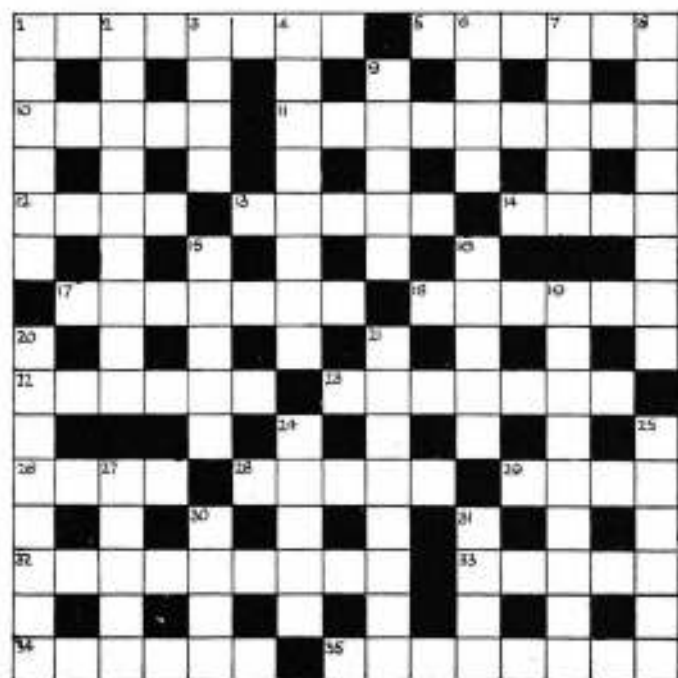


The "Mercury" contingent at Tipner

COMMUNICATIONS CROSSWORD

(See page 60 for Solution)

Across—1, Make and mend signal for Desmond? (8). 5, Small with outside inside (6). 10, Dancing time (5). 11, The right subject to learn for advancement? (9). 12, I am after the letter (4). 13, All the world is this according to Hamlet (5). 14, Head armour for the navigator (4). 17, Men in these used to be in quadruplicate (7). 18, Tell again in business (6). 22, Not the kind of match used by the gunner (6). 23, Chaps in a vegetable? (7). 26, Stony res. raint (4). 28, Hot way to find favour (5). 29, 31, front and back for a deck (4). 32, I spy chits and the man who signs them is at Haslemere (9). 33, Haughty lions (5). 34, Albert in cover is not without ability, 35, They convey message handling instructions (8).



Down—1, Tell off a small part (6). 2, Spare home for signalling (9). 3, Its importance is out of proportion to its size (4). 4, Matthews in what he has won have much drawing power on the foc's'le (8). 6, Ships are inclined to do this (4). 7, Accustom (5). 8, Signal introduction goes before a walk (8). 9, No sea for the bad sailor (5). 15, Unpleasant way to treat meat? (5). 16, Cwt. negative avoirdupois (5). 19, Chin organ reducing movement (9). 20, Olivia's home in the Zoological Gardens (5, 3). 21, When mixed up he is a poor rate (8). 24, This Italian city contains a more ancient one (5). 25, They are not in knots ashore (6). 27, This sail is above the top gallant (5). 30, 35, without the professionals (4). 31, Work includes you and me (4).

DEFEAT BY CYPHER

Was Napoleon defeated by a cryptographic error? Perhaps the real answer will never be known, but there is evidence to show that the rout of the French army at Leipzig was due to a mistake in a cypher.

For some weeks before the Battle of the Nations, Napoleon had been fighting a masterly retreat with about one-third of his army. He had fallen back upon Leipzig and he hoped to delay the combined German, Austrian and Russian forces until more troops could join him.

The French had taken up defensive positions in a half-circle, about ten miles in radius, around the town. There was a river behind them which protected their flanks, as there were no bridges, except for the one in the centre of their disposition.

Heavily outnumbered, the French appeared doomed to defeat and the combined armies hurled themselves forward with courage and determination, but the military genius of the Emperor was at first triumphant.

Attack after attack was driven off with fearful losses. The magnificently handled artillery drove them back and the irresistible charges of the heavy cavalry, under the dashing King of Naples, swept all before them and might indeed have broken the Allied front if it had not been for the furious counter-attacks of the Russian Cossacks.

The French were hard pressed on all sides and particularly on the right flank, where Marshal Poniatowsky was desperately trying to hold his position on the river. Poniatowsky was driven out of a village that he was holding by overwhelming numbers, but the timely arrival of Marshal Augereau, a tireless and foul-mouthed veteran of many campaigns, restored the situation.

After the first day of the battle the result was a draw and both sides retired to their camp fires for the night. The French artillery, which had formed such a valuable keystone in the defence of the town, was running short of ammunition and Napoleon realised



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that he must eventually retreat across the river towards one of his supply bases in the rear. He accordingly wrote an order to his Chief of Staff, Marshal Berthier, telling him to arrange for the building of extra bridges over the river. This document is still in existence. After the disaster at the Beresina, during the Moscow retreat, when his shattered army found only one bridge by which to cross, he could not have failed to remember the importance of extra pontoons.

Something went wrong. The order to build the bridges is supposed to have been sent to Marshal Augereau in cypher. When he received this despatch the right flank was already being assailed with redoubled fury by Allied reinforcements, which had arrived during the night. Augereau replied in the same cypher, but in the heat of battle a mistake was made and headquarters were unable to decipher the message. It was presumed to be an acknowledgment, but the Marshal could not spare one man, owing to the fierce attack he was facing. Allied pressure was forcing him steadily back and if he had withdrawn part of his corps the flank would probably have collapsed. The result was that no extra pontoons were built.

As the second day drew to an end the radius of the circle around the town had decreased to about four miles and during the night Napoleon gave the order to retreat. The cavalry crossed at dawn over the one bridge, with the artillery and infantry following. The congestion got worse and worse and, with the Allied assault starting once more, panic set in. Discipline was lost and a French officer, thinking the enemy were getting near, blew up the bridge, leaving half the army on the northern bank of the river. Some tried to swim and many were drowned. Others fought desperately to the end. Demoralised groups surrendered.

Napoleon's army never recovered from this defeat. A defeat through a mistake in a cypher.

W. F. P.

KISS ME QUICK, I'M GOING

Naval man, aged 30, attractive and thrifty, seeks companionship of young lady, 20-25, view to matrimony. Photos welcomed, Box XYZ.—EVENING PAPER.

For years now I have held the view that the Navy is not what it was. Vice-Admiral Sir Theodor Thynnwitz, who writes explosive letters to *The Times* on the subject, holds that the Navy is going to the dogs. Whilst I am no supporter of the Admiral—he manages pretty well with a wheel-chair—I would like to paraphrase his remark into “the dogs are going from the Navy.”

Topsuttles me forejib, but the cissy who inserted that advert. into the paper was no naval man. In the Navy, yes, but not of it. Do you suppose that Sir Theodor caught his wife through a three-line ad. in the *Evening Blues*? Not on your life, sweetheart. The

odds are that Theodor, bless his white whiskers, poked some pantywaist civvy in the eye, seduced his girl, and married her when she caught up with him. He probably had a job wondering which one to pick out of the crowd: Theo was no saint, but, by heavens, he was a sailor.

I am no student of psychology—the correspondence schools take a dim view of those who fail to keep up their payments—but it is transparently clear to a suckling babe why this so-called naval man can't find a girl for himself. A suckling babe of my acquaintance to whom I showed the advert, said: “It is transparently clear why he can't find a girl for himself.” Of course, he laid off sucking for a moment in order to say it.

Look at the advertisement again, shipmates, and you'll see for yourselves the reason why. . . .

“Thrifty.” Well, what are you gaping at? That's the reason. Thrifty. Who ever heard of a thrifty sailor?

Imagine this fellow taking a girl to the pictures. He probably edges behind her just as they reach the paybox, and expects her to pay for the fish and chips when they come out. She'll get the bus tickets as a matter of course, and if she reaches home without losing something she'll be darned lucky.

Photos welcomed, eh? You can't fool us, Box XYZ. We know the sinister purpose behind this seemingly innocent request.

Let us suppose he gets a batch of them by return post.

Contrary to good order and naval discipline, he throws aside the good-looking ones and concentrates on the not-so-fortunate. Picking out the ugliest, he dates her by post. From now on it's plain sailing. They go to the cinema; she pays. Big cuts; she pays. Bus to the park; she pays. Having lured her into the wilds he batters her to a pulp, pinches her handbag, and leaves her body to the vultures. Nobody will bother about a jane with a face like a seaboot, and our agony-column Lothario sneaks back to his ship and pens another advert.

But this is pure speculation. I'll bet a pound to a pinch of grit that he won't get a single reply to his nauseating ad. A recent poll reveals that of three females interested in thrifty sailors, two were mentally retarded and the other hadn't been a girl for twenty-five years, and would have welcomed any sailor, thrifty or otherwise.

Discussing the advertisement with my friend Izzy Cohen, a member of one of the oldest families in Hampshire, I said: “What do you think of this egg?”

A smile crept into Izzy's blue eyes and his blonde curls danced with merriment. “Vy,” he said, “the whole thing must be a yoke.”

No, Box XYZ, we don't like your cringing appeal. Let us go back to the days when men were men and O.D.s. were cooks of the mess. When, on receipt of the news that Jack was ashore, wise men counted their spoons and wise women counted their daughters.

BEN DOVER.

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RECENT PROMOTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

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

Name	Rank	Whence	Whither
E. G. D. ANNIS	S.C.C.O.	Duke of York	Drake
J. ADAMS	A/C.C.O.	President	Newcastle
W. ALDER	Lt. Cdr. (L.)	Mercury	Collingwood
E. B. ASHMORE, D.S.C. ..	Lt. Cdr.	Mercury	President
A. AITKEN	Lt. Cdr.	Ausonia	Duke of York
T. R. BROOKS	S.C.C.O.	Drake II	Ganges
H. V. BRUCE	Lt.	Long (C) Course	Zephyr
Mrs. J. F. BEER	2/O W.R.N.S.	Condor	St. Angelo
R. B. D. BIRCH	Lt.	Vulture	Promoted Lt. Cdr. and re-appointed
G. G. A. F. BUTLER, D.S.C. ..	Lt. Cdr.	Diadem	President (Flag Lieut. to Board of Admiralty)
A. D. BLACK	Lt. R.A.N.	Maidstone	Mercury
A. C. I. BURNHAM	S.C.C.O.	Duke of York	Implacable
H. F. BAYTERSBY	Lt. Cdr.	Highflyer	Placed on Retired List
C. D. BONHAM-CARTER ..	Captain	President (J.S.S.C.)	President (S.O.T.C.)
J. A. BUCHANAN-WOLLASTON ..	Lt.	Pembroke	Promoted Lt. Cdr. and re-appointed
W. A. B. BLAND	Lt.	Mercury	Glasgow
C. B. BROOKE	Cdr.	Saker	Dryad (Radar Course)
C. H. COX	S.C.C.O.	Liverpool	Mercury
G. CHESHIRE	C.C.O.	Pembroke	Promoted A/Comm. Lieut. and appointed President
G. B. CLAXTON	A/S.C.C.O.	Liverpool	Promoted S.C.C.O.
F. A. CULLIFORD	C.C.O. (Air)	Merlin	Vulture
C. G. CHILDS	C.C.O.	Ganges	Mercury
F. R. DORE	S.C.C.O.	Warrior	Dolphin
E. T. L. DUNSTERVILLE ..	Cdr.	Mercury II	President (Staff Course)
A. E. P. DEANE	Lt.	President	Diadem
J. W. DAUBNEY	Lt.	Long (C) Course	Forth
D. C. DOUGLAS	Lt.	Long (C) Course	Maidstone
Miss J. DAVIES, M.B.E. ..	1/O W.R.N.S.	Drake	Promoted to Chief Officer, appointed President
R. G. DREYER	Lt. Cdr.	President	Belfast
H. V. DRURY	Comm. Lieut.	Drake II	Placed on Retired List
R. DANCE	S.C.C.O.	Terror	Cochrane
D. A. K. FINLAY	Lt. Cdr.	Glasgow	President (D.S.D.)
K. C. M. FLEETWOOD ..	Lt. Cdr.	President (J.S.S.C.)	President (D.R.E.)
C. P. D. GRANT, M.B., CH.B. ..	Proby. Ty. Act. Surgn. Lieut.	Victory	Mercury
P. W. W. GRAHAM, D.S.C. ..	Lt. Cdr.	Duke of York	Implacable
E. J. GAYFORD	Lt.	Victory I.	Placed on Retired List
A. H. C. GORDON-LENNOX ..	Cdr.	President	Surprise
C. F. GRAY	C.C.O.	Sussex	Drake II
G. J. HINES	Lt.	Long (C) Course	Battleaxe
R. W. HUGHES	Lt. Cdr.	President	Highflyer



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E. F. HARGOOD	S.C.C.O.	Highflyer	Ganges
M. HODGES, O.B.E. ..	Captain	President	Re-appointed for six months
J. A. J. JOHNSON	A/S.C.C.O.	St. Angelo	Promoted to S.C.C.O.
C. A. JAMES	Lt. Cdr.	Superb	President (J.S.S.C.)
G. KNIGHT	Comm. Lt.	Afrikaner	Placed on Retired List
A. KENNETT	Cdr.	Pembroke	President
J. KANE	Lt.	Zephyr	Sparrow
R. E. KENT	A/S.C.C.O.	Mercury	Promoted S.C.C.O.
H. LIDDLE	S.C.C.O. (Air)	Seahawk	Sea Eagle
A. G. LEWIS	C.C.O.	Newcastle	Liverpool
R. E. LESH, R.A.N. ..	Lt.	Long (C) Course	H.M.A.S. Sydney
A. M. LOVELOCK	C.C.O.	Pembroke	Bluejacket (three years loan service to R.I.N.)
A. D. LENOX-CONYNGHAM	Captain	Victory	President (J.S.C.C.)
F. M. H. MILBURN	Lt.	Triumph	Dolphin
D. V. MORGAN, M.B.E. ..	Lt. Cdr.	Tamar (C)	Superb
R. C. MORGAN	Lt.	Terror	Mercury
J. B. D. MILLER	Lt.	Long (C) Course	Dolphin
A. G. MCCRUM	Lt. Cdr.	Duke of York	Implacable
J. C. NEWING	Lt.	Forth	Promoted Lt. Cdr. and re-appointed
R. A. H. PANTER	Lt.	Philomel II for 2 years loan to R.N.Z.N.	Promoted Lt. Cdr. and re-appointed
R. T. PAUL, O.B.E.	Captain	President	Mull of Galloway and as S.O.R.F. Clyde Area
W. J. PARKER	Cdr.	Mercury	St. Angelo as F.C.O.
J. B. PATERSON, D.S.C. ..	Lt.	Duke of York	Mercury (Temporary)
A. T. G. C. PEACHEY, C.B.E., D.S.O.	Captain	Cochrane	President
D. M. PATCHETT	C.C.O. (Air)	Sea Eagle	Seahawk
C. H. PAIN	Lt.	H.M.A. Naval Depot, London	Promoted Lt. Cdr. and re-appointed
H. PATTERSON	S.C.C.O.	Drake	Glory
H. H. RIDLER	Lt. Cdr.	Battleaxe	Terror
C. REED, M.B.E.	S.C.C.O.	Rooke	Promoted Comm. Lieut. and re-appointed
R. B. RICHARDSON	Lt. Cdr.	St. Angelo	Mercury
R. SWIFT	S.C.C.O.	Dolphin	Terror (2 years exchange service in R.N.Z.N.)
E. W. SMEE	S.C.C.O.	Dolphin	Victory
A. SMITH	C.C.O. (Air)	Condor	Merlin
G. E. SAMPSON	Lt.	Dryad	Promoted Lt. Cdr. re-appointed
D. L. SYMS	Lt.	Hornet	R.A.E. Farnborough
M. R. SIMPSON	Lt.	Long (C) Course	Implacable
C. D. SHEAD	C.C.O.	Ganges	Pembroke
H. K. SERGEANT	Lt. Cdr.	Sussex	President (D.S.D.)
R. F. T. STANNARD, O.B.E., D.S.C.	Cdr.	St. Angelo	Lent Victory (Damage Control Course)
A. A. T. SEYMOUR-HAYDEN	Lt. Cdr.	Stag	Osiris
L. SLOANE	A/C.C.O.	Implacable	Mercury
Miss J. L. TURNBULL ..	2/0 W.R.N.S. (CE)	Mercury	Condor
E. C. THORNE, R.N.Z.N. ..	Lt.	Long (C) Course	Fierce
K. A. TOWNSEND-GREEN ..	Lt.	Long (C) Course	Triumph
T. W. TURNBULL	Comm. Lieut.	St. Angelo	Mercury
P. LA B. WALSH	Lt. Cdr.	Sussex	Mercury II.
C. C. WAKE-WALKER	Lt.	Long (C) Course	Pembroke

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J. D. WILLIAMS	Lt.	Mercury	Glory
M. L. WOOLLCOMBE	Lt.	Mercury	Promoted Lt. Cdr. and re-appointed
Sir MARSHAL G. C. WARMINGTON, Bart.	Lt. Cdr.	Victory	Flowerdown
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