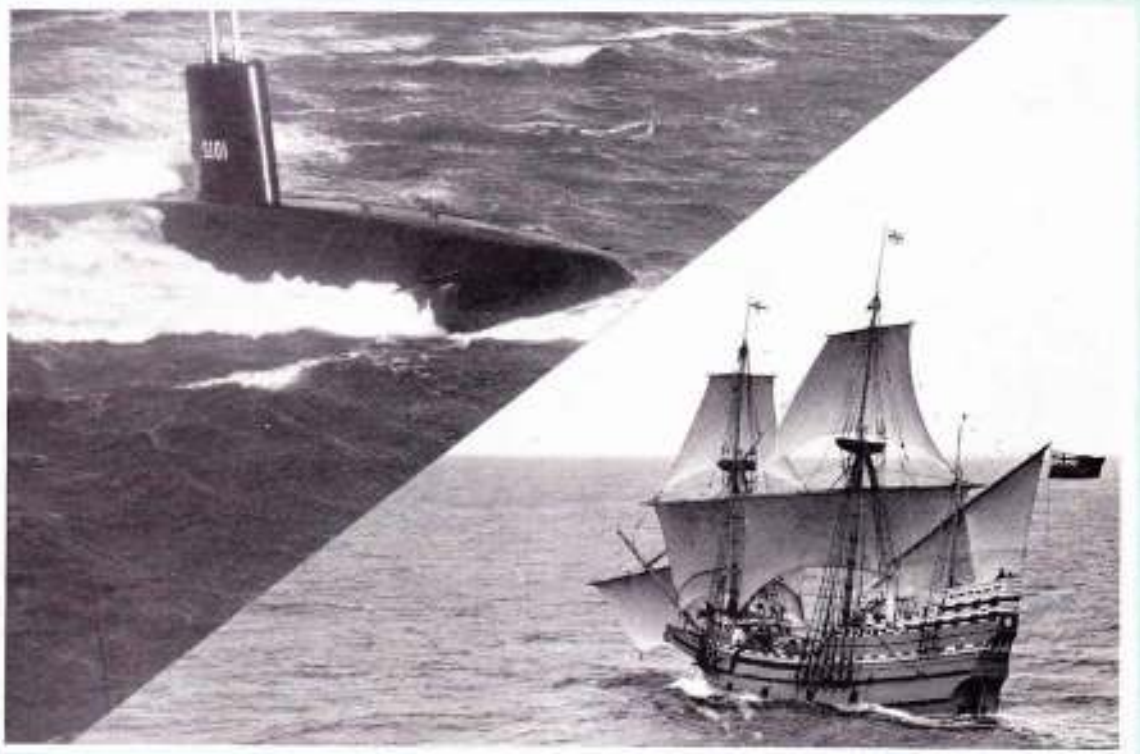
R.S. Pullrick

THE COMMUNICATOR

VOL. 16
No. 5

SUMMER
1983

CELER ET FIDELIS



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THE COMMUNICATOR

The Magazine of the Communications Branch, Royal Navy and the Royal Naval Amateur Radio Society

SUMMER 1963 VOL. 16, No. 5

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Cover Picture—THE NEW AND THE OLD—H.M.S "DREADNOUGHT" AND THE "MAYFLOWER".

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All MSS, photographs and cartoons should be sent to the Editor at H.M.S. "Mercury" as below. These will be returned to the sender only if asked for, and responsibility for them cannot be accepted by the Editor. **CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE CHRISTMAS 1963 EDITION MUST BE IN THE EDITOR'S HANDS BY 21st OCTOBER. BULK ORDERS BY 15th NOVEMBER.**

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Some back numbers are available and those more than two years old can be obtained for 1/- post free.

* * * *

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The Editor, THE COMMUNICATOR, H.M.S. "MERCURY", East Meon, near Petersfield, Hampshire.

PUBLISHED AT H.M.S. "MERCURY"

EDITORIAL

I am very pleased to report that the sales of our magazine are good and over 3,250 copies of the last edition were despatched from my office. Unfortunately the printing costs have increased and so it is essential to increase our sales still further if we are to remain self supporting and solvent.

This is the 51st edition of THE COMMUNICATOR and it is a worthy reflection on all who have served and are serving in the Communications branch that this number has been possible; it also provides a challenge for the future.

Have we read all about those runs ashore? I know that many readers like to know what their "oppo's" have been up to, but this provides only part of the magazine, and I appeal to all our readers to use their ingenuity and imagination and submit articles cartoons, etc., which they would like to see in print. The Editorial Staff edit and print the material which you submit and then *hope* that the sales will produce sufficient money to cover the costs.

In an attempt to keep pace with the times, we have introduced a competition for a new front cover as explained on page 261 of this edition. Dare we hope that we can eventually enter the field of reproducing coloured photographs in the magazine? It is not impossible and would increase the scope of the magazine considerably but such a dream can only be achieved by increased sales.

We therefore ask everyone in the Branch to help us, by giving their support and assistance in any manner whatsoever.

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF SIGNAL DIVISION

New equipment

Many of you will have heard of, and a growing number will have seen, the new generation of communication equipment now being introduced into ships. The increasing use of the over-crowded H.F. band, a requirement stemming from the increased distances which must separate ships and groups of ships in the era of missiles and nuclear warheads, brought problems which could only be solved by a radical re-think of the whole range of communication at H.F. This resulted in the concept of an "integrated" system which has been under development for some years and is now beginning to go into ships.

This sort of programme, however, is extremely costly. Whilst there is a cast-iron case for putting it into new ships, the older the hull, the less value can one see being derived from an expensive refit involving the fundamental alterations which a fully integrated system of communications is bound to require when replacing older arrangements. Consequently it has become necessary to consider fitting certain older ships, and certain of the "early birds" of the new generation, fledged before the arrival of equipment for the integrated system, with an interim range of transmitters and receivers. A detailed programme for this scheme, essential in order that incompatibilities should be avoided, has been produced which is known as "COMIST"—"Communications In the Short Term". This is now well ahead.

Other communications improvements are in being or under consideration. The acceleration in technological advance in the past 10 years has been enormous: whereas it has taken over half a century to get where we are from the "Spark-gap" transmitter, within five years we must not only look to Satellite communications, with all that that may give us, but we have got to start dealing in data communications at information rates unthinkable fifty years ago; furthermore, somehow, we feel that we will still have a problem in coping with the telegrams at Christmas!

Recruiting

Looking ahead, there is absolutely no doubt whatever that Naval Communicators will have an even more vital part to play in our Service than they have carried out with such marked success in the past. I am confident that we will have the equipment and, much more important, the men to do this job; but it must be clear to all of us that we will need officers and men of the highest quality. We have them now and very good new entries are coming in; but we are not getting as many as we need to meet the planned build-up of the Branch. Opportunities and prospects are bound to be good during this period of slow expansion which will last many years. The Captain, H.M.S. *Mercury* and I are doing our best, in co-operation with the Recruiting Staff, to spread the word; but the best recruiters are the keen and efficient Communicators now in the Navy. If you have friends who would like the life you lead—pass the word on that we need them.

Security

Finally, a subject which has provoked probably more widespread discussion in recent months than anything else—SECURITY. At no time in history has it been so necessary for us, you and I, to be ever on guard against an attack on our security. This is of particular importance in our Branch and each and every one of us must continue to play our part, by, above all, taking meticulous care over such mundane tasks—often irritating but, I can assure you, very necessary—as Mustering, Amending and Destruction of Classified material and ensuring its complete physical protection at all times.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Mr. Editor,

At 82 years of age I suppose I am now the senior member of the Signal Branch to have worn the "Crossed Flags". I was sorry to read in the Easter number of THE COMMUNICATOR that the badge of the "Bunting Tosser" has now been abolished.

I can still remember with pride the day when I was entitled to sew on the 'crossed flags'. It was in 1896. I joined *Impregnable* as a Boy 2nd Class and after a short period of training became a Signal Boy, and believe me I thought I was the 'Cat's Whiskers'! I was never rated Boy 1st Class. Actually before joining the Royal Navy I was employed in the counting house of Eyre & Spottiswoode, at that time the King's Printers, who printed all the Navy Signal books and, being interested, I learnt the rudiments of signalling, Colours of Flags, Morse and Semaphore, and became Poop Signal Boy. I can still remember distinctly the first message I received and made. Must confess, however, that I know little about Seamanship. Knots and splices are still somewhat a mystery to me.

W. R. PARIS,
Signal Commander R.N.(Retd).

Dear Ed.

We would like to point out that our magazine is rapidly becoming a technical handbook—this might be all right for some but on *Yarmouth* we rather enjoyed reading about runs ashore and where oppo's were, we might be wrong but as one of our juniors said "Have I got to pay 2/6 for a B.R.?" We have heard of being TRAD mad but we suggest you're going STRAD mad.

BYGRAVES, DANCE, DOWNIE etc., plus the Canteen Manager's Assistant!

EDITOR.—*"We can please some of the people some of the time, . . ."*

From the Author of "A Glimpse of the Past—South Africa 1900" (p.264). Extracts only.

Dear Sir,

Am one of the 'Old Books' types (Yeoman, left the Service 1947) and was vastly pleased to come across the magazine, nothing like it in my earlier years, gave some very nostalgic memories to read of present doings at the various depots and stations.

Also to try and 'decode' the current jargon makes one think—wonder how many of us are left who still cannot forget "Freddie Duff—Stop Engines", or even further back "Equal Speed Charlie London" as in the School Blazer badge—what a lot of odd knowledge we absorb, and mostly forget—to order. I am on the committee of the H.M.S. *Cornwall* 39-42 Reunion Association and we are continually trying to trace and get in touch with shipmates of that commission—to join our association—and where possible in the case of still serving types, attend our Reunion Dinner, held annually at the Victory Club. For the benefit of any of the old *Cornwall* Communicators who might see the magazine we have quite a contingent but one we completely lost touch with is a "Knocker" White Leading Signalman who qualified with four more of us for VS2(H) at Leydene in '42—and I could spin you a couple of yarns about 'Basegram Hall' (as I believe PUNCH called it) in those days. Since leaving the Service I have become a stamp fanatic, in fact an advanced philatelist specialising in the postal history of the Boer War and early South Africa—and I wonder if there were any stamp collectors serving who might like to have a home contact. My address is: Basil H. POYSER, 76 Second Cross Road, Twickenham, Middlesex.

EDITOR.—*All correspondence should be sent direct to the writer.*

"'E ain't 'arf got a big 'ead ain't 'E"

COMPETITION

A prize of 2 guineas is offered for the best design of a new front cover. Please send your ideas to the Editor as soon as possible and certainly not later than the 10th October.

The following points should be noted:

(a) The design must be capable of being reproduced in not more than two colours.

(b) Finished drawings are desirable but not essential so long as the design intention is clear.

By courtesy of Warner-Pathe.

ANGIE DICKINSON

YOUR MESSAGE IS NOT UNDERSTOOD

By the late Commander H. P. Mead

Mistaken signals may have a classical reputation such as we associate with Lord Nelson's "blind eye" at the Battle of Copenhagen, or the tragic sinking of *Victoria* with the loss of 360 lives in 1894; or they may be merely farcical and facetious like the modern one concerning the admiral's washerwoman. Then there are those of a less serious nature and the purely legendary ones which probably never had any foundation in fact.

The earliest example on record of a mistaken signal concerned a man named Ægeus. His son went off in command of his fleet on an expedition and it was agreed beforehand between them that if it were successful the colour of their sails would be altered when the ships were homeward bound. Unfortunately the son forgot all about this arrangement, and when the old man saw the fleet afar off with their sails unchanged, he assumed that the worst had happened, worked himself up into a state of hysteria, jumped into the sea and was drowned. Hence the Ægean Sea.

An event, cartooned in PUNCH by Bernard Partridge and characterised as "A Signal Indiscretion", occurred in the Channel Fleet in 1907. The occasion was the visit of the German Emperor, when, in order to prepare for a review, the C.-in-C., Lord Charles Beresford, ordered the fleet to be out of routine and paint ship. Rear-Admiral Sir Percy Scott, commanding the First Cruiser Squadron, made a signal to *Roxburgh*, "Paintwork appears to be more in demand than gunnery, so you had better come in in time to look pretty by the eighth instant." This was described by Lord Charles Beresford as "contemptuous in tone and insubordinate in character," and he ordered the Rear-Admiral to have the signal expunged from the signal logs of the ships concerned.

In the days when ships spent a whole commission with one another in the same squadron, it was the custom to give a hearty send-off to a fleet-mate as the time came for her departure for home. One such ship had earned a somewhat questionable reputation during her two years with the others; nevertheless, in a spirit of conciliation the flagship sent up the usual cordial signal in vocabulary groups, "Goodbye and good luck!" To the consternation of the beholders, the vocabulary hoist seen to be flying in reply in the departing vessel was interpreted as the uncompromising word "Hawseholes!"

A similar incident happened at the time of the Crimean War when Vice-Admiral James Dundas was turning over the command of the British Fleet to Rear-Admiral Sir Edmund Lyons. There was no love lost between these two officers; however, Dundas's flagship, *Britannia*, hoisted the farewell signal, "May success attend you," which, to the horror of the onlookers, was replied to by the other, "May hanging await you!"

In each of these episodes, it must be confessed, the mistakes alleged to have been made in the flags were extremely far-fetched, as, on referring to the code books, it was found that the wrong groups bore no relation to the intended groups.

Another ludicrous situation was created owing to inefficient signalling with a flashing lamp, coupled with a poor sense of imagination. The captain of one ship had asked a brother captain to dinner, to which he received the reply, "Regret unable to accept as I am confined to bed with a child"! This was due to the trifling omission of one dot in the morse code which involved a D having been read for an L, as the signalman should have observed.

There was the case of the commander of a certain destroyer making a frightful mess of some manoeuvre, and scrambling back into line after a fashion, hoping against hope that his exhibition had not been too noticeable; he was therefore considerably reassured on receiving from Captain (D), instead of the expected "Manoeuvre badly executed", the simple signal, "Good". His feelings of elation, however, were shortly afterwards considerably damped by getting a further signal, "My last message, add Lord"

FAREWELL TO A SHIP

by Cook(S) B. Hayes

Farewell old pal, your time is nigh
They tell me you're condemned to die.

The buzz has got around to me
Your days are finished on the sea.

Your duty is over and has been hard
And now you're for the breaker's yard.

You don't deserve this ill pledged fate
But pal, you're really out of date.

Your Engine Room is still and cold
No movement in your for'd hold.

Upon your decks there is no life
Where one time work on them was rife.

You crossed the seas so wild and wide
But still rolled on from side to side.

'Tis pity that comes from my heart
And now, alas, we two must part.

"Goodbye, old pal—old ship", we sigh
"Your nameplate, that will never die".

A GLIMPSE OF THE PAST—SOUTH AFRICA 1900

by B. H. Poyner

War against the Boers who operated in mounted Commandos of crack riflemen gathering and dispersing like ghost squads was something quite new for the British Army, whose last major effort was the Crimean War—so suffering heavy and unexpected reverses they called on the Royal Navy for any help available. Due to the foresight of Admiral Harris in concentrating his fleet, and making plans for a Naval Brigade some months before the war commenced, the R.N. was able to astonish the Army and shore authorities with the ease they adapted themselves to conditions ashore.

The principal units involved were *Terrible*, Captain Percy M. Scott, R.N., on her way to China, relieving *Powerful* due home on completing her commission in China. Both ships did wonders in making gun carriages for 12-pounders, and in the case of the *Terrible*, 4.7 guns on mountings devised by Capt. Scott.

H.M.S. Terrible.

One of the early schemes tried by our forces was the armouring of trains, and mounting them with artillery—and it is here that the communications branch appears to have had a hand—there being several reports and pictures of Signalmen and S.P's mounted on railway trucks in the various histories.

Mobile Naval Shore Signal Station.

though none goes into much detail. It is known that communications with Ladysmith during the siege was effected by light, and no doubt each of the parties of the Naval Brigade had its attached Signalmen—for co-operation with the Army by heliograph, etc.

Incidentally, the Army used helio. extensively in the early stages of the war before military telegraphs gained control of the lines or laid fresh ones.

If anyone can give any references to books or histories which give details of the personnel involved and their methods it would be of great interest.

A point of interest for any young 'Handy' types is that this term was first applied to Jack—as a very great compliment for his adaptability in operating ashore and showing the Army how to get things done!

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

(Extracts from "The Communicator" of 15, 10 and 5 years ago.

SUMMER 1948. Cost 1/3 and there wasn't a single "Communicator" on the editorial staff!
Touchtyping became a qualification for advancement.
Warrant *Communications* Officers put in an appearance.
A new pay code came in and the "Trained operator" rate went out.
The morse flag-wigwag-also went out.
Wren Communicators came to Malta.
Aurora and *Mendip* were transferred to the Chinese Navy and *Venerable* to the R.N.N.
The International Long Course contained 2 Greek and 2 Argentinian Officers and one from Holland, Egypt and Eire!
Lieut. A. S. Morton (Cdr.) was appointed from *St. Angelo* to *Troubridge*.
Lieut. G. E. Sampson (TC) was appointed from *Boxer* to *Dryad*.
Lieut. K. M. Teare (TSO) was appointed from *Mercury* to *Implacable*.

SUMMER 1953. Communicators appeared on the editorial staff—the price had risen to 1/6!
There was much acrimonious correspondence on why Communicators received less pay than other Branches—writers got 6d a day for being able to type!
The argument between PENNANT and PENDANT was resolved at very high level.
A member of the NATO Long course produced the following gem:- "I can read these SBX's (MMX new books) up to about 16 WPM as long as they stick to English. It's when they start going into a foreign language that I get stuck!

SUMMER 1958. The editorial staff was almost entirely "Communicators" and the price had risen to 2/6 per copy—its present level.

Signalmen became Tactical Operators and Telegraphists became Radio Operators. Both Houses of Parliament were disturbed by these changes.
The East Indies Station closed down—no more idyllic commissions in Trincomalee!
Manoel Island MSO closed down and STC Malta shifted from Ricasoli to Phoenicia.
The Naval Air Signal School closed down at Culdrose—no more Wren Tels in bone domes.
The new *Mess Maid* was on the stocks at Emsworth.
Mountbatten Block was opened at long last—a far cry from the Nissen huts of 1941.

NOTE:- In all 3 editions.
Good Runs Ashore were held in:-
Aden; Barcelona; Cannes; Durban; Edinburgh; Fremantle; Gibraltar; Hong Kong; Istanbul; Jesselton; Kobe; Liverpool; Muscat; Naples; Oslo; Portofino; Quebec; Reykjavik; Saigon; Tangier; Umm Said; Venice; Woolloomooloo; Xtraordinary Places; Yokohama; Zanzibar.

PROCEDURE CHECKING

from Whitehall Wireless Station

Tape Relay

During the last two-and-a-half years the analysis of Tape Relay traffic shows an improvement in the preparation and transmission of this type of traffic. Details are:—

1961-62 ... Average errors per message 2.81.
1962-63 ... Average errors per message 1.14.
Up to June '63 Average errors per message 0.95.

Since it became apparent that the rules for marking errors were unsound in principle, the rules were revised recently on the basis that errors made in major elements of a message were multiplied by three, those in certain other elements by two, and those of a minor nature penalised by one mark. It is noted that the average would be a lot lower than 0.95 for the first 6 months of 1963 had the old system of marking still been in force.

For the benefit of Tape Relay Centres, the following table shows what errors continue to be made.

Table of Errors (taken from a given month's results for 1,000 tapes)

Element	*Errors*	*Remarks*
Start of message functions.	128	These functions vary from station to station dependant upon the circuit they are connected to. This problem is likely to be more acute when the new edition of the ACP 127 series comes into force. It is therefore advisable that operators know exactly which functions apply to a particular circuit.
Line one pilots.	1	Tapes bearing line one pilots *are* marked and counted in monthly summaries.
Additional or missed spaces.	65	Main faults in this category are missing out the spaces at the start of tape preparation or spacing in the addresses.
End of line	107	These are always to be 2CR 1LF except for page separation or end of message functions.
Cancelling procedure.	8	When used, cancelling procedure is to be followed by the end of message functions. i.e. E E E E E E E E AR 2CR 8LF NNNN 12 Letters.
Additional or missed figure or letter shifts.	55	The habit of putting a letter shift at the beginning of each line seems to have died a natural death, but, there are still quite a number of unnecessary letter and figure shifts used.
Security warning prosigns.	5	With the advent of automatic equipment these prosigns play an increasingly important part in tape relay.
Correction procedure	43	The 8 E's (when used) should be spaced out, only 1 "C" should be used in the final instructions. No corrections whatsoever are allowed before line 5.
End of message functions.	28	One of the main triggering functions of automatic equipments and extremely important, those functions should never vary and are 2CR 8LF NNNN 12 LTRS.

Fixed Services

"Dits" on Fixed Services are still very much in evidence. It is fully appreciated that co-operation, etc., is the backbone of a Fixed Service, but, when all Fixed Services are connected to a TARE, there will be serious consequences unless this is rectified. Every time a "dit" is necessary (and we conceded the point that they are) operators should make them in the form of a procedure message with all the correct start of message and end of message functions, correct routeing indicators and precedence prosigns etc. Then everyone will notice the benefit when eventually each circuit is connected to TARE.

Bouquets

To Malta for operating very successfully through the Admiralty STRAD, mainly because of correct procedure messages.

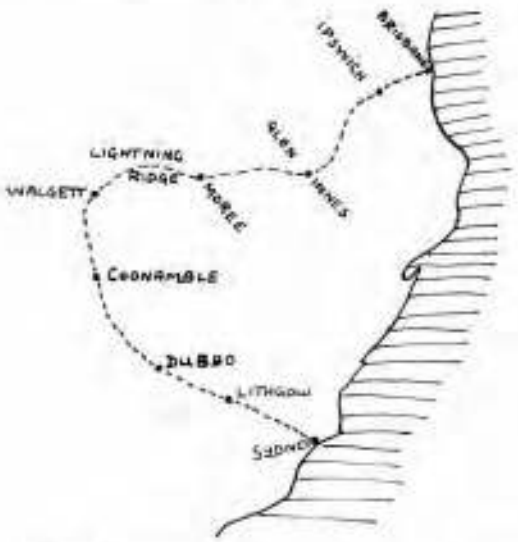
To CND Haslemere for the most consistent performance of good tapes in the Tape Relay world.

PRIZE WINNING FEATURE

WALKABOUT—AUSTRALIA 1963

by LRO(G) M. J. Clarke

We left the jetty, beneath Brisbane Bridge, at 0900; our object was to make our way to Sydney via Lightning Ridge, a small Opal mining town situated in the bush of New South Wales, in the shortest possible time. Ldg. Stwd. Tony Chappel, A.B. Brian Shipman and I formed one team and L.M.E. "Taff" Parker, M.E. "Brum" Clay and M.E. "Artie" Shaw composed the other team. A team of three seamen from S/M *Tapir* pioneered the route in 1962 and had taken three days for the journey; we hoped to beat this time and the opposing team, and so we found ourselves at Mount Gravatt a suburb of Brisbane, with no money, a set of "number eights" (which we wore) and completely dependent on native hospitality.



The engine room team proceeded along the Gold Coast Road but we decided, by majority vote, to obtain a map and managed to beg one from the proprietor of a filling station. On hearing our story, he advised us to return to Brisbane and use the inland road. We acted on this advice, after a 2-1 vote in favour and, two hours and many lifts later we arrived in Ipswich, 30 miles south of Brisbane. Luck was with us and we soon obtained a lift in a Jaguar; the speedometer was broken but we decided that the driver could not be regarded as a lazy driver and would not cause traffic congestion, after we had covered about 300 miles in a little over four hours!!! Our driver had finished second in the Australian Grand Prix for sports cars the previous day! He dropped us at Glen Innes at 3.30 p.m. but, before leaving he informed us that if we could reach Tamworth by 8.30 a.m. next day, he would take us on to Sydney. Tamworth was 400 miles away and we had 17 hours in which to do the journey; at the time this seemed easy but, as we discovered later, the "roads" ahead of us made the track across the Broadwalk look like the M1.

After obtaining a signed chit from the local constable to say that he had seen our party, we headed west towards Lightning Ridge. So far we had made good progress but after walking for an hour without seeing a car, our spirits dropped. Jokes helped to lift the gloom for a while and the suggestion that we should steal three horses and ride was outvoted. Eventually a school bus overtook us and, surrounded by vegetables, milk, provisions and screaming schoolchildren, we were transported a further 12 miles along our route.

We continued to walk in the direction of Moree via a small village aptly named Gravesend; the inhabitants were very unfriendly and refused to speak to us. Our morale reached rock bottom as we anticipated the prospect of sleeping on the roadside, but, whilst squatting on the kerb discussing our predicament, two sheep shearers—obviously shocked by the sight of three men in naval uniform 300 miles from the coast and in the middle of the outback—stopped and offered to share their utility and beer as far as Moree. We entered the local cafe in Moree and enquired about the possibility of a further lift but we were informed the prospects of a lift were very slight because the roads were very treacherous after extensive flooding. The cafe owner offered us the use of his house which was six miles out of town and had not been occupied for some time. As we moved in, a large rat moved out, but at least we had a roof over our heads, which provided some protection against the millions of mosquitoes and flying "weirdies" which inhabited the area; and so our first day ended.

At six o'clock the next morning we were on the road to Moree again, and then tried to reach Collienebri, 120 miles from Moree. After walking a few miles and seeing nothing but dead trees and hundreds of kangaroos, a travelling salesman gave us a lift to Colli'. We contacted the local policeman who amazed us by enquiring about the other team; our curiosity was satisfied when he revealed that the details of our expedition had been broadcast by Brisbane radio.

The road between Collienebri and Lightning Ridge was impassable to normal vehicles but, fortunately for us, the Lightning Ridge constable and a bush nurse had brought a young boy to the district hospital and had driven the 80 miles in his Land Rover, which had 4-wheel drive, without incident. During our trip the bush nurse offered some sandwiches to us and we almost snatched them from her as it was the first food we had seen since leaving Brisbane, 24 hours previously. This was the last stage of our inward journey and we felt a sense of achievement and our spirits soared, but after travelling 20 miles along this "cart" track (which was shown on the map as a "highway") our

spirits flagged slightly when the car got a puncture. In intense heat and surrounded by countless flying "things", we quickly changed the wheel and were on our way again.

Several more miles were covered and then our spirits plunged down to a very low level—another puncture and there was no repair kit in the Land Rover! Fortunately, it was a slow puncture and so by using all hands (or feet) on the pump we were able to inflate the tyre sufficiently to carry us a further ten miles.

Repeated operations of this kind eventually brought us to the Ridge without further disasters but we did realise how lucky we had been when we passed a station wagon which was bogged down in thick mud. It was 2 p.m. when we arrived at the Ridge and we proceeded to the police hut to obtain the necessary signature on our chit to prove our visit to the black opal mining centre. The miners gave us a great welcome and dispensed their hospitality in the local pub. One of the miners we met was known as "Jack the Hermit", because he lived in a hut made from mud and odd bits of rock; he was very generous and gave each of us a couple of opals as souvenirs.

Walgett, a small township 50 miles south-east of the Ridge, was our next objective. The only store in Lightning Ridge consisted of a shack with a variety of advertisements but there was a car parked outside it. The car displayed a "Glasgow" pennant and we had high hopes of a lift as we approached the store. The car owner, a Scotsman, was a representative of Cadbury's but he was proceeding in the opposite direction; he did give us a couple of bars of nutty and we thought we would have to wait for Bernard's rep! We returned to the hotel and another traveller called and, after a few beers, took us to Walgett.

From Walgett we had to reach Coonamble, a smaller town; our luck deserted us and we spent the night sleeping under the stars somewhere between the two towns.

We had received a lift twelve miles along the road from a family out for an evening spin; they had suggested that our chances of further lifts were very slight and offered to take us back to Walgett where they would accommodate us and give us some supper. We declined their offer and, on reflection, I realise how foolish we were to spurn local knowledge. We sat by the roadside for two hours and then decided to light a fire but, after using a box-and-a half of matches and failing, we concluded that bush fires must be a figment of the imagination. And so to "bed", sleeping in one-hour periods, until, after a further three hours, the headlights of an approaching car were spotted. The occupants were jackeroos (or cowboys) who had been to Walgett for a night out. They stopped and suggested that we should spend the night on a bridge, further along the road, which would reduce the possibility of us being bitten by snakes and poisonous spiders which were rife in that area. Naturally we accepted the advice and so at sunrise on the third day we were 35 miles from Walgett and 65 miles from Coonamble.

At 5.30 we started walking and at 8 o'clock the first car came our way. The driver and his companions were building contractors and, luckily for us, they were travelling to Sydney, 400 miles to the south! They gave us a meal at Dubbo, about 200 miles from Sydney, and told us that the green hills we passed near Lithgow and Lucknow were the last traces of the search for gold which had occurred some years ago. We reached the Main Gate of the Royal Australian Naval Dockyard, Garden Island, at 5.45 p.m. on Wednesday, 3rd April, having taken 56 hours 45 minutes to travel 1,000 miles, 60 per cent being through the Bush and, much to our joy, we had beaten *Tapir*'s time by 16 hours!

Incidentally, the engine room team were dissuaded from the journey by the local inhabitants along the Gold Coast road who had said that all roads to Lightning Ridge were impassable because of floods. The team then headed directly for Sydney and, of course, was disqualified.

CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD

SOLUTION

Across 1 Portfolios, 7 Adorns 9 Roadsign, 10 Abandon, 11 Initiate, 12 Monocle, 14 Gasper 19 Ellen, 20 Erects, 24 Married, 26 Outsider, 27 Terrors, 28 Parisian, 29 Rowena, 30 Limelights.

Down 1 Parking, 2 Readies, 3 Festive, 4 Lights, 5 Sambrowne, 6 Townmouse, 8 Sense, 13 List, 15 Anna 16 Pear-Trees 17 Rehearsal, 18 Old, 21 Rossini, 22 Codfish, 23 Sarongs, 24 Meter, 25 Humane.

ST. PAUL'S ANGLICAN CATHEDRAL, MALTA

Over a hundred years ago, Queen Adelaide built at her own expense a very fine church, now called St. Paul's Cathedral, to provide a worthy place of worship for British families working and living in Malta. Many thousands of civilians and Servicemen have since used and come to love this Cathedral.

During the last World War Malta survived a long siege by a relentless enemy. The Cathedral was damaged, though not seriously. Today it has been attacked by another equally relentless enemy—a beetle—which has so seriously damaged the roof timbers that they became dangerous. The Cathedral has been closed and the roof demolished. Services are being held in the crypt.

A fund is now being raised to repair, maintain and endow the Cathedral so that both its fabric and its ministry may be preserved and established. A total of at least £30,000 is required. Of this £12,000 has already been committed to the reconstruction of the entire roof which is already in progress. These sums are far beyond the resources of the British people in Malta, most of whom are only on the Island for a comparatively short time. They have already done magnificently in raising the substantial sum of nearly £5,000, but we must now appeal to a far wider public.

The Cathedral enshrines memorials to all those who died in defence of Malta during the last World War. There must be many who would wish to see such memorials preserved. There are others who have regularly worshipped there or who have family connections with the Cathedral. There are also those who value and profit from the British connection with Malta.

The Duke of Edinburgh and Sir Winston Churchill have taken the lead in contributing to the Fund. We hope that many others will follow their lead by giving generously.

Contributions may be sent by ordinary 3d. letter to the Treasurer, HAFMED, Floriana, Malta, G.C., and marked "For the Cathedral Appeal Fund".

H.M.S. NORTHWOOD

by Message Handler W. Hay

Never heard of us did you say? Well we while away our shore side hours, surrounded by green trees and parklands on the border line between Middlesex and Hertfordshire. No roughers or "corn dog" dinners for us, except when we are lucky enough to take a trip on one of your sea-going ships!

At present, the communication strength is rather low and numbers 23 ratings, (14 WRNR and 9 RNR) and 9 Officers, our head of department being Lieut. Cdr. Allen. Although our numbers are small, we have high hopes for the future and we are carrying out active recruiting drives in the area. Our last effort was in the Watford Carnival, where we were situated alongside the Army recruiting stand and they didn't have a chance! One of our fair damsels, who obviously caught the eye of a passing fellow and caused him to tarry a while, offered him a pamphlet, only to be greeted by the words, "Not me love, I'm a Royal Marine on leave!" Now we know why they are taught to look inconspicuous. We built a stand and filled it with various pieces of nautical equipment, which baffled most of us, but the small boys knew the answers and by 1973 we should be overcrowded.

We carry out various exercises of our own, and also join those between other R.N.R. Headquarters. During large exercises, as most of you know, we take over various duties in the M.S.O., Crypto and Comcentre. We have a Plotting side to our unit as well; in fact they are much larger than we are but, the nicest things come in small parcels! Apart from exercises, we do training on one night a week, either Tuesday or Wednesday, and if any of you are in the vicinity on a training night, just "POP IN" to the "GORGONS HEAD", where we have our own bar. There is always a welcome for ex-regulars of any Branch who may wish to retain contact with the Senior Service, and they might meet some of their ex-Oppo's.

MORSKODO

by Lieut. C. J. McMullen

This article concerns neither current Naval Communications nor present-day Naval Communicators, but may be of interest to readers of this magazine as it involves signalling in general, and, in an indirect way, the Royal Navy.

To show how the matter originated, a certain amount of background is necessary. In 1887, a Pole called Dr. Zamenhof invented Esperanto, intended to become an internationally used auxiliary language, having to recommend it neutrality, complete regularity, logic and even a certain beauty of its own. Today, although its following is not vast, its million or so supporters are well distributed and enthusiastic. International communication of all types is intended, and although the language is at present confined mainly to the written and spoken word, its expansion to cover other systems such as telegraphy would seem a logical step.

Esperanto was accepted for "plain language telegraph correspondence" by the Paris Telegraph Conference in 1925, and so is one of the comparatively few permitted communication languages, as distinct from a secret code. However, no provision was made for the fact that Esperanto contains six letters which do not appear in other languages. These letters, with their English equivalents in brackets, are: c (ch); g (as in 'gem); h (kh or Scots ch); j (zh); s (sh); u (w or short u for diphthongs); and here the story begins.

In 1961, by means of an inquiring letter to the main Esperanto magazine, I discovered that no Morse symbols, however unofficial, existed for the six peculiar letters, and I realised, by the shower of suggestions I received, that Esperantists were only too keen to establish some kind of a code. The reason for this enthusiasm may not be obvious to those who do not speak the language, as, it could be pointed out, one could always add an h in place of a circumflex and still be understood. However the letters concerned are not merely accented letters like ç or ê in French, they are separate and independent units of the language. Points also considered were the prestige value to the language itself, and the fact that these letters occur fairly frequently and so the speed of signalling would benefit by each having one Morse symbol instead of two.

And so it happened that in 1962, after much correspondence and argument about different combinations of dots and dashes, a non-sub-specialist Naval Officer found himself on a postal committee whose aim was to establish a Morse code for Esperanto; the other committee members were an American television engineer and a French radio amateur. The three of us considered all sides of the problem; brevity, clarity, similarity to any other language's equivalents and ease of learning. Of the other languages examined, only Russian and Serbo-Croat looked hopeful, but for various reasons they proved to be of little use. We observed that for communication between certain countries, symbols are provided for such letters as a, n, o, and we considered risking confusion by using their symbols hoping that the legal problem would thus be solved, but the law on this issue was found to be too complicated and the plan was dropped. Finally a scheme was evolved, by which dots and dashes were added to the basic letters (but using k instead of h for h) so as to form symbols which were as short as possible and yet did not in any way clash with existing letters, numbers or punctuation marks. It was not however thought inconvenient that two of the new symbols coincided with procedural signs (s = VE; h = YE, used by amateurs), as k and r are in the same category. As a side issue, c, g and u could be made the same as a once used French ç, the Serbo-Croat dz (same sound as g) and the international u, respectively.

Finally the committee proposed its code to the Universal Esperanto Association (U.E.A.), which is situated in Rotterdam. After discussion, the Executive at their 1963 annual meeting accepted the six new symbols, knowing that until the legal position changes, the code may only be used by light or buzzer. The time may come when the U.E.A. feels bold enough to ask Geneva to amend its Regulations, but until then, communicators can only amuse themselves by, for instance, altering their usual visual challenge to: "KIU SIPO KIEN?" (what ship and whither), or by replying to a similar question: "CI BRITA MILITSIPO . . . BONAN VOYAGON—ADIAU" (British Warship . . . Bon Voyage, farewell). For this purpose and (as the R.N. is partly responsible) for the record, the six peculiar letters of the official Esperanto Morse Code are presented here:

Ĉ ---- Ĝ ---· Ĥ ----
Ĵ ·--- Ŝ ··· Ŭ ··--

"That's the last time I slap in for SWEEPERS"

EARLY DAYS

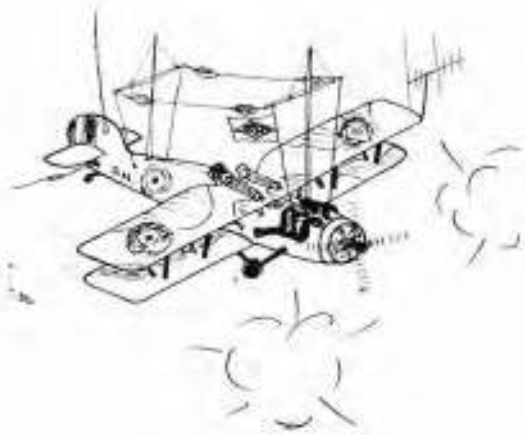
This is a further extract from the journal of Admiral Sir Raymond Fitzmaurice, K.B.E., D.S.O., Royal Navy, who was Director of the Signal Division in 1923 and the first Signal Officer concerned with fitting radio equipment in airships and aircraft. It is interesting to see how accurate his forecasts are, and also, how many of his problems still bedevil the modern signal officers.

"The great difficulty in advancing radio in aircraft at this time (1912) was due to the entire lack of knowledge on the part of the aeroplane makers of communications. It became essential for the Admiralty to put radio requirements into the original specifications for the machines and to explain to their contractors that a machine built originally with no provision for a set, was often impossible to modify.

Another problem was the lack of flying time. A series of smashes reduced the number of aircraft and delays occurred in the delivery of new machines. The life of the first machine allocated for W/T trials, though distinguished, was very short and everyone was glad to see the last of her. Her pilot was Captain Kirke, while I was her observer for trial purposes. On her last flight, all went well for a time and I was sending signals on different adjustments when suddenly both engines stopped; we were 1,200 feet up and above ground that looked suitable for landing, but at the last moment an unseen dyke and slope appeared and to avoid it, the pilot had to put the helm hard over. We got there all right, but with such a smash that the undercarriage and lower plane were completely broken up; fortunately the W/T apparatus was undamaged. This accident was a setback but I had great hopes of a new 100 h.p. seaplane being built by Messrs. Short and the Maurice Farman biplane.

My next step was to persuade the Admiralty to let me go to Paris to see a new radio set designed by M. Rouzet. It was light (70 lbs.), compact and beautifully made. It emitted a clear musical note and was in every way a modern installation. It consisted of a self-excited alternator of ½ kw. power with a safety cutter and clutch for clutching in and out from the main engines, an air-cooled transformer, a tuning coil primary and secondary for altering the wavelength, and a spark gap of special design which emitted a clear musical note.

By the time I got back from Paris with four of these sets, the Short seaplane was nearing completion and she was ready in time to escort the Royal Yacht for the last 50 miles of her journey back from Flushing to Port Victoria after the German Royal Wedding. We flew out to meet her off Flushing. Just off the North Foreland, we sighed a battleship carrying out gunnery practice. The pilot, Lieutenant Babbington, did not notice that the ship was firing and flew at a height of 1,000 feet directly between the ship and the target. I did see it, but it was impossible



to make Babbington hear so I frantically tried to remember what I had been taught at Whale Island about the height projectiles reach at various ranges. When we were just in line, I saw a puff of smoke and a moment later we shivered all over and fell some distance. Evidently we had got into the vacuum of the shell! It was only then that Babbington realised what was happening and he steered for safer regions. We picked up the Royal Yacht about 20 miles to the seaward of the Foreland and gave them a W/T salute, the first message the King had ever received from an aircraft. The apparatus worked excellently and our base at Grain held us in good touch all the time, the distance being about 50 miles.

The next machine to be fitted was another Short seaplane; her life was briefer than most as she broke her back the day after completing her acceptance trials, through being stalled. After being repaired, she was burnt to a cinder by a spark from the magneto setting some petrol on fire; the petrol had been carelessly used for cleaning the magneto contacts, but fortunately the accident occurred before the aircraft had taken off.

Things now began to move and Seaplane stations were built at Yarmouth, Cromarty, the Firth of Forth and Calshot. The *Hermes* was commissioned as a parent ship for aircraft and was fitted with a special platform on the Fo'c'sle to enable machines to fly off the ship, whilst the Quarterdeck was fitted with derricks to hoist the aircraft in and out. Short's were busy in building the latest thing in Seaplanes; No. 81 was to be a great advance on anything yet known and had two 80 h.p. Gnome engines, M. Rouzet's latest W/T equipment, and wings that could be folded or spread after hoisting out. The main difficulty with No. 81 was starting the engines; on one occasion we spent half an hour of agony bumping up and down on the water before finally taking off. All seemed well for a few minutes, but at 500 feet we began to shake all over. I looked over the side and saw that some struts to the floats had

smashed and the floats were swinging backwards and forwards. Sampson, the pilot, put the nose down when suddenly the back fabric of the upper plane tore where the wings fold. I spent a most uncomfortable ten minutes holding on to the fabric to prevent the tear spreading. It was like holding on to a piece of tissue paper out of an express train window. Fortunately, Sampson made a magnificent landing without doing any further damage. The bumping before we got off must have split the struts and our final rush off the water had completed the damage.

On another occasion we were flying from the *Hermes*; it was a lovely day and we were making a good 75 knots at about three to four thousand feet. I had been sending signals by W/T all the time and had just reported a tramp on our starboard bow when the engine suddenly stopped. We made a bad landing in our hurry and smashed the undercarriage and part of the lower plane. Luckily, the tramp came to our rescue and hoisted us on to her poop. She was a German timber boat, the *Clar Mening*, bound for Tilbury from the White Sea. A few hours later *Hermes* hove in sight, having realised from our stoppage of signals that something was wrong. We were hoisted out from the *Clar Mening* and rehoisted onto *Hermes*, having had a very interesting day!

Up to the present time it has not been possible to receive signals in an aircraft due to the high noise of the engines. However, I have no doubt that this will be overcome. It will be some time before aircraft can be safely used at night, but even now Commander Sampson has made flights with no illumination to assist him, other than the moon. There are few days now when seaplanes cannot fly and they have a great advantage in speed and can mount higher than their natural enemy, the airship. They can carry bombs and guns and use wireless for spotting purposes. In fact, I can see no limit to the development of the 'Heavier than Air' machine. They may completely change their shape, the materials of which they are made, and their method of propulsion, but they have come to stay and, I feel certain that in a few years time everyone will fly and think nothing more of it than they do of present-day motoring."

THANKS TO OUR ADVERTISERS
who support the Magazine with their announcements which we are sure will interest all our readers.

IN MEMORIAM

In our last edition in the article "The Signalmen's Lament" we referred to "The Lay of the Last Signalman". This appeared in the October 1947 Edition of THE COMMUNICATOR and is now reproduced as a token of Sympathy to the 'bereaved' "Bunting Tossers":

THE LAY OF THE LAST SIGNALMAN

On a thickly wooded sponson, where the last projector stands,
The museum pair of hand flags hanging idly in my hands,
With my jargon half forgotten, of my stock in trade bereft,
I wonder what's ahead of me—the only bunting left.

The relics of my ancient craft have vanished one by one.
The cruiser arc, the morse flag and manoeuvring lights have gone,
And I hear they'd be as useless in the final global war
As the helio, the fog horn and the masthead semaphore.

The mast is sprouting gadgets like a nightmare Christmas tree.
There are whips and stubs and wave guides where my halliards used to be.
And I couldn't hoist a tackline through that lunatic array,
For at every height and angle there's a dipole in the way.

The alert and hawk-eyed signalman is rendered obsolete
By the electrically-operated optics of the fleet,
And the leaping barracuda or the charging submarine
Can be sighted as a blob upon a fluorescent screen.

To delete the human error, to erase a noble breed,
We rely upon a relay, and we pin our faith to creed,
So we press a button, make a switch and spin a little wheel,
And it's cent per cent efficient—when we're on an even keel.

But again I may be needed, for the time will surely come
When we have to talk in silence and the modern stuff is dumb,
When the signal lanterns flashing or the flags are flying free—
It was good enough for Nelson, and it's good enough for me.

PRIZE WINNING FEATURE

ASCENSION ISLAND— PAST AND PRESENT

by RS A. D. Bowen

Ascension Island (Lat. 7.54 South, Long. 14.25 West) was discovered by a Portuguese mariner, Juan De Nova, on Ascension Day 1501, and he, perhaps realising that he had in all probability done his worst day's work ever, promptly left. In 1815, after Napoleon had been exiled on St. Helena, 700 miles to the South, their Lordships decided to garrison this uninhabited piece of rock measuring five miles by seven, to prevent any rescue attempts by the French, and with a burst of truly nautical originality, named the garrison 'H.M.S. Ascension'.

Hardships and misery must have been the lot of the Royal Marines who had to build Georgetown, as the capital is called, which is about the size of Clanfield, an estimate which is being slightly unkind to Clanfield! The climate is healthy, humidity being exceedingly low, but the terrain virtually defies description. The most apt would be that it is a cross between a science fiction artist's idea of another planet's surface and a painting by a chimpanzee. The streams of molten lava from the 40 extinct volcanoes have run into thousands of jagged shapes. In the middle of this multi-coloured desolation stands Green Mountain, aptly named as its slopes display the only vegetation on the island. It was on this mountain that the original garrison lived, and their humble abodes in the form of caves are still to be seen. Eventually they moved into the accommodation which they had built, and the Admiralty allowed their wives and families to go to Ascension which must have eased their life, but the town is too much of a 'pussers' barracks to be true. Most of the original buildings still stand firm, a credit to the structural capabilities and toil of men of bygone days. Inside the church, whose spire is made from beaten out oil drums, are plaques to the memory of many R.N. and R.M. personnel who were buried in one of several Naval cemeteries on the island. One is for an AB who had spent 12 years in Ascension, and one for a Lieutenant who fell from his bridge whilst entering harbour. How he fell is open to conjecture, but many odd things happened at sea in the last century—so I am told by the CRS. One final macabre reminder is the present day use of a rum pump—issuing petrol!

Along the roads, previously rough tracks but recently tarmacadamed, one can find long boats standing on end and half buried in the ground. These are the landmarks of the island and were used as resting places for the men and mule teams who had to visit the mountain at regular intervals. An endearing touch is "Gallows Hill" which, fortunately, no longer has the gibbet for carrying out the supreme penalty to erring sailors and marines. On Cross Hill (the navigational landmark of the island), two 19th-century cannons contrast strongly with two large guns taken from *Hood* during her last refit in 1939.

On closing the garrison in 1922 the Navy handed over the administration of the island to Cable and Wireless Ltd., and the Resident Magistrate, who is the local manager of the company, is responsible to the Governor of St. Helena for its well being. With the advent of the second World War, the Navy, together with the Army and American Forces used Ascension as a jumping off spot for North Africa. Unfortunately, many records of the island have been misplaced, and no one knows how many other relics of the past came under the shovel of a bulldozer in the building of an airstrip and a U.S. Base; perhaps some relics have disappeared for all time, but Ascension Island will forever be a true indication of the saying 'Wooden ships and iron men'.

It was with the feeling that my past misdemeanours had finally caught up with me that I heard of my draft to R.N. W/T Station Ascension Island. The mention of taking plenty of reading material and indoor games, etc., hinted that life would be exceedingly dull, and no one travelling with me on the *Durban Castle* said anything to alter my views. In fact, what they had said together with my first view of the island brought forth some unprintable comments! I did not realise, then, how the island had changed with the passing of time and, on closer inspection, I noticed many arrays of aerials.

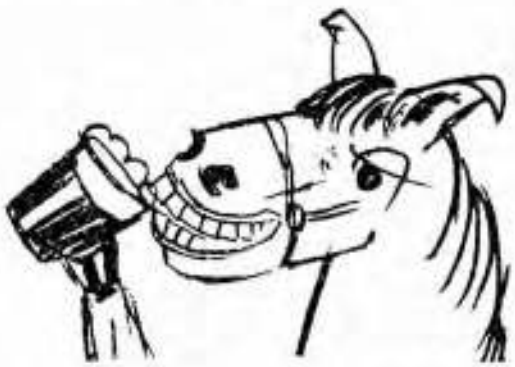
My first job, however, was to get onto the island, and this turned out to be a tricky operation. I had to swing by rope from the small boat that had brought me ashore to the pier steps, because of the heavy swell. Looking up from the boat, I saw many faces, ranging in colour from white to dark brown. The latter belonged to the St. Helenians who work for both Cable and Wireless and the Americans, and they are the happiest, most trustworthy and friendliest people I have ever met in my travels, and I now have many happy memories of their company. The other faces, of course, belonged to their employers.

At the top of the steps I was hailed by an American who ushered me into a vehicle and we proceeded to the U.S.A.F. Base. From this very affable character I learnt that Ascension was one of the chain of tracking stations for Cape Canaveral; hence the aerials. Although it is basically a U.S.A.F. station, only two people wear uniform (the Base Commander and an administrative sergeant), the remaining personnel being civilians from Pan American and other electronic companies who man the telemetry equipment and tend the 'satellite' administration of the base. First stop was for a meal, and I was confronted with a huge steak, mushrooms, french fried, and ice cream. This was the pattern of victualling that I would be enjoying during my stay. Although all meals are truly American, the sight

of the smallest would be enough to send any Supply Officer straight to the sanctity of a mental home. Communicators from *Protector* or *Puma*, who have visited us will endorse this statement.

After finding my accommodation and "checking in", I quickly found by smell and instinct the bar of the Volcano Club, American in the extreme—with a high padded cocktail bar, Hi-Fi stereophonic juke box, soft lights, and a patio—this is the centre of social life on the base. However, I viewed the clientele with some apprehension, as every time a 'twist' record came on the juke box they all hopped up and started gyrating around the floor. Little did I realise that within the space of a few weeks, when I had been bitten by the 'rock', and my square edges had been knocked off, I would be jolting in, and that some of the other naval members would be 'out-twisting' their American masters.

A further notion that Ascension was 'twisted' in more ways than one came to me when I saw a donkey poke its head around the club door and an American, without saying a word to anyone, picked up a freshly-opened can of beer and held it to the donkey's lips. Seconds later he replaced the now empty can on the bar. Since that time I have come to know 'Rebel's' drinking habits quite well, and, on several occasions, have seen him suffering from an almighty donkey-type hangover.



Sport, films, hobbies, and walks to the remoter parts of the island all help to make life here interesting and if one travels to the garrison town of Georgetown, life is seen to be some fifty years behind the times. Unlike the Americans who rely on airlifts for food, mail, etc., the Georgetown residents are largely dependent on the "Union Castle" and "Clan" lines for their food; only a small amount of fresh vegetables is grown on the farm on Green Mountain.

Yes, Ascension Island now has two faces, each with its place in history: the past which is revealed by the remains of the Navy of yesteryear, and the present, which appears as a missile base. Which would you have?

Postscript.—Since writing this article, the author has been home on leave, via Brazil and West Africa, thanks to the U.S.A.F. and B.O.A.C., and returned to Ascension on the *Pretoria Castle*. For past "Ascensionites", 'Rebel' was killed by a truck and buried with all solemnity.

A freak rainstorm hit the island in February and parts of the tarmacadamed roads were washed away. Was this an act from above to show disapproval of the island's 'changing face'?

THE SANDAL SCANDAL

by LRO(G) S. J. Rayner

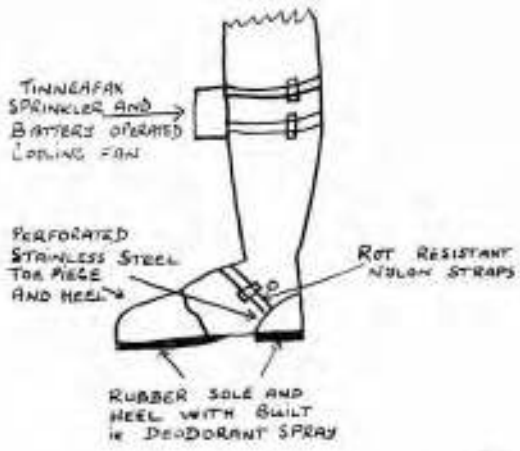
Those of us who have completed the foreign leg of a commission know that one of the major problems to be solved is that of making a pair of "Pussers" sandals last for that period. At the moment, mine have completed 12 months' service and, although I am not claiming a record, they still look comparatively new. They are held together by 8 copper tacks, 3 pin nails, approximately 35 staples, 2 paper clips, 1 aluminium rivet, 2 brass screws, 1 steel screw, 9 inches of masking tape, innumerable inches of sellotape and a thin coating of rust!

To prolong sandal life I gladly offer the following tips on preservation:—

(a) Avoid water—salt, fresh or bathroom.
(b) Avoid work; this causes perspiration which is not good for leather.
(c) Avoid kicking ringbolts or any other metal objects.
(d) Avoid wearing sandals and go barefoot (but be wary of the Grey Funnel Line).

These precautions are difficult to observe and, no doubt, some unfortunate will be lumbered so take heed and come prepared and visit your ironmonger without delay. Remember the old saying, "Have sandals, will Travel".

EDITOR'S FOOTNOTE.—*We do not intend that the magazine should compete with* WHICH, *but offer the following design of a suitable sandal:*



GOING THE ROUNDS IN MERCURY

SPORT IN MERCURY

Congratulations to the 2nd. XI soccer team on their fine achievement in winning Division III of the U.S. League for season 1962-63, thus gaining promotion to Division II. The 1st. XI enjoyed a good season and crept into the limelight by finishing third in Division I.

Our cricket trials followed, and although these did not produce much talent, we have since developed into a very useful side, which has won most of its matches. At the time of writing *Mercury* is in the the final of the Portsmouth Command Cricket Knock-out Competition, our opponents being *Victory*.

The highlight of the Summer Term was Sports Day on June 12th. The Met. Office laid on the sunshine and the Squadrons supplied the thrills. The first Trophy to be won was the Assault Course Cup, and, after being run very close by New Entries (*Ganges*), C and P.O.'s emerged as worthy winners in the fast time of 3 mins. 22.2 secs. This was not to be C and P.O.'s only win! To the cries of "FIXED", they also won the Tug of War and the Points Aggregate Cups. The "ROYALS", from Eastney, gave a very interesting Canoe Display in the swimming pool, and the Steeplechasers provided some water-works in the newly completed water jump, all of which was greatly enjoyed by a large gathering of spectators.

Immediately after Sports Day, the gales and rain returned to Leydene, frustrating our efforts to keep the Cricket league going. We survived this however, and the Squadron placings are fairly even, and it seems that no-one is a clear favourite to win the league.

CY Charles 'up the pole'.

Heartiest congratulations to the W.R.N.S. Athletic Team on winning the Command (W.R.N.S.) Athletic Trophy and to the men's team which almost won the Minor Establishments Trophy.

Six a side hockey and soccer will soon be under way and secretaries of both sports will soon be rushing around talent-spotting for the forthcoming season. A cold wind and the low pool temperature have so far defeated our efforts to get the Swimming relay and Water Polo leagues started, but we hope that they will be well under way by the time this is published.

MERCURY CLUB

The Club's entertainments programme has run very smoothly since the end of last term's "ice age". The dances, on alternate Thursdays, continue to be popular and, on Sports Day, a record crowd of about 300 danced to the music of Charlie Galbraith's Jazz Band!

CY Royal has been drafted and CY Patterson is now the "Tombola King". The Tuesday night cabarets are enjoyed by everyone except the losers, and the darts team is now managed by LRO Thacker, who is crying out for some new faces to go on runs ashore. The snooker competition was won by LRO Law who gave a very good display in the final.

CRS Almond continues to be the Club Chairman but our Secretary, LRO Edwards, has been drafted and has been replaced by LRO Kemp. Financially, the club continues to show a small profit and we are hoping to arrange more interesting entertainment during the summer, so come along and join us.

W.R.N.S. AT MERCURY

The Wrens of *Mercury* have done extremely well in the sporting world during recent months. In May, Wrens Hulse, James and Edgington (WRO M. 8) came first, second and third for the W.R.N.S. entry in the Queen Charlotte Cup Rifle meeting.

Wren Exell (WRO 33) and Wren Goddard (Ex WRO 31) competed in the Portsmouth Command Tennis Tournament and have been chosen to play for the Command on Tuesday, 2nd. July.

We have also done well in the athletic field by winning the Command Athletics Trophy by a clear 8 points from *Dryad*. Last year, *Mercury* were second, being beaten by *Daunt less* by 4 points. Wren Bain (Ship's Company) and Wren Naden (WRO M. 9) came first and second in the discus event at this meeting, and together with Wren Murch (WRO 32) have been selected for the Portsmouth Command Team in the Inter Command Championships.

Stop Press: Wrens Exell and Goddard won their matches!

"Naturally you will have to adjust to wolf whistles and passes once you're in the attractive WRNS uniform."

SIGNAL SCHOOL MESS

Since the last edition of THE COMMUNICATOR went to press, the office has come under new management. LRO(G) Hood, the previous tenant, will soon be on his way to Aden; LRO(G) Littlewood now occupies the chair and is assisted by LRO(G) 'Fingers' Byrne.

Welcome news for those members who remember the days when there were only eight to a mess—the two new blocks, long rumoured, are at last being built between Pascoe and Inglefield. Here's hoping the Signal School Mess benefits from their completion!

Another Sports Day, and associated dance, has passed. The Chiefs and P.O.'s were victorious on the track but it remains to be seen who were the victors at the dance! Blake Squadron gave the Chiefs and P.O.'s a run for their money but failed by a small margin. Blake's 'Champion', LRO Hampton, had been drafted a few days before the big day but he came back to compete—successfully—only to find that his points could not be included in our score!

CHIEF'S CHATTER

The lounge has now been redecorated, and it looks really nice for you to come home to. We hope the refurnishing by NAAFI (to whom we are very grateful for bearing most of the cost of the redecorating) will commence in the very near future.

The social life is still going very well and we average one social event per month and receive a fair amount of support; past and future members of the mess who live in this area are always welcome to attend.

At the time of writing, the turnover of Mess President is taking place: CRS Kelson is leaving the chair for the security of London Division of the RNR, and his place will be taken by CRS R. Taylor.

On the sports field we are doing very nicely; our cricket team results so far read—Played 3; Won 3, and in the recent Sports Day the C & PO's were clear winners—our only representative was imported from New Zealand and occupied number six position on the rope!

There have been many changes of personnel recently, and a greater number have left than have joined.

OUTS: CRS's Tinkler, Watkins, Pratt, Fleming.
CRS'(W) Figg, Duffin, O'Rourke.
CCY's O'Brien, McArthur, Butler, Baker.

INS: CRS's Huggett, Evans, Simpson, Baker.
CCY's Carter, Pearce, Palfrey.

We bid a special farewell and good luck to the following who have left the Service for the hazards of Civvy Street: CRS's King, Mulholland, K. Taylor, Lewendon, J. Lowe and CCY Stew.

IS IT CRICKET?

On Sunday, 16th June, 1963, it was reported in the National Press that in the cricket match, Old England v. Lords Taverner's, Dênis Compton, fitted with a concealed microphone and miniature transmitter, gave a commentary to B.B.C. TV viewers on the kind of ball he was going to bowl next, etc.

This advent of communications in cricket is rather apt, as the Bat and Ball ground at Hambledon is the birthplace of cricket. We take the liberty of providing the following excuse for any communicating cricketers who find themselves out for a duck.

"Did you mistime it?"
"No, I was mistuned!"

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS: The bowler will operate a transmitter to control the flight of the ball and the batsman will be equipped with a square cut jammer.

PASSING SHIPS

By T. G. Galloway, 3rd Officer M.N.

Before any navigating officer can hold a certificate of competency he must also have passed the Admiralty School of Signals examination, the chief purpose being that a ship will at all times have a competent signaller on the bridge.

In these modern days of Radio Telephony, one might ask what useful purpose is served by spending hundreds of pounds on signal lamps and flags for each ship, but it is quite surprising how often it becomes necessary to make full use of them.

Each ship is provided with over £600 worth of flags, a signal light fixed to the mast, and a portable lamp capable of being seen up to five or six miles on a sunny day and fifteen miles at night.

And so it was with such equipment that we decided to reach the ultimate standard of signals required by the Ministry of Transport, by continuous practice with passing vessels. That was at the beginning of the trip, and now, looking back through the "Remarks" column of our 'Log of Passing Ships', we find that it has not only been educational, but in many ways entertaining.

As some of our recent voyages have been in narrow congested waters, it has not always been possible to signal everyone, as the safe navigation of the vessel must always come first. But in 102 days no fewer than 500 ships have been contacted with the usual procedure of 'What Ship?'

Into a scrap log book have gone the names of ships, flag, tonnage, where from and to, and a few remarks. A fitting start to this book was the longest merchant ship afloat—the 66,000-ton luxury liner *France*—and she was to be followed by everything from huge tankers and liners to tiny coasters and cargo ships.

Cargo ships, alas we must mention last, because not only have they been found to be the poorest signallers, but many of them would not even answer. Of our 500 ships to date, only 119 of these have been cargo ships, the remainder being tankers, Men-of-War, and even a Danish salvage vessel who concluded her message with the usual 'Pleasant Voyage'.

The British and Norwegians appear to have the most tonnage afloat, followed by Greek, French and Liberian flag vessels, in that order. The international language at sea is English and therefore the nationality of a ship presents no problem. On one particular night for instance, we had no British ships passing at all but called and spoke with a Norwegian, Czechoslovak, French and Russian. The same night an Egyptian, a 411 ton Yugoslavian and a Polish vessel called us.

The latter flagships, like the Russians, are excellent signallers and their greeting or casual wave if they pass in the daytime, proves that no political barrier exists at sea. We have also found that it pleases the foreigners to have a few of their own words thrown into the message. A Bon Soir, Kitash, Gracias, Danke-Gute nacht or just plain 'Ganem Yem' are always welcome.

Quite recently, however, we were almost stumped by the B.P. chartered Norwegian *Polyglory* who was 'Kommer fra Skandi til Mena'! Without a doubt, he was a good signaller but found it easier to express, 'Coming from Scandinavia to Mena', in his native tongue. Then there was the Norwegian who explained that his ship had an English name because she was built in Skotland!

On the long haul from the Gulf to Australia, the sight of a ship on the vast expanse of ocean is always welcome. First-hand weather accounts can be exchanged as well as comments on Company ships in the area, the latest film library or where not to go when in Fremantle. One interesting ship we had down this way was the yacht *Vema* engaged in underwater survey in the Indian Ocean.

While the eight to twelve is the most popular watch for signals one can be sure of a 50 p.c. response on the 12-4. It is surprising, too, how many answer on the 4-8. However, as has happened on more than one occasion, one can call half a dozen ships in a watch and get no reply. After this had happened a few times, we decided to try a new method of approach. The standard call used nightly was dropped and the letters NMI flashed instead. This works like a charm! The receiver either consults his code book to find the meaning (I wish to exercise signals with you) or answers out of sheer curiosity!

The people most ready to signal, of course, are the Navy, and not so long ago when being slowly overtaken by the Auxiliary Tanker *Cherryleaf*, we all enjoyed a 2½-hour exercise. The presence of apprentices on both ships meant too that they could put into practice all they had learned from books about light, code flag and semaphore signalling.

Not like the ship of a well reputed British Tanker company, who, on observing our flag signal directed to him, replied by radio; 'Does your Second Mate know that he has two flags flying?'

Then there was the radio officer of a ship who read our 'Good Afternoon' and immediately got to work on his key. As a reminder that radio was the principal means of communication at sea, he tapped out the message: 'And good afternoon from me too!'

Seldom does a Merchant ship have the opportunity to call up a Navy ship, as the latter start to signal as soon as the Merchant ship is sighted on the horizon. Quite recently though, we got our lamp going first and enjoyed a few minutes conversation with a crack British destroyer who concluded his message with a 'Thanks for Brilliant Signals'. Another Navy ship, in the Persian Gulf, obviously had 'Common' connections. 'Did I know where Peel was?' After explaining that this was a picturesque hamlet in the Isle of Man, I found it quite funny when he replied with 'No. The *Border Pele*'.

Considering the size of the Lowland fleet, no fewer than 12 'Border' tankers have been called by

lamp and with only two exceptions, the standard was very high indeed.

Signalling too has surely been the start of many friendships. After a long chat on topical sea life, it is not unusual for addresses to be exchanged or an invitation given to visit the ship when in port together.

Arrangements for the change of films, the warning that a certain lighthouse is not functioning, rude remarks on the weather in the Gulf . . . all pass between ships in dots and dashes or by a paraphernalia of flags.

Whether it was the Polish *Syzmanowski*, or the more brief Norweigan *Kim*, all ships have given a few moments pleasure and the *Border Reiver* must surely be becoming a common name upon the high seas.

As a point of interest, the 16,000-ton *British Vigilance* was our 500th ship, the *Keep* and *Regiment* being 498 and 499 respectively.

Armed with an exercise book, pencil (ink for THE ships!) and a few minutes patience, much can be done to extend courtesy on the seas.

THEY WOULDN'T TALK

by RS J. Eilbeck, Staff of NLO Mombasa

Masai tribesmen in East Africa have not spoken to their employers for four days; they have not been sent to Coventry and have not been wronged by their employers but have been anointed by the "magic fluid". One morning, they appeared with shaven heads, and not a word did they speak to anybody who was not anointed. Because of this magic fluid, the Masai throughout Kenya and Tanganyika, except those of the Kajiado region, are all behaving in a similar manner.

The story goes back to last October, when there was a rainstorm south of Tanganyika Masailand. In one place, water formed into a pool, but, on examination by two Masai it was found to be a magical fluid and not rainwater. A voice from the pool told one man it would give him a cow (riches to the Masai) and from the sky came a cow! The voice said, "Take this fluid and cleanse all the Masai with it. Pour it on their hands and head, but do not cleanse the people of Kajiado. The fluid is everlasting in a magical way, so that if you leave a drop in a gourd overnight, the gourd is full in the morning".

We have only the word of the Masai for the pool and the cow, because Europeans trying to visit the pool have been unable to do so, their cars breaking down en route. Since October, Masai elders have toured Kenya and Tanganyika anointing fellow Masai with the magic fluid. After being anointed a man must not speak for the next four days, except to others who have been anointed, and women must remain silent for eight days. Both men and women have their heads shaved after the ceremony.

You may think this is a fairy story, but it's true, and national newspapers in East Africa carried the story.

DAWN BREEZE GUSTING TO $\frac{\text{ONE}}{\text{EIGHT}}$

by LRO(G) R. Turner

Accompanied by LRO(G) "Mick" Wormald and LRO(T) Sackett, better known as "SACLANT-REPEUR" to the unfortunates who have to be near him, I spent three storm-tossed weeks aboard the French destroyer *Chevalier Paul* during "Dawn Breeze 8" and I am now ready for anything "Pusser" cares to fling at me. One doesn't mind black coffee served up in a pudding dish for breakfast, but snails for dinner and shark meat for supper is too much. But for the unending supply of beer and "Le Rouge" (Red wine to you, Jack) I'm sure we would have starved! To be fair, the Admiral's chef made a very charming English speaking omelette which we "yomped" with great relish whenever possible.

Our job was to help the French Operators with manoeuvring as very few on board could speak English; in fact, there were only three French matelots who could speak English so you can imagine the difficulty we had in finding our way around. One evening LRO(T) Sackett asked one of the French P.O's in the mess if he would like a game of Whist—we ended up with two double whiskies! And Monsieur Sackett paid of course.

Yes, we had our laughs: news of our little escapade with the Admiral at 0200 soon travelled round the Fleet whilst in Brest; the snag was that the Admiral didn't ask for a shake at 0200! However, we'll know better next time.

P.S.—There won't be a next time if I can help it.

"Glad I can't understand him."

FIRST FOREIGN?

by Lieut. C. Maitland-Dougall

relieved when he was able to recognise them. Some

Once again the bows of the MFV rose unsteadily to the top of the confused swell that always seems to lurk off the Needles waiting to greet any venturing mariner. The Yeoman in the cramped little wheelhouse, thoughtfully puffed at his pipe which emitted clouds of evil smelling fumes. The JRO on the wheel gulped and fixed his eyes more firmly on the swinging compass card in front of his face, and tried to pretend that he felt quite alright; he was off to France, his first trip abroad. Somehow it didn't seem quite such a good idea as it had on the Saturday night when he was telling his Mum about it in the solid security of his home.

With fifteen JRO's and a seasoning of more elderly retainers of Leydene on board, MFV 1060 was off again. The first four or five hours were very quiet whilst the Juniors made up their minds whether they should emulate Nelson or join the hardened band who drink their tots in a Force Nine in the Denmark Straits. During this period of indecision little happened apart from the helmsman, fresh to the job, boxing the compass and revolving through all the thirty two points in his efforts to chase the lubbers line.

As night fell, the lights of France and Alderney swung lazily above the horizon—after a day of devious steering the Navigator was profoundly shouting between the dark of the upper bridge and the wheelhouse ensued and finally, after a few incorrect applications of those confusing corrections, variation and deviation, a fix was on the chart and course was set for the grey little harbour of Alderney. At a very late hour, with their heads full of such nonsense as 'coming to buoy shackles' and 'rack that wire' and other strange cries never heard in any self respecting BWO, fifteen JRO's collapsed on to their bunks and were quickly lulled to sleep by the faint heave of the swell coming round the end of the broken breakwater.

The roar of the diesel generator woke the boat and in crystal clear weather and calm seas the MFV was off again. With Sark and Guernsey distantly to starboard and Jersey and the lurking dangers of the dreaded Minquiers to port, the MFV steamed steadily all day except for a halt for a cold swim and a few unpredicable swerves from the helmsman. Towards evening France again appeared, and on top of the tide the MFV chugged slowly into the locks at St. Malo. The douanier looked at Flag Quebec, dutifully flying at the yard, and with a shrug of his shoulder indicated that we had really been a little over-zealous and should lower it at once before it became necessary for him to take such action as the laws of the Republic prescribe.

After the bleak coldness of Alderney, the warmth and shelter of the basin were very appealing and the towering walls of the ancient city seemed very friendly.

Next morning, after shaking off the lazy, inconsequential atmosphere of Brittanny, we were again on our way—this time, north to Jersey, where we had an appointment with the local Marine Cadet Corps.

After navigating with extra caution, because of the dangers which abound in those waters, we arrived in St. Helier which was crowded with boats all being loaded with new potatoes for England. Thirty young Marine Cadets swarmed over the bulwarks of our MFV and within minutes she was transformed into a warlike vessel and bristled with rifles and studded boots. Half an hour later we stole into a lonely bay at the west end of the island. Anchoring didn't seem to be on the syllabus of either JRO's or Marine Cadets, so the Captain and the Chief, who, in deference to such a military exercise had even exchanged his carpet slippers for gym shoes, swiftly cast many anchors over the stern. Rubber dinghies were launched, and amid a flurry of splashed water and excitement, the landing party were paddled ashore, and within minutes they were scrambling up the cliffs with portable sets hanging precariously from their home-made slings. Garbled enemy reports floated in on Naval Assault Secondary and finally, the cliff top sentries reported coloured flares inshore, which indicated the success of the raid. As darkness and the mist came down the last of the warriors returned to the beach and was ferried back to the MFV, the dinghy hands being dressed in swimming trunks! Returning to St. Helier in the fog was a little ethereal and the Captain pondered, with

considerable qualms, as to what would happen if the expected buoy should not materialise. However, all was well and we slid into the harbour for a brief night's rest before plodding back home.

At the Casquets, an uneasy swell was crashing onto the base of the lighthouse, and the sky was clouding over in an ominous way. CCN was filled with gale warnings but we set course for the Needles. The Chief withdrew to his engine room and urged the engine on to greater efforts, so that, as it grew dark the Needles light hove in view. With relief, we entered the shelter of the West Solent before the worst of the gale broke.

SIGNAL DIVISION AND NAVAL COMMUNICATION CENTRE WELLINGTON, N.Z.

This "hub of communications" of the N.Z. Station is situated on the top floor of a government building in Wellington, and we have a very good view of the city and waterfront. Incidentally, this excellent vantage point became crowded with the whole staff of Navy Office when Her Majesty the Queen arrived at Wellington during the Royal Tour.

Besides being the terminal for most of our overseas links and the station broadcasts, we serve a number of customers up and down the country. Of these, the most important is Navy Office, the equivalent of Admiralty, which is in the same building. The Air Force Comcen is a few floors below us and the Army Comcen is just a few blocks away. In addition to links with these other Service Comcens, we have links with *Irirangi* (the main transmitting and receiving station, which is near Waiouru, about 170 miles north of Wellington) and the main naval base at Auckland (some 400 miles to the north), the G.P.O. shore stations at Wellington and at Awarua in the South Island, the U.S. Navy Antarctic Operation "Deep Freeze" headquarters, near Christchurch in the South Island, and last, but by no means least, with the RNZNVR Divisions in Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin.

Our staff numbers 38 and is headed by Sub.-Lieut. (SD) (C) H. E. Miller, CRS J. N. Hewson, who is shortly moving to *Irirangi*, and CCY F. P. Black, and includes six Wrens to maintain the high tone of the place. Next door, D.S.D. Lt.-Cdr. (C) I. S. Sandeman, and D.D.S.D., Lt. (SD) (C) H. N. Alderton, keep their eyes on us, although they are likely to move downstairs before long to join the rest of the Navy Office Staff. (This will put an end to DSD's self-imposed exercise of climbing eight flights of stairs instead of using the lift!) Lt.-Cdr. (C) J. D. Gresson, whom Lt.-Cdr. Sandeman relieved at the beginning of May, has now left the Service and emigrated to the U.K. in search of pastures new.

At present the Branch is short of junior rates but things will improve by the end of this year. No doubt an additional impetus will be given to recruiting by the recent announcement that another improved Type 12 Frigate is being ordered for the R.N.Z.N. We have not followed the example of the Royal Navy in adopting a new Branch structure, but we understand that such a move is possible in the not too distant future.

We hope in future to produce regular contributions from this remote outpost of the Empire, and send our best wishes to all.

The following signal was recently received from the Chief of the Naval Staff who was travelling by car from Wellington to Auckland

Regret to report vehicle RNZN 433 rammed.
2. Ram died.
3. Continuing to Auckland under own steam.

COMMUNICATION TRAINING SCHOOL, NEW ZEALAND

by CRS D. Campbell

We are situated at North Head, right at the entrance to Waitemata Harbour, Devonport, Auckland. Like the majority of Signal Schools, we are remote from the main training establishment, and occupy a former Army camp site. Our first move towards "independence" started with the acquisition of a house just outside the gates of *Philomel*, the shore base. This was at a time when most training, other than basic training, was carried out in HMA Signal School. However, with increased training commitments, including senior rates' courses, it became necessary to expand, so during 1958 we moved to our present site. This involved a great deal of work by the staff, especially as the school was at that time unfenced and sheep greatly outnumbered naval personnel, which of course made

even more work! Our Port W/T is also situated here, and we have a wonderful view of Auckland Harbour and city. Accommodation is separate from the school, and involves a transport service to and from *Philomel*, about a mile away.

Gradually our outfit of Radio Communication equipment is increasing, although we fear that by the time we have most things we require, the next generation of equipment will be in vogue!

There are still quite a number of ex-R.N. Communicators among the Instructional Staff, although a lot of the "Old guard" have passed on into 'civvy' street. We shall shortly be saying farewell to Lt.-Cdr. Sanderson who is returning to the R.N. after serving here for the last two years. We wish him good luck and Bon Voyage.

An Instructor was taking a class of Wrens, and had gone to great lengths to describe the size and weight of the hammer which hangs on the bulkhead of certain Communication Offices. A day or two later a ship visit ensued, and on the bulkhead in the office was a very small hammer. One of the Wrens said she understood a substantial hammer should be used. The ship's RS scratched his head a second, then replied "Well, this is only a small ship. Small ship—Small hammer. Cruisers—bigger hammer. And a Carrier, well, you ought to see the size of theirs!"

"Your eyesight's perfect, you're just plain solid."

M.S.C.—SINGAPORE

It may be of interest to past and present members of the Far East Station that the Signal Centre in Singapore is undergoing a drastic reconstruction programme. No doubt old members recall the archaic conditions under which we work, but, fortunately, they should have improved before the end of the year as new offices are being built and new equipment will be installed in a new Comcen. These changes will mainly affect 'sparkers' and they will be working here on completion of the programme. With the exception of the C.W. Circuits most of their equipment, at present in Kranji W/T, will be moved down here.

The general feeling is that it will be a good thing when finished, as it is rather difficult to work with the roar of drills and inches of brickdust everywhere. Most of us feel that it is worth putting up with these inconveniences as we shall be working in a clean and well laid out office in the future.

Because of the large number of personnel required to run the new Comcen, and because Kranji is inconvenient it has been proposed that the staff should be accommodated in *Terror*, which is considered better for all concerned. If this proposed move does come off, those interested in sport should benefit as *Terror* possesses excellent facilities—soccer is played all the year round, rugby claiming priority from September to April, and there is a small golf course (9 holes) and squash and tennis courts. Don't forget your equipment if you are coming out here!

Commander Prince (F.C.O.) has recently joined us but our Regulating Chief, Fred Johnson, will have retired from the Service by the time this is printed.

MEDITERRANEAN FLEET COMMUNICATIONS BALL

Under the ever varying lights of the Palace Theatre, Pawla, and to the splendid music of the Oscar Lucas Band, the Communications Officers and Ratings of the Mediterranean Fleet held their Annual Ball.

Everyone enjoyed themselves enormously, thanks to the hard work put in by the organising committee principally by RS O'Brien of the C-in-C Staff, CRS Petchey of *Trafalgar* and Wren Jackie Nutt, of the Lascaris Communications Centre.

The raffle of many presents, generously donated by local firms, was a great success and an interesting feature of the evening was a Twist Competition, won by some very elegant dancing by Leading Telegraphist Giorgio Santi of the Italian Navy and Wren Sandra Thornett, both of Lascaris Communications Centre.

A few of those present: Admiral Sir Deric and Lady Holland-Martin, Vice-Admiral and Mrs. Cole, Rear Admiral Viscount Kelburn, Rear Admiral and Mrs. Walwyn, Captain Mackenzie, Captain Sommerville and Cdr. and Mrs. Shattock.

MESSENGER OF THE GODS

by CY R. M. T. Walker of H.M.S. Hermes

We arrived in Singapore as a Christmas present to the Far East, and since then the communications department of *Hermes* has had a lively time, and has operated with the Americans, Malayans, Pakistanis, Indians, Philippinoes, the R.A.F. and the Army. As a result of many exercises and much perseverance, a high standard of co-operation has been reached with the Army units and we now have a very strong liaison with them. The ship is affiliated to the Royal Corps of Signals and some of them have been to sea with us; in return, they have taken us on many sightseeing trips ashore including a trip round the New Territories during which we sighted Red China from a range of less than a mile.

For a large part of our time here we have been a Flagship, and on one occasion it appeared that FOAC and FO2FEF would have to resort to the "Noble Art" to decide whose flag would fly in *Hermes*. Fortunately, one of those *other* ships was around and the difficulty was resolved by FO2FEF leaving the "Messenger of the Gods" for the "King of the Jungle" and FOAC was then able to see how *Hermes* ticked over.

F.O.A.C. inspecting Comm's Department

During our refit in Singapore the ship's athletics and aquatic sports took place. We put up a fairly good performance, our star performer being RO2 Turner. In the Far East Navy Boxing Championships, RO2 Parr won all his contests and is the reigning champion at his weight, whilst RO2 Torrison lost in the finals.

By the time this edition is printed, the new Branch structure will have had its impact and we expect to see a Yeoman on the compass platform wearing a —— badge! The Junior Rates are moved around between departments quite regularly but it is difficult to persuade a sparker to remove his shirt whilst buntings take some time to realise that ZBZ5's both ways on fixed service is the ideal time to wet the coffee!

Unfortunately, we cannot boast of any visits to unusual places and have done the usual round to the Philippines, Hong Kong, and Singapore. We also had a telescopic view of Japan but we are still hoping, and if our hopes of a visit to a new place do not materialise then perhaps C.N.D. will have sympathy with us when he receives our Drafting Preference Cards!

To conclude, I offer the following true stories which may amuse some readers:

Who was the rating who sent a signal inviting guests to a Cocktail Party at 1930 when the original said that the party commenced at 1830 and ended at 2000?

Heard on Tactical Primary during a Commonwealth exercise: C/S de C/S Interrogative correct word after Gold Whiskey or Victor K.
de C/S I say again, word after Golf—*Wiskey*.

H.M.S. ALBION

by RO1(T) Webb and RO3(T) Botten

0200—what a time to write an article for The Communicator. Still it's all for *a good cause* and we hope it proves interesting reading.

Because of our role in the Borneo operations, we had to wait until the end of February before we could savour the delights of Hong Kong. However we certainly made the most of our three weeks stay there and had ample opportunities to visit the famous Floating Restaurants of Aberdeen, The Peak, and, of course to take a trip on the ferry to Kowloon. Our visit passed all too swiftly, and we quickly found ourselves back in Singapore.

During our spell here, our four candidates passed the first LRO's Fleet Board to be held on the Far East Station, at the S.T.C. Kranji.

Dreams of further relaxation were abruptly shattered and, at short notice we were ordered to sail for Sarawak with further troops and transport. Our role as a commando ship was again brought to the fore, and for the next three weeks we were kept busy as our helicopters were used to deploy troops and ferry stores to various parts of the jungle.

Three days in Singapore, and yet again the "Empire" *Albion* was called upon to ferry troops to Borneo to relieve those who had completed their spell of duty.

Then came the long awaited station leave. The ship commenced her refit and the Ship's Company moved into *Terror*. During this time the communications staff, aided by the ship's Royal Marine Detachment, showed their undoubted prowess when they cleared the board on Sports Day, and walked away with an armful of trophies after winning most of the events; this also included winning the aquatics and water-polo competitions.

Since our last report we have lost the services of LRO(G) Alderman and RO1(G) Rollins, who have returned to U.K., and RO2(G) Tetley who has been drafted to the *Loch Lomond*, but we welcome A/LRO(G) Foster into our midst.

We are now back at sea again, with the staff undoubtedly refreshed after their leave, and the ship gleaming throughout with her new coat of paint.

With almost half the commission completed, we are looking forward to a further visit to Hong Kong, although, no doubt, we will have to fulfil many other commitments before that happy day.

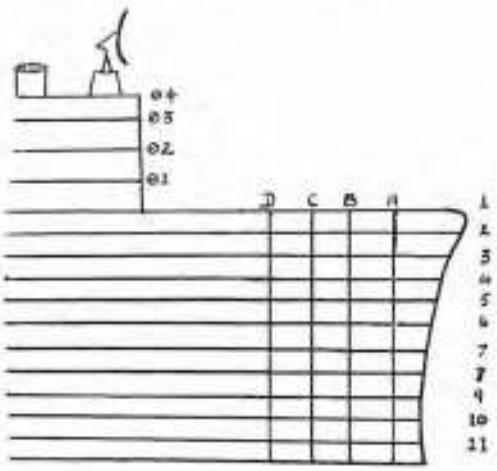
SIZE, SOUND AND S'ORGANISATION

by JRO Mytley of H.M.S. Ark Royal

I joined the *Ark* at Gibraltar on April 16th and am relating my impressions of the Navy's largest ship in an effort to provide an article *different from the usual kind*, for our magazine.

The first impression is SIZE. Like all our ships the *Ark* is divided into several decks, each deck having a particular number to identify it. The flight deck is numbered 1 and so on down to the double bottom deck which is 11. Those above the flight deck are indicated by a Ø in front of the number; hence, the MSO, which is four decks above the flight deck, is on Ø4 deck.

The ship is also divided into sections from forward to aft, each section having a letter from A to Z. Finally, compartments on the starboard side are numbered 1 and compartments on the port side 2, so when I was sent to 6J1 mess I knew that my mess was on No. 6 deck down, in section J (just about halfway between forward and aft) and on the starboard side. It took me a long time to find the various routes from one office to another, but, by mistakes, I soon learnt. The longest trek was from the Main Signal Office (Ø4K) to the Composite office (6N), which includes the Lower Receiving Room, Lower Transmitting Room and Cryptographic offices—in the tropics the trip is worthwhile, because 6N is air-conditioned.



Mytley's first chore

The second impression is of NOISE. Noise is part of carrier life and varies from the ear-splitting sound of jet engines revving up on the flight deck (which completely drowns the V/S Intercom from the bridge to the Flagdeck), to the drone of the huge fans, which keep the air as cool as possible, and the noise of programmes on the closed circuit Television which is provided in all messes.

The third impression is the ORGANISATION. When 2500 of us live and work together, a tremendous organisation is very necessary to make the ship work efficiently. For instance, on pay day we are paid as we go to 2C dining room for our dinner. The doc is crafty, because whilst in the queue, we are also inoculated before we get our fortnightly pay packet!

As one of the new breed of Communicators, half my time must be spent in the wireless office and the rest on the Flag Deck/MSO/Bridge, with a "change round" every two months. So far I have been on the wireless side, keeping watch on 500 kcs, learning how to keep watch on the RATT broadcast, RATT Fixed Service (which carriers use often), and double banking (with RAF bases ashore), on the morse safety frequencies and also on circuits with Army units for whom we occasionally provide air support.

On the visual side, I shall spend time learning to type and distribute signals; we were work-studied recently and have a simple system to serve the 250 officers on board but I hope that I shall get used to the world of initials (AVPIN, AOG, COD, ERP

and hundreds of others) in which the Fleet Air Arm seem to live. Also I hope that I will not mis-type the complicated stores signals which are day-to-day life in a carrier's MSO. A little later I shall be on a voice circuit on the bridge and then to the Flag Deck for visual signalling.

CHALLENGE FOR THE COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP

from H.M.S. Hampshire

If this article surpasses any contribution which may conceivably come from *Devonshire*, we in *Hampshire* will have achieved one of our aims!

We commissioned on 15th March, 1963, at Clydebank, in the presence of H.R.H. Princess Margaret and the Earl of Snowdon. The commissioning ceremony set the precedent, and many notable persons have visited the ship since then and, no doubt, there will be many more in the future.

Since commissioning we have been to many places—Portsmouth, Spithead, Portland and Weymouth to name but a few. In fact, to quote a famous advertisement, "Only 25, and already I have seen half of the South Coast of England". However, at the time of writing, we are enjoying our first foreign run ashore—a visit to Falmouth.

In the Communication Department we are one happy family, all doing jobs to which we were previously unaccustomed. Our large staff is presided over by Lt.-Cdr. Lord, assisted by CCY (Big Jim) Surridge and CRS's Hayward and Barclay—(G) and (W) respectively. Snags have arisen of course, but they are being ironed out, and jobs like *O.O.W. for the Communication Chiefs* are being mastered—the CRS(G) beams like a Cheshire cat when told to hoist a boat! Our Radio Supervisors and Yeoman are coping well with their Damage Control Watchkeeping and our "Communal Party Detachment" have just finished their first stint.

Recreational activities (such as fishing, deck games, cricket, football and bird watching) are strongly encouraged, and with all the modern facilities that we enjoy (television, laundry, air conditioning, cafeteria messing, etc.), it's not such a bad life after all.

We are always pleased to welcome communication visitors when we are in harbour and even visitors from *Devonshire* will be welcome if they want to be shown the light!

H.M.S. DEVONSHIRE

The first question many Communicators ask when they enquire about GMD's is, "Can a communications complement of 45 keep themselves employed aboard a destroyer?" The answer is found by considering the size of the ship and tasks she has to perform.

Firstly, she is bigger than a pre-war light cruiser and, secondly, she is a small aircraft carrier. On top of all this, there's the added problem, which no

H.M.S. Devonshire

doubt the "Tribals" also experience, that it's no good settling down to "Z Cars", when the ship is at anchor in St. Helen's Roads, in the comfortable knowledge that 'Stokes' has slacked back to four hours' notice for steam because he has only to press a button on the gas turbines and we're off!

Outside and inside she is really most impressive. At last a ship has emerged where the requirements of all departments have been dovetailed together in the design stage, the result being a ship in which it is easier to move, which is easier to keep clean, and in which it is more comfortable to live.

We have now been in commission for just over six months and they have passed very quickly. Our first four months were spent in U.K. waters during which the main occupation was weapons tuning—the more complex the ship the longer it takes—but after that we were away to the Mediterranean for two month's machinery trials and this was thoroughly worthwhile from every aspect. Sunshine at last, but, more important, for the first time we saw some other ships. Admittedly we were in company for only 24 hours each with *Virago*, *Ark Royal* and *Centaur* but we learnt a lot and the Tactical Operators were in business for the first time. We wore FOF Med's flag for ten days from Malta for a visit to Barcelona and we had *Cassandra* in company for seven days during this period. *Cassandra*'s joining presented a novel situation as we were doing 14 knots astern at the time! To signal this we used SPEED NEGAT ONE FOUR on the authority of an ex-C.S.S. I only wish we had a photograph to prove that *FORMATION ONE can be kept at 14 knots for half an hour with two ships facing each other!* We are now back at Portsmouth for leave and maintenance before continuing machinery trials.

Without going into details we have a lot of new gadgets to show Communicators, so if you want to see them just let us know and we will be delighted to show you round. It may have to be out of working hours, but we would like to show you our fine ship.

LION—TO THE RESCUE

Lion's introducton to the Middle East was not without incident, and on the 20th of February assistance had to be given to the broken-down

Indonesian motor-vessel, *Blewah*. This little coaster, built in Jugoslavia, was on her maiden voyage to Djakarta and was experiencing serious engine trouble. A team, which included RS E. Jones and LRO(T) Applegate, boarded the unfortunate vessel as a towing and repair party. RS Jones kept *Lion* fully informed of the situation from *Blewah*'s "B.W.O." using a Marconi Oceanspan, set on 2182 kc/s. A 634 set, manned by Applegate, was used between towing positions in the two ships. Jones was the envy of all, as rumour had it that an attractive woman, who had been sighted from the flagdeck during the early stages of the tow, was *Blewah*'s sparker! Unfortunately, the lady in question turned out to be the assistant cook, and as her cooking wasn't as good as her appearance, our Communicators were glad to return to us in Aden after their four-day ordeal.

During the voyage between Hong Kong and Saigon, *Lion* yet again performed an act of mercy and because of a good sighting by a lookout, six Chinese survivors were rescued from the ill-fated *National Glory*. Their boat had a Dutch radio set, similar to our 629, but it wasn't working because water had seeped into the set through a faulty drain plug. This clearly illustrates the importance of carrying out regular maintenance on such sets.

This year's S.E.A.T.O. exercise, "Sea Serpent", gave our sparkers plenty of work. In addition to taking part in the tactical phase, *Lion* had to act as a Central Information Bureau for the press, and a fixed service was maintained with Kranji W/T and two incoming information nets were manned. Needless to say, *Lion* herself received a fair amount of good publicity.

We have been kept very busy with plenty of exercises but, fortunately, these have been interrupted by visits to Manila, Hong Kong, Nagasaki, Osaka and Kobe.

LONG RANGE RADIO TELEPHONE

from H.M. Yacht "Britannia"

During a Royal Tour or Visit, one of the roles of the *Britannia*'s Communication Department is to provide an Overseas Radio Telephone Service. Calls by members of the Royal Family, Royal Household and their officials are made to the U.K. and to the countries being visited. These calls, and any calls made by the Yacht's officers or tour officials in connection with the Royal tour, are free of charge.

Britannia is fitted with a "Standard Telephones" Type DS9B SSB Medium Power transmitter and a Marconi Type HR 22 receiver.

To establish a call direct to the United Kingdom one can follow either of the following procedures:

(a) Pass a service message (ATEL) direct to Portishead radio quoting the serial number of the call, the person called, the person calling, the frequencies to be used, time at which the call is required, and the Yacht's position. On receiving the ATEL, Portishead pass it by teleprinter direct to Brent Radio Telephone Terminal, which is situated near Hendon in Middlesex.

" Darling you can't have another 2 bobs worth . . . . I'm 12,000 miles away y'know."

(b) U.K. Receiving Stations have continuous automatic monitoring facilities, known as "CODAC" (Carrier Operated Device Automatic Calling), on certain frequencies, to expedite the setting up of calls. A carrier is transmitted for a period of at least 90 seconds which sets off an alarm at the Receiving Station before the calling stations requirements are broadcast.

When satisfactory communication has been established with Brent, the call is put through to the International Exchange (Faraday House, London) and is then connected as a normal trunk call. All calls are automatically treated as "person to person". The head of the G.P.O. Overseas Telecommunications Department arranges maximum availability to the United Kingdom via linking stations and helps with Overseas Telephone requirements.

The arrangements during *Britannia's* recent passages to and from New Zealand and Australia for the Royal Tour give some idea of the range over which this system can operate and are as follows:

Most of the calls on the passage out were test

calls; they were made direct to Brent until arrival in the West Indies, a distance of 3,000 miles, and thereafter were linked through Barbados until within 1,000 miles of Fiji, giving a working range of some 6,500 miles, and then through Suva.

(It is of interest to note that Suva, owing to its geographical location, will soon be one of the main ship Radio Telephone Stations. It will become a link in the cable from Australia to Canada, the Australia-Suva cable having already been laid).

On departure from Fiji and whilst in New Zealand waters, Wellington was used as the link to London. Thereafter Sydney gave us valuable service until the *Britannia* was off East Africa when we reverted to Brent. One of the most outstanding calls made during the tour was direct to London from a position off the North of Madagascar at 1200 G.M.T. a distance of approximately 4,000 miles.

The Radio Telephone on board may be used by anyone for private calls—provided they pay—and several such calls have been made both to and from the *Britannia*, but when a Royal Party is on board, incoming calls have to be restricted slightly.

For charging purposes there are three operation zones: Zone "A", within approximately 100 miles of the U.K. coast—costs 10/6 for three minutes. Zone "B", within 1,000 miles of the U.K. (inclusive of the Mediterranean) costs £1. 16s. 0d. per three minutes, and Zone "C", outside the above areas costs £3 12s. 0d. per three minutes. Each additional minute costs one-third of the above rates.

HOME FLEET EXILES

from H.M.S. Keppel—F.P. Squadron

As this article is being written, we are about to leave the Land of the Midnight Sun and we hope to have a well-earned break after being at sea for almost a month. Our entry into the F.P. Squadron from the 2nd F.S. was rather hurried but we had to relieve *Malcolm* who had returned to Rosyth with a defect. Bang went our week-end and, to the disgust of many "Southern R.A's", we sailed from Pompey on 17th May, calling at Campbeltown, en route, to embark necessary stores.

During our patrol we had Trawler Net on continuous loudspeaker; any Voice Instructor would turn grey immediately if he encountered the procedure and unmentionable blarney which issues from one "oppo" to another on this net. We have done countless transfers during the patrol. These have usually been by Gemini (Inflatable Raft) and this method has proved very speedy.

The calls from the trawlers are usually for minor medical matters, radar assistance or advice, wires round screws, spares or anything in that line. The RO(T) on watch usually mans a 615 on such occasions and he informs the Bridge of the progress being made on a particular job. The trawlers usually make repayment in kind and a Belgian trawler showed its gratitude by giving us several baskets of king-sized prawns.

Our most interesting call for assistance came from the French trawler, *Alex Pleven*, of 1,700 tons. She had struck an iceberg and her forward hold was filling rapidly. We raced to her position, 25 miles off the North Cape, and our divers and damage control parties went into action and carried out temporary repairs. We then escorted her to Akureyri and managed to pump most of the water out of her before she went alongside to have more satisfactory repairs carried out. Eventually the trawler sailed for St. Malo but before doing so, she showed her gratitude and we received champagne!

"Smith . . . will you inform the young lady you've been wet for years . . . then tell'er to hop it"

Our refuelling on patrol is by means of a RAS with either *Wave Knight* or *Wave Chief*. Incidentally, ancient matelots who remember "Taff" Davey (ex LTO) may still see him on *Wave Chief* and he is still batting out short-arm semaphore, so if you think its taboo—think again.

Mail is a problem but thanks to the co-operation of the American Air Force and our own trawlers, we are able to keep in contact with the outside world.

We hope to be relieved soon and then we shall be back to Rosyth and, with luck, an E.L.W.E. to each watch! We have our "jollies" occasionally and anticipate visits to Brussels and Grimsby.

However, for the present, it is goodbye from the Arctic summer, so get your requests in now if you want a wonderful draft to the hunting grounds of European trawlers!

VISIT TO THE INDIAN SIGNAL SCHOOL

from H.M.S. Rothesay

During an informal three day visit to Cochin the Communications Departments of *Rothesay* and *Cavendish* were given the opportunity of seeing the Indian Naval Signal School.

This modern building was opened in 1958 by Vice Admiral Sir Stephen Carlill K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O. and is the latest of several specialist schools to be completed. All the schools are near to each other which allows for one administrative control—only one set of Pussers and Doctors etc—and enables each other's equipment to be used. For example, the 691 and 692's fitted in the Signal School can also be used by the ND School.

The voice cubicle classroom was one of the more impressive features. It is a large air conditioned room with twenty sound-proofed cubicles, and a large control desk fitted with a tape recorder—the whole layout being ideal for the purpose. Other features were two V/S masts, each having an enclosed bridge alongside; although there is never any snow in this area the enclosed bridge is still very necessary as Cochin is in one of the heaviest rainfall areas in India. Equally impressive was the V/S procedure classroom with a modern teacher. The list could be longer still but what I have related will give some indication of the general standard of instructional equipment, which is clearly producing excellent results, as we know full well from exercising with the Indian Fleet during "JET 63".

New Entries come to the Signal School after forty-four weeks at a Basic Training Establishment, where they are taught a little about communications. At the Signal School they carry out a thirty-four weeks course before going to sea; this includes a few days in either the Training Squadron attached to the Base or the Fleet, if it is exercising off Cochin. They return again to the School for Leading Hands Courses, 16 weeks for Leading Telegraphists and 15 weeks Leading Signalmen—the old titles are still in use—and, of course, again for Petty Officer and Instructor Courses.

Their problems, although different from ours, still exist. Since it may take a man up to a fortnight to travel home by train, bullock cart and on flat feet (the last week), three months leave a year has to be granted, which still may allow only a month per year at home. So there are some advantages in a Country House in Hampshire.

We all came away extremely impressed with this modern well laid out school and the high standard of instruction it was producing—clearly, the Indian Navy was very well served.

FLESH POTS OF THE MIDDLE EAST

from H.M.S. Loch Fyne

During our final commission we have managed to steam nearly 35,000 miles during which we have visited the major flesh pots of the Middle East including Mombasa, Tanga, Bombay and Karachi and have taken part in many exercises. We have also visited several Persian Gulf ports including Das, Abu Dhabi, Doha, Abadan, Dubai, Muscat and Bandar Abbas. Some of these small arab towns had little to offer for the "run ashore kings" but our RS (RS Brabon) never daunted, always seemed to be highly successful in his shoreside activities! Our Yeoman (CY Ayden) who was president of the Petty Officers' mess and was not averse to a good run, found the RS a problem at times. For the rest of us, Tanga was the place that really lashed us up and just about the whole ship's company was 'uphomers'. There was one exception and RO2(T) Wakefield decided that Mombasa was better value, and after our arrival in Tanga, he hotfooted it 88 miles back to Mombasa: he is now engaged, and hopes to be married later this year.

The sparkers have upheld the ship's rugger team, which RS Brabon, a man of stamina, has captained; RO2 Davies and RO3 Ball have played regularly for the team. LRQ(T) Smith, LRO(G) Sleight and RO3(T) Smith have been regular members of the hockey team whilst other members of the department, namely RO's(T) Robertson, Bills and Cotter and RO's(G) Skinner and Thompson, have played a major part in maintaining values of the shares of Watney's, Tusker and Amstel.

H.M.S. LOCH FADA

by RO2(G) Hunt

This article, which I believe is the first from *Loch Fada*, is being written in Jesselton where we are having a well-earned rest after our Japanese cruise. The next job on our list is that old faithful in the Far East—North Borneo, Anti-Piracy Patrol, but details of that will appear in our next article. For the present I will relate the events of the past twelve months.

After commissioning at the end of June, 1962, work-up presented us with no special difficulties and we were soon on our way to the Far East to join the 3rd F.S.

On reaching our fuelling stop at Gan we were ordered to proceed to Malé, the capital of the Maldive Islands, and protect the British Nationals residing in the group. There had been a bit of trouble concerning taxes between the natives of Addu Atoll, one of the group in which Gan is situated, and the Government of the Maldives. Britain had refused to take sides in this dispute and Nasir, the Maldivian Prime Minister, had said that he could no longer guarantee the safety of any British nationals resident in the Maldives. Consequently it was decided that the Navy should step in and perform its function of protecting Britain's interests abroad!

After ensuring the safe evacuation to Colombo of all British personnel except the Commonwealth Relations Officer, who remained behind to try to settle the trouble, we became the main communication link between him and the Government.

After three weeks we were relieved by *Caesar* and then we proceeded to Singapore arriving on the 14th December.

During our stay in Singapore, which included a self-maintenance period in dry dock, full opportunity was taken to avail ourselves of *Terror*'s sports facilities. Twice our communications football team "thrashed" *Lincoln*'s and received beer at their expense in the Armada Club, *Terror*.

The Christmas holiday over, we ammunitioned, stored and set out for Brunei Bay to relieve *Blackpool* as guard ship. Three shore parties were landed, with a sparker in each to operate a 622, and the War on the Rebels was continued.

This was followed by a brief stay in Singapore and then we went on to our S.A.R. position in mid-Pacific for the Queen's return flight from Australia. On the way we visited Manus in the Admiralty Islands where we were entertained by the Australian Navy, and Suva, the capital of Fiji.

We then proceeded to the famine stricken Phoenix Islands to land much needed supplies for the natives. They showed their gratitude by staging a magnificent display of native dancing and singing, complete with dusky maidens in grass skirts!

Then to Hong Kong via Guam. Need anything be said of any ship's stay in this 'Pearl of the Orient'?

On the 8th May we sailed for Japan where we visited the ports of Moji, Muroran and Maizaru, and on completion of this hectic trip we sailed for Jesselton, which brings us to date.

So far it has been a most interesting and varied commission and many of us will have no regrets if another Far East draft comes our way as the next one may even be better!

H.M.S. NUBIAN

I saw it first in Pompey Dockyard, a big heap with a rabbit hutch on top, covered with scaffolding, wires, dockyard maties and gash! A few weeks later, after two false starts, it actually put to sea and without too much trouble, completed Contractor's trials. In October 1962, it commissioned, this 2,600-ton, fully air-conditioned, bunks for all, cafeteria messing monster named *Nubian*.

Destined for the Gulf, we got acclimatised at snowbound Portland in the middle of winter. It was hard going, although not as bad as we had been told, but we learnt a lot and enjoyed it.

We thought we were in for a quiet time from then on, but have not found it so yet. Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean, Admiral Sir Deric Holland-Martin (Captain of the last *Nubian*) came out with us for manoeuvres, and with two appendicitis cases on board, we were kept pretty busy.

But Chief it states "For onward transmission kindly redress."

It was rather disconcerting at Suez to find ourselves broadside on to the searchlights of a North bound convoy, but we backed out of the way in time. We had our first sample of the Middle East when we put in to Massawa (Ethiopia); wine and song were expensive, but who cares! Luckily (?) we only stayed there a day and were soon on our way to Aden and Bahrain.

After a couple of days we left again for Exercise "Khargex", with ships of the Iranian and U.S. Navies, and then on to the island of Das, where "Red Barrel" (on tap) flowed almost as fast as the oil; we look forward to another trip there later.

At the moment we are maintaining in Bahrain, but are kept busy with a fantastic amount of traffic. We still find time for sport though, and although it means that those who do not play are on watch, we have lost only one of seven inter-part games, and are willing to prove that we are the fittest Comms Department on the station.

H.M.S. WHITBY

Our last article found us outside the South Atlantic Station as guard ship in the Maldive Islands; it seems that few ships cross the Indian Ocean nowadays without having a spell there.

Mid-February seemed to be an unfortunate moment to be relieved by *Cavendish*, for this coincided with the Government's decision to deploy a second carrier with escorts East of Suez. *Whitby* was an obvious choice as one of the escorts and so we went straight to Aden and worked with *Centaur*, between the Gulf of Aden and Kenya, for the next two-and-a-half months.

After Easter at Mombasa, we sailed for South Africa again, calling at the Seychelles on the way. We all know the reputation of these attractive islands, where girls outnumber the men by about four to one! Even allowing for this happy state of affairs, the visit still surpassed our expectations.

Early May marked our return to Simonstown, and looking back, those three-and-a-half months off station were not so bad as one might imagine. Everyone was stocked up with Aden rabbits and, as always happens, the ship, herself, improved her efficiency as a result of some carrier time.

A visit to Durban and its well-known racecourse ended May most successfully.

BERMUDA BOUND

from 17 FS—1st Division

Our absence from these pages in the last issue can be directly attributed to the cold winter, which forced us to seek warmer climes. In the West Indies we were much too busy to write articles for THE COMMUNICATOR—though this was not entirely due to the effort of reading a C.W. Broadcast!

British Guiana mistimed their riots this year, for we were already on our way home, and our only "incident" was rushing Lord Avon (Sir Anthony Eden) to Barbados for a medical check-up. This curtailed *Urchin*'s sojourn in Montserrat, but they did have time to put "Radio Montserrat" on the air again; this was a relatively simple job as their transmitter is a modified type 89, and its repair brought great joy to the inhabitants.

After a final fling in Bermuda, we headed for Guzz, where we took some leave and embarked a new group of Cadets before sailing again—for Bermuda! This time we left *Urchin* with the 2nd Division—the "stay-at-home-boys"—Captain (F) having transferred to *Tenby*, a new arrival in the Squadron. *Torquay* replaced *Vigilant* at Christmas so *Wizard* is now the odd one out in the 1st Division.

From Bermuda we took our 150 cadets to Annapolis, where the U.S. Naval Academy trains 4,000 midshipmen at a time. Boston then saw considerable improvement of Anglo-American relationships, and we are now heading up the St. Lawrence Seaway to celebrate American Independence Day at Cleveland, Ohio, nearly 2,000 miles inland.

CCY Edge transferred from *Urchin*, condemning CY Malet to Cadet Training duties, and RS Perrow was relieved by CRS Parlett, who started afresh in the 17th F.S. Due to the American influence (where he is known as "Moosehead"), that first freshness is not now so obvious, whilst Cadet Manoeuvres is making the CCY look his age—much more than Portland ever did. His last words—"Hear you clear but distorted".

Seated one day in the Mess, I was lonely, fed up and miserable. "Cheer up" they said, "things could be worse".

So I cheered up—and sure enough they got worse.

COMPETITION

A prize of half a guinea will be awarded to the best caption for this cartoon.

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R.N.A.S. ABBOTSINCH

by Sub.-Lieut. K. Reith

With our closure date rapidly approaching this seems an appropriate time to give a brief resume of the history of this station.

In 1932, Abbotsinch was first opened as an airfield by the Royal Air Force who used it as the Headquarters of No. 602 Squadron, Royal Auxiliary Air Force, until, on the outbreak of the Second World War, it became fully operational. Amongst the many tasks performed here by the Royal Air Force at that time was the training of Naval Torpedo Crews.

The geographical position of the airfield, however, made it ideal for naval purposes. The deep water of the Clyde was suitable for berthing aircraft carriers and from there, it was only a short trip by water up the Rivert Cart to Abbotsinch, where damaged aircraft could be repaired and test flown. Thus, in September, 1943 the airfield was transferred to the Fleet Air Arm, and provided accommodation for four disembarked front line squadrons, maintenance facilities for carriers in the Clyde and also acted as a salvage and storage unit for about fifty aircraft. Three hard runways were constructed; these were made of American steel tracking laid on embankments which were built to a height of four and a half feet above the general airfield level. Flying began the following year when No. 768 Squadron carried out deck landing training with carriers operating in the Clyde.

In 1943 No. 1 (Scotland) Air Training Corps Gliding School was formed at Abbotsinch, and sixty-four cadets were trained during the next two years. Gliding activities then ceased until the formation of No. 663 A.T.C. Gliding School in 1960 and they still continue to fly from here at week-ends.

The Glasgow University Air Squadron (equipped with Harvards and Tiger Moths) began flying here in 1946, but four years later they transferred to Perth.

1947 saw the formation of 1830 (R.N.V.R.) Squadron (flying Harvards, Fireflies and Seafires) for anti-submarine duties. Later, the Squadron expanded into the Scottish Air Division, but in 1957 the axe fell and the Division was disbanded when the national economy ruled that R.N.V.R. flying should cease.

By 1950 the old metal runways had worn out and the flying task was temporarily transferred to Renfrew Airport, while the present tarmac and concrete runways were constructed.

In more recent years the task of the Station has been fourfold:

To accept new aircraft from the manufacturers, fit them with the latest modifications and then test-fly them before delivery to other ships and establishments for squadron service.

To inspect and modernise aircraft which had been in squadron service for some time.

To store aircraft at a high degree of readiness for future use. Lastly to salvage useful parts from obsolete aircraft before they were sold as scrap.

It follows from the nature of the task that the work varied in intensity and there were times when it was necessary to work night and day to meet the deadline. Even now, shifts are being worked to ensure that the few remaining aircraft are completed and flown out before we go out of routine.

Most of the flying from Abbotsinch has been test-flying—an exacting job in which aircraft are put through a stringent series of tests before being certified as fully serviceable. Quite a large and varied selection of aircraft have passed through our hands ranging from, in the early days, Swordfish, Seafires, Firebrands, Sea Furies, Avengers, Attackers, Sky Raiders, Gannets, Vampires, Sea Venoms and Sea Hawks to the present day Hunters and Sea Vixens and have also included such aircraft as the Albatross, Sea Balliol and Sea Prince; some of these are depicted in the accompanying photograph. The lighter-than-air vehicle in the centrepiece was constructed for an Air Display Day and, incredible though it may seem, reached an altitude of 30 feet—thereby passing the take-off test—but unfortunately, it failed the remainder of the proving tests by returning to base rather rapidly!

In October this year Abbotsinch will cease to be a Naval Air Station, after twenty years under the White Ensign and thirty-one years flying and, regrettably, our next contribution to THE COMMUNICATOR will also be the last.

R.N.A.S. BRAWDY

Tug-of-War Team.

Since our last contribution the countryside has been transformed from the snows of winter into a really glorious scene and, at present, the climate is almost tropical. We have had to pay for it of course, and we are subjected to water rationing! The water shortage is due to the inadequacy of the local supply, and we had water rationing in the depths of winter! It was once said that only a genius could produce a shortage of coal or fish in Britain and I reckon that the saying could equally apply to water in Wales!

Gradually we have been building up to our full complement and, thanks to the co-operation of C.N.D., we are now in a strong position numerically. CRS Harris (ex-*Kranji*) and CY Betts (ex-*Tiger*) have grasped the reins very firmly and sorted out a few of the "bugs". RS Courtman is about to depart for *Meon* and has been rushing around the countryside doing various courses to fit him for the rigours of the Gulf.

The station is beginning to hum at last (nothing to do with the water shortage!), with the advent of our first squadron and Sea Vixen task. All our new equipment is fitted and has been duly tested and tuned by A.S.W.E.—some of it is "foreign" to us and will take some time to get used to.

The station's sports day was a welcome day in the open, and the staff put up a very creditable show and were finalists in the tug-o'-war contest. Special mention should be given to LRO Greatrex who won the high jump in fine style.

R.N.A.S. CULDROSE

The new V.C.P. is nearing completion, and will be ready for use in August. It is ultra-modern, resembling a glass octagon, and many people think it looks strange perched on the top of a *circa* 1946 tower, but its assets are legion. The glass sides and high position give an unimpeded view of the airfield, and the slanted windows prevent the glare of the sun's rays. It is fitted with air conditioning and is very spacious, the latter feature being gladly anticipated by the Wren Radio Operators, who are at present manning Channel Two and Bravo in the rather cramped, temporary V.C.P.

Having described the new V.C.P., we move downstairs to the C.R.R. A new office has been built for the SCO but, at present, it is the grace and favour residence of the RS. He is a very active Petty Officer but does not wish his presence here to be reported, so of course we will disoblige him! The C.R.R. is a wonderful draft for any RO2(G), recuperating slowly after a hard spell at sea, as his female counterparts, Wren Radio Operators (M), will tackle the tedious tasks such as deck-scrubbing, coffee brewing, and cigarette distributing. This leaves him free to monopolise Ship/NAS, Submarine Safety and Wrens of other categories! The most important Channels in the C.R.R. are, of course, Guard and Delta; a close watch is kept on these, with the awful knowledge that tape recordings, unlike man made logs, never die.

Down in the P.C.B., the Wren Radio Operators (Minus M) and the Wren Switch/Ops. are probably the most consistently busy Communicators at Culdrose. Truly, their motto should be "Slavibus Del Snorum" (We slave while others snore)!

The RO2 whose part of ship is the W/T Office in the P.C.B., also deserves a mention; his efficient running of the various exercises has kept our less-used communication talents in working order.

SIGNAL TRAINING CENTRE ST. BUDEAUX

The "Hydrographic Goat", temperamental and a great lover of unpainted canvas flag-locker covers, could frequently be seen standing in lonely supremacy of the "long" grass at the S.T.C. Officially, the goat's job was grass eating, but he took great delight in chasing unfortunate Communicators who chanced to walk within the Tactical Diameter of his chain. It was decided in higher circles that the four-legged lawnmower in the S.T.C. should be a sheep and the ex-Reg. Chief was required to acquire one in good order.

"How does one obtain a sheep?" At first it seemed impossible, but a local farmer, after being convinced that the enquiry was neither a skylark nor a hoax from the "other place", suggested that

a visit to Tavistock market would be a good idea. Accordingly, the "Sheep Obtaining Team" set off to the wilds of Dartmoor. There were sheep readily available at the roadside across the moor but one look at these wild and woolly monsters convinced us that the "Hydrographic Goat" would be in peril of losing its seniority or maybe its life, so we continued our journey.

A roadside briefing was held before entering Tavistock; after all, a casual wink, nod or blow of nose may have brought us a herd of Bovine Brothers. The Reg. Chief gave great emphasis to this point for he had attended an auction at a country house and a wave to his wife across the room had brought him two dustbins for five bob!

Across the road from the market is the Cattle Market Hotel where, in the public bar, one can listen to the farmers flogging their wares over a glass of mild and bitter.

At irregular intervals the door flies open and a besmocked youth yells out "They're on fat porkers now" and he returns to the market followed by those interested in "fat porkers". Our biggest problem was to convince the locals that our intentions were sincere ("Us knows how you Navy blokes gets up to mischief") but eventually a gentleman approached us and enquired if we knew Lt.-Cdr. Samuel George Smith—a well-known figure to all Communicators who had enjoyed the luxury of Glenholt Signal School in the old days. It transpired that our new found friend was an ex-C.Y.S. named Bill Luscombe, now aged 70 and still capable of marching manoeuvres and a "George One Zero".

Communicators of any age or vintage invariably help each other and so within a matter of minutes we were introduced to another man named Barney. Barney's sheep were house tamed to a halter and, what's more, Barney undertook to shear and dip the sheep periodically, if we bought one from him. The usual haggle about the price followed, and finally the transport arrangements were concluded and so "Larry the Lamb" was borne on the books of H.M.S. *Drake* (S.T.C.).

We anticipate future sales of bales of wool at competitive prices but at the moment, our requirement is for a shepherd of able rate wishing to go through for his crook. Any volunteers?

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SEE EUROPE ON THE CHEAP

By Lieut. G. M. Tullis

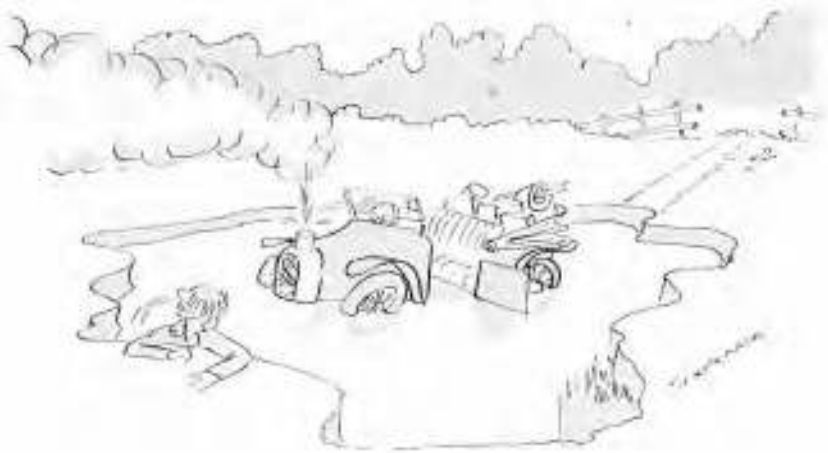
Some years ago I enjoyed a three-week tour of France in a pre-war Opal motor-car. This car's main characteristics were a top speed of 35 m.p.h., a clutch with built-in vibration, and a radiator which insisted on boiling at regular intervals! Economy was the main object and was achieved by living off the "countryside" and sleeping in barns (most uncomfortable and not recommended), by the roadside or, occasionally at camping sites. I still retain happy memories of the tour and recall putting caustic soda, salt, thin oil and many other ingredients in the radiator to try and cure its ailments.

Last summer my wife and I desired a continental holiday but money was still scarce, so with some trepidation we decided to have a go at camping. We are by no means camping or "out-of-doors" addicts, but the holiday was a great success, so if you are considering a cheap motoring holiday on the continent, the following comments may be of some assistance to you.

Firstly prepare the car and arrange a passage across the Channel. This can be booked through any Travel Agency and, for a car and two occupants, costs about £18. Next, write to your insurance company and obtain a "Green Card" which extends your insurance cover to the countries you wish to visit (except for sports cars, this is supplied at no extra cost). The only other paper work involved is a customs form, which is signed as you leave and re-enter the customs to prevent you selling your car abroad; the form can be obtained at the port of embarkation. If you are a member of the A.A. or R.A.C., the above is done for you. However, there is so little work involved, that the only real advantage gained by being a member (Cost: £2.2.0 membership; £3 overseas services) is the assistance given in case of breakdown. As a form of insurance, it is probably worth it, even if only for the comfort derived when you think you detect that knocking sound in your back axle. Last summer I was the only motorist on the Channel Ferry who wasn't a member of either organisation! However, I made sure my car was thoroughly checked over before setting off.

Next on the agenda is the question of clothes and equipment. As the space in our car was very limited we took the absolute minimum of both but in fact it turned out to be quite sufficient. With a bigger car of course, you can take more and you may wish to indulge in rather more sophisticated entertainment than that which we could afford. Being complete novices and having little equipment of our own, we scrounged and borrowed most of our gear and so it was not ideal. A two-man ridge tent provided an adequate roof over our heads, though a built-in ground sheet would have been less draughty. (Continental campers are professionals and have the most elaborate canvas houses). However, as well as a tent, ground sheet, and sleeping-bags, the other real essential for comfort is either a lilo or a camp bed to sleep on; I prefer a lilo.

So much did we enjoy outdoor cooking and eating, that only three times during the whole tour did we treat ourselves to a restaurant meal. Simplicity was the rule and our cooking equipment consisted of a kettle, frying pan, and cooking stoves. We used two solid fuel stoves which are merely small metal stands, in which a tablet of solid fuel is burnt; they are clean, simple to use, cheap to run and occupy very little space. Breakfast consisted of coffee and French rolls, and a thermos flask was filled with coffee for the rest of the day. During the forenoon we would stop at a market to buy fruit, cheese, bread, tomatoes, wine and paté, which made an excellent picnic lunch. In the evenings my wife cooked supper while I pitched the tent and put out the camp beds and sleeping-bags. Afterwards we both tidied up and changed for the evening, the



entire operation being completed within an hour.

As well as a comprehensive collection of maps, a guide of the camping sites is just as important for this kind of holiday.

The camping sites are situated all over the continent, and the more attractive the area, the more there are. One can join various organisations which provide their members with information and literature and other services. Not only is it important to know where the sites are, but it is useful to know what facilities they offer, (hot water, showers, shop, cooking arrangements, etc.). The hot showers are usually very good value and operate on the coin in the slot principle, and I encountered no difficulty in finding plugs for my electric razor. On the camping sites one invariably meets "fellow campers" who can be a tremendous help. In fact, though we had planned our route in some detail, it turned out that our eventual route was based almost entirely on the recommendations we picked up as we went along. And this very fact is perhaps the greatest and most exciting advantage to be gained from a camping holiday such as ours. You have complete freedom to follow your fancy, to go where you want, when you want, and even then change your mind! If it's a nice spot, then stay there a few days. There are no worries about accommodation or cost! The total cost of our holiday was about £60, for which we motored 2,200 miles and visited Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Luxembourg and France. Petrol was responsible for about one-third of this whilst the Channel passage took another third and £20 covered everything else. Our tour could have been done in considerable ease and comfort, if you could afford it but if you can't, then why not try it our way.

PURCHASE TAX-FREE CARS

One of the advantages of a foreign draft is the opportunity to buy a British car free of purchase tax or, in the case of a foreign car, free of import duty as well. The purchase tax on a car is normally 25 per cent and the import duty a little over this figure, so the saving can be substantial; in fact, in some cases, it is possible to buy a car purchase tax and duty free, use it for three years and then sell it in the U.K. at its original cost. If you have the capital to buy a new car or to put down the deposit to buy it under the NAAFI Car Hire Purchase Scheme, it is worthwhile looking into the details to see whether or not you qualify for the purchase tax concession.

Motor manufacturers, or their approved agents will arrange all the formalities necessary to get these concessions if you give them details of your overseas tour when you are choosing the car. Briefly, the

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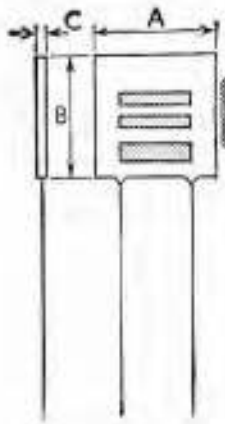

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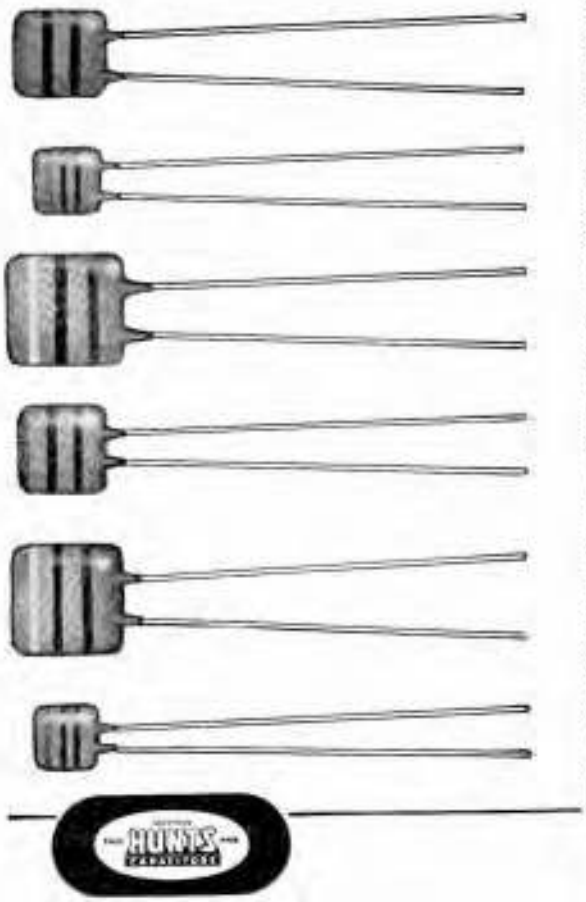

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If you use the car less than twelve months abroad, or if you sell it, you will have to pay purchase tax and, if it is a foreign car, import duty as well. If you are buying the car with the help of the NAAFI Car Hire Purchase Scheme, it is possible to get cover against having to pay purchase tax because you have been prematurely repatriated to the U.K.; this costs as little as £5 for many British cars.

If you are due to go on an overseas posting, you can get your purchase tax free car in U.K. and use it for up to six months prior to taking it overseas or, if you have been in U.K. less than twelve months in the last two years, you can use it still longer in U.K.—for up to twelve months before exporting it. If your draft chit is cancelled you will have to pay the full purchase tax, and if it is delayed beyond six months or a year you will also have to pay purchase tax unless you can arrange to hand over the car to the manufacturers to be stored in bond until you go abroad.

In this short article it is impossible to cover all the points but if you have any doubts about whether you qualify for these concessions you should put the facts of your case to H.M. Customs & Excise, King's Beam House, Mark Lane, London, E.C.4.

A further point worth bearing in mind is that if you are running a purchase tax free car in this country, prior to export, and it becomes a total loss, you will have to pay the full purchase tax. Therefore, it can pay you to insure the car for the purchase tax paid price. Similarly, you should arrange with your insurance agent that your car is covered for the purchase tax duty paid value while overseas, in case you have a total loss and find that you are posted home before you have earned a concession on the replacement car, which must be used abroad for a further year.

LE-JOUST

by Lieut. (SD) (C) W. Dawson

As a result of Television and the cinema, most of us are familiar with the sight of a "Knight of Old", armed with a lance, unhorsing another Knight whose lance always seemed to splinter, to the cry of "Take that you wretch", or some other appropriate cry.

It was once my doubtful privilege to participate in a nautical version of one of these contests. My ship, on a visit to the South of France, had been invited to "field" a team for "Le Joust", as had an American destroyer which was on a similar visit. No-one understood what was involved and so there were no volunteers, but the First Lieutenant—no doubt a descendant of Merlin—worked his magic over a glass of wine provided by a local Baron, and the Buffer, the chief OA and I were in! The brew must have been very powerful because "Jimmy" was also in the team!

Attired in swimming trunks, we made our way to a small jetty, still not knowing what was involved. Our progress was impeded by large crowds but, as it was a feast day, we were not alarmed. Eventually we reached the water's edge and, from the reception we received, we realized that we were soon to take part in the competition. At the same time we discovered what was required of us! A fully manned six oared boat was pulling away from the jetty; the coxswain stood in the stern, but overhanging the stern there was a little wooden platform five feet above the surface of the water. On the platform stood a man dressed in swimming trunks and a coloured shirt; his chest and stomach were protected by a wooden shield, which was supported by pieces of cord around his neck and waist, and, under his right arm, he couched a long, wooden lance, the business end of which was alarmingly sharp, and was aimed towards "Red 40". The boat headed towards another similar boat and the coxswains started to scream orders and instructions; both crews bent to their oars with great vigour and the boats closed rapidly. Then, with a resounding thud, the lances struck the opposing shields and one of the lancers fell into the sea while the other swayed gently. The crowd roared its approval and the rowers nonchalantly boated their oars so that they would not be damaged.

"Le Joust" is a traditional event and is held each year in August. Teams which come from neighbouring fishing villages, consist of either four or six members and each man competes against one from the opposing team in single combat. Having discovered this, we were advised by the locals to get a good grip on the lance and try to present a "formidable obstacle" so that our opponent would expend his energies and easily fall into the sea as a result of a blow from our lance. It sounded simple and we were not perturbed.

During subsequent contests my anxiety increased as I saw some of the lancers propelled horizontally

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from their platform and others ended up on top of the coxswain! Yet another fell to the depths, followed by his lance—point first; the lance surfaced like a polaris missile but fortunately no-one was impaled on it! And then it was my turn—my opponent being one of the team from the American destroyer.

My spirits dropped to ankle level, despite the verbal encouragement of my team-mates, and the whole contest became deadly serious. At last my boat moved off, and I could hear the crew shouting the odds. My opponent seemed to be protected by a huge shield and his lance looked as though it was a mile long. As for me, I felt that I was protected by a piece of moist "Kleenex" and armed with a patrol stick. I braced myself against the surge of the oars and soon my opponent's face became quite clear. At that moment, I decided to take a quick jab and take him by surprise. I eased the lance forward, all seven feet of heavy wood, and immediately realized that I had blundered. The point dropped slowly and was directed first at the American's knees, then at his ankles and finally at the head of the French coxswain! I panicked at the thought of an International incident, with newspaper headlines reading "Innocent French fisherman speared by mad English pseudo-knight", and, with a frantic heave, my lance came up and struck the American at the instant his belted me. I imagine that it was little different from being run down by a double-decker bus! However, as I parted company with my platform I had the satisfaction of seeing my adversary enter the sea and so it was a draw!

I surfaced, spat out a gallon or so of neat Med, evaded my lance, and looked around for my boat. My crew recovered the lance and removed my shield and then, by a number of questionable gestures, they indicated scornfully, what they thought of my performance and returned me to the beach where I was greeted by an amused crowd.

Afterwards, I was told that I had been magnificent but I should have knocked my opponent over, instead of him overbalancing as a result of his own attack! My comforter was none other than "James the First" and, frankly, he wasn't so hot as a diver! The Mayor, who had been a member of my crew, saw me at a reception that night and, bursting into hysterical laughter, proclaimed "Vive Le Joust", but I think I will be satisfied with dancing the Lancers in future!

PRIZE WINNERS

Features—"Walkabout—Australia 1963", *page* 266.

"Ascension Island—Past and Present", *page* 272.

Cartoon—*page* 285—Marine Crowther, *page* 277—RO1 (T) Tanner.

ROYAL NAVAL AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY

Membership of the Society maintains a steady level, and stands at 140 to date. We welcome new members VK3EE, ZS1XM, GI3RRW, G2FFO, G3NIR, G3LXQ and BRS 25155. The society is represented in Australia, Newfoundland, West Indies Federation, Bermuda, Kenya, India, New Zealand, South Africa and Hong Kong as well as all countries of the United Kingdom. On completion of the present publicity campaign, it is hoped that the membership will have grown considerably.

G3BZU

The H.Q. station (G3BZU) has been extremely active on all bands since the last report, due to an increase in operator strength. GI3RRW (Ex-ZB1JF) is with us for a period of two months, whilst G3LIK is now back after a period overseas. In addition, members Alex Shearer, "Mac" Mepbeat and "Ben" Bennet have been carrying out various constructional work (including a complete re-rigging of the HQ aerial system) as well as swotting for the next RAE. G3RJX will shortly be leaving the Service, and has lately been working DX with the old Vanguard transmitter. This has now been returned to HQ, and if "Bill" Metcalfe manages to pass the RAE in September it will be heard under yet another callsign.

The lunch hour skeds have been regularly carried out by "Mac" at the CW end of 3.5 Mc/s, and it has been a pleasure to see so many members making the effort to contact H.Q. at this time. Activity on 3720 Kc/s AM/SSB has also been regularly maintained and several R.N.A.R.S. members have been worked by these modes. Dx wise VU2GG (India) has been contacted several times and regular contacts into Africa suggest that we should have no trouble raising our Kenya members when we

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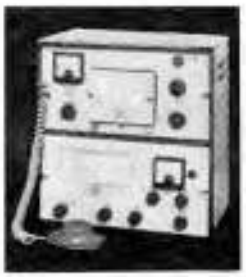

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hear them on. Members who have not yet been in contact with G3BZU are invited to listen on either of the regular 3.5 Mc/s or 14 Mc/s frequencies.

The item passed at the A.G.M. last year, regarding changing the Society badge to one conforming to the shape generally accepted as that of an amateur radio society has been finalised and the new badge is available from H.Q. 5/- (post free). Members returning their old badges can get the new one for 4/6 (post free). It is hoped that members will justify the committee's decision to change the badge and help to cut losses on the previous one.

The three QSL designs, *Tiger*, *Victorious* and *Devonshire*, are selling well and a recent addition to the main design is that of our new R.N.A.R.S. badge. This is complementary to the R.S.G.B. badge which is already printed on the card for members of that Society.

The committee have now finalised details of the "Mercury" award, which was mentioned in this column in the last edition of THE COMMUNICATOR, and the certificate should be available by the time this appears in print. This award will be issued in three classes: Class I (UK) 20 Points, Class II (Europe) 10 Points and Class III (DX) 5 points. Contacts with a member count as one point per band, contacts with HQ station count two points per band. Claims, together with QSL cards and 1/6d. (or equivalent) should be forwarded to G3HZL (RNARS Awards manager). This award is available to non-members as well, as is the Code Proficiency Certificate. With the advent of this award we hope more members will avail themselves of the special QSL cards available to them. However, those members who prefer to keep their own QSL designs are asked to append the words R.N.A.R.S. to them so that people wishing to claim for the "Mercury" award can easily identify our members.

The Annual General Meeting of the society will be held at 1700 on Saturday, November 2nd, at the Seymour Hall. This is also the venue of the R.S.G.B. exhibition and we hope as many members as possible will combine the two events. This year, we will be presenting our first President to the membership at this meeting, so come along and meet him and your 1964 committee.

The society are now proceeding with plans for a stand at the R.S.G.B. exhibition and, in conjunction with C.N.I. Department of Admiralty, hope to produce something worthy of the Senior Service. About time R.A.F.A.R.S. had some competition! Members living in or around London who would consider volunteering for stand duty are requested to get in touch with the Secretary giving details of day/time available.

The QRQ runs have been made regularly on schedule as per the last edition of THE COMMUNICATOR, and now that the skip on 3.5 Mc/s is shortening, with a corresponding drop in the heavy European QRM experienced during the winter months, more entries are being received that are 100% correct. This is yet another service to our members and non-members alike, and it would be appreciated if members would bring this activity to the notice of their local clubs. The "TOPS CW CLUB", in its bulletin (QMF), has recently given this some publicity which should also increase the entries. Only two members have so far managed to successfully claim the 35 WPM sticker.

Member G13RRW will shortly be going to sea in *Kent* and has already started the ball rolling with regard to Maritime Mobile operation. Another member who is at present in *Agincourt* is GW3ITD. Roy was MM from *Puma* on the South Atlantic station several years ago, but so far there is no news of any impending operation from his new QRA. Another seagoing amateur radio operator has arrived back in U.K. and elsewhere in this magazine you will find a chronicle of his activities. We were pleased to see Ken (G3RFH) up here at H.Q. and also to have worked him in *Protector*.

It may not be generally known that another R.N. operator (though not a member of the Society) is active from Ascension Island. He is CRS Derek Wilkinson who is at present signing ZD8DW. We have tried many times to contact him from G3BZU, but heavy QRM from Kilowatt Alley has drowned our signal out. Two of the H.Q. operators have now left for that part of the world and an increase in activity from another "Rare" location can be expected.

That is all the news from H.Q. this edition. Members have been very good in passing in information for this item and it is hoped that this will continue. 73 es DX.

"Do you think they'll put this on 'Sports Report'?"

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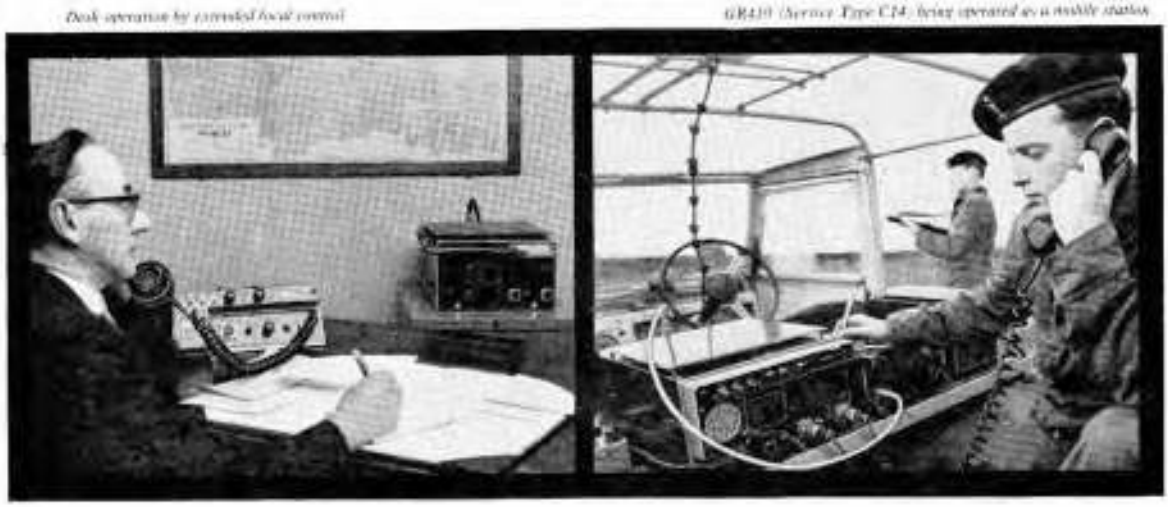

AMATEUR RADIO—ANTARCTIC STYLE

by RS K. Randall

G3RFH MM VP8HF/MM

Shortly after passing the Radio Amateur's examination and the Morse test (12 WPM) I found that I was the proud owner of callsign G3RFH. However, I was unable to get on from the home QTH due to a "Note" from "Their Lordships" that I was required for foreign service. For the next two years my home was *Protector*—a ship which spent most of her time carrying out duties as guardship in the Antarctic area.

Having received permission to operate on board, I sent the necessary forms to the Post Office and, after a long wait, I received my Maritime Mobile licence, which is the fourth to go to R.N. operators and still has the same limit of operation—28 Mc/s and above.

A Heathkit DX 40 transmitter kit and a VFO kit were obtained and construction work commenced. Unfortunately the Anode loading coil was missing when the kits arrived and the firm was informed of the missing item; meanwhile, work carried on with the building of the transmitter and VFO unit.

The 28 Mc/s band was kept under constant surveillance while I was temporarily off the air and quite a lot of activity was noted. Most of it emanated from the U.S.S.R., U.S.A. and South Africa. Having whetted my appetite by just listening, and there being no sign of the missing coil, I decided to try and construct one. A "Pusser's" broom handle provided the means for winding the coil, and after a few "cut and try" attempts, a suitable coil was wound to cover 28 Mc/s, and the day we left Sao Salvador, in Brazil, for the deep south, G3RFH MM put out his first call on 28 Mc/s.

After calling CQ for over 5 hours and not raising a single station doubts were raised as to the efficiency of the rig! Nonetheless it was decided to have another attempt during the following week-end period. On Saturday, November 17th, the first QSO from *Protector* took place with VQ2W in Kitwe, Southern Rhodesia. Report started at RST 559 and finished up 569. This was very encouraging.

The first Fone QSO (with a borrowed tape recorder microphone) was made half an hour later with LU3DVN in Buenos Aires. Two days later, after leaving Rio de Janeiro, contact was made with our first Antarctic amateur station VP8GO in Port Stanley followed by QSO's with VP8FJ and his XYL VP8HC. Soon I was making regular contacts with stations in the South American area.

During the trip to Port Stanley, 46 QSO's were made with Amateurs in 11 different countries.

During one particular QSO with OA4CR (Peru), whilst actually transmitting the transmitter fell on the deck during a spot of rough weather. Comment from the other end was, "That sounds like an expensive noise", but fortunately all was well.

On returning to Port Stanley, enquiries were made regarding Maritime Mobile operation in the Falkland Isles and the British Antarctic area, and I applied to the Postmaster for a licence, the Captain's permission having been obtained; so I received the callsign VP8HF/MM. As this call is only licensed whilst in the Falklands Dependencies and the British Antarctic areas, I hope it will count for DXCC but confirmation of this is awaited from the RSGB.

A quick CQ on the 20 metre band proved that a VP8 call was a very desirable item and the QSO's were soon piling up. As many stations as possible were worked; those who just wanted a QSL Card were given a quick report, whilst others, who wanted to natter, were given bits of information about the Antarctic.

During the first 28 days of January, using VP8HF/MM on the 14 Mc/s, 167 QSO's were made with 26 different countries, mostly on C.W. though some were on Fone. Great pleasure (and a great morale booster too) was my first contact with the United Kingdom. This was with GM3AEY in Edinburgh. The ship at that time was off Adelaide Island well inside the Antarctic circle. To date this is the only United Kingdom contact, though contacts have been made with France, Germany and Norway.

During the rest of our present commission in the Antarctic many QSO's have been obtained with "locals" on 28 Mc/s and also DX on the 14 Mc/s band. (No sign of G3BZU though!)

Together with the DX 40 transmitter (60 watts) I use a Hammarlund SP 600 JX receiver and a half wave Vertical Antenna cut for operation on 28.2 Mc/s. It has been found that this antenna works extremely well on 14 Mc/s too.

There are quite a few active VP8 stations, mostly on the lonely Antarctic bases, and they are always on the lookout for contacts with U.K., but the U.K. boys just don't seem to be on (or else there is a big hole in the ionosphere in that direction).

On the way home our route lies up the west coast of South America, through the Panama Canal, up to Bermuda and then Portsmouth. The G3RFH/MM call will be used once we leave Antarctica and operation on 28 Mc/s only will be carried out.

When I arrive home, I hope to operate from the home QTH in Poole, with a modified TGY2 transmitter, and work many R.N.A.R.S. members before I return to the Antarctic.

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HAMS DOWN UNDER

by J.N.H.

Radio Amateurs are well represented in the RNZN these days, and the prefix "MM" is becoming more common in this part of the world. CRS John Hewson ZL2BAH who has just completed 15 months in *Taranaki*, mainly on the Far East Station, is now on the beach, and should be on the air shortly. His relief CRS Pete Smith ZL1ARB, should be active when *Taranaki* sails again. RS Pat Green ZL1II is enjoying DX from onboard *Otago* somewhere on the F.E.S., and we hear that S/Lt. Ian Fraser ZL1AMU has been on the band again, from the same QTH.

Royalist is represented by LRO Geoff Andrews ZL2FX, who gets on the band whenever commitments allow.

An Auckland enthusiast is Lt. Peter Mulgrew ZL1FG who is Electrical Officer at the Communications and Electrical Training School at Auckland, and Lt.-Cdr. Dave Ingram ZL1NP is an active member of the Radio Amateur Emergency Corps.

This must be something of a record for such a small Navy, and shows the increasing interest in this very contagious hobby.

PERSONALITY PIECE

Lt.-Cdr. John Sainsbury, R.N.R., VQ4HE

Our personality piece this time comes from yet another overseas country—Kenya.

John first became interested in amateur radio in 1933, by accidentally overhearing G2DQ and G2KT in contact with each other on "Top Band" on the home broadcast receiver. This was followed by a period of constructing various short wave receivers and listening to the then relatively new, short wave broadcast stations which were beginning to operate. Amongst the QSL cards which were received were confirmations from KDKA/W8XK Pittsburgh and PRA8 Pernambuco, Brazil—two of the more prominent broadcast transmitters of that time.

In 1936 John joined the Brentwood Amateur Radio Society and became its Hon. Secretary. During this period an artificial aerial (non-radiating) GPO licence was held with the callsign 2CYW. By 1937 a full licence had been received and the call allocated was G8HV.

Also around this time he joined the London Division of the R.N.V.R. as a "bunting". The only reason John had to join the "other" branch was that the W/T branch was full up (popular even in those days!). When the crisis in Europe was reaching a head, the R.N.V.R. W/T branch and the R.N.W.A.R. were amalgamated and became the R.N.V.W.R. and John found himself "In" as an Ordinary Telegraphist (capable of reading 20 WPM with ease).

His first wartime commission was spent in *Hotspur*, *Hereward* and *Hunter*—famous ships of the 2nd D.F.—which, under the late Captain Warburton-Lee, V.C., won recognition at Narvik. In 1940 John was commissioned into the R.N.V.R. and a long succession of jobs, which saw him in action in European and Mediterranean waters, ensued. In 1944 he visited *Mercury* to undergo his Ce course and on completion of this, he served on the Staff of Flag Officer British Assault Area Normandy and later as Signal Officer to Admiral Commanding Dover. Before his release in June 1946, John was on the staff of Flag Officer Malaya.

On cessation of hostilities John returned to Hove, Sussex, and reactivated his home station after the G.P.O. had returned his equipment. He also helped to re-form the local branch of the R.S.G.B. and later became T.R. for Brighton and Hove.

In 1947 he moved to Walton-on-Thames and joined the flourishing Thames Valley Amateur Radio Transmitters Society. During this period John returned to the R.N.V.(W)R. and was appointed section officer of *President* and later went to South West Tower, Admiralty, where he was promoted Acting Lt.-Cdr. After a three-year period in the London Area, John returned to Brighton and Hove where he joined the Sussex Division of the R.N.V.R. (*G2HV, also a member of RNARS, belongs to that Division—Sec.*).

In 1953 a permanent change of climate was fancied and he emigrated to Southern Rhodesia. Amateur Radio activity was still pursued, under the callsign ZE6JS, whilst his R.N.V.R. activity was maintained as Signals Officer to the S.C.C. training ship *Matabele* in Bulawayo, of which he later had command. A further shift was made to the neighbouring country of Kenya from where the call VQ4HE is now radiating.

John became President of the Radio Society of East Africa in 1960 and also holds the post of manager of the Radio Amateur Emergency Network (similar to the U.K. emergency network). It was in this latter post that he set up and controlled amateur communications for the evacuation of Europeans from the Congo during the recent crisis there. For his

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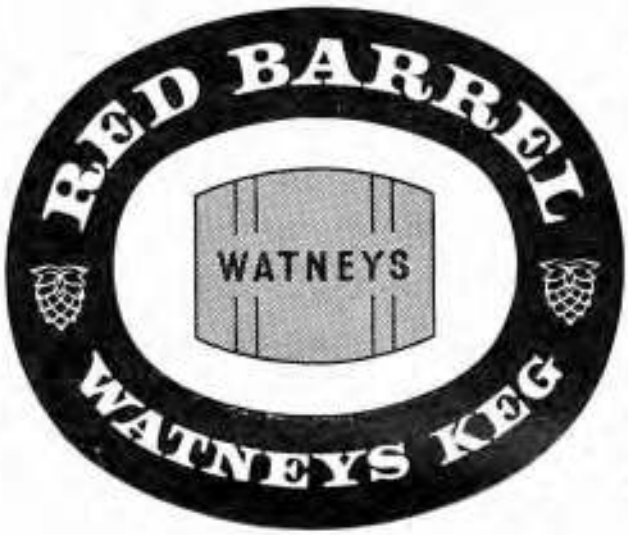

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work in this field, he received the Belgium Government's Gold medal for "Services in Amateur Radio".

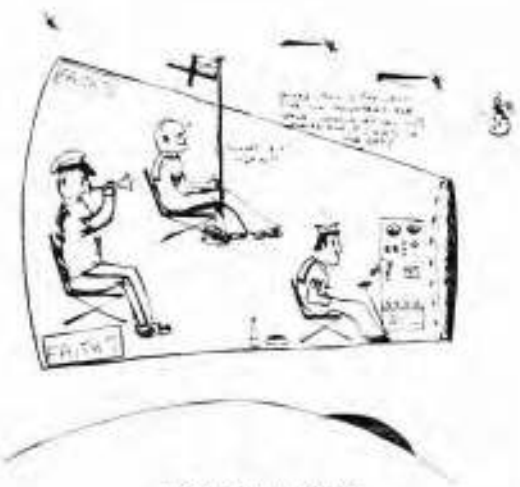
Operation has also been carried out from Entebbe, Uganda, as VQ5HE, Dar-es-Salaam as WQ3HE, and in 1959 he flew his own Cessna aircraft to Zanzibar in company with VQ1TW (an ex-WRNS CPO Tel) and VQ1RET, where he operated from VQ1HE.

The station at VQ4HE consists of a "Home Brew" 150 watt AM CW transmitter, and HT 37 exciter for Single Sideband operation. Antennas include a 3 element close-spaced beam for 14 Mc/s, and all band G5RV dipole and a ZL special for 21 Mc/s. A beam for band 1 TV is also erected for TV DX reception. The receivers in use are a Hallicrafters SX 111 as the main receiver and an SX 110 for general purpose reception and as a standby.

John tells us "modestly" that no tally is kept of the number of countries worked, although he believes it is about 200!

Although he manages to work a lot of DX, the main interest is in the East African Emergency Network which operates daily and takes up a great deal of his time. This network operates in close liaison with the Kenya police force and the civil P and T authorities and, from all accounts, it is very well drilled in procedure and traffic handling. Due to all this hard work and voluntary training, there now exists a network which can be called upon at a moment's notice to serve the community if normal communications links should be cut (just another way in which amateur radio serves the community).

John assures us that anyone visiting Kenya who can get to Nairobi will receive a warm welcome and be shown some of the hospitality that the VQ4 gang can serve out.



"17th Sunset, Sir!"

Bloggs! You press that key and I'll! . . . .

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cartoons—Marine Crowther, *pages* 261-284.

JRO Poole—*pages* 267-273-279.

ROI (T) Tanner—*pages* 269-275-280-290-292.

ROI (T) Robinson, *pages* 270-295.

CRS O'Sullivan—*page* 287.

Wilkie—*pages* 288-299.

Sub.-Lieut. Mawson—*page* 291.

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M. A. BROOMFIELD	Lt.	Adamant	Mercury Long Course
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M. G. M. W. ELLIS	Lt.	Phoenicia	Dagger Course
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M. J. L. FREEMAN	Lt.-Cdr.	Centaur (C)	ASWE
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N. T. J. Skitt	Lt.-Cdr.	ASWE	Forest Moor in Comd.
P. E. D. Stearns	Lt.-Cdr.	Phoenicia	President for DWR
D. L. Syms	Commander	Mauritius in Comd.	Staff of C-in-C Portsmouth
R. A. Thompson	Lt. (SD) (C)	Mercury	Chilcompton as 1st Lt.
A. F. Tilley	Lt.-Cdr.	Loch Fada	President for BJCEB
R. J. Trudgett	Lt. (SD) (C)	Staff of CINCEASTLANT	Staff of CINCAFMED
P. Troubridge	Lt.-Cdr.	Exmouth in Comd.	Staff of A.C.R.
J. Veal	Sub-Lt. (SD) (C)	Terror	Mercury
J. B. Wells	Lt. R.A.N.		Mercury Long Course
D. Whitehead	Lt.	Mercury addl	Dagger Course
F. C. Wigg	Lt. (SD) (C)	Ark Royal	Forest Moor
P. K. Wigram	Lt.	President	Mercury Long Course
P. A. Williams	Lt. (SD) (C)	Belfast	Afrikander
K. Wollan	Lt. (SD) (C)	Mercury	Staff of RNLO Ottawa

PROMOTIONS

To Captain

Sir Peter Anson, Bt.

To Commander

M. C. Eyeleigh

To Lieutenant (SD) (C)

J. Shackell
P. W. Sochall
C. G. Bryant

To Lieutenant-Commander (SD) (C)

A. V. Salter

To Acting Sub-Lieutenant (SD) (C)

C. H. Walklett
A. T. S. Perry
A. Mackay
M. Murphy
P. R. Leonard
E. Wilcock
J. M. Adair
D. E. Wenn
J. Tate
D. G. Pike
J. R. Duffey (RAN)
A. G. Gray (RAN)

RETIREMENTS

J. A. C. Henley, Captain
R. F. Wells, O.B.E., D.S.C., Commander
J. A. Buchanan-Wollaston, Lt.-Cdr.
L. R. D. Mackintosh of Mackintosh, Lt.-Cdr.
J. C. Newing, Lt.-Cdr.
J. H. Hornyold-Strickland, D.S.C., Lt.-Cdr.

Radio Supervisor to Chief Radio Supervisor

G. Armitage	(21.2.63)	W. F. Henderson	(1.4.63)
J. E. Lamkin	(6.3.63)	F. Pittaway	(1.5.63)
P. R. Leonard	(24.3.63)	L. A. T. Read	(1.5.63) CRS(W)

Communication Yeoman to Chief Communication Yeoman

H. Stockwell	(23.2.63)	G. T. Pearce	(18.4.63)
P. J. Green	(23.2.63)	J. P. Fiddick	(18.5.63)
M. Murphy	(1.3.63)	D. A. King	(20.5.63)
A. Sayers	(7.3.63)		

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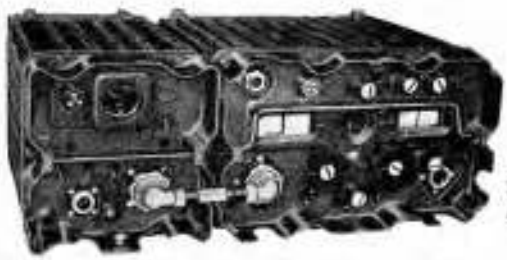

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