

COPI

N.L.1819/36.

10th June, 1936.

The Commander-in-Chief,  
The Nore.

Copies to: Commander-in-Chief, Portsmouth.  
Commander-in-Chief, Plymouth.

With reference to your submission of the 2nd June,  
No. 944/0247.A, I am to acquaint you that Their Lordships  
approve the award of censure in all Boys' Training  
Establishments as a punishment for a first offence of  
"breaking out" when done with intent to desert.

BY COMMAND OF THEIR LORDSHIPS,

(Sgd.) J.S. BARNES.

PRIVATE

Seen by L. G.  
Copies sent DWSG  
DNT  
MDG  
Nov. 3.

N.L. 3806/53.

3rd October,

Commander-in-Chief, The Home.

Copies to:- The Medical Officer-in-Charge,  
R.N. Hospital, Chatham.  
The Commanding Officer,  
H.M.S. GANGES.

I am to inform you that the mother of Boy James Beaumont SN No. 4350 of H.M.S. GANGES, has visited the Admiralty to complain about the treatment given to her son in H.M.S. GANGES. This Boy is now in R.N. Hospital, Chatham, awaiting an operation for hernia.

2. According to Mrs. Beaumont, her son joined H.M.S. GANGES about three months ago. On returning home on leave he was very quiet but, physically, was in good health. After returning to H.M.S. GANGES, her son became unhappy and so ran away from the ship. He was brought back and caned; the day after his punishment he developed symptoms of hernia. Very shortly afterwards, he ran away again, was again brought back, and was again caned, although his mother considers he was medically unfit for this further punishment.

3. Mrs. Beaumont travelled from Edinburgh to visit H.M.S. GANGES on 1st October, having apparently been requested to visit her son. She was most distressed at the condition of her son, finding that he could not walk properly, that he had just been on parade or drill, although obviously physically unfit for such duty, and was most upset at the visible effects left by the two canings. Her distress was aggravated because, she states, the Captain received her in a brusque manner and told her that her son was a thief.

/4.

4. Mrs. Beaumont considers that so far as the Navy is concerned, her son's spirit is broken and that he will settle down. She feels that it is not in the interest the Service or her son for him to remain in the Navy.

5. I am to request a very early and full report on Mrs. Beaumont's allegations about the treatment of her son, and ask for your recommendations on the retention of her son in the Royal Navy.

BY COMMAND OF THEIR LORDSHIPS,

W. R. LEWIN

N.L.3806/ 53.

5th October, 3.

Commander-in-Chief, The Nore.

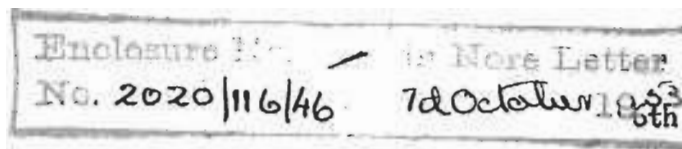
Copy to:- The Medical Officer-in-Charge,  
R.N. Hospital, Chatham.  
The Commanding Officer,  
H.M.S. GAUCES.

With reference to Admiralty Letter N.L.3806/53 dated 3rd October, 1953, about a complaint from the mother of Boy Beaumont concerning the treatment of her son, I am to inform you, in confirmation of a telephone message from Naval Law Branch, that in a letter to his mother this boy has threatened to commit suicide if he stays in the Royal Navy.

BY COMMAND OF THEIR LORDSHIPS,

H.M.S. GANGES,  
Ipswich,  
Suffolk.

No. 804/17



6th October, 1953

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF THE NORE.

(Copy to:- Medical Officer-in-Charge,  
R.N. Hospital Chatham.)

BEAUMONT J., OFFICIAL NUMBER J.926340, BOY 2.

Reference:- Admiralty Letter N.L.3806/53  
of 3.10.53.

BEAUMONT J., Official Number J.926340, Boy 2 joined H.M.S. GANGES on 9 June 1953. He was no particular trouble and his progress was satisfactory until he went on seasonal leave on 18 August 1953.

2. He returned from leave on 8 September 1953. After only a few hours in the establishment he saw his second Divisional Officer alleging that his mother was sick and requesting compassionate leave to visit her. The Divisional Officer telephoned the Edinburgh Police and asked for an investigation. The Edinburgh Police visited Mrs. Beaumont's doctor, the Infirmary where she had recently been under treatment, and Mrs. Beaumont in person, and telephoned the establishment two hours later stating that all three had said there was nothing wrong with her. Mrs. Beaumont had said in addition that she did not want her son sent home on compassionate leave as she knew it would make him homesick, and that she preferred him to settle down.

3. BEAUMONT was informed that he would not listen and a tearful scene ensued in his Divisional Office - the boy reiterating that he must have 24 hours leave to see his mother, and the Divisional Officer trying to explain that such leave was neither necessary nor possible. Finally a telegram was sent to Mrs. Beaumont asking her to telephone the boy and reassure him. This was done by Mrs. Beaumont a day or two later.

4. On 10 September he again saw his Divisional Officer and stated that he would go to any lengths to obtain his release from the Service mentioning inter alia, suicide. He was told of the correct procedure for requests for compassionate release, and then told his Divisional Officer of pains in his feet and ankles. As a result of this he was ordered to visit the R.N. Sick Quarters Shotley for investigation of his complaint.

5. He was admitted to the R.N.S.Q. on that date, and his condition was described by the Medical Specialist as hysterical. It was obvious that he was using this complaint in an attempt to be discharged from the Service, and was magnifying his troubles considerably. He was examined thoroughly and X-Rayed.

6. On 13 September a letter was received from the boy's parents about his feet and ankles, and stating that he had fallen a distance of twenty feet two years ago and intimating that this trouble might still be causing him pain. A copy of this letter and my reply dated 25th September is attached. The delay in reply was due to my desire that Mr. and Mrs. Beaumont should be given a definite answer whether or not there was anything wrong with the boy, and the result of thorough medical examinations was therefore awaited.

Private

(Page 2 of H.M.S. GANGES' No.804/17 of 6th October, 1953.)

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7. On the 22 September BEAUMONT was discharged from the R.N.S.Q. 'Fit'. Later that day he broke out of the establishment stealing another boy's oilskin on the way. He returned four hours and 45 minutes later cold and hungry, and asking the main gate to 'let him in'. On 23 September he was charged before me on one count of improperly leaving and one of stealing, which were both proved. I tried to persuade him to settle down and make a success of his career but he replied that he would never try. He was awarded 12 cuts with the cane; after being examined by the duty Medical Officer and found fit for punishment, the cuts were administered on the same day.

8. On 24 September the boy neglected to carry out the orders of an Instructor in his division and on 25 September was awarded 5 days No. 16 punishment by the Commander. He did the standard hour's extra work and an hour's extra drill - which is in the form of physical training - in the dog watches on that day, and at about 2100 broke out of the establishment again. On this occasion in company with three other boys, he stole and abandoned a rowing boat, broke into a canteen and stole some bottles of minerals, attempted to steal a combination motor cycle and stole a sachel of food in the side car. He was eventually apprehended by the Civil Police, who did not prefer any charges against him.

9. He was recovered 19 hours and 40 minutes later on 26 September, and was medically examined to ascertain whether he would be fit for caning if the above offence was proved at my subsequent defaulters. The Medical Officer responsible for his division found a tiny hernia in his groin at this examination, but stated that his buttocks were fit for caning. On the morning of the 28 September I awarded him 12 cuts with the cane for the repeated offence of breaking out. Afterwards he was examined by the surgical specialist who pronounced him fit for punishment and the punishment was administered. I am assured that the small hernia is of congenital origin, and could not have been caused by his previous No. 16 or No. 20 punishment.



10. In the meantime <http://www.godfreydykes.info> the boy - on Sunday 27 September - stating that she intended visiting the establishment as she was worried about the Captain's letter which she had received the day before. She arrived on 30 September, and was accommodated in H.M.S. GANGES overnight with every courtesy. I interviewed her on 1 October. As a result of her allegations about the visible effects of caning at this interview that boy was again medically examined on the same day, and the Medical Officer found about ten visible marks on the buttocks, superficial - not deep - bruising, and no broken skin. He formed the opinion that no undue force had been used in administering the punishments, and that the boy's body was in reasonable condition. In my interview with Mrs. Beaumont, at which the Boy's Divisional Officer was present and which lasted for fifteen minutes, she immediately complained that the punishment inflicted on her son was terrible, and that she would not stand for it. When I mentioned that her son had stolen an oilskin she became almost hysterical and for this reason I did not mention details of the boy's part in the thefts on his second attempt to break out.


11. This term the boy has shown himself to be lacking in interest and the will to succeed in his career. He has been deliberately not trying, and has been magnifying his troubles - both real and imaginary - in an attempt to leave the Service. He is a miserable boy, lifeless in appearance, and lacking in personality.

12. On this term's showing BEAUMONT's discharge unsuitable is strongly recommended. He has failed his "eighth week" V/S examination, and has had to be changed to the seaman branch. He has had no training so far as a seaman because of absences and his admission to R.N.H. Chatham on 2 October for treatment for his hernia.

Private

(Page 3 of H.M.S. GANGES' No. 804/17 of 6th October, 1953.)  
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13. Normally a boy is not allowed to leave the Service if obviously trying to "work his ticket". Every encouragement is given him, and only when all resorts have failed is his discharge 'Unsuitable' applied for. Otherwise many other temporarily homesick or dissatisfied boys hear how simple it is to leave the Service and try the same course.

  
( CAIRNS )  
CAPTAIN.

D/H/1

Enclosures:

Mrs. Beaumont's letter of 10 September, 1953.  
H.M.S. GANGES' No. 804/17 of 25 September, 1953.



(Enclosure with H.M.S. GANGES No.804/17 of 6.10.53.)

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(COPY)

H.M.S. GANGES,

Ipswich,

No.804/17

Suffolk.

Dear Mrs. Beaumont,

Thank you for your letter of 10th September.

Your son has been in the Sick Quarters here but an examination proved that the medical authorities can find nothing wrong with his feet.

I should like to take this opportunity to ask you to give every encouragement to your son as he caused a considerable amount of trouble at the start of this term. He said he did not like the Service and wanted to get out. This is probably a touch of homesickness coupled with worry over your recent illness. Please give him every possible encouragement to settle down properly to his work here.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd) CAIRNS  
( Captain The Earl Cairns Royal Navy )

Mrs. E. Beaumont,  
44, Southhouse Broadway,  
Edinburgh 9.

(Enclosure with H.M.S. GANGES' No. 804/17 of 6.10.53.)

(COPY)

Mrs. E. Beaumont,  
44, Southhouse Broadway,  
Edinburgh 9.

10th September, 1953

The C.O.,  
H.M.S. GANGES,  
Shotley, Ipswich.

RE. James Beaumont, S.B. 4350.  
Drake Division,  
H.M.S. GANGES,

Dear Sir,

While my son James was home on leave he was complaining about his feet and ankles, some two years ago he fell over twenty feet from the roof of our house and he was in bed for two months before he could walk properly, I would be much obliged if you could give him a thorough examination, my husband and myself are proud to think that our son is a member of the Royal Navy but we know that you only accept fit men in the Senior Service and we know that you will do what is best and that we will abide by your decision knowing that you have the finest medical resources at your command.

Hoping that you will let us know the result of your examination at your earliest convenience,

in the mean time let us remain,

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd) Mr. & Mrs. J. Beaumont.

PRIVATE

GRAMS:—  
Admiral, Chatham.

PHONE:—  
Chatham No. 3221.  
(extension 210 and 519).

Office of the Commander-in-Chief, The Nore,  
Admiralty House,  
Chatham.

PE NL 3806/53  
126

7th October, 1953.

No. 2020/116/46

THE SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY.

(Copies to: The Medical Officer-in-Charge,  
R.N. Hospital, Chatham.  
The Commanding Officer, H.M.S.  
GANGES.)

BEAUMONT J. OFFICIAL NUMBER J. 926340, BOY SECOND CLASS

Reference: Admiralty letter NL.3806/53 of 3rd October,  
1953.

Enclosures: The Commanding Officer, H.M.S. GANGES' letter  
No. 804/17 of 6th October, 1953, and  
enclosures thereto. (To the Secretary of  
the Admiralty only.)

Forwarded for the information of Their  
Lordships and for consideration of the proposal to  
discharge this rating "unsuitable", in which I concur.

2. I am satisfied that Beaumont was correctly and  
fairly treated, and that Mrs. Beaumont was received with  
every courtesy on her visit to H.M.S. GANGES.

  
ADMIRAL

PRIVATE

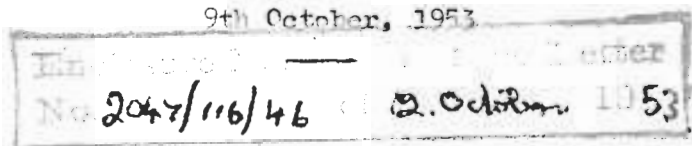
PRIVATE

Royal Naval Hospital,  
Ostham, Kent.

Ref. No. A/2010/53.

9th October, 1953

Commander in Chief,  
The Nore.



Copy to: Commanding Officer, H.M.S. GANGES.

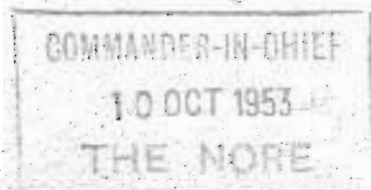
BEAUMONT J., C.N. J. 926340, Box 2.



Reference: - Admiralty Letter N.I. 3806/53 of 3rd October 1953.

The above named boy was admitted to this Hospital on 2nd October 1953 with a history of painful feet since a fall two years previously, and a small left inguinal hernia. He had recently been under punishment at Shotley for breaking out and stated he was fed up with the Navy and had no intention of remaining in the Service.

2. Since admission he has been fully investigated. The Orthopaedic Specialist states that he has a moderate degree of flat feet, but the feet are fully mobile and no treatment is indicated; he has no real disability from this cause. He has a left sided varicocoele, which is of no importance, but no hernia has manifested itself since admission and the surgical specialist does not consider any operation is justified. The Neuropsychiatric Specialist can find no evidence of any mental illness, but reports that he lacks will power and tenacity of purpose and is never likely to be of much use to the Service.

3. There is no disability to justify invaliding in this case and it is proposed to discharge him to duty.



  
(R.W. MUSSSEN)  
Surgeon Rear Admiral  
Medical Officer in Charge 

CONFIDENTIAL 121450 October 1953  
MESSAGE

RECEIVED:

DATE 12.10.53

TIME 1638

From C. in C. Nore.

BY SECURE MEANS

To Admiralty

Info: GANGES, R.N.H. Chatham.

Nore No. 2020/116/46 of 7th October, 1953.

Request early approval by signal for discharge "unsuitable" of Beaumont J.O.W. J.926340 Boy, 2 class. He is fit for duty but it is considered most undesirable for him to return to GANGES and he will be retained at Chatham pending decision and then discharged direct to shore.

2. Medical report follows by letter.

121450

N.L.

N.M. (2) — New. (462)

M.D.G.

C.M.O. re letter

19/19.45

PRIVATE

PENL 3806/53

NL

RAMS:—  
ral, Chatham.  
HONE:—  
tham No. 3221.  
sion 210 and 519).

Office of the Commander-in-Chief, The Nore,  
Admiralty House,  
Chatham.



12th October, 1953.

No. 2047/116/46

THE SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY.

(Copies to: The Medical Officer-in-Charge,  
R.N. Hospital, Chatham.  
The Commanding Officer,  
H.M.S. GANGES.)

BEAUMONT J., OFFICIAL NUMBER, J.926340,  
BOY SECOND CLASS

References: (a) Nore No. 2020/116/46 dated  
7th October, 1953.  
(b) The Commander-in-Chief, The  
Nore's signal timed 121450  
October, 1953.

Enclosure: The Medical Officer-in-Charge,  
R. N. Hospital, Chatham's No.  
A/2010/53, dated 9th October,  
1953. (to The Secretary of the  
Admiralty only.)

Forwarded for information in  
continuation of the letter and signal quoted.

for A D M I R A L

PRIVATE

Madam,

With reference to your recent visit to Admiralty concerning your son, Boy Second Class J. Beaumont, I am commanded by My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to inform you that after full medical investigation at the Royal Naval Hospital, Chatham, it has been found unnecessary to perform an operation on him. He is not suffering from any disability which requires treatment and he is being discharged from hospital as fit. He will remain at Chatham until a decision has been reached on the question of his retention in the Royal Navy.

2. You will be informed of this decision as soon as possible.

I am, Madam,  
Your obedient Servant,

SEC 17 W. 12

Mrs. E. Beaumont,  
44 Southhouse Broadway,  
Edinburgh 9.

SM  
CCE/20



to:-Commander-in-Chief, The Nere (Ref.Nos.2020/116/46 of 7.10.53  
and 2047/116/46 of 12.10.53)  
Commanding Officer, H.M.S. GANGES (Ref.No.804/17 of 6.10.53)  
Medical O.i/c, R.N.Hospital, Chatham (Ref.No.A/2010/53 of  
N.M. Stats., D.N.A.9. 9.10.53)

NCW/N.L.3806/53

29th October,

3

Madam,

Further to Admiralty letter NCW/N.L.3806/53, of  
16th October, 1953, concerning your son, Boy Second Class  
J. BEAUMONT, I am commanded by My Lords Commissioners of  
the Admiralty to inform you that they have decided that  
he should be discharged from the Royal Navy as "Unsuitable".

2. The necessary instructions are being issued.

I am, Madam,

Your obedient Servant,

*141 123 10/10/53*  
*10/10/53*

Mrs. E. Beaumont,  
44 Southhouse Broadway,  
Edinburgh, 9.

PRIVATE

H.C.W./N.L. 3806/53

29th October,

3

Commander-in-Chief, The Nore.  
(Ref.Nos.2020/116/46 of 7/10/53, and  
2047/116/46, of 12/10/53).

Copies to:- Commanding Officer, H.M.S. GANGES.  
(Ref.No.804/17 of 6/10/53).  
Medical Officer in Charge, R.N. Hospital, Chatham.  
(Ref.No.A/2010/53, of 9/10/53).

I am to inform you that Their Lordships approve the  
discharge as "Unsuitable" of BEAUMONT, J., J.926340,  
Boy 2nd Class.

2. Copies of two letters sent to Mrs. Beaumont are  
enclosed for information.

BY COMMAND OF THEIR LORDSHIPS,

ROBERT E. M. PALDOCK

PRIVATE

N.L. 3806/53

10th November, 3

Commander-in-Chief, The Mores.

Copy to:- The Commanding Officer, H.M.S. GANGES.

I am to refer to submission No. 804/17 dated 6th October, 1953, from the Commanding Officer, H.M.S. GANGES which was forwarded with your submission No. 2020/116/46 dated 7th October, 1953. The submissions deal with Beaumont, J., official number J. 926430, Boy Second Class.

2. Paragraph 9 of the submission from H.M.S. GANGES refers to the award of twelve cuts with the cane to Boy Beaumont for the repeated offense of breaking out. Having regard to the provisions of Article 0803 Clause e(ii) of B.R. 697 (Boys Training Instructions) I am to enquire what was the justification for this punishment.

BY COMMAND OF THEIR LORDSHIPS,

WR Lewin

PRIVATE

Private.

Enclosure No. -	H.M.S. GANGES,
No. 2367/116/46	Ipswich,
20th Nov. 1953	Suffolk.

17th November, 1953

No. 804/17

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF TILB HORE.

BLAUMONT J. J.926430 BOY 2 - PUNISHMENT BY  
CANING

Reference:- Admiralty Letter N.L. 3806/53 of 10.11.53.

BLAUMONT J. Official Number J.926430 Boy second class was awarded twelve cuts with the cane for a repeated offence of breaking out of ship in accordance with a practice which has gone on in H.M.S. GANGES for many years. Records show that 6 cuts with the cane has for years been the local scale for a first offence of "breaking out", and nine or twelve cuts for a repeated offence. Such punishments have been consistently recorded in H.M.S. GANGES Daily Records, and where necessary shown on page 3 of punishment warrants.

2. Records in my <http://www.godfreydykes.info> 10.6.36 contained the approval for this practice, but no copy is now held in H.M.S. GANGES. The Committee which edited B.R. 697/52 did consider an amendment to Chapter VIII which would record this approval more permanently; their reasons for deciding against it are not known, but it was clearly in their minds that the punishment remained valid in Boys Training Establishments.

3. While it is fully realised why the punishment of caning must be carefully restricted, its retention for offences of "breaking out" is considered most necessary. The distinction (Q.R. & A.I. Article 94 as amended by Q.R. 1/46 between "desertion" and "breaking out" when applied to a boy who runs away from his Naval school, is a very fine one; at the time, the boy himself is probably not aware which offence he is committing. Caning is allowed for desertion (in special cases as an act of leniency); if it is not also to be allowed for "breaking out" the choice of punishment will then lie between:-

- (a) Detention - which is quite unsuitable for the average case
- (b) 14 days No.11A - which is far more likely to destroy the boy's spirit than to have a beneficial effect on his character.
- (c) In sea-going ships, but not in Boys Training Establishments, Cell Punishment is authorised.  
The re-introduction of Cell Punishment in Boys Training Establishments is not recommended

4. The advantages of caning are that it is swift, stimulating and a surprisingly good deterrent. An Extensive period of No.11A punishment has none of these advantages; when applied to a growing boy under intensive training it produces mental apathy which is reflected unfavourably in his subsequent work, dress and bearing.

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

18 NOV 1953

THE NORE

*Cairns*  
(CAIRNS)  
CAPTAIN.

Private.

NL

GRAMS :—  
Admiral, Chatham.  
PHONE :—  
Chatham No. 3221.  
Extension 210 and 519.

Office of the Commander-in-Chief, The Nore,  
Admiralty House,  
Chatham.



DE NL 3806/53

20th November, 1953.

No. 2367/116/46.

THE SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY.

(Copy to: The Commanding Officer,  
H.M.S. GANGES.)

2367/116

BEAUMONT, J., J.926430, BOY SECOND CLASS -  
PUNISHMENT BY CANING

Reference: Admiralty Letter N.L. 3806/53 of  
10th November, 1953.

Enclosure: The Commanding Officer, H.M.S. GANGES' No.  
804/17 of 17th November, 1953.

I have no doubt that caning is the most appropriate punishment for Boys who break out and trust that B.R. 697 will be amended to accord with current practice.

2. Pending Their Lordships' decision the Commanding Officer, H.M.S. GANGES, may continue to award this punishment as before.

A D M I R A L

N.L. 3806/53.

Madam,

I am commanded by My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to refer to your visit to the Admiralty early in October <sup>about</sup> ~~to protest against~~ the punishments of caning given to your son when he was under training in H.M.S. GANGES, and am to inform you that My Lords regret any distress which may have been caused when you saw your son during your visit to H.M.S. GANGES.

2. The canings given to your son were awarded and carried out in accordance with the regulations. In particular, he was medically examined before each punishment ~~was inflicted~~, and on each occasion was found fit to undergo the caning.

3. With regard to the medical condition which necessitated your son's removal to the R.N. Hospital at Chatham, I am to inform you that examination there showed that your son had no hernia but that the suspected hernia was in fact a varicose condition.

There is no reason to suppose that this condition was in any way caused <sup>or aggravated</sup> by the canings given to your son.

I am, Madam,  
Your obedient Servant,



N.L.3806/53

- *Letter of Boy James Beaumont.*

D.W.S.C.

I agree with the views which you express in paragraphs 4 and 5 of your minute of 12th January on this paper. Paragraph 3 of my draft letter to the C. in C. was an attempt to justify the present practice because I thought you and D.N.T. and the Board would want to back up the man on the spot. I was the less reluctant to do this because I thought the punishment justifiable on its merits. I realized the political dangers, however, and, as you are not in favour, I gladly withdraw.

2. I feel, however, that your paragraphs 3 and 6 may be based on a misunderstanding of the reasons given at tab.A in N.L.1819/36 for justifying the use of the charge "Breaking out with intent to desert". I am sure that the Board were at least as much concerned to avoid a notation of desertion on a boy's Service certificate as to avoid bringing him into debt. If we now withdraw the authority given in 1936, more boys will inevitably be treated as deserters with permanent notations on their records.

3. From the purely legal point of view I agree with you that the charge of "breaking out with intent to desert" is bogus, but I think that the need to avoid branding young boys is paramount and that the procedure adopted in 1936 should be retained. It is difficult to justify putting the case of a boy running away from school on the same footing as the case of a grown man who deliberately deserts from his ship; and I am sure that the lenient view taken in 1936 is better.

4. Once the 1936 decision has been made clear to GARGES we can compare their punishment returns with the ones we

/are....

<http://www.godfreydykes.info>

are getting from them now and see well enough if they are complying with the rules.

5. Do you agree?

G. C. B. DODDS

HEAD OF N.L.

14th January, 1954

Head of N.L.

I must confess that you have made a point about the charge of desertion which had not occurred to me when I wrote my minute. However, I am still doubtful whether we would be wise, in recoiling from the word "desertion", to involve ourselves in the complications of "breaking out, with intent to desert." Two stigmas attach to the full charge of desertion. One is the immediate one - the effect on the boy and his fellows; the other is the long-term one - the notation on the S.C. and so on. So far as the first is concerned "desertion" is better than the circumlocution. We always impress on the boys that they are subject to full naval discipline, and we imply that the boy who deserts is doing more than the one who runs away from a civilian school. On the long-term issue, I do rather agree with you that we ought to avoid the stigma of a notation on a boy's certificate that can be crossed out, but never erased. However, I think we can do this without having to tell Captains to lay bogus charges.

2. In the service certificate the "R" serves only to mark the end of a period that in the life of an adult does not count for badges and pension. Its removal merely means that the man can count more of his service for these purposes. As a boy can count none of his time, there is no point in dividing it into "pre-R" and "post-R" periods. We could possibly rule that the "R" should not be marked on the certificates of boys. On the pay side it would be necessary to use "R" in ship's books (N.P.R.Arts.1100-1106), but this is not a matter that affects a man's personal records.

3. The abolition of "R" on boys' certificates would be in conformity with a recent Board decision against recording on men's papers the nature of the offence (as opposed to the

punishment). On the papers of an adult the "R" is used only for practical purposes in connection with badges and pension; it is not intended as an additional punishment for desertion, or as a guide to tribunals who may later have to punish the man for another offence.

*D. W. S. C.*  
25th January, 1954.

N.L. 3896/53.

1st March,

1.

Commander-in-Chief, The Nore.

Copy to: Commanding Officer, H.M.S. GANGES.

I am to refer to your submission No. 2367/116/46 of 20th November about the use of caning for the punishment of breaking out offences committed by boys in training establishments, and to forward herewith a copy of Admiralty Letter N.L. 1819/36 of 10th June, 1936. That letter gave authority for a first offence of breaking out with intent to desert to be punished by caning. There is no authority for the local scale of punishments referred to by the Commanding Officer, H.M.S. GANGES in his letter No. 804/17 of 17th November, and the irregular practice of caning for simple offences of breaking out must be discontinued.

2. Their Lordships have considered whether the two canings awarded to Boy Beaumont could nevertheless be justified; and they consider that the first punishment can be justified because of the offence involving theft, and that the second might be justified on the grounds that Beaumont broke out intending to desert.

3. Their Lordships recognise that a charge of breaking out with intent to desert is open to criticism, because such an offence is actually desertion; but they consider that it is better to use it than to charge the boy with desertion, which would involve a notation of 'R' on his service certificate. Their Lordships are at present considering whether notations need in future be permanently made on service certificates of punishments during boy's time. If they decide that they need not, the objection to charging boys with desertion will be largely removed and the instruction in Admiralty Letter N.L. 1819/36 of 10th June, 1936 would not be required.

4. Although Their Lordships realize that, in the particular conditions of boys' training establishments, caning can be a very useful punishment, they desire me to point out that it is not an authorised punishment in the Army and the Royal Air Force and cannot be awarded by civil courts. It is not too much to say, therefore, that naval practice is out of accord with the tendency of the times. For this reason alone, it is essential that all those responsible for the administration of naval discipline should constantly bear in mind the danger of any departure from the strict letter of the regulations. The Royal Navy is likely enough to be criticized for preserving this punishment at all; abuse of it might well lead to its complete abolition.

BY COMMAND OF THEIR LORDSHIPS,



Ref. S.31/1/54.

PRIVATE

Naval Training Department,  
Queen Anne's Mansions,  
London, S.W.1.

5th March, 1954.

As you know, we have had under consideration the case of Boy Beaumont, culminating in Admiralty Letter N.L. 5806/53 of 1st March, which you have no doubt now received.

You will see from this letter that the two punishments of caning are considered legally justified. Paragraph 4, however, sounds a warning that the propriety of the punishment of caning must be very carefully considered before it is awarded.

It is generally agreed, as you say in paragraph 4 of your letter 804/17 of 17th November, that caning is 'swift, stimulating and a surprisingly good deterrent'. In this particular case, however, the inefficacy of caning as a deterrent was strikingly demonstrated by his immediate repetition of the offence after the first caning. If Mrs. Beaumont had written to her M.P. or to a newspaper, we might well have had a very difficult situation to deal with. Nothing would be more likely to arouse public indignation than the award of 12 cuts twice within a week, even without any suggestion that the boy had a hernia at the time.

No doubt you will bear these considerations in mind when dealing with any future cases.

(Sgd) M. Richmond.

Captain The Earl Cairns, Royal Navy.,  
H.M.S. GANGES,  
Shotley,  
Nr. Ipswich. Suffolk.