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Due to the now fading print it was decided to re-type its contents for publishing.



FEBRUARY

1944

FOREWORD

North Russia is certainly a strange part of the world to the newcomer and his arrival is apt to upset some of the ideas he may have absorbed before leaving home. It certainly did in my case.

I was in Belfast when I was summoned to The Admiralty and I returned to my ship having volunteered to join Naval Party 100 and started the difficult task of trying to find out what was before me. All that I had been able to discover at the Admiralty was where the Party lived (I think 'existed' was the term used). The 'Met' Officer on board provided me with a table showing the average monthly temperatures and the Paymaster Commander pointed out that, as we had been in tropical rig for the last three years, it was unreasonable to expect the slop room to carry winter underwear. The F.O.I.C. Belfast, however, had quite a lot to say about my future home, and before going on leave I took up a year's supply of soap and razor blades from the canteen.

As one of the new-comers, I cannot look back on time past, but certainly we have all the facilities here for the making of a happy ship's company. Our stocks would make the Paymaster Commander and Canteen Manager of any ship green with envy, the Naval Amenities Fund treats us very generously. All that is left for us to do is to continue to enjoy these facilities together to the utmost and extend a hearty welcome to our shipmates who bring them, during their short stay in port.

Finally, we have our own paper. It is obvious that our Editors put a lot of work into NORTHERN LIGHT, but they require contributions to keep up the high standard, and there must be many of us who have not yet helped them out, so why not let them hear from you.

(Signed) G.P. CODRINGTON BALL
COMMANDER R.N.

FROM THIS OUTPOST

This land of olden glory – what tongue can tell the story
Of years both brave and gory, since first the war began?
The sacrifice and slaughter, by air and land and water
To beat the foes who fought her, and evil things to ban.

With honour duly plighted, her torch of freedom lighted
A Europe sore affrighted, by tyranny on earth;
The great dominions waiting, their all for Britain staking
No thought of ever forsaking, the land that gave them birth.

What wonders will be written, of mighty blows then smitten
To save the soul of Britain, from bondage to the Hun?
Defying bomb and blasting, with courage stern and lasting,
Alone, yet still forecasting, the triumph to be won.

A dauntless country willing, her destiny fulfilling,
Her life and treasure spilling, bound nations to release;
She answered to their pleading, with all her forces speeding
The vanguard she is leading, to paths that end in peace.

Tyler & Money
(Mishukov Signal Station)

“THEY USED TO CALL IT PING-PONG”

On Monday 21st February was held at Sailor’s Rest the first of a series (we hope) for Table Tennis Tournaments in Polyarnoe. Conditions were unfavourable for good play. The lighting at present is poor, the table was too high for fast play and neither side had been able to get their eye in or to freshen up their game.

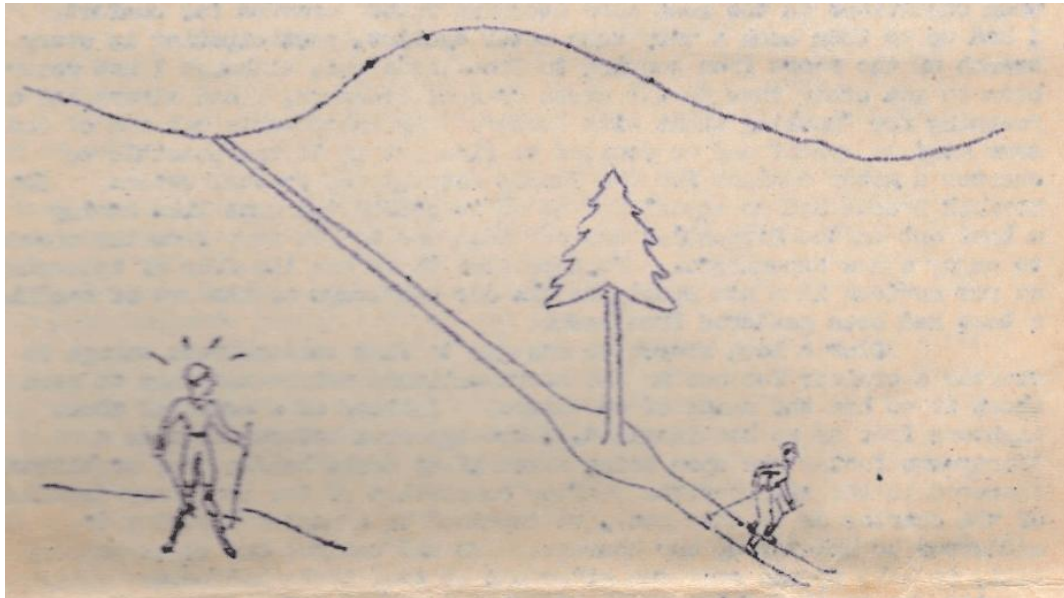
In spite of these disadvantages some very interesting matches were played. Those players who are used to playing close up to the net, when matched together, gave us some close fights. An instance is the match between Hargreaves and Hopkins, the only one which went to twenty two points. Johnstone, alone in winning all his six games, and Hamilton, both playing a long range game and getting plenty of spin on the ball gave us a most entertaining display, Johnstone winning 21 -12. A good instance of the two types of players was the meeting of Hargreaves and Johnstone when the match went to 18 – 21. At half-time the players adjourned for supper which consisted of sandwiches a la grade 3 and biscuits and cheese washed down by chai. The games finished 20-16 in favour of Navy House and a pleasant evening was enjoyed by all.

‘NOBBY’

MORE WANDERINGS IN A STRANGE LAND

By DOGSBODY

With tears in his eyes, the Doctor had warned me off skating. He pointed out that my dare-devil tendencies were bound to lead to some grim tragedy in due course. I shrugged my shoulders and readjusted my mind to some alternative form of arctic sport.



Frankly, there wasn't much choice. It seemed I must settle down to skiing, a pastime which had always appeared tame and childish to me.

I had never really studied the sport, but was perfectly convinced of its elementary simplicity. Maybe some clumsy, stupid people required instruction – I was quite certain I didn't.

And it came about that one memorable afternoon I gazed through the Navy House windows at a familiar scene - a wide expanse of virgin white, a horizontal blizzard, three pigs and all the dogs in North Russia. What a magnificent setting for my first adventure on skis. I therefore approached the chef, a skier of some distinction, and announced my intention of accompanying him that afternoon. He was very kind and helpful; borrowed some skis for me and a couple of queer looking ??? affairs that he explained should be used as paravanes. Now this all seemed pretty straight forward, but no-one had pointed out that the skis should not be worn until one had got downstairs.

Two stewards, a coder and my pal the chef, picked e carefully out of the window-frame at the bottom of the first flight and patiently explained that Jimmy-the-One was a bit fussy about chaps wearing skis in Navy House. I managed a sickly grin and descended to the ground floor, passing through a door that was held open by a sentry who appeared to experiencing some difficulty in maintaining a serious expression.

On reaching the great slope, my first impulse was to look wildly round for shelter. The chef eyed us rather scornfully "Where's your blood?" he remarked. "I think it's turned to water" I replied through chattering teeth.

However, it's hard to keep a good man down, though I discovered afterwards that it took a better man than me to keep upright.

I adjusted my skis with the help of the chef and started my adventurous trek accompanied by three very small, very agile, very cynical boys on skis, three pigs and all the dogs in North Russia.

These adventures will live long in my mind. I think they are worthy of another article, so control your enthusiasm for another month.

MARINE MOTORISTS

By POLE STAR

No doubt the title of this article is familiar to quite a few readers, and while it does no flatter, at least we do not mind it. By the “we” I mean those of us who are called “mad enough” to go to sea in a “small ship”.

My experiences in this sphere really commenced ten year ago when conditions on the road were becoming rather crowded for comfort. I had up to then been a very keen motor cyclist, participating in every branch of the sport from touring to Brooklands and, although I had never been to sea other than on the cross channel steamers, I had always had a yearning for “mucking about with boats”. My inseparable pal was of the same mind as myself and we decided to find out if it was possible to charter a motor cruiser for the Thames Estuary and coastal waters. The Norfolk Broads had no appeal for us as it seemed too much like having a boat out on the Serpentine and our idea was to get away from the crowds to enjoy a new experience. Perhaps also there was the fear of appearing as new novices in a new sport, as all our knowledge of the art of handling a boat had been gathered from books.

After a long search we managed to find someone rash enough to charter a cruiser for use in the aforementioned waters and when we were shown it we had the shock of our lives. Instead of a craft of about eighteen feet as we had imagined, there appeared before our eyes thirty two footer and upon being asked if we could handle her, we blithely answered in the affirmative. After completion of the necessary details of the charter as to date etc, we repaired to a nearby hostelry to endeavour to bolster up our courage. We had enticed one other member, Bill, to make up the crew and after one or two, I who had been unanimously elected skipper (in my opinion it was a case of ‘he can take the can back’) felt confident enough to handle a couple of Queen Marys. From that time it was a rush around to obtain as any hints as possible from friends who owned boats, but as these were of the “rag and string” fraternity, the help they could give us regarding handling power craft was negligible. A chart of the Estuary was purchased and armed with this and an ordnance survey map we rushed to every vantage point to study the water from the land. It was a thirsty business, but the information we gathered, both visual and oral, was to prove very valuable. At last the great day arrived and three outwardly confident, but inwardly quaking, mariners presented themselves at the boat yard. The owner decided he had better show us the principal features of the craft under way and so we all embarked. After getting some of the gear safely stowed, the engine was started and Bill, who had never done such a thing before, slipped our mooring. The wheel was handed to me and with fear in my heart the lever went over to “ahead”. I managed to bring her round nicely, and we headed down stream. The boat handles easily and I was soon feeling very much more at ease.

After about an hour of instruction during which the instructor put her on the ‘putty’ (aground) much to our secret joy, we returned to the mooring. We then repaired below and regaled our mentor with high tea, during which we intimated we should not sail until the next morning. There was a reason for this delay, as it was our intention to set forth on our adventure in the wee small hours, in order that any mistake would have no critical observers. So after putting ashore in

the dinghy, which thank goodness, could be handled more or less expertly, we embarked stores both wet and dry, and for the first time in our lives hoisted our riding light: and so to bed.

(to be continued)

SOLICITING

We hasten to correct any misapprehension which may have been created in the minds of our narrow-minded readers; don't let the heading raise your hopes. It is our custom which has been solicited again. Editors, editors' secretaries and lots of other equally small fry have been after our blood again. Our television phone recently showed u a P. Rating on his knees in supplicating attitude, tears coursing down his cheeks, begging the while for another monthly article from us for the publication he has the dishonour to represent. It was in our minds to dismiss him perfunctorily (nice word that what's it mean?) but we didn't, the appeal to our vanity was too great; so here is a further load of gubbins.

Since our last attempt at King's English our complement at M. Has been supplemented by various odds and ends of naval personnel, the supply, writer, stoker and mechanic branches now being represented. Perhaps the addition of the first mentioned will result in our supply of NAAFI stores being augmented and expedited. We might even get some beer! Miracles do happen even in war time, don't they?

The social side of life here has had a recent fillip. Bolshoi Dom (our H.Q.) issued a challenge at darts, cribbage and propel-halfpenny. They little knew what they were letting themselves in for, and we heard there were strange goings on. Perevodohikking pay accounts and even LUMBAGO were carelessly thrust aside, whilst the air was thick with whistling darts, and muttered curses were heard as various blokes go "one for his knob" in first. Unfortunately, we have not yet learnt who really won on the evening's performance. A record quantity of liquor was apparently consumed; and it is now generally believed that the putting away of wallop was a secret challenge item on the programme, there can be no other explanation for it.

The local skiing club Meet still gathers each week and no amount of bruises can shake it confidence. If only its skill was comparable with its tenacity....! Our romantic minded readers will learn with regret that love's sweet song is no longer heard here, the last preferring booze to feminine company (here we have the choice of either delectable item; we understand that our brethren at P. can only get booze).

Since our new arrivals have appeared, meal times are especially entertaining, as Stoke Case regales us with spicy anecdotes of life on a Greek schooner, which at the date of its sinking must have been about 130 years old. To our enquiry of "What the devil is a stoker doing on a schooner?" we can obtain no printable reply.

All our questions of last month have been satisfactorily answered and we thank our readers for all the unstamped letters on which we have had to pay postage. Can anyone now tell us how to repair gramophones? Since our receipt of those much discussed twenty records both our portable instruments of torture have jagged in. Is it fate or just plain sabotage?

P.S. May we have the following current rumours confirmed?

1. That Sub.Lt. Cheshire is taking lessons in Russian.
2. That Lt. Fry is granting all the lads here a weeks free NAAFI.
3. That P.O. Tel. Stephen has repaired Bolshoi Dom's wireless set.
4. That A.B. Sanders refused his tot one day last week.

We thank you.

Murmansk Incorporated.

ON CAPS

By JONSON

It was brought home to me quite recently. "Git your cap", he said, and he meant it. Then I realised that my cap was a symbol; it was a symbol of naval discipline and concentrated on it was all the irritation that the discipline caused me.

????? with the Navy, of course, affects different people in different ways. A friend of mine in training was always getting into trouble because he could never remember to carry his gas mask. It wasn't a rebellious or uncooperative spirit on his part; but, like most people, he had consistently ignored the advice of the Ministry of Home Security before he had been called up and he hadn't adjusted himself in this respect to the Navy's way. It was his blind spot. All he said the first time they pulled him up about it was "Oh, that's all right. Hitler will never use gas." You see? He just hadn't grasped that whether it was reasonable or not to carry your gas mask didn't enter into the matter at all.

Well, with me it was my cap. When I was a civilian, and could please myself, I faced the world with bared head I never raised my hat on meeting a female acquaintance, or handed it in at cloakrooms, or lost it under the seat, because I never wore one. But the Navy, I gathered, felt rather strongly on the point. I took a dislike to my cap the moment the uninterested Wren brought us together. "Size?" she said. It was so long since I'd bought a hat that I wasn't quite sure. But it seemed silly to say I didn't know and so I made a guess which I don't think could have been very accurate; and that didn't help.

I remember donning it for the first time in front of the mirror. What a creation it was. Until the buffetings of weather and use had moulded it into an amiable shape, it appeared that one wore it of necessity either resting expensively on both ears or carving an additional furrow, as if from some unsupportable worry, on the brow. Solid and round as the earth itself it was. I had my photograph take in it – bowing my head to domestic clamour – and I am still confronted each leave by this ghastly likeness. I seem to be wearing the lid of some discarded chocolate box, an impression which is confirmed by the prominent bow leaning limply over the left ear. It looks profoundly uncomfortable, as indeed it was. For a time, I resorted to the stratagem of pretending I was hot, and carried it uneasily in my hand, dangling carelessly, perhaps, from one finger. But this made saluting – and in training one did salute – an impossibly intricate solution; you had to clap it on your head and peel off (as they say) a smart one with a single, sweeping, all-in-one movement, like Hobbs fielding a bouncing ball at cover point; so I abandoned the ruse.

In the end, I grew to a certain extent, accustomed to my cap, just as I grew accustomed to P.T. before breakfast and getting fell in three deep. I could never learn to like it but I found it had its uses. You could keep things in it, which went a long way towards making up the deficiency in the

way of pockets for which whoever designed that picturesque anachronism, the naval uniform is responsible. I once knew a three badge killick who used to keep practically everything, from unanswered letters to newly acquired prophylactics in his cap. It was amazing: he would produce things out of it like a conjuror; I used to wait in tense anticipation for the rabbit. Besides that, I learnt, you needed it for a run ashore. It acted as a sort of barometer of the naval temperament. Placed squarely on the head, and you were chokker or you were sober; but tilted a little farther back with every pint, it could finally enable you to achieve the ultimate stage of exhilaration. Perhaps you entered the hostelry as timorous, as self-conscious, a counterfeit a man dressed as a seaman as ever stuffed a surreptitious lanyard into his pocket but you emerged the genuine sea-going matelot, with rolling gait and boisterous song, and your cap – miraculously, defiantly, recklessly, criminally, flat aback.

Any affection the memory of such occasions might have aroused in me for my cap was more than offset by the use made of it by officialdom. “Off caps”, they said when they wanted us to pray, “On Caps”, (one, two) they said, bringing us rapidly back to earth after our brief communion with the heavenly powers. It was raise caps, three times rhythmically, when we cheered by numbers on occasions requiring an exhibition of formal joy. But the pay parade did most of all to perpetuate the bad feeling which has always existed between me and my cap. My idea was that one’s money should be handed one in a discreet envelope, according to the delightful Civil Service tradition. Instead of that, I found you queued up for an indefinite period (never did so many, it was once said, wait so long for so little) after which you placed your hat on the table, as it were challenging them to insult you, like the knight of old used to fling down his glove; and as each fortnight your challenge was promptly accepted, you beat an ignominious retreat clutching thankfully the grimy note or two that had been thrust on your cap.

There it was that symbolical cap again, and every fortnight my dislike of it inexorably increased. The last straw came when the melancholy intelligence was spread abroad that the well known ceremony was in future to be carried out inside the Arctic Circle, as well. The deathless phrase, “Get your cap”, indicated the injury that was about to be added to insult. I know now that I will find no peace of mind until that incredible day when I walk out of Chatham Barracks a free man. Then pausing only to make a Churchillian gesture to the Jaunty on the gate, I will fling (if I haven’t done so already) my cap, ribbon, chin strap and all, to the winds that they may sport with it as they well,.

ICE CREAM AND ACES

By A.G.M.

After a lapse of many weeks, the interest of sufficient members of Naval Party 100 was aroused to enable a Whist Drive to be run at the Corner House, on Sunday, 13th February. The evening passed very pleasantly with several players’ hopes and chances fluctuating as the last games were played. Eventually Surg. Lieut. Cowie, a somewhat doubtful “lady”, obtained the top score of “her” sex, and incidentally, of both sexes. Ldg. Sig. Hamilton, playing with all the charm of “her” namesake, took the second ladies prize. P.O. Starkey was the most successful of the “gentlemen” and received his prize amongst many remarks which would be too slanderous to print. Tel. Leatheraich ran him a close second. The Coder branch, not to be outdone, sported “Gunner” Easton as the candidate for the “booby”.

Our grateful thanks must be tendered to the Supply Chief and to Andre, the Russian chef, for providing such tasty refreshments, which consisted of pears and ice cream, delightful cream pastries and coffee. Well, those people who didn't attend and, with an effort, could have done, doesn't that make your mouth water? Thank you, C.P.O. Ling and P.O. Tel. Parkins for your efforts in arranging the evening.

Although there was an attendance of forty two this time we can do even better Surely everyone who can possible attend these functions should do so, just out of appreciation for the time which our C.P.O.'s and P.O.'s give up to provide us with entertainment. Come on N.P. 100, it was good this time, what about making it better the next.

MUSICAL GEEKS

The following is a conversation between two critics of both classes of music.

BRC: I hear that they are preparing for the annual Swing Session, or whatever you call it, at the Kingsway Hall, or wherever you hold it. What is happening this year, do you know?

CFR: I really couldn't say. I do not attend these meetings as nothing really worthwhile is turned out. I am a jazz fan and British swing leaves me cold.

BRC: What exactly do you mean by that? What is the difference between jazz and swing?

CFR: Well, to put it more or less in a nutshell, jazz is the authentic folk music of the Negro race, the music of New Orleans and Chicago of the early 1920's. It is simple and sincere, depending mainly on the inspiration of its soloists: Coleman Hawkins, Johnny Hodges, Louis Armstrong etc. Swing is a deterioration of jazz and is essentially a "hotting up" of commercial dance tunes with all the cheap frills and smart tricks of the modern arranger; and now a question to you. Can you explain the lack of good classical composers during the twentieth century? There seems to have been no one of repute since the great masters.

BRC: Well, with Joad, I would ask what exactly you mean by 'good classical composers'? I trust you are not falling into the error of assuming that because you have never heard of some of our present day composers they do not exist. How many of my followers could name even one of your jazz composers? Yet both sides are making a great mistake. To give the names of a few classical composers: Delius, Elgar, Arnold Bax, John Ireland, William Walton and from foreign countries, Prokofieff, Shostakovitch, Rachmaninoff, Debussy and Kakaturian. Even you will not doubt the universal acclamation of these twentieth century composers.

CFR: Yes, but are their works appreciated as much as Beethoven, J.S. Bach or Mendelssohn? Your so called classical lovers seem to be very limited in their likes and dislikes. One hears too few names outside the accepted masters. On the other hand, jazz has had a few consistent composers – Ellington, Fletcher Henderson, W.C. Handy and Spencer Williams – but jazz has no definite writers; generally members of small groups write a riff (four bar phrase repeated) and improvise on it, caring not so much upon keeping to the tune as to the excitement and phrasing that they can produce. They speak the music that is in their minds.

BRC: You must remember that classical lovers, as you are pleased to call them, are not the ecstatic sycophants of your jazz world. They take their music seriously, and if they don't say much they think a great deal more. Of course their (the composers') music is well known to the average concert-going classical lover, and he also appreciates the brilliance with which their works are orchestrated and played; also the finer technical points. However, would you like to attempt to tear any further holes in our Classical Defences?

CFR: Yes, can you see any resemblance of a melody in those rather somber Piano Concertos or the horrible fugues that Bach submitted to a long suffering public way back in the distant past?

BRC: Bach incidentally did not submit anything to the long suffering public because he was dead before anyone heard the majority of his music; but to carry on. You must remember that a fugue is a four part melody each part coming fifteen beats after the other and so weaving a pattern. If it were possible I could show you that there is a great deal of beauty in a fugue if only you have the patience to listen to it. As for the concertos, their beauty lies mainly in the way in which the themes are taken up first by the piano and then by the orchestra. This formation of the chords are all part of a great idea fostered in a musician's brain, and no one can tell me that there is no beauty in such a work as the Schumann or Grieg Piano Concerto or the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto. Actually it's purely a question of taste. I can't stand some of the modern composers; concerto work. Arthur Moeren for instance. There are good phrases but they are few and far between.

CFR: Well, you fetch me the records and I'll accumulate enough patience to listen to them and although I am not prejudiced I don't think I shall like them.

BRC: That remains to be seen. I think perhaps we'd better stop now and if the Editor can stand it we'll submit another ripping episode in the thrilling story.

B.R. Colthup and C.F. Rippingale
'Y' Cottage

PUZZLE CORNER

THE ANSWER TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLE

The Farmer put nine men to work in each of the four fields overlooked by the windows of the farmhouse.

	9	
9		9
	9	

HERE'S ANOTHER

Who was the oldest man who ever lived yet died before his Father?

From 'M' Hut

QUIZ

1. Who won the first V.C. in the present war?
2. How many engines has a Mosquito fighter?
3. Does the Equator pass through India?
4. What British monarchs were portrayed in films by the following and what were the titles of the films?
 - a. Charles Laughton
 - b. Bette Davis
 - c. Basil Rathbone
 - d. Anna Neagle
5. From who did Joe Louis win the World Heavyweight title?
6. Which European cities have been declared "open towns" in this war?

7. Name the latest books by
 - a. Wendell Wilkie
 - b. John Masefield
 - c. Richard Llewellyn
8. Who have been the last three Master of the King's Musick?
9. What is the signature tune of Billy Ternent?
10. Who is:-
 - a. Secretary of State for Air
 - b. Secretary of State for War
 - c. Ministry of War Transport
 - d. First Sea Lord

I WONDER

By Jim Morris

How far do you think that man has advanced since the Dark Ages? By that I mean do you think that man has outgrown his superstitions, his fear of the supernatural? I wonder, and think that the following story will show you what I am getting at.

Joe, a young chap, was an only child and to his widowed mother he was perfection. She extolled his virtues and glossed over his vices, which is the natural thing with mothers; but in this particular case it went further than normal. Her worship of her son amounted to an obsession.

Her greatest fear was that he would be inveigled into matrimony by some painted flapper who would have the audacity to expect to share her son's affections. Maybe she would even attempt to turn him against her, his mother.

She was unfortunately taken ill Joe learned from the hospital that she was incurable, would never walk again and would gradually waste away; and that absolutely nothing could be done.

Joe did his best to carry on as usual at home; but after a year of being alone he naturally enough sought feminine company and finally met, and eventually married, Jean, against his mother's wishes. The girl soon learned of the mother's hatred of her and the thought of her mother-in-law's return from hospital became her greatest fear.

The mother's condition became worse. As her son was rushing to the hospital she died; and the body was taken to the son's home to await burial. From then on the wife's fears increased. She seemed to sense a feeling of evil in the air and at night long after her husband had fallen asleep she would lie awake and listen to the small sounds with which an old house abounds. Or worse still she would suddenly awake in the early hours of the morning and in the stillness her imagination would begin to work; she would think of the body in the next room, of the women's hatred of her and of the thinness of the wall which obstructed her view of the coffin and what it contained.

On the afternoon preceding the funeral she was sitting the living room reading. The upper half of the doors of the room were composed of frosted glass. The door opened on to a landing from which one flight of stairs led down to the street and another up to the room where the body lay.

Suddenly she looked up. Was she imagining things again or had she heard a shuffling footstep on the lower stairs? She waited. Nothing stirred. As quiet as a grave, she thought, and then wished she could forget the idea. After a while the tenseness lessened and she attempted to resume her reading but she unconsciously remained listening.

Then she stiffened with fear. She could hear the door of the room where the corpse lay opening and yet she knew she was alone in the house – except for the corpse.

Petrified with fear she heard slow shuffling footsteps coming from the room towards her, steadily descending the stairs and shuffling nearer, ever nearer. Then with her eyes fixed on the door with a terrible intensity she saw a face distorted by the frosted glass peering in at her.

For what seemed an eternity she remained rooted to her chair while the face continued to stare. And then slowly the door began to open.

Unable to move a finger her body seemed just a frozen mass, and refused to obey her wild urging to take flight. She waited for what the opening door would show.

Gradually the opening widened and then at last to her amazement and relief she saw a man standing there, a stranger whom she had never seen in her life.

Quickly she rushed to the man soon discovered he was visiting the next door neighbours. He was drunk and had wandered into the wrong house.

An anticlimax you say. What did you expect her to find – a ghost? Of course not, civilized man doesn't believe in ghosts – or does he? I wonder.

FLANNEL CORNER

Hollywood entertains the R.N.

By H. (Constance) Cooper

The following experience happened during my last ship's refit in Carolina in 1942.

Ashore one night in Charleston supported (literally) by the Chief Stoker and Canteen Manager at the American forces U.S.O. Club we had the good fortune to see Paulette Goddard and entourage surrounded by admiring fans. By using our own special brand of R.N. flannel we got into a conversation which ultimately ended in an invitation to spend the weekend with the party at their Villa in Charleston.

The following Saturday, the Chief Stoker wanted to live up to his name of Head down Harry and the Canteen Manager wanted to check up his weeks "makings" (not to be confused with "takings") but after much argument, we finally got to the entrance of the Villa Marguerita. It was one of those beautiful colonial buildings complete with white pillars along the front.

All the guests, including us, were introduced formally with hand kissing by some of the Yanks; but the Manager gave Paulette a good hearty Lancashire handshake that must have rocked her on her lovely legs. Another star was with her – Martha O'Driscoll. Dinner was served in a dining hall complete with fountains and gold fish and most impressive array of cutlery on each table. The party was split up very much into their own groups; luckily we had our separate table. The Chief Stoker's first move, being left-handed, was to transfer his array of bright work (in his groggy condition you can imagine with what results). The effects were apparent throughout the long and to me complicated meal; the Chief was certainly under a heavy handicap from which he never quite recovered, and his final faux pas, of feeding the gold fish from his plate, certainly staggered some of the Americans, but don't think it worried us. By this time we were getting accustomed to our luxurious surroundings and overcoming our shyness. We were casting overworked glances at Miss Goddard's figure which is worth (need I tell you?) checking over curve by curve; but really she is a small pleasant mannered lady and obviously she tried to make us feel at home and give us a good time. So I for one admit this little debt to Hollywood. To prove that it wasn't a dream I still have the autographs I collected from glamorous hostess.

Overheard in the S.D.O. Exasperated Bunting to signalman on ship alongside:

“Ring Ardeen Deavit Vosem”
“Ardeen as in forest of, Shakespeare”
“Deavit things you hoist ships’ boats on”
“Vosem like foursome in tennis”
“Ardeen Deavit Vosem!!!”

SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

A warning to those lads
Who court the ‘wrapped up’ she
You’d better wait ‘til May be out
For when ‘clouts’ are cast – AH! ME

IMPOSSIBLE

By: SPOKESHAVE

Mr Chadley was getting annoyed. He had been drinking steadily since opening time, and for the past hour the little man with the drooping moustache had been making a fool of him. Telling him that it was possible to move objects by will power. Mind over matter indeed.

Mr Chadley snorted. Stabbing his forefinger savagely in the direction of the little man he demanded for the tenth time that he gave some concrete proof of his wild statements. The little man gazed at him with weary eyes, and said, also for the tenth time, that the forces used were too dangerous to handle lightly.

“Poppyclock” said Mr Chadley, now thoroughly roused. “Climbing down, that’s what he is”. He looked around at his cronies and was satisfied to hear a murmur of agreement. “I’ll tell you what I’ll do. I’ll lay five pounds you can’t do it”. Mr Chadley drew his week’s wages from his notecase and threw them on the bar He’d show him. The little man would have to back down now. Mr Chadley began to feel pleased with himself. He drew himself up and called for a double.

The little man finished his drink, and slowly drew a grimy sleeve across his lips. “All right”, he said at last, “Don’t say I didn’t warn you”.

He fixed his eyes on a pewter tankard and made a few passes; and the tankard began slowly to rise. Mr Chadley was taken aback. This was impossible. He was being made a fool of. Probably there was a bit of cotton attached. Yes, that was it. He lurched forward. He James Thomas Chadley would show ‘em.

The little man yelled, “Look out!!!”. The tankard hit the bar with a crash

Everybody in the bar looked at the little man; everybody that is, except Mr Chadley, who was nowhere to be seen.

“Well where is he?” they said.

The little man called for another pint. “I don’t know”, he said.

The barman silently drew him his drink. The little man took a deep draught and set his glass slowly down on the counter.

"Don't say I didn't warn him" he said.

He pocketed the five pounds.

PIANOFORTE RECITAL

STAFF REPORTER

On February 20th at Navy House, a new form of entertainment was given in the shape of a pianoforte recital by Tel. Culthup. A good attendance of officers and men could have left no doubt in the mind of the performer as to their appreciation. Each item was applauded with considerably more than mere politeness.

It would probably have been an object lesson to some people to see those hairy chested, bull necked, baccy chewing sons of the sea listening with rapt attention to a programme of classical music. My pa the chef remarked that the piano looked "kinder bare" without a few pints of beer stood on top.

As my musical education was sadly neglected I won't attempt to discuss the various suites, fantasias etc. When I glanced at the programme I thought at first it was written in Russian. It must be quite an achievement to pronounce such things, let alone play them.

But there's no denying we all enjoyed every minute of the recital. Hard to say which item was the most popular. I thought if anything the final rendering – 'Piano Concerto in A minor' was perhaps the most impressive in a programme of really fine music.

Many thanks to Tel. Colthup.

BUNTING'S LAMENT

BY: JACK

"You leave in half an hour" he said, "It's only for a couple of days."

Well. I suppose I couldn't grumble, after all I was in the Navy; and even though it was a destroyer it was only for a couple of days. As I trudged along the quayside I presented a pathetic figure, I thought, against the vast snows of eternal Russia. With pencil in pocket, kit bag over shoulder and heart in mouth, I stepped aboard the forbidding craft that had added so impressively to the Polyarnoe scenery for the last month or so.

I was shown to my allotted billet for the trip, somewhere around the stem of the ship, and got my head down; but within half an hour I was called on deck and after much gesticulating I was literally thrown into a small motor boat whose destination no-one knew.

After about four hours steaming I finally arrived aboard an old destroyer lying way down the inlet, and on the face of things I was in for a hell of a trip. Well, who wouldn't think so, in a mess with hundreds of matelots and millions of insects?

At the break of dawn I was surprised to find that we were still tied to the buoy, and, wondering a little whether after all I was going to sea, I got my head down again, brushing a stray cockroach or two off my pillow first.

I was awakened by the shrilling of whistles, shrieking of sirens, buzzing of buzzers and the scrambling of sailors. At last it appeared we were off, heading down the inlet for the White Sea. At this time I thought I ought to pay the bridge a visit, but when I got there they indicated that I wasn't needed – after all there was no work, no interpreter and no flickering lights – and so I went below and crashed the swede once more. What alas was there to do?

Twelve hours later I had eaten nothing – nothing eatable had been put in front of me; there was still no work and no signals, and I still had my head down. By this time the cockroaches were running up and down, to and fro, over the steam pipes, just above my head. I found myself mentally racing one against the other. This would never do. I was letting it get me down; I was going round the bend quicker than the ship was steaming through the White Sea; so I went up on the bridge.

We had action stations during the day so I joined in the rush and fought my way to the bridge only to be told to go below and get my head down again; by this time I was getting chokker with this swede crashing routine. I refused to go below this time and stood there taking in some fresh air, which, by the way, is very scarce in the mess decks, and watching an English escort when she actually blinded me with more A's than that. This was a bit better, a signal at last; but it was now that I found out why I had been having so much sleep. Upon enquiry I found that there was an interpreter, with his own signalman, aboard our Senior Officer. So I went below and crashed more chokker than ever.

When I regained consciousness I was in heaven-sent Kola Inlet. Never have I been so glad to see the white cliffs of Kola, but there will, probably, be several more occasions when my comrades and I will see that welcome sight again.

Before the destroyer was alongside I was on the quayside, pencil still in pocket, kit bag on shoulder and head down in my sea boots. I had spent four days – four long days – during which time I had eaten nothing but four bowls of vegetable soup, and did nothing but get my head down and study the habits of cockroaches.

Was my journey really necessary?

MOSCOW THEATRE GUIDE 1944 SEASON

This review is intended for the benefit of those who are likely to pay a short visit to Moscow, to assist them in making a reasonably good choice of the numerous shows running in the capital.

BALLETS

The "SWAN LAKE" (Bolshoi Theatre)

Unsurpassed for sheer beauty of the real classical ballet and the Tchaikovsky music genius. The string section of the 100 odd of the orchestra is much in evidence, the harps coming into their very own time and again. The plot has been altered to a happy ending. In consequence the famous Dance of the Dying Swan is performed no more.

The "BACKCHISARAI FOUNTAIN" (Bolshoi Theatre)

At the time of writing the above revival had only had two or three performances. The story is based on the famous poem by A.S. Pushkin, set to music by B.V. Asaffiev. It is a ballet of wide contrasts, the slender, fairy-like heroine fleeing about like a will o' the wisp, whilst a grandiose, savage, abandoned, Asiatic background predominates around her, after the first act. The theme-song persists right through and is charmingly haunting.

The "NUTCRACKER" (Bolshoi Ballet)

Another beautiful ballet with more enchanting music by Tchaikovsky. There is some highly efficient stage shifting thrown in.

The "DON QUIXOTE" (Bolshoi Theatre)

A comparatively new Bolshoi Theatre production, the sequences being slightly altered and a short prologue added. Some very spectacular scenes and the juvenile dancing talent even more in prominence than in the "Nutcracker"/

Footnote: It is well to remember that some Prima Ballerinas have that extra something which others lack, therefore make a note of these names and try to see any Ballet where the Danseuses appear in order of their merits.

O. Lepeshinskaya of Moscow, in my opinion, shares the first place with G. Ulanova of Leningrad. S. Messerer runs a close second in personality, but is just as good in her technique, whilst M. Semenova and M. Sorokina vie for the third place. This is throwing fat into the fire, but go and judge for yourselves. The best of the so-called modern ballets is probably the "Red Sails" as the FILLIALE of the BOLSHOI (the Annex to the Bolshoi). It is certainly more inspiring when Lepeshinskaya appears in it, on rare occasions, so I was told. It was certainly my good fortune to see this ballet with Madame Lepeshinskaya rising to her usual great heights, and it was quite inspiring to see the famous Moscow No. 1 conductor, U.F. Faier, driving his 100 men into blood and sweat.

OPERAS

It is astounding to hear people say that because they do not know the language, they fight shy of hearing an Opera in a strange language, especially in Russian. The music and the singing is still there, plus the stage-craft on a gigantic scale. Therefore, the Red version of the "Life for the Tzar", now renamed "Ivan Susanin" at the Bolshoi Theatre, should not be missed, especially if Mikhailov is singing the title role. The Soviet production includes a most spectacular prologue, and a truly magnificent and lavish epilogue just for the sake of some ten to twelve minutes. There is, also, a fiery Polish Ballet in the second act, which certainly makes people say "This thing, called the Ballet – there is really something in it."

To those who know a little Russian and are curious to find out whether the Country has a parallel to Shakespeare, 1st let them go to see Tragedy at the Moscow Arts Theatre entitled "Tzar Feodor Ioannovich." It is a tragedy, indeed, and Art with a capital A. I would go to see a play so magnificently performed in any language, whether I knew that language or not.

To sum up: "Swan Lake", "Pachisarai Fountain", "Ivan Susanin", "Tzar Feodor Ioannovich" would give you an all round idea of the Russian theatrical art, i.e. two ballets, one opera and one classical play.

If you add a long ride on the much publicized "all-Russian" Metro-Vicker built Underground "DURING A RUSH HOUR," and view that famous painting on the ceiling of the vestibule in the British Embassy on the Sofievskaya Hall, an stroll through the Red Square, it ought to leave you amply rewarded for the nightmarish discomforts of the seemingly never-ending train journey. Incidentally, don't get off the train for "short walks", as you may be left behind for a couple of days and thus shorten, still further, your visit to Moscow

Elaboration on the "Swan Lake" running commentary as given by an American. "Waal, geisers, this is known back home in Hollywood as Plot A 1. Boy meets girl as he goes swan-stalking in Central Park N.Y. City. The swans are privately owned by a plenty-tough Big Shot, alias the Evil Spirit, who can change, at will, all these geese into skoits and back into feathers again. Now the Boy, who is a bit of a well-to-do Wall Street Dooke goes nuts over the smallest looking swan-dame, met mo? The Big Shot gets bored with this, as there aint enough dames to go round, like in the Kola Inlet, and so does the Boy; ???, who has a swell joint down-town. She can get all the vodka and fattening caviar, but it aint dignified for her to dig for worms to feed her future daughter-in-law, seeing that she is half a gangster's Moll and half a Boid. The Boy gets the blues over this, and bang

goes his noive, so the Mother puts over a Party in a plenty Bolshoi way, with heebie-jeebies, and a swell bunch of good-looking dames, and an extra special Hot number supplied by the Big Shot himself, who comes to the Party in a bullet proof suit and pants. So back we go to the Central Park, where after a lot of harum-scarum the Dooke punches the Big Shot on the beak, tears off one of his wings, so the poor sap gets the woiks and bites the dust. And that, you suckers, is the "Boid Lake"that was."

J.T.

EARLY DAYS (Concluded)

By A.L. CREEDY

No doubt you've heard of 'wood parties' (collecting 'fire wood; from barges etc.) Well, it used to be the natives who unloaded the tree trunks on to the jetty – and as Les Cook had not then arrive in N.R. a crane was used for taking the heavy logs from the hold. The local inhabitants apparently knew nothing of the rise and fall of tides, and the incident now to be related happened time and time again.

When the whistle went for lunch they would cease work, leaving the grab of the crane clutching several hundred weight of prospective firewood for our galley fire – off went the workers for vodka.

Down went the tide, down came the crane grab, further down went the water level and further down came the tentacles of the lifting apparatus – the inevitable happened; the crane being unable to life the barge and strained to its utmost, collapsed into the water.

But usually we got our wood, and gradually we settled down to wait for our reliefs or the end of the war.

The reliefs came first; yet here I am still clearing lowing deck in Polyarnoe.

I couldn't keep away from the dear old place, you know.....

EDITORIAL

It is with – let us admit – a feeling of mild surprise and perhaps a slight sigh of relief that, having crossed the "t's" and inserted the final comma, we lean back in our editorial chairs to survey another issue of 'Northern Light'. But say not the struggle naught availeth; our concern now is to ensure that the work of staff and contributors is in no degree wasted ant that 'Northern Light' reaches as many people as possible. The number of copies is rigorously limited, for the shortage of paper is one of our greatest difficulties. We assure you that we would produce more copies each month if we could and that the distribution of what we can print is as fair as we can make it. So please co-operate with us to make certain that this month's 'Northern Light' is seen by everybody on your particular station.

We have one more request to make of you, and that is to heed the pleas we shall doubtless be making in the coming month for contributions to our next issue. It is your magazine; and to some extent, therefore, the responsibility for maintaining the standards set by our predecessors rests with each individual.

Finally we would thank everyone whose work has made February's 'Northern Light' possible, particularly Sig. J.C. Green, who illustrated Dogsbody's article. We hope you like it. If you don't, the least you can do is to send us your ideas for making improvements

EDITORS.

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