

U.S.S. ARK ROYAL



FIFTH COMMISSION
1964-66

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CAPTAIN M. F. FELL, D.S.O., D.S.C. +, R.N.

FOREWORD

by

Captain M. F. FELL, D.S.O., D.S.C.⁺, Royal Navy

Ark Royal is a famous name in the Royal Navy. During the Second World War there were few who did not know of her or of her achievements. She was held in great affection by the people of our Islands and when she was finally sunk their reaction was first one of disbelief and then of personal loss.

I believe that our *Ark Royal*, the fourth to bear the name, is a worthy successor to our war-time predecessor. I feel qualified to make this statement having served in the war-time *Ark*, served in our *Ark Royal* during her first commission and finally had the honour to command her during her fifth commission.

No matter how modern a ship or her weapons or her aircraft or her equipment, she is nothing without the men who man her. It is they, and they alone, who bring her alive and infuse spirit into her. Each and everyone of you can feel pride in the way you have achieved this during the *Ark*'s fifth commission. She is not as young as she used to be, and by the middle of June 1966 had steamed some 405,000 miles, 100,000 miles of which were steamed during this commission.

You have not only kept her running but brought her to a high degree of efficiency. You have all worked long and arduous hours and yet remained cheerful throughout. Whenever Senior Officers have visited the ship, they have commented on the excellent spirit in her.

And what has all the training been leading up to? First and foremost, that we have the ability to steam vast distances quickly and then perform any operational task assigned to us, as we demonstrated during the Beira patrols. The presence of *Ark Royal* in the Far East during the height of the Indonesian confrontation of Malaysia was undoubtedly not only a stabilizing but a restraining influence. Perhaps it is all best summed up by the Far East Fleet Commander who, when we left the station at the end of our year East of Suez, said - "The *Ark* is a key figure in a world political scene of great difficulty. It should be a matter of pride that this is so and that each movement and action of the ship should count for so much."



CHANGE OF CAPTAIN



Captain M. F. Fell, D.S.O., D.S.C.⁺, R.N. joins



Captain A. T. F. Griffin, R.N. is pulled away

The History of H.M.S. Ark Royal

In 1586, Sir Walter Raleigh placed an order with R. Chapman, shipbuilder of Deptford, for a vessel to be named Ark or, more correctly, *Ark Raleigh*, for ships then bore their owner's name. In January 1587, the Crown bought her from Sir Walter and she became styled *Ark Royal*, a formidable vessel of 38 guns, and a ship for great occasions. Her greatest was the Battle of the Armada. With the flag of the Lord High Admiral of England, Lord Howard of Effingham, at her masthead she was in the battle from the first encounter with the Spaniards off Plymouth to the decisive battle of Gravelines, chasing the scattered and fleeing Spanish ships into the North Sea and beyond the Firth of Forth. It was not the last time Lord Howard was to fly his flag in her, for in 1596 she was in the front line of the joint Army and Navy expedition against Cadiz, an interesting early example of combined service operations. The Spaniards only threatened England with invasion once more, in 1599, and *Ark Royal* was again commissioned as flagship. Perhaps the memory of her guns spoiled the Spanish appetite for action against her, for the threat died and *Ark Royal* never saw action again in her own name. When James I acceded to the throne he renamed her *Anne Royal*, in honour of his Queen Anne of Denmark. In 1625, under her new style, and as flagship of Lord Wimbledon, she led another expedition against Cadiz, this time a disastrous one owing to the poor preparations made for it.

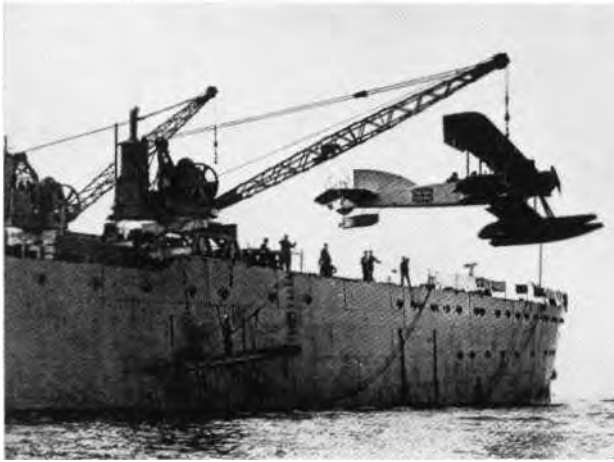
To her Admirals she was a great ship in all conditions, an opinion definitely not shared by the soldiers who were carried in her and who complained of the excessive rolling. Only the soldiers therefore would not mourn when, in 1636, as she was moving from the Medway for service as Sir John Pennington's flagship, she stove in her timbers on her own anchor and sank. At a cost greater than her original purchase price she was raised and docked, but found to be beyond repair and broken up.



Three centuries passed before another ship called *Ark Royal* fought for Great Britain. She was a merchant ship bought for the Royal Navy whilst still building in 1914 and converted into a sea-plane carrier. With the Mediterranean Fleet she served at the Dardanelles and the Gallipoli landings and, in 1918, in the Russian operations in the Black Sea, where in 1920 she was the evacuation ship for Russian

THE HISTORY OF H.M.S. ARK ROYAL

refugees from the Revolution. After refitting in Rosyth and a period in reserve she joined the Fleet again at Constantinople when trouble was brewing between Greece and Turkey. Returning to England in 1923 she was placed in reserve and eventually disposed of.



Embarking a seaplane in the second Ark Royal



Last hours of the third Ark Royal

The third Ark Royal, a ship of 22,000 tons, was launched at Birkenhead in 1937. She was destined to carry some seventy-two aircraft and 1,500 officers and men into some of the most stirring battles of the Second World War. After taking part in the Norwegian Campaign in 1940, she joined the attacks on the French Fleet at Oran when France had fallen to the Germans. She then joined the famous Force "H" based at Gibraltar and for fifteen months saw action in the Mediterranean, where she was a favourite target for the enemy, notably on convoy runs to Malta. The sinking of Ark Royal was a frequent German claim, and the enemy doubtless wished it were true when she played a crucial part in the great naval operation of the sinking of the Bismark. Her career was in fact ended early in the morning of 14th November 1941 when, having been torpedoed the previous day by a submarine, the "old Ark" - as she is still referred to by many - turned over and sank within sight of Gibraltar.

In May 1943, the keel of the present Ark Royal was laid down at Cammell Laird's Yard, Birkenhead, by Princess Marina, Duchess of Kent, and in 1950 she was launched by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, now the Queen Mother. The ship has an overall length of 810 feet and has a deep displacement of 50,786 tons, the fourth great ship to bear a famous name.

She was adopted at the time of her building by both Lloyd's and the City of Leeds.

OUR ADMIRALS



*Rear Admiral H. R. B. Janvrin,
C.B., D.S.C.,
Flag Officer Aircraft Carriers*



*Vice-Admiral P. J. Hill-Norton, C.B.
Flag Officer Second-in-Command,
Far East Fleet*

COMMISSIONING DAY

12th November, 1964

On Thursday, 12th November 1964, the Commissioning Ceremony for the Fifth Commission was held in the Hangar. It marked the end of several months of refit in Devonport Dockyard and the beginning of a full programme of Storing and Trials that was designed to be completed by Christmas. The evening before, many of those who were now gathered for the Ceremony had been to the Ship's Ball which had been held in the Guildhall. On this sunny, cheerful morning the ladies found themselves in a quandary as to how they were to achieve the maximum of comfort, warmth and elegance simultaneously. Our guests came on board in their hundreds - civic and Naval dignitaries, families and friends. The Commander-in-Chief, Plymouth, Admiral Sir Nigel Henderson, K.C.B., O.B.E.; and Lady Henderson, and the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Plymouth headed the list of Official Guests.



COMMISSIONING DAY



The Ship's Company and their Guests stood while the Captain (Captain A. T. F. G. Griffin, R.N.) read the Commissioning Warrant. This Warrant had been read originally in February to the few Officers and men who had stayed on after the end of the Fourth Commission to see the ship through her refit. This fact was betrayed by the use of the words "Their Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty" which had been correct at the time of issue but had receded into History with the inception of the unified Ministry of Defence in April 1964. When he had completed the reading of the Warrant, the Captain called on the Ship's Company to ask God's Blessing on H.M.S. *Ark Royal*, using the Gaelic Blessing of 1589, which contains these words:

The Captain: What do you fear seeing that God the Father is with you?

The Ship's Company: We fear nothing.

The Captain: What do you fear seeing that God the Son is with you?

The Ship's Company: We fear nothing.

The Captain: What do you fear seeing that God the Holy Spirit is with you?

The Ship's Company: We fear nothing.

There followed a brief service of hymn and prayer led by the Chaplain, assisted by the Roman Catholic and Free Church Chaplains, and ending with the Benediction: "Go forth into the world in peace. Be of good courage; hold fast that which is good; render to no man evil for evil; strengthen the faint-hearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honour all men; love and serve the Lord."

Finally, the Captain gave an address of welcome to the friends and families who had joined with us on this occasion and started the lighter side of the festivities by helping Mrs. Griffin to cut the first slice of the traditional Commissioning Cake.





*The Rt. Hon. Christopher Mayhew, M.P., Minister of
Defence for the Royal Navy,*



Mr. Mayhew takes coffee with the Chief Petty Officers



*Mr. J. P. W. Mallalieu, M.P., Parliamen-
tary Under-Secretary of State for the Navy*

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS



Dame Joan Vickers, D.B.E., M.P.



*His Grace the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.
Dr. Ramsey, P.C., D. D.*



*Mr. A. L. M. Cary, C.B., Second Permanent
Under-Secretary of State*



*Field Marshal Sir Richard Hull, G.C.B., D.S.O., B.A.,
Chief of Defence Staff*



*Admiral Sir David Luce, G.C.B., D.S.O., O.B.E.,
First Sea Lord*



*Admiral Sir Wilfrid Woods, G.B.E.,
K.C.B., D.S.O., C.-in-C. Portsmouth*

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS



*Admiral Sir Nigel Henderson, K.C.B.,
O.B.E., C.-in-C. Plymouth*



*Vice-Admiral Sir Raymond Hawkins, K.C.B.,
Chief of Naval Supplies and Transport*



*Rear Admiral D. C. E. F. Gibson, C.B., D.S.C.,
Flag Officer Naval Flying Training*

EARLY DAYS

At 0800 on Thursday, 24th November, we slipped and sailed sedately down the Hamoaze towards the Sound and the open sea. The two weeks since the Commissioning had been a turmoil of Inclining Trials and Gales, of Storing and Ammunitioning, of embarking Trials teams and test equipment. On the 19th, the two Whirlwinds of the Ship's Flight had landed on to act as a reminder that our essential purpose is to carry aircraft.

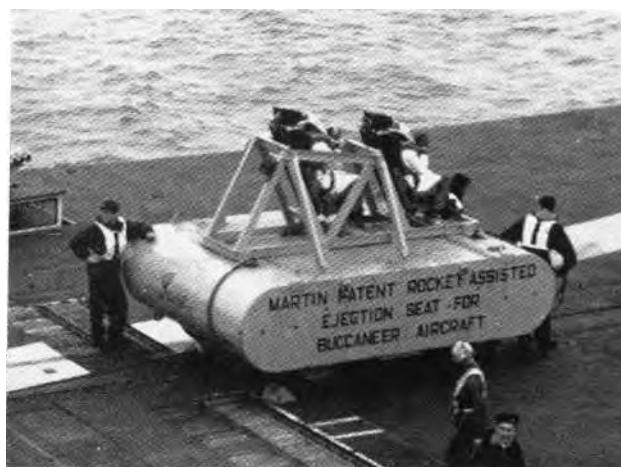
Within a couple of days we were at full stretch when we were called upon to conduct the search for a Sea Vixen aircraft that had come out to inspect our new Flight Deck lighting and had failed to return to Yeovilton. Sadly the search was unsuccessful and we returned, slightly exhausted, to Charlie Buoy. There we fired off "Jane", a float which carried two experimental rocket assisted ejection seats. As the float reached the end of the catapult the seats were fired, the dummies were ejected high into the air and then drifted gently down on their parachutes into the sea from where they were rapidly recovered.

By the end of the month we were ready to accept the first aircraft into the arresting gear. At 0930 on the 30th, Lieut.-Cdr. W. H. Barnard (Commanding Officer of 849 Squadron) came into the first wire and then, with the deft touch of a master, plucked each in turn to give it an official clearance. During the week further clearance trials of catapults and arresting gears were carried out under a variety of conditions by Scimitar, Sea Vixen and Gannet aircraft. All these were completed in time for the entry into Portsmouth for the week-end, a time for a rest and for the "Pompey" families to have a good look over the ship.

During the week-end Whale Island embarked their Trials team and when we sailed again it was to face Gunnery trials and Gales concurrently. These lasted two days. In the fine weather which followed the storm flying was resumed and we welcomed some distinguished visitors - the Minister of Defence for the Navy, the Rt. Hon. Christopher Mayhew, M.P. and also Rear Admiral D. C. E. F. Gibson, D.S.C., a former Captain of *Ark Royal* and now Flag Officer Naval Flying Training. The fine weather was short-lived and a forecast of a serious deterioration led to a return to Devonport Dockyard a day early, to the unconcealed delight of the natives. We had found our "sea Legs" and knew that after Christmas leave we should be steaming north to improve and perfect our techniques in an operational Work-Up.



The first wire



Jane



Rocket assisted



AIR DEPARTMENT

W haffooes, Airey Fairies, Birdmen and other less complimentary terms of endearment are among the collective nomenclatures given to the Air Department; whereas in truth, and according to the official records, it consists of Flying Control, Aircraft Control Room Staff, Flight Deck and Hangar teams, Operations Staff, Sea Air Rescue Flight, Safety Equipment Section, Photographic Section, Meteorological Section, Carrier Control Approach team, and last but not least, the Air Office. (Priority has no place, for team work is the order of any and every day.) It is about these persons upon whom flying operations partly depend, that this saga is written. A saga of flying programme changes, respotting the flight deck, painting the island, marshalling aircraft on to the catapults, safety crews who unceasingly sweat it out in their fire-fighting suits, of weather reporting, the movement of aircraft around the flight deck and in the hangar, and the movements of lifts between the two, and many other jobs which help to keep aircraft flying safely and efficiently. A saga of not any one person, but of a multitude, who are ever ready to let their presence be known no matter whether it is working the flight deck, potted sports, uckers championships, or a casual run ashore. Immodestly will their tale be told in the hope that those who have not understood them during the Fifth Commission, and have all too readily sung, "There's a mess-up on the Flight Deck and the Aircraft Handlers (augmented by enlisted stokers) did it," may see the error of their ways, and accept them with the same good humour

that sometimes created not so much a flying programme, but a way of life.

Cor! The inevitable opening remark of just about everyone who joined the ship in Guzz and saw a flight deck that was strewn with every imaginable piece of machinery - Steptoe's scrap yard had nothing on it! To avoid going completely mad the entire team detached to Culdrose to learn their trade of shouting rude sayings at each other, driving tractors around the flight deck like a poor man's Jim Clark, and generally trying to convince each other that they were the bees' knees. There is no denying they were quite good, but they found that they still had much to learn.



This is the operations officer speaking....

AIR DEPARTMENT



Rigging the barrier

This they did in Brest and Bergen, and a little at sea besides, and by the time the ship sailed for the Far East they had settled into a steady routine. A routine that is only ever broken when flying and arguing with the Aircraft Control Room gives way to replenishment stations. The familiar cries of "Whoa! Back up! Left hand down a bit!" are superseded with the unfamiliar Seamanlike terms of "Avast!" and "Belay!" as Naval Airmen are used for humping spuds instead of manoeuvring aircraft.

On the whole, life on the flight deck has been much the same as ever; exciting, frightening, too hot, too cold or simply laughable. The description would entirely depend on the viewpoint of Commander (Air), the Flight Deck Officer, a goofer, a fireman in the tropics, or a chockman in the Arctic. But, however, everyone will admit to the magnificent example of co-operation and a real sense of purpose of the Barrier rigging team to erect a barrier in the record time of 2 minutes 34 seconds, in order to "stop" a Scimitar which was unable to lower one of its oleos. It is this sort of initiative and team work that aircrew confidently rely upon.

"Diabolical!" The Aircraft Control Room Officer's signature-tune. A skeleton of a man, a mere 142 stone, who before trying to make the Flying Programme work, and appeasing, on the one hand irate Flight Deck Officers, and on the other Squadron Air Engineer Officers, all of whom require him to organize an impossible number of aircraft moves in an impossibly short time, had a marvellous head of hair. A sense of humour has been an essential part of his make-up, and the ability to maintain a straight face when subse-

quently blaming the Flight Deck Officers for the ensuing snarl-ups.

Someone, unfamiliar with flight deck operations, may have been completely bemused by the upward turned faces of the flight deck teams, as another megacrisis occurred. Their glances were directed not towards Heaven, but Flyco, the Olympus of the Air Department, the home of Commander (Air) and Lieut.-Cdr. (F), for it is this small compartment that looks like Dad's greenhouse from whence all things great and small come.

These are people who form the greater majority of the Air Department - the people who enjoy the tropical sunshine and equally weather the rude winds and rains of the Arctic.

Down below in the two grottoes of the lower and upper hangar, a different species of the same breed play a variation of uckers with real life aircraft. For no matter where or how they arrange them, of one thing they can be certain, the one aircraft the ACRD wants, is the one which is right at the back. Somehow they cope without scratching the paint or denting too many, and in addition watch over their charges throughout, and every day attend upon the aircraft like wet nurses as they pour fuel over their clean decks.

With screwdriver, parachute packing stick, and Singer's sewing machine the S.E. ratings take in-



Safety equipment

AIR DEPARTMENT

finite care in looking after every piece of flying clothing and equipment which is worn or is likely to be used by an aviator to save his life or protect him against the rigours of near-supersonic flight, or surviving in the sea or jungle. Like so many of us, often unseen, but ever relied upon by the aircrew, and by those who have their number eights patched or their shorts made even shorter on the treadle machine.

Like every other society there are those who work, and those who sit in offices and introduce complications for the others. The Bureaucrats! The best known of these is probably the Ops Department. From their darkened space in the island, originate ship's and flying programmes, programme alterations, mail arrangements, onward routing of compassionate cases, safety of aircraft, press liaison, and every other sort of organizing job that may be going. They are among the sort of people on board who are instantly recognizable, because they enjoy that lack-of-sleep look, which accentuates the contrasting dark bags under their eyes with their blanched night club pallor.

Practically next door is the Met Office, an organization who will go to endless pains to explain to you that tomorrow will be fairly cloudy, with some rain, and above all else, weather. They dabble in their mystic cult of climatic clairvoyancy, and make sacrificial offerings to their gods by launching radio-sonde balloons, in the hope that they might receive a prophecy of "tomorrow's weather". If you ask most people, they will explain that in fact they have hopes of setting up a rival air group of their own.

Also tucked away in the island are the Air Traffic



Rest between ranges



A quick dip?

Control Officers who with great aplomb talk down the aircraft on to the deck during bad visibility and at night. Often unheard, frequently unseen, but nevertheless a very important lot.

Perhaps the most noticeable group in the Air Department are the SAR crews, who sit in their helicopters like watchdogs, ready to retrieve any lame aircrew who may unfortunately fall into the sea. Their presence is a comfort, and the other miscellaneous work they perform, such as numerous transfers at sea, is much appreciated.

The two remaining departments are a complete contrast! On the one hand the Air Office which disgorges bumph to no mean scale, on matters as diverse as Air Department Temporary Memos and the Air Department Football Swindle. On the other hand the Photographic Section, which states that semi-illiteracy drove them to hide where they could express themselves in pictures rather than script.

But life is not just a bowl of cherries, and no one airman would claim himself of paramount importance in an aircraft carrier, for each officer and naval airman realizes that he is an integral part of the Air Department and also that the Air Department is an integral part of the ship; and without each other *Ark Royal* could not exist.

Therefore, may we thank the rest of the Ship's Company of the Fifth Commission for helping us, by providing steam, stores, food, entertainment, and so many other things, to do our job.

THE MORAY FIRTH

Christmas and Hogmanay came and went and were celebrated decorously or immoderately according to taste and native land; early January brought the reality of further storing and ammunitioning into cold, dark nights. On the 12th January, Flag Officer Aircraft Carriers (Rear Admiral H.R.B. Janvrin, D.S.C.) hoisted his flag in H.M.S. *Ark Royal*. We were to have sailed the next day but a blustery gale delayed the departure for 24 hours. By nightfall of the 14th we had embarked the aircraft of 890 Squadron and 849 C Flight and were on our way towards Dover. An appreciation of the probable weather conditions during January in the Channel and in the Moray Firth indicated that the latter was preferable for a heavy flying programme. On the 16th, 803 Squadron and the helicopters of 819 Squadron landed on to complete the air strength. A brief visit was paid to Rosyth, or rather it should have been brief, but a mishap with a boat-rope gave the diving team a chance to operate in the fast-moving, bitterly cold waters of the Forth.

The weather log shows a variety of conditions off Lossiemouth at this time - fine, cold, dry days; cold days with snow showers; cold days with strong winds and cold days with no wind at all. The M.F.V. came out daily and we had visitors by air. We even had one Wren stenographer who nearly had to spend a night on board but was eventually bundled into a boat for a long, rough passage to the shore. The centre of activities was, of course, the Flight Deck and everyone spent some time in "Goofers" as our Pilots practised their several arts of handling their aircraft. Emergency drills were practised both on the Flight Deck and below - Damage Control exercises, Emergency Stations, Crash on Deck, Shelter Stations - and we dashed, sometimes uncertainly or in the dark to the appropriate spot. The hours of flying extended as the pilots regained their skills - first into the dusk and then into the dark of night.

On Sunday, 24th January, the news came through that Sir Winston Churchill had died after some weeks of illness. Only the youngest of the Ship's Company can have failed to have had some personal recollection of the great man or to have been aware of his impact

on Britain and the world. For the first time in this century there was to be a State Funeral for a Commoner. One wondered whether we should be called upon to to send officers or men to stand guard in Westminster Hall or to line the streets of London. The day chosen for the Funeral was the Saturday when we were due to visit Brest. Would it be regarded as quite suitable to have the first "run ashore" abroad at a time when both Britain and France would be in mourning? Some said that we should be diverted to Portsmouth and others that we should return to Devonport. (The words "The Buzz is Guzz" were to recur throughout the Commission in every clime and on any occasion.) Doubts were soon resolved and the visit was to proceed, if in a somewhat quieter and more subdued mood.

ARK TO THE RESCUE

The little 22-ton Grimsby seine net fishing vessel *Aldersea* had been in distress for two days in the storm-lashed North Sea with engine failure and with her radio out of action, when *Ark Royal* passed nearby on her way to Brest. Handflares were lighted and the Union Jack was flown upside down as conventional distress signals and *Ark* altered course and came to the rescue.

The motor-cutter was sent over with four engineers, two wireless operators and a doctor to try to sort out their problems. The Skipper of the *Aldersea* was almost afraid that the influx of rescuers would sink his craft. While the engineers tried unsuccessfully to restart the engine, *Ark* relayed messages to Grimsby who were unaware of *Aldersea's* difficulties or of *Ark's* presence in the area. The 40-ton *Foursome* was soon on its way to take the *Aldersea* in tow, the Skipper having refused the offer of a somewhat perilous tow from the enormous carrier. About five hours later when *Foursome* arrived on the scene Captain Griffin sent his last signal to Grimsby, "Have turned *Aldersea* over to *Foursome* and am now proceeding in execution of previous orders."

VISIT TO BREST

Although many old hands were *blasé* about visiting France, there were about 400 on board for whom this was the first visit to a foreign country. Brest is not exactly the Riviera, nor was the weather welcoming, but all were determined to get a breath of French air. The 38-foot draught of the *Ark* limits the number of ports in Europe, or elsewhere, where she can come alongside, but in Brest, where the Germans had built deep underground submarine pens which are still visible, she had plenty of water underneath. Just ahead of *Ark* lay the Battleship *Richelieu*, stationary now but still impressive. This was to be our host ship and there was a great deal of convivial hospitality offered aboard her at all levels.

The mourning for Sir Winston meant that the social side of the visit had to be somewhat curtailed; nevertheless, the Flag Officer Aircraft Carriers had to pay and receive a number of Official Calls. On the second day, the Admiral and other senior officers attended a ceremony at the Hotel de Ville when the Royal Marines Band Beat Retreat in an impressive display.

The screening of the State Funeral presented quite a problem for *Ark* T.V. Eurovision uses 625 lines; the French use their own 819 lines; *Ark* in common with the B.B.C., uses 405 lines. With the help of the French authorities a 819-line receiver and its associated aerial were hastily installed and by focusing the Studio camera on this screen a satisfactory picture was relayed round the ship. In every Mess quiet groups watched the pomp and pageantry of the procession through the streets of London, secretly proud of the bearing of the naval Gun Carriage Crew. On the Sunday forenoon, 31st January, representatives of the City of Brest and of the French Navy came to join in a short Commemorative Service, which was conducted in French and English by the Chaplain and by a local Catholic priest.

Despite the depressing weather a considerable crowd came onboard when the ship was Open to Visitors, and showed interest in the ship, in the aircraft and in the weapons and stores displayed in the Hangar. A small but happy Children's Party was also given.

The sporting programme was a heavy one. The matches took on something of the flavour of international competition with the presentation of the teams to the Senior Officer present, the playing of the National Anthems, the giving of pennants and bouquets and an excessive amount of hand-shaking. Association and Rugby Football, Basket-ball, Golf and Judo were also contested.

Between these events there was still time and energy



for the "run ashore", where everybody seemed to achieve what they intended. There was plenty of good, if expensive, food for the discerning; an abundance of cheap, if lethal, drink for the fool-hardy; shopping, dancing, bars and cafes galore. Several hundred Breton dolls were bought (later to provide an outrageous revenue for the Rosyth Customs). The weekend gave a chance for the ship's company, who were learning to work together, also to enjoy themselves together. One small postscript in the Commission Diary - on Wednesday, 3rd February, the Captain's Defaulters lasted for three and a half hours. C'est toujours comme ça!



SEAMAN DEPARTMENT

There is an International Prize presented annually to the man who "by technical and human skill displays, to the very highest degree, a measure of that imponderable and not easily defined quality of the seaman which is his seafaring spirit." How far can we capture this quality of the seaman among us by examining their technical and human skills?

In the first place, the large number of those described as Seamen soon divide off into splinter groups and sub-sections so that, of the 30 officers and 300 men in the Department, only four seem to have *exclusively* seafaring problems at heart - Jimmy, the Bosun, the Buffer and Sam. Every store containing rigging shackles, hawsers, swivel-pieces, stoppers and the like is firmly designated "The Bosun's Store" and Section Rounds reveal that their number is legion.



Technical and human skill?

(Apart from his immense knowledge about cable-work and replenishment rigs, the Bosun has also proved to be the repository of other exclusive know-how and folk-lore such as how to conduct a Crossing-the-Line Ceremony, the art of telepathy and the delights of Crown and Anchor.) Those who give a hand with anchors and cables inhabit the F'c'sle while, at the other end, the locals are recognized by their habit of marking their buckets, scrubbers and everything else in sight with the mystic letters A X - which is their own esoteric abbreviation for the Quarterdeck.

The bulk of the alleged seamen prefer, in fact, to devote their time to such diverse and multifarious activities as being a Sailmaker's or a Painter's Mate, a Navigator's Yeoman, P.T.I.'s, Butchers or in that large group, called the Seaman Weapons Party, who appear to owe their allegiance to the Electricals, if to anybody. The Communications ratings retired long since from the hurly-burly to the ivory tower from which they distribute pink and white signals indiscriminately (almost), while the Radar Party base their activities on another lofty office, when they are not huddled in the half-dark over their plots and screens. A small group of T.A.S. operate in such seclusion and secrecy that they have recorded their activities in verse in another part of this publication.

At sea, the working day seems to be divided between watch-on-deck and painting in preparation for entering harbour: in harbour, there is a concentration on painting in the cause of ship-husbandry. To a seaman painting is not so much a part of the programme, it is more a way of life, and he devotes considerable thought and ingenuity to determine those parts of the ship where his labours will have the most effect on the life of the community as a whole. The art of placing the Warning Notice so that one has one's hand or foot firmly in the painted area before seeing the sign is one in which the experienced seaman excels.

Watch-on-Deck, however, makes real demands on the seafaring spirit, combining, as it does, the tedium of hours on watch in exposed, uncomfortable condi-

SEAMAN DEPARTMENT



Man the side

tions with a demand for instant, correct action in an emergency - the first sighting by a look-out, the crash lowering of the seaboat or the swift response of the life-buoy sentry. The hours of inactivity may so easily blunt the keenness and the sense of urgency.

At regular intervals there is the demonstration of the technical skills in the Replenishment-at-Sea. An account of the preparation and laying out of the gear could fill a Snotty's Journal - and frequently does! As the manoeuvre commences, so the goofers' positions fill up with avid spectators of seamanship. With Special Sea Dutymen closed up, the Captain gently eases the Ship into its correct position and the first line is passed, followed closely by the sequence of messengers, wires, hoses and telephones. While this evolution is being carried out on deck with controlled haste, and during the prolonged transfer of stores or fuel, the Quartermasters down in 6K require all their concentration to maintain the accuracy of course needed by the Captain to keep his station. And, on deck, the rest of the seamen are often pulling their weight in the actual jackstay operation, even though mechanical handling of stores has been developed to a fine art in *Ark Royal*.

In contrast to the organized confusion of the R.A.S. we can turn to the quiet and dignified ceremonial of the Quarterdeck in its harbour role. After an initial frenzy of securing alongside, the Officer of the Watch, in his cleanest suit and with a telescope traditionally under his arm, is Master of all he surveys and is the

Captain's Representative. Every visitor to the Ship stepping on to the Quarterdeck receives a courteous salute and welcome and every vessel passing is saluted or acknowledged by the O.O.W. In his task he is assisted by a group, ranging from the eldest to the youngest of the seaman department, whose specific duties are obscure but who act as guides, watchdogs, cup-bearers and what-have-you. It is also necessary to record the presence in this group of the Marine Bugler since technically he is not a member of the Royal Marines Band and will not, otherwise, get a mention anywhere in this book. His performance at 1115 daily has been *most* memorable.

Apart from the standard set by the Officer of the Watch and his team, a Ship is also judged by its Boats and its Side. *Ark* carries a great variety of types of boats but they have had few opportunities to display their versatility and prowess. Even when all the boats have been in use their manoeuvres have been principally distinguished (if that is the right word) by their handling by the Mids. under Training. Boat running is tremendously dependent on conditions - while Bergen and Mombasa leave pleasant memories of the



Away first motorboat

SEAMAN DEPARTMENT

boat trip, Rosyth will remain a ghastly memory. The Side Party have fought their everlasting battle against rust with brush and with chipping hammer. From time to time they have received reinforcement from some local team of cheerful Chinese. In one Ship's Quiz the question was asked, "Who painted *The Fighting Temeraire*?" The Captain was the first to reply with the answer - Jenny's Side Party!

The seamen and the airmen are probably most closely associated through the Back Room Boys of the A.I.O. Well over 1,500 interceptions have been completed, not including those controlled by our D's from shore-based radar stations, stretching from Yeovilton to Bukit Gombak. In addition, they have taken their share in some thousand C.C.A. recoveries in all weather conditions. The avoidance of Major Fleet exercises has reduced the Inter-Carrier programme.

Lastly, we come to the magic world of Gunnery which, in its turn, has many ramifications. Many of those who are numbered amongst the other sections mentioned above have duties inside the framework of Blue-Watch-of-This or Red-Watch-of-That. The hub



Pulling their weight

of this organization is the Gunnery Office in 7U, where Lt.-Cdr. (G) holds court (provided, that is, that he is not acting as Liaison Officer in Brest, Bergen, Singapore, Fremantle or Mombasa!). Three Gunners of mature years keep tight control over the weapons and the Watch bills, whether it be for a surface engagement or for the provision of Air Weapons on the Flight Deck. There is, also, one bright-eyed Lieutenant (G) who is kept as clean and shining as his own Wilkinson's sword in order to take charge of the well-drilled ceremonial guard that is turned out for visiting potentates or for the transfer of command. On one occasion at least all these gallant officers, together with the Chief G.I. and a posse of markers and measurers, fell on the innocent Ship's Company and dragooned them into Ceremonial Divisions. One was enough!

Slightly further down the chain of command we come to the Master Gunner's Party. These have apparently two main functions - the supply of webbing equipment and a limited amount of ammunition to Awkward sentries and to even more awkward Internal Security Platoons, and, secondly, a vital role in any ship-to-ship transfer when the otherwise versatile helicopter has been dispensed with. This process used to be heralded by the waving of flags and the blowing of whistles (the mark of the Gunner or G.1.) before the firing of the dreaded coston gun-line but,



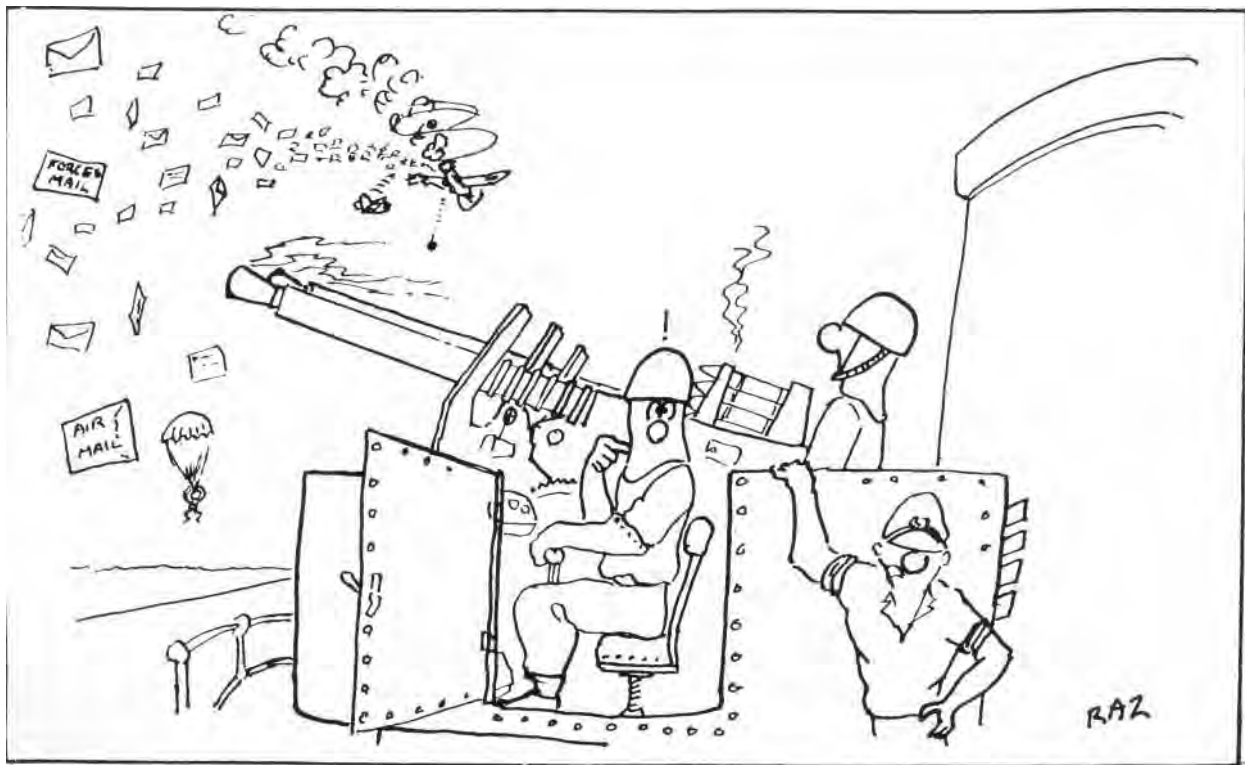
The bolas thrower

SEAMAN DEPARTMENT

after a fatal accident in the Fleet, it was decided to try a less lethal method of passing the first line and the practice of throwing across the bolas was introduced. Rapid rotation of the bolas, together with release at the critical moment carries the bolas over the other vessel and the seamanlike evolution with distance lines, messengers, and those others, can commence. In rough weather, however, it is necessary to revert to the old-fashioned gun-line and the inevitable waving of flags and the blowing of whistles. This leads to happier faces among the Gunner's Party, who now feel that they understand what is going on.

Finally, since the Gunnery motto is *Si Vis Pacem,*

Para Bellum (If you wish for Peace, Prepare for War) one must not forget the Armament, the 4-5 inch medium range and the 40/60 close range mountings. Despite the fact that *Ark* now only possesses two of her original eight turrets, she has given a good account of herself against sleeves and pilotless aircraft, on Helicopter throw-off shoots and against Fast Patrol Boat targets. To achieve this, the Turret and Computer teams, with some help from the Royals, the Close Range and Gun Direction crews and the Weapon Supply numbers have all been vital cogs which enable the machine to run smoothly - yet another example of the efficiency and versatility of the very able seaman.



"Tell 'em to pipe, 'Mail is now ready for collection.'"

OPERATIONAL READINESS

On departing from Brest many felt less than well and their number was increased when *Ark* came clear of the Brittany coast into the teeth of a north-easterly gale and swell. During the night one for'ard scuttle gave way and the Damage Control experts had a real life exercise on their hands. Morning found us in the lee of Cornwall and a full day's flying was achieved as we steamed northwards towards Brawdy and the Pembrokeshire coast. Onwards through the Irish Sea and the Western Isles, west-about, and we were in the Moray Firth again. The solitary crofters of those desolate islands must have gazed with wonder that men could live so tightly packed as in an aircraft carrier; in turn, one wondered that they could live in such solitude.

After some delay, occasioned by F.F.O. in the feed water, the second full phase of the Work-Up was continued off Lossiemouth. The climax of this was a 24 hour exercise which was designed to test the operational efficiency when in a high state of Damage Control readiness and security. In addition the arrangements for feeding the ship "round-the-clock" were brought into action, including the provision of a night snack designed to sustain the watchkeepers during the long night. To the Pussers' surprise morning revealed that over 5,000 such snacks had been consumed - not to mention an additional 400 suppers. Apart from this one cheerful aspect, the exercise again demonstrated the fact that war is very largely discomfort and waiting and very little action and excitement.

Between the second and third phases there was a period of self maintenance at Rosyth. The aircraft disembarked to Lossiemouth in bitter winds of up to 70 knots, proving once more the remarkable serviceability which comes with the call to fly ashore. "At Rosyth" is not strictly accurate since the building of the Forth Road Bridge now prevented *Ark* from getting upstream of the Bridges. Long, dreary boat rides were to be our lot for the next ten days. Some of the keener souls struggled off to Glenshee and to the Dall Hut for Exped, and for some ski-ing practice in anticipation of the visit to Norway. Visitors from shore included some of the "light blue jobs" from the R.A.F.,

some apprentices from H.M.S. *Caledonia* and a large number of ladies who had for years been packing and despatching all manner of Naval and Air stores and were now discovering what their purpose was.

At last came the final phase of the Work-Up, when all the stops were out and all manner of emergencies were exercised, in preparation for the Inspection. The Flag Officer, Aircraft Carriers and his staff had left the ship at Brest and now returned to test and prove our Operational Readiness. To set the whole thing off on the right note the Inspection started at 0330 and continued throughout the day with a full and demanding flying programme, designed to meet all probable circumstances. In addition to this there were a number of incidents, promoted to test the individual departments. Early in the day one of the Staff passed an envelope to the Chief Yeoman. Inside he read a note which said, "You are to faint." He slumped to the deck on the Compass Platform. "What's the matter with you?" demanded the Commander in such a tone that the supposedly unconscious Chief could not refrain from gasping, "I've fainted, Sir." With considerable difficulty the Chief was manoeuvred down innumerable ladders to the Sick Bay. He subsequently returned to his post, pale and shaken.

When the flying was completed and the last aircraft safely on the deck, disaster broke out below decks as the yellow-banded umpires of the Staff distributed envelopes containing tidings of structural and other damage. Fires were started and extinguished; power supplies were lost and regained; bulkheads damaged and repaired. One sad "casualty" with a notional broken leg, called piteously for help for half an hour until he finally gave up and walked away in a huff. An umpire was swept up by the Shipwright Chief into his shoring-up party and found himself working in the team despite his protests and his yellow armband. By 0100 all the incidents had been dealt with and the Inspection was declared to be at an end. By breakfast, the Captain was able to announce that F.O.A.C. had found *Ark Royal* to be Ready for Operational Service with the Fleet.

EXERCISE PILOT LIGHT

One of the signs that Her Majesty's Ship *Ark Royal* had become fully Operational was the apparent recognition of this fact by the Soviet Navy, and the arrival on the scene of a Russian trawler. This vessel came and had a good look at us in the Moray Firth and showed every intention of staying with us and keeping station until told firmly, but politely, that her presence was hazarding our flying operations and would she please go away.

With the inspection successfully behind us, we joined up with other N.A.T.O. forces to take part in the Spring Exercise - Pilot Light. Among those gathering at Rosyth were the Dutch carrier *Karel Doorman*, the cruiser *Tiger*, wearing the flag of Flag Officer, Flotillas Home, and the newly formed Matchmaker Squadron. This last unit is an experiment in inter-Navy co-operation and included ships of the American, Canadian, and Norwegian navies. The whole exercise was under the general direction of the Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet, Admiral Sir Charles Madden, G.C.B., who embarked in *Ark Royal* for the purpose. We were already wearing the flag of Rear Admiral Janvrin.

The exercise was divided into a number of distinct phases - leaving harbour with its associated problems of anti-submarine defence and mine clearance; air defence co-ordinated with the R.A.F. from Scottish airfields; offensive strikes against the coast of Norway; replenishment at sea of all types of ships; the manoeuvring of the capital ships and of the escort forces. The weather conditions varied from flat calm, when it required high speed to achieve enough wind over the deck for flying, to howling gale, when the escorts could just be seen plunging deep into green seas.

As a result of the N.A.T.O. Spring Exercise of the previous year when the Russians had carried out a very full surveillance of our manoeuvres, this year's exercise had attracted a considerable body of reporters. Six of these gentlemen of the Press were carried in *Ark*. In the event, the Russian surveillance proved a disappointing story, with only our friend the Trawler appearing on the first day and an aircraft sighted briefly on the fourth. The routine of the manoeuvres and the efficient handling of the Matchmakers were hardly worth space in the morning editions. As a result, the more stately of the journalists contented themselves with interviews with the Admirals and with discussions of Grand Strategy and the Future of the



Under two flags ...

Aircraft Carrier. (This latter subject was to remain under fervent discussion in the Press throughout the Commission.) The younger reporters turned their attention inwards and carried out a sociological study of living conditions in *Ark Royal*. This led to the publication, after they had left the ship, of two articles which "laid bare" the conditions of Mess decks and life in general. The content of the articles was basically accurate but the tone was so lurid that the majority of the ship's company resented the intrusion into their way of life. It is probable, however, that the articles will have done some good, in the very long run, since conditions can only be improved appreciably in the next Refit by the release of more money and the attention of Members of Parliament and of Treasury officials was now directed to these needs and problems.

When all the phases of the exercise had been completed, the Fleet formed into a single line and steamed slowly through the deep and exciting channels of the approaches to Bergen. While the remainder of the ships were able to get alongside, *Ark* executed the drill of mooring in a depth of 90 fathoms - another "first" for the record.

BERGEN

The predominant fact that sticks in one's mind about the visit to Bergen is the tremendous contrast between it and everything else that came later. The week-end at Brest had been played in a minor key; now, after the rigours of the Exercise we were all set to relax and enjoy ourselves. It was to be the first real "Jolly" with Make-and-Mends every day. The dry, cold air was exhilarating, and the mountains and fiords



on the outskirts of the town are very different from the flat, moist surroundings of the Singapore Naval Base; the neat, elegant, Scandinavian shops full of well-designed, modern silverware or of chunky, colourful sweaters seem a world apart from the muddy streets and naughty nite-spots of Olongapo; the flesh-tingling crunch into crisp snow on the ski slopes of Voss is a sensation entirely unlike the hard smack of warm, but unyielding, water as you topple gracefully off your water-skis or surf board.

Some of our experts who had learned the gentle art of ski-ing at Lossiemouth, or elsewhere, were swift to dash for the slopes of Voss to practise their *telemark* and *schuss*. Others, complete novices, were not far behind in accepting the kind offer of the Royal Norwegian Navy of skis, boots and instruction. The rig for this activity is usually regarded as something rather

special in the matter of elegance - the foul-weather clothing and galley- or steaming-boots brought out on this occasion never made the pages of the glossy magazines! Nevertheless, many enjoyed their first initiation into an exciting and testing sport. And they were all the more ready to taste the delights of the "after-ski" eating and drinking. Food and drink were fairly expensive but the average portion of fish or reindeer would have been enough for two.

For the less adventurous there was the interest of the town, a very worthwhile visit to the Aquarium, tours of the neighbouring snowy wastes and valleys or the trip in the funicular railway which carried one the thousand feet up the mountain to Fløien to eat and drink and admire the view. At night the lights of the town twinkled in the foreground, *Tiger* and *Lion* were floodlit brilliantly in the middle distance and *Ark* was a small, bright shape far out in the channel. All those who expressed horror at the frail support of the cable railway were told firmly to wait until they saw the Peak Tram at Hong Kong.

As the guide book puts it:

"From the upper station you can have a nice walk through the forest, where the planting started about 50 years ago, a forest with its wildlife and charming small lakes. If you are a good hiker, properly dressed and in fine condition, you can also make the long hike along the mountain ridge to the Ulriksbanen."

On the whole there were few who were in fine condition or could make the long hike anywhere. One wonders if the team of stalwarts who were to run up the Peak at Hong Kong would have attempted a similar feat in the snows of Fløien. The risk of a blizzard from inland and the start of the thaw with its attendant falls made Exped training out of the question except for some of the most hardy members of the Deep Sea Scouts.

The visit ended with the Post Exercise Discussion among the N.A.T.O. Fleet. The event was to be honoured by the presence of the Crown Prince of Norway. On Sunday, the Daily Orders in *Ark* told us that we must advance our clocks to Norwegian Summer Time. The start-time of the P.X.D. was now uncertain. When would the Prince arrive? The problem was resolved when it was discovered that only *Ark* Royal, ably led by the misguided Commander's Office Writer, had even considered changing their clocks. The time was left the same and in due course we sailed again in neat formation back out to sea through the austere fiords with their isolated summer houses and their dark pines.

A.E.D.



If the AIR ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT had no other claim to fame than that it owned the Hangar Extension it would still have a high reputation amongst those who appreciate the more bizarre aspects of carrier life. To lightly dismiss this section of the ship as "the place where the S.A.R. choppers are kept" is akin to thinking of the National Gallery as a pigeon loft.

Geographically and politically, of course, the Extension is a "Buffer State" between the gentlemen on the roof in multicoloured waistcoats who appear from time to time at the liftshaft to make abusive and rude pantomime gestures to those below, and the peasants in the hangars, their bodies aglistening with honest toil, who make similar gestures in answer to those above. Between these two "Power Blocs" exists a love-hate relationship which only unites in a common bond when contemplating that unlovely area forward of the lift.

The Extension is the "East End" of Ark Royal City, a squalid, fetid cul-de-sac in a state of confusion only normally found in third-rate Neapolitan warehouses, and yet possessing a picturesque charm to those whose eyes are not blinded by green dadoes, 1950 markings in contemporary colours and the translucent sheen of Bourne Gleem. A curious facet of this charm is that it exists at all - but similar instances frequently occur. As an example of town planning the "Shambles" in York leaves much to be desired and yet who can deny the pleasure it gives the eye?

Perhaps the most useful role this orphan of a loveless marriage between Space and Spares has played has been as a depository. A depository for the invective of its two big brothers between which it uneasily lies and as a last or temporary resting place for all those "come-in-handly" gadgets, conceived by post-tot inspiration which are now cast aside, relegated and unpainted even for "Rounds".

To the occupants of this Dickensian warren the ebb and flow of these unwanted articles has ceased to surprise them because they know that in the fullness of time the unwanted will become the wanted again. Not that they will receive any blessing from those whose needs they supply - rather will there be the suggestion, darkly hinted at, that they have been hiding the vital item for some unseemly reason.

To see the Extension at its best, full of colour and pulsing with life one should visit it some few hours after leaving harbour. In the normal course of events, it is in this period that all and sundry come to redeem those unshipshapelike objects which are swept to oblivion (The Extension) prior to "Procedure Alpha". Similarly there are likely to be those looking for crates of spares, allegedly delivered, during the precious docking, on an uncertain day by an unknown means, but assuredly in the ship according to the claimants, and where



A.E.D.

better to search than in this cluttered plot? The Extensionalists join in the search with enthusiasm and when the last satisfied customer has left, dragging his leaky bag of Speedi-Dri behind him, they return to their normal function, the care and maintenance of Ground Equipment, a "Cinderella" task with little possibility of a hydraulic rig turning into a pumpkin coach. They seldom leave their domain, although one intrepid soul did inadvertently step on to the lift towing a Palouste. He was whisked upwards and finding himself on the flight deck, proceeded aft on his errand. However, he was informed in stentorian tones by an electronic and anonymous voice to remove himself so he rapidly retraced his steps. This event, students of naval aviation history may like to know, was the origin of the "Running Turn-Round".

AIRCRAFT WORKSHOPS

The question has often been asked - but never adequately answered - "What do you really do in the Aircraft Workshops?" It is curious that when asked in this manner the question has unpleasant overtones. Firstly the flat rejection that the answer can be as simple as the title of the Workshops implies and secondly, the haunting suspicion that whatever they do, it is not to the complete and sole advantage of Her Majesty's Navy.

Why this sinister uneasiness should exist is difficult to explain but obviously the facade of "industrious tradesmen supporting the squadrons" has slipped and the public image of the Aircraft Workshops is tarnished. As the commission draws to a close there seems to be little point in maintaining the subterfuge any longer and the suspicions which have lurked in the back of the ship's company's minds for so long can now be confirmed.

Like most units of its size the Aircraft Workshops consists of a number of sub-departments and each of these will be dealt with in turn, revealing for the first time their true purpose.

The Hydraulic Shop, with its winking gauge glasses and shining pipes does, it is true, repair a number of hydraulic components which have, by some haphazard means, finally been fitted to an aircraft but the shop is, of course, nothing more or less than an illicit "still" producing a light, but full bodied, table wine - Chateau Lee. It retails under the counter at 5s. a gallon attractively bottled in khaki green tins and an illuminated parchment Hurt Certificate is available if blindness ensues after the first pint.

The Sheet Metal Shop has all the outward appearances required to deceive the eye and lull the mind into acceptance of its "tin-bashing" normality. It is in fact a highly skilled and organized unit devoted entirely to the

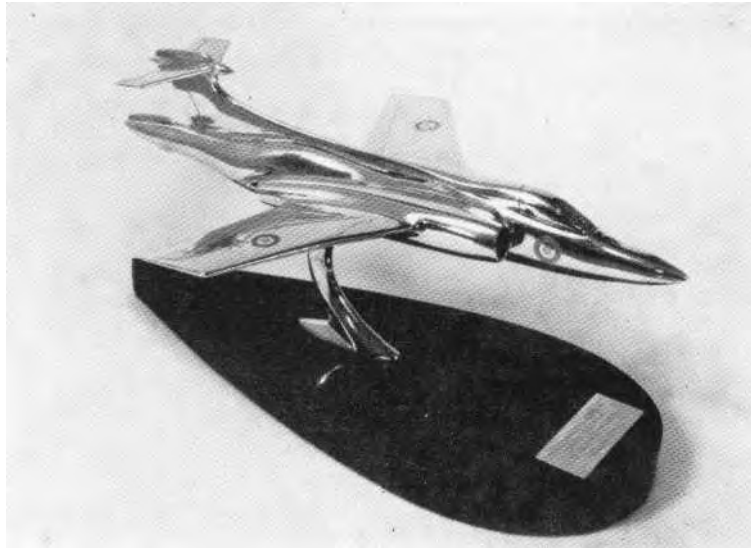
production of camphor wood record players. (How else can you keep the beatles out?) These are the culmination of the "rabbiteers" art being constructed entirely of "Crown" materials and they have recently received the final accolade of taste and discrimination by being advertised in the "Antiques" column of "Exchange and Mart".

It can only be with a feeling of surprised disbelief that the Air Stores Usage Control has not had its disguise pierced many months ago. Superficially the A.O.G. Demands and S. 156's have flowed in and out to create the illusion that A.S.U.C.O. was "keeping 'em flying" but regrettably those urgent bits of paper were betting slips - every one. This was why the flying became an illusion, too! A.S.U.C.O. is one of the biggest Turf Accountants afloat and one can only marvel at the loyalty of the clientele which has kept its true identity masked for so long.

This, then, is the unvarnished picture of the activities of the Aircraft Workshops who are quietly proud of their record of service to their patrons, knowing that the Ship's Company are appreciative of the beneficial effects on morale of wine, music and a modest flutter on the Spring Double. What other department can boast such a saga of profit to both giver and receiver?



.... an illicit still producing a full-bodied table wine!



BUCCANEER S Mk. II

With a full-scale exercise and a week-end at Portsmouth behind us (the Long Week-End for the Second of Port had resulted in 1,500 men leaving the ship - or so it seemed!) we next embarked a large team of "boffins" and special ground equipment from the Aircraft and Armament Experimental Establishment, Boscombe Down, in order to provide C.A. clearance trials for the Buccaneer S Mk 11. This aircraft is powered by the Rolls-Royce Spey engine in place of the De Havilland Gyron Junior in the Mark I. The change is recognized externally by the wider jet intake and the much larger engine housing, and there is a resultant appreciable increase in power. The trials were directed by Commander C. M. Little, A.F.C., R.N. - later to relieve Commander Heenan as Cdr. (AE) - and were completed satisfactorily in the time available despite some wet weather and fog. In order to achieve launches at high All-Up Weights without waiting too long for the recovery or jettisoning fuel the aircraft took off with a load of inert 1,000 lb. bombs which they simply discarded into the sea - to the anguish of the Air Gunner! As a result of the increase in power, *Ark* became the first R.N. carrier to launch an aircraft with an A.U.W. of 50,000 lb. At the conclusion of the trials, Mr. D. G. Whitehead, chief test pilot of the Hawker-Blackburn Aircraft Company presented Captain Griffin with a silver trophy of the "Bucc Two".



Sea Vixen Mark II



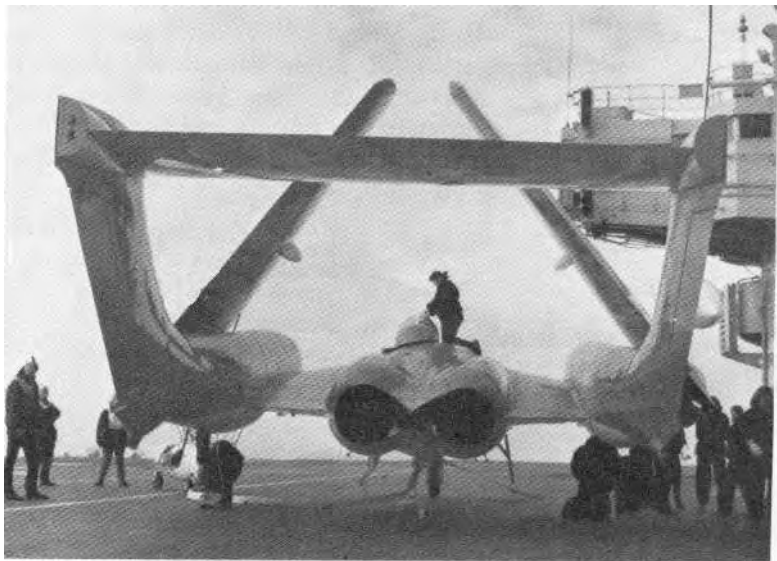
Buccaneer Mark II

BUCCANEER II TRIALS



During this period we were visited by the Chief of the Defence Staff (Designate), Field Marshal Sir Richard Hull, G.C.B., D.S.O., A.D.C., B.A., and later by the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir David Luce, G.C.B., D.S.O., O.B.E., who arrived opportunely for the 1,000th landing of the Commission and was greeted by the Captain with a magnum of Champagne. "It's my first, and probably my last, chance to give the First Sea Lord a 'bottle'," said the Captain.

In addition to the Buccaneer Mk II, Boscombe Down also seized the opportunity to carry out minimum speed launching trials with the Sea Vixen Mk II carrying the 37-tube 2-inch rocket launcher, and a M.R.G. trial with the Buccaneer Mk I. Finally we should record the daily coming and going of the Boscombe Down Balliol. As this aeroplane required neither catapult nor arresting gear, and only a trickle of wind down the deck, it was greeted by many as the future hope of the aircraft carrier.





VISIT OF THE 16th CENTO MILITARY COMMITTEE

The nations which constitute the Central Treaty Organization are Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, the United States and the United Kingdom. They have a permanent Combined Military Planning Staff but twice a year there is a Meeting in one of the capitals of the Military Committee which represents directly the views of the Chief of the Defence Staff of each of the member nations. In April this meeting was being held in London and the Chief of the Defence Staff, the Earl Mountbatten, proposed that the Committee should pay a visit to H.M.S. *Ark Royal*. This visit was part of a tour of the Portsmouth Command which was under the supervision of Commodore Fell, then Chief of Staff to the Commander-in-Chief, Portsmouth. The high ranks of the visitors and the protocol of their respective personal and national seniorities led to a considerable amount of concern and consultation.

The day chosen, April 1st, was fine as the guests arrived by helicopter from H.M.S. *Vernon*. After struggling free of their life-jackets and regaining their composure, they took their seats for an address of welcome from Captain Griffin. It is problematic whether the visitors or the hosts were the more surprised when the Captain started by greeting the guests in Urdu, Persian and Turkish. He then went on to discuss, in English, the role and purpose of *Ark Royal*, and was followed by Commander (Air) who explained the operation and capabilities of the various aircraft carried on board. The party then divided into five separate groups to tour the Hangars and Island, seeing the aircraft and their weapons, the work of the A.D.R. in directing fighters and compiling the air picture, the planning and co-ordination of strikes in the Operations Room the complexities of Hangar and Flight Deck control from the A.C.R. and the operation of Catapults and Arresting gear and the barrier.

After lunch there was a Flying Display. As this included both the recovery and launch of four Scimitars the foreign gentlemen were issued with ear protectors which they immediately donned, to their great joy, and hence they received no benefit from the commentary given from Flyco. On the conclusion of the Fly Past and the speeches of thanks, Lieut.-General Shah of the Pakistan Army, who was the Senior Officer of the Day, took the Salute from the Guard of Honour, before the Committee were bundled again into waiting helicopters for the journey to Thorney Island and thence back to London.

MARINE ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

Every article about Marine Engineering in any Book of the Commission ever written is invariably packed with useless statistics, such as the total number of times that the Port Outer shaft has turned. This may be due to the fact that true engineers have analytical and mathematical minds, or just because someone has been counting - a great deal of practical steam engineering consisting of taking readings from gauges, meters and dials. Such data as may be included here is only used to enlighten the reader and to improve his mind. The most important thing for him to learn and remember is that the Marine Engineers are the source of all Power, Light and Goodness within the Ship.

To give the uninitiated a basic idea of how we achieve this and how we earn our hard-won pay, let us take a look round the various departments.

The Engine Room department has had a fairly steady time between panics, with just an occasional crisis to keep them on their toes. They were the envy of the other departments at one time for the number of Make-and-Mends they managed in Hong Kong. The wisdom of this move was proved during the Divisional Run Ashore when they consumed more pints of San Mig in the China Fleet Club than any previous team in living memory. It just goes to emphasize the value of training!

When the evaporators are on the blink, it becomes the Engine Room's responsibility to provide feed water for the ship, and it is their proud boast that they have begged, borrowed or stolen feed water from every ship of note in the Far East Fleet, up to the limit that the feed water barge could not get round any faster.

Our friends in the Boiler Rooms, however, have been indulging in a very strange occupation, namely, rolling 41,856 balls down the boiler tubes. This is not, as at first might appear, some sort of occupational therapy for neurotic acrobats but is a technical necessity. If 41,856 little balls come out of the bottom then the tubes must be clear; if not, then either the tubes are blocked or someone counted them wrong in the first place. In addition to this time-consuming effort there has been quite a lot of trouble with Fire Alarms, not all of which, unfortunately, were false.

The T.G. and EVAP Party has been occupied with providing us all with Water and Power. The cessation of either of these commodities produces an instant clamour. They managed to keep their heads above water, so to speak, until the return to the U.K. of the departmental officer, with an injured back. From that moment on, things seemed to take a turn for the worse and the cry of "Make-and-Mend? I thought 21 hours was the normal working day in this part-of-ship!" went up frequently. While the work of the Marine Engineers was described by the Captain as "heroic" he must surely have had the Evap. party at the forefront of his thoughts. On the whole, water rationing has been more a threat than a reality, although constant warnings have been broadcast. The production of 10 Megagallons of fresh water from the sea has kept us in the clear.

The D.B. and D.C.M. Party have come up with one curious statistic. On a normal day at sea, steaming and flying, the Ship's boilers consume 550 tons or so of fuel, while the Engine Room personnel consume 31 pints of rum. This works out at a rate of 20 feet travelled per gallon of fuel and a "flying speed" of two-thirds of a ton per hour.

A rather mixed-up mob are the Avfuel and Boats Party. Under most varied conditions the aircraft have been fuelled, to the accompaniment of a sepulchral voice from D.C.H.Q. 1 whenever Avgas was involved. The boats have always been hoisted out in good working order, except for a minor failure or two to start. However, once away they certainly clock up the miles - over twenty thousand so far. In Singapore and Hong Kong we did also see the aircraft being hoisted out by crane, but this was not the fault of the Avfuel boys. The other flat-top, or open-air, engineers tell their story on later pages.

Despite the constant flow of complaints to the Domestics, which all require attention straightaway - the complaints not the Domestics Party that is - they have worked steadily and effectively to maintain those essential services without which life rapidly becomes unbearable - air-conditioning in places, steam for hot water and the galleys, refrigeration for all the foodstuffs and half a ton of ice a day to cool the Rum tub or the Wardroom gin.

Last, but by no means least, is the Training Office which, although of recent origin, is now part of the life of the

MARINE ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

department, running courses in a variety of subjects to cover anything from the ME (1)'s examination to the ERA's charge ticket. Advancement has been good everywhere; in particular, one *Chief* and two *Seniors* have been elevated. It should be added that Physical Training is not in the curriculum - although *Chief* does his 5BX and *Senior* keeps fit by doing Rounds.

When the "Stokers" turn out on the Sports Field they are generally more than a match for any opposition. The Junior Rates Soccer Team spent some time at the top of the League table following their win over the redoubtable 890 Squadron. The Inter-part Rugger side has been a little short on fixtures though they were well represented in the Ship's team. The Hockey side have had a fairly successful season, with the sands of *Suara* taking their toll of grazed knees and elbows. The Senior Rates turned out an exceptionally heavy-weight bunch to represent them in the Tug-of-War and carried off the Boatswain's Trophy; later, with a few substitutes, they defeated the might of *Eagle* in two straight pulls. Meanwhile, the Engineer Officers' Whaler, after an excruciating series of "full watches below" on the oars at 0600, managed to trounce the best that *Eagle* could put up, while being beaten by a short head by *Ark's* Number One boat. Those not athletically inclined have all been active in other well-known, and lesser-known, pursuits. Although the men down below have had the most rugged and arduous Commission both at sea and in harbour, it must be said that some have managed to get away for just a few moments' rest and relaxation.



. . . the source of all Power, Light and Goodness....

FLIGHT DECK ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

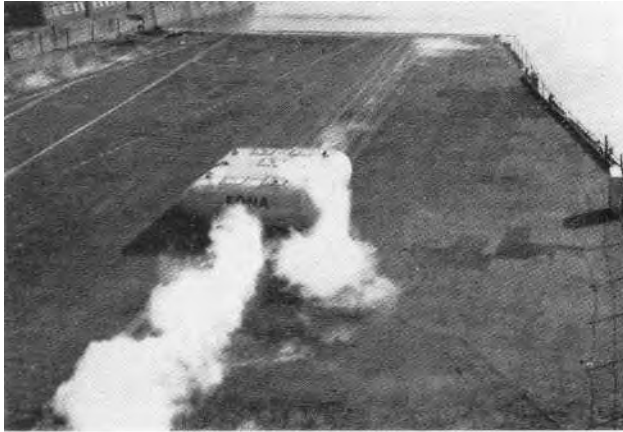
||**T**he first launch of the day will be six Scimitars at 0700." This has been a common enough broadcast during the commission. To the Flight Deck Engineering Department this means that the day starts at 0400 for the Catapult crews, who need three hours to get their catapults ready. The Arresting Gear crew mans its control room soon after. The men who run the pumps that provide the hydraulic ring main pressure and the high pressure air, essential for the operation of the catapults and arresting gear, also have to start at 0400. In a compartment off the Lower Hangar one of the Oxygen producing plants has been running since the ship left harbour. Such a start to the working day has been fairly regular routine for the Flight Deck Engineers.

Before we reached the stage of regular operational flying, there was a lot of work done in preparation and training. By September 1964, all the flight deck machinery was assembled and tried. The Flight Deck Machinery Trials and Training Unit came to the ship from H.M.S. *Daedalus* and tested all the equipment during the Catapult Deadload and Arresting Gear Fast Pull-out Trials. These were followed by the Flying Trials when all the calibrations of machinery performance, calculated from the deadload trials, were checked with aircraft from our own Squadrons. After those trials and the three work-up periods we found that the Department could do almost anything that was asked of us.

In this Commission some notable milestones have been passed. Soon after 29th March, 1965, when the first 1,000 arrested deck landings of the commission were completed, came the Buccaneer 11 Flying Trial. During this trial we believe that we were the first R.N. carrier to launch an aircraft at all All-Up Weight of over 50,000 pounds. When one remembers that the ship's catapults were installed when people thought that an aircraft weighing 30,000 pounds was very heavy, one can see that the development of the capabilities of Flight Deck Machinery has been remarkable. In August 1965, the ship completed 30,000 catapult launches since the steam catapults were installed in the ship just ten years previously. Then in September came technical problems. The port catapult power cylinders had to be taken out of the ship for repair by H.M. Dockyard, Singapore. The ship sailed without the catapult power cylinders, firing on one, so to speak, and made her way to Hong Kong. The cylinders were repaired and subsequently some were brought to Hong Kong by the R.F.A. Fort *Duquesne* and the remainder by H.M.S. *Manxman*. By the middle of October we had reassembled the whole thing and we had two good catapults again. We think that this is the first time that a catapult has ever been fitted while a ship has been at anchor.

*Opposite: Dead load
testing at Devonport*

FLIGHT DECK ENGINEERING



GOING ...



GOING ...



GONE!

FAMILIES DAY

SEA ROUTINE

0600 Pass Breakwater. Secure to Charlie Buoy.

0645 Call the Hands.

0655 Woken by clumsy messmate. Have a smoke. Wonder what wife is doing at that moment. Wash.

0710 Breakfast.

0715 Guard and Steerage.

0815 Clean into Number Twos. Wash and shave.

0900 Look anxiously in Paddle Tug for wife and John.
Muster in Upper Hangar.
Meet wife and John. Kiss wife and wipe oil off John.

HARBOUR ROUTINE

0500 Rise and shine. Have cup of tea. Remove curlers. Wash and dress.

0530 Lay out Baby's gear for Gran. Prepare breakfast. Feed cat. Do boiler.

0600 Call the kids. Dress John and change Baby. Cook breakfast.

0615 Breakfast for children, including finding plastic cowboy at bottom of cereal packet.

0628 Own breakfast.

0630 Wash up. Put cat out. Pot Baby.

0645 Pram to be alongside to take Baby round to Gran's. Explain to Gran that *Ark Royal* is not likely to sink and leave her holding Baby for ever. Say good-bye to tearful, unconvinced Gran.

0655 Return home. Shift into Rig of Day - best dress, best coat and sensible shoes for naval ladders.

0710 Remove John from compost heap, change shirt and put on coat and cap. Secure back door and depart.

0715 Return to ensure that gas is off and that cat is out.

0720 Catch bus to R.N. Barracks. Varnish nails and look for Pass.

0745 Arrive R.N.B. Meet other wives and families. Wish had worn smart shoes.

0800 Bus from Parade Ground to Millbay Docks.

0815 Board Paddle Tug boat. Lose John down hatch. Wish his Father were here and not out there. Leave Docks and chug slowly across the Sound.

0900 Arrive alongside *Ark Royal*. John found in engine-room, covered with oil. Climb on board. Thankful for sensible shoes. Very thankful to have got here. Kiss husband. Now for a nice cup of tea!

1030 Slip and Proceed.

1100 Launch Gannet from Port Catapult.

1110 Launch two Motor-cars from Catapults.

1115 Flypast by *Ark Royal's* aircraft.

1120 Royal Marines Band Display.

1145 Rumber rigged in Upper Hangar.

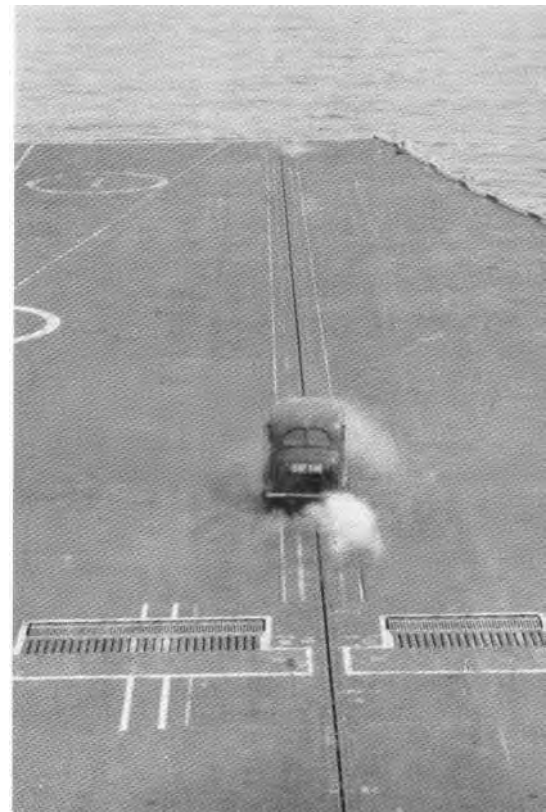
1150 Helicopter Pirates arrive.

1200 Buffet Lunch in Upper Hangar.

1400 Hands fall in for Entering Harbour (Modified Procedure Alfa).

1500 Alongside.

1515 Go home together.



FAMILIES DAY





803 SQUADRON

"Cave Punctum"

The romantic cannot help but feel the passing of an era and a sense of historical occasion with this probably being the last of the Navy's "single-seaters" (fittingly the largest front line Squadron of recent years yet formed), so perhaps a brief resume of the Squadron's past would not be entirely out of context. 803 originally formed in 1933 and between then and 1945 flew a variety of famous "old timers"; Flycatchers, Ospreys, Skuas, Rocs, Fulmars, Sea Hurricanes and Seafires. In 1951 it reformed with Attackers followed by Sea Hawks, and June 1958 saw the introduction of the Scimitar. During the later period, the Squadron has at one time or another embarked in all our present carriers (except *Bulwark*) but her shore-base loyalties were devoted to R.N.A.S. *Ford*, transferring to R.N.A.S. Lossiemouth on the closing down of that very popular air station.

From our point of view, this Commission has been roughly divided into two phases; the first being a most impermanent and uncertain existence prior to *Ark's* sailing for the Far East, during which time a strong Lossie homing instinct was always prevalent. It was during this "work-up" and "shake-down" period that the versatility of the Scimitar (as well as the ingenuity and patience of the maintenance personnel) was ably demonstrated: L.A.B.S., P.R., I.F.R., Strafing, Bombing, Rocketing, Air-to-Air Missilry and Bullpup were all taken in their stride.

803 SQUADRON

However, as all "clouds have their silver lining", so ours was to be Brest and Bergen, the latter visit being after exercise "Pilot Light". Both runs were noteworthy inasmuch that no grave disasters occurred - much to the chagrin of the Line Book Officer. It was remarkable to view the transition from hesitant "schoolboy" French to fluent intimacy that progressed throughout many an evening - perhaps largely attributive to the *vin du pays*.

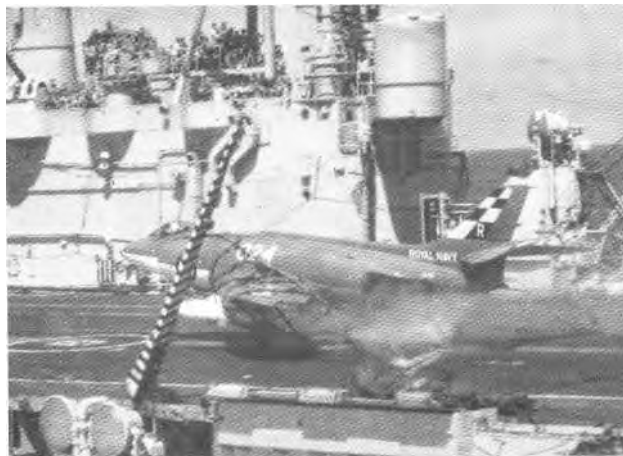
Gibraltar and Aden were both pleasant interludes on an otherwise uneventful passage East and as always the Suez Canal provided one with a most impressive spectacle, especially viewed from the vantage point of a Flight Deck. In Gibraltar the absence of several "haunts" on Main Street was lamented by the older hands who promptly found consolation across the Border, while the more reckless were painlessly parted from their money at the new Casino. In Aden the tense political situation and curfew did not appear to affect the Colony's community and, contrary to expectations, the only "sharks" viewed were of the human variety.

Flying activity was stepped up as we neared R.A.A.F. Butterworth and consequently our eventual arrival in Singapore and disembarkation of half the aircraft to R.A.F. *Changi* came as a welcome respite. The Squadron soon settled in at Changi with the sailor's accustomed alacrity and the day when "all good things must come to an end" arrived all too soon when we re-embarked for exercise "Guardrail". The low-level strikes and F.A.C. exercises during this period off North Borneo took on a new operational aspect as it was realized that this was a commitment that could all too easily become "for real". Subic Bay came as a pleasant intermission between the two phases of the exercise and the particularly virulent "delights" of Olongapo were long remembered. The latter half of the "Guardrail" was not without incident, Lieutenant Rankin supplying the "goofers" with a barrier engagement by way of an afternoon's entertainment, and the proximity of U.S.S. *Midway* (on her return from Vietnam) afforded an ideal opportunity to cross-operate that was seized avidly by both sides.

As a well-known Hindu philosopher was once heard to remark, "the best laid plans of mice and men gang aft a'glee" - so was it to be with us on our return to Singapore. Due to Ship's unserviceabilities, it was decided to leave four aircraft at Changi to carry out I.F.R. trials while the ship proceeded to Hong Kong. That little team bears mention in that not only did they complete the I.F.R. trials and a formidable P.R. commitment for the Ministry of Defence, Kuala Lumpur, but also managed to "cap" the Buccaneers at Lossie by keeping a Scimitar airborne for six hours and ten minutes. During the course of this "epic" (which was not without drama from the logistic side), Lieutenant Wren found personal comfort facilities sadly lacking and the subsequent disaster inspired the Squadron bard to immortalize the occasion:

If you want to stay airborne for more than six hours,
The precautions you take must be these,
A book for the boredom, a cushion for comfort,
And a small plastic bag for your ease.
But remember remember this one vital warning,
A Scimitar flies mighty fast,
If your bag should be full, do not try to eject it,
For 'tis always thrown back by the blast.

It was during this period, on a single engine diversion to Changi, that Lieutenant Waring left his aircraft on "finals" after a total hydraulic failure - the parting between pilot and aircraft being by courtesy of Mr. Martin-Baker. He was next located (unaffected by his "traumatic" experience) reaping his just rewards at the bar.



Into the barrier

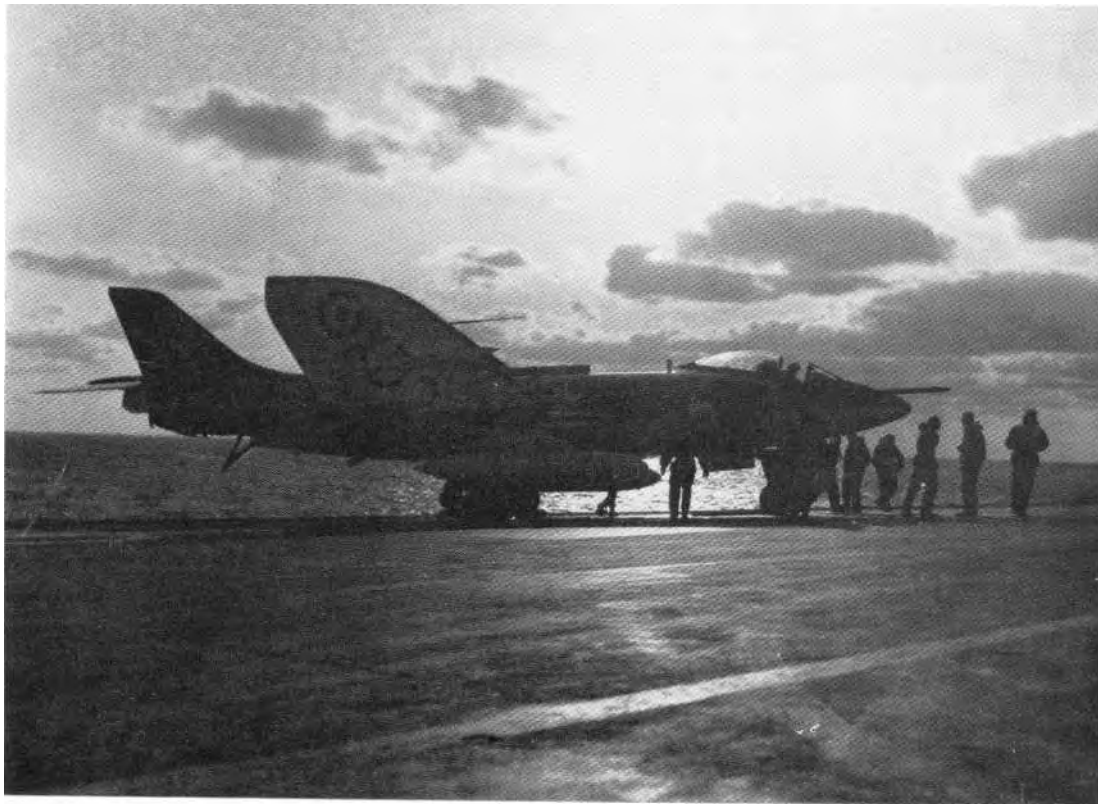
803 SQUADRON

Hong Kong once again justified its reputation for being the best run East of Suez and once again on the return trip full advantage was taken of the excellent facilities at Cubi Point to practice live Sidewinder firings; although the measure of success was not comparable with our previous Bullpup firings at Tabones. We have always acquitted ourselves well in the field of sport, especially the "potted" variety.

On our return to Singapore, movement order followed upon movement order as we shuttled between the Ship, Changi, Butterworth and the Ship (all in the space of a few weeks). In fact the C.A.A. was so moved as to remark that if it was all changed again he would "tear his hair" (a remarkably incautious remark as will be appreciated by those who have viewed his tonsorial limitations!). If it would appear that our disembarked periods at Changi have been "glossed over", we hasten to affirm that they have proved invaluable for continuation flying and for affording us the opportunity to have a change that has been as good as any rest. We were exceedingly well looked after by the Australians at Butterworth and accustomed ourselves to being called "pommies" for our Down Under visit - this was even after four emergency landings were called on our second day there.

The remaining months of the foreign leg were marked by our flying off the Cocos Islands, off Gan and in the Beira blockade broken by innumerable returns to Changi. In particular, we remember with gratitude the islanders of Cocos who spread a huge "Happy New Year" greeting on the beach for 803. At Beira we contributed largely PR effort with some diplomatic "medium range" shots.

We also spent much of this time reducing the stowage problem by disposing of aircraft into the catwalk, into the barrier and into the sea. This was achieved by Messrs. Skrodski, Notley, Williams and de Souza. On one occasion the pilot ditched so near to Changi that he refused a helicopter rescue and virtually walked ashore.



YOUNG VISITORS



PASSAGE EAST

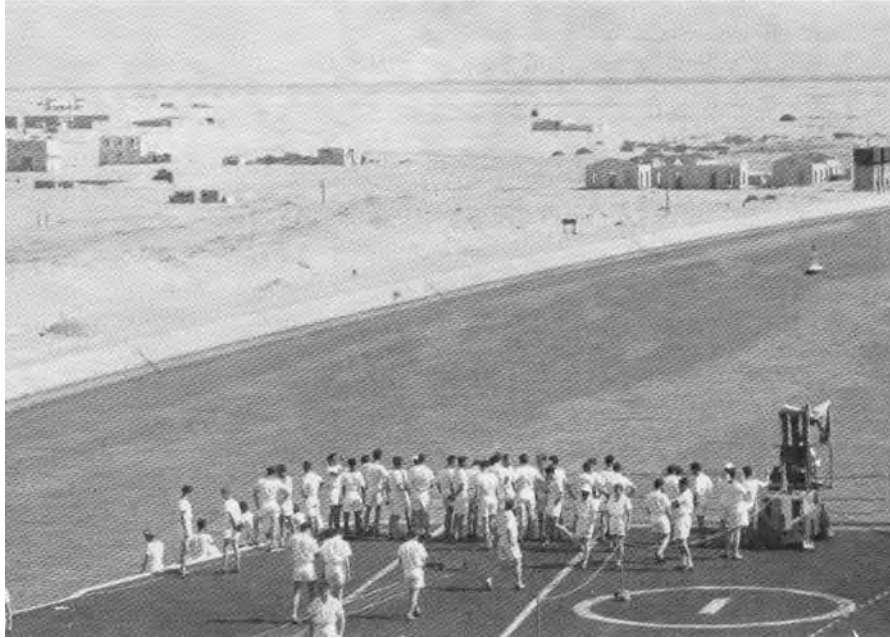


ACROSS THE BAY

The third week of June opened with such dismal West Country weather, that one was almost glad to be leaving for the Sun and the warm South. We sailed from Plymouth at 0745 on June the 17th in temporarily fine conditions, and a few families and friends were there to wave us out of the Sound. A few anxious late comers had just made it over the last brow as it was taken in; others failed even to do that and had to be collected by chopper from the Barrack's parade ground. The Air Group joined during the afternoon but only just made it before the weather clamped. Lieut.-Cdr. P. G. Newman, who was giving up command of 803 Squadron, came on board for a last visit to say good-bye to Captain Griffin and found himself being carried, willy-nilly, to Gibraltar. We struggled across the Bay with one screw trailing due to something known as a "plummer block" - cries of "The Buzz is Guzz!" but the weather steadily improved and we got out our Whites and our sunglasses and we were able to enjoy a profitable day's flying off Gibraltar.

When we secured to the Mole at Gib. it was to find the diminutive *Centaur* immediately ahead of us. There was to be a Sportex between the two ships which was intended to embrace practically every activity, it was evident that *Centaur* had been enjoying the benefits of an old-fashioned Mediterranean cruise and we hastily resolved to catch up on some of these remembered pleasures - hot sun, warm sea, all that is summed up by the words "Mediterranean climate". Political tension over the Border with Spain meant that it was only possible to cross with a valid Passport and on foot. In comparison with the usual conditions, the locals found these restrictions very tedious and soon after our visit Flag Officer Gibraltar himself was involved in an incident on returning from a polo match. Some of the old hands reckoned that La Linea was not what it had been but many of the young 'uns thought that it lived up to its reputation. With the markets of Aden, Singapore and Hong Kong ahead, we were cagey shoppers, prepared to examine the range of luxury goods, to ask prices and to haggle, but not to buy. Some hardy souls climbed the hilly streets to see the Apes - confident that so long as they were on the Rock the British would hold Gibraltar. Only a week after we had sailed from Devonport we sailed again from Gib. for Suez, feeling already like seasoned travellers.

PASSAGE EAST



THE CANAL

The sunny Southern sea turned out to be the misty Mediterranean as we worked our way along the coast of Africa to Malta and again as we crossed towards Port Said. So the Suez Canal became not only the symbolic point at which one passed from "West of" to "East of" but also very obviously the beginning of the Heat. For a long evening we lay outside Port Said, waiting as the South-bound convoy formed up, and we missed the cheerful bustle of the bumboats and their "interesting" wares. Towards midnight we passed through the harbour, past where the statue of the architect of the Canal, Ferdinand de Lesseps, had previously stood. Morning found us moving very slowly and steadily, with the utmost caution on the part of the Captain and Pilot, down the narrow channel. It was a day of rest on board - not even the roar of a ground run to disturb the quiet. A few traders had been hoisted inboard with their small craft and their stock of goods; they were exhibiting these by the Island, leather handbags and writing-cases with exotic views of the Pyramids and Sphinx, pouffes and camel saddles at inflated prices, the same style of tourist attractions that they had been offering to unwary travellers for about a hundred years. The rush for the soft linen sunhat seemed to have become less - in other years these have formed an indispensable part of the "modified 10's" and the Mess Deck Joker who bought a fez or tarboosh and gave his impression of King Farouk was missing, a sign that the exotic monarch was now fading fast from the public memory.

The desert wastes are a sight that will hold one fascinated for an hour or so, and then, suddenly, one feels that one has seen it all and turns away. This is partly due to the very slow rate at which the ship progresses so that it is possible to study every detail of the panorama, the unworking adults and the children waving, the modern installations from the West and the essentially primitive huts and dwellings of the East. "How strange of them to wear their pyjamas during the day," someone said, but is it they who are strange or are we the ones, we who have borrowed their baggy cotton trousers to become our night attire?

At whatever age or however often one makes the transit of the Canal there is one memory that is abiding - the skill and simplicity of the Gully-Gully man, and the downy charm of his day-old chicks. For all the highly professional patter, the luring of a stooge (he still calls him MacGregor or MacPheerson as he used to in the 20's and 30's when tourists went out East in the cool season and only Scottish engineers would risk any other

PASSAGE EAST

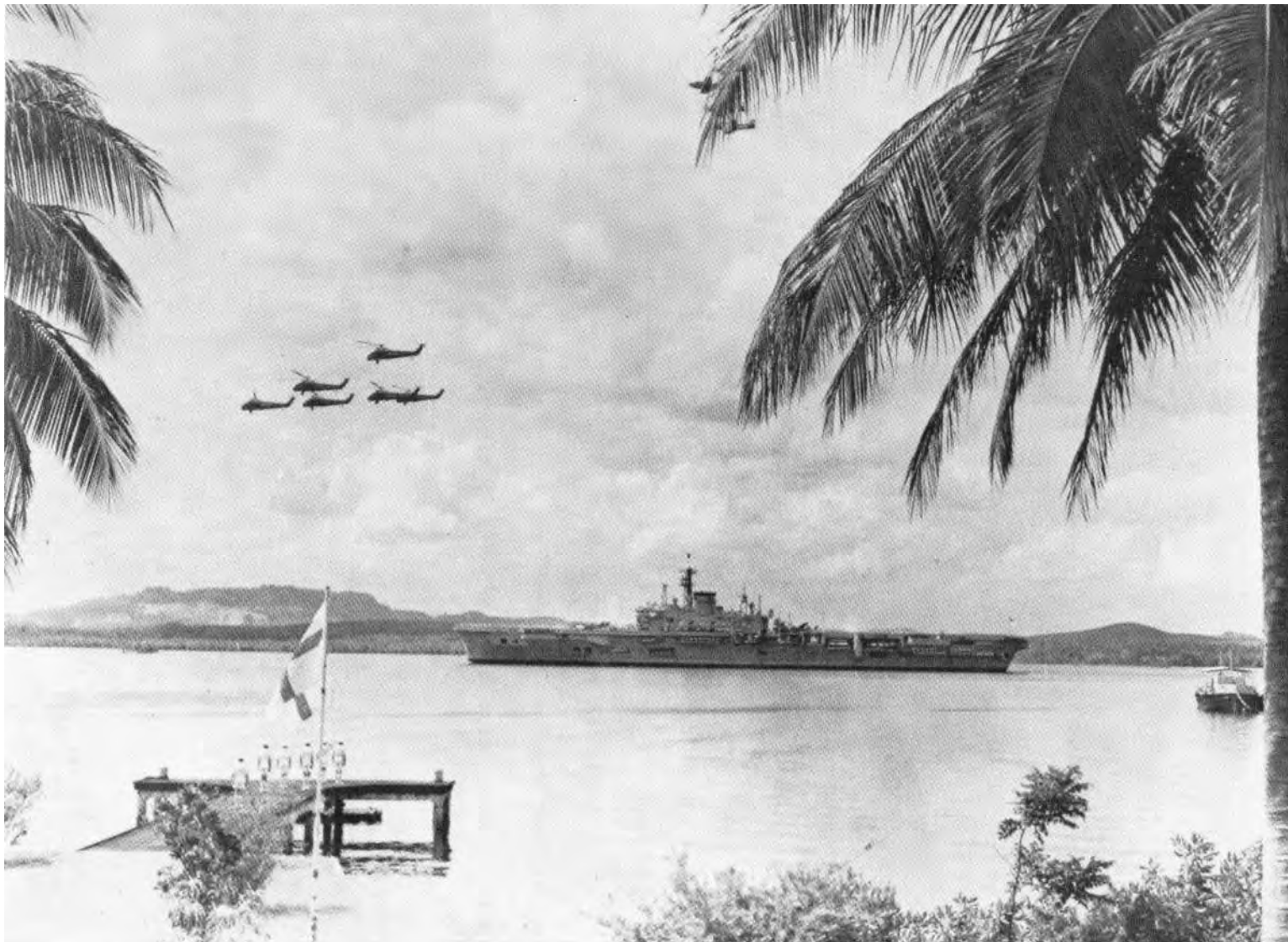
time!) to assist in the card and coin acts, the expertise with the rings and with the cups, it is still the legerdemain with these little live creatures that holds the attention. They seem happy to nestle silent in the deep, cavernous pocket of the Gully-Gully man's flowing robe, and then to appear, at will, from under the cups or out of ears and pockets. One helper stood awed and amazed as chicken after chicken was taken cheeping from inside his shirt, and after the show was over he could be seen feeling carefully round his chest in case one was still there and he had not noticed it. With exact timing as he completed his half hour the Gully-Gully man ended his show, and conjured up a small collection.

ADEN

The news from Aden as we approached was of political tension which was accentuated, from time to time, by bombs being lobbed into cinemas or at children's parties or at groups of soldiers in the street. It was therefore decided by the authorities ashore that the advent of one thousand *Ark Royal* libertymen each day of our stay would prove too much of a temptation for the keen bomb thrower and that the local defence forces would be hard put to it to provide adequate protection for our men. So, reluctantly, only one Part of one Watch were allowed to



stay ashore after dark, while the other Part returned on board, clutching their tape-recorders, single-lens automatic cameras, mechanical toys and the most astounding bargains in cheap watches and fountain pens. The experts disagreed violently about what was cheaper in Aden than anywhere else and what was not - one expert will still be travelling hopefully towards Guzz at the end of the foreign leg, confident that the tape-recorder of his choice will be cheaper at the next port than it was at the last. N.A.A.F.I. brought samples of some of these luxury goods on board; these were handed round, admired and some orders were placed but, when the time came to pack up, the samples had disappeared into the unknown depths. Ashore, we mixed with the visitors from the luxury liners and tried to pass for rich Americans. Self-preservation was uppermost in one's mind and very few risked the picturesque but dangerous back-streets. The inland town of Crater was strictly Out of Bounds. Our oppos in the Army and the R.A.F. were lavish with invitations and in particular a group of those with fond memories of Shotley visited the Royal Anglian Regiment for a hearty lunch. The beaches were popular, but for the first time the ominous word "Shark" was mentioned and some contented themselves with the briefest of dips. It was fortunate, on the whole, that the visit was short because caution was necessary but tedious. As the N.P.M. said in his introductory broadcast, "Don't go ashore on your own and don't go ashore in a group. I hope you enjoy your visit."



(By courtesy of the Fleet Photography Unit, Singapore)

815 SQUADRON

"Strike Deep"

The Squadron consisting of six Wessex H.A.S. 1 aircraft joined H.M.S. *Ark Royal* from R.N.A.S. *Culdrose* on 15th June 1965. It had been disembarked there since the previous Christmas after a twelve-month commission in H.M.S. *Centaur*.

During the weeks prior to embarkation we had undergone our Operational Readiness Inspection by Flag Officer Flying Training, taken pre-embarkation leave, and made a multitude of other preparations. It was a busy time for all.

Finally embarked then, we soon fell into a steady programme of day and night flying, working up both air and ground crews as well as aircraft Flight Control Systems. After a six-month disembarked period it quite naturally takes some little time to reaccustom the Squadron to carrier operating. Not only that, but also under completely different weather conditions to those experienced in U.K., which require rather different operating techniques.

July 4th, two days out of Aden, marked the fourth anniversary of the Squadron recommissioning with Wessex helicopters. During these four years the Squadron served for eighteen and twelve months respectively in *Ark Royal* and *Centaur*, seeing action in the Radfan and assisting in maintaining law and order in Dar-es-Salaam. A dinner was held in the Wardroom to mark the occasion.

Between Aden and Singapore we continued a steady programme of Screenex flying with a particularly intensive period during Exercise *Malarky* off Butterworth. As *Ark* steamed through the Johore Straits on July 19th we disembarked six aircraft to R.N.A.S. Sembawang, after taking part in the Air Group flypast. H.M.S. *Simbang* is familiar ground to most of the Squadron, and we quickly settled in there.

These disembarked periods not only permit aircraft maintenance in very much more agreeable conditions than those onboard, but also a tropical routine to be operated when commitment and work allow. Accommodation and surroundings are pleasant, the station has a fine swimming pool, and the Squadron has a fairly busy programme of sporting fixtures. Particularly successful have been the Squadron barbeques at the swimming pool.

While ashore the flying has been varied and interesting. In addition to the General and Instrument Flying practice, we have carried out numerous jungle navexes, operated in confined areas and clearings up country, carried out load lifting and troop drills with the Army and taken part in demonstrations at the Jungle Warfare School. During the extended October S.M.P. in particular we did a considerable amount of this sort of work, having converted two aircraft to the Commando role, that is, removing Sonar and F.C.S. equipment and fitting troop seats.

While preparing to re-embark in *Ark Royal* on August 3rd, the flotation equipment on one aircraft inadvertently inflated when the fuses were fitted. Unfortunate though this incident was, it served the double purpose of reassuring all those concerned that not only does the system operate extremely efficiently but also that it is potentially dangerous. Fortunately no one was injured although one or two were somewhat shaken!

The next ten-day flying period was, from the Squadron point of view, a work-up period for the forthcoming Exercise *Guardrail*. Throughout this exercise we flew a fairly intensive anti-submarine programme, operating with ships in company and also units of the United States Navy. For our contribution to the weapon training phase of the exercise we carried out a torpedo drop of six weapons in the Subic Exercise Areas.

On August 30th the Squadron detached four aircraft to H.M.S. *Albion* for two days. She was working in company with *Ark* off the coast of North Borneo. Those who operated from her were much impressed by the ship itself - cool, clean and, above all, quiet. A welcome change from the noise and pressure of a fixed wing carrier.

It was with great pleasure that the Squadron received news of the promotion on 1st September of our Senior Pilot George Barras and Senior Observer Brian Hortin to Lieutenant-Commander. Not surprisingly, this auspicious event gave rise to a grand celebration.

815 SQUADRON



We operated once again from Simbang during the September S.M.P. and from here the Squadron detached two aircraft and crews to Kuala Lumpur where they were to spend a week operating with No. 3 Squadron Royal Malaysian Air Force, gaining jungle and high altitude experience. This detachment proved to be excellent value, giving those who took part a greater confidence and better knowledge of operating the aircraft in unaccustomed conditions. Incidentally, there were no complaints from either the officers or ratings about the hotel accommodation or the Kuala Lumpur rates of L.O.A.! Those remaining in Singapore continued a programme of general flying from Simbang.

Re-embarking, this time bound for Hong Kong, the Squadron had on passage its first opportunity since leaving U.K. of working with a fast submarine. With H.M.S. *Oberon* for three days we had a taste of realistic submarine evasive tactics. We were fortunate also in being able to embark an observer in her for two days, and at the subsequent debrief he was able to pass on much interesting information from a submarine's eye view.

Whilst in Hong Kong, we achieved a limited amount of flying, mainly stores and ferry trips. Aircraft were flown ashore two by two over the stay for cleaning and polishing by the Hong Kong Aircraft Engineering Company at Kai Tak. The actual visit was much enjoyed by all, although the extended stay inevitably put a considerable strain on the pocket. Many Squadron ratings took advantage of the two days ship's leave and by all accounts had an excellent time. Of particular mention is the kindness and hospitality extended to officers by Mr. and Mrs. Ng, parents of Lieutenant Archie Ng, who served in the Squadron for some time. We had two extremely enjoyable outings with them, and were pleased to reciprocate in some small measure by taking them as guests of honour to a Squadron dinner in the Hong Kong Club.

815 SQUADRON

On sailing from Hong Kong, two aircraft were detached to R.F.A. *Tidespring* for a ten-day period during Exercise *Guidex*. Two full crews and some fifteen maintenance personnel made up the detachment. While onboard both aircraft were stowed in the hangar overnight, unlikely though it may appear on first inspection. Indeed, stowing the aircraft did prove an interesting manoeuvre and fortunately no heavy weather was encountered which might have made handling very tricky indeed. This was a particularly worthwhile experience, both from the Squadron and ship's point of view. It has shown the feasibility of operating two Wessex from a Tide class vessel, and in future it should be even more practicable from the experience gained and recommendations made.

Again we used *Simbang* during the extended October/November S.M.P., and occupied ourselves with a variety of flying concentrating mainly on "Commando" work as mentioned previously. Many new faces have appeared in the Squadron, occasioned by a one-third relief in ratings. Several new aircrew have also joined in the past weeks, both to complement our two new aircraft, and replace those with recent appointments.

The visit to Mombasa was marked by an interesting request to assist with the setting up of a wireless station in a remote location. This could be speeded up by a chopper lift. In the end, technical difficulties and the rising cost of the venture discouraged the inquirers. In the next weeks, off Beira, our principal contribution was anti-submarine patrolling but we took a further step forward in operating a Wessex as a night planeguard thus releasing the escorts for more extensive duties. We had a dummy run at night winching with some guinea pigs from 803. And for our final fling we indulged in a two-day Casex in the salubrious waters of Jason's Bay before our minds and course set firmly for home.



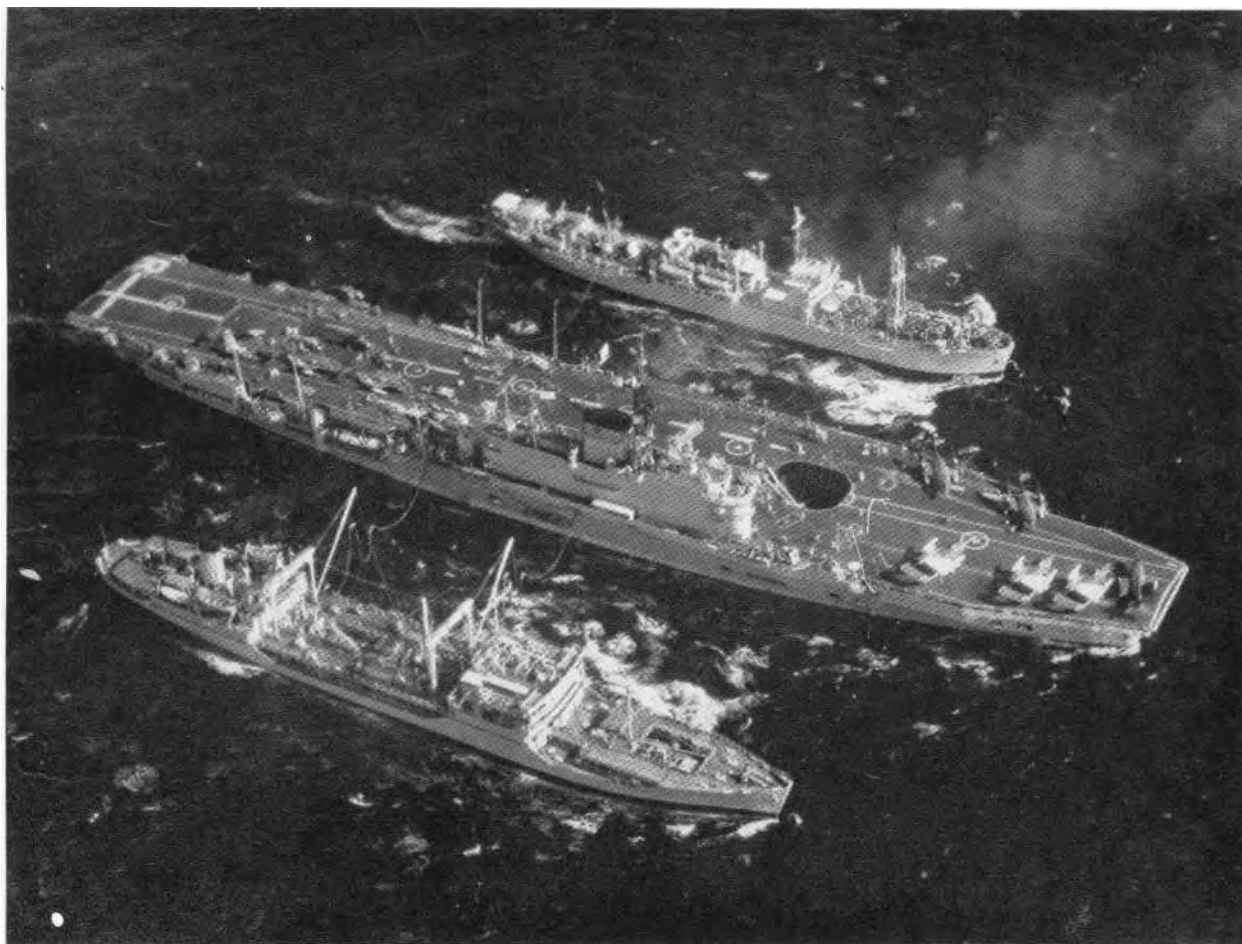
Neatly stowed in Tidespring



Inadvertently inflated



Emergency fuelling party



THREE SHIP R.A.S.

Replenishment At Sea with a warship on each side of the R.F.A. has long been established in the Fleet, but the reverse evolution of one R.F.A. on each side of a Strike Carrier had been only a theoretical study and a rehearsed manoeuvre, without any transfer of stores, until *Ark Royal* finally completed the entire operation on Sunday, 11th July, 1965. As she approached the northern tip of Sumatra she came into company with the R.F.A.'s *Fort Langley*, *Fort Duquesne* and *Wave Sovereign*.

The first move was the transfer of the First Lieutenant and the Deputy Supply Officer to the R.F.A. to discuss the details. When Number One was nicely suspended beneath the helicopter it was discovered that the winch was defective and the unfortunate officer had a somewhat hair-raising journey.

Wave Sovereign came alongside first on the Starboard side and began to pump across the liquid load. It is of interest to note that *Wave Sovereign* had been the very first ship to replenish *Ark Royal*, ten years before, in June 1955. *Fort Duquesne* next came alongside on the Port side and passed across a great quantity of food and stores to the two newly designed stump mast positions. To the dismay of many the light jackstay stump was a little short and three casks of Rum were damaged against the ship's side and spilled their precious contents on the deck. Later, *Fort Langley* connected on the Starboard side in place of *Wave Sovereign* and passed over a large consignment of Beer, while flying an unconventional ensign of a Golden Cockerel emblazoned on a blue ground. It stood for Courage - the ale, not the virtue.

The handling of stores was swift and efficient and a storing task which would have taken days in harbour, with the utmost inconvenience to all, was accomplished in a matter of hours by the hard work and the co-operation of all departments. As a result of this the Three Ship R.A.S. has become an established routine in our lives. The Captain and Bridge staff are relieved of many hours of wearing station-keeping since, in this arrangement, it is the Carrier which is the Guide. The storing rates have been maintained throughout the commission and all the stores are brought inboard and despatched below decks within a few hours.

**HERE
COMES
THE
BEER**



C.B.G.L. SECTION

At the start of the Commission the presence of Khaki-clad characters on board a warship was most puzzling to those members of the Ship's company who had not previously served in an aircraft carrier. No one appeared to be aware of the reason why we were here, nor what our duties were. It is heartening, therefore, to observe now that we are nearing the end of the Commission, that we have performed our work so unobtrusively that there has been no change in the empuzzlement factor which prevailed when we first embarked.

Why do we have Pongos in an aircraft carrier? The mobility and hitting power of an aircraft carrier offer remarkable possibilities for the support of ground forces. This is particularly so in minor wars in remote places, where normal support may be limited or delayed. A carrier can, for example, operate her aircraft in one area one day and hundreds of miles away the next, and in any given area support can be on call over a very wide front.

For the effective use of such support a go-between is necessary to interpret the needs and problems of the Army to the Naval aircrew. A small unit called the Carrier-Borne Ground Liaison Section meets this need. We are a self-accounting unit under the control of the Ministry of Defence and under the command of the Captain of the Ship.

Briefly, the task of the Section is to seek out targets and to help the Squadrons to engage them to the best advantage. This involves instructing aircrew on Army matters such as organization and tactics, recognition of vehicles and equipment; advising on the military side of joint operations; producing the relevant maps and intelligence to brief aircrews before they take off; debriefing them on return and passing information gained to those concerned, including forces ashore and other missions already airborne: and being prepared to help in photographic interpretation, liaison with Army units ashore and in the day-to-day life of the Ship.

Inter-Service co-operation has come to stay. No one Service can "go it alone". Experience in joint operations is thus of greater interest and value than ever before. A tour of duty in a carrier offers the C.B.G.L. Section not only an opportunity to visit, in the best of company, the ports of the world, but also the chance of a unique position of operational responsibility and of a grandstand view of the application of land, sea and air power. The Fleet Air Arm, and the support it can give, are major factors in war. It is up to the

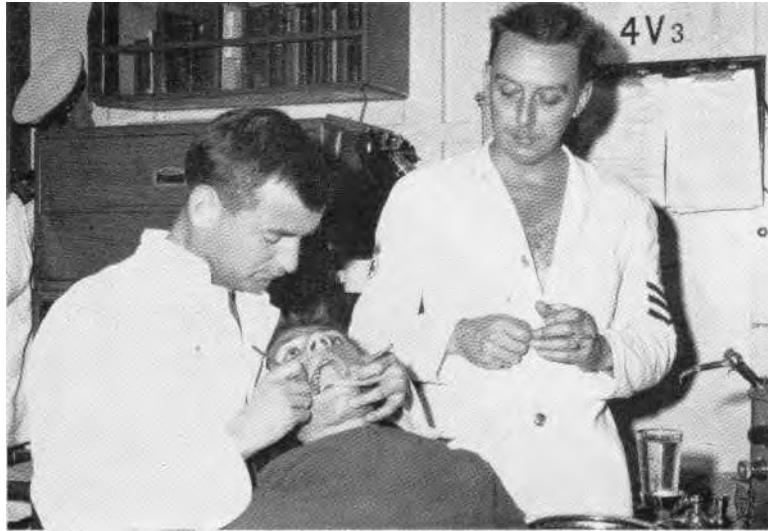


*Sergeant Michael Keogh, R.A.O.C.;
Captain Martin Minter-Kemp, Royal Welch Fusiliers
Driver Derek Stedman, R.C.T.;
Major James Newton, Queen's Own Highlanders;
Private Michael Baron, R.A.O.C.*

Army, in its own interest, to make available personnel to act as a link between those who need support, and those who have it to offer.

The 63rd Carrier-Borne Ground Liaison Section could not have had a happier and more successful Commission. We feel that we have performed our duties to our entire satisfaction. We have thoroughly enjoyed ourselves and have made many lasting friendships with "Airey-Fairys", "Fish-heads", "Bomb-heads" (concrete filled) and all the rest of you shower. We have learned many things; that Ship's programmes should be filed away under the "Fiction" section of one's library; never to believe anything until it actually happens; that "world cruises" really mean visiting half-a-dozen ports. More than anything else we have acquired the ability to take the rough with the very rough.

DENTAL DEPARTMENT



Soon after joining H.M.S. *Ark Royal*, and finding that it was, in reality, a cruiser named H.M.S. *Blake* (in early March 1964), the Dental Staff surveyed the dental surgery in the aforementioned cruiser and found it bare of all equipment, so moved into H.M.S. *Drake* and a spare surgery in the Dental Clinic. This was labelled "Ark Royal" and we settled down to eight months of steady work enlivened by four long walks a day through the Dockyard to and from *Blake* for lunch and tea. A delicate balance was maintained between the increased physical fitness due to the outdoor life and the corns, bruises and blisters which one associates with dockyard strolling.

But once aboard the *Ark*, the smallest department in the ship, consisting only of S.B.P.O.(N) Bond and Surgeon Lieut.-Cdr. (D) Stacey and the transient patient of the moment (a closely knit threesome, 1 might add) started to make some indentation into what is definitely the largest single-handed floating dental practice in the world.

One of our first cruises was to the primitive northern part of the British Isles, where live the Scottish, and we of the Dental Department, who had never been there, were excited by the knowledge that we might see our first "filed" teeth amongst the savages there. Alas, after many weeks in the capital of Scotland, South Queensferry, we were informed that this evil practice had been stamped out two years ago during a period of martial law.

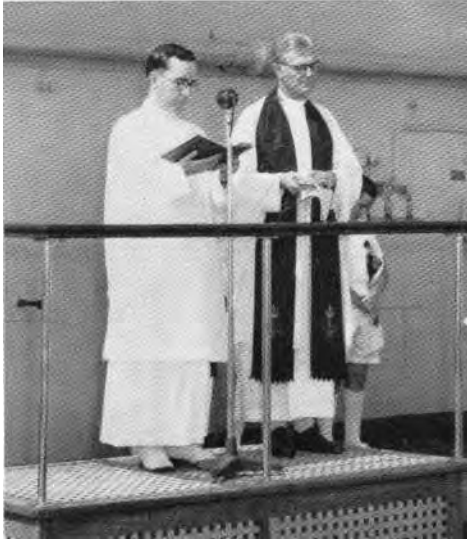
Dentistry in Bergen tends to be the same as dentistry in Aden and dental statistics are the dullest and most frightening things in the world, but by December 1st, that is, after twenty-one months on board 4,667 visits had been made to the department by people seeking treatment and, for example, nearly 3,500 fillings had been done in that time.

Both members of the department felt a little envious of the U.S.S. *Bennington* in Subic Bay, a far smaller ship than *Ark*, which had three dentists permanently embarked!! S.B.P.O. Bond, however, distinctly remembers having a Make and Mend on September 12th!!

Besides our main task which is obvious the department has various small side lines. Incisions into severely bruised finger and toe nails for the medical fraternity with our high speed drill and removing signet rings from damaged fingers and, of course, supplying the engineers and shipwrights with such delicacies as plaster of paris, old mirrors and steel drills and, for a small fee, the Dental Officer will introduce you to his twenty-seven young dental assistants who are at present working in various massage houses in Johore Baru.

In short, you may not like us, you may be afeared to visit us but in the end you'll always need us and you may be comforted by our Latin motto: *In Dento Facto Terribulum*. Which as you very well know means, "You Are Interrupting Our Tea Break."

THE CHURCH IN "ARK"



"Challenge" and "Achievement" would be the two words that seem best to sum up the work of the Churches this Commission, and to give a fair picture of what has been attempted on board by all Denominations.

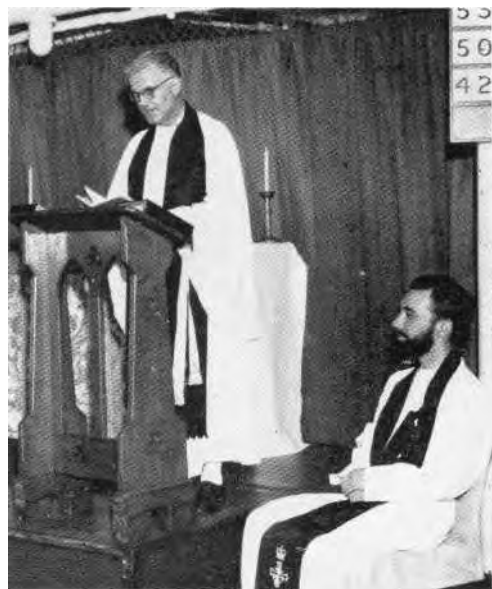
An Aircraft Carrier, especially the size of *Ark Royal*, is a real challenge to anyone living on board - particularly to a Chaplain. The large numbers of men of different "parts of ship", the separate and distinctive squadrons, the extensive day and night flying, and an ever-changing Ship's Programme over all. However difficult, it is a challenge with very real "fringe benefits" ready to hand - the sense of abundant "good-will", the ever present naval good humour and the active co-operation of all on board - so that visiting the many Messes is always a real encouragement and pleasure, as well as an opportunity of sharpening one's wits!

Services for all denominations have been held regularly on board and have shown a steady growth and achievement. Congregations at the Quarterdeck Service have noticeably increased during the Commission, especially when we have been at sea for long periods or on special occasions like the Ship's Carol Service. Asking each Squadron or Division to make itself responsible for running the Church service on a particular Sunday has aroused interest, given added purpose, introduced a certain competitive spirit, and increased attendances. Just occasionally we have had to contend with Sunday Routine being run on a weekday because of some overriding Service commitment, but this has always been accepted good naturedly by most

concerned as unfortunate but unavoidable! Another contributory factor to our Sunday services has been the much appreciated part played by the Royal Marine Band, by their ability and co-operation in getting us all really "with it", and by their successful perseverance with the Chants, Canticles and Responses. Our "All Male" (unfortunately!) Choir has at all times given strong support, and have taken every opportunity of helping ashore at Evensong at Hong Kong, Singapore and Mombasa. This has proved of mutual encouragement and stressed the unity of all nations that can be found in Christ.

Regular weekday services, especially Night Prayers and the weekly Bible Study, have clearly been meeting a need for some, and the Epilogue each evening over the Ship's S.R.E. has been a fitting close to the daily Radio Ark Programme. For much of the time there have been two chaplains on board, the Ship's Chaplain and either the Roman Catholic or Free Church Chaplain on F.O.A.C.'s Staff. This has been much appreciated, and provided opportunities for combined services whenever possible - Remembrance Day, Memorial Services and on other occasions. A step in the right direction as well as an opportunity of putting into practice the wishes and feelings of the Christian Churches.

Taking chaplains by helicopter has become a regular Sunday feature (as well as an "occupational hazard"!). We only hope that the Escorts enjoyed having us as much as we have enjoyed going to them by this novel means of clerical transport. (The air crew may



THE CHURCH IN "ARK"

have found our presence a little "restricting" on the "Intercom".) On our return passage from Australia, where we had spent Christmas and had our very splendid services in the forward liftwell and main after hangar, both Morgans ("the Left" and "the Right") had the chance of visiting and taking After-Christmas Services for their respective congregations ashore on the Cocos Islands, who were both kind and appreciative of this unexpected help, since they are entirely dependent on the occasional visit of a priest, whenever this is possible.

Small groups from the Ship have managed, in Hong Kong, Singapore and Kenya, to visit local Children's Homes, Orphanages, Mission Stations and Hospitals. It has been of real benefit to us all to see the Christian Church in action, caring for the sick, the destitute and the unwanted - showing forth by lives of unselfish devotion, the Love of God for those of every country and colour. In several instances practical help was

given by Working Parties doing much needed repairs, as well as by gifts of money and food. It was a challenging time to be able to see from first hand experience the many who have so little in this life.

Being a practising Christian has never been easy (fortunately!) and life in the Royal Navy is no exception. It needs moral courage, determination and consistency; and living under the crowded conditions of a ship, fully operational and serving in tropical waters, provides ample opportunity for practising all three. Many have found through personal faith in the Risen Christ, that He is able to keep them in the face of life's many temptations and to give an inner joy and peace that is not dependent on outward circumstances. May the lessons that we have learnt through the "challenge" and "achievement" of this Commission stay with us, and may we always remain true to the One Who has called us to His Service.

In Memoriam

DAVID JOHN LOWE

Sub-Lieutenant

VICTOR JOHN BLYTHER

Sub-Lieutenant

PETER CHARLES COLLISON

M.E. (1)

NEIL EDWARD HILL

Able Seaman

JAMES FORSYTH PATRICK

Lieutenant

COLIN LIGHTFOOT

Lieutenant

JOHN MICHAEL STUTCHBURY

Lieutenant

An Ode to the T.A.S. Party

A gallant band of T.A.S. men, seven urchins of the *Ark*,
Only happy when we're working, always ready for a lark.
A parting in October that split our pirate crew,
When Mac and Ginge went homeward; received - one T.A.S.O., new.
Our sonar sets are ancient, the oldest of their kind
In Britain's modern Navy, yet submarines we find.
A.E. took our torpedoes, and work the "Tinfish" bay,
But still our lad, one Pomeroy, works there night and day.
Our ties with "Airy Fairies" prove the critics to be wrong,
They still call out "T.A.S. Party!" for the bit that goes off bang.
We have an office writer, Keith Hayden is his name,
He is the T.A.S.O.'s runner, and a boxer of some fame,
His home is in the office amongst the paper work,
And he helps Commander's Office with the jobs they shirk.
Another of our party is a "shot rope", name of Jan,
Although he is a gunner he is our diving man.
Call him a "Scuba Diver" and you'll send him in a rage,
But diving is his story, found on another page.
Last but not least yours truly, diver and W.A.,
Leading Hand of the party and star instructor brave.
Not many see me working, especially in the deeps,
Which earns me the epitaph: "to him who always sleeps".
Our work in this commission has been both hard and long,
But like all well trained T.A.S. rates, though tired, we carried on!
The Diving Store, the Sonar Space, the Mag and Office too
Have had their share of recommends when the Captain comes to view.
We've always done our utmost best, to work hard and be loyal,
We're proud to be what we have been, T.A.S. PARTY of *ARK ROYAL*.

*(Written by L.S. G. Perry and released for publication
by kind permission of the T.A.S. Party)*

N.B.C.D.

It was during this, the Fifth Commission that Their Lordships decided that the Ministry of Defence (Navy) sounded better than Admiralty and that N.B.C.D. was better than A.B.C.D. The latter involved a change of cap tallies but no change in purpose, Nuclear being a modern synonym of Atomic.

And play on words has provided us with amusement in other circles from time to time. The case is quoted of the Rating who went to Damage Control Headquarters 1 during an Exercise and asked for some



Keeping cool in the tropics

C.O.2 for his Breathing Apparatus, and of the Petty Officer who thought that the Chemical Cleansing Routine involved the poor unfortunate victim being "daubed" all over with Chlorine Paste.

On the more practical side, H.Q. 1 has provided a 24 hour a day "information service" which has no parallel. Queries varying from, "What time is it?" to, "Where can I borrow a crash helmet?" have been answered quickly, efficiently and, usually, politely. Even the caller suffering from toothache was helped to gain relief.

Besides dealing with all these "extras", the Petty Officer of the Watch takes action on all reports of damage and fires in the ship. Fortunately, there has been little requirement for the former, although there has been a great deal of practice for the latter. His main task, apart from dealing with emergencies, is the control of the Watertight Integrity of the Ship. Who, for instance, has the Stores rating so rudely shaken from his slumbers to close his doors and hatches?

In all the many and varied aspects of H.Q. 1 the Petty Officer on watch has been well backed up by his two patrols, whose keen eyes have corrected many dangers and defects around the ship. Every Member of the Department, as well as taking his turn in H.Q. 1 belongs to the team who maintain all the fire-fighting equipment in the ship. If you can imagine a building containing over 2,000 rooms, then it will give you some idea of the problem in *Ark Royal*. It is a long complicated job, but an essential one if the ship is to remain fully operational.

Another activity of the Department is training. So far, over 200 Ratings have been given instruction in different aspects of N.B.C.D. This enables them to pass the necessary examinations for higher Rating, and the percentage of failures has been very small.

In conclusion, we have had a busy time so far this year but, whilst we still have men such as those you see in our photograph, we will always keep cool in the face of an emergency.

SINGAPORE

A personal impression

It's not what it used to be," the old hands told me. But there again, it never is. "A city of wonderful surprises!" according to my guide book. How then did it strike me, a visitor for the first time?

I arrived late in the commission, by air, just in time for the S.M.P. which became, due to unforeseen circumstances, somewhat prolonged. Having landed at the airport at the ungodly hour of 0230, I found my luggage and slumped on to the waiting R.N. bus. According to my atlas, Singapore was a mere dot at the end of a peninsula so, when, three-quarters of an hour later, we were still travelling I thought that we must be half-way up Malaysia. I was soon to find out to my cost that from the Naval Base to the City of Singapore is quite a ride, by bus and by taxi.

The first run is generally to Sembawang Village. I had been told that Christmas presents had to be away by the end of the week, an odd fact as I had just finished Summer leave in the U.K., so, armed with a pocketful of dollars, I set forth. It did not take me long to learn that the price to aim to buy at is the price at which the shopkeeper just will not accept. Most goods are repeated in the numerous shops available and, having strolled down them all, there is usually one shopkeeper who, after a lot of, "Oh dear me no sir's," will come down to your figure.

The main stores in Singapore generally sell at fixed prices but they are well worth visiting if only to find out the range of goods available. The best shopping centre that I came across was Changi Village where nearly everything that is to be found in Singapore can be bought at a discount. Best buys, of course, are clothing, photographic and electrical equipment and furniture although one's popularity is not enhanced by arriving back on board with a full suite of rattan furniture.

The availability of taxis on the island leaves little to be desired and, providing that you do not hop into the first one that comes along without first asking the price, the fare is reasonable. Travelling by "pick up" on the main routes to Singapore City is a good bargain for sixty cents provided that you are not class conscious. On market days you may well find yourself accompanying a couple of hens or small pig but do not let this deter you as the fare will not be raised.

In the City, trishaws are an interesting form of propulsion for those with iron nerves and a good command of the local dialect. If, "Ah yes, sir," is replied to every utterance you make, insist on enlisting the aid of a passing interpreter to ensure that you travel in the direction required.

One sees on travelling that the island is evergreen and seemingly seasonless as plants and trees are found in every stage of growth. Many colourful trees are found in abundance, including the scarlet "flame of the forest", the yellow "cassia" and the pink and white "rain tree". Coconuts and bananas are seen growing haphazardly by the wayside and it is little wonder that six of the latter can be obtained for twenty cents.

The night life is disappointing. Beer is expensive and there is little entertainment to be seen while consuming it. Bars are plentiful, usually air conditioned but lacking in character. Food, however, is good with first-class fare being served and cooked in the streets as well as in numerous restaurants. The national dish of Satay (kebabs barbecued over charcoal) is an acquired taste but sweet and sour pork or prawns and fu yong hai are excellent although there are some who prefer the less elaborate two eggs and chips. The latter, of course, must also be eaten with chopsticks to preserve the oriental atmosphere.

How many go to the National Museum, the Van Kleeef Aquarium or the Tiger Balm Gardens? The former can be missed without much loss but an effort should be made to visit the botanical gardens to see the most vivid and exotic collection of orchids in the world. The Tiger Balm Gardens will give you a preview of Hell, oriental fashion. But then, so can the other Tiger!

EXERCISE GUARDRAIL

The arrival in Singapore of a Fleet Carrier provided the opportunity for Rear Admiral P. J. Hill-Norton, C.B., a previous Captain of *Ark Royal* and now Flag Officer, Second-in-Command, Far East Fleet, to transfer his flag to her. In an address to the ship's company on his arrival, he spoke of the role of H.M.S. *Ark Royal* in the operational areas of the Far East, and also of visits that we were likely to make and enjoy. However, before sailing for the major exercise *Guardrail*, we were visited briefly by Rear Admiral Janvrin (Flag Officer, Aircraft Carriers) who came to see how we were operating in the warm climates some months after our O.R.I. in the cold of the Moray Firth. We spent several days of day and night flying in the Singapore local area. At the same time we became familiar with the routine of the three-ship R.A.S. and the time for transferring stores gradually reduced. It was during this period that the announcement of the declaration of Singapore as an independent, sovereign state was made. It soon became apparent that this was not going to cause any immediate disturbance in the political position of the Naval Base, as all Defence agreements were to be continued.

On Tuesday, 17th August, wearing the flag of Vice Admiral Hill-Norton - for he had been promoted in the interim - we sailed for the first phase of Exercise *Guardrail*. Again, the first few days were to consist of flying in the local area, before sailing eastwards to Borneo and then northwards to the Philippines. The Commanding Officer of 890 Squadron, Lieut.-Cdr. A. M. G. Pearson, made the 2,000th landing of the commission early in this period. Phase One ended with a brief operational visit to the American naval base at Subic Bay. This gave an opportunity to discuss the actions of the first part and to prepare for the second.

Subic provides a deep water, alongside berth in a pleasant naval base. The United States Navy have created a complete colony there. Across the bay there is the airfield of Cubi Point where the carriers have the facility of coming alongside and discharging their aircraft straight on to the shore. The surrounding hills are covered with the Married Quarters, hospitals, clubs and schools so that the base is virtually independent. A centre of attraction to our sailors within the base was the Families Shopping Centre (the PX) where the cigars, records and local manufactured goods were popular buys, while the size and cheapness of enormous American family refrigerators were astounding.

Outside the gates of the naval base one comes abruptly into the more primitive Philippine town of

Olangapo. At the border it is necessary to change the American dollars, which are the currency inside, for the local pesos. Then it is advisable to take a ride in one of the over-decorated Jeepneys - relics of the war, it would appear - which ply for hire. The main street runs for about two miles until it tails off into a rugged



Olango

road which is the highway to Manila. All the way along through the town the road is flanked by bars, restaurants and cabarets - all of which offer colourful, exotic, noisy, glamorous invitations to the passer-by, whether he be on foot or in a cab. All the traditional temptations of the sailor are provided here in abundance. By day, the glitter looks somewhat tawdry against the dirty, muddy, rutted roadway and there are glimpses of an appalling poverty behind this pretentious facade. But, at night, the street is alive with the swank and swagger of the "matelot" on the search for entertainment and with the cacophonous appeal of bands, combos and juke-boxes from adjoining bars. Beers are comparatively cheap, and even the "sticky green" is not exorbitant. But all this flourish and show

OLANGAPO

is part of a Cinderella world, for there is a strict curfew on the gate back from this fantasy world into the cold reality of the U.S. base. At midnight, the regretful return to cash in any remaining pesos and to make a weary way back to ships, where the duty staff lack that warm sympathy that one might hope for - or is it merely that they suffer from a feeling of suppressed envy? On the way, there are one or two minor hazards in the form of U.S. Naval Patrols, but a fellow feeling among our sailors and their American counterparts brings them through unscathed - except, perhaps, for an odd cap, or two, left on the way, like a modern glass slipper.

After Olangapo, back into Phase Two of Guardrail

where we used the practice areas of Subic for intensive, live weapon training and did some more serious liaison with the U.S.N. by a brief exchange of key personnel with U.S.S. *Midway*. Phase Three brought us south again, in rather miserable conditions, reminiscent of the English Channel in winter if it were not for the temperature. The exercise finished with Strikes being flown against targets on the Borneo coast. Not on the programme were the first "barrier" of the commission and a couple of crashes on deck - both of a minor nature. On Saturday, 4th September, after a successful Fleet exercise and with happy memories of the one good run ashore we entered Singapore Naval Base.



"What made you think he didn't understand English?"



Rear Admiral T. W. Best, F. O. Gibraltar, and Mrs. Best



*Cdre. F. D. Holford, D.S.C., Commodore-in-Charge,
Hong Kong*



*Sir Richard Turnbull, G.C.M.C.,
High Commissioner for Aden*

MORE DISTINGUISHED VISITORS



*Rear Admiral P. J. Hill-Norton, C.B.,
FO.2, F.E.F.*



*Vice-Admiral Sir Frank Twiss, K.C.B., D.S.C.,
Commander, F.E.F.*



*Rear Admiral H. K. B. Janvrin, C.B., D.S.C.,
calls on FO.2*



*Air Vice-Marshal C. N. Foxley-Norris D.S.O.,
O.B.E., M.A., A.O.C., 224 Group*



*Vice-Admiral D. C. E. F. Gibson, C.B., D.S.C., with
Rear Admiral C. P. Mills, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.C.,
FO.2, F.E.F.*



*Air Chief Marshal Sir John Grandy,
K.C.B., K.B.E., D.S.O., C.-in-C., Far East*

MORE DISTINGUISHED VISITORS



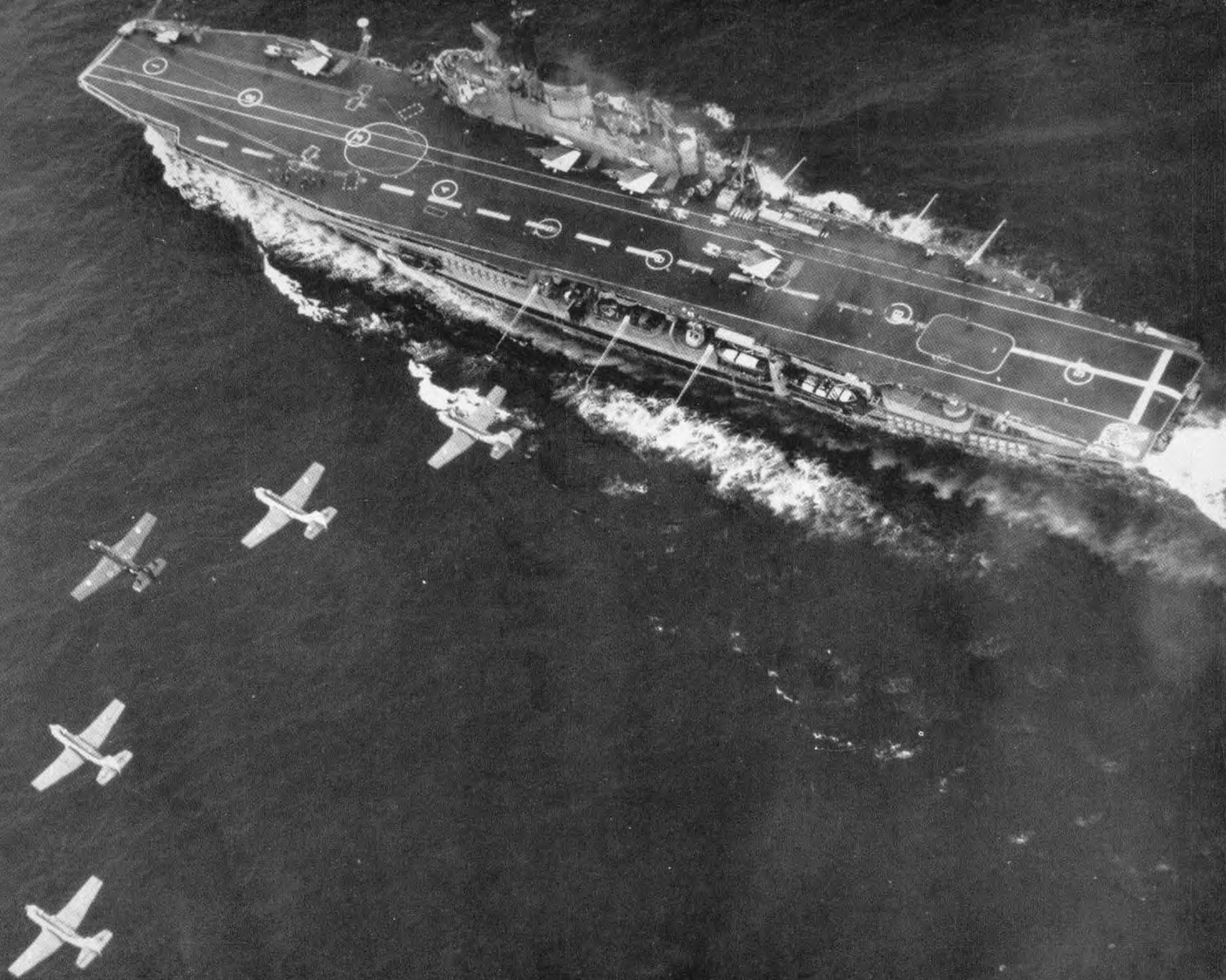
Alderman Kombo, Mayor of Mombasa



*Rear Admiral W. D. O'Brien, C.B., D.S.C.,
Flag Officer Aircraft Carriers*



*Monsignor G. E. C. Pitt, C.B.E., Principal
Roman Catholic Chaplain*





849 C FLIGHT

"Primus Video"

C Flight returned once more to the mighty *Ark* for the commissioning ceremony on the 12th November. The Flight's true station in life, however, was underlined on the 22nd October when the new Captain, Captain Griffin visited Culdrose to watch the Zebras on their home ground. Having flown on an exercise sortie and attended the Flight run-ashore during the evening, it is alleged that Captain Griffin was sufficiently impressed to extend an invitation to the Flight to join him for yet another commission. Whatever the real reason, C Flight personnel very shortly found themselves firmly established on board and commenced Deck Landing Practice which was designed to boost everyone's adrenalin count in preparation for the Xmas season.

Meanwhile, back at Culdrose it was learned that someone had sold the deeds to the ranch and as a result, 849 Squadron was to be evicted, prop, chocks, and baggage. The only accommodation available at this time was to be found to the north and so the Zebras were compelled to join the general migration to R.N.A.S. *Brawdy*. The Squadron had trouble finding an "in-date" Skyraider pilot and as a result this noble aircraft was left parked in the entrance of H.M.S. *Seahawk* as a reminder of better days to what has become the biggest heliport in the business. On the 15th December all other squadron aircraft were launched for a formation circuit of Cornwall before turning towards Wales.

The Squadron was given a splendid reception by its new landlords and everyone felt very much at home by the time Xmas leave began on the 18th December. Returning full of Xmas pud, the Flight took steps to put its house in order prior to joining *Ark Royal*. On embarking with the other fixed wing aircraft on the 14th January the flight set out to work up to as high a state of efficiency as possible in both operations and maintenance.

Flying during the next two months might be described as routine. The AEW Gannet can justifiably be described as a high density aircraft, which means basically that it is packed full of equipment with no room to spare. Apart from the powerful radar set the aircraft is fitted with three separate radio sets, one H.F. and two U.H.F. This means that the crew operating off Malaya might conceivably be controlling Fighter aircraft in low-level interceptions on one set, reporting incoming raids to the ship on another, and talking to R.N.A.S. *Brawdy* on H.F. With the addition of comprehensive navigational equipment and a radar picture, it can be seen that the AEW Gannet may be called upon to perform a variety of tasks. While the ship is at flying stations an airborne Gannet is a valuable asset to the Command.

By the time the Flight was disembarked to R.N.A.S. *Brawdy* in March everyone had got to grips with the problems of Flight Deck operations and advantage was taken of the period ashore to complete some of the larger

849 C FLIGHT

maintenance tasks. The aircraft were also fitted with explosive canopy release, designed to facilitate underwater jettison.

At sea once more in May, the Flight had eight days fairly intensive day and night flying; approximately sixty sorties were flown and only one commitment was missed. Feeling more than satisfied with progress made, the Flight took a final spell of leave in the U.K. prior to the ship's departure for warmer climes, but while *Ark* steamed towards the Far East Station opportunities for flying were limited. The exercise programmed to take place off Penang was a limited success only, as restrictions on the Ship's speed kept the fighter aircraft firmly on the deck. Thus C Flight were able to launch all aircraft, and the pilots were delighted to find themselves detailed for simulated strike sorties which were carried out with the usual verve and dash.

When the air group disembarked to Singapore in July, C Flight graced R.A.F. Seletar with its presence and commenced operational flying. The sorties normally entailed flying a barrier up and down the Malacca Straits in order to detect low-flying intruders from Indonesia. Two or three sorties were flown each night and although several aircraft were detected during the period, happily none showed aggressive intentions. Little day flying was done and time was once more devoted to heavy maintenance tasks and taking advantage of the swimming pools and station Golf Course (whose contours changed somewhat during the stay).

During Exercise Guardrail, the Flight had what was one of its most beneficial flying periods to date. The initial sorties were designed to locate U.S.S. *Midway* but half an hour after "go" time a Gannet illuminated U.S.S. *Midway* for identification purposes with a flare which floated gently through their circuit whilst they were night flying - fortunately radio contact was not established. The remainder of the exercise was devoted to raid reporting and controlling our own jobs in interceptions of the American strike aircraft.

In September, we went ashore to Changi, where the Flight found accommodation good but scarce. Transport and communications problems were increased by the fact that aircrew were living in the Ocean Park Hotel, the Ambassador Hotel, and two Service messes. Fortunately the operational task was reduced and only one barrier was flown each night.

Embarking once more, the Flight had about a week's flying, some of it without a diversion off Vietnam, before the ship steamed for Hong Kong. Shortly after the Ship's departure from this oriental paradise the Flight aircraft were grounded as a result of the loss of one of D Flight's aircraft. This aircraft trundled down the catapult at about 10 knots and entered the "og", fortunately with no injury to aircrew. It was felt that the catapult attachment hooks were at fault and all aircraft had to be X-rayed before further catapult launches were carried out. The Flight was nervously considering free take-offs because the X-raying proved exceedingly difficult with the equipment available, but the treatment was changed to testing with compactaflux, all aircraft were found serviceable, and the Flight were ready to fly just in time to disembark once more to R.A.F. *Changi*.

Finally, we can record with pride the achievement of the Flight during the period off Beira in March. Twenty-four hours a day surveillance of an area as large as the Mozambique Channel requires all the best performance of the Gannet and we can congratulate ourselves on our success over all the days on which we were required to operate, and that our serviceability was first class. In addition to the routine searches and the direction of visual and photographic probes by our flightier cousins, we can also record that a Gannet did the only positive fighter interception of the Commission when it headed off a Portuguese intruder. Is there nothing these boys can't do?

No account of C Flight's activities would be complete without mention of that noble aircraft the COD. Since the Flight left U.K. the COD has flown thousands of miles and visited countless airfields from Labuan to Khor-maksar in order to keep the ship supplied with mail and to fly ship's personnel to and fro as necessary. This means that we have carried a number of the more important visitors to the ship.

Although the Gannets and the COD may not have the flashy glamour of the Day jets and the Night jets we know that we are the ones that everyone really relies on - the first off in the morning light and the last back in the dusk or late into the night. We can congratulate ourselves and those who have gone before us in this Commission on this record of serviceability and dependability so that, in all sorts of conditions, we have never failed to come across with the goods.

WEAPONS AND ELECTRICAL DEPARTMENT

The Weapons and Electrical Department is unique in maintaining equipment in every compartment of the ship and takes pride in having emerged victorious from a complex and never ceasing battle of wits with the user departments. Each ploy used against us has been matched and surmounted. Such minor attempts to shake our calm as first removing all tallies from a telephone switchboard and then, as a concession, replacing them in the wrong order were easily overcome. More subtle attempts were made, though, such as the Naval Stores changing all the pattern numbers and then stating blandly that the items demanded using the original numbers were not recognized. However, pride of place must be shared between Commander Janion personally and the Marine Engineers collectively. The former for his ever increasing requirements for special lighting and insistence that the portion of the mast perpetually in funnel smoke should be painted white; the latter for their cruder but effective use of both fire and water in their increasing attempts to exhaust our efforts to keep things going.

As the commission progressed each electrical section developed its own character and techniques for dealing with problems, although rumours that next commissions' Engine Room and Boiler Room Section is to be equipped with combined shallow water diving and fire-fighting suits should be discounted.

Our Weapons specialists eventually made up for the many frustrating cancellations of gunnery shoots due to changes in the flying programmes by achieving a palpable hit on one of our own aircraft with a gun barrel, thus making "Y" 4.5 mounting the closest range armament ever fitted. At this point special mention must be made of our Weapons Seamen who have accepted "electrification" with such good grace and whose running of the turret pumps has provided the officers with the loudest alarm clocks in the world.

We can now reveal that those members who devoted their time in Hong Kong to the Wanchai District were officially learning Chinese in order to understand the more frantic distress calls from the laundry. However, the most noted success with telephones was achieved by the maintainer who succeeded in routing all calls

from a certain officer to the Admiral's Sleeping Cabin. (We hope Lt.-Cdr. S---th will enjoy his six years in the Persian Gulf.)

The major task undertaken by the department was undoubtedly assisting Singapore Dockyard rewire "B" boiler room and surrounding compartments following the fire damage. In all, some 72 miles of cable were used and all sections gave assistance, including a fan repair team provided by REA George and his fellow "volunteers" from the Radio Group.

Earlier in the commission the Radio Group had had its moments, in particular the ship's staff replacement of the Tacan aerial between snow squalls in the Firth of Forth. The aerial, which is fitted 160 feet above the sea and weighs 425 pounds, was successfully removed and the replacement fitted by helicopter. The accuracy shown by the aviators in placing the aerial on the mast



WEAPONS AND ELECTRICAL DEPARTMENT

was extremely high but doubt still exists as to whether it impressed us more with the fact that flying an aircraft is a highly skilled business or merely with the folly of getting anywhere near the beastly things. We have had our aviation supporters who, in intervals between brewing up in the D.L.P.S. compartment, could occasionally be seen creeping furtively around the flight deck apparently talking earnestly to themselves, while taking avoiding action against the mythical red bearded monster who is reported still to inhabit the after end of the island.

Entertainment, both official and unofficial, has been a feature of the department's activities and has ranged from a "spectacular" run in Mombasa to the floodlighting of the entire Ship's side and Flight Deck for the Far East Fleet Reception. This made Ark Royal the first fleet carrier to be floodlit overall. Other notable achievements included providing theatrical lighting for Lieutenant McCallum's entirely natural performance in the pantomime at the Perth Concert Bowl and the conversion by the Radio Group of the mainmast into a fluorescent cross of "David" for the Christmas illuminations.

The coach tour to Tsavo Game Park was almost as great a success as Tiger hunting in Singapore and the twenty members of the department who located its

lair in Alexander Road were very hospitably treated as were those who found it in more exotic establishments across the causeway. Banyans by M.F.V. to Changi under "Lord Jim" Cooksley were another popular feature of life in Singapore whilst the intrepid White Hunter Marshall led his devoted band of Exped enthusiasts across the Malayan Jungle.

On a more serious note we were proud to assist in Arkaid in such tasks as the wiring of the extension to the Lakoni Cheshire Home and to have in EM Bryce the recipient of the Royal Humane Societies Testimonial for saving a fellow rating from drowning.

Sport got off to an early start with the departmental athletics meeting in Devonport where the trophy awarded surely entitled us to claim that we held the first ever "Potted Sports". Subsequently we came a close second in the inter-departmental athletics and throughout the commission provided a high percentage of the ship's hockey, rugger and soccer teams. Undoubtedly though, sailing was our strongest point, not only did we supply the bulk of the ship's team but, under R. E. M. Holme's leadership, built and launched the first Ark Royal "piccolo". Lieut-Cdr. Ross must not be forgotten. He not only organized the Ship's Rugby but also kindly allowed us occasionally to use the Rugby fixture office for departmental purposes.





SHIP'S FLIGHT

The Ship's Flight for H.M.S. *Ark Royal* formed at Portland on the 9th September, 1964, and was soon in action, even though it was, initially, embarked in H.M.S. *Eagle*. It seemed wasteful to be luxuriating in the air-conditioned bliss of *Eagle* in the English winter when we were to swelter in *Ark* under tropical skies, but one of our mottoes is "Gather ye Rosebuds while ye may" so we made the most of it. A short run to Brest and ten days in Gibraltar meant that we felt like "old salts" when *Ark* was ready for sea.

On our arrival, in "Mother", on the 19th November, we found ourselves relegated to the Hangar extension, along with the minibuses, innumerable crates and the impedimenta of A.E.D. From here our Whirlwind aircraft emerge daily, with practically unfailing regularity, so that one or other of our two crews can keep a watchful eye on every launch and recovery of those bigger, noisier and nastier aeroplanes from the other hangars. On one of the few occasions when we were not able to provide the S.A.R. aircraft, the Wessex called upon to fill our role found it all too much for it and fell into the ice-cold sea. Fortunately another Wessex was airborne at the time and in a convenient position so that the aircrew were swiftly rescued and returned to the carrier.

The principal difficulty of our task is to remain vigilant and alert when, most of the time, our role is a purely negative one. For launch after launch and for recovery after recovery, we hover like a bird of prey, waiting to pick some unfortunate out of the sea, and nothing happens. Then, when one least expects it one is called upon to act and, within minutes, it is all over and the damp, but undismayed, victim is on his way down to the Sick Bay for a physical by the Doctors and (we suspect) for "medical comforts" while we are back again in our station for another operation. Sometimes we are allowed off the leash and go round delivering mail, or bread or the visitant vicar to our escorts, or to a submarine or R.F.A. Infrequently we make the longer trips to the shore.

Among our major technical achievements must be recorded the air lift of the *Tacan* aerial and its subsequent replacement amid the intermittent snow storms of Rosyth. Our friends in the Commando carriers are dab hands with the lift of stores or vehicles, but we can claim the *highest* airborne-crane operation in the great *Tacan* repair. (Some credit should perhaps go to the electrical party who received the aerial back into its position at the mast-head.)

As an independent unit we are extremely proud of our record of serviceability and service. As the first C.O. left and the Senior P. assumed his mantle we have continued in this faithful tradition. We can modestly admit that we believe we have the two most serviceable, best maintained, shiniest aircraft in the Fleet today, cared for by the most industrious and diligent group of maintainers and operated by aviators of rare enthusiasm and expertise.

SHIP'S FLIGHT



Akin to bird - but of machine,
Relied upon for ship's routine,
Keeping station up in the sky,

Safety first for those who fly,
Always tending the Mother Ark,
Returns on board (when it's dark),

Fetching bread, supplies and mail-
Let us pray that they prevail.
I'm sure that we all agree so far
God's gift to Ark is the S.A.R.
Happily then for years to come
This service surely must always run.

(This acrostic poem was composed by P.O.M.(E)
Burnett on the S.A.R. Flight's first anniversary
- 9th September 1965.)



MET AND NAMET

TIME ALLOWED - 18 months or so

Read the following carefully

1. Answer each question once only.
2. Do not write in the margin, or anywhere else.
3. At least one answer is correct in each selection.

SECTION A MET

1. Weather forecasting is:
(a) an inexact science; (b) a black art; or (c) sheer luck?
2. Which of these is a Meteorological instrument:
(a) an Assmann Psychrometer; (b) a Sykes Hydrometer; or (c) an Iambic Pentameter?
3. When a radio-sonde is released on a Met. balloon it transmits a coded signal giving the pressure, humidity and temperature at any height. When the balloon bursts, does the radio-sonde:
(a) vaporize; (b) stay in orbit; or (c) fall to the earth with a thump?
4. Who said, "I am Sir Oracle":
(a) the Operations Officer; (b) the Duty Forecaster; or (c) W. Shakespeare.
5. According to weather lore it will rain heavily if:
(a) it rains on June 15th; (b) the oak is out before the ash; or (c) you can see Drake's Island from the Hoe?

SECTION B NAMET

6. If you had spent two hours a week studying during the commission you could have passed:
(a) NAMET; (b) HET; and (c) G.C.E.?
7. The Ministry of Defence (Navy) will pay up to £10 a year towards the cost of private Correspondence Courses. In which of the following subjects did students benefit from this scheme:
(a) Surveying and House Agency; (b) Forestry; or (c) Amateur Radio?
8. In which of the following subjects did students pass in the G.C.E. (Forces):
(a) English Literature; (b) Chemistry; or (c) Music?
9. Educational attainments are:
(a) something to boast of in the bar; (b) needed for advancement; or (c) valuable in civilian life?
10. Who said, "Throw physic to the dogs. I'll none of it."
(a) the Principal Medical Officer; (b) the Education Officer; or (c) W. Shakespeare?

Now turn to page 116 and see if you are Weather wise or just plain foolish.

HONG KONG

Although practically everyone on board was looking forward to the visit to Hong Kong with keen pleasure, there were a few pessimists who said "it's very expensive now" or "it's hardly worth the boat ride". Certainly the arrival at the Frangrant Harbour was scarcely auspicious as Tropical Storm Agnes had just passed that way, depositing fourteen inches of rain in one day and leaving behind more rain, too much wind and swell and a sinister leaden sky. However, *Ark Royal* did come safely to anchor off Green Island on September 28th, only one day later than programmed. The Peak was shrouded in cloud and the harbour was just beginning to come alive again as the smaller craft and junks left the Typhoon Basin.

The boat ride ashore was certainly long but was not uncomfortable as a most efficient fleet of ferry boats - each one capable of carrying one Watch - had been engaged for transporting libertymen to the heart of Wanchai and almost to the door of the China Fleet Club. It was true, too, that prices had risen steadily in Hong Kong in recent years but still the variety, quality and cheapness of many of the goods was astonishing. The Battle of the For'ward Gangway on the first day was fought between scores of traders of all descriptions seeking permits to sell their wares on board and a Regulating Staff trying to control their numbers. The deaf and dumb, the painters on silk or china, the purveyors of car coats and embroidery, the makers of shirts or cheong sams were to become familiar on board. For the larger purchases like camphor wood chests a special Rabbit Warren had to be opened in 9F. Hundreds of smaller packages were sent home immediately in the Christmas sea mail.

While shopping could be made highly economical by the process of tramping from shop to shop through Victoria or Kowloon and by determined and careful haggling the whole structure of thrift was liable to collapse when the last purchase had been made and when the exhausted shopper contemplated his parcels and faced the long journey back to Pier or Ferry. Too often it required the hire of a taxi, or even a rickshaw, or more often a call into a nearby Bar or Club for a "refresher". Then, lo and behold, by the time he reached his boat he was considerably poorer in pocket if richer in experience. The San Mig, the charming hostess, the orange cocktail are essential parts of the remembered atmosphere of Hong Kong.

For, apart from its staggering selection of goods, from cheap, mechanical toys to antique works of art, the city offers every form of enjoyment, whether it lie through the wide portals of the Hilton or the Mandarin, guarded by a veritable Mogul Prince, or through the narrower swing doors of the Suzie Wong or by sampan to a Floating Restaurant at Aberdeen. The well-being of the customer is the first care of the staff.

On October 1st, and again on October 10th, there were celebrations of the National Day of China - depending on which China you recognized. For safety, leave was restricted and those on board were entertained either by a professional Chinese troupe or by the home talent. The first occasion was enlivened by the burlesque dancer - one Commander in the front row steamed up his spectacles; the second by news of an attempted *coup d'etat* in Indonesia. Fortunately, *Ark Royal* was not called upon to sail. Not only was the Port Catapult stripped down completely but also the Admiral was in Hospital and, above all, suits, chests, paintings and other orders galore were scheduled for later collection.

The streets of Wanchai and the waterfront provide endless interest for the tourist without effort. Two other expeditions are worthy of mention. The first is the journey in the Peak Tram, foreshadowed by the Bergen funicular. The rate and angle of the ascent seems breathtaking but the unfolding view of the harbour below rivets one's attention. At the top there is a fair walk around the Peak which gives a view of the islands to the south and a glimpse of *Ark* at anchor at the tip of the island. Or one can look down over Victoria, Kowloon and the harbour - best seen at dusk with the ferries moving to and fro like fireflies on the dark water against a background of exotic coloured neon advertising. The other visit for the enterprising tourist is to take the quick and modern hydrofoil craft to the old Portuguese colony of Macao with an atmosphere and flavour of its own. Certainly all those who visited Hong Kong came away with its image imprinted clearly in their minds, if not actually on their skin.

HONG KONG



THE EXTENDED S.M.P.

The October Self Maintenance Period in Singapore was intended to prepare the ship for its part in Exercise Warrior and for the visit to Australia in December. It was also the occasion for a change of Command. Captain Griffin was to leave in order to be promoted to Rear Admiral and to take up his appointment as Naval Secretary. His successor had been Cdr (Air) of *Ark Royal* during the first commission and, more recently, as Chief of Staff to the Commander-in-Chief, Portsmouth, had been in charge of the arrangements for the Cento Visit. At 0910 on Friday, 29th October, Captain M. F. Fell, D.S.O., D.S.C., R.N., joined and took over command of H.M.S. *Ark Royal*. At noon Captain Griffin was pulled ashore by the Senior Commanders. He flew home the following day.

On Sunday, the 31st, during the Dog Watches there was a pipe, "Fire in B Boiler Room." This was promptly tackled by the Fire and Emergency parties, supported by the Dockyard Fire Brigade, and it was considered to have been satisfactorily put out by 2130. However, it became apparent that this was not so and the fire had also taken a grip in the funnel uptake to such an extent that it was necessary to hose down the hangar bulkheads and Island superstructure to prevent overheating and the start of other fires. Eventually by 0200 the fire was finally extinguished.

The next morning revealed the extent of the damage, both to the structure of the Boiler Room and the funnel uptake and to the electrical wiring. The ship was due to sail for Exercise Warrior on the following Thursday. It was soon decided that essential repairs would take three to four weeks and that *Ark* would have to withdraw from the exercise. F.O.2., F.E.F. therefore transferred his flag to H.M.S. *Devonshire* and left *Ark* firmly in Dockyard hands.

In order to relieve the tedium of such a prolonged stay in Singapore, the Sports Officer devised what came to be known as the Departmental Sportex. Each day of the week as many men as possible from a given department went up to the playing fields of H.M.S. *Terror* and engaged in energetic knock-out competitions of six-a-side hockey, soccer and basket ball, or in volley ball, tennis, sailing or golf. By noon, everyone was much in need of the barbeque lunch that the Chefs provided daily at the pavilion - washed down by a pint from the Armada Club. In addition to these departmental days and inter-part matches, the ship also engaged in a heavy sporting programme with other ships. The athletes swept the board in a Command Cross Country; the boxers scored a number of wins in a Boxing Tournament and gave an Exhibition evening against all-comers; the Soccer XI and Rugger XV defended their standing against many strong contenders.

One result of the change of programme was that *Ark Royal* was still in Singapore when H.M.S. *Eagle* arrived. As No. 8 berth was fully occupied, she had to remain at a buoy in the stream, to the chagrin of her libertymen. In order to make room for her Squadrons at Changi, the *Ark Royal* Air Group departed for a temporary resting place with the R.A.A.F. at Butterworth. The ground parties set out in a 20 vehicle convoy for a two-day drive up country. The journey was not without adventure - soon after the convoy had passed, one road bridge collapsed (or it might have been dynamited!). The two carriers engaged in a major sporting competition, the highlight of which was a double-header of Soccer and Rugby under floodlights. *Ark* were favoured to win the Rugby but the final result was a draw. Then after a change of goal-posts and a display of countermarching by the combined Royal Marine Bands the Soccer also was drawn, although here *Eagle* had been heavy favourites. When one of *Eagle's* exuberant supporters fainted in the heat and excitement a swift *Ark* wit shouted, "Throw a bucket of air conditioning over him."

The political situation in Rhodesia was now deteriorating and suddenly one morning *Eagle* was gone. The Dockyard repairs went on apace and in early December *Ark* was out again for day and night flying in the Singapore area. But things were not to run smoothly for long; a nasty frothing appeared in the feed water and was identified by chemical analysis, as an errant detergent. The only cure was a return to S.N.B. and a complete change of water. The visit to Australia now appeared in jeopardy but the change of water did the trick and *Ark* departed, very belatedly, for a hasty passage across the Equator towards Fremantle. In the words from Genesis quoted in H.M.S. *Albion's* Christmas Greetings:

"And the waters prevailed ... and the Ark went upon the face of the waters."

SUPPLY AND SECRETARIAT

VICTUALLING

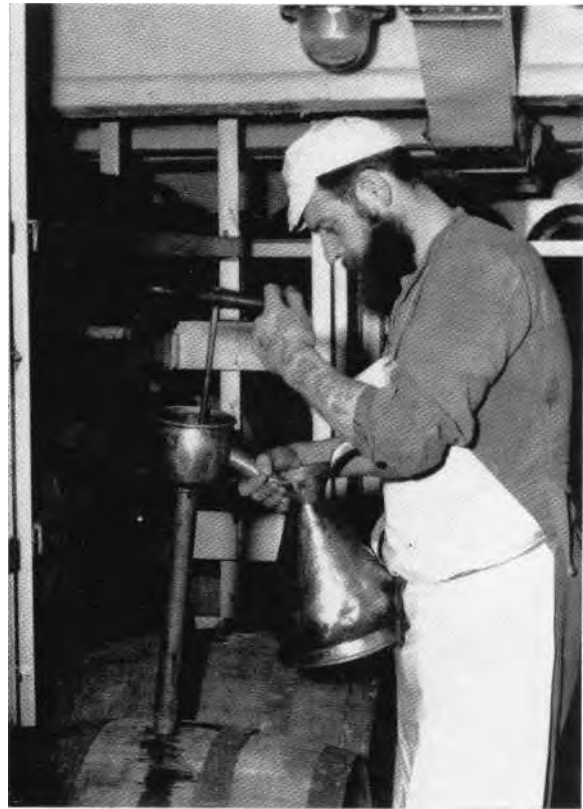
On the Victualling side of the House it is necessary to start the story before November '64 because all the ordering and providing must be done well in advance. The problem was increased by the move into and out of H.M.S. *Blake*, but on the appointed day, when 100 officers and 1,600 men moved into *Ark* we were ready with our Bedding and Mess Trap issues, hot meals in the galley and, of course, the Tot for the G's. Some of the staff had had to remain behind in *Blake* to return stores there, hence we remember the day with awe and with pride.

We are now most obviously on show on the R.A.S. days. Replenishment at Sea is here to stay, and it is now an integral part of the ship's way of life. There are often a lot of very rude things said about it, but there is no doubt at all that it is, by far, the quickest way to store ship. For one thing, we get the assistance of all sorts of people who would otherwise be deprived of the pleasure of storing. In *Ark* we have achieved a level of efficiency when R.A.S'ing that will take some beating. We normally receive and stow nearly 45 tons of stores an hour.

Everyone in the ship comes to the Victualling Office at some time and we hope that each has been met with help and a measure of courtesy. The original Chief Pusser, Fred Lee, left the ship as we arrived in the Far East and went home to be promoted. He was succeeded by Bill Sanham in the V.O. chair, while the Mess Traps and Clothing chair is filled (and how!) by C.P.O. Dixon. The junior staff have had some promotion successes too, moving on to L.S.A. and P.O.S.A.

We have, of course, a band of trusty helpers. These are all well known, as they issue the grog, hump the spuds or haul the stores up from the bowels of the ship and keep the storerooms clean and tidy. They are a picturesque team, slightly less so perhaps since Ben Gunton shaved off, but this has been counterbalanced by A.B. Rutherford's "Superman" tattoo. Talking of Tattooing, we must have the most tattooed Butchers and General Mess Party in the business. We are glad of their assistance.

We know that some of you think the Victualling Department only justifies its existence at "Up Spirits"



Up Spirits

so here is one of the vital statistics. In the first year of the Commission we issued Three Hundred and Fifty-Six Thousand, Seven Hundred and Thirty-Six Tots—so by the time we get back to the U.K. we shall be well past a half-million. Just think how far half a million tots would stretch just think!

SHIP'S COMPANY COOKS

Like the Victuallers, from whom we receive our raw materials, the first day of moving back from H.M.S. *Blake* to *Ark* was something of a nightmare, made more difficult by the fact that the galleys of *Ark* are still as they were when the ship was first built ten years before, and not streamlined and modern like those in *Blake*. However, we soon found ways and

SUPPLY DEPARTMENT

means to get the best out of it all. The Commissioning Ceremony found us with a Hangar full of families and friends and Food, and the former seem to have been suitably impressed with the victuals provided. The decorated cakes on that occasion were made by C. P.O. Cook(S) Langham, who, unfortunately, was invalided



Cooks and pies

from the ship shortly afterwards. We repeated the performance of a Buffet Lunch in the Hangar on the Families Day - again with marked success. In between we had survived the demands of the Work-Up and twenty-four-hour round-the-clock catering, and visits to Brest, Bergen and Rosyth. During one brief return to Devonport we were able to enter in several classes of the International Gastronomic Festival at Torquay and were delighted when P.O. Cook (S) Gay was awarded a Gold Medal for his excellent efforts.

Once away from the United Kingdom we found ourselves involved in all manner of special cooking - Hot Dog stalls on the Flight Deck (they wouldn't let us collect the cash!); barbecues on the sportsfields at Terror for hundreds at a time; bag meals for banyans - all came in the day's work. It was hard work, too, much of it under particularly difficult and tricky conditions, but all in all we pulled through, and some of it was fun.

It is worth mentioning that during the Commission

we shall have prepared and cooked 2 million pounds of Bread and over a million pounds of Meat. The sausages we have cooked would have stretched 682 miles and the weight of potatoes consumed (1,500 tons) is equal to the weight of a frigate.

Despite these vast quantities of effort, the cooks have found some time for relaxation. A number of banyans, and one memorable Exped to Kota Tinggi by MFV were organized and some of the sturdier members of the staff discovered the thrills and hazards of living in the jungle. Tiger hunts were particularly well supported and it is evident that we can cope with this exercise as well, if not better, as with the more athletic sort. The soccer team, led by Leading Cook Adair, has given a very good account of itself.

The Sixth Commission will have brand-new galleys and equipment to assist them in their labours, but we hope that they will have more than these. We wish them a full measure of the spirit and friendship which we have been fortunate enough to have enjoyed during our time in the *Ark*.

SCRIBES FIRST XI

The line up for most of our home fixtures has been:

C.P.O. BAGLEY

P.O. PENFOLD C.P.O. WARD

L. WTR. JAMES L. WTR. OSBORNE L. WTR. BLACKMORE

WTR. COLCLOUGH WTR. WALLAS

WTR. JASPER L. WTR. HOSSACK L. WTR. EDWARDS

Referee: Lieut. Lonsdale.

Linesmen: Sub.-Lieut. Scott, Sub-Lieut. Davies.

Reserves: P.O. Horne, L. Wtr. Capner, L. Wtr. Richardson, P.O. Rose, P.O. Terry, L. Wtr. McCallum, Wtr. Barrie.



Scribes

SUPPLY DEPARTMENT

There have, of course, been others who have given yeoman service but these have been transferred to other teams.

There can be no doubt that *Ark Royal* is a First Division side when it comes to sheer hard work. We have had to contend with the phased drafting of Squadrons and Ship's Company, the repeated embarkation and disembarkation of the Air Group and the Flag, the innumerable changes of LOA and the constant physical burden of money changing. During the foreign leg of the Commission we shall have paid out over One Million Pounds (Sterling) to the Ship's Company in the currencies applicable to Gibraltar, Aden, Singapore, Philippines, Hong Kong, Kenya, Australia and points West.

Having spent half the foreign leg working in a temperature of between 91 and 95 degrees we were glad to see a start made on Air-Conditioning the Pay Office. But, alas, after eight weeks' work by the Dockyard and three attempts to switch on (the result of which was an unofficial pre-wetting trial) we had to call in the Ship's Staff to sort it out. It eventually started to work as we approached a cooler clime but proved a great boon when we returned to the damp heat of Singapore.

We have been pleased to see that our Referees have been men of character. Our first, later transferred back to the Irish League, presented us with the perplexing problem of why he ended up in the monsoon ditch when, as he himself said, "not a drop had passed my lips". As Shakespeare said, "Methinks he doth protest too much." During the Crossing-the-Line ceremonies the present incumbent was summoned before the Court and, apart from an abortive attempt to bribe the Judge, conducted himself in a manner befitting an Officer of the Branch.

At times, during the strain and stress of the Commission, which for us, as for everyone else includes those numerous extraneous duties, patrols, guards, etc. - a senior working ledger keeper may have been heard to offer grievous bodily harm to some more junior ditto, but, on the whole, it has been good to see that on their several runs ashore by boat, minibus, rickshaw or shank's pony, the staff have moved from bar to bar spreading goodwill among the local populace with a united front and a genial air of departmental *bonhomie*.

NAVAL AND AIR STORES

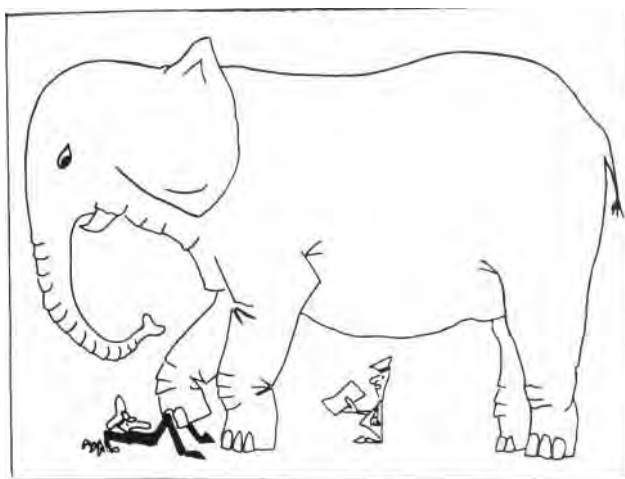
We are members of an Ancient and Honourable Department whose lineage can be traced back to Samuel Pepys. His problems were largely confined

to the difficulties of obtaining sufficient quantities of Stockholm Tar, Holystone. Sailcloth, and Spitkids. These commodities are still available from Naval Stores and it is reassuring to note that with the passing of the centuries their supply position has improved.

There is a certain amount of magic in the Stores world. Hundreds of seemingly superfluous and multi-coloured pieces of paper are distributed to unseen Authorities at Copenacre, Llangennech, Taunton, Singapore or Hong Kong, and from the anonymous jumble of letters and numbers something tangible at last appears, be it a radar aerial or the locking-pin for a guardrail. In the pursuit of these bits and spares we buy up a large proportion of the ship's signals traffic and the cargo space of British airlines. A day seldom passes without some urgent ironmongery getting airborne from home for us. It is a tenuous thread that holds the world-wide organization together, to get the right thing in the right place at the right time. It calls for the tenacity of Hannibal, the patience of Job and the tracking powers of a Doberman Pinscher.

In the old days we were known as Stores Assistants but now the term has changed to "Accountant". This is rather misleading because accounting for stores is comparatively simple - it is the obtaining them in the first place which takes all one's skill and ingenuity. And each man is expected to have some idea of the purpose of the stores he deals with. This enables him to follow up the, "I'm sorry, we haven't got one," with a suggestion of an alternative part that we have got.

Rather than reel off a string of statistics of the "if they were laid end to end" variety, we thought we would make you acutely conscious of where your taxes go - the door handle and lock for £ 1 10s Od. ; the



"Well it doesn't look like an element to me!"

SUPPLY DEPARTMENT

Kit Locker £13 15s. Od; a Deck Scrubbing Machine £126 5s. Od. If we move into the air world we can ignore the shillings and pence, the pounds speak for themselves - Comoseal Washers £15; Aircraft Lashings £15; Scimitar Wing Assembly £28,000. So if one will do, do not ask for two and if it can be repaired, repair it because Jack Dusty has to think about the cost as well as about the time and effort required to replace a part. There is little or no substitute for time and hard work in this business and, like some others in the Supply Department, we can be distinguished by our Fluorescent Tan which results from living on 7 Deck most of our seagoing lives.

WARDROOM COOKS AND STEWARDS

For the Wardroom Staff the start of the Fifth Commission might be said to have gone like a culinary bomb - the first major event was a Taranto Night Dinner, within a couple of days of our moving into *Ark* from H.M.S. *Blake*, at which Rear Admiral Janvrin, who had actually taken part in the attack, was the Guest of Honour. The "Bombe Taranto" fizzed and sparkled as it was paraded round the Mess. Two days later the Commissioning Ceremony brought a crowd of four hundred for a Buffet Lunch. After coping with these events, anything would be possible!

It was almost with a sigh of relief that we sailed for the Trials and Work-Up. With the embarkation of the Squadrons we welcomed the squadron stewards into the fold - although later, in Singapore, they were to become part of the floating population.

In the spring the Catering Officer formulated plans to launch an attack on the International Gastronomic Festival at Torquay. C.P.O. Cook (O) Pallister, with considerable support from the merry men of the Galley staff, entered the field, which was open to the Armed Services of the World. In the face of fierce competition he won the first prize - a Challenge Cup and a Gold Medal - with Porte Bonheur Style Salmon

Steaks, two Ducks in the style of Charles Vaucher, and two most impressive baskets made of chocolate and filled with an Orange Mousse.

On the way out East the staff all took advantage of the low prices in Gibraltar and Aden so that cameras, record players and radios were very much in evidence. On the 8th June we held a Mess Dinner to mark taking over from H.M.S. *Victorious*. The air-conditioning system decided to go on strike rather than cope with the extra heavy load - it is questionable whether the officers or the staff suffered the greater discomfort. On arrival at Singapore everyone had his few days of leave in various Army rest camps and centres. To judge by the stiff right arms most people enjoyed themselves; one steward even requested to transfer to the Army, as he fancied himself as a tank driver. Since then we have had an intensive Keep Fit drive with Volley Ball, potted sports, sportex and the great success of our football team at the top of the league. And we have enjoyed our visits to foreign ports even though they bring a considerable amount of extra work with receptions, parties and so on. We look forward to our next Trafalgar and Taranto Night Dinners, partly because they will mean that we have managed the long trip home and that much dreamed of leave in the cold, wet summer of Guzz.



On the Quarterdeck - Trafalgar Night '65

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT

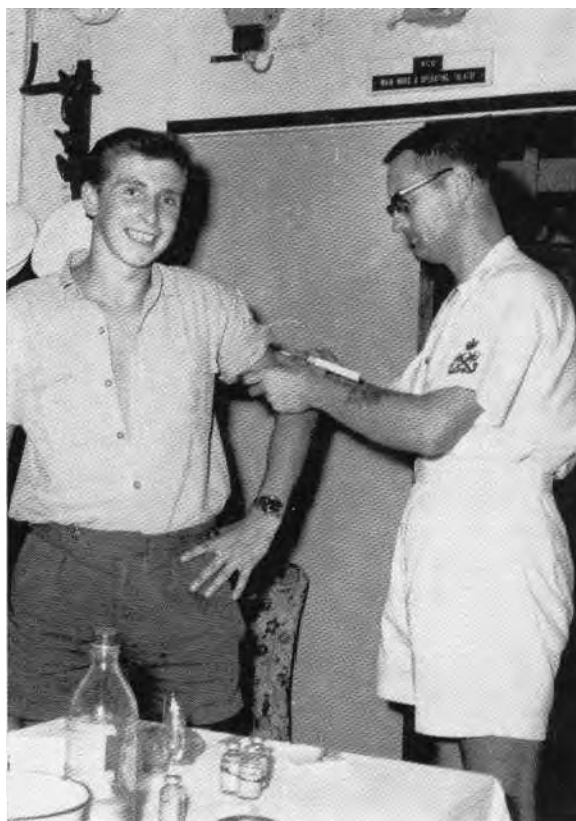
In 1741, it was the practice for a boy to go round all the decks ringing a handbell and, in rhymes composed for the occasion, to invite "all those who had sores to repair before the mast". The present-day sailor of H.M.S. *Ark Royal*, however, is blessed with a large, air-conditioned Sick Bay, resplendent in a variety of pastel shades and attractive furnishings, which gives him a complete change of environment when ill. The tasteful decor and up-to-date equipment of the Sick Bay is the brain-child of CPOMA Hiskey who claims to have been deprived of numerous tots during the refit in order to achieve such an excellent result. The once-familiar designation of "Sick Berth Attendant" has now been dropped in the interest of recruitment and there emerges a shining new body of men called "Medical Assistants" and "Medical Technicians". Apart from producing overnight a remarkable preponderance of Chiefs over Indians, everyone carries on much the same as before and the Admiralty have yet to disclose the full complexity of the change which is, at present, not within the grasp of the ordinary mortal.

The Father of the Medical team is Surgeon Commander J. S. P. Rawlins, O.B.E., R.N., famed as a Boffin in Aviation Medicine and for his diving exploits. The colour of his hair belies his enthusiasm and youthful zest for life and his tall figure is a familiar sight all over the ship and also in every camera shop and night spot in the Far East! Our Surgeon is Surgeon Lieutenant-Commander C. Chapman, R.N., who has had to plunge his knife into all parts of the sailor's anatomy. The rumour circulating at one time that everyone, irrespective of complaint, was subjected to the same operation was of course treated with the contempt it deserved! Debonair Surgeon Lieutenant-Commander N. Denham, R.N., the third medic in the team and an anaesthetist by trade, has managed to make even the largest and most hard-bitten sailor succumb to his noxious potions. It is said that he finds the fair sex ashore much more amenable, requiring only mild hypnosis! Medical Technician 3 T. Clarke has ably assisted in the operating theatre and also enjoys gazing at exotic fish, both on the sea bottom and in a tank tended with loving care and attention.

Laboratory work has kept Medical Technician 1 Jennings busy and microbes both big and small have had a Maigret on their heels the whole commission, but his pseudonym "Jimpy" has not quite earned for him the respect of "Le Patron" as he refuses to explain its origin.

The complicated task of accounting for the stores and keeping track of the therapeutic whims of the Medical Officers has been successfully carried on the broad shoulders of POMA Strode. His hangover mixture, made from a secret recipe handed down by his father, who was a SBCPO long before the PMO had his first "Steak au poivre", has kept many a man on his feet at the Defaulters Table. Perhaps after the initial encounter with CPOMA Morgan, the would-be patient is convinced that he is imagining his aches and pains, but if they are genuine he will find that behind the gruff exterior there is a wealth of paternal Celtic sympathy. Even though he is the oldest member of the staff, he has umpired hockey matches both home and abroad - his almost half-century in years disdainfully forgotten.

Officers and ratings treated in bed have blessed the peace and quietness of the wards, so tranquil after the



MEDICAL DEPARTMENT

hustle and bustle of the rest of the ship and some have even offered their tot to be turned in. Perky Medical Assistant Jock Baird fusses around the officers in their spotless surroundings and keeps their spirits up and Mess bills down while the ratings are provided with home comforts by Med. Tech. Clarke and MA Slaymaker in the main ward. Such is the service that one rating remarked at pipe-down one night that if Nelson had been in *Ark's* Sick Bay Hardy would have kissed him twice!

Medical Technician 3 Hickmott has had a go at everything from hypnosis to Judo and his imposing appearance, together with blue glasses and a fearsome beard give him an air of mysticism, having supernatural healing qualities or perhaps, who knows, there is a prophet in our midst.

Although there have been many interesting and amusing incidents, as yet no major drama has occurred, which might do justice to Emergency Ward 10. There have been sudden trips in the sea-boat and by helicopter; the Captain has been handed photos taken with a Polaroid camera of an appendix operation performed only minutes before; there was a major exercise in the North Sea where hundreds of bodies with labels ranging from "broken leg" to "dead" tested the staff both for its ingenuity and sense of humour; there was also the occasion when Chief Hiskey broke his leg while dusting.

Perhaps the ship's company may take for granted the high quality of the Medical staff and the efforts which are made to ensure that everyone is healthy both in mind and body, perhaps it is the lack of incident and drama which indicates the efficiency and capacity of the organization; at any rate it is wonderful to have the opportunity to blow one's own trumpet!



"It's in here somewhere."



. . . healthy both in mind and body . .



890 SQUADRON

"Caelurn Varrimus"

On 14th January, 1965, just over a year since 890 had departed the fold at the end of the Fourth Commission for the more "homely" pastures of Yeovilton, the Squadron returned with twelve Sea Vixens Mark 1 on board a rejuvenated *Ark Royal* to take its place in the Fifth Commission.

The first two days passed with no flying, while the ship made tracks for an exercise off RAF Leuchars. This gave the now land-minded squadrons a brief period in which to grow once again accustomed to the peculiarities of ship-board life, but at the first call of, "Fair, Fair, Fair . . ." everyone knew that we were home. The first flying period covered some ten days during which time a fair amount of weaponry was carried out and Dusk DLPs put brief restrictions on the business at the bar.

Four days at Brest was the due reward for all on board. This French naval port is, perhaps, not everyone's idea of La Dolce Vita (or its French equivalent) but it does have numerous advantages over rivals such as Devonport. The language problem, far from being a handicap, can, with suitable use of gesticulation, be turned very much to one's benefit.

Continuing the work up, the squadron flew on passage to Lossiemouth via the West Coast. During this period Brawdy and Lossiemouth were used as diversions. On 15th February five aircraft disembarked to Lossiemouth while the ship made tracks for Rosyth. Twelve days were spent in Morayshire during which time a fair amount of useful flying was carried out. In other days, of course, the home of those "other" fighters might have looked aghast at a Vixen night-flying programme but now it goes by with hardly a raised eyebrow to mark the occasion.

Back to sea, and Exercise Pilot Light, but at the front of everyone's mind the thought of Bergen. Here, potential skiers (pronounced both ways) tried their hands but the degree of success of either party is not recorded. However, nobody came away with broken bones and, for novices on the slopes, this was a happy state of affairs. Immediately after leaving Bergen, the Squadron disembarked to Yeovilton while the ship made for Portsmouth.

The time spent at Yeovilton was put to good use from the flying point of view but it also gave the squadron the opportunity to marry off two of its longer standing members. Both Lieutenants Mike Fallon and Dave Henry crossed the matrimonial threshold in the time-honoured manner. During this period there was a considerable change in the "face" of the squadron. Crews left and new crews joined, Lieutenant-Commander Tony Pearson and Lieutenant-Commander Nobby Hall taking over the reins as Commanding Officer and Senior Pilot respectively. Just before we finally embarked for the Far East leg of the tour, the outgoing Commanding Officer, Lieutenant-Commander Jock Campbell, brought the list of newlyweds to three.

And so, on 17th June, we finally embarked in the *Ark* for a scheduled twelve months East of Suez. The occasion was marked at Yeovilton with a somewhat unceremonious "flag" raising on the parade ground mast yardarm.

890 SQUADRON

It took the station sports officer and staff some two hours to get the offending pants down which is somewhat longer, we understand, than the time spent on the initial descent.

For the next four and half weeks, little enough flying was carried out due to a variety of factors, the principal ones being the programmed passage time and unforeseen unserviceabilities within the ship. Brief spells at Gibraltar and Aden gave the "old" boys sharp reminders of what was to come and the new ones had their appetites whetted.

We were to have flown off Penang but the ship burned out one of its Plummer Blocks and this little-known part of the machinery became, in the space of one day, a household word. However, we made good use of the time to get the aircraft into fine trim, including new insignia with very streamlined witches on the fins.

So, with very little flying under our belts, we found ourselves, on July 19th, disembarking to R.A.F. Changi in Singapore. A new experience for all, it gave us the opportunity to really appreciate the incompatibilities of fighters and transports using the same airfield. Whilst most aircrew slumped it at the Hotel Ambassador, the remainder lived in the quiet and comfort of Changi.

Changi proved to be very popular, with almost all one could want on the station itself, and the transition from crowded mess-decks to the spacious accommodation was made with ease and pleasure by everyone lucky enough to get ashore. Here we had our first squadron "get together" and, for those clever enough to beat a continually changing organization and find the beach, there was a remarkable amount of Tiger and barbecued food to be had for a mere two dollars.

The ski boat became really operational for the first time and innumerable sorties were skied, splashed, wallowed or simply dragged depending on whether you were one of the experts or of the larger company of unbalanced non-swimmers. We had a bit of trouble finding a venue for our watersport that the R.A.F. would approve. They would have liked us to use Pulau Tioman but a compromise was reached and they let us use a bit of beach where it is almost certain our engine will be smashed to pieces and the bone of contention will no longer exist.

Back to sea after a fortnight ashore and the highlight of this period was the Bullpup firing at Subic Bay. We didn't have it all our own way, with the weather making it difficult to achieve the height necessary for the firing run. The remainder of the flying took place off North Borneo and some very useful experience in flying long range strikes over unfamiliar and mountainous terrain was gained.

On 4th September, we once again headed for Changi; and this time the Ambassador stepped down gracefully to give way to the Ocean Park Hotel with Miss Peggy Tan nightly (except Mondays!). This proved to be a popular move, not least because the system of reimbursement changed somewhat. It was possible with the minimum of food being consumed, to have enough money left over to take a taxi to night-flying when the transport failed to appear.

During this time ashore the port catapult became unserviceable and the decision was taken to spend an extra week in Hong Kong to fix it. We sent four aircraft to Kai Tak for refurbishing but the squadron did not disembark. We secretly felt that "in the manner to which we were accustomed" we might just be ferried ashore to the Hong Kong Hilton, but it was not to be! Some of the "marrieds" made do with the rather less salubrious surroundings of a small hotel in Happy Valley.

We then spent six days at sea during which we fired (or tried hard anyway) our Firestreaks at Subic Bay. However, unserviceable Delmar towed-targets put paid to that. Of our programmed twelve firings, three were fired.

During this time at sea we really cemented our position as the invincibles of Potted Sports Days. For the third time running we proved ourselves the masters of all-comers at standing on our heads, triple jumps, and running backwards with oars between our



890 SQUADRON

legs. The suggestion that our victories were due, in the main, to our having between a dozen and fifteen heads in our ten man team is hotly denied by our scrupulously fair-minded sports officer.

In addition to Potted Sports we came third in the inter-departmental Swimming Competition and are currently heading the Soccer League. Chief Petty Officer Tate distinguished himself in winning the Far East Fleets Open 120 Yards Backstroke Championship and went on to be narrowly beaten into third place in the Combined Services Championship.

Back to Changi, and we said good-bye to one-third of our numbers who reckoned they had done their stint in the Squadron and now preferred the cooler climes of U.K. in October. The new one-third were broken in slowly by the turn of events.

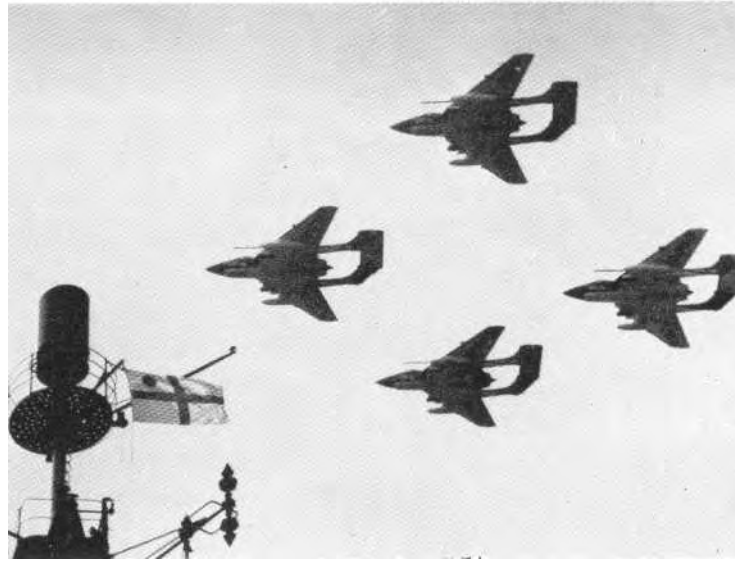
A dastardly trick by 803 Squadron to try to sabotage our squadron serviceability, was to jettison a refueling hose right in the face of a Vixen who had just plugged in! They were duly warned to "watch it" or they would get struck with a probe where they were least expecting it.

Whilst at Changi this period the ship suffered a serious fire and we knew we were ashore for a long while. The first period at Changi lasted three weeks during which time we flew a lot, played a lot and had a Squadron Ban-Yan on Changi Beach. Soon after this event we were invited to move to Butterworth to make way for *Eagle's* Air Group. Despite the problems of the move, everyone found the end result very worthwhile. The R.A.A.F. were pleased to have us and spared no effort to show it. Although we were "out on our own" up there the aircraft stood up to it very well indeed. Unfortunately we left earlier than expected and were recalled to Changi just when we had all decided that this was the life for us.

Back at sea again at the beginning of December with the Ship and Air Department under new management, we quite quickly found our sea legs again and settled in to the old routine. Only the night flying programme was not met, through lack of wind.

An engine room snag caused us to make a quick call into Singapore area again, before we were off on passage to Australia. On the way, we passed within Vixen's range of Christmas Island. We took the opportunity to de-patch a Christmas card to the Christmas Islanders in a dayglow envelope, which was popped out of the Air Turbine bay by Lieutenant Ron Badenhorst while flying overhead the island's airstrip.

After the variety of 1965, the months of the foreign leg in 1966 had a certain sameness, principally because of the repetitious flying as visual probes during the Beira operations. The wind and sea conditions of the Mozambique Channel in March and May made getting on and off the deck more tricky than usual, but, once airborne, we played a valuable role. Apart from this we had some successful flying with Gan as a diversion and two runs of note - Mombasa with its beaches and safaris and that final expensive shopping spree at Singapore.



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RUGBY FOOTBALL

The Rugger players first settled to their chosen sport in the heavy, muddy conditions of the south-west, where the game has a strong, dour character of its own. The first game was played against H.M.S. *Hermes* on her return from the warmth of the Far East. After playing the familiar naval sides, the XV took on the local teams, such as Teignmouth, Salcombe, Liskeard and Looe and opened up a further aspect of the game with hearty, social gatherings after "No side". Having enjoyed two very pleasant evenings in the old Clubhouse of the Teignmouth Rugby Club, it seemed fitting that Captain Griffin, as President, should present a plaque to mark the opening of their new one.

The policy throughout the commission has been to provide as much Rugger as possible for those who are keen to play. Even in the somewhat uninviting conditions of Rosyth several fixtures were played, and six of our players were selected to represent the visiting N.A.T.O. Fleet against the resident Royal Navy (Scotland). Unfortunately, due to typical weather, this match did not materialize. However, we moved

into the "international" field with the visit to Brest, where the Ship's team won a hard fought game against the hitherto unbeaten French Navy (Northern). This success led to a quick challenge from a strong, local, civilian side and a scratch side lost this game by a single point. Both events were marked by the consumption of much local produce at the traditional Vin d'Honneur after the match.

Up to date, over eighty players have turned out in the ship's colours on one occasion or another, and on one particular day no less than three teams took the field. The ages have ranged from a Junior Seaman at the youngest to the more mature, or vintage, Chief Writer or the Senior Engineer. (We have also had our very welcome and regular supporters on the touchline, whose attendance has been much appreciated.)

In the very different conditions of the Far East, we have had a very successful season, especially during the extended October S.M.P., when each week brought a fresh challenge for the Chunking Shield. This was won from H.M.S. *Triumph* and, then, successfully defended against assaults by *Eagle*, *Albion* and *Terror* and by Down Under sides, like *Duchess*, and *Taranaki*. Chippy Veal led the victorious side through these games. At the same time, we supplied a number of players for the Singapore Royal Navy and Combined Services sides:

Lieut. Bradley, Lieut. Chilcott, E. M. A. Dunn, Lieut. Jones, E. A. Langton, E. M. Patterson and Lieut. Stutchbury.

During the visit to Hong Kong, in October, the Club gave itself a Dinner at the China Fleet Club to say farewell to the departing President. Seventy members attended, some of whom joined the dancer in the cabaret with a demonstration of body swerves and other movements. Photographs of this event are not entirely suitable for publication.

The visit to Mombasa gave an opportunity for a brief tour up to Nairobi by a combined side, of some twenty-five players, from *Ark Royal*, *Rhyl* and *Lowestoft*. The cooler climate at 5,000 feet was a



The Fifteen

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great pleasure and the hospitality of the home clubs was overwhelming. It was early in the season for the Nairobi teams and the representative side won their first two games easily and were held to a draw in their third. After the moist, heat of *Terror* and the clear air of Nairobi, the Rugby stalwarts are again looking forward to the mud and sweat of the south-west.

HOCKEY

This has been quite a successful Commission as far as Hockey is concerned in *Ark*. Several games were played before leaving "the wall" at Devonport, which resulted in only one defeat. We were narrowly beaten by the then H.M.S. *Ariel* in the Navy Cup.

During our two days at Gibraltar, and the two at Aden, we fitted in four games, winning two, losing one and drawing one. It was noticeable that our team wilted during the last fifteen minutes of these matches, due to the unaccustomed heat, but by the time we arrived at Singapore we were acclimatized.

We enjoyed a good hockey S.M.P. at "Singers", losing only to SM 7 who made a great tactical move by asking *Ark* not to field too strong a team! We never made the same mistake again and in fact beat SM 7 during our second S.M.P.

With the exception of Fremantle, we have managed to play hockey at each port of call. One of our most enjoyable games was against the Hong Kong Hockey Club - a telephone call confirmed that the ground was unfit, but we were asked to go along to their Club anyway. A dinner had been arranged for us, and during the evening we competed at darts, snooker, dice and "schooner races". The game was declared a draw at midnight, and it was unanimously decided by *Ark's* team that the H. K. Hockey team were a great bunch of "players".

Approximately thirty players have represented *Ark's* 1st XI, but we have never been able to field our best eleven at once - duty, sickness, Squadrons ashore, etc., being the main reasons.

The team's umpire has been a great help, and he has consistently turned out to umpire the games and to assist in team selections.

Yes, all in all, it has been a long and successful hockey season.



Daily Training

BOXING, JUDO

The noble arts of Self-Defence have both had their fervent supporters during the Commission. The Starboard After Gangway Space has been turned daily at sea into a training area with boxers at work on the punch bag, or sparring, skipping or exercising under the eagle eye of Able Seaman Biggs, who has given his time and experience to encourage the Novice Boxers. These did well in the Championships in October '65 and *Ark* was able to provide sufficient boxers for an Exhibition match at all weights some weeks later. Able Seaman Field, unfortunately, could find little suitable opposition and had to return to the U.K. for competition and boxing honours.

Meanwhile the judo mats have been out in the Dining Hall where Leading Airman Mosely, a first Dan Black Belt, has given encouragement and instruction. Over forty have participated, and the

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P.M.O. has both taken part himself and, occasionally, patched up the results of an unfortunate fall. There has been some lack of outside competition but Judo is an international interest and matches have been contested in Norway, France, Singapore and Mombasa.



The Eleven

ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL

Soccer! The bigger the ship the bigger the problem. The necessity for so many Trials, the problems of selecting and retaining a team in the face of unforeseen draft orders and in the light of informed criticism by a thousand self-appointed selectors. And, when the very best team is selected, the players who either cannot or will not get there to play. Such are the besetting experiences of the one finding himself with Soccer on his plate in a carrier. But let us not complain - or even appear to complain; those who have played, will surely agree that the goal that counted has often been scored from the touch-line by the cheers of the team's greatest critics.

The fact is that *Ark* has not been blessed with a great number of "star" players. Stalwarts, yes, and certainly a wealth of darned good part-of-ship players who could always be relied upon to give of their best. To judge from their encouragement from the touch-line this has always been appreciated by the Ship's Company.

Back in those far-away days at Devonport there

were the additional problems of week-end leave, of reluctant R.A.s and, of course, none of the Squadrons to choose from; it is not surprising that we hardly approached the expected standard. The Work Up and more trials under depressing conditions at Rosyth did not prepare us for such a strong team as the Dutch carrier *Karel Doorman* and we were pleased to be beaten only by the slenderest of margins. Brest again gave us a sad defeat to record, although the matches were played in almost festive surroundings.

In comparison with Devonport and Rosyth, Singapore has delightful conditions for clean, straightforward play. The ship, as a whole, made the most of the facilities and in a month over 2,600 articles of sports gear were laundered, and most of it after use by aspiring soccer stars. The result - a flourishing inter-departmental league and a good, workmanlike First XI. In the last two months of 1965, in 10 games, they lost 3, drew 4 and won 3 with 21 goals for, and 23 against. The team was now winning some matches against good opposition and the defeats were narrow. All the matches, and particularly the floodlit ones, provided good entertainment for a large crowd of supporters.

A word about some of the players. The untiring half-back line of Leach, Martin and Edwards is possibly the best on the Station. Farquharson and Hitchens have given strong support at full-back. In the forward line the weakness has been the absence of a suitable centre forward with the right thrust and the ability to snap up goals. Watson and Goodwin are able providers for such a player. About ten different players have had a go, but the quest has gone on. Many other players deserve a mention but space forbids. A humble "well done" to them all, and a loyal cheer for Tommy Wise, General Manager, Bag boy and, on one occasion, Player.

SWIMMING AND WATER POLO

The Ship's Water Polo and Swimming team has gone from strength to strength during the Commission. At Rosyth we pulled off the N.A.T.O. Fleet Swimming Championships but, on the whole, condi-

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tions out East are even more favourable to aquatics and the Ship's own competition at Terror found many keen starters. The Quarterdeck Seamen won the day, with strong personal performances by their Captain, A. B. Rodgers. The swimming team also carried off the honours for the Far East Fleet Championships.

By the time of the visit to Hong Kong the water polo team had found their best form and achieved convincing wins over the two top local clubs. On the return to Singapore, with added zest, we moved outside the Naval field and challenged everyone we could. Despite the absence of some top players we managed 8 matches in two weeks and finished with a close 5-4 victory over the R.A.F. Seletar. A. B. Rodgers and Midshipman Steele were selected for the Royal Navy and Combined Services sides, and the latter went on to Captain a Singapore club side against the official S.E.A.P. Games team.

ATHLETICS

It is not often that any single ship holds so much athletic talent as *Ark* has carried since leaving Devonport in June. There have been seven Navy representatives on board. Steward Bob Meadows and Lieutenant Dave Brown have represented the Navy, the Combined Services and their respective Counties and Brown has gained also a Scottish cap. Meadows at present holds the Navy record for 3 miles and 6 miles, while Brown holds the Navy record for the 3,000 metre Steeplechase and the Scottish record for this event. In Singapore these two athletes have set over eleven meeting and national and all-comers records. Meadows has produced times of 14 min. 21 sec. for the three miles and 15 min. 3 sec. for the 5,000 metres. Lieutenant Brown recorded 3 min. 57.1 sec. for the 1,500 metres and 9 min. 22.3 sec. for the Steeplechase.

These two very strong leaders gave a boost to the sport and have been well supported by Petty Officers Joe Clare, Phil York and Tommy Mercer - all of whom have run for the Navy in the past. These have been backed up, in turn, by Leading Airman Dan Barker and Leading Steward Vic Bolton and by the up-and-coming Dennis Mack. When the Far East held their Cross-Country Championships at H.M.S. *Sim-*

bang it was no surprise to find Meadows and Brown romping home in the lead and the *Ark* team in first place; what was more remarkable was that *Ark's* next four runners would have gained second place had they been entered as a separate team. Similarly, *Ark* has carried off the Home Fleet and the Far East Fleet Athletic Championships.

At Hong Kong in October, Brown, Meadows and Clare set a road running record that will be hard to beat. Starting from outside the Hilton Hotel they ran a relay to the top of the Victoria Peak, a distance of 5½ miles and a climb of 1,600 feet. The runners travelled in the Land Rover between stages and relieved each other when the runner felt weary. The total time to the top was 24 min. 45 sec. Two days later, the same runners, with their staunch supporters from the ship, set out to run the same course individually. Meadows and Brown reached the peak in 31½ minutes, with Clare only 12 minutes behind and all the other four completed inside 39 minutes. This is no mean achieve-



Top of the Peak, Go!

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ment - but it is not what is usually meant by a *run ashore* in Hong Kong! The cost of this effort is the constant and conscientious speed and distance training of the team, often under difficult conditions, round and round the Flight Deck. But it has certainly brought rewards in terms of achievement.



The Ark Royal Cup

In October, we set out to regain the *Ark Royal Cup* from the Army Sailing Club at Hong Kong, who had held it since its presentation in 1963. We challenged the Army, and raced against them and, *Devonshire* and *Falmouth*. With hard racing against a keen opposition we won and Captain Griffin presented the Cup to the Ship's team. With great hospitality the Army entertained us at the Hong Kong Yacht Club - a splendid occasion.

During the October S.M.P. we held our own Ship's Regatta which was marked by enthusiasm, if not always by seamanship. The lack of wind at the finish rather took away the excitement, but the result was close with the Air Electrical just beating the Seamen. *Ark* also provided the nucleus of the Navy team which beat the Army, Midshipman Pym sharing the First Prize. And behind the success of the *Ark* team or individuals there lies a solid support from many keen amateurs who turn out regularly in the weekly races. As the Boats Officer of *Terror* remarked, "Every time I come down to Red House, all I find is *Ark Royals* in and out of the boats."

SAILING

Before the real sailing of the commission had started, there was considerable activity on board while members of different departments took advantage of the kits, provided by the Nuffield Trust, to construct their own Piccolos. Six of these small craft can be stowed easily and conveniently and they provide enjoyable sailing with a minimum of effort. In addition, the ship has carried three Bosuns and two whalers and, from time to time, has been able to use the boats of Clubs visited.

Our first competition was against *Centaur*, when we reached Gibraltar. We had heard much of her sailing talent, and challenged her with some trepidation. We need not have worried; we won by 49¼ points to 37. In the Far East, tougher competition awaited us. Although in the weekly Club races individuals did well, we were pipped at the post by *Albion* in the September Fleet Regatta. It is hoped to get our revenge in a straight race between the two ships.



Racing at Hong Kong

SPORT

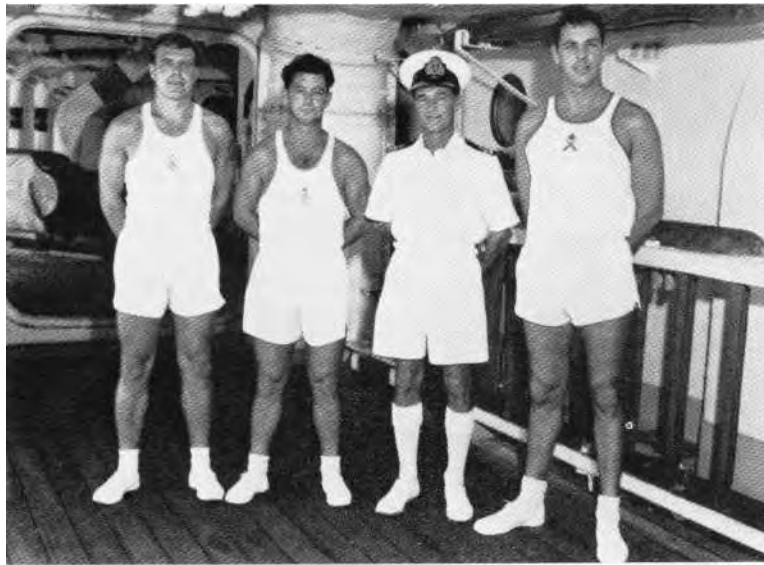
GENERAL

Behind the provision of the correct gear for each and every game, the organization of pitches and transport and all the paraphernalia of Sport looms the diminutive figure of the Sports Officer. In addition to his help and encouragement with those sports whose individual accounts fill the previous few pages there are others whose needs have not escaped the attention of Lieutenant Lundquist and the P.T. staff - basket-ball, squash, tennis, badminton and ill-fated cricket, which is continually out of season.

But we should especially remember their efforts to provide exercise and entertainment in adverse circumstances - seizing on breaks in the flying programme for a burst of deck hockey; persevering with Potted Sports until 890 finally failed to win; and devising and running the departmental Sportex system of the October S.M.P. The first Potted Sports only drew the minimum number of competitors and offi-

cials but the word soon spread that this was something well worth watching, and the number of spectators and cine-photographers has grown progressively from meeting to meeting. A variation of the Sunday routine to provide a knock-out competition in Deck Hockey, Volley Ball and Tug-of-War revealed many well-developed gentlemen, the bulk of whom indicated an unfamiliarity with athletic endeavour but who pulled like Trojans, win or lose.

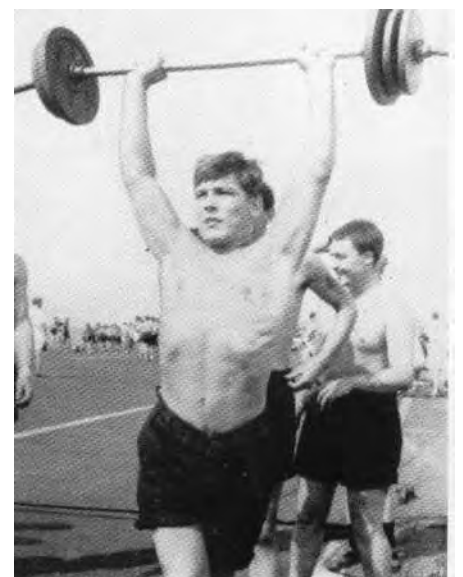
The Sportex provided a certain maximum of activity in the minimum of time, since the brief inter-section knock-out tournaments in hockey, soccer and so on had generally to be completed in one forenoon in view of the effects of probable afternoon showers and certain midday over-indulgence of hot dogs and pints. However, one sunny forenoon of exercise on Terror's grounds was worth a lot to keep up the fitness and morale of the whole Ship and, for their whole-hearted lead, great credit is due to the Springers.



The P.T. Staff



MINI -
SPORTS





CHILDREN'S PARTIES

Whether the party was given in the cold of Norway or the heat of Fremantle, at home or abroad, in the East or in the West, all that is best about a children's party is summed up in one happy smiling face.

CHILDREN'S PARTIES

We had a marvellous time
and it's the greatest party we
have ever been to.

My wee brothers Philip age four
years said "I'm going to be a pirate
on my Ark Royal ship and have
more parties." Nigel who is five years
old said "The ice-cream was real nice,
and the rides in the aeroplane too, and
I think ships are even greater than
tanks." Steven who is nine years
said "The party was Super and when
I grow up, I would like to be a
sailor and signal aeroplanes on to the
ship. Then when they have parties
I'll help and dress up like a
pirate and invite orphans." I would
like to say, thank you for the best
party I've ever been to and I would
love a photograph of The Ark Royal
to show my grand-dad and little
cousins and friends when we go home
to England and we were told we
could not take photographs.

It's now bed time now so Goodnight
and God Bless and thank you and
all the sailors and people who
helped to make us happy
Anita

AT THE EQUATOR

On the evening of Friday, the 17th December, Anno Domini 1965, the Mighty vessel *Ark Royal* was sailing southwards towards the Equator and towards the continent of Australia for those much discussed days in Fremantle. Suddenly, there were signs of a disturbance in the waters ahead of the ship and a feeling in the air that something out of the ordinary was about to occur. The Ship's Company was alerted and many made their way to the Flight Deck to see what might befall. Some bright lights appeared in the sea just under the bows and a frail, quavering voice could be heard, hailing the ship, "Ship AHO-O-O-Y. What ship is that, and whither are you bound?"

"Her Britannic Majesty's ship *Ark Royal*," replied the Captain, from the bridge, "bound from Singapore to Fremantle. Who are you?"

"I am the herald of His Majesty, King Neptune, and I wish to come on board," came the answer.

Immediately the Captain ordered "Stop all engines" and despatched a side party to help the Herald on board. Up over the bows, out of the dark and the welter of packed aircraft, there came the sturdy shape of the Master-at-Arms and the fragile figure, strangely clad, of the Herald. When he had recovered his equilibrium, the Herald opened his scroll and spoke thus:

"From ocean's vasty depths, I, Herald, swim
Bringing you greetings and a warning grim.
My Master, Neptune, King of all the Seas;
Lord of the Oceans and the Balmy Breeze;
Defender of Dolphins, Denizens and Whales;
Protector of Mermaids (Bless their shiny tails!);
Master of every Finned and Scaly thing;
Scourge of the Sharks; the Power beneath the wing
Of Skua, Roc and Albatross, all birds
That skim His waves; Keeper of all the Herds
Of Seal and Walrus, Sea Lion and Horse
(Who graze upon His sea-weed fields, of course);
Whose Sceptre is the Trident, and Whose Crown
No mortal man can wear - or he would drown;
Gave me this Charge - hear ye and mark it well.
Before your Ship and all who in it dwell
Dare my most Hallowed Line to come across
Into the regions of the Southern Cross
Take heed, by lawful right, my Sovereign Lord
Will hold His Court of Honour here on board."

and he delivered to Captain Fell the Order convening a Court to be held on the morrow.



Arrival of the Herald

The Captain replied, full graciously, expressing our loyalty to our beloved Queen and our polite deference to his Oceanic Majesty and welcoming the King and all his Court to come to inspect all newcomers to the Southern hemisphere and to give them a fair trial with, "Justice plain not cruel." The Herald returned to the unfathomable deep and *Ark* proceeded towards the Equator.

At nine of the clock on the following forenoon, the scene was set for the arrival of the Court. To martial melodies from a mob of motley musicians, King Neptune made his appearance on the forward lift, accompanied by His Consort, Queen Aphrodisia, and by his three graceless daughters. In his train came his familiars - the Bears, Barbers, Physicians, Policemen and the rest, all suitably attired. When they reached the dais prepared for them the Captain tendered his address of welcome and homage "Ark Royally" and loyally. The Lord of the Waters, Sovereign of all Oceans, Governor and Great High Admiral of the Baths was graciously pleased to accept this message and greeted the Captain in like vein:

"Rest ye safely in Neptune's toils,
Welcome, thrice welcome, bold Ark Royals."

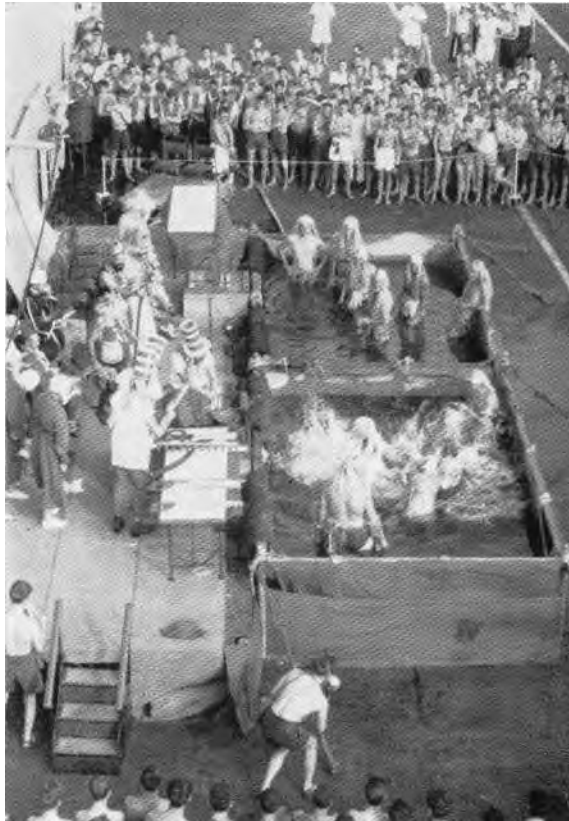
CROSSING THE LINE

He went on further:

Now to you, Captain, I make an award
To be worn when only you carry your sword;
A medal worth more, far more, than a "sipper"
The Order, First Class, of the Flying Kipper."

However, before the honoured Captain could withdraw, the Clerk of the Court announced that there was a charge against the Captain, which it would be painful to relate, and the first unfortunate was duly lathered and shaved and thrown to the Bears. By this time the Policemen were among the assembled throng collecting all those who were guilty of some heinous crime and the first of these victims was the Commander. Although he produced and waved aloft his previous Certificate for Crossing the Line, gained many, many years before, it was pronounced to be a forgery and he was ceremoniously ducked. Subsequently, he was awarded the Medal of the Bloater.

Now victims came thick and fast and the variety of their crimes was astounding. The charge was read and the verdict given - each and every one was dismally Guilty while with increasing joy and gusto the Barbers and Bears lathered and ducked, as culprit after culprit



King Neptune's Court

was dragged struggling to Judgement. Some of the charges are quoted below as fearful warnings to others.

Commander Ellingham:

"Our current victim, pardon the pun
Is a man whose task is an arduous one.

Each motor, switch and fan and light
Is his by departmental right
This microphone, as all can see
Is working most efficiently;
I withdraw all praises of 'Green' affairs,
And deliver you now to Neptune's bears."

Lieutenant Lonsdale:

"Skating on financial ice,
Issuing profound advice
On dollars, shillings, pounds and pence,
All tempered by uncommon sense
If, by disaster, he should err
And wrath of Nat. Pro. Bank incur—
Lonsdale, quickly, bold cashier,
The Bears await you over here."

S.P.O. Lewins:

"When P.O. Lewins sits in the store
Demands can wait for evermore;
To each demand, though big or small one,
He says I'm sorry - we ain't got none!"

A.B. Gunton

"Here stands before you Ben, the Butcher true,
Who cannot resist a smart tattoo
To the Pool he is now about to depart
For the royal Bears are lovers of Art."

Garry Burnside:

"With scissors, comb and curling tongs,
He works amidst exotic pong —
'Like a perm, dear?' once he asked
A stoker who was strolling past
This N.A.A.F.I. Barber, Tonsorial Tool
We charge and condemn to be thrown in the Pool."

The proceedings were suddenly interrupted when, from the Crowd, emerged an aged, aged man, borne by a posse of shallow water divers. Neptune was irate at his impertinence and told him off roundly:

"My Court's in session, true and loyal,
In Her Majesty's Ship, the Fourth *Ark Royal*."

To which Noah, for that was who the bearded gaffer was, replied, in reproving tones:

"Fourth *Ark*, indeed, that's just a myth.
Surely you know that it's the Fifth.
I'll have you know, you beardless lad,
I'm old enough to be your Dad.

CROSSING THE LINE

For, many thousand years ago,
Before you ruled the sea below,
I built my *Ark* to ride the Flood
Until I landed on the mud.

I've lived in every *Ark* that floats
With, or without, the sheep and goats.
I owe to no man fee or rent
And mostly I have been content.

But still, enough of all this talk
How dare you on my ship to walk
And set your Court up in my place -
'Tis time for you to state your case."



Lather and shave him ...

The Crafty Monarch of the Meridian then challenged the old Noah to produce his Rum card "stamped for Gin" and in the absence of this satisfactory proof of identity the Barbers, Bears and Court executioners gave the oldest inhabitant short shrift and he was soon drenched and dripping. But vengeance was his, for the stout hearted crowd surged to his rescue and before long everyone, King, Clerk and Court and all the spectators were in one watery waste, the baptism of the bath, as improvisation took the place of initiation. Fortunately, an old familiar pipe of "Up Spirits" revived the flagging strength of the Court and they were able to withdraw in dignity and haste and the Crossing the Line had been accomplished.



... and throw him to the Bears



CHRISTMAS AT FREMANTLE

The journey to Fremantle had been so fraught with doubts and disappointment that it was a great relief, and something of a surprise, to see the coast of Australia and to be making the final preparations for our ceremonial entry. The depth of water in the harbour was such that an accurate draught of the ship was required, so the Shipwright Officer and the Chief Shipwright were lowered in a Motor Cutter and read the mean draught, while bobbing up and down on a moderate swell. The readings were satisfactory and the Pilot was soon on board. With a full Alpha range of aircraft and ceremonial manning parties, *Ark Royal* passed the breakwater at the appointed time. It could now be seen how relatively narrow was the Port of Fremantle. Up harbour lay H.M.S. *Devonshire*, wearing the flag of F.O.2., F.E.F., and Vice-Admiral Hill-Norton, himself, could be seen on deck, watching the manoeuvre as *Ark* turned right round through 180 degrees to point her bows back towards the harbour entrance. At one time the forward end of the Flight Deck seemed to swing very close to a merchantman secured on the opposite wall. The Master could be seen anxiously watching from the wing of his bridge, but, when he was content that there was no danger of a touch, he hastily produced his camera and took an excellent snapshot right down the centre of the Flight Deck. The delicate turn having been accomplished in a difficult breeze, *Ark* was soon comfortably settled in number 7 and 8 berths. *Devonshire* lay immediately astern, with *Blackpool* secured alongside her.

Now the Flight Deck, after Lift and Upper Hangar were to be converted rapidly into the venue for an Official Reception. While aircraft were struck down and moved forward, tables, lamps, ceremonial ladders, flowers, glasses and decorations were produced to replace them and, by evening, all was ready to receive over 600 guests from the cities of Perth and Fremantle. At the same time, the Ship's Companies of *Ark*, *Devonshire* and *Blackpool* were making their ways to the Pagoda Ballroom for a Grand Ball. They returned sadly because the combination of the recurring doubts about our arrival and the busy anticipation of Christmas meant that the attendance of partners was far below that needed for the multitude of males.

The next day, however, the locals heard of the disappointing response at the Pagoda and went out of their way to ensure that their reputation for hospitality was not tarnished. The telephone lines to the Ship's liaison office were kept constantly in action as invitations flooded in for two or three sailors for lunch or for a beach party or for a quiet evening at home with the family. Sometimes, there were particular qualifications to be fulfilled - "an Engineer from Northern Ireland" or "a couple of lads who don't drink" or "he must be a good rider as we are going kangaroo shooting". The Christmas story of Scrooge was thought by some to have been re-enacted in the

CHRISTMAS AT FREMANTLE

Regulating Office where a benign Master-at-Arms listened patiently and long to the dear old soul who wants to invite out the grandson of an old friend, "His name is John and he comes from Halifax and that is all that I know." It often transpired that she was not even sure that he was serving in Ark rather than one of the other two ships. This rush of telephone calls, and a steady flow of those who just arrived at the gangway with open invitations, continued throughout the Christmas holidays so that, in the end, it was estimated that 80 per cent of the Ship's Company had the opportunity to accept private hospitality.

Before the visit there had been several hours of planning meetings to discuss all that would have to be done to meet the programme arranged by the indefatigable Gunnery Officer. The Upper Hangar, in particular, underwent many transformations; from a mere shelter for aircraft to the wet weather alternative for the Reception; to the setting of the Christmas tree and the Children's Party; to be rigged for Church to accommodate the numbers who remembered the story and the meaning of the First Christmas; then, rapidly, to become a festive and extensive Beer Bar on Christmas



To each, a plastic carrier



A gift from Santa

Forenoon; finally, to be the Exhibition Hall for the days when the Ship was Open to the Public. Over six thousand people took the chance to come on board and see round the ship. Many of these extended further invitations to the sailors who formed the working parties or who were on duty at the stands to explain their jobs. It was surprising to see how many "instant experts" there were - the Cook (S) explaining the intricacies of the Sea Vixen Ejection system to a girl friend or the Leading Airman describing the principle of the Electrical Ring Main. The visitors were evidently astounded by what they were told.

Probably Christmas is the most nostalgic time of the year to be away from one's family and it was as well to spend it in conditions so unlike those with which one is familiar. First and foremost there was the tremendous contrast of the climate. Although the Christmas decorations and cards still showed snow and frost, the temperature daily approached the hundred degree mark - the "century" of local weather lore - on most days of the visit. The traditional turkey is still eaten, but cold and with salad; while the flaming Pudding is replaced by ice-cream and fresh melon.

CHRISTMAS AT FREMANTLE

Carol singers are still greeted with mince pies, washed down with ice cold Swan lager! The children's excitement over Father Christmas is undiminished but the favourite Boxing Day activity is to go the beach and to revel in the long rollers and the surf.

Apart from his appearance at the Children's party to distribute small gifts, Santa Claus also had a date on the Quarterdeck where a small tree held an array of presents for the officers, each proper or appropriate to the nature of the receiver (and some not so proper!).

Prominent among these presentations were the gifts of two small plastic aircraft carriers, complete with air group, to the Admiral and to the Captain.

The Royal Marines Band spent a hectic, and varied, few days. They beat Retreat at the Reception on the Flight Deck; they entertained and were entertained in return at the Returned Servicemen's League's home for wounded veterans and they appeared in full regalia at the Ascot Races. On their last day they provided the orchestral backing to the Pantomime which was presented at the Supreme Court Gardens, after innumerable alarms and excursions.

On the 29th December, under a dull and sullen sky, a large crowd of hosts, friends and well-wishers gathered along the quay to see us sail. A ragged group of beatniks chanted folksy songs and there was some coming and going on the gangway with a final exchange of messages and souvenirs. As *Ark* led the way down past the impressive buildings of the Port Authorities and out to sea it was revealed that the road along the jetty and to the end of the breakwater was packed with cars three deep. One could not but be glad that *Ark* and the other ships of the group had evidently done much to strengthen the bonds between the people of Western Australia and the Royal Navy.



Moment of departure

CHRISTMAS PANTOMIME



In the early autumn, a team of enthusiasts got together to prepare a Christmas Pantomime to be presented for the benefit of the Ship's Company and for the possible entertainment of the friendly natives of Australia. It was decided to base the plot loosely on the *Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens, the story of the miserable and miserly Scrooge and of the vision that came to him of Christmas Past, Present and Future and of his change of heart. The story was given a typically naval twist, with suitable, topical allusions, was rendered into verse and was set to music. Only the names of the principal characters and the skeleton of the story revealed its origin as it appeared under the title "The Carol L'Ark".

After many changes of date and plan, the opening was on the last evening of the visit and much of the day was spent rehearsing on the stage at the Supreme Court Gardens at Perth, where a crowd of over two thousand sat out in the open, on the grass, to watch it. A collection was taken and produced over fifty pounds for the R.S.L. charity. The skilful design of the stage gave excellent acoustics throughout the large arena. It was regrettable that, despite the efforts of shipwrights and electricians, similar conditions could not be produced on the home ground of the Flight Deck. Much of the humour was lost on this later occasion. Nevertheless the thought, hard work and imagination that had been devoted to the production was evident to all.

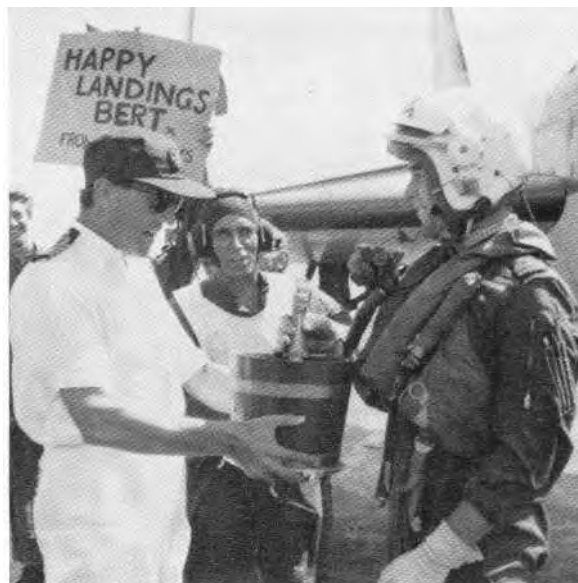
The miser Scrooge had become the cross-grained Executive Officer of the H.M.S. *Bountiful* and his humble clerk, Bob Cratchit, an erring Chief Petty Officer. When the dreaded Commander had retired to his uncomfortable bunk he was visited by the Ghost of his equally miserable predecessor who rattled his chains at him and warned Scrooge of his eventual fate. The second apparition was less Dickensian and more James Bondian, suave and ominous. The final and most startling of the three visitations was that of Christmas Future, in the form of a Dalek. Its outward appearance was enhanced by the complexity of flashing lights and electronic effects and the realistic and relentless way in which it threatened to "ex-ter-min-ate" Scrooge and all other victims. All this proved too much for him and he rapidly repented of his wicked ways, granted leave to the Petty Officer to visit his dreadful, delinquent family and got very drunk with a Scottish medic. Finally, in true pantomime tradition, everyone married everyone else, sang a jolly closing chorus and Tiny Tim called out the inimitable "God Bless Us Every One".

It would be invidious to mention names so one can only record one's appreciation of the two producers and the authors for their conception and execution; of the Royal Marines Band, for their work in the orchestra pit and for the cast who struggled to project their personalities through such varied and unfamiliar acoustic conditions.

PRESENTATIONS



*Champagne for Admiral Luce
-1,000th arrested landing*



*A magnum for Marindin
-500th Scimitar landing*



*Silver for the Seaman
-Aquatics at Singapore*



*The First Footer
-1st January 1965*

DIVING



Entering the water

During the summer of 1964 the Divers took every opportunity to dive and to get acquainted with each other so that they should develop as a team. The fact that they also gathered crayfish and other edible marine creatures from the Deep was purely fortuitous. They also tried their luck, a little further west, near Culdrose, and it took a lot of tact to escape the repercussions of that adventure.

During the catapult trials in the Dockyard the dead-load Eric sank and we were invited to help in raising it. The perverse behaviour of this 20-ton load would have been better suited to a female and the episode lasted right through a week-end of interesting, though cold and arduous, diving. Later, at the rocket ejection seat trials in the Sound, we were asked to assist with recovering the seats, but, in the short time available, we only retrieved one, and had to leave the other to Devonport Diving School.

In January 1965, life became real and earnest with the Work-Up and we were soon at work when, as *Ark* was coming to a buoy in Rosyth, a boat-rope wound itself several times round the port outer screw. It looked as if the flying programme for the next day

would have to be delayed until, at 0300, after a miserable and cold dive, in high wind and pouring rain, the offender was removed. We also had some attempts off Burntisland (cold and murky) and with the French Navy's *Dragueurs de Mines*, at Brest (cold and raining). It was not until the return to Devonport in the spring that we were able to recapture the gay spirit of 1964.

On the passage to the Far East there were few chances to get underwater, though we managed two days' worth in Gibraltar and, as in the last commission, an inspection of the shark net moorings off Tarshyne Beach at Aden. It was interesting to discover, afterwards, how few of the bathers on the beach realized that the net had actually been removed and that only the moorings remained. The divers thoroughly enjoyed their afternoon - on the sand!

The murky waters around Singapore are unfavourable for underwater observations and Hong Kong was spoiled by a plague of large, yellow jelly-fish. Most of the diving out East has been of the "bottom search" or "recovery of lost article" variety. Subic, where the brilliantly coloured fish and fantastic corals were a delight to the eye, proved a welcome change. Giving a hand to the Fleet Clearance Diving Team at Singapore to salvage the wreck of a Javelin which had crashed off Changi provided us with a job which, though somewhat melancholy, was both interesting and well worthwhile and justified the regular routine of training dives.



The Diving Team's Mascot - Miss Helen Woodard

FLEET WORK STUDY

One of the techniques used in Work Study is known as P.E.R.T. - Programme Evaluation and Review Technique.

The most striking success of the technique was in controlling the construction of the Polaris missile system in the U.S.A., where its use advanced the completion date of the programme about two years.

The essence of PERT is Network Analysis, the basic principles of which are:

- Breaking down a task or project into a set of individual jobs and arranging them in a logical network.
- Estimating the duration of each job, and establishing which jobs control the completion of the project.
- Re-allocating resources to improve the schedule.

Within the network the controlling jobs form a "critical path". An example of how Network Analysis could be applied to the preparation, cooking and serving of sweet and sour pork is shown below.

Production of Sweet and Sour Pork

The table shows the overall task broken down into basic activities with an estimated duration for each. In the network, activities are shown as lines joining "events" which are represented by circles. Each event is identified by a number. The duration in minutes of each activity is indicated in the table, and also alongside the appropriate line in the network. (Fractions of a minute are expressed in decimals throughout). Figures in squares indicate the earliest time that the following activity can be started. Figures in triangles indicate the latest time the following activity should be started.

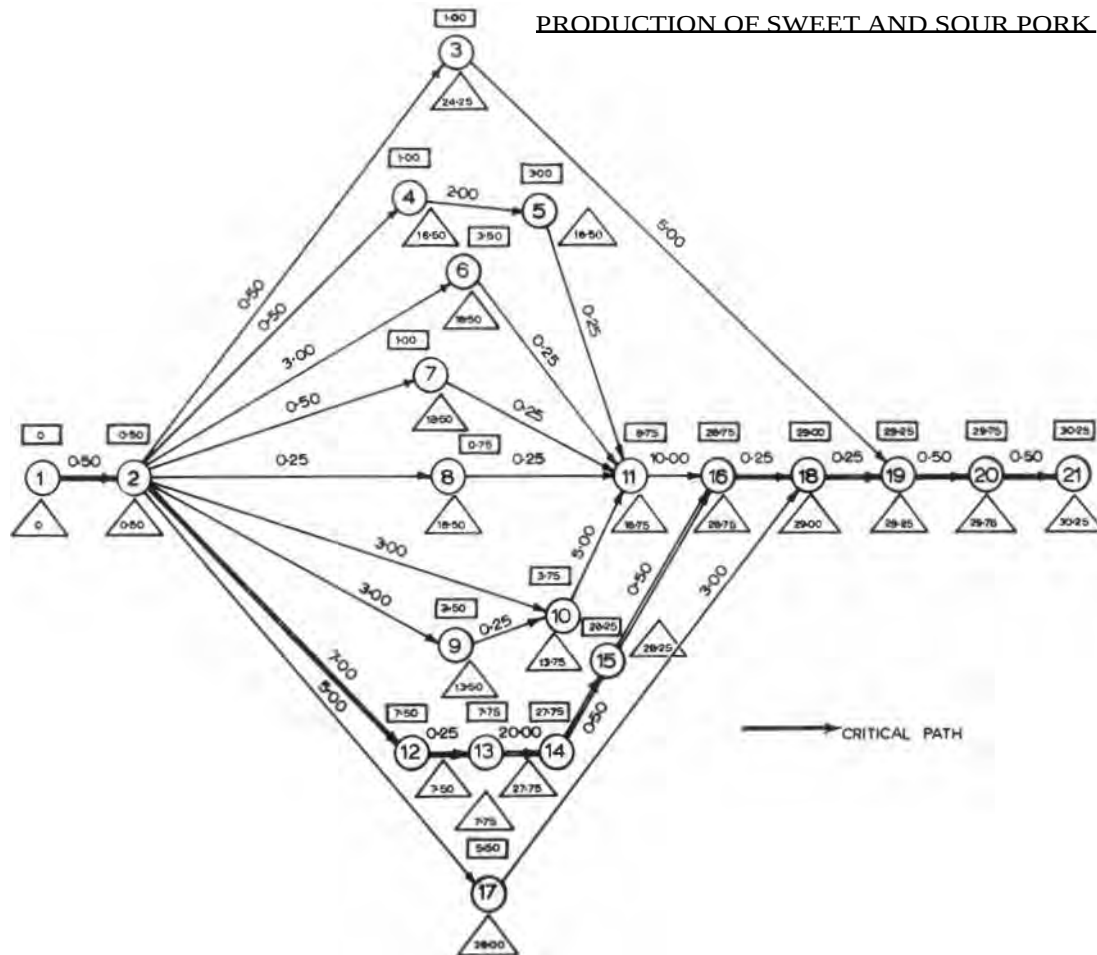
After drawing the network the critical path is established as shown by the double lines. The duration of the activities on the critical path give the overall time for the job.

The total time of all activities in the table is 7275 mins. The total time for the job, though, is only 3025 mins., i.e. the sum of the activities on the critical path. It would be the Work Study Team's job, then, to examine the activities on the critical path, because any reduction in the duration of those activities would reduce the total job time.

Events	Activity	Duration	Events	Activity	Duration
1 2	*Go into kitchen	½	7 11	Add pepper to pork	¼
2 3	Get plates out	½	8 11	Add pineapples to pork . .	¼
2 4	Slice leeks and place in cold water	½	9 10	Add pork to oil	¼
2 6	Core and dice apples . .	3	10 11	Fry pork until brown	5
2 7	Slice green pepper and remove seeds	½	11 16	Cook pork etc. on gentle heat	10
2 8	Open tin of pineapples	¼	12 13	*Add rice to water	¼
2 9	Cut pork into 1 in. cubes	3	13 14	*Boil rice	20
2 10	Heat oil with garlic	3	14 15	*Drain and separate rice . .	½
2 12	*Boil water for rice.....	7	15 16	*Serve rice on to dish.....	½
2 17	Mix sauce	5	16 18	*Serve pork etc. on to dish	¼
3 19	Warm plates and dishes	5	17 18	Boil sauce	3
4 5	Boil leeks	2	18 19	*Serve sauce on to dish	¼
5 11	Add leeks to pork	¼	19 20	*Take finished meal and plates to dining-room . .	½
6 11	Add apples to pork	¼	20 21	*Serve	½

* Indicates Critical Activity.

FLEET WORK STUDY



"ARK" NEWS SERVICES

From their cramped studios or offices in 7K, 4T and 7U Ark's News Services of Television, Radio and Press have attempted to provide news and entertainment throughout the commission.

The closed circuit television has been relayed to the 75 sets scattered around the Messes. In Home waters it was possible to screen either B.B.C. or I.T.V. presentations but in foreign areas it has been necessary to depend largely on films; full length R.N.F.C. features, short B.B.C. crime recordings, some commercial Motor Racing films, or, on Sundays, films from the "Fact and Faith" series. To supplement this celluloid diet there have been live broadcasts of many sorts - the Commander's regular Question Times and interviews with ship's characters, placing "Sam", the P.M.O. and others in the "Hot Seat". The staff of Ark T.V. have two principal headaches, the maintenance of the receivers in the Messes and the minute-to-minute control of quality.

The S.R.E. Studio has a greater outward appearance of calm as its programme is being pushed out. Two alternative channels have been available. On one there is the local radio station, Hong Kong, Manila, etc., or the General Overseas Service. The other has been the home produce of Radio Ark, which has used a mixture of record programmes, to suit all tastes, produced on board, B.B.C. transcriptions and recordings and a medley of Talks and Quizzes, together with one or two Live Sports broadcasts.

Finally, there has been the erratic and, sometimes, erring *Noah's News* which has produced some news, some comment and some amusement each day at sea. Its reporting has been subject to vagaries (like the declaration of war between Vietnam and France), but then the behind-the-scenes life of N.N. bore, at times, a distinct flavour of "Compact" with each day containing some new and dreadful crisis. Under later military control it became more stable.

ARKAID

For the benefit of the unenlightened in the ship, it should be explained that Arkaid has been a voluntary organization from within *Ark Royal* which has set out to do practical, helpful work for any welfare cause that has needed assistance. It has been sponsored and financed by the Welfare Committee; its workers have come from all departments and it has used the skills and resources that are available in the ship. It is, therefore, something in which the whole ship has been associated.

During the refit it came to be known that the Cheshire Home at Tamerton Foliot needed help to convert a thirty-two seater coach so that it would take the wheel chairs of the invalids. Material and not financial help was badly needed here. Naval Airman Cobbett and friends set about the task and with the expertise of Sailmaker Fletcher (an upholsterer and harness-maker) the job was soon completed. The reward of Arkaid is the visible evidence of achievement.

A full list of the jobs done would be too long but a few examples will indicate both the variety and the pattern. At Edinburgh, books and magazines were collected and distributed at the Cheshire Home by Naval Airman Jordan and others. At Hong Kong, Chief Writer Quance led a party who repainted fifty hospital cots, beds and lockers while Shipwright Stokes made new cupboards and others felled trees. The seamen tackled the seamanlike task of striking a 120-foot mast, repainting it and then rerigging it. The Royal Marines Band went to the Hospital and played for the enjoyment of the inmates.

Probably the major project of the Commission has been at the Cheshire Home for Incurables at Singapore, where over fifty men have given a hand. All the exterior woodwork has been repainted and the wards have been rewired. Other jobs have included rebuilding the summer house, repairing the garden gates, flyproofing doors, gardening, plumbing, converting invalid chairs and the never-ending repainting of wicker chairs. Petty Officer Jones, Leading Seamen Flitney and Cole, and Naval Airman Cobbett took the lead in these activities.

Arkaid has been done during ordinary shore leave, and no special concessions have been made. But it would be wrong to give the impression that this time has been sacrificed. The expeditions were enjoyed and everyone went knowing that he would spend his time profitably because the work was creative, evidently worthwhile and because the people who benefited from our efforts knew that there was no suspicion of a patronizing attitude in our desire to aid.

DEEP SEA SCOUTS

The present crew on board was formed in January 1965, when 25 people became Deep Sea Scouts. Our first activity outside the ship was a camp in the snow of Norway. As the conditions were dangerous only six were able to take part. At Gibraltar, we went pot-holing in St. Michael's Caves. This proved to be a very exciting first experience for many of us. When we arrived in Singapore we decided to make use of the ship's boats and have managed to visit different parts of the Malaysian coast.

The Deep Sea Scouts is an international organization so that we meet friends everywhere. In Hong Kong, a Chinese Sea Scout group came on board, where one of them was invested as a Deep Sea Scout, the first Chinese ever to become one.



The investiture in Hong Kong

VISITING AIRCRAFT



Chance-Vought Crusader (F8)



Douglas Skyhawk (A4D)



McDonnell Phantom (F4B)

VISITING AIRCRAFT



*Grumman
Tracker Cod*



*Kaman
Seasprite*



*Bolton Paul
Balliol*



MOMBASA

After a fairly straightforward S.M.P. in Singapore during January we sailed for the familiar Singapore practice areas, wearing the flag of the new Flag Officer, Second-in-Command, Rear Admiral C. P. Mills, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.C., while we welcomed on board Vice-Admiral D. C. E. F. Gibson, C.B., D.S.C., now Flag Officer Naval Air Command. Then, at the start of February, we set off westwards for Gan and Mombasa in order to give H.M.S. *Eagle* a change of scene. The passage was not without its own critical moments: a Chief Petty Officer fell down the lift well but, mercifully, survived; the Spline valves gave us all, and especially the Flight Deck Engineers, a nasty time (unavailing cries of "The Buzz is Guzz") and a Naval Airman disappeared for a couple of days and was eventually discovered to have stowed himself away (on the Section Rounds route of all places!).

The island paradise of Gan, with an inner lagoon deep enough to take the S.S. *Queen Mary*, provided us with several days of diversion flying and we took over the task of *Watchdog of the West* from *Eagle*, with signalled shouts of Uhuru (Freedom) and Merdeka (Freedom). The small R.A.F. complement of Gan could not readily accept a deluge of libertymen from the *Ark* but some liaison visits and late night diversions gave a few a view of the gracious living, tropical beaches and coral gardens of this remote base.

On now to the coast of Kenya and to the welcome of

Mombasa. This town, with its harbour of Kilindini has one of the most attractive approaches in the East, with the silver beaches and the protective coral reefs stretching north and south of the harbour mouth. With a fine, new Alpha range and an attendant photographic helicopter, *Ark* passed sedately by the modern Oceanic Hotel and beside Azania Drive. By 1800 on Friday, 18th February, the official calls had commenced while a swift L.W.E. leave party was already en route for Nairobi. H.M.S. *Rhyl* and H.M.S. *Lowestoft*, who had been our escorts from Singapore, were alongside far down the harbour while *Ark* lay at a buoy, with R.F.A. *Fort Duquesne* astern. A small but efficient fleet of hired boats kept up a regular service with the shore.

Although the scope that the town of Mombasa offers is perhaps more limited than the other ports East of Suez it has three features which are not reproduced elsewhere. The first of these is the existence of miles and miles of unspoiled beach. After the muddy flats of Jason's Bay the warm, soft sand is pure delight and after a short ride in a primitive dug-out across the inner reef there are fascinating fish and formations of coral for the enterprising snorkel swimmers. It should be confessed that the majority of the superb conch and cowrie shells brought back as souvenirs were more likely than not bought from the local experts on the beach rather than picked from the

MOMBASA



Masks and assegais

ocean bed, as claimed. These beaches are enhanced by the shark-free security offered by the coral reef and by the long shadows of the palms which fringe the shore. A distant beach, a fast car and a friendly blonde might add a touch of excitement, but even the nearer beaches of Nyali and Silversands offer the superb sun, sand and swimming of an airline advertisement.

Secondly, among the distinctive delights of the area, there is the presence of the National Parks - either the close one of Tsavo or the more distant Nairobi. Several hundred took the opportunity of coach or minibus trips, setting out at 0430 to be in the Park before the heat of the day stilled the movement of the more shy beasts. How much one sees is a matter of luck - elephant, giraffe, zebra, the varieties of deer, Thompson, Grant or Sable, the diminutive Dik Dik, the wallowing hippo, the ugly wart hog. Occasionally a browsing buffalo or ruminating rhinoceros can be induced to charge - an exhilarating experience for the spectator but one which may cause an unexpected and unprovoked attack on the next innocent arrival on the scene. The predatory cats - lion and leopard - are rarely seen. The cine-enthusiasts were warned that these would only appear while they were changing their reel of film!

The last feature which is very different in Mombasa is the "rabbit run". While the remainder of the Orient sells the identical selection of cheap Japanese and Hong Kong products, together with the tax-free luxuries of Europe, the tradesmen of Kilindini and Salim Roads concentrate their attention on disposing of acres of timber - carved into fierce masks, exotic

fertility symbols, the ubiquitous gazelles - and other native products. The Regulating Office became, temporarily, a repository of weapons or an arsenal of assegais as Jack decided, late at night, that *he had always needed* a carved wooden spear. Equally popular were the small African drums - reminiscent of "Zulu" or of Rider Haggard, perhaps. These were regarded with even less favour than assegais by the Leading Hand of the Mess, as many of the cheaper skins had a regrettable tendency to go lousy. The prices were low and, what is more, expressed in shillings not dollars; the designs were original if somewhat primitive.

At the two week-ends the ship fell quiet as many departed up-country to Nairobi and beyond. Many families invited two or three for the week-end and the farming community of Eldoret invited a whole group of 65 - who provided an extempore Rugby team. A more serious Combined XV from the three ships battled with the Railway and Nondescript Clubs and enjoyed their hospitality; a small Squash team and a Shooting team had matches in the capital and the athletes contemplated running all the 300 miles and then thought the better of it. Twenty men of a different calibre enjoyed a quiet run to the local Brewery. Political restrictions on any attempt to leave Kenya ruled out the now traditional Exped to Mount Kilimanjaro - so the equally traditional photograph of the team at the summit is missing.

One of the more flourishing activities during the visit was Arkaid. About 200 officers and men took part in some form of practical, charitable work which included the rebuilding of a causeway at one Mission,



General mess

MOMBASA

the rewiring of huts in another and a considerable amount of general maintenance and painting. Once again the Cheshire Homes came in for a large measure of this assistance. The care of children has often awakened a sympathetic response in the toughest sailor.

Lastly, one should mention the Big Game aspect - once the principal source of notoriety for East Africa, with lean rugged, Hemingway heroes fighting to a death the strong wily sailfish or felling the charging elephant with an immaculately placed bullet. The reality was somewhat different. After a very early start, one reached the favoured fishing ground and slowly trailed one's baited hook in the wake of the motor-boat. Everything was at standby for the strike - the expensive complex reel; the leather and canvas



Doctor and deer



Gentle giraffes

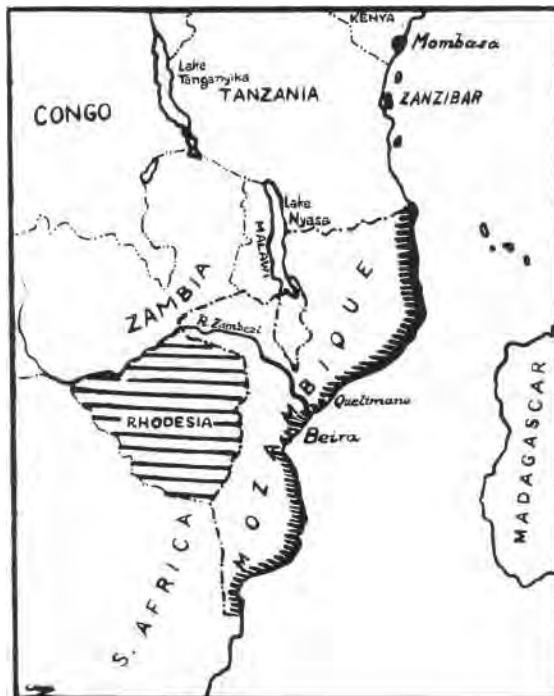
harness so that one can take the strain off one's tiring arms and take it across one's shoulders; the strengthened foot rest against which to thrust. An hour passes; a fish rises near the bows and the African "boy" lets out a shrill cry, altering course towards the splash; another hour passes, a beer and a cigarette; finally dismal and fishless one returns to base, only to hear that the last boat had landed eighteen large ones. However, it must be recorded that our intrepid hunters - the P.M.O. and Lt.-Cdr. (Flying) - came back from their shooting trip with a most impressive array of horns and skins and their own special police guard to ensure the security of their weapons.

Towards the end of the stay in Mombasa 80 of the Ship's Company were relieved by a draft flown out from home. At the same time, Commander H. P. Janion was relieved by Commander G. 1. Pritchard as Executive Officer. For some this brought the wheel full cycle since for them the start of the Fifth Commission had virtually started at Mombasa in October 1963. On the 3rd March we sailed again, believing our destination to be Gan and Singapore.



THE BATTLE OF BEIRA

On leaving Mombasa the Captain announced that the original programme of *Ark's* return to Singapore had been delayed in order that she should carry out an important operation in support of Her Majesty's Government's policy of economic sanctions directed against Mr. Smith's government in Southern Rhodesia. After Mr. Smith's unconstitutional declaration of independence sanctions had been imposed and the loss of a supply of oil was causing concern. It appeared probable that oil might be carried by sea and landed at the Portuguese port of Beira from where it could be pumped to Rhodesia by pipe line. As many nations had committed themselves to the policy of sanctions, it was required that the nationality of any tankers carrying oil to Beira should be known. This was the task of H.M.S. *Ark Royal* and the escort forces H.M.S. *Rhyl*, *Lowestoft* and, later, *Plymouth*.



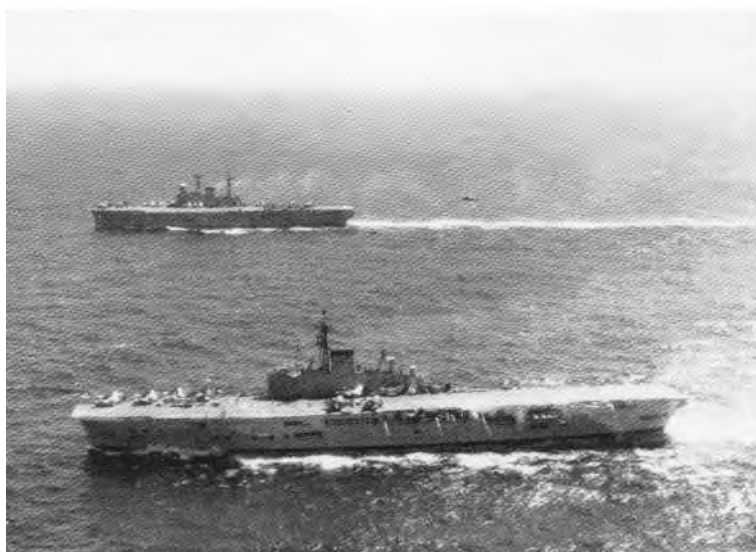
The primary means of achieving a full picture of the movements of shipping in the Mozambique Channel was to be the Gannet AEW aircraft of 849C Flight with their combination of radar search and visual identification - and their good endurance on task. These could, however, profit by assistance from the swifter Sea Vixen and Scimitar aircraft which could rapidly swoop down and identify or photograph the more distant contacts on the Gannet radar. The helicopters were used to investigate those ships which came close enough to the ship. Such combined activities of all the types of aircraft were, after all, what all our months of training had been about. Flying stations was maintained continuously for just under ten days. To keep the aircraft on the job required not only aircrew and handlers but also maintenance teams and every other service, power, electrics, stores, food and so every man found himself a part of the team, of which the Gannet was the active agent.

BATTLE OF BEIRA

The operation was sustained for several days during which the weather deteriorated due to the influence of a distant storm, Ivy. This hampered but did not seriously curtail flying although it made a R.A.S. of fuel with R.F.A. *Tideflow* an unexpectedly laborious evolution. The return to northern waters seemed far nearer in these conditions of heavy sea and swell. The last quarter of the foreign leg of the commission had just been entered.

Ark Royal's activities had been released to the press and the Portuguese therefore felt it necessary to send a daily aircraft to supervise our movements. On the first occasion the unidentified contact, or "bogey", was intercepted by a Gannet which was conveniently placed - to the intense joy of 849C who felt they had now moved into the "fighter" world.

As the days wore on it became apparent that press and radio reports of "tankers due to arrive at first light" were not borne out by the facts. (A report that *Ark Royal* was operating her *Buccaneers* indicates the accuracy of reporting.) The arrival of H.M.S. *Eagle* to take over the task of surveillance was therefore welcome and the two great carriers steamed side by side throughout one afternoon in a mood of mutual admiration and awe. Rear Admiral W. D. O'Brien, C.B., D.S.C., who had recently become Flag Officer, Aircraft Carriers, paid a brief visit and flew his flag in *Ark* for the one day. On his return to *Eagle* we were free to resume the long interrupted passage to Gan and to Singapore, for an S.M.P. in the Dockyard, for Easter and for a final fling of oriental shopping and pleasure, before returning in May for a second, longer patrol.



SHIPWRIGHT DEPARTMENT

You may have noticed us in and around the ship, which is not really surprising considering that we deal with a myriad of jobs that take us into every compartment from 04 deck to the keel.

The older the ship, the heavier the work load for the "chippy" staff. Our Department is subdivided into various sections. Working directly under the Planned Maintenance Officer are the Ventilation, Survey and Paint Spraying Parties. On the workshop side we have the old established Chippies, Blacksmiths, Plumbers, Boat and Paint Shops. The machinery in these is not modern and age has brought them to a temperamental stage. But, if it is any consolation, Noah built and maintained his Ark without even what we have!

From the Planned Maintenance office, the hub of the wheel, a constant inspection of over two thousand compartments is organized. This task is the Survey party's duty, a rather monotonous, ceaseless and unromantic job, but very essential in order that the ship's structure be maintained in good state. Chief Shipwright Coventry, in charge of the party, is fortunately blessed with a most cheerful disposition and a fluent knowledge of the Chinese Dialects; his staff must have been affected because they are often heard to mutter some unintelligible words, presumably Chinese! If you see a shipwright in a cage being lowered into a dark and murky compartment it is

because we've run out of canaries, and in the tropics the air can be foul.

The Ventilation Party also have a mammoth work load that keeps them busy every day, and frequently at night. There are approximately a thousand separate ventilation systems to maintain with many miles of trunking meandering throughout the ship, even in the darkest depths - it nearly drives them "airless". We have never been able to find out where Chief Shpt. Spencer, in charge of this party, gets his sun tan from. He must have one of those new fangled lamps!

Over 200 job cards a month come into the Planned Maintenance Office, the logging and returns of these are just one of the many jobs that Chief Shpt. Baker, our Planned Maintenance Chief, has to deal with. The long hours he puts in, and the diligence and patience shown in his exacting job have been most impressive. The job cards are logged under various headings viz. Early, Later and - according to some wits - Never, they are then passed to our various workshops to be dealt with at our usual lightning speed.

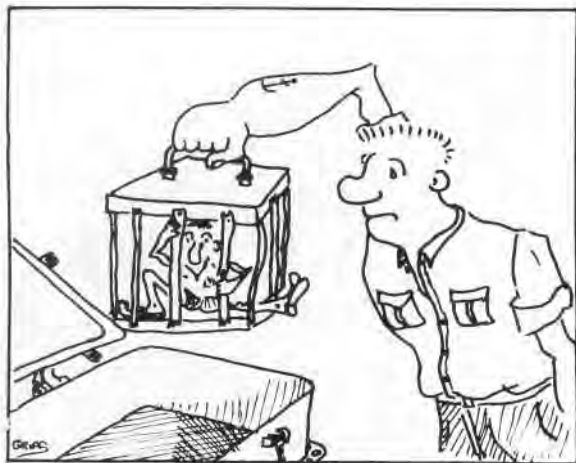
Our main workshop houses tactful Chief Shpt. Whyman as our Regulating Chief; one *needs* tact and diplomacy in his job, as he produces, apart from the normal ship maintenance requirements, an amazing variety of material for such functions as cocktail parties, children's parties, crossing-the-line ceremonies, pantomimes and stage shows. The occupants of the shop still try to find time to listen patiently to the constant flow of visitors who, with no job cards in their hands, but pleading on their faces come out with the old stock phrases such as, "Can you just . . ." or, "it won't take five minutes . . ." or, "I wonder if it would be possible . . ." not to mention the ever-present line of, "It was picked up on Captains Rounds."

The Plumbers can frequently be found with their arms, and sometimes even their heads, exploring the insides of some most peculiar ship's fittings and holes. To come up smiling from some of these takes some doing, but they do, especially if they have found something that should not have been there anyway. With sixty bathrooms and thirty-three heads compartments to maintain, it's about the same work content as the Hong Kong Hilton although the working conditions are somewhat different. When the Royal Marine Band found themselves short of an instrument at a



The first Shipwright

SHIPWRIGHT DEPARTMENT



... run out of canaries.. .

ship's concert in Hong Kong, a W.C. pan was given to them which when played with the aid of a copper pipe, produced unbelievably sweet tones ranging over almost the entire musical scale. One young man made a fatal mistake one day, when, on seeing a Plumber carrying a piece of copper pipe, he asked if he was going to rehearse for a musical evening!

Our musclemen in the Blacksmithing section burn, saw, weld and hammer their way through a huge number of jobs per month and have really no need of those Charles Atlas course books any more-"Have a body like mine in six months" (Chiefs and P.O.'s - 3 months).

During the ship's first visit to Hong Kong it must have been the time of the full moon; we called it "Mids' Madness" fortnight. These "young gentlemen", all budding Jim Clarks or Kamikazes, took over as coxswains of the ship's boats and left a trail of destruction on every jetty and ladder in sight and enough work on our boats to last the two boats Shipwrights for the rest of the commission. Still, one learns by one's mistakes and having one's leave stopped.

The Paint Shop Staff have not been idle either. In weight of paint issued, and presumably applied in various parts of the ship, we have added over 100 tons to the structure, thereby settling the *Ark* an inch deeper in the water. Putty now has the finest collection of station cards in the ship, Regulating Office included, but no pots or brushes.

Without the valuable help of our "mates", both M(E)'s and seamen, who perform a lot of lift and shift and hard graft jobs, we would be stuck. A big "thank you" to them for all their important and, more often than not, cheerful assistance.

On a ship such as the *Ark*, repair and maintenance is, and obviously must be, our main objective and the days of "rabbits" are past. But we hope we have given satisfaction to our customers for we *have* tried to live up to the Chippies' motto - "The difficult we do straight away; the impossible may take a little longer."



"Another coat of varnish should do the trick"

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

Enlighenment is the best word to use to dispel the misapprehension that the esoteric life of the radio operators is all "wine and roses". *Au contraire* we are kept hard at it at sea maintaining the complex communications needed for the Admiral to control his fleet effectively; for the Operations and Direction teams to brief and control our multifarious aircraft safely and efficiently; for the Army ashore to receive rapid air support from our ground attack fighters; and for the R.A.F. to receive air defence fighters from *Ark*. In harbour, on a much smaller scale, but just as vital, we provide the necessary communications for the defence of the harbour against attacks by infiltrators, saboteurs and frogmen, and for local air defence usually required in areas of political unrest.

Concurrent with all the above sophisticated requirements, the mundane task of transmitting and receiving administrative, meteorological and welfare traffic, and private radio telegrams, which usually totals 250 signals daily, goes on. The major hurdle in this process is the actual message handling and distribution in *Ark*, a great work study subject, and the Main Signal Office Staff (bless 'em) require the wisdom of Solomon in making their succinct decisions on the distribution of signals and the memories of elephants when dealing with queries, however nebulously posed by our subscribers.

Two decks below in the Bridge Wireless Office the scene is like a tobacco auction only with signal pad, teleprinter paper, and tapes instead of Virginia Gold Leaf. Here the Radio Supervisor of the Watch wrestles with problems called Radhaz, outages, tracers, portables for the crash boat, an S.B.A.'s telegram, the D's SSB, air move diversion, talking to a passing Shackleton or fishing boat, placating the Operations staff, frequency shifts, and other dissimilar oddities with one thing in common - communications. Ten decks further down, below the water-line, the crypto staff encrypt, decrypt, and resolve corruptions (in cryptograms, not in the tea boat).

As we move round the globe, our methods of communication and the shore stations, via which we clear our signals, vary considerably. We are not restricted to Commonwealth Stations such as Mauritius, Singapore, and Sydney, but Washington D.C., Manila, Rome, Brest, Kolsaas (Norway), Vishakhapatnam, and many others accept our traffic willingly by radio automatic teletype, morse, or voice. Similarly, communications with diversion airfields and ports visited vary.

And what about the greatest single factor - the Man? We are split into three sub-specializations; General (G), which embraces every aspect of radio communications from long distance ship-shore to comparatively short distance local radio links; Tactical (T), which deals with intra-fleet tactical communications, which are usually UHF, i.e. short range, or visual, and an exacting knowledge of fleetwork is needed; Warfare (W), a black art which denies the enemy the use of his radio by measures such as jamming. In addition, there are unspecialized ratings who serve a communication apprenticeship, and carry out basic communication operating tasks, cryptography, and message handling before sub-specializing as (G), (T) or (W). The documentation required in the Regulating Office when an RO(T) goes from U.A. to G. aggravates the Master-at-Arms (an ex-sparker too!) to profanity over this nomenclature of rum and rate!

For advancement courses, the main academy has been Kranji W/T, where the effects of an Olympiad size swimming pool and excellent playing fields have not been too deleterious on classroom results, and a steady rate of success is maintained. One RO(U) described a receiver malfunction known as "cycling" as a "cyclone in the set", and obviously had tropical storm Agnes, when we rode off Hong Kong, on his mind at the time.

For sport we join forces with the Royal Marines Band and create an effective presence on the Soccer pitch against the other parts-of-ship teams. The Department's sportex days at Singapore, with all joining in from 17 to 40 years of age, have been more beneficial than any Johore Massage Parlour.

In conclusion, apart from the odd isolated fire, willowing air conditioning, and, let us hope, the last of water rationing, the commission so far has been a healthy challenge to us all, and we look forward to when computers and communication satellites rule the navy, although the possibility of lack of power on the catapult to launch the latter may still prevail.

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT



*Dear Mum, must
close . . .*



Guess who has not seen the bad news



Double top to win, Sir



*When you hit the
beach, fan out,
lads*



Let's sit ihis out, Bunts

ROYAL MARINES BAND

The Royal Marines Band joined H.M.S. Ark Royal a week before the Commissioning Ceremony, and an agonizing week it was, too, as we rehearsed both the routine for Colours, which was to become a part of our daily life, and also for the more formal performance at the Commissioning. As if things on board were not already complicated enough, we added to the sense of confusion as we struggled from end to end of the ship, and up and down innumerable ladders, carrying instruments of a variety of shapes and sizes. Each jolly sailor that one passed had his attempt at original humour; it is remarkable how the very sight of a flute or a double bass brings out the worst in other people!

There is, fortunately, no need for us to explain what we do on board. We play Music. No matter what the occasion, we are there with an appropriate selection of players and tunes. If the Fleet Commander holds a Reception on the Flight Deck, we turn out in our helmets and Beat Retreat, we have done this in each foreign port we have visited. For dancing there are the *Ark Angels* and for Concert parties we have a small orchestra, together with a strange set of party pieces on bassoon or wash-board. We have provided a Palm Court atmosphere for the Quarterdeck or a Salvationist air to Sunday Half-Hour on the Flight Deck. We greet Admirals on their arrival and we cheer up the workers with gay tunes during Replenishment. We have even been waterborne to greet our good friends in *Eagle* but they did not seem to appreciate our serenade. The drum and bugle boys have also provided that outstanding musical medley which is designed to get one through the day's routine from Reveille to Last Post, but it is thought that there are still some who go to the Mail Office every time Flying Stations is sounded.

Far be it from us to restrict our efforts to the purely cultural and aesthetic role; we have given our Band President, the Gunnery Officer, assistance in some of the other tasks for which he is responsible. In accordance with long standing naval tradition we have twiddled knobs and made settings in the T.S. and have worked in the Stygian darkness of the G.D.R. The Sergeants have done their bit in the A.D.R. It has yet to be revealed what the Bandmaster does during these exercises, but he has been seen looking very important, with a clutch of papers in his hand, and a distinct air of knowing what is going on. The Air Gunner has received some help from us with his Air Weapons Supply problems. It is confidently expected that, one day, a Sea Vixen will be launched armed with a tail-fuzed trombone and a pod of clarinets.

Lastly, we have attempted to bring to the ship something of the spirit and example of the Royal Marines. Although we have learned to call floors "decks" and staircases "ladders" we have maintained our Barracks and have given a lesson or two on care and cleanliness which has earned its due reward in cakes. Our boots are bigger and brighter and our hair is shorter - but then we carry our own cobbler and barber. Big, bushy and small, sleek moustaches have declared our independence unilaterally. Nevertheless, we for our part enjoyed this opportunity to imbibe our share of the spirit of the Navy in good measure.



Postscript. At one of our concerts we were able to give the first performance of a work for the *Flügelpharten*, an instrument of original design. The conventional bell opening of the brass wind instrument was replaced by a deep, resonant chamber of porcelain; while the tubing is straight and of copper. The joint between the tubing and the sounding base was supported by a disused scrubbing brush. After several performances the instrument was ruined by a demand from the Naval Stores for the return of the main component for use in its designed role.

ROYAL MARINES BAND



Full dress



Half dress



Fancy dress

NOAH

The veritable oldest inhabitant of the *Ark* is Chief Electrician Bryan Davies, if one counts by length of service and not by age. Davies joined the ship at Devonport in March 1955 and apart from a brief spell for courses between the Second and Third has seen through all the five Commissions. He claims to have been on board for every mile steamed by the ship:

First Commission	23,773
Second	67,708
Third	76,857
Fourth	136,694

and by the end of the Fifth Commission the total could exceed 400,000 miles.

He expects to see the refit through but is somewhat doubtful about going to sea in *Ark* in the 1970's. Chief Electrician Davies is a bachelor.

A photograph hanging in the Chief Electrician's Store shows *Ark Royal*, off the coast of America, with the *Mayflower* at the end of her voyage - one of the highlights of the Second Commission. Many faces have returned to the ship in the last 18 months in different capacities: Captain Fell was Commander (Air) in the First; Vice-Admiral Hill Norton (F.O.2) was Captain in the Third and Vice-Admiral Gibson (F.O.N.A.C.) in the Fourth.



Chief Electrician Davies

MET AND NAMET

(Answers to questions on page 69)

- 1 (a) 3 marks; (b) 2 marks; (c) 0 marks.
- 2 (a) 4 marks; (b) 1 mark; (c) 0 marks.
- 3 (a) 0 marks; (b) 1 mark; (c) 4 marks.
- 4 (a) 0 marks; (b) 0 marks; (c) 5 marks.
- 5 (a) 2 marks; (b) 2 marks; (c) 1 mark.

If you score more than 15, you ought to be a weather prophet; more than 10 is fair; less than 5 is dank.

- 6 All three - 5 marks each.
- 7 All three - 5 marks each.
- 8 All three - 5 marks each.
- 9 All three - 5 marks each.
- 10 All three - at some time or another - 5 marks each.

If you score 25 or more, you may have used your time profitably; if less than 5, you were wasting your opportunities. Better luck next commission!

THE REGULATING STAFF

The job of regulating a ship the size of *Ark* is a many sided one, and perhaps all the sides are not always evident. It is certainly never a dull job; if any job can be said to be varied, this is it. There is always somebody who has thought up a new question to which he wants an answer, and the Regulating Office seems to be the natural place to take it. Sometimes - only sometimes - the answer has been short and to the point. More often the answer has required a lot of digging out. Surely every man in the ship's company has been to the Reg. Office for one purpose or another, sometime during the commission, though a few of these may have been less pleasant than others.

One remembers the U.K. leg of the commission as periods at sea, clearing up the problems of the last leave, alternating with brief visits here and there, with frantic planning for the next leave or run ashore. In particular, one recalls the decision at 2100 one Wednesday that we should give an unexpected Long Week-End on arrival alongside in Plymouth forty-eight hours later. The immediate co-operation of all departments enabled us to get all the requests in and to have the requirements for tickets assessed by noon on the Thursday and the intrepid Leave R.P.O. was despatched in the COD with the ticket demand, to return by helicopter from *Drake*, clutching some 1,100 railway tickets, and with the assurance that there would be buses ready when the ship berthed. So there were, and a special train as well. And there was the Long Week-End at Portsmouth when 1,500 men were away within 15 minutes of the first man falling in on the jetty - all the more surprising when one considers that the week-end leave was supposed to be for the Second of Port only.

The visit to Brest had its moments. Altogether 4,500 libertymen went off, most of them determined to demonstrate to the French how wine should be drunk. The French in their wisdom provided us with two large patrol wagons to bring them back in after the lesson. The Duty R.P.O. had a trying time explaining that the French authorities had not designed their road signs to be taken to England as souvenirs. After Brest we settled down to the idea of visiting foreign countries and the visits to Bergen and other ports passed with less incident. Subic deserves a mention. At 0100 the gangway resembled the dressing-room of the "Windmill" as the Duty R.P.O. relieved the returning revellers of the items of American uniform that they had somehow borrowed during their visit to Olan-gapo. The next morning there was an exchange and mart with our opposite numbers in the U.S. Navy as uniforms were returned. We ended up 17 caps to the

good. At Hong Kong there were those lovely, lovely ferries that gave the unwise merry-maker a chance to get his head down for a couple of hours before climbing the ladder, so that all the effects of San Mig had worn off except the Hangover.

On our initial arrival in the Far East Station we set a new First Ever when we arranged a three day leave, out of the ship, for every man in the ship's company (Standfast the Regulating Staff!) and found accommodation in various Army camps, Hostels, in Aggies and the like. It proved very popular and valuable as a "settler-inner" and was well worth all the midnight oil that had been burned.

The routine jobs go on, of course - Joining and Drafting, the drafting being the more preferred; Victualling, the sacrosanct hierarchy of "G" and "T"; and the ever-popular Discipline section, ready to provide "free holidays, without pay, in delightful surroundings" at short notice. The Reg. Staff can be seen at various times around the ship, doing odd jobs, keeping an eye on the Beer and Rum during a R.A.S., ensuring that nobody goes round the buoy in the Pay queue, or hurrying in answer to an urgent call, wondering what new bit of ingenuity Jack has dreamed up. When we get back to Guzz who will be the ones left to see that everybody else gets away on their leave? Why, the Reg. Staff, of course, Master-at-Arms Walker; the R.P.O.'s Newman, Doyle, Newland, Jones and Austen; the Leading Patrolmen Thorpe, Curtin, Willis and "Postie" Weston. We like to think that we, too, have contributed to a good commission with a good ship's company, and that we have not very often caused any to mutter, "B **** Crushers!!"



UNOFFICIAL CHINESE

It was originally the intention to have a Chinese Laundry crew on board from the end of the Refit in November 1964 until our return from the Far East in 1966, but this plan was frustrated by politics and policies to such an extent that, until the ship received a part complement of eleven men in April 1965, the laundry had to be run by a scratch crew recruited from the Engineering Department - and a brave shot they made of it!

In April 1964 the Admiralty had found it necessary to decree that no person born in China and having a close relative still in China could serve in an R.N. ship West of Suez. This cut down drastically the availability of good Chinese laundry crews, as the more experienced and best known of them had wives or near relatives in the mainland of China. (Some of them appear to have wives in Hong Kong as well, but no matter!) Our friends in H. M.S. *Eagle* did a great deal for us out East by way of representing our views and in battling to get *Ark's* old team back again for us. Mr. Lam Sho Shan, known variously as the Number One or Boss-man or simply as Mr. Lam, had served in *Ark Royal* since June 1961 and like all, or most, of our Chinese crew he prefers to belong to one ship. At that time, however, the policy out East was against these "family" crews who move steadily from Commission to Commission and was in favour of a common pool which would send the next available crew to any ship, very much on a "take or leave it" basis. Although the Chinese are prepared to work almost anywhere to fill the bread-basket, they are also prepared to remain unemployed for quite a long period if it means that they can get back to their own ship. In the end it would appear that their patience out-last-ed the policy.

So it was that when *Eagle* arrived in Devonport, shortly before we sailed in June, she brought with her Mr. Kwong Siu Fu and his ten men to join us. What a change it must have been for them! Not only has the *Eagle's* laundry got every possible modern device - including double duplex presses which gives her ten steam presses to our five (of which one of ours has been incapable of being repaired for four years) but also the laundry in the "Bird" class carrier is Air Conditioned. Anyone who has spent five minutes in ours will note that ours just isn't, in fact, it could lay claim to being the largest Turkish Bath fitted in one of H.M. Ships, with a capacity of 765,000 cubic feet. Unfortunately, due to dhobeying commitments the Laundry Officer cannot allow the space to be used for slimming purposes.

Most of us will remember the trials and tribulations of the Laundry as we sailed further and further into the hot East in June and July. The laundry crew started work each day at 0700 and carried on until the job was finished - their code of honour will not let them pack up and go to bed until it is finished. If you can imagine these eleven men doing the dhobey for 2,500 in the heat of the Red Sea and with the added setback of the water shortage, so that it was after midnight before they secured, then you will understand why these few Chinese did not seem the happy, smiling fellows that the travel-writers always meet. Life was pretty miserable for them. During this time it was alleged that the number of Laundry Officer's memos issued exceeded the number of bundles of dhobey actually completed.

On July 11th we "razzed" the remainder of the crew of the laundry, plus the tailors and cobblers from Fort Langley. These reinforcements came over by light jackstay. You may not know it, but every R.A.S. produces more paper work than the stores embarked. In this case Fort Langley told us that they had 32 Chinamen coming over to us in 32 loads; what they did not say was that there were also 60 bundles of merchandise to come over. The Flight Deck was soon knee-high in bales of cloth, sewing-machines, personal effects, cooking pots and rolls of shoe leather. But within hours the Chinese were settled in and waiting for customers.

The unofficial Chinese are not subject to the Naval Discipline Act and are very much on their own. Basically they are not entitled to anything, not even food, and they are obliged to pay their own insurance contributions. As a result of their freedom from the N.D.A. they may be put off the ship, anywhere, anytime, without warning. The responsibility for finding their fare home is then entirely theirs. This can be quite expensive and they generally have to work their passages and get no actual money in hand. On one occasion, on their way to join the ship, they were stranded in Singapore for a month, and the bill for food alone for the 32 man crew came to \$ M 1,290. It is

UNOFFICIAL CHINESE

usual to charge them for their food during any passage. So you can see that it can be a chancy and costly business to get established in the ship in the first place.

On the other hand, there must be some money in it or they would not be here. The Chinese are extraordinarily reticent about the figures but one can reckon that in an ordinary week out East there are an average of 30,000 articles processed in the laundry - and if there are Divisions there will be about another 8,000 articles added to the normal load. A spot of mental arithmetic will indicate the turn-over. Similarly, one imagines that they will make something like 4,000 suits in the twelve-month period. It is hard to assess how many pairs of shoes and sandals will have been produced in the cobbler's shop, but it is necessary for each shoemaker to make one pair a day for him to make a decent wage and there are seven of them at it so that it works out at least 3,500 in a year.

It is hoped that the Laundry crew will be allowed to stay with us until we reach Devonport again, but the Tailors and Cobblers will have to leave us and transfer to some other ship when we leave the Far East Station. This is because it is considered that West of Suez cobbling and tailoring are shore sides prerogatives and trading in these services in ships, at much lower prices, would affect employment in the Home Ports.

N.A.A.F.I.

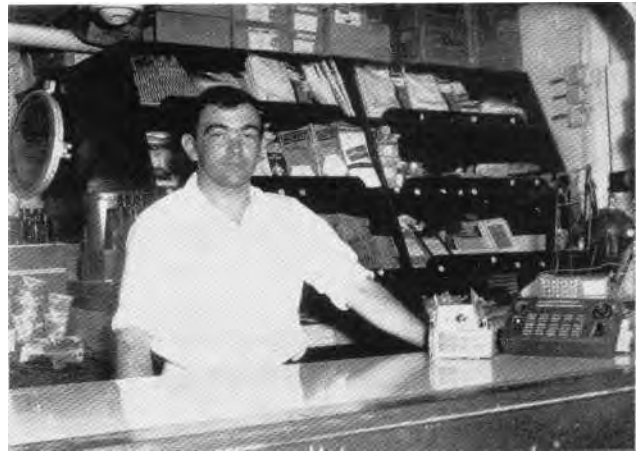
Canteen staff, although civilians, are members of the ship's company, and one is apt to forget that they also do their best towards making a commission. We have had longer stays at Singapore than first anticipated, but even so, the commission will be remembered as a happy one, bearing in mind we are here to do a job of work and not enjoying a pleasure cruise.

The canteen of today selling anything from collar studs to cars is a little different to the N.A.A.F.I. our parents remember, and N.A.A.F.I. has advanced by leaps and bounds since the days of sticky buns and cups of tea. Considering the space available the choice of goods is, we believe, more than fair.

Sales of cameras. watches. radios. etc.. have been good, and H.M. Customs will be gleefully rubbing their hands awaiting our arrival at Devonport.

The rebate paid to Welfare Fund is not as good as it could be, but sales are not the best in Singapore and Hong Kong due to traders taking some of the money normally going to the canteen, and with no overheads the traders can drop prices and be content with a very small profit. N.A.A.F.I. have to maintain staff, vehicles, boats, warehouses and clubs, etc., but get a fair share of sales under the circumstances.

The staff should by now be well known to most of the ship's company. Harry Bainbridge, Mo Parry, Terry Tunnadine and Ron Foley run the Main Canteen; Carl Rust is in the Bookstall; John Leavesley looks after the Goffa Bar; Ian Peck sells the cigarettes; Bill Shockledge and Chris Gilderdale dispense the daily beer ration. The tonsorial experts are Vic Thomsett and Gary Burnside. Tony Bennett in the Senior Rates Canteen; Bill Williamson at the Officers' Shop and Bill White at his Vending Machines complete the staff, under the management of Reg Henderson and Australian Mel Martin.



MIDSHIPMEN

as seen by one

They appeared in two of Albion's helicopters one day at sea, were dumped on the Flight Deck with their baggage, and disappeared inside *Ark Royal*. Few noticed that the Mids had arrived - they confined their efforts to eating, sleeping, and watching the activity on board. On the sixth day they were seen again, for *Ark* had returned to Singapore, and they promptly went ashore.

The training programme got under way and this year's white-patched batch from Dartmouth started working through the ship's departments seeking instruction and cups of coffee. Some offices had it all organized, others left the Mids to learn by their own efforts. They discovered that responsibility was hard to find in a big ship and they carried out such jobs as O.O.W.3 or Q.D. Officer 5. However, in Hong Kong they ran the MSMB's which caught fire, developed leaks and broke down at inappropriate hours of the day and night; and in Singapore they were invariably lurked for the boat patrols. They challenged everything in sight, including unlit buoys and a submarine's sonar dome. In between times they legally arrested two boats.

At regular intervals there was a Mids' shake-up, which was deemed to be a "good thing" and for which duty victims were duly appointed. In fact there were duty Midshipmen to deal with every contingency including duty dipper out (for guarding beer on the Flight Deck), duty dipper in (for looking after girls selling poppies), and duty disciple (for church), besides the normal dutymen. Watches were kept on the gangway, in the boats, in the A.D.R. and Operations Room, in the machinery spaces, on the Flight Deck and by the duty divers during their training.

Ashore they upheld the ship's honour by trapping all available girls at the Officers' Club for two glorious weeks, and they played games against all comers (including the girls). *Eagle's* Mids were challenged to the whaler race of the year, but *Eagle* sailed suddenly, which saved them from the ignominy of losing and *Ark's* trainer from providing the prize, a barrel of beer. Their ranks included the one who was quite prepared to swim to Australia, the one who arrived offshore at 23.50 each night for the midnight boat patrol, the one who fell through a storing route hatch, and the extra-long haired one. As a result of their many *faux pas* they have left the following Midshipmen's Standing Orders for posterity and other good causes:

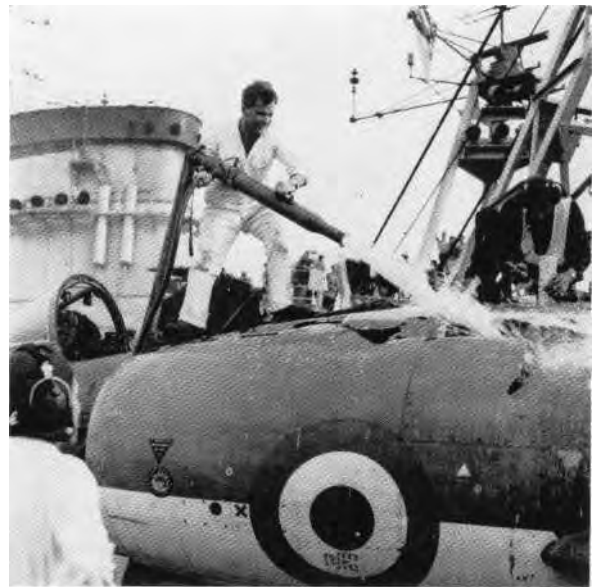
1. Do not sit on the torpedo alarm push, it creates panic on the bridge;
2. Do not drive your MSMB through the Admiral's gangway ladder - you get your leave stopped;
3. Do not drown the training officer too often at the swimming pool - he may be an Admiral one day;
4. Do not lie down in Naval Stores - you will be categorized and stowed away;
5. Do not be found without an excuse - in fact do not be found.

It was in February that they were last seen, leaving to inflict their newly acquired knowledge on the Inshore Flotilla.

EDITORIAL COMMENT. *Several other groups of Midshipmen have come and gone; the similarities are more obvious than the minor differences.*



CRASH ON DECK





Leaving Singapore for the last time

GOING HOME



The island of Gan



Second Beira Patrol



Gully-Gully!



Last run for Rabbits



"Hey Mum - he's home!"

Diary of the Commission

1964

NOVEMBER

- 12th Recommissioning Ceremony in Devonport Dockyard.
 - 17th Visit by the Vice Controller, Rear Admiral R. S. Hawkins.
 - 19th First embarkation of Ship's Flight.
 - 20th Post Refit Inspection by C.-in-C., Plymouth, Admiral Sir Nigel Henderson.
 - 24th Sail from Devonport for Sea and Flying Trials.
 - 30th First arrested landing.
-

DECEMBER

- 4th Arrive Portsmouth.
 Visit by C.-in-C., Portsmouth, Admiral Sir Wilfrid Woods.
 - 8th Depart Portsmouth for Gunnery Trials.
 - 10th Visit by F.O.N.F.T., Rear Admiral D. C. E. F. Gibson.
 - 11th Visit by the Minister of Defence for the Navy, Mr. Christopher Mayhew.
 Christmas Concert.
 - 14th Arrive Devonport for Christmas leave.
 - 17th Visit by Principal Under Secretary of State (Navy), Mr. J. P. W. Mallalieu.
 - 18th Start Christmas leave.
 - 25th Christmas Day.
-

1965

JANUARY

- 12th Hoist flag of F.O.A.C., Rear Admiral H. R. B. Janvrin.
 - 14th Depart Devonport for Work-Up.
 Embark 890 Squadron and 849C Flight.
 - 16th Embark 803 and 819 Squadrons.
 - 17th to 25th Work Up in the Moray Firth.
 - 28th Arrive Brest.
 - 30th Children's Party.
 - 31st Memorial Service for Sir Winston Churchill.
-

FEBRUARY

- 1st Flag of F.O.A.C. transfers to Fort Southwick.
- 2nd Depart Brest for continuation of Work Up.
- 5th to 7th At Rosyth.
- 10th 24-hour Operational Readiness Exercise.
- 13th Arrive Rosyth for Self-Maintenance Period.
- 15th Visit by F.O.S.N.I., Vice-Admiral Sir David Gregory
- 25th Depart Rosyth for Operational Readiness Inspection.
- 27th Hoist flag of F.O.A.C.

DIARY

MARCH

- 2nd Operational Readiness Inspection by F.O.A.C.
 - 3rd Arrive Rosyth.
 - 4th C.-in-C., Home Fleet, Admiral Sir Charles Madden embarks.
 - 5th Depart Rosyth for Exercise Pilot Light.
 - 10th Arrive Bergen.
 - 11th C.-in-C., Home Fleet, transfers to H.M.S. *Lion*.
 - 15th Flag of F.O.A.C. transfers to Southwick.
Depart Bergen for Portsmouth.
 - 16th Disembark Squadrons.
 - 18th Arrive Portsmouth.
 - 20th Children's Party.
 - 22nd Depart Portsmouth for Buccaneer II Trials.
 - 23rd Embark Buccaneer 11 aircraft from Boscombe Down.
 - 24th Visit by Chief of Defence Staff, Field Marshal Sir Richard Hull.
 - 27th Ship's Concert.
 - 29th Visit by First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir David Luce.
1,000th arrested landing.
 - 31st Disembark Buccaneer aircraft.
-

APRIL

- 1st Visit by the 16th C.E.N.T.O. Military Committee.
 - 2nd Arrive Devonport for Easter leave.
 - 9th Start Easter leave.
 - 18th Easter Day.
-

MAY

- 17th Depart Devonport for Exercises.
Embark 803, 849C and 890 Squadrons.
 - 19th Visit by F.O.N.F.T., Rear Admiral D.C.E.F. Gibson.
 - 21st Exercise with German Fast Patrol Boats.
 - 23rd Full Power Trial.
 - 25th Disembark Squadrons.
 - 26th Families' Day.
Arrive Devonport for Pre-Sailing Leave.
-

JUNE

- 12th Children's Party.
- 17th Depart Devonport for Far East Station.
Embark 803, 815, 849C and 890 Squadrons.
- 22nd to 24th At Gibraltar.
- 26th Flying off Malta.
- 28th Arrive Port Said.
- 29th Transit Suez Canal.

DIARY

JULY

2nd to 4th	At Aden.
8th	Relieve H.M.S. <i>Victorious</i> .
11th	First Three Ship R.A.S.
19th	Arrive Singapore for S.M.P.
21st	Hoist flag of F.O.2, F.E.F., Rear Admiral P. J. Hill-Norton.

AUGUST

3rd	Flag of F.O.2, F.E.F., transfers to H.M.S. <i>Falmouth</i> . Hoist flag of F.O.A.C.
4th	Depart Singapore for Flying Exercises.
6th	Flag of F.O.A.C. transfers to Fort Southwick. Hoist flag of F.O.2, F.E.F., Vice-Admiral P. J. Hill-Norton.
4th	Singapore declares itself Independent.
12th	Arrive Singapore.
17th	Depart Singapore for Exercise Guardrail.
18th	2,000th arrested landing.
23rd to 25th	At Subic.

SEPTEMBER

4th	Arrive Singapore for S.M.P.
10th	Fleet Reception on Flight Deck.
14th	Flag of F.O.2, F.E.F. transfers to H.M.S. <i>Devonshire</i> .
15th	Visit by the Commander, F.E.F., Vice-Admiral Sir Frank Twiss. Children's Party.
18th	Depart Singapore for Hong Kong.
26th	Arrival at Hong Kong delayed by Tropical Storm Agnes.
27th	Arrive Hong Kong. Hoist flag of F.O.2, F.E.F.

OCTOBER

1st	National Day of Chinese People's Republic. Leave restricted; Flight Deck Concert.
10th	National Day of Nationalist China. Divisions. Leave restricted; Flight Deck Concert.
12th	Depart Hong Kong for Singapore.
20th	Arrive Singapore for S.M.P.
26th	Fleet Cross-Country Championships at H.M.S. <i>Simbang</i> .
29th	Captain Fell relieves Captain Griffin in command.
30th	Fleet Boxing Championships at H.M.S. <i>Terror</i> .
31st	Fire in "B" Boiler Room.

NOVEMBER

7th	Flag of F.O.2, F.E.F. transfers to H.M.S. <i>Devonshire</i> .
11th	Rhodesia declares itself Independent.
14th	Remembrance Sunday.
23rd	Children's Party.

DIARY

DECEMBER

7th Depart Singapore for Flying Exercises.
9th Visit by C.-in-C., Far East, Air Chief Marshal Sir John Grandy.
13th Arrive Singapore for change of Feed Water.
17th Depart Singapore for Fremantle.
21st 3,000th arrested landing.
23rd Arrive Fremantle. Official Reception on Flight Deck.
24th Hoist Flag of F.O.2, F.E.F. Children's Party.
25th Christmas Day.
28th Depart Fremantle for Singapore.
31st Flying off the Cocos Islands. Pantomime.

1966

JANUARY

8th Arrive Singapore for S.M.P.
15th Hoist flag of Rear Admiral C. P. Mills, F.O.2, F.E.F.
27th Depart Singapore for Flying Exercises.
28th Visit by F.O.N.A.C., Vice-Admiral D. C. E. F. Gibson.
30th Full Power Trial.
31st Visit by the Commander, F.E.F., Vice-Admiral Sir Frank Twiss.

FEBRUARY

1st Sail for Mombasa.
10th to 12th Flying off Gan.
18th Arrive Mombasa for S.M.P.

MARCH

3rd Depart Mombasa for Mozambique Channel.
5th to 14th Surveillance off Beira.
15th Relief on station by H.M.S. *Eagle*, sail for Singapore.
Visit by F.O.A.C., Rear Admiral W. D. O'Brien.
19th 4,000th arrested landing.
25th Arrive Singapore for S.M.P.

APRIL

7th Farewell Reception on Flight Deck.
10th Easter Day.
26th Depart Singapore for points West and for Devonport.

MAY

2nd to 4th Flying off Gan.
5th Relieve H.M.S. *Eagle*.
8th to 25th Surveillance off Beira.
25th Start passage to Devonport.
31st Anchor off Aden.

JUNE

4th Transit Suez Canal.
13th Arrive Plymouth Sound.
16th Start General Service Leave.

"Go forth into the world in peace. Be of good courage;
hold fast that which is good; render no man evil for evil;
strengthen the faint-hearted: support the weak; help the
afflicted; honour all men; love and serve the Lord,
rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit."