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# Navy News

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No. 102 DECEMBER, 1962

Published first Thursday of the month

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## BAD MONTH FOR AIR WORLD

### Five killed in Centaur SIX LOSE LIVES IN AIRCRAFT CRASHES

NOVEMBER was a black month for the Fleet Air Arm. On the 19th of the month there was a serious accident in the 27,000 ton aircraft carrier, H.M.S. Centaur, resulting in the death of an engineer sub-lieutenant and four engine-room ratings. Lord Windlesham and a Royal Air Force officer lost their lives when a helicopter from H.M.S. Hermes crashed in the sea on November 16. Six lieutenants were killed when two Gannets from R.N. Air Station, Culdrose, crashed on November 27.

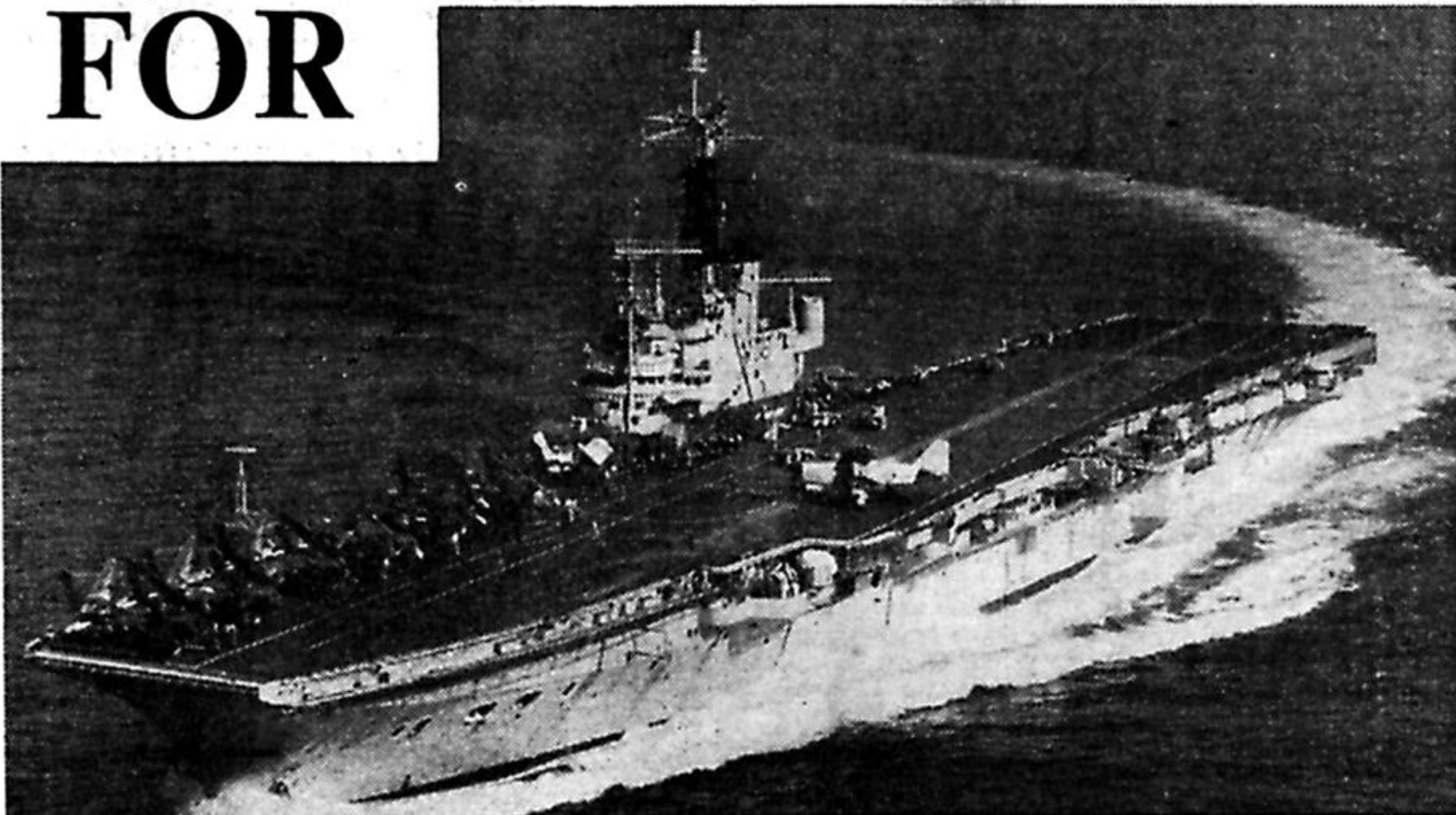
H.M.S. Albion was in collision on November 26 with a tug in Aden Harbour with, it is reported, the loss of two tugmen. Finally, an aircraft from H.M.S. Ark Royal was lost in the Gulf of Aden. Happily the two occupants, who baled out, were rescued after about 40 minutes in the sea.

The five who were killed in the Centaur (their names are included in the In Memoriam notice on page 3) were in one of the ship's boiler rooms when a serious high pressure steam leak occurred. Rescue operations by the ship's company were started immediately, but it was some time before the boiler room could be entered because of the intense heat. Medical authorities state that death must have been practically instantaneous.

**M.P. IN CRASH**

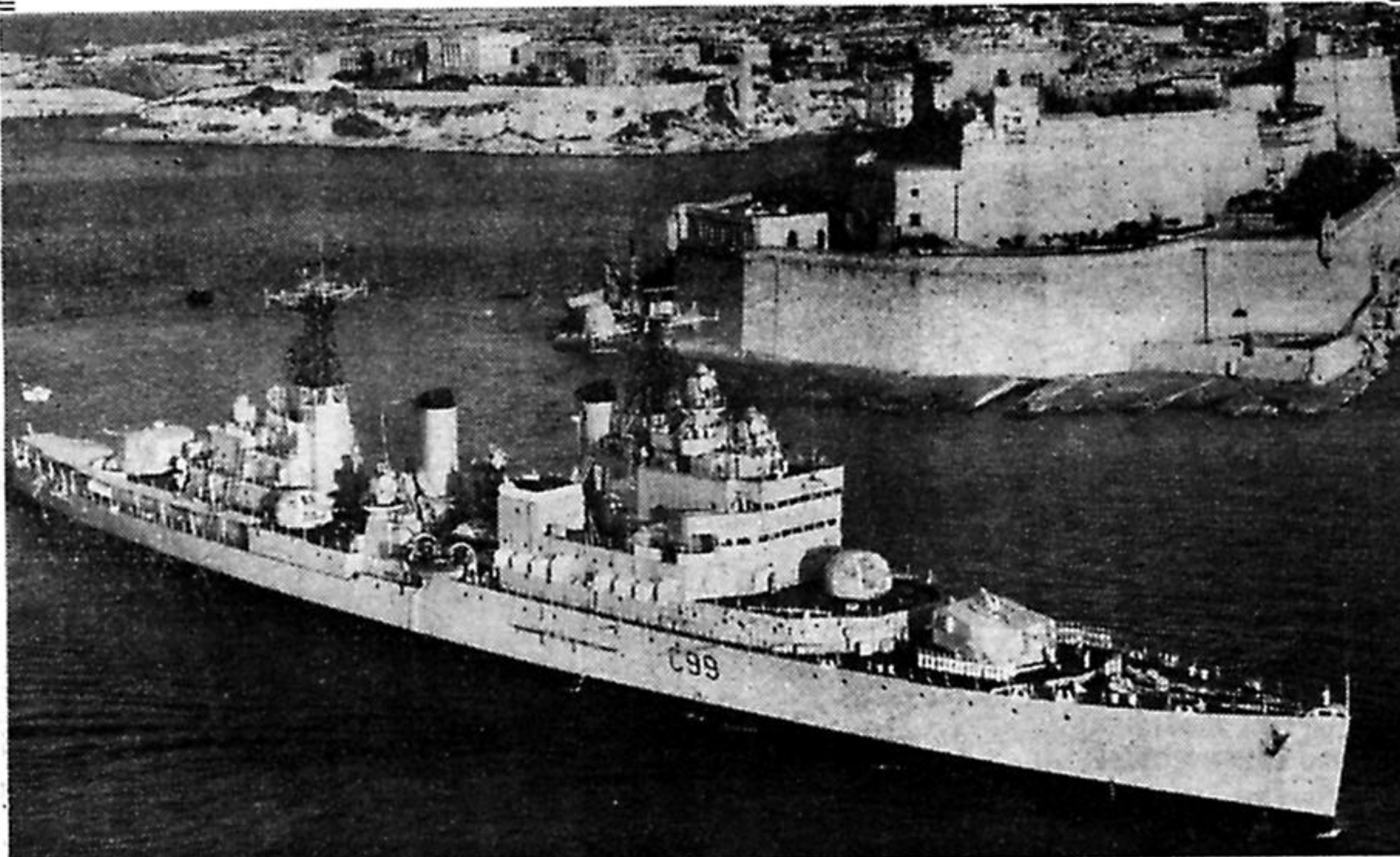
The helicopter from H.M.S. Hermes was flying from the ship, lying off Pembroke, to the Royal Naval Air Station, Brawdy, conveying visitors who had spent the day in the ship, when it crashed. Mr. J. Cronin, M.P., was one who escaped from the helicopter whilst it was submerged.

The six Lieutenants were on routine flights from the Royal Air Force



H.M.S. Centaur, on which ship five engine room personnel were killed.

## FOCUS ON THE MED.



Pages 7-10 have, this month, been devoted to the Mediterranean Station. The above photograph shows H.M.S. Blake entering Grand Harbour, Malta. H.M.S. St. Angelo, Headquarters of the Malta Port Division, is in the right background, with R.N. Hospital, Bighi in the left background

### Nubian for Middle East next year

H.M.S. Nubian (Capt. I. W. Jameison, D.S.C., Royal Navy), the Portsmouth Dockyard built frigate which, since commissioning in October has been completing Sea Acceptance Trials in the Portsmouth area will, this month, start a short period of "shake-down" before proceeding to Portland to commence her "work-up."

The ship will be the first of the new Tribal Class of General Purpose Frigates to work-up at Portland. The first week, December 9 to 16, will be spent in harbour training and the ship will then return to Portsmouth to give Christmas leave and will again return to Portland early in the New Year to continue with her work-up.

H.M.S. Nubian is due to join the Middle East Command in April next year.

The keel of the Naiad (2,000 tons), a Leander class frigate, was laid on October 30 at the Scotstoun yard of Yarrow and Co. Ltd. Nine ships of this class are now under construction.

### 'Supremo' to be new First Sea Lord

IT has been announced that Admiral Sir David Luce, who became Commander-in-Chief, Far East Command, on November 28, "Supremo," head of all the British Forces in the Far East, will succeed Admiral of the Fleet Sir Caspar John as First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff in the middle of next year.

Coastal Command station at Ballykelly when the planes crashed in thick mist on Carrowhugh mountain in North Donegal. The names of those concerned are included in the In Memoriam notice.

On November 30 Lieutenant G. F. Dobbie, Royal Navy, and Sub-Lieutenant Gravestock, Royal Navy, as Observer, had to "bale out" from a Sea Vixen whilst flying from H.M.S. Ark Royal. Lieutenant Dobbie was picked up by a helicopter from the ship and Sub-Lieutenant Gravestock was rescued by H.M.S. Rothesay.

**HELICOPTER RESCUE**

On a happier note the survey ship, H.M.S. Vidal was called upon to rescue, by means of her helicopter, the survivor from a Colombian air freighter, the pilot and co-pilot of which were killed. The aircraft crashed into a mountain in inaccessible jungle near Kingston, Jamaica, and the survivor, a woman, was winched up to the helicopter.

### PILOT—COVERED IN BLOOD—MAKES A 'BLIND LANDING' Commendation by Queen

LIEUT. Ninian Michael Tristram, R.N., at present serving at H.M.S. Ariel, Lee-on-Solent, has received the Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct for successfully landing a Scimitar aircraft on the carrier H.M.S. Hermes despite being partially blinded and in grave discomfort when a large bird shattered his front windscreen earlier this year.

Returning from a non-operational day flight sortie on July 14, the aircraft was struck on the windscreen by a large bird. The Scimitar was flying at 3,000 feet and at 480 knots. The bird penetrated the windscreen and covered the pilot and his cockpit with blood, glass and the shattered remains of the bird. Although blinded, cut about the face and subjected to a wind force of 480 knots, Lieut. Tristram put out a "Mayday" call and stayed with his aircraft.

He called for directions from Sub-Lieut. C. A. Bosworth, R.N., who was flying another Scimitar aircraft alongside, and was guided back to the ship.

**RED-STAINED CANOPY**

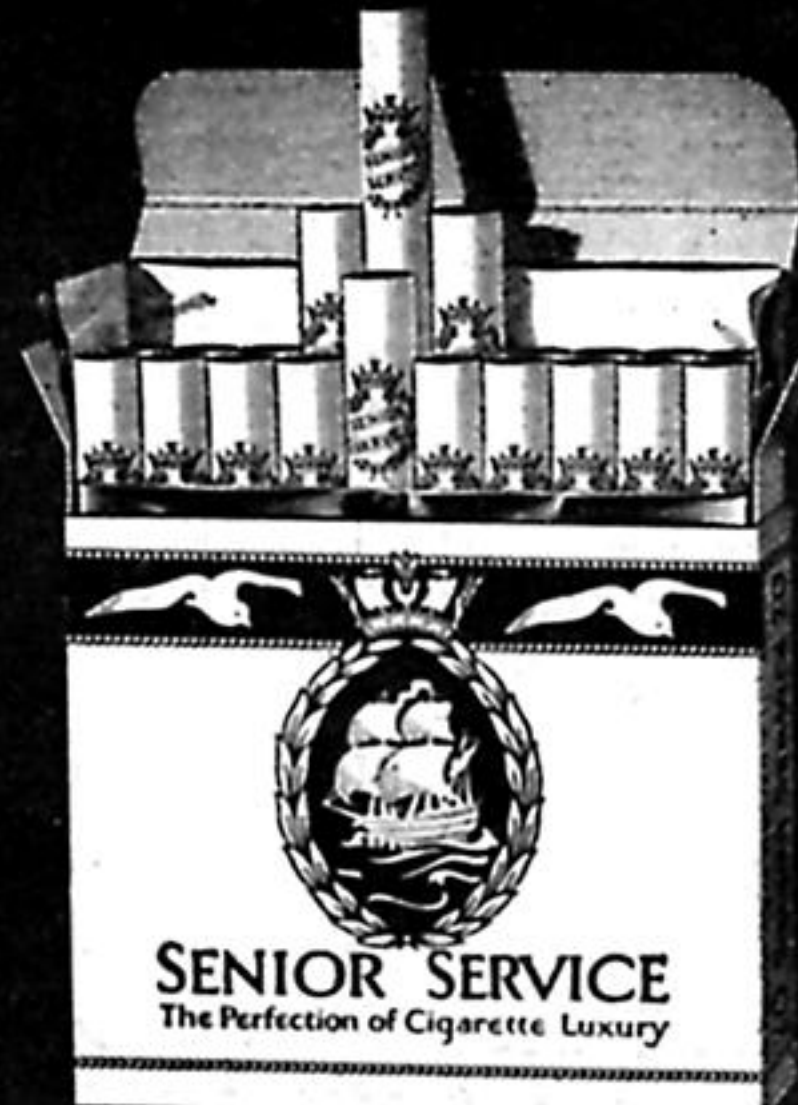
Sub-Lieut. Bosworth said after-

wards. "His cockpit canopy was obscured and stained red all over, and all I could see was a red figure which appeared to be Lieut. Tristram's head."

Back at the ship, Lieut. Tristram was unable to see the carrier and was talked down for a successful deck landing by the Mirror Control Officer and Sub-Lieut. Bosworth. During the whole of this time, Lieut. Tristram was partially blinded and subjected to the full slip-stream through the shattered windscreen.

Lieut. Tristram entered the Royal Navy in 1953 and qualified as a pilot in 1960. He will shortly begin training the Home Air Command field-gun crew for next year's Royal Tournament.

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# THE NAVY HAS 42 SHIPS BUILDING

**THE Admiralty announces that with the launching of H.M.S. Aurora, fifth of the new Leander class frigates, by Mrs. Le Fanu (wife of Vice-Admiral M. Le Fanu, C.B., D.S.C., Third Sea Lord and Controller of the Navy) at the Glasgow yard of John Brown & Co. Ltd. on November 21 and the launching of the tenth Oberon class submarine, H.M.S. Osiris, by Mrs. Mackenzie (wife of Rear-Admiral H. S. Mackenzie, D.S.O. and Bar, D.S.C., Flag Officer Submarines, at the Barrow yard of Vickers-Armstrongs (Shipbuilders) Ltd., there are now 42 ships under construction for the Royal Navy.**

Since April, 1951, the total new construction for the Navy has been 328 ships, viz., six aircraft carriers (in addition Victorious was rebuilt), one guided missile destroyer, six Whitby class frigates, four Salisbury class frigates, one Tribal class frigate, one

survey ship, three fleet replenishment ships, three cruisers, eight Daring class destroyers, 12 Blackwood class frigates, four Leopard class frigates, nine Rothesay class frigates, 16 conventional submarines, 104 coastal minesweepers and 150 smaller vessels.

It is but fair to remark, however, that the six aircraft carriers were laid down between October, 1942, and May, 1945, the three cruisers were laid down in 1941 and 1942 and the Darings were laid down between 1945 and 1949.

### UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Of the 42 ships now under construction there are five guided missile destroyers, two nuclear submarines, 10 Leander class frigates, two fast fleet replenishment ships, two assault ships, seven conventional submarines, six Tribal class frigates and eight smaller vessels.

A third nuclear submarine, three Leander class frigates and two smaller vessels are on order and awaiting laying down.

# SHIPS OF THE ROYAL NAVY

## H.M.S. Broadsword

No. 85



(Continued from col. 2)

- H.M.S. Cassandra, October, at Portsmouth, for General Service Commission, Home/Med. 21st E.S. U.K. Base Port, Portsmouth.
- H.M.S. Barrosa, October, at Singapore, for Foreign Service (Far East). 24th E.S. (A).
- H.M.S. Penelope, October (may be delayed), at Newcastle, for Home Sea Service, 20th Frigate Squadron. U.K. Base Port, Devonport.
- H.M.S. Kemerton, October, at Aden, for Foreign Service (Middle East). 9th M./S. Squadron (E).

### In Memoriam

- George Douglas Bell, Engineering Mechanic, P/K979601, H.M.S. Torquay. Died October 10, 1962.
- Michael Bancroft, Stores Assistant, P/M958626, H.M.S. Dolphin. Died October 13, 1962.
- Richard William Harry Clarke, Writer, P/M966352, H.M.S. Dolphin. Died October 13, 1962.
- David Findlay Sims, Stores Assistant, D/M978032, H.M.S. Dolphin. Died October 13, 1962.
- Clifford Bernard Haywood, Tactical Communications Operator, P/J970990, H.M.S. President. Died October 14, 1962.
- Edwin Derick Locke, Acting Leading Engineering Mechanic, P/KX914999, H.M.S. Sea Eagle. Died October 18, 1962.
- David Loye Bramble, Shipwright 1st Class, D/MX904930, H.M.S. Shackleton. Died October 24, 1962.
- George Harold Hawes, Leading Seaman, P/J947276, H.M.S. Berwick. Died November 5, 1962.
- Terence William Lewis, Acting Petty Officer Engineering Mechanic, P/K965273, H.M.S. Sultan. Died November 5, 1962.
- Granville John Dagnall, Able Seaman, P/J984163, H.M.S. Victorious. Died November 7, 1962.
- Cdr. Graham Edmund Mee, A.M.I.E.E., Royal Navy. H.M.S. President. Died November 12, 1962.
- Engr. Sub-Lieut. Leslie Townsend Jennings, Royal Navy, H.M.S. Centaur. Died November 19, 1962.
- Tom Harold Cartwright, Chief Engineering Mechanic, P/KX 525799, H.M.S. Centaur. Died November 19, 1962.
- Derick Hambridge, Leading Engineering Mechanic, P/K 965253, H.M.S. Centaur. Died November 19, 1962.
- John Edwin McCosh, Engineering Mechanic, P/053578, H.M.S. Centaur. Died November 19, 1962.
- Gerald Brian Patrick Fitzpatrick, Engineering Mechanic, P/060634, H.M.S. Centaur. Died November 19, 1962.
- Lieut. John Hilary Griffith, Royal Navy, H.M.S. Seahawk. Died November 27, 1962.
- Lieut. Peter Maycock, Royal Navy, H.M.S. Seahawk. Died November 27, 1962.
- Lieut. George Cameron Halley, Royal Navy, H.M.S. Seahawk. Died November 27, 1962.
- Lieut. Brian Robert Tulley, Royal Navy, H.M.S. Seahawk. Died November 27, 1962.
- Lieut. Peter Leonard Martin, Royal Navy, H.M.S. Seahawk. Died November 27, 1962.
- Lieut. Christopher John Blanchett, Royal Navy, H.M.S. Seahawk. Died November 27, 1962.

**THE Fleet Radar Picket H.M.S. Broadsword was originally armed and equipped as a destroyer for fleet anti-submarine escort duties, but was modernised and converted to a radar picket (aircraft direction) destroyer in 1958.**

Built by Yarrow & Co. Ltd., Scotstoun, Broadsword was laid down in July, 1944, launched on February 5, 1946 and completed on October 4, 1948. Of 2,935 tons (full load) displacement, the ship is 365 ft. (o.a.) in length with a beam of 38 ft. Complement is 256 officers and men.

The destroyer has four 4-inch guns (in twin mounts) and has two "Squid" triple-barrelled depth charge mortars. During the conversion to radar picket, a second lattice mast, with the prominent air warning radar aerial was installed forward of the after funnel. (The fore-funnel is masked by the foremast).

The other ships of the class—Weapon—are Scorpion and Crossbow. A fourth, the Battleaxe, was badly damaged in a collision on the night of

August 1/2 this year, and is to be scrapped.

The present Broadsword is the first of her name to serve with the Royal Navy and her badge is of a broadsword on a white and blue wavy field.

## BATTLEAXE AND URSA REPRIMANDS

**I**n a series of courts-martial which followed the collision between H.M.S. Battleaxe and H.M.S. Ursa on the night of August 1/2, resulting in serious damage to H.M.S. Battleaxe, five officers and one petty officer have been sentenced to be reprimanded.

Those reprimanded were Cdr. S. S. Brooks, R.N., H.M.S. Ursa, Cdr. O. P. Sutton, R.N., H.M.S. Battleaxe, Lieut. A. H. Paterson, R.N., H.M.S. Battleaxe, Lieut. P. G. Stephens, R.N., H.M.S. Ursa, Lieut. E. A. Brooks, R.N., H.M.S. Battleaxe and P.O. W. E. Overton, H.M.S. Ursa.

## DRAFTING FORECAST (cont'd)

(Continued from page 2, column 5)

- H.M.S. Anzio and No. 1 Assault Sq., April 19, at Gibraltar, for Foreign Service (Middle East) Amphibious Warfare Squadron (B).
- H.M.S. Puma, May, Portsmouth, L.R.P. complement.
- H.M.S. Centaur, May, at Portsmouth. Service under consideration. U.K. Base Port, Portsmouth.
- H.M.S. Redoubt, May 31, at Bahrain for Foreign Service (Middle East). Amphibious Warfare Squadron (F).
- H.M.S. Messina and No. 5 Assault Sq., June 7, at Bahrain, for Foreign Service (Middle East). Amphibious Warfare Squadron (B).
- H.M.S. Kent, June 27 (tentative date), at Belfast for Home Sea Service. General Service Commission, October, 1963 (tentative date), Home/East of Suez. U.K. Base Port, Portsmouth.
- H.M.S. Dalrymple, June (tentative date), at Devonport, for Home Sea Service). U.K. Base Port, Devonport.
- H.M.S. Dido, June (tentative date), at Glasgow, for Home Sea Service. General Service Commission, August (tentative). East of Suez/Home (16 months) 2nd E.S. U.K. Base Port, Portsmouth.
- H.M.S. London, June (may be delayed) at Wallsend-on-Tyne for Home Sea Service. General Service Commission October, 1963 (may be delayed). East of Suez/Home. U.K. Base Port, Portsmouth.
- H.M.S. Berry Head, June, at Chatham, for trials.
- No. 700H Squadron, June (tentative date), at R.N. Air Station, Culdrose. I.F.T.U. Wasp.
- H.M.S. Victorious, July 3 (tentative date), at Portsmouth. Service under consideration. U.K. Base Port, Portsmouth.

- H.M.S. Vidal, July, at Chatham, for General Service Commission. West Indies. U.K. Base Port, Portsmouth.
- H.M.S. Mohawk, July (may be delayed), at Barrow for Home Sea Service. General Service Commission August, 1963 (may be delayed), Home/Middle East (18 months). 9th Frigate Squadron. U.K. Base Port, Portsmouth.
- H.M.S. Meon, July 26, at Bahrain for Foreign Service (Middle East). Amphibious Warfare Squadron (B).
- H.M.S. Cavalier, end July, at Chatham. C. & M. party.
- H.M.S. Blackpool, August, at Chatham. L.R.P. complement.
- No. 829 Kent Flight, mid-August, at R.N. Air Station, Culdrose, for Home Sea Service. General Service Commission, October, 1963. For H.M.S. Kent, Wessex.
- H.M.S. Relentless, September 5, at Rosyth for trials. Commission March, 1964, for Foreign Service (Far East) from date of sailing. 3rd Frigate Squadron. Transfers to 26th E.S., December, 1964 (A).
- H.M.S. Loch Alvie, early September, at Singapore, for Foreign Service (Far East). Third Frigate Squadron (A).
- H.M.S. Appleton, H.M.S. Flockton, H.M.S. Chilcompton, September, at Aden, for Foreign Service (Middle East). 9th M./S. Squadron (E).
- H.M.S. Ulster, September, at Devonport. C. & M. party (under consideration).
- H.M.S. Parapet, October 18, at Bahrain, for Foreign Service (Middle East). Amphibious Warfare Squadron (F).
- H.M.S. Caprice, October, at Gibraltar, for Local Foreign Service. L.R.P. Complement.

(Continued in col. 3)



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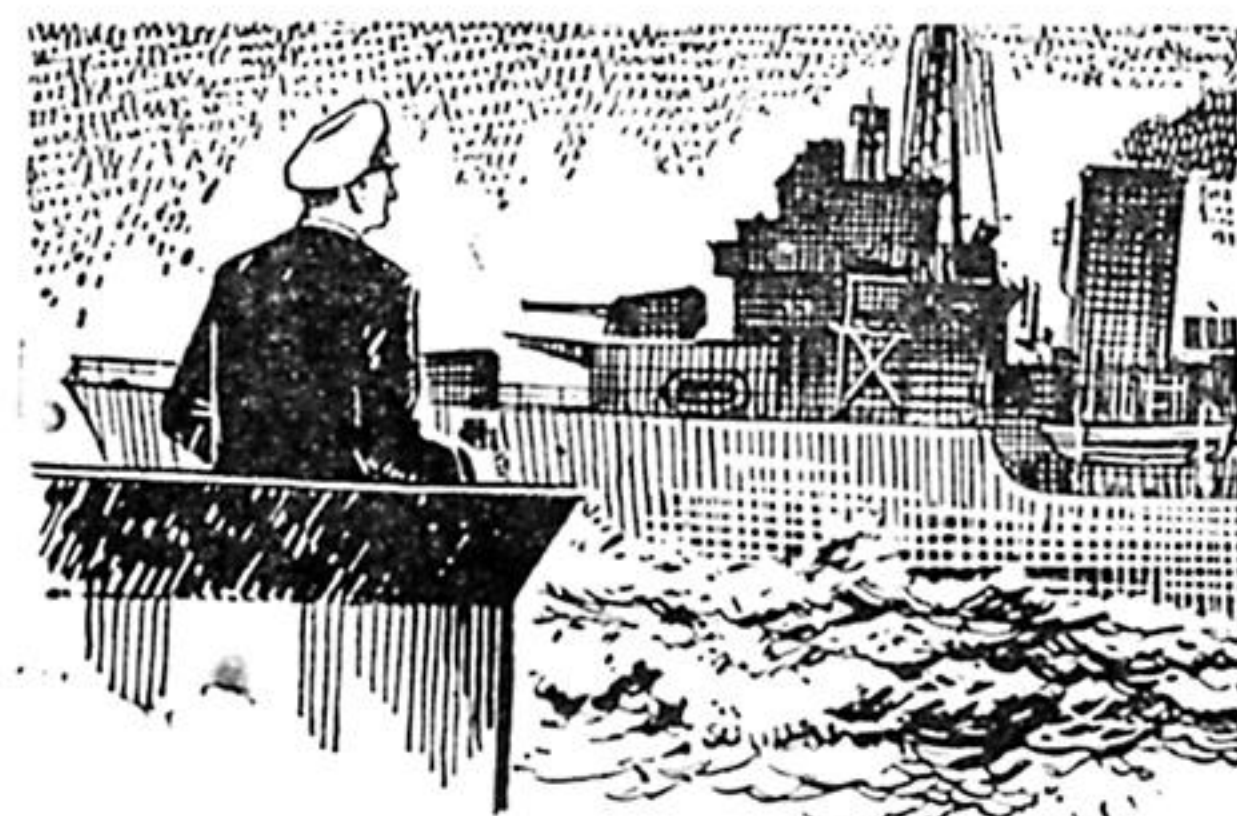
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H.M.S. Ark Royal, the Royal Navy's largest ship in commission, has completed the first year of her fourth commission and is due to return to Devonport this month. Inset. Capt. D. C. E. F. Gibson, D.S.C., R.N., her Commanding Officer

# Ark Royal completes first year of fourth commission HOME FOR XMAS

AT the naval base, Singapore, on Sunday, September 16, the flight deck of H.M.S. Ark Royal was the scene of a service of commemoration. The service was conducted by the Chaplain of the Fleet and the occasion was the first anniversary of the beginning of the Fourth Commission.

The commission began on September 12, 1961, at Devonport, and in the year that has passed, the ship has gradually emerged as a worked-up, fully operational, attack carrier . . . the most powerful unit of the Fleet. The year has been an eventful one, one upon which the ship's company can look back with pleasure and pride.

After the sea trials period in the Channel; work-up in the Mediterranean, which included Christmas at Malta and visits to Naples and Gibraltar; and a spell of leave at Devonport, the ship sailed for Singapore on March 10 this year. There she was to join the Far East Fleet using Singapore as her main base.

### EAST OF SUEZ

A 33-day passage, broken only by half a day at Aden and including the transit of the Suez Canal, saw her arrival at Singapore where she was to be based for the next seven months. This was the first time that the ship had ever been east of Suez and this also applied to many of the ship's company.

In the main, the programme as forecast was followed, and the ship, in due course of her duties, visited Subic Bay and Manila in the Philippines, Hong-Kong, Okinawa and Fremantle, each visit leaving behind it memories of interesting places and kindly people. The hospitality of the Americans in Okinawa and the Philippines, the spontaneous welcome of the Australians in Fremantle and Perth, and the unique shopping opportunities in Hong Kong were all memorable experiences even to the most sophisticated of the Ark Royals.

### INTENSIVE EXERCISES

The year, however, was not just a saga of exciting and interesting visits. These were pleasant, but incidental, interludes in 12 months of absorbing and intensive training, and participation in numerous exercises with the navies of the United States and the S.E.A.T.O. nations.

Perhaps the culminating and most successful of these was "Showboat"—a "shop-window" demonstration—which was held in the South China Sea.

The static displays arranged on board, the flying displays by the squadrons and the display given by the ships in company, gave the guests a good insight into the day-to-day training, the efficiency and the state of preparedness of the Royal Navy in the Far East.

The first year, then, has passed more quickly than most expected, leaving behind it a host of memories such as the day spent at Pulau Tioman—a Bali-Hai-like island in the South China Sea; a hilarious crossing-the-line ceremony; the kindness and compassion with which the Ark Royals looked after the blind children who came on board at Singapore, and the children's parties given to the orphans and underprivileged children wherever the ship has visited.

Ahead lies the second year, which includes the ship's return to Devonport in December, a year which promises to be as exciting, fruitful and satisfying as the first one has been.

# IS U.K. TO BECOME A SECOND-CLASS NAVAL POWER?

## Over 900 ships disposed of since 1945

IT becomes increasingly difficult, year by year, to find superlatives, so richly deserved, to describe that superb production—"Jane's Fighting Ships." The 65th edition is, as usual, a first-class production from start to finish, and the rapidly changing naval scene has meant that the volume of fresh material is well above the average.

Particulars of over 10,000 warships of the navies of 93 countries, with well over 2,000 illustrations, including about 1,570 photographs and 470 scale drawings, are included in this stupendous volume.

The Editor, Mr. R. V. B. Blackman, M.I.Mar.E., M.R.I.N.A., in his foreword, refers to the very large number of British warships scrapped or sold since 1945: 15 battleships and battle cruisers scrapped; 30 aircraft carriers scrapped or sold (and 23 escort carriers returned to the U.S.A.); 54 cruisers scrapped or sold; scrapped or sold, 280 destroyers, 340 frigates and escorts (and 88 returned to the U.S.A.); and 110 submarines.

### LITTLE NEW CONSTRUCTION

He goes on to say: "It is manifest that the United Kingdom does not now require, nor can it afford, the mighty fleet of former days" and mentions the "fair modernisation programme" carried out, but in the 17 years since 1945 there has been comparatively little compensation in new construction, and the Royal Navy "is now stretched to breaking point, as events in recent years have proved."

"The question will have to be faced as to whether the United Kingdom is to remain one of the big three, or whether she will sink to the status of a second-class naval power with an insular fleet largely composed of frigates and minesweepers.

"Will the present concept of an aircraft carrier obtain in 20 years' time?" asks Mr. Blackman, and he mentions the progress made with the vertical take-off or short take-off and landing aircraft, which might, in time to come, influence the shape of possible future carriers. Could they be shorter or

wider, with the shape of a tear drop? Will the nuclear-powered submersible supplant the carrier? Asking this question raises the enormous cost of naval construction today. The new frigate, Ashanti, is estimated to have cost over £5 million, twelve times the cost of the previous Ashanti—a destroyer of comparable size. The nuclear-powered submarine, H.M.S. Dreadnought, may well cost £20 million, and a new large aircraft carrier would probably cost £50 million (possibly £100 million in ten years' time when equipment and aircraft are included).

### HUGE U.S. NAVY

Over 100 pages of this new volume are devoted to the United States Navy, as befits a force totalling some 3,200 craft, of which, in September this year, 900 were active (400 warships and 500 support craft).

By 1970 there will be 150 ships with nuclear-powered machinery plants and 200 ships armed with surface-to-air guided missiles, and all combatant ships will be armed with anti-submarine missiles or equipped with anti-submarine aircraft.

Twenty-six pages of the new Janes are devoted to the U.S.S.R., which has a naval force of some 3,400 units, including 1,000 minesweepers, 1,000 motor torpedo boats and 200 fleet auxiliaries.

### SOVIET NAVAL EFFICIENCY

Although the Editor says "the missiles are said to be limited in numbers and range," he adds that this state of affairs will probably not obtain for long. "Soviet research, Soviet technology, Soviet prefabrication and Soviet shipyards now seem to be fully geared and it would be unwise to underestimate Soviet warship production capabilities. Naval bases, warships, submarine pens and shore stations are probably at their highest efficiency since the war."

"Jane's Fighting Ships" (compiled and edited by R. V. B. Blackman, M.I.Mar.E., M.R.I.N.A., and published by Sampson Low, Marston & Co. Ltd., at £5 5s.) is, as usual, superb—an indispensable work of reference for all interested in the navies of the world.

## How can I save?



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wife would have received the whole £855 immediately. You see, it's a Savings Scheme and Life Assurance rolled into one.

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# The Icelandic wilderness was A new Naval Auxiliary Service formed

## crossed on foot

### Seven make 180-mile trek

TOWARDS the end of the English summer, nine men of H.M.S. Malcolm (Cdr. M. A. Tibby, R.N.), who knew the rugged coastline of Iceland, perhaps, far too well, were planning a trip somewhat more energetic than the average holiday-maker. They were planning a 180-mile trek across Iceland.

The arrangements for the trek had to be thoroughly planned, as the entire journey had to be completed in a fortnight so as to catch the ship before she sailed for home. Every meal had to be carefully worked out, so that no excess food was carried, and nothing vital to existence was left behind. By the time all the victuals, clothing, stoves, blankets and two tents had been packed, each pack weighed every bit of fifty pounds.

#### TWENTY MILES A DAY

Neither the weight nor the fact that on most days they were going to have to march over twenty miles on very tough going, seemed to depress the party as they set out from Akureyri in Northern Iceland. The route was to take the team first northwards and westwards through the mountainous Horgadalur Valley, and once the Hjeradhsvotn had been crossed, it was to be due south through the interior known locally as the Wilderness.

The track was far from good and on the second day two of the party who were finding the forced pace too hot, turned back. The remaining seven (Sub-Lieut. Evans, R.N., Lieut. Cowie, Royal Engineers, Leading Writer Burton, Leading Steward Hart, Able Seaman Murtagh, Ordinary Seamen Harris and Roberts) pushed on over the Bakkasel Pass where it was learned that the Hjeradhsvotn was in flood and thus was unfordable. This meant a forty-mile detour and fortunately an offer of a lorry lift came just in time.

After the restful journey on the back of the lorry in pouring rain, the party headed southwards. All the Icelandic people met were very kind and helpful, although the twinkle in their eyes could be seen as they learned the party was going to cross the Wilderness.

#### IN THE WILDERNESS

It was with an immense feeling of loneliness than on the shoulder of Maelifellsnukur (6,200 feet), the party took a last look at a group of farm children far below. Those of the party were on their own for the next week at least. As the final ridge was cleared the whole of the Wilderness, with two glaciers on the horizon, lay before them and the feeling of excitement at crossing this almost unknown country was tempered with misgivings, for with feet already blistered it was not going to be funny to cross the scrubland, dustbowls, rock faces and shingle banks that lay ahead.

Each day was very much the same as any other although sometimes the party was lucky and only had to wade three times instead of six through fierce glacial streams that poured down from the icecaps, cutting through fissures in the barren ground. In fact life began to get grim when, after five days marching, the seven found themselves in a desert where the streams had gone underground. Again, when all looked bleak, they had the luck and found a hut under the side of the gigantic Hofsjokull Glacier. It was pleasant to have a roof over their heads, and a wooden floor to sleep on and they saw a magnificent sunset over this great glacier which is larger than Kent.

After this hut, the party were almost unwilling to go on, but after one more night in the Wilderness, spent on the volcano Blafell, it finally reached its destination, Gullfoss, one of Europe's most spectacular waterfalls.

No one could say they were sad to stop walking, but in thirteen days the trekkers had covered 165 miles on foot over very rough country. Without special equipment they felt proud of their adventure which had been even funny at times. One day they almost burned themselves as they took water from what seemed to be an ice cold stream and actually was a hot spring.

## Guided missile destroyers for Royal Canadian Navy

(By DESMOND WETTERN)

DURING October the Canadian anti-submarine aircraft carrier Bonaventure, the destroyers Cayuga, Athabaskan, Nootka and Micmac and the frigate Crescent visited Plymouth and Portsmouth during the course of N.A.T.O. Exercise "Sharp Squall."

The Bonaventure formerly carried a squadron of Banshee fighter aircraft but the R.C.N. in future will have only A/S aircraft and the Banshee squadrons are now being disbanded.

The seven Tribal class destroyers are gradually being replaced by new "Cadillac" frigates of the Mackenzie class. By about 1966-67 all the Tribals will have paid off. Costing about £8 million each the Mackenzies have the latest anti-submarine equipment including V.D.A.

The R.C.N. is also to build eight guided missile destroyers armed with American surface-to-air missiles. These ships will replace modernised "River" class frigates.

#### HELICOPTER CARRIER

Another ship now in the design stage is a helicopter carrier. One possible design is based on destroyer lines but would be unarmed and would rely on its nine helicopters for protection. According to an official report from Ottawa there are plans in Britain and France for new helicopters but the new Canadian vessel would be specially designed to meet R.C.N. requirements. These might include provision for the eventual operation of V.T.O.L. air-

craft and possible use as a troop carrier in some future international crisis like that in the Congo.

Also in the design stage are a number of asdic barrier vessels. These would provide long-range warning of the approach of hostile submarines towards the North American coast in a similar way to the kind of warning now given by radar picket ships in the event of air attack.

#### RUSSIA

All gunnery officers in the Soviet Navy must now be qualified in missile control and operation. Any officer who has not been carrying out gunnery duties for the period of one or more appointments must qualify on a special missile course before he can be appointed to a ship or shore base in some gunnery capacity. Similarly, most sea commands of larger ships require a knowledge of missiles and missile control systems.

#### EAST GERMANY

It is reported that some post-war built minesweepers of the Habicht I class have been relegated to minor patrol and auxiliary duties. The reason is that too much has been attempted on their displacement. Only slightly larger than the British coastal minesweepers, these vessels besides their minesweeping gear are also fitted as minelayers and have an armament of one 3.4-inch and four 20 mm. guns and depth charges.

watching Service and for providing the basic support staff for naval organisations installed in commercial ports of the United Kingdom in time of war has been formed.

The varied responsibilities which the new Service would undertake in war include manning, to the greatest possible extent, the naval organisation required in this country which controls the movements of merchant ships in war-time.

The Royal Naval Auxiliary Service will contribute to naval defence both directly by performing these duties and, indirectly, by releasing active service ratings and reservists for first-line duties elsewhere.

As the Minewatching Service before it, a Service which has existed for 11 years and which has 100 units up and down the country, the Royal Naval Auxiliary Service (R.N.Aux.S.) is a civilian uniformed Service open to men and women between the ages of 21 and 60 who are prepared to train for specific duties on a volunteer spare-time basis in peace time and be ready, if needs be, for full-time paid service in war.

#### NAVAL PORT PARTIES DUTIES

Personnel will be recruited from among men and women in coastal areas, where they would mainly be required to serve. Some are required for duties in small craft operating in ports, harbours and anchorages in those areas, and others for short service only, such service being duty in naval port parties, communications, plotting clerical work, driving, despatch riding and general naval port duties on shore.

All men and women are trained for mine-watching duties on shore or afloat.

The new Service will be trained, administered and operated by the Royal Navy and will offer men and women in civilian life the opportunity of service with the Royal Navy.

Travelling expenses incurred by attending training classes will be refunded and payment in lieu of wages lost during exercise periods offered.

Readers who are interested in this worthwhile job and would like further information should see the advertisement on page 13.

# 15

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# The Mediterranean Fleet had to exercise with no Asdic Destroyers

## FIRST NIGHT IN HARBOUR WAS CHAOS

(NEPTUNE, who joined the Royal Navy in October, 1904, as a young seaman, was serving as the First Lieutenant of H.M.S. Wessex in 1924, and in the October Issue of NAVY NEWS told of a rough trip from Portland to Gibraltar.)

ON arrival at Gibraltar, the 11th Division of Destroyers, H.M. Ships Windsor, Wessex, Westminster and Westcott, were secured in pairs at swinging berths in the centre of the harbour, and all ports and scuttles were opened to let a good draught of fresh air into all mess decks, whilst the ships' companies began sorting themselves out after the ordeal of the past few days.

Experiences such as the Division had undergone during the trip from Portland to Gibraltar did much towards the making of good sailors; even those who were terribly seasick—and I was one—were able to laugh and joke about incidents on passage and to appreciate that such conditions were part and parcel of a sailor's life, and what is more, it made them feel that they were living a man's life.

No serious damage to the hull and superstructure was apparent, but the boats had had a severe bashing. The ship's side was very rusty and the funnels and gun shields were white with salt from the spray. All hands started to clean up the ship, inside and out, with great gusto. Little was it thought that difficulties would be experienced, now that the destroyers were secured in harbour.

### GIBRALTAR WINDS

Although the Rock of Gibraltar provides a well sheltered anchorage for all types of ships, particularly when the wind is easterly, it played tricks with the wind, splitting it as it were, and causing heavy gusts to blow into the harbour from either end. Whirlpools occurred in different parts of the harbour, although the surface of the water was not disturbed, and it caused ships berthed at buoys to swing in opposite directions. We were to experience these windy frolics on this very first night in harbour, at a time when a good undisturbed night's rest had been well earned, and expected.

Just after dark, when the hands were at supper, a severe bump was felt. The Fleet Repair Ship, H.M.S. Assistance, had swung in an opposite direction to Windsor and Wessex who were berthed together. The stern boom of the Assistance had become wedged in the searchlight platform of Wessex. The combined efforts of the crews of the

destroyers managed to bear off but not before Assistance's rudder had buckled two plates of the ship side of Wessex, fortunately above the water line.

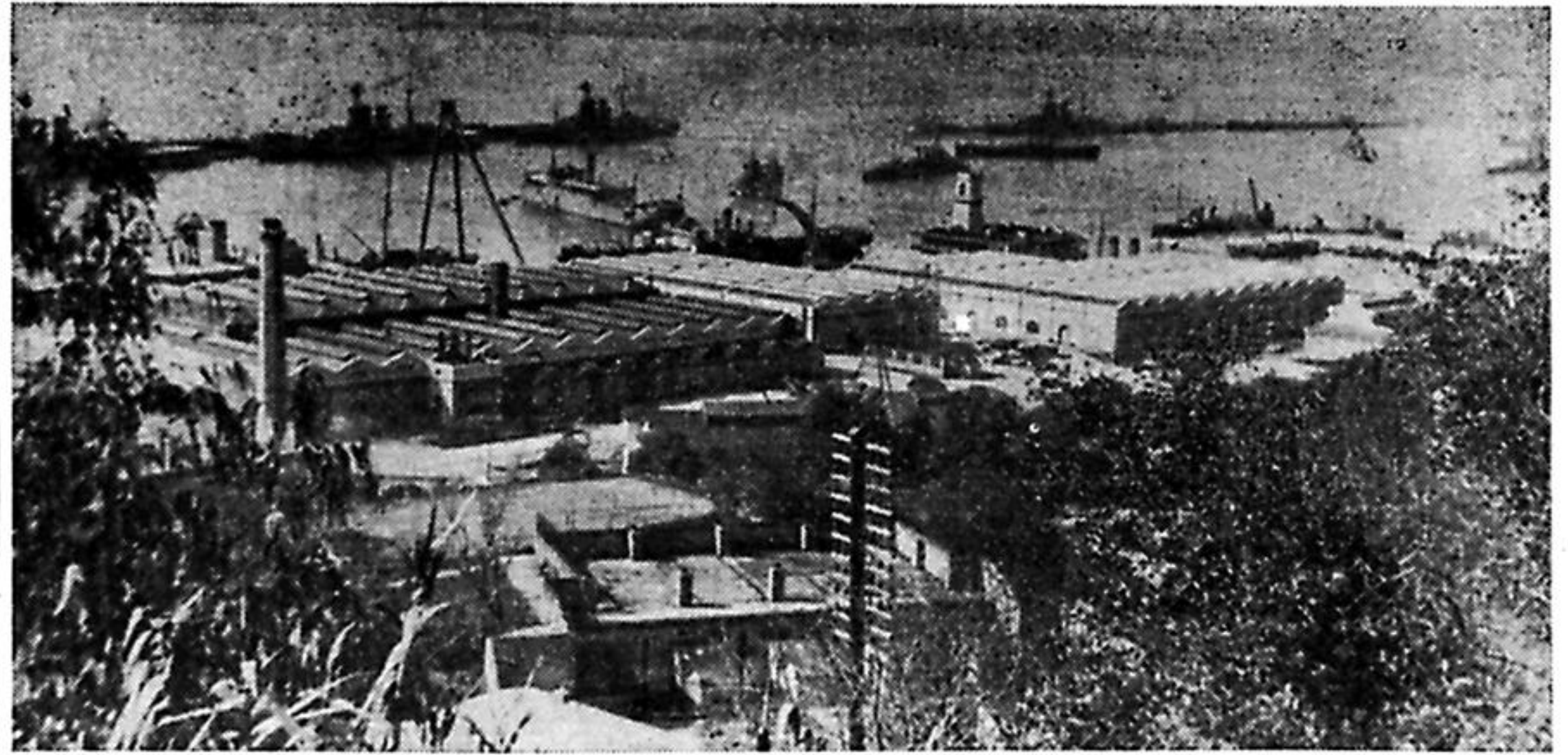
This was not to be the final knock. During the middle watch all hands were startled by the pipe "Clear Lower Deck." It was found that H.M.S. Conquest also had become the prey of the freakish wind, and had swung in opposite directions, bringing her stern on to the Windsor's ship side. By the time Conquest had cleared it was time to call "All Hands." Thus a most unpleasant first night in harbour was brought to an end. Such incidents illustrate very clearly that the training of "Sailors in the Making" is never finished.

H.M.S. Campbell, Flotilla Leader with the 12th Division of destroyers, H.M. Ships Valhalla, Vidette, Wolfhound and Walpole, arrived at Gibraltar some days later, having missed the bashing that the 11th Division had endured. The 6th Destroyer Flotilla was constituted and became known as the Asdic Flotilla, and the ships were berthed in the Penns, at the Eastern end of the harbour, enabling ships' companies to get to know each other.

### NAVAL REVIEW

Before the combined exercises with the Mediterranean Fleet, the Commander-in-Chief decided to hold a Naval Review on shore at North Front.

It was with a thrill of pride that I marched through Main Street, Gibraltar, with the men of the fleet, their rifles carried at the "slope" with bayonets fixed and the bands playing. The prestige of the Royal Navy and our country had been enhanced considerably in the eyes of the Gibraltarians and the population of the



Gibraltar Harbour in 1924

adjoining Spanish territory, and many foreign visitors.

Now it was time to get down to the real objective of the Spring Cruise, and the Atlantic Fleet proceeded to sea and took up its dispositions for combined exercises with the Mediterranean Fleet.

### FLEET EXERCISES

In those days, with large fleets of battleships, the main object of the exercises was for two opposing fleets, almost balanced in power, to search out and find the opposing fleet and to

### SAILORS IN THE MAKING

By NEPTUNE

deploy its forces so as to engage the enemy in line of battle and, at the appropriate moment, to launch a torpedo attack from many destroyer flotillas attacking on different lines of bearing. At the same time it was essential to counter a similar attack by the enemy and for the flotillas to retire on a pre-arranged course behind a smoke screen.

In this particular exercise the Mediterranean Fleet had a preponderance of submarines but no Asdic Destroyers, whilst the Atlantic Fleet had the 6th Flotilla of Asdic Submarines and the one and only ship fitted as an aircraft carrier, H.M.S. Argus. The Commander-in-Chief, Atlantic Fleet, had the advantage of

receiving enemy reports from aircraft as well as sighting of submarines, and had an Asdic Flotilla sweeping ahead of the fleet to detect and kill attacking submarines. At that stage of Asdics there were many lessons to learn.

### HIGH-SPEED MANŒUVRING

In addition to being Asdic Destroyers, the 6th Flotilla was given an opportunity to learn and practice the more normal duties of destroyers, and for this purpose were detailed to take part in a torpedo attack on the Battle Fleet. This called for great skill on the part of the Commanding Officer in manœuvring and station keeping at high speed.

The Flotilla Leader, stationed in the centre of the destroyers, moved in on a line of bearing with the appropriate signal hoisted—"Turn and fire torpedoes." It was an exciting moment when the sights of the Torpedo Control Officer came on to his target and he pressed the tube firing switches, at the same time ordering, verbally, by voice pipe, "Fire 'A,' Fire 'B,' Fire 'C,'" and similarly for "S," "Y" and "Z."

### TORPEDO ATTACK

Six torpedoes fired from nine destroyers, making 54 in all, were on their way to cross the line of advance of the Battle Fleet, either to hit, miss (or in war-time sink), whilst the destroyers, now making smoke, retired behind the screen of their making.

In war, the torpedoes would, for good or ill, be finished with, but in peace time, they had to be recovered. Therefore, as the Battle Fleet continued on course, the 6th Flotilla destroyers, were ordered back to the area to pick up torpedoes,—not an easy task. The heads of the torpedoes, had the same markings as appeared on the funnels of the respective destroyers, which made it easy to identify

them, but as the torpedoes would be widely scattered, each destroyer recovered six as quickly as possible. This gave them the "All Clear" for return to harbour, where the torpedoes would be exchanged. Should any torpedoes have been lost, then the destroyers with less than six torpedoes on board would be required to continue the search for quite a long period.

On completion of the combined exercises, both Fleets proceeded to Polensa Bay, where a battle of a much less exacting nature took place. On shore, soccer, rugger, hockey and athletics, whilst afloat, boat pulling, and sailing races took place, and a restricted amount of leave was given, and a great deal of ship visiting took place, yes, those days were strenuous, exciting, and happy. In many ways, it is a great pity that the Battleship has been eliminated for all time.

### SMART MEDITERRANEAN SHIPS

There was considerable competition, between the First Lieutenants of the Atlantic Fleet destroyers, and now, they were anchored in company with the smart Flotillas of the Mediterranean. They were painted in a light grey paint, and the lower booms and other woodwork, looked very clean indeed, whilst we in the destroyers of the Atlantic Fleet, were painted with the drab Admiralty grey, so that in outward appearance at least, we could not approach our Flotilla counterparts of the Mediterranean in beauty of outline. In overall efficiency, however, there was not much to choose from, but the important point, was that Senior Officers and even Commanding Officers, were attracted by appearances. However, at a later date, it was decided, unofficially by the First Lieutenants of Atlantic Fleet Destroyers to develop gradually a lighter colour, of grey paint, to brighten up the external appearance.

(Continued on page 11, col. 1)



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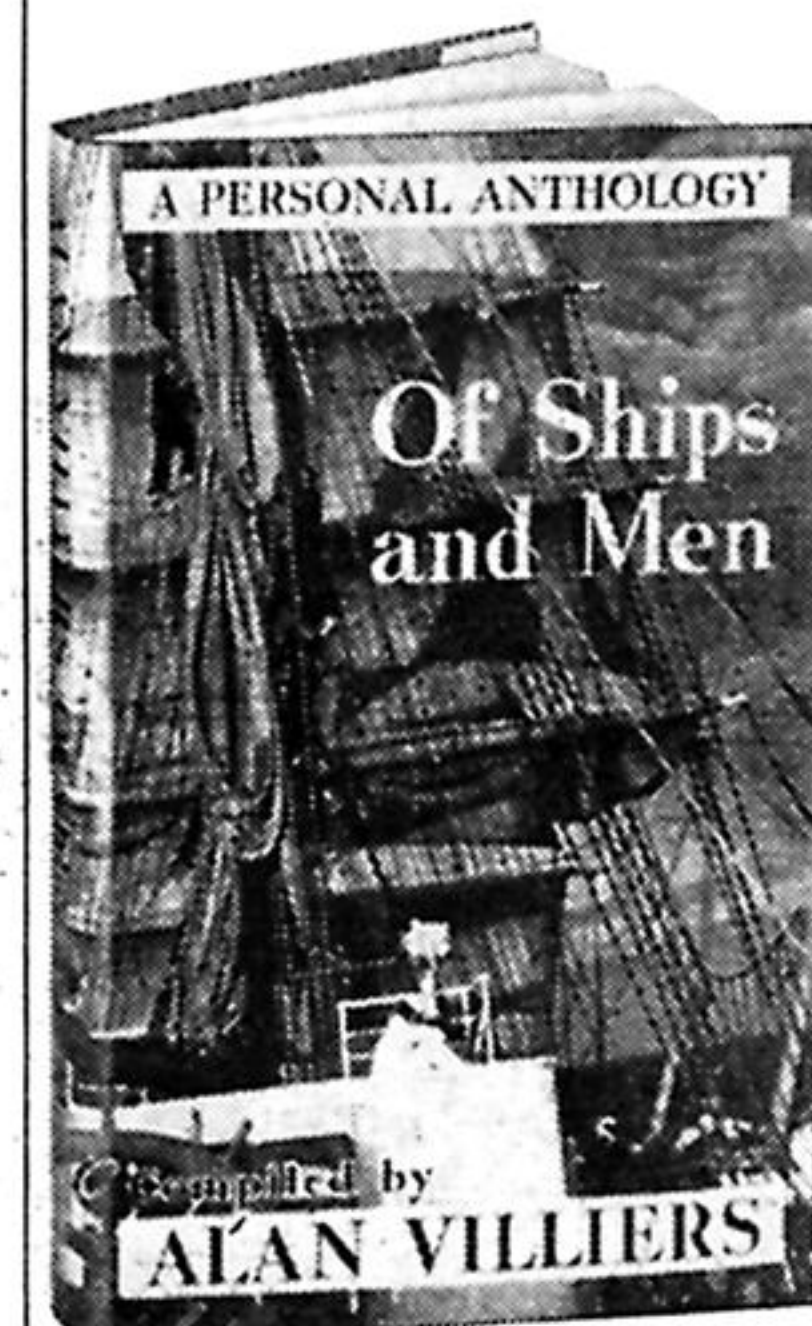
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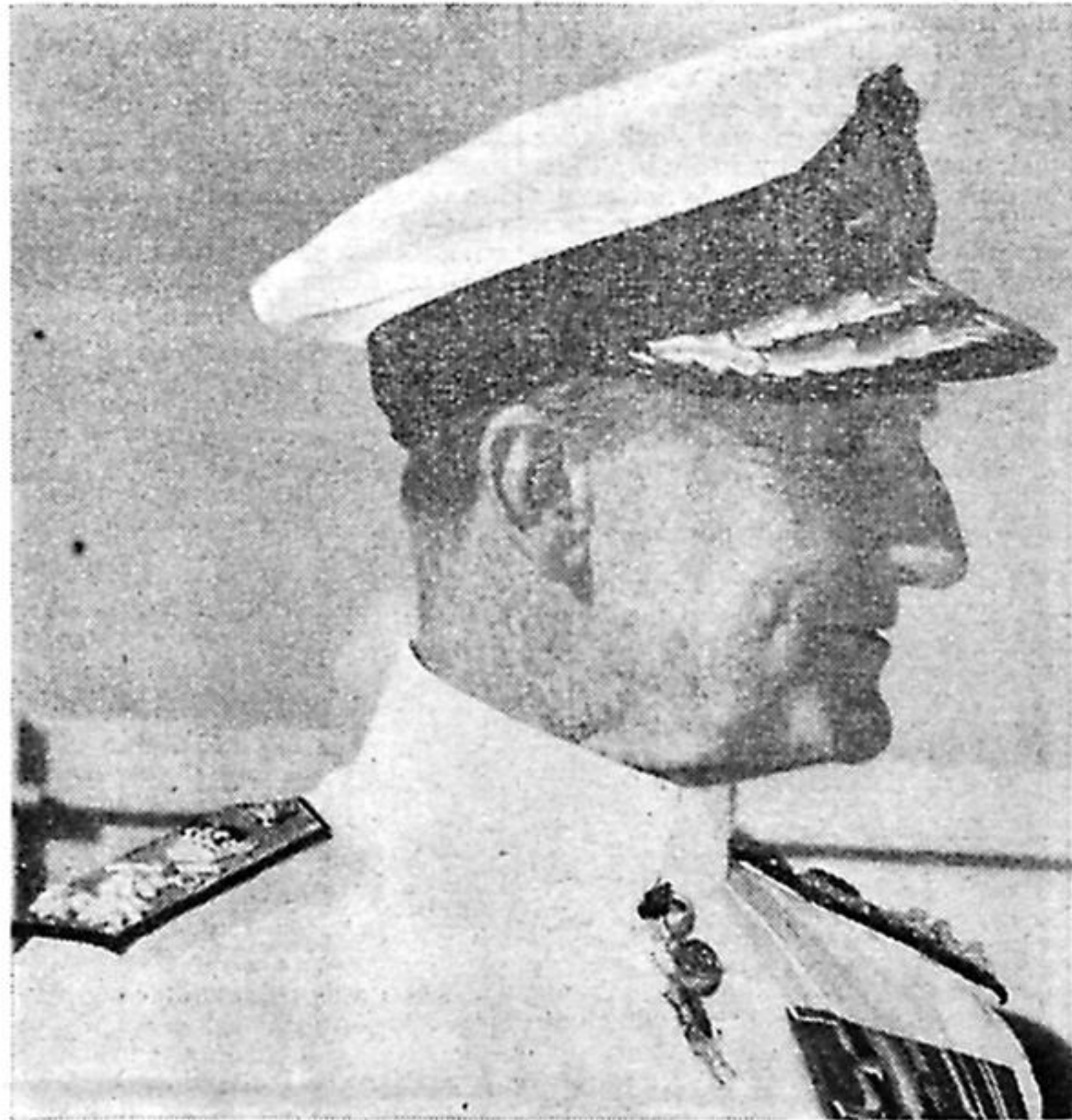
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NEWNES

# Mediterranean has played a major part in the history of the world

## VARIED ACTIVITIES OF ROYAL NAVY

THE Mediterranean Fleet has a long and glorious history, and Britain has for long periods been the dominant naval power in this sea, which has been described as having "played a greater part in the history of the world both from a commercial and a military point of view than any other sheet of water of the same size."



Admiral Sir Deric Holland-Martin, K.C.B., D.S.O., D.S.C., the Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean. He also holds the N.A.T.O. appointment of Commander-in-Chief, Allied Forces, Mediterranean.

Many of our most famous Admirals have won fame on the Mediterranean Station. Amongst them were Rodney, Howe, Hood, Jervis, Codrington, Fisher and, more recently, Vian and Cunningham. Nelson, who was in his time Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean, won two of his most important victories on the Mediterranean Station, the Nile and Trafalgar.

But times change. Britain no longer has to discharge alone her obligations in this historic sea. With the formation of N.A.T.O. and the increasing unity of the countries of Western Europe her responsibilities are shared with her allies. In recognition of this, the Defence White Paper of 1962 announced that in future the main base for our naval forces west of Suez would be in Britain, although the need for forward operating facilities in Gibraltar and Malta would continue.

### KEY POSITION IN N.A.T.O.

The Mediterranean Fleet holds a key position in the N.A.T.O. forces. The Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean, holds also the N.A.T.O. appointment of Commander-in-Chief, Allied Forces Mediterranean, while Flag Officer, Gibraltar, and Flag Officer Flotillas, Mediterranean, too have dual responsibilities within the N.A.T.O. command structure. The majority of the ships deployed to the Mediterranean are earmarked for assignment to N.A.T.O. in war and in these circumstances much of the training of the Fleet is in association with the allied navies of France, Italy, Greece, Turkey and the United States.

During 1962 ships based in the Mediterranean consisted of H.M.S. Blake, one or two squadrons of escorts, the 5th Submarine Division, and the 7th Minesweeping Squadron. These were supported by the heavy repair ship H.M.S. Ausonia and a number of Royal Fleet Auxiliaries. For about half the year there was a carrier in the Mediterranean and sometimes two. Throughout the year the ships took part in every kind of N.A.T.O. exercise and paid many visits to N.A.T.O. countries. But over and above its commitments in these directions the Fleet also found time to carry out exercises with the Spanish Navy and to visit ports in Spain, Yugoslavia, Lebanon, Israel, Libya, Tunisia and the Republic of Cyprus.

### VISITING NAVIES

The Mediterranean climate and the excellent practice facilities also make this station, with its central situation, an attractive resort for visiting ships. Ships of all kinds of the Royal Navy, from carriers and commando ships, minesweepers and submarines, have taken time out on passage to or from the East of Suez Fleet, to enjoy its hospitality, to exercise and to work-up. Not a few have taken advantage of the base support and repair facilities as well as of the firing ranges, which include the island of Filfla as an air, surface and sub-surface target. Other visitors in 1962 included squadrons from the Netherlands and West German Navies as well as a squadron of Royal Australian Navy minesweepers and the Dartmouth Training Squadron.

Some examples of the many and varied activities of the Royal Navy in the Mediterranean are mentioned in the following pages.

# CONTROL TOWER WAS SHAKEN BY EARTH TREMOR

THIS year has provided many and varied tasks for the Royal Naval Air Station, Hal Far. The busiest periods always occur when an aircraft carrier is in the vicinity and 1962 has seen visits from H.M. Ships Ark Royal, Centaur and Hermes, when squadrons from the carriers were accommodated and flew from the airfield.

The resident squadrons have main-

## LION SAILS FOR MED.

H.M.S. Lion (Capt. I. L. M. H. McGeoch, D.S.O., D.S.C., R.N.) left Plymouth on November 30 for Gibraltar and will be spending Christmas in Malta.

At the end of October the Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet, Admiral Sir Wilfrid Woods, flew his flag in the ship when a number of units of the Home Fleet were at Plymouth.

A party of 14 Sea Cadets under the guiding hand of Lieut.-Cdr. (C.C.F.) H. C. Gordon, R.N.R., spent a week in the cruiser which, by all accounts, they thoroughly enjoyed, as did a party of Wrens and a number of soldiers from the Devon and Dorset Regiment who spent a day at sea.

Eight Gull dinghy kits, provided by the Nuffield Trust are being assembled on a "do-it-yourself-basis" in the ship and the sailing enthusiasts are looking forward to many hours in them in sunnier climes than have obtained in the United Kingdom of late.

tained a steady flying task. 750 Squadron, equipped with Sea Princes and Sea Venoms, carry out the flying for the Observer School, whilst 728 Squadron Meteors provide aircraft towing sleeve targets for the Fleet in all parts of the Mediterranean.

The new Control Tower was completed this year and became operational on May 28, an imposing building with a magnificent view of the airfield and quite an area of surrounding sea. The tower was slightly shaken by an earth tremor on August 28, but no damage is visible, and it still remains upright, much to the relief of the top floor occupants. The building previously used has now been modified to accommodate the Fleet Weather Centre, with communications facilities which enable a really up to date weather picture to be maintained at all times.

### HELICOPTER'S MERCY ERRAND

The Search and Rescue Flight is the only Helicopter Unit on the Island and performs many useful jobs in addition to its main task, including aerial photography and V.I.P. flying. A sortie worthy of note recently was a flight to Lampedusa over 80 miles away to bring off a civilian in need of urgent medical treatment. Another unusual job for the flight was the delivery of the ballot boxes containing the votes of the Gozitans during the recent General Elections in Malta.

In the social and sporting world, the summer brought its usual sun-seeking activities with plenty of swimming, water skiing and beach barbecues. Three most successful MEDFOBA trips were carried out in the M.F.V.s to Sicily.

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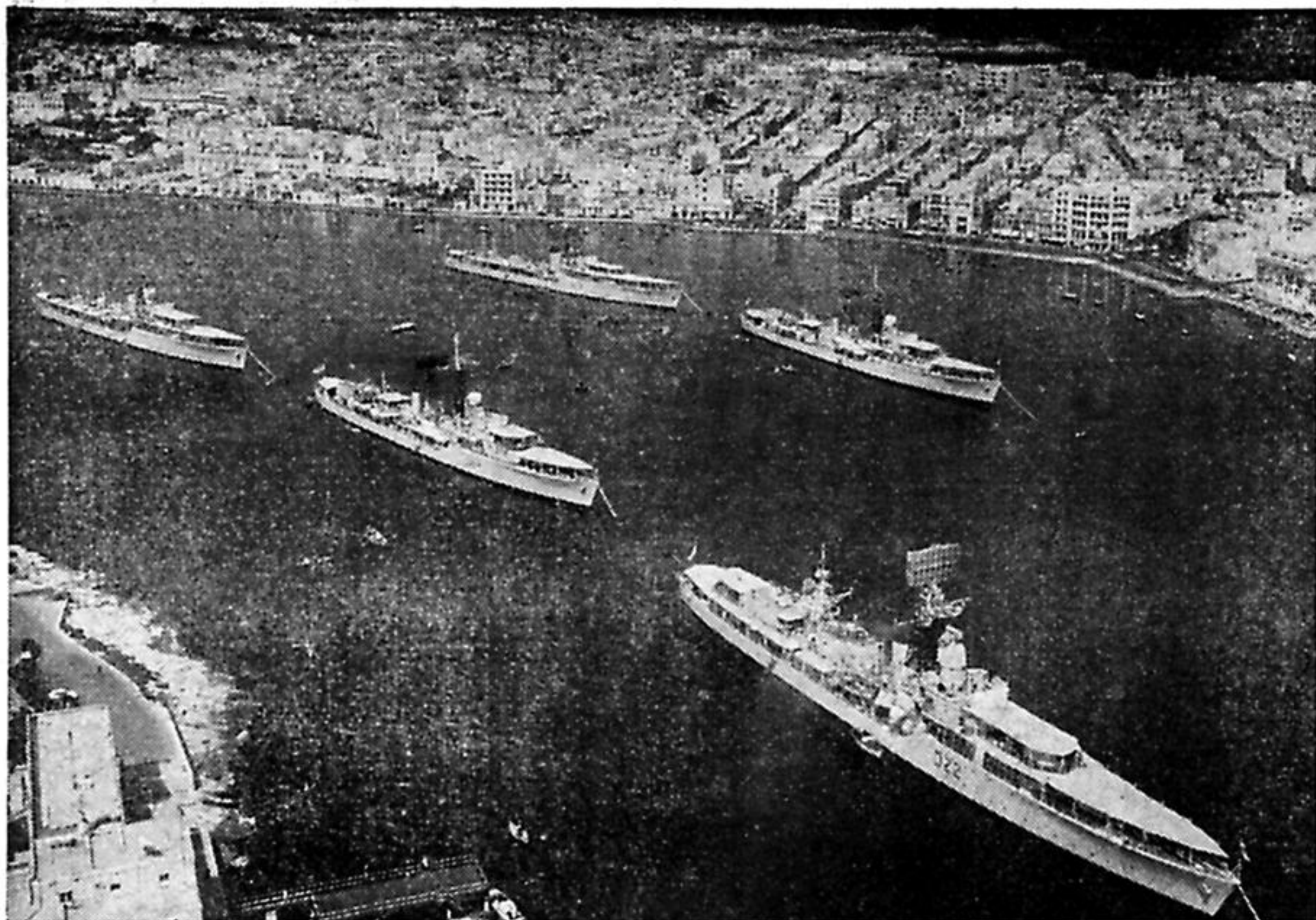
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Ships of the Seventh Destroyer Squadron in Sliema Creek, Malta. H.M. Ships Aisne (D.22), Scorpion (D.64), Dunkirk (D.09), Broadsword (D.31) and Trafalgar (Leader) D.77

## NEVER A DULL MOMENT IN THE SEVENTH DESTROYER SQUADRON

**T**O start off on the right foot during the Mediterranean leg of the commission, the Squadron left the United Kingdom on March 6 for Gibraltar to take part in Exercise "Dawn Breeze." During this three-week exercise, the ships worked with the Dutch, French and Canadian Navies, refuelling from French Oilers, hunting Dutch Submarines, firing with French and Dutch ships, operating with French Aircraft Carriers and towing Canadian ships.

After a short visit to Malaga, the Squadron joined the Flag of the Flag Officer Flotillas, Mediterranean and carried out further exercises on passage to Malta, where old friendships were quickly renewed and new ones made. In May there were exercises with H.M.S. Centaur passing through the Mediterranean, when the ships hunted Turkish and our own submarines, repelled attacks from Centaur's aircraft and fired their guns and torpedoes at Filfla. They also took part in A/S exercises with units of the U.S. 6th Fleet—then to Corfu. This beautiful Greek Island offered some excellent cricket opposition, sailing and visits to beauty spots.

### VISIT TO BARCELONA

The International Trade Fair at Barcelona in June provided a good reason to visit this splendid city. On passage from Malta to Barcelona, the Squadron replenished at sea with fuel, stores and ammunition, and carried out Anti-Aircraft firings. At Barcelona, all found something to suit their taste, whether it was the Fair, shopping or meeting the locals on the Ramblas. The next port of call was Palma, Majorca, and on passage rendezvous was made with H.M.S. Surprise, wearing the Flag of the Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean; there followed a ceremonial steam-

past and demonstration firings in the course of which the target was shot down.

Competitive shoots in the Malta practice areas followed in July before Trafalgar, Dunkirk and Scorpion visited Sorrento, Capri and Salerno respectively. H.M.S. Dunkirk was honoured with a visit by His Majesty King Hussein of Jordan and Princess Muna-al-Hussein and Gracie Fields entertained the ship's company in her incomparable manner.

The next task was to provide support for and against H.M.S. Hermes and H.M.S. Centaur for the former's Operational Readiness Inspection in the Gibraltar Straits area.

### LEADER RETAINED SHILLELAGH

H.M.S. Corunna and H.M.S. Aisne joined in August, and, at nearly full strength, the Squadron sailed for Lemnos, one of the Greek Islands, to hold a Squadron Regatta, Inter-ship Sports and a Beach Barbecue. However the weather was unfriendly and only Broadsword and Trafalgar managed to barbecue their oxen on the last night of the visit. The object was to decide who should hold the Squadron Trophy—a genuine Blackthorn Shillelagh presented to the Captain (D) by the O'Driscoll of O'Driscoll at Bantry Bay, Eire. In a series of closely fought competitions, the Trophy was retained by the Leader.

One of the highlights of this period was a sailing race in the Piccolos presented to the Squadron by the Nuffield Trust. The conditions were that the Piccolo should be coxswained by the Commanding Officer of each ship, crewed by his First Lieutenant—the loser to provide champagne for the remainder. A veil is drawn over the outcome of this contest.

The Squadron later split up for visits to Turkish Ports in the Black Sea, being later reunited for a short visit to Cyprus. Sailing from Larnaca an exercise was carried out with R.A.F. Javelins, and Trafalgar and Broadsword landed some Army infiltrators for an Internal Security Exercise. After escorting the Commander-in-Chief, embarked in H.M.S. Surprise to Haifa, Broadsword and Trafalgar made for Split in Yugoslavia, where they had a most enjoyable visit and discovered that the Yugoslavs had lost none of the art of hospitality for which they were renowned before the war.

Since then there have been other exercises—more work, and other visits—more play, many sporting occasions and many expeditions—in fact there is never a dull moment.

Admiral Sir David Luce assumed command of all British Forces in the Far East on November 28. His title is Commander-in-Chief, Far East. His headquarters are at Singapore.

## Sixteen Wrens win Life Saving Society Awards

**T**HE strength of the W.R.N.S. Unit, H.M.S. Phoenicia, is some 200 officers and ratings and they are employed on the Staff of the Commander-in-Chief, in the Headquarters Allied Forces Mediterranean, in the Malta Comcen, the Base Supply Offices, Joint Tactical School and the Signal Training Centre.

Of these there is no doubt that the International Headquarters carries the most glamour as well as the chance of meeting people of other countries, brushing up one's languages and for some, visits to Italy, Greece, Turkey, Spain and, as the Americans would put it, Paris, France. In February of this year a Wren Writer (Shorthand) was one of two stenographers at the N.A.T.O. Geographical Conference held in Florence. She speaks French fluently, some German and Spanish, and is learning Italian.

Day trips to sea are popular and at least two H.M. Ships have hit on the happy notion of saying "thank you" to the Wrens who look after their pay accounts by including them in their Families' Days. Social events—banyans, beach and boat picnics, parties—are numerous three very successful W.R.N.S. Unit dances held at the Manoel Island Club for Valen-

tine's Day, at midsummer in the open-air, and Hallowe'en are worthy of special mention.

Swimming is the most popular sport and early-morning life-saving classes are a pleasant way of starting a hot summer's day. By the end of the 1962 season, 16 W.R.N.S. candidates had gained Royal Life Saving Society awards.

### MARRIAGE OF YEAR

Another "16" is the number of W.R.N.S. officers and ratings who have married on the station since January 1, and the bridegrooms have been fairly evenly distributed amongst the three Services. Perhaps the "Marriage of the Year" was that of a petty officer Wren to the Regimental Sergeant-Major of the Royal Highland Fusiliers.



Manoela, Donkey Mascot of H.M.S. Phoenicia in Malta; is used to being the centre of attraction, on and off the parade ground. Here she is, in full ceremonial dress, having just marched past at Divisions. When not on ceremonial duty Manoela, in straw hat to protect her from the sun, pulls the water cart used to water the flower beds round the Manoel Island Base. Her son, Antonio, was presented to H.M.S. Excellent during the year

## RINELLA'S VOICE LOUDEST IN MALTA

**R**INELLA Wireless Station has several claims to fame. It is one of the Navy's oldest transmitting stations, the first Officer-in-Charge being appointed in 1910. In those early days of Wireless Telegraphy the main transmitter, and probably the only one, was a huge Type 1 Rotary Spark transmitter. Fortunately the Malta Television Service had not begun operating then, for the TV reception within several miles of Rinella would have probably been ruined.

Another feature is the 400 ft. mast, the tallest structure in Malta, which provides an excellent view of half the island from the platform at the top. Its lights also provide a novel "homing" beacon for Rinellans un-

certain of their whereabouts when returning from Zebbug, Zabbar, Zurriq, Zonkor or zome zuch place after dark.

Rinella can also claim the loudest voice in Malta. This does not refer to any particular G.I.'s vocal capacity, but to transmitter power. Transmissions from this station can be heard world wide, hence its motto "We speak around the world."

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# H.M.S. ST. ANGELO— HEADQUARTERS OF THE MALTA PORT DIVISION

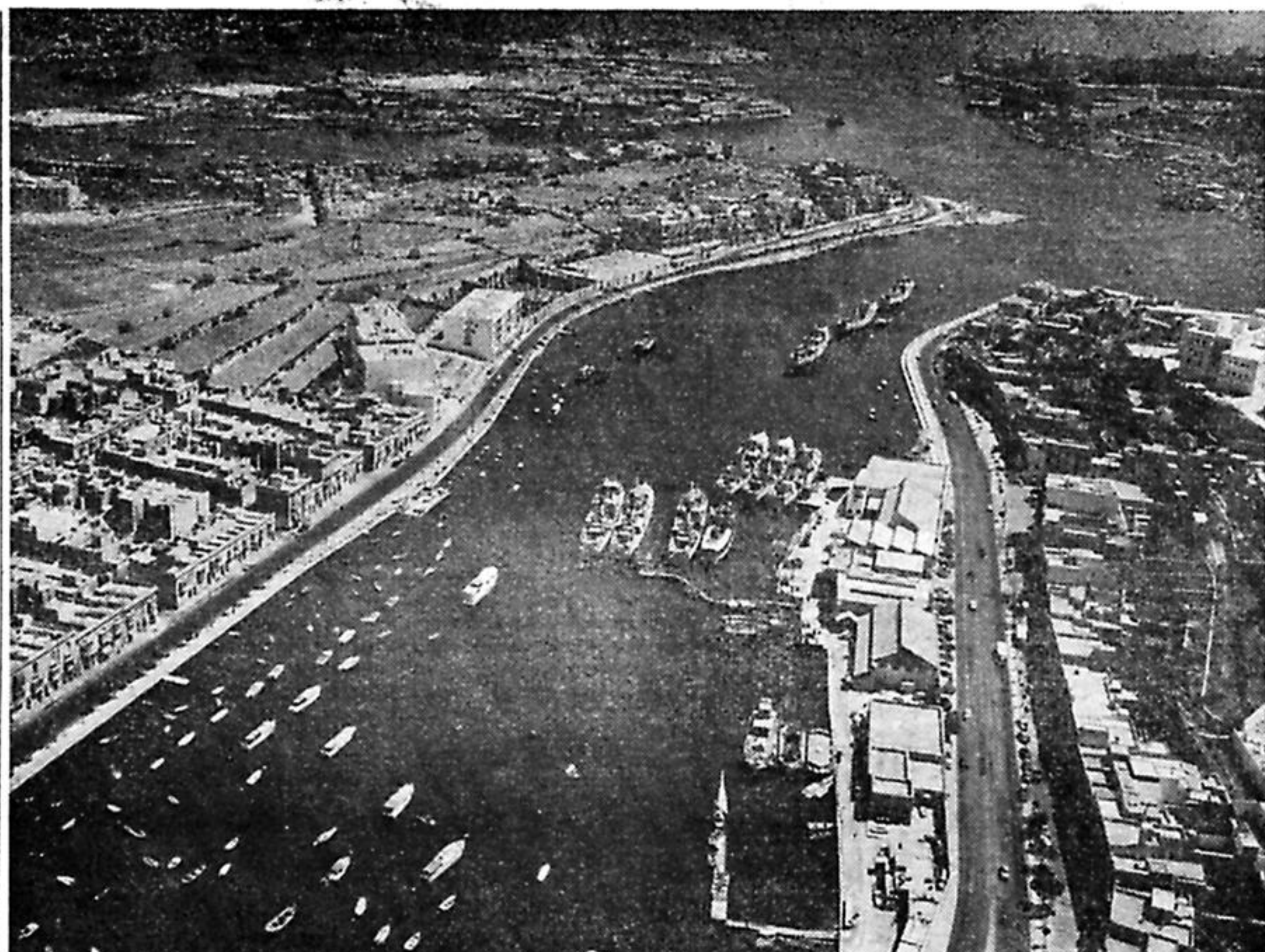
ratings serve in most of the ships of the West of Suez Fleet and in the shore establishments in Malta.

FOR many decades seamen from Malta have served in the Royal Navy, and many of those at present serving belong to the Malta Port Division with its headquarters in H.M.S. St. Angelo.

Occupying the Fort overlooking Grand Harbour from which the ships of the Knights of St. John used to sail in the past, H.M.S. St. Angelo is responsible, amongst other things, for the recruiting, training, drafting and welfare of some 1,200 Maltese seamen, mechanics, cooks and stewards. These

From their ranks have recently been drawn the instructors needed to train men of the Libyan Customs Force and of the newly-formed Libyan Navy. Sixty recruits of the Libyan Navy are currently undergoing a month's basic training in H.M.S. St. Angelo—training which has been conducted in English, Arabic, Maltese and Italian, thanks to the linguistic ability of the Maltese Petty Officer Instructors.

H.M.S. St. Angelo forms the background to the photograph of H.M.S. Blake which appears on page 1.



The Msida Base, Malta, showing ships of the Seventh Minesweeping Squadron and of the visiting Royal Australian Navy's Sixteenth Minesweeping Squadron, together with a multitude of small private boats. Centre background is Lazaretto Creek in which can be discerned H.M.S. Ausonia and Manoel Island

## Seventh Minesweeping Squadron has strenuous but pleasant year

**E**IGHT major minesweeping exercises, two minor ones, one Raidex and a total of 14 ports visited by the squadron. These are the bare facts on the activities of the Seventh Minesweeping Squadron during the first 10 months of 1962.

To pick out the highlights of such a programme is difficult and varies according to taste. Many would consider that the year started well safely secured astern to the wall in the Vieux Port, Marseilles, for four days before going on to Toulon for the N.A.T.O. exercise Medsweepex 30. The nearest restaurants were fully 30 yards away on the other side of the road and there were few who did not take advantage of the fact!

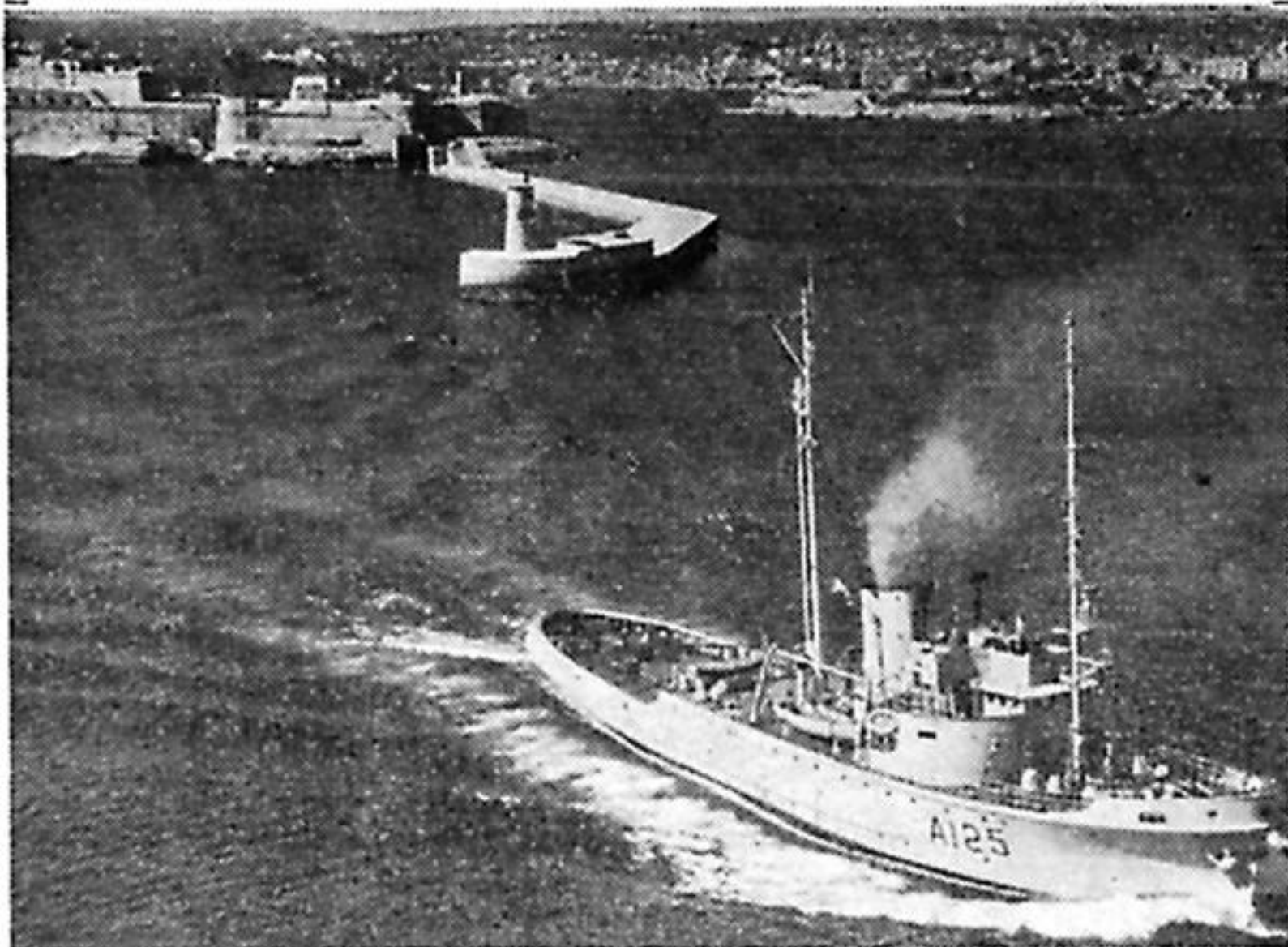
cise, an interesting departure from routine was a Raiding Exercise, near Tripoli in July. Ships were darkened and then crept into an unlit, shallow beach. The soldiers disembarked into life rafts which were towed inshore by the ships' motor boats. On the second night the ship's company of H.M.S. Ashton had the unusual sensation of being thrown abruptly forward when the ship hit an unlit, unmarked and remarkably solid tunny net.

A sometimes strenuous but enjoyable year will be concluded by visits to Naples, and then to Sousse and Sfax in Tunisia. During December, the artistic talent and technical potential of the squadron will be combined with that of the Msida Base Staff to produce the Christmas tableau which has become a popular feature in Malta. One year the trot of "sweepers" was together decked out to represent a string of reindeer drawing Father Christmas.



His Grace the Metropolitan Archbishop of Malta inspects ratings of the Malta Port Division in H.M.S. St. Angelo

## The Protecting Arm



The Fleet Tug, H.M.S. Mediator, with the outer arm of the breakwater and with the entrance to Sliema Harbour and Sliema itself in the background

### SNOW IN THE MED.

Being anchored in Aranci Bay with H.M.S. Blake and the destroyers in heavy snow squalls could hardly be called enjoyable but it was certainly a novel experience for the sunny Mediterranean. Unfortunately this weather was the cause of the cancellation of a massed escape and evasion exercise.

At the mention of Civitavecchia a wistful look will cross the faces of the majority of the squadron as they recall the proximity of Rome, the Eternal City. Nothing new can be said about this wonderful city and it suffices to say that the following 10 days, grinding up and down the minesweeping range at La Spezia, were passed in a haze of pleasant memories.

### ASHTON HITS TUNNY NET

Apart from taking part in every major N.A.T.O. minesweeping exer-

### SECOND BATTLE OF THERMOPYLAE

**W**HEN the submarine H.M.S. Thermopylae visited Athens recently, a party of officers and men from the ship visited the site of the Battle of the Pass of Thermopylae, fought in 480 B.C. The battle was between the Greek and Persian armies and a statue of the renowned leader of the Spartan Army, King Leonidas, stands in the village.

With the assistance of the British Vice-Consul, Piraeus, a detailed account of the battle, followed by a comprehensive tour of the battlefield, was given. Then followed a typical Greek feast in the village hotel.

At the end of the dinner the President of the village was presented with a photograph of the ship, a crest and the ensign worn on the day Thermopylae entered Piraeus.

Later the ship's football team took on the villagers. The locals managed to win, two goals to one, and the battle honours remained where they have been for the past 24 centuries.

## Bernards In The Mediterranean

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At Malta there are two branches and workrooms tailoring high quality uniform and civilian clothing. The Overseas Supervisor at Malta is Mr D. H. Allen with Mr J. H. Willis in charge at Valletta branch and Mr C. G. Jenkins at Sliema branch.

At Gibraltar Mr J. C. Penney is in charge having just moved from Helensburgh.

Bernards are at the principal Naval Ports, at all the Royal Naval Air Stations and additionally representatives visit ships throughout the world at frequent intervals.

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# H.M.S. PHOENICIA HAS CROSS OF KNIGHTS OF MALTA

THE reclamation of Manoel Island and the restoration of Fort Manoel after the depredations of war and encroaching nature have now reached a stage where the efforts of the small Maltese Ship's Company are bearing fruit; the Fort and the surrounding moat are clear of rubble and rubbish, and the island has generally acquired a much more tended appearance.

Amongst other things, the ship's company is embellishing the approaches to the Anglican Church with an ornamental garden containing the Cross of the Knights of Malta. When this has been completed a tribute will be paid to their work in the form of a small plaque to be set in this garden.

### AN INTERESTING YEAR

Of the units which form part of H.M.S. Phoenixia, the Fleet Diving Centre has perhaps had the most varied and interesting year. The Fleet Clearance Diving Team has taken part in mine-countermeasures exercises in France, Sardinia, Greece, Turkey and Sicily, and worked with N.A.T.O. diving teams and ordnance disposal units of the American Sixth Fleet. Visitors to the section have included Germans and Belgians and several film units mostly making instructional films, but one a commercial film called "East of Christmas."

Bomb- and mine-disposal operations dealt with the destruction of two 250 Kg German bombs, a German buoyant mine and numerous anti-personnel bombs of German and

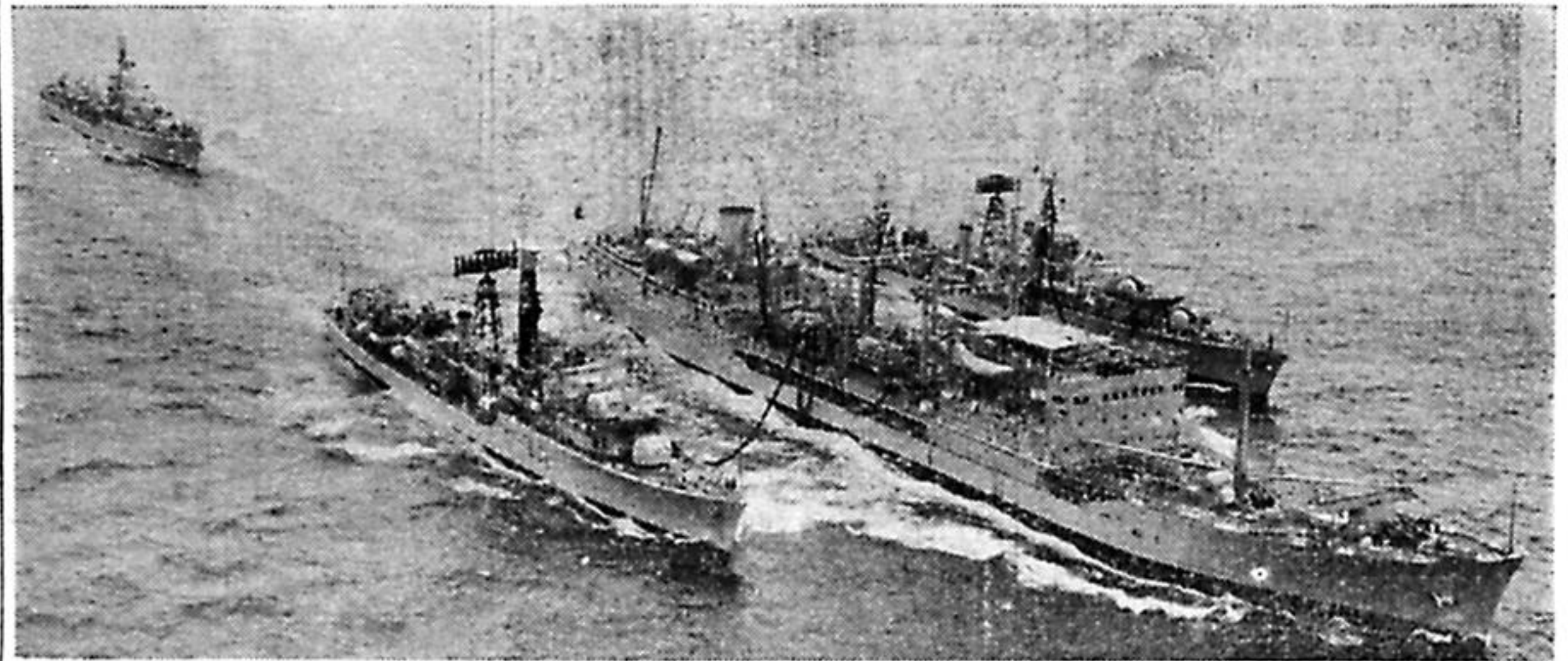
Italian origin. But if the divers have had the most interesting year, let it be said that the T.A.S., Gunnery and A.I.O. School and the Signal Training Centre have not been idle.

### WRENS WIN TROPHY

The Base Supply Organisation has continued to look after the pay accounts of the majority of personnel in the Mediterranean—about 5,000 accounts are currently held—and to keep a watch on the victualling and naval stores affairs of the smaller tenders. The mixed naval and W.R.N.S. staff have taken part in all kinds of activities, and amongst other things the Wrens have carried off the Athletics Trophy, provided the winner of the "Miss Manoel Island" beauty competition, and gained one promotion to Third Officer.

H.M.S. Leopard (Commander P. S. Hicks-Beach, Royal Navy) returned to Portsmouth on November 2 to pay off at the end of a two-year General Service Commission on the Home and South Atlantic Stations.

# Replenishments whilst under way



H.M.S. Broadsword (D.31) and H.M.S. Scorpion fuelling at sea from Tide Austral (now H.M.A.S. Supply). H.M.S. Dunkirk is in the "waiting" position

## Busy times at Gibraltar

THE Naval Dockyard at Gibraltar has had a full and busy year. The major tasks have included successive refits of destroyers, frigates and L.S.T.'s, their trials, and the preservation and maintenance of ships of the reserve fleet. The dockyard has also answered the many and frequent calls made upon it by visiting ships for major and minor repairs and for all kinds of logistic support.

The shore establishment H.M.S. Rooke, which takes its name from the Admiral who, in defiance of his orders from London, captured "The Rock" in 1704, today caters for the administrative needs of all naval personnel in Gibraltar including the crews of ships refitting and of the reserve fleet.

### FRIENDLY VISITS

Those familiar with the Rock will recall with pleasure trips across the border and perhaps by M.F.V. to Tangier. Nowadays access to Spain is easier, and on one occasion two M.F.V.'s penetrated 70 miles up the Rio Guadalquivir to attend the annual Feria in the city of Seville. It is also on record that the football team from H.M.S. Rooke won both home and away matches against the Royal Moroccan Navy—friendly events which it is hoped will become permanent fixtures in the future.

## AMERICANS WIN TROPHY AGAIN

THE Ghajn Tuffieha Range and Training Centre in the North West corner of Malta provides landing party training for all Ships and Establishments on the Mediterranean Station. For Royal Marine Detachments all aspects of minor tactics and weapon training are covered, but for the Sailors the emphasis is on shooting and landing parties.

In the shooting world the highlight of 1962 has been the annual Cassidy Trophy Match against the U.S. Sixth Fleet. This year the American team firing the Garrand rifle and the .45 in. Colt automatic, scored 1,744 points, exactly 200 more than the British joint R.N./R.M. team armed with the new self loading rifle and .38 in. revolver.

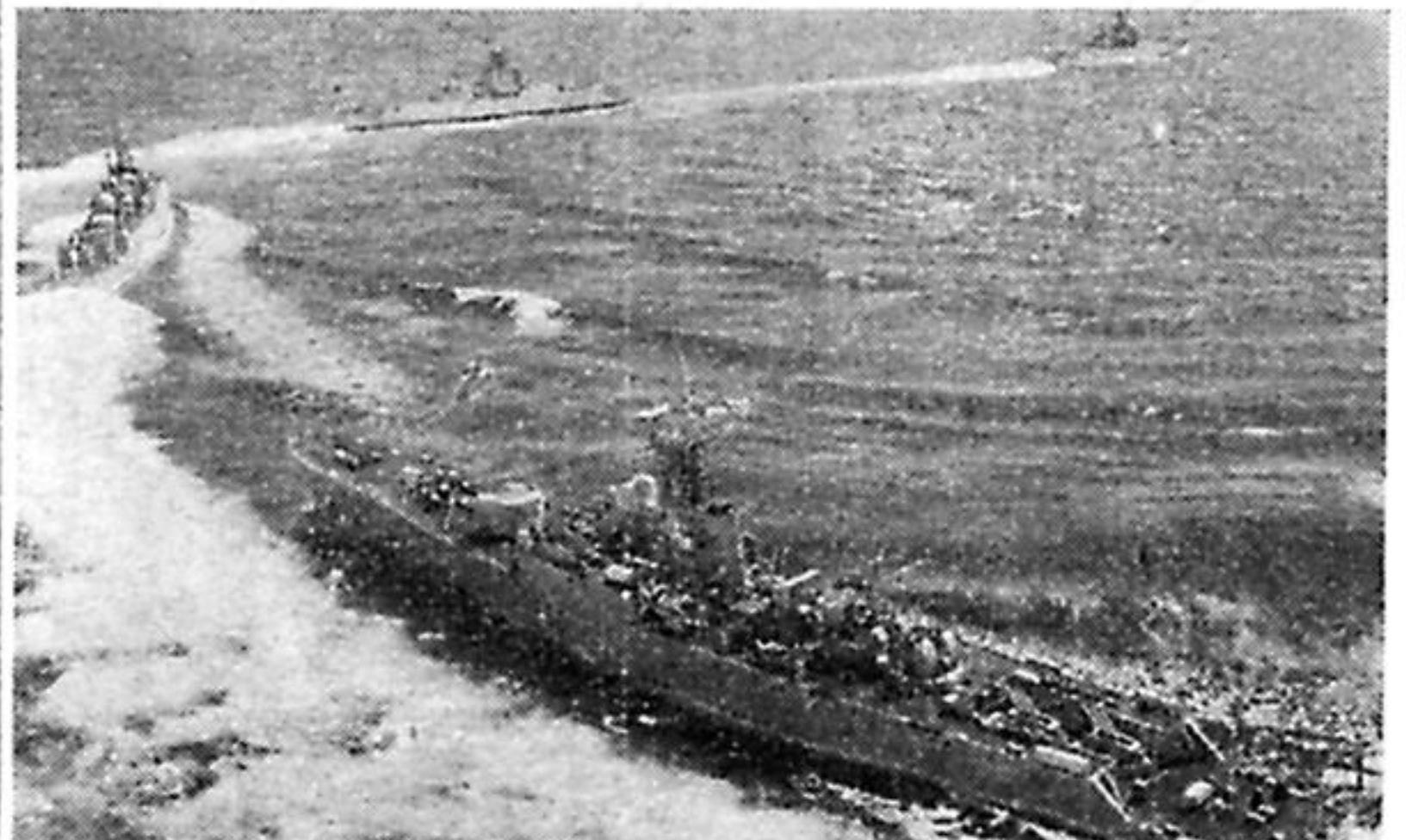
This was the eighth American win since the trophy was first competed for, but it is hoped to turn the tables next year. On a more cheerful note the Royal Navy again won the Malta Inter-Service Rifle and Pistol matches. The win in the rifle match was a fairly comfortable one, but in the pistol the Navy was only two points ahead of the R.A.F.

## NAVY WANTS MEN FOR 27 YEARS

IN the November issue of "Navy News" it was stated that the Admiralty had decided to allow ratings of the Seaman, E.R.A., Mechanician, Engineering Mechanic, Stores (V) and Electrical branches to re-enter the Service "to complete 27 years pensionable service" and that applications should be made to the Commodore, R.N. Barracks, Portsmouth, or the Commodore, H.M.S. Drake, Devonport.

The Editor has now been informed that applications should be made through the nearest Royal Navy and Royal Marine recruiting office.

## FOLLOW MY LEADER

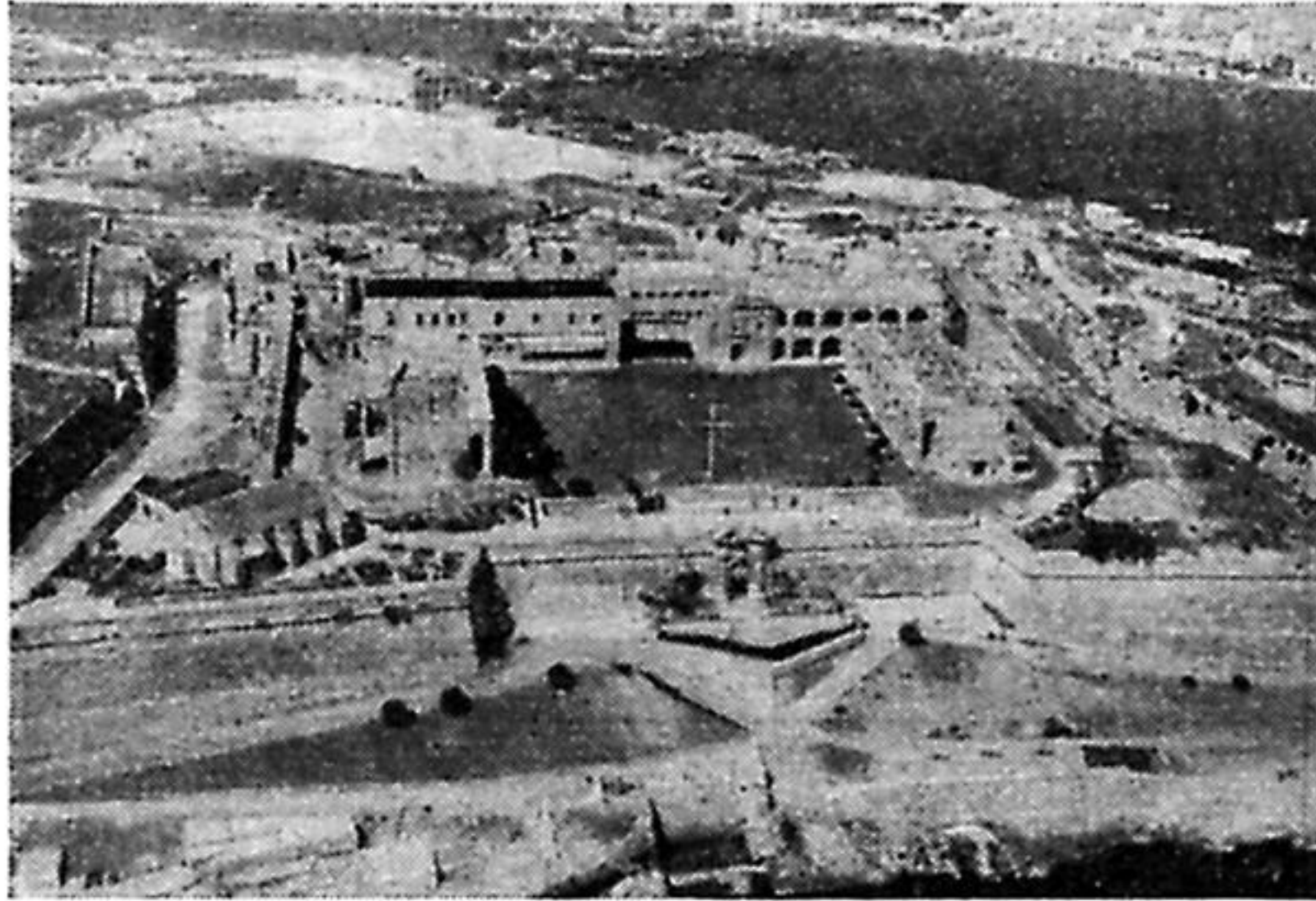


Ships of the Fifth Frigate Squadron at manoeuvres close to Malta. The ships are dressed with Jack and masthead flags in honour of a national occasion. Nearest to camera is H.M.S. Scarborough, and ahead are H.M.S. Ursa, Lowestoft and Berwick—the leader

## NEW MEDICAL DIRECTOR-GENERAL

**SURGEON REAR-ADMIRAL D. STEELE - PERKINS, C.V.O., Q.H.S., F.R.A.G.S., D.L.O.** is to be promoted to Surgeon Vice-Admiral and to be Medical Director-General of the Navy in succession to Surgeon Vice-Admiral Sir Robert Panckridge, K.B.E., C.B., Q.H.P.—the promotion and appointment to take effect on April 30, 1963.

Since promotion to Surgeon Captain in 1955 he has served as Senior Surgical Specialist at the former R.N. Hospital, Chatham, and the R.N. Hospital, Malta, where he was Deputy Medical Officer-in-Charge. Since 1961 he has been Command Medical Officer on the staff of the Commander-in-Chief, Portsmouth, and Medical Officer-in-Charge, R.N.H., Haslar.



H.M.S. Phoenixia, Manoel Island, Malta, is a splendid example of the fortifications of the Knights of St. John in Malta.

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# HOLDING THE BABY



Where is the patrol? Although caps are "flat-aback," and they are propping up a lamp-post and with hold-alls not usually associated with sailors in uniform unaccompanied by wives, Ian Macnaughton and Ian Curry look real sailors as they act in Philip King's and Falkland Cary's "Rock-a-bye, Sailor!" now running in London. This is the third of the "sailor" series, the two previous ones, "Sailor, Beware" and "Watch it, Sailor!" having run for five years between them in the West End. "Rock-a-bye, Sailor!" tells of the further adventures of the Hornett family, ruled by that redoubtable "battle-axe," "Ma" Hornett, played by Renee Houston. The uniforms were supplied by C. H. Bernard & Sons, Ltd., the well-known naval tailors, of Harwich. (Photo.— David Sim, London.)

# NO ASDIC DESTROYERS

(Continued from page 6, col. 5)

## VISIT TO BARCELONA

Ships of the Atlantic Fleet were dispersed to enable them to visit various Spanish ports, for a period of relaxation, after the strenuous days of Fleet exercises. The 6th Destroyer Flotilla accompanied H.M.S. Argus to Barcelona, where they were given a great welcome, and were continuously entertained. We were overwhelmed by the hospitality of the population of this very gay city. Theatres and dance halls opened about 11 p.m. and remained open to the early hours. A farewell cocktail party was given on board H.M.S. Argus to an unlimited number of guests. At the end of this four-day non-stop entertainment it was refreshing to get to sea again.

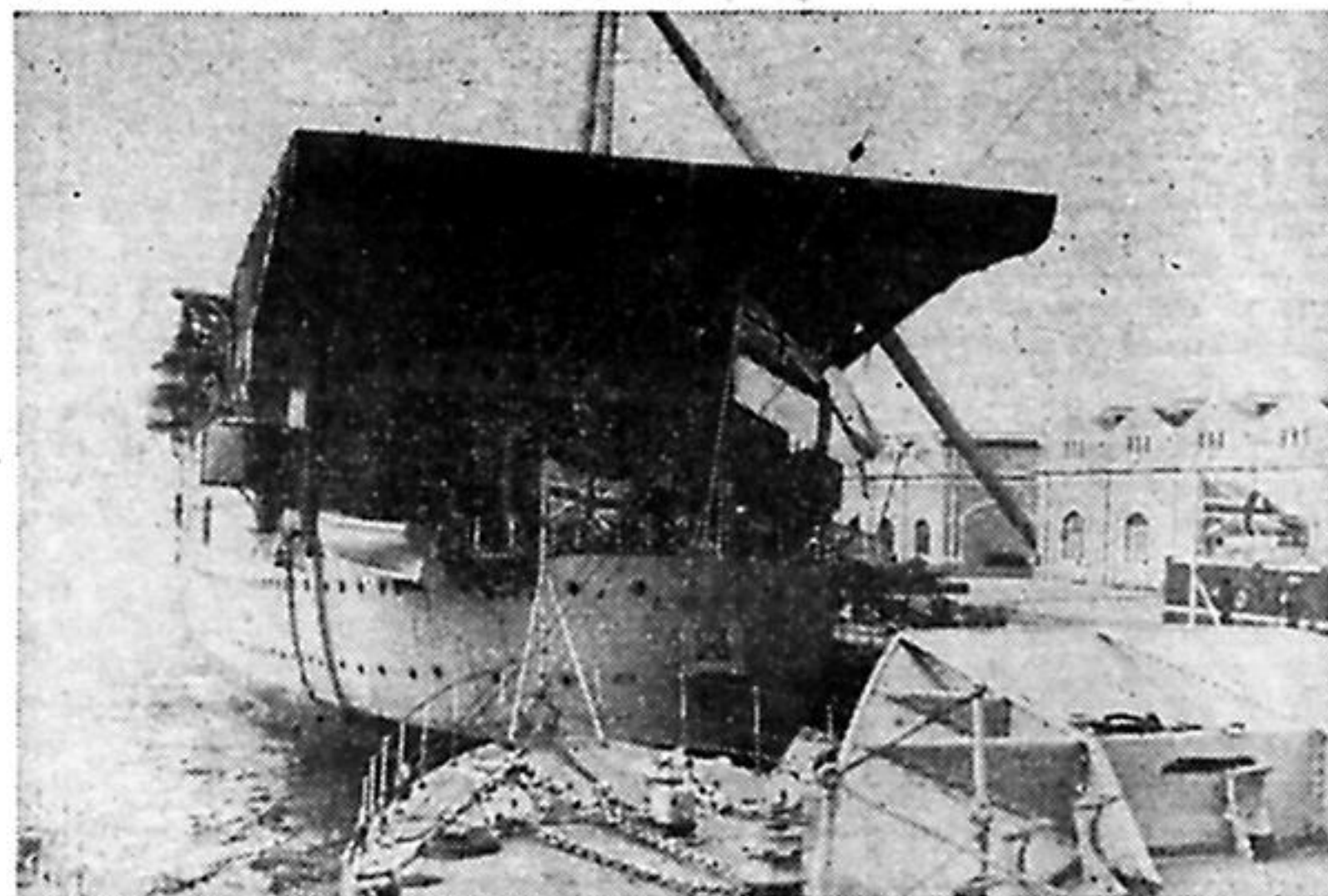
The Atlantic Fleet re-assembled at Gibraltar, and sailed in company homeward bound, but the accompanying Submarines and the 6th Flotilla were kept constantly at Asdic exercises, and whilst on passage up Channel, the Fleet was constantly attacked by Submarines, from the Devonport

and Portsmouth Commands. Finally ships of the Fleet dispersed to Home Ports to give Easter leave, H.M.S. Wessex proceeded to Chatham.

## EXAMINATIONS AGAIN

During the Spring Cruise, I had spent all my available time studying navigation, as I had applied to take the examinations in Navigation and Gunnery for the Command of a destroyer. I considered that my knowledge and experience in gunnery was of a high enough standard, to enable me to pass. I was therefore able to take these examinations during my leave, and passed them successfully.

It gave me a great thrill to know that I was now half-way through a C.O.'s examination, and I made up my mind to study Torpedo and Signals during the Summer Cruise, although the ban on Ex-Mate Lieutenants specialising, had been removed. I decided that I was now too old to specialise in Gunnery, and that I would now go all out to specialise in destroyers.



The stern of H.M.S. Argus taken from the bows of H.M.S. Wessex in Barcelona Harbour in 1924.

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# ALL OVER THE WORLD THE SWING IS TO ROTHMANS KING SIZE



# THE ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

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The Bishop of Coventry, Dr. Cuthbert Bardsley, flanked by some of the 60 Standards from branches of the Royal Naval Association, enters Coventry Cathedral for the dedication of the Coventry Branch's new Standard. (Photo: "Coventry Evening Telegraph")

## Country's growing need for moral courage—Bishop TWO BIG OCCASIONS FOR COVENTRY

ON the most appropriate day of the year, Sunday, October 21, the Standard of the Coventry Branch of the Royal Naval Association was dedicated in Coventry Cathedral in the presence of some 650 shipmates with about 60 branch Standards, from all over England, and about 600 sea cadets from the Midlands.

The occasion was a truly naval one, and past, present and future men of the Royal Navy were told by the Bishop of Coventry, Dr. Cuthbert Bardsley, of the country's growing need for moral courage and of men like Admiral Lord Nelson. The new Standard was carried by Shipmate Howard Jones and was dedicated by the Provost of Coventry, the

Rev. G. C. N. Williams, who was at sea with the Royal Navy during the war.

### OLD STANDARD LAID UP

At the same ceremony the Standard of the Coventry Branch of the Royal Naval Old Comrades' Association, dedicated about 16 years ago and carried on that occasion by Shipmate Sydney Bliss, was laid up in the new cathedral. Shipmate Bliss, escorted by some who were present when the Standard was dedicated in 1946, again carried the Standard for the laying-up ceremony.

The Old Comrades' Association was disbanded in 1954, but in 1955 the Coventry Branch of the Royal Naval Association was formed and this took over the old Standard.

The parade through the city streets before the service attracted considerable attention and so did the march past afterwards. The march past was followed by tea and a most enjoyable social evening.

After the closure of the Old Comrades' Association a few ex-naval men got together to keep alive the spirit of unity, loyalty and comradeship they had found in the Royal Navy, and among them was Shipmate F. Jephcott, the present chairman of the branch. The energy and perseverance shown by the few has borne fruit and today the Coventry Branch has a membership of 250, and that number is still increasing.

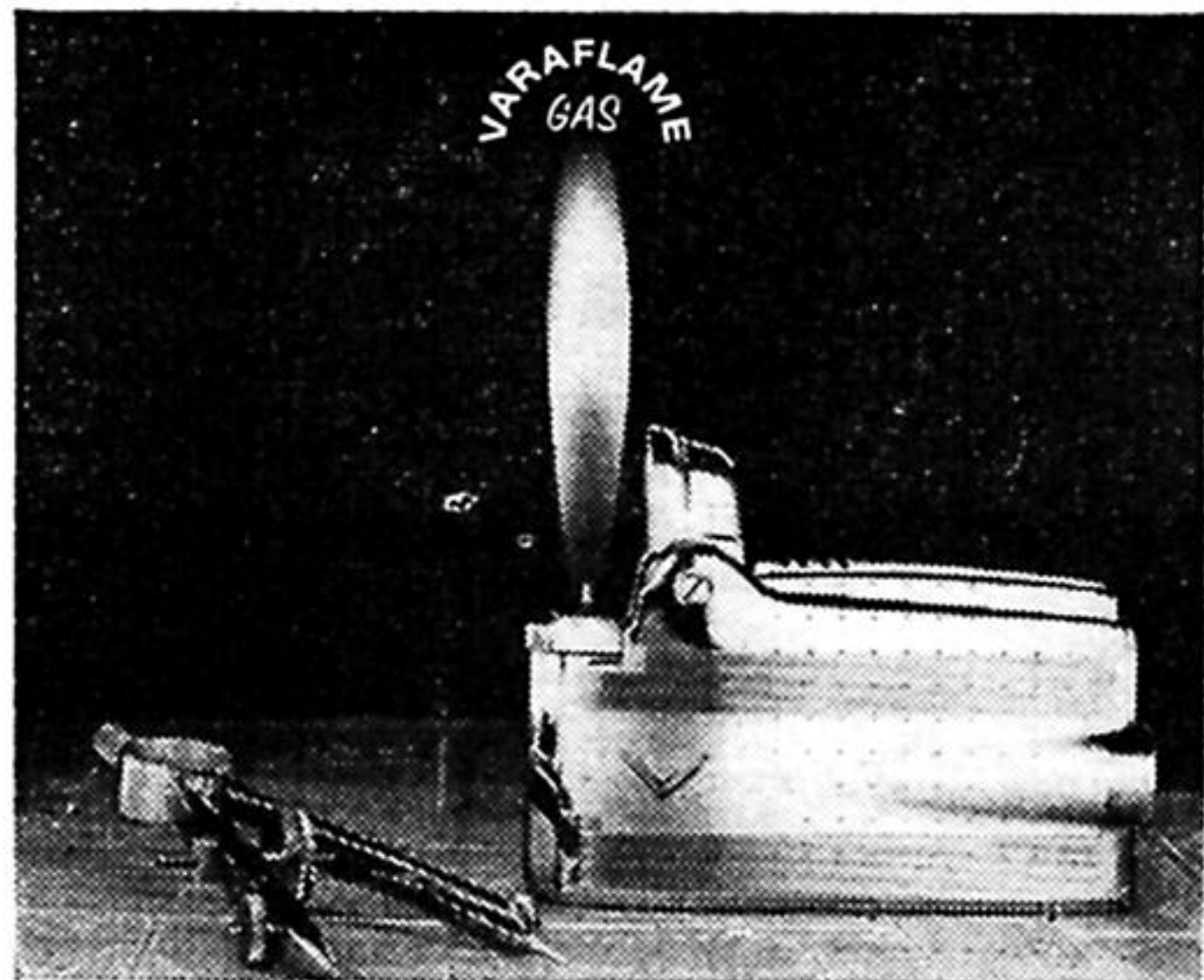
### NEW SOCIAL CLUB

Another important occasion for the Coventry Branch was the opening of its new social club in Much Park Street on November 2, when Alderman Harry Weston "pulled" the first pint.

The new club has a truly nautical atmosphere, for ships' bells, port and starboard lights, warship models, paintings and photographs decorate the headquarters, the result of months of hard work by some of the shipmates of the branch. Dozens of cap tallies are evident, including the cap ribbon of a German U-boat sailor, and the central feature of the bar is a ship's wheel.

### UNFULFILLED AMBITION

The shipmates, however, have still one ambition unfulfilled. They intend to build their own permanent headquarters and have £6,500 in the building fund. The members realise that they have a long way to go before attaining their objective, but the year 1970 is being mentioned as a possible target.



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## PLAQUES WILL HAVE PLACES OF HONOUR

PLAQUES from H.M.S. Sea Eagle and the Royal Naval Aircraft Yard, Sydenham, were received by the president of the Belfast branch of the Royal Naval Association, Captain Sir Richard Pim, K.B.E., V.R.D., D.L., R.N.V.R., at the eighth annual dinner of the branch.

The plaques were presented by Cdr. W. Bond, R.N., representing the Senior Naval Officer Northern Ireland, Capt. D. Mason, R.N., and Cdr. T. G. Horton, R.N., on behalf of Capt. Kemp, R.N., Superintendent of the R.N. Aircraft Yard.

After the Loyal Toast, a telegram from H.M. The Queen was received with acclamation. Cdr. Bond ably proposed the toast of The Royal Naval Association, and the Irish Area delegate, Shipmate Lieut. (E) C. A. Maxwell, M.B.E., D.S.C., M.I.Mar., E., R.N. (ret) responded.

Cdr. Horton, in proposing the toast of the Belfast branch, gave some interesting figures regarding employment of civilians at Sydenham. Responding to this toast the branch president regaled those present with an interesting, witty speech, recounting a few of his amusing experiences as an R.N.V.R. officer in two world wars.

He also expressed the best thanks of the branch for the two plaques which, he assured the donors, would find places of honour in the branch's rooms. He also paid tribute to the secretary, Shipmate T. Brown, for the excellent organisation of the dinner and for his untiring work in the

interests of the association in the city.

### 'EAST INDIES' ANECDOTES

The toast of Our Guests was given by Shipmate Lieut. R. D. Rolston, R.N.R., a founder member of the branch and one of its vice-presidents. The guest of honour, the Deputy Lord Mayor of Belfast, Councillor W. Jenkins, who has spent many years in India replied and entertained the members with anecdotes which recalled to some shipmates memories of the "East Indies."

Cdr. York, H.M.S. Kent, also expressed the thanks of the guests who included representatives from the Bangor, Portadown and Lisburn branches, also other Regimental Associations in the city.

Messrs. Dempster, Thompson and Wilson entertained the company with music and song.

Amongst those who sent apologies for non-attendance were the Senior Naval Officer Northern Ireland, the Captain Superintendent of the R.N. Aircraft Yard and the Lord Mayor of Belfast, Alderman Martin Wallace, who served under the White Ensign with the rank of Lieutenant during 1914-1918, and is a Life Member of the Belfast branch.

Capt. R. Roberts, R.N., the former Superintendent of the R.N. Aircraft Yard paid the branch a visit recently and introduced his successor, Capt. Kemp, R.N.

### VISIT OF H.M.S. BELFAST

The visit of H.M.S. Belfast to her name town occasioned a good deal of excitement and exchanges of hospitality. The Belfast branch was very pleased to welcome so many of the ship's company to its headquarters.

## Served with Captain Scott

SHIPMATE William Alfred Hawkins, a member of the Bridport branch of the Royal Naval Association and known to everyone at West Bay as "Bill," has died at the age of 75. Known to thousands of holiday-makers, he was one of two people claiming to be natives of the old Bridport harbour, which had a community of 70.

Shipmate Hawkins entered the Royal Navy as a boy in 1901, retiring in 1926. His training was served in one of the old "wooden walls," and he later served in destroyers and then in submarines. Later he served with Capt. Robert Falcon Scott of Antarctic fame.

### JUTLAND VETERAN

At the Battle of Jutland Shipmate Hawkins was serving in H.M.S. St. Vincent and from 1920-23 saw service in a gunboat in the Yangtze.

At his funeral the coffin was covered by a White Ensign and members of the Bridport branch present included Capt. E. W. Whittington-Ince, a vice-president, representing the president of the branch (Admiral Sir Gerald V. Gladstone), Lieut.-Colonel M. R. Yeo, R.M., Shipmates W. M. Perfit (chairman), W. R. N. Cast (secretary), H. Chubb, R. Atkins, J. McDonald, R. V. R. Collins, C. Shaw, B. Welch, B. Bengree and J. Altham.

## New Headquarters and Skittle Alley

IN addition to attending the annual reunion, members of the Portland branch of the Royal Naval Association, in concert with various Service associations, were able to visit Coventry Cathedral on Trafalgar Day.

The Portland shipmates consider that Coventry put on an excellent show and they extend their thanks and congratulations.

The branch's .22 rifle team is doing well again this year and ready for all challenges.

On December 6 the branch moves to new headquarters—to what was the prison. At the new headquarters is a fine skittle alley, and the Portland members hope to be able to give other branches a good game.

## SHIP'S WHEEL WANTED

THE Ashford (Kent) branch of the Royal Naval Association will be holding its 15th annual dinner in early February next year, and the members are in the throes of a refit.

The "bridge," with its port and starboard lights, masthead light and White Ensign, looks fine, but one thing is missing. Is there any shipmate who could help Ashford to obtain a ship's wheel? The members are anxious to hand over a wheel to the branch's president at the annual dinner.

Some 40 shipmates and their ladies were present at the annual reunion and all had a splendid time. They did not get back to Ashford until about 2.30 a.m., but the secretary and other shipmates managed to get a couple of hours' sleep and then set off for Deal for a day's competition sea fishing. "Some folk never give up," says our reporter.

A new idea has been put forward to the members. It is an eight-day coach tour, staying at Great Yarmouth, with day trips to the Fens and the Broads, to say nothing of the visits to local branches of the Association.

## Order or Renewal Form

(Delete as appropriate)

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I enclose herewith money order/postal order/cheque value 8s. being a subscription for 12 issues, including postage

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If member of R.N. Association, please state Branch

## Guest of Honour at his own branch

WHEN the Camberley branch of the Royal Naval Association held its seventh annual dinner and dance on November 3, 97 members and their friends sat down to the dinner and were joined by members from other branches for the dance.

The guest of honour of the evening was a member of the branch, Shipmate "Bill" Pibworth, an Association member for over 20 years, who was "piped aboard" in traditional manner.

Shipmate R. Berg, the president of the branch proposed the Loyal Toast and, in the absence of Lieut.-Cdr. R. Kitson, the secretary, Shipmate S. Head proposed the toast of The Royal Naval Association.

### INCREASED SUBSCRIPTIONS

Shipmate Head told those present of the rise in subscriptions for 1963. He pointed out that owing to the increased cost of things today, the rise was something that could not be avoided if the Association was to be maintained. He concluded his short address by saying that people often asked the question "What do you get out of it?"

## Farewell Gift for Cardiff President

THE members of the Cardiff branch of the Royal Naval Association said goodbye to their president, Capt. A. P. Atwell, C.B.E., R.N., and Mrs. Atwell on October 17 at a social evening, some 50 members and wives being present.

The vice-president of the branch, Shipmate J. Graham, presented Capt. Atwell with a cigarette case and lighter and Mrs. Atwell was presented with a bouquet.

Thanking the members for their kindness Capt. Atwell, who is retiring to Devon, said how sorry he and Mrs. Atwell were to leave Wales and, in particular, the Cardiff branch where they had spent many enjoyable evenings and made so many good friends.

At the close of the evening all the members sang "We'll keep a welcome in the hillside."

## CASTLEFORD TO ENTERTAIN 80 'WEAR-SIDERS'

ALTHOUGH not much news has come from Castleford and District Royal Naval Association lately, "Navy News" is informed that the association is as active as ever. There have been various social activities and the annual Trafalgar Dance was an unqualified success.

Arrangements are being made to entertain shipmates from the Wear branch of the Royal Naval Association. It is understood that about 80 Wear shipmates and friends are going to Huddersfield on December 8 hoping to see Sunderland beat Huddersfield.

Any member of the Royal Naval Association will be welcome at this social evening, but in order that the necessary catering arrangements can be made and so ensure a pleasant evening for everyone, the secretary, R. Darley, 9 East Drive, Chequerfield Estate, Pontefract, should be informed. The Castleford headquarters is at the Drill Hall, Healdfield Road, off Ferrybridge Road, Castleford.

## Do You Live In A Coastal Area?

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Volunteers are trained in their spare time for special duties to take their place in a Naval Port Organisation in emergency, either ashore or afloat.

For details apply to your nearest Royal Naval Recruiting Office, or write direct to:- Command Naval Auxiliary Officer, Office of the Commander-in-Chief, H.M. Dockyard, Portsmouth, Office of the Commander-in-Chief, Plymouth or Office of the Flag Officer Scotland and Northern Ireland, Rosyth, Fife.

## BLACKHALL'S NEW CLUB OPENED

EVERY member of the Blackhall and Coastal branch of the Royal Naval Association is highly delighted with the new headquarters and club which had its official opening on December 1.

For a branch which has been in existence for about only three and a half years, Blackhall has done remarkably well. To have built its own club and to have purchased its Standard and had it dedicated in that short time shows what can be done by all pulling together. The ladies of the branch have been of the greatest help.

The new headquarters are very comfortable and the furnishings and amenities first class. On the main doors, which are made of glass, the Association crests were painted by Miss M. Craggs, daughter of Shipmate A. Craggs, and very "shipshape" they look. The "wardroom" is furnished in blue and gold and is really snug and cosy. The canteen and recreation space is in red and blue, the floor tiling being blue and gold.

The attractiveness of the club, however, does not end with its furnishings. It houses a warmth and a welcome, not only to the shipmates of the branch, but also to all visitors who are made more than welcome.

Shipmate Clough, of the Portland branch, was one of the first visitors and he was very impressed with the fine effort the branch members and their ladies had made.

### A ROBBERY

Unfortunately a week after the unofficial opening the premises were broken into and the branch suffered a £40 "set back." Everyone is hoping that the culprit will soon be brought to book.

He reminded members that the important thing was not what you get out of it, but what was put into it. "It is this," he said, "that makes happy branches like I have the pleasure to say our's is."

The branch chairman, Shipmate "Bill" Gunns proposed the toast of the Guests and in doing so he paid a warm tribute to Shipmate "Bill" Pibworth. Although Shipmate Pibworth had been with the branch for only three years, he had been a member of the Association for over 20 years and, as Delegate for the branch at Area Conferences he had done a wonderful job of work for the branch.

In his reply Shipmate Pibworth said that when he joined the Association in 1930 he did so because he could see something he could take an interest in. He had done his best in the three branches he had belonged to, mentioning that he had been a founder-member of Westminster branch and had the honour of being its chairman for about 13 years.

He recalled his early days in the Navy in 1916 when his pay was 3s. 6d. per week. Two shillings of this was allotted to his mother and the paymaster kept back another 1s. which left a meagre "tanner"—not enough for a "run ashore."

A splendid dance concluded a most successful evening.

THE EDITOR WISHES ALL READERS A HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND A PEACEFUL AND PROSPEROUS 1963

## CHEAM BRANCH NOW HAS SIX EX-WRENS

DURING the last month the Cheam and Worcester Park branch of the Royal Naval Association has increased its membership by four—two of whom are ex-Wrens. This increase is not a startling one for the branch's recruiting campaign, but at any rate it is a start. There are now six ex-Wrens in the ship's company and the branch finds them a great asset.

The "Teenage Twist Session" was a great success and the younger element—and the "not-so-young"—are asking for more sessions.

The Ladies' Section went to the Black and White Minstrels Show for their annual outing. The ladies made splendid "hosts" and the shipmates thank them for a splendid evening. The ladies' help in running the dance buffets is most appreciated too.

The branch was represented at the Remembrance Day service at St. Dunstan's Church, Cheam, the branch Standard, carried by Shipmate V. Bailey, being in evidence. Shipmate F. W. Matthews, chairman of the branch, laid a wreath in memory of those shipmates who so gallantly gave their lives for freedom.

### DROP IN MEMBERSHIP

After his visit to No. 2 Area meeting, the chairman reported that there seems to be anxious times ahead for the Association. He reported an alarming drop in membership, but felt that with tenacity of purpose there could be an improvement.

The oldest shipmate at Cheam and Worcester Park is Shipmate Jack

Young who, at the age of 84, still manages to get along to meetings and to enjoy every moment with the shipmates. Cheam wishes him many more years with them.

The branch deeply regrets the loss of its vice-president, Shipmate Alderman A. L. Hasted. A real stalwart, he will be greatly missed by all, and the members extend their deepest sympathy to Mrs. Hasted and family.

## Rhondda's gift to Sea Cadets

THANKS to the generosity of the Rhondda branch of the Royal Naval Association the Rhondda East and Rhondda West Sea Cadet Corps have their own Colours.

Over 300 Sea Cadets from South Wales were present when the Colours were presented at a special drum head service conducted by the Chaplain of the Rhondda branch, the Rev. W. J. Loyns. The Colours were presented by the Lord Lieutenant of Glamorgan, Colonel C. G. Traherne, K.St.J., T.D., who, previously had inspected the Cadets. He was thanked by Lieut.-Cdr. J. E. Williams, R.N.R., president of the branch.

At the conclusion of the Colours Presentation, the Lord Lieutenant and the Mayor of Rhondda, Alderman Ioan Williams, J.P., took the salute at a march past.

A luncheon followed, presided over by Lieut.-Cdr. Williams. Mr. Gerald Blackmore, president of the Rhondda Sea Cadet Corps proposed the toast of the guest of honour and the Lord Lieutenant, in his reply, said that it was most fitting that after ten years in commission the Rhondda branch of the Royal Naval Association had made the presentations possible.

The toast of the Rhondda branch was proposed by Alderman Sidney Mitchell, O.B.E., J.P., and Shipmate Elwyn Israel, responding, said he wished to place on record the names of the pioneers who, ten years ago, had worked so hard to found the Rhondda branch. These included Shipmates Idwal Cook, E. H. Walters, J. Powell, Ellis Russel and Bryn Thomas.

Many obstacles had been overcome and now, by personal contributions and special efforts they had secured permanent headquarters at Pandy Square, Tonypany.

The Colours were dedicated at St. Andrews Church, Llwynypia at a service conducted by the Rev. W. J. Loyns, assisted by the Rev. D. C. Rees, B.A., the vicar.

## UNTRAINED SEAMEN WERE A PROBLEM

(In his first article Capt. Waight told of the setting up at Ardrossan of a Naval Operational and Repair Base, and the commissioning of H.M.S. Fortitude, and the sinking of the German submarine U.33 by H.M.S. Gleaner.)

AS the trawlers and drifters converted on the Clyde were completed, they were sailed to Ardrossan, the last port of call before proceeding to the port on which they were based. Great care was needed, therefore, in framing the "Sailing Orders" and to see that the crews had a working knowledge of the guns and equipment with which their vessels were fitted.

The auxiliary vessels were commanded by a lieutenant, R.N.R., or a skipper. The crews consisted of men specially recruited for service in the Auxiliary Patrol Service. One of the necessary qualifications was that the applicant had served at sea as a deck-hand on a trawler, drifter, yacht or tug. Unfortunately, it was discovered that on recruitment no effort had been made to verify what qualifications the applicant had.

### UNTRAINED DECKHANDS

Consequently raw recruits, untrained but dressed as seamen, were drafted to man these vessels. The inexperience was abruptly brought to the notice of the commanding officers

a week to ten days to train both the commanding officers and crews. The training was placed in the hands of Lieut.-Cdr. A. E. Way, M.B.E., R.N.—a very efficient officer.

I visited Lowestoft where the headquarters of the Auxiliary Patrol Service were established and arrangements were made to send crews destined to man auxiliary vessels to Ardrossan for two weeks' training before being drafted. This was a step in the right direction.

### DOCKYARDS AT PRESSURE

The Ardrossan Dockyard was soon working at high pressure and, for that matter, so were the yards at Troon and Irvine. At Ardrossan trawlers were being built and others were being converted for minesweeping or anti-submarine work. In addition, a number of other vessels were either refitting or boiler cleaning. At Troon sloops, in addition to trawlers, were being built, and other trawlers were being converted and destroyers refitted.

At Ayr the dockyard, too, concentrated on repairs to merchant ships, whilst Irvine dealt with drifters, yachts and motor launches. At a later date Ardrossan and Troon yards undertook docking and refits of submarines. The co-operation of the managers everywhere was first class.

To ease the load from off my shoulders the Admiralty appointed two commanders (retired) as resident

(Continued on page 15, column 1)

Nearly one hundredweight of currants, 210 eggs and nine bottles of rum were among the ingredients used in the making of Christmas puddings for the Juniors at H.M.S. Ganges. The puddings include 200 sixpences.



## WATNEYS Brown Ale

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Try also WATNEYS PALE ALE; CREAM LABEL STOUT; RED BARREL—WATNEYS KEG

# BANGS BEFORE GRIM DISPLAY

## Near-perfect weather at Christmas

(BY OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT)

WHEN Captain Cook discovered Christmas Island on Christmas Eve, 1777, it is unlikely that even in his wildest dreams he could have foreseen the use to which his discovery would be put nearly two hundred years later. Having named and charted the island, he was probably convinced that it would be gradually forgotten, and remain forever an obscure and uninhabited British possession in the middle of the vast Pacific.

But in 1957, when the British atomic tests took place, the name of Christmas Island became as familiar to people in Britain as anywhere else overseas. After the few years of obscurity which followed, the island again hit the headlines early this year when the American series of tests (Operation "Dominic") started. One of the Navy's smallest and farthest-flung units found its temporary home making front-page news, and its officers and men having balcony seats for one of the most awesome (and expensive) shows produced by man.

### ISLAND IN THE SUN

Many ratings, on seeing N.P. 5555 on their Draft Orders, are little the wiser as to where they will be sent, and on learning that their home for the next year will be Christmas Island imagine themselves living under canvas on a desolate sandbank about a mile long, set in shark-infested waters, tormented by poisonous insects, and in an appallingly oppressive heat.

Christmas Island, however, is very different to the conception that most people have of it. It is by no means a small island, being 32 miles long by 18 at its widest point, and in fact it enjoys the distinction of being the largest coral atoll in the world. It is very roughly shaped like a flat, single-ended spanner, and like all coral atolls is made of a coral growth on top of a submarine volcanic peak (luckily extinct). It is extremely flat and its highest point is only about 30 feet. The surrounding ocean, however, is exceptionally deep, and the sea bed slopes very steeply from the shore. The fringing reef, about 200 yards wide, extends right round the island except for a convenient break leading into the very shallow central lagoon. Just inside the entrance to this lagoon lies the settlement, grandly called Port of London. (A ruined settlement at the other side of the entrance is called Paris.)

Christmas Island is one of a group called the Line Islands, which in turn form part of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony. Christmas is 120 miles north of the equator and 1,200 miles south of Hawaii, and the Great Circle distance to London is 8,600 miles—five and a half weeks by sea.

### LOVELY COCONUTS

On arriving by air at Christmas one is struck first by the many different-coloured lakes and lagoons dark reds, blues and bright greens, and secondly by the amount of thriving vegetation. The salt bush, a tough, not unattractive shrub with a shiny green leaf, seems to prefer the most arid parts of the island. The north and south-west parts of the island are covered with coconut trees, but all these have in fact been planted artificially as copra plantations. These are worked by about 450 Gilbertese, who do not, however, belong permanently to Christmas but have been brought in for the planta-

tion from various islands in the colony. Christmas Island is basically uninhabited.

Although the humidity is extremely high, and corrosion plays havoc with everything from steel to leather, the climate is not at all oppressive, and in fact is as near perfect as one could hope for because of the constant and cool easterly breeze. The temperature remains between 75° and 85° all the year round, and the weather does not change from season to season except for slightly stronger winds in the winter.

### COMBINED OPERATIONS

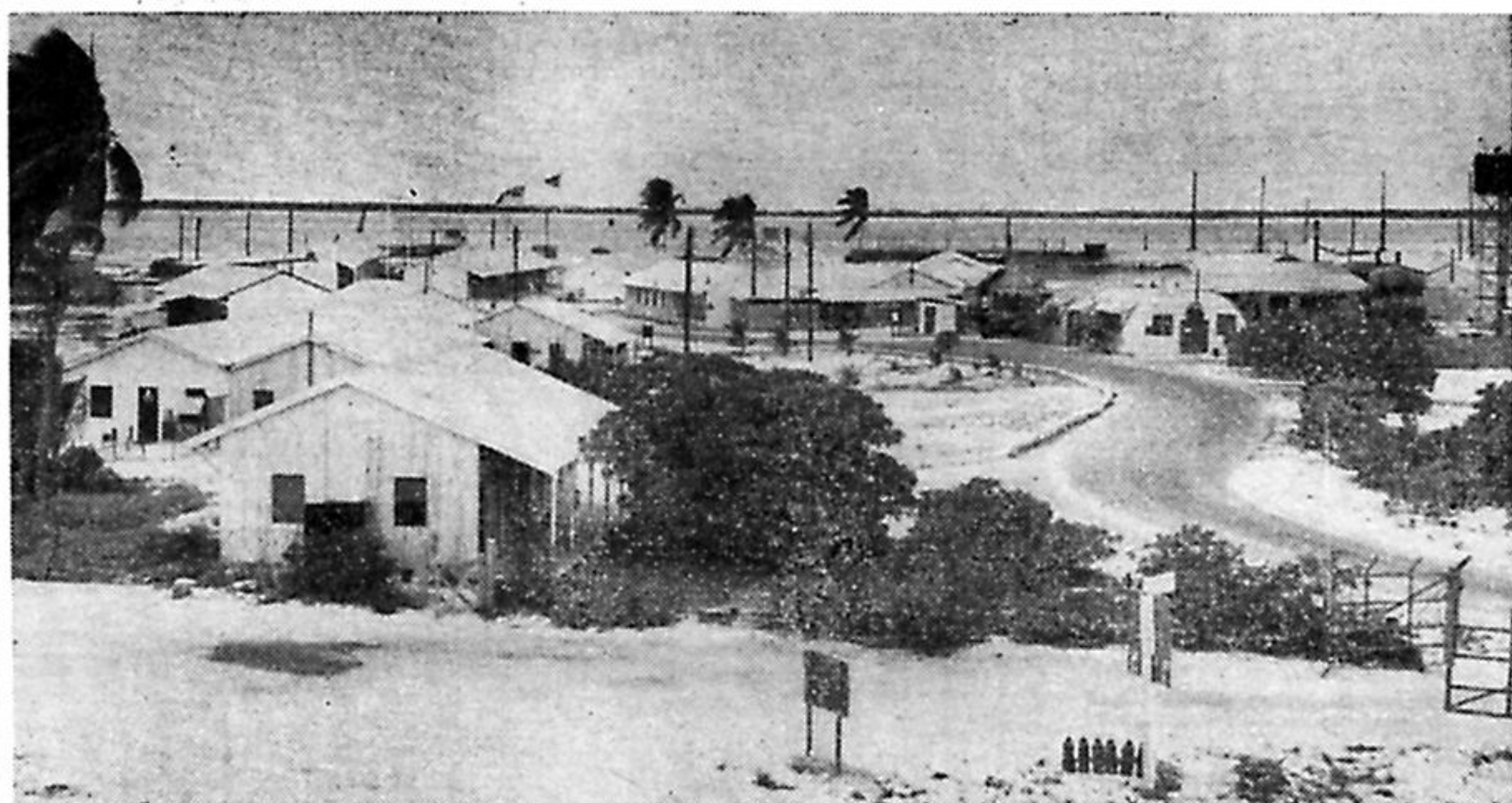
Naval Party 5555 consists of the Commanding Officer (who also carries out the duties of Resident Naval Officer and Harbourmaster) the Base Engineer Officer, and 32 ratings of all branches. We form the (numerically) smallest part of the inter-Service organisation which comprises the R.A.F. Station, Christmas Island. The R.A.F. have about 190 personnel, and the Royal Engineers (who are responsible for power and water services and all construction) 100 officers and other ranks. The three Services are accommodated in wooden buildings, which are spacious and comfortable, in the Port Camp at Port of London.

The task of the naval party is to man and maintain the various craft which are essential for unloading store ships and maintaining the channel buoys, to look after the workshops, jetties, slipway and an Emmet-like distilling plant inappropriately called Felicity-Anne, and to keep the sea defences in good repair. As age and corrosion take their toll, the task becomes more difficult. The busiest time for us is when a store ship arrives; the L.C.Ms. then prove their worth as ideal craft for transporting the cargo ashore from the ships anchored beyond the reef.

### AMERICAN "BUILD-UP"

Operation "Dominic," the American series of nuclear tests, for which the build-up of Christmas Island started last February, gave all three Services a considerable amount of hard but interesting extra work. We were eventually outnumbered by the U.S. Navy by five to one, and the normally more-than-adequate alongside berths were constantly occupied by L.C.Us. and L.C.Ms. flying the Stars and Stripes. Thirty-seven different U.S. Navy ships came to the island during the operation, some of them several times.

The nuclear explosions themselves provided a beautiful if grim before-breakfast spectacle. There were 24 altogether, sometimes as many as three taking place in one week. The interest and excitement of watching the developing fireball and mushroom cloud wore off after the first few shots; everyone was aware of the danger of looking straight at the flash, and the camp went about its normal business during the count-down.



A general view of the camp on Christmas Island

When the series of tests ended in July of this year, the Americans pulled out and left us more or less as we were before. Although the speed of the build-up was noteworthy, that of the "roll-up" was remarkable. The thought of getting home to the States provided a big incentive.

### V.I.P.s.

The end of the tests was an anticlimax, when the searchlight of world interest which had been on us for six months was turned away and we slipped back into relative obscurity. But we have certainly not felt neglected, and have been honoured by several visits in the last year—the First Sea Lord and Lady John in February, the Chief of the Air Staff (Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Thomas Pike)

and Lady Pike in April, the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Transport Command, at the end of last year, followed soon after by the Engineer-in-Chief.

### SPORT FOR ALL

There is plenty of work to be done on Christmas, but there is also plenty of opportunity for sport of all kinds. Soccer, hockey, tennis and cricket are all enthusiastically played, and conditions for aqua-lunging, sailing, water-skiing and fishing are ideal. Men who would not dream of taking up these sports in England do so at Christmas. Whether they keep them up or not when they get back to icy English wind and rain is another matter!

There is excellent bathing in the lagoon, but this is prohibited off the coast because of the dangerous reef.

### "TRAFALGAR" CLUB

There are no "runs ashore," Portsmouth style, on Christmas Island, although leave can be taken in Honolulu. Each of the three Services has its own club the Navy's, the Trafalgar Club, was opened for the first time by the Base Commander on Trafalgar Eve this year. Except for the outside walls and roof, which existed already, the club was constructed entirely by ratings of the Naval Party. The completed product is a first-class club, which is not only very comfortable and attractively decorated, but gives the impression that one is "away from it all," and not in fact in a wooden building like all the others. It is running well and its only problem appears to be that it is making too much money!

Life on Christmas Island is a bit (Continued on page 15, column 1)

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# Naval display team at Festival of Remembrance

At this year's Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall on November 10, the Royal Naval School of Physical Training mounted a chair tricks display as part of the Royal Navy's contribution.

The Festival of Remembrance is always a very moving and memorable occasion, and it is both an honour and a personal ambition amongst many physical training instructors to appear among the participants.

The performers were chosen from the staff and ratings on course at the School, a total of 25 ratings being available from which to choose the final 15.

The display lasted eight minutes and was very different from the usual run of chair tricks, inasmuch that the method used was devised to suit the circular arena of the Albert Hall, and gymnastic movements were introduced for the first time as part of the display. The movements in and outwards and around the circle produced a very pleasing effect, somewhat similar to the opening and closing of a flower.

## THIRTY HOURS' TRAINING

The display party completed some 30 hours' training spread over a period of six weeks. Because of the strenuous nature and length of the display, training sessions were confined to half-hour periods.

Two performances were given at the School before leaving for London and at one the Commander-in-Chief and a large number of senior officers

from the Portsmouth Command attended. Wives, sweethearts and friends of the display team attended the other. The Festival was televised in its entirety and it is hoped that many who could not attend the two displays in Portsmouth were able to enjoy the Albert Hall performance which was graced by Her Majesty The Queen and members of the Royal Family.

## 'LOST' IN THE MOUNTAINS

THREE apprentices from H.M.S. Caledonia, the Rosyth training establishment, were "lost" in the Cairngorm mountains, Inverness-shire, for over 28 hours. The three youths failed to return to their base camp near Aviemore on November 27 after having been out in the mountains on a training expedition.

The following day the remaining members of the expedition, under Lieut. John Bingeman, R.N., organised a search party assisted by local police, a Royal Air Force Mountain Rescue team from Leuchars and local civilians. A Royal Naval helicopter from Lossiemouth also took part in the search.

Some 28 hours after they had last been seen the boys arrived at a cottage near Tomintoul, 15 miles from where they had entered the mountains. They had taken a wrong turning and just

kept walking till they reached civilisation. As they had plenty of warm clothing and food they were none the worse for having spent a night out in the open.

The boys were all 17 years of age. They were Brian Dickson of Edinburgh, Michael Sturman of London, and Gary Hale of Cardiff.

## NAVY HOCKEY SELECTOR PLAYED FOR THIRTY YEARS

BY the time the December issue of "Navy News" is published, the Inter-Command Hockey matches will have been played and from those matches, closely watched by the Navy Selector, will be selected those whom the Selector wishes to attend the coaching week-end Navy XI will, eventually, be selected.

This season's Navy Selector is Instructor Lieut.-Cdr. W. L. Blamey, B.Sc., R.N., of Drayton, whose own playing record is one of which he can be justifiably proud.

In 1936 "Lawry" Blamey gained his "purple" at London University and played for the U.A.U. the same year. He played regularly for his university XI until he entered the Royal Navy in 1939.

His hockey career as a left half was, of necessity, restricted from 1939 to 1945, but in 1948 he achieved his ambition. Not only did he gain his first inter-Service cap, but also played for Scotland against all three home countries. He continued to play for the Royal Navy when appointments permitted between 1946 and 1957. His playing record for Devon extends over an even longer period—1939 to 1959.

## RNBT

The Men of the Royal Navy have supported and administered their own fund since 1922. During that time £3,114,032 has been expended in grants to serving and ex-servicemen, their families and dependants who were in necessity or distress. £622,874 to kindred organisations and Children's Homes; and £387,025 for training and finding employment.

RNBT maintains its own Home for Aged ex-Naval Men in Gillingham, Kent; and the Naval School of Motoring, Portsmouth, where Naval men are taught to drive and service motor vehicles.

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## Advancements

CONFIRMATION has been received that the following have been advanced to the Chief Petty Officer or Chief Artificer rate:

To Chief Petty Officer  
JX856616 J. R. R. Steer, JX 660414 M. J. Wood, JX158423 R. J. Edwards, JX 581678 N. J. Poole, JX 760173 J. W. Binks, JX 820269 B. W. Miller, JX 156198 T. L. Reynolds, JX 760499 R. Smalley, JX 661402 D. M. Edwards, JX 301629 A. J. Payne, JX 161944 A. G. Bush, JX 201297 J. M. Nyland, JX 712550 H. G. Scott, JX 581186 C. D. Barnes, JX 646261 D. J. Eccles, JX 156761 R. D. Steed.

To Master-at-Arms  
MX 801697 R. V. Carder, MX 888116 A. Bryant.

To Chief Petty Officer Writer  
MX 863391 G. H. Clark, MX 808120 G. T. Lane, MX 770973 S. J. Davies.

To Chief Petty Officer Cook (S)  
MX 853421 S. Swallow.

To Acting Chief Engine Room Artificer  
MX 818541 J. Couch, MX 887923 K. J. Batty, MX 887944 P. Chivers, MX 120509 L. J. Wells, MX 888537 E. G. Williams.

To Chief Petty Officer Engineering Mechanic  
KX 789967 H. Mee, KX 738291 R. W. Fox, KX 859542 R. Howell, KX 769597 T. Knowles.

To Acting Chief Electrical Artificer  
MX 902219 L. W. Berry, MX 888080 J. C. F. Wiseman, MX 902562 M. S. Silvester.

To Acting Chief Radio Electrical Artificer  
MX 888833 B. O. O. Moore.

To Acting Chief Petty Officer Radio Electrician  
MX 908310 A. Jordan, MX 903593 C. C. Lomas.

To Chief Shipwright Artificer  
MX 842454 J. W. Coventry, MX 802700 H. W. German.

To Acting Chief Ordnance Artificer  
MX 887823 R. S. Lowe, MX 79999 J. R. Price, MX 855789 L. W. Powell, MX 857428 F. Sharp.

To Acting Chief Radio Electrical Mechanician  
MX 903845 R. Hudson.

To Chief Communication Yeoman  
JX 581161 R. A. Edge, JX 646223 A. Walker, JX 581438 E. A. Crouch, JX 340920 R. W. Burton.

To Acting Chief Aircraft Artificer (AE)  
L/FX 670226 D. L. Saxton.

To Acting Chief Aircraft Mechanician (AE)  
L/FX 837730 D. J. Dibell.

To Chief Air Fitter (AE)  
L/FX 640832 J. A. J. Turner.

To Chief Airman (A.H.I.)  
L/FX 646265 W. E. Jones, L/FX 872932 P. R. Bassett, L/FX 646016 R. L. Swanwick, L/FX 846734 S. G. Bell.

To Chief Airman (Phot.)  
L/FX 835275 J. M. Thorne.

To Acting Chief Radio Electrical Artificer (Atr)  
L/FX 855576 J. R. Severs.

H.M.S. Turpin sailed for service in the Mediterranean on November 28.

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## THE PLOVERS 'POOP' PAPER

A TEAM from H.M.S. Plover completely overwhelmed the "Sunday Telegraph's" bowlers in a match last month in the Portsmouth Nuffield Club bowling alley.

Despite the support of several Plover's TASO, playing for the journalists on a "lease-lend basis," including a powerful weapon in the shape of Plover's TASO Lieut. Simmons, only one or two "tens" relieved the dismal display on the "Sunday Telegraph" scoreboard.

But the Fleet Street team went down firing in spite of some crafty diversionary tactics by the Plovers. Headed by their Captain, Lieut.-Cdr. Messervy, they caused frequent distractions with comments like "Can I top you up?" and "How about another?"

## OUT OF TRAINING

Eventually, under a smokescreen of remarks such as: "Well, of course we were out of training"; "we've never played before" and "the fielders keep on putting 'em up again" the journalists conceded the game in the seventh round and retired in grid-iron formation to a nearby Chinese restaurant.

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