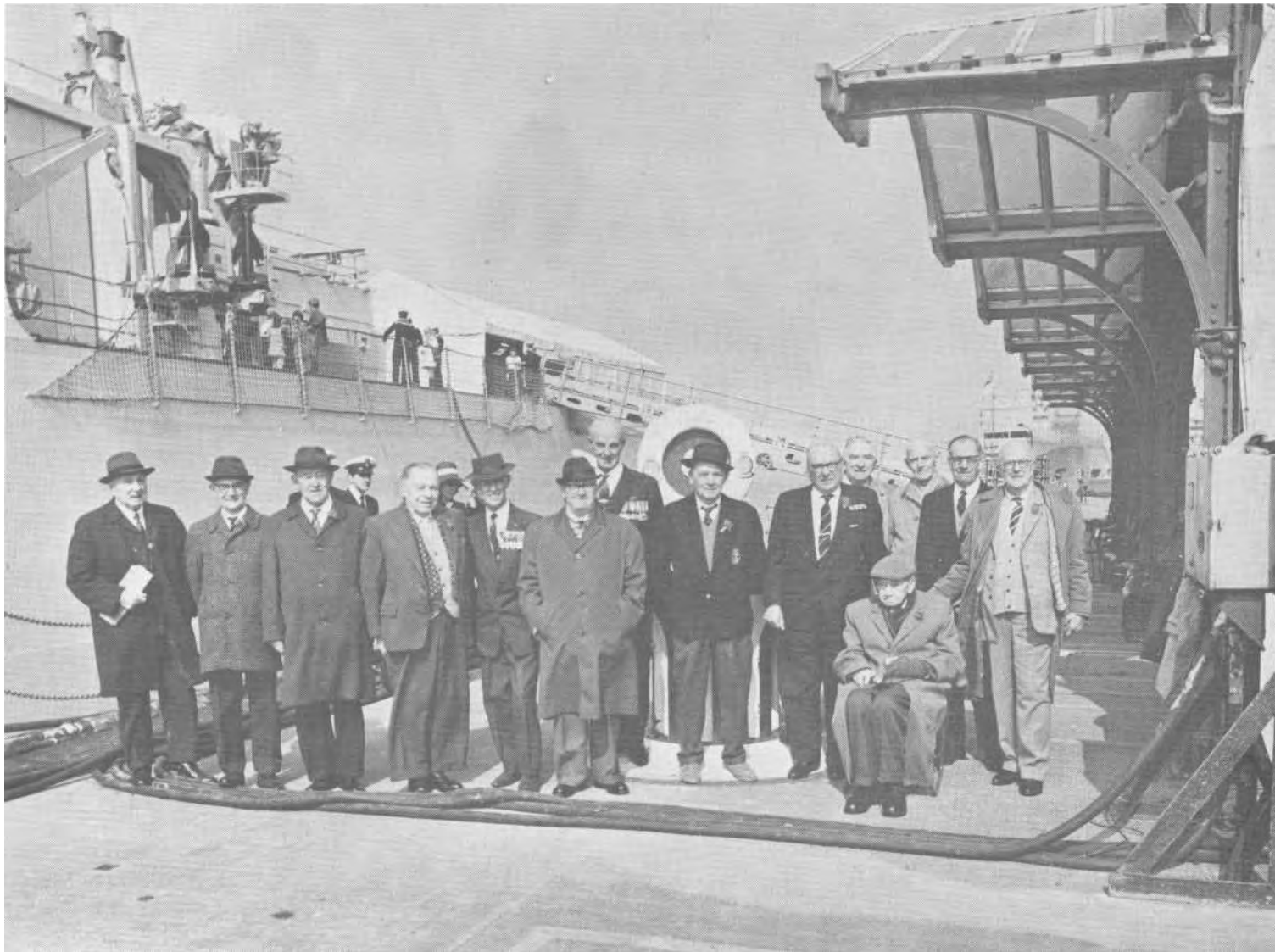


Commissioning Day
The Scene on
South Railway Jetty



Commissioning Day

' The Old ANTRIMs'



Commissioning Day

Mrs H W E Hollins and

JMEM Wing cut the

Commissioning Cake



Commissioning Day
Corporal Piper
Norman Beattie of
the North Irish Militia
playing with spirit

On the day after the Commissioning Ceremony, the ship had a cold move back to FLJ 1. The Easter leave period started, and for those of the ship's company who had not gone on first leave, the preparations for the safety work up and further sea trials continued. There were problems with naval stores - particularly on one occasion when the dockyard seemed unable to distinguish between a watch-maker's minute hammer and a shipwright's maul!

Various groups of visitors came and went, ranging from parties of scientists and technicians helping with the trial to groups of schoolchildren who came on board when ANTRIM was 'Duty Visits Ship'.

During this period, the ship's flight was at Portland, conducting their own programme of training, work up, and maintenance.

By the end of April, the leave period was over, and the whole of the crew began the preparations necessary for the hectic summer of trials, visits, and the final culmination of the work up at Portland which lay ahead. Firstly, though to Portland from 3rd-7th May for the safety work up. The idea at this time was to ensure that the ship could carry out the various emergency drills and procedures which might prove to be necessary at any time at sea - passing and receiving a tow, going to Emergency Stations and liferaft drills.

Then, at the end of May, came a fast passage to Glasgow, for the now traditional return visit to the builders of the ship; ANTRIM lay at Yorkhill basin, on the north side of the River Clyde, a little further up river from the Govan basin where she was fitted out. The visit lasted from 29th May-1st June, and, after a dash down the Firth of Clyde and across the St. George's Channel, the all too short time of two days, 2nd-3rd June, was spent lying at anchor off Portrush in our name country, County Antrim. Here, lots of visitors arrived, particularly on the second day, when a 'sea day' demonstration was held - visitors from the Royal Irish Rangers at Ballymena, the Antrim County Council, the Portrush Urban District Council, and representatives of various Royal Navy oriented groups in County Antrim.

ANTRIM then dashed back to the Clyde, to Faslane, and acted as safety ship during diving trials which were being carried out by the nuclear submarine COURAGEOUS. June continued, and the ship made the long haul around the north coast of Scotland, going through the Pentland Firth, to Invergordon, in the Moray Firth, there to conduct radar and target acquisition trials during the next two weeks. These having been successfully completed - in a remarkably brief period - ANTRIM spent next a short time in Portsmouth, before heading northwards on the next trial towards Haakonsvern, near Bergen, in Norway (the ostensible reason for this trip was to check out the performance of the SINS Inertial Navigation equipment). Norway was expensive, and the weather poor, so it was with a sense of relief that the ship's company saw the bows pointing southwards, and ANTRIM picking her way through the 'Leads' - that complex of islands and fast flowing tidal rips of the south west coast of Norway, making for Antwerp in Belgium. Antwerp was a fine visit - the ship lay at a convenient berth near the heart of the city, the weather was fair and warm, and it was the first major foreign visit of the commission. It was interesting to find out that our predecessor ship had also visited Antwerp, in 1906, and, curiously, also at the end of her period of trials'.

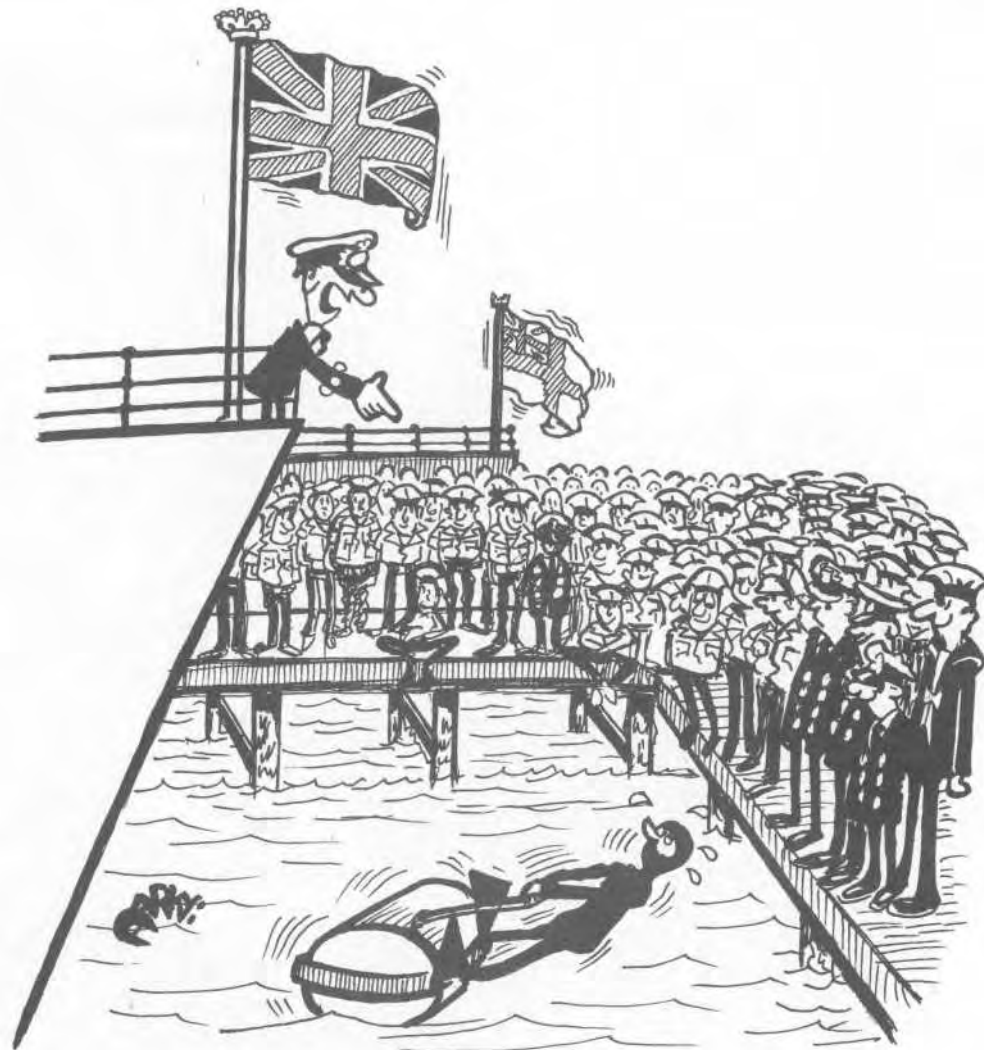
Then it was back to Portsmouth again, and Families Day on 22nd July, and the beginning of the summer leave period.



'The stores have never heard of a watchmaker's hammer, mate,
will this do?'



HMS ANTRIM' s
Wessex III Helicopter
airborne over
Portland Bill
April 1971



'And inside you will find a great big hammer which you use to
open the thing.....' Portland - Safety Work Up - May 1971



Canteen Assistant Green,
OS Stevenson, Ld Regulator
Kilford, AB Crowley, AB McMahon
in Antwerp, July, 1971



Apprentices Robinson and
Wyatt, and EMs Mansley,
Pouton and Hope by the
Antigone Statue in Antwerp



Antwerp, July 1971 -
HMS ANTRIM open to
visitors



Families Day

22nd July 1971