

849 C FLIGHT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WEAPONS AND ELECTRICAL DEPARTMENT

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

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

Our Weapons specialists eventually made up for the many frustrating cancellations of gunnery shoots due to changes in the flying programmes by achieving a palpable hit on one of our own aircraft with a gun barrel, thus making "Y" 4-5 mounting the closest range armament ever fitted. At this point special mention must be made of our Weapons Seamen who have accepted "electrification" with such good grace and whose running of the turret pumps has provided the officers with the loudest alarm clocks in the world.

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

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

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

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



WEAPONS AND ELECTRICAL DEPARTMENT

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

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

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

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

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

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





SHIP'S FLIGHT

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

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

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

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

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

SHIP'S FLIGHT



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

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

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

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



MET AND NAMET

TIME ALLOWED - 18 months or so

Read the following carefully

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

SECTION A MET

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

SECTION B NAMET

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

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



HONG KONG

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

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

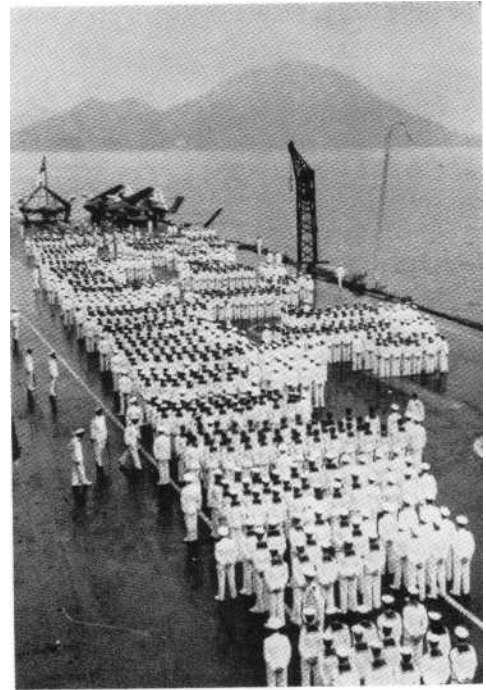
While shopping could be made highly economical by the process of tramping from shop to shop through Victoria or Kowloon and by determined and careful haggling the whole structure of thrift was liable to collapse when the last purchase had been made and when the exhausted shopper contemplated his parcels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

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

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

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

HONG KONG



THE EXTENDED S.M.P.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SUPPLY AND SECRETARIAT

VICTUALLING

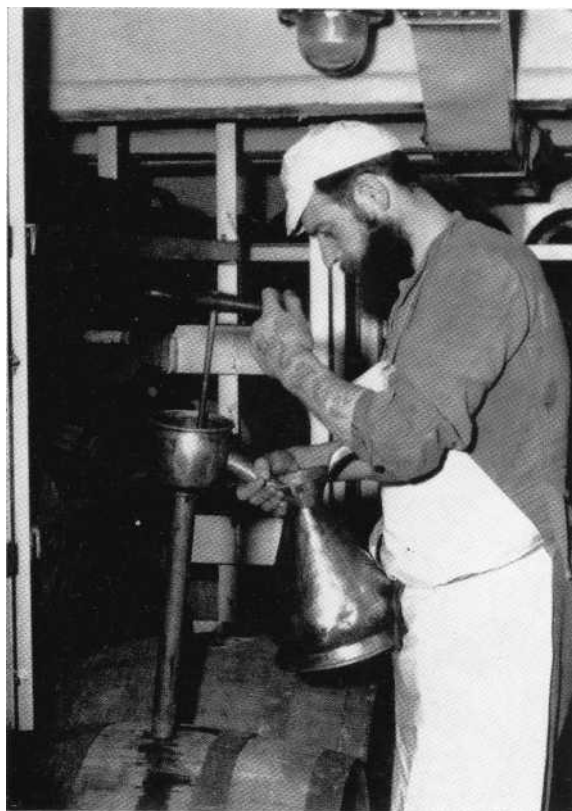
On the Victualling side of the House it is necessary to start the story before November '64 because all the ordering and providing must be done well in advance. The problem was increased by the move into and out of H.M.S. *Blake*, but on the appointed day, when 100 officers and 1,600 men moved into *Ark*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

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

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

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

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



Up Spirits

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

SHIP'S COMPANY COOKS

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

SUPPLY DEPARTMENT

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



Cooks and pies

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

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

It is worth mentioning that during the Commission

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

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

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

SCRIBES FIRST XI

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

C.P.O. BAGLEY

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

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

WTR. COLCLOUGH WTR. WALLAS

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

Referee: Lieut. Lonsdale.

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

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



Scribes

SUPPLY DEPARTMENT

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

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

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

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

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

NAVAL AND AIR STORES

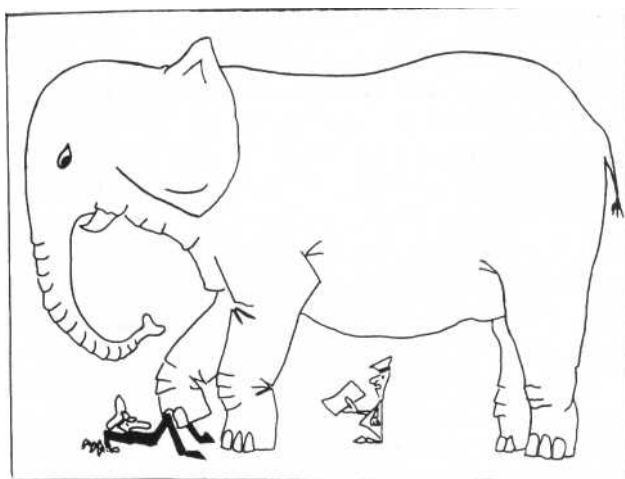
We are members of an Ancient and Honourable Department whose lineage can be traced back to Samuel Pepys. His problems were largely confined

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

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

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

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



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

SUPPLY DEPARTMENT

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

WARDROOM COOKS AND STEWARDS

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

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

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

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

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



On the Quarterdeck - Trafalgar Night '65