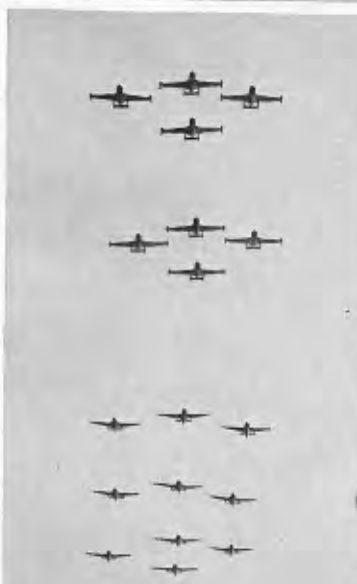




"We gave her the brush-off !"
Wearing the flag of F.O.2 H.M.S. "Bulwark" leads
the combined SEATO fleet into Manila



Vice-Admiral L. G. Durlacher,
C.B., O.B.E., D.S.C.
Fly-past over Manila



Ocean link: Cross-operating
Replenishment exercise

deck most people seemed to enjoy themselves. In the evenings the deck hockey competition progressed with mounting interest and two salt-water baths were rigged on the flight deck. These proved to be very popular, the more so since on the Sunday, "Hands to bathe" over the ship's side was rudely interrupted by the shout of "Shark ! Shark!" Almost before the warning had finished the water had cleared and the sentry in the after sponson took several shots at it before it disappeared.

24th-26th April, Exercise "Bullfight" with the Far East Fleet. On completion, one of the Sunderland aircraft that had been shadowing us unexpectedly dropped our mail in canisters which the choppers scooped out of the sea—really mail from "out of the blue" !

Monday, 28th April, forty-one days after leaving Halifax, we berthed alongside H.M. Naval base at Singapore. The dockyard was seething with sailors from the combined SEATO force which was assembling there. During our short stay everyone took full advantage of the facilities of the dockyard and H.M.S. *Terror* for a short spell of relaxation. Our Chinese laundry and tailoring firm were embarked and the cable deck became crammed with Chinese traders displaying their colourful wares. While at Singapore the ship's repairs to the starboard quarter were inspected by dockyard and Admiralty surveyors and, to our relief, the repairs were declared fully seaworthy.

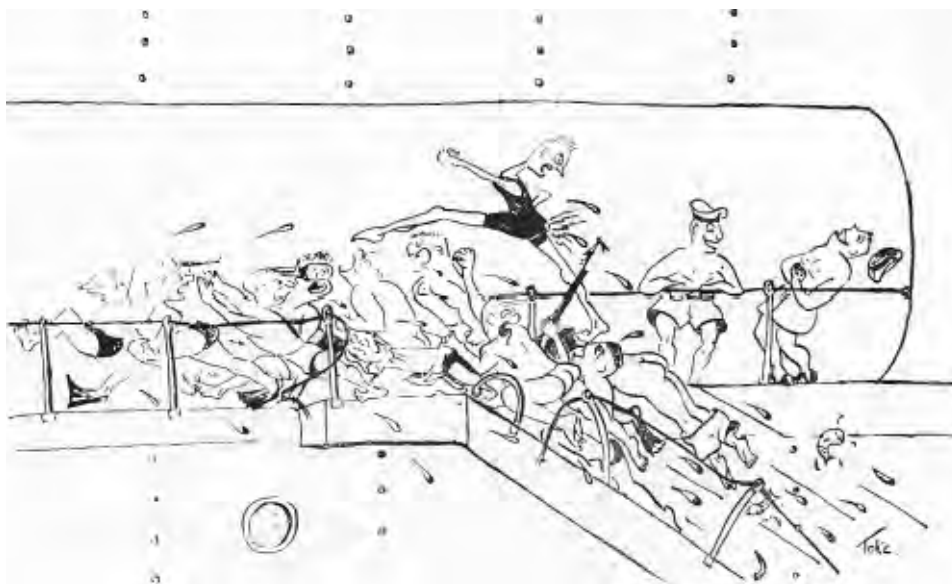
On Thursday, 1st May (flying the flag of Rear-Admiral Durlacher, F.O.2, F.E.S.), we sailed for Exercise "Ocean Link." The first phase of the exercise was a general shakedown which ended when the combined force anchored off Johore Shoal Bay for a critique held on the 5th May. The force sailed later in the day for phase two of the

exercise which consisted of general day and night flying, gunnery, communications and replenishment exercises whilst on passage to the Philippines. Sunday, 11th May, was observed as a day for "rest and recreation," and we exchanged deck sports teams with the other two carriers in company, the U.S.S. *Philippine Sea* and H.M.A.S. *Melbourne*, by chopper. Whilst cross-operating with the *Melbourne*, one of our Skyraiders was given an "R.A.N. Mod. i"—a golden kangaroo painted inside its roundels. However, not to be beaten, when the Australian aircraft returned to *Melbourne* from *Bulwark* they found that the kangaroo on their squadron crest sported a ball and chain round its leg!

Led by *Bulwark*, the SEATO fleet entered Manila Bay during the forenoon of Tuesday, 13th May. Unfortunately we were three and a half miles from shore, and with our boat requirements from shore not being met, shore-going was restricted. To aggravate things further, mail was not delivered on board until late that day. However, we managed to fit in quite a lot of inter-ship and inter-fleet sport during our brief visit, the Commonwealth boxing team, including some of *Bulwark's* boxers, defeating the *Philippine Sea* 6--3. On 15th May we sailed from Manila in company with the Far East Fleet for Hong Kong.

On Saturday, 17th May, preceded by part of our air group which disembarked to R.A.F., Kai Tak, we berthed at the north jetty of H.M. Dockyard, Hong Kong, receiving a warm welcome from Jennie and her side-party.

We soon found that Hong Kong still provided a fabulous run ashore. The shopping, once one could manage to drag one's eyes away from the tantalising cheongsams, was in some cases incredibly cheap. Soon a stream of camphor-wood chests, silk and brocade goods of all descriptions,



"And all I said was Shar-r-r !"



H.E. the Governor of Hong Kong arriving on board "Somehow clearer than we remember it !"

Jennie's farewell

Des Voeux Road, Hong Kong

Full astern !

"Showboat"

Side party at work

Sampan City, Hong Kong

"Showboat" — gridiron

watches, photographic equipment, furniture, ivory and pearls began to pour into the ship. Needless to say, the P.O.S.B. withdrawals reached an all time high.

We were due to sail on Monday, 2nd June, for Exercise "Sea Horse," but due to bad weather, we finally sailed the following day, after what had been a most successful stay. As we left, the side party expressed its regrets in the traditional manner by letting off fire-crackers in our path to scare away the devils. Apart from the period at Portsmouth over Christmas, 1957, this was our longest stay in any port since August, 1957, and perhaps the most enjoyable.

After recovering our aircraft from Kai Tak, the passage exercises and rehearsal for Exercise "Showboat" commenced. On Monday, 9th June, we anchored off Singapore City and embarked our guests. Exercise "Showboat" was a demonstration of naval power for the benefit of some fifty V.I.Ps. and about 230 schoolchildren, and included close manoeuvres at high speed, fuelling, jackstay transfers, RIP attacks, bombing, formation and aerobic flying, "throw-off" shoots, squid firings and a helicopter demonstration. It must have been a success as the V.I.Ps. appeared to be suitably impressed. On the lighter side, one of the schoolgirls having a meal asked her Chief Petty Officer host where the ship's company's wives were, but before he had time to answer the question the small girl came back with her own reply, "Oh, I suppose they are 'downstairs' cooking!" We returned to Singapore City in the late afternoon to disembark guests and to begin our second short stay at Singapore.

Singapore was rather an anti-climax after Hong Kong and not many could afford to go ashore. However, sports parties were landed and *Bulwark* won the Far East Athletics Championship held at H.M.S. *Terror* on Wednesday, 11th June.

After a happy and eventful stay on the Far East Station we joined the Far East Fleet and sailed to meet the East Indies, Indian and Pakistan Fleets for the first phase of the joint Exercise "Foamite," before arriving with the combined fleets at Trincomalee on 10th June. Owing to the state of emergency in Ceylon, leave was restricted to the dockyard area and a curfew was in force.

After a quiet week-end the combined fleets sailed for the second phase of the exercise, which was appropriately named "Extinguish" ! Then followed a period of "off-the-cuff" flying until C.-in-C., East Indies, declared " 'Extinguish' extinguished" and we returned to Trincomalee on Thursday, 26th June. The curfew and leave restrictions were still in force, but the Fleet Canteen in the dockyard was kept busy and large banyan and swimming-parties were landed. Full advantage was taken of the sailing offered and the ship competed against the combined fleets in the many regattas that were organised—in fact, winning the crash whaler race on Saturday, 28th June.

The following Monday, in company with *Ulysses*, we parted company from the combined

fleets at Trincomalee to an accompaniment of good wishes and sailed for Mombasa.

Whilst on passage to Mombasa, *Bulwark* crossed the equator for the first time in her career, and on the evening of Friday, 4th July, the ship was visited by a herald to King Neptune announcing the ceremony that began with the arrival of King Neptune and his court at 0900 the following day. A large number of the ship's company were initiated after nearly all the senior officers had been reprimanded and punished for heinous crimes.

Our arrival at Mombasa on Tuesday, 8th July, was watched by a crowd of several hundred people. Then followed a very lively visit, one of the highlights of which was a party held on board for 300 children of all colours, shapes and sizes. One only had to look at the delighted faces of the children to realise how much they enjoyed it, but much ingenuity was needed to prevent them from "going round the buoy" for the presents they received on leaving.

The following Saturday saw the most incredible "ship open to visitors" ever. Would-be visitors were so keen to get on board that they rushed the boat landing-stage which slowly collapsed under their weight, and a different landing-stage had to be used—luckily there were no casualties ! In spite of the difficulties, some 5,003 visitors managed to get on board.

Leave parties went off in all directions—many to spend a short time at the Silversands leave centre—others managed to go "on safari" and a small number visited Nairobi. For those who remained in Mombasa, the sporting programme was almost too much to cope with; keen sailing opposition was provided by the Mombasa Yacht Club and the R.E.A.N. Two separate parties climbed Mount Kilimanjaro (19,565 ft.), one without guides or porters, the other under the auspices of the Outward Bound Mountain School at Loitokitok.

During our stay three helicopters visited Dar-es-Salaam and Zanzibar and held displays in both places.

On Sunday, 13th July, the Provost of Mombasa, the Very Reverend R. W. Miles, M.A., preached at Morning Prayer on the Quarterdeck to a congregation which was increased by some fifty members of his cathedral parish—English, East Africans, Arabs and Indians, many of whom received Holy Communion afterwards with members of the ship's company. The Governor also attended the service.

Towards the end of our stay the Middle East crisis began and, instead of sailing for Madagascar on the 16th July, we embarked troops and equipment and sailed for Aden on the evening of 10th July.

Mombasa gave us a wonderful send-off; thousands of people gathered at the harbour entrance to cheer us on our way, and as we passed the Yacht Club starting-line the Yacht Club cannon fired a salute. The salute was returned by various



Combined Fleets at Trincomalee
Aircrew briefing for "Extinguish"
Aden — Steamer point

Fleet Canteen, Trincomalee

Sailing regatta in Trincomalee Harbour
The Cameronians arriving on board
Aqaba — Lightning disembarkation



The Captain gets his deserts
The Bears and their victims
Main Street, Mombasa



Herald Extraordinary to His Britannic Majesty
G.O.C. Kenya inspecting Royal Marine Guard of Honour



Embarking at Mombasa
H.M.S. "Bulwark's" Pied Pipers
Children's Party, Mombasa



Lt.-Col. A. W. Innes, M.C.* receiving a commemorative plaque from the Captain Muscat
 Dhow in Muscat Harbour
 "Chopper" recovery

"You don't think I did it for fun, do you ?"
 The Lincolns' guard march past Gatehouse in Muscat, where entering tribesmen must leave their rifles
 Combined parade with The Royal Lincolnshire Regiment

rockets and Very lights from the ship, and the ship's company gave three rousing cheers.

Early on the morning of Wednesday, 23rd July, we arrived at Aden, disembarked the troops and their equipment, and stood by to move more troops and equipment to the Persian Gulf.

The following Friday we put to sea for flying exercises and were preparing for a self-maintenance period. But this was cut short after only two days, and August Bank Holiday Monday found us in company with *Ulysses* embarking 1st Bn. Cameronians and their equipment for Aqaba, where they were required to safeguard the British supply line from Aqaba to Amman. Less than twenty-four hours from sailing from Aden the sea water temperature had risen thirteen degrees.

After a tense but uneventful passage through the Straits of Tiran we anchored off Aqaba at 0500 on Tuesday morning. By 1050 the disembarkation of troops was completed and twenty-five minutes later, in company with *Ulysses*, we weighed and proceeded. Later that day, before passing through the Straits, we parted company with *Ulysses*, who was to spend a further period patrolling the area before returning home to reach Devonport on 5th September.

On our return passage to Aden, a light following breeze gave us our hottest day to date with the cry bulb at 96° F. and the wet 90° F. After a lively attempt to ammunition at sea from the R.F.A. *Fort Sandusky*, we returned to Aden on the afternoon of Sunday, 10th August.

Then followed our overdue period of self-maintenance until the 19th August, when we put to sea for further flying exercises. On our very first launch we had a mishap—a Seahawk ditched on being catapulted. The pilot was recovered suffering from shock and minor injuries, and was flown to the R.A.F. Hospital at Steamer Point.

During the following week-end we returned to Aden to begin a large store-ship period, during which time a number of our aircraft were disembarked to Khormaksar for flying and weapon



"I've an idea we've been here too long"



" 'Oh yes,' he sez—'bring your pet on board' "

On Sunday, 31st August, a joint parade was held on board to mark our friendship with the 1st Bn. The Royal Lincolnshire Regiment, on which the salute was taken by H.E. the Acting Governor of Aden, K. W. Simmons, C.M.G.

On the afternoon of the last day's storing on Monday, 8th September, one of our helicopters had engine failure and ditched in Aden inner harbour, the crew being rescued safely. The chopper, which was lying upside down on the sea bed and fouling a channel, was salvaged that night by our divers working in conjunction with a crane lighter in four and a half hours.

Bulwark sailed the following day, and that afternoon after flying had been completed, the helicopter airframe was given a ceremonial ditching after the engine had been removed for technical examination.

The following day flying practice for the forthcoming operations against the rebels in Oman began. At this time the ship was in the vicinity of Masira Island, and the ship became much cooler as she steamed through colder water brought to the surface by the south-west monsoon. Those sleeping on the upper decks had to use blankets for the first time since our arrival in the Aden area. It remained cool throughout the next day.

On rounding Ras-al-Hadd the ship soon warmed up again in the hot air and sea water temperatures of the Gulf of Oman. Then began the first day of flying operations against the rebel forces holding the 10,000 ft. mountain range to the west of Muscat in the Jebel Akhdar. When flying finished at 1800, forty-four sorties had been flown against the rebels and we withdrew to the east and cooler water for the night.

The following day flying started again off Dimanyiat Island at 0630 with a reconnaissance to the south of the Jebel Akhdar. Intensive flying operations had been planned for the whole day, but at about 0700 confirmation was received of an earlier report that the French tanker *Fernand Gilbert* and the Liberian tanker *Melika* had collided at 0215 in position 21 41' N. 59 41' E. An

Bulwark's SECOND COMMISSION-continued

account of the transfer of survivors to hospital and the subsequent salvage of both ships may be read elsewhere; for us, these eventful days ended when, on the morning of Sunday, 21st September, the s.s. *Melika*, with a small party of *Bulwark* personnel left onboard, was handed over to the care of *Sheffield*. We sailed from Muscat at 1115 and, in the afternoon, as soon as the flight deck had been cleared of towing gear, we made a final attack on the rebels, who had been enjoying a fairly quiet time during the towing operation, before we steamed for Aden.

The following day we re-entered the area of cool water, much to everyone's relief, and after a further period of flying exercises a clean ship programme began.

Bulwark arrived at Aden on Wednesday, 24th

September. Then followed a hectic but jubilant three-day period of embarking fresh provisions, other stores and last-minute "rabbits" before sailing for the Mediterranean at 1100 on Saturday, 27th September.

We made a daylight transit of the Suez Canal on 30th September, and on 1st October F.O.A.C. transferred his flag from *Eagle* to *Bulwark*. Although F.O.A.C. only remained with us for three days, he found time to walk round informally and spent a couple of hours between decks talking with members of the ship's company. We have learned through bitter experience not to put any trust in plans and programmes — nevertheless, we are fairly confident that our arrival date in Portsmouth, 4th November, is as definite as anything can be in these times and waters.



"Not made any plans, have you?"

The Air Contingent

THE NOISY PEOPLE who go "bang" in the dawn; do engine tests as you are about to get the head down in the afternoon ; go crash as you are about to get to sleep legitimately at night, and make lots of fuss when invited to man a paint-ship stage if the old floating airfield requires a face lift. The boys! The chaps who have battled against the tearing icy winds of the arctic and who blistered the soles of their feet on the sun-soaked flight deck in the blaze of the tropics. The fellows who know only the two-watch system — work or sleep — and would never dream of changing their mode of living for all the tea in China or the poppets in Southsea!

Ask 'em!

A rare bunch — the Upper Yardmen of this fighting Navy. Frequently soaked to the skin, with feet and fingers numb — always in the immediate presence of noise, oil, high explosives, A.E.Os. and Flight Deck officers and the Captain. "A good bunch" — none better!

Ask 'em!

Now what you read above captures only the majority of the chaps who appear—and all too frequently disappear, into smoke-holes, hangars, lockers, stores, heads' offices, sick-bays and mess-decks — about the airside of our ship. It naturally discounts the Air Department officers, Technical magicians, Mets., Phots., Ops., Writers and leading hands who do all the work and only appear when flying stops, the sun shines or the ship turns down wind, on pay days, for divisional photographs, banyans, Crossing the Line ceremonies, clear Lower Deck, prangs, tot-time and Liberty-boats ! It also excludes the Aviators.

Our ship has run for one purpose and one purpose alone; and that has been to boost our Aviators high into the air with constant and unremitting regularity into a position where they can either day-dream, have an engine failure, do aerobatics, watch fuel gauges, play R.P. darts, drop bombs, or talk to friends over the radio telephone and, finally, return to catch their favourite wires. Our Aviator is a man apart. Many of us who live the way of the mundane only catch glimpses of him as he either appears out of the for'ard door in the island and canters over to board his plane; when he's showing a blonde around the Flight Deck; attending cocktail parties, sunbathing, or when he's going ashore — and sometimes later

next day when he returns for either a shave or a casual. Once or twice this rare bird has been seen on watch, looking at his aeroplane, washing paint-work, painting the Flight Deck and, at odd times during the day, without a glass in his hand!

He is overworked, underpaid and, generally — misunderstood. Ask him!

I know you're simply dying to — well I shan't keep you waiting long. Very soon you can spend a complacent hour rambling amongst vicissitudes of our Air Department. Can you still visualise it? Start in Regent's Palace — remember? — slightly "off-white walls" with green surrounds. Was that "Dougy" Hale that dropped the tape recorder "down your hatch" ? Move for'ard, Fourteen Mess. Gee! looks like St. Alban's Cathedral chopped short — but anyway, St. Alban's never had an arrestor system that went wrong and filled the jolly old vestry with fluid. Get down below, move along Two Deck passage, see the squadron mess-decks (surely not 891 on another make-and-break ?), bathroom sweeper, bridge mess, beat to port, A.M.C.O. (*all men completely organised*) and, in between, now a hollow empty hall, the hangar. Don't rush, linger here awhile. Recognise the short man in cap and shorts with prosperous turn and, by his side, the strident voice with teeth ? Recognise ye not young Timms's ghost and on the gently wafting breeze the taint of rum and lime—younger Lancaster ? Pass on, do not meditate, ere long the *Centaur* sails. **But** see the A.E.O., and all that section, 2 C.V. and Land-Rover with crest. Trip not over the man who "amps and ohms" and vainly prays for "air conditioning" long removed, or "salad days" Tug. Jr. If you're lucky, you'll catch the lift—"heavy jackstay," "bridles" — going up, first and only floor, a wild expanse of green and grey with wavy lines, our Flight Deck. Promenade, towering island, nodding radar, greasy wires, "Jumbo," cap-clad Commander, whirly chopper, pregnant Sky and Harry. Robin, too, and Pete! Who? When? What? — young Murray taking photographs — no! A group: Mr. Penfold, Tiny Ellwood, and a thousand-pound bomb bubbling beer — well, *Bulwark* always did provide the unusual!

Fairey Fox ? What ! gone to a far, far better land than this! *Bulwark's* "hunt !" Pilots, man your planes — no night-flying supper — Melika ahoy! A giddy fleeting round with hardly a dull moment. You don't believe it ? Well, friends — just ask 'em!