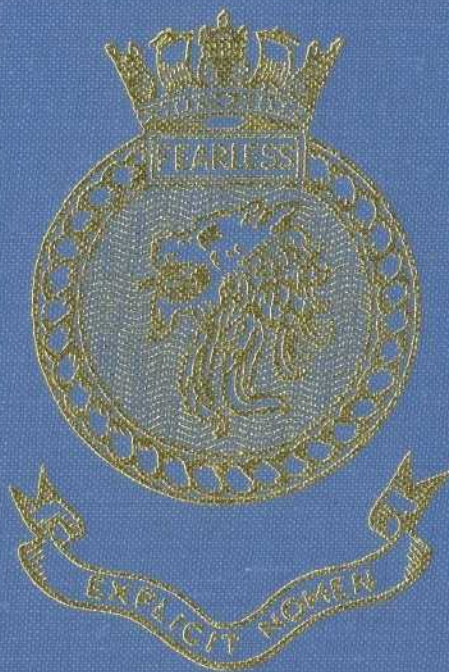
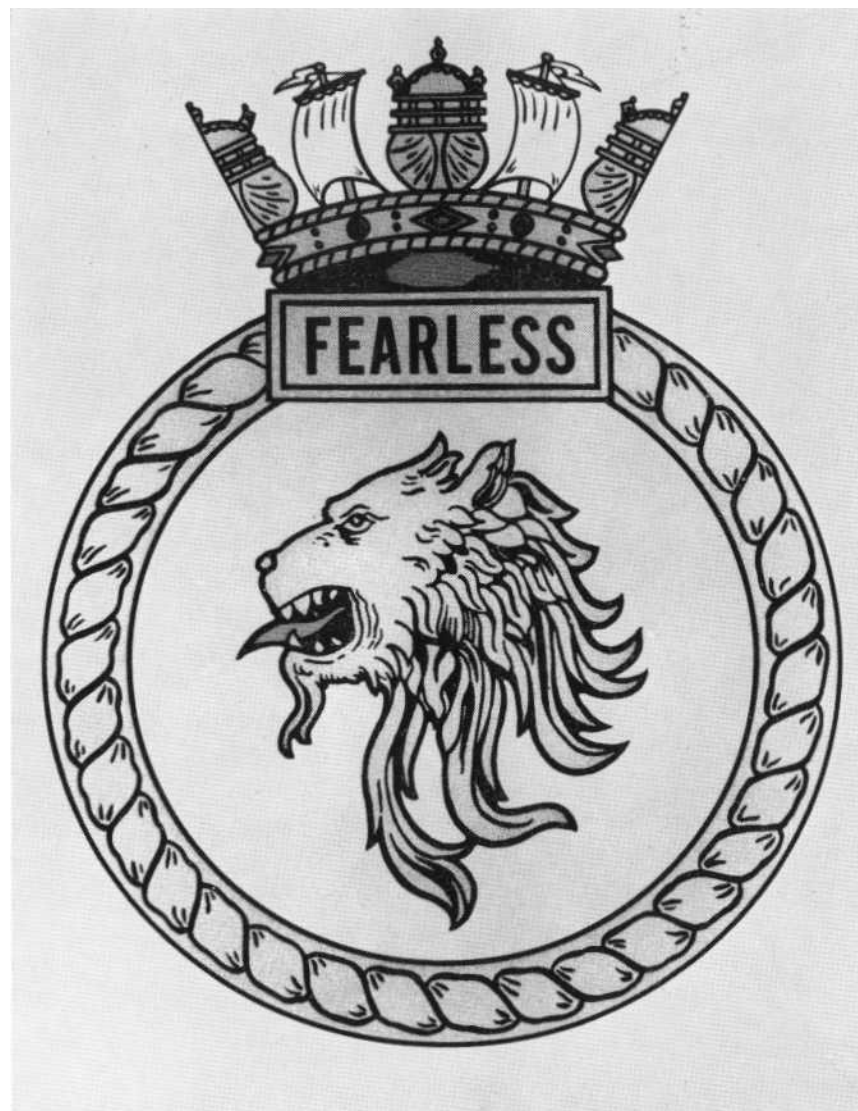


# H.M.S. FEARLESS



1970-1972





HELIGOLAND 1914

NORWAY 1940

MALTA CONVOYS  
1941

JUTLAND 1916

ATLANTIC 1941

MEDITERRANEAN  
1941





#### FOREWORD

There is an awful lot to recommend serving in an L.P.D. and of course *Fearless* in particular. The main thing to recommend the ship this commission is her splendid Ship's Company-and if you want a diverse life, where else do you find Royal Marines diving and driving aeroplanes and sailors doing all these things and forming a "Blue Beret" Platoon which lands in support of the Embarked Force-and not only in the Internal Security role.

With only two such ships in the Royal Navy *Fearless* is bound to be in great demand, as the succeeding pages in this book will show. In a word-work hard and play hard.

I personally am very sorry to leave you and wish you every success for the rest of the commission.

Captain, Royal Navy

20th March 1972



#### FINALE

Captain Straker mentioned in his Foreword that *Fearless* was bound to be in demand-working hard and playing. The last nine months have been no exception: 2 Major N.A.T.O. Exercises, 4 National Exercises, 5 foreign visits, Schoolboys galore, not to mention the ship's part in "Operation Motorman".

All this you have done cheerfully and well, and it is with good reason we have come to be known throughout the Fleet as "Friendly *Fearless*".

It has been a great privilege for me to command such a well-knit, responsive and happy Ship's Company. My best wishes to you and your families for the future, and may this book help you share and cherish your memories of this fine ship with them.

God bless you all.

Captain, Royal Navy

31st December 1972



The Commander-in-Chief  
Admiral Sir Edward Ashmore, K.C.B., D.S.C.



Rear Admiral J. D. Treacher  
The Flag Officer Carriers and Amphibious Ships (1)



Rear Admiral R. D. Lygo  
The Flag Officer Carriers and Amphibious Ships (2)

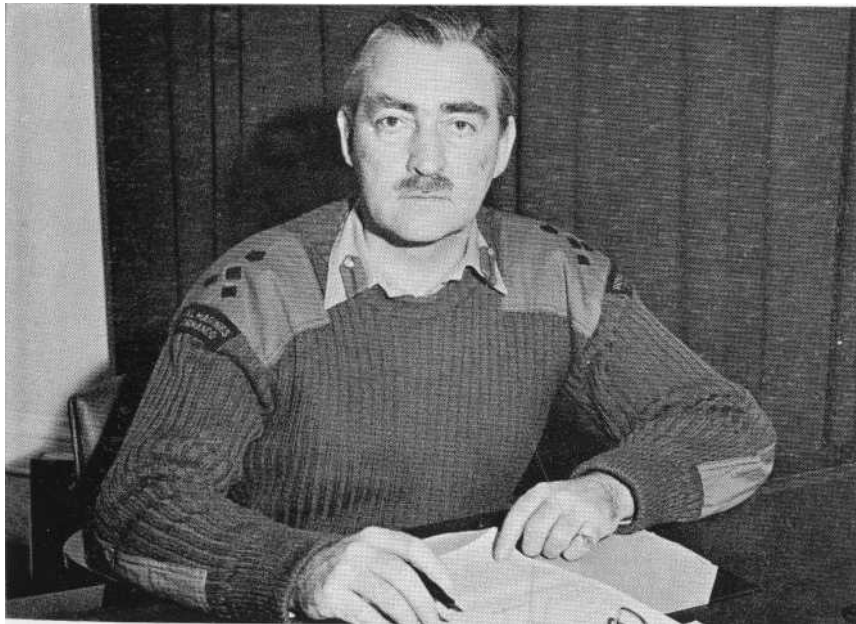




Flag Officer, Malta  
Rear Admiral J. A. Templeton-Cotill, C.B.



Commodore (A.W.)  
Commodore R. W. Halliday, D.S.C.



Commander 3 Commando Brigade, Royal Marines  
Brigadier P. J. Ovens, O.B.E., M.C.



Commander 24 Airborne Brigade  
Brigadier K. Perkins, M.B.E., D.F.C.



CHRISTMAS 1972

STATISTICS OF COMMISSION

Total mileage	66,230	No. of Helo Landings (Day)	4,246
No. of Passages	86	(Night)	305
No. of R.A.S.	44	No. of Aircraft carried	54
No. of Assault Landings	68	Max Landings in a day	92
Amount of F.F.O. burnt	16,569 tons		



The Commissioning, 12th February 1971

H.M.S. *Fearless*' third Commission commenced with the ship's Company moving on board one cold grey morning early in November 1970. It was a relief to graduate from Benbow Huts in *Drake*, but there was little to warm a sailor's heart until, with the approach of Christmas, Miss Westcountry, Wendy May, came to stir the Christmas Pudding. She was ably assisted by the new Commanding Officer, Captain Bryan Straker and the ship's Folk Group led by the Executive Officer, Commander Alastair Anson, provided the music. The passing of Nelson's Blood a few months earlier created a problem for the Chefs, but Petty Officer Wong gladly stepped into the breach by volunteering the wardroom supply.

## RE-COMMISSIONING DAY, 12th FEBRUARY 1971

With the Festivities over the ship sailed early in January for acceptance trials. The seas were rough and it was evident that during the refit many lost their sea legs. With nothing more serious diagnosed the ship returned to Devonport for Commissioning Day, the Ceremony being conducted by the ship's Chaplain, the Reverend Michael Gray, on 12th February 1971.

The occasion was attended by representatives of all the Services and included Lady Hull, the ship's sponsor who was accompanied by her husband, Field Marshal Sir Richard Hull. Lady Hull launched the ship and. takes a keen interest in all our activities.



Lady Hull cuts the Commissioning Cake



## THE WORK UP

Our departure from Devonport in mid-February was followed by a very arduous four-week Work-Up at Portland. The following song written and sung to F.O.S.T. during our stay, adequately sums up our activities there

- (1) Ach Dear Father did we have to come to Portland  
One week in Harbour and another three at sea  
We like to see the Dutchmen, the Germans and the Englishmen  
When the War is over you can takes us back again.

Chorus Distex, Riotex, Awkward and G.D.X.

Breakdowns, closing downs, and N.B.C.D.I's.

Oh how we've had our fill

Of Board and Tow and docking drill

Ballasting, Replenishment for Staff to criticize.

- (2) Ach Dear Father now that we have come to Portland

Just to cast a Jibe at the Handy Baggy tribe

Switch on our Skynet and wow what a thunderball

Sterlize the Naval Base for ever and for all.

Time has eroded Portland's harsher moments and it is now just another pleasant memory. The problem of welding a new ship's Company into an efficient Fighting Force in a matter of weeks was very real and this evidenced itself in our "Satisfactory" result. Nevertheless we all learned a lot and indeed. our experiences proved invaluable during the subsequent exercises.



Papa Doc Cardy is received on the Flight Deck



Foxtrof Two embarks her load in Lulworth Cove

IF THAT FOST  
OFFICER COMES  
IN MY GALLEY  
AGAIN THERE'LL  
BE A NEW  
CHINESE DISH  
ON THE MENU



Following out hard-earned Easter Leave, we at last approached an active period of Amphibiosity. Our Baptism was Exercise *Nelson Touch* which took place in the Mull of Kintyre and. this provided the curtain raiser for the larger Exercise *Moon Lady* in Denmark. This period, with 24 Brigade and the Irish Rangers embarked, also incorporated our Operational Readiness Inspection, during which F.O.C.A.S. (Rear Admiral J. D. Treacher) and his Staff investigated our preparedness for Amphibious duties.

The Exercise culminated in a 5-day visit to Copenhagen which was a resounding success. The Tivoli Gardens, the live shows, the whispering bushes, we saw them all and had our eyes opened, as did Lord Longford, by the latest in Danish supermarkets!

June brought with it a change in role for *Fearless*. Instead of playing host to a conventional Embarked Force we entertained a series of schools' parties in a Meet the Navy tour of Great Britain. The regional Careers Officers concerned were very appreciative of our efforts on their behalf for their recruiting figures subsequently took a healthy turn.



A Soling is loaded for Kiel

Having despatched our last schoolboy and benefited from some recuperation in Portsmouth we sailed for a much heralded week in Kiel to represent the Royal Navy at Kieler Woche. We arrived in Kiel on 18th June to join ships from eight other countries for what proved to be a very hectic seven days. The week revolved around international sporting activities with *Fearless* doing exceptionally well in the shooting and sailing events. The best individual performance, however, was put up by the doctor at the local beer cellar. He emerged. undefeated and was given the honorary award of "Weltmeister der englischen Marine in biersaufen" by a distinguished team of German challengers. Our hosts arranged a considerable amount of entertainment which ranged from a day excursion to Berlin to a dance with partners provided. Perhaps the highlight of the visit though was the yachting, for it was on the Kiel course that the 1972 Olympics were to be held. Many British yachtsmen were contending for Olympic places and the Navy offered all participants a free return journey with their yachts and cars embarked. What a multi-purpose vessel *Fearless* is!



41 DEUTSCHLAND DEUTSCHLAND  
UBER ALLES.....



On 1st October we left sunny Cyprus and steamed to Brindisi ostensibly to pick up the San Marco battalion of Italian Marines. It was rumoured that they had received adverse reports concerning the Chief Caterer's spaghetti for they thought better about joining us, so were replaced by the American Marines who formed our embarked force during Exercise *Deep Furrow*. This was a N.A.T.O. commitment involving an Assault Landing at Saros Bay in Turkey, during which we were visited by the First Sea Lord. At the conclusion of the exercise many of the ships proceeded to Istanbul for a recuperation period. *Fearless*, unfortunately, was anchored a long way from the "Main Drag" but those who made the pilgrimage ashore were well rewarded. This was a most interesting city with its ancient mosques and fascinating bazaars. Our arrival coincided with the commencement of Ramadan and so we observed some interesting behaviour patterns amongst car drivers during the late afternoon. All wrapped up in our new Suede coats we sailed for Malta. Except for two of our Company who decided to extend their stay. That proved an expensive decision.

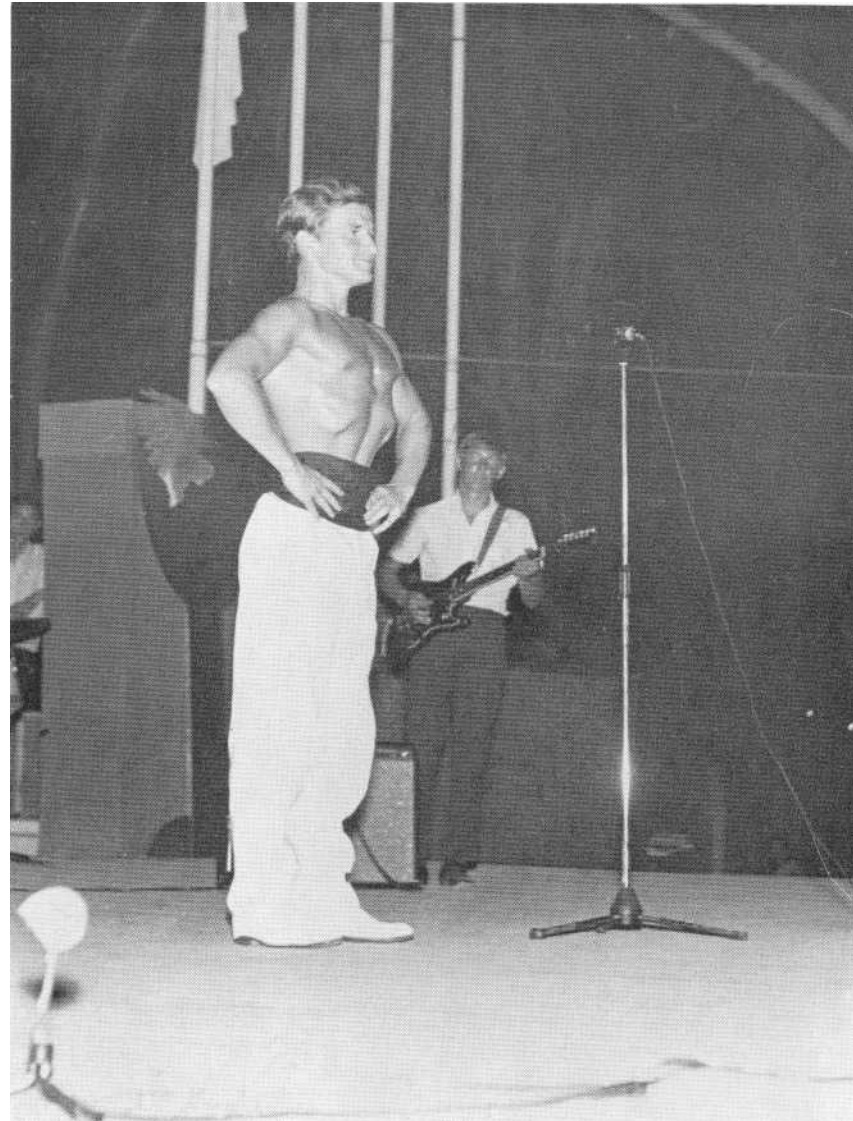


Wardroom Chorus: "What shall we do with the drunken sailor"

CYPRUS WINE FESTIVAL - AFTERMATH



SOY WHAT A HANGOVER!  
(WITH APOLOGIES TO 3  
WISE MONKEYS.



Muscles Morgan



Although a period in Malta was scheduled in our original programme, Mr. Mintoff's financial demands cast a doubt on our visit and alternative plans were made for an S.M.P. in Taranto. However, the situation in Malta calmed sufficiently to enable us to proceed as planned and we completed a very useful 10-day maintenance period there in October. Our embarked force, HQ 3 Cdo Brigade, repaired to Ghajn Tuffeiha camp to recuperate from their arduous exercises whilst "Jack" painted the ship, serviced the Hydraulics and cleaned the Boilers, to mention but a few things. These "Bootnecks" can never stand the pace!

It was during this period that we said goodbye to our Number One accordionist, Commander N. A. B. Anson. He had served *Fearless* well and was replaced as Executive Officer by Commander M. D. Joel, our Number One Aston Martin Driver.



Mail is vital

On 2nd November we left Malta for Cagliari in Sardinia, where we spent two days prior to continuing homewards via Gibraltar. Our visit to the Rock coincided with Remembrance Sunday and a Service with Divisions was held on the jetty. This visit also turned out to be a mammoth pre-Christmas rabbit run for those who managed to get ashore during the limited opening hours. Having put the final touches to our Mediterranean tans we slipped and proceeded home to Devonport, arriving on 18th November. With F.O.C.A.S.' impending Harbour Inspection in Newcastle it was imperative that we make good use of our time in Guzz, in order to prepare the ship for the big day. The Dockyard made a large contribution to this end by repainting the ship's side and they also fitted two new five-bladed propellers. Mundane docking periods inevitably produce their lighter moments and this one was no exception. One humorous episode occurred as the Captain was jogging over the brow in a tracksuit having returned from a strenuous afternoon's tennis; he was suddenly accosted by a Junior who bawled, "Are you the new Clubswinger mate?" A quick denial followed but, ego brimming over, the skipper beamed all the way to his shower.

1972 promised us a varied and interesting programme but much to the delight of the R.A's. things got off to a bad start when mechanical difficulties caused a three-day delay. Eventually the problems were overcome and we made our way to Rosyth to embark 45 Cdo and transport them, their vehicles, and equipment to Elvegard in Norway for Exercise *Clockwork*. This exercise was designed to test men and equipment in sub zero temperatures so we were required to steam well inside the Arctic Circle in order to achieve this.



COME ON LASS  
WE'LL HAVE TO  
GET BUSY FOR  
YOU KNOW WHAT  
FEARLESS' LADS  
ARE LIKE FOR  
RABBITS !



Leaving Cagliari, Sardinia



Ski troops of 45 Cdo



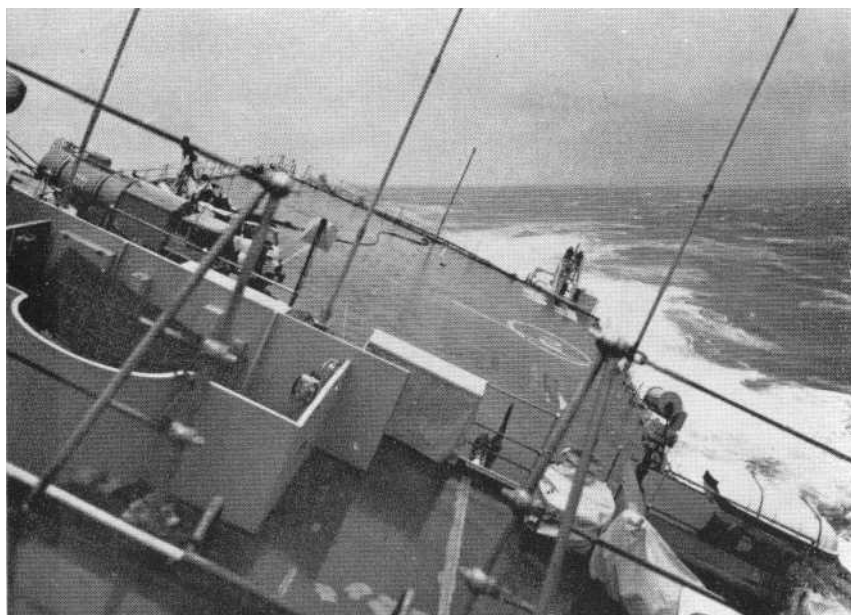
The Passage from Scotland was generally considered to be the worst of the Commission for in force 11 conditions the ship rolled as much as 35 degrees either way. Work was virtually impossible and even the normally industrious Pay Office shut up shop, though later Mr. Bone maintained they locked the door solely to make up the Doctor's and Dentist's Pay! Never has the sight of land been more welcome.

Besides the rough passage we were soon to face other problems for L.C.V.P. F6 had the misfortune to strike an underwater object in a Fjord but gratefully the crew's shouts for submarine pay were quickly heard. The cold and extended hours of darkness made the recovery difficult but it was eventually achieved much to everyone's relief. Another disappointing aspect of the Exercise from the strategists' point of view was the relatively mild weather which we enjoyed and it is rather ironical to record that the temperature was far colder on our subsequent visit to Newcastle where we also saw our first snowfall of the year! A short visit to the town of Harstad concluded our Arctic adventures after which we were exposed again to the full fury of the North Sea which had not abated since our last encounter. Clutching our "Bluenose" Certificates we made for Newcastle and all that it promised.

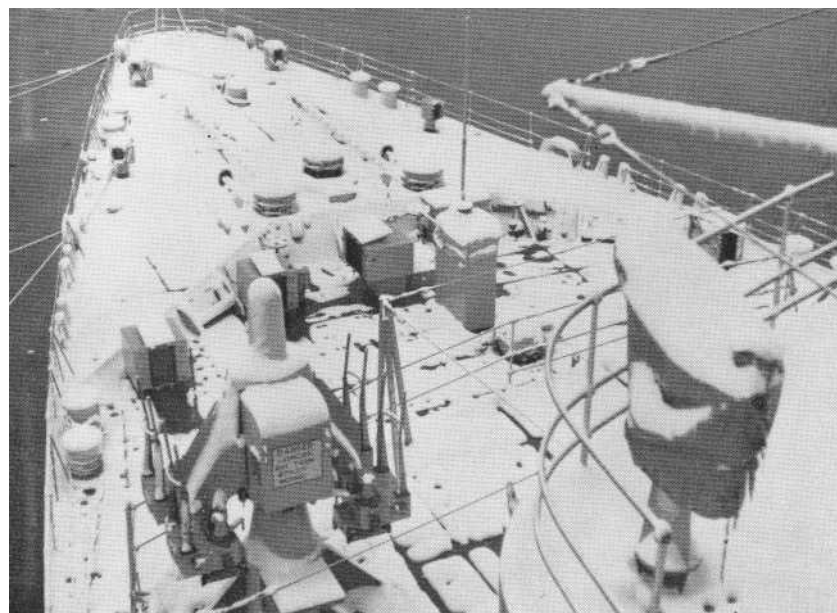
Despite the blunder of a confused Pilot we safely made our way up the River Tyne and secured under the shadow of the Tyne Bridge on 21st January. Then began the task of putting the finishing touches to



Foxtrot 6 comes home



Arctic 1972



White forecastle