

pains to see that the Billy Bunters restricted themselves to one slow ride !

Christmas Day provided a chance for the artists among us to decorate the messes, and the result was a highly colourful and pleasant setting in which to have the traditional Christmas fare. Such was the prowess of our artists that we came a close second to the Petty Officers in the competition for the best decorated mess.

In the realms of sport we have managed to turn out a team whenever required, and although we never reached a highly successful pitch in our playing, everyone got the utmost enjoyment from taking part.

In tune with everyone else, we are all looking forward to our East African tour and then to going home with many happy memories.

J. P. T.



## *"The Rangers"*

THE pseudonym may be unfamiliar to gunnery unbelievers and non-combatants; but to the R.P.'s it is reminiscent of the lighter side of life. "The R.P. Rangers" is the title under which L/Sea. McHale has led our sports teams to victory; and to time of writing has held us in good stead, having lost only one game.

Owing to reduced complement we have been unable to work as an R.P. Division. This state of affairs has meant the R.P.'s being divided between the Foc'sle and Quarterdeck Divisions but has not resulted in any splitting of allegiance to the branch or part of ship. While mentioning reduced complement of seamen, I should like to point out that the R.P. Branch is the only one that is not reduced. This fact I think speaks for itself and does not need enlarging upon by me. However it does mean that being 25% of the seamen complement, we have had to take a large share of special duties.

I have just asked a non-branch member of our mess to think of something the R.P.'s have done. To my surprise he replied, "Apart from running the ship nothing." So casting aside his irony I stopped to think and let the cal pips whirl. The following emerged from my deliberations. Our Direction Officer has been FX Divisional Officer and Cable Officer. The senior R.P.'s between them have carried out the following duties over a period of time - Admiral's Coxswain, P.R.I., Capt. Fx., 2nd Capt. Ax., Bosun's Party, Capt. Sides, 3rd. Capt. Fx., Cable P.O., A.B.C.D.I., Coxswain M.B., Land Rover Driver, P.O. of Transport. R.P.'s have also been Boats' Crews, M.S.O. Messengers, General Mess Party, Quartermasters, Bosun's Mates, Blackie's Mate, Sweepers, Admiral's Barge, Captain's Motor Boat and Radar Test Party. So it is evident that we haven't been loafing in radar offices and that our capacity as seamen first has not been neglected.

Having dealt with sport and Ship's duties in general, a little must be said with regard to R.P. work. Having survived dockyard trials and a rushed work-up, we entered upon Exercise Fairwind II. Not with gay abandon, but with less apprehension than we had when doing a harbour exercise with the Fleet only 17 days after com-

missioning. However, all went well and the results at the wash-up seemed to compare favourably with other ships taking part.

After summer leave the busiest part of the commission began for R.P.'s. On September 9th we sailed for pre-Strikeback work-up and those five days presented our only bit of bad weather, although for the area it was reasonably subdued. On 14th September Strikeback began and with it hard work. It was on this exercise that the famous "Dreaded Lurgy" struck and by the 22nd the number of R.P.'s was reduced from 45 to 14 due to 'Asian Flu!' However, we survived and managed to keep both air and surface pictures going. I have heard it rumoured in the flats and whispered in the "goffa" queue that a friendly Battleship is to be painted on the 6 inch director. The final results are unknown to us as our programme did not enable anyone to attend post-exercise conferences.

I must at this point, say thank you to the maintenance staff, who, bitten by the same bug, worked exceedingly hard and for long hours.

After General Service Leave we said a sad farewell to Chatham on October 17th when all became quiet in the R.P. Branch. At Bahrein we officially relieved our counterparts in H.M.S. Ceylon; and along with a few 'rabbits' in the way of plotting gear we were supplied with a comprehensive list of good runs.

Our next major event was Exercise Crescent, with the accent on the surface side and plenty of day and night encounters. This kept the branch busy but did not extend us in any way.

We now look forward to Exercise jet 1958, when I know that Gambia R.P.'s will up-hold the good name of the branch and set an extremely high standard for all the ships taking part.

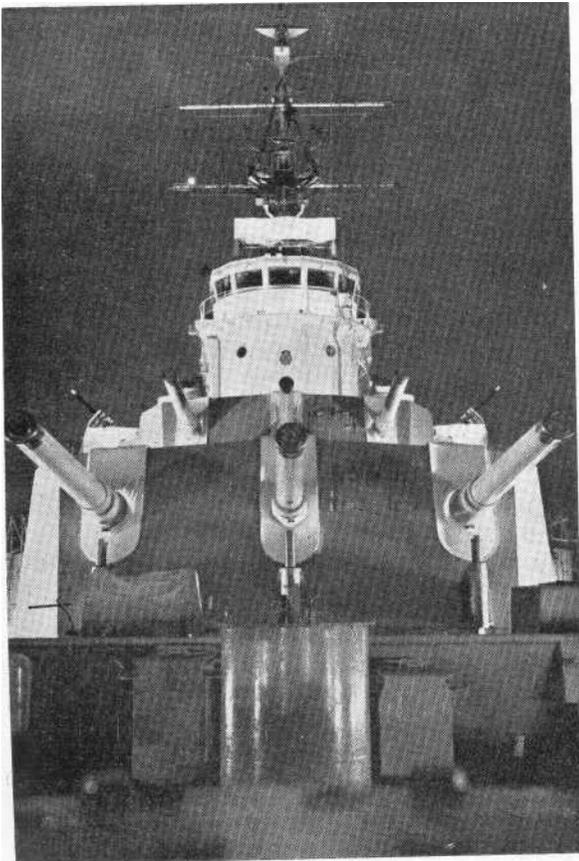
And so to all our friends in Gambia we say, "Now that the cannon is extinct and torpedoes have had their run, come round and we will show you where to send your G.M.'s."

D. B. C.

# ELECTRICAL DEPARTMENT

IT is interesting to reflect upon the many changes in electrics which have taken place in Gambia since she was built. In those early days she had one radar only - now she has nine. The original wireless equipment would now be found in a museum. In consequence of this increase in electronic equipment, the Electrical Branch was established on its own in 1948 and many new "ratings" came into being. The complement list today would look very strange if compared with the original one, but although equipment and names have changed, the old activities of the ship continue, and in this the Electrical Department has kept pace with tradition.

Floodlighting ship was unheard of before the war, when it was customary to illuminate ship by outlining the hull and superstructure with hundreds of small electric lamps, and very pretty it was too. Nowadays, it is fashionable to floodlight ship, our first occasion this commission being during the Home Fleet Review at Invergordon, in May, 1957. Since then we have floodlit ship at Basra, Calcutta, Madras and on two occasions at Aden. At Zanzibar it may be used as the finale to a firework display.



*Floodlit for Royal Review*

At Bergen was staged the first of the Children's Parties on board with E. A. Allan in charge of Electrical Games. His "shocking" machine was reluctantly withdrawn after a trial run, in which the P.O.G.I. landed on his back, still at attention, and muttering, "You can't use this blankety machine on kids!" Several other innocents were seen to take off from the boat deck, - but then, perhaps their resistance was low!

The Division has played its part in sporting activities during the commission and the following have represented the ship.

Soccer.-R.E.A. Trenouth, L.E.M. Lewis, L.R.E.M. McCarthy, E.M.'s Croft, Bressington and Moran.

Rugby.-E.A. King, P.O. R.El. Bowles, and E.M.'s Croft and Bressington.

Cricket.-E.A. Lightbody, L.E.M. Mann, and E.M.'s Pritchard and Lintern.

Waterpolo.-E.A. King.

Swimming.-E.A. King, E.A. Smith.

Shooting.-Commander Orr.

Sailing.-E.A. Field, E.A. Cuffley and Elect. Wilson.



The first interpart soccer Cup Final was played at Trincomalee with the Electrical Division opposing the Wardroom. A chucking-up party was organised with great success, the "L" supporters being augmented by a large number of the Ship's Company. Lt. Cdr. Pearce, as manager of the Wardroom team, made his appearance sporting the rosettes of both contestants. The Electrical Division's Green and White colours were carried on rosettes, top hats, banners and flags, produced through the efforts of Ch.R.El. Gilmour and Ch. Elect. Lewis, and the vocal support was supplemented by bugles, rattles and klaxons. R.E.A. Gambier performed an athletic feat in climbing a flag pole to plant a green

and white pennant on top, and it was the "L" Division on top at the final whistle by two goals to nil.

The shock result of the commission occurred in the 2nd Interpart Soccer Tournament when the Division received their first defeat of the commission from the C.P.O.'s team in the semi-final. The blow was softened somewhat, since the C.P.O.'s team contained five other players from the Electrical Division.

In the Interpart Swimming Gala the Division, ably led by E.A. King, was pipped by a short head for first place.

Other members of the Department contributed their talents to the successful Ship's Concert Party which is reviewed elsewhere in this magazine.

Sub. Lt. (R) Branegan is at present leading a party of budding mountaineers in hard training for an attack of Kilimanjaro. We wish them luck and one hopes it will be cooler for them up the mountain than it has been for their training in Trincomalee.

Congratulations go out to all who have become fathers during the commission, namely Lt. Cdr. Pearce, E. A. King, E. A. Lightbody, L.E.M. Lewis, L.R.E.M. McCarthy, E.M. Casbolt and E.M. Steels. Let's hope not too many middle watches, walking the floor, await them during their leave.

As the day draws nearer for our return home we look forward to the re-union with our families not forgetting the friendships that have been made or the many and varied incidents experienced whilst serving on board H.M.S. Gambia.

R. T.

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If all the fans on board were pointed upwards, the ship would take off ! ?

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## Royal Marines Band

ON the 18th July, 1957, approximately two months after forming up, the Band left R.M.S.M. Deal and entrained for Rosyth and H.M.S. "Gambia". Whereas to a few of us "Gambia" was just another ship, to the great majority of the Band she was the promise of a new experience.

We were not due to commission the ship until October, but apparently someone had been pulling a few strings, and as a result we were ordered to join the ship for a "Showing the Flag" trip to Bergen in Norway. I shall not dwell on this very short cruise which turned out to be quite a success in every way, except to say that it served a very useful purpose in giving us all a foretaste of life in "Gambia."

On our return to Deal on the 30th July, we got down to our training programme and six weeks later, our leave behind us and farewells said, we found ourselves once again clambering up the accommodation ladder to the quarterdeck. Our Bandmaster, who was returning to Deal in order to complete a course for Principal Director of Music, Royal Marines, waved a fond farewell and regretfully turned away.

The ship sailed on the 17th October, and for the next seventeen days, except for short stops at Gibraltar, Port Said and Aden, we were en route for the East Indies Station. During that time the Band gradually settled into the routine. One of our most urgent commitments was to provide the orchestral accompaniment for the ship's Concert Party. After much tearing up of paper and cursing

of concert parties in general, the show went on for the first time in Basra, where to the relief of everyone concerned it proved a great success. Since then the concert party has gone from strength to strength and has given performances to enthusiastic audiences at most ports of call.

We have managed to produce a Dance Band consisting of thirteen performers who have been kept fairly busy with dances for officers and ratings at some of the bigger ports of call. Our other activities have included the usual round of receptions, Beating Retreat and Guards of Honour.

A memorable stay of five days at Diyatalawa Leave Camp was enjoyed by us all, and once again the dance band came well to the fore by providing entertainment on the few evenings that the camp staff had left free. The efforts of the Commanding Officer and his staff were greatly appreciated and on behalf of us all I should like to say a very sincere "Thank you."

We are now entering the last months of our foreign service and naturally our thoughts are turning homewards. However, there is still a lot of playing to be done and plenty of places to be visited. From the Band's point of view it has been an interesting commission with practically no hard work at all, though we shall still be glad to get back to a more settled existence in a 'square number', there to regale the 'stanchions' with tales of ship life out East.

D.O.C.

# "The Ordnance World"

I can foresee a few eyebrows rising at the sight of the heading to this article. It is indeed unusual for the Ordnance World to do things so independently as this, they being normally included in some grander section of the ship and only mentioned in passing. This tendency to overlook them is apparently an old naval custom, and in a newly-commissioned ship the first sign is from the person responsible for organising the layout for Divisions. Having fitted everyone out with somewhere to stand he generally finds himself left with a few spares, most of which are prefixed "O. A.". There are two standard ways of dealing with this situation. One is to tack them on the end of some larger division. The other is to find somewhere to put them on their own, just in case someone should want to look at them at any time. Such then is our fate, unattached and unsung members of the Ordnance World.

But now all that is to be changed as I take the lid off this tin and expose to all, the facts of life in this little known tribe.

## The Team

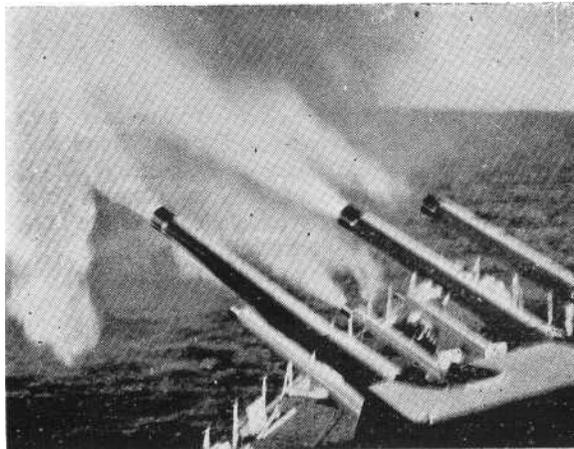
This, as any Divisional Officer who has recently done the course will tell you, is the prime factor in any organisation. I will avoid the long list of time-worn cliches, such as "Pulling together", "Work hard, play hard" and "Upholding the etc. etc." Here then is the team, arrived at after several changes including that of the skipper, one of the full backs and a complete set of reserves.

SIR  
ACKERLEY                      ROWE  
RUTLAND                      TURNER                      FIELDS  
HURFORD    MILLS    HOPE    CARR    DORBER

Reserves: Hooper, Large and Reed.

The entire front line is composed of what may be called the heavy squad, and they are employed in the symbolic game in the following way. The centre forward makes most of the opening moves by passing everything over to the inside left. A pass to the right would not be likely to bear a great deal of benefit as that member will most likely be asleep, or sailing, or both. The situation is then likely to rest between the inside left and the left wing where it will remain until one or the other of them goes too far and has to pass it over. The centre forward, meanwhile, will have made his way upfield as fast as his back will allow and will be ready to take up where he left off. If, on the other hand, he is not around, the right wing is likely to take the thing up and go off somewhere on his own to deal with it. You will note that there is no question of passing back, the reason for this being that the forward line are never sure for any length of time that there is anyone behind to pass back to. Such a move would in any case be a danger as the actions of the half-back line are unpredictable.

The left half would probably consider writing to the "Times" about it, the centre half is more likely to cut anything into shreds and attempt to eat it on the spot, while the right half, if present, would punt the whole thing back where it came from. It remains now only to mention the lines of defence. This is dealt with quite easily by the two backs keeping close to the goalkeeper and surrounding themselves with books as a barricade. In the event of sighting a potential enemy they write a list of numbers on a piece of paper and hand it to the attacker. This method of evasive action is known as the Chit System and, with practice, can be used with great effect. Mention must be made of the goalkeeper, who, as playing captain, has done a great deal to boost the team's position in the league. A word of praise also to the "Reserves", without whom things would have proved very difficult, and with whom life has been that much more pleasant. They have provided the helping hand and often a welcome laugh. Best wishes will go with them when they go to do battle with the Gunnery School examiners.



## Teeth in the Great Cog

Another well-hackneyed phrase, but one that is certainly true of all men in any walk of life. In this case we would be better to think of a series of cogs running together in a gear-box with a rather erratic clutch. The Ordnance World has four main cogs, namely Sirs, Chiefs, Weapons and Control. Of the first two sufficient has been said, but of the two varieties of working cogs, a little explanation is required. The weapons-type invariably wears overalls. These not only denote him as a worker but they form an important part of his working life. They make stowage for cigarettes and matches (Pay week only), a means of cleaning the hands before having a smoke, protection for the body whilst lying on the ground and an infallible excuse for getting thoroughly dirty. You can generally find him filling, emptying, cleaning, climbing into or out of a gear box. Life for him is one long round of routines, and before a gun can fire it is

essential that he pulls things back, blows things out, drops things down and tightens things up. Problems can often be solved by a light blow with a two pound hammer, or, a heavier blow with a four pound hammer, or, by sending for "Blacky". Whatever is done, it must always be greased, and there is no truth in the story that a coat of grease is put on the overalls and then transferred to the job in the normal course of events.

The Control-type provides an immediate contrast by wearing overalls on only the rarest of occasions, and even then managing to look completely out of place. Of the three followers of this creed only one is resident on the upper deck, the other two spending long periods in s u b t e r r a n e a n lairs. They invariably carry a book, partly for impression and partly in case anything should go wrong. They have a habit of talking to each other, and to themselves in sinister undertones raising the voice only to emphasise

some technical point such as " ..... and that's straight from the chap who saw the signal." They have created such an air of mystery about their work that few people know what they really do and no one has thought of a way to find out. This is just as well because when they are brought into contact with other people they often prove rather temperamental. Mechanical problems are solved in a similar manner to before, except that where a weapon-type "Hits", a control-type "Taps".

So there you have it, The Team and The Types, but what of the outcome of it all ? What is there to show for their presence? Merely that in spite of a refit, unending painting programmes, rust, gun-drills, rust, alignments and rust, the guns of this ship have been kept in running order. That no shot has been fired in anger is a relief to everyone, indeed it is a constant hope that work such as this may never go beyond the stage of "Being Prepared".

R. A. S. F.

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A bird in the hand is worth two in the Galley.  
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## *The Dhoby Firm*

ONE of the necessities of life in a hot climate is a good laundry service, and we have been well served in Gambia. Our first private laundry firm was Chinese, but they were ordered back to the Far East Station. Then we had to face the hard facts of life and run the laundry ourselves - one Lieutenant Commander (modesty forbids me to mention which one), P.O. Sellars and five hands struggling against ever-increasing mountainous bundles of laundry. Luckily not for long, because the heat was beginning to tell on our little team and they were pleased to give it up. From H.M.S. Ceylon we inherited a Ceylonese team - 'V. Ganesh and Brothers' - numbering sixteen in all.

When they first arrived, I had trouble in working out their names until I discovered that like many other races in the East, their first name came last and their father's name first, and so the name of their father being Velupillai, the names of the three directors of our dhoby firm are V. Ganesh, V. Lingeratnum and V. Santherasekram. It follows that the sons of V. Ganesh will be G. ---. (Incidentally, Ganesh is the name of a Hindu God who is depicted as half man and half elephant).

The father of this team owned a laundry establishment in George Street, Trincomalee, but in 1946

the brothers came to sea. They have always served in the Flagship of the East Indies Station - a proud record - and are more than sorry that the Station has ceased to be under the 'new look'.

Here are the ships that they have served in-

H.M. Ships Norfolk	...	1946
Mauritius	...	1950
Kenya	...	1952
Newfoundland	...	1954
Gambia	...	1956
Superb	...	1957
Ceylon	...	1957
and now Gambia	...	1958

They have of course travelled far and wide in the Flagships - from Korea to the U.K., which place they liked very much, particularly London, where they lived in the Union Jack Club.

We shall all be sorry when they have to leave Gambia because they have made conditions a lot easier for us, turning us out in dazzling whites, and so here's hoping that they may have many more years of service to the Royal Navy,

"STEVE"

# Shipwright and Artisan Department

The Chippies are a happy shower,  
Working hard at every hour,  
Helping all who come their way  
Be it midnight or mid-day.

Hole in boat, blocked-up scupper,  
Always happen during supper.  
Try to face it with a smile,  
End up "dripping" all the while.

Four seem happier with their lot ;  
Is it they've had an extra tot,  
Or because they're off outside  
No more to roam the ocean wide ?

Soon they'll leave our happy band  
To settle down on firm dry land;  
No more to travel on the seas  
Except in pleasant memories.

AS in most commissions that start after a ship has had an extensive refit, much work was left to the staff to make the ship habitable. This was no easy task with the ship "working-up" and the Invergordon Royal Review so soon afterwards.

We temporarily lost Sub. Lt. Trace early in the commission due to an accident sustained while upholding the football prestige of the ship against H.M.S. Eagle. Lt. Spurr very ably stepped in as Divisional Officer and Mentor to the Chippies and was loath to leave us on the return of Sub. Lt. Trace at Aden during the New Year.

For a good percentage of the staff this will be their last ship - huge sighs of relief ! Shipwright Artificers A. Hall, E. G. Williams, J. Wright and G. M. Hoare are leaving the service on premature release. Chief Joiner Stevens (Admiral's joiner) left us in January on the same grounds, and we have since heard he is getting acclimatised to civilian life. We are sure all who have known them, will join us in wishing them all the best for the future.

Painter Oxley left us in February because of family illness, but we are pleased to hear all is now well. We all missed Putty and the very capable way he managed the paint shop, but we were very fortunate in having Shipwright Artificer De La Hoyde, who very ably stepped into his shoes at a not too opportune time when "Paint Ship" seemed to come around at all too short intervals. At the moment he is right up to his neck in keeping everyone happy who is engaged in preparing for the coming Admiral's Inspection.

The two boat specialists, Shipwright Artificers Lee and Coursens have had all their work cut out to wage a never-ending war in trying to keep the boats up to scratch. Because of the extensive use the boats get, giving little time for maintenance, it has been just miraculous the way they managed to keep the boats running at all. I see at the time of writing that our motor cutter is now fitted with a brass funnel - surely we saw one like this on the Station not so very long ago.

Blacksmith Fox has been extremely busy and turned out so much metal work that he eventually ran out of metal. His biggest job though was in trying to coach the Goanese Chief Cook in the gentle art of making "Oggies" to the true Devonshire specification. The last one made was nearly right, except for the fact that the "roping" was left-handed, and somehow a slight taste of curry crept in. Blackie's spare time is spent being President of the "Bank Book Club". This was purely a "Janner" concern at the start, but of late the rest of the staff have taken an interest and find there is something after all in this business of saving money. In fact even Plumber Farr was seen going in the direction of the Pay Office on one occasion during the "Depositing Period", but firmly denies having anything to do with the "Club", and reckons he went there purely to fit a key to the Pay Office safe. Talking of keys, Plumby has done some sterling work with the key-cutting machine which the Welfare Fund purchased at the beginning of the commission, and the number of keys cut to date is 247.

Our Chief Shipwright Artificer has had quite a time dashing about on board getting the staff organisation running smoothly. His energies have not solely been confined to the ship though, as being a cine enthusiast, we have had private showings of his 8mm. films of various places we have visited. He has taken full advantage of the varied scenery and incidents which have come our way - an excellent record of our tours. The baby of our staff has been Shipwright Artificer P. Wright who has had to put up with a lot of the donkey work, coming up smiling each time. Our sailing dinghy crews have had a valuable member in him, as he has been able to use his chipping experience to great advantage. On one occasion our Admiral's Shipwright (Shipwright Artificer J. Wright) was seen on the quarterdeck doing a Highland Fling, but this wasn't because he had won the football pools, he happened to spot someone applying white paint to his newly-polished handrails.

There was a slight panic here yesterday over the appreciable list which the ship had acquired, Sub,

Lt. Trace seemed quite concerned. However, we soon convinced him there was no danger - it was only Colour Sergeant Parsons leaning over the guardrail.

When ashore together there is never a lack of entertainment, with Shipwright Artificer Clowes at the piano and his ever-ready repartee, things warm up in no time at all - the life and soul of the run ashore.

For a small staff we have done very well in producing two stalwarts for the 1st eleven soccer team, Sub. Lt. Trace and Shipwright Artificer Hoare, who have been in the team since the start

of the commission. Hoare, who is now a veteran of 36, still plays with the enthusiasm of a much younger man. His experience and steadiness have saved the day on numerous occasions. Sub. Lt. Trace, who has represented the Navy and Devon County, has now resumed playing after his serious neck injury, but intends retiring from active soccer at the end of the commission.

The commission is nearly over and our thoughts turn homeward from India's coral sands, but not quite as far as Greenland's Icy Mountains. So to all our readers we wish a Good Leave, Happy Ships, and the very Best of Luck.



O. O. W. (to helmsman) "Where do you think you're going - You're 30° off course?"

Helmsman "Nothing to do with me, Sir, I've not touched the wheel since I came on watch."



### *"So You Want to be a Ranger"*

HAVING seen the little clubs that meet every morning in the Sick Bay flat, and thinking to yourself that it would be an ideal way to pass away an hour or two, the first thing you require is a complaint. Now getting sick on board the "Gambia" was fairly simple, but becoming a member of one of those clubs was by no means as simple. Let us say, for instance, you decide to get a pretty violent cold, attended by a sore throat and so on. This malady can be brought on by getting far too hot, and then seeking the comfort of the numerous air-conditioned compartments thoughtfully provided by the farsighted Admiralty. Having got your complaint you begin the preliminaries at the Sick Bay. These preliminaries can be your undoing if you are not very careful, because it's not a case of crawling along there, or if you are particularly bad, getting your chums to help you hobble. On no ! First you have to see the "Keeper of the club cards". This person, on finding out that you want to see his Lord and Master, can make you feel decidedly unwanted, but take little notice of his demeanour, as he is a very human person at heart. However, be very careful, because any trite remark made to this person, will have an immediate caustic effect ! Having fumbled your way through these preliminaries, and been told "See the M.O. at 0830", you have only to turn about as smartly as you can and join the queue outside, at its extreme end. As this queue has been known to stretch along passageways and flats, I feel that I ought to add this word of warning. It is here that you will find a man who will give you the impression that you are a chum of his, and that he likes you, especially so if your previous commission was in Victoria Barracks. Should you happen across him organising his scrubbing out party - and I do mean Party, you

will soon find out just who is friends with who all right, and in basic English, and I do mean **Basic!** One further word on this subject, should you be a member of the esteemed Armament Division, be extra careful - this man practically eats members of this division !

So far, so good. You have attached yourself somehow to the end of this long, long queue, taken all possible evasive action from this other hazard and now you wait. Eventually you arrive at the head of the queue, and at this point you keep your ears open for the dulcet tones of the "Keeper of the Cards", as he will soon be calling your name. Keeping his feelings well under control, he will bid you enter the Inner Sanctum. Usually by this time you really have got a cold from standing in a draughty passage, and going hot and cold from catching sight of the "man in the passage". You will also be feeling very weak from standing upright for so long, and this apparent weakness will be quite a help to you in passing the next hurdle. No, don't get discouraged, you wanted light duty - now is your big moment.

At last you are in the web, and a rather good looking spider is eyeing you with his very professional air. Unknown to you the other person in the room has taken up his position, blocking the exit in case you break down and try to make a dash for it. Now you begin your terrible story, how bad you feel and so on, getting a very sympathetic ear. If your story is a poor one, you will get another sort of ear, of this I assure you! Let us assume however, that you have put up a fairly good show, and after you have subjected your person to various proddings, the M.O. will take up his pen. If you should be the nervous type don't bother



## By ... The Chaplain



### *"The lot is fallen unto me in a Fair Ground "*

THE above words of the psalmist often come to mind when one sees the capstan rigged as a round-about, and slides and swings and an aerial railway on the Boatdeck for children's parties; but for me they are appropriate to the whole commission. I have often envied Cruiser Chaplains, and after a commission in Gambia I realise how Fair and Pleasant is the lot of the Padre in such a ship.

On May 1st., whilst many were still coming on board with their kit after a night's journey from the south, earlier arrivals worked to rig an altar on the Boatdeck for the Commissioning Service. As befitted the first Scottish Cruiser, Padre Laidiaw, the Church of Scotland Chaplain, assisted at the service, whilst Father Catterell said Mass in the Chapel for the Roman Catholics. Many of us will never forget the service when the Captain used the old form of bidding, "What do ye fear, seeing that God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost is with you?" To which the Ship's Company and their wives and families replied, "We fear nothing." Then, led by the band of R.N.A.S. Lossiemouth, we joined in the singing of the hymns.

Nearly eight months later, on Christmas Eve in Aden, a large number of us, though alas, except in two cases, without our families this time, crowded together on the quarterdeck for the Midnight service of carols and Holy Communion. Once again Church had been rigged with a platform, altar, curtains, chairs, lights, and officers cabins raided for carpets. Whilst ships glided past on either side to the oiling berths, and the

candles never flickered in the still air, we sang the old familiar carols and received the Sacrament with Joy in our hearts that Christ is born. Earlier, at 7 p.m., many came up onto the boatdeck and sang carols with the Ladies and Gentlemen of the Christ Church Aden choir and the ship's choir.

Christmas Day away from home is always trying, but the quarterdeck at 0930 was crowded for the service of lessons and carols, the lessons being read by representatives of the various parts of ship.

Good Friday found us at Aden once again, and many joined in the service of Readings of the Passion. On Easter Sunday some were present at the Midnight Holy Communion and others at the services the next day.

We are fortunate enough to have a small Chapel which was rigged with much care by the joiners and upholsterers at Rosyth Dockyard. The Altar rails were made originally for H.M.S. Illustrious. Whilst in Home Waters the wives provided flowers for the Chapel each Sunday. Some of us have used the Chapel regularly for the daily services, but no one has spent more time there than Leading Coder O'Brien who has looked after it.

Sometimes one feels despondent when one realises how many do not appear regularly at the services, then one remembers with joy the faithful; those who Sunday by Sunday, Divisions or no Divisions, are in the congregation; the Band led

by Bandmaster Haigh; the choir led by Lieutenant Arthur, who was always ready to play the harmonium no matter what the temperature might be; and those many who have taken such careful preparation over the reading of the first and second lessons.

Not only have we been able to see something of the results of the faithful work of the church in India, Pakistan, Ceylon and other places, but also we have listened to addresses by the Pakistan Assistant Bishop of Karachi, the Bishop of Bombay and Canon Spence of the New Zealand Church Missionary Society. We have also been able to assist in a small practical way by giving the Sunday morning collections to various Christian Societies both local and at home.

I have had the privilege of baptising a number of children whose fathers serve in Gambia, taken part

at a wedding, and presented men to the Bishop of Bombay for Confirmation. My cabin has been used for a variety of purposes from Rover Scout meetings to a 'Studio' for tape recordings for sweethearts and wives.

*"The lot is fallen unto me in a fair ground."*

It has been a great privilege and perhaps I have realised the truth of this most of all when we have had the daily prayers on the fore-castle; for just as the Argonauts of old carried the figure of the King of the Gods in the bows of their ship and said their morning prayers there, so too have we in Gambia prayed to our God, that He might be with us and our loved ones and that we might do His will.

K. P. E.

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## Royal Marines Detachment

AFTER a short pre-embarkation training period, the detachment entrained for Rosyth where the ship was berthed. Quite a number of us found ship-life rather unfamiliar at first as this was our first sea-going commission, but after a few days we settled into the routine. A busy work-up period followed, during which Her Majesty the Queen paid a visit to the Home Fleet. We paraded on board H. M. S. Ocean where the O.C.R.M., Captain Waters, and the Sergeant Major, C/Sgt. Overington, were presented to Her Majesty.

In the latter part of July we sailed to Bergen where, apart from the usual ceremonial, parties were given for the children who enjoyed themselves immensely. Here too, romance was encountered and a certain member of the detachment is still corresponding with a Bergen lass.

We finally left U. K. in October and sailed for warmer climes. One of our celebrated members must have been under the impression that we were Arctic-bound for he brought along a "Primus Stove" much to everyone's amusement. After a brief stop at Bahrein, where we formally took over as the Flagship of the East Indies Station, we began our Autumn cruise in the Persian Gulf. Here we met our first delicate situation, the detachment being ordered to stand by in case of trouble ashore. The source of the trouble, a labour dispute at Umm Said, fortunately settled itself and we were not called upon to land.

Christmas was spent at Aden and the messes looked very decorative indeed with all the usual fancy trimmings and plenty to eat and drink. A most exuberant time was had by one and all. When the Commander-in-Chief called on his usual rounds, accompanied by Mrs. Biggs, he was met by the new O.C.R.M., (Corporal Henderson)

whose facial adornment consisting of a handlebar moustache suggested more a Royal Air Force type than a Royal Marine.

Field Exercises were carried out at Little Aden where Section and Commando Troop tactics were rehearsed with a Troop Attack using live ammunition as our finale. Congratulations are due to Mne. (K) Strike for acquiring a huge supply of lemonade powder from the Army.

At Berbera we were alerted for Internal Security Duties and one section of our landing force provided protection for a naval party who, under cover of darkness, removed a tug and five lighters from the shore and put them alongside a ship in the harbour. Fortunately there was no opposition and after the initial excitement the task became a period of waiting and guarding. Trincomalee saw half of us on our way to a well-earned rest at Diyatalawa. Did we say rest? It is certain that the majority of us used more energy on leave than on board ship. At Madras we gave a combined Beat Retreat and Drill Display which received a good ovation. We regrettably did not do real justice to the occasion and missed a good solid surface to drill upon. Calcutta was our first "Bright Lights" and we enjoyed excellent hospitality ashore. At Colombo the other half of the Watch went on leave to Diyatalawa travelling by bus, the most hair-raising experience imaginable with budding Grand Prix drivers and a long tortuous climb of six thousand feet to the rest camp. Fishing, swimming and sailing came well to the fore at Male as the shore attractions were non-existent. Here too our Sergeant Major, C/Sgt. Overington, was promoted to Q.M.S. On returning to Aden we paraded a Guard for the C.I.G.S., Field Marshal Sir Gerald Templar. Considerable amusement was derived from the R.A.F. Parade Warrant Officer's only word of command 'STILL', pronounced "STEEL", which he bellowed throughout

the rehearsals. Both the Naval detachment and ourselves undoubtedly outshone the other regiments which included the 1st Battalion the Buffs, the Royal Air Force, R.A.F. Dogs and their handlers, Aden Protectorate Levies and their Camel Corps.

After a visit to Muscat, mysterious "buzzes" spread like wildfire; something was in the offing and we soon found ourselves returning to Aden for further Internal Security duties. Demonstrations were given to the Seamen Platoons and the quarterdeck was a sight to behold after the rebels had finished throwing tomatoes, oranges etc. The performance of our G.I., Sgt. Burgoyne as Abdul Bin Mustaff (chief riot-leader and trouble-maker) resulted in a close watch being kept on him at all times for the least sign of any intimidation of the detachment.

Sport has played a prominent part in our tour of duty and we have many ranks representing the ship at various sports. Marines Shaw, Lester, and Musician Westaway play regularly for the ship at soccer, and Marines Parker, Henderson and Cpl.

Scarratt are occasional players. At hockey we have three regular players in Cpl. Henderson, Mne. Strike and Band Cpl. Hutton, whilst A/Cpl. Graham is almost a certain bet in any ship's golf match. A familiar figure at most cricket matches is our rotund umpire C/Sgt. Parsons, whose verdicts are never questioned. Whaler pulling has recently been added to our sporting attainments and a Regatta was held in Karachi in which the detachment team, coxswained by Cpl. Denman, put up a most creditable performance winning by several lengths.

We still have a few months of the commission left during which the detachment will continue to uphold the good name of the Royal Marines. The East African cruise, we have heard, is the most enjoyable of the commission, and a small number of the detachment are planning to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro and plant the Corps Colours on top for the third time.

J.M.L. & J.T.G.



# ***SPORTS OFFICER'S ROUND-UP***

*"Let it never be said that we have refused a challenge."*

**G**AMBIA has certainly lived up to this reputation, and the result has been that teams have been fielded in rugby, soccer, cricket, hockey, swimming, waterpolo, boxing, tennis, squash, badminton, golf and basket ball. Billiards, snooker, darts, and several other types of indoor sports have also been indulged in.

We commissioned with some knowledge of our sporting talent on board, but it was necessary to build up a soccer and cricket team at once, and to this end the first month of our commission was spent in playing interpart games and trials. The benefit of this certainly paid off on joining the Home Fleet, when at soccer we beat all comers except "Superb", with whom we drew one match each, an excellent achievement in a ship so newly commissioned. At cricket too we had our moments and won many more games than we lost.

Although opportunity was against us owing to working up and Fleet commitments, we had produced a successful nucleus on which time and more games would and did surely reap a reward. Slightly later than this period the hockey, swimming and rugby teams were being given trials and though no matches were played before leaving home waters, the energy, enthusiasm and foresight of the players in training was well worth while.

Bergen ... Our first visit abroad in July, where our soccer teams were victorious and we put up an excellent show at swimming and waterpolo in a water temperature of below 54°F.

At this stage we appeared to be on top of the world, but summer leave, Exercise Strikeback, and the loss of quite a few players who were the stalwarts and backbone of several teams, caused a severe blow from which we did not recover until we had been out on the East Indies Station for a few months. We had relied on too much from too few, an inevitable situation due to lack of opportunity for enough interpart games and relying too much on building up ship's representative sides.

Soon after leaving home waters we were presented with a signal from the C-in-C, East Indies stating that we should produce three soccer, two cricket, two hockey, one rugby, one tennis, one squash, one darts, one waterpolo and one basket ball team. We could now expect a full programme, it was to the future to see that we certainly got it.

Gibraltar and Aden on our way out, before taking over the Flag, provided us with games against the R.A.F. and the Army. We were not yet used to the grounds or climate but managed in all cases to give our best, and soon showed as a sporting community, that we were something to be reckoned with.

The Persian Gulf area provided a full variety of sport. Our rugby team moved into action and since Basra, the opening match of their tour, have not yet lost a game, a fine record. Many a team were royally wined and dined, none more so than our soccer team who flew to Teheran to play the Iranian Air Force, more of which can be read elsewhere. Between our Persian Gulf tour and our Christmas sojourn in Aden, a brief but pleasant interlude was sport with the Crescent Navies.

Over the Christmas period at Aden, despite much good cheer without and within and very many thick heads, sport carried on as usual. We held our swimming-gala, which was certainly a great success, and also played off the quarter-finals and semi-finals of our soccer interpart knockout competition. Again representative matches were played at many sports and against many teams, the soccer team certainly taking a tanking with nine 1st XI matches in eighteen days.

We have now "done" India and Ceylon as well. The Indians have shown us how to play hockey and we have handsomely repaid the compliment with rugger and cricket. Congratulations rolled into the ship on their performances. Many a team was billed in local newspapers as the Royal Navy versus .... however, we were not daunted. In fact after one hockey match it can clearly be remembered, having lost 4-0, our opposing team captain said three cheers for the Royal Navy, our captain immediately responded with the same quantity to the whole Indian Army!

Hockey, cricket and athletics interpart knockout competitions have not yet been run due to lack of opportunity, hockey is however under way and both this game and cricket should be run off and completed by the end of Exercise JET. To enumerate the places and sides we have played would fill pages; we visit a place, we play a sport or a variety of same; we cannot say that we have a brilliant sporting record measured in games won, but we have won nearly two thirds of our matches.

Our reputation of playing hard and sportingly has won us many friends.

N. B.

# CRICKET



*Standing: O. A. Mills, S/Lt. Rudd, Musn. Westawav, Ldg. Wtr. Ward, Tel. Ringrose, E. A. Lightbody, Clr. Sgt. Parsons.*

*Seated: Lt. Cooper, C. E. R. A. Veale, Captain Dunsterville, Lt. Cdr. Bent, Mid. Hunt.*

*Front Row: E. M. Pritchard, O. A. Hope. Absent A. B. Newsom.*

**A** blistering sun, an acre of parched sand, a sad strip of matting and a corrugated tin hut - hardly the setting for cricket you'd think. Yet in half the matches we've played in just those surroundings. Of course, sometimes it wasn't like that at all. The Colombo Cricket Club for example, where even the most fastidious couldn't ask for a more lovely ground, for a more perfect grass wicket, nor, come to that, for more generous and delightful entertainment. There was Madras Cricket Club, which had a background of very English-looking spires behind the boundary trees ; and the beautiful bowl of green, ringed by the tea hills of Dickoya, in up-country Ceylon, where the 1st XI were royally entertained for three days.

Yes, we played cricket in all sorts of conditions, and always it was fun. But we didn't always win by any means, and sometimes there were some very exciting finishes, like the match against "Jamaica" at Rosyth, where "Jamaica" was bowled out for 134 and then took "Gambia's" last wicket in the last over left for play, with 132 on the board. Perhaps the best team we played was the Royal Ceylon Navy at Colombo. They bowled us out for 90 and then knocked up what was needed to win for the loss of only 5 wickets. It was a dour match indeed. Our opening bats could find no more than 31 runs

in the first hour, so tight was the bowling and fielding. There were some equally honourable victories. The most satisfactory was in Bombay, against the full might of the Indian fleet combined with the Bombay naval shore establishments. Excellent batting right through the innings took "Gambia's" score to 203 for 8 wickets, at which stage the skipper declared. Then in the late afternoon the Indians were put out for a mere 102. A sweet victory indeed.

It has been one of the misfortunes of the commission, that there have been so few opportunities for inter-part cricket, but as we go to press the first inter-part knock-out competition is starting in Trincomalee, and may the best side win.

## **1st XI Results** (To 1st May, 1958).

Played	26
Lost	12
Drawn	2
Won	12

D. J. B.

# SOCCER

USING the excellent facilities available at Rosyth, numerous interpart friendly matches were played and a nucleus of ship standard players quickly found. Early in May an Interpart Knock-out Competition was started and with the odd trial match a regular 1st XI was selected. It was soon evident that Gambia was a force to be reckoned with in the soccer world.

After a series of rather easy victories, the first defeat was suffered at the hands of ~~H.M.S. Superb~~. ~~Superb~~ were rather proud of their soccer record, but we were not deterred and were raring for another go at them. Meeting up with them again at Rosyth after returning from the "Royal Review" at Invergordon, another challenge was issued. This time, after a hard struggle, they were defeated by 2 goals to 1. Meanwhile the Interpart Knock-

out competition was continuing and the Electrical Division, R.M.'s and Wardroom were doing very well. Prior to Summer leave we paid a week's visit to Bergen during which the hard work put in by the team bore fruit. Two resounding victories were recorded against Norwegian naval sides, and Trana F.C., who have recorded victories against English league clubs, were held to a very creditable 1-1 draw. Prior to this match, the captain of the team, Shpt. Sub. Lt. Trace, presented the British Consul, Mrs. Strong, with a large bouquet of flowers.

On Oct. 17th, as Gambia slipped out of Chatham to join the East Indies Station, three regular 1st team stalwarts were no longer with the ship. Corporal Hennion was in hospital with a slipped disc, E.M. Proudfoot had left the Service, and Shpt.

## 1st XI



*Standing: L. E. M. Lowis, Musn. Wesiaway, Mne. Shaw, M. E. Belsten, E. M. Bressington,*

*Seated: L. R. E. M. McCarthy, Shpt. Hoare, P. O. P. T. I. Legge, Captain Dunsterville, Shpt. S. Lt. Trace, S. Lt. Bench, Mne. Lester.*

*Front Row: S. Lt. Emerson, N. A. Tilley, A. B. Buckland.*