

ROUND THE DIVISIONS

PER SIGNA SAPIENTA

THE Communications Branch is, traditionally, the silent branch of the Silent Service, and so our contribution to this book will be of modest dimensions! In any case with the introduction of the General Service Commission there is less to relate than in the days when we boasted of our 'two and four' or even more.

The branch is one of the smallest in the ship with about twelve senior and forty junior ratings. These are augmented, when the C. in C. is embarked by another four senior and five junior ratings. The branch is further sub-divided into wireless and signal ratings of which there are slightly more 'sparkers' than there are 'buntings'. The Coder/Educ. is also officially part of the branch although we have not seen very much of him! We hope, however, that he has been happy in his work, coaching those of us who are not quite so 'well up', for E.T.1 and E.T.2 and ensuring that we all return our library books on time.

The communicator's work, as most of us know, concerns the handling of all signals, whether written in plain language or encrypted. Every signal has to be logged, typed, duplicated and distributed as necessary throughout the ship, and in a flagship the cryptographic part of signalling, which all sparkers and buntings have to deal with, accounts for at least half of all signal traffic.



Amongst other things cryptography requires a fair degree of mathematical genius!

We have various transmitters throughout the ship which enable us to send signals to all parts of the world, and we beg the pardon of any Royal Marine or Boy who may have been trampled on by one of the wireless branch in his efforts to get to the transmitter rooms situated under the respective mess decks. The buntings have their troubles too, as they are responsible for typing all messages and, with the help of the Seamen Messenger Boys, ensuring delivery to the officers concerned.

On normal days the main duty of the Flagdeck staff has been to keep a good look-out and to communicate with any passing ships. To date we have exchanged identities with well over a thousand merchant ships. During combined exercises, however, such as J.E.T., the Flagdeck was the scene of much activity dealing with short operational messages with either flags, light or semaphore.

Statistics show that an average of 180 signals a day were handled during J.E.T., but even when there are no exercises about 50 a day are dealt with. Up to Christmas the grand total handled since the beginning of the commission was in the region of 35,000. A large number of private telegrams have also been dealt with, particularly over Christmas and the New Year.

We have managed to produce a few pages of news each morning for your perusal. This has called for the combined efforts of P.O.Tels. Gilvary and Davies who have listened to the ordinary B.B.C. News Bulletins and endeavoured to type as much as they can from this broadcast. From the two rough copies a master copy has been produced and this is finally distributed round the ship. The work generally takes as long as two hours, with an extra hour on Saturdays to cope with the Football results and League Tables. We apologise for the occasional error that has crept in, but reception has often been poor. However our efforts must have been read as any errors are inevitably pointed out to us by at least half the ship's company - usually rather forcibly!

In the sporting world we have done exceptionally well and we venture to say that no other division has equalled our achievements. At the inter part athletics we came second to the Royal Marines, being beaten by only one point. Yeo Wright won the javelin although he had never thrown one before in his life. Actually he tripped at the throwing point and thereby achieved the immense (to him) distance of 118 feet 6 inches. Yeo Benfield and Ldg. Tel. Hague have been regular members of the Ship's Rugby XV and others have played for the second string.



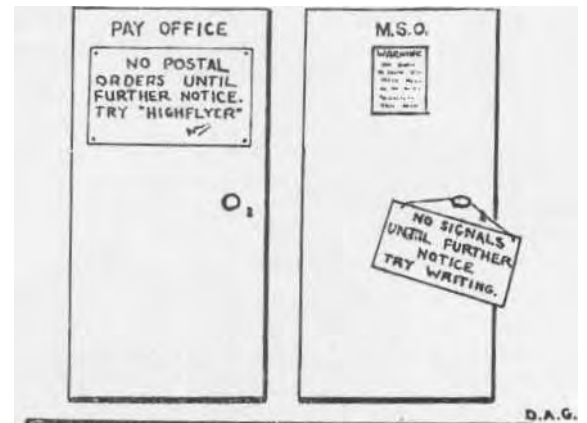
We head the Soccer league table and with only one game to play are full of confidence about retaining this position. Ldg. Sig. Broadfoot and Ord. Sig. Turner and regular Ship's players. We have yet to be beaten at cricket at which Ldg. Sig. Murphy is the star player. We have had our share of players in the Hockey Team amongst them Ldg. Tel. Tawton and Chief Yeo. Smith (Umpire). We were a little unlucky in the inter part competition but this has been mentioned in the Hockey Notes.

Our swimmers Menzies, Redpath, Rushton, Crooke, Head and Richings gained us first place in this sport and Yeo. Benfield has been a regular member of the Ship's Water Polo Team.

In the Regatta, we had a thrilling pull against the Wardroom whom we beat by one second after

leading at one stage by four lengths. Our crew was very heavy, probably the heaviest in the ship, and we thought we did well to come in third against the R.P.N. at Karachi. From bow to cox our crew, was, Fallon, Hague, Aire, Benefield, Suter and Tawton.

Finally we thank all other departments for their co-operation and hope we have not trod on too many corns. A special word of thanks, perhaps, to the Electrical Dept. for all the `amps' they have given us - the figure must be astronomical as well as other things, begged, borrowed or just plain pinched! We wish everyone a happy homecoming and a good leave and a prosperous life to those going outside and the draft of their choice to those who have not yet done their time.



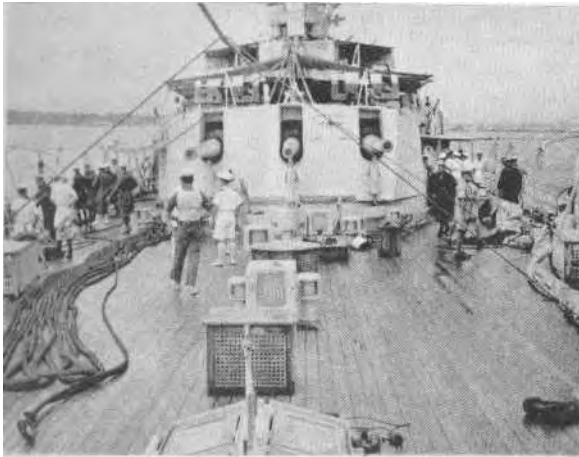
THE ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

In keeping with the best traditions of the Royal Navy the Engineering Department has quietly and efficiently provided the essential services so necessary in the Flag Ship of the East Indies Station.

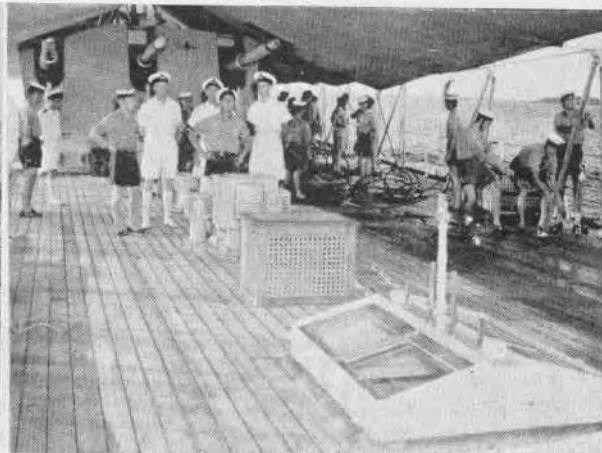
A short list of some of these services is given below for those of our readers who may not appreciate to the full what they comprise. The list of course, does not indicate an order of priority

- Air Conditioning Aft.
- Constant H & C.
- Ice for Cocktails.
- Hives for Bees.
- Strainers for Jelly Fish.
- Cooling for Beer.
- Peelers for Spuds.
- Oil for Quarter Decks.
- Salutes for Admirals.
- Spills for `L' flat.
- Beards for Barbers.
- Air for Guns.
- Dips for Divers.
- Defaulters for Commanders.
- Steam for Main Engines.
- Revs, non-denominational, for screws.
- General Service for the Commander (E).

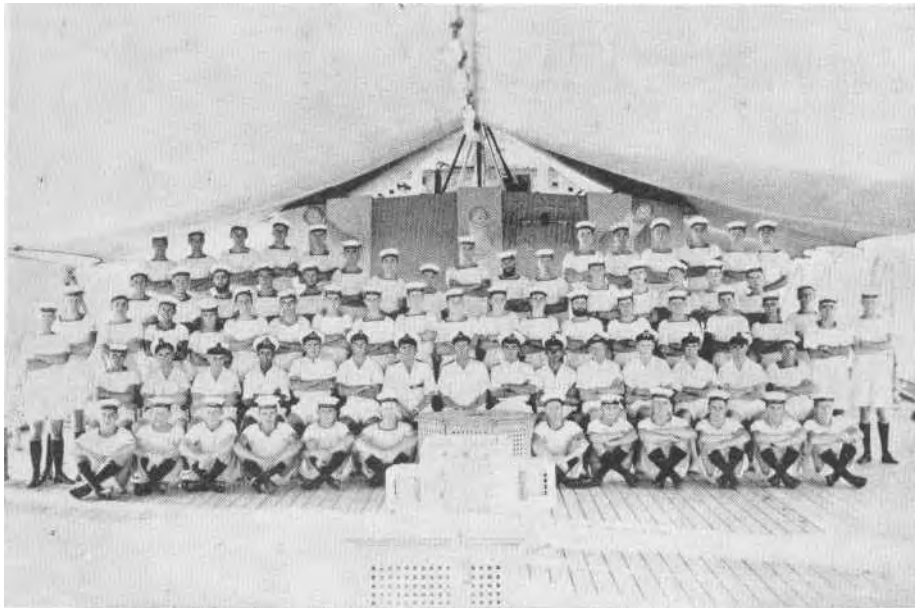
THE QUARTERDECK



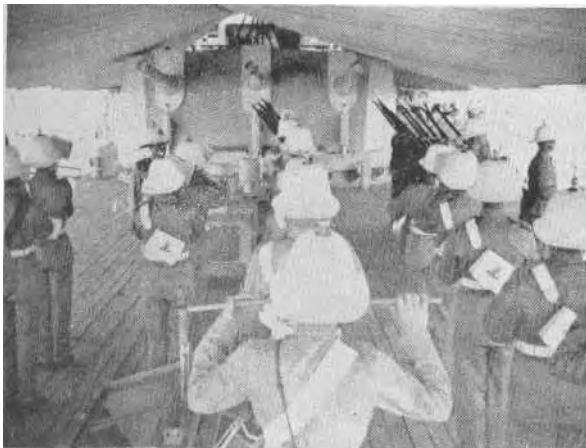
Five minutes before entering harbour



Final adjustments are made



Quarterdeckmen



In ceremonial mood



More lighthearted.

QUARTERDECK DIVISIONAL NOTES

WHEN it was first decided to allow one page of the commission book to each division the Quarter-deck Division inundated the editor with pages of manuscript which had been the diary of one of the able seamen of the division. From these pages many of the following remarks are taken, but it was quite obvious from the start that we would be unable to publish all the references without risking libel actions for offending the more sensitive amongst us.

We have had an interesting commission at the after end of the ship, and although we have not been able to see all the V.I.P.s who have trodden on the hallowed ground, we have caught the occasional glimpse of a Sheik or Political Agent making his official call, no doubt impressed by what the Mombasa Times called "The gleaming brass", and of course the deck. The deck is primarily made of wood, but not the common or garden wood that you find on the floors of houses or up beyond the catwalk - no, this demands a special sort of treatment. First we allow the dockyard mates of Devonport to spread their oily feet all over it, then we cover it with lime which sets so hard that it has to be chipped off, then we scrape it and wash it. Now this washing is not the normal type of washing that you may encounter in your own home; it is unique. First you get up early and after you have tried to be detailed for store party you are sent down to provide scrubbers. The scrubber is a long handled instrument and the end of the handle fits into a round hole in the bit of wood with the bristles in it. The system was invented in the early paleolithic age and has been handed down from father to son until the present day. It was used with such success for brooms and mops that just after Nelson's time they decided to use it for scrubbers. It soon became obvious that when the scrubber was immersed in water the hole in the wood would swell, allowing the handle to escape, but this fact has been kept a dark secret until now when at last it can be told. You have a choice ; either you don't scrub hard enough to loosen the handle or you spend the whole of the 'scrub-deck' period trying to fit the thing together again. ("Don't hit that handle on the deck here, you'll wake someone up - take it off the Q.D.") Having armed yourself with your weapon you trip lightly down aft, confident that the next scene in the before-breakfast comedy is about to start.

The cast is the same for both variations of the scene and although there are little differences in each presentation, the broad outlines are roughly the same. In scene one the Captain of the Q.D. rigs the hose on the deck and waits for the nozzle to arrive. When eventually this elusive article is found, the water is switched on and a thick glutinous mass of oil is sprayed over the snow-white

wood. Reactions of the cast are shown below under scene one reading from top to bottom.

In scene two the Captain of the Q.D. rigs the hose on the deck and does not wait for the nozzle to arrive. The steady stream of crystal clear water cascading on the clean deck dwindles to a trickle. The fire-main pressure falling fast to the scene the Engine-room staff. Reactions of the cast are again listed below this time reading from bottom to top.

<i>Dramatis Personae</i>	<i>Scene I</i>	<i>Scene II</i>
Captain of the Q.D.	Irate	Offended and unrelenting
Divisional Officer or understudy	Irate moves off right to Engineers Office	Moves off left quietly
The Hands	Amused	Highly amused
The Engineer	Occasionally apologetic usually explanatory with diagrams and gestures	Irate

"That is why so much Pussers' lime is used"

That is enough about the work that the division does, although it is a temptation to spread ourselves further and include all the remarks about 'Y' turret, the Royal Marines and the effort required to secure the ship to a buoy astern. Now about the sport.

We have a splendid divisional football team though we say it ourselves. It is well led and enthusiastically supported and met with great success until on the indifferent ground at Bahrain we lost our chance to win the inter-part league in a frustrating draw with the Communications Division. As well as enjoying it, it did give the 'old men' of the division some exercise.

In the ship's team we have always been represented, usually by the two outstanding players in the team.

Boxing is probably the next favourite sport with us and the majority of the team is drawn from Quarterdeckmen. Seven of the division have represented the ship in boxing competitions at Zanzibar, Seychelles or Diyatalawa - "Well done" to them.

At rigger we again provide more than our fair share of players at least three of us being in every

team that has been fielded. At cricket, although we have had little success in the league, we have always been ready to field a team even at the last minute by a triumph of organisation by the team secretary ?? In the 1st XI we have usually had our representatives and it was largely due to the contribution from us that the ship's company beat the officers in the game at Trincomalee. On the Hockey we have lagged a bit, but occasionally manage to get two players into the 1st eleven.

At the time of going to press we have a whaler's crew being formed which has a good chance of getting into the regatta at Karachi. Looming up in the future we see more of every kind of sport before the commission ends and whenever a team leaves the Gambia to play any game be it Darts, Snooker, Boxing or softball, Quarterdeckmen will be there.

Finally we turn to the Messdecks. Up there on the starboard side of 'A' barbette are the Quarter-

deck messes. Never are there less than fifty crammed up together in this small space and although conditions are not ideal we have managed to win the 'cake' or more than our fair ration of cigarettes regularly. We also have our 'characters' - the chap with the baboon's head -Robert Mitchum with his slate grey eyes - and many others. If you don't know a Quarterdeckman when you see one you will recognize him because he doesn't like

- (1) Stokers who allow oil fuel to get on his deck
- (2) Royal Marines who don't wash the soles of their boots
- (3) Forecastlemen
- (4) Topmen
- (5) The Electrical branch
- (6) Work.

THE BOYS DIVISION

Divisional Officer; Lt. Cdr. K. C. SIMMONS. R.N.

Divisional Petty Officers; P.O. KINRADE and P.O. RYDER



The Boy Seamen's Guard

THE ASIAN STEWARDS AND COOKS



IN this ship we have carried 12 Ceylonese stewards and also 12 Goans. We have all learned something about Ceylon but not everybody knows that Goa, about 400 miles south of Bombay on the west coast of India, is a city of some 600,000 inhabitants. Ever since the domination of that part of India by the Portuguese the Roman Catholic Church has wielded great influence on the affairs of the colony and most of the natives have been converted. It became a centre of Christian civilisation and culture and was known as "The Rome of the East".

As the Goans have adopted a European way of life they have for generations been employed as cooks and stewards by the principal shipping

lines serving the East; and, despite their Portuguese citizenship, in the Royal Navy on the East Indies station. This strange connection with the Royal Navy dates back to early Victorian days. At that time the Goans entered on a normal continuous service engagement, qualifying for a pension at the end of their service. Nowadays they enter on a three-years non-continuous-service engagement without pension rights but with a gratuity after 22 years satisfactory service.

They are a cheerful, hardworking and intelligent race and some of them are exceptional linguists, being able to speak and write Portuguese and English in addition to their own language Conkanim.

BUZZ-BUZZ

*Have you heard the buzz
That we're going to
Guzz.*

*It's all round the ship
That it's our next trip.
But alack and alas
I fear it's 'Madras,
And then I hear say*

*Our next trip is Bombay.
The rumour's around
We're off to the Sound.
I'm assured that it's
true*

*And I hope so too.
The chart-house explain*

*We're heading for
Spain,*

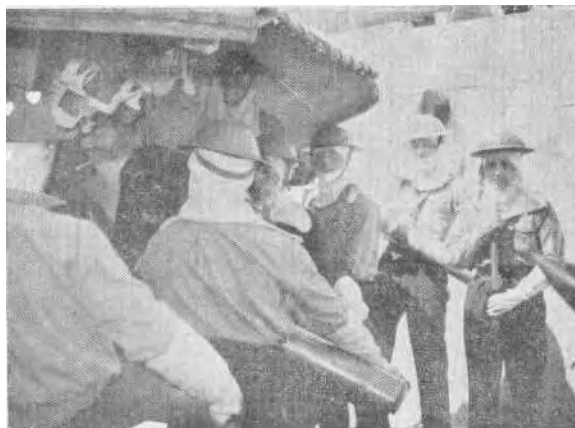
*But the Tanky has fears
We're set for Algiers.
It's said with a smile
We'll soon see Drake's
Isle.*

We're leaving tonight,

*I do hope he's right.
We're heavily laden
Let's hope it's for Aden,
But just wait and see
You've got it right—
Trincomalee !*

R.M.E.

THE ROYAL MARINE DETACHMENT



LOOKING back we can regard our General Service Commission with satisfaction as it has been both interesting and enjoyable. The two main cruises of the commission took us to some very interesting places and we were all welcomed and entertained in a most hospitable manner. We on our side have, we feel, done our part to keep up the prestige of the Royal Navy, the Royal Marines and the British People.

Nairobi, Mombasa, Kilimanjaro, the Seychelles and the Persian Gulf will long be remembered by all of us; especially by those who stepped over the mark and who may now look back and think it was well worth while (we wonder ?!).

Our military role was hampered by the lack of time and opportunities to get ashore. Sea duties aboard kept us very busy and it wasn't until we reached Khor Kuwai that we had a chance to test our full Landing Organisation. The Platoon carried out some exhausting Section attacks and even 'Bungy' Williamson, the Commander's Servant donned his fighting order! We felt an error must have crept in to the O.C.R.M.'s Orders because our two fat men, Bill Laker and Pete Wale, were landed in the Support Group (or was it merely to keep the Sgt. Major company?).

On two occasions there was a possibility of landing in earnest. The first occurred when the Dockyard Police in Trinco. threatened to strike and the second in Bahrain, where again labour troubles were reported. The first of these was, perhaps, averted by the prompt landing of Lieute-

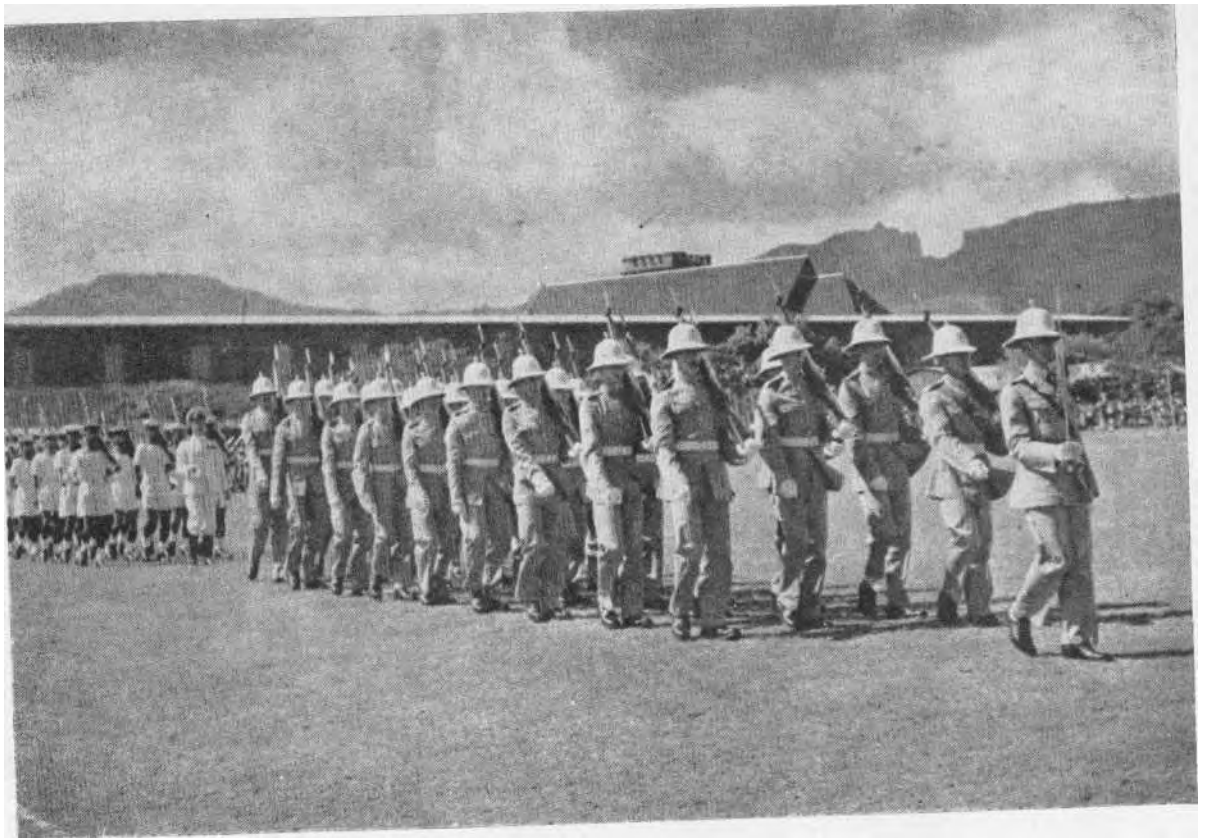
nant Sidwell and the Sergeant Major (complete with Sash!) and the second fizzled out before we entered the Persian Gulf.

The Leave Period at Diyatalawa was enjoyed by all and during this time we managed to fit in our Annual Range Course.

On board we have never had a dull moment with more than a fair share of guards which were paraded, for, amongst others, the Sultan of Zanzibar and the Ruler of Kuwait. At the 'Crossing the Line' ceremonies on the way to Mauritius and returning from the Seychelles the Royals were well to the fore in the shape of Corporal Wyles' 'Pirates' and 'Butch' Vincent and his henchmen. The latter initiated the F.R.M.O., according to 'Neptune's' ancient traditions, with a gusto appropriate to his rank. The 'Pirates' have also been one of the main stays and attractions at the Children's Parties which have been given at most of the places we have visited, to all races of children.

One of the highlights of the East African cruise was the Queen's Birthday Parade at Mauritius. There, thirty of us representing the Corps, took part in this most attractive spectacle which was held at the Police Barracks.

At the time of writing the Persian Gulf cruise is nearly over. We still have to visit Calcutta, Madras and Massawa after Christmas, but if these places are anything like those so far visited then we are certainly in for a pleasant time before we reach 'Guzz' in March.



The Royal Marines Guard Marching



The combined bands playing at the 'Beating the Retreat' ceremony held at the end of J.E.T. This ceremony took place on the hockey pitch at the 'Highflyer' following the match between the R.P.N. and J.N. which ended in a draw