



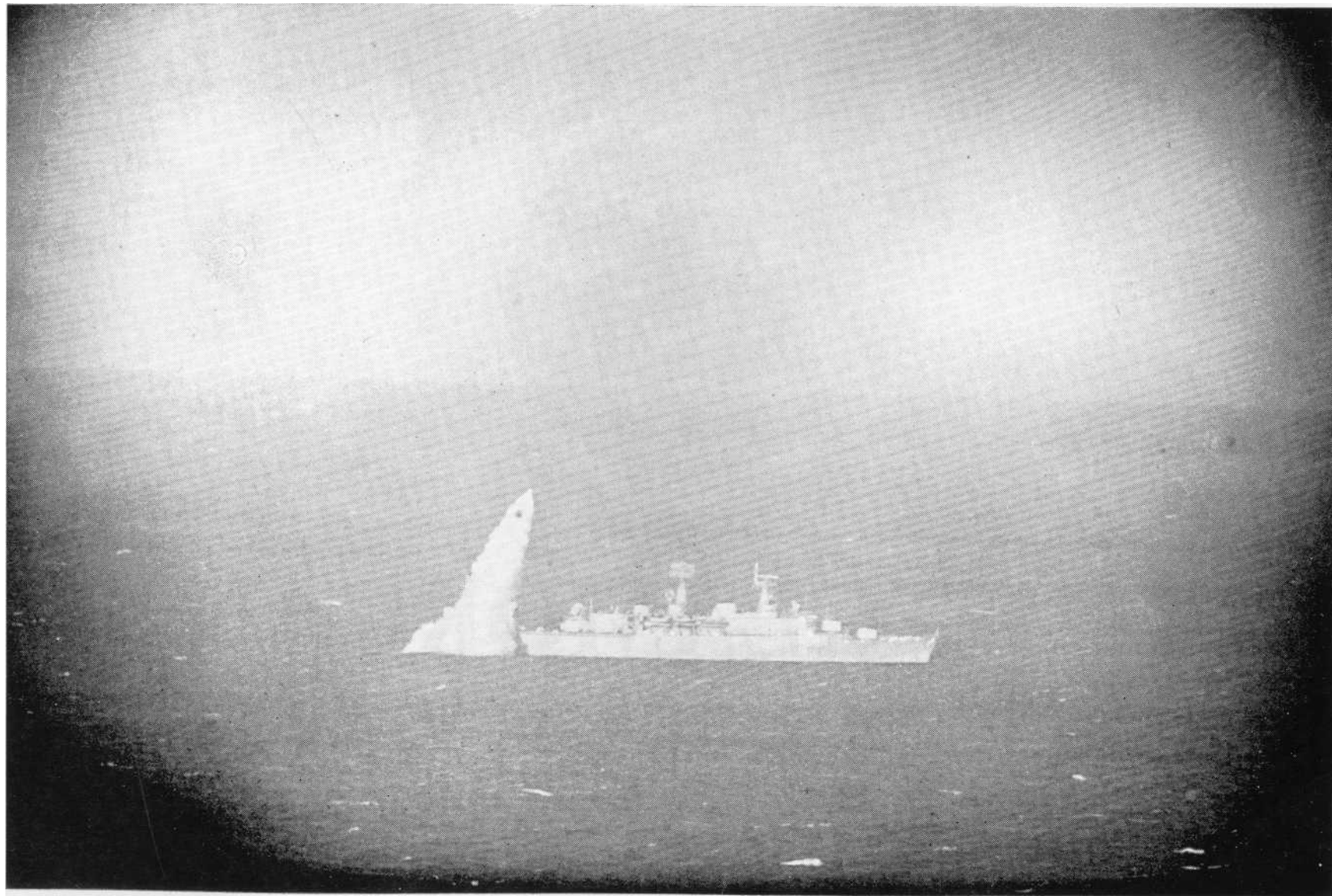


# **HMS GLAMORGAN**

**THE FIRST TWO YEARS**

**OCTOBER 1966 - OCTOBER 1968**





# Foreword

by **Commander P.F.V. Stigant**

At the time of going to press, I find myself inadvertently in command and so will have to try and introduce this book in the way which my two predecessors would have wished.

It has been a most successful and happy commission and we have achieved a tremendous amount of constructive work and play during the course of it. The first eighteen months were spent setting to work an entirely new weapon system with all the hard and sometimes tedious work that this involved. The last year will have been spent proving, both in the States and Australia, but the members of the Royal Navy, both individually and collectively, are the best ambassadors that the country could have.

Certainly we were left in no doubt that the USN regarded this ship as an advance in Naval construction and the most modern and sophisticated ship in anyone's Navy, and this is a feather in all your caps.

I could not end this introduction without mentioning the tremendously strong ties which have been built up with the Principality, and particularly with the County of Glamorgan. The interest shown by Lord and Lady Brecon, By Sir Cennydd Traherne and the Glamorgan County Council to mention but a few has been absolutely outstanding and we have been almost embarrassed by the gifts that have been showered upon us as well as the hospitality given. We are most grateful for this and hope that the liaison will long continue with our successors.

Finally, it has been the greatest privilege to have met you all and I can only thank you on behalf of Captain Roe, Captain Greenlees and myself and wish you 'all the very best of good fortune in the future.



**CAPT. RICHARD E. ROE**



**CAPT. R. C. C. GREENLEES**

**P.F.V. Stigant**

# In The Beginning

This is the story of the first Commission of the first GLAMORGAN. And it must start long before Commissioning Day. The keel was laid in Messrs. Vickers limited Shipyard at Newcastle-upon-Tyne on 13th September 1962. The ship was then known by two numbers, the Naval Controller's Department number DLG 05 and the Shipyard number Ship 176. This was not the first of DLG 05 however, because the staff and Ship divisions of MOD (Navy) had first to dream her up, find the money and obtain approval for her. So far as is known these decisions were taken in 1959 or 1960. Of course work had started on some of our 'latest' systems much earlier than that. Poseidon computers were being designed and talked about in the early fifties and Action Data Automation (ADA) in its first form was taking shape in the mid-fifties.

Back in the Yard, Number 176 was taking shape. The ship's sides grew, certain machinery was installed, including main steam plant gearboxes and shafts. Number one deck was built and the lower decks were hung from it. This method helps to maintain the ship's "form". Eventually the hull was ready to take the water, and HMS GLAMORGAN was launched into the river Tyne by Lady Brecon on 9th July 1964. Our representatives at that ceremony, and what followed were the Marine Engineer Officer (designate), Commander M. S. Drewett, and Lieutenant Paxton.

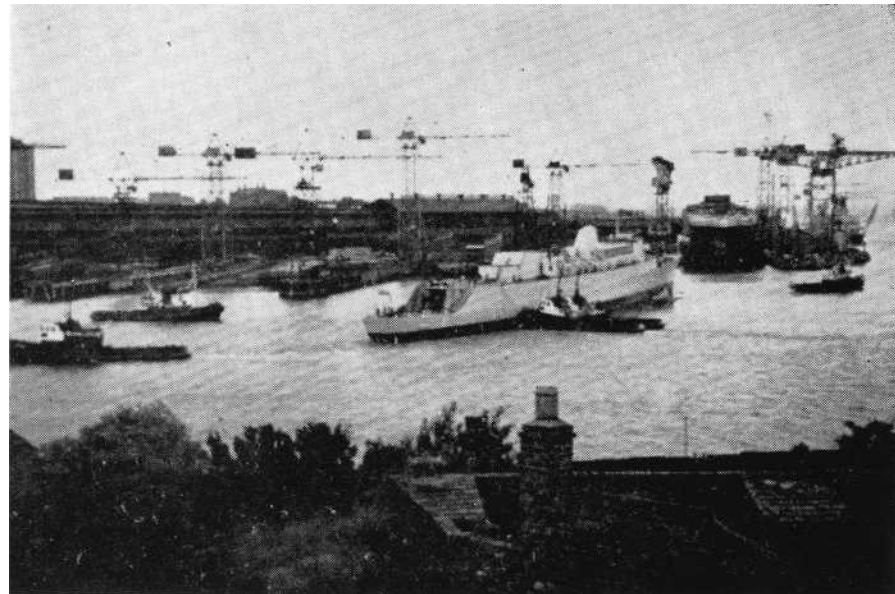
More officers joined, then the first members of the Ship's Company, but it was not till October 1964 that the ship's staff were finally provided with a home by the Shipbuilder. They moved into a splendid! set of hardboard and wood cabooshes that had been built among the rafters of the Sheet Metal Shops. They shared these premises with the Ship's Company of HMS MINERVA.

During the summer the ship had lain in her fitting-out berth, minus her after funnel and superstructure, awaiting the fitting of the G.6 gas turbines and other equipment. There was a great deal of rain in the summer and the space which was to become number nine mess came to look more like a swimming pool every day. In the winter which followed, the ship was covered in snow. The various trades in the Shipyard took it in turns to go on strike, and equipment which should have arrived from outside contractors failed to arrive by the promised date. The completion date slipped back from December 1965 to April 1966.

During the first half of 1965 there was a rapid increase in ME and WE personnel, as those of us who had started our pre-commissioning training with an eye towards the old completion date came off

the production lines. The first Seaman Officer, the future Executive Officer and Second-in-Command, Commander D. J. Mackenzie, joined in April. Never before had he been so completely surrounded by Engineers and his first reaction was to view the whole thing with some concern and to wonder how we had managed without a Master-at-Arms or some sort of ruthless regulating machinery. However, in no time at all he had bought himself two pairs of overalls and was on Christian Name terms with the key men in the yard.

The first Seaman to arrive was Able Seaman Neal, who joined with Leading Writer Jenkins, the first member of the Supply Department, in May 1965. They set up the Ship's Office and spent a great deal of time trying to chase up lodging allowance and pay. There were days when our pay would arrive in the form of an unsigned cheque, the list would include people for pay we didn't have or would miss off several we did have. We were often indebted to the Cash Office in Vickers who tided us over these embarrassing moments.

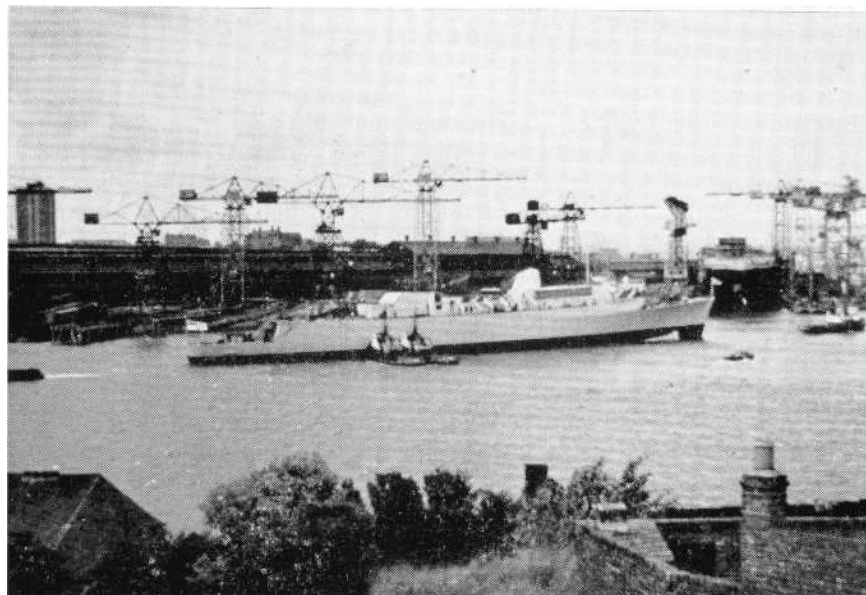


The first soccer matches were played, using gear provided by the generosity of the Nuffield Trust, and some attempts were made at playing cricket. Chief E. R. A. Toghill umpired many games in the area and several members of the Ship's Company played in local rugby and soccer teams. Vickers Limited again came to our rescue by allowing us to use their sports grounds and clubhouse. All the facilities were excellent, including the Newcastle Ale. A sniff was given us of things to come when Chief. GI Bray 'and COA Powell organised the first Ship's Company Dance in the Clubhouse in December 1965. It was a happy forerunner of bigger and better events to follow.

The first few months of 1966 were spent in 'assisting' the ship-builder and machinery contractors in getting the ship ready for its first voyage - Contractors' Sea Trials. The object of these trials is to ensure that the propulsion machinery works properly, that the ship doesn't fall to pieces when the guns fire or when the missiles are launched and that there is some chance that the Ship's Company will be able to exist, or even live, between decks. We were also rather concerned as to who our Captain was to be. Several names were buzzed around, at least three of whom ended up in other DLG's. When Captain Roe's name was at last announced, no-one was able to say that he had served with him previously. So we were still none the wiser until he came to sea with the ship one Sunday during CST's. That marked the beginning of a crew phase in HMS GLAMORGAN's life.

## Glamorgan And Wales

The first links with Wales were forged when Lady Brecon, the wife of the then Minister for Welsh Affairs, did us the honour of launching the ship. From this date a close relationship between the ship and the County of Glamorgan was fostered on both sides. By the time the Captain was appointed the foundations had been firmly placed, and he built on them from the start by entering into correspondence with Lord and Lady Brecon and the Lord Lieutenant of the County, Sir Cennydd Traherne, TD, L1.D. Through the Lord Lieutenant, we asked Cynan (the Archdruid) to propose a motto - hence "I fyny b' or nod" which could not be more suitable for a guided missile ship as it means "Aim High."



There was much private correspondence between Ship and County in the early days too. The very first person to write to us independently was P.C. Dodson, of the Glamorgan Constabulary. He proposed to make a plaque which he would present on the ship's first visit to the County. And this was in July 1964, long before we had either a crest or a motto!

The liaison with Wales and the County will be mentioned many times in these pages. And this is right and proper, for it is a very real and personal liaison and one which we all hope will continue to flourish, and be kept alive by the next Commission.

By the time Commissioning Day came, we felt that there was already a strong bond between Ship and County, and accordingly invited a large number of dignitaries from the County. Among the distinguished guests must be mentioned the late County Alderman Theophilus Griffiths, Chairman of Glamorgan County Council. He was an enthusiast for HMS GLAMORGAN and he made the promise that he would invite "us all" to dinner in County Hall when the ship visited Cardiff; for those who were duty he would send been on board! We were able to accept his hospitality on both counts - but the ship's visit to Cardiff is another and later story.



# Commissioning Day

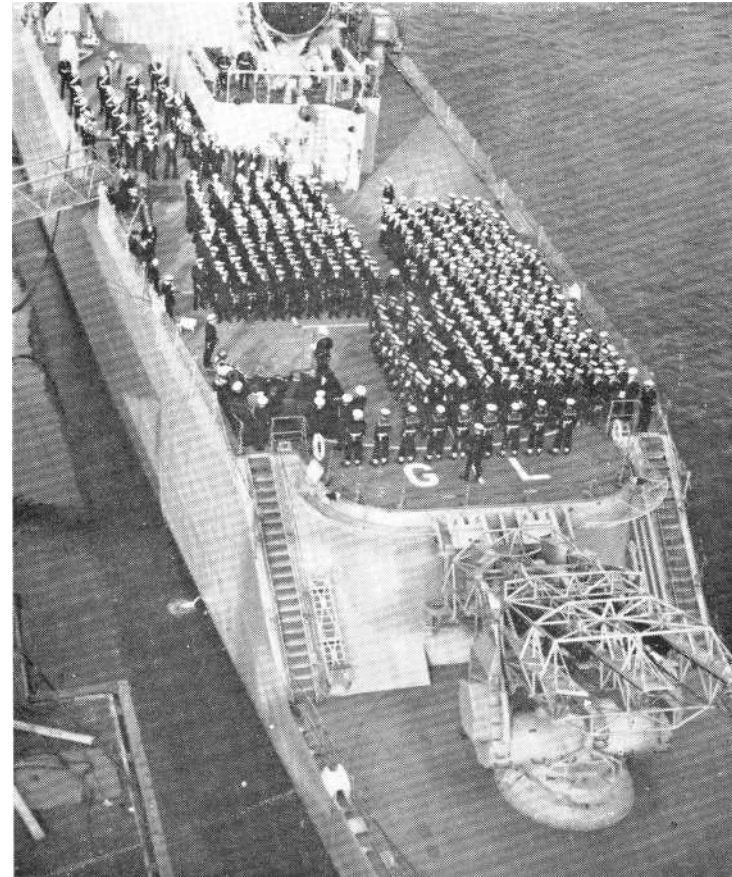
Friday 14th October 1966 dawned and wet on Tyneside. However, by midday the weather had cleared and the omens looked more propitious for the Commissioning of HMS GLAMORGAN. After the ship's first Press Conference, an historic presentation took place in the wardroom, at noon. Mr. J. D. Glanville, the Managing Director of George Clark and NEM Limited, presented a bronze plaque, depicting the "Turbinia" and the "Glamorgan", the first and last ships to be powered by Parsons Marine steam turbines. GLAMORGAN is the last of a long line of warships (the first were VIPER and COBRA in 1898) to be engined by Parsons, as the famous Turbinia works at Wallsend has now closed and the Company has become a member of the Richardsons Westgarth Group.

In a gradually brightening afternoon the Ship's Company were fallen in, looking remarkably smart and already very much a "Company", and the guests, naval and civilian, began to arrive. At three o'clock the Commissioning began. The opening address was made by the Chairman of Vickers, and this was followed by a charming and gracious speech by Lady Brecon. Lady Brecon told us that since GLAMORGAN was the first ship to be so called, and was therefore unable to continue the tradition built by previous Glamorgans, she must become the inspiration of a new tradition. This "splendid and mighty ship" must be "the foundation - the beginning of a great story, so that other ships which may inherit this name in the far-off future will regard her with pride and affection."

Captain Roe, in thanking Lady Brecon, included many others in his thanks. He praised the shipbuilders, craftsmen and scientists who had made the ship possible; he expressed his delight at being able to welcome so many guests from the County of Glamorgan; and he extended a special "thank you" to the landladies of Tyneside, especially those of Whitley Bay and Tynemouth, where many of us had been living during the long months of fitting out.

After the speeches the Commissioning Warrant was read, the "Alert" sounded, and the White Ensign hoisted for the first time. Then followed a short and moving service, conducted by the Chaplain of the Fleet, the Venerable Archdeacon Prior, after which Lady Brecon proceeded below decks to the Dining Hall, where she cut the Commissioning Cake - assisted by the Master at Arms with a smiling Chief Cook in attendance.

Among the many gifts given to the ship by the County of Glamorgan on the occasion of her Commissioning were television sets for the messdecks and some magnificent silver for the wardroom.





Wardroom Silver.



Parsons Penny



MAA Northern, Lady Brecon, CPO Ck Hogg.



Dockside View.



# Shaking Down

Late on the 16th October 1966, after a day of non-stop trials and an evening of non-stop discussion, HMS GLAMORGAN exchanged the Red Ensign for the White, and became the latest ship to join the Royal Navy, a distinction she was to hold for some months. A saving clause remained on the port gas turbines, still troubled by excessive vibrations, and like all good merchandise she carried a year's guarantee, but at last we felt she was ours. The plans and hopes of three years, which had reached a crescendo over the last few months, had come to fruition: we were of one company in a magnificent new ship.

The skill of brain and hand which created her had not quite eliminated the occasional teething trouble. Abreast the Goodwin Sands on the passage South:

"Bridge - Wheel 'owse."

"Bridge."

"Ship won't steer, Sir."

"Why not?"

"Wheel's come off in me 'and Sir!"

It is rumoured that the Gunnery Officer never really recovered from this early watchkeeping experience in GLAMORGAN, and the Quartermaster thereafter confined his wheel turning to the landrover.

News of the Aberfan disaster was received with stunned sorrow in the ship, where the Welsh bonds so newly formed were already strong. The ship's company made a spontaneous collection of £140 almost overnight, long before the official fund opened, and the tragedy was felt personally by about all onboard.

Portland, that improbable siren of the English seas, claimed us greedily for a few days' D.G. ranging and the like before giving us up reluctantly to the more obvious charms of Portsmouth, but content to bide her time our inevitable return of work up almost a year later. At Portland our Vickers-built contemporary cousin greeted us with a signal in Welsh, "CROESAN." W.E.O., Commander Greaves our Welsh interpreter, consulted his dictionary and offered in translation "Buffoon". Although heads were shaken in polite disbelief, MINERVA was eyed warily and estimates of the dangers of the Welsh tongue were hastily revised.

And so to Portsmouth, and the beginning of a love-hate relationship with the Part IV programme of testing, tuning, setting to work and trials, which was to last for seventeen months. Quick and efficient surgery made a hole in the ship's side, the ADA computer was transported reverently down from ASWE and through the hole to

her new, permanent home, and the wound was healed. The programme thereafter was to be one of hope deferred, of advances cancelled by slipping back, of sea time alternating with long periods supporting the North Wall, of family greetings and farewells.

Our first efforts to reach Cardiff just before Christmas, at the end of the initial sea period, were thwarted by a force ten Bristol Channel storm. The lively motion of a 6,000 ton ship, stabilisers and all, was a timely reminder for most, and memorable proof for some, that seagoing in wintry Atlantic seas could be a serious affair even for a new electronic sub-miracle.

For the remainder of the winter and spring which followed, a gradually accelerating period of trials ensued, and we began to acquire a reputation for achieving our objectives at the very last minute allocated. For example, the Gunnery Sea Acceptance Trials were passed 'Sat' on the last run of the last sortie of the last aircraft in the last hour available to us. This formula was to be repeated so often in the next year that the philosophy 'she'll be right' became well established long before prospects of a Sydney visit were even considered. Throughout these trials we were occasionally tempted by the grotesque attraction of Portland, but because of the state of some of our new equipment we were compelled to keep our practices modest in scope.

Early in the new year, FIFE, hitherto lead ship for both the ADA weapon system and GWS 2 was forced by problems and delays to abandon the latter to GLAMORGAN. Henceforth, the trials firings of Seaslug 2 at sea were to form the focus of all plans and activities in the ship until deployment: a *raison d'être* had miraculously appeared to give urgency and point to all the hard work and apathy, never a common commodity in this ship's company, vanished completely.

The winter and early spring work continued with alternating periods in harbour and at sea. An early Easter leave period was followed by the first, and highly successful, families day. The lord Lieutenant, and lord and lady Brecon and their daughter joined us and much enjoyed the day. Those of us who, like the author, were precluded by circumstances from enjoying the company of their families, derived pleasure from seeing, and in some cases meeting, the wives, fiancées, girl friends and sisters who could come; the general standard of pulchritude was agreeably high!

At last, at the second attempt, to our adopted home, the County of Glamorgan in the shape of Cardiff, where the good citizens had waited dinner for us for over four months.

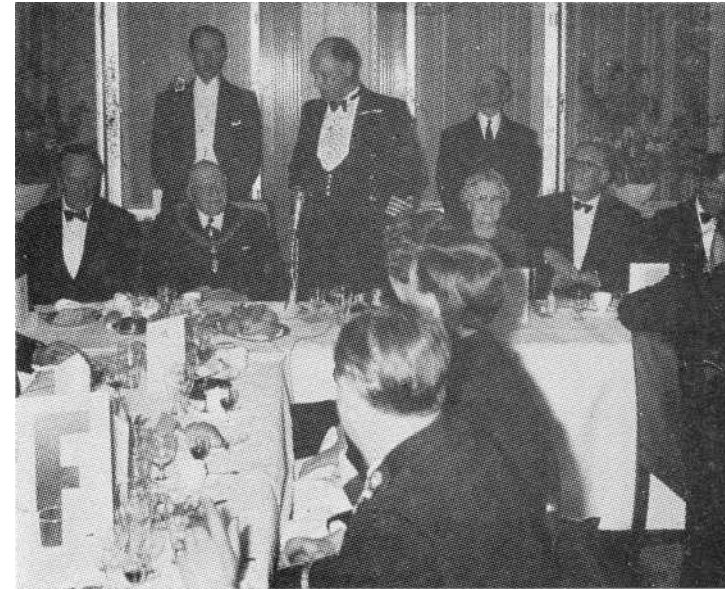
# CARDIFF

**22nd-27th April 1967**

The ship's visit to Cardiff had been long delayed - five months in fact for a severe gale had prevented us from calling there in December. But it was worth waiting for. The people of the principal city of Glamorgan greeted "their" ship as only the Welsh can, and all those who were with the ship for those four days in April will long remember them. Alderman Theophilous Griffiths kept his promise made at the Commissioning, and some one hundred and sixty of the Ship's Company were invited to the Civic Dinner at the Glamorgan County Hall. This dinner was undoubtedly the highlight of the visit. It was a truly magnificent occasion. In his speech Captain Roe made mention of the many lavish gifts that had been bestowed on the ship by the County, and presented the Chairman with a water colour painting of the ship with a background of Worms Head, a gift from the Ship's Company.

The Cardiff visit was marked by many presentations. P.C. Dodson, who had been the first person in the County to contact the ship while building, presented us with a plaque made by himself: it now has pride of place in the ship's trophy cabinet. The Sea Cadets of T.S. GLAMORGAN. The Fire Service and Guard Dog Handlers (complete with Guard Dogs to keep us from the natives!) paid us visits and generally expressed goodwill. On the final night, 27th April, the Royal Naval Association gave a gala ball, at which Miss HMS GLAMORGAN 1967 was selected.

We left Cardiff secure in the knowledge that the ties with the County, forged in the very beginning, were real and lasting ones. Even some of the Scots amongst us felt a certain pride at serving in a Welsh ship.



# Four Presentations



P. C. Dodson



Miss HMS GLAMORGAN 1967



Penarth Sea Rangers



Cardiff Fire Service



## Our First Foreign Visits - Excluding Wales

On 9th May the ship sailed from Portsmouth and crossed the North Sea to Denmark and Holland, with the Commander-in-Chief Home Fleet embarked. It was an interesting passage to Aarhus (Denmark), taking us through the Kiel Canal. Being Flagship brought its honours and hazards. There was an embarrassing moment on arrival at Aarhus, when it was discovered that there was no brow; the Admiral had to disembark in our new Huntress - a vessel that had not many days before been run aground by the Commander and Boatswain during 'sea trials.'

After a quiet weekend the ship paid a visit to the enchantingly beautiful city of Amsterdam. The Dutch gave us a tumultuous welcome, 'and throughout our stay showed us true friendship and hospitality. All who visited Amsterdam will have pleasant memories of a city of water and cobblestones, museums and art galleries; a city of charming people; a city steeped in history and culture.



# Back To Wales.....And Aberporth

Our trials continued, and many frustrating weeks were spent off the range at Aberporth carrying out seaslug firings. So many factors had to be just right, and we were plagued with just the sort of weather one would expect off the Welsh Coast in Winter; bad visibility, crosswinds, ice on the runway etc added to the thousand and one technical hitches encountered. Glamorgan Songwriters Inc. were moved to write the following lines:

## Home On The Range

Home, home on the Range,  
Where the meteors and jindiviks fly,  
There's always a slot, but never a shot  
While the mist from the mountains rolls by.

Oh, give me a home  
Where the rogue missile roam  
And the kine theodolites play,  
Jackie Clough rules the roost, not 'a seaslug can boost,  
Til Master has said it's OK.

Home, home on the Range,  
Where each day it is always the same,  
For the sea is too rough, or the 901's duff  
And there's no one whatever to blame.

Ten days we've been here  
With but little to cheer  
Though we did get one off Friday last,  
But Guns was appalled when the jindivik stalled,  
Although Sid jumped for joy at the blast.

Home, home on the Range,  
With the H.S.D. steam-driven bird,  
Brian Tolley who's here cannot find much to cheer  
When the final count down's never heard.

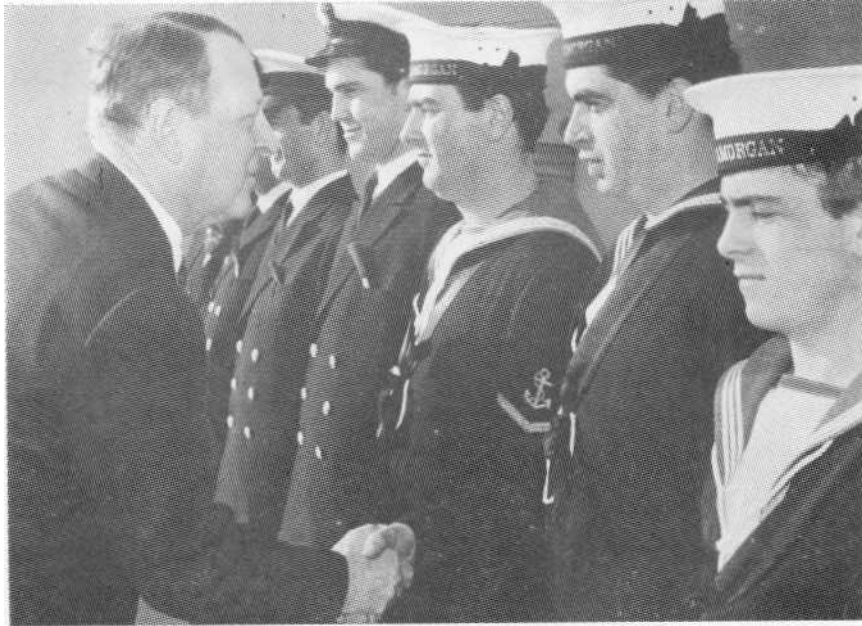
Home, home on the Range,  
At H minus seventy-five,  
We're the battered grey ghost of the Cardigan coast,  
And our zero will never arrive.

The One That Got Away



SEACAT Works Anyway!

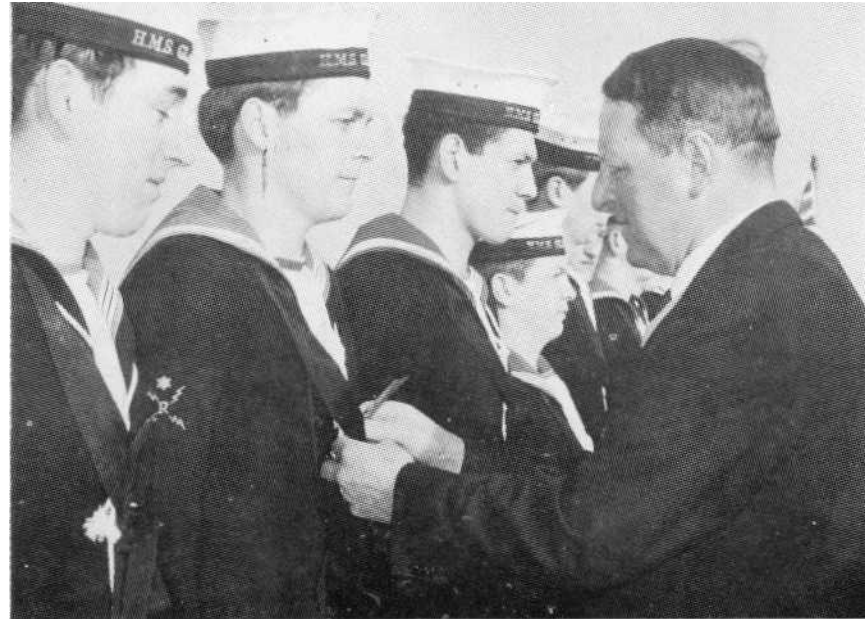




At last the cold January and February days, broken by short but enjoyable visits to Belfast and Liverpool, were over and the firings successfully completed. On 24th February we returned to Portsmouth to prepare for docking, to dock and give pre-deployment leave. Before going into dock the second St. David's Day was celebrated and we were honoured by the company of the Lord Lieutenant of the County of Glamorgan who presented leeks to the natives.

We had been told our future programme during the bleak Aberporth days, and our hopes were high for an exciting Americas trip. The dockyard, however, introduced a note of gloom, and we became resigned to missing our first port of call, Washington D.C. But meetings were held, and officials cajoled and persuaded, and the ship undocked on Saturday 30th March. The rest of the weekend was spent painting, storing and carrying out final trials, and we were able to meet our sailing date of 5th April.

We sailed on a clear crisp morning with the band of HERMES embarked, Welsh T.V. to watch our departure and messages from the Secretary of State for Wales, Lord and Lady Brecon and many other well-wishers.



#### Letter from The Secretary of State for Wales

Dear Captain Roe,

On the eve of your departure on your voyage, I am glad to send to you and to all your ship's company my very best wishes.

You take with you the goodwill of the people of Britain, and especially Wales, on your friendship tour. I am sure that you will be received everywhere as popular ambassadors.

The close association which your ship enjoys not only with Glamorgan but with all the people of Wales will arouse many warm feelings among those you meet who have links with the Principality. I would like, through you, to convey the greetings of Wales to them.

I myself have happy and recent memories of the many Welsh fraternities in the United States from my visit there last Autumn. I know you will find the same warm welcome.

Good luck and bon voyage,

CLEDWYN HUGHES.



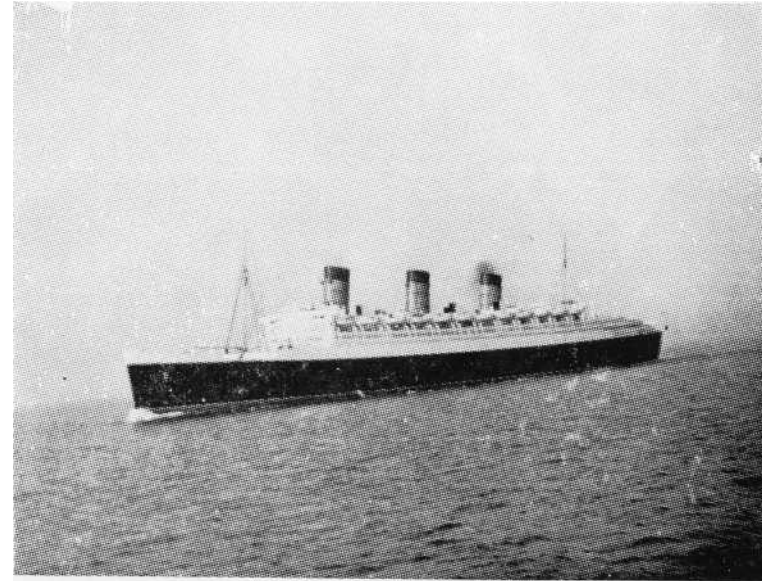
# Westward Ho!

And so we were off. We steamed westwards across the Atlantic, in company with our sister FIFE, to show the flag round the United States and Canada and eventually to join the Far East Fleet. Soon after leaving Portsmouth we passed a distinguished lady on her last, historic voyage: the QUEEN MARY, crossing the ocean she knew so well for her resting place at Long Beach, California.

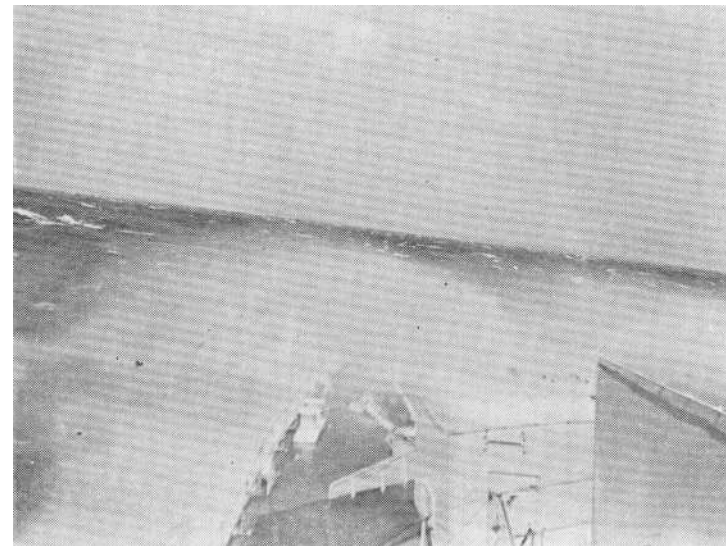
The voyage of a lifetime was ahead of us:  
Washington, D.C., Panama, San Francisco, Vancouver, Victoria  
British Columbia, Hawaii.....

For some this was the first trip abroad; for others, seasoned 'East of Suez' men, the first trip 'West-about' and for a few oldtimers another chance to revisit familiar places and renew old acquaintances.

The crossing was uneventful, apart from a spot of rough weather for the last thirty-six hours. After a day spent at anchor off the United States Marine Base, Quantico, the ship continued up the narrow, shallow Potomac River to the Nation's Capital, Washington D.C. No sooner had GLAMORGAN and FIFE berthed at Navy Yard than the telephones started ringing. For the next ten days we were to be the grateful recipients of overwhelming American hospitality.



The Queen Mary



Roughers