

of the countries represented, and working up a thirst in the process. Indeed, one evening the ship's company drank the British pub, The Bulldog, dry! With pride we can report that the British pavilion stood out distinctively from all the others, and was definitely the most popular, with the attractive mini-skirted guides and hostesses. On Britain's national day, the crowded arena roared with delight as our display lampooned 2,000 years of progress to national maturity. It was hot work for the Royal Marines Band providing incidental music, but 'Puppet on a String' soon had everyone swinging.

#### *Toronto*

After six days at Montreal, we went further down the St. Lawrence Seaway, through the locks, past the 1,000 islands and across Lake Ontario to Toronto. This impressive and constantly developing city took great interest in us. We were flooded with visitors and enjoyed an expansive press. Even the 'Go-Go Girls' had a day off to come and see us. There were trips to Niagara Falls, which we all enjoyed. Then we set off for Winsor, via the Welland Canal, and across Lake Erie.

#### *Windsor*

Here it was quite tropical when the Guard paraded for Centennial celebrations - no comfort for the Band who were still in Blues! The American city of Detroit lay across the river, but not many of us went across the border as Canadian hospitality was warm and lavish. Ontario is a very British province, and our visit evoked a certain nostalgia. Sailing away again, under the Ambassador Bridge, we claimed two more records: we were the largest warship to penetrate so far up the Great Lakes, and our RAS with Tidepool on Lake Erie, at 572 ft. above sea level, must have been the highest ever.

#### *Halifax*

At Halifax we formed part of the British representation at the International Naval Review. All ships were illuminated at night, and all sent contingents to march through the streets on the day of the Naval Parade. The Canadian Navy's extensive social programme for us was rounded off by the Governor-General's review of the assembled ships.

For most of us the tour had been our first taste of North America, and we could not fail to be impressed by their more pressurised tempo of life and the massiveness of their surroundings. As a final fling before refit and commissioning, it was a very enjoyable trip.

*Contributed by Lieutenant R. J. Francis*

Heard on the radio circuit being used at the Halifax Naval Review for the co-ordination of the floodlighting:

*HMCS Provider:* '10 seconds to go..... 5-4-3-2- 1 - Switch On!'

*Different voice:* 'This is Indian Naval Ship Tippu Sultan, Say again all after '3!'

#### *UK Again*

Hampshire returned to Portsmouth on 4th July, expecting to sail the following week for Aberporth for pre-refit Seaslug firings. This was not to be, however; a snag in a sister-ship's missile system had resulted in Seaslug Mk. 1 being temporarily 'grounded', and we sailed instead with some senior Iranian naval officers embarked to demonstrate the Seacat system. Perhaps the less said of these firings, the better! The weapon systems had obviously not yet recovered from Canada, and it was hard to find a safe bearing to fire on as the Portland exercise area was littered with peace-loving yachtsmen with wives and families to support.

Then followed landing-on trials of the Wessex Mk. III off Culdrose, and a quick visit to Devonport to land our missile outfit, prior to docking. Several officers and senior ratings were being relieved during this period, and many of the newer members of the ship's company made the acquaintance of The Brown Bear, The Chapel, The Groin Exchange, and the pubs in The Barbican area during farewell runs, which they were to renew two years later.

We berthed alongside the USS Missile Destroyer Farragut, on our return to Portsmouth, and were host-ship during her four-day visit. Thus ended the Second Commission of HMS Hampshire; the Third began, with a 19 week refit and docking.

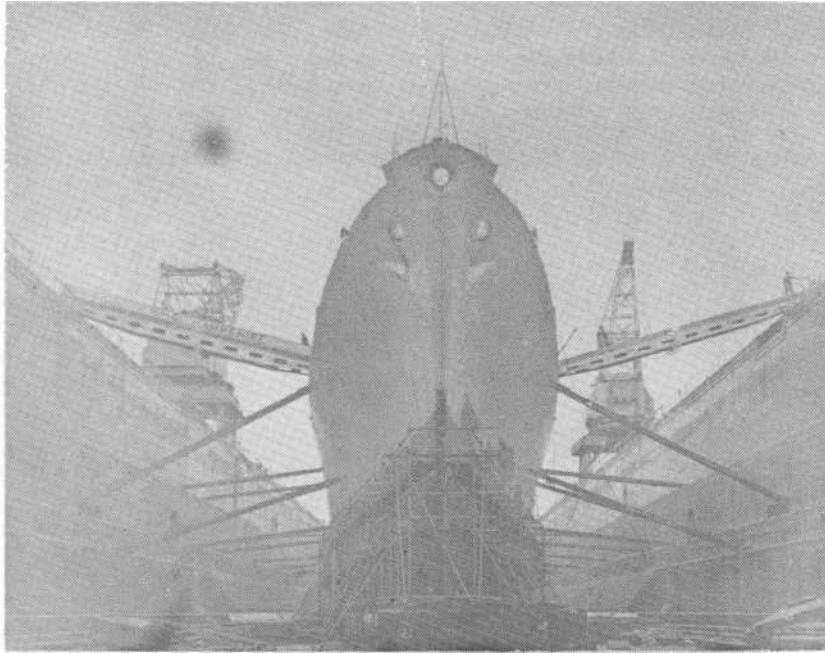
#### *Refit and Docking*

The majority of the new ship's company joined early in August, and their recollections of the refit and docking period depend very much on which department they belong to.

The engineers remember the battles to keep the machinery compartments clean and free from fire risks, and the work running to schedule.

Pre-commissioning training at the various parent establishments looms large in the seamen's and 'Greenies' memories, when each sub-specialist learned or reminded himself of the intricacies of the equipment or weapon system that he was to operate in the ship. It made a welcome break from scrubbing, chipping and painting and the general routine of life in Portsmouth. Pre-commissioning training was followed in the autumn by the training of the Command Team through lectures and exercises at MERCURY, EXCELLENT, VERNON and DRYAD into some semblance of order.

The livers-in and more especially the ship's company cooks remember the feeding of the five thousand in the floating galley, that monument to British shipbuilding. The ship's own galley could not be used for most of this period because it was being extensively refitted. People are still arguing whether or not we should have lived and eaten in the more comfortable surroundings of the Barracks, and accepted the loss in man-hours worked on board.



**'Refit and Docking'**

The first link of the new commission with HAMPSHIRE'S affiliated army unit, The Royal Hampshire Regiment, was forged in August when the Captain and officers were the Regiment's guests at their annual cricket fixture versus Old Members of the Regiment, at Winchester.

The period from August until Commissioning Day will also be remembered for other refit activities. Strenuous attempts were made to rid the ship of cockroaches, and by the Commander's Office to interest the new ship's company in Ship's Standing Orders and general ship knowledge. If the victualled members were driven spare by having to use shoreside heads and bathrooms, the RAs quickly tired of home to duty trips through chaotic Portsmouth rush-hour traffic.

As always when ships spend months in harbour after their companies have joined, the biggest morale booster was sport. We discovered early that we had the making of an outstanding soccer XI, and a large and enthusiastic band of supporters encouraged them from success to success.

### *Commissioning Day*

The ship officially commissioned for General Service on 16th December, 1967, and had moved to South Railway Jetty for the Commissioning Ceremony a few days earlier.

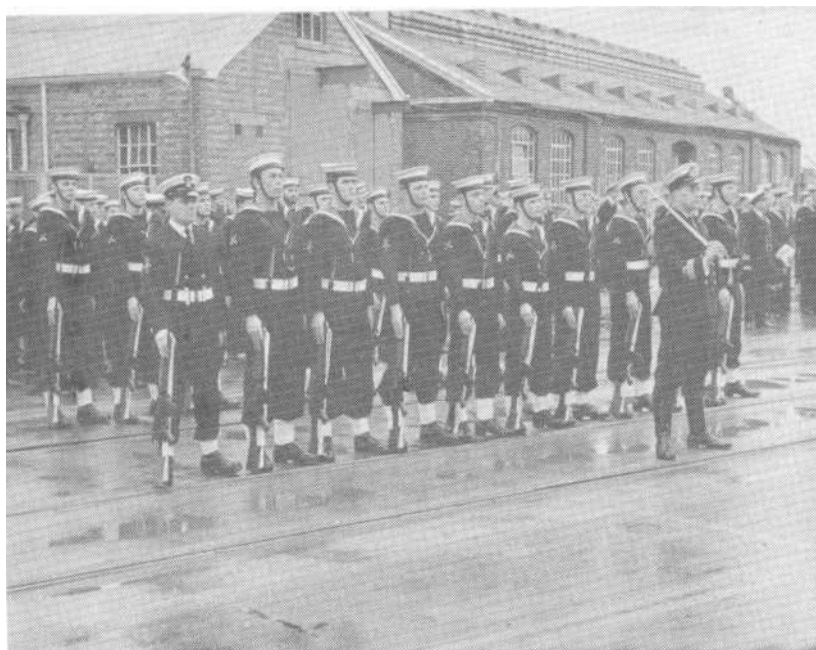


**'The Inter Denominational Service'**

It was a windy and rather wet day, as the photographs show. The Royal Hampshire Regiment band provided the music, chaplains of the Church of Scotland, Anglican and Roman Catholic churches conducted the service, and The Lord Bishop, of Winchester gave the Blessing, before the ship's company and guests proceeded on board.

### *Commence Trials*

At last, on 19th December, HAMPSHIRE sailed from Portsmouth for the local exercise areas. This was something of an achievement, as this date had been decided upon before the refit had started, and considerable efforts had been required by dockyard and ship's staff to make the ship ready for sea in time. We returned alongside in Portsmouth after three days, which had been used to familiarise the Captain, Navigating Officer and the Officers of the Watch in the



**'Look how short their hair was then!'**

handling of the ship, the engineers in the running of all the machinery and particularly the departmental organisers, who had joined nearly a year before, in helping their departments to settle down. The Christmas leave period began on December 21st, all of us much happier for being at last in a 'running' ship.

Before the ship could be considered 'Operational' and commence her Work-up, she had many trials of equipment to undergo. Harbour Acceptance Trials had by this time largely been completed. Families living in the Portsmouth area will have seen the Seahawk and Scimitar aircraft from Airwork Ltd. at Hurn flying low over the dockyard for us to align our weapon systems on. On 22nd January, we sailed to continue our 'Shakedown' period, and to complete our Sea Acceptance Trials in the Portland and Portsmouth areas. We had a foretaste of things to come by participating in several of the simpler Portland exercises, and must surely have won the prize for the largest number of patrol reports collected in one weekend by a ship which was only visiting!

After inspection by the Staff of the Commander-in-Chief Western Fleet, the ship was declared Operational on 23rd February.

#### *Portland Work-up*

On Thursday, 14th March we sailed for Portland and were met by various members of the Staff of the Flag Officer Sea Training, hereinafter referred to as FOST, who conducted checks of various equipment before we berthed alongside for the weekend. Those of us who had any illusions left, soon found that this was not to be the normal long, short or quiet duty weekend that we had been used to. Admiral Roxburgh followed his inspection of the ship by an address to the ship's company, in which he told us (a) that HAMPSHIRE wasn't the dirtiest DLG to present herself for, work-up but that she certainly wasn't the cleanest, and (b) that Work-ups were Fun!

Guided Missile Destroyers, in common with smaller ships, spend seven weeks at Portland; the first and fourth weeks are spent alongside, and the remainder at sea with FOST inspection on the final day. The first harbour week was an important one for Operations Room teams and communications ratings; it allowed time for the initial training of



**'Our Families'**



Landing Parties and repair of equipment defects. Duty parts of the watch soon learned to cope with emergencies other than simple fire exercises, though the nature of the emergency could often be guessed at in advance by finding out the sub-specialisation of the day's Duty Staff Officer.

It is difficult to devise any exercise which involves the entire ship's company, but NBCD exercises at Action Stations came closest to it, and also provided the most amusement. On one occasion, the hoarse, pain-wracked voice of Lieutenant Jack Davey, all but overcome by a staff-planted smoke generator in the burning and half flooded Seaslug TS caused great mirth among the Command team in the the Ops Room. We quickly became used to the Portland language: SAFE GUARD, SOOTAX, RHOC, COOS, AND PIAWPO (not, as we'd thought, a New Zealand frigate) and learned that 'Machi Breaks' were brought about by The Wreckers. Breakdowns, however had a nasty habit of occurring without staff assistance, and on the evening of Wednesday, 3rd April both engines came to a grinding halt as a result of a forced lub pump failure and we suffered the humiliation of being towed back to harbour by ULSTER. We even felt pangs of regret (but very small ones) at seeing the other ships commence the following morning's 'Thursday War' without us.

The trouble was such that 2 week's dockyard assistance was required. Our programme was thus altered to allow a week's Easter leave to both watches to be followed by Seaslug firings at Aberporth and our return to Portland.

#### *Missile Firings*

The firings went off quite satisfactorily, though the Gunnery Officer sweated buckets, as the low cloud base made firing conditions marginal for the photography which is an essential part of the practice. The night firing was sensational, but the warhead could not be fired because of the presence of fishing boats on the range.

#### *Work-Up (Phase 2)*

The second phase of the Work-up began with a demonstration 4.5 inch shoot for some senior US naval officers, one of whom said later to the Captain of Whale Island. "The US Navy hasn't seen shooting like that since God knows when!" This earned us a 'chocolate signal' from FOST. We were also host ship to the French destroyer 'Surcouf'. A HAMPSHIRE quartermaster delightedly watched half a dozen Frenchmen throw themselves to the deck in alarm as our gas turbines were flashed up. The final two sea weeks at Portland went smoothly and our performance there clearly showed the benefit of our continuation training while on the Aberporth range. Our Seacat firings went especially well, and the PTA Flight looked forward to providing targets for HAMPSHIRE, as there was seldom any wreckage to recover, strip down, wash through and reassemble.



**'Aberporth Firings - 1968'**

Inspection Day went well for us. In many ways we had come off lightly from our work-up; there were fewer ships at Portland than usual, and our engine trouble had resulted in a split work-up and the loss of two weeks of it. Although we still had much to learn, we had also achieved much in a short period, entirely due to a sustained maximum effort by everyone on board, particularly good co-operation with FOST's staff and readiness to accept criticism and learn from it. Some say we flannelled our way through work-up, in which case we must have flannelled FOST himself, who signalled to C-in-C Western Fleet on our departure: 'Hampshire has done well at Portland and achieved generally a good work-up.'

We now had to earn our living. The balance of our Easter leave was taken while alongside in Portsmouth during May, and during this period we became the flagship of Rear Admiral P. M. Compston, the Flag Officer Flotillas Western Fleet. On 29th May we sailed north for Rosyth Navy Days.

### *Rosyth Navy Days*

This was the first ever visit of HAMPSHIRE to Rosyth, and our entry was made in fog so thick that we couldn't see either the Forth rail or road bridges until directly underneath (them). A larger gathering of ships than usual made this a record year for Rosyth, and over 9,200 visitors came aboard HAMPSHIRE in the two days. The load fell on one watch only, as we had steamed north during the leave period. An hour after leave expired, we sailed for Scapa Flow.

### *Scapa Flow*

A strange ritual was performed at Scapa called Orkex, which was not so much an exercise, more a harbour training period. With Hampshire were Juno, Danae, Jaguar, Zulu and Decoy - the largest assembly of ships that Lyness had seen since the run-down after the war. The long boat trip to Lyness where six ships had to share the rather meagre facilities made sport on anything but a small scale impossible. Some most successful advancement boards were held, however, and our Officers of the Watch spent a useful day ship-handling in the Flow. The Commander-in-Chief, Vice Admiral Sir John Bush, visited us on the day that 100 of the ship's company abandoned the ship for the island of Rysa Little. Able Seamen Nurse, Brown, Yates and O'Toole tried it the hard way on a home made raft, but after setting off very slowly in the wrong direction in drenching rain, they acknowledged defeat and received a tow. Once ashore, the eager beavers set up a camp, a helicopter landing place (which the helicopter refused to land on), and built a very serviceable bridge and jetty, but the majority were quite content to pelt each other with turf. The chefs provided a very good meal. Despite the intermittent rain, most people enjoyed their day - anyway, it had made a change!

One of HAMPSHIRE'S first duties as flagship was to pacify the crew of the Stromness lifeboat, which arrived alongside one middle watch wanting to know what the trouble was. 'What trouble?' We said. The Royal Marines detachment encamped ashore from Zulu had fired some red vereys cartridges to announce late night snacks, or something. Naturally the lifeboat crew was invited to the wardroom for a wee dram for their trouble, and a return match was then necessary in the lifeboat at the bottom of the gangway 'to test the emergency rations.' In a haze of rum, the lifeboat left at 0400, HAMPSHIRE having been given permission to fire off red rockets whenever and wherever she felt like it! As a result of this encounter, a number of the ship's company were invited to a dance at Stromness, and an MFV ferry service was provided.

We sailed early on 10th June for Exercise JUDAN - FOFWF'S inspection of JUNO and DANA. There was insufficient time in hand unfortunately, to pass over the place where the 4th HMS HAMPSHIRE struck a mine and sank with great loss of life in 1916 while on passage to Russia with Lord Kitchener on board.

### *Seadays*

The last two weeks of June were spent day-running from Portsmouth with up to 70 (?) passengers embarked daily. These were mainly Senior Service Officers, with some MP's, Government officials and Youth Organisations. Prince Michael of Kent came on one of the Army benefit days, and the BBC newscaster Richard Baker also spent the day with us, though we suspected that he was really killing time while he waited with other reporters for Alec Rose's triumphant return to Portsmouth. Several ships were in company, and the full programme of demonstrations - involving a Fast Patrol Boat, hovercraft, submarine, ships, helicopters and fixed wing aircraft, required split-second timing. The first two days were earmarked for rehearsal, the second was our Families' Day, and a most successful one, too. Few ship visitors can have seen so much in one day. The sweethearts and wives of 892 Squadron aircrew ('Simon's Circus') who took part in the dummy strike and aerobatics were also guests of the ship late on in the fortnight.

### *Malmö*

Rear Admiral A. M. Lewis relieved Rear Admiral Compston on 1st July, and 3rd July we arrived at the Swedish port of Malmö for a five day visit, our first visit of the commission.

We berthed alongside in Kockum's Shipyard, within easy walking distance of the city centre and of the ferry and hydrofoil services to Copenhagen. Early July, we were told, the time that many people left Malmö for their holidays elsewhere in Sweden or in Europe, and it is true that 'grippos' were not very plentiful. Food and drink ashore were more expensive than we had expected, with no Local Overseas Allowance to deaden the pain. One stoker went to and fro on the Malmö - Copenhagen Ferry continuously one day as the booze was cheaper than ashore! It cost nothing, however, to ogle the plentiful supply of leggy mini-skirted Swedish girls, and there was no language barrier, provided you kept the conversation uncomplicated. Even the most unlikely people dipped in!

Tours of a brewery and newspaper office were popular; some people were by then so nostalgic for UK that they travelled 70 miles up the coast to visit a replica of an English pub! They arrived with such a thirst on them that the beer quickly ran out. A bus tour might just as well have been arranged to the town of Lund, a few miles distant, as the International Exhibition of Pornographic Art - banned in every other country - drew the curious like a magnet. For others, a glance (or two, if you didn't believe the first one) in a newsagent's window was enough. W. H. Smith's was never like that.

We were well looked after by the armed services. The liaison officer procured two pretty Swedish Wrens to man the shore telephone line, and the large charming bus driver provided by the women's

army will be remembered with affection. We were much indebted also to Rolf, the leather-clad motor cycle policeman, who prevented adverse publicity on one or two occasions and looked after the interests of our libertymen.

We were sorry to leave Malmo on 8th July, and sail for Rosyth. (The biggest understatement so far.)

### *FORTHTEX*

Forthtex was the major Western Fleet assembly, which culminated in 'Seaforth', the steampast of 50 ships past the retiring First Sea Lord, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Varyl Begg, on 1st August.

HAMPSHIRE was fortunate in being due for a self maintenance period, and thus had over a week in harbour before most other ships began to congregate. This time we used wisely in training for the sports, and on 31st July, we became Cock of the Fleet.



**'The Hampshire Minstrels'**

As the rehearsal date for Seaforth drew nigh, more and more flag officers began to arrive in port, the tension mounted, and it became customary to salute any pusser's fast black on sight. The Commander-in-Chief's arrival on board KENT, berthed inboard of us, coincided with Captain Trowbridge's and the Navigating Officer's departure with golf clubs, which put things back in perspective. It can now be revealed to FOFWF'S Staff that, after they had made a number of rude signals to junior ships about shortcomings in their appearances, the Flagship (yes, HAMPSHIRE, I'm afraid) with band playing hoisted ensigns at both ends at Colours! The Fleet was naturally delighted.

The Steampast provided a fitting climax to what had been an unusually large peacetime assembly, and the success of it, in poor visibility was the just result of much careful planning by Lieutenant Commander Marshall. BULWARK controlled the helicopter, HAMPSHIRE the fixed wing flypasts. The ugly rush towards the home ports, once ships had been dismissed, had to be seen to be believed.

### *Exercise Silver Tower*

After Summer leave, we sailed without the Flag for the Moray Firth to be with EAGLE, ARETHUSA, BARROSA and CAVALIER for a pre-exercise work-up. The exercise was on a large scale, and involved NATO naval, land and air forces over a wide area. After three days, during which EAGLE made use of the diversion facilities of RNAS Lossiemouth, we sailed in company for the Strike Fleet rendezvous position off Iceland. The Russian intelligence collection vessels and escorts were by then deployed to observe the exercise, and we anchored briefly in the Orkneys en route leaving CAVALIER behind to make signals about sports parties and boat routines and to give the impression to eavesdroppers of a much larger force.

Then began what was undoubtedly the most interesting fortnight of the commission, operationally speaking. HAMPSHIRE'S departure for the Far East had been delayed so that she could be EAGLE'S close escort DLG for Silver Tower, and so we were sad to learn that for political reasons our position of honour was to be taken by two US ships. Instead we had the equally responsible task of the protection of the three nation Underway Replenishment Group, supply ships and fleet tankers which included such unlikely names as WACCAMAW and ALLAGASH. This task was made more difficult for us by the pinching of our Wessex by EAGLE, who had carelessly lost one of her own.

This isn't the place for an exercise narrative, but a few memories are worth recalling. The Soviet participation was almost on the same scale as our own; Bear and Badger aircraft flew over the force daily, although they had been tracked by shore radar and intercepted far away. EAGLE made the headlines of the national dailies when a photograph of a Sea Vixen Mk. 2 trailing a Badger was exposed as a

fake - someone spotted that one photograph had been superimposed on another! Russian destroyers were equally active, and the three aircraft carriers, EAGLE, BONAVENTURE and WASP generally had one in each screen, manoeuvring correctly, and in one case switching off his navigation lights when ordered.

It did the ship a power of good to be at Defence Stations for nine days continuously. For most of us this meant the long two-watch system, and the extra breakfast at 2 a.m. Once the routine had become established, each man knew his part to play and the ship really ticked. That the U.R.G. lost ships from submarine attack from time to time was unavoidable with the poor resources available to us. HAMPSHIRE survived, that was the important thing!

Had the engineers not found the required revs and put us a flip to the front on our way home the honour of towing LYNESS to Rosyth in some very nasty weather would have fallen to us instead of BARROSA. Our timely arrival at Portsmouth on 28th September more than made up for our being deprived of Bluenose Certificates by not quite reaching the Arctic Circle.

#### *It's all been changed*

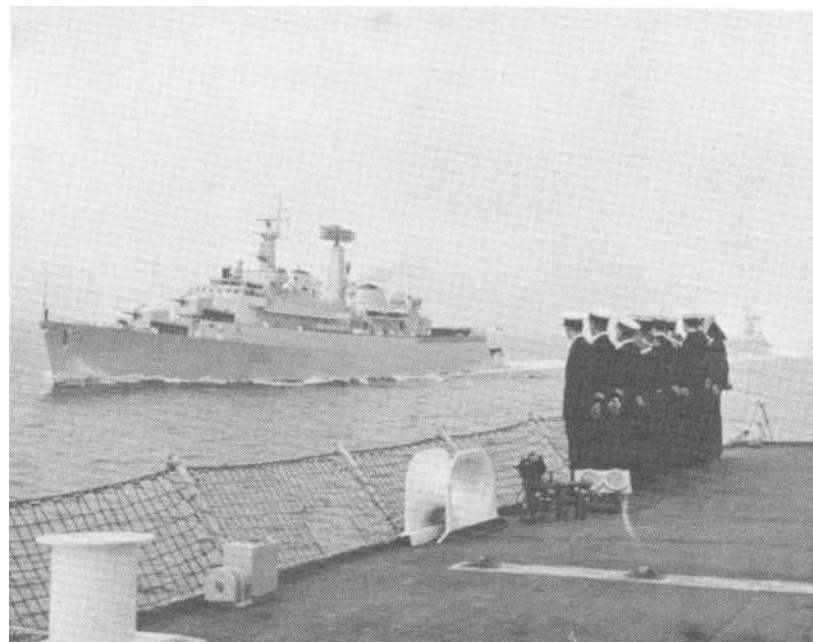
KENT had suffered a serious boiler explosion during Silver Tower. Mirracuosly nobody was injured, but her starboard boiler was to remain out of action for the remainder of her shortened commission. The effects of this explosion were immediately felt in HAMPSHIRE; we were not to go to the Far East after all, we were to go to the Mediterranean for Exercise Eden Apple (please God, no!) we were not to pass 'GO' nor to collect £200. But we were, on the other hand, to undertake KENTS South American tour in the New Year, and the commission would be extended. Most affected by the change was Captain Trowbridge, who realised that with the commission already a year old, and with possibly a full year still to come, he was likely to be relieved.

#### *Exercises Francex and Fruit Salad*

Admiral Lewis and his staff rejoined from KENT, and on Trafalgar Day we sailed for the Mediterranean, together with other ships which were to take part in Exercise Eden Apple. Francex involved a day of air attacks by French Etendard jet aircraft and by submarines as we passed Brest. The Staff's Fruit Salad planning chart looked like a giant hopscotch pitch down the Portuguese and Spanish coasts with an anti-submarine incident in each square. And so to Gibraltar, and the Mediterranean L.O.A.

#### *Gibraltar*

Already drawing L.O.A. at Gib and looking very fit and well, we found KENT, recovering from the rigours of being Mr. Ian Smith's hotel during the FEARLESS talks. Her Commanding Officer at the time was Captain R. P. Clayton, whose name seems strangely familiar!



**'The Steampast - 'Hampshire' from Kent'**

After a short weekend at Gib, the ships split up, some sailing for Toulon and some with us for Malta - the two ports where the Eden Apple work-up phases were to take place.

#### *Malta*

A certain amount of work now had to be done in preparation for EDEN APPLE!

A sign that showed that some people weren't taking life too seriously was the painted one which read: 'QUIET NIGHT SISTER SLEEPING'. The excited steward who discovered this outside the Commander's cabin when taking him his wakey-wakey cuppa was however disappointed. (Where the noisy one slept was never revealed).

On 6th November, we shifted berth to Marsaxlokk, and playtime was over.

#### *Exercise Eden Apple*

We were joined in the anchorage by KENT, and ships of various Mediterranean NATO member countries. Then began ten days of valuable exercising punctuated by periods of frustration and high



**'RAS Lyness'**

comedy. After the assembled fleet at Marsaxlokk had been attacked overnight by underwater swimmers, we spent a day in the Malta practice area, and did a short tactical overnight exercise, during which the Italian escort ALPINO was misidentified and sunk with gunfire. This ended with a short debrief at anchor at Augusta, Sicily, leave not being granted.

Before sailing for the exercise proper, a losing battle was fought over the breakfast table by Commander Hallifax, the Admiral's Staff Operations Officer, against Sandy Gall of ITN. The original plan to exclude the Press from the exercise had been suddenly reversed two or three days before, and here was an ITV team of three wanting to be where the action was. Fortunately they stayed with us and were very good company.

HAMPSHIRE'S activities for the next week took her to the South East of Sardinia and to the Eastern Mediterranean before passing through the Straits of Messina and proceeding to Naples for the exercise wash-up. Air attacks were mounted from Malta, by EAGLES' Buccan-

eers, and from Libya and the U.S.S. Independence during daytime only. Submarines were about, but appeared infrequently, although VALIANT surfaced, at the request of ITV to have her photo taken. There was a spirited F.P.B. action near Crete.

Surprisingly little Russian interest was shown in the exercise, which disappointed the ITV team but nobody else. The large Russian force which included the new helicopter carrier 'Moscvva' had dispersed a week or two earlier.

#### *Naples*

Berthing and unberthing at Naples is always a traumatic affair. Both anchors have to be let go and the stern manoeuvred against the wall. A contrivance called the CORPO MORTO then has to be summoned to assist in weighing one anchor when it's time to go. As it rained for all of the five days, the effort wasn't really worth it.

It was not the sort of weather to encourage excursions to Amalfi, Capri, Pompei or Sorrento. Those who ventured to Rome found it equally wet, and a one day rail strike didn't help. After the exercise wash-up we sailed to Malta.



**'Grand Harbour, Malta'**



*Return to the U.K.*



**'The winners of the Western Fleet Cookery Competition - 1968'**

Our second spell in Malta gave an opportunity for fleet advancement boards and inter-ship sport. A gentle non-delaying exercise, MINCE PIE, was conducted on passage to Gib, where we made use of this heaven sent opportunity for Christmas shopping, and from Gib back to Portsmouth and leave.

1969

*Good-bye Portsmouth, again*

On 16th January, Captain Clayton relieved Captain Trowbridge, who said, on being dined out by the wardroom, that he had never managed to go to South America in his service career. We must warn him, then, that to read further will rub salt into the wound! It also serves to remind us how lucky we were.

We sailed on 20th January with JUNO and ARETHUSA for Portland for what some called The 43rd Week of Work-Up. The Secretary of State for Defence, Mr. Denis Healey spent the first Saturday with us, touring the ship and meeting as many groups of

people as he could. It was a change for us to be able to discuss conditions of service and pay with the man at the top.



**'AB O'Toole touches up the Ship Open to Visitors signs for South America'**

Just after we had left Portland, we received the following signal;

ROUTINE 271725Z JAN  
FROM FOST  
TO HAMPSHIRE

UNCLAS STAFF IN CONFIDENCE RTT

SWANAGE POLICE REPORT BOTTLE FOUND ON BEACH 26  
JAN CONTAINING FOLLOWING MESSAGE

QUOTE I AM BEING HELD AGAINST MY WILL. CONTACT  
LEADING COOK TODD

HMS HAMPSHIRE C/O BFPO SHIPS LONDON UNQUOTE



**'The Secretary of State for Defence on the attack'**

On leaving Portland with the Storeship RFA LYNESS now in company we were once again subjected to air strikes from French shore-based aircraft, with French Crusader fighters in defence. It was then that our oiler, RFA OLWEN, with Royal Marines Band and SRN hovercraft embarked, suffered a relapse and had to be towed in to Brest. For a day, we envisaged ourselves making unexpected fuelling stops at Gibraltar and the Cape Verde Islands, but a spare armature

was quickly taken by tug from Plymouth to Brest, and OLWEN was repaired.

The third valuable cargo carried by OLWEN was Lieutenant-Commander Pennell, the Western Fleet NBCDO, and the ship's successful repair meant that we would, after all, have to suffer Exercise Golfball. This was a 48 hour exercise designed to exercise the ship while operating in fall-out. We found 28 hours enough and called a halt!

On 1st February, 'It's a Knock-out' inter departmental sports were held on the flight deck.

During daylight hours we were kept occupied by serialised exercises, which continued until we returned to Portsmouth, known collectively as FORWARD PASS. It was frustrating to have to steer due West under cloudy skies for days, to make a rendezvous with the submarines that were to accompany us, when we knew that much warmer weather lay a hundred or so miles to the South. We exercised



**'Mr. Healey visits 1 Mess'**

with OTUS and NARWHAL who then dashed for Puerto Rico, hove to off the Virgin Islands to touch up the ship's side, and on the morning