

HMS LION



FIRST COMMISSION

1960 — 1962





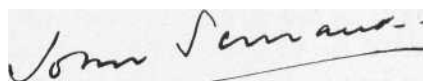
THE CAPTAIN

AT the end of a happy and successful commission I welcome the opportunity to place on record my appreciation of the steadfast support which has been given to me by my ship-mates at all times.

I shall never forget the wonderful spirit of the men who manned *Lion* in this her first commission. It was this spirit which carried us through the uncertain, gloomy days of engine failure and repairs and it was the same spirit which cheerfully and successfully met every challenge at Home, in the Mediterranean and in South America. We have done all that was asked of us and done it well. I am confident that we have lived up to our famous name and that we have set high standards for those who follow us.

I have been proud to command this fine ship and her excellent company. I hope that you will remember the commission with equal pride and that in years to come when you open this book it will bring back happy memories.

To you all and to your families I reluctantly say " Good-bye " and wish you Godspeed wherever you may serve.



WHAT'S IN A NAME

NO better introduction to the name *Lion* can be brought to bear than the following article extracted verbatim from "The Searchlight," the magazine of the Battle Cruiser *Lion*; dated October, 1915. This ship, completed in May, 1912 - the first ship to cost over two million pounds, mounting eight 13.5-inch guns and sixteen 4-inch guns - was the flagship of Admiral Sir David Beatty's "Splendid Cats" - the first Battle Cruiser Squadron. Heligoland Bight and Dogger Bank were over, and in October when the following article was written, the whole Battle Cruiser force lay in wait at Scapa Flow for the German Battle Fleet.

Concordant Nomine Facta

"Our knowledge of the history of war is based almost entirely on a list of names; names of great leaders and the battles in which they fought. But in naval warfare, unique and taking by ancient right an equal share in the glory, we must include the names of ships. Of all inanimate things created by the hand of man, there is nothing that can equal a ship-of-war for majesty and grandeur. Docile as a child, stronger than a giant, swift and terrible in battle, there is no other of man's achievements that seems more surely to possess a soul and to be animated with life. Thus it is only right that the name of each of our great sea captains should be inseparably connected with that of the ship which bore his flag to victory on some memorable occasion. It is naval tradition that a ship and her captain should be looked on as twin beings that are inseparable except by death, and not always then. So also with flag officers and their flagships; and it is pleasing to note how very appropriate were the names borne by some of those flagships which have been immortalised by our greatest admirals.

"What could have been more suitable for Francis Drake than that his flag should fly on board the *Revenge* as he led the fleet of England in pursuit of the invincible Armada? What name better suited to that fierce and indomitable spirit which Spain and the seven seas alike had failed to conquer? A name appropriate indeed, when Drake and the winds of heaven swept down to exact revenge for the threats and insults of the Court of Spain, revenge for the British seamen tortured by the Inquisition, revenge for sea-power misused, and vengeance for all the evils of a corrupt and decaying nation.

"One therefore connects the *Revenge* with the downfall of Spanish sea-power, and in the same manner one looks on the *Victory* as symbolic of the final blow which shattered the fleets of France.

"It is not given to many ships to achieve immortality, and of all those gallant vessels that bore Nelson's flag or pennant it is only the *Victory* that can claim to be as immortal as his deeds.

"Surely an appropriate name, for 'victory' with Nelson had a different meaning to that which others were accustomed to attach to it. To others it meant defeating the enemy, to Nelson it meant annihilation complete and overwhelming. In all the history of naval warfare decisive victories have been very few. In 2,000 years there have been scarcely a dozen, but Nelson achieved no less than three. Victory, to him, was not a possible ending to a fortunate encounter, it was the only ending, predestined and inevitable, which he felt absolutely certain of achieving on any occasion where he could meet with an enemy's fleet and fight it to a finish.

"It rests now to be determined whether the names of Sir David Beatty and the *Lion* shall earn the right to take their places in our history beside those heroes of the past. The matter is not settled yet, it still is trembling in the balance; but we have seen perhaps enough to know that it can be done, is possible, and even probable.

"It is not time yet to count up achievements and to estimate the valuations of history. Our duty is only to recollect that we have before us a matchless opportunity waiting to be converted into imperishable achievement. The necessary effort of sustained preparation, determination and energy may or may not be forthcoming. Distractions are many, battle is far off; it may be that the opportunity will never be presented to us. Who can say whether or not we are worthy of it?

"Be that as it may, we have an Admiral and a ship that are worth working for, from sheer affection, no less than the imperative call to duty demands our utmost efforts on behalf of the Navy and our Country.

"The name of *Lion* is one that seems predestined from the beginning of time to achieve splendour in our naval history. The ship herself, built in the land of Francis Drake, first floated in that very harbour whence he sailed to break the sea-power of Spain. More than once her predecessors have followed him into battle, crowning their work in the defeat of the Armada. They have flown the flag of the Lord High Admiral of England and the pennant of Nelson; they have sustained a part in our naval history that very few ships have equalled; but never yet has a *Lion* been the central figure of a decisive battle. That day has yet to come.

"As an emblem, the lion has stood for a symbol of supremacy since the remotest days of history.

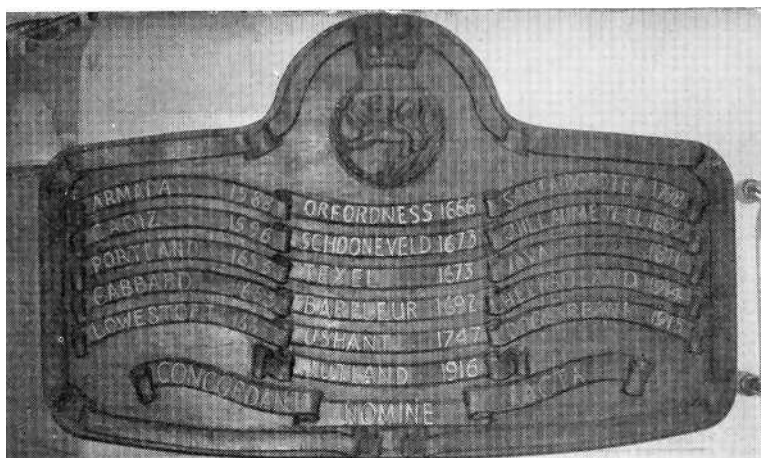
"We see it contemporary with the might of Persia and the ancient glories of Assyria. The winged lions of Venice looked down on a sea of supremacy that was invincible in its day. Now, all are looking westward to those distant cliffs and misty seas where, last inheritor of their greatness, the lion of England stands greater than them all.

"Well may we insignificant mortals peer into the darkness and wonder what is to be the outcome of this greatness that has been thrust upon us. We find ourselves 'the heirs of all the ages' acting as trustees for the proudest heritage that has fallen to living man. We have to uphold, in so far as we may be competent or worthy, the reputation of the *Lion* and the traditions of the British Navy, both stretching back into the past records of many centuries. The mantle of greater and better men is descended on our shoulders; the spirits of buried empires are abroad to watch the downfall of that empire which is next to crumble into ruin. And as we peer into the future we know only this - that we are totally unable to foretell it.

"The history of the future we cannot guess, but we can do better; we can and we must make that history and shape it to the requirements of our country's imperial destiny. Our part is liable to be a very small one, but we can see to it that such history as we have to make shall be good history and not bad. It is in our power to display perseverance and energy at our appointed tasks; to remove obstacles to efficiency, whatsoever they may consist of, promptly and with a firm hand. It is in our power to be cheerful and patient, and to make sure in a hundred ways that nothing we have done or left undone shall jeopardise the great results we hope for. It is in our power to make very great for very small visible gains; and finally to be guided by that motto more appropriate to *Lion* than to any other ship - 'Concordant nomine facta.'

"A great deal is asked of us, and there may be little enough reward, but only by such means as these can we bend circumstances to suit our needs, and make sure, so far as is humanly possible, that success shall be ours. Success not merely commensurate with our merits, but success, we hope, worthy of the tremendous destinies committed to our care, and sufficient to carve in history a mark that shall place the names of Sir David Beatty and the *Lion* on a level with their most illustrious predecessors."

Seven months later, on 31st May, 1916, *Lion* was the first ship to open fire at the Battle of Jutland, the last of the ship's battle honours.



THE BATTLE HONOURS BOARD

A German writer on naval affairs, Kapitan Perseus, wrote; " Our fleet's losses were severe. On 1st June, 1916, it was clear to any thinking person that this battle must, and would be, the last one.' He was right!



THE CITATION

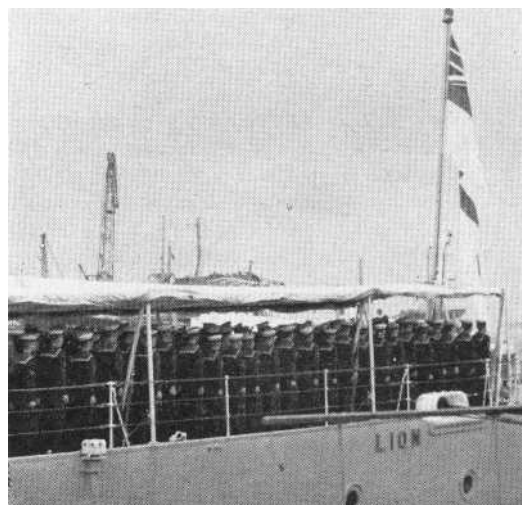
During the engagement, *Lion* received a direct hit on " Q " turret, which blew the roof off and killed everybody inside, starting a fierce fire at the same time. Only the heroism of Major Harvey of the Royal Marine Light Infantry saved the ship. With both legs blown off, he dragged himself over to the magazine flood valve, which by then was red hot, grasping the valve wheel with his bare hands he flooded the magazine and saved the ship. For this act of selfless devotion to duty Major Harvey was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross. A copy of the citation was presented to the ship on 3rd September, 1960, by the Commandant General, Royal Marines, General Sir Ian Riches, K.C.B., D.S.O., R.M.

And so-we, the first commission of the eleventh *Lion*, have every right to be proud of our name.

PHASE ONE

THE story really begins way back in the dark days of the Second World War, when *Lion* was laid down at Greenock. She was launched in September, 1944, and was christened *Defence* by Mrs. J. H. Edelston (now Lady Edelston). Her completion was stopped when the end of the war came, and she remained half-finished and half-forgotten. In 1954 the files marked *Defence* were reopened, she was towed to the Wallsend Yard of Swan, Hunter and Wigham Richardson & Co. Ltd., where she was completed and renamed *Lion*.

In June, 1959, the first of the now familiar faces began to appear on the scene. One of these was Shipwright Sub-Lieutenant Trew, another was Commander (E) Richards. As the day of completion drew nearer, more and more officers and senior rates arrived. On the evening before the commissioning, the bulk of the crew arrived by troop train from R.N.B., Portsmouth.

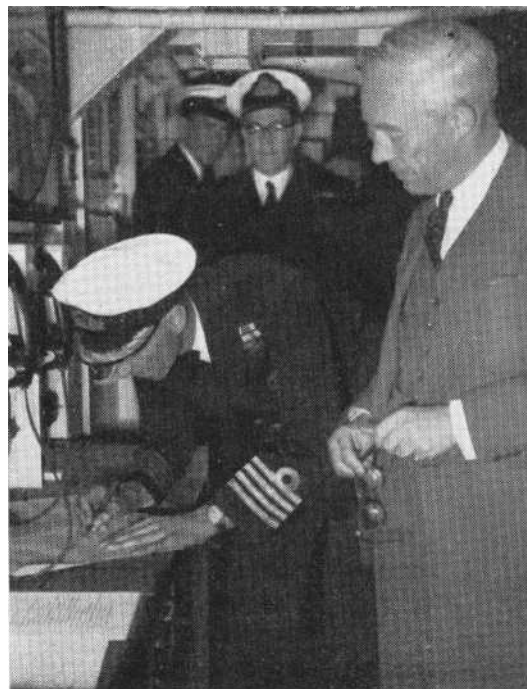


H.M.S.

Lion was commissioned on 20th July, and it seemed that the final preparations were only just completed in time. The ceremony itself took place before a distinguished gathering representing both the Service and the builders. Earl Mountbatten, who served in the last *Lion* as a Midshipman, Lord Beatty, whose father flew his flag in the last *Lion* at Jutland, were among those present.



ARRIVAL



ACCEPTED



COMMISSIONING DAY

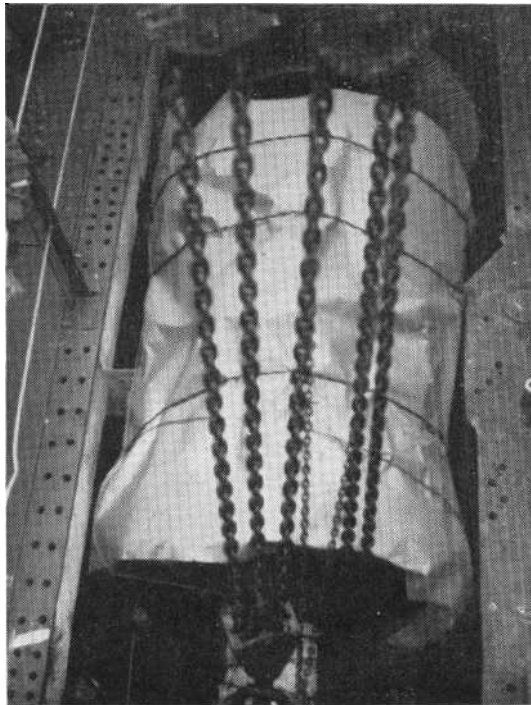
Also, there were many wives and families, and a large gathering of dockyard workers who were seeing the final results of their skill and effort. After the Commissioning Service conducted by the Chaplain, the Captain read the Commissioning Warrant, the Ensign was hoisted and the Commissioning Pennant broken at the masthead. *Lion* had come to life - her career had started!

Two days later *Lion* steamed from Wallsend, shaking the Tynemouth dust from her feet, for final acceptance trials, and headed north for Invergordon, from where firing and speed trials were to take place. At the close of the stay, the village of Cromarty held its regatta and invited "Lions" to take part. The Marines in particular, distinguished themselves in the "cobble" race. Next day the ship left the Firth and set sail for "Pompey," but things weren't to be as straightforward as that, because it was on this journey that *Lion's* big defect came to light. Whilst off the east coast, very intense vibrations suddenly began, indicating that all was not well with the forward starboard turbine. Although the engine was quickly stopped, it was soon discovered that it was in fact, seriously damaged and this was to have far reaching consequences.

On the afternoon of Tuesday, 2nd August, *Lion* entered Portsmouth harbour and berthed at North Corner Jetty - a corner of the dockyard that we were destined to know very well in the next few months. Our arrival was watched by a crowd of wives and families, who came eagerly aboard as soon as the brow was lowered. From August until November the programme was simple,

Lion put to sea for trials, developed faults in one or more of the main bearings then returned to Portsmouth. Most of these trials were designed to find the cause of the faults, then rectify them. Unfortunately, no-one could find either the cause of the repeated failure, or the cure, and so it went on, week after week. This did not pass unnoticed, some adverse criticism appeared in the national press, and there were ugly rumours that the ship was to pay off, but fortunately these were quickly scotched by a statement issued by the Admiralty.

By early November, it became clear that we were getting nowhere very fast, and so it was decided that the ship should go into dockyard hands and damaged rotor replaced. The size of the offending rotor demanded a large hole cut through the boat deck and the galley flat, down into the starboard engine room. The hole for about a couple of months was one of the show pieces of the ship. There is no record of anyone having fallen down it, neither is there any truth in the story that a junior M.(E) was once detailed off to fall into it for the benefit of a distinguished oriental guest. The hole in the galley



THE NEW ROTOR



LADY EDELSTON UNVEILING THE STAINED GLASS WINDOW



LION'S CORNER

flat meant the Sick Bay passage being closed, and consequently a long trek over the boat deck in the winter weather that only the U.K. can produce.

On Sunday, 25th September, the Chapel was dedicated by the Chaplain of the Fleet, and at the same ceremony Lady Edelston unveiled a stained glass window which she had presented to the Chapel.

When Christmas came " the Hole " was still there and the ship seemed a pretty permanent addition to North Corner.

The New Year was rung in with due ceremony and with it, *Lion* started on a more active and successful year. All through January, the work of filling " the Hole " continued, and by the end of the month the job was almost finished. Rear Admiral Bush, who was to become the Flag Officer Flotillas, in the Mediterranean, came to see his future Flagship. The C-in-C, Portsmouth, Admiral Sir Manley Power was another visitor, he inspected Divisions, walked round the ship and pronounced all to his satisfaction. By early February " the Hole " was filled, the masses of wiring and piping that had been cut away were replaced, and basin trials had been satisfactorily completed. On 16th February *Lion* put to sea. The acid test of three months blood, sweat and, no doubt, tears began. As the trials progressed it became apparent that all was to be well and our optimism justified. When this had been established, the scene of operations switched to Plymouth and the Western Approaches. Winter weather there is rarely good at the best of times, and the winter of '60 was no exception, and the trials progressed with a background of fog and occasional heavy weather. The fog, which was the greatest hazard, once brought the visibility down to 20 yards, and on this occasion we entered harbour and secured to a buoy which could not be seen at all from the bridge.

On 20th March, *Lion* returned to Portsmouth, trials satisfactorily completed, and, as she entered, fired a salute to C-in-C's Flag. A Families' Day was held and about four hundred wives, girl friends and children came to meet



the ship at Spithead and sail up harbour with us. Despite the cold, it was highly successful.

On return to "Pompey" about a week was spent storing ship, followed by a week's leave. A few finishing touches to the ship, then on 14th April *Lion* steamed out, set course for the Mediterranean, and her first real job.

THINGS WE HAVE SAID

"My landlady can cook as well, what's yours like?"

"The Commander was in my lodgings, but he moved."

"When I go to Guzz for my P.C.T., can I have my warrant made out via Pompey'?"

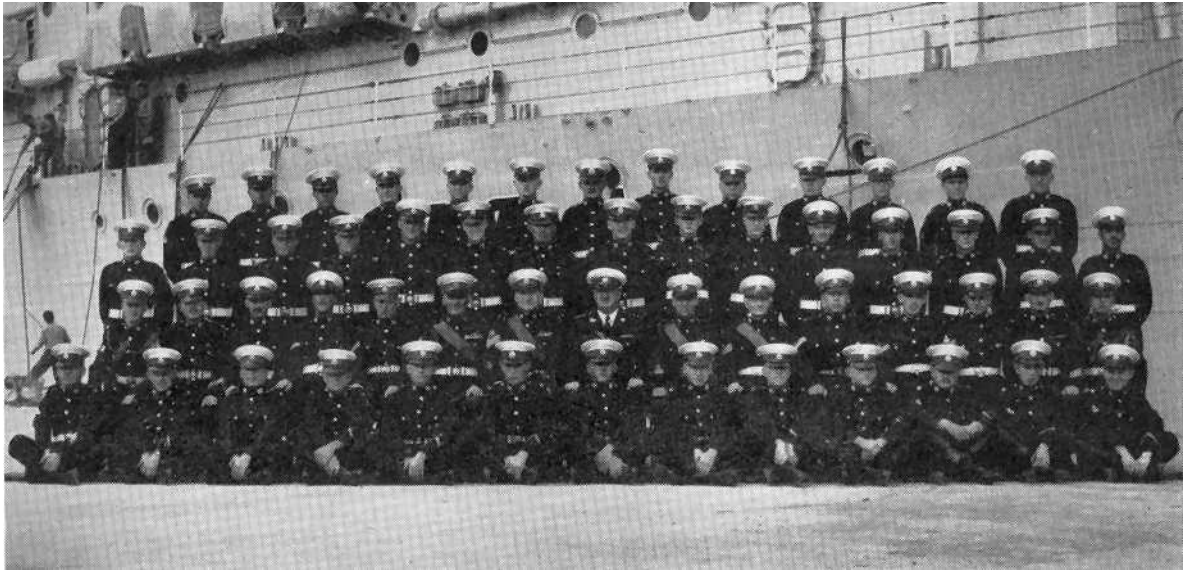
"She'll never be ready by 20th July."

"This engine trouble's going to be a long job and I've heard a buzz they're going to transfer us all to the *Blake*."

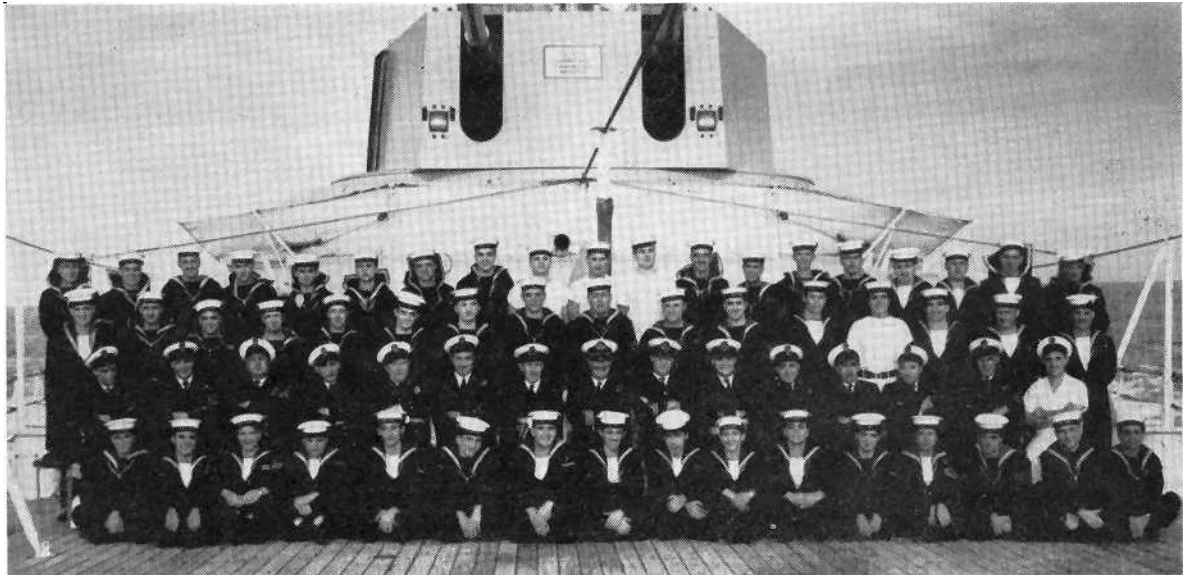
"We're headline news in the 'Mirror' again; £20,000,000 chucked down the drain."

"If we get towed back in again I daren't show my face in the Crystal Bar."

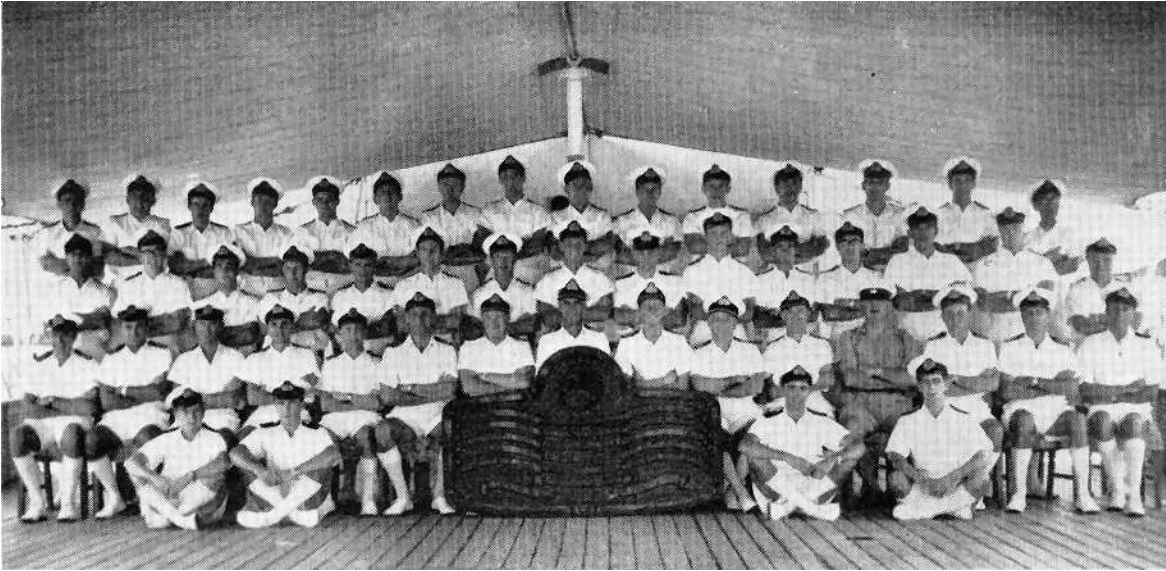
"We don't get fog like this in Pompey."



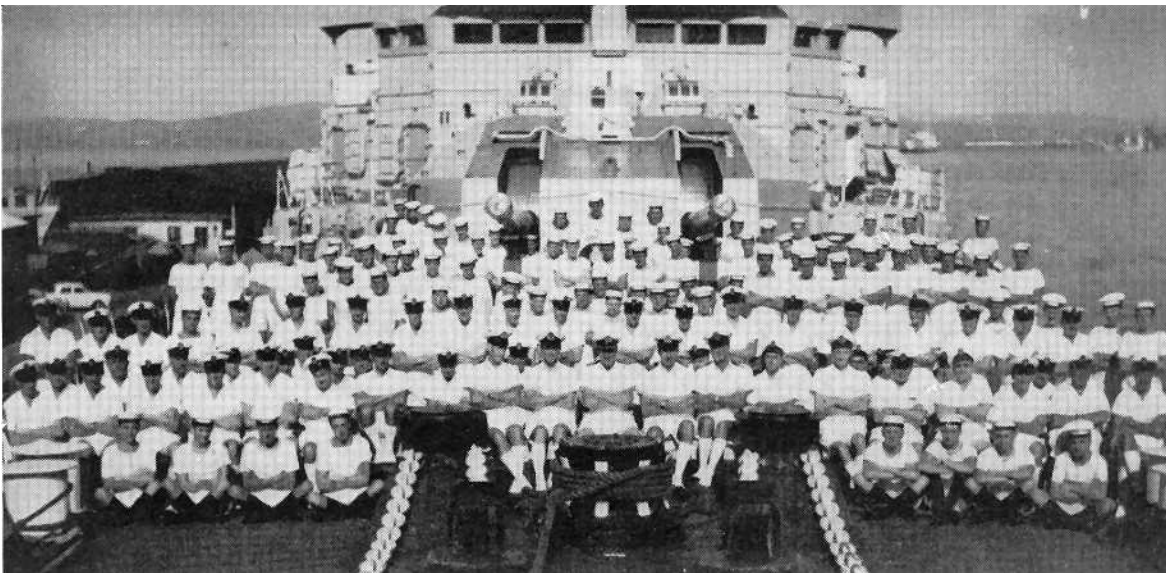
ROYAL MARINE DETACHMENT



COOKS AND STEWARDS



WARDROOM



ELECTRICAL DIVISION

Temporary Memorandum ABC/123.

**ORDERS FOR THE PROPOSED VISIT OF HIS SERENE HIGHNESS CHIEF REABUMBA PARAMOUNT
CHIEF OF PONGOLAND AND PRESIDENT DESIGNATE OF THE CONGOLESE REPUBLIC**

Fine Weather Routine

H.S.H. is expected to arrive at 1015 approximately. The exact time depends on whether he arrives (a) by sacred white elephant (b) by Royal War Canoe (c) by bicycle, and (d) whether the " Nut " is open.

He may or may not be accompanied by three wives, four concubines, five eunuchs and an assortment of hangers-on and wrinkled old retainers.

Routine

0900-Elephant handlers to clean.

1000-Bucket and shovel party to clean.

1010-Hands detailed fall in.

Procedure

(a) On approach of the Royal Elephant, the lookout on "Y " turret reports "Alarm, Sacred White Elephant, bearing green five-oh, speed 14, closing."

Sound the alert.

Elephant handlers bring the royat beast to a standstill at the bottom of the brow.

H.S.H. dismounts. General Salute. Band plays:

"Bongo, Bongo, Bongo,

I don't want to be a pongo."

Carry on - stand fast elephants.

Elephant handlers close up at the ammunitioning trunk.

Bucket and shovel party fall in at the de-ammunitioning chute.

(b) As above: the Royal War Canoe berths at Excellent steps, and the journey is completed on the pillion of Lt.-Cdr. D's pop-pop.

(c) As above: elephant party are not required. In this case the Royal Bicycle Clip Holder, an hereditary office of ill-repute, will be received on board.

As H.S.H. arrives on board his personal standard will be broken at the masthead.

Note: 1. This standard is similar to the house flag of the South Eastern Gas Board, from whom it is believed to have been stolen.

2. Cdr. (L) is requested to arrange removal of the type 960 aerial.

Wet Weather Routine

The welcoming party will muster at the Wardroom bar and the old b----- can find his own way in.

Walk Round

H.S.H. will walk round the ship as follows:-

1. Start in Q.D. Store.

2. Senior officers' Bathroom: see Cdr.(S) in bath.

3. Wardroom:

(a) demonstration of " heads through crinkly light covers " by S/Lt. Palmer, and " straightening out " by Steward Attard.

(b) drink 2/3 pint *Lion* cocktail (P.M.O - 2/3 gin, 2/3 rum. 2/3 draught gin, 2/3 vodka, 2/3 meths., 2/3 draught gin, 1/14 water: to be drunk at the boil).

4. Commander's Office:

See Daily Orders in production.

(Cdr's. Asst.-H.S.H. will be invited to draw the day's tombola numbers, whereupon he will win the line of £3 19s. 7d. payable in coconuts).

5. Schoolroom: muster green chalk.

6. Wardroom " Heads ": gets jammed in folding doors - Shipwright Officer required.

7. Shipwright's Office: fails to borrow a screwdriver.

8. Ship's Laundry: dirty dhoti dhobeyed while he waits.

9. The 'Ole:

(a) G.O. to make joke-" No, Sir! Mice. Sir! " Everybody to laugh.

(b) Junior M.(E) falls down hole. Everybody laughs.

10. Regulating Office: see playlet " Defaulters."

11. Canteen: draw duty-free goffers.

12. B.W.O.: see Bush Telegraph and meet R.O.1 Bird.

13. Operations Room: demonstration of appendectomy (acute and inflamed) by the bos'un.
14. Flag Deck: Hydrogen explosion. Falls down ladder to boat deck. Fall broken by boats officer, who is thereupon awarded the Order of the Crossed Bulls, 4th Class.
15. Main Galley: luncheon under preparation
 (Bamboo shoot soup
 Grilled elephant steaks
 Rich brown gravy
 Manchester tart
 Rich brown custard
 Rich brown tea).
16. Port Waist: demonstration of paint dripping by Q.D. Officer.
17. Electrical Office: inspect spare hands and Wardroom Line Book.
18. Engineers' Office: view vacuum and listen to hard-luck stories.
19. Gunnery Office: accept gift of inscribed chromium-plated elephant shovel and sign permanent loan list.

20. Dental Officer's Cabin: see expurgated version of Lady Chatterley's Lover.

21. Presentation in Captain's Cabin: H.S.H. will present the ship with a man-eating lion and a sacred crocodile. The lion will be kept in the clothing store thereby stopping all further issues of slops and ticklers. The crocodile will be kept in bathroom; junior officers will bath at the Nuffield Club.

- Notes: 1. Under no circumstances is Chief Reabumba to be addressed as Chief R.E.A.
 2. Please do not feed the elephants.
 3. Elephant party are to wear sea boots.
 4. Rehearsals of the Pongoland National Anthem (composed by Haycock) will take place in the Wardroom during forenoon stand-easies.
 5. Master Gunner and Dags Gunner are to stand by to discharge a piece at Porchester Castle, for the edification of H.S.H. T.A.S.O. is to arrange for Porchester Castle to blow up after a suitable T.O.F.
 6. H.S.H. may wish to see D.C.H.Q.1 and last month's laundry bills.

Signed

LIAISON OFFICER: FOREIGN POTENTATES.

"READY AYE READY"

SINCE commissioning, a true and active liaison has been maintained with the Training Ship *Lion*, the Slough Sea Cadet Unit. The fact that Admiral of the Fleet, Lord Chatfield, one time Flag Captain of the previous *Lion*, is a great friend of both Training Ship and H.M.S. *Lion*, has strengthened this tie.

Training Ship *Lion* has been awarded the Admiralty Efficiency Pennant for four years in succession. This is a highly commendable achievement and reflects the efficient recovery made after the disastrous fire, which destroyed valuable Unit buildings during 1961.

The 1960 Efficiency Pennant was presented by the Captain of H.M.S. *Lion* to the Unit at Slough and at the same time a magnificent silk white Ensign was presented on loan to H.M.S. *Lion*. This Ensign has been worn on many ceremonial occasions, the more colourful of which have been when our Royal Marines have "Beat the Retreat" in the capital cities of South America during the recent cruise. Thus in no small way did the Training Ship *Lion* contribute to "showing the Flag" in South America.



FLAG CAPTAINS PAST AND PRESENT. ADMIRAL OF THE FLEET LORD CHATFIELD AND CAPTAIN SCOTLAND ON A GOODWILL VISIT TO T.S. *Lion*