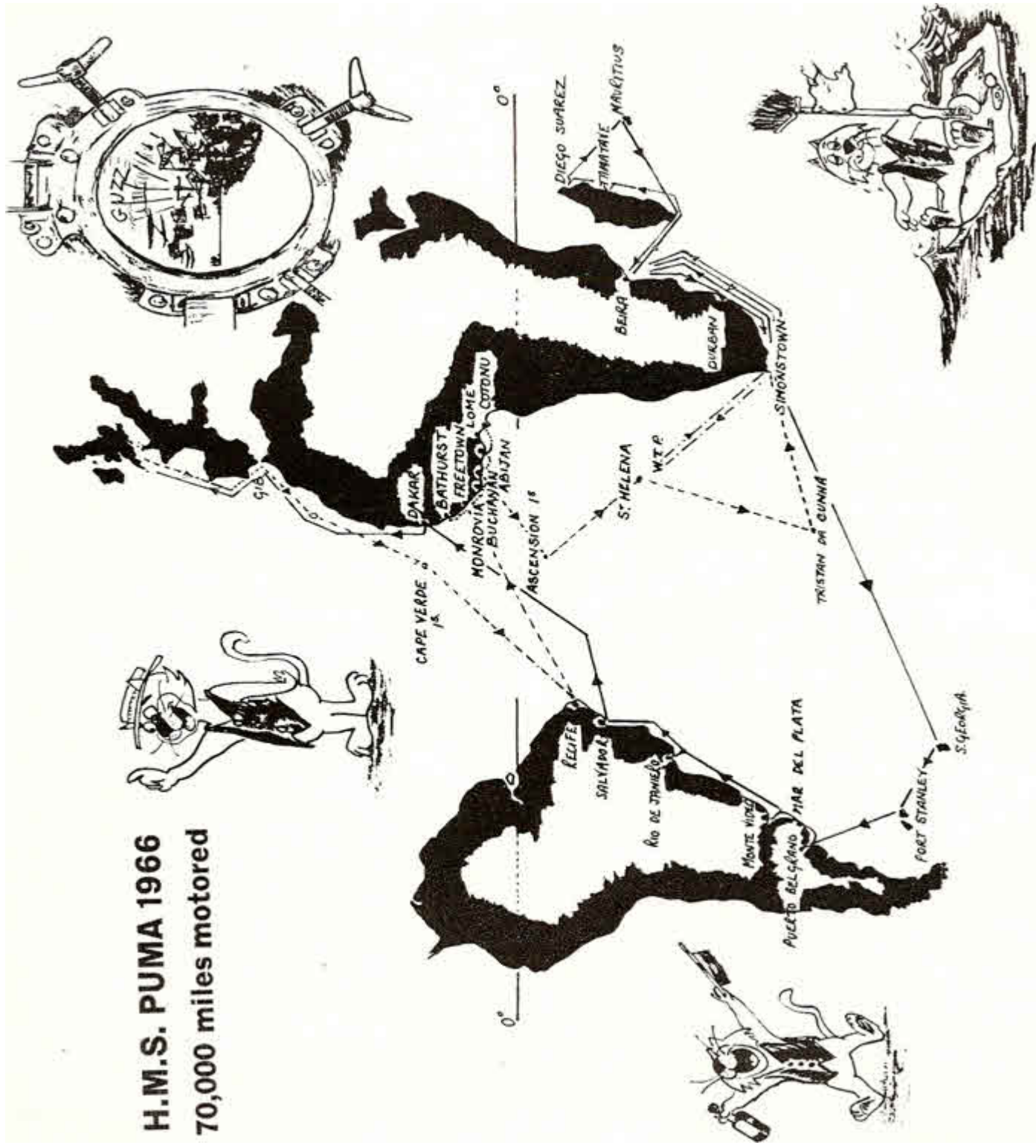


H.M.S. PUMA 1966

70,000 miles motored





We stood on ceremony

On arrival it was found that President Tubman had declared a week of fasting and prayer for National Safety. This meant that sport and official entertainment was cancelled but the cricket lunch, a very enjoyable occasion was held. During our visit Mrs Tubman's birthday was celebrated by a march past of the Coast Guard and the Liberian Army band, *Puma* swelled their ranks by parading the colour, a guard and two unarmed platoons and they looked very smart indeed when I later saw them on television.

Liberia is the republic set up for the freed slaves from the United States and was notable to us for the enormous Firestone Rubber plantation and the great number of wrecked cars which littered every roadside. Whilst in Liberia the ship made a short visit to Buchanan, the new port through which Nimba mountain is being exported at the rate of 6000 tons per hour, this operation began in 1963 and there is enough mountain to last them for 25 years. The mountain is in fact 67 % pure iron and at its current value of eight dollars a ton, a pretty valuable piece of real estate.

It was now time to say goodbye to West Africa and head for the lonely islands of the South Atlantic, the first one, Ascension, looked very like a surrealist moonscape and it seemed that at the top of every pile of clinker the Americans have placed a large radar array, there are in fact about 600 Americans engaged on either building more tracking stations or actually tracking rockets and spaceships.

The Ascension Islanders, who are either Cable and Wireless, M.P.B.W., or the contractors in English Bay, made us extremely welcome, lots of sport was arranged. A splendid party was given in the tented camp of the English Bay contractors and the Americans showed us around their tracking stations. The Americans are obviously coming under the British influence, they play soccer, darts, cricket (stick it in his ear Buddy) and were unaccountably beaten at soft-ball by *Puma* in a match notable for the amount of booze consumed by the players.

Saint Helena was our next stop and a leisurely one it was except for those engaged on fuelling the ship from 300 forty-gallon drums. The Governor, Sir John Field, was embarked and we then took him on to our final stop before Simonstown, Tristan da Cunha. Tristan was shrouded in mist and rain but we were able to see the

effect of the recent volcano before pushing on to Simonstown where we arrived on 23rd March.

The two-week maintenance period which followed was very useful to the ship but very hard on the ship's company, old hands of this station disappeared every evening to visit old friends and left the majority to discover Darryls' and the Navigators Den by themselves. A lot of sport was played against local service and civilian sides and a very happy liaison was initiated between *Puma* and South Africa. On the 7th April we sailed for our first Beira patrol and it was to be two months before we would return.

During this first patrol, on the 22nd April Captain Cunningham joined the ship, at sea, from RFA *Resurgent* and a few hours later Captain Lucey was transferred by jackstay to *Resurgent* and Captain Cunningham assumed command, this method of taking command of a ship must be unique, it is really jumping in at the deep end with a vengeance when ones first order is Starboard 20 Steer 185.

The first patrol lasted for three weeks and on the 25th we left the area and proceeded to Tamatave on the east coast of Malagasay, stopping en route to wash and paint. This was a quiet visit remarkable only in that the referee was the only man injured in a game of rugger between *Puma* and the locals. This injury put Mech. Shillan out of commission for several says. After Tamatave came Diego Saurez on the northern tip of the island and we hoisted the flag of Admiral Gray. The French Navy were very helpful and every day we were able to get parties of 70 away for bathing, always a most popular pastime.

On the 10th May *Puma* with Admiral and Mrs Gray embarked sailed for Mauritius and nine days of self-maintenance combined with again plenty of sports fixtures between the ship, the local police and civilian sides and H.M.S. *Mauritius* and a wide programme of entertainment made this a most successful visit. The nine days were soon over and for *Puma* it was 'back to Beira' and after a short patrol on to Simonstown arriving there on 7th June.



'Again'



... and again'

This time three to four weeks was spent in the dockyard and a considerable amount of work was done, it seems incredible now how everyone was able to enjoy the time spent in Simonstown and yet achieve so much on board. However we sailed for a weapon training programme and had a very successful exercise and achieved good results, we may have been inspired by the performance put up by the England side in the final of the World Cup.

After a week in Simonstown we were off again to Beira for our last patrol during which we heard of the dreadful accident in Rorqual and were too far away to help. This patrol ended we went on to Durban where Rorqual berthed on us. It was a wet, depressing Sunday and we all felt very sorry for the poor Zulus up on those bare hills with the mud squelching between their toes. The Durban visit which at first appeared to be an up and coming success was completely overshadowed by the appalling assassination of Dr. Verwoed on the second day of our visit and all official entertainment ceased as a mark of respect. Three days later with Admiral and Mrs Gray embarked we sailed for Simonstown arriving there on Monday the 12th September. During the week-end passage Admiral Gray inspected the ship and said he was very satisfied with his findings.

The following period in Simonstown promised to be extremely busy, we had our Pre-Refit trials to complete, the Home Fleet Technical Staff were coming to have a look at us during the second week and the first phase of the new ship's company were due to join us on the 27th. All these things were achieved. We also bade farewell to the First Lieutenant, Lt Cdr. Hames, and welcomed his successor, Lt. Cdr. Wright. We were due to sail on Monday the 3rd October and on Thursday 29th September the official cocktail party was held on board to thank everyone who had helped us, ashore or in the dockyard. By 0200 preparations to sail at 0830 were well under way, it had been decided to send us to the Falklands and the night became a frenzy of effort. Defect lists, partially typed, were packed up and given

to the staff in Afrikander. The dockyard produced various bits of equipment of ours, stores were arranged, films, and most important of all our own ship's company ashore were all recovered, and at 0830 we left Simonstown to the very touching spectacle of the South African Navy ships cheering ship for us, a very generous gesture which was very much appreciated. *Puma* was wearing her new paying-off pennant and her upperdeck was once again well covered by oil drums.

For two weeks (at a very low speed) we crossed the Southern Ocean, the loneliest passage in the world. In cold miserable weather and winds varying from about force 2 up the scale to the memorable night of the hurricane force. On the way across we were told to visit South Georgia and during the morning watch of the 14th October the snow-covered icy crags of South Georgia rose above the horizon. It was a glorious day, cold but very bright and the sun shining on the snow and the glaciers gave the island a Christmas cake appearance. By mid morning we were alongside the tiny jetty of Prince Edward Settlement and watch leave was granted. Just about everyone took the opportunity of getting ashore and walking round the bay to the Grytviken Whaling Station now deserted. The penguins were chased up and down the icy slopes and appeared to enjoy the company of their strange visitors, the vast number of sea elephants were very boot-faced about the whole business. The sixteen residents made us very welcome, we being the first visitors since the winter. They appreciated the stores, liquid and solid, and turned out in force to see us leave that evening on our way to the Falklands.

Port Stanley was still in a state of high excitement about the landing of the Argentinians' DC4 but by the time we arrived the invaders had been taken off. We settled down to enjoy ourselves in their pubs, clubs, and at the dance laid on for us and there is no doubt the islanders enjoyed our company and we theirs and we also found the island to be an extremely good 'rabbit run'. To the First Lieutenant's horror we sailed from Port Stanley with a cargo of privately owned sheepskins many of which were destined for no known grave 'The



But the sea passages were restful

owners of the sheepskins in the flat tiller are to remove them by 0800 tomorrow or . . .

Puma's next water-hole was on the magic continent itself, Puerto Belgrano the Argentinian Naval Base, where in spite of the lack of bright lights or perhaps because of this lack we all had a great time and found the Argentinians most friendly and helpful, their facilities were excellent and they were delighted that we should avail ourselves of them, they are extremely proud of their navy, their British warships and their connections with the R.N. and it was a pleasure to be with them. A week at sea, followed this visit and we next called at Mar del Plata, the Argentine holiday playground, unfortunately the season hadn't got under way but it was still a very pleasant visit but there was a feeling of expectancy, everyone seemed to be keeping a firm grip on the pesos and then suddenly we were in Montevideo and out came the money, sheepskin rugs appeared on board by the dozen, unborn calfskin coats, skirts and dresses, handbags and jewellery. The local purveyors of cerveza and whicki didn't lose out either. It was a wonderful run, those who went on the bus trip to Minas will always remember it as will the young gentleman who woke up one morning to find himself being dressed by the British Vice-Consul, two Uruguayan policemen, the Uruguayan Naval Patrol and the hotel manager and his assistant, we are pleased to report that he made it to the ship even though there was only the head rope left to go.

Montevideo was followed by Rio de Janeiro and as the ship slid past the Sugar Loaf and Corvocado a ripple of anticipation passed through everyone in the ship. It was expensive but great, during our stay there was an election, Nacionale had eight players sent off, about a hundred people were killed on the roads and the Copacabana Beach was absolutely covered with gorgeous girls. The local British Community gave us a huge welcome and there was lots of private hospitality, Rio you were everything we had hoped.

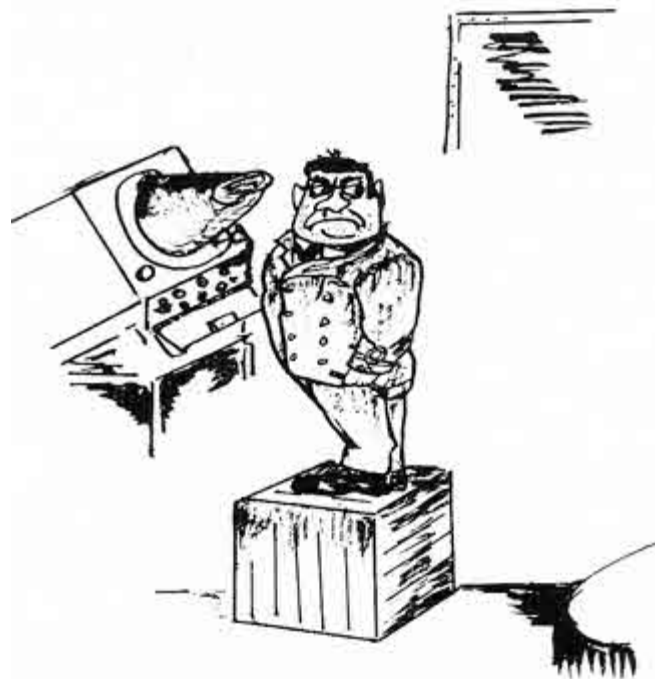
The final South American visit took us further up the coast of Brazil to Salvador or Bahia as it used to be called. The weather was glorious, the beaches and swimming superb and the city swinging and again we loved it. Whilst in Salvador we lay for the first few days alongside our old friend *Protector*, but she left before us and we had the town to ourselves.

We had all reached the stage of physical exhaustion where the doctor recommended a long sea voyage and we accordingly set off again to cross the Atlantic and after a calm uneventful crossing here we are in Dakar and we have been made most welcome. All that remains now is the two days in Gib. and then Devonport. It has been the best foreign leg in the best commission I have ever had and as the writer of this saga I am taking the opportunity of thanking everyone in the ship for making *Puma* so memorable for me.

J.C.



It could be a world record, Scouse



Needs no introduction

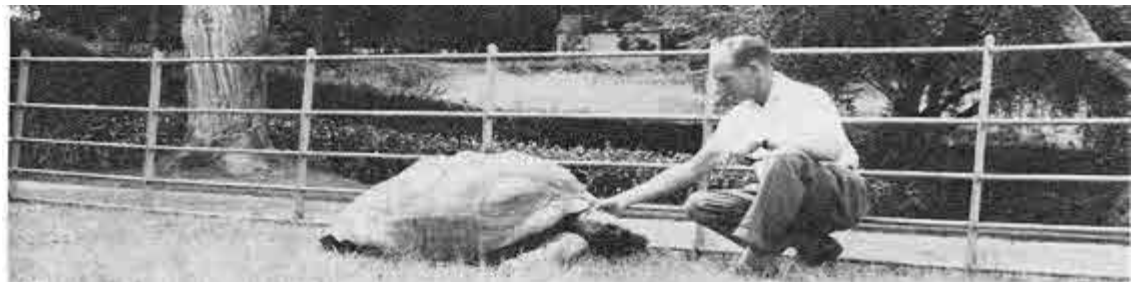


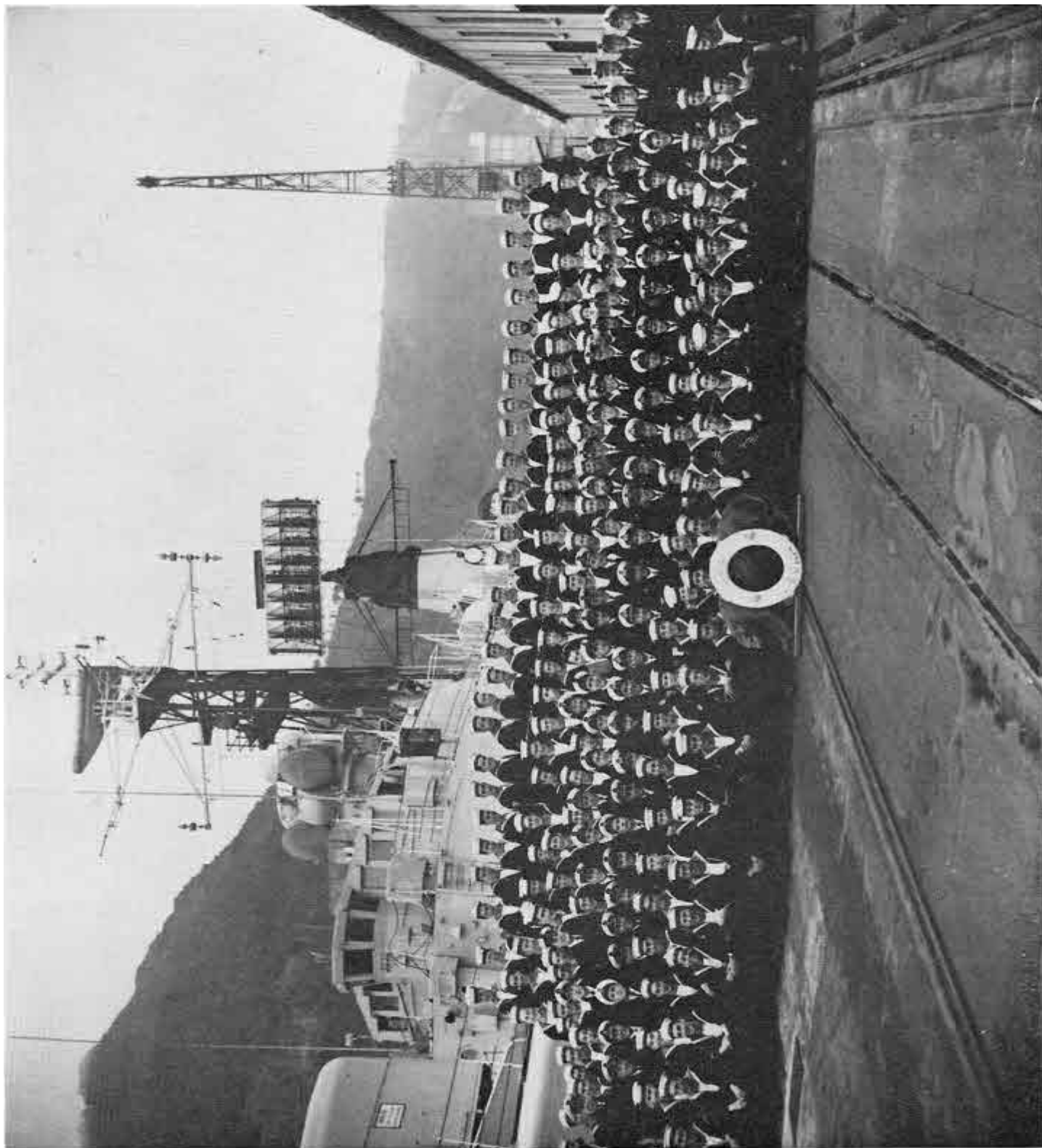
We commission



But the majority perished in the cold

Or at the hands of...





LIST OF SHIPS' COMPANY

Commanding Officer: Captain C. J. Cunningham, DD.S.C

Officers

Lt.-Cdr. N. H. Wright
Lt.-Cdr. D. Smith'
Surg. Lt. A. Marsh
Eng. Sub-Lt. J. Cotterill
Mid. P. Williamson

Lt.-Cdr. M. Phelp
Lt. M. Watkinson
Lt. F. R. Trevethan
Sub-Lt. K. J. Dillon
Mid. N. Sheehan

Lt.-Cdr. I. Martin
Lt. J. Birkett
Lt. J. King
Sub-Lt. A. Sheather
Mid. T. Woolley

F.X. Division

C.P.O. Thompson
C.P.O. White
P.O. Taylor
P.O. Buck
L/S Grubb
A/L.S. Lee
A/L.S. Spencer
A/L.S. Shia
A/L.S. Heritage
A/L.S. Avery
A.L.S. Jones
L/S Haggie
L/S Norton
L/S Lewis
L/S Jaques
A.B. Norman
A.B. Howell-Jones
A.B. Nicol
A.B. Foster, P.
A.B. Wale
A.B. Perrin
A.B. Pelting
A.B. Humphreys
A.B. Robinson
A.B. Lovitt
A.B. Welland
A.B. Yeats
A.B. Lowder
A.B. Parry
A.B. Lowther
A.B. Godfrey
A.B. McLean
A.R. Hobbs
A.B. Cooper, R. W.
Ord. Thompson

E.R. Division

C.E.R.A. Sandfield
E.R.A. Barry
Mech. Rowdin
Mech. Charles
E.R.A. Denby
Mech. Hands
C.M.(E) Henderson
Shpt. Henning
Shpt. Powlesland
Mech. Hope
E.R.A. Jarman
P.O.M.(E) Jackson
P.O.M.(E) Pritchard
P.O.M.(E) Johnson
P.O.M.(E) Brodigan
L.M.(E) McCosh
L.M.(E) Thom
L.M.(E) Tivey
L.M.(E) Marrows
L.M.(E) Crawford
L.M.(E) Hall
L.M.(E) Houston
M(E) Brooks
M.(E) Burtonwood
M.(E) Cook, A. D.
M(E) Duffy
M.(E) Hazlett
M.(E) Kerry
M.(E) Lee
M.(E) Magee
E) Woozley
M.(E) Allen
M.(E) Anderson, J.
M.(E) Anderson, M R.
M.(E) Caley
M.(E) Davey

M.(E)1 Holder
M.(E)1 Walters
M.(1-1)1 Watts
M.(E)1 Weeks
M.(E)1 Cook, D. E.
M.(E)1 Hall
M.(E)1 Hanlon
M.(E)1 Mundell
M.(E)1 Parkinson
M.(E)1 Penniford
M.(E)1 Perry
M.(E)1 Pierce
M.(E)1 Shields
M.(E)1 Govier

Q.D. Division

P.O.G.I. Brain
P.O. Westbrook
L/S O'Keeffe
L/S Carson
A/L.S. Service
A.B. Foster, W.
A.B. Taylor
Ord. Mercer
A.B. Sly
A.B. Kennedy
A.B. Norris
A.B. Lindley
A.B. Anderson
A.B. Sharpe
A.B. Grundy
A.B. Gowan
A.B. Reid
A.B. Botterill
A.B. Mason
A.B. Hoare
A.B. Oakley

A.B. Tennant
A.B. Meechan
A.B. Scoops
A.B. Hookings
A.B. Morris
A.B. Fox
A.B. Smith
A.B. Cooper, J.M.
A.B. King

S. & S. Division

C.P.O. S,A.(V) Duerden
P.O.S.A.(S) Peters
S.P.O.(V) Gould
P.O. Std. Rowe
P.O. Std. Douch
P.O. Ck.(0) Callery
P.O. C.k.(S) Hewitt
P.O. Ck.(0) Lyall
P.O. Wtr. Wood
L/Ck.(0) Vincer
L/Std. Lambert
L/Std. Simmons
L/Std. Agar
L/Ck.(S) Thompson
L./Ck.(S) Riley
Ck.(0) Gannon
Ck.(S) Bird
Ck.(S) Johnson
Ck.(S) MacFadzean
Ck.(S) Bowland
S.A. Ferry
S.A. Burry
S.A. !Merton
Wtr. Heritage
Std. Kay
Std. Dryden

W.E.E. Division

C.O.A. Bunn
C.E.A. Larcombe
C.R.E.A. Machin
C.E.L. Redfern
O.A.1 Reed
L/Mech. Sharpies
EA1 Tullett

P.O. FL. Fisher
P.O. REL. Flanks
P.O. RE. Brooks
W/M2 Shilan
O.A. 2 Brassington
R/M 2 Crawford
R/M 2 Felt
W/M 3 Gaunt

P.O. El Harris
P.O. El McAuliffe
P.O. El Selby
L.E.M. Clay
L.E.M. Boyall
L.E.M. Budding
L.E.M. Hawthorne
L.E.M. Whittaker
L.R.E.M. Cuthbert
L.R.E.M. Mullin
R.E.M. Gibney
R.E.M. Green
R.E.M. Lynch
R.E.M. Scott
R.E.A. App. Delves
E.M. Moore
E.M. Palmer
E.M. Plumpton
E.M. Christian
P.M. Harris
E.M. Lane

EM.1 Smith
R.E.M. Kilpatrick
R.E.M.1 Clark
R.E.M.1 Privett
R.E.M. I Walmsley
R.E.M.1 Watson

Seamen Armourers

P.O. Fowler
A.B. Bumstead
A.B. Hora
A.B. Call
A.B. Scott
A.B. Gordon
A.B. Broadbent

Communications Division

R.S. Metcalfe
C.Y. Standing
L.R.O.(T) Elder
L.R.O.(G) Brocklebank
R.O.1 Chaston
R.O.1 Davies
R.O. I Park
R.O.2 Johnson
R.O.2 Stanwick
R.O.2 Harvey
R.O.2 Nott
R.O.2 Betts
R.O.3 Beeson
R.O.3 Anstee
R.O.3 White
R.O.3 Sawyer
R.O.3 Poulson
J.R.O. O'Dell
J.R.O. Marshall

first Phase Joined

Shpt. Cassford
Mech. Phillips
Mech. Geddes
CEA Pring
P.O. M.(E) Chandler
M(E) Jeffery
M.(E)1 Crook

M.(E) Sheriden
M.(E) Walters
M.(E) Dean
M.(E) McCallum
M.(E) Musgrave
L.M.(E) Neale
L.M.(E) Harriott

M.(E)1 Toward
M.(E)1 Sykes
R. Mech. Coffey
O.A. I Whitworth
R.Mech. Bond
P.O. Fl. Manned

C.A.(W)2 Kennedy
O.A.1 (W) Parkinson
E.M.2 Daley
J.E.M. Dunn
J.E.M. Gosney
C.A.W. App. Newbury

L.E.M. Trillon
A.L.R.E.M. Jackson
R.E.M.1 Saunders
E.M. I Laurin
J.R.E.M. Povah
R.E.M.2 Gillis

R.E.M.2 Bond
L/Sea. Jackson
L/Sea. Gasgoigne
R.S. Harder
P.O.S.A.(S) Carroll
Wtr. May

WE HAD LOTS OF VISITORS

