

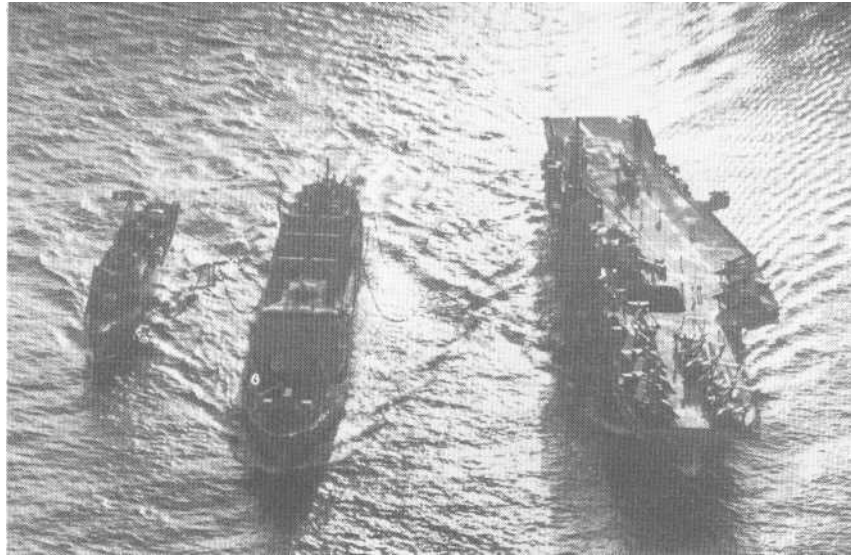
Chief, Far East Fleet, Admiral Sir Desmond Dreyer also came to visit us, and shortly afterwards, through Lady Dreyer's kindness, the Flyco Botanical Gardens were opened to a select public.

VICTORIOUS sailed from Singapore on 16th October to resume the work-up; but first it was necessary to carry out engine trials. These went well, and it looked as if it would be possible to continue. The squadrons flew back to rejoin mother, and work began in company with LOCH ALVIE, ALERT, AMPHION and H.M.A.S. QUIBERON. Admiral Sir Varyl Begg, K.C.B., D.S.O., D.S.C., who as Commander-in-Chief, Far East controls all three Services in the area, came to visit us for a day at sea, and the Gunnery Department, not to be left out of the act, staged the first shoot of the commission. RETAINER then topped us up with 'bricks' for the



Exploring the sights of Singapore.

3" and 'stores' for the aircraft. Crossed fingers began to relax, but early on 19th the failure of the auxiliary feed pump on the centre shaft unit proved to be the last straw. A deputation of F.O.2's staff and ship's officers flew in to confer with the Fleet Commander, and we all waited onboard to know where the repair would be carried out. While we were waiting, TIDE-REACH provided more fuel, and RELIANT passed some 80 tons of stores. The announcement in the evening that the penny had come down in favour of Hong Kong for



RAS Liquids.

the repair work was greeted with a cheer, and an earnest search for small change in forgotten pockets began.

At this point, a word on the subject of the oft repeated RAS may be of interest. Here is the word (hot) from no less a person than the Pink Salmon himself ...

Before I joined this ship, I had heard of RAS, but only just. Then it became part of the turnover, and George said, very nonchalantly, that there was nothing to it, and handed me a sheaf of papers the size of the Pentacheuch describing how it was done. After that, it was a question of waiting until the first RAS and then finding that there was really quite a lot to it.

Look at it from a weight point of view. We eat, use or ditch about 7 tons of food, stores and containers every day; all this is replaced by RASes because it is easier that way, hands are available and the ship's routine is mucked up in one dirty great heap rather than in a lot of small ones.

The planning begins with the Victualling and Naval stores putting in their demands based on past expenditure and the interval between RASes. Add to this the quantity of stores picked up for us by our friendly R.F.A. at her last port of call, and we have the total. Electric Whiskers and his wreckers now enter the scene, and the bods (you) are organised into teams.

Extraordinary tales are told about the number of loads per hour which can be transferred to other ships. In



RAS Solids. Rigging the



Stump mast for one of the 18 RAS's with R.F.A. RELIANT.



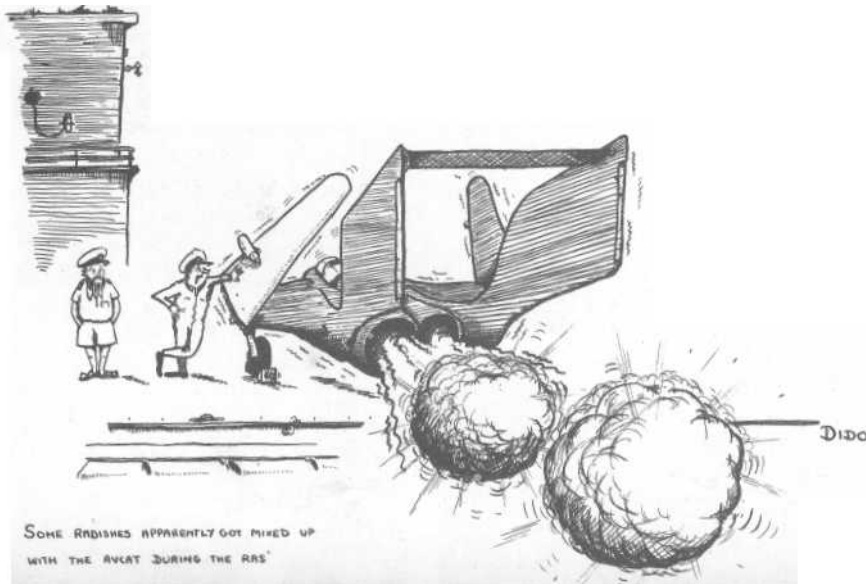
Stand by for the next load.



All the best people wear brown boots.

war it is essential to cut down the time alongside, but in normal times the real consideration is how quickly you can strike the stuff down into the holds, not how quickly you can fill up the flight deck with a mountain of broken boxes; and the shorter the time the rollerveryor fills the gangways, the better. For all that, the striking rate increased with each replenishment.

We have been very fortunate to have RELIANT with us throughout our time on the station. She quickly got to know our ways, and has always been very understanding - even when finding some items coming back over the forward rig which had been passed on the after rig during the same RAS! The total load she has passed to us is not recorded - but just think of all that beer, for example, at 100 cases to the ton. The mind boggles at the ghastly thought that it all might have had to be brought over the side in the old-fashioned way.



There would have been a consolation; we would never have left Pompey! . . .

On passage to Hong Kong, we were briefly in company with DUCHESS, VENDETTA and LINCOLN, the `choppers' flew in an increasing wind, and the fixed wing aircraft, running up on deck for lack of other exercise, found they could improve on the last commission - instead of merely burning liferafts, they managed to blow them over the side!

We heard with pleasure that Lt. Cdr. E. R. Anson, C.O. 801 Squadron, had been voted a `Man of the Year'. He shared this distinction with some lesser lights - the ex Prime Minister, a brace of Nobel Prize winners etc.

The squadrons partially disembarked to Kai Tak airfield on 23rd, and



Visitors in Hong Kong. Girls



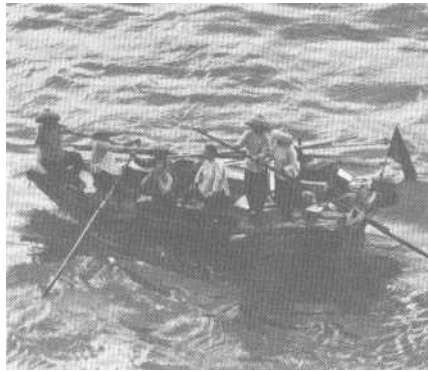
Gurkhas and Glamour.



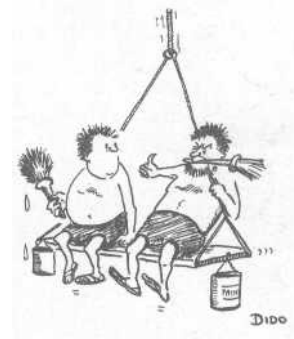
VIC' followed closely on their heels to a splendid berth strategically placed between Wanchai and Kowloon. Hong Kong lived up to its reputation, and, as we found ourselves unexpectedly in time for yet another 'last sea mail before Christmas', the P.O.S.B. accounts took a hard blow. By the end of our stay, funds were low all round, but even so the quantity of bulky goods coming aboard gave rise to some concern. Many visitors came to see the ship, and we gave a children's party onboard for some Chinese orphans. Jenny had been the first to greet us when we arrived and was there to wave us goodbye. "See you in May," she called! During our 14 days stay, a new coat of paint had worked wonders with the appearance of the ship, and down below the repair work had gone famously.



Hongkong.



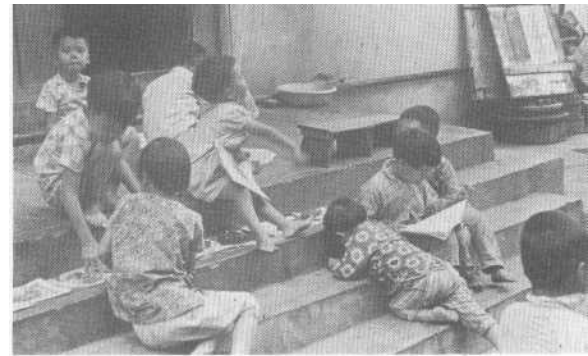
Jenny.



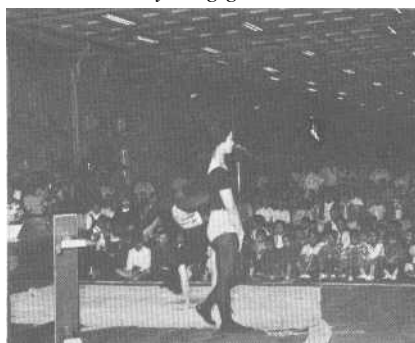
*Side Shows for the children's party on the flight-deck,
and tea in the hangar.*



*The 'King Dragon Troop' entertain
our young guests.*



*"Kids!"
Photographs by R.S.(W) Turley.
"Sampan City."*





Alfa Range at Subic.



Champagne for a rocket-firing hat-trick.



The Bootnecks had a close look at a Vixen.

When we left, engines purring, there was some reluctance among the aircraft to rejoin, but by late on the 8th of November they were all on, and we were off to Subic in the Philippines, QUIBERON (by now known as the EGPF - Elderly Green Painted Frigate) and SALISBURY shared a final RAS from TIDEREACH before she left us for home.

By now, it was two months since the first work-up ended, and it was dearly time that we got down to it again. The second was carried out off Subic, and what a magnificent place for a work-up it proved to be. Everything we needed was there; ranges, deep water, good diversions



Admiral Scatchard presents the Commendation to A.B. P. Speck.

and even wind! It was not bad for a harbour period afterwards either, but unfortunately we were there for only two days - just time for a rapid change from an Alfa Range to a cocktail party drill and on to a Bravo Range for leaving. VICTORIOUS sailed preceded by our escorts, SALISBURY, VENDETTA and QUIBERON who, assisted by 814 Squadron, prevented ANCHORITE from 'sinking' VIC or the attendant RFAs RELIANT, RETAINER and TIDEFLOW.

Immediately before the work-up started, a Remembrance Day service was held on the flight-deck during which a wreath was laid on the water by Junior Seaman Harvey.

After we left Subic, at another ceremony on deck, Admiral Scatchard presented a Commendation to Able Seaman P. Speck, an aircrewman of 814 Squadron, for his part in the rescue of the crew of the Wessex which was lost off Aden during the first work-up.

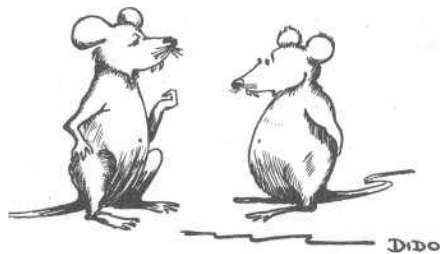
Our departure was saddened by the almost incredible news of the assassination of President John Kennedy of the United States; we joined our American friends in mourning the untimely loss of a very gallant President.

QUIBS' and 'DETTA now left us, with a seemly show of reluctance, to show the Flag in Japan, and VIC' returned to the Singapore area and the final work-up: 'Old Sarum' had gone ahead.

We had been spoilt by the blue skies off the Philippines, and now viewed Singapore's heavy showers and thunderstorms with some distaste. However, the heaviest downpours were reserved for RAS days as usual, and the newly joined one-third of the squadrons' personnel found there was quite enough sun for their U.K. type, lily-white skins. Our new companions were DUCHESS above and ALLIANCE below the waves; with 814 Squadron, they beavered away at the A/S game. BARROSA came to join the fun later, and ANCHORITE took over from ALLIANCE. Admiral Sir Desmond Dreyer came to watch a day's flying in true all-weather weather, and the Captain of ALBION also came with the Commanding Officer of R.A.F. Changi to visit us. Consternation spread onboard when it was heard that a rat had joined the ship, and a £5 reward was offered by the Captain for its capture; the hunt began, and filled a corner of VICNEWS for many days.



So far, no mention has been made of the Villains of the Piece. Indonesia all this while had been making a great and noisy fuss about the parts of Malaysia in north Borneo; Confrontation was the cry, and President Soekarno lost no opportunity to proclaim his intention to 'crush Malaysia'; Malaysia had other ideas. We played no direct part in all this, but it may be partly because of the presence of VICTORIOUS in Far Eastern waters that the belligerent propaganda campaign was accompanied by only comparatively minor acts of aggression by Indonesia. At all events, it was interesting to read in the papers that when we were on passage down the South China Sea, minding our own business and enjoying one of the rare quiet Sundays on the flight deck, President Soekarno's arrival by air at Manila was delayed by two hours because his aircraft was routed to keep it out of range of our fighters!! Fully worked up or no, he clearly had a healthy respect for VICTORIOUS.



'I'M THINKING OF STAYING ON FOR THE NEXT COMMISSION'

Preparations for Christmas began to vie with the flying; F.O.2 and the Captain, ably assisted by Junior Naval Airman Howes and Junior Assistant Steward Jones, poured a gallon of rum and five guineas in sixpences into 3½ cwt. of Christmas pudding - all good stirring stuff. Meanwhile, strange noises could often be heard from the forward dining hall - it seemed that a Panto was rehearsing.

The work-up ended with a spell of round the clock flying, and then as a final fling before the aircraft slipped ashore for the Christmas period VIC' took part in KIT KAT, a joint air defence of Singapore exercise. VICTORIOUS aircraft played on both the attacking and the defending sides and won.

Our return to Singapore dockyard for an S.M.P. and Christmas coincided with a major change in the ship's programme. So far, we had

been on a General Service Commission (G.S.C.) - normally six months 'Home' leg followed by a twelve months East of Suez leg. This had been turned back to front at the start of the commission, and we had almost reached half-time East of Suez; now it transpired that VIC' would not complete the G.S.C., for she was needed in the Far East. Speculation was rife. Would we, for example, return to Pompey for a docking and then sail east again? The possibilities were endless. Eventually, the ship's company heard from the Captain that VIC' would re-commission by air in Singapore, and that this would start in August '64. This was a blow to the more avid rabbit-hunters - you can't take a camphor-wood chest home by air! There were also those who, for one reason or another, didn't fancy themselves as birdmen - after all they had joined the Navy; it was announced that requests to stay on for the next commission would be considered. The debates continued, and, before we knew where we were, Christmas had arrived.

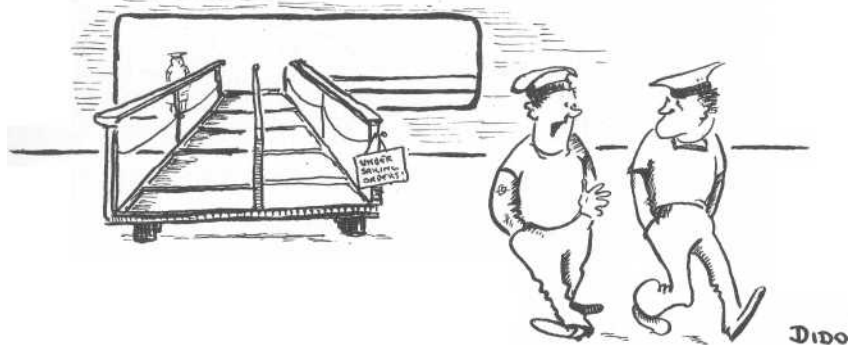


... a gallon of rum and five guineas in sixpences stirred into the Christmas pudding.



The Panto - what luscious girls!

Just before Christmas, the 'Victorians' staged their Xmas pantomime-Alanladdin. The show was a great success, largely due to the efforts of Lt. Lawrance, who played the name part; he was supported by an enthusiastic cast and some brilliant arrangements by the Royal Marine Band. The entry of our dainty 'over-zone' fairy produced the biggest laugh, but the author Lt. Cdr. Haines and the producer Cdr. Bateman, must be congratulated on a show which



HEARD THE BUZZ - WE'RE ALL GOING HOME NEXT MONTH AND THE SHIP'S TO BE HANDED OVER TO THE NATIONAL TRUST

Crossing



went with a zip from beginning to end.

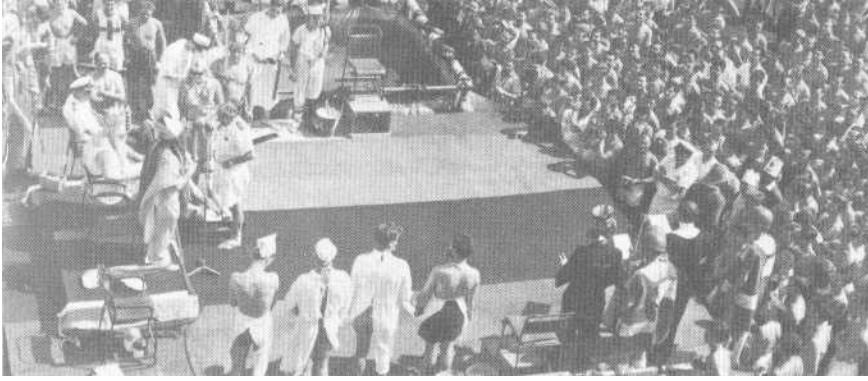
On Christmas eve, a carol service for the Fleet and the Dockyard was held on the flight-deck; some two thousand came to sing. For very many of the ship's company, this was their first Christmas away from home. Despite the unseasonable temperature, it was celebrated in the traditional manner, and by the time we sailed on 2nd January, 1964 for some private flying in the local area we were suffering from the effects of the New Year as well.

The cobwebs were all brushed away by the middle of the month after a period of exercises which included a joint Army support exercise, COCKTAIL, and which we shared with H.M.N.Z.S. T A R A N A K I and H.M.S. DIANA, LINCOLN and ANDREW. DIANA came with us when we turned our backs on the Far East for a while and set off for a visit to Mombasa. F.O.A.C. planned to join us there, and hold our operational readiness inspection - hucking out and buffing up became the order of the day - but there were other villains waiting to change all that, and they began to show their hands when the Government of Zanzibar was overthrown by



the Line





Neptune's Court in session



a coup d'etat, and the Sultan was banished from the island.

For the moment we were able to enjoy our passage in company with DIANA and the faithful RELIANT; OLN kept us topped up with fuel. On the evening of Saturday 18th, as the ship approached the 'line', Neptune's heralds came aboard, and with due ceremony and very fishy music proclaimed that His Majesty would be visiting the Ship next day and called on the Captain to make all proper preparations. The Captain replied in verse both courteous and corny, and the Heralds departed over the bow again to carry the gracious message to His Majesty.

At ten fifteen on Sunday morning, the ship stopped, and the Royal Court embarked, to be met by the Captain, guard and band when the

after lift brought them up to the flight-deck. An intercepted eye witness report contained the following telegraphic remarks:- "Scenes spectacular. King, attended by court officials, inspects gayguard. Muchfun. Band plays special anthem. Neptune welcomes Flat-top. Procession formed. Leading chariot King and Flattopcaptain. Numbertwo Queenie and Exec. Triumphant procession martial music due solemnity. Arrive stage procession halts. Court forms up on stage. King welcomes Captain and crew. Historical proclamation. King invests Captain with Star of Neptune. Invests others. Much fun, Sees ship's criminals. Awards punishments carried out without appeal. Welcomes Novices. Ritual carried out by Barbers, Doctors,

Policemen, Bears. Muchfun. Some Novices reluctant. King departs with soggy court. Interview later on Fantail. Muchbeer. Awl Kort in hi spirits. Muchmorfun."

The ceremony was remarkable for the number of cameras recording it, which accounts for the reluctance mentioned in the report - they all had expensive equipment slung around their necks. The afternoon was spent by many quietly taking the sun; it had been a busy morning.

We were now near Gan, and on Monday morning 849 were at their most popular task once more - they brought off twelve bags of mail. Despite Jan's cartoon, the mail has always arrived safely, and with remarkable speed to the remotest places.





... our landing parties were trained ...

Gan proved to be a splendid place for flying - enough wind, unrestricted air space and, with the ship operating right alongside the diversion, all aircraft had to do was to widen their final turn a bit and there they were. News reached us that an Army revolt had broken out in Tanganyika and we waited to see if it would affect our programme. H.M.S. CENTAUR embarked the Royal Marines of 45 Commando from Aden and sailed to join H.M.S. RHYL off Dar-es-Salaam as a precautionary measure; there are many thousands of British nationals in Tanganyika, and their safety was in

doubt. Although it was not certain that there was a direct connection between the Zanzibar revolution and the trouble in Tanganyika - perhaps it was just that it was the Revolting Season - the Governments of Kenya and Uganda feared that the contagion might spread to their territories and so asked Britain for help in maintaining law and order; VICTORIOUS was ordered to sail for Mombasa. Our diversion parties ashore at Gan were hastily retrieved, and off we went.

Two days later, after 45 Commando had landed from CENTAUR at Dar-es-Salaam and disarmed the

mutineers, at the request of President Nyere, and other British troops had stabilised the situation in Kenya and Uganda, VICTORIOUS was proceeding 'with all despatch'. Our role was uncertain, but on passage our landing parties were trained for a landing by helicopter. DIANA went ahead at 29 kts to Mombasa, and our replenishment group, RELIANT, RETAINER and OLN A were left to follow on behind. TIDESURGE met us off Mombasa, and we spent the night of Sunday 26th cruising close inshore with the island and ensign staff floodlit.

After one day at Mombasa, we were ordered to Dar-es-Salaam to take over from CENTAUR. During the next few days, we re-embarked a very buoyant 45 Commando (the efficiency of their operation had made them extremely popular not only with the European and Asian but also with the African community in Dar'). The 16/5 Lancers and two R.A.F. Belvederes also came on board; it was a bit of a squash for we also had our own squadrons embarked, and 'A' and 'B' hangars became one vast Cdo. bedroom. There followed a period when the 'fire extinguishers' were kept at the ready in case there should be a further outbreak of the 'brushfire' which had been so quickly extinguished.

While we remained at anchor off Dar-es-Salaam, there was no shore



The Royal Marine Band entertains at Dar-es-Salaam,



Captain Compston welcomes members of the Tanganyikan Government on board H.M.S. VICTORIOUS.



45 Commando, Royal Marines forms, with 40 and 42 Commando, the 3rd Commando Brigade. The unit has served since 1960 on the Yemen border and at Kuwait and in May 1963 trained in northern Kenya. After quelling the mutiny of the Tanganyikan rifles, and embarking in H.M.S. VICTORIOUS, the unit returned to its base at Little Aden by helicopter lift from H.M.S. ALBION.



leave except for sports parties; bathing from a nearby small island became very popular, and the sailing dinghies were in great demand. Previously, sailing had been limited to a small team of enthusiasts; matches had been sailed in Hong Kong against both the Army and the R.A.F. and we had taken part in both the Changi to Singapore passage race and the Far East Inter-Services Meeting, but for the friendly match arranged by the large and thriving Dar-es-Salaam Yacht Club there were plenty of volunteers! We were declared to have won after our kindly hosts had fiddled the points. The Royal Marine Band was also landed, for 'soothing' duties, and was a great hit. We entertained members of the press, and the Captain received a party of local VIPs - including members of the Tanganyikan Government - on board. There was no fixed-wing flying, except when we launched a couple of Gannets to form a communication Flight ashore, but the flight-deck was by no means idle. Each morning, every available inch of space was taken up with Commandos parading and training - coming up on the lifts in battle order, hopping in and out of helicopters with all their gear, shattering targets in the sea around the ship with small arms fire, cleaning their weapons, etc. Our new teeth clearly intended to keep the cutting edge sharp, and we were duly impressed both with their obvious efficiency as a fighting machine and also with their devotion to the military duty of sleeping for every minute not otherwise usefully employed.

Eventually the tension ashore eased sufficiently, and we departed for an S.M.P. at Mombasa. On the way, we disembarked most of our fixed-wing aircraft to Embakasi airport (Nairobi). The comical sight of the day was the C.O. 893 leaping out of his U/S aircraft, racing to another, scrambling in and being halfway through starting up before his observer had even opened his hatch to get out of the first one. The required number of aircraft got off first time despite the many days without flying - no hold ups - no one U/S after starting - strange is it not!

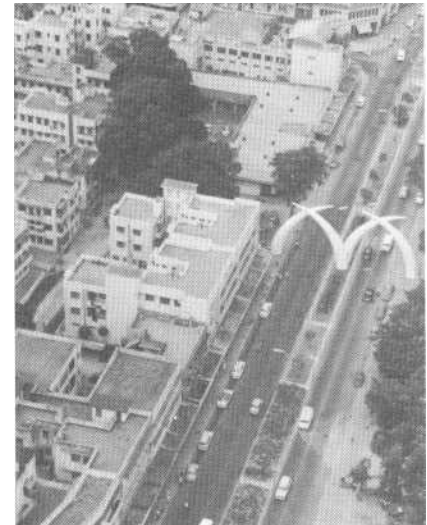


ALBION arrives at Mombasa.

Our stay at Mombasa was notable for the bus trips which were organised to the Game Reserves, for the enormous quantity of wooden carvings bought by the ship's company and for the friendly welcome we received. You had to be up betimes to see the game in action, but many thought it worthwhile; as usual, Jan had a point to make. The beaches were also popular, and, with only a short boat trip from the ship's berth to the shore, Mombasa proved to be a very good spot to spend a fortnight's S.M.P.

ALBION arrived, and our 'lodgers' left, taking 84 Squadron with them; we thought that it might be a long time before the squadron returned to us, but in fact, after spending ten days working with the Cdo., back they came - almost unrecognisable in their khaki and floppy hats. ALBION then took '45' back to their Aden base.

The large number of ships assembled at Mombasa and the hospitality of the Mombasa Yacht Club gave a



Mombasa from the air.



Belvedere playing cranes.



Our RM 'lodgers' leave for ALBION.



further fillip to sailing. Our boats were kept at the club throughout our stay. A match was arranged between the Fleet and the club, for which H.M. Ships and R.F.A.s pooled their boats and the club provided a similar number; crews were mixed. It was something of a nightmare to organise, but provided a splendid afternoon's sailing. The second race ended at DIANA where beer was provided on the foc'sle, and as darkness fell everyone returned to the club for a barbecue. On the final Tuesday, a Naval match was sailed in dinghies, whalers and Picosos between the escorts and the 'big ships', who managed to preserve their dignity.

At sea once more, there was a moment's anxiety when we heard that the Buccaneers were not all willing to start, but our prima ballerinas were at last persuaded that the time really had come to quit Nairobi, and we were soon 'all aboard' and off eastwards again, this time to take part in Exercise JET 64 in the area between the Nicobar Islands and Penang. ESKIMO, who remained behind, sent in her farewell signal; . . .

*So, think of us you legions,
as you leave for other lands,
If History is in the making,
it's left in steadfast hands,
We wish you peaceful sailing,
and hope that you won't mind
If we spend our time consoling
the girls you've left behind.*

F.O.A.C., who should have joined us at Mombasa, had been forced to change his plans once more when we were choc-a-bloc; the 'villains' could gloat over that success, but what about their political achievements? The governments in E. Africa were reluctant to recognise any master plan behind the unrest they had suffered. They might be right in this, of course, but it is worth noting that the disturbances preceded a planned visit by Mr. Chou En Lai. Had he expected an all red reception during his tour? The prompt action of the elected governments of these countries in taking the necessary steps to preserve order and to prevent chaos (including their appeal for British aid) seems to have disappointed him. He cancelled his visit! We were honoured to have been asked to help our E. African Commonwealth partners