

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT — *continued*

Now you've got our number you know where to find us, the promenade deck, playground for the children of 803 and 892, night club, cloakroom, church, casino, boudoir and bedroom, pianos and chinese lanterns. We can't say we've been everywhere but we've seen everything. The Captain's Sec stranded like a half-tide rock at 1330 after lunch on the Quarterdeck, during that stay in the Riviera of the Middle East. The Bosun when he was heard to say, "But I haven't had my sweet yet!" Little did he know that the coffee had already been topped up with salt water.

The bellboys, cloakroom attendants and general factota of the Quarterdeck have had to put up with a lot, they live in the Blackboard Jungle where there are more chiefs than Indians—promotion to leading hand is on virtue—a strong soccer team, well represented in the Ship's Sports Teams, and as for diplomacy they are experts and such fast talkers too.

Experts at Tow Aft and tying up ships on Saturday afternoons; they are mechanised to cope with all eventualities and don't have to rely on gimmicks like chariots and sub-aqua facilities. Noted only for the high losses of splash targets which the birdmen like to see towed astern (it gives them a sense of purpose).

We hope our guests have enjoyed their stay and one day we shall publish our list of satisfied customers.

A Final Word for the Flat Sweeper

The Sweeper and the 'tween decks Mate, were walking close at hand; They wept like anything to see, such dirt so far from land. "If this were only cleared away", they said "It would be grand". "If thirty hands with pots of paint painted for half a year, Do you suppose", the Sweeper said, "That we could get it clear". "I doubt it", said the 'tween decks Mate, and shed a bitter tear.

Engineering Department

"Our ships, great and small, have been at sea more continually than was ever done or dreamed of in any war since the introduction of steam.

Their steaming capacity and the trustworthiness of their machinery is marvellous to me, they seem to steam on for ever.

We must never forget the man behind the gun but we must also remember in these modern times the man around the engine, without whom nothing could be done."

W. S. CHURCHILL,

Introduction to Navy Estimates, 1940.

The end of any commission in an aircraft carrier is practically certain to bring to light a great deal of heartfelt relief, reflections and prematurely aged watchkeepers. This commission has been no exception, having been a hard, often tedious two years, during which time it has sometimes been felt that someone at Admiralty has been trying to achieve the impossible—or that the rest of the Navy has been sunk, or undergoing refit, or just on leave! But the ship's doings as such, concern us not. What of the 20 per cent of the ship's company which forms the Engineering Department? How have the last two years left us?

Looking back, probably the times which come first to mind are those spent in the Persian Gulf, Cape Town and Hong Kong — did we go

anywhere else? The Gulf, in particular, was what might well be described as an "experience" which, despite its discomfort, boredom and irritation, went little more than skin deep; morale remained high and really we fared much better than had been expected. Once used to having no sleep, stepping over one's collapsed messmates, looking like starved leopards with a bad case of measles, and giving one's tot away because one didn't want it, life became almost bearable. Some chaps were even proud of their prickly heat—but they were the heat-struck ones mostly! Others played a great deal of deck hockey, preferring perhaps a quick death by clubbing rather than the slow torture of being grilled to a sweat-soaked crisp. As if the heat were not sufficient agony, all and sundry were urged to "drink more limers", thus adding the agony of internal burning by the iced acid brewed in the M.C.R. (You all think those blokes what suddenly disappeared had gone on draft, I suppose!) However, the Persian Gulf and its horrors are part of the past perhaps better not dwelt upon—at least not till next commission!

Quite a lot of 1961 was, of course, spent at sea—as no doubt statistics can impressively show—and the question might well be put asking what we did whilst we were at sea. The flight deck crews will reply, "We played deck hockey", the electricians, "Repaired burnt-out fans", the Royal Marine Band, "Played Teddy Bears' Picnic 647 times", and so on. But what did the Engineers do? The replies to this question will doubtless be



E.R.As. and Mechanics



Ch.M.(E.), P.O.M.(E.)s and Officers

varied, ranging from the scandalous to the impossible. Let us then try to spotlight our activities afloat.

The sporting skill might be said by some—the jealous outsiders—to have been limited, but this, we indignantly protest, was certainly not so. No ship has ever boasted such an expert team of tiddley-winking E.R.As. and as for poker ... well, have you ever tried joining in with a bunch of stokers? We guarantee you retired shirtless! Soccer is perhaps one of our outstanding skills—maybe because we have the intelligence to play in outsize, opposition-crippling, steaming boots! Cricket, hockey, water-polo, deck hockey and many other games, sports or battles were fought out over the commission, with a very fair share of the honours going to the Engineers. One stalwart, if slightly optimistic, animal lover, it is rumoured, even became so keen on equitation that he applied to keep a horse onboard! Exercising the beast on the flight deck being considered an unprecedented hazard to flying operations, the request was reluctantly rejected. Even the notion of using the animal as a flight deck tractor was met with a singular lack of humour. (He now trains racing cockroaches, we believe).

Down below, in the hot surroundings of the Engineer's world, the watchkeepers showed praiseworthy indifference to very uncomfortable conditions—although there was a bit of a rush on duffel coats in early December once the ship had passed through the Canal! Watchkeeping can become a dull task to the unimaginative, but imagination has certainly not been lacking in VICTORIOUS—especially where colourful pin-ups are concerned! Painting and polishing of brightwork, too, rose to astronomical heights of individuality—one or two stylish artists even going so far as painting their own pin-ups. Yes, watchkeeping has had its lighter side, and many amusing incidents have arisen during the course of the commission. Perhaps one of these bears repeating. The scene is set with an anonymous E.R.A. busy closing a large steam cross connection valve, having uncharacteristically omitted to check an alternative steam supply to the turbo-generators. As steam was cut off, the lights began to dim, and the unsuspecting chap, persevering with his task, was heard to say disgustedly, "Blimey, ruddy fine time for 'em to put the lights out, this is!"

Now that the commission is over we can look back over the two years and say, "We did a good job." There will be many memories in connection with VICTORIOUS which will remain—especially to those who now bear tattoos proclaiming the delights of Cape Town and Hong Kong. When, for the last time, with a backward glance at the familiar black-topped funnel, each man troops down the gangway and departs, the comments on "Vic" will be varied in the extreme—some of them quite unprintable! Several of our number, of course, will be returning for another commission. To these single-minded stalwarts we can only say, "Last commish, like last leave and the brewer's product. is always best."



"CAME STRAIGHT FROM ARCTIC PATROL 'E DID — 'E JUST MELTED!"



"WHERE DID YOU SAY THE BLACKOUT VALVES ARE SIR?"



Starboard Watch of M.(E.)s



Port Watch of M.(E.)s

Supply and Secretariat Department

These are the men ...



Officers, Chief Petty Officers and Petty Officers

... Who ...



Ship's Cooks



Officers' Cooks and Stewards



Writers and Stores Assistants

... look after the stores ...



4,500 different items of Naval and Air Stores are kept in stock



plus a wide variety of foodstuffs and clothing for all occasions from the North Pole to the Equator

— . and take it back . . .

... give money away ...



The Ship's Company were paid £657,471 2s. 3d. in cash during 1961 (a little more than the cost of one aircraft)



Post Office Savings Bank Deposits in 1961-£40,805 2s. 7d. Withdrawals in 1961—Shhh!

.. prepare meals on board ,



Over three tons of food are swallowed daily

. and generally bring comfort to all the officers...



Versatile cooks at the wheel

.. and ashore ...



Barbecue at Pulau Tioman

... and the Ship's Company



The Ship's Company drank 409,950 tots of rum during 1961 (that's about 6,405 gallons). No statistics have been extracted from the Wardroom

T.A.S. Department



THE T.A.S. STORY

The T.A.S. Department seems to be chiefly known as the owners of that large and much coveted space known as the Torpedo Body Room. From time to time it has been used for Naval Stores, empty drop tanks, practice bombs, etc., etc., in fact, any gash that other departments cannot find a home for has been stowed away in there.

However, we do keep a few torpedoes in there as well and we have even had some of them out for an airing on several occasions, mainly in Singapore, where 825 Squadron carried out some practice drops. On one occasion one torpedo ran wild and hit the ENIGMA, our target-towing tug, with a resounding thump, but the less said about that the better.

Most of the T.A.S. ratings have worked in the T.A.S. Party at one time or another under the able leadership of the T.A.S.I., Petty Officer Marchant, and they have always kept the torpedoes and asdics, and the various T.A.S. spaces, in excellent condition and spotlessly clean throughout the commission.

The paperwork has been most ably done by the T.A.S. Officer Writer, Leading Seaman M. J. Startup, who has also found time to work with "the party" on occasions as well as assisting the Padre with the running of the ever popular VICNEWS.

Our Second T.A.S. Officer, Lieutenant (SD) (TAS) E. Garnett, is going

ashore for the last time at the end of this commission as he retires in 1963. He has seen more years of service than most of us have seen of life, and we wish him a long and happy retirement.

THE DIVING STORY

The divers have been busy during our rare spells in harbour, but their most important task had to be done at sea—clearing a jammed rudder when the ship was on her way home from the Mediterranean in December 1960. A difficult task at the best of time, but extremely difficult and dangerous in the heavy swell prevailing at the time. However, the job was done and we got home for Christmas after all.

Our other "dips" have been more of a routine nature, training dives and hull inspections, etc., but we finished our time in the Far East with a full-scale night bottom search whilst in Singapore.

Also in Singapore, during the docking period, we ran our own Shallow Water Diving Course. P.O. Collar, Diver 1 and L.S. Borland, Diver 2, doing all the instruction, using the facilities of the Diving School at HMS TERROR.

Our numbers have averaged about 33 divers throughout the commission, and ably led by P.O. Collar they have been a very efficient team.



Diving Team

Electrical Department



For many members of the Electrical Department the commission started in July 1960, about the middle of the special refit at Portsmouth. By that time the "Dockyard Mateys" had all but taken full possession with their inevitable litter scattered in every corner of the ship.

The department was almost up to full strength by the time the harbour trials started in August and, as if by magic, lots of things started to work; the ship began to look tidy, and those of us who were newly joined began to feel confident that we might get to sea after all. As the weeks passed by life became more hectic, particularly as the "users" (also newly joined) were starting to find their way into the more remote parts of the ship and ask questions about "which switch switched what!"

Sea trials can be a bore but those which followed were just the reverse for the L's. There was never a dull moment. We even steamed round in circles for long periods, having been assured by the Island Radio Section that, "new equipment requires new methods to test it." Odd gentlemen in the various trials parties came and went. Each in turn assured us, "It's O.K. now, old chap, shouldn't give you any more trouble," and we hoped they would be right. The 984/CDS Group were already starting to chase the spares they hadn't got.

An impressive series of exercises in the Med brought the inevitable spate of electrical defects, and gallons of midnight oil were burnt in

wrestling with the mysteries of our black electrical art. Even so the department found time to keep up with the sports and social programme, reached the final in the Interpart Soccer Competition, and were only narrowly beaten. On our one jolly in Naples a certain member of our fraternity endeavoured to increase our numbers by buying a goat. Fortunately it declined to sign on!

At Christmas, in the rain-soaked blustery day of an English winter, the Island Electrical Group transformed the mast into a Christmas tree with flashing fairy lights and illuminated stars. It looked very spectacular.

For a time in the Irish Sea the 984 team found things particularly difficult whilst working outside on their "Dustbin" in a 40-knot gale and driving rain. By this time "the Beast" had already consumed a fantastic amount of spares and seemed intent on taking its pound of flesh as well.

Cape Town—what a fabulous visit! The department played one memorable cricket match against the Cape W./T. Station, the result of which has been lost for ever in an alcoholic haze. Floodlighting the Island and self-maintenance were carried out as mere sidelines, because the accent was very much on SELF-maintenance. The stay ended all too soon and we suddenly found ourselves in the midst of the Operational Readiness Inspection, and with it our first major Damage Control exercise. The Forward and. After Groups got down to some real "live" knitting

with their emergency cables and began to learn just how hot it could get between decks. By this time the flight deck sports were in full swing and the department reached the quarter finals of the Deck Hockey and Volley Ball.

In Singapore it seemed to rain every day; the weather was hot and humid and the delights of the Terror swimming pool and the local beverage at the "Brit Club" made a welcome change after so much seetime. Exercise "Pony Express" followed this period and providing the "Airfield Facilities" for the squadrons kept everyone in the department busy, especially the boys between decks who found the going tough in the clammy heat. In this period we paid our first visit to that delightful "tropical paradise", Pulau Tioman, the poor man's Palm Beach, with its miles of golden sands and mountains of empty beer cans.

To start with the docking was a pretty anxious period for the department, as the electrical supplies were very severely restricted and we were not able to maintain the "Hotel Services" of which we had always been proud. Thus there were frequent black-outs, very little ventilation and often no hot water for tea making. The switchboard watchkeepers were very glad when we had settled down and found the best way to make use of the limited electrical power the ship was allowed. With life so uncomfortable onboard it was fortunate that everyone lived ashore! The department took the lead in the Interpart Knock-out Competitions and reached the finals in soccer, hockey and water polo. It was a great disappointment that we were defeated in all three. A few of the more ambitious types braved the perils of various "Expeds" and "Banyans"; two of our members went on a sort of Jungle Survival Course and came back looking very fit and healthy ! For those who didn't take part in these violent activities there was the ever popular "TIGER" hunt each night at the Dockyard Canteen and Terror Bar, and judging by the noise of escaping "TIGER TOPS" coming from these places the hunts were very successful. Our new Deputy Electrical Officer joined us about this time, sporting a beard which rivalled many that had been grown since leaving England. As tattoos had also become very popular it was not surprising that Commander "L" was heard to say, "First beards, now tattoos; is there any other heathen practice left for them to adopt?"

In the Persian Gulf we sweated through each day getting more and more dehydrated as we struggled with the problems of cooked and condensated equipment. In particular the Boiler Room and Engine Room Electrical Sections had a very rough time and earned every penny of their "Sweat Money". The 984 continued to consume spares at an alarming rate, some of which were sent on expensive "World Tours" before reaching us. It was about this time that the Electrical Officers and E.As. played their famous "un-floodlit" Vollev Ball match with a black ball on a

dark night. The pitch was also slippery to make it more interesting. Both sides claim to have won, but the argument is still going on.

In Mombasa most of the department went on Safari, shooting big game with camera and cine, and helping to produce some of the finest rear-end views of wild animals ever to come out of Africa. In the less strenuous activities the change over from "TIGER" to "TUSKER" hunting was very easy, and for the "rabbit" buyer there was an abundance of wood carvings to be had and enough bongo drums to send a Beatnik crazy with delight.

Later, and at long last, we set out for Hong Kong. The "old sailors" had told us many times what a fabulous place it was, and the visit proved them right. There was something for everyone : the "tattooed wonders" among us collected new and exciting proof of their wanderings; the "rabbiteers" came back nightly loaded with new "bargains"; and the popular beverage changed to San Miguel. Once more, due to the hard work of the Island Electrical boys, we were "all lit up", including fairy lights and illuminated fountains to add further attraction to the Official Reception. It was a gaily exhausting eight days, and many P.O.S.B. shrank under the onslaught of heavy withdrawals to finance the hectic runs ashore.

Operation "Cross-tie", and during the subsequent week-end in Subic Bay Anglo-American relations were cemented in no uncertain manner. Many "Happy Hours" were spent at the "Dollar Steak Nights", and after one such evening one member was heard to say, "The food was good, the booze was better."

Singapore, then a short stay alongside at Mombasa gave us a chance to renew old acquaintances and to take careful note that trade was still brisk at the Rex and Star before setting out for Aden and Suez.

Passage through the Canal was uneventful, and thank goodness all our elaborate precautions to safeguard electrical supplies were unnecessary. Instead we were left in peace to watch the Gully Gully men and to haggle with westernised Oriental gentlemen over the cost of their camel saddles and leather bags.

Then it was December and with excitement mounting as we headed westward, we passed through a little frolic called "Solinus", on to meet our American allies for exercise "Royal Flush V" and into the teeth of a full-blooded gale.

At this stage it seemed that the wheel had turned full circle, this was where we had come in, it was 1960 all over again! But with this difference, that the commission is nearly over, and there is only a little bit of 1962 to see through before we pay off. The whole department feel that they can do that and still keep their promise to find a laugh in every day.

The Shipwright Department



Apart from the stalwarts who remained from the last commission, the first introduction to the ship was in "D" Lock during a refit. The first wave joined in March 1960 and the remainder in June. By Commissioning Day everyone had a fair idea of the task ahead with a Staff which had been reduced by 25 per cent. An early job entailed cutting and laying some 72,000 sq. ft. of hardboard to protect the deck linoleum. The saving in wear and tear made the cost and effort worthwhile.

Our activities have been widespread and not confined to any one particular section or community of the ship. All parts of ship have been our parts of ship—stem to stern, keel to truck. Defects have been completed at a rate of between 250 to 300 a month—some large, some small and others which have involved alterations and re-construction. However, not once did the ship fail in her task through a dormant job card in the Shipwrights' Office.

In January the department was given its first taste of emergency repairs. The starboard catapult venturi compartment developed a split in the plating and threatened to flood the Flour Store and Bale Room. This

was shortly followed by a similar defect to the port compartment. First aid leak stopping and shoring did the trick and this withstood the test of time until permanent repairs could be undertaken during the docking at Singapore some four months later.

To add to our problems, the cable lockers started to flood and continued to do so in fair and foul weather—in harbour and at sea. Recordings of the rate of flood produced some colourful graphs, but due to the cable and the ship side lining, it was impossible to determine the extent of the damage or stem the flow. Frequent pumping kept things in hand until the docking when three large splits were found in the hull plating and repaired.

The introduction of Chinese tailors, cobblers and laundrymen presented more work. A vast amount of shelving, benches, racks and cupboards was needed before they could perform. It is said that the Shipwright Officer became one of the smartest, best dressed, best shod members of the ship.

Crossing the line ceremony involved the usual preparation of platform, canvas swimming baths and ducking chairs. Rigging for dances, cocktail parties, children's parties, boxing contests, stage presentations and the