



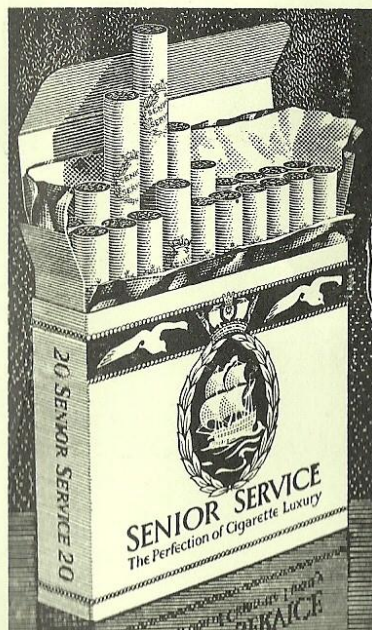
**The Torpedo and
Anti-Submarine Instructors
Association 1955**

Number 13 Journal

The Official Journal of the Association founded in 1955
Headquarters — H.M.S. VERNON — Portsmouth

DECEMBER 1958

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TORPEDO AND ANTI-SUBMARINE INSTRUCTORS
ASSOCIATION, (1955)



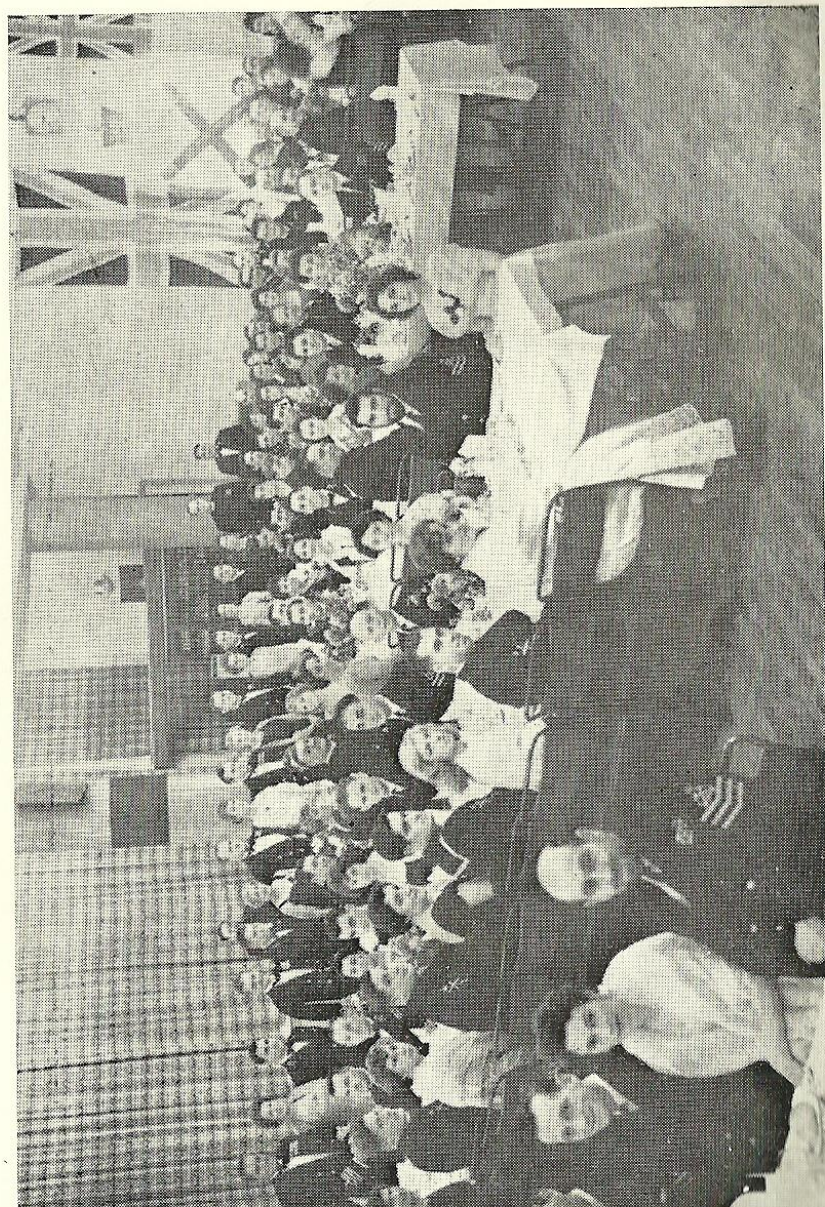
First Patron of the Association
Rear-Admiral N. A. Copeman, D.S.C.

Patrons of the Association
Captain E. A. Blundell, O.B.E., Royal Navy
The Captain of H.M.S. "Vernon"
Captain G. B. Pound, D.S.C., Royal Navy
The Captain of H.M.S. "Osprey"



COMMITTEE

Chairman	C.P.O. A. Fraser
Vice-Chairman	C.P.O. M. Thomson
Secretary	P.O. J. Seamons
Treasurer	C.P.O. T. Wilson
Committee	C.P.O. J. H. Riley
Committee	P.O. L. Wood



T.A.S.I.'s 2nd Annual Dinner. 28th November, Royal Sailors Home Club

Chairmans Letter

Dear Members,

Once more I have the honour to report that all is well with the Association as we near the close of our third financial year and the accounts are handed over to our auditors. On 31st December, 1956 the funds stood at £27 13s. 8d., on the same date last year they had risen to £183 6s. 5d. and this year the Committee forecast a capital gain of approximately £300 over the year. Our thanks are due to C.P.O. Wilson our retiring Honorary Treasurer for the exemplary way he has kept his accounts and advised the Committee.

By the time this letter is printed the Second Annual Dinner and Ball will have been held and will again been a success I hope. May the Committee and myself extend our thanks to all who attended and in other ways assisted towards its success.

The Association Employment Bureau is running smoothly and successfully and is proving a boon to all who use its services. We have no dissatisfied applicants, in fact one firm asked for nineteen men and we could supply three only.

The new year will soon be upon us and with it the Annual General Meeting with its consequent election of officials and changes to the rules. This Committee feels that it has fulfilled its aims of building up membership, placing the Association on a firm financial footing and publicising the Association by means of this Journal. It will therefore be necessary to elect a new Committee almost complete and volunteers are required for this. Most of this Committee will be around to give advice or assistance when needed but we must have new blood in the 1959 Committee.

Some minor changes to the rules may be necessary and any proposals together with the names of the proposer and seconder should be forwarded to the Association Office by 1st February, 1959. It is proposed that the position of Editor of the Journal be separated from the duties of Hon. Secretary and the Editor will be of Committee status. This has become necessary if the Journal is to expand and grow into something better in the future. "To stand still is to decay" That is the motto of this present Committee and it could serve other Committees in good stead.

In closing this report may I on behalf of all here in Vernon wish you a Very Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year. We further hope that those members who are separated from their families this Christmas will be reunited before next Christmas.

A. Fraser, C.P.O.,
Chairman.

Vice Chairmans Letter

Dear Members,

At the moment of going to press we, your Committee, are preparing slowly but surely for the greatest Annual event of the Association, the Dinner and Ball. However by the time you have read this anything I may say now will be history to most of you. We are hoping to include in this issue as a supplement, an account of the occasion. So far it promises to be a very glittering affair and I hope that all those members who can are taking the opportunity of attending.

The results of our Christmas draw which was taken on the 14th November in Vernon will also be published with a full list of winning numbers and names.

Looking back over the year we don't appear to have had a great many social occasions. I'm certain this can be remedied in the coming year, but, we need each and everyones co-operation. It's a simple matter to arrange an evening out at a club, stag or mixed, but its disappointing to the club and Committee if, after displaying a notice for a couple of weeks we find six names down to go — five Committee members and the sixth who was not a member of the Association! There is nothing to stop us having a social evening once a month, there are lots of clubs in the Portsmouth area who would be only too willing to entertain us and our ladies. With all the national newspapers promising us a fabulous pay increase during the coming year the least we can do is show our willingness to spend it! Maybe these outings to clubs don't appeal to many members — well, if you have any suggestions for a social evening which you think would go down well pass them to us. Any suggested trip to Hamburg or Paris is OUT, we don't get that much pay increase!

Seasonal Greetings to all and remember there are FOUR Seasons in the year. It would be nice to have some Christmas spirit in Spring, Summer and Autumn as well.

M. Thomson, C.P.O.
Vice Chairman.

Secretariat Review, 1958

Once again we are at the end of yet another year, and as such another milestone in the history of the Association.

One might be forgiven if after so many things have happened in such a short time, if one elected to "Take it Easy". Happily I am glad to say this just cannot be done by your humble servant or your Committee. It is with the Association always uppermost in our minds that these milestones have been reached as quickly, and passed at speed, always looking towards our aim of "That first Thousand".

As most of you know, my main aim in life up in the office is to keep you all happy and contented with your many and varied queries, coupled with the always increasing Fund Raising and Employment. May I add at this point that answering letters is the least of my worries. They never seem to come in enough bulk for me to ever get behind for very long. So it is up to you all now to prove how wrong I can be!!

Since the year started, for us at the A.G.M. in February, there have been many ideas and requests suggested to the Committee. Some of these have been acted upon at once. Others, owing to the fact that they alter the rules, are on the Agenda for the next A.G.M. which we hope will be held in Vernon on 22nd February next year. If there are any more items for the Agenda please let me have them by January 31st. The block voting system will once again be used.

From March 1st we have had 472 letters from all sources. This includes members, advertisers, printers and employers. We, in this time have posted 603 letters and parcels. Quite the majority of these have been relating to Fund Raising, but this number does not include 1125 Journals to all parts of the world. This will help members to appreciate our postal bill when they see it displayed next year. It is no small item in the Annual Expenditure of the Association.

So many things have happened during this year that it makes ones head whirl to remember them all. But I think they have been accounted for and reported on at the end of each quarter. It is only natural that events are dimmed by the passing of time, but there are some that will never be forgotten as long as there are T.A.S.I's in the Royal Navy, or should I say while the present members are alive.

It is worth while recording at this point that during the whole of the year the Committee have worked in close harmony. There have been many different points of view, but things have always worked out well, and the onward march maintained.

It has come to the point these days when the Hon Treasurer has been coming to me and moaning about the number of trouser pockets

hearing as mine are in the same state. But this is a good thing as far as we are both concerned, and to your benefit as a whole eventually. As I write this Hon. Treasurer is in the office and he wishes me to add that his is with keys and my own with loose change.

The Journal, well, all I can say is "Thank You" to all who have so nobly contributed to its success. They are only a few in number unfortunately. But it has been up to date and, so I have been told, well worth while the time and money spent on its publication. From me must go a vote of thanks to our printers who have managed to show a smiling face in spite of all the obstacles I put in their way. How they manage it is beyond my powers of understanding.

From the next edition you will have a separate Editor, I can only hope that you will continue to support him as you have done me.

Many new faces have put in an appearance these last few months, and many have vanished. Most of those who have departed are only temporary absences, but to those who have forsaken the R.N. for the ever present "Armchair and Fireside" we wish them the very best of luck and good hunting. To the one who went and returned so quickly—well—it saved us a tankard.

I suppose no review is complete without a 'moan'. So may I insert my little 'Private bleat' before you get too tired reading this screed. Will members changing their address either ship or private please notify the office. Your Journals will never go astray then

By the time that this finds its way into print the Annual Dinner and Ball will be over for yet another year. All we of the Committee hope is that you all enjoyed yourselves as much as last year. A full report will be found in the Stop Press, in the centre of this Journal.

Now just before I come to a close — Yea Gasps of Relief are more than endurable — May I say just a few words regarding the next Committee in February. Since February, 1957 we have risen from an insignificant 'Junior' Association to the top place bar none in the Port. This must be maintained and even advanced to an even more secure footing, so please think carefully who you would like to represent you during the coming year. A good Committee will further everything that has been done in the past; but a bad one can create havoc.

The Christmas raffle proved a success thanks once again to the few of the many. The profit was just over £25. This more than underlines that if all pulled their weight we could go even further.

So in closing may I wish you all, wherever you may be, a Festive Season and all best wishes for 1959.

J. A. Seamons,
Hon. Secretary.

Financial Statement

INCOME				EXPENDITURE			
Cash in Bank 1st Dec.	369	0	1	Adverts, Postage, Printing	11	7	9
Cash in Hand 1st Dec.	20	10	6½	Annual Dinner	159	4	2
Fund Raising & Subs.	20	16	5	Coaches	10	10	0
Total	£410	7	0½	Miscellaneous	2	12	6
				Cash in Bank	226	12	7½
				Total	£410	7	0½

ASSETS				OUTSTANDING DEBTS			
Bonds L.C.I.	207	14	6	Advertisers	20	0	0
Government Bonds	50	0	0	Dinner Subs	8	5	0
Sick Fund	3	0	0	Subscriptions for 1958	26	0	0
Estimated fund raising	50	0	0	Total	£54	5	0
Total	£310	14	6				

Signed. T. Wilson, C.P.O.
Hon. Treasurer.

Signed. T. Wilson, C.P.O.
Hon. Treasurer.

Bon Voyage

The following members have left since we last published the 'Anguish List'. May we wish them a Happy Commission and Safe Return.

P.O. M. Harrison, Cavalier
P.O. J. Mason, Lagos
P.O. E. Kinchin, Battleaxe
P.O. N. Shouls, Chaplet
C.P.O. T. Wilson, Royal Malayan Navy
P.O. N. MacLeod, Tiger
P.O. Stewart, Reserve Fleet, West Hartlepool

Greetings

We welcome the following members from their sojourn away from the fold. May they spend many happy hours in the 'Mother Fold'.

C.P.O. Daniel W.
C.P.O. Grey E.
P.O. Sellar H.
C.P.O. Hayman C.
C.P.O. Davies J.

Also all our brethern who have trickled up from Osprey during the last few months.

New Members

The following have joined the Association since we last went to press, we welcome them to the ranks of the finest Association in the Royal Navy, and hope that they may have a long and happy membership.

246. P.O. J. Adams, Vernon
247. P.O. E. Roe, Vernon
248. P.O. R. Spindloe, Vernon
249. L/Sea. J. Graham, Vernon II
250. P.O. J. Turner, Vernon
251. P.O. W. Andrews, Vernon
252. P.O. N. West, Vernon
253. P.O. D. Dyke, Vernon
254. P.O. M. Caddell, Vernon
255. P.O. M. P. Butler, Vernon

Correspondence

From:— The Captain, H.M.S. Osprey, Portland Dorset.

Dear Chief Petty Officer Fraser,

Thank you very much for your letter and for the invitation of the Committee and Members of the Torpedo Anti-Submarine Instructors Association to become your Patron in place of Captain Mayo. I accept with the very greatest pleasure and consider it a great privilege, particularly as I am not, as you say, a T.A.S. Officer.

I believe the future of Osprey to be as bright as ever and that our ties with Vernon will become stronger than ever.

My wife and I accept with great pleasure your kind invitation to attend the Second Annual Dinner of the Association to be held in the Royal Sailors Home Club, Portsmouth on Friday, 28th November.

Thank you again for inviting me to become one of your Patrons and perhaps you will be kind enough to convey to your Committee and Members how much I appreciate having been asked.

Yours sincerely,
G. B. Pound.

From:— Petty Officer P. R. Fair, H.M.S. Sheffield.

Dear Secretary,

I thank you for the October issue of the magazine, and congratulate all who are responsible for its publication.

Have travelled much since last writing, up the Persian Gulf to Bahrein..... Tidied up H.M.S. Bulwark's prize tow at Muscat and visited Turkey.

Would like to pass an appreciation through the Journal to P.O. MacCombe and his wife for the magnificent way in which they entertained myself and P.O. Brady, Diver 1st Class, while we were at Istanbul. They made us completely at home for the whole five day visit and nothing was too much trouble. Future T.A.S.I's visiting Mac should be wary of the dog.

Our commission is drawing to a close officially January 22nd, 1959. But we are not sure if we are paying off in Chatham or Portsmouth. Am sorry indeed to miss the Ball. But wish every success and hope one and all have a jolly good time as I am sure they will.

Looking forward to the next publication.

Sincerely,
P. R. (Peter) Fair.

Osprey's Report

May I take the opportunity to wish on behalf of Osprey 'A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year' to all T.A.S.I's everywhere.

In the new year when we are all able to retire on the large pension what will the committee do about employment. It will be a waste of time, wont it, or will it.

Most of the Instructors who are due to leave have left us. Some for Vernon and others to ships. P.O. Needs to a mess change into the local squadron, Les Avery to the Jewel at Dartmouth. All the cars going on draft so the chances of a lift over the beach are getting less and less. P.O. Phillips had a chance to hit a dog in his car and did not take the chance, the result is that he has joined up with the walking wounded. After this all dogs in the area are warned that they are to get out of the way of cars and not the cars dodge the dogs.

There are two drafts that will interest a few of the late Ospreys Ball to Collingwood and Fuller to Gillmours ship.

The S. D. Dependents Fund is in the process of being cleared up. I have contacted about fifty of the ex members in this area. There have been several suggestions put forward as to what to do with the money. Apart from the usual cry of 'S T B O' we have the following:—

A plaque on Weymouth front.

Seats in the popular view points on Portland.

Provision of a pavilion on the Osprey sports ground. By the W.O's mess.

Payment of the turf bill for the sports ground.

Trees and shrubs in Walker Crescent and Vern Road.

The R.N.A. have acquired a plot of land from the Admiralty. This is below the U.S. hockey pitch and above the R.C. Church near the square. It has been suggested that the R.N.A. take over the fund to help in the erection of a head quarters on this land. The head quarters to be called 'The Walker Memorial' Hall' or 'The A/S Memorial Hall'.

Also that the R.N.A. take over the furniture and the 'Roll of Honour' to be placed in one room of this hall. Thereby the name of the S.D's will be perpetuated. Also if the room only is called the Walker Memorial Room the same will apply to the name of Captain Walker.

Though the Walker Crescent is so named which of the occupants know why the Crescent is so called.

This brings us to the state of Osprey now. We still have our classes both of them, one Nigerian and one Indian. Lew Dover has the Nigerian and P.O. Merchant, C.P.O. Gray have the Indians.

One day the local squadron could not go to sea. We had all the sea classes in the A.T.H's and the M.A.S.T.U's. This gave us a chance to see how the other half works. Even though the instructor was doing his 'nut' I did not learn any new words. So it seems that the Osprey and the Vernon have the same instructional technique.

It was my honour to have our Hon. Chairman do 'his nut' in the A.T.H. that I was running. We would like to see more of them up here. As we had only three instructors without classes it was a bit of a rush to get things underway.

The 'Useless Eustace' that I was running for the Association has been a loss for the last two weeks. It has now been stopped. We did make a bit of cash for the fund.

C.P.O. Banks has just had a shock, on opening his paper today the headlines said 'Send Monty to Cyprus'.

The Instructors who join the local squadron must not forget that we have the messes in the Osprey.

Cheerio for this Journal.

C.P.O. R. Norley.

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Queer Story

My most unforgettable Christmas Eve occurred during the war. Our escort of two old destroyers a corvette and one trawler were shepherding a 6 knot Arctic convoy 100 miles South of Bear Island on a mean course of due East. An early bombing attack had crippled three merchantmen in the convoy and Murmansk was yet a long way off. At 1600 the Captain informed the ship's company of some grave news. Our covering force of cruisers and destroyers had been ordered 200 miles south to investigate alleged enemy sighting reports by one of our homeward bound convoys. One of our submarines had signalled sighting a large enemy force of at least one heavy cruiser and six modern destroyers steaming due West at high speed towards us. Contact was expected within eight hours and our covering force would not reach us in time. It was a pretty gloomy Christmas Eve, and as we surged through the changing shades of blackness and grey mist, very few below decks slept.

It was a bitterly cold middle watch on the bridge and as we pinged and zigzagged, the wireless Officer Busse indicated an unusual heavy traffic on the air. The convoy entered into a swirling grey mist as our Surgeon Lieutenant arrived on the bridge at about 0100. 'Hello Doc' said No. 1 'everything ready below?' 'As much as it ever will be' replied the Doc with an expressive shrug of his shoulders. 'It should be quite a party' said the Yeoman 'and we've got seats in the stalls'.

The latter end of his remark was interrupted by a shout from one of the Starboard look-outs 'Object bearing Green 160° to 180°, war ships!' All binoculars swiftly swept through the arc.

About six cables away could be dimly seen the bow wave of a destroyer then another and another.

The T.A.S. Officer said 'They're ours'. The Captain who had arrived at the first shout, ordered 'Make the challenge'. Our recognition signal had hardly been made when the nearest destroyer flashed the reply.

'Correct reply, sir' said the Yeoman, and training his telescope began to read the pendant numbers on the destroyers side. They were steaming East on a parallel course to us at high speed. The mist lifted momentarily to reveal more vessels in single line ahead, battle-ships 'Why, there's the Barham, Royal Oak' said No. 1. The Doc chimed in 'There's my old ship H.93 — Hereward and look, there's the Glowworm and Acasta' His voice trailed away. An eerie silence settled over our little group. We looked again intently. The black shapes merged into the mist and were gone. We looked at each other wonderingly. 'There's something peculiar going on' said the Captain 'very peculiar'. He voiced all our thoughts. It was weird. For all the ships we'd seen had been sunk earlier in the war.

A U-boat alarm on the convoys port wing gave us more urgent things to think about as our ship increased speed to investigate.

But the oddest thing of all enabled us to enjoy our Christmas dinners and celebrate a British Naval Victory.

For as history now records, the enemy units heading straight for us on that fatal Christmas Eve abruptly altered course for no apparent reason to the South West at 0100. Increasing speed to 30 knots.

Our own covering force which had been steaming North East at high speed, in a vain effort to intercept suddenly found the unsuspecting enemy units conveniently steaming as it were, right into their arms.

The brilliant action that resulted in the enemy cruiser and several destroyers being sunk and the remainder damaged is now a classic of British Naval History.

But to this very Christmas Day it still leaves unexplained, the mystrey of the ghost fleet or does it?

Carl Hayman,
C.P.O., T.A.S.I.

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PRINTERS TO THE ASSOCIATION

From:— Jock Inglis, Petty Officers Mess, H.M.S. Terror, Singapore.
Dear Fraser,

For quite a long time now I have been contemplating dropping you a news letter but like a good T.I. I have continued to swing it until Monday. However this state of affairs must cease so here goes.

At the moment we are in the process of having a new A.T.H. Type 164/174 built. The building is situated inside the hangar and the structure is nearing completion. Unfortunately I cannot see the installation being completed before my return to U.K. sometime in December this year. However Lt. Peddle (S.D.) (T.A.S.) and myself intend keeping old faithful M.A.S.T.U. 43 going for the use of the Fleet until S.E.E. starts installing the new supplies for the A.T.H.

We also hope soon to add to our weapon section and are waiting rather impatiently for the arrival of a modern type of torpedo and Ground mine. For sometime now we have been accepting Basic U.C. and U.W's from ships and feel that with more modern equipment this could prove beneficial to both the individual and the Branch.

Our latest news from Hong Kong informs us that Lt. Cressland (S.D.) (T.A.S.) has gone home without relief and that the M.A.S.T.U. may be closing down (grapevine says this may not materialise). You may be better informed than our local lower deck lawyer on this subject.

Recently I have been seeing a lot of C.P.O. Walton, P.O. Underwood, P.O. Somerfield but not so much of P.O. Waterfield and P.O. Carberry all T.A.S.I's as they have been putting in a bit of seetime. P.O. Carberry, feeling no doubt he has earned a rest is joining me in Terror beer bar tomorrow. He should be in Terror until December so if anyone in Osprey or Squigly in Defiance should find old Micks B.13 sculling around at least they will know where to send it.

Well Fraz before closing I would like very much to compliment you and your Committee for the good work you are doing for the Association and wish you all the best for the future.

Yours fraternally,
Jock Inglis.

P.S. If you or the Secretary have not already evicted me for back rent don't do so and I will square up when I return to the fold.

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From:— Syd 'G', H.M.S. Trafalgar, at Malta.

Dear Secretary,

Thank you for sending me the Journal for October, 1958, it was indeed interesting, but I feel I must answer Ted 'G' for he, whoever he may be, sounded oh so cynical.

You are right of course, Ted 'G', absolutely, devastatingly right. That is exactly how we think; they are exactly the things we have done and exactly the things we will do.

And when the tot doesn't come up at 11.30? Well now, what do you think we should do? Perhaps sit down on our backsides and look woefully lost? Shall we suck at our teeth (tooth?) and say 'alas, alack-a-day all is lost?'. I think not Ted 'G', because if the Service has taught us that life can be easy, surely it has taught us that it can be damned hard too. Did you not learn to adapt yourself during those awful 1939 - 45 years? Of course you did and so did everyone else. And those that follow after — will they not learn to be adaptable? You know they will. If we have to leave the 'compound' and go forth into the 'jungle' we shall at least have this ability — that we shall be able to meet the jungle dwellers and say, in effect 'I have come among you to live your way — if I succeed it will be by my own effort, and if I fail — I can take my own can back, for in the Service I have learned (I hope) to be a man'.

These are no mock heroics, these words. They set forth, as well as I am able, my own feelings. I have had it easy — very few easier — 27 years service to date — 12½ years Chief's time in — just a decadent plutocrat? But, I know that whatever the jungle has to offer in the way of obstacles I feel that I shall be able to meet them foursquare — whether I shall overcome them is another problem.

Yours sincerely,
Syd 'G' (waiting for tot-time!)

From:— Gordon Baxter, Portland Roads Hotel.

Dear Chief,

I was very pleased to receive this morning the June and October Journal. I don't know who sent them, but I can assure you I am very grateful and would like to receive them regularly. If you will let me know the cost of sub ect., I should certainly like to be a member of the Association. Should any T.A.S.I. be in Portland he is very welcome to call in and have a 'noggin' on me.

I have recently retired from H.M.U.D.E. and taken over this place. Happily to say we are doing exceedingly well on the 'Barbary Coast'. In fact although I say it myself we are becoming the premier Hotel along here.

Hoping to see some of you when you visit Portland

I am yours sincerely,
Gordon Baxter, D.S.M.

From:— Petty Officer D. E. Smith, T.A.S.I. C.M.S. Reserve Fleet,
c/o H.M.S. Sheba, Aden.

Dear Alan,

It almost a week since I slipped away from the school during divisions, my apologies for not saying cheerio; now I am out in the hotter climes wondering what the next move is.

Going back to last Sunday (26th) when I started this mystery tour it was 1315 when I reported to R.T.O. Waterloo, and my first question was 'How many more are going?' Well I was told there would be 21 on this draft. Having received a little more information I was then taken to the R.A.F. Hostel at Hendon to spend the night. On arrival there it was easy to pick out sea going men in civvies and after introducing myself I found a weird collection of bodies all going to Aden and no one having a clue what we were going there for. In the draft there was a chippy, E.R.A., E.A., S.P.O(S), P.O. El, 3 P.O.M.E's, 2 Seamen P.O's one T.A.S.I., 3 Seamen, 3 M(E)'s, 1 L.S.A.(S), 1 E.M and 1 L.R.E.M.

Next morning (Monday) we were transported down to Blackbush Airport and there on the tarmac was a huge Skymaster belonging to Eagle Airways. Remembering the T.A.S.I.'s motto 'The sea shall not have them' I studied this huge monster of the air and noticed she had 4 engines, then when I found out that was the plane that was taking us to a far distant land I got hold of the pilot and asked him if the plane could fly on one engine he said yes so I felt a little safer after we left the soil.

To cut a long story short we arrived at Aden about midday on Tuesday, and to relax we thought. But we were herded into a lorry with wire netting all round it a door that locked at the back, and away we went through the streets of Aden, and the driver being a wog was unable to tell us where he was taking us.

After a few miles we turned into a yard which I now know as the Boom Defence Yard, and on stopping the driver pointed to two C.M.S's at the end of the jetty — our home and journey's end.

Now, it seems that someone spoke out of turn somewhere in the upper circle, and casually mentioned that the R.N. had no minesweepers east of Suez. Those few words started a panic and the first thing that happened was the towing of two C.M.S's from Hythe to Aden, then detail a base staff. Everyone still in a panic and no one thought of accommodation for 'Jack' so we are living on two C.M.S's which have been in reserve and just the skin hood taken off. Another point which was missed is that no officers have yet arrived, so two officers from the base have been appointed to us for the time being.

We are on special victualling allowance so that cuts out our tot, still by the time the next T.A.S.I. comes to relieve me conditions should be much better.

The reserve fleet here at Aden became official at 2359 Monday, 27th October, 1958 and four more C.M.S's are being towed out and are due to arrive shortly.

So here has started another shore base job for T.A.S.I's but at the moment it is un-accompanied. That is the lot for now. Good hunting.

Smudge (D. E. Smith).

From:— P.O. A. Mitchell, 19 Mess, H.M.S. Tenby, c/o G.P.O. London.

Dear Secretary,

Please accept my sincere apologies for taking so long in writing to you, but I have at last got down to it, so better late than never.

There isn't very much I can tell you about the activities of the 5th Frigate Squadron. Torquay (Capt. F.5.) and Scarborough sailed for Malta in February to start our work-up, and we were joined shortly afterwards by Salisbury and Tenby, the remainder of the Squadron.

The Scarborough was not destined to remain with us for long, and in June, was sent off to watch the 'fireworks' at the Christmas Isles, leaving the Squadron strength down to three ships.

In July, just as we were preparing for a nice visit to Marseilles, the flare up in the Eastern Mediterranean started and so, instead of having a few days in the South of France, we found ourselves taking Commando units to Cyprus and Tobruk etc., and there we had to stay. Torquay managed to get a five day visit to Naples and Tenby had four days in Capri later on. The Squadron T.A.S.I. (oddly enough) was in the right ship at the right time and enjoyed both visits. Needless to say, he set all T.A.S. ratings a good example by being ashore every night.

After our visits, the Squadron returned to Cyprus where we resumed that 'favourite pastime' of the Med Fleet, the Cyprus patrol, and at the time of writing, Tenby is now engaged in what we hope is the last patrol of our commission.

As far as T.A.S. is concerned, we have done quite well, having had quite a few Casex's with submarines from Malta, and I have managed to get around the Squadron and get most of our basic rates qualified.

We are due home, via Toulon, Gibraltar and Malaga, on 28th November, when we will all be looking forward to 25 days leave.

Well, I seem to have rambled on for quite a bit, but you can pick out any parts you think interesting enough for the next issue of the Journal.

I guess that's all for now, so in closing, I wish the Association and its members

All the best,
A. Mitchell.

Singapore Incident

Singapore Incident Part 2.

With the departure of Staff Sgts. Ginn and Lockett fresh in the minds of those remaining on the Island, a keener lookout was kept for the next few days. What each one hoped in their hearts was not discussed openly. Only by odd remarks was it obvious that each member was secretly hoping that the evidence around them (such as the casual flights of the Japanese aircraft and sightings of various types of I.J.N. Warships) was not the real situation and that soon the Allied Navies and Airforce would appear and all would be well once more.

It was about this time that a daily dose of Quinine powder was ordered for each man, whether he had signs of Malaria or not. So after prayer service each morning, all ratings mustered at the hut used as the sick bay, and the dose was taken there and then.

It is also worth mentioning that about this time the effect of the rice diet was felt. This was apparent constipation. As rice was being used for the bulk of each meal in lieu of the usual potatoes and bread, its effect on the body was to make a great deal of water, and little or no bulk. Thus, several ratings imagined that because they were paying no visits to the 'Bore Holes' for reasons other than to urinate, they must be constipated! One in particular, the Admirals Coxswain, realised that he had not performed a natural function for over a week, and became a trifle worried. This complaint was passed to the Admiral who gave him a further three days grace. Then as nothing had been 'passed' by that time the Admiral himself performed a minor operation known as 'An Enema' on the Petty Officer. This, when it became known, was well discussed and laughed about in the camp. But it was noticed that few complaints of constipation were made from then on.

Even urinating during the day practically ceased and it became the habit about eleven p.m. every night for nearly all the ratings to emerge from their huts, stand on the verandahs, and empty their bladders into the sand below. Often the streams seemed endless as quantity was well above the normal.

Another scare developed when a young rating by chance threw a small stone at a 'Small Log', which immediately ran past the rating and disappeared into the undergrowth. By the time he had told his story three times, the 'Buzz' went around that there were alligators on the Island. Two days later another reptile was sighted from a window of the hut. The occupants immediately picked up their rifles and fired at it, but with no observed results. From their more lucid description, however, the reptile was recognised as the 'Iguana'. The average length of those sighted was five feet. It was not, unfortunately, known then, that those reptiles were quite edible and possess very tender steaks, if trouble is taken to skin them and ignore the foul smell.

However as time progressed the odd sighting of these became a regular thing: and was ignored.

On another occasion a snake was seen sleeping in the lime bush outside the hut occupied by the Admiral. When the Admiral heard the commotion and saw the cause he brought out his sports gun, and let fly with both barrels. The Python, originally about three feet six was seen to be in tatters and although sinuating slowly was still apparently asleep. Feeling somewhat braver now, a couple of ratings pushed the snake off the branch to the ground. With a swift stroke of a 'Parang' its head was severed. However the thought of snakes on the Island preyed on most peoples minds. It was almost amusing to note how delicately even the 'Bootnecks' trod when passing down paths through undergrowth.

However such things as these were almost forgotten when, in the seventh week, a native boat was sighted coming in from the direction of Banka. As soon as it was seen that the occupants were natives, everyone who was able crowded to the beach to welcome them.

The natives, who were out on a fishing trip, had heard that the Island was occupied by white people and had enough curiosity to find out what was happening. Whilst the Wing Commander carried out an interrogation of their spokesman, the others were observed to be very interested in the wrecked launch.

The news received from them was that 'Everywhere' had been captured by the Japanese. The Japanese had landed in Australia and America!

The I.J. Navy had sunk a British and American Fleet in the Java Seas! All this gave the party a lot to talk about. Ideas and opinions flew to and fro very rapidly so that their own circumstances were temporarily forgotten.

The natives were asked if they had any fish to sell, but their answer was no! What little they had they wanted for trade on the next large Island being roughly North, 50 miles away.

So on hearing this the Admiral suggested that the Chinese cook 'Charlie' should go with them to shop. When dusk came the boat felt its way out of the channel, and sailed North.

The departure of the boat caused most of the active members on the Island to start speculating on the future. This train of thought resulted in the majority feeling that they would remain on the Island for ever, that is until the war ended.

When this was reported to the Admiral, he ordered that more work be carried out. So a fresh latrine had to be dug. This, as before, was a trench about ten feet by two, and six feet deep. A lattice of banana folds enclosed it, another one sub-divided it, (the Wardroom end being

about four feet long), and the seat was a length of timber supported at either end; some two feet above the mouth of the trench. When the user had finished his 'visit', it was his job to shovel loose sand to cover up the purpose of his visit. This was the safe guard against dysentery. So far no signs of this disease had been noted, quite the contrary in fact.

The digging of the trench occupied six men some four days. The top three feet of earth whilst being of only soft sand was threaded by thousands of gnarled roots from the Palm trees. Because they were so interwoven, it was impossible to dig with a shovel, so the method was to chop the roots with an axe, then lift them out, then scoop the loose sand away. Once the top three feet was clear then digging could commence. The same applied to the digging of graves. So far twelve had been dug and filled in. The three survivors of the 'Aquarium' had succumbed to the Malaria and Beri-Beri, and had been buried in the grove. When the first four graves had been dug, the deceased had been given a full six feet depth. But by this time the depth of the graves had been to between three and four feet, the change being necessitated by the physical state of the surviving men, the daily muster now showed about fifty percent fit for work. The remainder were either down with Malaria or Beri-Beri or just recovering. Thus the heavy work was hard on those who were considered fit for duty.

Early in the ninth week 'Charlie' returned from his 'Shopping Jolly'. He had managed to obtain some fish, a little pork and several dozen turtle eggs. The latter being somewhat new to the 'Navy Types', were called by rude names. Being about as big as a ping pong ball, equally round, they had a small round and very hard centre, no matter how carefully they were boiled. Hence the name 'Balls'!!

Charlie had a certain amount of news this being in the main, that Sincap was not fully occupied by the I.J.A. Forces and that a large launch was available to anyone with the money.

The result of this news was increased activity on the boat repair. (Referred to in first instalment). A boat party was set up and at the first serious meeting a plan of action was drawn up. The main point was owing to the large gaps in the planking, a false cover would have to be provided as follows; first a coat of lead paint all round the hull to a height of a foot above the expected waterline; then a coverage of canvas all round, tacked as much as possible; then a couple of coats of paints; and then all the petrol tins to be cut open, the metal flattened and tacked on. Finally a coat of paint. Inboard, the sails of the launch's dinghy to be adapted to fit the old mast that had been fouled. The new difficulty of finding a strong enough 'Tack Tackle' was overcome by the Admirals coxswain stopping two blocks. The plan having been made, work progressed rapidly or slowly dependant on the men available each day.

One day the Admirals coxswain was ordered to take the dinghy and go out for twenty four hours fishing. With one of the soldiers for company, these two left at sunset. They rowed some four miles from the Island and rigged their lines. Rowing slowly they made their way round the Island. During the night the episode was not too bad, though disappointment was profound when after several hours no fish had taken the bait. When the sun came up they drifted for an hour whilst they had breakfast, biscuit (ship) and bananas. By noon the heat and glare of the sun gave them headaches. But they could not return until six o'clock. Throughout the afternoon they toiled, heading into what little breeze there was to give relief from the heat. And so at 1800 they so very wearily pulled round into the channel and back to the Kampong. No Fish!!! No sympathy was forthcoming — only annoyance.

By the eleventh week several more had succumbed to the Malaria. The grave digging was now very hard indeed, to dig only three feet took a whole day.

The Admiral, up until now had been very fit and cheerful. Most of his days he had spent writing a report on his activities in his position as Rear Admiral Malaya, and his subsequent evacuation. Once each day he walked to the western beach and partook of a short swim. It was now that he was reported to be lying in bed sick. The following evening at dusk S/Lt. Poole found the coxswain on the beach and asked him to look at the Admiral. Gathering knowledge of what to expect from the officers manner the Petty Officer went to the Admirals hut, and crossing to the bed where Admiral Spooner lay, the P.O. felt for the pulse. There wasn't one. Still not believing this evidence the P.O. then held a small mirror close to the Admirals lips. There was no misting at all. Gently drawing the blankets over the Admirals head he now had a feeling of panic. What would happen now? The Wing Commander ill most of the time, S/Lt Poole suffering from sun blindness and migraine. But first things first. A working party was detailed and worked through until dawn to scoop a shallow grave. And at about eight o'clock the Admiral was buried.

Two days later the Wing Commander mustered all available hands and informed them that as soon as the boat was ready it would be launched, and an effort would be made to reach Sincap and there obtain a motor launch, return to the Island, pick up stores and the remainder of the party and sail for Australia.

This seemed to cheer up most of the ratings and even the sick seemed to take more interest in what was going on.

Food was getting short, so a further cut was made to prolong the supply. At the end of the eleventh week the boat was ready for launching. It was with some dismay that the party trying to launch the boat found it was immovable. The next day a more determined effort was

made with no avail. The boat was resting in soft sand and the men had not the strength to shift the boat an inch. Two days later when despair was at its deepest, a native boat containing four Javanese arrived. They appeared highly amused at the appearance of the repaired boat and laughed outright at the tale of woe of the attempted launching. Five minutes later they literally ran up the Palm trees and chopped off a couple of dozen fronds. With the assistance of the boat party they dug channels under the keel and pushed through several of the fronds. The remainder they laid in front of the boat making a path down the beach to the sea. They fastened two lines to the bows, and instructed all the others to heave. At first it was hard to move the boat, but when it moved onto the fronds laid in front, it ran easily and quickly down the beach and into the water, where it rode easily. S/Lt. Poole clambered out to it and inspected the inside for leaks. After half an hour it was found that the meereest trickle was to be seen. Bailing once a day would easily cope with the amount.

So feeling jubilant! The boat party celebrated by drinking coconut milk!!!

The decision was now made that at dusk tomorrow the escape party would leave. This party was to be kept to a minimum, one reason was that the boat would be better not loaded too heavily, the other that the numbers remaining contained more sick than fit. The fit had to look after the sick. So next morning the Wing Commander announced that the party to sail that night would comprise himself (as interpreter) S/Lt. Poole as navigator, Captain Stonier, Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders, L/Motor Mech. Johncock and two Able Seamen.

This meant that remaining on the Island would be A/Temp Bosn. Richardson, R.N. in charge of seventeen ratings. At this time the graves numbered nineteen (four Officers and fifteen other ranks).

At dusk that evening the boat departed, sailing Northwards. Soon it was lost to sight and so the remaining men gathered at the cook house for supper. The wind showed signs of increasing and by midnight a storm was raging and the thoughts of the men lying in their beds went out to those men who had sailed six hours ago. Would the boat stand up to the high winds and seas?

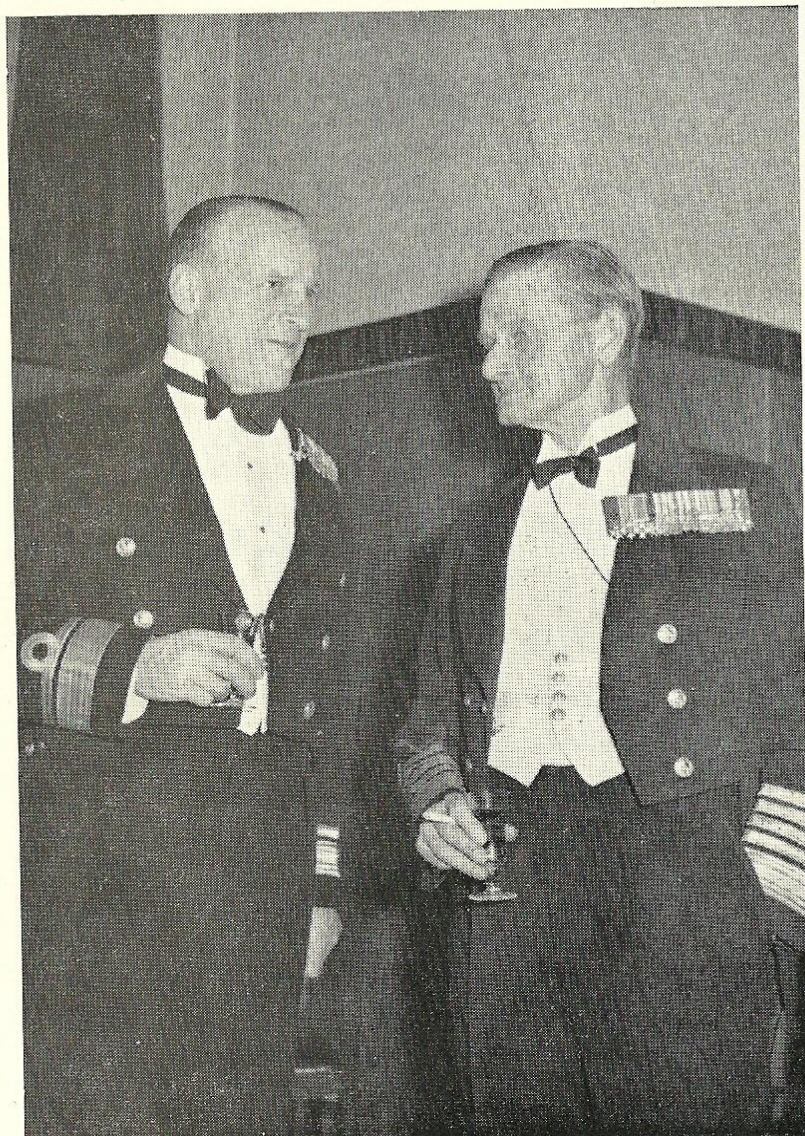
Life was now at a standstill. Only seven men were fit for duties the following morning. It was all they could do to chop wood, fetch water and tend the sick. There was foraging to do in the Banana and Potato Plantation, this was hard because by now most of the crops had been reduced to a mere nothing. To find one sweet potato meant turning the old earth in the hope that a potato might have been missed previously.

At supper that night it was realised that 'Charlie' the Chinese was missing. It was on reflection realised that he had not been seen for

STOP PRESS

ANNUAL DINNER AND SPEECHES

28th NOVEMBER, 1958.



STOP PRESS

The Second Annual Dinner and Ball

This occasion was patronised by more guests and members than was the function held last year, and the Committee had to restrict the numbers arriving for the Ball only. A few last minute cancellations were received and we were sorry to hear that Mr. Coop was prevented from attending due to his wife's serious illness, also that Lieutenant Beale, R.N., Retd. was prevented for a like reason. The best wishes of all go to these ladies and we hope that they are well soon.

By seven fifteen, the guests were arriving and soon the Guests of Honour, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Algernon and Lady Willis, arrived in company with our First Patron, Rear Admiral Copeman, Fourth Sea Lord and Mrs. Copeman. Captain and Mrs. Blundell and Captain and Mrs. Pound arrived at the same time and soon all senior officers and their ladies were being escorted to the Club Board Room for a pre-dinner sherry. Commander and Mrs. Sims and Lieutenant-Commander and Mrs. Bright represented the Training Staff of Vernon whilst Lieutenant-Commander and Mrs. Coxwell represented the bond between the Association and the wardroom. Our own Padre, the Rev. Watson completed the company of wardroom guests and soon the bulk of the Committee were hard at work endeavouring to make the distinguished guests feel at home. C.P.O. and Mrs. Riley, assisted by Petty Officer and Mrs. Neads played host to representatives of the R.N. El. Association, the R.N. and R.M. G.I.'s Association and the Divers and their ladies, whilst C.P.O. Wilson, our Hon. Treasurer and his partner took the five R.C.N. T.A.S.I.'s under their wing.

Had the Committee possessed any doubts of the ability of the staff of the Royal Sailor's Home Club to handle a function of this magnitude these doubts were dispelled on entering the banqueting hall and the full effect of the table layout and decorations were seen. Great credit is due to the Chef of the Club, T. W. Smith, who had personally supervised the decoration and floral arrangement of the tables. Soon all guests were in position at the tables due to the noble efforts of Mr. Alexander, our Major Domo and Toastmaster for the evening, and the top table guests came into the hall and joined the company.

Grace was said by the Rev. Watson and the dinner commenced on time at seven thirty. The Chef excelled himself and an excellent dinner was enjoyed by all and a generous supply of wine had been decanted

banquet and soon the Port was being served for the Toasts. The Loyal Toast was proposed and drunk, the coffee was served and cigarettes passed and thus we settled back to listen to the after dinner speeches, details of which are in this Journal for your perusal.

On completion of the speeches the senior officers and their ladies were escorted to the board room for a reception at which they were introduced to all the official guests of the Association, Lady Willis carrying a magnificent bouquet presented to her by Leading Seaman Graham, T.A.S.I. on behalf of the Association. Once the hall had been cleared for the Ball to follow, the company moved into the hall for the dancing to follow. The Admiral of the Fleet insisted on meeting as many guests as possible with an accent on old-ships and ex Torpedo Gunner's Mates whilst the Fourth Sea Lord also sought out familiar faces. All too soon the staff car of the Admiral of the Fleet and Lady Willis was brought to the door, and the guests rose to their feet and applauded their guests of honour as they left the hall. The time was eleven twenty p.m. and the Guests of Honour were visibly moved at the warmth of the welcome they had been given by all present and, although it was over twenty three years since they had been the Captain and his Lady of H.M.S. Vernon, the modern Vernonites had not forgotten them or their contribution to the Vernon tradition, and considered it a great honour to dine and wine this very distinguished officer and his lady on this occasion.

Soon after the departure of the guests of honour, Rear Admiral and Mrs. Copeman began to take their leave along with our Captain and Mrs. Blundell and Captain of Osprey and Mrs. Pound. From the letters of appreciation received from these officers it is evident that they enjoyed themselves immensely. It was a great privilege to meet our new Patron, Captain Pound, who, with Mrs. Pound, had motored from Portland to be with us and had to motor back that same night. Rear Admiral and Mrs. Copeman had journeyed from Admiralty to be with us and to Captain and Mrs. Blundell had fallen the task of entertaining all the senior officers and their ladies before and in some cases after the function. The Association owe a dept of gratitude to these officers and their ladies for the support they so willingly gave and the inconvenience and travel discomfort they so willingly undertook to be with us. On the other hand, I am sure that all at the dinner played their part by ensuring that all our official guests were made to feel genuinely welcome and were part of the Vernon family.

Meantime the ball continued on its happy way and it was evident that all were enjoying themselves, the lovely gowns of the ladies making brilliant splashes of colour around the hall. Prize dances were held and won by C.P.O. and Mrs. Pink who were our best statues,

Mr. and Mrs. Merry who lasted the elimination dance and Petty Officer and Mrs. Russet who took honours in the Spot Waltz. Midnight passed all too soon and with it the bar and the dancing continued on until one a.m. The ball ended in a cascade of balloons and the grand sight of thousands of coloured streamers soaring across the dance hall. Auld Lang Syne, followed by the Queen, terminated the evening and soon happy guests and members were leaving by car or by the buses laid on for their convenience.

All in all, it was a successful and pleasant evening enjoyed by all and well worth the vast amount of work which the organisation of this function had entailed. Our thanks are due to the Manager, Chef and Staff of the Royal Sailor's Home Club for their co-operation and hard work.

All that remains to be said now is, see you all again next year, God and Naval Drafting willing.

Speech of Rear Admiral N. A. Copeman, D.S.C.

Admiral of the Fleet Sir Algernon Willis, Lady Willis, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Vice Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is with great pleasure that I find myself here this evening amongst such a distinguished company, and may I add that my wife and I have been looking forward to this occasion since we received our invitations.

Since I was here last year there have been a great many improvements made in many ways, and it is gratifying to see so many of you under this roof this evening.

It gives me even greater pleasure to welcome on your behalf Admiral of the Fleet Sir Algernon Willis and Lady Willis as your guests of honour.

My first recollection of him was when I joined Vernon when he was your Captain. Upon me presenting myself to him his opening remark was "You have a smudge on your collar Copeman". But although he has always had a very fierce countenance, he has a very different and deep inner interest in everyone he meets. This has made him a well loved character with all.

It is with great pleasure ladies and gentlemen that I give you the toast "The Guests of Honour".

Speech of Sir Algernon Willis, G.C.B., K.B.E., D.S.O., D.L.

Rear Admiral Copeman, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Vice Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I hope that I am able to stand to address you after having partaken of such a scrumptious dinner, at least I think I can, but to be here at all this evening moves both my wife and myself very deeply.

I, for some time have considered myself as having been 'Put out to grass', but I am happy to say my wife is still as active as ever she was in her younger days.

It is now seven years since I last was, if I may say so 'Active', but to be here this evening removes the traces of many years.

I do not think that to resuscitate at this point would come amiss, and so I would like to go back to the years following World War II.

At this time the old Torpedo Branch found themselves with more than they could cope with, and so finding ourselves in the happy position of having 4 Admirals, all Torpedomen, at the Admiralty, we decided to do something about it. So from out of the old Torpedo Branch came the Electrical Branch, and I am happy to see one of their representatives here this evening as your guest.

To further this change we decided to amalgamate the old S.D. Branch and the remainder of the Torpedo Branch and make the new T.A.S. Branch, out of which this Association has now so quickly been formed.

It is therefore more than interesting to me, to see the growth of our 'Brain Child' and to see its rapid advancement. It is always pleasant to see ones ideas go over in a big way.

I have met many old friends here this evening, and during the interval before you commence your Ball, I hope to meet many more.

To have been invited to be your guests this evening makes one realise that one is not always forgotten even if removed from the realm of Active Service, and so before I give you your toast to the Association, may I add that I shall follow its progress with very great interest and hope that this occasion will only be the one of many more.

Ladies and Gentlemen I give you "The T.A.S.I's Association".

Speech of C.P.O. Fraser, Chairman.

Sir Algernon Willis, Lady Willis, Rear Admiral Copeman, Ladies and Gentlemen.

This is the second occasion that I find myself replying to the Association as your Chairman, but next year I hope to be on the other side of the table, with you, listening to the speeches instead of making one myself.

It is a very great honour to us all that Sir Algernon and Lady Willis consented to be with us this evening, more so as he is the Senior Officer of the Torpedo Branch left in the Navy.

We are more than pleased to welcome the members of the Royal Canadian Navy who are able to be with us tonight. It is regrettable that there could not be a representative of the Australian, New Zealand and South African Navies here also to make the family complete.

I feel that I must make a reference tonight regarding the S.D. Remembrance Trust and the Book of Remembrance which is at the moment resident in Osprey. We in Vernon feel that its proper resting place ought to be here, but that will be thought over later.

Before I close, I feel that we in Vernon owe a great debt of gratitude to our Captain who is shortly leaving us, and to Mrs. Blundell who I may say has been the 'Mother of Vernon' during her period of residence within the walls. We shall miss them both when they have departed in February.

I would like to make special reference to our friends and guests of other Associations. We are sorry not to see a member of the P.R.I.'s here, but I understand that they have had to disband.

And so in closing Ladies and Gentlemen I would like you to stand and drink to the Health of Our Ladies and Guests.

Speech of C.P.O. Thomson, Vice Chairman.

Admiral Sir Algernon Willis, Lady Willis, Rear Admiral Copeman, Ladies and Gentlemen.

When I entered this hall this evening I had no idea that I was going to be called upon to propose this toast, let alone speak, and so in this position I would like to make it the shortest ever and ask you to Drink the Health of Absent Members.

From:— Rear Admiral Copeman, Fourth Sea Lord.

Dear Chief Petty Officer Fraser,

I would be grateful if you would inform your Committee how very much my wife and I enjoyed the T.A.S.I. Annual Dinner and Ball last Friday.

If you remember my wife was not well last year and so it was certain that we would enjoy this year's function more, excellent though I thought the arrangements were last year; but, in fact, I thought this year was a tremendous success and that many improvements had been made, and so far as I could see all those present were enjoying themselves as much as we were, which was very much indeed. May I finally say what an excellent speech I thought you made.

With best wishes to you, your Committee and the whole Association for a Happy Christmas and a successful year in 1959.

Yours sincerely,

Nicholas Copeman.

From:— Captain E. A. Blundell, O.B.E., Royal Navy.

Dear Chief Petty Officer Fraser,

I am writing to thank you and the members of the T.A.S.I. Association very much indeed for the very pleasant evening at the Annual Dinner and Ball. It was a great privilege to attend and my wife and I enjoyed it immensely.

I would like to congratulate you on the first class arrangements made for the evening and also to thank you for a very fine dinner.

It was a great pleasure to me to see the dinner so well attended and there is no doubt that the T.A.S.I. Association has developed from strength to strength under your Chairmanship. I wish the Association every success in the future.

Again, many thanks.

Yours sincerely,

Ted Blundell.

From:— Lieutenant Commander E. C. F. Coxwell.

Dear Chief Petty Officer Fraser,

My wife joins me in thanking you, your Committee, and the members of the Association for the wonderful evening you gave us all on Friday last.

I thought the organisation was excellent, particularly as so many of the Committee responsible for parts of that organisation were absent at sea with their classes, or at Osprey, until the actual day of the Dinner.

It is also very pleasing to note that this annual function is likely to become more and more of a re-union, and it was good to see so many prosperous looking ex-T.A.S.I.'s, T.I.'s and S.D.'s present. It is obvious that they are maintaining their high standards in the great outside world, and that these standards are obviously appreciated by the employers.

Yours sincerely,

E. C. F. Coxwell



Informal glimpse of Captain Pound, D.S.C., R.N., our new Patron in Board Room.



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two days, so finally it was assumed that he had left with the natives after the launching of the boat.

Three days later another death was reported and again the few fit men had the arduous task of digging a grave. This took longer than it seemed and when it was ready, the P.O. remaining wrapped the body in blankets and tied them round. The six men available found it almost beyond their strength to lift the mat on which the body lay. They had to rest three times in the walk of four hundred yards to the grave. Eventually the service was over and the cross erected and marked.

Sitting around in the evening the few men wondered who would be the next!

One Marine was known to be suffering from chronic Beri-Beri, his legs were the same thickness as his thighs the whole way down. Knowledge of his complaint was nil. No one had heard of it, or recognised it when seen. So of course in their ignorance, they could not treat it.

It was therefore understandable that at the beginning of the fourteenth week little interest was shown or felt in any way by anyone on the Island. Hopes that the boat may have reached friendly shores (locally) had been deflated and despair was evident all round.

There was surprise then, when, on the third day of the fourteenth week, the sound of a boats engines were heard, keeping a good lookout, the party sighted a launch rounding the head of the Island. Cheers rang out until suddenly they became aware of the Rising Sun ensign flying from the stern of the launch.

What to do now was the question. Small Arms were plentiful, could the survivors overcome the men on the launch if they landed? Could the launch signal for help? The sound of aircraft in the distance made up the mind of the Bosun quickly. So, the order was made to hide all Arms in the bush, remove all bolts and hide them separately. Now that a crisis was at hand everyone seemed to have gained strength and moved quickly.

The launch was seen to anchor inshore some half a mile from the edge of the beach. Nothing happened for a long drawn out half an hour! Then small khaki dressed figures were seen to be clambering into the launched dinghy and making their way towards the beach. Half way to shore four of the soldiers left the dinghy and fanning out widely waded ashore. They advanced towards the huts where the survivors were clustered together. Whilst three of the Japanese pointed their rifles at the British the fourth could be heard shouting to the occupants of the dinghy which was still in the same spot, where the soldiers had clambered out to wade ashore. It then proceeded to head for the beach. When it beached the first of the occupants to jump ashore was seen to be wearing a sword and only from this was it presumed that he was an officer. Closely following him were the other

three occupants of the boat. These were two more soldiers and one civilian. As the officer approached the party, the Bosun started forward to meet him but was brought up sharply by the unmistakable guesture of a rifle held by one of the I.J.A. soldiers, although the command uttered at the same time was unintelligible. Eventually the Japanese officer stopped some three feet from the Bosun and announced in broken English 'You are prisoners of war!! The civilian now came forward and in good English said he was an interpreter for the Japanese. He then said that the officer wanted to know how many men were on the Island. As the Bosun started to answer he was slapped hard across the face by the Japanese officer. Most of the party growled and started forward but were checked instantly by the rifles pointed at them by the soldiers. The Japanese officer now screamed at all the British. The interpreter told the Bosun and his party that the Japanese officer said 'You salute all Japanese when each time you speak'. Glowering round at everyone, the Japanese officer ordered that all the party should now bow to him. The Bosun realising that no good would come from any antagonism shown by his men, told the party to do as they were told. The Japanese officer then pacified a little, and proceeded to tell the Bosun, via the interpreter, that the Bosun would be held responsible for his parties actions.

The party was given five minutes to collect their belongings and muster again on the beach.

They took ten minutes and as soon as they laid their cases on the sand, the Japanese soldiers opened them and emptied their contents. Rifling through the contents the soldiers searched for guns, cameras and any English monies. One rating received a beating when he was found to have some bullets in a package. Eventually the officer was satisfied and ordered the men to repack. When this was done, the soldiers marched the party down to the beach. Within one hour all were embarked upon the launch.

The survivors found themselves herded down into the fore peak, where, when they sorted themselves out, they found that they had just enough room to sit on their suitcases against the bulkhead. Laid down in the middle was one Marine who had the largely swollen legs. (Beriberi). He had progressively become worse over the last week, and by now found it an effort to do anything.

He had been well looked after by a fellow Marine. The prisoners were guarded by a monkey faced Japanese soldier who didn't seem very happy at his job. He appeared more scared than the guarded men. He was apprehensive at every move made by them. The prisoners heard the boat get under way and from the shadow cast by the sun estimated they were heading North. A long day passed and as no food had appeared the P.O. who was more or less assumed to be respon-

sible for the men, (it should be mentioned that the Bosun was kept on deck with the Jap officer) asked the guard if food was going to be sent. This was done by classic miming, guestures made to the mouth with then a rub of the tummy. All this highly amused the prisoners and their mirth so upset the guard that he unwittingly gave a classic mime of an angry disconcerted baboon. This uproar caused the rapid appearance of more guards, and the interpreter. When he heard the explanation he in turn explained to the officer who had now appeared. The officer showed no sign of amusement but immediately slapped the guard who was then relieved of his post. Food was promised in the typical Jap manner, soon, soon! Eventually at dusk a large ball of rice and a bucket of water was brought by a Malay. As the guard seemed relaxed the P.O. asked, if the Malay knew where they were going. To Sidcaip for some more prisoners and then to Singapore was the reply. The prisoners soon devoured the rice ball and as it was the only food they had eaten that day were still hungry.

After dark the launch was brought alongside some jetty. The prisoners listened to the babble of tongues on the outside, wondering what was going on. Then unmistakably came the sound of the Wing Commanders voice. A little while later the L/M/Mech and the two A.B's who had sailed with the Wing Commander were pushed into the peak. Immediately everyone wanted to know what had happened.

It appeared that when their boat sailed at dusk all went well until about 2300, when the storm caught up with them. The seas grew rough until the boat began to ship water, and so the officers decided to take shelter at the next Island which they knew to be on their starboard bow. With this intention they closed the island and eventually dropped anchor. But it appeared they were still to windward and therefore dragged until they hit a submerged rock, and the withered old timbers took very little time to disintegrate.

The three officers and three ratings were lucky to get ashore which they successfully did. The next day, they were sighted by a Malay fisherman who took them on to Sidcaip Island, where they were arrested and thrown into the local prison. And now they were together again.

The launch sailed at night and at 1800 the next day arrived at Singapore. Landing at Keppel Harbour the party were shoved into a lorry and driven to the Headquarters of the Kempei.

This meant little or nothing to the party who had no idea that the Kempei were in fact the Japanese equivalent of the Gestapo. On their arrival they were shown up a long flight of stairs to a large open room that had once been a General Office, perhaps holding a dozen tables and filing cabinets. As they reached the room they saw that it was occupied by some three or four dozen Chinese. The Chinese were of all ages from sixteen to an apparent ninety. Two or three of the

elders were wizened old men, with straggley beards and few or no teeth. Their age was indeterminate.

Sat at a table in a commanding position over the room was a Kempei guard. When the guard escorting the party told the room guard that the party were joining, the reaction of the guard was somewhat violent, and shocking. Seizing a cane he commenced bellowing and gesticulating with his cane, to crowd the Chinese over to the left hand side of the room, some of the Chinese were slow to move, the guard strode over and belaboured them with his cane. It was hard to understand how no broken bones resulted. When he was satisfied with the arrangements the British were told to enter and sit on the tiled floor. The sick Marine was laid down on two blankets, he was now very weak and disinterested in all around him. Food was brought up by the Chinese boys and devoured instantly. The Wing Commander stayed over in the corner of the room by himself, the S/Lt., Captain and Bosun mixed in amongst the men. Eventually an attempt was made to demand a doctor for the Marine, which resulted in a Sojo (Sergeant) being brought who heard the demand and went away. A doctor (Japanese) then arrived with the two other officers and just stood and looked at the sick man. They appeared curious at the large swollen legs and were very soon enjoying themselves poking their fingers deep into the swollen flesh, laughing when the indentations remained for some time, in fact five to ten minutes.

Finally they departed laughing and joking. Later a camp bed was brought and the sick man placed on it. The remainder spent an uncomfortable night 'On the Tiles', without the proverbial pleasures!

Permission was given in the morning for two at a time to go to a small water closet at the other end of the room. At eight o'clock the entire guard came up through the room and on to the roof above. There every day at 0800 and 1800 they bowed to the sun and saluted their Emperor. On the first day when they came down some of the senior N.C.O's stopped to look at the sick man and poked their fingers into his flesh. The duty Sojo seeing this got angry and sent them away. The prisoners thought this a kind act, but were informed by a Chinese that the Sergeant had rebuked the others for making contact with prisoners due for interrogation.

The interrogation started that day.

First the Officers went down and were away for several hours. The remainder were apprehensive until they returned, when a sigh of relief was audible when it was noted that the officers had not been beaten up. Some of the Chinese had shown many signs of this and had told the party that they feared the interrogation.

The P.O. went the next day and his story is that he was taken to a small room at 1000. There at a table sat a Toshi, (Capt. I.J.A.), one

Chinese girl, and one Malayan male. The system was that the Toshi spoke direct to the prisoner in Japanese, the Chinese girl then interpreted this in Malayan and the Malayan interpreted in English to the prisoner. When the prisoner answered he had to look direct at the at the Japanese but the interpreters gave the answer back in the reverse to the former method. The prisoner had to sit down as he was not allowed to look down at the Toshi. The questions were brief on service matters, namely; rank, number, name, length of service, names of ships served, (to this no answer was given) and to the prisoners surprise no intimidation was presented. Then began the relevant questions. Where is your home, have you a father, mother, sister, etc. What does your father do? What does he earn? Have you trees in your road? What school did you go to? And so on, nothing that seemed to make sense. This went on and on for six hours during this time prisoners sat thirsty observing Toshi drinking weak tea and nibbling biscuits. At the end he was given a drink of water and told to go. When he walked to the door he was told to come back and as he reached the table the Toshi dealt him two stinging blows about the head. He was informed that he should bow when leaving exalted presence and back to the door. On his acknowledgement of this the prisoner received a cigarette and a flash of gold teeth from the officer, the following day he was taken down again and the same questions were repeated. This was a check against his truthfulness. The third morning the sick man had refused any drink or food and at about nine o'clock had simply started to urinate where he lay. When it stopped he tried to sit up and speak and as his friend tried to help him he fell back dead. It was to the prisoners surprise that the Japanese doctor was brought almost right away and he pronounced death. His visit followed by two more officers who saluted the dead man. Next came the duty Sojo who placed a twig, loaf of bread and a packet of cigarettes on the dead mans chest. His body remained thus for one hour, when it was removed by the Japanese for burial. This after all his suffering and neglect. The prisoners discovered that this was an old honoured tradition to help the dead on their way to the next life.

Finally after seven days in the Headquarters the prisoners were put on to a lorry and sent to Changi Prison Area.

On their arrival there they were split into groups and rejoined their own units. Thus it was at 1500. When the Naval Officers and men joined a small Naval Unit in southern area. Immediately they were given a medical inspection by a Captain R.A.M.C., who stated that all of them were to be sent to Roberts Hospital, a central Hospital for all the camp, a camp of some 53,000 prisoners of war. As an example of all these survivors, this was the condition of one of them. Weight 7 stone 13 pounds. Temperature 102. Complaint, Malaria (Chronic), Beri-Beri. (V.D. Vitamin Deficiency). It is interesting to know that this man felt perfectly fit. His normal weight was 11 stone.

All survivors were immediately admitted to hospital, where they spent a long time recovering.

It is with regret that it is added that several of these recovered and went up North to the infamous railway and there succumbed to the treatment and conditions. The only remaining Australian a lad of 20 went insane and attempted suicide but was still alive at the end of the war. Of the two earlier boat parties who were mentioned early in the episode no further intelligence had been learnt.

"P. O. W."

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Gozo Chicken

The corner of Corrodina Canteen was occupied by its most constant customer, to wit, one Sharkey Ward, Able Seaman of vintage old and rare. Around him were grouped his normal host of oppos and admirers, with ears cocked in order that they would miss none of the pearls of wisdom which, liberally sprinkled with obscenities, flowed from Sharkey the oracle. Sharkey had been regaling his audience with unprintable and hair raising yarns of pre-war Malta. The Gut, the Cairo Bar, the Gyppo Queen, the Galvanised Donkey and hosts of other famous bars had been visited and anecdotes attached to each one. His yarns neatly tied up, Sharkey awaited the replenishment of his glass with a brace of Blues and, having stoked up his foul smelling pipe, launched on his next yarn.

'We was on the old Isis in the grand days before the war when the Med. was peaceful and happy except for the Abyssinian crisis, the Spanish Civil War and the Jews and the Arabs knocking seven bells out of each other every five minutes. Now the Isis was the pride of the 3rd D.F., a likely looking craft whose name denoted "I suffer in silence" We were a happy ship and I had a quiet number by virtue of my seniority and extreme skill with a marline spike. Gobi-deck lockerman, I was, the skipper of the quarterdecks right hand man, and in those days a destroyers quarterdeck was a quarterdeck with scrubbed cortucine, brass strips and "Y" gun enamelled and burnished till it hurt your eyes. The only thing that upset it was the wardroom meat safe and as the skipper was fond of game, there were times when it almost stunk the flotilla out of Selima Creek.

However, to get on with this yarn, we has a wardroom messman, Jose Aquilana by name, which same was a close oppo of mine and we used to do each other quite a bit of good when the occasion arose. He lived in Vallet but his family came from Gozo, home of goats and the legendary Pope that Jack invariably invoked at all sorts of odd times. Now our skipper, known to us who loved him as Captain Bligh and to My Lord Commissioners as Lieutenant Commander The Right Hon. Basil Dimwit, R.N. decided to give a dinner party aboard to a senior officer to whom he had his snivelling valve jammed hard over. The trouble with old Captain Bligh was that he was more than a little greedy at the table and his epicurean appetite demanded the best fare on the table at any given time. The wardroom, and in particular Jimmy the One, known to the lads as Fletcher Christian could testify to this sad state of affairs as they often sat at dinner watching the skipper yaffle the best cuts whilst they shared the parsons nose. However on this occasion the skipper had a brainwave. Two only for dinner in my cabin. The Rear Admiral and myself. The Admiral ought to get the best but that would break old Skip's heart, so what better than a chicken between ... We both ought to get a leg each and a good cut of the

breast. Accordingly, the skipper sends for Jose and issues his instructions, which same were to wrap big eats around a chicken dinner at eight thirty that night, and it had better be good or all the numerous Saints in Malta would not protect Jose Aquilina, Petty Officer Steward from the righteous wrath of Captain Bligh. Jose gave his customary 'Not to worry' and, borrowing the ship's motor boat, sped off to Gozo to acquire a chicken from his brothers farm. Thus the day drew to its close with the Maltese Officer's Chef slaving away in his tiny galley to provide a dinner fit for his lord and master, not to mention a crusty Rear Admiral upon whom the future career of the afore-mentioned lord and master greatly depended. At eight p.m. the Rear Admiral came aboard and proceeded to demolish a bottle of the skippers gin with a bare-faced affrontery acquired only by long experience and a calculated sense of his own rank. The skipper bore the attack on his wine bill with amazing fortitude and mentally calculated how much of the Sub's wine allowance for the month was left and whether it would be worth stopping his wine bill and appropriating the same.

Just after half past eight, the skipper led his honoured guest down to his cabin. The soup was thoroughly enjoyed, as well it might, because the wardroom galley stockpot hadn't been cleaned out in two years in commission. The fish was admirable and no trace of its dubious ancestry and diet in Selima Creek could be detected by the palate, and finally, in came the chicken on a large covered E.P.N.S. salver complete with cover Adm. Patt. 1212. Chef himself accompanied the chicken, and, armed with a set of carvers, stood by to carve the bird. With a flourish the steward whisked the cover off the salver and displayed the bird to the eager gaze of the two diners. The Rear Admiral beamed in gastronomical anticipation whilst the skippers eyes came out like proverbial organ stops. There lay the chicken, nestling amidst succulent roast potatoes, a sight to gladden any eye, except the skippers, because it only had one leg pointing like the barrel of a gun to the deckhead. "Good" boomed the Admiral, "I think I'll try a leg and a good portion of breast". The skipper was livid on account he was browned off with a wing and the parson's nose but he tried, and this is where his Dartmouth training paid off, to put a good face on it. "My compliments to the wardroom messman and inform him not to go ashore until after I have dined and have seen him". The remainder of the dinner was agony as far as the skipper was concerned and, had the Admiral been able to read the skippers thoughts, old Captain Bligh would have been retired as and O.D. "The gin-sodden, chicken-bloated old perisher, I hope he gets seventeen different varieties of stomach ulcers. Look at the old lobster he's positively gloating over that drumstick. I'd like to ram it" just then the Captain's thoughts were fortunately transferred elsewhere.

The Admiral, mulling over his port, and with an aura of well being surrounding him finally lit his cigar and, viewing the skipper through

the haze said "An excellent dinner, Dimwit old fellow, but why did that damned chicken have only one leg?" "I was hoping you would ask that Sir" said the skipper. "Steward, bring me the messman". So in trots Jose to be met by a torrent of accusations as to the traditional honesty of the Maltese nation and the whereabouts of the missing leg of chicken. When poor old Jose could get a word in edgeways he told the skipper straight. "This chicken, she come from my brother's farm in Gozo and she is a Gozo chicken which same only have only one leg". "Piffle, balderdash" said the skipper. "Damned peculiar" said the Admiral. "If you do not believe this thing" said Jose, "This I will show you next time you go to Gozo". "Dammit Dimwit, this is ducced interesting. It's a fine night. Get your boat cloak and lets go now" said the Admiral. So off they sets in the Isis's chug-chug, the undisciplined stoker muttering unprintable things under his breath.

Now you all may think that Jose had been lumbered, which shows how little you know about the Maltese stewards. The boat gets to Gozo alright and up the goat track to the farm sets the Admiral, the skipper and Jose, stummbing through the dark. Finally they gets to the farmhouse and knocks up Spiro, the agricultural brother of Jose. The skipper had blotted his copy book en route by carrying out a one sided conversation in the dark with a goat, which he had mistaken for the Admiral. Same style of beard it seems. Jose called to his brother "Spiro, may the Saints bless you, we have come to see the wonderful one-legged chickens for which Gozo is world famed. Get a lantern and show us the chicken run". Spiro led the group to the chicken run, and opening the door and shining his light in he said, "There my friends, the true pure-bred Gozo chickens" and so help me lads, there they were each one standing on one leg with their bonces tucked in between their shoulder blades. "Gad's strewth" said the Admiral, "Its true then". The skipper goggled in fascination for their were the chickens each supported by one leg only. His apology for a brain was whirring round like a destroyers T.S. when suddenly his eyes lit up. "Dammit. I've got it" he shouted and looking evilly at poor Jose, he clapped his hands and shouted. "Boo". The chickens, thus aroused, dropped their other legs and started to mill around the run. "There, you miserable Maltese brigand, what have you to say to that?" Jose looked at him and quietly said,

"Why you no say boo when he was on the table".

Chaplain's Letter

The Vernon Choir is giving its carol recital in the Cathedral at 7.30 on Wednesday, 17th December. Excerpts from it will be broadcast by the B.B.C. as has been the case in previous years. Lt.-Cdr. Temple was responsible for getting the choir together 4 years ago and this is the first year that it has not been under his direction. But the choir has lost nothing of its enthusiasm: it is over 30 strong and well balanced: and under Lt.-Cdr. Maurice Perthen has reached a very high standard of excellence. I hope that all their efforts will be rewarded by a large and appreciative congregation for the occasion.

The form of Service is somewhat different this year. Previously the nine lessons have been read with interposed carols. Ever since Kings College Cambridge Choir has been broadcast on Christmas Eve this has been a most popular form of Service. Familiarity with it has, I think, got to the stage where the point of it all is obscured. Our reorganisation, which does not diminish either the number or the character of the carols sung, is designed to focus attention in a different way on the meaning of Christmas. It was for our sake, for the ideal of the family; for the respect due to all men whatever the colour of their skin: the state of men's bank balance or their condition (with special emphasis on the hungry: thirsty; the stranger, the naked, the sick, the prisoner: St. Matthew 25 v 35); for peace on earth, etc., that God himself was born into the most humble condition of human life and lived it out according to the rules.

"The Lord was made Flesh and dwelt among us"

A bewildered age with lots of money in its pockets seeks to buy its happiness in the shop windows of life before Christmas: the Christian finds it in the Crib: in the Child born at Bethlehem who is still the Saviour of even our crazy mixed-up world.

Services at Christmas:—

Holy Communion : Midnight Christmas Eve

Holy Communion : 1000 Christmas Day.

A happy Christmas to all: God bless you.

B. A. Watson,
Chaplain.

A Record Breaking Lecture

The voice droned on in the warm air. Waves of sound it generated were focussed at a point a little below the ceiling on the classroom wall. Shafts of sunlight stabbed across the room, illuminating motes of chalk dust that dipped and floated in the still air. Rivulets of perspiration coursed down the face of the lecturer, and at intervals he ceased his gesticulations to mop and daub. Pacing the rostrum with thumping strides coat flapping and arms waving, the performance went on and on. What reserves of attention the class had left, long since had been expended on the jigging figure that pranced and mumbled before them. Occasionally an oath dropped dully on top of the irrelevant information that had collected during the three hours. The clock sloughed its hand across its face wiping the minutes away with agonizing slowness.

A discussion among the class later on examined the evidence and and concluded the afternoon had been wasted. Much work would have to be done if the class average was to be saved. Head scratching and pencil sucking went on far into the dogs, until at last, one by one books were put away, and orders presented at the bar.

The following days went on in much the same pattern; delay while the diagrams were hung and chalk provided. More delay while notes were sorted. Tempers becoming frayed even before the session started and brought almost to breaking point with the phrase 'You'll find it in the book'.

Another subject completed. More marks to justify. More long hours in a classroom that had long since taken on the aspect of a cell into which one was forced each day to listen and try to understand. To listen! Yes it took all ones power of concentration merely to do just that. To decipher the conglomeration of varegated facts that tumbled over ones head was almost outside the class limitation.

Towards the end of the course I.T. was introduced. What to do, what not to do; how to do it, when to do it, why. Each member now was absorbed in analysis of past lectures and lecturers. Experimental talks, discussions on preparation, and then allocation of the 40 minute talks.

He was fourth on the list, scheduled in three days time. Gloomily he listened to other members spout about the most unlikely subjects; bee-keeping, accompanied by comb frames and combs. White mice in a cage provided another 40 minutes of unexpected knowledge. Newts and how to keep them started the third day, and a complete blank mind was cudged to awareness of the fact that he had to talk first period in the afternoon. A quick survey of topics produced no ringing bell, and dinner time arrived with an abruptness that was almost indecent. Suddenly, in the midst of a particularly tenacious figgy duff inspir-

ation descended with a bang. A search of the E.V.T. library provided no help but the librarian at the Municipality library did, and facts and figures dates and data streamed through the carpiece of the telephone. Persuasion, a bent nail, chewing gum and string, procured an instructional aid, and a lightning dash into town for some more brought the deadline to zero. A last minute check on equipment and notes, then the ordeal was under way.

A sea of faces, critical, amused, bored, interested, floated below the rostrum, furtive shiftings, fidgets and rustlings momentarily bemused him and then he was off. Hastily concocted facts, tentative dates and names rolled forth. A pause for use of one of the aids and a quick prayer that it would work. Through the **Introduction**; onto the **Body** and now approaching the **Summation**. How's the time? How far to go? Will it be finished on time, what questions can be asked? Build up to and end on a climax had been the instruction. Grasp the attention of your class and carry them along with you. They were certainly with him now! As, walking slowly down an aisle he held aloft, one in each hand, two gramophone records 'This one' he was saying, indicating his left hand, 'the pre 1920 type. Heavy, brittle, with hill and dale recording process. Easily damaged care must be taken when handling. This other, the latest production of recording science. Made of light plastic, flexible, superior reproduction quality and above all — **unbreakable**'. So saying he tossed it carelessly into the air. The class watched with (he hoped) bated breath as it sailed to the floor. The silence was alive, pregnant, electric — shattered by a sharp CRACK, as the record split into fine pieces. Immediately humbug broke out. Laughter, hoots, guffaws and uncontrolled giggles swayed and rolled throughout the room!

Keep your composure in the face of the unexpected, had been another warning in past instructions. Carefully, still talking to regain his command of the class, he picked up the pieces, and walking backwards, the while bringing his lecture to a close, silence once again fell on the room. The same sort of silence! Pregnant! Slowly moving back, he tried to judge the proximity of the rostrum, making searching sweeps with each foot as it reached the deck. He'd made it! No — a foot caught the edge of the rostrum, he stumbled, and again the class roared in anticipation of the inevitable. Naturally, of course he gratified — What? Who'd be an Instructor.

Ted 'G'.

News from Vernon

Lots of refugees have joined the fold in the last few months. We only hope that they will not miss the apron strings of the Second in Line to much. They have been absorbed in the ever growing circle of I. A/S.

Much amusement was caused recently to everyone except P.O. Stewart, who, on entering Vernon for a much needed rest, after a long spell on "Malcom" at Portland, found that he was due to take a class aboard Malcom for fourteen days before Christmas leave. To this the classic definition of "A Green Rub".

At long last the hut used by W.R.N.S., Chapel, Rest Room changing room and other uses long since dimmed by the passing of time has gone. There is a longing look in the C.G.I's eye these days as he scans his little extra piece on the old Parade ground.

At long last the Cafeteria system is in force for the Chief Petty Officers and Petty Officers Messes. To the Paymaster Commander must go all the heartfelt thanks of members of both messes.

For the information of those in doubt. The Petty Officers Christmas Dance will be held after the Kiddies Party this year. So if you are thinking of coming along, it has not gone by unnoticed.

The Vernon Variety Group produced a first class concert in November. This was made up of more talent than one knew existed in this establishment. All praise to those concerned for a very enjoyable evening.

There was a record number of Blood Donors (258) on Wednesday, 19th November. This was a grand effort for an ever needed replenishment for the Naval Blood Bank. Even the local 'Leathernecks' cannot hold a candle to us now.

a native, I told him to shove off ashore, I would look out for him. Five minutes later he had gone. The first stone in the Chef's plot was laid. A few moments later Chef came in the mess and gave me the signal everything was ready for the next move.

Togther we saw the Officer of the Day who happened to be the G.O. Swiftly we put him in the picture. Nothing loath to get his own back he fell in with our plan.

The bosun's mate was sent to shake the T.A.S.O. who was sleeping off the effect off a gaggle of lunch time gins.

On T.A.S.O's arrival in the wardroom he was met by the information that the turkeys for the ship's companies Christmas dinner were not where the chief cook had left them when he went ashore.

'Well' said T.A.S.O. 'Your the O.O.D. its your pigeon'. 'Granted' replied that officer but the duty P.O. has some information you should know. 'Yes sir, I was ashore this dinner time and saw one of our cooks raffling a turkey. When I questioned him he told me you had signed a chit to enable him to get it out of the dockyard. Since the Chief cook reported the matter to me I phoned the police and a check showed that a turkey has been taken out of each of the dockyard gates'.

It was the turn of the T.A.S.O's face to run the gamut of the spectroscope. We all trooped down to the galley. 'Where did you leave the turkeys?' Chef was asked. 'There on the preparing table' he replied. There on the table lay a heap of entrails, half a dozen claws and a few feathers.

'What can be done about the troops dinner tommorrow' I ventured. 'Well' said chef 'there are some more turkeys in the cold room. I'll have to get them out now, they need about six hours to thaw out'.

'Do that please' said the T.A.S.O. 'I'm going to get some Coffee!'. He went away a worried man. His worries were not allayed by the G.O. and navigator who had also arrived on the scene and had been put wise. They sat in the wardroom and discussed his chances at court-martial for conniving at misappropriation of Government Stores.

I remained by the gangway and shortly the cook who had raffled the turkey returned on board. Quickly I explained the situation and told him no matter what happened to act drunk. I then brought him before the T.A.S.O. for 'Investigation re loss of turkeys'. But all the T.A.S.O. could get out of him was an untuneful rendering of Nellie Dean. So he ordered the cook to be kept in close confinement in the tiller flat.

As I was leading the cook away the T.A.S.O's girl friend come on board.

Ten minutes later while the chef and I were debating whether to report that the cook had broken ship or not, the Q.M. told us that me

and the cook were required in the wardroom. He added that the girl friend had blown the gaff. With some trepidation we made our way forward. But everything was taken in good part and the T.A.S.O. met us at the door with a bottle of champagne in his hand. As we stood laughing over, the various incidents the T.A.S.O. said 'Where are the blasted turkeys anyway?'. 'Oh' said chef 'When I went ashore I left orders for the duty cook to start cooking them at two. So when I came back they weren't where I left them. They were in the oven'.

Tombola.



The advertisement is enclosed in a decorative, hand-drawn border. It features several bottles of 'Tavern Export Ale' arranged around a central oval. The oval contains the text 'It's TAVERN all the time' in a stylized font, with 'TAVERN' in large, bold letters. To the right of the text is a small cartoon character of a hoppy with a smiling face and a single leaf on its head. Below the character, it says 'says Hoppy'. At the bottom of the advertisement, it reads 'One good TAVERN makes You think of another'. The company name 'H. & G. SIMONDS Ltd.' is printed in a large, bold, serif font, followed by the address '33 MARMION ROAD, SOUTHSEA' in a smaller, bold, serif font.

It's
TAVERN
all the time
says Hoppy

One good
TAVERN makes
You think of another

H. & G. SIMONDS Ltd.
33 MARMION ROAD, SOUTHSEA

Ne Exeat

Before Osprey finally folds its historic wings it is as well that certain of its legends and stories should be recorded for posterity. Such stories are already enshrined in the hearts of past and present ping ratings and are often related wherever submarine hunters are together.

One December Sunday evening just before the war the Borstal authorities from up the hill alerted the Island that a youth had broken out and Osprey was particularly asked to keep a watchful eye on the great area of bushes that surrounded the establishment.

The week passed uneventfully. The youth had not been captured or even sighted. He had completely vanished.

Another week passed and everything reverted to normal and preparations for Christmas leave.

At Saturday's evening quarters, the long lines of ratings fell in were interested to observe a ginger haired sailor clad in overalls and gym shoes being marched away from South Block by the M.A.A. towards the regulating office. Shortly after the Commanding Officer of the Day was hurriedly called away and a buzz of speculation rose and swelled through the ranks.

In the lower Canteen that night there were many chuckles as the whole story was told again and again. When the ginger haired sailor — A.B. Moses, was being charged with 'Being absent from place of duty, namely Evening Quarters and (ii) being out of the dress of the day at 1600' he gave one figure to many in his official number. When questioned he maintained stoutly that this had always been the case. Suspensions were aroused and the heat was turned on.

Suddenly Ginger grinned 'O.K. mates, you win. I'm the Borstal boy they're looking for'.

That's all he would say and it wasn't for a very long time afterwards that the truth came out, and it was too late for the 'accessories after the fact' to be faced with their 'crime'.

Apparently, members of 12 mess discovered the youth in the bullrushes, whilst skylarking in the bushes, and had promptly made him an ex-officio member of their mess.

They had discreetly fed, clothed and slept him since that time and he was in fact a great favourite doing permanent "mess sweeper"

The affair blew over swiftly, just before Christmas leave. Everybody was satisfied. The friendly comenaderie of Borstal and Osprey

has developed much since that time mostly in the realms of football and cricket and other normal ways.

But many remember the story of the ginger boy who came to the establishment which treated him kindly but nevertheless has its motto

"NE EXEAT" — "He shall not escape"

Carl Hayman.

At your service . . .

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N.A.A.F.I. Letter

Major-General Sir Randle Feilden, Managing Director of Naafi, announced this morning that no further applications for service with Naafi in Cyprus can be considered for the time being.

"We have enough to meet our requirements for any foreseeable task in Cyprus", he said, "even though our original target of five hundred may have to be increased. Only a few vacancies for specialist grades remain to be filled".

He added: "I would like to thank the public for the magnificent response to our appeal. The promptitude with which seventeen thousand men, women and girls have offered themselves for a task which they recognise will be no picnic is a token of the country's overwhelming support for, and confidence in, our troops in Cyprus".

All those who have volunteered will receive a personal communication as soon as possible.

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CHRISTMAS FARE & TOYS



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