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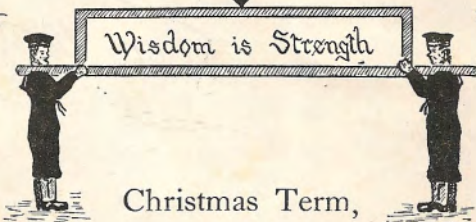


The Shotley Magazine

Being the Record for H.M.S. "GANGES," Term ending Christmas, 1951



The Magazine
of
H.M.S. "GANGES"



Christmas Term,
1951



I wish you all a happy Christmas
and New Year and every success
in your future in the Navy.

John W. Peck
...



Editorial

*"The old order changeth, yielding place to new
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world."*

In our own particular case, the "good custom" has been Instructor Lieutenant P. Mellors, who has so energetically edited this magazine for the last three years, and who, at the end of the Summer term, left the Service in order to sort out more difficult problems in the legal world of Nottingham. We wish him every success in civilian life and, even more so-a private prayer-wish him back here at this moment.

We must also mention one other "good custom" of "Ganges," Commander E. L. Cook, **D.S.C., R.N.**, who left us in November when he was appointed to the Admiralty. During his stay here, he left his mark on many aspects of Boys' Training, and we will particularly remember his work in connection with the Modernisation Scheme and the Careers Room. A recent letter from him gives the impression that he is suffering from slight claustrophobia in his little office, and is yearning to see the river again.

During the last few months, we have had in "Ganges," possibly more than our fair share of distinguished visitors, but despite all the "secret" hard work that is part of the preparation for their arrival, "Ganges" has been extremely glad to welcome them. The obvious interest in this Establishment that is shown by Senior Officers is an encouragement to everybody in the important work that is to be done here. At the end of July, as mentioned in the last magazine, we were glad to welcome for the first time, the Fourth Sea Lord, Vice-Admiral the Earl Mountbatten of Burma. In an exhaustive tour of the Establishment, the Fourth Sea Lord found many opportunities for viewing the daily routine. October saw the inspection by the Commander-in-Chief, The Nore, Admiral Sir Cecil Harcourt, **K. C.B., C.B.E.**, who was accompanied by the Command Supply Officer, Rear-Admiral(S) F. R. J. Mack, **C.B.E.** Later in the term we were pleased to see Captain R. Gotto, **C.B.E., D.S.O., R.N.**, a former Commander of this Establishment; Captain W. J. Lamb, **C.V.O., O.B.E.**, Captain D of the 4th Training Flotilla, who brought his ship, "Widemouth Bay," for an enjoyable and instructive visit; Surgeon-Captain S. G. Rainsford, **S.C.D., M.D., B.CH., M.R.C.P., D.PH.**, Naval Medical Officer of Health; Captain J. G. T. Inglis, **O.B.E., R.N.**, Captain of the Signal School; Surgeon Rear-Admiral Ingleby MacKenzie, **C.B., B.M. B.CH., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., K.H.P.**, Medical Director General (Designate); and finally Admiral Sir George E. Creasy, **K.C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., M.V.O.**, Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet (Designate), who took the salute at Sunday Divisions and attended Church.

These visits from such distinguished personalities would alone have made these last few months memorable.

In the following pages, you will find bundled together the "Ganges" of this last term, and if possibly the emphasis seems to be more upon "Ganges" at play, we can only excuse ourselves by saying that after all, it is the Festive Season, and that we have worked hard as well.

Once more we must express our appreciation to all those without whose help this magazine could not have been produced. Particular mention must be made this time of Mr. H. F. Duncan, Commissioned Gunner, **R.N.**, who besides helping with a host of drawings and articles, has also taken over the arduous task of Advertising Manager. To him, and the nameless many who have helped us in a hundred and one different ways, we would like to express our sincere appreciation.

Finally, before leaving you in peace to read the magazine, we would like to take this opportunity of wishing you all "A Merry Christmas and a Very Happy

New Year."

Inst. Lieutenant A_ M. MCGREGOR, BA., R.N.

Crossing the Line Ceremony

H.M.S. "KENT," 1932.

In this age of 30 knot and 60,000 ton vessels, the old traditions of the sea are dying out one by one. One time-honoured custom to which seafarers still cling however, is the "Ceremony of crossing the Equator." Why they do so is obvious, if you have ever been Baptised on the Equator (or line as it is called) and watched the old sea dogs who take part in the fun.

The ship left Singapore for Batavia, the Daily Routines were issued, mysterious references were made to Heralds, Nymphs, Bears and Flatties. Old stagers amongst the crew, with unholly glee, hinted at all sorts of eerie proceedings to come, much to the discomfort of the audiences.

At length the fatal day arrived. With the approach of 6.40 P.M. (1840) on the 25th January, 1932—the fixed time for the momentous crossing, curiosity overcame apprehension and the fore-castle became packed with sightseers prepared for anything, from a white line painted on the ocean to goodness knows what. They were not to be disappointed. A tense atmosphere could be felt. The lookouts, in awesome voices, reported "Line right ahead, Sir." Shortly afterwards a voice could be heard from the midst of the ocean, hailing the ship. A blast on the sirens, a fanfare of trumpets, and there, in a greeny-bluish phosphorous light stood the strangest of spectres imaginable.

The Herald, for it was he, in a loud voice held conversation with the Captain as follows:—

HERALD ... What ship are you and whither bound?

CAPTAIN ... His Britannic Majesty's Ship "Kent", bound from Singapore to Batavia, commanded by Captain T. B. Drew, Royal Navy, and flying the flag of Admiral Sir William A. H. Kelly, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., the Commander-in-Chief of the China Station. Who are you?

HERALD ... I am the herald of His Oceanic Majesty, King Neptune, and I wish to come aboard.

CAPTAIN ... I will stop the ship. Officer of the Watch, Stop both.

The Herald and his trumpeters clambered aboard and advanced to the top of "A" turret.

HERALD I bring greetings from the Lord of the Deep. Is your Captain here?

CAPTAIN I am here, and am ready to receive the commands of His Oceanic Majesty.

HERALD He asks you Sir., to let me know
The names- of all your men
Who are not yet completely free
To sail at will upon the sea
I will then go at once below
To Neptune, you may then
Proceed forthwith across the "Line"
Continuing south, until you sight
Fair nymphs ahead. They are the sign
That Neptune comes to claim his right

Of homage, Sir, from you.
Tomorrow then at half-past nine,
Pray muster all the crew;
And also pray the weather's fine,
For rain would spoil the view,
Now lest I waste more precious
time I bid you all adieu.

CAPTAIN ... Assure King, Neptune that we all,
Are honoured at this meeting And
will you to the depths below
Convey our Loyal Greeting.
We shall be ready for the Court, And
glad to meet his charming Queen, And
will she bring her lovely daughters, To
add more beauty to the scene.

HERALD ... It cannot be, a Sea-Nymph's form
Would take each sailor's heart by storm
The Queen debars them from such shows,
In any case—they have no clothes.
The Queen will come alone, for she knows what sailors are,
Now Captain Drew, I must return
And report unto His Majesty.
Good-night, Gentlemen All, Good-night.

The eerie lights wavered and, finally, with the disappearance of the trio over the bows, went out.

OFFICER OF THE WATCH. Half a head both. The ship then proceeded on her way unhindered, leaving an air of mystery in her wake.

On Thursday, "prompt at half-past nine," Father Neptune, Queen Amphitrite and their court came aboard, and were greeted on the Quarterdeck by the Commander-in-Chief. The following conversation then took place.

CAPTAIN ... Greeting your Majesty, we are gratified and honoured that you should visit us. There are many novices to be presented to you, but I see you have already noticed some old acquaintances amongst us, first and foremost, our Commander-in-Chief, Sir W. A. Kelly.

NEPTUNE ... Thank you, Captain Drew, for your kind welcome. We have come on board as we have come from time immemorial to greet our children of the sea, and to admit them into the mysteries of our realm.

Admiral Kelly, greetings from myself and my Queen. It gives us the greatest pleasure to renew once again, our friendship. We should like to add to the honours already conferred upon you, the highest of our realm, namely, The Order of the Old Sea Dog, 1st Class.

Where is my secretary ?

SECRETARY Here, Your Majesty. (Advancing with the Order on a felt cushion, amid a fanfare of trumpets).

Neptune then presented the Order to the C. in C.

NEPTUNE ... My eyes are getting old, but surely, Amphitrite, that is my old friend, Captain. Layton standing over there.?

AMPHRITRITE It surely is, and we are right glad to see him.

NEPTUNE ... Captain Layton, we are glad to meet you once again. We will take this opportunity to present to you the Order of the Old Sea Shark, 1st Class.

Secretary advances with the Order which Neptune presents to Captain Layton.

NEPTUNE ... (Addressing all): We have one other order to present. Captain Drew, it gives me great pleasure to rate you a member of the Order of the Old Sea Horse, 3rd Class. I am pleased indeed that the "Kent" crosses my path and hope the sailors have a nice bath. My Barbers are Good and of course are renowned,
Their razors are sharp as ever been ground,
Their lather you'll like, and as for their pills
They are better than Beechams, they cure all ills.

CAPTAIN ... Will your Majesties proceed to your thrones.

The Herald and the Trumpeters head the procession to the Dais where Neptune and his Queen sit on their thrones. The trumpeters sound a fanfare, and the Herald announces in a clear voice—Advance all ye who are to be initiated into Neptune's mysteries.

The Bears took possession of the three baths, all dressed up in hideous garments, snarling, gambolling and grovelling with one another, anxious for the first victim to be thrown to them.

A fanfare of trumpets greeted the third defaulter, - who proved to be the Fleet Torpedo Officer. "Ah, a Warrant I smell," quoth the amiable Barber, wiping his massive razor on his tongue. "The bears are hungry and they are nearly all his L.T.O.s as well. Your most noble Majesty, I hereby declare that T have a Warrant duly drawn up and signed _against the Fleet Torpedo Officer."

"One pace forward march."

The chief clerk now proceeds to read O.U.2—

Warrant number O.U.2.,

H.M.S. "Kent" on the Equator 25th day of January, 1932.

Whereas it has been represented to me that Lieutenant Commander W. G. Andrews, R.N., alias Ammeter Shunt was guilty of an act to the prejudice of Good Order and Discipline, and the rules of His Majesty Neptune, in that he did:—

(1) Allow beastly bombs and deadly depth charges to explode in the boudoirs of Neptunes' fair Nymphs and Mermaids.

(2) Did masquerade under the name of Ammeter Shunt with intent to conceal his identity, with malice aforethought, and safety as an afterthought.

(3) Did allow his wicked tin torpedoes to career wildly at terrific speeds and dangerous angles through Neptune's main streets and thoroughfares without:—

(a) First obtaining His Oceanic Majesty's permission;

(b) Obtaining a licence for this purpose.

After personally investigating the case and hearing the evidence for the prosecution, without worrying about the defence, he shall receive nine pills, three doses of medicine, twenty-one shaves and three baths.

Given under my hand this 26th day of January, 1932, on board H.M.S. "Kent" at sea.

(Signed) NEPTUNE REX.

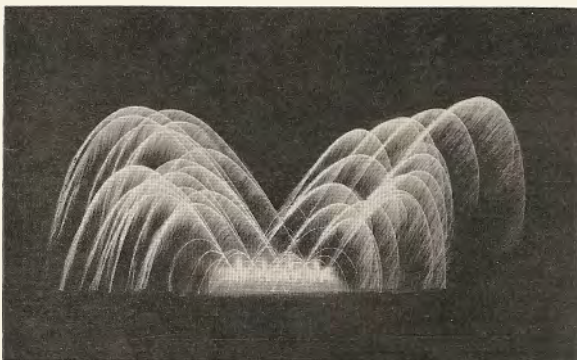
Chief Clerk,
DAVEY JONES.

N.R. McG.S.

Fireworks Display

Following on last year's successful trial, the beginning of November saw the Gunpowder Plot suitably commemorated, albeit two days earlier than on the anniversary of the day Guy Fawkes attempted to blow up the Houses of Parliament.

The Bonfire, of course, is the mainstay of any Guy Fawkes celebration, and prospects at the beginning of the term did not look very bright for making a fire of suitable proportions. Last year was the first display since 1938, and all the "gash" accumulating in the Establishment since then was duly burnt. The problem this year was where to gather in combustible material other than mess tables, whalers, rigger posts, etc., which may be considered, by some at least, to be serving a useful purpose and therefore not available.



Fiery Fountains

Two things helped us out however, First, the Commander-in-Chief was making the first official inspection since before the war in October. This did away with the idea that everything had been burnt the year before, because there is nothing like an official inspection to cause everything which has been stowed away in case "It comes in handy sometime" to be summarily discarded. Those of you who find yourselves clearing out the tiller flat of a destroyer for a Captain D' s inspection will find the truth of that when you get to sea.

Secondly, the building of the Married Quarters had necessitated the razing of some long hedges, all of which made excellent burning matter.

The Establishment Officer and the Chief Bos'n's Mate slowly but surely gathered everything in; local farmers discarded old elevators and carts, and finally a goodly pile was assembled ready for the blaze.

One thing for which this year's fireworks will be remembered was the remarkably fine weather we had.

The previous day and the following day were rainswept, cold and miserable. We were fortunate in having the one in between—a bright sun all day to warm things up, and a mild, clear evening with a very slight breeze to take the smoke away..

The show opened with a fanfare by buglers and drummers and was immediately followed by the maze doubling display of the boys who performed in the Albert Hall for the British Legion Festival of Remembrance. Carried out on grass under floodlights, it was a most effective display.

Next came the main event of the evening—the fireworks. This year the display was entrusted to a fireworks firm, and two men with a lorry full of fireworks arrived the night before to rig up all their set pieces, bombs, rockets, gerbs, etc. So well was it arranged that it required only the two of them to set off the whole display.

Previously, a brochure had been received from the firm giving details of the items in most flowery language; for example: "The Oriental carpet" presented a network of shimmering silver spray, intersected with coloured snakes and gigantic



The Rush to the Bonfire

cobras twisting and turning themselves into divers fantastic forms whilst the mammoth piece is in motion. Concluding with an eruption of the whole piece amidst showers of glittering rain and oriental gems."

While the description of the show is difficult to follow, it may suffice to say that the 25 minutes of fireworks were enough to satisfy the most exacting exponents of squibs and catherine wheels, and was excellent entertainment.

On conclusion of the fireworks, it was the turn of the torch-bearers to give their display. In marched eighty boys from Benbow Division all carrying flaming torches. To the music of the Royal Marine Band they carried out some maze marching movements which looked most spectacular to the crowds on the bank. After their final movement, a column was formed which moved off to escort the Guy to its last resting place. The Guy, looking suspiciously like an instructor,

was mounted high on a chair on a field gun limber, and the procession paraded along the running track in front of the spectators, and then round to the bonfire.

The finale was at hand. From out of the darkness emerged an elephant, whose duty it was to light the name GANGES in letters of fire on the sea wall bank. (The connection between the elephant and "Ganges" can be seen by anyone taking a look at the Ship's crest).

"This huge beast," in the words of the brochure, "walks along with life-like movements, the dorsal and proboscis effects causing roars of laughter." On completion of his journey and with a flourish of his trunk, the elephant lit the gunpowder trail, which slowly made its way along to the sea wall and lit each letter of the Ship's name in letters of coloured fire.

There now remained but to light the bonfire. Once again guided missiles were used, this time coming in from three different directions; the target was hit with each salvo (no mention of the rockets being on a wire) and the bonfire immediately burst into flames, consuming the Guy, so bringing the evening's entertainment to an end, and also bringing all the boys from the bank in a mad stampede to the bonfire.

A large crowd, estimated between 3,500-4,000, watched the display from the bank. The success of the show was ensured by the great assistance received from all quarters, in building the bonfire, making the Guy, the rocket stands, the wiring circuits, and all the other numerous contributions. To all those who helped—thank you very much.

R. P. D.



Admiral Sir Cecil Harcourt, K.C.B., C.B.E., C.-in-C. The Nore and Rear Admiral(S) F. R. J. Mack, C.B.E., taken during the former's inspection.