

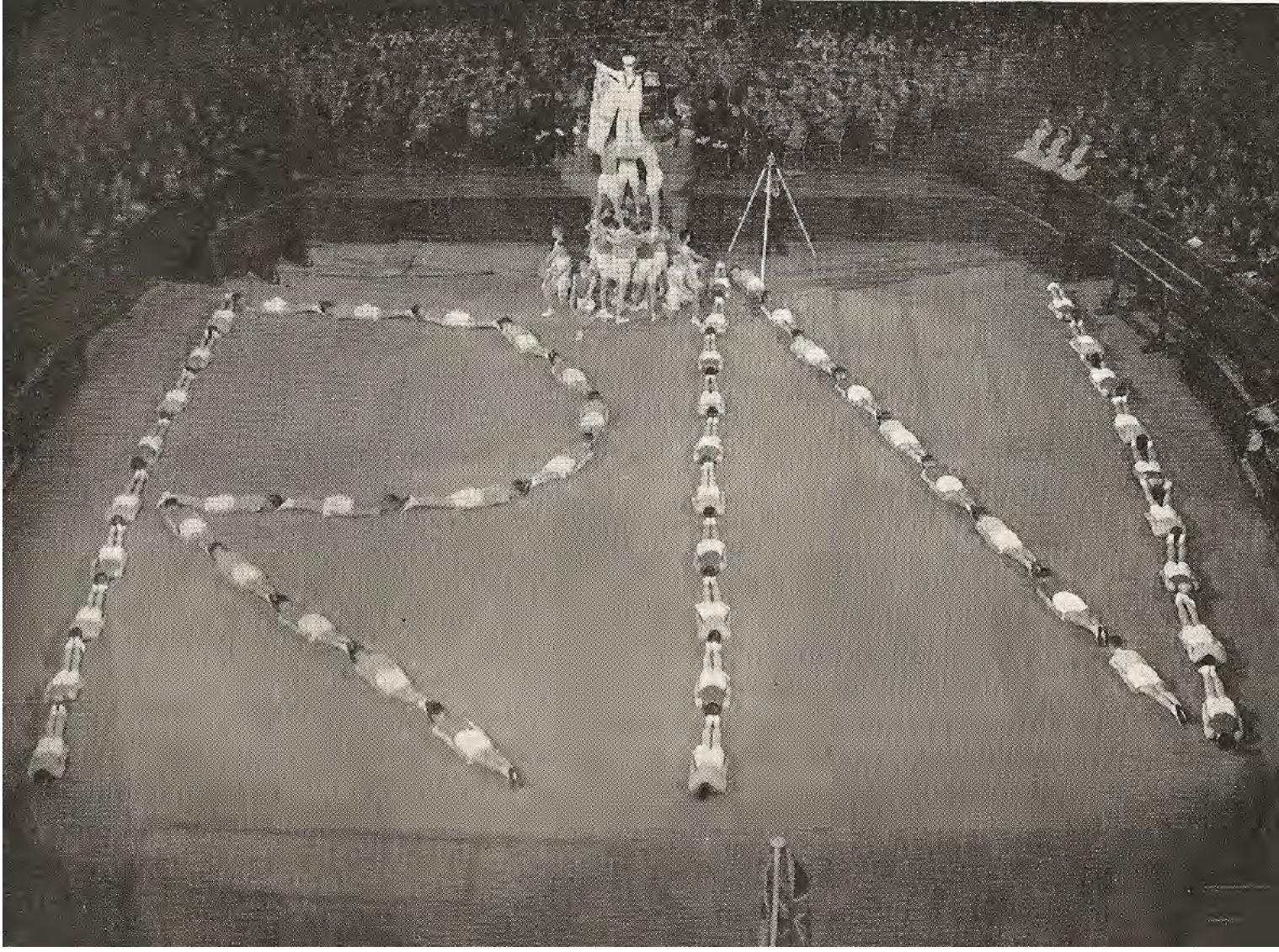
# Interesting Figures.

Despite the findings of the experts these are the stark facts facing you and me:—

|                                       |       |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| Total complement of "Ganges" ...      | 2,333 |
| People above the rate of Leading Boy  | 836   |
| Balance left over to do the work ...  | 1,497 |
| People "working" in offices ...       | 367   |
| Balance left over to do the work ...  | 1,130 |
| Persons adrift or "skating" ...       | 437   |
| Balance left over to do the work ...  | 693   |
| People making tea at any given time   | 241   |
| Balance left over to do the work ...  | 452   |
| Persons at Confirmation Classes ...   | 131   |
| Balance left over to do the work ...  | 321   |
| Persons "Standing fast" ...           | 94    |
| Balance left over to do the work ...  | 227   |
| Persons under punishment ...          | 92    |
| Balance left over to do the work ...  | 135   |
| People in Sick Bay at any given time  | 48    |
| Balance left over to do the work ...  | 87    |
| People on leave at any given time ... | 52    |
| Balance left over to do the work ...  | 35    |
| Persons in the Bugle Band ...         | 33    |
| Balance left over to do the work ...  | 2     |

TWO!—You and me, and you had better pull your weight, because I'm fed up with running this ship all on thy own.

*Note:—These figures, although they may have been correct at the time of going to print, may now be out of date. In consequence you may find that you are the only one left to do the work.—Ed.*



# Festival of Remembrance

November 10th, 1951, in the Royal Albert Hall.

The Festival of Remembrance is always a most impressive show. This year it was well up to standard.

In view of His Majesty's recent illness, we were fortunate to have Their Majesties the Queen and Queen Mary, and Her Royal Highness Princess Margaret, present.

The Festival opened, as always, with the Muster. Recalling our country's glories of other days, British Legionnaires from all over the United Kingdom marched into the Arena and to their places on either side of the great organ. Next, representatives of the three fighting Services, men and women, were each given a tremendous ovation as they marched across the arena and up to their seats behind and flanking the band. Lastly, to the strains of "We are the lads of the Old Brigade" in marched those grand old men of yesterday—the Chelsea Pensioners. Needless to say they received a really great reception.

Displays by each of the Fighting Services followed, and first on—representing the Royal Navy—were the H.M.S. "Ganges" Maze Marching Display Party. If one judges by the reception that our boys got, our display can have been second to none. All the training of five weeks and the co-operation of all concerned bore abundant fruit in those nine minutes.

The massed bands of the Royal Marines then appeared in the arena. After playing a few marches, they finished their performance with a rendering of "The Holy City." It was very well played and most impressive as, towards the end when the Royal Marine bandmen were joined by the Brigade of Guards band and the organ, the music reached crescendo.

It was the Army's turn next. Firstly, the Instructors from the Army P.T. School at Aldershot gave a display of Parallel Bar work and High Box vaulting: It was a faultless turn and drew round after round of applause. Secondly, the Boys' Drum and Bugle Band of the Queen's Regiment showed off their marching, both to bugles and trumpets, and their drumming, which were both of a very high order.

The Royal Air Force Display, the "Training of a Pilot," showed the various stages that a recruit passes through before attaining his ambition—his "Wings."

Then came the Community Singing, recalling for a brief interval those songs that cheered the fighting men in both the Great and World Wars.

Next came the Remembrance Service itself, conducted by the Dean of Chichester.

After the Last Post, Sir Ian Frazer, C.B.E., M.P., spoke the Act of Remembrance:

"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning,

We will remember them."

Then followed what is often described as the most moving moment in the British year—Silence fell for two minutes while a steady cascade of poppies and poppy leaves fell from the roof, and not a man or woman moved, as each was occupied with his or her own thoughts of the past.

Finally, to the strains of "Onward Christian Soldiers," the Service closed and, when "God, Save the King" had been played and Their Majesties had left the Royal Box, the 1951 Festival of Remembrance had ended.



# Figureheads

As the photograph below shows, the last of the "Ganges" figureheads is on the move. The "Black Prince" is being moved into Nelson Hall to join the other three figureheads which were once in a more conspicuous position.

The figurehead representing Admiral Nelson, high up on the south wall, came off H.M.S. "Trafalgar." This used to stand at the south end of the quarter deck by the entrance to the R.N. Sick Quarters.

The figureheads at the north end of Nelson Hall, those of "St. Vincent" and "Caledonia," used to stand at the main gate of H.M.S. "Ganges." To this day "Caledonia Terrace" is the local name for the row of houses from the Shotley. Gate Post Office to the main gate, opposite the Central Mess and Galleys.

This pair of figureheads have been well known to the Royal Navy since they were erected in about 1903. There is a story that a boy was asked once in a test of



The Black Prince.

his observation, what were the names of these two figureheads. He replied that they represented "The Captain and his wife!"

The figure of "Caledonia" was moved into the Nelson Hall in 1946. It weighs over two tons and its lifting was quite a difficult job as no load can be put on the roof trusses.

The figure of "St. Vincent" had been reported on for many years as being in a bad state of decay. It had been patched with canvas, plaster, plastic wood and paint for a number of years. It had been recommended before the war that, as it was in too bad a condition to move, a plaster cast should be taken of it. After the war this was mooted again and pressed home until approval of the necessary funds was given.

The making of a plaster cast requires that a negative should be taken in jelly, or some such material, against which the plaster can be cast. This jelly has to be

applied and allowed to dry against the original, positive. When this jelly was removed from the original the whole of the old timber collapsed in a heap. There was nothing left but dry rotted wood, paint, plaster and so on, but the negative was safe and a new positive was made in plaster. So what we see in Nelson Hall today is the plaster cast.

Admiral Sir William Burrough, Commander-in-Chief at that time, was very interested in this work and on one occasion when he visited "Ganges," shortly after the erection of the plaster cast, he remarked that Lord St. Vincent had been his ancestor. It was noticed at the time that the old sea dog physiognomy is faithfully reproduced in the present generation.

The other figureheads in Nelson Hall were brought from various Dockyards and erected in this covered position during the years 1946-47.

L. S. B. SIMIEON,  
Officer-in-Charge of Works, East Anglia District.



Main Gate, 1939.

He put his hand in his hip pocket but there was nothing: nothing there at all. He stopped, paralysed, his blood frozen in his veins. He couldn't have lost it, surely fate wasn't as cruel as this. With his heart hammering against his ribs, he leant back against the wall and tried to think. He remembered how it had happened before, long ago. How they'd laughed at him—the misery, the intolerable anguish he had gone through. But there was still a chance. As his lips moved feverishly in prayer, he slid his hand into his breast pocket.

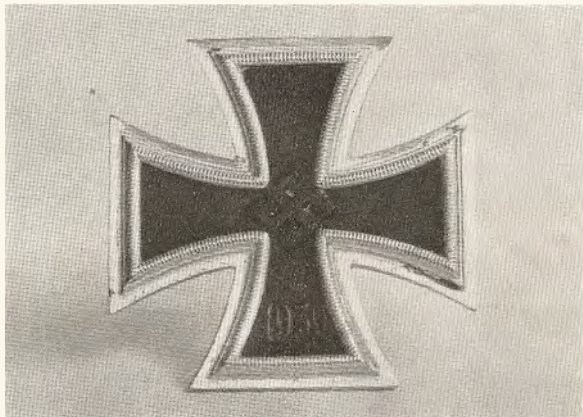
It was there !! Oh, ecstasy, it was there! He could feel the cool plastic handle against his hot palm. An unnatural light came into his eyes as he brought it upwards, past his pale contorted face to level with his temple. With a sigh, he tightened his grip on the handle and began to comb his hair.

J. BOURNE.

# A Discovery

The cross illustrated below was found among the pebbles by "Ganges" pier. Boy Webster, of Rodney Division, who discovered the relic covered in weed and barnacles, cleaned and restored it to the present state, when it was found to be that of the German Iron Cross, First Class.

This cross probably belonged to a German pilot shot down off the coast during the war.



The discovery.

The Iron Cross which was awarded more freely than any British Order, decoration or medal granted for bravery in battle, was established by Frederick. William III in 1813.

There were two classes, first and second class, which were revived again for the Franco-German war in 1870-71 and the Great War, 1914-18. Between the years 1813 to 1918 there were some 219,300 awards made for first class decoration, and 5,500, 000 for second class.

The design during these years differed slightly from the one illustrated above.. The original Cross had a spray of oak leaves in the centre and had the year 1813, 1870 or 1914 engraved on the lower limb. On September 2nd, 1939, Hitler reinstated the Iron Cross as a decoration for the second World War. The shape of the cross remained the same, but a swastika was introduced as a centre piece. The shape is that of a Maltese Cross and bears the date of 1939 on the tower limb, the colour is black with silver edges. The ribbon has a broad red centre with

white and black stripes at either edge. There are various classes and starting from the bottom, are as follows:—

Iron Cross Second Class.—A small cross worn on the breast from a ribbon. Iron

Cross First Class.—A slightly larger cross worn on the breast, without ribbon, like the star of an Order. (As above).

Iron Cross, Knight's Cross.—A slightly larger cross worn round the neck from a wider ribbon of the same colouring as for second class. It can be awarded to both officers and men.

The higher awards are as follows:—

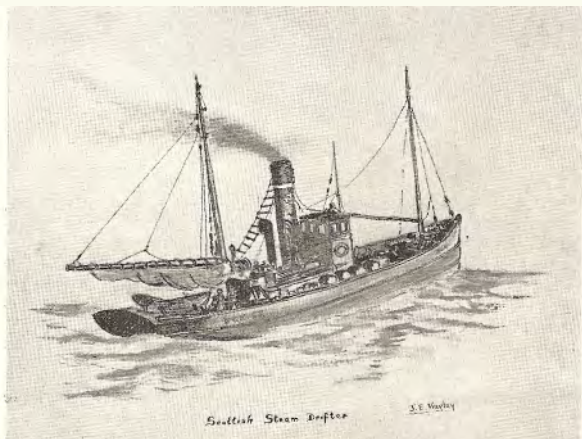
Iron Cross—Knight's Cross with oak leaves.

Iron Cross--Knight's Cross with oak leaves, swords and diamonds.

Iron Cross—Knight's Cross, with diamonds—a higher grade than the last, with the oak leaves embellished with brilliants.

Iron Cross—Grand Cross.--A still larger cross worn round the neck from a wider ribbon. Awarded only for activities having a decisive influence upon the course of the war. This cross was only awarded once during the war, 1939-45, this was to Field Marshal Goering after the surrender of France in 1940.

Judging from the German wireless announcements the Iron Cross in its various classes appeared to be awarded with considerable liberality.





# Aden

"The barren rocks of Aden." This is the title of an energetic Scots bagpipe air, and if you are one of those who believe there is no melody in bagpipe music, ask one of your haggis-chewing messmates to whistle it for you. What's that? he can't? "Black mark, McGinty ! Compulsory country dancing for you next term!"

In this issue of the magazine I should like to draw for you a pen picture of the real Aden, the Aden which has lent its name to the bagpipe march. It is, of course, situated at the southern extremity of the Red Sea, and there are few naval men with "time in" who have not at some period or other gone ashore at this well-known shipping centre. Large numbers of "Ganges" boys will doubtlessly do so in the future, and it is to them particularly that I address my remarks. So come with me on a visit to this well-known British outpost.

As we approach these grim, unfriendly-looking rocks, let us spare a thought for the much-harassed navigator of our ship. He is steering a tenuous course through the notorious Straits of Bab el Mandeb, the "Gate of Mourning," so called because down through the centuries its swift-flowing under-currents have proved the graveyard of countless numbers of ships. Even now, on a modern warship equipped with the latest navigational aids, extreme caution must be observed all the way into the new harbour (the old one is partially choked up) until anchor is dropped somewhere in the vicinity of Steamer Point, the main centre of present-day activity in Aden.

Before we proceed ashore, however, let us get one or two points in their correct perspective. Remember first of all that we are only thirteen degrees north of the Equator, in what is virtually a no-man's-land, 1,300 miles from Suez and 1,600 miles from Bombay. So it would be logical for us to assume two things—extreme heat by our European standards, and a certain sense of isolation. Yet it would be unwise to over-emphasise either of these factors. Certainly it is hot in Aden, but temperature in the tropics is notoriously relative, and figures that indicate a sweltering breathless day in London may, and often do, mean a really cold night or day in Aden. From May until September is the trying time; a damp, airless heat pervades the atmosphere, and occasionally a storm of reddish purple sand sweeps over town and harbour, so that it becomes quite dark, even at high noon. On such occasions, the only sane plan is to alter the hours of meal-times until the unwelcome intruder has vanished; fortunately, the sandstorm rarely lingers for more than three or four hours. As regards the second point—a sense of isolation—although Aden may be geographically remote from other naval centres, a brisk walk ashore will soon dispel the idea that we have landed in a barren wilderness.

Aden today is a thriving community of some 80,000 inhabitants, equivalent to three quarters of the population of Ipswich. The vast majority of the people, of course, are coloured and it is doubtful if the British civilian residents number very much more than a thousand. Of the coloured community, more than half of the total is made up of Arabs, Indians and Somalis; there is also quite a large colony of Jewish people who, along with the Indians, seem to control the majority of the trading concerns. An interesting point, and possibly a rather sad one in the eyes of Jack Tar ashore, is the fact that the total number of females in the population is not much more than half the number of males. The reason for this is simple: in the vast hinterland beyond lies Arabia, home of a scattered but largely impoverished people, many of whose men are only too glad to come to work in Aden for a year or two, leaving their women folk at home. They form a welcome labour force and the money which they save and take back with them gives them an increased standing in their native village.

What sort of work, are the people engaged in? Well, the main local industries are salt and cigarettes. The salt industry is mainly an Indian concern, and the cigarettes, made from imported Egyptian tobacco, are sold by Jewish firms. But it is the entrepôt trade, the importing and exporting of articles from the four corners of the earth, that is the life-blood of Aden. Some of the commodities in this vast transshipment trade are: fuel oil, petrol, cotton goods, grain, hides, coal, sugar and coffee. The coffee, incidentally, is obtained from the nearby province of Yemen; it is claimed by the Arab to be the best in the world, and he is something of a connoisseur when it comes to pronouncing on the merits or demerits of coffee.

The almost total lack of rain and the consequent water shortage is so well-known that I shall say little more about it here, except to add that recently sunk artesian wells have helped to obviate any acute discomfort. At Steamer Point, there is a public irrigated garden which puts up a dazzling display of greenery against the reddish brown background, and the Royal Air Force lads, who have now taken over completely from the Army, tend their pocket-handkerchief patches outside their messes with an air of justifiable pride.

The harbour today, although less busy than in war-time, remains a scene of intense activity. On an evening, anchored off-shore and silhouetted against a tropical sunset, may be seen ships of every description—a P. and O. liner bound for Shanghai via Singapore, a "trooper" packed to suffocation with homeward-bound Tommies from Korea, another one outward-bound to "keep a date" with the terrorists in Malaya, and perhaps a large Dutch merchantman out of Batavia, striving to preserve the tenuous link between Holland and her Indonesian dominions. For all of these ships, Aden means one thing—oil fuel. From the huge storage tanks ashore, the pipe lines run down to the water's edge, where, by an ingenious system of buoyage, they are kept floating on the water, ready to be tapped whenever the need arises.

What are the chances of picking up a "draft chit" to Aden? Well, at the moment, rather slight. The naval staff ashore is extremely small, and there are no naval vessels of any great size using it as an operational base. But for all who join a ship bound for eastern waters the prospect of a "run ashore" in Aden is quite on the cards. And who knows, perhaps the occasion will rise again, as it did during the campaign against the Italians in Eritrea in 1940, when Aden will again become a mainspring of British naval activity.

K.H.P.

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## *A "Ganges" True Story*

A D.O. one morning was angry to find  
His messenger had not done his duty,  
His office was cleaned but the rug at the door  
Was covered in flecks, and was sooty.

He snatched up a pencil and wrote a short note,  
Which he pinned on the rug with a snort, The  
Instructions thereon were just to the point  
Simply, "Shake this mat and report."

On entering the office after breakfast that day,  
At the rug he happened to look,  
And there on the rug a little note lay,  
With only one word on it: "SHOOK."

"GILROY."

# Our First Kit Muster

("It was ever thus.")

We had our sewing done at last,  
Had every stitch complete;  
We had it ready to be passed,  
Laid out all nice and neat.

As each boy had his name crossed out,  
He breathed with deep relief. There  
was no more to sigh about—Well, that  
was his belief.

He'd sewn each button on quite tight, Had  
patched up every tear,  
And as he went to his bed that night, He  
thought: "Gone is every care."

Soon after this we all were told,  
"You will shortly have kit muster."  
Whereat we all turned hot, then cold, And  
got into a fluster.

Each piece of kit was to be rolled;  
We were shown just how to do it. "You'  
ve not got long," we all were told,  
"So see that you get down to it."

So, hard we toiled from morn to eve, And  
fast our time diminished;  
We were told that we would get no leave  
Unless we got it finished.

That night, when all was dark and still, Out of  
bed there crept  
A small boy, into the night so chill,  
While all around him slept.

Softly he opened his locker door,  
And from within he took  
Some clothes, and dropped them on the floor,  
And his nervous fingers shook.

Trembling, he rolled the garments tight,  
Ne'er once for breath he stopped,  
He put them away, right out of sight,  
And into bed he flopped.

At last the fateful hour had come;  
The kits were all laid out,  
And every face was pale and glum—  
The Commander was without.

Into the dorm' the Commander stepped,  
And all sprang to attention.  
As he walked round, his eagle eye  
Held all in deep suspension.

Then, when the inspection was done at last,  
And the Commander had departed,  
Everyone said, "I'm glad it's past,  
But I'd sooner it hadn't started."