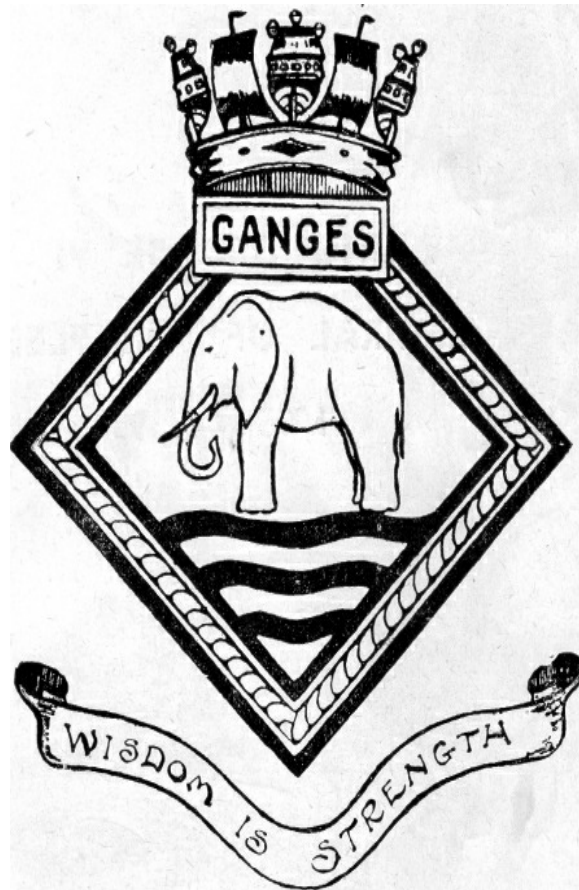
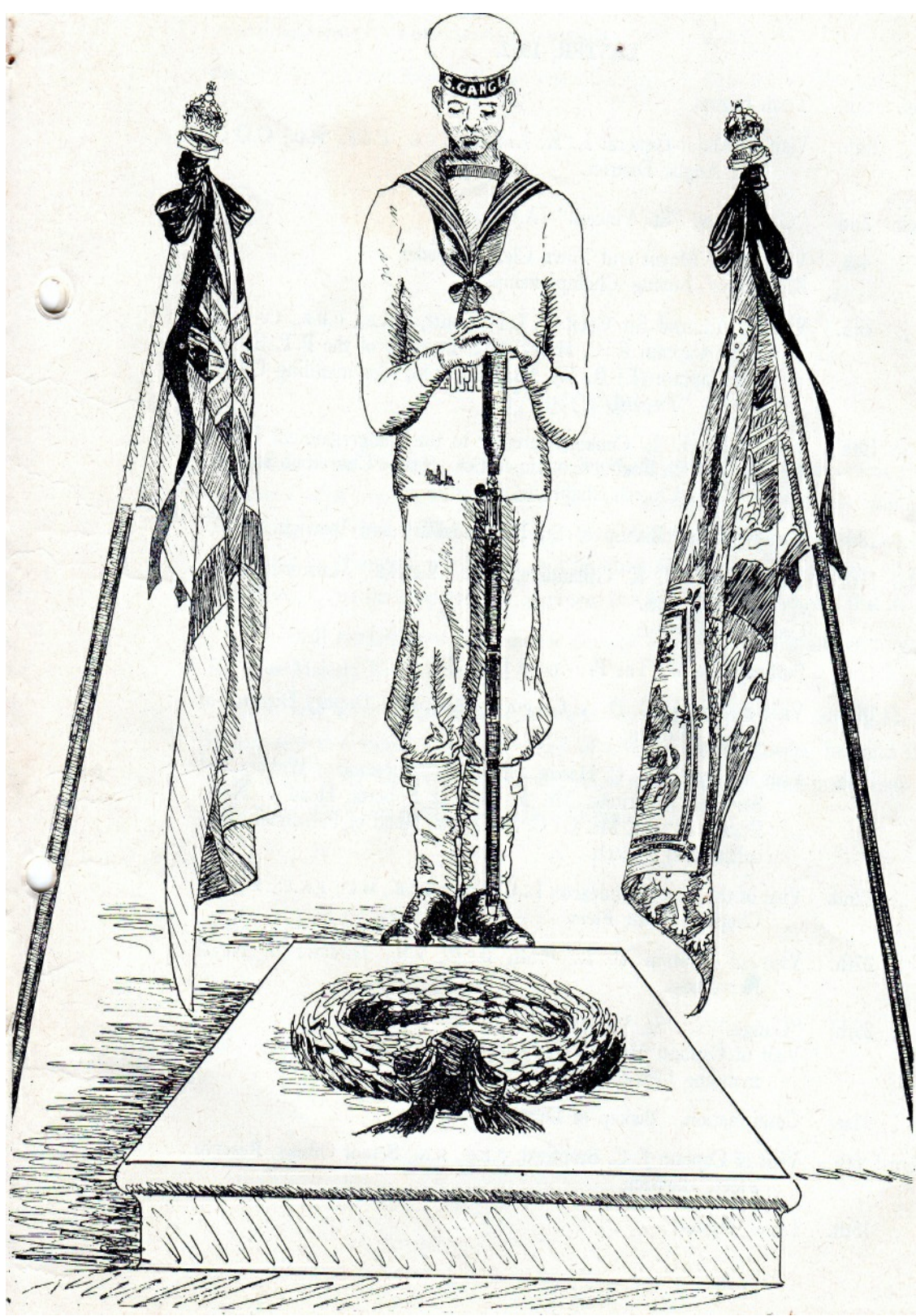


The Magazine
of
H.M.S. "GANGES"



Easter Term,
1952

KING GEORGE VI
ADMIRAL OF THE FLEET
1895 - 1952



Term Card

EASTER, 1952.

Jan. 8th. Term begins.

„ 20th. Visit of Major-General L. K. Lockhart, C.B., C.B.E., M.C., G.O.C., East Anglia District.

Feb. 2nd. "Ganges" v. "St. Vincent" (A.)

„ 4th. Visit of the Mayor and Town Clerk, Harwich. R.N.
Boys' Boxing Championships.

„ 6th. Visit of Admiral Sir Cecil H. J. Harcourt, K.C.B., C.B.E., C.-in-C., Nore; Captain R. C. Harry, R.N., Director of the P.T. School; and Captain (E) R. W. Marshall, R.N., Commanding Officer, H.M.S. "Fisgard."

„ 10th. Visit of Dr. L. E. Cooke, Secretary to the Congregational Union, and Rev. O. Roebuck, O.B.E., K.H.Ch., Senior Church of Scotland and Free Church Chaplain.

„ 18th. Confirmation. Bishop of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich.

Mar. 11th. Visit of Miss J. K. Gillanders, R.R.C., K.H.N.S., Matron-in-Chief, Q.A.R.N. N.S.
Orchestral Concert.

„ 17th. Performance of "The Provincial Lady."

„ 18th. Visit of Captain G. D. A. Gregory, D.S.O., R.N., Deputy Director of Naval Training.

„ 20th. Visit of Captain C. C. Hardy, D.S.O., R.N., Director of Welfare and Service Conditions; Mr. E. Sargent Roberts, Head of Naval Branch II; and Mr. G. C. B. Dodds, Head of Personnel (Miscellaneous) Branch.

„ 22nd. Visit of the Ven. Archdeacon L. Coulshaw, C.B., M.C., F.K.C., K.H.Ch., Chaplain of the Fleet.

„ 27th. Visit of Captain T. L. Bratt, D.S.C., R.N., Director of Naval Recruiting.

„ 29th. "Ganges" v. "St. Vincent" (H.)

Visit of Captain M. S. Townsend, D.S.O., O.B.E., D.s.c., R.N., Commanding Officer, H.M.S. "St. Vincent."

„ 31st. Confirmation. Bishop of Dunwich.

April 6th. Visit of Captain J. C. Stopford, O.B.E., R.N., Senior Officer, Reserve Fleet, Harwich.

„ 15th. Leave begins.

Editorial

At noon on February 6th Captain Whitfeld made the announcement that, confirmed what everybody had hoped all morning was only a baseless rumour. The King was dead. The immediate sense of personal loss which was felt by everybody in "Ganges" was shown in a hundred small ways, but of them all we shall never forget the all-pervading quietness that stayed with "Ganges" that day.

We shall remember with pride the courage and selfless devotion to duty of His Late Majesty King George VI.

Our new Queen, Elizabeth II, as we all know is the wife of a serving Naval Officer and this forges a particular link of loyal affection between her and the Royal Navy. We humbly pray that her reign may be as long and prosperous as that of her illustrious predecessor, Queen Elizabeth I.



The Royal Proclamation Ceremony.

The Royal Proclamation

The Royal Proclamation which formally makes the heir to the throne the new Sovereign, was read on Friday, 8th February, 1952. In Ipswich, as in other cities and towns of the British Isles, the Proclamation, proclaiming Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, was held on the steps of the Town Hall, and it was the privilege of H.M.S. "Ganges" to provide a party to take part in the ceremony.

For half an hour before the Proclamation was due to be read on the morning of Friday, 8th February, the Royal Marine Band played selected music to the assembled crowd, and then at 1050 a contingent of servicemen in their best uniforms marched towards the Town Hall, headed by the Royal Naval party which consisted of a platoon of Boys from H.M.S. "Ganges.": There were the usual remarks of appreciation and shrieks of delight from the schoolchildren gathered round the Town Hall, and a very large crowd had assembled to witness this historic event.

The Parade was drawn up facing the Town Hall with the Royal Naval Platoon on the right flank, and the Army and R.A.F. contingents on the left flank. At 1100 the Still was sounded by a Royal Marine bugler, and the Mayor of Ipswich, and his retinue filed slowly in procession down the Town Hall steps, and took their place among the dignitaries of the Council, the Courts and the Senior Officers of the three armed Services.

The Mayor of Ipswich, Alderman A. J. Colthorpe, dressed in his impressive Mayoral robes of office, then read the Royal Proclamation. With the final words "God Save the Queen" ringing across the Square, the Parade came smartly to the "Salute" and the National Anthem was played. Then the Mayor called for three cheers for Her Majesty the Queen, and the crowd heartily joined in, led by the waving caps of the Parade. Under the orders of Lieutenant Commander R. P. Dannreuther, R.N., the Parade was marched off, swinging to the strains of the rousing march tune "Soldiers of the Queen." A memorable occasion was at an end.

H.F.D.

Captain's Rounds -

"22 Mess ready for your inspection, Sir. 28 boys in the Mess, 3 in Sick Quarters, 4 on the School List, 2 escaped last night. 22 weeks on course. General Course P.O. Willingthwaite reporting, Sir."

The Instructor draws a deep breath and the red and purple slowly drain away from his face, leaving it a more normal colour.

The Captain nods understandingly, looks down at the ground and thoughtfully prods a toffee-wrapper with the end of his stick. A boy appears out of the blue and snatches the offending wrapper from under his stick. The boy thrusts it deep into a pocket already bulging with a quarter of a slice of stale bread—~~an~~ empty metal polish tin—~~a~~ well worn sock and four frayed clothes stops.

The Divisional Officer raises his eyes appealingly towards the heavens; the Establishment Officer writes thoughtfully in a small note book; the Second Divisional Officer mutters, turns on his heel and rushes headlong in the direction of 24 Mess.

The Captain moves slowly into 22 Mess.

Captain: "How long are they on course?"

Commander:

Divisional Officer:

Establishment Officer: "22 Weeks, Sir."

Instructor:

Captain: "How many Badge Boys sleep in the Mess?"

Commander (turning to Divisional Officer): "How many Badge Boys sleep in the Mess?"

Divisional Officer (turning to where the Second D.O. should have been): "How many ~~where~~ the devil's he gone?"

Instructor: "I don't know, Sir-~~four~~."

Captain: "You don't know?"

Instructor: "I don't know where he has gone."

Captain: "Where who has gone?"

Instructor: "The Second D.O., Sir."

Captain: "I didn't ask for him."

Instructor: "No, Sir."

The Establishment Officer frowns thoughtfully and writes in the small note book.

Captain: "How long has that window been broken?"

Divisional Officer: "Sixteen weeks, Sir. I rang about it yesterday and they are sending a man up tomorrow to put the stamp on it. It will be repaired about the middle of next term."

Captain: "Is that a sock hanging over the lamp shade?"

The retinue gather quickly under the lamp shade with upturned faces. The Commander frowns, places his hands in coat pockets with the thumbs outside and views the object from four different angles ~~then-~~

Commander: "Is it?"

D.O. (miserably): "Yes, Sir."

The Establishment Officer scowls and writes furiously in the small note book.

The Captain meanwhile is looking into a locker. He bends down, reaches into the dark recesses of the locker and produces a novel. The cover, in brilliant colour, depicts a beautiful blonde girl in tattered silk underwear straining at her bonds with the title splashed across the page "DAMES DIE DUMB."

Captain: "Is this sort of thing encouraged?"

Commander:

"No, Sir."

Divisional Officer:

Establishment Officer:

Instructor:

The Instructor reaches out for the novel, but the Second D.O. takes it from the Captain and thrusts it into his pocket-- then dashes wildly out of the Mess and disappears into the Long Covered Way.

The Captain moves slowly along the Mess, stops for a moment, looks into the corner of the Mess and murmurs—

"A cobweb."

The Commander turns to the D.O. and pointing, says almost genially, "A cobweb."

D.O.: "A cobweb, Sir."

Establishment Officer (menacingly): "A cobweb."

Instructor: (sadly): "A cobweb, Sir."

The procession moves majestically on. Cautiously the Instructor raises the dustbin lid, peers into the dark interior and then, with a hunted look in his eyes, replaces it carefully. With a start he realises that the Captain is looking over his shoulder and almost savagely he again removes the lid.

A mingled smell arises; a tinge of kipper perhaps, the merest trace of cabbage, a liberal touch of Ronuk, and perhaps a slight memory of "Evening in the Laundry." The Captain sniffs and turns to the D.O. asking—

"How often are these bins scrubbed out?"

The Instructor intervenes: "Once a week, Sir—with Izal."

Captain: "Was it done this morning?"

The Instructor hesitates, and then, as a definite smell of kipper wafts mockingly to his nostrils, replies: "Er—No, Sir. You see we only had two boys left in the Mess after the Confirmation Classes and the outside working parties and the backward swimmers had—" the sentence trailed off dismally. He remembered saying that last Rounds.

The Establishment Officer scribbles savagely in his small note book.

The Second D.O. returns at this moment and takes up his appointed station in the procession.

The Captain moves to the window and gazes out. Then turning to the Divisional Officer asks:—

"How is your Division getting on in the salvage drive?"

Divisional Officer (brightening visibly): "Oh—excellent, Sir. We have got two very interested and enthusiastic collectors in 24 Mess and they collect daily."

Captain: "Indeed? I see they haven't been round today yet."

A general surge to the windows and 22 Mess looks rather like the 4.17 train from Chatham arriving at Victoria. The Second D.O. takes one quick look and rushes headlong from the Mess into the Covered Way. The D.O. quickly loses his smile as the chant comes, window by window, from the third from the top "Paper on the Garden," "Paper on the Garden," "Paper on the Garden." The Establishment Officer jabs at the notebook and breaks his pencil.

The Captain then moves quickly to the door, murmurs something to the D.O. and rounds are over for another week.....

Twenty minutes later in the P.O.'s Mess.

"Hurry up, Harry—I need my tot after that. But he was beaten. He looked everywhere, stove, dustbin, fingers along the ledges, into each locker—but your old pal Charlie's too old a bird to be caught by all that boloney. I tell you Harry, the Captain turned to me as he left the Mess and he said: 'Very nice indeed, Instructor. Your Mess always makes Rounds a pleasure.' Ah well, bottoms up, Harry!"

Twenty minutes later in the Wardroom.

"Rounds over again. You know I will say this, I'm of the opinion that once the Captain has started on the Division it isn't one bit of use we Second D.O.'s dashing out to correct the faults he has found in the first Mess—I mean to say Old Man—#s so obvious—I never do it. By the way, would you like 'Dames Die Dumb' after me Fred ? You would ? Righto, I'll drop it in your cabin when I've finished it."

Malaya Today

Many people cannot understand why Communist activities in Malaya have been able to reach their present proportion, and indeed why the situation has not been cleared up long ago. Some put forward suggestions which are apparently logically sound, but which are in fact impossible to carry out in Malaya. This, I think, has led certain people to believe that the authorities in Malaya are apathetic and that the Military are not really trying their hardest to end the lawlessness.

Both these facts are far from the truth, but it is most difficult to get a full picture of the problems that beset the Security Forces (all those engaged in fighting the bandits) in Malaya, and until the background of the situation is grasped, wrong impressions are created. The object of this article is therefore to give a quick picture of what is happening, but it is not, and cannot be in the space allowed, comprehensive.

Geographically Malaya is about the size of England and Wales, although longer and not so wide. In the Northern part there are many more hills than in England, mostly steep sided, reaching 3,000 feet and 4,000 feet. The temperature, as you know, is hot and humid. It is this combination of heat and humidity which makes physical effort for Europeans difficult, causing excessive perspiration and fatigue after an expenditure of energy which in this country would be considered little. Four-fifths of the country is covered with jungle, providing a perfect hide-out for law-breakers, and of the other fifth a great proportion consists of rubber plantations, which can be and are used by the bandits.

There is only the veneer of civilization in Malaya. About a dozen towns as we know them, one North/South road, one subsidiary road up the East coast, half a dozen secondary roads to the East or West, but that is all. Even these few roads run through dense jungle. There are Malay Kampongs (villages) and Chinese Re-settlement Camps with their surrounding rice fields, but everything outside this is jungle or rubber plantations.

The country is therefore basically jungle or rubber.

Jungle, sometimes called "Ulu," is of two types. First there is the natural or primary jungle. This is similar to a large wood or forest with the trees reaching 70 to 100 feet and with trunks the diameter of two arms' span or greater. There are practically no paths and those that do exist seldom seem to go in the direction you wish. Everything is damp to saturation point and there is no wind to make any noise so that the silence and feeling of isolation experienced, especially in a small party, is intense. Because the sun never reaches inside the jungle, only the sturdiest shoots can grow, but vines thrive and bushes with thorny stems appear to flourish miraculously, regardless of the amount of tugging they receive when you are caught trying to get past. Hills are many, necessitating slippery uphill climbs, only to find a direct descent necessary and then another ascent at once. Leeches are legion, starting about the size of a matchstick and ending up as thick as a cigar, having gorged on your blood, uninvited and tax free. (Although they cause no pain they are invariably regarded with revulsion, and their nuisance value is directly proportional to their place of attachment).

This is not the "hell" that sensational journalists lead people to believe, but it is unpleasant and tiresomely monotonous, the danger being failure to keep alert and notice small indications that may give warning of approaching danger. One mile an hour is good going, but normally one allows for half-mile an hour.

Secondary jungle is growth over ground that has once been cleared. The growth is so prolific that up to 9 feet it is a mass of entwined bushes, vines, small

trees or anything else that happens to seed itself. This becomes matted and tough, requiring to be cut. It is slow and exhausting work with the sun beating down on you and even in this country would be hard work, but in Malayan heat a fit man is absolutely tired out after 10 minutes' cutting. Although there are no vast areas of secondary jungle, progress through this is terribly slow, sometimes as little as 100 yards per hour. Thus even small patches can be considerable obstacles.

Rubber plantations, another feature unknown in this country, are regimented trees, planted at about 15 feet intervals and sometimes running for miles. Visibility is about 40 yards and progress can be as great as two miles an hour in a plantation where the undergrowth is kept down well.

The population of Malaya is not only Malay, and indeed they are not even in the majority. There are just over 2½ million Chinese, just under 2½ million Malays, 1¼ million Indians and 50,000 Sakai (the wild, very timid people, who wear only loin cloths and live in small groups deep in the jungle). All these races reproduce at an incredible speed and consistency, but the Sakai suffer badly from sickness and starvation so that their numbers are slowly decreasing. However, it is abundantly evident that the Chinese, Malays and Indians are by no stretch of the imagination dying out. Language is another problem as there are about six different Chinese dialects, three Indian and two Sakai, but bazaar Malay is known to many.

The Chinese are a frantically industrious people, working seven days a week from dawn to dusk. They are farmers (farming rice, tobacco, and tapping rubber) shopkeepers and small businessmen. Many have entered the country illegally and have just hacked a farm out of the jungle wherever they have wanted and started farming. They are, in fact, squatters, paying no rent and having no legal standing. Their loyalty is divided between the Communists and ourselves. Whilst they may not be Communist, some would rather naturally prefer to see Chinese in power than British; whilst others help the bandits because they fear reprisals.

The Malay is unbelievably indolent, pleasantly mannered and pro-British. Work in any shape or form is not his pastime. He prefers to sit and wait for a coconut to fall rather than shin up the tree for it. Although pro-British, he does not consider that this should in any way impede his normal occupation, which is doing nothing. Nevertheless, sometimes when roused and well led they give a good account of themselves, removing bandits' heads with a skill and alacrity with their knives. Unfortunately they are completely unpredictable and the same lot may surrender to the bandits in more favourable circumstances to themselves the very next day. The Malay considers the country to be his by right, but it is not normally prepared to do more than talk about it.

The Indians are the low grade labourers, whose working capacity is directly proportional to the vigilance of their supervisors. It is extremely difficult to assess their political beliefs, even if they have any, because they will agree to anything with which they are directly confronted in order not to anger the person confronting them and thereby receive his wrath. They are nonentities in the bandit struggle, except that they will do all they can to avoid being involved in anything.

The Sakai are so timid that they help the bandits through abject terror and fear.

Virtually speaking, therefore, practically none of the population will give information about the bandits to the Security Forces. This is one of the main reasons for lack of success, as information of bandit movements and their very presence is withheld.

The Bandits started their Terrorism in July, 1948, with the object of turning the country Communist by gaining control of first a few small towns, later districts, then States and finally the whole country. However, although they have never gained control of any town or Malayan Kampong, they have succeeded in disrupting the country's economy by drastically retarding the production of rubber and tin and necessitating an armed force of about 23,000 to be maintained in Malaya. In spite of all efforts the situation has not eased in the last 18 months.

These bandits who started in 1948 had, with the British Force No. 136, fought the Japanese throughout the occupation of Malaya. It is from us during the war that they have learnt their tactics. Further, a fact not generally realised is that after the Japanese surrender on V.J.-Day, they, the Communists, had complete control and governed the country for ten days before we could organise people to come into the country and take over. They therefore have a hard core of fanatics who are well trained and practiced at guerilla warfare and have proved to their own satisfaction that they can govern.

The bandits work in two main parties. Firstly, there are those in uniform, who may be termed soldiers, and do the job of killing or frightening the local inhabitants and ambushing Security Forces. They live in camps a little way inside the jungle. The other party is the Min Yuen, who are their contact men in plain clothes, sometimes armed, who collect food, money, clothing, etc., for them from the local population. These are very astute men who know their district well and are concealed by the locals.

The bandits are able to choose their place and time of attack, obtaining their information from the locals, so that the habits, numbers and whereabouts of the Security Forces are well known to them. They are thus able to avoid meeting such forces or carry out their attacks on a post when it is depleted. They do not lack recruits but are short of arms and ammunition, and their intention in attacking Police Posts is generally to obtain weapons.

The Security Forces, which includes all fighting services and the Police, are naturally trying to seek out the bandits and destroy them. Information about bandits however is sketchy, inaccurate and sometimes treacherous so that the major proportion of encounters (other than when ambushed) are purely fortuitous. Looking for bandits in the jungle is literally like searching for a needle in a haystack, and just as useful and rewarding. (Visibility is only 20 yards and a man can lie hidden quite easily at six feet).

The Royal Navy's particular job is to stop illegal entry from the sea of any more Chinese, stop weapons being smuggled in, take troops around the coast or up rivers to land them behind bandits, bombard areas likely to be used by bandits and stop piracy. (Piracy is an old-fashioned and honourable Malay and Chinese profession in which they rush aboard a junk or into a village, sing "Yo Ho Ho and a Bottle of Rum" in Malay or Chinese, take what they want and then go. As soon as the villagers know that they have gone they come out and say, "We've been robbed." Latterly, however, the pirates have been helping the bandits if it suited their purpose, so their activities have been curtailed a little.

The Royal Marine Commando Brigade consisting of Bde. H.Q., 40 Cdo.' 42 Cdo. and 45 Cdo. are carrying out an ordinary Infantry job searching for and fighting the bandits, and the score stands, after 18 months, about 150 bandits killed for the loss of about 15. I hope that this brief description of Malaya helps you to realise what an immense feat this has been.