



292/293 Classes. P.O. Tel. Pitt P.O. Tel. Stanley	170/3 Classes. P.O. Hardy P.O. Pettit	311 Class. Yeo. Lucas
13/14 Classes. P.O. Price, C.P.O. Ball (Tempy.) P.O. Clackett	182/183 Classes. C.P.O. Tomkins P.O. Charlton	381/391 Classes. Yeo. Whittel. Ldg. Sig. Waggett

We wish P.O. Price and Yeoman Rye a quick recovery and return to "Ganges."

The beginning of the term saw the D.O. back as a married man and installed nearby as a "native." The organisation got away to a good start and we made a fair showing in the first Parade marks and in the Mess Rounds. Cross Country training commenced on the first day of the term and we scored a success by winning the Inter-Divisional Trophy on 24th January. Boy Reaney, of 14 Class, fell and broke a bone in his hand shortly after the start of the Junior Competition but gallantly finished and then retired to R.N.S.Q. for nearly three weeks.

We suffered a setback on the 21st January, when Boy Solid, of 272 Class, was detailed to cut down the dead Chrysanthemums in the tennis, court gardens. At the end of half an hour the Chrysanthemums were still standing but 128 Wall-flower plants were no longer in evidence. It so happened that a visiting Commander was studying MORALE in the Divisional Office when the news was brought in He said he had never seen Morale vanish so quickly before in a collection of Officers and Instructors. With any luck the survivors may be out in early September. The boy in question attended Saturday Backward Gardening Classes held by Mr. Whetstone.

88 and 89 Classes left us in January and C.P.O. Tomkins and P.O. Charlton went on pension for 3 weeks. It is rumoured that the latter obtained a job as a manager of the Felixstowe Laundry during this period.

The usual activities of the term progressed more or less favourably. We thought we had a good chance to win the 1st Water Polo League Cup but everything turned to naught in the Collingwood match and we eventually came 3rd. Basketball was more successful and we won the Cup after a classic game with Grenville which ended in a draw.



Parade Efficiency was maintained and we are just in the lead at present. If we can retain this trophy we shall have won it for three terms in succession. A great effort was put in the Mess Rounds marathon and we are trying hard to rake this one in for the first time in Hawke. Once again this competition is not finished and we do not know our fate as yet. The Messes with the aid of the Divisional Fund, bought flowers, bulbs, perfumed Duresco, table mats, d' oyleys, pictures and even special extension pieces for removing "Sammy Spider" who thought he was safe until we produced this new weapon of war. The king of them all is still reigning from the top of 46 Mess staircase, but we shall soon bring him down from his lofty perch when we get our "Extra Special Extension Piece" into commission:

No effort was spared in trying to impress the Inspecting Officers and we even managed to grow hyacinths in our Divisional Colours.



No. 3 Platoon.

A number of boys received "Ganges" Colours this term:-

Running.-Fox, W. J.; Halley, G. C.

Rugby.-Self, R. A.

Boxing.-P.O. Boy Jackson, Samyint, D. V.; Wallace, B.

Swimming.-Bradley, H. K.; Stocks, K. E.

This term has been a busy term and we have all felt the added responsibility of trying to do well in the Divisional Cup. Last term the score was kept for experimental purposes and it would have resulted in a win for Hawke. This term we are struggling for second position against Rodney.

We have had some surprisingly good results, but in some activities, e.g., Swimming Relays, and Style Cutter, where we put in even more than the usual effort, we got nowhere. Contrary to common belief at the time, we did not put in a great amount of extra practice in the .303 Competition but an outstanding run by P.O. Boy Robinson's No. 7 Section coupled with a good run by Nos. 8 and 9 Sections, brought home the trophy. The weather conditions on this day were ideal, which may have helped considerably.

Rugby was more successful than before so far as the 1st XV were concerned. Boys Self, Jackson and Campbell were the star turns, helped by Taberner, Stevens and Weston. The latter learnt the hard way that you are not allowed to pass the ball from the ground!

A big effort at Hockey produced nothing. Boy Johnson, late of Drake Division, showed some promise and should be worth watching in September.

In case any reader thinks that sport is the only thing that matters, we have given attention to producing good citizens and sailors from our merry band of boys. The kits this term have been surprisingly good and so has the cleanliness and appearance of the boys. There have been fewer defaulters than in any previous term in the Division and I must not conclude these notes without a tribute to the Instructors of the Division. These Chief and Petty Officers have formed a team whose efforts have been unrelenting and constant throughout the two terms we have been together. I hope all boys realise what they owe to their Instructors, and if they themselves make equally good Instructors when their turn comes, then we shall not have laboured in vain.

RESULTS—EASTER TERM, 1952.

Cross Country	1st	Parade Efficiency	... 1st (to date)
Soccer	3rd & 7th	.303 Rifle Competition	1st
Rugby	3rd & 8th	Swimming Proficiency	1st (to date)
Basketball ...	1st	Water Polo	3rd & 5th
Swimming Relays ...	7th	Hockey ...	5th & 7th
Style Cutter	3rd	.22 Competition	4th
Pulling Cutter	3rd	Piping	4th
Mess Cleanliness ...	1st (to date)		

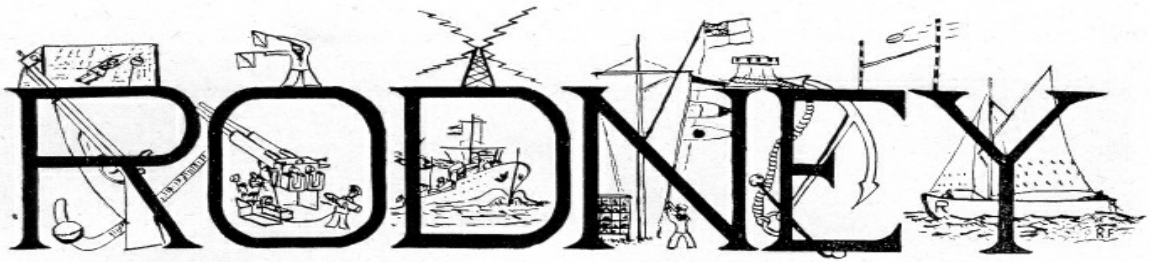
Inter-Class Swimming ... 1st (170/3 Classes).

The Heaving Line, Gym and Class Guard Competitions have not yet taken place.

Things "Harry Hawke" Wants to Know

- (1) Has Davy Jones been on locker routine ?
- (2) What kind of a bird is "A-Cockbill" ?
- (3) Who was the boy that got treatment at the Sick Bay on saying he had been stung by a hammock nettle ?
- (4) Has the Lazy Painter reported to the unemployment exchange ?
- (5) What kind of animals are caught in mess traps ?
- (6) Who killed the "dead wood" ?
- (7) Who was the boy that put our bell on the Divisional fire upon being told to "warm the bell"?
- (8) How many boys can tie a "Dhobey Hitch" ?
- (9) Who was the boy who went to the Implement Store for Extension Pieces for Sailmaker's Needles ?

J. P. B. E.



Divisional Officer; Lieutenant J. F. Kidd, R.N.

2nd Divisional Officer: Commissioned Gunner J. R. Forbes, D.S.M., R.N.

322/323 Classes ... P.O. Tel. Aston Jones

9/12 Classes ... P.O. Trickey, G.I.

178/179 Classes ... C.P.O. Muffett, G.I.

372/373 Classes ... P.O. Tel. Ulyatt

27/28 Classes ... P.O. Waters, G.I.

Divisional P.T.I. ... P.O. Jones.

P.O. Tel. Miller

Ldg. Seaman Drake

P.O. Norton

P.O. Tel. Wailes. P.

O. Murton

THE CONTINUED TALE OF ADOLPHUS (ERIC, OR FIDDLE BY FIDDLE).

Those of you who got as far as reading the Rodney Divisional Notes in the last issue are no doubt sick and tired of Boy 2/c Eric Adolphus. Take heart though, you are not half so sick and tired of him as his Instructors, and anyway, his story will continue.

After taking off his illicit Leading Seaman's badge in the train, changing his light blue collar and H.M.S. "Mars" cap tally, he rejoined at the beginning of the term looking reasonably respectable (except for his hair, which his girl friend likes long), and he was prepared to be rated a Boy First Class almost straight away. His Divisional Officer had different ideas. He invited Eric to lay out his kit.

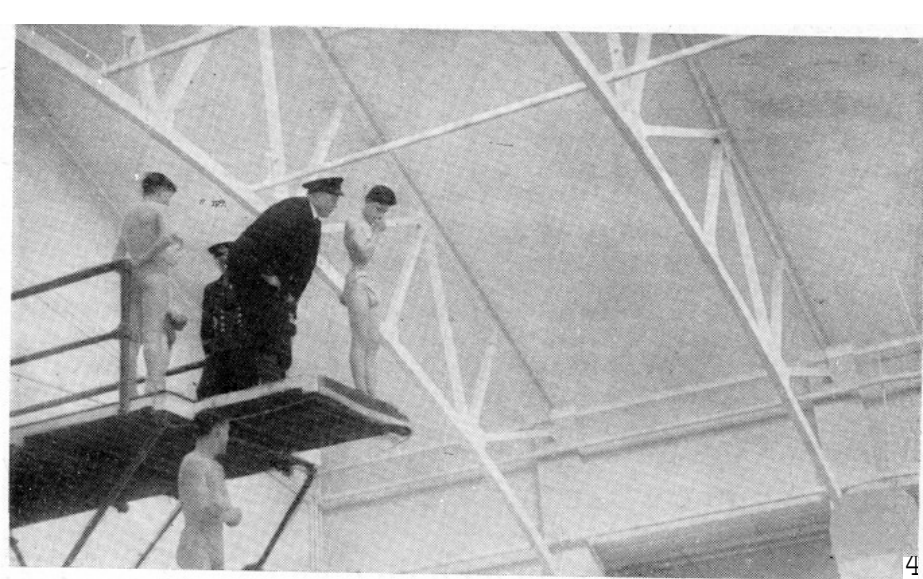
This was the start of a great deal of trouble and worry for Eric Adolphus. But after learning that hymn cards in his underwear were not calculated to improve the D.O.'s temper, and that holes in socks need darning and not just gathering together, he managed to produce a kit that, though it did not make the D.O. dance with joy, did persuade him to give it pass marks. His Instructors eventually gave a passable report on him (after he had offered to clean their gaiters); the School were eventually prepared to recommend him, for after all he was a First Class Marksman with ink-blobs and only carved other people's names on the desk; and, eventually, he was rated by the Commander one cold morning in Nelson Hall.

Next Wednesday, all prepared to pocket 7s. 6d., he confidently slammed his cap on the table and was given 5s. 6d. A crash muster had found two pillow covers adrift.

Having got over the hurdle of his first, and we hope not the last, permanent advancement in the Service, he prepared to enter the fray and win a few competitions for the Division.

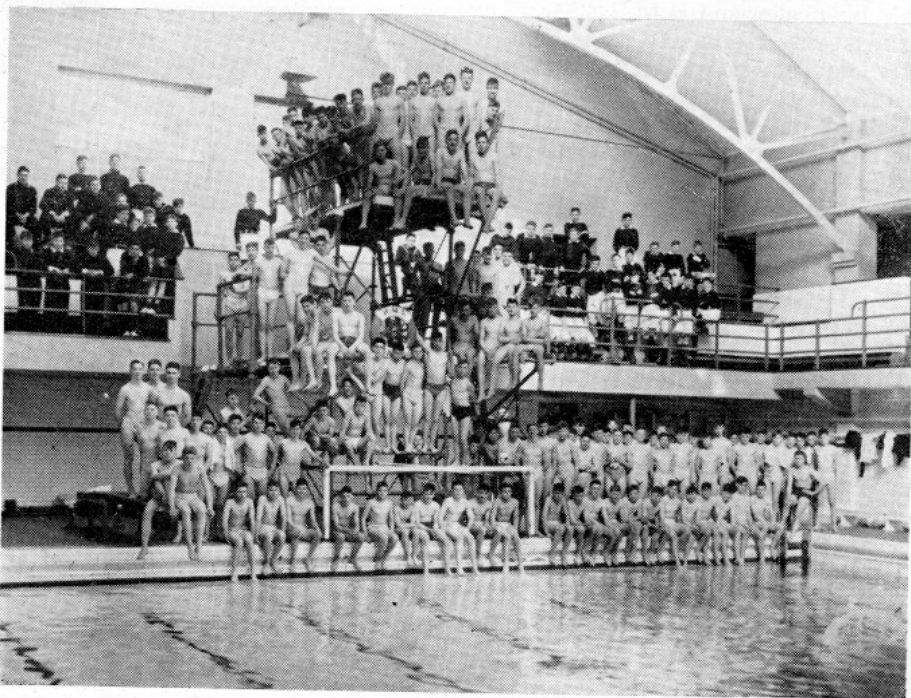
He played Soccer for the Divisional 2nd XI and during the play-off for points on S.1 in the middle of a cloud-burst, he decided that there was little, if any, difference between Soccer and Water Polo in those conditions, and for Water Polo the water was, at least, fairly warm.

Adolphus was no good at Rugby or Hockey. So, by a method of "careful" selection he became a member of his Mess Style Cutter's crew. This, and learning how to be a cat-burglar on the air-raid shelters and a poacher in the jungle on defence exercises, took all his spare time -for several weeks. But at the end of it he had the reward of seeing both the cutter trophies put into the Trophy Case



4

Some "Trickey" Advice on the High Board.



Rodney Division.

(AWAH!-RAMROD!) to join the swimming trophy, which had been won just before by a bit of "trickey" organisation and some very good swimming.

Once more Adolphus is about to go on leave to plague his Mum with his semi-nautical remarks and to give her a few hints on how to clean her tin gear. When he returns for next term he will have nearly done his time at "Ganges" and will have a draft routine to face. Then, after that, he must have learned to look after himself without having an Instructor to hold his hand all the time, and he has some way to go.

But before that happens he has the Summer term to see through, and the Summer term is a very different thing from the cold and miserable Winter one. The sun shines, the Sick Bay is empty, oilskins are never(?) worn, scissors cut grass and open windows instead of just being laid out for kits, boats day is enjoyable, there is cricket after supper, there is a fun-fair at Felixstowe—and the Queen has her Birthday.



Rodney Divisional Staff.

How I Passed My Swimming Test

Ordinary Seaman Snappitt had had a good run ashore on his first effort at all night leave, and now here he was down at the jetty gazing, with a perplexed frown on his forehead, at the fast receding stern of his ship's motor cutter, which had shoved off at 0700 with returning libertymen. "D_____, and set light to it; I reckon I'll have to see the 'Skipper' tomorrow and bang goes my date for tomorrow night."

After kicking a large size pebble into the drink, he sat down on a nearby bollard mentally bemoaning his luck, whilst he looked wistfully into the morning mist, making out the faint lines of his ship lying at anchor some two miles off shore. The next boat in from his ship, H.M.S. "Straightwash," would be the Officers' trip and that wouldn't be until 0800. "Of course I could swim off," ruminated our

tardy O.D. "and why not? The water in this French Port is quite warm, and I reckon I could do it by 0800, and then they can't put me in the rattle."

However, he shrugged his shoulders with another frustrated sigh: "What's the use anyway, I can't swim."

Swimming was the grim ogre hovering over Charlie's existence. He had joined during the war when it wasn't so hard to fiddle with one's draft chit, in spite of the alertness of certain swimming instructors always on the lookout for backward dodgers, and he had managed to evade the issue when drafted to sea.

He did call to mind, however, his Divisional Officer's remarks of two days previous to the effect that he, Ordinary Seaman Snappitt, would certainly pass out on his provisional swimming test whilst at the present port of call, and he had quite made up his mind that as like as not he would be stung to death by the myriads of jelly fish floating about, or at least be sucked under by one of those blue things with long tentacles.

Continuing to reminisce over the previous night's "Run," he failed to hear the fast motor boat draw up alongside, until a stentorian hail brought him from his reverie and he looked straight down into the benevolent face of his old oppo. who was at the wheel of the boat, which was no less than the Captain of the Fleet's personal barge. "Blimey if it 'aint old Lofty Small!" says Charlie. "What's up, mate? Missed the boat? Never mind, hop down here, I'm going your way, an' I'll drop you at your wagon."

Charlie needed no second bidding. He dropped gratefully into the cockpit and in a moment the boat was away in a flurry of spray.

On checking the time he discovered it was 0745, "How long will it take us to get to the 'Straightwash,' Lofty?" queries Charlie. "Oh, five minutes ought to see us there in this barge," replies Lofty.

Charlie was suddenly struck with a brilliant notion, here was a golden opportunity not only to clear himself for missing the boat, but also to pass the swimming test without the watchful supervision of his D.O., Sub. Lieutenant Greenstick. Leaning over to Lofty, he whispered in that worthy's ear, who laughingly nodded in agreement.

Rapidly closing the 'Straightwash,' the coxswain smartly swung the boat and cut off the engine. Sliding under the destroyer's bow Lofty took the boat almost to the accommodation ladder, and with a gentle splash, heard by nobody, Charlie went over the side of the boat, whilst Lofty caused the barge to pass unnoticed down the blind side of the next ship astern.

With a few desperate strokes Charlie made the ladder, and clawed his way on to the upper deck, water streaming from him from head to toes. No one saw his arrival on board for at that moment the Officer of the Watch and the Quartermaster were at the other gangway waiting for officers to man the boat taking them ashore on a sight-seeing tour. Thus Charlie had the whole of the Port side of the 'quarterdeck to his breathless, bedraggled self.

Charlie, hearing the order: "Alright motor boat, Shove off," tensed himself. "This is it," he said to himself. "Oh well, all or nothing." The O.O.W. followed by the Q.M., coming from the other side, stopped and stood staring in amazement at the sight of the figure which stood in enough water, and which was still dripping from him, to float a battleship.

However, before the O.O.W. or Q.M. could recover their equilibrium, Charlie squelched to attention and saluted, reporting "Returned on board, Sir. Please, permission to carry on forward?"

The O.O.W., being no less than Sub. Lieutenant Greenstick himself, made a hasty look round for signs of recent boat traffic alongside, but seeing none, replied:

"No, Snappitt, what the H— has put you in that condition and why did you miss the 0700 liberty boat?"

"Well, Sir, if you please it was a chain of coincidence." "

Such as?" queried the O.O.W.

"Well, Sir, when I arrived at the jetty this morning I found I had an hour to wait for the boat to come, and you know you told me, Sir, I had to pass my swimming test while we are here, well, Sir, I thought here is a good chance, to save you the trouble of organising a special routine, so I swam off, Sir."

"Do you mean to tell me Snappitt that you swam off the two miles to the ship, fully dressed as your are?" asked his D.O.

"Yes, Sir," replied Charlie, albeit with an air of innocence on his cherubic countenance.

"Incredible as it seems, I have no alternative but to believe you. Carry on forward now and change."

Whereupon Charlie saluted and carried on forward, telling all his chums of his exploit, adding greatly to the distance he covered in actual swimming

Suffice to say that Charlie was sent for by his D.O. the next day to be informed that the notation had been entered on his service certificate "PASSED SWIMMING TEST."

Memories of the Tobruk Run

In January, 1941, my ship, H.M.S. "Glenroy" having been torpedoed and thus put out of action for many months, most of her officers and crew were taken • off and other jobs found for them.

At that time, a force of tank landing craft was being formed in the Eastern Mediterranean, and as I came from a ship which had carried assault boats of various types of up to about twelve tons, I was naturally fully qualified to step aboard a craft of about three hundred tons and take charge, so I found myself in the new organization.

The L.C.T.s (then known unflatteringly as "A" Lighters) were being shipped to Port Said in sections, these being lashed to the upper decks of merchant ships.

The two types in being at the time were, curiously enough, the Mk. I and the Mk. II. The Mk. I had two Hall-Scott petrol engines and was more or less manageable and reliable. The Mk. II had three Napier Sea Lion petrol engines which required high octane fuel, and which drove three right-handed screws, making the craft ideal as an instrument of terror in a small harbour. To improve the C.O.s state of mind, should he at any time feel complacent, the Mk. II had practically no "astern" power, and the orders for three engines had somehow to be communicated by two telegraphs. The ship was not equipped with a sound signal, in case the C.O. became drunk with power.

The complement was two Officers (R.N.R. Skippers or R.N.V.R. Sub-Lieutenants or Lieutenants), a Petty Officer or Leading Seaman as Cox'n, an Ordinary Signalman, about eight seamen, and four engine-room ratings.

The accommodation was incredibly bad, the craft never having been designed for semi-permanent living on board, but only for, say, a few hours'—perhaps overnight—run. The ratings ate their meals and slung their hammocks between the engine-room bulkhead and the after end of the craft, and this confined space was tastefully furnished with the 'tween-decks portion of the steering gear and the

capstan for the kege-anchor. The Cox'n resided in solitary state in the wheel-house and shaved by the mirror of the periscope he used for steering when at sea in line ahead. The officers' accommodation was, of course, sumptuous by comparison, being the curtained-off corner of the galley-flat, which was abaft the wheel-house and took up the remainder of the superstructure. There was just enough room to provide two bunks and a small space in which the officers could pull their trousers on-one at a time of course, in reverse order of seniority. The galley-stove, opposite this curtained alcove, was coal-fired, and the funnel which carried off the hot exhaust fumes passed through the flat within a few feet of the bunks, so that what with these aids, and the normal Mediterranean warmth, we were, to say the least of it, cosy at all times, though somehow, in spite of all this luxury, we mysteriously and persistently lost weight.

Our original official armament was two single 2-pdr. pom-poms, though this was augmented every time we got at the captured weapons dump in Tobruk, the usual additions being Italian machine-guns which we mounted according to taste and convenience. These helped to make a comforting noise when necessary, but Fiats in particular always patriotically refused to fire if pointed at Savoia 79s.

The function of these L.C.T.s was to help to keep the 8th Army supplied. The Mk. Is had this job at its most difficult, because they started on the run from Alexandria to Tobruk when the latter port was entirely cut off by land, so that for half of the trip the coast was enemy-held. This meant almost certain air-attack from convenient bases by an enemy striving to prevent a single cargo reaching the besieged garrison. Losses were inevitable and numbers died along the route, killed in almost hopeless battles-two pom-poms against dozens of Stukas. Some had amazing escapes, as, for instance, a friend whose Mk. I L.C.T., loaded with land mines intended for the defensive belt around Tobruk, was hit fair and square in a dive-bombing attack. Though the bomb ploughed straight through cargo and ship, nothing exploded. The L.C.T. sank, and the entire crew stepped onto a second L.C.T. in company.

Another Mk. I had a rather unusual battle with a U-Boat. On this occasion, the cargo was a tank intended for a possible break-out from Tobruk. In the dark hours a U-Boat was encountered and a brisk action commenced, the result being in the balance until the tank crew joined in with their vehicle's weapons. The U-Boat, probably rather shaken, gave it up and dived. It is doubtful whether its German crew ever successfully classified their target of that night. The tank arrived safely in Tobruk, and proved of great help later, but the L.C.T. unfortunately, disappeared without trace on the return trip.

There were a number of memorable characters engaged on the "run" at this time, but one in particular stands out in my memory. He was a South African Lieutenant R.N.V.R., a stocky, powerfully-built fellow of soft voice and mild appearance. His fair wavy hair and blue eyes, however, were belied by some other characteristics. In the first place, he practised Yoga and claimed, though not boastfully, to be unable to feel pain. He would support this claim, if pressed, by taking a pair of dividers, flexing his calf muscle, and sliding the entire length of the points into the flesh without showing the least sign of discomfort. I saw this performed, rather diffidently, at a party. He had once inadvertently this time, taken off the top joint of his right thumb, whilst bringing an assault-boat alongside his ship in bad weather. Again he showed no sign of distress, and wandered along for a dressing only after seeing his boat on board and secured. Apart from this insensitivity to pain, he apparently had no nerves at all. Although attacked many times from the air, his L.C.T. was never known to request fighter assistance, though rumour had it that it would have been impossible anyway, as De Kock never had the faintest idea where he was. It was certainly true that his chart folio usually remained cosily stowed in its rack throughout the trip, and that when

a

pressed on one occasion by a supernumerary senior officer to state his position on the chart with which he had been persuaded for once to decorate his chart-table, he stated that he knew for certain he was somewhere, underneath the large saucer which reposed on the chart. He claimed to obtain a landfall by turning and steaming south until he heard dogs barking, a thought which may, or may not comfort some budding navigators.

De Kock survived the Inshore Squadron days only to disappear for good in more successful times, after being landed by Folboat from a submarine to reconnoitre the Italian coast.

Tobruk itself, once one arrived, was no haven of rest, and the steadily increasing number of wrecks in the harbour was graphic testimony to this. One picked one's way through the debris, and once alongside a jetty, it was often possible to look over the side, through the clear water, and see the eerie, quiet outline of a previous occupier of one's berth.

The A.A. defences in which practically everyone who could find a weapon took part, were no matter of derision for the attacking pilots. The Italians obviously disliked it, and I remember reading in the Australian Daily News Sheet of Tobruk, something to the effect that "the Italians approached the target area at 12,000 feet and made their usual attacking dive-upwards." Against this, I did once see what must have been an enthusiastic Italian beginner attempt to strafe a column moving round Tobruk harbour. Unfortunately for him, the column included a couple of Bofor crews who had by no means just joined, and several seconds after the first thrilling dive, he was suspended by his parachute over the burning remains of his beautiful Macchi, apparently being done to a turn. Actually, he ended up in Tobruk Hospital with a dislocated ankle.

Again in defence of individual Italians, I should mention the following incident, which occurred as we made a return trip from Tobruk. Whilst on watch, I received a diffident tap on the shoulder from a very inexperienced look-out, a replacement for a rating killed in a raid on the harbour.

"Aeroplanes," he said, casually, apparently pleased by the sight, and anxious that I should enjoy it, too. I turned in time to see two Savoia 79s letting go torpedoes in the general direction of our small convoy, upon which the look-out added the information that they were ours, and "dropping things on U-boats." We managed to make the "turn away" of "our" planes highly unpleasant with the pom-poms, and the merchant ship astern, very well handled, avoided the torpedoes by a matter of feet. Still, it has always seemed to me that those two pilots made a skilful, and, considering their distance from their friends, courageous attempt on this occasion.

I remember with pleasure one very successful manoeuvre in which our L.C.T.s took part, a few days before the 8th Army broke Rommel at El Alamain. We had been requested by Field Marshal Montgomery to stage a diversion which would keep occupied a certain German formation, likely to prove a nuisance. So, shortly afterwards, a decrepit L.C.T. moved in to 83 Quay, Alexandria, bows on, in full view of the local population (which included plenty of fifth-columnists). Two worn-out tanks were loaded on board and the L.C.T. pulled out, only to move round the harbour and put her cargo ashore in a different, more secluded place. The tanks came round to 83 Quay again, and were loaded into a second L.C.T. which repeated the drill, and so on 8 or 9 times. By evening, I imagine, many people in Alexandria were discussing the proposed landing, but the organisers took no chances, and we left harbour with plenty of fuss, our "Hunt" escorts even taking the trouble to put the fighters they controlled at a suitable height for being picked up by enemy radar.

We steamed along the coast, and once off the scene of the land-battle, steamed round in circles whilst the M.T.B.s and destroyers present fired off plenty

of tracer in the direction of the dark coast-line, and kicked up hell generally without actually doing anything dangerous. The whole group then steamed back to Alexandria for a late breakfast, and later in the day listened to enemy radio accounts of our "attempted landing" and our repulse, "with bloody losses."

Everyone "in the know" was so charmed with this colourful version of our enjoyable moonlight cruise, that we were asked to repeat the exercise five nights later. We were naturally driven off with the same bloody losses as previously.

We were heartily thanked by Monty, and informed that the feints produced exactly the right result, which was that the German 90th Light had to be moved to deal with this new, apparent threat. We hoped they were still sitting waiting on the coast when the 8th Army broke through elsewhere.

After the break-through, we were, of course, kept busy rushing up stores after our advancing troops. It was during this period that I was well and truly shipwrecked in the good, old-fashioned way, on a lee shore.

All sorts of improvised landing-places were used to beach cargoes, and one of my runs was with 40-gal. drums (not completely filled) of water. The scheme was to manhandle them into the sea, and have them floated ashore in the event of the selected beach being unsuitable for a dry landing. I ran into Sollum Bay and made for the section of the beach marked-off with improvised buoys. We grounded before beaching, and started to dump the drums to be picked up by the waiting soldiery, by then in the sea up to their chests.

We listened with satisfaction, as we worked, or watched to a B.B.C. report stating that the Middle East section of the Luftwaffe had ceased to exist. Unloading was then interrupted by a couple of Ju. 88s which must have been overlooked somehow.

Just after this diversion, a very sudden storm blew up, and I discovered, whilst endeavouring to haul off, and put to sea, that the Beach Party had overlooked a number of large rocks in their reconnaissance. My screws and rudder had found them. To cut a long story short, I had to give the order "Abandon Ship," and this was carried out through what had become really heavy seas, smashing over the ship, by then completely broached-to, and our miserable, soaking selves

We stood by on the beach, and after about three days of laying out anchors in every conceivable direction, and a lot of help from a bull-dozer and a tug, L.C.T. 112 was eventually water-borne once more, though somewhat battered.

During the same night in which we took our pounding, another L.C.T., 104, foundered about forty miles from Bardia. A South African Whaler A/S ship in Bardia picked up her distress signal and position, put to sea, and by a miracle of luck and navigation steamed straight to the exact spot where the survivors were hanging on to Carley floats in pitch darkness, and battered by a filthy storm. Only one rating, a non-swimmer, was lost.

Most of our losses could be put down to taking worthwhile risks. My own L.C.T. was landed in a bad position because soldiers *had* to have water somehow. L.C.T. 104 was lost because she was loaded so full in the exigencies of the situation, that her crew could not possibly get at the appropriate valves in the emergency which, by bad luck, did arise.

112 was repaired in time to make another run from Alexandria to Benghazi, and from Benghazi to Tripoli, where I was relieved and told to find my own way home.

I optimistically assumed after my three years abroad, that the authorities, delighted with my contribution, were sending me home for a rest. I was not at flattered, on arrival, to find that I was a highly valuable fellow, a seasoned Combined Operator, and, by a strange coincidence, just in time for the assault on Normandy. They persuaded me to go, in the end, but that's another story.