



The Rum Tub or Norrie's Nocturnal and Nautical Natter.

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A Yorkshire treat

A Yorkshireman and his wife walked past a swanky new restaurant last night...

"Did you smell that food?" she asked... "Wonderful!"

Being the 'Kind Hearted Yorkshireman', he thought,

"What the heck, I'll treat her!"

... So they walked past it again...

HMS Ulster

Volume 1,

Issue 5

December, 2012



Editorial



A Very Merry Christmas & Happy New year



Well here we are into the Festive Season and the last newsletter of 2012, I thought about making it the last newsletter ever as I still get little or no response to my efforts. I was hoping (maybe foolishly) that some of you might have some good and amusing anecdotes to share, maybe a comical incident in your naval or civilian careers; at the very least it would be nice to get some response out of the majority of you who for whatever reason cannot seem to find the "Reply" button on their email, or cannot be bothered. If this hits a nerve then I am apologize. I have great pleasure and satisfaction running the website and producing this newsletter for your reading pleasure, surely it's not too much to ask for a simple response?

Enough said on that subject, as I formulate these few words I see we are only 303 days away from our Stafford reunion, which I feel sure promises to be a really good one. A complete change of venue, a different part of the country and the added bonus it will give our central and northern shipmates less driving. If you have not yet made a booking I encourage you to do so.



Bookings to date are: Nine (9) Doubles, Six (6) Singles & Two (2) Twins for a total of 17 rooms and a total of 26 people. So lots of rooms left, all very nice. Angela and I were made most welcome on our inspection tour and weekend stay there Shipmates do let me know when you have booked in, so I can keep a running tally.



Angela and I wish you all and all of your families a Very Merry Christmas and a Prosperous and Healthy New Year.

May all your prezzies be big ones!

SHOVEWOOD

From "Roll on My Twelve" by David Bolster Adapted by Norrie Millen

Part II (Continued from last issue)

But before the avalanche descended on that store, the two badge locum tenens had time to fling himself at the book and stare. There was the entry, no doubt at all:

It was better to confess to the departing Admiral that the shovewood could not be produced. C.S.33 was displeased: "Send me a signal when I can come and see it."

As soon as he had been piped away, an inquest was held. The P.O. Jack Dusty swore he'd seen the shovewood only the other day, so did the TGM. The wretched storekeeper swore he'd never seen it at all. The Boatswain said the damn thing must be somewhere, you could hardly run a ship of this class without a shovewood. The CERA concurred. The Pay Bob said the thing to do was to find out whose charge the shovewood was on and then jump on him, by God! The Chief GI said that in all his twenty-two years in the service he'd never known a shovewood lost before. The Commander said he doesn't want to listen to drivel; he wanted something done. At this point the Gunner (G) who wanted to get to his gin, took his courage in both hands and, feeling moderately sure that all those present were as ignorant of the shovewood as himself, said, "Well sir, if it can't be found, I'm sure my department could run up quite a satisfactory one in no time, something like this" and he began to sketch on a signal pad.

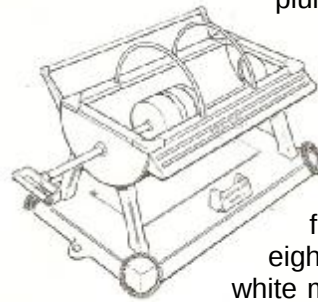
But the Commander (E) broke in with "I think this is a matter for my department," and snatched the sketch out of the gunner's hand.

Commander (E) bustled off with the CERA in attendance, but the Chief Shipwright wasn't going to let him away with it on his own, so he too shot off towards the workshops. The Boatswain strolled away with the Chief Boatswain's Mate. All the others looked wise and seamanlike and drifted off to lunch.

The messdecks, of course, by now had the whole story. At first some of the younger ratings were bold enough to say that they'd never heard of a shovewood, they couldn't believe there was such a thing. But this talk came to an ignominious end as one three-badgeman after another spoke of shovewoods they had had; had lost and had mended. They talked of modifications that had come out in the shovewoods; of different marks of shovewoods; they recalled dates on which the allowance of shovewoods to Cruisers and above

had been revised; but most of all they told how they personally, had been congratulated on the way they kept their shovewood....."an', e says to me, e 'says, I 'aven't seen a polish like that what you've got on that there shovewood, not since I was No.1' on the Yacht."

The very next day it was reported the shovewood was ready. A signal was made. The Admirals barge was seen to leave the flagship, and as he came over the side, there in the waist, just before the quarterdeck, stood the shovewood. It was a fine wooden trough standing on four stout legs painted battleship grey, with gleaming copper hoops over the top and brass capping and corner-plates. Chippy had supplied a teak stand with eyes to take deck bolts, a rubbing- strake of mahogany and a plunger with a handle, also of mahogany, as well as brass work on the trough. The ERA's had fitted a brass band around the plunger; and the



Boatswain's party had given it a leather capping and a baize grip secured with a couple of Turk's heads. They had, further, pointed four eighteen inch lengths of white manila and fitted them at the corners of the stand by way of fenders. The Gunner's party, off their own bat had made and supplied two stainless steel rules, one in inches and one in centimeters, which were bolted along the sides of the main trough, where they caused more jealousy and ill-feeling than ever with the Engine-room department who felt that supplying precision rulers was their pigeon. Finally, a canvas cover, complete with hemp lanyards, had been made by the men under No. 9 punishment; and this was folded down on the deck at the head of the noble appliance.

"Aha," said the Admiral, "I see, you wanted to tiddly it up a bit before I saw it. I believe you were sent out here in rather a rush, weren't you? Well you've made a very fine job of it. Tell me do you find it useful?"

Yes Sir," replied the Captain unblushingly, "very useful."

On the strength of this reply, the Admiral, when he got back to his flagship, made a signal to the squadron; "Report number of shovewoods held." There was of course a nil report, so 'His Nibs' made another signal; "Technical staffs of all ships

are to repair on board 'Mombresia' to take measurements and details for shovewoods which are to be constructed by ship's staffs."

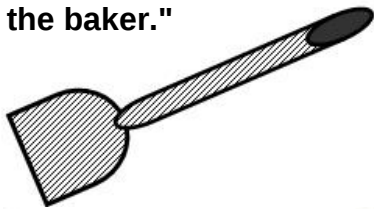
It was not until every ship in the 33rd Destroyer Cruiser Squadron could boast a gleaming new shovewood that Nobby, the three-badge Jack Dusty, reported fit for duty. He was met, as he came over the side, by his relief and straightway hauled down to the store.

"ere Nobby, now tell me, will yer, what is a bloomin' shovewood?"

"Shovewood? Never 'eard of it, ain't no such thing."

Yes there is. 'ere Look at this yer entry own in 'andwritin'."

"Good Lord," breathed Nobby "that ain't shovewood, that's meant to be - Shovel Wood, That's a spare we carries for the baker."



**No Madam, I don't flog my sailors
You can have one for nothing!**

"IT'S A BOY" I shouted "IT'S A BOY, I DON'T BELIEVE IT, IT'S A BOY" and with tears streaming down my face I swore I'd never visit another Thai brothel!

POMPEY The slang for Portsmouth, and there are three theories for the nickname. The 80-gun French warship *Le Pompée* was captured in 1793. She later fought with distinction in the battle of Algeciras in 1801 and then became guard ship of Portsmouth Harbour. Others say it was from a drunken sailor's interruption of a talk by Agnes Weston, the naval temperance worker. He surfaced from a beery sleep during her lecture on the Roman Empire to hear that the general Pompey had been killed. **'Poor old Pompey'** he is said to have shouted. The most likely reason is that in 1781 some Portsmouth-based English sailors scaled Pompey's Pillar near Alexandria, 98 feet (30 m) up in the air and toasted their ascent in punch. Their feat earned them the Fleet's tribute as 'The Pompey Boys'.

Here's a poem I'm sure all that crossed the bar passed.

THE FINAL INSPECTION

The sailor stood and faced God,
Which must always come to pass.
He hoped his shoes were shining,
Just as brightly as his brass.

'Step forward now, you sailor,
How shall I deal with you?
Have you always turned the other cheek?
To My Church have you been true?'

The sailor squared his shoulders and said,
'No, Lord, I guess I ain't.
Because those of us who carry guns,
Can't always be a saint.

I've had to work most Sundays,
And at times my talk was tough.
And sometimes I've been violent,
Because the world is awfully rough.

But, I never took a penny,
That wasn't mine to keep,
Though I worked a lot of overtime,
When the bills got just too steep.

And I never passed a cry for help,
Though at times I shook with fear.
And sometimes, God, forgive me,
I've wept unmanly tears.

I know I don't deserve a place,
Among the people here.
They never wanted me around,
Except to calm their fears.

If you've a place for me here, Lord,
It needn't be so grand.
I never expected or had too much,
But if you don't, I'll understand.

There was a silence all around the throne,
Where the saints had often trod.
As the sailor waited quietly,
For the judgment of his God.

'Step forward now, you sailor,
You've borne your burdens well.
Walk peacefully on Heaven's streets,
You've done your time in Hell.'



An old Matelot sitting watching the ships
sail out to sea was asked,
"At your ripe age Jack, what would you
prefer to get - Parkinson's or Alzheimer's?"
The wise Old Sailor answered, "Definitely
Parkinson's."
Why that the interviewer asked.
"Better to spill half a tot of Rum than to
forget where the hell you keep the bottle!"



A GI was stranded on a remote
desert island. Two years later
the officer of the rescue party
landed on the beach and said.

"Well G.I., You're looking
remarkably good for your long
incarceration".

"Yes sir! Kept my body fit, created
parade grounds to double over
all over the island. Looked
after my body sir".

"How did you manage to survive? What did
you eat?"

"Bananas, sir, berries, the odd root or two.
Kept myself fit sir, looked after my body
sir".

"What about water, G.I.?"

"Rain water sir, the dew in the morning, the
occasional coconut. Channelled it all and
regulated it sir. And kept myself fit sir,
looked after my body sir". "What about..
er....well you know G.I. What about ...sex?"
Seeing the G.I. blush he continued "Well, it
has been a long time!"

"Well....."said the G.I. "I went almost two
years without it, sir. Never missed it! Kept
myself pure sir.....And then last week", he
said hesitantly, "I was doubling across the
parade ground at the north end of the
island when I saw an ostrich. With its head
in the sand and its back towards me". "As I
was watching those big muscular legs
something came over me sir" he said very
sheepishly. "I crept up behind it, grasped
the legs, and well, you know !"

"My God G.I.", said the landing officer,
"What was it like?"

Well... O.K. for the first two
miles....but then we fell
out of step sir!"



***"We are Fred Karno's Navy we are the RND,
We have no ships - we have no guns, what bloody use are we?
But when we get to Berlin the Kaiser will decree,
Ach' Ach' Mein Gott. vot a bluddv fine lot are the boys of the
RND***

But who were the RND?

The RNVR was established in 1903, eleven years later Naval reservists were the first to be mobilised on the outbreak of hostilities. 45,000 of them served with the Royal Navy and the Royal Naval Air Service but in 1914 there were 15,000 more volunteers than there were sea billets available for them. With a fortnight of the start of the war Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty, took the decision to form two Naval Brigades for fighting on land. Most of the reservists were drafted to this new Royal Naval Division would have preferred to have gone to sea; it was after all what they had volunteered for. There was also some opposition to the idea from Naval Staff who realized that they would have to train and pay for what was effectively Churchill's private army.

Churchill prevailed over the opposition and the division rapidly took shape with some Brigade of Guards retired officers helping to strengthen the ranks of RN and RM officers and senior rates. Miners, particularly from the North of England and South Wales made up a large proportion of the RND. A new Entry depot was opened at Crystal Palace. 125,000 recruits would eventually pass through its gates, of whom over a quarter became casualties killed or wounded.



[The Royal Naval Division Memorial on Horse Guards Parade, London](#)

Despite their unexpected role as land combatants, the officers' and men of the RND maintained their Naval individuality - beards, White Ensigns, the use of Naval ranks and rates, the rum ration and "jackspeak" (naval slang) all contributed to their sense of identity. The battalions were named after famous Admirals (Drake. Anson. Hood. Nelson. Hawke. Howe. Collingwood and Benbow). Many eminent men were attracted to the RND - Arthur Asquith (son of the Prime Minister - it took him just three years to rise from Sub Lieutenant to Commodore. Rupert Brooke (who succumbed to an infected mosquito bite before reaching the scene of the action), A P Herbert the writer and so forth.

The RND's first action was an unsuccessful attempt to keep the German forces out of Antwerp. The men had only their rifles a week when they were embarked; the operation proved unsuccessful and the Division withdrew leaving 60 dead and 900 prisoners who played no further part in the rest of the war. The next venture was the assault on Gallipoli where the Division fought with great gallantry and suffered over 7,000 killed and wounded out of a total of 16,000.

By now the Naval Staff were quite impressed with the division's performance and supported Churchill when attempts were made to incorporate the RND into the Army. In 1916 the Division found itself in France, attacking and taking what had previously been thought to be impregnable German positions, again with a high casualty rate, over 4,000 killed and wounded. The RND spent the rest of the war fighting on the Western front, invariably at the sharp end of any action, when the Armistice came, the RND was still in its spearhead position, the nearest British units to German territory.

During the course of the war, the RND lost about 11,500 men killed and over 35,000

wounded, accounting for more than 40% of total RN casualties whilst numbering no more than 4 - 5% of the total RN strength. The Division won a proportionately large number of VCs, One of the reasons that the RND is little known today is that after the War the Admiralty was naturally not at all keen to mention anything which detracted from the mainly successful sea operations and correspondingly inclined to play down the high casualty rate in the trenches. There was a tremendous *esprit de corps* among the survivors, however and after disbandment in 1919 money was raised to commission Sir Edwin Lutyens to design a suitable memorial on the corner of Old Admiralty Building overlooking Horse Guards parade Ground. The site and design of the memorial were personally approved by His Majesty the King George V. Lines by Rupert Brooke were carved on the stone of the memorial's plinth.

At the beginning of the Second World War, the memorial was dismantled and removed for its own protection and subsequently re-erected in the grounds of the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, where it formed the focus of the annual reunions. Inevitably the passage of the years took its toll and the final parade of the survivors took place in 1981. The Memorial remained, looking more and more unloved as time went by; it was mainly regarded by the young officers passing through the College as a handy means of climbing over the perimeter fence to get to the Trafalgar pub.

When Greenwich ceased to be a Naval establishment around ten years ago a committee with the Prince of Wales as its Patron was formed to raise funds to bring the Memorial back to its rightful place in the heart of the capital. All the necessary agencies gave their permission and work was started to refurbish and repair the memorial.

The Ceremony of Re-dedication took place on Thursday 13 November 2003 in the presence of H.R.H Prince Michael of Kent.

Heritage of South Africa Beginning of British Influence The Royal Navy Opens Fire

On 7 August 1796 the Cannons of five British Warships in False Bay, under the command of Vice Admiral George Keith Elphinstone on board H.M.S. Monarch were turned on Muizenberg and the first shots were fired in the capture of the Cape. Ashore were 900 armed men, made up of troops under the Dutch East India Company and burghers from the Cape Colony all led by the Deputy Commander of the Cape garrison Colonel Carel Willem de Lille.

The confrontation was short lived. After the first salvo was fired and threatened by the advance of 1600 Royal Marines & British soldiers from Simonstown, De Lille and his men fled to Diep River. The next morning De Lille returned, but again his nerve failed him and after engaging the British at Steenberg and Retreat, he pulled back to Wynberg, where he was relieved of his post.

On the 4 September, another fleet of British ships sailed in with 5000 reinforcements. Ten days later, the combined British force advanced on Cape Town. The Dutch scattered from Wynberg and the British took Newlands the same day. On 16 September the Dutch capitulated at Rustenburg and the garrison surrendered their arms. British Forces first landed at the Cape in 1796. General Sir David Baird launched the second invasion 10 years later, when Commodore Sir Home Riggs Popham on board H.M.S. Diadem 64 guns landed the troops on the 8th to

At the unveiling on 25 April 1925 Churchill said: Everyone I think must admire the grace and simplicity of this fountain, which the genius of Lutyens has designed. The site is also well chosen. Here, under the shadow of „ the Admiralty Building where 11 years ago, the Royal Naval Division was called into martial life, of this monument now records their fame and preserves their memory Doubts and disillusion may be answered by the sure assertion that the sacrifice of these men was not made in vain. This fountain is to the memory of the Royal Naval Division will give forth not only the waters of honour, but the waters of healing and the waters of hope".

the 18th January 1806. Three months after the Battle of Trafalgar on the 21st October 1805. Which Victory gave Britain supremacy of the Seas.

An eighty year old woman walked into the day room of a Care Home and held up a clenched fist. 'If anyone can guess what I have in here they can have sex with me' she said. A male voice from the back of the room shouted, 'An elephant' The woman thought for a moment and replied, 'That's close enough'

One for the Stokers

From Terry Breverton's "Nautical Curiosities"

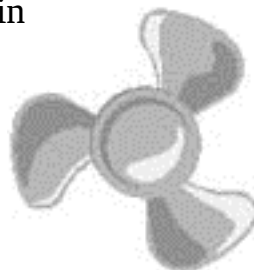
"Screw Smith" 1808-74

The Inventor of the Screw Marine Propeller

Before the end of the 18th century several patents were taken out for screw propellers, but nothing practical was done until Francis Pettit Smith to experiment. 'Screw Smith' a farmer who grazed sheep on Romney Marshes in Kent. His first model was made in 1834, when Smith was 26 years old. The screw in his boat was worked by a powerful spring.

Two years later he took out a patent for propelling vessels by means of a screw revolving beneath the water at the stern, and later that year a small steam vessel of 10 tons with an engine of 6 hp was built to test the invention. The vessel was tried on the Thames, and ran well but slowly. As she sailed up the river the wooden screw struck some floating timber and broke in half, but the boat was propelled forward more rapidly than before

The screw had been in two turns. Smith therefore fitted a new screw with only one turn, with which vessel worked much better, and the modern screw propeller, with which all ships are fitted,



is of this one-turn shape. In 1839 he produced the Archimedes, a wooden vessel of 237 tons fitted with his patent screw. Her builders said she would not do more than 5 knots (6 mph/9 kph), but her speed was no less than 9.5 knots (11 mph/17.5 kph). In 1840 she made a tour of all the major ports of Great Britain.

After seeing and examining the Archimedes, the great engineer Brunel redesigned his ship Great Britain and fitted her with a screw. The Great Britain, built in 1843, was 274 feet (83.5 m) in length, and much the largest steamer which had been launched up to that date.

The first British warship to be fitted with a screw was the Rattler, of 888 tons. Trialled against the Alecto, a paddle ship of similar power, the Rattler easily won. Smith's invention was successful, but by 1856, when his patent expired, he had exhausted all his money by developing and testing it.

However, the Institute of Civil Engineers subscribed £2000 as a testimonial, Queen Victoria gave him a Civil List pension of £200 a year and he was made

Curator of the Patent Museum at South Kensington. In 1871, three years before he died, he was knighted

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West Country Slang

Many sailing terms have been shortened as a result of the influence of West Countrymen at sea – vittles, bos'n, cox'n, fo'c'sle, for-ard etc. One of the best examples in spoken English is the Bristol slang 'Armchair they? Enquiring the price of items. It is a vernacular way of asking 'How much are they?'

CHRISTMAS CAKE RECIPE.

Ingredients:

- 2 cups flour
- 1 stick butter
- 1 cup of water
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 cup of sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 cup of brown sugar
- Lemon juice
- 4 large eggs
- Nuts
- 1 bottle rum
- 2 cups of dried fruit

Method:

Sample the rum to check quality.
Take a large bowl, check the rum again.
To be sure it is of the highest quality, pour one level cup and drink. Repeat.
Turn on the electric mixer.
Beat one cup of butter in a large fluffy bowl.
Add one teaspoon of sugar.
Beat again. At this point it's best to make sure the rum is still OK. Try another cup... Just in case.
Turn off the mixerer thingy. Break 2 eggs and add to the bowl and chuck in the cup of dried fruit.
Pick the festering fruit up off floor. Mix on the turner. If the fried druit gets stuck in the beaterers just pry it loose with a drowscriver.
Sample the rum to check for tonsisticity. Next, sift two cups of salt. Or something. Check the rum. Now shift the lemon juice and strain your nuts.
Add one table. Add a spoon of sugar, or some fink. Whatever you can find.
Greash the oven. Turn the cake tin 360 degrees and try not to fall over.
Don't forget to beat off the turner.
Finally, throw the bowl through the window.
Finish the rum and wipe counter with the cat.
Go to Sainsbury's and buy cake.

Bingle Jells!



Submitted by Steve Jackson ex-CPO USN

"Above and Beyond" now at NEW LOCATION

When visitors first enter the museum, they will hear a sound like wind chimes coming from above them and their attention will be drawn upward 24 feet to the ceiling of the two-story high atrium.

Dog tags of the more than 58,000 service men and women who died in the Vietnam War hang from the ceiling of the National Vietnam Veterans Art Museum in Chicago on Veterans Day, November 11, 2010. The 10-by-40-foot sculpture, entitled Above & Beyond, was designed by Ned Broderick and Richard Steinbock. The tens of thousands of metal dog tags are suspended 24 feet in the air, 1 inch apart, from fine lines that allow them to move and chime with shifting air currents. Museum employees using a kiosk and laser pointer help visitors locate the exact dog tag with the imprinted name of their lost friend or relative.

Requiescat In Pace

Children in church

One particular four-year old prayed, "And forgive us our trash baskets as we forgive those who put trash in our baskets."

A little boy was overheard praying: "Lord, if you can't make me a better boy, don't worry about it. I'm having a real good time like I am."