



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

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Microsoft have a "Spell Checker" and a "Grammar Checker", sadly they don't have an "Idiot Checker" which I could do with. For those of you that have been involved with writing in any form, you will know and appreciate it is literally impossible to proof one's own work. There were a few glaring errors in the last edition which was discretely pointed out to me. I future I will attempt to have another pair of eyes proof read my work.

HMS Ulster

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Editorial

By Shipmate Norrie Millen



By the time this latest newsletter reaches you it will only be approximately 225 days to our 'last' big reunion. No doubt the faithful few will continue to stage mini reunions after that somewhere in UK. If you have not already done so, please consider getting your bookings in. It will be the 'Skippers' last reunion and I urge you all to attend to bid him farewell.

Since the last issue I have clocked up a few miles, first driving up to Scotland to celebrate Christmas with my two sons, a thousand miles round trip; and not the best of Christmas I have ever had. Arrived to find both my sons unwell, youngest with a heavy cold and quite severe ear infection, my eldest just being diagnosed with coeliac disease (pronounced see-liac) In short Gluten intolerant. This compounded with his already Lactose Intolerant disorder and being a Type 2 diabetic, he will be on a very special diet for rest of his life.

Christmas Lunch was a disaster. We had booked a table at a rather (normally) upper class and excellent hotel. They were offering a five course lunch for £49.95 per person. There was a choice of three starters, a set soup, choice of three main courses and five choices of dessert following by cheese & biscuits and coffee/tea + mints.

The starter and soup was excellent, but main course saw enough food on all four plates which would have hardly provided a meal for one. (We had booked a gluten free meal which they had forgotten to prepare). Some of us had the beef and others turkey, the slices being measured with a micrometre! We each had two sprouts, two slices of carrot, three small chunks of turnip and one roasted potato. When we caused a stink they brought a small bowl of extra potatoes, but lost their way back to the table with the extra veg. I had a few heated word with manager who knocked £50.00 off the bill, which I accepted but warned duty manager it was not they last they would hear about the issue.

My second trip was to Southampton where I sadly attended the funeral of my youngest cousin aged just 60, who had died of lung cancer and she was a non-smoker!

January was not a great month for the Millen household either. Angela contracted a very severe viral chest infection which saw her blood pressure plummet and severe dehydration, which in turn caused almost total kidney failure. Just got her to hospital; in time to get kidneys working again and boost BP etc.

Acting as head cook, bottle washer, laundry maid and nurse, I got so run down I contracted the chest infection too! The 'Golden Years' are turning into 'The Rusty Years' as everything seems to be seizing up or breaking down! The way I see it anyway!.

THE PALMER BOYS

Submitted by S/M John Soanes

A POIGNANT TALE OF THREE BROTHERS WHO MADE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE DURING WORLD WAR TWO.

Mrs Jessie Palmer of Laindon, Essex had five sons, her eldest boy was Charles. On the 15th April 1921 Charles Palmer joined the Royal Naval Training Establishment at Shotley, Suffolk, known as *HMS Ganges*.

On completion of initial training he spent the next year serving in *HMS Monarch* and *HMS Conqueror*. In December 1922 Charles Palmer was posted to stand by for service in the Danae Class Cruiser *HMS Diomedé* which was being fitted out at Portsmouth. For the next three years he served in *Diomedé* in the 5th Light Cruiser Squadron of the China Fleet, followed by a drafting to *HMS Cairo* which was part of the 8th Cruiser Squadron on the American and West Indies Station. In 1928 *HMS Cairo* became Flagship of the Mediterranean Fleet before finally returning for a refit in 1930. After a period in *HMS Vernon*, Charles was to join *HMS Cornwall* for another three year commission in the Far East. On return to the UK he served for three years in home waters in the destroyers *Saladin* and *Vega* and enjoyed some well-earned shore time in Pompey Barracks.

On the 7th June 1939 Charles Palmer joined *HMS Royal Oak* and, as we all know this battleship was torpedoed and sunk by Gunther Prien Commander of *U.47* whilst at anchor in Scapa Flow on 14th

A Sunday school class was studying the Ten Commandments. They were ready to discuss the last one. The teacher asked if anyone could tell her what it was. Susie raised her hand, stood tall, and quoted, "Thou shall not take the covers off the neighbour's wife."

October 1939 with the loss of over 800 lives. On 15th October 1939, Jessie Palmer received the following telegram *“Deeply regret to report death of your son Charles J. Palmer Able Seaman J/101960 on War Service. Rear Admiral, RN Barracks Portsmouth”*.

In June 1924 Albert Palmer, second son of Jessie, joined *HMS Ganges* where he trained a Boy Telegraphist. Whilst at *Ganges* he won a Championship Medal for winning the cross country race for the Signals Division in 1925.

Albert served in many ships prior to World War Two including *HMS Canterbury*, a veteran of the 1916 Battle of Jutland, *HMS Ark Royal* (a converted Collier ship), *HMS Calypso* and *HMS York*. In late 1936 he started a three year service in the destroyers *HMS Firedrake*, *HMS Brilliant* and *HMS Bulldog* and then on 27th August 1939, just two weeks before war was declared, Albert was drafted to *HMS Kelly* as a Leading Telegraphist. On the 12th September 1939 *Kelly* on the orders of Winston Churchill and commanded by Lord Louis Mountbatten *Kelly* was ordered to Cherbourg to bring the Duke and Duchess of Windsor back to Portsmouth. Over the next few months *Kelly* took part in several incidents including the rescue of crew from the torpedoed *HMS Courageous* and the evacuation of troops in Norway.

On the 9th May 1940, having arrived off the island of Sylt near the border of Germany and occupied Denmark, *Kelly* was torpedoed and 27 members of the crew were lost. Albert was working in the radio room and was killed instantly. Jessie received her second telegram: *“Deeply regret to report your son Albert W. Palmer Leading Telegraphist C/J110638 is missing presumed killed on War Service, letter follows. Commodore RN Barracks, Chatham”*

Edward Palmer was the youngest son of Jessie Palmer's family. He joined *HMS Ganges* on 22nd January 1926 and after his training was drafted to an old coal burning battleship *HMS Emperor Of India*. He went on to serve in *HMS Nelson*, and the destroyers *Wakefield*, *Westminster*, *Caterham* and *Wild Swan*. He followed this with a short spell in *HMS Campion* (Light Cruiser), *HMS Curacao* and then in July 1934 the battleship *HMS Revenge*.

In 1936 Edward was drafted to *HMS Skate* for a brief period before serving in *HMS Forester* and *HMS Penelope*, following which he joined *HMS Cormorant* at Gibraltar on 6th June 1941. On the 11th October that year he wrote home *“just ticking over and not getting too monotonous, although I am looking for a change”*. Two days later he joined *HMS Fleur De Leys* which sailed from Gibraltar on the 13th October 1941 to escort an inbound convoy. Twenty four hours later *HMS*

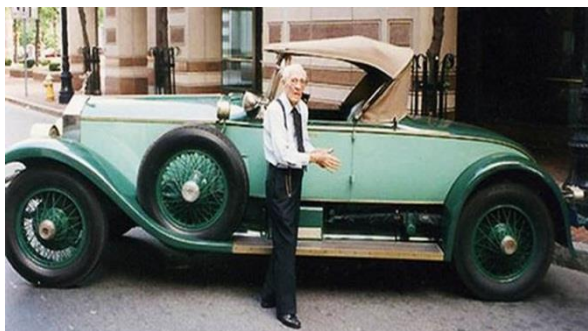
Fleur De Leys was torpedoed by an enemy submarine. Jessie Palmer was to receive her third telegram: "Regret to report that your son Edward S. Palmer P/JX 125840 is missing presumed killed on War Service. Commodore Naval Barracks, Portsmouth".

Note

This is a very much shortened version of an article I wrote following research I made in about 1994 into the Palmer Brothers Royal Naval careers. This was at the request of a friend of mine who had no idea of his uncles RN careers.

Versions of this research have appeared in the HMS GANGES magazine and in a book by Tom Robson entitled BOY SEAMAN RN.

*John Soanes.
RNA Torbay*



Oldest Running Car and Driver

This man owned & drove the same car for 82 years. Can you imagine having the same car for 82 years?

How long have you owned a car?

Mr. Allen Swift (Springfield, MA.) received this 1928 Rolls-Royce Piccadilly-P1 Roadster from his father, brand new - as a graduation gift in 1928 (lucky lad!).

He drove it up until his death (2010) at the age of 102. He was the oldest living owner of a car that was purchased new. Just thought you'd like to see it.

It was donated to a Springfield museum after his death.

It has 1,070,000 miles on it, still runs like a Swiss watch, dead silent at any speed and is in perfect cosmetic condition. (82 years). That's approximately 13,048 miles per year (1087 per month)

Hurricane Appeal

A major hurricane (Hurricane Shazza) and earthquake measuring 5.8 on the Richter Scale hit Essex in the early hours of Wednesday with its epicentre in Basildon. Victims were seen wandering around aimlessly, muttering "Faaackinell".



The hurricane decimated the area causing almost £30 worth of damage. Several priceless collections of mementos from Majorca and the Costa del Sol were damaged beyond repair. Three areas of historic burnt out cars were disturbed. Many locals were woken well before their Giros arrived.

Essex FM reported that hundreds of residents were confused and bewildered and were still trying to come to terms with the fact that something interesting had happened in Basildon. One resident - Tracy Sharon Smith, a 15-year-old mother of 5 said, "It was such a shock, my little Chardonnay-Mercedes came running into my bedroom crying. My youngest two, Tyler-Morgan and Victoria-Storm slept through it all. I was still shaking when I was skinning up and watching Jeremy Kyle the next morning."

Apparently looting, muggings and car crime were unaffected and carried on as normal.

The British Red Cross has so far managed to ship 4,000 crates of Special Brew to the area to help the stricken locals. Rescue workers are still searching through the rubble and have found large quantities of personal belongings, including benefit books, jewellery from Ratner's and Bone China from the Pound shop.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

This appeal is to raise money for food and clothing parcels for those unfortunate enough to be caught up in this disaster. Clothing is most sought after - items most needed include: Fila or Burberry baseball caps Kappa tracksuit tops (his and hers) Shell suits (female) White stilettos White sport socks Rockport boots any other items usually sold in Primark.

Food parcels may be harder to come by but are needed all the same. Required foodstuffs include:

Microwave meals
Tins of baked beans
KFC
Ice cream
Cans of Special Brew.

22p buys a biro for filling in the compensation forms

£2 buys chips, crisps and blue fizzy drinks for a family of nine

£5 buys fags and a lighter to calm the nerves of those affected.

****BREAKING NEWS****

Rescue workers found a girl in the rubble smothered in raspberry Alco pop and were worried she had been badly cut... "Where are you bleeding from?" they asked, "Romford" said the girl, "woss that gotta do wiv you?"

Please don't forward this to anyone living in Essex - oh, sod it, they won't be able to read it, anyway.



THE DIFFERENCE IF YOU MARRY A SCOTTISH GIRL

Three friends married women from different parts of the world....

The first man married a Greek girl. He told her that she was to do the dishes and house cleaning. It took a couple of days, but on the third day he came home to see a clean house and dishes washed and put away

The second man married a Thai girl. He gave his wife orders that she was to do all the cleaning, dishes and the cooking. The first day he didn't see any results but the next day he saw it was better. By the third day he saw his house was clean, the dishes were done, and there was a huge dinner on the table.

The third man married a girl from Scotland. He ordered her to keep the house cleaned, dishes washed, lawn mowed, laundry washed, and hot meals on the table for every meal. The first day he didn't see anything, the second day he didn't see anything either but by the third day, some of the swelling had gone down and he could see a little out of his left eye and his arm was healed enough that he could fix himself a sandwich and load the dishwasher. He still has some difficulty when he goes to toilet though!

*I was drinking in Boobs when a girl caught my eye,
she had a ring through her nose and a tatt on her thigh.
I asked her, her name and she said "I'm called Gwen"
She smelt like a horse and she danced like a wren.
She said come on Jack are you game for a laugh
so we jumped in a fast black and went back to her gaff.
Now the house was in Swilly and on the front door
was a crest from each ship that had been there before.
I said to her "Gwen that's impressive to see"
As it looked like she'd been on more ships than me.
It smelt like the mess after a good run ashore
there were lanyards and cap Tallies all over the floor.
She walked to the window and sat on the ledge
I put my hand down her knicks and felt meat & two veg,
I tried to get out but she got hold of my leg.
It was then I knew Gwen was an ex killick Reg.
I ran out of the door and into the street
with my kecks round my ankles and nowt on me feet.
Thank god I'd escaped and gave praise to the Lord
got big eats and a taxi and went back onboard.
So if you're ever in Plymouth and bump into my Gwen
just remember she's really an ex- Reggy called Ben.*



**"Too bloody short!, I was
not two short when I
joined!"**

Paraprosdokians

1. Regular naps prevent old age, especially if you take them while driving
2. Marriage is a relationship in which one person is always right and the other is the husband
3. Having one child makes you a parent; having two makes you a referee

Sex Education 1960's

This is an actual extract from a sex education school textbook for girls, printed in the early 60's In the UK and explains why the world was much happier and peaceful then...!



"When retiring to the bedroom, prepare yourself for bed as promptly as possible. Whilst feminine hygiene is of the utmost importance your tired husband does not want to queue for the bathroom, as he would have to do for his train. But remember to look your best when going

to bed. Try to achieve a *look* that is welcoming without being obvious.

If you need to apply face-cream or hair-rollers wait until he is asleep as this can be shocking to a man last thing at night. When it comes to the possibility of intimate relations with your husband it is important to remember your marriage vows and in particular your commitment to obey him

If he feels that he needs to sleep immediately then so be it. In all things be led by your husband's wishes, do not pressure him in any way to stimulate intimacy Should your husband suggest congress then agree humbly all he while being mindful that a man's satisfaction is more *important* than a woman's When he reaches his moment of fulfilment a small moan from yourself is encouraging to him and quite sufficient to indicate any enjoyment that you may have had.

Should your husband suggest any of the more unusual practices be obedient and uncomplaining but register any reluctance by remaining silent. It is likely that your husband will then fall promptly asleep; so adjust your clothing, freshen up and apply

your night-time face and hair care products.

You may then set the alarm so that you can arise shortly before him in the morning. This will enable you to have his morning cup of tea ready when he awakes.



In a dark and hazy room, peering into a crystal ball, the Mystic delivered grave news:

"There's no easy way to tell you this, so I'll just be blunt. Prepare yourself to be a widow. Your husband will die a violent and horrible death this year."

Visibly shaken, Laura stared at the woman's lined face, then at the single flickering candle, then down at her hands.

She took a few deep breaths to compose herself and to stop her mind from racing. She simply had to know.

She met the Fortune Teller's gaze, steadied her voice and asked, "Will I be acquitted?"

For some reason, wives tend to like this joke.....



Engineering in the Royal Navy (Original source unknown)

This remarkable letter was written in the 1870's by a serving officer in the Royal Navy to the TIMES newspaper. During this [period, steam propulsion was being introduced into Royal Navy ships, this letter related to the proposed introduction of commissioned engineer officers into the Royal Navy.

I have, with some Surprise, read a paragraph in the "Times" of 20th Inst., in which it is stated to be the intention of the Admiralty to make the engineers of Her Majesty's Navy commissioned officers and that they are to mess with the Lieutenants etc., also that Messrs Baker and Brown of the "Victoria and Albert" and the "Bee" have already joined the Wardroom Mess of Her Majesty's ship "Excellent".

Now without in the slightest degree wishing to say anything against that class of officers (engineers), I believe I am speaking for the sentiments of every officer in the navy when I say that such a step as that proposed in the "Times" would not only give dissatisfaction, but would be prejudicial at the same time to the service in general; and I believe firmly that the engineers themselves would be against anything of the sort. They would feel themselves placed in a position they were not intended to fill-among a superior class of people altogether, and by whom, generally speaking, they would be looked down upon as out of their station in society. As far as Messrs Baker and Brown are concerned, they are most respectable, and I dare say well educated men; the former I know well, having been in the "Victoria and Albert" with him, and every officer will speak of him in equally high terms as I do. Yet I much doubt whether Mr. Baker would not prefer remaining where he is.

Those two are, however, exceptions to the general rule, and for one that would be found equally respectable, there are a hundred that would be the contrary. It is urged in the "Times" that by placing engineers on a footing with commissioned officers they would be able to hold direct communication with the captain, without applying through another officer. He is at liberty to do so now as much as any officer, but at the same time if anything is wrong in the engine room, it is his duty to report the same direct to the officer of the watch (be he mate, midshipman or Lieutenant), who has charge of the ship at the time and is answerable for everything that occurs in her. There are forms to be observed in the service which placing engineers on a footing with their superiors will not do away with. Why are they more than gunners, boatswains etc., to take a leap from the engine room to the Wardroom? If it is so necessary that they should be always in communication with the captain, it would be better they should mess with him; then they would have it all to themselves.

Why should not also the second and third engineers be advanced to the midshipmen's mess; and perhaps the stokers &c. would also like to be advanced? But as I said before I do not wish to say a word in disparagement of the engineers; they are a most useful class of men, but they are not "gentlemen"; they may be well educated, but their education is merely in their own line. They have a mess place to themselves, with lots of room for drawing, working and everything else. The fault of the whole thing I believe to be this; hitherto the Captains and officers of Her Majesty's steamers (at least a great number) have been entirely at the mercy of the engineer, and if he reports the engine out of order, the captain believes it, because he is not able to ascertain whether such is the case or not, not knowing much about the engine. Mind, I do not say all the captains, because I know well that we have some who understand equally well, if not better than the engineer, everything connected with the engine, Austen, Ramsay, Lushington, for example; but others know no more about steam than steam does about them.

While such a state of affairs exists, it is not to be wondered at that the Admiralty have so petted the engineers, given them better pay than any class of officers under the rank of Commander gets, or is ever likely to get, first class engineers getting £16 a month, while lieutenants at the most get only £15 8s. after an indefinite period of service and are now contemplating putting them into the wardroom to mess with Commanders, Lieutenants &c. The Whigs may do many foolish things, but I do not think they would do quite so silly a trick as this.

Let all officers appointed to steamers (executives only, of course) be fully competent in the knowledge and the management of the machinery, and everything connected with it; there will then be no necessity for this entire dependence on the engineers, and it will, I trust, do away with the necessity of placing men in their station of life on a par with their superiors. With many apologies for thus trespassing on your time, and hoping you will give this a place in your columns,

*I have the honour to be
Sir, Your obedient servant signed*

WARDROOM.

A Tribute to the 'Supply' & 'Secretariat Branch of the Royal Navy Today it is the Logistic Branch



There's a branch you may not notice for their stations are below.
In the cubby holes and lobbies where the sailors do not go,
They were wont to call them "idlers" with a curious sense of fun.
For their watch was never ended and their work was never done,
They were always known as "Day men" just because they slept at night,
Though they, had to get some sleep in, and it didn't seem quite right.

You can often see them sitting in an office or a den,
Filling up strange forms with figures and a stylographic pen,
You can hear their busy fingers clicking far into the night,
Typing reams of flaccid foolscap by an insufficient light.
Taking half a dozen copies with a carbon wearing thin,
Or a hundred with a hectographic jelly in a tin.



There are many thousand items in a modern vessel's stores,
And they issue them by ounces and by hundred weights and scores,
You will see them on the messdeck, having tried the safety catch,
Swinging down a steel rung ladder, through a heavy armoured hatch,
To compartments filled with firebricks, sacks of flour and cotton waste,
Cabin furniture and bedding, frozen fish and potted paste.

If a smoker wants his baccy, if a toper wants his rum,
They produce it from a packing case or draw it from a drum,
If he lacks a feather pillow or a blanket for his bed,
If he needs a new sou'wester or a helmet for his head,
If he needs a black silk necktie or a flannel or a shoe,
He has only got to ask for it and sign a chit or two.



In the galleys, or the kitchens, in the bakeries and stores,
You may find them tending pots and pans or merely doing chores,
Mincing mutton in a hobart, kneading dough or scrubbing tins,
Stirring cocoa in a cauldron, shaking salmon from a tin,
Cooking tasty meals for officers, or plainer meals for men,
Six or seven in a galley only eighteen feet by ten.

Deftly setting out the tables for the officers to dine,
Serving tots of gin and bitters, mixing cocktails, bottling wine,
Meditating over menus in conjunction with the cook,
Making out the monthly mess bill, writing up the daily book.
From illegible inscriptions on soda sodden chits,
On a guest night staging banquets like the Carlton or the Ritz



More Being British

Being British is about driving in a German car to an Irish pub for a Belgian beer, then travelling to home, grabbing an Indian curry or a Turkish kebab on the way, to sit on Swedish furniture and watch American shows on a Japanese TV.

Only in Britain can a pizza get to your house quicker than an ambulance.

Only in Britain do people order double cheeseburgers, large fries and a **Diet** coke.

Reunion Update

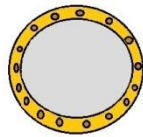
Just to keep you all in the picture; as I prepare this newsletter we have 35 booked in to Tillington Hall Hotel in Stafford. The hotel has 91 rooms, so still plenty of room as our total include:

7 Single Rooms
4 Twin Rooms
11 Double Rooms.

Remember it is the 'skippers' last reunion and I urge you all to consider attending and wish him farewell.

Remember, although a little more that we are used to paying, the price does include two bus trips, one to The Lord Leycester Hospital, where our Shipmate 'Buck' Taylor is a Brother and who will host this visit. The second trip is to the National Arboretum a must for any veteran. In addition to the bus trips we have Shipmate Shep Woolley as our Saturday night entertainer. Many of you will have heard and enjoyed his nautical act, for those that have not; I know you will enjoy it.

Don't hesitate – Get your form in!



How many days, minutes and seconds is it since rum was discontinued?

"It was 15,695 extra cans of beer ago!"

Woman's Poem

He didn't like the casserole
And he didn't like my cake,
He said my biscuits were too hard
Not like his mother used to make.
I didn't perk the coffee right
He didn't like the stew,
I didn't mend his socks
The way his mother used to do
I pondered for an answer
I was looking for a clue.
Then I turned around and smacked
him.....

Like his mother used to do!

Paddy and Mick were waiting at the bus stop when a truck went by loaded up with rolls of turf.

Paddy said, "I am going to do dat when I win da lottery —"

"What's dat den? " asks Mick.

"Send me lawn away to be cut"