



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

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Deep Thoughts

If flying is so safe, why do they call the airport the "terminal"?

I don't approve of political jokes. I've seen too many of them get elected.

If life deals you lemons, make lemonade. If life deals you tomatoes, make Bloody Marys.

Shopping tip: You can get shoes for a pound at bowling alleys.

I am a nobody; nobody is perfect, and therefore I am perfect.

Every day I beat my own previous record for number of consecutive days I've stayed alive.

HMS Ulster

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Hi! Shipmates,

Despite me contracting 'Shingles', as a full time result of being a full time carer for my wife Angela I have sharpened up my quill for another edition of the rum tub.

Looks like summers here at last. You can always tell as I break out my shorts and sandals! I even had a very enjoyable pint of ice cold cider in the Rock Gardens beer garden in Torquay dressed in my No. 10's!

I have included in this issue another article from "Trident" dated January 1946 and priced 1/6d which as I told you last issue I found looking through some old albums of my grandfather (Only one shipmate answered question what the 'd' stood for in 1/6d, so I owe Ted Ditung a tot)

The article entitled "*Under Two Flags*" tells of seven Canadian destroyers, which were ex US 'four stackers' similar to those the United Kingdom had on lend-lease during WWII. Quite a lengthy article so I will run it in two parts.

Sorry to keep 'playing the old scratched record' but I know some of you must have some amusing anecdotes that you could share with other shipmates. Several of you have provided excellent biographies of your time in the Royal Navy, you that have not, come on give the old grey cells a dust off and I am sure you could put together an interesting account of your time in services. Don't worry about the format I can soon put that in to (ship) shape.

We enjoyed the visit of HMS Pembroke to commemorate the 70th anniversary of D-Day landings. Many American and Canadian troops embarked at Torquay for the invasion of France. If you should happen to go to "The Harvester" in Torquay on Beacon Quay you will see the commemorative plaque on the wall.

If we have another nice summer, don't forget I have RNA epaulettes on sale in the Ulster slop chest. You will all look as smart as guardsman in 'shirt-sleeve' order. Whilst others are sweltering in blazers you can be cool and cool looking and also be advertising the Royal Naval Association.

The way I see it any way!

A GONG IN HONG KONG – DING DONG*Submitted by John Soanes Torbay RNA*

In Hong Kong They Strike A Gong And Fire Off A Noon Day Gun.

The noonday gun in Hong Kong is in situ on the very first plot of land to be sold by public auction in Hong Kong. It was purchased by Jardines in 1841. The trading company maintained its own gun battery and detachment of guards at East Point. The head of Jardines, known as the Taipan was given a gun salute whenever he arrived or departed Hong Kong.

The origins of the Noon day gun salute is unknown, but the story I like best is that a senior naval officer, who was new to the Colony was annoyed by the sound of the gun going off at odd times whenever the Taipan arrived or departed and ordered Jardines to fire the gun at noon each day as a time signal for the Colony. (The Royal Navy had quite some power over businesses in those days) This tradition continued until the Japanese occupation in 1941. The original cannon disappeared during the war and at the end of hostilities the Royal Navy presented Jardines with a six pound gun as a replacement and in August 1947 the tradition of firing at noon each day re-commenced.

However in 1961 following increasing complaints about the noise the Royal Hong Kong Marine Police exchanged it for a Hotchkiss Mk.1 Three pound quick firing naval piece.

When the gun is fired, eight bells is sounded signalling the end of the forenoon watch.

Make and Mend to all matelots if you are lucky!

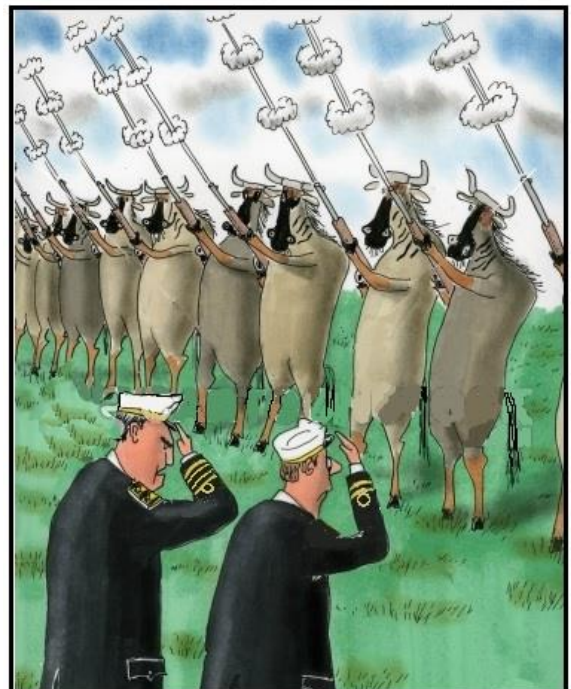
Eds. Notes: For those on Internet check this link out:

Money can't buy happiness but it sure makes misery easier to live with.

I got a sweater for Christmas. I really wanted a screamer or a moaner.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=37Gpu37SNd0>

Anyone who knows about the Noonday Gun will remember Noel Coward's 1924 song, "Mad Dogs and



"So the memo said 'Twenty-One GNU salute a?'"

Englishmen," which tells the world: "In Hong Kong they strike a gong, and fire off a noonday gun, to reprimand each inmate, who's in late." This historic relic, built in 1901, is still fired every day and is the best-known landmark in Causeway Bay. It is situated in a small garden on Gloucester Road right across from the Excelsior Hotel

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**Water in the carburettor**

**WIFE:** "There is trouble with the car. It has water in the carburettor."

**HUSBAND:** "Water in the carburettor? That's ridiculous"

**WIFE:** "I tell you the car has water in the carburettor."

**HUSBAND:** "You don't even know what a carburettor is. I'll check it out. Where's the car?"

**WIFE:** "In the pool"



The Canadian destroyer "Annapolis" (the former U.S. ship "Mackenzie") which gave her name to the Canadian class that included five ex-American destroyers. Side number changed to **I 04** on becoming a Canadian ship

## Under Two Flags

### The Story of Seven Canadian Destroyers

Aye, tear that tattered ensign down!  
Long has it waved on high,  
And many an eye has danced to see  
That banner in the sky.

*Editor's Note: Remember this article  
was published in January 1946*

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES' stirring words received a new meaning when six Canadian destroyers recently hauled down their ensigns for the last time. It is not certain yet when they are making their last bitter voyage that is the fate of all fighting ships unlucky enough to survive the hour of their glory.

Tacit admission on the part of the Canadian Navy Ministry that the six survivors of the seven former American destroyers which served with the Canadian Navy during the height of the Battle of the Atlantic will soon be headed for the wrecker's boneyard, could not but cause many a nostalgic heart tug on both sides of the International Border. There are many regular Navy old-timers, reservists and volunteer youngsters, who served in these ships, either under the Stars and Stripes or the White Ensign.

Better by far, the old-timers mused, if the six ships had met the fate that befell the seventh of the old U.S. destroyers which were the Dominion's share of the fifty over-age destroyers traded in by Britain in 1940 in exchange for bases. That seventh ship was the *St. Croix*. She went down, on September 19th, 1943, in mid-Atlantic while fighting like a faithful sheepdog to protect a flock of merchantmen from the attacks of German wolf packs.

The end of the heroic little ship had dramatic reverberations in Parliament. Mr. Winston Churchill was addressing the House of Commons on the progress of the war. For four months the Atlantic had been quiet, ominously quiet. Not a single ship had been lost. Optimists began to believe that the Battle of the Atlantic was won. As the Prime Minister started his speech someone handed him a message and he changed his thesis abruptly. He told the Commons that the Hun had broken loose on the Atlantic again. Even as he was speaking the four-day battle in which the *St. Croix* found her doom was in progress. The German wolf-packs had returned to the fray stronger and more numerous than ever and equipped with new torpedoes of greater



reach and detonation power than had been known heretofore.

The westward-bound convoy, to which the *St. Croix* was assigned as an escort vessel, was just about ready to catch up with another, slower convoy which had left British ports several days earlier. As the two aggregates of ships converged to form one fleet, the raiders struck suddenly and with unexampled ferocity. The hit-and-run technique of World War I U-boats had been replaced by a new and highly efficient attack pattern.

Several wolf packs were deployed *en echelon* over the routes convoys were sure to take. As the sound gear of the nearest submarine picked up the convoy it informed the other members of the pack and, in company with another lurking pack, they converged for a concentric attack. Part of a pack suicidally surfaced and feigned an attack to draw the escort vessels off.

Meanwhile the rest of them closed in on the convoy. The newly-developed German "tin fish" ripped into vessels right and left. British, American, Norwegian and other steamers went down. Over 300 members of their crews drifted on rafts, in boats and, by the grace of God, in the wake of the convoy. Untold others went down as their ships were torn to pieces by the torpedoes. Intermittently the battle continued for four days. The first attack occurred on a Sunday. Not until Wednesday, after long-range Liberator bombers had gone out from Canada to join the outnumbered escort vessels against the lurking enemies, did the wolves of the sea withdraw. Even then some of them showed their teeth by surfacing boldly and shooting it out with the patrol bombers, pitting their guns against the depth charges and aerial torpedoes of

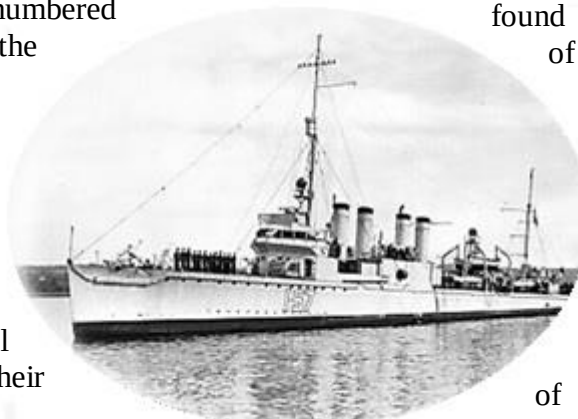
the planes. Losses sustained during the aerial attack finally convinced the U-boats that they had found their match. Yet only the timely appearance of the Canadian Air Force units saved the two convoys from utter destruction.

Meanwhile the old *St. Croix* had found her end. All but one of her 147 men went down with her. That one survivor was too stunned when he was picked up to give a coherent account of what happened. All that is known is that the little flushdecker was fighting it out with a surfaced U-boat. At short range the two ships, the over-age destroyer and the giant sub-cruiser, believed to be the flagship of one of the wolfpacks, were circling each other. The *St. Croix's* four-inchers were hammering pieces out of the submarine's conning tower.



What happened next is still largely conjecture. Men, who from the deck of a nearby merchantman watched the uneven contest, later reported that the *St. Croix* suddenly seemed to be lifted bodily from the waters. There was the flame and crash of a shattering explosion. Before the eyes of the watchers she broke in two. Within seconds there was not a trace of the stout little ship left. Seemingly the German submarine had let go another spread of torpedoes, of which at least one must have found its mark in the magazine of the *St. Croix*. Depth charges stacked on deck did the rest.

Together with the *St. Francis*, the *St. Croix* formed the Canadian destroyer class named after her. Part of the famous fleet of flushdeckers the United States began building during the First World War; the two old four-



*The Canadian destroyer "Niagara" (formerly the U.S. ship "Thatcher") were for some time used for high-sea training, on runs between Halifax and Newfoundland*

pipers were somewhat larger than the other five former U.S. destroyers, which were grouped by the Canadian Navy into the "Annapolis" class. The class, which included, besides the ship that gave it her name, the *Columbia*, *Hamilton*, *Niagara* and *St. Clair*, were thousand-tonners, all of them launched between July and December, 1918, and they were at the time regarded as the last word in destroyer construction.

There was still room for structural improvements, however, which were incorporated in the 1,200-tonners. They were even more weatherly ships and their gun platforms, raised seven feet above deck level, protected their gunners from the bane of every destroyer-man's existence, white water shipped over the side. At the same time the platforms permitted better sight and fire command. The *St. Croix* and *St. Francis*, both launched in the spring of 1919, were of this later flushdecker type.

All these ships became officially over age in 1935. Merely proverbial Navy Department frugality, dictated by Congress, prevented their scrapping at that time and thus eventually provided a welcome addition to the arsenal of the world's democracies when the need for fighting ships was most dire and acute.

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GOFFER TIME

By "Nautivox"
(from 1946 *Trident*)

D ICTIONARIES do not include the word "goffer"; but step on board a warship on a sultry summer afternoon and mention it to the first bluejacket you come across and it is ten chances to one he will grin and say: "Thanks. Don't mind if I do." Then he will steer you for'ard to the recreation space and indicate a corner that boasts a small hatch marked "NAAFIò

It may seem strange to some, remembering the tough, hard-living individuals who once formed the crews of

our earlier men-o'-war, that to-day's sailor should take so readily to soft drinks. But progress bows to neither race nor creed and the days of the swashbuckling seadog whose main interest was rum and lots of it are now, happily, passed. "Goffers," imported from our American cousins, have come to stay.

Nevertheless, it must not be thought that the Navy has gone completely T.T. It is merely that a happy medium has been reached. While the issue of rum has lost little of its long-standing appeal, it is interesting to note that the man who draws his grog to-day seems equally partial to the less intoxicating effects of the humble "goffer."

Probably few of the many compartments of a warship are as busy as the "goffer barò; it vies with its popular counterpart, the canteen. The reason for its importance is plain, for, almost unobserved perhaps, it has done a great deal towards the elimination of branch consciousness, for many years a most disturbing feature of lower deck life. Nowadays, stokers, marines, communications, E.R.A.s, writers and all the various specialists that comprise a warship's company, gather together in perfect harmonyò at the ship's "pub." (Eds Note: Different navy than I served in – Probably "The Golden Rivet Pub"!)

Though a newcomer, the "gofferò is fast earning a respected place among the long traditions of the Senior Service. For instance, the losers of a darts match are expected to pay for their defeat in "goffers"; a like ceremony takes place when a man's birthday arrives, for he celebrates by forking out for all the members of his mess. Custom also has it that those among his messmates who take their rum invariably reward him in kind with "sippers" from their tots. In fact, almost everything seems worthy of a round or two of raspberry, pineapple, vanilla, lemon or strawberry-flavoured "goffers" at 4d a pint.

At the moment, however, soda fountains are exclusive to the Navy's "elder brethren,"

the capital ships of the fleet. Yet, in spite of this handicap, the smaller fellows do not go without their "goffers." Most of them carry among their crew a sick-berth rating whose knowledge of dispensing stands him in good stead; for the price of a penny he quenches many a thirst on a hot day.

A sailor's tot of rum, it has often been said, makes far more friends than his money. The day is not far distant when we shall hear of "goffers" having similar power.

Editor's Note: The word Goffer may not have appeared in dictionaries in 1946, but it does appear in my 1991 Collins Dictionary and is defined as: to press pleats into a frill, to decorate the edges of a book, the iron or tool for making goffers.



Good luck, Mr. Gorsky

On July 20, 1969, as commander of the Apollo 11 lunar module, Neil Armstrong was the first person to set foot on the moon.

His first words after stepping on the moon, "that's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind," were televised to earth and heard by millions.*

But just before he re-entered the lander, he made the enigmatic remark

"Good luck, Mr. Gorsky"

Many people at NASA thought it was a casual remark concerning some rival soviet cosmonaut. However, upon checking, there was no Gorsky in either the Russian or American space programs.

Over the years, many people questioned Armstrong as to what the - 'good luck, Mr. Gorsky' statement meant, but Armstrong

always just smiled. On July 5, 1995, in Tampa bay, Florida, while answering questions following a speech, a reporter brought up the 26-year-old question about Mr Gorsky to Armstrong.

This time he finally responded because Mr. Gorsky had died, so Neil Armstrong felt he could now answer the question.

Here is the answer to "who was Mr Gorsky":

In 1938, when he was a kid in a small mid-western town, he was playing baseball with a friend in the backyard. His friend hit the ball, which landed in his neighbour's yard by their bedroom window.

His neighbours were Mr. And Mrs. Gorsky. As he leaned down to pick up the ball, young Armstrong heard Mrs. Gorsky shouting at Mr. Gorsky, "sex! You want sex?! You'll get sex when the kid next door walks on the moon!"

It broke the place up.

Neil Armstrong's family confirmed this is a true story.



America's Secret Atomic City

The city of Oak Ridge located in eastern Tennessee was established in 1942 as the production site for the Manhattan Project, the American, British and Canadian operation to develop the atomic bomb. At its height, over 75,000 people lived there, but most of them had no idea that they were producing uranium until the bombs dropped on Hiroshima in 1945. In a fascinating look into this 'secret' town, learn about the residents' daily life and the sacrifices they made of the atomic bomb.

Beginning in October, 1942, the United States Army Corps of Engineers acquired the Oak Ridge area for the construction of

the Manhattan Project. The town was chosen by Major General Leslie Groves due to its low population and discrete location, all of which would aid in keeping the town a secret.

Billboard across the town reminded the residents of Oak Ridge of their duty, to keep the project a secret and to complete their job. One resident recalls, "If somebody was to ask you, 'What are you making out there in Oak Ridge,' you'd say, '79 cents an hour.'"

While the town was open to the public, the non-military section of the town was fenced and guarded to limit who came in and out.

The vehicle inspection stop had no exceptions and everyone was searched, including the highest ranking military officials. This was at the height of the war and the military wanted to make sure no one would leak information on the bomb. If the workers themselves asked too many questions about what they were doing, they would be thrown out of the community immediately.

Workers were forbidden from saying certain words like helium or the names of the equipment they worked with. This had a negative influence on the morale in the factories and the workers became suspicious. They were told that they were doing a very important job for their country, but could not see the results of their duties.

In order to fix the problem of morale, the government decided to make Oak Ridge into the perfect American town, with theatres, roller-skating rinks, sports teams, bowling allies and more. The goal was to keep workers pleased during their free-time so that they would be more motivated at work.

Almost all of the residents of Oak Ridge were young, and although there were schools, many of the couples were discouraged from having children. This was so they could better serve the project and the mission.

The large number of workers in the famous Y-12, K-25 and S-50 uranium plants were recruited by the government, which led them to the conclusion that it would be

worthwhile to build an entire town, instead of just a large camp. The town that was created had over 300 miles of road (480 km), 55 miles of railroad tracks (89 km), seven theatres, 17 restaurants and 13 supermarkets.

By 1945, Oak Ridge was home to so many residents that one of the largest bus systems in the entire U.S. was established there. The entire town of 75,000 residents was using more electricity than New York City.

This abandoned cabin was photographed in 1947, only a few years after the U.S. government took over the town. The 56,000 acres on which Oak Ridge was built had previously been farmland where some families were given only two weeks' notice by the government to vacate their farms.

After the bombings at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, many of the physicists involved in the Manhattan Project founded the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, to begin an educational program on atomic weapons.

Residents celebrated V-J day (Victory over Japan day) just like the rest of America because they had no idea that they were developing the atomic bomb that ended the war

Two years after World War II ended, the town of Oak Ridge was demilitarized and shifted to civilian control. In 1966, the X-10 graphite reactor was designated a national historic landmark.

Little that remains of the town of Oak Ridge is this old hotel known as the Alexander Inn or 'The Guest House', which housed the residents' visitors during the time of the project. The hotel finally closed in 1990, and since then has fallen into terrible disrepair. Oak Ridge has largely become a ghost town.

Editor's Note: If any of you wish to see the images that come with this article, let me know and I will attach an email for you.

Gallagher opened the morning newspaper and was dumbfounded to read in the obituary column that he had died. He quickly phoned his best friend, Finney. 'Did you see the paper?' asked Gallagher. 'They say I died!!' 'Yes, I saw it!' replied Finney. 'Where are ye callin' from?'

EIGHT THOUGHTS TO PONDER

Number 8

Life is sexually transmitted.

Number 7

Good health is merely the slowest possible rate at which one can die.

Number 6

Men have two emotions: Hungry and Horny. They can't tell them apart. If you see a gleam in his eyes, make him a sandwich.

Number 5

Give a person a fish and you feed them for a day. Teach a person to use the Internet and they won't bother you for weeks, months, maybe years.

Number 4

Health nuts are going to feel stupid someday, lying in the hospitals, dying of nothing.

Number 3

All of us could take a lesson from the weather. It pays no attention to criticism.

Number 2

In the 60's, people took acid to make the world weird. Now the world is weird and people take Prozac to make it normal.

And The Number 1 Thought

Life is like a jar of Jalapeno peppers- What you do today, might burn you a** tomorrow.

é and as someone recently said to me: "Don't worry about old age-- It doesn't last that long."

Rum & Coke

A minister was seated on a plane bound from Hong Kong to the US with a stopover in Honolulu.

After the stopover a crusty old Chief Petty Officer boarded and, as fate would have it, he was seated next to the minister.

After the plane was airborne drink orders were taken.

The Flight Attendant asked the CPO if he wanted a drink.

The CPO asked for Rum & Coke, which was prepared and placed before him.

The flight attendant then asked the minister if he would like a drink.

He replied in disgust....

"I'd rather be savagely raped by a dozen whores than let liquor touch my lips."

The old Chief then handed his drink back to the attendant and said,

"Me too, I didn't know we had a choice."

Out and about

By Norrie Millen



I said in last issue that I had gone to look at railway damage in Dawlish, which thankfully has now been repaired. Local MP is pushing for a breakwater to be built 100 yards from shore to prevent a repeat of this winters damage. A 'mad dash' - **not** - on this by various departments has seen the announcement that they will look into it and report in approximately 18 months! By this time we could suffer another repeat of this last winter. Of course in 18 months they will come up with recommendations which will see months if not years before decision is made to do anything.

"That's all for now folks"