

COMNAVORCENT

Tucked away in the residential district of Cologne, is the office of the Flag Officer, Germany, a small compact hive of activity with a communications staff of one Yeoman, one Leading Signaller, one Signaller, and a Telegraphist, which is kept pretty busy with our R.N. and N.A.T.O. commitments. What we lack in facilities we make up for in opportunities, although our local organised British entertainment is restricted to an R.A.F. cinema and club with sport virtually non-existent. We have excellent opportunities to see some interesting parts of Germany and have easy access to most of the other West European countries. In traditional Navy style, past members of the staff went further afield and got "well in" at the British Embassy in Bonn and now it is rumoured that certain members of the present staff have requested for a transfer to the Foreign Office.

By and large we do quite well and what with work and thinking of the correct words for ordering 'big eats' and a pint in German, the time passes very quickly. To those who seek a draft with a difference—"this is it".

H.M.S. "ROYAL CHARLOTTE"

Although we have been in commission nearly two years, this is the first time *THE COMMUNICATOR*, or for that matter, the majority of Communicators in general, have heard of us. This first article is mainly intended to be one describing the location, function and activities of *Royal Charlotte*.

We are one of the three Naval Establishments in Germany, the others being *Royal Prince* in Krefeld and *Royal Albert* in Cuxhaven, and we are an almost purely Communications Ship's Company, the other two having only half-a-dozen Communicators between them.

Basically, *Royal Charlotte* is a W/T Station situated on the Baltic Coast just outside Kiel, within a barracks compound that we share with the British Army and the German Navy. The wardroom and the C.P.O.'s and P.O.'s messes are both run by the Army and although the Navy are the lodgers, the "blues" invariably outnumber the "khaki's". The officers' mess was originally built just before the war as an N.C.O.'s mess for the German Luftwaffe and the present garrison W.O.'s and sergeant's mess was part of it. Apparently, the German Officers didn't have a mess but used to live ashore with their wives and sweethearts. The garrison W.O.'s and sergeants' mess must surely be the most palatial one that C.P.O.s and P.O.s have ever lived in—even our C.P.O.s and P.O.s are the first to admit this.

The junior ratings and Army other ranks accommodation is also well up to modern standards and even the leading coders don't complain very often—at least, not about their standard of accommodation! As opposed to the officers' and sergeants' messes, the junior ratings' and Army O.R.'s mess is run by the Navy. All in all we get along fairly well with the Army.

There are a limited number of excellent, brand new married quarters for the permanent staff within close proximity of the Establishment.

In many ways, *Royal Charlotte* is an unusual Establishment, not the least being that, of a Ship's Company at times up to 100, we have no ratings below leading hand. This does create a problem as readers can appreciate, so that any leading hand drafted here can expect to be detailed to "grab a scrubber" and act as "general humping party" when needs must. However, it also has its compensations, for Kiel is a very pleasant town and we have a number of facilities unheard of in any other Establishment, including a large yacht club where budding "sailors" can take out or crew for anything from dinghies to 100 square metre yachts.

We have recently had a new sports field constructed and already have produced an excellent cricket team. In July we intend to hold what could almost be called an international athletics meeting, having invited the British Army, the R.A.F. the German Navy and the U.S. Army and Navy to take part. We are hoping for some good results as we have amongst us the holder of the Royal Navy 880 yards record, Leading Coder New.

In the recent B.A.O.R. Amateur Dramatic Festival, we entered a team playing the third act of "Billy Budd" and due to an enormous amount of hard work, enthusiasm and excellent acting, we got through to the Northern Area semi-finals.