

and to complete the number, the Dean suggested the names of those who were active workers during the Warship Week Campaign.

The first part of the journey was made by train and the second, to the port where Walpole was lying, by a naval motor truck, in company with Number One (the ship's first officer) who looked after us with the courtesy and consideration which was to mark the whole of the day's proceedings.

FEELING VERY NAUTICAL.

On arrival at the landing stage we could just discern, through the mist, the long, grey shape of the warship, at rest some way out and after a lusty hail from our escorting officer, two motor launches came to take us on the last lap. By this time we were all feeling very nautical and important and when we climbed the ladder up the ship's side, we could almost feel "bell-bottoms" flapping round our ankles! We were conducted below where we were hospitably received and introduced to the Commander and other officers. We saw, too, the carved wooden plaque presented by Ely and district to the ship.

Next we met the whole of the ship's company, drawn up in smart ranks on the deck and the men were briefly addressed by the Dean, who assured them that we felt very proud and honoured at the privilege of meeting them.

This ceremony concluded the party was split up into ones and twos and each group, in charge of a sailor, was taken on an extremely interesting tour of inspection. For obvious reasons, much that we saw cannot be described, but it was plain to see that Walpole is a very efficient ship, with a jolly crew, who think the world of their youthful Commander.

The Navy has a reputation for hospitality, and tradition was maintained at the next stage of the proceedings—an excellent lunch in the ward room. One appreciated it the more, having just previously seen the diminutive cookhouse (sorry, galley) in which it was produced. That cook must be something approaching a wizard!

The meal at length concluded, the Loyal Toast was drunk, in accordance with Navy tradition, with the company seated.

A SPLENDID RECORD.

The Commanding Officer warmly welcomed the landlubbers and assured us of the interest of the ship's company in Ely, and gave the impression that they would like to see that feeling reciprocated.

We were then given an outline of the history and achievements of Walpole which left us feeling very proud to have the privilege of being in any way associated with her.

A destroyer of the "V" and "W" class, Walpole was built in 1917 to Admiralty design. She was commissioned in 1918 and attached to the Second Destroyer Flotilla, celebrating her 25th birthday this year. In 1919 she served for a time in the Baltic before joining the Sixth Destroyer Flotilla in 1920, to which she remained attached till 1935. Practically all these ships were laid up about this time, but it is with a feeling of pride that the ship's company remember that Walpole has been running continuously since her first commission.

She began this war operating from the Western Approaches where she did much useful anti-submarine work, making many attacks on submarines. It says much for the efficiency of the Admiralty that Walpole, along with two other destroyers, was sitting over a U-boat on Sept. 3rd off the west coast, waiting for war officially to be declared. The first attack was carried out at two minutes past eleven.

In 1940 she changed her sphere of activities to the east coast where she did much to protect our vitally important east coast convoys from attack.

cast that she has served most of her time and it is in the quick-moving, highly specialised form of warfare found here that she is most apt. Many have been the aircraft and E-boat encounters in which she has taken part. A Dornier 217 was shot down by her in January, 1942, and on numerous other occasions has she been instrumental in turning the attack away from her merchant ship charges. Later the same year an enemy armed merchant cruiser, escorted by destroyers and "E" and "R" boats, attempted to slip through the Channel by hugging the French coast. Walpole attacked with torpedoes and helped to make this attempt abortive. That same night she set on fire and sank an R-boat.

After mentioning that many changes have taken place in the structure of the ship since her first commissioning and referring to the immense amount of service which she has seen, the Commander concluded, "No wonder, then, that the citizens of Ely and district should feel so proud at having adopted a ship with such an excellent record as H.M.S. Walpole."

THE DEAN'S THANKS.

The Very Rev. the Dean expressed the gratitude of the people of Ely and district whom we were representing, to the Commanding Officer other officers and the ship's company of H.M.S. Walpole for their kindness to us. Referring to the Navy's reputation for hospitality, he assured our hosts that they had not deteriorated. He hoped that following that visit more and more interest would be taken in Walpole. If the Commander would let him know of their requirements, he would see what could be done.

"We shall always be proud of the fact," he said, "that we have in our Council Chamber, a replica of the ship's badge, where it occupies an honoured place." The Dean concluded by again thanking the officers and men for the hospitality and courtesy which had been extended.

Mr. Horace Martin also voiced thanks for "One of the happiest days of my life."

The time for parting with our new-found friends came all too quickly and it was another fine gesture on the part of the Commander and other officers that they accompanied us to the railway station to see us off.

ADOPTION IN THE REAL SENSE.

Yes, it was a wonderful experience, and we left with the feeling that we just cannot let these grand fellows down by failing to strengthen the bonds thus established.

They expressed such a keenness to know what Ely is doing day by day that arrangements have been made for them to receive copies of the "Ely Standard" each week, and a batch of Ely guide books has been despatched to the ship. This is only one more step forward towards building up that bond of comradeship between city and ship, which is so obviously the earnest desire of the men who are doing such splendid service on Walpole.

We people of Ely and district must adopt the men of "our" ship in the real sense. There is the matter of comforts, and another fine gesture which has already been made by certain persons, is their willingness to accommodate men of the Walpole who might like to pay a visit to Ely on short leave.

Other ideas may be forthcoming, but whatever happens we must not let these men think that the people of Ely and district have no further interest in them. Somehow, I don't think that it could ever be the case after this.

F. W. W.

FOOTNOTE: On Tuesday week, two ratings from Walpole, on short leave, paid a flying visit to Ely and had tea with the Dean at the Deanery. They looked him up and as may be imagined he was delighted to see them.