

## THE ADMIRALTY TO BATH, 1939

When World War II was only between one and two weeks old, much of the Admiralty moved out of London to Bath to avoid the anticipated bombing. Among the departments transferred were those of the Director of Naval Construction, the Engineer-in-Chief, the Director of Electrical Engineering, and the Dockyard Department. E-in-C staff settled in the former Spa Hotel, now the Spa Nurses' Home; DNC took over the Grand Pump Room Hotel; DEE occupied the Technical College; the Dockyard Department went to the Pulteney Hotel; and other departments were housed in the Empire Hotel, the Fernley Hotel, Kingswood School, the Royal School, Brock Hall, and other sites—twenty in all. Work in Bath started about 24 hours after leaving London.

All these sites have since been relinquished by the MOD—some of them very recently. The buildings at Foxhill, Ensleigh and Warminster Road, built later in the war, are still in use; and other buildings in the city are now used as well.

The two pictures are reproduced here by courtesy of W. H. Sampson, who features in FIG. 1 and was the photographer of FIG. 2. Bill Sampson is still known to many for his work with the Institute of Marine Engineers as well as his long service at Foxhill. Photographs of the other technical departments seem not to have survived.



FIG. 1—MEMBERS OF THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF'S DEPARTMENT DEPOT SHIP SECTION AT PADDINGTON BEFORE DEPARTURE.

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: F. MATHIAS, W. H. SAMPSON, L. BALL, R. ROBOTHAM, A. MONNINGTON, ELLEN LEE, D. SPENCELEY AND E. VICARY.



FIG. 2—NAVAL AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL OF THE ADMIRALTY ON THE PLATFORM AT PADDINGTON BEFORE LEAVING FOR BATH ON 17 SEPTEMBER 1939

PHOTOGRAPH: W. H. SAMPSON