

OPERATION AT SEA COMPLETED ASHORE

When the destroyer H.M.S. BULLDOG was plunging through a heavy sea, Stoker Albert O'Neill, of Stanmore, Middlesex, was brought to the ship's doctor with severe appendicitis.

The Medical Officer decided, despite the handicap of a rolling ship, to operate immediately.

His fellow officers volunteered to assist. The patient was firmly fixed to a table, and whilst the doctor prepared his instruments, his assistants administered the anaesthetic.

Bracing himself as firmly as he could against the roll of the ship, the Medical Officer began the operation. He discovered the condition of the appendix to be too serious to warrant removal under the conditions. The doctor, however, effected a temporary remedy to prevent the condition worsening and to keep the patient from pain for the remainder of the journey to harbour.

When O'Neill was landed three days later and transferred to a Royal Naval hospital, the hospital authorities expressed admiration at the skill of the operation. They described it as "a first class job", and were surprised when they learned of the conditions under which the operation had been performed.

The Medical Officer was anxious to see his case through to completion, and special arrangements were made for him to visit the hospital to finish the operation he had started at sea.