

Chick Goes Up for Fleet Finals

Last week at Navy Field, Long Beach, Chick, our 118-lb. bantam-weight wrestler took on and decidedly won a victory over Matherly of the WEST VIRGINIA. He is now up for All Navy bouts, held at the same place, Navy Field, Long Beach.

Chick, a good little shipmate, has come up under the careful supervision of "Headlock" Wellbourn, our genial Jimmy Legs, to develop into a mighty smooth matman.

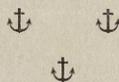
If the "powers that be" in such matters are with our little representative

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PLoughing through the ceiling of a vast watery realm, a ship scarce scratches the surface of a world so mysterious and so filled with natural wonders as to be beyond human conception. What lies below our maneuvering at sea?

Mountains raise austere heads above most cloud layers, canyons tear huge chunks out of the terrain; yet the floor of the ocean has series of mountain ranges and valleys between that would dwarf these dry land marvels. Printed figures on a chart show the depths of the ocean. On the high seas these

Mysteries of the Sea



soundings run in straight lines; inadequately few they are like tiny threads on an limitless expanse.

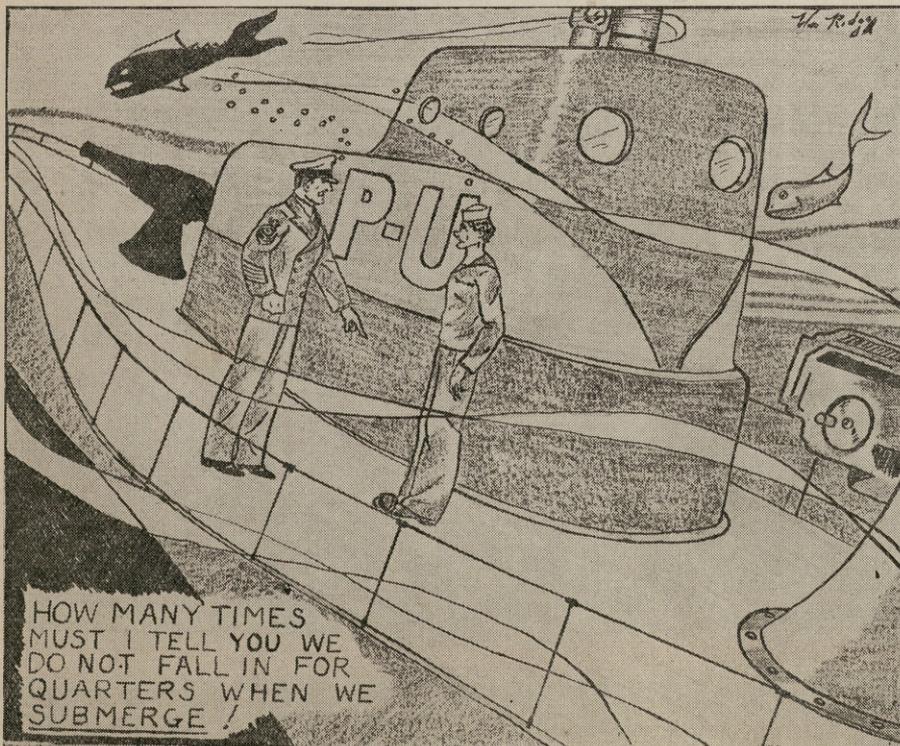
More than three-fifths of the globe is covered with water. We can only guess at life and the formations down there in the cold dank chill of the depths.

In ancient times and even later, monsters were believed to exist which rendered travel on uncharted waters perilous. These were mainly myths conjured out of minds fed by the superstition and the dread of the unknown. However, many tales have been told of strange huge sea serpents and sea animals seen in modern times by the crew and passengers of various ships. The average person doubts. Yet in this comparatively unknown world there might live such creatures. How can we be sure just because we haven't seen.

This is accepted. In tropical waters where dark skinned, pearl seeking natives dive to incredible depths (sometimes well over one hundred feet) lurking dangers are ever present. Huge clams, a thousand pounds or more in weight, are ready to clamp shut on a leg or arm. There is no escape save for cutting off the seized member. Hideous octupii, man eating sharks, and sudden changes in pressure make their life truly a hazardous one. The barracuda and the manta (blanket fish, huge ray, or devil fish) also wreak their ghastly toll.

Untold wealth, hid forever from the eyes of humans, and swept by only the gentle bottom currents of the ocean's floor, will lie there until it slowly disintegrates into the limbo

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— : THE BLUE BONNET : —

A weekly publication of the ship's company of the U.S.S. Houston, Captain G. N. Barker, U.S.N., Commanding and Commander C. A. Bailey, U.S.N., Executive Officer.

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5 February 1938

LES FEMMES!

It is the intention of the *Blue Bonnet* staff to put out more special issues as so much favorable comment was heard regarding our other attempts. If we can get the necessary support from your mothers, wives or sweethearts perhaps we can publish a "Femme" edition. Topics of interest, poems, or cartoons by them will be greatly appreciated by the *Blue Bonnet* editor. They will all be combined in one edition to form an extra super-special edition. Tell our femme admirers about this chance to put their ideas in writing. We would like to get their slant on the navy.

SEA MYSTERIES

The U.S.S. *CYCLOPS* will be remembered as the "mystery ship" of the United States Navy. She disappeared completely, in the South Atlantic, during the World War leaving no trace of wreckage or personnel to tell the story. Post-war investigation developed that no record of any attack on the vessel had been made and that what happened to the *CYCLOPS* will probably be a matter of conjecture.

About eleven years ago, Atlantic shipping was for months endangered by the erratic behaviour of the *GOVERNOR PAR*, a disabled British schooner, abandoned by the crew in mid-ocean. She carried in her hold a fortune in Canadian lumber. Twice steamers put off from Nova Scotia to tow her ashore and salvage her cargo; but each time, after they had boarded her, a sudden storm forced them to abandon the attempt. Months later she appeared off the Azores where again efforts at salvage met with the same defeat. Her final fate, like that of many others, remains a mystery.

Navy Bill Opines: A man wrapped up in himself makes a small package.

PLANK OWNERS' REVERIES

By Little Ocko

A few things that came to mind speaking of old timers, plank owners, and things that have happened in the past are the old one chair barber shop, the round scuttlebutt, when the forward messing compartment ran up in where the print shop now is; also how the movie pictures came in a month or two ahead of schedule out in China. These above notices were pinned up on the screen around the shop and at times one could scarcely see out of it. Remember when that torpedo fouled on a log and headed back for the ship and how she put out her best to get away from it?

While speaking of it a fellow told me that Freeman, GM2c, was born in the fourth division peacoat locker. He's one of the youngest of the old crew so it might be so.

Back in those good old days there was no ice cream plant on the ship. Now we have two good ones. They used to show movies on the fantail, the present movie shack being built some time after this period.

The interest of several persons on board led me to dig and delve in various places to find out as many as possible of the men aboard who are plank owners or close to it. This may not be correct but should be nearly so.

Allan, J. M., MM1c	Motes, C., Sealc
Arsenault, A. J., EM2c	Gibson, O. E., AMM1c
Aue, W., MM1c	Standafer, S. D., F2c
Cawthon, J. N., WT2c	Sivak, S., SK2c
DeBri, T. H., Y1c	Harred, R. C., MM1c
Dotterer, J. H., SF2c	Freeman, H. W., GM2c
Herrick, G. H., CWT	Wallace, J. K., GM1c
Leo, N., EM2c	Westerfeld, EM2c
Hartley, D. P., CEM	

Someone said that in this group are the fifteen who relieved the beleaguered 4th Regiment, U.S. Marines in Shanghai. Sivak says there were only thirteen but enough is enough, the marines have been kidded enough.

Customer: "I want some powder to kill cockroaches."

Clerk: "Will you take it with you?"

Customer: "No, I'll have the cockroaches call and you can rub it on their little tummies."

SHIPS OF OTHER DAYS

Old ships, creaking ships, forgotten ships, ships of another time
 Slowly swinging to rusty anchors, half buried in muck and slime
 As they groaningly protest a slow moving, filth strewn tide
 Forlorn and half ashamed, in some secluded bit of bay to hide
 Cause me to often wonder what their fortunes might have been
 In those days when wood made up the ships, and iron the men.
 Some sailed to far-off places for myrrh, sandlewood, and jade
 While others fought off the enemy, or engaged in a nefarious
 trade
 As the trafficking in slaves or fighting for the blood tainted gold
 of pirates' hoards.
 Yes, and I often wonder, too, how our modern ships might have
 fared
 In those lurid days of the past when everything and all was
 dared.
 But I do know for sure that the men of the sea then and those of
 today
 Would believe the same when they are out in the sea and spray
 And that is, that the girl in the next port
 Still seems the best to court.

— From the Wardroom.

SEND the BLUE BONNET
 to the folks at home.



Hearty greetings friends and shipmates! Amid all the turmoil of drills and preparing for admiral's inspection and surprise inspections your old broadcaster is endeavoring to let you in on the latest Nosey News.

Bannen had a hard time convincing the inspecting party during clothing inspection. Seems the inspecting party thought he had too many pairs of shoes in his outfit. After a bit of explaining he convinced them that he had only one pair showing. Sure did look like more than one pair but size eleven and a half is the size he wears so help us.

Then we received a bit of news concerning a couple of radiomen; first we have Ray Ford, RM2c. He received a post card from a femme addressed as follows: To Perfect Specimen Roy. Throughout the card she told him how conceited one man could be. It was terrific—ask him to let you see it.

Secondly we have Harrison who will gladly demonstrate how to put on a pair of panties. Made quite an impression Sunday while demonstrating to a large audience.

Putman, MM2c, newly appointed master-at-arms, is successfully maintaining peace and order in the after messing compartment. It's almost impossible to touch the paintwork therein without being scared out of your shoes by his dictatorial growl.

Akeman of the Bake Shop has a prized crop in the making. If weather conditions remain satisfactory he should have a good production soon. Try to keep the flour dust out of it Akey, as fuzz is pretty hard to see under the proboscis, even in its natural color.

After manning the center rammer in turret two for almost eight years our head barber has decided to change his rating to fireman so that he can be relieved of this tedious battle station.

Have been hearing how good the new band is and have found out that it must be good, this due to seeing Ramella and "Caesar" Cardinali trucking on down to the accompaniment with the band's swinging arrangements. While on the band subject; much credit must be given them for the cheerful condition of the crew. Their nightly playing in the forward messing compartment has brought the crew together more than any other event in the past six months. Their playing is well appreciated according to the applause they receive after each piece.

Did you know that Philips, Storekeeper Striker, is saving his money so that he can go to school after he gets paid off? Yes sir, he is going to go to that famous mortician school in Pennsylvania. Has a clipping from his home town showing six caskets laid out, and boy is he proud because his uncle was the man who had charge of this big event.

"Playboy" Willie Slough, SK3c, alias "Gun Tub" is seriously thinking of running for mayor of Wilmington. States he has many promises of votes from the fair sex of that town.

One of our former editors recently wrote and told us quite a bit of former shipmates. This reminds us of a few other former shipmates who occasionally drop us a line. Quite a number of men remember R. V. Hill, SK3c, who used to tell us how much we were drawing on payday. He is working with the Customs Department in San Francisco and doing well for himself and wife. Another member of our crew to make good on the outside is E. L. Buchanan who is district manager of the State Life Insurance Company of Indiana. He has his office in Vallejo and perhaps many of you were told about the benefits of insurance from him. Another member of our crew to do the unusual was C. W. Ostergren, former SK2c. He is now working for the Procurement Division which is under the Treasury Department. We can well be proud of these men and wish them the best of luck.

MYSTERIES OF THE SEA

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of time. Gold carried in the holds of ships which floundered at sea is there which would make men rich beyond their wildest dreams. Priceless pearls, more beautiful than any which now grace a necklace or ring worn by woman, will sink with its parent shell into muck, to be lost forever from man. Ores and rich minerals are in the rock formations. Even the ocean sand contains gold.

Have you wondered about the sea?

SHIPS—OF THE AIR AND OF THE SEA

To prevent any possibility of Japanese or Chinese war planes mistaking the big trans-Pacific airliner PHILIPPINE CLIPPER for a hostile plane, large American flags were painted on each wing and on the sides of the cabin prior to its recent departure from California for the China coast.

The aviation unit of the battleship TEXAS has been awarded the Rear Admiral William A. Moffett Memorial Trophy, emblematic of aircraft operations conducted with a maximum of safety by battleship- and cruiser-based aviation units, for the fiscal year 1937.

The crew of the aircraft carrier SARATOGA mail on the average of 2,000 letters a week. The sailors use the airmail service almost twice as much as their correspondents with about 500 airmail letters leaving the ship weekly. Mail for the SARATOGA during the Christmas season is increased 400 percent.

One of the most important items in the purchase of new equipment for the new destroyers building and those recently launched is the dish washing machine. These new destroyers are the most modern and powerful in the world.

Host: "Those are my grandma's ashes over there."

Guest: "Oh, so the poor soul has passed on."

Host: "No, she's just too lazy to look for an ash tray."

Little Ocko Says . . .

STEAK for dinner today (Thursday). Jim Wallace sat by L. O. Peterson, better known as "Pete Dear," and witnessed the consumption of one steak, carved with the mess cook's butcher knife, that Jim says must have grossed four pounds. How that big fellow does pack it away. He earns it tho, just take a look at the 1st Division magazines someday.

SAW SEVERAL oddities lately: A pharmacist's mate scraping and shining a medicine chest, a signalman back aft giving a 4th Division deck hand a hand on some heavy work and a fireman chastising a boatswain's mate. Also saw Abie Butler, cox'n, playing basketball with the kids in the port hangar.

ELI BUDIMLYA'S girl friend told me Sunday about our hero sleeping in the show one afternoon recently. He got to snoring so bad that she had to wake him up so the rest of the audience could hear what was playing.

RECENTLY we've received some new deck P.O.'s. Fox, BM1c, came aboard from Receiving Ship, San Francisco, to the 4th Division. English, BM1c, came from the CinCus Flag to the 1st Division. Claytor, Cox'n, came from Receiving Ship, San Diego, to the 2nd Division. 3rd Division has Buttler, a wrestler and belt-man from the U.S.S. AUGUSTA. He also is Cox'n. Tells us that on 14 November, when he left the "Augie," they had 25 percent liberty, one fourth of the crew ashore at a time from noon on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays until seven p.m. On working days liberty sounded at four-thirty, and so not much time was left to go ashore. Buttler also told us that all pieces of shrapnel, bullets and other souvenirs were taken into custody of the Navigator for analization and inspection. Most of the fighting was concentrated ashore about fifteen miles from the harbor of Shanghai, the aircraft bombing and machine gun raids often took place very close, even so as to drop bombs immediately off the side of the ship. We're sorta' glad we're on the HOUSTON after all.

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we will have a Fleet Champion on board. The last belt-man on the Rambler Ship was Frankie Remus, who took both middle and light-heavy-weight belts (civilian) of the Orient. He took on all comers at the Shanghai auditorium and came away the victor. If Chick wins it will be the first All Navy belt ever aboard the Good Ship.

Matherly of the Wee Vee was an able contestant, being All Navy and having defeated Chick a year ago by a narrow margin for the all service title in San Diego. That included U.S. Army, Navy and Marine contestants. The victory last week was an excellent comeback, defeating one who had downed him before, as Lieut. J. E. (Pop) Jones wrote: "Chick, HOUSTON bantamweight, displayed aggressiveness to win over Matherly (WEST VIRGINIA).

Let us all be present who can on Saturday 12 February at Navy Field, Long Beach, and cheer on a sure winner coming out of that ring and back to the U.S.S. HOUSTON, our first All Navy belt-man, E. A. Chick.

Sargeant: "How do you know that Mr. Kelly was drunk the night of the party?"

Patrolman: "Well, he was crawling around on his hands and knees with a bottle of liquor tied around his neck and tried to make me believe he was a St. Bernard dog looking for a blizzard."

BACK TO some scandal: Wicker, gun striker in turret three and Malcolm, Cox'n in that division, have something on each other. Only trouble I encountered was that neither would tell on the other for fear his own sins would come to light. I'll find out yet and it will appear in this column.

WATKINS, F1c, has a new name among the coal-heavers in "B" Division. For four days the lad did nothing but ply brightwork polish and paint to his locker so now he's called "Brightwork Watkins."

Let's hope this inspection comes off soon, there's liable to be more nicknames for sailors than I can print; don't dare miss any more than I can help.



Ten years ago every other ship which docked at New York Harbor was infested with swarms of rats, but now only one ship in every twelve entering all U.S. ports bears the creatures. Because rats harbor fleas which transmit the dreaded bubonic plague, Surgeon General Thomas Parran, upon noticing the success of rat elimination, stated recently that the likelihood of plague ever again reaching the United States is practically nil

Many interesting stories are told of the intelligence of rats, particularly where ships are concerned. It is said that the rodents have been seen to suddenly abandon a moored vessel which upon putting to sea was lost with all hands. Another story tells of a ship equipped with rat guards, but which was invaded nevertheless by the device of forming a long rope of rats and starting this rope swinging until the end rat was able to reach the side of the vessel. The remainder of the troop then walked across the living bridge and disappeared below.

Wharf rats, particularly those which frequent grain ships, grow to a size larger than a cat and can easily put a dog to flight. When cornered they fight fiercely and cases are known of grown men being killed by a horde of the creatures.

Navy ships in recent years have never had rats aboard, but their disappearance from the merchant marine is indeed a welcome prospect, particularly from the health standpoint.

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The United States Navy is a pioneer in the development of ship propulsion methods. Naval ships were the first to be equipped with diesel engines, oil burning installations, geared turbines and electric drive. United States vessels were also first to be equipped with electric lights.