

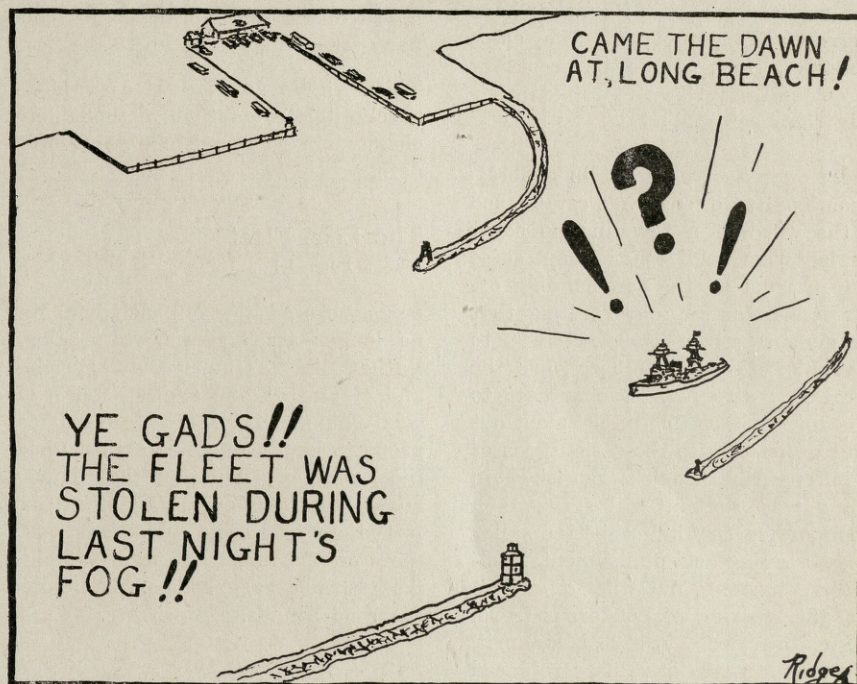
★ ★ DETECTIVE ISSUE ★ ★

The Lost Fleet
or the
Ribald Robbery
Off The Breakwater

G RIM, tight lipped countenances would have replaced the ones wreathed in smiles and short husky words the careless banter of the sailors had they suspected a hint of the impending tragedy. Soon their little Naval world was to topple in on them like an egg shell house in a flurry of wind. No evidence now of the dark sinister force which had wreaked its vengeance under the quilting protection of the fog, but in a few minutes all would be revealed.

Standing expectantly and awaiting a boat, yet alike the others, in being unaware of disaster, a Houston sailor was talking to his pals of the night before. He talked about home — of his mother, and of his dear old Dad. Words filled with poignant meaning hushed their bantering laughs so that in the group around him only the soft southern drawl of his voice caressed the silence. In awe the others listened, then in sympathy they wept together. Home-sicknessness had banded them a little closer together this morning, of all mornings.

The harsh scraping of a boat, bearing the letters HOU, grated in upon their silence like an ominous presager of a coming storm. A single boat, the first of the morning, had knifed its way through the fog. It awaited its



passengers hungrily.

Houston sailors filed on the float and into the boat. The sailor who had held the others with his mood felt his way forward, then leaped into the yawning launch.

Then without warning; without any further premonition of what was to occur, the fog lifted. It lifted so completely that not a vestige or a streamer of vapor remained. But the pathos, the sadness, all the sorrow in the world welled in the hearts there on that dock that morning. What the sudden disappearance of the fog revealed, or better, what the lifting of

the fog did not reveal was the fleet. Only the solitary form of a heavy cruiser rode to anchor. It was the Houston. The other proud grey silhouettes of steel no longer graced the harbor. No boats were racing to Pico Landing to pick up the liberty parties. The fleet had been stolen under the protection of the fog.

Hell broke loose on the dock. Everyone talked and shouted. There was a slight tendency of the mob spirit as the liberty parties surged back and forth. The discipline which the Navy had instilled in its fighting men and for which they have always been fa-

(Continued on Page 2.)

—: 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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- Editorial -

THE NAVY of today is a far cry from that of the early days. Its customs have changed, its moods have altered, and changes in the ships themselves have made it necessary for officers and crews to think differently than before.

Where once a man's guilt in generally some paltry offense was established by the word of a few and no court martial was held other than some form of mast by the commanding officer it has now progressed so that the man is given every chance to prove his innocence. Where once the so called guilty man was subject to some form of horrible punishment out of all proportion to the seriousness of his offense, he is now punished in such a way that it will serve as a means of making him a better sailor besides serving as a punishment. Keel-hauling, burning out the offender's eyes, the wearing of ponderous irons, caging over the vessel's bowsprit, and other tortures have been replaced by loss of pay, extra duty, restriction to the ship, and confinement in the more serious cases.

One out of every thirty seven that apply to the recruiting bureaus are accepted. Of these the majority are high school graduates. All are required to produce recommendatory letters as to their character. This indicates that the salt water man of today certainly thinks differently than the sailor of yesterday.

I remember once when I was on a destroyer. The ship's service safe containing over \$400 in funds was stolen from an officer's room. Naturally the ship service officer was greatly con-

cerned and perturbed. Besides the \$400 in the missing safe there had been this officer's marriage license. After a week's time the guilty one was discovered through the fact that he had made payment on a new Buick and outfitted himself in a grand style. Investigation revealed that he had removed the safe bodily, extracted the negotiable money, and then threw the rest over the side. Needless to say, he received 2 years at Mare Island Prison.

The sailor was very young and had been spoiled by a doting grandma, his only surviving blood relation. Shortly after his incarceration the captain of the ship received a letter from the boy, stating that he was learning his lesson. He ended by saying that he hoped to see some of the ship's company when they came up to the yard.

This is quite an unusual case, but it surely illustrates that methods have changed in the punishment of offenders.

The Lost Fleet

(From Page 1.)

mous suffered a severe setback. Men no longer acted like human beings. Rather like animals they shrieked and clawed at one another's hair. It was not so much that government property had been stolen almost under their very eyes but that their homes, homes to them ever since they had left their mothers and dads back there on the farm, had been snatched from their weary bodies. Excitement knew no bounds.

The entire police forces of the surrounding cities were rushed to the landing. Reserves were called out. To this the Navy patrol lent its support. After quite a long period of time, order began to gradually emerge from the chaos. The stronger heads began to quiet the others so that finally a semblance of the true Navy spirit and peacefulness were regained. The solving of this dastardly crime commenced.

The liberty parties from each ship were divided and the questioning started. Particularly keen and furious were the questions hurled at the little Houston group. It was naturally assumed that some sailor from the Rambler Ship knew something about

the crime as that ship had been the only one spared in the wholesale robbery.

The questioning swung around to the sailor who had so eloquently told of his mother and dad. They plied him with questions. Some of his answers were evasive—and then he crossed himself up in others. A purple cloud of shame and guilt swept over his face. He felt himself lost.

With the desperation born from a lost cause and the realization that the jig was up he broke loose from his tormentors and hurled himself into the cold, grey water.

Hands were grabbing him. A thousand people were shaking him. Then he heard these words from his Houston shipmates. "He's coming to now. He'll sure look for those thwarts the next time he jumps into a boat."

Nab this culprit! --

Master At Arms

I have the dope on him!

See how crafty No. 00 works aboard our ship. Follow him on his stealthy hunt through the bowels of the ship in those silent hours of the mid-watch. Watch him unravel the greatest mystery of all time—how he thwarts the sinister work of the shadow—how he saves the ship from a scourge of bed bugs and other vermin—how he nabs the water thief in the act, et cetera.

Fill out the below application and you will get—

FREE

The confidential reports No. 00 made to the Master at Arms.

U.S.S. Houston Detective Agency

Gentlemen, without any obligation, send me the secrets of No. 00. I wish to (be) (get) the dope like him.

Name.....

Age.....

Measurements.....

I desire the book to be illustrated with:

Blond ()

Brunette ()

Red headed () Women



**From the Blue Bonnet
Contribution Box**

Piechochi, "Wonder Man of Poker," lost his shirt in a penny-ante game. Don't tell anyone Piechochi, but we think you were framed.

Also found in the box was an Associated Press clipping, stating that last Thursday the Navy Department announced the entire fleet would be moved to Atlantic waters in 1939, leaving in early January. Visit will be made to NewYork's World Fair in May. A Fleet Problem will be worked out during February in the West Indies. These maneuvers will be the first held in the Atlantic since 1934.

**Thanks for the contributions fellas,
how about a lot more next week?**

#

The Hack Drivers are about to lose The Three Musketeers: Randall, CRM, or 'Wolf of the Pike'; Enos, CMM, alias 'Mayor of Oceanside'; Hatch,

CQM, the man with the Pink Pajamas. The boys are going out on "twenty years", and after that much service deserve a heartfelt—"So Long Shipmates. A pleasant berth be yours."

#

We received some new CPO's also the past week, Malcolm, CQM, reported aboard for duty from the U.S.S. Pensacola. Powell, CSF, came from the Salt Lake City to our C & R Dept., and for temporary duty came L. Ratcliffe, CCM. Welcome aboard men, we hope you enjoy your cruise with us on the Rambler Ship.

#

D. L. Royal, Sea. 1c, longtime Scullery Queen, was relieved by Henry, Sea. 1c, in order that the former mite be sent to RecSta. Norfolk, Va. to be paid off. So long Shipmate. Ocko says Hank will be a long time learning to make that Royal Brand of coffee that Headlock and Barnett like so well. It'll float a marlinspike at reveille!

#

Heard some dope about one of our old shipmates the other day. Ringheim, who served aboard here as a Private 2 years ago, is now a bus driver in Long Beach. He has been married a year and a half and has a youngster about four months old.

Due to a mistake on someone's part Carpenter Kalb made a flying leap for the Astoria's gangway, one nite recently, and almost missed. One foot in one place and one in another becomes most embarrassing when one goes off apparently leaving the other one. It seems Carp. Kalb thought he was making the Houston and the shore-boat was pulling away—hence the sudden rush, the slip, nearly an accident.

#

Jim K. Wallace, turret one's first class gun striker, is helping H. E. Freeman hold inventory in the storeroom. Says Herkie is a tough boss, won't let him knock off early to take a gunner's mate's bath (at 3:00 P.M.) or anything else. Keep up the good work Freeman.

Lt. (jg) Long to China

On 2 June Lt. (jg) E. C. Long, first division officer, was detached from the Houston to duty in the Asiatic Station. He expects possibly destroyer duty in vicinity of Manila, P.I. Mr. Long has been the first division and Turret One Officer for over a year, having been E Division Officer prior to that time.

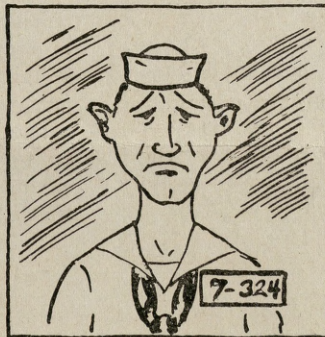
Again we say Farewell to a fine Officer and a good shipmate. May his cruise be long and pleasant.

HAVE YOU SEEN THESE MEN ?



Thug

Wanted—Adelbert A. Butler alias Asiatic Sam. Grappler, thug, trigger man, and strong armer. Scares babies; wows their nurses.



Forger

Wanted—Gilroy F. Reedge alias the crazy caricaturist. Confidence man, bunko artist, check forger. Watch your roll when you discover him.



Murderer

Wanted—Geefont X. Pootman alias the mad monk. Poses as policeman. Curses as he kills. A very dangerous man. Capture with caution.



Arsonist

Badly Wanted — Henry N. Wellburnie alias the dapper dope. Exudes flame and will probably be discovered by trail of burning hemp.

Baseball

Northampton Nine Bombards Houston

With their confidence high after winning the first two games in the ScoFor Group, the Houston team suffered mightily against the Northampton. This game was more of a burlesque than baseball. Errors were the order of the day with the Houston monopolizing with the amazing total of 13. Score — North.-14, Hou.-4.

Pensacola "Gators" Tamed By Houston

With determination to stay in the ScoFor Baseball Series, the Houston Nine captured their third game of four played by downing the Pensacola 8 to 7. High spot of the game was a triple play which caused much consulting of rule books and heated words. The Houston won this squabble with the umpire deciding in their favor.

Keep in there Houston!

Holy Matrimony

On Saturday, 28 May, 1938, in North Hollywood, a wedding was performed. The principals in the ceremony were Ensign Arthur V. Ely, formerly attached to this vessel, and Miss Ann Galvin, of North Hollywood.

Attendants were Lt. (jg) Paul Emrick of this ship and Miss Alberta Toschi of San Francisco. The ceremony was performed by Rev. Fr. Lawrence Duggan of North Hollywood.

(Editor's Note: As was mentioned in the last issue, Ens. Ely was transferred on 31 May to NAS Pensacola, Fla., for flight training.)

Judge: "What induced you to strike your wife?"

Salmon: "Well, your honor, she had her back to me, the frying pan was handy, and the back door was open, so I just thought I'd take the risk."



That in New York it is possible to send a dog from the City Hall to Grand Central Station faster by mail than either taxi or subway train. The pneumatic tube does it.

! ! !

The Albatross is the largest bird of the sea and ranks with the largest of the land, attains a length of four feet and weight of 25 pounds, and the unique wing spread of 17 feet.

! ! !

That artificial fish worms have been invented that you squeeze out of a tube like tooth paste.

! ! !

They say that not one person in 100,000 can pronounce all these common words correctly. Do you think you can? Look them up in the dictionary and discover if you are the exceptional one. Here they are: Data, Culinary, Gondola, Impious, Caribbean, Gratis, Cocaine, Version, Chic, and Viking.

I Don't Get It.

Little Johnny wrote on the blackboard, "Johnny is a passionate devil!" The teacher reprimanded him and told him to stay after school an hour. When he got out that night all his little pals were waiting to hear what punishment he received. "What did she do to you?" asked one lad. "I aint saying nothing," said Johnny, "except that it pays to advertise!"

Time and tide wait for no man,
allee samee like motor launch.

The king of ancient Egypt was a Pharaoh. Faro is a card game. A card game is poker. Some people have poker faces. You ought to see the Pharaoh's mummy.

He: Why are you so popular with the sailors?
She: I give up.

We know this is upside down.

Be A Fingerprint Marvel



Do YOU wish to stand out in your division?

Would YOU like to be able to step out the next time at Captain's inspection when he asks "Who's the print expert in the division?"

Sure you would!

Every man aboard who doesn't have milk in his veins would like to find his mislaid clothing and gear.

OUR COURSE IS EASY

Take 3 EASY lessons. Everything is easy.
Even you if you take it.

Enroll with us and you can sort your gear from the pile by merely comparing the prints on them with yours. If they match take the gear to your locker.

Above is a picture of one of our former students. Don't let his condition deter you. He forgot to take the 3rd lesson before claiming gear.

U.S.S. Houston Easy Defective Agency