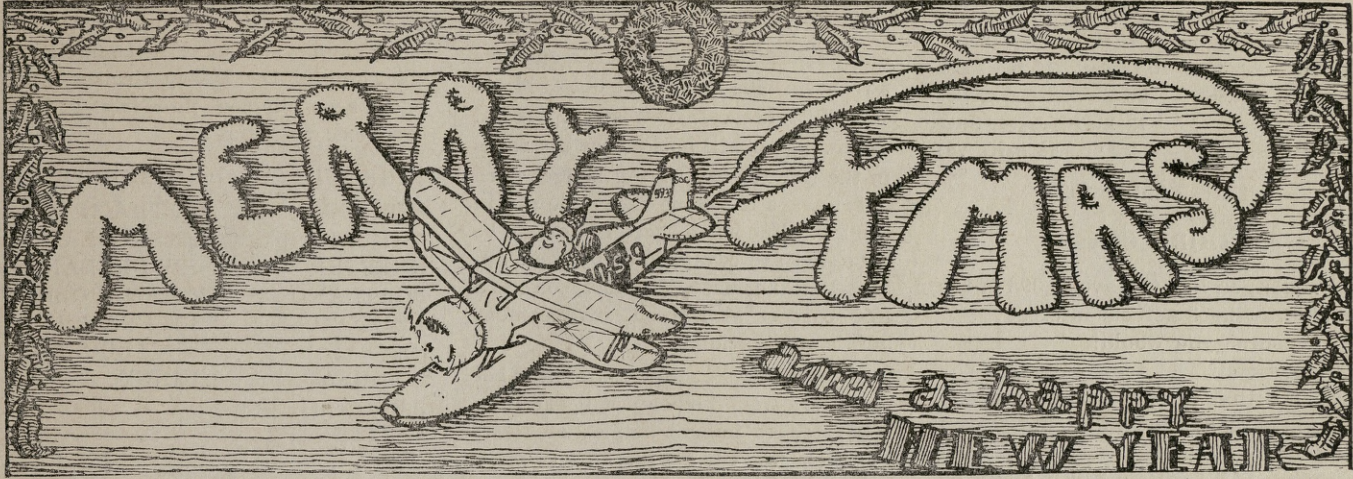


THE BLUE BONNET



Volume IV, Number 49

U.S.S. HOUSTON, Long Beach, California

24 December 1937

THE CHRISTMAS TREE

USE of the fir tree in connection with Christmas celebration is either of German or Scandinavian origin. When the pagans of northern Europe became Christians, they made their sacred evergreen trees a part of the festival, and decorated them with gilt nuts and apples in imitation of the stars.

One popular legend relates how on a Christmas Eve, twelve centuries ago, the first Christmas tree was miraculously revealed. Winfred, an Englishman, who had gone to Germany to spread the teachings of Jesus, found a group of worshipers gathered at the Oak of Geismar about to sacrifice little Prince Asulf to the god Thor. Winfred averted the death blow and cut down the "blood" oak. As it fell, a young fir tree appeared, which the missionary declared was the tree of life or Christ, of whose birth he then told the people and then converted them to Christianity.

ALL hands of the Gunnery Department and the non-combatants who furnished coffee and sandwiches after firing runs are to be congratulated on their splendid efforts and excellent achievements in the recent practices. Well done!

CHRISTMAS DAY

IN ALL Christian countries Christmas is celebrated as the anniversary of the birth of Christ, "the Prince of Peace," "the King of Kings." That day, by common consent December 25, is marked by special religious services in various churches, by charitable deeds, the exchanging of gifts, and by merrymaking and rejoicing.

The time when the Christmas festival was first observed is not definitely known. It is spoken of in the beginning of the third century by Clement of Alexandria, and Chrysostom speaks of it in the latter part of the fourth century as a custom of long standing. Other dates were often celebrated as the day of the Nativity, but finally, December 25 was universally adopted; there is no evidence that the date is absolutely correct. But exactness on those points is now not so important as the "Spirit of Christmas," the spirit of giving, of helping—a broad all-embracing love for our fellow men.

The giving of presents and the use of holly, mistletoe, Yule logs, and the wassail bowl have all descended from the day of paganism, but they are things which set the day distinctly apart from all other holidays. Without the Christmas tree and Santa Claus for the little folks, the day would be

(Continued on Page 4.)

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

THE committee for the Christmas Party wishes to take this opportunity to voice its thanks for the splendid cooperation of all the officers and men of the ship in preparing for the coming event. There follows a program of the attractions and their purveyors.

Yuletide Echoes Band
Teasey Tricks Fred Allen
Wedding of the Painted Dolls . Band
Old Mill Stream
Sleep Kentucky Babe
Silent Night Seagoing Cowboys
Parade of the Wooden Soldiers . Band
Song and Tap Carolyn Londahl
Harmonica Tunes Ray Nantz
When Irish Eyes
Are Smiling Ray Kelly
Sweetpea Returns . . . H. D. Williams

J. R. Brady, E. A.
Chick, I. F. Olson

Santa Claus is Coming to Town . Band

ARRIVAL OF SANTA CLAUS
WITH PRESENTS

THE Captain and the Executive Officer extends to each officer and man and his family best wishes for a happy holiday season and for a Happy New Year.

—: 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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24 December 1937

THIRD CLASS

Would you like to have \$2,398 in the bank drawing 3 percent interest?
 Of course you would!

Sometimes we fool ourselves by thinking that it's not worth going up for third class for the simple season that our pay is increased only \$6 a month. Not hardly enough to pay for insurance—yet that measly six cart-wheel increase amounts to \$72 when the year is over—or just exactly 3 percent interest on \$2,398, if we had that much in the bank at Pedro.

Naturally the navy doesn't deposit that much money to your credit in a bank but they have to pay you interest on that amount—and when you consider the benefits derived from a crew—the feeling of getting somewhere—the sense of responsible trust—we wonder why more of us don't try just as hard for third class as we did for seaman? Just a thought.

Lawyer: "Now, Sir, did you or did you not, on the date in question or at any other time, previously or subsequently say or even intimate to the defendant or anyone else, alone or with anyone, whether a friend or mere acquaintance, or, in fact, a stranger, that the statement imputed to you, whether just or unjust, and denied by the plaintiff was a matter of no moment or otherwise? Answer me YES or NO."

Witness: "Yes or no WHAT?"

"That female police dog has been howling and barking for hours."
 "Yeah, she's calling all curs."

"You want me to raise your salary, eh?" growled a boss at his employee. "Give me at least two good reasons."

The employee gazed meekly at his employer and murmured, "Twins."

CHANCE FOR HIGHER RATING

Since last July first one hundred and eighty-five men have been advanced up the ladder. This quarter one hundred and seventeen men were advanced. This means one out of seven were advanced. If you are a careful observer you will notice that the faces in the line for new rating badges each quarter are the same faces you see in the front line when there is work to be done and are conspicuous by their absence at the mast. The navy offers a fine career with good advancement and compensation.

It will only be a few more days before the division officers will again be requested to submit names of those qualified for advancement. The navy only requires two things for advancement, one, a clear record, two, that you have studied and completed a course for the next higher rating. Have you both of these qualifications, if so, your name will be on the list. Your record must indicate that you have completed the course. If you have not done so, get busy today. Do it now. Be prepared, when the time comes, don't wait until the last day and expect your division officer to examine your assignments for the entire course in one day and have a certificate prepared and entered in your record.

CHRISTMAS DINNER**Tomato Cocktail**

Ripe Olives Sweet Pickles

Celery en Branch**Cream of Asparagus Soup****Soda Crackers**

Roast Tom Turkey Baked Spiced Ham

Celery Dressing

Giblet Gravy Cranberry Sauce

Candied Sweet Potatoes Early June Peas

Buttered Asparagus Combination Salad

Hot Parkerhouse Rolls

Ice Cream Magnes Fruit Cake

Mixed Nuts Hard Filled Candy

Bread Butter Coffee**BASKETBALL SCHEDULE**

Schedules for competition of the Heavy Cruiser Athletic Unit Basketball teams have been announced for the coming season. For competition the ships of the Heavy Cruiser Unit have been divided into two groups composed as follows:

GROUP "A"	GROUP "B"
HOUSTON	NORTHAMPTON
CHICAGO	PENSACOLA
CHESTER	NEW ORLEANS
PORTLAND	INDIANAPOLIS
LOUISVILLE	SAN FRANCISCO
VESTAL	TUSCALOOSA
MEDUSA	QUINCY
ARGONNE	
RELIEF	
UTAH	

Group "A" competition will commence on 3 January 1938 while Group "B" competition and the final play-offs will be conducted during the period 28 February - 12 March 1938. All games are to be played in the Admiral Leigh Gymnasium, San Pedro, Calif.

Let's support our team by having a good sized rooting party present for each game.

COSTLIEST SHIP FITTED OUT

For the scientific study of sea phenomena, the most expensive ship of her size ever built is taking on equipment and supplies in a corner of the East India dock in London. The "Research" will be only 650 tons, but has cost nearly five hundred thousand dollars. She will sail the oceans of the world with a well versed crew of scientists interested in magnetic phenomena. The "Research" will be entirely non-magnetic so that nothing will disturb the sensitive instruments on board.

The hull is mainly of teak with brass and bronze in place of iron and steel. The ship has bronze anchors and cables and an engine entirely of bronze and non-magnetic alloys. Even the cooking stoves will be of bronze; the buttons on the sailors' clothes and the rivets in their boots will be of bone and wood; and the cutlery will be of non-magnetic material. . . . What a job to shine all that brightwork every morning!

LITTLE OCKO SAYS

After two weeks of a lay-off we don't seem to have much in the line of info. However, we will try our best.

Did some slumming around last Sunday evening and found out a lot of things. Would have liked to have found out who the pretty lady was that Skelton (Red) Clymer, First Division Coxswain, had on his arm in Bachelor's Club that night.

"Bucky" Haratyk, Galley Romeo, says that as soon as his hair has grown out some more he's going back to San Pedro in quest of a certain lovely blond in vicinity of the Y.M.C.A. over there. We've seen her and she's plenty nice! Try Fitches', Bucky, they say its very good.

Horace Carter, Bkr3c, has all the boys wondering whose pretty picture it was he had in the Bake Shop recently. He says it's for him to know and us to find out.

Kelly and Azbill, semaphore artists, made a rip-roaring liberty one evening lately. It seems the hospitality at dinner in a friend's home was somewhat overwhelming and the lads had difficulty keeping a bunk under them on return to the shhip.

"Little Van" Akerman, wise-guy of the Cake and Pie Gang, took "Schnozzle" Hattimer, tiller-holder of No. 2 motor launch, in hand at the movies recently. The remark was something like this, "Don't look around, Hattimer, I don't want that nose of yours to cover up the screen." Nice that Hattimer is good natured, isn't it?

Enough has been said for now. Little Ocko says Merry Christmas to all hands and guests. See you next week.

FIRST ENLISTMENT CREW FIFTH

The HOUSTON first enlistment whaleboat crew placed fifth in a field of seven 10-oared boats which rowed to a bunched finish on Friday, 3 December. This ship was represented by Goddard (coxs), Viskovich (stroke), True, McDonald, Krecklow, Garcia, Brinn, Hart, Nantz, Schroeder, and Newton. The CHICAGO pulled an excellent stroke to come in first and was followed closely by the SAN FRANCISCO, ASTORIA, and PORTLAND in that order.

EDUCATION IN THE NAVY

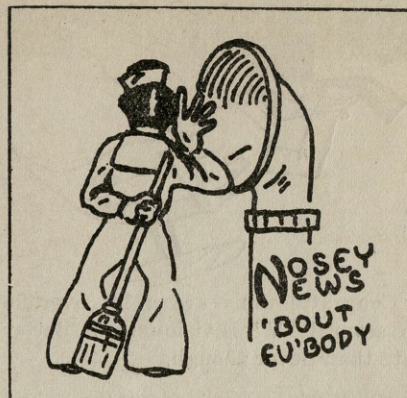
Modern naval vessels being so complicated, fleet personnel, officers and men, must compose a great organization of technical specialists. The recruit newly enlisted in the service, begins at once an education to fit him for some particular role. He first spends about three months at San Diego, Norfolk, Great Lakes, or Newport Naval Training Station, receiving a rigorous general training under the strictest military discipline. There he gets infantry drill, small arms practice, seamanship, boating, learns to stand a good watch and is inoculated against various contagious diseases.

Next he is sent to duty on a ship of the fleet as a seaman second class. Aboard ship he begins to absorb a practical knowledge of seagoing life, receives constant instruction from his officers and petty officers, and from observation of the older hands. For promotion to seaman first class he must study two courses published by the Navy Department and maintain a satisfactory conduct record. Once each quarter, candidates get an opportunity to advance to the next higher rating. An examination is conducted by the officers in which the man must compete with his shipmates, only a few, with the highest marks, being rated. In higher ratings the competition includes men of all ships in his part of the fleet. Progress is at a price.

If the man makes seaman first during his first year afloat, his second year sees him choosing a specialty and studying hard for a third class petty officer's rating, perhaps in signaling, fire control, or engineering. His progress always depends upon his application and his ability to learn from books supplied him and from practical training at his particular job. It takes at least another year to achieve the third class petty officer's privilege of wearing an eagle and one chevron on his sleeve with the accompanying pay increase.

By the end of a four-year enlistment a man has acquired a fine practical training in a useful trade and should be a second class petty officer or nearly so. Promotion becomes gradually harder and more competitive but is always accompanied by higher pay and greater privilege. His next step is first class petty officer by which

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Borgehetti, Flc, playboy of the "F," while romancing in the Silver Dollar cafe in L.A., had quite a time telling the girls he couldn't do the Big Apple but he sure is a wow at Suzey-Queying.

* * * *

Flashes From Former Shipmates:

Charlie Campbell, Cox, is now swinging his hammock on board the PEN-SACOLA, and we mean really swinging a hammock as they have no bunks. "Dagwood" Dainwood, Slc, is now the coxswain of the speedy No. 1 motor launch belonging to the "Little Augie." States that he is dodging shot and shell while navigating the Whangpo.

* * * *

The "R" Division men have been feeling mighty blue the past two weeks. Some person (can't write the words he is being called) disposed of their mascot (the cat) while we were on last week's drills. The kittens are being well taken care of even though their mother was thrown over the side. Sure hate to be in the shoes of the person who performed this crime when he is found out.

* * * *

Anyone desiring information in regards turf news, it is recommended that he see "Buck" Fowler, known to all his fans as the King of Sports. According to his statements, he could win quite a wad if only he had some dough to start with.

* * * *

There are many good things in store for us on board during the holidays. With many men on Christmas leave and others looking forward to New Year's leave may we repeat the age-old wish —

Glad Tidings To All!



Congratulations are a bit overdue to several "V" Division men. Better late than never though.

"Pat" Readette is now the proud daddy of a bouncing baby girl. "Pappy" Reid is the daddy of a son.

Both men came through the ordeal quite nicely. Congrats Pat and Pappy.

"Hoot" Gibson trod the primrose path and embarked on the sea of matrimony a few weeks past. Congratulations from the gang, Gib.

Too bad the mountain slide in L.A. didn't last longer. Thornton was thinking of putting in for shore duty on Riverside Drive. Cheer up, George, maybe a tidal wave will soon come along.

Andy Mellon apparently has become a dyed in the wool 'Golden Grainer.' Never seems to miss a boat since his marriage.

"Sunshine" Hollingsworth is expecting a Christmas present in the form of a driver's license. Shades of Chula Vista!

Aviation Cadet Dugan is quite put out now that Fordham isn't to come out for the Rose Bowl.

"Herm" Morgan states that it is getting too cold for fueding back in Kentucky. It will all be resumed in the spring however.

"Stinky" Rice is quite undecided about this Santa Claus story now that he has made Seaman first class.

Sivak: "Are you sure your wife knows I am coming home to dinner with you?"

Leo: "She ought to. We argued all night about it."

Cox'n: "I'm Cox'n of this boat and what I say goes."

Dashing Engineer: "Then would you mind saying 'Engine' a few times?"

CHRISTMAS DAY

(Continued from Page 1.)

incomplete and lose much of its deeper meaning to the whole family. The custom of sending "Christmas cards" started more than fifty years ago.

In recent years, many cities have adopted the beautiful custom of celebrating the festival as communities. Great Christmas trees, glowing with innumerable lights, are set up in a central location, such as Madison Square, New York, or the lake front in Chicago, and Christmas Eve the people gather about these trees to sing the familiar hymns and carols associated with the birth of Christ.

EDUCATION IN THE NAVY

(Continued from Page 3.)

time, in most cases, he has had the opportunity of studying for one to six months at one of the many Navy service schools where the training is very exacting and standards high. On up the ladder the man takes the high hurdles to appointment as Chief Petty Officer, a position of great honor and trust. At this stage he has proved himself trustworthy, reliable, and intelligent through a series of competitions and eliminations. If still under 35 years of age and of outstanding merit, he has the chance of attaining Warrant Officer rank, the apex of an enlisted man's ambition. The man who makes it has successfully concluded many years of hard study, excellent conduct and plain hard work.

—Keystone.

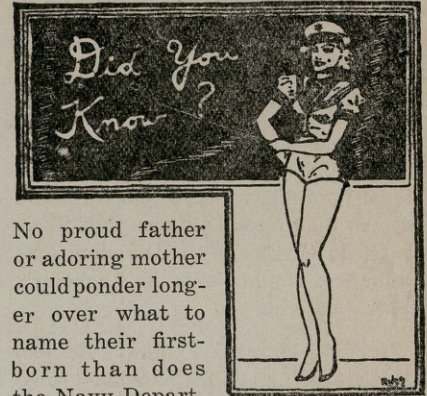
"Com-pa-nee, atten-shun!" bawled the drill sergeant to the awkward squad. "Com-pa-nee, lift up your left leg and hold it straight in front of you!"

By mistake, one rookie held up his right leg, which brought it out side by side with his neighbor's left leg.

"Aw right, aw right; who's the wise guy over there holding up both legs?" shouted the hard-boiled sergeant.

"Who is that man over there snapping his fingers?"

"That's a deaf-mute with the hiccups."



No proud father or adoring mother could ponder longer over what to name their first-born than does the Navy Department over the names given its smaller children—cruisers and destroyers.

One intelligent charming employee of the Navy Department, Mrs. Edna B. Casbarian spends practically all her time in finding names for the new vessels.

Battleships must be named after states of the Union according to law but it is the smaller cruisers and the destroyers which, as soon as they are authorized, that cause the Bureau to be swamped with requests to name a ship after a city or person.

Hours of research work are necessary before any name may be selected for a destroyer to insure that everything be in order and that the closest female descendant be found to officiate in releasing the bottle of champagne against the ship's bow at the launching.

Equal difficulty is experienced in the naming of a cruiser as every city of any size craves the honor and publicity of having a warship named after it.

You may be sure that Mrs. Casbarian breathes a big sigh of relief when it comes to the naming of submarines. They are merely named after fish.

The RELIEF is the only ship in the navy which has women as regular members of the ship's complement. They are members of the Navy Nurse Corps. These nurses are sea-going and travel aboard the RELIEF as the ship accompanies the fleet. The tour of duty aboard the hospital ship is very desirable and for one year only. These nurses are selected for sea duty from among the 320 members of the Navy Nurse Corps. Every ward is supervised by a nurse and there is one in charge of the operating room and another has charge of the special diet kitchen.