

"Fog, Rain—and Death"

(With Apologies to Floyd Gibbons.)

To get the yarn right from the start we've got to follow the career of a heavy cruiser, the U.S.S. Charleston. Built at Newport News in 1905, and ordered to duty as flagship of the Pacific Fleet, she put into New York harbor for provisions before making the trip around the Horn.

Being a new vessel many visitors came aboard. One day a little old lady came aboard and asked to see the captain. After explaining that it would be impossible, the Officer of the Deck, out of politeness, asked if there was any message he could deliver. The little old lady wasn't stumped. She had a message, "Please tell the captain," she said, "that the Charleston will be blown up in Magdalena Bay, Mexico, on the eighth day of May, 1908. It will be foggy, rainy and a tramp steamer will come out of nowhere and refuse to give any information about herself."

The story got around, and of course it gave the crew a big laugh. Why, there hadn't been a drop of rain in Magdalena Bay since time began. Putting the old lady down as another crackpot they forgot about it. That is, they did until May 1908.

The Charleston took up her duties in the Pacific and the spring of 1908 found her at Magdalena Bay for target practice. The prophecy was almost forgotten. But some of the more superstitious on board did remember and on the night of May 7, 1908, after a day of perfect blue, cloudless skies they turned in their hammocks wondering.

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Our Captain Leaves

It is with a feeling of deep regret and cherished memories of many happy cruises spent together that we bid our commanding officer, Captain Guy E. Baker, a fond farewell and a heartfelt goodbye.

During the past two years under his skillful guidance the ship not only ranked as a highly efficient fighting craft of the navy, but was, as we rightly can say, a happy ship. The crew and officers felt as a coordinated team, always justly prideful to point out that they were serving aboard the United States Ship Houston.

So it is for this and to the fact that Captain Baker possesses the qualities of a real man that we wish him good speed and good luck in his next assignment where he will report for duty to the Chief of Naval Operations, Washington, D.C.

To our new commanding officer, Captain G. N. Barker, coming from duty as Professor of Naval Science and Tactics, R.O.T.C., Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, we extend a hearty welcome. We hope that you will like our ship, and we will do all in our power to make your tour of duty aboard both pleasant and profitable.

Full Power Run Successful

Highly successful were the Full Power and Smoke Prevention runs made between Astoria, Oregon and the navy yard, Mare Island. To many this may seem to be just another routine problem for the Engineering Department. It is, but there is a great

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United States Savings Bonds

Much has been said and many words written on the subject of saving. No doubt spending or saving is habit forming; that is, once a person starts spending or saving there is a tendency to continue at the same.

Many methods of systematic saving are tried in the navy. Allotments to a bank are very popular but in a great number of cases it is, "Dear Bank, Please remit," with the request reaching the bank each month about five days before the allotment check has arrived.

Another method is the Ship's Bank which has the disadvantage that no money deposited, even in the most extreme emergency, may be withdrawn until discharged.

Yet another method has recently been presented by the government in the form of United States Savings Bonds. These Savings Bonds are sold on a discount basis and mature ten years from the date of issue for one third more than their purchase price. Savings Bonds range in purchase price from the \$18.75 bond which matures at \$25.00 to the \$750.00 bond maturing at \$1,000.00. Bonds may be bought at third class or larger post offices or direct from the Treasurer of the United States. In addition a beneficiary in case of death may be designated on all bonds that are not under co-ownership.

Savings Bonds may be redeemed by proper identification, the execution of request for payment on the back of the bond being witnessed by a postmaster or executive officer of any

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—: THE BLUE BONNET :—

A weekly publication, published by the ship's company of the U.S.S. HOUSTON, Captain G. E. Baker, U.S.N., Commanding and Commander C. A. Bailey, U.S.N., Executive Officer.

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Savings Bonds

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bank or trust company, and forwarding to the Treasury Department which will promptly send a check drawn to the order of the owner of the bond. Redemption may be made at any time after sixty days from date of purchase at purchase price plus the accrued interest as stated on the face of the bond.

The Treasury Department shows an attractive point when they remind you that an investment of \$18.75 per month for one hundred twenty months then assures the investor of an income of \$25.00 per month for the same length of time. In addition they point out that Savings Bonds, the same as any other government bonds, are not taxable; though, likewise, may not be held to aggregate of more than \$10,000.00 in one calendar year. Which last statement is of course of little importance to the average enlisted man.

Further information on United States Savings Bonds may be had by simply sending a letter requesting such to the Treasurer of the United States, Washington, D.C.

Army Buys Autogyros

The Secretary of War recently announced the purchase of six autogyros complete with spare parts from the Kellet Autogyro Corporation of Philadelphia, Pa., at a cost of slightly over \$238,000. They are to be used by the infantry, artillery and cavalry for reconnaissance, observation of fire, carrying messages, and command missions. They have a cruising speed of 125 miles an hour and a minimum endurance of two and a half hours with the ability to land on a 150 foot field.

— 0 —
 Send the BLUE BONNET home.



Dear Sal,

You got me all flabbergasted and a wearin' one o' those sick moonin' looks. 'Tis worse'n spring fever ere tha sulphur and black strap commences a workin' on a body's feelin's and blood stream. And tha boys have to blare out a blast o' reveille in my direction afore they can get me to connect tha brain cells with my hearin' gear. You've sorta took tha spring outa my frame, Sal, but tha brain is a dwellin' and a takin' it easy in some mighty comfortin' thoughts.

Certainly caused my peepers to want to come a pilin' outa tha sock-ets and take a lotta hop, skips, and jumps around to see tha good old homestead again and all the familiar noggins.

First thing I did after Boozy Bowman brought me over from Simsonville through a gawkin' passel o' yokels in front o' tha general store was to set out a searchin' for Felix. Nice and polite I was a goin' to pass out a warnin' for tha conivin critter to stay away from your doorstep. Tha word musta got out fasterin' wild fire cause nary a soul could remember a seein' Chicken Mouth after I hove up. Bet he's a tremblin' and a hidin' 'n some black hole a coupla counties away.

I'll never forget us, a swingin' 'n tha barrel stave hammock and a holdin' hands. Gone went tha thoughts o' my multiplyin' pigs and poultry. Gone went tha hankerin' to sail again on tha salty brine. There was just you, a yearnin' for a smackin' kiss from me. And I was a reachin' over with tha feelin' o' heaven 'n my soul, a goin' to touch your lips with my spray splashed ones when all of a sudden tha barrel staves gave a mighty crack and poured us on tha cold hard dirt, so hard and a makin' so much confusion it brought your Pa out fasterin' a fox at a huntin'

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**Attention Houston
Poker Experts**

Can you solve this one?

Six men were playing a game of draw poker at a round table. All stayed the first round before the draw.

Swartzell sat between two players who bumped the pot before the draw. Crego thought Webb a slow player. The dealer had two pair at the go in. Jones put the least money in the pot. Webb had never held a straight flush in his life.

Brown got first cards on the draw.

The winner did not bump before the draw.

The pot was opened under the guns.

Eufemia was sorry for the player on his right who held four aces at the go in.

The first card dealt on the draw to the second player on the dealer's left was red.

The player on Webb's left looked at the discards.

Now name the dealer, the opener, and the winner of the pot; and also place the various players in the order in which they sat.

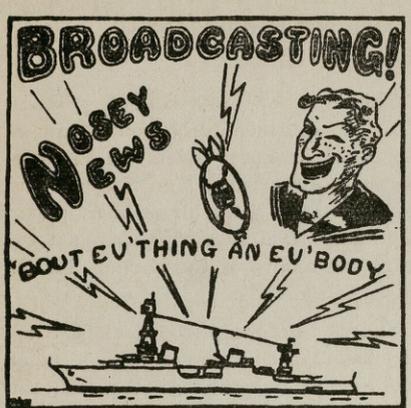
The best and nearest correct answers dropped in the **Blue Bonnet** contribution box in the recreation compartment will be in the next issue along with the correct answer. Added provision: If there are too many correct answers to print, then the names of those submitting correct answers will be printed.

Full Power Run Successful

(From Page 1.)

deal more to it than that: To complete such runs at high speed with no casualties or penalties, requires not only the smooth-working cooperation of every man in the Black Gang—from the fireman on the floorplates to the Chief Engineer in Main Control—also, but often overlooked, is the fact that complete success depends on the help and cooperation of all hands outside the department directly concerned.

Because this help was so willingly given all along the line, the Chief Engineer wishes to sincerely thank all who played a part however small, not omitting the "forgotten men," those deck force mess cooks who took care of that duty for the day.



Greetings and Goodbye Friends and Shipmates! That's quite a lot for Adam Chatterbox to say in one breath—the goodbye part isn't at all easy to say either. Last Christmas when Obie O'Brien, our good friend and the late M.C. of this program went the way of all sea-faring men and departed for other duty, he asked me to take over the helm. It was with some misgivings that your faithful announcer allowed the Irishman to blarney him into taking on the rather dubious position of Nosey News editor. Believe it or not, but it has never been regretted.

Since that time much water has gone under the Rambler Ship's bow and happy Houstonites have had many a hilarious time. In broadcasting the highlights of the past seven months happenings and making personality comments with abandon, Adam sincerely hopes no feelings have been deeply hurt; that friends have been amused and that enemies (if any) have not been unduly irritated. He has enjoyed trying in a humble way to make the Houston even a happier ship than she has always been, to bring the entire ship's company closer together, and contribute a few laughs now and then.

Right here and now Adam wishes to thank each and every one who has in any way helped to make the ever-popular Nosey News highly successful. That includes all those persons who have made an appearance, sometimes to their embarrassment. You're fine shipmates, gang—they just don't come any better—and the friendly feeling between all the men of the several Divisions is something worth being proud of. It's the factor that makes really "good ships" and you can't find too many of them.

Harried Husband: Clipped from one of the better known news sheets is one that's too good to keep. If you didn't see it, have a chuckle... (Headline) **FLEET'S IN; MAN WANTS WIFE JAILED**—One Portland husband apparently was duly impressed by the arrival of five navy vessels in port Wednesday. The individual rushed to police headquarters and breathlessly asked police for assistance.

"The sailors are in town," the man explained, "and my wife likes them. I wonder if you would lock her up until after they have gone."

Police informed the agitated hubby that they were unable to fulfill the request.

* * * *

Little Brotheritis: GSK Gene Finney, swains a booful Hollywood Miss. (Tis reported that wedding bells are ready to ring.) She is the proud big sister of a bright—too bright—ten year oldster who is the exact counterpart of Peck's Bad Boy. One of his favorite pastimes is to leave his trundle bed long before midnight armed with a flashlight, (when lights are low, if not out) and with stealthy tread haunt the love birds. Finny finds this most upsetting, but doesn't know what to do about it. **ADAM ADVISES:** Buy him a shotgun, Finney, and show him how to shoot himself.

* * * *

Adam Exits: It's been lots of fun and I hope you've enjoyed a part of my time on the air—and in your hair. So long, and best of luck Shipmates. I give you "Scoops" Sivak. Take it lads! May your snooping be good. **ADAM CHATTERBOX** is dead—long live Nosey News!

* * * *

Realize now what a good snoop artist Adam really was after trying all week to get the latest in news happenings which occur to those who have been making this column. The Houston's crew is rapidly changing, which makes it rather difficult to keep up with the news happenings which can make this column interesting if only someone would contribute them. As it is, going to press this week, I find that Adam left this column a bit too soon.

* * * *

Realizing that we must start somehow, we'll start in by giving that man from Arkansas, **Byron McElhanon** the honors of being first by letting you

A Mystery Of The Sea

Still unsolved to this day is the mystery of the "Commodore." On the night of 6 April 1901 a vessel appeared off Tebo's yacht basin in South Brooklyn, New York, drifting in on the flood tide. Workmen hailed her and upon receiving no answer they boarded her and found not a soul aboard. Every nook and corner was searched but no trace of life was to be found, and further, no trace could be found of anyone ever having been aboard her. It was unbelievable but there she was, as real as any ship that ever sailed the high seas. Subsequent investigations revealed nothing more than that the vessel was not registered in any port in the world.

Editor's note: Individual solutions of this mystery should be interesting. Where do you think the "Commodore" came from?

all know that he claims that he is a much better baseball player than any of the regulars on the ship's team. Doesn't care to lower his league standing by playing with scrubs as he calls our team.

* * * *

Another growler is the "S" Division, **Bill Yates**. Doesn't like the way the fire watches are being maintained in his division by the other sections. States that he wouldn't be able to do any work in the Pay Office next day after using their watch system. Stood his first watch last night using his system. Slept all day today.

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With **Charlie Campbell**, alias Yap-Yap, leaving us soon, this column will only have to worry about the other two Campbells who drop in this column occasionally. Sure will miss that clear, deep rich voice of his over the announcing system.

* * * *

The lighting effect is very unusual in the mess-attendants compartment. Wonder why they have red bulbs glowing instead of the regular issue.

Have you ever tried to get past the Oil King's shack to get to the wash-rooms? Reminds me of the subways back in New York. More arguments are settled in that vicinity than anywhere else on board.

Baseball With A Vengeance

Well, well, and well—who's going to take home the marbles or something? If we knew, there would be no use of playing, and if there were no playing who'd have any fun, anyhow?

On Tuesday afternoon the division baseball representatives assembled in the port hangar to confer and argue on the fine points of a contemplated division baseball competition. Results were immediate and conclusive. First each division, exclusive of the "H" and "N" Divisions, will put forth a baseball team to battle for victory and glory; second, the games will be played at 1815 each week day; and third, the division having the highest percentage at the end of the competition will garner a substantial prize.

Results and division standings will be published each week. Everybody can't win, but we can sure try. May the best teams win.

Guns For The Golden Gate

Four new sixteen inch guns are to be installed on the Fort Funston reservation, near the Golden Gate Bridge entrance. One of the guns has arrived and the second is at Mare Island Navy Yard, the remaining two being expected shortly. The guns were brought around from the East Coast on the army transport Ludington. Each of the huge rifles weighs 143 tons.

Gus's Weekly Letter

(From Page 2.)

bee. And he stood there in his long handled red flannels a pointin' his double barrel at us, thinkin' we were chicken snatchers a tryin' to leave tha county. Couldn't help but heave out a snicker. But you're not a goin' to get hitched to Chicken Mouth just because he took a sudden dislike to me then and there, are you Sal?

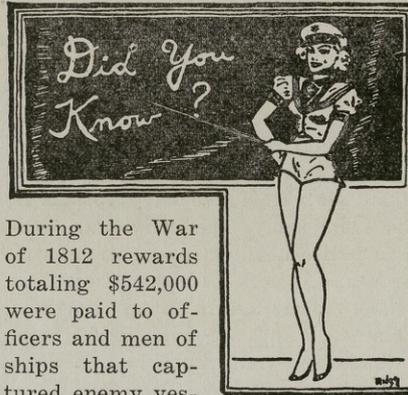
Tell me again you hanker to be a puttin' your feet under my table.

Love,

Gus.

Inspecting Officer: "See here, Cox'n, I can write my name in the dust on the top of this locker."

Yap-Yap Campbell: "Gee, ain't it wonderful to be edicated."



During the War of 1812 rewards totaling \$542,000 were paid to officers and men of ships that captured enemy vessels. At that time a bounty was given for a captured ship depending on the number of its guns. This was a welcome addition to the average wage of \$19.00 received by petty officers. For instance the Lake Champlain victory earned from \$668.10 to \$1,163.62 for petty officers, and the seamen and marines received \$120.42.

Scores of famous persons in history could not write legibly. Some of Shakespeare's work never has been definitely deciphered. Several of Hawthorne's manuscripts remain unpublished today because no one has been able to read them. And Napoleon's letters were almost in a class by themselves, some of them being mistaken for maps of battlefields. . . . This would make a lot of new famous names in history if that applied to pay slips as well.

The famous frigate Constitution carried street cars and locomotives to the Paris Exposition in 1879. The ship was eighty-two years old at that time.

The air commerce of the United States is larger than that of all the European countries combined. In a single day 3,000 persons and 25 tons of mail are flown over the air lines of this country.

The Marine Corps was organized on November 10, 1775, when Congress passed a resolution organizing a corp unit of two battalions. Although at times during the days of sailing ships marines served ship's guns, their battle service was mainly to board the adversary, or repel boarders, and with their muskets keep up a continuous fire. Thus have they earned their right to be called "soldiers of the sea."

"Fog, Rain—and Death"

(From Page 1.)

The eighth of May dawned—COLD, FOGGY, and RAINING—unheard of since no one knew when. On the surface all was serene. Men laughed and joked as they went about their work, but many an anxious eye was cast toward the mouth of the harbor. THEN IT HAPPENED.

Shortly before three o'clock that afternoon the men on the cruiser could make out through the fog, the general outline of a tramp steamer entering the harbor. It began to look like the little old lady had known what she was talking about, for no merchant ships had ever been known to enter the harbor. Warships firing their big guns all over the place made it too dangerous. About this time many a ruddy complexion began to take on the hue of a bag of flower. But there she was, moving straight toward the Charleston, and not responding in the least to the frantic signals that were being sent to her.

She steamed past, refusing to give a name or call letter, the only information she would give was that she had lost a propeller blade and was anchoring to ship another. No tramp as miserable as this ever carried a spare blade, but over her side went a diver.

The afternoon wore on and anxious men tried to discern the movements on the mystery ship anchored a few hundred yards away. A hearty supper was served, but few had an appetite. The bugler sounded lights out and hammocks, but doggone few rolled in their hammocks that night. The night wore on—and NOTHING HAPPENED. Just before daylight the tramp was heard hoisting her anchor and a few minutes later steamed past and out to sea. After heaving sighs of relief, the entire crew fell to and cursed that rusty old tub as only a strong, healthy sailor could curse in those days.

For the period this vessel remains in the yard pay day will be every Friday. Since pay day will be weekly it should not be necessary for special money requisitions. This advance notice is being given in order that you may arrange your financial affairs accordingly.