

ENGINEERS FORCE EDITION

ORGANIZATION OF THE ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

The Engineering Department is organized with the Engineering Officer as Head of Department and is responsible only to the Executive and Commanding Officers as are all other departments aboard ship. Directly under the Engineering Officer are the First Assistant and the various Division Officers.

The Engineering Department is divided into four divisions, the "A" Auxiliary; "B" Boiler; "E" Electrical; and "M" Main Engine. As a rule each division has a line officer and warrant officers as its Division Officers.

The Auxiliary Division, better known as the "A" Division, has care of all boat engines, evaporators, ice machines, machine shop, the heating system throughout the ship, and the siren and whistle. There is also the general repair gang, which does all acetylene welding and brazing.

Continued on Page 2.

Congratulations

I wish to take this opportunity of thanking all hands of the Engineering Department for their splendid work and cooperation shown this year.

V. M. Davis, Lt. Comdr., U.S.N.
Engineer Officer

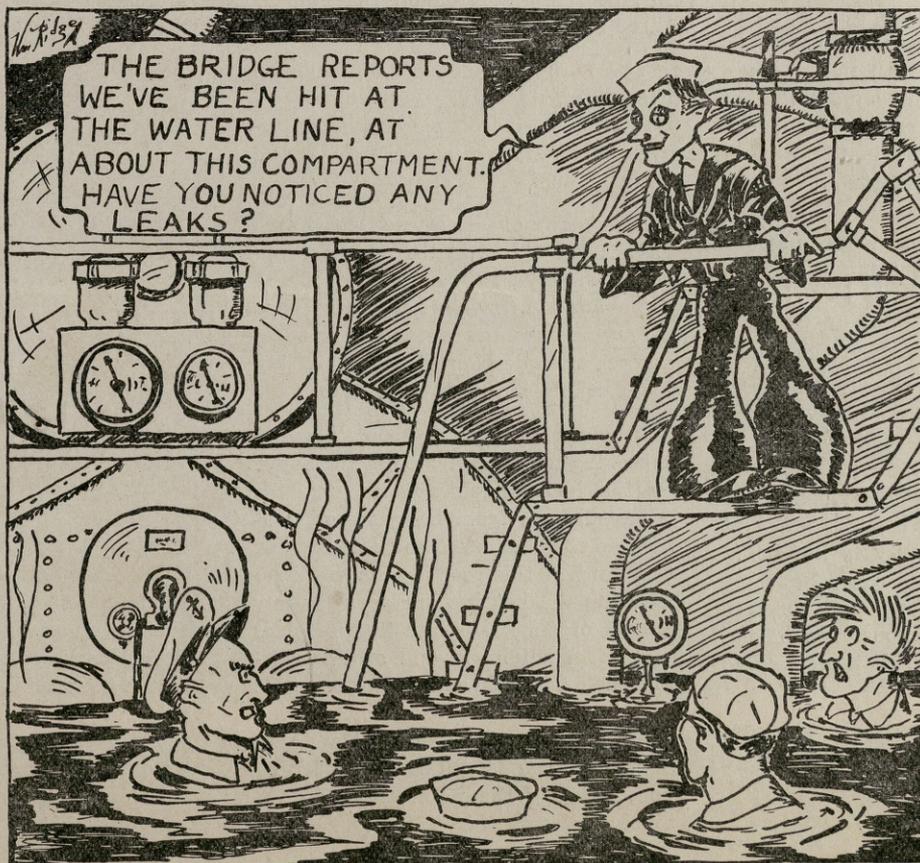
DEPARTMENT A BUSY PLACE ON A HOUSTON SPEED RUN

As seen by an embryonic engineer: Just lazin' along, eight knots standard, everything running cool and easy. Big, polished steel shafts throwing off gleams of light as they slowly turn—so slow you may count the coupling bolts.

Throttlemen lounging—taking things easy, it won't be long now; a speed run coming up! Coffee, sandwiches, cigarettes, always welcome, never more than now. On the floorplates, oilers and pumpmen idling in a cool blower stream, no worries, everything "maskee"! Wise-cracks, laughing; the Officer of the Watch seriously explaining the mysteries of the steam turbine to a lad not long away from the farm.

The Chief Engineer hits the throttle platform accompanied by his Assistant - the zero hour isn't far away now. Clinging heat; sweat

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.

Editor, Lieut. (jg) E. A. McDonald, U.S.N.

Assistant Editor: R. C. Ball, Ch. Pay Clerk

Associate Editors: Stefan Sivak, Jr., SK2c

R. B. Thompson, SK3c

Circulation: John Boris, Y3c

18 December 1937

EDITORIAL

The Blue Bonnet Staff presents the Engineering Edition, one which we hope will meet with your interest and approval.

Know something about the Engineering Department. Such information, besides being highly instructive is quite intriguing. Trace a tiny drop of water from the time it is sucked into the ship's evaporators to explode into steam on meeting red hot coils till the time it returns again to its parent, the sea. Take this drop of water through the engineering system, and you will be both surprised and amazed how many times it changes form and temperature.

This is your own paper, containing items about you and for you. It is the staff's idea to edit and publish a ship's paper so arranged with news, jokes, editorials, poems, cartoons, items of interest, and novelties that it will provide the best possible in the way of entertainment and education.

We wish to know your response to special editions. Comments may be placed in the contribution box in No.1 Messing Compartment. If you desire it, the staff will publish more special editions; for example, The Christmas Issue, "Ye Olde Navy," The Advertising Issue, "Mysteries of The Deep," "Don't Believe This," "Rover Boys in The Navy," et cetera.

As this is as favorable a time as any in telling you, we wish to state that we are extremely sorry in not being able to publish last week's edition. The linotype machine and presses were working continuously on official printing, and as a result there was no time for the paper.

SEND the BLUE BONNET to the folks at home.

ORGANIZATION OF THE
ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

(Continued from Page 1.)

This division is on the job night and day. Warm water in the scuttlebutt or a delayed liberty because of a broken down boat, are among the many things that make the importance of the "A" Division felt by all hands.

The Boiler or "B" Division has charge of the eight boilers located in the four firerooms, and the boilermakers shop. This is the largest division but when more than two firerooms are in use its personnel must stand watch and watch. For full power, personnel must be obtained elsewhere. In port, the boilers must be cleaned, both fire-sides and watersides—a long and tedious job. Frequently the boilers must be rebricked, another back breaking job.

The Electrical or "E" Division has charge of all things electrical throughout the ship. To enumerate the various appliances under their care would take too long, but in general they are, fire-control, lighting, and power circuits. Every electrical motor, generator, searchlight, etc., on the ship is cared for by this division.

The Main Engine or "M" Division has under its care all machinery in the two enginerooms, consisting of everything from turbines to fire and bilge pumps.

How many of you of the Deck Force have been through the Engineering Department- Altogether too few. Drop down and see us whenever you have a few minutes and we will be glad to answer any questions. Know your ship from double bottoms to foretop.

In closing, a word about blowing tubes. As soot is collected in the boiler on the heating surfaces it insulates these surfaces from the gases of combustion and decreases the efficiency of the plant. If this soot is allowed to remain on the heating surfaces for any length of time, sulphur in the gases will form sulphuric and other injurious acids, which attack and corrode the surfaces. The reason for blowing tubes is to get rid of the soot and not, as the deck hands will persist in telling you, to dirty the paint work on the topside.

DEPARTMENT A BUSY PLACE
ON A HOUSTON SPEED RUN

(Continued from Page 1.)

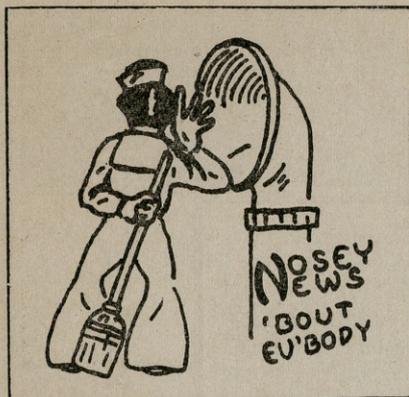
saturated dungarees—pump lazily pounding—an occasional glance at guages, dials, revolution indicators; no strain, just kicking over.

A clanging bell! Speed change! Going up! All is action now—every man has his part to play, and does it with smooth precision. Open nozzles, adjust valves; everybody on their toes; another signal from the bridge; another! "Open her up, slowly!" Turbines whine, big gears rumble—fifteen—twenty—twenty-five knots. "Give her the gun!" "Keep your oil pressure up, the temperature down!"

The latest and most modern equipment. Powerful turbines, small, yet under those gleaming casings are concealed the leashed power of tens of thousands of horses. Miles of twisting, curving pipes—steam, oil, water. Burnished copper, glistening brass, silvery paint. Bewildering valves, wheels in rows, pairs, groups; giant steam stops, throttle valves, each one a part of the harness for this Colossus of energy. The engine room seems crowded to overflowing with machinery: pumps, turbines, electric generators, the huge mysterious switchboard, valves, rods, bells, telephones, voice-tubes, dials, guages, indicators, warning annunciators, raucous klaxons; commonplace to the engineer, bedlam to the uninitiated.

A jangling signal; open up! A few more turns! The propeller shafts are whirling around more than three hundred and fifty times each minute. "Hard over, right rudder! One hundred and eighty degree turn!" A lurch—she swings over on her beam, the massive gears rumble and growl in protest. Nonchalant oilers inspect bearings, caressing them with grimy hands. "Running cool, O.K!"

Counters spinning, eyes on the clock! The strain is beginning to tell, a throttleman wonders how four hours can seem so long. Coming around. "Mark!" "Watch your turns!" "Watch the back pressure!" "Watch the oil, the make-up feed, catch the counter!" Readings on the hour and on the half. Only four more hours of this, then back to steady steaming.



Greetings shipmates and best wishes for a Merry Christmas to those who are going on leave this week. They sure are going to miss out on a swell dinner being prepared by our culinary experts.

* * * *

The gang in the machine shop have been taking quite a beating this week due to their listening to "The Vagabond Lover (Nicolette) tell of his final thrust at Dan Cupid. He says he won but you and I know different. Tell 'em about that "Ideal" girl you met in New York 14 years ago, Nick.

* * * *

"Gene Raymond" alias Eliasson, snipe of the second order, was seen romancing a sweet young thing in the Majestic Ballroom the last evening in port. Dances with his eyes closed or else he was getting ready to pass out! She was cute.

* * * *

"Goose" Gossage, WT2c, insists his nickname starts with a "G" and not with a "D" as someone erroneously heralded him over the announcing system.

* * * *

Congratulations are in order for Si Pierce, EM1c, who is being advanced another step in his Naval career. He will put on the buttons this month. Here's hoping we get the usual cigars.

* * * *

M.M.M., or Mike (Milano's) McCarthy WT1c is putting his 16 in Milano's. The reason seems to be a certain Mary who serves his special bit of refreshment to him.

* * * *

Bert Ellstrom, WT1c, had his heart broken Saturday morning when he lost a two bit bet with Sam Samuelson. Sorry Bertie. Betting isn't in your line, better stick to playing with valves.

"Squeaky" Crego of the sparktrician's gang was given quite a number of growls from one of man's best friends on the dock the other morning. All this due to his trying to charm the dog with one of his well known personality smiles. (He shouldn't have kept moving his leg so often.)

* * * *

While we were talking about electricians we might as well try getting the lowdown on the Second Class who tried to borrow two dollars from his one and only so that he could take her to the Majestic.

* * * *

Speaking of riding, you should have heard the riding that brand new PhM3c got when he started sporting Baby Blue Skivvies. He claims his wife accidentally packed them in his sea bag. O.K., we'll believe him this once! To show us he was sincere he mailed them home!

—o—

One day when Little Audrey visited a newspaper office she got caught in a newspaper press, but she just laughed and laughed and laughed because she knew she wasn't the type.

—♦♦♦—

FIFTY-FIFTY

The Navigator and the Chief Engineer once had an argument as to who was the most indispensable in operating the ship; whereupon the Navigator agreed to take a try at the Engineer Officer's job and the Engineer Officer agreed to take the bridge.

After about half an hour running, the ship stopped and the Navigator crawled out of the engine-room hatch. His clothing was wet with perspiration, and his features were covered with grease and grime.

"It's no use," said the Navigator, "I can't seem to make the darn thing go again."

Certainly not," said the Chief Engineer, "we're a-ground."

DIVINE SERVICES

Divine Services will be held Sunday, 19 December, on the following ships: Catholic, 0830, San Francisco, 1000, Arizona, Colorado, Lexington, New Mexico, Quincy. Protestant, 0845, Portland, 0900, Quincy, 1000, Chester, Idaho, Mississippi, Nevada, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Relief, Saratoga, Tennessee, Tuscaloosa, West Virginia. Visiting Catholic church parties should reach ships on which Catholic services are being held one half hour early in order that men may attend Confessions.

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE OF EVENTS AT SERVICE MEN'S CLUB

December 16 — Home cooked dinner followed by decorating tree.
 December 17 — Dance: eight thirty.
 December 18 — Dance: eight thirty.
 December 25 — A special Christmas dance. Gifts for all.
 December 30 — Bridge party.
 December 31 — New Year Eve special dance, noise makers, floor show.
 Sunday's special Breakfast Club 9 a.m. Vespers, 4:30, sandwiches and coffee.

January 1 — Dance.

The Club is open daily from 7 a.m. to 12 p.m. and is equipped to serve the men of the fleet in every way. You will find a cordial welcome and are urged to make the Club your headquarters when ashore.

416 Pine Avenue

FIREROOM MUSINGS

Tiny drops of blazing oil, pirouette, corkscrew, and leap
 To form a writhing hell, a molten mass of searing heat.
 The conjuring flames of a boiler's fires in the sodden
 air-crammed space of a vessel's hold
 Causes lazy, torpid musings to coil, then slowly, luxuriously
 unfold.
 The mind pauses listlessly, dulls to heavy, persuasive
 warmth
 Until body and brain are as things apart, unhinged by the
 comforting hearth.
 Fancy, freed of its bondage, paints strange pictures
 With raw-red colors on an easel of flame-filled air
 And fashions your picture with skill and consummate care.
 A face, bedaubed with crimson, choked with rouge and
 ochre
 Peers out at you like some hideous joker.
 Its fingers clutch your breath with the chill of fear.
 It's your conscience. Next time don't drink so much beer.
 —A Houston Engineer.

BILGE FROM BELOW

Greetings snipes, bilge rats or what ever you care to be called. Since this is our edition let's try and put a few of the boys on the spot.

Keesee who has always boasted that he grew his own mustache admits defeat at this moment. Traded it for the colorful eye.

We didn't believe this either, when we first heard it. But s'help us Hirsch is having his girl friends polish his finger nails.

Joey Cawthon has told the best of the week, says he was out with a girl the other night and she was so young that when they went to get a hunting and fishing license she had to lie about her age.

Cromwell, our midget from back aft, has given up the idea of taking a chance of just having one girl friend. Says it is not safe. At present he is making plans on buying them by the acre. Now if he were kind hearted enough to tell us just how many one gets with every acre.

This is not official but comes from good source. The only time that Orville McGoldrick Brant can draw small stores is when he has the approval of the better half. That is in hand writing. Too bad we single fellows can get ours without having to woo and coo for an extra skivvie shirt.

Will someone tell Wilson, F2c, that Mary is a perfect kid and not to worry about his shipmate taking her away from him or even writing her a letter. Cause she did say he was a perfect dancer and that is all she cared for.

Pop Early returned from the hospital the other day and says he never felt better in his life. Well Pop, after an absence of over 13 months the boys are more than glad to see you back and here is hoping you are here to stay for some time.

Cawthon's big ambition is to be like Sprague and at least try and not disappoint his shipmates with his lady friends. Sprague says the only way he can do that is by buying the lady friend a new set of false teeth for a Christmas present. Even Gilmore has suggested the same.

THE SNIPE

Webster's dictionary describes the snipe as any of a certain limicoline birds (genus gallinago) related to the woodcocks. They frequent bogs and marshes and are highly valued as game.

For your edification (I feel good today) I go further. While standing up on deck the other day, doing nothing but just tending to my knitting, a strange creature scuttled up from below. Oil-soaked, dirty, and begrimed with whatever was in the bilges, it blinked its eyes in bewilderment as the bright glare of sunlight struck small squinting peepholes for eyes. I could see that light and fresh air were quite rare and a treat for the creature. It just stood there, drinking in great lungfulls of air and flexing unused muscles. Finally, after curiosity got the better of me, I sauntered over to this thing of flesh. But I kept my distance. One never knows, and it's best not to take any chances.

"What are you gawking at?" came at me in sepulchral tones.

I looked around to make sure. Was this creature human? Yes, there was a sort of dungaree uniform on it and there was a human-like face under the grime of the ages. It was a human being.

I recovered enough to ask a question, although a trace of fear still pervaded my system, "Are you part of our crew?"

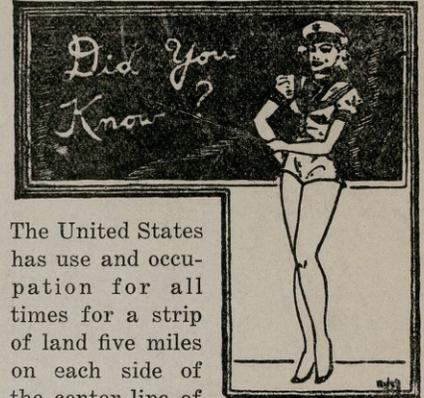
"Sure, you swab handle twister, I'm a snipe, an engineer to you. Just came up for a few minutes before I go back down again to get up a good sweat and a slug of 'jamoke'."

The snipe's eyes bugged out with wonder. "Say," he said, "better not stay out in this sun too long. You'll get sunstroke."

Have you noticed Abbott, MM1c, walking around shining his buttons on his dungarees, well he is just getting in practice for the new uniform. Save your energy, Abby.

Shaw, MM1c, is now reviewing his mathematics due to his pet rabbits being such rapid procreators.

Fox, "M" Division Romeo, has the girl picked, the time set, the place, and the ring. Move over G.G.'s.



The United States has use and occupation for all times for a strip of land five miles on each side of the center line of the Panama Canal. For this the United States paid Panama \$10,000,000 cash and pays annually \$250,000. The cities of Panama City and Colon are within the five mile limit but are excluded from the agreement.

The battleship WEST VIRGINIA, displacing 32,500 tons, is forced through the water by four solid bronze propellers 13 feet in diameter, each being driven by an 8,000 horsepower electric motor, for a total of 32,000 horsepower, which is sufficient to operate a fleet of a thousand average automobiles.

Poor little Stevie Koster was more than disappointed here a day or two ago about his leave and where he was going to spend it, then from out of nowhere his little love in Oakland finally sent the ever so wanting invitation, here is hoping our Stevie has as good a time as he is looking forward to.

If all the boys were interested in the white "E" as the auxiliary watch the other night, the mighty HOUSTON would be certain to be in there running. Every cruiser in the Scofor is after the "E," shipmates. Let's get it.

Podries, twister of No. 3 throttle, reports he is just getting the hang of dancing. Having completed two hours of his dancing course he wonders how the rest of the lads even have the nerve to go out on a dance floor. When questioned he admitted that the instructor was patient, philosophical and kind. This helps, we feel sure. Maybe she is pretty too.

Only because it is the accepted custom we must say so long and we will be wondering who will Cawthon's next heart throb be.