

Key West

Key West, Florida, is on the island of Key West, one of a group known as the Florida Keys. The Florida Keys are 60 miles southwest of Cape Sable and 100 miles north by east of Havana, Cuba, thus making Key West the southernmost of the cities of the United States. The island is a flat island averaging eleven feet above sea level. Its geographical location, vegetation and climate supported a population which made it the largest city of the state in 1890 and even now it has 20,000 inhabitants. Its excellent harbor, an easy port to make, gives a steamer communication with the large cities of the Atlantic and Gulf coasts. Also it is the terminus of the Florida East Coast Railroad and the ocean ferry to Havana thus permitting a passenger and freight car service between Havana and New York via Key West.

There is a naval base at Key West which during the Spanish American war was the rendezvous of the fleet but since that time has had little importance except for its strategic location controlling the coast and Caribbean trade. There is little history attached to the island as the first permanent settlement was in 1822 though it has several buildings which were used as hospitals during the Spanish-American War, one of which is the convent of the Holy Name.

The army has a small post, Fort Taylor, on an artificial island in the harbor at the main entrance.

It is a good place to buy cigars, turtle and turtle shell ornaments. Its only other trade or industry is fishing. Yes, the fishing's good.

Houston Fighters At Guantanamo

Our boxers and wrestlers gave good account of themselves in the matches of 29 January at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, as evidenced by the results which reached us in Portsmouth. The best of cruiser division seven pitted themselves against cruiser division four representatives.

Chick, our 118 lb wrestler, threw his opponent as soon as he could lay hands on him in the fast time of 15 seconds. He looks like a repeater for Fleet Champion.

Buttler, our 145 lb entry, was ahead all the way until he had the misfortune to break a rib. The match on a default then went to the other man. Our sympathy goes out to this third division coxswain. He looked good.

Hodge, the 145 lb boxer from our ship, won by the K.O. route. This did not surprise us in the least.

Harris, our 160 lb boxer, won by a technical knockout. Here's another hard hitting boy who should go to the top.

Lewdanski, the heavyweight boxer, fought a great fight throughout, having his man down during one of the rounds. However, the experience of his opponent, the cruiser representative last year, was too much; the result being that Lewdanski lost his bout by a close decision.

Fine work. The entire ship is behind our fighters to the last man. They deserve everything we can give them.

Slaughter Among the Icebergs

By GUS

— Fourth and Final Episode —

(The story continues with the leading aviator giving his impressions of the polar flight.)

"The slightest suggestion that our search would end in failure must have seeped into my consciousness at this point because a dark wave of melancholia then washed over my being like an eclipse blotting out the light of day. It rendered me almost unfit for any lucid thinking. This would never do, I told myself. I had to fly on to search out the white carnivora. So much depended upon us aviators. I have never put much stock in the teachings of Coue or any of those philosophizing pedants so it was impossible for me to have recourse to mere plain thinking. My remedy was action alone.

With this thought in mind I signaled my intention to the other planes. All pilots performed flawlessly and the bearing line of the planes from the ship revolved slowly but perfectly to the new position. Almost simultaneously came results. My sadness fled as if it were being pursued by greased lightning. Below us thousands of white bears lay languishing in the rays of the aurora borealis. They were bunched up in large sedate groups with no show of action or evidence of their remarkable strength. This was the pay-off. I don't believe anyone could have found a sleeker and better conditioned group of bears either."

Back aboard ship you can well imagine the surprise and the joy that

(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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February 4, 1939.

Officers and Men of the
 4th Div., U.S.S. Houston,

Dearest Friends,

Your lovely flowers and message have been received and words cannot express how very, very much they mean to us in our loss, for it all seems so unreal, but we have to remember the "Lord gives and the Lord takes", and we will always have the memory of his smile and happy ways.

I wish you could see the beautiful flowers that just came, they are pink rose buds, daffodils, pink carnations, heather ferns and pussy willows, tied with a beautiful two toned satin ribbon in rose and gold in the most beautiful low silver gardiner, something I can always keep to remember Harold's shipmates and officers by, and how their thoughts were with me in this sad hour.

Again thanking you for all kindnesses.

Sincerely,

"Christiansen" Family,

(Mrs.) Bertha Christiansen

Can and Will are Cousins

Who never trust to luck;

Can is the son of Energy,

Will is the son of Pluck.

Can't and Won't are cousins, too,

Always out of work;

Can't is the son of Never Try,

Won't is the son of Shirk.

Slaughter Among the Icebergs

(Continued from Page 1.)

was ours when we received the first good radio reports from our planes. From the very number, frequency, and optimism of the contact reports, we knew that the planes had sighted a large herd. Our duty was to not permit them to escape.

All hands were called to general quarter stations on the double. Guns were loaded with ball bearings, nails, and bolts— anything that would inflict a telling wound. It would have been thoughtless to have employed regular shells. Thoughtless because of the consequential damage that we would have done to the polar bear meat. We desired to bring back the carcasses in good condition, not shell torn or with huge chunks missing.

In the hurry and scurry of loading the guns our ship's cat mysteriously disappeared. Ever since that day when it had wandered aboard in Panama the crew had accepted it whole-heartedly as our mascot. The sad thought of losing such a pleasant little companion was untenable. A touching appeal to locate the straying feline was immediately broadcast over all circuits of the loud speaking system. Finally the miscreant was discovered as part of the load in #1 anti-aircraft gun. The reason for this was excusable under the circumstances however as the little fellow had inopportunely chosen to bed down atop a half filled barrel of half-inch bolts.

In spite of this flurry of excitement the ship soon made ready at the firing line. After an operation order had been radioed to the planes the war commenced in earnest. Almost immediately the planes started to drive the bears toward a particular spot in the ice fields nearest the ship. A few well placed bombs scared the sneaking ones back into the main herd. At last when the white bears had reached the desired spot open fire was ordered and the slaughter began. (There being no need to go into the details of the battle nothing concerning the frightful carnage will be said. Suffice to say, results were one hundred per cent satisfactory.)

The butchering, loading, and packing of the polar bear meat were begun at once. This was indeed a huge job as most of the men detailed for

the preparation of the meat were quite inexperienced. Only a scant half dozen of the crew, and these attached to the commissary department, were competent in this respect. Regardless, the work went on. School was held under the tutorage of the chief commissary steward, and soon two score happy embryo butchers were merrily hacking and slicing away with perfect timing and correct follow thru.

Work went on quite smoothly for many days and the ship became literally loaded down with bear. However, when No. 1 and 2 messing compartments were ordered to be packed with the precious meat after every other available space had been filled a few stifled yet nevertheless audible grumblings were heard. Then, as it is now, these food serving compartments were quite popular with the crew. It was decided to overlook the behavior of the disgruntled few, but in order to preserve good fellowship a smoker was ordered to be held that night— piping hot polar bear steaks and black Jamoke to be the refreshments after cessation of hostilities. A few stern admonishments, then and there, would have been much better as quite an unfortunate incident occurred which surely sowed the seeds of discontentment deeper than ever in the hotbeds of the unhappy minds of the persons concerned. The battle royal should have been left off the card. As it was, during the height of the conflict the ring ropes broke thus permitting the fighting arena to be shifted to different places among the onlookers. The result was not satisfactory. Black eyes are not dispensers of gloom in anybody's Navy.

Through this trying period the ship was eventually loaded and pronounced ready to sail. All hands took their getting underway stations. When all reports had come in, full speed was rung up over the engine telegraphs. Instead of the ship swinging around and gathering speed nothing happened except maybe a slight, almost imperceptible turn of the ship. Flank speed was ordered. Still the ship refused to pick up headway. What was amazing with this slow turning of the ship was the fact that No. 1 turret was slowly training around with the exact speed of the ship's swing.

A board of investigation immediately went into a huddle. Their findings later made history. It was discov-

ered that some malcontent had removed by an unexplained yet ingenious method all four of the ship's propellers. The shafts without the propellers, although rotating at a tremendous rate, were doing no good towards ship propulsion. Still this did not explain the fact that the ship was now proceeding along at about a ten knot clip on a due south course.

The board reconvened time after time but always adjourned without the hoped-for findings. The entire ship's company was then called to a conference. Any man with the slightest inkling of the mysterious phenomenon concerning the movement of the ship was urged to step forward in order to aid the board. For a while no one answered. Then back on the outer fringe of the milling crew a slight second class seaman stirred and slowly made his way forward. Everyone waited breathlessly for his words. Would he be a crackpot, or would it be the real McCoy? Clearing his throat of a cold which had been contracted in the arctic regions he began in a low voice, "From the time the green bolt of lightning hit No. 1 turret my suspicions have been aroused. Now that No. 1 turret has returned to its normal fore and aft position and our good ship is proceeding at a fast rate of speed my suspicions are confirmed."

A movement on the part of the hospital corpsmen toward the speaker at this minute did not escape the apprehensive eye of the presiding officer. They were duly cautioned to withhold hasty action and the stage was set for the seaman's explanation.

"Gentlemen," he continued, "No. 1 turret is charged with northern polarity. The lightning did that. As you all know, 'like' magnetic poles repel each other, and that is the reason the ship at present is traveling without the aid of the propellers. That is my explanation. It is perfectly simple."

A rousing cheer went up from all hands. The "findings" were complete.

Day still followed day with amazing regularity on the voyage back to civilization. Nothing of note happened except the morale of the crew increased in proportion as we came closer and closer to our port of destination.

The honors, glory, special awards, special pay bonuses, are all a matter

Out Of The Ozone

It seems to be that a single man doesn't stand a chance ashore anymore, all these married men seem to be gradually taking their place. Most of our more notable main street flashes in the past week are old home guards. I see Guigiletti, Fordemwalt and Bacon are doing pretty well for themselves.

By the way, has anyone ever heard what a Casonova that Shaky Malcomb is? Only missed one liberty during our stay here and all the bar maids are planning on following the Houston when she leaves.

I wonder why they call Moulton of the third Iron Man Moulty? Ask him maybe he will tell you.

Our Texas hill billies are growing more popular by the hour. It seems that Osborn has to have Segars help him sort out his fan mail now.

What was the matter the other morning Skudlas, were you and Jack Barron cold?

I wonder if Johnny Allen ever got the Valentine he went over to get the other night, or was it Seven roses that got him? It seems Hasty was a friend in need.

A couple of the latest reports are that two of the plankies, namely Cawthon and Man Mountain Nicholas were burning up the bar rooms along Main Street.

Rosebud Leslie said that Man Mountain Nicholas and he spent in the neighborhood of two hundred dollars looking for a Valentine.

Red Cawthon has a mighty bad looking right eye, as usual, its the old story, something like getting hit with a swinging bar room door, What we'd like to know is, was the bar room swinging or the door?

of history. They make a story in themselves. The only concrete remembrance of that trip is the red, white, and blue "E" which now graces the good ship Houston.

The End

For a good detailed description of the picture Jesse James go back to the barber shop, Curly and Cheek will give you all the dope on it, seems they used the excuse to see it three different times to go ashore without casting any reflection on their character.

If you haven't heard our new swing band drop back to No. 3 mess hall in the evening and really get an earful of good hot swing music, they swing everything from opera songs to hill billy tunes.

Well shipmates(?) that will be all for this week but watch out next time, I'm only starting.

The Prowler

Questions

(Answers on Page 4)

1. What is meant by fishing a mast or a spar?
2. How does one fly the blue pigeon?
3. What are gudgeons?
4. Where is the jackass on board ship?
5. What is the jew's harp?

Isms

Editors' Note—The following is printed as humor alone. As such it does not necessarily reflect the opinion or any partisanship of this paper.

Socialism: If you have two cows you must give one to your neighbor.

Communism: You give both cows to the government which gives you back some of the milk.

Nazism: You keep the cows and give the milk to the government which keeps the cream and gives you some of the skimmed milk.

Facism: You keep the cows and give the milk to the government which sells you some of the milk.

New Dealism: You shoot one cow and get paid for not milking the other.

Capitalism: You keep both cows, milk them, sell the milk and buy a bull.

Davy Jones' Locker

For centuries sailors have been known as being among the most superstitious persons in the world. The tradition of the sea most universally known among both sailors and landlubbers is that of Davy Jones' locker. The Davy of today has undergone many transformations in general character, but there seems to be little doubt that he is a direct descendant of corresponding figures of four or five centuries ago.

There is some difference of opinion as to the origin of the name "Davy Jones," the chief dissension being over "Davy." It is more or less generally agreed that the "Jones" comes from "Jonah." One theory which sounds quite plausible is that Davy is a corruption of "duffy" which is a word for ghost. Although here there is disagreement, too, as one writer says "duffy" is an old English word, and another says it is from the negro language. This translation would make Davy Jones literally the "ghost of Jonah."

Over a period of time Davy Jones has come to be regarded in a light much different from the position held by his early forebearers. Modern seamen have lost much of their superstitious dread of this figure. For instance, he is included as first assistant to Neptunus Rex in the ceremonies transforming "pollywogs" into "shellbacks" as a ship crosses the line. Much different is the earlier Davy Jones who "sometimes appeared a giant, breathing flames from his nostrils, and having big eyes and three rows of teeth." He was "the fiend who presides over all the evil spirits of the deep, and was seen in various shapes, warning the devoted wretches of death and woe."

Without a doubt the present conception of Davy Jones in a rather humorous tone is much preferable to these early ideas. Nowadays Davy has become the central figure in numbers of jokes and short stories. For instance:

The Devil and Davy had been rolling dice for possession of the souls of several persons, and Davy had been in a run of luck. Finally, one fellow came up whom the Devil

very much desired. This man was exactly the type he wanted, well known throughout the world for his daring and courageous deeds. Davy could not be induced to part with him until at last he accepted in trade four men and a lovely maiden.

Then the Devil began a chase all over the world, following his man through peace and war, o'er land and sea for many years. Eventually the man died, and only then did the Devil discover how he'd been tricked. The man had no soul at all.

Answers to Questions

(Continued from Page 3.)

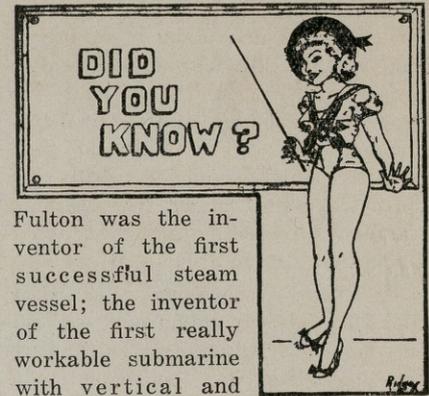
1. To fish a mast or a spar is to secure it when weakened or broken, by wrapping it with line along pieces of wood or iron called fishes, which are laid along the spar.
2. To fly the blue pigeon means to heave the lead.
3. Gudgeons are the pivots for a rudder on the stern of a boat.
4. The jackass is a plug that fits in a hawse pipe to keep the water out; it fits around the anchor chain. This jackass prevents excessive spray from covering the ship.
5. The jew's harp is the shackle that joins a chain to an anchor.

Basketball

Houston wallops Naval Operating Base Marines 32 to 15.

The Houston basketball team in a clean fast hard fought game defeated the Marines of NOB last week but in another close tussle our men dropped one to the Aviation Mechs of N.O.B. The score: 48 to 49. This game was the closest and hardest fought game that the Houston has played all year. The deciding basket was thrown in the final 15 seconds of play.

Under the spreading Mistletoe
A homely maiden stood,
And stood, and stood, and stood, and
stood,
And stood, and stood, and stood.



Fulton was the inventor of the first successful steam vessel; the inventor of the first really workable submarine with vertical and horizontal rudders and a means of renewing its air supply; inventor of the torpedo; the designer of the first steam propelled man-of-war in any navy.

The "Oregon Gun" in the U. S. Navy about 1840, fired 300 rounds without casualty taking 25 to 35 pounds of powder and a shot weighing 212 pounds. In a test shot this gun pierced a wrought iron target 4.5 inches thick.

During the Civil War ranges up to 6,000 yards were obtained with only 20° elevation. A 100 lb projectile from the Brooke 7# rifle Gun.

After one salvo of the eight inch battery the Houston is a ton and a half lighter.

The whisker boom on the Houston is 57 feet long and weighs 900 lbs.

The Houston draws more water under way than when at anchor.

It takes more power to drive a ship in shallow water than it does in deep water.

That a noble romance of history inspired the song "Put on Your Old Grey Bonnet." The part about "With the blue ribbon on it" was not put into the song to only fill up space. The blue ribbon was considered as very superficial by the girl's parents, but the lover insisted that the girl should express her gay spirit. The parents said if she had become so frivolous they would disown her. Later they retracted their statement.