

Mail Call is Sweet Music to All Hands

If you ask a sailor which he'd rather miss, a meal or a mail-call, he'll think you're crazy. You can eat anytime, can't you? On the **BENNINGTON** we average nearly a letter a day each, incoming and outgoing. Every night about 2,300 air mail letters have to be collected, censored, cancelled and sorted by 48 States and 45 large cities. Free mail and V-mail are not popular. The boys say they're too slow. They total less than 100 a day.

The post office on the third deck which is like all Navy P. O.s, a branch of the New York City Post Office, sells 40,000 air mail stamps and as much as \$118,000 in mail orders a month. On a recent pay day, the two men there sold \$19,418.71 in money orders. The money-order business equals that of a city of 30,000, letter mail that of a city of 10,000.

Letter mail comes on tankers to the ship at sea, perhaps once or twice a week. Packages seldom are received except at anchor. A mail delivery at sea may comprise up to 20,000 air mail letters, or 10 bags. Four men sort it into 48 pigeon-holes, one for each division and department aboard ship. After an hour, when the pigeon-holes are filled, there's a mail call.

The biggest mail the **BENNINGTON** ever received was before Christmas, when a small mountain of 800 sacks, all packages, was heaped on the hangar deck. It took three days to sort. Nowadays we get about 1,500 packages and 7,000 newspapers a month.

About the worst thing anybody can do, in the mailman's book, is to mail a sailor a glass jar of home-made pickles, or, as somebody's Mother once did, of meat balls and spaghetti. Packages, the mailmen will tell you, are bound to take a beating getting out to the Asiatic Theater. They are a long time in transit, probably in the hot hold of a ship. Glass jars break, pickles run out, meat spoils, cheese turns rancid, cookies are smashed, candy melts, peanuts go stale. Mix them up and what have you got? A mess. And every package in the sack may be ruined.

Outgoing mail on this ship is picked up at 6 collection boxes at 1630 daily. All officers off watch censor mail in the ward room. The job takes about an hour. Rejections average about 10 a night, or 4 of 15. That includes letters without stamps or return address.

V-2 Division, which services the planes, gets the most mail, partly because of its size, partly because its mail is not sub-divided at the post office. The black gang, the electricians and the Air Group are runners-up.

It takes seven men to hustle the mail on the **BENNINGTON**. Bernard F. Fellen, MaMc, a former Brooklyn postal clerk, and Robert F. Sergeant, MaMc, handle the aaxes. Byron Larson, MaMc, a former Tacoma letter carrier; David Collier, MaMc; Robert E. Jenkins, MaMc; Donald E. Robinson, MaMc, and Stanley J. Pierce, Cox, make up the sorting room crew. During Condition I, three of them also pass ammo.

The contents of this paper has been censored. It will be accepted for mailing if no handwriting is added. Air-mail postage required, 12 cents.

NOT FOR REPUBLICATION



No matter how many times there's mail-call in a day someone's always left out...seems like there is more than enough for some...while others get none.

Laff Lines

Storekeeper: "I've checked the figures on the pay list 8 times, Sir."

Lieut. Purdy: "Fine! That's what I call being thorough."

Storekeeper: "Thank you, Mr. Purdy, and here are the 8 results!"

Boot: "What is the calibre of this gun?"

Sic: "Darned if I know-it's just a big bore to me."

"What makes you think your boy friend is conceited?"

"Well . . . he joined the Navy to let the world see him."

Sic: "I'd like two hard boiled eggs to take out."

Daytime Waitress: "O.K. but you'll have to wait. Mame and I don't get through until 10."

WAVE inspecting ship: "Where's the captain?"

Gunner's Mate: "He's forward."

WAVE: "I don't care, I'm on a pleasure trip."

"I shall now illustrate what I have in my mind," said the Ensign as he erased everything from the blackboard.

Mae's letter from forward area: Long time no sho.

Sailor: "What do you mean I have nice baby hands?"

WAVE: "They're just beginning to creep."

Chief Master of Arms to Brooklyn Lass: "Let's get married or something, baby."

Brooklyn Lass: "We'll get married or nothing, Mac!"