

## —: THE BLUE BONNET —:

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## Traditions—Old Yet New

Today, we have among our military courtesies, the familiar right-hand salute. Many years ago—aye, centuries ago—in ships of war and merchantmen, in days of Greece and Rome, there were, on the after poop of the galleys and like vessels, altars to the pagan gods, and as a mark of respect and fear; and from superstition, those persons going out of, or coming onto, the ship, raised their hats as they came on deck. It is generally believed that the salute to the quarterdeck was derived from this early custom, and later, as religion changed, was a mark of respect to the shrine and crucifix in the early Christian era. Eventually, the "king's colors" became the symbol of state and religious reverence, and finally only the colors remained.

The quarterdeck has been a dignified and sacred area from earliest days. Captain Basil Hall, R.N., wrote in 1831 of his days as a midshipman in the British Navy; quote:

"Every person, not excepting the captain, when he puts his foot on this sacred spot, touches his hat; and as this salutation is supposed to be paid to the privileged region itself, all those who at the moment have the honor to be upon it, are bound to acknowledge the compliment. Thus even when a midshipman comes up and takes off his hat, all officers on deck, (admirals included, if they happen to be of the number) return the salute.

So completely does this form grow into a habit, that in the darkest night, and when there may be no one near the hatchway, it is invariably attended to with the same precision." Unquote.

There you have it. Handed down

## The Storm

Across a leaden and mottled sky,  
Portent warning to a weathered  
eye,  
An albatross flew on beating wing—  
A lonely, living, pulsing thing.  
And o'er the sea, that glassy tomb,  
An arrow sped—like the crack of  
Doom.  
A shaft that pierced a snowy breast  
And brought an albatross to rest.  
A ghastly horror filled the ship,  
An ashen hue on every lip.  
The Native Helmsman broke the  
calm,

"The albatross no man shall harm,  
For he who kills shall come to grief,  
Upon some vicious, hidden reef—  
A sudden leak, a splintered mast;  
You'll see, you fool, fore this day  
has passed."

As if in answer to his cry,  
An inky blackness filled the sky—  
And from the over-hanging clouds  
A wind whispered in the flapping  
shrouds.

While beneath, the crew in frantic  
haste  
Made ready to meet a maddened  
Waste.

O Neptune, whose mercy we have  
sought,  
Pray leash the wrath that fool hath  
wrought.

Unanswered went his frightened plea,  
Perhaps unheard in a lashing sea.

For swooping down in a vengeful  
blast  
Whipped a gale that stripped from  
every mast

The bellying sails, that fell in shreds  
Upon a score of quaking heads.

Now, far beneath, a king unheard,  
Stroked a stricken, broken bird,  
And cried in angry voice so strident,  
"Ey the hand that holds this

Trident,  
They'll pay, each and every one  
For the needless damage they have  
done."

through the years of time, and today  
we do the same, in a slightly abbreviated  
manner. It is a short, dignified,  
personal recognition of the colors, the  
symbol of the state, the seat of authority,  
given as we come aboard, or  
leave the ship, night or day.

W. J. Bannen, Bkr3c

## Answers to Questions on Page 1.

The taffrail is a rail around the stern of a vessel.

Thole pins are pins stuck in the gunwhale of a boat to which an oar is secured.

A mat is thrummed when bits of rope yarn have been sewn all over it's surface. A collision mat is thrummed on the inner side.

A tompion is the wooden plug put into the muzzle of a gun when it is secured.

A waltham ring is the ring in the eye of a towing cable. It is grooved on the outside to fit well into the eye and is bored through with a hole which affords a good fit for a shack's pin.

## The Garand Rifle

(Continued from Page 1.)

The introduction of this new rifle will not change the strategic or tactical doctrine of the Army. The rifle weighs but 5 ounces more than the former rifle, hence, it is no harder to carry. It is definitely superior and in tests with both expert and untrained riflemen has been proved to be as effective as 3 bolt-action rifles. The average rate of fire is about 25 to 30 aimed shots per minute. However, the record to date with the rifle is 100 aimed shots per minute at 200 yards, and never hitting outside the four-ring of a standard.

A censor is a lovely man.

I know you think so too.

He sees three meanings to a joke,  
When there are only two.

True to his word, the seas o'er head  
Boiled up from their briny bed—  
And showed their teeth in the waves  
that lashed

With unrelenting fury, that finally  
smashed

The crippled ship. And to a watery  
grave she sped,

To rest beside an albatross, dead.

The fire died in Neptune's eye,  
And over head the leaden sky  
Vanished before the coming sun.

Neptune smiled, his work was done.

G. L. Bailey, Sea 2c

—The Newport Recruit