



# Todd Pacific Shipyards Inc.

TACOMA, WASHINGTON



THE LAUNCHING OF THE

USS MINDORO



## BEHIND THE LAUNCHING SCENE



It is a tense moment when the holding triggers are released and a mighty fighting ship slides down the launching ways at Todd Pacific Shipyards on Commencement Bay.

In less than a full minute some thousands of tons of steel moves from land to water. It is the ship's first voyage!

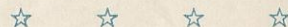
So effortless is this operation that thrilled spectators are aware of little else but the strangely empty slip where the ship was built and the ship itself, proudly riding the waters of the bay.

Imagine the problems involved in moving a fifty-story skyscraper, lying on its side, the distance of several city blocks and you get some idea of the task of launching a ship of such great bulk as is the one being given to the sea today.

Todd ships are built in place at the water's edge. Each ship is readied for launching almost from the time the keel is laid. This keel is put down upon rows of heavy timbers or keel blocks, running the entire length of the launchways in the center. As building progresses and the hull begins to take shape, additional timbers or bilge cribs are placed as supports on both sides of the ship's bottom. When construction is finally complete the trick is to lift the ship from these supports and transfer it to sliding ways.

There are two sets of sliding ways — two on each side of the ship. They are ground ways and sliding ways. Ground ways are stationary, extending well out into the water. Sliding ways, cradling the ship, are placed on top of these and sandwiched in between is nearly a half inch of mixed wax and grease. Shortly before launching, the ship is actually lifted by means of wedges, keel blocks are knocked out and the ship rests on the ways.

High on the gaily-festooned platform the sponsor awaits the signal. The moment comes! The trigger is released, the christening bottle crashes — a new ship is born!



March 5th, 1940! On that memorable day the keel was laid for Todd Pacific's first ship during World War II. She was the cargo carrier Cape Alava.

On her trials on Puget Sound, the Cape Alava came through as a ship of the first water. New contracts followed; first for additional cargo ships, then transports, tankers, and onward to escort aircraft carriers (baby flattops), seaplane tenders, destroyer tenders and finally the present series of larger aircraft carriers.

Todd workers know their ships well — for the sweat and toil put into them during the days, weeks and months of construction. The nation knows them too; war communiques have told briefly of their heroic exploits in this global war.

They've heard of the escort carrier U.S.S. Card, and her sister, the U.S.S. Bogue, for their thrilling action in ridding the Atlantic of wolf packs of Nazi submarines. For this vital duty, both ships have won Presidential Unit Citations.

The list is long — the H.M.S. Khedive, the U.S.S. Block Island, the H.M.S. Emperor, the U.S.S. Nassau, and many, many more.

The amazing story of Todd Pacific, Tacoma Division, will not be written until the war in the Pacific is won. The Army-Navy "E" pennant flies from the yard flagstaff, attesting to the excellency of the fighting ships built for the U. S. Navy. Todd men and women will keep that coveted flag on high until the final shot has been fired!

