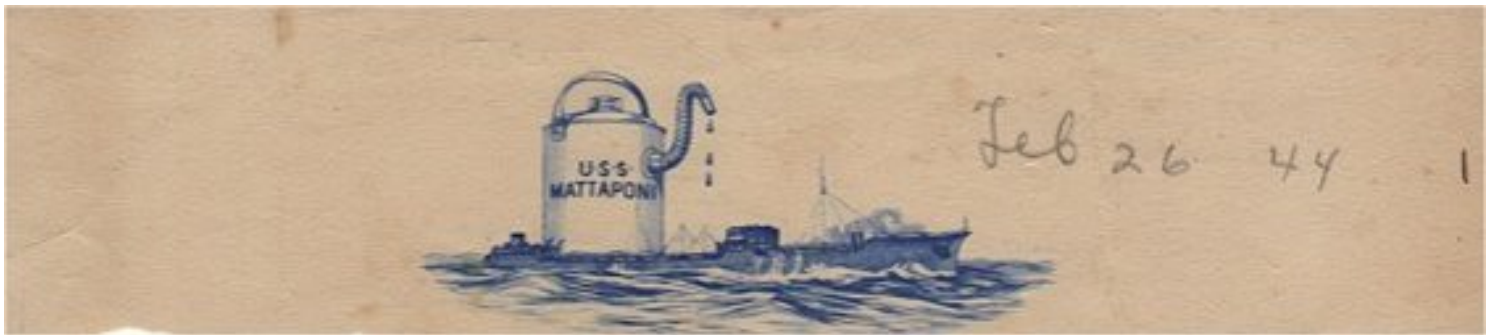


Contributed by Marcia Alexander



How we spent Christmas day at sea -

U.S.S. MATTAPONI
c/o P.M., New York

Friday, December 25, 1942.

**** ORDERS FOR THE DAY ****

About

0530 - GENERAL QUARTERS

About

0630 - Secure from General Quarters

0700 - A brief Christmas observance over the loud speaker and broadcast systems, if circumstances permit.

1. Greetings by the Commanding Officer, Commander M.C. BARRETT,
U.S.N.
2. Reading of Christmas Gospel, St. Luke, Chapter II,
Verse 1-20, by Convoy Commodore, Commander J.W.W. CUMMING,
U.S.N.
3. The Lord's Prayer by C.B.M. Schmitt. Every one invited to
join in.

0715 - Breakfast.

0800 - Muster on Stations. Attention to all cleaning stations throughout the ship. Clean sweep all decks above the main deck. ~~Living spaces, ladder wells and compartments to be thoroughly cleaned.~~ Division officers to inspect for neat and ship-shape appearance of the ship.

1030 - Holiday Routine.

Uniform to 1600

Officers and Chief Petty Officers: Blue service with blue cap covers.

Men: Undress blues with white hats (helmets for condition watches).

1100 - Dinner.

Sunset - Darken ship and go to General Quarters.

U.S.S. MATTAPONI
7 P.M. New York, N.Y.

Tuesday, December 29, 1942.

ORDERS FOR THE DAY

0545 - Call mess attendants and mess cooks to set mess before General Quarters.

About

0630 - GENERAL QUARTERS

0715 - Breakfast for Watch III, if conditions permit.

About

0730 - Secure from General Quarters, Breakfast.

0800 - Muster on stations. Turn to. Continue ship's work as directed by First Lieutenant.

1630 - Supper.

Sunset - Darken ship and go to General Quarters.

Following is part one of a brief, recently written description of French Morocco believed to be of interest.

MOROCCO

Bounded on the north by Spanish Morocco, a 50-mile-deep strip of territory facing Gibraltar, and on the south by Spanish-held Rio de Oro, French Morocco stretches along the Atlantic coast of northwest Africa for 550 miles. It embraces most of what is popularly considered to be Morocco, as well as the principal Moorish towns. The total population of French Morocco, in the 1936 census, was 6,298,528. Well over 90 percent of the people are native Moslems and are essentially rural, with only one-eighth of the total being city dwellers. Although there are sizable Spanish and Italian colonies, the European population is predominantly French.

Much of Morocco's commerce is sea-borne, and as a result the European population and the trading centers are concentrated along the coast. There is a north-south railway connecting the ports of Casablanca and Rabat with Tangier, in Spanish Morocco opposite Gibraltar, and most of the roads are in the coastal plain. Both a railway and a motor road connect Rabat on the Atlantic coast of French Morocco with Algeria on the south shore of the Mediterranean. Algeria borders French Morocco both on the eastern Sahara side and on the northeast.

French Morocco contains more varied terrain than any other part of North Africa. Along the Atlantic seaboard there is a rich plain, normally devoted to the raising of grain crops, and a mildly humid climate. This agricultural area has an excellent network of roads and, through its several ports, has in the past had shipping connections with nations throughout the world. Behind the coastal plains are the Atlas mountains which run generally in a southwest-northeast direction. Some of the peaks reach heights varying from 10,000 to 13,000 feet. Back of the mountains is a zone of high plateaus continuing into Algeria and bordering the Sahara.

In the north the Rif Mountains occupy practically all of Spanish Morocco and extend south into the northern part of French Morocco.

There is ample rainfall in the Rif Mountains to support an agricultural population, but the rugged terrain and the almost total lack of communications render movement of the population between villages and out of the area difficult.

Separating the atlas chains on the south from the Rif Mountains is the fertile valley of the Sebou River, in which are some of the richest and oldest cities in Morocco, including Rabat, Meknes, Fes, and Taza. This valley is the corridor through which the principal rail and motor overland communication lines pass, connecting the Atlantic ports with Oran and Algiers in Algeria.

East and south of the mountains and plateau stretches the great expanse of the Sahara Desert with its infrequent trails and even less frequent oases. The desert region of eastern Morocco is the threshold over which caravans pass into southern Algeria and, further south, into the Sudan and the Upper Niger region of West Africa.

Climatically French Morocco differs from the French colonies on the southern shore of the Mediterranean. Breezes from the Atlantic, cooled by the Canaries current, bring the average temperature well below that of the more northerly colonies. The cool, damp, south and southwest breezes off the Atlantic effectively counterbalance the extreme heat generated across the Atlas mountains in the Sahara. The Atlas range insulates most of the country from the Sahara heat, but the summer wind from the desert--the sirocco--passes the mountain barrier and brings great heat with it in its season.

JOHN M. PAULSSON,
Lieut-Comdr., U.S.N.R.,
Executive Officer.

U.S.S. HATTAPONI
c/o P.H., New York

Sunday, February 7, 1943.

**** ORDERS FOR THE DAY ****

0600 - Call mess cooks and mess attendants.

about

0650 - GENERAL QUARTERS.

0715 - Watch I to breakfast, if circumstances permit.

about

0750 - Secure from General Quarters. Breakfast.

0830 - Muster on stations. Attention to all cleaning stations. Division officers inspect for clean and ship-shape appearance of ship. Make such preparations for entering port as weather permits.

1030 - Pay crew in mess hall. Ensign Papertsian witnessing officer

about

1200 - Station Special Sea Details, Watch II.

1315 - Pay stragglers.

about

1500 - Anchor as directed. After anchoring, handle incoming and outgoing mail as directed.

1600 - Liberty for Watch I, if circumstances permit.

NOTE I - The Convoy Commodore desires the following to be published in today's orders:

EXCERPTS ONLY

"To all hands of the MATTAPONI:

I take this means to express my personal appreciation and thanks for the always cheerful, willing and efficient assistance to me in the execution of my duties as Convoy Commodore. I shall ever have a fond memory of my shipmates on the MATTAPONI. God bless you all. Au revoir!

Replying to a message from the Escort Commander complimenting the Commodore on his conduct of the convoy, the following answer was sent:

"Your 06150 Thanks. To be just I must say for whatever I have accomplished I am indebted to the MATTAPONI. To Captain Barrett, his officers and men" Signed Cumming."

NOTE II - Due to the heavy schedule for the Mail Clerk no money orders will be issued until tomorrow.

NOTE III - In the event that liberty is granted the Executive Officer cautions all hands to limit their travel to such distance that their return on time is beyond question. Non-rated men are reminded that their overstaying liberty the last time in this port was the reason for granting liberty to rated men only.

The Executive Officer further desires to bring to the attention of all non-rated men that being overleave will prevent their being rated.

(over)

NOTE IV - There is no need to publish a description of the country we are about to enter because it is-----OUR HOME.

To quote the following poem is deemed to be appropriate:

A M E R I C A

1. My Country, 'Tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing.
Land where I shall abide,
I love with Holy pride,
From every mountain side,
Let Freedom ring.
2. Beloved country, thee!
Land of the noble free!
Thy name I love.
I love thy rocks and rills,
thy woods and temple hills!
My heart-with rapture -
thrills like that above!
3. Let music swell the breeze
and ring from all the trees
sweet freedom's song! Let
mortal tongues awake! Let
all that breathe partake!
Let rocks their silence break
the sound prolong.
4. Our fathers God! To thee--
Author of Liberty! - to Thee
we sing! Long may our land
be bright with Freedom's
holy light! Protect us by
Thy might, Great God--Our
King!

The MATAPONI wishes the Commodore Godspeed.

JOHN H. PAULSSON,
Lieut-Comdr., U.S.N.R.,
Executive Officer.

25 NOVEMBER

USS MATTAPONI
SOMEWHERE IN
AFRICA

1943

THANKSGIVING
DAY
DINNER



TOMATO JUICE COCKTAIL

ROAST TURKEY

GIBLET & RAVY

BREAD DRESSING

MASHED POTATOES

BUTTERED PEAS

BRANCH CELERY

GREEN OLIVES

CRANBERRY SAUCE

HOT ROLLS

PUMPKIN PIE

ORANGES & APPLES

BUTTER

PEANUTS

CIGARETTES

HOT COFFEE

APPROVED:

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

T.B. Christenson
T.B. CHRISTENSON
Lieut-Comdr USNR
Executive Officer

N.E. Picard
N.E. PICARD
CCStd USNavy

M.C. Barrett
M.C. BARRETT
Commander, U.S.N.
Commanding.

RECOMMENDED:
T.J. James
T.J. JAMES
Lieutenant (SC) USN
Supply Officer.

U.S.S. MATTAPONI
Fleet Post Office,
New York, N.Y.

Tuesday, 11 January 1944.

**** ORDERS FOR THE DAY ****

OFFICERS DUTY WATCH	III
CREWS DUTY WATCH	III
CREWS STANDBY WATCH	I
CREWS LIBERTY WATCH	II

- 0530 - Call Master-at-arms, mess cooks and steward's mates.
0645 - Reveille. Call all hands except midwatch standers.
Make up bunks.
0615 - Turn to. Thoroughly clean all inside cleaning stations.
0700 - Call idlers. Breakfast.
0800 - Quarters for muster.
0810 - Turn to.
First & Second Divisions: Stow away all fueling at sea fend-
ers. Make all preparations for getting underway. Straighten
up decks, etc.
0900 - Station special sea detail Watch III.
0930 - Underway.
After mooring and/or anchoring turn to. Paint fore and aft
catwalk under cargo deck, etc.
1300 - Turn to. Continue as above.
1600 - Knock off upkeep work.
1700 - Pipe sweepers. Sweep decks where necessary.
1830 - Movies in Mess Hall.

NOTE I - SHORE DUTY.

1. The Commander Service Force has been granted author-
ity to order to shore duty east of the Mississippi River, a
few enlisted men in certain categories.
General requirements are as follows:

- (a) Must have served 18 months or more at sea or
beyond continental limits.
- (b) Must have had less than thirty days leave dur-
ing this time.

2. The commanding officer will forward written re-
quests from men having been two years at sea, or who are
entitled to shore duty because of age or other disquali-
fication. He does not consider that the sea duty performed
by this ship is sufficiently rigorous to entitle any large
number of men to shore duty.

/s/ M.C. BARRETT.

(over)

This is what I told you about -

NOTE II - ALNAV 2

ALNAV 187 IS HEREBY CANCELLED AND FOLLOWING SUBSTITUTED IN LIEU THEREOF X MANY INSTANCES HAVE OCCURRED WHERE GOVERNMENT OWNED PROPERTY IS BEING RETURNED BY NAVAL AND MARINE CORPS PERSONNEL TO UNITED STATES FROM WAR ZONES X SUPPLEMENTING VCNO SERIAL 2883516 OF 10/18 TO ALL SHIPS AND STATIONS COMMANDING OFFICERS WILL INSURE THAT ALL PARCELS MAILED OR SENT FROM OVERSEAS AND CONTAINING PROPERTY WHICH BECAUSE OF SIMILARITY TO GOVERNMENT OWNED PROPERTY WOULD OTHERWISE BE CONFISCATED UPON ARRIVAL IN THE UNITED STATES CONTAIN A CERTIFICATE SIGNED BY COMMANDING OFFICERS OR HIS DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVE WHO WOULD ORDINARILY BE OFFICER PERFORMING CENSORSHIP DUTIES STATING THAT SENDER IS OFFICIALLY AUTHORIZED TO MAIL OR SEND ARTICLES IN PACKAGE AND LISTED ON CERTIFICATE.

T. B. CHRISTENSON,
Lieut. Comdr., USNR,
Executive Officer.