Contributed by Darryl Baker


## The 2Cnited States Yeceiving Ship

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## 2 Cnited States Ship-of - the - Tine Jndependence <br> Taunched 1814

THE name Independence appeared on our naval records first when borne by a sloop belonging to the Colonial Navy. This vessel was destroyed in the Delaware in 1777, to prevent her capture by the British. The present INDEPENDENCE was the first of the 74 gun line-of-battle ships built for service against the fleets of Great Britain in the second war with that country. She was laid down at Boston in 1812 and launched in 1814, and inJanuary of the following year sailed on her maiden cruise for the Mediterranean Sea, bearing the flag of Commodore Bainbridge. The Indefendence sailed in company with the frigates United States and Congress, the sloop-of-war Erie, the brigs Boxer, Chifferna, Firefly and Saranac, and several smaller craft. At Gibraltar was found the squadron of Commodore Decatur, consisting of the frigates Guerriere, Macedonian and Constellation, and several ships of war, brigs and schooners.

This was the most formidable fleet ever gathered in foreign waters by our government and coming so soon after the close of hostilities with England, was a subject of considerable chagrin to British officers. The latter had circulated the report that the Americans were not allowed to build ship-of-the-line, and the lordly proportions of the

INDEPENDENCE were a sufficient contradiction. War had been declared against Algeria, and the Independence took part with the cther vessels of our navy in blockading the ports of that Barbary Power, and in bringing the war to a successful close. Upon her return to the United States, the Independence was used by Commander Bainbridge as Guard ship in Boston harbor, flying his flag until 1819.

In 1836 the Independence was razeed, being cut down from three to two decks, 54 guns, and shortly sailed for Europe as the flagship of Commodore Nicholson. She was commanded by Lieutenant Alexander Slidell, and her log of that period bears this entry: "She sails well and is a good sea boat. She has logged ten knots on a wind and thirteen knots free." In 1837 she carried the Honorable George Dallas to Russia as Minister from the United States, and established the record speed during the passage from New York to Cronstadt.

In 1846 she was sent to the Pacific as flagship of Commodore Shubrick. After three years' service in these waters, during which time she participated in the capture of Guaymas and Mazatlan, she returned to the Atlantic, and later for several years was the flagship of the United States squadron in the Mediterranean. In 1854 the IndePENDENCE was refitted at New York and sent to the Pacific for the last time, as Station Flagship. The Independence was the first vessel to dock at Mare Island, being: used to test the sectional docks at the Mare Island Navy Yard in 1854.

The following extracts taken from the Station Log, Navy Yard, Mare Island, Cali-fornia:-U. S. S. Independence arrived at

Yard October 2, 1857, Commodore William Mervine aboard. Crew of U. S. S. Warren transfarred to Independence October 28, 1857. Left the Yard for San Francisco November 8, 1867 for duty as School Ship, Captain W. A. Parker commanding. Arrived from San Francisco under tow February 17, 1869, Commander Paul Shirley. Referred to as Receiving Ship at this time. The Independence was the first ship to be docked in dry dock No. 2 at the Mare Island Yard being docked in this dock on October 30, 1886.

The U. S. S. Cleveland replaced the Independence as Receiving Ship on November 19, 1912. The Independence being placed out of commission at $3: 22 \mathrm{p}$. m. of that date.

The old vessel was sold in 1914 to a Captain Rinder and was towed from the Yard at $9: 55 \mathrm{a}$. m., November 28,1914 , to the tide flats of lower San Francisco Bay where she was stripped of all valuable material and later burned to recover the large amount of copper that was used to bolt her timbers together.


