

# WHAT KNOTS



HMSNZS MAUNGANUI

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## EDITORIAL

Let us now praise famous men,  
Men of little showing,  
For their work continueth  
And their work continueth  
Broad and deep continueth  
Greater than their knowing.

In the wake of Christmas come many philosophical considerations. A compelling one is the thought that among all the varied customs that mark the celebration of Christmas in different countries, there is one central motive, namely that the occasion is a religious festival of a joyous nature and from ancient days such a festival has always been marked by a feast. Thus Christmas and good food are inseparable.

There has been no break with tradition on this ship during this Christmas. We have been feted royally, every one of us. The epicure examines the quality, the variety, the preparation and the service. So, as more humble critics, have we and have found them all stamped with something that is very close to perfection.

The matter is worth examining further. All the food on this ship is supplied, prepared and controlled by the Providore Department. It is completely removed from all army control except that special diets may be ordered by Medical Officers for special patients. Nearly five years ago when the Ship began her career as a hospital ship the army laid down a standard of food to be supplied. This was immediately ignored by the Providore Department which set a standard tremendously higher and has maintained it ever since and their efforts on Christmas Day were the products of their own initiative and voluntary service.

How did they combine a task so great with an efficiency so smooth? The Chief Steward, Mr Tom Griffiths could tell us but we have not asked him as he is very reticent on these matters. Like all true artists his pleasure is in the end rather than the means. He would tell us nothing for instance of how the various menus were selected by himself from the many suggestions made by the Chief Chef, Mr John Bunyan, by the Chief Baker Mr Fred Annabel, by the Chief Butcher Mr Jack Wieden and by the Pantryman Mr Dave Watt. Nor would he tell us that from the time the mincemeat was made three weeks before Christmas there have been long hours of steady work over and above the daily routine; nor that the preparation of scores of turkeys, ducks and chickens often engaged some of his staff at four o'clock in the morning. He would probably say nothing of the seventeen Christmas cakes that were made, of the seven separate messes that had to be served, of the more than 600 menus prepared by the printer, Mr Moselling. He would have no comment to make on his trepidation at the disruption of routine as the serving at Christmas was taken over by inexperienced volunteers.

Very late on Christmas night Mr Griffiths, the second steward Mr Alex White and all their staff settled down to their own Christmas. We hope it was merry. If they take pleasure in the happiness they have given to others then merry