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The Union Expands for Navy

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Virginia Bates explains the Memorial Union's system in feeding hundreds of Navy men daily.

SERVING more than 800 Navy men three balanced meals a day is a Herculean task for the food department in the Memorial Union under the direction of Miss Mabel Anderson. With 200 men arriving 30 days after the first notice and 200 more every month following until the quota is reached, Miss Anderson and her staff have their hands full.

Using dishes and cafeteria trays, the first group received food served in the same manner as regular cafeteria customers are served. It soon became evident that the time required to clear dishes from the commons would make it impossible to handle the ultimate quota of men with the existing facilities.

When the second contingent arrived late in June, making a total of 450 men, the Boarding Club line was revamped. For greater efficiency, six-compartment trays eliminate the necessity for clearing large amounts of dishes between shifts. As the men carry their trays through the line, the food is served directly into the compartments. The number of people serving the men had to be increased because it is necessary to have one person for each item of food service. With the new system 450 men with compartment trays are served and the dining room is cleared in the same time that 225 men served on dishes required before.

Behind the scenes, the kitchen facilities had to be increased with no time for remodeling the existing kitchen space. Equipment had to be fitted into the available space, with emphasis placed upon getting necessary equipment in rather than on placement for efficiency.

No less than 27 major equipment purchases were necessary, ranging from a room-sized refrigerator to a large can-opener. One new addition, a toaster, turns out 720 slices of toast per hour, but it must be supplemented by ovens for needed quantities of toast.

One of the outstanding features about the menus is the large quantity of dairy products used. Each man has the option of taking coffee or milk. According to Miss Anderson, milk in pint portions is one of the best liked foods on the menus.

The Navy sets definite standards that must be followed each meal. Uncle Sam says his men shall have not less than four units on their breakfast menu, five for the luncheon and six for dinner. Eight hundred men sit down to an average breakfast of 265 cantaloupes cut in thirds, 800 individual packages of dry cereal, 35 gallons of cereal cream, 236 pounds of sausage, 550 pints of milk, 90 half pints of milk and 32 gallons of coffee.

The dinner menu for a sample day includes 45 gallons of fruit juice, 524 pounds of fried chicken, 800 ears of corn on the cob, 6 bushels of potatoes, 56 gallons of mixed fruit salad, 2 gallons of French dressing, 150 dozen rolls, 1600 pats of butter, 135 bricks of ice cream and quantities of milk. Little coffee is served for the noon and evening meal.

To assure variety, no menu rotation is followed. Meats are served according to the available supply.