

**1901 Chinese Chow enlisted in  
the U.S. Navy**



Lifted High Off the Floor by  
His Tail.

This newspaper article ran in dozens of papers in 1901, this one being one from Pennsylvania. The chow dog was a very unique novelty to Americans this early on and most came here either directly from China via gifts brought home by sailors and travelers, or from very early breeders in England.

How I would love to see a copy of Chow Chow's enlistment papers. I wonder if they are still in the Navy archives?

## *Dog Enlisted in the Navy.*

From the New York Sun.

The naval recruiting station opened at St. Louis recently by Lieut. D. W. Blymer has enlisted Chow Chow, a Chinese dog, in Uncle Sam's navy. It is said that Chow Chow is the only really enlisted dog in the service, and his papers are actually on file in the navy department in Washington. Chow Chow—his real name was unpronounceable to the sailors—has had a varied experience. He is a soldier of fortune, and were it not for a good strong six-foot chain there might be some fear that he would desert from the navy as he did from the Boxers. He does not stand much for family, probably because so far as is known his ancestry is not traceable. He first appeared in history two years ago, under his Chinese alias, following a young Chinaman to the American legation in Peking. Some women there bought him for a tin camping plate and a little American food. He soon became a part of the legation. The eventful part of his life, so far as is recorded, began after he came under the folds of the United States flag. He was in the legation when the siege of Peking began. He was permitted to go out of the legation grounds occasionally to reconnoitre. On one of these occasions he was captured by the Boxers. Just what happened is not positively known, but it was evident that he was well treated by the Boxers, for he returned after a week's absence looking fatter and more prosperous than ever before. Some said that he had been commissioned in the Boxer army and had deserted from principle. Then the fighting began, and there was no more luxury in the legation. He had to keep an eye open for himself to avoid becoming commissary stores.

With the arrival of the allies Chow

Chow's troubles increased for a time, instead of diminishing, for soldiers of all nations have a predilection for fresh meat served up with greens. It was not until after the fighting was over and the supplies were coming with regularity that Chow Chow dared to lie down for a nap. And then he was kidnaped by Americans. A detail of sailors from the United States steamship Buffalo took him in charge and escorted him all the way from Peking to the coast. It was at this time that his name was changed from impossible Chinese to more easily handled English. The sailors decided to have his name recall his history, and Chow Chow was determined upon. At the coast he embarked with his captors, and after a long trip more than half way round the world, with visits at several Asiatic and European cities, he landed about three weeks ago at New York. As a token of esteem and good fellowship the sailors presented

Chow Chow to Charles H. Casey, warrant machinist in the navy, who had just arrived in Gotham with a bunch of recruits from Indianapolis. The presentation took the form of an old-fashioned jamboree, such as sailors have when they reach port and meet their old comrades. When Casey reached St. Louis a few days ago Chow Chow was with him. The dog was introduced all round and Lieutenant Blymer determined to enlist him as the first recruit in St. Louis. Regular papers were made out in Chow Chow's name. Examining Surgeon R. P. Crandall made the physical examination and pronounced him sound in every respect. There was considerable discussion as to Chow Chow's bravery and the men of the detachment were bent on further examination before they would permit him to become one of their number. A brindle cur with a reputation as a street fighter was found and the two put together. It took Chow Chow about three minutes to prove his worthiness. Then as he would stand the ordeal of being lifted high off the floor by his tail without a murmur the recruiting papers were finished. Lieutenant Blymer decided that the clause prescribing the "consent of parents or guardian" could be waived. Everything was now done but the signing of the papers. Chow Chow sat on the table and touched the pen with his paw while his mark was made and his name written. Then he held up his right paw and was duly sworn into the service, forever renouncing all allegiance to the land of the almond eyed. The papers were properly witnessed, placed in an envelope, sealed and sent to Washington addressed to the navy department. Chow Chow is about a foot in height. He is not at all conversant with the English language, nor has he the slightest knowledge of the usual whistling address to which all of the canine family usually responds. He is nondescript in color, waddles when he walks, is awkward even when he is asleep, and it needed the test of raising by the tail to prove to the sailors that he was not a cur.