



Mrs. Slater Writes Of Trip To Tampa To Launch Ship

Crossville, Ala., Route 1.

Dear Editor and Staff:

We wish to thank you and the people of DeKalb County for sponsoring our trip to see the grand launching of the USS Slater. I believe God will reward each of you. We thank each and every one of you.

I will try and tell as much as I can of our trip there and back. We left Fyffe Friday, February 11, at 7 a. m. and drove till 8:30 that night. We stopped at a nice tourist camp in Valdosta, Ga., and spent the night not far from the Georgia and Florida line. We left there about 6 Saturday morning and drove till about 1 p. m. We reached Sulphur Springs, Fla., and called Mary Robertson, Ensign USNR. She led the way to our hotel the Red Cross had reserved for us. It was a nice clean place. On Sunday morning, Feb. 13, Mary Robertson called for the family at the hotel in a Navy coach and took us to the Gulf, where a dinner was sponsored for the Slater family. They served turkey, French fried potatoes, cranberry sauce; too many things to mention. After we had dinner we were driven back to our hotel by a new street that crossed a bridge 7 miles long. The children waded in the ocean and we saw our first jelly fish. After we got back to the hotel we had 45 minutes to get dressed and get to the shipyard for the launching.

It was the greatest experience of our lives. It was almost like going to Frank's funeral. The destroyer sure is a beauty, so large. The USS Earl K. Olsen was launched at 4, and the USS Slater at 5.

There will be two days in our lives we will always remember. I was presented with a beautiful cedar chest with a brass plate with the USS Slater and Mrs. James L. Slater engraved on it. Also a beautiful silver punch bowl and tray with the same engraving on it. I also received the broken bottle in the chest; the one I used to launch the ship. I am giving each of the county papers a piece of the bottle as a souvenir. The ship builder gave us a grand supper. His wife, two Waves, Mary Robertson and Mr Hicks ate with us. Everyone was so nice to us. I met so many people I can't remember their names. The Wave, Mary Robertson, was wonderful to us.

We made the trip there and back with only one puncture on the way back. We drove almost a hundred miles in one of the worst rain storms I have ever seen, but had such good luck.

I would like to have had all the Editors and staffs of DeKalb County papers, and everybody else to have seen the USS Slater slide into the water. She is a grand ship.
MR. and MRS. JAMES L. SLATER
AND FAMILY.