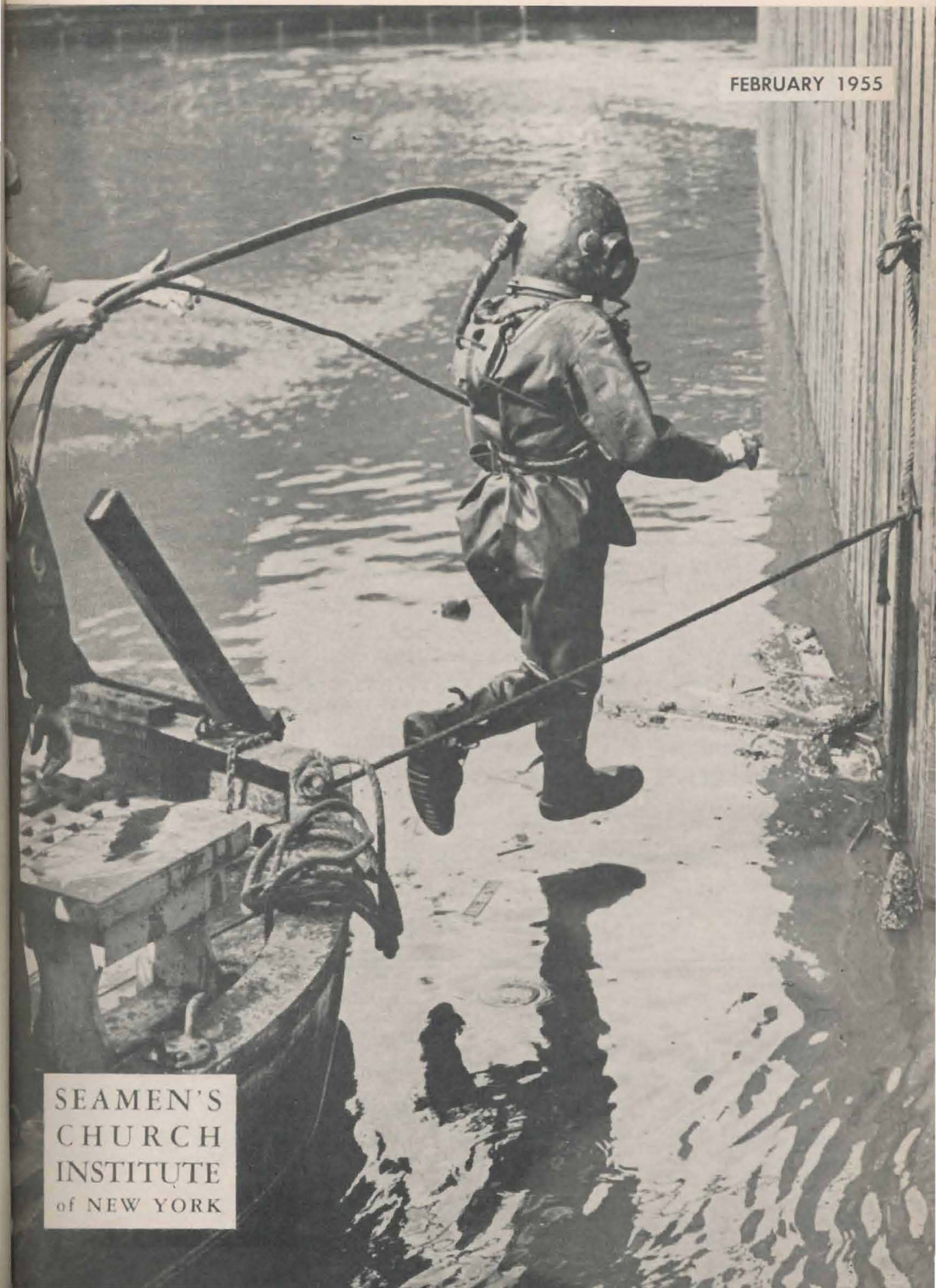


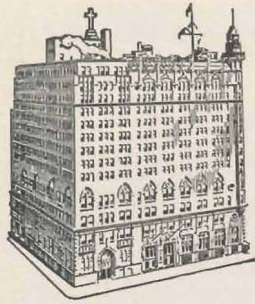
# The LOOKOUT

FEBRUARY 1955



SEAMEN'S  
CHURCH  
INSTITUTE  
of NEW YORK



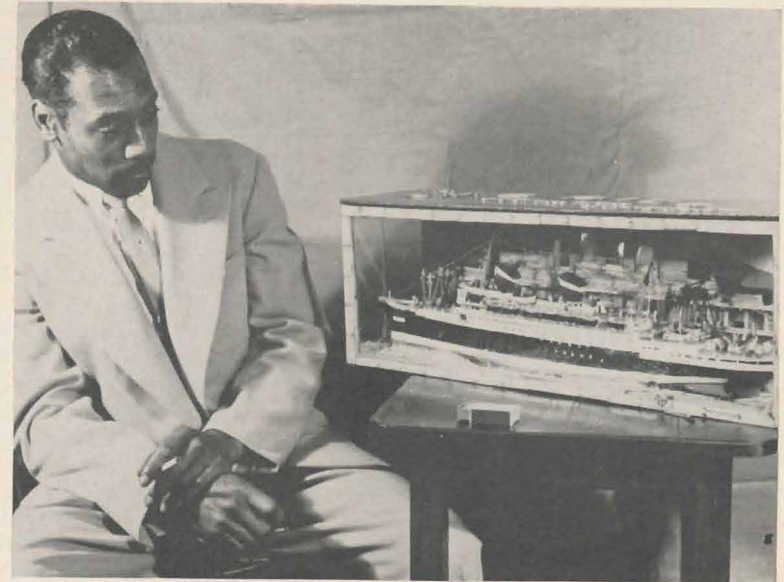


THE SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK is a shore home for merchant seamen who are between ships in this great port. The largest organization of its kind in the world, the Institute combines the services of a modern hotel with a wide range of educational, medical, religious and recreational facilities needed by a profession that cannot share fully the important advantages of home and community life.

The Institute is partially self-supporting, the nature of its work requiring assistance from the public to provide the personal and social services that distinguish it from a waterfront boarding house and so enable it to fulfill its true purpose: being a home away from home for the merchant seamen of all nationalities and religions.

A tribute to the service it has performed during the past century is its growth from a floating chapel in 1844 to the thirteen-story building at 25 South Street known to merchant seamen the world around.

## STRIKING ACHIEVEMENT



Seaman George Booth struck 7,000 matches to make his ship model of the S.S. America, above.

# The LOOKOUT

VOL. XLVI, No. 2

FEBRUARY, 1955

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SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK  
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## It's All Done with Matches

SEAMAN George Booth, who spends most of his time on ships, also has eight of them in his own home. They're all models, of course, but models with a difference. Each one, hand-made by Booth, is built almost entirely of matchsticks.

For example, there's his model of the S.S. America, on which he shipped for three and one-half years. With its frame and background of warehouse, pier and cranes, the model contains approximately 7,000 wooden matchsticks. Booth always uses small Diamond Safety Matches and lights them a box at a time. His only other equipment and tools are an ordinary pocket knife, carpenter's glue, balsa wood for shaping the hull, and dowels for the mast, kingposts and booms.

Booth estimates that it took him approximately 500 hours, about one year's spare time, to make the model of the America. He did the entire job from memory, without benefit of a scale drawing. Booth works on his hobby when he's home in

New York between ships, or in good weather at sea. A rough sea, he claims, is not conducive to the kind of painstaking care his craft demands.

Besides the America, Booth has seven other models at home, the latest of which, Ursula, is a ship of his own design. Ursula was constructed of 3,820 matches and has about 80 matches in each smoke stack alone. Ursula not only lights up electrically, as do the other models, but has something astonishingly different — a music box that plays "Mary Had a Little Lamb." Booth salvaged the music box mechanism from a toy that one of his small daughters had discarded.

Booth, 27 years old, has been going to sea since he was 16. He's worked for the past seven years with the United States Lines, as an A.B. and a deck utility man.

Right now, he's looking for a new harbor for some of his ship models. His wife and daughters are complaining that there are just too many of them around.

THE COVER: Just step off and plunge in . . . a diver in London Docks shows how it's done. From *Down to the Ships in the Sea*, reviewed in this issue on page 12.



THEIR SHIP WAS GONE  
AND THEIR . . .

VOYAGE NOT  
COMPLETED

LOOKING like two distinguished but displaced cough drop brothers, Richard McCappin and Samuel Richardson spent a restless few days at the Institute during January while the British Consulate prepared to return them to London. In the joy of the holiday season the two young seamen had lost track of the time and missed their tanker bound for the Middle East.

"It really isn't funny," they insisted, but at the same time they laughed, simply because they didn't know what else to do. They possessed nothing but the clothes

they had worn on that fateful last evening, and overcoats weren't included, since the weather had been warm. McCappin estimated that he had £300 worth of gear aboard the ship, and he doubted that he would ever catch up with it. Richardson was without some of his papers.

The two Belfast-born seamen had been junior engineers on an American-owned tanker flying the British flag. After unsympathetic company officials told them to "get lost," the boys tried to ship "on anything, as anything," but it was no go.

When they presented seamen's papers stamped "voyage not completed," they got a poor reception from shipping companies, who were wary of potential headaches from the Department of Immigration and Naturalization. Immigration authorities take a close look at seamen who fail to join their ship at the scheduled departure time, and they can revoke future shore privileges. The shipping companies themselves are charged with the responsibility (and the expense) of keeping such malefactors from coming ashore. Naturally, companies would rather be safe than sorry.

After unsuccessfully making the rounds of foreign-flag ships in the harbor, they tried to hustle a stop-gap job ashore, but they were stymied by the lack of Social

Security cards. Then they went to Stillman's Gym where McCappin tried to get a bout.

"Aye, the lad here's a bit of a boxer," said Richardson of his husky companion. "But they weren't interested. Said he wasn't known here, and all that."

Subsequently they paid a visit to the British Consul and were sent to the Seamen's Church Institute to wait until passage to England could be arranged.

"But how can I go home to Belfast just now?" asked McCappin, picking up the story.

"Aye, that would make quite a picture!" laughed Richardson. "You without a thing in your hand or a shilling in your pocket as you stand in the doorway and announce, 'Well, Mother, I'm back!'"

McCappin expected his homecoming day to be the occasion of a "severe telling off" from his father, a Belfast police inspector. Richardson, a sailor's son, could hear, "In all my years going to sea, I never got into your kind of international mess!"

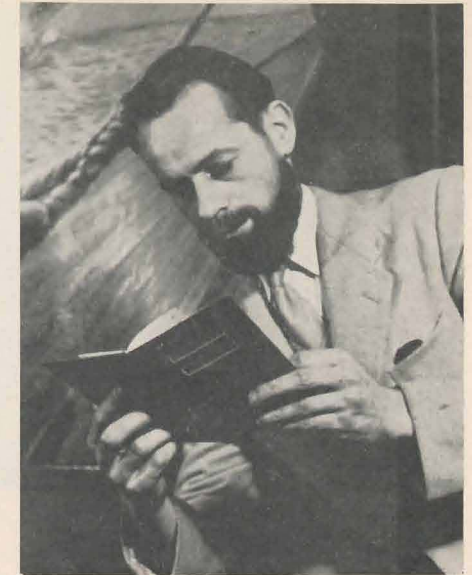
So the two young engineers — Richardson, 27, McCappin, just 24 — were planning to try for another ship, "a Greek or anything" in Liverpool before surrendering to the family pressures in Belfast. But they weren't at all sure of their chances of shipping on an English vessel again.

"We've each got a perfect record before this, and that's to our credit, but we'll just have to wait and see what they say."

Failing everything, they were considering the Royal Navy and the R.A.F., although they were reluctant to give up the sea careers which had begun for each with apprenticeship at the age of 16.

Richardson, being somewhat older, was alive to a few disadvantages of seafaring, however. He had been away to sea for five of the last six Christmases. From February of 1951 to February of 1954 he had sailed continuously, with the result that he had gotten a "Dear John" from his girl back home.

"She was only 25, but she felt herself getting a bit long in the tooth, so she married this other fellow. I never answered her letter."



Sans ship, Richardson studies his seamen's papers and ponders a course.

The boys were sorry about having hurt their chances to visit the United States again as sailors, but they agreed that the Far Eastern ports were more interesting, anyway — and less expensive.

"In a port like Hong Kong the change from Western ways is wonderful," said McCappin. "The sights, the sounds — even the smells — are different. And as a sailor you can see life any way you want to: high up or low down."

Aboard their last vessel the engineers had as a lark grown full beards, which they later found useful in "kidding with the New York girls" and in concealing the fact that they lacked the wherewithal to get a shave. Furthermore, the beards were found useful in confronting New York's raw January winds. Overcoats obtained through the courtesy of the Institute's Slop Chest also made the going a bit easier.

When the *Saxonia* sailed back to England after her maiden visit to New York, McCappin and Richardson, enforced guests of the British Consul, took a last look at our Statue of Liberty as they were exiled to new fortunes elsewhere.



Richardson and McCappin take a map-view of the United States — the way they expect to be seeing it from now on.





Seamen in the Roper Room team up with Hostess Isabel Singleton to decorate the birthday cake.

Aw, you shouldn't have.

## Birthdays of the Month

**E**VERY MONTH about 45 seamen are honored guests at a joint birthday celebration in the Janet Roper Room at the Seamen's Church Institute. Since its inception in 1952, the Seamen's Birthday Party has become one of the most looked-for events in the Roper Club's program.

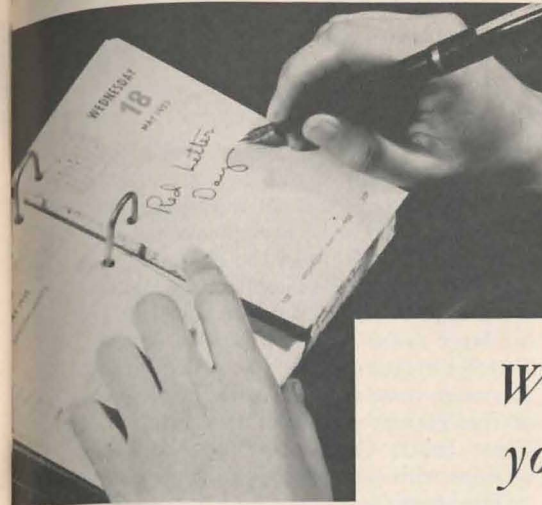
It all started three years ago when the Ladies of the Night Watch, a group of women who wrap Christmas presents for the Institute's Central Council, thought of the birthday party idea. Informal birthday parties had been held from time to time in the Roper Room, but the ladies planned on an elaborate celebration every month, for every seaman whose birthday fell within that month. The women act as hostesses, provide ice-cream and gift-wrap the comb and brush sets, small tools, flash-



lights, etc., which are given to the men as birthday presents. They do such a good job of wrapping that one seaman, receiving his gift at the last party, was heard to comment: "Gee it's pretty. I wonder if it's perfume!"

Highlight of the evening is the wheeling-in of the lighted birthday cake in the darkened room as the audience, often numbering as many as 200, joins in a chorus of "Happy Birthday." Blowing out the candles, the wishing ceremony, coffee and cake and an evening's program of entertainment follow.

Hostess Isabel Singleton, presiding in the Roper Room, sets the tone of the evening as she wishes the birthday celebrants, "Blue skies, fair weather and a safe harbor at the end of the voyage."



## *Which day would you choose...*

to remember forever? Whatever the day, for whatever reason, the Institute's Red Letter Day plan offers you a meaningful way to pay tribute — by sponsoring for one complete day each year the activities of this shore home for merchant seamen.

The personal and social services that make 25 South Street a home and a home town to thousands of seafarers cost, each day, an average of \$273.97 more than what seamen pay themselves. A single contribution or legacy of \$9,000, invested by the Institute at current interest rates, would provide the necessary amount needed to sponsor an Institute day.

In addition to honoring the memory of someone you love or indelibly marking an important occasion in your life, our Red Letter Day plan offers you an enduring investment in the program of practical Christian service which the Seamen's Church Institute of New York has capably rendered for 120 years.

If you wish to consider participating in this plan, please write for further details to:

Jay Dennis, Ways & Means Dept.  
Seamen's Church Institute  
25 South Street, N. Y. C. 4



## ATTENTION, SEAMEN

The Foreign Claims Settlement Commission of the United States announces that eligible merchant seamen, or survivors, may now apply for detention benefits under Public Law 744, 83rd Congress.

The new legislation provides that any merchant seaman employed on a vessel of the United States or of a friendly power, who was captured, interned or held in any other capacity by the governments of Germany or Japan during World War II, shall be entitled to receive detention benefits. These will be paid at the rate of \$60 for each month the seaman was 18 years old or over, and \$25 for each month during which he was under 18.

All claimants must have been United States citizens as of December 7, 1941. Members of the U. S. Armed Forces, anyone who received, or is entitled to receive benefits under Section 5 of Public Law 896, 80th Congress, or those who in any way aided governments hostile to the United States during the war, are ineligible for benefits.

Claims must be filed on or before August 31, 1955. Seamen who have previously filed benefit claims with the former War Claims Commission, must file new claims. Inquiries and application blanks are available from the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission, Washington 25, D. C.

## WRONG SIZE

The completion of the St. Lawrence Seaway and the improved facilities for shipping on the Great Lakes will be of little benefit to the United States merchant fleet unless some new ships are built, ac-

ording to Walter L. Green, head of the American Bureau of Shipping.

Addressing the annual meeting of his organization, Green stated that at present only a few vessels under the United States flag could be used profitably on the waterway, since most American cargo ships are too large to navigate its restricted waters. To meet the competition of small, foreign-flag cargo vessels for the expected increase in foreign trade via the seaway and the Great Lakes, Green urges the building of ships with specific design changes.

The bureau's annual report showed that the U. S. privately owned merchant fleet, in contrast to the trend in "all other countries," was at a low of 1,120 vessels (ships of over 2000 gross tons only).

## ALMOST THE TOUGHEST

In October of 1954, the *Mormackite* went down in the waters off the North Carolina coast. In the cruel tragedy of the sea that followed, 37 men perished; 11 battled sharks and icy waters for almost 50 hours to survive the nightmare of fear and pain. *Lookout* readers may remember that in our October issue, commenting on the disaster and on the element of danger that the merchant seaman must always expect, we quoted from an essay by Seaman James Pearson: "My toughest voyage is still to be sailed and my hell ship is yet hull down on some horizon of the future . . . the half-promise of wilder waters and unholier watch partners is always in the sunrises, and it's the reason we never really unpack our bags anywhere . . . this is only a half-promise, true, but the adventure of uncertainty is a good part of any seaman's wages." We noted that in the case of the *Mormackite*, the half-promise was grimly realized.

The other day we received a letter from James Pearson which speaks for itself:

"I believe it will interest you to know that in the same week I submitted my essay entry I shipped aboard the *Mormackite*, only to quit the ship just a few days later in Baltimore for no really good reason. That was the fateful trip, of course, and neither of my watch partners nor any others of the crew that I got to know in those few days survived. When I heard the news . . . my first reaction was that somehow I had been cheated by not staying with the 'Kite.' I now have a saner and perhaps healthier perspective on the tragedy; yet I am more certain than ever that a 'toughest voyage' is part of the sea's attraction."

## TIME FOR A BATH

When the Benrus watch people say that a watch is water-resistant, they mean to prove it. No goldfish bowl testers they, the Benrus scientists recently fitted out the American Export liner *Independence* with a submerged laboratory to determine the shock resistance and waterproof qualities of their watches. Heaved overboard at Gibraltar, the 50-inch long steel shell, perforated to admit the free flow of water, was towed at the ship's speed of 23 knots.

Anyone (blub-blub) got the right time?

## PIRATE SHIP

The black flag of piracy flew over an American ship early last month, forestalling, for a short time, a foreign flag. The crew of the coal ship *Seacoral* hoisted the skull and crossbones to protest their replacement by a crew of Greek seamen when the vessel was put under Liberian registry.

The Jolly Roger flew in Newport News, Virginia for six days, when the *Seacoral*, having surrendered one registry and waiting for another, was officially a ship without a country.

## BRMMP, BRMMP

The fireboat that promised to become the heartthrob of New York City's fire-fighting fleet has, from some reports, turned out to be rather more of a head-throb. The highly touted *John D. McKean*, built for the city at a cost of almost \$1,500,000, has yet to go to a fire.

On her initial shakedown cruise, the *McKean* developed such excessive vibration at speeds above 10 knots that engineers feared for the safety of her equipment. While everyone is delighted at the tremendous water-pumping power of the vessel (14,000 gallons a minute), remedies for the excessive shaking will have to be found before the *McKean* can officially join the municipal fireboat fleet.

## COATING

A rubber-like coating that may stop corrosion on fast-moving ships and become a major factor in shipping operations, has successfully weathered a stormy crossing with the *United States*.

After battling hurricane winds for 13 hours, the liner arrived in Southampton in mid-January with a protective coating of neophrene still intact on her bow and rudder.

Neophrene, developed by DuPont, is one of the preparations the United States Lines is testing in an effort to protect the stem and rudder parts of the *United States*, which knifes the water too quickly to keep paint on its bow. The rubber-like guard material, which is burned on in a kind of vulcanizing process, was applied back of the bow last summer. Chief Engineer William Kaiser of the *United States* told Reuters reporters that the experimental coating had passed its test "magnificently." He added that its future use might "save American shipping concerns millions of dollars a year."





Left: the *Nautilus* as she was launched a year ago in Groton, Connecticut. Right: For the first time under her own power, the *Nautilus* took to the sea in January of 1955.



## *Nautilus* Takes the Plunge

**T**HE first atomic-powered ship has gone to sea. As the Navy's 55-million-dollar A-sub, the *Nautilus*, began a series of trial runs in Long Island Sound late last month, a new era in the history of marine transportation came into being.

Launched in a froth of fanfare last year and then held up for several months by faulty piping in her steam system, the *Nautilus* took to the sea for the first time under her own power with a minimum of fuss. Even the traditional champagne and speeches were missing.

But there was no lack of enthusiasm among the 85 enlisted men, eleven officers and 50-odd civilian experts and dignitaries who were on board for the historic first run, nor from those who watched. On the submarine rescue ship *Skylark*, which attended the *Nautilus*, Navy observers remarked at the unusual facility with which the sub maneuvered and picked up speed. In fact, her 12-knot speed was almost too good. It caused a veteran submarine officer watching from the shore, Captain Slade Cutter, to remark that the crew might have been arrested for exceeding the Thames channel speed limit (10 knots) had a traffic officer been present. A young naval officer on the *Skylark* was overwhelmed by the phenomenon of the atomic-powered ship and quipped: "I think she's running on batteries."

The "batteries," in this case, consist of an atomic engine that runs on uranium instead of conventional fuel. It works in this fashion: the reactor of the sub, fueled by neutrons, is a core containing uranium. It is cooled by water that is prevented by high pressure from becoming steam. As the hot and radioactive water leaves the reactor, it is passed through a boiler shielded against radiation, where it converts other water into high pressure steam. The steam, not radioactive, turns the tur-

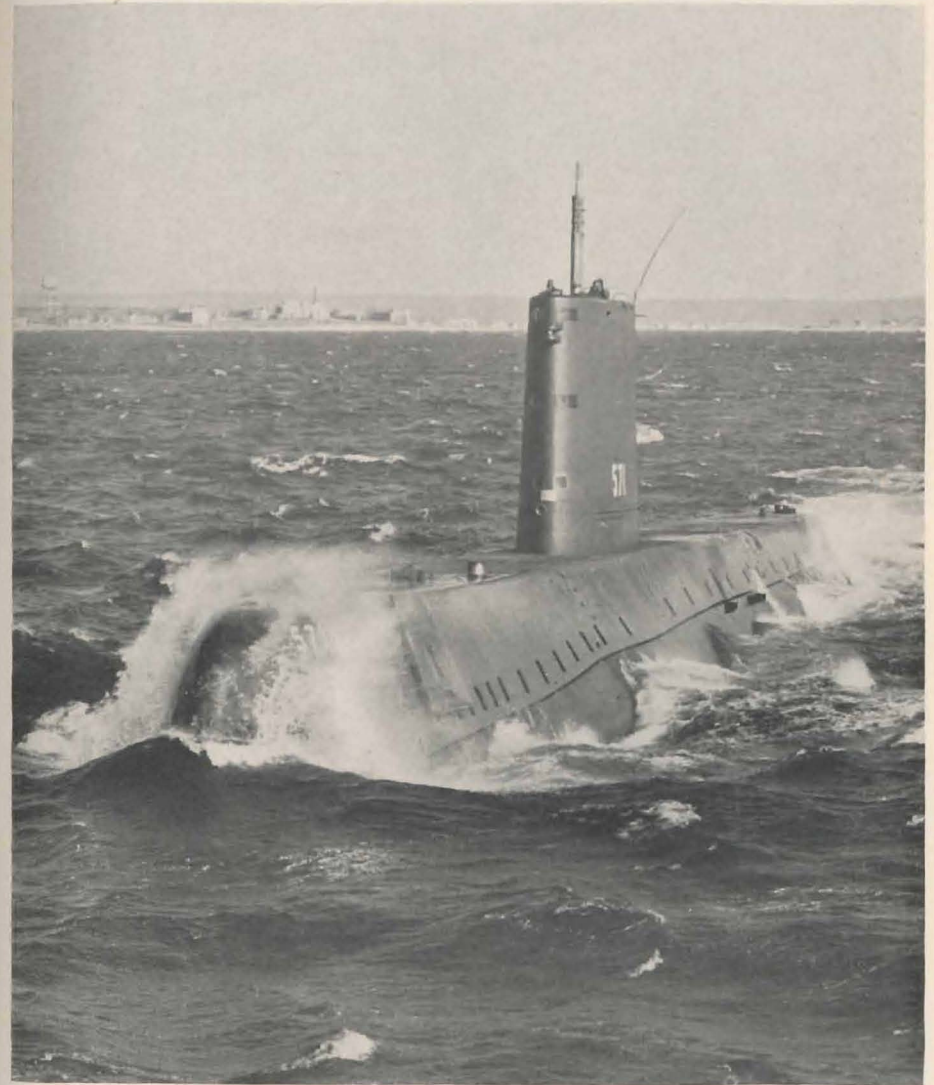
bine that drives the ship's propellers. This mechanism will enable the *Nautilus* to cruise all the way around the world, completely submerged, at speeds in excess of 20 knots. Refueling, or even resurfacing, will not be necessary.

If Harry Truman's prediction, made when the keel of the ship was laid on June 15, 1952 comes true, the *Nautilus* will be "the forerunner of atomic-powered merchant ships and airplanes, of

atomic power plants producing electricity for factories, farms and homes.

Returning from her successful surface trials a few days later, the *Nautilus* made ready for additional diving tests now being carried on in the Atlantic. As she returned to port, the whistles at General Dynamic's Electric Boat Division, where the *Nautilus* was built and where her sister-sub, the *Sea Wolf*, is nearing completion, shrieked her a noisy welcome.

*U. S. Navy Photo*







## After the Clermont

By Cadet-Midshipman John Jantzen

U. S. Merchant Marine Academy, Kings Point

**I**N modern times, everywhere planes and rockets are streaking through the sound barrier. At Kings Point, another barrier has been broken. The hands of time have been turned back by a unique type of barrier-breaker: *Little Effie*.

This story started four years ago and centers around Captain Lauren S. McCready, Head of the Department of Engineering. His respect for steam power and his fascination for the reciprocating engine drew him into this adventure. The purchase of a miniature steam power plant and reciprocating engine, coupled with the acquisition of an ex-Navy motor whaleboat gave the Captain the essentials with which to begin.

The many hours spent in planning, repairing, and installing the steam engine

were soon forgotten, when in 1953, *Little Effie* (named after the Captain's mother) was launched. She spent the rest of the summer on trial voyages, working out the kinks always to be found in a new vessel. In 1954, a cabin was built on the boat and some of the comforts of home installed. Finally, on August 7, at 0830, *Little Effie*, with provisions, a crew of one (Commander C. W. Sandberg), one passenger (Lt. Commander H. O. Travis, bound for Ossining, N. Y.), and Captain McCready at the helm, turned over her engine, cast off her lines, tooted her whistle and slipped from her berth into the era of yesteryear.

By 1050, the Hudson River had been reached via the East and Harlem rivers, and *Little Effie* pointed her bow toward Albany, as another famous steamboat, the

*Clermont*, had done one-hundred forty-seven years ago. Yonkers, Piermont and Tarrytown quickly passed by and 1355 found the craft off Ossining, where the magic spell cast by the gallant little lady kept her lone passenger aboard till arrival at Beacon, the first stop of the journey.

Following a cooling dip in the Hudson and a good meal cooked by Commander Sandberg (which earned him the position of permanent cook), the fires were banked and a well earned night's sleep was enjoyed by all.

After fueling and taking on stores, *Little Effie* took departure Sunday morning from her berth at the Newburgh Yacht Club. Perhaps the hand of fate can be seen here, for the designer of the *Clermont*, Robert Fulton, is the man for whom Fulton Hall, the birthplace of *Little Effie*, is named. On that Sunday morning last summer, many spectators stood in the same spots as had the awed onlookers of the *Clermont's* first voyage.

The surge of power the boat had in her as she approached Catskill was understandable for here was her engine's birthplace twenty years ago, the home of the builder, Mr. George Krum. While *Little Effie* stopped over at Catskill, Mr. Krum took the throttle for a pleasure jaunt with his wife and friends. As the engine lived up to the skill of its designer, the builder's face was aglow with pride in the engine's display of its enduring ruggedness.

After leaving Catskill, the voyage was halted briefly when the feed pump packing gland developed trouble and a brief return to Catskill was necessary. However, the Hudson was moving under her soon again and at last, at 1117 on August 10, Albany was reached. Reporters and photographers were waiting as the boat was moored at the Albany Yacht Club, the mooring place of the *Clermont* in 1807.

But *Little Effie* was not satisfied with only equaling her predecessor. She continued on to the north at 1326 as she passed into the Federal Locks of the Barge Canal and emerged into the Mohawk River. Here she encountered her first rain squall and emerged with flying colors and

a dry crew. The comfortable bunks, radio, icebox, alcohol stove, sink, and most of all, the overhead of the cabin made living aboard quite pleasant, even in the raging storm.

The only brush with actual disaster occurred at 2030 on August 10 while still in the Mohawk River waters, when a submerged object was struck, bending one of the propeller blades hard against the stern frame. Captain McCready quickly became an underwater repair man and soon the blade was operative.

After a brief stopover at Troy, the end of the outbound journey was reached at Schuylerville on Friday where coal and provisions were loaded for the trip home.

On August 17, *Little Effie* returned to Kings Point. She had burned 2200 pounds of coal and despite the length of the trip the final cost for the journey was \$65.00.

The success of the voyage was certainly proof of the skill and ability of Captain McCready and his colleagues, who labored over *Little Effie* with motherly attentiveness and affection. This miniature *Clermont* repaid them well for all their care as she made her voyage backwards in time and succeeded in reviving for all aboard memories of the early days of the reciprocating engine.

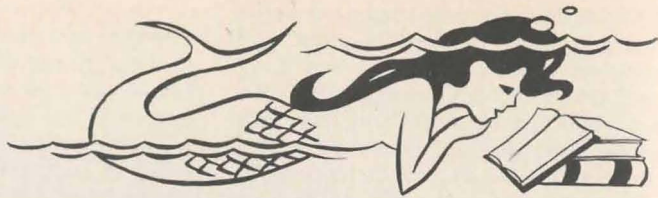
Reprinted from *Polaris*

Commander Sandberg takes the tiller in a storm.





# Book Watch



**DOWN TO THE SHIPS IN THE SEA**  
Harry Grossett  
J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia and  
New York, \$3.75

Ever have a hankering to search for sunken treasure at the bottom of the sea? Harry Grossett did, and he's been doing it for over 50 years. Probably the world's most experienced salvage diver, Scotch-born Grossett, the son and grandson of divers, gives an absorbing account of his career in *Down to the Ships in the Sea*.

Grossett has been diving since 1898. He trained at the naval diving school in Sheerness, England, where he learned that a good diver must be strong, thin ("there is no place for fat men at the bottom of the sea"), have good ears and an excellent sense of touch. He has since worked at diving jobs around the world, performed intricate feats of salvage in both world wars and played a leading role in the biggest salvage operation in history — the raising of the German fleet at Scapa Flow. To prove that you can't keep a good man down — or in this case, up — Grossett, at seventy, is still diving today.

**THE SUN, THE SEA, AND TOMORROW**  
F. G. Walton Smith and Henry Chapin  
Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, \$3.50

This is a knowledgeable account, written by an oceanographer and a historian, of the potential sources of food, minerals and energy from man's last, relatively untapped frontier — the sea.

In a world of diminishing supply, the authors tell us, a world in which overpopulation and over-industrialization are steadily shrinking man's available sources of food, minerals and energy, the ocean offers the only abundant source of supply

for future generations. But the problems of exploiting the wealth of the sea — farming for fishes, changing the oceans from a hunter's realm to a salt area of cultivation, harvesting plankton and oceanic vegetation, mining minerals from the sea, harnessing the ocean's energy in terms of sea-water power plants, etc. — are enormous. The work already done in the field, some suggestions and possible long-term solutions are explored here.

**THE BLUE CONTINENT**  
Folco Quilici  
Rinehart & Company, Inc., New York, Toronto,  
\$5.00

Using methods as ancient as curare harpoons and as new as jet-propulsion, a small group of men set out in 1952 to explore the wonders of a new world — the blue continent that lies beneath the Red Sea. Their remarkable findings are documented here, in picture and text, by the chief of the photographic unit of that group, Folco Quilici.

The official aims of the Italian National Underwater Expedition were many: to explore the marine life beneath the Red Sea and bring back scientific specimens of it; to learn more about the sea as a source of food, energy and minerals; to study the medical effects of prolonged underwater diving, and to conduct aquatic big-game hunting in ways that had never been tried before. Equipped with aqualungs and autorespirators, the "skindivers" had some amazing experiences with the creatures of the deep, from fending off barracudas to making friends with the sharks. The book is most notable, however, for the 60 unusual, often fantastic photos, 26 in full color, of the inhabitants of the submarine world.



HERE IS A VERY PLEASANT WAY to make a contribution to our funds while actually spending money for your own needs. The Institute has been invited to share in the proceeds of Lewis & Conger's annual "Name-Your-Own-Charity Sale," which lasts throughout the month of March. When you make purchases at their store, located at Sixth Avenue and 45th Street, please mention the Seamen's Church Institute of New York and we will receive from the store 10% of the total amount you spent for your own needs. Please tell your friends about it.



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## LEGACIES TO THE INSTITUTE

You are asked to remember this Institute in your will, that it may properly carry on its important work for seamen. While it is advisable to consult your lawyer as to the drawing of your will, we suggest the following as a clause that may be used:

"I give and bequeath to **Seamen's Church Institute of New York**, a corporation of the State of New York, located at 25 South Street, New York City, the sum of .....Dollars."

Note that the words "**of New York**" are a part of our title. If land or any specific property such as bonds, stocks, etc., is given, a brief description of the property should be inserted instead of the words, "the sum of.....Dollars."

Contributions and bequests to the Institute are exempt from Federal and New York State Tax.