

The LOOKOUT

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Young America Goes Adventuring

SIXTEEN year old John S. . . . has been longing to go to sea ever since he was old enough to row a boat. When he arrived at the Institute after two weeks of hitch-hiking across country from his home in Racine, Wisconsin, our officers on duty stopped him, and looking into his guileless young face naturally surmised that he had run away from home. But John proved himself to be as efficient as he was adventurous. From his pocket he drew forth a leather-bound autograph book and pointed to the first page which read:

"To Whom It May Concern: The bearer, John S. . . ., is a citizen of Racine. Any courtesy shown him will be appreciated." This was signed by the chief of police. John's photograph and thumb print were duly recorded. On succeeding pages, the mayor, the priest, school teacher, leading citizen and Y. M. C. A. director all paid tribute to John's fine character.

Then John reserved a room at the Institute and had a big breakfast with his last forty cents (he had started from home with four crisp



dollar bills) after which he felt in a more talkative mood and, his eyes alight with true Marco Polo fervor, told of his yearnings to wander all over the globe. As he traveled eastward from Racine he sought the chief of police and the mayor of the principal cities which he passed through: East Chicago, (Indiana) Gary, Michigan City, Akron, Cleveland, Elkhart, Toledo, Youngstown, Lewiston, Easton, Wilkes-Barre, Philadelphia and New York and obtained their autographs. The gold seals of the various cities shone in splendor as John's fingers hovered over them proudly. "Everybody was so nice

PLEASE NOTE: LOOKOUT readers may observe the abbreviated form of the current issue. This is in keeping with our policy of retrenchment because of present economic conditions. The Institute is facing a large deficit, and must, therefore, economize at every point. We are counting upon your encouragement and support to see us through these difficult times.

to me and wished me all kinds of success," said John. "I'm jealous of your wandering feet, my lad," wrote one mayor, "and I wish I had your youth." A chief of police penned these words: "May your wandering footsteps find happiness in your great adventure and bring you safe home at last," while still others wrote: "This is to certify that the bearer passed through our city on this date. Good luck and God bless him."

Since this is the very first time John has been away from home we rather expected him to show signs

of homesickness when we were compelled to tell him how difficult it is to get shipping jobs under present conditions. But instead of retracing his steps, John squared his broad young shoulders resolutely and decided to try his luck hitch-hiking down the Atlantic Coast to New Orleans. "I have letters of introduction to friends in several cities," he declared bravely, "so I guess I won't starve. I'll get a chance to see this country. Maybe when shipping improves I'll stand a better show of seeing other countries."

Dentistry for Sailors

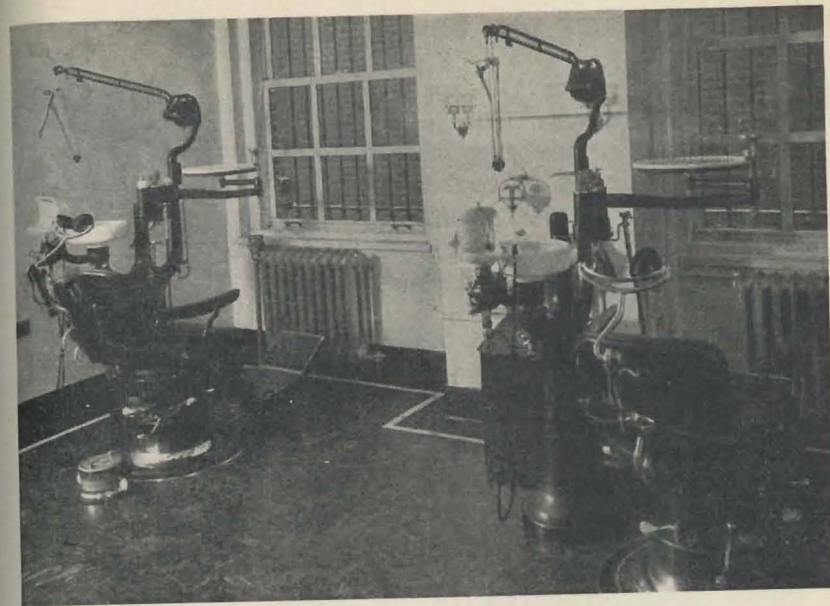
IN THOSE much lamented days when sail held the sea's right of way, Jack went to the captain when he had a toothache. Obliging, the captain would take forceps from his medicine chest and yank out the aching tooth. Then Jack would return to his watch. If Jack developed a toothache ashore he would go to any one of the quack dentists along the waterfront or to the nearest barber shop.

Today, the Institute, which has long recognized the urgent need of merchant seamen for expert and adequate dental service at reasonable cost, has established the William D. Tracy Dental Clinic on the first mezzanine floor of our building. The Clinic which is the

gift of Mrs. Elisha Whittelsey is the first of a group of clinic units to be established in answer to the expressed need for various medical service on the part of Jack of the Merchant Marine.

Dr. William D. Tracy, a well known dentist in New York City, and a life-long friend of our Superintendent, Dr. Mansfield, has professional supervision of the Clinic, with a dentist, Dr. George W. Whitby, and a hygienist, Miss Henrietta Sanchez, in attendance daily from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M.

The Clinic is equipped with two dental chairs which were the personal gift of Dr. and Mrs. Tracy, with an X-ray machine, a laboratory and all the complete equip-



A completely equipped Dental Clinic

ment of a modern dental office. During the few weeks since the clinic has opened the attendance has indicated how great was the need for such a service. Merchant seamen of every age, race, rank and creed who are non-beneficiaries of any other agency are entitled to the use of this Clinic.

As they come hesitatingly into the Clinic to have their teeth examined, cleaned, treated, filled or extracted, they are no more eager for the ordeal than are landlubbers. They, too, have a horror of the "drill" but make the best of the experience as a necessary thing if they are to be relieved from toothaches.

One sailor who came into the

Clinic to have his teeth cleaned said: "I just can't keep a tooth brush and tooth paste on ship-board. Some guy always swipes mine before we're two days out at sea." An old seaman wanted the dentist to "measure" him for a set of false teeth and he appeared disappointed when no tape measure was forthcoming. Another old salt wanted the dentist to take "ten rays" (X-rays) of his whole mouth. The majority of seamen seem pleased that the Institute has established such a practical and worthwhile service. The Clinic is probably the first ever to be established exclusively for merchant seamen by a seaman's Institute or mission in this country or abroad.

Superstitions of the Sea Really Gone? *

WHEN the new German Cruiser *Deutschland* unexpectedly slid down the ways of Kiel harbor five minutes before the appointed hour, Tuesday noon, May 19th, and splashed into the North Sea without being christened, President Von Hindenburg wildly swung a bottle of Stiftswein after her retreating bow but he missed. To about sixty thousand German landsmen gathered at Keil for the christening this was a black omen that spelled the doom of the new ship, but to the majority of our seamen with whom we talked in the Institute Lobby, it didn't make any difference whether a ship was properly christened or not.

"Did you ever hear of a ship being launched prematurely," we asked an old sea captain, Staples by name. "Do you think the *Deutschland* will have bad luck because she wasn't christened?" "Huh!" he replied, "I wasn't christened and I've been at sea thirty year without bad luck. Nope, if that there *Deutschland* has bad luck, it'll be her commander's fault. I'll sail her from now to Doomsday without losin' a night's sleep over her bein' missed by a bottle of beer."

"Then you're not superstitious, Captain?"

"Not me. Oh, I reckon there're some superstitious sailors. I mind

my father, now—he's 89 and just off the sea a few year—how he booted me the first time I stepped foot on his ship. A clipper she was—made the fastest run to the Grand Banks. I come on board for my first trip and first thing I did was go down to the galley for a bite to eat. Well, goin' down I turned a hatch over—an' the next thing I knew my father fetched me a boot with his foot where it'd do most good. 'You turn another hatch over on this ship an' I'll throw you overboard!' he says to me. But I don't hold there's any bad luck in that. Precious few hatches turned over on steamers nowadays, anyway."

And Capt. Staples rolled out with a final snort at superstition. "I've sailed every kind of a ship there is but a beam trawler," he said. "When I was in sail I mind one skipper who used to set a can o' condensed milk behind the mast every night. 'For the angels to drink,' he said it was. An angel got it all right, an' he was named O. H. Staples, E-squire! Ho, ho, ho!"

Half a dozen young seamen in our third floor reading room were puzzled when we asked them if they had ever heard of a ship having bad luck because she wasn't christened or if they knew there were any superstitions about it.

"The only superstition I ever heard of," drawled one of them, "is that a sailor was tellin' me it's bad luck if the rats leave a ship. It means it's gonna sink."

There was only one downright scoffer in the lobby besides old Capt. Staples. He was a dim little fellow in rusty brown, who peered up from behind magnifying spectacles and a squat black pipe. "Naw—them superstitions, now!" he exclaimed scornfully. "They'll tell you it's bad luck if the rats leave a ship, but I've had 'em leave me, many's the time. In Trinidad once there was hundreds of 'em left my ship an' did it bring me bad luck? Comin' back from Trinidad that time I made the fastest run on the line." He fished vainly in his pocket for tobacco and finally borrowed a cigarette. "I figger there's always a reason for everything," he went on. "Once when I was in sail I shipped on the Edmond. She was a two-masted schooner, British built. Well, sir, the trouble that ship had. Couldn't keep a crew more'n one voyage. There was

some kind of a knockin' and tappin' goin' on inside her when she'd put to sea an' all the seamen got so's they wouldn't stay on her. It'd fair keep you awake at night—some-thing goin' 'Tap! Tap! Tap!' regular like. Well, they figgered she was hanted. Some said she'd been in the slave trade or somebody'd been killed on board on the Indies voyage, an' that tappin' was his hant comin' back lookin' for his soul. I laughed at 'em an' stuck with the ship. Finally the skipper, he had so much trouble keepin' a crew he went over that schooner with a fine-tooth comb an' what do you reckon he found? Why, nothin' but a dog-gone ole rusty crowbar some son of a sea cook'd dropped into a six-inch pipe in the pump system while he was takin' soundings o' the bilge, maybe years before! The ship, she'd roll, see, an' the ole crowbar'd clank agin her sides!"

"Some one must have got the signals mixed—waved a handkerchief or something ahead of time," was the way this realist accounted for the *Deutschland* incident.



*Adapted from the article by William Bridges in "THE SUN" May 22, 1931

"Rest After Toil—Stormy Seas"

IF YOU have ever watched a boat race you will have noticed that the winning crew pulled together with marvelous unity—not a single oar was out of time—nor a man out of tune with the rhythmic motion of the boat.

For eighty-eight years loyal, generous friends of the Institute have all "pulled together" so that our "ship" has been able to accomplish many things and to sail many miles over perilous seas as well as through calm waters.

Now, we are again in the midst of a storm—a financial wave has struck our vessel—we need \$4,778.26 to meet our last year's figures for our Ways and Means Department and we are asking for the whole-hearted assistance of ALL our friends to help us weather the storm. We are handicapped without your moral encouragement and financial support.



Please send your check to HARRY FORD, Chairman, Ways and Means Committee
25 SOUTH NEW YORK

Will You Help Keep the Good S. C. I." on an Even Keel?

Some of our contributors have failed to renew their gifts this year and some have reduced their donations owing to their own straightened circumstances. From many shipping companies we have received smaller amounts than in other years owing to trade depression.

All this we regret, and yet we still face our obligations to the sailor. If we had no deficit we could spend this \$4,778.26 to assist other funds which are being used for the support of our religious, social service and relief work.

From January 1st to July 1st we have given relief to 4,950 individual seamen. But if it were not for the shrinkage in contributions we could help many, many more. It is because of our responsibility to these jobless, undernourished men that we make our appeal so urgent. If you can not give as much as you did last year, will you at least give *something*?

Victims of War

THE World War is still taking its toll among our seamen. Among those who wait in our Relief Loan lobby are many who were injured during the war, whose compensation is insufficient, or who, through some technicality, have received no compensation for their disability. These men served in various capacities in wartime—in the navy, in the marines, and in the merchant service. For example, there is Roger T. . . . , who was struck by shrapnel during the Battle of the Marne and was wounded in the temple and his right eye blown away. Then there is Bill E. . . . , who received a gash in his neck from a bayonet and has a four-inch scar and medals to prove it. Bill received compensation until he found work, and then it was discontinued. Now that jobs are scarce he is penniless. Still another pitiful victim of war is Seaman John K. . . . , who was so badly gassed that he has developed a nervous affection in his throat so that each time he starts to talk he rasps out a barking sound, but cannot articulate.

William B. . . . is the most tragic case of all. Shell-shocked, gassed, during his service in the French Army, this Yankee returned to the front when the United States entered the war. A shell exploded near him, one piece tearing into his

skull. He was left for dead in No Man's Land, but was miraculously saved and an army surgeon with marvelous skill put a steel plate in the hole in William's skull. But the pain persists and an operation has been declared too delicate.

Harry W. . . . was an oiler aboard a merchant ship carrying ammunition to the Allied Forces. During a sea raid, a submarine sank the ship and he and two other members of the crew managed to escape. But infection from a wound developed into gangrene and the poor fellow had to have one arm and a leg amputated. Compensation helped him out for a time but now he is out of work and totally dependent on the Institute for subsistence.

And then there is George T. . . . whose compensation checks went astray while he was working on shipboard. George was gassed at the Battle of the Argonne, wounded in both legs, and ever since the war has suffered from an open wound in one foot.

It is such instances as these that make us hope fervently that there may never be another war. We are doing everything possible to help these men. Our generous friends' dollars are holding open the doors of life for many of the war's unsung heroes.

Ask Me Another?

THE once popular game, "Ask Me Another," has apparently lost none of its attraction for our sailormen if we are to judge by the flood of questions addressed to the clerks at our Information Desk. Among the facts sought by our information-thirsty seafarers during the past month or so were how to sell a painting, where to evaluate an old family Bible, who is the Congressman for a certain district, what are the enlistment requirements for State troopers, how much does it cost to change one's name.

An inquisitive sailor could not rest without knowing all about the Nicaraguan Canal and a second mate was in search of a numismatist to whom he wanted to sell old coins. Another seaman in the pursuit of knowledge was terribly excited about models of Viking ships and where could he see some on view. Still another sought to know the height of the Empire State building.

Questions are varied: Who are the New York agents for a firm of London stock brokers? Who is the author of the lines beginning "What is so rare as a day in June"? Where is there a swimming pool in downtown Manhattan? Where can a man attend cookery classes? How much will it cost to go by river boat from Matadi to a town

1500 miles up the Congo? Where is the Saar Basin and how is it governed?

A young sailor wanted to know where he could buy Pickwick chocolates and an Irish lad asked if the Shannon Electric Scheme is in operation in Ireland. A South American seaman wanted to send a cable to the Argentine and a Yankee tar from New Bedford wished to know how to get himself and family by bus to Mexico City. The cost of railroad fare to Texas deeply concerned a Southern chap and a Canadian boy was curious to know the date of the British Empire Service League Convention.

The Information Desk was able to answer all these questions and sundry others, or else referred the seamen to some authority.

Strange Sights

A seaman rescuing a young sparrow from the gutter and placing it in a tree in Jeanette Park—A big Negro sailor coming to the Information Desk, saying, "I want to join the Navy"—A sailor with a parrot in a bright red cage—A seaman coming back to the Institute to display his new set of teeth—A sailor with an easel and a palette full of paints sitting outside the Institute painting the Brooklyn skyline—A partially paralyzed man hobbling up the stairs to the Social Service Department to claim a veteran's pension—A Porto Rican sailor borrowing a "dime" for carfare from a tall Italian—A tiny marmoset checked in our Baggage Department by a seaman—A weather-beaten old tar carving a ship's model—A young bright-eyed sailor in ragged dungarees singing "I'm Happy When You're Happy"—

Jottings from the S. C. I. Log



"There's Where"

A Map of the World has been mounted on the wall of our third floor reading room and it is proving the subject of much comment and the inspiration for many reminiscences. "There's where I was shipwrecked," says one sailor to another, a stubby finger pointing to a spot near the Black Sea. "And there's where my mother lives," volunteers another, indicating the south of France. "There's where I was quartered for eight months in 1917," comments another. "There's where my buddy is staying—he'll soon be mayor of the town there." "There's where I traveled for two days without food and water—" "There's where we ran into a hurricane," and so on run the comments of these wanderers, each of them with a story to tell of far-away ports.

"God's In His Heaven"

The wonders of this machine age and the marvels of radio and wireless were brought home to us not long ago when the Institute broadcast a program of popular

sea ballads over WOR. One of the singers, a seaman who has been out of work for almost a year, sang a bass solo "When the Bell in the Lighthouse Rings Ding Dong." Upon returning to the Institute he found a telegram waiting for him. Opening it he saw that it was a message from his mother in Iowa. We have just heard you sing over the radio, said the telegram in substance. Why haven't you written us? We are wiring you some money. Come home and visit us. And off went our bass singer, overjoyed that his family had not forgotten him.

The Rescue of "Static"

All the way from the Seamen's Church Institute of New Orleans comes a story of "Static", a black cat, which we are confident our readers will enjoy. Third Engineer William F. Shepherd, of the S. S. Comal, was finishing up a repair job one morning as the ship was taking on cargo at the Dumaine street wharf when "Static", catlike, was joyfully playing with a loose rope-end on the lower deck. Suddenly a river breeze caught the rope-end. "Static" watched it go. He leaped, and somersaulted clean over the side of the ship. Claws scratching vainly at steel plates, "Static" plunged down a cavern four feet wide, 24 feet deep, that ended in the Mississippi River. Third Engineer Bill Shepherd jumped after his pet. No time to strip or kick off shoes. Splash! George Miller, Negro longshoreman, dove after Bill and the two men and "Static" swam madly to a wharf piling. Safe on deck, "Static" picked a sunny spot just outside Bill's bunk, licked himself and lay down to sleep. Bill went back to his repair job. Bill has a wife in Tampa. "What do you think Mrs. Shepherd will say when she hears what you did for a black cat?" he was asked. "Shucks!" said Bill, "We got cats at home, She knows 'Static's' my buddy."

Experts say this is a good time to invest. Why not buy Seamen's Church Institute because it is real preferred stock and it pays the only kind of dividend you can take to Heaven. From: *The Mainstay*.

An Appreciative Letter

My dear Mrs. Roper:

How can I ever thank you for the miracle you've performed?

"I'm sure it's through your influence my brother has finally written. I wonder if you can appreciate my happiness and peace of mind?"

I'm so overjoyed I can scarcely contain myself. I'm treading on air, as it were. And think of it, he's promised us a visit soon! I'm reasonably sure he intends keeping his promise. It's going to be pretty hard getting down to earth till I see him. It's four years tomorrow to be exact since he left us, and fully a year and a half since he has written us. Our only touch with him in all that time has been through you. I hope we can persuade him to give up his wanderings, especially going away to sea. In my opinion such a life has a tendency to harden men. He's the youngest in the family of eight and naturally the most beloved and the favorite. You've earned our undying gratitude in restoring him to us, for without your help I'm sure he would have drifted farther and farther from us. Thanks so much.

Hoping I may have the pleasure of meeting you some time. I am

Gratefully yours

Times Have Changed

Our latest celebrity is Monsieur Francois Marcel De La Mare, a hairdresser aboard the S. S. Ile de France who calls at the Institute for his mail after each trip. Francois proudly lays claim to being the "Coiffeur special" of Madame Maurice Chevalier, and the dance instructor of many Hollywood stars. He holds several medals of honor awarded him for his skill in dressing coiffures, in facial massages, etc. Francois, we feel, is a new type seaman. In the days before the floating ocean palaces women passengers (when ocean breezes rumbled their tresses) could not immediately enjoy the services of an expert beautician.

A Good Turn

A toothsome bit of news has just reached us. Seaman John Y . . . came to our Slop Chest and asked for his false teeth.

"But we confiscated your baggage a year ago because you did not notify us," protested the staff member. "I could identify them in a minute. They fit me exactly," replied John with such an urgent note in his voice, that after a half hour's diligent search among the pile of unclaimed luggage we found a set of false teeth which John excitedly claimed as his. He went away happily wearing them and grateful to us for doing him what he called "a good turn." As we go to press we have been asked by another seaman to post the following notice on our bulletin board: LOST: a set of false teeth—right eye-tooth of gold. Please forward.

A Cheerful Visitor

The words "slump" and "depression" are wearying words today, but they are not so wearying as the fact. To the men out of employment it is a period of misery, anxiety and heartache. Into such an atmosphere walked Seaman Robert E . . . , one of the pluckiest, most cheerful chaps it has been our lot to know. He sat patiently waiting his turn for relief, and when the Relief Secretary looked up into Robert's smiling face he felt himself a better man. Robert was an oiler, and when he was on one of the swinging stages painting the walls of the engine room of his ship a rough sea hurled him from the stage to the steel landing below. For six months Robert was in a London hospital with a broken hip, his legs swung up in the air, suspended by weights. Then he was sent back to New York and was told he could collect a part of the settlement due him in Baltimore. His left leg is healed but it is two inches shorter than his right, and he has to wear iron braces, lean on a cane and wear a clumsy shoe. We lent him the money to get to Baltimore and the very next day our Relief Secretary received this telegram: KIND SIR: PLEASE ACCEPT MONEY AND WIRE REPLY IF RECEIVED O. K. THANKS A MILLION. A letter followed in which Robert explained that he is using the compensation money to become a Radio operator so that he can earn his own livelihood in spite of his handicap.

"The Brass Plate"

The following poem, written by a member of "the black gang", Fireman George Elvin, expresses in an unusual way how much the rooms in the Institute mean to our sailormen. When you give a room in memory of some relative or loved one the room itself wields a spiritual influence on lonely seafarers:

The original brass plate bears this inscription: "This room is named after William Merrony, a British seaman of high character. His sister waited forty years. His last ship never reported."

"In the Seamen's Institute upon the eighth floor
Is a room with a brass plate upon the door
To the memory of a seaman of British birth
One of fine character and sterling worth
He sailed with his ship and never returned
While his sister patiently waited and yearned.

"Little brass plate fixed upon a room door
To me you mean something, something far more
Than the few words inscribed upon your bright surface
You stand for the man who sailed with set purpose
And for the woman who patiently down the years waited,
Waited for him, and the ship that never reported."

Since the list of available memorials in the Annex was published in the last issue of THE LOOKOUT, the following have been subscribed by friends of the Institute:

Seaman's room, with running water.....\$1,000.00

The following Sundays have been memorialized for the *Chapel Flower Fund*: Second Sunday of February; fourth Sunday of February; second Sunday of November; second Sunday in August.

Among other memorials still available are:

Seamen's Reading and Game Rooms.....	\$25,000.00
Cafeteria	15,000.00
Nurses' Room in Clinic.....	5,000.00
Additional Clinic Rooms.....	5,000.00
Chapel Memorial Windows.....	5,000.00
Sanctuary and Chancel.....	5,000.00
Endowed Seamen's Rooms, each.....	5,000.00
Officers' Rooms, each.....	1,500.00
Seamen's Rooms, with running water, each.....	1,000.00
Seamen's Rooms, each.....	500.00
Chapel Chairs, each.....	50.00



Legacies to the Seamen's Church Institute of New York

You are asked to remember in your *will* this important work for Seamen. *Please note the exact title of the Society as printed below.* The words "of New York" are part of the title.

The Institute has been greatly aided by this form of generosity. The following clause 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.

If land or any specific personal 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."

In drawing your will or a codicil thereto it is advisable to consult your lawyer.



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