the LOOKOUT

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

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FEBRUARY - MARCH 1964

GOD, MOBY-DICK and 25 SOUTH STREET

Because Herman Melville's youth was spent in our neighborhood among seamen and because his life as a seaman gave him background and inspiration for his most famous novel "Moby-Dick", we have dedicated this LOOKOUT—printed during our 130th Anniversary—to him who, "gabbing with fellow sailors and re-living the recent past came to feel and believe in his gift."

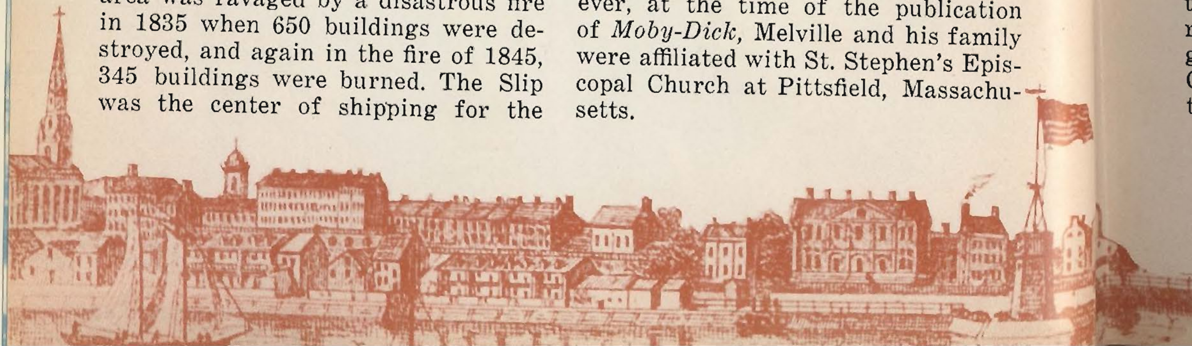
When SCI purchased property on Manhattan's Battery Park recently, little did we know that on this site in 1819 Herman Melville was born (No. 6 Pearl Street). Next door to the Melville birthplace is the site where the "Board of 19" city fathers (burgomeisters) first met in 1636 when our city was New Amsterdam. This acquisition gave us a third important historical site. The first was the home of Robert Fulton in which he developed the steamship Clermont. Fulton's home, not far from the present SCI building, was converted by SCI to a boarding house for seamen and was in use from 1902 until 1931.

Ishmael, the hero of *Moby-Dick*, immediately introduces the reader of this strange yarn, which many have considered to be the greatest of all American novels, to the environs of 25 South Street. It is a "damp, drizzly November day" in Ishmael's soul as he directs our attention to that area of the "insular city of Manhattoes" that leads us along South Street to our present address at Coenties Slip. This was once Herman Melville's own neighborhood. As a child he lived only a stone's throw from the Seamen's Church Institute at the corner of Pearl and State Streets.

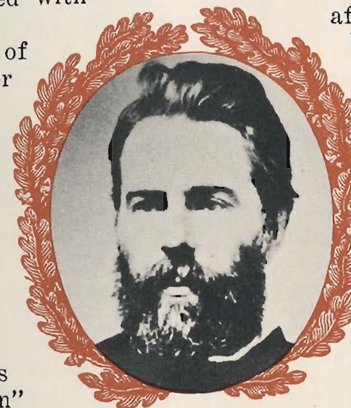
Coenties Slip, originally an inlet from the East River, would dampen the steps of the entrance to our present building if it were not for the fact that the Slip was filled in the early part of the 19th century. The area was ravaged by a disastrous fire in 1835 when 650 buildings were destroyed, and again in the fire of 1845, 345 buildings were burned. The Slip was the center of shipping for the harbor and it took its name from a corrupt combination of the given names of Conraet and Antje Ten Eyck, Dutch settlers whose 17th century home once stood not far from our present location.

The story of the white whale (though Moby-Dick was "mocha" rather than white) begins in the year 1840. This is an important date in the history of the ministry to seamen. Many of the contemporary seamen's agencies in our major port cities trace their beginnings to this romantic era. The Seamen's Church Institute of New York was organized on March 6, 1834, and the first floating chapel, the Church of Our Saviour, was launched at Pike Slip in 1844. These were the days of *Moby-Dick;* days when a four-course dinner with all the trimmings cost about 50 cents, and a local newspaper advertised a grand tour of Europe, two years abroad and passage both ways, for $472.00!

Herman Melville, the seaman-author-inspector of customs, had distinguished roots in the milieu of this exciting period in American history. His grandfather, Thomas Melville, had been a leader in the Boston Tea Party and later served as a major in the Revolution. His maternal grandfather, General Peter Gansevoort, was the distinguished "hero of Ft. Stanwix" in 1777. Although his father was a Unitarian and his mother a member of the Dutch Reformed Church, the family tended to follow the Calvinistic doctrines of what Melville refers to as "the infallible Presbyterian Church." An austere Calvinistic theology permeated the thinking of this era. However, at the time of the publication of *Moby-Dick,* Melville and his family were affiliated with St. Stephen's Episcopal Church at Pittsfield, Massachusetts.



The author crowded his books with powerful and often subtle Biblical references. Shakespeare and the King James Version of the Bible are the acknowledged sources of his style. He was obsessed with the concept of the struggle of the forces of good and evil in the world. Critics who make the claim that Herman Melville was a religious skeptic must close their eyes to much of the poignant religious spirit that reveals so much of the personality of this sensitive, tormented man who spent most of his life searching for an adequate expression of his inner conflicts which grappled with his own religious faith.



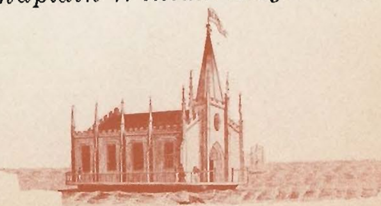
In the early chapters of *Moby-Dick* the character of "Father Mapple" of the New Bedford Seamen's Bethel (apparently modeled after the famous Father Edward Taylor of the Boston Seamen's Bethel who is referred to with great admiration by Dana, Dickens and Emerson) preaches an excellent "Melvillian" sermon at the end of which the author concludes, "the pulpit is ever this earth's foremost part; all the rest comes in the rear; the pulpit leads the world." Even the five-stanza hymn which forms the setting for Father Mapple's sermon was apparently composed by Melville! Had he been so inclined, the author of *Moby-Dick* might have become a "spellbinder" in the pulpit, and although he was frequently prone to needle the temperance societies of his day and ridicule the solemn "pillars of religion" in his community, sparks of the Christian gospel brighten his books to kindle the minds of his readers.

Melville was deeply concerned with injustice in the world and his own religious insights constantly crop up in his text: "Tell me, oh Bible, that story of Lazarus again, that I may find comfort in my heart for the poor and forlorn." Frequently he will challenge his reader to follow a practical brand of Christianity: "To be efficacious, Virtue must come down from aloft, even as our blessed Redeemer came down to redeem our whole man-of-war world."

Perhaps the greatest tribute to Herman Melville is that for the modern mariner he is a hero a century after his great yarn has been spun. I know a young seaman from California who speaks with religious zeal of *his* "Bible," *Moby-Dick.* As an emblem of his faith, the white whale is tattooed on his arm. I once heard him give an eloquent rendition of one of the crucial chapters of the novel, "The Symphony." His word-perfect recitation from memory held us spell-bound as Melville came to life again in the very locale he knew so well!

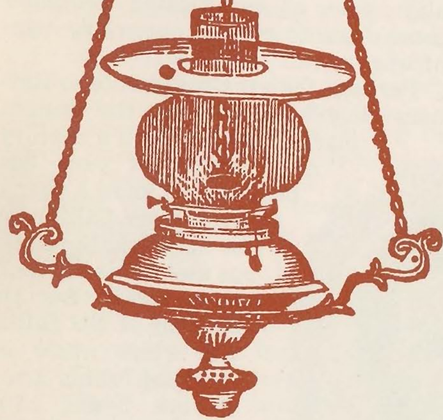
If only Herman Melville might have had the satisfaction of knowing before he died in obscurity at his E. 26th Street brownstone back in 1891 that half a century later, in this year of grace 1964, men who go down to the sea in ships would discuss with affectionate awe and admiration the strange and wonderful "story of the white whale," a story about man and the sea and God.

by Chaplain William Haynsworth



Melville's Life and Times

by Orlan Fox



On the 15th of April, 1846, Walt Whitman's review of a new book appeared in the columns of the *Brooklyn Eagle:* "A strange, graceful, most readable book this. . . . As a book to hold in one's hand and pore dreamily over of a summer day, it is unsurpassed. . . ."

Typee: A Peep At Polynesian Life was an auspicious literary debut for Herman Melville. Critics unanimously urged their readers to buy this book which treated, for the first time in fiction, life in the South Pacific. Some, it must be said, were skeptical about the authenticity of the young sailor's exotic adventures. One critic even conjectured that "Melville" was the romantic pseudonym of a practiced writer. But the word quickly got around about this handsome 26-year-old ex-seaman who could enthrall a drawing room audience with true, though slightly embellished, tales of cannibals and faraway lands. His book was an instant best-seller.

Typee was, in modern jargon, ripe for success. It burst upon the bustling seaport cultures of Boston and New York of 1846 and delighted a society which was used to complain of long uneventful voyages to Europe. "O! ye stateroom sailors, who make so much ado about a fourteen days' passage across the Atlantic; who so pathetically relate the privations and hardships of sea. . . . What would you say to our six months out of sight of land?" Here was a powerful, appealing voice, a potential literary lion.

Omoo, which appeared in 1847, soundly reaffirmed Melville's ability to tell a good and convincing tale. Similar to *Typee,* it too was a popular success. By this time, moreover, the promising young seaman-turned-writer had decided upon a literary career for himself. He moved from his mother's home in Massachusetts and bought a house for his entire family in New York City at 103 Fourth Avenue. In the meantime he married Elizabeth Shaw, daughter of the chief justice of Massachusetts and one of his sister's friends who had listened to him tell the tales of *Typee.* Ostensibly, the move to New York was for professional reasons. He had been invited by the scholarly editor Evert Duyckinck to contribute articles to the satirical magazine *Yankee Doodle* and to the new *Literary World.* In this growing metropolis of some 400,000 he could also become acquainted with the complexities of the publishing world. But in returning to his native city a success after having left it as a poor seaman, he must have regarded it, above all, as a personal triumph.

Melville was born to adversity on August 1, 1819, at number six Pearl Street, at the southern tip of Manhattan. His father, Allan Melville, had been a well-to-do importer whose business was damaged by the scarcity of foreign exchange during this country's first postwar depression. For 11 years after the birth of Herman, the third of eight children, the Melvilles struggled for a livelihood in New York. Records show that they lived at five different addresses during this period. At age five, young Herman played hoops and watched the ships of the busy port again on Pearl Street, this time at number 162. The following year, the family moved to 33 Bleecker Street in the uptown "suburbs." (Uncultivated woodlands and pastures lay above present-day Union Square.) Finally, three years later, they were installed at number 675 of a commercial street commonly known as the Broad Way.

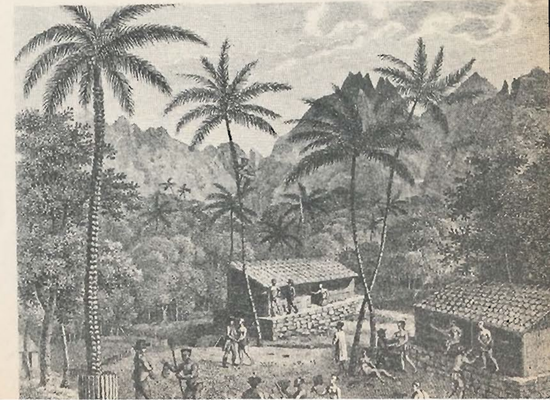
At the invitation of Melville's mother's relatives—the Gansevoorts, an old Hudson Valley patroon family—Allan Melville took his family to Albany in 1830. There Herman attended the Academy where he enjoyed the only two years of formal education he ever received. In later years, he would have to rely upon a not uncommon necessity in nineteenth century America: self-education.

Upon his father's death in 1832, the boy left school and began to earn his living—as a store clerk, a farmhand, a country schoolmaster, and, finally, as a sailor. At the age of 20, he made his first voyage before the mast, as a merchant seaman to Liverpool and back. After another venture to make his fortune ashore (he went as far west as the Mississippi), he sailed on January 3, 1841, aboard the *Acushnet,* a New Bedford whaler bound for Cape Horn and the Pacific. It should be pointed out that a whaler in those days was the last refuge for criminals and castaways.

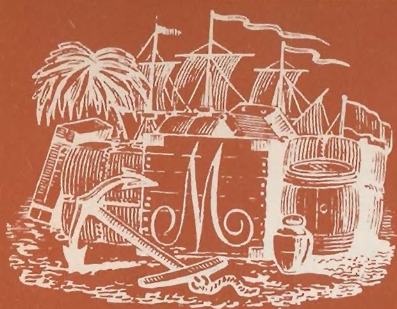
It was a moment of desperation for Melville. Depressed by his inability to launch a promising career and reminded of his failure by affluent relatives, he committed himself to the three-year voyage of unknown adventure and hard labor. But he was not cut out to be a professional seaman like his younger brother Thomas, who eventually captained a ship. His subsequent record at sea was, to put it mildly, bad. In the Marquesas Islands he deserted the *Acushnet,* protesting intolerable conditions. After living among the Typee Valley natives, he and a fellow mate were rescued by an Australian ship headed for Papeete. There, he and his friend refused further duty. They were promptly arrested and brought to trial but, as it turned out, were allowed to escape when the ship set sail. After a period of beachcombing, Melville managed to get a position as a harpooner aboard a whaler bound for America. He was discharged in Hawaii. Finally, a place on the U.S. frigate *United States* returned him to Boston in 1843. There, much to the relief of his family, Melville's inglorious nautical career came to an end. He did sail to Europe in later life, but only as a stateroom celebrity.

At some time during his raucous wanderings, probably during his service aboard the *United States,* Melville had an "awakening." He discovered his author's voice.

Scene near Pearl Street where Melville was born on August 1, 1819, and spent 19 of the last years of his life as a customs inspector on its docks.



Nukuhiva, the Marquesas; after 18 months at sea, Melville jumped ship and escaped to these Pacific islands.



Reading in the ship's library and listening to the stories of his fellow sailors, he perhaps felt the urge to record and embellish his own tales. In any case, upon his return to his family, he set about to recount his adventures. *Typee* and *Omoo* were the immediate results.

Flushed by the success of his first two books, Melville in the winter of 1847 began work on his third novel. *Mardi* proved neither a popular nor an artistic success, but it did reveal a developing complexity of mind. Melville, it seems, was capable of more than just an exotic adventure story. But his publisher was doubtful, and his readers astonished.

Mardi's failure was a source of deep frustration to Melville. He felt compelled to develop his talents beyond the level of "parlor" fiction. At the same time he had developed a taste for popular success. In rapid order, therefore, he produced *Redburn* (1849) and *White Jacket* (1850), two books in his best public style. The first was based on his youthful Liverpool voyage; the second recounted his service aboard the *United States*. *White Jacket* enjoyed a particular success, as it appeared during a cholera epidemic panic in New York. Melville had coincidentally portrayed the effects of the fever aboard ship.

Shortly afterwards, Nathaniel Hawthorne, whom Melville had never met but who was to be a powerful influence on the young novelist's next book, wrote an appraisal of the author in a letter to editor Duyckinck: "I have read Melville's works with a progressive appreciation of the author. No writer ever put the reality before his reader more unflinchingly than he does in *Redburn* and *White Jacket*. *Mardi* is a rich book, with depths here and there that compel a man to swim for life. It is so good that one scarcely pardons the writer for not having brooded over it, as to make it a great deal better." With five novels behind him, Melville, still only 30, now enjoyed both the enthusiasm of the public and the admiration of his literary peers.

By the spring of 1850, Melville—now the established New Yorker—was at work on another money-maker to follow up *Redburn* and *White Jacket*. In a letter to a friend he wrote that he was "halfway" in a book which he referred to as the "whaling voyage." He described it to his publisher as "a romance of adventure, founded upon certain wild legends in the Southern Sperm Whale Fisheries and illustrated by the author's own personal experience, of two years and more, as a harpooner." In August of that year Duyckinck visited him in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, where he was vacationing, and wrote that "Melville has a new book mostly done; a romantic, fanciful and literal and most enjoyable presentment of the Whale Fishery, something quite new."

These early references to the book which was to become *Moby-Dick* are of unusual interest because they are followed by a year of agonized composition which transformed a "mostly done" autobiographical romance into a powerfully dramatic novel. The trigger action of his explosion into greatness came on a single day, August 5, 1850, during his vacation. On that day one of his neighbors arranged an expedition and dinner party for all the literary celebrities of the region. The expedition was to the top of Monument Mountain where Melville, Hawthorne, and Oliver Wendell Holmes, among others, were made gay by the elevation and the champagne. The result of such a gathering of eminent American writers was a literary quarrel which continued throughout the "well moistened" dinner party later. It focused upon the theory of the influence of climate upon genius and the question whether America could produce a literature as elevated as its mountains and as spacious as its plains.

Melville's part in the argument seems to have been that of a listener, but he was impressed by it and even more impressed by his first meeting with Hawthorne. Shortly afterwards, in an article in the *Literary World*, he contended that Hawthorne proved the greatness of American literature; it was a greatness of heart and mind, observable in Hawthorne's willingness to press the "blackness" of truth—the same dark "background against which Shakespeare plays his grandest conceits" and which "appeals to that Calvinistic sense of Innate Depravity and Original Sin, from whom visitations, in some shape or other, no deeply thinking mind is always and wholly free." The impression made by Hawthorne was so great that Melville cultivated his acquaintanceship assiduously during the following months and eventually dedicated *Moby-Dick* to him.

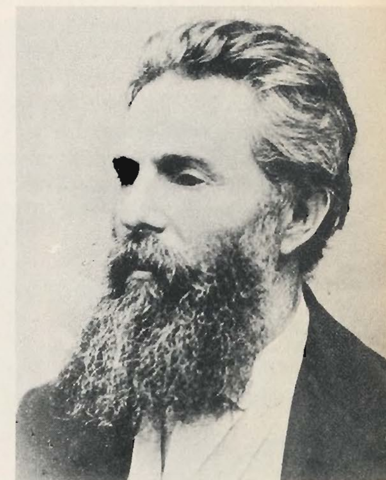
The final product of this period was Melville's masterpiece. All of his previous work was superficial compared to *Moby-Dick's* philosophical and structural complexity. No longer was he the popular novelist of the drawing room. He had surpassed even Hawthorne as one who "tears off the mask, and speaks the . . . madness of vital truth."

His optimism would never be so high again. *Moby-Dick*, the classic we know today, was a failure compared to his earlier works. Few critics liked it and sales were bad. Even his friends were becoming impatient of his perverse "truth-seeking" moods. Melville could not have guessed it at the time, but in a few years he would sink into an unread oblivion. It would take the awakened public of another century, surviving a war of even greater proportions than that which was brewing in 1851, to acclaim his story of the white whale.

Pierre, his next book, was written largely in the Berkshires, where he and his family had moved in 1850. The new country home did not see an improvement in his fortune. Barely 300 copies of *Pierre* sold in the first year.

Melville was still only 33. He had produced seven novels in seven years. Now his fantastic productivity showed a marked decline. Five years after *Pierre* came the last novel he was to publish, *The Confidence Man*, which was a probing search for "the face behind the mask." Its failure punctuated his popular decline.

Melville then turned to writing poetry which was not well received. In 1866 he received an appointment as deputy inspector in the New York Customhouse, a post he held for nearly 20 years. Forgotten by his once-admiring public and bookishly contemplative in his seclusion, he lived on until 1891, writing slim volumes of poetry and one notable long narrative poem, "Clarel."



Melville as an old man.

Curiously, in his last years he tried to recapture a form he had not used in over 30 years—the novel. *Billy Budd*, the story he was working on at the time of his death, is the last ironic testament of his career. Its bitter, yet to Melville gratifying, postulation of death recalls the satisfaction he had felt with *Moby-Dick*. And like *Moby-Dick*, it was not discovered by an admiring and appreciative public until 1924. That was the year *Billy Budd* was first published. And, for us today, that was the year Herman Melville was reborn.

The Maldive Shark

by
Dr. Sanford Sternlicht

The poetry of Herman Melville

The year 1819 might very well be considered the year of birth for American literature, not because of any work published at that time, but because 1819 was the year in which was born America's first important female poet, Julia Ward Howe, author of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic"; one of this nation's finest philosophical poets, James Russell Lowell; perhaps the greatest American poet of all time, Walt Whitman; and the man who wrote *Moby-Dick*, the great American novelist Herman Melville. But Melville was not only a novelist, he was a poet too, and one perhaps worthy of more recognition than he is afforded when an occasional poem or two of his is included in an anthology of American poetry.

It was not until after his terrible disappointment over the mixed reception given by the critics to *Moby-Dick* in 1851 that he began to turn to poetry. Due to ill health he took a voyage to the Mediterranean in 1856 and, returning to the United States, worked at various jobs until he was finally able to obtain a not-very-lucrative government post as a New York City district inspector of customs in 1866. He held this post until 6 years before his death in 1891. From the time he began to work in the Customs House near the Battery he slowly faded into literary oblivion.

In 1859 Melville made his first unsuccessful attempt to have his poetry published. Finally, in 1866, Harper and Brothers published a volume of his Civil War poems entitled *Battlepieces and Aspects of the War*. Because this book was not well received, Melville was never able to have a book published again in his lifetime except at his own or his family's expense. In 1876 his uncle caused the publication of that strange long poem *Clarel: A Poem and Pilgrimage in the Holy Land*. The reviewers scorned it. In 1888 Melville paid for a 25-copy edition of *John Marr and Other Sailors;* and in 1891 Melville printed a 25-copy edition of *Timoleon*.

When Melville died, on September 28, 1891, there were few obituaries. One newspaperman stated: "Even his own generation had long thought him dead."

As to the poems themselves, they have been criticized for their rhythmic inadequacy. His sea poems, however, at their best, evoke powerful emotional responses. The poems are tough and vigorous. They are restless reminders of the power and the glory of *Moby-Dick*. Consider what is perhaps Melville's best short poem:

THE MALDIVE SHARK

About the Shark, phlegmatical one,
Pale sot of the Maldive sea,
The sleek little pilot-fish, azure and
slim,
How alert in attendance be.

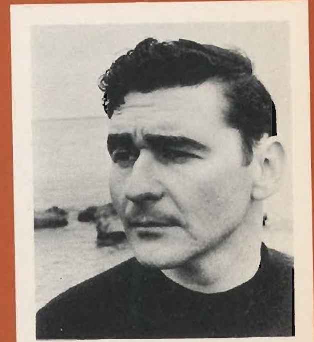
From his saw-pit mouth, from his
charnel of maw
They have nothing of harm to dread,
But liquidly glide on his ghastly flank
Or before his Gorgonian head;

Or lurk in the port of serrated teeth
In white triple tiers of glittering gates,
And there find a haven when peril's
abroad,
An asylum in jaws of the Fates!

They are friends; and friendly they
guide him to prey,
Yet never partake of the treat —
Eyes and brains to the dotard lethargic
and dull,
Pale ravener of horrible meat.

This poem is concerned with a metaphysical idea: the shark is a death angel fulfilling his appointed role. "The Maldive Shark" shows Melville's deep and pained concern for the nature of reality. To him reality is always treacherous, seductive, surprising, and always ready to ravish man's idealistic attempt to escape. At the same time, the "Pale ravener of horrible meat" is Melville's symbol for life itself: life that lives on life; life that is never sentimental; life that renews; life that is willing to accept the tragic naturalism of reality.

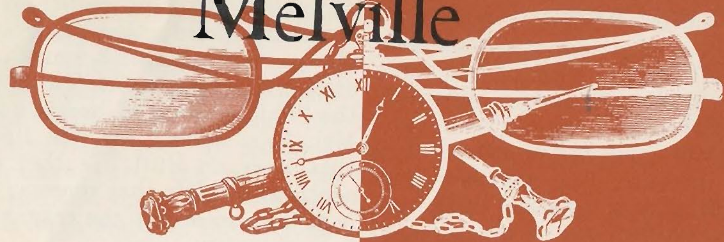
Perhaps one may read in this poem, and in others like it, Melville's final acceptance of death and the oblivion that must have seemed inescapable to him in the dark, lonely, latter years of his long life.



POETRY-BY-THE-SEA

Lookout readers will quickly recognize the name of Sanford Sternlicht whose poetry has appeared in our magazine for nearly a year. Ex-seaman, now turned professor of English at New York State University, Oswego, N.Y., he volunteered to read from his compositions for an audience of seamen last month. With enough experience to know that seamen would respond to this intellectual program, SCI sponsored Sternlicht's appearance, and the resultant audience was extremely gratifying. Not only many seamen sat through the moving program, but dozens of people from the community and Sternlicht's own students joined the standing-room only audience.

Vignettes from Melville



The following excerpted material from Melville's own books and from those of his grand-daughter was provided by Mr. Leonard Vanderpot, an employee of John Wylie and Sons, New York publishers of Melville's first book, Typee.

. . . OF SAILORS

"Consider, that, with the majority of them, the very fact of their being sailors, argues a certain recklessness and sensualism of character, ignorance, and depravity; consider that they are generally friendless and alone in the world; or if they have friends and relatives, they are almost constantly beyond the reach of their good influences; consider that after the rigorous discipline, hardships, dangers, and privations of a voyage, they are set adrift in a foreign port, and exposed to a thousand enticements, which, under the circumstances, would be hard even for virtue itself to withstand, unless virtue went about on crutches; consider that by their very vocation they are shunned by the better class of people, and cut off from all access to respectable and improving society; consider all this, and the reflecting mind will soon perceive that the case of sailors, as a class, is not a very promising one. . . .

And yet, what are sailors? What in your heart do you think of that fellow staggering along the dock? Do you not give him a wide berth, shun him, and account him little above the brutes that perish? Will you throw open your parlors to him; invite him to dinner? Or give him a season ticket to your pew in church? No. You will do no such thing; but at a distance, you will perhaps subscribe a dollar or two for the building of a hospital, to accommodate sailors already broken down; or for the distribution of excellent books among tars who cannot read. And the very mode and manner in which such charities are made, bespeak, more than words, the low estimation in which sailors are held. It is useless to gainsay it; they are deemed almost the refuse and off-scourings of the earth; and the romantic view of them is principally had through romances. . . .

But we must not altogether despair for the sailor; nor need those who toil for his good be at bottom disheartened, or Time must prove his friend in the end; and though sometimes he would almost seem as a neglected stepson of heaven, permitted to run on and riot out his days with no hand to restrain him, while others are watched over and tenderly cared for; yet we feel and know that God is the true Father of all, and that none of his children are without the pale of his care."

Redburn: His First Voyage. By Herman Melville. Doubleday 1957. From Chapter XXIX.

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"Do you not give him a wide berth, shun him, and account him little above the brutes that perish?"

Reproduced from Frank Leslie's illustrated newspaper, October 4, 1884

. . . OF HIS BIRTHPLACE

"No family records survive of the house in which Herman was born, at 6 Pearl Street just off the Battery. It was here that he astonished his family by showing "nearly three teeth" at the age of fifteen weeks and that his mother, after about a year, completely weaned him. But in less than two years Allan Melvill had established his family, together with cook and nurse, farther north at 55 Cortlandt Street, a move that took the family out of a district rapidly being monopolized by business establishments."

Melville's Early Life and Redburn. By William H. Gilman. New York University Press 1951. P. 19.

. . . TO HIS DAUGHTER

Pacific Ocean
Sep. 2d 1860

"My Dear Bessie: I thought I would send you a letter, that you could read yourself—at least part of it. But here and there I propose to write in the usual manner, as I find the printing style comes rather awkwardly in a rolling ship. Mamma will read these parts to you. We have seen a good many sea-birds. Many have followed the ship day after day. I used to feed them with crumbs. But now it has got to be warm weather, the birds have left us. They were about as big as chickens—they were all over speckled—and they would sometimes, during a calm, keep behind the ship, fluttering about in the water, with a mighty cackling, and whenever anything was thrown overboard they would hurry to get it. But they never would light on the ship—they kept all the time flying or else resting themselves by floating on the water like ducks in a pond. These birds have no home, unless it is some wild rocks in the middle of the ocean. They never see any orchards, and have a taste of the apples & cherries, like your gay little friend in Pittsfield Robin Red Breast Esq.

I could tell you a good many more things about the sea, but I must defer the rest till I get home.

I hope you are a good girl; and give Mama no trouble. Do you help Mama keep house? That little bag you made for me, I use very often, and think of you every time.

I suppose you have had a good many walks on the hill, and picked strawberries.

I hope you take good care of little

FANNY

and that when you go on the hill, you go this way:

[drawing]

that is to say, hand in hand."

By-by
Papa

the art of remembering

Letters from seamen who received the Women's Council Christmas gift boxes last December have begun to saturate SCI's mail. Postmarked from strange places throughout the world, some scrawled in nearly illegible handwriting, others neatly typed on ship's officers' letterheads, some in foreign languages, they all have succinct and sincere messages of gratitude from men who were "remembered."

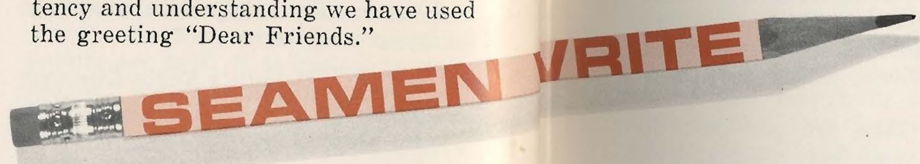
The messages are sent directly to the Women's Council by the seamen, or are forwarded to headquarters by knitters and contributors who have received them from seamen through addresses in the boxes themselves. And as seamen often have a desire to return a favor for a favor, some of these same women might expect a piece of carved ivory from Africa or a hammered brass box from India. Foreign seamen are especially grateful to be remembered by unknown American friends.

The Women's Council, through the LOOKOUT, wishes to share some of these letters with its more than 2,500 volunteer knitters and contributors who helped in sending 1963's record number of 9,004 Christmas gift packages. Your continued interest in both its current Wool Appeal and another Funds Appeal this summer and fall will provide resources to deliver an even greater number of Christmas boxes to men at sea on Christmas Day, 1964.

To set the mood for the spirit of these letters, permit us to report an incident which happened one morning last fall. A ruddy-faced seaman presented himself at a desk in the Women's Council offices and asked if he could be of service in packing Christmas boxes. Executive Secretary Grace Chapman and Mrs. Barbara Love thanked him for volunteering, promising they would contact him when the Christmas room opened and they needed more "hands." With an unexpected burst of enthusiasm, the seaman responded: "Several years ago we got Christmas boxes on my ship. We were so surprised for none of us had ever had one before and I've never forgotten that scene. I opened the box and thought I'd never get to the bottom. I kept taking out one present after another . . . and there were still more! I'll never forget that Christmas."

For hundreds of men out of the thousands who will receive the gifts this December, the Women's Council packages will be the *only* presents they'll receive. For some of them it will be the first time *anyone* has remembered them since they gave up the comfortable life of the shore for the lonely alienation of the sea. The essence of the Christmas box project, stripped of its material values, is simply: the love and devotion of a "shoreside mother" bridging the seas at Christmas to remind one lonely man that the real meaning of the Day is sharing.

Because many of these letters are directed to various people, for consistency and understanding we have used the greeting "Dear Friends."



S.S. Exchester
10 January 1964

Dear Friends:

It sure was a great pleasure to receive your Christmas greetings and "gift package" from the friends at the Seamen's Church Institute.

Thank each and every one of you.

The S/S Exchester was 3 months out of New York on Christmas day steaming along in the Bay of Bengal headed for Madras, India. Everyone felt kind of home sick, and the thought of receiving a gift from home made each and every one of us feel a lot better and that much nearer to home.

Once again thank each and every one of you very very much.

Yours truly
W.N.

1-4-64

Dear Friends:

It is my pleasure to say thank you very much for the Christmas package you and your most thoughtful friends sent to many seamen.

It was the first time I had ever received the Christmas box and I was overwhelmed. I didn't believe people did nice things anymore.

With this as inspiration and God's help I shall have to get my own house in order.

Thank you. May God Bless all of you.

A Seaman

Christmas Day at sea

Dear Friends:

I wish to express my thanks for the gift parcel which I received today. It is indeed a wonderful surprise to open a Christmas package out at sea somewhere in the Indian Ocean. I am only sorry there was not a particular name inscribed on the greeting card that was enclosed.

Everyone has been made happier by your thoughtfulness and if giving is supposed to lend happiness to the giver then all at the Institute must feel happy indeed.

Sincerely Yours,
J.F.E.

Salisbury, Australia

Dear Friends:

I wish to show my appreciation of the many wonderful and useful gifts which came to me at Christmas.

With friends like you in the world a seaman need never feel he is alone.

I only hope somebody has made your Christmas as happy as you made mine.

Yours faithfully
N.G.W.

December 25, 1963

Dear Friends:

After being towed 700 miles at sea after a fire—your Christmas dinner treat and thoughtful present is really appreciated.

E.B.

At Sea
1.1.64

Dear Friends:

I don't really know how to start this letter as I am still so amazed at receiving a present, through you, from the Seamen's Church Institute of New York. It really meant a great deal to know that people are thinking of you whilst so far away from home. The contents of the Christmas box, too, were ideal for a person such as myself—small things that make life much more simple for one whilst at sea. I am indeed very grateful for the present.

I feel you ought to know a little about myself. I am 18, and hail from Derby in England. At present, I am serving my apprenticeship towards being a navigation officer in the New Zealand Shipping Company. This is my first trip, so you may imagine, Christmas was especially lonely. We are now bound for Sydney and Australian ports laden with paper and pulp. Thence to New Zealand, to load for the U.K., and home after a 10-month trip. And thank you once again for the wonderful Christmas box, and all the thought behind it.

Yours Sincerely,
M.S.M.

Dear Friends:

Received your Christmas package which you sent through the Seamen's Church Institute of N. Y. I thank you with all my heart.

It is a great feeling to know that such devoted fine Americans still exist in our country. It is also a great feeling to know that someone somewhere remembers us on Christmas besides our families.

People like you have made many of us very happy especially when we are so far from home.

In behalf of all the seamen who sail the seas, we wish you a very happy and prosperous new year. May God Bless you.

Respectfully yours,
W.F.

New Orleans, La.
Dec. 29th, 1963

Dear Friends:

We, all of us, cordially wish you a very happy New Year.

Believe us, dear friends, we cannot find the proper words to express our thankfulness for the useful gifts you sent to us for Christmas.

We appreciated your kindness very much indeed, especially for your thinking of us and for your try to console our painful hearts from the suffering of being so far away from our families at Christmas.

No doubt we are really happy to meet friends like you at places away from our home and we extremely long to meet you some day in the near future, to shake hands with you and thank you orally as well.

Please accept our gratitude to you, our wishes and our friendly regards,

The crew members of
MV. Orpheus

Port Chicago, California
Christmas Day 1963

Dear Friends:

I want to say thanks for the Christmas package that was presented to me by the Friends of the Seamen's Church Institute. It took hours and hours of toil to prepare, yet Santa's helpers never see the people that receive these welcome gifts. I hope that in my small way I can transmit the warm glow aboard this vessel to the ones responsible for this noble work: Here's my contribution:

After weeks and weeks of travel,
and endless nights at sea,
If I had but one wish,
I'd see my Christmas tree.

Lady Luck is heartless.
This Christmas far from home
A seamen's life is rugged
But you never hear him moan.

It's nice to be remembered
By friends you never knew.
It makes this Christmas a warm one
Instead of cold and blue.

May you and your staff have a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Thanking you again, I remain,

Truly yours,
R.W.F.—

December 22, 1963
Fleet Post Office
New York, N. Y.
U.S.N.S. Valdez

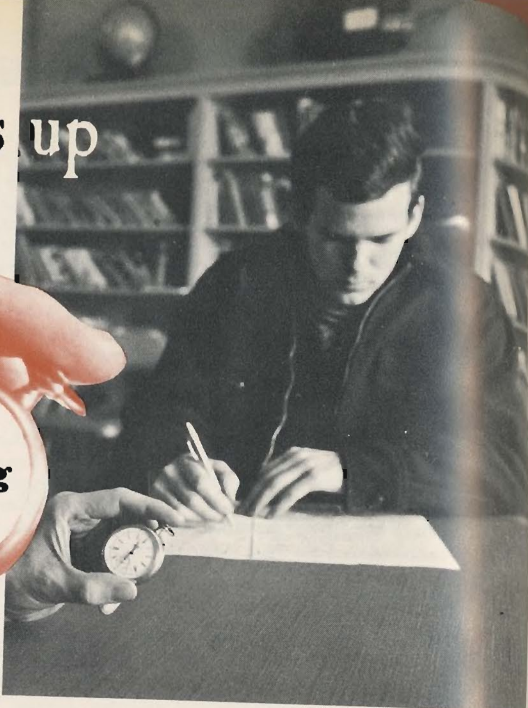
Dear Friends,

As long as memory lives I shall remember the gift that I received from you. The gift was received with joy and appreciation.

I wish to thank everyone who contributed their time and effort to make such a wonderful gift. The memory of this Christmas I shall cherish for many years to come.

Gratefully yours,
L.H.

When a seaman gives up the sea



Few American industries have been involved in as long a pattern of constant change as our merchant marine. The slow ship of the early 19th century was displaced by the swift, majestic clipper ship of the "China Trade" era. While the sails of masted vessels continued to billow across the seas until well after the turn of the present century, sea transportation within the last hundred years has been revolutionized with the rapid succession of screw steamer, turbine steamer, motor ship and, within the last few years, the appearance of the atomic ship.

The one unchanging "ingredient" in the maritime stew is the man who sails the ship. The seafarer remains the eternal "rugged individualist," a nonconformist at heart, a home-spun philosopher who is "at home" with himself only when he is away from home. The poet often voices the landlubber's typical stereotype of the seaman as a happy, carefree soul living a life of high adventure on the seven seas. Alas!, it is the historian and not the poet who is best qualified to describe the seaman's lot in life and all of the harsh realities which have been identified with the seafaring vocation. A century ago hardtack, dried beef, rancid water and bad pay were the "hall-marks" of a seaman's life. With the advent of social legislation in the early part of the present century, some of it initiated by Dr. Archibald Mansfield, pay standards and living conditions have been vastly improved. But the industry continues to be burdened with complex economic problems which defy easy solution.

Today less than ten per cent of American tonnage is carried aboard American ships! Our merchant fleet has declined from 1300 vessels in 1952 to fewer than 900 vessels today. During World War II and the Korean War, many thousands of men identified themselves with our merchant navy. During these periods of emergency a greatly expanded merchant fleet was in dire need of manpower. The men who volunteered to man these ships have become, in terms of their own "self-image," seamen. "Following the sea" has become their vocation—despite the fact that there are not enough employment opportunities available today to provide steady work without long intervals "on the beach." Off on the horizon an "automation technology" threatens to complicate the vocational aspects of an already complex situation.

The individual seaman is caught on the horns of a dilemma. If he is a man over forty years of age he has much to lose in shifting to shore-side work. He will have equity in a pension system as well as a vocational involvement in a "way of life" and it is not an easy matter for him to change the whole structure of his existence. Such a man is likely to remain a seaman and take his chances in an uncertain future in the hope that his union will protect his interests. However, if our seaman is in his twenties or early thirties, he may be asking himself some crucial questions about his future as a seafarer: What are my qualifications in terms of the demands of a coming automated technology? Can I adapt my shipboard skills to shore-side employment opportunities? Is vocational retraining a possibility for me? Do I possess the necessary aptitudes for training in a specific kind of work?

Vocational and psychological testing is often the best starting point in a careful exploration and evaluation of an individual's economic potential. A well-selected battery of tests can provide valuable data which the counselor and the testee can utilize in planning a tentative strategy for the future.

A young mariner will say: "I've been going to sea for five years and I've been lucky enough to have saved a little money. I've always thought I'd like to operate a chicken farm. Do you think I stand a chance of making a 'go' of it?" Others may indicate a preference for work which is closely allied with the mechanical or other skills used aboard ship. There are also those who aspire to "way out" vocational objectives which are in no way related to past employment experience.

Within the last decade a number of psychological and vocational tests have been perfected and validated and have come into common use in our educational and industrial institutions. There are "personal preference schedules" which employ the psychological device of the "forced choice." Such an instrument will yield an extremely helpful "vocational interest profile" of the individual's motivation for a certain kind of work. Other highly validated tests are available which explore the specific areas of individual aptitude. These would include tests of clerical ability, various kinds of mechanical ability, abstract reasoning, art judgment, etc.

The Seamen's Church Institute acknowledges a responsibility to provide a full program of counseling. Personal counseling, a traditional part of the ministry to seamen, so often overlaps with the more technical aspect of vocational counseling. It is within this interrelated area of counseling that the Reverend William Haynsworth, a member of the Institute's clergy staff since 1960, began a program of vocational testing in the fall of 1963. In preparation for this work, Chaplain Haynsworth began graduate study for the doctorate at New York University in 1960. He has received special training in psychological testing and vocational rehabilitation at New York City's Hunter College.

The pilot program includes standard tests which may be individually structured to meet the requirements of the seaman. When a man indicates a highly specialized interest, Chaplain Haynsworth looks for an appropriate validated test which will help the seaman explore his aptitude. Although the program is less than four months old, the availability of vocational testing has assisted in providing direction to several dozen seamen who have been partially or fully tested.

"We have uncovered some very interesting data in a very short while," reports Chaplain Haynsworth. Most of the seafarers achieved a "high average" to "superior" IQ on a test of mental ability. Chaplain Haynsworth observed that this data is indicative of very good potential in terms of vocational adaptation.

While the future may pose many searching questions and problems for the young seaman in 1964, the Seamen's Church Institute is prepared to help each man in his search for identity employing those methods which the science of human relations has placed at the counselor's disposal.

We are a kaleidoscope of the waterfront

A look-in on the world's largest shore home for merchant seamen . . .

NEW LEADER — Climaxing three years of devoted service as Chairman of the Women's Council of SCI, Mrs. Ogden E. Bowman (l.) retires the gavel to Mrs. Robt. A. West who accepted her new responsibility at the Annual Luncheon Meeting of the W.C. on Jan. 29 attended by 137 volunteers. Both women are from Manhattan.

SEAMEN'S CONTRIBUTIONS HELP BOYS IN TROUBLE

Seamen opened their purse strings this past Christmas to help the St. Francis Boys' Homes at Ellsworth and Salina, Kansas, an agency of the Episcopal Diocese of Salina, Kansas serving boys in trouble regardless of race or creed.

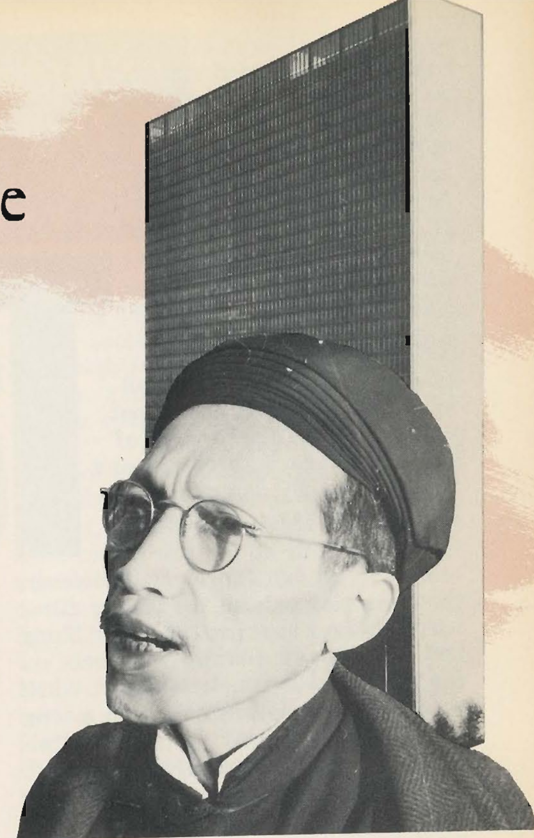
From a collection box placed in SCI's lobby before Christmas and from December chapel collections, the school received $186.45.

In an acknowledgment letter expressing the gratitude on behalf of the boys at St. Francis, its assistant director, The Rev. Kenneth Yates reported that half the Home's annual budget was raised during the few weeks of the Christmas Appeal.

The tradition of seamen's giving at Christmastime has aided a number of worth-while charities over the past years.

OUR GREAT PLEASURE—There was little doubt in the minds of 13 clean-cut teen-agers from St. Mark's Episcopal Church, New Canaan, Connecticut, that SCI was just about the most fascinating place in New York after a Saturday tour of the Institute and Marine Museum with their leader, The Rev. Franklin E. Vilas, Jr., son of SCI's Board President. The group arrived by chartered bus early in the afternoon and had the opportunity to sample, with great relish, the cafeteria food and to witness firsthand the services SCI provides seamen.

Prophet of Peace



Vo Thanh Minh is a man of peace. But his outspoken, one-man crusade to remind the world's leaders of the injustices and atrocities inflicted by man on man got him in hot water recently in frigid New York. His unorthodox methods made newspaper headlines and television newscasts coast to coast.

By living and fasting for 10 days in a car parked outside the United Nations, small, fine-boned Mr. Vo, a Vietnamese exile and former professor of comparative religion there, hoped to persuade the U.N. to take steps to bring about neutrality and unification for his disturbed Viet Nam homeland.

Mr. Vo was subsequently arrested by NY's police over parking regulations. But at his trial the judge gave him a suspended sentence for "good faith."

Still undeterred from his "mission" Mr. Vo met a sympathizer who offered him an unheated cubicle in a cartage warehouse in the SCI neighborhood. In his search for listeners and plain old-fashioned warmth, Professor Vo made friends with a barge captain who invited him to partake of SCI's Christmas dinner. Non-seamen are ordinarily *persona non grata* at the free holiday feast, but when SCI's guards took a second look at wispy, oriental-gowned, sockless Professor Vo and his enthusiastic seaman friend, he was offered our hospitality.

The crusading Vo speaks little English but is fluent in French. He was delighted to find camaraderie among SCI's French-speaking and peace-loving staff. One woman was so inspired by his objectives that she spent her lunch hour typing and mimeographing a lengthy peace presentation in French for the delegates to the United Nations. SCI's Chaplain William Bugler visited the wiry anti-Communist in Vo's makeshift warehouse quarters.

At SCI where practically everybody turns up sooner or later, Vo Thanh Minh had found friends, and perhaps most important, an audience of seamen interested in peace.

SCI's Chaplain Bugler talks with Vo Thanh Minh on Pier 11 near his room at American Boat Cartage.

Tall Tales

"Shaggy Dog"

by Captain Gordon Messegee

Not long ago someone asked me if I could tell a tall tale. I said I couldn't. I'm not a good liar. I've seen a lot of strange things both at sea and ashore but they don't tie up into nice packages as stories should.

There was one experience, however, that has plagued me for a long time. I was there. I saw it. And so did Tuny and George and Johnny who were on the island with me. Invariably, when we get together—and it's been a long time now—we kick it around and always wind up the same way—confused, and questioning whether it really happened. Then each of us goes away with lurking dissatisfaction that there is something in that experience we didn't understand.

It started in 1940 on Johnston Island. Picture four acres of sand eight feet above sea level at high tide in Mid-Pacific, thousands of birds and the Northwest wind blowing steadily day after day. Picture 115 men on that island and no women, no trees, no beer, no movies, no radios that worked worth a darn, no newspapers. Just sun and sand and sea and stars—an island in time drifting nowhere.

In a place like that one resorts to various hobbies. Our work of diving, blasting and sounding for that advanced Navy hop-off base kept us busy but not busy enough. There was too much leisure. The ten of us *Haoles*—the rest were Polynesian — devised games and jokes and gave each other nicknames. One of our number whose real name was Joseph Evington Mitchell, we nicknamed Ulysses. With his piercing blue eyes, his tattered trousers, and his stringy long beard, he resembled the ancient King of Ithaca who, after ten years of wandering, returned home to find the only thing that remembered him was his old dog sleeping in the warmth of a dung heap.

I don't remember just when Ulysses began to acquire "Mitch." It was probably after the third month. One day Ulysses walked through our barracks calling an imaginary dog named "Mitch." It was a good practical joke and we went along with it; soon the Polynesians picked it up and soon Mitch became the island mascot. Ulysses was meticulously realistic in his handling of Mitch. He took him for a walk around the island's perimeter twice a day. Sometimes, shrieking in a high-pitched voice, he would stop Mitch from chasing birds. "Mitch! Stop, Mitch!" he would yell. Sometimes he would spank Mitch, and there were little tears in his eyes when he did it. Joseph Evington Mitchell was a convincing actor. Every Saturday he bathed Mitch with the cherished contents of the one bucket of fresh water each man was allowed a day. "Mitch is so white and his hair so long I have a hard time keeping him clean," he would say.

The game of playing and taking care of Mitch became a delightful obsession. Before long not one person on the island would have dared say "imaginary" in relation to Mitch. I remember one day when Mitch, chasing a Gooney bird too far out, was caught in the outgoing tide. At least fifty of us, under Ulysses' direction, worked for an hour, using three boats and a long rope, to cordon off an area around Mitch and then coax him towards shore into Ulysses' waiting arms. I think Ulysses was the happiest man on the island that evening when he got Mitch back. All of us felt good. It was great sport and, strangely, we felt we accomplished something real.

Then the day came when Ulysses' contract was up and he left the island. He took Mitch with him. To the astonishment of the officers and crew of the Navy ship that was to take Ulysses back, we played it to the hilt—all 115 of us. Normally, a ship's sailing was a matter-of-fact thing. But this time the Polynesians, laughing and shouting, swam out to the ship or paddled out on dunnage to say goodbye a hundred times to Ulysses and Mitch. Each man patted Mitch's head. Some shook his paw. Others gave him a friendly hug. As the ship pulled away, we all sung *Aloha Oie*. It seemed as if you could hear a dog's shrill barking above the words of the song.

The island never seemed the same after that. Ulysses was gone. What was worse . . . Mitch was gone. No one had the heart to try bringing him back. I was not unhappy when a month later my contract was up and I returned to Honolulu.

Not back in Honolulu an hour, I saw Ulysses coming down Hotel Street. He was shaven, his hair was cut. He wore a Hawaiian sport shirt and neat gray slacks. But I recognized him. We rushed to greet each other. Then Ulysses said, "Look at Mitch. Doesn't he look good? I had him trimmed. Even had his nails done in that fancy poodle shop!" For a second I hesitated. But why not carry on this crazy farce? It was all in good fun. Like everyone else I had truly missed Mitch. I reached down and played with Mitch's right ear like I used to do on the island. I said, "Down Mitch, down," as he began to jump on my clean trousers.

"If you haven't anything to do today," said Ulysses, "How about spending the day with Mitch and me?" I agreed, and I shall never forget that day. First we started with a couple of drinks and Ulysses asked the bartender if he would mind if Mitch came into the bar. The bartender—a *Happa Haole*—looked quizzical. Then with an innate adeptness said, "O.K. *Malahini*. Let me know if you need a saucer for his beer!" Shortly after, a soldier, unaccustomed to the dim light entered the bar and stepped on Mitch's tail. It took the bartender and me fifteen minutes to keep infuriated Ulysses from slugging the soldier. Leaving the bar, Mitch spotted a cat and was off in a mad dash followed by Ulysses and myself in and out of alleys and across streets with Ulysses yelling, "Mitch! Mitch!" We finally captured Mitch at the foot of the sprawling banyan tree near the Royal Hawaiian Museum.

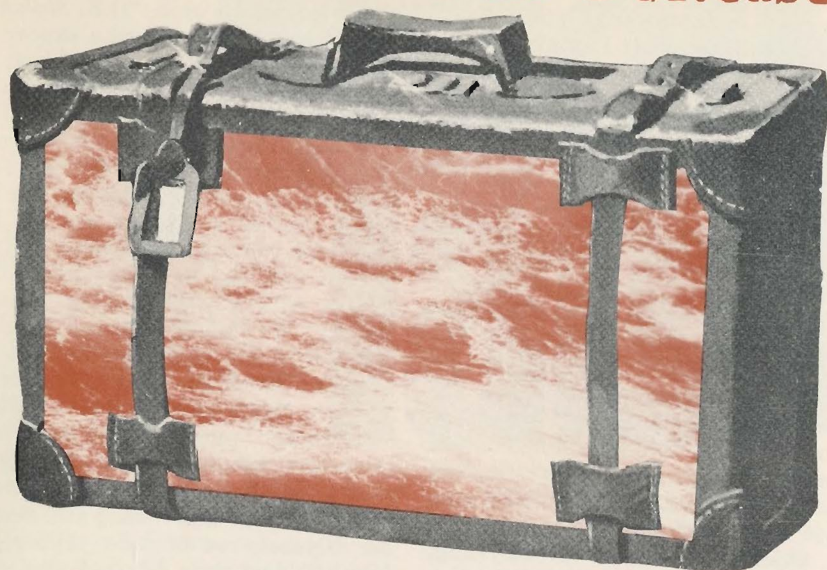
Next, Mitch encountered a cute female cocker spaniel on the leash of an attractive blonde. Mitch, having recently spent six months on a desert island, became amorous. I still remember Ulysses, red of face, yelling, "No Mitch!" And then Ulysses apologized to the young lady. She went off in a huff. After that, Ulysses decided that it was safer to continue our walk by bus. To the mounting anger of the bus driver, Ulysses held the bus up at least three minutes while he coaxed and pleaded with Mitch to enter the bus's front door. Mitch had never ridden in a bus before. Besides, as Ulysses explained once we got settled, "Mitch isn't afraid of buses. It's only that he found that fire hydrant attractive. You know dogs!"

For the first time I began to wonder how much I knew about this dog. Or about Ulysses for that matter. It was inconceivable that Ulysses was serious about this. Or was he? For a second I was tempted to broach the untouchable subject and to say something like, "Look Ulysses, it's been a good joke, but maybe we have carried it too far . . ." But I couldn't bring myself to it. Mitch and Ulysses—and I couldn't seem to separate them in my mind—had carried us through on that island, had held up our entire morale. Hadn't Mitch meant almost as much to me as he had to Ulysses?

The day ended. I didn't see Ulysses for a week. When I did he was the saddest man I've ever seen. "I've lost Mitch," he said, "I let him out of the

Continued on page 23

The Sea's In His Suitcase



No one enjoys such intimacy with the sea in its many moods as the seaman who goes down to it to ply his trade. When he retires from it he has left only memories of its temper and tempest, and perhaps a stockpile of "tall tales" about extremes in its behavior. It is a lucky seaman who retires from the sea with a portfolio of 10,000 photographs of it taken during 40 years of seagoing, to prove those stories of 50-foot waves and those "monster storms."

When 66-year-old SCI resident Alfred Larsson, seaman and photographer par excellence, was thinning his store of photos this month, it occurred to him that he might share his celluloid victories with the LOOKOUT readers, and he visited the Public Relations Department with dozens of carefully-wrapped manila envelopes into which were crammed his treasures.

What Larsson told about his photographs, using florid English and a heavy Norwegian accent, was fascinating. Among his pictures are some which experts rank with the greatest sea-action candids of all time. Several so judged are reproduced here. One of these photos won for him the first prize in an international contest conducted by a British magazine. One above, taken from the deck of the tanker "Trimountain" in 1925 during a North Atlantic gale, was sold to the famous Ewing Galloway collection, and other Larsson photos took honors in a contest run by the Guild of New York Photographic Dealers.

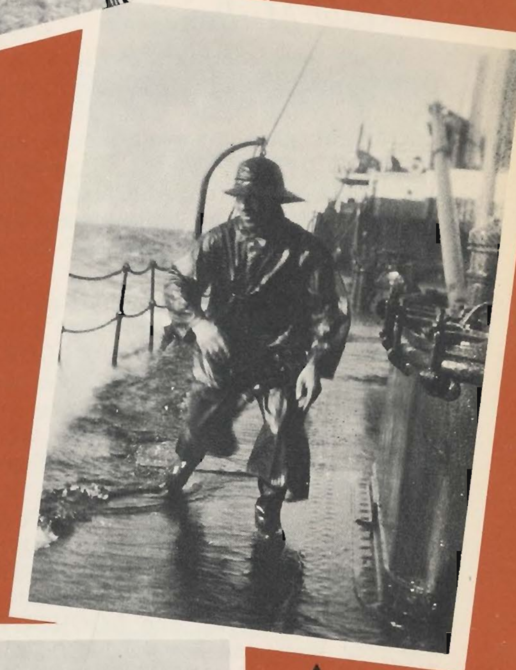
Retired now with his National Maritime Union pension, Larsson finds the SCI neighborhood still the most photogenic and nostalgic in the city, and he's still taking pictures at every opportunity.

"Everything about a seaman's life has changed," he observes, "except the sea." And the observation comes from one who went to the sea in an era of sailships (1914) and who has shipped through two world wars under the flags of five nations. Ex-seaman Larsson has described one of his encounters with rough seas in the North Atlantic in a tale he calls simply "Sea Story" which LOOKOUT will reprint in its original vernacular this summer.

His advice to seamen and camera bugs who want to get photographs of storms at sea: "Just keep an eye out for the big waves and one foot wrapped around the searail."

◀ Taken aboard American oiltanker "Trimountain" in 1925.

▲ Museum Curator Herbert Jennings and Chaplain Huntley (r) accept Alfred Larsson's gift.



▲ "There is the danger of losing the camera and also of having myself thrown overboard by the big waves."

◀ "To get this photograph I was on deck for about four hours watching and waiting for the big waves to come over the decks."

seaman of the month

▶ *Gale Muller*

If one were casting a movie with a role for a determined, competent, purposeful young man, Gale Muller — forthright gaze, firm-set mouth and strong chin—would be one's type-casting dream come true. And just to disprove that old adage "appearances are deceiving," Gale is exactly those things.

A Second Classman (junior) at the New York Maritime College at Fort Schuyler, Gale walked into the LOOKOUT office one day seeking stories reflecting the day-to-day life of the ordinary merchant seaman. Gale, who is the marine editor of the college newspaper, "The Porthole," felt the cadets would get a refreshing and realistic view of life at sea from the writings of real sea-going A.B.'s. In typical Gale fashion action immediately followed thought, the LOOKOUT was contacted, and the stories found.

Graduation will bring true for Gale the dream of a lifetime—he has always, always wanted to go to sea. As a youngster he built ship models and collected deck plans, and the fascination of ships and the sea is warp and woof of his earliest childhood memories.

His parents aren't standing in the way of a sea-faring career for Gale—in fact his mother is a "sea buff" of long standing. Though she's from land-locked Frankfurt, Germany, Mrs. Muller loves the things of the sea, and as Gale puts it, "She knows more about ships than I'll ever know."

He got a taste of the sea life on the Maritime College cruises aboard the *Empire State IV*, an old MSTS ship which serves as summer training ship for the Academy. A ten-day trick on a Moore-McCormick ship as a student observer provided more valuable sea experience. (When his mother heard about the trip she wanted to sign up too, but Gale thought that was too much of a good thing.) The student-observer trip is new at the Maritime College, and Gale was instrumental in setting it up.

While he's preparing for that long-awaited career at sea, Gale is busy with a hundred other plans, projects and activities in and out of the Academy. He has been in religious affairs, starting as altar boy in Emmaus Lutheran Church, Ridgewood, Queens, and later in the Protestant Club at Fort Schuyler. Besides being marine editor of "The Porthole," he's treasurer of the International Relations Club (a discussion group) at the Academy, and for three months has been president of the Propeller Club. He's bursting with ideas for the future activities of the latter which is the largest and most active student "port" in the country.

Gale has the sea in his future, but if marriage should enter the picture he would give it up and turn to a shoreside job in the maritime industry. He feels that the responsibilities of the head of a family cannot be fulfilled on an absentee basis, and since Gale takes responsibility seriously he'd give up his longed-for career. But he obviously hopes The Girl doesn't come along *too* soon!

TALL TALES: *"Shaggy Dog"*
Continued from page 19

room two nights ago and he didn't come back." There were tears in those clear blue eyes, just like on the island.

I had to do it then. I had to make it blunt no matter how much it hurt Ulysses or myself. "Look Ulysses," I said, "Knock if off. You know there is no dog. It's gone. Finished! The island is through. You're back in civilization now!"

"Civilization . . .?" Ulysses said. The sound was drawn out. It was more of a moan than anything. His face seemed empty. He just turned and walked away. I hated myself for doing it. I felt like a heel.

That evening, against my every practical inclination, I found myself looking through the classified animal ads. I don't know what I really expected to see. I possibly hoped that I might find something like: "FOUND . . . WHITE DOG WITH LONG HAIR, ANSWERS TO NAME MITCH." I still remember that I looked at the "Found" ads *first*. Then I looked at the "Lost." It was there: "LOST, LARGE WHITE LONG-HAIRED DOG CALLED MITCH. REWARD."

So Mitch *was* real to Ulysses. Real as anything a man can believe in. And I had tried to destroy that reality. If only I could have taken back my words. I felt like rushing out on the streets yelling "Mitch! Mitch!" I couldn't help thinking to myself that if I saw that dog again I'd give it a welcome like I had never given any dog before.

A week later I had my chance. I was sailing back to the Mainland. Some of us sailors were standing by to haul up the gangway, when who appeared to say "Goodbye" but Ulysses, beaming. Mitch was with him. I knew it. I raced down the gangway and literally embraced Mitch, petting and fondling him and playing with his ear the way he liked. "Mitch," I said, "You're back!" I think my eyes had tears then.

And then Ulysses said, "You know, Gordon, I can never understand you. I never knew you liked Mitch that much."

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The pulpit is ever this earth's foremost part; all the rest comes in its rear; the pulpit leads the world. From thence it is the storm of God's quick wrath is first descried, and the bow must bear the earliest brunt. From thence it is the God of breezes fair or foul is first invoked for favorable winds. Yes, the world is a ship on its passage out, and not a voyage complete; and the pulpit is its prow.

Melville, *Moby-Dick, Chapter VIII*

Lithograph, *"Sabbath Scene on Ship-Board"*

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