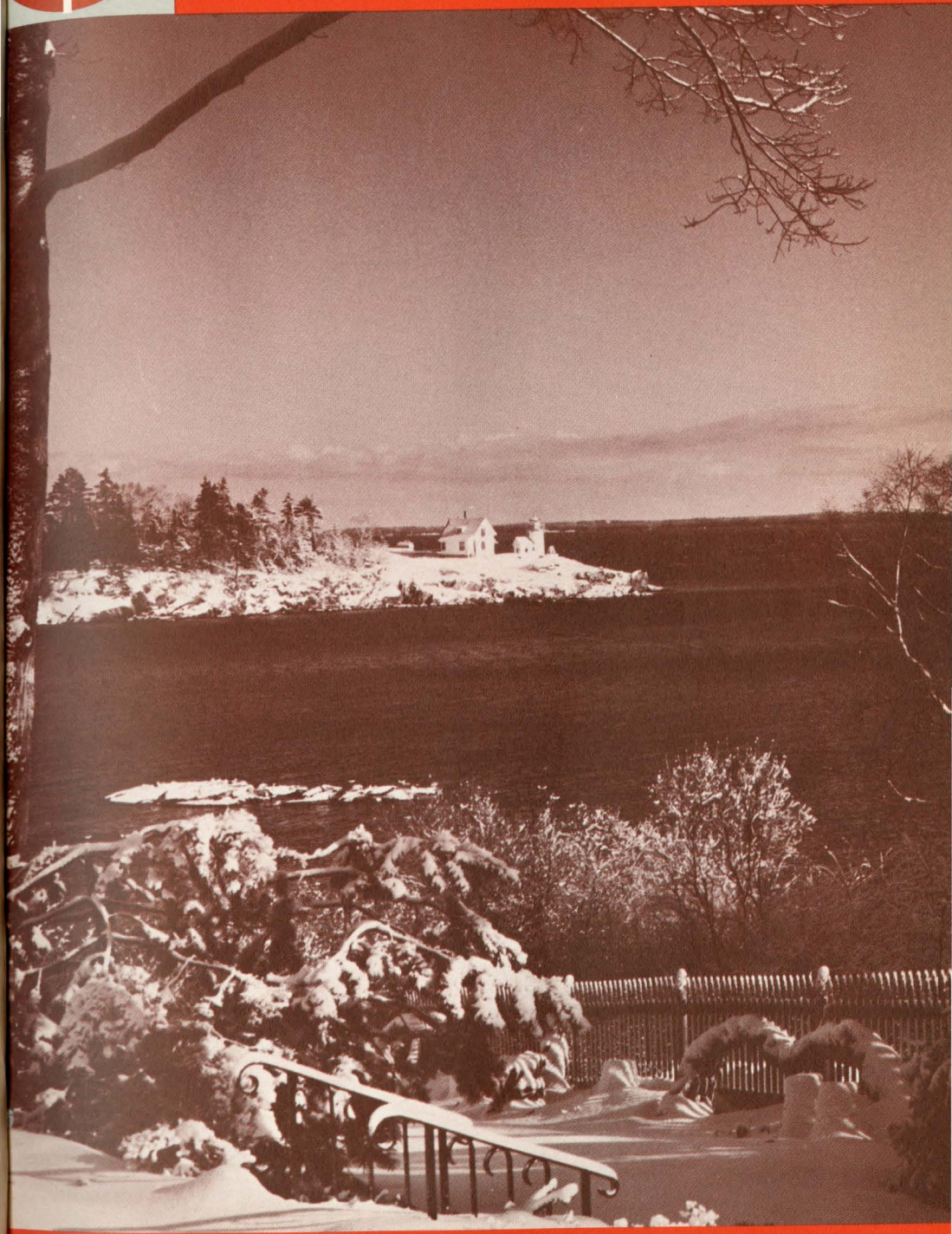
the LOOKOUT

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK



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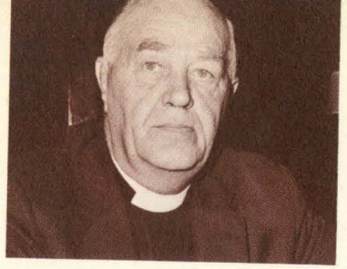

A Holiday Message

from the Director

This year we celebrate our first Christmas at 15 State Street and we greet you with thanksgiving and great joy. Although all the "bugs" have not been ironed out, the new building is proving itself up to our fondest expectations. Great credit must go to our entire staff for making our move to the new building a remarkably smooth transition with an absolute minimum of interruption. No essential services were suspended.

We are deeply grateful to all of you for your help and support during this year. It, too, was uninterrupted and all our programs are stronger. This year again over ten thousand Christmas boxes will find their way into the hands of seamen on Christmas Day. Their joy will be the more full because it was the result of your love and concern.

So we wish for you a blessed Christmas and bespeak your continuing support in the new year.

THE REV. JOHN M. MULLIGAN
Director
SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

the LOOKOUT

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SEAMEN'S CHURCH
INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK
15 State Street, New York, N.Y. 10004
Telephone: 269-2710

The Right Reverend
Horace W. B. Donegan, D.D., D.C.L.
Honorary President
Franklin E. Vilas
President

The Rev. John M. Mulligan, D.D.
Director
Harold G. Petersen
Editor

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COVER: A light fall of snow on a section of New England coast softens the rugged terrain. Photo by Bud Yallalee, Portland, Maine.

Deep regard and concern for seamen – wherever they are in the world – has been the pervading characteristic of the Institute since its founding in 1834. A shimmering facet of this concern is here described.

Cartoon sketch by seaman sent by him to Women's Council.

THE CHRISTMAS BOX

Late in October, the headquarters of the Women's Council on the third floor of the Institute building became the hub of feverish activity as Council volunteers assembled and began to pack the more than ten thousand Christmas gift boxes for seamen obliged to be at sea on Christmas day.

The converted room in the old South Street building where this annual event began years ago was known as the "Christmas Room." Another room at State Street, especially designed and fitted for storage of wool, finished articles, etc., as well as for operational efficiency, is likely to become known as, again . . . the "Christmas Room." It is being used for the first time this season.

The logistics of the packing, wrapping and distribution of the packages are as carefully planned as any military operation. Indeed, and parenthetically, the custom of the SCI Yule packages traces to World War I when Council members began — in an organized manner — knitting of watch caps, scarves, sweaters, and other woolen pieces for seamen obliged to stand the long cold watches on the war-time North Atlantic convoys.

But women connected with the Institute have knitted for seamen — since way back when.

The packing and wrapping of the Christmas boxes is done by women volunteers, principally, although some men participate, and is accomplished in a systemized fashion found most expeditious through long years of past experience.

As the packed units accumulate, quantities of them are loaded on SCI station-wagons and transported during November and December to ship-side by Institute ship visitors — to the cus-

tody of one of the ship's officers who stores them away until Christmas for distribution to the ship's crew.

For months following Christmas, thousands of thank-you letters and notes from these seamen flow into Council headquarters, all expressing gratitude for the gifts, some letters particularly touching and all heart-warming.

Some men — particularly those without families — have said the SCI package was the *only* holiday gift they received. Still others have written — incredibly — that the gift pack was the *first* Christmas gift they ever received *in their lives!* The correspondence on occasion has reduced the Council staff to the verge of tears.

Each package contains, in addition to a hand-knitted piece, a number of other items useful to a seaman—comb, writing materials, clothes brush, candy, sewing kit, etc.

But it is the knitted articles which really ring the Christmas bell with the seafarers. Some crewmen write to tell they opened their package while the ship was in the tropics — or Vietnam — but hasten to say the warm woolen articles will be appreciated as the ship plows northward.

a. A section of wool storage bins.

b. Incoming knitted garments are inspected before being packed.

c. Cupboards stacked with clothes brushes which will be included within seamen's gift packages.

Records on over 3,500 knitters and the garments produced by them are kept in this file, being examined by Mrs. Constance West.

Because the knitted articles are so popular, the Council has enlisted a great many knitters throughout the country to make them. Most are women — typically members of church auxiliaries — but some outstanding knitters are men.

There is, for example, Denton Hoffman, retired cab driver of Norfolk, Nebraska, who knits scarves of such perfection that the Women's Council sends them as samples to church knitting groups for guidance in technique; he also knits sweaters and watch-caps for SCI.

Mr. Hoffman first began knitting while a young boy during World War I when the Red Cross sponsored knitting among the school children of the time; the simple articles thus produced were distributed to the "doughboys." The Norfolk man did not resume knitting until his retirement a few years ago and at the urging of his sister, Louva Hoffman.

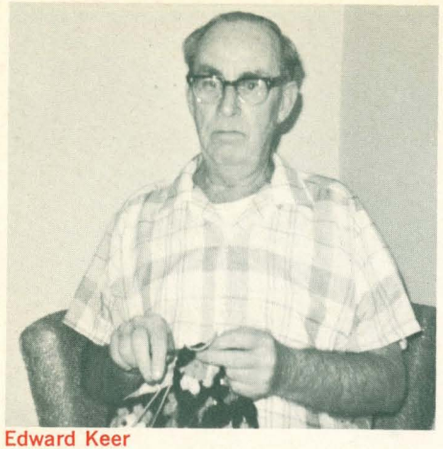
Then there is William H. B. Haines, of Asheville, N. C., who has been knitting sweaters and caps for SCI. In a recent letter he said, "Our knitting for SCI is actually a joint venture with my aunt, Miss Minnie E. Bower.

"My profession is forestry, and I am in charge of data processing of the U. S. Forest Survey at the Southeastern Forest Experiment Station here in Asheville.

"Our former rector always wanted socks, and I still send him a pair every Christmas to Columbus, Miss. Last year I sent him a pair of bright red ones, and said he could only wear them on Whitsunday or Saints Days. I think I'll make him a pair of purple ones this Christmas, and say he can only wear them during Advent or Lent!"

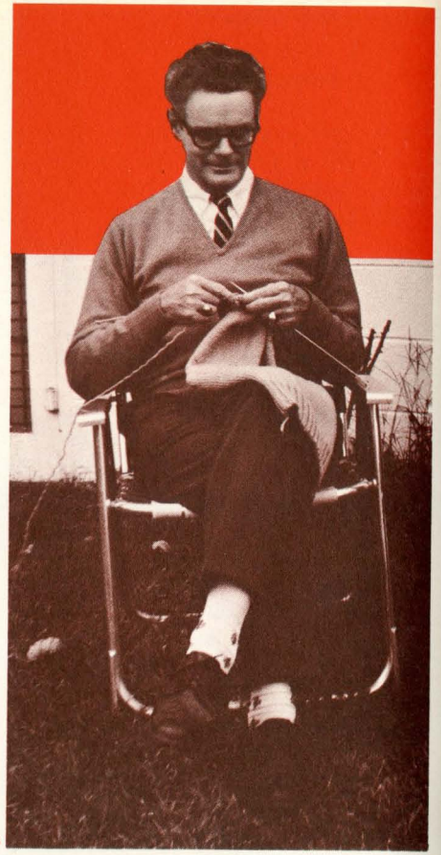
A sock-knitter specialist is Robert

Seamen model their watch-caps and scarves aboard their vessel on Christmas Day — while their ship is passing through the Tropics.



Edward Keer

Denton Hoffman



William H. B. Haines

Seybolt of Staten Island, formerly a superintendent at Todd shipyards. Mrs. Seybolt is a staff member of the Council.

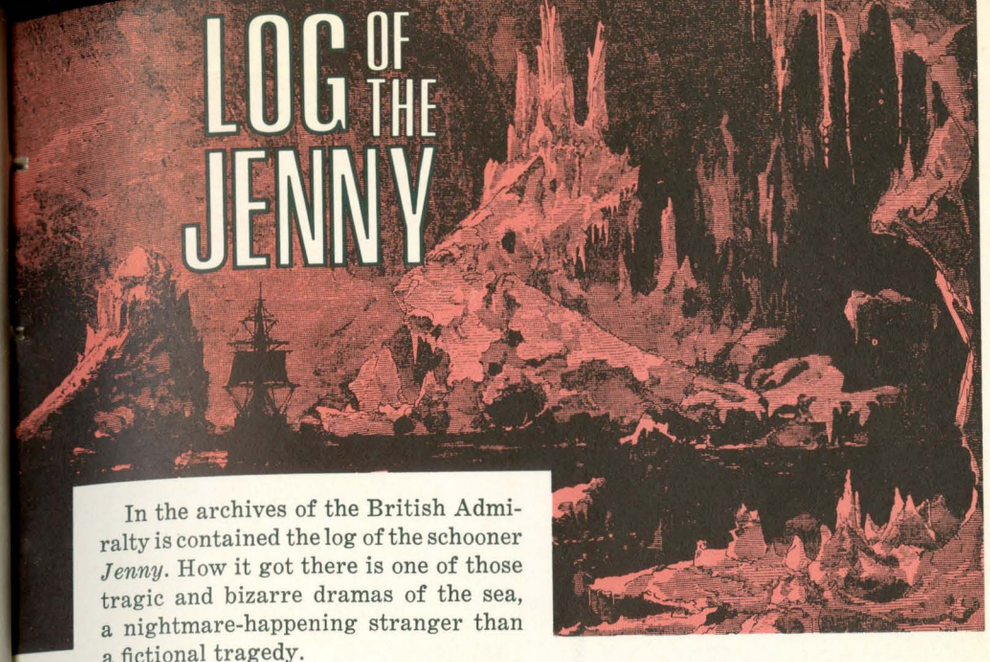
The late Morris Rapaport, a retired clothing designer, is well-remembered at the Council for both his wit and fine scarves; blind, he turned out 385 scarves for the Institute from 1958 until his death recently at the age of 87.

The Rev. Paul D. Bowden, for many years rector of St. James Episcopal Church, Warrenton, Va., produced exceptionally well done woolen gloves — 119 pairs of them after his retirement. He was most helpful to the Council staff in suggesting more explicit directions — and corrections — in knitting instructions.

Edward Keer of Staten Island is an ex-Navy man and a retired longshoreman. For over 20 years he crocheted fine lace doilies (when the front door bell rang he would quickly hide them). He lost a thumb several years ago in an accident on the piers and not able to do fine crocheting any longer, switched to working with wool and he has been crocheting beautiful articles for the Council ever since.

Some men knitters whose wives knit for the Council project, turn over their output to their wives for shipment to SCI.

The Council is most grateful for all the help it can get. Although there are at least 3,500 knitters throughout the country contributing their handiwork to the project, according to Mrs. Constance West, Council director, the demand for hand-knit articles is so great that even more knitters are wanted.



LOG OF THE JENNY

by Dane John

In the archives of the British Admiralty is contained the log of the schooner *Jenny*. How it got there is one of those tragic and bizarre dramas of the sea, a nightmare-happening stranger than a fictional tragedy.

On September 22nd, 1860, a whaling ship, the *Hope*, was sailing among dangerous ice floes near Tierra del Fuego islands between the southernmost tip of South America and the Antarctic, when she came upon a huge, tall ice mass upon a floe.

As Captain Brighton of the *Hope* ordered the crew to heave to, he and the other men on deck were astonished to see the walls of the ice mass begin to crack and split open, so that large pieces broke off and floated away. The watchers on the *Hope* could see an indistinct shape contained inside the mass.

Then a huge wall of ice crashed into the sea. In silent awe they beheld a schooner locked in the ice.

Quickly the captain ordered a boat to be lowered and he, with some of his crew, rowed to the mystery ship. As they drew close they could see she was named the *Jenny*. On climbing aboard they found a strange scene of death.

In the cabins were eight men, a woman and a dog, sitting or lying in the same positions as when they had died, and all perfectly preserved by the refrigerating ice.

In his cabin on the *Jenny* her captain was found still sitting in his chair. In his hand he clutched a quill pen and on his writing table in front of him lay the open log of his vessel. In scratchy letters he had painfully written the last entry dated May 4th, 1823. "No food for 71 days. I am the only one left alive."

Now, thirty-seven years later, reading back through the log, the captain of the *Hope* pieced together the tragic story. The *Jenny* had become trapped in the ice January 17, 1823 and gradually locked in. As timed passed, the ice had built up on and around the Jenny until she was encased in it. Her log showed her last place of call had been Lima, Peru.

The food on board had lasted five weeks and then, one by one, for the next ten weeks, the men and woman had starved to death. They were left where they died, frozen like statues, because those remaining were too weak to move them.

For over 100 days the *Jenny's* captain had recorded their fate.

The captain of the *Hope* and his men gathered together some of the horror ship's equipment; the vital log book

(Continued on page 11)

MONKEY-SHINES FOR CHRISTMAS

by George R. Berens

Homeward bound from Bombay, the *S.S. Eelbeck* plodded through the sparkling waters of the Arabian Sea on Christmas Day. On the after deck there was a lot of chattering and shrill clamor from the four hundred monkeys who comprised a portion of the ship's cargo.

As such they were under the care of the chief mate, for it was one of his principal duties to see that all cargo is delivered in good order.

The mate had assigned me to take care of the monkeys, no doubt, because he knew that I liked animals. Or perhaps it was, as the boatswain claimed, because I was the most useless member of the deck force as far as seamanship was concerned.

Care of the monkeys was aimed at keeping them alive on the long run to New York, and consisted of feeding and watering them, and cleaning out the cages and hatch tops on which they were stowed. Food consisted of "grams" — roasted barley — of which we had many sacks aboard supplied by the shipper.

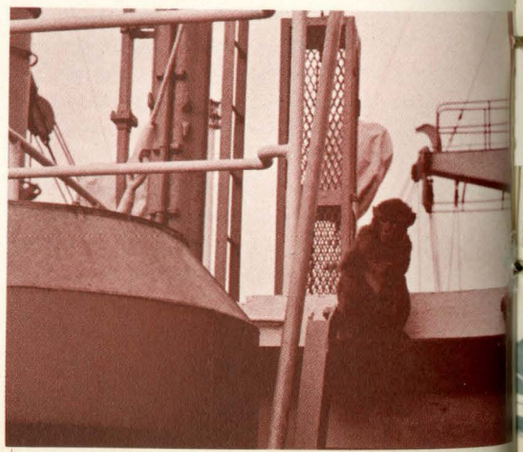
They were nice monkeys, but they had atrocious feeding habits. When the containers in the cages were filled with grams there would be a wild stampede, and the monkeys scrambled and fought while they grabbed handfuls which they stuffed into pouches in their jaws. This they kept up until either their pouches were crammed full or the food containers were empty.

Taking care of the monkeys occupied a couple of hours every morning. I did not mind it at all; in fact, enjoyed it. But what I did object to was the sobriquet applied to me by my shipmates, and used by them with galling frequency — "Monkey's Flunky".

On this Christmas morning several of the crewmen stood about on the after deck watching me go about my duties; all but essential work had been suspended for the holiday. Many remarks were passed, and the despised nickname was often repeated, but the hullabaloo of the greedy primates drowned out most of the idlers' banter.

There were several baby monkeys scattered throughout the cages, and I had noticed that at feeding time these little ones, lacking size and strength to compete with their elders, went almost entirely without food.

Moved, no doubt, by the spirit of the day, I decided to do something about this: that was to transfer the babies to



wildly while many of my shipmates on the deck below shouted words of advice to the "Monkey's Flunky." Suddenly there was a startling roar from

p the Institute bring the warmth of Christmas
hearts of merchant seamen of all nations.

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bottles and glasses and an open box of cigars, for our skipper was a genial old gentleman, and he had just been about to call his officers to join him for a pre-Christmas-dinner appetizer when a couple of the monkeys had invaded his private domain.

Now the bottles and glasses rolled on

MONKEY-SHINES

Christmas can be lonely
when you're far from home—

They were nice monkeys, but they had atrocious feeding habits. When the containers in the cages were filled with grams there would be a wild stampede, and the monkeys scrambled and fought while they grabbed handfuls which they stuffed into pouches in their jaws. This they kept up until

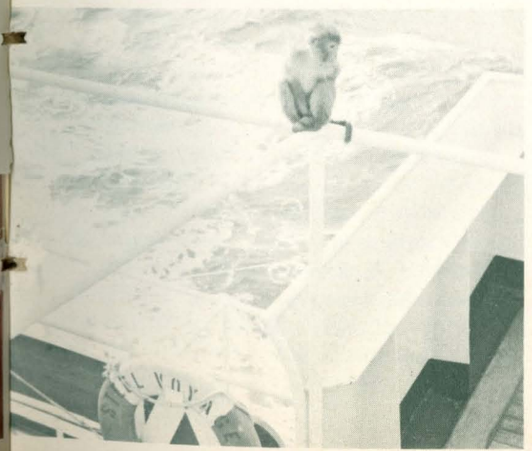
cages emptied of adults so that the young monkeys would have a fair chance of getting their share of grams. This entailed fast handling of the squalling, squirming animals.

This had not progressed far before several of the lounging seamen jumped in to help, for it looked like fun, and my shipmates were in a jubilant mood as befitted the day.

And it was fun, too. It is doubtful if the monkeys made more noise, or produced more action than our crewmen.

In the melee about fifteen monkeys got loose, but we managed to segregate the babies. Then I got busy in an attempt to recapture the escaped animals. Most of them had disappeared forward. I found several climbing the foremast stays so I went up the mast with the idea of recapturing them. This, of course, was unsuccessful for they were much better and faster climbers than their pursuer.

On the fore crosstrees I sat and pondered how I could recover the items of cargo that were now scampering about



wildly while many of my shipmates on the deck below shouted words of advice to the "Monkey's Flunky." Suddenly there was a startling roar from amidships and I saw our captain gesticulating wildly. Finally his words became intelligible to me aloft, "Get down here, you. Get down. I want to speak to you!"

Slowly I made my way down the mast and walked aft to where the captain, now joined by the chief mate, awaited me.

"What the devil did you let those monkeys loose for?", roared the captain. "Come in here and take a look at *this*."

I followed the captain into the passageway that led to the officer's saloon.

It was getting close to noon-time when the traditional Christmas dinner would be served, and the tables had all been set up. Besides the usual bottles of relish, catsup, and pickles, sugar shakers and platters of bread and rolls, there were bowls of nuts and fruit. Above, the Christmas decorations were festooned from the overhead; green wreaths hung on the bulkheads and a miniature Christmas tree adorned the sideboard.

At least, that is how it must have been before some of the loose monkeys got there.

Now the elegant saloon looked as if a tornado had hit it. The chief steward and a couple of messmen were trying to clear things up. They glared hostilely at me.

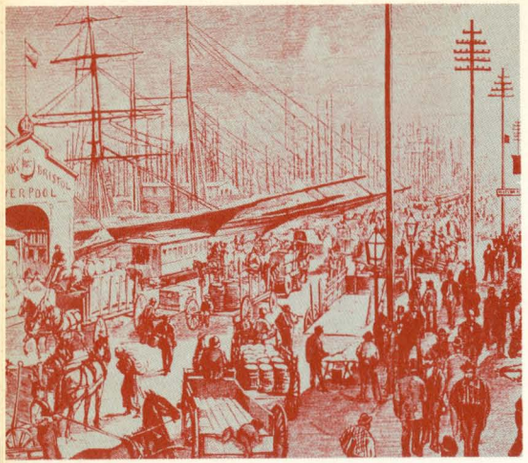
"You see what your damned monkeys have done," barked the Old Man. "Now come up *here*."

I followed him up to his quarters. A table had been set up in his cabin with bottles and glasses and an open box of cigars, for our skipper was a genial old gentleman, and he had just been about to call his officers to join him for a pre-Christmas-dinner appetizer when a couple of the monkeys had invaded his private domain.

Now the bottles and glasses rolled on

SAGA OF THE CUTTY SARK

by E. R. Yarham



The two ships whose names are household words in Britain are the *Victory*, most celebrated of fighting ships, and the *Cutty Sark*, the swiftest and loveliest of the tea clippers, which made her name first on the run from the China seas and then on the Australian run with bales of wool. Today this, the last and most historic of the tea clippers, lies in her berth on the Thames, "the sailor home from the sea."

The *Cutty Sark* was opened to the public by Queen Elizabeth in June, 1957. It was a great day for the Duke of Edinburgh, too, for it was he who initiated the plans to preserve the *Cutty Sark*, the most splendid ship of "The Golden Age of Sail," as a national monument and memorial to the Merchant Navy.

The *Cutty Sark* was never a big ship even by the standards of her age. She was 212 ft. long by 36 ft. in the beam, with a depth of 21 ft. Her sail plan gave her a plain sail area of 32,000 square feet and her maximum speed was something over 17 knots.

Her pace in favorable winds was legendary, and her last and most famous master, Captain Woodget — a religious man — always kept a box of tracts handy in the poop, and he scattered some overboard every time the *Cutty Sark* passed a steamer, as he was sure her crew were blaspheming. She not only challenged but set a lively pace for the "new-fangled" steamships.

On a passage to Australia in 1888 she outpaced the crack P. & O. mail steamer *Britannia*, a beautiful ship, and beat it into Sydney by an hour. The steamer's log recorded "Sailing ship overhauled and passed us," although she had increased speed from 14½ to 16 knots. The *Cutty Sark* consistently beat her rivals in the wool fleet by weeks as often as days, and there was something in her crew's boast that "nothing ever passed her, not even an albatross."

Her first master, Captain Moodie, wrote: "I have measured the *Cutty Sark*, both by patent log and common log, going 17 and 17½ knots, but the highest distance for the 24 hours on several occasions was 363 miles."

Once she did 2,164 miles in six days and another time 3,457 miles in 11 days. She was not at her best in light winds, where her great rival the *Thermopylae* scored, but with a strong hard wind on her quarter or sailing to windward the *Cutty Sark* was unbeatable.

These two splendid vessels were probably the fastest ships that ever moved through the water under the power of sail alone.

The *Cutty Sark* was built on the Clyde.

Several interesting men became her masters during her time at sea, including Captain Richard Woodget. He was a remarkable personality — eccentric, deeply devout, and a magnificent and intrepid master in sail.

That he bred prize collies on board his clipper, roller skated round the 'tween deck and rode a bicycle round both 'tween and main decks is evidence of his eccentricity. He held prayer meetings on the poop while the crew were longing for the order to shorten sail in a gale.

In the Australian wool trade the *Cutty Sark* made an average of passages never surpassed by any vessel under sail. In the end, inevitably, the steamers beat her, and in 1895 she was sold to the Portuguese, having been launched in 1869. Narrowly escaping destruction in the West Indies, she was salved and continued tramping, visiting Britain several times in World War I. But in 1916 she was towed into Cape Town, dismasted and re-rigged. Yet shorn of her glory as she was, six years later her arrival in London created much interest.

Captain Wilfred Dowman who, like most other seamen of his day, had been passed at sea by the *Cutty Sark*, and had never forgotten her — bought her, and for some years she was laid up at Falmouth. Then, in 1938, with her original rig restored and looking youthful in her pride, the grand old ship came round from Falsmouth into London River from whence she had sailed on her maiden voyage to the China seas.

Log Of The Jenny

(Continued from page 7)

and other items; then rowed back to their own ship. They decided not to bury the dead at sea but to leave them aboard the *Jenny*, still together in death.

But next morning the sea did claim them. Gradually the *Jenny*, released from the ice, broke up and sank beneath the waves, watched by the *Hope's* officers and crew who stood at attention, in respect, at the rail as she disappeared.

On arriving back in England the *Hope's* captain reported the facts of his discovery to the British Admiralty and gave them the log as proof.

Monkey-Shines for Christmas

(Continued from page 9)

the deck, and cigars were scattered all around together with many other small articles.

"Well, what have you got to say for yourself, young man?" snapped the captain, glaring redfaced at me. I have said that he was a genial old gentleman. And so he was — under normal circumstances. But circumstances now were not quite normal.

I am afraid that, despite his evident displeasure, I was smiling a little. After all, the monkeys *had* done a job! Also I had a slight inkling of what the result of their depredations might be.

"Haven't you got anything to say?" he shouted.

"N-n-no, Sir."

"Mister Mate," bellowed the Old Man. "Take this idiot off the job of looking after those damned monkeys and put somebody with some brains to do it."

A half-hour later I was seated contentedly in the crew's messroom with a plate heaped with roast turkey and all the fixings in front of me. It was a great day, a very merry Christmas for me.

My shipmates could no longer refer to me as the "Monkey's Flunky."

ANCHORS AWAY

by Alan P. Major

An anchor is described simply as an implement for mooring ships and other vessels at rest when floating in the water. The word comes from the Greek *agkon* or *ankos*, a bend.

In ancient times men moored their boats by dropping large stones over the side attached to lengths of rope. Then crooked pieces of wood, such as a hooked tree branch, were used, weighted with stones to prevent this floating back to the surface. Following this came similar shaped pieces of wood weighted with a metal covering for the same reason; the lower end was carved into a shape like a fluke of present day anchors.

The Greeks made the first anchors of iron and so could claim the title of being the first anchorsmiths. Once the basic design of the anchor was devised and proved with use it has changed very little through the centuries until recent times when bigger vessels have meant the change in design of anchors.

Anchors used by the Romans, Vikings and other seafarers for their ships were in heavy iron, consisted of a shank with a mooring ring in the upper end for the cable and a stock, made of wood, fixed at right angles to the plane of the arms, which way used to cause the arms to fall so as one of the flukes entered the ground or bed. At the other end, called the crown, the anchors had two arms or blades at right angles to the shank, toed with a broad palm or fluke.

Various anchor names and sizes are best-bower, small-bower, sheet, spare, stream, kedge and killick. The bower anchor is the ship's largest anchor, used for anchoring or mooring the ship and is stored, one on each bow, in a hawsepipe. The stream anchor is used by some naval ships as a stern anchor, stowed on deck or in a stern hawsepipe. The killick is also used by some naval ships as a light anchor for general purposes. The sheet anchor was formerly the largest and strongest anchor in use, while the kedge was used for anchoring in a stream or sheltered place and for warping from one place to another.

The making of anchors was at first a part of the blacksmith's craft, but in the 18th Century the craft of anchorsmith developed, with the anchors being specially forged to the various rules and measurements laid down by the Navy and other authorities. Ironfounders also cast anchors in metal, consisting of cast iron shanks with arms made of wrought iron and sharp billed flukes in the same metal.

From this basic design a number of improvements in the shape and construction of anchors were introduced including a hollow-shanked anchor with a view of increasing the strength without adding to the weight.

A man named Porter, anchor maker at his iron works in Newcastle-on-Tyne, about 1840, introduced anchors with the arms and flukes moveable by pivoting them to the stock instead of fixing them immovably, causing the anchor to take a quicker and firmer hold and avoiding the chance of the cable being fouled. John Trotman improved on Porter's invention afterwards. Then a Claudius Martin, about 1870, invented his "patent self-canting anchor", the arms revolving through an angle of 30 degrees either way and thus the points of the flukes were always ready to enter the seabed.

One of the most unusual anchors was that made in the 18th century by a Dublin anchorsmith for the *Silver*, a West Indian trading vessel owned by Messrs. Bateson of Belfast. The anchor was forged in iron, then cleaned, after which it was encased in silver all over by a silversmith, with the flukes being covered in "hard silver", a silver alloy with tin, to endure wear. The anchor was a gimmick, the sun shining on it to attract customers when the ship took part in a trade fair being held then in the West Indies.

Not unnaturally nautical parlance concerning anchors has passed into the English language. A person described as "a sheet anchor" was strong and reliable. To "ride at anchor" to a sailor meant the ship was made fast to and held safe by the anchor, but to civilians it is anything which gives a feeling of security from being fixed and secure.

"To cast anchor" or "come to anchor" is to let the anchor down into the sea; to a civilian this would be known as taking a rest. "To weigh anchor" meant to haul the anchor out of the sea prior to a voyage; to a civilian this would mean beginning a journey. Anyone who has "swallowed the anchor" is a person that has retired from a job at sea to live on land.

There is a village called Anchor, in Shropshire, England. It is said to have got its name when a ship's captain from the Welsh port of Aberystwyth decided to retire. He got a horse, loaded on a small anchor, headed inland and said he would ride until the horse refused to go further. When it did so he would "drop his anchor" and build an inn, and live happily ever after. Anchor is the place where it supposedly happened and the captain's anchor outside the Anchor Inn proves it, but many landlubbers think it is just another sailor's yarn.

PORT YOUR HELM

by Paul Brock

Ask any man who prides himself on his knowledge of nautical things what the origin of "Port your helm" is. He will tell you the same old story and it will probably be wrong.

Try the Navy, the Marines; ask any of the old survivors of sail. While their answers will differ in detail, their themes will boil down to the same misinformation. If you begin with the innocent question, "Why is the left side of the ship called the *port* side?" their reply will be:

"About 125 years ago it was decided that the order 'larboard' could be confused with 'starboard,' and that in the future mariners were to say only 'port' instead of 'larboard your helm.' "

(At this point please resist the temptation of asking *when* people said "larboard your helm.")

If you then ask, "Why was 'port' selected?" your victim will come out with this tolerably safe though vague generalization: "In the old days when the rudder used to be on the right-hand side of the ship, in order not to foul the rudder, they could tie up only the left-hand side of the ship to the quay, or the land, or the port, *ergo*, that side of the ship was called the *port* side —get it?"

(At this point refrain from asking when ships refused to tie up with their right side to the quay.)

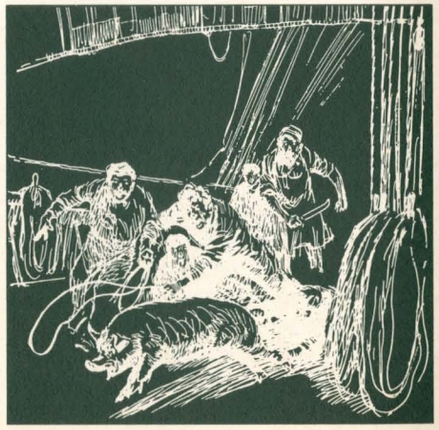
In 1844 there was a British Admiralty order that read: "The word *port* is frequently substituted for the word *larboard*, and as ..... the distinction between *starboard* and *port* is so much more marked than that between *starboard* and *larboard*, it is Their Lordships' direction that the word 'larboard' shall no longer be used."

The most unanimous conclusion is that the word "port" came into common use then and there, but as an old shellback pointed out to me — with one eye shut and an emphasizing forefinger —what they said in naval circles they must have said in Merchant Service circles maybe 200 years earlier.

I looked up a copy of Southey's "Life of Nelson" and found that Nelson said, "Port your helm" at Trafalgar. Earlier than that, in the battle off Corsica in 1790, no further in the book than the third chapter, we are told "they put the helm a-port and stood after her again."

In "Anson's Voyages" of 1748—over two centuries ago—we learn that "the ship heeled two streaks to port," and from J. Harris and his "Lex Technica," 1704, that "They never say *larboard the helm*, but always *port it*, though they say *starboard the helm* when it is to be put to the right side of the ship."

William Monson, who was at sea from 1585 to 1635, died in 1643. After his death, "Naval Tracts" was published, and he says: "The sea language is not soon learnt, much less understood, being only proper to him that hath served his apprenticeship; besides, a boisterous sea and stormy weather will make a landsman so sick that it bereaves him of legs, stomach and courage, and, in such weather when he hears the seaman cry 'starbd' or 'port' or 'haul home a clue-line', he thinks he hears a barbarous tongue."



Seamen's Church Institute of N. Y.
15 State Street
New York, N. Y. 10004

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