

THE LOOKOUT



Seamen's Church Institute of New York

25 South Street, New York, N. Y.

The Seamen's Church Institute of New York
Sends Through "The Lookout"
Christmas and New Year Greetings
to All Its Friends

The
LOOKOUT

VOL. XXXIX, DECEMBER, 1948

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Church Institute of New York, Inc.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

by the

SEAMEN'S CHURCH
INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

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\$1.00 per year 10c per copy
Gifts of \$5.00 per year and over
include a year's subscription to "THE
LOOKOUT".

Entered as second class matter July 8,
1925, at New York, N. Y., under the act of
March 3, 1879.

Address all communications to
SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE
OF NEW YORK
25 SOUTH ST., NEW YORK 4, N. Y.
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LEGACIES TO THE INSTITUTE

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

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

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

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VOL. XXXIX

DECEMBER, 1948

NO. 12

Home for Christmas

THE freighter *Lena* was going through her usual paces, rolling and pitching as she logged her way toward New York in ballast from Channel ports.

In the chart room a conference between the Master, Mate and Chief Engineer had been concluded by the laconic comment of the Master, "We will make it for Christmas."

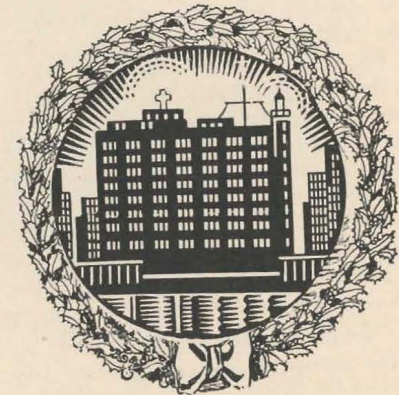
As the Mate left the chart room he glanced at the chronometer and noted the time as twelve minutes before the hour.

"We'll make it for Christmas," mused the Mate as he focused his eyes on the horizon in the blackness. As the effect of the lighted chart room on his eyes waned, he swept his practiced glance completely around the horizon to the westward.

Dimly he saw a faint light. Not certain of it, he called to the bridge lookout. "Do you see anything to the westward?"

"Aye, sir, but I can't identify it."

The Mate seized the glasses. What he saw caused him to call into the chart room to the Master who came onto the wing of the bridge immediately, carrying his own powerful binoculars. Within seconds he verified the Mate's report. "It's a distress signal."



As the two men studied the light, the wireless operator came on the bridge with a message. "Distress call from the *SS Lichfield*. Here is her position."

The Master took the message, walked into the wheelhouse, and seconds later emerged.

"About ship," he ordered.

An hour later, crackling through the ether came this message, to be picked up by shore stations. "Standing by the *SS Lichfield* which is in sinking condition. Will attempt rescue at daylight. Present weather conditions, Northwest gale, rough seas."

Eight men launched the *Lena's* lifeboat. The entire crew had volunteered to go to the rescue of the crew and the sinking ship. To launch the boat their once chance was to make a lee so as not to be smashed against the side of their ship. The Mate, in command,



ordered the men to pull across the stretch of tumbling sea to the stricken steamer's far side.

Even as he worked, the Mate thought of the gleaming lights on a Christmas tree waiting for him at home. How far away home seemed now!

As they approached the steamer, he saw she was going down by the head and sinking fast.

The Mate knew, as did every man in the lifeboat, that it was a desperate gamble. But the men aboard the ship were counting on them to take that gamble. All knew that a nor-west gale is a devil to gamble with.

As they neared the stern of the sinking vessel, the Mate worked the bow of the lifeboat slowly around into the

lee of the sinking vessel. Soon they were up close to the vessel and were taking off the crew. As soon as the last man was in the lifeboat, the return trip was commenced. These maneuvers weren't easy, nor were they simple, but they made it.

But the Mate didn't make it . . . home in time for Christmas. The *Lena* carrying the rescue crew, docked in New York the day after Christmas and the newspapers carried sensational reports of the rescue.

But the Mate knew, when his wife greeted him, misty-eyed and proud, that she didn't mind . . . didn't mind at all . . . having their Christmas delayed for just one day.

M.D.C.

SAILORS' DAY OBSERVED

The annual observance of Sailors' Day, held on the Sunday nearest Navy Day, was held in the Institute's Chapel of Our Saviour on October 24th. The Rev. Raymond S. Hall, Assistant Director in Charge, officiated. Mrs. Anne Conrow Hazard directed the Chapel music. The Rev. Dr. Charles Deems, Assistant Minister at St. Bartholomew's Church, preached, taking as his text "The Sea in His and He Made It." Dr. Deems was formerly Assistant Superintendent at the Institute under the Rev. Dr. Archibald R. Mansfield from 1912 to 1918.

Sailors' Day was set apart in 1919 by the General Convention of the Episcopal Church in special honor of merchant seamen in order that church people might "remember the value of the living seamen and memorialize those who have died."

CHAPEL NEWS

Frances Bible, mezzo-soprano, who has been a member of the S.C.I. Quartet for five seasons, is making a name for herself this winter with the N. Y. City Opera Company. She recently received an ovation for her singing of the important role of "Cherubino" in Mozart's "The Marriage of Figaro" on very short notice. Miss Bible is a graduate of the Juilliard School of Music, an artist-pupil of Madame Queena Mario. She has sung leading roles in Mme. Mario's Opera Workshop productions and for three seasons in the Chautauqua Opera Company. She is shortly to appear as "Lola" in "Cavalleria Rusticana" and again in the "Marriage of Figaro." After the opera company's fall season here and in Chicago, we hope to have Miss Bible back with the Institute Choir in January.

Anne Conrow Hazard, Organist,
S.C.I. Chapel

EXHIBITION OF SAIL AND STEAMSHIP PAINTINGS AT INSTITUTE

An exhibition of twenty oils and watercolors of ships painted by Commander Lauren S. McCready, U. S. Maritime Service, was held in the Janet Roper Club during the month of November. Commander McCready went to sea as a wiper and by 1941 had received his 1st Asst. Engineer's license. He is now in charge of Engineering Instruction at the U. S. Merchant Marine Academy, Kings Point. Among the ship paintings were the "Malabar," Inlay, "Halsey" Marine Transport Co., "Siboney," "Yucatan," "Oriente," Cuba Mail SS Co., "Nantucket" Training Ship; "Kings Pointer"; Steamer "Mary Powell," Grace liner "Santa Elisa," "Leviathan," United States Lines; and others, all loaned by their owners, steamship and Maritime Commission officials. Also included in the exhibition was an oil painting of Clifford D. Mallory's motor sailer, "Dundee," and loaned by his son, Clifford D. Mallory, Jr. a member of the Institute's Board of Managers.



CHRISTMAS GIFT SUGGESTION

LOOKOUT readers are invited to see the exhibition of paintings by merchant seamen on view at the Institute through the month of December. These are chiefly oil paintings, pen and ink sketches, wash drawings and watercolors. Many of them would make most attractive gifts. Open 3-11 P.M. daily. Inquire LOOKOUT office.

"The Primitive Approach"

By Robert M. Coates, Art Editor, "The New Yorker"

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The artists who served on the Jury to judge these paintings were: Gordon Grant, Charles Robert Patterson, Bertram Goodman and Edmond James FitzGerald.

We are sorry that the first prize-winner in oil, by Bernard Bovasso, does not reproduce well in black and white. Visitors may see these paintings in the Janet Roper Club, 4th floor, daily, 3—11 p.m. from now until Christmas.



Drawing by Phil May

The Day after Christmas

Trudging around the capstan, sailors began to sing an outward bound chantey.

CHRISTMAS ashore! A brisk wind blew across the East River and the masts of tall-sparred clippers cut arcs in the December sky. Along South Street men hurried over the snow-covered cobblestones, intent on reaching home in time to celebrate the holiday, and those with no homes made for the Shamrock Bar.

Captain Jonathan Rollins, pacing the quarter-deck of the clipper "*Surprise*" had just reached a difficult decision. His fast passage from China had earned for him command of Donald McKay's new clipper—the largest ever built—the "*Great Republic*." He had accepted instantly, although it meant he could only spend Christmas Day with his wife, Sarah, and must sail the following day, on the morning tide. Buttoning his gray frock coat, and pressing his gray beaver hat tighter on his head, he walked briskly down the gangplank and strode swiftly up South Street. "See you the day after Christmas," he told Jim Evans, his mate.

As he strode along he remembered, with a pang of remorse, Sarah's deep brown eyes spilling over with tears as he had last seen her, waving farewell. Now he must greet her, and leave, again. She had pleaded with him to quit the sea forever, and she had arranged for him to have an excellent job ashore with Grinnell, Minturn & Co., shipping merchants. But Capt. Rollins had told her, gently,

that he was not cut out for a desk job. She had married a seafaring man, and so must put up with him.

Over at the Shamrock Bar, Chips, who had sailed with Capt. Rollins as carpenter on many trips, was quarrelling with Sally Brown, the dimpled barmaid. "It's Christmas Eve, Sal," he said. "Let's not quarrel."

"But you're leaving the day after Christmas," pouted Sally, "and I'm tired of waiting for you to come home. Why do you have to sail in the *Great Republic*?"

Chips looked at her. How could he explain to a woman what it meant to sail on the maiden voyage of the largest clipper ever built?

Mr. Evans, the Mate, who had agreed to sail with Capt. Rollins, had also encountered a marital squall. His wife, on learning of his intentions, wept and carried on and accused him of never loving her.

"But I do, darlin'," protested Mr. Evans, a hairy-chested, much-tattooed individual with a reputation for rough use of the belayin' pin on unruly members of his crew, but a hen-pecked husband when ashore. He stood his ground, for once. "I'm sailin' the day after Christmas, and that's that."

His wife adopted a wheedling tone. "Why don't you get a mate's job on one of those new Collins Line steamers that go to England in eleven days? I don't like you goin' on those long trips 'round the Horn." But Mr. Evans only stubbornly shook his head.

All South Street was astir. Ghostly ships came suddenly to life as their wraith-like sails were raised. Trudging around the capstans, sailors began to sing an outward-bound chantey. This was the big day—the day after Christmas—when the “*Great Republic*” was to sail on her maiden voyage.

As Captain Rollins, Mate Evans and Chips approached South Street, they saw people running and heard a great commotion. Turning the corner they stopped and stared in horror. The “*Great Republic*” was on fire at her South Street pier!

The newspapers recorded the event as follows:

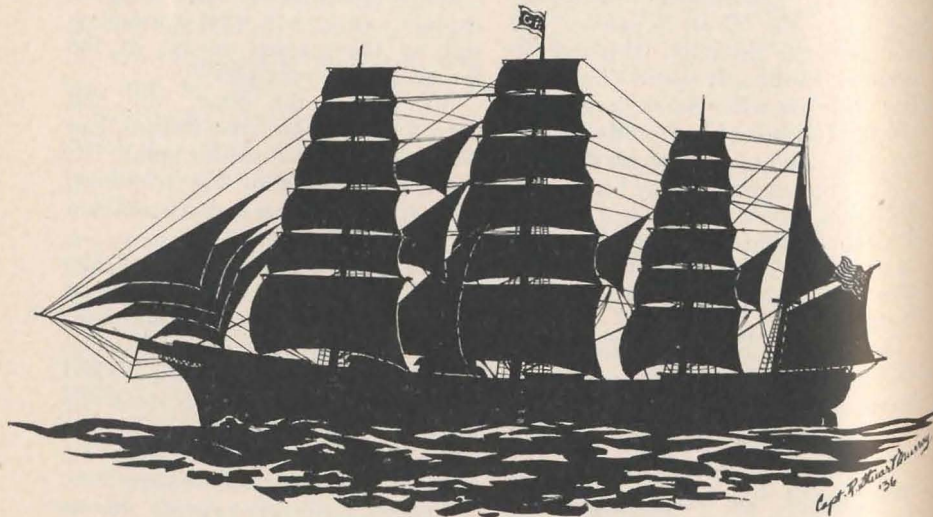
“The night of December 26th, 1853, should long be remembered in the annals of New York City as the date when fire destroyed the noblest specimen of naval architecture of which our country could boast.

“Upon arrival in New York, the *Great Republic* loaded cargo and she was almost ready for sea when the disaster occurred. The rigging of the mammoth clipper caught fire from blazing cinders blown from some burning warehouses nearby. Owing to the height of her masts it was impossible for the fire engines to play the hose upon the flames, and the consequence was that the falling spars soon set her deck ablaze. Some of the sails were bent and when they once became ignited no human power could save her. The conflagration attracted thousands to New York’s waterfront.”

... The three men, sick of heart, and defeated, walked slowly home to their women folk who comforted them, mourned with them, but could not hide the flickering expression of triumph in their eyes. M.D.C.

MYSTERIOUS SHIPS

Seafarers gathered in the clubrooms at the Seamen’s Church Institute of New York, like to tell tales of La Belle Rosalie, the Flying Dutchman, the Cyclops, Kobenhavn, and other ships that have disappeared. The Ship Mary Celeste, found sailing with no crew on board, is also discussed. Latest on the role of phantom ships is the 22-foot converted sailing lifeboat “Chance,” skippered by John Dow, who sailed the little boat to the Solomon Islands. Excited natives in the Solomon Group reported seeing a vessel under full sail pass by their island without recognition. She made the tricky channel, but eventually lay, heeled over, on the beach at Isabel Island. Authorities investigated, found Captain Dow dead in his bunk, his last entry made two weeks previous, with the course set for the Solomons. The skipper must have had a premonition of his death, and confidence in his ship to bring him to port — for the flag had been set at half-mast, and so entered in the log! And the tiller was lashed!



GREAT REPUBLIC

1853-

The “GREAT REPUBLIC,” 6,000 tons, 335 feet long, was the largest ship built by Donald McKay. After the fire in 1853, the clipper was rebuilt and for many years she was in the California trade and made good passages under her reduced rig.

Sunday at Sea

By Brooks Atkinson*

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*From: “The Cingalese Prince” by Brooks Atkinson (Drama Critic, N. Y. Times).

A Christmas Welcome to the "Sailor Home From Sea"



HE green and red lights of Christmas trees will soon be shining in homes around the world. At sea, the green (starboard) and red (port) lights of the ships that carry the cargoes will be shining, too, and above each helmsman, the Christmas stars.

Part of our traditional celebration of Christmas in America is sharing our good fortune with others not so fortunate. This spirit of generosity is evident in the response to calls for assistance from many worthy causes.

Here at the Seamen's Church Institute of New York we are again relying on the voluntary and generous contributions of our friends who each year, through gifts to our HOLIDAY FUND, help us to welcome from 1,200 to 1,500 seafarers on Christmas Day. These contributions are tangible expressions of their appreciation of seamen in carrying the world's commerce.

As an innovation this year, we are constructing a huge fireplace of Christmas boxes (wrapped in paper simulating brick) and just

before the turkey dinners are served, each seaman staying in the building on Christmas Eve will be invited to accept one of these boxes (containing socks, cigarettes, candy, stationery, etc.) packed by Central Council volunteers. We believe this will be more heart-warming than putting a box on each bed. Hostesses will be on hand to greet the seamen.

In an atmosphere made festive by gala Christmas decorations, the dinner will be served, and moving pictures and music will follow in the Auditorium.

A Christmas Carol Service will be held in the Chapel.



Chapel Decorated for Christmas.

With YOUR help this promises to be "the best Christmas ever" for our big family of seamen. YOUR contribution to our HOLIDAY FUND (made payable to the Seamen's Church Institute of New York) will ensure a happy Christmas for seafarers far from their own homes and families.



Christmas Rendezvous



By James H. Parsons, Able-Bodied Seaman*

Editor's Note:

The author of this story writes: "I am in the marine hospital here in New Orleans with a broken leg, fractured jaw and more stitches in my noggin than a baseball. I was hit by an automobile while walking in the rain at midnight plotting this short story! Eleven of my teeth were knocked out, and I am afflicted with the dangdeth lithp imaginable. What a way for a guy to get himself laid up after playing tag with the Nazis for five years! Thintherey Yourth."

Jim Parsons."

THE doctor sat at his desk in the Marine Hospital and stared thoughtfully at a neatly typewritten letter from one of his former patients, a young seaman named Stuart, and it affected the doctor strangely. Like many members of the medical profession, he had schooled himself against sentiment. To him, an "affair of the heart" meant a cardiac condition to be checked with a stethoscope—a condition in no way connected with such an intangible thing as romance. Yet, despite this curb on his emotions, the letter had somehow penetrated his austerity and moved him deeply.

Through his office window, hung with a holly wreath, the snow-mantled landscape looked as picturesque as a winter scene on a dime-store greetings card. The calendar on his desk showed the date to be six days before Christmas. From a radio down the corridor came the voices of a choral group lifted in a Yule hosanna.

Stuart had been admitted to the hospital for examination of an old war wound injury received when a torpedo had found its target off the Irish coast five years before. He had remained in the ward for five weeks while the doctor reviewed his case history. Well-mannered and personable, with a quiet knack for making friends, he had soon become popular with patients and nurses alike. The robust freshness of his features, his cropped blond hair and bright engaging smile, made him seem younger than his twenty-eight years. Of Athletic build, he had the rippling muscles of a swimmer or sprinter rather than the bunched sinews of a weight-lifter. The taciturn, ambitious doctor, who at first had been interested only in the clinical aspects of his case, had conceived a liking for Stuart which resulted in as close a friendship as the doctor permitted himself.

With this picture of Stuart in his mind, the doctor shook off his reverie and again focussed his attention on the letter.

"When I left your hospital last month," the ex-patient wrote, "you said you would be glad to hear from me and I am taking your word for it that my plans for the future won't bore you. By the time you receive this I will be on my way to England with one of my buddies to search for the girl I should have married five years ago—a girl named Margie. You never suspected I was in love, did you, doctor? The truth is, I don't even know Margie's last name; I was

(Continued on Page 10)

*Best Sea Story-of-the-Month





(Continued from Page 8)

so completely under her spell during our brief courtship it never occurred to me to ask it. But that doesn't matter. I will find her—and she will have to marry me."

"To start at the beginning I must go back to Manchester in the middle of December, 1943, during the American 'occupation' of Britain."

"On previous trips to Manchester I had frequently dropped in at a lively little pub called the "Adam and Eve," and had become well acquainted with the proprietor, Mr. MacGrawler, a jovial gentleman of florid complexion and tremendous girth. Shortly after my ship docked I went there to pay him my respects over a bumper of half-and-half. This was six months before the Normandy invasion and the place was crowded with soldiers, sailors and working-class civilians. Strangers were welcomed with a bluff freemasonry that offered cheery respite from war's sordid business.

Mr. MacGrawler and I shook hands, quaffed beer and fell to cussing Hitler. While we speculated as to when the Allied brass hats would give the signal for the Big Push across the Channel, a tipsy Canadian soldier swung his foaming glass in a metronomic arc and began bawling a rollicking song-hit of many years ago entitled "Smiles"—remember it? The rafters were immediately set a tremble by a thunderous chorus of tenors, baritones and basso-profundos; but above this masculine rumble rose a girl's sweet soprano, vibrant and alluring. Without thinking to apologize to Mr. MacGrawler, I broke off our conversation abruptly and turned to discover what manner of face and figure came with golden pipes like those.

"She was seated behind a table in the corner and I could see at a glance she was every bit as lovely in appearance as the quality of her voice had led me to imagine. On her head was a little red tam that tilted pertly amid a profusion of auburn ringlets. The tips of her knitted scarf, matching the color of her tam, were tucked crosswise beneath the notched lapels of her slate-grey

coat. She had large blue eyes—bluer than the Gulf Stream on a sunny day off Florida—and an air of buoyant friendliness."

"The singing ended on a note of hilarity and she joined in the general applause, clapping her hands like a happy little girl on the front row at the circus. You can be sure that among all those lusty young males I was by no means alone in my admiration of her.

"Well, before Mr. MacGrawler shut the beer off that night, I followed the path which other hopefuls had figuratively beaten to her table and contrived—oh, ever so artfully—to engage her in polite conversation. Mine was the gentlemanly approach, you see, and it paid off with an invitation to the seat opposite her. She was neither coquette nor prude, neither too flirty nor too prim; she was just a sweet kid who knew how to be a good sport without being 'sporty'—the sympathetic kind of girl a lonesome guy likes to tell his troubles to.

"That was the beginning, doctor. We met at the 'Adam' every night for about two weeks. Margie always arrived ahead of me and occupied the same seat behind the cracked marble-topped table in the corner, reserving the opposite seat for me. Needless to say, I had fallen in love with her at sight, and although I didn't tell her in exactly those words, I am sure she had been aware of my infatuation from the first.

"My ship had finished discharging cargo and on the morning of Christmas Eve was known to be 'red hot'—ready to sail on short notice. The prospect of being suddenly ordered back to sea without having declared my love to Margie threw me into a dither of apprehension and I resolved to speak my piece that very night, and with her consent, try to get a special license to wed. When I left the ship to meet her at our trysting table, I carried a pitifully small gift for her—six oranges. There was a good reason for the oranges no matter how niggardly a gift they seemed. Once when I had chaffed her about Manchester's murky weather and contrasted it with California's sun-kissed climate, she told me she hadn't seen an orange since the beginning of the war four years earlier. Remembering this, I had braced my ship's steward and corkscrewed a half-dozen big ones from him.

"The 'Adam' was already in full celebration when I arrived. Margie gave me a radiant welcome and she looked so enchanting it was all I could do to resist an impulse to pop the question but I decided that a noisy tavern was hardly the place.

"First I suggested that we walk uptown through the park and go to The Plaza where a Christmas dance was being held with music by a real live orchestra; but she declined. Then I suggested that we walk through the park and go to The Hippodrome where a comedian was staging a new revue; but again she said me nay—regretfully. Then I came right out with it and asked her to walk as far as the park with

me, explaining that I had something especially important to say to her and preferred to say it where I wouldn't be interrupted. She gave me a long, searching look, and I knew she had guessed what was in my mind, but she shook her head for the third time and wouldn't stir from her seat behind the table.

"Her refusal to grant me a few minutes in which to plead my love seemed a bit rum, as her countrymen would have put it—not cricket at all. I couldn't help feeling miffed. She wasn't playing the game—she had jolly well been making a blithering fool of me. The more I thought of it the sulkier I became, and out of pique I began to suspect she was in love with some other bloke and had been using me as a stand-in. Why—maybe she was already married! Right away this dreadful suspicion goaded me into saying nasty things. She was hurt by my sarcasm—I could see it—but she wouldn't fight back. She wouldn't offer explanations of any kind and pigheadedly, I kept on being churlish, moping and scowling and trying to make her as miserable as I was.

"Finally our unmerry Christmas party dragged to a dreary end. At a few minutes to ten, Mr. MacGrawler shouted "Time, please!" which is the English way of saying closing up—"Everybody scram!" Still smarting under Margie's refusal to give me an even break, I rose from my chair and bade her a curt goodbye, not good night. She lifted a hand as though to stop me, but dropped it without saying anything. Jostling through a crowd of merry-makers who stood near the front door waiting to ease themselves singly into the blacked-out street, I paused at the bar to bid Mr. MacGrawler goodnight. He motioned to me and I proceeded to the back room with him where we enjoyed a nightcap. When I returned to the tap-room a short time later, the place was deserted except for Margie, whose back was turned to me as she leaned over behind the table reaching for the bag of oranges I had brought her. Mr. MacGrawler shook hands with me and again wished me a merry Christmas. Then I turned to leave. Margie turned round at the same time and stood facing me.

"She stood there with crutches under her arms, balancing herself on one leg—her skirt empty of the other!

"She looked at me with a startled expression. Her lips quivered. Tears brimmed her eyes.

"I—I thought you had gone," she wailed. "I didn't want you to know!"

"Can you imagine the excruciating feeling of love and pity that swept over me? I was ready to weep. Gently I took the wretched little bag of oranges which she held pressed with two fingers against the crosspiece of her crutch and said huskily: "Let's go home, Marge!"

"As she trudged at my side through the blackout, the thuddings of her rubber-tipped crutches echoed in my heart like a

kettle drummed dirge. For me there was agony in every step she took. With a lump in my throat I listened to her tragic story. She had been living in London during the big blitz of 1940. The walls of a bombed building had toppled as she fled toward an air-raid shelter; a girder had crushed her leg. After long months in a hospital she had been sent to Manchester to live at the home of her uncle, Mr. MacGrawler.

"We sat on the stoop of the shabby building in which she lived with her aunt and uncle, two flights up. From behind scudding clouds a pale moon broke through as a group of young choristers, strolled past us singing of that glorious story of old which had come 'upon a midnight clear'. We remained reverently silent as their music receded in the distance.

"When I rose to leave I impulsively bent down and kissed her. I still didn't know which emotion was uppermost—love or pity. My thoughts were in anguished turmoil. In my heart I felt an ineffable tenderness, but my intended proposal remained unspoken.

"She leaned against the wall, holding both crutches under one arm and clasping the oranges with her fingers. She kissed me shyly, softly, with the gentle caress of a girl truly in love. Then she turned to the stairs and began her laborious ascent.

"That was the last time I saw Margie."

"My ship sailed next day—Christmas. We joined a convoy out of Liverpool and headed for New York; but didn't get far. We were torpedoed off the Irish coast. Only six of us were saved out of a crew of 48. I was landed at Glasgow, hospitalized and later sent back to the States. During the long months when I was in the hospital, Margie was almost constantly in my thoughts. So now, doctor, I am off for England to find her. My travel schedule puts me in Manchester on Christmas Eve. I'll go straight to the "Adam" and Mr. MacGrawler has written me that Margie will be there at our table in the corner. We'll walk home together again and this time I'll have the ring and everything. She won't turn me down, I know she won't. And we'll be happy, doctor—tremendously happy."

The doctor folded the letter slowly, leaned back and listened meditatively to the radio down the corridor, playing a Christmas carol. Donning the white smock of his profession, the doctor strode briskly to his ward. The nurse on duty noticed with surprise, as he moved among his patients, his warm smile. Yes, he was thinking, Stuart would find his Margie, all right. They would sit at "their" table and know the exquisite joy of loving and being loved. They would laugh when Mr. MacGrawler shouted "Time, please!" and together they'd walk to her home. But now to the dull thuddings of Margie's crutches would be added the questing tap of a blind man's cane.

Two Famous Sailing Ships

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The Rustic Mariner

By Paul Carron, *Radio Officer*

THE Indian sun stared down calmly out of its beautiful blue kingdom. A light breeze ruffled the peaceful gulf waters, speckled here and there with darting, glittering flying fish. The *Marie Irma* cleft the seas silently, her proud bow jutting nobly from the surf and her trough astern was straight, right to the far horizon. Her engines seemed too far away, too contented in their mumble to be anything but part of the sound of nature on her ocean.

As she sped along there was never a tremor, never a groan, everything about her spoke of newness. Young Harry, too, at her wheel was a new seaman. Since the weather was at its best, it gave him an opportunity to grasp the idea of watching the compass bearing, keeping his mast steady against the background of sky and sea, and of getting the feel of the wheel. He could also watch the flying fish when they appeared in the limited view offered him by the small apertures in the bridge house. They were new to him, and the tropic sky was wondrous, and the sparkling blue sea, and the wonderfully strange things he'd seen in Calcutta. Oh! how much he'd be able to tell Sadie when he got back. And he had something for her sixteenth birthday (his seventeenth would be a week after hers). He wished he could bring her a flying fish. Her big eyes would grow round and she'd say "Oo-oh!" in the sweetest way. The Mate, in immaculate whites, puffed serenely at a cigarette, as he scanned the horizon from the starboard wing of the bridge.

"Two sixty-six Sir!" the Mate's voice sang out and disturbed Harry's fond reverie.

"Two sixty-six, Sir!" Harry replied.

Two sixty-six, that would be practically due West. Ah! There it is, that's good. Well, thought Harry, I

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Courtesy, Maritime Reporter

"But that's what you said, sir—throw the wheel over to port!"

wish Sadie could see me now, steering the ship all by myself, my ship; it goes where I want it to go; I'm in charge, if she could only see me . . . my ship.

With these lovely thoughts, and the ship steady, Harry withdrew a brand new sheath knife from his hip-sheath, and twiddled it idly in his hand. Then he threw it up, and caught it deftly. As the mate was out of sight, Harry flung the knife at the duckboard on which he stood. The knife did not stick.

"Must be that *lignum vitae*" thought Harry, "wonder anybody can saw it! I'll bet the steerin' wheel's hard too."

Forthwith Harry picked at the wheel with his knife. It was hard, but not quite so difficult to cut as the duckboard.

"If I put me name on that, together with Sadie's they'll be there forever! On my first ship. And when I'm a captain maybe, I'll get my own ship one day an' I'll bring Sadie to see her name."



Dreaming of Home

These idyllic thoughts struck the young Londoner as very practical. He reckoned if Sadie was angry at him for returning to sea too soon, she'd love him all the more when she'd see her name carved on his steering wheel. Then Harry began to chip and whittle, and whittle and chip. Four watches later the job was finished. There on the steering wheel of the *Marie Irma* was the undying love of one Harry Huggins pledged to one Sadie Claggs, one name inside one heart, the other inside its twin and both of them pierced with an arrow.

At Vizagapatam the pilot came aboard and gave Harry the orders via the mate. The skipper, Captain Sevenoaks, chatted and joked with the pilot, mostly of the old days on the China Coast. One of the seamen brought up a pot of tea and some cups. The mate did the honors and everyone was happy as the ship docked and tied up.

The crew retired to a certain dive called the Brandy Shop and the master entertained in his "house." Darkness fell and the skipper's party was quite gay until it happened. The deck officers were discussing a certain star visible through a porthole and one decided that the dock lay at a certain

angle and the ship pointed somewhere about nor'west. The captain denounced this in a jocular way and gave his own decision further suggesting that they all refer to the compass.

As Captain J. J. J. Sevenoaks, O.B.E., M.B.E., the master of the anathemas and denunciations of all *Marie Irma*, looked at the binnacle and said "Ha-ha. I told ye! I told ye!", his glance happened to stray to the carven love pledge of Harry Huggins, ordinary seaman, also of the *Marie Irma*.

The master's jaw fell, his eyes bulged, he stabbed at the carving with one finger as if to rub it off . . . Nobody could do a thing like this . . . but somebody had! And there was the culprit's name on the steering wheel, that brand new steering wheel. The captain took a deep breath, released it, got slowly purple in the face and for two whole minutes belched forth invective, swear words, curses, expletives, execrations, that was Harry Huggins, of all that was connected with him, of all that would ever be near him. This feat was performed speedily, without a single repetition, in English and a few other languages.

The party, such as it had been, was not. Not any more. A cloud fell on everyone but the skipper, who *was* the cloud.

Next morning, Harry Huggins, nursing his first hangover, was called to the presence of the master. After sounding off, threatening all kinds of damnation, affecting a hard pity for Harry's youth, he wound up with, "So, considering everything, I am going to be light on you. I am charging you and logging you for the price of the steering wheel. Ten pounds, five shillings and eightpence. Consider yourself lucky!"

Harry's young heart nearly burst. It was a terrible blow to him, losing all that money in one lot. With it went all the trinkets, silks and Indian stuff he had intended for Sadie and Ma.

Disconsolate, disgusted, and miserable, Harry sat working away fiercely at an eye splice in a five inch rope. The old bos' who had had over forty years at sea was showing him the little short cuts that come only through deep knowledge of sea lore. Bos' looked at him benignly through his gold-rimmed glasses and his twinkling eyes showed understanding of Harry's troubles.

"Did 'e sock yer 'ard, son?"

"Ten blinkin' quid, five an' bleedin' eightpence! All the chips I 'ad and a bit more. Dunno wot I'm gonna do—the 'ole price of the steerin' wheel."

"Did 'e fine you the price o' it? Eh? Eh?" asked the Bos' quickly.

"Yus."

"Well, son, 's far as I see it, the steerin' wheel's yourn. Waitaminit. Gor, yus! You can do it, son. There ain't no law agin' it—no law as I can figure out."

"Wot?", asked Harry.

Gottings from the S.C.I. Log

SAFARI

One of our old-time seamen came in to tell us about his recent trip to the Far East. He's been saving his money, and now wants to purchase a caravan and go on a Safari to the center of Africa. He has been inquiring in some of the Mediterranean ports but finds inflation has made caravans almost prohibitive. He wants a simple one as he wants to cook and live in the open.

PHILOSOPHY AT SEA

An English seaman to whom we had given Durant's "Story of Philosophy" before his last trip, stopped in to tell us how much it had meant to him and his fellow crew members. He said many of them had showed an interest in the book, and had borrowed it to read chapters on certain individual philosophers, and then discussed their own viewpoints. Now he would like Toynbee's "Study of History." He has read two volumes in the original, and would like very much to read the new abridged edition of the remainder.

A.L.

"Go up and screw the darn thing off. It's yourn! Ye paid for it. They can't get one in this 'ere port, so ye can rent it out to 'em. Charge 'em twenty rupee a day!"

"D'ye think I could?"

"I do. Wait till it's dark, get it orff. I'll help ye. Then, when we're ready to sail, put it to 'im!"

This was all done neatly and the Captain, no matter how much he tried, both by threats and by wheedling, could not persuade Harry to give up the wheel. He did not budge from his original rent request.

What hurt the skipper was that no wheel could be found in any of the coasting ports until they reached Bombay, five weeks later.

And Harry, now more mature, with many more trips under his belt, has had countless hangovers at the expense of others on the strength of the tale . . . the tale of the strange wheel frame on his and Sadie's wedding picture.



A SEAGOING "KRIS KRINGLE"!

White-bearded Captain Ed Lane, of Mystic, Conn. who recently was featured on "Life Begins at 80" radio program, paid a visit to the Institute. He could easily "double" for Santa Claus, but most of Capt. Lane's Christmases have been spent far from home and hearthside, on the "bounding main."

Book Reviews

SAILING ALONE AROUND THE WORLD

and

VOYAGE OF THE LIBERDADE

By Captain Joshua Slocum

With an Introduction by Arthur Ransome
Rupert-Hart-Davis, London, 1948

This is an astonishing pair of yarns of and by a man who first, after wrecking his ship and losing nearly all of the little fortune he had accumulated, brought his family home from Brazil to the United States in a canoe, and then after a few years made a forty-six thousand-mile voyage around the world alone in an old, rebuilt 35-foot sailing boat. Without a chronometer—he had an old clock that lacked a minute hand—he sailed to Gibraltar, then to the Magellan straits, fighting for weeks against opposing storms, cold and hostile savages to battle his way into the Pacific, then across the Pacific, Indian, Atlantic oceans around the Cape of Good Hope and back to the fair town of Fairhaven, after three years of buffeting seas, loneliness, enthusiastic welcomes in the many places he visited where such seamanlike skill and indomitability was understood and rewarded.

And all this related in the cheerful manner of a man to whom three-thousand-mile undertaking in a cockle shell of a boat meant no more than the same distance to the modern air clipper ship.

In these days when wars, rumors of wars, social troubles, etc. keep people jittery and sleepless, this great seaman's philosophy of doing the thing that lies before you, not looking back nor worrying too much about the future may be worth listening to. In his *Greeting* to the VOYAGE OF THE LIBERDADE he says:

"Be the current against us, what matters it? Be it in our favor, we are carried hence to what place or for what purpose? Our plan of the whole voyage is so insignificant that it matters little, maybe, whether we go, for the "grace of a day" is the same! It is not a recognition of this which makes the old sailor happy, though in the storm, and hopeful even on a plank in mid-ocean? Surely it is this! for the spiritual beauty of the sea, absorbing man's soul, permits no infidels on its boundless expanse."

WILLIAM L. MILLER

OLD MR. FLOOD

By Joseph Mitchell

Duell, Sloan & Pearce, Inc., \$2.00

Here is a literary sea food cocktail with a real fillip. For those who like oysters and clams and fishermen and old New York and good eating and genuine human beings, this little volume is highly recommended.

When Joseph Mitchell first wrote these stories for the New Yorker magazine he

created a following as keen as any movie star's for his central character. Fascinated readers took to prowling around the Fulton Fish Market and the old Hartford House on Pearl Street hoping to catch a glimpse of the incomparable Mr. Flood. Imagine their dismay when they read in the preface to this expanded collection of the three original stories, that no Mr. Flood ever existed. He is a composite of several old men who work or hang out in the Fulton Market. So real, so full of character, so keen of mind and stubborn of will, so contemptuous of sham and of any food not bred of the sea . . . Mr. Flood will live in the minds of his admirers whether he ever drew breath or not.

P.W.B.

THE RUNNING OF THE TIDE

By Esther Forbes

Houghton, Mifflin Company, \$4.00, 1948

This is a massive story of the days when Salem merchantmen cruised the seven seas, bringing back the commodities of Europe and the Orient to Salem town or bartering them back and forth in the most distant ports of the world. It was a young man's world, when the age of forty was considered too advanced for sea captains in this pioneering, rough-and-tumble calling. But the story itself is mainly, almost entirely of the people of Salem town itself as these young adventurers shuttle back and forth between Salem and the far parts of the earth, of their lives, ambitions, their families, rise to affluence and decline.

For Salem's fortunes changed greatly with the changing times, wars and gradual silting up of the harbor. And so we find Captain Dash Inman and Polly Mompesson, so fine and grand to look upon, but not quite sound at the core, left at the end of the book a genteel old bachelor and a still charming spinster, meeting daily promptly at half past four in Polly's now empty home. Had Dash been as morally courageous as he was physically brave he would have admitted his slip with Dulcey Delaney and his parenthood of Petra and not let his younger brother Peter shoulder the ignominy and the responsibility of using his Harvard money to pay Flanneau to say that the child Petra was his.

It is in a sense a story of conscience or a tale for the moralist or the psychiatrist to ponder, but in any case it is vividly and movingly told, with a wealth of historical background and a broad canvas of interesting local characters, some of them historical. SCI boys will shake their heads at some of Miss Forbes' attempts at things nautical, but on shore she is literally on sure ground. The reader can't help saying to himself, "What a whale of a film this book would make!"

WILLIAM L. MILLER

SUMMARY OF SERVICES TO MERCHANT SEAMEN

by the

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

From January 1 to October 1, 1948

244,293	Lodgings
100,133	Pieces of Baggage handled
824,102	Restaurant Meals
246,009	News Stand Sales
23,015	Barber, Laundry and Tailor Calls
7,277	Total attendance at Religious Services at Institute and U. S. Marine Hospitals
36,767	Personal Service Interviews
12,242	Credit Loans to 4,827 Individual Seamen
2,102	Pieces of Clothing and 159 Knitted Articles* distributed through Slop Chest
3,853	Treatments in Dental, Ear-Nose-Throat, General Medical Clinics
66,528	Total attendance at Movies, Concerts and Sports
225	Missing Seamen located
2,676	Jobs secured for Seamen
28,241	Attendance in Janet Roper Room
44,007	Attendance in Seamen's Lounge
1,038	Visits to Ships by Institute Representatives
2,041	Transfers of Seamen's Earning to Banks
30,756	Attendance of Seamen Readers in Conrad Library; 15,359 Books and 60,325 Magazines distributed
4,555	Total Attendance at 545 Sessions in Merchant Marine School
8,975	Incoming Telephone Calls for Seamen
90	Comfort Kits* containing knitted articles distributed

*Prepared by the Central Council of Associations



MAIN ENTRANCE Decorated for Christmas.



Courtesy United States Lines

The S. S. Washington's Streamlined Funnel and Christmas Tree.