

SEAMEN'S

The

NUMBER

LOOKOUT



"CAST OFF FOR'ARD!"

Photo by A. Eriss

Cadets in the Institute's Merchant Marine School Learn Practical Seamanship.

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

VOL. XXXI NO. 8

AUGUST, 1940

The Sanctuary

Oh God bless seamen wherever they may be. Give them health, courage and skill. Make their hearts sound, their lives pure, their spirits humble and their thinking straight so that to their fellow-men they may prove true interpreters of the character of Thy Son, Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.
Adapted

EDITOR'S NOTE: In response to many requests from readers we are having another SEAMEN'S NUMBER of THE LOOKOUT. The articles, poems, stories and some of the illustrations in this issue have been contributed by merchant seamen.

The LOOKOUT

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THOMAS ROBERTS
Secretary and Treasurer

REV. HAROLD H. KELLEY
Director

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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," incorporated under the laws 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.

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An Incident of the Last War

By Captain Peter R. Staboe

I SHALL relate here an experience of mine during the first World War in which I had the dubious pleasure of sitting in a grandstand seat at a sea battle between the English and the Germans.

One of the leading shipping firms in my home town in Norway offered me a Mate's berth on S.S. "Svanfos", which was loading pulp for Manchester, England. I accepted gladly and on the Thursday after Easter 1917 saw us loaded and on our way for Haugesund on the southwest coast of Norway, where English Admiralty sailing orders would be received.

On Sunday, April 16, our sealed orders came and verbal instructions to weigh anchor at noon. The departure of ships had now to be done in secrecy, because a radio station was discovered aboard a shipwrecked vessel on an island just a few miles away from the city, the previous week, and spies were active in every port.

At noon the anchor was lifted, and with Pilot on board we proceeded up the "Inland Passage" for one hour according to our verbal instruction, and then opened the orders. In doing this we learned that we were to leave the coast at Slottero Light and under the Pilot's instructions we proceeded for our place of departure. In our company was S.S. "Borglia" bound for Rouen, France, with general cargo.

At 3 P.M., as we were just inside the lighthouse, our Pilot disembarked, wishing us a "Bon Voyage"



and "Good Luck", words which an old superstitious salt would take as a bad "omen". He would rather see the last one leaving the ship, as she starts on a voyage, spit some nice brown "juice" in her wake.

When well clear of the lighthouse our course was set for a position in the North Sea, where an escort would meet both ships at 8 o'clock on the following morning. The weather was clear with an occasional squall, but quite a swell was running after the stormy weather, which had lashed the coast the previous days and the ship pitched and rolled heavily.

As the helmsman struck 3 bells, I was standing on the afterpart of the bridge chatting with Captain Olsen and Mr. Johnsen, the Chief Engineer, when the unexpected happened. A whine over our head, a boom and splash as a shell fell in the water a short distance off on our port side. The skipper sputtered and exclaimed: "Holy smoked mackerel,

what in Sam Hill was that?" as nothing had been sighted. "We will have visitors", Johnsen in his dry sarcastic way answered and hurriedly descended for the engine room. Orders to stand by and stop were given to the engineer and the whistle cord stretched for the Life Boat and Abandon Ship signal. The second shot had by now whistled over and dropped considerably closer. The skipper and I scanned the horizon to see if the noisemaker could be located, but nary a sign of him. By now the crew was busy with the lifeboats, as we also saw "*Borglia*" was doing; she was by now a half a mile off to our port and a little ahead. With our engine stopped, the ship was wallowing heavily as she lay abreast in the swell. Several shots were fired and the souvenirs dropped too close for comfort so we launched the boats without any mishaps and we shoved off. We had barely got clear of the ship, when the last "Bon Bon" fell so close that the "Geyser" nearly swamped us.

The skipper and I had agreed to row some distance off and watch the "Krauts" sink "*Svanfos*". Those boats certainly had wings, as the boys made double tempo with the oars, until we were well in the clear. By now "*Borglia's*" boats were out of sight. While we lay hove to, the big noise, U Boat came speeding up on us like a ghost. No wonder we had not seen her, so well matched was her color with the water, and her decks only a couple of feet above water. From the conning tower a brusque voice in broken English inquired: "Why in Donner Weter bist you so late?" "We have waited for you since 2 o'clock, and where habst du Verukte '*Borglia's*' boats gehen zu?"

"Jumping Mexican beans," what a joke, we left port under sealed orders and here is Fritz awaiting us with open arms, asking: "Why are you so late?" The irony of fate!

This showed what strong and efficient espionage they had. Captain Olsen was now ordered to come on board and bring the ship's papers with him, but hell and high water broke loose when he explained that in the confusion he had left them on board. The tower assemblage got up in a frenzy and the vandyke bewhiskered whaleback-commander started in true Prussian form: "Ach meine Himmel welche 'Klotzkopfe'" and other choice compliments. When the tirade was over our skipper entered on board the submarine, which I had made out to be U 30 and was a 2 gun outfit. Now my turn came to ferry alongside; into the boat stepped three strutting Germans, a Lieutenant, a Bos'n's Mate and a Bluejacket. The Lieutenant ordered the boat tied up alongside our other one, this done a merry-go-round chase started in search of "*Borglia's*" lifeboats, but all in vain. They were "Sporles verschwunt" as the Lieutenant expressed it.

The submarine was stopped in a position where they could, when the time came, do their target practice on both ships at the same time. Lieutenant Plun, who by this time had introduced himself, ordered my boat cast loose and proceed for "*Svanfos*" for those "Verdante papieren und mach schnell". I told the boys to pull on the sticks and get the kinks out of their backs, by showing our guest that it takes a "Norse Marinhero" to feather and wield an oar, and like greased lightning we in a jiffy were alongside.

Now the Lieutenant opened his food chute and asked: "Wo bist the ladder?" I told him how, in emergency cases, we always perform "Monkey calisthenics" by the use of ropes. Boy oh boy, it surely was a job climbing those tackles the way "*Svanfos*" rolled. A pilot ladder was hung over and the Germans ascended. The much wanted papers

were procured. Upon visiting the galley we found the java pot on the stove and still warm. Taking one last look around the deck, I said farewell to my ship, which in a short time I had developed a fancy for, and then back to the boat. The course was set for U 30, where the desired documents were delivered.

Now another ferry order came: I was to board "*Borglia*" in search of the ship's papers, as dusk soon would set in. This made sweet tempered me fighting mad, and I inquired "Why in pickled Bismark herrings have you not manned our other boat while we were off for '*Svanfos*'?" This North Sea De Luxe Express ferrying had tired my boat crew, but my only recourse was: "To keep my mouth shut or they would make an example of my disobedience."

With a "So long and we will be seeing you" to the skipper, we headed for "*Borglia*" post haste. I knew the way of those Prussian Goosesteppers" when they had the whiphand. Coming alongside, the same calisthenics had to be performed as "*Borglia's*" crew likewise had forgotten to be accommodating and the "Krauts" had to ascend baboon fashion. But our search was all in vain. Back into the boat and off for U 30.

We were just clear of the ship and on our course, when all of a sudden I noticed something rise out of the water a short distance off. Immediately after came a burst of lightning, a whine over our heads, and we saw a "Geyser" from where an artillery "visiting card" fell a little short of U 30.

I understood that this was an English submarine, but Lieutenant Plun as well as I could not get into our "noodles" how for the love of Mike it could happen that a "Limejuicer" was in these waters and the whole boatload of us were for a moment stunned. The Lieutenant explained his feelings as he

gaspingly exclaimed: "In the name of unsere Kaiser how can this happen?" An English U-boat dared to show up on Admiral von Tirpitz's adopted playground without their knowledge. Now shot after shot followed in quick succession, and we could see that John Bull's Tars had got their range, as their "Bon Bons" dropped dangerously close on U 30's tail. The Germans too had got their peepers on this unexpected visitor, and started to bark back as they made a running fight, but the first couple of shots were rotten ones and fell closer to us than to the English "Tub". The shells were whining and whistling over us, in truth the Huns "Artillery Food" dropped down so near that I ordered the boys to step up tempo on the oars, and we headed for the lee of "*Borglia*" as our present position was not exactly a spot to linger at, although we had a ringside seat to watch a sea battle. The "Lime Juicers" certainly had the best of the encounter the way their sub zigzagged as they barked and always was way in the clear, when Fritz's answer hit the water. To us in the boat it seemed as if U 30, while she was almost submerged, was hit. A groan came from the three Germans, and my thoughts during the encounter went to my skipper up there in the conning tower. Had he got back in the boat?

Just as sudden as the skirmish had started, the fireworks ceased and all was quiet on the North Sea Front. U 30 had disappeared and in the distance we saw "John Bull's Life Saver" chasing back and forth.

This encounter was surely an unusual experience and an unexpected thrill. It certainly got my old circulation pump to work at top speed, while we lay there in the "Firing Line." That earlier shooting had been my "Baptism", and now I, for my part, did not give a "Hoot". Not so with the Fritzes,

they surely got the scare of their lives. When the fracas ended they became docile, gone were their brusque, domineering manners. With peacoats turned to hide their identity and caps put away, the Lieutenant in a humble voice pleaded with me, that in case the English should come over to tell them we only had our crew in the boats. What those Krauts dreaded most of all was to be taken as prisoners.

The dusk was setting in and we headed for "Svanfos" and the other boat, as I was anxious to see and hear how they had fared. When we came up to them, I saw to my surprise that the skipper was missing and asked if anything was wrong. The Chief Engineer gave us a short resume of their trials and tribulations. When the first shell came whistling, God only knew where from, and fell in the water a little short of its mark, what a surprise that shot was for "Emperor Wilhelm's Disciples". U 30 of a sudden became a hive of activity. From the tower Mr. "Whiskers" roared his orders to the flabbergasted Heinies. Officers and men scattered to their different stations and made ready to answer this unwelcome visitor, get under way and descend. We hollered for Captain Olsen, but got no response. On board the U boat it certainly was a mad scramble. They had believed that here was nothing to worry them and thus had been caught napping. As the propeller started to swivel, a shot fell so close that I thought U 30 was hit the way she heeled over. In a hurry our painter was cut, as we had to get away, and nobody answered our shouting for them to let the line go. Our boat was half swamped from the "Geyser" of the last shot, and to a start we had difficulty in getting under way, but now she is dry as Noah's Ark. Of Captain Olsen nothing could be seen, he had vanished like Jonah of the Old Testament when he went rub-

bernecking in a whale. By the time the Germans got under way, they had their peeper's focused on the trouble shooter and started to throw "Confetti" at the Lime Juicers, as they made a running fight of it.

"I think," Johnsen continued, "the Heinies were lousy shots, besides John Bull's Tars knew how to maneuver and whoever heard of the Germans making a fight when they are on even footing. No Sir!"

The course was set for "Svanfos" where we found everything as we left it. The boats were hoisted and secured. While the engineers got the "Coffee Grinder" ready, the hash slinger was busy getting our belated supper heated up. The "All Ready" signal sounded from the engine room and under top speed we headed for the coast. Those 25 miles were made in a "jiffy" and on our arrival inside the 3 mile limit we slowed down with the ship's prow on a course for Utsire Light, where a Pilot could be obtained for Haugesund.

At 7 A.M. the Pilot boarded us and by 9 o'clock the mudhook was again at rest. The Port Authorities arrived now alongside and inquired: "What is the matter?" We gave them an account of the incident. The Navy authorities sent a launch out and took the Germans under their "Guarding Wings".

The answer to the English submarine's timely showing I got, while I scanned the morning newspaper and saw an article about a French statesman on a mission to Russia who had landed in Stavanger on Sunday. He had made the voyage over the North Sea in an English submarine which had landed him outside the Neutrality Zone on a chartered Norwegian fishing boat. The rest I could guess. Captain Olsen's fate I learned a few months later, he "poor soul" was taken to Emden, Germany, a Navy base, where he was interned for some time.



Photo by A. Eriss

CAPTAIN FRED JUST SHOWS STUDENTS "THE ROPES."
Instruction in rigging sailing ships is a part of the course in seamanship at the Institute's Merchant Marine School.



Class in Lifeboat Handling as taught in the U. S. Maritime Commission's school on Hoffman Island.

A Seaman's Letter

MY DEAR MR. KELLEY:

Referring to my letter of Dec. 14, 1939, thanking you and your efficient staff for kindness received while a guest at the Institute from December 20, 1937 to December 14, 1939, and for seeing me through a financial crisis, hospitalization at New York Eye and Ear Infirmary November 15 to December 13, 1939, I said I hoped to be able to repay the financial loan at an early date. I sincerely hope you have not come to the conclusion that I wrote idle words. Maybe, it would be just as well to give you a history of my case, so that you may have all the facts.

Having had to leave my ship S/S "Chincha" on December 17, 1937 owing to failing eyesight, I started a long seige of hospitalization, physical pain and I might say mental anguish owing to dwindling finances and worry as to outcome of what turned out to be four major operations on my eyes, and worry as to my being able to make a living. After thirty years at sea from apprenticeship in British Sailing Ships on thru to Master of ships, it was natural that I should worry as to my future. . . .

However, my owners asked me to come to New York from Philadelphia and go before U. S. Public Health Service there. Upon examination they found I had bilateral polar cataracts and so lifted my Master's License and thus I was unable to earn my living. On January 5, 1938, I entered the Marine Hospital, Staten Island, for operation on my right eye and was discharged March 5, 1938 to await time for operation on my left eye. Then I entered Hospital October 10, 1938 for operation on my left eye and discharged February 23, 1939. While in the hospital second time, after operation on left eye, I lost sight in right but was told

sight would come back. . . .

So finding I was up against it, upon advice of your Mr. Richard Greyble, Jr. I consulted Dr. Harrison in the Institute Clinic. He found I had detachment (right eye) and so on his advice, entered New York Eye and Ear Infirmary June 15 to July 21, 1939. I financed the hospitalization myself, but Dr. Harrison did the operating without fee. On discharge from Infirmary, I was told it would be necessary to return for another operation later. This worried me for naturally after such a long spell, December 1937 to July 1939, I was becoming financially embarrassed to say the least. Fortunately, I had been able to save some money even if I did have family obligations (mother and sister) and so far had been able to finance my expenses without having to go to anyone for a loan. . . .

So after consulting Mr. Greyble, I swallowed my pride and asked for an interview with Mr. Pearson, told him my circumstances and asked him if he could arrange to finance my hospitalization. No sooner asked than the request was granted and so I was able to enter the hospital and altho I suffered pain, I did not have mental worry as to how my bills were to be met. So your "Welfare Department" is one phase of the Institute work I have had a close insight of and am deeply appreciative of all kindnesses received thru the same.

You see, I am interested in the Institute because I have seen it grow from a small room at #1 State Street and a floating Church between the bridges in 1907 (when I came to America to start my apprenticeship in the largest British sailing ship, the four mast barque "Daylight" of the Anglo-American Oil Company) to its present situation and there is no comparison. When I came to America May 1st, 1907,

Glimpses of Seamen at "25 South Street" on Shore Leave

Reverend Dr. Mansfield was in charge and a Mr. Wood who was the organist met me at the steamer, S/S "Celtic" for I was in charge of Captain Smith, later in command of the ill-fated "Titanic". He was a friend of my father who was in command of Union Castle Line ships running to South Africa. You see it has been interesting to me, seeing the growth of the Institute from the early days, May 1st, 1907, to this and I marvel at the compactness and efficiency of the Institute and all its departments from the fine navigation school on the roof to the basement Baggage Room, Laundry and Tailor Shop.

So it gives me great pleasure at this time to enclose money-order covering my debt to the Institute. The money-order represents a material debt paid. The other kindnesses received from your entire staff cannot be paid back except by saying thanks and deep appreciation from bottom of my heart, that is spiritual. Naturally I have had closer contact with some of your large staff than others and in closing I would mention personally a few who have been most kind and considerate to me and I would appreciate it if you could personally give them my deep and sincere thanks: Rev. Mr. McDonald, Rev. Father Bensley, Mr. Westerman, Capt. Morasso, Dr. Harrison, Mrs. Latimer, Mr. Powell at Desk, Mrs. Gladys McDonald, cigar-stand, I am especially indebted to Mr. Dick Greyble, Jr. for doing so much for me, going out of his way to visit me weekly without fail, sometimes twice a week, at different hospitals.

Wishing you and yours everything that is good and continued success in your good work.

Most sincerely, WILLIAM M.



British Combine Photos, Ltd.

Main Entrance



Photo by Marie Higginson

Enjoying the Movies



Photo by Marie Higginson

A Game of Bowling

Sailing

By G. P. Hammond, Bos'n, In Training, Hoffman Island, U. S. Coast Guard

SAILING in the modern sense may be construed to apply to steam, motorship, motor boat, or any other mechanical propulsion, and seldom to apply directly to a ship with masts and sails. Any man can become a mechanical sailor nowadays, so long as he knows how to scrub paint, work and stand his watch inside of a glassed in wheelhouse with the iron "mike" holding the ship on the course and every other modern convenience.

But after all, man is still being tossed around by old mother nature and her rolling, tumbling surface of the oceans. All the modern equipment and thousand foot steamers still have to roll and pitch enough to remind this modern man that he has not yet become master of the wind and sea. Sailing under sail is still being taught on the nautical school ships of many nations and often being questioned by our modern sailor, who says, "Why teach that stuff. We will never earn a dime on a sailing ship nowadays," and feels it a waste of time to learn a little about sailing. However, sailing still remains the foundation of real understanding of what the wind and sea mean to a ship, whether she be sail or steam. The sailor on a sailing ship learns what leeway is in its real sense, what the sea will do on the beam, on the bow, and over the stern. He learns the full appreciation of working with the elements, or fighting against them. He learns to know the direction of the wind by a glance of the water on the windward side. He understands what a sudden squall will do and learns to sight them coming over the water. He learns what the leeshore means to a ship, how a strong current affects the movements of his ship, and many other things that every man on every ship should know, together with a

From the Hoffman Island Log, June, 1940

thorough training in observing and forecasting weather as it was necessary for the old timer to know his clouds to enable him to know when to work his ship to an advantageous position to obtain the maximum benefit of the shift of wind and to run into a safe anchorage to avoid a storm, as well as how to handle a ship in a heavy sea and ride the storm offshore. All these things are the very ground work of what every sailor should know, but in this ever-rushing world, we don't want to stop long enough to start at the beginning, we want to be modern and begin halfway there.

No matter what kind of a ship she may be, they all have to bow to the wind and sea, and the principles of the sailing ship are the guide for them all.

The small boat training given here at Hoffman Island, in both pulling boats and boats under sail, is the very beginning of what every sailor should have, landing these small boats alongside of the float with and against the wind, combatting a strong current at times. The actual feel of a steering oar, how she holds her way, and how the wind throws the bow off when high out of water forward. It is hoped that sail boat races will be held in the very near future when the weather warms up more, as the rules of safety are so often disregarded in a race.

DON'T KICK

What is the use of kicking, friend,
When things don't look your way
What is the use of hollering
And grumbling night and day?
The thing to do is curb your tongue
Cut out that little whine
And when they ask you how you are
Just say, I'm doing fine!
Concentration, inspiration,
dampened with a lot of perspiration
Will help you reach your destination.
Act right, think right, do right
One can't go wrong if you live up
to the above; it's nice to be nice,
Try it.

By SEAMAN JESS WILSON

Escape from Davy Jones

By George W. Bill, Second Mate, Esso Baltimore

Editor's Note: We are indebted to the editor of the "Ship's Bulletin"* for permission to reprint the following tale, in two parts by two seafarers.

*Published by the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey.



TO BE trapped in a sunken submarine which has but a few feet of her stern above water, to escape by crawling through a small hole cut in the submerged vessel's hull by men from a passing ship, and years later to discover that the engineer in charge of cutting the hole in the submarine's hull was a Chief Engineer in the ESSO fleet in which you yourself are a deck officer—that was one of my interesting experiences. The engineer who supervised the cutting of the hole through which our submarine crew escaped was Carl Jakobsen, Chief Engineer of the *C. A. Canfield*. The occasion was the sinking of the submarine S-5 off Cape Henlopen in August, 1920, and was the last cruise of that undersea fighter.

"As for my account of the disaster, let me take you back to the latter part of August and the first days of September in the year 1920. Probably many will recall the accident which caused the sinking of the S-5, which was a similar ship to the S-4 which sank off Provincetown, Mass.

The S-5

"This type of boat was 231' in length. The compartments, beginning at the bow, were the torpedo room and next the battery room, in which we had our bunks, lockers, etc. This was the living quarters for the crew. Under the flooring, which came up in sections, the batteries were located. The officers' bunks were in the rear of this compartment. Next came the central operating compartment. The boat was controlled from this compartment when submerging and running

submerged. The various valves for flooding the tanks, blowing the water from the tanks, the diving rudders, motor controls, the radio room and galley also were located in this compartment.

"Next came the engine room. There were two 750-H.P. Diesel engines in this compartment, next to which was the motor room. In addition to the motors there were also located here the air compressors which charge the tanks with air used for blowing water from the tanks. Over the central operating compartment was the conning tower, entrance to which was gained by a ladder. The watertight hatch could be closed separating the two compartments. The boat was steered from this tower while submerged.

"The S-5, after being commissioned during the spring of 1920 at Portsmouth Navy Yard, N. H., where she was built, operated along the New England coast waiting for the Submarine Division of which we were a part to sail for the Pacific coast and eventually to the Asiatic Station with operating base at Cavite, Philippine Islands.

"While waiting for the Division to complete arrangements for the trip, the S-5 was ordered on a recruiting trip to visit several cities in the Southern Atlantic states. The cities had been notified of our intended visit and had planned affairs such as theatre parties and the like.

"On August 29 we left Boston for Baltimore. En route we were to make several yearly test dives such as a twenty-four-hour run on the engines, a six-hour submerged run on the motors, a one-hour full power run on the engines, and the final test, a one-hour full power submerged run on the motors.

The Last Dive

"All tests but the final one, the

one-hour full power submerged run, had been completed successfully. . . .

"On account of the roughness of the sea the tanks on the windward side were filling faster than the tanks on the lee side and the boat was taking on a list. In order to correct this list the valves on the side responsible for the list were closed and opened when required. This procedure occupied the skipper's attention. We were on the way down. The water began rushing into the boat through the sub-valves because the main valve had by some accident been left open. A Stillson wrench was used in trying to close the main valve but the pressure became so great it could not be turned. The men in the motor and engine rooms succeeded in closing their sub-valves but the man in the torpedo room could not get his closed. He left the compartment waist deep in water, closing the water-tight door behind him.

"On the Bottom"

"We struck at 185 feet. The Captain had given the command to blow everything at the first knowledge of water rushing in, but the speed at which we were traveling and the amount of water rushing in made it impossible to rise. After settling on the bottom and various methods of pumping and blowing had been tried to raise the boat, the tail extended about fifteen feet above the water. All the compartment water-tight doors had been closed and communication was carried on by means of a telephone system in the boat. Water had rushed into the battery room, covering the batteries, and chlorine gas formed. Some of the boys who were in that compartment entered the control room, closing the door behind them. Gas had escaped into the control room and when the fellows started to sneeze (a sign that the chlorine gas is about) the Captain ordered us to leave the control room for the engine and motor rooms. When the water-tight doors were opened lead-

ing into the engine room we were greeted with a flood of bilge oil and water.

Faith in the Skipper

"As many men as could went into the motor room, the remainder finding seats wherever possible. My seat was on one of the cylinders of the engine, warm when we first entered the engine room but gradually growing cold. Work was immediately started in the very tail of the boat cutting with hand ratchet wrenches and hack saw blades, in fact, anything that would cut steel. Our electric drill had become grounded. Our regular lights dimmed and went out but the emergency lights held. After cutting away at the hull for nearly a day we were rewarded by a hole about six inches long and one-half inch wide.

"Our life saver happened to be a bottle of oxygen located in the engine room. When the air became stagnant and impossible to breathe through the nose a little would be released. They certainly were a game crew, every single one of them taking whatever was to come as real men—all having faith in our skipper, knowing that if anything could be done he would do it. He was up in the tail working with the rest of the men and encouraging them along. Time didn't mean a thing; it seemed more like a nightmare. After some hours we felt the boat vibrate and heard a dull noise. We didn't know where it came from, whether it was a gas explosion or from the amount of air pressure in the torpedo room. . . .

"Finally the Captain noticed a vessel passing a few miles away. It passed from his vision. Later it reappeared close at hand. A small pipe with a white shirt on the end was forced through the hole and waved. The ship came alongside and when they discovered life on the submarine they tied up to the tail. The steamer proved to be the S.S. *Alanthus*, a freighter."

The Other Side of the Story

By Carl Jakobsen, Chief Engineer, C. A. Canfield

"The S.S. *Alanthus*, one of the wooden ships belonging to the Shipping Board, left Boston, Massachusetts, for the James River, Virginia, on August 31, 1920, to be laid up.

"The First Assistant Engineer and I were standing on the starboard side midships looking over the sea when we discovered a small object on the horizon far away. After attentive observation it looked to us as though an airplane had landed on the water. I reported our discovery to the Captain but he told me it was a fisherman. I then joined the First Assistant and we both watched the object through binoculars and discovered a white rag moving back and forth, then stop, then start moving again.

"When the *Alanthus* was about five miles away we discovered this object to be a large submarine standing on its head with the tail straight up in the air, both propellers and rudders out of the water, approximately thirty feet of the after part of the vessel. The Captain ordered a lifeboat lowered and manned by several sailors. We pulled alongside the submarine and knocked on the hull. Immediately there came a knock from the inside and we heard the voices of the crew but not plainly enough to be understood.

"We returned to the *Alanthus* and then proceeded under slow speed in order to make fast to the submarine. It was a very dangerous job as there was a heavy swell, but the weather was fine. At last we got the lines fast to the propeller shafts and kept the engine on the *Alanthus* running slow astern to enable us to remain on the same spot and keep away from the propellers and rudders.

How It Was Done

"The sailors rigged up a scaffold on the submarine and then the

First Assistant and myself got busy with cold chisels and sledge hammer on the corner of the steel plate. We ripped open a hole four inches square and then went back to the *Alanthus* engine room, disconnected the suction lines from the fire hose injector pump and connected the ice machine compressor pump to the fire line, made all connections good and tight, then connected four lengths of fire hose to the fire hydrant on the fo'c'sle head. We then lowered the fire hose through the hole we had made with the cold chisels in the bottom of the submarine, started the pump and it worked fine. You could see, smell and hear the foul air escaping through the hole.

"We found out how the crew was able to signal with the white rag. One man knocked out one of the rivets, tied a white rag on one end of a four-inch brass rod, stuck the rod through the hole and then wiggled the rod. The men took turns and the space where they sat was about the size of a dog house with the opening under him. We marked out a hole about fourteen inches by eighteen inches and center-punched for 102 half-inch holes. We rigged up the old man (a leverage device) and the drill ratchet and started drilling at 4:00 p.m. . . . At two o'clock in the morning the last hole was drilled and with a little chipping the plate was out.

Everybody Happy

"The Captain rigged up the forward boom, made a large canvas sling and was all ready for the first man to come out. By three o'clock the whole crew was out and resting on the deck of the *Alanthus* enjoying the fresh air. The submarine crew was supplied with cots, eats, drinks and smokes, in fact, everything the crew could do for them.

Favorite Ships

A SYMPOSIUM of mariners' preferences in ships is a fine way of starting a frenzied discussion on the merits of respective vessels. A recent canvass taken in the officers' room on the third floor of the Institute, revealed some interesting reasons why certain ships are favorites among seafarers. The chief reason appears to be food. If the food is good, even if the ship is old and if the pay is less, the officers and crew are contented. Another point in favor of a ship is good fo'c'sle accommodations, and another factor to be considered is attractive ports of call on the voyage. Old-time sailing ship seamen liked the ship that had a kind-hearted mate. Modern day seamen are almost unanimous in preferring a tanker to a passenger ship.

For instance, Captain Henry Hjrookus, when asked the question, "What is your favorite ship, and why", replied readily: "A tanker, and particularly the tanker, 'Pat Doheny.' I was skipper of her for two years. She was a handy ship, never gave me any trouble. She had a fine crew who liked to work aboard her, so there was very little turn-over. Finally, she had a good chef. My favorite sailing ship was the 'Armada', a Scotch square-rigger. I worked as an able-bodied seaman aboard her in 1906. We had salt pork and beef, but I liked her anyway."

Chief Engineer Joseph Robertson echoed Captain Hjrookus' statement that a tanker is his favorite ship. When asked about the danger, he replied: "If the crew only smokes aft, according to regulations, a tanker is no more dangerous than any other type of vessel. And the sleeping quarters are more roomy. Mr. Robertson was one of the engine crew of the Lusitania, and he said she was a good ship, and had a fine captain."



Bo's'n George Finch told of his preference for the sailing ship "Wayfarer". "Her sister ships were the 'Wanderer' (referred to by John Masefield as a hell-ship) and the 'Seafarer,'" he said. "They were big 3,000 ton ships, built in Liverpool. The 'Wayfarer', was a honey—the smoothest sailing, sweetest, easiest ship I ever shipped on."

Eighty-year old Captain William Brennan expressed the opinion that all ships are the same to him. This brought forth exclamations of surprise from younger seafarers, so the veteran Captain modified his statement. "If the food is good, it's a good ship," he declared.

Christopher Walthall, radio operator on the "City of Houston", claimed this vessel as his favorite, "because she came through a hurricane in fine shape." John Quirk, with fine patriotic fervor, said that all American ships were the best. He's in the engine department, and once served aboard the Leviathan. "American ships have larger rooms for the crew, better meals, and improved sanitary conditions," he stated. "The Washington and the Manhattan are my favorites."

Captain Alan Villiers, who is now in Great Britain's Royal Navy, and who sailed in many of the Finnish-owned grain race ships, always claims the little square-rigger "Joseph Conrad" as his favorite of all the ships in which he has sailed.

Sailor Poetry

—CAPE HORN —

— 1891 —

Come all ye old shellbacks and list to my song,

With way, hay, and blow the man down.
The watch below was taking its ease
On the old ship, "Maid of Dover".
The wind was blowing a moderate breeze
With a long clean roll of following seas.
We were rounding Old Stiff in a bitter freeze,

And we hoped that the worst was over.
Then a't in the darkness we heard a hail
On the good ship "Maid of Dover",
"All hands on deck to take in sail
Turn out ye lubbers and face the gale,
For the seas are breaching across her rail
and the old ship's turning over".

We jumped to the rigging and out on the yard;

How we made it is hard telling.
We fisted the frozen canvas hard
And the blood from our bleeding fingers
poured

As we clung to the leaping swaying yard,
And the mate beside us yelling.

My matey slipped off the yard and fell
(The lad had seemed like a brother)
Into that raging pit of Hell —

He plunged to his death with an awful yell,

And I was the shipmate that had to tell
Of his end to his old gray mother.

My ditty is ended, my song it is sung,
Oh! Give us some time, for to blow the
man down.

By ISRAEL STOUT

THE OLD HULK

I sometimes wonder what the old hulk thinks,

As it wallows out there in the foam.
Does it long for the crew that it sheltered,

The people that once called it home?
Does it grieve when it weeps with the raindrops,

And sob when it groans in the gale,
Or remember yet the curses

Of the slaves who reefed the old sail?
It's so foolish to think there is something,

Made of canvas and wood that once shone,

Could cry out in grief and in sorrow,
Could sob when its left all alone.

But I hailed one this evening at sunset,
That was haunted it seemed, and that cried,

To the souls of the crewmen departed—
Long since, gone out on the tide.

By HOLT.

A SAILOR'S PRAYER

Now I lay me down to sleep
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.
Grant no other sailors take
My shoes or socks before I wake.
Lord, guard me in my slumber
And keep my hammock on its number.
May no clews or lashings break
And let me down before I wake.
Keep me safely in Thy sight
And grant us fire drill not tonight.
And in the morning let me wake
Breathing scents of sirloin steak.
Lord protect me in my dreams.
And make this better than it seems
Grant the time may swiftly fly
When I again shall rest on high,
In a snowy feather bed
Where I long to rest my head
Far away from all these scenes
And from the smell of half baked beans.
Take me back into the land
Where they dont scrub down with sand,
Where no demon typhoon blows
And where the women wash the clothes.
Lord, thou knowest all my woes
Feed me in my dying throes.
Take me back—I'll promise then
Ne're to leave my home again.

HOFFMAN ISLAND LOG June 20, 1940.

FROM WITHIN

The pessimist sat at his window
And watched the rain come down
His thoughts were attuned with the weather

His brow wore an ugly frown.
The monotonous drip of the water
That fell from the eave o'er head.

Oppressed the soul of this misanthrope
'Til he wished that his soul were dead.
He crouched in a great deep armchair;

And the sneer, that deformed his face,
Was like to some evil Satyr
Caught glooming in deep disgrace.

The man was alone at his window
He brooded on death with dread,
His body was thin and shriveled

His heart was a thing of lead
The poet stood at his window
And watched the rain from above,

His thoughts were attuned with the weather

And his heart was full of love.
He drank of the balmy moisture
Sweet breath from the fields of green,

And his soul seemed to be uplifted
As though from some vision seen.
He stood by the open window

And the smile that illum'd his face
Reflected a gentle spirit
Caressed by the hand of Grace.

The man was alone at his window,
He dreamed of a world of good.
A beam through the clouds shone on him,
And hallowed him where he stood.

By R. E. TUCKERMAN Fireman 3/C

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