

# The LOOKOUT



MORAN TUGS DOCK FRENCH LINER *LIBERTÉ*.

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE  
OF NEW YORK



## Sanctuary

Prayer by Captain Paul B. Cronk, U.S. Coast Guard Weather Ship "Bibb" just before he and his crew rescued 69 men, women and children on the Flying boat "Bermuda Sky Queen" Oct. 15th, 1947 "Oh, God, grant that I do not have to stand here helpless and see that plane open up and sink. Guide them down safely. Help me to save them."  
— From "Atlantic Monthly"

# The LOOKOUT

VOL. XLI, OCTOBER, 1950

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THIS MONTH'S COVER: With more than 1,200 passengers aboard, the French Line's refitted 49,850-gross-ton luxury liner SS. LIBERTE arrived in New York, August 23rd, six days out of Le Havre, France, and was accorded the traditional Harbor welcome.

Under command of Captain Herve Le Huede, the *Liberte* is manned by 955 officers, crew and service personnel . . . There is a deck crew of 96, an engine crew of 167 and 692 stewards, stewardesses and service personnel . . . Officers are all Nautical School graduates with long experience at sea under sail and steam . . . Seamen are largely recruited from the rugged Breton and Norman stock . . .

PLEASE SAVE THIS DATE — FOR OUR FALL THEATRE BENEFIT:  
THURSDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 30th

We have selected a sparkling new comedy by Sam Spewak, "THE GOLDEN STATE," starring the beloved actress JOSEPHINE HULL. Theatre-goers will remember her delightful performance in "Harvey" and in "Arsenic and Old Lace." We are counting on your loyal and generous support of this benefit. Proceeds will help to finance our welfare, recreational, religious and health facilities.

Notices will be sent you later.

# The Lookout

VOL. XLI

OCTOBER, 1950

NUMBER 10

## Further Adventures of Oscar

By Tom Bowers, Ship's Electrician

EDITOR'S NOTE: A world in turmoil—but our merchant seamen manage to keep their sense of humor. In this issue we offer recent sea yarns and tall tales written and illustrated by our Artists and Writers Club members, for your enjoyment. We hope they will give you brief respite from the grimmer side of life.

LOOKOUT readers have been asking for another story about Oscar, the whimsical sea turtle who always manages to elude the turtle factories at Key West and Tampa, but who does not escape other exciting experiences.

So we offer here the yarn of how Oscar became involved in a wedding.

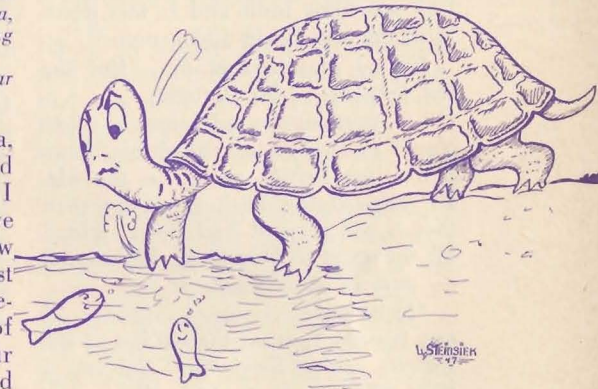
I FIRST met Jimmy Jones in Aruba, Dutch West Indies, during World War II. Two of my shipmates and I went ashore from our tanker. As we groped our way along the narrow sidewalk a loud voice came out past the heavy black-out curtains. Somehow we knew we were in front of Dutchman's Cafe and we felt our way inside. The voice we had heard was resonant enough to drive the enemy away, but the owner of the voice—Jimmy Jones was a little man, not more than five feet tall. He seemed very angry and was shaking his small fist toward the Dutchman.

"Where's the fight?" I asked.

"All over the world," the little man replied. "This Dutchy here practically implies I'm a liar when I tell him that sea serpents really exist. As sure as my name's Jimmy Jones I've actually seen one!"

My shipmates weren't interested in the subject so we had a quick beer and left the Dutchman's place while the little man's voice got louder and louder.

A few years later on South Street near the Institute I heard the same voice through the open doorway of Pat O'Connor's Clam and Oyster Bar. It was the little man, all right, and it was the same argument about



sea serpents. His adversary, a big Swede, glowered at him.

"You need some sleep, Jimmy. There you go imaginin' things again."

"I know what I see with my own two eyes and I haven't had a drink," bellowed the little man with the big voice.

"Just a minute," I interrupted, and turned to Jimmy. "Just where did you see this sea serpent? Was it by any chance off the coast of Punta Gorda, Honduras on the afternoon of June 14th, 1944?"

He looked at me in astonishment. "You saw it there, too?" he demanded.

"Yes, I did," I admitted. "But it wasn't really a serpent, although it sure did look like one."

The Swede spoke up. "See, Jimmy, what'd I tell you?"



Jimmy drew himself up to his full height. "Explain yourself," he bel- lowed.

"Certainly," I answered calmly. "I can supply you with all the details. A certain young Honduran couple who were very popular in Punta Gorda were going to be married."

"I thought we were talking about sea serpents," Jimmy broke in. "Keep to the subject!"

"I am. Just be patient," I told him. "The wedding was to be a gala affair. To make it so, the young men of the town went into the woods and brought out dried logs and tied them together with vines. A large float of logs was thus built and it was decorated for the bride and groom."

Jimmy glowered at me. "But the sea serpent—" he shouted.

"A popular broadcaster in New York was glancing over his news items just before going on the air. He refused the flash when he read that a sea serpent had been sighted off the coast of Honduras. He wanted no part of such nonsense."

"Nonsense!" boomed Jimmy. "I saw it myself, from the bridge of the Liberty ship *Benjamin Nelson*. I have witnesses to prove . . ."

"The 'sea serpent' you saw," I re- torted, "was the raft of logs lashed together and decorated with colored bunting for the wedding celebra- tion."

"But it was moving—and I could plainly see an enormous brown head," protested Jimmy.

"That was Oscar."

"Oscar? What do you mean?"

"Oscar—the sea turtle—a personal friend of mine."

"Go on. Go on." Jimmy's voice filled the Clam Bar.

The Swede added: "Better make this good, brother."

"It is good—and true," I answered. "Now it so happens that Oscar is very partial to a vegetable that grows in the woods—it's called breadroot. It's very prolific from Oklahoma down to Panama. I've eaten it, my- self."

"What in the name of names does breadroot have to do with sea ser- pents?" Jimmy yelled, shaking his fist under my nose.

"Plenty," I replied. "The Indian breadroot was suspended on a bam- boo pole. The young friends of the Honduran couple had put reins around Oscar's neck and a strong line which they tied to the raft. All that was needed to propel the raft was the power. The white breadroot held in front of the turtle's nose did the rest."

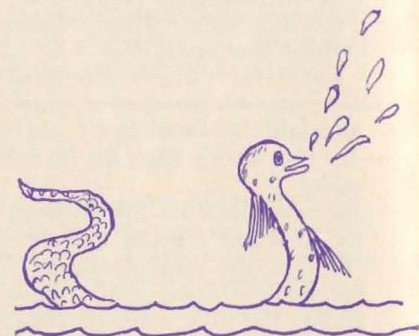
Jimmy was silent. I felt sorry for him. To tell him that there was no sea serpent was like disillusioning a child about Santa Claus. But I had to do it. "You see," I went on. "The water was choppy and from a dis- tance the logs and bunting looked exactly like a sea serpent's long body and Oscar's back appeared to be the head of the monster. A young Honduran ship's officer was fooled too and it was he who broadcast to the world that he had sighted a sea serpent."

A tear glistened in Jimmy's eye.

The Swede patted him on the back. "Cheer up, friend," he said. Maybe there's no sea serpent but at least there's Oscar."

"Come on," I offered. "I'll treat. Let's drink a beaker of clam juice to my good friend Oscar—who led a wedding!" And so we all did.

For other Oscar stories see Feb. 1947, Aug. 1947, Feb. 1948, May 1948 LOOKOUTS.



## No Flies on Brannigan

By Iain Alexander

"NO, Sir, there ain't no flies on Brannigan," and Brannigan chortled happily and beamed all over his chubby, sun-tanned face.

"Sure I've been around the world," he said, and added slyly, "I guess I've learned a few tricks, too."

"Indeed. I'd like to hear more about it, Mister Brannigan," the little man in the corner seat replied, his grey moustache acquirer with inter- est. "I often wish that I too had run away to sea. It must be a won- derful life," he sighed. Brannigan leaned forward in his seat, elbows on knees.

"Tell you somethin' else, mate. The *Lake Bonne* had one of the best able seamen outa Liverpool aboard her. And you know that guy's name, huh? Brannigan. Yes, yours truly. You see that suitcase, Mister," he confided in a whisper, pointing to the luggage rack. "That case is full of the finest silks, and stockings, and perfumes, and watches, the whole works. And did Brannigan pay? Not on your life, mate. I had it too well-hidden for the Customs john- nies. Brannigan fools 'em. No flies on Brannigan," he hiccuped.

The little man jumped nervously at the hiccup.

Brannigan lowered his voice and continued in a husky whisper. "Mon- day night I goes up to the cop at the dock gate with me big suitcase. I smiles, friendly like, and gives the cop the wink. Young fellow, he was, one o' them smart alecks," and he winked knowingly, and coughed. "Not so smart as Brannigan though."

"I sidles up to this 'ere young fel- ler, and I says, 'Listen son,' I says. 'I'm just on me way up to the left luggage office with me bag. Only me gear in it, son,' I says. 'But tomorrer night I'll be bringing me big bag full o' the goods, eh. What about it, son?' and I slips me hand into me pocket and fishes out a bottle of whiskey and a quid note. 'Okay, ole- timer,' he says and tips me the wink.



Drawing by Gordon Grant

Smart as a light I slip into his box and leaves the bottle and the quid, and ups with me suitcase and off." Brannigan paused and smiled.

"What then?" breathed the little man.

"Tuesday night," Brannigan went on, "I goes down the gangway with me other case, and up I goes to the dock gates. 'Evenin' pal,' I says to the young copper, and he looks at me and laughs, a grim look on his ugly mug. 'In here,' he says. 'The sergeant's waiting for you,' and sure enough there was the sarge smackin' his lips, and all excited about the big arrest. 'Let's take a peep in the bag, oletimer,' he barks, official like. I wish you could have seen their faces when I opens me bag and shows them me workin' gear."

"But . . . but?" the little man be- gan.

Brannigan continued: "What about the whisky you gave the con- stable last night, the sarge yells, and his face got red as a blinkin' beet. 'Whiskey,' I says, all innocent like. 'I never touches whisky, sergeant,' I says. 'I never saw this young feller in me life before. You can't pin any- thin' on me, sarge,' I says, and off I trots."

"But . . . but?" said the little man.

"That's the joke," Brannigan laughed. "I had the stuff with me on the Monday night," and he slapped



his knee and guffawed. "And that's not all, mate," he continued breathlessly. "No flies on Brannigan. The bottle of whisky I give 'im was full o' cold tea."

The little man laughed with him. "Very clever, very clever, indeed," he said heartily. "I'd like to see the stuff, though. How do I know you're not pulling my leg?"

"Me?" "Brannigan never spun the bull in his life," he boasted. "Cast your keekers on this lot," he snorted, dragging at the heavy suitcase.

The case, opened on the seat, drew a gasp even from the little man. "Good stuff?" Brannigan ran his fingers through yards and yards of fine silks. "Loads o' stuff, eh?" and he beamed, but the smile died on his lips. His eyes rose slowly from the police badge in the little man's hand, and he stared at the grey moustache in wild disbelief.

"Detective-sergeant Smith is the name," the little man confided, a faint smile wrinkling the corners of his mouth. "I wouldn't advise you to make any trouble, Brannigan," and he tapped his side pocket meaningfully.

Brannigan, pale now beneath his tan, wilted visibly. His knees, weak and shaking, gave away beneath him, and he sank slowly to his seat, his hands fumbling for support.

"Why you little . . ." he bellowed and rose menacingly, his face flushed with rage, but the rage quickly subsided when he caught sight of the gun in the little man's hand.

"Careful, Brannigan," he cautioned. "Take it quietly, old man. It's much better that way," and Brannigan resumed his seat, shoulders drooping. "We reach London in five minutes," Smith said. "I'll take the case, and we'll move out quietly together, eh? That suit you, Brannigan?"

"Anything you say—Sir," Brannigan mumbled.

The train stopped with only the slightest of jolts.

"After you, my friend," the little man invited, and Brannigan, grasp-

ing the bag full of his working gear preceded him along the platform.

"You wait here. Under the clock. I'll phone through for a police car. Take my tip and don't get any foolish notions into your head," and Smith departed.

Brannigan, eyes wistful, watched him go, and of a sudden new life seemed to flow through his veins. "Be blowed if I'll wait," he muttered, and scampered for the other exit. At the taxi rack, he paused. His name and address. Yes, he had given Smith his name, the name of his ship. They'd soon pick him up. Things would be the worse for him.

Better go back and face it, he thought, grimly. Better to get it over and done with. I'll be an old man when I come out of clink, he sighed, an old, old man, and his shoulders drooped. What would prison life be like, he thought. I'll miss the sea, he told himself, and thought of salt-soray, and heaving decks, and old shipmates. His mind drifted back to the good old days of sail, his adventures at sea, his wild youth, and with a shudder he contemplated a lonely old age in clink.

Half an hour, an hour went past, he waited on. "Anything wrong, mate?" a porter asked.

"Nuthin', son," Brannigan gulped. "Not a thing," and his eyes turned again to the clock, and this time he was convinced.

The blood rushed to his face, he spluttered a bit, but his shoulders squared, and once again he looked like the old Brannigan, tough old sea-dog. He picked up the bag containing his working gear, and departed.

"Detective-sergeant Smith me eye," he spat disgustedly. "No flies on Brannigan, huh. If ever I set eyes on friend Smith again, bedad an' I'll make him swaller his phoney police badge."

(Second prize-winner, 1949 Short Story Competition.)  
Seafarers' Education Service  
Selwyn House, Endsleigh Street  
London, W.C. 1 England

## New-Found-Land

By H. W. Corning, Chief Engineer

WE were toasting our shins around the old barrel stove at the Crossroads store one stormy night. Uncle Elair pointed to the chimney with his pipe and said:

"Hear that? Blow me down if it don't sound for all the world like the trade wind in the riggin'."

"You know?" he added, "I used to follow the sea years ago but I finally gave it up on account of sit down strikes. Shiver my timbers if we didn't sit down so often and for such long periods that I couldn't make enough money to keep my overalls reseated."

"Yes siree." He continued, "I've seen many odd things on the sea in my day but nothing ever equalled that which befell old Swensen our carpenter on the *Carib Clipper*."

"Swensen was a good shipmate and an A-1 sailor, but he had his peculiarities one of which he carried over from the First World War. Seems like a ship he was on got hit with two torpedoes and suddenly went down with great loss of life. Swensen, however, floated to safety on a home made raft.

"As soon as he joined the *Carib Clipper*, after World War II began, he started constructing another raft and on this one he built a sort of dog house. It was only natural that he'd get ribbed and when we nicknamed him 'Old Man Noah', he just answered 'Ya! Ya!' and each night crawled into his dog house."

Old Uncle Elair paused to relight his pipe.

"As the war dragged on," he resumed, "the *Carib Clipper* turned out to be one of the few Caribbean ships to escape torpedoes. However, sooner or later a ship's luck runs out and on voyage 203 we ran smack into a tropical hurricane. Its 160 miles an hour gusts screamed like the amplified wails of a million wild cats. The drumming wind ripped the wave tops off bodily and hurled

them at us. Next we were attacked by mountainous confused seas which straffed and raked us end to end.

"At one time I saw the galley smoke stack taking off through the air like a jet plane and roll me on my beam ends if it wasn't chasing a life boat cover. Some time before the storm Swensen had been ordered not to sleep in the dog house, but he must not have heeded the warning for when the driving spray cleared enough to see aft it was all too plain that the raft dog house and Swensen had gone over the side.

"We all knew that Swensen's contraption couldn't live in such a storm and to manoeuver to search for him impossible in that gale. There was nothing we could do except feel sorry for him. It was just one of those things—Swensen's time had come! For him it was 'finished with engines' and the deep six." Uncle Elair paused, then continued. "Time rolled on, the war ended. We hauled coffee from Colombia and on Voyage 209 we lifted a full load which put the old *Carib Clipper* well below her marks. You could lean over the side and scoop up water with your cap.

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By Derek Chittock Courtesy, "LILLIPUT", London.



We learned that our route would be over what is known as the Southern passage and smack through the Sargasso Sea. This lane assured us of good weather and on this never to be forgotten afternoon it was no exception.

The day dawned fair and clear with excellent visibility. We had just consumed (by shooting the breeze) 25 minutes of the three P.M. fifteen minute coffee period when suddenly and wildly the lookout shouted 'Land ho! Land ho! On the port bow!' On the port bow, land, yea land!—New-Found-Land!"

"Well belay me if this didn't take the wind out of our sails for we knew no land existed within thousands of miles. We dashed forward to find out if the lookout had seen a mirage or most likely got a hold of a flask of monkey run or sneaky pete (smoke) in which case we'd secure him before he ran amuck or jumped over the side.

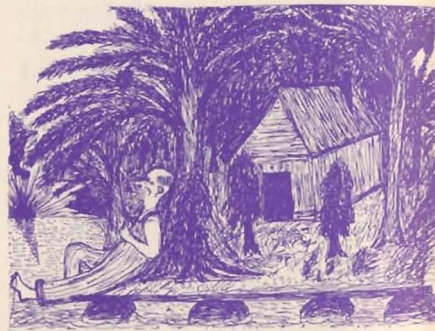
During our dash forward it was only natural to look ahead and 'twas then we saw it and for a minute you could have knocked me into the lee scuppers with a feather, for there with tropical vegetation and palm trees waving gently in the breeze, lay one of the most appealing islands I've ever seen.

We looked and looked and still

couldn't believe our eyes until we heard some one shouting and blow me down and keelhaul me if it wasn't our old shipmate Swensen!

We pulled alongside and he explained. Seems like after the storm he'd drifted into the innermost eddy of the Sargasso. Then as planks, logs and empty drums drifted toward him he spliced them to his raft. Later on he covered the whole works with seaweed. Many uprooted trees drifted near and he planted these in the seaweed. Then finally a case of seeds drifted in and now he was all set with a full acre farm.

However, the most remarkable thing about the whole layout was his water supply. For just behind his shack alongside a small rolling hill there bubbled a spring of fresh water sparkling clear and tasty!



Drawing by H. W. Corning

## How Did Shakespeare Know?

By F. E. Knight

**I**F you do not read Shakespeare now you probably did when you were at school. Did it ever strike you then, or does it now, what a lot that remarkable man knew about the sea?

Of course he knew a lot about a great number of things—so much that some people think he was not one man but a score. He had inside knowledge of a hundred trades. So have a lot of authors today; or, if they want it, they can soon acquire it. But did you ever read a book about the sea, or introducing a seaman, that was obviously written by a landsman? If you did, then you

will have noticed the tiny flaws that give the show away; the odd words misused—I read the other day a story in which the crew of a tramp steamer went ashore in 'the pinnacle'; the speeches which do not quite ring true in the mouth of a sailor; the indications that the author has got no closer to the sea than being a passenger in a liner. You must have noticed these, even if you have not encountered such a magnificent boob as the novelist Ouida's famous description of a boat's crew—"They all rowed fast, but stroke rowed fastest."

Now, if you have not done so recently, have a look at some of Shakespeare's nautical references and see if you can find any flaws. Take his description of a ship on a lee shore in *THE TEMPEST*.

First the master tells the boatswain to shake the men up:  
"Fall to't yarely, or we run ourselves aground."

Then the boatswain:  
"Heigh, my hearts! Cheerly, cheerly, my hearts Yare, yare! Take in the topsail. Tend to the master's whistle. Blow, till thou burst thy wind, if room enough!"

The last sentence, presumably, a sotto voce comment on the master's whistle blowing!

Then the passengers fussing around:

"Good boastwain, have care. Where's the master? Play the men."

Bosun: I pray now, keep below.

Passenger: Where is the master, bosun?

Bosun: Do you not hear him? You mar our labour. Keep your cabins. You do assist the storm.

Passenger: Nay, good, be patient.

Bosun: When the sea is! Hence! What care these roarers for the name of king? To cabin. Silence! Trouble us not!

Passenger: Good, yet remember whom thou hast aboard.

Bosun: None that I love more than myself. You are a counsellor; if you can command these elements to silence, and work the peace of the present, we will not hand a rope more. Use your authority. If you cannot, give thanks you have lived so long and make yourself ready in your cabin for the mischance of the hour, if it so hap. Cheerily, good hearts! Out of our way I say!

Yes, I like that boatswain, and I think Shakespeare had more sympathy with him at that moment than he had with the passengers, kings and counsellors though they were.

And the boatswain was a seaman. Presently we hear him roaring:

"Down with the topmast! Yare! Lower, lower! Bring her to try with



Courtesy East River Savings Bank

the main course. (The passengers scream.) A plague upon this howling! They are louder than the weather, or our office. (The passengers come on deck.) Yet again? What do you here? Shall we give o'er and drown? Have you a mind to sink?"

The passengers object, and argue, and he tells them, "Work you, then"—and later, to the men, "Lay her a-hold, a-hold! Set her two courses; off to sea again; lay her off."

Well, the ship strikes and breaks up, but it is no fault of that tough seaman.

Notice, by the way, the use of the word "Course" for the lower square sails. How many, even of Shakespeare's Elizabethan audiences, would know that word in that sense?

It is possible, of course, that Shakespeare had that scene 'vetted' by a sailor. But I doubt it. Ben Johnson said of Shakespeare that "he never blotted a line"; in other words, he wrote down the words as they came, and altered none. He is hardly likely to have called in expert assistance afterwards. Besides, there was no need for him to have written that scene at all. The shipwreck could have been implied, as such things often are, by the characters talking over the event afterwards. That boatswain need not have appeared in the play—but what we should have missed!

It is also true that the Elizabethans lived much closer to the sea than we do. Even a crossing from Britain to France might last days and pro-



duce more real experience of the perils of the sea than would a pleasure cruise round the world today. The average Elizabethan gentleman would have had ample opportunity for observing the ways of the sea and learning its language. At the same time, it should be remembered that the gentry, as a rule, were not seamen; they served afloat as soldiers. We think of Sir Walter Raleigh, for instance, as a great seaman; whereas in fact he probably left both seamanship and navigation severely alone, relying upon his 'master'.

How did Shakespeare get his knowledge? As an unusually observant passenger—or as a seaman?

So little is known of Shakespeare's life that it is quite possible he did serve on board ship for a few years. What seems to me to point to this is, not so much the few really nautical scenes such as the one described above, but the large number of nautical allusions he brings in, often quite needlessly, but as though they came to him naturally, as to a true sailor. Characters, landsmen themselves, are made to call up images of the sea and seafaring to illustrate their speeches. A few instances will suffice:

In Richard II, Northumberland is complaining of the king's tyranny, and that the nobles go calmly on, enduring it. "But lords, we hear this fearful tempest sing, yet seek no shelter to avoid the storm; we see the wind sit sore upon our sails, and yet we strike not, but securely perish."

In Romeo and Juliet, Romeo, who

is certainly no sailor, says when he is heading for trouble by gate-crashing the Capulet's ball. "But he that hath the steerage of my course direct my sail." And again, when he is happy, he refers to "The high top-gallant of my joy." Even when he is dying Romeo begs Death—"Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on the dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary bark."

These references in Romeo and Juliet are particularly interesting, because the play has no nautical association whatever. Its characters are not likely to have had any of the seafaring experiences that would befall the average Elizabethan Englishman. Usually Shakespeare does preserve a sense of fitness in the speeches he gives his characters. In this play the sea seems to have been so prominently in his mind that he forgot the rules.

When Harry Hotspur in Henry IV—Part I talks of diving "into the bottom of the deep where fathom line could never touch the ground," we can at least assume that Hotspur a soldier, would have made a sea voyage or two and watched the heaving of the lead. When, in the same play, Mortimer, speaking of Hotspur, says, "Yea, but mark how he bears his course and runs me up with like advantage on the other side," we can guess that he had often watched the mediaeval warships manoeuvring for position, each trying to get to windward of the other, each flying the personal standard of her commander.

But what should a young Italian gallant like Romeo know of 'high top-gallants?' And how did King Henry IV know so well the ship-boy's tendency to fall asleep on lookout?—"Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast seel up the ship-boy's eyes, and rock his brains in cradle of the rude imperious surge, and in the visitation of the winds, who takes the ruffian willows by the tops, curling their monstrous heads, and hanging them with deafening clamour to

the slippery clouds, that with the hurly death itself awakes?"

A fine description of bad weather, that, and one may suppose that the king had often seen such weather. One also suspects that Shakespeare had spent a night watch in the crow's nest—or, if they did not have such things in his day, perched in the rigging. He must have known what it was to have his brains "rocked in cradle of the rude imperious surge" and have felt the temptation to let his eyes close and to hell with the consequences. Shakespeare knew it; but I suggest he is a little 'out of character' when he tells us King Henry knew it.

Perhaps these instances will be sufficient to show what I mean: how allusions and imagery which would be quite foreign to the average landsman spring so readily to Shakespeare's mind that he cannot keep them out of the mouths of even the least likely characters. They can easily be multiplied by a casual reading of his plays.

I should like to end with a reference which is taken, not from any of the plays, but from a sonnet.

*It is the star to every wandering bark,*

*Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.*

Now that makes sense to us; we

know all about taking the altitude of a star. But how many landsmen do, even today? Ask the average landsman of what use is a star to a sailor, and he will answer, "To steer by." It is a common illusion. The amazing thing is that Shakespeare should have known it was not true. What did he know of measuring altitudes? Presumably his contemporaries used the astrolabe or some such instrument. They took their latitude from the pole star on meridian altitude. But only real deep water sailors would know anything of this, and in Shakespeare's day not so many seamen had made really long voyages. Quite the majority would be content with pilotage and dead reckoning. Shakespeare, however, knew of it. He quite casually makes the reference, as though it were the most familiar thing in the world to him.

Of course, he may have read about it somewhere, or heard it from some returned voyager, just as he may have got some old sailor to 'vet' that scene from The Tempest. But—well, I doubt it.

I venture to suggest it is high time we adopted our great William as a brother. Let us say he was a sailor, and let the scholars, if they can, prove that he wasn't!

From: THE SEAFARER (July 1950)

## Westward Ho!

By Cadet-Midshipman Frederick M. Kipp 3/C

Experiences of a Kings Point Cadet aboard the cargo vessel President Buchanan. (American President Lines)

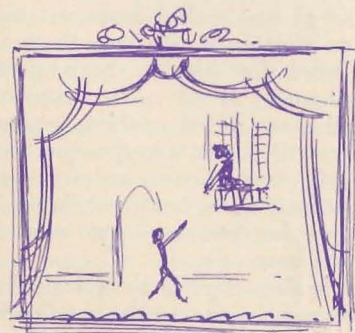
(Compiled from letters and postcards sent to his father.)

WE hugged the coast of Florida on the way south and had a good chance to see many of the cities. Miami was a wonderful sight when the electric lights suddenly were turned on. The ship is full and heavy and takes the seas well. The ship, crew, etc., are all that I expected them to be and plus.

I am amazed at the knowledge I am absorbing in the engine room. Everyone's attitude is "Hey, Cadet, I want to show you something so you'll know how to do it the next time"; not, "Hey cheap labor from some fancy school come over here

and do the dirty work." It is shown by the things of responsibility I can do by myself now with confidence, and which I never could do before. . . . The taxi-men in Havana haven't changed much, because one promptly hired himself out for the night for \$2.00 as soon as we got ashore and showed us the points of interest, including Sloppy Joe's where we didn't linger long, being "beer-money" Cadets. Took on 15,000 bags of sugar for the Orient. Had to open up the main condenser to locate a salt leak. That night, going out of the harbor past the old fort

Reprinted from *Polaris*, May 1950



Drawing by Phil May



Morro Castle, the lights were on the road along the beautiful shore line, and the pair of towers on the hotel looked like twin clowns laughing it off. . . . A yellow canary flew in the officers' mess and perched right on the Second Mate's head. After much joshing, he flew around the electric fans while we all held our breaths; finally he went out a port hole. . . .

We are now on the inner lake, after being pulled through the Gatun Locks of the Panama Canal and after awaiting our turn at the Cristobal anchorage. We are very close to the thick jungles, and the air is hot and moist. The channels are narrow, and the ships pass so close they almost touch. Balboa next and the Pacific. . . . The coast of Mexico looks parched and desolate. Saw my first water spout. The porpoises in trios are jumping along in our painter wake and the far back. Didn't realize until just now that it is longer from the canal to Frisco than from England to New York. . . . Sailed under the Bay Bridge on our way to the pier in San Francisco and are now berthed right near the Ferry Building. The Whitestone Bridge in New York looks much better to me. Walked myself footweary all over Market Street and Nob Hill and am glad to report that the rubble has been removed from the streets since '06. Quite a sight going through the Golden Gate on our way to Los Angeles. . . . When the First gave me three days off, I visited Hollywood. Did not see any starlets but was all over Hollywood Boulevard, Vine and Sunset. Some town! Saw several shows in L.A., also did a little shopping. . . . Shifted ship to Long Beach. The water front has a strange appearance as thousands of oil wells are intermingled, their pumps going constantly. Must be quite a town during the summer months. Also saw some of the famous California fog. . . . We are heavily laden and also have a deck cargo of gasoline in barrels. We picked up a new skipper in Frisco and will take the great circle route to Japan which is reported rough and cold. I still like the ship as much as I did initially and that's including the chow, too. On the long trip across the Pacific I am to have access to all of the ship's books and plans as aids to my studies. . . . Four of Uncle Sam's destroyers just ran past us in a straight line as we near the coast of Japan. The air from the land smells good, and I never realized the difference before. The shore line looks a great deal like California's. There was a typhoon a distance away, and the going has been slow and rough. It was strange to see green water knocking on the port holes on the boat deck. Not only do I like the ship, but it has won a greater respect for the manner in which it took some of the weather we plowed through. The birds which apparently followed us all the way across from Long Beach have just left, and the sea gulls from the shore line have picked us up. The birds hardly flapped their wings at



Drawing by J. Rulon Hales

all but just soared and swooped all day and perhaps all night. . . . If they have barbers in Yokahama that don't do the job with sabres, I will get a crew-cut. The Harbor is something, and it is amazing to see the Jap families that live and breathe on the lighters. Visited the Seaman's Club in Yokahama. It is a nice place. Spent the time talking. . . . Kobe was terrific, and in the two days there we racked up plenty of shore time. Plenty of G.I.'s riding in rickshaws. . . .

Doimaru Dept. Store is the Macy of Japan. Danced with some Japanese girls to American music. We are still eating away on a monster bunch of bananas which cost only two packs of Chesterfields. . . . Passed Okinawa and side-swiped a typhoon at the same time. . . . Did not get a chance to mail anything at Takao, which incidentally is on Formosa. Dropped our deck gasoline destined for the Nationalist Army Air Force, also the helicopters and tires. Soldiers from Hangchow came aboard, mostly to dicker for cigarettes. Young girls do all the heavy work, including pulling in the long nets. Had a swim outside the breakwater. Just like Jones Beach except the sand is coal black. Bicycle rickshaws are faster but lack the rhythm of the others. . . . We broke all records in our engine room in opening steam lancing, repairing brick work, etc., on the starboard boiler in only eight hours. . . . Hong Kong is quite a City as is the Chinese city of Kowloon across the river where we were moored for awhile. Just came from a tram ride to the Peak (1305') overlooking the harbor, and am now in the Gloucester Hotel watching the shipping. This is the best town yet. Bought some jade ear-rings and other knick-knacks. Had a whole free day in Victoria, but was most impressed by the Peak. The hotel way up high and the ruined Monastery on the very top. The grandeur of the scene, the floating vapors, and the profound silence made a deep impression. . . .

(Continued in the November issue)

## DINNER TALKS FOR KINGS POINT ALUMNI

Hans Isbrandtsen, President of Isbrandtsen Steamship Company, was a guest speaker at a meeting of the Alumni Association of the U. S. Merchant Marine Cadet Corps at the Seamen's Church Institute.

Mr. Isbrandtsen spoke extemporaneously, dynamically presenting his views on international trade and on shipping problems. He illustrated his talk with a chart of the approaches to Ch'ang Chiang, China, off which several Isbrandtsen vessels were shelled by Nationalist gunboats. Arthur Coday, president of the New York Chapter, announced that due to the initial success of this dinner-talk an entire series is being scheduled for the Fall and Winter. The dinner-talks will be held in the Officer's Dining Room at 25 South Street and will be open to all. With the cost of the dinner being held to a minimum the series is being sponsored primarily for the benefit of the "younger generation" who are just getting a start in their careers in the marine industry. Outstanding leaders of the marine industry will be selected from management, labor and government with complete freedom and latitude being allowed the guest speakers in selecting their topics.

## WINTER GEAR NEEDED.

Housekeepers doing their Fall cleaning are reminded that the Institute needs overcoats, shoes and underwear, especially for the use of convalescent seamen just out of hospitals and low in funds.

If you have such "warm gear" to spare, please telephone our Department of Special Services, BO 9-2710, if you live in the metropolitan area. It is a long winter ahead and overcoats and other woolen clothing will be greatly appreciated. We hope that our friends living out of New York City will send these by parcel post.

## WATCH OFFICER, 2 A. M.

Home I love is far, but these are mine:  
Spice of lands unseen, all stars that shine,  
Carolling dark breeze, the turbines' whine,  
Trust of men who sleep while I'm awake,  
Gusty stings that on my brown face cake,  
Faith in self with every breath I take.

By JOHN ACKERSON.  
Steamship "African Lightning."

N. Y. Herald Tribune.

## MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS NEEDED

Chaplain John Evans, our musical chaplain, says that we need Guitars (Spanish and Hawaiian) Violins, Ukuleles, Mandolins, Banjos and Zithers.

He has repaired and given out all available musical instruments. So if you have any to spare, even with broken strings, will you kindly mail them to our Department of Special Services, 25 South Street, New York 4, N. Y. They will be greatly appreciated by our seamen musicians.

## JIG-SAW PUZZLES

Whether the puzzle contains 300 pieces or 5,000, seamen are enthusiastic about fitting the jig-sawed parts together to form scenes of the Mediterranean, the Alps, Old Masters paintings and seascapes. Joe McCrystal, in charge of the Institute's Game Room, says that he needs more jig-saw puzzles—(complete, please) as they are one of the most enjoyable pastimes for the men. Some are remarkably swift, finishing a puzzle in half-an-hour, while others take three hours for the same puzzle. Many seafarers ask permission to take the puzzles to their rooms to work on in the evenings. Both young and old men seem to like to spend their time ashore in this manner, and each afternoon one may see at least 25 men sitting around at the puzzle tables. The Institute also sends jig-saw puzzles to ships' crews requesting them. Please send to Dept. of Special Services, 25 South St., New York 4, N. Y.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE SOUTH PACIFIC

On June 13th Miss Mary Martin, star of the musical play "SOUTH PACIFIC", wrote a message which was placed in a bottle and given to Capt. Anthony Gallo, of the United States Lines freighter *Pioneer Gulf*, with instructions to cast it into the South Pacific. The bottle was found and the finder wrote:

Hello Mary Martin:

A few days after the departure of the *Pioneer Gulf* from Tahiti I found on the shore a bottle containing your sweet message. I live at about 5 miles from Papeete the town in a lovely district named Puania. Here is a picture taken from my house. It was a nice surprise to find your kind wishes enclosed which I heartily send back to you with some Tahitian breeze.

Hoping that your lucky star shall remain with you always I am sending through the distance all my sympathetic thoughts.

AIMATA LOUISE BAINBRIDGE.



Book Reviews



Courtesy East River Savings Bank

THE LAW OF THE SEA

A short history of maritime law  
By William McFee

J. B. Lippincott Company \$3.75

While the title of this book might lead the reader to believe that he would be subjected to a dry dissertation, the contrary is true. The author has managed, in a highly interesting fashion (although somewhat superficial) to highlight the legal problems of the shipowner, the merchant and the men who go down to the sea in ships from ancient times to the present.

He develops the paradox of sea law, that it is the most highly developed form of international law, and yet has many elements of provincialism. He appropriately discusses maritime law in the light of its ultimate authors, the commercial interest and the men who have made a living of the sea.

The chapters on the ancient codes, piracy, privateering, mutiny and Lloyd's, are particularly fascinating.

The book provides a background on the law of the sea of especial interest to a layman, and even for one well versed in the admiralty law.

ARCHIE M. STEVENSON, ESQ.  
BIGHAM, ENGLAR, JONES AND HOUSTON.

THE FREEDOM PLEDGE

I am an American. A free American  
Free to speak—without fear.  
Free to worship God in my own way  
Free to stand for what I think right  
Free to oppose what I believe wrong  
Free to choose those who govern my country.

This heritage of Freedom I pledge to uphold

For myself and all mankind.

From GREAT LAKES REVIEW.

INCIDENT IN SILVER  
A Book of Lyrics, By A. M. Sullivan  
Declan X. McMullen Co., N. Y., \$2.50

The President of the Poetry Society of America has written his seventh book of poems and always, because of his love of nature, and the sea, he has fine imagery, coupled with lyrical beauty. The poems, "Sea Sonnet", "Aran Tragedy" and "Riding the Dunes" are of high quality, and the title poem, "Incident in Silver" is a gem to be treasured. "In Memoriam" is a tribute to the five Sullivans who lost their lives on the cruiser *Juneau*, and to all those who hear "the heavenly horn that summons sailors home."

MDC.

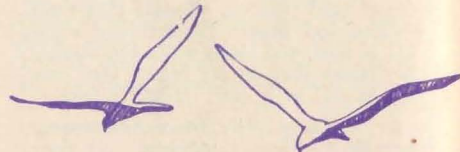
A STRETCH ON THE RIVER  
By Richard Bissell  
(An Atlantic Monthly Press Book)  
Little, Brown and Company, \$2.75

Anyone who might think that the salt water seafaring man has a monopoly on an adventurous and colorful life has a pleasant surprise due in Mr. Bissell's latest book. This absorbing and racy account of a deckhand's life and love on the Upper Mississippi has a punch on every page. Steamboating has lost none of its glamour with the passing of a hundred years.

Each chapter is practically a story in itself. Being rejected by the Navy in 1942, Bill Joyce joins a towboat pushing coal barges from St. Louis to St. Paul. His stubborn intent to prove himself is gradually replaced by a genuine love for the River and the democratic river people. He says, "With all this we had, too, our trials and struggles, our Cape Horn, our typhoons, our doldrums." Even working six hours on and six off, he found time for the fair sex. "Girls, god how I love them. Without them, cuckoo as most of them are, there is no point in anything, not even in work or steamboating or the river."

This book is written by a man who knows his subject thoroughly having pilot licenses for the three great rivers. His vivid and humorous sketches are sparkling pictures that will be appreciated by all who are stirred by the sound of a steamboat whistle.

WILLIAM G. DAVIDSON, Chief Mate.



Courtesy Grace Line

THE SHIP

You need no watch to tell her sailing time  
When tugs tread water, pant around her bow  
And every aperture along the pier  
Fills up with faces. (Down on the waterfront  
Where the crowd grows, gardenias are half price.)  
Hawser by hawser they start to let her go  
And each taut rope which bound her to the shore  
Slackens, droops in a deep curve, and falls.  
High on her deck the winches groan and turn—  
Foot by foot winding all her lines aboard  
Till there is no connection, only last words  
Called through cupped hands, caught piece-meal, then ground out  
In the propellers' first Niagara churn,  
The whistle's deep and breast-bone-shivering blast.  
Then as with gathering sternway she draws out,  
Cleanly as any cut of surgeon's steel  
The separation's made—husband from wife,  
Parent from child, friend from aching friend,  
Each dwindling figure parted from its love.  
Though each one strains to keep his own in sight,  
He knew from the first blast it was no use:  
The ship, directed to the harbor's mouth,  
Gives her allegiance to another world;  
The empty slip, where gulls swoop after scraps,  
Gapes open to the air like a new wound.

By EVELYN AMES.  
New York Times.

THE RETURN OF RODRIGO DE TRIANA

(A sailor on the *Niña*, in the fleet of Columbus, 1492)

How many marvels I have seen to tell!  
For west of the Canarias a star plunged in the sea before us,—as it fell its tress of fire nearly singed our spar.  
We crossed ourselves to see the skeletons in the Sargasso Sea, but we were freed by a brisk wind, though many galleons and caravels lay rotting in its weed.  
About a week beyond that awful plain we marked a flight of birds and clouds hung low,  
the sweetness of the morning was like Spain,  
and in the dark we thought we saw a glow,  
But the green boughs with berries and our wake white with the brawling gulls that looked like home  
were cheats of ocean that we could not slake  
with cries of "land" when there was only foam.  
Weeks more we sailed, despairing and afraid,  
in a mirage of islands, learning thirst.  
Some spat and cursed the captains, others prayed  
but we kept on, . . . and then I was the first  
to see the Indies as I kept my watch.  
Yet I did hardly dare to give that cry,  
fearing my drowsiness had drawn a blotch across the sea,—till light poured through the sky.

By ULRICH TROUBETZKOY.  
N. Y. Herald Tribune.



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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."

*Contributions and bequests to the Institute are exempt from Federal and New York State Tax.*