

*The*  
**LOOKOUT**

JANUARY 1952

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**WINTER HAZARDS** *Courtesy, Ship's Bulletin, Esso Shipping Company*

*Weather Ship C.G. Cutter "Ponchartrain" battles it out in the North Atlantic on Ocean Station BAKER and no one gets very far from the lifeline.*

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE  
OF NEW YORK

Vol. XLIII

No. 1



O Thou who alone understands eternity and to whom a thousand years are but as a watch in the night, we beseech Thee to guide and bless all seafarers as they enter upon the voyages of another year. In the storms of life, upon the waters, grant them steadfastness in the assurance of Thy presence. Give strength to their arm and wisdom to their endeavors so that their vessel and its burden may reach ports of safety. This we ask in the name of Christ our Saviour who also went down to the sea with the fishermen of Capernaum. Amen.

Dr. James Healey, Chaplain

## The LOOKOUT

VOL. XLIII, JANUARY, 1952

Copyright, 1951, by the Seamen's  
Church Institute of New York

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

by the

SEAMEN'S CHURCH  
INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

CLARENCE G. MICHALIS  
President

THOMAS ROBERTS  
Secretary and Treasurer

REV. RAYMOND S. HALL, D.D.  
Director

MARJORIE DENT CANDEE, Editor

\$1.00 per year      10c per copy  
Gifts of \$5.00 per year and  
over include a year's subscrip-  
tion 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.  
Telephone BOWling Green 9-2710

MARJORIE DENT CANDEE, Editor of THE LOOKOUT for the past 23 years, will retire after this issue, and will devote her time to free-lance writing. Miss Candee founded the Artists and Writers Club for the Merchant Marine, sponsored by the Institute. Under her editorship THE LOOKOUT won several awards from the National Social Work Publicity Council, and earned acclaim in the maritime world. Her fund-raising campaigns won recognition from the Direct Mail Advertising Association.

Miss Candee, who is a graduate of Barnard College, and who has a Master of Arts degree from Columbia University, in private life is the wife of the Rev. John Walter Houck, pastor of Pilgrim Congregational Church, the Bronx.

Her friends among seamen and staff at the Institute wish her good health and happiness.

RAYMOND S. HALL, Director

### Solo Voyages

THE urge to cross the Atlantic in a small boat seems to crop up among adventurous men every few years. Within the past twelve months three such tiny vessels have reached New York, and the resourceful and daring seamen who manned them have had their day of newspaper acclaim and slight monetary reward. Edward Allcard, a British architect, sailed *Temptress*, a double-ended auxiliary yawl, from Gibraltar; Stanley Smith, a 35-year-old builder of Yarmouth, and Charles Violet, a 32-year-old British school teacher, sailed their twenty-foot yawl *Nova Espero* from England to the Azores and thence to New York; Coast Guard Lieutenant Clyde Deal fulfilled a lifelong ambition when he crossed the Atlantic from the Canaries in his thirty-three-foot sloop *Ran*.

Some years ago a book was published entitled "Midget Magellans," by Eric Devine, and it told of the many adventurous men, such as Joshua Slocum and Alain Gerbault, who sailed small craft on round-the-world voyages. The landlubber wonders why men decide to brave the sea in such small boats. "Because we can't afford larger ones," said one practical mariner. Perhaps they yearn to escape from people and problems ashore. "For those with trouble in the heart, the sea can heal," writes one sailor-poet. And when landfall is made at long last there is the sense of achievement, of conquering insurmountable obstacles, a sense of power that puny man can sometimes defeat the forces of nature.

Although these stout-hearted seafarers are not showered with ticker-tape welcomes, like Channel swimmers and generals, they do receive a special welcome at the Seamen's Church Institute of New York. There professional seamen gather around them to learn details of their voyages from these sun-tanned, bearded adventurers whose epic open-boat journeys demonstrate that the days of "iron men and wooden ships" are not over. Exchanging experiences with merchant seamen who endured life-boat voyages during the war, these voluntary sailors can proudly join the seafaring fraternity which admits only the skillful and the fearless.

Editorial in THE NEW YORK TIMES,

November 9, 1951



Acme Photo

Stanley Smith and Charles Violet aboard  
their 20 ft. yawl "Nova Espero."

### BOAT ON EXHIBIT

Trans-Atlantic adventurers Charles Violet and Stanley Smith have returned to England, leaving their 20 foot ocean-going yawl, the *Nova Espero*, in custody of the Institute. The boat will be exhibited by the Institute at the Motor Boat Show in Grand Central Palace from January 11th until January 19th. We hope LOOKOUT readers will visit the Show and see this boat which is believed to be the smallest craft ever to have crossed the Atlantic *both ways*. Built in Nova Scotia, the yawl was sailed from Dartmouth, Nova Scotia to Dartmouth, England, prior to the voyage to the United States.

Sailing as "good-will ambassadors," the men say of their voyages:

"Our greatest achievement has been of a social nature. Confined in a tiny boat for four months, we are now better friends than at the start of the trip."



COAST GUARD RESERVIST CROSSES  
OCEAN IN 33-FOOT SLOOP

When the double-ended, 33-foot sloop *Ran* entered New York Harbor, it marked fulfillment of Coast Guard Reserve Officer Clyde Deal's dream to cross the Atlantic alone. He had sailed 4,400 miles from the Canary Islands.

A graduate of the University of California and a member of Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 311, Red Bank, N. J., the 37-year-old adventurer entered the Coast Guard early during World War II. Serving in the Pacific, and ascending in rank to lieutenant, he saved about \$5,000. On demobilization he went to Norway where he purchased his craft in the port of Mandal.

He departed from the Canary Islands April 29, with his woolly dog, Tenerife. The craft had no radio or power. Fifty-four days later, arriving in New York, he was met by a welcoming Coast Guard Auxiliary fleet.



U.S. Coast Guard Photo

Clyde Deal in his 33 ft. sloop "Ran" as he put into Pier 9, East River, across from the Seamen's Church Institute after crossing the Atlantic.

WESTWARD CROSSING

By Humphrey Barton

W. W. Norton & Co., \$3.50

On April 15 of last year Humphrey Barton and Kelvin O'Riordan left St. Mawes, England in a 5-ton, 25-foot *Virtue* class Bermudian sloop, *Virtue XXXV*, to cross the Atlantic to New York for the sake of the publicity such a voyage would give this type of ocean-going small boat and to sell *Virtue XXXV* "for dollars." The company which Mr. Barton represents intends to build these boats for export. This gives a definitely commercial slant to the venture and Mr. Barton makes some of the story which he wrote on the trip sound recognizably like sales talk. Nevertheless, no voyage of this kind could fail to be thrilling and hazardous even under the direction of two master seamen as these two were. The voyage took 46 days and ended at City Island in New York on June 1. It is essentially a yachtsman's, or at least a sportsman's story, whether the reader be of the active or rocking chair variety. For the prospective deep sea yachtsman there is a wealth of useful advice and helpful detail in choosing a boat and fitting her out properly and the writer leaves his reader with the impression that the *Virtue* type of boat is an excellent model for this sport.

WILLIAM L. MILLER

SHE CHOSE THE BOAT

Mr. Frank Van Lew, an American seaman, did quite a bit of research and checking of data in our Conrad Library. He recently bought in England the 12-ton cutter *Orcadia* (Latin for Orkney Islands). He is planning to sail her from Southampton to Central America next Spring with his British wife and his baby son, age 3 months, as passengers, and possibly a Norwegian seaman friend as crew. Mr. Van Lew is a graduate of the University of Oklahoma and a Greek and Latin scholar. He told us that his wife decided in favor of the *Orcadia* when he asked her to choose between the boat and a home ashore.



"Mother Ship" For Tug Fleets\*\*

By Frank O. Braynard\*\*

THE *Dalzelland* would rank high on any poll of unusual ships that call New York home port.

Built of reinforced concrete she saw service with the Navy as a PT boat mother ship at New Guinea. Today she is in effect the mother ship for three busy tug fleets—those of the associated Mutual, Tice and Dalzell towing companies.

The *Dalzelland* is berthed at the New York docks in Atlantic Basin at Commerce Street, Brooklyn. She nestles inconspicuously beneath the bows of four gaunt and rusted Liberty ships just taken out of lay-up and being reactivated for emergency foreign-aid cargoes. All around her are foreign-flag from every sea lane.

Services 33 Tugs

Capt. William J. Lacey, who at twenty-four was the youngest American Merchant ship captain to be torpedoed in World War II, heads a crew of seventeen men. John Francis is his port engineer. Together they service, repair and supply thirty-three tugs.

"The work performed by the *Dalzelland* if bought on the open market would cost us at least 50 per cent more," Lloyd Dalzell,\* president of the Dalzell Towing Co., said. "And the whole thing was the brain child of Capt. Lacey," he added.

From the outside the *Dalzelland* is an odd-looking craft. She is 157 feet over all, has a beam of forty-six feet and a seven foot draft. Her upperworks are distinguished by a series of four light bays on either side.

Within the craft's single deck upper works is a maze of machinery and equipment. Rope-whiskered tug prows may generally be seen tied up near the barge's outboard ports for repairs or supplies. Below decks

\*Lloyd Dalzell is a member of the Institute's Board of Managers.

the concrete hull is divided into eleven deep compartments, most of which are used for storage. These are reached by steep wooden ladders. Mechanical hoists are available to lift out heavy coils of rope and other equipment.

Part of the upper works and several of the holds house the Marine Ship Chandlery Co., a Dalzell subsidiary founded in 1919 as a supply house for the thousand and one things needed to keep tugs operating. Its shelves contain everything a vessel might need from rope to galley equipment.

... The *Dalzelland* was acquired in 1948 at a rock bottom price from the War Assets Administration. She lay at Prall's Island, Staten Island, when Capt. Lacey found her, and was bought stripped. Her several dozen large and small machines would have cost a fortune if bought new. They were picked up at bargain prices, Capt. Lacey said.

Tree Trunks Bought

Tree trunks are bought for lumber. Chief carpenter Pio Vidulich, a Yugoslav by extraction, can handle up to twenty-eight-inch timbers. His forty-two inch band saw, radial saw, joiner, big and little planes and other machines produce an average of fifty pounds of sawdust a day, which is collected by mechanical suction pipes and carried to a canvas bag for disposition. This suction apparatus, just installed, has meant a great saving in labor for watchman John Reis, an ex-Portuguese whaler, who formerly had to sweep up the sawdust.

Rene J. Sygnecki, chief electrician, presides over a mechanically-cooled electrical shop in one of the *Dalzelland's* holds. Once when a manufacturer told him it would take forty-two weeks to supply a needed piece of tug equipment, the lanky former Frenchman



The Dalzelland is an odd-looking craft



turned to and made the item in three days. Mr. Sygnecki has a degree in electrical engineering.

There are also two hot work shops, whose combined range including power cables is 400 feet, a pipe shop and a machine shop.

Capt. Lacey is a graduate of the New York State Maritime College, Fort Schuyler, the Bronx. After eighteen months with United Fruit Co. as 3rd and 2nd Mate, and eight months with R. A. Nicol as chief he received his first command.

She was the Liberty *Horace Bushnell* and her cargo on the dreaded Arctic run to Russia was ammunition. Required to keep on the outermost rim of the convoy to protect the other ships, the ship survived until within only a few miles of Murmansk. Then she was blown into four quarters by a German torpedo.

#### Fox Terrier Rescued

Only the central portion with its deck house remained afloat. The nine men who were below decks were dead, and Capt. Lacey's three-month-old fox terrier named Squeakie was nowhere to be found. While the survivors and rescuers were nervously pacing the deck of a British destroyer-escort Capt. Lacey searched for the little animal.

He found the puppy stretched out cold but still alive. Squeakie survived one more hectic adventure—that of falling overboard in convoy—before succumbing at the age of seven months to the temptation of an open can of spoiled food left carelessly on deck.

\*\*Reprinted from *The New York Herald Tribune*



Courtesy, *Holland-America Line*  
OFFICIAL GREETER

Jacko is a well-known local seagull at Dorset, England, who attaches himself regularly to a motor launch owned by B. E. Caddy. An alert passenger on board the *Holland-America* liner *Ryndam* snapped this picture.

## A HORSE IN THE COAST GUARD

—Here is the story as told by a member of the USCG: "It was hard work in those old days to move a surf-boat. We had to resort to plenty of old-fashioned manpower and I can assure you it was a trying task to haul those boats over the clinging sand. Finally, one of my mates came up with an idea. He prevailed upon all of us to chip in for the purchase price of a horse!

"Well, the horse made our work much easier, but a new problem arose. Our pay was small and we couldn't buy sufficient feed for the horse. Then we came upon the brilliant idea of enlisting the horse in the Coast Guard. Papers were made out showing that John Dobbin had been enlisted as a Surfman! Scarcely had we begun to enjoy the pleasure of a horse as a shipmate than we found his pay was not enough for all expenses. Then after a council of war, we solved the problem by advancing John Dobbin to Boatswain's Mate. Soon he became Chief Boatswain's Mate. But that was our big mistake; our surf station didn't rate a Chief Boatswain's Mate. This fact, plus some rumors, soon reached Headquarters.

"Then one day we opened the official mail to find orders transferring John Dobbin to sea duty aboard the cutter *Pamlico*. I've often wondered if someone at Headquarters had learned of our problem and was trying to see how we would solve the problem. Well, we solved it very quickly by selling the horse to a farmer and reporting that John Dobbin was a deserter."

Editor Robert Lloyd of the *COAST GUARD* Magazine states that this is a good yarn, but it is not true. However, if you will look very carefully through the old musty records at Headquarters, you will find that a Chief Boatswain's Mate named John Dobbin is still carried on the books as a deserter.

Courtesy, *The Ensign*, U.S. Power Squadrons

## Parrots Again

THOSE of us who were brought up on "Treasure Island" and "Robinson Crusoe" have never really outgrown the youthful conviction that a proper seafaring man always came ashore with a parrot perched on his starboard shoulder. Time was, when the Institute used to receive requests from people asking seamen to bring from abroad a parrot that was "nicely spoken," or one that could say "Pieces of eight" or could sing "Blow the Man Down." But alas, when the U.S. Public Health officials banned parrots because of the danger of psittacosis (parrot fever) mariners had to choose other pets.

This condition has prevailed for the last decade or so on New York's waterfront and parrots from abroad have not been admitted.

Now Science has come to the rescue of sailors who like a parrot for a mascot. Dr. Leonard A. Scheele, U.S. Surgeon General, is about to relax restrictions on the importation of parrots and other members of the psittacine bird family. The reason for the restriction in the first place was the danger of "parrot fever," a disease similar to pneumonia. The reason for the change of heart of health officials is the effectiveness of the new "wonder" drugs in treating the disease; no longer are imported parrots a public health menace.

This is good news to many a seafarer of the old school. The last parrot the Institute owned was "Pop-Eye" whose prolonged gabble could only be interpreted by seamen familiar with parrotese. His language, according to these experts, was not suitable for the young ladies who worked in our Social Service Department to hear. "Pop-Eye," it seemed, had been brought from a bar in Shanghai, so "Mike" our night porter offered to take him to his home. Now we're looking for a new parrot—as soon as the restriction is lifted—whose vocabulary will be salty—but refined.



Steward Jimmy Cruickshank and his parrot, "Laura."

### "JONAH"

Seaman George Gardner Elvin dedicated the following verses to a parrot called "Jonah."

Although I am a parrot, I'm a deep blue water Jack  
And I have been 'round the Horn to 'Frisco and back.  
My boss he calls me "Jonah" but why it is not plain  
'Cause I have never used a whale as a subway train.  
We've rambled round a lot, my boss and me, together,  
Shipmates in both foul and fair weather.  
We almost parted once when he couldn't get a ship  
And his landlady hung on to me, and to his grip.  
But I saved the situation when I said a naughty word  
She said, "Get out of here with that heathen bird!"  
My boss had some luck, he chanced to meet a mate,  
And that night we sailed for the River Plate...  
On the galley's extra rations I began to get quite stout  
Until one day the ship rolled in the roughest weather  
So that I fell upon the stove, and almost lost a feather.  
Cook gave one look at me, and said, "As for you—  
If ever I see you again you'll end up as stew!"



## Sea Trains

SHIPS which can carry 100 loaded freight cars on a mile of track are unique vessels in America's Merchant Marine. Six of these 503 foot long "sea trains" now carry on an express freight service from New York to the Gulf area. We talked with several seamen who work on board the recently completed Seatrain *Georgia* (and Seatrain *Louisiana*, not in service yet) and they explained to THE LOOKOUT editor how the freight cars are swung aboard by a special crane which lifts each car from the dock on a detachable cradle and lowers them into the ship's three decks. Each car is clamped down and secured to prevent their shifting even in the roughest seas.

The Seatrain *Georgia* is 503 feet long, and her gross tonnage is 8,300. Her cruising speed is 16 knots. The ship takes a full load of trains in less than seven hours, and covers in less than six days the distance from New York to New Orleans and Texas City. It would take a train of freight cars 10 to 12 days to travel this distance. Shippers find the new sea trains useful because of their lower freight rate. Forty-three officers and men man each vessel. The Seatrain *Louisiana* is the sixth of her type built by the Seatrain Lines at a cost of \$4,000,000.

When a Seatrain arrives at its Belle Chasse, La., terminal on the Mississippi, the freight cars are unloaded onto the tracks of various railroads. Cars can go from shipper to consignee without ever being unloaded.

Two were used extensively to carry tanks and vehicles for the Army, and two were under the Navy carrying planes and airplane engines to the southwest Pacific.

The Seatrain *Texas* gained honors in 1942 for running the U-boat gauntlet alone and delivering 250 urgently needed tanks to the British Army during the critical days at El Alamein.

The Seatrain *Georgia* is commanded by Capt. John Wenzel who has been serving with the company for seventeen years.



## A Board Member Looks At Seamen's Agencies

FOLLOWING are excerpts from a paper presented by FRANKLIN E. VILAS, a member of the Institute's Board of Managers, at the Panel on Seamen's Welfare held under the auspices of the National Council of Seamen's Agencies in conjunction with the American Merchant Marine Conference, October 17, 1951, sponsored by the Propeller Club of the United States.

Seamen's agencies, carrying the titles of Homes, Bethels, Institutes, and Havens, were originally conceived and maintained by religiously minded landmen as a community responsibility to seafarers who because of the nature of their occupation were largely denied the advantages of home, family, and church affiliations. In addition it was recognized that seamen endured hardships, dangers, deprivations, and economic insecurity out of proportion to that which the majority of the population experienced.

As our cities grew and the importance of foreign trade was recognized, groups of men and women gathered together in the seaports interested in improving the lot of the sailor. In most instances their first efforts were largely aimed at providing seamen opportunity for religious worship. Later attention was directed to providing for physical comfort and safety ashore as well as for their physical health. Still later attention was given to their need for wholesome recreation and entertainment. The result of these efforts culminated in the creation of centers that met the special needs of seamen by providing a Christian home "for men away from home." . . .

. . . In addition to creature comforts, and in my opinion of much greater significance, the agency is faced with a very real challenge in the modern seaman's requirements on the spiritual side. An agency here in New York, which has recently undertaken the distribution of devotional material, reports that the demands for such literature have exhausted their anticipated supplies and that the new generation of seamen is asking for such material in unheard of quantities for use at sea. These men welcome the advice and Christian fellowship which is available but not forced upon them in the modern agency. Wherever the community leaders have established an agency devoted to the task of serving the sailor ashore, there we have set up an outpost facing the enemy in the never-ending attack waged upon our principles and economy by subversive elements.

. . . Due to the life he leads the mind of the seaman is subject to every kind of attack by the enemies of our ideas, our religion and our way of life. The seaman's agency is the real answer to this attack. It and the citizens who direct its affairs have indeed a momentous responsibility.

## When Winter Comes

THE arrival of winter intensifies the hazards of the sea. Wind and wave and ice add to the usual dangers. When the mercury descends and huge cakes of ice are seen floating in New York harbor, the request for sweaters, socks, mufflers, helmets and other warm apparel increases here at the Institute. Our faithful knitters have been getting ready for this season, so that no seafarer need be cold when on duty aboard ice-bedecked freighter or tanker, on the bridge of transatlantic liner or tugboat glistening with frozen spray.



Shutting out the chill of East River winds, the seaman, returning from his ship, opens the doors of "25 South Street" and finds a warm welcome within, friends old and new to greet him, a cheering cup of coffee or tea in one of the clubrooms, and an atmosphere at once home-like and harmonious.



Here he finds "rest after toil, port after stormy seas." His time ashore is brief, for vital cargoes are needed across the oceans and around the world. Machinery, cement and steel for building; canned goods and flour and potatoes for sustenance; jeeps and tanks and trucks for transportation; a thousand-and-one items carried on each ship's manifest.



So the ships sail—although the winds blow high and the temperature drops—and the seamen are on their jobs—on deck, in engine room, in stewards' department, in radio shack—carrying the goods of commerce as well as the bullets, the beef and the personnel needed to defend our freedoms, and to protect our way of life.



Because of YOU and other generous friends, the Institute can continue its varied program of service—its health, welfare, recreational, religious and educational facilities. We THANK YOU for your gifts which enable us to carry on, in winter and summer, all year 'round.

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## SHIP'S CAT



EDITOR'S NOTE: Bosun, the Institute's photogenic cat mascot, has now retired and is living on a farm on Long Island under the care of Mrs. Christine Hartmann.

News from Miss Carla Dietz of the U. S. Lines, is that the ship piers are still alive with cats, "some are huge, fat grizzly old-timers with many battle scars, and there must be a dozen generations represented as there is always a litter of kittens. The men in the receiving office at Pier 61 have a two months old cat now which is their pride and joy as it is quite a beauty.

No doubt some of the pier cats who have 'swallowed the anchor,' ship out now and then just for old time sake. At any rate they disappear for a longish spell and then turn up again."

Dear LOOKOUT Editor:

Not the least of a ship's crew is the cat, and of the complement, none is so missed if any accident occurs to pussy.

We left Bangkok, Siam, on May 23, 1905, in a Swedish barque of 732

tons with a crew of 13, two dogs and a cat with two kittens. Inside of a week one kitten slipped off the rail to Davy Jones' famous Locker. The other kitten mewed so plaintively that we all shed tears (inside). The big cat and both dogs came safely to port at Belfast, Ireland.

On another ship, a Norwegian bark, loaded with lumber from Mobile, Alabama, we had a cat with four kittens. The second mate raced the cat for the flying fish which dropped on deck after striking the rigging at night. "Doggone," he'd say, "Cat got my fish again."

Now about the nine lives of a cat—from personal observation, let me say that no animal is so lucky except maybe a two-legged animal—a sailor. In point of fact, both cats and sailors have the faculty of always falling on their feet. Another common characteristic—neither ever forgets a friend, or an enemy.

One of the most famous seagoing cats, belonged, of course, to Dick Whittington. Dick had a chance to put in a "venture," as it was termed, in a ship going to Africa. All Dick had to invest was his cat, a famous mouser. He gave the cat as his share. She delighted the King of Morocco who was troubled by rats and mice, and when Dick's cat destroyed them, His Highness bought the mouser. With the money, Dick commenced business and afterwards was three times Lord Mayor of London.

From the times of the ancient Egyptians people have considered cats important. If they do squall at night—well, you would holler, too, if your insides were full of fiddle-strings.

Categorically yours,

JAMES FROST, *A.B. Seaman*

## What Books I Like to Read at Sea

### Third Prize Winner, Annual Essay Contest

By James Parsons, *Able-bodied Seaman\**

AS a kid I used to sell newspapers in Raleigh, capital of North Carolina, and some of my best customers were State officials.

After school each day I'd gather up an armload of local *Times* and begin my round of State buildings wearing high-topped shoes, ribbed stockings and corduroy britches reinforced at the knees against the rigors of marble shooting.

My first stop was the Supreme Court building opposite the dignified old Capitol. From the main entrance a broad staircase led to a glazed-stone landing. On this landing, facing an ascending visitor, was a bronze memorial tablet—the wall's only ornament. The left side of the tablet showed a stoutish man in bas relief, and on the right side was this inscription:

"O. HENRY"

1862-1910

He no longer saw a rabble  
But his brothers seeking  
The Ideal.

William Sydney Porter.

Seeing that plaque day after day, I became curious about the man it commemorated. My eighth-grade teacher told me that "O. Henry" had been the pen name of William Sydney Porter, a famous short story writer born in nearby Greensboro. She said the inscription had been taken from his "Brickdust Row" and I could best understand it by reading some of his works. To encourage my interest she suggested that I choose him as the subject of my next English composition.

That was the beginning of my great admiration for O'Henry. Since making my first trip to sea in 1930 at the age of sixteen, I have burned many a ship's bunk light far into the night, reading and re-reading stories contained in the twelve volumes of his

collected works. For me, his tales have a perennial freshness. The brilliance of his pencraft suffers nothing by comparison with today's popular fiction.

The teeming city of New York; the Texas cow-country; the lotus-land of Central America; New Orleans; the Blue Ridge Mountains—these were settings for many of his stories. From the "rabble" he plucked his characters, ranging them in serio-comic situations. Sometimes they were plain down-and-outers warming park benches; again they were struggling artists, actors, writers and musicians; shop girls, laundry workers; policemen, safe-crackers, bartenders, cowboys, hillbillies and opera bouffe comers hawking gem-dandy potato peelers.

These characters and others drawn by him were my companions on long voyages during the depression years. Too, they were often with me on convoy trips in the second world war. Yet I can't decide which of his yarns I enjoyed most. Off-hand I think of "The Lost Blend," "The Duplicity of Hargraves," "Whirligigs of Life," "A Blackjack Bargainer," "Springtime a la Carte" and "The Thing's the Play." For tenderness I'm partial to "The Last Leaf," "The Skylight Room" and "The Gift of the Magi." If tomorrow some new economic crisis forced the rationing of only one book of fiction to each seaman, I'd unhesitatingly put O'Henry's stories in my sea-bag to relieve another trip's tedium.

Biography and historical novels have also helped to beguile my long watches "below." I was particularly impressed by Charles Dickens' "A Tale of Two Cities." I also liked the dering-do-tales of Dumas and Sabatini. It seems almost heresy for a seaman to admit this, but I've never cared much for the stories of Joseph Conrad, Herman Melville and Jack London—with the single exception of London's "The Sea Wolf." The best

\*We regret to report that James Parsons was drowned at sea. We send our deep sympathy to his relatives.



biographies I've read were written by W. E. Woodward, M. R. Werner and Marquis James. Two period studies that I thought especially good were Claude Bowers' "The Tragic Era" and Bernard de Voto's "The Year of Decision."

On the lighter side, the stories of Damon Runyon and Ring Lardner were always good for a chuckle, but some of the best humor I ever dug from a ship's library was contained in a musty collection of sketches by Bill Nye. Like most seamen I often read "Whodunits," but none of the latter day thrillers has measured up, in my opinion, to Wilkie Collins' "The Woman in White," or Gabriou's "Widow LaRouge." Among the best of the current crop are the suspense stories of William Irish.

(Please send your books to the Conrad Library, 25 South Street.)



The Institute's Ship Visitors deliver books to ships flying United Nations flags.

## Your First Trip to Sea

By Cadet-Midshipman William F. Schretzman

**Y**OU report to the ship. "Articles will be signed in one hour, so stick around, and report at 0800 tomorrow; we sail at noon," the three-striper tells you. You have plans for this weekend. You can't sail on Saturday. Your gear, your girl-friend . . .

So you put your name on the dotted line. No sooner do you put your foot on the gangway when things start happening. That three-striper can't get to you fast enough. "Take this paper to the skipper downtown at Customs. Hurry!"

You get to see your skipper at last. He isn't the story book type of man, with his worn cravenette pulled roughly around him, and wearing an old grey fedora. He is glad to see you and impresses you with the way he handles his business with the Customs men.

Noon finds you on the bridge of the ship with the same man. Your ship is backing out of her berth and heading downtown, out to sea. You're happy and yet sad. You are wondering what the fellows will be doing tonight, what your folks are doing at

home now. Your thoughts are interrupted by the mate—"Cadet, how about logging these bells?" Soon the ship is at the pilot station—you drop the pilot off and you are on your way. It is dusk now as the ship rolls gently in the smooth sea, and you are impressed when a Navy "Corsair" fighter plane wings over the ship at a low altitude. The evening finds you squaring away your gear.

The next day you start to get around, you meet people, you get work done, you are given a watch . . . for hours on end you listen to the woes of the sea as described by the mates and seamen. Soon you are a recognized chow hound. You proudly enter the saloon after a very stormy night and start to eat, much to the amazement of the others present.

What do ships' officers talk about in their spare time? This was a big question in my mind. Shall we listen? We must wait for a leading question. Ah, this sounds good. One of the engineers just said that the laundry service on this ship is terrible, adding that he knows a Chinaman in Los Angeles who irons twelve shirts in one hour. Immediately a mate speaks up . . . "That is impossible," another voice chirps up . . . "now when I was in the Navy we . . .", still another voice adds, somewhat authoritatively that a regular laundry cannot do that many shirts in one hour. "What!" says the first voice, rather angrily, "Why they have eleven

machines that do the job." "Nine machines," adds a new voice, "Eleven," "nine," "eleven," "nine . . ." "there is one for the right sleeve, one for the left sleeve, one for the collar, one for the left cuff, one for the . . ." Sounds of laughter fill the hall. Someone yells out: "Hey, Sparks, where's the Ranger?" Sparks flies into a rage. (The Ranger is one of our company's ships heading in the same direction as we, being similarly tossed about in the North Atlantic gale.) Sparks is fed up with this question, everyone having asked him its position at least ten times in the past two days.

The days pass and you begin to observe things now . . . The skipper wears socks only when he sleeps; those two aged women passengers, now fearful of the ship rolling over, are getting noon positions for us from their ouija board. One of them even had a dream last night. She predicts that we will never make it to land. You look over the side; the ship appears to be going astern. Maybe the old lady is right.

Other things are happening now. The aerial is down again. The purser is in. "Will you put up my antenna while you put up your own?" he asks timidly. "When are you going up?" you inquire. "Bad heart, can't climb," he answers.

You can never forget that young relief radio operator coming to the side of the ship some twenty minutes after sailing time, innocently looking up at the swearing skipper hanging over the wing of the bridge, and softly announcing: "You can sail now fellows, I'm here!"

You can never hope to forget that first time you go aloft at sea as the ship moves through the choppy water, and those two hours in the airless paint locker aft struggling to paint a searchlight suspended from the overhead while the ship is rolling heavily.

Now you find yourself on the bow all alone. The "old gal" is really pitching now. You feel that vibration . . . you run for something to hold on to . . . you wonder why you ever came all the way up here alone . . . the bow is going under . . . prayers come quickly now . . . green water is before you, over you, and behind you. You look around. You are still secure, but soaked through to the skin, your only loss—a few stencils, the brush and the cover for the paint can. You look up to the bridge—the young woman passenger has a broad grin on her face as you wave to the mate on watch to signal that you are ok. You can almost hear her speaking to the mate, "Oh, look at the cadet up there . . . all wet . . . giggle, giggle."

Now to make things a bit more interesting, "the old man" tells the mates how useless all of them are, and that they can be replaced at any time. They are steaming. He goes on to tell of the time when his careless partner broke the skipper's very necessary glasses, and rather than tell him,

took the glass from the frames, and replaced them on the chartroom table. His description of the "old man" attempting to read the chart with the glassless glasses is really a classic.

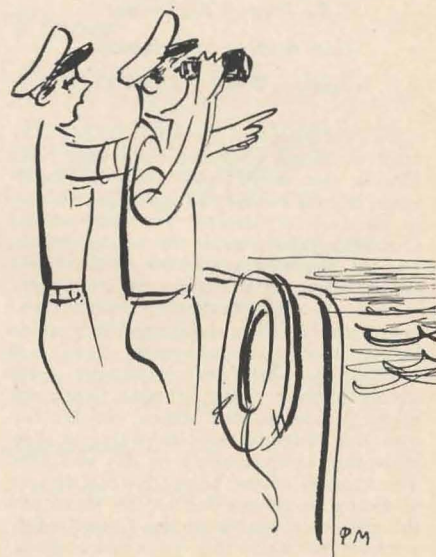
You chuckle at your skipper as bad weather comes nearer. He approaches the storm methodically, donning his navy sweater, given to him some years ago while he was still a cadet. He is careful to roll up the bottom so that the stencil is very visible. Next comes his marine fatigue hat and the towel around his neck. The center window on the bridge is now opened and the vigil begins, day in, day out, until the storm subsides. The wheelhouse fills with water and cold wind but the vigil continues.

You will never forget the expression on the Second Assistant's face as he finds out that the strange noise he is hearing in the engine room is not a defect in the turbine, but the "boy weightlifters" in the electrician's shop letting the weights down to the deck rather hard. That first forty-five degree roll lingers in your memory too.

The days pass. You are home again. You have been to "those far away places." The next day you are leaving again for the coastwise voyage. The cadet you are living with forgets where he put your ink. You get a nasty letter from that girl you did not have a chance to see. You are up all night counting sacks of mail. The next day finds you picking up new charts.

And before you know it your first trip is ended, you are an old salt. You soon come to realize that your time spent at sea is truly a remarkable experience.

Reprinted from *Polaris*  
U.S. Merchant Marine Academy,  
Kings Point, N. Y.



Drawing by Phil May





# Book Reviews

## CANDLEMAS BAY

By Ruth Moore

Wm. Morrow & Co., New York, 1950, \$3.00

You won't find Candlemas Bay on the Maine Coast chart nor mentioned in the Coast Pilot, Section A. But piecemeal, it's all there, its component parts scattered from Monhegan to Mt. Desert Island. And the people are there too, doing the things Ruth Moore has them do in the book and talking about them in the lingo of Jeb Ellis and Grampie Jehron and Jeb and Candace and all the others. You'll find these fishing folk, as you'll find people in every land, struggling to hammer out some kind of bearable life in this so rapidly changing world. For this story of the gradual breaking up of the old order among the last members of the Ellis family from the sailing days of pinkies and of white ash power to the present days of draggers with diesel engines, mile-long nets, fathometers, ship-to-shore radios is the story of the great upheaval the world over. Withal, there is the intimate story of the lives and adventures of Maine folks whom many of the readers will recognize, of a clash of personalities and of robust ambition. Maine folks themselves should enjoy this book.

WILLIAM L. MILTER

## THE ISLANDERS

By Joseph Auslander

and Audrey Wurdemann  
Longmans, Green and Co., \$3.00

Two distinguished poets have turned their creative talents toward a little west coast Florida town where Greeks from the Dodecanese Islands settled and fished for sponges in the Gulf of Mexico. The story of the Christidos family holds the reader's interest, for one sees a parallel in the world today, when the younger generation turns to callings other than their fathers' and grandfathers'. When the sponge beds are no longer productive, men must learn new trades. To Christidos' restaurant come sponge packers, divers, tourists, Greek veterans, pensioners and others, and his two sons and daughter react according to their individual temperaments to the outsiders. The imagery of the prose, the descriptions of nature in swamp and on the shore and the character studies of the Greek family combine to make this an unusual book.  
M. D. C.

## THE CAINE MUTINY

By Herman Vouk

Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, N. Y.  
1951 — \$3.95

Was Captain Queeg really crazy for a time? Was lawyer Greenwald justified in throwing Keefer's party champagne into the author-officer's face? Will the marriage of Willie Keith and May Wynne really stick? You'll be batted about by conflicting emotions over these and many other questions as you read this stirring, sophisticated, admittedly somewhat far-fetched tale of the adventure of the personnel of the old minesweeper *Caine* that swept just six mines in all of World War II as she wandered her decrepit way around the Pacific until a typhoon nearly capsized her and a Kamikase nearly blew her apart. The story is a searching study of the effects of the inner tensions of people under the stress of boredom, fear, oppression, physical hardships that tested the endurance of the men, especially of the officers of the old *Caine* and found them at times unequal to the test. This reader feels that the story of the hurricane, of the mutiny and of the trial must have in them a good deal of the autobiographical or be at least a careful study of similar events somewhere in the history of the War. The implications of the story may make you dizzy at times but you won't want to miss this fine test of your judicial ability in dealing with complicated human problems. It's a stirring yet thought-provoking story.

W. L. M.

## WE TOOK TO CRUISING

From Maine to Florida Afloat

By Talbot and Jessica Hamlin

Sheridan House, \$3.50

The authors cruised the Inland Waterway in their *Aquarelle* from Maine to Florida. Here is a lively and well-written narrative of house-keeping afloat, nicely illustrated by the Skipper. Their love of boats and of people is reflected in the warm, engaging text. Practical lists of tools and equipment are included to aid new and old boat owners.  
M. D. C.

Other marine books received are: "The Law of Seamen" by Martin J. Norris of the N. Y. Bar—Vol. 1, Baker, Voorhis & Co., Inc., 1951.

"Ships for Victory" by Frederick C. Lane, The Johns Hopkins Press—Baltimore, Md., \$12.50.

# Marine Poetry

Prize winners in the Eighth Annual Marine Poetry Contest sponsored by the Seamen's Church Institute were: 1st prize, Robert A. Stack, Chief Officer, Farrell Line; 2nd prize, Joseph Ferran, Ship's Butcher; and 3rd prize, C. Allan Neilsen, Able-bodied Seaman.

The judges were: A. M. Sullivan, Frances Frost and Joseph Auslander. Prizes were \$25.00, \$15.00 and \$10.00.

## First Prize Winner

### A LATE MORNING FOG

By Robert A. Stack,

Chief Officer, Farrell Line

The dolphin danced in the morning sun  
On a spangled sea;  
And the albatross, with a lambent turn,  
Caressed the swell that ran from a distant gale;  
But long before the day grew old,  
Or the sun had rolled from her pinnacle,  
The fog came down in silent ambience.  
Then the dolphin danced in a double depth,  
And the albatross rode the vessel's course  
With uncertainty.  
The fog had shaped the world to a smaller scale.



## Second Prize Winner

### SONNET FOR SAILORS

By Joseph Ferran, Ship's Butcher

Mother, he cannot ever tell you why  
The sea has mixed its salt into his blood,  
Or give you reason why his feelings flood  
With kinship, when he hears the raucous cry  
Of hungry sea gulls when the ocean's cold.  
He cannot say what makes his pulse-beat rise  
To watch the mast lights sway across the skies.  
He did not make the choice nor shape the mold.  
Mother, they're all the same, the surf's jelled roar  
Has lodged its echo deeply in their brain;  
They have no peace until they're back again.  
So when I lift my bag across the door—  
Then do not ask again: "Why must you go?"  
Mother, I cannot say—I do not know.

## 3rd Prize Winner

### WANDERLUST

By C. Allan Neilsen, A.B. Seaman

My road stretches ever onward;  
From sea, to sea, to sea,  
I'm a cursed son of wanderlust  
And there is no home for me.  
My eyes have seen each country,  
And my feet trod many miles  
But there is no heart within me,  
For having touched the dreamy isles.  
And O! on a night when stars are bright,  
And there's a calm and windless sea,  
The memory of a Wahine Maid,  
Comes drifting back to me . . .  
I see her in my mind's-eye.

On the sands, 'neath "coral head"  
And the morning wind was in her hair  
And the sea was sun-blood red.  
Her jade-green eyes smiled at me,  
They left me but one choice,  
To give my heart and soul to her,  
Of the laughter-silvered voice.  
Maybe, a fool I was, and a fool I am  
To have left my heart with her,  
When my ship sailed on the evening tide  
To only God knows where.  
And now, I live with memories,  
Of laughter, love and smiles,  
For my heart is kept by a waiting maid  
In the distant dreamy isles.

LISTEN IN: "THE CAVALCADE OF AMERICA"  
Station WNBC — 8 P.M. — Tuesday, January 15th  
(The story of Mother Roper)





*Courtesy, Grace National Bank*

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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.*