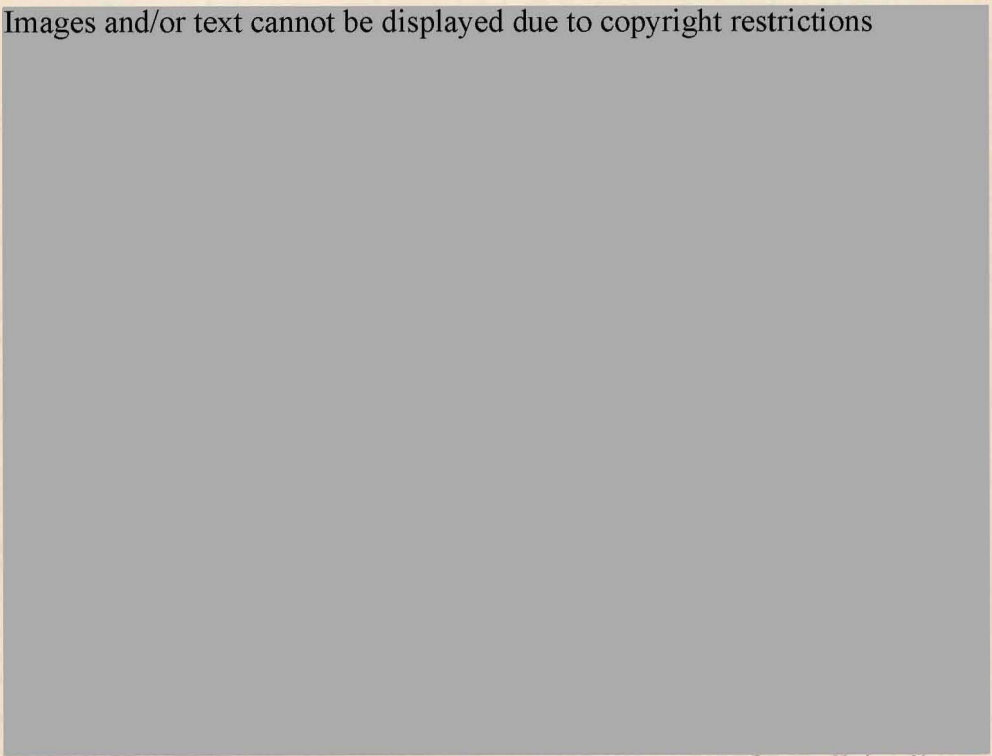
The LOOKOUT



Courtesy, Mariners Museum

FROSTY MORN

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

VOL. XLIII MARCH, 1952 NO. 3

Sanctuary

Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. — *Ephesians: 6*

"25 South Street"

The LOOKOUT

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Moby Dick Blows Again

THE great white whale has appeared again after over a century of silence, but this time he is not just a symbolic figure in the mind of Herman Melville. A fifty-six ton albino sperm-whale has been bagged this winter by the whaler, *Anglo Norse*, on an expedition off the Peruvian coast.

There is a known species of whale, light in color, that has been called the "white whale," but this is actually a dirty-yellowish in color. The pure albino whale that was caught by the *Anglo Norse* is the first to be recorded. Now new interest springs into the great story of Moby Dick, the white whale that superstitious seamen thought to be endowed with supernatural powers.

Whaling today is a far cry from the days when a small, wooden sailing vessel set out from the New England coast, armed with hand harpoons and a few hardy seamen. Whalers today travel in fleets of fourteen or fifteen catcher-boats around a mother ship of approximately 24,000 tons. The catcher-boats are from 150 to 200 feet in length and carry 2500 horse-power engines. In their bows they carry harpoon guns that shoot 160 pound harpoons into their prey. Inside the head of the harpoons are explosive charges that kill the whale and spread barbs into the carcass, thereby preventing it from going adrift. In the old days the men pitched the harpoon into the giant mammal, then chased it in boats manned by oars, hoping the whale would tire and die. Only too often it was the other way around.

The Mother ship is actually a factory where the whales are pulled up onto deck through a huge mouth in the stern. Then the whale is put on the "flencing deck" and the blubber is taken off and cooked down, rendering the oil.

A good day's catch is about fifty or sixty whales. Twenty thousand tons is an average catch for a season.

The ships rove from Norway all the way to the Arctic, staying out indefinitely, the huge mother ship acting as a supply ship for her little fleet. Last year, the whaling season in the Antarctic lasted from December 12th until March 9th. The fleet then goes in for a washing with caustic soda—and moves on to another whaling area.

LARGEST WHALING FLEET—47 whalers now in the Antarctic—owned by Capt. Lars Christensen.

In the Path of the Sun

Short Voyage

By Tom Bower, *Electrician*

SO YOU are fascinated with the lap-lap of salt water, beating against the shore, bringing tales of far-off places such as Ras Tanura, the Persian Gulf and Suez? I dreamed of all those places the day I signed on that ship, for she was chartered for one year to transport oil in the Middle East.

As I stood on the deck of the *Sea Horse*, watching the Statue of Liberty disappearing in the gathering dusk, I felt a deep nostalgia. Then I forgot the vast city disappearing behind us, lost in thoughts of the fascinating ports we would visit.

In my mind I saw gauchos, and lovely senoritas. I walked on the Rock of Gibraltar, and passed green Santa Maria. I went through the Suez . . . and bartered in Bombay. Planning, I lived my year-long trip. We were heading for the Persian Gulf via many waters, and I had been long on shore.

Soon we came to our first port of call. It was Aruba in South America. We dropped anchor in quarantine, and I prepared to go ashore. This would be the start of the greatest sight-seeing tour yet. Then, I heard the bos'n call out:

"Sorry, only two hours on shore, men."

Those two hours were soon over, but I would go back the next day. We were taking on fuel and supplies for the long trip, and would remain in port a day.

Settling down in my bunk I was happy. Tomorrow it would all begin.

Then, in the quiet peaceful night, resting at anchor, I was suddenly thrown from my bunk onto deck. In a flash, everything was pandemonium. Half dressed, I rushed up the ladder. The Chief Engineer was calling for help. Salt water was rushing into a big hole in our bow.

Running back I went to the line locker and filled my arms with pillows — the only things I could find. With these, I dashed to the Engineer and we stuffed them into the hole. Others were working bilge pumps frantically.

Then, through the chaos, I heard a bevy of hysterical Spanish . . . and, looking out into the dark, I saw a small tug boat, with a tiny fishing vessel in tow. Our Spanish cook rushed over as interpreter to the frantic voices calling out over the waters. Without flood lights we could only guess the predicament of the men behind those voices. Then, as we rushed to escape in our own boats, a life jacket was tossed into the air and landed on the deck of the tug boat in the hands of the tug captain. I saw Willie, our messman, walk away from the rail, no longer wearing his own.

There was no more sleep that night — only many gallons of coffee.

It was only one week later that I found myself leaning through a porthole, again watching the Statue of Liberty take form in the gathering dusk.

Captain Courageous Honors Rescuers

CAPTAIN HENRIK KURT CARLSEN was honored with his officers and 28 crew members from the *Flying Enterprise* recently at an informal testimonial dinner at the Seamen's Church Institute of New York. Together with the valiant Captain, was Captain Neils Olsen, skipper of the *General A. W. Greely*, and eight valiant crew members who comprised the rescue party for the men on the stricken *Flying Enterprise*.

Meeting with his men for the first time since he gave them the order to "leap" into the violent waves of the Atlantic, Captain Carlsen spoke to them personally and as a group. Facing his men, he said with visible emotion:

"You performed splendidly, boys, —and I thank you for it. There was no commotion that day on the sea — no fear — no hard words. You followed my orders perfectly, to the man."

A presentation of a sextant was made to Captain Carlsen by Dr. Raymond S. Hall, Director of the Seamen's Church Institute, on behalf of American merchant seamen. Capt. Carlsen's own sextant was lost with the ship. This was one of only two gifts that the Captain has accepted, having heretofore consistently declined all gifts offered him.

Capt. Carlsen, a shy, soft-spoken man, seemed surprised at the honor being paid him. Speaking to the entire group, as he received the sextant, he said:

"I honestly don't know why I deserve all of this. We only did our jobs well. That is all. I believe that the one who deserves the honors is Capt. Neils Olsen and his brave crew who risked their lives in the daring rescue operations."

A high point came when Antonio Silva from the *Flying Enterprise* offered his gratitude to his rescuers in the form of two huge bouquets of flowers — one to Captain Olsen, and one to the lifeboat crew that saved him from the waters.

As the dinner drew to a close, Captain Carlsen jovially mentioned:

"And now my work is cut out for me. I will set about answering the 10,000 letters I have received from children, friends, and well-wishers from all over the nation. It may take me many months, but I shall answer every one of these kind people."

During the evening a plaque was presented to the Captain by the Alumni Association of the Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point.

(Left to right): Capt. Henrik Kurt Carlsen "takes a sight" as Dr. Raymond S. Hall and Capt. Neils Olsen call out "Follow the blue line!"

Extra Ordinary Seaman

By James Frost, *A.B. Seaman*

THERE has always been a mistaken idea about sailors. Most folks, especially those who were never out of sight of land, look upon them as a wild, barbarous lot. It is only proper that I spin you a yarn about some of the highlights of life on the ocean waves. . . . Then, I will leave the decision up to you.

It was on a voyage to the East Indies in 1904 that everything seemed to happen. It was then that I earned my nickname "Extra-Ordinary Seaman," and with this I have been branded to this very day.

Our ship was a beautiful square-rigger running into violent storms, and I was a lonely sailor, marking the holidays off on my calendar, as they passed.

We left Capetown, the southern tip of Africa, on December 22nd, facing a year's grueling trip to Bangkok, about 6,000 miles as the crow flies. But for us there were no crows with which to measure on that trip — not even a lone seagull. An occasional albatross would come by and inspect us, and then the ocean would be empty again.

Just after leaving Table Bay, we ran directly into a violent storm—the very worst I ever saw. It tore at our little ship until she shuddered at every seam. It racked our bodies and nerves, as we struggled to keep her sailing. Finally, in the face of the storm's force, the main rigging carried away at the sheer pole. But luck was sailing with us on that square-rigger, for we found a couple of fathoms of boat chain stowed away. This was quickly made fast to the main shrouds, and back onto the pinrail. For the moment we were safe.

Ten days passed and no seaman slept on board that ship. We were expecting to take to the boats at any moment, and we knew that no boat could get away in such a sea. But we were not a frightened crew of men, battling the storm, for no one had time to even think about our peril. We were working hard and fast.

Just as it seemed that there would be no possible chance of our coming through, it all came to an end. As quickly as it started, the storm passed. Then we sailed on smoothly, and proudly on a friendly, brisk breeze through the Indian Ocean. And soon there was Java Head, our first landfall from Capetown. But there was still the China Sea to pass before we reached Bangkok. We knew that there would be more—much more—to come!

Cupfuls of Wind

At Sunda Straits we crawled through a passage 250 yards wide, and 72 miles long. Through this difficult sailing, we anchored thirteen times, often heaving anchor just after we had dropped it. We were taking advantage of every "cupful of wind." And we hove the lead until it seemed that our arms could not move one more time. Only those who sail can know how it feels to heave and haul in a deep sea lead of 58 pounds, with 78 fathom of line made fast to the lead.

At last we came to the Mainam River, and were towed to Bangkok. After unloading dirt ballast, we faced the task of taking on our cargo—giant teak logs, rough-hewn.

They were raised from the river to our loading ports, one on each side, fore and aft. These had been floated down the river from the jungle to meet our ship.

It was on May 22nd that we left for the long trip to Belfast, and home. There the ship would go into the yard for repairs after her grueling trip. And we sailors would know a few days rest, before we were off again to another distant port.

But our return was not to be easy . . . our trouble had not yet ended. Through the smooth Indian Ocean we were lulled into a false security, for the howling winds waited for us to round the Cape of Good Hope. For a full week the winds tore at us from the South Pole. Then, two men had to be lashed to the wheel during each four hour watch. Even the double lashings on the few sails we dared to carry broke loose a moment after they were secured.

But our bad luck finally ended. I was crippled and battered like our ship, but happy. I had earned my new name, "Extra-ordinary Seaman," from the other sailors on board.

From the Chaplain's Study

FOR the first time in the history of seamen's missions and institutes, a young man, who had spent two years as an assistant chaplain, expressed a desire to dedicate himself solely to Christian service for seamen.

The Rev. Warren H. Davis, Jr., was ordained to the Priesthood of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Chapel of the Redeemer at the Seamen's Church Institute in Philadelphia, by the Rt. Rev. Oliver J. Hart, D.D., LL.D., S.T.D., Bishop of Pennsylvania.

The Chapel of the Redeemer has a hallowed heritage as a successor to the Floating Chapel of the Redeemer consecrated by the Rt. Rev. Alonzo Potter on January 11, 1849. It was built at Bordentown at the instigation of the Rev. Benjamin C. C. Parker, missionary chaplain of the Floating Chapel of Our Saviour at the foot of Pike Street in New York.

Mr. Parker also built the second Floating Chapel of the Comforter which was moored at Houston Street on the North River, New York. Mr. Parker claims that the Floating Church of the Redeemer was the most beautiful floating church in the world, and that its exterior was surpassed by its interior.

All the floating churches are now gone, and in their places are the structures of the Seamen's Church Institute in New York and in Philadelphia. It was fitting that the oldest and most widely known Seamen's Church Institute should take official recognition of the ordination. The Rev. Dr. James C. Healey, Senior Chaplain, represented the Seamen's Church Institute of New York.

Book of Remembrance

A Book of Remembrance, together with the beautifully carved case in which it will be permanently kept, was dedicated at a recent special service in the Chapel of Our Saviour.

The Book, in which is inscribed the Endowed Red Letter Day Memorials, and the case, were presented to the Institute by Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Estes Comstock. The Red Letter Day memorializing their son is January 25.

The dedication ceremonies were conducted by the Reverend Francis D. Daley, Assistant to the Director. Representing the Comstock family were Mr. and Mrs. Roger P. Williams and Mr. Richard W. Comstock. Seamen joined members of the staff of the Institute in the service.

Romance of Spices

IT SEEMS a far cry from a bottle of bitters on the grocery shelf to a group of hardy sailors braving uncharted seas, battling pirates and repelling savages in almost impassable jungles. Yet, in the Fifteenth Century these adventurers were spurred on to roam the seas for this commodity. More valuable than gold in the Middle Ages, spices gave the monotonous food of that day a taste and quality comparable to what we now enjoy, and it was the only preservative in lieu of refrigeration. It was worth the price too—often paid in death—of bringing back the rare and valuable spices from the Far East.

King and commoner alike awaited anxiously for the arrival of the three-masted schooner which brought promise of strange new dishes, exciting, mysterious flavors from a different world. A visitor from Mars today would receive a reception similar to that which greeted the brave travelers who risked their lives to bring these treasures back from the end of the world.

Wars were fought, empires toppled as powerful nations carried on the most fantastic treasure hunt in the history of the world. They vied with each other to bring back the strange aromatic oils and pungent flavors. They had a magical effect in transforming the common food of the day into a delicacy fit for the gods. Lean beef suddenly took on a brand new flavor when sprinkled with a ground substance called pepper. A little clove placed on a country ham made the mouth water. Fresh vegetable salads took on an entirely different character when the spices were made into a dressing for them. Cinnamon taken from the bud of a flower, when combined with savory puddings and meats, brought tastes hitherto unknown. With a background of oriental music, the visiting Europeans ate dishes such as they had never seen before. They tasted dishes made with nutmeg, allspice, coriander—all new to the West.

Warring for Pepper

Cloves, nutmeg, even pepper filled the holds of the ships, to bring twice their weight in gold in the markets. Pepper still plays an important role in the wars of today. Indonesia's pepper plantations were extremely enticing to the enemy in World War II. Before the war, 50,000 tons of Indonesian pepper were imported to the U. S. in 1940. Now, supplies from this source are almost down to zero. This is due to Japanese devastation of the plantations during the war. The scarcity is shown even more graphically by price comparisons: in 1940 the wholesale cost of a pound of pepper was 4 cents, and now it is $2.50!

Gallants traveled uncharted seas to bring spices to the queen to court her favor. Christopher Columbus made his first voyage in a vain attempt to find a "back door" via the West to the spice treasures of the East. Ironically, on one of his other voyages Columbus paid a call at Trinidad, today a world center of spices—the bottled kind, Angostura. In fact when Columbus' sailors first set foot on this land they knelt and thanked the Holy Trinity for conduetting them to this beautiful island. Thus the name Trinidad. Unlike Columbus, who to his contemporaries was a failure, some hardy travelers made the trip to the East and returned loaded with the coveted items.

Growth of a Culture

They also brought back incredible stories of an exotic culture unknown to the Western world. Kings with untold wealth—beautiful harems—dishes for the table beyond the imagination of the most fabulous Western gourmets — and Mohammedanism, a strange religion which both shocked and awed the Europeans. All these tales came from the little vessels opening a new world merely to tickle the people's palates.

This same quest began in the New World as soon as America was settled. If the Medieval Europeans fought for their spices, so did the colonists.

Such purely American dishes as Boston Fish Chowder and Pumpkin Pie were common on the tables of the merchants in Massachusetts and the Virginia planters. The famous clipper ships raced to see who would arrive in Boston and Norfolk first with the still-valuable spices.

The British, realizing the settlers' desire for this food which "makes palatable food even more palatable, tempts invalid appetites, saves drooping lives and makes living a satisfaction," slapped an oppressive tax on the goods—one reason for the Revolutionary War.

And so the conflict which changed the whole course of our civilization has been an eating pleasure for us.

Friendly Little Island

By Phil May

THE SHIP lunged forward then came to an abrupt halt. No one had to be told that something was definitely wrong—a ship just doesn't stop in the middle of the ocean!

Instantly and instinctively, every man grabbed his Mae West and dashed to his emergency station. There was no excitement, just quick action. Seconds later, the emergency alarm sounded. We were in trouble, all right. As we peered into the night, we found ourselves on the shoals of a genuine South Sea Island!

Everyone seemed to know what to do. The men got ready to lower the lifeboats and head for the atoll. But the captain shouted from above:

"Take it easy, boys. Don't lower the lifeboats yet." And then we learned that we were reefed — three fathoms forward and seven fathoms aft. Our position was such that the island acted as a breakwater against the heavy seas.

Soon the captain reassured us that there was no cause for alarm — that help was on the way. By dawn we would know what action to take. He warned us not to leave the ship for the island straight ahead.

There we were, on a beautiful little island in the South Pacific, fully equipped like in the story books. There were slender, long-trunked palms, a sandy grey beach—and what seemed like thousands of white-feathered birds flying over the trees.

The first mate was all for taking-off for the island. Why wait? We could practically wade ashore. The ship might play any number of tricks on us, even roll over completely on her side, or split in two, or just plain sink before we could get away. But orders were orders.

"You men be patient 'til dawn," the Captain said.

The crew was engaged in a most extraordinary activity. They started to pack for vacationland. Talk spread that we might have to stay on the island indefinitely, so why not take everything you had?

The Mate was so hopping mad, he swore this would positively be his last trip. It was impossible for him to sail a ship any more without its being blown from under him, rammed in a collision, or being involved in situations that never let him call a fo'c'sle his own.

Someone chirped, "all going ashore stock up with cigarettes, cigars, candy and refreshments." The cook only wanted to get a fish and tackle outfit. All the deck engineer needed was his treasured, battered felt hat.

(*Continued on Page* 8)

(Continued from Page 7)

Everyone was in a festive mood throughout the night. The boys talked of the wonderful possibilities existing on that island. Native women . . . fresh fowl . . . fresh fish . . . but best of all, pay would go on just the same.

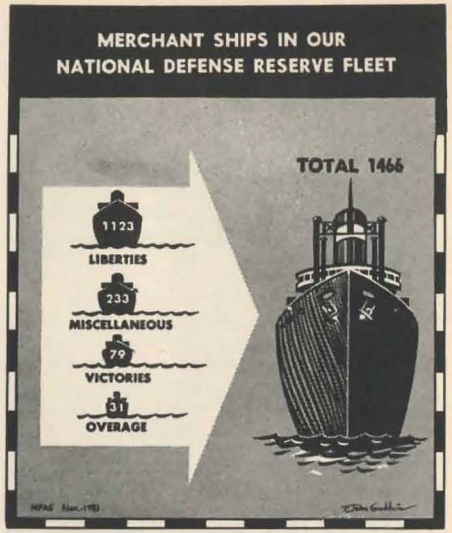
Ahhh — that would mean that we would be shipwrecked for days — months — why, maybe we'd have to stay there for years. Now I would *learn how to sit.* For hours I would be able to sit under a leafy palm tree and watch the war go by. Would I worry about work? I should say not.

This I'd seen before in the Islands when we'd gone in with supplies to some far-flung outpost. I'd seen the native male insulted at the mention of responsibilities. And somehow, I have the sneaking suspicion that this indifference to work is not because they'd tried it and found it disagreeable, but because the whole idea had not at any time entered their heads. Now we would have an opportunity to learn this method of life.

And who would be doing the work for us? Yes — the women, of course — the beautiful Dorothy Lamours of the South Pacific! They're the ones who carry things on their heads by day, and who gracefully dance for you by night. They're the ones who do the marketing and shopping — or in this case — fruit picking and boar hunting. They're the ones who raise the children in those Islands—and they're the ones who carry all of life's burdens, which for some reason or other always seem to be on top of their heads. They obviously enjoy it, and it gives the men a chance to think a bit. Ah yes . . . this would be a fortunate accident to have happen to our ship right in the middle of a hot, miserable war.

At dawn, the boys got together in groups, expectantly, awaiting the latest news. It reached us by a PBY navy plane.

"If you're considering paying a friendly visit to the island, forget it. You ought to know that there are 350 armed Japs here, and they might misinterpret your friendly overtures," the pilot reported.



These merchant ships, operated by private U. S. shipping lines in World War II, helped achieve victory. Since the outbreak of Korean hostilities over 700 of these merchant ships, not included above, have been withdrawn from this Reserve and again operated by private American shipping lines serve the nation's remobilization and help bolster the economic and military recovery of our Allies.

THE *Keystone Mariner*, the first of the Government-built Mariner class cargo ships, was launched late in February at Chester, Pennsylvania. These cargo ships are a vital part of the Government's defense program.

Thirty-five of these speedy vessels are to be completed within the next twenty-one months. They will be built in seven shipyards on the East Coast, the West Coast and the Gulf Coast. This new class will place the nation ahead of all maritime nations in commercial competition, for these vessels are built for high speed and large capacity.

Vice-Admiral E. L. Cochrane, Maritime Administrator, said this special class of ships was designed for peace or war. They will carry vital supplies and equipment during emergencies, their speed providing maximum safety against submarines.

"These Mariners will have a sustained speed of twenty knots," Admiral Cochrane said. "They are faster than any other class of dry cargo ships under any flag. They have a capacity of 12,900 tons, which puts them among the world's largest vessels designated for general cargo."

Freak Winter at Sea

THE most violent winter at sea in a century has chalked up thousands of freak accidents. Ships have split into two parts almost without warning to bewildered crew members before the sea's force. Other ships have gone down, taking with them all hands. And still others have been pushed into each other's paths, into wharves, and right up onto beaches.

The story of the *S.S. Lilica*, a collier, received only little notice, for she foundered in an Italian bay with a cracked bottom, about the same time all eyes were focused on news from the stricken *Flying Enterprise*. The *Lilica* was on a routine coal voyage from Norfolk, bound for Civitavecchia, Italy. This is a port about an hour from Rome. It was Christmas Eve and the crew was ready to go ashore to spend a happy holiday.

Suddenly the *Lilica* found the storm greater than her own power to hold course. She was thrust, like a match stick, upon shoals, her bottom cracked and water in three hatches.

Bobbing like a bottle didn't add to the Yuletide festivities, and three weeks later she was still sitting like a duck within a stone's throw of shore. Fortunately, no injuries to the men on board her were reported.

A tug stood by throughout, supplying electricity for shipboard operation. Five divers worked on the bottom of the vessel, trying to make sufficient repairs to enable her to proceed into drydock. The vital coal cargo was taken off in barges, and eventually the crew was transferred to shore.

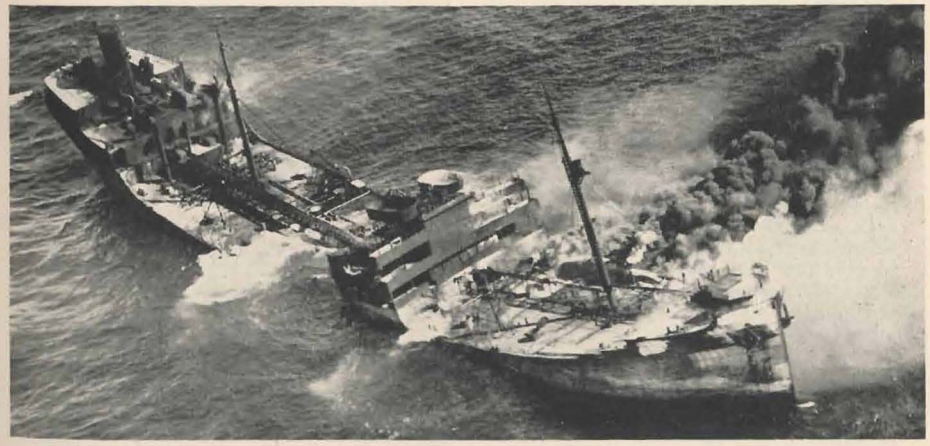
But, as if the three week ordeal aboard the crippled ship was not enough, *Lilica* crew members almost wound up in an air crackup.

By the end of January the crew had been paid off. Transportation was arranged for them to return home in three different groups. The first group was booked on an aircraft for the States. Out over the ocean the plane developed engine trouble, and was barely able to limp in for a landing on an emergency air field.

"Scared?" one of the crew members said. "You bet I was scared . . . and both times. It looked to us as if old Neptune was out to get us one way or another."

Grinning at the group gathered around for his story as he checked in at the Institute, he said:

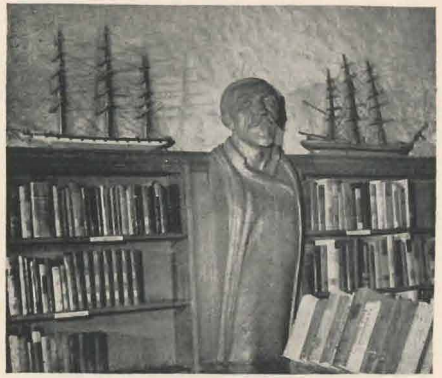
"When the rest of the crew members, waiting for transportation home from the other side, heard what happened to us, they all decided to return on a liner. None of us is interested in getting mixed up with these freak storms, but if we have to, it feels a lot better to be on a ship bobbing around in the ocean, than on a plane in the same spot!"



Scenes like this occurred with frightening frequency during this winter—the worst in a century.

Sea Chest of Stories

By Rachel L. Carson



"The sea that gives nothing, except hard knocks — and sometimes a chance to feel your strength." —*Joseph Conrad*

THE NAMES that come instantly to mind when we think of the great literature of the sea are Conrad and Melville. Awareness of the sea runs as a recurrent theme through the writings of Conrad, but for me occurs in purest form in one of his lesser known works, "*The Mirror of the Sea.*"

The great waves and the converse of wind and water over the wide spaces of ocean have never been more magnificently described.

As for Melville's "*Moby Dick,*" apart from its symbolism and human significance, it is a portrayal of the sea that in concept and execution stands apart from all others. The very spaciousness and leisure of the volume seem to be a reflection of the timeless, unhurried spirit of the sea. Such noble passages as that on the Pacific return again and again to the memory.

If you would experience the magic, the anticipation, the sometimes terrible realization of a far sea voyage, go with Tomlinson, "*The Sea and the Jungle,*" down the dark and rain-drenched streets of a small Welch port, down to the wharves where the Capella lies, and then with him cast anchor and set out on the passage to Brazil.

As Tomlinson takes us through that terrific storm that seized the Capella but a few hours out of port, we hear the sweep of seas over the decks, see the white shapes of breaking waves looming out of the darkness, and only with an effort realize that we are, after all, safe in an easy chair before the fire.

Another Realistic Story

There is the same sense of reality in another book that is an amazing recreation of a storm at sea. This is Richard Hughes' "*In Hazard,*" remarkable for its qualities of grueling suspense, its mounting sense of disaster, its piling of catastrophe on top of catastrophe.

I am struck by the fact that so many of the widely known sea books — those that come to the lips of every man when asked to name his favorites—deal with ships in peril and with men pitted against the insensate violence of a storm at sea. But that is only one aspect of a vast and many-sided subject, and among my own favorites are several well-loved volumes that present the sea in calm as well as storm, and that reveal some of the richness and meaning of that sea life in which man has little part.

Such a book is Henry Beston's "*Outermost House,*" the story of a year spent on the great outer beach of Cape Cod, alone with the sea, the winds, and the stars, the migrating birds and the creatures of the sand and the sea's edge.

I have lost count of the times I have read this book, but every return to it brings again a deep and abiding pleasure. It is full of the beauty of earth and sea, a moving testament of a man who returned to the simple, elemental things of nature.

Reflections on "Kon-Tiki"

Perhaps it is this same affirmation of the elemental realities that makes "*Kon-Tiki*" a great sea book. The facts of the wind and the sea, the creatures that rose to the surface bringing with them something of the mystery of deep waters, the inexorably westward sweep of the currents, carrying into the central Pacific the drifting plankton, the raft and the men on it, are ageless—of an earlier world to which man had not yet come, as well as of the present world. And they belong to a world that he can neither control nor modify.

Then there are those books in which articulate scientists and naturalists have brought us the intense beauty and the hidden mysteries of life within the sea, describing and interpreting a world that most men can know only indirectly.

Probably no one has explored more widely in this world, or written of it more extensievly, than William Beebe. His "*Half Mile Down*" is the only eye-witness account — in book form — of those dark undersea realms that lie beyond the reach of the sun's rays. In "*Beneath Tropic Seas*" and other books, he has vividly described the exquisite and beautiful world of the coral reefs, as seen by those willing to don a helmet and descend to the floor of shallow seas. This world also has been portrayed with great skill and sensitive appreciation by Gilbert Klingel in his "*Inagua,*" and more recently in "*The Bay.*"

Marine Manuals Thrilling

I have expressed before, and must repeat here, my conviction that some of the most fascinating sea reading is to be found in the Coast Pilots and Sailing Directions issued by many nations for the guidance of mariners.

World Telegram & Sun

Knitters Wanted!

HERE is a very worthy Christian Social Relations Project. The Seamen's Church Institute of New York has a quota of 10,000 knitted garments a year to fill. They are dependent on the volunteer efforts of our women. This year they need these three articles — sleeveless sweaters, turtle-neck sweaters, and gloves. They do not want scarfs or mittens. There are plenty of the latter in stock. Garments must be made according to instructions sent from the office of the Central Council. Wool will be sent free to anyone willing to knit who cannot afford to pay, but it is understandable that efforts should be made to make some contribution to the cost and pay the entire cost when possible. The cost per pound is $3.25 including shipping cost, which is the wholesale price.

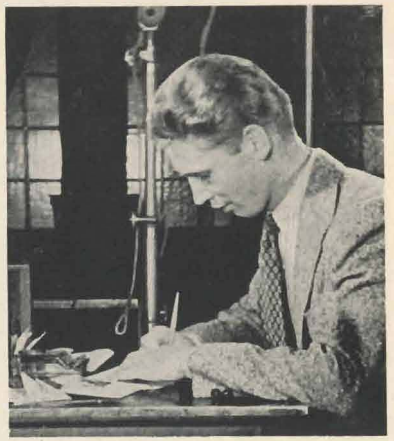
In this period our Merchant Seamen are carrying thousands of our boys overseas and keeping a steady stream of supplies going to them. For us they bring back the cargoes of goods essential to the life of our country and are invaluable in adding to our stockpile for the present emergency.

The men of the Merchant Marine have been of increasingly higher caliber within the past years. The percentage of married men has grown greatly, and they need the security, inspiration and comforts of a Christian shore home when in the port of New York. The work at the Seamen's Church Institute has a renewed challenge by making a real contribution to these men and assisting in preserving family life on which the happiness of the little children depends.

Won't you join our Knitters Guild and assist us in providing warm garments for the men who sail the seven seas? "Lord, help us to have a care for others above our concern for material things."

ED.—*This article appeared in the Albany Churchman, February, 1952. Within three days of its publication nineteen women had answered the call to knit for the S.C.I.*

The Mail Bag



Glasgow S.W. 2

Dear Sir,

I am taking the liberty of writing you this note to see if you could forward on to me a novelty I saw years ago in the States. I would like to have one again if possible. It is a small box with glass top containing ants, and they are shifting sand from one corner to another. The price was around 25 cents. Of course there might not be any more—but there might be, so if you would oblige by forwarding same, I will send you a Tartan Calendar or money which ever you want.

Yours truly,

T. MCALLISTER

Any ants to spare?

To: The Editor.

Hi, Lady!

I'm out here in California with a broken jaw and full of antabuse, and I'm dreaming dreams as moody and as vast as the sea. I got a check for $19.80 this morning for some copy a radio station bought, and a check for $82.28 from a shipping company I worked for three years ago! Never could settle down long enough to collect it.

Those little checks for overtime and unpaid wages are manna in this period.

Could you send me the little magazine? I do so want to write. I sent a 30-minute script to "The Whistler" the other day. If it sells, well—*you'll* know—the Mirror or News will read: "One Time South Street Sailor Succumbs Over Success!"

I like all of you immensely . . .

Sincerely,

THOMAS F. WHITESIDE

Ed.—Mr. Whiteside won 3rd Prize in Literary Contest for Artists and Writers Club, 1950.

Book Reviews

NEW YORK TODAY

By Agnes Rothery

Prentice-Hall, $3.75

The author's travels have given her perspective and an affectionate understanding of our great city, and she tells vividly of little-known and well-known facts about New York. She describes the entrance of immigrants through Ellis Island, and the arrival, through airports, highways, tunnels and railroad terminals of thousands of visitors, commuters and tourists. With a discerning eye for color, she paints a vivid picture of the five boroughs, the fire and police departments, the hospitals, the welfare agencies, the colleges and universities, the entertainment, the gardens, markets and parks. She does not neglect to emphasize the importance of the sea. In her chapter entitled "Tides, Docks and Piers" she graciously devotes three pages to describing the work of the SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK, and makes a point of distinguishing it from Sailors' Snug Harbor. We appreciate this, as many people confuse the Institute with the home for retired salts on Staten Island. The purpose of the Institute, as Miss Rothery states: "is to serve those merchant seamen who protect lives and cargoes on the high seas, and who, in time of war, carry essential supplies to the fighting fronts. It does not serve navy men or marines, or those merchant seamen who are no longer on active duty."

Here is an engagingly written book which is informative without being dull. Native New Yorkers and visitors will both enjoy it.

M. D. C.

COMMAND AT SEA

By Harley F. Cope
(Rear Admiral, U.S.N., ret.)

W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York
1951 — $3.75

COMMAND AT SEA is, as its sub-title indicates, a guide for the naval officer. It is a handbook to which the young officer should turn often for light and guidance in fitting himself into his important and responsible job. Such matters as taking command of a ship, of organization of the ship's personnel, of engaging in action, of discipline, of maintaining a happy and efficient ship and many others are discussed in an informal but penetrating manner by an officer who has been there and knows the game. It is enlightening, too, for the general reader who wants to know something about what the business of running a modern naval vessel is like.

W. L. M.

PORT UNKNOWN

By Sam Ross

World Publishing Co., Cleveland, Ohio, 1951, $2.75

Captain Simon Petry of the "rust bucket" cargo ship *Chickering* is on the verge of a breakdown from the strain of keeping his old ship in convoy with the motley array of officers and men given him for the job, and from the constant anxiety about the prowling wolf pack of subs. His Chief Mate is his only support and comfort, a jolly, ribald bull of a man, but a reliable officer.

The story tells of the progress of the ship, of the frequent warnings of prowling subs and the effects of these agonizing days and nights on men not trained for war service. The language of the book is uninhibited in the extreme, lewd, dirty, profane, crude generally, with occasional glimmers of poetry and mysticism of the kind that life under these conditions produces even in unawakened minds. Waterfront people will recognize many of the people in the story as prototypes of some whom they have met. The language, while not pretty, is authentic in many cases. For the thoughtful reader there is much to ponder over in this book.

WILLIAM L. MILLER

THE CITY OF FROZEN FIRE

By Vaughan Wilkins

The Macmillan Company, New York, 1951, $3.00

It would surprise anybody fishing on a bright, early morning in a secluded part of the parental estate, especially if you were a boy of about fourteen, if you suddenly became aware of a strange looking man watching you. He was from the unknown or partly forgotten land of Quivera to which ancient Welsh people from Tops' own neighborhood had fled a long time ago. While he was in rags, he had a princely bearing and spoke a strange language—part Welsh, part Latin — and he carried a bag containing heavy coins of gold of some strange design and a circlet of gold inset with great rubies. How Tops, his father, a scholar and historian, his youthful and pretty Aunt Tupenny, and Richard, set out for the strange land of Quivera, of their adventures, their encounters with the wicked Captain Darkness and how it all came out in the end is the substance of this juvenile adventure story. It is gracefully told and the story yields some strange and alluring episodes. It seems to this reader that the action is a trifle slow for American boys, especially those who batten on the modern adventure "comic" strips. The picture map on the inside of the cover is attractive, as is also the jacket by John O'Hara Cosgrove II.

W. L. M.

Three Poems Written on Board S.S. Ford Stephenson, Tanker during 1951

By Lawrence H. Miner

WORDS

What deeds are words and how they ring
Upon the straining sense,
They wake, they drive, they thrill, they sing.
They bludgeon and they fence.
How nice to hear the famed wit
Deliver his riposte,
So neatly timed, so clearly hit
We count as cheap its cost.
Yet deep within the structure of
This noble beast of man,
Hard by the luminescence, love,
Where also Fear began,
Lurk phantoms undefined and pale,
Atwitter in the shade,
Who whisper even as they hail,
And seen, begin to fade . . .

SONG OF LIFE

Death, I shall not find thee kind
If, I needs leave life behind,
Slumber is for those who care
Not for healthful sun-washed air,
But for surfeit slugs who crawl
Neath the tenure of their thrall,
And aspire to endless rest
In the dung that is their nest.
Nay! Let pain bid me arise,
Spurn my shackles, swim the skies,
Whistle down the void of space
Like a comet in its race,
Where the black abysses yawn
Palpable, without a dawn,
Where the songs of stars are sung,
Where the nebulae are hung,
Where the God-head's shining ray
Kindles an eternal day,
Burning like a gem bed light
On the throat of utter night,
Where milleniums attend
Cataclysms without end
Each by space and time to be
Dwarfed into obscurity,
By a vaster cosmos yet
That un-noticed too can set,
But an atom in a scheme
Quite beyond man's power to dream.
Thus let me assuage my fire
And exhausted of desire,
When delivered of my thirst,
Let me, like a meteor, burst.

PETRARCHAN SONNET

Fall will be coming on when we get back,
Old russet fire in leaves cascading down
Round fields and meadows sobering to brown
There in a glory reproductions lack.
Somehow no painter quite has nature's knack
There will be autumn colors in the town
Emerging in a tweed, a hat or gown,
Perhaps a shade the nearer winter's black.

Here on the straining waters, Equinox,
Eternally recurring, old as age,
Newly will daub the skies with paradox,
Soft sanguin wind-falls dashes on in an age
Of pure creation, and unhinge the cage
Now that Aeolius guards nor ever locks.

Wave

So the wave rises
Along its curve
The wind, the sun,
Until again
Water and light are one.

The green that is the root
Steadily gathers and builds,
Pulling the blown frost
Ever over and under.
Now, now, the rim breaks
To white thunder!

Sara Van Alstyne Allen
Courtesy N. Y. Times