

The LOOKOUT



Funds are still needed to meet Current Bills for Work on the New Annex Building

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

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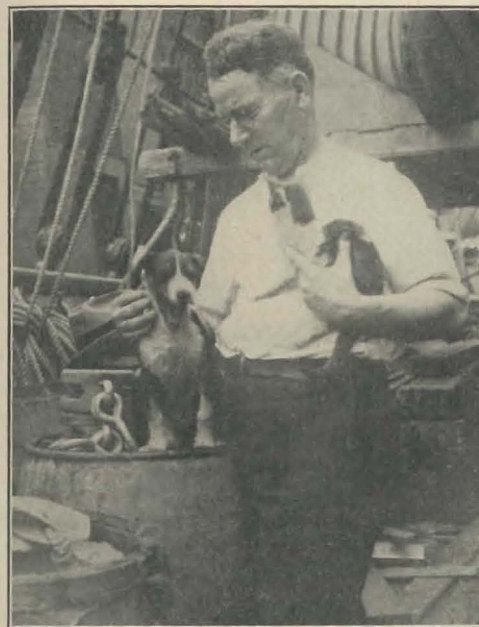
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The Institute's "Byrd" Men



TENNANT, SAMSON AND IGLOO

The vanguard of the Byrd Antarctic Expedition has sailed on the *City of New York* for two years of no one knows what sort of experiences in the last remaining unknown lands of the world, twenty-three hundred miles south of the nearest inhabited island.

During their absence they will continually be in the minds of the Institute staff; for, as Lady Astor cabled to Commander Byrd, "If men must fly, women must pray."

We are especially concerned with their welfare, for several of them are sailormen of our

own—men who for years have looked upon the Institute as their home in the Port of New York.

And away down there ninety-two hundred miles from New York, in the stillness of the Antarctic summer when all is darkness for weeks, we rather believe at least an occasional thought will be of 25 South Street.

For even if memory of the Institute fails them (and we doubt that it will), they will have as reminders the gay little cretonne ditty bags filled with sewing supplies, which it was our privilege to furnish to each member of the expedition.

Captain Melville, the skipper, made the request. In his frequent sojourns at the Institute he has seen many a sailor start off to sea with one of these little bags tucked into his equipment, and he did not hesitate to suggest that we fill this need which had not otherwise been met.

Gimbel Brothers, who had already contributed liberally to the Expedition, very generously gave us the necessary supplies at cost; and Mrs. Michael Armstrong of Mariners' Harbor, Staten Island, spent a torrid day making up the bags at only a moment's notice. Thoughts of

the South Pole temperature must have sustained her; also the knowledge that her work will be a source of help whenever a stitch gives way or a refractory button manages to get loose from its moorings.

The Institute had a further opportunity to be of service by supplying for the officers of the Byrd ship copies of our first-aid manual, which we publish in collaboration with the United States Public Health Service. This brought the following letter from Commander Byrd:—

"Dear Dr. Mansfield,

"I am deeply grateful for your thoughtfulness in sending me the inscribed copies of your Manual on Ship Sanitation and First Aid.

"One of these I have turned over to our Medical Director who will make good use of it, I am sure.

"It is nice to take down to the Antarctic the good wishes that you conveyed in the inscription, and I want to take this opportunity to thank you again for your cooperation and for the way your Institute has been taking care of the members of our expedition in recent months.

"With renewed thanks and

appreciation, Very sincerely,
(Signed) R. E. BYRD."

Among the members of the expedition referred to by Commander Byrd is Captain Melville, of whom we tell tales elsewhere in this issue; also George Tennant, with whom we have already acquainted our LOOKOUT readers.

Then there is Charles V. Gould, the carpenter, generally known as "Chips." He served in a similar capacity on the *Chantier*, which carried the Byrd North Pole expedition to its base at Spitzbergen. Chips connected up with this former adventure through our Employment Department, so that we have always had a special interest in his progress.

One of the most picturesque characters in the entire outfit is our Jake whose real name, our records tell us, is John Jacobson. He is sixty and the oldest member of the expedition.

Jake has known and patronized the Institute for years and for several months recently he was employed on our special police staff. Everybody loved him. He is an easy-going, comical fellow who nevertheless is conceded to "know his onions."



JAKE, THE SAIL MAKER

"Onions" in this case means sails, for Jake is the official sailmaker of the expedition. He was quite proud of the fact that the sails for the *City of New York* were all ship-shape ahead of time. What may happen to them when they encounter the polar breezes Jake was not prepared to predict, but he is quite ready to repair them or to replace them entirely if necessary. To help him he has a staunch sewing machine which looks a bit incongruous under his berth in the fo'c'stle.

Time was when Jake was top man and sailmaker in the Navy and he is glad to get back to his

old job. He can still frisk about in the rigging although his less arduous duties of recent years have permitted him to develop what one of his Institute friends calls "a shape like a senator."

Like the rest of the crew, Jake is happy to be following Commander Byrd to the ends of the earth. Three other reasons why he is pleased with his lot are (1) Captain Diedrich, (2) the ship's pup, and (3) the ship's kitten.

Captain Diedrich is the handsome young viking who bought the *City of New York* (then the *Samson*) from Norway. His father went to school with Jake years ago in Tromsø, which makes Jake take an affectionate proprietary interest in him.

Jake and Tennant divide the responsibility for Samson, the wistful little animal who bids fair to be a dog when he grows up. His kitten playmate should, of course, be called Delilah, but with a sense of the fitness of things, Jake named him Igloo. Knowing full well the depth of feeling sailormen have for animals, we are gratified to know they are taking these two little waifs along. They will be thoroughly spoiled, of course, but

they will help while away many a dull hour. They will also no doubt be taught many tricks so that they may be able to supplement the "act" which Jake contemplates putting on the vaudeville stage when the expedition returns.

The sailing of the *City of New York* on August 25 was an event which will go down in history, and it was accompanied with plenty of romance and picturesque-ness.

The little ship's capacity is only 512 tons but "she's a beauty," to quote Captain Melville. Her hull is painted white and the superstructure a bright orange; and with her sails full set on a blue sea she will well warrant her skipper's admiration. She was chosen upon the recommendation of Captain Amundsen whose experiences at the South Pole Byrd valued most highly. The little ship has a wooden hull thirty-four inches thick to withstand the contact with ice floes.

The deck was all a-bustle for the last few days before sailing. Reporters and tradesmen delivering supplies got in one another's way trying to scale the piles of boxes and coils of rope;

and through it all the members of the crew worked calmly and in the best of humor.

We came upon Tennant supervising the erecting of a Russia-iron chimney for his galley stove. When it emerged from the roof of the galley cabin it encountered one of the two lifeboats on the ship. Tennant's chief interest in the chimney was that it must "draw" and he was therefore trying to persuade Chips to cut a hole for it in the bottom of the life-boat!

The send-off has been graphically and adequately described in the newspapers, but one little incident after the *City of New York* got out to sea would seem to merit special attention in the LOOKOUT. Commander Byrd, relaxing from the formal official farewells, appeared on deck in his khaki jeans, called his men about him and told them that their families would be properly cared for in their absence. Then he voiced quite simply his whole policy toward the human element in his great undertaking:

"The most important thing on this ship is good fellowship, more important than efficiency, though efficiency is important

enough. I believe in every one of you."

A GIVE-AWAY

Sometimes a landsman tries to impose upon the Institute—a procedure which is invariably forestalled by demanding his sea papers. But we do not accept a man's papers as absolute proof of his claim to our help if other circumstances seem to be against him.

We were on our guard, therefore, when a jaunty youth approached our Relief Desk and rather flippantly asked for a meal and a night's lodging. He had discharge papers which we suspected were not his own; but more incriminating were the "wise cracks" which were so thickly sprinkled through his speech. It savored of frequent attendance at vaudeville shows, which are not included in the average seaman's program.

When we asked if he had no money at all, he replied, "Lady, I'm as broke as the traffic rules."

Of course that settled it. Traffic rules don't concern sailors. And further questioning proved that our applicant had never been to sea.

Any Old Clothes?

Paul Parker Photo
IN OUR OLD CLOTHES ROOM

"Cap'n, suh, yessuh, Ah wants me a coat, suh."

Fortunately we had a coat for Black Tom in our Old Clothes Room, and it fit.

Black Tom had been taken to the Marine Hospital on Staten Island several weeks back and had just been discharged quite well but too weak for a seaman's job. He "hankered" for his home in Baltimore, and we de-

ecided to lend him his fare. We then asked if there was anything else he needed, which brought forth the request for a coat.

Then we told him when he could get a train and where. His face beamed and he was profuse in his thanks, but he lingered fingering his cap. He was evidently bothered about something.

"Better get along, Tom," our

Respite for Matt

Matt thinks he will stay ashore for a while.

In August he was first mate on a small sailing vessel of only one hundred thirty tons, and a crew of six men. They were off Nova Scotia with a load of coal when a hurricane caught them without warning, tore off all their sails, and put the steering apparatus out of commission.

The ship of course became derelict. The cargo shifted and the little vessel went over on one side. A heavy wave carried the bosun overboard. Matt threw him a life buoy, but just as he was about to grasp it, a tremendous wave broke over him and carried the buoy beyond his reach. The wind got under the bosun's oilskin coat and held him up for a time, but he soon became exhausted and all effort to save him proved to be to no purpose. Matt clung helplessly to the deck and watched his pal drown.

The five remaining members of the crew were then forced to

take refuge in the rigging to escape the bosun's fate.

At the mercy of the hurricane, they headed in toward land until, only three-quarters of a mile from the rocks, the wind suddenly veered and carried them along the coast.

For eighteen hours they clung to their perilous perches and then ventured down for food. They could not get to it, however, for the sea was still breaking over the deck. It was four days before they could reach their supplies and the galley stove; and it was after eight more days of helpless drifting that a Canadian revenue boat finally encountered them and towed them into port.

Matt has been staying at the Institute since then, paying his expenses judiciously from his savings. With his feet firmly planted on the tile floor of our new lobby, he tells us,

"I think I'll stay ashore for a while."

WHAT A SAILOR SAYS

"To the toilworn and weary mariner ashore after long and perilous voyages, 'home' is a longing which he can only visualize and but seldom realize.

"But in lieu of a home of his own, he will invariably guide his errant footsteps to the Seamen's Church Institute, where he can find men of his own profession; where he can obtain rooming facilities at a nominal price; and where he is treated with the courtesy and respect which should be the right of those whose calling demands that they be ready to prove themselves heroes whenever the occasion arises.

"These facilities I understand are going to be enlarged in the New Building, and I am sure that we, as seamen of intelligence and understanding, feel that what we once considered as being incapable of improvement will be enhanced one hundredfold.

"When I think of the Institute, it invariably conveys to my mind—

"Home is the hunter, home from the hills,
And the sailor home from the sea.'"

WHAT YOU SAY?

Jack Tar took his pen in hand and put his best foot forward (mixing the metaphors) to write the message on the opposite page.

He had rather spontaneously burst into praise of the Institute within Mother Roper's hearing, and she asked him to jot down his thoughts for the LOOKOUT readers.

He attempted to speak for all the men of sailordom.

"Home," of course, was his key-note. It is always so with the homeless sailorman when he finds it possible to be articulate about the Institute.

This Institute, which will soon mean home to 1,500 men each night, is still facing a tremendous problem of financing.

A gift of \$500 for a memorial room will ensure a home for one sailor each night from now on; and a greater or lesser amount will give proportionate comfort and happiness to "the sailor *home* from the sea."

An Iron Man for a Wooden Ship



Captain Frederick C. Melville, commanding the S.S. *City of New York* of the Byrd Antarctic Expedition, has for years made the Institute his home while ashore in New York. This is part of the program which has won for him the reputation of being a man of good habits, staying sober and keeping good company ashore—a reputation which had a great deal to do with his selection by Comman-

der Byrd from scores of applicants.

He is one of the few young men following the sea who has remained true to his love for sail in the face of the overwhelming advent of steam. Still he has given steam a fair trial. He spent two years as master of a steamer, but finally returned to the sailing ships of his boyhood.

At the age of thirteen, thirty-

one years ago, he set out from his home in Lynn, Massachusetts, for a trip to Porto Rico in the capacity of deck boy. He was a frail youngster and it was his father's idea that a sea voyage would build him up. He has been going to sea ever since, a career which apparently has not interfered with his attainment of health. He is just the husky type that a movie director would cast as a sea captain.

Of course his predilection for sail in this day and age may have cost him considerable in the way of position and financial return, but he has been happy and through it he has won this opportunity to go to the ends of the earth as an important contributor to a history-making adventure.

Captain Melville has had most of the experiences of an old salt except that he has never been shipwrecked and he has never seen a burial at sea. He has, however, weathered many a gale and several hurricanes, one of which stood his vessel on beam ends for two hours; and during the War he "dodged mines."

At the age of twenty he had gone around the world three

times and since then he has pointed his prow into ports all over the world that are not listed in the itineraries of the travel cruises. But he has never sailed into polar waters. An old sea captain who has known him for years is of the emphatic opinion, however, that he is well qualified to navigate a ship to the South Pole or to any other place where a ship can go.

Captain Melville is a kindly genial soul ashore, but at sea he is said to put on a stern mask and to rule justly but with a rod of iron. He is master of his ship and his crew knows it. The story runs that his men once attempted a mutiny which the Captain managed in his own way, bringing his ship and crew into port intact, but "every man with his head in a sling."

Captain Huntington, principal of the Institute's Merchant Marine School, formerly had a similar school in Boston. It was here, twenty-three years ago, that Captain Melville qualified for his ticket for chief mate of sail and second mate of steam. The two captains have remained good friends throughout the years and they still delight in recalling incidents of the old days.

The proposed trip to the Pole brought back an almost forgotten event that has a significant bearing upon the present situation.

By way of an exercise in navigation, Captain Melville was told to make calculations proving that he had been to the South Pole. He did it. It fired his imagination to such an extent that he went his instructor one better by recording his calculations in a sort of log which elaborated upon his imaginary experiences mentioning that "after a meal of dog stew," etc., they pushed on to their goal.

Perhaps he may see his fictitious log come true.

It may be interesting to note in this connection that Captain Melville is a second cousin of Herman Melville who wrote the immortal "Moby Dick." This is the only claim he makes to having come from a sea-faring family, but it is quite likely that Herman Melville's reputation has at least unconsciously influenced our Captain's career.

Just before setting sail with the Byrd Expedition, Captain Melville was honored by the Government by being named Lieutenant Commander in the

Merchant Marine Naval Reserve. His joy was complete. It was well-deserved recognition on the part of Secretary Wilbur, for Captain Melville is living proof that the days of "wooden ships and iron men" are not yet past. This Antarctic Expedition will further prove it; and when at last he brings Commander Byrd's courageous followers back into port, we know he will look up to the roof of 25 South Street, as do thousands of others of our sailormen, and he will thrill to see our signal flags fluttering in the wind and spelling out their message, "Welcome!"

A sailorman came to one of our police officers with a twenty-dollar bill which he had found in our building. As he took it, the officer had an idea.

"How much money have you got on you, Hans?"

Hans dug down into his dungarees and brought forth all he had—thirty-five cents. He read the officer's thoughts.

"O, that's all right," he said in his embarrassment. "I'm shipping out today and I'll have more when I really need it."

A Clerical Criticism

The following correspondence will be self-explanatory and perhaps interesting to our readers. The criticism came from an Episcopal clergyman in the Diocese of New York.

"My dear Dr. Mansfield:

"I have just read over a copy of the LOOKOUT for August. I am disappointed to find in it no mention of our Lord from cover to cover.

"I confess I wondered whether there was not some connection between this want of spiritual courage, and your need for funds and I felt that in honesty I ought to say so to you.

"Faithfully yours,"

"My dear Mr. ———"

"We are always glad to receive expressions of opinion from our LOOKOUT readers, and I am therefore grateful to you for your criticism of our August number.

"I think there can be no doubt in your mind as to the foundation upon which this Institute is built, and as to the fact that our workers during the entire 85 years of our existence have striv-

en to emulate the spirit of Christ in their service to seamen. A Cross on our roof shines forth by night and by day to proclaim to the world, and especially to the sailorman entering port, that here is a house of Christian service. There can be no doubt as to our allegiance.

"The lack of definite reference to things spiritual in our August LOOKOUT (and perhaps in other numbers as well) is not an indication of lack of spirituality in our work, but rather a lack of ecclesiastical language on the part of a lay editor, who, I think you will agree, has indicated very clearly in her little stories that the spirit of Christ pervades our efforts to be of service.

"Other issues of the LOOKOUT from time to time have voiced very definitely our faith in God's help to carry us through this critical period in our history.

"The magazine, by the way does contain one reference to our Lord, which seems to me rather significant. It is the statement of the old retired sea captain who says, 'I sit back comfortable and trust in the Lord

and my red lantern.' He was quite devout in making this statement.

"I wonder if perhaps it does not figuratively express our attitude toward the raising of our building fund. We are comforted by our faith and our trust in our Lord that He will guide us in expanding His work; and at the same time, living in a material world where red lanterns are the accepted means of warding off material dangers, we use material methods to gain our material ends; but not, I hope, without spiritual guidance.

"However, I think your criticism is well taken, and again I thank you for it. Perhaps it was our 'red lantern' rather than our trust in the Lord which dominated the August LOOKOUT.

"With kind personal wishes,
"Faithfully yours"

"P.S. Perhaps you are under the impression that the LOOKOUT goes to our seamen, which is not the case. It is sent to about seven thousand people who are interested in our work and who contribute to its support. It is intended to keep them informed of our progress, to describe the service we are able

to render through their generosity, and to call attention to our further needs."

A red-headed seaman of middle age was making vehement threats, accompanied by appropriately violent gestures, against anyone who might ever make any criticism against the Institute. The reason was this: A week before he had left a six-dollar sweater (his one and only) in the Institute reading room. He had returned anxiously an hour later to find it undisturbed. So much for that.

Last night he had gone to sleep in an Institute dormitory bed with dollar bills (his three and only) inside his pillow case. He sallied forth in the morning without them, discovered his carelessness, and came back in a frenzy of excitement. The bed linen had been removed and sent to the laundry, but an Institute porter had found the three bills and had turned them in.

"That wouldn't happen anywhere but 25 South," our Titian declared, and we hesitate to print what he promised will happen to anyone who criticizes the Institute in his hearing.

Vignettes of the Seaman



probably take the seemingly gayest fellow in the Institute—one of those youngsters who whistles and cuts up didoes—for such is usually the veneer of the "sad sailor."

This is just one of many letters that find their way across our Business Manager's desk:

"Acknowledging receipt of my baggage and your letter, I wish to thank you for the efficient manner in which you acceded to my request. May every seafaring man be as grateful to your Institute for services rendered as I am."

The following, reported by the Seamen's Church Institute of Newport, might have happened in any port:

"As far as shipping goes, an oyster schooner is not a very important craft. This particular one was the captain's sole possession and he lost his life with his ship. The one man who constituted the crew was rescued after being in the water ever so long and came to us destitute except for water-soaked clothes and shoes. Everything he owned,

"For a Sad Sailor."

Such was the designation attached to a little gift which was sent to Mrs. Roper to be passed along to some sailorman of her selection.

Knowing seamen as she does, Mother Roper could and did make the choice.

We suspect, however, that any one of us blindfolded could have picked a man who would qualify. But were we called upon to make the selection with our eyes wide open, we should

what little money he had and what was of greatest value to him, all his seamen's certificates, went down with the boat. He wanted just one thing and that was work. With no little difficulty we got his consent to accept clothes, meals and lodging. He wanted work and tried ever so hard to find it and when it seemed as though there was not one job in the entire port, a yacht came into the harbor looking for one man."

Most of us have had the experience of feeling like criminals when we present perfectly good checks to be cashed and have had some strange bank clerk question us. We can appreciate therefore, how a sailorboy with a perfectly legitimate claim for our help can get all "balled up" in presenting his case, especially if he is a shy youngster like Tim Sharkey.

Tim appealed to us to help him to get a passport. He admitted afterwards that he had carefully rehearsed the speech he intended to make to our Chaplain but in spite of his foresight, this is the garbled yarn he told:

He had no birth certificate, the reason being that when he was three years old, his home town burned up and he lost his working clothes!

P.S. Tim got the passport.

Uncle Sam's sailorboys are quite welcome at the Institute, although we seldom have the privilege of serving them. Two "gobs" in our Social Service Department therefore attracted our attention.

They were on leave and broke, and the lamentable part of it was that they had several more days of liberty. One of the boys had a bank account in a southern city, and he was able to furnish adequate proof of it. So we cashed his check for ten dollars, departing from our rule of accepting checks for collection only. We took no risks, however, as the boys are under Navy discipline and know the penalty for misrepresentation in such a case.

The youngsters went off in great spirits for the balance of their holiday, and our reward came in the statement of the older one:

"I used to be in the merchant

service and I knew they'd fix us up at 25 South Street."

"Limey" has his views of landlubber womenfolk. Said he: "I asked a lady to come visit our ship. Told her I'd show her all around. And what does she do? Asks me when it's high tide. Said she'd like to come then so she wouldn't have so far to climb up the side of the boat? Can you picture it?"

Loud laughter came from a corner of the new lobby. Two old salts were slapping their knees and throwing their heads back to indulge in their mirth.

They saw our curious gaze and beckoned to us to come and hear all about the cause of their hilarity. It was a reminiscence party. They were calling up the old sailing days, and Irish John had just scored a hit with one of his yarns. He relished the opportunity to repeat it for our benefit.

"'Twas the first day out from Sydney, we were; and we had a new galley b'y along. Picked him up down there, we did, and him a farmer lad.

"He was getting breakfast and he was wanting to know where could he get some wood for the galley stove.

"There's a fine husky log," says I. 'Go chop yourself what ye'll be after needing.'"

Here the two old cronies went off into spasms of laughter that brought tears rolling down their cheeks, whilst first one and then the other tried to explain to us that the "fine husky log" was the mainmast.

It seems the galley boy went at it with a vim and a good sharp axe, during which performance the first mate happened along for his morning stroll. The description of the ensuing scene was lost in Irish John's chuckles, but he calmed down eventually sufficiently to tell us that the galley boy was docked two months' pay.

"Of course I fixed it up with him," John admitted with somewhat the air of a martyr. But our sympathies are still with the farmer lad, for John has apparently had his money's worth out of the episode. After all, what is a galley boy's pay for two months compared with a perpetual source of entertainment?

THE LOOKOUT,

25 South Street, New York City.

Enclosed find one dollar for which please enter a year's subscription for

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Funds for the New Building are vitally needed and will be most gratefully received by

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Treasurer

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