

# THE LOOKOUT



WINDJAMMER CLASSROOMS — See page 14

VOL. XXXVI—NUMBER 3

MARCH, 1945

LEARNING TO BE GOOD SEAMEN: Aboard the square-rigger "Joseph Conrad" trainees in the U. S. Maritime Service acquire a knowledge of how to "hand, reef and steer" and many other things essential for becoming "iron men" to man today's iron ships.

### Sanctuary

Invocation at Launching  
of the Liberty Ship Charles S. Haight, September 23, 1944.

O Eternal God, who alone spreadest out the heavens and rulest the raging of the sea, draw near to us at this time, as we invoke Thy blessing upon this vessel, Charles S. Haight, about to be launched in the Service of our Country. We commend her to Thy Almighty protection, guard her, we beseech Thee, from the dangers of the sea, from the violence of the enemy, and from every evil to which she may be exposed. Conduct her to the havens where she would be. We pray for those whose duties call them to serve upon her; endue them with a sense of loyalty to duty, and preserve them from all harm. Let Thy blessing be upon this, and all other industries that are working for the common good of our Country; grant that with united minds and purpose of heart, we as a people, mindful of the blessings of Thy good providence, may with peace and confidence serve Thee, our God.  
In the Name of Thy dear Son, who taught us to say, "Our Father, Who art in heaven . . ."

by the Rev. Frederick Cousins, St. Simons Island, Georgia

Mr. Haight was a member of the Board of Managers of the Seamen's Church Institute of New York, and a vice-president, until his death in 1937.

### A SPRING THRIFT SALE

for the benefit of

THE SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK  
DO YOUR SPRING CLEANING EARLY

Please send us furniture, china, glassware or any other articles for which you no longer have use. If convenient, will you please mail or deliver small items.

Address all inquiries to:

MRS. GRAFTON BURKE,  
25 South Street New York 4, N. Y.  
Bowling Green 9-2710

NOTE: Kindly state when material will be ready for collection. The Institute's Station Wagon will call for articles in New York City and vicinity by special arrangement.

We trust that any contributions of articles made to the Thrift Sale will not be a substitute for your usual gift to the Ways and Means Fund which is needed for the maintenance of the Institute.

PLEASE SAVE WEDNESDAY EVENING, APRIL 11th for the  
INSTITUTE'S SPRING THEATRE BENEFIT. Details later.

# The Lookout

VOL. XXXVI

MARCH, 1945

No. 3

## Club for Danish Seamen Opened at the Institute

A CLUB for the more than 2,000 Danish merchant seamen who have not seen their homeland since the Nazis invaded Denmark in 1940 was officially opened on Friday evening, February 9th on the second floor of the Seamen's Church Institute of New York, thus adding one more club to those already established for British, Belgian and Dutch seamen. The Danish Consul General, George Bech, presided, and introduced the speakers. Because of the large crowd, the program was held in the Chapel of Our Saviour on the first floor, after which the

Danish seamen and about two hundred and fifty distinguished guests in Danish shipping, religious and cultural circles in America inspected the attractive new clubrooms.

His Excellency, the Danish Minister to the United States, Henrik Kauffmann, extended greetings in behalf of his government to the Danish seamen. He said in part:

"For almost five years Denmark has been in enemy hands. Today, the hour of liberation is near. On April 9, 1940, our country was overrun and stunned after the first crushing blow which our attackers dealt us.



The Club is decorated in red, gray and white, with pale yellow walls. The vestibule has red and white striped wall paper in the colors of the Danish flag. Red and white checked curtains are at the windows. Tables and chairs are light gray, and armchairs and sofas are in red or green leather. Alfred A. Scheffer was the architect and Svend Kent was the contractor.

A large mural of Kronborg Castle, at Elsinore, painted by Boris Luban, dominates the main room.

Darkness shrouded Denmark, but outside the battle continued, the great fight between Liberty and dictatorship, truth and untruth.

"In this fight the Danish people neither could, nor would stand as passive onlookers. When Denmark was chained and its voice silenced, Danes the world over deemed it their duty to show where Denmark stands; *the first who heeded the call were our seafaring men*. In deed—and deeds do speak louder than words—they showed in action Denmark's protest against the attack and showed that Denmark is in the fight for the Common Cause side by side with the Allies.

"When the war is over, Denmark, as all other victims of Hitler's outrage, will be faced with great and difficult problems. As we have stood together during the war, all good forces must stand together in reconstructing our country. Our seafaring men have shown us all, that the Danish people are sound and strong.

A country which has developed a seafaring class such as the Danish, can look forward to the future without fear . . . This Club would not have been possible without the main contribution from the National War Fund, an expression of America's great and generous heart."

A highlight of the program was the singing by **Lauritz Melchior** noted Danish Metropolitan opera star, in Danish of "Der Er Ingering Des Maner", a moving tribute to the Danish flag.

**Jean Hersholt**, "Dr. Christian" of radio fame and President of America-Denmark Relief spoke:

"Immediately after the Nazis invaded Denmark an organization was started and about six hundred Danish-American churches, lodges, clubs and societies are members. Last year, when we joined the National War Fund, our name was changed to American Denmark Relief. Through this, we have sponsored several projects, furnishing financial help to



Left to right: Standing: Clarence G. Michalis, Thorkil Host, Capt. Knud Hansen, Pastor Alfred Dorf, Dr. Harold H. Kelley, Consul General George Bech, William K. Sorensen, and Victor Borg. Seated: Jean Hersholt, Danish Minister, Henrik Kauffmann (in profile) and Lauritz Melchior.



Coffee and Sandwiches for Danish Seamen Served by Danish Actors and Singer: Jean Hersholt, "Dr. Christian" of radio fame, Lauritz Melchior, Metropolitan tenor, and Victor Borge, Danish actor-musician help Hostess Mrs. Ibsen-Jensen to serve refreshments to a group of Danish merchant seamen at the official opening of the new Danish Seamen's Club on February 9th at the Institute.

Danish refugees, sewing units to which thousands of Danish-American women contribute their services, and now—this Danish Seamen's Club.

"No profession has done Denmark more honor than our Danish sailors, sailing for the United Nations. Some day, when the history of Denmark's participation in this world struggle is written, the contribution given by these Danish seamen will stand out like a shining light in the common cause for which we are all united."

Consul General Bech introduced the Institute's President, **Clarence G. Michalis**, as "a very fine landlord—since he does not charge us any rent for the space where our new Club is." Mr. Michalis spoke in behalf of the Institute's Board of Managers and staff and contributors, welcoming the Danish seamen and stating that the Institute is proud to have the opportunity to be of service by turning over the space for their use, just as it has done in

the case of the Netherlands Seamen's Home, the Belgian Seamen's Home and the British Merchant Navy Club.

The Institute's Director, the **Rev. Harold H. Kelley, D.D.** also welcomed the Danish seamen, and paid tribute to their great skill as seafarers and stated that the Danish Merchant Marine are a credit to their own country and to the Allied merchant ships which they are now sailing. He said that the Institute has always been open to seamen of all nationalities, that the general recreation rooms are international, but that he appreciates that groups would want to have their own clubs where they may meet with shipmates and friends who speak their own language.

The **Rev. Dr. Alfred Th. Dorf**, President of the Danish-American Seamen's Mission which is sponsoring the Club, said in part: "From the dawn of their history Scandinavians have been seafaring people.

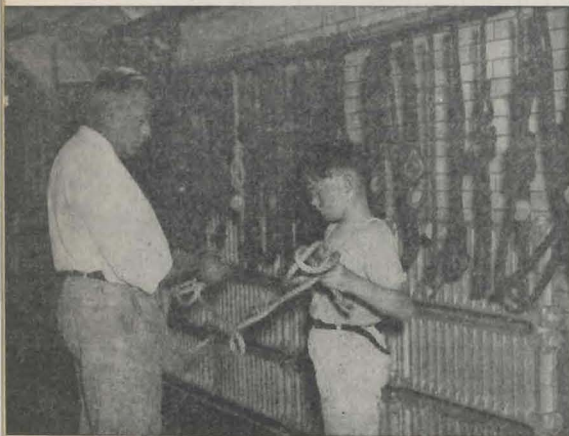
With pride we think of our heroes of the sea, from the time of the Vikings to the present day when the Danish Merchant Marine is plying the seven seas and their motorships have become models in efficiency and beauty . . . You seamen who are alive—we know that many of your comrades have sacrificed their lives—are looking forward to the day when you can go home to join your families, the day when peace comes.

“For years we have wanted to have a homelike place for you here in this big city, and we are grateful for the opportunity to open in the world’s biggest and greatest institution for seamen, a homelike place. We hope that you will enjoy it.”

Thorkil Host, managing director of the Danish Ship Operating Corporation, and treasurer of the Board of Directors of the Danish Seamen’s Club said “The long cherished desire to establish a reading room and

## Seven Years Ago— Bobby Stap

Learning the Ropes



Photos by courtesy of N. Y. Daily Mirror

We have a hunch that some day Captain Bobby Stap will be on the bridge of an American liner  
THE LOOKOUT, Nov., 1938

club for Danish seamen in the shipping center of Manhattan is now being realized. I hope that this Club will be a place with a homelike and kindly atmosphere where many Danish officers and crews will call often and where everyone who comes will get at once an impression of friendliness, understanding and good will.”

Frederik B. Clausen, representative of the Danish Seamen’s Unions in New York, thanked Jean Hersholt as President of America-Denmark Relief in behalf of the seamen, for the attractive club rooms made available to him and his shipmates and expressed the hope that after the war the Club would continue to keep its doors open to other Danish seamen who will then be free to sail their ships.”

The singing of the Danish national anthem (Kong Christian) and “I Danmark er jeg fodt” concluded the program.

Following inspection of the club-rooms, and a delightful entertainment by the Danish actor-musician, Victor Borge, the guests proceeded to the Institute’s dining room (also an attractive room with blue walls with silver ships) where coffee, sandwiches and Danish pastry were served.

Captain Knud Hansen, master of the Danish squarerigged training ship, now used by the U. S. Coast Guard, presented a photograph of his ship to the Club and promised to send his library of about 200 Danish books.

The officers of the Club are: Georg Beck, President; Thorkil Host, Treasurer; the Rev. Alfred Dorf, Chairman and Secretary; L. Bang Splittorff, F. B. Clausen and William K. Sorrensen. The hostesses are Mrs. Ibsen-Jensen and Mrs. Meta Juul.



## Success Story—From Stowaway to Officer

EDITOR’S NOTE: The LOOKOUT editor was pleased to receive a visit recently from Lieut. (jg) Robert Stap, a second mate in the American Merchant Marine. He had changed in seven years, as the pictures on this page show! He spoke of his gratitude to Capt. Robert Huntington of the Institute’s Merchant Marine School for accepting him for training. Bobby didn’t want any publicity about his achievements, but was persuaded to have a press interview so that the public would know of the possibilities for rapid advancement in the American Merchant Marine.

By ROBERT WILDER\*

Not so long ago, as the years fly, young Bobby Stap was number one problem child to his parents, and a little, old man of the sea who had fastened himself to the reluctant backs of half a dozen steamship companies.

At the age of 13 Bobby was establishing a dubious record as the water front’s champion stowaway and without even half trying he had any number of pursers, who have orderly minds and like to have all their passengers accounted for and with tickets in their hands, tossing fretfully in their bunks at night wondering if that Stap kid had managed to hide himself again.

Shoving off from his home, at Springfield Gardens, L. I., in 1938, Bobby picked the Normandie for his first successful crossing without benefit of fare. After that he made a jaunt to Europe aboard the Cunard White Star liner Georgic, then gave his unwelcome patronage to the Queen Mary. Bored with Europe he ran down to Savannah aboard the City of

\*Reprinted from The N. Y. Sun, Jan. 27, 1945.



Lt. (jg) Robert Stap, U. S. Maritime Service Today

Chattanooga and, having a fancy for the sun, polished things off with a Caribbean cruise aboard the Grace Line’s Santa Elena.

By this time not only were the steamship companies acutely conscious of the ever-present threat of Bobby around the docks, but Mr. and Mrs. Stap also thought something ought to be done to curb their snub-nosed wandervogel and Bobby was hauled up in Children’s Court. There the



Bobby Stap—a Dreamer 1938

### NOTE:

Owing to lack of space our regular features “Ship News”, “Book Reviews” and “Marine Poetry” are omitted from this issue.

EDITOR

judge went over the stowaway's case and pondered the problem.

#### Two Solutions Considered.

"It was a quick toss-up," Bobby said, "whether I should be sent to a reform school or be allowed to enter a merchant marine school."

As things turned out the merchant marine won and today Lieut. (j.g.) Robert Stap of the United States Maritime Service confessed that a sailor's life is just about everything he imagined it would be. Sitting in the Janet Roper Lounge of the Seamen's Church Institute, at 25 South Street, Second Officer Stap was back from a 45,000-mile cruise of the Pacific aboard a tanker. On his blouse he was wearing ribbons for service in the Atlantic, Mediterranean, Pacific and Middle East area, together with a combat ribbon with a star denoting one ship lost.

From the Children's Court, Bobby went to the Merchant Marine School at the Institute and then went to sea in a tanker as an ordinary seaman, age 16. He was an able-bodied seaman a year later, a third officer at 19, graduating from the U. S. Maritime School at Fort Trumbull and now, 20 years of age, he is a second officer and looking forward to a master's ticket. He has spent his spare time at sea studying but the self-imposed curriculum was interrupted for a while when

his ship was torpedoed and his books were lost.

#### Didn't Seek Publicity.

Young Stap, who made a lot of friends among the reporters who covered the water front, was never just another fresh kid who wanted to get his name in the papers. He ran away from home, but always to sea, following his bent despite the outraged cries of pursers and stewards. His father was and is a seaman, a lieutenant (j.g.) also, and, oddly enough, serving aboard a tanker in the Pacific. The wakes of their two ships may have crossed out there but if so neither father nor son knew the other was near. Bobby thinks he went to sea the hard way and if he had it to do over again he'd wait and enter the United States Merchant Marine Academy at Great Neck, L. I., but he thinks he has done all right under the circumstances. In the four and one-half years at sea he has traveled about 200,000 miles with danger as a constant companion.

Still snub-nosed, still possessed of a quick, shy grin, his voice and manner have been disciplined and he doesn't talk readily of his adventures. Asked about his recent voyage in the Pacific, he said it was good, and added:

"It's always good when you bring your ship back."

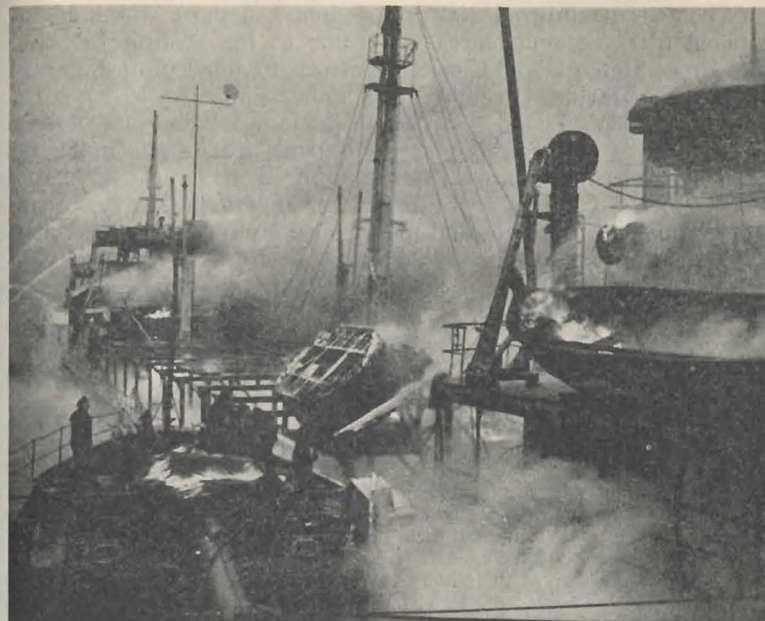
## Jankers Burn in New York Harbor

THE worst disaster in New York Harbor since the explosion of the destroyer U.S.S. Turner occurred on the morning of February 5th, when the Pan-American tanker *Panclio* collided with the tanker S.S. *Spring Hill*. The latter was loaded with 120 thousand barrels of high octane gasoline. The explosion and fire which followed spread to the Norwegian tanker *Vivi*, anchored fifty yards away.

The splendid team work of the U. S. Navy, U. S. Coast Guard and the New York City Fire Department prevented even further loss of lives. If the disaster had occurred at sea the death toll would have been higher.

The collision resulted in at least 17 deaths and 120 seamen injured. Many survivors blessed their luck in swimming through flaming water,

hurtling ice cakes and unseen rescue craft. But 27 year old Merchant Seaman Glenn Francis Blanton said, "Luck nothing, it was God. I kept telling my ship (*Spring Hill*) if you go down, I go with you, but I kept telling God, if we stay up the credit is yours." Blanton hid in the ship refrigerator for two hours to avoid the smoke and flame which enveloped him. Each time he opened the refrigerator door, he got a mouthful of smoke. Finally, hearing streams of water flapping on the door, he opened it and to his amazement saw three firemen. Blanton, cold and hungry and his face blackened by smoke, was taken to the Naval Base Hospital on Staten Island. "Just one thing" he added. "When the firemen took me out of the ship, there in the passageway were the burned bodies of the three men I had tried unsuccessfully to follow in the smoke."



U. S. Coast Guard Photo

Lieutenant (j.g.) C. N. Rudnick, one of six Navy members of the Armed Guard on the tanker *Spring Hill* said the spirit of the men was wonderful. "I was in communications quarters when it happened," he said. "I saw a sheet of flame envelope the bow of the ship; followed by an alarm and the order to jump. I grabbed my life preserver and dived overboard.

"I was in the water about 20 minutes, and I want to thank God for the Coast Guard."

Near him (in the hospital), Seaman 1-C Briggs L. Coppage of Ellenville, N. Y. moved carefully in the bunk, while he admitted that he had prayed for a half hour.

"I was asleep in my quarters when I heard the alarm," he said. "I jumped into pants and shirt, and when I got on deck I threw about 50 life preservers overboard for men who were jumping without them.

"I was praying in the water and was sure this was the end for me. A boat went by me and struck me in the back, and I kept getting hit by small pieces of ice. When the cutter came I could hardly hold onto the ropes they threw me. I tried

twice to get ropes around my body, and finally I just held on, and they pulled me up."

Stories of men sharing life preservers were told by Seaman 1-C Alton J. Hinesley of Carrollton, Ga. He swam for about half an hour, until, he said, "my hands and arms were so numb I couldn't move any more."

"I saw a man with a preserver and just barely made it to him. We both held onto his preserver and about 10 minutes later the cutter came."

Men on the Coast Guard vessels stripped off their sweaters and put them on the survivors, gave them coffee and cigarettes and wrapped them in blankets.

A Norwegian gunner on the tanker *Vivi*, Ole Ernandsen, said "I ran on deck at the word fire and saw the whole sea was burning around the *Spring Hill*." About fifty American seamen were swimming past in the icy water and he put life lines out to them. As the flames leaped over the *Vivi* amidships, Ernandsen jumped. He swam under water, coming up now and then to battle the flames away with his hands and to get his breath and then dive again.

Sixty-two of the injured seamen were taken in three ambulances of the Red Cross Staten Island Chapter to the U. S. Marine Hospital at Stapleton, Staten Island where about twenty-five of them were reported in critical condition.

The Seamen's Church Institute sent its Chaplains to the Hospital to assist the men in every way possible and distribute comfort bags packed by Central Council volunteers.

## Action in the Pacific

Former Filipino guerillas are now serving as members of the crews of American Merchant Marine vessels operating in Far Eastern waters, the War Shipping Administration has announced. Many are experienced seamen and some of them formerly served on American vessels before the Japanese invasion of their homeland.

As the area of liberation increases, the activities of local Partisan bands virtually cease. Because of that, many of the jungle fighters of Leyte, Mindoro, Samar and the other freed islands are turning to the WSA's Recruitment and Manning representatives in Leyte for enrollment in the Merchant Marine in order to take part in the expanding fight for liberation. Those who have volunteered are being used as replacements in the emergencies caused by casualties among merchant ships' crews in the Battle of the Philippines.

★ ★ ★

American merchant seamen, who manned the guns when nearly all members of the Navy armed guard were wounded, successfully defended a war freighter against 35 Japanese dive bombers and shot down seven before an aerial torpedo sent the vessel down in Leyte harbor recently, the War Shipping Administration reported. A report from Lt. John Macauley, USMS, WSA representative in the Southwest Pacific, showed that after 30 minutes of intense attack, guns were still firing as the ship went to the bottom.

Most of the Navy gunners were wounded when the first Japanese Betty—fast low-level bomber straffer—missed the merchantman with a stick of bombs by 20 yards, the explosion also badly strained the vessel's plates. The plane then made a tight turn and strafed the vessel from end to end.

Reserve groups of merchant seamen who then took over shot down two Bettys a few seconds later.

The action started about 8:30 a.m., and

Some of those who were injured came to the Institute at 25 South Street to stay until they can get another ship.

The immediate effect of the tanker accident was more upon military supply than on the civilian since, according to the Navy, the loss of the oil and gasoline was a severe one. Each of the 120 thousand barrels aboard the *Spring Hill* contained 42 gallons of the precious oil.

Within half an hour the seamen and unwounded Navy gunners were fighting off simultaneous and repeated attacks from every angle by fighter bombers. While their attention was thus occupied, a Japanese torpedo plane slipped in low over the water and scored a hit in No. 4 hatch. There was a terrific explosion and the freighter went down in about five minutes.

Lifeboats had been launched before the ship sank but gunners stayed aboard and fought on until the decks were under water and then, weeping with rage, swam off, giving up the fight.

It was a costly victory for the Japanese, Lieutenant Macauley reports, for the ship's guns certainly downed seven attacking planes, got five probables, and scored hits on twelve others. Most amazing of all was the fact that when the merchant seamen and Navy gunners were fished out of the water it was found not one of the ship's company had been lost!

## U-BOATS OFF CANADA SEND DOWN SIX SHIPS

Halifax, Feb. 9 (AP)—Long-range German submarines, sniping at Allied convoys bound into and out of Canadian ports this winter, torpedoed a Canadian warship and five merchantmen within one period of twenty-two days off the Nova Scotia coast, it was disclosed tonight.

The enemy underseas craft apparently were making a desperate attempt to cut the Allied North Atlantic supply line at its western anchor.

The sinkings included the Canadian minesweeper *Clayoquot*, a Canadian merchant ship and four vessels of other nationalities. A total of thirty-six men, eight navy men and the rest merchant seamen, lost their lives in the six sinkings.

The loss of the *Clayoquot* was announced by the navy Jan. 31 but details did not become available until tonight.

## "Red Letter Days"

We remember D-Day with admiration for all those who made it possible. We are hoping for V-E (Victory in Europe) Day in the near future, and all of us are praying for V-Day when final Victory and a lasting Peace will come.

Here at the Institute thus far we have R-L Day fourteen times each year. We wish there were more such Red Letter Days, for they bring so much happiness to so many.

Have you thought of designating a Red Letter Day on the Institute's calendar? The cost is \$273.97 and will pay you rich dividends in the happiness and satisfaction that you have befriended so many hundreds of merchant seamen by being responsible for all the Institute's non-income-producing activities for an entire day.

These activities are the sort of things that keep homesick sailors from feeling too badly; that keep lonely or sick sailors from getting discouraged; these activities are happiness-producing ones such as games, music, parties, dances in the lounges, moving pictures; they are inspiration-producing ones such as the Chaplains' services (visits to sick and convalescent seamen in hospitals; services in the Institute's beautiful Chapel; they are health-producing ones like treatments in the Institute's Clinics; they are mentally stimulating, like visits to the Conrad Library and the Merchant Marine School; and they also include personal counsel and temporary financial assistance.

All these are made possible by a Red Letter Day gift, representing the actual cost of maintaining these facilities for the thousands of seamen who use and enjoy them.

In selecting a Day, you may reserve it in memory of some friend or you may choose a certain day which is a happy anniversary in your own life.

If you wish to finance a Day at

the Janet Roper Club which the Institute maintains at 3 East 67th Street for merchant seamen and their families, the cost of this Day is \$30.00 (or \$303.97 for a combined Institute and the Janet Roper Club Red Letter Day.) You have probably read in *THE LOOKOUT* stories of how much the seamen appreciate this attractive Club where they may bring their wives and girl friends for dances, parties and games.

When you decide on a Red Letter Day please make your check payable to the SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK and mail to 25 South Street, New York 4, N. Y. attention Mr. Harry Forsyth, Chairman, Ways and Means Committee, and indicate what day you wish reserved as your R-L Day.

### TO "MOTHER ROPER"\*

#### In Memoriam (Died April 5th, 1943)

Your blessed name is on the salt-drenched bow

Of cargo carrier bound for war-torn land  
With valiant crew aboard. Remembered  
now

As when you walked this troubled earthly strand,

The Seaman's friend—your spirit lingers  
on

With helmsman, oiler, mate. Though you  
are gone

Your anchor light's still bright. On distant seas

Your name brings back a flood of memories.

Your portrait hangs above a stone-carved  
fireplace

In friendly Club that proudly bears your  
name;

You seem to smile upon some sailor's face  
And watch him tenderly while at some  
game

Or pouring forth his soul in talk low-  
spirited

You seem to listen, and he rises, comforted.

—By Marjorie Dent Candee

\*Mrs. Janet Roper was Supervisor of the Missing Seamen's Bureau at the Seamen's Church Institute of New York for twenty-eight years.

## "Vox Pop" Visits the Institute

EDITOR'S NOTE: One of the most successful entertainments ever held in the Institute's Auditorium was the "Vox Pop" program presented on January 15th by Bromo Seltzer with Parks Johnson and Warren Hull "emcees" (Masters of Ceremonies). A half-hour's entertainment preceded the Broadcast during which seamen were called up to do various stunts, and valuable prizes were awarded. So enthusiastic was the large audience of seamen that it is hoped "Vox Pop" will visit 25 South Street very soon again.

PARKES JOHNSON: "This is Parkes Johnson—and this is Warren Hull. Tonight is for the Merchant Marine—the great group of merchant seamen who transfer men and munitions to the Fighting Fronts.

Let's climb aboard . . . (Captain Conaghan at microphone) Twenty-eight years ago—at 14 years of age he was an ordinary seaman on a British ship. Today he is a Master—Captain John Conaghan. Did you come from a sea-faring family, Captain?"

CAPTAIN CONAGHAN: "No, I guess I am the first of the stock. A long time back my father was a soldier, then he became a member of the police force . . ."

JOHNSON: "You married over here, Captain? And you live in Staten Island? Have you any of your family with you here tonight?"

CONAGHAN: "One is here. The rest are listening in." (The Captain was referring to his children.)

JOHNSON: "Tell me, Captain, what line are you connected with?"

CONAGHAN: "The Standard Oil. I am master of the 'Chester O. Swing', one of the Standard Oil of New Jersey ships."

JOHNSON: "And how long were you away on your last voyage?"

CONAGHAN: "I was away thirteen months. I was in the Mediterranean most of the time . . . about eleven months . . . I handled 37 cargoes."

JOHNSON: "You made somewhat of a record!"

CONAGHAN: "Yes, we shipped in short of 135,000,000 gallons of oil."

JOHNSON: "With one crew?"

CONAGHAN: "With one crew. The boys 'hit the ball'."

JOHNSON: "Captain, that takes somewhat of a skipper!"

CONAGHAN: "I don't know. It takes cooperation. The boys 'scratch my back'—as they say—and I 'scratch theirs'."

JOHNSON: "What does it take to make a good skipper?"

CONAGHAN: "I barged around for 16 years . . . I figured I would be the kind of a skipper and the kind of a mate you work for. One kind you work harder for when he isn't there . . . I came up from the ranks."

JOHNSON: "And where were you Christmas, last year, Captain?"

CONAGHAN: "Christmas last year I was in Naples, Italy. We did not have any party aboard the ship. The Gang came up and suggested we should carry some fun ashore. The crowd got together. We collected about 32 young men with the week's supply of ice cream and cake and we went over to the local Orphanage and took the place over. The youngsters sang for us. Then one of our fellows said, 'The youngsters sang for us—now, we ought to sing for them.' So we did. We sang the Star Spangled Banner! And we meant it!"

(The Captain received his gifts from the Interviewer representing Vox Pop, among which was a little spaniel puppy for the children. Later Mrs. Conaghan said the name of the puppy was "Vox Pup"!)

Douglas Tanner, 17 years old.

JOHNSON: "And you really like boats?"

TANNER: "Sure. I was always in them in the Hudson River."

JOHNSON: "You've finished your boot training at Sheepshead Bay? How long was it?"

TANNER: "Yes, I finished. It's six weeks."

JOHNSON: "And how did you like it?"

TANNER: "Oh, it's allright. You learn about life boats—how your life can depend on them—and your compass in case you're adrift in a lifeboat—you must be pretty well able to navigate yourself around. Then there were the 'obstacles'—it breaks you down for a couple of days, then it builds you up!"

JOHNSON: "Are you going in for deck or engineer?"

TANNER: "No, I'm a steward's mate. I'll go out there and cook."

JOHNSON: "Do you know how to cook?"

TANNER: "Well—I won't brag, but I'll probably get along. I bake better than anything else."

JOHNSON: "Are you good at chocolate cake?"

TANNER: "Well, I won't say, but it's a lot better than my pie. I aim to get out there and maybe if I can bake the Engineer a good cake. Maybe I can get in the Engine Room and get his OK and then ship out as a wiper."

Young Tanner was given a set of four pipes and baking utensils, and retired beaming.)

### Henry X.

JOHNSON: "Suppose you had not seen your wife and youngsters for five years and you knew they were in Nazi dominated territory . . . Since his last Belgian ship was sunk from under him in 1941, our Belgian friend whom we shall call Henry X—for reasons you can well understand—has been sailing in American ships."

"Henry, when the Nazis came, how old were your three boys?"



Photo by Ensign Oscar Owen, U. S. Maritime Service

Seamen in the Institute's Auditorium Enjoy "Vox Pop"

HENRY X: "Seven, four and two. They were happy. Then came the Blackout. Four years and seven months and I did not know what had happened to them.

JOHNSON: "And you could not get any messages in nor any out. But I imagine many a night on watch you were thinking of them."

(Henry X nodded wordlessly, tears in his eyes.)

JOHNSON: "Then last September you slid into Antwerp?"

HENRY X: "Yes . . . I started looking right away. I did not know where to look . . . then I looked up my grandmother—she is 82 years old—and she knows what street my wife is living in but she does not know the number . . . I went into the first house and they do not know Mrs. X . . . and I went into the second house . . . and they do not know about Mrs. X. And I go into the third house—and so all along the street until I find a woman who says there is a woman like you ask for, but she has only two children. I say 'No, three children, and she says No, two.' Well, this woman is at the Canadian canteen and went over and met the Canadian WAC. She told me many Belgian women are working in the canteen and I ask her again 'Is there a Mrs. X?' . . . and while I was standing there a boy came. It was my eldest son. He recognized me, and he said, 'It is the Papa,' and he ran crying to his mother calling 'Papa is back!' My wife came up—while like a sheet—and she walks around me slowly—all around—looks at me from the front and the sides and the back. Then my second son—he just looked at me and he smiled as if to say, 'I know that man from somewhere, but where, I can't say.' My third little boy was killed from a flying bomb. Sometimes my wife had been without food for days—the Germans allowed them to eat by turns."

(Here Parkes Johnson and

Warren Hull presented him with gifts for his wife and the boys. Henry X does not look at them, just stands there smiling as if he were seeing something—listening to Vox Pop and the applauding audience but seeing perhaps his family when he brings them the gifts—a fur lined coat, woolen goods and bathrobe for his wife, clothing for his two sons.

JOHNSON: "We know your wife had to sell her wedding ring to get food, so here is one to take back to her."

(Thunderous applause.)

### William Samuel Clark.

JOHNSON: "Here is a man who sailed the seven seas longer than almost any other man you ever knew. He 'swallowed the anchor' 48 years ago. Here he is, a spry, cheerful and even 100! Captain William Samuel Clark of Sailors Snug Harbor."

CLARK: "They call us all 'Cap' over there at The Harbor."

JOHNSON: "Now, tell us, how did you get to be a hundred?"

CLARK: "Well, I've never been sick very much. My mother was 105 when she died. My father was 102. He would have lived longer only he had his chest badly injured while at sea when he was 80."

JOHNSON: "You were fortunate in your choice of parents. Did you ever get married?"

CLARK: "No, I didn't think it was a very good plan for a seafaring man."

(Wild applause)

JOHNSON: "Did you have a 'girl in every port'?"

CLARK: "Well, once in a while I had one or two."

JOHNSON: "Who was the first President you voted for?"

CLARK: "Lincoln, on his second election."



Photo by Marie Higginson

MERCHANT SEAMEN who were interviewed by "VOX POP"

JOHNSON: "Did you ever see him?"  
CLARK: "Oh, yes, at a meeting in Fanueil Hall, Boston."

JOHNSON: "Do you think the country is going to the dogs?"

CLARK: "Oh, no! I am sorry to see so many young men being wounded and dying, but I think it will come out all right—we must expect to have a lot of wounded—I told a steamship man years ago about the other World War and I met him years afterward and he said I just hit the nail on the head. Well, we are going to come out all right again—just like I said we would in the other war."

(Captain Clark is presented with gifts—a Century plant, a watch and a drawing account "for life" for tobacco.

### Lt. (jg) Herman Rosen

JOHNSON: "Lieutenant—you are not married?"

ROSEN: "No . . . I was at the University of Missouri School of Journalism before getting into the war."

JOHNSON: "What did you do on your last ship?"

ROSEN: "I was navigator, on duty in the 12 midnight to 4 A.M. That's the 'graveyard watch'."

JOHNSON: "When you are out there, you the boss?"

ROSEN: "The boss on the deck."

JOHNSON: "During this watch did anything exciting happen?"

ROSEN: "We were in convoy, once when we saw ships sunk all around us. Once on my watch at the bridge our ship got hit in the engine—I called the skipper . . . I used a primitive method—I just jumped up and down where I was standing—which happened to be right above him . . . in fact, right over his head."

JOHNSON: "You were sunk in the Indian Ocean?"

ROSEN: "Yes."

JOHNSON: "How many were saved?"

ROSEN: "Five out of 24."

JOHNSON: "How long were you at sea in that lifeboat?"

ROSEN: "Thirty days."

(Lt. Rosen is presented with a



sextant and retires to his place beaming as only a navigator could who has just been given so precious an instrument.)

Due to insufficient time, Ensign Paul Poster, who had been standing by, was not interviewed.

JOHNSON: "... and this terminates our Merchant Marine night ... and we need more men for the Merchant Marine ... and we need

them now."

(Parkes Johnson afterward interviewed Paul Poster briefly, explaining that he had been in the Invasion of France a little after D-Day, carrying supplies back and forth, and how they helped build the breakwater. "One day one of the mines exploded in front of us," Poster said.

Poster was given a large box containing a layette for his expected baby.

## Windjammer Classrooms

By Marjorie Dent Candee

SQUARE-RIGGED sailing ships—picturesque relics of bygone days—long ago gave up the struggle to compete as cargo carriers with their rivals: the steamships. But they are serving a useful purpose in the war, doing their bit to defeat the Axis, as seagoing classrooms for America's fast growing Merchant Marine. Young men destined for sea careers are following in the footsteps of their Yankee clipper-ship ancestors by learning the fundamental principles of wind ships and in the learning, becoming better fitted for the arduous jobs ahead of them, manning our merchant fleet.



Painting the Ratlines of the U.S.M.S. Tusitala

How did this come about? Three men may be credited with having persuaded the U. S. Maritime Commission to include sail-training in its curriculum. The late Captain Felix Riesenber, master mariner and author; the late Rear Admiral Henry A. Wiley, U.S.N., and Captain Alan Villiers who is now serving in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve. In 1937 these men presented such an appealing case in behalf of sail training that the Maritime Commission decided in its favor.

First they bought the square-rigger *Tusitala*, saving her in the nick of time from the ship-breakers whence her owner, the late James Farrell had finally consigned her after operating her for many years as a cargo vessel (a labor of love). The 61-year old "Tusitala" full-rigged ship, is now used as a barracks ship by the U. S. Maritime Training Station at St. Petersburg, Florida. Her present name was selected by Christopher Morley in honor of Robert Louis Stevenson, whom the Samoans called "Tusitala", "teller of tales."

Next they were presented with the square-rigger *Joseph Conrad* by her owner, G. Huntington Hartford who had purchased her from Alan Villiers after he had sailed her around the world in 1934 and 1935 with a crew of boys eager to learn seamanship. Next, they acquired the luxury schooner-yacht *Vema* from George Vetlesen. Since that time the

ONCE A LUXURY YACHT, NOW A TRAINING SHIP: The three-masted schooner VEMA, is attached to the U. S. Maritime Service Training Station at Sheephead Bay, N. Y. In three and one half years of service, the VEMA has carried approximately 10,000 apprentice seamen on one week trips on the waters of New York Bay and Long Island Sound.



VEMA

U. S. Maritime Service Photo

*Vema* has carried approximately 10,000 apprentice seamen on one-week cruises on Long Island Sound.

Officers-in-the-making as well as unlicensed personnel receive this sail training. At the U. S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, N. Y. midshipmen are learning the intricacies of handling sail aboard the three-masted bark *Emery Rice* (named for the Captain of the first merchant ship to sink a submarine in World War I); the schooner *Felix Riesenber* (named for the man who did so much to keep sail training in the Maritime schools); the three-masted schooner *Irene Forsythe* and the schooner yacht *Robert Forbes*.

How has this training worked out? Lieut. Robert P. Shuford, skipper of the 218 ton square-rigger *Joseph Conrad*, attached to the U. S. Maritime Service training station in St. Petersburg, Florida, explained: "The *Conrad* teaches these young men when to fight the sea and when to take advantage of her whims. They love her and they curse her. The sea is tough. You have to know her before you can fight her. This ship is the answer. She's alive. In sail, it's different from steam. The sea can be mean, but she can also be

a friend. You have to learn how and why."

The *Conrad's* cargo of trainees learn the first rules of the sea aloft in the rigging of the old ship which began her sea-going life sixty-three years ago in Denmark as a training ship for Danish lads who wished to make the sea their career. These 20th century youngsters from the cities, the plains and the prairies of



Lieut. Robert P. Shuford, Captain of the "Joseph Conrad"

America may not sing old sea chantees like "Whiskey, Johnny" while hauling on the main sheet, but they are learning the same things that the old salts of yesteryear learned at sea: to heave a lead for sounding, to tie knots, to furl a sail, to read a compass, to watch the weather—to act together in unison and in harmony.

How will this experience help them when they complete their training and become members of the crews of Liberty ships, tankers or Victory freighters? The answer is given by the officers of some of these vessels: "The young men who receive training under sail," they report, "are better seamen. They have learned the importance of ship's discipline."

But some people ask: "What's the use of teaching boys in sail when they will never make use of this knowledge aboard steamers?" A good answer to that is given by Rear Admiral Reginald R. Belknap, U.S.N. (Ret.) a member of the Institute's Board of Managers, who said: "One might as well ask 'What's the use of teaching a medical student anatomy?' Experienced mariners have said: 'There is greater safety at sea in a poor ship with a good crew than in a good ship with a poor crew.' Service under sail trains eye,



"Felix Riesenberg"

and brain, hand and body to work together. It makes men self-reliant and resourceful, so that the greater the emergency, the cooler and steadier they are."

Before the war all the Scandinavian countries used full-rigged sailing ships as "windjammer classrooms" for youths, and they built fine Merchant Navies. About 60% of these boys grew up to become officers in ships of their own nations. About 10% were lost track of and about 30% came to America and serve on steamships of our country.

Unfortunately, there are not enough full-rigged vessels available so that only the trainees on the East Coast have the advantage of training aboard the *Conrad* or the *Tusitala*. But those on the Gulf and on the West Coast learn the principles of sail aboard schooners such as the two-masted *Samuel Samuels* at the U. S. Maritime Training Station in Pass Christian, Mississippi. With the training accelerated by the demands of war, none of the trainees or cadets receive long periods of training under sail but they get enough to know that, as Captain Villiers said: "Sail eliminates the unfit. It inculcates discipline of body and mind. It shows those who are fit to lead. It forces them to think for themselves. Each man has shared in a profound and stirring and memorable experience that has shaken him up and shaken him down too. He has been one of a compact and disciplined body held together for the ship and by the ship, loyal to the ship and to his shipmates, and with his own efforts aiding her and them to complete a voyage."

A *Conrad* graduate said recently: "My training 'before the mast' proved very useful when I had to spend 14 days on a raft in shark and sub-infested seas." Another graduate commented: "It isn't the specific things you learn, it's how to work together—teamwork—and pride in your calling and pride in your ship. That's what life on the *Conrad* meant for me."

And so the lofty, white-winged



**SCHOOL MISTRESS OF THE SEAS:** The smallest three-masted square-rigger afloat, the *JOSEPH CONRAD*, is doing her bit to defeat the enemy by training men for America's Merchant Marine. She makes a dramatic picture as she sails down Tampa Bay from her base at the U. S. Maritime Training Station, St. Petersburg, Florida.

windjammers are serving their country by teaching fledgling seamen the "all-for-one, one-for-all" philosophy essential for a fine esprit de corps on any ship, whether propelled by sail or steam.

"Why" said Captain Knud Hansen, master of the square-rigged sailing ship "Denmark",\* "a sailing ship these days? Because character

is the thing to strengthen. Here you can train men who'll be responsible. Here you'll test courage, initiative, self-help. You can see yourselves we could not run the ship without order, quickness, discipline, cleanliness."

Reprinted from "I Chose Denmark"  
By Francis Hackett  
Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1940.

\*Now used as a training ship by the U. S. Coast Guard.



V E M A

U. S. Maritime Service

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\*Serving in the Armed Forces.

## LEGACIES TO THE INSTITUTE

You are asked to remember this Institute in your will, that it may properly carry on its important work for seamen. While it is advisable to consult your lawyer as to the drawing of your will, we submit nevertheless the following as a clause that may be used:

"I give and bequeath to "Seamen's Church Institute of New York," 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."