

The LOOKOUT

DECEMBER 1954



SEAMEN'S
CHURCH
INSTITUTE
of New York



THE SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK is a shore home for merchant seamen who are between ships in this great port. The largest organization of its kind in the world, the Institute combines the services of a modern hotel with a wide range of educational, medical, religious and recreational facilities needed by a profession that cannot share fully the important advantages of home and community life.

The Institute is partially self-supporting, the nature of its work requiring assistance from the public to provide the personal and social services that distinguish it from a waterfront boarding house and so enable it to fulfill its true purpose: being a home away from home for the merchant seamen of all nationalities and religions.

A tribute to the service it has performed during the past century is its growth from a floating chapel in 1844 to the thirteen-story building at 25 South Street known to merchant seamen the world around.

The LOOKOUT

VOL. XLV

DECEMBER, 1954

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SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK
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THE COVERS (front and back): Surprise is part of the fun of Christmas, but we do want our readers to know that Santa did get through, with the Institute's help, to bring Christmas packages to 6,000 merchant seamen (see page one). And to all our readers and Santas (and reindeer) everywhere,

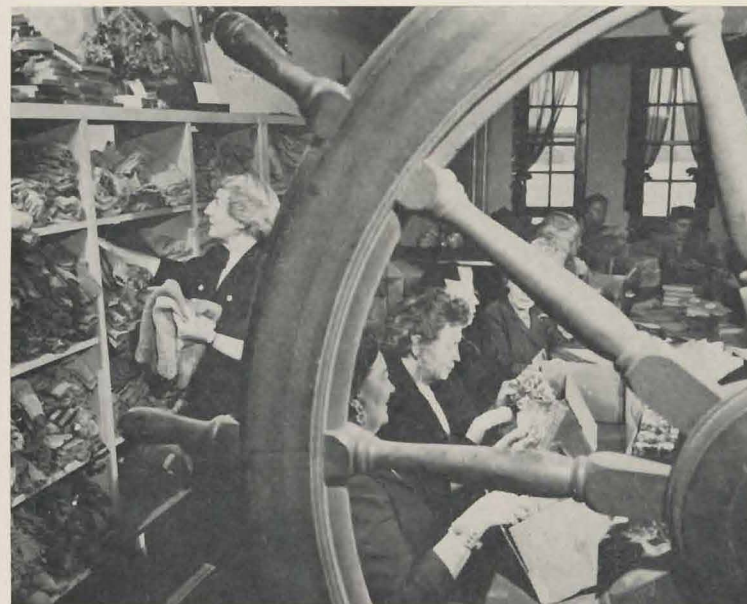
MERRY CHRISTMAS.

The Lookout

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No. 12



Volunteers working at the Institute's Christmas Room.

Santa's Seabags Packed

MORE than 6,000 Christmas packages for seamen are already packed, wrapped, and headed for their destination on Christmas Day. The Central Council of Associations at the Institute opened its Christmas Room in mid-October, and by the early part of December, a large group of women volunteers had individually gift-wrapped the 60,000 items that go to make up the packages.

Institute Ship Visitors have already placed 4,000 of these boxes aboard ships which will be at sea on Christmas Day. Nearly 800 seamen at the U. S. Public Health hospital at Stapleton, S. I., will receive boxes delivered personally by Council volunteers who live on Staten Island. Seamen in hospitals everywhere in metropolitan New York will be remembered. And more than 1,000 pack-

ages will be distributed on Christmas Day to guests here at the Institute.

Each package contains one knitted garment — a sweater, a scarf or a pair of socks — slippers, candy, a sewing kit, a book, writing paper and pen, an address book, polishing cloth, and a game. The 10,000 hand-knit garments are made by volunteers throughout the country.

With each Christmas package goes a card reading, in part: "These gifts were placed in your hands through the sincere good wishes of thousands of your friends who want to share their Christmas with you . . . each gift is wrapped in the spirit of good will and fellowship as we learned it on the first Christmas night. We hope that you will receive and use these presents with the same joy in which they are given."



Drawing by John Fernandez

Saint Elmo at the Masthead

By Robert Thompson, Engine Department

"NO MAN should have to go to sea so soon before Christmas!"

"Why not?"

"Well, just think of all those hamheads ashore, getting ready to enjoy themselves. Doing their Christmas shopping. Drinking highballs. Preparing to eat turkey. Sitting comfortably before a fireplace." It was the chief engineer of a Victory ship complaining to the captain.

"What have they got that we haven't got, Chief?" the captain asked. "A lot of tinsel and froth. A lot of automobile accidents. Airplanes crashing, bill collectors calling, divorce courts functioning, wars being planned, pickpockets milling through the shopping crowds — what else do you want me to name?" These two men had sailed together long enough to know how to gauge each other's moods. When the chief griped a little every day, everything was well down below. And when the Old Man wore that peculiar brand of optimism (that could easily be called suspect) then he was on his course and on his schedule, and the company had probably given him some favorable news about the voyage they had started on, and all was going well. Too well? Perhaps the monotony of the sea had settled down on the ship.

For the sea can do kind things to city-tired eyes and nerves. A long groundswell under a strong steel hull, and a clean propeller churning a white wake at the stern, is a soporific, a strong soporific that has to be guarded against. Perhaps it was necessary for this chief and this skipper to needle each other. They had been doing it for years.

And it meant peace for the other mates and engineers. A happy ship, a profitable voyage, what else did they sign on for? Hadn't they all seen the Christmas stores come aboard, the crates of turkeys, the bags of nuts, the apples and oranges? And to feed the inner man, wouldn't the mate have a Christmas tree lashed to the foremast, and the lights strung up, and wouldn't the steward dress up the saloon and the crew's messroom with paper streamers and geegaws?

And wouldn't a feeling of goodwill prevail, and extra pots of coffee get brewed, and extra hunks of mince pie and pumpkin pie get stowed away in the refrigerators for the night watch, and wouldn't some of the wipers and the messmen and the deckhands get the drop on each other by being the first to yell, "Merry Christmas!"

What no one knew, however, was that the chief mate and the second assistant, as they picked out the glamour and the festivity of the great hotels on the Florida coast, late in the evening, had gotten the pixie notion of dropping the steward's dearly-prized Christmas tree overboard.

It was an evil and almost criminal thing to do. It was a thing to be condemned in small boys or old men. It was just senseless, but they did it. They dropped the ship's precious Christmas tree over the side.

Now the chief could complain to the captain that their beautiful ship couldn't even afford a tree to lift the crew's spirits! That the beauties of life ashore were denied to men at sea! He could gripe and grouse to his heart's content, and he would have a legitimate beef because it was true. There would be no tree at the masthead. There would be no sign of Christmas, except the gluttony of the table, the roast turkeys and baked hams and the candy and nuts and cigars. Nothing divine nor exalted nor ennobling about these goods of the marketplace, transferred to the messrooms of a Victory ship sailing down the Florida coast to take a cargo of foodstuffs to other people in foreign lands!

And the chief expressed just those sentiments to the captain. Leaning overside and gazing away at the Florida coastline, then turning away from the glistening and gaudy show of wealth, the chief growled, "It's like Christmas in the bilges, Captain. All your decorations in the messroom, and all your fine provender in the iceboxes don't compare with the luxury those people ashore will be having. Think of the corks that will be popping, and the joys and pleasures



Photo by Tad Sadowski

"...What's Christmas without a tree?"

of sitting by the fireplace to a good dinner and a good yarn. And our Christmas tree, where is that, Captain!

"Except for the phosphorescence of that overboard discharge from the condenser, and the nine-thousand horsepower under the engine casings, it's a dead ship, Captain. Our generators light your bulbs and you have nowhere to hang them. What's Christmas without a tree? Yes, we'll have to say, 'It's only Christmas in the bilges.'" And the chief, having had his gripe and his grouse and his beef for the day, turned away for a night's sleep, to dream of the time when he would quit the ships and stay ashore.

And then it happened! "Look forward, Chief — there on the masthead! Saint Elmo's fire! Look at the masthead!" And dancing along the foreyard was a small ball of blue-green fire, like a sulphur match being struck and growing into life. And it moved along dancingly, and another lit and followed, and another. Were there gremlins up there on the foretruck lighting matches? Were they smoking on lookout watch? These tiny fireballs grew and multiplied and moved along the wireless antenna. Was the radio operator sending a message too hot for the wires to handle? The tiny

fireballs grew to the size of Christmas popcorn balls, to the size of Yuletide pumpkins, and they rolled and they scooted and they danced. The ship's rigging, the superstructure, the wireless antenna were ablaze with the little blue-green balls of static flame like the candles and the baubles on a Christmas tree!

"Saint Elmo's fire," smiled the captain, "come to bless our ship on Christmas Eve. The good Saint Elmo who watches over us blue water sailors, Chief. He must have known that you and I needed some Christmas cheer!"

"You know what actually causes that light to glow?"

"Never mind," said the captain. "I know what makes it glow."

The chief watched Saint Elmo's fire for a few minutes and then said, "Well, Merry Christmas, Captain. It's a fine tree we've got. Don't forget to shut the lights off when you turn in."

The ship moved through the darkened, white-capped waters. Saint Elmo's fire danced aloft, the phosphorescent sea cascaded from the bow and the propeller churned a clean, gleaming wake that rolled aft in the sea path unwinding like a lovely silken banner.



Curator Dick Greyble tells the boys about the *Prinzessin Victoria Louise*. Built at Hamburg in 1900, the ship was named for the only daughter of the Kaiser.

A newsboy shoots some miniature ship-models at the Marine Museum with a camera scaled to size.



Newsboys examine a World War II freighter, the ex-U.S.S. *Cape Boyer*, now the *Bowplate*. This model was loaned by the International Freighting Company.

Canadian Visitors

"HEY, look at this!" "Hey, look at this!" Two hundred Canadian newsboys — and a few newsgirls — swarmed through the Marine Museum of the Seamen's Church Institute for a special visit last month. The youthful visitors, winners of subscription contests

for the *Toronto Telegram*, visited the museum as part of their award, an all-expense weekend in New York City, planned by the Gray Line. The week before, the museum played host to 100 more boys, winners of similar contests for the *Ottawa Citizen*.

A MATTER OF TASTE

Milk, a drink long held suspect in France as a straight beverage, may be okay for Premier Mendes-France, but the crew members of the liner *Ile de France* are going to keep right on downing the usual 10,000 quarts of wine they consume on each round trip crossing between New York and Le Havre. The French seamen told a New York Times reporter so when the French Premier's campaign to help cut down alcoholism by substituting milk for wine, as he does, was announced last month.

"Frenchmen are reasonable — they will drink milk when there is a need for it," the chief wine steward of the *Ile de France* told the Times man. He added, however, that he could not foresee when such a need might arise.

Granting that milk was an acceptable source of nutrition, the French seamen declared that they have no intention of adopting it as a national beverage. Louis Sautreil, the maitre d'hôtel, complained that milk is too heavy for the stomach. The general consensus of opinion of the 800-man crew was that the *Ile de France* will continue to steam at 24 knots, wine or milk, and so they might as well drink wine. It's all a matter of preference, they explain, and Frenchmen, *naturellment*, prefer wine.

XR STRIKES AGAIN

The formidable death-watch beetle (*Xestobium rufivillosum*), not content merely to raise havoc with Lord Nelson's 187-year-old flagship, *Victory* (LOOK-OUT, May '53), has moved on to another of Britain's historical shrines—this time to Westminster Abbey. Previous beetle damage to the church had already been repaired when workmen on the roof of

the building discovered a new and unsuspected invasion in the rafters of the nave itself.

The tiny brown borer (1/3 inch long), who gets his name from his weird habit of making tapping, echoing sounds, has tunneled his way into the building so well that it will require three years of work to get rid of him.

NO BOLOGNA

That tasty imported salami so many travelers returning from Mediterranean countries bring home to their friends as gifts may be laden with danger — not for the recipients, but indirectly for the livestock of the country through the dread hoof-and-mouth disease.

According to experts of the Customs Service and the Department of Agriculture, the "sentimental salami" problem is on the rise again. They refer to the unwavering belief held by so many travelers returning from Italy and other Mediterranean countries that the finest present they can bring a fellow salami lover far from his homeland is, naturally, salami. If the friend eats the salami, or other meat products, all well and good. What usually happens though, is that large portions of it are thrown out, get carted off by garbage collectors to pig farms, and from there the hoof-and-mouth disease can spread like wildfire. The United States is one of the few countries where the disease is under control.

Although such meat products are banned as imports, except under controlled conditions, most tourists are ignorant of the rules. An educational program stopped the huge influx of meat products coming into this country right after World War II. At that time, travelers were bringing it in by the trunkful.

One ship alone carried 3,000 pounds. Now, however, violations are rising, and Federal agents fear that hundreds and perhaps, thousands of pounds pass through Customs undetected. A new educational program telling travelers how to get controlled, safe, salami, and warning them of the dangers of disease-carrying meat products, will soon be instituted by the Department of Agriculture.

CITIZENSHIP

Of the 18,000 new citizens who took part in mass naturalization ceremonies in New York on Veteran's Day, 15 were seamen whose citizenship claims had been expedited by the Department of Special Services here at the Institute.

Each year more than 200 seamen seek the advice of the Institute staff on immigration and naturalization problems. Many are refugees from Iron Curtain countries. Under the McCarran-Walter Immigration Act, special provisions have been set up for aliens who have been sailing on American-flag merchant ships for at least four years.

NEW GORGE

The second link in what is believed to be a vast Atlantic network of undersea gorges has been discovered by Columbia University scientists. Returning from a 7,000-mile expedition, the researchers reported a new canyon of the deep just 600 miles east of Philadelphia. Two years ago, a huge north-south canyon was traced in mid-ocean. Seventeen thousand feet below the surface of the sea, the new gorge runs west to east for a distance of from 300 to 500 miles. It is 180 feet deep and two to three miles wide.

TROUBLES

Part of the vast fleet of the Greek shipping magnate Aristotle Socrates Onassis is on the reefs of international trouble. In mid-November, five of his whaling ships flying the Panamanian flag were seized as a "pirate fleet" by the government of Peru for hunting whales within the 200-mile offshore zone claimed by that country. The latest complaint against Onassis, who also owns the Casino at Monte Carlo and a few other enterprises valued at about \$300,000,000, came a week later from the U. S. Department of Justice. It announced that Onassis is being sued for \$20,000,000 and the return of 16 vessels which, it claims, were fraudulently purchased. Onassis is also under indictment in a criminal case, based on the same purchases, on charges of conspiring to defraud the Government. The ships in question are seven tankers, seven Victory freighters and two Libertys.

CHRISTMAS SONGS

The annual Christmas concert of the Marsh & McLennan Glee Club will be held on Wednesday, December 22, at noon in the chapel of the Seamen's Church Institute. Featured on the program will be a selection of traditional Christmas carols and choral excerpts from Handel's *Messiah*.

Composed of 40 voices from the insurance firm's large staff, the Glee Club rehearses regularly at the Institute. Its last performance here was the highly successful "Spring Sing," in June. Under the direction of George Hansler, the group will be accompanied by Mervin Snyder. The public is invited to attend the performance.



U.S. Coast Guard Photo

New York harbor — big ships and heavy industry increase the danger of oil pollution.

Trouble on Oiled Waters

FROM the bubble of the helicopter, the casual observer may be intrigued by the shiny dark blob on the waters below. But to the trained eye of the Coast Guard pilot on his patrol of New York harbor, an oil slick is serious business. It means that some ship, knowingly or not, has violated the oil pollution regulations. And oil pollution means trouble.

Just how much trouble is not only a matter of statistics, but a matter of everyday concern. For the innocent-looking oil slick has none of the benevolent qualities of the proverbial oil spilled on troubled waters. To the contrary, industry, public health and wildlife all suffer. An oil slick may move on to a local beach, making it unfit for swimming and sunbathing; it can kill fish and marine life, or cripple and drown waterfowl by weighting their wings; it can damage and discolor boats and ropes; worst of all, it may coat the wooden timbers of piers, creating a serious fire hazard. When a blaze starts under an oil-soaked dock, even the most modern hoses of the fireboats cannot usually reach it.

New York harbor, by reason of its very magnitude, with its 600-odd miles of shore-front, 1630 piers, bulkheads and wharves, its higher petroleum commerce than any other port in the country, must be constantly on the watch for the menace of oil pollution. By act of Congress, it is illegal for a ship to discharge oil into New York harbor. Ballast water, which is pumped into fuel tanks as the fuel is used up, to insure the stability of the vessel, must be discharged "as far offshore as is consistent with existing weather conditions and the stability of the vessel, preferably to the eastward of Nantucket Shoals Lightship in the case of vessels coming from the eastward. In no case shall these tanks be pumped within 100 miles of Ambrose Channel Lightship." Dumping bilge water is also prohibited within these limits. Similarly, vessels which must discharge oil in order to clean tanks or make repairs while they are anchored in the harbor, are forbidden to do so. The legal procedure is to move out to sea to dispose of oil, or hire a sludge barge (which later separates

the oil and then resells it), to take the oil away. Sometimes, rather than go to all the trouble, a vessel operator will simply pump the waste oil into the discharge lines.

Most violations, however, are not deliberate, and are usually due to carelessness. When a ship is taking on fuel oil it's an easy matter for the oil to overflow and run down the outside of the hull. One of the most spectacular errors of this type occurred last year at a large terminal in New Haven. Loading from a tanker to a shore tank at night, the operator (who must have been sleepy), continued pumping into an already full tank. By the time he had discovered his error, about 6,700 barrels of oil had polluted the water.

Deliberate or not, violation of the oil pollution statutes is a federal offense, punishable by law. Under the Oil Pollution Act of 1924, which prohibits the discharge of oil "upon the coastal navigable waters of the United States," three enforcement procedures are possible: civil penalties against an offending vessel, criminal penalties against persons responsible for the offense, and — in rare cases — administrative remedies, whereby the license of an officer of the vessel may be suspended. The latter is, of course, applicable only to United States ships. Fines may run anywhere from \$500 to \$2500. Under the New York Harbor Act of 1888, penalties range from \$250 to \$2500. Both statutes may be invoked in prosecuting an oil pollution case. During the fiscal year of 1954, 23 such cases were handled by the United States Attorney with a total of \$12,140 collected in fines. The highest single fine was \$1500.

Before a case gets to court, it is necessary not only to sight an oil pollution violation but to name specifically the offending vessel. This work is done by two special services: the Coast Guard, which polices the waterfront via helicopter and boats, and the Supervisor of New York Harbor, an agency operating under the control of the Army Engineer Corps. Supervisor John T. O'Neill's department inspects anchorage and all forms of

dumping throughout the harbor and its adjacent waters, a territory which runs all the way from New London, Connecticut through Long Island Sound and from Troy on the Hudson to Mannisquam Inlet. A patrol boat on 24-hour, 7-day per week duty, and two small launches watch for violations — about 75% of which have to do with oil pollution. Shore inspectors also check up on refineries which may be responsible for oil violations. The Coast Guard acts only in a police capacity. The Army Engineers are, by act of Congress, the enforcing agent which takes the case to court.

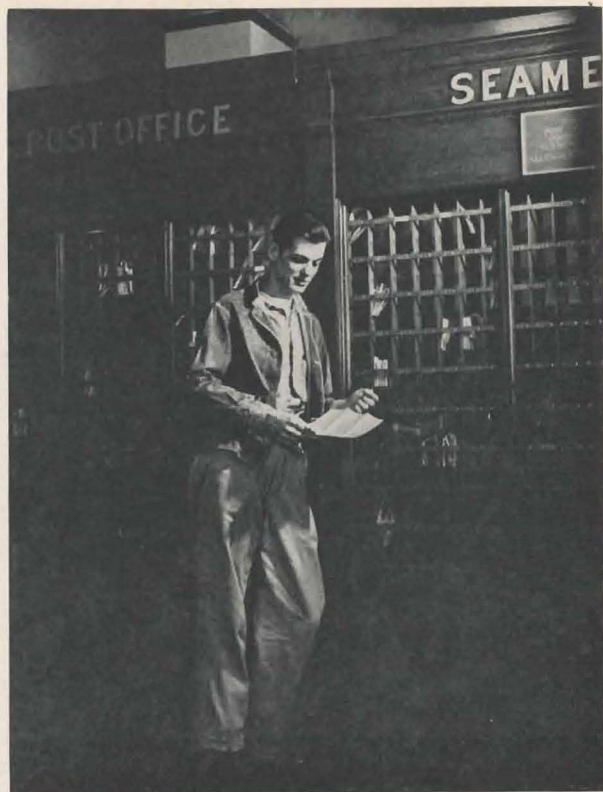
The pollution of the seas by oil readily becomes an international problem, for no matter how vigilant the patrol of our own coasts, oily wastes discharged some distance at sea may drift ashore and foul beaches and harbors. Since 1926, international conferences among the leading maritime powers and research projects carried out by the League of Nations and the United Nations, have sought a generally acceptable solution of the problem. The most recent of these meetings, the Conference on the Pollution of the Seas by Oil, held in London in April of this year under the auspices of the United Kingdom, had several important results. Although the United States Delegation did not sign the Convention that came out of the conference because it considered some proposals unrealistic, it is fully in agreement with its ultimate aims. United States maritime interests are being urged to observe the world-wide zones set up by the Convention wherein discharge of oil into the seas would be prohibited, an arrangement consistent with the long held "gentlemen's agreement," by which vessel operators do not discharge oil within a radius of 50 miles of the U. S. coast.

Until the next international conference is held, probably within three years, the United States group will continue to collect technical data on anti-pollution which will be made available to other countries through the United Nations. The final answer to the problem of oil pollution is not yet in sight.

— FAYE HAMMEL

25
South
Street,
New York 4,
N. Y.

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•
THE HOME
ADDRESS FOR
THOUSANDS OF
SEAFARERS



ANYONE who has ever moved to a different town, or even to a different house, can have some insight into the postal problem of a merchant seaman who is never sure when or where he is going to land next. It is no trick for him to mail a letter, but getting one can pose a problem. It has traditionally been one reason why so many seamen gradually lose touch with their people at home.

During the 1920's this special quandary confronting merchant seamen was carried to the United States postal authorities by Dr. Archibald R. Mansfield, then director of the Seamen's Church Institute of New York. The world's largest shore home for active merchant seamen, the Institute had established its own system for delivering mail to seamen. The volume of this mail had long since

outgrown Dr. Mansfield's vest pocket and the pigeon holes in his desk. In fact, at the time the Institute pressed for special postal facilities for seamen, five people were employed full time at the thirteen-story shore home to sort and deliver the letters that came to seafarers from all over the world. The Institute was handling the first-class mail of a small city, but it was still lacking the full postal facilities of a Government station.

Following Dr. Mansfield's presentation of the seamen's case before postal authorities in Washington, the Government established special facilities at the Institute in 1927. The Postmaster General issued special permission for the postal regulations to be amended along lines suggested by the Institute's own experience as an unofficial station.

The main changes were aimed at accommodating the long periods of time seamen are out on voyages. Ordinarily, mail is held at post offices for only ten days, but the Government adopted the Institute's policy of holding parcel post, first-class and registered mail for six months' lacking *specific* instructions for return in shorter time, with periodicals and newspapers being held for three months. By this means, seamen were given ample opportunity to pick up their mail or make arrangement for someone else to do so.

Presidential appointments went to members of the Institute's mail room staff who were already acquainted with the project, and the Postmaster General commented to the postal clerks, "Uncle Sam mustn't take the soul out of that work." Nor has it happened. The mail clerks at the Institute station today deal on a first name basis with most of the seamen who rent its 2648 boxes. Citing "customer satisfaction," Sidney Unneberg, one of the Institute station clerks appointed by President Coolidge, observes that he still hands mail to a "half dozen or so" old-timers who had boxes before the Government took over. In those early days, he recalls, democracy had not yet broken down the rigid caste system that required officers and unlicensed men to go to separate windows to ask for their mail.

Many seamen have steadfastly kept the same box number over the years, feeling that to change might mean bad luck.



Some, however, have preferred to bypass luck and take matters into their own hands to be sure they get mail. How? By clipping ads and coupons from magazines and sending them in, just so they will have some thing in their boxes when they come in from a trip. The moment when the sailor steps up to the mail window is fraught with its own quiet drama. The clerks make a very thorough shuffle of all the "M's" before telling A. B. Murray that he hasn't any mail. A wisecrack, no matter how lame, is usually mustered before the sailor turns away. On the other hand, the sailor occasionally comes into unexpected mail when "that French dame" plays a long shot and locates her man at 25 South Street.

The Department of Special Services at the Institute is recognized by the postal authorities as an agent whom seamen can authorize to call for their mail when their own schedules make it impossible to do so. For example, a man may find that his ship will come into New York in the afternoon and sail again the next morning without giving him a chance to get to the Institute during the hours when the post office is open. In such cases he can send word ahead to Special Services, and his mail will be picked up and then held at the hotel desk where he can get it anytime during the night.

The Institute's Department of Special Services also vouches for men who have lost their seamen's papers, without which they can get no mail even though the clerks have known them for years. One sailor can also give another seaman written authorization to pick up his mail. Here again seamen's papers serve as the means of identification.

Today the United States Government operates five stations catering to the postal needs of seamen in the principal American seaports. These are all patterned after the facilities at the Seamen's Church Institute of New York in the days before the Government recognized the special problem of merchant seamen, who depend largely on the U. S. mail between voyages to keep in touch with their families across the nation.

Gift from the Storm

By James Frost

AS I look back over my long years before the mast in sailing ships and modern steamships, years filled with perils and experiences, 1904 stands out.

A young lad, lonely, homesick and without gear, I found myself in Sydney, Australia with no place to go. It was close to Christmas and the outlook was bleak. A three-masted Swedish barque bound for Bangkok by way of Cape of Good Hope unloaded cargo in Sydney. I stowed away on this ship as my only hope. Hiding, hungry and unwanted I dreaded the approach of Christmas Day.

Three days out of Cape of Good Hope, the wind from the Antarctic increased and portended heavy weather. On Christmas night the storm broke upon us and I was not unwanted for long. As the cry for "all hands on deck" rang through our small ship, my young strength blended with the others as we fought the savage weather. Only those who have had the experience can understand the thrill and communion with others of the old days of the sailing ship when a man practically signed his death certificate when he boarded the ship, and his loved ones at home sometimes waited three years for his return.

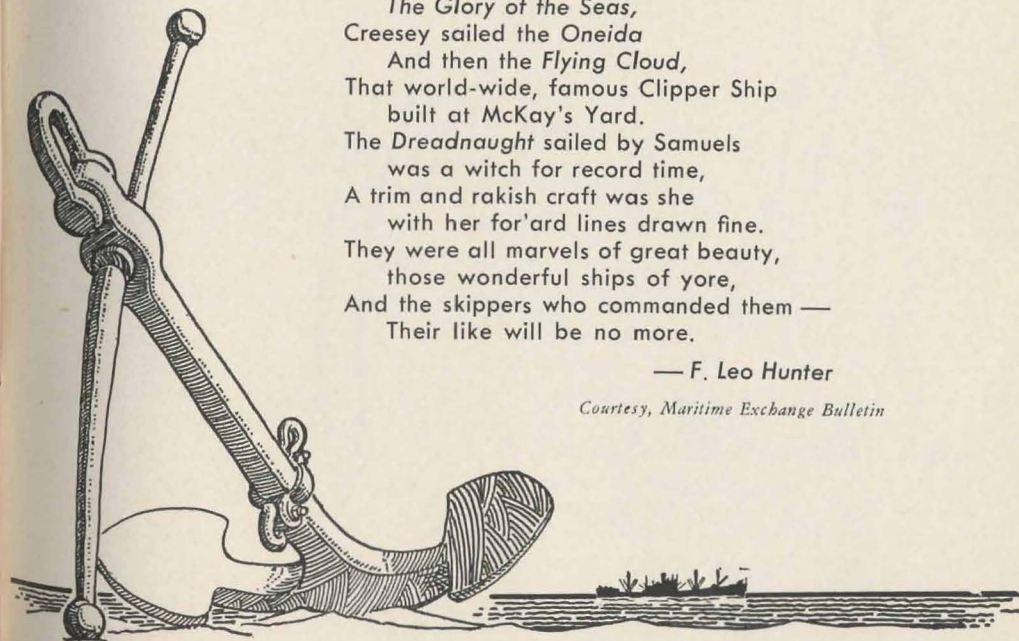
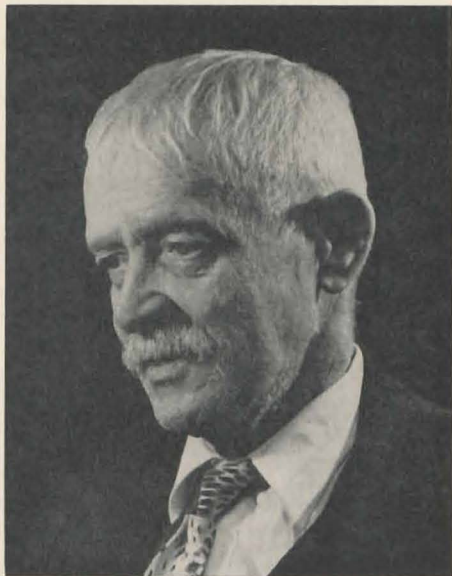
No Coast Guard to warn us, no ships to stand by to help, no equipment on board for repairs, no radar and no radio, and with only our nervous systems to serve as our nautical instruments we faced the challenge of the sea against men and the ship. As the savage waves engulfed us and beat upon us, the howling and whining of the wind was punctuated by crashing sounds as important sections of our rigging were torn and borne out to sea. We made repairs with the only equipment we could find — five fathoms of boat chain. Our sails were blown away with the fury of the wind as we battled the storm for three days and three nights. It was a never-to-be-forgot-

ten experience as our small ship rose from the trough shaken and exhausted but bravely carrying on; our bodies were frozen and wet, and in our confusion we even forgot to pray. The heavy seas precluded all possibility of abandoning ship.

As I attempted to calm the fears of another lad, I related the story of Noah's Ark which I had learned in Sunday school. In transmitting confidence to him, I regained my own. After several days, we finally beat the storm.

It was close to Christmas again when we limped into the port of Belfast, Ireland on our return voyage. By this time I was no longer considered to be a stow-away, but an important part of the crew. Like the five fathoms of spare boat chain used to repair the rigging until the close of the voyage, I had earned my place on the ship. This knowledge made me happier than any gift I could buy with the small sum I had earned on my long trip.

"... 1904 stands out."

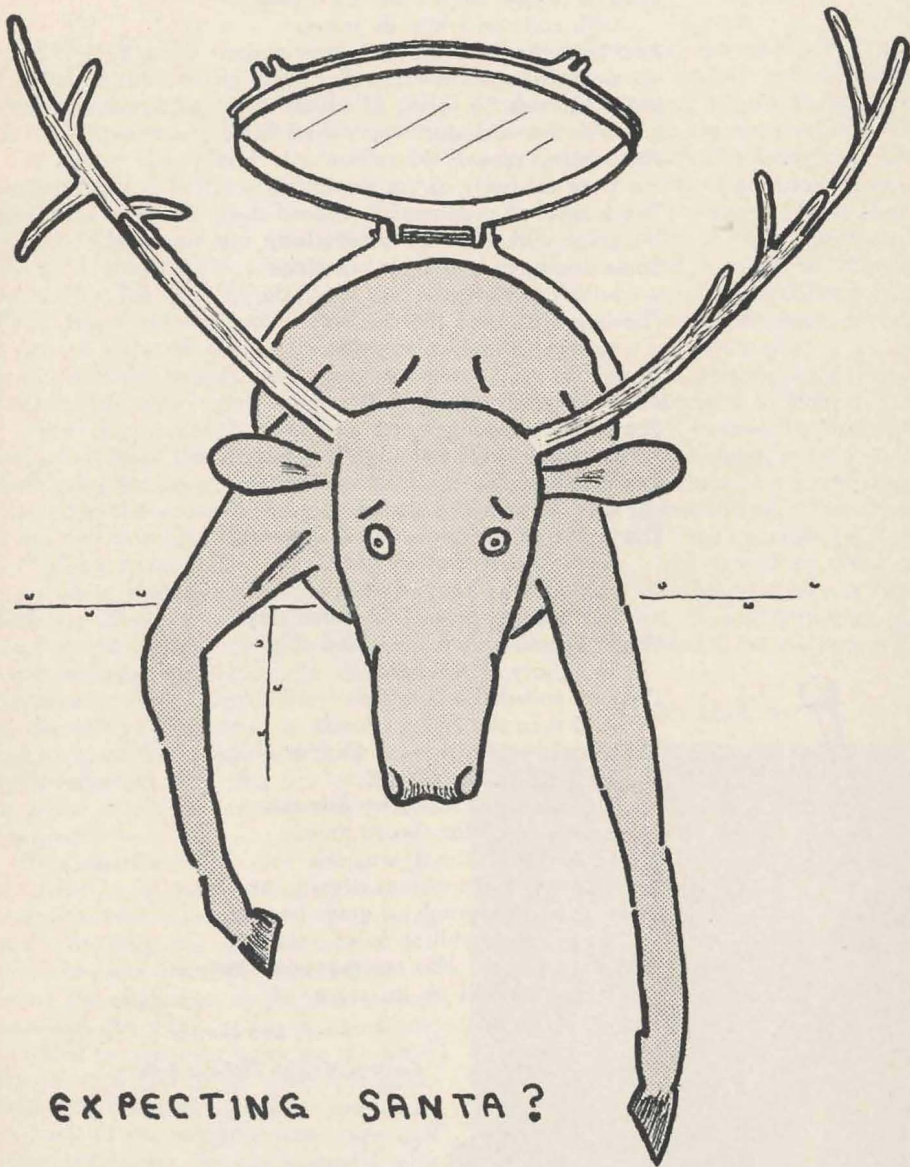


OLD SOUTH STREET

I'll never forget Old South Street
in days of long ago,
With its clipper ships from the Indies
with sails as white as snow,
And how they'd poke their bow-sprits
across the narrow street.
Indeed it was "a forest of masts"
with that wonderful vanished fleet.
The motley crowds of sailors
from all ports of the world;
The bustle of preparation — and the
ships with their sails unfurled;
Some ready to slip their moorings
with the doughty tug 'longside,
The impatience of the skippers
to catch the favoring tide.
And, too, the smell of oakum, fresh
paint and varnish sheen,
The lofty, towering masts and spars
all bright in the sunlight's gleam.
The cleek of the caulking mallets
was music sweet to hear,
The rattle of the blocks and sheaves
and all the running gear.
Its melody was South Street,
"Old South Street" in those days,
When Farrell sailed the good ship
The Glory of the Seas,
Creeseey sailed the *Oneida*
And then the *Flying Cloud*,
That world-wide, famous Clipper Ship
built at McKay's Yard.
The *Dreadnaught* sailed by Samuels
was a witch for record time,
A trim and rakish craft was she
with her for'ard lines drawn fine.
They were all marvels of great beauty,
those wonderful ships of yore,
And the skippers who commanded them —
Their like will be no more.

— F. Leo Hunter

Courtesy, Maritime Exchange Bulletin



EXPECTING SANTA ?

6,000 merchant seamen
won't be disappointed.
See page 1.