

# THE LOOKOUT



*Courtesy, Bundles for Britain*

SURVIVORS

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

VOL. XXXIII—NUMBER 6

JUNE, 1942



THIS MONTH'S COVER shows the survivors of a British ship sunk by an Axis submarine in the Atlantic. Their vessel helped evacuate refugees from Singapore during Japanese bombardment; was bombed near Hongkong and battled a typhoon in the China Sea. Photo shows three members of crew, wearing knitted garments supplied by Bundles for Britain, Inc., with kitten named "Charleston" after city to which it was taken by rescue vessel.

# The LOOKOUT

VOL. XXXIII, JUNE, 1942

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

by the

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SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE  
OF NEW YORK

25 SOUTH ST., NEW YORK, N. Y.

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## Sanctuary

Eternal God, we commit  
to Thy keeping all who are  
called forth to duty and dan-  
ger, whether on field or in  
factory, at sea, or under the  
sea, and in the air. May they  
stay close by Thee in their  
weakness and glorify Thee in  
their strength. Make them  
valient for the right, willing  
to endure hardship, and  
worthy and shining in honor,  
through Jesus Christ our  
Lord. Amen.

"Forward—day by day—"

## 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," incorporated under the laws 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.

It is to the generosity of numerous donors and testators that the Institute owes its present position, and for their benefactions their memory will ever be cherished by all friends of the seamen.

# The Lookout

Vol. XXXIII

June, 1942

No. 6

## Down to the Sea in Jankers

By Robert Wilder\*



Press Association Photo

### U-Boat Victims Adrift in the Atlantic

THERE is a grimly heroic but disconnected tale to be pieced together from the office files of the tanker fleets. It is there in the form of letters, scraps of interviews, the list of fuel carriers which have been torpedoed and the laborious attempts of seamen to set down personal accounts of the sinkings which have dotted the Eastern seaboard these past months. . . . In peace times the tanker appeared slightly ridiculous. She was a work boat, every inch of her designed for a purpose and shorn of the romantic glamour of rusty sided freighters which nosed their way about the seas, poking blunt noses into far flung ports in search of cargo.

Today such ideas have been radically altered. The fighting machines scream for oil, and as the tanker fleets deliver it, a great new chapter is being written into the maritime history of the United States.

Varying in size the tankers on an

average would carry a complement of about thirty-eight officers and men. For them there are no stripes nor bars, none of the panoply of war. The job they do is dangerous and exacting. There is no point in talking of high wages and a bonus of 100 per cent. It is no simple matter to ship aboard a vessel with the knowledge that packs of German submarines skulk through the Atlantic with the express purpose of cutting down the oil carriers and shutting off vitally necessary cargoes. A bonus is hard to spend in a sea of blazing oil or a shattered lifeboat. Yet, the tankers sail. They arrive, are emptied of their oil, degassed and put out again, and so relentless is the pressure that they cannot wait for convoys. They go it alone. This is one of the reasons why the sinkings have been so high. A single gun, mounted astern, is not much protection against an enemy which rarely shows itself until its torpedoes have struck home.

In the crews there are men of many

\* Reprinted *The New York Sun*, May 4, 1942.



years' service. Fresh-faced youngsters, veterans and those who have returned to a job they once knew make up the crews.

Sudden disaster has become almost commonplace to the men of the tanker fleet, and this is probably why the men, when they talk, recount their experiences in a matter-of-fact fashion. Take the case of Sidney Wayland, for example.

Wayland's ship was torpedoed on February 2, 110 miles offshore. Twenty-one men made the lifeboats and after five days Wayland was the only man alive. The others died one by one of exposure and injuries.

The R. P. — was attacked on February 27, eighteen miles off Asbury Park. The torpedo struck the port side and almost immediately the oil was ablaze, spreading over the water and engulfing the boats and survivors.

The bare list of such tragedies makes grim reading but it is in the unemotional statement of the facts the sailors put on paper in letters home which give some indication of the caliber of the men who are sailing the tankers.

The following is a typical report: "The torpedo struck between 4 and 5 aft bridge. The ship was immediately caved in at the center. All four boats were launched at once. The officers and men acted very well under the circumstances. The captain missed the lifeboat and fell into the water between one of the lifeboats and the ship. The lifeboat kept hitting the ship in an attempt to rescue the captain who, however, told the men to row away so that all would not be lost due to the smashing of the lifeboat. The captain was left. Later on we learned that he was able to climb back aboard the ship and place himself on a part that was out of water. The next morning he was rescued. It was discovered after the rescue that he had broken his leg in the fall."

The parents of the men also have furnished notes of great simplicity in their letters to the associations after a sinking. The father of a boy, shipping out for the first time as an officer, wrote: "We know full well that if he had been saved he would have called his mother up, told her he was O. K., come home long enough to dry off and be right back looking for another ship."

Not long ago each association distributed a questionnaire to the men, asking for suggestions in the hope that the causes for tragedies following a submarine attack might be discovered and, if in a measure, remedied. Here, if ever, was an opportunity for complaint. Yet, the forms were returned with the mildest of comment. There ought to be more practice in launching lifeboats, particularly at night. The men ought to be more thoroughly trained in rowing. Additional flare pistols could be used. Those were the things the men asked for.

Recently a tanker, putting into dry-dock for repairs, brought the report that it had struck a derelict, and so to the hazard of submarines must be added the danger of submerged hulks which have not yet been discovered and completely sunk by the Coast Guard.

So the tankers sail, unnoticed by most persons and without publicity. If they are heard of at all it is only when they have been struck. Recruiting is not too easy, for the young men prefer to take their chances with the army or navy, where they can at least fight back. The veterans make up the backbone of the service, but there are, apparently, a sufficient number of men who are willing to brush with sudden death to keep the fleets sailing, and their contribution is the greater because, for the most part, it is unsung, but certainly not unhonored.

### Just Give Us the Ships!

Speeches and ceremonies today will mark National Maritime Day, and there will be stirring words about the great deeds of America's merchant marine in the century since the Savannah set forth to span the Atlantic under steam. There will be proper fanfares in the swarming shipyards from Maine to the Gulf and all up the West Coast, where two new ships a day are being launched to the heart-lifting din of riveters and adzmen.

But the real observance of the occasion will be in the silent reaches of the lonely seas where crusty freighters are carrying men and materials to far-off battlefronts. Sweating men in dungarees will pay the real encomiums, and the enduring music will be the steady beat of engines and the creak of straining steel. The final tribute will be uttered by gasping seamen in battered lifeboats who mutter thanks to their rescuers, then hoarsely demand "another ship, one more chance to get a crack at 'em!"

On the quarterdeck, in the forecabin, deep in the engine room, in the wallowing lifeboats and on the helpless rafts in the open sea—that's where the plain men of the merchant marine are observing Maritime Day. Men without uniforms. Heroes without medals or heroics. Grim, short-spoken men of the sea. Come submarines or raiders, come mines or bombers, come hell or high water, they are getting the cargoes where they are needed. "Just give us the ships!" That's all they ask. "Pile in the cargo. We'll get it there!"

America has great traditions of the sea, traditions well worth remembering at any time. But the great days are not all in the past. New traditions that will stand high in any company are being made this very hour by the men of the merchant marine.

Editorial—The New York Times, May 22, 1942.

# The Conrad Library in a War Year

By Anne W. Conrow, Librarian

S.S. ....  
Pier 4,  
Hoboken, N. J.  
Sunday, May 9, 1942

The Librarian  
Conrad Library  
New York  
Dear Madam.

Once again I wish to take advantage of your goodness by asking you if you have any books to spare for the above named vessel.

Those books which you so kindly gave us on our last visit here were thoroughly enjoyed by all on board, and if I may say so were a grand selection.

We have a crew of fifty men on board, and as usual with such a number of men, the tastes are wide and varied.

If at all possible I shall come across again and visit you, remembering the kind treatment I received on other occasions I have visited you when on the SS. ...., and also when on this ship three months ago.

Thanking you for all past favours,  
Very sincerely,  
....., Chief Officer.

THIS heart-warming letter from a British officer bears eloquent testimony to the importance of good books to men at sea. It is just one of the many appeals which come to us by letter, by telephone and from seamen in person. Since the beginning of the war the library's influence has extended far beyond its four walls.

During the first four months of 1942, distribution of books to men aboard ship through the Conrad Library has more than tripled. Until our entry into the war last December, the calls came chiefly from

British, Dutch and Belgian vessels. Recently, however, crews of our own ships, finding reading their chief recreation because of wartime restrictions, have depended on us more and more to supply them with reading material. This we do whenever possible with the assistance of the Ship Visitors.

An A.B. telephoned saying that the number of Navy men aboard almost doubled the crew and would we please send books and magazines at once.

As the writer of the quoted letter says, the seamen's reading tastes are varied. A barge captain, Estonian by birth but for many years a proud citizen of the U. S., comes in twice a month with his little satchel, bringing back two carefully wrapped books. He solemnly consults the librarians and we try to help him choose wisely. Occasionally, however, we miss and last trip he shook his head over one failure saying sadly, "You know, sometimes I think books are like strange food. Someone say 'tis good and you taste and not like."

Won't you help us keep well stocked with books to satisfy all the tastes of these men who turn to this library where they have spent pleasant hours ashore?

Books may be sent "Book Post", and marked "Conrad Library", Seamen's Church Institute of N. Y., 25 South Street, New York City.

*From the "Washington Star". "It is more than the lure of a few dollars that keeps one man at his post on a sinking freighter, or that sends another back to the job when his ship has been lost and comrades have fallen in a hail of steel. In every war, the American seaman has been a proud figure. Once more this nation can take pride in his accomplishments."*



# Radio Tribute to Seamen

"This is the Truth", WJZ, 4:30 P.M., Sunday, April 19, 1942.

**CAPT. TIM HEALY:** The merchant seamen—the men who carry the cargoes of food, tanks and guns, the oil and rubber, regardless of storms, mines, torpedoes and bombs . . .

**VOICE No. 1:** My name is George Thatcher. Our tanker was off the coast when it was torpedoed. Our ship was shelled. The captain, the second mate, Louis the cook and six other men were killed. But I'm going back.

**VOICE No. 2:** My ship was torpedoed in the Persian Gulf. I was taken to a hospital in Bombay with a broken neck. They patched it up, but when I came to New York to sign on a ship again, I had to lean my head against my hands to give it enough support. They sent me to a hospital down South, but as soon as I'm O.K., I'm going out again.

**HEALY:** This is the type of courageous man who mans our merchant ships. But does the public appreciate the magnificent job they are doing? Well, here's one of those merchant seamen to tell us about it. His name is Kermit Salyer. He is a college graduate who is proud to have adopted the merchant marine as a career in preference to any other profession. Kermit Salyer, known to his friends as Red. Red, where were you when war broke out?

**RED:** On December 2nd my ship, carrying rubber and tin was leaving a harbor in Borneo. The Old Man (I mean the Captain, of course) sensed something wrong and instead of sailing north as he would have done normally, he plotted a course toward the south. Had we continued our normal course to the north, we would have been about four miles off Guam on that fateful December 7th, when it was bombed and I

wouldn't be here speaking to you now.

**HEALY:** I see, now, Red, what do the merchant seamen think of the reception they get from the average American citizen?

**RED:** Captain Tim, I can only speak for myself and the fellows I know. But we feel we don't get nearly the respect that the man in uniform gets, and we feel we deserve it.

**HEALY:** You fellows certainly do. But what do you mean by lack of respect.

**RED:** Well, I know a fellow who was at a dance. It wasn't a service club but they were all Army and Navy men and a handful of merchant seamen. This friend of mine was dancing with a girl and she said to him, "Why aren't you in uniform?" His answer was that he wasn't in the Navy but was a merchant seaman. The girl gasped a horrified "Oh!" and refused to dance with him for the rest of the evening. And this was a man who had been out on ships that had been torpedoed three times, and was about to risk his neck again. And I know many other cases like this.

**HEALY:** Well, is it a uniform you want?

**RED:** Oh, no. We don't want to be regimented. But we would like some sort of distinctive pin, such as the British have given their merchant seamen. They have a silver pin with a crown and on the crown is "M.N." standing for Merchant Navy. We would like some sort of similar distinctive pin so people would recognize us for what we are. Say a pin which would have U.S.M.M. on it, standing for United States Merchant Marine.

**HEALY:** And you feel such pins are necessary?

**RED:** Yes. Why I know one young fellow who had just returned from his 4th trip on a tanker since the outbreak of the war, and he was actually accused by some strange woman in the subway of not doing his bit. If he'd had a pin that could have never happened.

**HEALY:** In what other way do you fellows feel that you want recognition for what you're doing?

**RED:** Again, I can speak for myself and the seamen I know. For one thing, we have no canteens to which we are admitted. To attend the U.S.O. functions and the various service canteens, you've got to be in uniform. We feel that we should be admitted to the service canteens and the various privately run canteens for service men. It isn't a handout we're after. We make enough money to take in a show or two occasionally. What we want most is the companionship these places offer. A man gets mighty lonely after six months away from home you know. It would make a long voyage much easier if he knew that at the end of the trip he'd find friends, companionship and a warm welcome awaiting him.

**HEALY:** Do you fellows in the merchant marine get medals for heroisms as in the case of the army and navy?

**RED:** Yes, Congress has just enacted legislation awarding medals for heroism in the merchant service.

**HEALY:** Is there anything else you merchant seamen would like from the public besides respect and recognition?

**RED:** Yes. We can no longer carry radios with us on board ship because the oscillations of the receiving sets can be picked up by submarine direction finders. It's pretty lonely on shipboard, and some good music goes a long way towards lightening the job and easing the tension. So gifts of portable phonographs sent to the

Seamen's Church Institute of New York at 25 South Street or Sea Power Magazine at Rockefeller Center, which will distribute them would be highly appreciated.

**HEALY:** Well, Red, I hope you get that identification pin you mentioned.

**RED:** And I hope, if we do, the public realizes what it stands for.

**HEALY:** It stands for a group of fine, courageous men, doing a tough dangerous job for their country and doing it well.

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Tribute from Rear Admiral Howard L. Vickery, U.S.N., Vice Chairman, U. S. Maritime Commission, at Propeller Club of New York Maritime Day Dinner, May 22nd.

"These merchant seamen will never be identified with glorious chapters like Wake Island and Corregidor. Their names will probably appear in the record only as seamen of prosaic little cargo ships that sailed out in line of duty. If Hitler can be said to have made one outstanding error, it was in neglecting to reckon with the courage of the men who go to sea in American ships."

## Tribute from the New President of U. S. Lines

"American seamen and ship operators are doing their level best to win this war. I personally take my hat off to the men who man our merchant ships who are proving to be the real heroes of this war. Merchant ships are now the life line of the fighting forces. With the battlefields 3,000 to 10,000 miles away, the ultimate success of the United Nations may well hinge upon the ability of merchant vessels to move supplies to the fighting forces. As we pass rapidly from the defensive to the offensive phase of the struggle and as our production is stepped up to meet the ever-increasing need for planes, tanks, guns and ammunition, the importance of the supply line increases. Obviously, we cannot win this war if these implements remain in this country."

BASIL HARRIS  
Speaking on George Hicks program "Men of the Sea", Station WJZ, 3:35 P.M.



## Sea Heroes

An heroic episode in the unceasing battle which American merchant sailors are waging against submarines off the Atlantic coast was related by survivors\* of an American ship whose skipper, at the cost of his life, steered straight into a barrage of cannon-fire in a vain attempt to ram and sink an attacking U-boat.

The skipper, Captain Samuel L. Cobb, of Staten Island, was mortally wounded by a fragment of a shell which exploded near the bridge of the vessel. One other seaman was killed in the attack, which took place on the night of April 16, and five are missing. Twenty-seven survivors were landed at Norfolk, Va., after a 100-mile cruise in two open lifeboats.

As soon as the undersea marauder fired the first shell, Captain Cobb, survivors said, shouted to the helmsman to throw his wheel hard to starboard and head for the U-boat at full speed. The submarine managed to avoid a collision by circling the ship, meanwhile pumping round after round at her from its deck guns.

The captain ran below to destroy his ship's papers and then hurried back to the bridge, where he was hit by the shell fragment. He was unable to order his men to abandon ship.

"We huddled under the poop decks trying to get our wits together," Charles Brown, a messman, said. "The firing suddenly ceased. We ran for the lifeboats. Then the firing started again."

In the few seconds of respite from the submarine's cannonade, the survivors were able to launch two lifeboats and get the stricken skipper aboard one of them. He was buried

\*Editor's Note: Some of the crew of this ship were welcomed at the Institute. They were the 56th torpedoed crew to stay at 25 South Street since the war began.

at sea two days later.

For a record of all-time coolness under fire, the survivors cited the behavior of Waldemar Semenov, whom they called "the Mad Russian." While shells were crashing into the ship, he went to his cabin to brush his teeth and put on his best clothes. In the galley he stuffed his pockets with loaves of bread and from the library he picked out a book to while away the hours in a lifeboat. Then he borrowed \$2 from a shipmate against the day when he would again be set ashore. With his mind, body and finances provided for, he announced himself ready to quit the ship.

The sailors credited him with bringing one lifeboat through safely. An expert navigator, he took charge of sailing the craft toward the coast. Three days later the survivors were picked up by a rescue ship. They said that their own vessel went to the bottom in about thirty minutes after being hammered by at least sixty shells from the submarine's cannon.

*Reprinted from The New York Herald-Tribune, April 25, 1942*

### Maritime Day

The Seamen's Church Institute of New York and the American Seamen's Friend Society jointly sponsored a luncheon on Maritime Day, May 22nd at which Captain Ralph W. Dempwolf, Senior Coast Guard officer of the 3d Naval District, was the guest speaker. Invited guests included representatives of the seamen's welfare agencies in the Port of New York.

Hundreds of merchant seamen in the Institute enjoyed a special entertainment in the Auditorium at 7:30 P.M. Mrs. Janet Röper, House Mother, spoke. Sea chanties and popular songs were sung. A moving picture, "Sons of the Sea", portraying the transition from sail to steam in the 1840's, was shown.

A special Maritime Day party was given in the Seamen's Lounge through the kindness of Miss Gretchen Green and her friends who brought a cake baked in the shape of a Victory ship, gave souvenirs and special cookies and provided accordion music and other entertainment for the merchant seamen.

## Men on the Tankers

It is 6, before sunup, and a long truck roars over the highway with a load of food or army equipment. Along the road oil burners in many homes are sending up heat, for the mornings are cold. The fuel that heats those homes as well as the gasoline that runs the truck came up the coast from Texas in a tanker that might have been blown into wreckage at any moment. Cargoes are sailing through safely day after day, but the crews of the tankers that take the ocean road never know when a torpedo may sink them in a sea of flaming oil. The men in those crews wear no army uniforms, fly no bombers over New Guinea, may never walk the deck of a destroyer, yet theirs is a service now comparable in hazards to that of many in the armed forces.

For their families' sake a number of tanker men have left the sea they like for safer jobs ashore. The crews that carry on are a valued part of the nation's transportation and industrial system. The fact that they get good wages, or that their duties are done beyond the eye of an Army or Navy officer, with no medals for reward, does not detract from their courage. They and their precious cargoes may ultimately get protection of convoys not now available. Until then let us be glad they are willing to damn the torpedoes.

*Reprinted from the New York Sun, Friday, March 13, 1942.*

## "Men on the Tankers"

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir*: May I congratulate you on the beautiful tribute your editorial article "Men on the Tankers" paid to seafaring men? As the wife of the captain of a steamship of the Porto Rico line which was taken by the Navy as she was sailing in December, I hear and know much of the terrific struggle of the men who are now battling on the sea.

My husband, the only captain of the boat in her eleven years of service—and he spent thirty-seven years with the line—became seriously ill immediately after he turned the ship, stripped of fittings, over to the Army base.

The captain of the sister ship told us of his rescue of the survivors of the Lady Hawkins, and of the three submarines that confronted him.

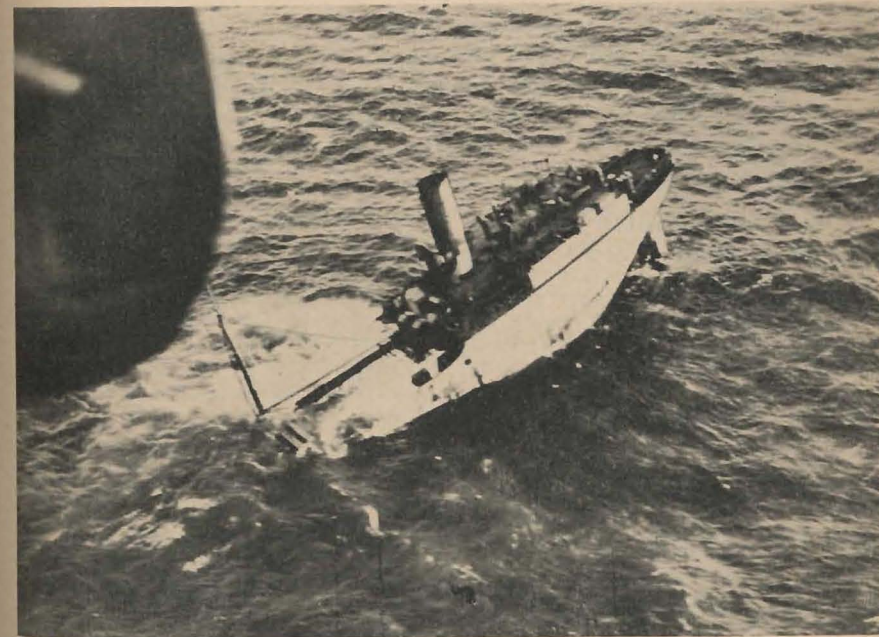
For all seafaring men we thank you.

HELEN H. EVANS.

New York, March 19.

"These merchant seamen, these men aboard the oil tankers and the cargo ships, have no chance to fight. To stay on the job under such conditions requires courage of the highest sort. All honor to such men. They have kept Britain in the war two years, saving her from starvation and defeat. And today American merchant seamen are doing their vital part in the winning of the war for us all, and are paying with their lives."

—"Clarion-Ledger", Jackson, Miss.



*Photograph from Press Association, Inc.*





Acme Photo

Seaman Robert Revall has been sailing aboard tankers and freighters for over 20 years. His ship was torpedoed in the last war but so far, in this war, he has been lucky in "delivering the goods". Here he is enjoying a game of checkers while one of the hostesses in the Seamen's Lounge looks on.

*Who is a greater hero than the man in the engine room or, for that matter, on the deck of a tanker carrying a hundred thousand barrels of gasoline and oil through a submarine-infested sea?*

—From the Saturday Evening Post



*"As we watch the quiet heroism and the true self-sacrifice of the men on our Tankers and other Merchant Ships, none of us will be willing to waste gasoline or other things which these men are supplying at the cost of their lives."*

—Bishop William T. Manning.

## "Dog Watch"

A recent newspaper item states that the "dog watch"—the period between midnight and dawn—has been renamed the "MacArthur shift" at the Colt's patent Fire Arms Company, Hartford, Conn., and the workers who chose the name were congratulated by the War Department. "This designation" said Major General C. M. Wesson, "should be an inspiration to every 'dog watch' worker in our production effort."

To the seafaring men at the Seamen's Institute of New York the first "dog watch" refers to the 4 to 6 P.M. watch on shipboard and the second "dog watch" is from 6 to 8 P.M. Time is divided into watches, starting from noon. From 12 noon to 4 P.M. is called the "afternoon

watch"; from 4 to 6 P.M. the first "dog watch"; from 6 to 8 P.M. the second "dog watch"; from 8 to 12 is known as the "first watch." From 12 A.M. to 4 A.M. it is the "middle watch"; from 4 A.M. to 8 A.M. is the "morning watch" and from 8 A.M. to 12 noon is the "forenoon watch." The seamen say that most of the torpedo attacks of U-boats occur during the "middle watch", from midnight to four A.M.

As to why the two hour watches are referred to as "dog watches", there are a number of explanations. It may have derived from the idea of a "short" or "docked" watch, but one merchant sailor explained that it was called the "dog watch" because it is a "curtailed watch!"

## Merchant Seamen

From the "Christian Science Monitor:"

"A great deal is said these days about the vast shipbuilding program the United States Maritime Commission has put into operation, but not so much is heard about the men who run the ships. In a way, this is not surprising. The merchant seaman is a quiet, unassuming fellow. He wears civilian clothes ashore, consequently nobody exclaims, 'Ah, here comes one of our brave sailors!' But that doesn't say that he isn't a fighter for freedom. . .

"As a group, those who go to sea in cargo ships do not hope to match even the modest amenities Commodore Decatur aspired to when he went searching down Maine for a place in which 'not to cut a dash but to live snug and hand-somely.'

"To live 'snug' seems to him sufficient reward for the hard and dangerous work a merchant seafarer must perform in these times. Since so little glory ever comes his way, it is heartening to see that a nation involved in war has provided that its seamen will reap a decent financial reward from it.

"That is what establishment of the President's Maritime War Emergency Board really means. This board has power to fix the amount of wartime bonuses and conditions under which they will be paid to those who man the merchant ships. The board will see to it that any rise in risk is matched by bigger rewards.

"This is only fair. Naturally it will be a good thing for morale all the way along America's overseas frontiers. It is safe to say the only thing American seamen will ask now is an anti-submarine gun for his ship—that and a chance to use it. They did a noble job in the first World War, these unsung merchant mariners. They are doing it again in this war."

## Deferment For Merchant Seamen

Every seaman in the Merchant Marine must keep in touch with his local draft board at all times in order that he may remain where he'll be doing the greatest service. Under the Selective Service Act, local boards make the decision as regards deferment; decisions are made on the basis of each individual case and not on occupation.

In a memorandum to local draft boards, General Hershey, Director of Selective Service, has asked that merchant seamen actively engaged in offshore shipping be classified in Class 11-b (occupational deferment). Following is the text of General Hershey's memorandum:

"1. Offshore merchant marine service, considering its importance to the war effort and the hazards it involves, is so closely allied to service in the armed forces that a man found by the local board to be actively engaged at sea in this service may well be considered as engaged in the active defense of the country. Such service may properly be considered as tantamount to military service. When a local board finds a man to be actively engaged in offshore shipping, it should classify him in Class 11-b if he is not found to be entitled to a lower classification.

"2. Although the hazards involved in coastal, intercoastal (including Canada, Mexico, West Indies and Central America), Great Lakes and Inland Waterway service are, of course, not comparable to those in offshore service, the uninterrupted operation of these services is essential to the war effort. These services should be given full consideration by local boards in classifying men actively engaged therein."

From: Hoffman Island Log

Admiral Emory S. Land, Chairman of the U. S. Maritime Commission, asked the Governors of all states to proclaim Maritime Day, May 22nd. "This year, Maritime Day takes on a new meaning," he said. "We are building in two short years the greatest fleet that any nation has ever attempted in one program. It will be a Victory Fleet for the United Nations—without these merchant ships no army, or navy, or air corps can gain and hold the victory we have . . . Men from every state have joined the crews of our merchant fleet. They are serving their country as well as the men in the armed forces, and they are sharing the real dangers of the war." Governor Herbert H. Lehman of New York in his proclamation said: "Hundreds of merchant seamen have lost their lives because of devotion to their duty in the face of an enemy attack . . . We do well to honor these men of the merchant fleet."



# Liberty Ships Christened

ON April 12th, Crown Princess Martha of Norway sponsored the launching of the Liberty ship *St. Olaf*, named for the King of Norway from 1016 to 1029. He brought Christianity to the country and in 1164 was canonized and declared the patron saint of Norway.

The band played the Norwegian national anthem as hundreds of Americans of Norwegian descent and other Norwegians who escaped by underground from Norway witnessed the ceremony on this second anniversary of April days when the Nazi war machine marched into their democratic country.

Workmen smashed sledge hammers against blocks holding the 10,500-ton ship, and an American worker, one of thousands lining the scaffolding and piles of steel in the Bethlehem-Fairfield shipyard, yelled: "Chop! Chop! Let's go!" Acetylene torches cut through the metal holding the ship to its wooden cradle, and the *St. Olaf* started down the greased way into the Patapsco River.

"I christen thee *St. Olaf!*" shouted Princess Martha, who later said: "It was very impressive, the spirit of those workmen and the cheers they gave . . . it was the spirit of

the United Nations . . . a gesture of sympathy . . ."

A few Norse army and navy officials saluted as the Norwegian and American flags were raised, and someone lifted a wooden American eagle with its wings upstretched in a tall V, the Maritime Commission's newest symbol of "ships for victory".

The *St. Olaf*, one of 1,500 liberty ships being constructed, was the twentieth ship built by Bethlehem-Fairfield shipyard on this river shore that only a year ago was a place of desolation and inactivity. This is the first time that a Liberty ship which will fly the American flag in the service of the United Nations has been sponsored by a representative of a foreign country.

"She got clean lines, a ship easy to handle," said one of the 25,000 Norse seamen who hasn't seen his country in two years, whose fleet has dwindled from 1,000 vessels to 730. "It's like a shot in the arm to know she's on our side."

The *St. Olaf*, as a ship, represents "the heart of Norway's contribution to the Allied cause," said Wilhelm Morgenstjerne, Norwegian Minister to the United States.

## 2,700 Miles in Lifeboat

Captain G. H. Boy, with twelve of his men, spent a month in a small craft as they crossed the open sea to one of the Gilbert Islands, northeast of Australia, after his steamer, the *Prusa*, was torpedoed 100 miles off Honolulu. While Captain Boy's achievement does not quite equal the 70 days open boat time of the *Anglo-Saxon's* crew he travelled a greater distance of 2,700 miles in 31 days. See December 1940 LOOKOUT.

One of the *Prusa's* crew, Bernard Baker, visited the Institute recently and told some of the staff of his experiences while in the lifeboat.

## Courage Today Is Freedom Tomorrow

The savagery of modern war is a fiery hell-born storm  
To maim and kill by torpedo blast and shrapnel-laden bomb;  
The ruthless shattering of free-born hopes fills us with dismay  
As we watch yesterday's peaceful world crumbling today.  
Youth knows not the gloomy fate the future holds in store  
As totalitarian banditry lurks outside our door;  
The deadly germs of selfish hate that all free men despise  
Have honeycombed our peaceful earth as their messengers wing the skies.  
Our sea that was once so peaceful far beyond the shadow line  
Has become a field of shattered hulks that braved the deadly mine;  
A cable's length from peaceful shores are submarines concealed  
As sentinels to guard the troughs of an ocean battlefield.  
Someone will pay the price and bow to full defeat;  
Men of good will must win the right to mould a world complete;  
Distrust and hate that rules by force will crumble to decay,  
A united world of free-born men will live to rule the day.

By Captain Walter E. Scott  
From "Poems of Coastal  
New England"

## Book Review

"POEMS OF COASTAL NEW ENGLAND"

By Captain Walter E. Scott

Beacon Publications. Vol. 2. \$1.50

This is a companion piece to Captain Scott's earlier volume of poetry written during his spare time when not at sea. His reminiscences of the days of sail will interest the older generation of seafarers. As he explained to THE LOOKOUT editor, "I wrote the sea verse in a sailor's language which make them sound crude to those not accustomed to the sea . . . I thank you for the friendly hospitality I received at the Institute, as it has helped me in many ways over a period of forty years, and I want you to accept a copy of my verses for your Conrad Library." His poems about Maine will be liked by those who love her rugged coast and rock-bound islands.

—M. D. C.

## Book Review

MYSTERY SHIP—The *Mary Celeste*  
in Fancy and in Fact

By George L. Bryan

J. B. Lippincott Company. \$3.00

One of my first recollections is that of my father, who was connected with one of the oldest marine insurance companies in New York, telling me of the *Mary Celeste*. As I too have always been interested in marine matters I have read and listened to many a tale of this mystery.

The present author has evidently gone into the facts of the case very thoroughly and carefully, investigated records of the building and early ownership of the vessel. He carries the tale on to the sailing on November 7th, 1872, from New York and picks up the voyage on December 13th when the *Mary Celeste* was brought into the harbor of Gibraltar in charge of three men from the British Brigantine *Dei Gratia* which had encountered the *Mary Celeste* off Gibraltar with nobody aboard and no visible reason for the crew having left the ship. Records of the Vice Admiralty Court at Gibraltar have been carefully searched and are quoted.

Then follow many of the yarns that have been spun based on this mystery ship and all of them are properly disproved by documentary evidence.

Various solutions are given that might possibly account for the abandonment.

An account of the end of this vessel on a reef in Gonam Channel at the entrance to the harbor of Port au Prince on January 3rd, 1885, by the apparent casting away of his command by her captain and the consequences which followed makes very interesting reading. Following this is a supplement quoting various documents pertaining to this much discussed vessel.

The book is well written and is enthralling, though I do not see why the author quotes a few lines of poetry here and there, appropriate though they may be; also I should have preferred having the chapters giving the yarns and conjectures at the end rather than in the middle of the book.

It is the most complete writing on the *Mary Celeste* I have seen and I recommend it for the library of all who are in any way interested or connected with those "that go down to the sea in ships".

Reviewed by ROBERT F. LIVINGSTON,  
Secretary, Life Saving Benevolent Society.

"These men do not wear uniforms to designate the fact, yet their services are as patriotic, as brave and as necessary for the national defense as are the services of the men in the armed forces . . . An admiring nation is grateful to them all."—*Journal & American*, New York.



## Book Reviews

### SHIP'S COOK AND BAKER

By Otto Krey

*N. Y. Cornell Maritime Press, 1942. \$2.50*

The importance of this timely little book on ship's cookery and baking can hardly be overestimated. Now that so great a part of winning the war depends upon cargo ships and tankers, the care of the men who man these ships must be well considered. And while numerous cookbooks have been written for hotels, restaurants, passenger ships and institutions, practical books on quantity cooking have been meager. Mr. Krey's book should have a warm reception, especially by the galley crews which will have to be quickly trained to take their places on the many ships being built. The author is well prepared for his work, having had thirty-four years of experience at sea, including service on ships of foreign registry. The recipes, planned mostly for forty servings, are full and complete, adapted to modern improved living standards and offering a tempting variety. These recipes would be queer reading indeed for a ship's cook of the days of sail.

—I. M. A.

### "SHIP'S BUSINESS"

By Myron E. McFarland

*Cornell Maritime Press, March 24, 1942. \$2.00*

The Cornell Press has succeeded once again in compiling a splendid concise reference text. "Ship's Business" should be invaluable to the Master Mariner who wishes a ready handbook giving procedures in the many transactions which he must undertake in connection with his command.

The landlubber might be amazed at the complex business practices which are involved in a ship's "paper work". Capt. McFarland says he has prepared his book "not with the intention that it should make an Admiralty lawyer out of ship master" but rather "to put into plain words a number of the vexing points . . . that make the ship master's life no bed of roses."

The material is clearly presented and well organized. Specific examples are quoted to clarify situations.

—A. W. C.

### NAVIGATION FOR MARINERS AND AVIATORS

By Captain David Polowe

*Cornell Maritime Press—1942. \$5.00*

Captain Polowe's new book should be a godsend to those who want a short cut to a working knowledge of navigation without missing too much of the theoretical background. This compact volume presents, without too much brevity, the essential points of piloting and naviga-

tion in such a space that it can go into the sailor's bag of the prospective navigator without noticeable addition to his equipment.

After giving the reader a short, interesting history of navigation, Captain Polowe plunges into the various phases of piloting. He develops this branch of the subject logically by starting with the compass and the correction of its errors, and follows with charts, aids to navigation such as lights, buoys, etc. together with their application to bearings and plotting. The chapter on Dead Reckoning first gives the reader the elementary knowledge of Logarithms and Trigonometry which he will need to use tables in Bowditch etc., and then covers the various sailings rather briefly. The piloting section is rounded off with chapters on Chart Navigation for Aviators, Fog, Radio Stations, Storms, Tides, etc.

The Captain's chapter on the sextant gives a great deal of indispensable information in a small space. From here on the reader is eased through such technical matters, necessary as tools to the navigator, as the chronometer, time, and the Nautical Almanac until he is doing a "Day's Work At Sea" (on paper) before he knows it.

The Appendices comprise a valuable reference book in themselves: Appendix "A" presents the Rules Of The Road, really brought up to date; Appendix "B" outlines in great detail the examinations for licensed deck officers. The rest of the book contains Dreisonstock's Navigational Tables and other tables compiled by the author, and excerpts from the Nautical Almanac.

During the present emergency there must be many newcomers to our armed services of the sea who aspire to rise to responsible ratings in which a knowledge of navigation is mandatory. Such men may well consider this volume a necessary part of their outfit.

Reviewed by William F. Avery, N. Lieutenant Commander, North River Power Squadron.

### SHIPFITTER'S MANUAL

By Albert Crivelli

*Pitman Publishing Co. \$1.50*

This Manual has been written primarily for student shipfitters who hope to qualify for jobs in shipyards. It is a well-arranged and comprehensive guide containing many diagrams. The author is an instructor in the U. S. Navy Yard's Apprentice School in Philadelphia, and he presents this intricate and important subject in a clear and systematic manner.

—F. A. J.



Arni Photos

A Busy Corner of the Institute's Cafeteria Where Hundreds of Meals Are Served Daily to Merchant Seamen and Coast Guard.

## Book Reviews

### CONVOY

By Quentin Reynolds

*Random House. \$2.00.*

One of America's most famous foreign correspondents, pacing the decks of a slow freighter bound for England, in convoy, retells the highlight assignments of his exciting career. His experiences are daring and often ingenious, for Reynolds has an amazing faculty for being "where things happen." The marine chapters in the book also show his facility as a writer. His description of loading cargo is interesting: "There isn't much in the way of cargo we haven't got aboard. On the deck forward there are four huge gray-painted crates — four bombing planes. We have fifty squat little camouflaged tractors, the kind I've seen at R.A.F. airports pulling the bomb trains toward the waiting airplanes. We have two tons of cheese and two thousand tons of agricultural equipment. They loaded our ship quickly and the winches screamed and the derricks groaned far into the night. Then we left Saint John and headed for Halifax. Two huge barges were towed up to our side. They were heavily laden with crates. But the crew handled these crates as though they were eggs.

"Easy, easy," the mate kept saying. I asked him what was in them. He smiled and pointed aloft. A large red flag was fluttering from the masthead. "When you see that flag flying, give that ship a wide berth. That means we've explosive aboard. That's what we're loading now, dynamite, T.N.T., all sorts of high ex-

plosive — five hundred tons of it." And Reynolds comments: "That gives our trip one more hazard, although if a torpedo hits you, it doesn't matter much whether you're loaded with dynamite or Brussel sprouts."

Reynolds and his convoy landed safely, and he went on to cover the Russian front.

M.D.C.

### CANTON CAPTAIN

By James B. Connolly.

*Doubleday, Doran. 1942. \$3.00*

One of the most adventurous chapters in American maritime history is the account of our China trade. In his biography of Robert Bennett Forbes, Mr. Connolly tells the story of one of the most famous of the "Canton Captains". Ben Forbes was thirteen when he first shipped out of Boston Harbor in 1817 for the East. He was nineteen when he sailed as master of the *Levant*. By this time he had met the dangers of pirates, of the uprisings of Chinese mobs against Europeans, of mutinous crews. He knew too the business of trading in opium as well as silk and tea. The rest of his life was no less colorful and while trade with China occupied much of it, he had his South American and South Sea island adventures; he commanded the warship *James-town* which took supplies to the starving Irish. He even built the first twin-screw steamer for deep-water service and rigged it with his own invention, the double top-sail. Later, American builders in general adopted them for their clipper ships. Captain Robert Forbes life is part of American sea tradition.

I. M. A.



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