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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 suggest 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 ofDollars."

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."

Contributions and bequests to the Institute are exempt from Federal and New York State Tax.

The LOOKOUT

NOVEMBER 1955

SEAMEN'S
CHURCH
INSTITUTE
of NEW YORK



THE SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK is a shore center 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 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. XLVI, No. 11

NOVEMBER, 1955

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SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK
25 South Street, New York 4, N. Y. BOWling Green 9-2710

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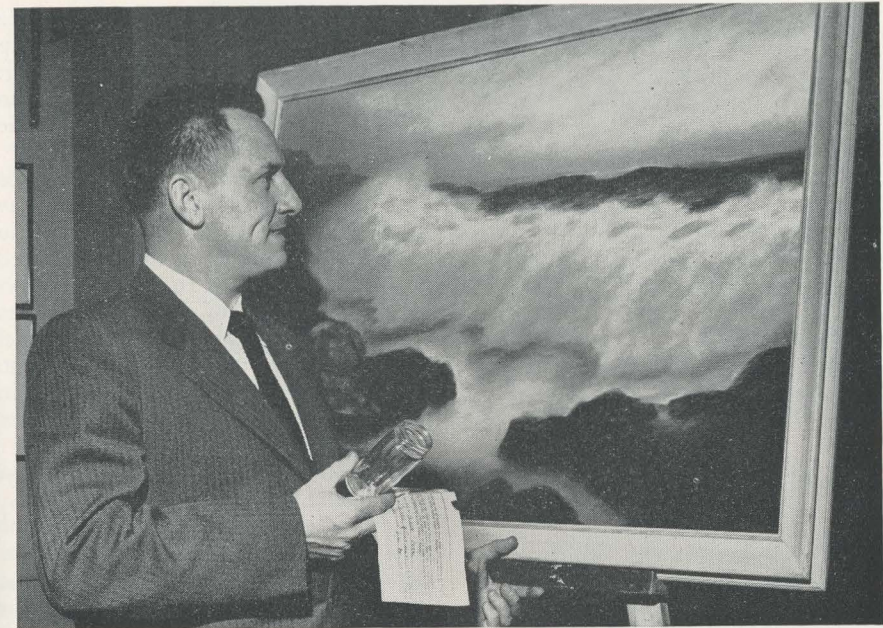
FAYE HAMMEL
Associate Editor

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THE COVER: Through sunlight and shadow, the *Queen Elizabeth* moves up through the Narrows to the Cunard Pier in Manhattan.



Russell Skillman holds the message-in-a-bottle that drifted 1500 miles in seven months to win him a \$200 marine oil painting.

Tide of Good Fortune

RUSSELL Skillman of Manasquan, New Jersey, who says he never won anything before in his life, is now convinced that the tides of fortune are with him. At least they were with his message-in-a-bottle cast overboard with 450 others last March from the superliner *United States* when the ship was half-way to England.

After drifting seven months in the Atlantic, for a distance of about 1500 miles, Skillman's bottle was the first to reach shore. It was found on the northwest coast of Ireland, in Donegal Bay, by one Patrick O'Byrne of Glen Columbkille, County Donegal. O'Byrne returned the message to the Seamen's Church Institute, making both Skillman and himself winners of original seascapes by marine artist Linwood Borum. The Institute had launched the bottles for contributors to a fund-raising drive held at the Jersey Coast Boat Show last February.

Skillman, a 35-year-old engineer with the Mercury Division of the Ford Motor Company, is no stranger to the waters over which his bottle-message floated in reaching Ireland. He spent six years with the Navy, serving before World War II on the 21-day neutrality patrol of the North Atlantic and during the war on the battleship *Texas*. He was discharged from the Navy with the rank of ensign.

Skillman's three sons, Russell Jr., seven, Michael, five, and Jeffrey, five months, are a little too young to be excited about their father's good fortune. But his wife, Virginia, thinks it's all pretty wonderful. "She's not superstitious," says Skillman, "but she can't help thinking that having this bottle-message turn up is a kind of good omen of things to come."

To date, nothing has been heard of the 20 bottles dropped in mid-Pacific by the *S.S. Pioneer Tide* at the same time.

It's An Emergency...

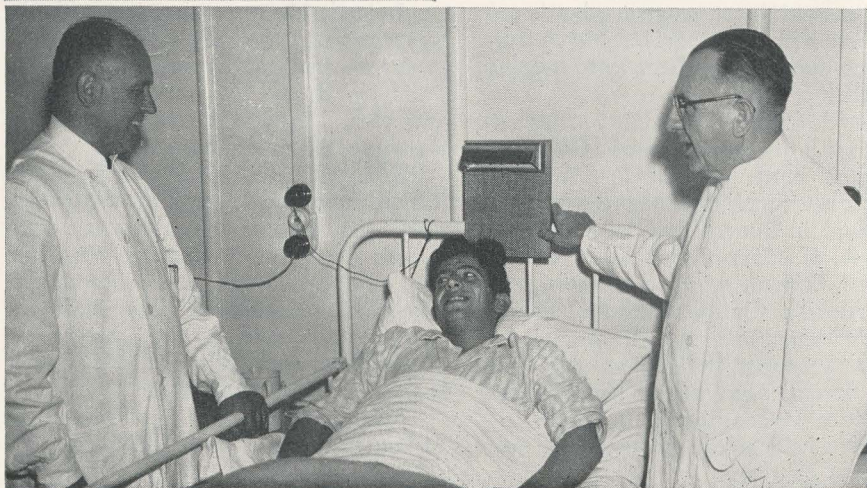
A MAN is hurt on the job. His injuries require medical attention — perhaps special surgery — within a matter of hours. But his job happens to be on a merchant ship, far at sea, a small ship that carries no doctor. What then?

Out of just such situations as these have come some heroic tales of life-saving at sea. Consider the case of Stamatis Zannikos. A deckboy on the Greek motor ship *Marpessa*, bound for Newport News, 19-year-old Zannikos was adjusting ventilators one day last summer, when he fell to daydreaming, and then really fell—onto the rail of the winchdeck below. His injuries were so severe that it was useless to try the usual methods of handling a medical emergency at sea. Expert help was needed, and urgently.

Fortunately for Zannikos, help was only 80 miles away, where the big *Nieuw Amsterdam*, jammed with 1,200 summer tourists, was making her way toward Europe. An urgent plea for assistance brought her to the side of the Greek freighter in a matter of hours. A lifeboat was lowered over the side, and the floating ambulance



Left: Injured Greek deckboy goes over the side of the *Marpessa* into a waiting lifeboat. Below: The worst is over, and Zannikos smiles gratefully at Dr. Lawrence Heacock, who performed the operation, and Dr. Johannes Muller of the *Nieuw Amsterdam*.



The resident chaplain aboard the *S.S. Vulcania* baptizes a new passenger, born halfway between Italy and the States.



brought the deckboy to the *Nieuw Amsterdam's* hospital in 16 minutes.

An examination indicated that surgery — of a highly specialized and technical nature — was required at once. Without it, the patient could not have survived for more than a few days. An expert surgeon, a passenger, volunteered to perform the operation, which saved the seaman's life. A week later Zannikos was landed in Rotterdam at the Seamen's Hospital, and given a plane ticket to Greece and a gift of money that had been collected for him on board the *Nieuw Amsterdam*.

Illness at sea isn't much fun, but one young Coast Guardsman found it had an ample share of secondary gains. Stricken with appendicitis in the course of duty aboard the Coast Guard Cutter *Dexter*, Seaman Richard E. Hodson was rushed in a lifeboat across rough seas to the *S.S. Independence*, returning from her maiden voyage to the Mediterranean in 1951. He became the first person to undergo surgery on the then brand-new liner. What's more, he became the first seaman to have movie actress Yvonne DeCarlo, on board for the crossing, help him convalesce (see photo).

Emergency of a grimmer sort struck six crew members of the Greek freighter *Nicolaou Georgias* the same summer. About 630 miles from Suez in the Red Sea, their vessel had caught fire amidships, and before they could escape the blast, one was burned critically, one badly, and four superficially. Help came from the

Esso Linden, which rushed to the scene of the disaster. Her pharmacist's mate applied appropriate first-aid until a physician from the Netherlands passenger ship *Indrapoera* was able to come aboard. Two of the men were removed from the freighter to the passenger ship.

The usual course of medical emergencies at sea is far more simple. On merchant ships, illness and accident are usually treated by the captain or one of his officers with reference to a medical manual, or in more complicated cases, under instructions from DH Medico, a shore-to-ship medical advisory service, originated by the Seamen's Church Institute in 1921. All passenger ships are equipped with medical staffs and a hospital.

Every so often, passenger ships find themselves with more passengers when they arrive in the States than they had when they left Europe, as a result of another kind of emergency at sea — the birth of a child. The Italian Line holds the record for this sort of thing. Strictly speaking, pregnant women will not be granted passage by any steamship company during the last two months of pregnancy; it's too risky. But many Italian immigrants, who have waited long months or years to get a visa to come to this country, will not lose their chance just because they're about to have a baby. A midwife stretches the truth for them a little bit, and they get their passage. The results are a number of "premature" little Saturninos, Andreas

On board the *Independence*, movie actress Yvonne DeCarlo helped Seaman Richard Hodson convalesce from appendicitis, but Head Surgeon William Kenny had a hard time keeping the patient's pulse normal.



U.S. Coast Guard photo

or Vulcanos (the babies usually take the name of the ship) born at sea with the blessings of the Italian Line. Asking passengers for spare clothes for an infant's layette got to be embarrassing, so now the Italian Welfare League sees to it that a complete layette and crib are always aboard ship in case of a birth. A resident Catholic chaplain presides over the baptism and Christening ceremony and presents the infant with a tiny gold religious medal bearing one side the picture of the ship.

The Italian Line has quite a big family by now. One of its oldest children celebrated her twelfth birthday on the *Vulcania* a little while ago. During the war, she had been born on board ship when the *Vulcania* was evacuating Italian citizens from East Africa to Italy. One of her names, of course, was *Vulcania*.

The two youngest members of the family are Nicola Gabrielle Bertolotti and Marco Saturnino Nicolo Basile, both born on a crossing of the *Saturnia* last month. Local hospitals aren't exactly worried, but competition from the maternity wards of the Italian Line ships is getting stiffer all the time.

Delilah's now **THE VAMP**

... But Our Fall Theatre Benefit Is Still December 1, 1955

CAROL CHANNING

with

Bibi Osterwald

Danny Scholl

THE VAMP

Winter Garden, 50th St., & Broadway

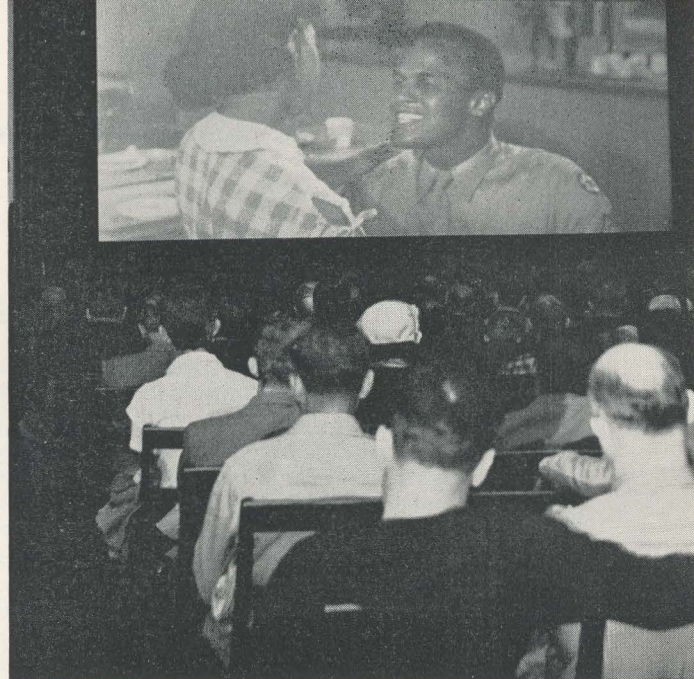
Out of town reports say *The Vamp* is an hilarious spoof of the silent screen stars . . . Carol Channing at her exuberant best.

For your ticket reservations, write to:

MR. CLIFFORD D. MALLORY, JR.
Chairman, Benefit Committee
 25 South Street
 New York 4, New York

At the Institute's auditorium—seamen, Cinemascope, and *Carmen Jones*.

Wider
 and
 Better



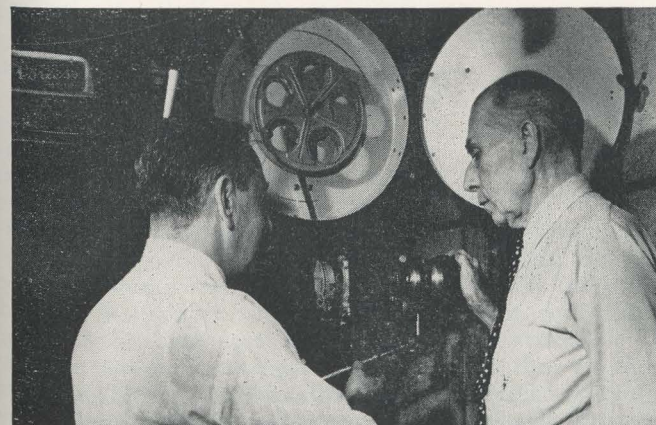
PERHAPS it is only natural that seafarers, who generally like their collars loose and their view unobstructed 360 degrees around the compass, should react favorably to the trend toward wider motion picture screens. In any event, this was confirmed during October when the Institute fitted its auditorium with Cinemascope equipment. One of the 700 seamen in the audience for the premiere showing of a Cinemascope feature observed, "It put the picture right in your lap."

The new screen is 22 feet wide compared to 12 for the old one, and it is far superior in radiance and color reproduc-

tion. Through the resourcefulness of the Amusement Supply Company, a special suspension system was worked out, making it possible for the large screen to be easily moved so as not to interfere with the use of the stage for variety shows and other live programs in the auditorium.

"The change to wide screen projection was made," said Mr. O. C. Frey, manager of the Special Services Department, "so that we could continue our policy of selecting from the best films available."

Different current movies are shown free at the Institute three evenings a week.



Projectionist Alan Jacobson (left) explains some of the intricacies of the Cinemascope lens to Joe McCrystal, who arranges the Institute's film programs.

The World of Ships

REFUGEES

The United Nations is taking steps to rescue hundreds of refugee seamen who are unable to leave their ships because they have lost valid travel documents and their nationality rights in fleeing Communist-controlled countries or through other mishaps. Virtually prisoners, they are frequently victims of exploitation, forced to accept poorer working conditions than other seamen who can change jobs at will.

Letters of appeal brought the plight of these men to the attention of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, G. J. van Heuven Goedhart of the Netherlands. At his instigation, the Netherlands government conducted a preliminary investigation which revealed that 550 stateless seamen had called at Dutch ports. The Commissioner pointed out that there are probably about 500 more refugee seamen, whose ships did not touch Dutch ports.

An international agreement to assist the refugee seamen is now being discussed by the representatives of eight maritime states—Belgium, Denmark, France, West Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Britain.

FLEETS FOR ADOPTION

Many school children will be glad to learn that two American steamship companies have offered their entire fleets for use in the Adopt-A-Ship program (Look-out, June 1955). United States Line, with 48 ships, and American Export Lines, with 30, have recently joined forces with 15 other American steamship companies in this unique educational project designed to

teach young Americans the importance of a strong merchant marine. The school children set up a correspondence with the captain of "their ship" and query him as to the ship's travels, life aboard, the ports it visits and the cargoes it carries.

Mrs. Fred N. Hansen, chairman of this program which is sponsored by the Women's Organization for the American Merchant Marine, reports that 111 ships have now been adopted by schools in 27 states. Still more ships are needed to supply the demand from teachers and children to keep this project going.

PIERS FOR BROOKLYN

Brooklyn, already a place of some repute, is going to be the site of the most extensive and costly pier development project in the history of the New York port. Donald V. Lowe, chairman of the Port of New York Authority, announced last month that an \$85,000,000 marine terminal, stretching southward from the Brooklyn Bridge for two miles, will go into construction July 1, 1956. The entire project should be completed in seven years.

The first development, a 2,000-foot long quay type pier will be constructed at Atlantic Basin, which faces Governor's Island. To be known as Pier 11, it will permit the loading and unloading of three large vessels simultaneously.

Since most of the existing piers on the Brooklyn waterfront are obsolete, designed for days when large numbers of smaller ships frequented the port, the ten new terminals planned will provide facilities for even more ships than the 25 piers they

replace. The rest of the plan calls for the rehabilitation of one existing pier, the construction of three new warehouses, and the improvement of 50 acres of upland to provide adequate unloading and trucking space behind the piers.

Brooklyn should attract 25% of the harbor's foreign trade general cargo, instead of the present 17%, when the new piers are completed. Steamship companies should benefit from lowered operation costs at the Brooklyn piers to the tune of about \$5,000,000 per year.

OPERATION THUCYDIDES

Archaeologists are guessing that the remains of an Athenian fleet which foundered in the harbor of Syracuse, Sicily, 2,368 years ago are still under water and may soon be salvaged.

Divers working in Syracuse harbor last summer discovered more than 2,000 nautical objects of ancient vintage which lead the experts to suspect that the Athenian fleet that went down here in 413-415 B.C., may be partly salvageable. The findings include large ceramic jars in which ancient warships carried their stores, solid lead anchors, rope stoppers for amphorae, and a great deal of other nautical gear. Some of these objects can be dated at the time the Athenian armada was defeated.

The work was started by a British diplomat with a passion for archaeology, who got interested in the project after a long study of Thucydides' writings on the Athenian attempt to conquer Syracuse. Up to now he has been financing the project but will have to drop it unless outside help is found before next spring.

RADAR FILM

An excellent new 20-minute color film by the Raytheon Manufacturing Company explains why radar aboard ships has not completely eliminated collisions at sea. Accidents involving radar-equipped ships are found to have four major causes: radar not turned on, radar not properly adjusted, improper action taken by operating personnel, and "radar hypnosis."

Rapidly changed visibility conditions are demonstrated to be the usual cause for a ship to be running with its radar not turned on, and failure to believe the readings on the scope, surprisingly enough, is shown frequently to be an explanation for the improper action taken by the radar operator. "Radar hypnosis" occurs when the operator becomes fascinated with the picture on one range of the scope and neglects to make frequent reference to other ranges or to supplement the radar view with other techniques of navigation, such as a visual check from the bridge.

A welcome reminder that seamanship is not yet obsolete, the film can be obtained for free showings by contacting Raytheon's public relations department at Waltham, Massachusetts.

DREAM SHIP

If it's news when man bites dog, it should also be news when beer gets tanked—so here's the pitch: the world's first beer tanker has been launched to cruise the inland Dutch waterways with 25,000 gallons of that golden brew.

Now just how would such a ship best be launched—with champagne or beer? Or maybe a bag of pretzels?

Manhattan ahead — the ferry *Tompkinsville* makes an hour-long anniversary run from St. George, Staten Island to Whitehall Street.



Department of Marine and Aviation Photo

Fifty for the Ferry

... A NICKEL FOR THE RIDE

EVERYBODY knows that what this country needs today is a good five-cent cigar — and also, a good five-cent nickel. If you think such nickels are as extinct as the buffalo whose image they carried in the 1930's, you've overlooked the last refuge from inflation — the turnstiles of the Staten Island Ferry. Recalling another era, the half-hour ocean voyage that takes place in the world's greatest harbor is still to be enjoyed for a nickel. And it's going to stay that way.

This was one of the promises made a few weeks ago to the large crowd that turned out to celebrate the 50th year of the operation of the ferry under municipal ownership. To the accompaniment of whirring helicopters, towering water sprays from city fireboats, and the noisy salute of harbor craft, the ferry *Tompkinsville* made her way proudly from St. George, S. I., to

Whitehall Street, Manhattan, for the hour-long anniversary run.

Public ferries have been running from Staten Island to New York ever since 1713, with various companies competing for the trade. The ocean voyage to Manhattan was a hazardous matter in those days, what with boatmen often drunk, the small sailing vessels, canoes and rowboats largely unseaworthy, and long delays caused by the loading of cattle. In poor weather Staten Islanders often postponed their business in New York for two or three days rather than risk the crossing.

Some relief came in 1810 when an ambitious young resident of the Island borrowed \$100 from his mother to set himself up in business, bought a sparkling new periaugu, rigged for sailing, and began ferrying passengers to Manhattan on a regular schedule, 16 hours per day. By

the end of the first year he had paid his mother back and cleared \$1000 to boot. His name was Cornelius Vanderbilt, and during the war of 1812 he earned the unofficial title of "Commodore" because of his ferry operations. In 1817, ten years after Robert Fulton's famous trip up the Hudson, Vanderbilt acquired the *Nautilus*, and the age of the steam ferryboat was at hand.

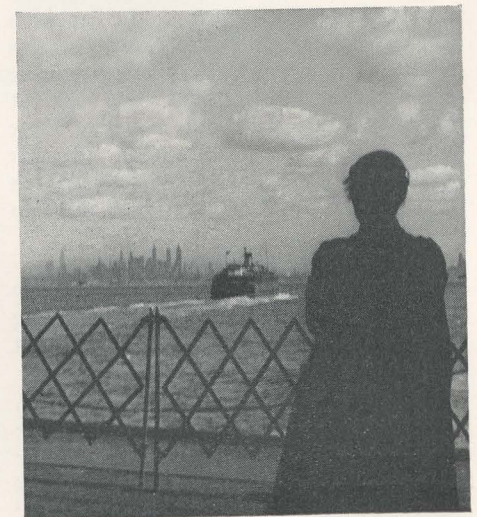
A number of steamboat ferry services eventually merged into one line and continued under private ownership until 1905 when the City of New York acquired the ferry service for a little under \$9,000,000. Today its fleet of 10 boats carries 23,000,000 passengers a year, operating 24 hours a day, on an average of every 10 or 20 minutes. Three of its largest boats each carry a capacity load of 2,930 passengers, as many as the *Queen Mary* takes across the ocean. The safety record has been perfect. Yet these largest and best-equipped harbor ferries afloat still follow the same route set out for them by Commodore Vanderbilt's *Nautilus* in 1817.

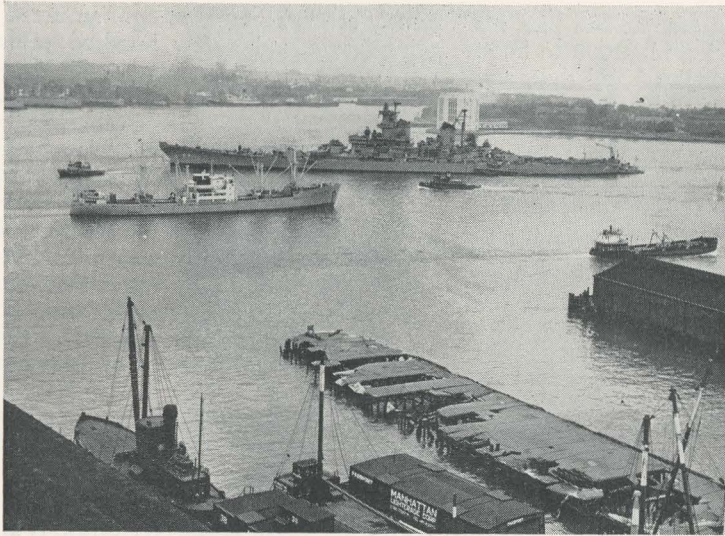
Pulling away from the Whitehall Street slip, the barn-red ferries make their way through the 3,600-foot mouth of the Hudson, keeping the Jersey shore on their west bank, Brooklyn to the east and south, the huge hulk of Brooklyn Bridge to the rear and left. At a point west of Governor's Island they pick up Upper Bay's principal channel, Anchorage Channel. Starry-eyed passengers often toy with the idea that the ride is going to take them out to the high seas; but although the large ocean liners are swinging left through the Narrows near Robbin Reef Lighthouse and heading for the ocean, the ferries travel only five-and-a-half miles to Staten Island. At the handsome new terminal at St. George, a thousand or so passengers scramble off, to be replaced, in a matter of minutes, with a horde of new riders, and the shuttle back to Manhattan begins.

A ride on the Staten Island ferry can be one of several different things, depending on your interest and your needs. To the tourist, it is a breathtaking view of Upper Bay, a chance to see the Statue of

Liberty at close range, to ogle an ocean-going greyhound a few hundred yards away, and to stare in rapture at the Manhattan skyline, emerging out of the water, especially at night, like some fabled Venice. To the harried commuter, it's a half-hour's time to read the newspaper, have his shoes shined, catch up on a little early-morning sleep, or munch doughnuts and coffee at the snack bar amidships. Although the ride is a lot better than the subway, he's taken it so many times he scarcely notices the froth of white on the water, the muffled whistles of morning harbor craft, or the grey gulls following the boat. To him, the ferry is a sea-going streetcar—unglamorous, monotonous, but eminently necessary.

To city cliff dwellers, stifling in New York's summer heat, the ferry ride is an inexpensive family outing. To the young hopefuls and the young lovers in New York, the ferry is a godsend. Back in the 20's, Edna St. Vincent Millay wrote, "We were very tired, we were very merry, we had gone back and forth all night on the ferry." The starry-eyed set still go back and forth on the ferry, not only in the summer, but on icy winter nights too. New York is probably the most outrageously overpriced city in the country, but on the Staten Island Ferry, it still costs only a nickel to weave a dream.





Held still: from the roof of the Seamen's Church Institute, our cameraman had no trouble getting this picture of the battleship *Wisconsin*. She was grounded in the East River for almost an hour.

The Pause That Reverberates

ARMCHAIR admirals at the Institute recently had a magnificent hour to pace the bridge and second-guess the seamanship of those actually in command when the battleship *Wisconsin* went aground on Diamond Reef in the East River channel across from 25 South Street.

Her engines dead, the 885-foot battlewagon was in the custody of ten tugboats moving her from Bayonne to the Brooklyn Navy Yard when heavy flood currents pushed her aground near the northeast edge of Governor's Island. The tugs cut loose with all they had, belching their black anger, but the afternoon tide was nearly at dead low and they were like ten frustrated penny-bugs trying to float an old shoe.

Kibitzers began to cluck along the waterfront. "They can't budge her. They sho'lda figgered the tides. They swung her too wide to begin with. Nothin' but high water kin move that ship."

As he looked out from his office window, Leslie C. Westerman, the Institute's business manager, could recall a similar balcony view of the battleship *Colorado* hung up on the same reef in 1927. "The win-

dows rattled and the building shook for weeks afterward," he said, reflecting on the fact that much of Diamond Reef had been drilled and dynamited away in the wake of the *Colorado* grounding.

The *Wisconsin's* plight was quickly relayed to other tugs in the vicinity. They swarmed to her starboard side and fooled the calamity-howlers by teaming up to free the 45,000-ton warship. She had been aground only about an hour, but that was long enough for the newsreel planes to begin circling her like curious flies as she moved off into the dusk that could not come quickly enough.

Not so bad were the people who saw for themselves and sat around snickering, but that evening she was in the papers and on television. She was reminded of the time in 1951 when she dragged her mooring buoys and got stuck in the Hudson River mud flats opposite 79th Street. Nor could she escape reminders of the colossal two-week ground of her sistership, the *Missouri* in 1950.

That night the *Wisconsin* slid into her Brooklyn berth wiser by the knowledge that one hour can make an awful bad day.



At the Institute's Christmas Room, Mrs. Rebekah Shipler of the Women's Council begins to pack one of the 7,000 boxes the Institute will give to merchant seamen on Christmas Day.

Holly Leaves in Autumn

CHRISTMAS may still be more than a month away, but at the Institute's Christmas Room, the height of the season is already here; that is, the height of the season for preparing almost 7,000 Christmas boxes which will be distributed to merchant seamen on the high seas, in marine hospitals and at the Institute on Christmas Day.

Volunteers of the Women's Council (formerly known as the Central Council of Associations) are busy five days and two nights per week gift-wrapping the thousands of items that go into the boxes.

This year each box will contain one hand-knitted garment (either a pullover, two pairs of socks or a scarf and cap); slippers; a leather watch strap; a plastic sewing kit (complete with needle-threader for the not-so-nimble); writing paper and ball point pen in a small portfolio; a box of hard candy; a game; a pocket-sized book; and a hairbrush and comb. Mrs. Rebekah Shipler, who is in charge of the program, reports that she chose the contents of the boxes after querying many seamen to determine the gifts that would be practical.

Despite the fact that the boxes are mass-



Women's Council volunteers at work wrapping the thousands of items that go into the Christmas boxes. In 1954, the Institute placed 4,627 boxes aboard ship, and gave 1,219 to men in marine hospitals and 800 to guests at 25 South Street at Christmas. Special requests made a total of 6,800 boxes.

produced, they still bear a personal touch. Each gift is individually wrapped; a Christmas card bearing the name of the donor is enclosed when permission is given; and the packages themselves are wrapped in one of six different kinds of paper. When they're distributed to a whole crew, they don't look like "regulation" stuff.

Work on the project goes on all year long, with over 1,000 knitters throughout the country contributing their time. Many who do not knit contribute to the Wool Fund, or help with other financial gifts. The cost of "sailing a box" is roughly about \$3.50.

Letters from seamen who receive the boxes run something like this one: "I want to take this opportunity to thank you and your friends for your wonderful Xmas gift box. Not that I had to have it, but it did my old heart good to receive same. Yes, it did make me happy. All I can say is thank you, from the bottom of my heart, to all my friends. I wish you health, I wish you wealth, I wish you friends by the score, I wish you heaven after death, what could I wish you more."

For donating many hours during the intensive five-week period the Christmas Room was open last year, Miss Edith Ker of New York City received a special citation from the Women's Council.



HOME FROM THE SEA

He's lonely as an old shell for the sea,
 An old shell beached forever high and dry,
 That calls its loneliness day after day
 To sea-bound winds forever passing by.
 He hungers for the sound of surging tides,
 The sight of ships, the gleam of gulls once more —
 He's empty as an old shell for the sea,
 An old shell parched and peeling on the shore.

Iva Poston

BEACHCOMBER: IN RESIDENCE

The sun has tracked him, tricked him now,
 For all this brave expanse of sea and sand
 He is gull-lost, yet never lost;
 He is the watchman of the salt-retreating land.
 The flagging weed, the battered dune
 Recall his quicker days and finer smile
 When, roaming in his porpoise-guided dream
 His measure was the moonrise, not the mile.

George H. Morse

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