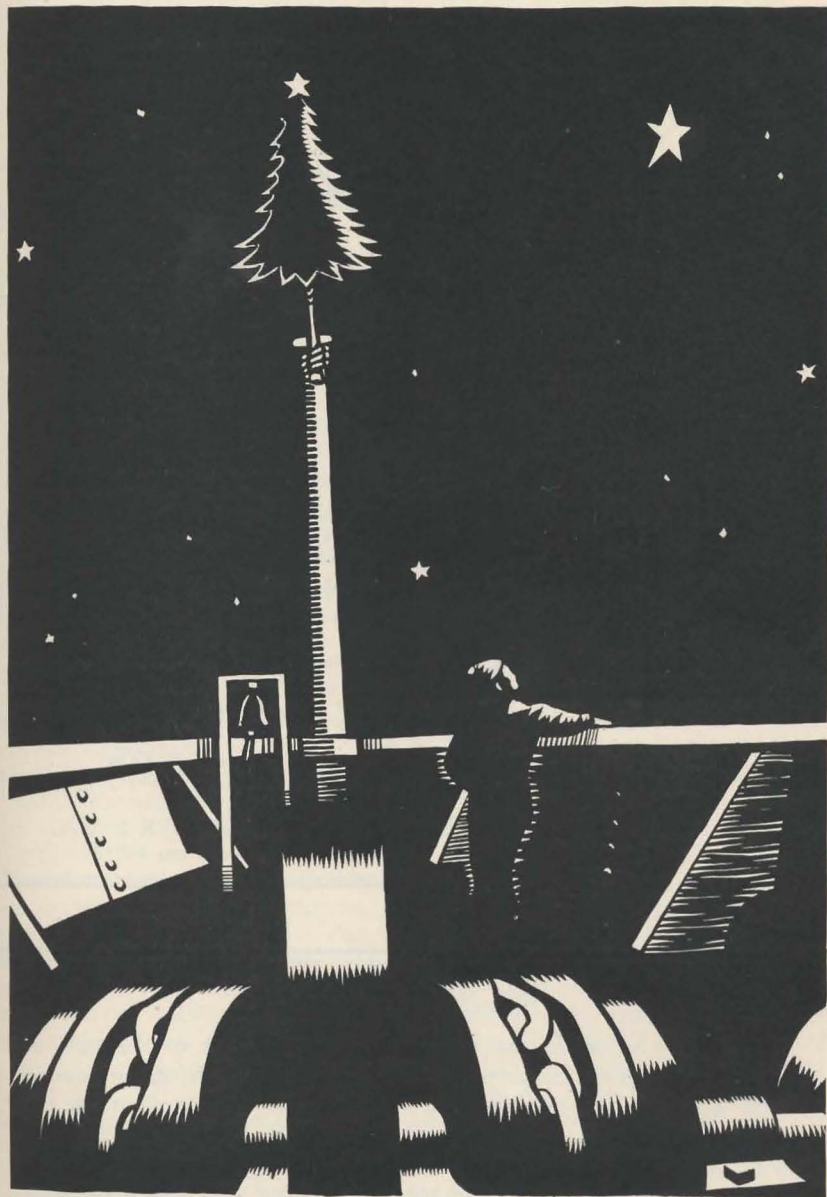


THE LOOKOUT

VOL. XLI NO. 12

DECEMBER, 1950



Drawing by John Broudbecker, A.B. Seaman

BOW LOOKOUT

Seamen's Church Institute of New York
25 South Street, New York, N. Y.

Almighty God, who sent Thy Son for a brief time to this troubled earth that men might learn of Thy goodness and mercy, we beseech Thee to bless the seafarers and the wayfarers on all the seas. Teach them to mark Thy wonders in the deep, to be valiant, and honorable, to endure hardship, to be kind to one another, and forgiving, even as Thou hast forgiven mankind for all its shortcomings. And may these toilers of the sea walk in the light of Thy countenance and in fellowship with Thee.

MDC.

The LOOKOUT

VOL. XLI, DECEMBER, 1950

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SEAMEN'S CHURCH
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THIS MONTH'S COVER:

Beneath a ceiling of stars stands the lookout at the bow of each heavy-laden freighter. On the bridge of each tanker loaded with precious fuel-oil stands a helmsman — ever vigilant. In the engine room of a transport carrying soldiers to the war zone an oiler checks dials. These are the men who man our merchant ships — who carry our commerce in peace-time and our vital supplies in war-time. These are the men for whom the SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK exists.

The Lookout

VOL. XLI

DECEMBER, 1950

NO. 12

Uncle Elair's Christmas Yarn

By H. W. Corning, Engineer



ANOTHER stormy night found us gathered around the old barrel stove in the crossroads store. A young fellow entered, examined the store's Christmas display, then turned to Uncle Elair.

"Say Unc, about that fellow Swensen who got washed overboard and then built his own floating farm out of drift stuff in the Sargasso Sea, I reckon Santa will never find him 'cause his island isn't on the map."

Uncle Elair seemed stumped for a minute then exclaimed "Well flap my top-sails if you didn't get to windward of me that time, young feller! However, if you'll all ride easy on your anchors for a while I'll tell you of my last Christmas at sea."

Uncle Elair bit off a chew and commenced. "Shortly after leaving the *Carib Clipper*, I discovered that the contents of my wallet had finished with engines. And as for my clothes, shiver my timbers if I wasn't schooner-rigged and double-reefed. So I shipped out on an old Liberty. She was fresh out of the bone yard and rust, man you never saw the like. One fellow said she left brown outlines on the docks and red streaks in the sea, however, that was breezing it a little too heavy. Always stick to the truth, that's what I say.

"Our crew for this Liberty was shipped sudden-like and I hope to choke on salt horse if ever again I see such a gang of beefers. Scuttle it if you wouldn't have thought that they had been picked up by a meat wagon." 'Twas said of the chief beeper

that when he was breezing along with a bone in his teeth he was a whole carcass all by himself.

"First off they beefed at the deck dept., next the engine dept., and then they turned their beefs on the stewards' dept. For instance, they complained that the bread was too heavy. So the cooks did their darndest and turned out a batch of the lightest I've ever seen but did this salt down the beef? No siree, blow up my compressor if he did. They accused the cooks of pumping up the bread with a bicycle pump!

"Finally, after having had beefs at all departments they settled down to a sort of friendly and local growling. One fellow's nose was too long, another's too short. An oiler claimed that a certain ordinary made more noise than the main bilge pump while lappin' his soup. The ordinary in turn told the oiler he had no mechanical ability 'cause he couldn't balance three more peas on his knife. Well, this friendly beefing went on and on until it was discovered that Christmas would fall at sea and that the Old Man had failed to get a Christmas tree before leaving port. That did it, and the free-for-all growling started all over again.

"Word of the tree beefing finally reached the Old Man's ears and one morning he stopped by the mess-room and said: 'Boys, ahem, men don't fret about us not having a tree; you can take my word for it that one will arrive on Christmas Eve.'

"Well sir, to get a tree in the middle of the ocean is one for the books so one guy speaks up and asks, 'Is it coming by plane?'

The Old Man grinned. 'Not by plane but it will be here on time. You can bet on that.'

"Well sir, scuttle me and cave in my ribs on a reef if this didn't start a beef with some real bone and sinew in it for they were certain now that the Old Man had stripped his gyro gears and gone off his binnacle.

"On Christmas Eve I was on the after deck when the twelve to four black gang came off watch sweating and cussing because they had had trouble with sea weeds getting into the sea valves and the condenser.

"The oiler claimed that the ship must be off her course and close to land and that the Old Man would probably pile her up high and dry.

"Yeah, that's it," agreed the fireman. "If she wasn't off her course why all the sea weed?"

"At his mention of weed we looked ahead and you can throw me to the whales for a Jonah if there wasn't acres of it! Right in the middle loomed a cluster of tall palm trees and from these rose a smudge of smoke.

"We noticed that the ship had not slackened speed and was driving straight at what appeared to be solid land! Strain my bulkheads if this didn't send the wind through our lower rigging for we expected to crash any minute.

"Well sir, we just drove on into the weeds and stopped! Next we heard the Old Man shouting, 'Ahoy there New-found-land! Santa, bring us out a tree!'

"We didn't have long to wait before we saw Swensen coming out over the weeds and you can hang me to the yardarm if he didn't look like old Santa himself seeing that he had grown a beard and was loaded down with a huge basket of tropical fruits on his back, a Christmas tree on his shoulder and a bunch of luscious bananas under each arm!

"The tree was set, and Swensen's fruit equally divided. Then the main brace was spliced and re-spliced. You'd have thought that it was old home week on board that Liberty and all during the remainder of the voyage only the local and friendly beefs occurred. The other type had like a storm suddenly blown itself out."

Uncle Elair paused to fill his pipe. "Any questions?" he asked.

"Yeah, I have one," spoke up the young fellow who had previously tried to breeze Uncle Elair onto his beam ends. "Tell me, Unc, how could Swensen walk on the weeds loaded down as he was? Seems to me he would have broken through and sunk."

"Ahem, ahem," exclaimed Uncle Elair, "Blow away my top-sails, shred my lower rigging, burn up my boilers, scuttle me if I didn't forget to mention that he traveled safely over the floating tangle of weeds by using an oversize pair of snow shoes!"



Drawing by H. W. Corning

Seven Christmases I Remember

By James Frost, Cape Horn Sailor

DURING the winter of 1900-1901, I had been dredging oysters from Chesapeake Bay, and just before Christmas, went over to London from Baltimore with a load of cattle. We had to support ourselves until the ship left and I enjoyed real British hospitality. The Sailors' Home on East India Road, treated us royally, and I sang "God Save the Queen" and really meant it. In the Sailors' Home they gave us a royal good concert, and about 120 sailors joined in a chantey, led by a grey-bearded bos'n. Boy, we almost raised the roof.

In 1902, Christmas found me near-ing San Francisco, California, aboard a 3 skys'l yarder, *S. P. Hitchcock*, 136 days from Baltimore, 'round the "Horn." We whittled a tree, using a pine stick, making feathery curls, and hung it in the fo'c'sle garnished with a morsel of gilt paper, an old sock, and a discarded shoe.

In 1903, I was in dock at Capetown just returned from a trip up the coast to German West Africa for guano. We had a turkey with all fixin's, including a bottle of "O be Joyful," which we were.

In 1904, I had the toughest time of my life. December 22nd, we left Capetown about 3:30 P.M., as I remember, with storm flag warnings of a gale. The Swedish barque *Robertsfors* had started for Bangkok, Siam, in

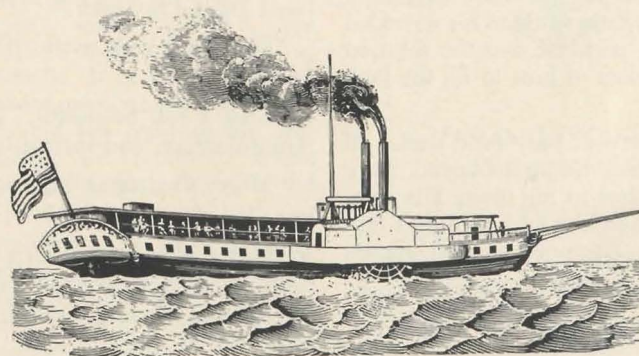
ballast, to load teakwood for any European port. On Christmas Eve, we caught the full force of an Antarctic gale. About the middle of the day the main shrouds started to carry away. The Captain took a length of boat chain to fish* it, and we never had it repaired while I was aboard. For two weeks we fought the gale, blown to 47° south.

In 1905, two months after discharge from the *Robertsfors*, in Belfast, Ireland, I found myself in dear old London—broke. In Medland Hall, a lodging House in Horseferry Branch (how's your geography?) I heard a gentleman repeat the entire Christmas story by Dickens, and have never forgotten the thrill. My holiday dinner was at Reuben May's Mission in Whitecross Street.

My 1906 Christmas was aboard the mail steamer *St. Paul* bound from Southampton to New York. I had my first experience of radio aboard ship. I sang the old song "The Stately Southerner," a song in praise of Paul Jones, one of our Naval heroes.

In 1907, after leaving Buenos Aires in early December, on the British steamer *Tapton*, after a stop in the island of St. Lucia for coal, we greeted Father Christmas in the Caribbean Sea, bound for Tampa, Florida, with a bottle of "Christmas Spirit" donated by our Skipper.

*To "fish" means to fasten the shrouds together.



Courtesy East River Savings Bank

Captain Jonathan's Christmas Present

CAPTAIN JONATHAN* was in a disturbed state of mind, for the doctor who periodically examined him and all the other old salts at Sailors Snug Harbor had tested his heart and told him to take it easy.

"How far do you walk each day, Cap?" (At the Harbor every old "Snug" is called Cap, no matter what his sea rating.)

"About six miles," Captain Jonathan admitted.

"Cut down to half a mile," warned the doctor. "Why don't you play checkers or find something less strenuous to do?"

"I'll think of something," Captain Jonathan promised.

Reflecting on the doctor's advice, he knew he would miss the long walks around Staten Island. He liked to watch the ships as they sailed down the Narrows and out into the open sea; a little of his heart went with them.

He had "swallowed the anchor" but for a man who had been active for sixty years, it was hard to get used to the slower pace. He picked up a copy of *THE LOOKOUT* which his friends over at the Seamen's Institute sent him each month. He enjoyed reading the seamen's stories but they made him homesick, too, for the old days at sea.

Turning a page he read something which brought a smile to his wrinkled face. Here, perhaps, was the solution to his problem of how to fill the long days.

Christmas was only four weeks off and Jonathan began to spend more and more time in his room. His companions asked him why he didn't join them in the afternoon checker games.

"I've got to do my Christmas shopping," he told them. Considering he had no relatives to shop for, the other "Snugs" wondered what he meant.

A few days before Christmas Captain Jonathan obtained permission to go to New York. Carrying a large paper bundle, he took the ferry, walked along South Street until he came to the Institute. In the big lobby he looked wistfully around to see if any old timers were there, but when a man is eighty, he mustn't expect to see many former shipmates. Most of his contemporaries had gone to Davy Jones's Locker. He stood looking down at the compass imbedded in the lobby floor and thought about the places he had visited around the world. With a sigh, he mounted the stairs, and asked for one of the staff he had known in the old days. Unwrapping his parcel, he said shyly: "I've got some things here to put in the Christmas boxes."

And there, neatly folded, were six knitted scarfs, lovingly fashioned with gnarled old hands, hands that had once gripped the spokes of a ship's helm, had once clung to an icy mast in a winter shipwreck.

"It's my Christmas present," he explained. "I read in *THE LOOKOUT* that you wanted knitters. "Made 'em myself," he admitted, "But don't tell anybody."

"They're very nicely knitted. It was very kind of you, Captain."

"I enjoyed makin' 'em. Many's the time I was glad for a warm woolen scarf around my neck."

"They'll be very useful. Thank you so much."

"Glad I can be useful," said Captain Jonathan, and turned to go.

"Merry Christmas," the staff worker called after him.

"Merry Christmas," Captain Jonathan called back cheerfully, then slowly began to descend the stairs.

**Editor's Note: Based on a true incident, but the name used is fictitious.*

The Chaplain's Page

By Chaplain John Howard Evans



Drawing by John Broudbecker, A.B. Seaman

RECENTLY someone stopped me in a subway with the question: "Are you a missionary?"

There may be some question as to whether I am a missionary. But there is no doubt that I am part of a huge missionary enterprise. I am part of an institution whose program is geared to making brothers out of strangers, and citizens out of wanderers of earth.

The Institute is for me something highly distinctive both in outward appeal and in inward program. It is not merely a hotel where volumes of men come and go. It is not a vast recreational hall where restless seafarers are perpetually amused. Nor is it even a local church serving its own.

It is more like a super-International House where men of all types from all lands live, work, play and pray together. It is not a "hospital of crippled ideals." It is a complex playground where men bump elbows daily with men, and full comradeship and understanding are achieved. While conference tables struggle with the problem, here it is at work.

It is evident why this is being accomplished here, when one contemplates that a genial spirit exists in all departments. Material wants are cared for without being patronizing. Recreational facilities and entertainments

are provided, and rooms are set aside as miniature homelands for seamen from faraway ports. Women volunteers are busily engaged giving a mother-touch to articles sent to seamen sick and well, far and near. The Chapel is active with daily prayer for all who live and work in this veritable home.

As a chaplain I cannot go into every port of the world and do a satisfactory Christian job. But I can assist this Institute, the departments of which are teaching trust and goodwill in every phase of men's needs. Those benefited can take the democratic ideals on board and demonstrate them in the most desolate and desperate parts of the globe. Our seamen are the most practical means of leavening the world with the gospel of freedom.

Our challenge is an impelling one. We are molding the world right here. The men of the sea are streaming before our eyes every day. This is the place to use one's talents. This is the place to volunteer one's time. This is the best place to put one's money to work. What better place to bring to fruition the day when "the earth shall be filled with the glory of God, as the waters cover the sea?"



A SEAMAN'S THOUGHTS — AT CHRISTMAS

"And each man dreams the self-same dream
Of gleaming hearths and lights aglow
And stockings hanging in a row;
The wistfulness of shining things;
Holly and mistletoe.
Men who've faced death without fears
They're not ashamed of misty eyes
At thoughts of home across the years."



IN APPRECIATION

Xmas 1949

Mr. Frank Gulden:*

I received from Mrs. Ida Cathers, who is Supervisor of Personal Service Bureau, 25 South St., a very beautiful box. In all my 45 years of going to sea, I've never seen anything to equal it. It's just out of this world. Some people are under the impression that a seaman receives a box and does not acknowledge receipt, that he does not appreciate same, well they do. They are like a lot of children that went to a party, and the party was over.

I've dropped both anchors in dear old Snug Harbor, and I may add, it's a wonderful institution for an old Salt, to sit back and take it easy, after going through two world wars, no regrets.

Good-bye, good luck, and may your pleasant fields be green always.

Very sincerely yours,

From an Old Salt

P.S. Your Xmas card was in the box. Many thanks.

*A member of the Institute's Board of Managers.



"Santa" from the Seamen's Church Institute visits a ship's crew and distributes holiday boxes.

SHIPS BRING CHRISTMAS CARGOES

SHIPMENT of Christmas goods are reaching U.S. ports in increasing quantities as Christmas approaches. According to the American Merchant Marine Institute, cargoes from Marshall Plan nations lead all incoming shipments.

England is sending ribbons, cinnamon leaf, Xmas puddings, chinaware and luggage. From France comes Calais laces, perfumes, chocolate, fruit preserves, wines and choice liqueurs. In the lowland countries of Belgium and Holland, ships loaded with cargoes of canned hams and fine cheeses. From the Mediterranean, Italy sends us choice wines, anchovies, dried fruits, almonds, pistachio nuts and walnuts, while from Greece come grapes and raisins.

Sweden sends its famous glassware and silverware, and from the Isle of Eire come famous Irish linens and whiskey. Making their first appearance on shipping manifests are shipments of toys and crockery from Germany, while Japan shipped to the United States large consignments of toys, Xmas ornaments and silks for the first time since the war. India furnishes spices and cashew nuts. Holiday cargoes include, also, nutmeg from the West Indies, coconut from Honduras and the Dominican Republic, and frozen turkeys from Argentina. There is the usual annual shipment by coastal barge from Canada of 70,000 pounds of live eels, a holiday delicacy for Italian-Americans.



A THANK-YOU LETTER

12-26 1949

To: Seamen's Church Institute
25 South St., New York 4

I wish to take this means of trying to convey my sincere thanks and feelings for such a grand Christmas.

The "Hostess" at the table at which I was seated was a lady who reminded me so much of my own mother who thanks to our universal God is still alive.

I am still a long way away from her—as she lives on the Pacific Coast—I am waiting patiently for transportation orders—they may come at any time.

In the meantime please convey my sincere thanks to all responsible for such a grand Christmas Day—giving so much of their time to a total stranger—it must have been such a personal sacrifice especially on a day like that.

I have written the senders of the surprise package and tried to express my feelings and thankfulness, but am afraid I didn't do a very good job.

I couldn't help but realize your tremendous part in making the day such a success.

From a Sailor

Christmas On Sea and Land



Laurence D. Thornton Photo

A Seaman gets a preview of Christmas turkey dinner from the Institute's Chef, James Adams.

DOES the very word "Christmas" send your thoughts winging back to other Christmases far away and long ago, with your family seated around a glowing hearthside? Does the lovely music of "White Christmas" remind you of the many happy Christmas days you have spent with friends and loved ones?

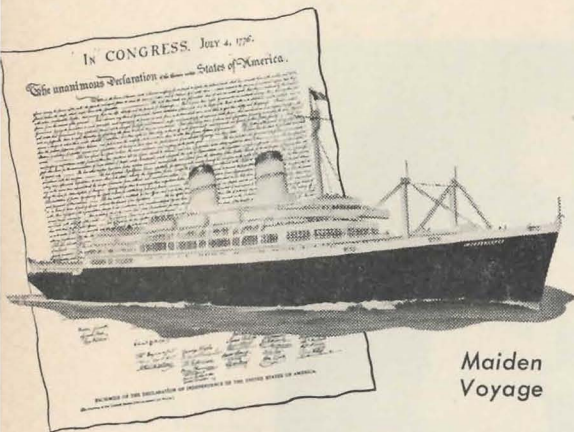
Many young faces will be missing from the family table this Christmas—young men far off across the seas, defending our Democracy and preserving our heritage of freedom.

Among those who will not be with their families at Christmas are the merchant seamen—the captains and the mates, the engineers, radio operators, stewards and oilers, cabin boys and cooks. Many crews will be at sea on Christmas Day, and for these men the Institute, in accordance with its annual custom, has sent holiday boxes, carefully hidden away by the purser or captain until Christmas morning. Seamen in hospitals will also receive Christmas gifts.

The Institute plans to be host to about 1,500 merchant seamen who will be ashore in New York on Christmas Day at a festive turkey dinner and holiday entertainment. This hospitality is made possible by VOLUNTARY gifts. Please send contributions to HOLIDAY FUND, 25 South Street, New York 4, N. Y.

In your name we can say "Merry Christmas."





Maiden Voyage

S. S. INDEPENDENCE
NEW YORK TO MEDITERRANEAN
February 10 to April 4, 1951

LARGEST LIFEBOATS

Each of the ten lifeboats on the new American Export liner *Independence* will be capable of approximately three times the capacity of the *Santa Maria*, Columbus' flagship.

The lifeboats are 36½ feet long, 12½ feet wide, and 5 feet 4 inches deep and weigh three tons apiece. Eight will be hand-propelled and will have a capacity of 150 passengers. Two boats will be motorized which will slightly reduce their capacity to 141 persons each.

The complement of the *Santa Maria* in 1492 was only 52 men.

One of the unusual features of these lifeboats is the seating arrangements. Passengers are seated in tiers as in a football stadium, all facing the center.

The *S.S. Independence* and the *S.S. Constitution* for which these boats are being constructed will be the largest American passenger ships built in a decade.

Each of these 682 ft. long vessels will accommodate 1,000 passengers in first, cabin and tourist classes, and 578 officers and crew. They will be the first transatlantic ships to be completely air-conditioned including crew's quarters and crew's recreation rooms. Another innovation will be a real American soda fountain, and polaroid glass over portholes for individual adjustment of light.

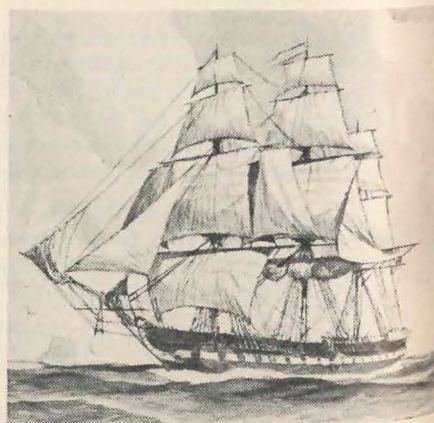
Especially cacheted maiden voyage covers will be serviced for stamp collectors in connection with the maiden voyages of the American Export Lines' new 26,000 ton passenger ships, *Independence* and *Constitution*.

The cover of the *S.S. Independence* will be mailed from one of the ship's ports of call. The *S.S. Independence* is scheduled to sail from New York February 10th on a 53-day Mediterranean cruise to 13 countries and islands including 22 ports. The *S.S. Constitution* will sail from New York April 24th in the Lines' New York-Italy-France express service.

Orders for these covers should be sent to the American Export Cover Agency, 25 South Street, New York 4, N. Y. on or before February 1st. The charge is fifty cents per cover and should be sent in coin or postal money order (not stamps). Please do not send self-addressed envelopes.

Proceeds on the sale of these cacheted covers will be donated to the Seamen's Church Institute of New York to be used to help maintain its health, welfare, religious, recreational and educational facilities for active merchant seamen of all races and creeds.

AMERICAN EXPORT LINES



From the painting by Gordon Grant

S. S. CONSTITUTION
NEW YORK - ITALY - FRANCE
April 24 - May 4, 1951

Maiden Voyage

LONG RIDE AND GOOD CHOW
CHEER 1,000 TIRED BIRDS

More than 1,000 winged hitch-hikers thumbed a 300-mile ride aboard the Military Sea Transportation Service transport *Gen. Maurice Rose*, the master of the vessel reported.

A flock of tired starlings, blown off their course by a westerly wind, landed aboard the vessel.

The decks of the 16,000-ton transport were comfortable enough for the visitors, but when the crews started to serve them chow, and when four of them found out how cozy the captain's berth turned out to be, they decided to stay on until the ship neared Ambrose Lightship. There the birds took off again, heading south.

7 TONS OF GIBRALTAR ARRIVE

Seven tons of Britain's celebrated Rock of Gibraltar arrived in the United States en route to the Canadian National Exhibition at Toronto. A gift of England to the Prudential Insurance Company of America, the rock segment was unloaded from American Export Lines' freighter *Excellency* at Pier 39, Coffey Street, Brooklyn. After being shown at the exhibition the rock will be on permanent display at Prudential's Canadian headquarters in Toronto.



Dalzell Towing Co.

EVEN THE TUGS GO MODERN

New Diesel Tow Boat *Fred B. Dalzell*, named in honor of the late Chairman of the Board of Dalzell Towing Company. She is a 100 ft. steel hull diesel, powered by 1440 HP straight drive Fairbanks Morse engine. On trial runs she logged a speed of 16 knots. Tugs like these help to expedite arrivals and departures of merchant vessels.



VITAL ROLE OF SHIPS

There is an extremely good example of the value of a fleet of fast merchant ships in the current Korean fighting. In addition to the vessels from private fleets that were available more than a hundred Victory ships were taken out of the lay-up areas and put into service. In two months these ships transported 200,000 people, 1,625,000 tons of cargo and 12,500,000 barrels of petroleum products. How much of this material would be on Korean soil today if we did not have the ships? How far away from Seoul would the United Nations forces be if we didn't have the ships?

Marine Progress, Oct. 1950



OUR LIBRARY NEEDS BOOKS

The Bible tells us that Noah spent forty days and forty nights on the Ark. That is just the time it takes for the average freighter or tanker to go from the west coast of the United States to the Korean fighting front.

Letters we have received from crews of these ships indicate that books mean a great deal and how much they appreciate those that are sent by our library. A crew of 45 to 60 men on each of these ships carrying bullets and beef, tanks and jeeps, live in a little world of their own far from family and friends. Deprived of these, they turn to books. Please send whatever current books you can spare, fiction or non-fiction, to our Conrad Library, 25 South Street.

From the Crosstrees on Christmas Eve

By Captain I. F. Wood, S.S. Alcoa Planter

I HAVE known a few happy Christmases at sea and one or two that were actually merry. The saddest one that I remember was in the Liberty Ship *Oliver Loving* down on the East coast of South Africa.

It was Christmas Eve, 1946. We were laying at Port Elizabeth and expected to sail at about 6 P.M. for East London.

I was sitting in the saloon having dinner with the ship's Agent. I had mentioned the wreck of a fine English vessel laying just south of East London entrance. The Agent

said: "Yes, I am very familiar with that wreck. We were agents for that ship and she sailed from Port Elizabeth bound to East London. Just before she sailed the Master had received a letter from his wife with sad news of his young son. The Captain left port that night grief-stricken, and to add to his grief, his vessel ran aground and became a total loss."

Just as the Agent finished this sad account, one of my crew appeared and said, "Captain! That big wiper is in the water." Actually there was nothing unusual about that for the young Canadian who had shipped in Halifax to replace a sick crew member, was always over the side swimming when off duty. However, my informant's voice was so urgent that I arose immediately and went to the offshore side of the after deck, and there I saw the wiper lying in the water being supported by two of his shipmates. The wiper had returned to the ship and while under the influence of a few drinks of "Christmas Cheer" (South African brandy) had bet his shipmates that he could dive over the side from the Main Mast crosstrees. Diving from crosstrees was his special accomplishment and he had performed this dangerous and difficult feat many times to the awe and delight of his less daring shipmates.

Those few drinks of brandy made the difference between life and death for the wiper because he failed to clear that hard, sharp, steel edge of the gunwale by a scant three of four inches. When we took him on the deck from the water, his skull was found to have a hole three inches long and one-half inch wide. Remarkably he was still alive but entirely unconscious and prone. I summoned a doctor who confirmed that the wiper was still alive but that there wasn't a chance for him to live. The wiper died in the ambulance taking him to the hospital.

A pall of sadness descended on our ship that Christmas Eve as we sailed for East London. I was particularly saddened over the accident, because only a few days previously in Cape Town I had reprimanded the wiper for being over-leave two or three days. He had been ashore on a "binge" and when he returned to the ship I had him brought before me. In addition to "logging" him I had given him an unmitigated "dressing down" in which I used strong words beyond and above the customary necessity. I had been particularly incensed over his misdemeanor because I had hired him after he had repeatedly beseeched me at Halifax to give him the job.

(Continued on next page)

He was so earnest in his desire for the job that I felt that he would be a hard-working untroublesome addition to the crew.

The next day (Christmas morning) as we entered East London the flag was at half-mast—the first time a flag aboard my command had flown at half mast since that time out on the lonely Pacific during the war when I received information that President Roosevelt was dead and that a proclamation of mourning had been proclaimed for vessels and public buildings.

To this day when tempted to give some offending crew member a harsh reprimand, I am reminded of that unhappy Christmas Eve accident. As sure as a soft answer turneth away wrath, a firm but gentle reprimand will prevent a feeling of humiliation in the mind of the offender, and will remove occasion for remorse in the heart of a commanding officer.

"GENE'S" CHRISTMAS GIFT

A well dressed seaman came to the Administration Office and left \$2.00, saying he wanted to leave it for the work of the Institute. When he was asked for his name he replied, "Just Gene." We urged him to give a further address and inquired whether he lived here, but he said "No" on his ship, and then was persuaded to say his ship was the *Uruguay* of the Moore-McCormack Line. He added that some years ago the Institute helped him very much and "when I am in port I always like to leave something." When he was asked how he would like the money used—whether for Christmas dinners or something else, he said, "Oh, do you give the men a dinner at Christmas?" and he was told that they were invited as our guests. Whereupon he drew \$2.00 more from his wallet and insisted that this be added to the first \$2.00, again expressing his desire to help because of what had been done for him some years ago.

E. C. N.



Courtesy, The Mast

"Not Jimmy Smith of the Liberty ship *Andrew W. Quiggle*? I never would have recognized you!"

A GAME FOR EMPIRES

By Pearl Frye

1950, Little, Brown & Co., Boston, \$3.50

Gentleman in the best sense of the term, God-fearing, loyal to his family, to king and country, terrible in battle, yet thoughtful and considerate of the lowliest of his men, Nelson represented what was finest in the character of the Britisher or of the countryman of any other land in his day, a truly knightly personage. At least so far as it is possible for frail humanity to vision and to live up to such an ideal. Even to his enemies he was never unduly harsh or vindictive. At Aboukir when he believed that his head wound would prove fatal he yet took thought to order the rescue of the French sailors roasting on the deck of their flaming ship.

Without attempting to portray him as anything of a superman, Pearl Frye's *A GAME OF EMPIRE*, in its minute and well documented story of Nelson's life, taken largely from a study of his own letters, goes a long way toward justifying British admiration, adulation of their great Admiral. While ambitious for himself and more so for his country there never was in him the self-seeking snideness and disloyalty to his own men that was true of Bonaparte. Incidentally the book gives a vivid picture of the early Napoleonic period and of the heart-breaking, stoical struggles of badly equipped men often in badly built ships attempting the impossible and accomplishing it. It may be said in passing, that the writer has seemingly not been too careful of "the economy of the reader's attention" so that the story is at times needlessly hard to follow. But it is a fine account and well worth the effort to read it.

WILLIAM L. MILLER

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From the painting by Charles Rosner
Courtesy, Socony Vacuum Oil Co.

Book Reviews

KON-TIKI

Across the Pacific by Raft
By Thor Meyerdahl

1950, The Rand McNally & Co., Chicago, \$4.00

The story of the odyssey of the balsa log raft KON-TIKI is one of the most astonishing and at the same time one of the most scientifically important tales of the century. These six men, courageous morally as well as physically, braved the prejudices of scientists and of naval experts as well as the dangers of a 4000-mile ocean voyage on a sailing raft to prove a theory: that the white, bearded peoples of the South Sea Islands could be the descendants of the white, bearded peoples who a thousand years or more ago lived on the western side of South America and could have made this same voyage on rafts identical in construction to their own KON-TIKI. But while the scientific speculations as to migrations of these ancient inhabitants are intellectually interesting the book is thrilling and good fun besides. Watching huge waves crash onto the stern of the raft only to sink through the spaces between the great balsa logs, looking into the five-foot smile of a following whale shark, drinking sea water, catching sharks by their tails, the mystery of Easter Island explained, the parrot who chewed the radio aerial, shipwreck, the "big times" with the people of the islands are all told in a lively and vivid style, well preserved in the English translation of the Norwegian original. This is a book not to be missed.

WILLIAM L. MILLER

A SHIP MODELLER'S LOGBOOK

By John N. C. Lewis

Percival Marshall & Co., Ltd., London
12 s. 6 d. net

In this little book Mr. Lewis gives us a bird's eye view of ship modeling. A chapter is devoted to each of a number of types of models—decorative models, ships in bottles, exact scale models, sailing models and others. A general description is given of the method of constructing each type, with some useful suggestions on details. This information is generally sound, but is not sufficient to enable a novice to build any of the models without further research or considerable ingenuity.

The book is illustrated with sketches of deck fittings, rigging details, etc., plans of several types of vessels, and photographs. Most of these are well chosen, but the plans are too small to work from satisfactorily, and some of the photographs are of rather crude, poorly proportioned models.

Along with the material on models, the author has interspersed something of the history and development of sailing ships. This is of little value, as it is very sketchy and has many errors and omissions. It gives the entirely false impression that Donald McKay was the only American clipper ship builder of any consequence, and that there were no large sailing ships

built after 1869. There are other minor errors in the book, such as the reference to the *Marco Polo* as a Yankee clipper and a picture of a brig described as "with . . . skysails set" although she actually has nothing set above her fore topgallant and her main royal.

On the whole, this book is chiefly valuable as an introduction to ship modeling; it gives a good idea of the many possible types, and the author's obvious enthusiasm for his subjects is likely to inspire the reader to get to work and try some of them.

FRANK W. THOBER

THE VOYAGES OF CAPTAIN COOK

Selected and edited by
Christopher Lloyd
Chanticleer Press, \$2.00

Captain James Cook was the son of an agricultural laborer living in a mud hut in North Riding, Yorkshire. His father learned to read when he was nearly eighty so that he might read the story of his now famous son's first voyage of exploration. That this poor boy should leave his inland home to work his way from a bound apprentice on a coastal vessel carrying coal to the leadership of three of the most important and world-wide exploring expeditions of his century was in the true spirit of eighteenth-century romantic adventure. Yet Captain Cook's Journals had nothing of the ornate, romantic style of his age. The Journals of his three great expeditions from 1768 to his horrible and untimely death in Hawaii in 1780 are told in a simple and direct style much more characteristic of the middle twentieth century than of the late eighteenth. Between those years he explored the icy waters of the South Pacific and South Atlantic oceans as well as the tropical islands of the Pacific and New Zealand, adding a vast store of new and more exact information regarding such things as the size and shape of new land masses, the use of the chronometer in determining longitude, of the peoples, customs and products of many parts of the newly discovered parts of the world. As a leader of men he was in advance of his age in the care and consideration he gave to the health and general well being of his personnel as well as in his open-mindedness and tact in dealing with the savage peoples in the many islands where he visited and stopped to refit and replenish his vessels—it seems strange that the unspeakable Bligh should have been under Cook's tutelage for so many years and to have turned out the kind of mad tyrant he did. It is probably due in large measure to the kind of spirit Cook displayed in those lands that later became parts of the British Empire that Britain stood out for so many years as the greatest and most successful of the colonizing nations. This is an important book as well as an interesting one.

WILLIAM L. MILLER

Marine Poetry

CHRISTMAS AT SEA

By Mel Curtis

'Twas at sea Christmas morning out on the deep
I was standing my watch while others were asleep
The morning was dark, bleak and cold as could be
And thoughts strayed to loved ones back over the sea
I thought of all seamen in centuries past
Who on Christmas morning sailed 'fore the mast
Were they lonely too, just as lonely as we
On a cold black morn 'neath an overcast sea?
And then off to starboard I sighted a light
'Twas the colors of Christmas, red, green and white
Of course to all seamen who e'er made a trip
'Twould seem that the light came from some other ship
But this light was different; moved swift as a bird
And to my surprise jingling bells could be heard
Then out of the sky Santa came big as day
And there on the foredeck he landed his sleigh
Oh, 'twas Saint Nick all right, there was no mistake
For when his weight hit I could feel the ship shake
And then through the deck house he tip-toed his way
From cabin to cabin where sleeping men lay
Then on to the bridge where I waited amazed
And up to his lips a straight finger was raised
He whispered, "And now before time to go nears,
I'll visit below with the ship's engineers"
Then on up the smokestack and over the rim
He disappeared, taking his white sack with him
And then from the wind vents there came sounds of fright
Immediately followed by grunts of delight
Then back up he came and leaped down to his sleigh
And in one jump reindeer were off and away
Up into the sky while he turned back and roared
"Merry Christmas to you and to all men aboard."

With apologies to "The Night Before Christmas"
and to "Modern Poetry" for the use of "e'er."



DECK SONG

By Laurence Miner

Beat me a stave and my music will flow
Like the echoing wave where the Caribbees
blow
For I'm off again, out again,—devil a care!
Life is the living on bonny salt air!
Up with the schooner on table and sea!
Down with the beer and the sadness in me!
False is my mistress, I'm falser than she!
Ask, comrades, ask her,—the jade will
agree!
Out again, out again,—hark to that blast!
Batten and dog 'neath the gyrating mast
Port holes and doors—are the lifeboats made
fast?
Hold her hard right till the next one is past.
Out in the depths where the porpoises play,
Out in the realm of the slow dying day,
Out in the being that cannot decay,
Beauty's a primitive painted with spray.
Tell my life on the chart by the course and
degree,
And my grave in the shark that just knifed
through the sea,
And my soul in a sunset like last even' shown
On the stars sailing through all their oceans
alone.





Drawing by Rene Cruz

25 South Street, New York, N. Y.

CHRISTMAS GIFT SUGGESTIONS

Oil paintings, water colors and black and white drawings by merchant seamen will be on display until Christmas in the Janet Roper Club, on the fourth floor of the Institute.

Ship models and ships-in-bottles will be exhibited on the fourth floor mezzanine. Here is a chance to buy—at reasonable prices—Christmas gifts for your friends.

* * *

Give THE LOOKOUT to your friends for Christmas. One dollar annual subscription. Just send us their name and address and we'll mail an attractive Christmas card to them announcing your gift.