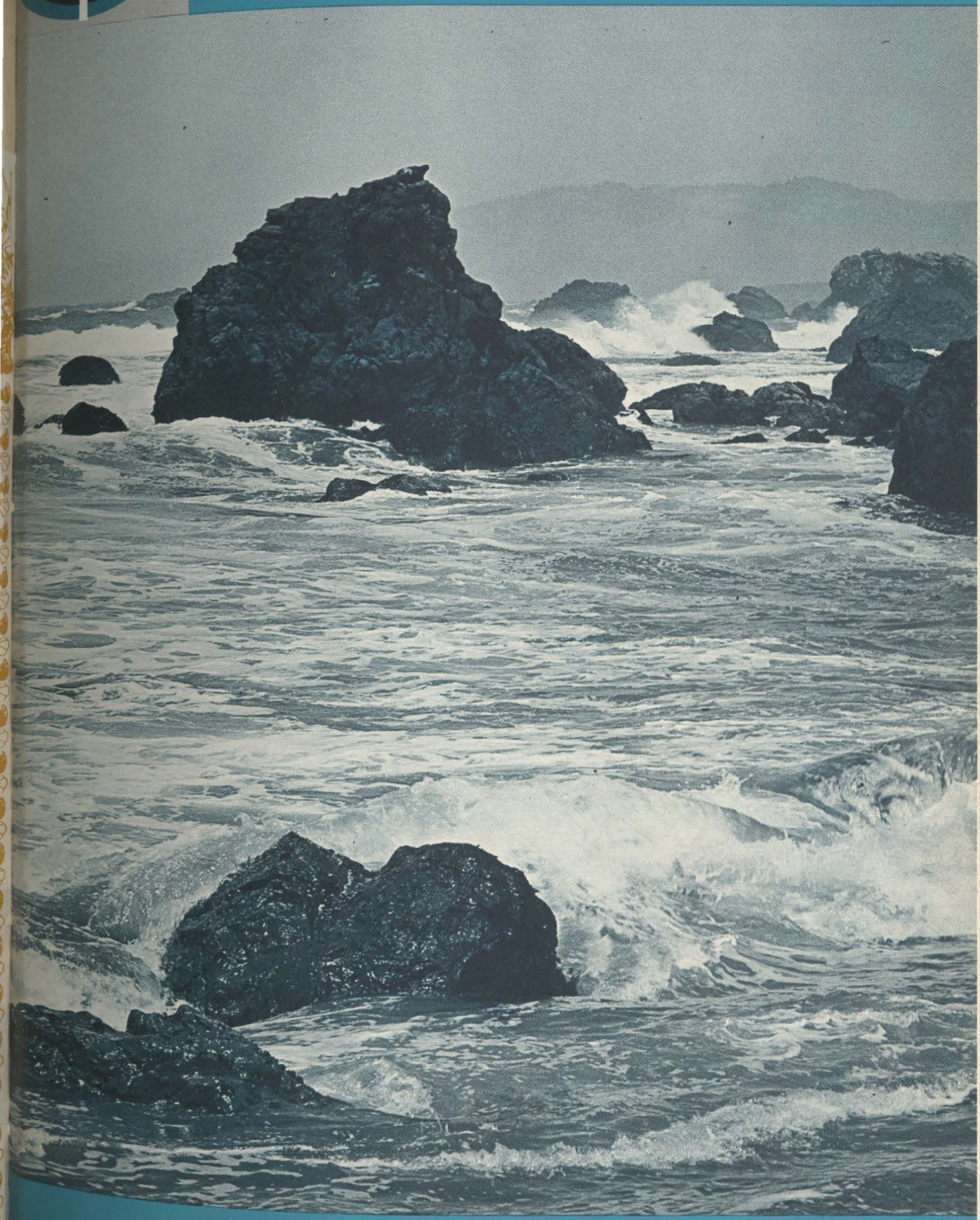
the LOOKOUT

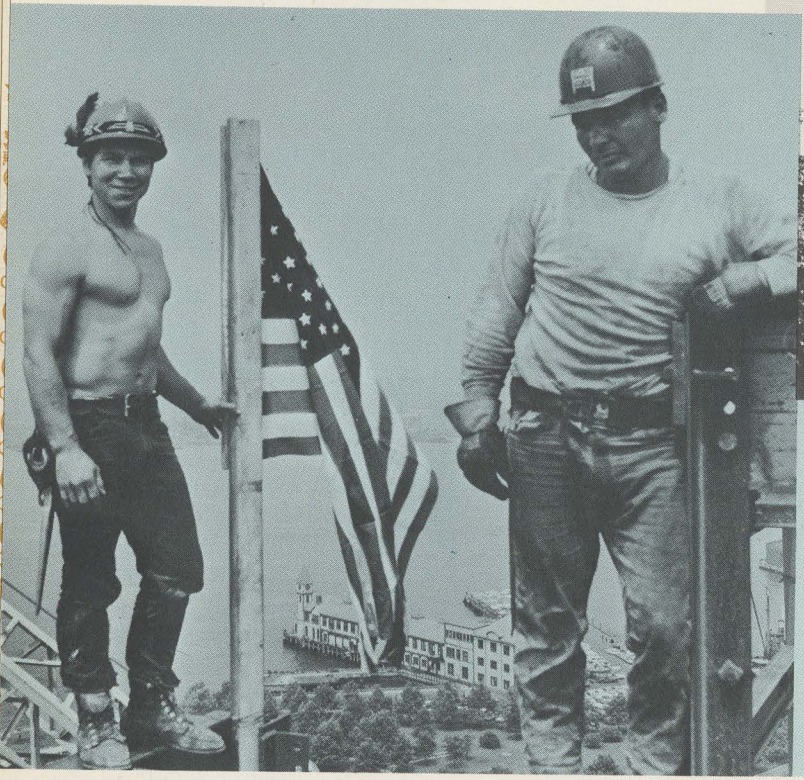
SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

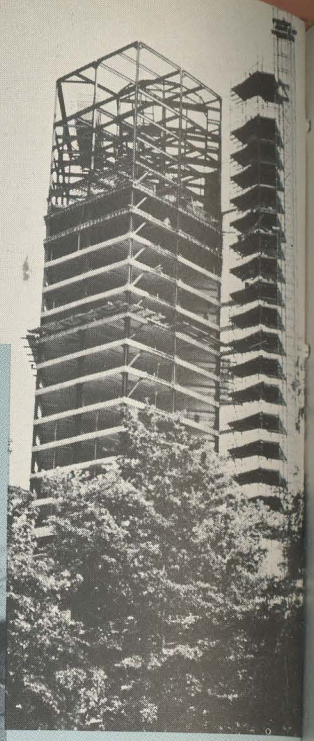


SEPTEMBER 1967

When the last top-most piece of steel of a building under construction has been bolted in place, the team of steel-workers completing this task customarily lashes a flag, a bush, or a broom to the beam to signalize the event.

Two steel-workers, Mohawk Indians from the village of Caughnawaga (near Montreal), "topped out" the new SCI building this midsummer. The Hudson River and a portion of Battery Park are visible behind and below them.





the LOOKOUT

Vol. 58, No. 7 September 1967

SEAMEN'S CHURCH
INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK
25 South Street, New York, N. Y. 10004
Telephone: 269-2710

The Right Reverend
Horace W. B. Donegan, D.D., D.C.L.
Honorary President

Franklin E. Vilas
President

The Rev. John M. Mulligan
Director

Harold G. Petersen
Editor

Published monthly with exception of July-August and February-March when bi-monthly. Contributions to the Seamen's Church Institute of New York of $5.00 or more include a year's subscription to The Lookout. Single subscriptions are $2.00 annually. Single copies 50¢. Additional postage for Canada, Latin America, Spain, $1.00; other foreign, $3.00. Second class postage paid at New York, N. Y.

COVER: Frothing waves rush past rock sentinels on Sonoma Coast of California.

by David Gunston

Nature's parasites may take many forms, but none is more resourceful than that strange, unique fish, the remora. Also dubbed *shark-sucker, sucking-fish, disc-head, pilot-sucker, pegador* or *pega,* this is the fish of warm waters almost everywhere that attaches itself by the crown of its head to a larger host. This may be a shark, ray, sunfish, tuna or almost any large ocean swimmer, including various whales, and, sometimes, the hull of a ship.

Thus fastened, the remora literally hangs pretty and is transported free by the host fish. Safe from all but the very largest ocean enemies, it is always sure of a meal from scraps left by its uncomplaining carrier, and is moved about from feeding ground to feeding-ground at no trouble to itself.

It is, in fact, only a partial parasite, but what a cunning one! It does not extract any nourishment from the body of the obliging host, merely adhering to the underside of the deep-sea fish, perhaps for days on end.

Then, as expected, the shark or ray swims through a shoal of small fry, fish of the herring or sardine type, maybe. The remora's sucker is relaxed, off it swims to its prey, feasts well and truly from the unsuspecting shoal fish. Then, again fully sated, it looks around for another big host, gets itself firmly installed in the same sort of billet, and away it is carried once more!

Disc-head is a very old, but nevertheless apt name for these resourceful creatures, for it is the large oval disc, or sucker, on the head that enables them to pursue their comfortable way of life. This is actually an evolved body formation, for fossil remoras unearthed show only a tiny disc set well behind the head, not the big flat slatted sucker, perhaps nearly a foot long, that is the most distinctive feature of today's specimens.

This oval disc is equipped cross-wise with many transverse plates set within a broad ridge. These closely resemble the slots of Venetian blinds, and the fish can raise or lower them by powerful muscle action.

When they are raised slightly, a series of vacuum chambers are formed between the fish and the object under which it hangs, causing it to adhere most strongly. To remove a sucking remora you have to pull the fish hard forwards, thus lowering the plates.

A backward tug, similar in practice to the underwater slipstream of the swimming host, merely serves to tight-

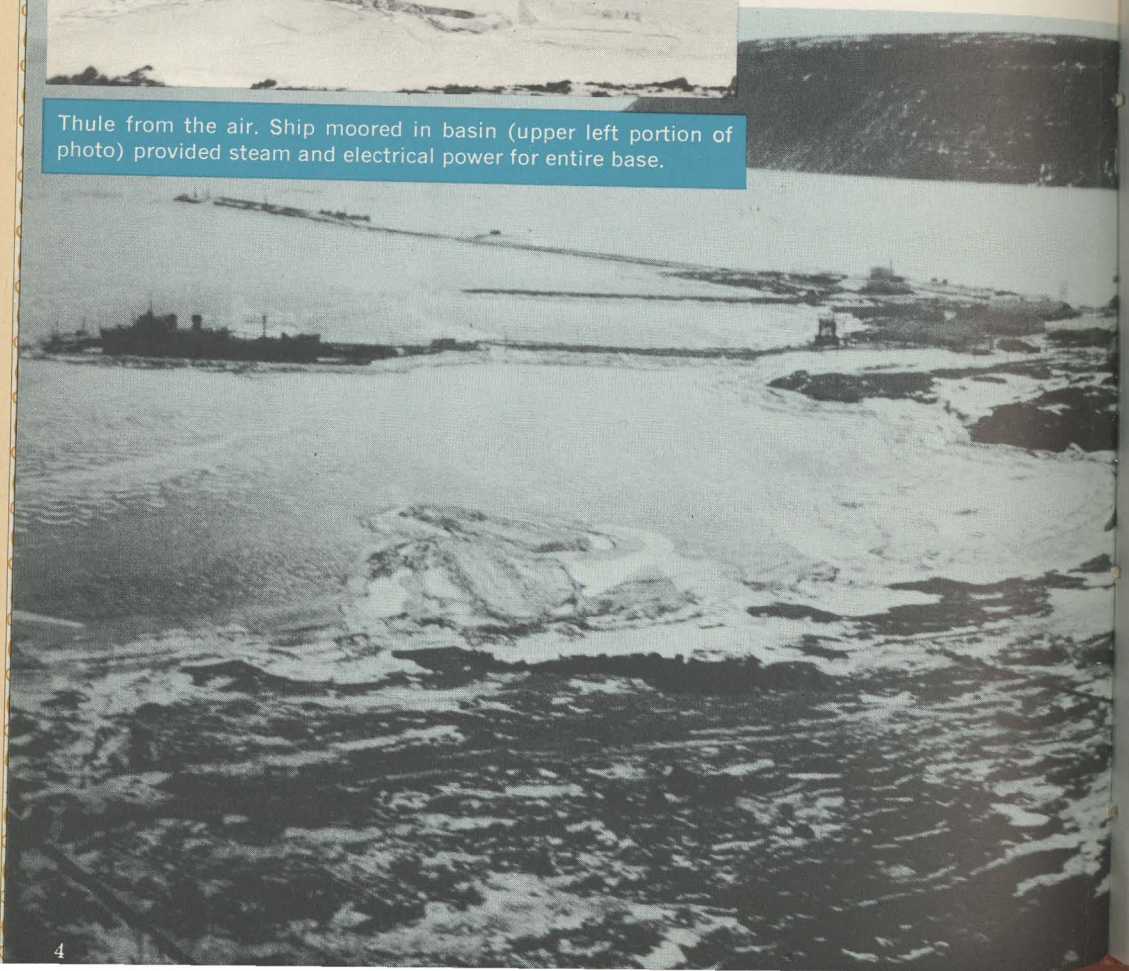
(Continued on page 14)

thule, greenland

by Lamar Holt

The bleak desolation of North Star Bay when swirling gray tatters of fog and cloud roll in advance of a "phase".

Thule from the air. Ship moored in basin (upper left portion of photo) provided steam and electrical power for entire base.



To a shore-based visitor, unfamiliar with Air Force jargon, Thule *patois* is both colorful and descriptive. The newcomer is immediately exposed to the phenomenon known as "The Big Eye." This is a seasonal malady which simply means that sleep comes hard, if at all, due to the first effects of the 24-hour sunshine.

The Thule neophyte will feel curiously groggy and lethargic, and in puzzlement will consult his watch. He will learn that he has been going full tilt for hours and that it is 4:30 in the morning.

"Phase" is another word which creeps into daily conversation. The local Armed Forces Network radio station will announce that Thule is on a "phase alert." This means that the weather conditions are liable to change dramatically and on short notice. A clear, cloudless sky will become, within the hour, ominously leaden, with low-flying clouds streaming off the icecap like smoke drawn from a freighter's stack.

Visitors are issued "phase gear" upon arrival. This consists of parka, long handles, heavy wool socks, gloves, face mask, and mukluks. The parka is standard gear, is worn everyhere, and is ecstatically luxurious. The newcomer feels like a chorus girl in mink.

All quarters and living and working spaces are fitted with walk-in refrigerator doors. The visitor enters a small anteroom, and carefully secures the outer door before going on to enter the building through conventional doors.

The arrival of an airplane, and especially a flight from the United States, is a major event. The regular chartered commercial flight arrives close to midnight, but the hangar is always jammed with sightseers. It is the Arctic version of the small-town pastime — going down to the depot to meet the evening train.

You know you are in the Arctic when you see lengths of 3-inch line made fast at each end to the entrances of buildings across the street from one another. Anyone needing to go from one building to another during a phase uses the line as a lifeline, and claws his way across, leaning into the wind which can get as sharp as a crosscut saw.

You know you are in the Arctic when you notice that all vehicles, as soon as they are parked, and regardless of the weather, have wooden chocks placed around the rear wheels by the driver. Thule's wind can blow a parked car right off an icy road and out of a parking area.

The absence of natural greenery is made up for by the omnipresent plastic shrubbery which is almost aggressively displayed in practically every building except the hangars.

There are no pets in Thule. Arctic foxes were once plentiful, but a rabies scare resulted in wholesale extermination. The nearest thing to tame animal life is the surprisingly large population of tropical fish which sail serenely through crystal-clear water in aquariums in almost every barracks and visitor's billet.

The fish arrive in Thule in various ways. Individual fish are brought to Thule by their owners in plastic bags hung from their necks, like dog tags, and worn under the shirt to keep the fish warm during the flight from the States.

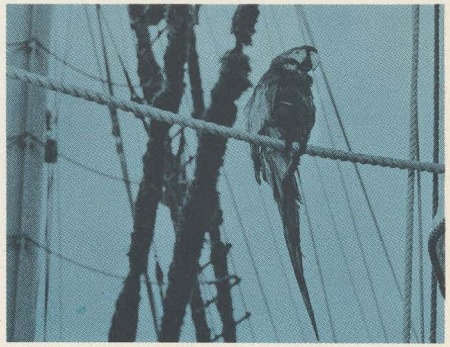
The one big item of major Military Sea Transportation Service interest and concern is of course the power ship, which MSTS towed by chartered commercial tug from New York to Greenland in 1959. The Moran ocean

(Continued on page 13)

▲ Captain John Wilson and his dog, "Greif".

◀ The **Regina Maris** at the Wall Street pier.

▼ "Pepe", ship's parrot.



NORSE VISIT

The Norwegian clipper ship, the *Regina Maris*, a three-masted barkentine built in Denmark and flying both the Norwegian and Maltese flags, tied up this summer at a South Street pier near Wall Street, within hailing distance of the Institute.

An SCI shipvisitor went aboard to extend the facilities of the Institute to the crew of fourteen and to meet the skipper, Capt. John Wilson of Arendal, Norway. The crewmen, composed of several nationalities, attended dances of SCI's International Club during the vessel's eight-day stay in New York.

The trim little ship arrived in the harbor from the Caribbean after having completed a westward trip around Cape Horn from east to west and accomplishing the historic feat of sailing within three-quarters of a mile off the Cape, enabling her to take the closest shipboard pictures ever taken of the Cape.

The *Regina Maris* displaces 480 tons (190 gross registered tons), with a length of 150 feet overall (100 foot waterline) with a 25 foot beam and a 12 foot draft. The main engine is 242 horsepower and the auxiliary engine 50 horsepower. She carries 6,000 gallons of fuel oil and 2,500 gallons of fresh water.

The highest mast is 110 feet and all rigging is set with over-dimensioned stainless steel wire. She has 32 sails in all, including the "Jamie Green" below the bowsprit. There are also three studding sails on each side from top-gallant yard down and a watersail on each side below the course studding sails booms.

The *Regina Maris* is the little sister of the world-famous tea clipper, *Cutty Sark*.

SEA MOOD

Voice of the waves,
And the seagull screaming,
Wind on the water,
The white foam streaming
Back from the shore
With a menacing roar,
And a cold hard moon
Like a white sail gleaming —
What lies beyond this
To set men dreaming?

—NINA WILLIS WALTER

We are a kaleidoscope of the waterfront

A look-in on the world's largest shore home for merchant seamen . . .

Cadets and petty officers of the Portuguese school ship Sagres ready to board the SCI bus and attend the dance at the Mariners International Centre in Port Newark.

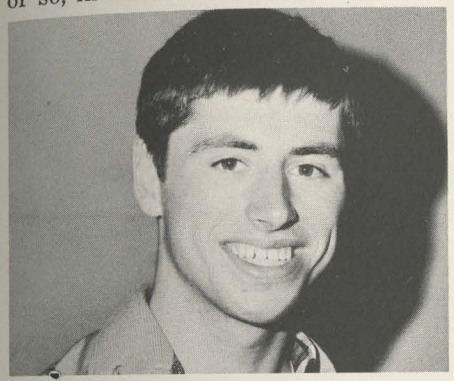
The sailing ship paid a 6-day call here this summer during which time many of the ship's company made use of Port Newark facilities.

The Institute is a member of the Associated Seamen's Agencies of New York, an organization which meets periodically in the city. The group recently held a meeting aboard the **Ciudad de Bogotá** while she was tied up in Brooklyn. Shown at ship-side are: (from left) The Rev. John M. Mulligan, SCI director; Gordon Heden, Dept. of Marine & Aviation of New York City; the Rev. Russell I. Brown, the Rev. Dr. R. T. Foust and Peter Van Wygerden of the SCI staff.

An ebullient young man with an infectious smile is Werner Vogel of Varel, West Germany.

He stayed at SCI this summer as a seaman and will probably return to SCI in late fall after he has completed a three-months' vacation trip around the United States. A sort of *wander jahr*, as it's called in German.

The tall, nineteen-year-old could be taken for an American youth from the Midwest — which he became for a year or so, in a manner of speaking.



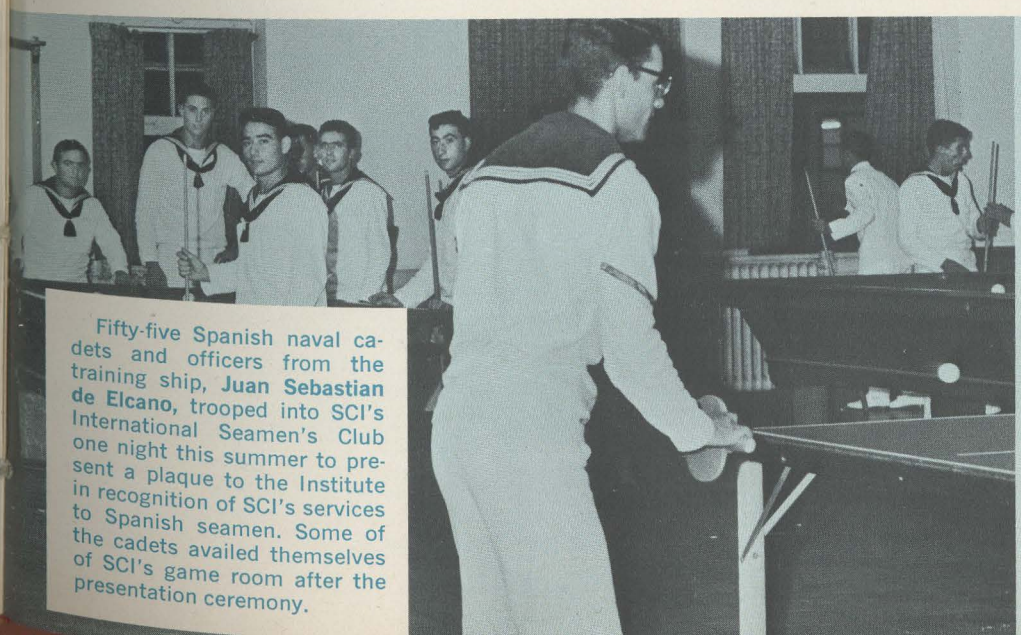
Werner came to the U.S. from Germany as an exchange student, graduating from the high school in Osseo, Wisconsin, in 1965. He then returned to Varel and graduated from the "gymnasium" — somewhat equivalent to the American junior college level.

This summer, wishing to re-visit the American family in Osseo with whom he stayed during his high school days, he shipped as a seaman on the *Johann Schulte* which carried over 1,000 Volkswagen automobiles from Emden to Newark. His seaman's papers entitled him to stay at SCI's Manhattan building where he made the acquaintance of Chaplain Frank Daley.

"The Institute is a wonderful place and I am delighted to have the chance to be here in these congenial surroundings," he commented.

When he arrives back home he hopes to give a year and a half service to a special hospital for children afflicted with birth defects — in lieu of military service.

Werner is a conscientious objector. German male youth of his convictions are allowed the option of working in various social services instead of taking military training. He hopes, eventually, to become a science teacher.



Fifty-five Spanish naval cadets and officers from the training ship, **Juan Sebastian de Elcano,** trooped into SCI's International Seamen's Club one night this summer to present a plaque to the Institute in recognition of SCI's services to Spanish seamen. Some of the cadets availed themselves of SCI's game room after the presentation ceremony.

· a loan re-paid

Thousands of seamen have been rescued by small SCI money loans which are invariably paid back—to the penny—by the grateful men. A loan is authorized by an SCI chaplain after he has heard the man's story and the seaman has clearly established his identity and manifested a willingness to repay the loan when able. No interest is charged.

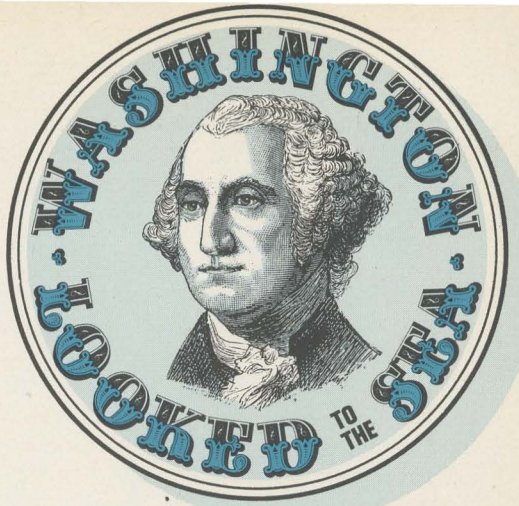
In some cases a loan may not be repaid for several years. In a letter recently received by the Institute, one man explains why:

". . . my aunt in New Orleans takes care of my bills for me (my money) when I ask her to. So I called her from Galveston just as soon as I got on my ship and asked her to send you the $14.00 I owed the dog-house, and also the dollar I owed D..... and the dollar I owed M..... I had no idea, through the years, that she has never paid it. I'd been home a few times but the matter never arose until recently when, behold, I found I still owed the Institute.

A.L.C."

Ed. note: The affectionate appellation, "dog-house", became attached to SCI many years ago and some of the older seamen still use the term.

SCI added more awards and mementos to its collection when the crew of the Brazilian ship, **Cabo Frio**, presented the Institute with a ship's life-preserver in gratitude for the shore-side recreational program maintained by SCI for merchant seamen.



WASHINGTON LOOKED TO THE SEA

by Enola Chamberlin

We do not think of George Washington as a naval man. But had it not been for his realization of the importance of sea power, our war for independence might have ended differently.

Samuel Elliot Morrison, naval historian, says that Washington was the first man in over a thousand years to have a clear grasp of the potentialities of combined land-sea operations. Some think Washington acquired this insight while observing the British Navy when the English held Boston in 1775.

Up until that time, Washington had no knowledge of navy tactics or ships of any kind, although in his youth he once almost became a British seaman. Had this come about, he probably would have become aligned with England and the course of the Revolution might conceivably have been changed.

Years later, as commander of the rag-tag Continental Army, he found himself almost wholly dependent on supplies from shipments from overseas. But he had no ships to fight off sea raiders attacking these shipments.

He was also confronted with the facility and secrecy with which the British commanders could move their troops from one port to another; they simply loaded the men on ships and headed out beyond the horizon. Even had he known where they intended to land, he could not get his foot army there in time to prevent a British beach-head.

It became apparent to Washington that his land forces required a sea force if the colonials were to contest the British with any semblance of parity. So he formally appealed to Congress for the creation of a navy. But Congress vacillated until, in desperation, Washington took matters in his own hands and set about acquiring some vessels for a "Navy."

As a striking force, Washington's navy initially was no better than his hodgepodge army. A few small craft called "gun-boats" carrying sails, oarsmen and guns were assembled. They had no housing, no covering of any kind. They were actually longboats. Washington's commission as a lieutenant general gave him no command even over these.

To man these boats he selected men with sea experience from his army. He appointed one Nicholas Broughton, an Army captain, as ship's manager of the *Hannah,* the first vessel to be commissioned.

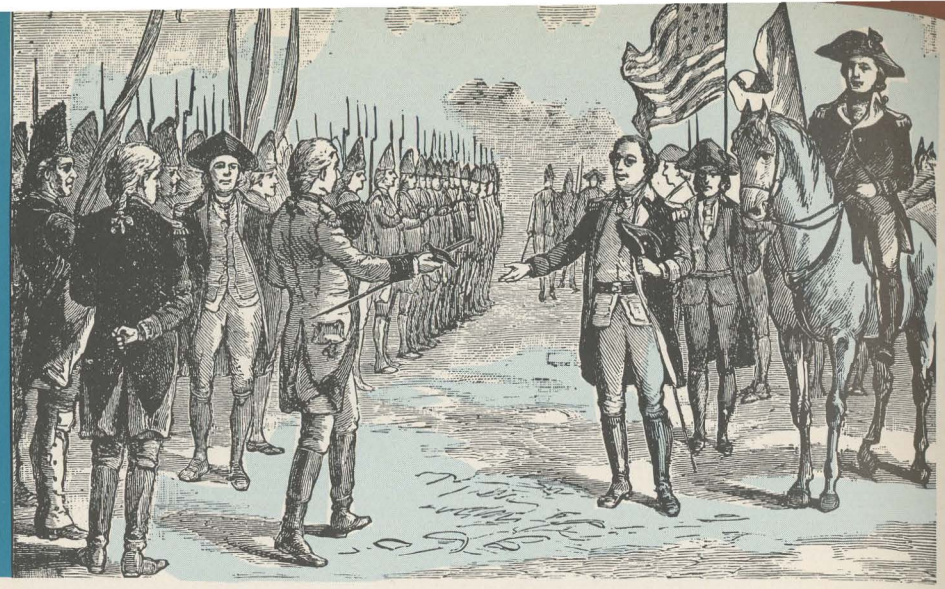
He ordered Broughton to proceed immediately on a cruise against such British vessels as might be found on the high seas, or elsewhere, to seize them and take soldiers, arms, ammunition, provisions.

The strategy was excellent. Within two days the *Hannah* returned with a prize.

Two more ships were quickly commissioned and sent out on like errands. Within a month Washington had a six-ship Continental Navy, sailing the seas under the Pine Tree flag.

It was not long, unbelievably, until these ships had captured *thirty-five British ships with all supplies.* Manly, another sea-experienced captain taken from the army, was put in command of the *Lee.* He captured the British brigantine *Nancy without a shot being fired.*

The *Nancy* had on board two thou-



sand muskets, thirty tons of musket shot, thirty thousand round shot, eleven mortar beds and a thirteen-inch brass mortar.

It would have taken eighteen months for the Americans to have manufactured such a quantity of ordnance.

For this exploit Washington appointed Manly commander of the fleet. His choice of a master proved excellent. Manly shortly thereafter captured two more vessels off Nantasket, Mass. and then successfully defended them from retaliatory attack by a British eight-gun schooner.

Washington's navy did not, single-handedly, win the war. Although the ships hampered and harassed the British and brought in supplies that helped the American cause considerably, the Revolution, as historian Morrison says, would probably have been snuffed out had it not been for the French Navy.

In the treaty of February 6, 1778, between France and the Colonies, no mention was made of naval aid. But in July after the treaty was signed, Washington wrote a letter to Lt. Gen. Count de Rochambeau, the French troop commander. In it he said:

"In any operation and under all circumstances a decisive naval superiority is to be considered as a fundamental principle, and the basis on which every hope of success must ultimately depend."

And Washington would not let the matter drop. In January of 1781 he sent a special emissary to Paris with an urgent appeal for increased naval aid.

"Superiority at sea," he wrote, "will enable us to convert the war into a vigorous offensive."

And so it proved. The French fleet under Adm. De Grasse moved from the West Indies into the Chesapeake Bay and bottled up the British who were on land. A British relief fleet was beaten off. This allowed Washington to move south and come up on Cornwallis by land and end the war.

Washington would never, very likely, have maneuvered in this manner on land had it not been for ships and men of the sea.

Historians have speculated, in this connection, whether this joint land-and-sea tactic would have succeeded had not Washington sent advice to the French fleet commanders—which they reluctantly followed.

They have also conjectured whether, had Washington become a naval man, he might have become as great an admiral as he was a military land tactician.

THULE, GREENLAND

(Continued from page 5)

tug *Edmund J. Moran*, escorted by the Coast Guard icebreaker *Eastwind*, picked her way up through the icebergs in 16 days, and another tug will reverse the voyage this season, bringing the former C1-MAV-1 back to East Coast United States for overhaul and future assignment, probably somewhere in the Pacific.

At least four MSTS seamen have "sailed" in the little ship which rests in an ice-free manmade lagoon, like a large toy in an immense bathtub.

Al P. Mainka is superintendent of the ship. He is as close to being master as anyone could be of a ship which has no deck force and never gets underway. He is, however, very much in charge, and thanks to him the little vessel appears in fine shape. She sparkles below decks, but there's not much anyone can do topside. Snow and ice have drifted over her open decks and the area near the gangway and the weatherproof hatch, through which a visitor enters the ship, looks like a suburban driveway after a blizzard.

Every hour 150 million B.T.U.'s are provided the base — enough to heat 3,000 average homes in —40° temperature. And every hour the ship provides 120,000 pounds of steam for the Thule complex. All of this power leaves the ship by insulated pipes and cables which fan out to the relay stations and generators of the base itself.

The first thing a seaman would notice about the power ship, aside from the fact that she lies in open water while there is ice everywhere else, is the fact that she is held by no mooring lines. Securing her to the side of the dock is a system of couplings which are bolted to the ship and which ride up and down five steel I-beams which are embedded in cement at the bottom of the lagoon. This permits no fore and aft surging of the ship, but does allow for the ship to rise and fall with the 8-foot range of tide.

The ship must remain on an even keel, and even a 1° or 2° list might put too much strain on the couplings which hold the ship fast even in the winter winds which occasionally pipe up to 120 miles per hour. The steampipes and wiring system are designed to withstand a slight list.

The water in the lagoon is kept from freezing by the warm water which is pumped overboard from the engine-room. This lagoon puzzles amateur naturalists who wonder about the profusion of kelp which has grown to great size. The stalks are thick as a man's forearm and the fronds are enormous. In August, for reasons no one understands, the entire lagoon is filled with jellyfish. They are there for one month only, and where they come from and where they go is puzzling to everyone aboard.

The ship is remarkably free from marine growth. Each year she is inspected underwater by divers from the visiting ships but the bottom is kept virtually free of marine growth by electrolysis. Wires, carrying low charges of electricity, are permanently placed and trail in the water at specific intervals along the length and from both sides of the ship.

A frequent visitor to the ship is a friendly seal the men named "Sam". It swims into the lagoon through an opening in the cofferdam which allows the tides to change the water twice each day.

When the ice melts in North Star Bay, and the first ships arrive to replenish supplies for Thule's next year of operations, they will probably find one of the familiar landmarks gone, and the cofferdam which sheltered the powership will be all that remains of the little two-stacker which spent more than 6 years generating enough steam to keep the *Queen Mary* going, yet which never sailed a mile under her own power after her conversion.

Condensed from SEA LIFT MAGAZINE

Remoras Are Resourceful

(Continued from page 3)

en the suction. Tests made in the New York Aquarium showed that a remora fastened to a pail and lifted by its tail supported a weight of 21 pounds, but other reports claim that a pull of nearly 40 pounds was once necessary to dislodge a remora from a shark in a tank.

Yet this action is readily controllable by the fish itself, which can slip off in a moment to hunt for food. Also, remoras invariably slip off back into the water the moment the host fish concerned is caught and hauled up out of the sea.

But nature, through the marvelous processes of evolution, did not just give the remora this special disc. It is, in fact, only the ordinary spiny dorsal fin of all fish divided into two, with the spines bent outwards to form the sucker-plates.

There are special species of the remora, the largest of which, the true shark-suckers, reach a length of three or four feet. They associate almost entirely with large sharks, but even the smaller remoras have a special liking for the shark tribe as a whole. Yet the strange thing is that no involuntary host to one or more remoras — for the biggest sharks frequently carry two — ever seem to object to their underwater passengers.

There is not a single record of remora remains being found in a shark's stomach, and all the hosts used appear to be just as friendly. Rays and sunfish in particular would find it hard to dissuade an approaching remora from attaching itself, and of course no fish can reach a remora on its underbelly with its jaws. But sometimes remoras are actually found beneath the gill covers of fish like sunfish, tuna and swordfish, and they even lodge quite happily at times inside the mouth of gigantic marine monsters such as manta rays.

Older naturalists sometimes asserted that once a remora was fixed to its carrier it became more or less insensitive, showing no sign of life unless roughly treated. Whilst it is true that the parasite digests its food and sleeps in complete comfort and safety, without having to worry about where it is going or how it is going to get there, it is usually quite alert and on the lookout for both shoals of easy prey and any real danger looming up for the big fish. Remoras must, therefore, have pretty good eyesight for deepsea fish, for they never find difficulty in locating a suitable carrier.

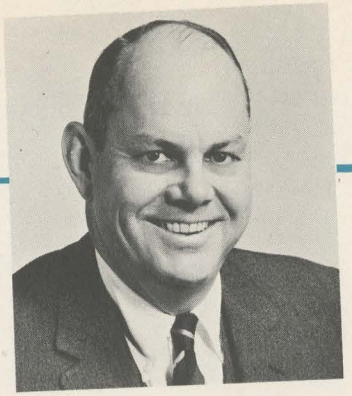
The Ancients knew all about remoras and their ways. Pliny gravely recorded that they had the odd power of stopping ships with their powerful suckers. He solemnly asserted that the death of the Emperor Caligula was presaged by one stopping his great galley, alone out of all the accompanying fleet, on his voyage to Antium. Nor was this all.

Pliny also wrote that it was in a remora's power to hasten or postpone an accouchement, and also a lawsuit! It is said that expectant mothers and legal plaintiffs in Ancient Rome always kept away from fish-markets lest they should come face to face with this supernatural fish! Incidentally, the very name remora derives from the Latin for "holding back," as applied, mythically, of course, to ships.

But man has found a real use for the remora. In N. E. Australia, China, Malaya, East Africa and Madagascar, the natives catch good specimens and keep them in tanks full of water. A metal ring is fastened around the tail, and a long cord attached.

When a turtle is sighted off-shore, or perhaps from a boat carrying a live remora, one is thrown overboard. It immediately fastens itself to the prey, and the two are carefully pulled in together. As long as the line is kept really taut, the remora is unable to let go even if it wants to, and so a catch is nearly always certain. In addition to turtles, dugongs and fish up to 100 pounds in size are regularly caught by captive remoras.

MEET THE BOARD



JOHN GRENVILLE WINSLOW

John G. Winslow, Vice President of the Board, is currently Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee as well as serving on two of our other committees.

Having joined the First National City Bank at the age of nineteen, he has always served with that organization except for five years military service during World War II. Presently he is a Vice President in the 55 Wall Street office of that Bank.

Mr. Winslow is a Trustee of The Belgian-American Foundation, The Judson Health Center, The Good Samaritan Home, The Holland Lodge Foundation, and serves as a Lay Reader in St. John's Church of Lattingtown, Long Island. He is married to the former Helen Michalis whose family have been closely associated with the Institute for several generations. Mrs. Winslow is a Trustee of the Kips Bay Boys Club.

AUTUMN MAGIC

The white moon spreads the valley with pale silver;
The blue from jacarandas paints the green grass;
The cosy night-sounds of some sleepy birds
Make background music for all of those who pass.
It then was Spring, and all the world was glad.
Now Fall is here, the green of Spring turned brown
And red and gold . . . a carousel of color
That weaves its spell and trims sweet Autumn's gown.

—NONEE NOLAN

25 South Street
New York, N. Y. 10004

Return Requested