the LOOKOUT

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

Images and/or text cannot be displayed due to copyright restrictions

JUNE 1970

the LOOKOUT

Vol. 61 No. 5 June 1970

Copyright 1970

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

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

John G. Winslow
President

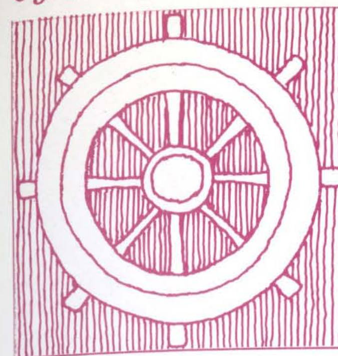
The Rev. John M. Mulligan, D.D.
Director

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: "Sailor Boy" painted wood carving of a boy holding binnacle containing compass. Circa 1875. Photograph courtesy Museum of the City of New York. Original wheel (restored) from the USS Constitution.

by George R. Berens



MIND YOUR HELM

One of the most important duties aboard ship, be it a 10-ton sloop or a 200,000-ton super-tanker, is steering. The ship must be kept carefully on her course to reach her destination, to avoid making unnecessary mileage, and to avoid rocks, shoals and other ships in confined waters.

Numerous ship disasters have been caused by faulty steering due to malfunction of steering apparatus or human error. That is why great attention is given to steering whenever a ship is under way.

The most ancient steering device is the oar, still in use as such on some small craft. An oar used over the stern to steer a ship thousands of years ago functioned on the same principle as the rudder of a ship of today. In fact, the rudder is a development of the steering oar.

As seagoing craft increased in size the oar blade was made larger for more efficient steering, and eventually it came to resemble a rudder. The increasing size and weight of the steering oar made it difficult to control by hand, so a short wooden bar was fixed to the loom (portion of an oar that is in the boat when rowing) at right angles which, acting as a lever, gave the steersman more power to turn the blade. This was the inception of the tiller.

Ships grew bigger and rudders replaced steering oars. The tiller at the top of the vertical rudder stock allowed the helmsman to control the rudder fixed to the stern so that it could be turned. The next development as the size of ships still increased was the steering wheel. This was a large wheel mounted vertically on deck which turned a shaft about which were wound ropes leading below deck to the tiller. When the man at the wheel turned it the ropes would move the tiller and turn the rudder.

As the size and speed of ships increased still more, so did the size of their rudders which required more

power to turn them than could be provided by an unaided seaman's arms. Tackles and gears mounted between the wheel and the rudder stock provided it.

Then came another problem with the development of the steamship: the steering station was shifted from the poop deck of the sailing ships to the amidships bridge which then required remote control of the rudder. At first, wire cables or chains were used, but as steamships became larger and more powerful a steering engine to control the rudder was introduced.

The wheel motion had to be transferred to the steering engine and about this time the "telemotor" was invented which turned the rudder by means of hydraulic pressure. Electrical means for transfer was installed in some vessels. These are essentially the means in vogue today.

Many modern ships are provided with an automatic steering device known to seamen as the 'Metal Mike'. This is an intricate electrical controller hooked up with the gyro-compass. When it is set on a certain course every deflection from that course as registered by the compass actuates the mechanism which transfers impulses to move the rudder the necessary amount to bring the vessel back on course.

Steering the old windjammers was a more exacting task even than it is on today's engine-driven ships. For one thing, those ships had no steering engine. The necessary power to turn the rudder had to be supplied by the wheelsman.

In heavy weather it was the practice to put two men on the wheel, and cases are on record of hard-steering ships requiring even three or four to keep them on course.

Sailing ships much of the time went along with the wind behind them and a consequent following sea, which, though these conditions were conducive to speed, had one bad feature: a following sea lessens the steering efficiency of the rudder, and when a gale was blowing from astern with its accompanying heavy seas, steering often was very difficult.

When that driving wind increased to full storm force and the towering foam-streaked waves overtook the speeding ship there was always danger that she might broach-to — be thrown off course until the battering seas came rushing abeam.

As Allan Villiers said of these conditions: "Good helmsmanship alone can guide her now . . . If for a moment one of the helmsmen so much as fumbles with a spoke; if the ghastly tumult of the maddened seas can come on board — these things in the wind are fatal." Fatal, yes; no doubt many a ship that disappeared without a trace was overwhelmed by the sea in just such conditions.

That is why the masters in sail were so particular about the steering of their ships. One noted clipper ship captain tried a very unique device to keep his helmsmen alert. Some years ago I used to see that device quite often. It graced the front of the store of the Negus Nautical Instrument Company on Pearl Street only a block from that noble seamen's domicile at 25 South Street, the old home of the S.C.I.

It was a wooden carving of a young sailor of the clipper ship era. Supported on one bent knee, he clasped in his arms a brass binnacle in which the compass was mounted. His prominent, glaring dark eyes stared directly over the top of the binnacle, and in black letters on the wide brim of his sailor hat were the words, "Mind Your Helm." (*See cover design.*)

It was some time before I learned the story of that wooden sailor of Pearl Street. He was a creation of the Negus artisans, the brain-child of a noted shipmaster, Charles Porter Low.

Captain Low was a proud sailing ship master who ran a taut ship. When he was appointed to the command of

(Continued on page 6)

some don't make it back to the ship in time

Chaplain William Haynsworth and English seamen who missed their ship.

"Missing the boat" — in the literal sense — occurs about as frequently for some of today's ship crewmen as in the sail-ship days, in the opinion of one of SCI's counselors to seamen, Chaplain William Haynsworth.

While the incidence of these situations is not high in relation to the other problems brought to the chaplain by seamen, the ship-missers — crewmen who are not aboard their vessel when she pulls away from her dock — knock at the chaplain's door in steady numbers.

In many instances — in most, perhaps — the plight of these men first comes to the attention of the ship-visitors of SCI's Ship Service Department who then refer the men to the chaplain.

The lanky minister, who spent three years in the U. S. Navy before becoming a cleric, says the reasons for a man missing his ship at departure time are varied, sometimes obvious, sometimes obscure.

"Because of the fast 'turn-around' of today's vessels — with the consequent long periods at sea — more men than before come ashore to see the bright lights. And they try to crowd a week of festivity into a two-day visit ashore," he observes.

"Some seek out friends in various parts of the city; if they are foreign nationals they might gravitate to the section of the city where their countrymen may be found — where the hospitality is readily available and refreshing. Time gets away, perhaps."

Then there are the girls. *Cherchez la femme!* Difficult to leave a lovely girl, sometimes, to return to the grey routine of shipboard life, especially if the man and the girl believe Cupid has uniquely singled them out.

The chaplain knows of men who have deliberately "missed" their ship — then referred to as "jumping ship." This is more likely to happen on a vessel of foreign registry or one sailing under a "flag of convenience" where living accommodations may be extremely bad, the crew made up of many nationalities, and in situations where tensions between individuals of the crew grow to a critical point.

The chaplain says he has known of men who have not returned to their ship because they felt their lives were in grave jeopardy while aboard.

"Then there are the confused men, those who are misinformed before going ashore, those who become ill and are unable to reach their ship, or those who return to discover their ship has 'up anchored' and left an hour ahead of schedule."

Every foreign seaman must obtain what is known as a "Crewman's Landing Pass" from the U. S. Immigration and Naturalization Service before going ashore at a U. S. port, the pass validated for a specified period of time.

The chaplain is usually able to secure an extension of pass validation for foreign seamen who are in the difficult position of being "illegally resident aliens." The chaplain customarily first contacts the shipping agent in behalf of the stranded seaman (most ship lines have agents in the major ports of the world).

The agent may arrange for transportation to the next ship's port-of-call in the U. S. or even send the men home by plane. But the seaman must then eventually reimburse the shipping line for the expense.

For various reasons the Institute chaplain may not be able to reach the proper authorities when a distressed mariner seeks him out and if the seaman is without means he is "logged in" on the chaplain's account books at SCI until his sometimes tangled affairs can be unsnarled. If, as sometimes happens, a man is left without personal gear, SCI has provided it.

No responsible seaman really relishes missing his ship, says the chaplain, because such incidents are noted on his performance record and act against him; the chronic "ship-misser" will find himself in serious trouble. If his record shows several "misses", he might well be discharged by the shipping line and find it difficult to obtain employment on another ship.

—H. G PETERSEN

A contribution to the Institute of five dollars or more includes a year's subscription to *The Lookout.* Wouldn't some of your friends enjoy reading it?

MIND YOUR HELM (*Continued from page 3*)

the new clipper *N. B. Palmer* in the spring of 1875, he did all he could to make the ship a special one. This sailor-boy binnacle stand was his innovation. Mounted on the poop deck a few feet forward of the wheel, he felt sure it would improve the quality of the steering aboard the *N. B. Palmer.*

But it didn't.

Instead, it almost caused a mutiny aboard the clipper on her maiden voyage.

The seamen just couldn't stand those staring eyes boring into them all during their trick at the wheel. They came to regard the mute sailor-boy as an enemy and a jinx. This reached the point where some of the men refused to stand their wheel watch. Punishment for this disobedience aroused the other men in sympathy, for all of them hated Captain Low's dummy supervisor of the helm.

Only his indomitable spirit coupled with cool tactfulness prevented a mutinous outbreak. But he realized that his idea was a failure, and before the *N. B. Palmer* started on another voyage the unusual binnacle was replaced with a normal one.

The unique carving was returned to its makers, and for more than half-a-century the sailor-boy directed his staring eyes at those passing by the Negus store. A few years ago the present head of this famed New York nautical firm, John S. Negus II, bequeathed Captain Low's rejected binnacle stand to the Museum of the City of New York.

I have often thought when I passed by and read again those words that so irritated the clipper's seamen, "Mind Your Helm", how appropriate that admonition is to life in general, for, as at sea, life ashore is beset with perils that only constant attention to our steering will bring us safely through.

WOMEN'S COUNCIL HOLDS ANNUAL MEETING

The Women's Council of SCI held its annual meeting at the Institute April 16 to review the year's accomplishments and to learn of new plans. Approximately ninety persons attended the noon affair. The meeting was addressed by the Rev. Dr. John M. Mulligan, Institute director, and by Mrs. Constance B. West, Council executive secretary.

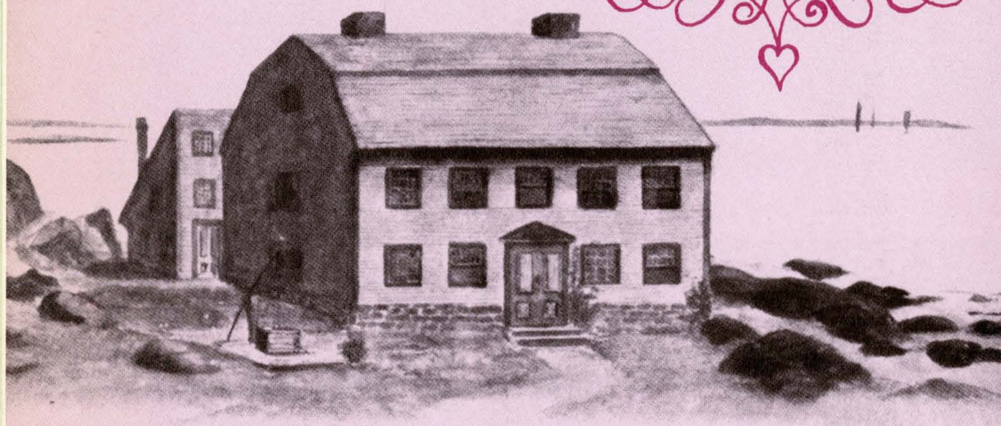
◀(Left) Dr. Mulligan addresses group. At the finish of his talk he announced that Dr. Roscoe T. Foust was retiring from the Institute and paid tribute to his leadership in its affairs.

▲(Above) Mrs. West (podium), gave her report for the year's activities. At the head table were (from left): Richard F. Pollard of the Institute Board of Managers and chairman of the Women's Council committee; Mrs. Warren J. Taussig, secretary of the advisory board of the Council; Dr. Mulligan; Mrs. W. S. W. Edgar, Jr., advisory board chairman for the annual meeting; John G. Winslow, president, Institute Board of Managers; Mrs. Arthur J. Simpson, former chairman of the advisory board; Dr. Foust.

Portion of Council group as it convened in the auditorium of the Institute.

Sea-Town Love Story

by Abbie M. Murphy



FOUNTAIN INN, built in 1721, as it looked when Harry Frankland met Agnes Surriage in 1742. A typical early Colonial tavern, it was well-known to all seafaring men. The old well may be seen at the left.

"One of the most engaging love stories of our early history" says one historian, "was the romance of Agnes Surriage and Sir Charles Henry Frankland." Agnes was the daughter of a poor fisherman; "Sir Harry" was a dashing young nobleman, son of one of the wealthiest and most influential families in England.

The setting of the 1742 drama was the seaside town of Marblehead, Mass., and the atmosphere and influence of the sea was part of every chapter of it. It was the sea itself, really, that brought these two together.

Marblehead, a sturdy, rock-ribbed old town a few miles north of Boston, was a thriving fishery in these pre-Revolutionary days. The cod captured in New England waters was of a superior quality; and dried salted cod was considered a great delicacy in Europe and elsewhere. Marblehead's first ship was built in 1636, and a century later a Marblehead ship made its first voyage from the town to Barbados. This was the start of enlarged maritime activity.

England, therefore, could not afford to overlook any threat to this prosperous settlement. Such a threat did exist . . . and it was posed by the French. For almost a century France and England were at war, each one trying to protect and enlarge their holdings in the New World.

As for Marblehead, on several occasions French cruisers in the harbor lobbed shells into the town, and the British felt that some protection was needed there. Because of this, in 1742 a fort was erected on the high headland facing the harbor.

All these happenings were inevitably leading to the Revolution. The only reason the Revolution did not erupt earlier was because of fear of French sea power. The British didn't dare put too much pressure on the colonists to enforce collection of the taxes which they imposed, and which made the colonists seethe. The colonists, on the other hand, dared not show their resentment too openly . . . as yet, anyway. They knew they needed British protection from the French.

The Collector of the Port of Boston, the handsome "Sir Harry" Frankland, was aware of these undercurrents, to some extent. It is hinted that Frankland "obligingly looked the other way" when smuggled goods were brought into Boston and Marblehead, and the British tax evaded. And this, it seems, was expected by the British. Both England and America were biding their time.

Frankland, then 26, was sent to Marblehead by the Crown to oversee the erection of a fort. The grassed-over remains of the ancient fort, with its forbidding underground dungeons, is still a visible part of Marblehead's Fort Sewall.

"On a lovely Fall day," we are told, the young Collector rode his horse down to Marblehead. The Fountain Inn was known as the outstanding hostelry of the Province, and it was at this tavern that Harry dismounted. As he entered he saw a girl scrubbing the stairs, and asked where he would find the landlord. When she looked up from her drudgery, Frankland was struck by her youth and beauty.

All available accounts of the Surriage-Frankland romance agree on one point . . . Agnes was a beauty. "Of grave and dignified mien, with black hair, large dark eyes, and a musical voice," she was evidently lovely indeed.

Harry saw that she was barefooted, and he, in his own rich clothing, felt sorry for the poor little drudge. He gave her money to buy shoes. He asked her name. She pointed out to him the tiny Surriage cottage on the slope across Little Harbor.

This was the first of many Marblehead journeys for Sir Harry. Finally he sought out her mother, and asked permission to take Agnes to Boston and have her educated in the arts and skills "common to fashionable ladies of the day." She was to be placed under the protection of certain socially prominent ladies of the town. All this was done.

Agnes had a good mind, and soon became skilled in music, needlework, painting and languages. Her great beauty and her obvious intelligence caused a sensation in Boston. Agnes never forgot her home ties, however. She always kept in touch with her mother and her rough, uneducated family. From all that can be learned, she proved herself to be in fact a real lady.

Before long Boston eyebrows were raised and Boston tongues wagged over Harry and Agnes. They were living together openly in Frankland's luxurious town house. The gossip increased, and Agnes, of course, was the target. She "bore it all patiently", but Frankland did not. He built a magnificent manor house in Hopkinton, Mass. This estate, with its gardens and orchards, seemed a paradise to the lovers.

In 1754 Frankland was called to England, and he and Agnes made another attempt to reconcile Harry's family to his wished-for marriage. When the Franklands were practically insulting to Agnes, the couple went to Portugal.

Lisbon was the most corrupt court in Europe in the 1700s, but the Feast of All Saints was a religious holiday there. Rich and poor made their way to the churches on that day. And on that day, in 1755, a horrible earthquake levelled the city. Thousands were killed. Frankland, on his way to church in a carriage, was buried in falling debris. It was Agnes who found him, rescued him, and nursed him back to health.

At last Harry saw things clearly. They were married at once.

"No more her faithful heart shall bear
Those griefs so meekly borne . . .
The passing sneer, the freezing stare,
The icy look of scorn."

On her return to Boston as Lady Frankland, Agnes found a new attitude displayed toward her.

"How gracious was the courtly smile
Of all who frowned before."

This was the cynical comment of Oliver Wendell Holmes, in his poem, "Agnes."

For several years the Franklands lived in Boston, until Harry's health made it necessary for him to return to England. He died there in 1768.

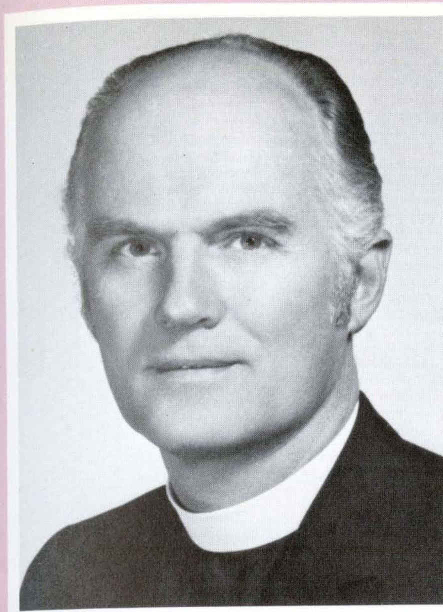
Agnes returned to Hopkinton for a time, but when the Revolution finally broke out she sailed for England. There she lived with the Frankland family, very much loved and respected. She died in England in 1783.

Marblehead's Agnes Surriage is still talked about today, but with admiration instead of criticism. Her "nobility of character" really shines through the history of the romance.

Sir Harry was a victim of his time. For a wealthy nobleman to contract a marriage with an ignorant and humbly-born girl was simply unheard of. That Harry "stood up" to his family and married the girl anyway was evidence of his love for her.

Anyone who reads the old books and papers telling of the "Marblehead love story" of Agnes and Harry is glad that their romance turned out to be happy at last — the Valentine romance of New England.

Rev. Miller M. Cragon to Replace Dr. R. T. Foust



The Rev. Mr. Cragon

The Rev. Dr. Foust

The Rev. Miller M. Cragon, who has been an assistant to the Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of New York, will become a chaplain and the director of the Institute department of Religious, Social and Special Services beginning in July, replacing Dr. Roscoe T. Foust who is retiring after fifteen years' service in this post at SCI.

The appointment was made known by Dr. John M. Mulligan, Institute director.

Responsibilities of the new staff member include oversight for the general chaplaincy counseling and referral services, Women's Council, chapel programs and services, ship visiting service, recreational and educational programs, the merchant marine up-grading school, library and gymnasium.

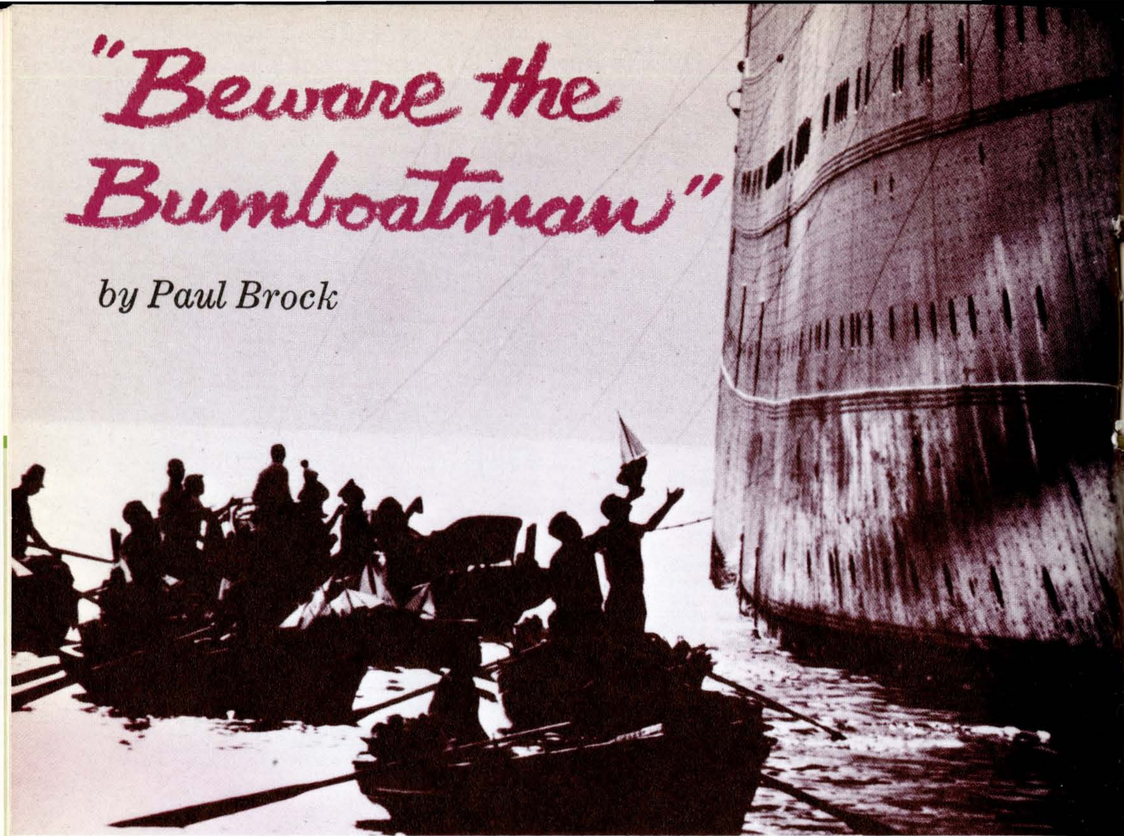
Louisiana-born and reared, Mr. Cragon joined the New York diocesan staff in 1961 from St. Michael's School in Dallas where he was director of Christian education and chaplain. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1950 and subsequently served as rector of Christ Church, Covington, La.

He has academic degrees from Tulane University and the University of the South, a diploma from St. Augustine's College (Canterbury, England) and a master's degree from Southern Methodist University. He has also done graduate work at Teachers College and The New School, New York. Mrs. Cragon died in 1966. There were no children.

Dr. Foust says he has no rigid retirement plans but that he and Mrs. Foust will establish a Florida base (Boca Raton) where they "hope to entertain thirteen grandchildren (in installments) and other family and friends, and to seize whatever opportunities for travel may arise, especially to hitherto unvisited parts of the world."

"Beware the Bumboatman"

by Paul Brock



Cruise ship buffs know him well. He plies his trade at all ports between Capricorn and Cancer. He is tolerated by some shipping lines, shunned by others.

He is cunning, flattering, and such a shrewd judge of human nature that he would make any high-powered salesman blush with shame. Invariably he is dirtier than last year's unwashed dhoti and, if he is once allowed on board, he never leaves the ship without successfully operating some ingenious swindle and making a huge profit on sales.

He is known in seafaring circles as the bumboatman, the merchant who floats in his boat a few feet from the ship's ladder, surrounded by an assortment of weird and almost invariably worthless goods. He drifts hopefully round every vessel that puts into harbor, waiting for permission to come on board.

The ways of the bumboatman are more devious than all the roads that lead to Rome. He is the essence of subtlety. His name is of Dutch origin, for the term "bumboat" was originally applied by the Hollanders to a shore-boat that sold provisions to vessels at anchor.

Today the bumboatman will not only sell you almost anything to be obtained in almost any country, but he will purchase whatever you have to dispose of —be it the Kohinoor diamond or a dead body. Scruples he has none, and conscience he has never known. He can be a Mexican or an Italian, a Greek or a Turk, but more often he is an Arab or a Muslim-Indian.

The moment a ship is sighted he leaves the wharf in his boat. In it are piled glorious selections from all the bazaars east and west of Gibraltar. He usually has an assistant, for there are certain swindles that cannot be worked without help.

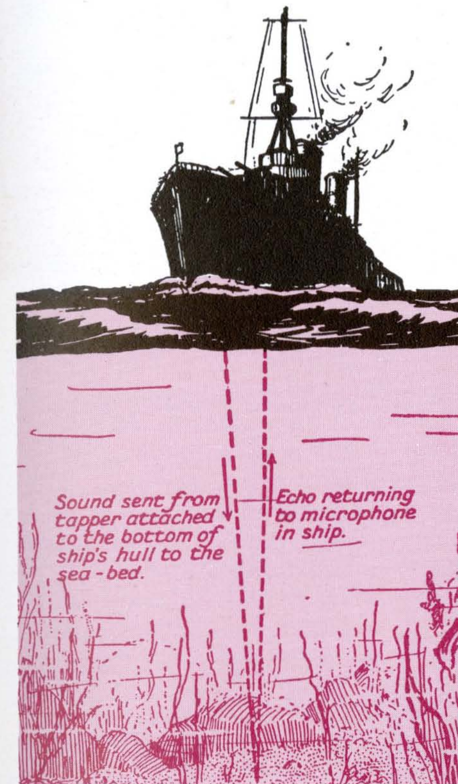
If he is allowed on board he begins his fleecings by exhibiting what past experience has taught him are the most costly of his wares when conveyed to

(Continued on page 14)

WILL THE FATHOM BECOME OBSOLETE?

The fathom, ancient nautical measure for six feet, may soon suffer a sea change in Britain, according to *The New York Times*.

As part of a general move toward the metric system, the English Government has asked Parliament to authorize the use of metric units aboard



Seaman casting the lead—a lead-weighted line to ascertain the water's depth in fathoms. Some of the lead weights were treated with a sticky substance; the bottom sand, mud, etc., adhered to the lead, thus giving the master another means of checking his location—since the bottom characteristics of each area of the oceans are known and charted.

Depth soundings today are usually made by electronic devices.

ship. That, a spokesman said, would allow the fathom to go gracefully when the authorities decided the time had come.

John Horner, a Labor Member of Parliament who was once a merchant seaman, told a House of Commons committee that he heard the news "with a sorrowful heart." He asked sadly, "Are we bidding farewell to the fathom?"

Poets were not mollified by the assurance. They remembered Ariel's song in *"The Tempest"* (*Act I, Scene II*):

Full fathom five thy father lies;
Of his bones are coral made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes:
Nothing of him that doth fade
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.

Since a yard is .914 of a meter and five fathoms is 10 yards, Shakespeare could presumably be brought in line with the metric reform — if not with poetic meter — by having Ariel sing:

"Full 9.14 meters thy father lies..."

Beware the Bumboatman

(Continued from page 12)

North America — little Turkish mats, small Persian rugs, all kinds of leather work, shawls and tablecloths. These are genuine, and worth even more than the startling price he asks, but they are only decoys with which he would not part at double the figure he puts on them. As bait, their value is twenty-fold to him.

After sorely tempting his audience with these goods and lowering the prices every few minutes — yet never allowing them out of his own hands or sight — he will, when near the price already offered him, throw them into his boat and declare that he cannot sell for so ruinous a figure.

Usually the would-be buyer now raises his offer, and the bumboatman instantly springs to the side of the ship and tells his assistant to hand up those things again. The trick is older than Egypt; worthless facsimiles of the original goods are passed on board. They are sold promptly and the man nets from two hundred to a thousand per cent profit.

While he is so engaged his humbler brother is retailing fruit, usually oranges that have been boiled to make them double their normal size.

In ports east of Suez where ships often have to lie at anchor, the fraudulent things bumboatmen will sell gullible Americans are past belief. They will offer imitation Benares ware at fantastic rates, very inferior Indian silk and cotton fabrics for which the prices asked are ruinous. Kashmir shawls and rugs appear together with carved woodwork alleged to have come straight from Srinagar, but in actual fact made by their own wives and families in some dingy back room.

If a ship happens to anchor in the Madras Roads, the "King of the Eastern Bumboatmen," the Madras jeweler is certain to appear. He will wait all day in his velvet-lined boat, attended by his two slaves, until he is given permission to proceed on board.

His unwashed appearance is misleading, for with the profits he has already made from selling his wares to cruise passengers, he could probably buy the vessel he is boarding and still afford to run his luxurious Daimler which waits for him ashore.

In his colored sash and his copious pockets he carries his collection of precious stones and jewelry; Trichinopoly chains, rubies, emeralds, agates, topaz, zircons, cats' eyes, moonstones, bloodstones, amethysts. They are set in rings, and brooches of the most elegant pattern, and flash color as a signal lamp flashes light.

Placed there, on a black velvet cloth, with the slanting rays of the sun playing down upon them, they look as though they might belong to Mrs. Jacqueline Onassis. You are amazed when he quotes prices that are only half those you would pay at home for such jewelry.

You decide to buy one or two trinkets and, on first examination, they seem to be perfect. But you will be uncommonly lucky if the setting holds together for a week after the day of purchase — the setting which prevents the glass from rolling out and revealing the skillfully glazed paper of many hues underneath which gives each glass bauble its false colorful luster.

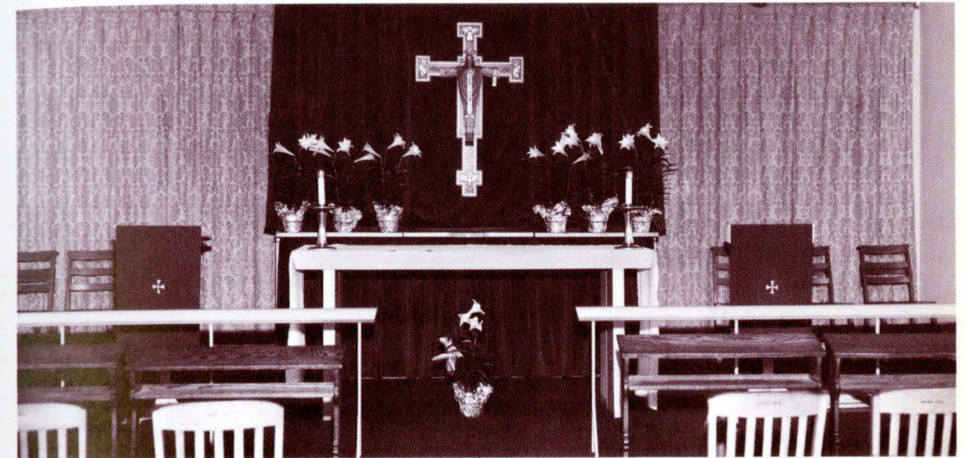
By far the most audacious villains in this profession are the bumboatmen who cruise off the coast of Spain, ready to pester tourists on board ships about to enter Spanish ports. These men are the hoodlums of the entire bumboat hierarchy.

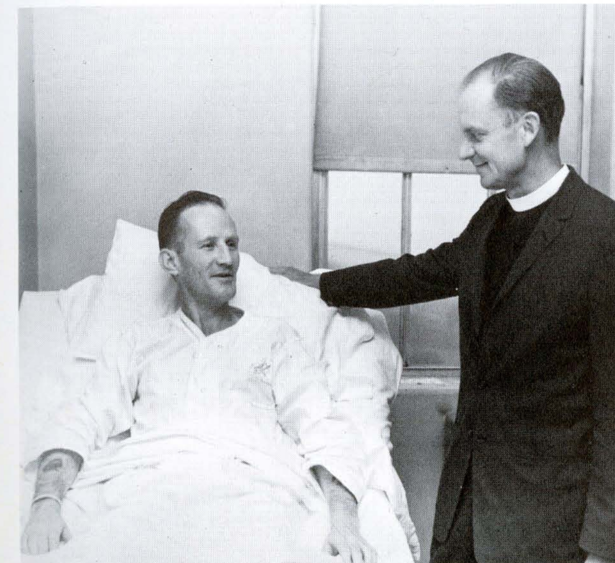
If you do not buy the wines, perfumes, cosmetics and jewelry they have smuggled off at the risk of their own lives and liberty, they have no scruples about firing a parting shot with a rifle or revolver at the first object that offers itself to their aim as they drop astern!

Chaplain Richard Bauer Memorialized

For fifty years an Institute chaplain has ministered to seamen and other patients at the U. S. Public Health Service Hospital at Stapleton, Staten Island, as a chaplain-in-residence. The present SCI chaplain at the hospital is the Rev. Francis Daley who succeeded the Rev. Richard Bauer after the latter's death in July, 1969.

The hospital chapel, which serves both Protestant and Roman Catholic worshippers, recently redecorated and provided with a new Cross, was then rededicated to the memory of Chaplain Bauer. Participating in the dedication ceremony, attended by friends of the late chaplain, and others, were Chaplain Daley, the Rev. Dr. Roscoe T. Foust of the Institute, and the Rev. Edward Datty, S.A., Catholic chaplain.





The late Chaplain Bauer, before his final illness, as he called at the bedside of a seaman patient in the hospital.

Seamen's Church Institute of N. Y.
15 State Street
New York, N. Y. 10004

Address Correction Requested

SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID
AT NEW YORK, N. Y.

NIGHT STUDY

So still the night, so still
what words can say it?
quiet, serene, becalmed? oh, all or none of these,
for there is here a reticence of trees,
a diffidence of darkness. What syllables convey it:
this trance of moon, this coventry of chill,
with even that great-muscled oaf, the ocean,
smooth-skinned as guile
and the sharp-tongued shore placid, for once, and mute.
What syntax can compute
a positive negation; what language reconcile
this silent joy with earth's unhappy motion.

Gilean Douglas