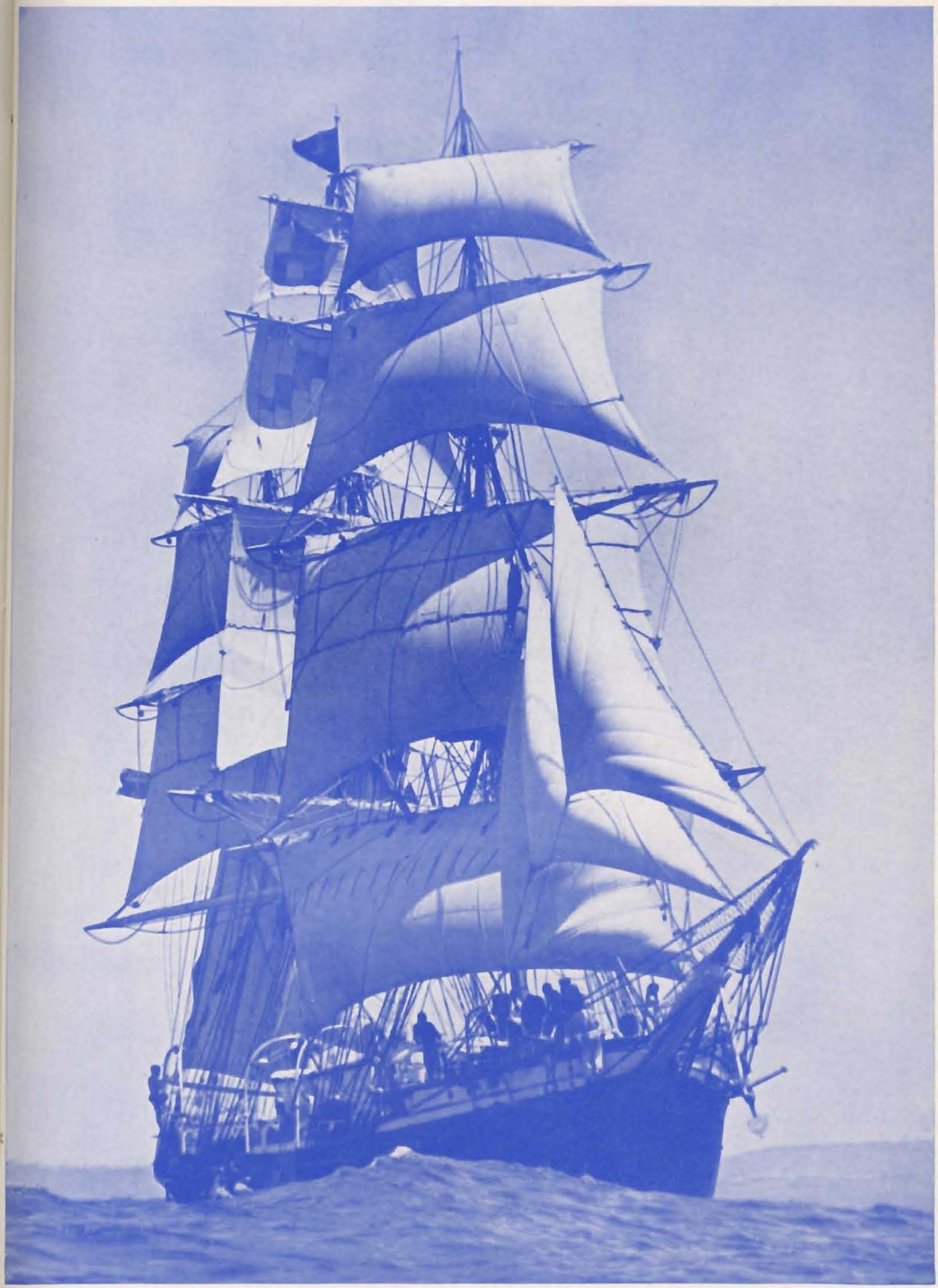
THE LOOKOUT



SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK
VOL. XXVIII NO. 8 AUGUST, 1937

This Month's Cover shows a view of the full-rigged ship, "Joseph Conrad" before it was converted into a yacht. Reproduced by permission of Captain Alan Villiers, the National Geographic Mazagine and the Sidney "Sun".

The LOOKOUT

VOL. XXVIII, AUGUST, 1937

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

by the

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

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

Telephone BOwling Green 9-2710

CLARENCE G. MICHALIS
President

FRANK T. WARBURTON
Secretary-Treasurer

REV. HAROLD H. KELLEY
Superintendent

MARJORIE DENT CANDEE
Editor, THE LOOKOUT

Entered as second class matter July 8, 1925, at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879.

Subscription Rates

One Dollar Annually

Single Copies, Ten Cents

Gifts to the Institute of $5.00 and over include a year's subscription to "The Lookout."

Address all communications to

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

25 South Street

LEGACIES TO THE INSTITUTE

You are asked to remember this Institute in your will, that it may properly carry on its important work for seamen. While it is advisable to consult your lawyer as to the drawing of your will, we submit nevertheless the following as a clause that may be used:

I give and bequeath to **"Seamen's Church Institute Of New York," incorporated under the laws of the State of New York,** located at 25 South Street, New York City, the sum of.....

.....Dollars.

Note that the words **"Of New York"** are a part of our title.

The Lookout

VOL. XXVIII AUGUST, 1937 NO. 8

Rescued Crew of Burning Freighter

Wide World Photo.

Members of the Crew of the "Sandgate Castle"

"SANDY" is really a very lucky kitten. She has survived a shipwreck and has been adopted by nine-year old Ellen Haines who happened to be a passenger aboard the Dollar liner, "President Pierce", which came to the rescue of the burning British freighter, "Sandgate Castle" in mid-Atlantic on June 26th. Originally christened "Midge" by the "Sandgate's" crew, the kitten was promptly renamed "Sandy"—short for "Sandgate Castle"—by her new owner.

A few weeks ago the kitten was sauntering along the waterfront in Brooklyn, as carefree as any Brooklyn kitten, when alas, she sniffed salt water and immediately caught that dread disease known as Sea Fever (a very contagious disease, by the way). By dint of persuasive mewings and wistful purrings, she managed to convey to William Weekes, donkeyman and junior engineer aboard the "Sandgate Castle", her desire to see the world from the deck of a ship.

All went well, and "Midge" soon won the favor of all hands, from captain to cook, until the morning of June 26th, when a fire broke out in No. 4 hold and spread so rapidly that two hours later Captain H. C.

Bergen gave the order to abandon ship. Fire extinguishers were used, but the blaze was raging in the cargo, which consisted of case oil, tins of paraffin, benzine, and the like.

Describing the fire later at the Institute, where 29 of the crew and 10 officers were quartered, Bo'sun Michael Castle said: "The fire spread fast until the starboard side of the boat deck was in flames. Four of the lifeboats burned at the davits. There wasn't much time to look at the clock, and we didn't manage to save much — just the clothes we had on. When the Old Man gave the order, there was no panic, not a bit of disorder. It might have been a lifeboat drill." William Weekes rushed below to save "Midge", and found the kitten sleeping peacefully on his bunk. Some of the crew said: "That black cat brought us bad luck. She's a poor mascot," but "Midge" proudly displayed her pure white paws and vest to show that she was not all black.

Wide World Photo.

Three of the Sandgate Castle's Crew, 9 year old Ellen Haines, a passenger on the President Pierce, and "Midge" (renamed "Sandy",) the ship's cat.

The "Sandgate's" radio operator, John Gallie, stayed at his post, sending out the S O S signals until the last moment when Captain Bergen hauled him into the lifeboat. Chief Engineer Alex McConnell, who suffered some burns while fighting the fire, was the only man injured.

In the lifeboat the men had corned beef, hard tack and water, but they did not worry about the food problem because they knew that help was on the way. From a point 177 miles away the round-the-world liner, "President Pierce" had radioed the cheering message that she was speeding to their aid under forced draft.

Passengers aboard the rescue liner saw flares go up from the lifeboat. While Ellen and her mother watched the crew scramble up the rope ladders to the deck, they saw William Weekes, dripping wet, suddenly reach inside his coat and thrust out a black and white kitten. Ellen joyfully claimed "Midge" and promised to give her a good home.

Before leaving the "President Pierce" Captain Bergen thanked Captain George Nelson, master of the ship, and his crew for the "promptness with which our S O S was answered and the facility with which the rescue was carried out." There were sixty passengers aboard the liner and many of them gave clothing to the rescued seamen.

On arrival in New York, 29 of the crew and 10 officers were brought by the British consul to the Institute, where private rooms were assigned to them on the tenth and twelfth floors. Comfort bags, containing tooth brushes, shaving equipment and other necessities were supplied to each man, and they were outfitted with shoes, underwear, work gear and street clothing from our "Slop Chest". They enjoyed the Institute's hospitality for three days and then were sent to Montreal by bus, thence to be sent home to England aboard the S.S. Antonio.

In Memory of Dr. Mansfield:

A BRONZE tablet honoring the memory of the late Dr. Mansfield, for 38 years Superintendent of the Seamen's Church Institute of New York, was dedicated at the Seamen's Church Institute of New Orleans, 535 Decatur Street, on April 27th by the Bishop of Louisiana, Dr. Morris. He was assisted by Dr. Couplans, rector of Trinity Church, and Mr. Harold A. Johnston, Superintendent of the local Institute. During the service a poem entitled, "Harbor," composed especially for the occasion by Mrs. Ella Bentley Arthur, known as the poet-laureate of Louisiana, was read:

HARBOR
A Tribute to
Archibald Romaine Mansfield

Built of friendship is this home,
A beacon on the shore
That men who drift from salt and foam
May find a friendly door;
A friendly door that opens wide
On all a home should be—
Companionship, a fireside,
And refuge from the sea.
Forget ye not these walls are more
Than simple walls may seem,
They are a shrine to one who saw
Fulfilment of a dream,
A man of God whose head and heart
Gave service as a friend
To seamen, that a happy port
Wait at journey's end.
And all who pass this way shall know
His work is just begun,
For men may come and men may go
But great ideals live on,
And surely immortality
In life as well endures
When green and lasting memory
Is framed in friendly doors.

The Institute lobby has been completely renovated. All the walls have wood paneling from the floor up six feet, above which are concrete blocks with ceiling to match. The lobby adjoining the Chapel is a particularly appropriate memorial for Dr. Mansfield, as he was one of the founders of the New Orleans Institute.

The Institute's Engineer

JOHN PLATT, chief engineer at the Institute, is receiving congratulations from seamen all along the waterfront upon the completion of 25 years at the Institute. Although his main job is to supervise the mammoth engine room where heat, light and power are generated for the 13-story building at 25 South Street, Mr. Platt has many unusual odd jobs and requests from seafarers and others. We asked him to jot down just a few, and here they are:

A seaman gets stranded with an artificial limb and seeks the engineer for a screw or a pin to keep the wooden leg from walking "starboard instead of port;" another son of the sea wants his false teeth filed so that he can chew more easily; a bugler wants his bugle repaired so that he may blow taps at the Titanic memorial service on the Institute's roof; a batch of artificial arms and legs are taken from sailors' abandoned baggage and overhauled for future use; every day the time ball must be prepared for dropping at noon and if it is a fraction of a second late, the wires are hot with critics who noticed the error; he must pull pricking nails from thin shoes of stenographers; he must keep the pumps in the basement going steadily, pumping out 10 to 12 gallons of seepage water per minute, day and night, year in, year out, (for the Institute's building is on filled-in land, once Coenties Slip, where canal boats and barges moored); he must repair parrots' cages and chains for pet monkeys or dogs; must put up electric fans throughout the building, overhaul the ice-cream freezer and the automatic silver cleaner (for thousands of meals are served to seafarers in the course of each week, and the wear and tear on silver and china is terrific); repair the laundry (since each morning two sheets, a pillow case and a towel are removed from each of the beds—that's a lot of laundry!); and rig up an ingenious apparatus whereby an injured seaman with his spine in a plaster cast can sit down and stand up.

Mr. Platt is a former seafarer; before coming to the Institute in 1912 he worked as marine engineer for seventeen years on Lakes and Sound steamers. Over the door of his office is this sign:

> "Trust in the Lord. But keep three gauges of water in the boilers on your own account."

A sensible admonition, we quite agree.

Although an old-timer, Mr. Platt has great admiration and respect for the modern day seafarer. "He is better educated and has come to accept many of the luxuries of life as necessities—but why hold that against him? Don't we all prefer the comforts and conveniences of today to those dear-departed romantic days on South Street when the old Belt Line of horse cars was the principal method of transportation?"

"Charlie Noble"

WE have had an inquiry from the City Editor of the Meriden Connecticut Record, Mr. Hugh J. Lee, regarding the origin of the old naval term "Charlie Noble" which was the name applied to the galley smokestack. We thought that perhaps he was of the same vintage as "Reuben Ranzo" or "Old Stormy." We asked Rear Admiral Reginald R. Belknap about it and he told us of an old sailorman's joke about "Charlie Noble" in the Navy. Each Friday night an orderly would appear before the Captain, usually while the Captain was entertaining guests at dinner, and ask permission to shoot "Charlie Noble." The captain would reply: "Very well, but don't fire more than three shots." The orderly would then tell the cook to fire three blank cartridges into the stove which would loosen the soot so that it would drop down into the galley instead of spreading all over the decks. This joke was done merely for the edification of the Captain's guests. In a book entitled "Naval Customs, Traditions and Usage," by Leland Lovett, published in 1934 by the United States Naval Institute, on page 219, it says that the expression "Charlie Noble" was derived from the British merchant service and refers to a certain Captain Charlie Noble, who always insisted on a high polish on the galley funnel of his ship. The funnel was of copper and its brightness became known in all ports where the ship anchored.

Drawing by Earle Winslow. Reprinted from "Tugboat"

Score One for the Sea

WHEN Captain Harry Manning requested leave of absence in order to accept Amelia Earhart's invitation to act as her navigator on the Pacific leg of a round-the-world flight and departed for California in late February, we had to suppress a thin little thread of anxiety lest sometime the lure of the air might prove too strong and a good sailor be lost to the sea. Certainly a man once given such wings and so momentous an occasion to use them might, understandably, be reluctant to be earthbound again.

The doubt need never have been born, as it happened. Captain Manning is back home again—home being the *S. S. American Merchant*—and very happy indeed. In fact, we've never seen him look more pleased with the world than he did after he returned from sitting on top of it and stood on the bridge of his own ship.

He acknowledged that he had a perfectly grand time on his aerial adventure and enjoyed the novel experience of navigating in the air instead of on the sea, and he was keenly disappointed that the accident in the takeoff at Honolulu had prevented their continuing the flight. The air had got a hold on him to that extent, he admitted. But the thing that amazed him about it all was the fact that he gets lots more thrill out of handling a ship at sea. Strangest of all, he found he got more sensation of speed in a ship doing 16 knots than in going 200 miles an hour in a plane, once you're clear of the ground.

But even if Captain Manning hadn't said a word, we would have known that here was one fine seaman who wasn't going back on his first love. He looked too all-fired pleased to be back.

Reprinted from "The Ocean Ferry"—May, 1937 —United States Lines

A View of New York Harbor in 1876, taken from the unfinished tower of Brooklyn Bridge by J. S. Beal. Original of this famous photograph is 7½ feet long and is in possession of the New York Historical Society. Copy made by Irving Underhill loaned by courtesy of Louis Tiemann.

Times Change and Customs Vary

THE growth of shipping from sail to steam comprises a long and fascinating history. Looking at the two pictures reproduced on this page, one realizes the remarkable progress made in the growth of New York as a great seaport and the gateway to America. From the marine viewpoint, this progress is noticeable, particularly in the treatment of merchant seamen and in the improvement of ships. Ships today are not only faster; they are also safer and more livable for both crews and passengers. A visit to the engine room of a modern liner, where white uniforms are worn by the engineer and his staff, and where ventilators control the temperature—when contrasted with the old coal-burning steamers where the "black gang" toiled in the stoke-hold, grimed with coal dust—is evidence of such progress.

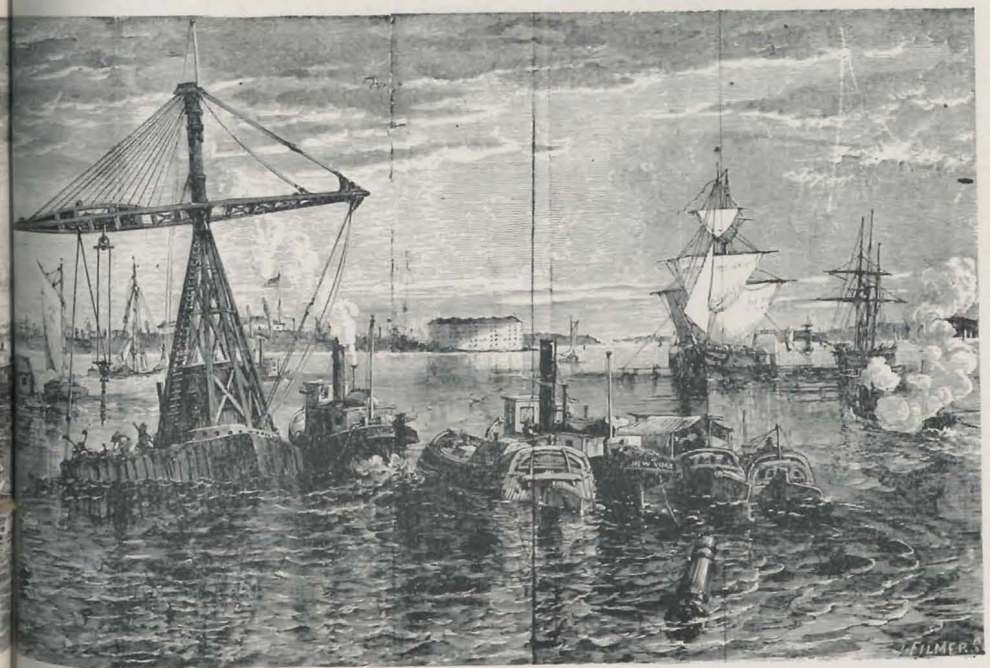
The waterfront, too, is much safer; no longer do crimps and landsharps flourish, lying in wait to exploit sailors. This is because the *Institute* has kept in step with changing conditions, and has done its part to change New York from "the worst seaport in the world" to the best.

Both afloat and ashore sailors are better treated, better educated. But in spite of all improvements, the hazards of the sea are many and its material rewards slight. No skill or brains have yet devised a sure method of keeping a ship safe when caught in an August hurricane or in a winter storm on the north-Atlantic. It is then that one realizes the truth of Joseph Conrad's remark, "It is stout hearts that keep the ship safe". Good seamanship and pride in their calling are two objectives which the *Institute* helps to foster and encourage among the men of the sea.

To help the *Institute* continue its important work on New York's busy waterfront, we need your loyal and generous support. The needs of merchant seamen are many and varied, and the welfare department at the *Institute* makes every effort to help each man according to his individual requirements. Your gift will be transformed into a sustaining influence on these mariners, who greatly need friendship and inspiration.

Kindly send contributions to the SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK, 25 South Street, New York, N. Y.

A View of Castle Garden, now the Aquarium, showing many types of old harbor craft in lower New York bay, 1869; for example: a sloop; a steam launch; a Whitehall boat; a canal boat; a square-rigged ship; a floating crane; a ferry boat; a side-wheeler.



Reprinted from the Art Supplement to Appleton's Journal.

A Sailor's Life As the Sailor Sees It

"MY children know I am their father, but they don't really know me, and I don't know them as I should. I have no share in their upbringing. I merely feed and clothe them from a distance." It was a member of the crew of a Tyne cargo ship who spoke these words. He was voicing the experience, sometimes bitter, of himself and thousands of other men who earn their livelihood in the hard school of the Merchant Service. What sort of men are these? What moulds their outlook on life? During many voyages I have lived with seamen whose homes are on the North-East coast of England. I have been able to study them, their outlook on life, their pleasures, their attitude towards each other. Occupation makes types of humanity, and to none does this apply more truly than to seamen. Of course there are many types within the main type, but there are certain characteristics of mind and conduct which bind seamen together in one class.

One of the most obvious characteristics about these men is their love of home, a place they seldom see. After a voyage lasting for months, perhaps years, their ship steams into a home port, yet often so insistent are the calls of duty and service, only a few days, or perhaps hours, are available for the company of wife, sweetheart, or parents, before the ship must again turn her bows to the horizon and steam away to face unknown perils. Talk to the average seaman who has a wife and children at home. He will tell you about them with loving pride. You will find their photographs hanging in his berth. Some may become accustomed to being parted from home, but others are always homesick. Often as the long hours on watch drag, their thoughts take them to the family circle which is broken by their absence and which they can so seldom complete. For many of these men a ship is a prison. After a few years of service the glamour of the sea fades and only reality is left. Life becomes a daily routine of monotonous tasks, relieved only by variations of sea and wind, and by such amusements as they themselves can devise. Each day they take their exercise on the same ten or twelve yards of deck, each day their eyes are confronted by the ever-changing yet changeless line of the horizon; each day for the officers there is the same bridge, the same sight-taking, the same course, and each day for the "deck-crowd" the same painting, chipping . . .

Regarded like that, the life of a seaman loses much of its attraction for the landsman. Yet, they are far from being a dull crowd of men. They grouse sometimes (who doesn't), but a joke is generally ready to follow. They patiently bear the monotony until the ship noses her way into a home port again, or until fortune smiles sweetly upon them in the shape of a good job ashore. It is this life which gives many sailors their love of bright lights and gaiety when in port. For a month perhaps they have been at sea without touching land, seeing the same faces every day, without those little delicacies of food which are foreign to a ship, and living in a small world of men, men and only men.

Ashore the sailor is ready to spend the money which is burning a hole in his pocket. The bright lights of the cafés and dance-halls attract him. He spends money freely. Don't condemn the sailor for this aspect of his life. It is mainly a reaction to life at sea. Don't expect him to study the architectural attractions of foreign ports. He is not in the mood for that. Remember he is not a tourist, but a man with a hard job of work to do. At sea he has no chance to forget his work. He lives on his job in the truest sense. Further, do not jump to the conclusion that the average sailor thinks of nothing except work and pleasure.

The better educated of them follow current affairs and other thought-provoking subjects with keen interest. How keenly they listen for news through the medium of that great boon to seamen, the wireless! They criticize the world and its affairs, and often their criticism condemns.

So much for their attitude to life, but what about their attitude to death? I asked more than one if they were ever afraid when storms arose. The majority of them can remember occasions when, with huge and powerful seas sweeping the decks, they wondered, "Will she rise?" but as to the horrors of death itself, they seldom think about them. "If your time comes . . . well it just comes," said a friend, while living with these men on board, taking part in their amusements and, in a lesser degree, in their work. I found much in them to admire. I found them to be men in the truest sense. Most of them would like that "good job ashore," and yet they accept their lot with a philosophy which is summarized in the remark, "Someone must go to sea." H. T. L.

* Reprinted from "The Church and the Sailor" Missions to Seamen, London.

Mrs. Roper has an Anniversary

MRS. Janet Roper, house mother and head of the Missing Seamen's Bureau at the Institute, celebrated on July 12th the completion of 48 years of work among merchant seamen. By a very nice coincidence "Mother" Roper (as she is known to thousands of sailors on all the seven seas) has just succeeded in locating the 5,000th missing seaman (one Peter O'Flaherty)* since she opened the Missing Seamen's Bureau in 1920.

Acme Photo

Sitting in her little office on the second floor of the 13-story Institute, overlooking the busy East River, Mrs. Roper told the story of the 5,000th man.

"On June 10th," she related, "I received a letter from an 84-year old woman, Mrs. Mary O'Flaherty, from Scotland, asking me to help locate her son, Peter, born fifty years ago in Drogheda County, South Ireland. The mother wrote me:

> 'As I am now 84 years of age, and very feeble, it is my sincere wish to get in touch with my son, whom I last heard from in 1912, when I was living in Ireland.'

By a happy coincidence, the next day, June 11th, Peter O'Flaherty came into my office wishing me to

* *Not his real name*

fill out a certain paper for him, as he had tuberculosis and must establish residence in order that he may receive convalescent care on Federal relief. I immediately told him of his mother's letter. He was surprised and delighted to hear of her. He had written two letters in 1912 to his old home in Ireland, but had never received an answer, and so had continued his seafaring until his recent illness. I naturally wrote at once to Mrs. O'Flaherty telling of my finding her son, and how he had promised to write to her right away. But after a week, Peter came to see me again and said how difficult it was for him to write to his mother. He begged me to write and explain that he was too nervous to write himself."

Mrs. Roper paused to comment, "You know, that is the way with seafaring men generally. If they are making a bit of money and things are going well with them they are glad to write, but when they get down they feel that they have no right to write to their people when they are in distress.

"Peter's mother could hardly believe that I had found her son," continued Mrs. Roper, "for she wrote me as follows:

> 'Your letter has been a wee bit of a shock. Will you kindly make sure it is the right Peter O'Flaherty, my son, from Drogheda County, South Ireland. He has a large Cross tattooed on his left arm, and a Maltesan lady on the right arm. I live in a little flat of my own. One of my other sons, Tom, was killed in the Great War. I have one other son, Jim. He is a vaudeville and radio entertainer and although he was my youngest and is now married, he has looked after me all these years. I enclose one of Jim's photos and two of my own. If you are sure it is Peter I want him to write to me; tell him I am not looking for anything, only to write. I have prayed all these years for him, and I am still trusting in God's goodness. Dear Mrs. Roper, I hope I am not troubling you too much, kindly ask him about his uncle, Mike, who lived in New York City. Peter's Father is buried in Boston, so if he is the right Peter O'Flaherty he will be able to tell you that his father was killed on the old COLUMBIA in New York harbour about 39 years ago.'

"On receiving this letter, I asked Peter to come to my office and I inquired whether he had any tattoo marks, and sure enough he had the crucifix tattooed on one arm and a Maltese lady on the other. So then I knew that there was no doubt about his being the right Peter O'Flaherty. He seemed much touched when I told him that his brother Tom was killed in the World War, as he had thought that his mother was still living with him. I gave him the snapshots of his mother and brother Jim and he was delighted to have them. He has promised faithfully that he will write to his mother. I talked with the doctor at the marine hospital—Peter has been there for about two years—and he tells me that Peter's is an arrested case of tuberculosis, and that he will soon be able to do some kind of light work. Peter is most anxious to begin work so that he can save up enough to go to Scotland and to be reunited with his mother and brother after an absence of twenty-five years."

This is an example of the type of service rendered by Mrs. Roper. She began her career among seamen at seventeen years of age when she volunteered at the Boston Seamen's Friends Society.

Fellow-members of the Institute staff, to whom, as to the seamen, Mrs. Roper is both an example and an inspiration, extended their congratulations, and in the evening special entertainment was provided in the Institute Auditorium for the seamen.

*Marconi's Radio a Big Factor in Sea Safety**

DRAMATIC examples of radio's contributions to safety on the sea were brought to mind yesterday by the death of Marquis Guglielmo Marconi, inventor of the wireless, on Monday night in Rome.

The first great example occurred on Jan. 23, 1909, when the steamer Republic was rammed by the Italian liner Florida off Nantucket in a fog. Only six lives were lost out of the 1,650 persons on both ships, because Jack Binns, 20-year-old Marconi man on the Republic, stuck to his key, sending out the C Q D signal, since superseded by S O S, and the position of the ship.

On April 14, 1912, the steamship Titanic, then the giantess of the sea, with more than 2,000 persons aboard, struck an iceberg 800 miles off the Grand Banks of Newfoundland. John George Phillips, the senior operator, sent the C Q D signal and the newer S O S, remaining at the key until water quenched the spark and until he lost his chance for rescue.

The Titanic sank on April 15 at 2:20 A. M. The Carpathia arrived in response to the distress signals at 4:10 A. M. and began rescuing the survivors. By 9 A. M. the Carpathia had taken 712 survivors from sixteen lifeboats. The dead numbered 1,517.

On the return of the Carpathia to New York City the survivors marched in a body to Marconi's hotel, cheered him and cried, "We owe our lives to you."

On Oct. 11, 1913, the steamer Volturno, turned by fire into a floating inferno, broadcast an S O S from mid-ocean. The Carmania and several other ships, including a tanker which poured oil on the water to smooth the rough seas, responded, saving 521 persons. Panic had made 136 persons jump overboard who otherwise would have been saved.

With the advent of aviation, aircraft crossing the ocean carried wireless, notably the United States naval flying NC-boats and the British dirigible R-34 in 1919.

Disabled in a hurricane 1,724 miles out of New York on Jan. 24, 1926, the British freighter Antinoe flashed the S O S from masts that trembled in a stormy sea. The Roosevelt reached the position given by the Antinoe, but there was no ship. The wireless men trained their direction finders on the signals and found the position had been incorrectly reported. After waiting for the storm to subside for several days, a daring lifeboat crew of the Roosevelt saved the Antinoe's entire crew of twenty-five.

Radio's increasing service to transoceanic aviation was perhaps most recently exemplified in the ill-fated flight of Amelia Earhart. It has been pointed out that, if she had carried along regulation transmitting apparatus, her rescue would have been probable. Even as it was, wireless served to direct and coordinate the unsuccessful searchers.

Radio's linking of the distant explorer with civilization, as on the Byrd Antarctic Expeditions, its addition to entertainment through broadcast programs and its general contribution to the field of communication are too numerous to detail.

* * *

Speaking from the New York studios, David Sarnoff, president of the Radio Corporation of America, called Marconi "the man who made possible our present great broadcasting systems," and recalled the bleak day in December, 1901, when at St. John's, Nfld., Marconi heard the three weak dots that crossed the Atlantic from Poldhu, England, marking the realization of the inventor's dream that the "wireless" might be useful to span great distances of the earth.

*Reprinted from The New York Times, Wednesday, July 21, 1937.

Editor's Note: Many seamen also owe their lives to Marconi through the development of radio medical aid to ships at sea not carrying doctors. "MEDICO" began in 1921, as an experiment on the roof of the Seamen's Church Institute of New York, and proved so helpful that the late Dr. A. R. Mansfield, Superintendent of the Institute, persuaded Mr. David Sarnoff and Mr. Owen D. Young to have the Radiomarine Corporation take it over. See July, 1936 issue of THE LOOKOUT for a complete story of how "MEDICO" saves lives.

Book Reviews

THE MASTS OF GLOUCESTER
By Raymond McFarland

(W. W. Norton, New York) Price: $3.00

It is surprising that so little of significance has been written about the fishermen of our own East Coast. Mr. McFarland's book is a welcome contribution, and coming as it does in the wake of an excellent film of Kipling's "Captains Courageous", it should find a large reading public.

The author grew up with no illusions about life at sea, and when he and his brother shipped on their uncle's schooner the "Yosemite", it was with not so much a sense of adventure as a challenge to measure up to those real seamen who signed up annually for the voyage. Nepotism played no part in the scheme of things; the two boys worked hard, obeyed orders and liked it. An honest, matter-of-fact picture is drawn for us of the busy life in the fishing fleet; good luck and bad alike are taken in their stride and all of the experiences are recounted as day to day events, never as startling exploits. And that was the life out from Gloucester, uncertainty always, but hope as well, that this time the catch would be a record one and the market right. The entire book is well-written but particularly vivid is the character of "Flo Mills, perennial cook" whose place in the crew was important not only because a good cook makes a happy crew but because he was Master Mariner, as well, and often left in sole charge when the seine boats were out. A.W.C.

CAPTAIN KIDD AND HIS SKELETON ISLAND
By Harold T. Wilkins

(Liveright Publishing Co., 411 *pp.) Price*: $3.00

Although Mr. Wilkins has written a biography of Captain Kidd that is bare of the usual romantic trappings of pirate lore, it is not devoid of excitement. With the aid of innumerable historical documents, of painstaking factual detail, truth again becomes stranger and more exciting than fiction. Evidence has been uncovered which proves that Captain Kidd was railroaded to the gallows by fairweather friends. His trial is an extraordinary account of trickery in high places in which Kidd was the pawn of complicated political intrigue. The author has several chapters on the recent discovery of Captain Kidd's own treasure charts, which will have a special fascination for those whose imaginations are stirred by the thought of "pieces of eight and pirates' gold". I.M.A.

YANGTZE SKIPPER
By Thomas Woodrooffe

(Sheridan House. Price: $2.50)

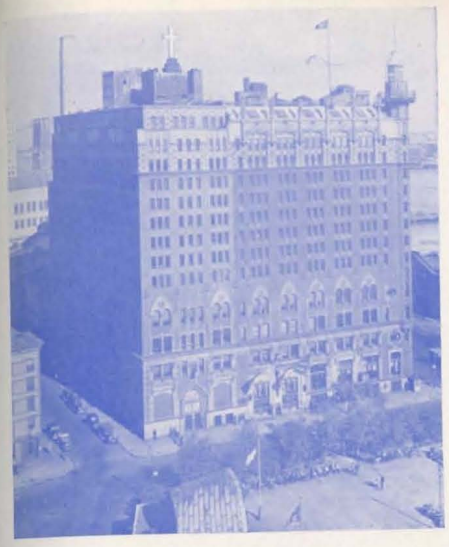
In the guise of a fictional narrative Thomas Woodrooffe has written reminiscently of the China he knew during his years as Subaltern in His Majesty's Service. Young Toby (his hero) went out to China with eyes, ears and mind wide open. He found himself junior to a lovable dipsomaniac, whose knowledge of the river, when sober, was uncannily accurate, but who gave his men a bad time when he ran the "Beetle" aground after a particularly severe "bender."

"There were no Admiralty Charts of the river, and navigation on the Yangtze was acquired by practise . . . I suppose it largely depends on whether you love the river or not . . . get to know its moods, its contradictions, its treachery; to know when to go cautiously and when to risk everything . . ." These were the old skipper's words to Toby who soon was to feel the same way.

The whole book is weighted with entertaining incident; it is a swiftly moving narrative giving glimpses of diplomatic circles, the "service," missionaries, and the Chinese, and it leaves one wanting to read more. A.W.C.

Rounding the Horn...

Cape Horn, where the Atlantic and Pacific meet, has always been a terror to seamen sailing round it. It is situated at the southern end of South America, on a Chilean island. Not many people know that its name was given by a Dutch navigator, Schouten, who discovered the cape in 1616 and named it after his birthplace, Hoorn, in Holland. The reason why men who have made this voyage are proud of it is that it is such a perilous place—heavy gales and dangerous steep black rocks rising to a height of 1,390 feet. A forbidding picture, as they describe it, and nearly always freezing cold. As one mariner put it: "To be frozen is sheer misery; to be sleepy is sheer misery, too. But to be both frozen and sleepy — as we struggled with 'Cape Stiff' — as oldtimers call Cape Horn —was indescribable torture. The worst cry of all usually came at midnight: 'All hands reef the foresail.' Up we would go, wearily climbing aloft, our frozen fingers trying to get hold of Number One canvas. Hour after hour we would struggle with the sails until we had no more fight left in us." Seas are amazingly high when near the Horn; they have been recorded as reaching a height of 60 feet and over 550 feet in length.



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2,146	Attendance in Apprentices' Room.
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