

*The*  
**LOOKOUT**



*Courtesy, The Ensign, U. S. Power Squadron*

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

Vol. XLI

JUNE 1950

No. 6



## Sanctuary

"Eternal Father, who rulest over wind and wave, look with favor we beseech Thee upon the men of the Merchant Marine. Preserve them from the perils of storm and fog, of hidden reef and lurking enemy. Be strong to save them in the hour of disaster, and bring them safe at last unto their desired haven.

"Guide and direct all who control the conditions under which they labor at sea. Enlighten and uphold all who minister to their needs ashore. Give to those who commit their possessions and their lives into their keeping a full realization of the fidelity with which this stewardship is discharged. Above all, make the nation deeply grateful for the prosperity and protection provided by the heroism and faithfulness of those who pursue their business on great waters.

"These things we ask in the Name of Him whose word even the winds and the waters obey, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."  
—By Dr. Charles P. Deems

# The LOOKOUT

VOL. XLI, JUNE 1950

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# The Lookout

Vol. XLI

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## A Weekend Aboard No. 12

By Capt. Peder Pedersen

IT is hard to believe that one of the world's busiest ports, New York harbor, can be so quiet and peaceful as it can be on a Sunday morning when a lot of ships ride at anchor on the flats and upper and lower bay. A ferry leaves the Battery for Staten Island and a tug with a string of barges slowly moves up the Buttermilk Channel to the railroad terminals. But all day long you hardly hear a sound; this is in sharp contrast with the constant din heard on working days, the loud clang of the windlass and the shrill whistles when tugboats blow their signals.

My barge No. 12 is moored on the Brooklyn side of the East River. In her hold are stowed 2,000 bags of green coffee. An additional 500 bags is to be loaded the next day for transfer to the company's warehouses. The rule is that the captain must watch the cargo day and night until it is delivered.

It is a long and lonely watch from Saturday night to Monday morning; there is strong temptation to take a sneak trip up the street to join other captains frequenting the bars along the waterfront. That is the time you appreciate a hobby. Any kind of hobby will shorten your long hours and help you overcome boredom. It is Sunday forenoon and the captain on No. 12 is pacing the deck, looking across the river to the top of the Seamen's Church Institute for the Time Ball to drop, and there it goes, exactly 12:00 noon. Now for some hamburgers and coffee that have been kept hot on the stove in the galley. But from across the slip someone is calling "Hey, No. 12, want to go along up the street for something to eat and a little elbow bending?" "No thanks," I shout back and go



... seated one day at the organ.

back to my hobby. I eat my coffee and hamburgers, then go into another room, my "Inner Sanctum," where there is the most unusual object to be found on a barge, a good sized Estey organ. Soon the tune of "Daisy, Daisy" is floating out of the windows to the delight of a big audience, a flock of sea-gulls.

As darkness descends over the river, I light a kerosene lamp in the cabin. The cabins on the other lighters remained dark. My friends are perhaps still bending elbows somewhere. From cabin No. 12 there comes the familiar tunes of old folk songs, sea chanteys and strange soft music, remembrances of moonlit nights in foreign ports. In the darkness the torch in the hand of the Statue of Liberty beams a welcome to friends as well as strangers coming up the Narrows, the big white cross atop the Seamen's Church Institute on South Street stood up against the sky like a powerful symbolic beacon for seamen to remember when they meet with pitfalls and temptations in a big city like New York.



Monday morning I see a police car standing near the bulkhead. Men grapple with boathooks underneath the pier, a police boat comes in the slip, hoists a body on deck and steers out of the slip past Barge No. 12, destination the morgue. "There, but for the grace of God, go I!" If it were not for my hobbies, I might be lying on that deck, instead of my friend, the third of us claimed by the river in a few years.

Twenty-three years as a barge captain on one and the same boat is a long time, especially when it is a one-man job. You feel lonely on your long watches and try to find something to do to shorten the hours. You paint walls, put up curtains and try to make your living quarters attractive, but this is not enough to keep you occupied. My special hobbies have been in drawing, painting, writing and music. It seems to me they are related to each other in rhythmic tunes and color.

First, I had several harmonicas, some with bells, some with horns and the small ones that disappear in your mouth if you are not careful. Later an accordion, was added, this used to be standard equipment on ships and often is referred to as a "fo'c'sle

piano," but it was not satisfactory for composing music to my songs. When I was fortunate enough to get my museum piece, the organ, I could really start. It was built in 1872 by J. Estey & Co., Brattleboro, Vt. and is still in excellent condition and good tune.

This organ was bought from a fellow who came down to New York looking for a job. His station wagon broke down in a snow drift. I went over to give him a hand and saw that inside his wagon was the organ, a mattress and some blankets. He told me that he came from up state with his wife and two children; had been lucky to find a job and a room for his family, but could not find any place for the organ. I offered to pay for it and soon afterward I had it standing in my "Inner Sanctum."

When I retire and get my pension, I will settle down out on Long Island or up on the New England Coast, just a little log cabin where I can take it easy and pursue my hobbies; do a little oil painting, do some poetry and play the organ. Oh yes, I will have some chickens and a big rooster. He will remind me early every morning that now I have my two feet on solid ground, TERRA FIRMA.

## The "Arphoo"

By Albert Brown, Master Mariner

*Editor's Note: Old sailing ship men have told about a certain crew member being a "Jonah" or a "hoodoo." According to tradition, a sky pilot or cross-eyed Finn were particularly bad omens. Here is a modern story involving a black cat.*

**I**N the summer of 1942 my friend Mac was Chief Engineer of the *Knollpark*, a Canadian-built Liberty ship, bound in ballast from Halifax to Port Antonio to load sugar. Most of the crew came from the Blue Mountain region in the interior of Jamaica. Here one finds the ancient religion of the Congo practiced openly and not diluted with foreign culture as in Haiti.

Mac had no trouble with his crew but became irked by having every

small event interpreted by the voodoo cook who acted as high priest of the fo'c'sle. If Mac took two matches to light his pipe the cook would solemnly announce that they would have two chickens for dinner (as he could easily arrange.)

Mac's yeoman was a mountain boy named Parish from Canada who would joke about the cook when no one but Mac was around to hear. Soon they approached the Windward Passage between Cuba and Haiti (commonly known as Torpedo Corner) and Mac noted that Parish had gradually become jittery, and under the influence of the cook,

News travels faster on a ship than lightning so Mac found the cook was declaring that there was an "Arphoo" or ghost on board shaking the ship. (Any Liberty rolls, but even more when in ballast.) After much hocus-pocus the cook concluded that the "Arphoo" was a female, which narrowed the field down to the Captain's black cat (which the cook was tired of feeding anyway).

From then on it was cook against cat. As Parish was the only unlicensed man with free access to the officers' quarters he was chosen to find the cat, and was then supposed to swing the creature three times around his head and into the sea, on the stroke of midnight. The difficult aspect of the problem was how to get the cat which always slept snuggled up against the Captain in his bunk. Parish was more afraid of the Captain than he was of the ghost and he became more morose under the prodding of the cook as the hour of midnight approached.

Mac stayed up to see the performance, and drifted down into the crew's messroom at 11:30 to get a cup of coffee just in time to see Parish slink out into the blackout. A minute later a torpedo explosion knocked out the lights and a rack of dishes fell on Mac's head.

He made it to the boat deck, finally, but had to swim to the only boat that got away. The bunker oil in the water had made Mac as black as the rest of the crew who eyed each other carefully to see who had been lucky. Dawn found them huddled together, scarcely daring to move lest they ship more water into the lifeboat.

No one was making a noise except the chattering of teeth until the cook spotted Parish sitting in the bow with the Captain's cat perched on his shoulder, (as far from the water as she could get). In a frenzied burst the cook put a triple hex on the



Drawing by Phil May

... From then on it was cook against cat.

poor yeoman who babbled in fear that the cat had no lifebelt. The rest of the crew thought Parish's remark funny, and laughed uproariously while the cook just sat and mumbled.

They had been using a sail as cover to keep out the spray, but decided to raise it to get back to Cuba which they could see in the distance. That is why they didn't see the Nazi submarine as it came up astern of them. Mac looked so black the German officer in command addressed the cook, asking the usual questions as to the ship's nationality and cargo. Then he asked if they needed anything in the lifeboat and the cook replied quickly that their mascot, the cat, had no food. So she was handed up and into the conning tower, and then the U-288 submerged immediately. Mac looked at the cook who had an expression like the cannibal chief who had just eaten a missionary. He was looking at the disappearing periscope and mumbling something about U-2, or it may have been "You, too."

A significant postscript to this story is that a report in the Proceedings of the U. S. Naval Institute states that the Submarine U-288 never returned from her mission in the West Indies.



# Sailing Under the Southern Cross

By James Frost, A.B. Seaman

WHAT a thrill we experienced as children, when the Southern Hemisphere was mentioned! The spirits of Drake, Magellan, Dampier—so many dauntless souls who dared the “Great Unknown” for King and country—fired our youthful imagination and dared us to follow them to the Antipodes.

My first venture south took me to Australia in a British full-rigger, *Scottish Lochs*, from Frisco to Sydney in 1903. We had a pleasant voyage south and landed in Sydney harbor after 59 days at sea. In a few days we tied up to the dock at Circular Quay and unloaded 3,000 tons of sacked wheat. I did not wait to be paid off, but jumped ship, and after about 3 months of passing up and down through New South Wales, stowed away on the ship *Surrey* for Capetown, South Africa. On arrival there, I was told to get out, but fast, which I did, dodging the police between two lines of freight cars and through the dock gates to freedom.

In a few days I got a berth on a small steamer taking guano in sacks from Ichaboe Island, about 500 miles up the coast, in German S.W. Africa. My wages were 4 pounds a month. We took about 10,000 sacks

to a load, and brought four ship loads from Sept. 25th to Jan. 20th, 1905, when the articles were up, as they say, and all hands paid off. After that, I worked on a small cutter, killing sea lions on a small island in Table Bay, just outside Capetown. Then up to December of that year, I picked up odd jobs, hoping to get a ship to a civilized country. I finally landed the Swedish bark *Robertsfors*, bound to Bangkok, Siam, in ballast, to load teakwood there for some port in Europe. Well, there was my ship! Wages at 2 pounds, five shillings a month, probably a 10 month trip. We sailed on Dec. 22, 1904, with Christmas 'round the corner, facing the world's toughest traverse in a foreign ship. “Well, Jack, me lad,” said I, “you made your bed, now lie in it!”

We struck a gale the night before Christmas, and we expected to be ordered to abandon ship any minute. The main shrouds started to carry away at the sheerpole. I sure thought my cable was running out the hawse pipe that day! But our luck held. The skipper gave us a good Christmas feed, with a good drink of Swedish punch to top off with. We ran into a streak of fine weather about the middle of January, but had to beat up into the Indian Ocean to get our easting, from 47° south, which is away off the track in any language.

After reaching the coast of India and the Spice Islands, we sailed through Sunda Straits, between Java and Sumatra. We anchored 13 times going 72 miles and I never was so tired of heaving anchor. But, like all hardships, it ended at last, and we dropped anchor in the Gulf of Siam, at the mouth of the Meinam River. A tow-boat brought us to the city of Bangkok, and we loaded about half the teakwood in the river, dropping down to an island called Koh si



Drawing by Hendrik van Loon

Chang, down the bay, to finish. On May 23rd, with 900 tons of teakwood, we were homeward bound.

In passing the African coast, we ran into the very granddaddy of storms. I expected to see the Flying Dutchman any minute. We were snuggled down to goosewinged lower tops'ls, and handkerchief jib, with two men lashed to the wheel, night and day, for a week. After it cleared up an Albatross was caught with a three-cornered brass hook, baited with pork. On hauling him aboard, the carpenter, a small man, held his legs while other lads took his wings. But he flapped and flapped till his wings were loose, when he dragged the man over to the ship's side, and would have had him overboard but for the other chaps holding on with him. That bird must have measured 16 or 17 feet across the wings. His webbed feet were about 8" wide.

We finally got around the tip of the Cape of Good Hope and set sail with a fair wind for St. Helena Island, where we stopped for fresh provisions and to mail letters home. I sent one to my old school teacher

in Methuen, Mass. I should like to have seen the postmaster's face when he saw the St. Helena postmark!

After leaving the island we had hot weather again until reaching the Spanish coast. One day a whale came up so close I could see his eye and his big, blunt head with a mouth about 10 feet long on one side. He played about near us for around 20 minutes, diving, then rolling up out of the water like a porpoise. Finally, he left us.



## Shipping Menace Noted

The name of the United States Lines cargo-passenger ship, *Pioneer Gem*, may be bestowed upon an uncharted rock that the ship's officers spied in the Pacific. Capt. Samuel J. Lee reported to the U. S. Hydrographic Survey office that “while sailing from Papeete, Tahiti, to Brisbane, Australia, a rock was distinctly seen, appearing flat and white in color as the sea broke over it. The location is Latitude 21 degrees, 54.5 min. South; Longitude 159 degrees 46 min. West, and the rock extends over a space of about 150 yards.”

## ONE-MAN SHOWS

The “Art Gallery” in our Janet Roper Room attracts both seamen and visitors. Each month we schedule a “one-man show” for some seaman artist. Among those whose paintings or watercolors or drawings have been exhibited this year are: Tom Musser, 2nd Mate; Lloyd Bertrand, 2nd Mate, and Linwood C. Borum, 2nd Mate. Many of the paintings displayed are for sale, at very reasonable prices.

During the month of June an exhibition of drawings by a former merchant seaman, Cliff E. Parkhurst, will be on display, through the courtesy of Gibbs & Cox, Naval Architects, where Mr. Parkhurst is now employed. During July there will be a miscellaneous show by various seamen artists, and during August, John Noble, well-known artist, diver, and seaman, will display his famous lithographs of old ships. These exhibits may be seen by the public between 3 and 11 P.M. daily.



Drawing by Cliff Parkhurst



# We Cover the Waterfront

By Ray Irwin\*

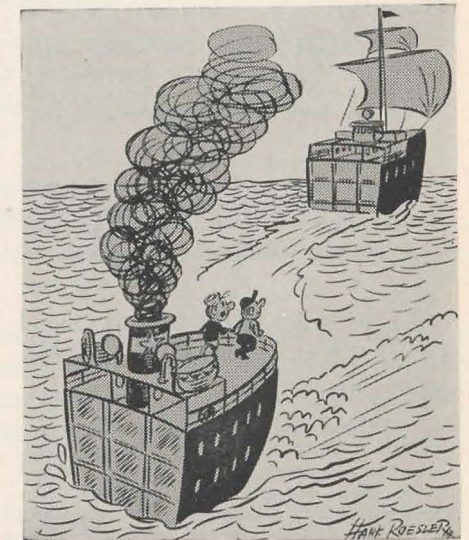
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Courtesy, "The Mast"  
STEAM versus SAIL!



SOME people find it a chore to write thank you letters for favors or gifts from their friends, and some find it difficult to be articulate in expressing appreciation of acts of kindness. Many seamen are like this, but some make the effort to take pen in hand and write to the various members of the Institute's staff prompted by helpful advice or specific gifts. Here are some of these letters prized by the employees to whom they were addressed.

To the Central Council: (From a bed patient at Staten Island).

*"I received an Easter basket yesterday. Gee, it is swell — packed so pretty — candy and cigarettes. Please thank the one who packed and sent it. I've been in this darned bed three months — sure is punishment. But spinal operations, they tell me, take a long time. Thanks again. Sure will come over to the Institute and talk to you when I get out of this hospital."*

To our Knitters: (From an ex-captain of the Merchant Marine, from Hungary).

*"I cannot tell you and cannot write the joy of our children in receiving the nice, useful sweaters. I send a picture of our small boys." My wife adds this postscript:*

*"I say also many thanks for the nice dresses for the girls. I am very glad and they are so well measured. I am greeting lovely you and I never forget our unknown patroness."*

To the ladies of the Central Council: (From an old pensioner, age 79, at the "Ancient Mariners," England).

*"Thank you for the old clothes from the Institute, via the Missions to Seamen, Liverpool. I was in rags." The chaplain added: "Your generous gift delighted my old mariner. He was most delighted and came to see me in his 'Sunday best.' He assured me he was writing to thank you himself."*



From a seaman to Mr. Frank Gulden (a member of the S.C.I. Board of Managers).

*"I received your very beautiful box. In all my 45 years of going to sea I've never seen anything to equal it. It's just out of this world. Some people are under the impression that a seaman receives a box and does not acknowledge receipt, that he doesn't appreciate same — well, they do. They are like a lot of children that went to a party. Goodbye, good luck, and may your pleasant fields be green always."*

To the Missing Seamen's Bureau: (From an Estonian searching for his brother who came to America thirty years ago).

*"I am very thankful to you for locating my brother Hendrick. It has made me feel very happy. I wish you and the Institute the very best of luck."*

TO THE LOOKOUT editor: (From an old salt, a "Cape Horn" sailor).

*"I am just home from Christmas with my doctor and his family, 30 miles down the mountain, and I find your wonderful package. I must confess that my eyes became dim at the thought of your kindness. I am rushing this off, going back to the store to mail it at once, that you may know how deeply I appreciate your kindly thought. What a great comfort the sweater is! All my life I have had bronchitis so must keep warm . . . This has been the best of my 70 Christmases and you have put the finishing touch on it."*

HAS your imagination struck fire at the mention of mysterious messages in bottles washed ashore in remote parts of the world? How would you like to cast a friendly message-in-a-bottle upon the waves?

We've arranged it so you can have this pleasant adventure without being shipwrecked or a castaway — and for the benefit of the Institute. Captains of ships sailing the seven seas have agreed to drop the bottles in whatever areas are requested. You can even specify the latitude and longitude if you wish.

A booklet was mailed to you with some suggested messages, or write your own message to the world. And if, perchance, someone finds your bottle, the instructions will ask the finder to return the message to the Institute, and receive a prize of a miniature ship-in-a-bottle. You, too, will receive a prize in this happy eventuality. Each message will be coded to identify donors. (We won't use your name unless you specify it.)

So why not set your bottle journeying across the Seven Seas—North or South Atlantic, North or South Pacific, Arctic, Antarctic or Indian Ocean? It may fetch up on some tropic isle or in front of an Eskimo's igloo, or even pierce the Iron Curtain!

In paying for this pleasant game of "who's going to find the bottle?" your extra contribution will help the Institute to raise funds for vital welfare and health facilities for merchant seaman. Thousands are unemployed and discouraged, and need help right now. Your loyal support will be appreciated.

If you have not already sent in your message, we hope that you will join in the fun of our "MESSAGE-IN-A-BOTTLE" benefit with the same wonderful spirit you showed last year in our "MEMORY BOOK" benefit.



Capt. Allen Smithies, of the United States Lines freighter *American Leader*, warms up his pitching arm for an unusual task: tossing bottles with messages sealed inside in the North Atlantic on his next east-bound trip. Dr. Raymond S. Hall, Director of the Seamen's Church Institute of New York, and Mrs. Clifford D. Mallory, Jr., a member of the Benefit Committee look on.



# Survival of the Sharpest

By Tom Musser, Second Mate



IN the first place I should have been suspicious of the price he was offering me. Having a sailor's acquaintance with most ports of the world, I should have been on the alert. The Sicilian said 10,000 lire, and for the amount of cigarettes I had, this was too good. But I became a victim of my own greed. Oh, I was suspicious, all right, but not enough. I made him show me the money, which he had folded compactly into a tight neat square not much larger than a postage stamp — a single 10,000 lire note. He unfolded it for me, and it was sure enough a genuine 10,000 liras. We went beside a building where we were half-hidden to consummate the deal — "so the M.P.'s will not see us," he said. Meantime he had folded the bill up again to its postage stamp size and placed it in my own hand, telling me to keep it out of sight; and his henchman was hurriedly stuffing Lucky Strikes into his shirt. Two minutes later he was gone.

That was all right for me. In the cup of my hand I held the folded note with the "10,000" staring up at me big and bold.

But when I eventually decided to unfold the note my self-congratulatory mood immediately switched into profane thoughts and bloody murder. It was the old "palm" trick, which even the prehistoric cavemen regarded as an antique. The 10,000 was in truth two 100 notes folded over each other with remarkable exactitude so that the exposed zeros of one followed the full number of the

other. Oh, it had been beautifully done! But in broad daylight!

Two shipmates who were with me at the time didn't spare my feelings. Finally I managed to laugh at it myself — not heartily, it's true.

Three months later in Casablanca. We're all going ashore loaded down with cigarettes. It doesn't pay to take an advance on our wages, as the legal rate of exchange is out of tune with the black market rate; so we will get francs through our cigarettes.

As we walk along the road toward town innumerable Arabs keep pace with us. One Arab is more insistent than the others. He is offering me 5,000 francs for two cartons. Ho — here is a wise one! I laugh at him; "Show me your money!" He shows me a 5,000 franc note. In fact, he places it in my hand. I look at it. Yes, it is genuine. I become interested, but now he seems to cool off. He takes his money back. "What's the matter?" I ask. "There are the M.P.'s." They really are there this time. They pass in a jeep and when they are out of sight we resume negotiations. Again I make him show me the money and he again displays the quality stuff. I'm not going to be fooled this time — I've been fooled by experts! O.K.? it's a deal. The 5,000 note is folded and placed into my hand. I clench my fist tightly so no more shennigans can be worked with it. No one else can touch it now. The cigarettes are passed over; the Arabs scatter. I contemplate my 5,000 note at leisure . . . but what's this???

— As I unfold the note it falls apart into two notes — a fifty and a hundred cleverly placed together . . . But it *can't* be! I groan in real pain.

After this misadventure a seaman related to me how he had duped the Arabs by selling them sealed cartons of cigarettes, only they weren't cigarettes; the packages were filled with sawdust. I wonder who started this thing, anyway?

# Animal Department

## BABY ELEPHANTS EAT BUNS ON VOYAGE HERE

Two baby elephants, trained for life in America by munching buns every night for three weeks, arrived here on the Isthmian Steamship Company's freighter *Steel Fabricator* on the way to their new home in Washington.

Shanti and Ashok, in care of a mahout, are a gift from India's Prime Minister, Pandit Nehru, to the children of the nation's capital. They will be housed in the National Zoological Park.

Besides the buns, the *Steel Fabricator* was well stocked for the three-week voyage with rice, sugar can, hay, ghee and gur, which Indian elephants dote upon. The last two items are melted buffalo butter and molasses, respectively.

At first plans were made to ship the elephants by air, but their bulk, even at an early age, made it too costly and an offer by Isthmian to carry the party free of charge was accepted.

Sea air and the informality of life on a freighter have helped the elephants recuperate from minor injuries sustained in the excitement of being moved by railway and truck to the sea, it was reported yesterday.

Shanti's left hind leg, injured while she was being transferred from a truck to a train at Mysore, is now in good condition. Ashok's eye, hurt as he entered a truck at Bangalore, is now normal.

Crewmen, the company reported, relieved the tedium of the long voyage by helping minister to the needs of the pair.

## MONKEY SHINES

On one of the old Dollar Line, round the world ships, one of the crew picked up a monkey in Singapore as a gift for his young son. In the following thirty days it took to reach New York the crew enjoyed the antics of the lively little animal. Upon arrival in New York the sailor was presented with a bill charging him with freightage on the monkey. Without murmur or hesitation he paid and just as promptly handed the purser an overtime slip claiming compensation for handling cargo. He collected.

Contributed by Seaman Gene Stein

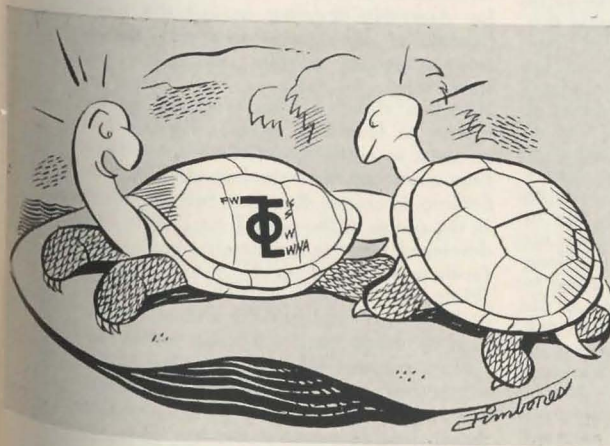
## SEA SERPENTS AGAIN

CAIRO, EGYPT — A fierce-looking 40-foot sea "monster" with nine-foot long curved tusks but no teeth was the center of attraction on a Red Sea bathing beach while puzzled scientists tried to decide what it was. The huge creature's mangled body, which washed ashore in a storm, looked like that of a whale but scientists from the Hydro-Biological Institute at Alexandria said the tusks and lack of teeth ruled out that possibility. The monster has a whale-like blow-hole in its back but very small eyes above its flappers.

## SEA DOG RETURNS

Bedraggled but still spry, Arab, collie mascot of the U. S. Coast Guard weather ship *Yakutat*, arrived in Portland, Maine, after going AWOL in Boston. Nobody knows how the sea-going canine found his way and journeyed the 107 miles to Portland, nor how he knew the ship would be waiting for him there.

\*Plimsoll's mark is the load-line on merchant ships to indicate the limit of submergency allowed by law. Named for Samuel Plimsoll by whose efforts the act of Parliament to prevent overloading was procured.



The Mast

"I got the idea from a cargo ship."\*



# Book Reviews

## PEPPER & PIRATES

Adventures in the Sumatra Pepper Trade of Salem  
By James Duncan Phillips  
Houghton Mifflin, \$2.50

No port in America has ever dominated the trade in a single foreign commodity or in a single part of the world so thoroughly as Salem did in pepper from Sumatra in the first fifty years of the Republic. It was hazardous business for these few white men among overwhelming numbers of barbarians and savages. As the author indicates, the American traders took little pains to understand these people or to realize that they, too, had inalienable rights. It took more than a century for that fact to be learned by the Western peoples who came to trade with them and to dominate them. An important contribution was made by these pepper pioneers in charting some of the routes they followed, especially of the waters along the northwestern coast of Sumatra. The book is diverting and informative, without giving a very intimate picture of the lives of these enterprising sailors.

WILLIAM L. MILLER

## CAPTAIN JOSHUA SLOCUM

The Adventures of America's Best Known Sailor  
By Victor Slocum  
Sheridan House, \$5.00

The picture on the dust jacket is in itself an inducement to read the book. There is so much more to be told about the remarkable Captain Slocum besides his own story of his 46,000-mile round-the-world voyage in his 36-foot sloop, *Spray*, that this book by his son, Victor, who sailed from earliest childhood with his father on his many voyages is very much in order. Captain Slocum's life upon the sea was that of a pioneer and most of his voyaging was off the beaten track. He went fur hunting in Alaska and was a pioneer in the Alaska salmon fishery a short while after Alaska became a part of the U.S.A. He was in the China-Australia trade; he sailed his 60-ton *Pato* from Luzon, by way of Hong Kong, the Okhotsk Sea, the Kuriles to Portland, Oregon. And on the loss of his ship *Aquidneck* on the Brazilian coast and with it most of the remaining money, he cruised from southern Brazil to Washington, D. C., with his family in the 36-foot sampan-rigged *Liberdad*. Victor Slocum's book tells the story of these and of many other adventures in a breezy and readable manner.

WILLIAM L. MILLER

## MR. MIDSHIPMAN HORNBLOWER

By C. S. Forester  
Little, Brown & Co., \$3.00

Every single day on board ship is a story in itself, but you would never suspect it by reading the average logbook. Mr. Forester brings British Naval history of the French Revolutionary period to life by telling of an English lad who ventured forth beyond Spithead to places with strange sounding names. The book is a collection of short stories of how difficult it was even then to be an officer and gentleman without being a seaman first. This will bring back memories of your first trip to sea and the wonder of it all. The author makes time seem unimportant as the places, peoples, and oceans do remain the same. The yarns are good reading and a swell way to spend the watch below.

CAPT. A. L. BROWN

## THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD 1790-1915

A Definitive History  
By Steven H. Evans,  
Captain U. S. Coast Guard  
U. S. Naval Institute, Annapolis, Md.

From the building of Boston Light in 1716, and even earlier, the Colonial governments and commercial interests were working to develop a means of protection for American shipping against the many hazards of the sea: treacherous waters, storms, warlike enemies, smugglers, and slave ships. As early as 1790 Alexander Hamilton obtained from Congress the authority to launch a small, sea-going fleet to assist in carrying out these aims. These tiny, alert craft were the beginning of what became later the Revenue Service, which in the course of the years from 1790 to 1915 developed into the immensely complex and far-flung system of the U. S. Coast Guard. While this book is essentially a history, it is filled with incidental accounts of courageous deeds, battles against storms and foreign enemies, tales of smuggling and of winter rescues in the stormy, icy Alaskan waters. The book is well written, well indexed, well documented and has many fine illustrations.

WILLIAM L. MILLER

# Winners in 1950 Marine Poetry Contest

In a search for poems about ships and seamen, the Seamen's Church Institute of New York opened its annual contest to both seamen and landsmen, obtained a jury of prominent poets, and donations of prize money. The results? Seamen won the Contest! Edward O'Gara, now teaching in Johnson, Vermont, but who sailed in the American Merchant Marine during the war years, won first prize for his poem, "HELMSMAN AT NIGHT"; John Ackerson of Radburn, N. J. and a Chief Mate, won second prize for his poem, "SARGASSO SEA." A landsman from Ellsworth, Maine, Harold Gleason, won third prize for his poem "DEPARTURE," and a former seaman Patrick McDonough, won honorable mention for his poem "SOUTH STREET." The winning poems were read at the May Meeting of the Poetry Society of America. The jury included A. M. Sullivan, Gustav Davidson, Louise Townsend Nicholl, Dorothy Quick and THE LOOKOUT editor. Poems were received from all over the world.

## First Prize \$100.00

### HELMSMAN AT NIGHT

By Edward O'Gara

His is an affirmation quite apart  
From figures on a compass, certitude  
Of sextant, penciled course upon a chart.  
Back of his mind remembrance of the port  
Prods at his sea-sharp senses with a goad  
Of garish midnight riding on the snick  
Of empty beer casks swinging through the  
frame

Of open doors, and laughter, whiskey-rich,  
From Port au Prince to Trinidad—and  
home.

Blue moment held ubiquitous on glass  
That curves above the needle in the light  
Of pallid lamps is his within this place:  
The rim of night confines no time, no space.  
Mind is a boundless measure, like the flight  
Of planing gulls that slant with wings  
outspread

To cut sure patterns of infinity;  
Heart is the steady measure of the tide,  
Diastole, then pause—and systole.  
But half his mind is bent to note the brute  
Utility of metal; dial and gear  
Are temporal auxiliaries to plot  
Position in the universe, to shoot  
Horizons or the azimuth of a star—  
While sullen counterpoint of wave and wind  
Is his by right of primogeniture,  
Homeric in its birth, undisciplined  
Forever, in one half his mind, secure.  
He reaffirms (and has since tides began)  
Eternal equipoise of sea and man.



## Third Prize \$25.00

### DEPARTURE

By Harold Gleason

Beached in the sheltered cove his  
schooner lay . . .  
"This is the day!" he thought.  
"This is the day!"  
Then climbed the ladder up her  
bleaching side  
Painfully, slowly. Still she was his pride  
Though home forever from the restless sea;  
And daily still, though close on ninety-three,  
He climbed aboard, with wistful hands  
to feel  
The storm-tried hand-grips of her  
sturdy wheel.  
Now, as he braced his feet on the  
sloping deck,  
He saw Joe Tibbetts — *in the  
Martha's wreck*  
*Off Sable, hadn't poor old Joe  
been drowned?* —  
Manning the jib-sheets . . . Grinning,  
weather-browned,  
There at the forestay, that was  
George McGill!  
— *Hadn't he died of fever in Brazil?*  
"Deaths must be dreams," he thought.  
"This is the day!"  
Smiling, the captain cleared the  
the landlocked bay . . .



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## Winners in 1950 Marine Poetry Contest

*Continued from Inside Back Cover*

### **Second Prize \$50.00**

By John Ackerson,  
*Chief Mate, Farrell Lines*

#### **SARGASSO SEA**

They come, the tall, the beautiful,  
With song as at the tackles pull  
Brown hands, and sable dolphins mull  
About the buried forefoot; mass  
One breathless instant as on glass  
Old ships that in a sunbeam pass.



### **Honorable Mention \$5.00**

By Patrick McDonough

#### **SOUTH STREET**

When I went down to South Street,  
I saw them ride at ease,  
The old ships, the bold ships,  
That sailed the belted seas.  
I saw the mast and bowsprit,  
The shroud and sail and spar,  
The figurehead and fo'c'sle,  
And cargoes from afar.  
And sailor chaps went by me,  
With bundles shoulder high,  
And in their dream-lit faces  
The lad that once was I.

*Photo by Seaman Donovan Burroughs  
Courtesy, Moran Towing & Transportation Co.*