Seamen's Issue

THE LOOKOUT

THE LOOKOUT

Low lies the land upon the sea.
Night speeds the sun into the west.
All's well, the course is set, our craft runs free.
The lookout's in his swaying nest.

Oh! humble man, that you should stand
For magic hours at night, t'wixt sea and sky.
Alone with awe-struck gaze you scan
The blazing vaults where jewelled chariots fly.

Mark well Polaris, for its icy fire.
Take heart in their confiding leap.
That beckoned men when Hiram sailed from Tyre.
Undimmed, they still a gleaming vigil keep.

You gaze, all enthroned atop the rugged spars.
Dim masthead lights, like jewelled fingers sway.
In humble tribute to the flickering stars.
Sail on and watch, while day moves into day.

Now comes a sudden wind to break the spell.
A stir, like infants' voices calling from their sleep.
The stars invite, dream on, all's well.
T'was but the hand of God upon the deep.

By SEAMAN WILLIAM COLLINS
1st Prize Winner*

See Page 1

*MARINE POETRY CONTEST WINNERS

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK
VOL. XXXV—NUMBER 3 MARCH, 1944

Sanctuary

A Prayer by George Washington

"I now make it my earnest prayer, that God would have you in his holy protection; that he would incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government; to entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another, for their fellow-citizens of the United States at large, and particularly for their brethren who have served in the field; and finally, that he would most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility, and pacific temper of mind, which were the characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed religion, and without an humble imitation of whose example in these things, we can never hope to be a happy nation."

The LOOKOUT

VOL. XXXV, MARCH, 1944

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

by the

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President

THOMAS ROBERTS
Secretary and Treasurer

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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.

It is to the generosity of numerous donors and testators that the Institute owes its present position, and for their benefactions their memory will ever be cherished by all friends of the seamen.

THIS MONTH'S COVER, *courtesy U. S. Maritime Service.*
On lookout aboard the USMS "American Mariner". With life jacket on and headphones set, a trainee stands lookout watch. Trainees are given three to four weeks practical instruction aboard ship as part of training program.

The Lookout

Vol. XXXV March, 1944 No. 3

Seamen's Institute Announces Winners In Marine Poetry Contest

A BRITISH fireman, an American apprentice seaman, a Dutch oiler and two American able-bodied seamen were the winners in a Marine Poetry Contest sponsored by the Seamen's Church Institute of New York for merchant seamen. The judges in the contest were William Rose Benet, author, and an editor of the Saturday Review of Literature; A. M. Sullivan, president of the Poetry Society of America; and Ted Malone, radio commentator of "Between the Bookends."

William Collins, British fireman, whose home is in Falmouth, Cornwall, won first prize of $25.00 for his poem "The Lookout." Franklin B. Folsom, at the U. S. Maritime Training Station, Hoffman Island, won second prize, $15.00, for his poem "Apprentice Seaman"; Able-bodied Seaman Kenneth Eldon Johnson of 25 South Street won third prize, $10.00, for his poem "Torpedo." Special awards of $5.00 each will be given to A. B. Seaman Julian A. Prager of 135 West 45th Street for his humorous poem, "Elmo, the Sea-going Gremlin," and to Lambert Houmes, a Dutch oiler, for his poem "The Sailor's Habitat," which he submitted in Dutch and another seaman from the Netherlands Seamen's Club at 25 South Street, helped him translate. Honorable mention was given to Shepard Rifkin, a messman, of 48 West 8th Street, for his poem, "The Wave."

The winning poems were read by Mr. Ted Malone on his "Between the Bookends" program over the Blue Network on Tuesday, February 22nd at 1:30 P. M.

Photo by Marie Higginson

POETS AWARD PRIZE TO SEAMAN FRANKLIN FOLSOM

A. M. Sullivan and Ted Malone present second prize to Apprentice Seaman Franklin Folsom in Marine Poetry Contest on "Between the Bookends" program, National Broadcasting Co.

Some of the winners are at sea at present. The awards will be made as each seaman returns to New York by Dr. Kelley, Director of the Institute.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The awards prove that Poetry is as international in spirit as the sea. The judges were greatly impressed by the moving sincerity, fine observation, poetic imagery and genuine quality of the many poems submitted. On March 10th the poems were read by the judges to an audience of merchant seamen and their families at the Janet Roper Club.*

The poem, "Elmo the Seagoing Gremlin" was suggested by Julian Prager's seeing St. Elmo's Fire at sea.

APPRENTICE SEAMAN — HOFFMAN ISLAND, NEW YORK HARBOR

Safe here behind the submarine nets
We learn about submarines and eluding them.
We learn how to fight the flames of bombs and torpedoes
And how to fan any sparks of life remaining after them.
We learn simple things which seafarers have known
Since man, creating, first set himself in motion over water.
Above the submarine nets, the gulls dip and bank and glide,
Palpable shadows of a sky busy with patrolling planes.
The gulls hover over these nets as always they have hovered
Over the natural nets of the sea —
The nets with which men draw in fish for food.
The tide comes in with its recurring strength,
Just as when man first set out from shore to master the winds —
At once the means and manacles to freedom.
But now the rising water rattles chains against buoys,
Marking the line where the submarine net hangs ready for its awful prey.
The moon shines across the water as it bursts slowly upward,
And over it comes a call from the keeper of the gateway to the submarine net.
"Any survivors aboard?" he asks of the ship seeking entry.
(Soon we will steam out through the same gateway now letting the ships enter).
"Any survivors aboard?"
Good, strong submarine nets — but confining.
Soon we eager ones here behind the nets will have the skill to start our new lives.
Soon we go out to a battle which if lost means the loss of all earlier victories—
A battle which, if won, means that we men can push all terrors
Back beyond the submarine nets, across the face of the waters,
Driving it cowering deep between the distantmost stars.
After us all ships will pass where these nets now hang;
And children will swim in these waters.

—Franklin B. Folsom
2nd Prize Winner

See Page 17 for other prize-winning poems

TORPEDO

What fiend produced this savage comet — carved
This cold, aquatic arrow, so exact
That doom seethes in its deadly path and hounds
Its victim . . . like a predestined fact?
Who fashioned murder thus, so exquisite
In its precision? What diabolist
Gave this electric fury life, and sent
It springing through the waves? Out of the mist
The voices of the dead: *Almighty God*
We heard a terrifying serpent breath.
And saw this wild, envenomed thing rush forth,
And we could only stand and wait . . . for death. —Kenneth Eldon Johnson
3rd Prize Winner

ELMO, THE SEA-GOING GREMLIN

You can sail on a luxury liner
Or a battered and wheezing old tramp
But there's one guy you're bound to meet up with
That's Elmo, the lad with the lamp.
He's a barnacle crusted old bucko
With seaweed for whiskers and hair
He can swim like a fish thru the ocean
And fly like a gull thru the air.
He's got eyes just a-gleaming with phosphorus
And a tail where us humans have feet
His favorite beverage is fuel oil
And raw sailor's his favorite meat.
He's the bane of a sailor's existence
You can't tell what'll be his next antic
From Gibraltar right clear up to Greenland
He's all over the whole North Atlantic.
When the general alarm starts to clatter
And you jump like a brave in a dance
That's when Elmo sneaks right up behind you
And grabs hold of the seat of your pants.
When you make a mad dash on the catwalk
And you suddenly land on your neck
That ain't a big sea that just hit you
It's old Elmo just clearing the deck.
When your mooring line's kinked like spaghetti
And you can't get no steam in the winch
And your feet run afoul of the tangle
Elmo's there with the lamp it's a cinch.
When the galley stove starts in to sputter
And you can't get the water to boil
There ain't nothing wrong with the fittings
Old Elmo diluted the oil.
When you sign on to go down to Houston
And you wind up some place near the Kremlin
It ain't your mistake nor the captain's
It's the work of that sea-going Gremlin.
He's the bane of a seaman's existence
From skipper to seagoing tramp
If you want to get home again safely
Watch out for the lad with the lamp.

—Julian Prager, A. B. Seaman

Wounded Sailor Aids Bond Drive

By Murray Davis*

"There were 19 of us who got off in a lifeboat. It was Jan. 14, 1942. Twelve froze to death, and of the seven picked up one died later and five had amputations. Two lost legs above the knee, two below the knee and I lost both feet at the ankles."

The speaker was Philip Wold, who now lives at the Seamen's House YMCA, 550 W. 20th St., and he said his chief regret was that he couldn't return to the sea and earn money to buy War Bonds.

Mr. Wold related his war experience today at the Janet Roper Club for Merchant Seamen, 3 E. 67th St., amid the comfortable appointments of the home of the late Thomas Fortune Ryan, which was turned over, complete, to the Seamen's Church Institute by the millionaire's grandchildren.

Progress of the Fourth Loan drive is a live topic of conversation in the club. There is concern among the seamen and the club's canteen workers over the slowness of individual purchasers to meet their state goal of $911,000,000. With less than a week left before the drive ends Feb. 15, only 60 per cent of the individual goal had been reached.

"It seems ridiculous that anything has to be done to stimulate people to buy bonds," Mrs. W. A. Sillars said as she bought a bond from Mrs. William J. Dwyer, whose husband was killed two years ago on his first trip as a merchant seaman. Mrs. Sillars is buying bonds for the day her husband returns to her. She refuses to accept the role of widow despite the fact that her husband's ship last was seen Sept. 22, 1942.

"I don't know that it has sunk," she said. "It just disappeared."

Although Mrs. Dwyer has sold more than $80,000 worth of Fourth War Loan bonds, she insists she is no saleswoman. She got a $5000 cash purchase and a $75,000 pledge on behalf of the AFL from John Hawks, business agent of the Seafarers International Union of North America, Atlantic & Gulf District, and more than $1000 from friends.

In the last war the Ryan home was the Central Park Officers' Club for all branches of our military services and those of the Allies. It was one of the first clubs of its kind.

**World-Telegram Staff Writer, February 10, 1944*

World Telegram Photo

Standing, Seamen Ceylon T. Rich, Patrick Gallagher, Philip Wold; Seated, Mrs. William J. Dwyer and Mrs. W. A. Sillars.

Photo by Marie Higginson

Seamen's Wives Aid War Bond Sale at Janet Roper Club, February 8th.

Left to right, Mrs. Harold Carson, Mrs. John Chiles, Mrs. Harry Chase, Mrs. Albert Duane and Lt. Commander Harold Carson a chief engineer, and Lt. Cyril Martinek, a mate.

During each War Loan Drive the Institute's ship visitors have sold many thousands of dollars to crews of tankers, freighters and transports at the pay-offs in New York Harbor. The Institute is an issuing agent for War Bonds.

The Legacy

By James Farquharson, Ship's Engineer

OF all the places I have re-visited lately, with a lapse in between of a quarter of a century, namely, from World War I to World War II, the greatest advancement I noted was in the City of Durban, S. A., and Karachi, N. W. India. The latter place brought vivid recollections of a rather amusing incident which occurred to me when joining a vessel called the SS "Fan Sang", a China collier, which was then running between Bombay, Karachi and Basra-Iraq. On taking over from the Chief Engineer he mentioned to me he was leaving me a rather rotten legacy in the shape of a full-grown rat which shared his cabin, and try his darnedest he could neither catch nor kill the thing. I told the Chief not to worry, that I would find some way to exterminate it, but I reckoned without knowing the wiles and ways of friend rat. As it is fearfully hot in this part of the world, I spent most of my time out of my cabin, but every time I went in, there was friend rat sitting on my settee, bunk or wash-basin, and he threw me a dirty look, as much as to say "What, back already?" and scampered to his hole. Things went on this way for some time, until one night I put an apple in the top of my dringing water bottle, and when I returned to the cabin, there was friend rat regaling himself on fresh fruit, and I realized he knew the water bottle so well he must also have been quenching his thirst out of it unknown to me.

Things began to look rather serious, as bubonic plague was rampant in this part of the world, and rats are the great carriers. I laid in a stock of rat poisons, latest make of rat traps, etc., etc., but friend rat knew all the answers, and when I lay quietly in my bunk with the choicest piece of chicken or cheese for bait he would look up at me with a knowing look, as much as to say, "Wise guy". Things had gotten with me now from a state of mild amusement to a stage of wild desperation, as the plague was on the increase.

Rat Situation Desperate

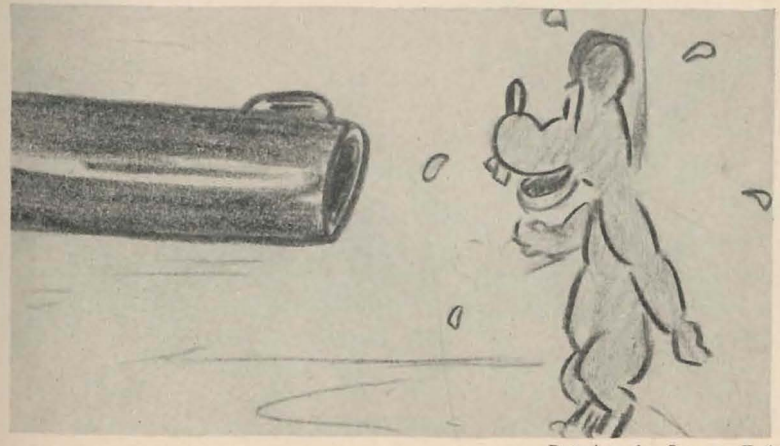
The military authorities were boarding all ships to find out how the rat situation was. In desperation I went to the Captain and borrowed a 32 automatic pistol to see if I could shoot the pest. Well, friend rat and I had now got to the stage of stalking each other, and the fight was on to the finish. My weapon was an automatic, his, disease germs. I went to bed about 8 P. M., but first of all I placed a nice piece of succulent, smelly cheese in the centre of the cabin floor, got into bed with a book, put the electric light out and lit a candle. I rested my hand on the bunk board and carefully trained the shooter on the cheese so that I would not have to move should be get between me and the cheese when I was ready to fire. But he came fifteen minutes later and scouted around to take in the situation and make sure no traps were in the offing, circling the cheese, and ever growing nearer. At last he sat down to gorge himself, but on the off side of the cheese, so that he could keep an eye on me. But in a reckless moment he spied a rather juicy morsel on my side of the cheese and made for it. Now was my time to do my stuff, and I let bang. Immediately after the bang I heard a shrill squeak and saw friend rat scampering for his hole. I jumped up and went for that hole, which was at the end of the settee, as I had now visions of a wounded rat dying between the wooden lining and steel bulkhead of the cabin. Friend rat had collapsed halfway through the hole, and I put the gun close up to his lower extremities and drilled a bullet through him longitudinally. I picked him up as

he was gasping his last, and with his knowing little eyes he almost said, "I too have left you a legacy." The hunting season being over, I retired to bed to sleep this time, perchance to dream of friend rat, not knowing the dirty trick he had pulled on me even in death.

Next day the purser was sitting talking to me in my cabin when a very young rat ran up his knee, and I picked it up and threw it out of the porthole and mumbled something about the ship being infested with rats. That night, upon entering my cabin, after dinner, I was amazed to see three young rats crawling around on the floor—and then the awful truth dawned on me. It wasn't a *He* I had killed—it was a *She*. This was a nice kettle of fish, and by now two of our coolie crew were down with plague. I immediately thought about dismantling my cabin down to the bare iron to see how many more young rats were there, but on second thought decided they might come out as the other four had done to look for food, seeing their larder had been shot up.

I spread a large sheet of fly-catching paper in front of the hole one night, and next morning I had to review the most pitiful sight of starvation I have

(Continued on Page 11)



Drawings by Seaman T.A.B.

Lifeboat

By Seaman David Harris

EDITOR'S NOTE: *"LIFEBOAT" a 20th Century Fox production, written by John Steinbeck and produced by Alfred Hitchcock, tells a tense, dramatic, moving story of nine people—six men and three women—survivors of a torpedoed ship, adrift in a 26-foot open boat, adrift in mid-Atlantic. The cast includes Tallulah Bankhead, Henry Hull, Mary Anderson, John Hodiak, William Bendix, Walter Slezak, Hume Cronyn and Canada Lee. A Nazi officer is rescued, and the story of how the other characters react to him, and he to them, makes a graphic and moving drama. We asked Seaman David Harris, who has survived such an experience, to review the picture here.*

"LIFEBOAT" should become the most talked about picture of the year. I wish I could write "talked over", for it deserves to be. Here in one picture are presented the main ideas abounding in America today regarding war and the enemy.

The theme is taken from life. The merchant seaman, long a witness of the rapine and destruction misnamed the "New Order", knows there is no common ground for us and the enemy. But there are doubters, as in real life, that war has any significance for them. The gradual realization that it is not a question of whether they should let the "New Order" alone, but what they must do because the "New Order" would not let them alone, forms the plot.

The moodiness of the picture induces thought. I believe that is what makes it a very good picture. You select the character whose ideas most resemble yours toward the war and the enemy—sit back, and watch what happens to those ideas.

This won't be a popular picture. Few invitations to think are. But the fighting man can say and probably will one day, "I tested all my ideas, the ideas I brought with me from home, some I abandoned, some new ones I gathered — whatever they are, they are my ideas and they have been tested in the heat of battle."

A Scene from "Life Boat"

The picture could not have been made without the cooperation of the United States Navy and the Merchant Marine. The Navy permitted a carefully investigated camera crew to film certain ocean backgrounds, and the Merchant Marine briefly loaned the studio two modern 26-foot steel lifeboats (which could not be bought, at any price.)

I Remember

By Bo's'n Herbert Colcord

AT THE Seamen's Church Institute at 25 South Street in New York City, on the 4th floor is a picture of the ship Gov. Robie, towing out under Brooklyn Bridge. This picture has always brought back to me memories of the old sailing ship days. She was at that time, some 40 odd years ago, considered to be one of the crack packet ships in the China trade. At that time she was under the command of Capt. Amos Nichols of Searsport, Maine. She carried a crew of 26 men and 2 boys, and was bound to Hong Kong, China, loaded with case oil. I think that she chartered to have the same for $.27 a case—she carried about 57 hundred cases. I was at that time 18 years old and got a foolish notion in my head I wanted to be a sailor, had had about 11 years in my early childhood on the sea with my parents and sister, so it was not all new stuff to me.

I remember it was the last of March and raw and cold when I sailed aboard the Gov. Robie. We finished loading in the stream. At that time it wasn't so easy to ship a crew. The sailors' boarding houses would get men for so much blood money, say $30. or $40. per man. The wages were $25. per month for A. B.'s and $18. for ordinary seamen. I got $16., boy's wages. The boarding house runners grabbed any old drunk, and only two Americans in the crew forward. The mate, Mr. Hanson, was a Dutchman—by the way, he received $40. per month. We finished loading and then the crew arrived, and were they a crew! They came from all walks of life, and only about four men could steer. We towed out in a snow storm, and if you think setting sails and getting under way in a square-rigger in a snow storm is a snap, just try it.

We ran into fair weather in a few days, and after the men got straightened out, things looked pretty good. We picked up the N. E. Trade winds, and headed her for the Cape of Good Hope. The only thing of interest that happened on the run down was a collision with an unknown barkentine off the River Platte, and we sure were lucky not to have been sunk. It happened at 4 A. M. —the barkentine was running free and we were close hauled. She luffed to,

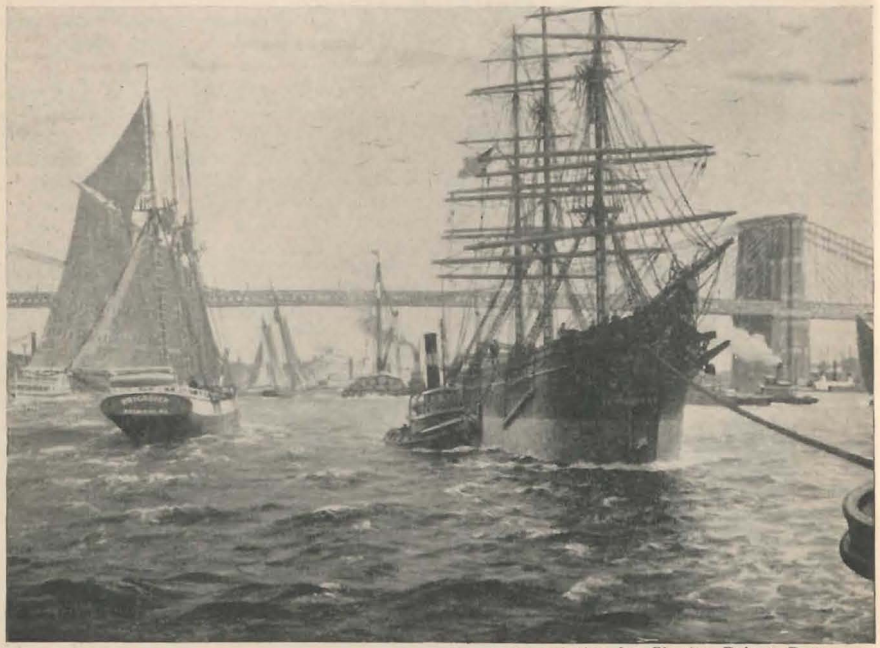
EDITOR'S NOTE: *Bosun Colcord is an instructor in seamanship in the Institute's Merchant Marine School.*

right under our bow, and head reached just enough so the ring on her spanker boom hit our foretopmast backstays and cut them off—other than that, we were not damaged.

After we crossed the "Line," as I remember we had light variable winds and fair weather, with the exception of now and then some heavy thunder squalls. We went through the Straits of Sunda and had a good passage to China. By the way, Hong Kong was at that time very pretty—it is built on the side of a mountain, and one had to go from one street to another up stairs. There were no houses to speak of, and the taxis were hauled by Chinese. They made good time at that. After we discharged our cargo, the ship was sold to the Alaskan Fisheries and we delivered her to Tacoma, Washington. We loaded sand ballast and made the trip around the Pacific in 42 days. All in all I was on the ship six months and when I paid off my pay was $65. (I had drawn some in China.) She went into the Alaskan Fisheries trade. After some years she was cut down to a coal barge and towed around on the coast. Some 10 or 15 years ago she sank off the Delaware with another barge, and ended up the way most all of the old wooden ships did, either they were wrecked or burned or were listed as missing.

Bo's'n Herbert Colcord is busy making a knot which he calls the "Victory" knot — the knot with which to hang Hitler. No, it's not the "hangman's knot" familiar to seafaring men, nor is it a slip knot. The Bo's'n instructs merchant seamen and Coastguardsmen in the fine art of knots and splices.

It wasn't then much like it is now—wooden ships and iron men, then,—now, *iron* ships and *also iron* men!



From the painting by Charles Robert Patterson

IN THE DAYS OF THE CAPE HORN TRADE—EAST RIVER, 1894

The above reproduction shows the East River in 1894, with schooners, sailing lighters, deep water vessels and steamboats. The ship, "Governor Robie," with to'gallant-masts housed to allow her to pass under the Brooklyn Bridge, is headed for her loading berth.

Mediterranean Adventures

By Lt. (jg) Cyril Martinek, U. S. Maritime Service

THE six days and nights I spent at Salerno on a Liberty ship loaded with gasoline and explosives while enemy divebombers continually tried to sink us was the hottest experience I've had in two world wars and several revolutions.

As a Navy man I served in Mexican and Central American up-risings and re-entered the Navy as a Chief Petty Officer in the first World War. After the Armistice I sailed in the Merchant Marine a few years until the bottom fell out.

The Pearl Harbor episode prompted me to try to re-enter the Navy but I was turned down for being over age and then discovered the Maritime service was the only front line outfit with confidence in the old timers and no age limit.

I sailed the Caribbean Sea in 1942, both of my ships being sunk on the first trip after I left them.

Last year I sailed the Mediterranean on shuttle duty for nearly six months hauling troops and ammunition from Africa to Sicilian and Italian invasion points and returning with prisoners. We had a lot of action but no serious casualties. Our crack Navy gun crew composed mostly of Texan cowboys would always spoil the bomber's aim and some times his future.

The merchant crew were mostly veterans of former torpedoings, the chief steward being a survivor of Dunkirk, and four torpedoed ships.

We were a long way from home and its luxuries but the unconventional life we led made up for it. The attire worn by some of the boys or rather the lack of it would have made a strip dancer seem overdressed.

The chief "Pan-handlers" of the front line were the naval landing barge crews. They were frequently lost from their base and would be in need of, and borrowing bread, vegetables and water.

Landing barge crews had first access to captured enemy equipment and used to conduct a brisk barter and exchange business with merchant and transport crews. The latter would trade food, clothing and other objects for enemy equipment and then on their arrival in the States the custom officials would confiscate the articles.

Our ship having received no mail or news from the States during our entire absence I was hopefully surprised at Salerno to see a crew member of an invasion barge next to our ship sitting unconcernedly on a filled gasoline drum reading a month old Chicago newspaper while enemy planes poised for their next dive. I shouted down an offer of almost anything for the paper only to have him ask for "two loaves of fresh bread". He scampered up the ship's side, stuck the bread into his blouse and returned unscathed

Lieut. Martinek bringing back trophies from 1943 Mediterranean Invasions.

Right hand: Italian sword, German rocket pistol and German gas mask; Left hand: Sicilian bolo (knife made in Conn., U.S.A.; German gas mask can, Sicilian earthen urn (dwelling drinking water supply); Note urns are well made as they are frequently the only object remaining complete in a thoroughly demolished dwelling.

to the barge just as the bomber dived.

We stopped at Gibraltar on our return, thinking our continual alert was over and found ourself subject to a new form of attack.

The harbor authorities warned us to disregard black-outs and to keep a constant watch on the ship's water line all night with a flash light, and at the first sign of air bubbles to notify the numerous picket boats patrolling the harbor. About midnight our vigilance was rewarded with the tell-tale bubbles and our signal brought forth a harbor barrage of depth bombs. A nearby picket boat brought a diver to inspect the hull in the vicinity of the bubbles but he could not report anything. An hour later the picket commander signalled "secure" and eventually came over and related the night's activity. The depth bombs had forced the "human torpedo" to the surface and capture. A submarine torpedo had a clamp welded on to the explosive head and a time fuse installed. Saddle seats and manual controls were attached to the speed and depth mechanism. A crew of two Nazis equipped with a Munson type of submerged lung operated the torpedo.

Riding on the surface under cover of darkness the torpedo would submerge when within several hundred feet of the ship and glide up to the vessel's hull, in search of the bilge keel or rolling chock. The clamp would be fastened to the latter, the dogs loosened, the timer set and the body and crew of the torpedo would return from whence it came.

A few hours later the bottom would blow out and leave the vessel beached in company with numerous others around there.

Editor's Note: Lieut. Martinek is now staying at the Seamen's Church Institute of New York while studying for a raise in grade.

"Shoo shoo baby
Papa's off to the seven seas"

Photo by Marie Higginson

The youngest visitor to the Janet Roper Club is 15-months old Harold Corbett who is shown here with his proud father, Frank Corbett, a graduate of the U. S. Maritime Training Station at Hoffman Island.

"For the battle of the Atlantic had started; started against *two enemies* — the U. boats and the sea".

By Hanson W. Baldwin, "The Navy at War"

"GOD BLESS THE SEA"

By G. H. Burrage,
Vice Admiral, U. S. Navy (Ret'd)

THE SEA

1. Gives us the rain which turns the dry land into a garden.
2. Gives us food; oysters, lobsters and fish from anchovies and sardines to whales.
3. Gives us the finest highway around the world at no cost to make and no upkeep expenses.
4. Gives us a place to play, fishing, boating.
5. The land is fixed, the sea keeps within its limits; but the wind knows no restrictions.
6. The wind makes seamen out of landsmen. The hurricane makes heroes out of seamen, who have justifiable pride in overcoming difficulties.
7. The shore is where seamen get into trouble.
8. The sea is man's good friend.

God bless the Sea.

Activities at the Janet Roper Club As Sketched by Seaman J. A. B.

THE LEGACY

(*Continued from Page 5*)

ever witnessed. There they were, eight of them, all held fast by the paper, and all too weak from want of food to do much struggling. So that when I lifted the sheet, I was able to bury them in the briny sea en masse. By this time we were close on Basra with a few more of our crew down with Bubonic, and I knew the military would gut the ship, my cabin included. I was quite correct in my surmise, for the moment we arrived we were shunted to an outlandish creek for days in quarantine and the authorities concentrated on the cabin where thirteen rats had been killed. As the medical officer came on board every morning he kept asking me how I felt, and when I asked him what was the big idea he remarked, "Well, chief, quite a lot of plague around, although it doesn't happen to bother white people much, but still, thirteen is regarded as a pretty unlucky number." Well, for me it must have been lucky this once, otherwise I wouldn't be writing this today for THE LOOKOUT.

Seamen Enjoy Ice and Roller Skating Parties

Arranged for them by the JANET ROPER CLUB

Photos by Marie Higginso

Ice Skating on the 59th Street Lake, Central Park.

Frank Smith and his bride try the Cer Park ice.

Roller Skating at the Columbus Circle Rink. In the center, Miss Elsie Arnold of the "OKLAHOMA" company.

Bill Schultz leans on a handy sign.

Vincent Knapp attempts an "inside spi figure.

Youth and the Sea

By Paul Patrick Poster, 3rd Mate

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The following story is by one of the youngest officers in the American Merchant Marine. Paul Poster (age 19) is a third mate, having completed his training at the U. S. Officers' School at Fort Trumbull, New London and is now at the Institute, awaiting a ship.*

The other story is about a 19-year old purser, Alexander Waigandt, who was decorated for heroism.

"I WAS torpedoed the first time in August, 1942, when I was aboard an old freighter of about 1915, called the "Balladier". I was sleeping at the time. I got out of my bunk and ran up to get to the lifeboat. This could not be launched at first as it got caught in a fishplate, and we could not get it off. The ship was sinking fast. We finally got the boat away, but most of the men fell off. Some got back, but the others drowned. We stayed eighty hours on a raft. We could do nothing, we just had to wait for daylight. Finally, about daybreak a merchant ship came along and picked us up, taking us into the port where it was headed at the time. It took us three days to get there, submarines chasing us all the time. Quite a few of the men were injured, thirteen died from exposure and shock, and some of the men had been trapped in the ship and went down with her. It took the ship only eight minutes to go down.

"Most of us went to the hospital for a check-up and to rest. We then expected to come back to the U. S., but were taken to England.

"The second time I was torpedoed was in July, 1943, when I was aboard a new Liberty ship, the 'Thomas Sinnickson'. I was returning from a long trip around the world. It was nearly 3:30 in the morning, when I was to go on watch. I was just about to have some coffee when first one and then another torpedo hit us. Everyone came up in time, and the lifeboat crew went into the boats, but the captain told us not to abandon the ship. We took off the wounded and put them on a corvette. At daylight we went back to the ship and had some breakfast. The corvette was to come back in the afternoon to take us off. She came back, and a skeleton crew was left aboard to try to salvage the ship, but this could not be done, so the captain signalled to the corvette to come back and pick them up, as he was going to abandon the ship. This was done, and the corvette fired some shots to finally sink the ship so that it would not be a menace to other passing ships.

"The men in this case had been very well trained. They knew their stations and had been drilled. We were taken to Brazil where we stayed for a month, then we flew to Miami and returned to New York by train.

"My last trip, aboard a tanker, was short and quiet. There were a few submarines, but not many. The men were well drilled, and there was no trouble.

"Although there are not very many submarines now, drills and training are never relaxed. We had good food on all the trips. If I had my life to live over again, and it was peacetime, I should certainly choose the sea as a profession, but I don't want to be torpedoed again. I was the youngest aboard, only 19."

Young Purser Cited for Heroism

By J. P. McKeown*

A PURSER at eighteen, a hero at nineteen; five years at sea, parading service ribbons from three war theatres; newly awarded the Merchant Marine Distinguished Service Award—Alexander Waigand, Sec. 47M, Hosp. Corps, is news!

Waigand was recently guest star of a presentation ceremony on board the *American Mariner*, on the occasion of his being awarded the medal by Capt. Edward Macauley, member of the Maritime Commission. Waigand figured heroically in a fire that broke out on board the "Daniel Huger" when she was bombed in dock last May at Bone, Algeria. At the time of the attack the *Huger* was loaded with 6000 tons of high octane gasolene, urgently awaiting delivery. Seventeen German planes peeled off on her, one of the sticks of bombs crashing home, killing a Navy gun crew man and the third mate; and setting fire to the 'tween decks.

Soon after, terrific explosions shot up geysers of flaming gasolene, breaking in showers of fire over the two holds. Flames towered 300 feet above the deck. The order was given to throw all five ammunition overboard, flood the magazine, and abandon ship.

The shore fire brigade dashed up and after a flash survey of the situation moved to save the ship with Foamite.

**Reprinted from "The Heaving Line", U. S. M. T. S., Sheepshead Bay.*

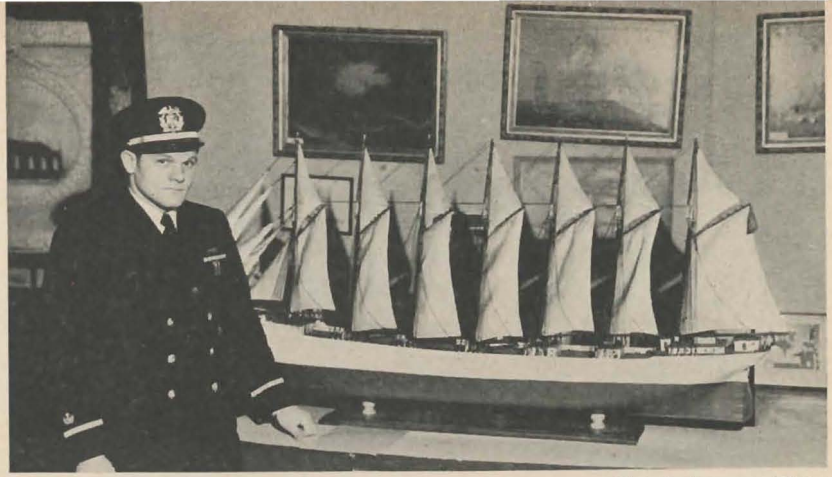


Photo by Lawrence Thornton

Paul Poster, 19-year old mate, poses beside a model of the seven-masted schooner "Thomas W. Lawson" in the Nautical Museum of the Institute.

To secure for this it was necessary that the fire be prevented from heating the bulkhead white hot in the hold adjacent, and touching off 200 gals. of gasolene in drums directly beneath—which would be the signal for the whole 6000 tons to go up in one "glorious Fourth", taking the ship with them. A seemingly suicide detail—yet four men immediately stood forward to volunteer, and Waigand was one of them.

For four hours in that inhuman heat, alone with hell in that hold—hell that might momentarily break loose—three men and a boy fought panic and collapse, to keep a steady stream playing on the overheated bulkhead—standing there right over the gasolene drums. Waigand was the boy; became a man in that nightmare of four hours standing up to death.

Rear Admiral Emory S. Land, chairman of the Maritime Commission, said in the citation:

"His willingness to risk his life to save his ship, and his heroic conduct during the fire are in keeping with the finest traditions of the sea."

How did Waigand feel during the fire?

"Didn't have time to feel, or think—just to keep that hose on her. The four hours went by like nothing. When it was all over I had a nice case of the jitters".

How did it feel when the DSA was being pinned on him?

"I think I'd rather go through another bombing than go through that again."

Asked for any marked reactions he experienced as a direct result of the incident, Waigand highly commended his skipper, Captain J. B. Adams, to whose personal inspiration, leadership, instruction and attitude throughout the entire trip—he attributes any heroic act of the men under his command. Also, he said, the crew had made three voyages, seen three enemy actions, on the *Daniel Huger,* and it was a personal thing with them to see to it that "the old girl continued to carry on." Waigand has made arrangements to go right back out, same skipper, same ship (if possible) as fast as he gets his Hospital Corps diploma here.

Waigand's record reads like a primer for success for the sea adventurer. The normally tender age of fourteen found Waigand signed on as deckhand on a private yacht making regular coastwise pleasure cruises. He did this for two summers; in the winter months attending Maritime School from his home on Long Island.

His first crossing was made on a Panamanian vessel; his age ruled him off the American ships. A year later, however, he was "deckin'" for lines flying the American flag. He wanted to become an A.B. and eventually work up to mate, but he was disqualified on a color blindness count. So Waigand instead settled for Purser for his career at sea, and he seems to have a way of getting what he goes after; he was made Purser on board the *S.S. Ballot,* Lykes Bros. Steamship Co., in June of '42.

He wears the bars for service in the Mediterranean-Middle East and Atlantic war areas, the Combat Bar with two stars for abandoning ship on two separate occasions, now he wears (only the bar) the Merchant Marine Distinguished Service Medal for heroism at sea.

We are proud to have him aboard.

Youngest Shipmaster

ONE OF the youngest "any tonnage, any ocean" licensed shipmasters in the American Merchant Marine directed fire-fighting that saved a British ammunition vessel in the Mediterranean when flames threatened the steamer recently, according to a war service story of the Merchant Marine which the War Shipping Administration released.

He is Captain Amos Baldwin Beinhart, 27 years old, of 705 Wyndmoor Avenue, Philadelphia, Pa. A native of Washington, D. C., and graduate of Washington-Lee High School, Arlington, Va., and the New York State Merchant Marine Academy, he has been at sea since 1937, rising from cadet and able seaman to master.

Captain Beinhart's Liberty Ship, the JOHN G. CARLISLE, was berthed off Algeria one evening when sparks and smoke were seen issuing from cargo hold ventilators of the nearby cargo vessel. Upon request of the British master, Captain Beinhart flashed an alarm by blinker, rang his own ship's fire alarm, and ordered the engines readied.

Warning came that the blaze was in a hold adjacent to one packed with ammunition. The deck department, engine crew, and half the Navy gunners were ordered to stay aboard their vessel, the JOHN G. CARLISLE. All others were ordered off the Liberty Ship and onto the quay in expectation the British vessel would blow up.

It became apparent that the British vessel's fire-fighting equipment was unequal to the task. Captain Beinhart provided hose from his ship by hooking several lengths together. This was swung across the 100 feet separating the ships and the Liberty Ship began pumping water. For an hour and a half the pumping continued. Meantime, shore fire engines arrived and the crewmen of the American ship passed short hose to the burning Britisher. When the flames finally were extinguished only one injury was reported — a British seaman suffered burns.

The JOHN G. CARLISLE, one of the hundreds of Liberty Ships that are the backbone of the Victory Fleet, was launched at the Richmond, Calif., shipyard of Permanente Metals Corporation, January 23, 1943. She is operated for the War Shipping Administration by the De La Rama Steamship Company of New York City.

Veterans of the Sea

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Seamen call them "rust buckets", those overage, obsolescent ships which weren't scrapped because they were needed so badly to carry vital supplies. Following are stories of several of these veterans which have now been released by the War Shipping Administration; the WHITE CLOVER, a 23-year old freighter; the JOHN WORTHINGTON, 23 years old; the DEER LODGE, 24 years old. In the shipping world these are regarded as vessels of ancient vintage, but they came through with flying colors during enemy attacks.*

WHITE CLOVER

Super-seamanship, in a grim game of tag with aerial torpedoes, saved the American merchant steamer WHITE CLOVER when it was subjected to mass attack while on convoy to Russia. So brilliant was the winning of the game that four members of the crew and the commander of the Navy armed guard received recognition for gallantry from King George VI of Great Britain.

Proceeding from a United Kingdom port to North Russia the WHITE CLOVER was attacked by a concentration of Heinckels. Three of the torpedo shooting planes singled out the 23-year-old vessel as their particular target in the convoy.

"The aircraft converged on the vessel from astern," related Captain Lintlom, "flying at an altitude lower than the ship's mast and launching five torpedoes. The torpedoes were first observed approaching from the starboard quarter. The ship was swung 'hard left' rudder sufficiently to clear the first torpedo by about 50 feet and the next by a much smaller margin by the stern.

Captain Lintlom said the torpedoes were dropped from 300 to 500 yards distance from the WHITE CLOVER.

The master's report concludes:

"I am proud to report that during this concentrated attack my naval gun crew, as well as the ship's personnel, who helped to man the guns, carried on in a manner that would gladden the heart of any old sea-dog. One of the attacking planes, unable to veer off or to gain altitude, was compelled to fly between the second and third columns. It was filled so full of lead that the sheer weight of it caused it to drop in flames off our port bow. Another plane veered off by the stern, making a sharp bank about 100 feet away. It also was filled with lead and although it managed to keep flying at that time it is very doubtful whether it ever reached home."

Deer Lodge

A SUBMARINE finally got the American steamer DEER LODGE but not before that 24-year-old veteran of the Seven Seas had rounded out her long and useful career by delivering vital war cargoes and surviving intense and prolonged bombing.

The DEER LODGE, built at Portland, Oreg., in 1919, for the U. S. Shipping Board, and operated for WSA by Moore-McCormack Line Inc., was sent down by a torpedo off Port Elizabeth, South Africa, last spring. Only two men lost their lives in the disaster. The ship had already delivered what proved to be her final load of munitions.

It was not the vessel's first brush with death. For two months she survived the repeated Nazi bombing of Murmansk. There she was severely damaged and was able to put to sea again only after persistent and ingenious repairs were carried on in a "home-made" drydock while enemy planes continued to pound the North Russia port. After eluding the U-boats which had not been curbed in the North Atlantic last year, the DEER LODGE entered Kola Inlet and proceeded to put her military cargo ashore. German bombers interrupted the job daily, but it was finally accomplished and the empty freighter swung at anchor to await assembly of a convoy.

Due to the port defenses, the Nazi aim was far from accurate and finally a bomb intended for the wharves fell close to the DEER LODGE'S stern, severely damaging the shell plating and making her unsafe for sea. Then ensued two months of repair under most adverse conditions. Meantime the crew and Navy armed guard stood by the ship's guns and not only defended themselves but aided the defense of Murmansk.

A survey of the ship's damage convinced Chief Engineer Frank F. Townsend, of Old Brooklyn Road, Sickleville, N. J., who had served in Moore-McCormack Line's engine rooms since 1929, that the vessel could be saved. He was certain she could be made tight and staunch without benefit of regular drydock or machine shop, provided he and his men could obtain materials.

Townsend relayed his ideas to the ship's master, Captain Alexander S. Henry, of 106 Hiltz Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, and the latter agreed. However, getting the materials was a big problem. The Russians were too busy defending the port to be of much aid. Jagged edges of the hole in the vessel's hull had to be cut away and she needed steel plates to be drilled and bolted in place to make her watertight. The outlook was indeed gloomy—no one could find the necessary burning apparatus for the wound-covered plating.

But Townsend and Henry never gave up, and finally, with the assistance of Commander S. B. Frankel, U. S. Naval Attache, the required material was found and allocated to the task. Meantime, temporary repairs had been made with timber and even canvas, the after hold pumped nearly dry, and the forward hold flooded to raise the stern. Under Captain Henry's direction the ship had been worked close inshore, adjacent to a shelving mud flat.

Improvised Drydock

Then hawsers were run ashore and looped over thick tree stumps. When an unusually high tide came the vessel's after winches tautened the lines, the stern slid up on the mud flat, and when the tide receded it was possible to work in the improvised muddy "drydock."

From then on, as each tide went out, the chief engineer and his men labored to replace the temporary patching. Before many tides passed, strong steel plates made the after hold watertight, bolts drawing the plates against improvised gaskets, and the vessel was ready for her second launching.

All weight that could be moved toward the bow was shifted and when an exceptionally high tide came the strain was put on the previously lowered bow anchors. The 6187-ton steamer stirred, then inched ahead and slid off the mudbank into the water—another capable supply ship back in the service of the United Nations.

For saving the ship, President Roosevelt, through the Maritime Commission, awarded Captain Henry the Merchant Marine Distinguished Service Medal.

In addition to his praise of the master and Chief Engineer Townsend, Commander Frankel commended Chief Steward Kal Petersen, 5 North Broadway, Baltimore, Md., for his ingenuity in stretching the limited food supply through the long period of peril. The armed guard officer, Ensign (now Lieutenant j.g.) Thomas E. Delate, USNR, of 143-35 - 38th Avenue, Flushing, N. Y., was commended by Frankel "for his defense of the ship, the courage he inspired in his men, and his coolness under fire."

"The conduct and morale of the officers, crew, and armed guard of the SS DEER LODGE have set a high standard and have earned the admiration of the harbor officials at Murmansk and of this office," commented Commander Frankel.

The DEER LODGE'S final and fatal encounter with the enemy occurred early one morning. When the submarine was sighted about 30 miles off the East Africa Coast, Captain Irving G. Jensen, of 57 Park Terrace West, New York, N. Y., swung his vessel around and attempted to ram the U-boat. The sudden swerve stripped the gears of the steering engine.

As the change to hand steering was made the first torpedo struck. Within half an hour another hit the wounded ship and she began going down by the bow. "Abandon ship" was sounded and all of the crew except two escaped on lifeboats and rafts. The survivors were picked up by a trawler, a naval patrol craft, and a British hospital ship.

JOHN WORTHINGTON

Defiant of serious damage inflicted upon her by a torpedo, an over-age American tanker has reached a home port after an epic 4,600-mile dash.

The vessel which refused to quit is the JOHN WORTHINGTON, owned and operated by the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey and built by the G. M. Standifer Construction Corp., World War I shipbuilder, at Vancouver, Wash., 23 years ago.

The ship was in convoy about 50 miles off Brazil, when just before midnight a mate saw the explosion of a torpedo which struck a ship in the next convoy column on the starboard side. General alarm was sounded and in little more than a minute a torpedo smashed into the JOHN WORTHINGTON, penetrating the number eight starboard tank.

There was a violent explosion which caused the ship to list heavily and to lurch almost at right angles off her course. The master was on the bridge at the time. He gave the helmsman the order to bring the vessel back to the convoy course. She answered the wheel, indicating the steering gear was undamaged and fought her way back into her position in line.

Examination by the chief engineer and chief mate showed that the engine room had suffered only minor damage. However, there was considerable damage to the hull. Three main tanks and the bulkheads within and separating them were knocked out and flooded. Despite the serious damage, the master, Capt. G. J. Jertsen, decided to try and stay with the convoy.

When day broke a more extensive survey of the damage was made. As a result, it was decided to leave the convoy and proceed at full speed to the nearest port, where temporary repairs could be made.

The hazardous run of 1,900 miles to Port of Spain, Trinidad, then began. There, after further examination and some repair, the master decided that the ship could chance the run to Galveston. This 2,700-mile voyage also was successfully accomplished.

The report of the JOHN WORTHINGTON'S adventure states that at no time was the attacking submarine seen.

Captain Jertsen's home is at 6735 Ridge Boulevard, Brooklyn, N. Y. Crew members rendering meritorious service in the difficult task of bringing the veteran tanker safely home were:

Chief Mate Frank L. Hooper, 2519 Edgewood Drive, Baton Rouge, La.; Third Mate Frederick Arfstrom, R.F.D. 3, Traverse City, Mich.; Second Assistant Engineer David Wilson Dutton, Filton, Del.; Fireman Harry Davidson, West Barnstable, Mass.; Able Seaman Stephen C. Truesdell, 47 Sixteenth Street, Jacksonville, Fla.; Able Seaman V. A. Larsson, Helsingborg, Sweden; Ordinary Seaman William M. Franklin, Route 2, Laneville, Texas; Engineer Cadet Robert J. Rhein, 2101 Feldman Avenue, Norwood, Ohio; Oiler Herbert Hathaway, New Street, Lebanon, Ohio.

THE SAILOR'S HABITAT*

Grey expanse that never ceases,
Dark haunt of fearful gloom
And deep, mysterious abysses,
That never man can plumb.
The curling waves are carried
House-high by the stormy blast.
Many a man lies buried
Whose life on the sea was cast.
Even becalmed, the sea is appalling.
Yet now that the war wolves lower
The sailor still follows his calling,
That his flag blow again from the tower.
In the dark, with a moment's shiver,
He thinks of men in distress.
He knows the sea and its whisper,
Yet bravely challenges his death.

—By Lambert Houmes,
Oiler, Netherlands Merchant Marine
Special Award in Marine Poetry Contest

*This poem was translated from the Dutch.

THE WAVE

Beyond the gulls' furthest reach
It began to seek this beach.
Very neatly it is curled
Its strength all tightly furled,
Till, like an umbrella near the shore,
It begins to open more and more,
And begins to make its' arch
Tall and green as a larch,
Taller and taller it grows
Till it bends down to touch its' toes,
And down, down like a challenge hurled
On all the beaches of the world!
It has burst into snow,
It has made a Christmas of this beach;
But snow must go, must go,
Back to the gulls' furthest reach.

—By Shepard Rifkin, Messman
Honorable Mention

A Year-Round Welcome to the Seafarer:

Seamen's Church Institute of New York

Courtesy U. S. Maritime Com
and Pictorial Statistics