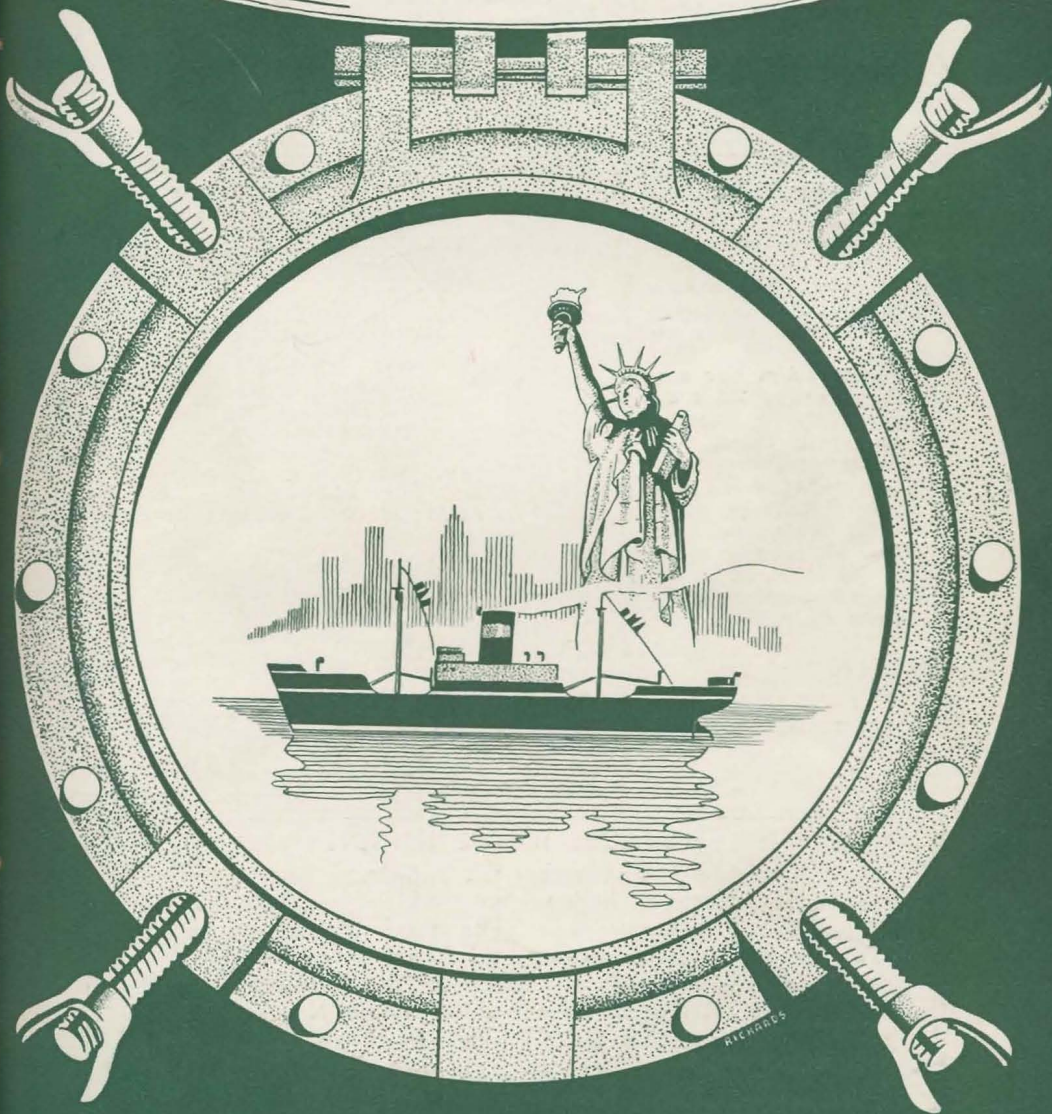


# The LOOKOUT

*Seamen's Issue*



"LORD, BE WITH ALL THE SHIPS THAT SAIL TONIGHT!"

### Sanctuary

O Lord God, when thou givest to thy servants to endeavor any great matter, grant us also to know that it is not the beginning but the continuing of the same until it be thoroughly finished which yieldeth the true glory.

Sir Francis Drake  
Master Mariner  
(From the Mainstay, Seamen's Church  
Institute of Newport)

# The Lookout

VOL. XXXIV

August, 1943

No. 8

## 133 Days on a Raft

Editor's Note: In the May issue of THE LOOKOUT we published an account of a Chinese seaman who had survived 130 days on a raft. Since that time, he has come to New York, and we learned that his record voyage was 133 days. Following are more details.

POON LIM, Chinese steward of a torpedoed British freighter, who surpassed all records by surviving 133 days alone on a life raft, was honored at a ceremony held on Friday, July 16, at the Seamen's Church Institute of New York, in the British Merchant Navy Club.

Presiding was Leonard H. Leach, Acting British Consul General in New York, who officially informed Poon Lim that he has been awarded the *British Empire Medal* and invited him to England to receive the decoration personally from King George VI. The Chinese Consul General, Dr. Tsune-Chi Yu paid tribute to the Chinese seaman's remarkable achievement.

On behalf of the Ben Line, the company by which Poon Lim was employed, Mr. Leach also presented him with an inscribed gold wrist watch.

Poon Lim, aged 25 and a native of Hainan, was torpedoed in the South Atlantic in November, 1942, and rescued 133 days later by a fishing boat which subsequently landed him at a Brazilian port. After four weeks in a hospital he was flown to Miami, and placed in the care of the local British Consulate. From Miami he was brought to New York on May 26th. On Flag day he came to the Institute



and represented his country by carrying the Chinese flag.

The citation for Poon Lim's award, published July 13 in the London Gazette, describes his experience as follows:

"When his ship was torpedoed and sunk, Second Steward Poon Lim was washed overboard. After being in the water for about two hours he managed to reach a raft on which he existed alone for 133 days before being picked up by a fishing boat. On the raft there were provisions for about 50 days, but before this time elapsed Poon Lim improvised a fishing hook and line and, using biscuits for bait, caught a number of small fish which he later used for bait for larger fish. He also caught sea gulls which settled on the raft. When the water supply ran out, he was without water for five

## The LOOKOUT

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by the

SEAMEN'S CHURCH  
INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

CLARENCE G. MICHALIS  
President

THOMAS ROBERTS  
Secretary and Treasurer

REV. HAROLD H. KELLEY, D.D.  
Director

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SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE  
OF NEW YORK

Telephone BOWling Green 9-2710

**WANTED:** A set of flags of the United Nations for display in the Institute's Auditorium. The beautiful flags in the first floor Lobby attract much attention and favorable comment from our seamen. A set of 34 flags costs \$200. Will some reader give these, perhaps, as a tribute or memorial to some friend? They will be appreciated by the seamen of the United Nations who make "25 South Street" their home when in New York. Address inquiries to the Rev. Harold H. Kelley, D.D., Director

### 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.

days, but was subsequently able to catch enough rainwater for his needs, using the covering



Marie Higginson Photo

Recent visitors to the British Merchant Navy Club at the Institute were Frank Mitchell, A.B. (left) and Alfred Harvey, A.B. (right) and with them their ship's mascot "Brownie." On the voyage "Brownie" had four pups. The crew kept one pup and gave the rest away to landfolk who were delighted to have them. "Unfortunately," said Harvey, "Our Brownie is not a very good sailor. She usually sleeps in the helmsman's lifejacket up in the wheelhouse when the weather gets a bit rough."

material of his lifejacket for the purpose. Poon Lim displayed exceptional courage, fortitude and resource in overcoming the tremendous difficulties with which he was faced during the long and dangerous voyage on the raft."

British, Chinese and American officials, a party of British Merchant Navy officers and Chinese and British merchant seamen from British ships now in New York attended the ceremony to honor Poon Lim, one of some thousands of Chinese serving in British and Dutch ships since the outset of the war. At the close of the ceremony, the seamen sang "For He's A Jolly Good Fellow" and gave three rousing cheers for their Chinese shipmate.

## "Along Came a Sub"

By A.B. Seaman Arthur George Montaigne

*Photo by Courtesy of "Sea Power"*  
*Editor's Note: This article was written more than a year ago when Nazi U-boats were attacking Allied merchant ships off Montauk Point and other places near New York and before convoys were organized. In contrast, today, sinkings by enemy submarines have declined to such an extent that authorities consider the U-boat menace well under control.*

Newport News for N. Y.

Departure—9:30 A. M.—Thursday—Crew a bit nervous but all fighting mad. Tuesday two ships near us had got it on our way in, just made it ourselves inside submarine net in time. That was Tuesday and the tension had relaxed until now, when we passed a tanker being towed in, her flag at half-mast, her dead still aboard. There is a gaping hole in her side where the torpedo had struck. That's alright, this is war. Further aft in the crew's quarters, shell holes. That

is not war, that's murder. An unarmed tanker, with absolutely no chance to retaliate. Cold meat for anybody. The sub knew she wasn't armed or she would have never surfaced after discharging the torpedo. The crew were silent as we passed. I knew that like myself they were all saying a prayer for the crew of that tanker.

11:30 A. M. Just passed the mosquito net. The patrol boat signalled, "Good luck, you are on your own." That lonesome feeling crept over me. "On our own," on our own. One ship is ahead of us and two behind all unarmed, "all on their own".

11:45 A. M. The pilot has just left us and is being rowed back to the Pilot Boat.

12:00 Noon. Well, here's my relief. 2½ hours at the wheel is enough for anybody especially when the wheel steers hard. We could have had this wheel

fixed if enough money were appropriated or if the people would just take their change in war stamps when they go to the movies or buy liquor. Well, I'm off until 8 o'clock tonight and then I will have to stand a 4 hour wheel watch as we are short three men.

5:00 P. M. Just woke up for supper. Bulletin on the board. Everyone will don their life preserver and keep it on until arrival in N. Y. Sleep with it on. Eat with it on. Steward's Dept. orders are not to feed anyone unless he has his life preserver on.

5:55 P. M. S.O.S. The ship that was ahead of us coming out turned south off Hatteras, and now was being attacked by a sub. S.O.S. We have been torpedoed. S.O.S. We are sinking. Position?? Latitude?? Longitude?? Silence - - - - -

6:30 P. M. S.O.S. Abandoning ship. That water looks cold. So long. "88" (Love and kisses).

7:40 P. M. Just been called to go on watch. Crew are gathered in Crew's Mess discussing torpedoed ship. Feeling better. Ship was heading South that was torpedoed. We are heading North. Maybe we will get through.

8:00 P. M. Relieved the wheel. Still steering hard. Ship is completely blacked out. Two ships behind us also blacked out. Hope they maintain their speed and don't run us down. Can't see a thing outside. Pitch black. Hope nothing blacked out ahead of us runs into us. Too bad for us both if they do. We just have one cargo on board. Ammunition.

8:30 P. M. S.O.S. S.O.S. S.O.S. "We have been torpedoed. Sinking fast. S.O.S. S.O.S. Latitude? Longitude? Silence - - - - -

Two of us left now. And we are within ten miles of each other. The last one was 20 miles from us. Getting close. Another prayer for the one that just went down. Why am I saying a prayer for them and not ourselves? At least they have a chance to launch a life boat. If a tin-fish gets us there won't be a piece of the ship big enough to float. Oh well, we get a few dollars a day until they get us, then our pay stops one way or the other. Besides, we can have all the sugar we want in our coffee and the people ashore can't.

10:00 P. M. Coffee time. Let the Mate try and steer this tub for the next 20 minutes until I get back. Maybe he will appreciate what I've been up against for the last 2 hours. Everybody is awake and fully dressed with a life preserver tied fast around them. Lots of pale faces. Not scared, but pale at the thought of two ships gone so soon. All of a sudden a laugh. Not hysterics either. A good old-fashioned laugh. There is no doctor on board. Is that funny? No. But in his place we have shipped an embalmer.

10:20. Back to the wheel. The Mate is glad to see me. I put her back on her course. Why don't mates learn how to steer? If I was that far off he would have bawled me out and had the Captain disrate me.

10:30. Another hour and a half to go. Wish I was home. Wonder if John Davis is still standing in front of the Morris Plan Bank at Front and Chestnut back home in Philadelphia. Or maybe at Front and Walnut bawling out the Coastliners who have been passing him and that corner for years. Wonder if the wind still embarrasses the girls at Front and Chestnut. Wonder if Abrams ever bought a hat or John Anderson and Milton Finkelstein.

10:45 P. M. S.O.S. S.O.S. "We are being attacked. Two torpedoes. One forward. One amidship. S.O.S. S.O.S. Latitude? Longitude? Sinking fast. Abandoning ship. S.O.S. S.O.S. Silence - - - - -

10:50 P. M. Changing course. Heading in. Hope we don't run aground on some of these reefs. If we get stuck we are meat for torpedoes or gunfire. Zigzag. Zigzag. Zigzag. A few prayers for the crew of the last ship. Alone. We are all alone. Four came out and now there is one. None rhymes with one. Four little ships going out to sea. Along came a sub and then there were three. Three little ships trying to get through. Another tin-fish and then there were two.

Images and/or text cannot be shown due to copyright restrictions.

Photo by Courtesy of "Sea Power"  
 "Just Woke Up For Supper"

Two little ships trying to run. The sub ran faster, then there was one. Zigzag. Zigzag. Zigzag. Stop. Take soundings. Still got enough water. Head in some more. More prayers for those poor fellows out there all covered with ice and trying to keep afloat.

11:30. Here it comes. A white streak in the water. A torpedo coming fast. Faster. Faster. Wheel hard right. Hard over until my hands are white holding it so hard. I don't need that much pressure to hold it over. I shall relax my fingers a little, the wheel won't come back. I can't relax. They are cramped on the wheel. Oh well, I am better braced for the shock. Shock, what shock? It missed. Missed by inches. Wheel amidships. Zigzag. Zigzag. Get ready for the next one. Wait. Wait. Wait.

12:00 Midnight. Wheel relieved. Need a good cup of coffee. Crew standing on Boat Deck, close to lifeboats. Waiting. Waiting. Alone in the mess-room drinking coffee. Wishing that I was with the gang having coffee at Saffos on the Crystal. Crew drifting in to the mess-room one and two at a time. Finally no more room. They are standing in the passageway. The air is heavy with smoke. Everybody is smoking. The toughest fellow on the ship is talking. It's unethical. Submarines always attack before sunrise and after sunset. Who ever heard of them attacking in the middle of the night? It's unconstitutional. Pipe down. Take it up with your Congressman. Write the Chamber of Commerce. Why don't you report them to their local Labor Union for working overtime. Take it up with your Draff Board. The tension is broken, everyone is laughing. Talk resumes about the narrow escape. With that Tar-heel steering as lousy as he does how could anybody hit us with a torpedo? He writes his name, every time he takes the

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wheel, all over the Atlantic. He even goes back to dot the "i's" and cross the "t's". The Old Man asks him if he's taking a short cut, every time he steers. On and on. Wait. Wait. Wait.

5:30 A. M. Daylight. Best sunrise I've ever seen. A plane in war color zooms over us and dips his wing in salute. He goes out to sea.

6:30 A. M. A Navy blimp comes out and hovers over us for at least an hour. So low we can see two men in the cabin of it very plainly.

7:30. Breakfast. All hands are bleary-eyed from lack of sleep. Oh well, tonight we will be safe inside the sub net at New York and sleep for eight long hours.

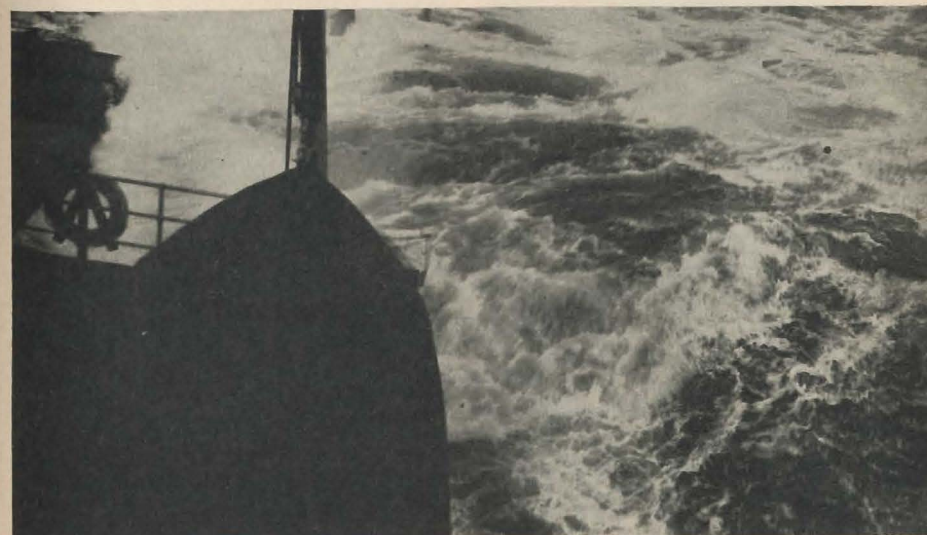
## *Corvette in Action*

By Nicholas Monsarrat\*

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"Half a gale blowing,

the sea very rough . . ."

Photo by John O'Brien, A.B. Seaman

# Artists Sketch Seamen

Twice a week, as one of their contributions to the war effort, famous artists from the Society of Illustrators visit the American Theatre Wing's Club for Merchant Seamen at 109 West 43rd Street, set up their easels and make sketches of merchant seamen. The idea came from Mr. Le Roy P. Ward, architect.

The original portrait is framed with the artist's signature, the seaman's name and rating, matted, carefully packed and then is mailed to whom the seaman wishes it sent. The seaman's wives, mothers and sweethearts cherish these portraits. The subjects are selected for interest and bravery.

"And this is the toughest part of the job," said Mr. Ward. "For which one of them isn't brave? Why, we had a seaman in one night who'd been torpedoed seven times. He could have been Caspar Milquetoast. He was about 22, and I found out that this shy, almost timid little fellow had been torpedoed three times, and once, with five other guys ranged in a circle around one lifebelt, held hands in the middle of the ocean for two days before they were picked up."

A number of the seamen sketched are frequent visitors to the Institute when ashore. On this page



Michael Locrotundo—By A. Treidler

are reproduced some of the portraits.

The American Theatre Wing very generously arranges for free tickets to Broadway plays to be given to merchant seamen.



John Heywood—By Saul Tepper



Donald Hawkins—By A. Parker



Chinese seaman Soon Sing—  
By S. J. Woolf



Patrick Rooney—By Gordon Grant



Carl Thorpe—By John Holmgren



Morris Hudson—By Frank Godwin

## Book Review

### GLOSSARY OF SHIPBUILDING AND OUTFITTING TERMS

By W. J. Eddington

Cornell Maritime Press. \$3.50

Mr. Eddington's background in the many divisions of the maritime industry give him the authority to write such a book as this.

The book is a good, sound dictionary of the language of the sea, ships, and the men who build and sail the ships.

But he does not end this book with the last word under "Z". The ninety pages of the Appendices, containing useful tables and equipment lists for all three departments, are almost as valuable as the remainder of the book.

—3rd Mate Kermit W. Salyer

# Seafarers' Superstitions

By Chief Mate Bernard Anthony Baker,

(who survived 33 days in a lifeboat when the American freighter "PRUSA" was torpedoed)

Have you ever asked yourself what gave root to the many superstitions so firmly believed in by most old time sailormen?

There are many sailors who will swear, for example, that a rat will not remain on any ship that is going to sink, but will invariably go ashore prior to the last sailing. Now is there in fact some foundation for this belief? Very probably, for in the days of wooden ships and iron men, leaks were obstacles with which a ship master had almost constantly to contend. When the seams started to open and the water slowly entered the hull, the rats, cozily installed in the hold, would be the first to discover the situation and would hastily migrate ashore in search of more comfortable quarters.

Assuming that the leaks grew larger once the vessel put to sea, and as she labored in heavy weather, the ship might, in accordance with what seemed to have been prophesied by the rats, founder and sink.

There is also a belief prevalent among seafaring men that accidents are sure to come in bunches—or that one accident quickly breeds another. Again could this be true? There would seem to be no good or valid reason for such a procedure. However, in twenty-five years of following the sea, I must confess that I have in fact, seen many instances of this kind.

Consider what happened aboard the U. S. S. "MICHIGAN" . . . the gun explosion. This was accident No. 1. Next the mast fell. This was accident No. 2.

Soon after this, we entered the York River and lay at anchor training gun crews for service on American merchantmen. At this time I was detailed as fireman and assigned at a steam launch. Two of these launches were used in patrolling the submarine nets at the mouth of the river. One would go out at night in company with craft from other ships, and in the morning each unit would return to its base. One night a launch left as per schedule, but failed to return at daybreak. A search was started immediately, but no trace of the missing boat was found until late in the afternoon, when a lighthouse keeper stationed fifteen miles from the nets, sent a message saying he had seen a person swimming at a point one quarter mile distant. Later, the body of the

chief boatswainmate, who had been in charge of the missing launch, was found floating in the river nearby. Ironically, he had swum no less than fifteen miles through icy waters before he perished—nearly in reach of safety.

The bodies of the other sixteen members of the crew were eventually found. This made accident No. 3. Incidentally, it was never ascertained what had happened to the ill-fated launch.

Immediately after losing our launch we were ordered out on convoy duty. While on the first trip, we lost one of our propellers and on our return trip sighted a small vessel in mid-Atlantic. It was a beautiful day. The sea was peaceful and calm but with an exceedingly heavy swell running. Drawing near the sailing vessel, we hove to and lowered one of our launches in an effort to ascertain just what a sailboat loaded with barrels was doing out there in the war zone. We soon found that she carried a cargo of wine and was bound from France to Quebec.

Returning to the "MICHIGAN" we prepared to take our launch aboard . . . just a routine task which we had performed hundreds of times before. However, this day the simple operation brought about a dramatic ending. We had hooked our slings to the wire from the electric crane, and the crane had taken up the slack when a huge swell lifted the boat about twenty feet, then quickly dropped from under, allowing the launch to crash back onto the slings, which parted in the bow, causing the fifty-foot craft to hang on one end. This movement dumped fifteen men, guns, waterbreakers, tools, and various equipment into the water. In this unfortunate moment three men perished.

Thus came to an end what we may identify as accident No. 4. This raised the total of dead to forty-two.

I recall another instance where ill-fortune came in bunches.

At the end of World War I, after leaving the Navy, I joined a tanker, the "S. S. Petrol" then plying between New York and Texas. For years the "Petrol" had operated without accident—then things began to happen. First a sailor while painting the smokestack, fell and was instantly killed. A few hours later a man was caught in a winch and badly injured. Soon after that, and while proceeding down the coast, we collided with another vessel causing some damage.

Next, on arrival at Port Arthur, and while loading, one man was overcome by gas fumes, and in his rescue four others were similarly affected, necessitating the hospitalization of two—of which I was one. On awakening I found myself in a white hospital bed. A very attractive nurse was bending over me, and I heard her say, "Do you know where you are?" It may have been due to those gas fumes, but I remember I had no hesitation in replying, "No I don't, but as long as you are here, I don't care." Recuperating and with considerable regret on leaving the hospital, I returned aboard the "Petrol", which was heading north with 89,000 barrels of oil. Hardly had this ill-fated steamer got well under way, when a terrific explosion (never explained) sent her to the bottom. And with her went the master and another member of the crew.

Old seamen still ask why a vessel like

the "Petrol" should go for years without an accident, and then run into a whole chain of unrelated mishaps which removed her forever from the seas.

Questions such as these are well beyond the ability of most of us to figure out—while more simple superstitions of less import, and hence more readily to be analyzed, often times are to be understood. Take for instance, the belief that it is bad luck to whistle on shipboard. This undoubtedly harks back to the old navy sailing ship days, when the sailors were called to duty by the boatswain's pipe. To miss hearing the boatswain's whistle called for the lash or at least severe language. Since whistling might be mistaken for the whistle, or the whistle for whistling, there was little room on deck for the two, and the boatswain remained supreme.

Other and more romantic sea beliefs are well-nigh impossible to figure out.

## A Night in a Lifeboat

By Lieut. (jg) John Macauley, U. S. Maritime Service

Cadet-midshipmen at the U. S. Merchant Marine Cadet Basic School at San Mateo, California, have a hurdle in their training program—a night in a lifeboat, living off their rations, in San Francisco Bay.

It sounds simply like good experience. That was the way it sounded to me when I decided to take the trip before shipping out for the South Pacific. I know now it is much more than that: It is a test of endurance for future officers of our Merchant Marine.

We left Coyote Point at 4:30 in the afternoon, or 1630 in the language of the school. Twenty-three Cadet-midshipmen were crowded into a lifeboat. As we pulled away from the pier, they were all singing.

The next morning at 9:00, when we put into an anchorage farther down the Bay, there wasn't a bit of song left in any of us. We were wet and hungry, and our eyes were blood red from salt spray and the lack of sleep. Our arms were tired from rowing and bailing.

Images and/or text cannot be shown due to copyright restrictions.

*Courtesy, Sea Power Magazine*

There had been a storm on San Francisco Bay during the night. We knew. We had fought it. At 4:25 on the preceding afternoon 23 deck cadet-midshipmen reported to Lieutenant Joseph Dimock, 31, USNR, a deck instructor at the San

Mateo School. Lieutenant Dimock is a leathery former chief officer from Springfield, Mass. He was one of the youngest chief officers in the Merchant Marine.

He was in charge of the lifeboat I was to accompany. Carefully he searched the cadet-midshipmen for any extra food they might have brought with them to supplement their lifeboat rations. Soon the dock which juts out from Coyote Point was littered with candy bars and bags of peanuts. Then he cried, "Abandon ship!"

The falls were let go, blocks and davits creaked, and less than four minutes later we slid down knotted ropes, and except for six cadet-midshipmen who were to begin the rowing, crowded ourselves into the stern or the bow of the boat. "Give way together."

We pulled away from the dock and hoisted sail. A stiff breeze from the north filled out the red sail and

we were blown south through choppy waves, under the San Mateo bridge down past Redwood City.

At 6:30 we had supper which consisted of a three and one-half ounce can of pemmican for every five men and a half cup of water apiece. Pemmican is a concentrate made up of dried raisins, kidney fat, shredded cocoanut, vanilla extract, evaporated apples, dextrose, oleo oil, and salt. This conglomeration looks horrible but is surprisingly tasty. Each ration, however, is less than a cubic inch.

The pink and gold sunset faded. The moon came up, and with it a cold, stiffer wind which whipped through oilskins, leather jackets and dungarees and ruffled the waves into whitecaps. We had gone far enough south. Lieutenant Dimock gave the order to come about.

The mast creaked ominously as the wind bellied the sail. We took it in and began to row. But the tide

was running against us and we kept rowing just to keep from losing ground like men in a treadmill.

It was hard work now. Everyone rowed. As one man's stroke slackened another would take his place on the thwart and the first oarsman would crawl up to the bow of the heaving little craft to rest. There the tired cadet-midshipmen lay with their feet in each others faces, across each others bodies, trying to rest. But in such positions sleep was impossible. Each wave seemed bigger than the last. Our bow would come over a crest and smack into a trough between the waves. Salt water would fly over and into the boat and wet the rowers and recliners to the skin.

Lieutenant Dimock asked for the rocket pistol. We were going to send up a distress signal. But the wind took the red flare that swayed from the little parachute and hurled them both back into the sea. We tried this five times during the night and each time the same thing happened.

At 12:30, shortly after midnight, we had our night lunch—two malted milk tablets and a graham cracker.

We kept rowing. It was hard to touch water with the oars while on the crest of each wave. In the trough it seemed impossible to lift the oars out of the Bay. Your oar either fanned the air between waves or slashed into a wave that almost wrenched it from your hands. As the sea became rougher, some of the cadet-midshipmen lost their scant meal over the side.

The wet, weary ones who lay on the bow began to talk to each other.

"Wonder what 4-F my girl's out with tonight?" "Have you heard about Tunisia? Good old solid Tunisia." "What price a foxhole?" "We'll be in great shape for the dance tonight." It was good-natured prouising. Through it all Lieutenant Dimock's voice kept droning at the rowers: "Stroke! stroke! one-two-

three-four, stroke!"

As the dawn broke, the tide turned. Rowing became easier and seemingly less futile. Finally we pulled up a channel into Redwood City Harbor. It was 9 o'clock when we docked.

Our faces were caked dry from spray and wind burn. The solid pier wouldn't stop heaving beneath our feet.

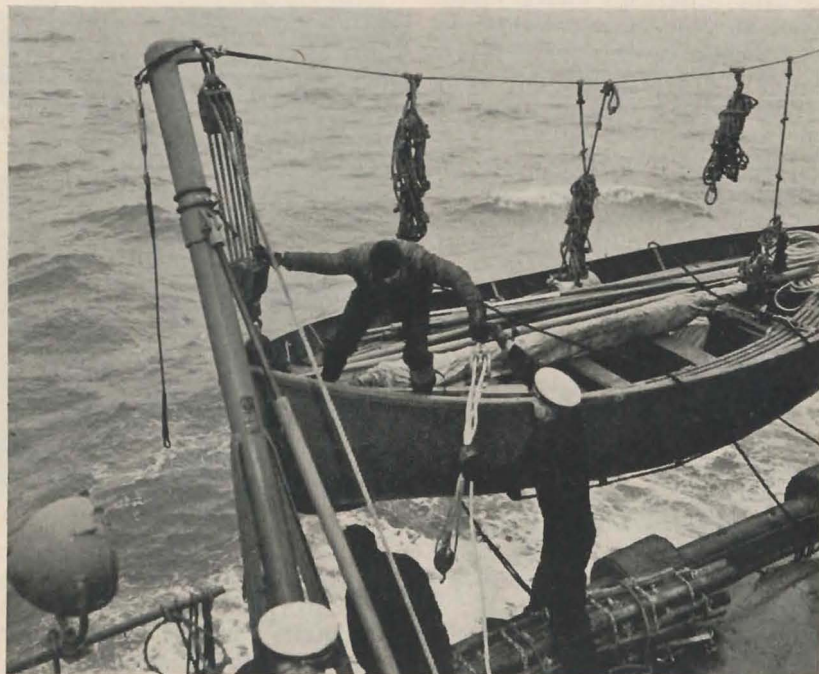
I spoke to one of the cadet-midshipmen. "Well, do you still think the Merchant Marine is such a hot idea?"

He smiled ruefully. "Last night wasn't pleasant, Sir, but I think we're all glad we've done it. To some extent it has shown us what we're up against."

A short while later the bus arrived. The cadet-midshipmen took their seats and promptly fell asleep.

These boys who slept so soundly were former office boys, gas station attendants, college students, stock room boys, lads from the farm.

In five weeks they would ship out for their initial six months of sea training aboard merchant ships of America's fast growing merchant fleet.



*U. S. Maritime Commission Photo*

Seamen and cadets rigging a lifeboat for emergency use on a Liberty ship.



In a Bosun's Chair  
*Courtesy, U. S. Maritime Service*

# Tall Tales

*Editor's Note: The U. S. Maritime Training Schools at Hoffman Island and Sheepshead Bay publish house organs to which the seamen trainees contribute. Following are two tall tales reprinted from these publications.*

## SOME FLING!

Quick to learn the ways of the sea here, two ingenious rookies at long last have discovered a means to feminine diversion during quarantine here.

Using a lowly mustard bottle, John Meehan and Bob Smith, both of Sec. 418, floated their lonely romantic outpourings on the tide and four days later received individual letters from a Philadelphia damsel who recovered their bottled SOS while swimming at a Pennsylvania beach.



*Courtesy, The Heaving Line*

Edward Gerrity, Section 97 E, doesn't expect to be lonesome at sea. His constant companion will be "Butch", the Baltimore Oriole (shown above with him,) which attached itself to Ed. while he was training on the "American Mariner". "Butch" even went to classes with Ed., who said the bird "sat there bored-like or went to sleep".

"I am 16, have blonde hair, green eyes, freckles, black eyebrows and eyelashes," the damsel, Joyce Zirkel, wrote. "I am five feet two inches tall and weigh 104 pounds. I love music, Coney Island, hot dogs, popcorn and movies."

Bottles out of Sheepshead Bay in the next month may prove a menace to navigation.

*From "The Heaving Line", Sheepshead Bay*

## AT MIDNIGHT

You've heard about "Kitten on the Keys," but how about a rat on the typewriter?

Once every so often we get a good husky rat along our shores: the aroma of our tantalizing cookery draws them from leagues around, stemming tide rips and treacherous shoals 'til only the hardiest survive.

Anyway this aforesaid rodent was endowed with the temerity to venture (of all places) into the O.D.'s office. Time 12:02 A.M.

Truth is this: Blank Blank was meditating, how best he might improve the Switchboard Service. Suddenly he sensed a presence. Kept hearing a sharp staccato. Blank saw to his horror a monstrous creature big as a shetland pony. There it was, up atop the typewriter, smacking the keys and dancing a jiggeroo, whilst words like d--n and h-k were hissed in blind fury. Evidently one of his great forefeet was wedged between G and H.

Our bucko dashed for the fire axe . . . A cryptic message was observed all written out on the typewriter. Pending further investigation this bit of evidence will be guarded with the utmost secrecy.

*From "The Hoffman Island Log"*

# Marine Poetry

## CARGOES OF WAR

*(After John Masefield)*

Convoys out of Halifax, coursing to the Thames-side,  
Crossing the Atlantic with their cargoes of war,  
With deck loads of fighting planes  
And holds stowed with field guns,  
Tanks, trucks and lorries to be landed ashore.  
Battle fleets and carriers, cruising all the oceans,  
Steaming to far stations on world-vast main,  
From 'Frisco and Panama,  
Annapolis and Brooklyn,  
To drive pirate U-boats from the wide sea lane.  
Quinquireme of Nineveh, stately Spanish galleon,  
Sailing home on storied seas from isles of romance,  
Never brought such cargoes through  
As barges with Commandos  
That cross the Strait to beachheads on the coast of France!

Carl John Bostelmann.

*Reprinted from the N. Y. Herald Tribune*

## THE MAN OF THE MARITIME

By Seaman Anthony Di Leva  
U. S. Maritime Service,  
Sheepshead Bay, N. Y.

Oh, the man in blue  
Is the man for you,  
He's the Man of the Maritime.  
When there's work to do  
He will see it through,  
For he works in rain or shine.  
The hurricane, the sub and plane  
Never matter in the least.  
Oh, the man in blue  
Is the man for you,  
He's the Man of the Maritime,  
The Man of the Maritime.  
Oh, the man in blue  
Brings the cargo through  
From Australia to Sudan.  
On ev'ry sea, he fights for liberty  
Straight from Russia to Bataan.  
The hurricane, the sub and plane  
Never matter in the least.  
Oh, the man in blue  
Is the man for you,  
He's the Man of the Maritime,  
The Man of the Maritime.

## UNSUNG HERO

Say, have you ever thought at all  
Of those who go to sea,  
In merchant ships and tankers too,  
To fight for you and me?  
Just vision what these men go through  
For oft they're quite alone  
And see no friendly ship or plane  
Until returning home.

## TO A MERCHANT SEAMAN

"The sea is so comforting—"  
That is what he said,  
"I joined the Merchant Navy  
When I learned my son was dead."  
"He won a decoration in the R.A.F.  
(You'll pardon me for being proud of him).  
At sea the sunrise's golden and the sunset's red,  
The promise in the far horizon's rim,  
The moon, and stars, and ever-changing sea  
Allay my grief when I remember him.  
The sea is so comforting—"  
That is what he said.  
God keep you, merchant sailor,  
When you set forth from shore  
Safe from storm and submarine  
And bring you comfort evermore.

M. D. C.

## THE MIDDLE WATCH

'Tis the middle watch; a windy night  
As the convoy ploughs its heavv course,  
While the new corvette, nigh out of sight,  
Keeps guard like an old sea-horse;  
Where arduous sailors tumble up  
And grope their way to a ready gun,  
And the trim ship heaves in the rolling seas  
As the convoy plunges on.  
'Tis the middle watch; the wind blows keen,  
And youthful eyes are sternly fixed  
Way out ahead, where a light shows green  
Or fades in a fleeting mist;  
But the young heart beats with manly pride  
As he keeps the trim corvette in line,  
While the bridge swings on in a rolling tide  
As the convoy plunges on.  
'Tis the middle watch; gray dawn is nigh  
And eyes are tired and nerves are strained;  
There's a cabin warm where one may lie  
And dream of a distant land;  
But ice winds blow where the big seas flow,  
And sailors crouch by a ready gun,  
And the night gives way to a desperate day  
As the convoy plunges on.

R. J. Vine

My heart goes out to merchant men,  
Those bold, intrepid souls  
Who keep alive democracy  
And propagate its goals  
While spending life so recklessly  
In wiping from the lands  
The grossly wicked maniacs  
And their deluded bands.

Paul Collins



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