

The LOOKOUT



U. S. Maritime Service Photo

OVER 55,000 MEN FROM ALL STATES TRAINED FOR
THE AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE IN 1943

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

VOL. XXXV—NUMBER 8

AUGUST, 1944

Sanctuary

THE BLESSING OF A SHIP

(from an old Gaelic prayer book)

The Pilot: Bless our ship.

The rest respond: May God the Father bless her.

The Pilot: Bless our ship.

The rest respond: May Jesus Christ bless her.

The Pilot: Bless our ship.

The rest respond: May the Holy Spirit bless her.

The Pilot: What do ye fear seeing that God the Father is with you?

The rest: We fear nothing.

The Pilot: What do ye fear seeing that God the Son is with you?

The rest: We fear nothing.

The Pilot: What do ye fear seeing that God the Holy Spirit is with you?

The rest: We fear nothing.

The Pilot: May the Almighty God, for the sake of His Son Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Ghost, the one God who brought His people through the sea and brought the Apostle Paul and his companions out of great danger, save us and help us and carry us on with favoring winds and the divine care, according to His own good will; which things we desire from Him, saying, OUR FATHER . . .

The LOOKOUT

VOL. XXXV, AUGUST, 1944

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by the

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The Lookout

VOL. XXXV

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Seamen Buy War Bonds



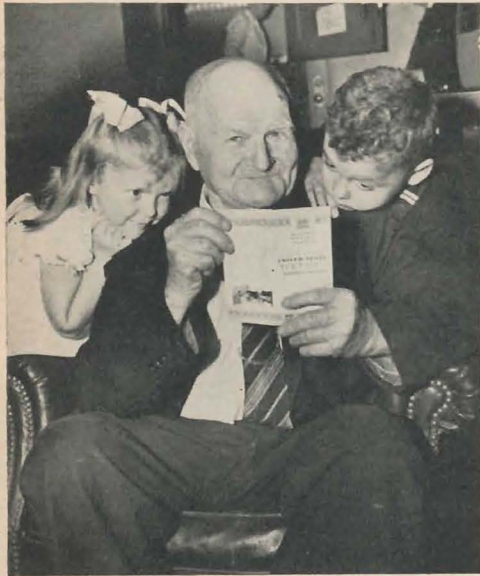
Photo shows:—Mrs. Jonathan M. Wainwright, V, wife of Captain Wainwright, U. S. Merchant Marine, son of the heroic General Wainwright of Bataan fame, in charge of the sale of war stamps. Dr. Kelley, Director of the Seamen's Church Institute of New York, presents war stamps to seamen's children. Johnny and Charlie Chaisson, sons of a merchant seaman, wear sailor suits for the occasion. They were baptized in the Institute's Chapel.

CHILDREN of merchant seamen were special guests at a War Bond Rally held June 30th at the Seamen's Church Institute of New York. Patsy O'Shea, eleven-year old star of radio and stage, entertained with lively tap dancing and singing. Samuel Eves played the accordion and the children sang happily. The Rev. Clifford Samuelson performed tricks of magic and picked war stamps out of small boys' pockets and little girls' hair.

The Society for Seamen's Chil-

dren, Staten Island, sent a group of youngsters to whom an anonymous friend of the Institute gave books of war stamps. Over \$3,000. in war bonds were purchased by seamen at the rally. Many seamen bought bonds for their children and grand-children and received certificates illustrated with Walt Disney characters. Since the 5th War Loan Drive the Institute's ship visitors have sold over \$16,000, in bonds to individual seamen at the pay-offs of crews.

Bonds for Seamen's Children



Captain Peter J. Cassidy, 82 year old veteran of the sea, places stamps in a book for little Greta and Johnny, children of seamen.



Pulling war stamps out of the air while children of seamen watch in wonder. The Rev. Clifford Samuelson, whose hobby is magic, does some slight of hand tricks at the War Bond rally.



Photo by Marie Higginson

Samuel Eves plays "East Side, West Side" on his accordion while children of seamen sing.

Dances for Merchant Seamen

EACH Saturday night the Janet Roper Room on the fourth floor at 25 South Street, (in pre-war days called the Apprentices' Room) is the scene of a dance. About 150 seamen and hostesses attend. Even on warm summer evenings there is a cool breeze from the East River and everyone has a happy time. Many of the hostesses are employed at the American Telephone and Telegraph Company and they furnish the cakes, cookies and punch as their part in helping to entertain men of the Merchant Marine. The girls have nicknamed the parties the "Telephone Belles' Canteen." They are under the leadership of Josephine Keating and Mrs. Violet Williams. The Fennor orchestra is an especially good one, and since the girls are all excellent dancers, the parties are always successful. Even seamen who don't know how to dance attend and soon forget their shyness when expert dancers teach them the steps.

One sailor voiced his appreciation: "It's just like a dance in the home town on Saturday night." Another said to the senior hostess: "Saturday nights away from home are the hardest. I sure am happy I heard about these parties here at the Institute."

Several specialty and novelty dances prove popular. One is a "multiple special" where one couple starts to dance; when the music stops they each take a new partner and this continues until the entire group is dancing. Another is called the "slipper dance" where each girl puts one of her slippers in the center of the floor and then each seaman takes a slipper and starts looking for the owner to match the slipper and to dance with her. And the "Paul Jones" is an old favorite.

Now and then a seaman or a hostess volunteers to sing or to do a special dance or a comic monologue during the intermission. Seamen are invited to these parties through a printed card placed on each bed at the Institute on the preceding night.

Sometimes the hostesses serve dinner prior to the dance. On one such occasion one of the "Aye-Tee and Tee Toppers" girls waiting on table dropped a dish. This was greeted by shrieks and groans from the seamen, and much good-natured ribbing.

Dances are also held on Thursday evenings for the trainees from Sheepshead Bay and Hoffman Island and here again the Institute serves dinner to about 150 trainees. Hostesses are girls employed in downtown insurance and shipping offices. The training station orchestras provide the music. Tuesday nights, square dancing is enjoyed in the Janet Roper Room (about which we wrote in the July LOOKOUT).

Thus the Institute's recreation program has expanded greatly due to the increasing number of new seamen entering the Merchant Marine and to the fact that five new merchant ships are launched a day as compared with one a day in 1939. Moving pictures continue to be shown on Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings in the Auditorium and special vaudeville shows every other Tuesday and occasional boxing and other athletic events.

Sight-seeing tours, swimming parties and the regular "coffee hour" in the Seamen's Lounge each afternoon, followed by bridge, cribbage and gin-rummy games, also help seamen to enjoy their shore leave in New York City before returning to their arduous and perilous jobs at sea.

NOTHING BUT THE BEST

A tanker recently torpedoed went down with the \$180 artificial leg of Bjarne M. Iverson, third assistant engineer. It was a serious loss. Mr. Iverson had accustomed himself to skate, ski or ride a bicycle with the leg, and once wore it with no inconvenience while working as a steeplejack. He was wearing what he calls his spare, a plain peg leg, when the torpedo struck. He resigned himself to the loss and asked for immediate assignment on another ship, but the government is concerned about such things, and said no. He was ordered to return to his farm at Maple Plain, Minn., while a new leg is made, to be paid for by War Shipping insurance.

N. Y. Herald-Tribune.

CAN YOU TOP THIS?

Among the U.S.M.S. trainees to come to Sheepshead Bay with the new batch of teenagers is William H. Newberry, Sect. 190. B-1, whose family tree is so salty it's rumored pure brine slithered out of his arm when he was given his induction blood test.

Newberry has a brother in the Navy, a sister in the Marine Corps Reserve, and his great uncle, Lt. Comdr. Charles A. Zimmerman was formerly band master of the United States Naval Academy and composed a tune called "Anchors Aweigh."

His grandfather is Capt. John S. M. Zimmerman, band leader of the United States Soldiers Home Band.

Recreational Activities at the Institute

Hostesses serve lemonade at the dances in the Janet Roper Room



"Step right this way for an ice-cold drink!"



Saturday night dances in the Janet Roper Room help seamen forget homesickness and loneliness.



The Virginia Reel is as popular as ever.

Atlantic Bridge

By Roger W. Stuart*

If you were to visit a certain long, narrow room high in a building on lower Broadway, you'd find the wall covered by detailed sections of a map showing every pier in New York harbor. This room is the nerve center for the loading of the numerous ships that shuttle in and out of the busy port.

A young man behind a desk at the head of the room can look at the map and know precisely where each ship is docked. He knows, moreover, what each ship is doing—whether being repaired or loaded, and if the latter, what items are going into it. Even as a new vessel steams into the harbor, he is aware of its approach. And it is up to him to see that a suitable berth is made available without delay.

With the assistance of five young women, this officer (he is a lieu-

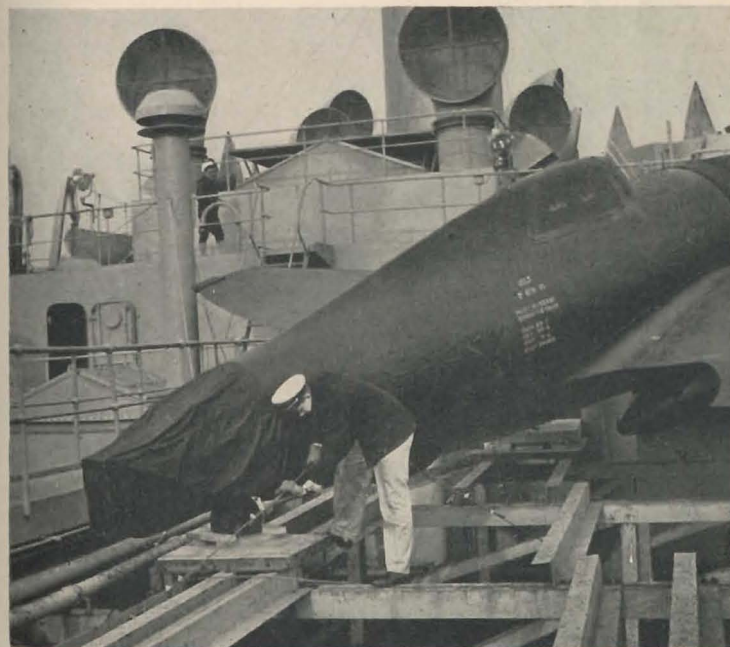
*Excerpts from a series of articles in the New York World-Telegram. Reprinted by special permission.

tenant in the U. S. Maritime Service) keeps track of every tanker and freighter, Liberty ship and Victory ship in port. Teletypes keep the office in touch with the Army and Navy and the Custom House . . .

Tiny bits of colored pasteboard, each cut in the shape of a ship and bearing the name of one, are pinned upon the chart to denote all kinds of activity in the harbor.

"With this system," modestly explains the young officer, Lt. Hiram M. Daniels, "the work of assigning ships to the proper piers, loading them and getting them out again moves along without fuss or confusion . . ."

Recently six American ships were called upon suddenly to carry 300 heavy tanks and a hundred 105 mm. howitzers to the front. The six vessels got away speedily, but soon after the convoy sailed one of the ships was sunk by the enemy. A



Courtesy of U. S. Maritime Commission

Making airplane fast on the deck of a tanker.

faster vessel, at the moment lying at a New York pier awaiting another cargo, was commissioned to take aboard some of the heavy tanks and howitzers. Due to the clock-like arrangements for loading and fueling, the vessel was able to get out of port quickly and, sailing without escort, overtake the convoy before it reached its destination . . .

Not only out-and-out war material, but goods which normally would be considered unrelated to the war, must be scheduled for the convoys. The invasion of North Africa, Sicily and Italy, for instance, meant in addition to troops and battle equipment, transportation for food for communities that had been looted by the Nazis.

Accordingly, among the 2,000 ships which participated in the mass move on Sicily were some that together carried 80,000 tons of flour, 6,500 tons of wheat, 2,800 tons of potatoes, 1,800 tons of dried beans

and peas, 1,000 tons of edible oils, besides large quantities of cheese, dried eggs, rice and vegetables.

To do the job American merchant vessels today cover sea routes totaling 56,000 miles. Indeed, there is a wealth of drama, as well as material for a fat chapter in the history of wartime transportation, in what the Merchant Marine has accomplished since the start of the conflict.

Among other things it has moved a whole railroad to Iran. Not just a locomotive, but rails and boxcars and signal systems as well. The equivalent of another railroad has been taken to England and Ireland. Still another to Australia.

Although America's merchant fleet already has increased from a prewar size of 10,500,000 dead-weight tons to more than 35,000,000 (despite losses at sea), shipping officials confidently expect to add another 20,000,000 tons before the end of 1944.

Book Reviews

FIRST FLEET

Reg Ingraham—Bobbs Merrill \$3.00

This book is an attempt to show the role of the United States Coast Guard in peacetime as well as in the present war. The security of our ports, the rescue of seamen along our coasts, the arduous duties of the lighthouse service and the Ice Patrol are all in the hands of this branch of our Armed Forces. To those of us who have observed closely the work of the Coast Guard in all its many phases this book adds little to our knowledge. It may arouse an interest on the part of landsmen who are not familiar with the details of this service.

A. C.

THE ROAD BACK TO PARIS

By A. J. Liebling

Doubleday, Doran & Co. \$3.00

The author's chapter on his experience aboard a west-bound tanker makes an interesting section of this book which deals chiefly with France after the war began; of many refugees, some stories are very comfortable. But the chapter dealing with life on the REGNBUE, Norwegian tanker, is an intimate picture of seamen who have been sailing since the beginning of the war, of the tension when nearing the coast of Norway, of life in a convoy, of mines, of the shortage of reading matter and of Christmas dinners at sea.

M. D. C.



Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation Photos

For the first Victory Ship launching, shipyard girls dress in the colorful costumes of many lands.

Books for Seafarers

Vacation days are here. People are enjoying themselves at the country, mountains and seashore, many taking with them carefully selected books for their summer's reading. Will readers of THE LOOKOUT remember the merchant seamen of the United Nations who are playing such a deeply significant part in the war and mail to us those books they have themselves enjoyed? Summer brings no cessation in the labors of seamen; they depend on us for books to ease the strain of long months at sea. Books may be sent at the Book Post Rate of four cents for one pound and three cents for each additional pound from anywhere in the United States. They may be simply wrapped and should be addressed to the CONRAD LIBRARY, SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK, 25 SOUTH STREET, NEW YORK 4, N. Y.



Photo by Marie Higginson

The CONRAD LIBRARY, established in 1934, is exclusively for the use of merchant seamen of all nationalities. Its 9,000 volumes are used by more than 20,000 seamen annually. It distributes to ships' crews about 500 books each week.

Fiction, Biography, Travel, Adventure, "Pocket Book" editions are needed. Also foreign language editions of books.

FROM THE FAR NORTH

Aklavik
N. W. T.
Canada
20 Ap 44

Dear Librarian,

I noticed your appeal for books in the 15 F/PM and have several I'd like to send. But as the book postage rate from here is \$1.40 a pound it seems more economic to send you a check that you may buy some books, and keep mine to lend to the book-hungry people down here.

This will not reach you for over a month unless some plane strays in soon before the river ice weakens. But letters left till near mail time are apt not to get written.

(Signed) Margaret E. Oldenburg

Farrar and Rinehart, Publishers:

I want to express additional thanks for the many foreign language copies of ANTHONY ADVERSE which you so kindly sent us in May. At that time I thanked you for the Swedish and Finnish copies only, as we thought all of the boxes contained these translations. Lately we found the other language copies and thought you would be interested in knowing to whom they were given.

The Danish and Czechoslovakian Consul Generals received the copies with deep gratitude saying their demands for books far exceeded the supply. The Czech copies were to be given to fliers as they have few merchant seamen and their fliers write in from all theatres of war pleading for books. We gave the Norwegian copies to the Norwegian Seamen's Home and the German and Hungarian copies to the Chaplain of Halloran General Hospital for the prisoners of war who are patients there. I am enclosing a copy of the Chaplain's letter of acknowledgment.

With appreciation of your interest in our work, I am

Cordially yours,

Librarian

The Saga of the "Richard Hovey"

"I am fevered with the sunset,
I am fretful with the bay,
For the wander-thirst is on me
And my soul is in Cathay.
There's a schooner in the offing,
With her topsails shot with fire,
And my heart has gone aboard her
For the Islands of Desire.
I must forth again tomorrow!
With the sunset I must be
Hull down on the trail of rapture
In the wonder of the sea."*

An American freighter was named in honor of the author of this poem, "The Sea Gypsy"—Richard Hovey. The ship and crew put up a gallant fight before a Japanese submarine torpedoed and sank her in the Arabian Sea. THE LOOKOUT editor first heard the story from the Chief Engineer, Robert W. Gray, who has been going to sea — just like the poem — a "sea gypsy" for 50 years. He came to the Institute's Department of Special Services after spending weeks in a hospital in Karachi, India before returning to the United States. When the Japanese machine-gunned and rammed the life boat in which the crew had pulled away from the sinking freighter, Engineer Gray was unconscious because he had burned his hands and feet so badly during the explosion which had followed the torpedoing. Gray gives credit to the mate, Mr. Evans, for saving his life. Here is the account of the disaster as released officially by the War Shipping Administration:

Thirty-eight survivors of the American war freighter RICHARD HOVEY were rescued after 16 days under a blistering Arabian Sea sun. Four lives were lost in the sinking of the Liberty ship a few weeks ago and the vessel's master and three of his seamen were made prisoners and taken away on the submarine. A lifeboat with 25 other survivors was picked up three days after the sinking.

An improvised still, fashioned from odds and ends of scrap by John Arthur Drechsler, junior assistant engineer, of 19-01 Murray Street, Whiteside, N. Y., is credited with saving the lives of some of the 38 men crowded in the lifeboat intended for 31. With bits of pipe and rubber hose and punctured air tanks

wrenched from a life-raft, he fashioned a still that produced 60 gallons of potable water, generating heat to operate it by using other parts of the raft as firewood.

The RICHARD HOVEY was in the Arabian Sea homebound from India when attacked. One torpedo missed, but two others found their mark, killing three seamen in the hold and making abandonment of the ship necessary. One lifeboat was destroyed by the explosions, but the others got away safely, only to become targets for the surfaced submarine, which also was shelling the stricken freighter.

Purser James F. O'Connor, 1421 Southwest Seventh Street, Miami, Fla., reported the shelling, from only 800 yards away, broke the RICHARD HOVEY in two. The middle portion submerging, the up-ended stem and bow of the vessel formed a V. Then machine-gunning of the lifeboat began, O'Connor's being hit 17 times. Next, the submarine rammed the lifeboat, Japanese on deck laughing at and taking motion pictures of the Americans struggling in the water, survivors said.

Cruising about, the sub located Capt. Hans Thorsen's boat. He acknowledged he was master of the freighter and was taken aboard the submarine, which departed with three other prisoners. Before they left, Japanese sailors smashed the portable radio in the master's lifeboat.

Two lifeboats remained at the scene all night, trying to find survivors and picked up many that were clinging to rafts. Among these was Lieut. (j.g.) Harry Chester Goudy, USNR, of 43 Murdock Road, Baltimore, Md., commander of the Navy armed guard. Sixteen others on the lifeboat that rescued him were Navy men also.

After Drechsler's still was in operation, the men on that lifeboat were allowed seven ounces of water a day. On the sixteenth day the craft was sighted by the British Liberty ship SAMUTA, which landed the exhausted crew at Cochin, India.

Six of those aboard had to be hospitalized, including James Burns, deck engineer, 209-51 112th Road, Bellaire, Long Island City, N. Y., who had been wounded by a machine-gun bullet. One Navy gunner, Phillip Fittipaldi, 541 Fremont Street, Lancaster, Pa., had died aboard the lifeboat of burns he suffered in the torpedo explosions.

In the meantime the second lifeboat, with 25 survivors aboard, had been found by another British Liberty ship, the SAMCALIA, three days after the torpedoing, and landed at Karachi, India.

A report from the American consul at Bombay, Stephen E. C. Kendrick, said all aboard the RICHARD HOVEY maintained excellent discipline during the

sinking and lifeboat ordeal. Special commendation, he said, was due Drechsler for his life-saving still, Lieutenant Goudy for his seamanship and leadership aboard the lifeboat, and Radio Operator Rehn, M. Mathews, 621 Arndt Street, Riverside, N. J., for his morale-building influence among survivors in their long wait for rescue.

Captain Thorsen's next of kin is his sister-in-law, Christine Eriksen, 342 44th Street, Brooklyn, N. Y. The seamen taken prisoner with him and their next of kin are Robert W. Turner, acting

second mate, sister, Mrs. Alice Dingwall, 125 Orange Street, Fairhaven, N. J.; William V. Margetko, mother, Mrs. Mary Sopkovic, 2711 Julian Street, Youngstown, Ohio; Fred B. Simms, fireman, father, A. F. Simms, 704 South 7th Street, Princeton, W. Va.

The RICHARD HOVEY was built by the New England Shipbuilding Corp., South Portland, Maine, being delivered March 31, 1943. She was operated for the War Shipping Administration by the Sprague Steamship Co., Boston, Mass.

Christmas Boxes for Merchant Marine

VOLUNTEERS BEGIN TO FILL CHRISTMAS BOXES FOR MERCHANT MARINE

7000 to be distributed through Seamen's Church Institute of New York.

HUNDREDS of appreciative letters from merchant seamen all over the world are testimony that the 6,000 Christmas Boxes distributed through the Seamen's Church Institute of New York last Christmas were appreciated. Mrs. Grafton Burke, secretary of the Central Council of Women who fill the boxes, announces that preparations for an even larger number of Christmas Boxes for the Merchant Marine of the United Nations have begun. Indeed, "Christmas in July" is the slogan which best describes the activities of the numerous groups of women in New York and vicinity, and individual women throughout the country who have begun during the summer months to fill the boxes.

"Our goal is 7,000 boxes before December 1st," declared Mrs. Burke, "So July is not too soon to start. The Institute will mail the cardboard boxes, size 8" x 8" x 4", folded flat to individuals requesting them.

Inquiries should be addressed to Mrs. Grafton Burke, Seamen's Church Institute of New York, 25 South Street, New York 4, N. Y. Each box should contain the following items: Playing Cards, Billfold, Cigarettes, Pencil (looseleaf), Fountain Pen, Soapbox and Soap, Gloves, Shaving Cream, Notebook and Calendar, Belt, Candy, Safety Razor and Blades, "Pocket Books", Comb, Shoebrush and Paste, Clothesbrush, Handkerchiefs, Metal Mirror, Flashlight and Batteries, Automatic Lighter, Garters, Sewing Kit, First Aid Kit, and a Package of Note-paper and Envelopes. If you are unable to procure these items or live far from stores and cannot fill a box personally, a check or money order for \$3.00 will pay for having a box filled and wrapped

in your name. Seamen of all ages and ratings enjoy receiving these boxes while at sea on Christmas Day. We also give one to each seaman staying at the Institute on Christmas Eve and several hundred to marine hospitals."

Mrs. Burke cited two letters as examples of how greatly seamen enjoy the boxes. One letter was from the captain of a freighter, the *Woodbridge N. Ferris*, which has just reached her home port after months at sea: "On behalf of the crews of the S. S. WOODBRIDGE N. FERRIS, I want to thank you wholeheartedly for the Christmas Boxes your organization supplied my crew with. Every member of the Merchant Crew, as well as the Navy Gun Crew, received a box filled with the most useful assortment of gifts possible for seamen to receive. Needless to say, these boxes brightened our otherwise gloomy Christmas Day, and we are indeed grateful."

Another letter was from the chaplain at the Hoffman Island Training Station which read: "This is but an attempt to express to you our sincere gratitude and thanks for the wonderful boxes you and the organization sent . . . For the men in this particular section, Christmas was looked forward to with considerable sadness, for it was our first away from home. I wish, though, you could have seen the transition from a relatively dejected group of men to a jubilant, elated one after we received our surprise package. It was really amazing to watch grown-up mature men run about like youngsters, excitedly opening their own gifts and then examining others! It's in order, too, to commend you for the choice of gifts. They were practical and useful — just what we needed. It made us feel good to know that in this mad, chaotic world there were people who were kind and unselfish, helping others, perhaps receiving little recognition for their effort . . . It may interest you to know that I am writing this with a pen I got in my Christmas Box."

* Reprinted by courtesy of Dodd, Mead & Co.

The letters of thanks have inspired the women volunteers to set a higher goal for this Christmas and it is hoped that the American public will cooperate on this project of filling Christmas gifts as a token of admiration for the men who face the hazards of the war and the sea to transport the munitions, food, supplies and medicines to our soldiers on the fighting fronts.

Mrs. Berwick B. Lanier is Chairman of the Central Council of Associations and she has enlisted the aid of the directors and members of eleven Associations of women volunteers in distributing the boxes to women's clubs, church auxiliaries, Victory Clubs and individuals.

Mr. Herbert L. Satterlee
Board of Managers

Dear Sir:

May I in these lines tell you what a very pleasant afternoon I spent attending the Centennial Services of The Seamen's Church Institute Wednesday, April 12th-44. The entertainment in the Auditorium was so enjoyable, then the delicious refreshments and last but not least the most beautiful services rendered in the Chapel. The address you made was so very interesting.

My father, Mr. F. A. Boning was a stevedore on Old Pier 41—New Pier 32, East River foot of Pike Street. The Floating Church was moored next to the pier. My father used to tell how Mrs. Vanderbilt came to the Church most every Sun-



Photo by Julius Saewitz

STORM IN INDIAN OCEAN

day. She came in her beautiful carriage, driven by a beautiful pair of horses, a footman and a coachman.

Dr. A. R. Mansfield presented my father with a beautiful bible. Christmas 1901. I have the bible and am very proud of it. I myself attended a sewing school (in 1889) held every Saturday morning in a house on Pike Street, between Madison and Henry Street. This house was used as a Sailor's Reading Room during the week. This house was taken care of by a Mr. and Mrs. Montgomery. The sewing school was supported by Mrs. Vanderbilt and I can remember her giving me personally a beautiful book "The History of Ohio" for sewing neatly done. I also had the privilege of buying canned corn, tomatoes, string beans and peaches for very little money, in those days canned goods were not as plentiful as today and my dear mother appreciated my getting them. I was born in 35 Market Street attended Public School No. 2 on Henry Street. So happy for having had the privilege of enjoying such nice surroundings as a child.

Thanking you for the very pleasant afternoon last Wednesday and wishing you the best.

I remain Sincerely
Mrs. Alfred E. Mitchell.

Men of the "Lifeline"

By Robert Carse*

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*From "Lifeline" by Robert Carse
Published by Wm. Morrow & Company, Inc.



Courtesy of U. S. Maritime Commission

Returning from life-boat drill

A COLORFUL SKIPPER

Death — from natural causes — and burial at sea, has written the last chapter in the adventurous life of one of the Merchant Marine's skippers, Capt. Levi J. Plesner, of New Orleans, La., the War Shipping Administration has revealed. Reported once king of a South Sea island, heavyweight boxer and powerful underwater swimmer, Plesner was a Veteran of World War I and a heroic figure of World War II.

As chief officer of the ill-fated SS PRUSA, his seamanship was credited with saving the lives of half the crew when that vessel was torpedoed and sunk in the Pacific.

Later, as master of the SS JOHN HANCOCK, his ship was torpedoed and sunk in the Caribbean, and again his superb seamanship was responsible for saving all the survivors of that vessel.

Plesner was born in Denmark March 16, 1893, but became an American citizen. He was a heavyweight boxer and king of a cannibal island in the South Seas for two years. Practice in underwater swimming was a hobby which he claimed served him well in escaping death in the sinking of the SS JOHN HANCOCK.

"It is my good fortune," he reported, "that underwater swimming is one of my hobbies, also that I had on a life preserver. When I had reached a depth of what (judging from the pressure on my eardrums) was about 15 feet, the rush of the water suddenly stopped and I felt myself thrust to the surface in a foamy mass of warm water. The boilers had evidently exploded and had blown me to the surface. After swimming on the oil-covered surface for some time I was picked up by one of the ship's lifeboats."

Bernard Baker, who visits the Institute whenever he comes to New York, was fourth mate aboard the PRUSA and made a 32 day voyage in a lifeboat to the Gilbert Islands.

NEW LIBERTY SHIP HONORS MORSE

The telegraph, which celebrates its centennial this year, is linked to the shipping world not only because of its great value to marine communications, but because it was actually conceived in mid-Atlantic.

While returning from Europe to New York in 1832, Samuel F. B. Morse, a passenger on the packet sailing ship "Sully," developed the idea of using electricity to send messages. In mid-Atlantic he jotted down not only an outline of his telegraph instrument but also of the Morse code. A liberty ship has been named in honor of Morse and his contribution to shipping.

THEY SAY IT CAN HAPPEN HERE

Bend an ear, you seamen on duty. Those unforgettable nights spent walking your posts during the frigid winter months are on the verge of being nothing more than memories. Yes, well, not just yet. But we hope soon. A thoughtful inventor, possibly one who has spent time walking a post in the services, has come up with what he calls the "electric coat." Honest, we're not kidding. The coat is wired like an electric heater and the current is supplied by batteries carried by hand in a little suitcase. All you do is connect the wiring in the coat with the battery, and the wearer (we hope it's you) finds out how toast feels in a toaster.

LIGHT RATIONS FOR SHIPWRECK

New Candy-type Food Is Announced by Navy

Washington, April 13 (AP).— Navy scientists disclosed today the development of new candy-type, tablet-form emergency rations for lifeboats and rafts, and declared a day's allotment weighed half as much and was more palatable to thirsty men than present shipwreck rations of the Navy and Merchant Marine.

Designed to take up as little space as possible in an emergency craft and to furnish food that can be taken with a minimum of difficulty when the mouth is dry, the new ration consists of three different types of tablets:

One of sucrose (sugar) and citric acid to provide fruity components and promote the flow of saliva;

One of sucrose corn syrup and citric acid, containing a butter-scotch-like material to provide buttery fat;

One of sucrose corn syrup and malted milk.

NAVY COMMENDATION

The Navy has commended the master and crew of the *Typhoon*, a 6,200-ton cargo ship "for outstanding performance of duty" in caring for wounded men in a recent engagement in the Pacific war zone, the WSA announced tonight. Capt. Jesse Morgan Jones, master of the vessel, received a letter from Vice Adm. R. K. Turner, commander of the Fifth Amphibious Forces of the Pacific Fleet, saying "many of the wounded owe their lives to the prompt and efficient attention by the ship's medical personnel and to the devoted and unselfish care tendered by the entire ship's company." Hundreds of wounded men — 250 on the first day — received treatment in an improvised surgical ward on the *Typhoon*, and merchant marine personnel vacated their rooms to the more serious casualties. The *Typhoon*, a Maritime Commission vessel, is operated out of New Orleans.

MERCHANT MARINE GETS PENICILLIN

Establishment of drug supply depots in eight major ports will assure a supply of essential drugs for men of the American Merchant Marine, the War Shipping Administration has announced.

Supplies of penicillin, dried blood plasma, insecticide, and quinine will be maintained in depots at the ports of New York; Portland, Oreg.; Seattle, Wash.; New Orleans, La.; Norfolk, Va.; Baltimore, Md.; San Francisco, Calif.; and Philadelphia, Pa. This will enable the operators of all WSA owned or chartered vessels to readily maintain a supply of essential medications as prescribed in the minimum drug list.

Such preparations are not always available in quantity on the open market, and the cooperation of the War Production Board and the Armed Services were enlisted in setting up the War Shipping Administration depots. Supplies will be allocated from the depots to operators on an actual cost basis.

STEWARD SIGNS ON 103rd SHIP

WASHINGTON, May 30 (AP).— "Lucky Uncle Otto" has signed on again — on his 103d ship. Otto Preussler, of Port Orange, Fla., chief steward and cook, has been going to sea for thirty-nine years, has seen action in the Russo-Japanese War, the Vera Cruz invasion and the World War, and has shipped out on twenty-three merchantmen in this war. His nickname, says the War Shipping Administration, stems from the fact that no ship on which he has sailed has been lost, either in war or in peace.

Uncle Otto always stays at the Seamen's Church Institute of New York when on shore leave in New York. He especially enjoys the bicycle trips through Central Park arranged for seamen at the Janet Roper Club. Here's luck, Uncle Otto!

"THE HAND OF GOD . . ."

Seaman John Hewitt, in his letter of January 7th, says life at sea continues to be most interesting "and more and more teaches me to trust in God. As you know, I am Navigator on this large naval auxiliary and am so often faced with decisions which directly involve the safety of the ship and often a thousand people aboard — it makes me think of a good topic on which to base a sermon if you should ever run dry! — A mariner lost at sea, buffeted by hurricane winds and mountainous seas for days, with no stars to guide him to his destination, feeling all is lost, sees as he approaches dangerous shores, a beam which reaches out and guides him in; an invisible hand, which takes him safely to port. Doesn't that also hold true in life? I know it does because I often feel the hand of God leading me when things get bad."

From a letter to
Lt. Ralph O. Harpole,
Chaplain, USMS
Sheepshead Bay

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Courtesy, Popular Science

MARLINSPIKE SEAMANSHIP fills in odd hours at sea. This seaman is reinforcing a wicker fender with a series of half-hitches, which is used as a bumper when coming alongside other ships.



Official U. S. Navy Photo

Ships of a U. S. invasion fleet in an Alutian harbor, just prior to the landing on Kiska

Reflections of An Old Sailor

To the Editor:

Recently the Seamen's Church Institute celebrated its centennary. The announcement of this event in THE LIVING CHURCH recalled to mind many experiences. For when a young sailor, I boarded at the old home and attended service at the floating church before the present Institute was built.

Being born in Newfoundland of a seafaring ancestry, it was natural that at an early age I should join the great company who, in the language of the Psalmist, "go down to the sea and occupy their business in great waters". And humanly speaking there is no reason why now I should not be sailing the seven seas. But, as Shakespeare says, "There is a destiny that shapes our lives, rough hew them how we will." And so it came to pass that just when I was making splendid progress toward the captaincy of a sailing ship I was submerged in a mighty wave of religious mysticism. And when I came to the surface, the vision of the clipper ship with her youthful captain had disappeared and the Gospel Ship had hove in sight, and was signaling for recruits.

These were the days of the old square-riggers whose daily menu consisted of "salt horse" and hardtack whose inside often contained the birthplace and cemetery of innumerable insects. However, from them there was no particular danger, for if perchance they escaped the strong teeth of the hardy sailor, a swallow of bootleg coffee, as we called it, overtook them on the way down, and from that there was no possibility of escape. Nor did any nice mattress, or even hammock, rest our weary bones. We slept on the bare boards of the bunk. Once in a while there was a "donkey's breakfast" (straw mattress) left in one of the bunks. Accompanying all these was the rigid, often brutal discipline of those old deep-sea going windjammers. Still in spite of all the hardships there was a fascination about that kind of life that was difficult to resist and impossible to forget.

How changed today is the life of a sailor! The old square-rigger has gone, and with her passing went the old sailor with his superstitious views and practices. The steamship now rules the waves. But in the passing of the square-rigger something picturesque passed from modern life. For not only was a full-rigged ship under full sail a beautiful sight, but to get her under way was vastly more interesting than to start a steamer on her course. Ring a bell, turn on the mechanical power, and the steamer is on her way. But to get an old square-rigger under

way required the activity of twenty shouting, cursing, singing officers and men, as they weighed anchor and set the sails. And when one heard the stentorian voices of those half drunken sailors singing the anchor or topsail chanty, he felt that a metropolitan opera company was quite tame in comparison.

With the passing of the square-rigger there also came a change in the religious work among seamen. Prior to that time, the missionary work among seamen was primarily of a purely evangelical nature. Individual salvation, as far as the American mission was concerned, was the main purpose for which the society was organized and supported. There was no attempt to clean up the waterfront. The crimp, the landshark, the brothel keeper continued their nefarious traffic unmolested. The attitude of the predatory gang who preyed upon the sailor is well expressed in the old song of the waterfront: "Strike up the band, here comes a sailor; Cash in his hand, just off a whaler. Stand in a row; don't let him go Jack's a cinch, but every inch a sailor."

It required more than the tender exhortation of the Gospel to drive this baneful crew of exploiters from the waterfront. And, strange as it may seem, the man who led the attack, and succeeded beyond all others, was not an ex-sailor, but a landsman, the Rev. A. R. Mansfield. With a clear vision of the needs of the sailor, and a remedy for them, he began his missionary work among seamen by emphasizing the social side of religion, and in continuance of that policy he built the Seamen's Church Institute of New York whose diversified activities minister to every need of the sailor, minister to every need of the sailor . . .

While the Seamen's Church Institute of New York is by far the largest work of its kind, yet it is only one of many sailors' missions that are doing a like noble and Christian work, if less extensive. But no column of figures, however imposing, can give a complete record of service rendered by those who minister to seamen in all important seaports of the world. The warm welcome, the influence of the encouraging word, the esprit de corps, can never be tabulated. But the sailor knows how tremendously important they are, especially the sailor who is such by profession, and not those who have been called into service, and are at home on the land and in a landed society, and, after the war, will return again to the old and familiar haunts. The USO, with its vast financial resources, is doing a splendid work for them, supplemented by numerous Church organizations. But after the war, as before, the

great work among sailors will be carried on by such institutions as the New York Seamen's Institute. And, as an old sailor who in the long ago shared in the social and religious fellowship of seamen's missions in many seaports of the world, I record with pleasure my appreciation of the service of those mission workers, men and women, who, in my sailor days, when most of the inhabitants of the waterfront thought of Jack as legitimate prey, when the uniform of a United States sailor was barred from so-called respect-

able places, and the United States government, itself, treated the American sailor more like a ward than a free and responsible person, extended to those modern vikings the right hand of fellowship, and treated them as individuals with the inalienable right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, even as other citizens.

(Rev.) Emanuel A. Le Moine
Washington, D. C.

From "The Living Church" June 11, 1944

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AMERICA'S MARITIME HISTORY

Its Background — Development — Tradition

By A. C. Denison, Lieutenant, U.S.N.R.
\$2.50 G. P. Putnam's Sons

Into the two hundred odd pages of this little book Lieutenant Denison has crowded enough solid facts for — a book twice its size. He shows an amazing knowledge of ships, from the models found in the pyramids to the planes of our "navy in three dimensions". He has a stimulating way of drawing parallels between the ancient and modern; as, when, in writing of the Battle of Actium where the navy of Anthony and Cleopatra, consisting exclusively of quinqueremes, was defeated by Octavius' small fast biremes. Two thousand years later, he reminds us, the REPULSE and the PRINCE OF WALES met the same fate when they were sent along the Malayan coast unprotected by small craft.

We read of medieval shipbuilders armorplating a ship with ten inches of solid oak; very effective, but, unfortunately, she would not sail. Stupid? Clever Americans tried a similar experiment in this war with similar result. We read of the privateers who gave such a good account of themselves during the Revolution; the graceful clippers and their rivals, the first awkward steam packets. There is a particularly interesting chapter on the Coast Guard. D. P.

BATTLE OF THE OCEANS

The Story of the British Merchant Marine

By Warrent Armstrong. N. Y. Liveright, 194. \$2.50 Illus.

In England's long history there is no more stirring saga than to-day's story of the British Merchant Marine. Mr. Armstrong, an ex-seaman himself, tells the story of the war from the viewpoint of the man who wears in his buttonhole the badge with the letters "M-N". Most of his stories are not those already publicized in our papers but matter-of-fact epics of courage and endurance of men on little freighters, of men in the engine rooms, of the seamen whose job it was to bring their ship and cargo back safe to England. Getting the cargo through was more important than spectacular deeds. As a background for these many anecdotes, Mr. Armstrong has sketched in a running account of the sea war from 1939 to 1944. He also discusses the future of the British Merchant Marine with the stern warning that the mistakes England made in scrapping many of her Merchant Marine ships and allowing her seamen to stand in dole queues, as it was done from 1918 — 1938, must not be repeated. M. A.

SAILORS OF FORTUNE

By Colin Mackenzie
E. P. Dutton, \$2.50

"The ——— Germans were spilling us all over the seascape. We died like everything and we fed the sharks of the seven seas." This is the way Colin Mackenzie writes. Swift, deep knife-cuts on a white canvas, and leaping into the gutted spaces, pictures singularly fierce and terrible. This is the story of the Merchant Marine in wartime, compelling, vivid, breath-choking. There are pictures from which one draws back in stunned shock with the thought that these things cannot happen. But they have happened.

Torpedo in the night. Mackenzie hurtling thro' space from the hatch where he had been sleeping into water. Bill Martin calling for help one minute, the next floating by — a severed torso. Mackenzie managing to swim back to his ship, a miracle like achievement in the black insanity of dynamite, sharks, barracuda. Flares burning like fiery hands all about the sightless sea . . . seamen throwing up their mute signals for help that could not be had.

Short-lived, indeed, Mackenzie's safety. A second torpedo cut thru' the ship, the *Cold Port*. "Hold Fast", the Norwegian, standing there one moment talking — a man; the next disconnected atoms breaking apart in high space. Mackenzie in the water again, his body burned, lacerated, oil-smearred, his leg broken. Afloat on a raft, a flag wrapped about him, seemingly dead, the captain and engineer were about to bury him at sea. He awoke just in time.

Again, Rescue. A freighter picked them up, and before the night was over, again the Torpedo. A man called "Swede" swimming to Mackenzie's cry for help. The submarine on the water's surface, cutting ahead relentlessly. A man galloped in mid-ocean . . . a man called "Swede" coming to help a hurt shipmate.

Young Mackenzie received hospitalization at Trinidad. They set his leg and drained a teacup of oil from his lungs. All of which did not deter him later from going ashore at Salerno (against rules) and helping to destroy a sniper's nest.

But there is a light touch of humor in the book wherever circumstance permits. Sailors arranging "dates" for each other, a dinner in the Kasbah, Mackenzie crashing to the floor a tray of cafeteria food which was denied him because he was not a citizen employee of a commercial company in Trinidad. The irony of rules and company regulations!

There is powerful impact and force in Mackenzie's writing. No one can read his story without understanding as never before what sailing the seas in World War II really means. A. V. C.

THE MERCHANT MARINE

We seldom get to learn their Names in spite of all they do. They're merely mentioned in the Press as "Members of the Crew". Yet they're the Men Whose Courage, Arms, and Clothes, equips And feeds, the Boys in every battle zone
Who do the glorious deeds.
We speak of them as Merchant Men.
Yet when they once set out
No matter where their course may run
Death follows them about.
They're stalked by death from port to port

When once the anchor's weighed,
From Master down to Cabin boy they're sailors unafraid.

They know the lurking submarines
They've seen them break the wave
And still with little means to fight the cruel odds they brave.
Sometimes they're stuck in death O'night
And into Rafts they fall
And drift about and pray to God
For help to save them all.

We think of them as Merchant Men
But when the War is Won
They, too, must share the pride of it for duty nobly done.

And when the world is free once more
And home the boys from sea,
When from the fox holes come the lads
With us once more to be
When from the skies the boys slip down,
Let all remember then
The courage of the Yankee youth
Who sailed as Merchant Men.

Mrs. Louis J. Festa

LURE OF THE SEAS

When I was young, I saw an old man looking out to sea . . . I asked him what he saw, and this is what he said to me:
"I see a million miles of water, liquid green and pure,
That rolled the far horizons back to cast the mad allure
That made me learn to love the sea as some men love champagnes . . .
And best of all, the gales that grew to full-fledged hurricanes
When black storm-clouds crept out across the sultry sky at night,
Whiplashed to splendor by the lightning flashing livid white,
Upon my ship
And angry waves climbed on her bow each time she took a dip.
Of all things that came along I liked the worst the best

And always found that danger gave the day a sweeter zest.
I liked the weeks of sailing on a glossy sea of silk . . .
But I liked the going best when waves gave off a spindrift milk."

—Paul Emile Miller
(a former seaman)

OUR SHIPS

Our merchant ships they leave their ports
At night and break of morn,
They sail the Seven Seas around
From Suez to Cape Horn.
They're manned by brave and fearless men

Who heed not war's alarm,
But land their cargoes on the shore
Our Allies for to arm.
The men who man these cargo ships
Have perils to meet uncounted,
With Hitler bombs and submarines
Which they have so far flouted,
And often on the run across
They meet with dirty weather,
With decks awash, a-rolling hard
And bows all in a smother.

When peace once more reigns in our land,
When Japs and Hun are beaten,
When Victory flags wave in our streets
And Victory drums are beating,
Let's not forget the Merchant Man
Or his deeds at Sea of Valor
For when things looked blue on land and sea

We looked to the Merchant Sailor.
We must not forget our Navy, too,
Who fought some gallant actions,
Whose guns replied, when tyrants tried
To annihilate whole nations,
But they may try and try in vain
Our land to raid and plunder,
But while the boys in blue are brave and true

They surely will go under.
Michael Folan

—CORRECTION—

The poem published on the Marine Poetry page in the May issue of THE LOOKOUT, entitled "THE WOMAN IN THE HARBOR" was written by Corporal George Watson Davis of the 1056th Signal Corps Service Group who was inspired to write it while standing in the streets of Oran shortly after the invasion of Africa.

The Editor regrets that the poem was credited to Frank Michael Marostis.

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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,"** a corporation 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. If land or any specific property such as bonds, stocks, etc., is given, a brief description of the property should be inserted instead of the words, "the sum of.....Dollars."