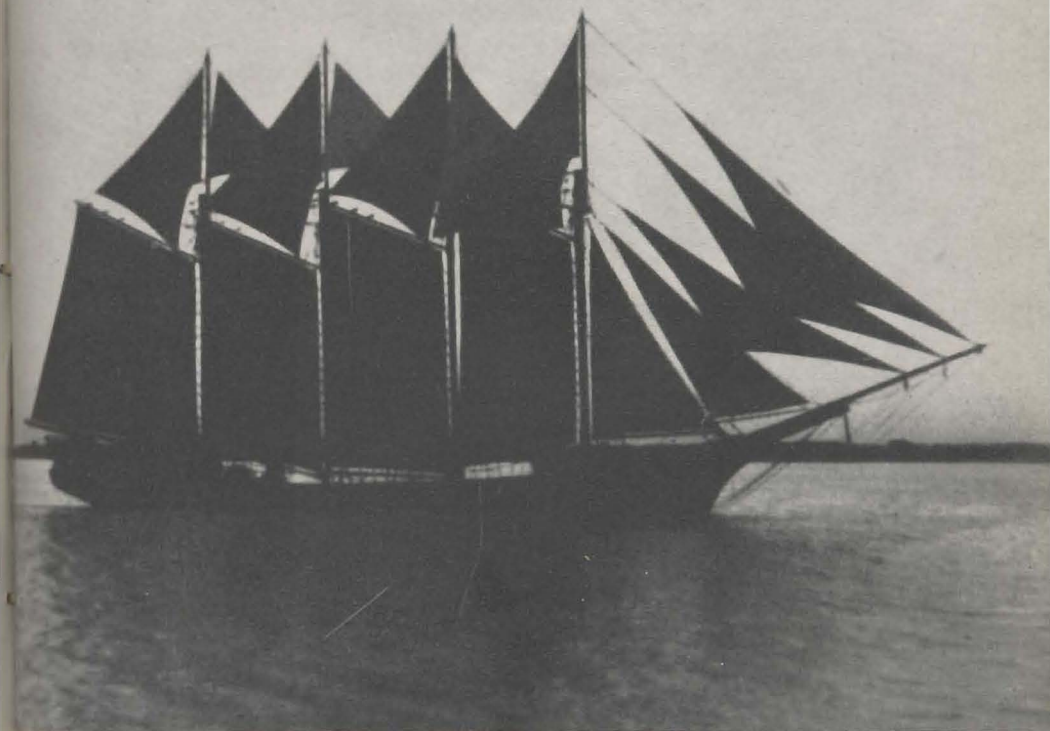


The LOOKOUT



SCHOONER LILLIAN E. KERR

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE
OF NEW YORK

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE
OF NEW YORK

No. 6

JUNE, 1947

Sanctuary

O Almighty God, remember with Thy mercy and love all who minister before Thee in Institutes and Chapels for Seamen throughout the world. Prosper the work in which they are engaged, enable them faithfully to preach Thy Word and to fulfill their ministry. May they uphold Christ, both by their words and in their lives, and raise up, we pray Thee, faithful and true men for this work, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

(Missions to Seamen)



The LOOKOUT

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THIS MONTH'S COVER was taken from on board 3 mast schooner "Irene & Myrtle" by James Antle — in "the Race" (between Montauk Point and Block Island) Summer 1942.

This was last voyage of the L. E. Kerr. She was lost with all hands, run down in thick weather by returning Convoy about a month after.

Caption by George Noble

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Sea Dogs Rescued From Ship Fire

A GOLDEN cocker spaniel and an airedale owe their lives to the bravery of Captain John Anderson, Chief Officer Herbert Parker, and the Purser Don Malone when their ship, the "John Ericsson" burned at her New York pier recently.

All three officers were on vacation when fire broke out aboard the "Ericsson," but on hearing the news on the radio, they hurried back to the ship, dashed on board to rescue the two dogs, "Eric" (the airedale) and "Chotahpeg" (the spaniel) who were locked in the Captain's cabin. A fireman broke down the door. The dogs, very frightened, were crouching on the floor, but as soon as they saw Captain Anderson they perked up and between them they got the dogs out and carried them down ladders from the top deck to a forward section of the ship which was not threatened by the fire and shut them up there while the three men went back to help fight the fire and rescue valuable documents.

The 16,500 ton vessel which was operated by the United States Lines was built in 1928 in Germany for the Swedish-America Line. As the "Kungholm" she carried passengers in the trans-Atlantic run. In 1941



The Chief Officer and Eric

the U. S. Maritime Commission purchased her, renamed her "John Ericsson" (for the Swedish-American Naval engineer who built the first armored turret ship "Monitor").

All through the war the "John Ericsson" served the Allies, carried 130,000 troops and after V-J Day, war brides, children, and refugees. She carried as many as 7,500 at one time. She logged 200,000 miles in this transport service. She carried the first marine division to Guadalcanal, and the reinforcements for the North African invasion. Her dramatic wartime career ended on March 6th when a three-alarm fire, probably due to defective wiring, swept her main and promenade decks. Her hull was saved, and was towed to Staten Island.

Chief Officer Parker suffered from smoke and minor burns and was hospitalized.

As we go to press we learn that Captain Anderson has been given command of the U. S. Liner *American Merchant* a new C-2 cargo-passenger ship. He became a captain at the age of 23, and has served 26 years as master of U. S. Line ships. He graduated from the schoolship *Newport* in 1913.



The Skipper and his dogs

War Records of Some Coastwise Steamships in World War II

By Freeman R. Hathaway,

Member Steamship Historical Society of America

EDITOR'S NOTE: Many LOOKOUT readers on reading the following article will have sentimental memories of these old coast-wise steamboats which once were a familiar sight on Long Island Sound and on the New York to Boston Run. These vessels, also, did their bit in the war; many were lost, but a few are now in peace-time service.

WITH the coming of World War II, the fast dwindling fleet of coast-wise and Long Island Sound steamers were taken over for war duty, leaving the coasts practically stripped of any vessels suitable for passenger and freight service.

Some of these ships, remembered by travelers, are briefly discussed in this article.

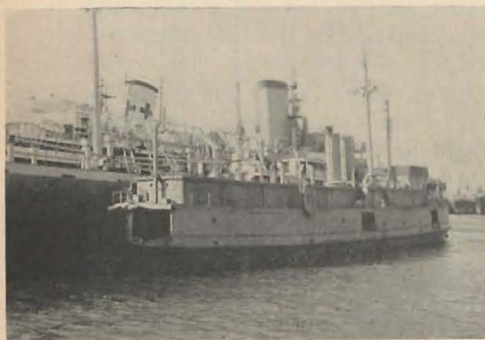
Probably the most spectacular mass exodus of these ships occurred in September, 1942, when a convoy of eight former coastwise steamboats left New York for England, after having been prepared for their hard trip.

They were the *Boston* and *New York* of the Eastern Steamship Company's New York-Boston service, *Naushon* and *New Bedford* of the New Bedford-Nantucket fleet, *Yorktown* and *President Warfield* of the Old Bay Line, and *Northland* and *Southland* of the Norfolk and Washington Line.

This fleet was known as the "skim-

ming dish fleet," (because of their shallow draft) and it made a brave start from Newfoundland in October, 1942. Several days out, they were spotted by enemy planes, the submarines then notified, and soon the underwater attack was on. The *Boston* and *New York* were sunk, followed the next day by the loss of *Yorktown*. *President Warfield* and *Yorktown* were credited with each sinking a sub, it was reported, and the little *New Bedford* put up a brave two day fight. The remnant arrived in Scotland, and saw various services in the cross-channel service, acting as barracks ships for training officers, and, in the case of the *Naushon*, a hospital ship.

Naushon, *New Bedford* and *President Warfield* have returned to this country, and have been offered for sale by the Maritime Commission. *Naushon* has been purchased by the Meseck Steamboat Company in New York, and will run to Rye Beach this summer, we are told. *New Bedford's* disposition has not been announced. However, *President Warfield*, first announced as sold to Chinese interests, last month was on her way to France. She became disabled and came back to Norfolk, operated by



City of Lowell



Wassuc, ex Yale
Photos by Stephan Gmelin

an almost entire Jewish crew. It was rumored she had been purchased to run refugees to Palestine.

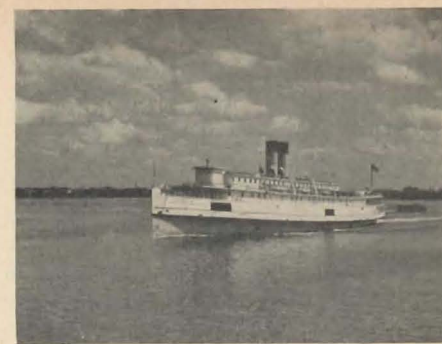
Northland and *Southland* were at last reports, still at Antwerp, as it was felt they could not safely make the trip home.

Probably the most familiar ship known to New Yorkers is the *Richard Peck*, which has run to practically all ports on the lower New England Coast. She was sold in 1938 to the Meseck Steamboat Company and ran between New York and New Haven, summers.

With defense plans under way in January, 1941, the *Peck* was taken over by the government, and made the run under her own steam to Argentia, Newfoundland, where she was used as a barracks ship for construction workers. She eventually became the U.S.S. *Richard Peck*, IX 96, returning to this port in May 1943, where the writer had luncheon aboard with her captain. Soon the *Peck* left for Norfolk, and in order to fill in a need for service in that area, was sold to the Pennsylvania Railroad, and re-named *Elisha Lee*. She has been running ever since 1943 on the Cape Charles-Old Point Comfort-Norfolk line with great success.

Another Sound steamboat which came back to life, was the *Meteor*, (ex *Chester W. Chapin*), taken over from the Colonial Line in March, 1942, and put into service as a barracks ship at the Army Base, Brooklyn. She continued as such until 1943, when she too was pressed into service on the passenger run from Washington to Norfolk. Her service there was spasmodic, and soon the *Meteor* was laid up. After the war, she joined the laid up fleet in the James River, and, too, was reported sold to the Chinese for service on the Yangste River. However, in April, 1947 the *Meteor* showed up in New York having been purchased by an excursion boat operator, who plans to perhaps run her to Bridgeport. This is one vessel which may return to the old Sound waters.

The running mate of the *Meteor*,



Elisha Lee ex-Richard Peck

Photo by James Wilson

the *City of Lowell*, went into retirement in 1938, under plans to use her, together with the *Governor Cobb*, as trailer ships. Nothing came of this, but in 1943 the *Lowell* was towed to Brooklyn and took the place of *Meteor* as the Army Base barracks ship, serving as such until November, 1945. She was then towed to the laid up fleet, and it is believed that she is now being broken up for scrap near Washington, D. C.

Two sister ships well known in the late 1930's on Long Island Sound, were the *Arrow* (ex *Belfast*) and *Comet* (ex *Camden*) which ran on the Colonial Line. Taken over by the Army, after extensive alterations they left New York and were inter-island transports at Hawaii. *Arrow* was recently reported as sold by the Maritime Commission. No word is available as to the fate of the *Comet*. She was last heard from in Hawaii.

The Colonial Line also operated other ships under charter for their Long Island Sound Services, among which were the:

President Warfield, *Southland*, *Yorktown*—discussed previously, *State of Virginia* — used in war service at Trinidad.

Also at Trinidad was the little *Gosnold*, later *Miramar*, and last known as *Wm. S. White*.

The *Sandy Hook* was used by the Army during the war as a transport around New York harbor. Last summer she ran from the Battery to Rye

Beach, (Playland) N. Y. She is now owned by the Central Railroad of N. J. and will probably sail this summer from New York to Atlantic Highlands, N. J.

A ship built for Long Island Sound, but never run there was the *De Witt Clinton*, ex *Nopatin* ex *Manhattan*. In this war she was converted to an inter-island transport under the name of *Col. Frederick Johnson*, and ran in the West Indies. She has been offered for sale, but it is doubtful if she will return to her last service — on the Hudson River Day Line.

Other vessels known here were the *George Washington* and *Robert E. Lee* which ran on the New York-Boston winter service, and last on the Old Dominion Line. The former ran as a coastal transport, and only recently finished a charter to run between New York - Bermuda. The *Lee* was sunk off South Pass, La., on December 26, 1943, with a heavy loss of life, having been torpedoed.

Acadia and *St. John* of the Eastern S. S. Company both finished their government service, having been transports, hospital ships, and in the case of the *St. John* a submarine mother ship, back in 1941. Full stories of these ships' services should appear at a later date.

It would not be fair to close without mentioning the little *Yale* built as a freight boat for the Starin line from New York - New Haven (not to be confused with the *Yale* which ran on the Boston run with the old *Harvard*).

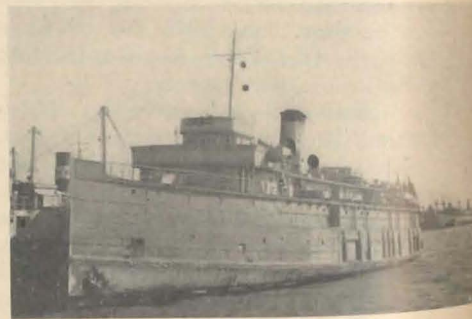
Yale became the *U.S.S. Wassuc*, a minelayer, and she has been offered for sale. Will she ever return to her last run from New London to Orient Point?

It has been repeatedly stated that the nation needs a strong coastwise fleet, to help out in case of war. Since the close of hostilities practically no

effort has been made to build up this fleet once more on account of high operating costs, and competition from parallel shore services of autos, trucks, busses and trains. Let us hope that we can again board a steamboat and go for an overnight trip down the Sound.

P.S. One of our LOOKOUT subscribers, Edward Steese, who suggested the foregoing article, writes: "In regard to some other coastal steamers I had occasion in November 1945 to cross over to Martha's Vineyard on a day when the weather was so bad that the big boats were not running. The "skipper" of the small launch told me he had seen some of the New Bedford boats and the "Naushon" running in the English Channel.

"The ancient "Sankaty" which took me as a small boy to Nantucket in 1912 was of course taken off her run years ago — burned or sunk several times — and the last I saw of her was as a remodelled ferry-boat (Stamford-Oyster Bay). I "crossed" on her one day when the wind was blowing down the Sound . . . The poor old boat had always been famous for its "roll." It was a shorter experience, but even more shaking than crossing the Atlantic in the old "Lafayette" on its last run — without ballast — back in 1924."



Naushon
Photo by Stephan Gmelin

PURCHASE OF FIVE C-2 CARGO SHIPS TO AUGMENT GRACE LINE'S SERVICE

The Grace Line has added five C-2 type cargo ships to its rapidly expanding post-war fleet in order to provide better service over its traditional routes to Central and South America.

The new ships are the *Santa Nora*, *Santa Eliana*, *Santa Adela*, *Santa Flavia* and the *Santa Juana*.

Dramatics at the Institute

"CURTAIN going up!" The magic hush — and the play begins. This is heard frequently both in the Janet Roper Club and in the Auditorium at 25 South Street.

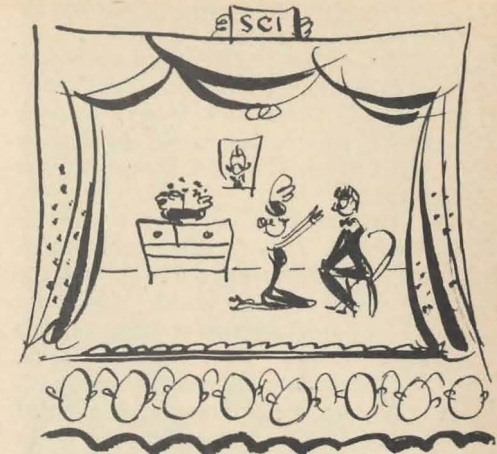
Paul Dorn, who has had professional theatre experience, has brought a group of actors and put on three one-act plays for the merchant seamen audiences in the Janet Roper Club. The first one "In Cold Blood" was a prize-winning play in England and its presentation at the Institute was its first appearance in this country. A spine-chilling mystery (as you may have deduced!), it played to standing room only and made a great hit with the seamen spectators. The second Dorn production "Hollywood Interview" was equally well liked and played to an audience of about one hundred seamen.

Mr. Dorn was introduced to the Institute through one of the volunteer hostesses in the Seamen's Lounge, Mrs. John F. McGovern, who is in charge of entertainment for the Episcopal Actors' Guild where Mr. Dorn also presents his one act plays. His leading actress is Dorothea Angove who was in the Broadway production of "Angel Street."

A platform stage borrowed from the British Clubroom, flats from the Auditorium, and props and costumes supplied by Dorn's group help to give the illusion of the legitimate theatre to these productions.

The Auditorium echoes once a week to the lively vaudeville and variety shows put on for seamen audiences by various groups. These weekly dramatic and musical entertainments are very popular with the men. At their close the men pour from the Auditorium into the Janet Roper Room to drink their coffee and discuss the shows.

An experiment begun almost a year ago by a staff member in the Seamen's Lounge developed into a group called the Maritime Players whose members were all seamen interested in having a go at acting. Mrs. Timmins, the staff



Drawing by Phil May

member, coached them and invited them to attend informal acting classes, and began rehearsing them in a skit. It is interesting to note that the men did not want to perform any sea stories. They said they saw enough of that! Their first production, put on rather spontaneously, was "Frankie & Johnny" in which the seamen took both male and female roles. Men not in the group were persuaded to contribute to the fun by making wigs of rope. Old pool table covers, some party tissue paper and other odds and ends were turned into costumes. "Frankie & Johnny" put on in the Janet Roper Room, was a howling success and the group was encouraged to start rehearsals for another production. Some of the members bought tickets to Broadway plays and with Mrs. Timmins went to watch the professionals at work. They bought the cheapest seats but had a fine time. The second one called "Bunyan Yarn" was eventually presented as a radio show with the actors unseen by the audience and speaking their parts through a loudspeaker. By this time some of the boys had lost their nerve or decided they were seamen, not actors, and the group gradually dissolved but not before a lot of entertainment had been provided both spectators and participants. The diffi-

culties of memorizing lines have been overcome recently by presenting charades, pantomines, and by the improvisation of dialogue.

One or two seamen were winnowed out from the group as having unusual talent for dramatics. One of these is trying to save his money so that he can attend dramatic school in the future.

Through her connections with the American Theatre Wing with which she served during the war and the Episcopal Actors Guild, Mrs. John F. McGovern, volunteer hostess, has supplied quite a lot of talent to the Institute's entertainment programs.

Among well-known and talented artists whom she has brought down to entertain the seamen are Shirley Woodman Wallace, concert violinist, Sergei Meilor, baritone, and Fairfax

Burghar (of the Virginia Fairfaxes, suh) who got interested in magic during the war and has done quite a few professional turns with it. In a recent issue of "SEA LANES," publication of the Janet Roper Room, a seaman who saw the Paul Dorn production of "Hollywood Interview" wrote a review in which he said: "I've seen amateur plays of one act, two acts, three acts, Long Johns and what-have-you . . . indeed, it got so that if at any time you required a ham sandwich, all you had to do was to take along the bread; the ham was there ready for slicing . . . But . . . at long last, I found it! A one-act play which was good! The script was like the curate's egg . . . good in parts but the excellent treatment it got from the players redeemed it completely."

Hazards of the Sea

NORWEGIAN FREIGHTER SINKS; NINE MISSING

Her sides bursting open by rolling cargo, the 3,215 ton Norwegian motorship *Belpamela* sank in the Atlantic, according to the Coast Guard. She carried a crew of 27, 18 of whom were rescued by the 7,000 ton American freighter *John P. Mitchell*, which radioed the Coast Guard that the sinking occurred about 800 miles east of Norfolk, Va. The survivors told the crew of the *Mitchell* that they had seen the nine missing sailors take to the water with life rafts. The Radiomarine Corporation of America picked up a message from the *Mitchell* asking other ships in the vicinity to join a search for the missing men. No trace was found of the nine men.

OIL TANKER AFIRE IN CARIBBEAN

Fire broke out in the engine room of the American Petroleum Transport Company's tanker *Fishers Hill* when five miles off the Colorado light at Aruba. The blaze forced the crew to abandon ship and three merchant vessels went to the rescue. Prompt and courageous action by the vessel's skipper, Capt. R. A. Moberg, prevented loss of life.

FREIGHTER SINKS TUG, SAVES ALL 27 IN CREW

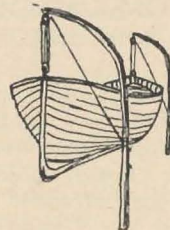
The Norwegian freighter *Bandeirante*, which had left here just twenty-four hours earlier, returned yesterday with two large holes punched in her bow and the twenty-seven-man crew of the seagoing tug *Great Isaac*, which lay fourteen fathoms deep ten miles off the New Jersey coast.

The *Bandeirante*, which docked at 3:30 p. m. at Pier 6, East River and Coenties Slip, was en route to Cuba when it collided with the 196-foot tug at 10:50 p. m. the night before in a fog five miles south of the Barnegat Lightship. Captain Ernest McCreary, skipper of the tug, owned by the United States Maritime Commission and operated by Moran Towing and Transportation Company, Inc., 17 Battery Place, said the freighter rammed six feet into the tug's port side but all his crew got off safely.

The tug was towing the decommissioned Liberty Ship *Thomas M. Cooley* at the end of a 1,500-foot cable and as she sank made a perfect anchor. A sister tug, the *Trinidad Head*, was sent for the *Cooley* and towed her here.

Worst off of the sunken tug's crew, all of whom lost their belongings, was Albert McCabe, an oiler, of 48 Underhill Avenue, Brooklyn, who left his false teeth in a glass beside his bunk. "I'm looking forward to a big oatmeal supper to celebrate our rescue," he said.

Editor's Note: Eighteen of the crew of the tug stayed overnight at the Institute following their rescue.



A Seafarer Behind Footlights

ONE afternoon last winter a tall, distinguished-looking man mounted the Institute's main stairway and introduced himself as Frederic March, the actor. He wanted no conducted tour of the building but simply asked permission to walk through the lobbies and game rooms where he could observe the seamen. He explained that he intended to play the role of a seafarer in a forthcoming play.

The play turned out to be a new comedy, "YEARS AGO," which stars Frederic March and his wife, Florence Eldridge. Mr. March plays the part of Clinton Jones, father of Ruth Gordon, actress and playwright. Mr. Jones had gone to sea as a cabin boy at the age of eight, and had continued sailing until he became a mate. He then married and settled in Wollaston, Mass., where his daughter, Ruth, was born. His memories of his seafaring days were still vivid, and his vocabulary was made colorful by nautical phraseology.

Mr. March's portrayal of the crotchety but kind-hearted ex-seafarer is delightfully amusing. His keen observation during his brief visit to "25 South Street" is evident by the sailor's rolling gait and widespread stance he acquired for the role. In the play, Mr. Jones, after much opposition, allows his daughter to journey to New York to "go on the stage," and he even gives her his most precious possession to pawn—his spyglass—which he had lovingly polished and cherished all his 24 years ashore.

"Go to Cap'n Alec Forbes at 22 South Street," Mr. Jones tells his



daughter. "And he'll give you \$100 for this spyglass . . . I'm willin' to grease the ways a bit for my daughter 'cause it's hard settin' out on a new enterprise without money in your jeans."

A gray cat named "Punk" also appears in "Years Ago." When the first cat disappeared shortly after the play opened, the *Institute* offered its feline mascot, "Bosun" as an appropriate substitute — and indeed "Bosun" might have "trod the boards" except that he is white and the part called for a gray cat!

John Mason Brown, writing in the *Saturday Review of Literature*, paid tribute to Mr. March's acting: "He had explored the part fully, mastered its shadings, and was acting from within. The slight stoop of the shoulders; the hint of an accent; the suggestion of a sailor's walk, remembered from youth and persisting years afterwards on dry land; the manual dexterity shown in tying knots and handling a knife when doing up a package . . . and the proof of his range, is to see him as the peppery but benevolent father in "Years Ago," having just seen him as the jaunty and wealthy sergent in "The Best Years of Our Lives."

Mauretania's Post-war Debut

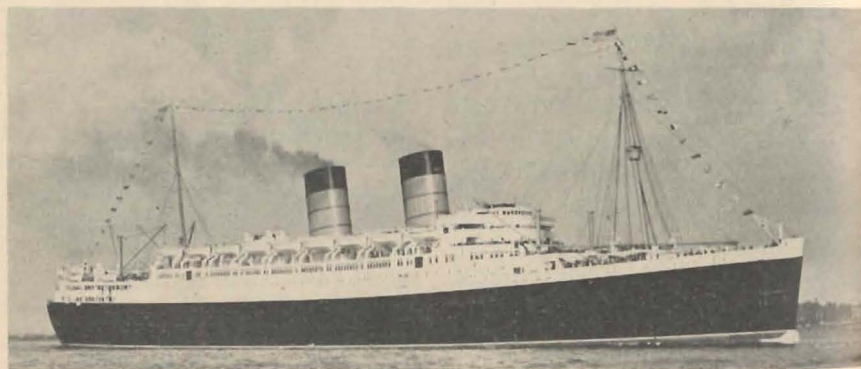
THE new *Mauretania*, in civilian paint and resuming the peacetime duties she had just begun at the outbreak of war, arrived in New York on May 2nd on her first post-war voyage. She carried 1,128 passengers and she forged through a heavy mist to her berth at Pier 90. Bad weather curtailed her reception, but her skipper, Captain R. G. B. Woollatt expressed pride in the 35,677 ton liner and hope that she would become as popular with transatlantic passengers as her famous predecessor, the "old" *Mauretania*, speed queen of the Atlantic for 22 years.

"The ship behaved very well," he said, despite a gale off the north coast of Ireland. Capt. Woollatt was in command of the *Mauretania* when she left New York for the last time — on March 10, 1945, carrying 7,584 American troops bound for England. Capt. Woollatt is a veteran of 33

years in the Cunard-White Star Line.

Upon the old *Mauretania's* retirement in 1935, an unprecedented tribute was paid the "grand old lady" when a memorial, depicting her at sea, was unveiled in St. Nicholas Cathedral, Newcastle—probably the only time a ship was ever immortalized in a church window. Her fastest crossing was made on August 16, 1929, at the age of 22 when she sped from New York to Plymouth, England, in four days, 17 hours and 50 minutes for an average speed of 27.22 knots.

Although the new *Mauretania* is not designed for such speed, she seems destined to win a place in the affections of travelers to Europe as a worthy successor. Of her crew of 600, 100 serve as a "hotel" staff: stewards, waiters, stewardesses, etc. Crew accommodations have been enlarged and renovated.



VETERAN LINER TO THE SCRAP HEAP

The gallant 38-year-old *SS George Washington*, veteran of both World Wars and once a favorite luxury liner on the North Atlantic run, will go into the permanent Reserve Fleet where she will stand ready for service again in any national emergency, the United States Maritime Commission has announced.

The *George Washington* was built in 1908 at Stettin, Germany, as a luxury passenger liner, and began her career with

the Hamburg American Line. In 1917 she was seized and interned by the U. S. Government, and used during World War I to transport 100,000 troops to France. After the war, while still under command of Captain Edward Macauley, USN, former member of the Maritime Commission, she carried President Wilson to and from the Paris peace conference, and was chosen by the King and Queen of Belgium for their visit to the United States. She transported members of the American Legion on their trip to Paris in 1921 as guests of the French government.

"It's Stout Hearts That Keep the Ship Safe"

MERCHANT seamen know what Joseph Conrad meant when he wrote:

"It's stout hearts that keep the ship safe."

In hours of peril shared at sea, they have depended on the stout hearts of their shipmates . . . and have come through. When ashore, they depend on friends like you for the touch of home that gives them the spirit to carry on.

One of the facilities at 25 South Street which they use constantly and keenly appreciate is the Conrad Library. With its ship models, its marine paintings, and its windows overlooking the harbor, it is a nautical sanctuary where the men can study for licenses or raise of grade, catch up on recent magazines, and read to their hearts' content.



The Clinics give about 5,000 treatments annually

The Library is but one of the **many** services maintained by the Institute for merchant seamen from all lands. There are **health, character-building, and recreational** services suited to the special needs and wishes of seafarers, young and old.

It's the warm hearts of generous friends that keep the Institute "steady as she goes."



Refreshments in the Janet Roper Clubrooms

From this library, too, go out the packets of books as gifts for crew members on out-going ships under all flags.

The Butterflies that Sank the Ship

By Ralph D. Finch*

STRANGE are the ways of the sea. Stranger yet, the stories of the ships and the men that sail them. Our story concerns the untimely ending of the *S.S. Alder*. It is a strange story. An unbelievable story. A story unique in all the annals of the sea.

Let's turn back the years. Back, back to the year 1911. We find the *S.S. Alder* plying a course through the waters of the Persian Gulf. It was on one of those scorching days, with little wind, not uncommon in this part of the world, that it happened.

The mate, pacing the bridge, became aware of what he thought was a black cloud barely visible on the horizon. As the minutes ticked off, the cloud grew in size and seemed to be heading directly for the *S.S. Alder*. The mate was puzzled. "Is this a storm approaching?" he thought. He checked the barometer, but found no change. The wind direction was such that the storm, if it was one, should be moving away instead of towards the ship. "Very queer," he said to himself, "I'd better call the Ole Man." When the Master reached the bridge

he ordered a ninety degree course change. As the vessel moved off on its new course the cloud, now very large, also seemed to change its course, still heading for the *S.S. Alder*. Again and again the *S.S. Alder* steered new courses but each time the cloud also changed course as it approached nearer and nearer. By this time the entire crew was on deck. Speculation was rife. The officers and crew, hardened seamen that they were, were dumbfounded. No one including the veterans of many years at sea, had ever encountered such a phenomenon.

Strange Kismet

Soon the immense cloud was upon the ship. Then and only then did the truth become evident. The cloud, believe it or not, was a swarm of butterflies. Millions of weary insects, undoubtedly blown out to sea by some storm, now frantically searching for a place to rest their weary wings. You guessed it, the *S.S. Alder* was to be their haven. Down upon the ship they lit, on the rigging, the gear, on every available space, butterfly upon butterfly. As tons upon tons of butterflies

blanketed the vessel from bow to stern, the *S.S. Alder*, already heavily loaded as was the greedy custom in those days, commenced to slide lower and lower into the water. The Master, realizing that his ship would soon founder, ordered the crew to abandon ship. The lifeboats were launched in the nick of time but not without great human exertion.

In a matter of minutes the *S.S. Alder* had slipped beneath the waves. Gone forever. However, before the sea had completely engulfed this hapless ship, the great swarm of butterflies arose

from the ship and soon disappeared beyond the horizon. When one of the lifeboats returned to the scene, little was left of the ill-fated *S.S. Alder*. A small amount of debris and hundreds of dead butterflies were all that remained. A strange fate for a gallant ship.

In the offices of Lloyd's of London, the renowned insurance firm of London, England, hangs a plaque upon which is mounted a large butterfly. Inscribed underneath are these words: "In memory of the *S.S. Alder*."

*From the Radio Officer's News.

Ship News

NEWS OF LIBERTY SHIPS NAMED FOR S.C.I. FRIENDS

Among the Liberty ships in which we took especial interest through the war years were the Janet Lord Roper, Archibald R. Mansfield, Charles H. Marshall and Charles S. Haight.

Here is the latest news about them:

JANET LORD ROPER (named for the late "Mother Roper," founder of the Institute's Missing Seamen's Bureau) is temporarily in the laid-up fleet in Norfolk, Va.; eventually will go to the Cosmopolitan Shipping Co.

ARCHIBALD R. MANSFIELD (named for the late Dr. Mansfield who was the Institute's Superintendent for 38 years) recently sailed from Seattle, Wash., on her way to Germany with supplies for the Army. Operated by Boland & Cornelius.

CHARLES H. MARSHALL (named for the owner of the Black Ball Line of packet ships, and grandfather of Charles H. Marshall, a member of the Institute's Board of Managers). This ship is now on her way to Norfolk. Operated by Polarus Steamship Co.

CHARLES S. HAIGHT, (named for a former member of the Institute's Board of Managers). This ship was shipwrecked on the rocks near Rockport, Mass., early in the morning of April 1, 1946. All the crew got off safely. The ship's bell was rescued and was presented to Charles S. Haight, Jr. of the Institute's Board.

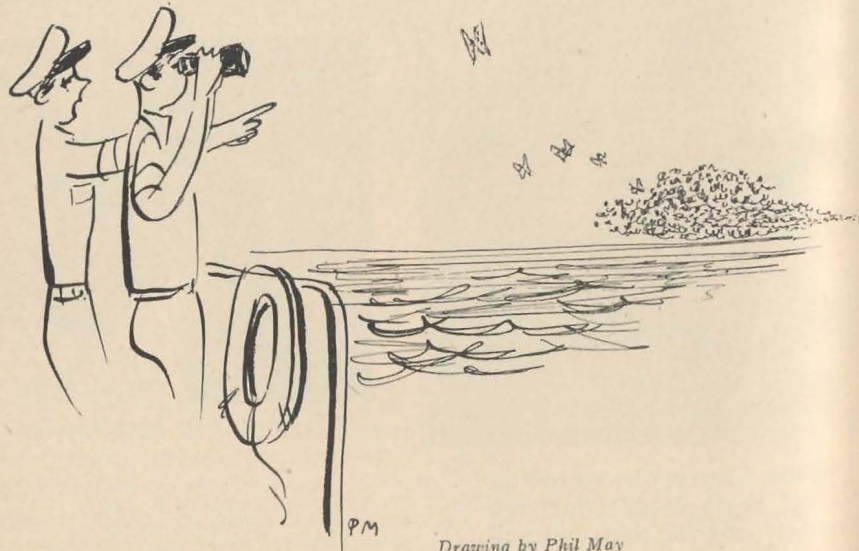
ALL-TIME HIGH IN PASSENGER TRAFFIC

All records for peacetime trans-Atlantic passenger traffic on American Flag merchant ships were shattered in 1946 when a total of 1,236,707 military and civilian passengers were carried on U.S. Maritime Commission vessels between Atlantic Coast ports and foreign countries.

REPORT TO THE CONVENTION

Dr. Kelley presented the Annual Report of the Institute, as printed in the April "Lookout," to the Convention of the Diocese of New York on May 13th. He stressed this as the report of the Board of Managers to the Diocese as well as to all contributors to the Institute, and emphasized the preponderantly lay membership of the Board and its being actively officered by laymen. In this same connection he mentioned the Staff of 300 Institute employees all being laymen except himself and the customary one or two other Chaplains.

In presenting the report the Director remarked that the Board and Staff as workers might better be designated as "wrights," from the Anglo-Saxon root for "work." This sturdy old noun continues in compounds, "shipwright," "millwright" and the like, and connotes highly skilled workers or builders. He foresaw also its application to religious and welfare workers under possible new, yet honestly Anglo-Saxon compounds — "churchwright" and "wealwright," the latter with special reference to the upbuilding of the commonweal or welfare, and as a replacement of the current two-worded term "social worker."



Drawing by Phil May

Challenge of the Sea

By Fred Lane

YOU don't forget your first voyage with a gold stripe on your sleeve. Not if you came up over the bows, you don't! But it's hardly likely that I would forget the *Tillamook* anyway, creaky old tub that she was; nor Captain Grimes and Mr. Barry, the mate—who were as far apart as the poles. And you don't forget those sharp peaks of life when the elements go mad with merciless strength, and men's wills clash. Those memories burn deep.

We were passing through the Carolines, churning up a creamy wake across a slate-gray sea. The glass was oscillating erratically, and a cirrus haze was creeping over the sky. The flying fish no longer broke from the lazy swells, and the leaping, laughing porpoises had disappeared. The sea birds, the gooneys and gulls, were long since gone; but occasionally you would see the stormy petrels skimming over the surface. It was like that tense, expectant moment when the lights go out before the curtain is lifted for a play; or the hushed silence when the maestro raises the baton that will bring forth the thundering drama of sound.

Captain Grimes joined me on the bridge. "On our present course we'll skirt it to the northeast, accordin' to the wireless," he said in his wheezy



(Reprinted from Nov. 1946 Blue Book Magazine by special permission)

old voice that always reminded me of a ship straining against her berth. "But we'll feel it, Mr. Rodney, we'll feel it." Then a little smile lit up his seamy features as reminiscence shone in his watery blue eyes. "Reminds me of the voyage when I was apprentice on the ship *Silver Witch*—and a snorter blew up north of Cape Stiff. Well sir, we took in the royals, flying jib, stays'ls, and t'gallants. But it got worse, so we reefed the tops'ls, and—"

"Beg pardon, sir!" It was Mr. Barry, the mate. There was annoyance in his voice as he interrupted. "Everything shipshape and secure. Here are the tank soundings." He handed over a slip of paper.

"Very good, Mr. Barry," Captain Grimes replied, then went right on with his yarn. "We close-reefed the fore and mizzen tops'ls, reefed the courses, and stowed the mizzen—" He peered at the sky as he talked, while the mate stood by, scowling.

They made a striking contrast, these two: the little old skipper whose thinning hair lay silvery white against his seasoned-oak skin; aged, yet somehow ageless, with the indelible mark of the old canvas sea upon him. And the mate, towering six foot two, his shoulder muscles rippling under immaculate whites, cool and efficient, and wearing the mark of the new sea—the steel sea—like a badge.

You see these things on your first voyage as a deck officer. You see them, but you don't say very much . . .

You think about the wide gap between these two: the garrulous little captain spilling out the lore and legend of the sea of yesterday; and the modern mate, impatient with the past, to whom a ship is simply steel and wood, and sailing her is just a job to do.

I'd been in the chartroom one day when the second mate was checking the day's run. He stuck the dividers

into the chart and said: "It's Mr. Barry who's the real skipper aboard, even if it aint official." Mr. Benson scratched his blond head and wrote down some figures. "But the port captain signed on old Grimes instead," he went on. "Sentimental reasons, I guess. Grimes is one of the last of the old wind-ship men."

I nodded, but I didn't agree with him. I didn't think that the port captain was sentimental, at all. But you don't argue or voice opinions—not on your first voyage with a gold stripe on your sleeve, you don't.

Just after seven bells, the sea betrayed us. The cottony cirrus had merged to become a darkening overcast, and the long swells were marching upon us from the starboard bow. It was sticky hot, and you could feel the weight of the atmosphere bearing down on you. I was in the port wing, and Captain Grimes was standing near the wheelhouse when the lookout's strident cry wedged through the oppressive air:

"Submerged wreckage — dead ahead!"

"Starboard — hard a-starboard!" The Captain's shout blended with the jangle of the engine-room telegraph. The *Tillamook* veered and shuddered as her propeller bit into the sea at full speed astern.

But it was too late. There was a grinding roar to port as the tangled wreckage hit and slid along the steel plates; and then a thudding and jarring as something snarled up aft. The engines' throbbing beat stopped.

The sea can do that to you. Days, weeks — even years — can go by, and the sea smiles. She holds you in her gentle arms, amuses you with her spirited playfulness, and lulls you with comforting murmurs. Then, in a matter of seconds, she turns on you in a fury and strikes cruelly.

There we were, lifting sluggishly in the long gray swells which heralded the oncoming storm, our rudder damaged, and the steel cables of the derelict tangled up in our propeller. And that wasn't all. The tail-shaft was cracked, and the engine-room needed



hours to repair it. And overhead, the sky's frown was deepening.

We went to work. The tanks were filled forward and pumped out aft, and men lowered on French bowlines over the stern to free the propeller and repair the rudder. In the engine-room, the black gang worked furiously against time. When we churned away finally at slow speed, the gale was beginning to chop up the sea.

We took only a glancing blow from the storm—but it was nearly enough to sink us. It was a deafening symphony of violent sound: (green mountains wickedly roaring down upon us, winds screaming with insane delight as they whipped us with lashes of salt spray and beat us down with torrential rain, and a ship groaning and sobbing, and sometimes shrieking her protests.)

For two days, desperately fighting the crazed elements that seemed determined to batter us into driftwood, we didn't sleep. Captain Grimes, a shapeless little figure in his yellow oilskins, never left the bridge. Mr. Barry was everywhere—in the bows seeing to the storm oil, amidships when a boat ripped from its davits and dangled over the side, aft where a hatch-cover was lifted and blown away like a feather. Sometimes the wind would grip and hold you against

a bulkhead, choking back your breath while it drenched you with spume. The little *Tillamook*, lurching and pitching, seemed somehow alive, as with tortured cries she shuddered over the crests and slipped sickeningly into the yawning sea-valleys. And yet we pulled through; out of that awful chaos and confusion, came order—finally. But the sea wasn't through with us. Not yet, she wasn't.

The wind had subsided to a mere gale, and the sea panted spasmodically, like the heaving belly of a fallen giant. We weren't making any headway. It was all we could do to keep her nose into the long white-bearded seas that remained in the wake of the storm. Two of our boats were gone, ripped from the davits and lost; the deck gear was snarled up, and the radio antenna carried away. But the worst was over, we thought.

Just before noon, the second mate and I were aft of the chartroom hoping to get a shot at the sun. The *Tillamook* was still lurching violently, and Mr. Benson hooked a thick rubber-booted leg around the rail to brace himself as he adjusted the index mirror of his sextant. We hadn't had a sight in two days, and dead reckoning was out of the question, the way we'd been kicked around the South Pacific.

"We're somewhere south of Minto Reef," Mr. Benson said, "as I figure it. But I wish the sky would open up for a minute or so. These waters are plenty treacherous." . . .

The mate joined us and squinted aloft at the blanket of clouds scudding southward. "The chief reports the shaft is running hot. If it breaks down again, we might have trouble." Mr. Barry looked very solemn.

I should have known better, but I was young and green—and tactless. And because I wanted the little skipper to have a pat on the back, I said: "I'm not worried—not when there's a sailor around like Cap'n Grimes. He certainly pulled us through the storm, all right."

Mr. Barry stood there with his long legs apart, swaying with the freighter's motion, a wet cigarette



Drawing by Armstrong Sperry

dangling from his lips. He looked at me thoughtfully and then said: "He had a little help, Rodney. Quite a little help, as a matter of fact."

"Still, he's had experience. What about the time he took the schooner through the worst typhoon that ever hit the Sulu Sea—"

Mr. Barry broke in, his voice hard and flat: "Some day you're going to learn that yarning about old wind-jammers doesn't make a man a sailor. It makes him a has-been." Then, as if suddenly angry, he said: "Any time I admit that I'm not a better sailor than Captain Grimes, I'll stand grog all around at the next port we hit."

I heard the second mate chuckle, and then I saw the skipper stumping aft. Peering at the sea and sky, he observed pleasantly: "Well, gentlemen, no sights today. Reminds me of the schooner *Zanzibar* out of Boston. Thirty-one days at sea we was, and didn't see the sun nor stars. Dead reckoning all the way—"

He was still talking when Mr. Barry walked to the companion and started below. He looked up and winked at Mr. Benson, making a circular motion with his index finger near his temple, then disappeared. I couldn't quite understand this contempt for Captain Grimes. Of course, I was young; it was my first voyage on the bridge, and the romance of the old sea was in my blood. I respected Mr. Barry for his seamanship; I've never seen a mate before or since who did his job better; but when he talked about ships—as he sometimes did in the officers' mess when Captain Grimes wasn't there—

he spoke of modern fathometers and electric winches, of Diesel jobs and electric-turbine-driven craft. . . . The steel sea. But with Captain Grimes, ships had souls, and the sea was a living thing. Sometimes his voice would become huskily reverent when he told of a ship he loved. Once he said: "Men change, ships change, but the sea—never!" . . .

We sighted land just after two bells. It was on the starboard quarter — where it shouldn't have been, since we were supposed to be moving ahead, or at least, holding our own. The currents and wind had set up eastward. When we rose on the crests, we could see through the glasses palm trees bobbing out of the sea. It could be any one of a hundred islands.

Captain Grimes, after studying it carefully, observed: "It could be one of the Losaps, or Oroluk."

"In this kind of sea, one's as bad as the other if we get too close," Mr. Barry said. He had his sextant out and was trying for a sight to check the drift. "And it looks like we're going to get too close if the wind doesn't shift."

"Reminds me of the *Albatross*," and Captain Grimes chuckled creakily. "Flash packet, that! We were running with the wind on the starboard quarter, and it suddenly shifted to the port beam. Well, sir, we hauled in the starboard forebraces, filled the headyards, shivered the after yard and brailed in the mizzen. The helm hard aport, she went off before it like a feather."

The mate threw the Captain a withering scowl, turned on his heel and went into the chartroom. The skipper finished his yarn and said: "Better go below and get some sleep, Mr. Rodney. We'll need you later."

I went below, but I couldn't sleep. I kept thinking about Captain Grimes. Clearly, Mr. Barry thought that the skipper's mind was going, and I wondered about that. There were times

when I sensed something behind his detailed reminiscing, something very intangible and peculiarly frightening. I tossed about uneasily; and quite unbidden, recollection of Melville's mad *Captain Ahab* crept into my mind. . . .

I had hardly closed my eyes when the engines stopped turning over. For a second I lay tense. Then I was on my feet. It is always alarming when your ship's throbbing vibration is suddenly cut off, even in fair weather. The steady thumping of the engines is your assurance of a heart still beating. When it stops, you are instantly aware of danger. You hear the sea sounds — the rushing hiss and roar of water alongside, the eerie moaning of the wind through the rigging, and the weird protesting groans of straining hull and gear.

I got into my clammy-damp oilskins and started forward, nearly running into Mr. Barry, who was hurrying aft. He paused long enough to shout angrily: "The damned old fool!" He was in a rage. I could see that, but I had no time for speculation. The *Tillamook* was yawing violently when I reached the bridge companion and pulled myself up. A snarling sea foamed across the deck just below, almost pulling my feet from under me. Then I heard the skipper's bellow:

"Port—hard aport!"

I realized that he wanted to get the *Tillamook's* stern up to the sea, but the elements took charge for some terrifying moments when she broached to. I thought she was going over . . . But there was still some seaway, and by the time the mate got the sea-anchor paid out over the stern, the wind was abaft the beam. The drag straightened us out, and storm oil imprisoned the crests, kept them from breaking. Soon we were scudding before it, safe enough had we only been in an open sea. But we weren't. We were deep in the Carolines, and there was land—dead ahead!

(To be concluded in
the July issue)



Book Reviews

THE SEA IS WOMAN

By Albert E. Idell

Henry Holt, \$2.75

Out of his own experiences in the Merchant Marine in the first World War, Albert E. Idell has written a novel of human relationships developed aboard the S.S. *Hawkeye State* on her voyage from Los Angeles through the Panama Canal to New York. The *Hawkeye State* was a war-built freighter and of her human cargo the most interesting and dominant male, Dr. Carl Brandt, had been mentally damaged by his war experiences. How he fights his way back to normal with the help of a young woman missionary who for the first time falls really in love, is the thread of the story. But weaving in and out are the stories of the other passengers, the Dutch nurse, the Brooklyn school teacher, the forgotten movie idol, the bridal couple . . . Good, not too heavy, reading for the summer hammock.

P. W.

THE CRUISE OF THE BREADWINNER

By H. E. Bates

Atlantic-Little Brown, \$1.50

A stubby little coastwise fishing boat on war patrol duty in the English Channel is suddenly caught up in the whirling vortex of the war. Her skipper Gregson, her engineer-gunner Jimmy and her cabin boy Snowy — the entire crew of the BREADWINNER — become to the reader as real as his own best friend or worst enemy. H. E. Bates writes with a vivid and unforgettable economy of words, pausing to note the little things and never failing to suggest the larger and more terrifying issues of man against man, and the cruel idiocy of a war made by those who do not fight in it. It's a small book, easily read at one sitting, and is the more unforgettable for its brevity.

P. W.



Drawing by Bea Betty

GALAPAGOS BOUND

By Felix Riesenber, Jr.

Dodd Mead, \$2.25

The son of the famous sea writer, the late Capt. Felix Riesenber, is following in his father's footsteps by writing sea stories. Young Felix, at the age of ten, sailed aboard the N. Y. State Training Ship, "*Newport*," commanded by his father. He served four years in the American Merchant Marine and then became shipping editor of the *San Francisco News*.

This book, an adventure story for older boys, will also interest seamen, yachtsmen, and fishermen, for it deals with tuna fishing — the most daring, rigorous work that men do at sea. The story involves opium smuggling, and the setting is the Pacific and the Galapagos Islands. Like his father, Felix Riesenber, Jr. has the "feel" of the sea and writes with the ease that comes from knowing his subject thoroughly.

M. D. C.

LANDFALL

Poems by Frederick B. Watt

Macmillan Co., \$2.50

Lieut. Commander Watt, R.C.N.V.R., author of the beautiful sea narrative poem, "Who Dare To Live" has collected in this volume many of his war poems. They are unusual poems, written while the author was serving with the Canadian Naval Control Service. Convoy Nursery Rhymes, for example, reminded ships and seamen of the rules for maintaining designated course and speed. His poem "Sealed Orders" went out with all sealed sailing orders from Halifax, Christmas, 1941, wished the crews of the tankers and the freighters "Merry Christmas." As Senior Boarding Officer, Commander Watt had first hand acquaintance with the men who fought the war at sea, and some of these poems reveal his keen observations of the men of the Merchant Navy.

M. D. C.

Marine Poetry

THE TALE OF THE GYASCUTUS

In a family scrapbook dating back to 1884 a correspondent discovers the amusing old Navy poem, "The Tale of the Gyascutus," for which inquiry was made. It is without date, but is credited to the Detroit Free Press, and under the title of "A Sailor's Yarn" is given as follows:

This is the tale that was told to me
By a battered and shattered son of the sea —

To me and my messmate, Silas Green
When I was a guileless young marine.
'Twas the good ship Gyascutus,
All in the China seas,
With the wind a-lee and the capstan free
To catch the summer breeze.
'Twas Captain Porgie on the deck,
To his mate in the mizzen hatch,
While the boatswain bold in the forward hold,

Was winding his larboard watch.
'Oh, how does our good ship head to-night?

How heads our gallant craft?"
'Oh, she heads to the E.S.W. by N.,
And the binnacle lies abaft!"

'Oh, what does the quadrant indicate,
And how does the sextant stand?"
'Oh, the sextant's down to the freezing point,

And the quadrant's lost a hand!"
'Oh, and if the quadrant has lost a hand,
And the sextant falls so low,

It's our bodies and bones to Davy Jones
This night are bound to go!"

'Oh, fly aloft to the garboard strake!
And reef the spanker boom;
Bend a studding sail on the martingale
To give her weather room."

'Oh, boatswain, down in the for'ard hold,
What water do you find?"

'Four foot and a half by the royal gaff
And rather more behind!"
'Oh, sailors, collar your marlin spikes
And each belaying pin:

Come, stir your stumps and spike the pumps,
Or more will be coming in!"

They stirred their stumps, they spiked the pumps,
They spliced the mizzen brace;

Aloft and alow they worked, but oh!
The water gained apace.

They bored a hole above the keel
To let the water out;
But strange to say, to their dismay,
The water in did spout.

Then up spoke the cook of our gallant ship,
And he was a lubber brave;

"I have several wives in various ports,
And my life I'd orter save."

Then up spoke the Captain of Marines,
Who dearly loved his grog;
'It's awful to die, and it's worse to be dry,
And I move we pipes to grog."

Oh, then 'twas the noble second mate
What filled them all with awe;

The second mate, as bad men hate,
And cruel skippers jaw.
He took the anchor on his back
And leaped into the main;
Through foam and spray he clove his way,
And sunk and rose again.
Through foam and spray, a league away
The anchor stout he bore;
Till, safe at last, he made it fast,
And warped the ship ashore!
'Tain't much of a job to talk about,
But a ticklish thing to see;
And suth'in to do, if I say it too,
For that second mate was me!

Such was the tale that was told to me,
By that modest and truthful son of the sea,
And I envy the life of a second mate
Though captains curse him and sailors hate,
For he ain't like some of the swabs I've seen,
As would go and lie to a poor marine.

THE NANCY LEE

She's outward bound — hull down — course true

You can see the smudge from her stack.
She's only a tramp, and a slow one, too;
But she flutters the Union Jack.

Below, her dirty engines pound
Like raucous, heaving hammers;
Her discharge, feed, and fuel pumps
Send up discordant clamors.

And deep in holds and high in shrouds and hovering at the wheel,

From bow-sprit point to spanker gaff,
from mainmast tip to keel,
Is a part of me that some call heart and others speak of as soul;

Oh, I long now to be, on the Nancy Lee,
out where the long swells roll.

For I love every plate in her rusty old hull,
Every line coiled neat on her decks,
Every trick I've stood at her creaking wheel,
Every bow-watch with spoon-drift and flecks.

And her decks mounting high on a storm-lifted ridge

With her lines screaming hard in the gale;
And the seas pounding hard on her trembling bridge,

And the devil short-twisting her tail.
Ah, many a far-flung coast she's seen
And many a running tide
Has brushed her keel and bucked her wheel

As the long, long runs were plied.
She'll limp along with a starboard list,
Sailing down-by-the-head a mite;

And she'll just make port, like a streak o' mist,

Edging out into the night.
It's eight bells now. From bow to bridge
Chime tone will answer tone.

I see her smoke, she's mast down now,
And, oh how I feel alone!
She's plowing away at a slow seven knots,
On towards the Palawan Sea.

My heart's not on her manifest
But it rides with the Nancy Lee.

By GEORGE MAYO NEWTON

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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."