

# THE LOOKOUT



PAUL SAMPLE '41

## LIFE-LINE OF FREEDOM ★ THE ★ ★ MERCHANT ★ ★ MARINE ★

*Courtesy, Abbott Laboratories*

From the painting by Paul Sample  
LIFELINE OF FREEDOM: THE MERCHANT MARINE

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

VOL. XXXIII—NUMBER 10

OCTOBER, 1942



THIS MONTH'S COVER is a realistic war poster painting by Paul Sample, one of a series of fourteen by famous American artists, recently exhibited at the Associated American Artists Galleries, Fifth Avenue, New York.

### Sanctuary

*Dedicatory Prayer made by the Rev. Harold H. Kelley, D.D. at the opening of the Merchant Marine School Pilot House.*

Blessed be thy name, O God, that it hath pleased thee to put it into the hearts of thy servants to appropriate, equip and devote this house to effective instruction, study and research in marine and aerial navigation. Grant that all who may enjoy the benefit of these facilities, may show forth their thankfulness, through the right use of their knowledge and in honorable companionship with their shipmates. And do thou, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, accept the dedication of this place as THE PILOT HOUSE — A MEMORIAL TO CHARLES HAYDEN, and grant that, inspired by his great-hearted devotion and generosity, we may all in our lives show forth thy praise; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*(Adapted from the Book of Common Prayer for use at dedication of the Pilot House)*

## The LOOKOUT

VOL. XXXIII. OCTOBER, 1942

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

by the  
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INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

CLARENCE G. MICHALIS  
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THOMAS ROBERTS  
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### LEGACIES TO THE INSTITUTE

You are asked to remember this Institute in your will, that it may properly carry on its important work for seamen. While it is advisable to consult your lawyer as to the drawing of your will, we submit nevertheless the following as a clause that may be used:

I give and bequeath to "Seamen's Church Institute of New York," incorporated under the laws of the State of New York, located at 25 South Street, New York City, the sum of

.....Dollars.

Note that the words "OF NEW YORK" are a part of our title.

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

# The Lookout

Vol. XXXIII

October, 1942

No. 10

## Hats Off to "Ordinary" Seamen

Two thousand men apply each week for service in the merchant marine in the North Atlantic district. They apply for a service as dangerous as any a man can choose in this war of ever new and more ingeniously contrived hazards. It carries with it no great fanfare of bands and uniforms, not even close comradeship of men who march in companies.

Its physical requirements are higher than those of the Army, its pay not comparable with that of the worker in defense industry. New recruits must take four to six months' training to qualify as able-bodied seamen, may go to officers' training school only after fourteen months at sea. Yet there is no shortage of seamen, only of cooks and marine engineers.

We owe most humble tribute to those who man our merchant ships in war time. Yet if one has been on or about Long Island Sound this summer and seen the stark gray ships come and go in stately procession he begins to appreciate the call of the sea and the call to essential service which makes recruiting for it little difficult. The freighters come in single file, looming high out of the water, their

holds empty, a brief respite earned. They file out, long and low, loaded till their water lines are blotted out, guns silhouetted, life rafts ready to cut away. They are grim and mighty in contrast with sailboats which scatter before them, not insisting this year on the etiquette of the sea as to rights of way. They are grim even in contrast with the P. T. boats which dart about, half-scorning the water, looking hardly more dangerous than high-powered speedboats. It is an impressive parade, more impressive, perhaps, than one of marching men.

For without the gray ships, marching men would be of little avail in this far-flung conflict; without the gray ships and the seamen who are undeterred by prospect of cold and hardship and death, the war would be lost to us before it had rightly begun.

*Editorial in the N. Y. Herald Tribune, Aug. 19, 1942*



*Photo by Marie Higginson*



## Pilot House Opened

A 74 foot long ship's pilot house and flying bridge to be used as a classroom for navigation students preparing for the Merchant Marine, Coast Guard, Navy and Air Force was opened on Thursday, September 24th at 1:30 P.M. on the roof of the Seamen's Church Institute of New York at 25 South Street. Over 6,000 men have completed courses in the Institute's Merchant Marine School within the past two years and are now serving in the deck and engine departments of hundreds of ships on all the seven seas as well as in military and commercial planes. After Pearl Harbor it became necessary to expand its classroom space to meet the increased enrollment. Many Officers who left the Merchant Marine Service during the depression years and permitted their licenses to expire, are now returning to the Service and are taking advantage of especially prepared "refresher" courses which the School is offering.

The Institute's 13-story building with lodging accommodations for 1,600 was already crowded with merchant seamen on brief shore leave from the tankers and freighters, Coast Guard detail, and with graduates of the U. S. Maritime Training Service awaiting assignment to active duty aboard ships. There was no available space for extra classrooms on the recreation floors, since larger numbers of merchant seamen

were enjoying these facilities in the Seamen's Lounge, also in the British, Belgian and Dutch clubrooms. It became necessary therefore, for the Institute to literally "raise the roof" and add what amounts to an additional floor to the 13 stories in order to accommodate the students in navigation. The staff of instructors was enlarged and now includes 22 men.

The bridge, from which students may take sights, is literally the highest navigation bridge in the world, 212 feet from sea level. With its Kearfott windows, it resembles the bridge of the U. S. liner AMERICA and is equipped with all modern navigation devices including Sperry gyro and a "Metal Mike" for automatic steering and for taking bearings, azimuth etc. contributed by the Sperry Company. Long chart tables line the walls. The structure was dedicated as "The Pilot House, a memorial to Charles Hayden," a member of the Institute's Board of Managers until his death in 1937, and donor of the Hayden Planetarium. Generous annual grants to the Merchant Marine School and other activities of the Institute, especially those for boys and younger men, have been made from the Foundation.

At the dedication ceremonies, J. Willard Hayden, President of the Charles Hayden Foundation spoke. Clarence G. Michalis, President of the Board of Man-

agers of the Institute, presided.

Guests who attended the dedication included, in addition to members of the Institute's Board of Managers:

Captain C. F. Arnesen, President of the Norwegian Shipmasters Association; Commander William F. Avery, U. S. Power Squadron; Dr. Herman B. Baruch; Colonel J. Garnsey Brownell, First Reserve Aero Squadron Association; Captain Kenneth G. Castleman, USN (Ret'd), Director of Naval Officer Procurement; Rear Admiral Thomas S. Craven, New York State Maritime Academy, Fort Schuyler; Rear Admiral Robert Donohue, Personnel Director, USCG; Rear Admiral L. C. Farwell, Officer Procurement Section, Third Naval District, USCG; George Friedl, Jr., President, Bludworth, Inc.; Lieut. Commander W. H. Gardner, USNR, Naval Aviation Cadet Selection Board; John F. Gehan, President, American Export Line; Stuart Gibboney; Stephen B. Gibbons, former Assistant Treasurer of the United States; Joseph J. Glatamayer, President, Harbor Carriers of the Port of New York; J. D. Herbert, Kearfott Window Corporation; Casey Jones, President Casey Jones School of Aeronautics; Commander W. A. Kiggins, USCG, Naval Auxiliaries Office; Captain F. V. Loudon, USCG, Captain of the Port; Commander E. A. McIntyre, USN (Ret'd); Edward J. Maloy, Eugene Moran, Roland Nelson, President Marine Basin Ship Corporation; Rear Admiral Stanley V. Parker, Senior Officer, Third Naval District, USCG; Colonel Leopold Phillip; Admiral F. G. Reinecke, USN, Director of the Port, Third Naval District; Jack Silberman, H. Gerrish



Smith, President, National Council of American Shipbuilders; Honorary Police Commissioner Edward Sykes; Frank J. Taylor, President, American Merchant Marine Institute, Inc.; Cornelius H. Callaghan, Manager Maritime Association of the Port of New York; Arthur M. Yode, Honorary President, United States Propeller Clubs. The Sperry Corporation which donated the gyroscope equipment was represented by John J. Brierly, W. S. Fish, Dean Kelley, Julius C. Manzi, George Tait, O. B. Whitaker. The Charles Hayden Foundation was represented by J. Willard Hayden, President, Earle V. Daveler and E. A. Doubleday, trustees.

Left to right:  
Rev. Harold H. Kelley, D. D.,  
E. A. Doubleday,  
Clarence G. Michalis,  
Willard Hayden,  
Lieut. Commander Frederick A. Just, Captain Kenneth C. Castieman, Admiral F. G. Reinecke, Erle Daveler.

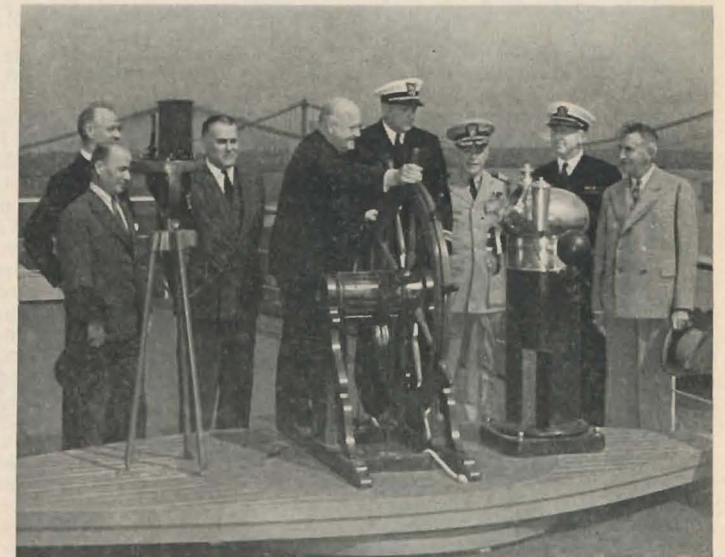


Photo by Marie Higginson



# Warm Vests for Seamen



Photo by Larry Gordon

## LEATHER VESTS FROM MINNEAPOLIS FOR SEAMEN AT THE INSTITUTE

Left to right: Mrs. Carl W. Jones, Chairman of the War Relief Committee of the Minneapolis branch of the English Speaking Union, John Simons, American merchant Seaman, Mrs. Cecile Stewart, Director of the New York workroom of the English-Speaking Union and Jack Compton, British merchant Seamen, photographed at the Institute.

FROM such widely separated areas as Minneapolis and the Fur District on West 26th Street, New York City, come two projects to promote the health and welfare of merchant seamen. In Minneapolis the English-Speaking Union is collecting leather scraps from automobile manufacturers and women are turning these into leather jerkins for seafarers who must brave the Northern winds when their ships go to Iceland, Murmansk and other Arctic and Antarctic ports.

Fifty thousand fur-lined vests for American and Allied merchant seamen are being made by members of the Fur Industry. On the Fifth floor of a workroom at 135 West 26th Street, large quantities of mouton lamb, beaver, nutria, moleskin, muskrat, Hudson seal, etc. contributed by retail fur dealers and also by women throughout the country, are being converted into these vests by fur workers who donate their spare time for this purpose. Nearly 5,000 fur workers have voluntarily pledged ten

hours of their free time on Saturdays, Sundays, holidays and off hours in manufacturing the vests.

Louis F. White, chairman of the War Emergency Board of the Fur Industry, in announcing the project, said that the vests would be distributed to the seamen through shipping lines, maritime unions and the Seamen's Church Institute of New York. Mrs. Janet Roper, the Institute's house mother, was one of the guests of honor at the opening ceremonies on July 28th when Mayor La Guardia sewed the first fur vest and presented it to Archie Gibbs, 36 year old Texas Seaman who, captured from a torpedoed ship, had been held prisoner aboard a Nazi submarine for four days.

THE LOOKOUT editor talked with Seaman Gibbs. Here is his story: "They fed me black bread and bitter coffee—but it was the same as the crew all had. The Germans all wore whiskers. They had been at sea a long time—I saw a Berlin news-

paper with a March 17th date on it. They asked me about my ship but I didn't give them any satisfactory answers. Finally, they hailed a fishing schooner and I was put over the side and swam to the schooner. I sure was glad to be free."

Mayor LaGuardia congratulated the fur workers for inaugurating something "Which I hope will spread throughout the country. I've been on the deck of an ocean steamer, and believe me, it does get cold. Our brave mariners can make good use of the fur vests, whether they're in the Arctic regions or not."

Women who have old discarded fur coats, hats, scarfs, jackets, collars, muffs, etc., are asked to send them to the Fur Vest Project at 135 W. 26th St., N.Y.C. or to turn over to their local furrier. When transformed into neat vests, lined with waterproof canvas, they will provide comfort to many a merchant seaman facing wintry blasts from the decks of freighters and tankers laden with supplies, munitions and troops.

Mayor LaGuardia is shown sewing the first stitch on the first of 50,000 fur-lined vests destined for American seamen. To the right of the Mayor is Mrs. Janet Roper, House Mother at the Seamen's Church Institute of New York.





# The Death of a Tanker

By MEYER BERGER\*

(Reprinted from the New York Times Magazine, August 2, 1942)

THE tanker's bunk room swelters. All day the Caribbean sun has burned the deck plates and little spots have jiggled before your eyes from the reflected glare. Night has brought no relief. The bunk-room ports are dogged down so no light will escape seaward for U-boat lookouts to see. When you turn on your mattress, all damp with perspiration, the bulkhead is warm against your skin.

You lie awake in the dark. You hear the steady thrust of the engines, thirty to forty feet down. Between the thrusts you hear your mates' heavy breathing. The steering engine breaks in on the steady rhythm with a clumping, metallic clash, as if two giant knives were struck one against the other. This sound dies and the rhythm goes on again, smoothly.

You think about home and how snug it felt to have convoy from New York to Key West: how you waved when the convoy slipped away in the twilight with you and the Navy gun-crew waving goodbye and how, a few minutes later, your tanker moved alone in growing darkness to the Gulf. "We're on our own, now," you thought, and though it wasn't your watch you scanned the horizon for periscopes. Just a habit, a betrayal of uneasiness.

You think, that's how it was when I was a kid, when my mother turned down the light and left me alone upstairs. This touches off a train of thoughts about home and you drift off to sleep, drugged with the heat and with the perspiration running in crooked rivulets down your back and down your cheeks. Old Swede Eck-

strom in the next bunk snoring. Pretty soon you are too.

You dream and in your dream you see again the big tanker you passed on your last trip near the mouth of the Mississippi. It was early morning and dark, and her flame reddened the Gulf's black waters for miles. The flames seemed a hundred feet high and maybe they were. Later you read how she took seventeen shells from the U-boat guns, and two torpedoes, and still stayed afloat, and how part of her crew died in the burning sea.

You come awake. The steering engine has clashed again, violently, and has snapped the dream. Swede still snores, but you are aware that something's stirring. Feet thud the deckplates. Some one is calling hoarsely, "We're hit." Something hits the after deck with a rending crash. The tanker lists to starboard and you roll against the starboard bulkhead. It takes time to come out of the dream fuzz. You shake your head.

You stand in the doorway and the details of the ship stand out in bright illumination. It doesn't register at once, but the tanker is aflame. That crashing sound was the after mast that held up one end of the radio antenna. A shell has carried it away. It looms up, crooked and crippled, athwart the stern. That means the radio man couldn't get off a call for help. The Navy kids pound past, racing for their their guns. The young ensign is shouting orders.

Oil sloshes into the bunk room and sucks warmly at your bare toes. Fire balls rain down from the sky, like fireworks on the Fourth of July. They're exploding blobs of oil. You stare upward, fascinated. Fear, somehow, has left you, and you stare at the raining flame. The crew is tumbling out, sliding on the black oil. The night is suddenly filled with men's voices. The bunk-room door slams with the increasing list each time a man runs out, clutching his papers and his clothes.

You're on the poop deck and you hear the Navy kids talking about the hit. They don't seem excited. One says: "The torpedo didn't make much noise. It was a dull thud somewhere below the water line." Another Navy kid laughs, and you wonder

why. It seems a natural laugh, not high pitched or hysterical. It strikes you as strange. Seven or eight of the crew are sprawled on the main deck. They're burned but they move and crawl about.

Flame pours from the well deck. It pours in irregular columns high against the night and lights the water. The waves are dappled red and sort of gold. One of the boats gets away. You hear the falls let go, but something's wrong. It dangles. The chief cook and two of the crew are in the burning oil on the water. Seven or eight men are clinging to the nets. The heat gets intense and the burning cargo sounds like a rushing L train. Funny you should think of L trains.

You get into one of the boats and your bare feet, as you take the oars, are down in about six inches of warm oil. Must have sprayed in with the first explosion. Suddenly you notice the whole crew looks strange in the flame's glare. They're all covered with oil. Their hair is matted with it and their faces are black and shiny with it. You look down on your bare arms and hands. They're black and shiny too. The stuff is coming down like vapor.

It is 1:45 A.M., only a minute or two since the tanker was hit, but somehow it seems like hours. The boat seems a long time getting away. Swede Eckstrom is on deck, staring at the boat. He doesn't move. So we call out to him. "Swede! Swede! This is the last boat!" He doesn't seem to hear. Swede, like lots of tanker-men, can't swim. He has said he'd take his chances with the ship rather than go over the side into flaming oil.

Seven minutes after the hit we're over the side, floating in the burning sea. The oars are slippery, but we get organized and we pull away from the tanker, on a lighted ocean. Someone says, "There's the sub," and the oars rest and the world gets quiet. The U-boat is running on the surface and coming at a pretty good rate. We are almost two miles from the ship when she hails us. Some one hollers to us in broken English to come alongside.

We row to the sub. The U-boat captain is on deck. He is short and stocky. Behind him is a young German sailor. He's in khaki shorts, but he has no shirt. His feet, in sneakers, are planted on the plates, and he is manning the deck machine gun. You reach out to keep the lifeboat from drifting and you touch the sub's side. It is cold and slippery and you feel the vibration of its engines. It must be 300 feet long.

The captain has a flashlight. He shines



it on our faces.

He says "Vass is? Is these all black mens?"

We do look like Negroes. The U-boat captain asks the tanker's name and her tonnage in barrels, but not about our port or destination. One of the crew, all burned, calls from the bottom of our boat. He is lying in warm oil. He wants water.

The young German sailor in shorts gives him a short guttural answer. "Go ask your President for water," he says sharply. He trains the machine gun on the boat and holds it there steadily. The U-boat captain shuts him up, but the young sailor is sullen. You notice the submarine is painted a sort of blue color, or seems to be, in the tanker's glow.

The U-boat skipper turns back to us. "You may go," he says, and we shove off, with the machine gun still pointed at our boat. An hour later we hear something slapping the water in the dark to starboard. It is one of our little Filipino AB's. He has cramps, but his life jacket has kept him afloat. We reach over and pull him in and he lies in the bottom with the other burned men. That makes twenty-seven in our boat.

The little Filipino is suddenly scared of the sea, now he's fished out of it. He does not want to see it again. He just lies in the oil, with his face down on his arms and will not lift his head. Sometimes, when the men change seats at the oars they step on him, but he doesn't complain or look up. We try to get him out of this mood. One of the men says, "Here's a piece of chocolate, Houdini," but he doesn't budge. He wants to shut out the sea.

Just before full daylight we see another man in the sea. We pull alongside. He is floating face down in a life jacket and his head looks black and shiny, but that is oil. We reach down and turn him over.



\*Our people accept gasoline rationing, but not without murmur, because statistics and arguments leave them cold. They may more readily understand the real price of gasoline through the simple story of John Phillips\* of Burlington, N. J., a tankerman\*. Thousands of other tankermen almost daily go through similar experiences.

\*Interviewed at the Seamen's Church Institute of New York.



It is Swede Eckstrom. The sharks have been at his face, but it is Swede all right. We turn him loose again and somebody says, "The poor devil, why wouldn't he get in the boat when he had the chance?" We watch him drift away on the water.

The five who are burned feel the sun when it comes up. Their skin is peeled away and their eyebrows and hair are gone. Sometimes they moan. We rig a piece of canvas for them to keep the sun off. It is all we can do. Pretty soon we feel the sun, too. We are all blistered, every one, from the tanker's fire. Oil burns have puffed our lips and our eyes and the sun beating down seems to roast us. It bakes us in our own oil.

We row and we rest. We try to tell jokes and stories. Mostly we talk about food—steaks and chicken and gravy. One man will say, "I will have a big, juicy tenderloin, with smothered onions and a lot of gravy," and another man will say, "Will you settle for a malted milk tablet?" and the first man will say, "Sure," and that's what he gets. We have a bottle of malted milk tablets and some canteens of water. The water is warm, but we dole it out. Just enough for each man to wet his mouth.

Our lips are black and gummy and you have to force them open to speak. They stick together. Every now and then a few of us slip over the side and swim, but the water is warm. You swim more to get the knots out of your legs and arms, just to change your position. Around 1 o'clock in the afternoon we hear a motor in the sky, way off, and it is a plane, an American Navy patrol plane. It circles and then lights. The pilot is only a kid.

He looks us over and says, "I can take five, but that's all. I'll have to crowd them." He takes the five who are burned the worst, the five under the canvas. We lift them out and they're tender and cry out but we get them into the plane. The pilot tells us he will get relief out to us, maybe tomorrow, and he stirs up a breeze with his propeller and feathers the water and finally gets off with his load.

## First Service Flag to Honor Seamen

THE first service flag designed to honor the men of the American merchant marine as part of the combat front in the war, fighting shoulder to shoulder with sailor, soldier and marine, was flung to the breeze on September 17th above the north entrance of the United States Lines' Chelsea piers, at 23rd Street and the Hudson River.

The new service flag designed especially for the occasion, is a modification of the regulation red, white and blue flag used for the men of the armed forces. On the white field is a blue spread eagle, hall mark of the shipping company since 1893, and

When the plane has gone the world is dead still. We do not talk for a long time. It is painful to open your lips.

We row and drift all through the hot afternoon and the sun kicks the reflections in your eyes from the water. We are sun blind. The night comes on dark and chilly. The sea roughens and we get tossed quite a bit. No one says much. We get snatches of sleep, a numb kind of nap.

Another lifeboat from our ship drifted up. We lashed them together and we talked about the plane. We swam some more when the sun came up. Late in the afternoon our relief ship came up over the horizon. She was an American destroyer. The sailors called out to us and helped us up the ladder. We were stiff as boards and our hands were puffed like little pillows. They rubbed us down with something that looked like buttermilk. That was for the sunburn. It was cool and refreshing.

They broke out their rum and that livened us. The first gulp had no effect, but the second or third shot took hold and our stomachs tingled and came back to life. We took a lot of rum, but no one seemed able to get drunk. The sailors gave up their bunks to us after we came from under the showers and had gotten most of the oil off. We had gallons of good, hot coffee, and pretty soon we were all normal again. They put us ashore at Colon. We checked up there and we learned that of our fifty-five only four were missing.

It is nice, for a while, now we are home again, to sit here in this cool cafeteria but tomorrow I ship out again. Most of the crew of that last trip are at sea already. My bonus money lasted a little longer. I got the feeling now that most of the older tankermen get. I got the feeling my number isn't up and I'm coming through this war. It's a funny thing to understand if you're not a tankerman, but you want to get back. The U-boats and the fire don't stop you. You know the old U. S. needs that oil and gas and so you go on fetching it.

below it on a field of blue stars are the numerals 2169, one for each crew member of the United States Lines fleet. Above the eagle are the numerals 316 on a field of gold stars, for United States Lines men who have lost their lives through enemy action since the war began.

Basil Harris, president of United States Lines, sponsored the creation of a special service flag for the merchant seamen and presided at the flag raising ceremony, to which officers and crewman from United States Lines ships and from the Seamen's Church Institute attended.

## "The Lifeline of Freedom" . . .

IF you visit the Institute these days you will see young men lined up awaiting assignment to Maritime Training Schools and merchant ships. Two thousand each week apply for a service as dangerous as any a man can choose in this war. But the gray ships must sail—to keep the "lifeline of freedom" firm.

As a recent Herald Tribune editorial said: "All of us owe most humble tribute to those who man our merchant ships. For without the gray ships, marching men would be of little avail in this far-flung conflict; without the gray ships and the seamen who are undeterred by prospect of cold and hardship and death, the war would be lost to us before it had rightly begun."

The general public is becoming aware of the splendid services of the merchant seamen, and you have long expressed, by your annual gifts, your interest in their welfare. For over 100 years the Seamen's Church Institute of New York has befriended these seafarers—never discriminating because of their race, religion or politics.

In peace time and in war time, year in,

year out, day and night, our services go on. Seamen ask chiefly for friendship and recreational services, but sudden changes of ships schedules, ships torpedoed, loss of identification papers, etc. also cause them to seek temporary financial assistance through the Institute's credit bureau. The percentage of men who return the loans is exceptionally high, indicating their desire to keep self-respecting and self-supporting. But the seaman's calling, dangerous and exciting as it is, deprives him of normal home life, and so he appreciates the Institute as a safe anchorage and a secure haven when he comes ashore.

So again we turn to you, regarding you as one of our good friends whose loyal and generous tributes to these men have encouraged them and made them realize that they are not forgotten or unsung. We especially need funds at this time for our rapidly expanding program of recreation and education.

Please send contributions to the  
SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE  
OF NEW YORK

25 South Street, New York, N. Y.

### WAKEFIELD CREW WELCOMED

Sixty-one members of the crew of the Navy transport *Wakefield*, formerly the United States Liner *Manhattan*, stayed at the Institute on the night after they were rescued and taken to an East Coast port. Since the burning of the 24,289 ton liner was a military secret the crew were not at liberty to tell any of the Institute employees or seamen from whence they came. It is a tribute to their loyalty and good discipline that none of the men divulged the identity of their ship until after the Navy released the story, one week after the disaster occurred. A check-up has indicated that all on board the transport were saved. Many of the crew proved themselves heroes in rescuing their shipmates from the smoke and flames.

### SONG FOR THE UNSUNG Dedicated to the American Merchant Marine

By Fred Waring and Jack Dolph

I've carried guns to Singapore,  
munitions to Ceylon;

I carried wheat for the boys to eat  
with MacArthur at Bataan,

I've sailed with planes to Liverpool,  
and Leningrad with tanks;

I made it thru to Ireland too, with  
a regiment of Yanks.

I've burned my feet with the deck  
plate's heat, and froze 'em with  
the cold—

While dodging subs in rusty tubs  
with nitro in the hold,

Yes! And yet I'd never trade my  
berth for anything I've seen;

So I'll stow my gear and drink my  
beer with the men of the Mer-  
chant Marine.



# The Inquiring Photographer

By JIMMY JEMAIL

The News will pay \$5 for every timely, interesting question submitted and used in this column. Today's award goes to Frank Ballard, 472 Dean St., Brooklyn.

## THE QUESTION

How did you feel and what did you talk about when you were in a lifeboat waiting to be rescued?

(Asked of torpedoed sailors.)

## THE PLACE

Midtown Manhattan.

## THE ANSWERS

**Capt. James Hamilton**, Glasgow, Scotland: "The men plied me with questions about making port. I was sure that we could make the nearest port under sail and oars. Capt. Bligh of the Bounty sailed over 3,000 miles in a small boat. I was sure we could make the much lesser distance. I gave them cheerful answers; and we made it too."

**Capt. Timothy McNamara**, London, England: "Our boys talked about ice cream sodas mostly, but I'm sure that any one of them would have compromised for a tall glass of water. Our ration was six ounces of water a day. I suppose they couldn't help but curse the submarine for sending so many bottles of beer to the bottom."

**Donald Murray**, first officer, Llandudno, N. Wales: "Water was the most on our minds and the usual topic of conversation. We also talked about beer, ice cream sodas and the other drinks we would buy if we ever got the chance. We were in a lifeboat for 14 days. A 220-pound fireman lost his second chin gazing into the sky for the dawn patrol."

**John N. Richardson**, radio officer, Dunoon, Scotland: "We talked about water, and when I day-dreamed, I dreamed of bales of tea immersed in oodles of steaming water. At the beginning, we did a lot of joking, but after a week in the boat we lost our sense of humor. However, we never gave up hope. That kept us up, but the monotony got us."

**Charles Wren**, seaman, London, England: "I kept it to myself, but I wondered whether I'd see my son again. He's in the British Army. We used to sing each night, and some of the boys took turns at reciting poetry, one gem being 'The Sinking of the Titanic.' The girls back home also were a favorite topic."

**John Wall saloon boy**, Liverpool, England: "Every single man on the lifeboat said that he'd never waste another drop of water as long as he lived. We all said that if we ever got to shore again, we'd climb into a bunk and stay there for a week. I didn't tell the men, but I was always dreaming of the folks back home."

## SERVICE FOR SEAFARERS

A special service for the Merchant seamen and the Navies of the United Nations will be held at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine on Sunday afternoon, November 8th at four o'clock. Bishop Manning will preach. Representatives of nearly all Christian communions in New York and the Consuls General of the United Nations will be in attendance. Institute friends are also cordially invited.

## TRIBUTE

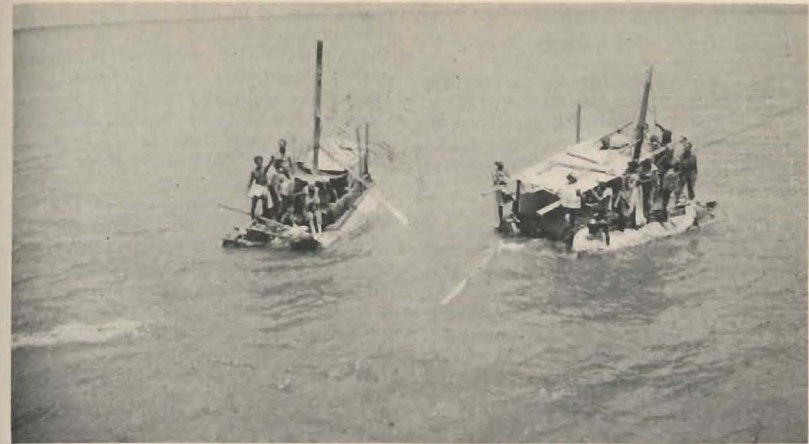
No one needs to be told that among the conspicuous heroes of this war are the merchant seamen who throughout the seven seas are risking their lives in the vital service of supply. But the report just released by the Navy that our merchant marine had lost more than 2,301 officers and men up to August 1, will bring home again the courage and devotion it takes these days simply to become a sailor, to ship aboard a cargo vessel bound to be the target of any U-boat or enemy bomber. The mission of these volunteers is as essential to the winning of the war as any other; it is also quite as perilous.

*Editorial Reprinted from the New York Herald Tribune, October 1, 1942*

## SEAMEN BUY WAR BONDS

The Seamen's Church Institute of New York has been appointed by the Treasury Department an Issuing Agent for the sale of War Bonds, not only for New York but for all Atlantic and Gulf Ports. The Seamen's Funds Bureau on the second floor is prepared to sell these bonds. Prior to this, many seamen came to the Post Office in the Institute and bought bonds with their bonus money received on the completion of trips to the war areas. The Institute's ship visitors also sell bonds to the crews of freighters and tankers when they are paid off in New York harbor.

# Jin Can "Heliograph" Saves 18 at Sea



AFTER 19 days adrift on two life rafts lashed together, 18 seamen told of a fight for life at sea in which they had to resort to every trick they could conjure up to maintain their existences.

The 18 were survivors of a medium-sized American freighter torpedoed 650 miles off the East Coast.

Survivors said that Seaman Miles Nelkins, 25, had given his life to save his comrades in the 37-man crew by releasing rafts while the ship was under attack on a moonlit night.

They said the rest of them had ingeniously improvised a small shack from floating wreckage to protect themselves from the broiling sun and had cruised in the flotsam from their ship to fish potatoes and onions out of the water to supplement their store of biscuits. For 19 days they drifted and sailed—water and food supplies got less and less.

Oiler William Thompson, interviewed by THE LOOKOUT editor, described how

they deftly "blackjacked" with an oar fish nibbling at seaweed to add some bulk to the diet.

"Raw fish," said Thompson, "are delicious, especially after you get to like uncooked onions and potatoes."

Then came the day when they saw an American ship on the horizon. Fearing it would pass them by, somebody got the idea of using a flattened out tin can as a heliograph to signal for help.

They hoisted the can on an oar and flashed it in the sun. Another ship, braving dangerous waters, swung over to pick them up. It was on its way again as soon as the last survivor climbed the rope ladder aboard.

Seaman Thompson, who has been torpedoed four times, has again shipped out and as he left the Institute he gave to THE LOOKOUT editor the striking photograph reproduced here of himself and his shipmates aboard the rafts when they were rescued.

## Propeller Club Convention

THE Sixteenth annual convention of the Propeller Club of the United States and the American Merchant Marine Conference will be held at the Waldorf-Astoria, New York City, October 15th and 16th.

Subjects of present day interest and of future importance to the entire American Marine Industry, including its contribution to the war effort, will be presented by recognized authorities. The purpose of the discussion is to promote the spirit of cooperation, advance the American Merchant Marine in all its branches, continue public interest in American water transportation and to further our war effort on the seas.

National Committee meetings will be held on Thursday, and a panel discussion on the General Welfare of Seamen Ashore conducted by Mr. Harry J. Pearson, Director, Seamen's Club of Boston, Chairman, and Capt. Alfred O. Morasso of the Seamen's Church Institute of New York, Vice-Chairman. About 60 national leaders of the Government, shipping lines, unions and welfare agencies will attend. General sessions of the American Merchant Marine Conference will be held on Friday, to which LOOKOUT readers are invited.

Several of the Institute's Board and Staff are active members of the Propeller Club.



## THE RAFT

By Robert Trumbull  
Henry Holt \$2.50

If you are looking for an interesting story, charmingly told, one that will leave you with a warm glow of self-satisfaction, that once again, we Americans, have shown the world the stuff we are made of, please stop here!

This story is not for you.

But, if you are willing to share an adventure (that very few have lived to tell of), if you can realize the background and the true meaning of stock phrases as "the sun was very hot today" or "we were soaked by the spray and the night was cold." If you can feel as they did at the close of day—they would have been glad to see the sun again and wondered if they ever would. If you can relive their 34 horrible days and nights and go proudly beside them as they go erect, up the sands of a strange shore; determined that if torture and death await them at the hands of the Japs, they would face it standing, like men-o'-warsmen should — then this story is for you.

From the decks of an American Warship in the South Pacific, the afternoon of January 16, went a Navy scout bomber on submarine patrol. What happened to the crew when the plane was forced down at sea forms a most absorbing story of the bitter struggle of three men against contrary winds, broiling hot days that seared their parched hungry bodies. Waves engulfed and upset their flimsy craft many times. All this these men suffered, and then, as if death were reluctant to lose them after having had them in its grasp so long, the island they sighted suffered its biggest hurricane the very night they arrived.

Meet bombardier Tony Pastula, a 24 year old Polish-American boy of Youngstown, Ohio. Tony's amazing persistence when he had once decided on a course, kept his mind intact during this long strain. A poor report card one day in school and Tony never went back. Tony stopped going to church because a priest snubbed him. Tony, with Gene Aldrich, was an ex-C.C.C. boy. Gene, a Missouri farm boy, was the most optimistic of the lot. He had a lot of blind faith that as long as prayers were said, help would come one day. One must be willing to wait and fight.

To Harold Dixon, the skipper of the plane and navigator of the 8' x 14' rubber life raft must go much of the credit and, of course, a portion of the responsibility for the original predicament. The story is told through narration by Dixon. Robert Trumbull, newspaperman of Hawaii wrote his fascinating adventure.

These three, barely acquainted at the start, learned to fight together. Only collectively, could they right the raft after the swells had overturned it. Only together, could they catch the food, or save the water collected during the squalls. Only with a unity of thought and purpose could they keep their flimsy craft afloat until they had conquered their obstacles and reached shore safely.

I believe the enjoyment of the reader will only be in proportion to the degree of imagination with which he enters into these experiences. If the reader can lay aside ordinary standards, read and perhaps in a measure understand what these men went through, he may rightly understand why the thought of ending this hellish torture by suicide never seems to have taken hold of their minds.

The reader will realize he has been allowed to look into the valley of death and see its shadow, through another's eyes to be sure, but a dramatically fantastic experience, as only truth torn from the depth of life itself can readily be.

—Reviewed by Seaman David Harris

## HANDBOOK OF SHIP CALCULATIONS

By Charles Hughes

Third Edition. McGraw Hill \$5.00

The third edition of Mr. Hughes' valuable book has been published by the McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., and will form a welcome addition to the technical library of all who deal with ships.

Much useful information has been incorporated in the present volume, and the subject matter throughout will be found thoroughly up to date.

The letterpress and tables are in clear and readable type — a valuable feature in a book of reference.

—H. W. H.

## THE SUBMARINE AT WAR

By A. M. Low

Sheridan House \$3.00

The timeliness of Professor Low's book is unquestioned. He traces the history of the submarine back 300 years and follows the improvements and developments through the years, bringing it up to the moment of its unprecedented deadliness.

Another picture — that of the undersea boat as a cargo carrier and vessel of exploration — is presented. Of greatest interest, however, are the chapters dealing with actual warfare where the author reveals the enormous task of those responsible for protecting and maintaining our ocean lifelines. It is unfortunate that possible haste in writing has produced inaccuracies which careful checking might have avoided.

—A. W. C.

# Marine Poetry

## The Merchant Marine

They wear no uniform, you'd never know,  
That they are playing parts in war's grim  
show:

No khaki, blues, to let you know their  
corps,

They're clad as anyone you'll meet ashore.  
In Beaumont, Galveston, Baytown, Bay-  
onne,

Where tankers come and go, they drink  
alone—

While crowds of soldiers, sailors, stare and  
frown,

Assuming these are homeguards from the  
town.

They come from town, but now no native  
soil

Shall know their tread — they ride the seas  
with oil!

The wide expanse of blacked out sea and  
sky,

The moonless, starless void where seas  
break high—

They wear no uniform, the flaming sea  
their chosen pyre:

Their requiem — a gull's wild cry — proud  
fuel for Freedom's fire!

—By Dan Howard

## The Sons of the Ocean

Far o'er the distant horizon,

Far o'er the ramparts of brine.

Sail the sons of the ocean who guard us,

From our mighty ships of the line.

At night as they on the bridges

Alone with the sea and the stars,

May their hearts be warm with the know-  
ing

That we've thoughts of them in our  
hearts.

God comfort you, sons of the ocean,

God sail with you over the foam,

God give you peace in the dark of night,

God guide you safely home.

As they sail o'er the seas to battle,

The stars and the stripes unfurled,

May they carry their nation's honor.

To every part of the world.

When the sea again is peaceful.

When the battle is finally won,

When the sons of the sea return to us,

We'll say to them "Well done."

God comfort you, sons of the ocean,

God sail with you over the foam,

God give you peace in the dark of night,

God guide you safely home.

—By Roger Ray

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Ray is a cadet at West Point Military Academy; one brother was rescued from the U.S.S. "Lexington," another was lost with the U.S.S. "Hammann" at Midway and recommended for the Navy Cross.

## Men of the Merchant Marine

They are the men who go down to the  
sea in ships,

With courage and faith serene,  
Sailing with cargoes on hazardous trips  
To the distant battle scene.

In the far-flung theatres of war,

Our allied soldiers pray

That merchant ships with new supplies  
Are speeding on their way.

On perilous seas our merchant men

Grimly await their fate,

Silent and tense, their only hope

They will not arrive too late.

Exposed to bombs from the open sky,

And torpedoes hurled through the sea,  
Over all the wide sea lanes they sail

In sight of the enemy.

Adrift on rafts, in the lonely seas

They watch their shipmates die,

Yet fearlessly they carry on,

"Keep 'Em Sailing" is their cry.

They linger not in foreign ports,

But hurry back for more,

No martial music heralds them

As they step upon our shore.

For them there are no big parades,

No heroes' welcome gay,

No uniforms, and no applause

To cheer them on their way.

But they are heroes, too, these men

Who sail the seven seas,

Our hats are off to their valiant crews

For unsung victories.

They are the men who go down to the  
sea in ships,

With courage and faith serene,

"God Speed You All" is the prayer on  
our lips,

For the Men of the Merchant Marine.

—By Eleanor L. Neal

(Whose husband, an officer in  
the Merchant Marine has  
stopped at the Institute on  
several occasions.)

## Seamen of America

Brave seamen of America,

A call to duty runs the tide!

Our destiny's in your defense;

We look to you, our Nation's pride!

Beside Old Glory on you fight

Through wars grim watches, unafraid.

Your booming guns rid freedom's shores

Of enemies who would invade.

In rich abundance God has given

Us forest seas, and golden field.

And cherish we our father's homes.

Our birthrights you will never yield!

Upon proud seas you'll write for aye

The letters making all men free.

Each of the seven seas will share

The glorious word of "VICTORY!"

—By Pauline Winslow



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