

The

LOOKOUT



Seamen's Church Institute of New York

25 South Street, New York, N. Y.

VOL. XL NO. 12

DECEMBER, 1949

Sanctuary

Almighty God, who sent Thy Son for a brief time to this troubled earth that men might learn of Thy goodness and mercy, we beseech Thee to bless the seafarers and the wayfarers on all the seas. Teach them to mark Thy wonders in the deep, to be valiant, and honorable, to endure hardship, to be kind to one another, and forgiving, even as Thou hast forgiven mankind for all its shortcomings. And may these toilers of the sea walk in the light of Thy countenance and in fellowship with Thee.

MDC.

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VOL. XL, DECEMBER, 1949

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This Month's Cover is from a drawing by Tom Hanrahan.

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The Lost Yuletide Ship

By W. T. Dunlap

IN late December, 1916, as an ominously black nightfall was palling the earth and waters, the SS *Jefferson*, commanded by Captain John L. Livingston, was entering Millbank Sound, southbound from Alaska.

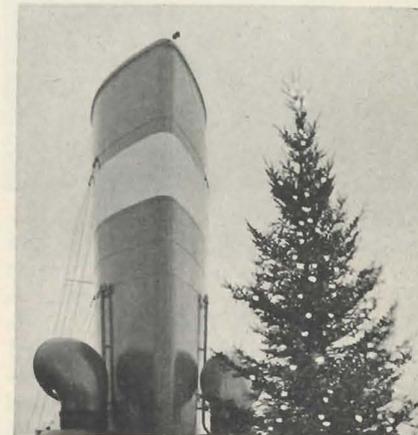
Scarcely had we nosed our way from the scenic channels to the wider waters of the Sound when a dense snowstorm enshrouded us diminishing visibility to only a few feet forward of the steamer's bow.

I just then had finished receiving a message from Triangle Island, a Canadian station fully a hundred miles to the southward. After giving him OK he said "TR?" (Where are you?) "TR entering Millbank Sound in a dense snowstorm," I answered. This he evidently logged and nothing more was said.

But, unknown to most members of the crew and passengers, the captain, knowing that there were dangerous reefs ahead, swung the vessel to port. After feeling his way along, he anchored the ship in a small obscure harbor, or rather anchorage named Rabbits Cove in the mountainous wilds of the British Columbia coast.

Although we had not gone many miles inland the radio radiation proved to be very poor. Indeed it was so bad that I soon found out by calling various stations that we were shut in by mountain ledges in a dead spot so dead that I could neither hear stations on land nor ships at sea. Neither could they hear me, as was verified afterwards.

All that night and all the next day the snow came down in flakes as big as silver dollars forming a whitish opaque curtain, so thick that navigation of the ship was out of the ques-



tion. And so it continued. During three days and three nights we were completely shut out from the world, but as we knew we were safe, apparently no one on our ship worried much about the seclusion or the delay.

It was dinner time on Christmas eve and the big tree from the Alaskan forest, taken on at Ketchikan was snowed over, ornamented and lighted. There were candles on the tables; bunting bedecked the walls patched with evergreens and American flags.

After a bountiful repast from many tempting dishes including turkey, of course, the passengers assembled in the Social Hall, where, in due time first to appear was: Ten Takukwan, an Alaskan Indian, who in the Thlinget language sang: "It Came Upon A Midnight Clear," followed by Mrs. Kashmir "the nightingale of Hawaii," on her way home from the Northland, explained that, "He Lives On High," which she was about to sing was set to the Hawaiian tune of Aloha-O-E, which was composed by former Queen Liliuokalani. Mrs. Kashmir



was a prima donna all right! This was proven by hearty encores and her gracious responses. Next came the lusty voices of the Seamen's Quartet in "Hark The Herald Angels Sing." And say boys was it good! Then appeared 80-years-young Jeremiah Jernagan, U. S. mail clerk and the Jefferson's bearded fiddler who played a religious solo so well that the audience compelled him to repeat it. Then jolly captain "Johnny" at the piano leading a choir of beautiful song birds burst out in the strains of that favorite old world anthem "Adeste Fideles." Immediately the crowd caught the spirit of it and sang with the captain's choir.

There were others on the program. All worthy of mention, but enough. All the selections were alternated by Yuletide tunes played on violin, accordion, guitar and flute by members of the crew.

Good-natured Captain Johnny sent word to the foc's'le that all seamen would be granted the privilege of seeing the show from the balcony and the wings of the *Jefferson's* large Social Hall.

To complete the evening William H. Ralston, successful Alaska mining man, generously went to the bar and ordered wine for everyone present, the chief steward joining him in this gesture of friendship and with coffee for the tee-totalers.

At daybreak Christmas morning, blest by clear skies, and coming out

in the open again after being in our hide-away anchorage we were showered by scores of messages, and it then dawned upon us for the first time that we had been lost. Lost to the world. Lost as completely as though some great seaquake had swallowed us, ship and all, instantaneously.

"TR. Entering Millbank Sound in a dense snowstorm," logged by the Triangle radioman were the last audible sounds from us, which when coupled with our unfavorable and almost perilous position as some might think it to be, was very disquieting news, especially after a two-day silence from us.

On the evening of the second day, not hearing anything further from us, the newspapers, with large bold first page headlines had proclaimed: "STEAMER JEFFERSON MYSTERIOUSLY LOST."

We had a large passenger list and were now more than two days overdue at Seattle, our home port. This news was soon flashed all over the continent with the result that the Alaska Steamship Company was obliged to answer thousands of telegraphic, telephonic and verbal inquiries, many of them from relatives and friends of those on board, seeking to verify this report, and inquiring as to the safety of the survivors, if any, from the supposedly wrecked vessel.

At the end of the third day the company and the world knew where we were and what caused the delay.

As a double celebration of Christmas and our advent into the world again, Captain and all agreed unanimously to continue the festivities unabated with a dance in the evening as an added feature.

Press dispatches of our disappearance had stimulated an unusual public interest in our ship to such an extent that, upon arrival at our destination the long pier as well as a considerable portion of the waterfront were thronged with anxious relatives and friends and curious on-lookers who had come to see the overdue Yuletide ship. Miraculously lost and found.

We Watch Our Profession Die

By Capt. Mel Curtis

A timely article in which a young sea captain talks frankly with the present generation of seafarers.

YES, we watch it die and inside, we too, die a little bit with it.

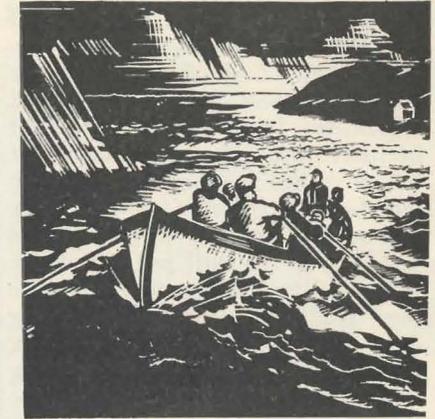
Many of us—Americans with Masters' licenses in the Merchant Marine—are still young. For many years now, we have been diligently scaling this imaginary mountain called ambition. Some of us have reached the top. Now, suddenly, the mountain has become a hill—a very small and slippery hill and, in contrast to the long upward climb, the way down seems very quick and complete indeed.

The American flag vessels aboard which we ply our trade have become so scarce, as time goes by, that while we go about cheering each other up with optimistic, fabricated predictions—whistling in the dark, so to speak—we find ourselves inwardly despairing, and justly so.

Let's face it, Gentlemen. The overcrowded lifeboat sinks and we must eventually be forced out of it altogether. Help does not seem to be on the way. Will it be "Finished with Engines" for us?

The unemployed seafarers among us, who make their usual daily rounds of steamship companies, hopeful but without avail, have discovered by now only too well, that the industry has declined to a point where our livelihoods are in desperate danger. We find at this time that almost all of the shipping companies have been cutting down, *are* cutting down and contemplate a continued cutting down of the amount of ships in operation. Here we have an American Merchant Marine steadily shrinking in size and importance—and this during a period of cold war and very shaky peace conditions.

As time goes by, this tends to increase the already tremendous number of us that are ashore and in difficult circumstances. Not only that,



but the rising competition for available berths most depressingly decreases our chances of returning to sea again.

There is much speculation among us as to just what has caused the present deplorable state of the Merchant Marine, but we are not the experts concerned with such affairs, nor are we the ones who can facilitate a remedy, but those who *can* must be told of our plight.

Our profession continues its alarming decline as we look about desperately for some means of subsisting over this prolonged period of inactivity. The unemployment insurance benefits we now receive help immeasurably over a limited period of time but the road ahead shows nothing hopeful and we become increasingly aware of the dismal prospect of seeing a lifetime of endeavor become uselessly wasted, precious years of our lives when the dying industry abandons us. When, of necessity, we turn toward shoreside activities we find those seafaring years of little or no value. Must we begin all over again at the bottom of some profession less desirable to us? True, in order to get to where we are we found it necessary to absorb an education of considerable size and complexity, but it is an education so highly specialized that

it is of little value elsewhere.

We look back upon the years so dear to us, when we did the work we loved as we climbed upward in the profession toward that coveted goal of "Master of Ocean Vessels." Remember the first officer's berth we held? We were proud as we trod the bridge for the first time. That in itself was quite an achievement to us. Then remember the long months, even years, of off-duty study and on-duty practice as we perfected ourselves in the skill and knowledge of our calling? When we thought we were ready we undertook the long days of examinations and the fears, anxieties and suspense of awaiting the results and finally—the license that moved us one step closer to the goal. And then at long last, for some of us, our first command! We held our heads proudly high, our eyes glowed with accomplishment and they called us "Captain" for the first time. That's when we felt we had reached the top.

All these years in our memories were devoted mainly to the pursuit of our traditional calling, that of "following the sea." All else was incidental to, but very much a part of it like the frigid climates and torrid zones (often experienced close together), the severe disturbances of wind, sea and weather that oftentimes made the possibility of survival look questionable, the perennial dangers of fire, collision and assorted mishaps that catch up with us now and then and last, but by no means least, the inevitable wars that become a part of us and take their toll. These were things we took in our stride as we continued the ambitious climb upward in our profession, becoming emotionally bound to it—and it to us.

Then it started, this decline. Here and there a ship was deactivated and assigned to the "dead fleet." Then came the day when it was *our* ship which we reluctantly escorted to its long sleep among the others. We turned wearily to the task of finding another ship.

The cycle continued. Each time the difficulty of finding a new berth increased—then another, and another still?

And now, the future looks dismal indeed as we make our never ending and ever hopeful round of the steamship lines only to hear the same daily refrain, "Sorry," "Laying up ships," "Old company men awaiting berths," "Not a chance, sorry."

If we happen to be one of the lucky ones who are still sailing, we live in fear from voyage to voyage, never knowing when we too will be ordered to "lay her up."

On all three of our nautical coastlines there are located various "dead fleets." Some of us have had the misfortune of seeing them. Row upon row of ships lie chained to their anchors and bound to each other, looming eerily gray against the sea and sky, cold and dead, their hearts no longer beating, lost to us and to our flag. Is it permanent? Must we pay the price of war in order to resurrect them? Did the sight make you, too, feel that way inside?

Old timers point significantly to the aftermath of World War I. What do we know of that? It was before our time. We put our faith in a series of promises—promises of a strong, well manned, well equipped American flag merchant marine. What has happened to it and to us?

We are not the men who regulate commerce. We are not the officials who regulate the size of our fleet. We are not those responsible for the factors that create or destroy a Merchant Marine. We are merely the men who sail the ships—pawns on their chessboard. Are we bitter? Frankly, we don't quite know what to be bitter about.

We have taken to the lifeboats. The ship is sinking fast. We scan the horizon desperately for help. Is any forthcoming?

Can you hear us, leaders of American commerce? Can you hear us in Washington? Will help arrive before we succumb?

My First Christmas at Sea

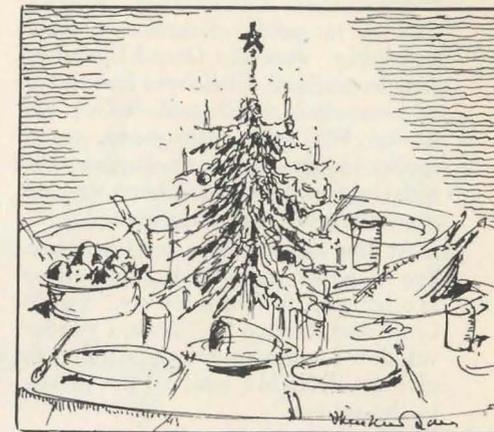
By Captain Irby Fulton Wood
Alcoa S.S. Co.

IT was the middle of December. I had signed on at Mobile two days before a scheduled departure for North Continental ports. The ship was one of the World War I Shipping Board Steamers of about four thousand net tons. She was commanded by a Nova Scotian, whom the crew referred to as "Bluenose." It was rumored that he had started to sea in a row boat fishing for his daily living and had risen to command in succession through schooners, square-riggers and on into steam. He was known as a "tough one." The ship was berthed at the Old Turner's Terminal loading lumber and cotton.

As the time of sailing drew near I was conscious of a certain and definite lack of something. The feeling was akin to that of food without savor. There was plenty of growling and grumbling, but no comments about Christmas that was so near. Since I was only fifteen, this complete lack of interest in or anticipation of Christmas puzzled me. As we left port, there was not one expression of regret that the ship had not laid in port for the Christmas holidays. I wondered what a Christmas at sea would be like, and what would be the attitude of those thirty eight crewmen toward the traditional spirit of Christmas.

The ship was properly secured for a North Atlantic winter crossing. Every moveable thing on deck was stowed away. Extra and heavy lashings were used about the decks. All the hold ventilators were taken off and stowed in the forepeak. Special storm plugs and canvas covers were used to close up the ventilator shafts.

I gathered my "sea legs" and soon began to learn my duties as an ordinary seaman. But I still wondered about this "no man's land of Christmas Spirit." When we dropped the pilot at Sand Island it seemed as



Drawing by Hendrik Willem Van Loon

though we not only severed all contact with the land, but also cut ourselves off from all earthly cheer. The Captain appeared stern, aloof and unsmiling.

We sailed through a smooth sea down to Dry Tortugas and then out into the Gulf Stream. The next evening after supper we were abeam of the Miami Skyline. Sometime that night a powerful light flashed its rays over our port bow. I was told that it was the Jupiter Inlet Light House. My experienced watch partners told me that when we passed Jupiter I could mark the end of "shirt-sleeve weather" and that the next night I would stand my lookout in an overcoat.

On the following afternoon when I went on watch at midnight it had turned cold. Spray was whipping over the fo'c'sle head and the lookout had been shifted from the bow to the weather wing of the bridge.

Cape Hatteras was next. Although the deck crew consisted of an uneducated body of men they were able to follow the vessel's passage accurately by definite land and nautical points. The sailors frequently alluded to the severe gales off Hatteras known as "The Graveyard of Seamen." Our

ship was windswept, spray-swept, and sea-engulfed as she struggled through what they called a typical Hatteras gale, and ploughed her way Northward.

Next in point of sailors' "dead reckoning" were the Grand Banks of New Foundland. Christmas Eve found us somewhere south and east of the Banks. We were enshrouded, so to speak, in overcast, lowering weather with intermittent fog. There was no suggestion of cheer anywhere.

At the supper table on Christmas Eve a wiper remarked, "Tomorrow is a holiday. No work for me." Swede Chris had chirped in, "Yeah, I vonder vat dot dommed steward is going to give us. Probably send all the turkey to the saloon."

Christmas Day came in bitterly cold, dark and wet. The ship was making extremely rough weather of it. Monstrous seas slashed into her bow and sent solid sheets of spray across her top bridge. I was chilled to the marrow when I went off watch at 4 A.M. In my fifteen year old mind I contrasted this with a Christmas morning in my home in the United States — awakening between dry, warm sheets and blankets to behold all the good things provided by loving, Christian parents.

After going off watch I turned in but I was too cold to sleep. In my mind was the thought that it was Christmas morning and I wondered what seamen did when they awakened on that particular morning. When the eight-to-twelve watch was called to breakfast, I too arouse and went amidship to the messroom. Upon entering the messroom I found the messman setting up the tables. He looked at me with a sardonic smile and said, "Twas the night before Christmas, I didn't sleep a wink. Man, you needed a pair of spurs to stay in your bunk aft there last night. I rolled out twice." The messman was one of those drifters that one often met in those days. He was a college graduate and from a fine family. Liquor was his personal devil.

After breakfast I again went aft to my bunk. Still not able to sleep, I finally gave up trying and about 10 A.M. went once more amidship to the messroom. Lo and behold, to my complete surprise the messman had hung up two large red paper bells over each table and was stretching some of the traditional red and green decorations from each bell to the corners of the messroom. Despite the heavy seas and overcast weather the effect was actually cheerful. Two large and generous bowls of Christmas nuts added an even more familiar touch to the setting.

About eleven thirty the crew began to congregate in the messroom. Not one comment of appreciation was passed on the messman's effort under the Steward's direction to decorate the messroom. One dyspeptic Able seaman said, "We can't eat this fuzzy wuzzy stuff you got hanging over the table. I suppose that it is up there to keep us happy eating the bones, wings and necks of the turkey while the saloon gets all the white meat." Another insomnia-ridden oiler added, "Yes, this is a two-pot ship. That steward and cook like the two pot system."

But in spite of all the grumbling we actually had a substantial Christmas dinner of turkey, roast pork, tarts and extras like cranberry sauce, strawberry and raspberry shortcake, mince meat, pumpkin pie and cheese custard. In the middle of this satisfying repast the fat steward came in with a basket over his arm carrying it as a farmer carries a basketful of eggs. He had its contents neatly covered with a checked table cloth. He set it down on the sideboard, uncovered it and extracted three bottles of Demarara Rum. It was the reddest liquor that I had ever seen. The steward held high the three bottles and looking lovingly at them as though they were precious gems said, "Boys, compliments of the Old Man. He wishes you all a Merry Christmas."

The electric-like shock of that gesture from the Old Man is the first

and only happy experience that I can remember with liquor. The whole atmosphere and attitude of the crew changed in an inkling. The rum was portioned out among the crew. It brought real cheer. The Old Man suddenly became the best skipper that ever sailed the western sea. Even an old Finn, with a supposedly "evil eye" sang a Capstan song which he had learned years ago on a British sailing vessel.

From that day on the weather became progressively worse. Yet despite this the crew members were more cheerful and amiable toward each other. I often remember my first

Dog Watch Songs

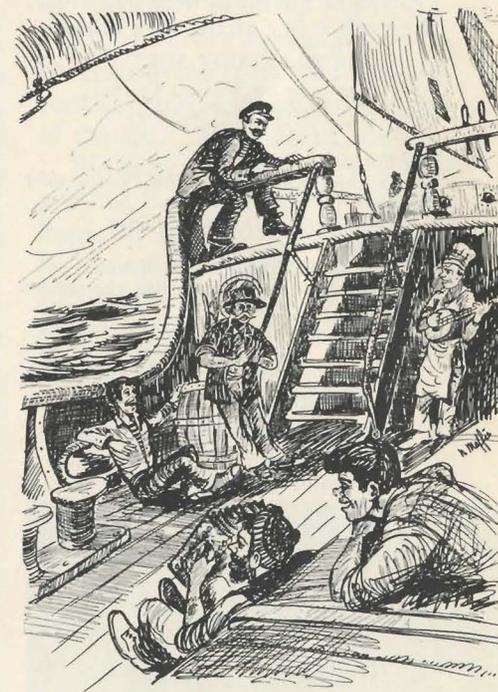
By Marjorie Dent Candee

FOLK-SONG singers on the radio have helped to familiarize the public with sea chanties, those old work songs sung aboard sailing ships when raising sail or heaving up the anchor. But not so many people know of the "fo'c'sle" songs which were sung by the sailors when the day's work was done. Seated on the fo'c'sle head, washing or mending clothes, the men sang songs of a sentimental nature, of home and mother, wife and sweetheart. Because such songs were sung during the first or second "dog-watch" (from 4 to 6 P.M. or 6 to 8 P.M.) they came to be known as "dog-watch" songs. Plaintive and melodic, usually Irish or Scotch in origin, these songs are almost forgotten, and are never sung aboard modern steamships where radios and victrolas bring the crews the latest Tin-Pan Alley favorites.

For twenty years the Institute has collected these songs, in addition to the chanties, as sung by old-time "Cape Horn" sailors who sailed before the mast. To obtain these we posted notices on the Bulletin Board in the Institute's Main Lobby, where thousands of seamen pass, asking any who knew the words and tunes to see THE LOOKOUT editor. In this way, over the years, over fifty such songs have been collected.

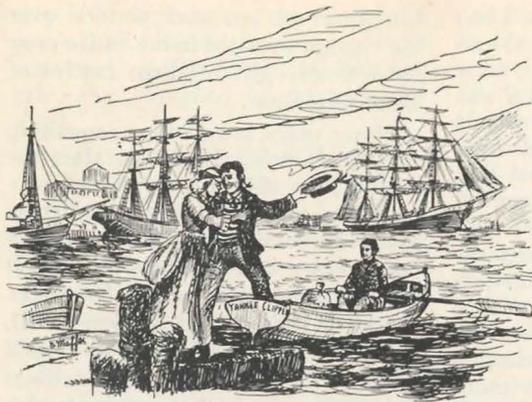
Christmas at sea and ponder over the change wrought in the entire crew by a timely gift of three bottles of Demarara Rum.

Many years later I read something said by Fletcher Christian after the mutiny on the *Bounty* which apparently explained this experience. Said Christian: "I have been at sea many years and I can tell you that the welfare of men on shipboard depends on things which seem small. A joke at the right moment, a kind word, or a glass of grog, is sometimes more efficacious than a cat-o-nine tails.



Drawing by Norman Maffei, A.B. Seaman
Off-watch Song Fest

Among the old shellbacks who have sung the songs to us are: the late William Berry; Harold Hooton; Michael Folan; Patrick Tayleur, William Cairns, Harry Garfield and others. These men actually sang on



Drawings by Norman Maffei, A.B. Seaman

square-rigged ships and on some of the steamers in the 1890's and early 1900's.

Some of the songs were humorous. Here are a few of the rare ones:

"DUCKFOOT SUE"

(as sung by William Cairns, Moran Towing Co.)

*"For now I'll sing to you,
Of the girl I love so true;
She's chief engineer of the "white shirt
line"
And her name is Duckfoot Sue.
Her beauty was all she had,
She'd a mouth like a soft-shell crab,
She had a turn on her lip like the rudder
of a ship,
And I tell you she was mad.*

Other Dog Watch songs were of the nonsense type, such as:

"THE SHIP STRUCK A MATCH"

(as sung by Michael Folan, who sailed on square-rigged ships)

*"The ship struck a match
And the cargo took fire
And we all walked ashore
On a telegraph wire.
At the Cape of Good Hope
Sure our hopes were all bad
When some blacks came aboard
Of our fine iron-clad.
And in the midst of a storm
They turned back the boat
Till the Captain went home
For his waterproof coat."*

One of these old ballads, "LOWLANDS LOW" or "THE GOLDEN VANITEE" was published in the October issue. If enough readers express interest, the Institute will publish a collection of these songs with piano arrangements (to sell at about \$1.25 or \$1.50). If interested send us a postcard giving your name and address. In this way we can decide if it will be profitable for the Institute to preserve these songs in book form.

During the Dog Watches they sang Songs of Home and Mother and Sweetheart or "Gripe Songs" about the poor "Grub" or the Bucko Mate.

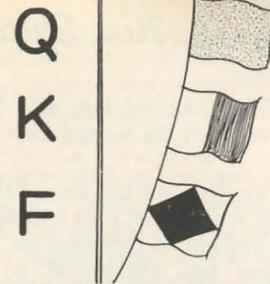
Salt beef was served in those days, and fresh meat was only the exception, at Christmas, when the pig was killed and all hands enjoyed fresh pork. Here is an old-time song; to a very lively tune:

"SALT HORSE"

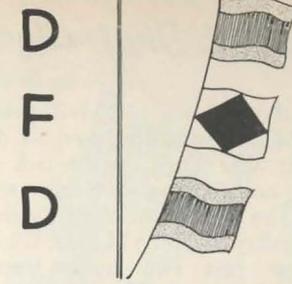
*"Salt horse, salt horse,
Both near and far,
You're food for every hard-worked tar.
In strongest brine you have been sunk
Until as hard and coarse as junk*
(*old condemned rope)
And we poor sailors standing near,
Must eat you, though you look so queer.
Salt horse, salt horse,
What brought you here?"*

Contrary to popular opinion, the sea songs did not die when steam replaced sail. Many old mariners went into steam and took along their songs. Since there was little use for the halliard and capstan chanties, they retained the dog-watch songs many of which were sung on both merchant and Navy ships. An example of such a general song is: "Eight Bells."

*"My husband's a saucy foretop man,
A chum of the cook's don't you know?
He put his head down the cook's funnel,
And shouted 'Come up from below.'
Eight bells, eight bells,
Rouse out there the watch from below,
Eight bells, eight bells,
Rouse out there the watch from below."*



****WELCOME****



****CHRISTMAS****

AT Christmas time our thoughts go back to the Christmases when we were children, and to those celebrated before the war. Here at 25 South Street members of the staff remember vividly the war-time Christmases when seamen survivors of torpedoed ships came ashore for brief respite in their hazardous job of getting the supplies to the fighting fronts. Older employees recall many Christmases celebrated here as seamen of all nationalities mingle in the lobbies and sing the Carols in the Chapel.

As one seaman put it: "We sing the same tunes with different words." Today, the flags of the nations in our lobby symbolize what we are striving for: "Peace on Earth and Goodwill to Men" — which can come only to "men of good will." For the Christmas songs with their message of goodwill triumph over evil, the message that means peace and happiness for the whole world. Friendship and neighborliness can be translated into every language through action. For example:

Each Christmas the Institute is host to about 1,500 merchant seamen of all races and creeds who sit down to a turkey dinner and

who enjoy a special holiday entertainment. This hospitality, rendered year after year (since 1913 when the building was opened) is made possible by the voluntary and generous gifts of friends to our HOLIDAY FUND. It's a way of saying "MERRY CHRISTMAS" in every language just as the flags flying from the Institute's roof say, in the international code of the sea, "WELCOME."

We hope you will share in welcoming these seamen so that the flags, "Q K F" and "D F D" can be strung on a halliard from the Institute's roof, proclaiming to seafarers a real CHRISTMAS WELCOME.

Please send contributions to:
HOLIDAY FUND, 25 South St.
New York 4, N. Y.



The HITTEL sisters (Adele and Arlene) entertaining seamen with accordion music.

The Cat That Almost Missed His Ship

By Ernest S. Clowes*

In the days of our lost civilization before 1914, steamships used to depart from New York on the tick of the clock and at whatever hour was set . . . The American liners sailed on Wednesday at 10 A. M., the White Star ships just two hours later. Thursdays at 10 A. M. the French liners pulled out while Saturday was the day for the Cunarders. The German liners favored Tuesdays or Thursdays. Practically nothing delayed these big, fast ships except a delay in the mails, and that was rare indeed. Individuals either made the ship or they didn't. If not, they were just out of luck unless they had the cash to hire a tug to put them aboard in midstream before the ship got fully under way.

The steamers never waited for anybody. Well, hardly ever. There was one time though when one of the crack ships of the old White Star Line almost waited, for no more of a person than THE SHIP'S CAT! (And thereby hangs a tale):

* * *

This was quite a remarkable cat. He was a big, active tom, mostly gray with a white underbody and white feet, and a long tail, striped almost like a coon's which he loved to wave as he walked. Both ears were well shredded by many fights and his expression varied between a sort of confiding simplicity and a leering, cynical disdain of all the world. He



Drawings by Victor Dowling
from "Joey Goes To Sea," by Alan Villiers

was a Liverpool cat but New York's waterfront was his second home.

* * *

Just as soon as his ship had tied up at the West Street pier and the passengers had gone ashore the cat would go ashore too. He would be gone until about an hour before sailing time the following Wednesday when he would stroll up the gangway with the first class passengers, waving his tail and glancing up toward the bridge as if to say, "Okay, captain, you can get her going anytime now." Then he would disappear below decks to his favorite retreat somewhere near the first-class galley.

* * *

He wouldn't be seen on deck all the voyage. He didn't like to get wet from spray or rain and did like to be warm and dry. So he stayed below until along about next Tuesday morning when the engines would stop for the ship's call at Queenstown, Ireland (Cobb, Erie today). Then he would come out on deck, sniff the Irish air, signal the bridge that the voyage had been satisfactory, and then stroll about in readiness for landing in Liverpool some dozen hours later. Such was his life. He was an all-British cat but he did love New York. "He has many friends along West Street," his captain used to say.

* * *

But once some wild party along that famous street almost made him miss the ship. It was only ten minutes before noon, the last "all ashore" gongs were clanging all over the decks, the friends of the passengers were trooping down the gangway, there were some hasty, tearful kisses as the last visitors went lingeringly ashore and there settled over the decks that air of finality and expectancy that, probably since the days of Noah, has enveloped all ships just before the last gangway is hauled aboard. The quartermaster had his hand on the engine-room tele-

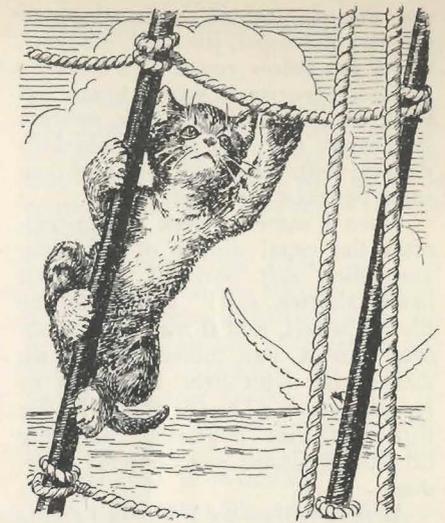
*From *The Bridgehampton, N. Y. News*

graph when the captain's steward rushed almost excitedly onto the bridge, saluted and reported, "the cat is not yet on board, sir."

* * *

What to do? the cat was a fixture of the ship. None of the ship's company from bridge to stokehold wanted to leave him ashore; but the passengers and the mails were all on board, there was no excuse for delay, and it looked as if the cat was surely AWOL. The bridge clock pointed to 11:59. Suddenly a junior officer on the wing of the bridge sung out to the anxious captain, "cat's in sight, sir."

And there he was, worried looking, hurrying along among the crowds on the pier toward the still waiting gangway. Eight bells were struck and the sound echoed again from the lookout at the crow's nest but the "gang" was still in place and the engines still at rest. Not so the cat. For once in his nine lives he was in a hurry. Up the steep gangway he came in long leaps but with his tail still up and waving. One last leap and he was aboard. The boatswain's whistle shrilled along the decks as the gangway was hauled in and there was that final other sound of cast-off hawsers dropping in the water. The cat went into half-



speed, made for his favorite entrance giving a knowing wink and wave of his tail to the bridge and disappeared below. "Dead slow astern," said the captain. "Dead slow astern, sir," echoed the quartermaster as he moved over the handle of the engine-room telegraph. Instantly the deep-toned fog horn of the ship began its long steady roar and the ship began, almost imperceptibly at first, to move out. The cat was present and accounted for. And, no doubt, quite pleased with himself.

Christmas off Cape Horn

By Bill Adams*

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*Reprinted from *The Nautical Research Guild's official publication*

Svend Visits the Seamen's Lounge

By Shirley Wessel

SVEND is a young Swedish seaman. He grins, showing a row of white even teeth, when he says, "Oh yes, I'll be eighteen in a few months."

This six-foot wavy blond-headed youth is following the sea because his father did and his grandfathers, as far back as any member of the family can remember. Most of his ancestors are Captains so when Svend fills out into a husky bronze-skinned individual and develops into maturity he will smile with pride when a crew member calls him "The Old Man."

When a seaman comes to enjoy the Seamen's Lounge the staff hostess and the volunteer workers try to make him feel at home and welcome. Perhaps he has a special interest or talent. He may enjoy books or the theatre, visiting museums or other spots of interest in the Port of New York. After a few conversations the hostess learns specific ways to make a seaman happy and suggestions are often made to make his stay at the Seamen's Institute more pleasant.

A staff member suggested to Svend that he come on Saturday afternoon to listen to our volunteer, Miss Daisy Brown, play the piano. Svend came and his eyes glowed with interest, his feet tapped time to the music and before the afternoon was over, Svend was sitting nearer the piano and enjoying every minute of Miss Brown's classical and popular repertoire.

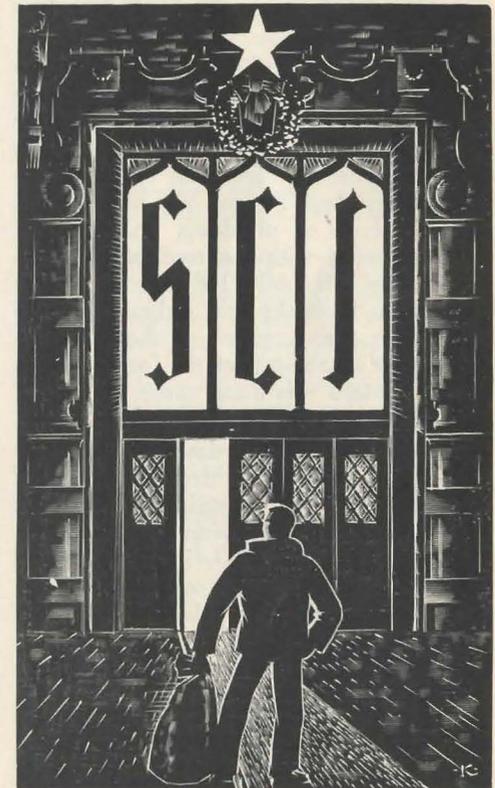
Next day he inquired if he could play a little on the piano. He started hesitantly and self-consciously but soon his fingers moved more surely over the keys and he was making beautiful music. Slowly he was recalling what he had learned as a boy from eight to thirteen years of age. Then came the sad time when his family had to tighten their belts and wear old clothing so Svend went to sea as a cabin boy and tried to help financially in his own small way.

Now, while he is waiting for the Consulate Office to assign him to a

ship, Svend plays a little each day and Miss Brown makes a special trip to the Institute to bring him sheet music, lend a listening ear, give encouragement and instruction where needed.

This young man feels "right at home." Much of his shyness is gone, one notices him approach a person he has never spoken with before and make a new friendship. As a result, Svend feels that he belongs, that he has sincere friends in a strange land, but best of all he feels that he has a home away from home.

In many ways his personality has developed and his English has improved considerably. Very often I meet him as I go about the building. He stops and asks, "Please, you stay and listen to my new English words?"



Drawing by Donald Graeme Kelley

"My Most Unforgettable Sea Experience"

By Capt. Peder Pedersen

THE brigantine "UTO" was standing southward in a gentle breeze. The home port with the small white houses was beginning to get smaller and smaller, but still I could see mother on the cliff above our house, waving her large apron. First she was standing beside the small watchtower my grandfather had built as a lookout for ships that needed a pilot, but as we sailed farther away she must have climbed to the top, because I was seeing the white apron against the blue sky above the lookout, like a flag in the breeze.

The Captain was standing at the stern, looking at the shoreline with a long barreled telescope. How I wished I had courage to ask him if I could have a last look at the watchtower, — but how could I, a simple cook, ask the Captain for such a favor?

As the shoreline began to sink beyond the horizon I went back to the galley to hide the expression on my face behind the pots and pans. I was just past 15 then, and my first trip to sea had begun. We had a high deckload of planking, on that trip, just even with the roof of the fore-castle. The only light we had came through the skylight and mighty little it was, on account of the two life-boats on the top of the fore-castle, so a lantern was hung under the rafter, burning day and night.

For a couple of days we had a fair wind, but on the third day it started blowing. The Captain, known as a man that was pressing his ships hard, let the sails stand, in spite of the waves that washed over the ship almost constantly: "More sails, more knots," was his motto.

I had one of the lowermost bunks in the fore-castle and was supposed to help in sailfurling only by daytime so I was glad I could turn in, although the constant rolling and groaning of the ship would not give me much sleep. Nevertheless I must

have been dozing off eventually, because I was dreaming I was trying to swim home. The dream I had woke me up and the fore-castle was flooded! In the dim light of the lantern I could see that everything that was not tied fast, was floating around, seaboots, oilskins and even a large soup tureen came rushing at me where I lay wide-eyed in my bunk.

It did not take me long to reach the door through the waist-deep water and without a thought of my ship-mates in the other bunks I stormed up the passageway and aft to where the Captain was standing with a big smile on his face, unaware of the calamity that had happened to his ship. "Captain, we are sinking." I shouted through the storm, "the fore-castle is full of water." I was wondering about the calmness he was displaying when he took hold of my belt, to steady me in the lurching of the ship as he went with me to the fore-castle. There he stood, calmly chuckling within himself as he said: "Cook, you are the man who tried to sink my ship! You forgot to plug the hole under the doorsill when you cleaned the fore-castle. Go put the plug back in the hole and bail out the water and when you are finished put on your seaboots. By the next watch we take in some sails and you are to give a hand. This bonerattling in your knees has to be driven out or you will never be a good sailor." I put the plug back in the hole and bailed for dear life, ashamed of my seamanship. On the yardarm that night I understood what they mean when they say: "Wooden ships make iron men." Later in life, storms and shipwrecks did not make such lasting impression on me as my first trip as cook on the brigantine "UTO."

EDITOR'S NOTE: Capt. Pedersen is skipper of Lighter No. 2 of the Jay Street Railroad. He went to sea aboard square-riggers when a boy. He took up marine painting four years ago and his oils are exhibited at the Institute.

Ship News

COURAGE and SEAMANSHIP SAVE POLIO VICTIM AT SEA

Sidney Moody, Jr., a Williams College student, was stricken with poliomyelitis at sea while returning from a holiday in Europe aboard the Cunard-White Star liner *Parthia*. Capt. Charles B. Osborne, master, sent a radio message asking medical assistance. A doctor with an iron lung and special polio drugs was rushed to the ship, off the Nova Scotia coast, by the U.S. Coast Guard cutter *Coo's Bay*.

Arthur H. Gill, First Officer on the *Parthia*, commanded a seaboat crew of eight men who were assigned to pick up the polio drugs in the event the package, dropped from a Coast Guard plane, should miss the liner. The plane came in for two trial runs. On the third run, the parachute was released, but the package fell into the choppy sea. The seaboat crew rowed toward the package, marked by a green dye on the ocean's surface some 50 feet away. The objective was reached, despite heavy waves and a high wind, but the attached parachute became snagged on the seaboat's keel and threatened to swing the craft broadside into the waves. A seaman, at risk to his own safety, retrieved the tangled chute and package. The crew headed back to the *Parthia*, aided by barrels of oil poured on the water to calm the swells. Passengers watching from the boat deck cheered the men who brought the vital package to the polio victim.

GILBERT & SULLIVAN AT THE INSTITUTE

Over the years various groups have presented Gilbert & Sullivan in the Institute's Auditorium, and in the Janet Roper Club, to the delight of the seamen audiences. The Blue Hill Troupe presented "Utopia, Ltd." at the Heckscher Theatre for the benefit of the Institute. Other groups presented "H.M.S. Pinafore."

A newly organized group, the Masque and Lyre Light Opera Company, directed by Dorothy Raedler, has presented here at 25 South Street the following productions: "The Mikado," "The Gondoliers," "Iolanthe," "The Pirates of Penzance," and "Pinafore." This Company, which presents a repertory of the operas at the San Jus House, 341 East 74th Street, has won the plaudits of Broadway drama critics for its fidelity to the Gilbert & Sullivan scripts and for the finesse in which its singers act and sing in true Savoyard tradition. We appreciate the generosity of this talented company in donating their services for the enjoyment of our seamen.

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Courtesy Sun Oil Co.

Statue by Alfred Panepinto MEMORIAL TO TANKSHIP SEAMEN LOST IN WAR

A large bronze statue of a merchant seaman was unveiled recently at the Sun Oil Co. Refinery in Marcus Hook, Pa., at a ceremony honoring the company's 141 men lost during World War II aboard their tankers. U. S. Maritime Commissioner Joseph K. Carson, Jr. and J. Howard Pew (former president of Sun Oil) and Rear Admiral Roscoe E. Schuirmann, Commandant, Fourth Naval District, were among the speakers.

"Seamen on Sun tankships sailed to all theatres of war, more than two million miles and delivered forty-one million barrels of aviation gasoline and other petroleum products" said Mr. Pew, and Commissioner Carson declared: "We of the Commission know full well that had it not been for the fortitude, bravery and patriotism of those seamen, living and dead, who manned the tanker vessels, World War II probably would have been lost."



YACHTING IN NORTH AMERICA

Edited by Eugene V. Connett

Introduction by DeCoursey Fales

Published by Van Nostrand — \$15.00

If you are planning a cruise for next year, and equally if your cruising is all done in an armchair, this is the book for you. Every bit of navigable water within our country is described. I do not refer alone to the excellent sailing directions, the complete description of overnight anchorages, harbors of refuge, Yacht clubs, Yachting events, Racing dates and places to get your ship or your crew repaired. These are there to be sure, and in a form that supplements and goes further than the Coast Pilots. In addition, however, there are historical and other not too strictly nautical bits of information that you will enjoy and use to your profit. It might have made for easier reading if all parts had been treated according to a single master plan, but instead each author has been allowed the greatest latitude in describing his own section of these thousands of miles of waterways and coasts.

This encyclopedia belongs on your bookshelf at home when you are on the Beach cruising in memory and dreams, and aboard when you set out to explore for yourself some of the fascinating possibilities which you had never before known to exist. With it you are well equipped for happy cruising.

Reviewed by Edward K. Warren



WE AT SEA

By Capt. Nicholas Manolis

Anatolia Press, N. Y. — Price \$3.00

WE AT SEA is an informative book about the American Merchant Marine in general and about the adventures and hazards of shipping during World War II in particular. As a boy in Greece young Nicholas had the ambition to become captain of a ship, an ambition fully realized in his captaincy of the freightship *Caribsea*, but which was torpedoed by a German submarine off Cape Lookout in March 1942. Most of the crew were lost and Capt. Manolis himself was wounded and taken from a raft into Hampton Roads. Later he filled several administrative positions with shipping organizations in Trinidad, to all of which he brought to bear an intelligent and understanding mind.

WILLIAM L. MILLER



Portrait of a Shipmate
by Captain Victor Seidelhuber

DESPERATE VOYAGE

By John Caldwell

Boston, Little Brown & Co., \$3.50

PREPOSTEROUS would seem to fit more aptly than DESPERATE as part of the title of this story of a one-man cruise across the Pacific in his rather antiquated 29-foot sloop, with two kittens, a rat and a sea bird as crew.

That a young man who had never sailed a boat before should spend a few days learning from a book how to sail and then start across the Pacific to Australia to join his young wife, that he could blunder in his untrained, unreflective way from one near disaster to another, dismasting his little ship, losing his food stores, breaking his compass, catching a shark that nearly wrecked him—you wouldn't believe that one man could ask for so much trouble and get it. John Caldwell does not spare himself in relating these pieces of fool-hardiness that reduced him finally to eating his fish bait, vaseline, facial cream, even crankcase oil to stave off the pangs of hunger until, half dead he wrecked his Pagan on a reef on Fiji just before she was ready to sink.

This story is well told and keeps the reader almost holding onto his chair as the disasters pile up. Probably the worst one-man cruise in history.

WILLIAM L. MILLER

SONG FOR ALL SEAS, ALL SHIPS

To-day a rude brief recitative,
Of ships sailing the seas, each with its
special flag or ship-signal,
Of unnamed heroes in the ships—of waves
spreading and spreading far as the eye
can reach,
Of dashing spray, and the winds piping
and blowing,
And out of these a chant for the sailors of
all nations,
Fitful, like a surge.
Of sea-captains young or old, and the
mates, and of all intrepid sailors,
Of the few, very choice, taciturn, whom
fate can never surprise nor death dismay,
Pick'd sparingly without noise by thee old
ocean, chosen by thee,
Thou sea that pickest and cullest the race
in time, and unitest nations,
Suckled by thee, old husky nurse,
embodying thee,

Indomitable, untamed as thee.
(Ever the heroes on water or on land, by
ones or twos appearing,
Ever the stock preserv'd and never lost,
though rare, enough for seed preserv'd.)
Flaunt out O sea your separate flags of
nations!
Flaunt out visible as ever the various ship-
signals!

But do you reserve especially for yourself
and for the soul of man one flag above
all the rest,

A spiritual woven signal for all nations,
emblem of man elate above death,
Token of all brave captains and all intrepid
sailors and mates,
And all that went down doing their duty,
Reminiscent of them, twined from all
intrepid captains young or old,
A pennant universal, subtly waving all time,
o'er all brave sailors,
All seas, all ships.

By WALT WHITMAN
"Leaves of Grass" D. Appleton & Co.



FOR A SAILOR

We always hung a silver star
At the top of the Christmas tree.
He used to place it there, himself,
Before he went to sea.
When Christmas skies are filled with stars
Above the ocean's rim,
Let one, high up, shine very bright,
Especially for him.

By ALICE HARTICH
N. Y. Times

CHRISTMAS AT SEA

I saw a fishing boat steer by,
Blunt-prowed beneath the winter sky,
As Christmas dusk was falling.
The hull was crusted dark with spray,
The waters all about spread gray,
And sea gulls followed calling.
But to the masthead gallantly,
Was lashed a little Christmas tree,
A green-armed pledge of pine.
No bright festoons or gifts it bore,
And yet those empty boughs held more
Than tinsel for a sign.
So fair a sight it was to see—
That small, seafaring Christmas tree
High amid shroud and spar,
And all night long I thought of it
Salt-drenched, wind-buffed, and lit
By Bethlehem's bright star.

By RACHEL FIELD
"Christmas Time"
The Macmillan Company

A SEAMAN'S THOUGHTS —
AT CHRISTMAS

"And each man dreams the self-same dream
Of gleaming hearths and lights aglow
And stockings hanging in a row;
The wistfulness of shining things:
Holly and mistletoe.
Men who've faced death without fears
They're not ashamed of misted eyes
At thoughts of home across the years."



Christmas at 25 South Street

On the Roof
the
Traditional
Tree

CHRISTMAS GIFT SUGGESTIONS

Oil paintings, water colors and black and white drawings by merchant seamen will be on display from November 15th until Christmas in the Janet Roper Club, on the fourth floor of the Institute open 3 P.M. to 11 P.M.

Ship models and ships-in-bottles will be exhibited on the fourth floor mezzanine. Here is a chance to buy—at reasonable prices — Christmas gifts for your friends. Hours 9 to 5, weekdays.

Give THE LOOKOUT to your friends for Christmas. One dollar annual subscription. Just send us their name and address and we'll mail an attractive Christmas card to them announcing your gift.



In Each Bedroom
the
Traditional
Gift



"Surprise . . . Surprise"

Drawing by Phil A.