



THE PROGRAM OF THE INSTITUTE

The Seamen's Church Institute of New York, an agency of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of New York, is a unique organization devoted to the well-being and special interests of active merchant seamen.

More than 753,000 such seamen of all nationalities, races and creeds come into the Port of New York every year. To many of them the Institute is their shore center in port and remains their polestar while they transit the distant oceans of the earth.

First established in 1834 as a floating chapel in New York harbor, the Institute offers a wide range of recreational and educational services for the mariner, including counseling and the help of five chaplains in emergency situations.

Each year 2.300 ships with 96,600 men aboard put in at Port Newark, where time ashore is extremely limited.

Here in the very middle of huge, sprawling Port Newark pulsing with activity of container-shipping, SCI has provided an oasis known as the Mariners International Center which offers seamen a recreational center especially constructed and designed, operated in a special way for the very special needs of the men. An outstanding feature is a soccer field (lighted at night) for games between ship teams.

Mariners International Center (SCI)

Seamen's Church Institute

State and Pearl Streets

Manhattan

Export and Calcutta Streets Port Newark, N.J.

Although 55% of the overall Institute budget is met by income from seamen and the public, the cost of the special services comes from endowment and contributions. Contributions are tax deductible.

the LOOKOUT

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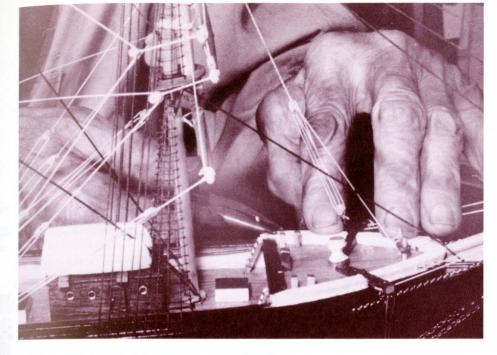
SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK 15 State Street, New York, N.Y. 10004 Telephone: 269-2710 The Right Reverend Horace W. B. Donegan, D.D., D.C.L Honorary President John G. Winslow President

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COVER: A ship model made of animal bone by imprisoned French seamen of the Napoleonic Wars and in possession of Seamen's Church Institute of New York.



SEAMIEN PRISONIER RELICS

by Alan P. Major

During the Napoleonic Wars large numbers of French seamen were captured by the British Navy. These men were housed on prison hulks, usually near-derelict warships, moored in the creeks and estuaries of various rivers. two being the Thames and Medway. Many were also imprisoned in primitive camps built on wild, remote salt marshes and islands where the rivers joined the sea.

From 1793 to 1815 it is estimated over 60,000 men were held captive in this way. The large majority of these unfortunate prisoners were not in fact professional seamen, but craftsmen. tradesmen, and semi-skilled and unskilled laborers, who had been forced into Napoleon's service.

Boring and monotonous would have been their existence but the British reeds from the marshes; even their own humanely allowed and even encouraged

them to make items which they could sell in order to obtain money to buy a few extras of food, clothes, tobacco, etc., for themselves. People were allowed to visit the ships and camps once or twice a week to purchase items, also the soldier-guards and the prisoners' chaplain took the items made to the nearest towns or market to sell for the prisoners.

In a few instances trusted prisoners themselves also accompanied the chaplain to sell the prisoners' wares. Out of this arose an amazing industry. The raw materials to make the items came from inside the prison ship, camp, or from its surroundings.

Their meat ration provided bone. straw came from their bedding mattresses, wood from the seashore, grass and hair was used. Occasionally visitors

took their own raw materials for the prisoners to make the required item. Tools at first were crudely made from scrap metal and old nails, stone flints and glass from broken bottles. Later they were able to buy proper tools, but from these and the crude tools and materials, items of a remarkably high quality were produced.

The whole procedure was organized by the men on a factory system. Those who were unskilled could still earn money as well as the skilled craftsmen. For example, the unskilled laborers would boil the bones and scrape them until they became dry, smooth and white; they also made the glue needed in this way. The semi-skilled men split the bones and made the required rough shapes. Then the craftsmen did the finer detail work and carving. This also applied to other items being made, the unskilled men cleaning and doing the rough work for the wood carvers and metal workers.

In this way the prisoners constructed very fine, wonderfully accurate model men-of-war up to several feet long, complete with cannons, figurehead, rigging made of human hair and other details. For this the prisoners would receive up to £2, which was shared by those who had worked on the model. Today these models are in world-wide demand by collectors and museums and in London's auction salesrooms are easily sold for £600 or more, and demand outstrips supply.

Other items were made from bone. Games found a ready sale from the prisoners, such as chess-pieces, draughts and dominoes, enclosed in bone boxes with sliding lids, some being ornamented with colored paintings. Playing cards, with the symbols and pictures painted in oil paint, were also made from bone.

Surprisingly, among the best sellers were working models of the guillotine, varying in size. Some gruesome examples even had a model figure, with its hands tied behind its back, ready for execution. A basket near the blade contained several heads, while the guillotine's blade was stained with one of the prisoner's blood, if he could not obtain red paint, to add realism!

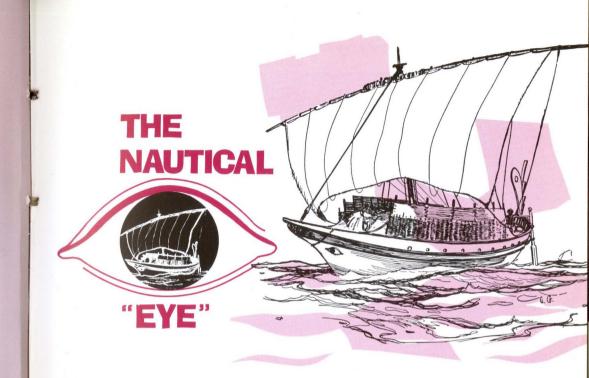
Working mechanical toys, which operated by a series of ratchets and wheels, with threads connecting the wheels and operating handle, were made from bone or wood. These included a woman spinning, nursing a baby or rocking a cradle, also animated figures of soldiers, drummers and blacksmiths.

Model churches, theaters, châteaux and castles were intricately made from bone or wood. On the castle walls guards could be made to walk along the ramparts and trumpeters raise their trumpets, while the drawbridge was raised and lowered, by operating a wheel at the back.

From these same limited materials the prisoners also made clock cases, watch-cases, mirror frames, fans, seals, lace-bobbins, needle-cases, thimbles and workboxes. Some of these items were also beautifully decorated with designs of different inlaid wood or bone marquetry. Metal workers made all kinds of ornamental and useful items, such as candlesticks, fruit containers, metal bowls, ladles.

Straw, reeds and grass, stems and leaf blades, carefully split and trimmed, were used to make pictures which give an illusion of sunshine on them. This material was also used—being stuck on with the bone glue—to ornament trinket boxes, needlework boxes and such items. More rare are prisoner-ofwar needlework pictures. These were made from sail-cloth, cloth and similar material, upon which the picture was created with colored wool or cotton with sheep's wool or cotton wool when available—to give the effect of a cloud or waves.

In all these delicate and beautiful items they made, these prisoners proved the truth of the proverb, "Necessity is the mother of invention."



by John Britton

From earliest times seafarers have

regarded their vessel as being alive, a

craft endowed with a living "spirit"

the same as that within their own bod-

ies. In some instances the vessel was

under the protection of one of the sea-

faring nation's gods or goddesses, who

guided the craft and its crew safely

across the seas from the beginning to

and "soul" of their ship, the seafarers

painted "eyes" or oculi on the bows of

the vessel. These "eyes" were also

meant as a symbol of the god's protect-

ing vision to "see" and guard against

It is believed the custom began in

ancient Egypt. The sacred eye of Hor-

us, or the Sun God Ra, used to be

As a token of their belief in the god

the end of the voyage.

all possible dangers at sea.

painted on the funeral barges that ferried the dead persons across the Nile to their tombs, symbolizing the guarding of the deceased on his or her way to the land of Osiris where the god of the dead sat in judgment on the dead person's soul.

Models of the boats, with a crew and servants, were placed alongside the mummy of any Egyptian of wealth or important noble rank; including of the crewed boat with servants was to ensure safe comfort for the dead man or woman while travelling in the Egyptian after-life. The eye on the model also allowed Horus, the sun god, to watch for any hidden dangers that might threaten the funeral barge.

The Phoenicians also painted crude, large, simple, oval or circular white eyes on their vessels that traded in the Mediterranean area and as far away as England.

The Greeks were also skilled mariners and both their war galleys and trading craft carried the "eyes" on their bows. These were usually normal human eye shape though sometimes the artist added his own embellishments. The "eyes" painted on the Greek "bireme" in use around 300 B.C. were very large, black-pupilled, with a brown iris, black-edged, whitish-blue eyeball and orange red lachrymal caruncle in the corner of the "eye." The Romans apparently took over the "eye" symbol and also painted it on their vessels.

Because the Phoenicians, Greeks and Romans in their vessels voyaged throughout the area it is not surprising the "eye" painting custom was carried to and used in other countries throughout the Mediterranean vicinity, including Turkey, Crete, Cyprus, Sicily, Malta, Spain, Portugal and France. But in many cases it was used later only as a good luck bringer by the superstitious seamen, a painted charm amulet against misfortune.

It was also applied to vessels trading out of East African ports and Zanzibar to Arabian ports, although the custom was banned by the Mohammedan religion, which forbids the idolatrous depiction of parts of the human body; and so in countries where this religion was strong, the "eye" painting did not become widely established, and sometimes where it did begin it soon declined. Examples can, however, sometimes be seen on craft using the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

But how it was spread by the early merchant explorers is shown by the Portuguese adventurer, Cadamosto, who visited West Africa in 1455. In his account of the voyage he wrote how, after passing the Senegal River and arriving at Cayor, his ship aroused great curiosity in the natives "who thought the eyes painted on the prow were real eyes by which it saw its way through the water."

In the harbors of the east coast of India some of the small craft and "pulwars" (river cargo boats) have "eyes," but these are usually not painted but made of brass or composed of brass nails and fixed or hammered to the ship's timbers. Other "eyes" are carved into the wood to create the oculi shape.

The use of round oculi on craft in Indonesia is known to date back to the 8th or 9th century A.D., the temples depicting outrigger craft on wall friezes, with "eyes" painted on both the bows and stern, thus being able to "see" dangers in front and from the rear. Traders and slavers from Java are believed to have carried the custom throughout the Indonesian islands and as far away as Madagascar and the Comoro Islands.

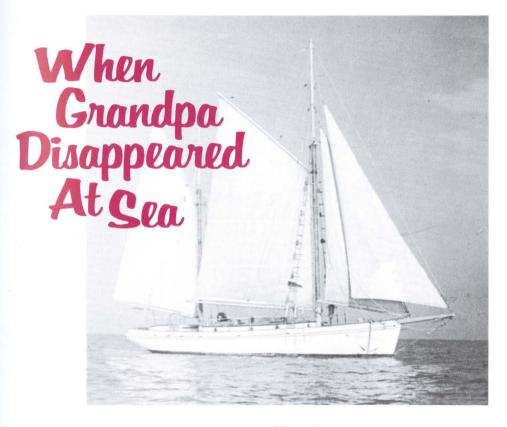
The Chinese painted the "eye" on the bows of their junks and sampans to spy out and scare away evil spirits of the sea and air that might attempt to harm the vessel and its crew. The "eyes" varied in shape according to the home port or area the junk or sampan came from. Some "eyes" are large and round, others are round with a "tail" pointed upwards from one corner, while a third type is narrow - curved and "slit-eyed" in shape.

The "eye" was also applied to their dugout canoes by the Red Indians living on the coast of British Columbia, Canada. As their ancestors probably came from Mongolia or elsewhere in Asia, it is most like this "eye" custom came with them and was not seen and copied at a later date.

Today the "eye" painting custom can still be seen on small privately-owned vessels of several types, in Sicily, Gozo, Malta, Cyprus, Portugal, Spain and some of the Greek Islands. But it is largely painted now as mere decoration to please the owner and beautify his craft, rather than to ensure good luck for boat and superstitious crew by operating against any evil spirits which might be lurking at sea.

* * *

by Robert W. Pelton



Robert W. Pelton of Covina, California, relates this chilling story of his grandfather's disappearance at sea in company with ten others. The circumstances call to mind another classic sea story, that of the Mary Celeste, a three-masted schooner found drifting at sea in good condition and well stocked with provisions but with her crew vanished. —Ed. Sixty-eight years ago, according to my grandmother's diary, my grandfather mysteriously disappeared. He had hoisted full sail before a freshening wind on his two-masted schooner, the *Sue Marie*, and with a group of deep-sea fishing people aboard left Los Angeles harbor and faded over the horizons; neither he, the crew nor his passengers were ever seen again.

The Sue Marie was a sleek, gleaming sailing rig fifty feet long. She left Los Angeles on December 9, 1903, bound for the popular fishing grounds off the coast of California and Mexico. Her skipper, my grandfather, Captain Robert Wayne Pelton, of Los Angeles had a crew of three men, and seven paying passengers, or a total of ten people besides himself on board.

(continued on page 13)

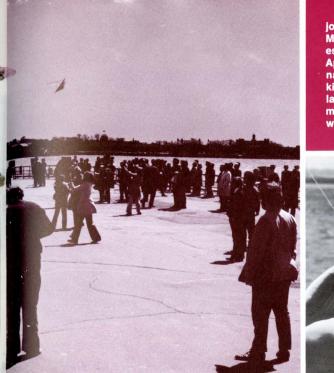
We are a kaleidoscope of the waterfront



The annual Spring Luncheon of the Women's Council (ancillary arm of the Institute) was held in the SCI auditorium in late April. It heard brief commentaries by its executive secretary, Mrs. Constance West and the Rev. Miller M. Cragon, director of the SCI department of Special Services. The Rev. Dr. John M. Mulligan gave the invocation. Mrs. Howard Weale, president of the Episcopal Church Women of the Diocese of New York, was a special quest.







A mid-day kite-flying event sponsored jointly by SCI and South Street Seaport Museum was held on the Battery Park esplanade near the Institute during late April. Amused lunch-hour strollers alternately cheered and groaned as most kites initially zoomed skyward after launch only to dive and crash the next moment because of the high-velocity wind gusts prevailing at the time.



Neither rain nor sleet nor whatever deters Gilbert Rodriguez of the SCI staff from his appointed rounds to ship-sides of the New York-New Jersey port area to deliver bundled magazines and books to ship crewmen — compliments of the Institute. Each week-day morning he loads up a station wagon with the reading material — as he was doing at the tailgate of the car when the LOOKOUT camera caught him in the act.



kaleidoscope

Mariners Center in its initial phase before expansion to its existing size.

June 15 marks the tenth anniversary of the Port Newark Mariners International Center and Sports Field operated by the Institute.

On that date a decade ago the Rt. Rev. Leland Stark, Bishop of the Diocese of Newark, dedicated the modest new building, later enlarged to a magnificent structure at right. The Rev. Dr. John M. Mulligan, SCI director, was a speaker.

According to the service statistics of the Institute's 1970 Annual Report, and which includes the Port Newark instal-

Macramé, says the dictionary, is "a coarse, knotted fringe or lace made of cord or silk, used especially in decorating furniture." The old-time sailors used to do considerable macramé work in their spare time, creating innumerable novel and decorative objects.

Fundamental to macramé are knots tied in a special manner; so it is understandable that sailors for centuries have amused themselves at this art. Hand-crafted articles are becoming more and more popular today and along with this trend macramé has emerged from Victorian parlors and old sea-



lation, 1,934 American and foreign ships were called on at Port Newark by SCI personnel; around 3,800 seamen were served in some way by the Port Newark staff; 27 religious services were provided; 1,488 men were transported to dances held at SCI in New York; 29,649 letters were mailed for mariners.

a men's homes.

Workshops in macramé were held May 19 at the SCI by a highly-gifted instructor, Mary Walker Phillips, who has written a book on the subject.

Chris Svendsen, an elderly seaman long associated with SCI, currently has some of his macramé work on exhibit at the Museum of American Folk Art in New York. Many newspaper and magazine pieces have been written about the Norse sailor and his other skills as a model ship builder and restorer.

kaleidoscope

Bishop Pereira admires ship model in Women's Council office.

Last year the Portuguese crew of a shipwrecked fishing vessel, the *Tina Maria Doncie*, was outfitted and flown home to Lisbon at a cost to the Institute of \$1,364. A delay of the crew's repatriation would have imposed severe hardships upon these seamen and their families.

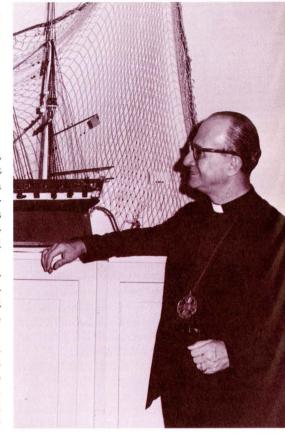
The American Seamen's Friend Society recently gave the Institute a generous gift of \$500, this sum to assist the Institute in its future ministry to shipwrecked and stranded mariners.

In mid-May the Institute was visited by the Right Rev. Luis Cesar Rodrigues Pereira who holds the title of "Bishop of Portugal." He is the resident Anglican bishop for the Lusitanian Church (Lusitania is the ancient Roman name for the geographical area which comprises present-day Portugal).

Bishop Pereira also has a Doctor of Medicine degree and was a medical practitioner in the Lisbon area. He said most of his clergy earn their living in secular work and exercise their ministry on a part-time basis.

The bishop is currently visiting the U. S. for the fourth time and will address clergy and community groups in scheduled appearances at parish and cathedral services.

He plans to publish in the official journal of the Lusitania Church an account of the work of the Institute, including the *Tina Maria Doncie* episode and the rescue role played by SCI in connection with it.



SCI's shipvisitors are versatile men, adapting to the varied needs among the seamen and ships they visit. One such shipvisitor, John Shea, went aboard the Spanish fishing vessel, *Pedrosa*, and learned that the vessel's radar had been inoperative for three weeks; that a radar shore technician wasn't familiar enough with the Raytheon equipment to repair it.

The shipvisitor, Staten Island-born and reared, obtained a Raytheon repair technician and acted as interpreter between the Spanish ship's mate and the repair man until the radar was in working order. **Ligurchea** MYSTERY POWER

by Cecil Kent

he is tall and slim, long golden hair. On her is a luring half-smile, stands, her hands lifting

of her dress to her knees while a strap has fallen from her right shoulder to reveal part of her bust. Her name is *Atalanta*, a 19th-century sailing ship's figurehead, but because of her provocative beauty two men have died.

with

face

as she

the hem

Just over a 100 years ago, in 1866, an Italian ship was sailing in the Adriatic, bound for Genoa, when the lookout saw what he thought was a body floating in the water. As the sailors pulled it on board they realized it was a wooden figurehead of a woman, with the name of the ship "she" had decorated, the *Atalanta*, carved on the mounting.

The sailors set it up on deck where they could see it and soon her compelling beauty began to have an effect on them. They argued about her and in a fight one was stabbed with a knife. The captain then had the figurehead locked in his cabin and as soon as his ship reached Genoa he sent it to the nearby naval museum at La Spezia, where "she" was placed among its collections of other figureheads.

In 1924 a man named Madrigo took a job in the museum as a cleaner-guard. Gradually he became infatuated with the figurehead, too, and spent hours in the same room, either looking at or dusting it. He became so captivated that people said he was lovesick or mad and this reached the museum's curator. He advised Madrigo to ignore the object, but eventually, as the man's strange adoration continued, the curator sent him to do other jobs in the museum.

One night shortly afterwards Madrigo's body was dragged from the harbor, he having committed suicide as a result of his obsession.

This unhappy incident was forgotten until 19 years later, when Atalanta caused another man's death. During the Second World War the Germans took control of La Spezia and Genoa. A Lieutenant Eric Kurz was one of the German naval officers stationed there. One day he wandered around the museum until he came to where the Atalanta figurehead stood and was enraptured by her beauty.

Next day he sent a truck to fetch the figurehead and as the curator dare not risk displeasing the Germans, he let "her" be taken to Kurz' quarters. His friends soon noticed he was a changed man. He became quiet and unsociable, no longer mixing with them at parties or in their quarters. Kurz failed to report for duty on October 13, 1944.

A search was made of his rooms, where he was found lying dead at the foot of the figurehead, a revolver clutched in his hand. A note was pinned to *Atalanta's* dress which read "Since no woman can give me the life of dreams that you have given me, *Atalanta*, I offer my life to you, Eric Kurz."

After this event the figurehead was put back in the storeroom at the museum where she remained for several years after the war ended, then it was decided to put her on view to the public again. There she stands today in La Spezia Italian naval museum for all to see.

Regularly there are protests that she should be taken away because the ob-

jectors say she is brazen and immodest. Those in favor of keeping her say she is only a wooden figurehead, nothing more. But over some men she has had a strange, witchlike power that may yet strike again in the future.

A letter dated Dec. 29, 1970, was sent by The Lookout to the curator of the Museu Tecnica Navale Della Marine Militare, La Spezia, Italy, requesting a photo of this femme fatale figurehead, "Atalanta." There was no reply, no photo. We tried again in another letter dated Feb. 17 1971. Again, no reply, no photo. At this point we gave up. Maybe the curator is apprehensive that the sight of the photo in The Lookout would drive its readers berserk. So the photo of the figurehead appearing with this story is not of the real "Atalanta," we hasten to explain. —Editor

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WHEN GRANDPA DISAPPEARED AT SEA (continued from page 7)

About a month later, actually on Grandpa's birthday, or January 9th, a British tanker, the *Holmner*, signaled my grandfather's ship repeatedly. Receiving no response, he overtook her and then sent a boarding party to investigate.

The puzzling scene which greeted the boarding party was bewildering to say the least.

Still partly under sail, the *Sue Marie* was in every way seaworthy and her storerooms were well stocked with provisions and water. In fact, a meal on the table was still warm and fresh to the taste.

But there was not a person aboard her — either living or dead. Only a healthy appearing black cat was noted by boarding party members.

In the galley where the meals are prepared, a crew member's half-eaten meal lay on a table — a boiled egg, cup of hot tea, and cereal. Obviously it was breakfast.

The crew's laundry was found hanging in the forecastle as if to dry after washing. Money, pipes, razors and other articles lay in the accustomed places. Captain Pelton's pocket watch hung from a nail above his berth. His bed bore his fresh-appearing imprint. The watch still ticked away.

None of the captain's personal things appeared to have been touched — including his wallet and cash box. There was even a half-finished letter on the First Mate's desk in his private quarters. No signs of panic or any sort of a struggle were evident.

In the cabin shared by two married couples, all was in order — clothes were neatly arranged on hooks, a sewing machine was in its proper place with an article still in it as if it had just been used.

At first it was believed the ship had been abandoned during severe storms or other adverse conditions. But a careful scrutiny of the ship's log revealed that the weather had been normal until Christmas Day, December 25, 1903, when the final entry was made.

In short, there was absolutely no indication of a fire, an explosion, foul play, a storm, collision or any other emergency.

Our family has often discussed this fantastic riddle during the past 68 years, to no avail. A mystery it was and a mystery it remains.

* * *

A Salute to Our Neighbors

This is the fourth in a series of brief articles on some of the organizations and institutions established in Lower Manhattan very early in its history, all of them nearby to Seamen's Church Institute of New York.



COVERNORS ISLAND

In 1637 the Manahatas Indians sold Governors Island to the Dutch, then in possession of New York (New Amsterdam), for what is believed to have been two ax heads, a string of beads and a handful of nails. The Island at that time was known by the Indians as "Pagganck," and by the Dutch as "Nooten Eylandt," because of the many oak, hickory, and chestnut trees that grew here. In 1652 it was set aside as an estate for the Dutch governors.

After the British captured New Amsterdam, Governors Island was used "for the benefit and accommodation of His Majestie's Governors for the time being." Hence, the name "Governors Island." Troops were stationed on Governors Island for the first time in 1755, the first garrison being the 51st Regiment of British Colonial Militia under the command of American-born Major General Sir William Pepperell.

During the Revolutionary War defensive works were constructed on the Island while British ships lay at anchor in New York Bay, and the Island batteries fired on five British ships entering North River on July 12, 1776. Following the American defeat on Long Island and the evacuation of New York, the Island was abandoned by the Americans. The British held it for the remainder of the war.

After the Revolution, in 1794, because of the threat of war with France, a new fortification was begun, and named "Fort Jay" after Secretary of Foreign Affairs John Jay. This fort was rebuilt in 1806-08 and was renamed "Fort Columbus," probably because of the unpopularity of the treaty with England which Jay had negotiated in 1795. Fort Columbus was never called into action against a foreign enemy.

In the War of 1812 the British fleet made no attempt to take New York. During the Mexican War the 1st New York Volunteer Infantry was mustered on the Island, and fought with distinction at the battles of Vera Cruz, Cerro Gordo, Contreras, Churubusco, and Chapultepec. In the Civil War the Island was a recruit depot and assembly point for troops bound for combat, and an assembly point for those returning from the war. Confederate prisoners were held here.

During the Spanish-American War the 13th Infantry, which was garrisoned on the Island, participated in the action at San Juan Hill. In World War I the Island was a major supply base and troop embarkation point. In World War II it was the headquarters of First Army (until 1943), the Eastern Defense Command, and Second Service Command. It was also the chief reception center for inductees from New York City.

Early in the 1960's reorganization and consolidation of Army activities foreshadowed the closing of Governors Island as an Army post. When the Island was declared excess to the Army's needs the Coast Guard saw the opportunity to consolidate many of its activities in one location and the chance of being able to provide housing for many of its married personnel in the New York area.

On June 30, 1966, at a joint ceremony, the U. S. Army ended its 172 years on Governors Island to the solemn music of Retreat, and a few minutes later Rear Admiral I. J. Stephans accepted the Island for the Coast Guard as a saluting battery boomed out a salute to his Flag as it was broken out over old Fort Jay. New York Coast Guard Base was established to operate the Island and its facilities. The Commander, Eastern Area and Third Coast Guard District together with his staffs are housed here as is the Captain of the Port of New York and Commander, New York Group.

The Coast Guard Training Center, providing both basic and advanced training in Service skills to Officers and enlisted students, was moved from Groton, Connecticut in the summer of 1967. During 1968 St. George Base, in Staten Island, was closed and its facilities and responsibilities were transferred to New York Base.

The Chapel of St. Cornelius the Centurion, a granite building in English Gothic style of the Fourteenth Century was erected on the Island (1905-06) to replace a frame chapel built in 1846-47. The present and original chapels were built by Trinity Parish of New York, which leased the land from the Army. The chapel contains many memorials and military relics of historical interest.

* * *

Seamen's Church Institute of N. Y. 15 State Street New York, N. Y. 10004

Address Correction Requested

SEA SAGA

Briny caps of crisp, white foam Ride the crest of the angry wave; Galloping shoreward, tumbling foreward; Daring, defiant, majestically brave.

Silent dunes of grim, gray sand Rise to meet the darkened morn; Scorning the ocean, mocking its motion; Adamant, regal, morosely forlorn.

-Barbara B. Stiles

AS IN THE TOSSED SEASHELL

When a tidal sweep of air laps the rim of earth some translucent morning, may you become aware of the invisible rise and fall, the mysterious curving swell, that in you ebbs and flows as in the tossed seashell.

-Katharyn Wolcott