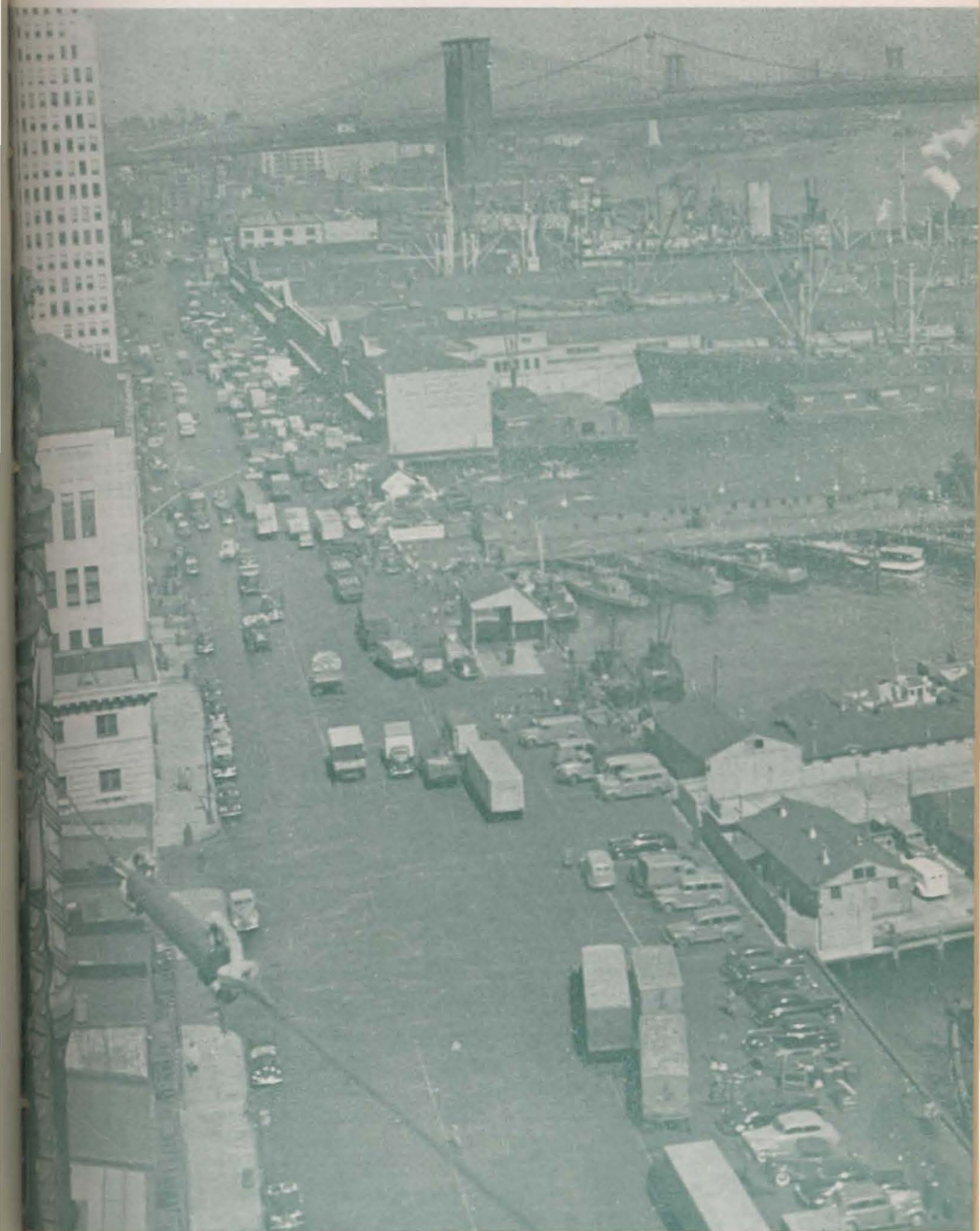


# *The* LOOKOUT



*Newspaper Photo*

A View of South Street from the Institute's Titanic Tower

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

Vol. XXXVII

August, 1946

No. 8



## Sanctuary

### PRAYER

For a Person, or Persons, Going to Sea

O Eternal God, who alone spreadest out the heavens, and rulest the raging of the winds, we commend to thy almighty protection, all seamen, for whose preservation on the great deep our prayers are offered. Guard them, we beseech thee, from the dangers of the sea, from sickness, from the violence of enemies, and from every evil to which they may be exposed. Conduct them in safety to the havens where they would be, with a grateful sense of thy mercies; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Book of Common Prayer (Adapted)

## The LOOKOUT

VOL. XXXVII, AUGUST 1946

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### THIS MONTH'S COVER

"Where, in the old days, the masts of the square riggers laced the sky . . . now all is grim and purposeful with the mission to feed the peoples and to rebuild the cities of that old world."

# The Lookout

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## Central Council Presents 425 Comfort Bags To Cadet Midshipmen Aboard "Empire State"

WOMEN volunteers packed these bags as gifts for the cadet midshipmen just before they departed on a three months' training cruise to South America. Vice Admiral H. F. Leary, USN, Superintendent of the New York State Maritime Academy, Ft. Schuyler, and Captain A. F. Olivet, USNR, Commandant of the "Empire State" received the bags from Mrs. Parkin Sowden, representing the Central Council.

The "Empire State" was a Navy attack transport in the Pacific during the war. Representatives of the Institute inspected the ship, and were impressed by the soda fountain,

ice cream machine, mechanical cow (which turns powdered milk into whole milk), the sick bay, library and dark room for developing films. When the cadet-midshipmen complete the three-year course they will hold degrees of Bachelor of Marine Science, and will start as third mates and third assistant engineers in the American Merchant Marine. Fort Schuyler (N. Y. State Academy) is the oldest Merchant Marine School in the country.

The comfort bags contain candy, cigarettes, a book, sewing kit, cards, band-aid, stationery, stamps, pencil, notebook, and subway maps.





## Dead to Loo'ard

By George Noble, Chief Steward

IT was a dark night off the coast of Florida and we were in a ticklish spot—just south of Cape Carnaveral, full of shallows and sudden shifting sandbars. Many a full-powered steamship had come to grief there, caught in the grip of the unpredictable tides that abound thereabouts. To us in the 2-mast schooner *Calypto* with our auxiliary engine broken down and most of our sails in tatters from the gales off Cape Hatteras—it was a ticklish spot. Tonight there was very little wind stirring—but what there was blew mostly from the Eastward, like the strong tide that was running—setting us in rapidly toward the beach.

I was at the wheel during the graveyard-watch, but there was darned little steering to be done. The little vessel was at the mercy of the tidal currents and didn't have "way" enough on her to answer to her rudder—even when the helm was put "hard-over."

Captain "Ed" Leighton, veteran sailing-ship skipper, "Coast-o-Maine man", was on deck beside me. Suddenly he turned, stabbing a gnarled forefinger down to windward: "See that thar light?" he bel- lowed, though I was within three feet of him: "That's a lighted buoy, a channel marker, by Gadfrey!—We'd oughter be way out thar, t'other side of that thar light—ain't enough water up in here to float a good-sized dish-pan—and here we be, drawin' all kinds a water—right dead to loo'ard!"

Muttering imprecations as he turned away I overheard him say, more to him- self than to me, that he'd "hate to pile her up on the beach after we'd gotten her this fer . . ."

But luck was with us: for along toward daylight the tide turned seaward and the wind veered 'round into the West. Under the increased urging of wind and wave our staunch schooner came to life like an awakened seagull that had been slum- bering with folded wings on the surface of the sea during the hours of darkness. Before a favoring wind and a following tide we went bowling merrily along once more—bound for Haiti in the West Indies.



## "The Worst Storm"

By Captain Albert Weider

THIS wagon is starting to kick up a bit and we received word that there was a typhoon ahead and the "Good Old Ship 'Albert K. Smiley'" is being tossed around like a top and I have a typewriter lashed to the desk also the chair lashed to the deck, so I am sitting here bob- bing around. She just gave a roll that sent her dishes cascading out of the racks in the messroom and I guess tossed some of the men out of their bunks, putting fear into men who had taken torpedoing in their stride; she kind of made them won- der so many times a minute, whether she would come back this time or the next roll, as she sure is a-roll- ing. I just came up from down below in the messroom to see what damage was done and I saw the messman had wet down the table- cloth but even that didn't stop the dishes and silver from hopping over the table racks. I suppose you could compare this rolling around with going over the "Niagara Falls" in a barrel and I am just after telling some of the officers that were kick- ing, that it will make them real salty and they came back with "It's the worse rolling ship they have ever sailed." That's funny because on every ship I have ever been on you hear the same thing when the sea gets to kicking up. The "Albert K. Smiley" isn't any different than thou- sands of others like her. As much care went into her welding of some four hundred forty-one feet of steel plates as into those of her sisters. The same gray paint adorned her house and sides; her silhouette, with smartly raked stem, long forward deck, high midship structure, and the raised poop around her formid- able five-inch gun aft, was no dif- ferent even in the speed, providing the engines are in good shape, as they all have the same horsepower, twenty-five hundred, and she is breezing along, jaunty in her devil- may-care way.

## The Man Who Never Boasted

by D. H. Barber

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Courtesy American Cyanamid Company

"ADVENTURES?" said the old salt, taking a goodly pull at the tankard that I had just placed before him. "No I've never had what you could call *adventures*. There's men hanging about pubs in this town as'll tell you they've had adventures just to get a tankard of beer out of you. But Honest Joe is my name, and I tell you straight that I've never had no adventures. Not to *call* adventures . . ."

"Sharks? No. I've never had no narrow escapes from no sharks, though there's not many men alive who've harpooned more sharks than I have. If I was a boastful man I'd tell you about the time when I har- pooned three tiger-sharks with one harpoon, like sausages on a skewer. But Honest Joe doesn't boast of what he's done. And I've never had what you might properly call no adventures."

"Wrecks? Of course I've been wrecked, many a time, but getting wrecked is no adventure to a sailor."

It's just in the ordinary run of busi- ness. I'd be ashamed to tell you about the time I lived on a desert island for six months with nothing but a keg of rum, seven sacks of dog-biscuits, and two ukeles. Be- cause that was just the ordinary give-and-take of a sailor's life, and of course there was the monkey-soup to keep body and soul together.

"Shoot the monkeys? No. I didn't shoot the monkeys, for the reason I hadn't got a gun. But I did what anybody else would have done in my place . . . it's not worth the tell- ing, just plain common sense . . . I just played on one of my ukeles until the monkeys came gathering round to listen, and then I lulled them to sleep with nursery rhymes, and then I just strangled them and put them in the pot. Another tank- ard of beer? Perhaps I will . . . but I'm afraid I can't tell you any yarns in exchange, if tha's what you're after. Honest Joe has led the simple, undramatic life of a common sailor,



and he's too proud to get beer under false pretences.

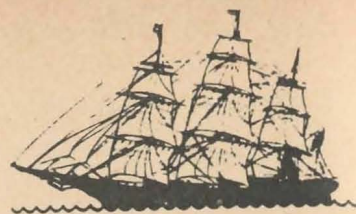
"Round the Horn? Of course I've been round the Horn in a windjammer. And now you've minded me of it there was a rather queer little thing happened to me when we rounded the Horn in '93 . . . or was it '94? I think it was '94. It wasn't what you could call an *adventure* . . . not like some of the chaps round here will make up to get a tankard of beer out of a mug . . . but it was rather curious in its way. It had been a hard passage from Sydney. Nothing out of the common, you know, but a hard passage.

"Anybody drowned? Of course a few of us had been drowned . . . but not an exceptional lot. Just the captain and five or six of the men. Not enough to worry us at all . . .

"Masts carried away? I forgot to mention that . . . these things are so much in the day's work that it slipped my mind. A couple of the masts had been carried away, but we had one quite good one left, and though of course we had lost every stitch of canvas *that* didn't bother us. Food? Of course most of the stores had been lost, but there were a couple of crates of lemons and a fat cook to fall back on if the worst came to the worst. If it had been only a few trifles like that we should have just shrugged our shoulders and danced a light hornpipe and thought nothing of it.

"But what really worried us was the strange behaviour of the first mate. Nice fellow he was, with a red beard and a cast in his left eye. As the captain was drowned, of course he was in charge of the ship, and when he suddenly went potty we began to get just a shade worried. You know how it is with us sailors . . . we're delicate, sensitive creatures, and quite small things prey on our minds.

"At first he just thought that he was a fairy queen, and went tripping round the decks dancing gaily in his seaboots and waving the ship's telescope instead of a wand. Live



and let live is the sailors' motto, and we wouldn't have interfered if it had stopped at that, but when he said that he was tired of the ship and intended to cut his way out by hacking a great hole in his cabin wall, ten feet below the water-line, we felt that it was time to protest.

"I went to him and said that on the whole I thought the scheme was not a good one, and he got quite cross, killing three of the men with his revolver and generally getting a bit peevish, so the rest of us decided to put him in irons. But before we could seize him he had escaped to the deck and swarmed up the mast. It was foggy weather, and we couldn't see the top of the mast, but we knew he was there, so we drew lots as to who should follow him.

"I was the lucky man, and I followed him up the mast. I'm not saying that this is what you'd call an adventure, but it had rather a laughable ending.

"I'll pass over my struggle with the madman on top of the mast. It was just an ordinary life-and-death struggle such as forms a normal variant to the monotony of a sailor's existence. Apart from biting off one of my ears and gouging out one of my eyes he hardly marked me, and I was able to knock him out and throw him over my shoulder to carry him down to the deck.

"But the real humour of the situation didn't strike me until I had descended several yards of my journey back to the deck. I really couldn't help laughing when I found that the ship had sunk with all hands while I was up there, leaving just about three yards of mast sticking out of the water . . .

"Well, thank you kindly . . . just one more."

Reprinted from "The Blue Peter"

## Grand Old Lady of the Pacific

By Ralph B. McDonald

WELL might she be called the "Grand Old Lady of the Pacific"—the famous steamship *Victoria*, again serving Alaska.

To this old craft goes the honor of being the oldest vessel still operating under American registry and she may hold a world's record in that respect. It was more than 75 years ago in Dumbarton, Scotland, that the *Victoria*, christened then the *Parthia*, slid down the ways to begin a memorable career. During her long period of service she has sailed the seven seas, but the great majority of voyages have been in the Pacific, with Seattle as her home port.

The *Parthia* was constructed by William Denny and Brothers, Ltd. (still building ships at Dumbarton, on the Clyde,) and was launched on December 10, 1870. Her dimensions were 360'x40'x35'2" and her gross tonnage 3,431. As originally designed she could accommodate 200 first-class passengers and 760 third class.

When completed and put into commission the vessel flew the Union Jack and the Cunard red house flag. A flushdeck vessel, this crack ship of the Cunard line ran between Liverpool and New York. After 15 years' service on the North Atlantic for the Cunard line the *Parthia* was sold to John Elder & Co. of Glasgow and made voyages to the Mediterranean, Australia and China. On August 19, 1886, she sailed from New York for Singapore and Yokohama via the Suez Canal. From Yokohama, she was dispatched to Vancouver, B. C., to pioneer the early trade between that port and the Orient. The Canadian Pacific Railway had just completed its road to the Pacific and had made Vancouver its western terminus. Lewis & Dryden's "Marine History of the Pacific Northwest" states that the *Parthia* carried a crew of 18 Europeans and 65 Asiatics. She re-

mained in the service of the Canadian Pacific until the arrival of the Empress ships, when she returned to England for overhaul and was renamed the *Victoria*. She again returned to the Pacific to operate between Tacoma and Hongkong for the Northern Pacific Steamship Company.

During the Spanish-American War the *Victoria* made three trips to the Philippine Islands as a troop ship.

Her hull of hand-wrought Swedish iron plates 1¼" thick made her an ideal ship on the Nome, Alaska route. She was placed on this run in 1904 and continued for many years. It is said that she used to slip and smash her way through the Bering Sea ice fields and, year after year, she was the first ship to anchor off the Nome roadstead. After the close of the season, when Bering Sea was blocked with ice, she went on the Southwestern Alaska run.

For many years the *Victoria* was skippered by one of the most colorful masters in Pacific Coast marine history, Capt. "Dynamite" Johnny O'Brien.

The Alaska Steamship Company acquired the *Victoria* in 1908 and still owns her.

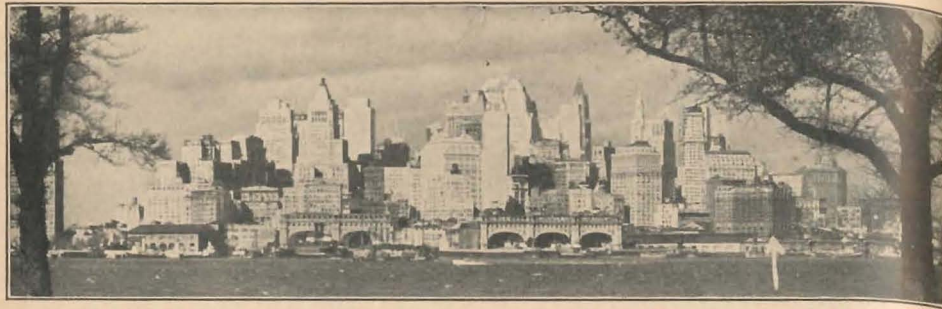
During her ownership by the Alaska Steamship Company, the *Victoria* has completed 292 round trips to Alaska in addition to 17 voyages under the operation of the War Shipping Administration. Prior to her present ownership she was on the Alaska run for a number of years but no record as to the number of these trips is available.

In 1938 it was felt that the famous old ship had made her last voyage and she was laid up for three years. In 1941 her services were again needed as a freight carrier to Alaska. At considerable expense, staterooms were removed to allow for cargo and during the war the faithful old ship

(Continued on page 14)



## South Street — Then and Now



by Polly Weaver

**P**UDDLES of recent rain, as quickly forgotten as fallen, touch the grimy streets with lustre. The iron sweep of the curving El threatens to run off into the blue sky . . . into infinity. Gulls wing inland for a brief moment and are gone—wing over water, element to natural element.

The great grey hulks of the ships, close-nosed to the solid land, are waiting . . . for a word . . . for a cargo . . . for a mission. It comes, and they slip away in the misty morning or at night while the sprawling giant of the city sleeps. Now brave with color, red and shiny black, funnels cut the blue sky. Spanking white paint has covered the grey incognito of war. Against the building known to men all over the world as "25 South Street," men in dungarees and khaki stand talking in low voices, puffing cigarettes, looking off over the park and the buildings and the East River . . . looking off as they are accustomed to do from the taffrail and foredeck. Instead of rolling swells and the sky's changing fabric, they see solid objects, anchored, changeless. They shift their feet restlessly. The city pushes at them, threatens them. They are not at home on pavements, against walls, under roofs. The wind that flirts around the corner of the building, eddies along the pavement picking up dirt and scraps of paper, is not the wind they know. They know a

wind that is clean, that has blown over miles of salty, heaving water: marble green, dazzling blue, flecked with foam, lapping secretly under mist, going down for miles of dimmer lit depths where sea creatures prowl upon one another. The wind they know is both an enemy and a friend. It has a thousand unpredictable voices.

Where in the old days of the clipper ships, wagons used to clatter over the stones of South Street, drawn by dappled grays fatter and rounder than the barrels of rum they carted, now motor trucks rumble and groan and screech. Loaded with chests of tea from Ceylon, others with American-made products, they rumble between ship and warehouse, leaving trails of exhaust in the freshening air.

Where, in the old days, the masts of the square riggers laced the sky, the long bowsprits poked rakishly across the roadway . . . almost to the buildings on the opposite side . . . and South Street was a teeming, bustling, colorful pageant of new trade with the old world, now all is grim and purposeful with the mission to feed the peoples and to rebuild the cities of that old world.

The long grey Libertys and the Victorys slide away from the piers loaded with foods and medicines; the battered merchantmen wait in the bays and the rivers for cargoes of grain.

## Dental Clinic Marks 15th Anniversary

**O**n July 13, the William D. Tracy Dental Clinic, at the Institute, celebrated its 15th anniversary. It was founded in 1931 by the late Dr. William D. Tracy, a noted dentist, as the gift of Mrs. Elisha Whittelsey. A total of 22,085, an average of about 68 a week, has been treated.

The usual lot of a dentist is to be feared or heartily disliked by that segment of the population which makes periodic and unwilling visits to him. Not so the dentists who give part of their time to the Institute clinic. They receive post cards, letters, telegrams from all over the globe from their seamen-patients. Fan mail for the dentist!

"Teeth o.k., feeling fine", "Plate going great", "Many thanks, doc", "teeth first rate", these and many other messages are scrawled across picture post cards purchased in the seaports of Shanghai, Sidney, Singapore. They receive long, amusing letters written by seamen from the fo'c'sles of ships on the high seas.

The dental clinic has been a particular boon to men in the British Merchant Marine. During the war, 40 New York dentists volunteered half a day a month to free care of British sailors' teeth. The clinic staff could always tell when the Queen Mary or the Queen Elizabeth had docked . . . so many crew members who had heard of the "fillin' for a shillin'" turned up. One British patient was Robert Tapscott who survived 70 days in a 16 foot open boat after the torpedoing of the British freighter, "Anglo-Saxon". His front tooth had been knocked out during the disaster!

Mrs. Elsie Latimer, R.N., chief nurse of all the Institute clinics, recalled some humorous incidents which have made life in the clinic as enjoyable as it has been busy.



One seaman dashed in and frantically asked for some immediate repair work. He had been in a little dust-up the night before in which he'd lost a couple of front teeth and now his girl wouldn't go out with him. As long as he was toothless, he'd be dateless, he explained.

Another seaman wanted to borrow a pair of false teeth just long enough to get a job aboard ship. The staff had difficulty convincing him that no one could wear anybody else's teeth . . . finally had to let him try some to convince him. They fixed him up with his own in jig time and he got his job.

A British seaman wanted three English sovereigns melted down to make the plate for his upper teeth. The dentist advised him to have them changed into American money as sovereigns were not suitable for the making of dentures.



## Why I Go To Sea

by Nils Svensson, Messman

### First Honorable Mention in Essay Contest

*Nils Svensson is a native of Sweden. He has been going to sea since 1936. After he makes one more trip home for a visit, he plans to become a citizen of the U. S. A.*

THE ice-cold winds of Ulinfer whistled past my ears, numbing my hands and feet as I laboriously pumped my bicycle up the hills of Western Sweden, or let it roll down the slopes. I was bound for the city, determined to change my uneventful life as a landlubber for the presumably more romantic and exciting existence as a seaman. When interested friends or my worried mother asked me why, the answer was simple. Depression, no job ashore, last resort, you know. Not that the last resort was easy to reach, though. But finally, when doubt and despair had, like Napoleon at his second try, reigned for a hundred days, I made it. Pier head jump, not even time to say goodbye to the family. But I was in, and I decided to stick. And Fate in her kindness saw to it that as a reward for my willingness to stick, I really got stuck. When the blood-stained boots of Hitler's legions started to march over

meadows in Denmark and mountains in Norway, my ship was displaying its gay signs of neutrality in the drab-looking surroundings of Philadelphia.

For a country to be neutral nowadays, however, doesn't mean to stay out of the war. It means to be in on both sides. Accordingly, few full moons had been cursed by sailors on submarine watch in convoys before I was on my way to bomb-harassed Britain. After that the question why I went to sea could easiest get a reply from the immigration authorities. "Sorry, you can't pay off here. The law, you see." But it wasn't long before the sight of burning oil on the waves, ships disappearing in a matter of seconds, houses wrecked and families homeless, gave me an answer of my own. A great evil had to be fought, and here was my floating foxhole. If I left before the fight was finished, I'd always feel like a traitor.

And now it's all over. The blackout is gone, and we can again get some fresh air through the portholes at night. The dangers from torpedoes and bombs don't exist any longer, and most of the mines that are still floating around won't bother us. But the isolation from the world on a long voyage is still there, and so is the separation from family and friends. And the tendency to spell the word seaman with the three letters b - u - m may be a part of the reconversion. A sensible human being ought to get securely rooted on "terra firma" in a time like this. So I'll probably ask myself, as I sadly "walk up the gangplank of my next ship: "Why, in the name of Neptune, do I go to sea?"

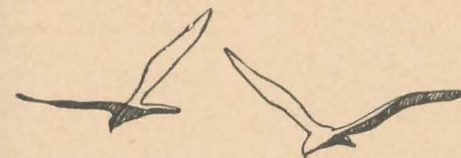


From "Delilah" by Marcus Goodrich.  
Farrar & Rinehart

Drawing by Earle Winslow

## Tomorrow — —

by Robert E. Conway, Able-Bodied Seaman



THE hot Pacific sun beat down mercilessly on the lad in the small uncomfortable, tossing raft. For thirteen days now it had been the same. It hadn't been so bad until five days ago, when his last meager rations had given out. Now, the sun, sharks, and lack of water, combined with the constant pitching and tossing of the tiny raft, had changed this happy-go-lucky lad of eighteen into a distraught hulk of a man.

He lifted his head off the burning sides of the rubber raft that would make even the strongest willed of us shudder to look at. His lips were parched and black. His tongue was lolling from between those blackened lips, cracked and swollen from the lack of moisture. The exposed skin was seamed with blisters and raw red flesh.

Just two short weeks ago he had been a member of the S.S. BAL-SAMO BAY. He was full of life then, with three meals a day, companions to chat with after standing long sea watches, a shower to cool him off, and all the other little things that make up for the loss of being home. Then he had been a stocky lad of eighteen, with fair complexion, laughing blue eyes, and a shock of chestnut hair that had a tendency to be unruly. Now after thirteen days of loneliness and privation, even his own mother wouldn't know him.

Four or five years ago a lad of his age would have been contemplating

what kind of a tie he'd wear to the dance Saturday, or polishing up the old dilapidated jalopy for a picnic with the gang. But later fellows as young or younger than he were slugging it out with the Japs, for a principle they believed to be right. Yes, even though you don't know much about life when you're eighteen, you still know how to die.

Many times in the past two weeks the will to live had flickered and threatened to go out, but it's amazing how much torment a fellow will stand to get home just once more. The will to live came muttering between those swollen lips once more as the flame roared within him. He cried out in his misery, as the sun, that damnable fireball, grew hotter as it marched in all its triumphant glory across the blue heavens. God, please let it rain, let that scorching sun go down, or send a cloud or something, anything, only God please, please dear God give me half a chance, please I beg of you. As he murmured these last words his swollen face sank down against the hot rubber sides of the little tossing raft. Even with his face in the terrible shape it was the hot rubber didn't bother him in the least. Perhaps he had endured beyond caring. He began to doze fitfully.

His dreams, all those pent up ideas and plans of an eighteen year old boy, were they to cease because some son of heaven had put a tin fish into his ship? No, never, he'd live to fight again if only to get another crack at the enemy.



That little girl back in Arkansas. The one he had met at the dance the night before he sailed. Remember, Tom, how faithfully she had written to you? Are you going to let her down after all those post war plans of the future you had both been exchanging of late? You've just got to live, boy, if only to see her once again, to hold her in your arms, to kiss her.

Oh, that sun was so hot. If only it would go down, just for a little while at least.

Remember Mom's apple pie, cookies and milk at bed time, and how Mom kissed you and cried the day you left? Remember her final words to you? "Come back safe to me, Tom, as you're the man of the house now since dad's gone." Remember too Tom, how your little brother Jimmie worshipped you, and how he sat on your bed begging you to tell him all about your Boot Camp experiences. And, Tom, the look in his eye when you gave him one of your old white hats, and he said, "When I grow up I'm going to be a sailor just like you." If only he could see you now maybe his young mind could grasp the fact that it's not all fun and liberty parties, this business of being a sailor. Think again Tom, how your sister Eileen took you around to the office and proudly introduced you to the swarm of cute girls she worked with. And, Tom, the squeals of delight from your kid sister Patricia as she climbed on your knee and begged for a story the night you left.

Tom, come on boy, snap out of it, we've got to go on, mate. We've got to get back to all that some day. Maybe tomorrow, yes that was it, tomorrow a ship will come and pick you up, and after a few weeks in a hospital you'll go home for a little while. Back to those who stay behind and pray for your safety. Seems so infernally long though, doesn't it?

Slowly the sun sank in the west. The cooling night winds soothed his fevered brow, and he stirred. A low moan came from between his tortured lips. Mom, mom where are you? There was nothing to answer him, only the gentle slap slap of the water against the bottom of the raft, the sighing of the wind, and endless space. But tomorrow will come and then, O dear God with your help, I'll be saved. Yes that's it, tomorrow.

The sun burst forth the following morning in all its radiant glory. Its hungry rays reaching out toward the tiny raft that was still pitching and tossing along the crests of the waves. In it lay the still figure of the lad in dungarees with his dreams of a better tomorrow. All around the raft were the sharks.

Big ugly monsters of the deep, lurking, waiting, sort of remind you of the buzzards back home on the plains when a steer or calf is dying. They seem to know. Waiting, waiting, while that sun tries its best to suck the life right out of you. Funny isn't it, how much patience they've got.

Off to the right a Jap patrol vessel cruises. The lookout spies the little bobbing raft, and after due consultation with the honorable commander of the Imperial Emperor's Ship, they set out to retrieve it. As it draws alongside they see the lad. An American, a Yankee pig, it's too bad! Not one of the Emperor's valiant fighters. Not necessary to pick up a Yankee dog. Only waste of time, and no one in Japan would like to hear of Japanese commander adhering to articles of war so closely.

Slowly the raft turns idly in the backwash of the Japs' propeller, as the patrol craft pulls away. The stillness of the day is broken by the chatter of a Jap 25mm gun. The boy's body jerks spasmodically as the leaden hail cuts through him. There are shouts of Banzai from the patrol boat and a whoosh of air from the inflated raft mingling on the morning air.

Slowly the bullet-ridden raft sinks beneath the rolling sea. So slowly that it seems as though it's reluctant to give up its lone passenger to the

(Continued on page 14)

By Lt. Comdr. S. M. Riis, S.S. Winchester Victory\*

SINCE I last wrote, we have been in many out-of-the-way-ports, carrying discarded war equipment and all kinds of troops and war criminals. From Aruban, Dutch East Indies—we carried dangerous Japanese war criminals to be shot in Moratoi, near the Philippine Islands. Then from Lae, New Guinea, we carried six German Lutheran missionary nurses, who in spite of carrying good-size silver crosses on their swarthy bosoms, were to be tried in Rabaul as Japanese spies. These nurses had with them two little girls, about three years old. They were supposed to be members of the white race, yet it was evident upon closer examination that they had traces of Oriental blood.

On one trip, where we carried 1,900 women and children, we had a birth on board. It was the first birth certificate I have ever issued at sea to a half caste. The mother had had five children before. The child and mother survived well the rigors of a birth in No. 3 hold and me acting as assistant midwife. I insisted on carrying out the principles of Pasteur.

While awaiting Australian forces from Fauro Island, not far from Guadalcanal, I had to make a rather lengthy trip into the interior of the

island with a small tank. There are no roads here.

We passed through a native village. Several of the braves with high fuzzy hair, growing straight up on their heads, surrounded me. I handed out some cigarettes. They seemed lovable and meek enough, until a sturdy brave, with scarred body and bleached fuzzy head, approached. I handed him also a cigarette. He refused. Then he proceeded to walk around me, pointing his finger at my cranium. To my horror I noticed that among other trophies on his belt, consisting of a tin can and a couple of piston rings, there was also hanging an old battered and burnt human skull. The Australian major and another Junior officer who had accompanied me suggested that we had better get along. . . .

That same evening my Australian major decided that we could return to our ship better by using one of the landing barges. One such barge had just landed on the opposite side of the island where "Winchester Victory" lay at anchor, some 15-20 miles away.

Unfortunately we ran out of gasoline after the tropical night had set in. Nothing can be blacker than a night in the tropics, when the sky



\*Member, Artists and Writers Club



is obscured. We soon drifted on one of the coral reefs. There was no help possible. In a few hours the barge would be just so many splinters and mangled steel angles. The only thing to do was to abandon it, and try to swim, wade and walk to the nearest shore line, looming up in the distance like a black mountain. It must be remembered that these island shores here seldom have any beaches, as we know them. The jungle meets the sea in rakish angle. The water is deep right to the very shore . . . sometimes as much as 240 feet. The coral reefs form sort of semicircular barriers along the shore line. You never know just when the foaming, rumbling surf will suddenly throw you on one of those sharp protruding reefs, as you puff away with boots on trying to keep afloat.

The major, who claimed to know the coast line, having been around these islands for the last three years, walked ahead of us, balancing himself, evidently on one of the submerged coral ridges. Just a black dot moving to the left of us, he yelled: "Follow me." As the sound of his voice died in the rumble of water around us, he simply disappeared. Nothing was heard of him again for about ten minutes. Then we heard some splashing on the right of us and there was the major. He had fallen off the coral ridge. With great difficulty we all finally made the jungle where the pounding of waves joined it. During the whole night we managed to hold on to rotten logs of palm trees and other jungle growth.

When daylight came, we decided to walk up an incline of some 60°. I am sure we could have made it easily, if it had not been for the thickest tropical virgin growth of climbing and clinging plant life imaginable.



*Drawing by Hendrik Willem Van Loon*

For about three miles we struggled with nature at its worst. We had no tools to cut our way through. We literally had to crawl through this mass of thorny growth. Being the oldest in the party, I seemed to get myself so entangled that it took others to help me out. My trouble mainly was that I could not manage to push the whole of myself through any hole or opening in the vines. I would get my head through one hole, but my arms and legs would be hopelessly jammed between other branches, and by the time I would clear myself, my companions would be way ahead of me.

After 37 hours, without food and water, the raggy, lacerated sorry party of four men found their way to one of the Australian outposts and finally back to the ship and civilization.

From here we are leaving for Tarakino, with its fuming live volcano of Bouganville and thence to Rabaul, New Britain and to Lae, New Guinea, and then back to Brisbane, Australia.

We are now carrying some 600 native Papuan troops, trained by the Australian army to hunt out Japs in the jungles and keep the wild natives from crawling to army camps in the dark of the night.

After that, where we go is in the lap of the South Sea Island gods.



# A Visit To the *Stavelot*

by Inger M. Acheson, Librarian, Conrad Library

THE *Stavelot*, the first Belgian ship to be built since the war, arrived in New York harbor recently. Launched by the Germans, but built at Antwerp by Belgian labor, the ship was named after the small Belgian town where the 30th U. S. Division, 8th U. S. Airborne Regiment checked Von Runstedt's offensive in December '44.

The officers of the *Stavelot* had invited Madame Defoy, who is in charge of the Belgian Club in the Seamen's Church Institute, Madame De Reyte, and the writer to visit the ship. The *Stavelot*, gleaming with newness, was gay with flowers in preparation for a formal visit from Baron Silvercruys, the Belgian Ambassador.

The Captain, Chief Officer, and Chief Engineer, who received our small delegation, were frank in their pride in their ship. They told with delight how the Belgians foiled the Germans by dallying over the building, and had constantly "lost" necessary tools. If a foreman attempted to speed the work, he found in his mail box a note telling him he would be dealt with after the liberation. This succeeded in delaying the construction so the Germans never had the use of the ship.

The *Stavelot*, a motor ship with three engines, is over 500 feet long and narrow in proportion. She is equipped with many modern maritime devices. A large panel with electric indicators shows the depth of the water; in case there should be a fire in the holds, there is an-

other panel of many sections devised to give its exact location. There is also a mechanism to supply the ship with fresh water made from salt water. The officers admitted a grudging admiration of German efficiency.

The *Stavelot* has a large crew and has six cadets in addition to a full complement of officers. She has accommodations for twelve passengers but on this return trip will also have several company officials who will occupy the comfortable couches in the officers' sitting rooms.

The officers' suites and the passengers' staterooms are large, light, and attractively furnished for comfort. There is even a pleasant lounge for the small passenger list. The Conrad Library sent French and English books and magazines for the ship's library.

After the officers served us refreshments and we had been taken over the ship, we watched the crew stowing boxes of rendered lard and some general cargo, all of which is so badly needed now in Belgium. On being asked if any cargo was brought here from Antwerp, we were rather sadly told there was nothing to bring so she came in water ballast, but the resourceful and busy Belgians would soon be sending us products of their country.

As we said farewell, the officers spoke of their pleasure in having this fine new ship named as a tribute to the Americans who liberated their war-battered little town.





## Nourishing Bread

I am a ship's carpenter in the American Merchant Marine. Our last trip was to Italy with a load of grain. I expect to make one more trip with the same cargo but what bothered me was the type of bread the Italians baked from it: white, fluffy, without any "body" weight or nourishment such as the Russian or Scandinavian black or pumpernickel bread has. I venture to say that one slice would have more life-giving contents than a whole loaf of windy, refined, bleached white bread. While in Russia during the war, I talked to some of the soldiers and sailors there who told me of living for weeks on this bread alone at the fronts. It also keeps for long periods.

I am willing to put up thirty dollars for a contest (which the Seamen's Church Institute could sponsor) among ships' bakers for a loaf of bread that has all the substance to promote and prolong life. Admiral Byrd in his Polar trips, as well as other explorers, had such bread. It may be possible to bake and ship it from America and thus avoid the black market existing in foreign countries, also the fancy cake shops, or each ship's baker could demonstrate how to bake it to bakers in Italy and other countries wherever their ships went.

A United Nations loaf of bread that would have all the essential food and diet requirements—even as a substitute for meals—is what is needed. I remember being in London where a once wealthy woman who was blitzed out had saved a fruit and nut cake that was about forty years old. It had about everything in it but the kitchen sink. One still could taste carrots, nuts, pears, yams and rum, almost a complete meal, with dessert, years later! Even one slice!

I firmly believe that pastry shops in Italy, and in other starving countries, should not be allowed. Nobody

should get any cake until everybody gets bread. That's brotherhood of the sea and land.

Sincerely,  
Tom Dwyer

## Tomorrow

(Continued from page 10)

sea that he's been fighting against these past two horrible weeks. Those hungry sharks, attracted by the smell of blood, swarm around the settling raft, and with quick splashing turns and sweeps get what they have been waiting for. Another telegram goes back to the little farm in Arkansas that reads familiarly to many of you.

*We regret to inform you that your son Thomas, etc.*

Tomorrow never came for Tom. But tomorrow will come for many like him. Don't let those who are to come after go through what he did. You've all got someone you wouldn't like to see go off somewhere thousands of miles away and never come back. All who have endured suffering, privation, yes, even death on the far flung battlefronts ask is that you who are left make a peace that can never ever be broken by Dictators, Emperors, or Fuehrers' mad dreams of conquest.

## Grand Old Lady of the Sea

(Continued from page 5)

did yeoman service in carrying north thousands of tons of freight. After a brief rest, she has been put to work again.

Greatly changed in appearance above the water line from the crack Atlantic liner of the 1870s, the Victoria still has those same hand-wrought Swedish iron plates that workmen fashioned her with back in Scotland 75 years ago. She has a record that few ships have equaled.

## Ship News

### IRON LUNG GOES TO SEA

Coast Guard Delivers It for  
War Bride Ill on Ship

The Coast Guard cutter Duane delivered an iron lung to the Army transport Thomas H. Barry recently at sea for a British war bride on her way to New York who was reported to be suffering from intermittent respiratory paralysis, the Navy Public Information Office at 90 Church Street announced.

She was identified as Mrs. Marjorie Anderson, wife of Sgt. George Anderson, of New Albany, Ind.

### RADIO OPERATOR WINS MEDAL

Standing by his radio almost continuously for eight days, keeping it in repair and receiving valuable messages which aided in defense of his ship during the initial invasion at Anzio beachhead in Italy, won the Merchant Marine Meritorious Service Medal for Earl Henry Robinson, Radio Operator aboard the S.S. *Hilary A. Herbert*. The medal was presented to Mr. Robinson by Vice Admiral A. P. Fairfield, chairman of the War Shipping Administration's Merchant Marine Medals and Decorations Board, in his office in the Commerce Building, Washington.

Seaman Robinson served about three and a half years at sea and is now employed in WSA's Recruitment and Manning Organization in Washington. The *Hilary A. Herbert* is operated for WSA by Cosmopolitan Shipping Co., Inc., 42 Broadway, New York City.

### 4 SHIPS CRASH IN 2 COLLISIONS IN FOG OFF N. J.

17 Lifeboats Are Found After a 3-Hour  
Search; Two Vessels Abandoned

Four merchant ships, creeping through a dense fog that blanketed the New Jersey coast, were involved in two separate collisions recently.

Although crew members and passengers abandoned two of the vessels, there were no casualties. Seventeen persons in two lifeboats were rescued after a three-hour search by Coast Guard boats and planes.

The first, and more serious, of the two collisions occurred at 12:45 a.m., six miles off the New Jersey coast and six miles north of Barnegat Light, midway between Asbury Park and Atlantic City.

The S.S. *Abraham Baldwin*, a 7,000-ton freighter, owned by the Mississippi Shipping Company, 17 Battery Place, was outbound from New York headed for Philadelphia. The *Baldwin* collided with the S.S. *Santa Olivia*, an 8,000-ton vessel owned and operated by the War Shipping Administration.

### FROM O.S. TO MASTER MARINER IN SEVEN YEARS

LOOKOUT readers may recall a story which appeared in May, 1945 about a youthful ship's officer, Peter Chelemados, who survived the torpedoing of his ship, the *John Johnson*. Recently, one of the Institute's chaplains, David McDonald, received a letter from him telling that he is now a Captain in the American Merchant Marine . . . He writes:

"It's seven years from that May 31, 1939 that memorable day when you took me to the Commissioner's office to get my Ordinary Seaman's Papers . . . I do feel a trifle elated . . . have a Lt. Commander's rating in the Maritime Service and feel proud of that too. But my feet are on the ground. Now to look for a ship to be a 'sailin' in."

At 23, Captain Chelemados is one of the youngest skippers in the American Merchant Marine. He survived eight sinkings during the war—from Nazi and Jap torpedoes, mines and bombs.

### MEDAL FOR HAZARDOUS RESCUE

Seamanship that effected the rescue of 90 survivors of the torpedoed British freighter *Richard James Ricketts* won the Merchant Marine Meritorious Service Medal for Capt. Nelson M. Amy, of Baltimore, Md. The presentation to the former master of the Liberty ship *Carole Lombard* was made by Vice Admiral A. P. Fairfield, chairman of the War Shipping Administration's Merchant Marine Decorations and Medals Board.

Capt. Amy's ship, S.S. *Carole Lombard*, loaded to capacity with a highly explosive cargo, received an SOS from a torpedoed and fast sinking British freighter fourteen hundred miles away. Disregarding reported enemy submarine action in the vicinity, he immediately determined the stricken ship's position, plotted the course, and with "full speed ahead", in a rough sea, located the scattered lifeboats spread over a distance of ten miles containing the entire British crew of ninety. Owing to the rough sea and strong winds it was necessary to skillfully maneuver his ship to each lifeboat. The stricken crew, having been four days in the boats, was completely exhausted. However, every man was taken safely aboard, given first aid, food, available clothing, and eventually landed in physically fit condition. His expert seamanship and indomitable will to go to the aid of distressed seamen under the most difficult circumstances, obviously saved the lives of these ninety men.



## Book Reviews

### "DEEP SIX"

By Robert Carse  
Morrow. \$2.50

While "*Deep Six*" is based on events directly related to the war, it overlooks the larger canvas and is not a novel of war action. It tells of the nine crew members of the *Wolston Hill*, an old Hog Island ship considered by her Captain to be lucky. She sailed from New York in 1941 and at Liverpool had orders to proceed to Capetown for return cargo. Torpedoed by a Vichy French cutter off the West African coast, the survivors were taken to Fort Etienne there to start a long march across the Sahara, presumably to work on the Trans-African railroad. In charge of an arrogant Major Von Boteger of Rommell's African Camel Corps and a decadent Vichy French Captain, the men, ill-treated and exhausted, turned to the boatswain, Ferry Duane, for leadership. Duane had seen hard fighting in the International Brigades in the Spanish war and had also taken part in the union fights in San Francisco.

When the group arrived at the desert post at El Chourine, more drama took place and the hates boiled into serious trouble. Von Boteger secretly wirelessly for a Luftwaffe plane to pick him up and then bomb the fort, but in the fighting that ensued the men of the *Wolston Hill* captured the Nazi's truck and started for North Africa and freedom. How the blinded ship's captain taught Duane celestial navigation for their trip north and found comfort in saying "the stars never lie", indicates the courage of these men. They had lived through their deep six of despair and ended it with deep inner strength.

—I. M. Acheson

### AN EXCERPT FROM

#### "TWO YEARS BEFORE THE MAST"

The Captain walked the quarter-deck with a cigar in his mouth, and dropping the words out between the puffs:

"Now, my men, we have begun a long voyage. If we get along together, we shall have a comfortable time—if we don't, we shall have all hell afloat. All you have got to do is to obey your orders, and do your duty like men—then you will fare well enough; if you don't, you will fare hard enough—I can tell you. If we pull together, you will find me a clever fellow; if we don't, you will find me a bloody rascal. That's all I've got to say. Go below, the larboard watch!"

### EMPIRE AND THE SEA

By Fletcher Pratt  
Illustrated by Inga Stephens  
429p. Henry Holt. \$3.50

This is an original picture of the great naval war between England and France from 1793 to 1805. The story is told from the English point of view, and Mr. Pratt gathers his material from contemporary sources, including newspapers and letters. Although the actual naval battles are described brilliantly with words, charts, and illustrations, and the scope and purpose of the strategy of Lord Nelson and other naval leaders is revealed in its entirety, there are many pages of extraneous trivia.

England was not only saved from invasion by this sea warfare, but its outcome contributed materially to Napoleon's downfall and the liberation of the continent. The book ends with the victory of the English at Trafalgar, which cost Nelson his life, and marked the end of the English nation and the beginning of the British Empire. Always England owed her victories to the intrinsic superiority of her fighting services. Her naval officers redeemed by their extraordinary devotion and professional skill the mistakes made by their government in diplomacy in the years before and during the war.

—F. L. Noling



### SOUL OF THE SEA

By Leonid Sobolev  
Lippincott \$3.00

This collection of short stories could more aptly be called *The Soul of the Russian Navy*. The tales run the gamut of tragedy, drama, humor. There is plenty of action and often a very moving poetry. And yet what stands out most vividly in one's memory is a series of portraits: the young officer from the Imperial Naval College, pitifully insecure in the new Red Navy; the commissar and his clever handling of the men under his charge; the four sailors fighting on land in 1941 and winning through against immense odds because, as one of them gayly sums it up: "One sailor is a sailor, two sailors are a platoon, three sailors are a company . . . How many are we? Four? All right, then: Battalion, fall in!"

The book deserves to be widely read, because of its own merits and because of its contribution to a better understanding of the Russian mind.

—Dorothy Page



# Marine Poetry

## CALL OF THE SEA\*

\*Inspired by Esther Clark Hill's  
"The Call of Kansas" (1933)

Satiated here with sunshine and the dry  
aromatic fumes  
Upon a million acres of sage-brush and  
desert cactus plumes;  
Made small by the towering mountains,  
made deaf by the lonely sigh  
Of winds that blow uncertainly from out  
a pale blue sky—  
I walk in the still of evening and hear  
again the drone of the sea:  
The heart of the ocean calling, calling me.  
Dearer to me than these sage-brush hills  
or burning desert sands,  
Greater by far than these mountain  
heights, are the low-lying distant  
lands;  
Sweeter the sight of a sea-mist blowing  
in from the ocean flow,  
Than grass wind-blown on a mesa, wide,  
or desert sunset glow.  
Glorious as the sunset is, more glorious  
by far  
Is a good ship sailing leisurely and guided  
by a star;  
For clearer and louder and stronger still,  
comes the distant roar of the sea:  
The heart of the ocean, calling, calling me.

by Baily Samuel Haynie  
from "Convoy and Other Poems"  
The Fine Editions Press

## PICTURE SHIP

There's a picture on my mantel,  
Of a lone ship sailing, free;  
With the moon above her skysails,  
And a lighthouse hard alee.  
The moon has silvered a highroad  
On a sea of cobalt blue;  
But the ship forsakes the moon-way  
And follows its own course true.  
Oh, that the ship were a real one  
Sailing so true and right,  
And I were snug aboard it,  
Following her course this night.  
by Baily Samuel Haynie

## "MOON WAVES"

I long to hear the sigh of the sea  
In the surging rush of the surf  
Where ribbons of kelp and rolling shells  
Are washing with bits of turf.  
I like to see the foaming scud  
From the wind on the ocean brine  
Racing off to a distant shore  
And the far horizon line.  
Then over all the lunar queen  
Bestows a pearly light  
On dappled waves reflected  
On the heaving sea, in the night.  
By George E. Reid

## BLACK SUNSET

Loud wails the wind, the rainbow died  
aborning,  
Upon the zenith curl gray points of  
foam,  
But I am thinking of a summer morning,  
The little smokes around the eaves of  
home.  
Still louder spoke a voice in vivid gun-  
light  
Whose angry notes still throb upon  
the air,  
While I am hearing through the cloud-  
laden sunlight  
The little feet so quick upon the stair.  
Hushed now the thought that whispers  
of returning  
From waters where the battle-smokes  
abide,  
But true I'll find the kiss that heals my  
yearning,  
The sea-gray eyes that look up from  
my side!  
Off Greenland by John Ackerson

## SOUTH STREET

The street of ships is a lonely street  
Though peopled night and day,  
For over it hangs the next farewell  
Of men who are on their way  
To foreign ports, to far-off ports,  
To Zanzibar, Cathay . . .  
For they have forsaken the neat, sure life  
And taken to wife the sea,  
And she is a mistress cruel and sweet  
More fickle than woman can be,  
But her men are her own, her very own,  
And that is the life for me!

PW

## ALL FAST FORE AND AFT

By Thomas Hill

Farewell to ships and shipmates true  
Farewell to Ocean rolling wide  
Farewell to Ports, I've seen a few  
From Brisbane to the Banks of Clyde.  
No more I'll tread the heaving decks  
Nor gaze as far as eye can scan  
To where the distant skyline beckons  
And calls to us to follow on.  
Those days are past, to come no more.  
My anchor's bedded in the sand.  
My duffel bag has gone ashore,  
Now, I'm captive of the land.  
Yet no regrets my thoughts employ,  
For distant lands across the foam.  
In Whitemire lies my dearest joy  
And her who makes a heaven of home.



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

"I give and bequeath to **"Seamen's Church Institute of New York,"** a corporation of the State of New York, located at 25 South Street, New York City, the sum of.....Dollars."

Note that the words **"of New York"** are a part of our title. If land or any specific property such as bonds, stocks, etc., is given, a brief description of the property should be inserted instead of the words, "the sum of.....Dollars."