

## S I M P L E S E A M A N

This is an account of life at sea in the twenties and thirties of an officer in the Merchant Service and Naval Reserve. And finally, after an interesting variety of jobs ashore in advertising, printing and managing a commercial art studio while still doing the necessary Naval training, ready for World War II

It begins in the early part of the century and covers several recessions with all the ups and downs of fortune the good and bad times have produced for most of us. It may be held severely critical of the way these ups and downs have been received today. However it is the tale of an astonishingly varied and intensely interesting life. I hope the MS will be read with ease, some amusement and perhaps a little astonishment.

Here are the briefest details of the life ashore and afloat of the writer.

- 1913 Chorister at the Chapel Royal Savoy (Now the Queen's Chapel of the Savoy). *which led to my becoming a -*
- 1918 Cadet at the (then) Nautical College Pangbourne.
- 1920 Cadet in Union Castle Line (which paid half my fees at Pangbourne).
- 1923 Obtained BOT 2nd. Mate's Certificate but Union Castle ships laid up in slump so no vacancies. Chaplain of the Savoy Chapel obtained a job for me in the P. & O. Co. (He knew the Chairman !)
- 1924 4th. then 3rd. Officer in P. & O. in the Australia via the Cape line at first. Then in 'Ranchi' a new ship on a trip to Cowes Week with 300 guests of the Chairman, Lord Inchcape. Guests of Honour being Prince & Princess Arthur of Connaught. Others included half the Peerage, Government and Opposition.
- 1930 Slump again. After the ship I was in, 'Rawalpindi', was laid up in Bombay, I went on indefinite leave, without pay. P. & O. recommended me for an Inspector's job with the RNLI but I was beaten to it by a nominee of the Prince of Wales who was President.

Through a friend I obtained a job as a copywriter in Harrods advertising dept. For some time I worked on Harrods News, a weekly magazine catalogue. I spent a lot of time seeing matter through the press and became very interested in printing.

- 1932 As a result I started a part-time printing business (still in a slump) with one small platen press. This was the height of self-confidence as I had never handled one.
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1934 Business increased rapidly as I seemed to be a good salesman, so I decided to make Lynton Press a full time business. I had one platen hand and did the composing myself. I rented a basement under a shop and was joined in the venture by a seafaring friend, Ben, who was also on the beach. Business continued to increase, we took the whole premises and had a staff of 14 and a lot of expensive machinery on hire purchase.

1936 Offered the job of General Manager of Hutchings and Crowsley, the printers I dealt with when at Harrods. Ben took over Lynton Press and I went to Hutchings and Crowsley.

1937 I got on well with Leonard Hutchings, the owner, and became joint Managing Director. I had fallen on my feet - I thought.

1938 Munich crisis. Called up and sailed for Singapore at 24 hours notice, to commission minesweepers. Got as far as Port Said and came home again. 'Peace in our time.'

1939 Called up again in August. Temporary appointment to Examination Service Bristol Channel as my mother was dying. Involved in salvaging two ships, victims of first magnetic mines. Appointed Naval Salvage Officer for Bristol Channel by Flag Officer in Charge, Cardiff. On leave in December got a new appointment as Signals Officer and Flag Lieutenant to Senior British Naval Officer Suez Canal Area, Admiral Sir James Phipps. Promoted Lieutenant-Commander. An unusual job for a reserve officer and needs a book on its own.

1941 August. Returned to England as wife seriously ill and on danger list. Happily she recovered. Appointed Captain of 'Sluna' and senior officer of Minesweeping Group.

1942 Appointed Naval Experiments Officer on the staff of the Chief Of Combined Operations, Rear-Admiral Lord Mountbatten.

1944 Seconded to staff of Admiral Commanding Expeditionary Force as liaison officer with Royal Engineers for Normandy landings. November. Appointed Naval Staff Officer to Rear-Admiral Archer, Head of British Military Mission in Moscow.

1945 Returned from Moscow in the Prime Minister's aircraft with Mrs. Churchill. Met at Northolt Airport by the PM. Final appointment, Commanding Officer, HMS 'Northney III'. On release from Service joined RNLI as an Inspector of Lifeboats. Both H & C and Lynton Press war casualties. Back, almost, to where I started.

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