

# The Dare Devils of Coast and Port

They tugboat was threading her way through the narrow channel, full steam ahead, puffing and blowing into the Brooklyn Navy yard, and out among a host of steam launches, rowboats and canoes as cleverly as a lady in a crowded ballroom.

"Captain," said an officer leaning over the rail of the tugboat, "aren't you sure you can't come into the navy yard?"

"I retorted the tugboat captain in scornful tones. 'We aren't afraid of anything in this business, and we've got a dozen old tugboatmen on board, and take your blessing, my boy, they'll be able to get you into the navy yard, and all.'"

"The anecdote is illustrative of the kind of mind of the typical tugboatman. There is no peril too great, no task too risky for these dare-devils of the coast and port — of New York, Boston, Baltimore, Philadelphia, San Francisco, New Orleans and a score of other American harbors.

And novelist never tire of repeating the dangers to which the water sailor is exposed. But he is a safe and placid life compared with that of the tugboatman who picks up living by plying to and fro among the crowded shipping of a busy harbor. Daily, almost hourly, the tugboat faces such perils as come to a ship only once in a year. He knows his well, and has a lofty contempt for them that go down to sea in ships and do their business in great waters."

"We don't usually look on collisions as lucky things," said a third tugboatman, "but I know of a young fellow down Boston-way who got a wife and a fortune through one."

"He was deck hand on a Boston tug, and she was run down one night by a tramp steamer outward bound for San Fernando, Trinidad. The captain was drowned but the rest of them were picked up and carried to Trinidad. When they got there the others were sent back to America by the American consul; but the deck hand liked the place and stayed, getting a job to boss a gang of coolies on a cocoa plantation."

"He was a smart young fellow and he made good. In a couple of years he was the planter's chief overseer and had a small plantation of his own, besides. Then the planter's daughter came out from England, where she had been finishing her education. They fell in love with each other and got married. The planter gave 'em a pretty good start, and now that deck hand is one of the wealthiest cocoa growers in Trinidad and has a treasure of a wife. It was a lucky collision for him."

This story recalled a sadder tale which is related of an English tugboat skipper. It was told to Tennyson by the late Lord Acton, and is supposed to have suggested "Enoch Arden."

The skipper's tug was cut down in Southampton Water by a royal mail steamer bound to the River Platte. He was saved and carried thither. In Argentina he got mixed up in a revolution and was thrown into jail. After his release a series of misfortunes prevented him from returning home, and over two years had passed before he saw Southampton again. His home-coming was like that of Enoch Arden. He found that his wife, believing him to be dead, had married another man. His house and his possessions were in the hands of a stranger. He did not languish and die, like the hero of the poem; he simply went back to South Africa after a painful interview with his wife, who vainly implored him to stay, and he was never heard of again.

As a rule tugboatmen are happy, jovial fellows, full of fun and high spirits; but tragedy is never far removed from their daily experiences. Any day they may pick up a dead body floating in the harbor—some unhappy girl who has flung herself off the bridge, or some drunken deck hand who has fallen off the wharf while trying to stagger to his ship.

"I ought to be hardened to it by this time," said the mate of a tugboat, referring to this unpleasant part of his work, "and I don't mind pulling up a man's body so much as I used to when I was a green hand. But every time we come across a woman floating in the water I turn sick and think of my little wife at home. My old captain, who'd been at the game for forty years, used to get hysterical sometimes when this happened. I've seen him cry like a child."

"A man needs to be pretty tough at this business," the mate continued. "I've seen some nasty sights. A few years ago I was in a tugboat about thirty miles off shore and we had picked up a leaky, rotten old tub of a schooner which had come through some heavy weather in the West Indies. A tearing gale caught us and the towline parted. We tried to beat up to her but a terrible sea caught her on the beam and down she went before our very eyes with all her hands aboard. We saw them struggling in the water but we could do nothing. By the time we reached the

place there was nothing left but a few pieces of wreckage.

"There's another bad day I well remember. We had a cook aboard who was too fond of whisky. He went crazy with it one day and tried to throw himself overboard. I just managed to lay hold of him as he was half over the side, and we locked him up in a bunk, taking away his jackknife and razor.

"Presently, passing by the door, I heard a low groan and went in. There he was, lying on the floor in a pool of blood, with a horrible gash in his throat. He had broken the looking-glass and cut his throat with a piece of it. They tried to tinker him up at the hospital, but he died sure enough the next day."

The yarns which the tugboatmen tell are not all tragedies. One of the queerest is the story of a runaway tugboat. It is absolutely true, and happened in New York harbor a few years ago.

The tugboat, one of the tiniest craft of its kind in the harbor, had steam up alongside a wharf. The engineer stepped ashore for a moment and when he turned to look at the boat he saw that the mooring line had slipped and she was steaming merrily away into the middle of the river, with nobody aboard. She had run away just as if she were a horse and the engineer had not even the satisfaction of yelling "Whoa!"

Half a dozen other tugboats chased her, but she had full steam up and went along as if there were a crew of demons aboard, zigzagging from one side of the river to the other, as her rudder veered with the current. Whenever her pursuers drew alongside she would suddenly whizz off at right angles and make a bee-line for the other side of the river, and the chase would have to begin anew.

The whole river was in commotion. In the course of her mad career the tugboat collided with a half dozen small craft and endangered several lives. At last, when the patience of the pursuers was exhausted, and her own steam had nearly given out, she finished up by crashing into a canal boat and sticking hard and fast. She was repaired and is plying New York harbor to-day. Her engineer takes good care not to let her run away.

These are only a few of the strange and thrilling experiences which fall to the lot of the tugboatmen of the big harbors. Hard as nails, inured to a thousand perils, equally used to buffeting gales far out at sea in their tiny craft and to sliding under the bow of an ocean liner with only a few feet between them and instant death, these dare-devils of coast and port are the sturdiest of the heroes who "follow the sea." They love their adventurous life and would not change it for the best billet on an ocean-going vessel.

"Once a tugboatman, always a tugboatman," said one of them. "It's a hard life and a dangerous life, but there's no other life on earth that I know of equal to it. Sometimes one

of us goes for a voyage or two on a steamer, but he is always glad to come back to the tugboat business again."

**Hotel Arrivals.**

**KLONDIKE HOTEL.**—Mrs. Mentzer, J. L. O'Donnell, Wm. Key, T. Best, Fred Milton and wife, Frank Swanson, Erick Nelson, Frank Lawson, Philip Canney, P. Barron, Ben William, E. W. Spencer, N. Morgensen, A. J. Huntington, Robt. Evans, Robt. Burns, J. Bjorn, John Bittle.

**EMPIRE HOTEL.**—Jack McDougall, Valdes, Mrs. Eckert, Duncan, N. Ames, Bonanza, P. D. Charles, Mrs. L. E. Thompson, Seattle; Lafrance, city; Mrs. Deary, Skagway; W. F. Dunkley, Seattle; W. Saunders and wife, city; H. E. Gordon, Dominion; Jas. Johnston and wife, city; M. Porter, Dominion; Mrs. B. T. Bailey, Dominion.

**Harmony.**

Richard M. Hunt, the artist, honest in his opinion and blunt in its expression, was appreciated by budding students. What he said in criticism sometimes necessitated the destruction of a picture, but the advice eventually was profitable.

A lady called on Mr. Hunt one day, requesting him to select a frame suitable for a sketch which a dear nephew had painted. "A frame in harmony with the thought suggested by the picture" was desired.

Artist Hunt betook himself to the woods. A few days after he called on a picture dealer, saying that he wished the sketch framed in the material he had collected.

"Impossible!" exclaimed the dealer. "Can't frame the picture with this stuff, it's rotten wood."

"You must," said Mr. Hunt, gruffly. "This frame is to be in harmony with the picture."—Boston Post.

No doubt many others besides the writer may have wondered how Johnnycake came to be thus named. When a child, I settled it for myself by imagining John Smith, whom Pocahontas saved, had something to do with it. The cake, being made of Indian meal, became thus associated in my mind with the historical name. A writer in the Housekeeper says:

In tracing the term we find ourselves at a time antedating by many years steam cars and hotels on wheels, in an age when mankind depended entirely upon his four footed companions for transportation and had only saddlebags in which to carry his luggage. Taverns were few and far apart, and a lunch was always acceptable. Cornmeal, forming sergarge a part of the dietary in those days, held a chief place in making up the lunch. Wet with water and a little salt added, it was baked in a shape that stored away in the saddlebags nicely and was called Johnnycake. This is the origin of our modern, unconventional Johnnycake.

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**EVERYTHING BOOMING**

**On Paradise Hill, on Hunker Creek**

**Claim Owners Are Busily Engaged Working Their Ground.**

**Personal Notes.**

**PARADISE HILL.**

Lynde and Sanson on the south side of the hill are now hydraulic mining very successfully. They have a sixty foot pressure that cuts the heavy bedrock at a rapid rate.

Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Marsh are putting up a fine house on their property and will also hydraulic the shallow ground on their properties.

B. R. Elliott has men employed stripping off shallow ground and will ground sluice on his group.

Redmond Bros. will ground sluice their shallow ground also, and will tunnel into their famous group a distance of six hundred feet from the rim.

M. R. Boyd & Co. on the Mrs. East claim have commenced summer work, and will work six men. Mr. Thompson is building a new cabin and will bring his family to the hill.

Mrs. East returned after spending a week in Dawson visiting friends and is now busily engaged in her garden, one of the first on the hill.

Munger and Peterson are sinking a new shaft on the back end of their claim, said to be in the centre of the white channel.

Bischock and Germain have rented a boiler and will commence summer operations at once on their claim in the second tier.

McDonald and McLeod are taking out pay every day and will operate all summer.

J. Madden and Chas. Redmond have a shaft down forty-five feet and a tunnel 80 feet long in their group of ten claims.

Bob Hyatt, successful operator and speculator, and Klondike pioneer, in company with Messrs. Jackson and Nece of Last Chance, visited Madden and Redmond this week. It is said by old-timers that everything Bob touches turns to gold.

John Redmond visited Bonanza, Eldorado and Dawson this week.

A. Hansen of 3 Eldorado visited Madden and Redmond on Wednesday.

One of the fairest (belles) of Last Chance and her mother were escorted around the mines on the hill by Mr. J. McDonald on Thursday, who was envied by many of the younger beaux of the hill.

T. D. Green, D. L. S., held undisputed possession of the hill until Thursday, and by the aid of his scientific and mysterious civil engineering appliances has located the famous White channel from the first to the tenth tier. He says it may be a paradise for the miser but not an abode for angels at present on account of mosquitoes.

The gilt edged fraction, with the golden centre piece in the phenomenal paystreak, it is hoped, will be developed by its fair owner in the near future.

Mr. Hanson, of Hanson & Nelson, in 70 draw, will sell his interest in his claim and go outside on account of illness.

JAS. MADDEN.

Power of Attorney Blank for the Tanana-Nugget Office.

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