

TRUE STORIES Adventure

The Ship of Mystery

BY CAPT. ARNOLD WHITCOMB.

Capt. Arnold Whitcomb, of Hyannis, Mass., tells this story of his adventurous youth. He has faced death often, but the wreck of the Susan Worth was his first tragic experience and made the deepest impression on his mind.

As far back as I know, my forebears were sailors, and from babyhood it was understood that one day I should go to sea. My mother, patient soul, dreaded the hour when I should be old enough to ship as able seaman, and I believe that throughout my childhood her fearsome thoughts cast a gloom over her naturally happy disposition. My father looked with pride upon my growing knowledge of things nautical and used proudly to boast that before I was out of my knickerbockers I had a swaggar that would grace any quarter deck, yet he, too, sometimes became grave when I talked of my first voyage, for his father, his grandfather, and two of his brothers had gone to sea, never to return.

For me there was nothing but glorious anticipation. The water held no terrors for my boyish heart and I had faith that my parents' forebodings were groundless and that I should live to carve out a fortune for us all. It was in my 19th year that it was finally decided I should make a deep sea voyage, as able seaman, after having shipped several times as cabin boy with my father on coastwise cruises. At the last moment, much against the will of my parents, I was booked in the crew of the Susan Worth, instead of sailing under my father. Capt. Ezra Endicott, master of the Susan Worth, was a great friend of my parents, and it was he who persuaded them that it was to my own best advantage to make my first voyage under the command of some other than my father.

We were bound for Batavia with a cargo of cloth and machinery and were to return with coffee, tea and spices. We touched at Apia on the voyage for water and provisions, and we did a little trading there with natives. Up to that time we had met with no mishaps, but six days out of Apia we ran into a hurricane, which drove us back across the date line and to the southward. After fourteen hours of banging and tossing about in the highest seas I have ever seen, the Susan Worth sprung a leak and a watch was set at the pumps.

LEAKS GAIN DESPITE DESPERATE WORK. We held the water for a time, but shortly after the first leak had been discovered the carpenter reported that the ship was taking water badly in the forward hold. There was a bulkhead between the two holds and we were obliged to keep two sets of pumps going continually and even then the bilge kept gaining on us. We were ankle deep in water when we first manned the pumps, but before a watch had passed we were in to our shins, and some hours later, when the carpenter reported a third leak, some of the men were standing in water to their thighs while they worked at the pumps.

All this time the seas were rising and the ship rolled, a sudden thing at the mercy of the wind and water. I remember once a terrific crash with a walling sound like the shriek of a thousand souls in torment, and they told us the foremast had gone by the boards. When I was spelled at the pumps, I went above and found the tackle and sails in shreds.

Even as I was getting my bearings the mainmast toppled and crashed over the side, causing the ship to lurch and take water badly. We cut away the wreckage with axes and then, having word from below that the water was gaining hopelessly against the pumps, we began to get ready the boats.

Capt. Endicott was a tower of strength and courage. He seemed all over the vessel at once, from stem to stern, from deck to hold, and he was always cheering the men on. Way to the eastward the sky was showing a gray light streak, and it seemed the wind was dying slowly, though the seas showed no abatement. Our one hope was that the storm was spending itself and that we might fight against the encroaching water long enough for the sea to subside sufficiently to launch the lifeboats. To do so with the gale blowing as it was would have been suicide.

Inch by inch the water gained on us and some of the men were hanging limp over the pumps, scarce able to hold their grips, to say nothing of accomplishing any work. The seas washed over the decks and we feared the boats would be carried away. Two had been smashed before we could attempt to launch them. All the while the wind was dying, but it was gradual and it was a race between the elements and the storm and the encroaching water.

for the boats and launched them in a sea, which was all but impossible. We lost four men in getting away, but we had not blown and drifted two cable lengths from the Susan Worth when the ship turned completely over on her side and stopped below the surface.

ONE LIFE BOAT IS LOST. There were two boat loads of us, but we soon became separated. What became of the other boat in which was Capt. Endicott, I never learned. The boat in which I was pulling an oar, a useless occupation while the storm lasted, drifted about for two days before we sighted a four-masted schooner. There was a very light breeze blowing at the time and we signaled the vessel by waving our shirts and handkerchiefs. Much to our astonishment, the schooner took no notice of us and kept bearing away from us. We could not doubt that she had seen us and we were at a loss to account for the outrageous conduct of her master.

With the breeze as it was she would have had no difficulty in distancing us, but it was our fortune that not half an hour after we sighted her the wind dropped and a dead calm lay on the sea. Mystified as to why the schooner should have tried to shake us, we rowed toward her, making the best of the calm. We had no idea what our reception might be, but we had carried arms from the Susan Worth and we were ready to fight for our lives if need be.

When we were within speaking distance we could see one of the blackest looking scoundrels I have ever laid eyes on pacing the quarter deck. At that close range we noticed that decks and rigging were in the utmost confusion and there was an air of unemptiness about the ship which spoke ill for the condition of the crew. Our first thought was that all must be drunk.

The black man on deck called out in language we did not know as we drew closer, and a number of men appeared from hatchways. Most of them were negroes, a very few being Kanakas. "There's something mighty strange about this," said Mr. McMillan, our mate. "Be on your guard, boys."

No word was said to us, but as we drew alongside, a Jacob's ladder was thrown over and we climbed to the deck, our fingers ready to clutch the butts of our revolvers at the first sign of treachery. A big Kanaka stepped forward and asked in bad English who we were and which was our leader.

The mate stepped forward, and expressing no surprise either in his voice or actions, related briefly our experiences, saying that he had been mate of the Susan Worth. By now the decks were swarming with negroes who peered at us curiously. The Kanaka explained that the white captain and mate of the vessel, which appeared to have no name, had died of smallpox and that he was acting as master until they could reach some port. He was not capable of navigating a ship, he said, and as the crew were green they would welcome us if we would take them to a port. We asked first for food and a chance to clean up.

KANAKAS A DANGEROUS CREW. As soon as we were alone the mate said to me: "The Kanaka is lying. The obvious explanation is that this ship is a blackbird. Some of the Kanakas of the crew must have betrayed the whites, who probably abused them, and the negroes were liberated and murdered most of the crew. This must have occurred after the storm, for I do not believe they could have weathered that gale. The Kanakas probably thought they could navigate the ship and intended to become pirates, but now that they find the task more than they can handle, they will not molest us so long as we are of service to them. When we near a port, look out."

This seemed the only plausible explanation and we decided to take for granted whatever our wily-nilly rescuers chose to tell us, and to get the ship near enough a port for us to escape. As for turning the vessel over to the authorities, we thought that not only a little ungrateful, although we were in a way forced on our saviors, but we were all agreed that whatever the fate of the blackbirds, it was no worse than they deserved for practicing their illicit trade.

Our first task was to calculate our position. This we determined to be about 147 degrees west and 22 south. We decided upon Tahiti as the port for which we would steer. The negroes and Kanakas left us pretty much alone and left the running of the vessel almost entirely to us. We soon learned that a life of leisure appealed to the Kanakas and blacks. So long as we tended to the operation of the ship they did not bother with us one way or the other. We early discovered, however, that we need expect no assistance from them. The fact that

we had our weapons always with us and made no attempt whatever to disguise the fact, had a great deal to do with keeping our rescuers from becoming overbearing, but even as it was, they took every possible opportunity to make us feel we were dependent upon them, and their manner was sometimes hard to bear with.

The Kanaka who acted as leader pressed us often to tell how far from port we were, but it was our policy to let him know nothing whatever. We knew very well that the moment the savages thought themselves capable of getting the ship to land they would get rid of us. Even though the authorities of the port knew that white men had been slain, it was doubtful whether they would act in the matter, for it was perfectly obvious that the vessel had been a slaver.

This did not make our position any the easier, for the blacks and Kanakas did not know this, and they feared our turning them over to the law. One evening Mr. McMillan discovered through the glasses a light, low on the horizon. It was only a dim speck, visible for a second, then fading from sight, to return again.

CHANCE TO REACH THE LAND. "Too far for the naked eye," said the mate to me. "Whitcomb, we're in luck. There's mist in the air. If I'm a judge of weather there'll be no seeing that light a biscuit's toss away before the sun's up. We'll lay off and tack around till it settles, if it does, and then run in close under cover of the fog, and desert this black crew."

The mate's prophecy was fulfilled. For three hours we jockeyed about in the sea, from time to time running in close enough to catch a glimpse of the light, but keeping far enough away to run no chance of the light being seen by the naked eye. A Scotch mist was settling over the water. It thickened steadily, so that each time we were able to run in closer to the light.

To favor our plans, it seemed that the devil was in the crew, or at least the Kanakas and blacks, who were supposed to be the crew. Grog was flowing plentifully and the men were singing, each in their own language, and dancing all sorts of weird dances, which were very strange and uncanny to me.

Before morning the fog was thick enough to cut and a man could scarce see the length of the quarterdeck. Luckily the savages were so far gone in liquor that there was little danger of their hearing the low rumble of the surf. We were straining our ears for it, and at last it came.

I went below and sent all of our party, eight in all, on deck. Without loss of time Mr. McMillan explained the situation to them. All were agreed that the best thing to do was to swim for it when the time came. One of the men was sent into the forecabin to throw the lead. The water began to get shallow, but we still had plenty to spare. There was scarcely enough sea to make it dangerous even should we take the ground.

The surf was sounding pretty plainly, but we counted on the blacks being too far gone to take notice of it. Presently the Kanaka leader came aft and spoke to the mate.

"Pretty bad noise little way off," he said. "Guess we run near surf."

"Possibly," said the mate, "but there's no reef charted here."

"Me ears pretty good," said the Kanaka. "Think him near land."

The man in the stays came aft. "You aren't run any closer," he said in a low tone to the mate.

At that very moment there was a slight rasping shock which just staggered the vessel a trifle and she floated clear again. The Kanaka gave a howl of rage. He whistled, and like a tiger sprang at McMillan's throat.

I was standing near him and struck him over the head with the butt of my pistol, but as he fell the whole drunken gang piled aft in answer to his signal.

There were four or five reports. As many revolvers flashed in the hands of our men, and several of the Kanakas and blacks sprawled on the deck. They paused in their onrush for a second, but it was long enough to permit us to leap into the sea.

The howling, bungling mob fired a few shots, but none took effect. Then they tried to lower a boat, but the ropes tangled and some of the men fell in the water. All was confusion on board the vessel, but we swam steadily toward the sound of the breakers, keeping close together in case any should need assistance. Two of the men gave out before we reached shore, but we others helped them. It was a long tramp to the port, and by the time the government officials at Tahiti had sent an expedition to salvage it, the ship was gone. Whatever became of the savage crew I never learned, but we all considered ourselves well rid of them.

S.S. LESSON

April 11. The Story of Creation, Gen. 1:1-2:25. Golden Text—In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.—Gen. 1:1.

ANALYSIS.

I. THE MAKING OF THE WORLD, 1:1-3. II. THE MAKING OF MAN, 1:26-31.

INTRODUCTION.—We begin here a series of studies in the Book of Genesis, which will continue until the end of June. No book of the Old Testament is of greater interest and none more worthy of patient and careful study. Indeed no book of all the world's greatest literature has held for so long a time the earnest and interested attention of men. Genesis is a book of beginnings. That is the meaning of its name, a Greek word meaning "origin" or "beginnings." Its Hebrew title is similar and is the equivalent of the first three words of our English Bible. It tells of the beginning of the world, of men and women, of evil thoughts and deeds, of society and industry, of families and nations, of war and of religion. The first eleven chapters tell us something of the early history of humanity. Chapters 12 to 50 tell the story of the patriarchal ancestors of the people of Israel. So the contents of the book carry us from the earliest times down to the settlement of Jacob and his sons in Egypt, some time between B.C. 1,800 and 1,600.

The contents of Genesis are exceedingly varied and are full of life and color. In rapid succession, not unlike the moving pictures of modern times, we have presented the splendid vision of creation, the paradise garden and its first man and woman, their sin and expulsion, the brothers' quarrel, the sword-song of Lamach, the pious wisdom of Enoch, the saving of Noah and his family from a dreadful flood, the rainbow covenant, Nimrod the mighty hunter and founder of a kingdom, the tower builders of Babylon, the migration of Abraham and Lot and the tribes of which they were the leaders, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, Joseph and his brothers. The story ranges over the vast territories lying in crescent shape between Mesopotamia and Egypt, the valleys and irrigated plains of the Euphrates and the Nile. Sometimes it is the story of individual men and women whose personalities stand out strongly against the background of time and wilderness, shepherds with their flocks, caravans with camels laden with their merchandise, cities and temples, altar and sacrifice. Sometimes it is the story of tribes, incipient nations and of their movements.

Always there is in Genesis the strong, religious interest. For these were stories told by prophets and priests in long subsequent times, in the centuries from Samuel and David to the exile in Babylon; told because of their national interest, but chiefly because they conveyed the religious teaching of the prophets in an unforgettable way to the mind of the people. And then, at length, written down, they have come to us bearing the infinitely precious lessons about God and faith, and covenant promise, and obedience, sin, righteousness, and judgment.

I. THE MAKING OF THE WORLD, 1:1-3. The words "in the beginning" mean absolutely at first, before anything else happened. They assume that God was in the beginning and that His word of power brought the world into being. So it is said by a Hebrew poet:

"Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of thy hands." Ps. 102:25.

The writer assumes that the world, when first made, was a mass of waters, a great abyss, without form and empty of all life. Over it all was darkness; but the creative Spirit of God was there, hovering like a bird with outspread wings over the face of the abyss. Then in obedience to the divine command, the darkness is shot through with rays of light.

The story of God's making the world of light and order, of life and the living soul, is told under the figure of the days of the week. As a man begins and carries on his work day after day until its completion and the God does in his great task, and when the order of the days is a natural order, for the most part, a reasonable, and the first light appears radiating energy and motion throughout the chaos of waters. Then there is the open expanse of the air, the appearance of dry land, the vegetable world; then sun, moon and stars, the life of the waters, land, animals, and man.

It will be observed that there is a second story of God's creative work in the second chapter, beginning at v. 4, differing somewhat in the order of events and in the language used, but in fundamental agreement with chapter one as to the central and important facts. Similar stories, but grossly polytheistic in character, have been found written on clay tablets in the ancient wedge-shaped letters of Assyria and Babylon, dug out of the ruins of Assyrian palaces of Bible times. It seems reasonable to believe that the Hebrew writer, but put upon the same material, had his own faith in the supreme Lord and Creator of the universe.

II. THE MAKING OF MAN, 1:26-31.

The climax of the great vision story comes with the creation of man in the second image and likeness. Since the Hebrew religious teachers refuse to make any material image of God, the thought must be here of likeness to Him in spirit. In mind and heart man is made like God. He is the child of God. "Thou has made him but a little lower than God," writes the psalmist, and crownest him with glory and honor.

It will be interesting to compare the great Creation Psalm (Psalm 104) with this first chapter of Genesis.

A KITCHEN BUILT AROUND THREE CURTAINS

The linen was beautifully fine and soft. Its color was a lovely shade of apricot, the stamped design of a graceful group of Chinese lanterns strung on bamboo branches. The combination proved irresistible. The curtains were bought, embroidered, laundered and put away till the kitchen in the new house should be finished.

Next was chosen, just to promote variety in this kitchen, a pair of rose-and-gray checked dimity curtains stamped for cross-stitch work. Then bleached cotton with an applique pattern to be sewed in place, of bright green leaves and absurdly plump, vivid-hued fruits.

To choose a kitchen color scheme that would harmonize with each of the different sets of curtains which it was the plan to use one after the other as mood dictated, was something of a problem, especially since the apricot-colored linen curtains were embroidered in three shades of violet, two shades of blue, brown, green and a dash of black and orange for good measure.

RUGS TO MATCH. Cream and green were the colors finally chosen—green stain for the floor, cream-colored paint for the walls and woodwork. Over the green stain were applied shellac and wax, making a finish extremely easy to care for, as grease could not penetrate the surface. Various washable rugs were purchased showing a variety of colors. They were to be changed with the curtains that happened to be hung at the windows. One week would find a brown-and-gray-and-white Navajo blanket rug on the floor, the next a braided rag rug, the next a linoleum mat of rose and gray block squares.

The ceiling and upper part of the walls were painted a somewhat lighter shade of cream than the lower side walls and woodwork. The kitchen range was of gray and white enamel, with the minimum of nickel trimming to keep polished and free from rust.

CONVENIENCES GALORE. The refrigerator was white, also the convenient little kitchen table with its roomy pan cupboard, its drawer for cutlery, and its pastry board all stored beneath the snowy porcelain top.

The spacious kitchen dresser built in the wall at right angles to the double drain-board sink—at the left side, of course, so dishes could be set away as fast as they were dried—was painted cream white, like the rest of the woodwork, all save the inside of the glass-doored dish cupboard. Shelves and lining were stained green, the same shade as the floor.

A narrow shelf above the sink held packages of cereal and tins of seasoning, while a small rack just above the right side of the porcelain splash board held soap flakes and scouring powder, silver polish and chamois. From hooks screwed into the bottom of this rack were suspended two dish mops, a copper wire scraper and a pair of kitchen scissors.

EFFICIENT BUT UNKITCHENY.

Back of the door leading into the hall, a door which was almost never closed, holders for broom and dust mop were attached, also hooks on which the long-handled dust pan and the kitchen aprons might be hung.

A tall white-enamelled stool was slipped beneath one of the sink drain boards when not in use, while beneath the other was the tall white-enamelled wire waste basket.

An electric wall outlet at the right of the window provided for grill and iron, while over the sink was a small wall fixture in which was placed an amber-dipped bulb, making it unnecessary to have the kitchen flooded with the brilliant white light of ceiling fixture when a less penetrating light was all that was needed.

Attractive, convenient, but not in the least "kitcheny" is the resulting room, thanks to the cheerful, unconventionally curtained window which serves as a focus point for decorative interest.



THE AQUILEGIA (Columbine)
By Miss Anna Moyle, Member of the Ont. Hort. Ass'n.

My first columbine I dug up in the woods, carried home and carefully planted in a shady spot in the garden. The seeds dropped and in a few years I had a fine group of these lovely plants; then I began to study the seed catalogues. My first purchase was a lavender and a deep purple; I bought seed and grew them by the dozen, as one can hardly have too many.

The flowers with their peculiar formation and striking colors are very attractive in the border, also very useful for cut flowers for the house, the fine delicate foliage showing off the beautiful flowers to advantage.

The flowering season lasts from late spring far into the summer months, so they are really indispensable for a mixed border. Seeds are freely produced, carried by the birds and wind, and one finds plants springing up in all sorts of places.

The border is exposed to the blazing sun all day, yet I find they do as well as in a partially shaded place. The cold clay soil no doubt is the reason. They will not do well if crowded together or with other plants. With plenty of room to spread out all round one plant looks better than three would in the same space. They work in beautifully for charming color combinations. Three of the beautiful whites, one on each side, a third one in front of a blazing Oriental poppy, makes an attractive spot in the border. Deep purple columbine and cream iris, the exquisite pinky mauve with emerald lilies—the variety is almost endless.

The long spurred hybrids are considered the finest, as the beautiful flowers, blue, white, yellow, with dainty shade of pink and rose, have long slender stems two feet high, and are much sought after for decorative purposes. I find in my border where there is a full sweep of the north and west wind that they are easily broken.

The seeds of choice varieties I sow in the peony beds. Sow thinly, cover lightly, firm with the foot. They soon germinate and are protected from the heat of the sun, strong winds and heavy rain by the foliage of the peonies. The second year they are moved to their permanent place in the border. They are very hardy, with the temperature from 20 to 30 degrees, there is no protection from the sun, and I seldom have any of the perennials winter killed. When the snow goes, a light mulch of litter from the poultry yard will be put on to protect from alternate freezing and thawing.

Lice on Baby Chicks. Vaseline with a few drops of kerosene added, applied around the vent and on the heads and wings of baby chicks, is better than lard to rid them of lice.

A better quality of milk is produced where silage is fed to the cows after the milking has been done.

In making the farm "rat proof," cement floors and wall steel cribs, and bins, and the generous use of wire screens over openings will aid in keeping these pests out, once those on the job have been gas-d or dug out.

FABRIC COMBINATIONS ACHIEVE SMARTNESS IN TWO-PIECE FROCKS

Fashion's fancy for combining two materials in one costume is charmingly expressed in this model which has flaring skirt, round collar, and bands on the sleeves of navy-blue taffeta plaided in red, yellow and white, while the overblouse is of navy-blue crepe satin. Raglan sleeves are a feature of the blouse, which slips on over the head, fastening under a flat plait, and is banded at the hips, giving the new blouse effect. The skirt is moderately circular, opening at the side front and joined to a fitted band at the natural waistline. If desired the side front opening may be omitted and the front made in one piece. The Blouse, No. 1062, is in sizes 16, 18 and 20 years (or 34, 36 and 38 inches bust only). Size 18 years (36 bust) requires 2 1/2 yards 36-inch material. The Skirt, No. 1067, is in sizes 26, 28, 30, 32 and 34 inches waist. Size 28 waist requires 2 1/2 yards 42 or 54-inch material. Price 20 cents, each pattern.

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