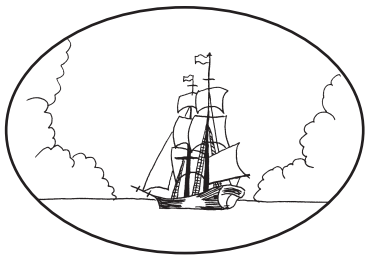


Still popular was I with the lads, but a stern taskmaster as well - I insisted on hard work and cooperation, and if any man objected, I could as well do his work in less time and do a better job as I could lick him. The crew knew this, and I earned my respect from them. Our captain was proud, and the Madeleine had a good reputation and a stunning service record. Though we were yet but a simple vessel the word of our conduct had reached the ears of the Queen herself.

And that, my good friends, is how I came to be Bosun of the "Madeleine."

But the Queen, my good friends, is how I came to be Bosun of the "Madeleine."

This number contains part three of "Captain Dick's Pirate Story," a serial tale of Spirited Adventure on the High Seas for All to Enjoy.

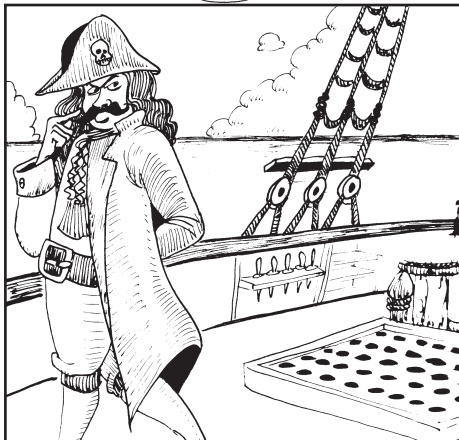


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ship, to be useful and needed.... I could have stayed in the service of the Queen forever.

PIRATE ADVENTURES

THRILLING TALES IN EACH ISSUE NO. 3.



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Chapter Six: We Set Sail for the Americas

But the Queen, she had other ideas, you can believe it. As Royalty does, our fair sovereign had been negotiating with the King of Spain for some time, and there was tension between their land and ours. See, your history's not so lacking; you can recall the time, "Madeleine," the King of Spain was muddying the waters of the Atlantic. There were rumors, tales of Spanish Galleons firing upon Ours, stories of pirates and wars. Stories that, while often dismissed, took on a different character when our Captain received his orders to head directly into the Spanish Main. There were goings-on in the New Territories - what we didn't yet know. But we would soon, my friends. This one order from our Gracious Queen was to change the lives of everyone aboard the "Madeleine" in ways we could not even fathom.

Aye, we were a cheery lot in that day. As we stowed away the provisions for our long voyage across the Atlantic, we whistled at "Whiskey Johnny," and I got to be quite good at the harmonium. Our spirits were high, my friends, and we had no idea what our future held for us.

And Old Dicky, he had grown strong! What a fine young lad I was, and you should have seen me! No taller than I appear before you today, but with strong arms and chest - enough to take on any lad on an occasion a midshipman would flinch the daily ration of grog from a

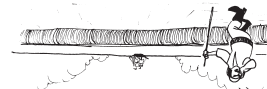
It was good life, friends, and old Dick had never seen anything like it. Such joy as I had never known - how simple! To belong to that the Madeleine, ready for another voyage!

And now your ears prick up again! To port you say? Why then didn't old Cappy Dick make a run for it? Fie! After you spend a few weeks aboard ship it becomes your whole life - your whole family. I couldn't - didn't WANT to leave her like that. Stopping at port meant supplies, new headings, and an evening or two with the most delicate, beautiful flowers that our sailor's pensions could afford. But that was all it meant, and morning would find us all packing away to the Madeleine, ready for another voyage!

How little you know of the ways of the sea! Oh, we all knew about lonely sailors wishing for the painted ladies of the shore, taking each other for wife while away from civilization for so long. But not in the Queen's Navy! Why, there were women aboard our ship! True, they were the wives of the officers, but they were women nonetheless, and a stinging lash awaited the man who did not bow and tip his hat when one went by! Such heavenly creatures kept the men pure and honest, at least until we pulled into port!

Good ship? Even that it was only some of the lads, not all of them? me to say? That fell Rome herself had nothing on the crew of our and breaks him in for a long voyage of abuse. Is that what you want about the day a perverted old salt takes your humble narrator astern savage indiscretions, our dirty little secrets. You're waiting to hear I see the twinkle in your eye. You want to hear tales of buggery, of hammocks, it's a wonder we survived it.

with so many men cooped up like hens, sleeping all stacked in our



"He was no longer The Marquis..."

Chapter Five: Life Aboard Ship

Aye, there were many miles to sail, of course. And young Dicky-boy, he did his best. I put my shoulder to the work and did more than my fair share. Now you might think a boy of my age wasn't going to grow big and strong on hardtack and limes. But our Captain (as I had begun to call him - he was no longer "The Marquis," for this was only a periodic ruse he donned when in need of crew), he knew we needed good hot meals to keep us happy and working. We had salt horse and scouse, always hard fish and even puddings! Of course the Captain kept us in grog, that currency of sea-faring without which no man would sail. With ports close at hand, we never wanted for bread or meat, and even when we were at sea for weeks at a time we had generous stores of dried goods. I had never eaten so well!

Our living was hard at sea. My daily chores did more to tire me out than to build me a strong frame. By the time my shift was over I'd drag my weary carcass to an available hammock on deck and sleep with the rest of the wasters until I went back at it for another round. Up at 5:30, in the middle of Morning Watch, and to the deck, to scrub it raw with blocks of holystone! To the brightwork, where we'd polish it until it shone at the crack of dawn!



In such close quarters, and with so little else to do, and boredom of the sea will get a man quicker than anything. Toprot it was! Yes, the hard work is one thing, but the torpor, and the torpor wasn't the real enemy.

Many a night after the mess we might gather at the mainmast, the Captain would pass a bottle of rum from his hold, and the lads would all sing under the stars. We had corp. Many a night after the mess we might gather at the mainmast, the Captain would pass a bottle of rum from his hold, and the lads would all sing under the stars. We had corp.

cars did burn with envy to see such finery. My goal to be captain was one thing, but this stature was easier to grasp! Be a topman, and join the company of the finest sailors!



All this before breakfast! Now, truth be known, ye lads and ladies, Young Dickie had finer things in mind for himself. Mid-morning, before the Captain would measure the sun and start the sandglass for a new day, we might convene on deck for a good lashing. Some unfortunate Jack-Tar would be feeling the cat-o-nine-tails for his indiscretions against an officer. It won't be great news to you to know that after a few of these events a smart young lad will take to figuring out how he can ascend the ranks and spare himself the risk of the Captain's ire.

Not that Young Dickie himself ever got himself the kiss of the lash! Oh no! I had eyes then, and I played my cards well even as a youngster! But I could see how the ship worked, and I knew I had to rise above the rank of an idler if I were going to get my due in life.

Oh, to be a topman! Those with sailing skills and prestige! Greenhands like myself were brute labor, called by the bosun's pipes to heave ho! Not all on board the "Madeleine" were impressed into service. Some had joined through the worst of circumstance, Purser rigged and Parish damned. But we were all inexperienced, useful only as beasts of burden. The topmen would watch from the crows' nests, laughing amongst themselves.

You could get close to them, aye, when they trundled off to their own private mess they came down from those lofty heights. Each one a mystery: tattooed, dressed in the height of flamboyant fashion, even elegant. My young