

SAILING ORDERS

By Arthur James Hayes

Illustrated by Ben Cohen



HERE is something about a tife hat that shifts a fellow's perspective a few points to leeward. I've seen that same fact illustrated several times in my life.

I remember, for instance, when old Jack Senrick, city editor of the Chronicle, used to enunciate his famous theory that two drinks and an inspiration should keep a reporter in working order eighteen hours a day. Men came and went rapidly on the staff of the old Chronicle under Senrick's regime. And then the Rice News Company elected a board of directors that held different views than the city editor, and Senrick went the way of the obsolete. Once back in the ranks, he rescinded the inspiration—if not the two drinks—phase of his theory.

But Senrick was only an understudy for Stephen K. Corrigan, president, majority owner and impelling genius of the yellow stacked Corrigan Line of lake freighters. Corrigan's folks were whitefish selmers from Thunder Cape, on the north shore of Lake Superior, and Steve had seen the big pond in all its varying phases for twenty-two years before he took up his abode in Cleveland. He was a deckhand on the old Georgian Maid when she accumulated a deckload of 3,000 tons of ice, not specifically mentioned in the clearance papers, and turned turtle off Whitefish Point.

Steve climbed out of a galley window as the old package freighter took her final roll. It was rumored along the docks that the cook had designs on the same exit, which Steve found necessary to discourage with a brace bar before he acquired precedence.

As a matter of fact the cook didn't follow at all, for some reason, but Steve paid dearly enough for his priority. He was frozen to the spar he'd grasped upon going over, and the revenue cutter Caribou, when it picked him up five hours later, found it necessary to leave two or three of his fingers on the flagstaff of the Georgian Maid.

Steve stayed ashore thereafter, and no one could blame him much for renouncing a life afloat. But the young Canadian couldn't quite overcome his passion for navigation, and when his hands healed enough to grasp a pen he accepted a clerical job in the Cleveland offices of the old Tilton Line.

The days before the commerce commission became interested in the degree of consanguinity existing between railroads and steamship lines were the salad era of lake shipping. Steve progressed upward rapidly enough, and when a good many enterprising "rail and wave" alliances were handed their divorce decrees Steve's independent line was jerking about all the iron ore that the steel trust boats couldn't handle.

Steve didn't subscribe to the idea of hiding one's light under a bushel, and all of his huge maroon-colored steel freighters bore the name of some member of the Corrigan family. I covered the launching of the Edith Corrigan for a Cleveland paper, and it was there that I first met the president of the line. He

A WIRE will countermand the sailing order," said Mary Mallory, but the jingle of dollars prevented Corrigan from hearing.



"A wire would countermand the order," he agreed dryly. "But it won't."

had all of your true publicity seeker's awe of the newspaper man, and upon presenting my credentials I was invited into the owner's stand. Edith Corrigan, in whose honor the big 600 footer had been named, was holding the be-ribboned bottle of champagne, and talking vivaciously with a slender young man whose portrait, in connection with some polo exploit, often graced the society section of our local papers.

Corrigan shoved a cigar into my hand, rumbled a lot of imposing statistics about the new boat's tonnage and dimensions, and then turned to repeat the performance for a motion picture weekly representative.

I WAS more interested in the daughter than in the old navigation master. She was a splendidly active, vigorous girl, with the Irish combination of black hair and blue eyes. I marveled that she could be of the same flesh and blood as heavy jowled, harsh voiced Stephen K. Corrigan.

A band was playing popular airs, to drown the harsh creaking of the retaining stays as they were dislodged in pairs. I couldn't hear what father and daughter were discussing, but it was patent that the strongest affection obtained be-

tween them. The girl's slender hand, gloved in pearl gray silk, rested lovingly on his huge arm, and when, in a clear, resonant voice, she cried, "I christen thee Edith Corrigan," and hurled the champagne against the great red steel bows, the light in her father's eyes redeemed the harshness of his forbidding countenance.

The big vessel glided smoothly into the bay, and with one last glance at the ill assorted pair I left the gaudily decked stand.

I saw little of the Corrigans for the next year or two. Sometimes Edith Corrigan's white French roadster would flash past the Chronicle Building, and I would catch a glimpse of the pretty features, sparkling blue eyes and bright red cheeks, framed against a background of blue silk or white fur. Her beauty made her a total favorite, and old Steve Corrigan lavished his wealth upon his only daughter. Steve himself was much in the limelight. He was a leader in the attack against railroad-owned ship lines, and lobbied actively in favor of various dissolution bills.

But his greatest prominence was acquired as an opponent of seamen's unions. He was the type of shipmaster who spends \$25,000 on a mahogany pan-

eled suite of rooms aboard his steamers, to be used sometimes as often as twice a year, while deploring the wholly inexcusable desire of A. B. seamen to have their wages raised from \$18 to \$22 monthly.

I interviewed him on the subject, and found him bitter in his condemnation of walking delegates and union publications. He waved his mutilated hands about as he declaimed against all forms of organization in any wise calculated to boost wages at the expense of dividends. I asked him suddenly what he considered a fair wage for his last trip on the ill fated Georgian Maid. He seemed momentarily nonplused, and then seized the question to turn his own end.

"See that hand?" he bellowed; "more like a sponge than anything else—well, I got that in active service, and when any of these lily fingered union swabs try to tell me anything about higher wages and 'full crews' I'll shake it before their eyes and tell them that I've seen service and know the ropes. Full crews!"—he puffed savagely on his thick black cigar and strode back and forth in his magnificent inner office—"full crews! Hell of a full crew they shipped in the olden days. Why, the old Georgian Maid used to ship short handed with half of those aboard down with the 'D. T.'s. No steam heated quarters forward for us, either, and now—" He stopped with an inarticulate oath of disgust.

I dropped in the Corrigan Line offices frequently during the big anti-union fight that the iron jawed old president was leading. Mapes covered the union camp, and I brought in the rebuttals from the employer's strong-

hold. It took a lot of front page space, and the old man seemed to glory in the prominence the issue gave him. "We've got 'em on the run," he told me exultantly one afternoon late in December. A fire burned cheerfully in the great red brick fireplace of his sumptuous den. "They're springing a lot of sympathy stuff about the man afloat these nights, but it won't get 'em over with anybody but the sol sisters."

HIS tirade was interrupted by the noiseless entry of the butler, who announced that a young lady was very anxious to speak with Mr. Corrigan. Corrigan frowned, consulted his watch, and snapped: "Well, show her in." I rose to leave, but he checked me peremptorily.

"Stick it out, Kessler," he commanded. "It won't take a moment to settle this other matter."

I resumed my chair and waited. A young girl entered the room and glanced nervously from Corrigan to me.

She stood uncertainly in the doorway for almost a minute, and it occurred to me that Corrigan might have offered her a chair. He didn't.

"It's—it's about father," she began nervously, in a rich contralto voice, with just a trace of tremor. "He has wired us that he has been ordered to clear from