

"Father of State Societies" Is World's Champion Brewer of Coffee

On His Second Million Gallons,
Clark H. Parsons Sets Unique
Mark As Prolific Coffee Maker

THEY slapped the hands of little Clark H. Parsons 75 years ago on an Iowa farm because he howled for coffee.

Deep in his young spirit a resentment fizzled and stewed. So, they wouldn't give him coffee! Well, he'd show 'em!

Little Clark obediently plowed and milked until he was old enough to go away to college. He drank five cups of coffee a day at Lennox college, taught school in Iowa, brooded over books and stationery counters in Salt Lake City and then, in 1898, an enthu-



Clark Parsons, 81-year-old "Father of State Picnics," who has made more coffee than any other person the world ever knew. He brews it in 100-gallon tanks and has served it to men and women from every corner of the United States.

siastic coffee brewer with enormous ambition, he came to the Pacific coast.

Settling down to a lumber business near Los Angeles, he began to bump into former Iowans. The whole end of the state was alive with them, all bumping into one another. One day in 1900, Clark Parsons conceived his great idea. With a whoop of joy his cup of steaming coffee dropped unnoticed to the floor.

Not long afterwards, while the Springtime flowers of 1900 still were sweetly abloom, he was

bustling about Los Angeles busier than a hen with 40 chicks. That year there was founded the Iowa State Society of California, and at its first gala picnic none other than gay Clark Parsons was brewing the coffee and pouring it into tin cups.

FROM then on, life took a new glow for the one-time farm lad whose hands had been slapped. He was destined to make coffee in larger quantities than it had ever been made before. While waiting multitudes held out tin cups, he was to brew coffee in 100 gallon tanks and stir it with a five-foot staff. He organized state after state and set Southern California afire with picnic fever.

By April 24, 1909, acknowledged leader of one of the greatest mass organizations of the West, he was ready to federate his many state societies, and he did it in one masterful campaign.

Years whisked by unobserved by the father of state picnics. Kansas, Nebraskans, Missourians, Texans and many others swelled each year's picnic throngs. Always presiding over the coffee, exulting like some strange spirit of picnicdom, eternally busy, the life and soul of the party, was Clark Parsons.

At the hey-day of the picnic business, in 1928 and 1929, he had 38 state societies meeting each month. He attended at least one picnic or indoor meeting every day the year around, and he never tired of making coffee. He loved to make it. At some of the larger picnics he looked up, from his labors by the vats, and gazed out over the tens of thousands of former "out-of-staters."

THEN, of course, the bottom fell out of the picnic business, but times are better now and Clark Parsons, at 81, is busier than ever. He hasn't missed a day's work since he had measles in boyhood.

He avoids photographers as he would avoid hostile machine gunners. He wears a felt hat almost as old as himself, and he has more energy than an airedale pup. He brews coffee in bigger vats than ever and is now on his second million gallons, according to his own estimate. He has made far more coffee than any other person in the world, he believes. In fact, he figures that if all the tin cups he has filled with coffee were stacked one on top another, the shining, steaming stack would be 757 miles high.

Poet Laureate Sees West As Art Center Of Future

John Masefield, Visiting United States, Believes Public Enthusiasm Is Near

POETIC ballads presented in public squares! Schools of poetry in every Pacific Coast city! Thousands of monuments by Western artists! Citizens alive to the talent of their own community!

These are events of the near future, visualized by John Masefield, England's poet laureate, as he chatted about Western art and artists during a recent visit to San Francisco.

He had just visited Coit's Tower on San Francisco's Tele-



John Masefield

graph Hill, studying the work of mural artists done under government supervision. This endeavor is what he had in mind before visiting the Tower—when he composed four lines, so far unpublished in his works. He quoted himself aloud:

"Friends, give the artist folk your pity. They live within the glorious city Which they'd make beautiful with paint, Bronze and marble—but they mayn't."

"This cenotaph," he said, "which

you call Coit's Tower, is a splendid example of the help your artists need. You have changed my 'mayn't' to 'may.' You are recognizing what I felt when I came West.

"I expect to see the day when there will be groups of artists giving dramas and poetic ballads in Union Square and other public parks. I see no reason why every city in the West should not have its outdoor group of poets in outdoor schools, learning to write and recite as well. It is inevitable."

POET MASEFIELD feels that artists cannot help but produce in the climate of the West. "The gray skies of England are very different. You do not, out here, fully realize what a source of energy you have in the sun."

Poetry can be as practical as any other work, he believes. "It is too often divorced from his fitting accompaniment, which are costume, color, and music. It has been severely handicapped by the printing press, for good poetry should be recited or chanted aloud. Not many people like to read to themselves, and a book of poetry may lie idle for a hundred years before it finds its proper reader. Then it comes to life—through a voice."

The old days of poetry, he believes, are returning. "At one time," he said, "a poet would recite verses in the street and stop traffic with the beauty of his words. Then he became a vagabond, patronized, but looked down upon."

JOHN MASEFIELD loves the West, and expects to return again and again. "The variety, beauty, and fertility of your mountains, valleys and deserts, gives a panorama of abundance which the western artist cannot ignore."

Mystery Ships — A New Series of Exciting Sea Stories

This is the first of a series of sea tales that will keep you fascinated—and, perhaps, puzzled as well. Strangely, the sea has taken toll of men and ships without leaving any trace of what caused the tragedies. Watch for further stories of mystery ships—they will appear regularly in this magazine.

—Editor.

The Mary Celeste

THE weather had been calm for weeks . . . a light breeze that sailing men like.

Mary Celeste was painted on her stern—a strange brig, running aimlessly before the wind, her jib and foremast staysail set. She was a ship without a crew.

The master of the *Dei Gratia* overhauled her 300 miles off Gibraltar on a December day in 1872. Silence answered his hail. He lowered a boat and pulled across to the brig.

No one was at the wheel, no

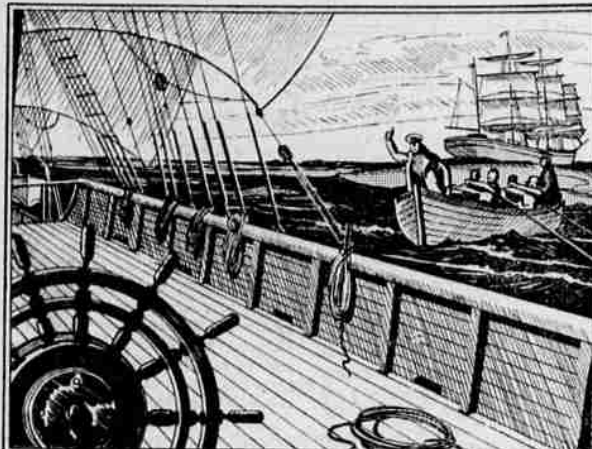
man on deck. A search was made from end to end: the ship was in perfect condition, with plenty of food and water.

Clothes hung on a line to dry, and in the galley were ashes of a fire. The table was laid for breakfast, which was half eaten. A cargo of alcohol remained below. She was deserted, but how? The life-boat still hung on the davits!

THIRTEEN people were aboard, according to Lloyd's Register—Captain Briggs (an intensely pious man), his wife, child and crew of 10.

Not one of them was ever seen again, though inquiries and investigations have been made by half the maritime world, and a dozen theories offered.

Did the crew mutiny? The bows were slightly scratched as if by a sharp instrument; a cutlass was smeared with what may have been blood; one barrel of alcohol was breached, and the chronometer and bills of lading



were missing. No other signs of violence were found.

Did the crew get at the alcohol, murder the Captain, his family,

and escape to another vessel? Where did they escape to—and without the use of a boat?

Was the Captain a religious

maniac? His cabin contained many religious books, and he was unusually devout. Did his reason snap like the spring of a watch, as he decided to put his wife and child and crew out of the misery of a wicked world? Did he attack them one by one and throw them overboard—and in despair follow when his madness passed?

Their fate is one of the famous unsolved mysteries of the sea. Amateur detectives and seamen speculate and argue, but find no satisfactory answer.

One writer, a student of sea mysteries, recalls that at least six "solutions" to the puzzle were published at various times. All purported to be based on evidence of survivors—yet all failed to bear the light of subsequent investigation. The mystery remains unsolved to this day.

The *Mary Celeste* was one of those hoodoo ships "built in the eclipse, and rigged with curses dark."

Look what's happened to WHITE LAYER CAKES!

THIS OLD FAVORITE VARIED IN HALF A DOZEN HAPPY NEW WAYS



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Hear Martha Meade Interview Radio Stars

Famous radio entertainers of the West are revealing their food hobbies and favorite recipes on Martha Meade's morning program. Tune in any NBC station and hear these popular stars talk to you as if they were guests in your home. Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10:00 A. M., P. S. T.

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