



GRAINS FROM AN OLD SALT

A GLUTTON FOR PUNISHMENT

Have been so busy doing nothing in retirement that I let dues time sneak up on me. Hope this beats it in to you before you send out notices of delinquent dues.

I'll bet every old timer enjoys reading SPARKS JOURNAL as much as I do. After being at sea off and on from 1940 to 1979 I sure miss the life at sea - but I don't miss the ships with bad chow, and the typhoons and hurricanes I had to ride out.

I never will forget the storm that got so rough we had to lower the bridge lifeboat to row across to the crow's nest to relieve the man on lookout. Mermaids were flopping all wet and slithery in our bunks when they got pitched through the portholes by the rough seas. The captain figured he was skippering a submarine instead of a ship. The smokestack was dipping so much water that the engineers could hardly keep the engine-room fires lighted. In that storm we rolled 360°, stuff broke loose - and we had to get towed to the shipyard.

Another time when we got submerged 103 feet by rough seas, all the portholes caved in and three men lost their hearing from the sudden pressure of the seas. Even the ship's cat was deaf afterwards - but gorged on all the fish slithering around on the decks. It was hard to keep the antenna up together with the ship's rigging going during such storms, but we made it.

73s to all, and this is 30 on this copy. Cordially.

- R. H. Mattox 905-V N5AD

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