CONWAY POEMS AND VERSE

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**JOHN MASEFIELD, Poet Laureate, O.M., D.Litt., LL.D., Litt.D.**

On the 12th June 1967, John Masefield, the best known and probably the best loved of all Old Conways, slipped his cable just before his eighty ninth birthday, born 1st June 1878 at Ledbury, in Herefordshire, the son of a solicitor, he was left an orphan while still a boy, and with the other Masefield childern he lived with an aunt. John Masefield, like Marryat and Conrad and unnamed thousands of other adventurous souls, went to sea, where a youth rich in vigour and high spirits is no more out of place than an millionaire's son at Eton. He joined the "Conway" in 1891 learning the science of merchant navigation before joining his first ship in 1894. His affection for the 'old ship' and the sea may be seen from both in his life and in his writings.

John Masefield became Poet Laureate in May, 1930, in succession to Dr.Robert Bridges, there was naturally a re-discovery of John Masefield and his work. A generation that had known him mainly by half-a-dozen or so exultant lyrics of nautical life and by less than that number of wonderfully energetic narrative poems, written in a colloquial manner suddenly found out that John Masefield as well as being everybody's poet was a poet's poet, with all the moods and manners of verse up his sleeve. To pick up his "Collected Poems" is to pick up the work of four or more wonderfully diverse writers. There is the Kiplingesque John Masefield who, in "Salt Water Ballads," wrote:

Not the ruler for me, but the ranker, the tramp of the road.

The slave with the sack on his shoulders pricked on with the goad,

The man with too weighty a burden, too weary a load...

Theirs be the music, the colour, the glory, the gold;

Mine be a handful of ashes, a mouthful of mould.

Of the maimed, of the halt and the blind in the rain and the cold--

Of these shall my songs be fashioned, my tales be told.

Then there is the Yeatsian John Masefield who , in "Ballads and Poems," gave us the verse:

I think of the friends who are dead, who were dear long ago in the past,

 Beautiful friends who are dead, though I know that death cannot last;

Friends with the beautiful eyes that the dust has defiled.

Beautiful souls who were gentle when I was a child.

And there is the Elizabethan John Masefield who wrote in "Good Friday":

 The towers bent like moss

 Under the fiery figures from the sky.

 Horses were in the air, there came a cry.

 Jesus was calling God: it struck us dumb.

 One said "He is calling God. Wait. Will God come?

 Wait!" And we listened in the glare. O Sir.

 He was God's Son, that man, that minster.

 For as he called, fire tore the sky in two.

 The sick earth shook and tossed the cross askew.

 The earthquake was like thunder, the earth's bones

 Broke, the graves opened, there were falling stones.

And there is also what might be called the Masefieldian John Masefield who in "The Everlasting Mercy" uttered lines:

 Si's wife come in and sipped and sipped

 (As women will) till she was pipped.

 And Si hit Dicky Twot a clouter

 Because he put his arm about her.

And when we have added up all the forms that go to make this most protean of poets we have still left unnoticed John Masefield, the romantic novelist, critic of literature and historian of the sea. To his grief, however, he had been forced to abandon the sea as a

profession -- like Nelson, he was constantly prostrated by sea-sickness. It was not, however, in his professional capacity as

a poet and author that John Masefield showed his love for his old wooden mother. "Conway" owes more to him than it gave him, for all his life he remembered his years training and his book, New Chum, published just after the Second World War, is an accurate if fictional picture of life onboard as it was in the last century. His two editions of The Conway - first written in 1933 and the

second twenty years later--detailed life onboard as remembered by many a latter day Old Conway. From 1930 to 1934 he was President of the "Conway" Club; he wrote many poems especially for "Conway," perhaps the two best known being the one he wrote in 1938 on the occasion of the Masting of the new Figurehead, and the other written to commemorate the Conway Centenary in 1959 which has been carved on the lintel of the Main Entrance of the new "Conway" shore establishment at Plas Newydd.

## THE NEW FIGUREHEAD

 Ninety nine years ago, the long-dead hands

 Fitted your figurehead to lean and yearn

 Vant-courier to you as you thrust your way,

 Your herald in your going and return,

 Seeming to search the seas for foreign lands

 Seeming to brood above the burst of spray.

 Long perished are those builders, and that form.

 We, who are linked to you by subtle ties,

 To-day re-dower you, again complete

 The Life you had (for us) with head and eyes

 To front the running water and the storm

 And bear alike, unblinking, sun and sleet.

 We give you this as dower, with our thanks,

 Old Ship who cradled us and gave us friends

 And sealed us to the service of the Sea.

 All honour to you till that service ends,

 New fo'c's'lemen to fill the dwindling ranks,

 And CONWAY boys wherever ships may be.

 2nd May 1939

**THE "CONWAY" CENTENARY**

 A Hundred years ago, when ships were wood,

 And rigging, hemp, this ship of ours began

 With Hope, (Man's best begetter of all good).

 For England's props, the Ship and Sailor-man.

 There, in the Sloyne, abreast Rock Ferry Pier,

 This August day began the thing desired,

 The "Conway" (with her future lying near).

 The words of hope were uttered; hearts were fired.

 Relics of those old ships are with us still;

 Some of the Hope has been achieved, but more

 Waits, for the living "Conways" to fulfil

 In all the seas that ring this planet's shore.

 Up with her "Conways" all; abandon fears,

 Let us do better this next hundred years.

More recently, John Masefield's poem The Conway Gulls published in his 1933 edition of The Conway, provided the inspiration for Wirral artist David Hillhouse to design a stained glass window in 1995. The artist has worked around theme of the poem, were John Masefield sees the new cadets as young gulls, leaving the ship for their journeys around the world. They finally return home to "Conway" as mature gulls to settle in the spars of the old ship. There was a tradition on the ship therefore that seagulls on the spars should be left alone, they were departed OCs returned. The following words are shown within panels of the window:

 ***"And being gone, they wander home again***

 ***Here, to the ship, and settle on her spars,***

 ***They are our brothers, so we let them be,***

 ***Old Conways, fellow sharers of the stars."***

In July 1996 the Memorial Window was unveiled and dedicated in the Scriptorium Chapel at Birkenhead Priory, over looking the Sloyne where Conway was moored for over 82 years.

A more fitting tribute could not be given to one of "Conways" most famous son's.

**THE CONWAY GULLS.**

 They died in the gales' roaring, in the smash

 Of some green billow whence they never rose;

 Some diced with Death with many lucky throws

 Till the last throw, that nulled them into ash.

 Some were for all adventure, being rash;

 And others died, in thirst and fever-throes,

 On frontiers at the furthest that man goes,

 Or on the foreman's muzzles, in the flash.

 And being gone, they wander home again

 Here, to the Ship, and settle on her spars,

 Mewing and going gleaning in the sea.

 They are our brothers, so let them be,

 Old Conways, fellow-sharers of the stars,

 Advanced another link upon the chain.

A selection of John Masefield's "Poems of the Sea" previously published in early editions of the "CADET" cover the full spectrum of sea going life, from early days training onboard Conway, recaptured in the poem "Biography" to the more well known haunting lines of "Sea Fever."

 ...the day they led my cutter at the turn

 Yet could not keep the lead and dropped astern

 The moment in the spurt when both boat's oars

 Dipped in each other's wash and throats grew hoarse

 And teeth ground into teeth and both strokes quickened

 Lashing the sea, and gasps came and hearts sickened,

 And coxswains dammed us, dancing, banking stroke,

 To put our weights on, though our hearts were broke,

 And both boats seemed to stick and sea seemed glue,

 The tide a mill race to us struggling through

 And every quick recover gave us squints

 Of them still there and oar tossed water-glints,

 And cheering came, our friends, our foreman cheering

 A long wild rallying murmur on the hearing:

 "Port Fore!" and "Starboard Fore!"

 "Port Fore!" "Port Fore!"

 "Up with her, Starboard," and at that each oar

 Lightened, though arms were bursting and eyes shut

 And the oak stretchers grunted in the strut

 And the curse quickened from the cox., our bows

 Crashed and drove talking water, we made vows,

 Chastity vows and temperance; and in our pains

 We numbered things we'd never eat again

 If we could only win ...

## SEA FEVER

 I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,

 And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by,

 And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white sail's shaking,

 And a grey mist on a sea's face and grey dawn breaking

 I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide

 Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;

 And all I ask is a windy day with white clouds flying,

 And the flung spray and the blown spume and the seagulls crying.

 I must go down to the seas again to the vagrant gypsy life.

 To the gull's way and the whale's way where the wind's like a whetted knife;

 And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow rover,

 And a quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's over.

## THE EMIGRANT

 Going by Daly's shanty I heard the boys within

 Dancing the Spanish hornpipe to Driscoll's violin,

 I heard the sea-boots shaking the rough planks of the floor,

 But I was going westward, I hadn't heart for more.

 All down the windy village the noise rang in my ears,

 Old sea-boots stamping, shuffling, it brought the bitter tears,

The old tune piped and quavered, the lilts came clear and strong,

 But I was going westward, I couldn't join the song.

There were the grey stone houses, the night wind blowing keen,

The hill-sides pale with moonlight, the young corn springing green,

 The hearth nooks lit and kindly, with dear friends good to see.

 But I was going westward, and the ship waited me.

**CARGOES**

 Quinquireme of Nineveh from distant Ophir

 Rowing home to haven in sunny Palestine

 With a cargo of ivory,

 And apes and peacocks,

 Sandalwood, cedarwood and sweet white wine.

 Stately Spanish galleon coming from the Isthmus,

 Dipping through the Tropics by the palm-greenshores.

 With a cargo of diamonds,

 Emeralds, amethysts,

 Topazes, and cinnamon, and gold moidores.

 Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked smoke stack

 Butting through the Channel in the mad March days,

 With a cargo of Tyne coal,

 Road-rail, pig-lead.

 Firewood, iron-ware, and cheap tin trays.

## I SAW HER HERE

 All tranquil is the mirror of the bay,

 Empty the anchorage from shore to shore;

 A seagull rides the water where she lay

 The ships are gone, they come not any more.

 Smoke rises from the town, not any noise

 Save from the gulls that mew about the pier,

 The shadows in the water stand at poise.

 All different from the day when she was here.

 For she was here when the tumultuous west

 Roared on this granite coast for days together,

 And billows rode the Channel under crest

 While all the hurt swans sheltered from the weather,

 And maddened water seethed along her sides

 Here, in this quiet, where the seagull rides.

## PAY

 The world paid but a penny for its toil,

 That which was priceless got the beggars' dole;

 Men who fetcht beauty, iron, corn or oil

 Scarce could keep beggar's bones about the soul.

 I saw those sailing seamen, cotton-clad,

 Housed in wet kennels, worm-fed, cheated, driven,

 Three pounds a month, and small delight they had,

 Save the bright water and the winds of heaven.

 Yet from their sweated strength an order rose,

 The full-rigged ship in her delightful line,

 So beautiful and tranquil in repose

 But in supremest action so divine.

 For in the trampling seas the beauty stood

 Trampling those seas, and made her pathway good.

## POSTED

 Dream after I see the wrecks that lie

 Unknown of man, unmarked upon the charts,

 Known of the flat-fish with the withered eye,

 And seen by women in their aching hearts.

 World-wide the scattering is of those fair ships

 That trod the billow tops till out of sight;

 The cuttle mumbles them with horny lips,

 The shells of the sea-insects crust them white.

 In silence and in dimness and in greenness

 Among the indistinct the leathery leaves

 Of fruitless life they lie among the cleaness,

 Fish glide and flit, slow under-movement heaves;

 But no sound penetrates, not even the lunge

 Of lives ships passing, nor the gannet's plunge.

**THE CONWAY'S WORD TO A NEWCOMER.**

 Here you will put off childhood and be free

 Of England's oldest guild; here your right hand

 Is the ship's right, for service at command;

 Your left may save your carcase from the sea.

 Here you will leap to orders instantly

 And murmur afterwards, when you disband,

 Here you will polish brass and scrub with sand,

 And know as little leisure as the bee.

 Here you are taught Sea Truth, to eat hard bread,

 To suffer with a rigid upper lip,

 And live by Lock-Out, Latitude and Lead.

 Here you are linked with Sailors, who abide

 The tempest and the turning tide,

 Disaster and the sinking of the ship.

Conway mourned the passing of John Masefield and so did the nation and it honoured him by giving him a Memorial Service in Westminster Abbey on 20th June 1967. John Masefield's ashes were interred in Poet's Corner, the first Old Conway to be honoured with a Westminster Abbey burial and it is good to think that if ghosts walk that pile at night, his will not have far to go to meet with those long-gone sailors, for if Conrad was the seaman's prose writer, John Masefield was their poet.

**JOHN MASEFIELD**

**OLD CONWAY 1891 - 1894**

 (Tributes to and Extracts from John Masefield's work have been reproduced from early copies of the "CADET" by kind permission of the authors, at the original time of publication).

**"OLD CONWAYS" OF THE WAR.**

 Ye fought for us have now left

 The frail company of this sphere,

 Grant us a blessing that we ne'er may know

 The fear that ye knew but bravely heeded not.

 That we, like ye, may not be men of sentiment,

 But let us with our actions sing the praise

 Of them whose active lives they gladly gave

 To save us from the foe.

 God give you peace; you gave us life,

 And grant also that we

 May live the life thou gavest us to make this world

 The better place that you would have it be.

 Anon. January 1950 - CADET

**A "CONWAY" LAMENT.**

 CUTTER'S crew again today!

 Those oars!

 Why can't they be made shorter?

 It is said she was new when they bought her;

 Look at her now! Full of water!

 Games compulsory three times a week,

 Rugby and hockey in the winter;

 In summer sailing tennis and cricket

 With the odd day off as a sprinter.

 Isn't it wonderful how we stick it?

 But don't moan about it.

 It won't alter!

 W.J.Metcalfe. January 1963 - CADET

**"CONWAY" through the ALPHABET.**

 **A** is for Ash, and the Library's his job,

 If your book's overdue it cost you a bob.

 **B** is for Brooke-Smith - he knows my Dad;

 We all know he's ancient, but he isn't too bad.

 **C** is for Charlie and his massive slide-rule;

 It's by far the biggest in the school.

 **D** is for Davies with Howard ahead,

 "Learn your articles"... even in bed!

 **E** is for Ernie, a true Foc's'leman

 With his famous piece "Come on my son."

 **F** is for food and here we can moan,

 There's a heck of a difference from the grub at home.

 **G** is for Gunter, the rig of our cutters;

 It's a b--- of a rig, the crew usually mutters.

 **H** is for Hay, he's the Bosun's Yeoman's mate;

 He'll learn to mix paint at some future date!

 **I** is for ink, the juice of your pen,

 And this can be purchased in Dan's little den.

 **J** is for Jack, a sailor of fame;

 Use the expression and you'll take the blame.

 **K** is for Kinetic, a Physics definition,

 Pug makes us learn it with definite precision.

 **L** is for Lawrie, a legend in his time,

 Loyal, little and loved by all.

 **M** is for Murphy, but we all call him "Spud,"

 They call his car "Snowball," but it ain't such a dud.

 **N** is for New Chum, still thinking of home

 With six terms to go he's good cause to groan.

 **O i**s for Oliver, "J O" to all,

 "Oh my Foretopmen" is his favourite call.

 **P** is for Preston, Abdul the Turk;

 He's C.P.O. ashore and makes the chums work.

 **Q** is for Quiz, "ego" the retort;

 This is a way to get something for nought.

 **R** is for Rain, the climate of Wales;

 They ain't heard of raindrops, it comes down in pails!

 **S** is for Censored: you wouldn't agree

 Take it from us it wasn't a plea.

 **T** is for Teaser, a painful affair;

 If the CC's in a temper, you'd better beware!

 **U** is for Universe and Celestial Sphere

 The plague of all Seniors who view it with fear.

 **V** is for "Vilson" -- Alf's favourite girl,

 Her Christian name's Ann and he says she's a pearl.

 **W** is for Whitehouse, "Ozzi" to you;

 He's an Australian and talks kangaroo.

 **X** is in Algebra, a part of Mathematics

 It's so hard my brain is a study in statics.

 **Y** is a flag in the International Code;

 It was a devil to rhyme in this little ode!

 **Z** is for Zenith which is directly above--

 Better the Zenith than a seagull or dove!

 "ROMMEL" April 1954 - CADET

## THE SEQUEL

 Now the "Conways" gone,

 Lost to everyone,

 In the flames of the fire,

 Like a funeral pyre.

 She would not give up,

 For she must live up,

 To the name that she bore,

 She would not lie ashore.

 But she'd die with a fight,

 Die in the night,

 She would now take no more,

 From the axe and the saw.

 And she started to blaze,

 And she ended a phase,

 Of the ships of her name,

 But of her fame.

 Now the Ship is no more,

 But the School is ashore,

 And it still carries on,

 Though the Ship itself's gone.

 S.C.Ouser. January 1958 - CADET

 **"ADEN"**

 Oh, to be in Aden,

 Now that Flosy's there!

 And whoever gets to Aden,

 If not taken unaware

 By the N.L.F., finds sand and sea

 Just as lonely as they used to be

 Before Emir Abdulla, Emir Feisal, Sir Richard Burton,

 Gertrude Bell, El Aurans, Nasser and Ottoman Turk

 Went to work!

 Percy Flage. January 1968 - CADET

**"A GEOGRAPHY CLASS"**

 The master's in an awful haste

 "Page twenty-four, no time to waste,

 Look at the book, and remember, boys,

 There's a class next door, so make no noise!"

 China is a country wide,

 With Gobi on the northern side,

 And through the centre, famed to all,

 Run miles and miles of Chinese wall.

 India in the south, you see,

 "Tis very famous for its tea.

 And throughout the Orient, rice is grown,

 Though other cereals must be known!

 Nepal has many a mountain peak,

 All frozen, desolate, white and bleak,

 Manchuria, with its fertile land,

 Contrasts so greatly, with Gobi's sand.

 "Is that the bell that I can hear?"

 Time passes quickly, now I fear,

 So, books away, and for your prep,

 Learn all about the Russian steppe.

 N.Rose. April 1966 - CADET

## To "CONWAY" Cadets

 Precious dear darlings; your Mammy's delight;

 Shall they tuck you all up in bed tonight?

 And kiss so gently your troubled brow,

 As only dear Mothers and Aunties know how?

 And sing you a lilting short lullaby,

 As Sandman drops sand in your tired pretty eye?

 Don't get your ten little tooties wet,

 For you know quite well we'd only fret,

 Don't play that rough game with lop-sided ball;

 You might run too fast and down you would fall

 And scratch that poor little, dear little knee,

 You're too far for pity from Daddy and me.

 Should naughty big Officers bully and shout

 And chase you and smack you, or order about,

 Just write me a line on pink scented paper,

 And I'll stop their wicked and hard-hearted caper,

 I'll tell them you mustn't be treated so cruel

 But kept well protected in warm cotton wool.

P.S. I'm sending you some jelly babies in your next month's parcel.

 By a Parent. January 1954 - CADET

## THE FIRST CUCKOO THIS YEAR

To the Editor,

Dear Sir,

Whilst reading the Choric Song from "The Lotus Eaters", I came across incontrovertable proof that Lord Tennyson was an Old Conway - to what else could the following verse allude?

 There is soft music here that softer falls

 Than petals from blown roses on the grass,

 REVEILLE :- Or night-dews on still waters between walls

 Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;

 Music that gentler on the spirit lies,

 Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes.

 Why are we weighed upon with heaviness

 And utterly consumed with sharp distress,

 STAFF:- While all things else have rest from weariness?

 DIRGE:- All things else have rest, why should we toil alone,

 We only toil alone, who are the first of things,

 And makes perpetual moan.

 ME SIR! OH, Lo! in middle of the wood,

 NO SIR! The folded leaf is wooed from out the bud.

 NOT SMOKING,

 Dead is the end of life; ah, why

 SLACK PARTY; Should life all labour be?

 Let us alone, Time driveth onward fast.

 POWER BOAT COX: How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,

 With half-shut eyes ever to seem

 Falling asleep in a half-dream!

 Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,

 NO COMMENT! And dear the last embraces of our wives

 And their warm tears; but all hath suffered change.

 CHOIR But they smile, they find music centred in a doleful song

 PRACTICE; Steaming up, a lamentation and an amient tale of wrong,

 Like a tale of little meaning though the words are strong

 ANY Q.B,; Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the shore

 Than labour in the deep-mid-ocean, wind and wave and oar.

Might I add, Sir, in conclusion, that I engaged in the compilation of an 8,000 page thesis to prove that Alf was also responsible for the inspiring words of the "Hullabaloobalay".

Yours Faithfully,

NOSPMAH. September 1954 - CADET

**ABSENT SCHOOLFRIEND.**

 I wonder, can you truly understand

 the joy it brings to hear from Eric Brand

 who shared with me those early, tender days

 before the course was set on wid'ning ways?

 And now across the seas we barter views,

 mounting a cavalcade of all our news;

 though far apart, still standing side by side;

 either "Conway" brother

 toasting each the other--

 "A graceful eventide."

G.L.O.Davies. Conway 1909 – 1910 January 1964 - CADET

**"FAREWELL CONWAY".**

 It was eight bells ringing

 and the morning watch was done,

 and the 'Conny-Young-Gents' were singing

 as they polished every gun.

 Now she's fading down the river,

 Conway boat, Conway boat,

 Ah, for pities sake don't tell me,

 she is scuppered - not afloat.

 At the auction-could it be there are no takers,

 Dear Lord in all Thy 'finite wisdom',

 Send her to 'Thee' cruel breakers.

 Nautical Magazine Vol:212. November 1974.

 Conway "NEWSLETTER" March 1997

**"OVER THE SEAS AND FAR AWAY."**

 Over the decks and round about,

 A new chum steals from his morning "grouse,"

 And by the Mainmast there is he--

 He thinks and he sees of the things to be;

 Of boats to cox and victories won,

 Of wrongs atoned and sacrifice done,

 Of the bravery, that he shall prove one day--

 Over the seas so far away!

 Above the deck with sad sigh stands,

 It's he! who knows he is going to land,

 And did he have the riches and fame,

 As a boy, he wished, with soul a-flame?

 As an old man now, he lingers by

 A telescope held to his glazed old eye,

 And thoughts of "Conway" are with him now

 Over the Ship and near the bow.

 Up the steps to the Golden Gate

 An Old Chum stands and is very late

 St.Peter's there with questioning air,

 "Come for'ard my lad, and let's see how you fare--

 Your battles fought and your victories won,

 God-fearing too 'fore your day was done

 On, oh lad, while the stage is set

 Up to Heaven, there's a set to let!"

 "A. NEEDLE" September 1952 - CADET

## SUBMARINES

 Under water, silent service

 Lurking in the deep, dark sea,

 Making merchant shipmen nervous,

 Unseen, but they must see!

 Firing fish of flashing fury,

 Into ships of merchantry,

 For them there can be no jury,

 Unseen but they must see!

 Cargo ships to sink or plunder,

 That is their decree,

 With iron fish of deathly thunder,

 Unseen, but they must see!

 Under water, silent searching,

 For a victim who will be

 Over on one side soon lurching,

 Unseen but they must see!

 S.C.Ouser April 1957 - CADET

## "BLACK JACK"

 Along the ripping water's edge,

 By willow tree and hawthorne hedge,

 Where deep the waters run so sure,

 And shiny fish refuse the lure,

 In peace and tranquilness so stout,

 Lives "Black Jack" king of the trout.

 No human eye has ever seen,

 His spotted back's entrancing sheen,

 No fly has ever held his mouth

 But has not gone East, North or South,

 Worms run off his mighty back,

 This king of trout that's called "Black Jack"

 A sudden ripple, a shaft of light,

 And a fly is swallowed out of sight,

 The fisher bends his flexing rod,

 And digs his heels into yielding sod,

 The fish with that tremendous snout,

 Must be "Black Jack" king of the trout.

 The reel drums out and smoke arises,

 Far into the sapphire skies,

 As angler with his aching back,

 And sweating feet in earthen crack,

 Strives in vain to bring back,

 The king of trout that's called "Black Jack"

 The width of Black-Jack's mighty tail,

 The running waters start to flail,

 And the angler who on crumbling bank,

 Up to his ankles now has sank,

 And with feeble flicks of wrist does try,

 To bury in the best of flies,

 Great the leap that fish does, and all too late,

 The angler tries to reinstate,

 The un-barbed hook in "Black Jack's" throat,

 But to no avail, the line is loose,

 And hook and line fall out,

 To free "Black Jack" the king of the trout.

 KIWI! September 1955 – CADET

## THE CALL

 We do not heed the end, we only care

 To take the ship and wander everywhere.

 To mind her day and night while underneath

 The mouth of Ocean opens showing teeth.

 To give her beauty, though ourselves have none,

 And let the others have the wealth that's won.

 Come brothers, the sea waits, Ay many seas--

 Wait for the will of men who love not ease.

Anon. April 1950 - CADET

**A "CONWAY" WINTER MORNING.**

 White and cold as charity,

 Frost as far as the eye can see,

 Fog and mist by the water's edge,

 And the mountains purple and grey.

 The water's vagaries today are gone,

 And the flag on the staff is limp and wan,

 Haliyards stiff to hands as cold,

 The trees seem weary and the Ship looks old.

 Bare, bleak mountains framed by the sun,

 Look more dead that they have ever done,

 The grass lies crisp in frozen fear,

 For the "Conway" winter again is here.

 "Bordeaux" January 1952 - CADET

## MON OLOGYOU (Known to some as Monologue)

 I'll tell thee a seafaring story,

 Of a chap whose name you all know,

 He's in charge of that place called Plas Newydd,

 Near mountains what's covered in snow.

 This chap used to love sailing dinghies,

 To 'im dinghy sailing were bliss,

 He just loved to feel dinghy heel over,

 While bow-wave made musical hiss!

 He'd hoist up his mizzentop foreyard

 (Though 'twere blowing a moderate gale),

 And closehauled with the wind on the quarter

 Away down the Straits he would sail...

 All summer he sailed with his New Chums,

 He taught 'em to steer, reef and tack,

 He taught 'em Article Seventeen,

 And how not to get caught aback.

 But when the summer were over,

 And dinghies were laid up on't slip,

 He realised that gone now, for ever,

 Was the day of the old sailing ship.

 So into steam he decided to venture

 (Though decision hurt summat cruel),

 So he bought an old Austin Seven,

 With winnings off Littlewood's Pool.

 A.W.Kinghorn 1949 – 1951 January 1951 - CADET

**LAMENT -- on the DECLINE OF SMOKING.**

 Down in the old Ship's bilges

 The Union meets no more

 Ashore the canteen's empty

 Of all who smoked before.

 On the upper deck right for'ard

 The tunnel's strangely bare,

 The for'ard chains are vacant,

 You will not find them there.

 Pipes and pouches empty

 The smoker walks forlorn,

 His day is now a memory,

 His smokes a thing to mourn.

 But still there is the craving

 The craving for a smoke;

 Yet it will go unsatisfied

 In fear of the teaser's stroke.

 Weep no more poor smoker

 Your day is yet to come,

 You'll get no more your cigarettes

 By the Port Dinorwic run.

 Anon. April 1951 - CADET

#### **"CONWAY"**

 Full ninety years is all to short a span

 (Though many ships do not live half so long)

 In which to keep her precept in the van;

 "Quit ye like men, Cadets; be strong!"

 Five generations she has fostered; now

 She joins the company of Gallant Wrecks,

 But still she lives; taut, trim, aloft, alow,

 For those of us who trod her wooden decks.

 Once as Cadets we learned to know the worth

 Of being shipmates, which was right and meet,

 Then on our duty bound we sailed forth

 To play our parts in Britain's Merchant Fleet.

 We need not mourn her passing, while she lives

 In hearts and minds of those whom she has trained;

 She leaves behind all that tradition gives;

 And though she's lost, all we, her sons, have gained!

 D.A.S. September 1953 - CADET

**THE "CONWAY."**

 Mine is the Conway, dear old Con-way;

 Sons on every sea.

 I to the dear old ship belong,

 and she belongs to me.

 Sons of the Conway, dear old Conway,

 Sons on every sea.

 I to the dear old ship belong and she belongs to me.

 Mine are the Comrades,

 Dear old Comrades,

 Found on every sea,

 Mine are the ships of war, of trade,

 Mine is the ocean free,

 Sons etc.

 Mine is the King,

 As mine the Country,

 Mine is the Lady Queen,

 Mine is the pride, the toil, the peril,

 Mine is the peace serene,

 Sons etc.

 Mine are the men

 Who guard the nation,

 Watching by day and night,

 Mine are the men who serve in silence,

 Strong as the men of might,

 Sons etc.

 Marching together,

 Sons and fathers,

 Listening to the Call,

 These to the "Conway"all belong,

 These are the best of all,

 Sons etc

ANON. First "CONWAY" song-published in the "CADET” April 1913.

**BE THYSELF AND TRUE.**

 Be thyself and true!

 Pose not, nor laughter feign, would'st thou by strong,

 Real laughter sounds as bells without alloy,

 As little children echoing along,

 The music that the angel hosts employ.

 Be thyself and true!

 So shall thy work have power to right the wrong,

 Help bitterness and enmity destroy,

 And as, the heartfelt spirit of thy song

 Shall ever spread in fellowships of joy.

(Reproduced from "John Twenty's Garden" by courtesy of Thomas W. Heanley 1893-95)

## "CARRY ON" The "Conway" Song

 Where the tide runs in from the open sea,

 The good ship Conway rides,

 No more she fights the enemy,

 No more she takes the tides,

 But dear as of old to our hearts is she,

 For she caught us, and taught us, to sail o'er the waters,

 So we love her, none other our Wooden Mother,

 O the Conway's the one ship for you and for me!

 Carry on, carry on, till the last days' gone,

 And the old ship knows you no more,

 O East and West and North and South,

 From Rio Bay to Mersey mouth,

 From every distant sea and shore,

 You'll hear the cry

 "Ship ahoy! Ship ahoy!"

 And you'll find on the bridge a Conway Boy,

 So for love the ship that sends us forth,

 From East and West and South and North,

 Till the last tide turns and the last days' gone,

 Carry on,-- Carry on,-- Carry on.-------------

 When I came to her I was four foot three,

 My heart was beating fast,

 I saw her first quite tearfully,

 But kept them down at last,

 But soon I was settled and sang with glee,

 To bewail her, no sailor, would dare so to fail her,

 We find later we rate her a splendid old Mater,

 O the Conway's the one ship for you and for me!

 Carry on etc.

 When I left at last and I went to sea,

 A lump was in my throat,

 I watched her fade all mistily,

 God bless the dear old boat,

 And dear to the hearts of her sons is she,

 For she made us, displayed us, on fighters and traders,

 Ev'ry rover all over, from Chili to Dover,

 Sings,"The Conway's the one ship for you and for me!"

 Carry on etc.

 Cecil Roberts

## HER MAJESTY'S SUSPECTOR

This is a "Public School Afloat," In fact a special cutter's crew

An "Alma Mater" on a boat, To do the run at half-past two;

And so, from time to time, there comes Because the boats were broken down,

A man to watch us at our sums; Oh, wasn't he a silly clown

a man appointed by the Queen To plaster it around the town,

To certify that we are clean Th'Inspector muttered,"Bless my soul

And organised in proper fashion; "Does't happen often, on the whole?

Good education is his passion, "I cannot think it helps the nation,

Not long ago-this term in fact- "To interrupt the eddication

This noble boat was sore attacked "Of future sailors of the ships

By this bird called a School Inspector, "Which do the lonesome ocean trips,

And yet another "gen-collector," "And bring us back oil, eggs and beef

Surveyor from the M.O.T. "It's very old indeed-good grief!"

Sent down to look at you and me A stranger thing by far I'll trow,

And write reports on what they see, Was destined soon to crease his brow

In case we aren't doing well, When he and the Examiner,

Indeed, I don't know how they tell; (A lusty, salt stained mariner),

Because it is always the game, Elected to proceed ashore

 (In my old school it was the same), Around the hour of ten-to-four.

To give the very best impression, A good idea t'was indeed;

By cooking up a special session, I'd be the last one to impede,

 (But soft-it might have happened here) But, dearie me, upon my kilt,

The dumbest boy need never fear The fat into the fire was spilt,

That he won't know what to say For not a motor-boat would go,

At lessons on "Inspector's Day," (The O.O.D.'s morale was low),

His mentor will take greatest care And finally, he called upon

To ask what's only right and fair, The boat of Owen, Moel y Don

Like,"What's the sum of two and two?" To carry back the H.M.I.,

Or,"Can you write a Clerihew?" The long sea trip to Anglesie,

However there's an evil twirp, I know not what the mannie thought,

Attached to this old wooden shirrp, Perhaps that it had been a plot

A friend of Tweedledum the Good, To show him just how hard it is

A frightful fellow, very rude; To educate Cadets-gee whizz!

A bloke who messed the special session, No plot was needed for that task

By bursting in upon the lesson; If he had thought of me to ask,

Disturbing the Inspector's thoughts I could have told him quite a lot;

By bawling news of broken boats; But I'll leave it to some other clot

Demanding twelve good men and true,

NAYDOOT April 1953 – CADET

## OH MR PREEN

 Oh Mr ,Preen, oh Mr Preen,

 As a bachelor the last of you we've seen,

 Now a life of married bliss

 Lies ahead of you, but this

 Needs a kind of --, sort of--, well, see what I mean?

 Oh Mr, Preen, oh Mr Preen,

 Though at judo you're a sort of rural dean,

 If you have and hold like that

 She will put you on the mat

 And you'll have to beat it quickly

 I assure you, Mr, Preen!

 Anon. January 1953 - CADET

**A TALE OF JACK and JO.**

 Once upon a time, so it's said,

 Two bad cadets did smoke in bed,

 "Whose bed was it?" You might well hiss.

 It was a bed of the Marquis,

 The Captain stormed, the Marquis fumed,

 The two cadets were faced with gloom,

 "What shall we do?" said Jack to Jo.

 "I do not know! I do not know!

 We scived off Church and now must pay;

 And all just for a little play."

 "Six of the best," the Captain said,

 "You must not smoke in others' beds,"

 What brand they smoked was not disclosed,

 But when you pull the weed that's banned?

 Two words will match the place and brand--

 "The Woods."

 Stephen Copeland. May 1960 – CADET

**THOUGHTS (with apologies to the WESTERN BROTHERS)**

Has anybody ever seen a bigger cap than Gum's?

Does anybody ever enjoy navigation sums?

Should early morning swimming be compulsory for new chums?

It's no bull lads, it's no bull.

Is Charley Vaughan's new ship only seven thousand tons?

Are officers to be armed with little tommy guns?

Isn't it fun on Fridays when we sometimes get cream buns?

It's no bull lads, it's no bull.

Is association Football a favourite game of Pug's

Is Rea a really famous Company of tugs?

Should "Conway" skiffs be fitted with great big dipping lugs?

It's no bull lads, it's no bull.

Is it true they train baboons to work down in the galley?

Is it true that Radio Luxembourg is really in R.A.F.Valley?

Is Spud going to enter for the Monte Carlo Rally?

It's no bull lads, it's no bull.

Is it true they're selling Players to Cadets in the canteen?

Do Senior Two like essays to be set by Mr Preen?

Why is it that our bacon never has a bit of lean?

It's no bull lads, it's no bull.

"KEWBEE" April 1955 - CADET

**ON MOVING TO PLAS NEWYDD.**

 Old ship, now that thy last voyage is done

 And to thy last resting place art come,

 The Swellies left behind thee as the Styx;

 Ride steady to thy moorings and survey with pride

 The scenery to which thou'st come

 To finish thy work and rest in thine old age.

 There thou wilt again thy work renew,

 And carry on traditions of the sea,

 That from thee hast spread over all the world,

 And hast won colonies in distant lands

 And performed countless courageous deeds

 Of chivalry on land and sea.

 Thy children scattered in remotest lands,

 Ever bear mute testimony to thy name,

 And each single one until the day when he

 Lies down his head unto eternal sleep,

 Or comes to rest within a watery grave,

 Ever lives a living praise of thee.

 Anon. January 1950 - CADET

## R.I.P

 Now let us plause and think awhile

 Of once-up-a-time the NILE

 Our CONWAY, Training Ship and more

 To topmen, mizzen, main and fore -

 Our days when Broadbent ruled the Ship

 (With Maxwell, Milsome, Tozer, Chipp,

 To Train us in the seaman's art

 And how to play a shipmate's part)

 Were only half through her career

 Of generations far and near

 Young sailors she sent forth with pride.

 And through the years stemmed Mersey's tide

 Till she went west to Anglesey,

 So aged that she felt unfree.

 In Menai Strait her straits were dire;

 Aground she went and then afire;

 Her trial and tribulation full -

 Her rest at last; God rest her hull!

 D.A.Stride Conway 1904 – 1906 January 1957 - CADET

**H.M.S.CONWAY**

(written before the fire)

 Just past the bridge of Menai Straits,

 The broken "Conway" lies,

 The broken back may seal her fate,

 But her spirit never dies.

 No more she'll moor from off that shore,

 No more o'er oceans fly,

 She'll soon bow down to the steely saw,

 But her spirit will never die.

 For now she's made her last short trip,

 No more on seas she'll glide,

 Though from that place she may never slip,

 Her spirit will never die.

 For the "Conway" now is a broken wreck,

 But although the time may fly,

 There'll be many a man from her wooden deck,

 No, her spirit will never die.

 S.C.Ouser January 1957 - CADET

**TOTAL LOSS** Oak is the flesh that crumbles and corrupts,

 And rust shall eat the nails.

 Time shall consume her body on the rocks

 As moths consume her sails.

 The wind that drove her on the Baltic Sea

 Drived ships no more;

 The tide tossed an era heedlessly

 On Menai shore.

 The hulk that you can see from Telford's bridge

 Slowly disintegrates,

 While coal and oil drive ships through trough and ridge,

 Her sons, captains and mates.

 Were then her timbers' strength, her mast and spars,

 Times sickly dross?

 Write off the universe of suns and stars

 A total loss!

 Write off the wreck, the metal and the wood,

 The hardship and the pain;

 But no marine accountant can compute

 The total gain.

 F.D. Manchester Guardian April 22nd - 1953

**ROVING SAILOR.** Cold wind howling; sharp, rain lashing;

 Sails crack-cracking, decks resound

 To the din of shrieking storm-winds,

 "What care I? I'm homeward bound!"

 Lang'rous swell, slowly heaving;

 Listless sails droop all around.

 His throat is parched, "Yet," says the sailor,

 "What care I? I'm homeward bound!"

 Filthy dockland, belching smoke-stacks,

 Furtive thief and yelping hound.

 Jostling, crushing in the station;

 "What cares he? He's homeward bound!"

 Country silence; long, dull evenings;

 Time hangs heavily on hand.

 Friends pass by him, busy, heedless;

 Pastimes gall; Oh! what a land!

 Sailor looking o'er the quayside;

 Fresh sea smells and cries abound;

 Laughs with scorn at dull folk, shore-tied,

 What cares he?--He's Outward bound!

 D.Tilson. 1948 – 1949 January 1950 – CADET

## "THE WRECK OF THE SEAMEW"

Down in the dockyard where the Seamew lay,

The breeze seemed cold after the heat of the day,

The last of the dockers had made his way home,

And left me and my boat entirely alone.

There she lay at the end of the quay,

Rising and falling from the swell from the sea.

Her fenders were grinding, her painters were taut;

So this was the Seamew, the heroine of my thought.

Down below amid her creaking frame,

Where weevils thrived and the rats run tame,

The air was heavy, and the light was dim,

And there hung around the feel of sin.

I met the crew singly as they passed me by;

Each looking back with a wary eye.

The mate was alone in the radio shack,

Dressed in fisherman's garb, and a naval mack.

As I quietly entered he rose to his feet,

And caused our eyes for a second to meet,

His eyes were dark and his face was grim,

And once again I felt the cloak of sin.

An hour later at the height of the tide

The last shore contacts were cast from her side.

With the engine throbbing and the screw going ahead,

We left for sea and set course for the Med.

At the set of the first watch with the sea running high,

We were pitching in darkness 'neath the cloak of the sky.

The main deck was flooded, the galley a mess,

When the mate came and reported the crew being one less.

An hour later with the boats washed away

And the crew waiting anxiously for the signs of day,

The engines were racing and the derricks swinging wild,

With the crew praying hoarsely for the winds to turn mild.

Not long afterwards at the break of day,

The Seamew lay wallowing in Carlingford Bay,

Her foc'sle was flooded and she leaked like a sieve,

With only an hour or so more for to live.

The wind and the tide, together joined force,

And down to the rocks ran the little ship's course.

She ran through the surf with a rendering crash,

To be beaten to bits by the seas vengeful lash.

The crew jumped down to the rocks below;

To be driven landward by the current's flow.

There on the beach when all were ashore,

They turned their eyes seaward; but the boat was no more.

 N.Anley. May 1960 - CADET

**ALL at SEA - or the B.B.C. of SEAFARING.**

Belay by the seas of the Manganese

Where the scared sea-urchin skim,

And the steamers' crews all choose to booze

At the bar of Brickdust Jim,

Down where the glimmering samphire glows

And the sputtering searchlights spin,

Ye may hear the song of the "Deutchland's" wrong

Wrought where the spindrift lies along,

Where the sea-fog flits and the tide-rip strong

Goes snickering through the Swin.

 \_\_\_\_\_\_

A twin screw brig of schooner rig was the good ship "Bolivar,"

She was trim and taut from her scuttle-port to the bilge on the capstan-bar,

With a pulley-haul for a ten-foot yawl, and a handy chanty crew;

And right avast at the mizzen mast the Scarlet Bosun flew.

 \_\_\_\_\_\_

We had hugged the shore for a year or more, when, on a summer's night

From out of the gloom the thwartship boom of the "Deutchland" hove in sight.

And inch by inch as she dipped her winch, with her crossjack streaming high,

Through the sleet and mist with a for'ard lit, she strove to pass us by.

 \_\_\_\_\_\_

"Full steam ahead," the Old Man said, and we heard our pennant crack,

With a twist of his heel he spun the wheel abeam on the starboard tack;

Then sprit in hand took his stand abaft on the taffrail log,

And the "Bolivar" like a shooting star clove through the second dog.

 \_\_\_\_\_\_

Away we went with our fo'c's'les bent and our hawse-pipes smoking free,

While the kentledge on the keelson shone atop the topmast tree.

On the bridge abaft where they force the draught the coal-chutes glimmered

 white.

 \_\_\_\_\_\_

We plied each grate with the best Welsh slate 'til we heard the gunwales choke,

With a hank of twine for a lubber's line the forehatch gave the stroke;

And inch by inch as she dipped her winch to the clew of the thwartships boom,

Through the sleet and mist with a for'ard list, the "Deutchland" neared her doom.

 \_\_\_\_\_\_

Or ever we heard the spoken word, or the bull-mouthed breakers call,

The Southwest wind veered up behind with the spite of a stranded fall.

There was scare a leak at the mizzen peak where the spanker thrust comes

 through,

But ever avast at the mizzen mast the Scarlet Bosun flew.

 \_\_\_\_\_\_

On the "Bolivar" a Stockholm tar ran forth as his black soul sped.

And the "Deutchland's" Mate in maddened hate hove-to the deep-sea lead.

The "Deutchland's" men filled the truck again as the crosshead roared its spleen,

And they frapped the dead in the main-shrouds red whilst the coamings rolled between.

 \_\_\_\_\_\_

Wherever the "Deutchland" hove in sight, the "Bolivar" hove too;

There was never a lift in the dank sea drift but the Old man conned her through.

He braced his feet by the futtock cleat and his voice rose harsh with pain,

Clear o'er the roar of the fife-rail's snore,"I'll swing for you yet, Abe Kaine."

 \_\_\_\_\_\_

"Full and by at the lazy guy," he gave the order, gruff,

And the half-cast steward fell off to leeward, neaped in the bight of a luff;

It was snotter and snub at the harness-tub, and the devil still to pey,

For never the scend of a carrick bend runs north of fifty-three.

 \_\_\_\_\_\_

Oh, this is the yarn of the "Bolivar," 'n the crimson deeds they do

Where the gray seas run round the midnight sun and the course is never true;

Where the shellbacks gray pinch the lubber's lay, and nobody knows at all

The distinction fine twixt a tripping line and a three-and-a-half inch fall.

 Athwart the seas of the Manganese

 By the breasthook scarph and trim,

 Where the beer is bright as starboard light

 In the bar of Brickdust Jim,

 Ye may listen long to the "Deutchland's" song

 Or ever there dawns a glim.

 Ye may listen right, ye may listen left,

 Ye may listen until you are sense-bereft,

 Till the garboard painter hoists a weft;

 It will still be exceedingly dim.

 It will never be aught but dim.

 G.Drake. Conway 1922 – 1924 April 1950 - CADET

(Any resemblance to the work of any other person, living or dead, is purely coincidental, but due apologies are tendered to the shade of Rudyard Kipling.)

## THE DESERT CITY

 The city lies silent 'neath the dust,

 Stones are powdering, metals rust,

 No human sounds disturb its sleep,

 Silent spirits vigil keep.

 Thus is has lain since the dawn of time,

 Nature has drawn an invisible line,

 City of mystery, peopled by ghosts,

 Long since relieved of human hosts.

 Ages have come, and gone again,

 Since last it heard the sounds of men,

 Healing sands have covered its towers,

 Shifting and moving in leaden showers.

 The desert once more has reclaimed its own,

 No life remains in the powdering stone,

 Yet, 'neath yon sandhills, buried deep,

 A ghostly city lies asleep.

 David R.Williams August 1950 – CADET

**PLUNDER AT THE PANAMA ISTHMUS.**

 In fifteen hundred and seventy two,

 From Southern America and Peru,

 Ships of Silver, ships of Gold,

 Which carried countless wealth untold,

 Unshipped there load at Panama,

 That load which they brought so far,

 Then packed on mules was sent across,

 The isthmus to Nombre de Dios,

 There to wait for Spring and meet,

 The Spanish galleons and Plate Fleet,

 But then one cool and peaceful night,

 Drake and his comrades did alight,

 Along there amongst themselves did boost,

 Of all the treasure they would plunder,

 Tearing houses all asunder,

 But Drake cut short this merry mirth,

 Just until the dawn gives birth.

 That night, that very night, these men

 Who boasted on the coast of Darien,

 Through narrow streets on knees did creep,

 When all the treasure house was their aim,

 Take its contents was their game,

 When round the corner there appeared,

 Sleepy Spaniards whom they feared,

 From every angle muskets rang,

 Sword and dagger also sang,

 Until a straying shot had pierced,

 The leg of Drake who then dispersed

 His faithful comrades from the scene,

 Without the booty which had been,

 Their goal for many months before

 And brought them to this far off shore.

 And next, with the aid of the Cimaroons,

 After a space of many moons,

 Drake and his band of fearless men,

 Again left the coast of Darien.

 To travel across to Panama,

 And from that place not very far,

 The first mule train to pass that way;

 Again success eluded him,

 For Drake, the result was very grim,

 Instead of treasure they did find,

 The mules bore victuals of every kind,

 The next time after this affair,

 Drake in alliance with a French corsair,

 Again waylaid another train,

 But this time it was not in vain,

 The prize was excellently good,

 For instead of fruit and food,

 The mules were laden with silver and gold,

 And grasping all that they could hold,

 Drake's men made off once more to the coast,

 And again amongst themselves did boost,

 Of ransacked houses, silver and gold,

 Being the result of attacks so bold,

 But soon they sailed back o'er the sea,

 To home and their beloved country.

B.Radley and P.J.K.Aynsley 1951 – 1953 April 1952 - CADET

## "GOING HOME"

 A poetic essay.....

The frost-laden air of the railway station wreathes curling from my lips;

Shimmering lights are reflected solidly in the pools on the platform.

Great gouts of steam issue, savage, from the belly of the monster,

Even now tamed under the hand of its creator.

A crescendo of noise claws into the night,

Tearing asunder the shroud of stillness.

And then, once more the silence descends unvanquished,

The silence of the night.

Do you imagine that inanimate things can sleep?

Yet sleep they do!

Great steel beast, quiet now. Yet I hear its heartbeat grow

Under the hand of its master.

A click. A pause. The tannoy blares

Commanding attention. Receiving it, too!

The diesel creeps bleary-eyed from its shed,

Its vast heart eager to go.

As on the old stages of the West,

The horses are changed.

Relieved, one glides gratefully to its resting place,

The new diesel's voice roars; great intake fans suck,

And off it goes into dense night.

 M.G.Wood 1964 – 1967 January 1968 - CADET

**AN ODE TO "BOSSY" PHELPS.**

 This is the tale of Bossy Phelps

 The only Conway bloke who helps

 The little New Chums in their plight

 And gets them from their first full fright

 When entering this dreary life

 Of work and want and slack and strife.

 The man whose cabin is a shambles

 Through which intrepidly he rambles

 Looking for toothpaste, studs and soap

 Amid the reefers, bags and rope.

 He really ought in Putney stayed

 And every day at boatman played.

 But Bossy dear did choose to brave

 A life upon the ocean wave

 But now alas he has to go

 I'm sure we'll miss him ever so.

 What shall we do when he has gone

 The man who called in French, is "bon".

 But he'll ever more be welcome here

 So give Bossy Phelps three damned good cheers.

 E.R.Maltby. 1944 – 1946 July 1946 - CADET

## GOING TO SEA IN '93

The late Captain S.S.Richardson amused himself during his retirement writing his autobiography in verse and had it published privately in a little volume entitled "Shakings." We have added the above title to the extract that we have chosen.

 FIRST comes the flag of the M.M.S.A.,

 Who managed the "Conway" in my young day,

 And so still for all I know

 (With the aid of a Liverpool Shipping Co.!).

 I did most of the things which New Chums do

 (And I looked for the "Key of the Kelson" too!)

 When I joined, a shy youth, fourteen years or so,

 But--when I left, I was C.P.O.!

 There I pulled an oar in a ten oared boat

 And learnt most of the things that are done afloat.

 "Turned in" a dead-eye, and "stopped" a block,

 Kept time by the bell, instead of a clock,

 Reefed the top'sle, and hove the lead

 (Three swings over my poor young head),

 And a whole lot of other things besides,

 And captained the Cricket and Soccer sides.

 And when I left, I'd quite a lot

 Of ships from which to choose--

 Marpesia, Glenalvon and Ancaios,

 To mention just a few,

 And Sproules' four-master Lynton,

 Then building at Evans's Yard.

 With such a galaxy of ships

 It shouldn't have been hard,

 But being keen to get away,

 And for the sea "athirst,"

 I chose the one that was sailing first,

 And I certainly chose the worst!

 So I bade farewell to The Heys Halewood,

 In December '93,

 To join my first ship in London Docks,

 And so away to sea.

 And in McIlwraith, McEachern's office,

 I signed "on the dotted line,"

 And bound myself apprentice

 To the Australia Line.

 By a comic legal document--

 An "Indenture,"if you please--

 Whereby I bound myself to serve

 Four years' apprenticeship on the seas.

 And never to enter a "tavern"

 Nor frequent a "gambling hall,"

 Tho' the life I was just about entering

 Was the greatest gamble of all!

 And hung at times on a rotten rope,

 Or maybe no rope at all,

 As when reeving off signal halliards

 On a pole which was eight feet tall

 With nothing to tell what happened,

 But a splash in the lee bow-wave,

 And a tiny speck in the good ship's wake

 To mark a sailorman's grave!

 Tho' very much worse should you land on deck.

 Imagine if you can,

 With that sickening thud on those sacred planks

 And as dead as the late Queen Anne.

 And should my Queen and country at any time

 Require my services--then

 The owners say I must hand over my pay

 And all my prize money to them.

 These were just a few of the many things

 You had or had not to do,

 When you signed those comic indentures;

 And what did they do to you?

 Firstly they called for your "premium"

 (Wherewith to pay your screw!);

 Five pounds at the end of the first full yea,

 And six at the end of two!

 Seven pounds at the end of the next one

 And twelve at the end of four

 But--you'd learn the law of the sea and ships,

 Which you didn't know before!

 By then you could reef and furl and steer

 As well as the best of the men

 (It would never do to pay the screw--

 A princely two pounds ten).

 All "work" they had bound themselves to "teach,"

 Though it actually transpired,

 They taught you nothing--nothing at all--

 What you learnt was all "acquired"

 By watching "Jack" at his daily work

 And learning as you desired,

 Which gave you all you needed to know,

 And what the exams required.

 Finally, "Five pounds in lieu of washing,"

 Completed the contract made,

 And, at the end of those four long arduous years,

 It was well and truly paid!

 Yet--it all forged a link 'twixt the Firm and their "Boys,"

 You may like to know that it still exists,

 And we meet today as friends.

 S.S.Richardson 1891 – 1893 May 1960 - CADET

## BRAVE NEW WORLD

 Eaqch politician, into a crisis hurled

 Declares his aim to build a better world!

 And when the crisis passes, he'll begin it.

 Oh, Brave New World, that has such people in it!

 Percy Flage January 1968 - CADET

 **THE OCEAN LINER - "THIS IS YOUR LIFE"**

 The Board is sitting, and no ordinary affair

 Is down to be discussed. Credit and cash to spare,

 And long-term plans for building to augment the purse

 Before conditions alter and the risks get worse.

 The meeting ends. Designs are worked at, contracts made,

 A builder's tender is accepted, and your keel is laid.

 You are to be ship that's spacious, fast and fine;

 Modern and comfortable - a credit to the Line.

 Keen craftsmen in the shipyard work, a year or more,

 Till, bit by bit, they fashion you out of the raw.

 Your bow is duly christened 'ere you leave the ways,

 While watchers cheer, and many a one about your future prays.

 O stately ship! They know your cabin walls will see

 Sad tears and radiant smiles - a babe, new-born maybe!

 And you will hear the parting words of friend and lover,

 Of spouse, of parent, children, sister, brother.

 Your holds will carry mails and merchandise galore,

 And tucked away, you'll have much provender in store.

 Your decks will be just right for games and care-free laughter;

 Ease, sport, dancing, fancy dress, and scrub down after!

 Your crew will be motley, human, happy crowd.

 Of them, and you, your captain will be justly proud.

 He'll chart your course and con you, however rough the sea.

 And, in his loneliness, his thoughts will be of thee.

 Before you sail, a wandering cat, ill-fed and lean,

 Will board you. And ere long, immaculate and clean,

 She'll settle, maybe in the fo'c'sle or the galley,

 The captain's cabin, first saloon or working alley,

 Till listed as an honoured member of the crew,

 Along with gay What-Ho, the barber's cockatoo.

 You are at sea. Below, your motors purr amain.

 Your mighty engines hum, and thrust-blocks take the strain.

 Skilled engineers, sweat-rag in hand are ready when

 An unexpected signal comes. Quick action then!

 "Stop, full-speed astern, and give her all she's got."

 Those engines and those men fail not, but they are hot.

 How wide your decks! How deep your holds! How high your truck!

 A seaman climbs aloft, and men admire his pluck.

 In preparation for a Prince or other guest,

 He reeves a halyard, soon, with bunting you'll be dressed.

 He is no cherub, 'bove the glamour and the glare,

 Yet, he looks down in wonder and, perhaps in prayer.

 Some forty years or so, and many a round trip done.,

 You will be widely known, and joked about for fun.

 You will have spurned foul weather, sailed when skies were grey.

 You will have seen flying fish and dolphin play.

 You will have skirted rocks, mountains, treacherous shoals,

 And reached, on time, your home port and your outward goals.

 Then, noble ship, back to the shipyard you'll be taken,

 Empty in hold and store, much mourned, forlorn, forsaken.

 There, broken up hard by place from which you came,

 You will become part of another ship, another name,

 Your own a memory within the hearts of men.

 Unconscious shattered hulk, good-bye! Good-bye, till then.

 Thomas W.Heaney 1893 – 1895 CADET February 1960 -

## "THE RED, WHITE and BLUE"

 How glorious is the banner we carry round the world!

 Wherever Britons gather the flag shall be unfurled

 Proud Union-Jack and Ensign, on ship and shore displayed,

 And over all, the Standard transcendently arrayed.

 Hoist high, hoist high the banner!

 Hoist high the glorious banner

 We carry round the world!

 Three well-known crosses blazon our staunch Red, White and Blue,

 By Church and State and heroes it is thrice honoured too.

 Saints Patrick, George and Andrew's united emblems shine

 In token that great nations can yet as one combine.

 Hoist high, hoist high the banner!

 Hoist high the glorious banner

 We carry round the world!

 Within the hearts of many, our banner holds a place;

 It binds together people unlike in creed and race.

 It forms a shroud for sailors, for warriors and kings,

 'Tis waved by little children and happiness it brings.

 Hoist high, hoist high the banner!

 Hoist high the glorious banner

 We carry round the world!

 This true and trusted symbol, that we so fondly own,

 Is still a pledge of freedom, and strength, where it is flown.

 And so, what'er the outlook, O flag, let all men know

 That you, and all you stand for, shall e'er with lustre glow.

 Hoist high, hoist high the banner!

 Hoist high the glorious banner

 We carry round the world!

 Thomas W.Heanley 1893 –1895 October 1959 - CADET

**AERONAUTICS.** Ready for a Flight

The "Conway" gets an aeroplane,

Its purpose is "Instruction."

But if you started flying around

Result would be "Destruction."

The moral of these simple words

"Tis very plain to see:

"Before you start the engine up,

Be anchored to a tree."

April 1935 - CADET

## "THE SAIL"

 Out to the cutter we go for a sail

 And in the faint swell turn quite pale.

 In a convulsive effort up goes the main

 And with a far less effort falls down again.

 To add to the misery down comes the rain,

 There goes the main--and another refrain.

 Up goes the job with no faults at all,

 And over the buoy in a thunderous squall.

 Up in an effort is the main sail,

 Down goes the boat to the lee rail.

 "Helm's down" cries the cox and the boat goes around

 What wonderful forces now we have found!

 Up to P.D. in a series of tacks,

 Over the mains'l in wonderful cracks,

 Up we go to the starboard can,

 Bad cox at the helm, we're going to ram.

 That was to narrow we say, looking pale;

 Good helm's at cox, down the lee rail,

 As water comes in by the tons,

 We sit petrified on our b---ms.

 The wind's aloft and we're running free;

 Tame, we say, in the rough sea.

 Occasional stray comes over the bow,

 'H'up' comes the buoy over the prow.

 Home at last is the mournful cry;

 Away from the boat, a very sad sigh.

 That good sail--again in a week hence;

 Another load of experience.

Anon. October 1959 - CADET

 **NEWS FROM KELLY COLLEGE.**

The following extract was published in the "NEWSLETTER" of August 1979.

The 1979 John Masefield prize for Creative writing has been awarded to Helen Edom for poem on 'Service’

**SERVICE**

 Well what I said

 And what he said

 What we told ourselves

 Was that we were useful

 We were

 We were of service to our country

 It had a need for gun fodder

 We met it.

 And so we float here greyly

 We don't mind, didn't expect much

 Not for ourselves

 We were glad to be of service

 But thought somehow well

 A bit of glory might not come amiss.

 Helen Edom

## "A TIP"

 I know that soon the day I'll face

 When I must leave the Ship;

 Before I come to leave this place,

 Let me give you a tip.

 Be true to all they teach you here,

 And fight for her fine name.

 As you leave you'll shed a tear,

 And take the road to fame.

 All along that road you'll find

 Temptations, big and small;

 But if you're honest, true and kind

 You'll never ever fall.

 In every port, in every land

 You'll find at least one chap

 Who has joined the Merry Band,

 And wears a M.N.cap.

 When you reach the higher ranks,

 Look back to where she lay,

 And give her many hearty thanks;

 Hurrah! Hurrah! "Conway."

 S.C.Robson May 1960 - CADET

## "THE ROYAL ROCK HOTEL"

 When I was Skivvy at the Royal Rock Hotel

 Washing up the dishes and answering the bell,

 Along came a Sailor a Sailor from the Sea

 And that was the start of all my mi-ser-ey,

 He asked for a candle to light his way to bed

 He asked for a pillow to rest his weary head,

 Being young and innocent and thinking it no harm

 I jumped in beside him to keep the bugger warm.

 Early next morning when he and I awoke

 He fished in his pocket and handed me a note,

 Take this my darling for the damage I have done

 If it be a daughter or it be a son.

 If it be a daughter bounce her on your knee

 If it be a son send the bastard off to sea.

 The moral of this story is very plain to see

 Never let a sailor get higher than your knee,

 If you do you'll find that

 That he will never rest,

 Till he gets his Bowsprit up your Old Crow's Nest.

 ANON.

**A "CONWAY " YARN.**

 Michael Hook first heard this story nearly 50 years ago from Dr .J.Masefield 1891 - 1894, then Poet Laureate, when he came aboard at the end of one Summer term to present the prizes. On the eve of Prize day the whole ship's company assembled on the Main deck and Dr.Masefield entertained us for an hour or more, reciting some of his poems, and telling us tales with great skill. This yarn was the best of them and I had hoped to tell it at a "Conway" "Worcester" luncheon in Melbourne on 30/7/80 (my 65th birthday). To my chargin this story (after hiding for half a century suddenly appeared in the Conway N.L. in mid July, so that I felt I would have to use other material. However it occurred to me

 On second thoughts I could do worse

 Than put the story into verse.

 and though not up to Laureate mark,

 I hope a smile it may spark.

 ..................

One hot half-holiday afternoon

"Conway" cadets ashore had gone

Except the luckless few on watch,

The duty cutter's crew, and such

As justly were confined to ship

For some disciplinary slip.

Of these there were but two, and they

From an after port admired the way

The Mersey caught the sky-blue glim.

"Come, Wilshaw! What about a swim?"

Said Cadet Darling to his mate -

"Your're asking for a speedy fate!"

Said Wilshaw. "We'd be breaking ship!" -

"Now if you by chance should slip,

And I jumped in to save your life!

That couldn't get us into strife!"

So Wilshaw leaped into the 'drink'

And Darling (I est his friend should sink)

"Man Overboard!" he loudly cried

And plunged headlong into the tide.

Sparkling, crystal clear, there's ne'er a

River more like to our Yarra\*

Than the Mersey. But our sinners

Exulted as all freedom-winners.

Two lads in strong and healthy trim,

They much enjoyed their stolen swim.

When ventur'd filled their happy cup

The duty cutter picked them up.

The Captain, whom they'd thought ashore,

Was waiting by the gangway door.

"Who gave you leave to quit the ship

And in the Mersey take a dip?"

"My friend, Sir, fell into the water

And I did what I thought I ought-to."

"Good lad! Go now below and change.

And as for Wilshaw, it is strange

That you should take part in such play

As fall o'erboard, you stupid boy!

But when you're looking less a wreck,

Come stand here on the quarterdeck!"

At prays that night they sang with glee

"For those in peril on the sea."

And after that the Captain told

Of stupid prank and action bold

And called three hearty British cheers

For Cadet darling from his peers.

A packet came a few days later

For Darling from young Wilshaw's pater.

"For your selfless deed and brave

Which saved our son from wat'ry grave,

Please accept our heartfelt vote

Of thanks and this small Five Pound Note

And this Gold Watch for you to w'ar."

Said darling, "This has gone too far!

We must own up! - But Wilshaw said

"They'd slaughter us! Kaput! Stone dead!

Things need not come to such a pitch!

You keep the watch; my folks are rich.

But, if you like we'll share the money

And treat our mess to cake and honey."

Term ending just a few weeks later,

There came aboard our alma mater

Admiral Sir Fred'rick Grey

To hand awards upon Prize Day.

When all was done, young darling's name

Was called. Before the man of fame

He stood and heard these praises spoken;

"I have much pleasure now, in token

Of your valour and your daring

In plucking from the tide (not sparing

Your own safety) a friend drowning,

To hand this medal, (courage-crowning) -

With all due honour and propriety -

Of the Shipwreck and Humane Society."\*

The Admiral smiled behind his beard,

And, gracious, how the Cadets cheered!

Michael Hook 1931 - 1933

\* Yarra - The River Yarra at Melbourne is said to be

"Too thick to navigate - too thin to plough."

One could safely say the same about the Mersey at Rock Ferry.

\* Humane Society - The Liverpool Shipwreck & Humane Society

Conway "NEWSLETTER" August 1981

## "KEEPING IN TOUCH"

Whenever I pass a little church,

I always pay a visit,

So when at last, I'm carried in,

The Lord won't say, "who is it?"

Neil Hulse 1935 – 1937 Conway "NEWSLETTER" March - 1997

**"THRENODY" on the"CONWAY".**

Kingsford notes with studious eye,

How Menai waters hurry by...

A hundred padres down the deck;

A prim ecclesiastic rout, O heck;

And oft between the falls is seen,

The sly shade of an officer keen.

And in the Ship all black and white

Creep whispers through the Hold all night

Till with screech in the night

Oliver's there, with shining light;

And Moore's roar at the rout

Meets but a startled sleeper-out.

God! I will pack, and take a boat

And get me to Cymru across the Moat

For Wales is the one land, I know,

Where men with splendid hearts may go;

And Caernarvonshire, of all the land

The Shire for ladies who understand;

For Suffolk people rarely smile,

Being shy, backward, they run a mile!

And things are done you'd not believe

Rock Ferry on Christmas Eve.

And Portsmouth men make cocky rhymes

And Glyn Garth's full of nameless crimes,

Sweet ladies have cried like babes, bydam

To hear what happened at Llanfairfech-an.

Strong nurses have run for miles and miles

When one from Aberdeen smiles;

On H.M.S."Conway" their skins are white,

They bathe by day, they bathe by night.

The women there do all they ought--

The men sometimes they pay them court!

Say, does the Mizzen Mast greatly stand

Still guardian of that ancient band?

 (With sincere apologies to Rupert Brooke).

NEEDLE. April 1952 - CADET

Extract from the "NEWSLETTER" of August 1976

Cdr.A.H.B.Anderson D.S.C.,R.D.,R.N.R. 1933 -1934 recalls a homily, circa 1798, so true then, and doubly more so today.

When he was a Cadet in Shaw Savill the self same homily was framed on the desk of the Master's Day Cabin of his first ship.

## HOMILY

God and our sailors we adore

When danger threatens, not before,

When danger is past and all

Is righted.

God is forgotten and the sailor

Slighted.

## CONWAYS, AHOY!

Proud empires fall. Dominions have their day,

But the great ocean, as of old, rolls on alway.

Its liners need men, and youths, well-trained and steady,

Who, when the call comes, will be there at the ready.

Cadets of the "Conway," "Worcester" and "Pangbourne" too,

The surging sea and its ships are waiting for you.

The breadth of two continents, side by side,

Measures no more than the width of an ocean wide,

And much more than the height of the highest land

Is the depth of the widest ocean spanned.

There, on its cradle, primordial life grew,

And now, New Chums, an old sailor is counselling you.

Some "Conways" are serving. Others are packing,

Waiting a tide or clear call to get cracking.

They studied navigation and learnt by heart

All they could about the compass, sextant and chart,

Lead, log, look-out and the Rule of the Road,

Stability curves and how cargoes are lifted and stowed.

To be sure for all sailors there is much to know,

So learn, in good time, how to cook, darn and sew.

How to conquer yourselves and care for your men.

For such assets will hold like a sheet-anchor, when

At last, with Articles signed, your turn has come round

To go down to the sea in ships, outward bound.

Thomas W.Heanley May 1961 - CADET

## THE DEATH OF A SHIP

The graceful clipper strives through the seas,

Her bows lift higher than tall oak trees,

Then down she plunges to the deeps;

Every timber groans and creaks

As she rolls to her lee rail,

Then splits to shreds another sail.

"Furl the fores'l, roll the jibs,

Secure all, else she crack her ribs;

Take in all sail, reef her main,

That'll help her in her pain."

The bowsprit disappears in the foam,

While the waves have all the world to roam.

The foremast then crashes overboard,

The cargo shifts, being badly stowed;

To add to this, she springs a leak,

She then begins to split her teak;

Suddenly comes a further roll,

Now she's left without a pole.

The dismasted ship plunges and kicks,

The clock of doom starts its ticks,

A mighty wave kills half her crew;

To man her now are far too few.

Then her bows lift high in a wave,

Then she's gone! Yes, she was brave.

B.L.Green May 1959 - CADET

## THE CONWAY BELL

Do you remember the Conway,

How sweetly she rose on the swell?

And the Conway boys like clockwork toys

And the sound of the Conway bell?

To and fro on the ferry,

Caught in a magic spell

Of mast and spar and rigging we sailed,

To the urgent calling bell.

The ever restless pacing

To the engine's rhythmic pound

Would pause as we passed the Conway

Waiting to catch the sound.

They towed her away from the Mersey,

They took her out of our care;

How could we bear to cross to school,

And our old ship not there?

Beyond the Lightship Bar she sailed,

Beyond the Rip Rap buoy.

In Menai Strait, to an alien shore

They moored our pride and joy.

She never returned to the river.

They let her drift away.

She broke her back, we broke our hearts,

And there she lies today.

Oh I remember the Conway,

I mind tears that fell,

For part of childhood's magic fled

With the Conway Bell.

Dora Kennedy Printed by kind permission of Lancashire Life and Conway "NEWSLETTER" August 1981

## "HULLABALOOBALAY"

"Hullaballoo, Hullabaloo, Hullabaloo, Ballah!

Conway! Conway!

Rah, rah, rah!

Pieces of eight, pieces of eight, pieces nine and ten!

We'll cut the throats of every man and sew them up again!

Dead-Men-Tell-No-Tails-s-s-s-s".

Anon.

## LA PENSION LA PEPA

A Spanish Poem to be included (In need of Translation)

M.W.Bloy September 1973 - CADET

The above Poems and Verse have been reproduced and copied from the H.M.S.Conway House Magazine "CADET" and the Conway Club "NEWSLETTER" whose authors and publishers kindly gave their permission to publish their work at the original time of publication.

## ‘FOR THE SAILORS’

Even in peace scant quiet is the sea

In war, each revolution of the screw,

Each breath of air that blows the colours free

May be the last life moment known to you.

Death, thrusting up or down, may disunite,

 Spirit from body, purpose from the hull,

 With thunder, bringing leaving of the light,

 With lightning letting nothingness annul.

No rock, no danger, bears a warning sign,

No lighthouse scatters welcome through the dark;

Above the sea, the bomb; afloat, the mine;

Beneath, the gangs of the torpedo shark.

Year after year, with insufficient guard,

Often with none you have adventured thus;

Some, reaching harbour, maimed and battle-scarred,

Some, never more returning, lost to us.

But, if you 'scape, tomorrow you will steer,

To peril once again, to bring us bread,

To dare again, beneath the sky of fear,

The moon-moved graveyard of your brothers dead.

You were salvation to the army lost,

Trapped, but for you, upon the Dunkirk beach;

Death barred the way to Russia; but you crossed;

To Crete and Malta, but you succoured each.

Unrecognised you put us in your debt;

Unthanked, you enter, or escape, the grave;

Whether your land rember or forget,

You saved the land, or died to try to save.

John Masefield O.M., LL.D. (1891-94) President, Conway Club 1930-34. Conway "NEWSLETTER" August 1997

**IN MEMORY OF THE MEMBERS OF THE MUSTARD CLUB.**

Down in the old ship's bilges,

The Union meets no more,

Ashore the canteen's empty,

Of all who smoked before.

On the Upper Deck right for'd,

The tunnel strangely bare,

The forward chains are vacant,

You will not find them there.

Pipe and pouches empty,

The smoker walks forlorn,

His day is now a memory,

His smoke a thing to mourn.

But still there is the craving

The craving for a smoke,

Yet it will go unsatisfied

In fear of the teaser's stroke

Weep no more poor smoker,

Your day is yet to come,

You'll get no more cigarettes,

By the Port Dinorwic run.

 Club "NEWSLETTER" August 1997

## "THE CONWAY"

Since the "Conway" moored in the Mersey,

the first of "Conways" three,

Her sons have fared to the wide world's end,

ashore or on the sea.

And the first ship was a "wooden wall" which

helped win the day,

When Nelson's famous signal flew in far

Trafalgar's Bay.

Now the "Conway" comes to her moorings,

in pride her pennants free,

For Nelson's figure at the prow inspires

to victory.

"England Expects," and "Conways," old and

new, the signal read,

Eager in ever loyal zeal to serve their

country's need.

Since the "Conway" came to the Mersey, her

sons go on their quest,

Till on a seagull's wide-spread wings back

they fly home to rest.

# ANNE ELIZABETH SIDDALL. The Liverpolitan. September 1938