

# The Last Voyage of The Donna Isabel

By Randall Parrish

Author of Bob Hampton of Plover.

Illustrations by Deaborn Melville

tors boldly, and thus ascertain the whole truth. I glanced upward at the telltale compass overhead—the vessel's course had already been altered; we were now headed westward, directly into the broad Pacific.

I met Tuttle at the end of the bridge, clinging to the handrail, his oilskins flapping in the head wind. He never glanced toward me, the cool, studied insolence of the fellow causing me to feel more deeply than ever before his consciousness of power.

"The yacht is several points off her course, Mr. Tuttle," I said, sharply, determined to test him. "May I ask if the change was made by your order?"

He swept one long arm toward the north, and, following the direction of his finger, I dimly perceived a spiral of black smoke barely visible above the horizon.

"I thought we had better sheer off, as there was no guessing who that fellow yonder might prove to be."

I remained silent, watching the distant smudge, and occasionally glancing aside into his imperturbable face. He yawned sleepily.

"I rather guess one of us had better turn in, Mr. Stephens," he suggested finally, "for we'll have to arrange about our watches aft."

"Presently, Mr. Tuttle; we haven't breakfasted yet. Meanwhile I should prefer to understand matters a little more clearly. I've just been through the cabins. None of the yacht's officers are on board."

I could see his thin lips drawn back in a sinister grin, which revealed his yellow teeth.

"The Lord helpeth those who help themselves," he returned, pliously, uprolling his eyes. "The race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong."

"I also discovered," I went on, angered by such abominable cant, "that this vessel we have captured is not the Chilean Esmeralda at all, but the yacht Sea Queen, owned by Lord Darlington, and flying the English flag."

"The hell you say?"

"Moreover, I have not the slightest doubt that you knew it from the first. Now I demand some explanation, Mr. Tuttle. What does this mean?"

He stood leaning back against the rail facing me, the disagreeable grin gone from his lips, his half-closed eyes glinting uneasily.

"Well, what of it?"

"Only that we have committed an act of piracy. Every naval vessel of the civilized world will be used to hunt us down. We shall not be safe on any sea, nor able to land in any port of the globe. If we resist we shall be blown out of the water; if captured, our crime means death. You have deliberately decoyed me into this affair for some secret purpose of your own; you have involved me in your crime, and now I insist upon some knowledge of your plan, and an explanation regarding my future authority on board."

"Oh, you are the captain," sneeringly. "What more can you want?"

"Then, if I am, we will head directly back to Valparaiso."

"Oh, I rather guess not," and Tuttle's eyes became instantly hard and ugly. "Nevertheless you're captain all right, just so long as you keep the nose of the old girl pointed the way we want her to go."

"That is it, is it?"

"Yes, that's exactly the ticket."

I turned partially aside, glancing toward the wheelman. The fellow was leaning forward over the spokes, evidently deeply interested in our controversy and endeavoring to hear all we had to say. Tuttle followed the direction of my eyes, but with apparent indifference.

"Oh, they all understand about it," he remarked, carelessly. "And now I guess maybe it's about time we gave you the main points to chew on. If you'll step down into the charthouse, Mr. Stephens, I'll fetch some things I want to show you, an' be along myself in a jiffy. Then I'll spin a yarn that'll cause you to come with us willin' enough, or else you're a dam' fool."

There was nothing else to do, and I followed him down the bridge steps to the main deck. The charthouse had its single door opening aft, and was a small, plainly built structure painted a dingy gray, with two narrow windows on either side, and just enough space within to contain a deal table, locker, and three rude benches. I sat down upon one of these, filled and lighted my pipe and waited in silence, gazing idly at the chart pinned flat on the table. It was a map of these waters lying off the Chilean coast, and a vessel's course had been pricked upon it from Juan Fernandez to Valparaiso. This did not particularly interest me, and I thought drifted naturally to the woman impatiently awaiting my return in the cabin. What a distressing situation for one of Lady Darlington's birth and refinement! And yet with what dignity of manner had she met the unexpected! It was plain to be seen that hers was a heart of courage, not easily broken under adversity.

And how could I hope to serve her? What would this crew of hell-hounds, these merciless sea-wolves, permit me to do? Trans-ship them upon some passing vessel? Put into some isolated island port? This was scarcely likely, for either act would involve the danger of an exposure they would be little inclined to assume. I comprehended already that it would be according to their decision, and not mine. I had been plainly informed how little my control extended over their desires. And whither were we bound? Into what strange seas? Into what species of wild adventure? The utter impossibility of keeping those two concealed below for any length of time was clear. Ship life was far too restricted. Both Tuttle and De Nova would naturally expect to lodge aft, and it was a privilege they could not easily be denied. Yet what would they say, how would they act, when they finally discovered these two unwilling passengers aboard? What was my duty in all the circumstances? It was all a deep, unsolvable mystery, yet out of its mist constantly floated the appealing face of that woman awaiting me below. I could not desert her. I could not consider anything except how I might best serve her interests, best protect her from the contamination of this hell afloat.

Three shadows suddenly darkened the doorway, and Tuttle, accompanied by De Nova and the big seaman named Bill Anderson, entered. The second officer nodded to me in genial fashion, his white teeth gleaming, but Anderson slouched surlily past and dropped heavily on a bench, his coarse bulldog features devoid of all expression, his square jaws munching the tobacco in his cheek. I took notice of his eyes, staring straight out of the window opposite, dull, dog-like, deeply sunken under thatched brows, his skin like brown leather drawn tight, his short red neck, and gnarled hands. Altogether he appeared a repulsive brute, no more easily subdued than a jungle tiger. Tuttle sidled along to the opposite side of the table, upon which he placed a tightly rolled, yellowish-backed paper, evidently a navigating chart. As I watched him curiously, he suddenly pressed the point of his thumb down upon the paper.

"There's our first port, Mr. Stephens," he announced dogmatically. "There, where you see that red cross."

I bent over, started out of all assumed indifference as I studied the position indicated.

"Longitude 110° 30' west, and latitude 66° 17' south!" I exclaimed, scarcely crediting either ears or eyes. "Why, good God, man, that is almost upon the antarctic circle!"

He nodded, running his long fingers through his thin hair.

"Right you are, sir. I guess there won't be no warships a-trailin' after us down in them latitudes; not at this season of the year."

"But there's nothing there!" I continued, staring incredulously at the map. "Nothing but fog and floating ice. There is no land marked within 500 miles."

"Just the same there's land there," he retorted, positively, his thin lips pressed together. "I've seen it; two

islands, an' that's where the Sea Queen pokes her nose."

I could merely sit back, staring at the fellow, who remained leaning both hands on the table, his glinting eyes on my face.

"It's a rum yarn, Mr. Stephens, I'll admit," he said, slowly, his nasal tone much in evidence, "but it's all true, sir, so help me, God! Here's the straight of it, an' you listen quiet till I get done. Then I'll answer your questions as long as you've got any to ask."

CHAPTER X.

In Which I Hear the Tale of the First Officer.

Tuttle recurred a while getting

started, pulling aside his dangling coat-tails to sit down facing me, and then twiddling his long fingers with his gaze bent on the deck. I take it that his intellectual operations were naturally slow, although he was swift enough in all matters pertaining to seamanship. Anyhow, he sat there for so long, his whole appearance so sleek and oily, that I lost all patience, shuffling my feet on the deck. The noise served to amuse him.

"It commenced somethin' like over two years ago, sir," he began, mousing each word with care, "a little earlier in the season than this is now. I was master of the whal'n bark Betsy, sailin' from Provincetown, an' we were homeward bound after about 18 months' cruisin' in the South Pacific, carryin' a fair cargo of oil an' whale trimmings. We were roundin' the Horn, being about 70 degrees west and 58 degrees south when the real trouble began. I know that was rather a low latitude, but we had been buckin' against head winds an' a high sea for more'n a week, an' besides were short-handed, five of the crew havin' skipped out at Somers Island, where we put in after fresh water. Anyway, it was about there that a storm hit us from out the nor'east. I guess it must have been one end of a hurricane. I never see nothin' fiercer, even in those seas. There was nothin' to do but turn tail an' scud, the ropes and canvas being so stiff with ice. Well, we batted down, an' took chances, but for a while I thought every wave was goin' to do for the ol' hooker an' send us all to Davy Jones. I couldn't see five feet from the rail, an' I had to keep diggin' ice out of my eyes to see at all. The wind had the feel of a solid wall, sir."

Tuttle was leaning forward now, his elbows on the table. His lean, solemn countenance had lost its listlessness, and I also noticed the eager interest imprinted on the faces of his two comrades.

"We was jest roundin' the point," he went on as soon as he took a long breath, "the Betsy keelin' over so's her deck was half awash, an' with no more than maybe 100 yards o' clear water to the good. Back o' an ugly lookin' headland the coast seemed to fall away sudden into a sort o' cove, which was piled high with great ice hummocks, behind which the ice wall rose up sheer almost to the top o' the rocks. There was a sorter shelf along the edge of it, an' a-settin' up there in full view was the damndest lookin' vessel ever I saw in 50 years o' seafarin'. So help me God, sir, I saw it with my own eyes, as plain as I'm lookin' at you! It was h'isted up all o' 20 feet above the lower ice-field, an' sort o' careened over where it was froze fast so as to show the decks amidships clear to the inner rail. You remember them ships what Columbus sailed in? Well, this hooker was that kind, only a blame' sight bigger. I guessed her at 500 or 600 tons, but she had the same sort o' build—a big high stern, with an after-cabin clear across it, the waist sunk down in a curve, an' the forecastle raised up like a house, with blunt bows, an' a monster bowsprit forkin' straight up into the air. The whole outfit was so cased with ice an' glitterin' so in the sun that it seemed like a part o' the ice cliff, which had took that queer shape from thawin' an' freezin'. Damme if I didn't think it was somethin' like that for a minute—a blame' freak o' nature—but when I grabbed the glasses, an' got a good look through them, it was a ship all right, the kind you read about in the books what navigated these waters a hundred or more years ago. I was still a-starin' at it with all my eyes when we raised the stern, which stood h'isted up a bit higher than the bow, an' where the steady dash of the waves didn't break clean over it, an' the sun fell just right so I read the hooker's name. By God, I did, sir! It was there plain as day: Donna Isabel, Cadiz."

The change in the man speaking held me breathless; his cant, his usually oily method of utterance had merged into an earnestness rare or fascinating.

"Well, that was about all, sir," his voice sinking back into commonplace. "In two hours we were out o' sight, an' feelin' our way through a blinin' snow squall. But it was such a rum thing, discoverin' them islands out there all uncharted, with that queer ghost ship perchin' on 'em, that I wrote down the latitude an' longitude an' the hooker's name in my log-book. We was about three weeks makin' the West Falklands, where I shipped a few more hands, an' then bore away north for home."

He drew a plug of tobacco from out his coat-tail pocket, cut off what he needed, and stowed it away in his cheek. He ran his fingers through his thin hair, and resumed:

"About 18 months later I was back with the ol' Betsy in the South Pacific. One night, with the moon shinin', hardly a ripple anywhere, my mate run her nose onto a rock, a couple o' hundred miles south o' Easter Island, an' in less than 20 minutes the bark had gone down like a stone. We made Easter Island in the boats without much trouble, but it wasn't so easy to get away. I had six weeks of it before I got a chance, an' then I shipped afore the mast on a sandalwood trader. De Nova here was mate, an' finally, huntin' goods to peddle among the islanders, we sailed into Valparaiso, an' the most of us shipped out. Well, by that time I wasn't thinkin' very often about that ice-ship down in the Antar'tic; I was bustlin' for some sort o' berth to take me back to the States. But one night, down in Rodrigues' back room, where I hung out, I got to talkin' with a gambler named Francisco—the same smooth duck who introduced himself as De Castillo to you, sir. He was an

ably, it carried the waters through with a roar and a rush which was refreshing to see. At no time did the waters reach half way up the side walls. The greatest height was between five and six feet. The work of the crossing coupled with the lowered streets saved the citizens of Plattsburgh many thousands of dollars and both repaid for themselves.

The damage on Main street was nothing to the business houses and the damage to the pavement is very small, being confined to two spots, one opposite the Journal office where a small section of the pavement was sunken down and the water got under it and another opposite the Perkins hotel where a large hole was excavated. This latter happened at the spot where the pavement was torn up last winter and which was only recently repaired. The cinders and earth placed in the hole when these last repairs were made are said to have been insufficiently tamped which caused it to settle. In both cases the cost to replace the pavement and put it in good shape will not exceed \$50. Aside from this and a small piece of concrete washed out at the lower end of the crossing east of the Burlington tracks there was no damage in the business section of the city.

The shops suffered a small loss, mostly confined to the new tracks in the shop yards being washed out owing to the new surfacing giving way before the waters. There was also some water in the planing mill and the brass foundry but not enough to seriously inconvenience the company. The work of the city in erecting a barrier south of the shops saved a big loss here as the waters were easily handled.

The sewer of the Burlington clogged up again and the waters backed into the yards which resulted in a small loss. The total damage to shops and tracks will not exceed \$150. The management of the shops congratulate themselves upon their escape while the city also feels gratified.

The waters at Sixth and Vine and Main streets got over on the walks and left a deposit of rich soil several feet deep at the former place and a few inches deep at the latter which the city forces are cleaning away today. Considering the heavy rainfall almost two and a half inches, the results are remarkable and demonstrate that the city authorities acted wisely in lowering the two streets. It might also be remarked that those taxpayers who have contemplated contesting the city's right to collect the tax for this work should pause to think about it. It is clear it is a great benefit to the city and they should walk up and pay for it. It has saved their property already and they ought to appreciate it. Whether legal or not the street has done the thing people have wanted and last night saved many times its cost and the many who believe in doing right should realize this and pay his share.

One feature of last night's storm was the terrific display of lightning and the thunder which accompanied it. The heavens were a blaze of light and the detonations of the

thunder were something terrifying. Great streaks of forked and jagged lightning tore rents in the pall of blackness to be followed in the instant by a crash of thunder appalling in its loudness. Then came a blaze of light which would light everything for miles showing the street a sea of muddy, surging waters and the opening under the Burlington tracts a mighty cataract as the waters plunged and raced through it to the open flat beyond. Then followed a silence profound as the grave to be broken in an instant by another ear-splitting crash as another bolt of the deadly electric fluid found its haven. This mighty display of the power of nature continued for two hours and more and sound indeed was the slumber if he would or could sleep through it. Lightning struck in many places but no disastrous consequences have been recorded.

In the country the storm was as severe as in the city. The creeks became raging rivers and tore their way through fields washing the newly planted corn out and creating havoc on every hand. From all sections come reports of fields washed out and torn by the raging waters and the loss in the country is far and away greater than the nominal loss in the city. The principal loss here is in washed out streets while in the country the roads are gone, bridges are out and fields are plowed and stripped of their contents. It would be several days before the full extent of the loss in this last respect can be ascertained.

Will A. Franz Sells Store.

A deal was closed a few days ago in which Will A. Franz disposed of his large general merchandise store for a large tract of fine Nebraska land. The purchaser of the store is Chas. George, a business man of Omaha, and the manager will be John Nicholas of that city, who is now here. The work of invoicing commenced Wednesday afternoon and as soon as completed then new firm will be ready to greet their customers. These gentlemen come as strangers to us, but their recommendations as business men justify us in extending a cordial welcome.

Will A. Franz' retirement from business is a matter of regret to all his acquaintances, who have known him a number of years both socially and in a business way. He has the best wishes of the people, and no matter where he may locate he can make "sightdraft" for the best of Union recommendations. As yet he has no definite plans, and will remain here for a few weeks, then will probably accept one of the several business propositions offered him.—Union Ledger.

Peters vs. Shoemaker.

As a culmination of the trouble that had been brewing between George Peters and Chris Shoemaker since some time last fall, a case of the above caption was started in Judge Barnes' court.

Peters sued for \$131.40 and was represented by Banker Wellensiek of Avoca. Shoemaker filed a counter claim for \$188.50 and his interests were looked after by A. L. Tidd of Plattsburgh. After hearing the evidence in the case Judge Barnes concluded that Mr. Shoemaker had something like \$80 coming to him and gave judgment accordingly.

To all this the plaintiff protests and not until the district court says so will he part with the \$0 "bones" and the costs which will be something like a nine dollar bill. The moral of this is that both ought to settle now.—Nehawka Register.

The best is the cheapest. "Acorns" are the best.



## Time Tells!

It is tester of every man's work. It tests the quality of clothes you buy. It tests the quality of clothes we sell. Our Quality Clothes have stood the test of Time and their superiority is acknowledged by all who have compared them with others. It's fairly a proverb in this town that Wescott sells good clothes. That is our whole aim—to sell good clothes. We could buy plenty of goods to sell for less money, but they wouldn't possess the Wescott quality. If you want clothes that will stand the test buy our quality line \$20 to \$35. Another shipment blue serges just received. Quality goods \$20, \$22, \$24.

## C. E. Wescott's Sons

"WHERE QUALITY COUNTS."

## ELECTRICAL AND RAIN STORM

### One of the Worst Storms in Years Visits City

A day of unseasonable heat was brought to a close last night by one of the most terrific rain and electrical storms ever witnessed in this city. The day had been very warm and sultry the thermometer climbing away up in the nineties while the air was sultry and the humidity great. As evening came on clouds gathered and there was every indication of rain. The storm was long in coming up, however, and it was almost eleven o'clock before it burst upon the city. To the south a heavy rain had been falling for about an hour before—and this storm passed over into Iowa, the vivid lightning flashes which preceded the storm here revealing a tremendous amount of water falling to the southeast. This storm traveled in a northeasterly direction and the rainfall passed up the river covering the channel of the stream and lashing its waters into a white sheet with the down-pour.

The storm or rather series of storms which struck this city, commenced at 10:45 o'clock and continued with lulls between the storms until 1:30 this morning. During this period the rainfall was 2:38 inches the most of it falling between 11:45 and 12:45. During this hour the downpour was so tremendous and the anticipations of another flood were near realization. The sewer at Washington avenue overflowed and its waters drained themselves down Vine street to the newly depressed Sixth street, turning down it just as the bulldozers had anticipated and flowing into Main street in an almost relentless flood. The Chicago avenue sewer did not overflow and handled the immense volume of water which came down the creek and the ditches with celerity and ease. This was doubtless owing to the excellent foresight exercised in having the streams cleared of debris and rubbish, a work which was done in the last two weeks and which doubtless resulted in affording the waters a clear channel.

The newly inverted pavement of Main street was deluged with the waters from the hills and the overflow from the Washington avenue sewer and it well repaid the expenditure in changing it. Every taxpayer on Main street can figure out for himself that this pavement last night alone saved him the price of his taxes in damages at least. It is the honest belief of all who witnessed the seething torrent which tore its way down the street to the new Burlington underground crossing, that had the pavement remained in its old form not a store or building on Main street but would have suffered untold loss and possibly complete wreck by the angry waters. The street was filled from curb to curb during the height of the storm and the current down the center of the street was so swift that a man could not contain himself against it. But the street carried it all off and that too with great rapidity. Within twenty minutes after the storm had ceased, the waters had subsided on the street to such an extent that one could easily cross at any point. The new Burlington crossing did its share admir-

ably, it carried the waters through with a roar and a rush which was refreshing to see. At no time did the waters reach half way up the side walls. The greatest height was between five and six feet. The work of the crossing coupled with the lowered streets saved the citizens of Plattsburgh many thousands of dollars and both repaid for themselves.

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