

## Page 44 - Capt. David A. MacLeod: My Early Years ISSUE : <u>Issue 33</u> Published by Ronald Caplan on 1983/6/1

mines and bought a ship and, I think, went into the slave trade, but he would never say, only "cruising in the South Pacific." He ran his ship ashore on an uncharted cor? al reef. He managed to get ashore himself on the island, but all hands were lost. He was there two years during which time he was made chief and tattooed all over. He a- dopted their mode of living. He made a raft of logs tied together with roots and would go fishing. He saved his telescope and nautical instruments and was always sweeping the horizon for a sail with his telescope. One day he noticed a ship be? calmed far out at sea. He often got the natives to have races with him, swimming from the raft to the shore. When a good way off the lands, he started swimming back to the raft. Then he commenced to pad? dle towards the ship and just at dusk they noticed him on the raft. They took him on the board of the ship. The Sunny South from New York bound for Hong Kong, China. I have the hook that he had fishing. It is made out of a solid piece of ivory or tooth of some animal. It's a good hook. Poor fellow, he gave it to me many years a- go as a keepsake. He shipped from Hong Kong to Melbourne where his ship was insured, only to find the insurance company was burnt out and he got nothing. He went back to the gold dig? gings and he struck it rich again and bought another ship, and in the Spring of 1867, he came to the Strait of Canso with a load of sugar from Samarang in Java for Montreal. She was called the Eleanor. Nav? igation was not free from ice to the Nor- thered, so he stayed home two days. He was the best company you ever met. The next day after he came home, I and my brother Will went to the Strait of Canso to see the ship. We were up before day? light and walked the eight miles distant easy. Spring work was on and our horses were busy. We got a boat and went on board the ship. Will went right up to the chief officer and introduced himself as the cap? tain's brother. After looking around the ship for a few minutes. Will challenged me for a race from the sheer pole on either the fore or main rigging to the royal truck. He chose the main and I the fore. We both arrived together and stood up on the royal yard. Then we shinned up to the royal truck. I got up first and put my cap on the truck. I went on the jib stay and landed on the flying jiboom. Will came down the main royal stay and landed on the cross trees, then came in the main deck and had a talk with the second mate. He was a McKenzie from Boularderie Island. This was a new job for me, for we had raced to the highest tree in the woods but never aboard ships. Will and I went home after we were told by Captain Charlie. There was no chance for us with him. We watched them mastheading the yards and squaring away for Montreal, and we came back home. Our home was near a river, and we both had boats rigged with two fore and aft sails, but once we were on board Captain Char? lie's ship, we hauled in our largest boat and commenced making a square rigger out of her. Where Will got the idea from, I can't say, but we got to work and made spars and yards. He was rigger and boss. We made dead eyes out of buttons and shrouds out of hake lines; pearls for the ATLANTIC SPRING & MACHINE CO., LTD. 564-5559 - 40 Kings Road, Sydney - 564-5550 General Machine Shop & Forge, Mining Equipment, Mar? ine Repairs, Welders, Automotive



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