

From Sea to Sea

Or

**Clint Webb's Cruise on the
Windjammer**

By

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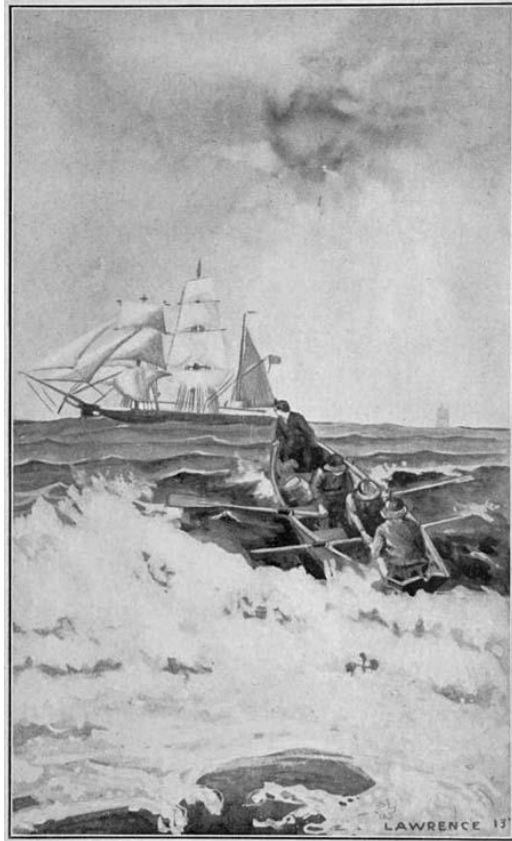
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**“YOU WANT US TO LOSE THIS RACE, YOU SAWNEY!” HE EXCLAIMED.
(FROM SEA TO SEA)**

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CHAPTER I

In Which I Shield a Friend and Make an Enemy

The after port anchor had come inboard before I stepped over the rail of the Gullwing, and leaped to the deck. The starboard and port bowers were both catted and fished and the stay-fore-sail had filled to pay off her head.

The wind was blowing directly on shore; the current ran parallel with the land; there was no choice of direction in getting the big four-master under weigh, and she was headed into the stream.

A clarion voice shouted from the poop:

“Haul main-tack!

“Come aft with that sheet!

“Set jib and spanker! Look alive there!

“Mr. Gates! see if you can’t get some action out of your watch!”

“Aye, aye, sir!” from the mate.

“Helm a-lee! hard a-lee!”

“Hard a-lee she is!” growled the helmsman, a great, hairy, two-fisted salt, with an enormous quid of tobacco in one cheek, a cast in his eye, and his blue shirt so wide open at the throat that we could catch a glimpse of a dashing looking mermaid, in blue and red, upon his chest.

“Set fore-sail! Be alive, there, Mr. Barney. Those men of yours act as stiff as Paddy’s father—and him nine days dead!”

The stamping of the men on the deck as they hauled on the ropes, a confusion of cries from those in the tops, the squeal of the cables running over the drum, the coughing of the donkey-engine amidships by which the huge anchors had been started from the bottom of Valpariso roadstead, and the general bustle and running about, kept Thankful Polk—who had followed me aboard the big, four-stick schooner—and I right there by the rail, where we would be out of the way. Thankful gave me a sly glance, as he whispered:

“I reckon we’ve caught a Tartar in Cap’n Joe Bowditch—what?”

But I had noted the lines about the skipper’s mouth and the wrinkles at the corners of his quick, gray eyes. Those lines and wrinkles had not been graved in the old sea-captain’s face by any long-standing grouch. Captain Bowditch was a man who liked his joke; and even his voice as he bawled orders from the quarter had a tang of good-nature to it that was not to be mistaken.

“I reckon we’ll get along all right with him, if we play the game straight,” I observed to my chum, and turned then to wave my cap to Cap’n Hi Rogers, of the whaling bark Scarboro, who was now being rowed back to his own ship after leaving us to the tender mercies of Cap’n Bowditch.

“By hickey!” exclaimed the boy from Georgia, glancing now along the deck, “ain’t she a monster? Looks a mile from the wheel to the break of the fo’castle.”

It was the largest sailing vessel I had ever been aboard of myself. The *Scarboro* was a good sized bark, but as we crossed her stern we could look down upon the whaler's deck and wave our hats to the friendly crew that had been so kind to us. Only a single scowling face was raised to ours as the *Gullwing* swept on, a creamy wave breaking either side of her sharp bow. This face belonged to my cousin, Paul Downes, who scowled at me and shook his fist. But I merely smiled back at him. I thought that—at length—I could afford to laugh at my cousin's threats. I was bound straight for home aboard the *Gullwing*; he had eighteen months, or more, to serve aboard the whaling bark.

Seeing that both the captain and the mates were too busy just then to bother with us, Thank and I strolled forward. It was a long, long deck—and the boards were as white as stone and water could make them. There was some litter about just now, of course; but from the look of the whole ship I made up my mind right then and there that if Captain Bowditch was a martinet in anything, it was in the line of neatness and order. The slush tub beside the galley door was freshly painted and had a tight cover; there was no open swill bucket to gather flies; the cook's wiping towels had been boiled out and were now hung upon a patent drying rack fastened to the house, and were as white and clean as the wash of a New England housewife. Every bit of brightwork shone and where paint was needed it had been newly put on with no niggard hand. As the sails were broke out and spread to catch the light wind, many of them were white-new, while those that were patched had been overboard for a good sousing before being bent on again.

Oh, the Gullwing was a smart ship, with a smart skipper, and a smart crew; one could appraise these facts with half an eye.

“Makes you think you ought to have wiped your feet on the mat before stepping in, eh?” chuckled Thank. “I bet we got to a place at last, Sharp, where we’re bound to work. That old feller with the whiskers up there could spot a fly-speck on the flying jib-boom. I wonder he don’t have brass cuspidors setting ’round for the deck-watch!”

Compared with the frowzy old vessels, captained and manned by foreigners, that make American ports, this American ship, American skippered, and American manned, was a lady’s parlor. “She’s a beauty,” I said. “We may work for our pay—whatever it is to be—but thank’s be ’tis no sealing craft. The stench of the old Gypsey Girl will never be out of my nostrils.”

We stood about for a few minutes longer, trying to keep out of the way of the busy crew; but one husky, red faced fellow came sliding down the backstays and landed square on Thank’s head and shoulders, pitching him to the deck.

“Get out o’ the way, you two young sawneys!” growled this fellow. “Don’t you know enough to keep out from under foot?”

Thank had picked himself up quickly and turned with his usual good-natured grin. It was hard for anybody to pick a quarrel with Thankful Polk.

“My law-dee, Mister” he exclaimed. “Is that the way you us’ally come from aloft? Lucky I was right here to cushion ye, eh?”

The red faced fellow, without a word, swung at him with his hard fist doubled. I was a pretty sturdy fellow myself, with more weight than my chum, and I saw no reason for letting him receive that blow when interference was so easy. I stepped in and the bully crashed against my shoulder, his blow never reaching Thank. Nor did he hurt me, either. His collision with my shoulder threw him off his balance and he sprawled upon the deck, striking his head hard. He rolled over and blinked up at me for half a minute, too stunned to realize what had happened to him.

The encounter was seen by half a dozen of the men, but none of the officers spied us. The spectators laughed as though they hugely enjoyed the discomfiture of the bully.

“Sarves ye right, Bob Promise,” muttered one of the A. B.s; “I bet ye got more than ye bargained for in that youngster.”

“Caught a Tartar, eh, Bob?” scoffed another man.

The fellow on the deck “came to” then, and sprang up with every apparent intention of attacking me. I had shielded my chum, but it was plain that I had made an enemy.

“I’ll teach ye, ye young swab!” Bob ejaculated, and started for me.

But the others interfered. Several hustled the bully back.

“None o’ that, Bob Promise!” exclaimed the first speaker. “We’ll have the old man down here in a second.”

“I’ll break that feller’s neck!” cried Bob.

“I dunno whether ye will or not—in a stand up fight,” drawled another of his shipmates. “He looks like he could take care of himself.”

I had involuntarily fallen into an attitude of self-defense. That is where I had the advantage of Thank; I knew something about boxing, and although the bully was heavier and older than I, it was pretty certain that he had no science. At any rate I wasn’t going to let him think I was afraid of him.

“You wait!” growled Bob Promise. “You stand up to me in the watch below, and I’ll eat you alive.”

I had an idea that if he did I should disagree with his stomach badly; but I did not say this. I don’t think I am naturally a quarrelsome fellow, if I am impulsive. Nor did I wish to get in bad with the captain and officers of the ship by being mixed up in a fight.

“Oh, pshaw!” I said, mildly. “I don’t want to fight you, Mister. Thank didn’t intentionally get in your way, and I didn’t mean—
—”

“You struck me, you white livered——”

“I didn’t,” I denied. “You ran against me.”

“Don’t you give me no back talk,” snarled the fellow, but looking out watchfully for the officers now.

“Don’t be mad,” I said, with a smile. “I’m sorry if I hurt you——
”

I guess that wasn't a wise thing to say, although I did not mean to heap fuel on the flames of his wrath. He gave me a black look as he turned away, muttering:

"Wait till I git you a-tween decks, my lad. I'll do for you!"

Thank and I looked at each other, and I guess my countenance expressed all the chagrin I felt, for my chum did not smile, as usual.

"You butted in for me, Sharp," he said, gloomily, "and now that big bruiser will beat you up, as sure as shooting."

CHAPTER II

In Which I Relate My History and Stand Up to a Bully

A fine introduction to my readers! That is the way I look at it. It does seem to me, looking back upon the last few years of my life, that my impetuosity has forever been getting me into unpleasant predicaments. Perhaps if I wasn't such a husky fellow for my age, and had not learned to use my fists to defend myself, I should not have "buted in," as Thankful Polk said, and so laid myself open to a beating at the hands of Bob Promise, the bully of the Gullwing's fo'castle.

A quarrel with my cousin, Paul Downes, on a certain September evening more than a year and a half before, had resulted in a serious change in my life and in a series of adventures which no sensible fellow could ever have desired. For all those months I had been separated from my home, and from my mother who was a widow and needed me, and at this particular time when I had come aboard the Gullwing, my principal wish and hope was to get back to my home, and that as quickly as possible. That the reader may better understand my situation I must briefly recount my history up to this hour.

Something more than fifteen years previous my father, Dr. Webb, of Bolderhead, Massachusetts, while fishing from a dory off shore was lost overboard and his body was never recovered. This tragedy occurred three weeks after the death of my maternal grandfather, Mr. Darringford, who had objected to my

mother's marriage to Dr. Webb, and who had left his large estate in trust for my mother and myself, but so tied up that we could never benefit by a penny of it unless we separated from Dr. Webb, or in case of my father's death. Dr. Webb had never been a money-making man—not even a successful man as the world looks upon success—and he was in financial difficulties at the time of his fatal fishing trip.

Considering these circumstances, ill-natured gossip said that Dr. Webb had committed suicide. I was but two years old at the time and before I had grown to the years of understanding, this story had been smothered by time; I never should have heard the story I believe had it not been for my cousin, Paul Downes.

Mr. Chester Downes had married my mother's older sister, and that match had pleased Mr. Darringford little better than the marriage of his younger daughter. But Aunt Alice had died previous to grandfather's own decease, so Mr. Downes and Paul had received but a very small part of the Darringford estate. I know now that Chester Downes had attached himself like a leech to my weak and easily influenced mother, and had it not been for Lawyer Hounsditch, who was co-trustee with her, my uncle would long since have completely controlled my own and my mother's property.

Chester Downes and his son, who was only a few mouths older than myself, had done their best to alienate my mother from me as I grew older; but the quarrel between Paul and myself, mentioned above, had brought matters to a crisis, and I believed that I had gotten the Downeses out of the house for good and all. Fearing that Paul would try to "get square" with me by harming my sloop, the Wavecrest, I slept aboard that

craft to guard her. At the beginning of the September gale Paul sneaked out of the sloop in the night, nailed me into the cabin, and cut her moorings. I was blown out to sea and was rescued by the whaling bark, *Scarboro*, just beginning a three-years' voyage to the South Seas.

I was enabled to send home letters by a mail-boat, but was forced to remain with the *Scarboro* until she reached Buenos Ayres. The story of an old boatsteerer, Tom Anderly by name, had revived in my mind the mystery of my poor father's disappearance. Tom had been one of the crew of a coasting schooner which had rescued a man swimming in the sea on a foggy day off Bolderhead Neck, at the time—as near as I could figure—when my father was reported drowned. This man had called himself Carver and had left the coasting vessel at New York after having borrowed two dollars from Tom. Years afterward a letter had reached Tom from this Carver, enclosing the borrowed money, and postmarked Santiago, Chile. The details of the boatsteerer's story made me believe that the man Carver was Dr. Webb, who had deserted my mother and myself for the obvious reason that, as long as he remained with us, we could not benefit from grandfather's estate.

While ashore at Buenos Ayres I was accosted by a queer old Yankee named Adoniram Tugg, master and owner of the schooner *Sea Spell*, but whose principal business was the netting of wild animals for animal dealers. He called me "Professor Vose," not having seen my face, and explained that my voice and build were exactly like a partner of his whom he knew by that name. The character of this Professor Vose, as described by Captain Tugg, as well as other details, led me to

believe that he was the same man whom the boatsteerer aboard the *Scarboro* had known as Jim Carver, and the possibility of the man being my father took hold of my imagination so strongly that I shipped on the *Sea Spell* for Tugg's headquarters, located some miles up a river emptying into the Straits of Magellan.

But when we reached the animal catcher's headquarters we found the shacks and cages destroyed and it was Tugg's belief that his partner—the mysterious man I had come so far to see—had been killed by the natives. Making my way to Punta Arenas, to take a steamship for home, feeling that my impulsiveness had delayed my return to my mother unnecessarily, I fell in again with the *Scarboro*.

To my surprise I found aboard of her, under the name of "Bodfish," my cousin, Paul Downes. Fearing punishment for cutting my sloop adrift, when his crime became known, Paul had run away from home and had worked his way as far as Buenos Ayres on a Bayne Line Steamship. There Captain Rogers of the whaling bark had found him in a crimp's place and had bailed him out and taken him aboard the *Scarboro*. Paul didn't like his job, and demanded that I pay his fare home on the steamship, but I believed that a few months' experience with the whalers would do my cousin no harm, and should have refused his demand even had I had money enough for both our fares. The details of these adventures are related in full in the first volume of this series, entitled, "Swept Out to Sea; or, Clint Webb Among the Whalers."

Because I refused to aid Paul he threatened again to "get square," and he certainly made good his threat. I was to remain

but two nights at Punta Arenas and had already paid my passage as far as Buenos Ayres on the Dundee Castle; but Paul got in with some men from the sealing steamer, Gypsy Girl, and they shanghaied me aboard, together with a lad from Georgia, Thankful Polk by name, who had tried to help me. Our adventures with the sealers, and our finding of the whaleship Firebrand frozen in the ice and deserted by her crew after her cargo of oil was complete, is related in number two of the series, entitled, "The Frozen Ship; or, Clint Webb Among the Sealers."

During those adventures I learned that Adoniram Tugg's partner, Professor Vose, escaped death at the hands of the Patagonians, had joined forces with the animal catcher again, and in the Sea Spell they likewise had sought and found the frozen ship and her valuable cargo. Professor Vose boarded the abandoned ship and remained by her when the Sea Spell lost most of her spars and top-hamper and Tugg was obliged to beat into port to be refitted. Meanwhile, from the deck of the Gypsy Girl, I saw the vast field of ice and bergs in which the Firebrand was frozen break up in a gale; was horrified by the overwhelming of the frozen ship, and had the evidence of my own eyes that, whether the mysterious man in whom I was so greatly interested was merely Vose, Jim Carver, or my own father, he had sunk with the Firebrand under the avalanche of ice.

Later the captain of the Gypsy Girl, a Russ named Sergius, and Thankful Polk and I were lost from the sealing steamer and are picked up by the Scarboro which was on her way to Valpariso to refit after the gales she had suffered on the South Pacific

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