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11731

29 August , 1979

Mr. J.N. O'Neill
President
Alumni Association
New York Maritime College
Fort Schuyler
Bronx, N.Y. 10465

Dear Jack:

During a recent visit to Fort Schuyler (to return the repaired model of a Ningpo junk), I stopped at the alumni office, and among other conversations, asked Grace if Norman Brouwer's history of the school had been corrected, revised, printed or had any other "work" done on it. She had no information other than the original manuscript is in the library archives. So I pass the question on to you- with "attachments".

Has the document been corrected or revised, with addendum distributed to all copies extant? If not, it should be, either by Norman or, with proper notation, by others.

I have little first hand knowledge of previous and following periods, but I was in the school during 1923 and '24, and know for a certainty that several depicted situations of those two years are in error. And one that I am very concerned about is a statement attributed to me that I did NOT make because the alleged action did NOT occur. As noted in my review, I questioned Norman about the statement and he replied that he "thought" I had told him such.

So regardless of any other revisions that might or might not be made, I insist on that section being deleted, and herewith request that you have the wheels put in motion.

Sincerely,

cc: Norman Brouwer
Richard Corson

Robert G. Herbert, Jr.
N.Y.S.N.S. '24

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A Review of Norman Brouwer's thesis entitled "Centennial History of the
SUNY Maritime College at Fort Schuyler 1874 - 1974"

A dry, historical report that shows lengthy research, diligent writing and good composition for a college thesis, but I doubt if it would have much appeal to many of the graduates, and very little to the general public.

It would be of more interest if the different eras were broadened and lightened by vignettes, anecdotes and short narratives by cadets, instructors and others connected with the school. And while I realize that pictures increase the cost of printing, the inclusion of deck scenes and activities on board the several vessels and views of the shore establishment and its development would greatly enhance the essay and give visual description to the various phases of the school life, past and present. (I mentioned this to Norman when I saw him a few weeks ago and he said that he had intended a bit of this, but never got around to it.)

Following is a list of errors noted, some of which are probably typographical, while others are no doubt due to the author's misreading, misinterpretation or misunderstanding of the particular matter he is discussing.

Page 30, Line 3 from bottom- "... harbor of Hempstead," should read,
"Hempstead Harbor".

Page 43, Para 2, Line 4- Delete "..encounters between the ships in
their foreign...".

Page 72, Para 2, Line 1- "1910" should be "1918".

Page 81, Para 3- Regardless of Tode's report, which naturally would
be slanted", much of this paragraph is erroneous:-

Line 4- The Board of Governors did all the hiring, the super-
intendent did NONE and learned who his officers were and their
abilities only after they came on board the vessel.

Lines 6 through 9- I don't know about moving the first engineer
out of the ward room but his secretary, Constantine Raizes, was
signed on as commissary steward and occupied a room on the port
side of the gun deck, NOT in the ward room. Anent the Chief Engi-

ineer standing watches- it was by mutual agreement, not outright orders, as implied. Only after we had been at sea for a couple of days did Riesenberg learn that Mr. Davison had had quite a bit of square-rigged sail experience. And by observation, he soon learned that Mr. Boesch, the Executive Officer, out of the naval collier service, though a ST. MARY'S graduate of 1906, had none. So the revised watch-list was beneficial to all.

Page 82, Lines 7 & 8- Repeat note for Page 8I, Line 4.

(Note that Tode's report on which these two paragraphs are based, is dated in December, some five and a half months after he left the vessel before the cruise. So much of the report is based on Hearsay. And although he did a great deal for the school, Tode was a "politician", looking out for Number One.)

Page 83, Lines 3, 4 & 5- Quite erroneous inasmuch as I never made such a statement. I questioned Brouwer about it a few weeks ago, and he replied that he "thought" I had told him this. Since we flew the required black ball at the fore truck indicating a powered vessel under sail only, there was no reason for Riesenberg to "try to fool the pilot". See "Living Again", page 266 where Riesenberg states that the pilot stepped to the telegraph and rang down "full astern."

Page 84, Line 3- Re: "paintings of the ships". I cannot locate it in my scattered "archives", but I recall a notation in an old issue of the alumni bulletin about the Association commissioning Charles Robert Patterson to do two paintings - one each of ST. MARY'S and NEWPORT- which were presented to the school. I recall seeing them in the secretary's office in the Whitehall Building, and the NEWPORT picture was printed on the cover of the 24th Annual Banquet, menu booklet. (For many years, they have been "under the care" of the Tode household, and I hope that one of these days they'll be returned to their rightful owner, the school.)

It would appear from reading pages 80 through 84 that Brouwer is excessively critical of Riesenberg, though when I asked Norman about it, he declaimed any such attitude.

Page 91, Line 3- Typo error- "shear" should be "sheer".

Line 5- Typo error? My shipping list of 1921 shows PROCYON to be 390 feet, not 380.

Line 6- Did Brouwer misread her tonnage, using her register tons for displacement? My list gives a loaded displacement - with normal coal bunkering"- of 11,475 tons.

Page 95, Last line- Just as comment- During the winter of 1923-24 while a new fore lowermast was being built for her, Riesenberg wanted to have the NEWPORT rigged as a bark. And I have a photo of NANTUCKET in 1930, painted black with a sprits'l rigged under her bowsprit.

Page 120, Line 2- "shipyard" should be "shipboard".

Page 122, Line 7- Delete final "s" from company name "Presidents"

Appendix I- Several place names in the Training Cruise Itineraries should be corrected and/or clarified.

1876- "Hempstead" is an inland village. The reference would be to Hempstead Harbor, on which is situated the village (now city) of Glen Cove.

1892- "Hempstead Bay" is an area of sloughs and "creeks" extending from far Rockaway east to Great South Bay on the south side of Long Island, with a maximum draft of about 5 feet. This must also refer to Hempstead Harbor on Long Island's north shore.

There are a few more of the same misleading locations.

If this history is set up for publication, be advised that proper lay-out is to have all pictures with their bottoms at the bottom of the page or at the right hand side.

Respectfully submitted

Robert G. Herbert, Jr.
N.Y.S.N.S. 1924