

Toronto Telegram, May 11, 1946
Schooner Days DCCXLIII (743)
By C.H. J. Snider

Orchids for Evergreens

Birthday Greetings, and many of them, to Capt. William D. Graham of St. Catharines, who this weekend rounds the 91st year-buoy and squares away on the 92nd mile on his life course with a fair wind, started sheets, raffee and fly-by-night set and everything pulling well alow and aloft.

Capt. Graham's adventures as horseboy, seaman, mate, master and construction superintendent of power lines in 68 years of strenuous activity have been mentioned in Schooner Days recently. We hope to hear much more.

Capt. Graham hails: "Feeling fine, and preparing for my friends to call Saturday night, and I do wish you could join the gang and help to splice the main brace. Kindly extend to the Evergreen Club my best Wishes."

There's an old saying. Captain, "Different ships, different long-splices." As a fore-and-after, Schooner Days has no main brace to splice, so couldn't be much help there. But does appreciate the compliment of the invitation, and hope for happy days for you and the gang, for many years after this coal strike is settled. You are assured of our vote and influence for the vice-presidency of the Evergreen Club, whereof Capt. Jas. H. Peacock of Port Hope is president, Capt. John Williams of Toronto is a keen runner up. but you have the edge on him by two years so far.

Mention of Capt. Peacock recalls another Port Hope man who held the presidency of the Evergreen Club so long that he had good prospects of passing it on to his son. This was Capt. Richard Clarke, who died at the green old age of 101 years and 7 months. His son, Capt. Fred Clarke, lived to be 86. He died recently – the 21st of last March – at the home of a grand niece of Capt. Richard, Mr. and Mrs. T. R. Crossley, R.R.4, Port Hope. From him, indirectly, came much of what follows.

Father and son sailed many schooners on the lakes, among them the *John Stevenson*, built at Napanee, arid the *Agnes Hope*, built at Hamilton.



*CAPT W. D. GRAHAM AHOY!
MANY HAPPY RETURNS to St.
Catharines' master mariner, now 91.
Photo by Norman Kennedy, St.
Catharines, this year.*

There is a lot more to be told about the *Agnes Hope* – next week, maybe – but Capt. Clarke’s disposal of the *John L. Lewis* problem is mentioned for President Truman’s consideration.

During the lumber trade from Port Hope to Oswego, a strike agitator appeared at Port Hope docks, attempting to interfere with the “lumber pushers.” Captain Clarke had a gang loading lumber, when he saw the sawdust caesar attempting to stop the men.

The old sea dog, very religious, and very apt with scripture quotations, confronted the agitator, saying, “There’s work to do here; I’m a man that reads his Bible; that Bible says, “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.” In a flash, a closed fist landed on the jaw of the interference and he was felled like an ox.

The agitator was left there to come to and walk away, amid the derision of the lumber pushers, for whom that form of fistic triumph closed the argument. The *Agnes Hope* sailed on schedule.

Captain Richard Clarke lived to his 102nd year of age. When he was 100 years old, he was visited by the entire town council and the mayor, who thus honored his birthday. On his 100th birthday he wrote 100 post cards, without the help of glasses, and mailed them to 100 relatives and friends. Going on 102. with no disease to be detected in his body, but because, as the doctor put it, the machine was “running down,” he went out. He lived on a hill at Port Hope, from which he could see over the expanse of Lake Ontario, and there saw the sailing ships give way to steam barge and the steam freighter. He often went aboard one of the passenger liners calling at Port Hope, for the trip, as the captain’s guest, down the St. Lawrence and back to Port Hope.

Today a scion of that old sailor, David Champ Clarke, a Boatswain’s Mate, 19 years of age, and standing six feet four, weighing about 200, is with his ship at Tsingtao, China, being one of those who were at Okinawa poised for the navy attack on Japan. “Dave” expects to be home this summer, when he will skipper his own small sailing craft among the islands of the St. Lawrence. His elder brother survived three years’ active service, including front line stuff, in France and Germany.

And David’s father (himself too modest to mention this) is a seafarer, too, being a captain in the navy of the Lord. He is the Rev. Dr. G.A. Clarke, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Towson, Maryland. He is a Bluenose fan, and keenly interested in sailing.

Blood will tell. Capt. Richard Clarke was his great-uncle.