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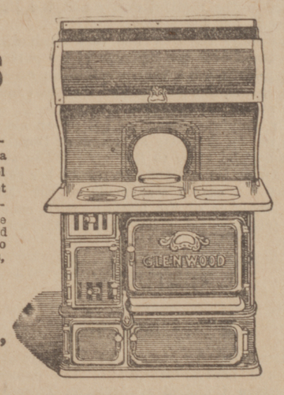
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HOW A BRAVE SEAMAN RESCUED 500 OTHERS FROM AN AWFUL DEATH

Able Seaman George Breeman, of the U. S. S. Kearsarge, was "The Man On The Spot" when Danger Threatened ---Ran Through Rain of Fire, Locked Himself in the Powder Magazine and Saved the Ship.

(New York World.)

Only a handful of a man is George Breeman, seaman of the first class, who saved the battleship Kearsarge and her seven hundred and odd officers and men on the target practice range off Guantanamo a few weeks ago. But the man of him is "all there," beginning at the topmost hair of his head and right down to the soles of his feet, which is a distance of about five feet four inches. He could hide himself comfortably in the breech of any of the Kearsarge's thirty-inch guns.

The afternoon of "the trouble in the for'ard turret," which is the way the men and the afterguard of the Kearsarge speak of the few minutes that took nine bluejackets and two splendid officers out of life, Breeman was doortender of the thirteen-inch magazine. It was his duty to pass along the sections of smokeless powder to the handling-room gang, which was feeding the electric hoists—the dumbwaiters of the ship, which go squirming upward through the decks with meals which fill the bellies of the big guns.

This door-tending for the thirteen "inchers" is an unromantic, back-breaking job. It's below the twenty-four-foot water line, and when it's on, with all the blowers cut off all a man can do is strip and sweat and swear and hustle. And if trouble should come, as it did on Friday afternoon, April 13, it is the doortender's duty to "stick" at his post and close his magazine, so it can be flooded. Breeman "stuck," which another man might have done just as loyally and just as well, and which another man might not have done. If Breeman hadn't it would have been kingdom come for the Kearsarge.

Incidentally Breeman has brought out of his heroism the question: "Is a man any less a hero because he ran away from school to paint houses, and forgot all about 'rithmetic?"

Breeman didn't want to be found, nor did he want to talk the other day when Midshipman Haines, who was the officer of the deck, ordered word passed along that he was wanted aft. It was the day a letter had been received from the secretary of the navy commending Breeman's bravery, awarding him a medal of honor, granting him a gratuity of $100, setting aside rules which will enable him to stand the examination for bo'sun, in November next, and at a bound become a warrant officer, and ordering that these things be recited publicly at a general muster of all hands. Breeman thought that was enough for one day, so he came diffidently, and when Mr. Haines told him that he was wanted to tell his own story of what happened in the for'ard turret, he stammered out a protest of, "There's really nothin' to tell, sir."

"Doesn't Want To Be a Hero."

"Say, this is downright misery, sir," Breeman began, all the while backing toward a gangway ladder which led from the quarter deck to the superstructure deck. "Come up here, sir, please, 'cause I don't want those folks aft to think I'm blowin' about myself," and Breeman fled up the gangway ladder.

"Now, I know you want to put me in the paper as a hero an' all that, but I really don't want it. You go to the ship's writer and he'll show you the letter what came this morning from the navy department. It's all in there, and all you need say from me is that I appreciate it very much and that I'm mighty glad I've had such a fine show. That's all."

Breeman was for fleeing for'ard that instant, but his embarrassment got the better of his legs. He blushed through his tan and looked like a boy caught with his fingers in a jam pot.

"Ain't I goin' to go up for a bo'sun?" he repeated in his own way, and his fine brown eyes lit up at the vista that opened with the suggestion. Instantly they changed to a strange seriousness.

"You saa, sir, it's this way," said he slowly, "I know that's a fine chance I've got, but I'm kind of afraid about the examination. They come along in November, an' that's too close to study it. I ain't so good on 'rithmetic an' I'm liable to get bilged. I didn't finish schoolin' before I went to paintin' houses over in Passaic, an' that's the trouble.

Breeman's Story "As He Gave It"

"About the turret? Now, sir, you seem to be the right kind, an' I'll tell you all I know about it, which ain't much, but on one condition: You print it just as I give it to you, for I don't want the fellows here to think I'm puttin' on airs; an' besides, when a thing isn't told right, it just makes a fool out of you, doesn't it? Sure!

"Well, to make it clear, we'll begin at the bottom, an' go up from the thirteen-inch handlin' room. The magazine opens into this room, an' my place was at the magazine door. That door cuts in through the after-bulkhead of the handling room on the starboard side. From this room the electric hoists run up to the gun platform in the turret. Next overhead to the thirteen-inch handling room, comes the eight-inch handling room, with the same kind of hoists to feed the 'superimposed.' Net to that comes the splinter deck, then



George Breeman

the berth deck, then the gun deck. That would bring you out where you can see the sky. But we have nothin' to do with that.

"It was in the afternoon, just after dinner, that the trouble came. I had lost track of how many shots we had fired from the thirteen-inch guns, and then the order came to case firing, an' it was so quiet, you could hear a pin drop. One of the men out in the handlin' room, who could see up to the shelving platform or grating just behind the breech of the left gun, said he guessed the run was over. There were two sections of powder lyin' on the handling room floor to go up, an' with that I started to heave them back to the magazine. Then the hoist brought down a section. I was leanin' back against the bulkhead gettin' a breath and wonderin' why the rest of the sections didn't come down, when it all happened as quick as you could snap your fingers.

"There was a sputterin' of something overhead on the serving platform. A gush of smoke came down, and with it a lot of burning canvas and spark-like things. The smell of the powder was enough for me. I got busy with the section of powder that was at my feet, hove it into the magazine, went in after it head first, and slammed the door shut behind me. I was supposed to stick, and I stuck.

"It was light for a minute, then the electrics snapped out. I knew they were flooding, and that the water had struck the wires somewhere. Then it was dark as hell. I heard the men shouting around in the handling-room outside, an' I guess it was about ten minutes afterward somebody hammered on the magazine door and I opened up.

"It was all over. They told me that Lieut Hudgins had got his, an' I was sorry for that. He was a fine man to have over you. They said Mr. Graeme, who'd come over from the Maryland to umpire, had got his, and then one by one I found out the names of the men who had got theirs. It makes a fellow kind of sick in the pit of his stomach to hear news like that.

"I don't know how it happened, but from what I'm told there was a section of powder in the gun and two lyin' on the platform to be sent below. The breech was open so a man could throw himself in and pull out the last section, and a man with the shell tongs was standin' by to reach for the shell and get that out. The handle ends of the tongs touched the switchboard of the left gun's ram, an' away went the fireworks. The juice melted the tongs and sent the metal going into the powder."

And as Breeman described the events of that deadly Friday afternoon they tally with the official reports.

The next thing was to get Breeman to have his picture taken, but he said he couldn't see "nohow" why anybody should want his "mug." Finally he was driven to a point where he had to decide, and he went aft and held a council with Mr. Haines, who evidently told him it would be all right, and that nobody would misunderstand him if his picture were printed.

After a long search, which Breeman didn't seem to take to kindly, he found his friend, Brinker, a marine corporal, who owns a camera which he knows how to use. "Brink" called Breeman a durned fool," photographed him, and was most solicitous that it should do "Bree" justice.

"About The Bosun Business."

"Now, sir, about this bo'sun business. Don't you think that's a pretty good job?" queried Breeman. "I've only got sixteen more days of my four years to serve, an' I don't know what to do. That's a job that's worth $1,200 a year at the first, an' it makes you somebody, but there's the damned 'rithmitic an' a lot of things I learned at school an' have forgot. I got my seamanship down pat all right, but if they go to heaving too much schooling at me, why, I'll likely go up in the air. Cram? Oh, yes, maybe I could study up ashore when my time's out.

"Why don't I ask somebody aboard about the examinations? No; that wouldn't do. They'd think I was too anxious an' had the swelled head. Nothin' doin'!

"What do my folks say? Oh, that was fine the day I went home to my old dad. He was tickled at what I had done. Seems that when the first reports came home from Guantanamo they all thought something had happened to me, and mother said she knew I had better have stayed in Passaic painting houses. Now that I got a medal she says I wouldn't have ever got that with a paint brush.

The Problem of 'Rithmetic

Breeman's 'rithmetic would keep forcing itself back into the game of talk.

"Now," he began, looking out over the river absently, "if I could pull up in my 'rithmetic and the other things for the examination— That bosun's job's a good job, sir, and I have a fine chance to make something out of myself. I wonder if they'd pull the 'rithmetic out of the examination, if they found out I was all right every other way. You see, I'm only twenty-six and I'm whole and sound."

Breeman paused again and went day dreaming. He was brought back aboard with a question as to his family.

"Sure we're Americans," was his answer. "Father and mother are Dutch—both Hollanders. They've been living in Passaic forty years. They came to Jersey when my sister was a little baby. There's a brother older than me and a brother younger, and both have families, but you don't catch me that way. No sir," and this came out firmly and with a wise nod of the head.

"Well, sir, I think you're right," added the magazine door-tender. "I'll go up for the examination, and if I don't land on my feet, why, I can paint houses in Passaic again."

Venezuela's Late President, Who Has Abdicated, and His Successor.



General Cipriano Castro.



General Juan Vicente Gomez

The season of church picnics is approaching, and already some of these outings have been arranged for. The Waterloo street Baptist picnic will be held at Westfield Beach on Saturday next, June 9th.

The annual outing of the Main street Baptists will also be held at Westfield Beach on the 28th of this month. The Brussels street Baptist Sunday school has arranged for holding their outing on Partridge Island on Dominion Day, July 2nd, and they intend to make it a notable event.

WELCOME FOR DR. GATES

Westmount Baptists Hold Reception for Ex-Saint John Pastor.

The congregation of the Westmount Baptist Church gave a reception Tuesday evening to their pastor, Rev. Dr. Gates and to Mrs. Gates. Representatives from various churches in Westmount were present and welcomed Dr. Gates on behalf of their respective churches. The Methodist body was represented by Revs. Wood and C. T. Scott; the Presbyterians by Rev. Dr. Clarke; the Congregationalists by H. J. Ross, and sister Baptist churches, by Rev. Dr. J. A. Gordon. Mayor Knox also extended his felicitations. A letter was read from Rev. Mr. Busell, of the Episcopal Church, regretting that he was unable to attend, owing to a prior engagement.—Montreal Star.

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