

Tomaz
od uplovanja št. 11. ladije, Saída.
1898, 1899.

»THE MEMORIES OF THE JOURNEY
OF THE HIS MAJESTY SHIP SAIDA«

THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN MILITARY NAVY SHIP JOURNEYS AS SEEN
THROUGH THE EYES OF SLOVENIAN SEAMEN



POMORSKI MUZEJ "SERGEJ MAŠERA" PIRAN
MUSEO DEL MARE "SERGEJ MASERA" PIRANO



INTERNAUTICA
INTERNATIONAL BOAT SHOW

The clothes and underwear were usually changed on Sunday and Thursday. The laundry was done on Friday morning. The clothes were hung on the ropes that were prepared especially for the occasion. It was very difficult to wash in the salt water, the soap simply glided through the fingers and would not foam. The fresh water could not be used to do the laundry. Once washed, the clothes were hung and were supposed to be taken off the ropes only upon the order. We were waiting for the order every time like the wolves to get our clothes back from the ropes. The one who got back all his clothes (and clean too!) could count himself very lucky. With the permission of the officer on duty we could wash also during the night if our duties permitted that. The night laundry could also have been dangerous: one could put his clothes under his head during the night. Waking up from one's dreams in the morning, you could put your dirty laundry back into the sack with the rest of your clothes.

At the Red Sea there is a constant temperature up to 36°C in the shade. There we wore white, textile clothes. Twice a day we got a cold-water splash on the upper deck to cool down but the cooling down lasted only while the water was running. We wore neither shoes nor underwear. Even that was too much. During the night we lay without bedclothes, instead of underwear we had swimming pants on. Although we were very tired, no one could sleep because of the heat.

In the days of extreme heat and with no wind, we had to work with the machines. We had to rake charcoal and throw it into the kettles. Nobody liked that job although they gave us half a litre of wine every 2 hours. I had compassion with the ship's stokers who had to work there much longer than we did! The skin peeled off from our faces and some of the limbs got stiff. Some of my fellow sailors had to rest for a couple of days because of exhaustion.

On 19th November the ship's commander gave a speech on the occasion of the birthday anniversary of our beloved Empress Elisabeth whom everybody of us bore in his mind. We were really touched and a full-hearted "hurray" was heard from all the present seamen.

In the afternoon we expected to reach the equator. We got properly prepared for the occasion. Dressed in our ordinary clothes and barefoot the whole crew gathered at the back of the upper deck. Near the equator, closely observing the sextant instruments, the servants of the sea god Neptune, dressed up like the blacks, took over the steering wheel and brought the ship to a gradual halt. Neptune and the goddess of Equator came along on the carriage, wearing a crown. They were accompanied by the music and some other men dressed in all kind of clothes.

Neptune got up to the command bridge, took over the ship's control and on his command the ship stopped. Meanwhile on the upper deck his companions began funny games, such as cutting the sailor's hair with a big wooden scissor, shaving them with a sword, pulling out the teeth with an ordinary tongs. These were very funny scenes. But all of a sudden it becomes a real war: the water is spilt and splashed. Everybody has to be baptized: one after another with no exception, being a sailor or an officer, even the ship's commander is not spared. Many members of the crew fled on the lower deck but nobody stayed dry. An

officer even took a couple of pictures of all that cheerful chaos. Afterwards we changed our clothes. At the evening meal we were served twice as much wine as usual. The upper deck quickly got dry in the hot afternoon. This is how our crew celebrated our first Equatorial baptism that is an old custom among the sailors on every ship.

Ivan Rupnik

Born in 1880 in Podkraj near Ajdovščina, he volunteered into the navy in 1895. After finishing the Navy Non-Commissioned Officers School in Šibenik in 1898, he boarded the Saida ship and sailed on her around the world. He later became an artillery sergeant and in 1917 a navy clerk.



A dance on the ship (a photograph from the photo album of Metod Ciril Koch from his journey around the world on the Donau ship (1894-1895))

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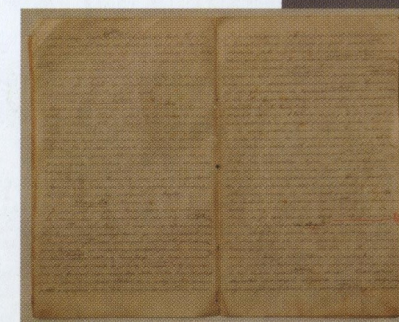
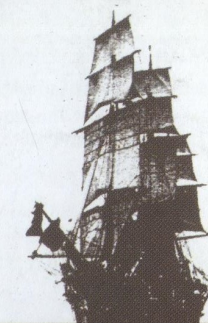
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A manuscript of the memories by Ivan Rupnik and the photographic material are kept by the Maritime Museum "Sergej Mašera" Piran



The manuscript "The Memories Of The Gone By Days" by Ivan Rupnik (a photograph by Igor Presl)



The map from the diary "The Memories Of The Gone By Days" by Ivan Rupnik (a photograph by Igor Presl)

