

GERALD F. MACMULLEN 1897-1981

Many of us were fortunate enough to have known Jerry MacMullen personally, others knew and loved him through reading his fine books and interesting articles published for many years in the San Diego Union. All of us deeply regret his passing last month, leaving a place among Maritime Historians that will be hard to fill.

Jerry was born in San Francisco in 1897, and came to San Diego at an early age, where he promptly fell in love with the beautiful harbor and the ships that plied in and out of it's waters. This love affair was to last the rest of his life. After graduating from the University of California at Berkeley, where his studies under Professor Herbert Bolton created an early love of California history, he returned to San Diego and became a staff writer for the Evening Tribune and later the San Diego Union.

During World War II, MacMullen served four years as a Naval Intelligence Officer, assigned to 11th Naval District in San Diego, and later with Western Sea Frontier in San Francisco and San Pedro. After the War, Jerry retired as a Commander in the U.S. Naval Reserve. In 1948, he brought out his first book, "Paddle Wheel Days in California". It was illustrated with his own pen and ink drawings, for among his many accomplishments, Jerry was a fine sketch artist and painter. Later, he co-authored "Ships of the Redwood Coast" with Jack McNairn, again using his own drawings. This book is about the lumber schooners which operated up and down the Pacific Coast----the "little steam tea-kettles" as Jerry called them. His "Star of India: Log of an Iron Ship", is the wonderful story of this great old sailing ship which has become the headquarters of the San Diego Maritime Museum. He was one of those persons instrumental in bringing the "Star" to San Diego, and later devoted much of his time in supervising the restoration work on this fine vessel. His last book, "They Came By Sea" is a story of San Diego from its very beginnings to modern times, and is illustrated with many fine photographs of the harbor and waterfront.

