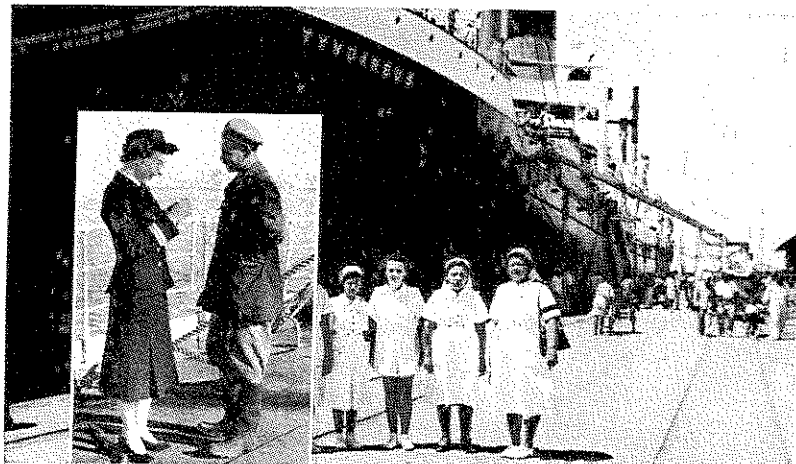


# A Woman Doctor Goes to Sea

by JOHN KERR



Dr. Lindsay, in tropical dress (shorts) on the Penang quayside with ambulance shore staff before the Tyndareus sailed for the Red Seaport of Jidda with 2,000 Mecca bound pilgrims. A baby born on this trip was named "Tyndareus." Inset shows Dr. Lindsay with Indian sailor.

Would you have the courage to quit office work at the age of 28 and start a five-year university course in medicine? And would you keep on trying to storm an exclusively male stronghold after 32 shipping companies had replied, "No vacancies for women sea-going doctors?"

Dr. Jessie Macintyre Lindsay, a slim unassuming Scotswoman—"Forty last birthday and not afraid to admit it"—accomplished these things mainly to gratify a lifelong wanderlust.

Not until her thirty-third application was she successful in finding a ship that would take a woman doctor. That was five years ago, and her ship was the Blue Funnel liner *Ascanius*. Her first voyage was outward bound for Port Said, Colombo, Penang, Singapore, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Yokohama, Kobe, Kure and other alluringly named Oriental Seaports.

On the first trip Dr. Lindsay experienced a full-scale-China Sea typhoon. Ashore, she indulged her wanderlust with visits to foreign schools, hospitals, shrines, temples and the fragile-appearing houses of the native people.

The contrasting pageantry and poverty of the Orient unfolded before her perceptive eyes like a color film. Shipping on five different liners of the Blue Funnel Company, she covered large portions of the Orient as well as Australia.

Dr. Lindsay's most eventful voyage was on the ship *Tyndareus*, which was carrying 2,000 Mecca-bound pilgrims from Penang and Singapore to the Red Sea port of Jidda. It was intensely humid in the prevailing monsoon, and in the steaming crowd it was not surprising that one of the pilgrims ran amok. However, he had injured six persons before Dr. Lindsay could administer a sedative.

The humidity also had a bad effect on the ether supplies, which evaporated quickly. There was a particularly difficult birth, during which Dr. Lindsay feared that the suffering pilgrim mother would regain full consciousness before the birth of her child. Those were scaring moments in her memory of the voyage

but, as she expressed it, "Mother and child both survived—and so did I" The boy was given the middle name, Tyndareus, in honor of the ship on which he was born.

About a year ago, this intrepid Scottish woman physician wanted scenic changes so she joined the cargo liner *Clan Macintyre*, the only woman in a crew of a hundred—80 of them Indians—and the first woman doctor to sail with the 78-year-old Clan line of Glasgow. Each trip is a four-month voyage around Africa or India, and 12 passengers are accommodated at a cost of \$1,000 each. In this leisurely situation, Dr. Lindsay not only takes care of medical needs but also helps entertain the passengers as well.

Having seen Capetown, Port Elizabeth, Durban, Lourenco Marques and Beira in Africa, and Bombay, Madras and Calcutta in India, Dr. Lindsay is now ambitious to extend her sea safaris to North and South America.

At sea she reads a great deal, keeps abreast of medical scholarship, and is considered a good companion as well as a good doctor by her shipmates. She has learned to work out the ship's position by modern calculations and is continually surprising seasoned sailors with her knowledge.

"Indian place names fascinate me," she says, "especially Bedi Bunder and Vizagapatam. I learned to spell the latter when I was the only European in the 900-bed Indian hospital located there."

THE picture of Dr. Lindsay with one of her Indian crew mates reminds her of gifts she has received from the kindly Indian people she has met.

"Parrots and live fowl are sometimes awkward to handle, but they are given with the best of intentions," she says with a delightfully nonchalant manner that makes one understand why the shipping lines broke an old tradition to receive this competent and adaptable woman physician.

We predict that American women doctors will be glad to make her acquaintance.