

Grateful Nation Honors Explorer



THURSDAY, APRIL 10, 1969

Telegrams from President Nixon and Secretary of the Navy John D. Chaffee were among congratulatory messages received Sunday by Rear-Admiral (ret.) Donald B. MacMillan on the 60th anniversary of the discovery of the North Pole by the late Robert B. Peary.

Admiral MacMillan, 94, is the only surviving member of the historic Peary Expedition that in 1909 successfully reached the North Pole. Admiral MacMillan also conducted exploration of Hudson's Bay, was commander of the MacMillan Baffin Land Expedition, the MacMillan North Greenland Expedition and the MacMillan Polar Expedition, to name only a few of the Arctic expeditions he has headed.

He spent four years marooned in the Polar regions, from 1913 to 1917, when he headed the Crocker Land Expedition for the Field Museum. The party which was to have taken off expedition members at the end of the year, was unable

to reach them and weather and other vicissitudes prevented their rescue for four years.

During this time the Provincetown-born explorer and his company dug in and for all intents and purposes lived the lives of Eskimos, successfully combatting the hazards of the Arctic to which many explorers had succumbed.

The anniversary Sunday of the successful Peary Expedition was marked by the gift to the explorer of a half-model of the famed schooner Bowdoin in which Donald MacMillan made 32 voyages to the Far North. His success in navigating ice-laden Arctic seas won him the nickname of "Lucky Mac."

The scale half-model was presented him by Dr. Edward Morse of Camden, Me., who with Mrs. Morse spent the weekend with the MacMillans at their home here at 473 Commercial Street. It was the gift of the Schooner Bowdoin Association of which Dr. Morse is

president. About four feet in length, the model was built by George Hodgdon of East Boothbay, Me., a son of one of the original builders of the famed Arctic schooner. The schooner itself is now in Camden undergoing extensive renovation. It will be part of a permanent marine museum complex there.

The holder of many honors during his long and adventurous career, the explorer today, his wife says, retains the unfailing good spirits that characterized him in storm or good weather. Miriam MacMillan, who sailed with him as a crew member on many of the Bowdoin voyages, declares "Mac just paced the deck," calmly and with no show of anxiety when trouble loomed.

Answering the telephone this week at the MacMillan home, Miriam MacMillan commented: "Cheerful? Yes, indeed, he has

the same good spirits he always had! That's one thing about Mac — he never loses them! He's out now pacing the deck" — the deck on the water side of the MacMillan home.

President Nixon's telegram to Admiral MacMillan said the President was proud "to join the many Americans who are one in admiration for you; your courageous spirit will live forever to inspire each new generation." The telegram from the Secretary of the Navy said a "grateful nation" honored him.

Additional messages included those from Roger Howell, Jr., president of Bowdoin College; Melville Payne, president of the National Geographic Society; Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe; Walter A. Wood, president of the Explorers' Club, Governor Francis Sargent, members of the Board of Selectmen and Town Manager Robert Hancock.

Veteran Of Arctic Seas Undergoes Renovation



PHOTO BY B. A. ROBIDOUX

The covered vessel above in Camden Harbor, Me., is the protected hull of Admiral MacMillan's Arctic schooner, Bowdoin, veteran of 32 voyages to the Far North. Protected from the weather, it has been undergoing extensive repairs since its removal from Mystic Seaport, Conn. When fully restored the Bowdoin will be a permanent part of a marine museum complex in Camden. The schooner is expected to be ready for her sails later this Spring.