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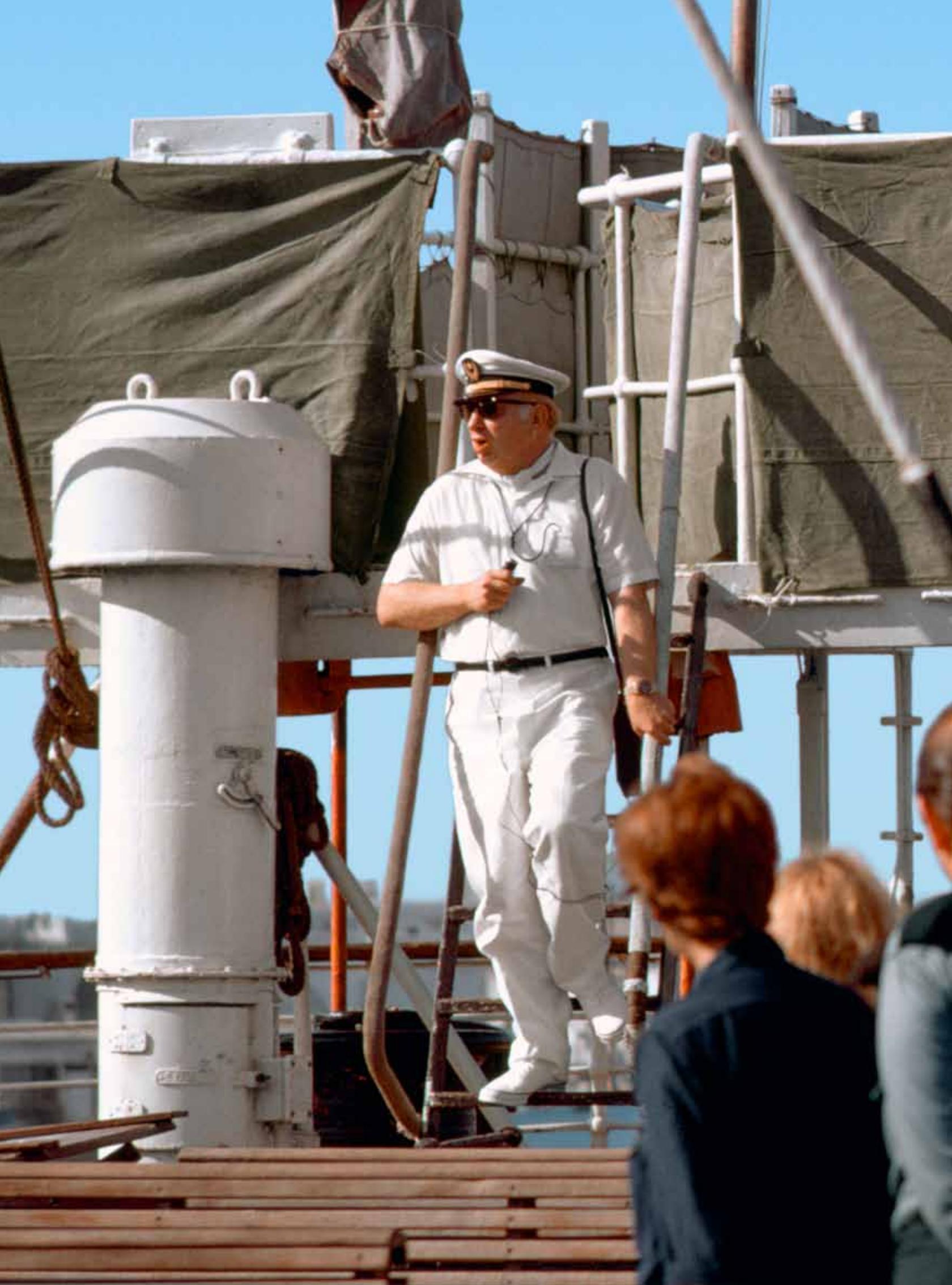
The L. Ron Hubbard Series

MASTER MARINER **AT THE HELM ACROSS** **SEVEN SEAS**



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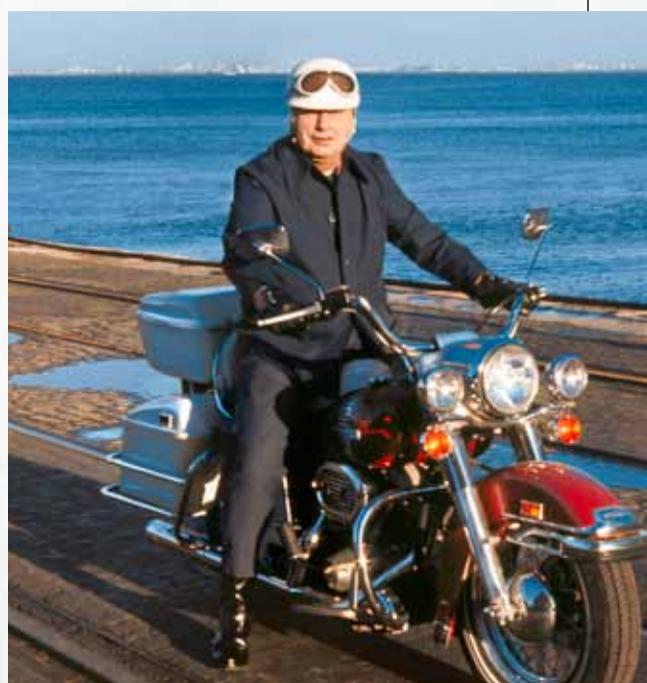
OLD MAN SEA

by L. RON HUBBARD

I NOTICED TODAY WHILE I was giving my bike some exercise that the points and cliffs about eight miles to the west have very long reefs extending out from them. I had not noticed this before, but today waves were breaking over them and they looked quite dangerous. I recalled two or three years ago taking over the con when I felt the ship was too close to that coast and getting it well out to sea again. Today I observed from the beach that there had been ample reason to do so. Although such things are marked on charts, lines of ink are nowhere near as dramatic as the real thing.

As I am doing some work on early discoverers and ships of five hundred years ago, I am tremendously impressed by the courage and adventurousness of those fellows. Old Man Sea was many times more dangerous in those days than now, because of the lack of technical advances, the absence of charts and no real knowledge of winds or currents in the areas in which they were sailing. I have done some of this “off the chart” sailing in Alaskan waters, where the yellow of the land simply faded out into the blue of the sea and not even the coastline was known. That was hairy enough to suit most anyone.

When you realize that the old-timers did their great voyages of discovery in ships very little bigger than *Enchanter*, you will see that they had their nerve with them. But Old Man Sea is a playmate you have to respect in any age.



Cádiz, Spain, 1973; astride a classic
Harley-Davidson Electra Glide