

Gazing across the prairie I see the ripple of ocean waves in the distance. It's the sun playing tricks on me as it warms the prairie landscape. But still, it reminds me of younger years – days of adventure on the high seas!

My name is Charles Sankey. I'm 36 years old but have lived a life of adventure that many can only dream of. My first sea voyage was to China and Australia, with the Merchant Marines out of London - I was only 16!

Shortly after, I was called to join the Cutty Sark – a clipper. You might remember the Cutty Sark. She's famous for tales of mutiny and murder! It was one of the most thrilling and disastrous voyages of my life!

Our captain, James Wallace, was a kind-hearted man. He'd let me, a senior apprentice, steer the ship from time to time. What a thrill to feel the surge of power under full sail! We'd take flight with the wind and it'd be all hands-on deck!

Yes, Captain Wallace was a good man. But our first mate - Sydney Smith? He was another matter – a relentless slave driver, that one!

We were on our way to Indonesia with a load of tea when the trouble began. Blows between Smith and one of the deck hands resulted in a murder. We all knew it was the first mate, but suddenly he disappeared.

It became clear that Captain Wallace had helped Smith escape.

We were ordered to proceed to Japan, but we refused. The crew threatened mutiny. The Captain realized then that, in helping a murderer escape, he'd be investigated and held responsible.

Captain Wallace up and added to the drama by throwing himself overboard! We scrambled to lower a boat to find him but the number of shark fins in the frothy water

spoke to Captain Wallace's grisly fate.

We returned to Indonesia, but from there things got worse. The Cutty Sark acquired a ruthless captain - and we had an outbreak of cholera. A full-scale mutiny almost landed me in chains! After a long and tense voyage, we finally docked in New York.

Ahh, solid ground!



I said goodbye to the Cutty Sark and took a train to Toronto to join my family. They'd just immigrated from Ireland. I followed my brother to Boissevain and took up raising cattle.

Beautiful country, but, just a bit too uneventful for my blood.

Wanderlust tugs at me. I might head up to Alaska.

I hear there's gold to be found in the Yukon.

See ya' later!

Betty Sawatzky and David Neufeld adapted 'Sankey Explores the World' from a story written for Vantage Points 3.