

# **HIS LAST LOG**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649542017

His Last Log by Morgan S. Woodward

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**MORGAN S. WOODWARD**

# **HIS LAST LOG**



**HIS LAST LOG**



# HIS LAST LOG

BY  
MORGAN S. WOODWARD

CHICAGO  
R. R. DONNELLEY & SONS COMPANY  
1903

## PUBLISHER'S NOTICE

Morgan S. Woodward belonged to the great army of American business men—an army in which the term of service is usually for life, and furloughs are few and far between.

Unexpectedly called upon to visit London and Paris, upon a business mission, which he hoped to complete in a few days, and return directly home, a delay in the negotiations at Paris left at his disposal a few weeks of leisure, with nothing to do but await developments. This was perhaps the longest period of absolute leisure of his strenuous life, and *mirabile dictu!* the Old World lay all about him, with a congenial traveling companion at hand. What more natural than that he should proceed to "do Europe in four weeks"?

In early life Mr. Woodward had served for some years in the United States Navy, and true to the habits of his sailor-days, he entered his daily experiences in a log, which from time to time he mailed to his family, in lieu of ordinary correspondence. The sheets of this log preserved by his family embody a faithful account of his travels, and are published in the following pages without change, aside from the exclusion of a few references to matters personal to himself or family.

It is proper to explain that a few months before this



trip a distressing accident had destroyed the sight of one eye, and so impaired the sight of the other that up to the time of his death, a short time after his return, he was constantly harassed with apprehensions of total blindness. In spite of this cruel affliction, to which he had had so little time to adapt himself, Mr. Woodward's log was faithfully maintained during his entire absence. It was invariably written from memory, after a wearisome day's work of sight-seeing, often in the small hours of the night by the dim and trying light of hotel gas-jets and candles, yet the manuscript is a marvel of neat, business-like penmanship, free from blot, erasure, or interlineation, and as legible as copper-plate. Written hurriedly, without a suspicion that it would be seen by any one outside of his immediate family circle, his language abounds in colloquialisms, and even slang, but these verbal "short cuts" were evidently resorted to in many instances to save his jaded eye the toilsome road around a conventional circumlocution. While it would have been an easy task to clear his manuscript of these imperfections, it must be confessed that the utter informality of his language tends to give his story the intimate personal quality, which is its greatest charm. We are taken into his confidence as it were, and over the coffee and cigars are permitted to listen to an inimitable tale of travel, enlivened by the very exclamations and vocal inflections of one who knew how to tell his story, and tells it before it has had time to grow cold.

In its quality of intimate self-revelation, *The Last Log* is as unique in its way as Pepys's *Diary*, with the praiseworthy difference, that it was written by an honest, self-sacrificing husband and father for the entertainment of his household, while Pepys recorded his, at times shady, experiences in cypher, with evident intent that they should not be perused by Mrs. P.

Were this its only merit the log would hardly merit publication, for it is simply the record of a flying trip over the beaten highways of European travel. Mr. Woodward probably saw nothing that had not been seen and described *ad nauseum* by every American "sight-seer" who has had his little fling of travel, and come home to inflict upon his long-suffering compatriots his impressions of Europe. But there is a difference between seeing and observing. Mr. Woodward's log is an exceptional tale of travel, not because he traveled over so much ground in so short a time, but because he observed so much of what he saw, and recorded so minutely, accurately, and entertainingly so much of what he observed.

Again, his story is a genuine impromptu, recorded on the spot, without books or reference, out of his prodigious memory, which enabled him each night, in spite of physical and mental fatigue, hurry or worry, to reel off before our eyes a moving picture of each day's impressions, with the faithfulness of a cinematograph. Beyond this mechanical property, it shows an artistic sense of perspective and relations, which unconsciously

holds him true to the Greek canon, "Nothing too much." Last, but not least, there is a steady glow of humor, of the genuine American brand, a humor that is reminiscent of the frontier and pioneer, and redolent of the forest, streams, and prairies of our native land, a humor that is as caviare to the European as it is a cherished heritage of the American, because it is bred in the bone—a New World characteristic born of New World environments. Hardly a day passes that the log does not record some humorous experience, told in a manner worthy of the best school of American humor.

His early morning experience at Lucerne; his midnight arrival at Venice; his souvenir of Pompeii; his visit to an ideal country-home in England, may be cited out of many similar incidents that are, one and all, worthy of a permanent niche in one's memory.

To those who knew the man, and can realize the crushing affliction under which it was written, there is much of pathos as well as humor in Mr. Woodward's *Last Log*, for in a few months after his return he was granted his final discharge from the army of toilers, in which he had served so long and arduously, and his log is to them the record of a brave and lovable soul, who always thought of others before he thought of self.