PROCEEDINGS OF THE
MERCHANT MARINE COUNCIL
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

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Proceedings of the

MERCHANT MARINE COUNCIL

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The Merchant Marine Council of the United States Coast Guard

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FRONT COVER

A vivid portrayal of a merchant mariner in action. The chief mate of the SS *Pennsylvania Sun*, Mr. Howard W. Quigley, fighting to save his ship after it was torpedoed off the Atlantic Coast on July 15, 1942. See hole from explosion in lower left corner. See *Traditions of the Sea* on page 153.

BACK COVER

A Tug (lower left) noses in to the bow of the *America* as lines are slacked off prior to departure. Photo credit U. S. COAST GUARD.

DISTRIBUTION (SDL 63)

A: a aa b c d (2); remainder (1)
B: e (35); c (16); f (4); h (3); g (2); remainder (1)
C: a b (less Quonset Pt.) c d e f g i m o w (1)
D: i (5); a b c d e f g h j k m (1)
E: o (New London only) (1)
List 141M
List 111

"The Arte of Navigation, demonstrateth how, by the shortest good way, by the aptest Direction, & in the shortest time, a sufficient Ship, between any two places (in passage Navigable,) assigned: may be conducted: and in all stormes, & naturall disturbances chauncyng, how, to use the best possible meanes, whereby to recover the place first assigned."

—*John Dee, 1577*

"If war should be thrust upon us, seapower gives us the ability of projecting our strength overseas. Otherwise, our Army becomes either a local defense force or a band of refugees. A modern fleet has the ability to move quickly to any threatened areas of the world, and on arrival, to serve a variety of ends. It can support troops already ashore; it can assist the landing of additional troops. It can strike the enemy's airfields and supply bases; and if needed, it has the ability of making massive attacks deep into the heart of any continent. Seapower also insures that the worldwide airbases which we have built around the free world are maintained, fueled, fed, and supplied."

—*The Secretary of the Navy, Charles S. Thomas*

TELL IT TO THE COAST GUARD

FOR many years a problem has plagued Coast Guard search and rescue operations—the delay before the Coast Guard is notified that a vessel is missing.

On the one hand untold thousands of man-and-ship hours and tremendous amounts of money have been expended futilely in pursuing searches based upon false or erroneous distress reports. On the other hand, many vessels have been lost and lives wasted because nobody called the Coast Guard as soon as there was good reason to suspect a vessel was in trouble, and the Coast Guard, not being clairvoyant, did not commence the search until too late.

Three recent disasters, all occurring off the Atlantic Coast have served to emphasize the importance of calling the Coast Guard as soon as there is reason to believe a vessel is in trouble. In each of these cases, a timely report that the ship was overdue and unreported might have resulted in greater saving of life.

In the first case, a freighter capsized and sank apparently without having sent out a radio distress call. The survivors had been in the water 30 hours before the first word reached the Coast Guard that the vessel was unreported and possibly in difficulty.

In the second case, a small freighter was enroute from a Gulf port to a New England destination when she disappeared. *A period of 6 days and 13 hours elapsed between the last radio communication with the ship and the time the Coast Guard was first alerted that the ship might be in trouble.*

In the third case, a fishing vessel never returned from a trip off Georges Bank. *A period of 13 days elapsed between the last communication between the missing vessel and another fishing vessel and the time the Coast Guard was first alerted that the vessel might be in trouble.*

VESSEL CAPSIZED

The first casualty occurred to a modern 9-year old freighter, adequately equipped with radio-communication facilities. Loaded with 9,000 tons of South American iron ore, she had almost completed her homeward-bound voyage to an East Coast port. Early in the morning of the 12th day, the sea and wind picked up, the freighter began to roll heavily, and ore was heard shifting in the holds. Although the vessel's speed was greatly reduced, at about 9:00 a. m. a particularly heavy sea struck the starboard bow. The vessel lurched to port, more cargo shifted, and the ship gradually inclined more and more to port. The engines were stopped. At 9:45 a. m. the crippled ship began to take water in her stack and plunged to the bottom stern-first soon thereafter.

A few minutes before she went down the radio operator, who did not survive, was seen working his equipment. While in the water, he told persons who did survive that he had sent a message but had received no answer. There was no evidence that this message was ever heard by any ship or station.

Since the lifeboats had not been lowered or cleared away so they would float free, the entire crew found themselves in the water supported by life preservers, flotsam and dunnage—their destiny in the lap of the Gods. Would someone guess their plight and start help on the way? The seawater was warm but humans are not built to live long in water and there were sharks hovering in the vicinity!

COAST GUARD NOTIFIED

The last *regular* radio communication from the ship had been transmitted at 8:00 p. m. the previous evening, Wednesday. Her position and speed as reported would have placed her arrival at the harbor entrance at 2:00 p. m. Thursday. At 3:53 p. m. Friday afternoon, the nearest Coast Guard Rescue Coordination Center received a telephone call from the local agent of the company, stating that the ship was overdue since 2:00 p. m. Thursday and that the company had been unable to contact the vessel since 8:00 p. m. Wednesday night. At 4:18 p. m., one Coast Guard PBM seaplane, already airborne, was diverted to search the predicted track of the lost ship.

At 4:26, Commander in Chief, Atlantic Fleet, U. S. Navy, was contacted and requested to alert all naval vessels in the area. At 4:54 p. m., an "All Ships" message on the 500 KC distress frequency was transmitted and within minutes acknowledgements were received from several merchant vessels. By 5:00 p. m. a Coast Guard radar-equipped plane was in the air to search the track from the last-known position, throughout the night, if necessary. All available Coast Guard cutters got underway to proceed toward the area and await further orders pending results of the air search.

At 2:20 a. m. the next morning, Saturday, a Greek freighter radioed that voices had been heard in the water and that lifeboats were being lowered. Two Coast Guard planes were ordered to this position to drop flares to assist the Greek seamen. The first survivor was picked up by the Greek ship at 7:28 a. m., having been in the water almost 46 hours. During that day a total of 11 survivors and 12 bodies were recovered. Of the original 48-man crew, 37 were lost. The survivors included 2 messmen, 2 wipers, 1 ordinary seaman, 1 AB, 1 deck utility, the boatswain, the 2d electrician, an oiler, and the chief steward—not a single ship's officer had lived through the harrowing ordeal.

OVERDUE—PRESUMED LOST

The second casualty occurred at some point along the Eastern seaboard on an unknown date. There were no survivors, no distress messages received from the stricken ship, and no actual clues as to her final demise. The vessel was a small bulk freighter converted from an LST-type landing craft. She was engaged in the carriage of bulk cargoes between Gulf ports and Atlantic coast ports. She sailed from a Gulf port on a Friday, loaded with a full cargo of bulk sulphur and carrying a crew of 23 men. Good weather was encountered during the passage through the Straits of Florida. She was last sighted off Jupiter Inlet on Sunday afternoon, the third day of her voyage, northbound and apparently in no difficulty. Another vessel reported sighting a northbound LST-type vessel on Tuesday several hundred miles north of the Sunday position, but no positive identification was made.

On Sunday morning a message was received from the vessel by a Florida commercial radio station. At that time there was no indication the ship was having any trouble. There was no further communication with the small freighter. The vessel which reported the sighting on Sunday was also proceeding on a northerly course and encountered heavy weather during the next several days, with shifting winds, force 7 to 9, and mountainous seas.

The Commanding Officer of a navy salvage vessel in the general area where the freighter was missing, stated later, "My vessel was experiencing mountainous seas, worse than any experienced in two hurricanes; and I had to hold her into the sea at two-thirds speed. I think the vessel would have capsized if I had not maneuvered in this manner."

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MASTER'S INSTRUCTIONS

The master of the missing vessel had been instructed to report his estimated time of arrival at least 72 hours prior to arrival. Since the voyage would normally require about eight days, the company office expected to receive a report from the vessel on the Tuesday or Wednesday following the Sunday report from the Florida radio station. However, taking into consideration that another of their vessels had been delayed by weather conditions in the same area, no action was taken until Thursday noon at which time an interrogatory message for the ship was filed with a coastal radio station. However, all radio efforts to contact the vessel were unsuccessful. At 9:30 p. m. Saturday evening, *six and one-half days after the last contact with the vessel*, a company official telephoned the Coast Guard with a request for assistance in establishing communications with or the whereabouts of the vessel.

Since the area yet to be traversed after the vessel's last known position was so large and there was no indication as to where she might be, the Coast Guard immediately undertook a communication search. Meeting with no success in contacting the vessel or any vessel which had sighted her, the Coast Guard instituted a wide-spread sea and air search. During the next 8 days, planes searched a total of 303.8 hours and covered an area of 262,400 square miles; surface ships searched an area of 9,000 square miles.

Two weeks later a tanker reported sighting, in the Florida Straits, a white ring buoy with the name of the missing freighter clearly visible on it. Aside from this one faint whisper, from the dead as it were, no other clue or tangible bit of evidence was ever found. The secret of the fate of the overdue bulk freighter remains a well-kept secret; one more mystery to be added to the annals of the sea.

The third casualty occured somewhere off Georges Bank. A fishing vessel departed a New England seaport on January 11, 1955, with a crew of 11, in company with several similar type vessels. They arrived off the fishing ground the next day and fished until January 13, 1955, when the weather became too rough and the gear was secured.

At 0300 the morning of the 13th, the missing vessel was in communication with one of the other boats and it was agreed that they would establish contact at 2000 that night. The other vessel attempted to establish contact but without success. No reports were made of this incident and the other vessels continued fishing until January 26 when they returned to port.

When the vessel did not return with the others, the owner queried the other Masters and then contacted the Coast Guard and reported his vessel overdue. A search was started one hour later and continued until February 3, 1955, without success.

The other Masters testified that while the weather became too rough for fishing it was never rough enough to cause a vessel to founder.

In light of the circumstances brought out by the investigation of the incident, the Marine Board of Investigation was of the opinion that the loss of the vessel could possibly have been caused by fire; drifting onto a shoal, of which there are many on Georges Bank; by dragging in rough weather with one drag out, and be pulled down to a considerable list by her own gear and swamped; or the more remote possibility of having been struck by a large vessel.

CONCLUSIONS

Any conclusions to be drawn from the time-delay in reporting these overdue ships to the Coast Guard is inevitably no better than "second-guessing" or "hindsight." Any conclusion that earlier reports to the Coast Guard may have led to greater saving of life in the first case and the saving of some lives in the second and third must remain forever in the realm of conjecture. Yet, it is obvious that such conclusions can and will be made. It is extremely difficult to draw any rule or standard as to when to sound the alarm.

For every one case in which the Coast Guard was not called in time, there are two cases of being called needlessly, of persons prematurely alarmed for the safety of others when there was no real reason for the alarm. Therefore it is difficult to say the company officials in the above three cases should have sounded the alarm sooner. Responsible and considerate, they were naturally reluctant to trigger a search which would cost heavily in manpower, ships, planes, and expense, even though there would have been no criticism from the Coast Guard if the alarm had turned out to be a false one.

The shortcoming, if any, would seem to rest more properly with the reluctance of the Masters of the first two vessels to send out an alarm when danger actually threatened, or to keep their companies and other interested parties better informed as to their intentions, positions, difficulties, etc. There is a very natural and understandable reluctance on the part of American skippers to call for help or to "cry wolf". This reluctance is based upon a strong heritage of self-reliance dating back to the clipper ship era when American mariners sailed the Seven Seas completely cut off from home or any other source of help for months or years at a time.

There is probably not one Master afloat who is not reluctant to send out a distress call, unless it is absolutely necessary, thereby admitting, for the world to hear, that *his* ship is in trouble. Yet, in this day of instantaneous electronic communication, high-speed search planes, and efficient search procedures, it is difficult to reconcile the loss of a ship along the American coasts (or anywhere in the world) with the complete absence of any distress message.

In the first case, approximately 45 minutes elapsed between the first indication of immediate danger and the final sinking. Since all the ship's officers and the radio operator perished, it can never be definitely known whether a distress call was intended to be sent or even attempted to be sent. However, the meager evidence available indicates that no attempt was made to transmit a distress message until almost the last minute—too late. In the second case, the world will never know if there was time to send a distress message after danger arose, if an attempt was made to send it but was unsuccessful, or if the Master purposely delayed thinking the vessel would recover from temporary trouble. The available evidence only indicates that no such message was received.

REPORTING SYSTEM

Analysis of the circumstances involved in the loss of this vessel wherein there was apparently no cause for alarm by the owners up to as much as four and one-half days after the last contact on a coastwise voyage, brings forth the obvious conclusion that such a reporting system leaves much to be desired. There are so many variables involved in any reporting system, that no hard and fast rule as to at what interval such reports should be made is practical. Indeed, a compulsory system could lead to jamming of certain circuits at various times, and monumental problems of administration such as fleet check-off procedures, call-backs, re-checks, and the problems of countless false alarms when ships do not or cannot deliver their routine reports. Nevertheless, there is considerable room for improvement in many systems presently in effect wherein no report of a vessel's position or circumstances is filed for days at a time.

The casualty involving the fishing vessel presents different problems

(*Continued on page 157*)

CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS

ON July 2, 1956, The House of Representatives' Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee opened hearings in Washington, D. C., to inquire into the necessity or desirability for additional Federal legislation to keep pleasure boating safe. The Committee is headed by Representative Herbert C. Bonner (D–N. C.).

The first witness to testify was Vice Admiral Alfred C. Richmond, Commandant, U. S. Coast Guard. He commented on the growth of motorboating over the past few years and described it as a phenomenon of unprecedented magnitude.

The Admiral stressed the need for education and said that whether or not additional or amending legislation comes about unremitting, widespread nautical education will continue to be a prime requisite for our boating public.

"As we see it, education in the safe equipping and operation of boats is a fundamental necessity in keeping the casualty rate to a minimum. Too many of our people today are probably shoving off for a spin in their power boats with only the sketchiest of information concerning the proper operation of a motorboat, the rules of the road, overloading, lights, safety equipment, effects of weather and so on. It is mute testimony to the innate common sense of the vast majority of the American people that many many more of them come in from a day's cruise safe and sound than the relatively few who die or suffer through their own ignorance or the carelessness or recklessness of perhaps one waterborne 'hot rod'."

Other witnesses who testified were: Mr. Ralph G. Klieforth, President, National Association of Engine and Boat Manufacturers; Mr. John B. Tanner, National Commodore, U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary; Mr. Joseph E. Choate, Chairman, Motorboat and Yacht Advisory Panel to the Merchant Marine Council of the United States Coast Guard; Mr. Robert M. Phelps, President, American Yachtmen's Association; and Mr. E. S. Terwilliger, Secretary, American Boat and Yacht Council.

Captain W. Hilton Lowe, President, American Pilots' Association also testified and urged that legislation be enacted which would change the "right-of-way" rules for motorboats.

"The navigators of the large vessel class must be in the possession of a license adequate to cover the vessel being conned—maneuvered, in other words. It can be assumed therefore that such navigators are trained and reasonably experienced. It can also be assumed that in meeting, crossing, or overtaking other vessels in confined waters, and narrow channels, that the navigators of such vessels will follow, to the best of their ability, the rules and regulations prescribed by law and also the fundamentals of good seamanship in narrow waters which they have learned through practical experience. When such navigators have the misfortune to become involved in an accident they must, within twenty-four hours, prepare a lengthy report describing the conditions under which the accident occurred and how they applied the prescribed 'Rules and Regulations' for navigation. Later they must appear at an official Coast Guard Hearing to be questioned under oath. The decision rendered as to fault may affect their license, sometimes to the extent of being deprived of the right to pilot ships for a given period of time.

"There are no such regulations for pleasure boat owners, yet they have the same free use of waterways as the larger vessel. I do not believe for a minute that small boat owners should be deprived of that privilege but do believe that legislation should change the 'right-of-way rules' and that small boat operators should keep clear of larger vessels operating in confined waters when it is obvious that they are obstructing channels to which the big fellows are confined."

Hearings were held in Detroit on August 8, 1956, and in Chicago on August 9th and 10th. The hearings were well attended and the Committee received many comments. Some of the organizations whose representatives testified at the Detroit hearing were: American Power Boating Association, Michigan Waterways' Commission, Browning Steamship Company, Emory Ford Steamship Company, local U. S. Power Squadron units and Coast Guard Auxiliary flotillas.

Some of the organizations which were represented at the Chicago hearing were: The Outboard Boating Club of America, Lake Michigan Yachting Association, Chicago Cruising Outboards' Club, Chicago Park District, local U. S. Power Squadron units and Coast Guard Auxiliary flotillas.

The Committee will hold additional hearings during the fall in various cities near large boating areas. It is anticipated that in this way every major boating area in the United States, i. e. Gulf, New England and

(Continued on page 157)

TRADITIONS OF THE SEA

The roll of American Seafarers who have performed their duties in an outstanding and meritorious manner in accordance with the highest traditions of the sea is long but never completed.

Four men who should have a place on this honor roll are: CAPTAIN FREDERICK LYALL; HOWARD W. QUIGLEY, chief mate; HARRY J. MOORHEAD, chief engineer; and WOODROW WILSON, first assistant engineer.

These men were officers on the SS *Pennsylvania Sun*, a tanker which was torpedoed off the Atlantic Coast. Through their actions the vessel was saved and returned to service. *(See front cover.)*

A summary of the incident is as follows:

> The *Pennsylvania Sun* was torpedoed on July 15, 1942. Within a few minutes the tanker was a mass of flames and burning oil rapidly encircled the vessel.
>
> The Captain ordered "ABANDON SHIP" and the crew, 57 in all, were picked up by a Navy destroyer and landed at Key West, Florida.
>
> The next day the Navy contacted the Captain, advised him that the fire had abated somewhat aft, and asked him whether he thought the ship could be saved. He replied that if he could obtain sufficient foamite and pumping equipment, he believed the ship could be saved.
>
> On the afternoon of the 16th, a Navy tug put the Captain, Chief Mate, Chief Engineer and First Assistant aboard the flaming tanker with a hundred cans of foamite and portable pumps. The four men fought the raging fire the rest of the day and on into the night. Finally, at 11:30 p. m., the fire was extinguished.
>
> The tanker was taken in tow and towed to port where repairs were made.

Although these men were never presented with a formal award, their devotion to their ship and disregard for personal danger was in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Merchant Marine.

AMERICANS WIN LIFEBOAT RACE

In a thrilling upset victory last Memorial Day, in the Narrows off Brooklyn, the crew of the *Esso Brooklyn,* put the opposition in their wake and won the annual International Lifeboat Race. By doing so, they returned the JOSEPH W. POWELL TROPHY, symbol of world lifeboat racing supremacy, to the United States for the first time since 1939. Six lifeboats were entered from the following ships: *Esso Brooklyn* (U. S.); *General R. M. Blatchford,* (U. S.); *Siboney,* (Nor.); *Heina,* (Nor.); *Braheholm,* (Swed.); and *Libreville,* (Nor.).

The winner crossed the finish line six lengths in front, completing the mile in 15:20. The *Blatchford* finished second, a length and a half ahead of the strong-driving *Siboney; Heina* was fourth; *Libreville,* fifth; and the *Braheholm* sixth.

The members of the winning crew are Robert P. Maher, Coxswain; Alvin C. Kennedy; George A. Fidler; Thomas F. Larkin, Jr.; Basil O. Challenger; Robert F. Brandon; Arinfinn Olsen; Leroy J. Jackson; Jose A. Ahorrio; Harold J. Mercer; and John F. Rooney.

The first race was held in 1927. It was sponsored by the Neptune Association, an organization of shipmasters and deck officers. The race has been held every year since then except during World War II, when it was suspended. The race was revived in 1952 under the sponsorship of the American Seamen's Friend Society. It is now held under the auspices of the International Seamen's Recreation Council, Port of New York.

Congratulations are in order for the winning crew. It is hoped that they repeat their success next year.

NEW NARCOTIC LAW

A new narcotic law which should do much to discourage narcotic trafficking and use by merchant seamen was signed by the President on July 18, 1956.

It is Public Law 728 and will be known as the "Narcotic Control Act of 1956."

Section 108 of the Act applies to merchant seamen. In effect it amends 21 USC 184 (a) and provides for heavier penalties and specifically includes marihuana.

21 USC 184 (a), as amended, reads as follows:

UNLAWFUL POSSESSION OF NARCOTIC DRUGS AND MARIHUANA ON VESSELS

> Whoever brings on board, or has in his possession or control on board, any vessel of the United States, while engaged on a foreign voyage, any narcotic drug not constituting a part of the cargo entered in the manifest or part of the ship stores, shall be imprisoned not less than five or more than twenty years and, in addition, may be fined not more than $20,000. For a second or subsequent offense, the offender shall be imprisoned not less than ten or more than forty years and, in addition, may be fined not more than $20,000.

It is anticipated that this law in conjunction with Public Law 500, which authorizes the Coast Guard to revoke the documents of any seaman convicted of a narcotic law violation, will go far toward removing this undesirable element from the ranks of merchant seamen.

Figure 1. THE NEW CHAMPIONS! M. G. Gamble, President of Esso Shipping Company, presents Powell Cup to Coxswain Robert P. Maher as tired but happy crew looks on. Left to right are: George A. Fidler, Robert G. Brandon, Leroy J. Jackson, Arinfinn Olsen, Mr. Gamble, Alvin C. Kennedy, Cox'n Maher, Coach Sydney Wire, Thomas F. Larkin, Jr., Basil O. Challenger and Jose A. Ahorrio.

nautical queries

Q. What is meant by "pratique granted"?

A. "Pratique granted" generally means that the quarantine officials have been on board and declared the vessel free from infectious diseases.

Q. (a) How often must the lifeboat crews of a passenger vessel be exercised in their duties in the lifeboats, i. e., rowing, and operating hand-propelling gear in the water?

(b) How often must each lifeboat of a passenger vessel be lowered to the water?

(c) What members of the crew, if any, are not required to exercise at the oars?

A. (a) Every 3 months.

(b) Every 3 months.

(c) Female members.

Q. Why is it important to use the proper knot for each particular purpose?

A. Knots so tied greatly increase the grip as power is applied to them, yet are easily untied when not in use. Improper knots may slip at the crucial moment and moreover are very hard to untie once they have been jammed.

Q. A vessel with a beam of 50 feet has a freeboard of 10 feet on her high side and a list of 5°. What is her mean freeboard if the low side is inaccessible to take the freeboard reading?

A. $\tan 5° = \frac{x}{25}$

$.08749 \times 25 = X$

$X = 2.1872$

Approx. 7' 10'' freeboard

Q. How are the draft marks read?

A. The numerals are 6 inches high. The bottom of the numeral is the even foot. The top is the even foot plus 6 inches. There is 6 inches space between the top of one numeral and the bottom of the numeral next above it. In reading the draft, inches are estimated by the eye.

Q. (a) What is the purpose of load lines on vessels?

(b) How do you measure freeboard?

A. (a) Load lines are assigned to vessels with the purpose of affording a positive means for the ship's personnel, law enforcement agencies, and other interested parties to determine if the vessel has been loaded in excess of the limitations placed upon her by law for the various combinations of route, season, cargos, and water densities that she may encounter. The load line markings are so placed that they assure that the vessel has sufficient reserve buoyancy, compartmentation, and strength; as well as ample freeboard so that in combination with the other factors involved, the vessel possesses reserve stability. Sufficient freeboard is required so that the deck provides a safe working platform for the crew, and the hatches and other openings are high enough above the water for the weather to be encountered.

(b) The freeboard is measured vertically downward at the sides of the vessel amidships from the upper edge of the deck line to the water level. The assigned or allowed freeboard is measured to the upper edge of the applicable load line. The measurement should be made on both sides and the mean of the two used as the actual freeboard; or if it is only possible to measure the freeboard on one side, the reading should be corrected for list, if necessary.

MERCHANT MARINE STATISTICS

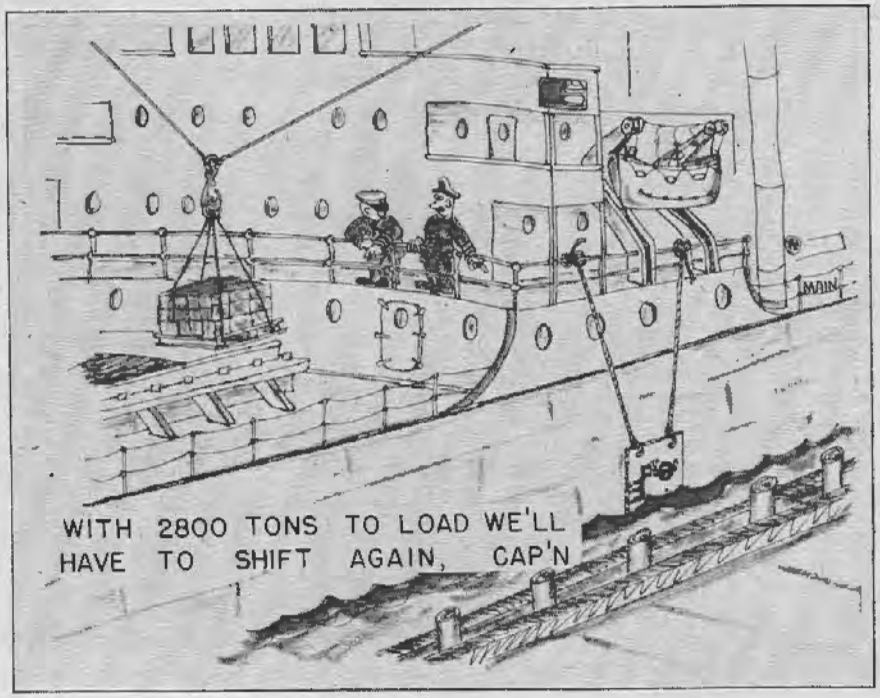
There were 1,091 vessels of 1,000 gross tons and over in the active ocean-going U. S. merchant fleet on July 1, 1956, according to figures released recently by the Maritime Administration. This was six more than the number active on June 1, 1956.

There were 53 Government-owned and 1,038 privately owned ships in active service. These figures did not include privately owned vessels temporarily inactive, or Government-owned vessels employed in loading grain for storage or undergoing repairs. They also excluded 35 vessels in the custody of the Department of Defense, State, and Interior.

There was an increase of 1 active vessel and a decrease of 3 inactive vessels in the privately owned fleet, making a net decrease of 2. One tanker and one freighter were sold foreign. The number of subsidized vessels increased by 8 to 306.

The Maritime Administration's active fleet increased by 5, while its total fleet decreased by 13, with the sale of one freighter to Korea, and two freighters and 10 tankers transferred to the Navy. This made a net decrease of 15 vessels in the total merchant fleet, active and inactive, which numbered 3,204 on July 1, 1956.

Orders for 4 new tankers and 1 tanker conversion brought the total of merchant oceangoing vessels being built or under conversion to 57.



LESSONS FROM CASUALTIES

DRY CLEANING OR HOW TO DIE CLEANING

THE chances are that every one makes at least one potential fatal, foolish mistake in his lifetime and, if he is lucky, he lives to tell the story.

Recently, the bosun on a T2 Tanker used up his quota of foolish mistakes.

One bright clear Sunday, a few days out of port, he decided to do a thorough house cleaning job in his forecastle. One of the tasks that confronted him was what to do with the oily dungarees and skivvies that were standing in the corner. He realized these were beyond the soap and water stage and he would have to use a strong cleanser—what could be better than gasoline?

It so happened that a drum of aviation gasoline had been left on board at the last port of discharge and had been stowed in the paint locker. With a bundle of clothes in one hand and a 5-gallon can of gasoline in the other he proceeded to the washroom. The washroom was equipped with an electric, agitator-type, washing machine. He poured the gasoline into the machine and put in a load of clothes. The first batch came out reeking but spotless and the bosun, an energetic soul, went back to his forecastle for any odds or ends of clothes he might have overlooked.

As he loaded the machine for a second wash, an ordinary seaman noticed the spotless dungarees hanging from a line and stepped inside the washroom for a look.

"What you doing, bosun?"

The bosun replied, "Dry cleaning."

"Bueno! That is how we do it in Puerto Rico."

Just then a tremendous "whoosh" put an end to the conversation. The washing machine disintegrated in a mass of flame. The two men were flung to the deck by the force of the explosion. Fortunately, neither was fatally hurt, although they suffered severe burns. The fire was quickly extinguished.

Since the men were not smoking, it is believed that the gasoline vapor was ignited by a spark from the switch when the machine was started.

The "lesson" to be learned from this casualty is all too obvious. Although it is the first such accident to be reported in a long time, it is possible that it has become a practice to dry clean with gasoline. Ships' officers should make sure that such "dry cleaning" is not a practice on their ship.

TRAGIC ACCIDENT

ONE of the most tragic and gruesome accidents ever to occur on an American merchant ship occurred last July. It is related here only because of the lesson to be learned.

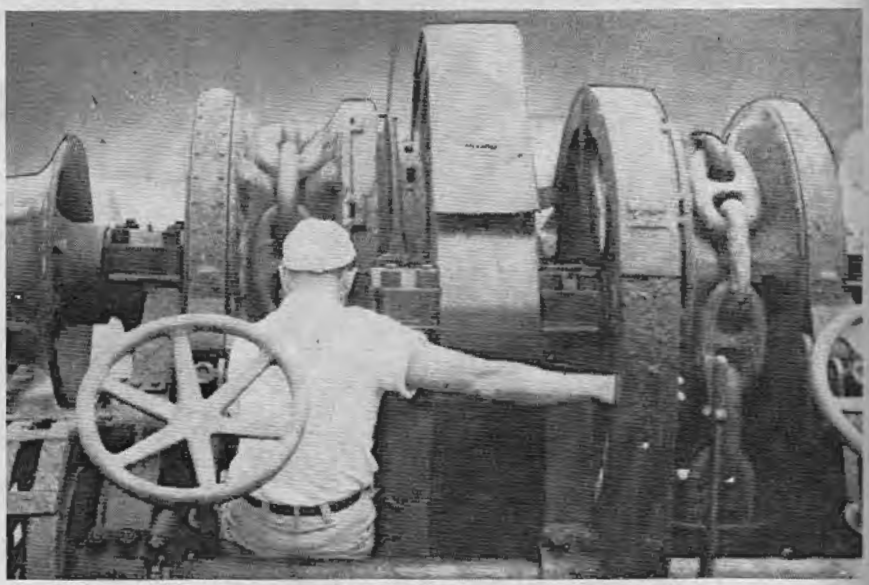


Figure 1. Demonstration of boatswain's position immediately before casualty.

The accident occurred on a T–2 tanker and involved the ship's bosun, an experienced sailor, 26 years of age. He had served on tankers for 9 years and on this ship for 3 months.

The tanker had just departed port. The Bosun, assisted by two deck maintenance men was fitting into place the port chain pipe cover. The cover consisted of a pair of semi-circular steel plates, hinged at one corner so that they would fit yoke-like about the chain and keep water from the chain locker.

On the anchor windlass there was a large intermediate drive gear, 41 inches in diameter, amidships and aft of the main windlass machinery. The gear had six spokes; the opening between each was in a triangular shape measuring approximately 12" on each

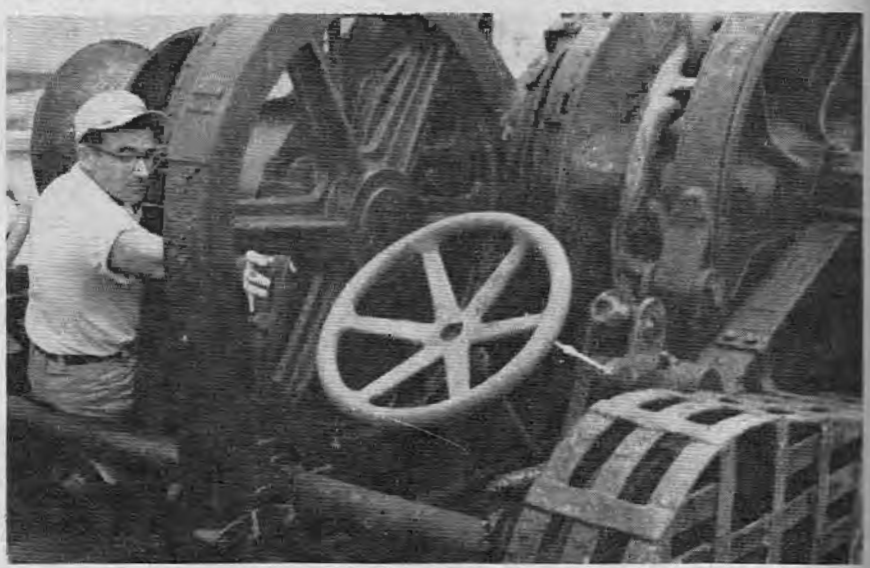


Figure 2. Showing how the boatswain reached between the spokes and grasped the control lever.

side. The upper circumference of the gear was protected by metal sheathing. The Bosun was sitting on the windlass drive shaft directly behind the port chain pipe. The intermediate gear wheel was on his right side. Four inches to the starboard from the after edge of the gear wheel was the windlass control lever.

As the men put the cover in place, it was found that the chain had to be moved a few inches before it would close about the link. There were two ways to reach the control lever; one was to stand up and step around the gear wheel; and the other was to reach between the spokes. The Bosun chose the latter method.

He intended to just move the wildcat a few inches but as he grasped the control lever he moved it too far forward and the large gear spun around. It moved so rapidly that it caught his arm with a downward motion and drew the upper part of his body into the triangular space between the spokes—he was decapitated!

Fortunately, the accident happened so suddenly the Bosun made no outcry and could have felt no pain. Obviously, the Bosun trapped himself without thinking. This was the case of an experienced man tempting fate and losing. Since any piece of moving machinery can be dangerous if a person places himself in a position where he can be hurt, it follows that a person should not put himself in that position. It is appreciated that the mate on the ship cannot watch over every action of the crew; however, every attempt should be made to keep them ever alert to the consequences of foolish acts.

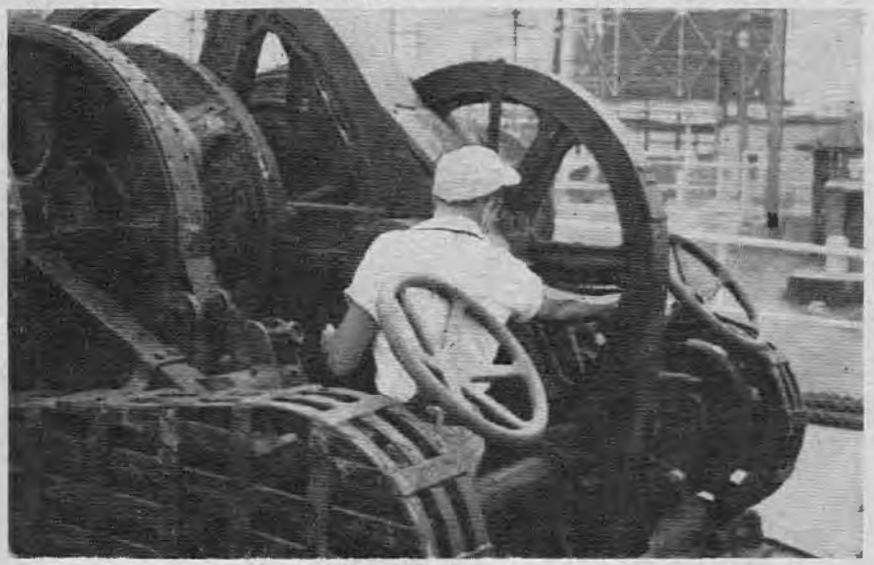


Figure 3. **View from port to starboard.**

Figure 4. **View from above showing position of bosun in relation to chain pipe.**

COAST GUARD

(Continued from page 152)

their operation is such that there can be no set schedule for arrival in port. Their length of stay on the fishing grounds depends largely on the catch.

In summing up, three conclusions can be drawn:

(1) For the cargo ship Master: If you are in trouble, get on the air. The Coast Guard handles hundreds of calls each year in which it finally develops that there was no real distress, but would prefer to receive every one of these calls rather than see one life lost because no call was made. In weighing your reluctance to inaugurate a needless distress against the possible risk to the lives of your crew, there can be no question as to which decision you should make.

(2) For the owner: If there is the slightest doubt in your mind as to the safety of your ship, call the Coast Guard. If there is no actual cause for alarm, the Coast Guard may well be able to assist you in locating or establishing communication with your vessel. If events prove that there was good cause for alarm and lives are saved as a result of your action, your own satisfaction and clear conscience will be not the least of your rewards.

(3) For the fishing fleet: Through the various trade associations or by agreement among owners and masters, exert some concerted effort among yourselves toward checking on each other. In this way a search can be undertaken when the vessel is reported overdue, or fails to answer a prearranged radio call instead of waiting nearly two weeks after the last communication.

One final reminder—if you find the cause for alarm has disappeared, the vessel is safe, and no Coast Guard assistance is needed—*please*, call and *cancel the request.*

HEARINGS

(Continued from page 153)

the West Coast, will be covered. Hearings were scheduled in Astoria, Oregon on August 30th, Tacoma, Washington on September 4th, Seattle, Washington all day on the 5th, San Francisco on September 7th, San Pedro on September 11th and San Diego on September 13th.

The Committee urges that spokesmen for boating organizations, State or municipal officials, or other persons who may have views on the subject of pleasure boating safety, communicate with Mr. John M. Drewry, Chief Counsel to the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.

MERCHANT MARINE PERSONNEL STATISTICS

MERCHANT MARINE OFFICER LICENSES ISSUED

QUARTER ENDING 30 JUNE 1956

DECK

Grade	Original	Renewal
Master:		
Ocean	66	662
Coastwise	9	55
Great Lakes	2	8
B. S. & L.	8	74
Rivers	7	53
Radio officer licenses issued	30	84
Chief mate:		
Ocean	43	133
Coastwise		
Mate:		
Great Lakes		
B. S. & L.		
Rivers	6	26
Second mate:		
Ocean	43	120
Coastwise		1
Third mate:		
Ocean	78	114
Coastwise		
Pilots:		
Great Lakes	8	10
B. S. & L.	194	112
Rivers	100	33
Master: Uninspected vessels	25	34
Mate: Uninspected vessels	25	33
Total	644	1,552
Grand total	2,196	

ENGINEER

STEAM		
Chief engineer:		
Unlimited	64	721
Limited	22	172
First assistant engineer:		
Unlimited	56	270
Limited	12	5
Second assistant engineer:		
Unlimited	46	305
Limited	2	1
Third assistant engineer:		
Unlimited	138	336
Limited	4	1
MOTOR		
Chief engineer:		
Unlimited	20	88
Limited	24	91
MOTOR—continued		
First assistant engineer:		
Unlimited	12	19
Limited	8	10
Second assistant engineer:		
Unlimited	2	5
Limited		
Third assistant engineer:		
Unlimited	48	3
Limited		
Chief engineer: Uninspected vessels	7	18
Assistant engineer: Uninspected vessels	5	9
Total	470	2,054
Grand total	2,524	

ORIGINAL SEAMEN'S DOCUMENTS ISSUED

Type of document	Atlantic coast	Gulf coast	Pacific coast	Great Lakes and rivers	Total
Staff officer	34	15	30	7	86
Continuous discharge book	8	13	1	10	32
Merchant mariner's documents	1,329	560	520	2,823	5,232
AB any waters unlimited	139	32	40	44	255
AB any waters, 12 months	31	11	32	159	233
AB Great Lakes, 18 months	3		10	58	71
AB tugs and towboats, any waters	1	1	1		3
AB bays and sounds					
AB seagoing barges	1		1		2
Lifeboatman	140	10	132	29	311
QMED	207	61	43	139	450
Radio operators	6	2	1	1	10
Certificate of service	1,240	575	521	2,783	5,119
Tankerman	14	42	9	54	119
Total	3,153	1,322	1,341	6,107	11,923

NOTE.—The last 11 categories indicate number of endorsements made on United States merchant mariner's documents.

WAIVER OF MANNING REQUIREMENTS

Waivers	Atlantic coast	Gulf coast	Pacific coast	Great Lakes	Total
Deck officers substituted for higher ratings				4	4
Engineer officers substituted for higher ratings	1		1	1	3
O. S. for A. B.	1				1
Wiper or coalpassers for QMED				2	2
Total Waivers	2		1	7	10
Number of vessels	2		1	5	8

INVESTIGATING UNITS

Merchant Marine Investigating Units and Details investigated a total of 2,562 cases during the second quarter of 1956. From this number, hearings before Examiners resulted involving 43 officers and 250 unlicensed men. In the case of officers, 2 licenses were revoked, 5 were suspended without probation, 14 were suspended with probation, 4 licenses were voluntarily surrendered, 4 cases were dismissed, and 3 hearings were closed with admonition. Of the unlicensed personnel, 35 documents were revoked, 13 were suspended without probation, 81 were suspended with probation, 97 documents were voluntarily surrendered, 25 hearings were closed with admonition, and 38 cases were dismissed.

APPENDIX

AMENDMENTS TO REGULATIONS

[EDITOR'S NOTE.—The material contained herein has been condensed due to space limitations. Copies of the Federal Registers containing the material referred to may be obtained from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington 25, D. C.]

TITLE 46—SHIPPING

Chapter I—Coast Guard, Department of the Treasury

Subchapter O—Regulations Applicable to Certain Vessels During Emergency

[CGFR 56-20]

PART 154—WAIVERS OF NAVIGATION AND VESSEL INSPECTION LAWS AND REGULATIONS

VESSELS OPERATED BY PACIFIC MICRONESIAN LINES, INC.

(Federal Register of Wednesday, May 16, 1956)

EQUIPMENT APPROVED BY THE COMMANDANT

[EDITOR'S NOTE.—Due to space limitations, it is not possible to publish the documents regarding approvals and terminations of approvals of equipment published in the FEDERAL REGISTER dated July 17, 1956 (CGFR 56-30)-(CGFR 56-31). Copies of these documents may be obtained from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington 25, D. C.]

ARTICLES OF SHIPS' STORES AND SUPPLIES

Articles of ships' stores and supplies certificated from 30 June 1956 to 31 July 1956, inclusive, for use on board vessels in accordance with the provisions of Part 147 of the regulations governing "Explosives or Other Dangerous Articles on Board Vessels" are as follows:

CERTIFIED

E. F. Drew & Co., Inc., Power Chemicals Division, 15 East 26th St., New York 10, N. Y., Certificate No. 267, dated July 5, 1956, "DREW-SOLV."

Alladdin Laboratories, Inc., 68 William St., New York 5, N. Y., Certificate No. 268, dated July 12, 1956, "ALLADDIN FUEL OIL TREATMENT."

E. I. Du Pont de Nemours & Co., Inc., Wilmington 98, Delaware, Certificate No. 269, dated July 12, 1956, "SULFAMIC ACID."

The Penatone Co., Tenafly, N. J., Certificate No. 273, dated July 30, 1956, "OLD SALT DEGREASER."

FUSIBLE PLUGS

The regulations prescribed in Subpart 162.014, Subchapter Q, Specifications, require that manufacturers submit samples from each heat of fusible plugs for test prior to plugs manufactured from the heat being used on vessels subject to inspection by the Coast Guard. A list of approved heats which have been tested and found acceptable during the period from 15 June 1956 to 15 July 1956 is as follows:

The Lunkenheimer Co., Cincinnati 14, Ohio. Heat Nos. 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, and 542.

APPROVED DRY MATERIAL

Sol-Speedi-Dri, submitted by Speedi-Dri Corp., Menlo Park, N. J., is approved as a dry material for use in lieu of sand in spaces containing oil fired boilers, as provided by 46 CFR 34.35–1, 76.05–30, and 95.05–20.

HAGGARD'S ALL-PURPOSE STRETCHER KIT

The regulations for Artificial Islands and Fixed Structures on the Outer Continental Shelf (33 CFR 140 to 146, inclusive) require in 33 CFR 144.01–35 that on each manned platform a Stokes litter shall be provided and kept in an accessible place. The use of alternate equipment may be permitted under 33 CFR 140.15–1. After examination, it has been found that the "Haggard's All-Purpose Stretcher Kit" is an equivalent alternate apparatus to the Stokes litter and is hereby permitted for use on manned platforms in lieu thereof.

NUMBERED AND UNDOCUMENTED VESSELS

The table below gives the cumulative total of undocumented vessels numbered under the provisions of the act of June 7, 1918, as amended (46 U. S. C. 288), in each Coast Guard district by customs ports for the quarter ending 30 June 1956. Generally speaking, undocumented vessels are those machinery-propelled vessels of less than 5 net tons engaged in trade which by reason of tonnage are exempt from documentation. They also include all other vessels propelled in whole or in part by machinery which have not been issued marine documents by the customs, owned in the United States and found on the navigable waters thereof.

Coast Guard District	Customs Port	Total
1 (Boston)	(4) Boston	15,089
	(1) Portland, Maine	9,127
	(2) St. Albans	931
	(5) Providence	4,519
	Total	29,666
2 (St. Louis)	(45) St. Louis	10,522
	(12) Pittsburgh	2,266
	(34) Pembina	114
	(35) Minneapolis	2,447
	(40) Indianapolis	5,180
	(42) Louisville	2,887
	(43) Memphis (part)	5,525
	(46) Omaha (part)	335
	(47) Denver	27
	Total	29,312
3 (New York)	(10) New York	47,599
	(6) Bridgeport	9,420
	(11) Philadelphia	20,237
	Total	77,256
5 (Norfolk)	(14) Norfolk	16,025
	(13) Baltimore	23,165
	(15) Wilmington, N. C	8,125
	Total	47,315
7 (Miami)	(18) Tampa (part)	24,110
	(16) Charleston	1,468
	(17) Savannah	2,291
	(49) San Juan	451
	(51) St. Thomas	108
	Total	28,428
8 (New Orleans)	(20) New Orleans	21,048
	(18) Tampa (part)	564
	(19) Mobile	8,071
	(21) Port Arthur	4,484
	(22) Galveston	9,135
	(23) Laredo	1,558
	(24) El Paso	19
	(43) Memphis (part)	65
	Total	44,944
9 (Cleveland)	(41) Cleveland	9,594
	(7) Ogdensburg	2,762
	(8) Rochester	5,699
	(9) Buffalo	4,155
	(36) Duluth	2,618
	(37) Milwaukee	3,889
	(38) Detroit	21,182
	(39) Chicago	8,198
	Total	58,067
11 (Long Beach)	(27) Los Angeles	12,186
	(25) San Diego	2,348
	(26) Nogales	138
	Total	14,572
12 (San Francisco)	(28) San Francisco	14,181
13 (Seattle)	(30) Seattle	20,400
	(29) Portland, Oreg	8,777
	(33) Great Falls	582
	Total	29,759
14 (Honolulu)	(32) Honolulu	3,551
17 (Juneau)	(31) Juneau	7,914
	Grand total	384,965


AMERICA