

ESSO FLEET NEWS

PUBLISHED BY THE MARINE DEPARTMENT, HUMBLE OIL & REFINING COMPANY



Vol 11, No. 2

January 23, 1969

This is the Life — of a Sailor

By OS GEORGE A. MATHEWSON

Mr. Mathewson, who sailed in the Esso Scranton to Karachi and Chittagong last year, wrote a very fine account of the trip. Most interesting, in our opinion, are his personal impressions and comments. Here's Part I of the story, which we think you will enjoy reading. — Ed.

Being assigned to "The Grand Old Lady" of the Fleet, May 9, suited me just fine as I was hoping that after a few coastwise trips we would go to India.

I get a bang out of the crew — as long as we are running coastwise, they all say they would like a Middle East or some other foreign run. Once we get loading orders, the sun goes behind the clouds and the excuses rain down as to why it just isn't possible for them to make the foreign run at this time.

We departed Port Arthur, Texas, June 29 for Karachi, West Pakistan and Chittagong, East Pakistan. We had a happy crew of all volunteers, although if we could have known what was in store for us there might have been some AWOL's.

We no sooner dropped the Sabine Pilot than "The Old Lady" began to roll. Here I would like to thank the 2 cooks, Chief Cook Manuel L. D. Cardoso and Second Cook Eduardo Oliveira, for meals cooked to perfection. Although it was cold cuts and boiled eggs weather, you couldn't tell it by the food they turned out — without loss of their good sense of humor.

Our Second Mate, Theron A. Guire, put up 2 charts in the day room and AB Kolbjorn Hansen put up a world map in the messroom. The ABs kept the mileage and course day by day on the messroom map and RO Linton P. Thomason posted the SS ESSO SCRANTON DAILY NEWS.

Trinidad was our first stop — for bunkers. We got Coca-Cola delivered to our fo'c'sle — 2 cases of 10¢ size bottles for \$5 and we stocked up.

The most unhappy man aboard

ship was Mr. Robinson, our Chief Mate. Every a.m. he would come aft with his head back like he was squirrel hunting. He was looking at the red lead on the main mast slowly turning a pale pink. AB William B. Page finally managed to get it painted and the Mate smiled for a few days. Once we started to open a fresh can of paint and put it in the Mate's room to try to cheer him

HUMBLE OIL & REFINING COMPANY
HOUSTON, TEXAS

From: M. A. WRIGHT

To:

1/10/69

T. J. Fuson

T. J. - This is a fine
message to your people.
We share your pride in
their accomplishments.
- Mike

Folks, in case you don't quite get the message here, this is a reproduction of a hand-written note from M. A. Wright, Humble's Chairman of the Board, to T. J. Fuson, General Manager of the Marine Department.

Mr. Wright's comments refer to Mr. Fuson's statement in the Jan. 9 FLEET NEWS on the Marine Department's accomplishments in 1968 and the prospects for 1969.

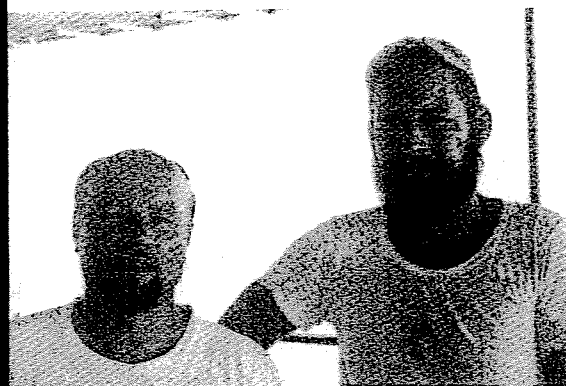
That part about "We share your pride in their accomplishments." (meaning those of the seagoing and inland waterway personnel and our shore staff) is just about the highest praise you could want. It is also confirmation that your work is noticed — and appreciated — at the very top.



The bull session, popular ship-board pastime on any run, foreign or coastwise. L. to r. are: Second Cook Eduardo Oliveira, Chief Steward Daniel Alves, AB Anthony Lazarczyk, Pumpman Floyd Harris (holding up light fixture) and seated, Oiler Arthur Rose, AB William Page, FWT James Perkins, UM Domingo Estrada and Oiler Denver McCasland. Note loud speaker on deadlight.



AB Ivy Etharidge and Chief Mate Neo Robinson. Mr. Robinson has made 7 voyages to India and/or Pakistan in the Esso Scranton.



Behind the foliage are FWT William Klingelhofer and MM/2P Harold Spaulding.

Photos by George A. Mathewson

up. To Mr. Robinson, the sound of chipping hammers, scrapers and wire brushes is the sweetest of music and the smell of fresh paint like the finest perfume.

We stopped at Durban, South Africa for bunkers and the reports from those who went ashore were very nice.

Thirty-nine days after departure we dropped the hook off Karachi. Customs men sealed our radios and cameras, thereby making some of us more miserable than all the rough weather we had getting there. I made one trip ashore without a camera and felt half dressed.

Then I learned from Mr. Libby, Third Asst., of a cab driver who had a camera to loan and I made an appointment with him. I packed my ice box with a 6-pack of State-side canned Cokes and some Canadian bacon sandwiches that Eddie, the Second Cook, made for me and oh happy day, I was living it up. I gave the guard at the gate a can of Coke and although I'm sure he recognized the word "Coca-Cola," I believe the pull-top opener reminded him of a grenade. Maybe he was thinking of a Coca-Cola booby trap.

The cab driver told me he had returned the camera but would get another one. We rode for about 2 hours seeking a camera. If you suggest renting one, the photo dealers look at you in such a way that you feel guilty of some awful crime. My driver picked up a free-loading friend, saying his friend liked to ride, and at long last he came out of a home with a 35mm camera.

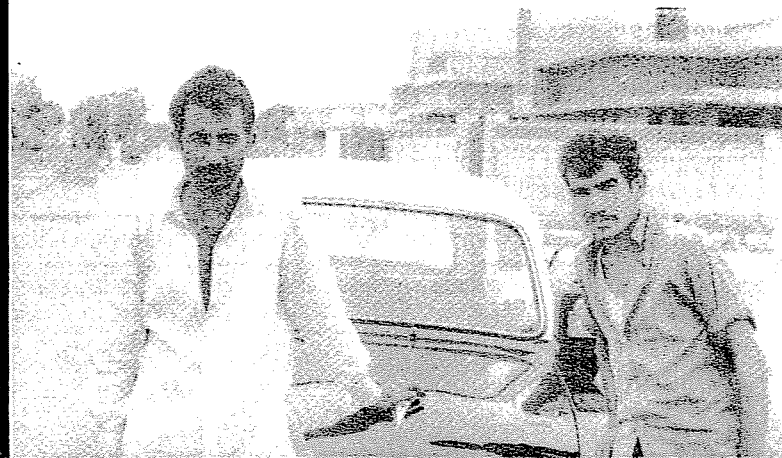
By then it was dinner time and I broke out my sandwiches. Boy, they smelled good and tasted better. Over there you soon learn that it's quite an art to eat: one must time things correctly. You eat too slowly and the flies get your food; try to speed it up too much, and you eat flies. I got one Coke out of the 5 that were left.

Knowing how the Muslims loathe pork, and being a little bit peeved, I took it on myself to explain to the driver the virtues of the swine as food. I cooked up with words everything from pan and link sausage to Chinese sweet and sour and when I described barbecued ribs, along with the bacon odor in the cab, the driver couldn't stand it; he bought a few fresh dates which I would have liked to have tried but didn't. I bought mangoes—you can peel them.

To put it very mildly, the Muslim and Hindu religions are incompatible: no 2 religions are so unlike. The Muslims believe in one God, and idolatry is not tolerated. Then too, Muslims believe in the equality of men and loathe the caste system. They are not vegetarian but do not eat pork or any pork bi-products, such as lard. The books say Hinduism has always been tolerant and has even borrowed or taken. you might say, gods of other religions. But an orthodox Hindu will not touch meat of any kind. The cow, sacred to the Hindu, has been partly the cause of contention in India.

Chittagong is on the right bank of the Karnaphuli River, 12 miles from the Bay of Bengal and 8 days' steaming time from Karachi for the *Scranton*. They are a seafaring people, having sailed the Asiatic seas for thousands of years as masters, shipowners and crews. The lascar seamen have sailed for Arabs, British, Portuguese and Hindus; real sailors, just so it's a ship and going somewhere. British sea stories often mention their lascar crewmen.

(To be continued)



Mr. Mathewson's Karachi taxi driver (left) and his friend.

Alaska Voyage Developments

Regarding the Northwest Passage to Alaska expedition, the SS *Manhattan* is now at the Sun shipyard, Chester, Pa. for alterations to make her "ice-worthy." The timetable for the shipyard work has been extended a bit and the vessel is now expected to be out of the yard between the middle and end of June instead of in May.

The number of unlicensed men who have expressed an interest in making the first Alaska voyage of the *Manhattan* has been surprising. At press time cards, letters and phone calls had been received from 62 men — proving that the spirit of adventure is very much alive in the Fleet.

Alton Burns, Jr. accepted an assignment as Third Asst. in the *Manhattan* just after the last issue of the FLEET NEWS went to press.

Thrift Fund Statements Mailed

Annual statements showing amounts added to and subtracted from Thrift Fund accounts have been mailed to participants' registered addresses.

If you itemize deductions on your Federal income tax, 2 items on the statement may be included — the amount of interest paid on a Thrift Fund loan, and hospital-medical insurance premiums paid from the Fund.

Other transactions shown on the statement do NOT affect your 1968 Federal income tax. Do not report:

Gains or losses on sale of stock in Fund,

Dividends credited to your account on stock in the Trustee's name,

Fund earnings (interest received on unallocated cash).

Jersey dividends (\$3.65 per share in 1968) paid directly to you are not included in the statement. Such dividends are current income and taxable.

New Regular Employees

Amongst temporary seagoing employees recently qualifying for and accepting regular employee status are the following:

USZER E. ALDORF	JOSE M. LOPEZ
CLYDE E. AYERS	JOSEPH C. LOPEZ
LARRY D. CARSON	JUAN LOPEZ
ARTHUR J. CASTRONOVO	JAMES J. MURRAY
RUSSELL J. GROSS	ROBERT C. STEHLGENS, JR.

ESSO FLEET NEWS is published for the seagoing employees of the Marine Department, Humble Oil & Refining Co.: T. J. Fuson, General Manager; Sydney Wire, Assistant General Manager.

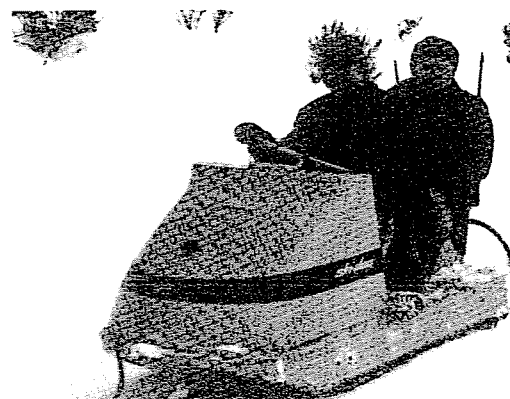
W. E. Gardner, Editor

Contributions and suggestions are invited and should be addressed to The Editor, ESSO FLEET NEWS, Humble Oil & Refining Co., P. O. Box 1512, Houston, Texas 77001.



CLYDE O'NEAL, Chief Engineer in the *Esso Houston*, owns this Dodge Motorhome, which "has everything but hot and cold running maids," and used it on a recent hunting trip. He and Thomas F. Smith (Chief Engr., ret. July 1, 1963) drove from Texas to eastern Idaho and hunted elk and deer in an area 15 to 20 miles west of Yellowstone National Park.

"We left home Nov. 15 and returned Dec. 1," Clyde said. "We found too much snow and too few elk but did kill our deer and had a wonderful time. We planned this year's hunt on the way home last year and started planning next year's hunt on the way home this year. Mr. Smith has hunted with me 4 of the 6 years he has been retired. He sends best regards to all his old friends and shipmates."



A "ski-doo" snowmobile was one of the ways (horses was the other) in which Messrs. Smith (left) and O'Neal navigated in the Idaho snow. "Snowmobiles are real fun vehicles," Clyde said. They have 2 tractor tracks, and a large ski forward for steering.

"Zaza," Mr. Smith's name for the donkey, was rescued from the deep snow and starvation by the hunters. "You can see she is a highborn lady," Clyde observed. "She isn't about to enter the home of 2 foot-loose sailors."

Photos by CE Clyde O'Neal



TAFFRAIL TALK

There have been quite a few assignment changes in the Houston Office of the Marine Dept. recently. Those of interest to seagoing personnel include the following:

ROBERT P. SCARR, formerly in the Benefits & Claims Section, is now head of Ships' Payroll, replacing WILLIAM F. BRUEGGEMAN, who transfers to Supply Accounting.

FRANCIS X. HAGAN succeeds Mr. Scarr in Benefits & Claims. Frank was formerly in the Freight & Statistical Section of Marine Controllers.

HARVEY C. NIELSEN, a long-time Seagoing Personnel Section man, joined the Port Everglades Branch Office on Jan. 10.

EDWARD H. COLE succeeds Mr. Nielsen as No. 2 man in Seagoing Personnel. Also in new jobs in the Section are STEWART T. EDMONDS, who now assists in assigning Radio Officers, Chief Stewards and Cooks, and MRS. BETTY BUTLER, whose responsibilities include Benefit Plan transactions. JAMES H. ROARK is a new starter in the Section.

Esso Newark discharged at Karachi and Bombay and is due at Kharg Island in the Persian Gulf about Jan. 27 to load for St. John, New Brunswick. Captain J. E. Wend is bringing her back, having relieved Captain A. W. Smith, who is now training for his *Manhattan* assignment.

RECENT RETIREMENTS



PUMPMAN HENRY W. WZOREK, JR. came to the Fleet on Jan. 30, 1946 after more than a year at the U. S. Naval Shipyard in Bayonne, N. J. He sailed as Wiper and FWT until June 1951 and was MM/2P and Pumpman from then until his retirement, Jan. 1. He had 22½ years' service.

A native of Bayonne, Mr. Wzorek lives in Highlands, Texas (between Houston and Baytown) with his wife Jean. They have 2 daughters, Cherie 19 and Terry 17, and a son David 14.

BOS'N HENRY C. PAYNE joined the Company as OS in the *C. A. Canfield* on Dec. 19, 1936 and spent over a year in that ship. He was in and out of the Fleet several times until July 1941, when he started a 5-month assignment as AB in the *Esso Baytown*, followed by 13 months as her Bos'n. He shipped out as AB in 4 other vessels during the War and then had 3½ more years in the *Baytown* as AB and Bos'n.

Of his nearly 30 years' service at retirement, Jan. 1, Mr. Payne was Bos'n for 24 years, sailing the past 5 in the *Esso Bangor* and *Esso Huntington*. He lives in Baton Rouge.



ABLE SEAMAN MELVIN J. ERB figures to "take it easy until the spring thaw, then settle down and become a real good landlubber." This might take Mel a little time because he has been going to sea for about 27 of his 44 years. He served 4½ years in the Navy, including 2 years in the South Pacific in the destroyer *Remey* and aircraft carrier *Intrepid*, 2 years with American Export Lines and 20 years, 8 months with Esso. His Company service was all as AB from his first ship, the *Esso Manhattan* on April 19, 1948 to his retirement, Jan. 1.

Mr. Erb, his wife Veronica and sons Ronnie 10 and Dale 9, live in Westminster, Md., 25 miles NW of Baltimore.

FIREMAN-WATERTENDER JOSEPH A. POMMIER retired Jan. 1 after 26 years, 5 months in the Fleet as Wiper, Fireman, FWT, Oiler and one assignment each as Storekeeper, Pumpman and Machinist. He started in the *Franklin K. Lane* on June 30, 1941, served throughout World War II in 7 vessels and most recently in the *Esso Lima*.

Mr. Pommier is a resident of New York City and was born in Rhode Island 65 years ago.

ORDINARY SEAMAN WILLIAM J. SOMSKY

had his own machine shop in Czechoslovakia before he came to the United States in 1935. He worked as a machinist foreman in New York (where he now lives) and sailed with the U. S. Lines, Socony, Tidewater and the MSTs prior to joining the Esso Fleet in Oct. 1950. More than half of his 15¼ years' service was as Machinist. His retirement Jan. 1 was at the mandatory age.



UTILITYMAN ANDRES ORTEGA. In addition to his 24¾ years with the Company, Mr. Ortega sailed with the Army Transport Service, Lykes Bros., the Robin Line and several others. He joined the Fleet as Messman in the *Dean Emery* on March 7, 1942 and continued in 5 more vessels as Second and Chief Cook during the next 2 years. After his return to the Fleet

in June, 1946, he served continuously 'til his retirement, Jan. 1.

Woodworking, fishing and landscaping are Mr. Ortega's hobbies. his home is in Hampton, Va. and his birthplace, the Philippine Islands.

OBITUARY

THOMAS BOYLE, 55, who retired on disability July 1, 1967, died Jan. 12. He lived in Hitchcock, Texas (near Texas City) and is survived by a son William and a sister Margaret.

Mr. Boyle's service in the Fleet totaled nearly 22 years and included 8 vessels in World War II and 2 in the 30s. He sailed in Engine Dept. ratings and as MM/2P and Pumpman.