



Vol. 11, No. 10

May 15, 1969

On-the-Job Training Program to Qualify Men as Oilers

Esso seamen with mechanical ability now have an opportunity to learn while they earn in a new engine department on-the-job training program set up to qualify them as oilers. The program, which may also include classroom instruction ashore, is being sponsored by the Marine Dept. at the request of the Esso Seaman's Association.

Candidates recommended by ships' masters and chief engineers

will be given a mechanical comprehension test. Those accepted into the program may undergo up to six months of practical training and instruction in the engine department. They will sail as oiler trainees with wages based on individual department seniority ratings.

So that trainees can focus full attention on learning their jobs, they will not be expected to do housekeeping and maintenance duties such as soogeeing or painting. They will be rated by masters, chief engineers and first assistant

engineers on aptitude, demonstrated ability and willingness to learn during the course of training.

Completing the training and meeting Coast Guard requirements for the oiler rating would bring a promotion as well as a hefty pay increase. Coast Guard requirements

(Continued, Page 2)

Esso Fleet Sails 123 Days Without Accident, Sets Record Under New Safety Program

Most seamen in the Esso fleet will receive individual safety awards for sailing a full 80 days without a single lost-time injury reportable to the National Safety Council, Marine Dept. General Manager T. J. Fuson announced in a recent letter to Humble's seagoing employees.

In fact, the 80-day period required to qualify for the awards was surpassed and the record finally broken after 123 consecutive days of no reportable accidents. It marks the first time the awards have been made since the new safety incentive program went into effect more than a year ago.

"From December 5, 1968, to February 23, 1969, inclusive, the personnel in the ocean fleet reached 80 consecutive days without a lost-time injury reportable to the National Safety Council which in turn qualifies each of you to receive an individual safety award," Mr. Fuson said in his letter to employees eligible for the awards. All employees who sailed in the fleet during the 80-day period are eligible.

They will select individual safety awards from a brochure offering an assortment of 24 prizes such as portable electric jig saws, camera kits, radios and other valuables. The catalog brochure and selection cards are being mailed to their homes along with the letter from Mr. Fuson. Selection cards should be filled out completely before being mailed.

(Continued, Page 2)

REFUGEES RESCUED BY JAMESTOWN IN ATLANTIC

An oil rig being towed off the Coast of Florida caused the *Esso Jamestown* to change to a course that led to the rescue of three Cuban refugees enroute to Florida in a powerless 30-foot cabin cruiser. Capt. E. W. Scott reported the men had been at sea for seven days when he took them aboard the *Jamestown* April 26.

The Humble tanker was enroute from Baton Rouge, La., to New York when the drifting boat was sighted at 6:50 a.m. 51 miles east of Cape Canaveral, Fla. "When the *Jamestown* came within hailing distance, Messman Domingo Estrada and Ordinary Seaman Staban Ocana talked with the men in Spanish, learning they were without fuel or food and had only a small supply of water aboard their boat, the *Ventura*," Capt. Scott said.

The refugees were taken aboard because unfavorable weather conditions prevented the tanker from taking the boat in tow. "They were tired and hungry but happy to be

(Continued, Page 2)

Rerouting of Products Saves About \$60,000

The rerouting of certain petroleum products shipped in Marine Dept. tankers is expected to save \$60,000 a year in transportation costs between the refinery at Baytown, Tex., and Humble's marketing terminal at Charleston, S.C.

Previously, these base stock products were shipped to Charleston via New York in a specially equipped vessel, the *Esso Bangor*. The *Bangor* loaded cargo for Charleston along with a shipment for New York. At New York she discharged all but the Charleston-bound cargo, turned around and sailed for the South Carolina port.

Hauling these products in other vessels had not been previously attempted. But a test shipment earlier this month in the *Esso Lima* indicates that the stocks can be transported in vessels with special equipment originally installed to move other petroleum products. The equipment, no longer used to haul those products, is suitable for the shipment of the base stocks.

The experimental shipment arrived in Charleston "on spec"—tanker jargon for "uncontaminated"—and plans are being made to go ahead with the new routing on a regular basis. It will eliminate the inefficiency of transporting the base stocks between New York and Charleston and lop off the cost of "two-porting" the *Bangor*. "Two-porting" is the routing of a ship to two different ports to deliver cargo.

(Continued, Page 2)

Rerouting

(Cont'd from Page 1)

"In the past, we've had to two-port the *Bangor* whenever we had these base stocks destined for Charleston," said Luddy Bade, chief of the Marine Dept.'s ship dispatching section. "The *Bangor* delivered cargo to Charleston via New York six times last year at a cost of \$10,000 per call at the South Carolina marketing terminal." The calls the *Bangor* made at Charleston last year added an extra \$60,000 to the transportation bill—a cost which will be eliminated by the new routing plan.

Much of the cost has been incurred in the extra time it has taken the *Bangor* to call at Charleston and unload before returning to a Texas or Louisiana port to load another cargo. "It added up to about one to 2½ days' extra time for the ship to dock and discharge cargo at Charleston," Mr. Bade explained.

Under the new plan, ships sailing from Baytown to Charleston with other cargoes will also take the base stock previously routed through New York, which is what the *Esso Lima* did this month. "Not every ship can haul these base stocks but the ones that can will keep Charleston adequately supplied," Mr. Bade pointed out.



A GOOD YEAR. The officers and crew of the *Esso New York* chalked up a perfect safety record in 1968—with no injuries resulting in time lost from work during the entire year. In recognition of that enviable record, a Marine Dept. Certificate of Safety was recently presented by A. B. Randall, fleet safety officer, to Capt. Howard McCartney, ship's master, at ceremonies aboard the *New York* when she was loading cargo recently at Baytown, Tex. On hand for the presentation were (left to right, front to back) Albert Fellows, assistant port engineer, Arthur Baldwin, assistant port steward, AB Charles Pires, Baytown Transportation Allocator Byard Sooy, Chief Cook Demetrios Georgiou, Messman Gavino Trevino, 2nd Asst. E. B. Chapman, Capt. McCartney, Messman Robert L. Mahoney, Messman David Anders, Mr. Randall, 2nd Cook Lindsay Fant, Chief Engr. Nello Leavins, 1st Asst. Fred Farrell and Oiler Marshall J. Dedon.

New Oiler Training Program Underway

(Cont'd from Page 1)

include a physical examination covering hearing and vision standards, six months' service in a rating at least equal to that of wiper in the engine department and satisfactory completion of a test to demonstrate ability to perform oiler duties.

The Marine Dept.'s oiler training program is designed to prepare interested *Esso* seamen to satisfy those requirements. A trainee's workday will consist of four hours on watch learning oiler and fire-

man duties and four hours assisting the first assistant engineer with repairs and machinery maintenance. After a trainee has learned the duties of one watch, he will be rotated to another one. When he has learned all three watches aboard a vessel, he will be transferred to a different class ship to continue his training.

Trainees will be eligible and qualified for Coast Guard fireman-watertender and oiler endorsements at the end of the training period. A recommendation for the endorsements must be made to the Coast Guard by a chief engineer.

Marine Dept. officials emphasized that a sufficient number of oiler vacancies in the fleet will make it possible for seamen who obtain Coast Guard endorsement to sail in their new ratings. "Humble is pleased to offer this opportunity to qualified seamen in the fleet and to continue its policy of promoting from within," said Paul J. McEwan, head of Seagoing Personnel.

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

Jim Pitts, 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.

Safety Awards

(Cont'd from Page 1)

"We feel that this achievement by every man in the fleet proves that safety is not only a benefit to the company in increased operating efficiency but also to the seamen who enjoy a safer, healthier life aboard ship," said A. B. Randall, fleet safety officer.

Jamestown Rescues

(Cont'd from Page 1)

aboard," the master said. "We gave them a good hot meal which they seemed to enjoy a great deal." The *Jamestown* had previously advised the Coast Guard of the rescue operation and made arrangements to rendezvous with a 40-foot cutter six miles east of Port Canaveral's No. 2 sea buoy. The Coast Guard also dispatched a ship to pick up the disabled *Ventura*.

"We transferred the three men to a Coast Guard vessel at 11:45 a.m.," Capt. Scott reported. "We would have missed the *Ventura* if we hadn't been forced to change course to avoid passing near an oil rig being towed across the Atlantic."

Northwest Passage-Ancient Mariners' Dream

By Jay Rose

First of two parts

For more than four centuries, an ocean maze known as the Northwest Passage has exerted a pull upon seafaring men almost as magnetic as the one that swings a compass.

Explorers and mariners from the time of Columbus to the present day have dreamed of using the passage as a trade route across the top of North America—a short cut from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The ancient dream has never died and at long last, with an assist from the petroleum industry, it may be on the point of coming true.

Sometime this summer, if all goes well, a hard-nosed tanker named the S.S. *Manhattan* will crunch its way through the pack ice of the Arctic Ocean and finally drop anchor off Alaska's Prudhoe Bay. Its assignment: to test the economic feasibility of a sea route to the frozen frontier where nature has cached one of the world's largest deposits of oil.

Planning for the venture has been under way ever since August of 1968 when Humble and its partners organized a Marine Arctic Task Force. This group, headed by Stanley Haas of Humble's Marine Dept., made exhaustive inquiries into scores of environmental, navigational and logistical problems. In the absence of actual operating data, they resorted to a variety of math and model studies. They also consulted Arctic experts from both Canada and Alaska.

Despite the most meticulous of planning, the voyage of the *Manhattan* remains a chancy venture, an expensive and carefully calculated risk. If successful, however, it could herald a new era for transportation in the Far North. It could also mark a dramatic ending to a saga of exploration that dates back to 1497, the year a hardy band of mariners first began sailing their wooden ships toward the roof of the world in quest of a trade route to China.

IN THE VANGUARD of those seeking the Northwest Passage was a Genoese navigator named Gio-

Jay Rose, staff writer for HUMBLE WAY, explores the history of men's dreams and ventures to open a commercial sea route through the top of the North American continent as a short cut from the Atlantic to the Pacific. This condensed version of the article is the first of two parts to appear in ESSO FLEET NEWS. The full length article will be printed in HUMBLE WAY, a quarterly magazine published by the Public Relations Dept., Humble Oil & Refining Co.

vanni Cabato, now better known to history as John Cabot. After settling in England, Cabot sallied forth with high hopes of unlocking a gateway to the Orient and of succeeding where Columbus had failed. His first voyage, made with a single ship in 1497, carried him only as far as Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.

The following year, he was able to reach both Greenland and the eastern shore of Baffin Island. But just above the Arctic Circle, he encountered intense cold and monstrous bergs, and his grumbling, mutinous crews forced him to turn back.

These lackluster results caused an ebbing of interest in the Northwest Passage for decades to come. During the reign of Elizabeth, however, the growth of Spanish seapower in the South Atlantic reminded the English once again of the strategic and commercial advantages of an east-west route across the top of the globe. So in 1576 royal permission was granted to Martin Frobisher, a Yorkshire captain and one-time privateer, to renew the search.

The 40-year-old Frobisher was a man with little formal education, but he was a bold and resolute seaman. On his first expedition, one of the three small ships in his squadron went down with all hands in a storm off Greenland. A second "privily made its way home." By then, the crew in Frobisher's own ship, the 25-ton bark *Gabriel*, was sounding some mournful plaints. But despite their urgings, Frobisher pressed on and finally made a landfall. It was Baffin Island, which the queen later named *Meta Incognita* (or Destination Unknown).

At Baffin, Frobisher entered and explored the elongated bay which

still bears his name. Returning to England he presented some interesting rock samples which led to the Arctic's first gold rush. An assay office with more enthusiasm than competence mistook iron pyrites in the rocks for gold. Frobisher was ordered to sail again for Baffin, but "only for the searching of the ore, and to defer the further discovery of the passage until another time." Not until he had carried out two ore-gathering expeditions, the final one with a flotilla of 15 ships, did the bubble burst.

JOHN DAVIS, one of the most skilled of Elizabethan navigators, took up where Frobisher left off. Davis was a staunch believer in the Northwest Passage, and he made three attempts to prove he was right. His first voyage, in 1585, took him across the southern tip of Greenland, which he named Cape Farewell, into the ice-infested waters known today as Davis Strait. A second effort led him to Baffin Island and southward to Labrador.

His third voyage, in 1587, was the most successful of all. Skirting the west coast of Greenland, he beat his way far beyond the Arctic Circle into Baffin Bay to reach 73 degrees north. At this point he was almost directly opposite Lancaster Sound, which was later to become the entrance to the Northwest Passage. The redoubtable Davis returned to England in a confident mood. "I have been in 73 degrees," he wrote one of his backers, "finding the sea all open, and forty leagues between land and land. The passage is most probable, the execution easy."

But once again the tide of events turned against the search. The war with Spain took Davis and other leading mariners into the Royal Navy, and the defeat of Spain opened up new opportunities in less remote areas of the world. In 1610, however, the quest was renewed—with tragic consequences—by the veteran navigator, Henry Hudson. For Hudson's voyage northwest, the English gave him a 55-ton ship (the *Discovery*), provisions for six months, and a crew not all of whom were sober men and true. Hudson had no more than entered the strait that now bears his name when his men, fearful of the drifting ice, began showing

(Continued, Page 4)

(Continued)

signs of mutiny. To mollify them, he steered southward and sailed into the open waters of Hudson Bay. He was confident that he had at last found the key to the Northwest Passage.

HUDSON'S GREAT BAY, however, turned out to be a cul-de-sac from which he was never to emerge. His ship was frozen in for the winter. Food ran short despite all efforts to restock the larder through hunting and fishing. Scurvy and other diseases took their toll. When summer came, the *Discovery* set sail for home but got only a short way before discord escalated to mutiny. Hudson and eight others, including his small son, were cast adrift in a shallop, and were never seen again. Ironically, it was one of the mutineers, Robert Bylot, who helped get the search for the passage back on course, and he did it in Hudson's old ship. Bylot, who had been more of a bystander than a participant in the mutiny, was placed in command of the *Discovery*, and in 1616 he headed the stout little ship northward through Davis Strait. With him as pilot was William Baffin, a great navigator whose name is now attached to the world's fifth largest island.

BYLOT AND BAFFIN sailed all the way to 78 degrees north where they discovered Smith Sound, an accomplishment that stood as a "highwater mark of polar exploration" for the next 237 years. (A new mark was set in 1853 when Dr. Elisha Kane of the U. S. Navy took a small brig through Smith Sound into Kane Basin.) Turning southward, Bylot and Baffin next discovered Jones Sound and, finally, Lancaster Sound, which they named after one of the patrons of their voyage. Neither man knew it, but they had at last found the long-sought entrance to the Northwest Passage.

(In the next issue of FLEET NEWS, Mr. Rose recounts the adventures of other seamen who sailed into the Northwest Passage. Part II begins with the expedition of William Parry in 1819, details the ill-fated journey of Sir John Franklin and the more than 30 expeditions launched in search of his lost party, describes the hardships of Robert McClure, the first man to transit the Northwest Passage, tells of Ronald Amundsen's three-year voyage in the passage, and of the first transit ever made in a single season, in 1944.)



HUMBLE ISLANDS. As if there weren't enough ice in the frozen Arctic, Humble has been making even more by spraying water atop its two ice islands in an effort to weigh them down so they won't drift away when summer temperatures begin to defrost the Far North. The 200 by 300 foot chunks of ice are grounded in about 90 feet of water some 25 miles north of Prudhoe Bay, Alaska—destination of the S.S. *Manhattan* on her maiden voyage through the Northwest Passage. The islands serve as observation posts to study the movement of ice against a stable structure.

Luck of the Irish Comes to Life of Riley

It was just a faint light in the distance but the *Life of Riley*—adrift in the Gulf of Mexico—was banking on her namesake that the luck of the Irish was with her. Apparently it was.

The alert eye of Second Mate M. Whitson in the *Esso Gettysburg*, enroute from Houston to New York, spotted the *Life of Riley*'s dim SOS signal at 8 p.m. April 14. "We altered course, reduced speed and finally in the rays of our searchlight made out a sailing craft," said Capt. Harold L. Sholes, master of the Humble tanker.

The boat was without power and had one day's supply of food and water aboard when the *Gettysburg* sighted her. "We were about 100 miles west of Dry Tortugas and knew it would be many hours before a Coast Guard cutter could reach the little boat," Capt. Sholes reported. Lines were thrown to the vessel "and we soon had her safely tucked under our stern." The tanker radioed the Cape Current, a Coast Guard cutter, and arranged a rendezvous.

Next morning at 7:50 the Coast Guard vessel pulled alongside the *Gettysburg* and took the *Life of Riley* in tow. Aboard the *Gettys-*

burg during the voyage was C. Leo Whyte, a silver-haired, silver-tongued gentleman from County Cork, Ireland. What role he played in bringing the luck of the Irish to the *Life of Riley* isn't known. But there couldn't have been a more Irish Irishman in the Gulf of Mexico at the time.

Texas Academy Grad Joins Esso Florence

William F. Ferguson has been welcomed board the *Esso Florence* as the company's newest third assistant engineer. He was hired April 21.

Mr. Ferguson graduated last year from the Texas Maritime Academy at Galveston, Tex. He sailed for the Lykes Brothers Company in the *Howell Lykes* and the *Kenneth McKay* until last October when he joined the Farrell Lines. Mr. Ferguson was in Farrell's *African Star* as third assistant until early this year.

He is now aboard the *Esso Florence*. Mr. Ferguson lives in Houston, where he graduated from Jesse H. Jones High School.

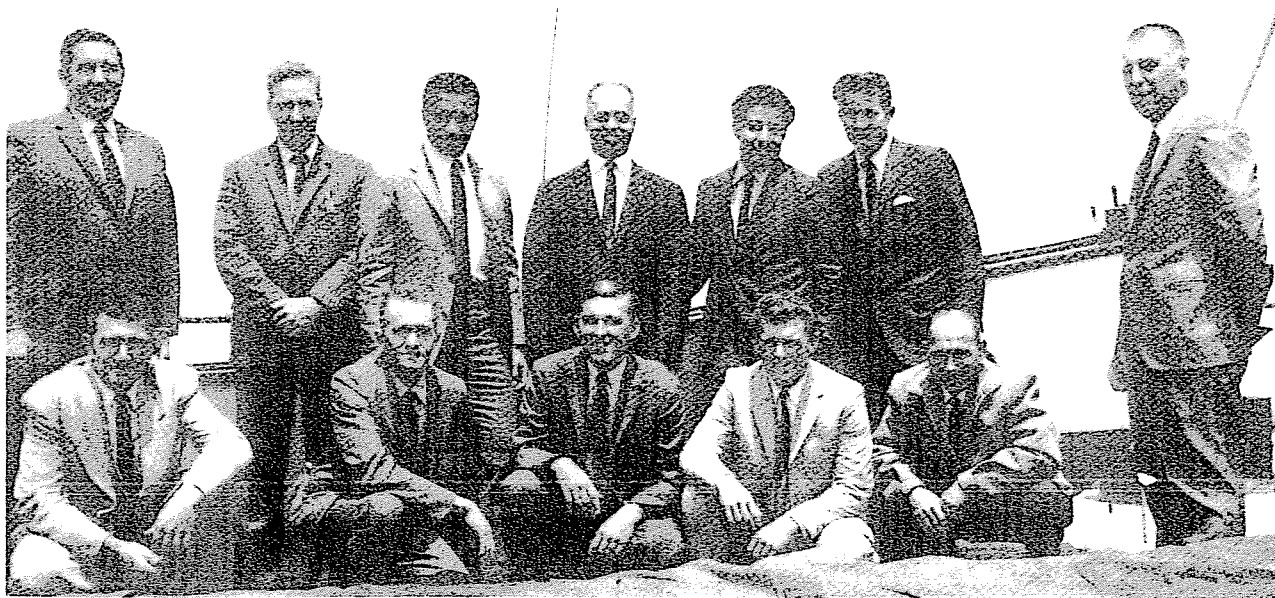
EIGHT FLEET OFFICERS PROMOTED TO NEW RANKS

Eight officers in the Esso fleet have been promoted and a third mate has been added to the seniority list. Promotions include two to master, three to chief mate and three to second mate.

Most of the officers have previously sailed in their new ranks. Howard G. McCartney and Edmund Mahoney were promoted to permanent master. Permanent chief mate promotions went to Keith Frutiger, Bertram Christensen and Torrance Inman. Roy O. Berg, John Griffith and Marshall Price were upgraded to permanent second mate. Hugh Newman, a graduate of New York State Maritime College, is a newly hired third mate.



INSTRUCTOR Michael Sharik III (center) shows Coast Guard CWO Kenneth C. Riggs (left) and Harvey Borgen, Marine Dept. Employee Relations Section representative, an album of photographs and newspaper articles about Humble's first able seaman training program which he organized and taught this spring. Sydney Wire, assistant general manager of the Marine Dept., presented the album to Mike "with congratulations for a job well done" at a luncheon in the instructor's honor.



THE GRADUATES. The third and final class of the Marine Dept.'s "spring semester" of able seaman training courses held at Galveston, Tex., aboard the *Texas Clipper* training ship chalked up a 92.1 grade average on the Coast Guard Able Seaman's and Lifeboat Examination.

There were no failures. Shown here after graduation ceremonies aboard the Texas Maritime Academy vessel are (from left, front) Harry H. Toney, Artur M. Castro, Thomas J. Niemiera, James G. Maude, Edward C. Nutter and 3rd Mate Michael Sharik III, course instructor; (back row)

Sydney Wire, assistant general manager of the Marine Dept., John J. Brennan, Antonio P. Ferreira, Antone M. Gomes, Juan C. Razo and Claude H. Loyd. Able seaman training classes are expected to resume in the fall.

TAFFRAIL TALK

MESSMAN EDWARD M. PAYNE wrote a note of farewell to his friends in the Esso fleet on the day of his retirement, May 1. He said: "I have experienced some interesting and unusual things in my years at sea. Probably the most unusual thing happened when I was crossing the Atlantic in World War II and our vessel was hit by a floating mine at the bow. Miraculously, the mine bounced off the ship without exploding. My greatest experience was working for Humble, meeting and working with the seagoing men of the fleet. Because of a medical disability I am leaving the company, with regret, and becoming a landlubber. I wish to say so long to the many seamen friends I have known and sailed with. Good luck and clear sailing to all of you." Mr. Payne is living in Bayonne, N.J.



Edward Payne

THIRD MATE IRVY H. EBANKS is beaming with pride these days in the wake of his son's appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md. His son, Gary, earlier qualified for and received a Teagle Foundation scholarship to Tulane University. In a letter to Humble declining the Teagle award, Gary said "thank you for all the help you gave me in getting the Teagle scholarship" and added that he'd decided to go Navy when he received the appointment to Annapolis. The Ebanks live in Tampa, Fla.



Gary Ebanks

RECENT RETIREMENTS

Capt. Clarence Lee retired May 1 with more than 35 years' service. He began his seagoing career with the company in the *H. M. Flagler* as able seaman. Capt. Lee sailed for the first time in an officer rating in 1934 as third mate in the *Princeton*. He moved up to second mate seven years later and was chief mate in the *Beacon* in early 1943. Capt. Lee skippered the *Esso New Orleans* on his first master's assignment in Sept., 1948. From late 1964 until his retirement, he was master of the *Esso Florence*.

For many years when Capt. Lee's name came up, the question was, "Which one?" Brothers Capt. Victor G. Lee and Capt. Clarence Lee both skippered Esso ships until Victor retired in 1963 with more than 33 years' service. They were born in China and came to the United States with their parents at an early age. Clarence, his wife, Rea, and their daughter, Barbara Ann, live in Staten Island, N.Y., also the home of his brother, Victor.



Third Asst. Engr. Matt Brodie had more than 30 years' in Esso ships when he retired May 1. He first sailed for the company in the *Frederic Ewing* as wiper in March, 1930, later shipping out as fireman and oiler until he became third assistant in the *W. S. Farish* in June, 1938. Mr. Brodie went to sea as second assistant in 1942 aboard the *Chester O. Swain* and was first assistant in the *R. G. Stewart* in 1943. He sailed as chief engineer starting Nov., 1945, in the *Esso Aruba*. After World War II, Mr. Brodie went to Maracaibo, Venezuela, as a construction engineer and returned to the fleet in 1952. In 1960, he accepted an assignment in Venezuela for Esso as advisory chief engineer in the *Esso Maracaibo*. Since then he sailed in various engine department ranks until his retirement. His last ship was the *Esso Gloucester*.

Mr. Brodie is spending his new-found leisure time watching the horses at the tracks. He and his wife, Sylvia, live at Monticello, N.Y. His son, Joel, 19, is in the Navy.



Fireman-Watertender Howard A. Heales began his seagoing career with the company more than 29 years ago in the *E. M. Clark* as a messman and quickly advanced to wiper in the same vessel. He sailed in the *E. M. Clark* for more than a year and later served in the old *Esso New Orleans* as ordinary seaman, wiper and storekeeper.

Mr. Heales became a fireman in 1942 aboard the *R. G. Stewart*. He sailed as fireman-watertender in 1943 in the old *Esso Baltimore* and continued in that rating throughout World War II and until his retirement May 1. His last ship was the *Esso Scranton*. Mr. Heales was born in Maryland and is living in Baltimore.

DEATHS

Claud J. Lawson, 64, died of a heart attack on April 26 at his home in St. Petersburg, Fla. He retired in July, 1963, as chief engineer after almost 32 years' service in company ships. Mr. Lawson went to sea as ordinary seaman in the *Walter Jennings* in Feb., 1929. He sailed in unlicensed ratings until April, 1932, when he joined the *Chester O. Swain* as third assistant. He first sailed as chief engineer in the *W. S. Farish* in June, 1943. Mr. Lawson was second and first assistant in six vessels during the war, including the *Esso Nashville* when she was torpedoed on March 21, 1942, off the U. S. Atlantic coast with no loss of life. He is survived by his widow, Arlene.

Albert Mucci, who retired July 1, 1965, died May 2 at the Baltimore Medical Center, Baltimore, Md. He was 68. Mr. Mucci had more than 16 years' service in steward department ratings of messman and utilityman going back to Dec., 1929, when he sailed in the *J. A. Moffett, Jr.* He sailed in company vessels intermittently until July, 1950, and had continuous service thereafter until his retirement. He is survived by his widow, Helene Mucci.

