



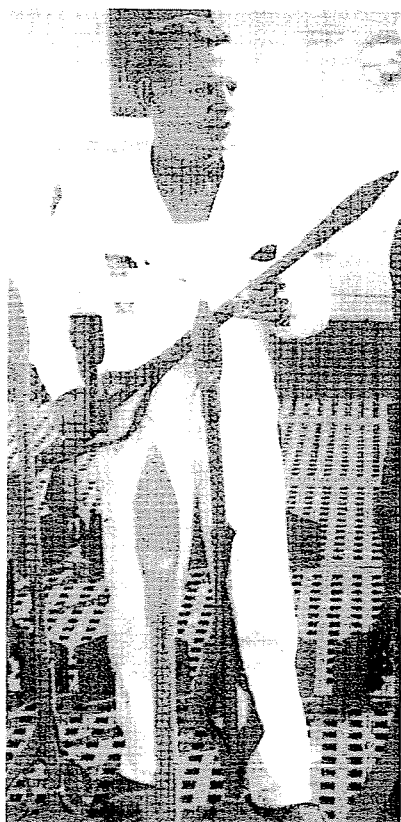
ESSO FLEET NEWS

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LOADED FOR POLAR BEAR? No, Capt. Arthur W. Smith is inspecting an array of lethal-looking "ice harpoons" aboard the S.S. *Manhattan*. The numbered harpoons will be used to mark chunks of ice to study their movements in the Arctic during the ship's voyage.

On Voyage to 'top of the world'

S.S. Manhattan Weighs Anchor

(Compiled from news reports filed by Hank Rosenthal, Humble correspondent aboard the S.S. *Manhattan*.)

The S.S. *Manhattan* is underway on an expedition which her captain hopes will complete a voyage started by Christopher Columbus more than 458 years ago—to discover an ocean trade route to the East.

The icebreaking tanker set sail at 10:12 a.m. Tuesday, August 26. Capt. Roger Steward, ship's master, set a course to Halifax, Nova Scotia, where the ship was greeted Thursday, August 27, by Premier G. I. Smith and the city's mayor, Allan O'Brien who invited the *Manhattan* to make a brief stop there.

Halifax is the home port of the Canadian Department of Transport icebreaker *John A. McDonald*. The Canadian vessel will rendezvous with the

Manhattan in the Northwest Passage.

Saves 10 Hours

The tanker saved 10 hours of steaming by deviating from her planned route east of Newfoundland and Flemish Cap. She proceeded north from Halifax to Cabot Strait, south of Newfoundland, where she turned west into the Gulf of St. Lawrence, headed north between Newfoundland and Labrador, and out the Strait of Belle Isle into the Davis Strait thence northward to a point near Thule, Greenland.

The *Manhattan* is scheduled to complete the 2,278 mile leg of the voyage from Halifax to Thule today at 3 a.m. Houston (tiger) time. At Thule the tanker will turn west into the Northwest Passage. Her estimated times of arrival at points along the route are:

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Esso Fleet Ships Play 'Cat & Mouse' With Camille

Eight Esso Fleet ships played cat and mouse with Hurricane Camille as she danced a deadly twist across the Gulf of Mexico and delivered a meat chopping blow to the Mississippi-Louisiana coast that swept 15 seagoing vessels and more than 100 fishing trawlers, tugs and other small craft ashore. Not a single Humble tanker was among them.

Masters of Esso ships took effective evasive action in the face of one of Mother Nature's

awesome temper tantrums. As Camille ripped her way across the waters of "Esso Fleet country" in the Gulf, Humble tankers outmaneuvered her wrathful winds and reached safe harbors without injury to personnel and only minor damage to two ships.

Direct Hit

The only Humble tanker that suffered a "direct hit" by the hurricane's 200-mile-per-hour winds was the *Esso Jamestown* as she lay in the Mississippi

River at Empire, Louisiana. The ship anchored and waited for Camille. When she struck, an anchor chain snapped and winds under the starboard bow started pushing the big ship toward the west bank.

"I thought we were going into the bank broadside," Capt. Karl Lohmann reported later from a safe harbor at New York. "But just then there was a momentary lull in the rains and I could make out the trees

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Hurricane Camille

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on the bank which gave me a sense of direction. The radar was useless."

He ordered "hard left, full ahead" and embedded the bow snugly in the mud. "We held her at a 45 degree angle for 14 hours at half speed," he said. Visibility was near zero as four and five foot waves struck the Jamestown throughout the storm.

Grounded

"When it was over, the ship came out of the mud very easily when I asked for full astern," Capt. Lohmann said. Nine other seagoing vessels on the Mississippi didn't come out of it so well: they were pushed ashore and grounded.

"I'd much prefer to be at sea during a hurricane," the captain observed. "But I knew we could be loaded and out of the river before Camille hit us. Trouble was they couldn't load me when I arrived at Empire as they had indicated they could. Still, I think we came out pretty good."

Some 18 employees at the storage tank facility where the *Jamestown* was loading took refuge in the ship to escape high waters. "We provided them places to sleep and served 175 extra meals to feed them," Capt. Lohmann noted. The tanker was delayed at Empire for six days.

Later, Capt. Harry Bansen sailed the *Esso Huntington* up the Mississippi and reported:

"We had to avoid collisions with houses, dead horses and cattle floating down the Mis-

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issippi as the *Huntington* moved up river toward Baton Rouge. What worried me was the small debris that could have damaged the propeller."

Emergency Leave

At New Orleans when the ship changed river pilots, Capt. Bansen gave leave to Able Seaman Eddie Wold, handed him \$98 donated by crew members, and wished him well as he headed for Biloxi, Mississippi, to check on the welfare of his family in an area hard hit by Camille. "The officers and men gave him the money so that he could take the fastest means of transportation home," Capt. Bansen said.

The *Huntington* had followed the hurricane "at a safe distance" from the Gulf and up the Mississippi River. "We stayed about 300 miles behind her and whenever she slowed down we did too," the ship's master reported. "As we came up the river, we saw that Pilot Town and familiar landmarks had been wiped out."

As the *Huntington* trailed Camille to the coast, Capt. Robert Kirby in the *Esso Florence* was heading down the Mississippi and into the Gulf. "You're not going out in the face of this weather, are you, Captain?" asked the river pilot.

"I'm moving . . ."

"You bet I am," the master replied. "I'm moving into deep waters and away from land as fast as I can." (Later he recalled. "It was the best decision I have ever made.") Bound for Wilmington, North Carolina, Capt. Kirby rang "full ahead" and set a course—to Tampico, Mexico, well out of Camille's path. Later, the *Florence* turned east and crossed behind the killer hurricane over "choppy waters with long swells." The tanker sailed an extra 285 miles and lost a mere 18½ hours to avoid Camille's ship-breaking winds.

The *Esso Gettysburg* was another Humble tanker trapped in the Gulf that headed for Tampico. She was enroute from

Baytown to New Haven, Connecticut. "We were headed straight into Camille when the *Gettysburg* got underway," Capt. Harold Sholes reported. "We slowed down and circled for a while to see what she was going to do. Then we got out of there and ran like a son of a gun."

Like Sparring Partners

"As Camille moved north-northwest, the *Gettysburg* swung south-southeast and headed for Tampico. We danced around the Gulf like a couple of sparring partners. A hurricane like that can break a ship in half, so you don't take any risks. And in light of today's weather service, there's hardly any excuse for being caught in a hurricane at sea." The *Gettysburg* added some 300 miles and an extra 44 hours to her voyage to New Haven where she docked unscathed by the tempest.

The *Esso Seattle* was sailing out of the Panama Canal as Camille churned through the Gulf. Capt. Edward Crawford stayed clear of the hurricane by reducing the ship's speed on a course to a Galveston, Texas, shipyard. He lost only four hours.

Rough Seas, High Winds

Capt. William Sims lost 12 hours sailing the *Esso Boston* around the hurricane. Enroute from Harbor Island, Texas, to New York, the ship went 70 miles out of her way. "We sailed south and then crossed behind Camille by about 80 miles," Capt. Sims said. "We encountered Beaufort force-10 (55-63 m.p.h.) winds and rough seas that shipped green water across our main deck and slightly bent a ladder. It was a little rough but no one got hurt."

The *Esso Lexington*, under Capt. Tom Lawton, steered clear of the hurricane by reducing speed. She lost 16 hours enroute from New York to Baytown.

Southbound from an east coast shipyard to Baytown, the

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Capt. Donald Graham (left) and 3rd Mate Charles Hahn check final details prior to *Manhattan* sailing.

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Esso New Orleans began to take evasive action north of Matanilla Shoal off Florida's Atlantic coast to preclude a run-in with the hurricane. Her master, Capt. Robert Stotts, knows what a hurricane is all about. "I weathered a pretty heavy one in the *Esso Zurich* at Pilot Town years ago," he said. The captain was not interested in a similar "adventure" with Camille.

"We slowed down and headed into the Florida Straits when a weather report indicated the hurricane was curving away from us, and then the storm slowed down and I turned south at Tortugas," Capt. Stotts said. "We encountered gale winds and heavy rains but stayed clear of Camille." The *New Orleans* deviated from her planned course by 57 miles and was delayed 36½ hours.

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Says Determined Crew Member

Destination: Alaska - - - or Bust!

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- Resolute on Cornwallis Island, September 5. (Resolute is the half-way point in the passage.)

- Melville Island, September 8.

- Sachs Harbor south of Banks Island, September 14.

- Point Barrow, Alaska, on the state's Arctic shores, September 20.

Distances are: Thule to Resolute, 424 miles; Resolute to Melville Island, 253 miles; Melville Island to Sachs Harbor, 448 miles; Sachs Harbor to Point Barrow, Alaska, 623 miles.

Research

The *Manhattan* is expected to spend about three months gathering research data during her passage through the Arctic

ice pack. Humble Marine Arctic Task Force Project Manager Stanley B. Haas said, "Although we're getting underway some six weeks later than originally intended, we don't feel our delayed sailing date will affect our ability to gather the kind of information we're seeking." Mr. Haas added that helicopter ice reconnaissance during recent weeks "indicates that substantial portions of the Northwest Passage are still solidly covered with ice."

"Since the *Manhattan's* voyage is a research mission," he continued, "we feel that it is imperative for us to test a wide variety of ice conditions. If necessary, we will seek out the ice environment we need for research purposes."

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S.S. Manhattan

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The voyage of the *Manhattan* — a first attempt by a commercial vessel to transit the "top of the world" water route — could shorten by nearly half the distance of ocean trade routes between the Far East and Europe, an objective first sought by Columbus. In this case, Humble is interested in learning whether crude oil can be transported via tanker to

oil refineries on the U.S. East Coast.

114 Men

There are 114 men aboard the *Manhattan*. They include a crew of 54 Esso Fleet officers and men and 60 scientists, navigation specialists, helicopter pilots, and communications experts.

Members of the Arctic tanker research group commemorated the start of the journey north by tossing their hard hats — worn during the months of

work on the ship in Chester, Pennsylvania — into the sea. Stan Haas, A. B. Mookhoek, Walter B. Devine and Richard Vukin then donned alpaca cold weather hats to symbolize the voyage's intent. T. J. Fuson, Marine Dept. general manager, witnessed the ceremony. He had joined the vessel while it was at anchor off Delaware Bay taking bunkers.

The *Manhattan's* fuel order of 184,000 barrels of bunker oil is the largest ever placed for a commercial vessel. It compares with about a 40,000 barrel order for luxury liners such as the *United States* or *Queen Elizabeth II*.

In addition to her own fuel, the *Manhattan* will carry 30,000 barrels of special diesel oil for refueling the U.S. Coast Guard and Canadian Department of Transport ice breakers which will follow her through the passage, plus 5,000 barrels of jet fuel for helicopters.

Self-Sufficient Island

Hopefully, her fuel supply and 300,000 pounds of stores and provisions will make the *Manhattan* an island of self-sufficiency during her voyage.

The immediate aim of the \$40 million expedition was summed up by one crew member who commented, "Alaska or bust."

16 More Maritime Academy Grads Sailing In Esso Fleet Ships; 52 Hired in Summer

Sixteen recent graduates of maritime academies have been hired since mid-summer either as third mates or third assistant engineers in Humble tankers. The new sailors bring to 52 the number of young graduates employed since June.

The largest number, 21, are graduates of the United States Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, New York. Eighteen graduated from the State University of New York Maritime College at Ft. Schuyler, seven from the Maine Maritime Academy at Castine, six from the Texas Maritime Academy at Galveston, and two from the Massachusetts Maritime Academy at Buzzards Bay.

Following are the names and alma maters of the 16 marine officers recently hired:

New Hands

State University of New York Maritime College: 3rd Assistant Anthony S. Annuziata, 3rd Mate Russ Henderling, 3rd Assistant Charles C. Hommel; United States Merchant Marine Academy: 3rd Assistant Thomas W. Dickinson, 3rd Mate John R. Dudley, 3rd Mate Michael A. Ehrmanns, 3rd Assistant Francis

Garvanta, Jr., 3rd Mate Robert Weinberg.

Also Maine Maritime Academy: 3rd Assistant David Merrow, 3rd Mate Joseph McCarthy; Texas Maritime Academy: 3rd Mate Richard A. Nicholas, 3rd Mate Ralph D. Collins, 3rd Mate Craig M. Rassinier; Massachusetts Maritime Academy: 3rd Assistant Gerald P. Bellomo, 3rd Assistant Gary N. Poor.

3rd Mate Sailing As 3rd Assistant Engr.

As if one job isn't enough, Bruce A. Reehl has decided his next assignment will be third assistant engineer when his 80-day tour as third mate ends today in the *Esso Baltimore*. He will be the fleet's first dual third mate-third assistant to show up on both seniority rosters.

A 1969 graduate of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, New York, the 22-year-old sailor indicated a preference for sailing as third mate with an option to sail as third assistant when he was hired by Humble this summer.

He has a bachelor of science degree in marine engineering. Third Mate-Third Assistant Reehl is from Monroeville, Pennsylvania.



Capt. Roger Steward
Master, S.S. *Manhattan*

28 Years at Sea End in Retirement

Robby Robinson Rings for Last Time — 'Finished With Engines'

By Capt. Edmund F. Mahoney
Master, *Esso Scranton*

(Chief Mate Neo Robinson was scheduled for retirement July 1 when he left the *Esso Scranton* in May. Illness delayed his retirement until September 1.)

Under an umbrella of three long blasts of the ship's whistle, Chief Mate Neo Robinson walked down the gangway of the *Esso Scranton* for the last time. He left the ship—last of the old T-2s in the fleet—May 10 at the Tampa Shipyard, where he boarded the vessel six years ago.

Robby (as he's known to shipmates) made eight trips to India and Pakistan during these last years in the *Scranton*. And I know he felt he was leaving a part of himself be-

hind—for he loved this old girl better than any other ship he sailed in the fleet. He retired September 1.

On the day of his departure, Robby was asked to the crew's messroom under the pretense that the deck gang had raised a grievance against him. He came back to the messroom believing he was in for a bad time. And for a little while, we lowered the old boom on him before revealing the purpose of the assembly was to wish him farewell. The steward's department had baked him a handsome cake with well wishes written in icing.

With funds collected from all his shipmates and friends in the shipyard, we bought Robby a Seth Thomas striking clock and cradle. It was engraved, "Robby—From Friends and Shipmates, For All Times." He was also given a shining ship's bell. And enough funds

remained for him to buy a fishing pole of his choosing and a sign, "Gone Fishing."

As he left the *Scranton*, his shipmates lined the handrails of the poop deck and called wishes for a long and happy retirement. So it is with regret to see an old shipmate pack up and ring, "Finished with engines."



SHIPMATES gathered to wish Chief Mate Neo Robinson farewell are (from left) Repair Inspector Edward Smith, Neo himself, 2nd Mate Stanley, Capt. Edmund Mahoney, 3rd Mate Ernest Seddon and 3rd Mate Frank Stoddard.



A SAFE SHIP. Not one, but two awards were recently presented to Capt. Milton L. Franklin of the *Esso Houston* in recognition of the ship's safety record. Port Captain Frank L. Hooper handed over both the Jones F. Devlin Award which recognizes that the *Houston* sailed for two consecutive years, 1967 and '68, without a single lost time injury reportable to the National Safety Council and a Humble Certificate of Safety to mark the no-lost-time injury record. On hand for the presentation are (from left) Radio Officer John J. Meegan, 2nd Mate Andrew Bozicevic, Steward Alvin P. Bergeron, Port Steward Dewitt Hodges, Fleet Safety Officer A. B. Randall, Oiler Arthur A. Derderian, Pumpman William J. Starnes, Ordinary Seaman William P. Bolstad, Utilityman Donald P. MacDonald, Chef Joel R. Teixeira, Messman Billy F. Hudson, and center holding certificate of safety Capt. Franklin (l) and Capt. Hooper.

Scranton Enroute to West, East Pakistan

The *Esso Scranton*—the fleet's most widely traveled ship—is underway to Karachi, West Pakistan, and to Chittagong in East Pakistan. The only T-2 tanker in the Humble fleet, she lifted 15,000 tons of lube oils out of Baytown, Texas, on August 6.

Capt. Bernard Nelson set a course to Port of Spain, Trinidad, where the ship took on bunkers in mid-August. The *Scranton* docks again for bunkers on the southeastern tip of Africa at Durban. She's due in Karachi September 15 and seven days later in Chittancong.

The ship will probably lift a cargo out of the Persian Gulf area for the homeward voyage. Prior to her current journey, the *Scranton* traded in Turkey.

RECENT RETIREMENTS



"I'd like to see more of the U.S.A. other than seaport towns now that I have the time," wrote Chief Engineer Francis R. Zeller shortly after walking down the gangway of the *Esso Lexington* for the last time. The Esso Fleet's senior engineer — known traditionally as the Commodore Chief — began his career with the company as an oiler 37 years ago when he boarded the *Beaconoil*. Mr. Zeller worked ashore in the early depression years as an electrician's helper for New York & Queens Light and Power Company and at a shipyard in Quincy, Massachusetts.

Previously, he had sailed in the *Jeanette Skinner* as oiler, and later as third assistant engineer in the *Lillian Luckenbach* and the *Raleigh Warner*. Four months after joining Esso, he was third assistant in the *Beaconoil* and sailed in the same ship six months later as second assistant. His first assignment as chief was in the *Franklin K. Lane* in May, 1942. A month later she was torpedoed northeast of Cape Blanco Light, Venezuela, about 35 miles off shore. The ship's captain, the chief mate, the radio officer and an able seaman were killed. Chief Zeller escaped with eyes burning from a geyser of oil that sprayed his face.

By 1943, he was in the War Emergency Tanker Service and first sailed in the *Five Forks* on transatlantic voyages. He also served in the *Halls of Montezuma* in the Pacific until World War II ended and he returned to the Esso Fleet.

"Commodore" Chief Zeller sailed in the *Esso Lexington* from the time she went into service in 1958 until his retirement. He was honored at a luncheon in Boston by T. J. McTaggart, Marine Dept. port engineer; Jack Bennett, manager of the Boston Marine Branch Office, and his assistant E. B. Bessels, and Chief Walter Werner of the *Esso New Orleans*. "I'm very grateful to all of them, and to T. J. Fuson (Marine Dept. general manager) who wrote me a nice letter on my retirement," Mr. Zeller said just prior to leaving home for a weekend in Cape Cod.

He and his wife have two married daughters and a son. He lives in Whitman, Massachusetts, where "my wife manages to keep me busy about the house."

❖ ❖

Neo H. Robinson, who joined the fleet as an able seaman in the *Dean Emery* in 1941, retired as chief mate September 1. He survived the torpedoing of two ships. Mr. Robinson was able sea-

man in the *I. C. White* when she took a torpedo in her No. 7 starboard tank and sank September 27, 1941. Three crew members were killed.

Less than a year later on April 8, 1942, he was able seaman in the *Esso Baton Rouge* when she was struck by a torpedo that took the lives of the first assistant engineer, an oiler and a fireman. Mr. Robinson escaped uninjured.

By mid-1942 he was third mate in the *John D. Archbold*, moved up to second mate in 1943 in the *Esso Little Rock* and first sailed as chief in the *Esso Memphis* in 1945. Mr. Robinson last served in the *Esso Scranton*. He has 28 years' service. His home is in the port-city of New Orleans.

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Billy L. Steward joined the Esso Fleet as a messman in 1943 in the *Fred W. Weller*. He retired as third assistant with nearly 23 years' accumulated service. Two years after joining the company, he sailed as oiler and later as fireman-watertender in the *Esso Camden*. By 1948, he was third assistant in the *Esso Manhattan*. Prior to his employment with Esso, Mr. Steward sailed as fireman and oiler in the *Comet* for the Army Transport Service. He went ashore in 1944 to work in his native Oklahoma, and returned to the Esso Fleet a short time later. In 1949 Mr. Steward signed on with the Lykes Bros. Steamship Company as night relief engineer and sailed in three ships before joining Esso again.



At the end of his last assignment in the *Esso Lima*, Mr. Steward went home to Cleveland, Texas, with some busy plans for his retirement years. Gardening, reading, photography, traveling, automobile racing and driving a school bus are some of the pastimes he's looking forward to. His 18-year-old son, Carroll Wayne, is a private in the Marines.

TAFFRAIL TALK

THE MANHATTAN'S COOL MEN

An Associated Press report from New York describes the crew of the Arctic-bound Manhattan as "men whose blood is as cool as Arctic waters." They don't come much cooler.

Last lost time injury in the Esso Fleet reportable to the National Safety Council occurred
AUGUST 21