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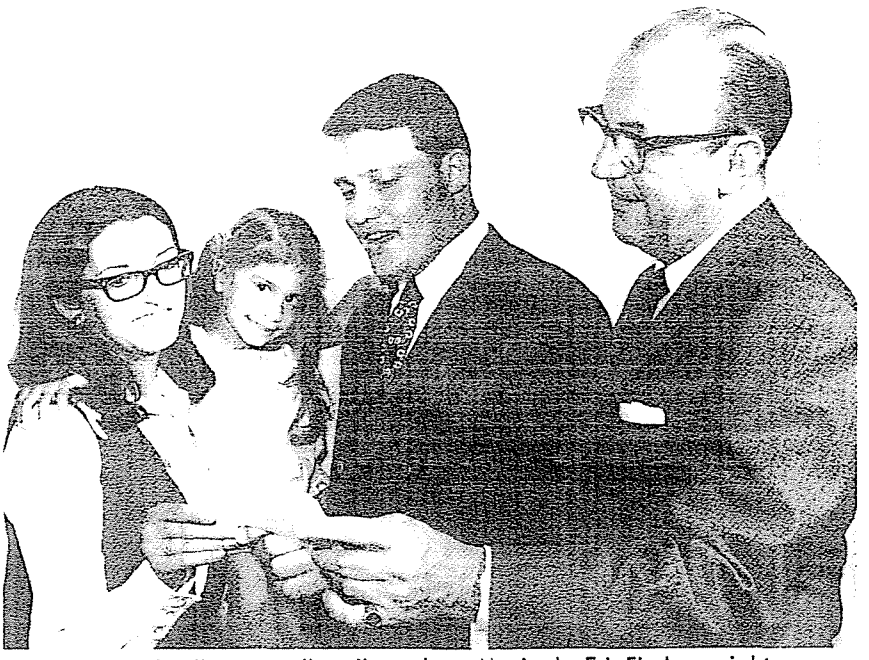

The Cintron family was all smiles when Marine's Ed Fischer, right, presented them with a whopping $12,774 check.

Letter From Daughter of Seaman Lost 27 Years Ago Leads to Whopping Check

Somewhere in the North Atlantic on December 21, 1942, the *SS C. J. Barkdull,* under the command of Chester S. Swanner, went down with all hands, presumably from enemy action. One name among the 58 crew and armed guard aboard was that of Pedro Vergara. The following 27 years buried Pedro Vergara and his comrades in the silence of the past.

Then late in 1969, the name Pedro Vergara suddenly broke that silence. It all began when Ed Fischer, head of the Marine Benefits & Claims Section in Houston, received a letter from a Mrs. Dolores Cintron. She claimed to be the only daughter of a "Jose Vargas" whom she said "worked in the kitchen" on a Standard Oil ship that was lost in 1942 or 1943. She inquired whether she might be due any monies by reason of her father's death 27 years before.

What connection did Jose Vargas have with Pedro Vergara? Well, the reason Dolores Cintron did not know the name of her father was because she was less than four years old when her mother, Dora, died in 1946. Reared by her Spanish-

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Phase-Out Does Not Affect Marine Group

The phasing out of a number of facilities at Humble's Bayonne (New Jersey) Plant, as announced by the company recently, will have no affect on marine terminalling operations there. The facilities to be phased out over the next 2½ years include asphalt, wax, industrial lubricating oils, process oils, solvents, greases, and fuel products.

After the transition, Bayonne will serve principally as a terminal for receipt and distribution of petroleum and chemical products for the New York metropolitan area. The Inland Waterways fleet of the Marine department will continue to provide barge deliveries of products to Humble terminals and other marine customers in this area.

Paychecks To Be Larger

You'll find a little something extra in your paycheck starting July 1. This is the date that the 5 per cent federal income tax surcharge will no longer be withheld from your salary. To get a rough idea of how much this tax decrease means to you, multiply the amount currently withheld for federal income taxes by .05. In addition, changes in the exemption allowance from $600 to $650 will further reduce your total tax withholding.

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speaking aunt, she was told very little about her real father except that he was "Vargas." Dolores grew up with the last name of Martinez.

Eager to see justice done, Ed Fischer soon cluttered his office with cartons and packages containing antiquated war casualty records and he slowly began to piece the jig-saw puzzle together. In addition to mentioning the "kitchen" as her father's work place, Dolores had provided some picture postcards taken of her father and other seamen on a Caribbean Island following the torpedoing and sinking of the *SS C. O. Stillman* on June 5, 1942. In checking the records of ships lost during WW II, Ed found the name of Pedro Vergara, who was not only a steward on the *Barkdull*, but who was lost at sea in that ship in December 1942.

Investigation Moves Forward

He believed that he might be on the right track because of the similarity between Vargas and Vergara. The pieces were beginning to fit. But what about absolute evidence from personnel records that would relate Vergara to a wife Dora, and a child, Dolores? Most of the personnel files from World War II, including Vergara's, had long since been destroyed. However, he did manage to unearth some bits and pieces from old rosters, ledgers, and other fragments that clearly indicated that a wife, Dora, and a daughter, Dolores Jane, were survivors of Vergara.

The months were passing quickly, but Ed's investigation moved forward. He requested a birth certificate from Dolores as undeniable proof that she was the daughter of Vergara. With the correct information she now had as to her parentage, Dolores was able to obtain and submit the proof. The case for Dolores was being tightly sewn together. In late spring, management and company legal authorities not only accepted the case for Dolores, but agreed that she deserved long overdue compensation that had never been paid her as a child, since no one had ever been appointed her legal guardian.

Ed calculated that Dolores was not only due her father's unpaid wage balance and payment for personal effects lost, but also a weekly payment from her father's death to her 16th birthday, all totaling $12,774!

It was time to break the good news.

On an evening in early June, Ed rang the bell at 201 Rosecroft Garden Apartments, in Oxon Hill, Maryland. A vivacious woman of 27 opened the door. It was Dolores.

Within a few minutes, Ed met Dolores' husband, Michael, and the couple's pretty three-year-old daughter, Michele Antoinette. He presented Dolores with Humble's check, following which they chatted for a few hours about many things: a review of the past months of research on the case, Michael's work with the American Automobile Association, and other topics.

History Reviewed

During the course of the evening, Ed presented Dolores and Michael with a copy of "Ships Of The Esso Fleet in World War II," now the most important book in their library. They reviewed the story of the mysterious disappearance of Vergara's ship, the *C. J. Barkdull*, and his previous harrowing experience as chief cook on the *C. O. Stillman*. A very pleasant evening passed quickly, and soon it was time for Ed to return to Houston.

Two days later, a letter arrived in Houston from Oxon Hill. In it, Dolores thanked Ed Fischer for "rolling up his sleeves" and initiating a thorough investigation and following through to its happy conclusion. She also stated that she would share a portion of the money with a half-sister and two half-brothers, all of whom had large families, and said that now she and Michael could at last make a down payment on a long-awaited home (see box). In closing, Mrs. Cintron said "When I say thank you to Humble Oil, I am in essence thanking you and all those who worked with you to bring about this happy occasion for me and my family."

The case is now closed. For Dolores Cintron, it took 27 years, but the legacy of Pedro Vergara was finally fulfilled.

'Now My Daughter Can Get A Puppy,' Says Mrs. Cintron

"My husband and I have been looking at model homes the past two weekends. Michele, our daughter, has a ball going through the empty homes and hiding from us. The day after you came to see us, I explained to her that now we could buy a house. I think I've been reading too much of The Three Little Pigs to her, because she said: 'First we have to buy the bricks, and then the grass and the flowers.' She also remembered that now she would be allowed to have a puppy. A few months ago when she kept asking us for a puppy, we explained to her that a dog would be unhappy locked up in an apartment while we were away all day. I told her that she could have a puppy when we had a house and lots of grass for it to run around on. I guess it came sooner than she expected."

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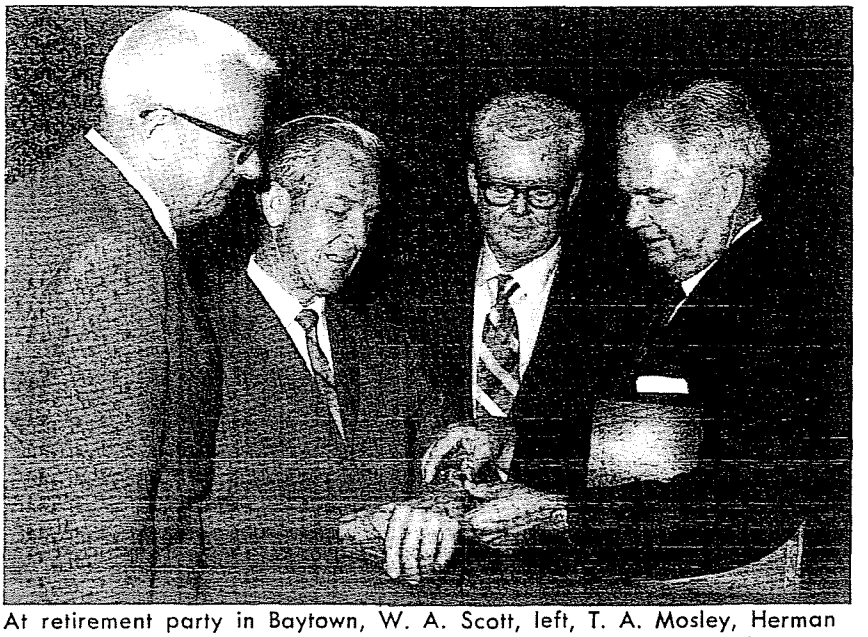

At retirement party in Baytown, W. A. Scott, left, T. A. Mosley, Herman Teller, and W. W. Cottle check the time on Mr. Mosley's new watch.

T. A. Mosley, Ex-TV Star, Retires

"At one time, I was known to my buddies in the fleet as a television star," recalled T. A. Mosley who on June 1 retired as an MM/2nd pumpman. His last ship was the *Esso Baltimore*.

"In 1957, I was featured in a Jersey Standard television documentary as a typical seaman in the Esso fleet. The 15-minute film, called 'A Traveling Man', was one of a series produced by Jersey showing company people at work. The film was made available to schools and TV stations in cities on the East Coast. It showed me relaxing at home and at work aboard ship. Part of the footage, taken aboard the *Esso Washington*, was made into a one-minute institutional commercial and shown during the company's daily news program called "Your Esso Reporter."

Mr. Mosley joined the company in 1946 as a wiper on the old *Esso Philadelphia*. Over the next few years, he served aboard a number of company tankers, receiving his A.B. ticket in 1951 and a pumpman's endorsement in 1966. Later that year, he transferred from the seagoing fleet to the inland waterways branch of the Marine Department at Baytown Refinery. He returned to seagoing vessels in 1967 and was serving aboard the *Esso Baltimore* at the time of his retirement.

Mr. Mosley is now on the sales force of an automobile company in Baytown where he lives with his wife and son.

Ship Tie-Up Completed

The last of the government-owned World War II vintage cargo ships used in Vietnam service is being laid up in the James River Reserve Fleet after its return to Norfolk recently.

A report from the Military Sea Transportation Service said the *SS Santa Clara Victory* is the last of 172 ships used under General Agency Agreement with the Maritime Administration since the build-up of American forces in Vietnam began in 1965.

New Section Set Up In Marine Department

A Logistics and Planning section has been established by the Marine Department in the Houston headquarters office. The new section is responsible for short- and long-range economics and planning and marine traffic coordination. Also, the section is responsible for Marine Arctic studies previously performed by a special Arctic Study Project group which has been terminated.

W. J. Bielstein, formerly deputy manager of the Arctic Study Project, is manager of the new section. Others in the section include A. D. Mookhoek, who continues as coordinator of economics and planning, and W. F. Robinson, traffic manager, who is responsible for ship allocation, dispatching, and chartering.

S. B. Haas, formerly manager of the Arctic Study Project, has returned to the position of assistant operations manager in the Marine headquarters office.

Two Third Mates On Temporary Assignments

Two third mates from the seagoing fleet came ashore June 22 for temporary assignments in the Houston headquarters of the Marine Department. They are 3rd Mate Peter A. Nolan, who is working in the allocation and dispatch section, and Roland R. Parent, Jr., assigned to economics and planning coordination.

ESSO FLEET NEWS is published every other Monday for active and retired employees of the Marine Department, Humble Oil & Refining Co.; Russell C. Curtis, General Manager; Sydney Wire, Assistant General Manager.

GENE LEGLER, *Editor*

Contributions and suggestions are invited and should be addressed to the Editor, ESSO FLEET NEWS, Humble Oil & Refining Co., P. O. Box 2180, Room 4193, Houston, Texas 77001.

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OBITUARY

George McClure

Radio Officer George F. McClure, 50, was struck and killed by an automobile in the Baton Rouge area on June 24. Mr. McClure, who first joined the company in 1939, had intermittent service in various unlicensed capacities for some two years. He rejoined the fleet in 1942 as a licensed radio officer in the *SS Beaconhill,* and was a member of its crew under skipper Kenneth Wing throughout 1943, when the ship gained fame as the "Murmansk Ferry." During this period, the *SS Beaconhill* made regular runs between the Russian ports of Molotovsk and Murmansk, battling the frozen Arctic in addition to the German air force and navy. McClure served as radio officer in many fleet vessels during the past 28 years, and was serving in the *Esso Philadelphia* at the time of his death. He is survived by his wife, Helen, his son, Larry, four daughters, Mrs. Eileen Emory, Kathy, Laurie, and Carla; his father, T. A. McClure; and his mother, Mrs. Ruth Morse.



Carol G. Ross

Third Assistant Engineer Carol G. Ross was reported missing at sea on June 20 while serving aboard the *SS Esso Jamestown.* Captain Lawton notified the Coast Guard and all vessels in the vicinity, ordered a thorough search of the vessel, posted extra lookouts, and retraced the ship's course. The *Esso Jamestown* covered her course twice before continuing on with her grain cargo to India, with a stop at Capetown, South Africa for bunkers. An amphibious plane from Guantanamo Bay also participated in the search for two days.

Ross joined the fleet as an oiler in October of 1969. He became third assistant engineer aboard the *Esso Jamestown* on June 3, 1970.

Ross is survived by his wife, Alma, a son, Arthur, and a daughter, Jo Ann, all of Chesapeake, Virginia.

Harry L. Cornell Dies In Sarasota, Florida

Harry L. Cornell, who retired in 1959 as port radio engineer, died in Sarasota, Florida, on June 15 at age 73. A veteran of 33 years service, Mr. Cornell joined the company in 1926.

Born in Almeda, California, in 1896, Mr. Cornell went to sea in 1914 as a seaman aboard the Matson Line's 4-masted schooner *Annie Johnston.* After sailing in several lumber schooners as a seaman, he later held ratings of quartermaster and deck officer with the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, Pacific Coast Steamship Company, Standard Oil Company of California, Atlantic Transport Company, and American-Hawaiian Line.

During World War I, Mr. Cornell served in vessels of the U.S. Army Transport Service before joining Barber and Munson Lines, advancing to master of the *Sagaporack* in 1922. He obtained a radio operator's certificate in 1923 and sailed on coastwise vessels of the Bull and Munson Lines. He returned to the deck department as navigation officer aboard the United States Lines' *President Harding* shortly before joining Esso.

A pioneer in the advances in wireless communication, he participated in the transition of Esso ships from the days of "CQD" radio to the present electronic aids to navigation.

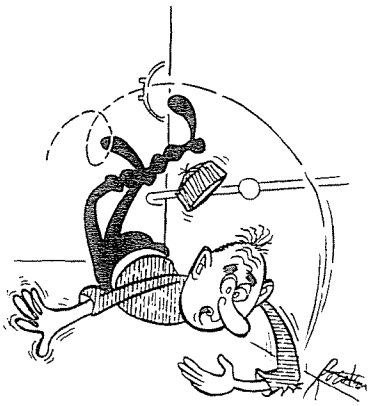
He is survived by his wife, Irene, and a son, Richard.



Harry L. Cornell

The MIS-Adventures of

J. STUMBLEPRONE MC FRACTURE



What a break! J. Stumbleprone slipped and fell in a passageway (with a handrail on each side) while going aft — for a coffee break. He got a deep cut on his left arm. Not only that, but the cut later became infected and he had to go ashore for a treatment.

We would like to be able to cite a safety rule or two to help prevent accidents like this, but what can we say? Don't be a Stumbleprone — even on your own time?

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