

# ESSO FLEET NEWS

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## Two Vessels Collide in Houston Ship Channel

### Traffic Blocked For 65 Hours

The new Norwegian tanker *Berean* and a Nationalist Chinese freighter, the *Union Reliance*, collided Nov. 7 in the Houston Ship Channel near Light 76, about five miles south of Morgan's Point. The accident occurred at 2315. Both vessels were immediately set afire as they lay locked together.

The fire was fed by an inflammable petrochemical, acrylonitrile, in the tanker's No. 1 port wing tank, which was torn open in the crash. The flames on the *Berean* were fought by the tanker's powder, water and steam systems but the Master credited a Coast Guard boarding party with extinguishing the fire with chemical foam.

At 0510, Nov. 8, tugs pulled the *Berean* free of the burning Chinese ship and she proceeded

down channel under her own power and anchored off Galveston.

The *Union Reliance* continued to burn through the day. During the night of Nov. 8 fire fighting attempts were abandoned after water pumped into the ship caused a 15° list and danger of capsizing.

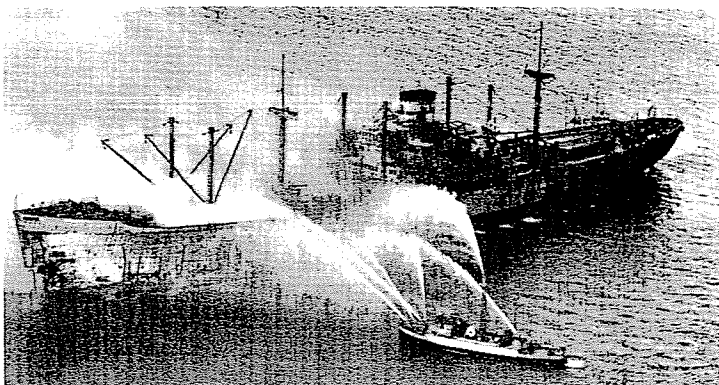
Six crew members of the Chinese freighter, including the chief mate, second mate and radio officer, and Houston pilot David O. Duncan, died on the ship. Four others, missing, are presumed to have drowned. There was no loss of life or even injuries to those aboard the tanker.

At a Coast Guard board of inquiry in Galveston, it was brought out that the Norwegian vessel was on the east side of the channel, inbound from Baton Rouge. Houston pilot Charles Lary testified that as the two ships neared Buoy 73, the freighter began veering across the channel into the path of the tanker. The Master, Captain O. Steen Larsen, said that "We went hard to the right. Our bow was aground, the ship was fully stopped and the engines full astern when we hit."

The Chinese vessel, which was reported to have had steering gear trouble, dropped both her anchors shortly before the collision.

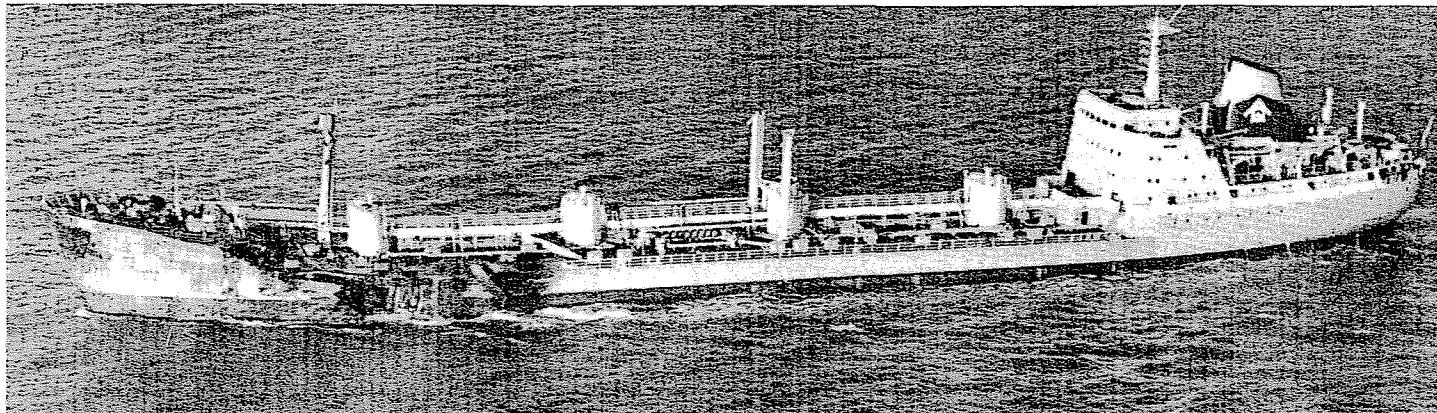
Because the burning freighter was aground by the stern on the west bank and stretched half-way across the channel, traffic was not permitted to pass. By Nov. 10 about 40 ships were prevented from entering or leaving port. Among them were the *Esso Baltimore* and *Esso Miami* at Baytown and the *Esso Gloucester*, which had been inbound a few miles behind the *Berean* on the night of the

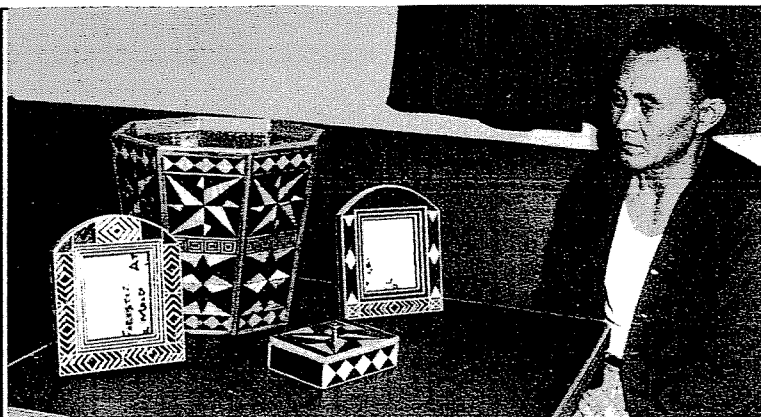
Photos by Dan Hardy, THE HOUSTON POST



A fireboat pours water on the 7,638 gross ton Chinese freighter *Union Reliance* in a brave effort to extinguish the fire.

The 13,230 dwt. MV *Berean*, with jagged hole in way of No. 1 port wing tank, proceeding down channel to anchorage, Nov. 8. She was built last April.





Utilityman Ling Ah Tay, of the *Esso New York*, with a collection of some of his inlaid matchstick pieces — a waste basket, two picture frames and a cigarette box. All are in variations of diamond designs made with natural and red and black dyed matchsticks and then lacquered. The eight-sided waste basket has an apple crate frame and required \$1.20 worth of matches, \$1.50 for Elmer's glue, many hours and much patience.

Ling also makes belts out of nylon cord and his artistic talents include the tonsorial — having a skilled hand with hair clippers and barber scissors.

Before joining *Esso* 10 years ago, Ling sailed in British tankers for three years. He got his first seagoing experience in small craft around Singapore.

Ling and his wife, Ruby, live in Hollis, Long Island, N. Y. They have a son and two grandchildren.

tragedy. The *Gloucester* anchored near Buoy 17 until the afternoon of the 9th, when tugs arrived to tow her stern first back to Bolivar Roads.

The *Esso Suez* and *Esso Lima*, due at Baytown on the 9th, were diverted to Baton Rouge, as was the *Esso Washington*, due on the 11th.

At daylight, Nov. 11, a Houston salvage firm began work to free the anchor chains of the *Union Reliance* and the tugs *Zeus* and *Juno* towed her, still smoldering, to Bolivar Roads.

At 1632, Nov. 11, the channel was clear. By 2100, 11 ships had passed Morgan's Point inbound and six outbound.

### **JSTOA and Company Agree on Overtime For Mates and Asst. Engineers**

Negotiators for the Jersey Standard Tanker Officers Association and the Company reached agreement Saturday, Nov. 11 on the terms of Amendment No. 1 to the contract of Jan. 20, 1961. The amendment is to be signed on Nov. 17 and become effective Nov. 1, if ratified by the Association membership.

Highlights of the amendment are pay increases of \$55 per month for Masters and \$53 per month for Chief Engineers and overtime provisions for other officers represented by the JSTOA.

Mates and Assistant Engineers will be paid

\$3.34 per hour for work in excess of eight hours in any one day, provided the work is authorized by the Master or department head. One half-hour overtime per day will be paid to an officer who is required to relieve another officer on watch for the evening meal when a vessel is underway or anchored.

Certain duties, such as those necessary for the navigation and safety of the vessel, routine inspections, fire and boat drills, preparation of vessel records, aiding ships in distress at sea, etc., are excluded as overtime work.

### **Gas-Freeing Systems Under Test**

For quite some time the Marine Division's Operating Department has been studying systems and methods to remove hydrocarbon vapors left in a cargo tank after discharging a low flash product. Several possible solutions are currently being investigated.

On many clean vessels, wing tanks that are not to be ballasted are washed with cold salt water after stripping and, when the slops have been removed, vented with a Coppus blower. The idea is to have all tanks adjoining the skin of the vessel gas-free, ballasted, or containing non-explosive vapors such as exist after discharge of a distillate product. This would make it unlikely that a fire or explosion would result from a collision in restricted waters where vessels travel at slower speeds and the danger of a spark reaching a center tank is remote.

A second system has just been installed in the *Esso Chester* during her repair period. This follows about the same procedure as that mentioned above except that there is a much more powerful blower (25,000 cfm., compared to 3,000 cfm. for a Coppus blower) located in the midship square. An air heater has also been installed, which will further speed up the evaporation of any remaining volatile product in the tanks. The heated air is discharged from the blower to the cargo lines and can be directed to tanks which carried low flash products.

The third system, of the inert gas type, was put in the *Esso Jamestown* while she was repairing last month. The method here is to draw flue gas from the boiler uptakes and pass it through a

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"scrubber" to cool it and remove sulphur and solid particles. This gas is mostly carbon dioxide and nitrogen, both non-combustible. It is discharged into a gas main on deck and from there distributed to the cargo tanks. The blower can also be arranged to supply fresh air to tanks that might require purging before being entered for inspection.

The three systems will be tested and compared during the next few months.

## TAFFRAIL TALK

Theodore O. Wallace, 21, son of Theodore J. and Anna Wallace, of Bayonne, recently earned his Paratrooper Wings and PFC rating from the 101st Airborne Division Jump School at Fort Campbell, Ky. He had previously received a "Trainee of the Week" award at Fort Benning, Georgia.

The Wallace's daughter, Kathleen, is employed in the Overseas Personnel section of Standard Oil Co. (N. J.).

Ted, Sr., whose service in the fleet goes back to 1932, has been sailing as Second and Third Asst. Engineer in the *Esso New York*.

Captain James S. LeCain (ret.), who has sailed through some towering seas, last month drove through towering trees. He made a trip to Yosemite National Park and the Redwood forests. The California Redwoods, he says, are the world's

oldest and largest living things. Some are over 300' high and up to 4,000 years old.

Health Service, Inc. has notified the Company that there will be no change in rates for 1962. The Service provides hospital-surgical-medical benefits which are available to seagoing personnel for themselves and their families. The employee and the Company share the cost.

## New Grade of Gasoline

If you have anything to do with loading orders, you will probably notice a new product name in them in a few weeks — "Esso Plus." This will result from Company plans, announced Nov. 9, to introduce a new three-grade system of gasoline marketing in Texas and in two other test markets — the Pittsburg metropolitan area and the Norfolk-Newport News area.

The program will start before Dec. 1 and will feature a new gasoline to be called Enco Plus in Texas and Esso Plus in the Eastern test markets. In quality and price, the new product will fall between Humble's premium Enco Extra and regular Enco in Texas, and between the premium Esso Extra and regular Esso in the East.

The new grade will enable owners of compacts and other new model cars, some of whom may not now get top performance from regular gasoline, to buy a gasoline superior to regular and particularly suited for their economical use.

## Captain F. I. Shaw, Agent at Boston, Retires

Captain Shaw retired officially Nov. 1, with a record of nearly 43 years of Company service afloat and ashore. The latter includes nine years as Agent at Boston and seven as a Group Captain in New York.

As a young New York Nautical School graduate, Captain Shaw started his seagoing career as Third Mate in the Company's *Charles Pratt* on July 19, 1918. He advanced to Master in November, 1926 and sailed 15 years in this rank.

During the war years Captain Shaw was stationed at Aruba as U. S. Naval Liaison Officer representing the Commander All Forces, Aruba-Curacao and as Executive Officer of the U. S. Routing Office. For most of 1945 he was Assistant Port Director, Naval Operating Base, Norfolk, with the rank of Captain, USN.

Captain Shaw and his wife will continue to make their home in Melrose, Mass. He has been active in several Boston maritime organizations.

Captain Frank Shaw (third from left) with a few of the scores of friends who attended a reception in his honor at the Ship's Haven restaurant, near Boston, on Sept. 28. Others, l. to r. are: L. J. Hodgkins, former Manager of the Operating Dept.; J. D. Rogers, General Manager, Marine Division; J. J. Kelleher, newly appointed Boston Agent; Harold L. Gordon and George Poor, of the Agency staff. The Captain was presented with a 35mm camera outfit.



## ESA Ratifies Amendment No. 1

The Esso Seamen's Association notified the Company on Nov. 8 that its members had ratified Amendment No. 1 to the agreement with the Company.

Nov. 8, then, became the date on which the new overtime provisions were effective. These include extra pay for work over eight hours per day for watchstanders and Steward's Dept. men; extra pay for Pumpmen who work more than eight hours on a Saturday, Sunday or holiday in port, and supper relief pay.

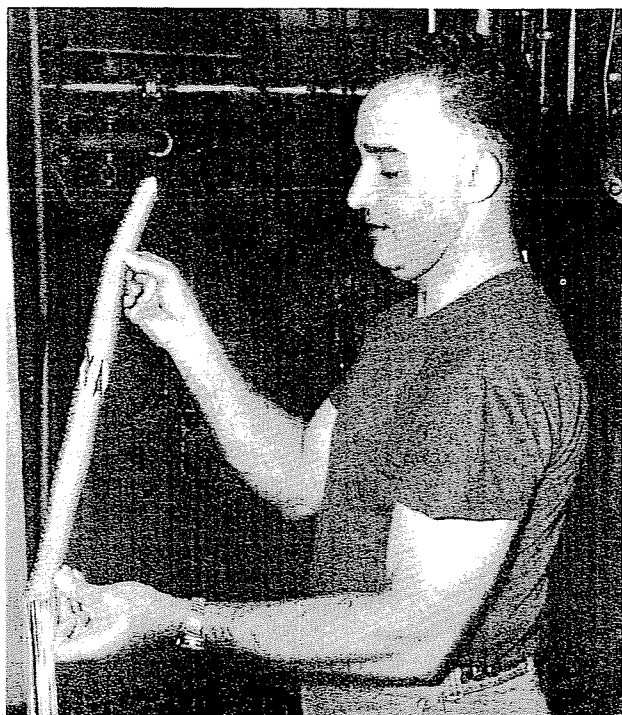
The amendment also provides wage increases for all unlicensed men and higher premium pay rates. Payment of these increases, which were made effective Sept. 1, are being included in current payoffs. First ship to receive the additional pay was the *Esso Florence* on Nov. 14.

## Educational Refund Policy Approved

The Humble Board of Directors has approved an Educational Refund Policy to provide financial assistance to employees who take approved courses during off-work hours. The policy applies to all full-time Company employees who are covered by the Benefit Plan.

Fireman-Watertender Jose A. Gomes holds still for a moment in the *Esso New York's* boiler room to show the attractive belt he is making in his off-watch time. The belt material is rose and green silk cord tied into thousands of square knots. He works on it by fastening some of the loose stands to a hook in his belt and ties each knot with uniform tightness.

Jose has been sailing in the Esso fleet ("my first company and I like it") since October, 1948. He and his wife, Ruth, live in Hanover, Mass., where they bought a house and a half-acre of land three years ago. They have two daughters, Sandra, 9 and Suzan, 4.



Although similar policies have been in effect in parts of the Company in the past, for many Humble employees this is the first time such assistance has been made available.

Under the policy, the Company will refund two-thirds of the tuition costs of outside schooling up to a maximum of \$400 in any one academic year. Schooling must be approved by employee's management in advance of enrollment and the refund will be made after completion, with satisfactory grades, of the school term.

Courses will be approved if it is considered that they will improve the performance of the employee in his present job or if they lead to a college degree and are appropriate to the career development of the employee.

Correspondence courses will be approved only if appropriate instruction is not available to the employee on a classroom basis.

## WORDS OF THE WISE

Any fool can criticize, condemn, and complain - and most fools do. — *Dale Carnegie*

— ★ —

If you pursue good with labor, the labor passes away but the good remains; if you pursue evil with pleasure, the pleasure passes away and the evil remains. — *Cicero*

## OBITUARY

JOSEPH D. BOTELER, Ordinary Seaman, died Nov. 9 at the Jersey City Medical Center. He was 55 years old and a resident of Houston. Surviving are his wife and a son, Robert C. Boteler, 22.

Mr. Boteler had been in the fleet since July 7, 1952, sailing most recently in the *Esso Bermuda*, *Greenville* and *Chester*. He was a U. S. Navy veteran with 18 months' service as Gunner's Mate 2C during World War II.

A. E. LINDQUIST, retired Port Engineer and representative at Baytown for Humble, died Nov. 11 of a heart attack. He was 67 years old and had been an annuitant since March 1, 1958. He is survived by his wife and two brothers.



Chief Lindquist served 36 years at Baytown, first as Dockmaster and then Port Engineer. Born in Sweden, he went to sea in 1915 as an oiler with the Morgan Line. After two years in the U. S. Navy in World War I, he returned to the Morgan Line as a chief engineer and in 1921, joined Humble as Chief in the tanker *Baytown*.