



ESSO FLEET NEWS

PUBLISHED BY THE MARINE DIVISION, HUMBLE OIL & REFINING COMPANY



Vol. 6, No. 7

April 2, 1964

Suez to Philadelphia

Part II of AB Bill E. Tyra's Story
Of the Esso Scranton's 5th Voyage to India

We arrived at Suez (from Kuwait) on Feb. 6 and anchored, waiting for a convoy to make-up. As usual, Egyptian businessmen came aboard to peddle their wares. But by now we *Scrantonites* were wise to the ways of the wheeler-dealers and knew nearly as much about prices of trade goods as they. About the only thing we bought in quantity was perfume and the fellows bought it as if it was water—which it probably was.

We had the lead in the convoy this trip and as it was a daylight transit, those who had cameras were able to record the *Scranton's* passage from Suez to Port Said. After a couple hours of waiting for interesting subjects to show up, most of us relegated the canal to what it really is—a stream of water between 2 piles of sand. But we did get some pictures of camel caravans, military camps, ships, trains, palm trees, de Lesseps' Monument and — 2 sand piles with a stream of water between.

The *Esso Scranton* arrived at Venice Harbor on Feb. 11 and anchored, expecting to dock about 8 or 9 a.m. next day. However, a heavy fog set in and we did not dock until noon on Feb. 14.

Esso has a big tank farm near Venice but we berthed at the IROM

Company (Italian Refining Oil & Minerals) which is next to Esso. Our prospects for shore leave didn't look too good as there was a 10" discharge line, but we got about 2 days in port.

After the ship was secure, most of us who were off-watch got ready to go ashore, even though the fog had now turned to a light rain. Only a few of us received mail and you could see some of the men were dejected.

Mestre was the nearest city. It is an ordinary-looking town and reminded me of Boston except that Boston is more exotic and foreign-looking. It is a large city and has a prosperous look—at least all the stores are stocked with goods of every description from many countries (Italy is one of the Common Market countries) but most everything is very expensive. One of the few things I considered a good buy was an Omega watch, which cost 22,000 lira or about \$40. Borsalino hats are always good buys and there were some imported ski sweaters which were probably bargains, too, and I will have to include wine, for which Italy is well-known. Everything else seemed over-priced and I suspect these Italians must be very well-off as I don't think I could afford to live here.

Ah, now to go to Venice. Venice is accessible from Mestre by train, bus or taxi, via a causeway and once you get there you must walk! Walking is the main mode of transportation. There are no wheeled vehicles other than baby buggies or hand trucks and it was a good feeling to be able to walk along streets with no traffic problems. There are motorboats (water taxis) and ferries to take you from one point to another via the canals.

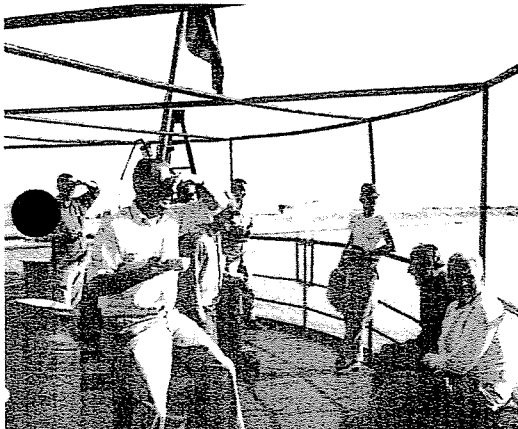
While we were there, all the gondolas were idle, as it was not the season. We saw many of them laid-up for the winter. Most appeared to be very old and in need of paint and repairs. I would have liked to have taken a "sailor's holiday" and gone gondolaing but I guess only the tourists and a few romantic couples ride in them. The townspeople go by "shanks mare" or ride the ferries. Venice is a sight to see—and there isn't another place like it anywhere.

ES SIDER

We left Italy and went to Libya, in North Africa, stopping at a place named Es Sider. This is like Freeport in the Bahamas, that is, you tie up to sea buoys and load through a submarine line. Es Sider is about 200 miles from Bengasi and 400 miles from Tripoli (which are joint capitals of the country). There are a few villages nearby but even if you got ashore there wouldn't be much to do. The pilot said that for excitement and entertainment natives sometimes burn a drum of oil.

The Oasis Oil Co., which is owned

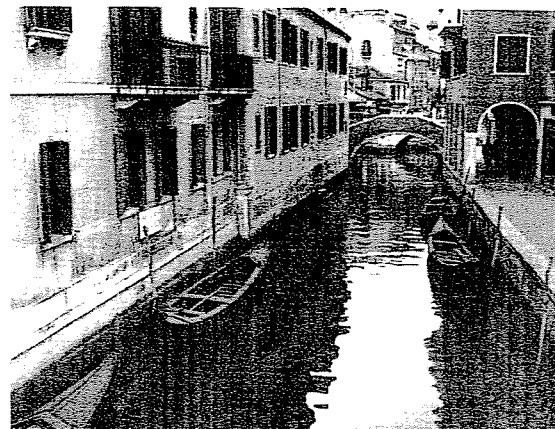
Coffee time in the Suez Canal.



Chief Steward Maurice Wishnoff window shopping in Mestre, Italy.



A picturesque canal in Venice.



Tidewater Sale Postponed to April 30

Tidewater Oil Co. and Humble have selected April 30 as the target closing date for the sale of Tidewater's western marketing, refining and related transportation facilities to Humble. While the 2 companies had looked to March 31 as the closing date, the large volume of detail in a sale of this size required additional time to complete.

TAFFRAIL TALK

Judith M. Johnson, daughter of Third Asst. Engr. Donald K. Johnson (*Esso New York*), has been awarded a Walter C. Teagle Nursing Scholarship to Texas Woman's University, Denton, Texas, starting next September.

Paul H. Franzen, who retired as Chief Engineer

by several American companies, has a team of about 11 men still engaged in removing land mines planted there during World War II by the British and German armies. After 20 years, the mines are still dangerous as the climate slows oxidation and deterioration. A case in point is the bomber "Lady Be Good" which crashed in the Libyan desert while returning from a mission in World War II. The wreckage was discovered by an oil exploration team a few years ago and the dry air had kept the plane in a near-perfect state of preservation. Even the coffee (in vacuum containers) aboard the plane was still hot — (desert temp. 120°).

Captain Wigh had a message from the Company warning and instructing on loading this Libyan crude, which was supposed to be gassy and dangerous. However, we didn't think it was nearly as potent as West Texas crude.

After topping-off, we let go, heaved in the anchors and headed for home. While steaming off North Africa, we could look at the mountainous coast (Algeria) and see snow, or so we thought.

As we passed the Fortress of Gibraltar (which is named after a Moslem General who landed there in 711 and invaded Spain) some men were out shooting at it with their cameras. The "rock" was visible but it was a dreary, overcast day.

While still in the Straits of Gi-

braltar, the seas began to boil over and slop on the deck. So we pretty well knew when we got into deep water we would do a little rock and rolling — and not on a dance floor.

STORMY ATLANTIC

As anticipated, we ran into some weather — or it ran into us — and stayed with us most of the way across. While I wouldn't say these were the biggest waves I've ever seen, I would say they were the most. The swells or crests of the waves averaged only about 10' but the troughs, or holes between them seemed to be very deep and we were forever falling into these holes.

Of course, we had some "big" seas break over us too. One sea gushed over the deck while a Messman was dumping the garbage and wet him up to his knees. While he was trying to retrieve the loose bucket (which had been dropped or wrenched from his hand) another sea swamped the poop deck and entirely hid him from our view. After the sea subsided, he was still trying to retrieve the pail. We beckoned for him to come on in and he waded back to the messhall. Outside of being breathless and as white as a sheet and 2 pillow cases, he was none the worse for his ordeal. We tried to entice him to go back out so we could take some action photographs but he refused. I don't think he ventured out on deck for several days after that. PS. He *did* retrieve the pail. Shouldn't there be some kind of award for this?

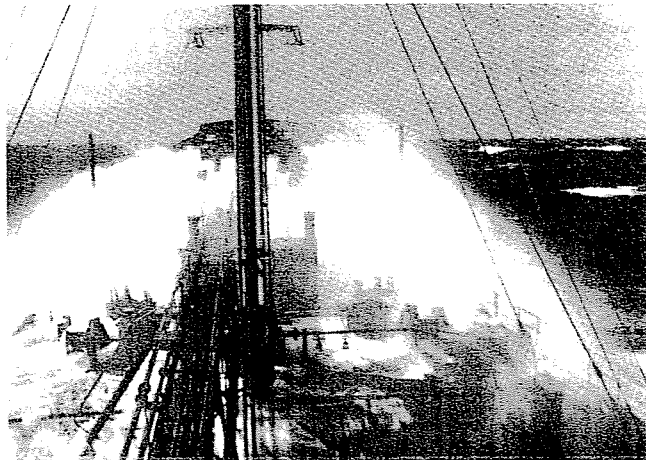
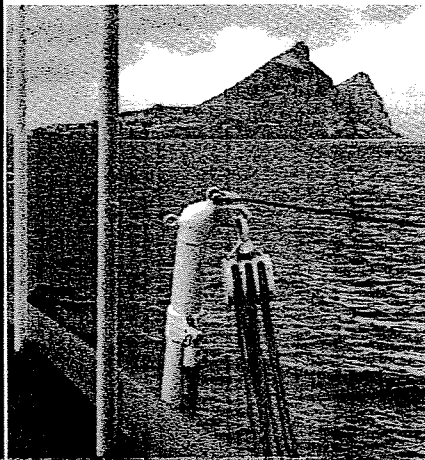
When we had fought our way to the middle of the Atlantic, the pounding of the seas began to tell on "Lady Scranton", which was and is one of the most seaworthy ships in the fleet. Even while exposed to all this stress and strain, she never creaked or moaned. We had a steering breakdown one night and had to shift to emergency steering while Engineers added oil and repumped the telemotor system. The complete change-over from the breakdown until steering in the wheelhouse again required about ½-hour. We had 2 more breakdowns but by then had the change-over down pat and were back on emergency steering in minutes. The Engineers and Pumpman were finally able to make permanent repairs (they replaced a section of tubing on the steering system) and we were on our merry way.

The weather improved as we headed full speed for Philadelphia, arriving at the pilot station about 7 a.m., Sunday, March 8. We docked a few minutes after 8 p.m., same day and all felt relieved when we learned that only 3 of us would have to pay duty on our booty — the rest were duty-free.

In closing, I will skip the customary "vote of confidence" to the Steward's Dept. (deserving though they be) and say thanks to everyone aboard the *Scranton* for making this a pleasant voyage. And to the men who will make the next India trip — Happy Motoring!

(Below left) Gibraltar abeam. (center) The *Scranton* digs out of one of the "holes" in the Atlantic. (right) Back on native soil, Bill Tyra points to pile of souvenirs.

Photos by AB Bill E. Tyra



in the fleet on Jan. 1, 1958, has retired again after 4 years as Chief in the *Florida*, the Miami-Bahamas passenger ship.

Certain of our unlicensed men may be surprised to learn that there IS an *Esso Ark*. She is a little shallow draft vessel, the first tanker built in Pakistan. Recently she sailed from Karachi, her home port, on her maiden voyage under charter to Esso Standard Eastern, Inc.

Three compact "walkie-talkie" radios were put aboard the *Esso Bangor* on March 21 for testing, particularly while docking and undocking and during fire and boat drills. With the transistorized instrument, you just extend the telescoping antenna, turn on the switch and talk or listen. Houston Pilots use similar equipment.

Our double-feature movie films — FIRE FIGHTING ABOARD TANKERS and RESCUE BREATHING are still playing to capacity audiences with some men seeing them twice. They are now showing aboard the *Huntington* and *Scranton*.

Esso Lexington (Captain Simpson W. Logan and Chief Engr. William W. McKay), enroute from El Segundo (Los Angeles) to Port Everglades, Fla., developed a loose propeller at Balboa, C. Z. on March 19. Canal tugs and the electric "mules" got her through the Canal and she left Cristobal in tow of Merritt, Chapman & Scott's tug *Cable* on March 25. Arrival at Port Everglades is expected about April 10, granting favorable towing conditions.

30 Years' Service



Aubrey G. Allen
Chief Engineer
Esso Boston
March 16, 1964

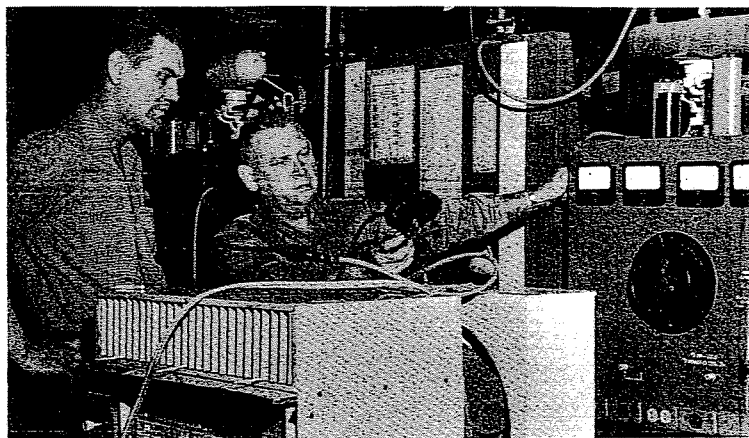


Herman A. Thompson
Repair Materials
Supervisor
March 4, 1964

ESSO FLEET NEWS is published for the seagoing employees of the Marine Division, Humble Oil & Refining Co.: Joseph Andraae, 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 1, Texas.



First Asst. Engineer Clyde C. O'Neal (right) watches a pressure gage while charging a room air conditioning unit with freon at the Kellow Technical College, Houston. Supervising is instructor R. W. Kellow.

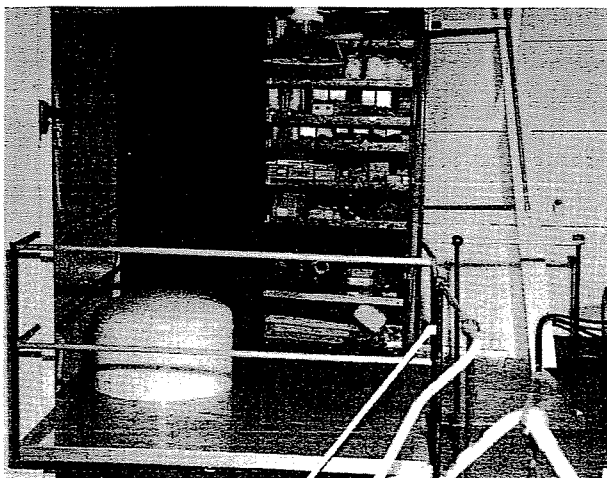
"... It's More Fun to Know"

Some engineers get an uncomfortable feeling ("bugged", you might call it) if they sail with machinery they don't thoroughly understand. First Asst. Clyde C. O'Neal felt this way about the refrigerating and air conditioning equipment. Oh, he knew something about it. He could do the normal maintenance work and he had developed a handy method to recharge the freon supply of water coolers and pantry refrigerators. But he felt that he didn't know enough. Many of us get this feeling from time to time but have become expert in sloughing it off. Clyde didn't.

Coming to Houston, Clyde enrolled in the Kellow Technical College for the 5-week course in refrigeration and air conditioning.* The course includes classroom lectures and discussions but is "heavy" on shop training and learning by doing. One of the things Clyde did was to tear down a compressor of his own, put it together again and improve its efficiency.

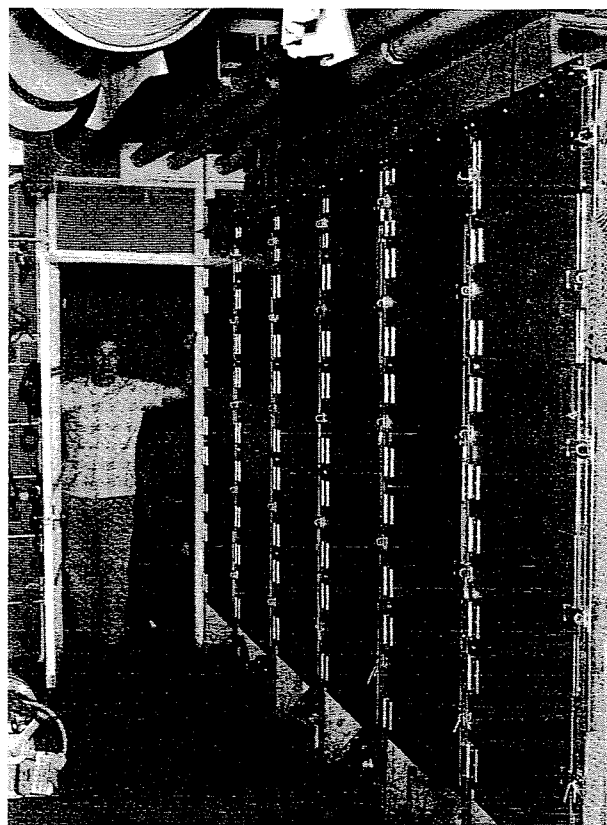
Mr. O'Neal completed the course on March 20 and is very enthusiastic about it. "I found out how much I didn't know," he said. "Now I'll be able to tell whether or not the shipboard equipment is running efficiently. Also, better maintenance will reduce repair expenses and if something does go wrong, I should be able to find the trouble quicker. I think, too, that the knowledge I have gained may come in handy when I retire."

*For the benefit of anyone interested, the Kellow school has day and evening classes (2 nights a week for 12 weeks for the evening course) both with a minimum of 72 hours of instruction. Classes are limited to 6 to 10 students each and tuition is \$200 now but is going to be \$400 in May. Mr. Kellow, who started the college in 1959, also heads a refrigeration and air conditioning repair business in which he has 27 years' experience. He says the only qualifications a student needs for admission is ability to read and write, do simple arithmetic and know how to use tools. However, engineering or mechanical experience is helpful.



These photos show some of the spare parts stowage improvements made by Chief Engineer Charles A. Ruggerio and the Asst. Engineers of the *Esso Florence*. At right are some of the storage bins for which Third Asst. Julius Q. Brown (background) made and installed aluminum doors — 57 in all. Each compartment door is numbered and labeled. (That's not a ragged under-shirt hanging down; it's the end of a roll of filter cloth.)

Above is a metal cabinet on a new platform which the Engineers made. The cabinet contains plumbing supplies and safety equipment and 3 more are in the steering gear space.



Jimmy Hoos is Dead

Jimmy Hoos, the little Navesink, N. J. boy who fought a long battle with muscular dystrophy, died March 22 at the age of 15. He was too weak to ward off a slight cold.

Though his disease was incurable, Jimmy put up a good fight, staying alive more than a year longer than expected. His doctor and parents give the hundreds of post cards he received from Esso seamen a large measure of credit for keeping up his morale.

Jimmy's biggest thrill though, was the day (May 13, 1962) when he visited the *Esso New York* and Captain Ralph W. Durdle made him Honorary Captain of the ship. Officers and crewmen also chipped in to give him a radio and a Captain's hat. He wore that hat to the end.



OBITUARY



FRANK J. BURCHALEWSKI, 80, former Chief Engineer and an annuitant for the past 18 years, died in Buffalo, N. Y. on March 18. He is survived by his wife, Vera.

Born in Poland, Mr. Burchalewski had 15 years' experience as an engineer when he joined

the fleet as Second Asst. in the *Crampton Anderson* on Feb. 12, 1922. He was promoted to Chief Engineer in July 1935 and sailed in that rank in 8 vessels during World War II. He retired on Jan. 1, 1946 with 21 years of Company service.

Finger-tip Valve Control for New Ship

All the cargo suction and line block valves on Humble's 66,700-dwt. tanker being built at Newport News are to be hydraulically operated — a system that takes the grunts and strain out of valve turning.

The type of equipment to be installed is shown in the accompanying photo. Protruding at left center, is the control lever. Lift it up and 1,500 lbs. of oil pressure go to work in a little hydraulic motor (in back), which turns gears connected to the end of the reach rod. Push the handle down and the oil flow, motor direction and valve position are reversed. Up opens, down closes the valve - in about 15 seconds.

Oil pressure to the valve turners will come through heavy duty tubing from a pump in a hydraulic power pack room, located in the deckhouse.

