

Coast Guard Cutter Northwind Proves She Can Stay At Sea for a Year, Keep Crew Fed, Fight Ice and Aid Natives

By CHARLES KEIM
ABOARD U. S. COAST GUARD CUTTER NORTHWIND, 45—Uncle Sam owns a ship that can carry enough fuel to go a year without refueling.

With her thousands of gallons of diesel oil aboard, she has penetrated into some of the most inaccessible areas on the globe. She is the U.S. coast guard cutter Northwind, an icebreaker commissioned in 1945. Seattle is her home port.

The Northwind got into the news this month through its ill-fated attempt to tow or escort the burned freighter George Walton from far off Cape Flattery. (The Walton finally sank.)

The assignment was only one of many hard jobs given the 269-foot vessel under command of Capt. John A. Dike. The ship is equipped to handle them all. She has a round hull to prevent ice from crushing her. The mid-ship section is almost a perfect circle with a 32-foot radius. The ship's bow is cutaway. This permits her to ride upon and crush the ice. The vessel may be rocked fore and aft, rolling from side to side to prevent the ship from being gripped by ice under pressure. To do this the crewmen transfer water in the ship's heeling and trimming system from front to back of side to side. Powerful pumps can transfer 225 tons of water from one side to the other in 90 seconds. She has a 70-foot beam.

Through most of the Cape Flattery assignment the ship filled these tanks to make her ride lower in the water. This stopped much of her rocking motion when she rode out two storms with gales up to 60 miles an hour.

The Northwind has a steel hull. The plating is up to one and five-eighths inches thick. This can resist the pressure and shearing action of ice. Her bulkheads are cork-insulated up to five inches thick. This allows operation in weather 50 degrees below zero.

It's no problem for the Northwind to carry stores for her authorized peacetime complement of 13 officers and 124 enlisted men. She can feed them well for 14 months without replenishing her supplies. She has her own laundry, photographic darkroom, hospital and dental laboratory, barber, machine and carpenter shops.

Daily fresh water consumption is 200 gallons. She has a distilling

plant that can produce 10,000 gallons daily.

Six diesel engines propel the Northwind at a maximum speed above 15 knots. She has two screws aft, placed far below the surface to prevent ice damage. She can be fitted with a third screw in the bow. All these features have been useful in some of the toughest missions ever assigned any ship.

In April, 1946, the Northwind left Seattle for the east coast to join task force 68. From July to September that year the Northwind in company with navy vessels operated in Canadian, Arctic and Greenland waters. She penetrated to within 800 miles of the North Pole, and broke through the northern passage to approximately the longitude of Missoula, Mont.

The ship returned to Boston in September, 1946, and outfitted for and took part in a navy Antarctic expedition.

Thus, within six months, the Northwind penetrated as far South and as far North as it is possible for a vessel to go.

The Northwind conducted the Bering Sea patrol from May through September, 1949, resuming this coast guard duty for the first time since before world war two. The vessel repeated similar patrols in 1949 and 1950. On these patrols the vessel moves as far West as Aitutia and as far North as Point Barrow in support of isolated

coast guard units. She also aids search and rescue operations. She performs various law enforcement duties and renders medical and dental aid to natives.

The Northwind is equipped with a landing craft which helps her crew reach some of the more inaccessible bays in the Arctic regions. It was considerable aid in the burning freighter assignment when the Northwind crew rigged a towing derrick aboard the George Walton during heavy weather. She also boasts a flight deck for a helicopter.

An amphibious plane can be carried for both long range ice reconnaissance and rescue work. Something / not quite general issue, too, presently adorns the flight deck. It is a 30-foot walrus skin boat acquired in Nome, Alaska, is shallow draft permits it to venture into areas even the landing craft cannot penetrate.

U.S., Britain Swap Metals

WASHINGTON, 45—Britain is diverting part of its aluminum supply to the United States and this country is going part way in meeting British requests for more steel. Manly Fleischmann, national production authority administrator, said yesterday Britain has agreed to divert 22,045,000 pounds of its aluminum from Canadian sources. This, Fleischmann said, "unquestionably means the difference between survival and disaster for thousands of small business firms which could not have existed on the reduced allocations of aluminum originally thought necessary for the first quarter" of 1952.

In a separate announcement, NPA disclosed that 71,500 tons of steel ingots and finished steel products have been allotted the British for the first quarter of next year. Further increases in the British allotment were expected later in the year. Part of the deal is that the U.S. "to the extent possible" will divert about 28,500 tons of iron and steel scrap from German sources to Britain. Britain has asked for a total of 800,000 tons of steel for next year.

ATHENS, Greece, 45—Premier Nicholas Plastiras is suffering from a slight attack of angina pectoris, a heart ailment. A medical bulletin yesterday said Plastiras had been in bed since last Thursday.

Crime Car Story Fades

HACKENSACK, N.J., 45—A direct connection between the gangland slaying of Willie Moretti and the impounding of a sleek, expensive automobile in Toronto by Royal Canadian Mounted Police is unapparent, say New Jersey authorities.

Canadian police said yesterday they had information a \$5000 black Cadillac they impounded was used as the getaway vehicle after the slaying of a gambler was shot to death in a Cliffside Park, N.J., restaurant October 4.

A former jockey and his girl friend were arrested at the border several days ago and held on charges of possessing a " stolen automobile."

Capt. E. J. Thompson, of the Bergen county prosecutor's office, which is probing the Moretti slaying, said yesterday he does not believe the impounded car is the one used in the getaway.

Cliffside Park police said they knew nothing about the car. In addition, Thompson said he was told by Capt. Arthur Keaton, head of the state police end of the investigation that no state officers have been sent to Toronto.

The mounties said they do not believe the "couple" held on the charge of owning a stolen vehicle had anything to do with Moretti's slaying.

Faisy Perry and Laurette Nesbitt, an 18-year-old dancer, were picked up as they were driving the automobile.

Frank Nasso, the attorney for the couple, said "my client has ownership papers for the car. Even the registration says the car was bought by Laurette Nesbitt."

Cattle prices are higher than last year, but lower than their record highs last spring.

Life In Indochina Today Resembles Hollywood Film

By LARRY ALLEN
SAIGON, Indochina, 45—Gunboats and French and Viet Namese soldiers wielding light machine guns guard the ships that come up the Mekong and Saigon rivers to this bustling capital city of Viet Nam.

There's always a chance that Vietminh guerrillas hidden in the dense jungles and stretches of mangrove swamps may spray vessels with automatic fire and kill passengers or crew members.

A voyage from Cape St. Jacques where the Mekong empties into the South China Sea to Saigon has all the flavor of a Hollywood action thriller about the French foreign legion.

It's a snaky, tortuous trip. The broad Mekong river follows a constantly winding route, narrowing as the water emerges with what is called the Saigon river.

Passengers aboard cargo ships or regular passenger craft get their first hint of armed protection when four French or Viet Namese soldiers come aboard at Cape St. Jacques carrying light machine guns.

Soldiers place the light machine guns at strategic points on starboard and port decks and keep their eyes trained on the jungle, ever alert for a burst of fire.

About this time, a gunboat flying the French tricolor shows up and follows in the wake of the passenger or cargo ship.

The Vietminh guerrillas probably would have little chance of doing any serious damage to a big ship, but that doesn't stop them from occasionally taking shots at crew members and passengers who look like good targets.

Even though the major part of the French fighting against the Vietminh is presently concentrated in northern Indochina, there are still islands of territory held by guerrillas not far from Saigon itself. Nobody ventures far from Saigon without an adequate escort.

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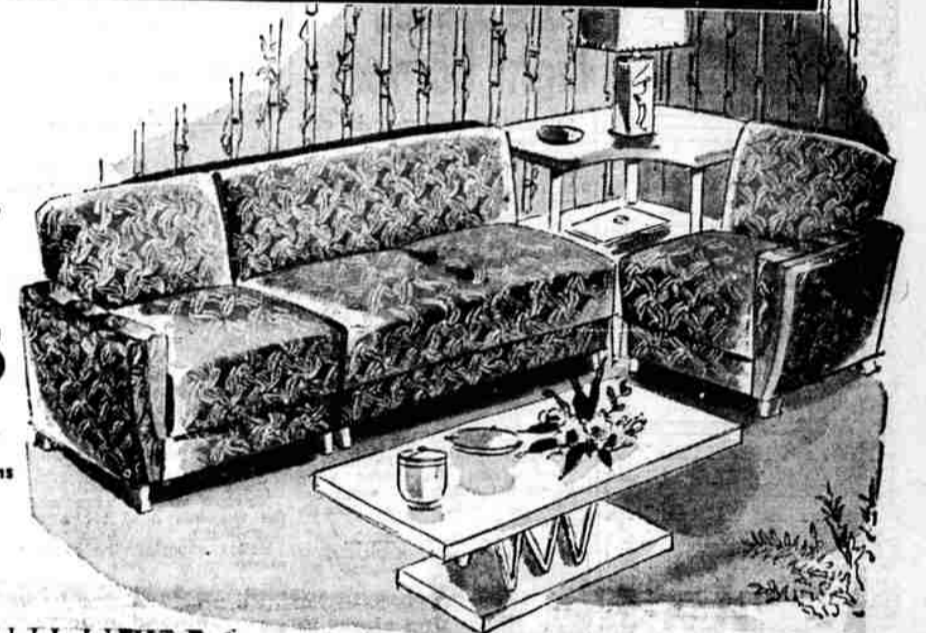
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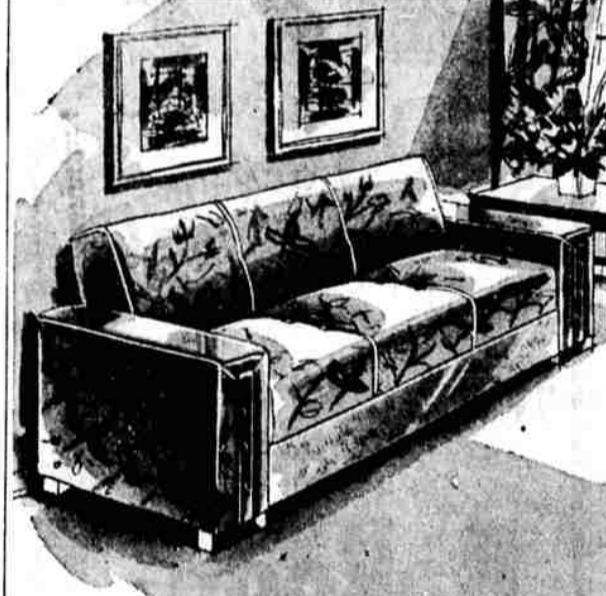
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