NOW—WHERE WERE WE?
THE STORY OF OLD ALEX


Our homeward bound ship was commissioned in 1905 at Belfast, Ireland. The North German Line bought the vessel, named it the "America" and put the ship into passenger service between Harmsworth and New York. Since that time she has come a long way.

At the outbreak of World War I, the "America" was in the Hoboken, N. J. harbor and fell into American hands as legal war booty. The crew was interned and the Navy Department assumed operation of the vessel as a troop transport. After the 1918 Armistice, the United States Line took control of the liner and lost no time in getting her into regular passenger service between New York, Southampton and the North German ports. The "Old Girl" still answered to the name "America" - English version - and flew her flag proudly. Together with the Geo. Washington, the "America" plied the waters of the Atlantic and these two ships had a monopoly on all first class passenger service for ten years after the conclusion of hostilities.

Despite the presence of larger and faster boats, the "America" kept her place in the Maritime sun until 1932 when the company placed her on the sidelines for a much needed and well earned rest. In 1940, when the war was raging all over Europe, the War Department took over control of the "America" and converted the once proud passenger liner into a troop transport. The passenger capacity jumped from a peacetime 1500 paying tourists to a total of 5557 non-paying "guests" of Uncle Sam.

Many a mariner around the New York docks had written off the "America" as a sea worthy vessel after her 1932 retirement, but like the leathery right arm of Grover Cleveland Alexander, who tossed too many strikes for the famed Yankees' "Murderers Row" in the 1926 World's Series, the "America" had many a good lick left in her. At 16½ knots, approximately 20 MPH, the E. B. Alexander, as she was re christened in 1940, is not the fastest transport on the high seas, but she bows to no sea-going vessel in seaworthiness.

"Old Alex" made her first overseas voyage as a troop transport in January 1941 when she delivered the first contingent of American soldiers to land on foreign soil during World War II. The port of call was St. Johns, Newfoundland and "Old Alex" stayed in port for six months as a barracks ship for the soldiers until suitable quarters could be erected in this barren, frigid wasteland.

Since that first run, "Old Alex" has been on the go continually. She has taken her place in the now famous Atlantic convoys; dodged and squirmed her way through the North Atlantic submarine wolf packs; fought off enemy aircraft attacks; and always delivered her load of troops and cargo intact. During the Sicilian campaign, "Old Alex" knocked off two German fighter planes which were bent on getting the one sticker out of the way. A near-by Allied ship claimed that the "Old Girl" had downed two more Jerry fighters, but the record books show two "kills" and two "probables". Not bad for a ship that has been around since 1905.

And the "America", the ship gained everlasting fame among all sea-faring men for a rescue act during the winter of 1929. Half way across the North Atlantic, with Captain George Freid as ship's master, the "America" was battling one of the worst storms of that period. Waves became mountains of water and the cold, biting wind swept the boat from stem to stern. Suddenly the ship's radio operator picked up a faint S.O.S., but repeated efforts to contact the distressed vessel brought forth only

(Closing)
the same invariable signal for aid.

Captain Fraid ordered the "America" to start a search for the stricken vessel and for three days and nights the ship circled the area without seeing a trace of anything on the angry sea. Late during the third night, a small light was noticed not far away, but the heavy seas prevented any close approach.

A small boat containing eight sailors and Chief Officer K. Manning, was put out and this vessel and crew worked their way perilously toward the light. They found 32 officers and men of an Italian freighter, more dead than alive. Broken legs, head and body bruises, and multiple fractures of every description filled the weary story of how the stricken ship fought the ravages of the tempest sea and refused to give up hope of life until rescued.

By skillful maneuvering, Captain Fraid was able to offer some protection for the small rescue boat and many skillful operation of the "America" and her equipment enabled all 32 injured persons to be brought aboard. A few minutes later the freighter broke in two and sank.

Chief Officer Manning, who directed the rescue from his light boat, was later to gain international fame as navigator for Acilia Ehrhart on many of her long-distance over water flights. However, he was not with the noted aviatrix when she made her ill-fated Pacific flight in 1937.

The current Master of the E. B. Alexander is Mr. 3. T. Cline, Newark, N. J. He is a veteran of over 30 years on the high seas and takes great personal pride in the "never say die" spirit of "Old Alex".

The skipper has been guiding the destinies of the vessel since August 1941 and believes that the foreseeable future holds no terror for the 40 year old veteran of two major war wards.

"If 'Old Pete' Alexander could strike out the Yankee batting stars when he was close to 40 years of age, I'm sure 'Old Alex' can do the same in this league for many years to come", reflected Mr. Cline. "She's sturdy as an ox and just as durable". (T.H.T.)

THE END

"ON THE BALL"

Here are a few facts about the two lovely girls who have been entertaining on the stairs between sections B6 and C6.

As many of you know, Miss Elyme Clark and Barbara O'Connell ably accompanied her with the accordion. Together, they have traveled the circuit through Bavaria, Germany, Belgium, Holland and France for the last six months (cont. page 4)

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CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

What people think of you is your reputation. Your reputation is a product of two things your contacts and dealings with others and their interpretation of them. Character is what you really are. It is not enough to have a good character. One should be diligent to make it impossible for others to interpret his character adversely. A good character is built of a lifetime of good deeds. Often a good character is destroyed by a single bad deed. A good character is preserved by continued right deeds.

A good reputation is better than riches. It is the one noble means of cultivating friendship. Your reputation is more often than not judged by the friends you keep. Your friends literally make or break you.

Character begun as a child develops year by year to the end of life. It is the one thing that cannot take you from you. It continues as begun and lived throughout this life and throughout eternity.

The best character that one can develop is none too good. There is an infinite righteousness available to those who exercise faith in Christ. That life is far more valuable than the wealth of this world. After life and all the affairs connected to all of us is over, life in God continues. Eternity is more important than now.

Since the war is over and we are returning home, it is a good time to think seriously of the life that we are to build. It will often be difficult to distinguish between valuable and trivial things that build character.

A life cluttered with things that do not matter is a wasted life. The success of our lives will be determined by the choices and decisions that we make.

Another young or old, rich or poor, we can choose wisely if we will but take time to think.

For you I can wish in the years to come a good reputation, a righteous home and a Godly life as the head of a home and a citizen of the best country on earth. I trust that your character will concern all people to think of you as the very best in the community.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace..."

T. H. BILES
Transport Chaplain.

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THERE YOU ARE THIS MONTH

From Le Havre ------------ 2735 miles

Yet to go ---------------- 445 miles
WEDNESDAY, 21 Nov., 1945:- We crowded the decks for a last look at the continent and Days of Leave for all concern. We sailed before noon.

THURSDAY, 22 Nov., 1945:- Thanksgiving Day—Services aboard and a big turkey dinner complete with ice-cream and cookies.

FRIDAY, 23 Nov., 1945:- We settled down to sweat out the trip—2,392 miles to go.

SATURDAY, 24 Nov., 1945:- The fourth day of our trip—the water was a bit rough, and some of us came NEAR to being seasick—1,999 miles to go.

SUNDAY, 25 Nov., 1945:- Our only Sunday aboard—Services in the theater and on deck—1,607 miles to go.

MONDAY, 26 Nov., 1945:- A beautiful warm sunny day which most of us spent on the open deck—1,269 miles to go.

TUESDAY, 27 Nov., 1945:- Not much opportunity to get out on the deck due to rain and strong wind—843 miles to go.

WEDNESDAY, 28 Nov., 1945:- Tomorrow we dock if everything goes well—445 miles to go.

THURSDAY, 29 Nov., 1945:- This is it! Today we invade the good ole USA.

ON THE BALL (cont.)—and have been with the U.S. O. since '41. The name of the unit they were with in Europe was called "On the Ball". Miss Jean Wilson, who has been with the show, has been unable to perform for us since trooper carriers are not adaptable to acrobatic dancing. We know that you have more than enjoyed their presence aboard ship so when they hit your town in the States, how about making it a point to be there and giving them a big applause.

TROOPS ASSIST

TRANSPORT SERVICES

Capt. Sylvester G. Renner, Transport Services Officer, and his assistant, T/4 A. J. Sesil, wish to thank all personnel who cooperated on this voyage to provide entertainment and services for the pleasure of all passengers. Movies were presented by T/3 Theodore Hornbuckle, Sgt. John B. Reynolds, T/4 George T. Moyers and Pfc. Gustav Heeren.

With 5,240 on board, The Alexander will steam into New York sometime Thursday. The ship's roster includes 500 male officers, 7 WC officers, 276 nurses of the ANC, 274 enlisted men, 4,476 enlisted men, and 46 other passengers.

Units aboard include Re-enlistees, Casual Dts., an L. F. Escort Guard Unit, the U. S. Army permanent det. aboard the ship, and personnel of:- 380th AAA Amn, 3rd Pl Omen, 1450th QM Serv Co, 882nd TD Bn, 656th PA Bn, 3252nd QM Serv Co, 307th QM Rld Co, 217th-26th-95th General Hospitals and 771st TD Bn.

TROOPS ASSIST (cont.)—Music, news, and announcements were brought to you over the F. A. from the broadcast studio by T/Sgt. Glenn Adams, T/4 Robert G. O'Neill, T/4 Jack Lockard, and T/5 Theodore Carr.


T/4 Leo Bovensese has assisted the ship's radio crew in edition to his work with the "Crew's Nest".

Radio repairs and technical maintenance have been handled by S/Sgt. Thomas P. McDowell, T/Sgt. Myron Coltri and T/4 Jack Lockard.


NOTICE

In order to use all available space for souvenir items, the "Crew's Nest" did not print the news today. The latest news will reach you over the ship's PA.