

CHAPTER X  
International Rivalry—1901-39  
THE SUPERLINERS



THE NINETEENTH CENTURY gave way to the twentieth without any appreciable effect on the Port of New York. The early 1900s were little more than a continuation of the 1860-1900 period. Steam had proved its superiority over sail, yet only five years before 1900 more than seventeen hundred sailing vessels had entered the Port. This figure indicated the last great effort of sail to compete with steam. The race for speed and size went on, but the opening years of the twentieth century offered few startling developments in this phase of shipbuilding and shipowner competition. The Spanish-American War had given rise to speculation concerning its effect on the Port's business, and some shipping men had envisioned an almost automatic boom. Nothing of the sort occurred.

Since the European trade of the North Atlantic routes was dominated by foreign-flag shipping, American ships were fighting for trade positions chiefly in the Western Hemisphere. In 1895 and in 1900 more American-flag ships entered the Port of New York from Cuba than from any other country. Second place in 1895 and 1900 went to American ships returning from England, but by 1910 these had dropped to fourth place. This indicated the steadily tightening grip which the British were exerting on the transatlantic trade. British ships were taking a leading part in the business of the Port of New York, whereas American ships

were playing an insignificant role in Liverpool and London.

Total port tonnage in American-flag shipping dropped steadily. Only 16.9 per cent of the Port's foreign commerce in 1895 was transported in American bottoms. By 1900 the percentage had dropped to 13.97, and the year 1910 saw a further drop to 10.79.

### *Chelsea Piers Erected*

The Chelsea Piers, nine large docks extending from Twelfth Street to Twenty-second Street on the Hudson River, were built by the city between 1902 and 1907 at a cost of fifteen million dollars. They were planned to berth the largest ocean liners of the time. The construction of the Transatlantic Steamship Terminal (Piers 88, 90, and 92) between Forty-eighth and Fifty-second streets in 1936, designed for the *Normandie*, the *Queen Mary*, the *Rex*, and other huge liners, failed to lessen the importance of the Chelsea docks. Piers 53, 54, and 56, during the 1930-40 period for example, were leased to the Cunard Steamship Company; the first for \$45,375 a year, and the other two for \$84,700 a year each. The French Line rented Pier 57 for \$84,700 annually, while the International Mercantile Marine Company paid the same annual rental for each of four of the piers, and \$45,375 a year, during this period, for the last one, Pier 62.

### *1914*

In the summer of 1914 the attention of the Port was centered on Europe, threatened with a general war. Germany's magnificent *Imperator* arrived in New York on June 3, establishing a new speed record; after the war this ship flew British colors as the *Berengaria*. The *Oceanic* docked on the tenth, carrying its usual quota of notable travelers. Marine disaster added a touch of excitement: the pilot boat *New Jersey* was rammed during a fog and sank; a few days later the Hamburg-American steamer *Pretoria* rammed the *New York* of the American Line, and both limped into port.

On July 28 Austria declared war on Serbia, and events in Europe moved swiftly. On August 1 Admiral Dewey declared that a world war would pave the way for a great American merchant marine. Two days later Germany declared war on France. Hamburg-American's docks were heavily guarded. A German cruiser was sighted off Sandy Hook; the darkened *President Grant* slipped into port, and the *Kronprinz Wilhelm* left the harbor to begin the run for her home port. Great Britain made its declaration against Germany on August 4, and the Port of New York again faced the problem of trade disruption caused by war.

### *Confusion in the Port*

The Panama Canal was opened to traffic on August 15. Commerce with Europe practically ceased. The New York Stock Exchange closed; bankers refused to accept bills of lading as collateral. Marine-insurance rates rocketed, and prices of domestic and imported goods soared. Committees to consider the situation sprang up everywhere. Unemployment resulted as workers in the export field were laid off or put on part time. Longshoremen and teamsters were thrown out of work. Thousands of alien reservists crowded steamship offices and consulates, trying to get back to Europe.

The harbor was an extraordinary sight. Not since the days of Jefferson's embargo preceding the War of 1812 had there been such a mass of ships riding at anchor or made fast to docks. In Jefferson's day most of the shipping had flown the American flag. Now ships flying the flags of many countries were stretched from Ellis Island to Tottenville. Manned by crews of nations at war, they lay for months side by side. Yet, as the *New York Press* put it at the time, "They lie in amity; the mantle of this nation covers all alike. . . Here are British tramps and German liners, Russian emigrant ships and French freighters, Austrian hookers and many others, their ensigns all fluttering. Some may grow weary of inaction and slip out past Sandy Hook, to brave the dangers of destruction or capture. How many will be afloat a year from now?"

But war business from Europe soon reversed the picture. Imports and exports rose so rapidly that the Port of New York seemed incapable of handling the sudden freightage increase. Drays and trucks often clogged the waterfront arteries, adding greatly to the cost of transportation. Other ports were being developed by the Federal government, however, and some of the war traffic was soon diverted to them, particularly incoming freight. Laborsaving machinery and methods, bridges and tunnels, and better port organization were needed.

Various individuals and groups charged city officials with lack of port-consciousness. Particularly was this criticism directed against the mayors between 1902 and the period just before American participation in the European war. Despite this apathy and other factors alleged to be retarding development, the Port began to expand and profit greatly as a result of the war. Most of the trade with the Central Powers had been lost because of the Allied blockade, but trade with the Allies, and the neutral countries deprived of their normal sources of supply, more than compensated for the loss. Allied orders increased immensely after the first year of war had depleted stocks. The Port of New York was in a strategic position to gain from this war trade. This position, as well as the recovery from the loss of Central Powers' commerce, is revealed in the following table:

VALUE OF NEW YORK EXPORTS

1913	\$ 917,936,000
1914	833,394,000
1915	1,792,335,000
1916	2,790,403,000

*American Seamen's Conditions Improved*

While coastwise shipping was by law exclusively American, only about ten per cent of the country's foreign commerce was carried in American bottoms. American steamships registered for foreign trade in

1914 amounted to but 725,000 gross tons. Several months after the outbreak of the war Congress enacted legislation allowing foreign-built ships owned by Americans to be transferred to American registry. This added nearly 750,000 gross tons of shipping to the United States tonnage, much of which New York gained.

Less than ten per cent of the personnel of the country's merchant marine were American citizens. The merchant seaman's lot was not an enviable one. Working conditions aboard ships were bad, and the hours were unreasonably long. Controlling the maritime labor market were crimps who, in the modern sense, were boardinghouse operators who also acted as independent ship-employment agents. Even the seamen's trade unions permitted hiring through such agents, and a seaman often found himself working for wages already signed over to the crimp.

The founder of marine trade unions in New York and president of the International Seamen's Union was Andrew Furuseth, a Norwegian sailor who emigrated here during his youth. Furuseth saw that seamen's conditions first must receive the benefit of Federal legislation before any cooperation from steamship owners could be hoped for. Following years of lobbying in Washington, he obtained the aid of Senator Robert M. La Follette, and after a long fight, backed at last by all labor organizations, the Seamen's Act of March 4, 1915, was passed. The La Follette Act abolished arrest and imprisonment for desertion in foreign ports, which was a long step forward; a sailor could now quit a ship in protest against unfair labor practices or ill-treatment.

The legislation improved safety regulations, standardized working hours, gave the men better food, increased the number of rated men in ships' crews, required larger living space in crews' forecastles, and made all forms of corporal punishment by the officers a penitentiary offense. The law also protected wages from assignment to creditors, which put a damper on the crimps' activities and led to an improved hiring system.

One of the chief aims of the Seamen's Act had been to raise the wage level on American vessels, but the low wage scale of foreign

ships' crews touching American ports was a complicating factor, as it tended to keep American seamen's wages down. The law prohibited the jailing of foreign seamen for desertion in this country and allowed them to quit their ships here if dissatisfied with conditions. This loss of protection to foreign-ship operators was designed to induce them to better conditions and raise wages on vessels calling at American ports. According to a report by the United States Shipping Board in 1918, the aim was partly achieved.

Before the passage of the law wages out of American Atlantic ports, including New York, ranged from twenty-four dollars to thirty-five dollars a month for able seamen. The first two years of the war did not appear to bring about any wage increase. Three months after the Seamen's Act had been passed wages were increased to forty-five dollars a month, and the pay of European seamen rose to the American level. By 1918 the average monthly wage was seventy-five dollars, plus bonuses for crews operating in war zones.

### *Shipping Board Created*

After the uncertainties of late 1914 and early 1915 shipbuilding responded to demand; existing yards flourished, and new ones were laid out. Yet the 1915 output was only 155,000 gross tons. In 1916 Congress set up the United States Shipping Board to regulate rates and practices of ocean shipping. It also appropriated fifty million dollars for the building, purchasing, chartering, and operating of vessels.

Huge profits were made by shipowners. Before the war it cost twenty-five cents to ship one hundred pounds of cotton to England; two years of war sent this cost to five dollars. In 1914 it cost eighty-eight cents a ton monthly to charter ships for transatlantic service; in 1915 the price was \$7.37 a ton. In 1917 it rose to thirteen dollars a ton if outside the war zone, to twenty-one dollars a ton on the New York-Genoa trade, and to twenty dollars a ton on the New York-France trade.

*Seizures and Sinkings*

As the war spread and gained momentum and the British blockade tightened, Great Britain again demonstrated that her notion of freedom of the seas differed sharply from that of the United States. The War of 1812 had been fought over this issue, but, in the peace following that conflict, Britain had conceded none of her "rights." Now, more than one hundred years later, British warships were again seizing American vessels carrying materials which His Majesty's government had declared contraband. That these vessels were dealing with neutral countries seemed to make no difference to Britain. She charged that, since her enemies were receiving materials of war through neutral countries, she had no alternative but to seize ships bearing such cargoes. This position was also adopted by the French, who likewise interfered with American shipping under similar circumstances.

The United States government protested this interference with American shipping to neutral ports. Notes were exchanged as tempers flared. The *John D. Rockefeller*, *Brindilla*, and *Platuria* were among the vessels whose names figured prominently in the press during this period. America's protests came to nothing. United States mail was rifled, and it was charged that American trade secrets had been stolen. Exporters to the neutral countries soon found that approval by the British Embassy was the only safeguard for shipments, so far as the Allied blockade was concerned.

When finally the United States entered the war this issue was put aside. Before that, however, resentment against British and French tactics had been replaced by a similar feeling toward the Germans. Allied interference with neutral trade had resulted in property loss. Now Germany announced a policy that spelled probable loss of life as well as of property, and she emphasized her position by means of a notice appearing in New York newspapers of May 1, 1915.

### *The Lusitania*

Beneath the Cunard advertisement announcing the sailing of the *Lusitania* from New York there appeared a statement by the Imperial German Embassy warning the public that all enemy vessels were liable to destruction in the war zone. Travelers sailing on them, the embassy stressed, did so at their own risk. Although this announcement gained wide publicity, few of the *Lusitania*'s passengers canceled sailing.

On Friday afternoon, May 7, 1915, the *Lusitania* was torpedoed ten miles off the Old Head of Kinsale, southeast tip of Ireland. According to an eyewitness account:

“We saw what looked like a whale or a porpoise rising about three quarters of a mile to starboard. . . . Immediately a white line, a train of bubbles, started away from the black object. . . . It . . . struck under the bridge. . . . We all hoped for the fraction of a second it would not explode. But the explosion came clear up through the upper deck, and pieces of the wreckage fell clean aft of where we were standing . . . The boilers exploded immediately. The passengers all rushed at once to the high side of the deck—the portside. There was such a list to starboard that all boats on the portside swung right back inboard and could not be launched.”

Within 20 minutes after the submarine U-20's torpedo struck her the *Lusitania* disappeared beneath the surface of the sea. Of the 1924 passengers and crew aboard, 1198 were lost, 124 of them being Americans.

This sinking angered the American public, especially along the Atlantic seaboard. War with Germany seemed probable. But three days later President Wilson made his “too-proud-to-fight” speech, and a crisis was averted. An exchange of notes between the United States and Germany followed, during which time several American vessels were torpedoed and many Americans went down with British, French, and Italian ships. Finally Germany gave a conditional pledge to restrain her submarine warfare, and from May 4, 1916, to January 31, 1917, she sank no ships under circumstances outlawed by the United States.



*Explosions on Ships and Ashore*

Explosions aboard ships began to engage the attention of New York's officials. On January 3, 1915, a mysterious explosion occurred on the *Orton*, docked in Erie Basin. During the following three months so many bombs were found and so many fires broke out on vessels bound for Allied countries that the public as well as shipowners clamored for action. The difficult job of running down the ship saboteurs in New York was assigned to the New York Police Department's Bomb Squad. On October 1915 the first break came when a purchase of TNT was traced to a bombing ring, which had in its possession twenty-five sticks of dynamite, four hundred and fifty pounds of potassium chlorate, four hundred detonating caps, two hundred bomb cylinders, and four finished bombs. Military experts declared the bombs to be mechanically perfect. They were designed for attachment to a ship's rudder, whose motion wound up a mechanism that eventually set off the explosive, of which there was enough in each bomb to sink a ship.

Because most of the men arrested in this ring were of German descent, three of the Bomb Squad were assigned to German saloons lining the Hoboken waterfront. They gained the confidence of dock workers and German seamen whose ships lay idle at the piers. In April 1916 the detectives succeeded in smashing the bombing ring. The *Friedrich der Grosse* had been used as a workshop, and a German agent had supervised the making of the bombs. This agent estimated that cargoes worth ten million dollars had been destroyed on thirty-six ships.

The prevention of sabotage ashore was even more difficult. Hardly a week went by without a mysterious fire or explosion in some factory producing ammunition or other war supplies for the Allies.

The chief terminal in America for the transfer of munitions to Allied ships was on Black Tom, a mile-long peninsula in the Port of New York, extending from the New Jersey shore toward the Statue of Liberty. Warehouses, trackage, and piers were owned by the Lehigh Valley Railroad Company. Freight cars were run to the northern part of

Black Tom, where their contents were unloaded upon barges and transported to ships. Black Tom was guarded by six railroad watchmen and private detectives hired by the Allies. However, watchmen seldom challenged the bargemen who passed, and the unlighted terminal could easily be reached by boat.

On Saturday night, July 29, 1916, there were thirty-four carloads of munitions in the yard. These contained more than two million pounds of high explosives. In addition, there were ten barges, most of them loaded. At 12:45 A.M. guards noticed flames coming from a munitions car. They turned in an alarm and fled. One hour and twenty-three minutes later there was a terrific blast, followed soon by another and seemingly heavier one. Both were heard as far away as Philadelphia. Windows were blown in by the terrific concussions; skyscrapers were shaken; many slumbering persons were thrown from their beds, and dazed crowds filled the streets under a sky lighted by the conflagration. The major blasts were followed by a series of smaller shell explosions. Fragments of metal were thrown as far as Governors Island. Ellis Island buildings were badly damaged, and their occupants were quickly removed. The Black Tom terminal was completely destroyed, but only two persons were killed, owing to the early-morning hour of the explosion. The property loss amounted to twenty-two million dollars.

### *United States Enters the War*

On the last day of January 1917 Germany informed the United States of her decision to resume unrestricted submarine warfare. Receipt of this news in New York disrupted industrial and shipping activity. The stock and commodity markets declined; marine-insurance rates soared; sailings were canceled; the Port was virtually closed; the watch on interned German ships was doubled, and the Navy Department ordered destroyers out to reinforce the neutrality patrol.

Throughout this tense period the sinking of the British liner *Lusitania* was kept in the minds of Americans; emotionalized, it personified

the German submarine blockade of the British Isles and meant “wanton murder” rather than war. Actually twenty-three months elapsed between the *Lusitania* disaster and America’s entry into the war; four United States vessels had been sunk by Germany before the *Lusitania*, and nine American ships between the latter and the American war declaration. When Germany announced its unrestricted submarine warfare in tightening its blockade of the British Isles on February 1, President Wilson lost all patience and broke off diplomatic relations with Germany on February 3. The United States declared on April 6, 1917, that a state of war existed with Germany.

America’s first war need was ships. A total of one hundred and twenty-three German and Austrian vessels had been seized and transferred to American registry, and private vessels were being commandeered for government purposes. However, since it was believed that all of these could be sunk within a few months by German U-boats, the United States decided upon one of its most important contributions to the winning of the war. This was shipbuilding. The program involved a succession of concrete, steel, iron, wood, and even composition ships. Shipbuilding was put on a mass-production basis; one of the largest shipyards in the country was in the New York area. This was the Submarine Boat Corporation at Port Newark, which employed fifteen thousand persons.

### *Wartime Organization of the Port*

Wartime organization of the Port of New York resulted in the expenditure of millions of dollars on new piers and other improvements. Yet America’s entry into the war put such a strain on the Port that breakdowns occurred. In addition, a severe coal shortage in 1917 and 1918 resulted from railroad congestion at the Port. Thousands of freight cars waiting to be unloaded jammed New York terminals. In other parts of the country empty railroad cars were as scarce as unused ships in New

York, where the oldest hulks were made seaworthy and luxurious yachts were converted into naval craft.

The Port's main handicap was lack of unified control. In 1917 the first step in creating the Port of New York Authority was taken. This was the appointment, by the states of New York and New Jersey, of a Harbor Development Commission to determine the best means of facilitating commerce. The commission's findings, together with the program it formulated, aided in the better organization of the Port during the critical war years.

Fifteen million dollars had been expended by the government on Port Newark Terminal, a stretch of reclaimed swampland. This development was first used as a supply base for the War Department's Embarkation Service but later abandoned. President Wilson created the War Board for the Port of New York, with Irving Bush as executive officer. The Bush Terminal at South Brooklyn was taken over by the government at the beginning of 1918, and its vast warehouse space and well-equipped berthage became the Embarkation Service's Army Supply Base. Army supply shipments increased from sixteen thousand tons in June 1917 to eight hundred thousand tons in November 1918. Yet the Port's export and import figures for the two years reveal a drop in its share of the nation's totals:

	Value of NY Exports	% of Total U.S. Exports
1916	2,790,403,000	50.8
1917	2,901,138,000	48.1
1918	2,560,857,000	41.6
	Value of NY Imports	% of Total U.S. Imports
1916	1,257,185,000	52.5
1917	1,361,662,000	46.1
1918	1,294,415,000	42.6

*Troop Movements and Harbor Defenses*

One of the most thoroughly German cities in America, Hoboken, became the embarkation center for American troops sent to fight the Germans. The six Hudson River piers of the German lines were taken over by the Embarkation Service, and an embarkation camp was erected within marching distance of the piers. This was Camp Merritt, near Tenafly, New Jersey.

Three quarters of all troops sent to France embarked from the Port of New York. Most of these men had never seen an ocean-going vessel, and ferryboats were sometimes mistaken by them for transports. Festive departures were banned by the War Department. Nobody was allowed on the piers on sailing days. Welfare workers were finally granted access, and departing soldiers were occasionally served coffee and sandwiches.

By the end of 1917 more than one hundred and ninety thousand men had embarked for France. In the spring of 1918 ways were found to get twice as many soldiers into a ship, so that thousands sailed daily during the summer. The average round-trip time for transports was shortened from fifty-two days in the spring of 1917 to thirty-five days in 1918. Cargo ships required about seventy days. During the war more than two million American troops were carried safely overseas. No transports were lost on the eastward run, and only three were sunk on the return voyage.

New York Harbor was defended by warships and a system of forts. Fort Hancock was at Sandy Hook, Fort Tilden at Rockaway Point, Fort Wadsworth and Fort Tompkins on Staten Island, and Fort Hamilton on the Brooklyn shore flanked the Narrows. In the Upper Bay was Fort Jay on Governors Island. Two forts commanded the Long Island entrance to the East River, and four guarded the eastern entrance to the Sound. After America's entry into the war a huge steel net was placed across the mouth of the harbor, and obsolete guns of the various forts were replaced.

*U-Boats off the Port*

The German submarine U-151 damaged shipping along the coast from the Delaware capes to Newfoundland. Yet the U-151 and five other German submarines sent to American waters failed to accomplish their purpose, for the stream of soldiers across the Atlantic, as well as transatlantic and coastal shipping, was not seriously disorganized at any time by underseas warfare. Credit for this was due primarily to the convoy system, under which the Atlantic coast was divided into six naval districts, each having hunt squadrons, mine sweepers, and seaplanes.

The sinking of the United States armored cruiser *San Diego* off the coast of Long Island was attributed at first to a German submarine. The *San Diego* was zigzagging into New York during the morning of July 19, 1918, ten miles southeast of Fire Island, when a violent explosion ruptured her hull below the water line. Of the 1189 men aboard, three were instantly killed. The wireless was put out of commission. The gun crews were ordered to "fire at anything that looks like a submarine," and the gunners fired at random until orders were passed to abandon ship. Later a Naval Court of Inquiry held that the sinking was caused by a mine. Six lives were lost and six men injured.

*Postwar Peak in Shipping*

Upon the termination of the war, the United States Embarkation Service became the Debarkation Service. New York was the center of this enormous activity. Warships, cargo carriers, and vessels just completed were pressed into service. During thirteen months hundreds of ships landed troops at New York, and all but a few of these ships flew the Stars and Stripes. Thousands of the war dead were also brought back, most of them reaching American soil through the Port of New York.

The Port had held onto its huge share of the nation's commerce, chiefly through a large increase in imports. The table below summarizes the 1918-20 growth:

	Value of NY Exports	% of Total U.S. Exports
1918	\$2,560,857,000	41.6
1919	3,456,329,000	43.6
1920	3,283,873,000	39.9
	Value of NY Imports	% of Total U.S. Imports
1918	\$1,294,415,000	42.6
1919	2,064,654,000	52.8
1920	2,892,621,000	54.7

The demand for ships did not abate. By June 30, 1919, more than 5,500,000 tons had been delivered, with about 8,000,000 more still due. The shipbuilding peak was reached in 1920 when vessels totaling 3,660,000 tons were launched. On January 1, 1920, the American flag flew on more than 2500 ocean-going ships of 1000 tons or larger. These vessels totaled 9,500,000 tons, 62 per cent of which were owned by the United States Shipping Board. High rates made it profitable to operate almost any kind of ship on any ocean route. Scores of new services were started to small ports. Ships were precious, a vessel built in 1900 for \$175,000, for example, being worth \$575,000 in 1920.

Those were days for dreams of maritime greatness, and many believed that the American merchant marine was to regain the dominant position it had held in the clipper days. But it remained a dream. The ships and the money were available in huge quantities, but the love of the sea and the fierce determination to make the American flag supreme upon the seas seemed no longer to be characteristic of the American people. Industry, not the sea, was now their consuming interest, and particularly was this true of New Yorkers, whose wealth was no longer derived directly from South Street.

### *The Port of New York Authority*

The Port of New York Authority was created in April 1921 as a self-sustaining public corporation, which would solve Port problems coop-

eratively in spite of the state line that divides the district. For more than two years preceding the signing of the bistate compact, however, there were sharp public debates and much political opposition to the plan of combining New York's and New Jersey's resources to secure a centralized and coordinated control of the Port.

When local opposition had been overcome the respective legislatures authorized commissioners to sign the compact between the states of New York and New Jersey, and the new project was ratified by Congress in August 1921. In February 1922 the legislatures adopted a comprehensive plan that gave the Port Authority, governed by six commissioners from each state, broad powers with which to aid in the future development of the Port.

In general terms, the Authority was to "promote and encourage the movement of domestic and foreign commerce by land and water, through the port and between the port and other localities; and improve existing facilities and provide new facilities for the movement of such commerce."

The comprehensive plan involved the improvement of waterways, tunnels, highways, bridges, and terminals; the building of new bridges, tunnels, and terminals; the coordination of both trucking and railroad-terminal facilities; and the layout of the Port in transportation belts so that direct routes and terminals could be placed in a manner that would prevent traffic congestion. In May 1924 the New York legislature amended the plan for the development of the Port of New York, giving the Authority additional powers. For future Port planning, the Authority was given power to hold hearings, investigations, or inquiries, to compel the attendance of witnesses, to procure the advice or testimony of corporations, to administer oaths, and to issue subpoenas.

Since that date the Port Authority has constructed the Lincoln Tunnel under the Hudson River at midtown, the George Washington Bridge over the Hudson at 179th Street, three bridges between Staten Island and the New Jersey mainland (the Outerbridge Crossing, the Goethals,



and Bayonne bridges), and the Inland Terminal No. 1, which has been called New York's first "union station for package freight." Although the Holland Tunnel was built by an earlier commission, the Authority refinanced and now operates it.

The Port Authority finances its projects by the sale of its own bonds. Interest, amortization, and operating costs are paid by the proceeds of tolls, and all Port facilities are held in trust for both states.

In addition to its construction activities, the Port Authority carries on an extensive program as a planning and advisory agency. It has conducted continuous research on questions of pier and harbor development, channel improvements, arterial highways, airports, markets, union terminals, and allied subjects. The Port Authority has upon many occasions cooperated with other agencies in studying such projects as the Foreign-Trade Zone constructed by New York City on Staten Island and the new naval dry dock for the Port of New York now under construction at Bayonne.

The Port Authority, being charged by New Jersey and New York with the duty of protecting the Port's commerce, appears on behalf of the Port of New York at hearings before the Interstate Commerce Commission on questions of transportation rates and officially champions the Port of New York before the United States Maritime Commission and other regulatory bodies. Such port-protection activities involve the presentation of briefs and oral arguments at hearings and have as their aim the prevention of any attempt by a competing port to divert traffic from New York through manipulation of transportation rates or inequitable service charges. The Port Authority has also been active in advocating uniformity as to transportation rates and procedures for all communities lying within the Port of New York district as established by the 1921 treaty.

*Rum Row and Hijackers*

The 1920s, which witnessed constructive developments such as the Port of New York Authority, also saw the strange effect of the national prohibition law on the Port. Rumrunning, which actually dates back to colonial times, again became a colorful part of the local maritime scene and developed swiftly into an illicit business of vast magnitude. This smuggling was brazenly defiant in its early stages, when shiploads of liquor were landed within the Port itself. Later a stricter enforcement of the law led to the phenomenon known as Rum Row. Ships riding deep with liquor anchored outside the three-mile limit off Sandy Hook, and small craft went out to them at night to run cargoes ashore. The Coast Guard battled these fast ship-to-shore motorboats, but the battle was a losing one, chiefly because the rumrunners could buy faster boats overnight, whereas governmental red tape delayed purchase of new Coast Guard craft to meet the increasing speed of rumrunning boats.

After a few years the government announced that the three-mile limit would no longer apply to the liquor supply. Territorial waters were extended in this respect to twelve miles off the coast. Rum Row adapted itself to the new conditions by moving just beyond the new limit and continuing to outrun the Coast Guard. Then a new threat arose to plague the rumrunners. The hijacker came on the scene. He preyed on both the rumrunner and bootlegger, capturing cargoes of liquor and disposing of them at enormous profits because he had little overhead other than pay roll. The merchandise and the cost of transporting it from foreign bases cost the hijacker nothing.

A raid on one of the rumrunning rings in the New York District gave an indication of the extent to which the bootlegging business had developed. This ring had its headquarters in an old mansion at Atlantic Highlands. To defend the building against hijackers, the ring had sheathed the lower walls with sheet steel, behind which expert marksmen waited with machine guns, tear-gas bombs, and other weapons. Within the house was a high-powered radio equipment, through which instruc-

tions were issued in code to the ring's fleet of six steamships and more than twenty speedboats. This efficiently directed organization ran about ten thousand cases of liquor into New York each week before Federal agents smashed it.

In the latter years of prohibition Rum Row was broken up to the extent that ships no longer anchored in groups to await the swift blockade-running speedboats. Instead they would radio their positions to shore, and the ship-to-shore craft would decode these messages and then go out forty or fifty miles to meet their supply ships. Cargoes were landed in New Jersey, Brooklyn, Long Island, and even at Manhattan piers.

The major activity of the Coast Guard during prohibition was its war on the rumrunners. It had about thirty cutters and other patrol boats attached to the Port of New York. None was assigned exclusively to prohibition enforcement, but all engaged in it at one time or another. The same was true of its personnel. In the New York District, which extended from Delaware to Rhode Island, about three thousand coastguardsmen were active.

#### *Development of the United States Lines*

A European service was inaugurated in 1920 by a private organization known as the United States Mail Steamship Company, which put fifteen vessels into service. In August 1921 this company's financial difficulties resulted in the taking over of its vessels by the government. They were then operated by the United States Shipping Board as the United States Lines. The names of seven of the vessels were changed to the "President" series.

By the fall of 1923 the Shipping Board had disposed of several United States Lines vessels, including some sold to the Dollar Line. To replace these the Shipping Board acquired five transports from the Army Transport Service. These were reconditioned and run as the American Merchant Lines under the management of J. H. Winchester and Company.

Paul W. Chapman & Company bought the United States Lines from the government in 1929. The deal involved eleven vessels. In August 1931 the Chapman Company turned over the *Republic* to the Army Transport Service in exchange for the *Cambrai* and the *Somme*. The Chapman fleet then consisted of twelve vessels.

There was another change in ownership in 1931, when the International Mercantile Marine Company took over the United States Lines from Paul W. Chapman & Company. The fleet then consisted of ten commissioned vessels and two building at Camden, N.J. The latter were the *Manhattan* and the *Washington*. Two of the former Chapman vessels were turned back to the Shipping Board and laid up in Chesapeake Bay, together with other decommissioned Shipping Board vessels.

### *Outstanding Ships*

In the period 1900-39 New York was introduced to one notable ship after another. The *Oceania's* 17,274 gross tons constituted a waterfront wonder at the beginning of the century, remained in service for years, and was a favorite with the traveling public until the outbreak of the first World War. Meanwhile the first *Mauretania* and the *Lusitania* appeared in 1907. Both ships made record crossings from Queenstown to Sandy Hook. The *Mauretania* continued in service long after the *Lusitania* had been torpedoed. Originally a coal burner, she was converted to oil in 1922. In 1935 she was scrapped.

For about five years after her launching the *Mauretania* was Queen of the Seas in size as well as in the affection of those who traveled aboard her. Then the first of the prewar floating palaces appeared. This was Hamburg-American's *Imperator* of 1912. With a tonnage of fifty-two thousand, quadruple-screw propulsion, and six decks, she was the maritime wonder of her day. The *Imperator* had accommodations for 714 first-class passengers, 401 second-class, 962 third-class, and a steerage capacity of 1772.

### *The Titanic*

In the same year that the *Imperator* was launched the British made another important bid for New York trade with White Star's luckless *Titanic* and her sister ship, the *Olympic*. These were smaller than the *Imperator*, although equally luxurious.

The *Titanic* was 852½ feet long, 92½ feet beam, with a tonnage of 46,329. Her height from keel to bridge was 104 feet; she had 8 steel decks, a cellular double bottom, and 16 watertight compartments which, it was believed, rendered her unsinkable. If the sides were punctured one or more of these compartments were supposed to be closed off by steel bulkheads, operating from the bridge by a switch controlling electromagnets or by hand, locally, thus shutting off the flooded section.

While making her maiden voyage to New York the "unsinkable" *Titanic* struck an iceberg with terrific force on the night of April 14, 1912, and sank early on the fifteenth. The collision took place off Cape Race, Newfoundland. Of the 1513 lives lost out of a total of 2224 on board, 103 were women and 53 were children.

Improvements resulting from the *Titanic* disaster were a shifting from the northern to the southern lane; better regulation of wireless patents, over which Marconi and De Forest had fought bitterly; and the establishment of a Coast Guard ice patrol to watch for dangerous icebergs floating southward from the Arctic Ocean. The White Star Line called in the *Titanic*'s sister ship, the *Olympic*, to have her hull strengthened.

### *The Vaterland*

The *Titanic* disaster did not seriously retard the race for speed and size. Two years later Hamburg-American made still another bid for North Atlantic supremacy with its *Vaterland*. She was six thousand tons bigger than the *Imperator*, had more than enough lifeboat equipment to take care of her passengers and crew, possessed a maximum horsepower of ninety thousand, boasted even more luxury than her predecessors, and was bigger and longer than any ship up to that time. She made

three trips before the World War began; then her owners decided to intern her in New York. When the United States entered the war she was seized, renamed the *Leviathan*, and became a famous transport.

After the war the *Leviathan* was completely reconditioned, converted from coal to oil, and, after a period of unprofitable operation by the United States Lines, tied up to a dock in Hoboken until 1938, when she was sold to be broken up for scrap.

### *The Aquitania*

Again the German threat, which had been concentrated in the *Vaterland*, was met by the British with Cunard's *Aquitania*, one of the best-known vessels plying between New York, Southampton, and Cherbourg. She was smaller than the *Vaterland*, but her increased emphasis on safety and luxury turned much of the passenger trade toward her. The *Aquitania* arrived in New York June 5, 1914, on her maiden voyage. Shrieking whistles and dipping colors welcomed the new vessel as she steamed up the harbor after a brief halt at quarantine. Fog and ice had forced her to reduce speed during part of the trip. After she had docked there were several gay ceremonies aboard, and a large department store featured the latest gowns from Paris "just off the *Aquitania*"

The *Aquitania* marked a pause in the construction of superliners until 1929, when North German Lloyd's *Bremen* was launched. The *Bremen* arrived in New York on July 22, having set a new record for the westward crossing—4 days, 17 hours, and 42 minutes. The *Bremen* has a tonnage of 51,731, a length of 899 feet, and a beam of 102 feet. Her sister ship, the *Europa*, 49,746 tons, arrived in the Port in March 1930.

That same year White Star reverted to the "small-but-comfortable" type of ship with its 26,943-ton *Britannic*. She proved to be merely an interlude in the race for primacy in size and luxury. Later her service was augmented by the *Georgic*.

The Italian Line entered the "super" field in 1932 with its *Rex* and *Conte di Savoia*. The *Rex* is quadruple-screw, 51,062 gross tons, 880 feet

in length, and with a beam of 102 feet. She won the world's speed record for the passage between Gibraltar and New York in 1933 and held it for two years. The *Conte di Savoia* is also quadruple-screw with a tonnage of 48,502; length is 820 feet, beam 95 feet. Her gyro-stabilizers, reducing any rolling motion, constitute her main contribution to modern sea travel. The first large passenger ship to be so stabilized, the *Conte* is reported to be greatly superior in comfort to a non-stabilized vessel.

#### *The Pilsudski and the Batory*

Another shift back to the "small-but-comfortable" type of ship occurred in 1934, when Poland's Gdynia-America Line brought out the *Pilsudski* and the *Batory*. The former was destined to be sunk in 1939 during the second World War. These were motor ships, powered by Diesel engines, and ran between New York and "Poland's own port," Gdynia. Many marine experts regarded these oil-burning, motor-driven ships as more modern than their larger turbine-driven contemporaries. Their New York docks were on the New Jersey side of the North River, just opposite the stronghold of Cunard White Star in Manhattan's West Twenties. Two important mergers had taken place in 1934—Cunard with White Star and North German Lloyd with Hamburg-American.

#### *The Normandie*

In the latter years of this period of intense international rivalry a high point in the race for speed and size was reached with the construction of the French Line's 83,423-ton *Normandie*. This \$55,000,000 superliner arrived in New York June 3, 1935, having made the run of 2971 miles from Bishop's Rock, off Plymouth, to Ambrose Lightship in 4 days, 3 hours, and 13 minutes. The *Rex's* average speed on the Gibraltar-New York run had been 28.92 knots; the *Normandie's* on the North Atlantic crossing was 29.94 knots. Prior to either of these performances North German Lloyd's *Europa* had held the record, which she established in June 1933 at an average speed of 27.92 knots.

The *Normandie* was greeted with one of the greatest demonstrations in the maritime history of the city. Crowds thronged the Staten Island and Brooklyn waterfronts. Battery Park was crowded for hours before the ship's appearance in the Upper Bay. Tugs, ferryboats, and sight-seeing vessels massed at Staten Island. French and American flags were dropped on the liner's deck by a squadron of military planes as she came abreast of Ambrose Lightship and broke out the speed-record pennant. Many New Yorkers turned out during the next few days to inspect the new speed queen. She had a permanent motion-picture theater seating 380, a garage for ten cars with a special lift, a first-class dining room 300 feet long, decorated with glass paneling, a swimming pool 112 feet long by 30 feet wide, all kinds of specialty shops, eleven decks connected by elevators, and many other luxury features. She accommodated 848 cabin passengers, 670 tourists, and 454 third class. Officers and crew numbered 1345.

On her first eastbound trip the *Normandie* also broke all records, establishing herself as the speed queen of the North Atlantic. She was the fastest liner afloat until Cunard White Star's *Queen Mary* wrested the Blue Riband from her, and she remained the world's biggest ship until the *Queen Elizabeth* was launched in 1939.

#### *World's Fastest Passenger Ship*

The *Queen Mary* was built at Clydebank, Scotland, in 1936 and has a gross tonnage of 81,235. The great liner has a length of 975 feet—nearly five times the length of the *Britannia*, the first Cunarder—and a beam of 118 feet. She made her maiden voyage from Southampton to New York in 1936, arriving in port on the first of June. The *Queen Mary* established new records that year, lost the Blue Riband to the *Normandie* in 1937, and regained it in 1938. The ship is driven by single reduction-gearred turbines, operating four propellers, the largest cast for any ship up to the time of the building of the *Queen Elizabeth*. The propelling machinery develops 200,000 horsepower, 50,000 for each shaft. There are accommodations for 2075 passengers and a crew of 1200.



*World's Biggest Ships*

According to *Lloyd's Registry of Shipping, 1939-40*, the world's biggest ten ships are:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Built</i>	<i>Country of Registry</i>	<i>Gross Tonnage</i>	<i>Length (in feet &amp; 10ths of feet)</i>	<i>Breadth</i>	<i>Depth</i>
<i>Queen Elizabeth</i>	1940	Great Brit.	85,000	987.0*	120.0*	70.0*
<i>Normandie</i>	1935	France	83,423	981.4	117.9	57.6
<i>Queen Mary</i>	1936	Great Brit.	81,235	975.2	118.6	8.5
<i>Bremen</i>	1929	Germany	51,731	898.7	101.9	48.2
<i>Rex</i>	1932	Italy	51,062	879.9	97.0	30.7
<i>Europa</i>	1928	Germany	49,746	890.2	102.1	48.0
<i>Conte di Savoia</i>	1932	Italy	48,502	914.6	96.1	32.4
<i>Aquitania</i>	1914	Great Brit.	44,786	868.7	97.0	49.7
<i>Ile de France</i>	1926	France	43,450	763.7	92.0	55.9
<i>Empress of Britain</i>	1931	Great Brit.	42,348	733.3	97.8	56.0

The dates when these vessels were built and the order of their size attest the keen rivalry among Great Britain, France, Germany, and Italy in developing the superliner. Of the largest ten ships, Great Britain took the lead with four; France followed with two, Germany two, and Italy two. The Netherlands became size-conscious and closely trailed the largest ten in 1938 with the *Nieuw Amsterdam*, a 36,287-gross-ton vessel, with a 713.7-foot length and an 88.3-foot beam.

*Some Steamship Lines of the Period*

In January 1938 the Red D Line, one of the oldest American-owned and -operated companies, which had long been plying between New York and Venezuela, was absorbed by the Grace Line. The Panama Mail Steamship Company, which had become famous after the California gold-rush days for its mail and passenger service between Panama, Central America, and San Francisco, ran between New York and San Francisco after the opening of the Panama Canal. It, too, was absorbed by the Grace Line. The Grace Line continued its services between New

\* No survey of the *Queen Elizabeth* was made before she sailed in 1940 for America. Dimensions given are from architect's plans.

York and Caribbean and South American ports. This line carried passengers and mail as well as copper, gold, iodine, vanadium, and other metallic cargoes. Its new turbo-electric ships were first built with subsidies granted under the Jones-White Act and later with loans from the Maritime Commission. These sturdy ships replaced older vessels and extended the passenger and freight facilities on the run from New York to the west coast of South America.

Foreign operators also experienced changes. During the 1914-18 war the vessels of the Atlantic Transport Company were active as troopships. Lamport & Holt's "V" ships, running to the east coast of South America, terminated their careers with the sinking of the *Vestris* in 1928. The Red Star Line, famous for its cattle and livestock boats, was absorbed by the Holland-America interests. The ships of the Arnold Bernstein Line were specially constructed to carry assembled automobiles. When the German government seized the company and Bernstein was forced to leave Germany, his line was sold to the Holland-America Line. In 1939 Bernstein established a line running between New York and Scandinavian ports.

The Panama Railroad Steamship Company included in its fleet three speedy passenger-freight vessels which were among the finest of their type afloat. The New York and Cuba Mail Steamship Company operated the Ward Line's ships, known to every traveler by sea to Veracruz or Havana. The early ships of this line were used as transports in the Spanish-American War.

Moore-McCormack's house flag was a familiar sight in the harbor. Founded by tugboat operators, the company operated a service to Scandinavian and Baltic ports (American Scantic Line) and later started services to the east coast of South America (American Republics Line). Many of the line's older vessels were sold to Brazil and replaced by C-2- and C-3-type fast freighters designed by the Maritime Commission. The line's new pier at the foot of Canal Street was specially fitted to handle grain in bulk, hides, coffee, and heavy machinery.

*Developments in the 1930s*

The enormous expansion of facilities during the first World War had carried the Port of New York through the profitable 1920s to such heights that, as the 1930s dawned, a Port Authority bulletin declared the Port to be “the largest, most frequently used, and best-known port in the world.”

More steamship tonnage was using the Port than was calling at any other—about forty-three million tons entered and cleared in 1930. During that year a ship arrived or departed every ten minutes of daylight hours. Steamship services out of the Port included one hundred and fifty-nine foreign routes, thirteen intercoastal to Pacific ports, fourteen coastwise to Gulf and Atlantic ports, and seventeen to New England.

The speed with which the Port could handle big liners had been repeatedly demonstrated. The Cunard liner *Berengaria* had docked at nine in the morning and sailed again at midnight after unloading one thousand passengers, nine hundred sacks of mail, and freight, and then reloading. The French liner *Ile de France* had arrived and sailed again within fourteen hours. To accelerate such movement the Port now maintained a customs force of thirty-seven hundred employees.

There were fifty ship-repair yards in the Port. Extraordinarily fast repair jobs had been carried out at piers. The *Mauretania* and *Veendam* were among the vessels that had undergone unusual repairs at their piers.

Five hundred steamship piers and deep-water berthage totaling seventy miles of side wharfage were available. During the 1920s more deep-water steamship berthage had been added to New York’s already developed waterfront than existed in the entire Port of New Orleans. In 1931 even greater expansion was being planned or was under way.

The City of New York was building or planning to build seven piers with a total of more than two and one half miles of wharfage. The Port of New York Authority and Jersey City were planning for four piers on the west bank of the Hudson River, all more than one thousand feet

long and having berthing slips from three hundred to four hundred feet wide.

Storage space in the Port district was equivalent to a two-hundred-story skyscraper built up solidly on a four-acre plot. In 1930 the Pennsylvania Dock & Warehouse Company in Jersey City was placed in operation. It then had a capacity of four hundred thousand square feet of refrigerated storage, and an ultimate capacity of two million square feet in dry storage. In the same year the Lackawanna Terminal of the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad was also opened in Jersey City. It had one million square feet of floor space. The Bayway Terminal at Elizabeth, N.J., which was an addition to the Elizabeth Terminal, added two million square feet to its plant. The Port Authority constructed for its own use the huge Port of New York Authority Building covering the entire block bounded by Fifteenth and Sixteenth streets and Eighth and Ninth avenues. This enormous structure, containing all modern freight-handling facilities, houses the Union Inland Terminal.

### *Mechanization of Waterfront*

New York's waterfront had undergone many physical changes, particularly in the handling of cargoes. During the packet and clipper days, when South Street was at its height, man power sufficed to handle cargoes.

The steam engine had been successfully applied to Hudson River navigation and even to transatlantic traffic, but its use in cargo handling was infrequent. Moreover, labor was cheap and plentiful, and the comparatively small ships of the period could not load cargoes too large to be handled at a profit by men alone.

Then the development of the steamship got underway, and, as steel was applied to shipbuilding in the 1880s, the sizes of vessels became such that cargoes could no longer be unloaded or stowed by hand, especially since increasing labor costs made purely manual loading and unloading prohibitively expensive. This resulted in cargo-handling machinery.

Electricity has since been applied to a high degree. Particularly is this true of such huge freight-handling plants as those of the Bush Terminal and the New York Dock Company. One of the uses to which electricity has been put with marked success is in the electromagnet. One of these can handle more scrap iron, metal, or structural steel in a single operation than scores of men could move in the same period of time. The invention of the gasoline engine has also speeded waterfront movement. Motor trucks, tractors, and cranes mounted on tractors have contributed greatly to the handling of cargo. Steam also plays its part, especially in the operation of winches and cranes. As a result of the increased ease of handling heavy or bulky goods, the warehousing of various products, such as foodstuffs, has been vastly expanded and improved.

### *Seatrain, a Highly Mechanized Development*

In striking contrast with this manual operation is the seatrain vessel, which eliminates longshore handling entirely. The idea back of this was to ship goods in the freight cars in which they had been originally loaded. A special type of ship was designed and given the name of seatrain. In general appearance it looks something like a high-sided tanker. It is four hundred and eighty feet long, sixty-three and a half feet at the beam, and has four decks, all served by one large hatch extending across the vessel amidships. Each of these decks contains four rows of standard-gauge railway tracks, so that a total of one hundred freight cars can be accommodated by a seatrain ship. The freight car is lifted from the siding to a seatrain track in the cradle hoisted by a special crane, secured to prevent movement, transported to port of destination, unloaded onto land tracks, and sent thence to its destination. Prior to June 1941 when the navy took over two of their vessels, Seatrain Lines operated five of these ships in services between New York and Cuba, New Orleans, and Texas City. Terminal facilities in the Port of New York are maintained in Manhattan and Hoboken.

The seatrain vessel was wholly an American maritime industrial idea created during the depression. Advantages claimed for it include increased protection against fire and contamination and much greater speed in discharging and reloading. A seatrain ship can discharge and reload in ten hours, as against several days for an ordinary vessel carrying the same amount of freight. Shippers of perishable commodities under ventilation or refrigeration, as well as of liquids in large quantities, are among the more important users of these unique vessels.

### *End of the Period*

The 1900-39 period was brought to a close with the dramatic sailing of the *Bremen*; the German invasion of Poland, which began the European war of 1939; and the Presidential Proclamation of Neutrality, restricting American vessels from ever-widening war zones.

The *Bremen* had arrived in New York on August 28, 1939, when the world was waiting for Hitler's decision with respect to Poland. Officials of the Hamburg-American North German Lloyd, the *Bremen's* operators, had planned to send their crack liner back to a German port without passengers, in order to avoid the concentrated British naval power on the high seas between the *Bremen* and safety in a home or neutral port. Suddenly the United States Treasury Department decided to subject the *Bremen* (as well as the French liner *Normandie* and others) to a thorough inspection. This had been decided upon, it was announced, in order that the Customs Service could notify the Collector of the Port that the *Bremen* was within the law, so far as gun emplacements, legitimate crews, and proper cargo were concerned.

German officials here and abroad complained that, since the *Normandie* was to be examined first, the *Bremen* was being subjected to a delay which meant steadily increasing danger for her, in the event that war should break out in Europe. Despite all objections, however, the *Bremen* was searched so carefully that an official of the line furiously exclaimed: "Now they are searching the empty swimming pool!" Presi-

dent Roosevelt pointed out that similar search was being carried out aboard the British *Aquitania*, the French *Normandie*, and other ships. Finally United States Attorney-General Frank Murphy summed up the search by declaring: "There will be no repetition of the situation in 1917, when a democracy was unprepared to meet the espionage problem."

For two days the *Bremen* was held at her pier while every inch of her was searched. Then on the night of August 30 the crack liner sailed. "As twilight fell," the New York Times reported, "the liner *Bremen*, her long reaches of deck empty, save for an occasional white-coated steward or blue-clad officer, slipped away from her West Forty-sixth Street dock with a band playing German airs. Unlike many other occasions of the past, when the two immense buff-colored stacks were illuminated by piercing floodlights and the cabins were filled with passengers eagerly looking forward to whatever lay before them in European resorts, the great liner slipped almost furtively down the river, with every light extinguished except the running lights required for navigation." Her black-out in operation, the liner disappeared into the darkness and began the elusive dash to outstrip British cruisers, eventually arriving at Murmansk, Soviet Russia. The *Aquitania*, released at the same time, arrived safely in England.

On September 3, 1939, Great Britain declared that she was at war with Germany. Two days later President Roosevelt announced America's neutrality and proclaimed that the Neutrality Act, as amended in 1937, was in force; but on November 3 a new Neutrality Act was passed in a special session of Congress in the form of a joint resolution which virtually placed an embargo on United States merchant ships to belligerent ports or waters, although it repealed the arms embargo and opened the munitions industries and trade to the belligerent powers.

President Roosevelt signed the joint resolution on November 4. One of several presidential proclamations, also signed on the fourth, defined the combat area at the time. The President, in an explanatory statement, said that the area took in "the whole Bay of Biscay, except waters on

the north coast of Spain so close to the Spanish coast as to make danger of attack unlikely. It also takes in all the waters around Great Britain, Ireland, and the adjacent islands, including the English Channel. It takes in the North Sea, running up the Norwegian coast to a point south of Bergen. It takes in all the Baltic Sea and its independent waters.”

There was immediate protest by the shipping companies in the Port of New York. At the same time the harbor began to show the absence of ship movements. Vessels were tied up. Aerial views of piers up and down the Hudson River and the Upper Bay showed many idle ships.

The New York Custom House made a desperate effort to interpret the new law for American shippers, who were demanding new trade routes and charging that they were being legislated out of business, while foreign ship operators were demanding the utmost secrecy in sailing permits and information on ports of call. News of frequent torpedoings showed that their alarm was not exaggerated. All the while the Maritime Commission worked swiftly to create new trade routes to South America, South Africa, and to points in the Pacific.

The Port now faced a crucial year—1940—and for the second time in the century had to cope with the special problems growing out of European war and widespread blockade.