World War II on the Savannah Waterfront
in the American Theater of Operations

Wartime Production and Service in Savannah

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Contents

Research Summary

Wartime Production
- Port of Savannah (Cargo Port)
- Private Industry
- Shipbuilding
  - MacEvoy Shipbuilding Company
  - Savannah Machine & Foundry Company
  - Southeastern Shipbuilding Corporation
- Lend-Lease Program
- Excellence in Production Awards

Wartime Service
- American Theater of Operations
- United States Coast Guard
  - Coast Guard Auxiliary
  - Coast Guard Reserves Temporary (USCG R(T))
  - Volunteer Port Security Force (VPSF)
  - Harbor Pilots
- United States Army
  - Savannah Army Service Forces Depot (ASF)
- United States Navy
  - Navy Inshore Patrol, Savannah Section Base, Cockspur Island
- Savannah-Chatham County Defense Council
- Savannah Women in Service

Miscellaneous
- U-boat 505 Visits Savannah

Maps
- The Port of Savannah, 1945
  - Port Facilities (Piers, Wharves and Docks)
  - Water Front Property
  - Terminal Sites
- City of Savannah, 1945

World War II on the Savannah Waterfront – Research Summary

The following brief articles represent preliminary research into the various activities that were occurring along the Savannah waterfront in support of World War II. The progression of research defined the themes of wartime production and wartime service. The greater Savannah community was greatly involved in wartime production through the conversion of the Port of Savannah into a military cargo port for Lend-lease goods and the development of wartime industries manufacturing paper, asphalt, naval ships, and much more. Wartime service along the waterfront included citizen soldiers and sailors volunteering in civilian and military organizations, including the Savannah-Chatham County Defense Council and the United States Coast Guard Temporary Reserve's Volunteer Port Security Force. Since the focus of this research was the Savannah waterfront, additional information on World War II activities inland, including Hunter Army Air Field and the Georgia State Guard, was not pursued. Several supplementary articles (specifically those regarding the Lend-lease program, production awards and the American Theater of Operations) were prepared in order to understand local activities in the larger, national context. Otherwise, the articles are geared strictly to local impact.

The articles should not be considered all inclusive accounts of the various activities and organizations, rather introductions that could be further expanded through additional research. For this document, research was primarily limited to the library and archival collections of the City of Savannah Research Library & Municipal Archives and the Bull Street Public Library, Kaye Kole Genealogy and Local History Room. Of particular use were the local reference files of both, and the *Savannah Morning News* index and microfilm at the public library. The Coastal Heritage Society supplied photographs of the Port of Savannah in 1946, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah Division provided access to the Annual Harbor Survey for the 1940s. Additional general information and images were pulled from various on-line sources. Possible sources for further research include: local historical/archival repositories; local veterans groups; the Navy League; the National Archives and Records Administration; the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary History Project; the *Savannah Morning News* research department/photograph collections; and the Savannah City Council minutes and indexes.

The articles are all footnoted and can be used and distributed individually, as needed. Therefore, there is not a bibliography for the whole document.

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World War II on the Savannah Waterfront – Port of Savannah (Cargo Port)

Aerial view of five miles of Savannah River, showing waterfront terminals and wharves at Savannah, September 23, 1946.[1]

Following declaration of war on the United States, Germany began a concentrated assault on American commerce along the Atlantic coastline of the United States, referred to by some as "the American hunting season." By January 1942, an average of nineteen German U-boats were operating in the U.S. Strategic Area everyday. Loaded with torpedoes, they posed a very dangerous threat to the United States' Atlantic ports. On January 12th, the British

[1] "Statement of the Central of Georgia Railway Company and Ocean Steamship Company of Savannah Regarding Their Waterfront Terminals at Savannah, Georgia," (Savannah: Central of Georgia Railway Company, 11 October 1946). Coastal Heritage Society, Accession #1998.26.4.

passenger steamship *Cyclops* was sunk by German torpedoes off the coast of Cape Cod and in February 432,000 tons of cargo was lost in the Atlantic Ocean (80 percent of it just off the U.S. coast). Germans sunk seventy ships along the east coast in March, leading to stricter port security measures in many cities. On April 22, 1942, Savannah City Council adopted an ordinance declaring the entire waterfront a restricted zone.[2]

The ordinance was passed as a temporary measure for the duration of the national emergency and covered the Savannah River waterfront within the City of Savannah limits (about 2,600 feet), from the Atlantic Coast Line Railway wharves on the east end of town to the Central of Georgia Railway wharves on the west end. This included "any and all wharves, piers, buildings, abutments, projections and other structures, extending into the waters of the Savannah River within the limits." The ordinance was designed to protect the port from sabotage and fire and was issued in response to a request from the United States Coast Guard. Only those residing within the restricted area and those with legitimate business would be permitted, and then only after presenting appropriate identification issued by the Coast Guard. The ordinance prohibited fishing, smoking, and selling or consuming liquor within the zone. Individuals could not carry "any explosives, highly inflammable matter, firearms or dangerous weapon or weapons of any type," unless authorized by the Captain of the Port (the Coast Guard official in charge of all activities within a given U.S. port during World War II). Further condemned unlawful were unauthorized cameras or photographic equipment which could document the activities of the port for enemies. The ordinance was put into effect for the duration of the war until official termination of the war plus an additional six months.[3]

Little was publicly mentioned about the precise activities of the port over the next three years, until V-E Day and the surrender of Germany. However, during May 1945 reports of the contribution of the port to the war effort began appearing. Savannah had served as a significant cargo port for the export of Lend-lease products to Great Britain and war supplies for the U.S. armed forces in Europe. The United States Army operated eight main ports of embarkation for troops and cargo, many of which had sub-ports manned by Army personnel. Charleston, South Carolina served as a sub-port to New York for troops (the port of New York was the main point of embarkation for troops fighting in the European theater,

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[2] Larson, C. Kay, "Bravo Zero: The Coast Guard Auxiliary in World War II" (History Program, Special Projects Division (BC-ASH), National Department of Marketing and Public Affairs, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary), (available at http://www.history.auxpa.org/collections/textarticles/article0002.htm, accessed 28 August 2008).

[3] "30-146. Waterfront, safeguarded during national emergency," (Ordinance adopted and approved 22 April 1942), taken from *The Code of the City of Savannah…Up To and Through The Year 1945* (prepared by Spence M. Grayson, City Attorney, by authority of the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah, adopted March 6, 1946), 181-184; "Waterfront is Restricted Zone," *Savannah Morning News* (hereafter SMN) (23 April 1942), 18:5.

San Francisco for those in the Pacific). Savannah served as a cargo sub-port for the U.S. Army Transportation Corps.[4]

Prior to the development of the Georgia Port Authority after the conclusion of World War II, the Port of Savannah was still defined by largely private facilities. Described in August 1945 in a report to the Agricultural and Industrial Development Board of Georgia, the Savannah Harbor of World War II consisted of the lower twenty-two miles of the Savannah River and seven miles of channel across the bar to the Atlantic Ocean (the City of Savannah located approximately 16 ½ miles upriver from the Atlantic). The main harbor spanned the width of the Savannah River from the Standard Oil Company terminals, 2 ¾ miles below the city, to the Atlantic Creosoting Company terminals, 5 ½ miles above the city. Port facilities included about 15,600 feet of developed waterfront with 51 wharves and piers (owned and operated by private interests, principally the railroads, and a small portion by the City of Savannah). Railroad companies servicing Savannah with port facilities included the Atlantic Coast Line Railway (east of the city), the Central of Georgia Railway (west of the city), the Seaboard Air Line Railway (terminals on Hutchinson Island), and the Savannah and Atlanta Railway (servicing the U.S. Army Quartermaster Depot west of Savannah). In addition, the Ocean Steamship Company (affiliated with the Central of Georgia) owned water-front terminals. In 1946, the Central of Georgia Railway published the following description of Savannah's port facilities:[5]

> *Central of Georgia Railway Company, Ocean Steamship Company of Savannah, Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Company, and Seaboard Air Line Railroad Company have large and commodious water-front terminals at Savannah.*
>
> *Ocean Steamship Company of Savannah owns and leases to others terminal property at Savannah containing approximately 300 acres, which have an uninterrupted frontage on the deepest part of the Savannah River of approximately 5,280 feet, a full mile of choice river frontage. On this property it has constructed terminals for its own use in its coastwise trade, for lease to other steamship companies, and under lease to the Central of Georgia Railway Company, at which terminals there can be berthed at one time approximately seventeen vessels. The value of these terminals is over $5,300,000.*

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[4] Wardlow, Chester, *United States Army in World War II; The Technical Services; The Transportation Corps: Responsibilities, Organization and Operation* (Office of the Chief of Military History, United States Army, Washington, D.C., 1951), 425; Wardlaw, Chester, *United States Army in World War II; The Technical Services; The Transportation Corps: Movements, Training, and Supply* (Office of the Chief of Military History, United States Army, Washington, D.C., 1956), 331.

[5] *The Port of Savannah: A Report to the Agricultural and Industrial Development Board of Georgia* (Frederick R. Harris, Inc., Consulting Engineers, New York, August 9, 1945) 2, 7, 8, 52 , Savannah Area Local Government Documents Collection, #SGA.SPA.1945-001, City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives.

In the slip at the terminals reserved by Ocean Steamship Company, five vessels can be berthed at one time. Unless the Government has constructed something better during the war, we say confidently that these are the most modern terminals on the Atlantic coast south of Norfolk. Their original cost was approximately $1,834,016, including land valued at $303,794, and they have been kept in good repair.

On another part of these terminals is the terminal formerly leased to the Merchants & Miners Transportation Company, from which it operated before the war a line of coastwise steamers between Savannah, Baltimore, and Philadelphia. This will accommodate two large or three small vessels at one time and has proved adequate for the business of that Company, and been of inestimable value for foreign commerce during and since the war.

The fleets of the Ocean Steamship Company and the Merchants & Miners Transportation Company were taken by the Government during the war. We cannot speak for the Merchant & Miners Transportation Company, but the Ocean Steamship Company is actively engaged in preparations for resuming its coastwise service and expects to use its terminals when conditions warrant its doing so.

The balance of the Ocean Steamship Company's terminals are leased to Central of Georgia Railway Company which will buy them as part of its plan of reorganization for approximately $3,000,000, which is their value, testified to by disinterested appraisers before the Interstate Commerce Commission, to be used principally in the purchase of ships.

They are adequately served by railroad tracks, Central of Georgia Railway switching yards at Savannah comprising 16 miles of track with a capacity of 1,532 cars. These yards with the exception of West Savannah are located on property of the Ocean Steamship Company.

Warehouses on the water front comprise 495,181 sq. feet, used by the Ocean Steamship Company, and 631,150 sq. feet leased from the Ocean Steamship Company and used by the Central of Georgia Railway. In addition, at the M. & M. T. Company wharf, owned by the Ocean Steamship Company, and now leased to the Central of Georgia, are buildings with a frontage of 1,110 feet in length on the river front covering approximately four acres of land.

In a report compiled this year known as "Port Series No. 14, Revised 1946" made by the Corps of Engineers, United States Army, and the United States Maritime Commission regarding the Port of Savannah, on Page 13 it says:

> *"There are 49 piers and wharves at Savannah with depths of water alongside ranging from zero to 32 feet at mean low water. Six of them are opposite the city on Hutchinson Island while the remaining 43 are on the south side of the river between a point 2 7-8 miles below and a point 5 3-8 miles above the center of the city. Thirteen piers and wharves are operated by the railroads, 5 by oil companies, 2 by coal companies, 1 by a cotton warehouse company, 6 by shipbuilding and repair companies, 1 by a local steamship company, and 6 by various private industries. Seven piers and wharves are used as tie-ups for floating equipment, 1 of which is operated by the United States Navy, 2 by the United States Engineer Department, 2 by towboat companies, 1 by a marine contractor, and 1 by a lighterage company. The city operates the large municipal wharf below the foot of Bull Street and maintains 4 street ends for small craft. Three wharves are not operated but one of them is occasionally used as a tie-up for idle barges."*
>
> *On Page 89 the following statement is made:*
>
> *"During the 10-year period 1936-45, for which detailed statistics are presented here-in, the waterborne commerce of Savannah averaged 2,811,744 tons per year. In the first 6 years of the period, however, the annual commerce was well over 3 million tons and in 4 of the 6 years exceeded 3 ½ million tons. In 1942, the first year in which we were directly engaged in the war, the traffic dropped to the unprecedented low of 878,720 tons, following which it increased each year and the period ended with a total of 2,478,957 tons handled in 1945."*
>
> *(The Port was entirely closed for most of 1942 due to submarine activities.)….*
>
> *This tremendous amount of business was handled smoothly and efficiently, and to the entire satisfaction of the Government and of the War Shipping Administration….*
>
> *The United States Coast Guard, which had supervision of the handling of cargoes at Savannah, awarded the Security Shield of Honor to the Central of Georgia Railway…. In addition, we have in our files letters of commendation from prominent Government officials and others in shipping circles regarding the high quality of service rendered by the Central of Georgia Railway, and the adaptability of its facilities for cargoes handled….*[6]

The above excerpt mentions the great work of the Port of Savannah in handling the materials of war. Not only was Savannah shipping out war materials produced by local companies, but it served as port of embarkation for special war

[6] "Statement of the Central of Georgia Railway Company…"

cargo produced inside the Zone of the Interior and shipped through Savannah via rail and then ship. "Savannah was chosen by the Transportation Corps of the War Department, the War Shipping Administration, and the British Ministry of War Transport to help carry the load in supplying Great Britain and its allies with the weapons of war and the necessities of life." Between spring 1943 and V-E Day in May 1945, shipments to Britain, France, the Mediterranean, and North Africa included tanks, guns, vehicles, ammunition, food, lumber, newsprint, steel, and fabricated bridges. An estimated 200,000 tons of bombs and munitions for British use, 300,000 tons of war equipment (tanks, jeeps, half-tracks, trucks, communication equipment, medical supplies, assault boats, etc.), and 900,000 tons of various Lend-lease goods for rebuilding countries decimated by war (steel, lumber, food, cotton, drugs, etc.) went through Savannah. "Altogether over 1.25 million tons of vital supplies went through Savannah 'in a constant stream of Victory and Liberty ships'." [7]

A halftrack in the 9th Armored Division, 1st U.S. Army, Engers, German, March 27, 1945.[8]

Robert W. Groves, President of the Savannah Port Authority-Industrial Committee of Savannah, in providing his annual report for 1945, singled out of particular interest the shipment of amphibious tractors, known as "Alligators," used in the invasion of the European continent and "Seamules" used to land on beaches. 1940-1941 shipments included scrap iron, explosives and even airplanes to Britain (the planes were flown into Savannah and then partially dismantled for shipment). The port was practically shut down in 1942 due to German U-boat operations off the coast. Tanks, trucks, and explosives for

[7] "200,000 Tons of Munitions Loaded; Report on Savannah War Shipments Released; Tanks, Jeeps Included; 900,000 Tons of Lend-Lease Go Through Port," SMN (22 July 1945), 24:1.
[8] (available at http://www.schweinfurt.army.mil/9eng/history/0022.jpg, accessed 29 August 2008).

England went out in 1943. During 1944, Savannah "handled large portion of all lease-lend explosives going to England." By the end of 1945, shipments consisted of the goods needed for relief and rebuilding, particularly steel, lumber and food, to England (also receiving emergency houses), France, Russia, Italy, Greece, Czechoslovakia, the Netherlands and Yugoslavia.[9]

Wartime export had required great coordination between the War Shipping Administration in New York, the Transportation Corps, the United States Coast Guard and the Captain of the Port, and the private railroad and steamship companies. By the end of 1945, the port began to slowly resume normal operations with partial commercial steamship services to South America, Australia and the Pacific (though it would take many months for normal business to be restored). A great deal of activity in late 1945 and early 1946 revolved around the repair of vessels. The War Shipping Administration (WSA) reported spending $2,479,814 on the maintenance and repair of freighters in Savannah shipyards in 1945 alone. During the first three months of 1946, thirty-one vessels were delivered to Savannah by the WSA for repair.[10]

In July 1946, Savannah was chosen as one of only two U.S. ports (Newport News, Virginia being the other) to handle the export of 75,000 animals destined for Europe to help replenish depleted livestock. The United Nations Relief Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), through the U.S. Department of Agriculture, contracted with the Atlantic Coast Line Railway (ACL) to ship cattle and horses sent to Savannah from the Owen Brothers Horse & Mule Commission Company in Memphis, Tennessee. ACL built stockyards on their waterfront property east of the city for 5,000 head at a time. The livestock came by rail to Savannah and then left on Liberty ships converted into "cattle boats" specifically for this purpose. An estimated fifteen shiploads were sent out each month until mid-December, when shipments were ceased due to cold weather in the Atlantic.[11]

On July 20, 1945, Commandant of the United States Coast Guard, Admiral R. R. Waesche awarded the Central of Georgia Railway Company, as operators of the largest waterfront facility in the Port of Savannah, the "Security Shield of Honor" primarily for its "valued and important contributions to the Port Security program of the United States Coast Guard." In addition, Waesche pointed out the role Savannah played in "the safe and uninterrupted flow of our country's vital war materials to the battlefronts of the world."[12]

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[9] "Vast Wartime Services of Port Disclosed in Report by Groves," SMN (13 February 1946), 20:5; "Port's War Activities Are Revealed in Report," *Savannah Evening Press* (12 February 1946); "Cargo Movement from Savannah to Europe Brisk," SMN (28 June 1945), 12:3.
[10] "200,000 Tons of Munitions Loaded…"; "Port's War Activities Are Revealed…"; "Ship Repairs during 1945 Top 2 Million," SMN (19 April 1946), 14:5; "Statement of the Central of Georgia Railway Company…"
[11] "Port to Handle 75,000 Animals; Memphis Outfit Gets Contract for Big Shipment; ACL to Build Yards; Horses and Cattle Will be Sent to Europe," SMN (4 July 1946), 12:1; "Port of Savannah One of Two Chosen to Dispatch Stock," SMN (12 December 1946), 3:3.
[12] "Statement of the Central of Georgia Railway Company…"

World War II on the Savannah Waterfront – Private Industry

Mexican Petroleum Corporation

During World War II, the Mexican Petroleum Corporation (later Amoco, which merged with British Petroleum (BP) in 1998) produced petroleum asphalt for the construction of military airports and roads. Refined petroleum asphalt was first used in the District of Columbia in the 1870s. By the outbreak of World War I, petroleum asphalt was favored over other types of asphalt and ruled the market. With the establishment of state highway departments and the increased popularity of the automobile, the industry flourished. At the outbreak of World War II, the Mexican Petroleum Corporation was already producing petroleum asphalt for highway construction. During the war, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was in charge of military road and runway construction and relied on petroleum asphalt products to meet the increasing needs of runways that could carry heavier loads. The Mexican Petroleum Corporation supplied the U.S. Army with up to 12,000 tons of petroleum asphalt each month for shipment to the warfronts.[1]

Pierpont Manufacturing Company

The Pierpont Manufacturing Company manufactured millions of boxes from its timber supply for Allied armies under the Lend-Lease program. During World War II, Curley Milton, who worked at the plant from 1939-1976, supervised the manufacture of bomb boxes at the Pierpont "box factory."[2]

Southern States Iron Roofing Company

The Southern States Iron Roofing Company produced 25,000 bomb castings monthly (as of May 1945) for the U.S. Army. Southern States Iron Roofing Company (SSIRC) was founded in 1914 in Savannah and established a manufacturing facility in Birmingham, Alabama that same year. SSIRC was a distributor of building products, including roofing materials, window frames, and metal chimneys. By 1932, the company also had facilities in Memphis, TN, Raleigh, NC, and Newark, NJ. In 1954, SSIRC was acquired by the Reynolds Metals Company and its name changed to Southern States Container.[3]

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[1] *The Port of Savannah: A Report to the Agricultural and Industrial Development Board of Georgia* (Frederick R. Harris, Inc., Consulting Engineers, New York, August 9, 1945), 77, Savannah Area Local Government Documents Collection, #SGA.SPA.1945-001, City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives; "War Work Done by Savannah Includes Building 130 Ships," *Savannah Morning News* (hereafter SMN) (8 May 1945), 12:3; "Asphalt Origins," reprinted from Asphalt Contractor magazine (http://wrbailey.com/rockbinders/asphalt.html, accessed 22 August 2008).

[2] "War Work Done by Savannah Includes Building 130 Ships," SMN (8 May 1945), 12:3; Keber, Martha L., *Low Land and the High Road…* (City of Savannah, Department of Cultural Affairs, 2008), 8, 14; Curley Milton interview (June 9, 2005, June 5, 2006), Box 6112-003-7, Sub-series 1, Folder 24, City of Savannah, Research Library & Municipal Archives.

[3] "War Work Done by Savannah Includes Building 130 Ships,"; "Integris Metals (Company Profile: Advertisement) (http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G1-89883062.html, accessed 27 August 2008); (http://www.mbsii.net/sirco/about.htm, accessed 27 August 2008); (http://cgi.ebay.ca/1932-SAVANNAH-GEORGIA-SOUTHERN-STATES-IRON-ROOFING-ROOF_W0QQitemZ360042260163QQihZ023QQcategoryZ41189QQcmdZViewItemQQ_trksidZp1742.m153.l1262, accessed 27 August 2008).

Steel Products Company

The Steel Products Company, Savannah, no date. [4]

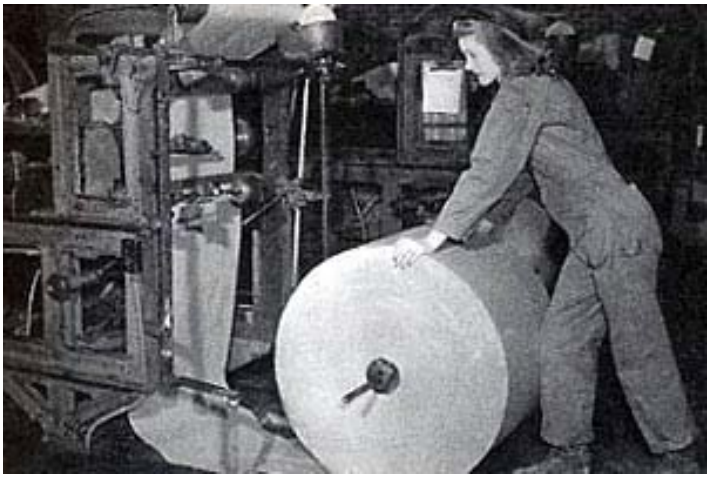
In 1931, the Savannah Blowpipe Company was incorporated as the Steel Products Company. The Steel Products Company designed and manufactured truck trailers, named Great Dane trailers, for over-the-road freight hauling. In 1938, the company began making lightweight tank and van trailers made of high tensile steel. During World War II, the Steel Products Company produced an estimated 12,000 Great Dane trailers for Army engineers. Working almost exclusively on government contracts from mid-1942 through 1945, the company was awarded the Army-Navy "E" pennant for excellence in quality and construction, and received four additional stars. During 1945, they began manufacturing a new design of heavy duty trailers referred to as the "20-ton front leader."[5]

World War II advertisement, no date
(note Army-Navy "E" Award logo at top).[6]

[4] "Great Dane Trailers; 1931-1944," (http://www.greatdanetrailers.com/gdhistory/index/asp?details=2, accessed 20 August 2008).
[5] "Great Dane Trailers; 1931-1944,"; "War Work Done by Savannah..."
[6] "Great Dane Trailers; 1931-1944."

Union Bag and Paper Company

During World War II, Union Bag and Paper Company (Savannah plant opened in 1936) produced kraft paper for use by the U.S. Army. Donald M. Nelson, chairman of the War Production Board, spoke on the importance of the paper industry to the war effort, "We have always taken paper for granted, like water and air…. Men are going overseas in increasing numbers and each one requires quantities of paper. I cannot begin to tell you of the importance of paper in this war." Lieutenant General Brehon Somervell, chief of the Army Supply Services, said that over 700,000 items for the armed forces required some form of paper packaging. In 1943, the company constructed a second bag plant at the mill specifically to meet the demand. The company also supplemented its workforce with women. 1943 saw a record year for the company with a payroll of $10,291,663 and almost 5,000 employees. In 1945, the *Savannah Morning News* reported that the company produced 400-500 tons of boards for use in Army V-Boxes and 25 million paper bags each day, in addition to shipping out machine-dried pulp to Allied nations under the Lend-Lease program. V-Boxes were developed by the U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps to provide more durable packaging for rations and subsistence goods being shipped to the Pacific theater of operation, where they were often quickly unloaded on beaches and pushed off the backs of trucks. The V-Boxes did not stack as well as wooden boxes, but were easier to handle, saved space, and helped minimize food losses in the field. They were also used for small equipment and supplies. Union Bag and Paper Company merged with the Camp Manufacturing Company in 1956 to become the Union Camp Corporation. In 1998, Union Camp was acquired by International Paper.[7]



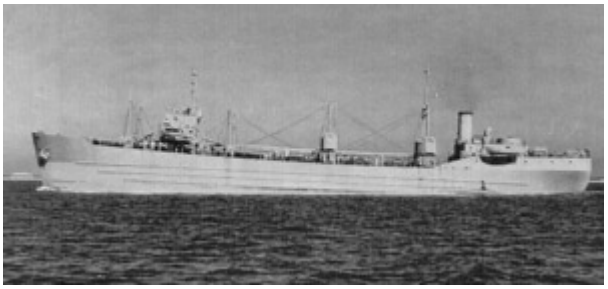
Union Bag and Paper Company employee and machinery, 1943.[8]

[7] "Union bag and Paper Company," (http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Multimeda.jsp?id=m-9857, accessed 20 August 2008); "Union Camp Corporation," Wikipedia entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Union_Camp_Corporation, 20 August 2008); "Record Payroll for Union Bag," SMN (10 May 1944), 12:6; "War Work Done by Savannah…"; "QM Supply in the Pacific During WWII," (http://www.quartermaster.army.mil/OQMG/professional_bulletin/1999/spring1999/, accessed 21 August 2008); Keber, 12, 15.

[8] "Union bag and Paper Company," Photograph from the Georgia Historical Society, (taken from http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-1843, accessed 29 August 2008).

World War II on the Savannah Waterfront – MacEvoy Shipbuilding Company

In November 1941, the MacEvoy Shipbuilding Company was awarded a contract with the U.S. Maritime Commission to build concrete tankers for oil cargoes (one of only three shipyards in the nation originally contracted to produce concrete barges). When the contract was awarded it was announced that the project would probably involve $60 million worth of work in the first year. The MacEvoy Shipbuilding Company was an offshoot of the MacEvoy Company of Newark, New Jersey, builders of housing projects. The company's shipyards were located on the old Terry Shipbuilding plant site in Port Wentworth, leased from the Port Wentworth Corporation, about seven miles upriver from the foot of Bull Street. The concrete tankers were 360-foot long barges, 54 feet across beam, weighed approximately 6,000 tons and could carry 15,000 tons of oil. The barges did not have engines, but were rather towed around by other ships. The barges were not flat platforms, but actual full-sized ships used to store supplies and raw materials. Similar barges were used during World War I and nicknamed "Rock Floats."[1]



S.S. Arthur Talbot, manufactured by McCloskey & Company.[2]

The Maritime Commission "only built concrete ships and barges reluctantly, at a point in the war when the steel shipbuilders were all at full capacity" and steel was in short supply. Since World War I, innovations in cement mixing and composition made these ships stronger than the World War I fleet of concrete ships, and they used half the steel required for a traditional steel-hulled ship. By the end of the war, the Maritime Commission had utilized five different contractors, but McCloskey & Company of Philadelphia, with shipyards in Tampa, Florida, was the only contractor to make self-propelled concrete ships with engines. Those without engines "were not considered worthy of actual names. They were simply numbered instead." The end of World War II marked the end of large-scale concrete ship building by the Navy and several of the ships

[1] "MacEvoy Company Will Build Concrete Tankers; $60,000,000 in Year," *Savannah Evening Press* (hereafter SEP) (15 December 1941); "Concrete Barges of WWII," (http://www.concreteships.org/ships/barges/, accessed 20 August 2008); "MacEvoy to Extend Existing Shipways," *Savannah Morning News* (hereafter SMN) (28 June 1943), 10:6; "War Work Done by Savannah Includes Building 130 Ships," SMN (8 May 1945), 12:3; Lane, Frederic, *Ships for Victory: A History of Shipbuilding under the U.S. Maritime Commission in World War II* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1951, 2001 reprint), 629, 632.

[2] "A Brief History of Concrete Ships," (http://www.concreteships.org/history/, accessed 20 August 2008).

were turned into breakwaters in Canada and Virginia (none of those manufactured by MacEvoy is included in these breakwaters).[3]

During World War II, the barges were used during the D-Day Normandy landings as part of the Mulberry Harbour defenses, for fuel and munitions transportation, and as floating pontoons. Concrete barges were especially used in the Pacific theater of war in 1944 and 1945 to support U.S. invasions, and BRLs (Barge, Refrigerated, Large) were used to transport fresh frozen foods to troops serving in the Pacific. Jim Donovan [not of Savannah], was a supply officer in Service Squadron Ten, and spent time on one of the concrete barges (*Feldspar* IX-159). Donovan remembers them as "very useful ships," though "when people heard that ours was a concrete ship, they normally found that hilarious."[4]

Though originally contracted for twenty-three barges, the MacEvoy Shipbuilding Corporation manufactured just seven barges, Concrete Nos. 6-12, between January 1943 and June 1944 (the Maritime Commission reducing the contracted quantity in June 1943 following investigation of president Clifford MacEvoy for fraud and negligence). The first concrete barge was launched in May 1943 and that same month the shipyard was awarded the Army-Navy "E" "for outstanding performance in war work." In November 1943, the company announced that the barge building program would end. In May 1944, the *Savannah Morning News* published an article, based on a Maritime Commission report, that the concrete barges made in Savannah were being used "very successfully" as floating sea warehouses in the Pacific combat area. "The barges are proving valuable as 'filling stations' for supplying ships," stated one Maritime Commission spokesman.[5]

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[3] "Builders of Concrete Ships," (http://www.shipbuildinghistory.com/history/, accessed 21 August 2008); "Concrete Barges of WWII,"; "A Brief History of Concrete Ships,"; "Barges Used As Sea Warehouses," SMN (6 May 1944), 10:4; Lane, 629.

[4] "Concrete barge," Wikipedia entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Concrete_barge, 20 August 2008); "World War II in the Pacific; An 'I was there' story: Navy Concrete Barges in WW2," (http://www.ww2pacific.com/concret1.html, accessed 20 August 2008); "Concrete ship," Wapedia – Wiki: Concrete ship (http://wapedia.mobi/en/Concrete_ship, accessed 20 August 2008).

[5] "Builders of Concrete Ships,"; "Army-Navy 'E' Is Awarded Shipyard," SEP (26 May 1943); *Savannah Morning News* Index, 23 May 1943, 32(1); 8 November 1943, 10(1); 6 May 1944, 10(4); "Shipbuilding is Inspected Here," SMN (18 March 1944), 10:5; "Barges Used As Sea Warehouses"; Lane, 632.

World War II on the Savannah Waterfront – Savannah Machine & Foundry Company

At the beginning of World War II, the Savannah Machine & Foundry Company (SMF) was already a well established marine repair firm located at the foot of Randolph Street with a small marine railway (often called Mingledorff's Yard). In 1941, SMF president W. Lee Mingledorff, Sr. organized a shipbuilding division. Mingledorff established the company's shipbuilding plant on Lathrop Avenue, west of the city on a tract of land wedged between the Southern Cotton Oil Company plant and the Colonial Oil Company terminals (this shipyard was in fact property of the U.S. Navy developed by Mingledorff for Navy shipbuilding). The facilities were estimated to cost about $1,025,000 to construct and included a plate shop for cutting, shaping and working with the steel plates for ship hulls. The buildings were erected by the Steel Products Corporation. The eighteen acre tract had a frontage of about 1,000 feet on the Savannah River. The United States Navy awarded SMF a contract to build 200-foot, all-steel, welded minesweepers as part of the national defense shipbuilding program. In early 1942, it was announced SMF received additional Navy contracts bringing the total contracted work to $20 million. In addition, the Navy paid to expand the shipyard facilities, adding a third shipway and a 475-foot graving dock (completed in 1943). The graving dock was highly prized because it allowed major military ship repairs to be completed in Savannah, an important addition to Savannah's existing shipbuilding facilities, and at the conclusion of the war was the only dock of its type south of Newport News, Virginia.[1]

In June 1942, SMF launched its first minesweeper, the *U.S.S. Symbol*. It was the first naval ship built in Savannah since the Civil War, and was the first of the World War II ships to come out of all of Savannah's shipyards to be launched. Between June 1942 and June 1946, the company launched twenty-five minesweepers for the U. S. Navy, including *Auk*-class minesweepers and *Admirable*-class minesweepers. During World War II, the U.S. Navy had 95 *Auk* Allied minesweepers built for use by the U.S. Navy and the British Royal Navy (under Lend-Lease) by several shipbuilders. The *Auk*-class displaced an average of 890 tons, was approximately 221 feet long, and cruised at a maximum speed of about 18 knots. The *Admirable*-class minesweepers were designed to clear minefields in offshore waters before the rest of the fleet arrived and participate in anti-submarine warfare duties. The *Admirable*-class minesweepers, measuring approximately 184 feet long and traveling at 15 knots, were used in the North Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. See the following section, "Savannah Machine & Foundry Company – Minesweepers" for information on several of the minesweepers produced in the SMF shipyard.[2]

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[1] "Mine Sweepers Work to Begin," *Savannah Morning News* (hereafter SMN) (7 September 1941); "Savannah Gets Navy Drydock; $3,380,000 Contracts Are Awarded," *Savannah Evening Press* (hereafter SEP) (9 January 1942); Thomas Gamble Collection, Georgia Miscellany, Volume 7, pp. 172-175, Bull Street Public Library; *The Port of Savannah: A Report to the Agricultural and Industrial Development Board of Georgia* (Frederick R. Harris, Inc., Consulting Engineers, New York, August 9, 1945), 77, Savannah Area Local Government Documents Collection, #SGA.SPA.1945-001, City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives; "Vital Ships Were Built Here," SNP (4 July 1976), 12FF; "Mingledorff Purchases Navy's Shipyard, Dock; To Continue Operation," SMN (19 July 1947).

[2] Gamble, Thomas, "Navy Ship Built Here Years Ago," SMN (29 June 1942); "Auk class minesweeper," Wikipedia entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Auk_class_minesweeper, accessed 26 August 2008); "USS

After completing their U.S. Navy contracts for minesweepers, SMF switched to production of submarine rescue vessels. Between 1945 and 1946, the company launched four of these vessels, designated as ASR for Auxiliary Submarine Rescue. The ASR ship was designed to accompany submarines on sea trials as an escort and to stand by in case of emergency. The ASRs patrolled the area of the trials to warn nearby ships and recover practice torpedoes fired by the submarine. The ASRs carried divers as part of their personnel in the event of an accident to perform submarine rescue. ASRs were considered the "guardians of the submarines." About eighteen ASRs were built during World War II by the U.S. Navy and were used extensively over the next fifty years. The *U.S.S. Ortolan* (ASR-22) was decommissioned in 1995 as the last ASR vessel.[3]

U.S.S. Sunbird (ASR-15), circa 1976-1979.[4]

All ASRs were named after birds of the sea, and SMF produced the *U.S.S. Sunbird* (ASR-15), *U.S.S. Kittiwake* (ASR-13), *U.S.S. Petrel* (ASR-14) and the *U.S.S. Tringa* (ASR-16). The *Tringa*, launched June 25, 1946 (after the end of World War II), was the last U.S. Navy ship built by SMF and the last ship to be

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Incredible (AM-249)," Wikipedia entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Incredible_(AM-249), accessed 21 August 2008); "Admirable class minesweeper," Wikipedia entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Admirable_class_minesweeper, accessed 27 August 2008).

[3] Lueck, Dale, CDR, "History of Submarine Rescue Vessels: Guardians of the Submarines," (http://www.sid-hill.com/history/asr-hist.htm, accessed 22 August 2008).

[4] (http://www.nafts.net/sunbird1.htm, accessed 22 August 2008).

built in Savannah under a World War II contract. At the launching ceremony, principal speaker Judge W. Walter Douglas exclaimed,

> *I congratulate the Savannah Machine & Foundry Company—management and labor—every man and woman connected with this splendid organization. You have the satisfaction of knowing that the work done here materially helped in the winning of the war. You contributed in the building of the mightiest navy that ever ploughed the seas.*

SMF had been contracted for additional ASRs, to be named *U.S.S. Verdin* (ASR-17) and *U.S.S. Windhover* (ASR-18), but the construction contracts were cancelled on August 12, 1945 in anticipation of the surrender of Japan (V-J Day, Victory in Japan Day, was declared on August 14th with the official surrender of Japan). See the following section, "Savannah Machine & Foundry Company – Auxiliary Submarine Rescue Vessels" for information on the four ASRs produced in the SMF shipyard.[5]

As SMF finished the ASRs and new construction contracts, they began contracts under the War Shipping Administration (WSA) to convert six Victory cargo ships to troop carriers (including *S.S. Rushville Victory* and *S.S. Smith Victory*). Work on the conversions started on May 25, 1945, at which time the local newspaper announced that the company had already converted three Liberty cargo ships into troop carriers (including *S.S. Matthew Maury* brought to SMF for repairs and conversion after a torpedo attack off the coast of Algeria). The troop carriers were to be used to transport U.S. troops returning to America from the European theater of operations.[6]

With completion of their Navy contracts, SMF wound down their shipbuilding division in early 1946. Since August 1945, and the surrender of Japan and canceling of contracts, the firm had already reduced its workforce from 3,300 to 800 men. The rest of the men were let go after the launching of the *U.S.S. Tringa* and the SMF returned to its focus of marine repair work. During their wartime production, the company was awarded the Army-Navy "E" pennant, adding four stars to it, for excellent performance in the wartime production. The Lathrop Avenue shipyard was owned by the U.S. Navy and in July 1947 SMF

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[5] "New Rescue Ship Goes Down Ways," SMN (26 June 1946), 9:1; "U.S.S. Tringa Placed in Commission," SMN (29 January 1947); "USS Verdin (ASR-17)," Wikipedia entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Verdin_(ASR-17), accessed 22 August 2008); "USS Windhover (ASR-18)," Wikipedia entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Windhover), accessed 22 August 2008).

[6] "Vessels Changed to Transport," SMN (26 May 1945), 10:1; "World Trade Uses S. M. & F. Shipyard," SMN (25 February 1959); "Cargo Movement from Savannah to Europe Brisk," SMN (28 June 1945), 12:3; "List of Liberty ships," Wikipedia entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Liberty_ships:_M, accessed 27 August 2008).

purchased the property, including the 475-foot graving dock, for $675,000 for private commercial use.[7]

[7] "Building of Ships Ends Jan. 15; S.M.F. to Lay Off 800 Men," SMN (30 December 1946), 10:4; "Savannah Machine to be Liquidated," SEP (28 June 1947); "Mingledorff Purchases Navy's Shipyard, Dock; To Continue Operation," SMN (19 July 1947).

Savannah Machine & Foundry Company – Minesweepers

U.S.S. Symbol (AM-123)

The *U.S.S. Symbol* was an *Auk*-class minesweeper. Her hull was laid down at the SMF shipyard on November 18, 1941 and she was launched on July 2, 1942. The *Symbol* was commissioned December 10, 1942. In September 1943, she did pre-invasion sweeps of Salerno, Italy, and was present at the German glide-bombing of the *U.S.S. Savannah* (light cruiser) on September 11th. In 1944, the *Symbol* was attached to the sweeper group for Operation Shingle, the landing of Allied forces sixty miles behind German lines in the Anzio-Nettuno area. On June 10, 1944, a German fighter-bomber attacked the *Symbol* at Anzio, dropping an anti-personnel bomb which exploded fifty yards from the ship, killing four and wounding twenty-five personnel. The ship was repaired in Naples, Italy and in August participated in Operation Dragoon, the invasion of Southern France. After being overhauled in 1945, the *Symbol* was sent for duty in the Pacific before being decommissioned on May 31, 1946. The *Symbol* was recommissioned in 1950 and sent to the Korean War zone. The *Symbol* received five battle stars for service in World War II and two for Korean service. In 1972, the *Symbol* was transferred to the Mexican Navy as "Guillermo Prieto (G-02).[8]

U.S.S. Symbol (AM-123), no date.[9]

[8] "USS Symbol (AM-123)," Wikipedia entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Symbol_(AM-123), accessed 21 August 2008).
[9] (http://www.navsource.org/archives/11/110212303.jpg, accessed 26 August 2008).

U.S.S. Tide (AM-125)

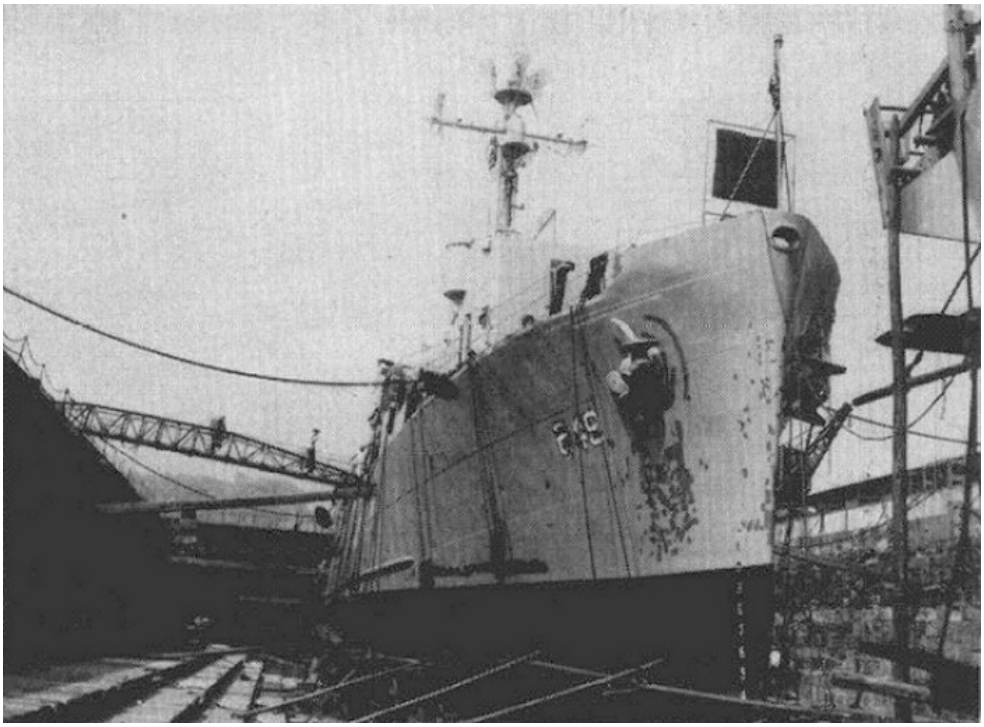
The *U.S.S. Tide* was an *Auk*-class minesweeper. Her hull was laid down at the SMF shipyard on March 16, 1942; she was launched on September 7, 1942; and she was commissioned on May 9, 1943. During the Normandy invasion (D-Day), the *Tide* swept channels off the beaches for fire-support ships. On June 7, 1944, she struck a mine over the Cardonet Banks. The explosion broke her back, blasted a hole in her bottom, and tore away the bulkheads below the waterline. The *U.S.S. Threat* (AM-124), *U.S.S. Pheasant* (AM-61), and *U.S.S. Swift* (AM-122) all tried to assist the *Tide*, but the damage was too severe. While the *Swift* attempted to tow the *Tide* to the beach, the strain broke the ship in two and she quickly sank after the last survivors were removed. The *Tide* received one battle star for World War II service.[10]

U.S.S. Tide underway at sea, 15 June 1943. U.S. Navy Photo 80-G-410253.[11]

[10] "USS Tide (AM-125)," Wikipedia entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Tide_(AM-125), accessed 21 August 2008).
[11] (http://www.navsource.org/archives/11/110212506.jpg, accessed 25 August 2008).

U.S.S. Incredible (AM-249)

The *U.S.S. Incredible* was an *Admirable*-class minesweeper. Her hull was laid down at the SMF shipyard on September 9, 1943 and she was launched November 21, 1943. Commissioned on April 17, 1944, the *Incredible* participated in Operation Dragoon, the invasion of southern France by the Allies, as part of the U.S. Atlantic Fleet. In 1945 and 1946, the *Incredible* served in the Pacific before being decommissioned on November 6, 1946. She was recommissioned in 1950 for service in the Korean War. The *Incredible* earned two battle stars for service in World War II, and four battle stars for Korean service before being sold for scrap in December 1960.[12]



U.S.S. Incredible in dry dock at Yokosuka, Japan.
U.S. Navy photograph published in *All Hands* magazine, September 1951.[13]

[12] "USS Incredible (AM-249)," Wikipedia entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Incredible_(AM-249), accessed 21 August 2008).
[13] (http://www.navsource.org/archives/11/02249.htm, accessed 27 August 2008).

Savannah Machine & Foundry Company – Auxiliary Submarine Rescue (ASR) Vessels

U.S.S. Kittiwake (ASR-13)

The *U.S.S. Kittiwake* was n *Chanticleer*-class submarine rescue ship. She was launched from the SMF shipyard on July 10, 1945 and commissioned July 18, 1946. The *Kittiwake* provided support and rescue for submarines during sea trials. On July 20, 1960, the *Kittiwake* supported the nuclear submarine *George Washington* (SSB(N)-598), off the coast of Cape Canaveral, Florida, as it successfully launched the first two Polaris ballistic missiles fired from a submarine at sea.[14]

U.S.S. Kittiwake (ASR-13), circa 1961.[15]

[14] "USS Kittiwake (ASR-13)," Wikipedia entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Kittiwake, accessed 22 August 2008).
[15] (http://www.nafts.net/Kitti.htm, accessed 22 August 2008).

U.S.S. Petrel (ASR-14)

The *U.S.S. Petrel* was laid down in the SMF shipyard on February 26, 1945, and launched September 26, 1945. She was commissioned at Savannah on September 24, 1946.[16]

U.S.S. Petrel (ASR-14), in Cape Cod Canal, circa 1950.[17]

[16] "USS Petrel (ASR-14)," Wikipedia entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Petrel_(ASR-14), accessed 22 August 2008).
[17] (http://www.nafts.net/petrel.htm, accessed 22 August 2008).

U.S.S. Sunbird (ASR-15)

The *U.S.S. Sunbird* was laid down in the SMF shipyard on April 2, 1945 and launched one year later on April 3, 1946. After her acceptance by the U.S. Navy she was inactivated and placed in the naval reserve until she was recommissioned in 1950 and then continually used in search, rescue, salvage and support operations. Between February 12 and April 22, 1986, the *Sunbird* assisted the naval research vessel NR-1 with the search, location and recovery of debris and wreckage from the *Space Shuttle Challenger* (STS-51L). The SMF's *U.S.S. Kittiwake* was also used for *Challenger* recovery. In a report on the recovery operation, NASA stated the ASRs were selected for recovery for their diving capability and ability to support ships on submerged operations. From July to November 1990, the *Sunbird* participated in Operation Desert Shield, providing support within the Suez Canal sea lane entrances, the only U.S. salvage ship in the eastern Mediterranean region during the operation. The *Sunbird* was decommissioned on September 30, 1993. In 1999, she was transferred to MARAD and placed in the National Defense Reserve Fleet, James River Group. In 2005, the *Sunbird* was removed from the fleet and scrapped by Bay Bridge Enterprises.[18]

U.S.S. Sunbird (ASR-15), pulling into Port Canaveral, Florida during the *Space Shuttle Challenger* recovery operation, 1986.[19]

[18] "USS Sunbird (ASR-15) and submarine salvage operations," (http://www.angelfire.com/fl/crazydave/page9A.html, accessed 22 August 2008); "NavSource Online: Service Ship Photo Archive: ASR-15 Sunbird," (http://www.navsource.org/archives/09/32/3215.htm, accessed 22 August 2008); "Report of the Presidential Commission on the Space Shuttle Challenger Accident; Volume 3: Appendix O – NASA Search, Recovery and Reconstruction Task Force Team Report; Volume 2: Enclosure 4: Search, Classification and Recovery," Prepared by Capt. Charles A. Bartholomew, United States Navy, Superior of Salvage, Naval Sea Systems Command, Washington, D.C. (http://history.nasa.gov/rogersrep/v3appoe4.htm, accessed 22 August 2008).

[19] (http://www.nafts.net/sunbird1.htm, accessed 22 August 2008).

U.S.S. Tringa (ASR-16)

The *U.S.S. Tringa* was laid down in the SMF shipyard on July 12, 1945 and launched on June 25, 1946, the final naval ship manufactured by SMF during World War II. Commissioned on January 28, 1947, the *Tringa* served for thirty years as a support vessel until her decommissioning on September 30, 1977.[20]

U.S.S. Tringa (ASR-16), no date.[21]

[20] "USS Tringa (ASR-16," Wikipedia entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Tringa_(ASR-16), accessed 22 August 2008).
[21] (http://www.nafts.net/tringa.htm, accessed 22 August 2008).

World War II on the Savannah Waterfront – Southeastern Shipbuilding Corporation

Liberty ship (name unknown), no date.[1]

Between 1941 and 1945, the U.S. Maritime Commission contracted eighteen different American shipyards for the construction of 2,710 Liberty ships. The Liberty ships were large cargo ships mass produced on an emergency basis for the U.S. fleet and for the Lend-Lease program to Britain to replace ships sunk by German U-boats. The Liberty ships were approximately 441 feet long and could travel at a top speed of 11.5 knots. Utilizing extensive welding rather than riveting, Liberty ships were inexpensive and quick to build and "came to symbolize U.S. wartime industrial output." As an emergency war product, the Liberty ships were only designed for a life of five years, though many were used after the close of the war. Today only two operational Liberty ships survive, the *S.S. John. W. Brown* and the S.S. *Jeremiah O'Brien* (neither products of the Savannah shipyards).[2]

During early construction, the design was dubbed an "Ugly Duckling" by *Time* magazine. However, at the launching of the first ship, the *S.S. Patrick Henry*, President Franklin D. Roosevelt spoke of his wish that the ships bring liberty to Europe, thereby giving them the name "Liberty" ship. The *S.S. Patrick Henry* took 244 days to build, but by 1945 the average Liberty ship construction time had dropped to forty-two days. Use at sea revealed structural deficiencies in the ships, particularly that extreme cold weather caused the steel to become embrittled and crack.[3]

The Liberty ship design was revised and enhanced to address some of the structural defects and make it faster. The resulting Victory ship was 455 feet long and could travel up to 15-17 knots. The hulls were strengthened by making them more flexible (achieved by spreading the frames from 30 to 36 inches apart) and thereby reducing stress and resulting fractures. The first Victory ship, the *S.S. United Victory*, was launched in early 1944 (all Victory ships carried the word "Victory" at the end of their names). By the end of the war, 531 had been

[1] U.S. Maritime Administration photograph taken from "Liberty Ships and Victory Ships, America's Lifeline in War," (http://www.nps.gov/nr/twhp/wwwlps/lessons/116liberty_victory_ships/116liberty_victory_ships.htm, accessed 20 August 2008).
[2] "Liberty ship" Wikipedia entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberty_ship, accessed 20 August 2008).
[3] "Liberty ship" Wikipedia entry.

built by six U.S. shipyards for the United States fleet and the British (414 were standard cargo and 117 attack transports). Many of the Victory ships were converted after World War II for other uses.[4]

In March 1941, Frank Cohen, of New York, began Savannah Shipyards, Inc., and began construction of a three-way ship yard two miles east of Savannah on the old Terry-Britain tract with financing from the Savannah Port Authority. Cohen had no guarantee of a Maritime Commission contract, but in November 1941 he was contracted by the Commission to complete the yard in thirty-sixty days in anticipation of manufacturing Liberty ships. The attack on Pearl Harbor made the necessity of the shipyard greater, and on December 30th the Maritime Commission took possession of the shipyard after the company had failed to make adequate progress on its construction (in the resulting lawsuit, Savannah Shipyards received a substantial compensation award). Daniel Construction Company, of Savannah, after being highly recommended by the U.S. Navy was awarded the construction contract to finish the shipyard buildings and Sirrine & Company was contracted to finish the design and construction of a six-way yard. On January 20, 1942, the Southeastern Shipbuilding Corporation (SSC), under the direction of G.A. Rentschler (president of the General Machine Company, leading manufacturer of the reciprocating engines used in the Liberty ships), William H. Smith (former executive of the Todd Shipbuilding Corporation), and Captain T. Rieber (also working with the Charleston Shipbuilding & Dry Dock Company), was contracted to manage the yard.[5]

On February 13, 1943, Southeastern launched its first Liberty ship, the *S.S. James Oglethorpe* (the *Oglethorpe* was one of three Southeastern ships lost to German U-boat torpedoes during the war, including the *S.S. John A. Treutlen* and the *S.S. Jonas Lie*). Over the next two years, workers fulfilled contracts for a total of 88 Liberty ships, ending with the *S.S. Thomas W. Murray* launched on January 31, 1945. The average cost of construction for one Liberty ship at the shipyard was $2,043,000 (the second highest of all the shipyards producing Liberty ships). In April 1943, SSC signed additional contracts with the Maritime Commission for the construction of C1-M-AV1 and C1-M-AV8 transport vessels. The company produced thirteen AV1 vessels, designed for short coastal runs, and five AV8 vessels, which had a controllable pitch propeller. In August 1945, Southeastern launched its 106th and final ship under World War II contracts, the C1-M-AV1 *Half-Knot*.[6]

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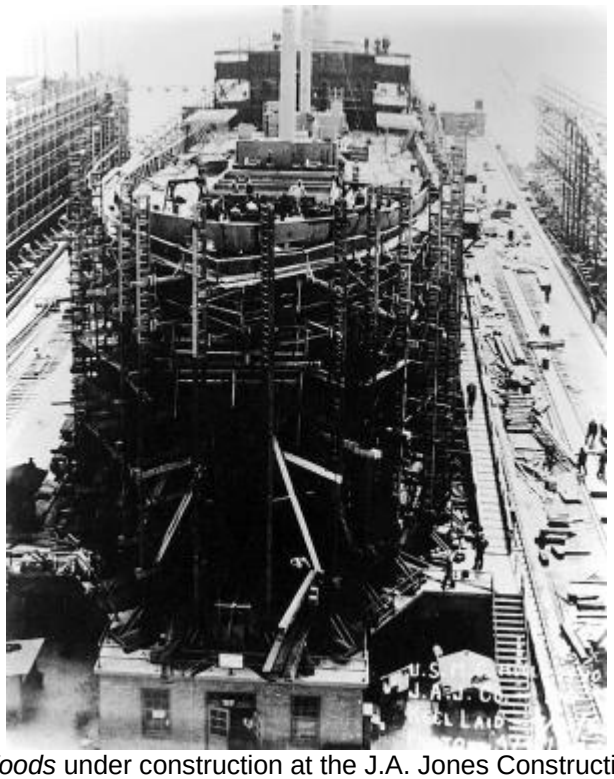
[4] "Victory ship," Wikipedia entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victory_ship, accessed 20 August 2008).
[5] "Southeastern Shipbuilding, Savannah, Georgia," (http://www.liberty-ship.com/html/yards/southeastsb.html, accessed 20 August 2008); Lane, Frederic C., *Ships for Victory: A History of Shipbuilding under the U.S. Maritime Commission in World War II*, (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1951), 156-157, 500-501; "Southeastern Shipbuilding Corp.," flier from Georgia Historical Society, transcribed by Charles Varner, (available at http://www.cvsolarbear.com/PGNR%20wp%20GHS%20history.htm, accessed 20 August 2008).
[6] "Southeastern Shipbuilding Corp.," flier from Georgia Historical Society; "Southeastern Shipbuilding, Savannah, Georgia," (http://www.liberty-ship.com/html/yards/southeastsb.html, accessed 20 August 2008); "United States Maritime Commission C1 and C1-M Type Ships used in World War II, Korean War and



S.S. William B. Woods under construction at the J.A. Jones Construction Co. shipyards, Brunswick, Georgia. SSC and J.A. Jones were the only two manufacturers of Liberty ships in Georgia.[7]

It's estimated that Southeastern injected $112 million into the Savannah wartime economy. Over the course of its two years of operation, the company employed over 45,000 individuals (the peak at one time being 15,000) "making it the largest industry ever located here." The shipyard won the coveted Maritime "M" award in September 1943 from the Maritime Commission "for outstanding production achievements in merchant ship construction." Following the end of World War II and the cancellation of several of the C1-M-AV1 contracts, the Southeastern shipyard closed in 1945.[8]

The property occupied by the Southeastern shipyard had been acquired from the Savannah Port Authority in 1941. During its wartime use, the Maritime Commission had invested an estimated $10 million into it. In late 1946, the War Assets Administration (WAA) called for bids on the 98-acre tract with fourteen buildings. The Port Authority was the only bidder, offering $100,000. Sale

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Vietnam War," (http://www.usmm.org/c1ships.html, accessed 29 August 2008); "War Work Done by Savannah Includes Building 130 Ships," SMN (8 May 1945), 12:3.

[7] *Savannah Morning News* (hereafter SMN) photograph, taken from Mayle, Mary Carr, "'Ships for Victory' to document coastal Georgia's wartime contributions," SMN (18 April 2008), (available at http://savannahnow.com/node/482278, accessed 29 August 2008).

[8] "War, Peace Kept City Busy in 1945," SMN (26 December 1945), 12:1; From a flier prepared by the Oatland Island Education Center, transcribed by Charles E. Varner, (available at http://www.cvsolarbear.com/PGNR%20wp%20OIES%20history.htm, accessed 20 August 2008); "Maritime 'M' Won by Southeastern," SMN (3 September 1943).

negations took almost another year, until they were completed in October 1947 for a final sale price of $357,112.[9]

[9] *The Port of Savannah: A Report to the Agricultural and Industrial Development Board of Georgia* (Frederick R. Harris, Inc., Consulting Engineers, New York, August 9, 1945), 77, Savannah Area Local Government Documents Collection, #SGA.SPA.1945-001, City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives; "Port Group Only Bidder for Shipyard" SMN (18 December 1946); "Sale of Shipyard Disclosed by WAA," SMN (14 October 1947).

World War II on the Savannah Waterfront – Lend-Lease Program

Lend-Lease was a program established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1941 (by the Lend-Lease Act of March 11, 1941) to allow the United States to supply the United Kingdom, Soviet Union, China, France, and other Allied nations with war materials. The Lend-Lease Act "permitted the President to 'sell, transfer title to, exchange, lease, lend, or otherwise dispose of, to any such government [whose defense the President deems vital to the defense of the United States] any defense article." War supplies were delivered by the Lend-Lease Administration in exchange for services to the U.S. (Reverse Lend-Lease), for instance rent on military bases in Newfoundland, Bermuda and the British West Indies. Between 1941 and 1945, the United States supplied approximately $50.1 billion worth of military goods (including $31.4 billion to Britain, $11.3 billion to the Soviet Union, $3.2 billion to France, and $1.6 billion to China). The U.S. received a total of $7.8 billion in Reverse Lend-Lease, the largest majority coming from the British ($6.8 billion). The Lend-Lease program did not require repayment for any supplies delivered before the termination of the program, only either their return or destruction. The controversial plan was explained by Roosevelt in a December 17, 1940 press conference as lending a neighbor a garden hose to put out a fire, "What do I do in such a crisis? I don't say… 'Neighbor, my garden hose cost me $15; you have to pay me $15 for it'… I don't want $15—I want my garden hose back after the fire is over."[1]

> *Lend-Lease was a critical factor in the eventual success of the Allies in World War II, particularly in the early years when the United States was not directly involved and the entire burden of the fighting fell on other nations, notable those of the Commonwealth and, after June 1941, the Soviet Union. Although Pearl Harbor and the Axis Declarations of War brought the US into the war in December 1941, the task of recruiting, training, equipping U.S. forces and transporting them to war zones could not be completed immediately. Through 1942, and to a lesser extent 1943, the other Allies continued to be responsible for most of the fighting and the supply of military equipment under Lend-Lease was a significant part of their success. In 1943-44, about a fourth of all British munitions came through Lend-Lease. Aircraft (in particular transport aircraft) comprised about one-fourth of the shipments to Britain, followed by food, land vehicles and ships.*[2]

While Lend-Lease was designed to allow the U.S. to be involved in the support of its Allies without actually being on the front, it was "a critical factor that brought the U.S. into the war, especially on the European front. Hitler cited the Lend-Lease program and its significance in aiding the Allied war effort when he declared war on the U.S. on 11 December 1941." The Lend-Lease program was terminated on September 2, 1945. A large quantity of materials needed for the post-war period was already in transit to the British. Britain received the goods

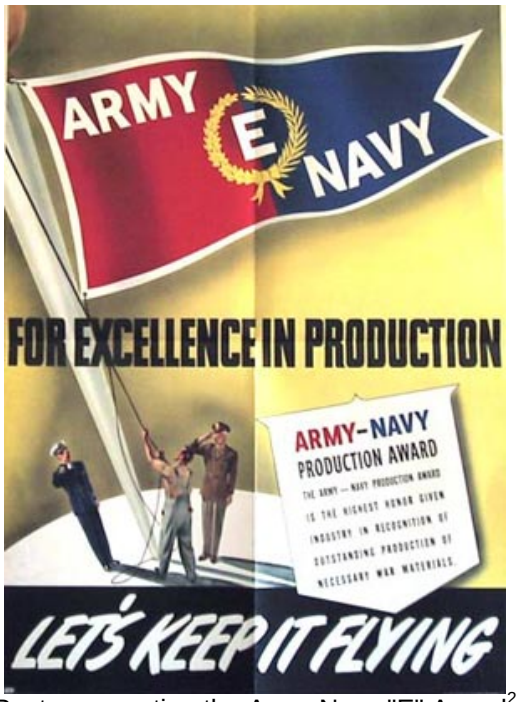
[1] "Lend-lease," Wikipedia entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lend-Lease, accessed 21 August 2008).
[2] "Lend-lease."

on a fifty-year loan of 2 per cent interest, called the Anglo-American loan. The final payment on the loan, $83.3 million, was made in December 2006, at which time Britain's Economic Secretary Ed Balls formally thanked the United States for its wartime support.[3]

[3] "Lend-lease."

World War II on the Savannah Waterfront – Excellence in Production Awards

In 1906, the U.S. Navy began awarding the Navy "E" Award to ships excelling in gunnery, engineering and communications to stimulate competition and patriotism. Early in World War II, the U.S. Navy used the Navy "E" to recognize excellence in defense production plants. The U.S. Army was giving out Army "A" Awards, and the Maritime Administration was awarding "M" Awards to shipyards excelling in the defense shipbuilding program. In 1942, the Army and Navy awards were combined into the Army-Navy "E," or Army-Navy Production Award, and awarded to individual plants in recognition of "private industry's contribution to the war effort through excellence in manufacturing, quality and production." The actual award consisted of a pennant for the plant (see illustration below) and emblems for all employees working in the plant at the time of the award. In addition, plants could use the Army-Navy "E" in their advertising and promotional materials. All plants, private and government, working in war production and construction work were eligible. The main factor in presentation of the award was "quality and quantity of production in light of available facilities." In addition, the Award Board considered overcoming production obstacles, avoidance of stoppages and absenteeism, adherence to fair labor standards, training, effective management, health and safety record, and conservation of critical and strategic materials.[1]



Poster promoting the Army-Navy "E" Award[2]

[1] (http://www.tandematic.com/cgi-bin/show.cgi?x=about, accessed 27 August 2008); (http://www.beanexporter.com/awards.html, accessed 27 August 2008); Circular No. 228, 1942, taken from *Compilation of War Department General Orders, Bulletins, and Circulars* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), (available at http://www.history.navy.mil/library/online/e_award.htm, accessed 27 August 2008).
[2] (http://www.tandematic.com/cgi-bin/show.cgi?x=about, accessed 27 August 2008).

World War II on the Savannah Waterfront – Excellence in Production Awards

The Army-Navy "E" Award program was terminated in the latter half of 1945. In total, 4,283 war production facilities, representing only 5% of those eligible, received the award (this number includes the Navy "E," Army "A" and Army-Navy "Star" given out before the introduction of the Army-Navy "E"). Recipients of the award ranged from a one-man plant to large corporations, including facilities that converted to wartime production and those established specifically for it. "The Army-Navy "E" Award was granted only to facilities which were particularly outstanding in production for the War and Navy Departments." Additional Star Awards were given to Army-Navy "E" recipients who maintained an outstanding record of performance for six months after receiving the original award (indicated by a white star on their "E" pennant). Up to four stars could be received for six month intervals, and then additional stars were awarded for each additional year. Of the 4,283 plants granted the award, eight received six Star Awards, 206 five Star Awards, 820 four Star Awards, 776 three Star Awards, 723 two Star Awards, and 763 one Star Award.[3]

[3] War Employment, Bureau of Public Relations, Press Branch, Press Release "Army-Navy "E" Award Termination Sees Award Granted to 5% of Eligible Plants," (5 December 1945), taken from "Navy E Awards" file, Navy Department Library (available at http://www.history.navy.mil/library/online/e_award.htm, accessed 27 August 2008).

World War II on the Savannah Waterfront – American Theater of Operations

World War II was fought on multiple battlefronts at the same time. Most commonly referred to are the European Theater and the Pacific-Asiatic Theater, the main grounds of the fight against the Germans and the Japanese, respectively. However, fighting was not limited to these areas, with operations in North Africa, the Mediterranean, the Middle East, and the Atlantic Coast of the United States (referred to as the American Theater).

The American Theater encompassed the mainland of the United States extending east to the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, the point where ship convoys passed into British control, a portion of Alaska and parts of the Pacific bordering between California and Baja California. The Atlantic area was particularly targeted by German submarines hunting Allied convoys enroute to Great Britain and the majority of ship sinkings during the first six months of the United States entry into World War II were in this area. The United States Navy and United States Coast Guard were primarily responsible for its protection.[1]

American Campaign Medal, front and reverse.[2]

On November 6, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9265 creating the American Campaign Medal (as well as campaign medals for the European-African-Middle Eastern and Asiatic-Pacific campaigns) in recognition of the service of the armed forces in the American Theater of

[1] "World War II-American Theater 1941-1946," (http://www.history.navy.mil/faqs/stream/faq45-20.htm, accessed 28 August 2008); "American Campaign Medal," Wikipedia entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Campaign_Medal, accessed 28 August 2008).
[2] "American Campaign Medal."

Operations during World War II. The American Campaign Medal was originally issued as the "American Theater Ribbon" and was not issued as a full-size medal until 1947. To be eligible, service members had to perform either one year of consecutive duty within the continental borders of the United States or 30 consecutive days/60 non-consecutive days of duty outside its borders. The dates of eligibility were December 7, 1941 to March 2, 1946. Those engaged in actual combat with Axis forces (for instance anti-submarine patrols in the Atlantic) were also eligible for service stars.[3]

American Theater Ribbon design.[4]

> *The ribbon design was approved by the Secretary of War on 24 November 1942. The blue color represents the Americas; the central blue, white and red stripes (taken from the American Defense Service Medal ribbon) refers to the continuance of American defense after Pearl Harbor. The white and black stripes refer to the German part of the conflict on the Atlantic Coast, while the red and white stripes are for the Japanese colors and refer to that part of the conflict on the Pacific Coast.*[5]

[3] "American Campaign Medal."
[4] "World War II-American Theater 1941-1946."
[5] "American Campaign Medal."

World War II on the Savannah Waterfront – United States Coast Guard

The United States Coast Guard (USCG) was created in 1915. On November 1, 1941, the Coast Guard was transferred from the Treasury Department to the Navy Department. In June of 1942, all port security responsibilities were transferred to the Coast Guard, including controlling the movements of all vessels, fire fighting, supervision of storage and loading of munitions and explosives, patrol of piers, ships and harbors, and control of waterfront facilities. Each port city was supplied with a Captain of the Port, a Coast Guard officer in charge of all these activities. To address the growing danger of German submarine warfare, an integrated Army-Navy-Coast Guard coastal patrol system, called "Sea Frontier" defense, utilizing mounted, foot, canine and afloat patrols, was instituted in July 1942. The threat of German submarines was very real. In In June, German saboteurs from U-boats landed on the beaches of Long Island and near Jacksonville, Florida.[1]

In Savannah, Coast Guard Lieutenant C.T. Christiansen served as Captain of the Port. In a July 1942 speech to the Exchange Club, Lt. Christiansen outlined the work of the Coast Guard in Georgia. The Coast Guard had seventy-three miles of coast and nine navigable inlets to patrol, checking the movements of all vessels within these waters. There were about two-hundred active duty Coast Guardsmen in Georgia, but their force was made stronger (to about 400 persons) through the Auxiliary and Temporary Reserve. In the Savannah harbor, the Coast Guard was monitoring the arrival and departure of all ships (kept secret from the general public for obvious security reasons), patrolling the coast on foot, car and boat, checking waterfront plants and making security recommendations.[2]

In December 1942, the *Savannah Morning News* announced the implementation of beach patrol in the Sixth Naval District, between Wilmington, NC and Jacksonville, FL, with five-hundred Coast Guard Mounties (regular Coast Guardsmen). The Mounties would patrol the beaches for enemy attacks coming on shore. The Coast Guard force in Savannah continued to grow and in July 1943, they took over the old Seaman's Bethel, at 207 East St. Julian Street, for use as a barracks for several hundred men.[3]

Following the surrender of Germany in May 1945, the USCG headquarters in Washington, D.C. began to plan for the return of the Coast Guard to peacetime status and the disenrollment of Coast Guardsmen. In August 1945, a separation center was established on Cockspur Island (in addition to separation centers in Boston, New York, San Francisco, Philadelphia, Norfolk, New Orleans, Cleveland, St. Louis, Long Beach, CA, and Seattle). The Coast Guard had to

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[1] "Sunday Ship History: The Coast Guard Auxiliary," (http://www.eaglespeak.us/2007/03/sunday-ship-history-coast-guard.html, accessed 21 August 2008); U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary "Milestones" (http://www.history.auxpa.org/collections/timelines/milestones.htm, accessed 28 August 2008); Larson, C. Kay, "Bravo Zero: The Coast Guard Auxiliary in World War II" (History Program, Special Projects Division (BC-ASH), National Department of Marketing and Public Affairs, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary), (available at http://www.history.auxpa.org/collections/textarticles/article0002.htm, accessed 28 August 2008).
[2] "Work of Coast Guard Explained," *Savannah Morning News* (hereafter SMN) (28 July 1942), 14:6.
[3] "Beach Patrol to Start This Month," SMN (6 December 1942), 20:2; "United States Coast Guard Take Over Seaman's Bethel," SMN (18 July 1943), 31:5.

reduce the active-duty force from 172,384 to 34,900 and planned to demobilize at a rate of 13,800 men a month. The separation centers were set up to facilitate the demobilization program. The Cockspur Island separation center handled the Coast Guard discharges from the Sixth and Seventh Naval Districts (North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida). The Cockspur Island facility was on land of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior (Fort Pulaski National Monument was closed to the public for the duration of the war). The U.S. Navy had established a section base on the island for the Navy Inshore Patrol in July 1942 and turned it over to the USCG in 1945. Following completion of its use as a separation center, the Coast Guard decommissioned the base on June 17, 1946 and returned it to the National Park Service.[4]

The Coast Guard had also used Cockspur Island as a station for air-sea rescue duty. Four 110-foot sub-chasers formerly based there were moved to the Coast Guard dock at the foot of Abercorn Street where they continued to serve for air-sea rescue in co-ordination with the Southern Group, Charleston section of the Eastern Sea Frontier.[5]

Coast Guard Auxiliary

The Coast Guard differed from the armed services of the Army and the Navy because it was not originally provided with a peacetime reserve unit. The Coast Guard Reserve Act of June 23, 1939 created the Coast Guard Reserve, however unlike the Navy and Army reserves, the civilian USCG reservists could not be ordered to active duty. Comprised of volunteer yacht and motorboat owners, the Coast Guard Reserve's principal purpose was to "promote recreational boating safety and to facilitate the operations of the Coast Guard." With the need to prepare for the onset of World War II and bolster the USCG forces, Congress passed a law restructuring the USCG Reserve into two separate reserve forces on February 19, 1941. The new USCG Reserve would function as the other armed service reserve units as a source of wartime manpower. The new USCG Auxiliary created a civilian reserve unit of volunteers (similar to the original reserve structure).[6]

The Coast Guard Auxiliary grew slowly until the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Thereafter, the Auxiliary grew stronger with many Auxiliarists putting in many hours a week patrolling the coasts in their own boats. Locally, the first Auxiliary flotilla (the basic operating unit, comprised of minimum of ten boat owners) was organized in early 1942. By April, a second flotilla was being organized using commercial fishermen. By mid-1942, the Savannah area had

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[4] "Coast Guard Set for Peace Status," SMN (22 August 1945), 12:4; "Lynch Commands Cockspur Center," SMN (26 August 1945), 32:2; "Coast Guard Set to Abandon Base," SMN (4 June 1946), 14:1.
[5] "Coast Guard Set to Abandon Base"; "Sub-chasers at Coast Guard Docks Stand by for Air-sea Rescue Work," SMN (20 June 1946), 16:5.
[6] "Sunday Ship History…"; (http://www.history.auxpa.org/index.html, accessed 21 August 2008); U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary "Milestones"; Larson

three of the thirteen flotillas serving the Sixth Naval District (Wilmington, NC to Jacksonville, FL) with around 400 men and 350 boats: Unit No. 1 Savannah; Unit No. 2 Thunderbolt (primarily composed of commercial shrimpers patrolling while undertaking their livelihood); and Unit No. 3 Savannah. About 75 of the local private boats in the Auxiliary had been selected by the USCG for regular patrol duty and painted battleship gray and marked "C.G.A." for USCG Auxiliary.[7]

Savannah, Georgia. CG Reserve vessels underway. History program, U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.[8]

In his book *The U.S. Coast Guard in World War II*, author Malcolm Francis Willoughby singled out the Thunderbolt flotilla:

> *An unusual flotilla, that at Thunderbolt, Georgia, was composed entirely of fishermen and shrimpers, who served more than 30,000 man-hours each month. Their boats carried ship-to-shore radio, and they kept in constant touch with the Navy, informing it of any suspicious objects or occurrences observed while carrying on their livelihood. These men operated their own vessels at no expense to the Coast Guard, and performed their fair share of rescues.*[9]

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[7] Willoughby, Malcolm Francis, *The U.S. Coast Guard in World War II* (Ayer Publishing, 1980), 20; "Lt. Landsberg Heads Coast Guard Auxiliary," SMN (11 April 1942), 2:4; "Second Auxiliary Coast Guard Unit," SMN (17 April 1942), 18:5; "Anti-Sabotage Patrol is Busy," SMN (6 July 1942), 12:6; "Call Is Issued to Yachtsmen," SMN (27 July 1942), 12:6; Larson.

[8] (http://www.history.auxpa.org/collections/photographs/photographs-1940-1945.htm, accessed 28 August 2008).

[9] Willoughby, 86.

Coast Guard Auxiliarists advising boaters, Savannah, Georgia, circa 1942.
National Archives/History program, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.[10]

In June 1942, the Auxiliary and Reserve Act was amended once again, allowing for Temporary Reservists (TRs) which would be volunteers enrolled in the USCG Reserve on a temporary/emergency wartime basis. The Temporary Reserve was established to alleviate the Coast Guard's continued need for additional men and boats, especially small patrol craft. The Temporary Reserve allowed the Coast Guard to pull in more boats from the Auxiliary. Many Auxiliarists enrolled in the Temporary Reserve and by 1943 much of the patrol duties originally handled by the Auxiliary were now performed by the TRs.[11]

During the war years of 1941 through 1945, the Coast Guard Auxiliary served as the Coast Guard's "general-purpose assistant." Though the Temporary Reserve (discussed in more detail in the following section) took over many of the duties of the Auxiliary during the latter part of the war, the Auxiliary continued its activities; "In some districts the Auxiliary did indeed function as a recruiting and training agency for the reserve," and in other districts the work of the Auxiliary and the Temporary Reserve was "virtually indistinguishable." While the Temporary

[10] (http://www.history.auxpa.org/collections/photographs/photographs-1940-1945.htm, accessed 28 August 2008).
[11] Willoughby, 21.

Reserve was discontinued after the war, the Coast Guard Auxiliary continues to be an active unit of the USCG. Today the Coast Guard is composed of active duty Coastguardsmen, regular Reservists, and Auxiliarists.[12]

Coast Guard Reserves Temporary (USCG R(T))

Following the June 1942 revision of the Auxiliary and Reserve Act allowing Temporary Reservists on a full or part-time basis, volunteers were aggressively recruited by the Coast Guard to help free regular Coastguardsmen and Reservists for duty at sea. Many Auxiliarists enrolled in the Temporary Reserve, bringing their vessels with them. During World War II, over 50,000 TRs served, "patrolling harbors, factories, bridges and docks; fighting fires; providing emergency and disaster assistance; conducting search and rescue and anti-submarine warfare; training; giving blood; selling war bonds." The Temporary Reserve helped the Coast Guard build up their forces to military strength (at the height of the war, the Coast Guard numbered 239,422, including regular Coastguardsmen, regular Reservists, TRs, and SPARs).[13]

TRs, while on duty, "had the same power, authority, rights and privileges as a member of the regular Coast Guard of similar rank, grade or rating…. He was entitled to the same military courtesy and privileges, and was governed by the same military procedures and practices as regular personnel." Most TRs were men who for one reason or another could not serve in the regular armed forces, including many veterans of World War I. The Coast Guard Temporary Reserve provided an outlet for their patriotism and skills. TR requirements called for at least 12 hours of duty each week, though many contributed many more hours. TRs averaged in age between 17 and 70 years, and while there were physical requirements, they were more lenient than the Army or Navy, allowing those with minor disabilities to serve. "These men assumed their duties with the understanding that there would be no pay or other benefits. They came from all walks of life."[14]

In October 1942, the final system of the Temporary Reserve was formalized with six categories in which men and women could serve:

1. Coast Guard Auxiliary (part-time, voluntary, no-pay; units afloat)
2. Volunteer Port Security Force (part-time, voluntary, no-pay; guard details on piers, wharves, and other harbor facilities)
3. Harbor Pilots (paid by Pilot Associations with whom they were already employed)
4. Civil Service Employees (full-time, non-military pay from Coast Guard Civil Service appropriations)

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[12] "Sunday Ship History…"
[13] U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary "Milestones"; (http://www.history.auxpa.org/index.html, accessed 28 August 2008); Willoughby, page 22.
[14] Willoughby, 21, 22.

5. Merchant Marine Inspectors (full-time, non-military pay from Coast Guard Civil Service appropriations)
6. Coast Guard Police (full-time, paid by shipyard or war plant with whom they were already employed)[15]

Most of the TRs could be divided into two types, those involved in waterside patrol and those in landside patrol. The purpose of both being the same "to protect waterfront facilities against injury from sabotage, subversive actions, and negligence, and through safety in the ports, to expedite the passage of troops and war material to fighting fronts." Waterside patrol was accomplished primarily by the Coast Guard Auxiliary and Harbor Pilots (Savannah pilots discussed in later section). Landside patrol was conducted through the Volunteer Port Security Force and the Coast Guard Police.[16]

The Coast Guard Auxiliary has already been discussed in the prior section, and the distinction between the regular Auxiliary and the TR Auxiliary is somewhat blurred. The first Volunteer Port Security Force (VPSF) was established in Philadelphia in July 1942 and quickly spread to twenty-two ports, including Savannah (the Volunteer Port Security Force is discussed in detail in the following section). The Reserve and Auxiliary Act was again amended on November 23, 1942 to allow women TRs known as the USCG SPARs. The greatest contribution of the SPARs came as administrative support, relieving men from office detail for patrol and guard duties.[17]

The Coast Guard Police filled the need for military control of private industry involved in government contracts (for instance, shipyards) to prevent sabotage. The U.S. Navy enrolled existing plant guards into the TR so they could receive proper training, while the companies employing them continued to pay their salaries. At the peak of the Coast Guard Police's force in June 1943, there were 80 commissioned officers, 842 Chief Warrant and Warrant officers, and 23,941 enlisted men. As plants completed government contracts, their guards were disenrolled from the TR. "These men, as a whole, served admirably, and functioned as intended."[18]

Following the cessation of war on the European front in May 1945, most Temporary Reserve activities were suspended and TRs placed on inactive status. TRS were honorably disenrolled from the Temporary Reserve in September 1945. The use of 50,000 TR volunteers made approximately 8,250 regular Coastguardsmen and Reservists available for sea duty. This number represents about 20 percent of those Coastguardsmen on the battlefront, a significant contribution to the force. "Thus, these Temporary Reservists made a definite contribution toward the effectiveness of the United States Coast Guard in

[15] Willoughby, 21.
[16] Willoughby, 78.
[17] U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary "Milestones"; Willoughby, 83.
[18] Willoughby, 78.

its seagoing operations against the enemy." Of those 50,000 TRs, about 20,000 of them served in the VPSF and 2,000 were SPARs.[19]

Their service in World War II did not earn the TRs veterans' benefits and they received little public recognition for their contributions. Since TRs served in the American Theater of war they were eligible to wear the American Theater Ribbon. In 1946, all Temporary Reservists received the Victory Medal. Coast Guard Admiral Waesche summarized the Coast Guard's appreciation:

> *The Auxiliary during the war years was indispensable. Many thousands of you served faithfully and loyally as Auxiliarists and as temporary members of the CG Reserve, performing hundreds of tasks and relieving thousands of Coast Guardsmen for duty outside the continental limits. The Coast Guard is deeply appreciative of this service.*[20]

Volunteer Port Security Force (VPSF)

> *Today, through the ports of the United States, pour in ever increasing numbers men, munitions and supplies for the far-off battle fronts of the world. It is important to keep these ports open and safe 24 hours a day, every day, every week and month. This, the Coast Guard can do, only with your help. Join the Volunteer Port Security Force. It takes so little of your time, yet it means so much to America!*
>
> *- Lieutenant Commander C. T. Christiansen, Captain of the Port of Savannah*[21]

Philadelphia began organizing the first VPSF in May 1942 as a full-time regiment of part-time volunteers to "guard vessels, wharves, piers, and other waterfront facilities as a precaution against sabotage, fire, unauthorized persons, and anything else which might endanger waterfront properties and personnel." The Philadelphia VPSF was so successful, that forces were established in twenty-two U.S. ports based on its organization with over 20,000 enrollments. By early 1944, most of the country's principal harbors, including those of Charleston, Savannah and Jacksonville, were protected by a VPSF, contributing "to the excellent port security record of the Coast Guard throughout the war." [22]

VPSF units were trained in the use and care of small arms, port security, fire-fighting, unarmed combat, chemical warfare and infantry drill. "They had to know everything about the pier, its cargo, equipment, and hazards, as well as the

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[19] Willoughby, 91, 92; "Sunday Ship History…"
[20] "Sunday Ship History…"
[21] "Security Force Stirs Interest," SMN (7 May 1944), 24:6.
[22] Willoughby, 21-22, 79.

location of all emergency apparatus such as fire extinguishers, hoses, telephones, and alarm boxes. They were required to know, in case of fire, exactly what to do in the promptest manner…. The security of vessels in port required trained Ship, Gangway, Roving, Cargo, and Fire Guards." The platoons were divided into watches and squads that rotated to provide full-time coverage with part-time volunteers. The VPSF volunteers wore Coast Guard uniforms.[23]

The Savannah VPSF was officially organized on May 6, 1944, though preparation for it was well underway led by a local organization committee[24] (Charles S. Sanford, president of the Liberty National Bank and Trust Company, chaired the committee) working with the local Coast Guard through Lieutenant Commander C. T. Christiansen, Captain of the Port. Recruiting for the force immediately began and those wishing to enroll were directed to the headquarters established at 124 East Bay Street, adjacent to the Captain of the Port's offices. Both women and men were encouraged to enroll and the offices were open from 9:00 am until 9:00 pm every weekday for interviews (SPARs processed and interviewed the applicants).[25]

> *Cmdr. Christiansen stated that the importance of airtight protection of the waterfront warehouses, ships, terminals and other installations vital to war production, and facilities essential to exporting supplies to our armed forces broad [sic], is equal in importance to combat operations, and will never be relaxed until the war is won…. "The Coast Guard has found, however, that patriotic citizens in the port cities who for one reason or another are not eligible for combat service, can, and will, do a large part of this job, and do it well."* [26]

Recruitment for the new force included tapping into existing volunteer forces. The Savannah-Chatham County Defense Council's Air Raid Warden Organization had been recognized nationally as outstanding, yet the progress of the war had permitted the program to be reduced. Air Raid volunteers were now encouraged to volunteer for the VPSF to continue their patriotic service. Charles S. Sanford was named the head of the Savannah Battalion with the rank of Lieutenant in the USCG R(T).[27] Sanford's request for volunteers appeared in the *Savannah Morning News*:

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[23] Willoughby, 22, 79; "Security Force Stirs Interest."
[24] Committee members included: V. L. Hancock, manager of the Savannah Community and War Chest; Arthur Funk, principal Commercial High School; Samuel N. Blair, of Crane Company, who organized the air raid wardens in the Civilian Defense Unit; Frank E. Evans, deputy collector of customs in charge of marine division; W. Kirk Sutlive, public relations manager for Union Bag & Paper Company; and Mrs. William Weichselbaum, Jr., active in organizing Civilian Defense groups in Savannah. Source: "Security Force Stirs Interest."
[25] "Security Force Stirs Interest."
[26] "Security Force Stirs Interest."
[27] "Security Force Seeks Wardens," SMN (10 May 1944), 12:6; "Sanford Heads Security Force," SMN (14 May 1944), 24:2.

> *…I know that Savannah men who, for one reason or another, are not now members of the armed service will welcome this opportunity to get into the fight…. This is no playing at war. The volunteers who wear the regulation Coast Guard uniform, and who release regular Coast Guardsmen for active duty on the high seas or on the fighting fronts, have the satisfaction of knowing that they, too, are playing an extremely important part in the winning of the war, even thought they be serving at home…. It represents doing something tangible for our country in this hour of grave peril…. A Savannah Battalion of the United States Coast Guard Volunteer Port Security Force will be a smart, strictly disciplined military organization of loyal, unselfish Savannahians, who will prove in service that democracy can fight total war.*[28]

Before being placed on duty, all VPSF volunteers had to be trained in Coast Guard procedure, fire watch and control, sabotage vigilance, handling of explosives, use of firearms, etc. The first training class for the Savannah Battalion was held on May 16, 1944 in the Atlantic Coast Line Railway (ACL) building, on the corner of Wheaton and Liberty streets. The classes were held on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights for a total of twelve classes over three weeks. At the completion of the training, all graduated with the rank of first class seaman. The initial class had ninety-eight men and twelve women enrollees. On June 1st, the first 100 men, following completion of their training, were sworn into the USCG R(T) at a ceremony held in the ACL building. Fourteen women were sworn in on June 5th. The women's division, trained in clerical work, was tasked with maintaining the battalion's records and handling all official correspondence under the command of Ensign Mildred Weichselbaum.[29]

The Savannah Battalion was originally organized as a unit under the VPSF headquarters in Washington, D.C. Following several months of progress, it was transferred as an operational unit of the Sixth Naval District directly under the Captain of the Port in September 1944. A formal transfer ceremony was held at the Savannah High School parade ground on October 1st with the majority of the battalion present.[30]

The VPSF in Savannah was fairly short-lived, not quite one and a half years. On October 14, 1945, no longer needed in the defense of the port (the force was actually placed on inactive status after V-E Day), the Savannah Battalion was disenrolled from the Temporary Reserves. The four-hundred members of the battalion gathered in the Armstrong Junior College Auditorium where they were hailed as "citizen sailors." Each received a certificate of disenrollment from Lieutenant Joseph P. Cairn, Captain of the Port. Cairn praised the Savannah

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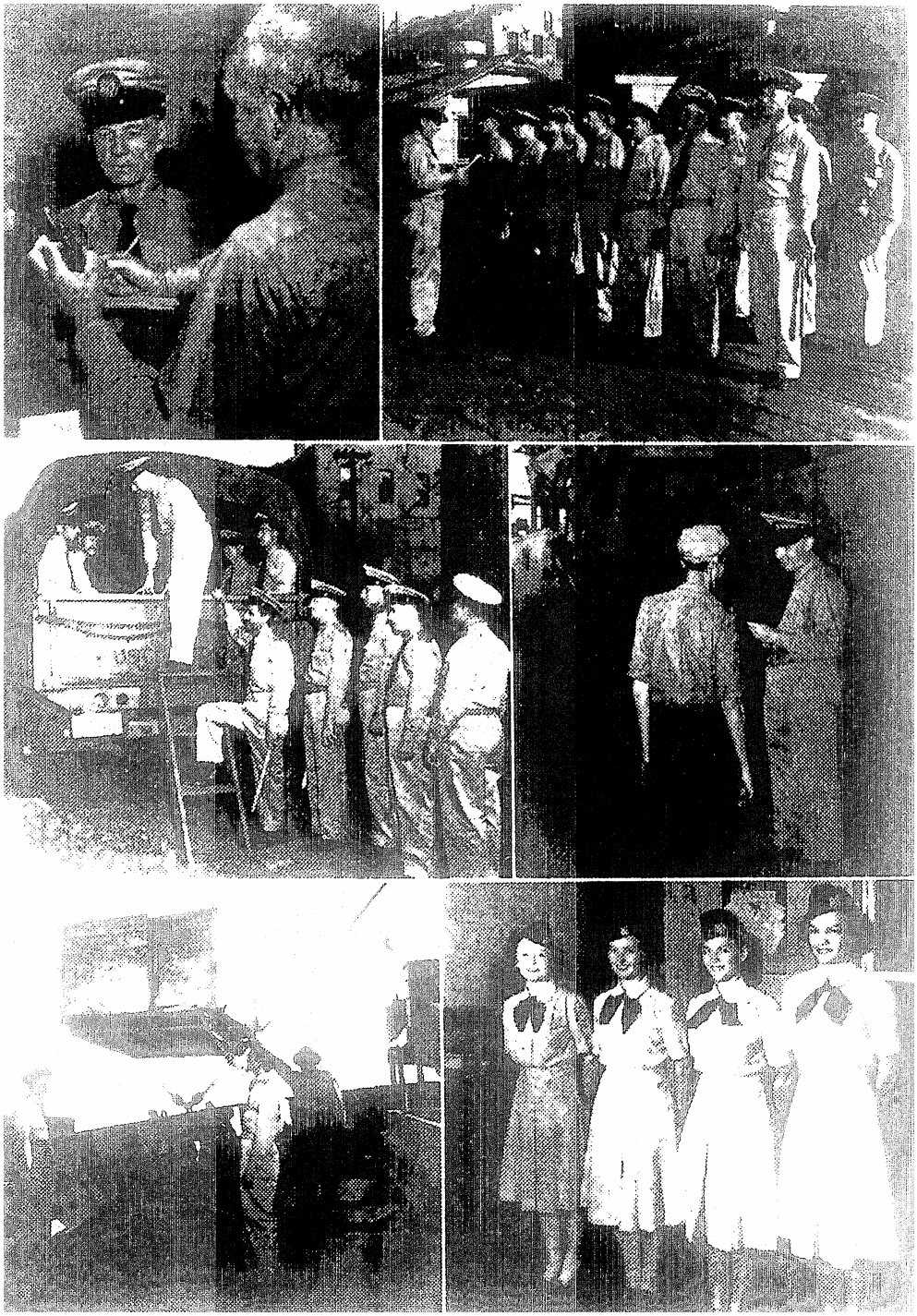
[28] "Security Force Stirs Interest."
[29] "Security Force Stirs Interest"; "Security Force Has First Class," SMN (17 May 1944), 12:2; "100 Savannahians in Security Unit," SMN (2 June 1944), 16:1; "14 Women to be Inducted Monday into Security Force," SMN (4 June 1944), 24:2.
[30] "VPSF To Be Unit of 6th District," SMN (24 September 1944), 24:2.

Battalion, saying that it had been organized and activated faster and more efficiently than any other VPSF in the country. The local force helped the Coast Guard tremendously by taking "over the security responsibility of lend-lease shipping at a time when his [Cairn's] office was taxed with the job of handling munitions loading.[31]

Admiral Waesche, wartime Commandant of the Coast Guard, held the VPSF in high regard, comparing it to the Minute Men of the American Revolutionary War:

> *Now, in the present struggle, by far the greatest which our country has been fated to endure, we hail the advent of a group of devoted citizenry not dissimilar to those just mentioned [the Minute Men of 1775 as citizen soldiers the Texas Rurales who fought the Mexicans along the Rio Grande, and the Rough Riders at San Juan Hill] and certainly yielding nothing to their predecessors in zeal and thoroughness. The men and women of the Volunteer Port Security Force in the U. S. Coast Guard have proved themselves worthy successors to the bodies of patriotic volunteers who rendered similar service in all previous crises of our national history.*[32]

[31] "Coast Guard's Volunteers End Service Today," SMN (14 October 1945), 32:3; "Disenroll VPSF at Muster Here," SMN (15 October 1945), 12:2.
[32] Willoughby, 20.



Savannah Volunteer Port Security Force, circa September 1944.
Clockwise from top left: reporting for duty and drawing side arms from the ordnance room; receiving "orders of the day" with section; inspecting seaman's identification; women's division; checking loading gear as war materials hoisted from dock into ship's hold; boarding truck for transportation to posts of duty on riverfront.[33]

[33] "VPSF To Be Unit of 6th District."

Harbor Pilots

On November 27, 1942, Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox approved the enrollment of all state pilots into the Coast Guard for the duration of the war. The Port of Savannah pilots were enrolled as full-time active duty Coast Guard officers. Military pay was offered to them, but they declined. The local pilots were: J. P. Browne; G. E. Clark; W. H. Fleetwood; A. E. Henry; Frank W. Spencer; H. L. Thompson; and J. S. Thompson. On May 4, 1944, Frank W. Spencer was elevated to the rank of commander and was made liaison pilot for the Sixth and Seventh Naval Districts in addition to his role as senior officer for the Port of Savannah. During the war, Spencer moved his family into an apartment in the 200 block of East Bay Street (near to the Captain of the Port's offices and the Atlantic Towing Company on River Street) so he could handle calls about the port.[34]

The Savannah pilots, along with those of all the national ports, were honorably disenrolled from the Coast Guard on December 1, 1945, resuming regular operations under the control of the State of Georgia on December 2nd.

> *Thus comes to a close a service that was of inestimable value to the winning of the war, since the pilots were responsible for a huge number of ships entering and departing from the port, with their tremendous cargoes of weapons, ammunition and supplies—not to mention the priceless personnel.*

During the war years, the Savannah Pilot Group handled vessels loaded with over one million tons of war supplies destined for various battlefronts. Of particular note, was Lieutenant Commander A. E. Henry's outstanding performance in the assistance of the *S. S. Hanley* into the Savannah harbor. The *Hanley* had been severely disabled in a head-on collision with a tanker off the coast and had to be lead into the harbor stern first. At the time, the *Hanley* was estimated to be carrying a load of war supplies worth $5 million.[35]

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[34] "U.S. Coast Guard Relieves Pilots after Years of Valuable Service," SMN (2 December 1945), 20:2; Gunkel, Kay Exley, "Windows on the Water," (paper and date unknown), Local Reference File: Riverfront (River Street), City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives.
[35] "U.S. Coast Guard Relieves Pilots…"

Savannah Army Service Forces Depot (ASF)
[Savannah Medical Depot, Savannah Quartermaster Depot]

Women workers at the Savannah Quartermaster Depot stacking jerry cans
(see note at end of section for information on jerry cans) into a boxcar for shipment, circa 1943.[1]

On January 15, 1941, the Savannah Medical Depot was organized in Port Wentworth on the site of the old Southeastern Compress and Warehouse Company about 3 ½ miles upriver from the city of Savannah. With the increasing demands of World War II, the Medical Supply Section was reorganizing and establishing additional Medical Depots in the general vicinity of ports of embarkation or near important manufacturing centers. The Savannah Medical Depot (depot symbol "SG") was a sub-depot of the Atlanta Medical Section, with 670,000 square feet of warehouse storage for medical supplies and equipment for army hospitals and medical attachments in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. In June of 1941, the Savannah Quartermaster Depot was activated as a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Depot and as a sub-section of the Atlanta Quartermaster Depot. On June 1, 1942, the Savannah Quartermaster Depot was made a separate depot from Atlanta, serving North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. By August 1942, under the command of Colonel Henry Hockwald, U.S. Army, the Savannah depot had become "one of the most important in the country." In January 1943, the Medical

[1] National Archives, Identification Code 86-WWT-67-6, (available at http://ww2db.com/image.php?image_id=6057, accessed 21 August 2008).

Depot and the Quartermaster Depot were combined and called the Savannah Quartermaster Depot.[2]

"A complete outfit for a Station Hospital ready for shipment from a Medical Depot in the Zone of Interior," no date. [3]

The Quartermaster Corps traces its origins to 1775 when General George Washington created the post of Quartermaster General for the Continental Army. Major General Nathanael Greene served as the third Quartermaster General and established the first depot system to support the army after Valley Forge. In 1912, the U.S. Congress consolidated the Subsistence, Pay and Quartermaster departments to create the Quartermaster Corps, a fully militarized division with its own officers, soldiers, and units trained to provide supply and service functions on the battlefield. At the peak of World War II, the Quartermaster Corps was providing over 70,000 different supply items and meals to troops every day.[4]

The U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps was on the battlefronts fulfilling its supply mission with Class I, II, III and IV items (food, clothing and equipment, petroleum products, and general supplies, respectively). Within the Zone of the Interior (ZI), the Quartermaster Corps was tasked with getting supplies from American farms and factories to the end users abroad. To accomplish this, Quartermasters handled procurement, storage and distribution. New York was the main port of embarkation on the east coast for serving the European and Mediterranean theaters. On the west coast, San Francisco was the main port for the Pacific. Chief Quartermaster in the Southwest Pacific Area, Brigadier General William F. Campbell commented on the immense task of the Quartermaster Corps:

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[2] "U. S. Quartermaster Depot Gets New Administration Building," *Savannah Evening Press* (hereafter SEP) (19 August 1942); "Q.M. and Medical Depot Combined," SEP (23 January 1943); "Medical Depots and Symbols," (http://med-dept.com/med_depots.php, accessed 21 August 2008); "Medical Depots in the Zone of Interior," (http://med-dept.com/medDepots.php, accessed 21 August 2008).
[3] "Medical Depots in the Zone of Interior.".
[4] "Quartermaster History," (http://www.quartermaster.army.mil/qm_history.html, accessed 21 August 2008).

> *Never before in any war have supply lines been so long. Never before has so much been supplied over such distances…. I am confident that logistics experts a few years ago would have said that the execution of the supply operations you have accomplished in the last four years [was] impossible. I am equally confident that historians in the years to come will write of your supply achievements as one of the miracles of this war.*[5]

In 1943, the Savannah Quartermaster Depot was sending out supplies at a rate of 1 billion pounds a year, including food, clothing, equipment and medical supplies. When it was established in 1941 there were only about 800 employees, by 1943 that number had grown to 2,200. The depot included a large administration building and over forty other structures, including an officers mess, dock, fire station, infirmary, and 90 acre "Victory garden." 20 acres of the 407-acre facility were under roof, with 2,530,000 square feet of covered storage (and 1,802,000 square feet of open storage). The warehouses, storing supplies for shipment overseas, held coats, jackets, helmets, peas, beans, spinach, "Field Ration K" compact units, quilts, tents, cots, and much more. Supplies were brought into the depot by the lines of the Savannah & Atlanta Railroad.[6]

Packing room of the Medical Section of the Chicago Quartermaster Depot.[7]

In June 1943, the name was again changed to the Savannah Army Service Forces Depot, with two supply sections, Quartermaster section and Medical section. In August, the depot received patrol boats to guard its ½ mile waterfront

[5] "QM Supply in the Pacific During WWII," (http://www.quartermaster.army.mil/OQMG/professional_bulletin/1999/spring1999/, accessed 21 August 2008).
[6] Lansdell, Joe, "Quartermaster Depot Has Grown Into Great Army Supply Center," *Savannah Morning News* (hereafter SMN) (16 April 1943); *The Port of Savannah: A Report to the Agricultural and Industrial Development Board of Georgia* (Frederick R. Harris, Inc., Consulting Engineers, New York, August 9, 1945), 83, Savannah Area Local Government Documents Collection, #SGA.SPA.1945-001, City of Savannah, Research Library and Municipal Archives.
[7] "Medical Depots in the Zone of Interior."

along the Savannah River. In November 1944, the *Savannah Evening Press* reported that the depot was shipping foods in dehydrated form to troops overseas to reduce food waste.[8]

Following the 1945 creation of the Georgia Ports Authority (GPA), the State of Georgia purchased the depot property in 1948 as the location of the first GPA terminal (Garden City Terminal).[9]

Jerry Cans

The 5-gallon jerry can (also referred to as jeep can, gerry can, army gas can, or blitz can) was developed in World War II from a German design. The square-cornered cans, so designed to eliminate the wasted space around stacked round containers, were used to carry gasoline, water and other liquids needed on the battlefront. The jerry can became "a widely recognized basic item of military equipment."[10]

[8] "Q. M. Depot Given New Designation," SEP (3 June 1943); "Q. M. Depot Name Has Been Changed," SMN (4 June 1943), 5:3; "U. S. Army Depot Gets Patrol Boats," (25 August 1943), taken from Local Reference Files: Army Service Forces Depot, Bull Street Public Library; "Sends Supplies to Troops Everywhere," SEP (9 November 1944).

[9] "Propeller Club of the United States: Port of Savannah and History," (http://www.propellerclubsavannah.com/page9.html, accessed 21 August 2008).

[10] "Jerry Cans in Boxcar, Savannah Ga, WW II," (http://www.olive-drab.com/gallery/description_0177.php, accessed 21 August 2008); "Military Jerry Cans for Gasoline and Water," (http://www.olive-drab.com/od_mvg_jerry_can.php, 21 August 2008); "QM Supply in the Pacific During WWII,"; Lansdell, Joe, "Quartermaster Depot Has Grown Into Great Army Supply Center."

Navy Inshore Patrol, Savannah Section Base, Cockspur Island

In November 1941, the *Savannah Evening Press*, in an article written by Lieutenant Commander Robert P. Erdman, USN, announced that a U.S. Navy section base would be located on Cockspur Island on the site of the old Quarantine Station for the Navy Inshore Patrol. The base, commissioned on July 8, 1942, included shops for the repair and maintenance of gas, diesel and electrical machinery required for the patrol vessels and minesweepers based there. The base served as the supply and training base for the patrol with fuel, provisions, and barracks. The Savannah Section Base, Inshore Patrol was responsible for patrolling the coastal waters of Georgia and South Carolina (the intra-coastal waterways were patrolled by the United States Coast Guard). The Savannah Section Base was inactivated in June 1944 and only a small force was kept at Cockspur Island to keep the base in a state of readiness. In mid-1945, the U.S. Navy turned over the base to the U.S. Coast Guard for use as a Coast Guard separation center. The Navy Inshore Patrol maintained offices in Savannah at the County Police headquarters until it closed in June 1946 as part of the U.S. Navy's demobilization of the Inshore Patrol. The eighteen men manning the local office were transferred to Charleston.[1]

[1] Erdman, Lt. Cmdr. Robert P., USN, "Navy Pushes Program to Protect Port; Naval Ships Be Built Here," *Savannah Evening Press* (19 November 1941); "Inshore Patrol Base Inactivated," *Savannah Morning News* (hereafter SMN) (4 June 1944), 24:6; "Navy Shore Patrol Here to Close July 1," SMN (16 June 1946), 28:5.

World War II on the Savannah Waterfront – Savannah-Chatham County Defense Council

On May 20, 1941, the Office of Civilian Defense was established by Executive Order 8757 as a federal emergency war agency. Its main purpose was "to co-ordinate state and federal measures for protection of civilians in case of war emergency." This was accomplished through various activities including supervised blackouts, preparation of air raid procedures, and the Civil Air Patrol.[1]

Local Civilian Defense units were established around the country, but in Savannah one was organized early on with the creation of the Savannah-Chatham County Defense Council by the City of Savannah Mayor and Aldermen and the Chatham County Commissioners. The Defense Council, led by Robert W. Groves, focused on support services and civilian protection. It was organized into two units, Civilian Protection and Civilian War Services. The Civilian Protection division oversaw Air Raid Wardens, Auxiliary Firemen, Auxiliary Police, Public Works, Utility Repair, Emergency Medical, Messengers, and Emergency Welfare Service. The Civilian War Services division included Block Leaders, Salvage Committee, Transportation Committee, Services for Service Men, Nutrition Committee, Recreation Committee, Health Committee, Child Care Committee, Housing Committee, Agricultural Committee, War Information Center, Bonds and War Savings Committee, and Rationing Boards. Daniel W. Hoan, assistant director of National Civilian Defense, acknowledged the work of the Savannah Defense Council, "Very few cities have done as much as Savannah in organizing civilian defense." [2]

The Defense Council recognized the need for defense of Savannah waterfront and organized a committee in February 1942 to make plans for "safeguarding shipping and perfecting internal security for harbor and port of Savannah." The committee was chaired by M. W. Lippitt, a commissioner for the Savannah Port Authority. In June 1942, the United States Coast Guard was given this responsibility for all of the nation's ports, relieving the local group from undertaking such a massive responsibility.[3]

The Defense Council concentrated much of its efforts on aircraft warning, establishing the Savannah Aircraft Warning Service Filter Center. Civilian volunteers played an immense role in the running of the Filter Center. The Filter Center served as the "nerve center for defense in this area." Located in the heart of downtown Savannah (Chamber of Commerce office, 137 Bull Street), the Filter Center received reports from remote observation posts. Running 24 hours a day and manned by ten shifts of thirty women volunteers each, the Filter Center handled calls from airplane spotters in the area observation towers. They then transferred that information to the appropriate Army and Navy personnel. Army

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[1] "Office of Civilian Defense," Wikipedia entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Office_of_Civilian_Defense, accessed 28 August 2008); "Defense Chairman Named By Groves; Defense Council Formed by LaGuardia Plan," *Savannah Morning News* (hereafter SMN) (23 August 1941), 2:1.
[2] "Defense Chairman Named By Groves…"; "Hoan Lauds Local Defense Set-Up," SMN (28 January 1942), 14:1; "Savannah-Chatham County Defense Council," organizational chart (no date), Local Reference Files: Civilian Defense, Bull Street Public Library.
[3] "Port Protection Group Appointed," SMN (18 February 1942), 12:2.

personnel manned the Filter Center between 11:00 pm and 8:00 am. The observation towers, part of the Chatham County Aircraft Warning Service under director Judge A. R. MacDonnell, were also manned 24 hours a day. Women volunteers served during the day, and men at night, each taking two-hour shifts (volunteers generally worked 1-2 shifts per week). In November 1942, Aircraft Warning Post S 33 was dedicated on top of the Liberty National Bank Building.[4]

In May 1945, President Harry S. Truman announced that the Office of Civilian Defense would be abolished (it was officially terminated by Executive Order on June 4, 1945). Since the Savannah-Chatham County Defense Council was a separate organization established by the City Council and County Commissioners, the federal decision did not directly affect it. However, by this time the protective services of the Council were already inactive and Director Groves announced that it would be dissolved shortly after the federal announcement. During World War II, thousands of Savannahians offered their services through the Defense Council and more than 5,000 citizens participated in the mock air raids drills. [5]

[4] "Take Over Duties At Filter Center," SMN (29 March 1942), 20:6; "Filter Center Is on the Job," SMN (7 June 1942), 36:1; "Observers at Outposts of Aircraft Warning Service on the Job," SMN (26 June 1942), 16:2; "They Stand Watch While Savannah Sleeps," SMN (26 November 1942), 11:2.
[5] "Office of Civilian Defense"; "Defense Council to be Dissolved," SMN (3 May 1945), 14:1; "War Work Done by Savannah Includes Building 130 Ships," SMN (8 May 1945), 12:3.

World War II on the Savannah Waterfront – Savannah Women in Service

For the first time, women in Savannah had an increased opportunity to join men in the workforce and on the battlefront during World War II. Local women joined the workforce at local factories and shipyards, and volunteered for military service through the Defense Council, WAACS/WACS and SPARS.[1] In honor of their contribution to the war effort, they participated in the "Women in War Week" parade down Broughton Street on November 27, 1942. Representatives from military and civil units and war industries marched, including:

Savannah Machine and Foundry Company
Southeastern Shipbuilding Corporation
Southern States Iron Roofing Company
Steel Products Company
American Red Cross
American Women's Hospital Reserve Corps
Filter Center (representing the Army Air Corps)
Savannah Medical Depot
Savannah Quartermaster Depot
Savannah Police Department policewomen
WAACS
Commercial High School's girls' Victory Corps
Girl sheet metal cutters from the National Youth Administration (NYA) war workers school
Savannah Girl Scouts[2]

[1] The Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) was organized in 1942 as an auxiliary unit to the United States Army. In July 1943, the WAAC was converted to full status as the Women's Army Corps (WAC). During World War II, about 150,000 American women served in the WAAC and WAC. The WAC disbanded in 1978, since women could then serve in the same units as men. Source: "Women's Army Corps (United States Army)," Wikipedia entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women%27s_Army_Corps, accessed 21 August 2008); The United States Coast Guard Women's Reserve (SPARS) was established in 1942 to free men from stateside service in order to fight overseas. Source: "SPARS," Wikipedia entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SPARS, accessed 21 August 2008).
[2] "Thousands Watch Women Parade," *Savannah Morning News* (28 November 1942), 12:6.

World War II on the Savannah Waterfront – U-boat 505 Visits Savannah

U-505 shortly after being captured, June 1944.[1]

On November 7, 1945, the German submarine U-505 (U-boat stands for the German name "Unterseeboot") arrived in Savannah accompanied by the *U.S.S. Neunzer* as escort on a publicity tour. The U-505 had been captured on June 4, 1944 by U.S. Navy Task Group 22.3 (TG 22.3), including the *U.S.S. Guadalcanal* and five destroyer escorts on anti-submarine patrol, in the south Atlantic off the coast of Africa. The capture of the U-505 was the first time a U.S. naval vessel had captured an enemy vessel at sea since 1815. Prior to its capture, the U-505 had sunk eight ships, including three American and two British. The capture of the U-505 was kept a closely guarded secret during the remainder of World War II, while the U.S. studied the submarine technology and Allied code breakers analyzed the code books and other secret documents found onboard helping them break the special coordinate code in enciphered German messages and relay more precise U-boat locations. To maintain the secret, the U-505 was towed into Port Royal Bay, Bermuda (1,700 miles from where it was captured), and the 58 captured German survivors were interned at Camp Ruston, Louisiana where they were kept isolated from other prisoners of war.

> *The Task Group's brilliant achievement in disabling, capturing, and towing to a United States base a modern enemy man-of-war taken in combat on the high seas is a feat unprecedented in individual and group bravery, execution, and accomplishment in the Naval History of the United States. -Admiral Royal E. Ingersoll, Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet*

Following the surrender of Germany in 1945, the captured submarine was turned over to the Treasury Department for use in the sale of Victory bonds as a means

[1] "Unterseeboot 505," Wikipedia entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unterseeboot_505, accessed 20 August 2008).

of stimulating patriotism and enthusiasm. Mayor Peter R. Nugent and the chairman of the Eighth Victory Loan Drive met the U-505 when it docked in Savannah[2] and took a private tour. It was then opened to the public for tours. Crew members on board the U-505 on its visit to Savannah included R.M. 2-c Charles W. Lanier, of Savannah, who served on the sub for twelve months. The U-505 is now housed in the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago, Illinois (donated by the U.S. government in 1954) and is a National Historic Landmark.[3]

[2] It is assumed that the U-505 was docked at the Municipal Dock at the foot of Drayton Street, but this has not been confirmed.
[3] "Captured German U-Boat Arrives In Company with U.S.S. Neunzer," *Savannah Morning News* (8 November 1945), 12:2; "Unterseeboot 505."