

# Shipping Trade Began In 1670

By THOMAS J. TOBIAS

The history of shipping in Charleston harbor goes back almost three centuries to the founding of the city in 1670.

Attracted by the spacious, land-protected harbor so close to the open sea, the three sailing vessels sent by the Lords Proprietors to settle their province of Carolina, dropped anchor near a point of land on the west bank of the Ashley a short distance above where the Seaboard railroad trestle crosses the river, now a part of Old Town plantation. There the first colonists began laying out a town.

That same year, although the settlers were busy providing shelter and food for themselves, Charleston's first foreign trade began. Sir John Yeamans shipped the "Proprietors" in England "Twelve cedar planks as the first fruits of the glorious province of Carolina."

SHIPS BEGAN to shuttle back and forth between the little settlement on the banks of the Ashley and England and the West In-

dies bringing supplies and new settlers.

But the real start of port activity began after the transfer of the original settlement in 1680 to the present site of Charleston as a location easier to defend and better suited to shipping.

Deerskins provided the port with its first export cargo of value. Trade with the Indians was early developed and ships bringing new settlers and manufactured necessities, returned to England laden with deerskins.

Gov. Archdale reported in 1707 that Charleston traders had penetrated "a thousand miles" into the interior. By the 1730's almost 100,000 deerskins a year were being exported to England.

LUMBER AND naval stores early became important exports. Tar, pitch and turpentine were essentials for the British navy and for commercial sailing vessels. In 1734, 28,874 barrels of pitch, 7,336 barrels of tar, and 4,552 barrels of turpentine were shipped overseas.

More than a million board feet of lumber was exported in 1759 to-

gether with shingles, barrel staves and other wood products.

But it was the early success in the planting of rice around 1685 that gave Charleston a staple which created its greatest port prosperity during the colonial period and beyond. There was a steady increase in rice shipments from 17,734 barrels in 1725 to 130,784 barrels in 1771.

In the 1740's Charleston's second most important colonial cargo developed. Indigo planting quickly became big business under the stimulus of a British bounty to supply the growing needs of the English textile industry which used the blue dye of the plant extensively.

SALTED BEEF and pork, corn and peas, were other exports through Charleston in colonial days. Surprising enough, Carolina-grown oranges were exported. In 1762, 47 casks and 282,000 loose oranges were shipped to England.

African Negro slaves were a constantly growing import to supply expanding plantation needs. British manufactured goods supplied requirements of the growing

colony, ranging from clothing to looking glasses, gloves to gunpowder, household utensils to watches, and liquors and Madeira wine.

Carolina exports to Great Britain, chiefly through the port of Charleston, reached a peak in the 1760's.

In 1768, for instance, the whole export commerce to Great Britain of the colonies in continental America was valued at 1,251,454 pounds sterling. The value of

Carolina's exports, principally rice and indigo, totaled 508,108 pounds sterling or some 40 per cent of the entire value of export trade to Great Britain.

DURING MOST of the colonial period, Charleston exports to the mother country were worth on an average more than the combined exports of all the provinces north of Maryland, including New England, New York and Pennsylvania. Only Virginia and Maryland tobacco, the most valuable colonial

export, topped Charleston shipments of rice and indigo before the Revolution.

Before the Revolution the expanding foreign trade of Charleston employed more than 400 ships. Ship arrivals grew from 122 vessels in 1724 to 447 in 1770. Most of them were in trade with Great Britain and Europe but an extensive trade with the West Indies and coastwise was also conducted.

THE NEXT ERA in Charleston

shipping came with the invention of the Whitney cotton gin following the Revolution. Whitney's invention set the stage for the vast expansion of cotton planting to supply the textile plants of England and New England. Charleston's port prosperity was built chiefly on cotton exports during most of the nineteenth century.

The value of cotton exports through Charleston grew from \$6 million in 1815 to \$21 million in 1880. Rice continued to be a valuable export but cotton became the real king of the waterfront.

The sailing ships of the colonial period made way for the faster packet ships and then the early steamships began to frequent the harbor.

AS COTTON PLANTING spread throughout the south and into the southwest, Charleston's early primacy as a cotton port gave way to New Orleans and Mobile. By 1860 Charleston, with cotton exports valued at \$21 million ranked a poor third after New Orleans with \$107 million in exports of the fiber and Mobile with \$38 mil-

lion, and only slightly ahead of Savannah with \$18 million in cotton exports.

The devastation of the War Between the States began a long decline in the fortunes of the port of Charleston. A revival of shipping followed World War I, but shipping activity began to decline again toward the close of the 1920's.

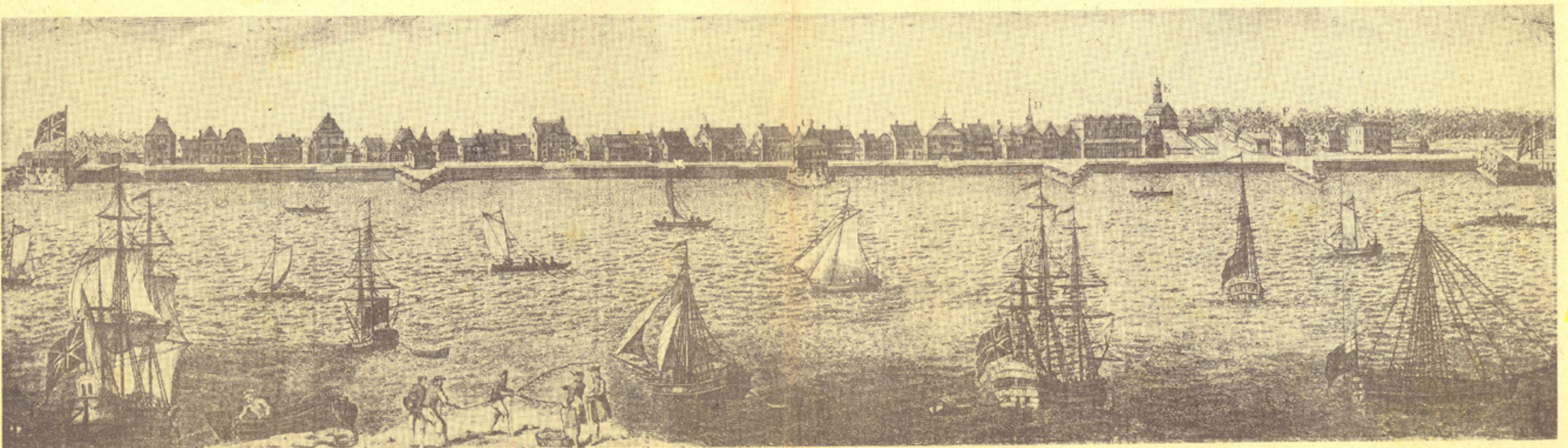
A NEW ERA in port development came after World War II when the state took over dock operation and port promotion through the agency of the South Carolina State Ports Authority.

During the past decade Charleston harbor has seen a constant growth in world trade. Construction of \$21 million worth of new state docks now under way will further greatly expand the port's business in the years ahead in addition to trade through Georgetown and Port Royal, where new facilities will attract commerce.

The outlook for the ports of the state is better today than it has been since the golden age of the colonial period, according to waterfront observers.

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The Port Of Charlestown In 1740 From An Engraving Appearing In The London Magazine. The Union Jack May Be Seen From Fortifications At Each Side Of The Print.



# State Ports Authority Builds Trade

Local legend has it that, upon rising every morning, Cotesworth P. Means leaves his home on Lamboll Street, walks to the Battery and lets the tide in. This is not entirely true. He shares this responsibility with his neighbors. What is true, however, is that as legislative architect of the S. C. State Ports Authority and as



C. C. PEARCE JR.

## Greenville Businessman Is Port Aide

Christopher C. Pearce Jr. of Greenville is vice chairman of the State Ports Authority. President of the wholesale food distributors, Pearce-Young-Angel Company, Mr. Pearce attended The Citadel and then graduated from the Business Administration School of the University of Georgia. He has been with the Pearce-Young-Angel Company since 1922, serving as president since 1947, supervising operations in North and South Carolina and in Georgia. He is a member of the board of directors of the Piedmont and Northern Railroad, the Elks Club, the Poinsett Club and the Greenville Country Club.

its chairman and chief executive, what comes into Charleston and goes out on that tide is to a great measure his doing. MR. MEANS, who at 18 was launched on a career as an importer, is currently serving his third term as a member of the State Ports Authority. His service began in 1942 when legislation he fostered as senator from Charleston County created the authority. The modern history of the Port of Charleston has been written in large part by the activities of the Ports Authority which has seen the port grow from 65th in the nation in 1946 to 15th in 1958. A Charlestonian, born Nov. 18, 1889, Mr. Means attended Georgia Tech before opening his career as an importer in 1908. In 1918, he served in the Army and in 1923 began his long career of service to the City of Charleston and the State of South Carolina.

FROM 1923 to 1931, he served two four-year terms on City Council. Between 1935-42, he served two four-year terms as state senator from Charleston County. Mr. Means has distinguished himself through the years not only by service, but by physical vigor and outspoken convictions. Now at 69, his prowess in a fast game of handball — he plays at least twice a week — is respected by men many years his junior. The spirited manner in which he conducts his games of handball he applies to his favorite subject — promotion of the ports of South Carolina. In the defense of what he thinks best for the seaports of the state, he may be somewhat less than gentle with the opposition. A CRITIC ONCE said that Mr. Means conducted the affairs of the Ports Authority like the manager of a country store. Mr. Means, who takes pride in the fact that the ports of South Carolina and their services are admired and respected for the people behind them as well as the merchandise, replied: "There are some things customers like about a country store — particularly when they know as they do in the case of our seaports — that we have the know-how and conveniences of a supermarket behind us."



C. P. Means Checks Construction At Columbus Street Terminal.

## Chairman Of Authority Port Growth Due To Means

A still young organization which fathered South Carolina's modern maritime revival has nursed its lusty brainchild from commercial obscurity into a ranking position among United States ports. In little more than a decade, the South Carolina State Ports Authority has built a booming ocean traffic and launched a sweeping port construction program. Cooperating with private waterfront interests, the authority has transformed Charleston from a port bereft of scheduled foreign steamship service into a harbor teeming with the vessels of 65 major lines. DURING A DECADE of startling progress, this is what has happened at Charleston: The dollar value of exports has increased by more than 500 per cent, and import dollar values have soared by more than 700 per cent. From 1946 through 1957, the annual value of foreign trade at Charleston has boomed from \$27,700,000 to a record \$208,000,000. Steadily climbing customs collections, an index to foreign trade, took another big leap in fiscal 1957-58 and bounded ahead by almost \$1,000,000. From an unranked position among major harbors, Charleston has climbed into 15th place in the rated dollar value of U. S. port trade. IT WAS IN 1942 that the General Assembly created the Ports Authority and handed it the task of reviving Charleston's slumping ocean commerce and developing new seaports at nearby Georgetown and Port Royal. The authority used the war years to map out operations and study traffic potentials. When hostilities ended, the authority took over the federal government's wartime Port of Embarkation at North Charleston. The city contributed its downtown Port Utilities Commission piers. The first scheduled steamship service of the post World War II era was begun on Feb. 27, 1947. In the years since 1947, authority officials and port promoters have spread Charleston's influence over a market area which extends from Charlotte, N. C., to Duluth, Minn., and from Atlanta to Sioux Falls, S. D. IT IS A MATTER of pride at the authority that the port has never turned down a pound of preferred cargo despite a mounting tide of business which often threatened to engulf overburdened dock and warehouse facilities. By 1956, the port, an ever broadening center of world trade, was staggering under its own success, and Charleston stood athwart a vital turning point in its maritime career. Supported by private waterfront interests, the authority went to work on a blueprint for expansion which culminated in the approval of a \$21-million bond issue by the General Assembly during January, 1957.

# Pilot Is Responsible For Safety Of Ship

By BELVIN HORRES  
Evening Post Staff Writer

The bow of the "Charleston Pilot" caught the first swells of the open sea and set a course for the C-2 buoy that denotes the beginning of international waters off Charleston. Hull down on the horizon, a large freighter aimed her blunt bow at the same buoy. Her radio crackled "The SS Southland to Charleston Harbor Pilot."

In the pilot boat, the veteran harbor pilot answered back saying that he had the freighter in sight and would board the ship just east of the buoy. As the two approached, the captain, used to boarding big and little ships in all kinds of weather, button his oilskins against the cold wind and spray and ventured out on deck of the rolling small boat.

The freighter slowed her speed to a minimum to hold steerage way and the pilot boat's captain raced in close, slowing his speed until the two vessels moved as one.

Holding on to a handrail, the captain reached for the ladder extended from the ship, watched the rise and fall of the small boat on the swells, then jumped on the ladder.

Quick hands grabbed him as he disappeared over the side and made his way to the bridge. From now on, the SS Southland, her holds loaded with merchandise from England and Holland, was the captain's responsibility.

He conned her into the jetties, onto the Fort Sumter Range, past Fort Sumter and turned into the Hog Island Channel. Giving orders quietly to the helmsman, he nursed the ship through Customhouse Reach, under the Cooper River Bridge and finally passed the Navy Yard and to North Charleston Terminals where waiting tugs took over. An uneventful trip to be sure, but one which requires skill and the dozen men who compose the Charleston Harbor Pilot's Assn. are well trained for their work. The modern aids to navigation now in use, such as radar, depth finders, loran, lighted and whistle markers, are a far cry from the days when ancestors of these same pilots brought ships in from sea.

In those days of sail, pilots were a wild lot. Skilled in their trade, they fought the sea and each other for "jobs."

Each pilot had his own pilot boat, usually a schooner, and not having radio, he sat off the coast in all kinds of weather awaiting the appearance of a sail on the horizon. It was then a race between the pilots and the first one aboard the visiting ship, got the job of bringing her in. Not a few boats were lost in storms and pictures of these old vessels, some of them cast up on shore, still adorn the walls of the Pilot's Office at Adger's Wharf. Today it is different. To become a pilot, an apprentice must go through years of training before graduating even to small vessels. One young pilot gained fame when a ship's captain asked him if he knew where all the shoals were in Charleston Harbor.

"No sir, I don't," he replied. "But I know where they ain't."

Thanks to radio, pilots may now remain comfortably in port while they trace a ship's progress by radiograms. Knowing the estimated time of arrival, the pilot whose turn it is, boards the pilot boat about two hours before the ship is due off the bar. Should fog or rain make visibility dangerous, the boat's radar picks out buoys, markers and the jetties and finally the ship itself. The Pilots Assn. is a state chartered and controlled organization and fees for their services are fixed by the Legislature for pilotage in Charleston, Georgetown and Port Royal.

One young pilot gained fame when a ship's captain asked him if he knew where all the shoals were in Charleston Harbor.

## Beaufort Resident Authority Member

Cecil D. McDaniel of Beaufort is a member of the State Ports Authority. Vice president and general manager of the Coca-Cola Bottling Company in Beaufort, Mr. McDaniel is very active in all the civic affairs of his community, including the Board of Trade, Chamber of Commerce, Boy Scouts, State Parks Advisory Committee, Rotary Club and Lady's Island Country Club. He attended Clemson College and the University of South Carolina and was production manager of the Albany Felt Company for seventeen years before returning to Beaufort to take over his father's business. He has been a member of the Ports Authority since its creation.



CECIL D. MCDANIEL

## First Shot Of War Fired On Ft. Sumter

The first shot of the War Between the States was fired upon Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, April 12, 1861.

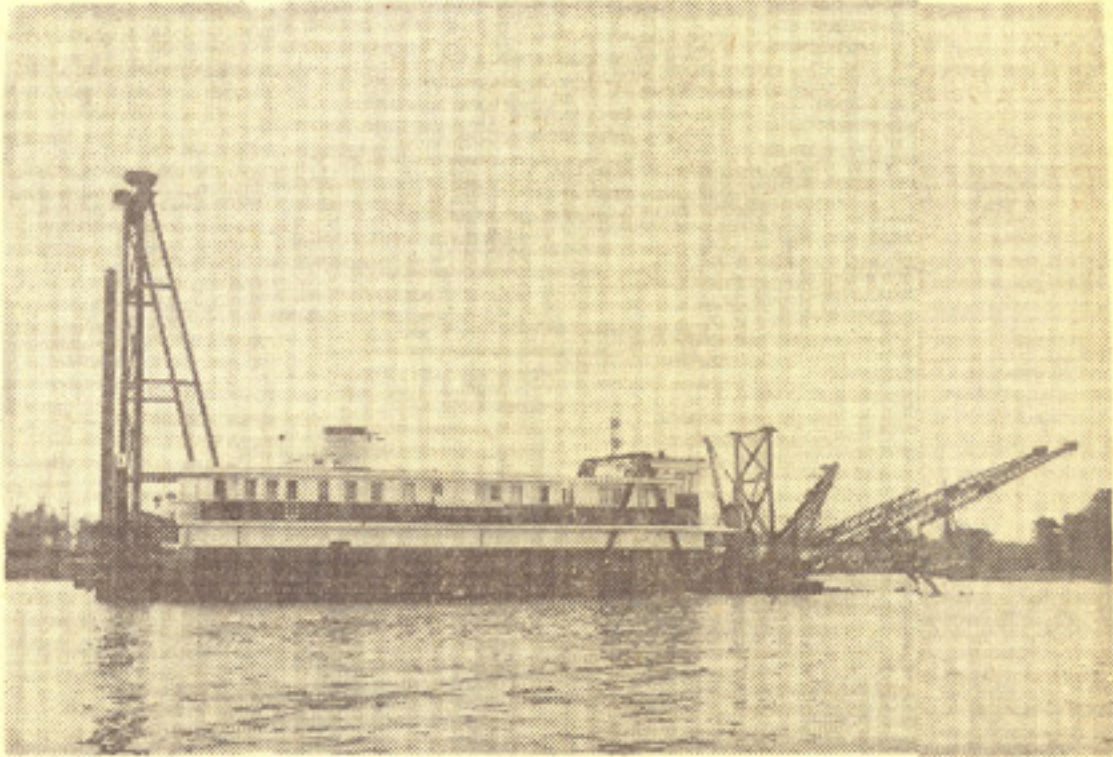
Fort Sumter is one of a series of coastal fortifications built by the United States after the war of 1812. The five-sided fortification, built on a shoal on the harbor, was begun in 1829 and was virtually completed by 1860. The five-foot thick brick walls originally towered 48 feet above low tide. The port of Charleston had all other South Atlantic ports in value of U. S. exports and imports for the year 1957. The port moved up from 16th to 15th in position among the 35 principal national seaboard ports.

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