

## BARQUE "PAMIR"

The four-masted barque, "Pamir," was built at Hamburg in the year 1905, is of 2,796 gross tonnage, and has had a most eventful career. During the 1914-18 War period she was captured from the Germans and handed over to the Italians. Later she was again acquired by the Germans, who sold her to Captain Ericson, of Finland, and who was the owner of a fleet of twelve sailing-ships principally engaged in carrying grain cargoes from all parts of the world. In the year 1931 "Pamir" dead-heated for first place in the annual sailing-ship grain-cargo race from Australia to the United Kingdom. On the 29th July, 1941, the ship arrived at Wellington from the Seychelles Islands with a cargo of guano with the intention after discharge to return to Seychelles to load again for New Zealand. The crew comprised fourteen Finns, including the master, one Swede, seven New Zealanders, and one English seaman. At the time of her arrival relations, although strained, had not been broken off with Finland and consequently it was not possible to seize the ship as a prize, and the United Kingdom authorities suggested that Government should continue to detain the ship by administration means. Later instructions were received to seize the ship in prize. The Prime Minister directed the Hon. Minister of Marine on 13th October, 1941, to arrange for officers of the Marine Department to consult with the management of the Union Steam Ship Co. of New Zealand, Ltd., with a view to getting the "Pamir" into commission again at the earliest opportunity. On the 6th January, 1942, the ship was taken over by an officer of the Marine Department on behalf of the Crown and arrangements were made to get the ship ready for sea. The Union Steam Ship Co. of New Zealand, Ltd., was appointed managing agent for the Government, and after several alterations to the crew's quarters had been effected and the ship loaded she commenced her first voyage for Government on the 30th March, 1942. In all to date she has made six round voyages from Wellington to San Francisco and two from Wellington to Vancouver and has carried valuable cargoes each way.

## NEW ZEALAND MERCHANT SEAMEN

The record of this Department's war activities would not be complete without a measure of appreciation and thanks to New Zealand merchant seamen, who carried on for the war period without a single hold-up of traffic. With fifty-five small trading ships taken off our coast for war purposes, an already overloaded coastal traffic was asked to carry a double load, calling for a quick turn round of vessels and their retention at sea for every hour possible. The Marine Department co-operated with shipowners in arranging running surveys where necessary and extending the provisions of the Shipping and Seamen Act to the utmost. This increase in the use of vessels spelt hardship to the masters and crews of the vessels, in that normal periods in their home ports were vastly curtailed, but this position was accepted in a splendid spirit by the men concerned.

## SHIPPING AND SEAMEN

During the six-year period of the war an average of 161 ships were employed in the coastal and overseas trades (exclusive of ships employed in river and extended-river limits), on which were employed an average of 2,676 men, exclusive of the masters of such ships. Owing to the menace of surface raiders and submarines, early in the war period the Department instituted a dual system of keeping a record of seamen. As well as keeping an individual record of seamen, an alphabetical list of ships was kept showing the names of each seaman employed on each ship. The idea of the latter record was if a ship were lost or overdue a ready reference to the members of the crew would be immediately available. Fortunately, it was required on only a few occasions. In the middle stages of the war there was an acute shortage of qualified seamen, but this was gradually overcome. During the whole period of the war the manning of ships was singularly free from any disputes or hold-ups and the seamen are deserving of commendation for the way in which they kept the ships running.