

when his land is cut up by trucks and cranes or a road through it has to be constructed. There may be a lessee to reckon with as well. Perhaps others have certain rights, too, even over the beach, where somebody may have a license to gather shell-grit, or own an oyster lease.

Having gained access to the wreck, the purchaser must devise means of removing gear from the ship. On a sandy beach it may be possible to get alongside at low water and work with the tides. Sledges are other means used to transport gear over long stretches of sand, but caterpillar tractors burning much coal may be needed when the full extent of a long beach, access to which is possible only from one end, has to be traversed. In fine weather lighters can be used as they were with the "Northern Firth." Flying foxes (aerial ropes) were employed to swing cargo and dismantled fittings from the "Cities Service Boston," auctioned in Sydney recently. The cargo was swung 900 ft. over a rugged stretch into lorries. It is stated, however, that when stripping the hulk the purchaser will put down rails over the rocks.

At times valuable cargo has to be brought up by divers. This happened in the "Gwydir," wrecked on a reef two years ago. The ship was sold for £1,000, with an additional £400 for the cargo. She was full of water, and much of the cargo and the auxiliary engines had to be taken out by divers. However, many of the fittings were bought for naval use, and it is believed that a good profit was made.

An interesting method of removal was followed when 5,000 tons of cargo was taken off the "Port Bowen" (8,000 tons), wrecked near Wanganui, New Zealand, four years ago. A bridge 600 ft. long was constructed of piles and deck timber to clear the rocks, and the cargo was carried across it. Mains in the town were tapped and pipes bore a water-supply to the ship. Electric light from the town was carried to the bridge so that the job could be continued at night and completed in four months.

Sometimes a hole is cut in the side of a ship to get machinery out, but, cumbersome as they look, boilers are easy fittings

to manage. They float and can be towed.

Disposal of wreck fittings and materials presents further difficulties. Markets must be found for the heterogeneous stock acquired. War conditions have increased the demand for most things, but normally there is no immediate sale for ropes, canvas, cables, winches, derricks, blocks, pumps, and anchors. It may be necessary to hold them for months or even for a couple of years. Most of this gear is sold to shipowners, but boilers may go to factories, timber-yards, or mines, and winches and electric-lighting plants can, of course, serve a variety of shore purposes. Big engines are seldom put into another ship because designs change in twenty years. Auxiliaries, however, may go to sea again if another ship happens to be under construction.

Additional obligations thrown on the purchaser of a wreck show that the price of the vessel forms only a fraction of the commitments which pile up against him. He must pay a large number of men high wages, and insure them against accidents at a high rate. Customs officials make demands because certain fittings and materials are dutiable, and he may even be compelled by the authorities to remove his wreck from a fairway.

People who believe an unlucky sale date a further risk have evidence to support their superstition in the case of the "Uralla." This North Coast ship, wrecked on Stockton beach, near Newcastle, was worth £28,000 before it was beached. It came up for auction on Friday, July 13, 1928.

Shipping company representatives laughed when attention was drawn to the date. But after months of intense effort and waiting for suitable tides and weather to refloat the vessel, the excited cry went up, "She's off!" A block carried away and a man was accidentally killed. Steam was up, the engines were working, and the winches were pulling on cables attached to two anchors and a tug. The men were allowed to cease work to attend the funeral. When they returned the opportunity time had passed. The tow line to the tug broke and the ship went back on