



## The Wreck of *Frank H. Buck*

Built in 1914 for the Associated Oil Company of California, the *Frank H. Buck* was named for the company's vice-president. *Frank H. Buck* traveled between New York, Europe, Central America and Asia carrying bulk cargo for the petroleum industry.

When World War I broke out, *Frank H. Buck* was requisitioned by the Navy as an oiler and fitted with a 6-inch and a 4-inch gun. The tanker put her guns to use, exchanging fire with a German U-boat and sinking another surfaced U-boat that had opened fire on the tanker. After the war *Frank H. Buck* was returned to her owners and continued service as an oil tanker.

On March 6, 1937 the *Frank H. Buck* was on her way through the Golden Gate, bound for Martinez with a cargo of oil from Ventura when it crashed head-on into the luxury passenger liner, *President Coolidge*. Fog at the Gate had prevented the ships from seeing each other and warning signals were heard too late to avoid the collision.

The *President Coolidge* was one of the two largest American passenger vessels at the time. It merely suffered a crushed bow. But the *Frank H. Buck* was fatally wounded. Quick responses by the Coast Guard and the San Francisco Police Department saved all of the crew, including the ship's dog.

The remains of the *Frank H. Buck* came to rest in the sand and rocks off Lands End, next to its sister ship, the *Lyman Stewart*, which had met a similar fate 15 years earlier. In 1938 the ship's remains were dynamited as part of a general effort to clean up some of the many shipwreck hulks that littered the harbor approach. Today the engine and sternpost can still be seen at low tide, resting next to the engine of the *Lyman Stewart*.