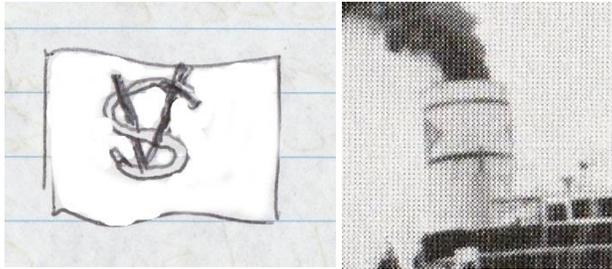


Vicente Villanueva Villanueva S.S. Co. Inc.

(registered 3/6/53)



(unavailable in colour).

President Vicente Villanueva

Vice-President Francisco Koh

Directors Vicente Villanueva, Francisco T. Koh, Santos Liorca,

Eloy T. Koh, Jose Uy Eng Kui, and his wife Dolores Sy Hai Pin

Manila/Zamboanga/Cotabato/Dadiangas/Davao

Manila/Cebu/Dumaguete/Bais/San Carlos/Dipolog/Misamis/Iligan/Butuan

Manila/Iloilo/Pulupandan

Manila/Legaspi/Batan/Cebu.

Worldwide tramping.

ILLUSTRATED FLEET LIST

by S.A. Kentwell & H.W. Dick

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This edition published 11 February 2021

Introduction

At the end of November 1946, the Philippines Shipping Commission announced that 80 surplus U.S. vessels, beginning immediately with 46 'Freight and Supply' (FS) type motorships, were being offered to

Philippine owners through the Philippines Shipowners Association comprising 30 prewar operators. Preference was to be given to larger prewar operators, but an order of allocation also theoretically enabled ships to be transferred to smaller existing operators, and if vessels still remained, to “responsible individuals”. Vicente Villanueva name first appears as the owner and operator under the shipping agency of Tan Cheong Pin of three FS vessels, *FS-271* which sailed for the first time on 4 May 1947 for Zamboanga, Cotobato, Dadiangas, and Davao, *FS-144*, scheduled to sail to the same ports 10 days later and *FS-346*, also scheduled to sail on 14 May to Cebu, Dumaguete, Bais, San Carlos, Dipolog, Misamis, Iligan and Butuan. These vessels thereafter were advertised regularly for Vicente Villanueva, for instance *Doña Bebang* ex *FS-346* being advertised in September as sailing each Tuesday at 4pm for Iloilo and Pulupandan.

By the end of 1948 all three ships had been sold. The reasons for the sale are not clear, but by this stage coastal operations had become very competitive, many shipowners with FS vessels which proved to be enduring and well suited, often with modified enlarged superstructures, to Philippine coastal waters. All three vessels ended up with the major postwar operator General Shg. Co., which probably had been able to use political influence to curb the smaller operators.

We have no further information on the precise origins of Vicente Villanueva, born in 1882 or 1883, who in 1947 was obviously an individual of some means. The *mestizo* surname Villanueva is not uncommon in the Philippines, but in terms of wealth and influence is best known in the Villanueva family, landholders, business persons and professionals in Negros Oriental, of which major ports are Dumaguete and Bais. In the 20th century, this family of Villanueva is known to have provided a Governor, a Provincial Board Member and two Mayors.

The next that Vicente Villanueva is heard of as a shipowner when Villanueva S.S. Co. was registered as a shareholding company on 3 June 1953. The Articles of Incorporation of the Company, dated April 28, 1953, indicates the shareholding of the top executives represented a significant Chinese *mestizo* influence:

Vicente Villanueva	P200,000.00	
Francisco T. Koh	100,000.00	
Santos Llorca	100,000.00	
Alberto Abeledo	20,000.00	
Ramon Fabella	15,000.00	
Eloy T. Koh	15,000.00	
Jose Eng Cui (alias Jose Ui Villanueva, Hwang Nien Shun)		10,000.00
other shareholders	40,000.00	
Total	P500,000.00	

Speaking to the press in August 1953 after taking delivery of *Doña Lourdes* in Japan, Vice President Francisco Koh explained that the company now owned two ships, *Doña Bebang* (a former Japanese 2E standard ship purchased in March and renamed in April) and *Doña Lourdes* (built as *Masula* for British India India S.N. Co. Ltd with ‘tween deck passenger accommodation) and had made arrangements to purchase five more from a British company (referring to Wheelock, Marden & Co. Ltd. of Hong Kong) of

which two, to be delivered by the end of the year, would be of a similar size to *Doña Lourdes*, and clearly intended for use in international trades.

Employment of the first two vessels indicates they were intended for international tramping. Although *Doña Bebang* was initially rumoured to be used from Manila to Legaspi, Batan and Cebu, she seemed to find a niche carrying coal from Samarinda in Borneo to Hong Kong. *Doña Lourdes* was advertised as sailing from Manila to Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan, and made at least one voyage to north and south American ports, before being grounded in a typhoon in Hong Kong in August 1954.

But by this stage the financial strategy of Villanueva S.S. Co. had been blown. A mortgage dated 14 September 1953 and funded in several tranches over the next few weeks, had been provided by the Rehabilitation Finance Corp. (RFC) for the funding of *Doña Lourdes*, payable in amortizations of P58,245.74 every three (3) months, beginning from January 1, 1954, until fully paid. However, within a matter of months it emerged that the actions had rather stretched the rules. In its dealing with the government corporation, it emerged that a misleading representation had been made in the knowledge of the full Villanueva S.S. Co. Board, the vessel had been purchased from Kian Hing Shipping Co. for US\$1,148,000.00 whereas in actuality the vessel had been bought from Concordia Steamship Co. for the amount of US\$266,000.00 only. The accusation was also made that of the dollars allocated for the purchase of a ship, \$882,000.00 was intended for purposes other than the purchase of *Doña Lourdes* and/or for sale "in the black market" at a time when the official exchange rate of 2P=\$1 was fixed at a very low level. In view of the company plan to buy further ships by the end of the year, probably the loan had been intended primarily to help finance the purchase of six or so ships, but it had been uncovered when the company was unable to provide a satisfactory purchase receipt, or indeed a copy of the necessary insurance policy on *Doña Lourdes*.

By the third quarter of 1954 the evidence was strong enough for President Magsaysay to appoint a Presidential Fact-Finding Committee headed by Commodore Jose M. Francisco, flag officer of the Philippine Navy into the the business transactions and activities of the Villanueva Steamship Company and the actions of the RFC. On 28/7/54 it was reported that payments for the Company's purchase of its next two ships, *San Jose* (6211/30) and *San Mateo* (7346/31) had been suspended. Francisco's report recommended actions against the full Villanueva Board and three complicit officers of the RFC under a variety of headings, and on 2/9/54 Magsaysay handed over the report to Justice Secretary Pedro Tuason for immediate action.

The salvaged *Doña Lourdes* was initially reported under repair in Hong Kong but during 1955 was sold for scrapping, returning a reported amount (doubtless converted in the more realistic Hong Kong exchange market) of P1,600,000.00, of which P1,000,000 was to be turned over to the RFC. The *Doña Bebang* was placed under arrest after arriving at Manila in October 1954, and the only further record of this ship is of having sailed for Hong Kong on 5/11/56 'for refit'.

On December 5, 1956, a motion was filed by the RBC stating that with access to these and other funds, the parties had come and agreed to an amicable settlement and, therefore, asked that the Action by the RBC and the counterclaims be dismissed with prejudice and without costs. The motion also signed by counsel for the Company, and RBC defendants Llorca, Uy, Siy Hai Pin, and Castillejo. The names of

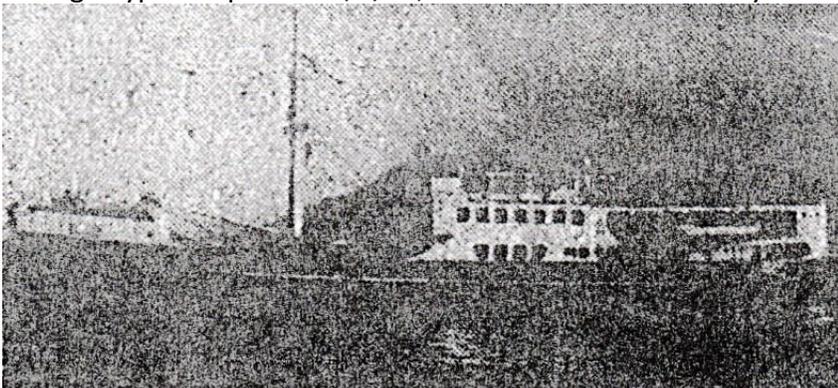
counsel for appellees, Eloy T. Koh, Villanueva, Alunan and Eleazar were, likewise, typewritten at the foot of the motion, evidently for their signature, which, however, was not affixed thereon. Nevertheless, appeals and counter appeals continued until at least February 1962, by which time both Vicente Villanueva (who had sought exoneration using a defence having signed documents in a condition of near-blindness) and Alberto Abeledo were deceased.

Note: Lloyds Confidential Index of the early 1950s places Villanueva S.S. Co. under the head listing of De la Rama S.S. Co. Apart from both companies probably having certain origins in Negros (Negros Oriental in the case of the Villanuevas and Negros Occidental in the case of the De la Ramas), a connection is not borne out by a close examination of the Manila press in the period from 1946 to the 1960s. Each company had separate Boards and personnel, separate houseflags and funnel markings, and operated in different trades. It may be noted, however, that there is a report (<https://psssonline.wordpress.com/tag/de-la-rama-steamship/>) that the De la Rama S.S. Co. also acquired three 750gt former US Army Transportation Corps Freight & Supply "FS" ships and three 166gt former U.S. Army "F" class at this time, although it has not been possible to corroborate this or precisely identify the ships. It may be postulated that the De la Rama "FS" ships were the three vessels FS-199, FS-271 and FS-346 acquired by Villanova as described above.

Illustrated Fleet List

FS-199/DON VICENTE (1947-47) c.550/44 (FS)

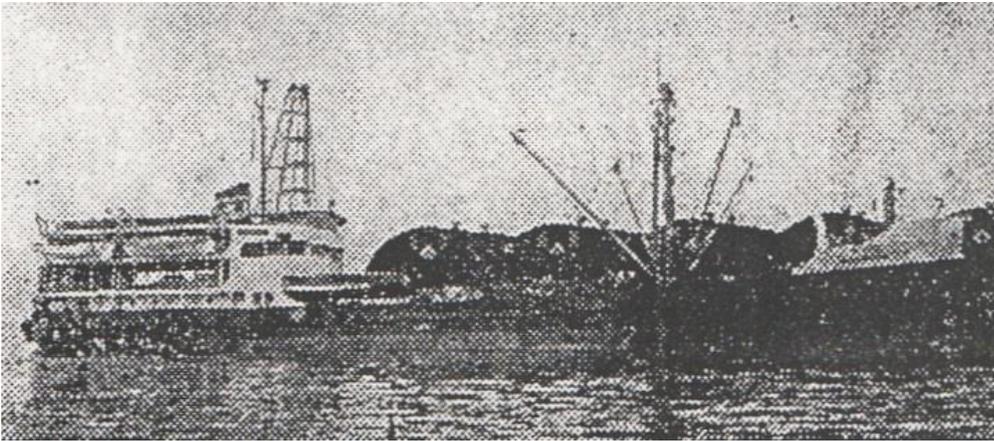
Built by Higgins Industries Inc., New Orleans (#65) for US Army Transportation Corps as FS-199. 1945 American President Lines mgrs, 12/46 still as such. 27/3 arrived Legaspi from Naga, owners unknown. 4/47 sold through Philippine Shg. Commission to Vicente Villanueva, 14/5/47 first advertised voyage Manila/Zamboanga/Cotabato/Dadiangas/Davao. As DON VICENTE 8/47 sold (t/f?) to Samar-Leyte Shg. Co, 20/8 first advertised voyage Manila/Bulan/Legaspi/Tacloban. Still as such 10/47. 1/48 sold to General Shg. Co. 21/5/48 r. GENERAL SEGUNDO. 17/5/50 returned to service after several weeks' painting and overhauling. 3/10/51 sailed to Hong Kong for general reconditioning and conversion. 17/12/51 r. GENERAL LIM on arrival at Manila from Hong Kong. Presumably renamed GENERAL SEGUNDO on 12/1/53. By 5/60 r. GENERAL CAPININ. 1967 sold to Sweet Lines Inc., Manila, r. SWEET HOPE. 1980 r. SWEET SOUND, same owners and fitted with bow doors. Reportedly stranded off Cebu during a typhoon prior to 3/9/84, later refloated and shortly after scrapped at Mandaue City.



GENERAL SEGUNDO in 1951, after having been remodelled in Hong Kong (Manila Times 17/12/51).

FS-271/DOÑA PRIMITEVA (1947-48) 558/44 (FS)

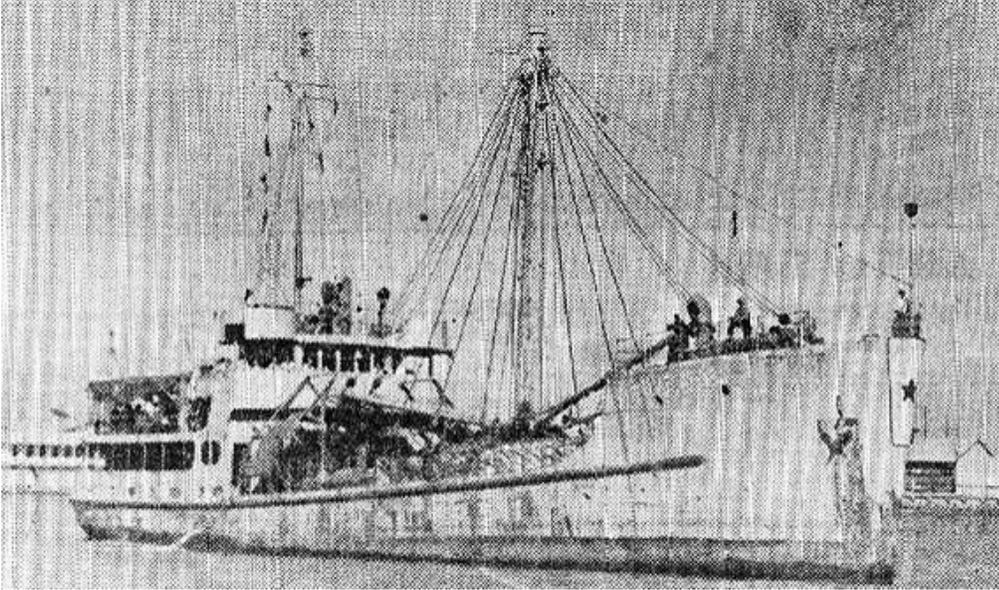
Built by Wheeler S.B. Corp., Whitestone (NY) (#85) for US Army Transportation Corps as FS-271. 1945 American President Lines mgrs, still as such 12/46. 4/47 sold through Philippine Shg. Commission to Vicente Villanueva, 4/5/47 maiden voyage Manila/Zamboanga/Cotabato/Dadiangas/Davao. Likely to have been r. DOÑA PRIMITERA. Sold 1948 r. GENERA MASCARDO (LCI shows acquired by General Shipping 1947) 1948 conv., lengthened. By L53 registered for General Shg. Co. as GENERAL MASCARDO. (But GSC not operating a GENERAL MASCARDO after 1950). Prior to 1960 lengthened (734g). By 1958, L66 as GENERAL MOJICA (same owners). 1966 sold to Cebu-Bohol Ferry Co. Inc. 5/66 r. MARCELINO. 1975 sold to Sulpicio Lines Inc. r. DON VICTORIANO I. During night of 4-5/4/82 wrecked on the east coast of Mindanao, while on passage Davao/Butuan. (Note - builder deduced correctly from FS number) Link with General Mascardo ex FS-271. Not located in L78 as DVI or SB. Early reported name SUBIC BAY. Probably the vessel of this name listed 1959-60 for Universal Shg which is probably ex FS-270. Presumably the vessel r. MARCELINO, in PSNC timetables by 5/66.



DOÑA PRIMITEVA as GENERAL MOJICA (ad in Manila Times, 30 May 1960).

FS-346/DOÑA BEBANG (1947-48) 560/44 (FS) (230 pass)

Built by Kewaunee S.B. & Engineering Corp, Kewaunee (#68) for US Army Transportation Corps as FS-346. 1945 American President Lines mgrs. 2/47 sold through Philippine Shg. Commission to Victory Shg. Corp., r. SEVEN UP but simultaneously sailing under old name. 4/3/47 first advertised voyage Manila/Legaspi/Tabaco. 4/47 as FS-346 sold to Vicente Villanueva, 14/5/47 first advertised voyage Manila/Cebu/Dumaguete/Bais/San Carlos/Dipolog/Misamis/Iligan/Butuan. 4/9/47 advertised as AKLAN, sailing 4/9 Manila/Iloilo/Pulupandan, but r. DOÑA BEBANG by Villanueva, sailing 9/9 (and every Tuesday thereafter) Manila/Iloilo/Pulupandan. 25/12/47 collided with WILLIAM NOTT (1870/45) at Legaspi during typhoon "Jean". 4/48 sold to General Shg. Co. Inc., maiden voyage 5/4 Manila/Romblon/Capiz/New Washington. 12/5/48 r. GENERAL LUNA. 16/1/54 detained for carrying 130 passengers whereas licensed for 74. In service as such 1960. 7/64 drops from GSC schedules, never to return. 9/65 advertised for Sweet Lines Inc. as SWEET RIDE. By 1966 tonnage 580g. 12/8/78 grounded off Canigao Island, CTL. Bow photo (GL) Manila Times 13/4/50. Photo Manila Times 1/5/54. Photo Manila Times 30/5/60.



DOÑA BEBANG as GENERAL LUNA (Philippine Herald 24/6/50).

DOÑA BEBANG (1953-54) 886/45 ('Type 2EH')

Built by Kawaminami Kogyo K.K., Fukahori (#4141) for Sanko Kisen K.K., Amagasaki as BUKO MARU. 3/53 sold to Villanueva S.S. Co. Inc., said to be operated to Legaspi, Batan and Cebu. 4/53 r. DOÑA BEBANG. 15/6/53 departed Manila for Hong Kong. 20/8/53 put into Manila for repairs on voyage Hong Kong/Samarinda (Borneo). 31/12/53 listing 15 degrees following deck damage on voyage Samarinda/Hong Kong with coal. 1/1/54 reached Manila under own power. 22/3/54 arrived Manila from Hong Kong. Advertised as available early 5/54. 5/10/54 due Manila from Hong Kong. Subsequently under arrest at Manila due to claims by Rehabilitation Finance Corp. 5/11/56 sailed Manila for Hong Kong 'for refit'. NFI.

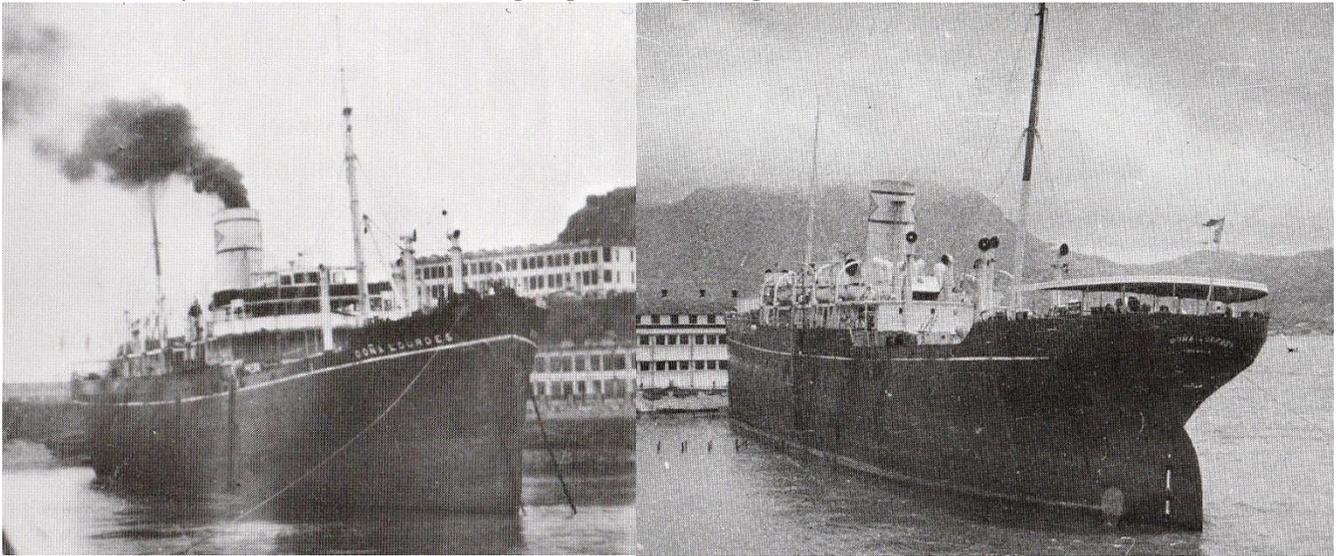


'Type 2EH' war standard sister HASSHO MARU (<http://jpnships.g.dgdg.jp/>).

DOÑA LOURDES (1953-55) 7324/19

Built by Barclay, Curle & Co. Ltd., Glasgow (Yard No.516) for British India S.N. Co. Ltd., Glasgow as MASULA. 6/30 beached at Gibraltar after fire in cotton cargo. 5/52 del. at Bombay to Concordia S.S. Co.

Ltd. (Wheelock Marden & Co Ltd. mgrs), Hong Kong r. JOLLY. 5/53 sold via Overseas Associated Corp., Hong Kong to Villanueva S.S. Co. Inc., delivered in Japan r. DOÑA LOURDES. 7/53 accepting cargo at Manila for Japan. 2/9/53 departed Hong Kong for Manila. 29/10/53 arrived Manila from Hong Kong. 17/11/53 arrived Manila from Cebu in need of minor repairs. 20/4/54 arrived Manila from Honolulu, New Orleans and South American ports. 28/4/54 due to sail Manila for Taiwan, Japan. 29/8/54 blown ashore at Hong Kong during typhoon 'Ida', 11/9 refloated with damage by Taikoo tugs. 1/1/55 (still under repair at Hong Kong) reported sold to British interests. 11/56 broken up at Hong Kong by Hong Kong Rolling Mills Ltd., work began 25/5/56. Small photo with black funnel in Manila Times 13/7/53. Photographed aground at Hong Kong in Worrall's book. 15/9/53 good photo in Manila Times, 6 lifeboats. [4/5/57 *The Manila Times* reported Villanueva officials escape charges of violation of central bank circulars re import of JOLLY from Kai Hing Shg. of Hong Kong.



DOÑA LOURDES being refloated at Hong Kong, Sept. 1954 (*Taikoo D.Y.*, Jan. 1955).

Agreement was reached in 1953-54 through Wheelock, Marden & Co. Ltd. for the purchase of the following two vessels, but payment was not able to be completed.

SAN JOSE (1954) 6211/30

Built by Harland & Wolff Ltd. for Cie. Generale Transatlantique, Havre as SAN JOSE. 12/42 sunk by air raid. 1946 salvaged, towed to La Spezia. 9/50 to Le Havre and recomm. by CGT. 1954 sold to Far Eastern & Panama Transport corp., Panama r. SAN ROLANDO. 1957 t/f to Panamanian Oriental S.S. Corp., Panama r. LORAINÉ. 16/9/58 laid up at Hong Kong, 11/58 delivered to local shipbreakers.

SAN MATEO (1954) 7346/31

Built by Harland & Wolff Ltd. for Cie. Generale Transatlantique, Havre as SAN MATEO. 24/6/40 seized by Germans at Nantes. 1945 recovered at Hamburg and recomm. by CGT. 1954 sold to Far Eastern & Panama Transport corp., Panama r. SAN MARDENO. 11/7/54 stranded near Jafarabad Light on W. Coast of India bound Bombay/Bhavnagar – 2/7 sunk.