

# A case of 'sacrilege' in Golden Gate park

**T**HE ORIENTAL tea garden in San Francisco's Golden Gate park, up to the war operated as the Japanese tea garden by three successive generations of the Hagiwara family, still draws crowds—particularly when the cherry blossoms are in bloom—and it is still predominantly Japanese.

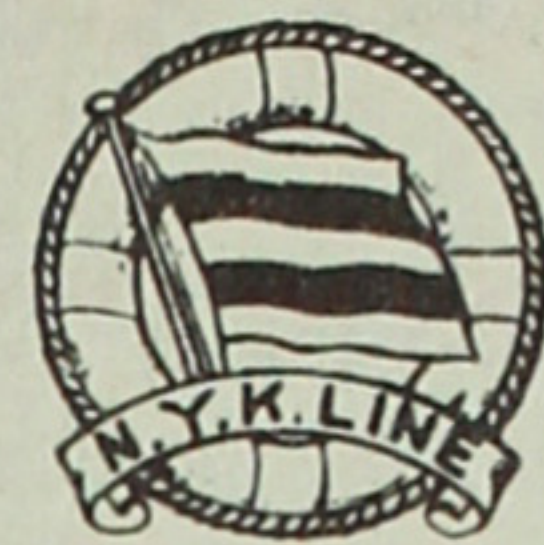
The cherry blossoms and the Japanese gate and mansion, inherited from the Japanese government following the Pan-American Exposition in 1915, are as serenely beautiful as ever. Sticklers for authentic Japonica, however, are horrified by changes in the garden which they regard as sacrilegious.

The grounds surrounding the *mon* and *yashiki* of the Heian era (794-1159 A.D.) are now cared for by Caucasian gardeners. Their idea of good gardening, as indignantly reported by SCENE photographer Bob Laing, "is to pour on the fertilizer and make everything grow like hell." The result is a confusing departure from the restrained simplicity of an authentic Japanese garden—"a bit like a piece of jungle," to quote Laing again.

The tea-serving stand and the gift shop in the Japanese house are now operated by Allen Agnew, one-time purser on ships on the Orient run. He took over a five-year lease two years ago.



**ANNABELLE UYEDA** adds to garden's authenticity by working as clerk in the gift shop on Sundays and Mondays.



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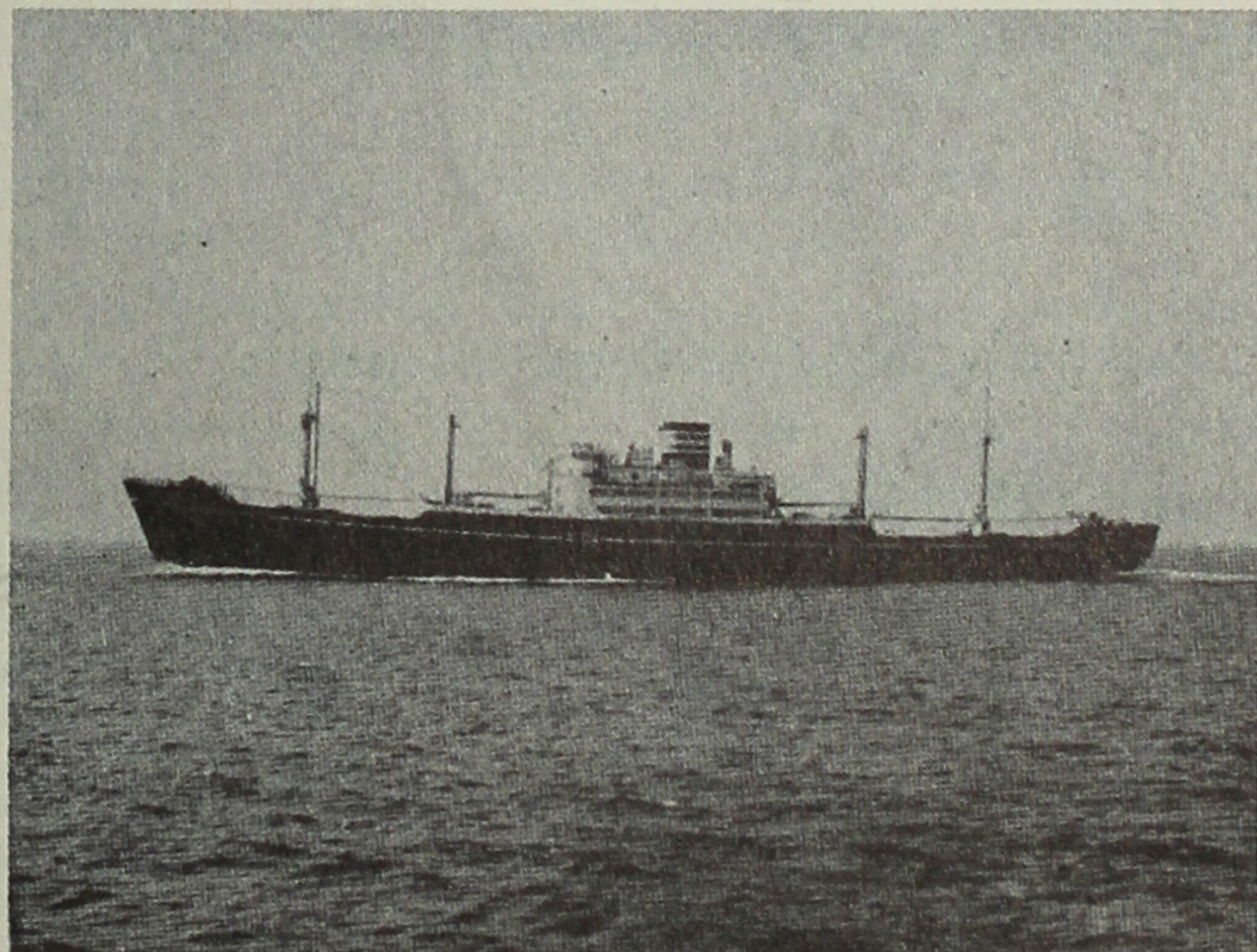
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