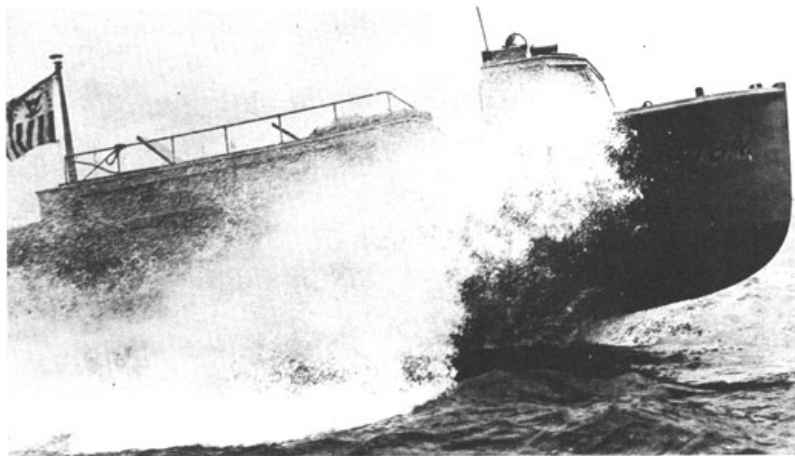


# a ride with the "cowboys"

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**d**aily the "Cowboys" ride about the harbor on picket boats, checking ships at anchor and piers for sabotage. The "Cowboys" are the Customs guards, and they get their nickname from the skill with which they heave lines over cleats and bollards as the picket boat comes in.

Aboard the picket boats on these daily trips are two Coast Guard men, a boatswain's mate and a machinist's mate, as well as three Customs men. First on the list in the day's patrol is the checking of all the ships in the anchorage areas in New York Harbor. The name of every ship and its position is recorded, and any changes in position are noted. With the anchorages checked, the picket boat pokes into the many nooks and crannies of the harbor, while the guards check piers and search for fires or sabotage. Hourly, the picket boat pulls in at specific piers about the bay so that the Customs



guards may telephone in a report, noting any unusual activity and taking any last-minute instructions from Customs headquarters. In this way, a fairly constant line of communication is maintained between the boat and headquarters.

In many ways the duties of the U. S. Coast Guard and the U. S. Customs overlap. For instance, the Coast Guard is charged with protecting the customs revenue and with enforcing the laws and regulations governing the anchorage of vessels in navigable waters. In addition, any Coast Guard officer has the power to board and to search vessels for contraband cargo, which also is the duty of the Customs.

Thus the U. S. Coast Guard and the U. S. Customs work hand in hand to protect revenue and to prevent sabotage to vessels and to piers. It's a big job these days; but one that is very efficiently handled. A ride with the "Cowboys" proves that.