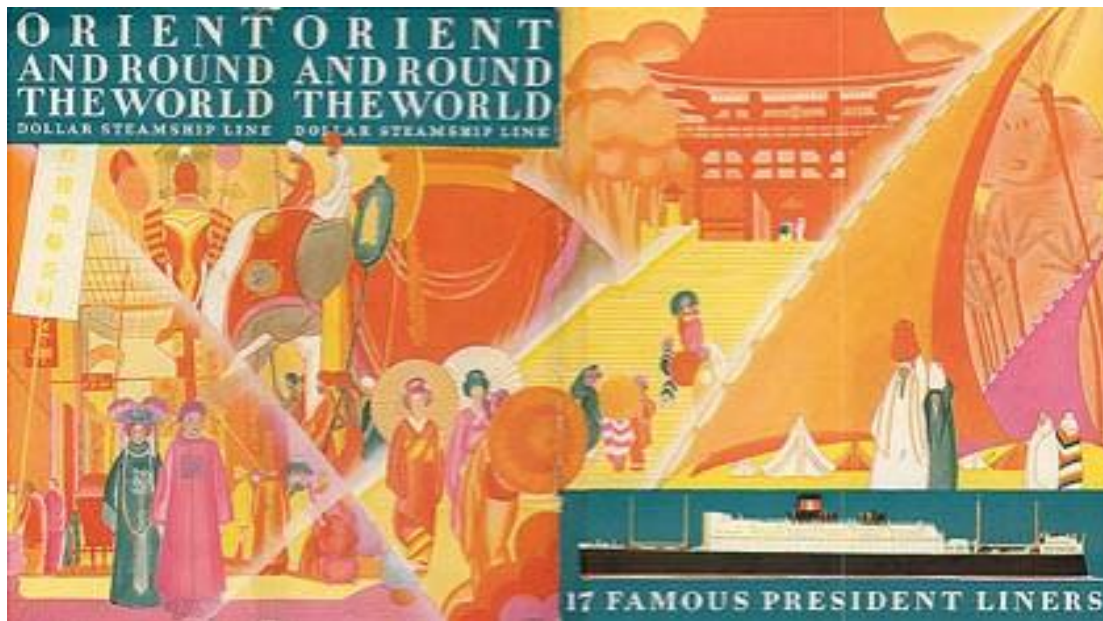


# Early Maritime Collection

The first seaborne collection mission by a Navy Communications Technician trained as part of the “On-the-Roof Gang” was in 1932. The On-the-Roof Gang were U.S. Navy radiomen given specialized training in the intercept of Japanese Navy communications.

According to the Navy Cryptologic Veterans Association, James “Little Jimmy” Pearson was given passage on a Dollar Line passenger ship that sailed from Seattle to Japan and China. The ship called at Yokohama, Nagoya, Osaka, and Kure in Japan, then sailed to Shanghai and returned to Seattle.



Little Jimmy was assigned a first-class cabin for the three-month voyage. The ship’s master was cleared for knowledge of his mission, but no others aboard were.

He kept his receivers under his bunk when not actually working. He used a wire coat hanger outside his porthole as an antenna.

There is no information about what Little Jimmy intercepted on this trip, but it must have been satisfactory—a second trip was scheduled. However, the Dollar Line was sold and his second mission was cancelled.

Collection using Dollar Line ships resumed shortly after, as new arrangements were made. *History Today* will have another article about this in December.

NOTE: The Dollar Line did not get its name based on the price of its tickets. It was founded in the 19th century by businessman Robert Dollar.