

# The Elmer A. Sperry Award



THIS AWARD seeks to encourage progress in the engineering of transportation. It commemorates the life and achievements of Dr. Elmer A. Sperry, whose versatile inventiveness encompassed virtually all science and industry, accelerated the progress of transportation by land, sea, and air, created basic industrial machinery and processes, and pioneered the organization and direction of group research.

Established by his daughter, Helen, now Mrs. Robert Brooke Lea, and his son, Elmer A., Jr., this new Award is to be available for presentation annually to that individual or group, of any nationality, adjudged, after nomination and thorough consideration, to have made "a distinguished engineering contribution which, through application, proved in actual service, has advanced the art of transportation whether by land, sea or air."

Recipients of the Award are selected by a Board of Award representing four technical societies of which Dr. Sperry was officer or member: The American Society of Mechanical Engineers, American Institute of Electrical Engineers, Society of Automotive Engineers, and The Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers.

Appropriately, this Award has been established and a special biographical memoir of Dr. Sperry published in 1955, year of the 75th Anniversary of ASME, 50th Anniversary of SAE, 95th Anniversary of Dr. Sperry's birth, and 25th Anniversary of his death.

## ELMER A. SPERRY BOARD OF AWARD

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## THE ELMER A. SPERRY AWARD

# William Francis Gibbs



As naval architect and marine engineer, Mr. Gibbs has dedicated more than 30 years to advocacy of super-ships and the application of modern designs and materials to shipbuilding. He began experimenting with super-ships in 1913 and had advanced the concept to the point of construction, when World War I and the ensuing depression interrupted.

During that war he served with the Shipping Control Committee of the Army General Staff. In 1919 he became construction chief for International Merchant Marine. In 1922, at government request, he organized Gibbs Brothers, Inc., to supervise the reconditioning of the SS LEVIATHAN and other ships. In 1929 the firm became Gibbs & Cox, Inc., which has designed a large proportion of modern American merchant, naval and other ships.

Upon the outbreak of World War II, Mr. Gibbs designed emergency cargo ships for the British Government, Liberty ships for the American Government, and a wide variety of combatant and service craft for the U. S. Navy. He served as wartime controller of shipbuilding, War Production Board, and as chairman, Combined Shipbuilding Committee, of the Chiefs of Staff.

In 1946 Mr. Gibbs undertook, for the United States Lines, the design of the SS UNITED STATES as a 30-knot transatlantic superliner incorporating his concepts, techniques, and uses of materials. Built to rigid naval requirements for possible use as transport, this ship has brought the transatlantic speed ribbon back to America and has achieved worldwide recognition for advanced engineering in transportation.

Mr. Gibbs was born August 24, 1886. He was graduated in science from Harvard in 1910, entered Columbia in 1911 and was graduated in 1913 with the degrees Bachelor of Laws and Master of Arts.

Among his honors are the National Defense Transportation and American Design Awards, the Franklin Gold Medal, and the David W. Taylor Gold Medal. He holds honorary degrees from Stevens Institute of Technology, New York University, Harvard, and Bowdoin.

He is a Fellow of The American Society of Mechanical Engineers. He is also a member of The Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers, the National Academy of Science, and the Institute of the Aeronautical Sciences.