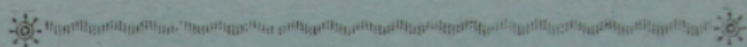
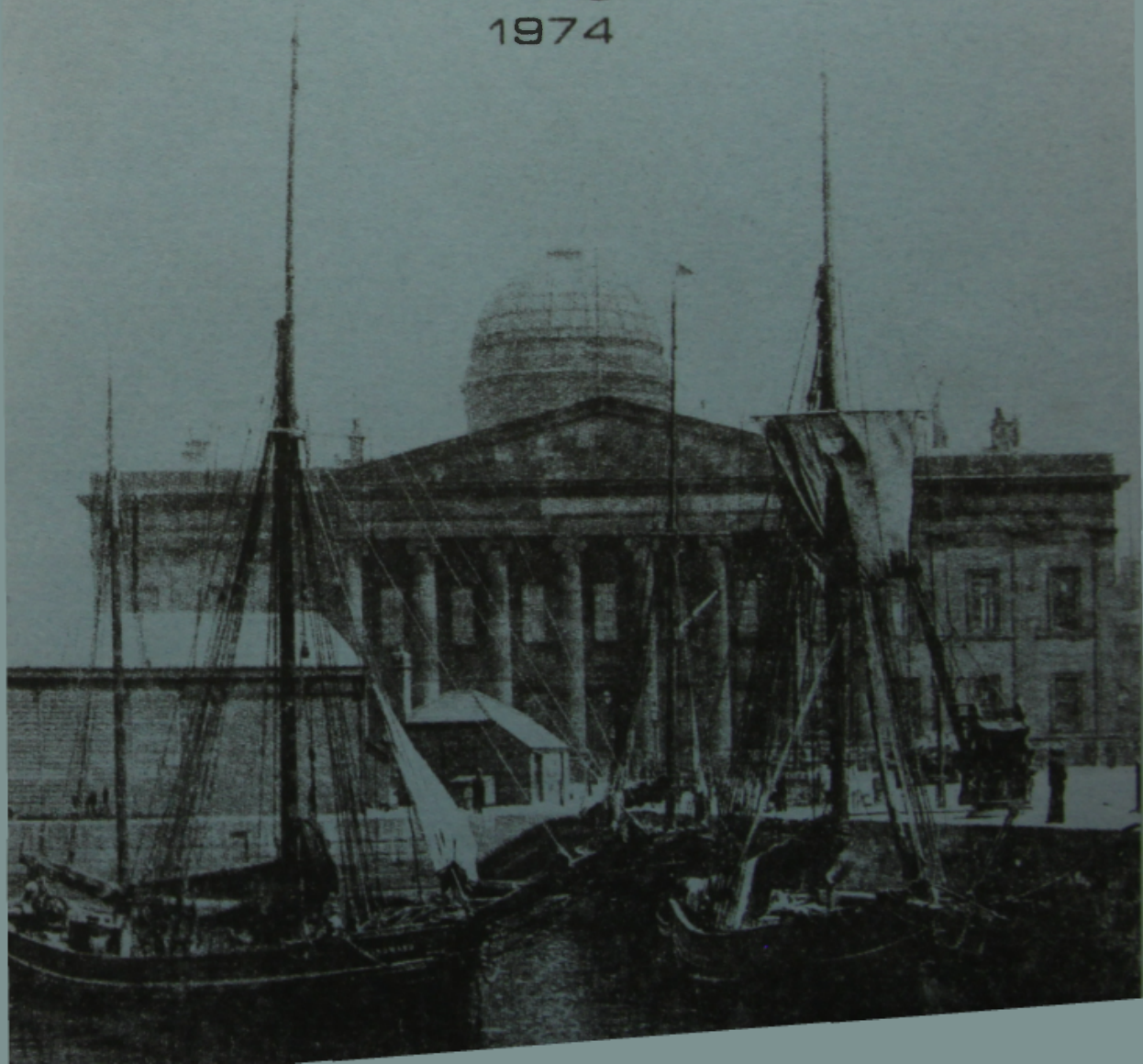


LIVERPOOL
NAUTICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY



THE BULLETIN

Volume Eighteen
1974



L I V E R P O O L N A U T I C A L
R E S E A R C H S O C I E T Y

B U L L E T I N

The Liverpool Museums
William Brown Street
Liverpool 3.

Hon. Secretary - M.K. Stammers, B.A.
Editor - N. R. Pugh

Upon the gale she stooped her side,
And bounded o'er the swelling tide,
 As she were dancing home;
The merry seamen laughed to see
Their gallant ship so tily
 Furrow the green sea foam.

Walter Scott

Vol. XVIII No. 1

January-March 1974

DIVERS' WORLD

At half past five in the morning the only light was from the street lamps. The air was calm, and the sky, what could be seen of it was overcast with just a hint of mist. By the time the landrover was loaded up with diving gear and provisions for the day, the first light of dawn appeared in the haze.

The journey to the boat in Birkenhead docks was uneventful, loading was tedious, adjusting trim, setting navigation lights and preparing to go through three bridges and the lock entrance was accomplished with some delay. A gale warning for the Irish Sea area was not duly disturbing to us, since our heading was up river towards Tranmere. We locked out at approximately nine thirty into a calm river, with little traffic about and headed up wind against the tide to the yacht mooring areas. Our target was our own mooring in the river, which was reported to us during the week as having broken adrift. Alongside Tranmere oil jetties were two large tankers, and then the mist began to clear, and we were able to survey all the moorings, and fortunately pick out our own. After several cups of tea to keep the inner man warm, we donned wet suits, and the first two divers went over the side into the very uninviting murky waters of the Mersey.

Since the dive project entailed untangling moorings and inspecting the ground chain and tackle, it was not necessary to put on fins or gloves, since no man is strong enough to fin against the Mersey, and with un-gloved hands it is far easier to identify by touch the various chains, shackles, ropes, rings and other accoutrements necessary for a tidal mooring. Although slack water was some two hours hence, the tide was nevertheless strong, and after an initial two or three minutes, tightly clutching the mooring chain, the Mersey water which had percolated into our suits, gradually warmed up from our own body heat. Descending feet first, hand over hand down a cold wet chain is not everyone's idea of a Sunday morning pastime. However, those who mess about in boats accept these hazards and hardships as almost a way of life.

For the first ten feet down, visibility under water was something like two feet, and it was quite easy to discern the white knuckles of our hands holding firmly on to the chain. Deeper than ten feet, the underwater visibility rapidly deteriorated to nil, and the all-enveloping darkness cannot be imagined. Even the darkest night still shows reflections or low key silhouettes when ones eyes become adjusted to the

darkness. In this dark water sight failed to function, since there is nothing on which the eyes can focus, and you might as well shut them, because all the human body senses are now centred on the feel of your fingers. These rapidly become numb with cold. You become aware of the slippery clay underfoot.

It so happened that our mooring chain, lying on the bed of the river, had been crossed by another mooring chain with a balloon riser of another vessel becoming entangled with our riser to our flotation gear. After some three hours work, the chains were unknotted and sorted out. During this time of immersion in the water, the whole body became numb, not just the fingers, and it was some relief to come aboard our own vessel again to a steaming hot cup of tea, and the inevitable pins-and-needles effect, as our hands thawed out.

This then, might be the world of the professional diver. His element is cold uninviting water. We are often asked, what is our price for laying or lifting a mooring, or even recovering outboard motors and such, and as amateur sports divers, we really do not charge, since it is a further exercise in our training, the manipulation of our gear, and adaption to this predator's world. In clearer waters, where our other senses come into play, we can, of course become concerned with whales, sharks, barracudas, conger eels, etc. but in total immersion in utter blackness and cold, the only anxieties are those in our mind from previous experiences, or the touch of an object which is neither rope, chain nor mud. It is certainly no place to panic. Letting go of a rope or other lifeline, we immediately lose any orientation our normal earthbound senses might give us, for our buoyancy is adjusted so that we neither sink nor float at the working depth. Our direction and heading is unknown and then the purpose of our dive is lost. Not all excursions are in these conditions.

It is very pleasant to dive in clear water and study the

flora and fauna of the undersea world, to excavate an ancient wreck, to explore a sunken hulk, or even to note the variety of fishes and their colours. But from the poor experiences, we gain confidence in ourselves and our other underwater companions. The resulting sense of elation can be compared with astronauts travelling to, and working on the moon. As a sport, it can be dangerous, even hazardous. As a profession it is very rewarding if one has the constitution to stand up to that sort of life week-in, week-out. There are fools in all walks of life, but the diver sees to it that pranks or any foolish play take place on land, if at all, for underwater there is no occasion for it. Next time you see divers enjoying themselves and apparently letting off steam, do not look at them and judge too harshly - they may be just relieving their nervous tension after a hairy dive.

Some ten hours after setting out in the dark, we were unloading the landrover again, to enter the house quietly and head straight for a hot bath, followed by a good meal and an early night. We had the satisfaction of knowing that our mooring was secure, and to have completed the sort of job few others would attempt without financial reward being the main aim.

R. H. PITTAWAY

(Note: Mr. Pittaway is Secretary of the Northern Underwater Archaeological Society, based at Liverpool Museums, under the Chairmanship of Mr. P.J. Welsh. When asked to describe the personal feelings of a skin diver, he kindly contributed this interesting essay).

NEW MEMBERS

Cordially welcomed into the Society are the following new members:-

H. M. Hignett Esq.	Wallasey
Mrs. C.G. Glyn-Jones	Birkenhead
F. Milroy Esq.	Hoylake
S.N. Porter Esq.	Bidston

DECEMBER RESCUE IN LIVERPOOL BAY

On 13th December, the Prime Minister broadcast to the nation on the dire peril on the industrial front. It was a night of storm. A northwesterly gale whipped up the sea off the Welsh coast, caused the Mersey Bar Pilot boat to heave to, and then make slowly and laboriously for the shelter of the Manx land. One of those nights to remember!

To the westward, and thirteen miles from Great Orme's Head, the fishing vessel SEGONTIUM had a breakdown in her steering gear, and was at the mercy of high seas. She is a green hulled ship of coaster design, of 197 tons, and was on a delivery passage with two men aboard. She is of London registry and across her bridge front are the words "Welsh Sea Foods Ltd.".

Llandudno Lifeboat stood by SEGONTIUM for most of that evening, in hopes that a tug would arrive. Rea's HOLLYGARTH took a heavy pounding as she crossed the Bar about 8 p.m., and conditions were so bad that at 9.30 p.m. she turned back. But only for a while, as contact was made with Llandudno Lifeboat, who put up a parachute flare. Its effect heartened those aboard the tug, who knew now that they could reach the casualty in a quarter of an hour. The relief of the two men aboard SEGONTIUM, who had no doubt envisaged abandonment, can only be imagined. At 10.30 p.m. HOLLYGARTH's towing hawser was made secure and SEGONTIUM was safely berthed in Alfred Basin, Birkenhead at about 2 a.m. Well done, HOLLYGARTH! As these notes are typed, the fishing vessel is berthed at Vittoria Wharf, showing no signs of the drama endured that night.

SEGONTIUM ex C.615 was built at Faversham in 1944 as one of a mass-produced type of coaster for the war effort. It is an interesting reflection that here was an instance of the usefulness of super tugs, of which we have six, now that New Brighton lifeboat has been removed. Not that NORMAN B. CORLETT would have been able to augment the services

given by the Llandudno boat in those seas, but the weatherly capabilities and power of the "supers" is a definite asset to the Port. This was a known factor taken into consideration when the New Brighton station was reduced to having an inshore rescue boat only, after Pier landing facilities were removed.

N.R.P.

DECEMBER MEETING

This now traditional event of the Social Evening took place at the earlier time of 6.30 p.m., and the change seemed to meet with the approval of the many members present. A full selection of refreshments was provided, and some interesting pictures and relics were exhibited by seven of the members. Some new gifts to the Museum's shipping collection were on show, as well as small displays connected with the old Christmas trade in fruit from the Mediterranean.

At 7.30 p.m. members enjoyed the latest programme of the Museum's Planetarium, and this was followed by sherry and mince pies. Our thanks go to everyone who contributed to make this evening such a success, with especial thanks to the Misses Susan Welsh and Joan Hough for all their hard work.

M.K.S.

THE BIBBY LINE

Older readers will remember the graceful four masted passenger ships of the Bibby Line, which left Birkenhead for Rangoon at fortnightly intervals before the last War. Although we seldom see a Bibby ship in the Mersey these days, the Line has gone from strength to strength, and since the demise of passenger and troop carrying, has diversified its activities with the world-wide carriage of bulk cargos, chemicals and containers. Their latest vessel HAMPSHIRE, built at Dunkirk brings the fleet to twenty vessels, totalling 518,000 tons gross, and all diesel propelled; their largest fleet so far.

WHAT'S IN A NAME - RECENT CHANGES

ADAMANDIOS	ex RICHARD DE LARRINAGA
AFRICA SHELL	ex HELISOMA
AVRA	ex IRISH ROWAN (1962)
CONSTANTIS II	ex KANTARA
CITY OF CANTERBURY	ex CAP CLEVELAND ex CITY OF ADELAIDE
CORINTHIAN TRADER	ex AGHIOS LAZAROS ex VILLEGAS (1955)
CARIBIA	ex COLUMBIA ex CARONIA (1948) and scrapped
DRINA	ex CRETIC
ECO DOURO	ex CRAIGAVAD
ELENMA	ex AKASSA PALM
ELIAS	ex MEMPHIS
ELINDIA	ex BALTIISTAN
ELIZABETH	ex CAPE SABLE (1960)
FONG LEE	ex SANDRA ex QUEENSBURY
FANNISS	ex LOCHDUNVEGAN
JARA ex ELIAS L	ex MERCHANT PRINCE ex SYCAMORE
	ex WALSINGHAM ex SYCAMORE
JOLLYVERDE	ex CARWAY
KAPPA VICTORY	ex CHERRYWOOD ex SILVERCRAG
MOCNI	ex BUSTLER (tug)
MERAG	ex ROYALGATE
MARIA	ex IRISH SYCAMORE (1961)
MAPLE	ex MALTA FAITH ex SOUTRA
NORWEGIAN SEA	ex SALIMIAH
N Z 1	ex MAJESTIC (1967)
N Z 2	ex BRITANNIC (1967)
NEMI ex ALDERNEY	TRADER ex GLENBRIDE ex LADY SYLVIA
QUEBEC	ex ALICE BOWATER
RELIANCE EXPRESS	ex TREMEADOW
ROE DEER	ex NORBRAE ex BUFFALO
SEAPEARL	ex MALOJA
STELIOS	ex BRITISH FAITH
SOTE ENGEL	ex AFON GOCH ex SCHELDE VIII ex HENGST (tug)
TEXACO DURHAM	ex REGENT FALCON
ULSTER MERCHANT	ex EMBDENA ex BRITISH UNIT ex EMBDENA
VENTURE ex MALABAR	ex SPARTAN PRINCE ex CHESHIRE COAST
WOODCOCK	ex BAT HARIM ex NETHERLANDS COAST
WOODBINE	ex BAT SHAPIR ex TALISKER ex ULSTER PIONEER

PROGRESS REPORT - S.S. GREAT BRITAIN

Mr. & Mrs. Coney have journeyed to Bristol in December, to see what amount of progress has been made with GREAT BRITAIN. The following contribution is gratefully acknowledged:-

"The restoration of this world-famous ship is proceeding according to the original plans. On Friday morning 14th December, we revisited the Dockyard, and were able to appreciate the progress that has been made.

Firstly, we spent a very interesting half hour with Commander J.R. Blake (Project Officer) discussing the design, and the difficulties which must be overcome to achieve perfection in the restoration, so as to enable visitors to see exactly the construction and beauty of the hull, the engine and rigging.

Splendid work has been put in on the bow section, a new bowsprit and forepeak is now in position, and the very lovely scrollwork has been restored. The original hawse pipes have been opened, and the complete fore end has been repainted.

The most striking change has, however, taken place at the stern. The six-bladed propeller, which has been constructed right here in the Birkenhead works of Stone Manganese Marine Ltd., and so generously presented to the GREAT BRITAIN project, has now been installed, together with a new shaft. In order to accommodate these and the original rudder, a part of the plating (added in 1886) has been removed. The curves of the stern section are now as in the original construction. The beautiful window frames (ports if you like), eight in number, are also in position.

The lower decks are being prepared for the replica of the engine and boiler. Meanwhile, the masts are being shaped from eleven Douglas firs, which have been cut at Cirencester, as also are the cross spars. The new funnel is being made ready for erection. The saloons, cabins and staterooms are being prepared ready for installation when the lower deck beams have been replaced.

Visitors to the ship are able to walk the decks, or stroll

around the dock floor in perfect safety to view the propeller, shaft and bottom plating. It is also possible to purchase various souvenirs, which have been cut from the timber cladding, which protected the hull for over a hundred years."

It would seem, that if any of our members are in Bristol in 1974, a visit to the dockyard where GREAT BRITAIN lies, would be well worth making.

WITH GREAT SORROW

As we were going to press with the last issue, news came of the death of our member Alex Fletcher, and our notice was necessarily brief. The "Bootle Times" of 8th November is quoted - "One of Bootle's longest serving and most respected teachers, Mr. Alex Fletcher, died on Friday at the age of 70. He left Liverpool University with a second class honours degree in science in 1923. Two years later he took up his first post with Bootle's Education Department, a partnership which was to last for another 35 years.

"From his first appointment at St.Mary's C. of E. School, he moved to Robert's Council School as headmaster, a role he continued playing when the school changed its name to St.George of England Secondary School, until his retirement. In 1968 he went into semi-retirement, and took up part-time employment, still with the Education Department, as a curriculum development officer.

"Two years later he retired to live with his family at their home in Radnor Drive. A member of Bootle Rotary Club for many years, he was instrumental in founding the Bootle and Litherland Arts and Crafts Association, and he played a permanent part in the town's Scout movement."

* * * * *

We are very sorry to have to report the death in November of Ken Hopkins, who was the Senior Librarian at the Commercial Reference Library, William Brown Street. He did a great deal of work for our Society in its early days, and encouraged our members to use the facilities available, including the Reference Library in Rumford Street (now closed). He leaves a wife and two sons to whom we tender our sincere condolences.

Fred Henry, a respected member of long standing, and well known as the author of "Ships of the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company" died on 23rd January at his home in Ainsdale. In ill health for several years, he was unable to attend our meetings of late. He would like to have returned to his native Mona's Isle in his last years, where his heart was, and where much of his interest lay. In his considerable sphere of friends and correspondents, he will be sadly missed. Our President, R.B.Summerfield, and Secretary, M.K.Stammers, attended at the Garden of Rest, Thornton, Crosby. Our sincere condolence goes to his widow and daughter.

THE SEA SHELL

But I have sinuous shells of pearly hue,
Shake one, and it awakens; then apply
Its polished lips to your attentive ear,
And it remembers its august abodes,
And murmurs as the ocean murmurs there.

W.S.Landor

I send thee a shell from the ocean beach;
But listen thou well, for my shell hath speech,
Hold to thine ear and plain thou'll hear
Tales of ships.

Charles H.Webb

JANUARY MEETING

Shetland Fishing Craft - a paper by Adrian Osler.
Our speaker based his lecture on the fine models in Liverpool Museum's collection, and a recent visit to the Shetland Islands.

The Shetlands were the crossroads between the sea-going folks of the north, between Scotland and Norway. The boat-building tradition of the islands goes back to the time of the Vikings, in hull form and techniques of construction, and up to about the mid-19th century, boats were imported in kit form from Norway, because Shetland has no native timber.

Boats are double ended; the keel and stems are laid down and the shape of hull formed in the overlapping planks. The frames are fitted afterwards and the thwarts are non-structural. The whole hull is intended to be light and flexible. The oldest and closest form to the Norwegian boats are probably the Fair Isle and Ness yoles.

The original colonists of Shetland settled on the edge of sheltered inlets or "voes" and pursued both farming and fishing. These "voes" are often beset by fierce currents, deadly rocks, and it was most important to have a good seaworthy boat. Trading journeys to Norway were frequent.

In the 15th century, the Shetlands were handed over to Scotland, and the new landlords forced the inhabitants increasingly to fishing, not for subsistence but for fish for export and the resulting cash. In the next century the long line was introduced, which considerably increased the fishermen's catches. The result was the depletion of the inshore grounds, and the need to fish away from the shore at distances of up to forty miles. The "sixen" or six-oared boat was developed for the deep water fishing. In the summer the fishermen worked from the "haaf" or fishing stations on the outer parts of the islands (so as to be near the grounds). They lived in temporary shelters and the "sixens" were drawn up on the beach. Catches were cured and dried at the "haaf" stations. The grounds were often up to 9 or 12 hours rowing away from the shore; and if the wind was favourable a square sail (and in later "sixens" a dipping lugsail), would be set. Food and drink, and peat for brewing tea was carried in the clinker-built open "sixens". Internally, the "sixens" were divided by the thwarts into rooms, and each one had a specific purpose, including the steersman's room, the ballast room, and the room for bailing with the traditional wooden bailing scoop etc.

The "haaf" stations were often sited on dangerous coastlines, demanding the utmost skill from their crews. There were two major disasters in the 19th century, one in the 1830's and the other in 1881 when 57 men were lost. As a

result of the first tragedy, half decked boats were tried and rejected. Partly as a result of the second tragedy, the "haaf" fishery went into a decline.

Many big "sixens" were built in the late 19th century, and could be anything up to 37 feet long. Jack Shewan (1865 - 1958), the maker of the Museum's models, worked at the yard of May and Co., Lerwick, all his working life from apprentice to foreman. He was a master craftsman and created the most lovely boats. He developed the hull form of the local clinker-built boats, and when he retired set to work recreating in perfect miniature detail some of the boats he had built or known. So far, some thirty models by Jack Shewan have been traced, including working half models and exhibition models, both in museums and in private hands. Jack Shewan's models of MARGARET and THISTLE stood on display at the meeting. Adrian Osler met many people who knew Jack well, and he found his workshop - a little lean-to shed at the back of his cottage, complete and still being used by a local joiner. Jack Shewan carried on model making well into his ninety's - a most remarkable man.

Mr.Osler showed many slides of the boats of today and the sites of the "haaf" fishing stations, the little harbours etc., and hoped that important sites would not be changed and overrun by the coming "oil invasion".

Only one "sixen" now survives (hopefully to be preserved) but he found many other smaller though interesting craft, like the Burra haddock boats, and the beautiful Ness yoles. These craft are built up of six planks a side only, 22 feet long, beam $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet and depth only twenty inches amidships. They have a good sheer forward to keep out spray and are low amidships for maximum rowing efficiency. They ride on the water rather than through it. When fishing, two men rowed with the traditional long oars (riding in the usual rope straps against wooden pegs) whilst a third fished over the stern with a handline.

The vote of thanks was proposed by Mr.D.Branigan, seconded by Mr. Wilfred Raine, and carried with universal acclamation.

M.K.S.

THE KING'S NAVY

A leader in the "Daily Telegraph" of Tuesday 21st June 1938 said "When His Majesty (King George VI) leads the Home Fleet to sea today he will command the greatest assembling of ships of the Royal Navy which has been seen since the Coronation Naval Review of last year (1937).....These battle exercises off Weymouth, and this Royal Review, convey no menace to any other nation. But they may well serve as a reminder to the British people themselves that to the strength and efficiency of the Royal Navy they owe all they have and hold as an Overseas Empire."

This was less than thirty-six years ago and soon we were to be embroiled in the Second World War. In its aftermath, when as a victorious ally, our Empire very largely disintegrated, and when at this present juncture, our Commonwealth ties lay broken, through entry into a European community, it is interesting to look back at a Naval occasion of those years. Years of national unity facing the Hitler threat.

The writer had the very good fortune as a Reservist, to be embarked in the battleship HMS RODNEY for these exercises. It was a warm and sunny Sunday afternoon on 19th June that the Home Fleet lay at anchor in Weymouth Bay. Reporting to the guardroom at BOSCAWEN, Portland, and then boarding a launch carrying one or two reservists, we were soon heading out of Portland Harbour past the grey breakwater forts, towards lines of tall grey ships on a deep blue sea. RODNEY was the most seaward. Completing the usual formalities at the victualling department, with hammocks to be drawn from the bedding store later in the evening, I was impressed with the size and comfort of the petty officers' mess, compared, say, to CALEDON or even NEWCASTLE. Accommodating 80 P.O's, there was a portion curtained off as smoke room and lounge, Table tennis was in progress. Supper at 6.30 p.m. was of corned beef, red cabbage, bread and butter and strong Navy tea. With rather more than a normal ship's company, space was limited below decks, and I slung my hammock in the recreation space, above a well worn piano.

Taking part in the Royal exercises, were six ships we irreverently called the "battle wagons" - NELSON, (C. in C.), RODNEY, ROYAL OAK (2nd B.S.), REVENGE, ROYAL SOVEREIGN and RAMILLIES. The cruiser force was composed of SOUTHAMPTON, NEWCASTLE, SHEFFIELD, GLASGOW, CORNWALL and AURORA. Aircraft carrier COURAGEOUS was there, with her attendant destroyer WREN. The wireless controlled target battleship CENTURION had SHIKARI as her attendant. Then there was the sloop BITTERN, four submarines NARWHAL, SEAHORSE, STARFISH and SWORDFISH and three flotillas of destroyers. Of these, EXMOUTH led eight "E" class, FAULKNOE led eight "F" class and KEMPENFELT, eight "B" class. A new type of craft was represented in MOTOR MINESWEEPER NO.1.

20th June. Awakened by the bugle at 5.30 a.m. "All hands heave ho, lash up and stow". Seamen hosed the decks on a bright sunny morning, before 7 a.m. breakfast. For reservists there were routine calls to be made at the Sick Bay, the Captain's Office and the Pay Office. At 10.30 a.m. the usual "stand-easy" - tea and lunchcake. The wireless ratings in training had inter-ship morse exercises, and soon it was time for dinner of soup, and rabbit pie. After this meal it was usual to take some exercise on deck amidships, and each section of the crew were allotted their own space, nevertheless with invisible boundaries. In the afternoon a rehearsal of manning ship for the King's arrival took place.

At 5.30 p.m., a royal salute of 21 guns was fired as the Royal barge went alongside VICTORIA AND ALBERT. Soon after this, "libertymen fall in" was piped, and a large crowd of matelots boarded the drifter WHIRLPOOL for a few hours in Weymouth.

Flying the Royal Standard, VICTORIA AND ALBERT had a royal blue companionway from deck to waterline, standing out brightly against the black and gold of her hull. The Royal Standard was floodlit after dark, as we in WHIRLPOOL rejoined the battleship.

Tuesday 21st June. A brilliant morning with a hint of

sea fog, at 6 a.m. At 7 a.m. Porridge, 2 eggs, bread and butter, marmalade and coffee. The fleet weighed anchor at 9.30 a.m., and the wireless reservists, not being in rig-of-the-day went to the remote control office, in the octopoidal, as the eightsided lofty control tower in this class of ship was called. A scouting destroyer off the Shambles Lightship reported fog, and this very soon enveloped the fleet, and the next ships either way disappeared from view. After dinner, we sailed on the fringe of a fogbank which hung like a curtain. The four "Town" class cruisers were successful in shooting down a Queen Bee pilotless aircraft, and NEWCASTLE pulled out of line to try and salvage the remains. During tea, destroyers came up on our starboard side at speed, dropping depth charges.

On two occasions, a Queen Bee flew towards us down sun, and our guns blazed but the machine soared away into the clouds. When landed on the sea soon afterwards, it was riddled with holes, though fully controllable.

After this, followed some turns at speed by destroyers, and this I found the greatest thrill of the day. Their handling was superb, as they raced along abeam of NELSON, slicing the blue water into white cascades beneath the bows and leaving foaming, swirling waves of white astern. Then with helm hard over, they would heel heavily, shipping spray from amidships to aft. ESCORT did a rapid manoeuvre which took her between NELSON and RODNEY, without them slackening speed. Altering course to prepare to slip across our bows, she seemed whilst doing about 20 knots to await the moment when extra steam should be applied to her turbines, and then with real precision, she unleashed her power and crossed ahead of us. There are white-muffled officers and hardy matelots who say "give us the boats, and you can have the ships".

The while cliffs of Dorset came into sight, and as a last thrill, aircraft in flights of three made dummy attacks on NELSON, steaming ahead of RODNEY. As each plane power-dived, a bomb was released sending up a grey column of foam, a hundred yards from the battleship, on whose open bridge was our Sailor King.

COURAGEOUS sailed away into the west to make the best of the breeze in getting her aircraft safely down on deck, and into the hangars before returning to Weymouth. In the evening, the carrier was the rendezvous for a concert which His Majesty attended, the talent being drawn from the Fleet.

Attendance at the concert was limited, and after 11 p.m., from my hammock, I could see through the port much activity around COURAGEOUS. Lights were flickering on many small boats taking off the contingents to different ships.

22nd June. There was wireless instruction whenever possible. After afternoon tea at 3.30 p.m. (currant bread, butter and jam) there were preparations to man ship for His Majesty's departure. The R.C.O. was manned and one boy telegraphist in his No.1's was detailed to carry any signals to the upper bridge as necessary. He appeared shy of the gold braid so much in evidence, and I could imagine his customary smile wearing somewhat faint when he arrived on the "holy bridge" - just as if he was at some shrine, diffidently offering a token to the gods (very critical gods too). The hushed atmosphere of the upper bridge, is deeply impressive on Royal occasions.

The Royal Barge sped round the Fleet with two other speedboats as escort on either hand. The ships, manned along the rails, cheered in turn, and the 21 gun salute was synchronized as usual by radio. Clouds of smoke blotted out the land, and packed pleasure boats loitered in the offing.

At 7.30 p.m. we "spliced the mainbrace" in honour of His Majesty, and this induced a yarning session in the mess. Our late member Leslie Speller, had spent the previous week in RODNEY, as a reservist, and experienced the firing of the sixteen inch guns, when the door of the Remote Control Office fell off its hinges! After 10 p.m. the searchlight display commenced under a low ceiling of cloud. By 11 p.m. the enfolding hammock gave sound sleep as it gently swung to the light Channel swell.

N.R.P.

QUERIES

Our member Mr. Grahame Farr, 98 Combe Road, Portishead, Bristol, BS20 9JX would like to obtain a copy of a pamphlet (probably only a few pages) which Sir William Hillary, of Lifeboat fame, published in 1839, entitled "A Letter to the Shipping and Commercial Interests of Liverpool on Steam and Pilot Boats". It is known to have been published but neither the British Museum catalogue, nor Liverpool Libraries can offer help.

* * * * *

To add to the list of mysterious abandonments, Dr. C.P. Wright, P.O. Box 710, Wolfville, Nova Scotia writes that the following appeared in the weekly paper "Nova Scotian" on 1st November 1847 :-

"Ship THETIS from Liverpool, on Sunday morning last fell in with ship JAVA bound from St. John's N.F. to Liverpool. She was perfectly tight and in good condition, with only the boats missing. Captain Hall put an officer and six men aboard of her, and brought her into port. The JAVA left St. John's on Thursday evening last with a cargo of deals, and since then the weather has been moderate".

Perhaps the crew did turn up somewhere, thus taking away the seeming mystery of the affair. Have any readers information, please?

FIRST NEW YEAR ARRIVAL AT MONTREAL

It used to be about April that ships of different nationalities would race for the prize of the gold knobbed cane, as a little warmth in the sun commenced to free the ice-bound St. Lawrence. Canadian Pacific, Head Line and Manchester Liners all vied for the trophy.

But times have changed. With reinforced ice-breaking bows, the Russian PAULIK LARISKIN moored at Montreal quite early in January, reported Lloyds List. Then there was a ship

a few years ago, which anchored on New Year's Eve just short of the line, and sailed over it on 1st January, to be disqualified. Another ship drifted over the line by accident, the crew being unaware of their entitlement to the golden cane. When Montreal's Harbourmaster reached the ship, all the crew had gone ashore and there was only a watchman on board.

On another occasion, a ship berthed in the full knowledge of being the winner. But the first visitor who arrived was not the Harbourmaster, but a bailiff to serve a summons for unpaid debts from a previous voyage!

LOSS OF EX-G.S.N.C's HERON

In the 1950's, the General Steam Navigation Company owned several short-sea traders of handsome appearance, like AUK, ADJUTANT etc. The late Leslie Speller took a fine photograph of HERON off the Needles in 1959 which remains in his collection.

Like very many more ships of this era, she was sold to Greeks at quite an early age, having been built by Charles Hill and Co., Bristol in 1957. Thereafter, she took the names THELMA P., ANASTASIA and EXPRESS I.

On 13th December 1973 she left Piraeus for Leghorn with a cargo of magnesite, and expected to take five days on passage. When half way across the Ionian Sea, she reported heavy weather and reduced speed. Next day she should have passed through the Straits of Messina, but this report was the last heard of her, and by Christmas she was overdue. She had a crew of 13 men and so far no wreckage from her has been identified.

MERSEY NOTES

Since the mention in our last issue of SOUNION ex CAMELL LAIRD ex ROYAL ULSTERMAN which sank at Beyrut following an explosion in March, this ship has now gone to the breakers.

Looking out over the broad empty spaces of the Mersey these days, it is difficult to appreciate that Britain's merchant fleet is now by far the largest in its history. At forty-six and a half million tons, we stand third in world order after Liberia and Japan.

The ceremony for launching the Sealink carferry ST.EDMUND was held at Cammell Laird's yard at about noon on 13th November 1973. Unfortunately Laird's usual fine launching weather did not hold, and with a northwesterly gale, she had to take the water on the following day. ST.EDMUND is destined for the Harwich-Hook service, and no doubt in time, we will accept the name Sealink as denoting the marine portion of British Rail activities.

The Danish coaster MERC ENTERPRISE ex VESTLOLLIK which sailed from Bramley-Moore Dock on 10th January for Treport, loaded bulk barley there and was on passage to Cork on 16th. When south of the Eddystone, in heavy seas, she took a sudden list. The Dutch tug WILLEM BARENDZ, coastal tanker MARE ALTUM and the Russian fish factory ship LENINGRAD answered her distress call. Within an hour, the coaster capsized and out of twenty persons on board, seven lost their lives. LENINGRAD took four survivors to Plymouth, and helicopters plucked some from the sea. Although the captain was saved, his wife perished. January was a particularly bad month for gales around our shores.

New Brighton Ferry Pier has now been completely demolished, whilst the floating stage and bridges were soon disposed of in Egerton Dock. The promenade pier remains closed to the public. Vandalism continues unabated, and the resort can have little attraction for visitors. It is a sad story of wanton neglect.

The Rip Rap Buoy has been removed from station and the Brazil Boat Beacon has been moved southeastwards to a position off the Perch Rock Battery. To the writer, these moves are a natural result of the closing of the Rock Channel, and seem to reduce the usefulness of the Perch Rock Light.

Naval visits in November. On 17th we had HM Frigate ANDROMEDA in Canada Dock and HM Submarine OBERON at Birkenhead. At the same period we had visits by the French escort vessels L'OPINIATRE, LE FOUGUEUX and L'AGILE and the tug L'INFATEGABLE.

On 2nd November 1973 the Chilean vessel MAIPO was testing her engines in West Float, Birkenhead when her moorings broke. She moved across the dock and collided with the ore carrier KNIGHTSGARTH, lately arrived. Both ships were locked together and the MAIPO's forepeak was flooded. VIGILANT and several tugs went to the scene, and it was only after great efforts that the two ships, both of approximately 10,000 tons were parted.

Also in November, the Alexandra Towing Co's ALFRED went over to Ireland to assist the chemical tanker SILVERFALCON. This vessel had a broken crankshaft whilst at New Ross, a small inland port in County Wexford. ALFRED commenced the tow at 4 a.m. on 27th and delivered her charge to Milford Haven at 5 a.m. on 28th.

The Mersey has at some time seen the first two of a quartette of liners just arrived at the breaker's yard - CARONIA, ORSOVA, the Portuguese ANGOLA, and HOMERIC ex MARIPOSA.

Since Lord Beeching closed the rail passenger service between Gaerwen and Amlwch, the line has come back into its own again, so that 12,000 tons of steel plate can be carried to Rhosgoch. People going on holiday to Cemaes Bay used to alight at the tiny station at Rhosgoch for a lift by car down to the resort. Now it has become the transit area for the single buoy, super tanker mooring, from whence oil will be pumped to Stanlow 78 miles away. This will again reduce the number of ships using the Mersey.

On 22nd November a Notice to Mariners was issued as follows: "Liverpool Bay, North West Light Float 53.31N 03.32W withdrawn". Doubtless another economy measure in the running of the port.

As the seafront at New Brighton has been allowed to decline so much of recent years, a visit to the Crosby Marina is well worth making. This large expanse of reclaimed foreshore, providing a yachting lake behind the sea-wall and promenade, looks like becoming a very popular Merseyside amenity. A train or bus ride to South Road, Waterloo, makes a good starting point.

The contract for the Isle of Man car ferry to come into service in 1976, has been awarded to the Ailsa Shipbuilding Co. of Troon, who built her predecessor MONAS QUEEN. The cost is stated to be £3 mn, and she is designed to carry 1600 passengers and 80 motorcars.

The world's largest refrigerated container ship, REMUERA, 42,000 tons was in Royal Seaforth Dock over Christmas to complete loading for her maiden voyage to the Antipodes. She was built by the Swan Hunter concern.

For bomb damage to the motor coaster BEN VOOAR at Cork in October 1971, compensation of £1700 has been settled in Cork District Court in favour of Ramsey S.S. Co.

T. & J. Harrison Ltd. have now added a "bulker" to their fleet, and although she bears the familiar name of WAYFARER, she is unlikely to be a visitor to our port. Of Japanese build, she was in the Black Sea ports of Odessa and Poti over the Christmas period.

STALEY BRIDGE, was a small motor coaster of John Summers and Sons Ltd., built by Scotts of Bowling in 1940. Still with the same name, she is now owned by Salvage and Cable (Folkestone) Ltd. For some time she has been trying to raise the hopper FOREMOST 101, which sank last January in the main Southampton shipping channel. So far, she has not been successful, with chains breaking in the most recent attempt.

On the last day of January a collision occurred off Egremont between the inward Liberian RUHR ORE, bound for Birkenhead, and the outward bound MANCHESTER CRUSADE. Both vessels were severely damaged above the waterline, and were temporarily berthed in Gladstone Dock.

On 1st December, the Panamanian tanker MARLAND ex BIDEFORD had a serious fire whilst in Rose Brae Graving Dock, Woodside, for overhaul by Cammell Lairds. Four men died and several were taken to hospital. The ship was saved, and is of 44,000 tons, built in Sweden in 1958. Subsequent repairs were carried out on board MARLAND in Royal Seaforth Dock, and later she left under tow for the Clyde.

26th January. The small Spanish tug PUNTA CRUCES having come across the Bay from Pasajes in wild winter weather, was moored alongside floating crane TITAN in Morpeth Dock. The main jib of the crane lay in a horizontal position for an ocean tow. How sad to see this Lobnitz product of 1952 leaving our port. It seems only yesterday, that the writer spent a few hours on board the new TITAN in Wallasey Dock. His firm, (the same which bought the GREAT EASTERN many years ago) had bought the old TITAN for scrap in 1955, and the occasion was the removal of the old crane's jib, in the process of dismantlement. Titan's port of registry has been changed on the stern, to Piraeus.

Of recent years, Tyrrells of Arklow purchased the former Coast Lines' FERNFIELD and renamed her SHEVRELL. She went out to Canada and has been again renamed. Tyrrells later purchased WIRRAL COAST, which was built by Cammell Lairds in 1962, and also renamed her SHEVRELL. She looked rather decrepit in their colours, but has now passed back to the British flag as PORTMARNOCK. In late January, she was berthed in East Float from Amsterdam. With a grey hull and the former white upper-works restored, she looks smart again.

In spite of the high wages paid to typesetters, many misprints occur in the press these days. On 30th January I was particularly startled to read in our local shipping journal a description of the situation at Morpeth Dock - "MANXMAID 994 IoMSPC ETS Feb for Red Sea". Incredulity knew no bounds, but all is well. A line of type had slipped, and the ETS note should have applied to Harrison's AUTHOR loading in another dock!

N.R.P.

OUR BLUE COVER

We are again issuing the blue illustrated cover to enclose the quarterly numbers of the "Bulletin" comprising Volume 18. The subject is the old Custom House, at Canning Place, Liverpool, which was in use until gutted in a 1940 air-raid. The present Custom House is a portion of the Cunard Building, originally used by the Royal Mail Lines Ltd. and Pacific Stean Navigation Co.

LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD DOCK SYSTEM

There is food for thought in some facts concerning the evolution of the Mersey Docks system over the last 200 years or so. Especially is this so, with the closing of the south end docks, which were the oldest and where, for today's ships, the depth of water was difficult to maintain. Francis E. Hyde's book entitled "Liverpool and the Mersey" gives the following dates when our docks were completed:-

Salthouse	1753	:	Wellington	1849
Dukes	1773	:	Sandon	1851
Kings	1788	:	Huskisson	1852
Queens	1796	:	Canada	1859
Canning	1813	:	Herculaneum	1864
Princes	1821	:	Alfred	1866
Clarence	1830	:	Langton/Alexandra	1881
Brunswick	1832	:	Harrington	1883
Waterloo	1834	:	Hornby	1884
Victoria/Trafalgar	1836	:	Toxteth	1888
Albert	1845	:	Vittoria	1909
Morpeth/Egerton	1847	:	Gladstone	1927
Salisbury/Bramley		:	Bidston	1933
Moore	1848	:	Seaforth	1973

FIRST WORLD WAR TREASURE

The steamship HARROVIAN was on passage from New York to Havre when she was stopped by the German submarine U-69 on 16th April 1916. She was carrying a large quantity of copper. The crew was allowed to take to the boats and landed safely in the Scilly Islands.

The salvage firm of Risdon Beazley Marine Ltd., using their salvage vessel DROXFORD, based on Poole, have made extensive searches of the sea bed over the last sixteen years. The reported position of the wreck was not accurate, but was found 27 miles away, and after no less than 84 other wrecks had been examined.

In 1973, substantial landings of the valuable metal have been made, after an exploit costing more than half a million pounds sterling.

SUMMER CRUISING PROGRAMMES, 1974

Liverpool to Llandudno. A leaflet issued by the Isle of Man Steam Packet Co., 40 Brunswick Street, Liverpool, details the Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday excursions to the North Wales resort. The season is from 26th May to 12th September, and the fare, increased once more, is £2.20 or, if a book of vouchers is purchased, £18 for ten trips. There is an optional coastal cruise to Point Lynas. No mention is made of any further possible fuel surcharge, and we must all hope that by the time these excursions commence, crisis conditions will have eased.

The Manx ships will, as usual, be serving Douglas, Ardrossan, Belfast, Dublin, Heysham and Fleetwood. The opportunity to travel by sea from Liverpool to Scotland should not be ignored. It happens that on occasions the 9 a.m. sailing from Liverpool to Douglas on Saturdays, goes on to Ardrossan at 3 p.m. arriving there about 8.30 p.m. This takes one within easy reach of Largs, an excellent resort from which to explore the Clyde estuary,

Liverpool to Manchester. From Princes Stage, Liverpool at 1100 arriving Manchester 1800 (return by rail) on Saturdays 25th May, 6th July, 10th August, 7th September and 21st Sept. Fare £2.20 including rail return. Accommodation is limited, so make your reservation early to Co-op Travel, Corporation Street, Manchester M60 4ES. Buffet and bar provided. There are similar cruises from Pomona Dock, Manchester to Liverpool at 9.30 a.m. arriving 1630 on Sunday 26th May, Saturday, 22nd June and Sundays, 7th July, 11th Aug., 8th Sept. and 22nd Sept. For the sail only the fare is £1.50.

This Ship Canal cruise is largely educational, and for some years has been well patronized, hence the increased programme this year. The usual vessel is the MPTE motor ferry EGREMONT.

Correspondence concerning the Liverpool Nautical Research Society's "Bulletin" may be sent to the Editor:-

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Southport PR8 4RH

L I V E R P O O L N A U T I C A L
R E S E A R C H S O C I E T Y

B U L L E T I N

The Liverpool Museums
William Brown Street
Liverpool 3.

Hon.Secretary - M.K.Stammers, B.A.
Editor - N. R. Pugh

And all day long the stone
Felt how the wind was blown;
And all night long the rock
Stood the sea's shock:
While from the window, I
Looked out, and wondered why,
Why at such length
Such force should fight such strength.

John Masefield.

Vol.XVIII No.2

April-June 1974

WRECKED AT CROSBY - 1902

Liverpool Museum was able to buy a fine builder's model in 1970, of R.P.Houston's steamer HERACLIDES. This model was restored and put on display in the Port of Liverpool Gallery, and its acquisition was due to some sharp observation by our members Captain Chubb and Mr.D.Branigan.

The original HERACLIDES was an iron steamer of 2788 tons gross, 320 x 40ft, built at the Pallion Yard of Messrs. Boulds and Shearer of Sunderland in 1886. Just recently, the interesting story of her grounding on Crosby beach in 1902 has come to light again.

On 16th October 1902, HERACLIDES sailed out of Liverpool in ballast, bound for Glasgow. She was only lightly ballasted and drew nine feet four inches forward and seventeen feet six inches aft. The lack of ballast was one of the main reasons for her stranding as the Court of Inquiry later revealed. As she drew out of the docks and into the River, the weather was fine and clear with a fresh southwesterly wind. When she reached the more open water of the channel, the weather became squally. Her pilot decided to take the weather side of the channel. This, of course, contravened Article 25 of the Rule of the Road:- "In narrow channels every steam vessel shall, when it is safe and practicable, keep to that side of the fairway or mid-channel which lies on the starboard side of such a vessel". HERACLIDES sailed on this wrong side until she reached No.4 buoy, when she had the Crosby Lightvessel on her starboard bow. The pilot's intention was to try and pass to windward of the lightship. However, before this manoeuvre could be accomplished, a heavy squall hit the ship, and with her high freeboard trapping the full force of the wind, she was forced to leeward, under the stern of the lightship. She then refused to answer her helm and was in great danger of going aground.

The crew attempted to let go the only anchor available for instant use, but the cable jammed on the windlass after only six fathoms had been let go. So, at the mercy of wind and tide, HERACLIDES went ashore on Taylor's Bank on the starboard side of the channel. By 11-10 p.m. she was well aground and distress rockets were sent up. These were spotted by the coastguards, and the New Brighton and Formby Lifeboats were both launched. It took the New Brighton sailing lifeboat one hour and twenty minutes to arrive on the scene, under tow from a steam tug.

The Formby Lifeboat arrived a little later - her crew had

already made one rescue in the preceding twentyfour hours. This casualty was the schooner MARIA SOPHIE which had been blown ashore off Hightown Battery, the crew of four having been taken off and brought ashore.

Most of the crew of the grounded HERACLIDES was taken off by the New Brighton boat, and the Formby boat took off the last fourteen, as it seemed likely that she would break up. The transfer of men to lifeboats was a very difficult operation in the heavy seas, and some received bad bruises as they tumbled from their ship into the lifeboats tossing alongside. The lifeboats stood by for two hours, and as the tide ebbed, they too occasionally touched ground on the bank.

At 1.30 a.m. the Master and Chief Engineer inspected the damage in the engine room. The main steampipe was fractured, the boiler had shifted two inches, the stokehold plates were opening up as the bulkheads buckled, and the propeller shaft was out of alignment. There seemed to be all the signs that she had broken her back. And so she was finally abandoned at 5.30 a.m. The two lifeboats headed back to their stations after the weary vigil. Both arrived about 8 a.m. The survivors in the Formby boat were taken to the Railway Hotel, and given hot coffee and rum to thaw out the bitter cold of that long night.

Meanwhile, at New Brighton, Mrs. Kirkham of Eaton Villa took charge of the twentyfive men landed there and provided them with breakfast, and there was a big roaring kitchen fire to dry their clothes. The men had not been allowed to take their kitbags with them in the lifeboat. They only had the clothes in which they stood. Mrs. Kirkham sent for a doctor to attend the chief steward who had badly hurt his leg whilst jumping in to the lifeboat. Two days later, the Liverpool Daily Post carried a note of thanks from the crew to the lifeboatmen and to Mrs. Kirkham.

At about 9.30 a.m. on the same morning as the rescue took place (17th October), HERACLIDES floated off Taylors' Bank on the top of high water, and drifted ashore at Crosby

Point, her bow pointing to the shore. It was still believed that her back was broken. She was taken over by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board to be dealt with as an obstruction. A thorough inspection revealed that her hull was intact if somewhat buckled, and the same evening, Capt. Young of the Liverpool and Glasgow Salvage Association went out to inspect her. He found that the hull was resting across a ridge of sand. Some sixty feet of the forward end overhung the ridge and the sternpost was broken. He thought he could get her off on the next spring tide, and the excavation of a channel to assist the refloating was considered.

The first salvage attempt was made by the famous RANGER assisted by tugs. The sea was still high and there was great difficulty in getting the towlines aboard. Consequently it was well past high tide before they started, and HERACLIDES did not budge. On the next two days the weather got worse, making work impossible, with seas breaking over the ship. At low tide on 23rd October, a salvage crew got aboard. They refilled some of the ballast tanks, and sent down the topmasts to prevent the ship from knocking herself to pieces. With an improvement in the weather next day, RANGER laid out extra anchors, and at low tide work was commenced digging a channel by hand. All the Dock Board dredgers had too deep a draught to approach. A light draught suction dredger was improvised, the shallow draft steamer FARADAY took on board a large steam pump. One hundred tons of coal was moved from amidships to a forward hold, to improve the chances of floating off the stern, which was becoming embedded in the sand. 350 tons of coal were shovelled through holes cut in her side plating, and when possible the channel was dug out.

All this hard work went on until 30th October. A second effort to refloat was started and soon abandoned when the depth of water on the bank at high tide was found to be only ten feet six inches. A third attempt was made on 31st and the tugs BLAZER, HOTSPUR and PATHFINDER pulled HERACLIDES off the bank and into deep water. She was then towed back to Liverpool for repair.

HERACLIDES carried on in the Houston service until 1907.

On 25th October of that year she went ashore on rocks at Hottentot Point, German south west Africa. This time, she was not so lucky, as her two forward holds filled rapidly, the passengers and crew taking to the lifeboats and getting safely ashore. In the next few days there were several abortive attempts to warp her off, but she could not be moved. Finally on 29th October, the master decided to abandon her, a sad end for a well built and useful ship.

M.K.S.

STERN WHEEL REVIVAL

From the Science Museum, South Kensington, London, John Robinson, our former Assistant Secretary offers the following:-

"Whilst enthusiasts in Britain struggle to save the last of our paddle steamer fleet from the scrapyard, news from the U.S.A. indicates that a renaissance may be at hand. The Mississippi steam stern wheeler DELTA QUEEN built in 1924, it is believed on the Clyde, has been the subject of many reels of television footage, thanks to her longevity. After fifty years of active service on the Mississippi and its tributaries, she has now fallen prey to the increasingly stringent fire regulations for passenger ships, and the combustible nature of her upperworks is one cause of her imminent withdrawal. The 285 feet long vessel is to be replaced however by another stern wheeler no less than 397 feet long.

"MISSISSIPPI QUEEN is currently under construction at a yard in Jeffersonville, Indiana, and is expected to be launched into the Ohio River in 1975. Tandem compound steam engines are being supplied by Pine Tree Engineering. If the new vessel fulfils her promoters' hopes and pays her way, shall we perhaps see more vessels of this type on the Mississippi, with the possibility of moonlit races, reminiscent of the Currier and Ives prints on American parlour walls?"

* * * * *

NAME CHANGES

ATLANTA ex C.P.AMBASSADOR ex BEAVEROAK (1965)
 ASPHALION ex POLYPHEMUS ex ASPHALION ex RADNORSHIRE ex
 ACHILLES (1948)
 AFRICAN LION ex KING HENRY
 AZELLA ex VENTURE ex CHESHIRE COAST ex SPARTAN PRINCE ex
 CHESHIRE COAST ex MALABAR ex CHESHIRE COAST
 AMARYLLIS ex BONIFACE ex ROSSETTI (1956)
 ARYA BOD ex WARWICKSHIRE (1967)
 ANANGEL FRIENDSHIP ex OPAWA
 ANANGEL PRUDENCE ex ORISSA
 ACHILLES ex AFON CEFNI ex APFLEGARTH (tug)
 BENALBANACH ex PANDO GULF ex WOODARRA (1957)
 BENWYVIS ex PANDO POINT ex WAROONGA "
 CITY OF PIRAEUS ex MAID OF ARGYLL
 CARRON ex FLYING WITCH (tug)
 CAST BEAVER ex INISHOWEN HEAD
 DARRO ex CARNATIC
 EMEL ex MESO ex KARDESLEH ex KYLE QUEEN ex CORNISH COAST
 ex VOLANA (1913) (Turkish)
 FIVE HILLS ex ARCHON CHERUBIM ex TREMORVAH (1954)
 GOLDEN CITY ex KAVO ASTRAPI ex NORTHUMBERLAND (1955)
 HOWTH TRADER ex HAWTHORN ex HARGLEN ex IRISH HEATHER (1952)
 IRENES FAITH ex ARKADIA ex SUGAR REFINER (1958)
 ILKON DALIO ex COVENTRY CITY
 ILKON POLY ex TORONTO CITY
 JAG SHANTI ex CUNARD CAMPAIGNER
 KHALID ex FULKA ex ANATOLIAN ex ASCANIA ex CITY OF DURHAM
 ex ANATOLIAN (1955)
 MALDIVE SEA ex FAIR HEAD
 NAIAS II ex LEASOWE (ferry) (Panamanian)
 N Z WAITANGI ex N Z 2 ex BRITANNIC
 REGENT LIBERTY ex KUMBA
 RAYNESTONE ex MAPLE ex MALTA FAITH ex SOUTRA
 ROSEMARY D ex VALERIE B ex SANSFIELD ex EDGEFIELD ex
 SPOLESTO (1956)
 SOLWAY FIRTH ex G.R. VELIE ex CORNISESINGEL
 SPERUS ex HESPERUS (Scottish Lights)
 TRIAENA ex MERSEY 26 (grab hopper)
 TONG JIT ex ALEXANDER A.S. ex ORIENT CITY (1960)

We all have pleasant memories of our former meeting place - the Clubship LANDFALL, which was then berthed in Canning Dock. The Journal of Commerce recently had a short article about her history. As LCT 7074 she was one of hundreds of landing craft built for the invasion of France, and came from a Tyne yard. She loaded a cargo of ten tanks and their crews at Felixstowe on 2.6.1944 and sailed on 5.6.1944 for the French coast. She lay off the Normandy beaches on the night of sixth and put her tanks ashore at daylight next morning. She suffered considerable damage in the process, but returned to Southampton on 9th and thereafter made a number of trips across the Channel with equipment for the Army. She now lies in Collingwood Dock as a floating restaurant and nightclub, operated by Compass Caterers.

GENERAL AVERAGE

"G. A." as it is known in the shipping industry, is a custom or practice associated with a ship and her cargo, that goes back to the distant past. Indeed, its origin is still obscure.

Over the centuries there have been many legal definitions, but probably one most often quoted is that of Lawrence J. in 1801:- "All loss which arises in consequence of extraordinary sacrifices made, or expenses incurred, for the preservation of the ship and cargo comes within General Average, and must be borne proportionately by all who are interested".

If a vessel is in imminent danger of being lost and cargo is thrown overboard, to ensure the safety of the vessel, then the owners of the cargo sacrificed, shall be compensated by those who have benefited, that is, the ship owner and the owners of the cargo left on board. The custom is not confined to a loss of cargo, but applies also where the master of the vessel, under similar circumstances, has voluntarily incurred expense and her cargo are saved from total loss.

One instance is the cutting away of masts, spars and sails when a sailing ship is on her beam ends, in order to lighten her and bring her upright. Another instance, with a steamer or motorship, would be incurring damage to propeller and shafting, due to working the engines whilst aground in a position of peril.

Whilst the principle is clear enough, there have been numerous law suits to decide whether or not, in particular instances, the sacrifice of goods, materials or expenses are recoverable in general average.

A historic case of considerable importance at the time, concerned a sailing ship named HIBERNIA of 445 tons, built at Cowes in 1810, owned by one H. Taylor, and under the command of J. Lennon. HIBERNIA left Gravesend on 21st November 1813 bound for St. Thomas in the West Indies during the state of war between Great Britain and the United States of America. She joined a convoy at Spithead, sailing on 27th November, escorted by HMS QUEEN.

In a letter to Admiralty dated 7th December 1813 in position 39.42N 14.00W, Captain Colville of QUEEN wrote:- "We had experienced a strong gale from the north west on 30th November, which scattered the convoy considerably, but on the following day, I had succeeded in collecting the whole, and on the evening of 1st December, we had 192 sail in a compact body. On the 2nd, the convoy was again dispersed by a most violent tempest from the westward, which continued with unabated fury with heavy seas, until 5th. Since this last gale I have only been joined by 27 sail and have not seen any of the men-of-war that sailed in company with me".

HIBERNIA was one of the vessels which lost contact and thereafter proceeded independently to destination. Incidentally, the average marine insurance rate between London and the West Indies in convoy was 10%. This rate fluctuated, and was sometimes levied at 20% with 10% returned upon safe arrival.

On 18th December HIBERNIA was attacked by an American

privateer, and the master, seeing no prospect of escaping by sail, determined to resist, although his vessel mounted only six guns, and had a crew of 22 men. The U.S. ship carried 22 guns and had a crew of 125 men. After a conflict of eleven hours, during which one man was killed and four wounded, HIBERNIA succeeded in breaking off the engagement, but not without considerable damage to her hull and rigging. She arrived at St. Thomas almost a wreck, landed her injured men to hospital and discharged her cargo.

It was for this loss and damage, voluntarily incurred at a time of peril for the safety of the vessel and her cargo, that the owner sought to recover a proportion from the owners of the cargo on board at the time, as a contribution in General Average. Accordingly he sued one of the cargo owners (S. Curtis) at Guildhall, London on 2nd September 1815, to recover the sum of £140 as his proportion of the damage to the ship and the cost of hospital treatment for the wounded - a sum amounting in all to £4,000. Attack by American privateers was then of such frequency, that the principle of the matter was of considerable importance.

The first hearing was adjourned because of the default of the jurors, none of whom appeared. When the case was eventually heard, the Chief Justice - Sir Vicary Gibb, in pronouncing judgement said: "The manner of resisting the privateer was for the general benefit, but it was part of the adventure. No particular part of the property was voluntarily sacrificed for the protection of the rest. The losses fell where the fortunes of war cast them and there it seems to me they ought to rest".

This decision was questioned by a subsequent writer who commented that if a ship sails on her voyage provided with guns and ammunition sufficient to resist an enemy, these are provided for that purpose and no other. He added that the use of expenditure of them for their appropriate purpose could not be regarded as G.A., the ship being so supplied being surely a notice to the crew that they are hired to fight in case of need, and are not there merely to navigate the ship.

Illustrating this point, and the hazards of seafaring in those turbulent years, is an advertisement by Booth and Hodgkinson, Redcross Street, Liverpool for marine stores, including "Superior gunpowder manufactured on the principles of Sir Humphrey Davy for export and ship use".

W.TAPSON

WITH GREAT SORROW

On Monday 4th February, Edward Jones of Edmund Street, Wallasey, died peacefully in hospital at the age of ninety. There was a funeral service at St.Paul's Church, Seacombe at 3 p.m. on Thursday 7th, followed by interment at Rake Lane Cemetery.

Ted Jones was a much esteemed member of our Society, and a regular attender until age, and the results of an unfortunate collision with a towed vehicle in failing light, precluded going out to evening functions. He was a keen photographer of many years standing, and it is fortunate that he has bequeathed his lantern slide collection, mostly illustrating old Liverpool and Mersey scenes, to the Wallasey Historic Society, based at Earlston Road Libraries.

Ted gave a paper to the Society on 13th November 1958 with the subject "Life aboard a Wooden Wall" - recollections of service aboard HMS EAGLE, baseship at Liverpool, 1914-1919. This was printed in Vol.9 of our "Transactions". He also co-operated in March 1962 with the late E. Cuthbert Woods, and the late John Smart in the presentation of a paper on the "Wallasey Luggage Boats". Ted was a widower, and in his last years living alone, was visited daily by his brother Fred (also a former member) who attended to his shopping needs. Ted had a lively mind and a wonderful memory - we mourn his passing.

* * * * *

Of all the ways of life but one
The path of duty leads to happiness.

Southey

QUERIES

The Mossop Family Foundation, 2899 Walnut Hill Avenue, Philadelphia PA 19152 is researching the family name "Mossop" and writes for any possible source of information:- "We have vague records of many men who sailed out of the port of Liverpool during the late 1700's and throughout the 1800's by the name of Mossop. Also in our files we have information regarding a Captain Richard George Mossop of the barque LIZZIE IREDALE, who was awarded a silver medal by the Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society, February 1st, 1878". This was in connection with the rescue of the crew of the German barque BREMERHAVEN, who were landed at Philadelphia. The National Maritime Museum, Greenwich have kindly supplied details of this BREMERHAVEN incident. If our members have information about any other seafarers named Mossop, would they please contact the Foundation, as above, or our Hon.Secretary.

* * * * *

A Mersey Pilot was recently heard to use the name "Stavanger Bay" for the Alfred Basin, Birkenhead. Can any member enlighten the Editor on this, please?

* * * * *

From our Council member, Mr. D.P. Branigan we have the following query:- "On the outbreak of War in August 1914, Harland and Wolff had just launched the 32,000 ton STATENDAAM for Holland Amerika Line. Work on the vessel ceased until 1917, when the British Government purchased the vessel, and she was quickly completed for the transport of troops. Despite being operated by White Star Line, she was given the name of JUSTICIA.

"On 19th July 1918, she was torpedoed at a point said to be 20 miles northwest of Skerryvore. Hit in the engine room, she was taken in tow and course set towards Lough Swilly. Next day she was attacked again by U.54 and UB.124, and struck by several torpedoes, she sank. The destroyers MARNE and MILBROOK finished off UB.124 at a point which was possibly some 7 miles from the original attack".

"Accounts of this affair seem to be very scarce and sketchy. Contemporary reports were heavily censored. Does any member know of a good, reliable account of the JUSTICIA's loss, and where she sank? It would seem that she must have got within about 20 miles of Lough Swilly, and ought to be about 8 miles from the position of UB.124's sinking. The Hydrographic Office have recently issued a book dealing with wreck positions in the Western Approaches. This gives the position of UB.124 some 10 miles or so off Lough Swilly, but there is no mention of the JUSTICIA wreck. How could a 32,000 ton vessel be missed?"

MERSEY NOTES

Amongst new vessels coming into service with the Ocean Fleets group, the very large tanker TROILUS is on her maiden voyage from the Persian Gulf to Trinidad. The Polish-built SHONGA which visited Liverpool in March, is in May completing her second voyage to West Africa.

The 20,000 ton Danish motor-vessel FALSTRIA, with containers from Seattle, Vancouver etc. for Liverpool and European ports, broke down when south of the Fastnet Light on 13th February. UTRECHT and WILLEM BARENDSE took her in tow, and postponing her call at Seaforth, took her to Hamburg.

The large Alexandra tugs of the CROSBY type have been towing sections of the new Liverpool Landing Stage from Dublin to Birkenhead. The Peter Lind concern is working on the project at the old Anchor Line quay (Four Bridges) and the new stage should be in use by the autumn.

It will be remembered that the MAGNUS floating cranes of the Ulrich Harms concern were used to refloat the dredger CRESSINGTON in the Mersey a few years ago. These lifting craft were towed from Rotterdam to Southampton fairway, and succeeded in removing the wreck of FOREMOST 101 in two pieces. (See our last issue).

After the M.D.H.C. floating crane TITAN had been towed away by the Spanish tug PUNTACRUCES in early February, another Spanish tug, PUNTATORRE came from Pasajes for the dredger MERSEY 26 which had been renamed TRIAENA.

The coaster GOLDEN TRADER was towed from Milford Haven to Liverpool by SUSIE HOWARD, arriving 14th March. Her cargo was discharged at Brunswick Dock from whence PUNTATORRE towed her to Bilbao for scrap. Built in 1950 at Faversham, she is ex LADY HYACINTH ex BALLYEDWARD ex LEAFOAM ex SPRINGWOOD ex GOLDLYNX, and was well known in Kelly's coal run between Garston and Irish ports, a few years ago.

Seen in the Mersey in May - Panamanian ANTONIO MIGUEL from Lisbon, ex ROWAN ex ROWANFIELD, built at Lytham in 1938 for the Zillah Steamship Company.

The old motor coaster INDORITA, originally built for the steel-making firm of John Summers and Sons Ltd. left Egerton Dock for a breaker's yard at Bilbao on 21st March. The Spanish tug PUNTATORRE was taking her to Holyhead, where the ex-Preston dredger CALDER awaited towage to the same destination.

On 27th March a 14,000 ton Panamanian tanker sailed up the Mersey named PHYLLIS T. CONWAY ex BARREN HILL. Of the many tankers seen in the port these days, she was interesting as being a "jumbo-ized" vessel. The forward half was built in 1960, and the after part in 1944.

Captain Gerald Barry, master of LEINSTER has been appointed Commodore of the B. & I. Line. He started his career as a cadet with Coast Lines Ltd. and DUNDALK was his first command at the age of 26. He was one of the last to leave the former INNISFALLEN when she was mined and sunk in the Mersey in 1940. In the following year he received only minor injuries when GALWAY COAST was attacked by six enemy aircraft when on passage from Dublin to London.

In March 1973, the Alexandra tugs CROSBY and ALFRED towed a Danish luxury liner being built by Vickers at Barrow, round to the Tyne for completion. This liner since named COPENHAGEN commenced her sea trials late in March 1974, but it was then announced that her owners were in financial difficulties, and that she would be offered for sale.

From 9th to 12th May we had a visit from the Danish Naval Frigate FYLLA, which berthed at Canada Dock. She had come from her normal fishery protection duties in Faroese waters, not the most congenial area to work in. She carries a helicopter with excellent landing and hangar facilities, and has stabilizers. Her largest piece of armament is a 3" gun. I was impressed with her operations room abaft the bridge, and with the important part which radar plays in her work. Clear-view screens, of which there were four on the bridge, were said to be essential in northern latitudes, and had electric elements for the dispersal of snow.

Liverpool's new Port Radar Station at Seaforth is now in operation, with a most commanding view of the estuary from Eastham Locks to the Bar. There are seven display units and a total staff of fifteen. The height is 84ft giving a radar range up to 20 miles. All radio conversations are recorded on tape. Our Secretary hopes to arrange for members to visit the new station on a Saturday in September.

The Easter holiday gave very cool easterly winds on Merseyside. On Good Friday, ASPHALION ex POLYPHEMUS etc. docked through the south lock at Birkenhead, and with bow, stern and breast tugs, made a nice entry. The next day, CLAN MACINTYRE also docked through the south lock, but approached at too small an angle to the knuckle, and the bow tug, having to hold the Clan's head off the wall, found herself "locked out" in the River. This, I was told, was not an unknown circumstance. A gap was soon made, so that the tug could squeeze through and precede her tow into the entrance.

On 28th February - Election Day - it was announced that the M.P.T.E. ferry LEASOWE had been sold to Greeks for £34,000. She became redundant when standard gangways were fitted at Seacombe, and only one stand-by boat is needed for the two remaining ferries. The former Birkenhead Corporation boats OVERCHURCH, MOUNTWOOD and WOODCHURCH can now use Seacombe Stage. LEASOWE was last on service on Christmas Eve and was licenced to carry 1342 passengers. She had a hearty send-off when she sailed from Birkenhead as NAIAS II, registered Panama, on Tuesday evening 14th May. It is said that she is to be used cruising amongst the Aegean Islands. Proceeding under her own power, her saloon windows were boarded over and saloon entrances made watertight. Her gangway doors had been removed, possibly to enable any shipped seas to clear quickly. On deck, in addition to her own two lifeboats, were four fibreglass motor launches, three on the boatdeck and one athward ship in the gangway space. It is interesting to recall that MacBrayne's LOCHEARN went out to Greece as NAIAS, and now we have NAIAS II !

After 45 years in Mersey towage, Capt. A.J.H. Lamey has retired as General Manager with The Alexandra Towing Co. His successor is Capt. H.J. Braithwaite, formerly of United Towing Co., Hull. In 1968, J.H. Lamey & Co. was taken over by The Alexandra Towing Co., and Capt. Lamey took charge of their coastal and deepsea towage work.

In April, Cammell Laird Shipbuilders launched the tanker ESSO SEVERN, now in the fitting out basin.

On the same day as our March Meeting, a memorable lunch-time event took place in the parish church of Our Lady and Saint Nicholas, which we know as the Sailors' Church. A full congregation, with many standing, gathered to hear the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Right Revd. Michael Ramsey, speak on "Faith". This was a colourful and impressive occasion, as the Archbishop told how his first appointment was as curate of this very church forty-five years ago. He expressed his love for Liverpool, although both the city and its parish church have vastly changed in the years between. The fact that

the very beautiful clock tower and steeple has survived time and wars was not lost on our renowned visitor, whose retirement next November had just been announced.

With two exceptions, all the passenger vessels in the Isle of Man S.P. Co's fleet have fine sounding whistles so rare these days. BEN MY CHREE makes a most unimpressive sound for so fine a ship, and one was suggested to me that the whistle must have been bought at a sale! MONAS QUEEN has a pair of air whistles set into the superstructure, and making a very commonplace sound. It is good to know that LADY OF MANN's "voice" has been installed at the Bass Brewery in Runcorn as a fire alarm. But how very strange that such a rare object should have been let to go to a scrapyard, from whence the dogged perseverance of the engineering manager of the brewery rescued it.

The Trinity House steam lighthouse tender ARGUS, based for some years at Holyhead, was offered for sale at Swansea in March. She was built by Fergusons in 1946. The tender SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL has replaced her at Holyhead, and was berthed at Princes stage a few months ago.

If a change of policy in the Mersey Pilot Service had not been approved, it would soon have been necessary to replace the No.1 Cutter, SIR THOMAS BROCKLEBANK. For some years the fleet has been maintained with three vessels to keep on station one cutter at the Bar, one off Point Lynas and another in reserve. However, a new plan means that one cutter for the Bar station, and one in reserve will suffice. No longer will there be a pilotboat cruising off Point Lynas, but a highspeed launch will take pilots out from a jetty being built below the Lighthouse. An adjoining building will accommodate the pilots with sleeping quarters for ten. There will be radar and a V.H.F. radio telephone in the lighthouse, and no doubt full communication links.

This spring, the Customs launch DEFIANT, lying in Wellington Dock, was offered for sale, and had been a boarding boat in the Mersey for 13 years. A boarding service is no longer operating here.

N.R.P.

FEBRUARY MEETING

The wintry nights of February are not always conducive to leaving ones hearth and home for the windswept city, and so we held this meeting on a Saturday afternoon. It took the form of a forum on ship modelling. Four speakers gave brief talks on their own particular model making interests.

Our Chairman, Mr. K. Stuttard, started with a description of the research and construction of a late 18th century revenue cutter. He gave us a short history of these vessels and their design, and the sources of information and plans, and with the finished model he described the different stages of construction. This model was certainly testimony to the skill and patience of its maker.

Mr. E. Lear then told us about making ships in bottles. He suggested short, wide-necked bottles as being the easiest for the job, and described the ingenious way in which all the fore and aft stays are used to haul up the masts, once the ship is inside the bottle. Mr. Lear brought some excellent examples of this old sailors' art to illustrate his talk.

Dr. F. Howard, discussed the problems of taking lines off half-models. He has devised a useful instrument for this - a board mounted on two legs above the model, with a sliding pointer by which the body sections can be marked on the paper pinned to the board. He also demonstrated another method using triangular sections of stiff cardboard which had been devised by Mr. W. Salisbury for measuring rigged models. Dr. Howard also makes plans of flats from measurements taken of full-sized hulls, and he builds half models of the bow and stern sections to check the correctness of his lines.

After a coffee break, Mr. A. Gosling of the Crosby Model Boat Club demonstrated his ingenious, free-lance model of an armed naval steam launch.

M.K.S.

MARCH MEETING

On 14th March we were privileged to hear the Director of the National Maritime Museum, deliver a lecture entitled "The Archaeology of the Boat".

Mr. Greenhill emphasized that he was not dealing with under-water archaeology alone but with an integrated discipline, which by drawing together many kinds of evidence, could shed new light on the development of the boat. The history of its development from ancient times had long been treated as a very simple step-by-step process, based on a small number of pieces of evidence. It has been assumed, for example, that the Saxon ship was the direct predecessor of the Viking ship, which may not be the case. It is possible for very primitive and very complex craft to co-exist on the same waterway or sea area as in Bangladesh.

In the same way, the dug-out has often been regarded as a primitive and crude craft. This is not necessarily so. An intensive examination of the existing evidence is needed, plus examination of documentary evidence, objects, archaeological excavations, actual boats still in use, and possibly the construction of replicas, before a proper understanding can be reached. Unfortunately, some of the existing evidence has been distorted. For example the Gokstad and Oseberg ships, which have been everyone's idea of a typical Viking ship for so long, were rebuilt without any record of what was new and what was original timber. Fifty years or so later, it is impossible to tell which is which. Nevertheless, it is clear that neither vessel was typical of its time. This conclusion has been the result of the discovery, and the painstaking excavation, preservation and partial reconstruction of the Skuldelev ships discovered in Roskilde Fjord, Denmark.

In this case, it is possible to talk about the evidence as it exists, and one can be certain that only the excavated timbers have been used in the restoration. Also, minute examination of every piece of timber recovered has brought

to light much new evidence on building techniques.

Turning to documentary evidence, Mr. Greenhill showed a slide from a passage from Caesar's "Gallic Wars" describing the boats of the Britons. As Caesar was a notably accurate observer, it can be fairly assumed that the description is correct and provides useful evidence of a tradition of British boatbuilding which pre-dates the Viking age.

Objects such as coins and seals sometimes carried pictorial evidence of boats of the past. Although their shape might be distorted by the confining circle of the coin, and the size put in doubt by the exaggerated proportions of the human figures, they contained useful clues. For example, the accuracy of the vessels depicted on the seals of the medieval/North German towns of the Hanseatic league has been indicated by their resemblance to an actual vessel of the period, recently excavated at Bremerhaven.

Furthermore, the Graveney boat (dating from about 900 A.D.) excavated by the National Maritime Museum in 1971 would yield new evidence. This boat, plus a fibre-glass cast of the Sutton Hoo ship, and the remains of the North Ferriby neolithic ship, would be featured in a new display at the National Maritime Museum.

Studies suggest the European framed vessel was of comparatively recent origin, and that the older technique was that of building up the planking as a self-sustaining shell, either by clinker or carvel methods. This apparently developed directly from the dug-out, first by the addition of extra strakes to the sides of the carved out hull. Such a technique is still used by the fishermen on the rivers of Bangladesh. Close observation of present day craft has also thrown light on the mysterious medieval ship known as the "hulk" which has been shown with reversed clinker planking. In the past this has been overlooked or denied as impossible; but in fact, such a method was successfully employed on the sailing barges of Bangladesh. The speaker also referred to the use of replicas to check the accuracy of investigation into the methods used so very long ago.

Mr. Basil Greenhill's lecture provoked many questions before and during the coffee interval. He foresaw that this breakthrough in methods of research of the history of the ship with its emphasis on integrating evidence from different sources, would continue and develop, and that his talk was an outline description of the early stages of this process.

The vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. G. Lewis, Director of the City of Liverpool Museums, and seconded by Mr. R.B. Summerfield, President of the Society, and carried with acclamation. It was regretted by all present that Mr. M.B. Glasier, who had done so much to arrange this lecture, was not able to attend because of ill health.

M.K.S.

NEWS FROM IRISH WATERS

Seven Norwegian basking shark hunters from the Alesund and Haugesund areas are again in the coastal waters of southern Eire which they visit from time to time. Their prey, these large placid creatures are harpooned for their liver oil. The Irish fishermen have strong words to utter, when their nets are fouled by the discarded carcasses.

The Daunt Rock Lightship, south of Cobh and so important in the era of North Atlantic passenger liners is being removed permanently from station. The tall "Cork Buoy" is replacing it. It will not be possible to install a radio beacon for navigational purposes on the buoy, and so by the end of August, two coastal radio beacons will give useful cross bearings in the Cork approaches. These will be at Ballycotton and Old Head of Kinsale, with callsigns B N and O H and both on a frequency of 287.3 khz. For radar purposes, however, the buoy will be distinguishable by a racon, standing out on ships' radar screens as an illuminated cross, and not a dot.

The Commissioners of Irish Lights announce the discontinuance of explosive fog signals at Fastnet, Kish, Tuskar and Slyne Head Lighthouses. These have been booming away for years - I wonder why they cease now?

N.R.P.

APRIL MEETING

The Society held its Members' Exhibition Evening on 11th April in the Coffee Bar of what has now come to be called the Merseyside County Museum, L3 8EN. In spite of its new appellation, our surroundings were unchanged, and even though this was the Thursday before Good Friday, we had a very gratifying audience of members and visitors.

On display were photographs, watercolours and crayon drawings. As well as illustrations of sailing ships Mr. H.V. Coney showed a large sectional drawing of the engine of GREAT BRITAIN, a replica of which is being fitted in the ship at Bristol. The theme of Mr. N.R. Pugh's watercolours and photographs was "The Mersey Ferries". Mr. H.R. Hill showed some recent paintings of various liners and Manx steamers. A beautiful oil painting by Samuel Walters, recently cleaned by the Museum staff, showed the entrance to Whitehaven harbour a century ago, with a Manx steamer departing.

Our member artist, Mr. Keith Griffin, whose work in the shipping sphere is so well known, spoke to us about the assistance which colour photography can be, in putting on record, natural sea and sky effects which are difficult or impossible to memorize. The "explosion" of a wave on the beach, the cloud effects before a thunderstorm, the conflict between a beam sea and the wake of a fast-moving vessel - all are useful studies as appertaining to the art of truthful painting.

After showing us colour slides of what goes to make "atmosphere" in a painting, Mr. Griffin projected slides of many resulting works of great charm. Our members found this a fascinating talk, both in the quality of the transparencies, and of course in the excellence of the paintings, of which a number of originals have already been shown to us.

The coffee interval then provided a welcome period for conversation, following which Mr. Gordon Ditchfield gave a short slide offering of colour shots made during 1972 and 1973 on the Clyde and at Oban.

He depicted such vessels as MAID OF ARGYLL, (recently sold to become CITY OF PIRAEUS), BUTE, WAVERLEY, QUEEN MARY II and KING GEORGE V, and mentioned the drastic pruning of cruising opportunities in West Scottish waters. Some views of Fingal's Cave, of Iona and of Tobermory in perfect weather conditions were very appealing, finishing with an exceptionally dramatic sunset at Oban.

Perhaps we are improving year by year at being able to stage these small exhibitions for a two hour period only. This was an occasion on which the setting up and dismantling of what was on show, caused no great exertion. The evening seemed to be enjoyed by one and all.

N.R.P.

TO THE BREAKERS

AEGIS CARE ex AEGIS MYTH ex THESEUS (1955)
AEGIS DIGNITY ex ORESTES ex GLENAFFRIC ex NESTOR (1952)
BENARKLE ex CITY OF POONA (1946)
ORIENTAL RIO ex RUAHINE. SVITZER-famous Danish tug (1921)
PLATIDIA. ANDALIEN. LEBU. INDORITA.
SUEVIC. MAIPURA (1952). KANBE (1948).
CALDER, RIBBLE and ASTLAND (Preston sandpumps)

HAVING WHAT IT TAKES

When winds are steady and skies are clear,
Every hand the ship would steer;
But soon as ever the wild winds blow,
Every hand would go below.

D'arcy Wentworth Thompson

MAY MEETING

The 32nd Annual General Meeting of the Society was held at the Museum on Thursday 9th May 1974. A.G.M's can be rather dull occasions, but somehow ours rise above the mundane affairs of facts and figures, and we always seem to introduce a spice of entertainment.

Our Hon.Treasurer was unavoidably absent on other business, but his favourable report was read for him, in which he

recommended that subscription rates be held at their present level for the coming season. Largely due to a slight increase in membership, and thanks to members paying their subscriptions promptly, finances are rather better than last year. But this is not to deny that we would like to see a larger membership and an intake of young blood.

A close look has been taken at management - voluntary though it be. Dr.P.N.Davies has very kindly taken the onerous post of Vice-Chairman, which means that he will take the chair for the 1975-76 and succeeding two seasons. Mr.K.Stuttard, our present Chairman, fulfils this office for next season 1974-75. Do new members realize that the carved gavel wielded by the Chairman to commence our meetings, is made from timber from HMS LIVERPOOL (1939)?

The constitution of the Society allows for four Vice Presidents, who can attend Council meetings, and for a Council of five. After the usual procedure of nomination and approval, the Vice Presidents are now Messrs.T.A.Hume, A.S.Mountfield, W.P.Raine and N.R.Pugh. The new Council is made up of Messrs. P.J.Welsh, D.P.Branigan, D.W.Boyes, E.P.MacManus and Miss S.Welsh.

An expression of gratitude to Merseyside County Museum was voiced, for the privilege of using the premises for our gatherings. There was also a special vote of thanks to Susan Welsh, who not only during this past season, but also in previous years has attended magnificently to the refreshments.

We were very pleased to have with us at the A.G.M. our President and his good lady, both looking fit from frequent crossing of the Irish Sea, and the fine Manx air!

Our Secretary outlined plans for next season, in what appears to be a promising and attractive programme. For the first meeting in September, we hope to visit the new Port Radar Station at Seaforth.

A matter which took up a little of our time at the A.G.M. was in connection with a large quantity of old numbers of "Sea Breezes". As was explained by Dr.Peter Davies, over a ton of these was stored in a city warehouse earmarked for demolition. Their owner shared our concern lest this material should be lost, and by the kind offices of Liverpool University, through our

Chairman-elect, this was averted. The numbers are said to date mostly from the late 1950's, but a few are late 1940's. The task of sorting so large a quantity was not practicable, but our members Mr. & Mrs. H.V. Coney very kindly spent several days, making bundles of 50 copies each, simply tied with string. These bundles are offered to members only at £1 each, the proceeds to go to Society funds. Each bundle contains a mixture as to issue dates. Early application should be made to our Hon. Secretary, as a quick clearance is desired. Consideration is being given to free distribution to establishments like the Mariners' Home. (This matter has been brought to the notice of "Sea Breezes" editorial).

Our evening ended with a film, showing in colour scenes taken on the maiden voyage of REINA DEL MAR in 1956. Views of all the ports between La Rochelle and Valparaiso were shown. And so it was in the sunshine of the southern hemisphere, in fancy, that we ended a successful season.

N.R.P.

LIVERPOOL NAUTICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

For anyone picking up this Bulletin for the first time, we would like to make the Nautical Research Society known. It is for anyone interested in ships and the sea, even if they are not keen researchers. We have eight or nine monthly meetings throughout the year, commencing in September. Most of these are held at 7.30 p.m. on the second Thursday in the month, at Liverpool Museums, William Brown Street, but there are sometimes Saturday afternoon meetings.

If you wish, you can attend our meetings as a visitor, before making up your mind about joining. The annual subscription is £1.50 with special rates for juniors, and man and wife membership. At our meetings, there is a coffee interval, and we do not extend meetings after 10 p.m. You may find someone with a like interest to your own, for amongst us there are divers, both amateur and professional artists, photographers, master mariners, shipping clerks, and we have quite a number of lady members. This Bulletin is mailed to all members in March, June, September and December. All enquiries should be made to the Hon. Secretary at the Museum. Communications regarding the Bulletin to:- The Editor, N.R.Pugh,

7 Dunbar Road, Hillside, Southport,

PR8 4RH

L I V E R P O O L N A U T I C A L
R E S E A R C H S O C I E T Y

B U L L E T I N

Merseyside County Museum
William Brown Street
Liverpool, L3 8EN

Hon.Secretary - M.K.Stammers, B.A.
Editor - N. R. Pugh

Exultation is the going
Of an inland soul to sea,
Past the houses, past the headlands,
Into deep eternity,
Bred as we, among the mountains,
Can the sailor understand
The divine intoxication
Of the first league out from land?

Emily Dickinson

Vol.XVIII No.3

July-September 1974

JOHN LAIRD - BIRKENHEAD SHIPBUILDER

The development of the iron ship from a novelty to a practical working proposition did not come easily. The conservatism of the early nineteenth century shipowners against the change from wood was very strong. A good deal of the credit for overcoming this attitude is due to the Birkenhead shipbuilder - John Laird.

Born on 14th June 1805 at Greenock, he was brought here in 1810, when his father William Laird established a repair yard at Herculaneum Dock. In 1824, William bought some land in the area of the present West Float and set up the Birkenhead Ironworks, the name by which the firm was to be known for most of the nineteenth century. John trained originally as a solicitor, but in 1828 entered his father's works. Up to this date no craft had been built by the yard, but in the following year John built their first, a sixty ton iron barge for Irish inland waterways. Up to 1833 he built two more for the same area. Although this sounds a very simple beginning, it must be remembered that there were no precedents to guide the builders in the use of iron for shipbuilding, the supply of plates and angle sections was limited, and men had to be trained as platers and riveters.

In 1833, John Laird built Merseyside's first iron steamer, the 133ft LADY LANSDOWN, also destined for Irish waterways. As she was too big to go through Irish locks, she was shipped over in pieces for re-assembly on Lough Derg. She had a long life, until she finally sank at her moorings at Killaloe in 1866. Five years ago, a member of our Society Dr. Peter Davies, led a diving team over to Ireland to study the remains of this historic craft.

LADY LANSDOWN was followed by another iron paddler, JOHN RANDOLPH, which was shipped over to the United States and re-assembled to operate on the Savannah River. She was the first iron craft seen in America.

In 1834, the yard turned out GARRYOWEN, at 300 tons the largest iron vessel built to date. She served the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company in the Irish Sea for thirty years, before going to end her days on the African coast. She was novel in having watertight bulkheads, and also served a valuable purpose as the subject of experiments in the correction of compasses on iron ships.

Following GARRYOWEN, came two steamers for the Euphrates Expedition. The East India Company were involved in this, and impressed by Laird's technique, subsequently came back to the yard for other iron steamers.

In 1837 they acquired the 375 ton INDUS, also the largest of her type. At the same time, the first iron Nile steamer - L'EGYPTIEN was completed and made the voyage out under her own power. There was a slight setback in 1834 when a well known Liverpool shipowner decided to order an iron yacht, then cancelling the order. However, three years later he changed his mind, and had the 362 ton, 100 hp GLOW-WORM built. This decision had quite an influence on other shipowners.

More orders followed - the 600 ton RAINBOW for the General Steam Navigation Co. in 1837 and the screw steamer ROBERT F. STOCKTON in 1838. Of only 33 tons burthen, this little steamer made the voyage across the Atlantic under sail. (She may have been the first iron ship to sail across?) Renamed NEW JERSEY, she operated for many years on the Delaware. 1840 was a busy year. Three iron ships, rated as gunboats for the naval expedition up the River Niger, seven gunboats for the East India Co. (two of these, NEMISIS and PHLEGETHON, sailed out and were the first iron craft to round the Cape of Good Hope)

Also in 1840 the first iron ship was completed for the Navy - the packet steamer DOVER. For some years, John Laird had been lobbying the Admiralty to build iron ships. DOVER was a break-through, but Admiralty was still against the use of iron for fighting ships. In the same year, Laird built an iron frigate "on spec". This was the 800 ton GUADELOPE. Admiralty was invited to witness the construction, and their shipwrights gave good reports on the ship. But their Lordships were not sufficiently impressed to purchase her, and in 1842 she was sold to the Mexican Navy.

But the seed was sown, and in 1843 John Laird was requested to submit designs, and tender for a 1400 ton first class iron steam frigate. A number were ordered from different yards, Birkenhead building the ship of that name. Unfortunately the results of some gunnery tests caused the Navy to change its mind again, and orders were given that BIRKENHEAD was to be completed for troop transport work.

Space does not permit the detailing of the steamers built

in the years up to 1861, but the yard was now firmly committed to building iron ships. The Crimean War was to give John Laird a chance to show his ability to mass-produce. After building a prototype iron mortar boat, the 102 ton CUPID, in three weeks, he went on to complete an order for fifteen more, and also fourteen wooden gunboats in a total time of eight months.

By 1858, the yard on the Float needed room to expand, but the construction of the docks threatened to cramp it. So land was leased from the Dock Board, and the yard re-established on the site occupied today by the repair yard. Five dry docks, two covered for building purposes, were a feature - the dry docks are still in use today.

The year 1858 also saw the construction of the first steel craft, the 75ft launch MA ROBERTS for Dr. Livingstone's Zambesi Expedition. It was a tight and difficult specification. Livingstone badly misused the boat, and when she finally sank after eighteen months, he blamed Laird, calling him a "bad and unscrupulous engineer". The Admiralty overseer who had supervised the construction vindicated Laird however, praising the work he had done.

In 1861 John Laird decided to retire from shipbuilding, handing the yard over to his sons. In that year, Birkenhead became a county borough. In view of the great part John Laird had played in its growth, it is not surprising that he was returned to parliament as Birkenhead's first M.P.

Before he left the yard, Laird had started off the firm's most famous ship - ALABAMA. When he entered parliament, the ALABAMA affair was to cause him a good deal of embarrassment. He was frequently attacked in the House over the matter. Once again lack of space must prevent any detailed account of Laird's parliamentary activities, except to say that he took a keen interest in marine matters, and was largely responsible for the Anchor and Chain Act of 1863.

In February 1874 he met with a riding accident. He seemed to recover at the time, but the injury was more serious than

realized. He was taken ill in October and died at his home in Hamilton Square on the 28th.

John Laird was not a genius in the mechanical sense. His two great assets would seem to have been a good organizing ability and great persistence. It was this latter quality which enabled him to stick at iron shipbuilding in the early days, when many others were shying away from it.

Information on John Laird is scarce. An 1874 article and the local obituary notices provide the bulk of available information. Considering what he did for iron shipbuilding, he deserves better treatment from history.

D.P.BRANIGAN

A monument to the memory of John Laird stands on the west side of Hamilton Square, but shows only his name and dates of birth and death. The austerity of inscription seems a little ungrateful. Hamilton Square gardens have fine floral displays in spring and summertime, and do great credit to the town. It is just one hundred years since John Laird died - a century of great achievement in Birkenhead shipbuilding tinged nevertheless with some latter day disappointments.

LIFE IN TOPSAIL SCHOONERS

Memories are growing dim concerning the topsail schooners which traded in and out of the Mersey up to the 1930's. MY LADY was one of these picturesque vessels which, at the turn of the century was also annually visiting the coast of Labrador. I was recently able to peruse an account of one of these Atlantic voyages, written by Captain John Peter Larson of Plymouth whose father was MY LADY's first master in 1889. Exclusive permission to quote the following extracts in the "Bulletin" has been granted by Mr. Douglas Larsen, son of the writer. I have to thank Mr. Ian Merry of Bere Alston for his assistance as intermediary - he himself an old topsail schooner man.

It commences - "About the 21st January 1892 we had just arrived at Plymouth with a cargo of coal from Garston Dock when we received orders that we had to ballast and proceed to Portugal and load salt for the Labrador. Our crew was Master, Mate, 2 A.B's and the cook. I was one of the A.B's, so when the old man came on board and told us the news it meant "work". There were provisions, stores, coal for the galley etc., to be got aboard, a new mainsail to be bent so that the stiffness could be knocked out of it on the voyage out. As we were unbending the old mainsail, we found that the jaws of the main gaff was sprung, so that meant having new jaws made, that detained us a day".

The salt cargo was loaded in Portugal, and the small ship was approaching the coast of Labrador, when - "One morning about 6.30 a.m. there was a nice little breeze and smooth sea and we could just lay our course. Right ahead of us was a berg. Not a very large one but pretty lofty. The old man was down below getting some cocoa from the galley. The cook was in the galley getting the kettle boiled, and as it was risky to luff to windward of the berg, I thought I would just keep her off to leeward of it, so that she would have enough way to go past it. Everything was going just right, when the old man came up from below with the basin in his hand. As he turned around to come clear of the companionway, he saw the berg. My word, didn't he jump! He came at me and swung the wheel hard up. He wanted to know at the same time if I had no "blame sense" and called me a "blame fool". He pointed out that if that berg was to touch ground, now where would we be? It would likely tumble over us. This was quite true - I never thought of that. Since then I have seen bergs ground and founder. You can imagine millions of tons of ice going tumbling to pieces. It sounds like big guns firing.

Later, during the night following, I had just gone below and turned in when Di who relieved us started shouting out to the Mate who was at the wheel - "Ice pack right ahead". You may guess we were out of our hammocks and on deck in no time. With that she began to bump into small pieces.

The mate kept her away off the wind, we squeezed the yards

and in about a quarter of an hour we were outside the edge of it. So we went below and turned in. When we came on deck again we were well clear of the pack, but daylight showed us several packs all around us. This made us feel a bit nervous, for if the wind came on the coast from the north east, it would drive the packs in on the coast and jam us in. But the light breeze kept off the land, so we crawled along close inshore past a little place called Slope Cove, where we saw a vessel called OUR NELLIE on the rocks, a total wreck. She was owned by J. Westcott. He had also lost another vessel called THE TELEGRAPH - this happened the year before, when a northeast gale swept the coast. She was refloated again and sold."

MY LADY returned safely with her cargo of fish, taking fourteen days from a port called Windsors to Exmouth Bar, and paid off at Exeter on 4th October 1892.

N.R.P.

MARINER CROSSING THE "GYRATORY"

Of winds and dashing waves the sport,
By perils, while at sea, beset,
The sailor found himself, in port
Exposed to greater perils yet.

John Pierrpont

MORE SHIPS FOR THE BREAKERS

AHMADI COAST	ex MAKALLA ex CALEDONIAN COAST (1948)
FANTASIA	ex YORK ex DUKE OF YORK (1935)
FORTUNE NAVIGATOR	ex CHAKDARA
MARDINA EXPORTER	ex OLANCHO ex CHIRRIPO (1957)
MARDINA IMPORTER	ex ORICA ex CHICANOVA (1958)
MARDINA PACKER	ex CHUSCAL (1961)
MACAU	ex PRINCESS MARGARET (1931)
MR NORMAN	ex TRIAS ex ADMIRALTY FLYER
	ex FLORENCE HOLT (1953)
NAIAS	ex JENS BANG (1950)
ROYSTON GRANGE	(towed, River Plate to Barcelona)

TROUBLE IN THE CRUISE FLEETS

Shaw Savill ships rate high in popularity with the travelling public, but this summer there were two disturbing incidents, not in keeping with tradition.

NORTHERN STAR left Southampton on 1st June for a 15-day cruise in the Mediterranean. After leaving Malaga, she had engine trouble, and for twenty-four hours the air conditioning was off, and there was little fresh water in the cabins. After calling at Venice, there was an explosion in the boilers, and she reached Tunis on 12th from whence about one thousand passengers were flown home. A few remained on board to return by sea, and spoke very highly of their treatment, saying they would have no hesitation in sailing Shaw Savill again.

Also in June, Southampton Port Health Officer visited OCEAN MONARCH ex EMPRESS OF ENGLAND, and described the catering conditions on board as appalling. The ship had just completed a refit, and anyone who has been to sea will understand what state the interior of a ship can be in, after being in dockyard hands. This complaint touched the owners in a very sensitive spot, and by the time the ship was to sail, the galleys and their equipment fairly sparkled. The 1100 cruise passengers were then invited to make an inspection for themselves, and had no qualms about future queazyness.

And all this, coming after the mechanical failure in QUEEN ELIZABETH II a little time ago, makes one wonder what is happening. Another, though smaller ship in trouble, is N.Z. WAITANGI ex Shaw Savill's BRITANNIC which left Liverpool with cargo for Timaru early in June. Almost at once, she had engine trouble and arrived at St. Michaels in the Azores on 11th June. Repairs could not be effected there, and so she went to Lisbon in tow of SKULD, for her engines to be opened up. In the early days of August she is still there.

* * * * *

NAME CHANGES

This feature is of record proportions this quarter. All the ships of the Ellerman group serving Mediterranean ports, have been brought into line with "City" names:-

CITY OF ANKARA ex SANGRO	CITY OF LISBON ex TAGUS
CITY OF ATHENS ex SALMO	CITY OF LA SPEZIA ex TRONTO
CITY OF CORINTH ex SALERNO	CITY OF MILAN ex MINHO
CITY OF FLORENCE ex TUA	CITY OF NAPLES ex TIBER
CITY OF FAMAGUSTA ex ARCADIAN	CITY OF OPORTO ex TORMES
CITY OF GENOA ex TAMEGA	CITY OF PATRAS ex SILVIO
CITY OF IZMIR ex FLAMINIAN	CITY OF SPARTA ex SORRENTO
CITY OF ISTANBUL ex MEDITERRANIAN	CITY OF VENICE ex MONDEGO
CITY OF LIMASSOL ex RAPALLO	CITY OF VALLETTA ex ATHENIAN

Other changes are:-

ATHENIAN STAR ex ATHELCHIEF
AGBARHA-OTOR ex PASS OF DALVEEN
ATLANTE ex ATLAS (floating crane)
ANNA ex CRISPIN
ALA ex MAID OF SKELMORLIE (1953)
BABI ex IOULIA K ex MAYFAIR SAPPHIRE ex SAPPHIRE
BURMAH AGATE ex DANALAND
BRIGHTON BELLE ex WINGFIRLD CASTLE (floating restaurant)
BANGOR BAY ex BRITISH RELIANCE
BESSY K ex THEOFILOS J.VATIS ex BEAUMONT
CHEVIOT PRINCE ex MENDIP PRINCE
CY THREESOME ex PASS OF GLENOGLE (1963)
CONISTER ex SPANIEL ex BRENTFIELD
CONFIDENCE EXPRESS ex PREMIER ATLANTIC ex SWAN RIVER (1959)
DEVON EXPRESS ex LAIRDSGLEN
EL ARKADIA ex IRENES FAITH ex ARKADIA ex SUGAR REFINER
ELIAS G II ex YEWMOUNT
EFOR ex PROVIDENTIA
ELECTRA ex MELTEMI ex CRYSTAL JEWEL
GOMBA ENTERPRISE ex RICHMOND QUEEN ex SOMERSET COAST
GOMBA PROGRESS ex DORSET QUEEN ex DORSETBROOK

NAME CHANGES - Contd.

GRECLAN	ex ANDROMEDA
GOLDEN LION	ex POLAMARY ex IRISH POPLAR (1956)
GEORGE ARMFIELD	ex WINCHESTERBROOK
H.T.S. COUPLER I	ex OREGIS
HASSAN	ex YEWTREE ex IRISH FERN
KORKAFAN	ex THEOKRATES ex LANCASTRIAN ex ALSATIA ex CITY OF LEICESTER ex LANCASTRIAN
KLAR	ex CRINAN
MARISURF	ex RFA SURF PATROL
MARIPATROL	ex BRITISH PATROL
MALDIVE TRADER	ex SANTONA (1959)
MARY M	ex YEWFOREST
NEMA	ex SILVER LAKE ex RIEVAULX
PAPAGEORGIS	ex KOHIMA ex KALAW ex PRAHSU (1959)
PAPAMAURICE	ex KABALA (1958)
POINTE DE LEYDE	ex ORATOR
RASA SAYANG	ex DE GRASSE ex BERGENSFJORD (1956)
REDTHORN	ex YEWGLEN ex TOLSTA (1960)
ROSETHORN	ex YEWKYLE ex LAKSA
RAVEN	ex SELBY
SAPPHO	ex SPERO (1966)
SOUND OF SANDA	ex LYMINGTON
SEAN CLAIRE	ex PINEGARTH (tug)
SATYA SOHAN	ex BARON FORBES
SILVERTHORN	ex YEWHILL
STARBULFORD	ex STAR PINWOOD
SHENGLI	ex TORR HEAD
TANAMBI	ex VELOZ ex VALIENTE ex SPENCER (1959)
TWIZZLE	ex M.S.C.MALLARD (tug) (1940)
ULIDIA	ex STENA CARRIER (B.R.)
ULSTER SPORTSMAN	ex DONAUTAL
VICKERS VIKING	ex DORTMUND
VITTORIO CORDELLA	ex CAPE FRANKLIN
W.D.THAMES	ex BATAVUS
YUNGJIAN	ex HUMI MAHIS ex MACHARDA ex ANDANIA (1960)
YUNGMING	ex HUMI NASITA ex MALANCHA ex ALAUNIA (1960)

NAVAL OCCASION AT LONDONDERRY

It was most appropriate that the Commander in Chief, Western Approaches, the late Admiral Sir Max Horton, GCB, DSO, should take the surrender of the first German U-boats on the cessation of hostilities in 1945.

At Lissahally, near Londonderry on 14th May, the first seven boats which were escorted south from Loch Eriboll, were to moor. Lissahally's extensive quays presented a fine sight that afternoon, with large contingents of all three services, including WRNS, ATS etc. For Sir Max, this must have been a very proud moment, and the culmination of his career, for he was on the eve of retirement.

Sir Max entered the Royal Navy in 1900. As Commander of Submarine E.9 he torpedoed the German light cruiser HELA at Heligoland in 1914, and the cruiser PRINZ ADALBERT in the Baltic in 1915, as well as two transports and several merchant ships. He was awarded the DSO and two bars for his work in the First World War, and promoted Captain in 1920, rising by the usual stages to Admiral in 1941. From 1940 to 1942, Sir Max was Flag Officer, Submarines, and from then until the end of the War, he occupied the most important post of Commander in Chief, Western Approaches, based at Derby House, Liverpool. Amongst his many honours, he was made an Honorary Freeman of our City in 1946. He died in 1951, having retired at the end of hostilities.

Admiral Sir George Creasy, his successor as F. O. Submarines, wrote of Sir Max:- "In pre-1939 days, our Submarine Branch was regarded as very much the preserve of the regular RN Officer and rating. It was my distinguished predecessor who, foreseeing the inevitable expansion that would be required of the branch, insisted on opening the entry to officers of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, as well as those of the Royal Naval Reserve." Foresight indeed - for by the autumn of 1944, more than half our submarine officers came from these reserves.

And when war came, from the very first hour of its declaration on that gloriously sunny, but apprehensive September Sunday in 1939, to the hour of capitulation almost six years later, the U-boat offensive against our shipping never let up. There was no period of delayed action at sea - no "phoney war". For seamen, life was grim demanding untiring vigilance. Not only in the Atlantic did the wolf packs harry our convoys, but in 1944-45, the Schnorkel device made it possible for individual U-boats to remain submerged for a whole patrol. They could suck in air through the nozzle of a pipe protruding only a foot or so above the surface, and charge their batteries in comparative safety. This enabled them to work close to our coastline - even torpedoing ships in the Irish Sea, and making it necessary to give destroyer escort to the leave ships carrying servicemen between Stranraer and Larne, etc.

Londonderry, being ultimately one of the assembly points for the U-boats of conquered Germany, let us take a brief look at its location on the north Irish coast. Approached from seaward, the port lies a considerable distance inland. The bleak mountains of Donegal lie to starboard. We see Inishowen Lighthouse, and a few miles further, Dunagree lighthouse at the base of the cliffs. To port, is the dangerous Tuns Bank, and as the red flashing buoy is passed, we steam through the entrance to Lough Foyle. Then, also to port, is the sandy Macgilligan Point where the Royal Navy had a signal station on the dunes in the 1940's. Here, in these troublous 1970's in this rather barren area, is a detention centre for internees.

Across the narrow strait is Greencastle, a village in the Republic. Much smuggling has taken place across these fast tidal waters. The sight of the beautiful green and wooded Donegal shore of the Lough must have been balm to many a seafarer, coming in from the wild Atlantic, so near at hand. Most of Lough Foyle consists of shallow water and extensive sandbanks.

The grey village of Moville is a little further on, to

our right, possibly lightly shrouded in the blue haze of sweet smelling peat. Here in former days, many an Anchor liner has embarked her Irish emigrants from the Derry tender. The channel proceeds along the west bank, between large red and black pile structures, instead of buoys. Perched on them, many cormorants rest, perhaps stretching their wings to dry, remindful of the legendary Liver bird.

In a good hour's sailing, we reach Culmore Point, in Ulster territory. The channel is narrow, and ships passing, do so at a remarkably close distance from each other. A slight turn to starboard takes us into the placid Culmore Bay, and thence into the "narrows" where trees intrude to the water's edge on the west side. On the east bank, the American forces built the new port of Lissahally, where factories and oil storage tanks soon followed. We sail on, and soon the vista of Derry City opens up, as we navigate the winding Foyle. Wooded banks give way to grey habitation, with many spires and two cathedrals.

In the war years, scores of ocean escorts crowded the quays. STARLING, flagship of the famous Walker flotilla, and her consorts were seen. Some ships merely came to the Lough to take bunkers from moored tankers off Moville, and perhaps receive their orders from the signal link - the elderly sloop HMS FOXGLOVE.

The escorts required not only fuel, water, stores and general maintenance, but their armament and detection devices needed servicing.

The trawler SUREAXE or ex-French tug PINGUIN would tow targets seaward for gunnery practice. Electronic equipment had to be calibrated, and for this, small naval auxiliaries like the yachts SETO, DUNLIN and HINIESTA, also the ex-Norwegian trawler UTVAER were used, and worked at sea in all weathers. HINIESTA steamed approximately 20,000 miles "in circles" in the course of $3\frac{1}{2}$ years of this work. New escorts, new equipment in ever growing quantity came

forward to fight the U-boats. The officers, the "boffins", communication ratings, worked long hours, mostly in sight of land, yet perhaps away from port for two or three week spells. We were glad of the daily tot, for though we might be in sight of an Irish pub, we were not allowed ashore in the Republic.

Thirty years ago, in June 1944, the Normandy landings took place. The routine work went on apace and just prior to D-Day, HINIESTA voyaged south to the Anglesey coast to service the aircraft carrier HMS PURSUER. Towing hawsers had been put on board, so that, given certain eventualities, she could steam further south - to the beaches. But the need did not arise, and back she went to Derry, passing scores of Victory ships on their way to the "big show".

Almost twelve months was to go by, as the Allied armies strove to reach the heart of the German Reich. And all this time, the U-boat war continued, if with varied strategy. The end had to come, and on 4th May 1945 Grand Admiral Donitz sent off a signal to all U-boats at sea to cease hostilities and return to base. But at noon on 8th May the British Admiralty announced that the German High Command had been ordered to instruct U-boats to surface, hoist black flags, report in plain language their positions and numbers, and proceed to designated ports.

Countless people, and many ships large and small had worked to this triumphant end; for one lesser unit, the steam yacht HINIESTA now 43 years old, and veteran of two wars, this surrender ceremony was a highlight. Her duty was a pleasant one - sufficient chairs were put aboard for the comfort of the civic dignitaries of Derry to witness the event. They embarked near the famous Guildhall, for the two or three mile trip down river. When anchored in position in Culmore Bay, there was a distribution of fruit cake and tea to the guests. The leading escort of the U-boat flotilla was HMS HESPERUS which gave her position in the Lough at intervals by radio, trees hiding progress until at close range.

It was also appropriate that HESPERUS should lead the vanquished, for her convoy escort work had been arduous throughout. In 1939 she was being completed by Thornycrofts for the Brazilian Navy, to be named JURUENA. The British Admiralty took her over and intended that she should be HMS HEARTY, but changed this to HESPERUS.

To return to the ceremony, in mid-afternoon the flotilla rounded the point. One by one came the U-boats following the proud HESPERUS. Our matelots on the casings covered the German mooring parties fore and aft, with their rifles. British Officers in the conning towers, no doubt also armed, supervised the German navigators. Everything went without a hitch and mooring up was extremely expeditious. The yacht's anchor was hove up and she sailed back to Derry to disembark the guests. Except for the voices of command, echoing across the water, it had been rather a quiet party. It was hard to realize that at last we had seen the end of the menace - ruthless and cruel as it had been.

By tremendous effort and the dogged spirit of Britons and their friends in the free world, the U-boat threat had been overcome; surely one of the "finest hours" promised us by Sir Winston Churchill. Success in the life and death struggle should never be under-valued or forgotten. For the three years prior to victory, the co-ordinator of the mass effort at Liverpool Naval Headquarters, Western Approaches, was Admiral Sir Max Horton - may we gratefully remember his name!

In the next few weeks, Lissahally's quays were to see the arrival of many types of U-boat, crowding together until finally dispersed, some to the U.S.A. some to Russia etc. One rusted Schnorkel craft was berthed at Derry quays, whilst the public queued to make inspection. A petty officer and four ratings from our auxiliary craft, saw that the awed public passed slowly down the forward hatch, and up the after one. The petty officer signalled by raised hand for the Royal Ulster Constabulary officer to send down another fifty from the queue. Anti-climax indeed!

N.R.P.

WORD PICTURE

In some unused lagoon, some nameless bay,
On sluggish, lonesome waters, anchor'ed near the shore,
An old, dismasted, gray and batter'd ship, disabled,
done,
After free voyages to all the seas of earth, haul'd up
at last and hawser'd tight,
Lies rusting, mouldering.

WALT WHITMAN

Remembering the illustrations of GREAT BRITAIN lying derelict in the Falkland Islands, these words bring a near description of her apparent impending fate. Yet how happy the outcome!

MERSEY NOTES

June 20th - MARY GABRIEL, Hoylake's new lifeboat went into service, after a dedication ceremony. The boat was named after the wife of Major O. Gabriel who donated the cost of over £60,000 as a thanks offering for sixty years of married happiness.

July 20th - There was a collision off Princes Stage between BEN MY CHREE, the 7.30 a.m. sailing from Douglas, and the oiler BLACKBURN. There was slight damage in the area of the BEN's bow rudder, any damage to the oiler being negligible. BEN dry-docked a week later.

HMS COVENTRY was launched at Birkenhead on Friday 21st June, leaving no further British warships on the stocks here. She is designated a Type 42 Destroyer, and is a sister to HMS BIRMINGHAM, now nearing completion. There is a simple arithmetical average in the statement that 268 warships have been built by Cammell Lairds in the last 134 years. The after-dinner speeches were somewhat tinged with political undertones. Cammell Laird's chairman Sir David Barritt remarked that "The decision of the previous (Conservative) Government to confine warship building to certain

yards other than Cammell Lairds, and the present (Labour) Government's plans for pruning the defence programme, implied that there seemed little prospect of more naval work on the Mersey". But Admiral Sir Anthony Griffin, Controller of the Navy, said that there was no intention to shut the door on Cammell Laird - they would be keeping in touch. He added that there are fourteen different shipyards involved in possible naval work. Laird's managing director, Mr. Graham Day, remarked on nationalization, that he could not see that there would be much difference if the present 50% should become 100% nationalization - their order book was full, mostly with tankers, for the next three to four years.

Survivors from the former HMS COVENTRY were present at the launch, and in a frank B.B.C. interview one of them said "he did not think the new ship would stand up to the hammering the "C" class cruiser received in World War Two, before she was finally sunk in 1942, in the Mediterranean." Defensively maybe, but the punch to be packed by the new vessel will be far superior - if she ever has to use it.

It is rather difficult to keep pace with changes in the B. & I. cargo fleet these days. WICKLOW and KILKENNY appear sisterships of 3442 tons and both were built at the Verolme yard, Rushbrook, Cork. SLIGO is a smaller container vessel of 787 tons, and was built at Pasajes as the Spanish ASTILUZU in 1971. TIPPERARY is on charter in the Spanish container trade, and KILDARE, her sister, has been sold to Greeks.

The B. & I. Line announce having made a loss of over one million pounds on the year's trading, and this is described as "most serious". Amongst the reasons for this, the Company's chairman cited the effects of the fuel crisis, international monetary uncertainties, general inflation and industrial unrest. Surely, the very much reduced tourism to Ireland must also be taken into account.

The cattle motorship CORK, perhaps better remembered

on the Mersey as B. & I's KILKENNY, broke down when 20 miles west of the Skerries in late May. Our ALBERT, always courteous and ready to assist those in distress; no doubt for a consideration, proceeded and towed her to Dublin. I refer to the Mersey tug, of course. CORK was built by Dublin Dockyard Co. in 1937.

On the Spring Holiday Sunday, MANX MAID broke down near Ardrossan and was unable to return to Douglas with passengers and cars. MONAS QUEEN sailed north to fill the gap, and the MAID was serviceable again two days later. (Sighs of relief!)

What has been called the "British Gardens Cruise" brought the Swedish liner KUNGSHOLM to Llandudno Bay in May, with BALMORAL acting as tender. Sadly the itinerary has been altered for 1975 with the North Wales call omitted. Another liner will anchor off Fleetwood for passengers to inspect Lake District gardens in the spring.

Brocklebank's MAKRANA came as a fine looking ship in 1957. When redundant under the British flag, in fleet reorganization, she became AEGIS GLORY and later AEGIS ETERNITY (Cypriot). She grounded in April 1974 near Singapore and was refloated by tugs NEGO CHIEFTAIN and NEGO KING. Then she became disabled in the South China Sea and NEGO CHIEFTAIN again assisted her back to port. Eventually she sailed for Japan - this may be "curtains".

The training establishment HMS CONWAY closed down on 11th July 1974 after over 100 years of service. In Liverpool Cathedral, the last ninety cadets acted as ushers at a special commemorative service.

It was in 1859 that the frigate CONWAY was anchored in the Mersey off Rock Ferry, and many famous characters including the first Channel swimmer Captain Webb, and the Poet Laureate John Masefield, had to thank CONWAY for part of their education. At the service Canon Hopkins made a plea

that the old ship's record should not invoke a feeling only of sadness, but of pride and gratitude for all that "CONWAY trained" stood for down the years.

Eighteen year old cadet Martin Davies bore the ship's colours to the altar for safe keeping. There was also a ceremony on board ROYAL IRIS at which the colours were lowered for the last time. For very much the greater part of her life, CONWAY was administered by the Mercantile Marine Service Association.

Some old institutions sadly pass away, whilst others seem to continue down the years. On the following day - the glorious twelfth, amid the age-old reminders of King Billy and his orange tinted followers, most of us Merseysiders were shocked by the announced retirement of Bill Shankly. A dour and astute Scot, he has become a Liverpudlian by adoption and acclaim. Whether he has any maritime connections or not, I am sure we all wish him well in retirement. We like to see Liverpool's good name upheld in all spheres, and he has brought lustre in the realm of our national game.

On 4th June, another of the M.D. & H.C's floating cranes, ATLAS, was towed out of Birkenhead by the Italian tug POETTO and went overseas with lowered jib. The crane has been lying up in Morpeth Tongue these last two years. She bore the new name of ATLANTE, and the tug was interesting as being ex SERVICEMAN of United Towing Co.

HMS WHITBY was anchored in Llandudno Bay on Sunday 30th June with RFA GRASMERE in attendance, for communication with the pier, and transport of visitors.

In June, ATLANTIC SPAN turned up as the one-thousandth ship to use the Seaforth container terminal in its two years of life. She is owned by the ACL group, which carries on the Cunard cargo service of 130 years standing.

Within a few weeks, the maintenance men who service the cranes at Seaforth went on strike, and the dock emptied of shipping. Not satisfied with the harm this was doing,

the north end dockers then said that they would go on strike when the maintenance men returned, but for a different reason. As these notes are typed, after five weeks, the cranemen have voted to continue the stoppage, against the advice of their union. On top of all this, the new grain terminal at Seaforth has lain idle these two years. Strange, that very much improved conditions and pay in dockland should only breed discontent.

To attend super tankers berthing at the single buoy mooring off Amlwch, two large launches are being built in Holland. They will be named AFON ALAW and AFON BRAINT and will carry 30 tons dispersal fluid, in case of oil spillage. Work on the overland pipeline to Ellesmere Port goes on apace.

The pale green hulled CARONIA came to the Mersey for refits on one or two occasions. Renamed CARIBIA and in tow of the tug HAMBURG, she sailed from New York for a breakers yard in Japan. Early in July, she developed a leak which flooded the shaft tunnel and caused a list. The tug's pumps were able to deal with this. The liner was taken in to Honolulu.

The last man to leave the escape hatch of submarine HMS THETIS in Liverpool Bay in 1939 was Mr. Frank Shaw of Prenton. He was one of Cammell Laird's engineers working on board during a test dive, and is now the only living survivor of that tragedy.

The liner REINA DEL MAR will be for disposal after this summer's cruise programme. Her owners have been deluged with pleas for her retention.

With the disadvantage of being a tidal port, Preston has been abandoned by the cross channel ferries of the Atlantic Steam Navigation Co., such as BARDIC FERRY, IONIC FERRY etc. With improved motorways, the more economical short sea route from Cairnryan to Larne is now being used, linking up with European traffic through Felixstowe. Townsend's FREE ENTERPRISE III is also working the Cairnryan link.

Late in June, the Spanish tug PUNTATORRE which had towed M.D. & H.C. redundant craft to Bilbao breakers, took the Bristol tug SEA QUEEN ex EMPIRE WALTER and the Cornish KING HARRY FERRY NO.5 to sea for delivery at San Esteban de Pravia. In bad weather, the Ferry sank off Ushant.

N.R.P.

THE CYPRUS INVASION

"Jane's Fighting Ships" shows that destroyers and frigates in both the Greek and Turkish Navies are mostly ex-US Navy. In fact in these two N.A.T.O. fleets, there are destroyers of the same class, which may have had a bearing in the Turks sinking one of their own ships.

A report was afoot that eleven Greek supply ships were heading for Cyprus. Turkish bombers could find no trace of them, and were diverted to the west coast of the island. Off Paphos, they found three destroyers and made the wrong assumption that the naval ships were falsely flying Turkish colours. KOCATEPE ex USS HARWOOD, received a direct bomb hit, blew up and sank with heavy loss of life. ADATEPE ex USS FOREST ROYAL, and TINAZTEPE ex USS KEPPLER were damaged and managed to reach the port of Mersina. These destroyers have only been in the Turkish Navy for two years, and would have a complement of about 275 men each.

It is disturbing to contemplate faulty recognition of this kind in one of the N.A.T.O. forces with which Great Britain is a partner, at this time.

Ex-British vessels are few in these Middle East Navies, but the Greeks have five Algerine type minesweepers, now rated as corvettes. These were HMS ARIES, GOZO, ARCTURUS, POSTILLION and LIGHTFOOT. They also have a lighthouse tender named ST LYKOUDIS, which is non-combatant, and is known to us as ex-HMS NASTURTIUM.

During the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in July, several of our merchant ships were in those waters. Shell's HAUSTELLUM

was delivering aviation spirit, and got away safely. MANCHESTER TRADER slipped her moorings at Famagusta, but not before a grenade was lobbed on to her after deck. Moss's MELITA also made a safe departure from the island. NORTHERN STAR, cruising, omitted her call at Piraeus, where she was unlikely to obtain fuel, and substituted a call at Malta.

CITY LIBRARIES

The building of an extension to the Picton Library has been commenced and will be ready in a few years' time. Meantime, certain documents, magazines, old Lloyds Registers etc., are being housed in temporary libraries in the old "Echo" Office building, Victoria Street, and in Duke Street. The auxiliary library in South Castle Street has been closed down, owing to impending demolition. Eventually, it is hoped to place everything under one roof in the Picton block.

The Commercial Reference section of the library still displays the daily issues of the Journal of Commerce and Lloyds List, and a few back copies. Lloyds Register and many other shipping volumes are available for quick reference. In the International Library is a fine collection of books on maritime history - it is a matter of spending a little time to find ones way around; the staff are most helpful and results of research are often very satisfying.

MERSEY NAVIGATIONAL NEWS

For several weeks in July, a salvage ship has been lying to six yellow buoys, near Q.4 red, but well out of the channel. This is TOPMAST 18, and she is working on the dispersal of the BERWYN wreck. It was in February 1973 that the coaster struck the revetment whilst carrying effluent or industrial waste from Morpeth Dock to the dumping grounds. M.D. & H.C.'s VIGILANT was working close by at the time, and took all the crew aboard without anyone getting their feet wet!

TOPMAST 18 ex RAMPINO is owned by Risdon Beazley Ulrich Harms Ltd. of Southampton. Built at Glasgow 1942. BERWYN's previous names were MABELSTAN ex JILL J ex SYLVIA ex MARGIT

REUTER. Built Norrköping 1949.

In our March "Bulletin" it was stated that the North West Float had been removed from station. This was not correct and the Float is still in its usual position. Our member Mr. G.J. Holden has provided these items of interest regarding the Mersey estuary.

Four years ago, three small white buoys marked TB.1, TB.3 and TB.5 were stationed on the south side of the "Crosby bend" - more properly known by the charted name of Askew Spit. TB is the abbreviation for Training Bank. When inward bound, it is permissible for small ships, including Isle of Man Steamers, to use these white buoys as starboard hand marks, especially when overtaking large vessels. The saving of time on the inward journey can be useful, in flood tide conditions. A warning to mariners has been issued concerning the danger involved when outward bound, and there is the temptation to "cut the corner". This puts a vessel on the wrong side of the channel and before the "red side" can be regained, she will have to cross the path of inward traffic.

Another recent innovation in Mersey navigation was explained by Mr. Holden. A powerful flashing light has been noted, directed up river from the top gallery of the Port Radar Tower, Seaforth. This is a warning to outward bounders, both in daylight and darkness, that a very large vessel is inward bound in the main channels. This visual signal is complementary to the warnings put out by voice on VHF radio from Port Radar, using the identity of "Mersey Radio" on Channel 16, frequency 156.80 mhz.

THE NEW SHIPPERIES EXHIBITION

Merseyside County Museums Department of Maritime History (to give us our full new title) will be mounting a new exhibition of ship models, starting on 30th September. The rather strange title is a reference to the Liverpool International Exhibition of 1886, whose ship model section was so popular that it was nicknamed the "Shipperies" Exhibition.

Our new display is very much in the old style of exhibitions, in as far as most of the models will be housed in individual mahogany framed cases, and there will be lots of them. In fact, we are aiming to show you a cross section of everything that has been installed since the War. Some models you may remember from the old shipping gallery, such as the Navy Board models - others have never been on display before, such as the model of Royal Mail Steam Packet Co's ANDES. There will also be pictures, prints and relics, including some of the finds from the wreck of the royal yacht MARY.

M.K.S.

LEEDS AND LIVERPOOL CANAL BOAT SCORPIO

SCORPIO, which once carried coal between Wigan and Liverpool has been preserved for the proposed Northwest Museum of Inland Navigation. At present, she is moored at Burscough and is being painfully maintained by a very small group of volunteers, including the Hon. Secretary. We urgently require more willing hands, and I therefore appeal to any members of the Society interested in canals, to lend a hand on SCORPIO. Contact should be made with Mike Stammers at the Merseyside County Museum, William Brown Street (Telephone 051 207 0001)

M.K.S.

NEWS IN BRIEF

On Monday 12th August, the new floating landing stage for Mersey ferries was placed in position at the Pierhead. A recommendation is before the Merseyside Passenger Transport Executive to close the Birkenhead Ferry in 1976. A scheme of re-building for Woodside Landing Stage is nearing completion by Odyssey Engineering Works, associated with the Blue Funnel Line.

CARIBIA ex CARONIA, whilst in tow from New York to Kaohsiung and the breakers yard, was wrecked in the harbour entrance of Apra, Guam in early August. The hull broke into three pieces. The tug HAMBURG is safe.

In regard to the "Bulletin" - all correspondence, contributions, queries etc., should be sent to the Secretary, as above, or to the Editor - N.R.Pugh, 7 Dunbar Road, Hillside, Southport, PR8 4RH.

L I V E R P O O L N A U T I C A L
R E S E A R C H S O C I E T Y

B U L L E T I N

Merseyside County Museum
William Brown Street
Liverpool, L3 8EN

Hon. Secretary - M.K. Stammers, B.A.
Editor - N. R. Pugh

O ship incoming from the sea
With all your cloudy tower of sail,
Dashing the water to the lee,
And leaning grandly to the gale;
The sunset pageant in the west
Has filled your canvas curves with rose,
And jewelled every toppling crest
That crashes into silver snows!

Duncan Campbell Scott

Vol. LVXXX No. 4

October-December 1974

THE SHIPPERIES EXHIBITION

It was in 1886 that a large Exhibition was staged in Liverpool, and so popular was the collection of ship models on display, that the word "Shipperies" was coined to describe this section of the show. In those Victorian times before

the coming of the motorcar, radio, television and commercialized sport, the populace would journey on the horse trams or on foot, to what would now appear as huge exhibitions. The wealthy might come in their own carriages or by hansom cab, and all to see and acknowledge with pride what the industrious Briton could accomplish by enterprise, ingenuity, hard toil and the sweat of his brow. Especially in engineering Britain was unsurpassed.

Eighty-eight years have gone by, the equal of a long lifetime, and now in 1974, the Merseyside County Museum stages another "Shipperies" Exhibition. As was the former practice, each model has its own individual case. Mr. Geoffrey Lewis, Museum Director, describes the Liverpool maritime collection, only a small part of which can be exhibited, as the largest outside London.

Amid a large gathering of friends, this new Exhibition was opened at 7.30 p.m. on Monday 30th September 1974 by Vice Admiral Sir Patrick Bayly. It will remain open for just one year at William Brown Street, and we hope that our members will pay a visit, and see what a fine job our Hon.Secretary, M.K. Stammers and his assistants have accomplished.

Mention should be made of the kind presentation to the Museums by Mr. R.H. Hobhouse, Managing Director of Ocean Fleets Ltd., of a builder's model of PELEUS which came from the Cammell Laird yard in 1949. This model has been brought home from the Singapore office of the owners. The ship herself went to the breakers not so long ago.

At the ceremony, Councillor Ben Shaw, Chairman of Merseyside Arts and Culture Committee was a speaker, and members of our Society seen present included our President, Ronald B. Summerfield and Mrs. Summerfield, our Chairman Ken Stuttard, Hon.Secretary Mike Stammers, Captain Chubb, Peter Welsh, Malcolm B. Glasier, Dr.Peter Davies, Gordon Ditchfield and J.Ford, Senr. and Junr.

N.R.P.

CLAN LINE CENTENARY - 1978

Any of our members with early recollections of Clan Line ships and happenings, may be able to assist the Company in

preparing for this Centenary. The Public Relations Official, Mr.S.P.Smith, would be pleased to receive any stories and interesting facts at Clan Line Ltd., 2-4 St.Mary Axe, London EC3A 8BP.

THE ROYAL CHARTER DISASTER

The north coast of Anglesey often gives shelter to shipping when westerly gales occur, and in equinoctial storms a veer in the wind to northerly can be dangerous to any vessel with insufficient power to extricate herself. A coaster which met her end in this way was HINDLEA in 1959, when Coxsn Evans of the Moelfre Lifeboat was awarded the RNLI's gold medal, for rescuing her crew.

A famous instance of long ago was ROYAL CHARTER, of the Liverpool and Australian Steam Navigation Co., for whom Messrs. Gibbs, Bright and Co. were the agents. She was an auxiliary sailing ship of 2719 tons with an engine of 200 nhp giving a speed of 9 knots. Date of build was 1854, and she was a popular ship in the Australian trade.

With a Captain Taylor in command, she left Melbourne on 26th August 1859 for Liverpool. There were 388 passengers and a crew of 112. As it was the time of the "gold rush" she carried a valuable cargo, including £273,000 in gold and £48,000 in sovereigns and half sovereigns. The voyage was a record for speed, and she reached Queenstown in 55 days. When anchored off the Irish coast, the passengers made a presentation to Captain Taylor as a thanks offering. A large number of letters and telegrams were despatched from Queenstown announcing safe arrival. Thirteen passengers disembarked at the Irish port and eleven riggers took passage for Liverpool. These last named had worked a ship from Cardiff. All told, there were now 498 persons on board.

On the voyage up St.Georges Channel, the passengers made a request to the Captain to put in to Holyhead, so that they could view GREAT EASTERN, the largest ship in the world. It was intended to grant this request, but the wind was freshening, and off Point Lynas the seas were tempestuous. Rockets were fired for a pilot and the ship steered as far inshore as prudent to facilitate boarding. But the weather was too bad for this,

and the ship was severely buffeted. At 10 p.m. both bower anchors were let go, and the screw was kept turning. At 2 a.m. both cables parted, and the ship drifted towards the shore.

Now in dire distress, the fore and main masts were cut away, but she swung broadside on to the sands of Moelfre Bay. With the engine, they tried to drive her deeper into the sand, but the cordage of the fallen masts stopped the screw, and she struck rocks.

At daylight, a Maltese seaman managed to carry a line ashore, and a bosuns chair was rigged, in which several sailors and two passengers got safely ashore. But the seas still pounded the ship, and at 7 a.m. a tremendous wave engulfed ROYAL CHARTER and broke her in two. 459 souls were drowned, including Captain Taylor and all his officers. Some boxes of gold and a great quantity of coin was subsequently recovered.

October 1974 is therefore the 115th anniversary of this tragic event, commemorated by gravestone inscriptions in Anglesey churchyards.

SEPTEMBER MEETING

How fortunate we were with the weather for our first meeting of the 1974-75 season! For some members, there was quite a long walk from rural Waterloo, across the open reclaimed land to the boulder-protected point on which stands the new Port Radar Station. For some, this was their first experience of Seaforth, and what has been achieved in a few years to make it a truly modern port for container traffic, meat, grain and timber.

The Society made a visit to the old Port Radar Station at Gladstone Dock when it was the first establishment of its kind in Britain, and very useful work was done there. But with the coming of Seaforth Dock, a new radar station was needed for the port, and the northwest point of the reclamation is an ideal site, with good visibility up to Eastham Locks and out to the Bar anchorage. Radar surveillance can be well maintained up to twenty miles.

Twenty members met in the compound of the station at 2.30 p.m. and admired the two ancient cannon standing on either side of the entrance. These have been brought out of old Dock Board

stores, and beautifully mounted on replica carriages. We noted the Victoria Regina monogram, and of course, the b d arrow, and it was hazarded that they were possibly cast for the Crimean War. Tampions of teak have been fitted to the muzzles with neat coat of arms of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company.

When we had made sure that there were no more members crossing the rather muddy wastes from Waterloo, we split into two parties of ten each, one in charge of Capt. Eastwood and the other, of Captain Blake. Some of us rose by lift, whilst others, testing their wind and stamina, climbed the tower stairway to a height of ninety feet. Capt. Eastwood's party then assembled in the operations room, looking out through large slanted plate-glass windows, on to the sun-speckled waters of the estuary.

Captain Eastwood told us that in a way the term Port Radar is a misnomer now, because that is not their chief function. New laws are being brought into force which will make it imperative for all vessels of more than fifty tons displacement to signal their movements within the area. Thus a complete record of what is happening in the port approaches will be kept. Continual watch is kept on Channel 16 V.H.F. radio telephone, with facilities to use several other channels. A long desk with impressive panels of meters, switches and handsets, faces southwest. There are two operator positions, and each unit is a complete duplicate of the other. Whilst sitting at these controls, the operators have this wonderful panoramic view of the narrowing Mersey to the left, the desolate sandbanks and also the Welsh mountains ahead, and then to the right, the Crosby bend and the channel leading out to the Bar and Northwest Light Floats.

Passing below us was the MONAS ISLE, proceeding without passengers to take the Fleetwood to Douglas sailing next morning, Sunday 15th - the last of the season. She of course, reported this fact to the operator on duty. ERIC COOPER, which had been pumping sand into her hoppers, just across the Crosby Channel, was heard calling the Waterloo Lockmaster to arrange her docking. Sometimes there is a babel of voices from the VHF receiver loudspeakers and all relevant information is logged and even recorded on tape, for at least one month afterwards. A telex machine is housed in an adjoining room, where

also is a wind strength recorder. Weather conditions along the coast, forecasts by Speke Met. Department, a statement of ships at anchor, docking and undocking - all are handled by Mersey Radio, which is the station's name amongst Mersey shipping. For those who have some technical interest in the propagation of VHF signals, it may be said that Mersey Radio's signals are directed for greatest power in the direction of the Bar. As for reception, Dublin Harbour Pilot Station can often be heard, which is normally much beyond the range intended. MANX MAID, outward bound whilst our visit lasted, and having passed the Bar Float was in touch with Ramsey Coastguard Station. This too, one would think, was much beyond the scope of VHF until it is realized that the aerial for the latter station is on the summit of Snaefell, and height, in this form of radio propagation, is all-important.

And so now, having enjoyed the sunshine and view in the operations room, we changed places with Capt. Blake's party in the radar room. Here was warmth and darkness, with seven Decca display units in a semicircle, each showing a different aspect of the approaches. One showed the entrance to Queen's Channel, with the Formby Float. Another the Crosby Bend, on which the PEGU's mast stood out plainly, as she lies wrecked on the revetment these 35 years.

One word of criticism from a layman - the illumination on the displays was not as bright as seen on other screens, neither was the retention of image so good, after the passing of the rotating beam.

An operator may have an interest in one particular "target" - a ship on the display. By pressing a switch, lighted figures appear stating the true bearing of this ship from the station, together with distance in yards, or, by the flick of another switch, dekametres. This is all rather breath-taking.

An inward bound vessel off New Brighton and an outward bound one off Waterloo Locks, both seemed to have tails, rather like a comet, showing which way they were sailing. Captain Eastwood showed us how to estimate the speed of the outward bounder, by putting a light ring round the target and noting how far she proceeded in a defined number of scanner swings. This got the better of the writer's curiosity, and he emerged

into the daylight to see with binoculars that it was the 1530 sailing to Douglas - BEN MY CHREE, showing her damaged bulwarks from last week's storm.

There may never be a dull moment at Port Radar, but our time had come to bid farewell.

And so the assembly of the two parties re-united was called to order by our Secretary, and a vote of thanks to our two hosts was proposed by Mr. W.B. Hallam. Technology has certainly gone ahead by leaps and bounds since those days, over thirty years ago, when Bram Hallam was involved with R.D.F. (radio direction finding), later to become "radar". Those times, in Douglas Bay, and later practicing the real thing out in the Atlantic, are reminders of electronic advancement. The vote of thanks was acclaimed in the usual manner, and we descended from the Seaforth eyrie, to disperse in our different directions.

N.R.P.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Our President, Mr. R.B. Summerfield wishes it to be known that principally because of increased business commitments and consequent travelling, he has decided to relinquish the bungalow he had built on the Isle of Man. His new address is 82 Green Lane, Liverpool L18 2ER. Telephone: 051-722-1496.

SUPER TANKER AGROUND IN MAGELLAN STRAIT

Early in August, Dutch Shell's METULA (Persian Gulf to Chile) went aground in Magellan Strait. Carrying 190,000 tons of crude oil, any assistance was some days steaming away and the winter weather was bad, with snow. ZWARTE ZEE was on the Uruguayan coast and answered the call. Chilean and Argentine tugs also went. Several tankers proceeded, so as to lighten the stranded VLCC, amongst them HARVELLA, ARGENTINE SHELL and BERGELAND. From hull fractures there was an estimated spillage of 25,000 tons - a serious threat to marine life in the South Atlantic. METULA was refloated on 25th September.

NEW NAMES FOR OLD

AL TURAB	ex BERWELL ADVENTURE ex BERNARD ex ROSSETTI ex BERNARD ex RUBENS ex SIDDONS
ASIAN RENOWN	ex MANCHESTER RENOWN
BEAVER MACKENZIE	ex W.D.THAMES ex BATAVUS
BEAULY FIRTH	ex TREVISCOE ex LYNBAANSGRACHT (1952)
COMMODORE CLIPPER	ex MAYO ex HIBERNIAN ENTERPRISE
EFCHARIS	ex PATAGONIA ex HARPALYCE (1958)
ELISAVET	ex MANGANA ex BALTIC SPRAY ex PONZANO ex SVENKSUND
FEDERAL AVALON	ex SEASPEED TRAILER ex SKYWAY ex MANDEVILLE
GOOD LEADER	ex ELWOOD MEAD
IOANNIS ANGELICOUSSIS	ex ORAMA (1964)
JUANITA H	ex MIKRASLATIS ex BORDER LASS (1954)
JAKI	ex SAMSONIA (tug)
LOVIMA	ex LYSHOLMEN
LADY THERESA	ex YORKSHIREMAN (1967)
N.Z. AORANGI	ex MAJESTIC
OSWEGO COURAGE	ex BORGSTEN
OSWESTRY GRANGE	ex CHELWOOD
PEARL ASIA	ex CRYSTAL CROWN
PHILIPPA	ex SALAMAT ex WARKWORTH
PACIFIC DESPATCHER	ex KILDARE
QUEBEC	ex ALICE BOWATER
SALRIX	ex OWENRO
SUN PRINCESS	ex SPIRIT OF LONDON (P. & O.)
SAND SAPPHIRE	ex CY THREESOME ex PASS OF GLENOGLE
SILLOTH TRADER	ex ROSEMARY D.
SATYA KAILASH	ex GALLIC BRIDGE
SHIPMAIR III	ex CAIRNVENTURE
THIRLMERE	ex KINDILL
VOLCAN	ex HEATHERGATE
WOODBURN	ex HALCYON LOCH ex SIBEAU ex BEAU

THE SOUTHPORT AND ST.ANNE'S LIFEBOAT DISASTER

This year - 1974 - commemorates the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, and celebrations began in Britain with a service in St.Paul's Cathedral on 4th March. This deeply moving occasion was attended by the Queen Mother and the Duke and Duchess of Kent. The

Archbishop of Canterbury preached an inspiring sermon, and services of thanksgiving and dedication were also held in ten cathedrals, including Liverpool and Manchester.

Keeping pace with technological progress, the R.N.L.I. is going through an exciting period of development. More and more of the large fast lifeboats of the Thames, Clyde and Arun classes are coming into use, as well as a host of even faster inshore inflatable craft.

In the early days, the bravery of lifeboat crews rowing or using sail to reach casualties, was beyond praise, and it is as a tribute to them, that the following story is told, particularly as it concerns our own locality. Our member, Mr. J. Ford Senr. has kindly made the research concerning the barque MEXICO, which went ashore at Birkdale. Lytham lifeboat saved her crew, but Southport and St. Anne's lifeboats were lost in the attempt.

The report of the tragedy was printed as an extra special edition of the "Southport Standard" at 11.30 a.m. on Friday, 10th December, 1886 (price one half penny):-

"Seldom has the solemn truth, "in the midst of life we are in death" been brought home more forcibly to a community than it was last night.

"Whilst the Mayor and Mayoress were giving their brilliant reception in Cambridge Hall, the crew of our lifeboat were facing the storm in the noble endeavour to save the lives of their fellow men on board a vessel which was in distress off Birkdale. The efforts were of no avail, for we regret to say the night was so rough, and the sea ran so high, that the lifeboat shipping a sea was capsized and failing to right herself, thirteen of her crew were drowned. Three, however, lived to tell the story. It appears the boat was launched last night at 9.40 p.m. and the catastrophe must have occurred about three hours later, as the watch of Mr. Henry Hodge, who was one of those who sacrificed his life, stopped at 12.40".

Those lost were Charles Hodge (coxswain), Henry Hodge, Thomas Spencer, Thomas Jackson, Ralph Peters (second coxswain), Benjamin Peters, Richard Robinson, Peter Wright, Timothy Rigby, Peter Jackson, Thomas Rigby, Henry Rigby and John Robinson.

The following were saved:- Henry Robinson, brother of the two men of that name lost, John Jackson, and John Ball.

"The lifeboat was taken along the sands by horses and launched into the sea which was fearfully rough. After struggling manfully with the oars, two men to each oar, there being sixteen men in the boat, she gradually approached the wrecked vessel. It then being as nearly as could be ascertained, about half past twelve o'clock, she was within twenty yards of the vessel, the crew of which she had gone to succour, when she was struck by a fearful sea and upset. She had no sails up, and she ought to have righted immediately but she did not; but remained bottom upwards, the horror-stricken crew being fast in their seats and unable to help themselves in any way.

"The details of the sad occurrence are most painful. It appears that when the lights of the barque MEXICO were seen, the horses were sent for the lifeboat, and the crew got together, each man equipping himself with his lifebelt. Mr. Henry Hodge, happening to be on the promenade with Mr. George Rockliffe, determined to go out though fruitlessly dissuaded by the latter. Those on the shore watched the boat off, and after some period saw the light of another boat, that which hailed from Lytham. About three o'clock this morning Mr. George Rockliffe saw the light of a boat returning from the wreck coming in the direction of the pier. He at once started for the latter expecting to meet the ELIZA FERNLEY with the crew of the wrecked vessel, but on arrival at the pier he was told by a fisherman that the light he had seen was that of the Lytham boat.

He at once made for the boathouse, and not finding that they had arrived, he in company with others went in search of them, and when just beyond the Palace Hotel met Richard Robinson, the father of Henry, John and Richard, three of his sons who had gone out in the boat. On asking him where the lifeboat was, the old man replied "She is lost, and all hands are drowned except my son Harry and Jack Jackson. Both my poor other lads are at the bottom of the sea".

On hearing of the disaster, Mr. Rockliffe sent one of the policemen, who had come down to the shore, for Dr. Pilkington, who was quickly on the spot. A short time after, they came upon the body of Henry Hodge, and near him that of his uncle Charles

Hodge, the captain of the boat. Other bodies were discovered left on the sands by the receding tide. At last they found the lifeboat, bottom upwards, and on turning it over, the remains of three of the crew were discovered beneath it. It appears that when the boat turned over with its crew, some of the men were enabled to unfasten their strappings and get from beneath. Five, however, remained and two of these, namely, Peter Jackson and Henry Robinson, after getting themselves loose, managed to clear themselves of the boat as soon as their feet felt the ground. During the time they were under the boat, the five men were talking to each other, and the three who succumbed must have been suffocated for want of air when the boat grounded.

Before Mr. Rockliffe, Dr. Pilkington and others who had reached the boat, John Ball had been picked up insensible and sent to the Infirmary, where he arrived at five o'clock. He was immediately seen by the house surgeon, Dr. Voight, who until the time of going to press remained in close attention upon him, trying every remedy to restore suspended animation. He is, however, still unconscious but hopes are entertained that he may yet be restored. The rest of the bodies were removed in one of Mr. Aspinall's carts, and a shandry, to Mr. Nicholas Wright's stables at the Palace Hotel.

The scene is a heart-rending one, youths and grey bearded old men lie side by side, struck down in the full vigour of health and strength by the cold hand of death, whilst on a mission of mercy, and in execution of a noble duty.

The wrecked vessel was the barque MEXICO, and a telegram just received states that the crew, twelve in number, were rescued by the Lytham lifeboat and safely landed at that place. The vessel was from Hamburg, and was laden either with timber or cotton. She is on Trunkhill Brow, about a quarter of a mile this side of the wreck of NEREUS. She stands upright, but her fore and main masts have been cut away.

The subscription list has been started by Mr. E. Binns-Taylor, the manager of the Palace Hotel, and already the amount has reached £35. The rest of the hotels in the town are following this praiseworthy example".

And in a stop-press appears the following:-

"Feared loss of the St.Anne's Lifeboat crew - Intelligence is just to hand that three bodies, wearing cork life jackets, have been washed up on the Birkdale shore. It is feared that the St.Anne's lifeboat crew are lost as nothing has been heard of them since nine o'clock last night".

Commemorating the loss of the Southport Lifeboat, a monument stands on the promenade, near Scarisbrick Avenue. The inscription records that ELIZA FERNLEY was presented to the R.N.L.I. by John Fernley of Birkdale. This boat rescued the crews of nine vessels, numbering 52 lives. She capsized in a gale on December 9/10th 1886 when fourteen of her heroic crew were drowned. (Not thirteen as stated in the first report quoted).

N.R.P.

WE NEVER TURN BACK

was the title of a most attractive colour film shown on B.B.C. TV on 15th October, recording the present state of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

Whilst on the subject of the R.N.L.I's centenary-and-a-half, tribute should be paid to the municipal gardeners who produced such a wonderful flower bed facing Birkenhead Town Hall. The wording in flowers was clearly visible from passing buses. Many pedestrians did turn back to look and admire.

DOCK PHOTOGRAPHIC PERMITS

These annual passes can be obtained at the Dock Office, price £1.08. Two photographs 2"x 2" are required. O.A.P's free.

JOTTINGS FROM THE ISLE OF MAN

The 1974 herring season was in full swing at Douglas, Port St.Mary and Peel in September and catches were described as being very good. At Port St.Mary filled barrels were stacked along both breakwaters, awaiting the coasters to carry them to Continental ports.

The Irish packers from counties Waterford and Wexford were over as usual, working long hours; brine, water and fish-scales underfoot - the strong fishy smell in the breeze, and no shelter

from the elements. Sea boots, waterproof aprons, ganseys, and an assortment of headgear produce a motley crew, receiving cran boxes of fish from the trawlers' derricks to salt, and scoop ungutted into barrels. Forklift trucks speed the work as sightseers watch for any more boats smashing their way round Langness in a smother of spray.

Some of the boats seen this year were:-

From Banff - SCOTTISH MAID, EXCEL, BOUNTIFUL.

From Buckie - ODYSSEY, ARDELLE

From Peterhead - JUNEVE III, TRIDENT, ACHILLES, AMETHYST,
UGIE VALE II

From Fraserburgh - RADIANT WAY, EXCELSIOR, MYSTIC, NORTHERN
VENTURE, STAR OF HOPE, RADIANT STAR

From Inverness - ADVENTURER

From Kilkeel - SHALIMAR

From Belfast - ELEANOR ANNETTE, WHITEHILL

From Dublin - AZURE SEA, WAVECREST

It is sad to record that TRIDENT, PD III is missing on passage home to Peterhead, via Ayr, and presumed lost with her seven man crew. She was off Wick on 3rd October, and assisted another Scottish boat, FAITHFUL which had engine trouble. A slick of oil and numerous plastic fish boxes were sighted by Macduff Lifeboat and helicopters. (Macduff RNLI has replaced Longhope in this area). FAITHFUL reached Peterhead safely - she was seen in Douglas on 24th September.

No longer are discarded scallop shells from the Port St. Mary depot dumped on the beach, but are now discharged into a hopper on the old trawler ADRAIA, CT30. She is engaged in dumping them at sea, under flocks of gulls.

The Castletown registered scallop boats now number at least twenty. Scraping the sea floor around the Manx coastline has denuded all weed, essential to normal fish life. It would appear that scallops pay a good return, judging from the sophistication of the fleet.

Some of the boats used for this shellfish trade are:-
DAWN MAID, HEATHER MAID, VERVINE, PESCADO, MASAI WARRIOR, ZULU WARRIOR, FENELLA ANN, ERINS HOPE, PEEP O'DAWN, FRIENDLY SHORE, MAUREEN PATRICIA, REBENA BELLE, THE BOUNTY, PETIT RALEUR, GOLDEN SCEPTRE.

A diversion on the Port St. Mary quay was provided by a dolphin, resident in the harbour. He enjoys playing with mooring buoys, and nudging small vessels around at their moorings. He has taken part in frolics with skin divers, and allowed one to ride on his back. Accompanying fishing parties out of harbour, his leaps and antics have not always been appreciated. He seems to have a friendly disposition towards humans.

A visit was paid to Dennis Maddrell B.E.M. the retired coxswain of Port Erin Lifeboat. He was mentioned in the Bulletin some time ago for his fine rescue of two survivors from the coaster MOONLIGHT. Since retirement, he has been very ill, with spells in hospital both on the Island and at Clatterbridge. Stamina and good nursing have prevailed, and he has made a remarkable recovery, and is once more enjoying his bowling. What is the connection, I wonder, between our game on the greensward and the sea?

Port Erin has a new lifeboat, named OSMAN GABRIEL. She is of the "Rother" type.

Two automatic radio beacons operate from the high ground above Cregneish. One is an important homing device for aircraft, and the other enables ships to take accurate bearings outside the threshold of radar.

It is hoped that the Manx people have not forgotten that it was Sir William Hillary, Bart. who founded the National Lifeboat Institution. Whilst walking along the promenade at Fort Ann recently, not so very far from the Lifeboat house, I came upon an apparently neglected bronze plaque set in the wall to his memory (1771-1847).

N.R.P.

LIFE'S BUFFETINGS

A smooth sea never made a skilful mariner.
The storms of adversity, like those of the ocean,
rouse the faculties, and excite the invention,
prudence, skill and fortitude of the voyager.

Capt. Marryatt

Ship movements, fleet lists of British owners now get poor attention from our two leading dailies in the marine sphere. Your editor, having both a business and leisure interest feels ever more frustrated at the declining amount of information published.

London's "Lloyds List" has recently adopted a new format, and for a time no foreign movements were printed. But these are now appearing again in a tiny print, but in some cases have been upwards of a fortnight out of date.

It is a very long time since our Merseyside's "Journal of Commerce" gave the movements of British tankers on Mondays, British liners in fleet order on Tuesdays and Fridays and so on. Both papers now give prominence to editorial articles on general transport matters, to the detriment of shipping movements.

I cannot see that business houses do not still require this information, or that relatives of sea-going personnel no longer require it. This too, at a time of faster communication and increased technology.

"British Signal Letters" was suspended from "Lloyds List" some months ago. This was a very useful item, perhaps weekly, listing name, tonnage, official number, port of registry and signal letters of British and Commonwealth ships coming into service, and those whose registry was cancelled. On communicating with the newspaper, their Shipping Editor replied that the item was considered to be of only limited interest - borne out by the fact that I was the only subscriber to comment on the omission!

There followed a suggestion that information might be obtainable from the Department of Trade (Shipping) at Cardiff. A lady in this Department was sorry that there is now no publication giving this information.

Our members might ponder on the future of nautical research, if we are to be deprived in this way of information on the British Merchant Marine, now tonnage-wise, the largest it has ever been. Are we being stifled of traditional information? Or is the day fast approaching, when some department in Brussels assumes command of the combined fleets of the E.E.C. countries?

Are subscribers to the maritime press getting what they require or, as in so many walks of life these days, having to take only what is offered?

"Where lies the land to which the ship would go?
Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.
And where the land she travels from? Away,
Far, far behind, is all that they can say."

A.H.Clough

Ever know a ship with such a complete breakdown of the grapevine?

MERSEY SAILING FLATS. A QUERY

Mr. G.F. Howard of "Yew Bank", 25 Buxton Old Road, Disley, Stockport writes:-

"Although the rigging details of sloop-rigged flats are fairly clear, the way in which the mast was made to lower remains uncertain. At least two methods were in use towards the end of the 19th century. In one, as shown on a detailed and seemingly accurate model of WESLEY of 1868 in the possession of Mr. A.R. Hattersley, Hollins House, Grosmont, Yorks., the mast heel rests on a pin about four feet below the deck. When the mast is lowered, it comes to rest first on the main beam, and then pivots on it, the heel of the mast sliding up inside the tabernacle, as the mast head comes down. When the mast is raised, the heel slides down the tabernacle until it rests on the pin again, and then the mast comes up.

"The other arrangement can just be made out in a photograph of the Queen's and Coburg Docks taken in 1895. The photograph is in the Records Office of the Liverpool City Libraries and is reproduced, though less clearly, in "Victorian and Edwardian Liverpool and the North West from old photographs" by G.Chandler, as plate 15. In the bottom left hand corner of the photograph, unfortunately not so sharp as the rest of the picture, a flat can be seen with its mast nearly horizontal and well above the hatch, and one can make out the taut forestay and its tackle. The mast is quite unambiguously pivotted above the level of the hatch coamings. This is obviously a better arrangement than the first one, because it does not require hatch covers to be taken off before the mast is let down. I have been told about

another method in which the boom was set up as a derrick and used to lift the mast out. I have not been able to work out how this could be done.

"It would be interesting to know more about the first two methods described. If any member can tell me the whereabouts of photographs showing flats with their masts down, or accounts of how it was done, or a model showing the arrangements, I shall be most grateful. I have searched the Records Office files, seen the articles in "Sea Breezes" Vol.6 p.318 and Vol.8 p.168, those by Douglas Bennet in the "Mariner's Mirror" and the models in the Liverpool Museums. Also, of course, E.W.Paget-Tomlinson's booklet."

MERSEY NOTES

TEES ORE, a regular visitor to the Mersey, left Birkenhead on 6th September for Puerto Ordaz, and met the full force of the gale on 7th. She had a breakdown and complete loss of power when south of Cork. Dutch tug CYCLOOP was sent to tow her to Falmouth, from whence she continued her voyage on 14th. Misfortunes seldom come singly and after loading for Birkenhead she has gone aground at the mouth of the Orinoco River on 29th October.

CORK ex KILKENNY (1937) mentioned in our last issue as breaking down near the Skerries, arrived Dalmuir on 10th June 1974 to be broken up.

Yet again, the livery of the Mersey ferries is to be changed and MOUNTWOOD is emerging from refit with dark green stack, with black top. This is an improvement, in my opinion, to primrose and blue, yet hardly compatible with red waterline, Merseyside buses are being painted in mid-green and cream, also considered attractive.

Saturday 7th September, as mentioned above, was a wild day and all Irish Sea crossings were affected. BEN MY CHREE was the 4 p.m. afternoon sailing from Liverpool to Douglas, and when in the area of the oil rig - OFFSHORE MERCURY - a "freak wave" (so described) stove in the steel bulwarks of the promenade deck forward and below the bridge.

Those of us who patronize the Liverpool/Llandudno sailings

on summer Sundays, and on weekdays for that matter, were rewarded with a very pleasant sailing season in 1974. Of the sixteen Sundays, MANXMAN, SNAEFELL and TYNWALD each accomplished four, whilst MONAS ISLE and KING ORRY each did two sailings. It is very pleasing to see the same folk (and some highly respectable canine friends) come every week for this healthful pursuit. The last trip of the season tends to be a sentimental one, and there are little sherry parties on the boat deck, as the Bar Float is passed inward bound.

The long days pass all too quickly. For the winter lay-up, TYNWALD entered Morpeth Dock on 27th August, SNAEFELL followed on 2nd, KING ORRY on 9th, MANXMAN on 12th and MONAS ISLE on 17th September. BEN MY CHREE followed on 21st but was brought out again almost immediately to stand in for MONAS QUEEN, which developed a defect. A brief spell in dock soon put this right. So, for the start of the winter season in October, the two remaining ships on service are MANX MAID and MONAS QUEEN. Fares to the Island are to be increased still further in 1975, though with off-peak reductions.

A collision occurred on 24th August between ANCO DUCHESS ex ATHELDUCHESS (1969) leaving Queen Elizabeth II dock, and CITY OF LEEDS ex CITY OF OTTAWA (1950) inward bound for Manchester. Both were damaged.

Amongst recent Naval visits, the nuclear submarine HMS SWIFTSURE arrived in the port on 22nd August for inspection by the public. With only one entrance hatch, and some agility required, the commanding officer made a request on Radio Merseyside for grannies and young children not to come.

Another submarine HMS ANDREW visited Birkenhead on 5th October, thence sailing to Manchester.

A cold and dreary Saturday was 28th September, and this may have accounted for a lower than usual attendance aboard one of H.M. Ships, open to the public in Liverpool docks. She was the deep diving ship RECLAIM, whose home port is Portsmouth.

Our member Mr. J. Ford went aboard and was given an interesting hand-out concerning the ship and her work. She was built in 1948, by Simons, Renfrew, as a salvage ship, and altered for her role in deep diving.

She searched for, and located, the sunken submarines TRUCULENT in 1950, and AFFRAY in 1951, when underwater TV was used for the first time. Another job was the recovery of an Aer Lingus Viscount in the Irish Sea in 1966.

In 1956 her divers set up a deep diving record of 600ft off Norway, and have since made dives at this depth of one hour's duration off Toulon. It is planned to dive down to 1000ft for prolonged periods eventually, giving underwater access to anywhere on the Continental shelf.

The crew consists of 8 officers, 2 of which are in charge of diving, 84 men, 10 of which are divers, and a doctor specialising in underwater medicine.

In August, the Laird-built ST EDMUND was seen proceeding on trials. An impressive Sealink vessel, she is destined for the Harwich - Hook service. In late October she is still in the builder's yard here.

The end of an epoch! Elder Dempster's flagship AUREOL arrived at Southampton on 19th October on her final voyage from Apapa. It was intended that she should dock at Birkenhead on 21st assuming the success of negotiations pending, for her sale to Pakistan. A few ship enthusiasts with their cameras, waited for her in vain on that afternoon's tide. The deal had fallen through and she remained at Southampton, with the possibility of lay up in the River Fal later.

It comes as a surprise, and a mild shock too, that TYNWALD, having sustained serious turbine damage, is being cannibalized to provide machinery for the other ships, and will presumably be scrapped. She lies at the east end of Morpeth Dock, and one of the first items to be unshipped was her melodious whistle. Could this be destined for fitment in BEN MY CHREE, which has need of a better voice? Left with seven ships, Heysham sailings are to cease.

The Kuwait Shipping Co's vessels have left Birkenhead in favour of a Liverpool loading berth - this being due to draught limitations at Alfred entrances.

N.R.P.

MORE SHIPS FOR THE BREAKERS

ANDALIEN (1955)

KIM HWA ex FAVORITA ex DARESSA (1950 ex B.I.)

KOTA AMAN ex CHINDWARA

IRISH TRADER ex ADMIRAL NELSON (Coaster)

PHILIPPOS ex EMPRESS QUEEN (1940)

CASTLEDORE (1956)

GENERAL NEWS ITEMS

By the acquisition of the Estella Shipping Company, Ocean Fleets will possess a 41,500 ton tanker now building in Japan, and for completion in January 1975. She is to be named CHARON, and will fly the Liberian flag.

In early October, we heard through the "media" of the fate of AMMERSEE ex SCILLY ex CILLY ex OSTE, a Cypriot ship loaded in France with 300 tons of explosives destined for Kuwait. After engine trouble, she was refused entry to the port of Bilbao, and found that no French port would now admit her either. Finally she went on fire and the accommodation aft was gutted. Her crew was taken off without casualty by the Austrian ROSWITHA. And here was a floating bomb, drifting without lights off the Brittany coast - half her cargo was dynamite. The French armed forces took the matter in hand, and planes endeavoured to bomb the wallowing coaster, but were warned of the risk should she blow up. Finally a frigate was sent and fired rockets into her, at which she exploded with a blinding flash which was seen in Guernsey on 6th, and the anxiety was over. Of only 420 tons, and dimensions 165 x 24ft she was a motor coaster built in Germany in 1953. One wonders why such a small craft should be engaged on so long a voyage round the Cape, with a cargo of that description.

Four ships with refrigerated storage space have been loaded with Irish beef and anchored in Bantry Bay, pending instructions from Brussels as to its disposal. These are:- WILD FULMAR, SAMOAN REEFER, ROMAN REEFER and TUNISIAN REEFER.

Clyde puffer KAFFIR was cut from her moorings at Ayr in September, and lies on rocks. A man was charged. Salvage is still possible.

In our last issue, mention was made of how CARIBIA ex CARONIA was wrecked off Guam when in tow of HAMBURG to Kaohsiung breakers. It was a strange coincidence that at the same time, the other liner CARIBIA ex VULCANIA was arriving at Kaohsiung in tow of JACOB VAN HEEMSKERCK. She was moored to a buoy off the shipbreaking berth, and taking water through her plating, settled on the bottom. She was at one time a crack Italian motor liner, and was built at Monfalcone in 1928. So both CARIBIA's of noble lineage, did their best to escape final demolition. The ex-Cunarder avoided the ignominy of the burner's torch, and the Italian seemed bent on her own form of self destruction!

OCTOBER MEETING

On 10th October, we welcomed our Canadian member Mr. C.P. Wright, who delivered a most interesting paper on the wreck of the packet ship ALBION.

She belonged to the fleet of the Black Ball Line which commenced a regular service of packet ships for passengers and freight between New York and Liverpool. The first sailings were advertised in the New York Evening Post for 27th October 1817 - "in order to furnish frequent and regular conveyance for goods and passengers, the subscribers have undertaken to establish a line of vessels between New York and Liverpool, to sail from each place on a certain day in every month throughout the year. The following vessels, each about 400 tons burden, have been fitted out for this purpose:-

Ship AMITY, John Stanton, Master,
Ship COURIER, William Browne, Master,
Ship PACIFIC, J. Williams, Master,
Ship JAMES MONROE, - "

This first regular Transatlantic service was launched by five New York businessmen; Jeremiah and Francis Thompson, Benjamin Marshall, Isaac and William Wright. The idea is said to have come from Jeremiah Thompson, an Englishman living in New York and involved in the import of Yorkshire woollen goods. His father owned a woollen mill at Rawdon, and about 1800, he and his brother Francis had been sent to New York to handle the firm's export business. Benjamin Marshall also came from the West Riding of Yorkshire. Four out of five of the partners (the

two Thompsons and the two Wrights) were Quakers, as were their Liverpool agents, Cropper Benson and Co. All five knew each other well, and whilst the two Thompsons provided a large proportion of the capital, the other three undertook the management of the line.

By offering a regular service, they hoped to carry valuable freights such as cloth, and specie, plus passengers and mail. The service proved a success and other rival lines were established. In 1822, to stave off the first challenge of a new line, the Black Ball Line doubled their service to two sailings each month, with eight ships instead of four.

ALBION was the fifth ship of the Line, being added in 1819 to replace PACIFIC. She was a full rigged ship of 434 tons burden, 113ft long by 29'4" beam, built at New York by S. Brown. Her average passage on the westbound run was 34 days. She set sail for England on 1st April 1822 carrying 23 cabin and 6 steerage passengers, and 36 crew. It was usual for the vessels to berth in Princes Dock. This was her last voyage and only eight souls were to survive the wreck. The cargo is not known, but it was doubtless similar to that of the previous sailing: 618 barrels turpentine, 200 bales cotton, 68 tierces rice, 1 box gold, 100 boxes apples, 1 box "glass patterns".

In command of ALBION was Captain John Williams one of the original Black Ball captains. For nearly three weeks the trip went well, and on Sunday 21st April, they sighted Fastnet Rock. Shortly afterwards, the weather turned nasty blowing fresh to heavy squalls from the southward with poor visibility, which must have set her towards the rocky coast. About nine o'clock at night ALBION was hit by a freak wave, which dismasted her, sweeping away her bulwarks, hatches, compasses and the deck-house. With the latter went the only three axes on board, with which to cut away the rigging. The cabin was also smashed; some passengers remained there, whilst others helped to man the pumps, possibly including a lady passenger Anne Powell. The ship drifted steadily towards the shore. By midnight the light on the Old Head of Kinsale was visible and by two o'clock, the sound of the waves on the shore could be heard. Captain Williams summoned all the passengers on deck, and told them it was impossible to preserve her. She struck about 3 o'clock and was driven well inshore. Captain Williams and several others were swept away.

Some managed to scramble from the stern on to the rocks where several more were swept away. Others stayed on board and were ultimately drowned in the fury of the seas. Only eight people survived, including the first mate. The wreck caused a melancholy and profound sensation on both sides of the Atlantic.

The passengers were a mixed and interesting company. The most intriguing was a retiring Frenchman, travelling under the assumed name of Monsieur Gravé. In fact he was Count Charles Lefebvre-Desnouettes, one of Napoleon's Army commanders. He had been captured in Spain by the British in 1808 and sent to England, where he was allowed to live on parole in Cheltenham. His wife joined him in 1809 (though briefly sent back the following year) and the couple became key figures in the polite society of the town.

In May 1812, the Count, his wife and his aide-de-camp escaped to France after the failure of arrangements for his exchange for the Earl of Beverley. He felt released from his parole, but was bitterly denounced by the British. He assisted in the Russian campaign, and in 1814, when Napoleon was exiled, he went into the service of the restored French king, only to desert when Napoleon returned from Elba. After the Battle of Waterloo he fled to America, and became involved in the establishment of a colony of Napoleonic exiles in Alabama. After Napoleon's death in 1821 he hoped to return to France, and gained a qualified pardon to live in neighbouring Belgium. When the freak wave hit ALBION, Desnouettes broke his arm, making his escape impossible.

Amongst his fellow passengers, there were two British Army officers, Major William Gough and Lieutenant Colonel Augustine J. Prevost. There was also a Professor Fisher of Yale University, who was coming to England for a few year's study, and an Anglican clergyman, the Rev. Hill on his way home from Jamaica. The only cabin passenger to survive was William Everhart of Chester, Pa. He was too ill during most of the passage to go on deck. Another cabin passenger was Miss Anne Powell, daughter of the Chief Justice of Upper Canada. In 1817, whilst in England with her father, she formed a close relationship with the Solicitor of Upper Canada, John B. Robinson, some five years her junior, and she somehow formed the impression that he would offer her marriage. However, Robinson married someone else, which upset Anne Powell.

In 1822 she attempted to pursue Robinson and his family to New York, where she attempted to take passage to England on the same packet. However, the Robinsons sailed on an earlier opportunity, and Anne Powell followed on ALBION. She lost her life in the wreck.

After the coffee break, there was a discussion on various aspects of the wreck, and our speaker stressed the importance of steam tugs assisting these sailing packets to keep their schedules. This prompted Mr.W.B.Hallam to outline the very early history of steam tugs on the Mersey.

Mr.Wright's talk, not only told the story of a shipping line and its fleet, but also shed interesting light on some of the passengers carried. The vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. M.B.Glasier, seconded by Mr.D.P.Branigan and carried with acclamation.

M.K.S.

ON REFLECTION

Kipling implied positive reward for those who can look upon Triumph and Disaster, and treat those two impostors just the same! Nautical research throws up disaster and tragedy in profusion, with which, perhaps this particular Bulletin abounds. To offset this, we had in our last issue, the triumph of John Laird and his iron ships, and Sir Max Horton's part in the conquest of the U-boats. No doubt there are many triumphs still to come.

If you are reading these notes for the first time, and have an interest in the sea, why not consider membership. The full subscription is £1.50 per annum with special rates for man-and-wife, juniors and country members.

And now a gentle reminder to our members, before Christmas pulls too strongly at the purse strings, that subscriptions are due each September. Hon.Treasurer Ted Tozer will be glad to receive any still unpaid for 1974/5.

We hope to have a good gathering at our December Social Evening, and for any members unable to be present, your officers and council wish them a very Happy Christmas. And may we also include in our seasonal greetings, those who assist the Society in various ways, including the Museum Director, the attendants who keep vigil until ten o'clock, and not least those good ladies of the Express Typewriting and Duplicating Service whose efforts on our behalf are so praiseworthy. A Happy Christmas to one and all!

Editor.