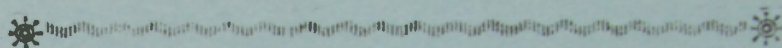


LIVERPOOL  
NAUTICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY



THE BULLETIN

Volume Twenty-one  
1977



LIVERPOOL PILOT OFFICE

NRP

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

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B U L L E T I N

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Merseyside County Museum  
William Brown Street  
Liverpool, L3 8EN

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

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Outside was the ship's rush to the wind's hurry  
A resonant wire-hum from every rope,  
The broadening bow-wash in a fiery flurry,  
The leaning masts in their majestic slope,  
And all things strange with moonlight; filled with hope  
By all that beauty going as man bade,  
He turned and slept in peace. Eight bells were made.

"Dauber"    John Masefield

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Vol. XXI    No.1

January - March 1977

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OUR LATE PRESIDENT - R. B. SUMMERFIELD

With great sorrow we record the death of our much esteemed President, Ronald Bernard Summerfield, who passed away peacefully on Sunday 12th December 1976. He had been with us at the Christmas Social Evening only three days previously, and proposed the toast of "The Society".

The funeral service took place at Springwood Crematorium on

Friday 17th December, at which the Society was well represented. There was but one floral tribute from the family, as it was Ronald's wish that instead of flowers, contributions might be made to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

We all knew Ronald so well, that it is not the intention to write of him at great length here, but we remember, as the Rev. Bartlett stated during the service, that he was a man of integrity. He was one of the founder members of our Society, and Chairman from 1952 to 1966.

In his early days, he spent three years at Denstone College, followed by an engineering course prior to joining his father's firm of Summerfield and Lang Ltd. in 1921.

With a great interest in the Royal and Merchant Navies, he also had close to his heart, the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and Sea Cadets. One of his hobbies was the collection of waterline ship models, and he amassed what may have been the largest private collection in this country. One or two of us still remember the party Ronald gave at his Woolton home on 5th May 1968 to his model-maker friends, with a luncheon on board LANDFALL.

On 29th November 1969, his marriage took place to Miss Betty Hope, who had been his secretary for over twenty years, and the Society's Hon. Treasurer for a lengthy period. We all gratefully remember that much of the work of the Society devolved upon Ronald, Betty and other members of Summerfield and Lang's staff.

The beautiful bungalow he designed and had built at Colby, may have been part of a dream fulfilled for semi-retirement, when approaching three-score-years-and-ten. Yet, commuting back and forth to the Isle of Man and the shedding of even a part of his workaday harness seemed unpalatable. He felt that his business, now actively developing in a different sphere, needed him. Maybe his dream commenced to evaporate and he was not one to abandon the "ship". His sense of duty brought him back to the Liverpool he loved. He bought a house in Green Lane, Allerton and seemed averse to retirement.

Of solid principles, he was an ideal Chairman who spoke well

and never seemed at a loss for the correct word. He was always in command of a situation. We shall miss him greatly, and his name will stand high in the annals of the Society.

His nomination to be President of Liverpool Nautical Research Society in 1972 was an honour he appreciated very much, and to use his own words "a very rewarding acknowledgment of thirty years membership".

Bram Hallam writes:- "For almost thirty years my wife and I knew Ron Summerfield as a good friend. He nominated me as the first chairman of World Ship Society, Mersey Branch, and was always a staunch supporter in the early years. The Liverpool Nautical Research Society was his real interest, and he will always be remembered for his work in placing the Society in a sound position in the post war years. We remember the welcome he extended to us on our joining up some fourteen years ago. Council members will remember his conduct of the quarterly meetings, when difficult situations were resolved so easily by Ron's sound reasoning. Whilst the Society will always be his memorial, his wider interests will not be readily forgotten. His great love of the Royal Navy, his work for the preservation of relics of HMS LIVERPOOL, his wide knowledge of ship modelling, and above all his innate courtesy will ever be remembered by all who knew him. Our thoughts go to his wife Betty, who helped him so greatly."

Edward Paget-Tomlinson, former Keeper of Shipping at Liverpool Museums, and also our former Secretary, writes:- "Liverpool has lost a great citizen with Ronald's passing; his interest in the history, present and future of the city was deep, and deepest of all was his passion for the Maritime Museum. This brought me into touch with him in August 1956, when I had only been at the Museum for a few days. I soon realized that the proposed maritime museum had a champion. Throughout my efforts to revive the shipping collection at Liverpool, R.B.S. gave unfailing encouragement. I needed it. We did achieve some successes, in particular the great shipping exhibition of June 1957 to mark the City's 750th anniversary. It is a tragedy that R.B.S. has not lived to see the creation of the maritime museum; if it comes it will be thanks to the crusading zeal of him and his fellows, a dedicated band."

Mrs. Betty Summerfield thanks everyone for their kind messages of condolence, and adds "I have received so many beautiful letters that I am quite overwhelmed, but also very proud to know what Ronald meant to so many people. Each letter has been a great comfort to me and my family in our very sad loss."

\* \* \* \* \*

This was a man of intellect, well-versed in all the Arts.  
This was a man of character; of many parts.  
This was a man who carried high the brave, proud flag of youth,  
Yielding his rights to God alone: a man of truth.  
This was a man who "walked with Kings" and kept the "common touch":  
This was a man with much to give - who gave so much.

N.R.P.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### NOVEMBER MEETING

Up to twelve months ago, our speaker Adrian Osler was attached to the educational side at Liverpool Museums, but is now Keeper of Shipping at the Tyne and Wear Museum in Newcastle. The Society's talk in January 1974 is still well remembered, when Mr. Osler's subject was "Shetland Fishing Craft", but on Thursday 11th November 1976, he came to speak to us on "North East Coast Shipping". He had certainly "done his homework" and collected many interesting transparencies in the short time he has been around Tyneside.

We were treated to a vivid description of a trip we might have made down the River Tyne about the turn of the century, with comparative views recorded at the present time. (No, your scribe does not go for this "day and age" stuff!)

It came as a surprise to most of us, to find our speaker working two projectors simultaneously by remote control. To some of us, operating one only can be a trial. But this method gave the facility for making comparisons, and even the showing of maps of various periods, side by side, all wonderfully clear. Mr. Osler certainly showed himself adept in this dual projection, which was acknowledged by our Chairman, Dr. Peter Davies when winding up the meeting.

Our imaginary cruise started from Dunstant Staithes, and it could be recalled that not so many years ago, perhaps about thirty vessels would be loading coal. On our slide, not one vessel was anywhere in sight, for modern conditions have hit the Tyne, just as they have the Mersey, Thames, Clyde, etc. The pattern of trade has changed in a startling manner. A Tyne cruise, such as ours, could be made at half hourly frequency at the turn of the century, but nowadays TYNE QUEEN makes one cruise daily during the summer months.

The Tyne has always been a man-made river, and Newcastle was once the largest coal port in the world. But now, all this has changed and very little remains. The use of docks was never on the same scale as at Liverpool, as most ships loaded in the river, after perhaps waiting their turn at the many buoys. At the turn of the century and since, paddle tugs have done much of the towage work, but also in attendance were small "foy" boats. These had black and white checker sides and were necessary to couple up ships' hawsers to buoys. , Many of these "foy" boats are still in existence.

The Tyne is a river of bridges. The Swing Bridge built by Armstrongs permitted vessels to be built in the upper reaches of the Tyne. Then there is Stephenson's High Level Bridge and the King Edward Bridge. About 1900, Armstrong's works extended for two or three miles of the river frontage. They built large machinery, naval armaments etc. Here, the torpedo was developed, particularly the broadside type.

Instead of the Mersey flats and barges we remember, the Tyne used a type of cargo carrying craft called a "wherry". These were usually towed by paddle tugs, but it was usual for them to have a mast, so that they could use a favourable wind and tide. They had to be strongly built to stand "taking the ground" at the riverside. The Tyne Museum has been fortunate in saving the last of the wherries but her future has not yet been decided, as to whether she lies afloat or is preserved on shore. She is ELSWICK II and is probably one of the largest clinker built vessels in existence.

Another vessel which comes under Mr. Osler's care, is

TUNISIA which is housed in the Museum. The picture of her with white hull and green boot topping was most attractive. It is fortunate that she has been preserved, as she was cut in half by a vessel which ran amok on launching. Her plans were still in existence, and so she was resurrected as the first turbine vessel. When built, she caused a great stir at one of the naval reviews.

In 1900, the port authority was "The Tyne Improvement Commissioners" but that has been changed to the "Port of Tyne Authority".

We saw the great Walker yard with only one ship on the ways, and with the new Bibby Line tanker YORKSHIRE fitting out. On the opposite bank we saw Harrison's yard where small vessels are repaired and there is a slip for fishing vessels and the like. Some work for the Windermere Nautical Trust has been done here.

The Walker shipyard was founded in 1852 by Charles Mitchell. He built iron ships and it was not long before Armstrong's took him over. This was a very prosperous yard where it was quite usual for seven ships to be under construction at any one time. The planning of the yard was meticulous to a degree and there was nothing haphazard about it. We saw a posed photograph of the firm's draughtsmen all looking very proud, as indeed they had every right to be, in an age of such great achievement in British ship-building. In using the comparison technique of two screens, it is a pity Mr. Osler could not have shown us a similar contemporary group of workers in a British shipyard, in this day.... (there, I nearly did it!).

At the Walker yard, they used quite primitive moving methods for the frames and plates - numerous tubular masts, well stayed, with wooden spars. Nowadays, we see huge cranes as we well know on the Cammell Laird skyline, or that monster of the North East Marine engine builders we saw on a slide. Walker also had extensive rolling mills, for ships of that era had many curved plates, where nowadays shipbuilders are not happy unless they can build with flat ones.

If we could have been on the Tyne in 1906, we would have experienced the greatest surge of pride of the Jordies, for the great four funnelled MAURETANIA was launched. All the associated industries of the region profited by this great Cunard enterprise,

and the ship turned out to be a great success, as we all know. Our speaker showed a number of slides of the great sleek ship.

It is interesting to note that Swan Hunter's built ships under cover at the turn of the century, to obviate the effects of weather on production. Several yards have since followed suit, as at Yarrow's and at Appledore. Cammell Lairds are now building a tremendous roof over their berths at Birkenhead - so there is little new under the sun!

Ships have become so large, that on the Tyne they have built the bows of a ship on the south bank and the stern part on the north bank, later for the two parts to be welded together. Mr. Osler may have been referring here to the 66,000 ton tanker KYRA LYNN which has now gone into service for Russia as GEROI SEVASTOPOLYA, and was built in this way.

The 260,000 ton TYNE PRIDE lay in almost the same berth as did MAURETANIA seventy years ago. TYNE PRIDE cost £m12, but the company which ordered her failed when the tanker market collapsed. She has since been bought and sails as OPPORTUNITY (see also note on page 13).

Somewhat similar to the MD & HC floating crane MAMMOTH, Swan Hunters have in use on the Tyne, TITAN II (non-propelled).

As regards ferries, there were at one time five services, but only one remains - North Shields to South Shields. Most Tyne ferries have been built, not on the River, but on the English south coast. The present one is named SHIELDSMAN.

One of the few small firms to survive on the Tyne is Clelands, and as they were to launch the freezer trawler JUNEELLA at the early hour of 5 a.m. Mr. Osler attended, and took one or two attractive colour shots in dawn light.

We saw illustrations of The Black Middens, treacherous rocks in the Tyne estuary, the Fish Dock, the Merchant Marine Training School, the High and Low Lights to guide mariners through the river entrance, and the Tyne Volunteer Lifeboat Station. There was the impact of the North Sea Oil, and the Norwegian tourists pouring in to buy at our cheap prices following the fall in sterling - so much could be commented on in such a very comprehensive talk.

But to end - a little story on paddle tugs which can be



single acting (both paddles ahead or astern) or double acting (each paddle can work independently of the other). A tug went out to meet a ship in the North Sea, whose master hailed "Are you a double acting tug?" To this the tugboat skipper rejoined "No, we are a single acting tug, but I'm a double acting master!" And the motto of Tyne tugs is "Deeds not Words".

Many thanks to Mr.Osler for such a noteworthy occasion, his delivery impeccable, his memory (dare I use a modernism!) fantastic.  
N.R.P.

## VICTORY

It was the time of voyaging back.  
                    It was the time, now, at last.  
We had come to the end of the days and nights  
                    We went patrolling  
The wastes of ocean. We'll not retrace our wake,  
                    All that is past;  
The salt-bleached struggling ship,  
                    The frozen spray in the rigging.....  
No wonder I saw a young seaman,  
                    His face puckered and weeping  
As we ran in the lee of the land back to port,  
                    And he felt the rain  
Falling quietly down from a sky that stood still,  
                    Out of a peace  
That spelled home, gentleness, love.  
                    His tears were only the tears of release.

R.C.M.Howard. August 1945.

How many felt this way, the wide seas over, when hostilities ceased after six years of war.

## FIRST TRIPPER (Part III)

In our last issue, Leslie Harrison described life aboard the good ship NORTHUMBERLAND, as she traversed the Panama Canal. Crossing the line was quite a gruelling ordeal, and now he continues :-

"Paradoxically it was silence that awakened the young cadet very early on that January morning in 1929. It was the silence which had replaced the steady rumble of the ship's twin screws under the poop, and the intermittent clatter of the steering engine on the deck below forming a generally disregarded background to the ship's

uneventful three-week passage across the Pacific from Panama. Without disturbing his seven sleeping cabin mates, he climbed down from his upper bunk and went out on deck. It was breaking dawn. Away to port of the anchored ship lay the wharves and city of Auckland; to starboard, in miniature relief, were the sheer-legs over the naval base at Devonport, and beyond, the distinctive peaks of Rangitoto Island. Apart from the intrinsic beauty of that tranquil morning, he was stirred by the exciting knowledge that here he was, in an entirely new country, half a world away from his English home.

New Zealand was a country for which he formed an immediate attachment. The ports were so clean and open after the grime and industrial pressures of those he had so far known; the atmosphere in the towns and cities seemed freer and more relaxed; and above all, the individual New Zealanders he was to meet seemed genuinely to welcome him as a guest to their hospitable shores.

The ship spent just over two months on the coast, discharging in Auckland, Wellington, Lyttelton and Port Chalmers, and loading in Bluff, Napier, Gisborne, Lyttelton, Timaru and Wellington. Shipboard routine dominated all other activities, inevitably directed in port towards the over-riding needs of cargo work. Derrick lifting, adjusting and lowering was a constant duty, whilst technically the "first tripper" began to acquire new basic skills, in particular the facility of deftly guiding hatch beams into their guides, shipping the wooden hatch covers into place (taking due care to ensure that neither he nor they fell into the lower hold in the process), spreading tarpaulins, and battening down, a routine procedure always to be completed as swiftly as possible.

A weekend in Timaru found the port short of stevedores and the cadets eligible to replace them on an industrial basis. The "first tripper" put in just one hour's work, for which he was paid three and sixpence. As his sole financial resources for the six month voyage was the £5 deposited in advance by his father and held to his credit by the chief steward, three and sixpence represented a substantial addition to his pocket money at a time when the decision whether to draw five shillings or ten shillings on arrival in port was a major one. Another potential drain on his funds was the all too ready facility by which cadets could sign for slabs of chocolate and bottles of lemonade which the chief steward was only too eager to unload on to his young customers.

Shoregoing activities were mainly concentrated on cafes, cinemas and inexpensive sightseeing. Food was an ever-present preoccupation, and his first glimpse of New Zealand was recalled when he ordered a Rangitoto Special - three mounds of ice cream on a long dish, with supporting fruit, cream and syrup.

At weekends in port, a constant stream of visitors could be expected, a form of recreation popular with New Zealanders. This practice had its drawbacks and embarrassments, for the cadets' cabins were in effect unscreened bed sitting rooms, immediately accessible from the deck outside.

In some ports, local residents took advantage of the temporary availability of a supply of unattached youths by organizing dances. These were usually held in rather bare halls, with comparably sparse musical accompaniment, and to a sixteen-year-old some of the partners seemed a little elderly. Nevertheless it was always refreshing to be reminded that there was another world outside the confines of an all-male shipboard environment.

It was at such a dance that he received a quite unexpected reminder of the importance of one recommended seamanlike practice. So as to eliminate the possibility of a single unusually attractive girl monopolizing the attentions of the majority of cadets present, as had happened on a previous occasion, the chief officer had ruled that no cadet was to dance more than once with any individual partner. The dance began with a Paul Jones, at the end of which "first tripper" found himself escorting a chance-met partner to her seat. He also found to his horror that he was firmly tethered to her by a decorative fringe on her dress, which had become entangled in the three brass buttons (the "snotty's badge") on his uniform sleeve. Congenitally shy, he found himself inhibited from drawing the matter to her attention and inevitably, when the music struck up again, he had to invite her to take the floor for a second time. As they resumed their seats, he began to fear that, quite apart from any possible reaction from the chief officer, his partner was mistakenly reading rather more into his apparent marked attention than was intended. A desperate situation required a desperate remedy. By some miracle of dexterity, he extracted his penknife from an inner pocket, opened it, and apparently unobserved cut himself free from his entanglement. Excusing himself, he then fled from the hall, to dance no more that night. The painful lesson he had learned was that no real seaman is every without a knife, a practical demonstration of the

truth of an unquotable nautical aphorism.

Lying alongside a wharf, the ship was conveniently placed for the P.T.I. to extend the area normally available for physical jerks. Sometimes he sent the cadets on a very early morning run through the streets of some small port, oblivious of the natural reactions of the prematurely disturbed residents. A less anti-social recreation successfully promoted by the Instructor was boat-pulling. Most of the harbours were ideal for this purpose and the ship's boats were put into the water whenever possible. Crews were formed and races organized. In one of these, "first tripper" as cox of a junior crew distinguished himself when two mistakes on the part of his opposite number - a wide turn at the mark boat and a temporary loss of nerve at the very close approach of a crossing coaster - enabled him to retrieve what had been a losing situation.

As the ship's holds were cleared, those intended to carry refrigerated cargoes were scrupulously cleaned, drip trays erected under the deckhead cooling grids, and dunnage laid. It became a familiar, but nevertheless an always surprising experience, to climb down from the warm atmosphere on deck into the almost solid clutch of the chilled air in a refrigerated hold.

And so loading began; suety-smelling carcasses of mutton or lamb in their individual shrouds; cartons of butter and apples; cylindrical wooden-slatted cases of cheese; bales of wool; and barrels of tallow, heavy with their characteristic fatty odour.

Early in March, fully laden, the ship passed through Wellington Heads, homeward bound for London via Panama."

(Editor - we hope to complete the description of this routine voyage of NORTHUMBERLAND by Leslie Harrison in our next issue).

#### TO THE BREAKERS

CUMBERLAND (1948)

HINDSIA (1955)

KARA (1956)

SPYROS NIARCHOS (Barrow 1956)

V.MADRIGAL ex MOBIL ENDEAVOUR (1961)

WORLD INDEPENDANCE (1957)

HOLOSPIRA ex SAN FELIPE

JOYA MCCANCE ex BEAUVAL (1964)

PHILIDORA (1959)

SUSSEX (1949)

# NEW NAMES FOR OLD

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| ADARA              | ex SAXON PRINCE ex CAIRNTRADER (1971)    |
| ANDRIA             | ex TEESSIDE CLIPPER                      |
| ALAUNIA            | ex CARDIFF CLIPPER                       |
| ANDANIA            | ex GLASGOW CLIPPER                       |
| ALSATIA            | ex EDINBURGH CLIPPER                     |
| ASTORIA            | ex SELMA DAN                             |
| BALMORAL CASTLE    | ex CLAN ROBERTSON                        |
| BEACON POINT       | ex DUNCANSBY HEAD                        |
| CARINTHIA          | ex CANTALOUPE                            |
| CARMANIA           | ex ORANGE                                |
| CADOGAN            | ex BAMFORD (1967)                        |
| CADWALADER         | ex BEDFORD                               |
| CITY OF PRETORIA   | ex RIA JEAN MCMURTRY                     |
| CORTES             | ex BALTIC VANGUARD                       |
| CHELSEASTREAM      | ex LANCASTERBROOK                        |
| CARTIERCLIFFE HALL | ex RUHR ORE                              |
| CAST BEAVER        | ex INISHOWEN HEAD                        |
| CASTLE POINT       | ex HUDSON LIGHT                          |
| DESEADO            | ex IBERIC                                |
| DUNSTER GRANGE     | ex CLYDE BRIDGE ex CLYDESDALE            |
| DOLPHIN POINT      | ex CORCHESTER                            |
| DOVER CASTLE       | ex CLAN RANALD                           |
| DAPO WAVE          | ex CAPE NELSON                           |
| EXPRESS APOLLON    | ex HIBERNIA                              |
| ELMINER            | ex VALLILA ex SUGAR CARRIER (1960)       |
| EAGLE I            | ex CHARLES H. MERZ                       |
| ESKSTREAM          | ex GLENCREE                              |
| FORT POINT         | ex DUNVEGAN HEAD                         |
| FORTROSE           | ex FORAGER ex BRIGADIER (tug)            |
| GLAUCUS            | ex LYCAON                                |
| GRIGORIS           | ex ST.CLEMENT                            |
| GORDIAN            | ex HUDSON FRIENDSHIP (1971)              |
| GRATIAN            | ex HUDSON VENTURE (1971)                 |
| GALWAVE            | ex SAINT ENOCH ex YORKSHIRE COAST (1959) |
| GULF ORIENT        | ex ANTILOCHUS                            |
| IDEFIX             | ex NORDIC ENTERPRISE ex NAESS ENTERPRISE |
| KOCABAS            | ex AFON WEN ex MSC ONSET (tug)           |
| KWAKWANI           | ex IRISHMAN (tug)                        |
| KING EGBERT        | ex LIVERPOOL CLIPPER (1974)              |
| LAKE NIPIGON       | ex TEMPLE BAR (1971)                     |
| LIZA               | ex OLIVINE                               |

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| LAKE ALMANON      | ex SEVERN BRIDGE                                |
| LAKE MENDOCINO    | ex AVON BRIDGE                                  |
| LOSSIEMOUTH       | ex BATTLEAXE ex STRONGBOW (tug)                 |
| MONTCLIFFE HALL   | ex EMS ORE                                      |
| MASTER JOHN       | ex BELGULF ENTERPRISE (1962)                    |
| MENA              | ex DONACILLA                                    |
| MOORGATE KING     | ex GLORIOUS COLOCOTRONIS ex CLYDE MARU (1966)   |
| MAR VI            | ex RATHMINES ex STANSTED                        |
| NICOLA            | ex ANTONIO MIGUEL ex ROWAN ex ROWANFIELD (1938) |
| OPPORTUNITY       | ex TYNE PRIDE                                   |
| RABUNION VII      | ex STORMONT ex FRUIN ex FIFE COAST (1954)       |
| SEA CONDOR        | ex CEDRIC                                       |
| SALINAS           | ex LONDON CLIPPER                               |
| SAXONIA           | ex GLADIOLA                                     |
| SCYTHIA           | ex IRIS QUEEN                                   |
| SERVIA            | ex ORCHIDEA                                     |
| SAMARIA           | ex CHRYSANTEMA                                  |
| STEELCLIFFE HALL  | ex RHINE ORE                                    |
| TOWERSTREAM       | ex LONDONBROOK                                  |
| WINCHESTER CASTLE | ex CLAN RAMSAY                                  |
| ZENIA I           | ex CHRISTOPHER M                                |

(Note - OPPORTUNITY is the new name for the vessel shown during Mr.Osler's talk on the N.E.Coast)

#### DECEMBER MEETING

Our Christmas Social Evening and Exhibition took place at the Museum on Thursday 9th December and was well attended. Although the catering arrangements did not allow for a sit-down supper as previously, our lady members saw to it that we had an excellent buffet supper. Our thanks go to all of them for such tasty refreshments.

This annual event gives an opportunity to meet and talk with our friends, and to browse around the various exhibits. Messrs. Boyes, Griffin and Hill brought paintings and drawings, Pugh brought scrap books of sketches, and J.Bain, a new member, brought a photograph enlargement of a three-masted topsail schooner for identification.

Our slide talk of the evening was by our Chairman Dr. Peter Davies, on the Expedition earlier this year to search for Sir Francis Drake's coffin. It is known that Hawkins died when the

English ships were off Portobello, and Drake died soon afterwards. According to William Parker, there are several accounts of Drake's sea burial. The body is said to have been placed in a lead sheet and cast overboard, but the exact position is not known with any certainty. The careening grounds have been searched but have silted up to a considerable extent.

A collection of huts on the beach comprised the 1976 Expedition's headquarters, and as these housed many valuable items of equipment, they had to be closely guarded from unauthorized natives. A landing jetty was constructed on floats and topped with numerous flagpoles.

Professor Egerton was in charge of sonar techniques, and electronic beams were used to position the search craft and make sure that probing the ocean bed was methodical. At a depth of seven metres, two large targets were found, possibly of quite large ships, but the expedition only succeeded in penetrating three or four metres down. These might have been scuttled ships, which were not repairable for a passage back to England. Silt was always the problem.

Syd Wignall was leader of the Expedition, which had assistance from the Panamanian Government, who loaned a helicopter and a small vessel named PAVLON. It had been intended to use a fine schooner, owned by one of the expedition members, as a floating HQ, but this vessel was not available for the length of time required.

Magnometers were used under water, but these were hampered by the basalt rock beneath being slightly magnetic. On the underwater slides, we plainly saw the cannon balls from wrecks. We also saw a series of slides of very beautiful gold and silver objects recovered from a wreck of about 1750 - real works of art. We saw a diver holding spoons in his hands, and learned that all metal objects are useful in dating finds.

The screen showed us idyllic scenes of blue seas and wonderful skies, yet Portobello has an average of one inch of rain per day, and we saw the onset of a rainstorm.

At one period, the report within the expedition, that a lead box had been found caused a stir, until it was realized that it was only 2'6" long and empty. This posed quite a mystery.

But Drake's remains were never found.

Now to return to our modest festivities - the hot mince pies and sherry having arrived, our late President R.B.Summerfield proposed a toast to "The Society" and in a spirit of optimism, we raised our glasses to a hopeful future. For with the encouragement of our members and the influx of new ones, we feel well assured. Little did we think, however, that within three days Mr.Summerfield, who had done so much for the Society since its inception, would pass from our midst. But I leave that to the tribute on page 1 of this Bulletin.

N.R.P.

#### A HISTORY OF THE ALEXANDRA TOWING CO.LTD.

"Blow Five" - a book for every tug enthusiast, by our member Mr. W.B. Hallam, is now available. 108 pages of information, photographs and fleet lists. Price £1.50. Copies can be obtained from "Sea Breezes", 213 Tower Buildings, Water Street, Liverpool L3 1LN. If sent by post there is an additional charge of 15p.

#### FROM SEACOMBE TO SALCOMBE

Maurice Hope has described the arrival of our well-remembered ferryboat EGREMONT in a Devon estuary, in the magazine "Cheshire Life".

"It's a far cry from the gloomy shores of the Mersey to the diamond waters and pepper sands of Salcombe's delightful estuary in the ancient South Hams of Devon.

The Mersey's natural inlets and contours over-ruled by commerce and shipbuilding have been unravelled and concealed behind angular wharves and dock gates that resist the tides. Giant ships pass in and out, their channel courses cleared by muddy dredgers, their safe conduct assured by sturdy tugs. Along these embankments even the colours of summer are dimmed to a surly monochrome.

Since the final departure of the Cunard liners, and the withdrawal of Admiralty's wartime fleet, the excitement associated with greeting beautiful and graceful ships has become an uncommon emotion for the Mersey ports; in fact the River, obsessed by its industrial role, seems to have little time left for beauty in any



form.....Perhaps only the trustworthy ferries have found a way into the hearts of the local people. In the main, ferryboats lead unromantic, well-ordered lives, ploughing to and fro against the rushing tides.

Childhood memories are dotted with scattered impressions of the old boats, looming from a winter's mist, thumping against the landing stage tyres. One recalls the throbbing handrails, the propellers churning up coffee-coloured water, the clatter of slatted gangplanks crashing to the deck from impossible angles and one particularly remembers the ritual procession of earnest commuters perambulating around the upper deck on their early morning journeys to city offices. The steamers, unbeatable for stamina, were eventually replaced by more economical motor vessels which were squatter and slightly shorter but just as powerful and more manoeuvrable.

EGREMONT, launched at the Dartmouth yard of Philip and Son in 1952, measured 150 feet from tip to stern, and was capable of about twelve knots. Cruising, she could accommodate 700 people, but on a ferry run could carry an astonishing 1,472. After twenty-three years on the busy crossing she was withdrawn from service having borne over a million passengers. Through her television appearances - in the opening sequence of B.B.C. T.V's "The Liver Birds" she was brought to millions of homes. Then she tied in at Birkenhead's dreary Morpeth Dock, unwanted, exhausted and unsure of the future. When water leaked through a corroded plate in the hull, it seemed likely that they would break her up.

The Salcombe Estuary stretches its handful of twisted fingers northwards to the protective hills and tors of Dartmoor, whilst its mouth is guarded by the cliffs of Bolt Head and Prawle Point, and in spirit at least, by the ruins of Fort Charles. Villages and hollows along the winding banks repose in gentle names like Shadycombe, Fisherman's Cove, Bowcombe Creek and Goodshelter. Handsome oak trees and wide chestnuts dip their branches into the silver waters of this sunken valley. Along the western slopes Salcombe's pink and blue cottages and well-groomed villas rise from the water's edge. Winter is brief in this favoured spot and fuchsias, geraniums and roses bloom in December.

Recently, sailing around Snapes Point, I approached the secluded pool known as the Bag where the houseboats are moored. I could hardly believe the sight that greeted me across the estuary.

For there, set against the rolling hills, was the unmistakable figure of EGREMONT. A little scratched and battered after her long trip south, she nevertheless maintained a stubborn dignity and seemed singularly unimpressed by her adventurous companions; for one thing, having been built just across Start Bay, she had, in a sense, come home. For another, having spent a quarter of a century giving way to mightier vessels, here, at last, she was the largest boat in sight.

On the following day in the bar of the Island Cruising Club's shore base, the story unfolded. The Club, celebrating its silver jubilee this year, was formed to provide opportunities for cruising under sail in a variety of craft, owned by the members, and to make available initial and advanced instruction in sailing and seamanship. The Club's floating headquarters KIWI and WESTWARD, moored together in the Bag, had become inadequate for the growing demands of the thriving organization, so plans were made to replace them. What was needed was a vessel to serve as a base for thirty-five dinghies and seven keel boats, one that could support a far-ranging cruising fleet of eight yachts, and could provide living accommodation for at least seventy people.

The old Wallasey ferryboat was discovered lying in her deserted Merseyside basin. After intensive examination she was purchased for £25,000 while a further £13,000 was spent on preservation and towage.

On Tuesday, 15th June 1976, she turned her back on the Mersey shores for the last time. Her conversion, planned to include double cabins, deck saloons, lecture theatres and an attractive observation lounge, will cost another £30,000. It seems that no expense is too high for the boat which became "surplus to Wallasey's requirements", and she is held in such high esteem that the Royal Yachting Association's Seamanship Foundation agreed to match the Cruising Club's contributions, pound for pound, until this month of November. The members I spoke to were enthusiastic about "The Mighty Egg" due to be commissioned at Easter 1977. It is a dream come true for the Island Cruising Club and an affectionate memory for Merseysiders."

In spite of Mr. Hope's somewhat disparaging remarks on our local scene, your Editor still considers there is still a little magic left on the Mersey.

To read the above article, what pleasure it would have given to the late Tom Graham, who had an important role in designing both EGREMONT and LEASOWE. He was, of course, a partner in Graham, Robb and Woolnough, Naval Architects of Liverpool. He was also largely responsible for the pilot cutter SIR THOMAS BROCKLEBANK. Once, when asked what was the ship that gave him the greatest satisfaction in designing, he said, without any doubt in his mind, HEAS ALBATROSS, the early seaplane carrier.

N.R.P.

## MERSEY NOTES

With only the south lock in use at the Birkenhead entrances, measuring 600ft x 80ft, the size of some of the recent grain ships has necessitated them entering and leaving "on the level". LAURENTIAN was 575 x 75ft. Preliminary work continues on the bed of the north lock prior to fitting new gates.

HMS BIRMINGHAM, the first of two SHEFFIELD class destroyers built at Birkenhead, left the Mersey on 24th November, and on arrival at Portsmouth was duly commissioned into the Royal Navy. HMS COVENTRY remains fitting out. Cammell Lairds have no further naval contracts.

Both the ferry ROYAL DAFFODIL and the British Transport Commission's dredger GRASSENDALE are being offered for sale.

The No.1 Mersey Pilot Cutter SIR THOMAS BROCKLEBANK departed from Langton Lock on 17th December 1976 bound for Lemvig, Denmark. She was offered for disposal as a result of the new method of pilot working at Point Lynas. After some modification for work in the Mediterranean, she will carry students on educational cruises.

Built by Philips of Dartmouth in 1951, she was the first of our pilot vessels to break with the steam tradition. She replaced CHARLES LIVINGSTONE, built by Ferguson Brothers in 1921, which was sold to Estonians and became AURA. The running mates of the new ship in 1951 were WALTER J. CHAMBERS (1917), JAMES H. BEAZLEY (1921) and WILLIAM M. CLARKE (1937). At present, only two cutters remain to man the Bar station - ARNET ROBINSON (No.3) and EDMUND GARDNER (No.2) with four launches, PUFFIN and PETREL to serve the Mersey and FULMAR and GUILLEMOT at Point Lynas.

Anchored off Woodside Stage on 1st December was EXPRESS APOLLON ex HIBERNIA. She had called to fuel for her delivery voyage to new

owners in Piraeus. Her funnel was now painted white with a green top and her British Rail (Sealink) markings obliterated.

A Notice to Mariners advises that a red buoy now marks the wreck of EL OSO, mined or torpedoed northwest of the Mersey Bar in January 1940. Position 53.37N 3.23W.

The dredger SERVITOR arrived under tow at Morpeth Dock in November 1976 and was rapidly reduced to scrap. We have not been able to trace any detail of her, but understand she hailed from the Plymouth area.

The North West Light Float was removed from station by Trinity House in November 1976 and the light will be discontinued, in position 53.31N 3.22W.

The new medium sized tankers HUDSON PROGRESS, HUDSON CAVALIER and HUDSON DEEP completed by Cammell Laird Shipbuilders Ltd. remain in the port. Payment difficulties experienced by the firm which ordered the ships, have forced Cammell Laird into the position of being shipowners, at a time when the tanker market is depressed. The first named is laid up in Sandon Dock, the other two are still in Laird's basin, and a fourth ship contracted for has not yet been commenced.

The German coaster HERMANN SUHR on passage from Spain to the Mersey in November, broke her main crank shaft off Orme's Head. Tug CROSBY towed her to the Mersey for discharge and when it was found that continental suppliers could not promise delivery of a shaft for nine months, it was decided to fit a new engine complete. CROSBY then took the ship in tow for Rotterdam, and arrived 2nd December.

Some progress is being made in rehabilitating the George's Ferry stage, after sinking last year. Shelters, though draughty, have given some winter protection. Seats have been bolted down all facing inshore - it is probably thought that Merseysiders might otherwise despair when viewing the emptiness of the present day Mersey!

The new concrete stage, intended for Isle of Man traffic which severed its mooring booms in January 1976 has remained derelict ever since. But now, work has recommenced possibly in view of H.M. The Queen's visit this summer. The old portion of the pontoon stage still serves the Manx boats. The wooden buildings on it have partly disintegrated, but all praise to the

A.D.N.C. men who manage to keep an office around them, with rope lashings round the walls and tarpaulins to keep out the rain. No doubt, the improvisation of ex-Navy types!

To help reduce expensive chartering, Ocean Fleets were able to take delivery "off the peg" of two Russian-built Dnepr-class cargo vessels in January 1977. Named LAERTES and LYCAON, they made good passages from Piraeus and docked at Birkenhead on the same tide in the forenoon of Thursday 6th January. They aroused considerable interest and were of impressive appearance. And as we stood and watched them passing through "four bridges" to West Float, we reflected that whilst Odessa was building ships for us, our own Cammell Laird yard nearby was closing for yet another strike. There is too much at stake for British owners to rely on our own yards at present, and who can blame Ocean Fleets for taking advantage of prompt delivery of two large, speedy and sophisticated ships?

The summer sailing programme of the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company can be obtained from the Liverpool office, Brunswick St. As well as the usual sailings between Douglas and Liverpool, Dublin, Belfast, Ardrossan, Fleetwood and Llandudno, there are thirty day excursions between Liverpool and Llandudno. Of these, 13 will be on Sundays, 7 on Tuesdays and 10 on Thursdays between 5th June and 4th September. Contract for these Llandudno trips costs £40. The poor support from Merseysiders for these Llandudno sailings, particularly on the early Sundays of the season, gives rise to fears that the Company may withdraw them. More support from our members and friends in 1977 would help to allay this misfortune.

Even with the afternoon coastal cruise from Llandudno well patronized, it must be disappointing to see the ship leave Liverpool with insufficient passengers to cover even the fuel bill! This has happened.

N.R.P.

#### GENERAL NEWS

The two Italian liners RAFFAELO and MICHELANGELO built in 1965 have been sold to Iran, who may use them as floating hotels.

Clyde car ferry GLEN SANNOX has been having a thorough overhaul at Aberdeen. Possibly this is to make her into a double-purpose ship for the time when she takes the place of QUEEN MARY II on summer excursion work. The paddler WAVERLEY is still an

attraction on the Clyde, and it is hoped to see her in service in 1977.

John D.Potter, Chairman of Coastal Cruising Association, in a letter to Lloyds List, accuses the Greater London Council of forcing Thames small passenger boats off the river by draconian demands.

Two more passenger links are soon to close, these are Swedish Lloyd's Tilbury/Gothenburg service (SAGA) and Southampton/Bilbao (PATRICIA). But whilst this is happening, Tor Line are to increase their sailings from Immingham and Felixstowe/Gothenburg from four to five per week. (TOR BRITANNIA and TOR SCANDINAVIA).

SCYTHIA ex IRIS QUEEN on a ballast trip from Falmouth to Casablanca in mid December had a heavy fuel oil overflow in the engine room, and fire. Four of the crew received burns and the ship was immobilized. She finished her voyage to Casablanca under tow of the Moroccan tug EL MAHIR.

In October, a receiver was appointed for the old established Greenock firm of John Hastie & Co.Ltd. - the well known manufacturers of ships' steering gear.

Smits Sleepdienst have sold their tug ELBE. Their tug SMIT SALVOR ex CLYDE was detained 15 days in Cuba after entering their territorial waters in error. Sensitivity of a communist country to innocent visitations, perhaps!

The Bulgarians seem to have become world-wide fishermen. After the impounding of their AURELIA, and heavy fines for illegal fishing at Cork, a Bulgarian stern trawler named OFELIA was caught fishing within the 12-mile limit off the Oregon coast. Fined in Vancouver, the ship had to pay \$350,000 and the skipper \$5,000 to obtain release. The skipper was put on probation for a year, not to transgress again.

In early October, the Irish coaster KILCREA ex MARIA ALTHOFT had engine trouble off South Wales. She was towed for three miles by Tenby lifeboat, whose engine became overheated - a big effort for a lifeboat to tow a 1000-tonner. The Alexandra tug MARGAM arrived on the scene from Swansea and took the ship to Tenby Roads.

Over Christmas 1976, CALEDONIAN PRINCESS and DUKE OF LANCAS-TER have maintained the Holyhead/Dunlaoghaire run.

EMS ORE was "blackened" by dockers at Glasgow in August 1976 owing to low wage rates being paid to foreign crew, under Liberian flag. Tugboatmen imposed a boycott. Finally she and her

sisters, RHINE ORE and RUHR ORE have come under new ownership, with new names. They are delivering Venezuelan ore to Birkenhead and Glasgow as formerly.

In early December, QUEEN ELIZABETH II had a very stormy Atlantic voyage, and was then to make a Caribbean cruise. She docked at Boston instead of New York where damage was repaired. An anchor she carried on the fore deck was unshipped in heavy seas, dropped over the side and damaged plates in the bulbous bow some feet below the waterline. The anchor was lost.

A man and wife sailing the yacht TRISMUS from Buenos Aires to France in November came into collision with a sperm whale, which cracked the hull and sank her. This was in the area of Fernando Noronha, and after 6 days in a dinghy, they were picked up by Brazilian fishermen.

Another man and wife were sailing a catamaran in the English Channel and were caught in dense fog. They came upon a buoy, which the man stepped aboard to try and discover its markings. But looking round, his craft had sheered off. His wife tried for hours to locate the buoy but eventually reached port, and a helicopter managed to locate the buoy and pluck the man to safety, after a very cold night afloat. What he said to his wife is not known!

Tyne ferry NORTHUMBRIAN has been used as a floating restaurant from July 1973 to February 1976 when the venture failed. The Admiralty Marshal has taken charge.

In November, the Donegal fishing port of Burtonport lost one of its trawlers, CARRAIG UNA and her crew of five. The boat radioed during dark hours that she was on the rocks on Rathlin O'Byrne Island, but other trawlers which proceeded found only wreckage.

Raymond Blackman, former editor of "Janes Fighting Ships" has commented that the present day destroyer of the SHEFFIELD class takes about 5 years to build. In fact they take half as long to build as they can expect to be in service.

The Ulrich Harms concept of very large barges for carrying whole vessels across the oceans, may have inspired the Dutch firm of Wismullers to build more sophisticated craft for the same purpose. Their OCEAN SERVANT II is a semi-submersible craft, carrying up to 12,500 tons. She has her own propelling power, but is normally towed. We all remember how GREAT BRITAIN arrived from the Falkland Islands on a MULUS barge, and how another barge of this type loaded the rockcutting dredger W.D.PORT SUNLIGHT in Birkenhead for delivery in West Africa.

A ship built by Henry Robb & Co. for Ellerman Wilson Line in 1955 is a write-off through fire at Bahrain. She was OCEAN DUCHESS ex ASIONE ex TEANO.

N.R.P.

## INBORN FEAR OF THE SEA

John Ryan, on Radio Eireann, expounded on the inborn fear felt by many Irishmen in a short talk on 7th March 1976. This may stem from the flood of emigration which occurred in the mid 1800's when two million abandoned their homes to cross the Atlantic to start a new life. They suffered incredible conditions on board the sailing ships engaged, and on average, one ship per month was lost.

Half the vessels sailed direct from Irish ports, and the remainder sailed mostly from Liverpool. Many were only small coastal vessels. A vessel named EXMOUTH left Londonderry for Quebec, but ended up in a cavern on the island of Islay, and 108 persons were lost. PALHATTAN reached the New Jersey coast, and was so near the shore that conversation was possible with those on shore, yet not one person survived her wreck. Hannah from Newry to Canada hit an iceberg.

This emigrant trade was described as a subsidy for British owners, who could obtain good cargoes of timber, grain and fruit inwards, the outward voyage being made profitable by emigration. The speaker stated that this emigration, and slavery before it, had contributed to the richness of Liverpool as a great city and port.

The poor unfortunates might be battened down below for four to six weeks. There was little ventilation in the tween decks, no stoves so no cooking, and sanitary facilities almost non-existent. Water was often rationed at one pint per person per day for all purposes. It was worse than being in a crowded gaol. There was no redress and, as our typically Irish speaker had it, "you might as well take the Czar of Russia to law"!

The haunting memories of these voyages has been passed down to the children and into the subconscious.

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## DEFINITIONS OF "RESEARCH"

Careful search or inquiry.

Endeavours to discover facts by scientific study.

Course of critical investigation.



## PADDLER WAVERLEY TO VISIT MERSEY ?

It lightens winter's gloom to hear that WAVERLEY will make educational and O.A.P. cruises here 25th to 29th April chartered by M.P.T.E. She is to cruise to Fleetwood on 30th and to Llandudno on 1st May in connection with the Pier's centenary. On 2nd May, ST COLUMBA, Sealink's new ferry for the Holyhead/Dun Laoghaire service is expected to show herself in Llandudno Bay, immediately following her maiden voyage.

## THE SOCIETY'S PRESIDENTIAL ROLL OF HONOUR

|              |                            |
|--------------|----------------------------|
| 1938 to 1948 | Lord Derby                 |
| 1948 to 1960 | Sir Ernest Royden          |
| 1962 to 1972 | Sir Arnet Robinson         |
| 1972 to 1976 | Ronald Bernard Summerfield |

## SOCIETY NOTES

It was with great regret that our January meeting had to be postponed owing to the snowstorm of 13th.

Our Hon.Treasurer hopes that we may be able to finalize the sale of draw tickets for the Keith Griffin print at our February meeting.

Shire Publications Ltd. have produced the book "West Coast Shipping" by our Hon.Secretary M.K.Stammers, copies of which were on view at the December meeting. This book can be purchased from the Museum shop, price £1.50.

Mr.Stammers is also author of the Liverpool text of another larger book, "The Medley of Mast and Sail". This work has been accorded very favourable comment in the maritime press, and is published by Teredo Books Ltd. at £13.80.

The good news referred to in our last Bulletin, duly came to pass, and prior to Christmas two baby boys arrived. We offer hearty congratulations to Mr.& Mrs.Paget-Tomlinson, and a long and happy life for John Edward. Similar hearty congratulations go to Mr.& Mrs.Stammers and all best wishes for the future health and happiness of Andrew James Kingsley. The stork is usually held responsible for these happenings, but there is a South African species called a Secretary bird, and this chap must have stood in as locum whilst the hard working stork had time off!

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

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B U L L E T I N

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Merseyside County Museum  
William Brown Street  
Liverpool, L3 8EN

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

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See the sky, and breathe fresh air,  
Feel the sea-wind through your hair,  
Hear the waves come in, go out,  
Have the right to move about,  
Laze awhile on golden sand,  
Feel the warmth of sun on hand.....  
Give no thought to bitter gold,  
Worry not as you grow old,  
Just look around, and you will see  
You have the best - for you are free.

Don F.Bezant (contemporary)

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Vol. XXI No.2

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MERSEY CHANNEL CHASE, APRIL 1906

"A rather exciting incident on the river the other day  
Passed un-noticed by many. A passenger, from Barbados, arrived  
at the Landing Stage after the tender for his boat the NICARAGUA  
had left. In fact the NICARAGUA was then steaming down the

river and was off New Brighton. What was to be done? The tender HERCULANEUM returned to the Stage and the situation was explained to Captain John, who was asked whether it was possible to catch the disappearing steamer. Captain John said that they would try at all events, and the trial was made. The chase was full of excitement for all concerned, but especially for the traveller anxious to get to Barbados. The effort succeeded, but it was not until the Bar had been passed that NICARAGUA was overhauled and the passenger safely transferred to her deck".

This is an extract from the "Liverpool Weekly Courier" of 28th April 1906, for which Mr. Don McNeil, a researcher into past history, is thanked.

#### MUSEUM NEWS

Regrettably, the Shipperies Exhibition has closed, and there seems little chance of its revival in the near future. However, there will be temporary exhibitions of nautical interest this year:-

Kenneth D. Shoesmith (1890-1939) Exhibition of marine paintings and designs. 1st April to 12th June 1977

The First Royal Yacht, Exhibition of finds from the wreck of the Royal Yacht MARY, wrecked off Anglesey in 1676. 17th June to 31st August 1977.

Members will be interested to learn that the salvage of EMBLEMATIC at Meols is still in progress. This vessel was a smack rigged trawler built in 1873 at Sunderland, and acquired by the Eccles family of Hoylake in 1877. She was torn from her moorings in January 1883 and cast ashore on the Wallasey embankment at Leasowe. Her owners were unable to salvage her and she was abandoned, and the sea wall rebuilt over her hull. Last year, the sea wall was again rebuilt and the contractors dug her out; miraculously she floated after nearly 100 years entombment. However, before she could be lifted ashore, she sank at her new moorings at Meols. If the salvage is successful, she will be taken to Croxteth Hall for restoration and storage. Members of the Museum staff have renamed her "Problematic"!

M.K.S.

## FEBRUARY MEETING

The first meeting in 1977 took place at the Museum on Thursday 10th, our January meeting having been postponed because of the snowstorm of that evening. Our Chairman Dr. Peter Davies paid a tribute to our late President, Ronald Summerfield, in whose memory we stood for a few silent moments. Without any doubt at all, it would be Ronald's wish that the Society which he helped to form and maintain, should continue its activities and prosper. We owe it to his memory to keep the flag flying.

And in doing just that, our gathering welcomed Mr. Michael McCaughan of the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, a young man with lucid delivery and the pleasant brogue typical of the province. The subject was "Sail and Steam in Ulster" - very nicely illustrated by transparencies and a colour film.

The Folk Museum largely deals with transport, and its maritime connections are still in embryo, yet for all that, almost a score of small boats have been acquired for preservation as representing various types. The largest of these to date is the veteran schooner RESULT.

The first slide shown was of the museum itself, situated in the country on the south bank of Belfast Lough on the road to Bangor C.D.

The port of Belfast consists of three channels - the Victoria, the Herdman and the Musgrave. Wooden shipbuilding began in 1791 and the very different craft of building iron ships commenced in 1838. Some famous vessels were turned out, and we saw slides of JANE PORTER of 1860, a 900 ton ship engaged in the East Indies trade.

Around 1875 to 1882, there was a prosperous jute trade in which Belfast-built ships like STAR OF RUSSIA, STAR OF ITALY and STAR OF FRANCE took part. One of these went round the Cape to Calcutta in 77 days.

Harland and Wolff became the chief builders and one of their early steamships was Bibby Line's PERSIAN, the first steamer they built with a straight stem.

We saw the ill-fated TITANIC on No.3 slip in 1911, and as comparison, CANBERRA of 1961, with her aluminium superstructure.

Somehow it came as a surprise to know that the present ULSTER PRINCE was the last passenger vessel built by Harlands. We saw her at Donegal Quay on 6th April 1967 when new.

But now, although building slipways are still used, the largest ships are built in a huge drydock, to be floated out. At the moment, a tanker of 330,000 tons is taking shape. There are two travelling overhead cranes traversing this dock, each able to lift pre-fabricated sections of up to 800 tons. Vessels of up to 200,000 tons are still built on the slipways. ESSO ULIDIA was the first product of the building dock method.

There were other builders at Belfast, and chief amongst these was Workman Clark & Co. who commenced in 1880 but went out of business in 1935 following the depression. Their last yard number was 535 so that their output was considerable. They built VICTORIAN, a very fine triple screw turbine ship for North Atlantic work.

They also built small ships like the Belfast Corporation sludge steamer DIVIS which still makes two trips to sea every day. She was built in 1928, is of 357 tons and has coal fired boiler and reciprocating engine.

We were reminded that ships were also built at Derry, Larne and Carrickfergus.

And now, probably with considerable pride, Mr. McCaughan told us about his Museum acquiring RESULT in 1970. She was built as a three-masted topsail schooner in 1893, and with several changes in her rig and mast arrangement, she became purely a motor vessel in 1946 and traded until 1967. In the First World War she was used as a Q-ship. Her restoration proceeds apace, and £25,000 was spent on her in 1974. She is 102 ft. long, or if unlike your scribe, you are "with it", then that means  $31\frac{1}{2}$  metres.

We saw some slides of RESULT's decks being caulked with oakum and pitch and this gave great pleasure to this writer, remembering the business-like caulking of his wartime ships by Harland's men during the last war. It brought back memories of the strange caulking mallet, the implements, and the smell of hot pitch running into the teak seams. In his present day voyaging on pleasure steamers and ferries, he views neglected caulking, soon leading to bitumen coating as a substitute for rotting timber. The craftsmen who wore leather knee-pads may be no more - teak is

being priced out.

Michael McCaughan's reference to the connection between Ulster and Cornwall was interesting in connection with fishing boats. This goes back to the 1820's when the Cornish "dipping luggers" came north after the herring. This rig was found very handy and suitable for the trade. The Manx were evidently impressed and built luggers of a larger size, but instead of both masts having lug sails, they had a standing lug mizzen and kept the gaff mainsail.

Another Museum acquisition is MARY JOSEPH, a 52ft fishing boat (N.55) under restoration on Strangford Lough. She was once a sailing boat, but has now got a wheelhouse aft and engine forward. She is a survivor of the Victorian fishing fleet, but with her blue hull and brown upperworks appears of much more recent vintage. She has just had anti-fouling treatment as there is serious worm problem in Strangford Lough.

Came the coffee interval, and time for a chat, but Mr. McCaughan had more in store, in the form of a colour film taken aboard DIVIS whilst consigning a cargo of sludge to the deep, well clear of the land. DIVIS resembles a coal-burning coaster of former days, and puts up a very striking cloud of black smoke whenever her furnace is fed - say every ten minutes. She is the subject of many remarks and complaints as she daily plods up and down Belfast Lough. And no doubt, in normal circumstances action would be taken against her owners, but she happens to be operated by the Ministry for the Environment! It could only happen in Ireland.

The film was made during the summer of 1974. DIVIS makes 9 knots with a Scotch boiler at 180 lbs. pressure. The well-controlled background music to the commentary was "Siegfried's Journey to the Rhine" which was rather more dramatic than a sludge board would merit, but very pleasant. DIVIS is often rudely referred to as the "banana boat"; not a very complimentary term for a twin screw, coal-fired ship from an era that is sadly past.

The British Navy maintains a minesweeper of the SOBERTON type, patrolling off the Ulster coast on watch for gun running, during these troublous times. DIVIS was challenged on one occasion at the extent of her seaward run. The warship sent away a boarding party in rubber dinghy just as DIVIS discharged her odoriferous cargo!

This was a most interesting and well-illustrated talk for which the vote of thanks was made by Dr. Denis Chapman. Mr. McCaughan stated his pleasure in having such an appreciative audience and stressed the bond existing between Belfast and Liverpool; both cities have much in common, and again we see ours left behind in not having a maritime museum, when our past achievements demand it.

N.R.P.

#### NEW MEMBERS

We are very pleased to welcome to the Society the following:-

|                |                            |
|----------------|----------------------------|
| M.M. Dooley,   | Wallasey                   |
| J.S. Bain,     | Hoylake                    |
| J.W. Roughley, | Liverpool                  |
| W.G. Carter,   | Richmond, British Columbia |

#### FIRST TRIPPER (Part IV)

Leslie Harrison, now retired, was for a long period Secretary of the Mercantile Marine Service Association which administers what we familiarly call "The Mariners' Home" at Egremont. His sea-going years were a very useful prelude to this onerous post in later life.

In our last issue, he described a cadet's impressions of a first visit to New Zealand, until early in March 1929, s.s. NORTH-UMBERLAND passed through Wellington Heads, homeward bound for London via Panama. This is the final part of the "First Tripper" series:-

"NORTHUMBERLAND sailed from Wellington at 7 a.m. on 8th March. That evening, first tripper stood what was to be the first of his many watches on look-out during the passage.

Look-outs were normally stationed on the focs'le head, which in this ship was unusually long, incorporating No.1 hatch. A solid bulwark extended some way aft of the stem, and being small he found that he could comfortably wedge himself into the very eyes of the ship, his shoulder just fitting under the top angle iron. In the relatively peaceful mid-ocean watches, he had plenty of time to reflect on life, and particularly on all aspects of his new career. He had many pleasant memories of New Zealand and looked forward to returning.

On those long ocean passages, look-out duties were normally

free from incident but never wholly dull. A constant but varied background, depending on sea conditions, was provided by the swish and gurgle as the stem ploughed through the water, and the tumble of the bow wave, as it spread out on either side. Occasionally there was an opportunity to observe the luminous trails left by dolphins and porpoises, gliding, twisting and effortlessly leaping as they kept station around the bows.

There could be tenser moments. Crossing the Pacific, they ran into an exceptionally heavy thunderstorm. The lightning was almost continuous but the rain so solid that the flashes were diffused and not at all alarming. Squeezed tightly into his favourite nook, he became aware of a soft hissing noise, superimposed on the splashing of the torrential rain. For a little while he was unable to trace its source, then, looking upwards from under the brim of his streaming sou'wester, he saw with fascinated horror that around the cap of the jackstaff just in front of him, playing up and down for nearly a quarter of its length, were blueish-white sparks, each some four or five inches long. The potential danger of this incredible phenomenon was beyond his imagining. Backing slowly away, he fetched up against the windlass. Aft of this was the bell used to signal to the bridge the bearing on either bow, or ahead, of lights or objects which had been sighted. There was an additional signal, four strokes, to be used when a lookout was in doubt or wished to be relieved. At that moment, he was both in doubt and wishing to be relieved. Nerving himself, he walked round to the bell and began to strike it. As he did so, he wondered whether or not his report would be received with scepticism or even ridicule. Perhaps his fourth stroke was more hesitant and less firmly struck than the first three. At all events the effect on the bridge, he subsequently learned, was traumatic.

Secure in the knowledge that radio reports had confirmed that no other ship was anywhere near them, the officer of the watch was excusably keeping out of the rain. When he heard what appeared to be three bells from the focs'le, his attention was instantly directed towards what appeared to be a light dead ahead. Despite putting the wheel hard over, the light remained on the same bearing. There were some very anxious moments before the mystery was resolved. Between them, the watchkeepers agreed that St.Elmo's fire was a phenomenon better to read about in a meteorological handbook than to be encountered at first hand.



The ship berthed in Balboa at 11 a.m. on 29th March, and after taking on oil, passed on through the now familiar but still fascinating Panama Canal. Additional but more fleeting fascination was provided by several very attractive young girls leaning on the rails of a Pacific-bound Italian passenger liner in an adjacent lock, with whom the cadets exchanged cheerful greetings, before the two ships continued on their different ways.

NORTHUMBERLAND left Colon at midnight, and once again he found himself on lookout duties. Three days later, came another refueling stop, at Curacao. The stop-over enabled some cadets, including First Tripper, to go ashore. The immediate area was desolate and arid, being mostly sand and cactus, but the swimming was superb, the clear, almost tepid water giving perfect scope for underwater experiments first tried out in the ship's much more restricted swimming bath.

The last lap of the homeward voyage brought additional emphasis on the social activities which had kept the cadets occupied during their off-duty hours. Concerts each Saturday night had revealed an equal balance between natural unforced talent, greatly enjoyed by all, and a comparative lack of talent courteously tolerated. Swimming and deck sports were organized, and examinations set to test the knowledge picked up during spare time study, and the occasional more organized study sessions in the saloon. These were under the supervision of the supernumerary schoolmaster and ship's officers. On deck, work became increasingly concentrated on ship maintenance and overall painting, so as to ensure that when the ship came to dock in London, her home port, she would be looking at her best.

Inevitably, after a voyage most of which in retrospect seemed to have been spent on the focs'le head, it fell to first tripper to report the loom of a double flash over the port bow which identified the Bishop's Rock, the first practical indication that their six month voyage was nearly over. Channel Fever, the irrational maritime malady, swept through the ship, the symptoms being unreasonable excitement underlaid with wild anticipation of what leave was going to be like. Everything went to sustain that excitement: the greener tinge of the sea as they entered coastal waters; the increasing number of trawlers and fishing boats, and above all the initially distant coast, with its miniature houses and trim fields, coming closer as the ship steamed up Channel.

On 16th April, forty days out from Wellington, first tripper was on lookout again for the final stages of the voyage. On watch from midnight to 2 a.m. he turned out again at 6 a.m. to return to the focs'le, acting as the Chief Officer's messenger as the ship picked her way through the crowded Thames, to berth in the Royal Albert Dock.

Quite suddenly, there was a complete change of atmosphere. From an isolated self-contained unit, the ship became part of an almost alien environment. A curious air of detachment hung over the cadets as they waited for formal permission to leave the ship. Soon, with cheerful excitement, they were on their separate ways home.

It was a changed youth who returned home. A journey halfway round the world, bringing with it novel discoveries and responsibilities, seemed imperceptibly to have begun to set him apart from both family and friends. Their topics of conversation bored him and seemed to reflect the relatively narrow lives it seemed to him they were leading. Equally, on their side any initial interest in his experiences soon appeared to evaporate. Understandably, deep within him, he began to look forward to a return to that routine, disciplined yet somehow freer, in which he had found so much satisfaction. It was a life which, at that early stage of his development, seemed of promise, with something novel and intriguing lying just over each new horizon".

A changed young man! But, what of the ship, which was to continue with a long and useful life. Stephan Rabson, Librarian for the P. & O. Group, which absorbed the Federal Steam Navigation Co., supplies the details. NORTHUMBERLAND was a refrigerated cargo ship of 11,573 gross tons, built in 1915 by Swan Hunter & Wigham Richardson, Newcastle on Tyne. She was 530ft. long and for many years, the longest ship running to New Zealand. Twin screws were driven by steam turbines, giving a speed of 14 knots. Her masts were hinged for negotiating the Manchester Ship Canal.

As she came out in the middle of the first World War, she saw two years trooping, using her tweendecks emigrant accommodation. This was used by cadets after the war, until DURHAM was built in 1934, and became cadet ship.

She was converted to oil fuel in 1926.

In 1927 she was damaged on an uncharted rock off Gisborne, but reached Auckland where a drydock had to have special excavations so as to accommodate her length.

In 1931 she was at Napier at the time of a severe earthquake. Crew and cadets gave valuable help ashore.

In 1940 she was fitted to carry 1600 troops, but was also used to bring frozen meat from River Plate.

In January 1942 NORTHUMBERLAND returned to the New Zealand trade, although in 1944 she made two trans-Atlantic voyages. Passenger accommodation was removed in 1946, and all crew and officers housed amidships.

After a noteworthy career, including in all, eight years of war service, she was handed over on 13th January 1955 to British Iron and Steel Corporation to be broken up. Four months later came another NORTHUMBERLAND which served until 1972.

(We are indebted to Leslie Harrison for this most interesting series of "how he went to sea" - a truly seafaring documentary - N.R.P.)

#### LINES FROM JONATHAN SWIFT

At Holyhead, 25th September 1727

Lo, here I sit at holy head  
With muddy ale and mouldy bread,  
All Christian vittals stink of fish,  
I'm where my enemyes would wish.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Captain swears the sea's too rough,  
He has not passengers enough.  
And thus the Dean is forced to stay  
Till others come to help the pay

\* \* \* \* \*

In Dublin they'll be glad to see  
A packet, though it brings in me.  
I never was in haste before  
To reach that slavish, hateful shore;  
Before, I always found the wind  
To me was most malicious kind.

\* \* \* \* \*

(250 years is a long time, until Sealink altered all that!)

# NEW NAMES FOR OLD

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| ASPASIA                | ex LAOMEDON  |
| AL DAMMAM              | ex LUMEN (1971)  |
| AL HOFUF               | ex LUSTROUS (1968)   |
| AL KHAFJI              | ex LUMINOUS (1968)   |
| ADMIRAL FITZROY        | ex WEATHER ADVISER ex HMS AMBERLEY CASTLE                    |
| ADMIRAL BEAUFORT       | ex WEATHER MONITOR ex HMS PEVENSEY CASTLE                    |
| AFON GOCH              | ex AFON CARADOC ex PLATINA (tug)                             |
| DAPO SKY               | ex GOTHLAND (1961)   |
| DAPO STAR              | ex QUEENSGARTH   |
| DAPO SEA               | ex TARPON SEA ex PEARL SEA (1957)                            |
| DAPO WAVE              | ex CAPE NELSON   |
| EARL WILLIAM           | ex VIKING II   |
| GORSETHORN             | ex DIDO  |
| HANAN                  | ex GERMANIA ex KITTIWAKE (Burntisland<br>1946)               |
| HELANEH                | ex GOODWILL TRADER   |
| JADE STAR              | ex WELSH CITY (1968)   |
| KUMBASAN               | ex MERSEY BEAUCOUP ex MERSEY 42 (Hopper)                     |
| KRITI                  | ex UTRECHT ex JEAN BART (tug - 1946)                         |
| MARIYOS HOPE           | ex BALMERINO   |
| MARJORI Y              | ex ANDRIANA ex ROWANMORE ex MADULSIMA<br>ex ROWANMORE (1956) |
| NORTHBRIDGE            | ex CAIRNGORM   |
| NADINE                 | ex ROSELIL   |
| NEWFOUNDLAND CONTAINER | ex ROE DEER ex NORBRAE ex BUFFALO (1962)                     |
| NEPTUNE STAR           | ex CORNISH CITY (1969)                                       |
| ROBERT M               | ex CREE  |
| ROLAND                 | ex MAHSURI ex COLORADO STAR ex RAE BURN<br>(1952)            |
| ROMEL                  | ex CORNELIA B.IV   |
| RAYLIGHT               | ex WOPPER (puffer)   |
| ST.CLAIR               | ex TERJE VIGEN ex PANTHER                                    |
| ST.CLAIR II            | ex ST.CLAIR  |
| STENIES                | ex TORNADO ex SHEAF FIELD (1959)                             |
| STENTOR                | ex MEMNON  |
| UNITED VANGUARD        | ex GLAUCUS ex LYCAON (1954)                                  |
| VIRGINIA M             | ex GLOXINIA (1958)   |
| WILL ADAMS             | ex ATHELRENT (1965)  |
| ZEINA ONE              | ex CHRISTOPHER M   |

## MARCH MEETING

On 10th March in the Museum's Educational Lecture Room, our member Norman Morrison spoke to us on the history of the Liverpool Pilotage Service. Introductory remarks by our Chairman, Dr. Peter Davies, intimated that Norman Morrison has spent all his active life in the pilot service, except of course for the statutory time in his youth gaining deep sea experience. And so the paper he gave about the service, was as seen through the eyes of an active pilot.

The pilot service commenced officially in 1766, because of tragedies occurring in Liverpool Bay, although there had been some sort of pilotage since 1734. These men owned their own boats, fixed their own rates and although dedicated to the task, were somewhat undisciplined.

The Rock Channel and the Formby Channel were used for ships entering and leaving the Mersey, for what we now know as Queens Channel had not been discovered. Ships could anchor in the Hoyle Lake if desired, before proceeding up the Rock Channel (in this present day, unbuoyed and un-navigable). But the Rock Channel was not used after dark as there was only a perch and not yet a light-house at New Brighton. There was a ten guinea fine for breaking this rule. One of the pilot cutters is known to have broken the rule, probably owing to weather circumstances, and having knocked the perch down, duly paid the fine!

The names associated with the service of which they had charge were Captain Joseph Cook, 1839, R.P.J. Simpson, 1859 to 1896, then Edward C. Wheeler; in 1929 Capt. Blakey, in 1941, William Vickers and 1960, Robert Smith.

A red light and a white light were shown in the rigging of the early cutters and schooners. There were no charts and the chief tools of the trade were the lead line, rule, watch and tide tables. The pilotage committee consisted of the Mayor, bailiffs, 29 merchants and 18 mariners. The pilots were very careful to formulate a good working benevolent scheme.

Boats were always known by numbers and up to 1896, there had been 64 pilot vessels. Boarding was sometimes carried out by grabbing a rope from a ship's yard-arm, which was a dangerous procedure, with the cutter as close alongside as possible.

In 1897 the merchants made a new act in a Dale Street pub giving preference to large ships against small, where there had been a British rate, a differential for foreign ships and a half rate for coasters.

There had to be a collector of pilotage dues, and one such was John Leece, who had an office in Renshaw Street. At one time, the shipowners of the port considered that the pilots were exacting too much money for their services, and in fact it amounted to £28,000 per year. They were not pleased to find that the percentage profits exceeded their own returns!

In the 1830's steam boats were thought of, but the idea was rejected.

Up to 1854, the pilot boats always had yellow hulls but these were not easy to see in misty weather. The 3 inch yellow band round the present pilot cutters is a reminder of this, and the white boot topping is also a relic of former times.

Except for a number, the pilot boats cruising off Anglesey had no other distinguishing marks. One ship which ignored compulsory pilotage was brought to book, and the captain asked how he was supposed to know that the cutter was the Liverpool Pilot. So ever afterwards, this designation is clearly painted on the ships' sides.

Liverpool pilots only operate as far as Eastham, and then the Manchester Ship Canal Company use their own methods.

Norman Morrison's first cutter was JAMES H. BEAZLEY and he was paid eight shilling per week, with an increase of two shillings per year. Apprentices are now called boat-hands and do all the duties of the boat. The boarding boats are always called punts. In our speaker's early days, a boat would do one week at the Bar, come up to Monks Ferry for coal on a Thursday and then do a week at Point Lynas, before a short spell in dock. Even in this present day, change over duties are done on Thursdays.

Our salty narrative was broken at this point for the coffee interval. Your scribe ruminates that every aspect of an informative talk such as this, cannot be covered in the Bulletin report, and we hope that in due time, Norman Morrison may be the author of a book on the subject.

At question time, this writer asked our guest to say something to us about the tragic loss of CHARLES LIVINGSTON at Ainsdale in the autumn of 1939. It seems that a convoy was being serviced by two cutters and on completion, Norman Morrison's cutter returned to the Mersey. The other one stayed out at the Bar and a fierce southwesterly gale blew up. The practice was to head up into the wind, and then run down wind to Formby Point, avoiding a beam sea as much as possible. Her heel touched the bank, and she rolled over, finishing up on Ainsdale beach with high seas pounding her. It was a dark night, and pilots clung to the lee side of the bridge house, but a sea lifted the top bridge clean off her. Men were also in the foremast rigging and one man lost his grip when the crosstrees fell on both his arms. 26 lives were lost and there were 4 survivors, one of whom was in our audience; at the time, an apprentice.

That night, out to the westward, HM Submarine THETIS still lay on the seabed, with H.M.Yachts EVADNE and RHODORA keeping vigil, until the subsequent raising.

Norman Morrison made mention of a Yeoward liner he piloted in the pre-war years. As was commonly done, she anchored in the Mersey off Guinea Gap, and took aboard her passengers by tender. Saturday was the usual sailing day and this was a February sailing for the Canary Islands. The barometer was falling very rapidly, and in Crosby Channel they found a whole northerly gale with snow. Captain McPhee was master. At Formby Lightship, the sea was broken and boiling. The ship ceased to steer and more steam was called for, and obtained. She passed the Bar at midnight, taking  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours to cover 7 miles. Then she lay over to such an extent that she was headed for the Welsh coast, with the gale, to get her upright again. For the pilot, disembarkation at Point Lynas was impossible, but he was taken off safely at Dunmore East, Co. Waterford next day.

We all enjoyed the evening and feel that there is a great deal more about the pilot service we would like to hear.

N.R.P.

\* \* \* \* \*

So my thoughts return again and again  
To white horse with foaming mane  
These memories will not let me be,  
I'll remember for ever the world of green sea.

Chris Lang (contemporary)

## SHIP DISPOSALS

for further trading:-

ARDSHIEL. LAOMEDON (1953) to Maldive owners.  
CUNARD ADVENTURER to Norwegian owners.

to breakers:-

PHILINE (1959). KOSICIA. S.A.MERCHANT (1955)  
PETROLA VI ex BRITISH SOVEREIGN  
PETROLA XXVIII EX ESSO LANCASHIRE  
CRETAN FLOWER ex CHARLOTTE ex LIRIA ex TOLMIROS ex ELLENGA

It is understood that the sale of ROYAL DAFFODIL (1958) has fallen through. She remains in Morpeth Dock.

## GENERAL NEWS ITEMS

In wild February weather in the Bay of Biscay, Ellerman's CITY OF CORINTH ex SALERNO put in to Vigo with a fifteen degree list. She was on passage from London to Haifa, and her containers needed re-stowing and securing. SEASPEED CHALLENGER bound for Jeddah put in to Bilbao for similar treatment.

On 18th February in a southwesterly gale, the tug HIBERNIA was towing two Westminster Dredging Co's dumb barges, MANITHREE and MANIFOUR from London to Cork. As they were 150ft. long, they were a considerable hazard when they broke loose from the tug and disappeared from sight. They were later sighted by LESRIX, and the Alexandra Towing Co's tug MUMBLES proceeded to search. MANIFOUR piled up high on a rocky coast and MANITHREE drifted to Boscastle where our "undertaker" friend SEA BRISTOLIAN came on the scene. She launched a rubber dinghy in efforts to put two men aboard the barge, but twice it capsized and the men finished up in Bude Hospital. Two Boscastle villagers got aboard the barge which was in danger of damaging the small harbour's defences, no doubt hoping for a salvage reward. But the fire brigade was called. They managed somehow to flood the barge so that it sank and could do no further damage. SEA BRISTOLIAN continued her voyage to Hamburg, but soon had to take shelter at Brixham. MARGAM arrived Boscastle and took MANITHREE to Cork, after salvage.

The Wysmuller tug GELDERLAND lies wrecked on the coast of Porto Rico and is being scrapped.



The largest ship launched to date at the Verolme Yard, Cork went down the ways in January christened IRENE DAN for Lauritzen's of Copenhagen. Her tonnage is 70,000 and the tugs attending the launch were THUNDERER, GLENGARTH, SHANDON, STACKGARTH and POINT SPENCER.

Once again, someone we know has been in trouble! At the end of January 1977 SEA BRISTOLIAN was towing a section of dry dock from the Tyne to Apapa, when she had engine trouble in the Channel. She put in to Weymouth, and SEA QUEEN arrived to tow the section to Southampton for safety. SEA QUEEN then towed SEA BRISTOLIAN to Bristol for repairs, before taking the tow to West Africa.

The Pakistani RUPSA ex LA FALDA collided with AGELOS RAPHAEL in St. Lawrence river in November last. Holed, and heavily damaged, she was towed to Quebec and declared a total loss.

CREE, a coastal tanker bought by Metcalf's was built at Whampoa and until now has worked in the Far East. Possibly she may be seen in the Mersey as ROBERT M.

The December 1976 wreck returns show that a vessel capsized and was beached at Kaohsiung in February 1975. Only now written off as a total loss, she is FONG CHI ex ASIA DEVELOPER ex DIMITRIOS N ex PHRYGIA built at Port Glasgow in 1955. She will be remembered as a smart Cunarder on Mediterranean services, and regularly seen in our north docks.

Insurance of \$50mn was paid out for the loss of Onassis's OLYMPIC BRAVERY, wrecked on her delivery voyage at Ushant last year. In February 1977, this firm bought another large tanker UNIVERSE FRONTIER for \$25mn, not one year old.

With the powerful Smit tugs SMIT LONDON and SMIT ROTTERDAM now actively working in hauling oil rigs around the seven seas, the slightly smaller SMIT NEW YORK was commissioned in March, and her sister SMIT HOUSTON should come into service very soon. The difference between the two types is 22,000 IHP against 16,000 IHP. Smits will then have 18 ocean going salvage tugs distributed world-wide.

One hates to visualize the pollution caused by a spill of 17,500 tons of crude oil. But this is what happened when HAWAII PATRIOT ex OSWEGO PATRIOT ex BORGILA split open and blew up, 330 miles west of Honolulu on 24th February. One man was killed in the explosion, but 38 survived and were rescued by PHILIPPINE BATAAN.

The Panamanian EL TAMBO on passage from Greenore to Tripoli with 900 head of cattle, had a severe engine room fire when ten miles north of the Bishops on 8th February. Sealink's AVALON reached her and took off 19 of her crew late at night. STEYNING and St. Davids lifeboat also went. The master and 2nd Engineer got aboard ARCTIC SEAHORSE, which managed to keep the casualty's head to wind, whilst a firefighting party from HMS HERALD (survey) fought the blaze with the assistance of the Cory tug EXEGARTH. GARGANEY towed EL TAMBO to Fishguard. She is a vessel of 1412 tons built at Rendsburg in 1961. There was great public outcry at the delay in getting the animals ashore, but it is said that only one died.

It is sad that W.A. Souter & Co. - the old established East Coast tramping firm - got into difficulties, and to avoid liquidation, were taken over by Ben Line for £4mn. The Bamburgh and Sheaf fleets were formed in 1905 with a capital of £8000. In 1973, they became involved with Reardon Smith's in the oil rig business. Then came inflation, bad North Sea weather, high costs and the unprofitability of two £17mn rigs, which put them out of business. Most, if not all the fleet has now been sold, comprising such ships as ALNWICK CASTLE, BAMBURGH CASTLE, CHEVIOT, LINDISFARNE, LONGSTONE and SHEAF FIELD. But Souters have formed an amalgamation with Burmeister and Wain, and the new firm of "Souter Hamlet" is in being.

So our former Manx cargo ship has had a mysterious end! VASSO M ex FENELLA left Alexandria on 1st February with a cargo of rice and cotton. She had a serious fire when off Damietta and coastguards informed Alexandria on 10th that she had been seen east of Baltim drifting seaward in very bad weather. Later news was that she was abandoned by master and crew, 2 miles from Borolos Lighthouse. Italian underwriters sent a surveyor to supervise towage to Port Said but she had completely disappeared. It has not been verified if she was sunk by the Egyptian navy, or her loss was attributable to fire.

## DRAKE'S DRUM

"You must take my drum", he says  
"To the old sea-wall at home";  
"And if ever you strike that drum", he says  
"Why strike me blind, I'll come";  
"If England needs me, dead  
"Or living, I'll rise that day";  
"I'll rise from the darkness under the sea  
"Ten thousand miles away..."  
Two hundred years went by,  
And the guns began to roar,  
And England was fighting hard for her life,  
As ever she fought of yore.....  
The foe was creeping close,  
In the dark, to our white-cliffed isle;  
They were ready to leap at England's throat  
When - oh, you may smile, you may smile;  
But - ask of the Devonshire men,  
For they heard in the dead of night  
The roll of a drum, and they saw him pass  
On a ship all shining white.

from The Admiral's Ghost - Alfred Noyes.

## KEEPING TRACK OF SHIPPING

Where does one go for information about ships? There are various registers published by the different classification societies giving fulsome details of vessels - the Record of the American Bureau of Shipping, Bureau Veritas, Germanischer Lloyd, and Norske Veritas, to name some of the principal foreign ones.

Among the lesser known societies publishing registers of shipping are the Registro Italiano and the Nippon Kaiji Kyokai, which need no further elaboration as to their country of origin. But the real "bible" of world shipping without doubt emanates from London; the universally known Lloyd's Register, which contains information about more seagoing vessels than any other source - and by no means only those classed with Lloyd's Register of Shipping.

The issue of the Register for 1975-76 showed considerable change. In its two volumes listing ships alphabetically from A to L and from M to Z is to be found information about 56,000 vessels -

and that's a lot of ships by any standard. The whole thing has been computer type-set from information held on tape in the files of Lloyd's Register IBM 370/158 computer.

The transfer of information to the computer involved the production of  $1\frac{1}{4}$  mn cards - enough to stretch for  $1\frac{3}{4}$  miles and weighing 3.4 tons.

Lloyd's Register book goes back a long way. If you look at a copy of say 1830, you will appreciate two things almost at once - how much more comprehensive today's information about each ship is, and how many more ships are afloat today. The 1830 register is a small volume which can be held in one hand, but that for 1975-76 comprises two fat volumes, each of considerable weight.

One might think that these volumes would provide the answer to every possible question one could ask about ships, and that one can find any vessel, of any size, within their covers. But it doesn't and one can't.

To find details of every British-registered ship, down to the smallest non-propelled barge, you need to turn to another source: the Mercantile Navy List and Maritime Directory. This is a Government publication, compiled by the Department of Trade and published by H.M. Stationery Office.

Craig J.M. Carter

The above article appeared in the "Freighting World" - a weekly supplement to the "Journal of Commerce". Craig Carter, Editor of "Sea Breezes" writes on the shipping angle, and his permission to reproduce here is acknowledged with thanks.

#### MERSEY NOTES

The new super tug WELLINGTON of The Alexandra Towing Co., built by Dunstons of Hessle, was on show in the Thames on her delivery voyage to Liverpool on 14th February. She arrived in the Mersey on 24th and was shortly afterwards viewed by local shipping interests. Her sister WATERLOO is to work from Swansea.

Tug WESTON PANTHER ex MSC PANTHER owned by Bradshaw and Darlington Marine Services Ltd. was berthed in East Float in January. Close by, was DUNHERON ex GOLDEN CROSS.

The medium sized tanker ALVEGA was launched by Cammell Laird at Birkenhead on Tuesday 8th March 1977. She is the first vessel to be launched here this year, and is sister to ALGOL which was the only ship launched by Lairds in 1976. ALVEGA's launch was somewhat marred by the tanker ATHELREAGENT emerging from nearby drydock and having to drop anchor in emergency, within the launching area. By the time clearance was made, the tide was past its peak, and instead of entering the wet basin, the new ship was berthed at Tranmere until the next tide.

Cammell Laird's managing director, Sir David Barritt, said that the yard needed to increase productivity. Whilst shipbuilding nationalization has been hanging fire these last two years with all its uncertainties, their big £3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>mn modernization scheme has been under way at Birkenhead. Lairds seem confident that commonsense may emerge in the end, and although some builders may yet go to the wall - it will not be them. Be that as it may, low productivity was the reason Lairds lost a destroyer order recently. Although said to be not one of the three firms favoured by the Ministry of Defence for warship building, it looks as if they had the chance to quote. The yard has been plagued for so long with strikes, lock-outs, office take-overs and demarcation disputes. At any rate, as if in faint hope Sir David remarked "We cannot build our warships in Japan!"

McTay Marine Ltd. of Bromborough, having set up a covered building yard at Magazine Village, have turned out a 115ft trawler, two pilot boats for Pakistan, and the 1000 ton motor barge MERSEY TRADER. This latter is owned by Bulk Cargo Handling Services Ltd., a subsidiary of The Alexandra Towing Co. Their managing director Mr. Bicket, said that on a typical trip with grain from the Royal Seaforth granary to Manchester, MERSEY TRADER would consume 195 gallons of diesel fuel. To put her cargo on the roads would require fifty wagons of twenty tons capacity, and the fuel consumed would be 425 gallons. So here is a vessel which will relieve road congestion, and put some sense back into bulk transport where the consignee has a wharf. Perhaps only an eventual and inevitable shortage of world power will react in favour of the barge and the coaster. Meantime, the lavish use of oil continues and the consumer pays in the end.

Early in March, P.S.N.C's ORDUNA reached Bermuda, outward bound from Liverpool to Chile. On the passage, she was hove-to in a force ten storm, with mountainous seas and confused swell, and she rolled heavily. Her cargo had to be re-stowed before proceeding towards Panama.

Fleetwood has had a 40% boost in port trade in 1976. Very much of the Irish trade, both to Ulster and the Republic now goes through Fleetwood, largely at the expense of Liverpool, once predominant. In passenger carrying to Douglas, the 1976 total was 117,000, an increase of 5,000 over the previous year.

To increase the standard of living in the Arab emirates, there is a huge flow of goods, and numerous shipping companies are participating. Two new Jap-built ships are of interest to us, as they will run between Ellesmere Port and Jeddah, of Liberian flag and chartered by Ocean Fleets group. Their names are RS IXION and RS JASON. They carry their own transporter machine for loading, the "RS" denoting "roll and store".

ASTRONOMER built in Poland for the Carol Line (a consortium of which the Harrison Line is a member) was to be christened afloat at Liverpool on 14th February. The luncheon party took place on that day, but owing to the dock strike in Holland, the ship only arrived on 16th. Another container ship named ADVISER, also for the Caribbean route is being built.

The second reading of a Bill to close both Mersey ferries was blocked in the House of Commons by Mr. David Hunt, M.P. and Mrs. Linda Chalker, M.P. No public inquiry had been held at this stage, democratic processes going by default these days, but such a meeting will have been held at Birkenhead Town Hall by the time these notes are read. Meantime, the second reading is understood to have been passed.

Mrs. Chalker is also interested in the long drawn-out issue of New Brighton pier. It will have to be decided whether to put the pier back into viable use, or to spend a possibly larger sum in demolishing it. The value of the scrap would by no means cover the cost of labour, oxy-acetylene etc. in these inflationary times. The tides would also limit working hours to some extent.

In repairs to Gladstone Lock gates in January, the services of the floating crane R.B. BRUNEL were used, as well as MAMMOTH.

She is owned by Risdon Beazley Marine Ltd. and was formerly MAGNUS XI of Ulrich Harms, Hamburg. "R.B." denotes the owners' initials, as does "W.D." in the Westminster Dredging fleet. There is also R.B.TELFORD ex MAGNUS II.

Mersey Docks and Harbour Company are involved with dock gate work essential for the port's operation. The estimated costs are:- Gladstone Lock, £350,000; Langton Lock, £700,000; Alfred Lock, £500,000. The outer gates were fitted at North Alfred Lock early in March, after it had been drained for most of the winter, but this 100ft lock will not be in use for a while longer.

It has come as a relief to Birkenhead that the Government has decreed that steel making is not, after all to be phased out at Shotton. The shipments of iron ore will therefore continue to be unloaded at Bidston Dock for onward transport by rail.

Tranmere will lose most of its oil importation this year with the Amlwch single buoy mooring for super tankers, coming into use. The old pipeline from that buoy across country to Stanlow is quite a major engineering feat.

On 9th February 1977, the Dutch coaster DOMINO collided with Woodside Stage and caused slight damage to the passenger bridge. She grounded at the rear of the landing stage, and was refloated by tugs which berthed her in West Float. Her cargo was grain from Rouen to Brunswick Dock which is now tidal.

Liverpool Landing Stages are still three separate units and it is not easy to report on progress. The ferry portion was closed for a weekend in March, as the central mooring boom needed adjustment. This stage has never had a "finished appearance".

Regarding the concrete stage destined eventually for Manx traffic, Princes Parade thoroughfare has been closed to traffic whilst piles have been driven. The booms which came adrift in the gale of January 1976 have gone to Birkenhead for modification but there seems a hope that the stage may be useable in May and during the Royal visit. It looks as if the contractors concerned will be engaged on the whole scheme right up to judgment day!

Liverpool's Picton Library is a wonderful storehouse of information on every subject, both for the student preparing for the future, and not least for those retired who now have the

time, as never before, to satisfy their curiosity in books, guides, registers, journals and records. A book in the Hornby section - "The Light of Other Days" - was quite a discovery to this writer. It is a book of quite large size photographs taken in Ireland around the turn of the century by Robert French, and only published in 1973. On page 160, we see s.s. HAZEL passing Ramore Head on her daily passage between Portrush and Greenock, 1910. She later became the Isle of Man S.P.Co's MONA. On page 161 we see FENELLA embarking passengers at Donaghadee in 1890, in the rain.

In March, an exhibition of books on shipping, has surrounded a beautiful model of m.v. AUREOL in the Technical Library. "German Warships of World War II" is a most interesting volume, and reminded this writer of seeing H.M.Submarine GRAPH in the Mersey. Originally, she was the German U.570 built by Blohm and Voss of Hamburg in 1941. Depth charged 80 miles south of Iceland by No.269 Squadron R.A.F. and immobilized, surface forces then captured her, a brand new U-boat. She did good work for our Royal Navy until she was wrecked on a passage from Chatham to the Clyde in 1944. She was salvaged, and scrapped in 1947. As designed, she was of the German Improved Type VIIB, 166ft long, with twin screws driven by diesel electric motors on the surface. Her armament was 1 - 3.5", 1 - 37mm AA and 2 - 20mm AA guns. She had 4 torpedo tubes forward and one aft, and carried 14 torpedoes or 31 mines. Her complement was 44 men.

N.R.P.

#### RECENT LAUNCHES FOR BRITISH OWNERS

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| November | NESTOR, 88,000 tons at St.Nazaire for Ocean Group. |
| "        | PORT VANCOUVER, 36,000 tons in Denmark.            |
| "        | CAPE OTWAY, 19,600 tons in Japan.                  |
| "        | Tug EYEGARTH, 380 tons at Lowestoft for Cory's.    |
| December | LIMA, 161,000 tons at Belfast for Shell Tankers.   |
| January  | ISLE OF CUMBRAE, 170 tons at Troon.                |
| "        | WELSH VOYAGER, 15,900 at Sunderland                |
| "        | CLARKSPEY, 18,500 tons in Japan.                   |

Day by day the vessel grew,  
With timbers fashioned strong and true,  
Stemson and keelson and sternsonknee,  
Till, framed with perfect symmetry,  
A skeleton ship rose up to view!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.



## SOCIETY NOTES

This Bulletin, you may notice, is a month earlier than usual. The reason is purely economic. We cannot see our name even at the very bottom of the list of bodies to be nationalized, so we, who can never earn and do not desire, the description of "lame duck" must at least pay our way. Postage has become a large item of expenditure, and so we are mailing the Bulletin in the same envelope as the announcement of the A.G.M. Meeting reports for April/May will therefore appear in the late summer Bulletin.

Also in the next Bulletin will be a report on WAVERLEY's visit to the Mersey, and whether local support will favour a return visit in 1978. The owners have also in mind using WAVERLEY in the Thames, possibly next year.

On page 26 of this number, our Hon.Secretary announces the Exhibition of marine paintings and designs by the late Kenneth D. Shoesmith at the Museum. A notable event indeed! This Ulster artist painted for the Royal Mail Steam Packet Co. and depicted on calendars such vessels as ANDES, ALCANTARA and ASTURIAS in sunlit, and sometimes starlit, scenes in tropical South American ports. All our artist members will enjoy his pictures and decorative designs for ship interiors.

Some of us are looking forward keenly to our summer sailings, made possible by the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company. Maybe there will be those, such as pensioners, who will be deterred by the ever increasing cost, but it would be sad indeed to lose altogether our chance to put to sea. If your holiday has nautical appeal, then let us hear about it!

\* \* \* \* \*

This Bulletin is produced quarterly by the Liverpool Nautical Research Society, based at Merseyside County Museums, Liverpool. The Hon.Secretary is Michael K. Stammers B.A. who is also Keeper of Shipping at the Museum, and the editor is N.R.Pugh, 7 Dunbar Road, Hillside, Southport PR8 4RH, Merseyside.

Between September and May, our monthly meetings deal with various aspects of shipping. Visitors are welcome, and we are pleased to receive inquiries regarding membership, which should be sent to the Hon.Secretary, c/o the Museum.

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

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B U L L E T I N

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Merseyside County Museum  
William Brown Street  
Liverpool, L3 8EN

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

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If when I come to Paradise, the Lord do not provide  
The salt tang of seaweed and the running of the tide,  
And if as the book saith, there shall be no more sea,  
Then all the peace of Paradise shall not comfort me.  
If when I come to Paradise, the Lord do not provide  
Pools fringed with sea pinks, and ribbed sands stretching wide,  
If no gulls call shrilly across a ruffled sea,  
Then all the songs of Paradise shall not solace me.

Joan Campbell

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July - September 1977

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A FORGOTTEN BAND OF LIVERPOOL VOLUNTEERS

The port of Liverpool has a proud tradition of volunteer service for the Royal Navy and the Army. The history of most of the old training establishments has been fully recorded in the pages of the Society's Transactions.

But who has heard of the Mersey Division Royal Engineers (Volunteers) Submarine Miners and the Mersey Section No.8 Coast Battalion?

These were both set up in 1886 after the old port guard-ship HMS HASTINGS had been paid off. The shipowners of the port complained that the defences of the Mersey were inadequate. The volunteer force was set up to train for mine laying and to man the defences of the port in time of war. Their headquarters was established at Kings Dock, Liverpool in two hulks - DANAË, an ex-Naval steam corvette and ANNETTIN. I cannot trace the origin of the latter vessel. There was also a store in the old chain-testing works at Kings Dock pierhead. These berths were supposedly temporary; but like many temporary arrangements they lasted rather a long time. In fact, it was only the extensive alterations to Kings Dock in 1904 that caused the hulks and their volunteers to move.

The Dock Board had them moved to the little used Clarence Dock in 1904. This caused a great fuss because the new berths were within smelling distance of a floating piggeries and the Corporation's refuse destructor. Also, because there was no quay space to drill, or store mines, cables and other heavy equipment. Moreover, the corps which had by then reached a high state of efficiency was largely recruited from men living in the south end of the town. It cost them a sixpenny tramride (return) to attend their weekly drills and training weekends. The health of the regular engineers who lived aboard ANNETTIN was also a matter of anxiety.

It was suggested that DANAË and ANNETTIN should be moved to the little-used Albert Dock or to the southwest side of Princes Dock. Questions were also asked as to why the newly established Royal Naval Reserve should enjoy a fine site in Salthouse Dock. The volunteer corps remained in existence until at least 1905. Whether they were transferred to a shore station or whether another berth was found, I do not know. Certainly DANAË had disappeared from the Navy List by 1909. Information has been derived from Liverpool newspapers of 1904 - 1905, but does any member know the answers?

M.K.STAMMERS

\* \* \* \* \*

Well then - our course is chosen, spread the sail,  
Heave oft the lead, and mark the soundings well;  
Look to the helm, good master; many a shoal  
Marks this stern coast, and rocks, where sits the Syren  
Who, like ambition, lures men to their ruin.

WILLIAM FALCONER

## GENERAL NEWS

The Liberian flag passenger liner FAIRSKY ex CASTEL FORTE ex ATTACKER ex BARNES ex STEEL ARTISAN, has been making South Sea cruises out of Sydney. On 22nd June she left Jakarta for Sourabaya with 813 passengers and in trying to avoid a junk, touched a submerged wreck. With a gash in her hull, she was put listing, on to a sandbank, and although everyone on board was saved, some passengers lost all their belongings. All were flown home by Qantas Airways. The wreck was of a recent sinking - the Indonesian ship KLINGI. FAIRSKY served as an escort aircraft carrier in the last war as HMS ATTACKER and saw action at Salerno in 1943, in Aegean operations and the invasion of southern France in 1944. She was built at San Francisco in 1942.

Forty-five years is an appreciable age for a coaster, and SPRAY built by Hall Russell in 1932 has met her end as the Greek SIMOUN. She had arrived at Lattakia from Piraeus with a fire in a hold containing hydrochloric and sulphuric acids. Her other hold was discharged and she sailed back to Piraeus, but after the inter-action of the acids, she was only fit for breaking up.

Early in June 1977, the cruise liner RASA SAYANG was on fire between Port Kelang and Port Dickson, Malaysia. One thousand passengers included a large number of children and these were transferred to the tanker SANKO PRESTIGE. The liner will be better known as ex DE GRASSE ex BERGENSFJORD built by Swan Hunters in 1956. The fire started in the crew's recreation room and was still burning five hours after an SOS was sent out. Five of the crew jumped overboard and were lost. Eventually control was gained and the liner reached Singapore under her own power.

SAINT COLUMBA has taken up service on the Holyhead to Dun Laoghaire run, and called at Dover on 4th April on her delivery voyage from Denmark.

Lying on the north coast of Ireland, Coleraine is not an easy port to enter when Atlantic rollers beat the sandy shore around the River Bann. A new grab and suction dredger has been built to keep the entrance clear, and has been given the quaint name of BAR MAID.

Sponsored by the Coastal Cruising Association, BALMORAL circled the Isle of Wight on Saturday 2nd April. The weather had been stormy and there was some doubt as to whether it would be prudent to circum-navigate the island. She left Bournemouth at 9.30 a.m., took a pilot at Hurst Castle and made calls at Cowes and Portsmouth before the clockwise circuit. Off No Mans Land Fort, a loudspeaker announcement was made to the effect that sea conditions were favourable to continue, and this was greeted with a cheer. The weather remained fine and a good time was had by all until she arrived back at Bournemouth in the late evening. Our member Gordon Ditchfield was on board. He made later cruises in the same vessel from Weston super Mare to Penarth, Mumbles and an abortive landing at Tenby owing to heavy swell. Next day a landing was safely made on Lundy Island, which is a whole day's excursion from Weston.

Three coasters which have been lost this year are the following: LADY MARIA ex SAINT ANGUS ex MILO which went aground - she dates from 1953. SPYROS G ex KAPTA MATHIOS ex REDSTART which foundered in the Mediterranean, and was built by Robb's in 1946. INTERNOS ex SYDENHAM which sank three miles north of Gijon. The latter was a "flat-iron". It is thought that all the crews were rescued.

The skipper of GOMBA PROGRESS radioed that he was afraid to leave the wheelhouse and go to his cabin, because of a riotous crew. HMS CLEOPATRA escorted the ship to Falmouth and all seemed peaceful. This coaster had a crew of twelve and was on a voyage from Abadan to Rotterdam via Ceuta. There had been trouble over the food and the cook left her at Port Said. It was thought that the captain may have over-acted.

Yarrows are top builders of frigates, the Navy's "maid of all work". HMS BATTLEAXE was launched on 18th May 1977, BROADSWORD had been launched earlier by Princess Alexandra, AVENGER was fitting out. ARROW and ALACRITY were commissioned and took part in the Jubilee Review at Spithead.

Early in the morning of 1st April WHITETHORN ex HERO went ashore on Mutton Island, about one mile west of Galway city, and the engineroom and peak were soon flooded. She had left Ipswich on 29th March with fertilizer. With a force 8 - 9 gale she took a heavy pounding but the crew was saved. Eventually she was refloated and towed to Cork.

"The Westcotts and their times" is the title of a Stationery Office publication by Ian D. Merry (Price £4). It is a well illustrated documentary of the last of the West Country topsail schooners such as FRANCIS AND JANE, MY LADY, NIKITA, ROMOLA etc. For anyone interested in these craft, which were still trading to the Mersey in the 1930's and even later, this is a most fascinating record.

\* \* \* \* \*

I've never travelled for more'n a day,  
I never was one to roam,  
But I likes to sit on the busy quay,  
Watchin' the ships that says to me -  
"Always somebody goin' away,  
"Somebody gettin' home."  
That's what I'm thinkin', on all the days  
I'm loafin' and smokin' here,  
An' the ships do make me think the most  
(Of readin' in books 'tis little I'd boast) -  
But the ships, they carries me long, long ways,  
An' draws far places near.

J.J.BELL

#### APRIL MEETING

"The Effluent Disposal Ships of the port of Manchester" was the title of our talk, given by Capt. J. Atherton, O.B.E. of the Manchester Water Authority. This event was to have taken place in January, but had to be postponed because of the only snowstorm we had in the Liverpool area on the appointed evening. Mr. T. McManus filled the role of deputy chairman in the absence of Dr. P. Davies. Our venue was the lecture room of the educational block at the Museum, and the date of this meeting was 14th April 1977.

The sewage intake at the expansive Daveyhulme site, is thoroughly processed before shipment. Screening removes solid objects like sticks and stones etc. Allowed to settle, it passes later to aeration chambers where micro-biology assists the breeding of bacteria, and the product assumes a more liquid composition. Water is run off into the Manchester Ship Canal and is not toxic. The sludge is dumped at the "spoil grounds"

in the approximate position of the former North West Light Float, recently removed from station by Trinity House.

Here, an interjection came from the audience - "What Manchester sniffs today, Liverpool smells tomorrow!" but Capt. Atherton said that this was not really true. These were not shiploads of sewage, but the cargoes were pumped on board and could be of the consistency of blanc mange. Only five percent was of solids.

The process is not nearly as messy as it sounds in description, and at one time domestic sludge was carried in barges to farmers land, not as a fertilizer, but as a soil conditioner. The opening of the ship canal in 1884 made big changes and the first sludge ship SALFORD was built in 1895, 165 x 32ft beam. Then Manchester Corporation built JOSEPH THOMPSON.

Methods of disposing of the sludge at sea presented some difficulties as it is not easy to pump it, but the practice over the years of letting gravity do the work has been the correct one. The sludge fills the tanks on the ships, right up to main deck level. A valve at the top of a wide pipe is opened and the sludge runs out. At the same time, the ship relieved of the weight, rises and the discharge continues until the tanks are empty and the ship rides in a ballast condition. It will be seen therefore, that the tanks do not extend to the bottom of the ship's hull, and the space below is taken up with buoyancy tanks. Present day ships can discharge 3000 tons in ten minutes. The hopper system would not work.

The same spoil grounds in Liverpool Bay are used now, as were at one time also used by Liverpool Corporation's rubbish disposal ship DELTA.

The work of the ships - there are now four of them - is watched by the Conservators of the Mersey, and abstract logs are examined monthly.

By 1928, the original SALFORD was worn out, and with a single screw had not been adequately manoeuvrable in the canal, and so SALFORD CITY was built and proved to be the final product of the yard of William Beardmore on the Clyde. She was of 1000 tons, with 4 tanks, and had a speed of  $11\frac{1}{2}$  knots against the 8 knots of the former ship. Twin screws were provided.

JOSEPH THOMPSON went for scrap in 1933, when the first

MANCUNIAM was built and she was 1200 tons, twin screw. In 1940 she was mined at the Mersey Bar. An armed trawler saved all her crew - the hulk was towed away and sunk, the wreck still remaining. The writer remembers passing the foc'sl of MANCUNIAM in 1940, projecting almost vertically from the sea, not far from Q.1 buoy.

As a stop gap, SHIELDHALL served until 1946 and then the second MANCUNIAM was built in which Capt. Atherton started his career in 1949. He fondly remembered the white lead putty that went into the deckhouse, and the very handsome graining of the deckhouse bulkheads, which some of us must have noticed.

In 1961 big extensions were made at Daveyhulme, and it was decided to convert SALFORD CITY and MANCUNIAM from steam to diesel drive. This so upset one of the chief engineers that he packed his bag, but later returned. When the steam engines were removed, they were in mint condition having been carefully tended down the years. But diesels gave more power - speed rose from  $9\frac{1}{2}$  to 13 knots. The cast iron propellers were replaced by phosphor bronze, and the discharge valves were modified from hand operation to electric control. It was no longer necessary to hazard two men on a pitching steel deck in the darkness.

The big refit of MANCUNIAM in 1962 cost £100,000 but this was reputedly saved during the next few years in oil. When steam driven, she had 19 crew, now with diesel 13 were sufficient. Previously, they lived in the foc'sl but now are quartered in a large deckhouse aft. The ship's conversion took three months.

SALFORD CITY was converted in the following year and in her re-built form was a better looking ship than MANCUNIAM. The year 1966 saw a big increase in sludge production and it was decided to build PERCY DAWSON, with greater speed. However, the Government became concerned for the environment, and initiated an investigation regarding pollution.

A much larger class of ship of 3000 tons was now contemplated, and in 1969 plans went forward for building GILBERT J. FOWLER, but until the results of various tests became known, construction was suspended. Dyes were used as a trace, then radio-active silver which had a life of eighty days. The sludge very largely dispersed, but where it did settle was in an egg-shaped area, and only on mud; never on sand.

Far from there being a pollution threat, a report was produced called "Out of sight, out of mind" which found in favour



of increased dumping, and the sea was found able to absorb five times the quantity being deposited.

So GILBERT J.FOWLER went ahead. She is 300ft long and probably the largest vessel to navigate the Canal without tugs, though it must be said that she has a most helpful bow thruster. So successful was it, that MANCUNIAM also had one installed. Then came G.J.F's sister ship, named CONSORTIUM I. By 1971, sludge output was half a million tons and by 1976 this had risen to one and a half million tons, with no significant change in Irish Sea water around the area. PERCY DAWSON has a laboratory in which sea water is tested.

Last year, after a lifetime of 46 years, SALFORD CITY went to breakers at Fleetwood.

There was a lively question time, Kent Richardson asking our speaker why Liverpool has no comparable sludge system. Manchester being an inland city, the need is great, but Liverpool only offers primary treatment and sewage is ejected through the various outlets. Then there is the Wirral outfall off Meols, about which our Hoylake member J.Bain offered some critical remarks. Capt.Atherton said that the only coastal town in the area treating sewage is Southport. Incineration has been considered at Daveyhulme, and pipelines across country, but when costing is made, the ships are the most economical.

All present found Capt.Atherton's lecture most informative and the slides which followed the coffee interval were much enjoyed. We thank our speaker also for the invitation to visit Daveyhulme, if it is found possible to organize a party to travel there.

As our lecture room adjoined the gallery housing the temporary Kenneth Shoesmith Exhibition, coffee was served there so that we could study and admire the fascinating work of this Ulster artist. A brief report on this Exhibition appears elsewhere in this issue.

N.R.P.

Whither, O splendid ship, thy white sails crowding,  
Leaning across the bosom of the urgent West,  
That fearest nor sea rising, nor sky clouding,  
Whither away, fair rover, and what thy quest?  
Ah! soon, when Winter has all our vales opprest,  
When skies are cold and misty, and hail is hurling,  
Wilt thou glide on the blue Pacific, or rest  
In a summer haven asleep, thy white sails furling.

Robert Bridges 1844-1930

# NEW NAMES FOR OLD

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| AFON WEN           | ex TASMAN ZEE (tug - 1958)                             |
| AKTIAN             | ex ANDREW C.CROSBIE ex COLINA (1960)                   |
| BAROUK             | ex CUTHBERT  |
| BENHIANT           | ex CRAMOND ex BENHIANT ex WEARFIELD                    |
| CORTES             | ex BALTIC VANGUARD                                     |
| DEVONIA            | ex SCILLONIAN  |
| DYVI NOVA          | ex MEGARA  |
| FESTIVALE          | ex S.A.VAAL ex TRANSVAAL CASTLE                        |
| FRANCESCA SECUNDA  | ex PERELLE ex KINNAIRD HEAD (1963)                     |
| GEORGIS K          | ex LOCH CARRON (1951)                                  |
| GEROI NOVORROSIYKA | ex INTEROCEANIC I                                      |
| HAWES WATER        | ex LAUMUHLEN (Effluent service)                        |
| HOEGH APAPA        | ex APAPA PALM  |
| IOULIS KEAS II     | ex ROYAL DAFFODIL                                      |
| JOSTRICA           | ex ARKLOW BRIDGE ex TIMBER SKIPPER ex JORGEN<br>PRIESS |
| KYMA               | ex AMALRIC   |
| LADY. JOAN         | ex TRADESMAN (tug)                                     |
| LUCKY TRADER       | ex BALLYROBERT ex ARDINGLEY (1951)                     |
| LSCO BASILIAN      | ex BRITISH MERLIN                                      |
| MILOS TRADER       | ex DIMITRIS A ex BERTIE MICHAELS ex KUMITAMA MARU      |
| MATINA             | ex POLYDORUS ex ALCINOUS (1952)                        |
| MITERA ERRINI      | ex ST.MAGNUS ex CITY OF DUBLIN                         |
| OPOBO              | ex RHEXENOR ex MARON                                   |
| OWERRI             | ex STENTOR ex MEMNON                                   |
| OTI                | ex MANO ex MENELAUS                                    |
| OBUASI             | ex MACHAON   |
| ONITSHA            | ex MENESTHEUS  |
| POINTER            | ex PRESELI ex ANTWERPEN ex ISARTEL (1970)              |
| REMUERA BAY        | ex REMUERA   |
| SASSA              | ex PORTSLADE   |
| SRI KAILASH        | ex NEPTUNE AMBER ex SCOTIA (1966)                      |
| THURSO CROSS       | ex CONSTANCE ex STELLA MARIS (Effluent Service)        |
| UNITED CONCORD     | ex ELPENOR   |
| VICTORY            | ex JOHANN WESSELS (tug)                                |
| WILD MARLIN        | ex MANAPOURI   |
| WILD MALLARD       | ex MATAURA   |

\* \* \* \* \*

Waves breaking on a shore,  
Lonely seagull, wildly crying,  
A smell of salt, wind wet and raw,  
For these I am forever sighing.

## THE FLEET THAT NEVER WAS

Considerable disappointment has been felt recently on Merseyside at the inability of Cammell Laird and Co.Ltd. to secure an order for a Type 42 frigate for the Royal Navy. With the completion of HMS COVENTRY the yard will not have any naval work with which to carry on, and the highly skilled workforce will have to be dispersed.

This is an order lost, but how much greater would have been the disappointment if the tender had been accepted and then for some political motive, cancelled. Between 1918 and 1948 this is precisely what happened.

In 1941 the nation was shocked when HMS HOOD blew up after receiving a salvo from the German battleship BISMARCK. HOOD was the only ship completed out of four ordered in 1916. One of them, HOWE, was to have been built at Birkenhead and is reported to have been laid down in September 1916 and cancelled in March 1917. Confirmation of this is lacking as I have been unable to trace a yard number, but she was ordered from Lairds and cancelled.

In 1915 Cammell Lairds built their first submarines for the Admiralty, and in November 1918 two "E" class and several "L" class were under construction. Of these, L.50 and L.51 (yard numbers 843/844) were scrapped on the slipway as were H.35 and H.36 (numbers 874/875). Ships cancelled before keels were laid included L.60, L.61, L.63, L.64, L.65 and L.66 (numbers 880, 881, 845, 846, 847, 848).

The flotilla leader was a naval ship type pioneered by the Birkenhead shipbuilders in 1907 when SWIFT was completed to be followed by 16 others of varying types in the war years. BARRINGTON and HUGHES (Yard numbers 878/879) last of the SCOTT class were ordered in July 1918 and cancelled early in 1919.

After the first world war and the implementation of the Washington Naval Treaty taking effect, orders for warships were scarce, but Lairds did receive the order for HMS RODNEY (yard number 904). Following her, came the submarine PHOENIX (No.941) launched in 1929, and the cruiser ACHILLES (983) which took the water in 1932, but the order for the submarine RUPERT (960) was cancelled in 1930. This was a period in which British Governments cancelled many ships to appease the participants of the London Naval Treaty, actions which the country had cause to bitterly regret within a few years.

By the mid-1930's, it was apparent that a naval war was more than a mere possibility, and when the Washington and first London Naval Treaties were ended at Japanese insistence, warship orders began to follow. The aircraft carrier ARK ROYAL (No.1012) was already building at this date, and on 1st January 1937, the keel was laid of the battleship PRINCE OF WALES (No.1026).

In 1939 an order was received for an even larger battleship to be named TEMERAIRE (No.1045). As the war, which began in 1939 progressed, it was made painfully clear that the battleship had no future in an age of air power, and so TEMERAIRE was cancelled. But Cammell Lairds did turn out a very considerable amount of naval tonnage including the aircraft carrier VENERABLE (No.1126), the cruisers DIDO (1033), CHARYBDIS (1041) and ARGONAUT (1047). Destroyers and submarines predominated, particularly "Hunt" class escort destroyers, and "S" class submarines.

All things come to an end, good or bad, and in 1945 history repeated itself. Orders were cancelled. The destroyers PELLEW and PIQUE (1120/1121) were cancelled and the orders re-allocated to J.Samuel White of Cowes who completed them under the names of CARYSFORT and CAVALIER.

Cancelled submarines for which no yard numbers are available, were SEA ROBIN, SPRIGHTLY, SURFACE and SURGE.

The "A" class of submarines were designed for work in the Pacific, and in 1945 Lairds were building eight of which five were cancelled. They were AGILE, AGGRESSOR, AGATE, ALCESTIS and ALADDIN (yard numbers 1146/1150). Also designed for Pacific service were the "battle" class destroyers NAMUR and NAVARINO (1152/1153) both of which were launched, the hull of the former being retained for experimental purposes, the latter being scrapped at Preston. SAN DOMINGO and SOMME (1154/1155) were dismantled in the yard.

The improved "battle" class VIMIERA (1157) was also cancelled, as was the "D" type DANAÉ (1179). Two aircraft carriers were ordered of which the 18,000 ton HERMES (1158) was one. Her name upon cancellation was transferred to ELEPHANT, building at Barrow.

Perhaps the greatest disappointment was the cancellation of the 45,000 ton NEW ZEALAND (No.1159). ARK ROYAL (1119) was completed in 1955, but NEW ZEALAND was to be a much larger ship, similar to vessels being built for the United States navy, to whom the "trident of Neptune" had undoubtedly passed.

So, the greatest ship ordered from Cammell Laird & Co., joined the "fleet that never was" and remains in the memories of those who knew the Royal Navy, when the lives of so many people depended on its abilities.

Now, in 1977, one vessel, HMS COVENTRY is the last of the ships of the Royal Navy to be built in the yard, unless governmental changes of policy are brought about. This is vastly different to the conditions around the turn of the century, when a notable civic personality, attending a launch, commented that "Laird's yard without a warship is like a church without a steeple".

W.B.HALLAM

#### THE KENNETH SHOESMITH EXHIBITION

After the dismantling of the "Shipperies" display, came the exhibition of artistic work by the late Kenneth Shoesmith at the Museum. We had ample opportunity to view the show during the interval of our April meeting, and in fact coffee was served there.

Perhaps the colourful calendars which Shoesmith produced for the Royal Mail Steam Packet Co. in the twenties and thirties were amongst his best work. But his scope was wide, covering posters, the covers of menus and even playing cards. A Canadian Pacific brochure displayed the magnificence of the three funnelled EMPRESS OF BRITAIN. Then there was a more sombre painting of a Blue Funnel "goal-poster" at Shanghai surrounded by sampans. In contrast there were water nymphs playing in the waves.

There was a wonderful painting of HMS CONWAY and the greater of the two MAURETANIA's, with other craft closely confined in the Mersey. The scene was extravagant, even impossible, but so lavish in colour, beautiful in composition and truly effective. The artist loved what he portrayed - that was plain to see.

N.R.P.

#### THE VISIT OF WAVERLEY

On her first venture outside the confines of the Clyde Estuary in her 30 years existence, WAVERLEY arrived at our Princes Landing Stage on the afternoon of Friday 29th April. Her voyage was quite a breezy one, and she behaved very well in a choppy patch around the Calf of Man.

She had a full complement for her passage to Llandudno on

Sunday 1st May. Her return for Liverpool was delayed by extreme low water conditions at the Welsh resort, but it was an enjoyable cruise. The weekday cruises did not get all the support one might have hoped for, but for those who did partake, the experience was a very happy one.

The special pensioners' occasion on Friday afternoon, 6th, was open to all and sundry, but it is doubtful if she had even half her permitted complement. There was a heavy shower of rain prior to sailing, and quite a cold wind for May. But WAVERLEY's newly furbished saloons made the sailing most attractive in an atmosphere of bright colours, wide windows, and a friendly crew who seem to care very much about the wellbeing of the passengers. We sailed at 2 p.m. on the top of high water, and hugging the line of south docks, passed the old Dingle oil jetty and so into Garston Channel, sailing parallel with Otterspool Promenade.

Arriving off Garston entrances prompt on 2.30 p.m. (and one would hardly cover the distance by bus in that time), with our Mersey pilot on the wing of the bridge, and Capt. Neal by his side, we made straight across as the crow would fly, to Eastham locks. This came as a surprise to your reporter, not having seen a passenger ship do this before. WAVERLEY seems to have no vibration and glides along so swiftly and smoothly, that there is no real sense of motion. How sad it is that through reasons of economy we have to build diesel driven ships which smell, thump and shake, when we look back at the beautiful paddlers and turbine ships which went before. Certainly, so far as the passenger's comfort is concerned, progress has turned to retrogression. It is very soothing to gaze at the huge sliding shafts driving the paddles. We can also look through ports and see how the paddle floats thrash the water.

On the way up to Garston we had passed the very large tanker CASTERBRIDGE, being aided by tugs after being aground at the entrance to Eastham channel.

It was in 1974 that WAVERLEY was taken over by the keen preservationists who procured her for a nominal £1. Her length is 248ft and she has an overall beam, over paddle boxes of 58ft. Her tonnage is 693 and with a triple expansion steam engine, she is capable of 17 knots. When engaged in Clyde sailings, her permitted passenger capacity is 1350. For the River Mersey, above Rock Lighthouse, she can carry 1223. In the Irish Sea,

she is permitted to carry 886 passengers when cruising to Fleetwood, with the limit at Whitehaven, and the same number to Llandudno with the westward limit at Beaumaris. Her certificates show a crew of 33. Her freeboard is 2'8 $\frac{3}{4}$ " and she has radio-telephone communication.

She seems the ideal ship for estuarial cruising, and one gets a very good "both-sides" view, even from the glassed deck shelters, and is very much better in this respect than ROYAL IRIS and our other ferries which have been engaged on river cruising. It is only fair to say, however, that built for the calmer waters of the Clyde, and ideal for the Mersey in its pleasanter moods, she might not endure for so long the conditions we are used to in the Irish Sea including Liverpool Bay. She is a grand ship. Her preservationist owners and her crew are so very much alive to the enterprising spirit needed to keep her in being. It is a great project.

The evening cruise, also on 6th May was a success, when some passengers wore Victorian attire. Mr. Stephenson of the Prescott printing firm and his good lady, looked very smart in their Victorian "togs". On the 7th, there was a cruise destined for Beaumaris, but Liverpool Bay played up rough, and it was necessary to turn at the Bar Light Float and come into calmer water.

Things were a little better for the Fleetwood cruise next day, though some of the large number of passengers suffered mal-de-mer. A huge crowd spread to every vantage point to welcome at Fleetwood, the world's last sea-going paddler. The Society was well represented aboard WAVERLEY's various cruises, by Messrs. Raine, Stuttard, Ditchfield, Richardson, Hill, McManus, Pugh and several others.

Waverley Steam Navigation Co's director Douglas McGowan said "While the financial aspects are important the enormous publicity the vessel received can only do good, and I would not have been unhappy had we lost a couple of thousand pounds on the Mersey venture, so much press, radio and TV coverage resulted from the trip".

Already W.S.N.Co. is considering possible visits to the English South Coast or Thames in May or September 1978. But guarantees would obviously be required from local authorities or business ventures.

N.R.P.

## THE JOURNEY ONWARDS

As slow our ship her foamy track against the wind is cleaving,  
Her trembling pennant still looks back to that dear isle we're  
leaving.

So loath we part from all we love, from all the links that bind  
us;

So turn our hearts, as on we rove, to those we've left behind us!  
As travellers oft look back at eve when eastward darkly going  
To gaze upon that light they leave still faint behind them  
gleaming -

So, when the close of pleasure's day to gloom hath near  
consigned us,  
We turn to catch one fading ray of joy that's left behind us.

Thomas Moore 1779-1852

Could these have been the thoughts of some emigrant Manxman?

\* \* \* \* \*

## MAY MEETING

The thirty-fifth Annual General Meeting of the Society was held on Thursday 12th May 1977 at the Museum. A Council meeting was held a short time before the commencement of the main proceedings.

Our Hon.Treasurer Ted Tozer, explained the financial position, particularly with regard to increased costs of postage and printing. That postage rates are to be increased again in June poses a further difficulty to societies such as ours. Your Council reluctantly decided that both economies in expenditure and an increase in subscription rates were necessary to keep the current account in a solvent state. The proposals made were later confirmed by the body of the meeting.

There is no wish to cut the size, content or frequency of issue of the "Bulletin". From the start of the new season, however, the intention is to hold all copies of the Bulletin (in addressed envelopes) at the Museum, so that members can collect their copies at the first meeting. Those not taken up will then be posted. A programme card will be mailed to all members before the start of the new season, but for an experimental period no monthly reminder postcards will be sent out. It is hoped that our meetings will be announced in "Sea Breezes"



and in the feature "What's On" on Radio Merseyside.

The new membership rates are £3 for local members, £2.50 for country members, and joint man and wife £4.00. Pensioners, although local, have the option of paying the country members' rate.

The deposit account is primarily to cover the cost of printing Transactions, but at the present time, it is not intended to carry out this project.

The Council is pursuing the matter of a new President.

With regard to the print kindly donated by our member Mr.Keith Griffin, the draw for this produced £16.30 to funds. Vice President Wilfred Raine called upon our archivist Miss Lomas to pick the winning ticket, which was No.159 purchased by Mr.J.Banks.

Our Hon.Secretary had various themes for the meetings next season, and whilst we cannot partake of all, a selection may come from the following:-

History of yachting on the Mersey  
Early 19th century shipowners (Mr.Leahy)  
Visit to Daveyhulme Sewage Works, Manchester  
Panama Canal. Illustrated Mr.Linwood P.S.N.C.  
History of Liverpool whaling ships  
Dock gate systems, and hydraulics  
Brocklebanks  
History of Runcorn  
Liverpool Bay Wrecks. Denis Branigan  
Liverpool Landing Stage. Jack Thomas, last piermaster  
Hoylake and Meols  
The Overhead Railway  
Liverpool Pilotage. Part II. N.Morrison

After the deliberations of an Annual General Meeting it is only fitting that there should be some light relief. The refreshments of our coffee break were hardly enough to sustain us for a talk on "Food at Sea" by Miss Lomas, who has made a special study of the palatial liners in the past, their appointments and especially their cuisine. A large number of menus were exhibited around the room, including "World Cruise - CARONIA - 1956", "Dinner in (Laird-built) MAURETANIA, first voy. 26/6/39". Then there was the menu for luncheon on board BRITANNIC on 21st September 1956, which included 14 different cheeses.

You were honoured if the Captain invited you to his table, and of course these were dinner jacket affairs.

Miss Lomas considered that the period 1920 - 1930 was when luxurious ocean travel reached its peak. The ladies were mobile epitomes of wealth and magnificence in clothes and jewellery - the dining saloons were enormous, and magnificently furnished and equipped, with superb china and silverware.

A menu from the Columbia Restaurant in QUEEN ELIZABETH II seemed to imply in September 1976 that there was a loss in artistic and tasteful content.

The fact that so many items on menus are in French caused Mr. McManus to interject that menus on troopships were never in French!

EUROPA was Miss Lomas's favourite ship and she found that the Germans tended to provide immaculate service.

Mr. Branigan remarked that he had never seen a lady cook on shipboard.

Dr. Peter Davies had experience of the food in DUNOTTAR CASTLE, perhaps quite some time ago, and was not impressed, but found REINA DEL MAR superb. He has found AUREOL, ACCRA, APAPA and Elder Dempster ships generally, to be not so much floating hotels as floating boarding houses! According to our chairman, the problem of food at sea is generally that there is too much of it.

Wilfred Raine had wartime experience of troopship REINA DEL PACIFICO which from a culinary point of view, he thought extremely poor. At Durban he transferred to NIEUW AMSTERDAM where the standard was much higher. In REINA, the troops were unhappy and it was suspected that fiddling of messing funds was taking place.

Gone are the times when Liverpool saw leaving the Princes Stage, Elder Dempster liners to West Africa on Wednesday afternoons and P.S.N.C. liners to South America on Thursdays. The C.P.R. liners to Canada usually left on a Friday and the White Star and Cunard ships sailed on Saturdays. There were many variations to these rules and there had to be days for arrivals too.

Miss Lomas is fortunate to have these artistic menus and brochures as a reminder of a glorious past.

N.R.P.,

FOR ALL TO SEE

We would like to congratulate our member Keith Griffin, whose painting of FLYING CLOUD, has been hung in the new London offices of the American Bureau of Shipping. FLYING CLOUD was an American built and owned ship, which set up a record of just under ninety days between New York and San Francisco, via Cape Horn of course.

#### MERSEY NOTES

A director of the British Transport Docks Board says that large scale construction of enclosed docks has come to an end. West Dock drained resources at Bristol, just as Royal Seaforth did here. It is his opinion that in future deep water estuary berths will be used, obviating lock gates. It comes to mind, that some day we may see the Dublin and Belfast cross-channel ships sailing from a riverside berth on the Mersey, to avoid locking in and out. The project is already under consideration and might take shape once the old Princes Stage has been removed.

The announcement on 29th June that the Harrison Line were selling PHILOSOPHER, STATESMAN and DISCOVERER should not have been a surprise. The large container ship ASTRONOMER is already in service to the West Indies and ADVISER will be in use later this year. Harrison Line seems to have kept its fleet well employed of recent years.

EMPIRE GULL was in Liverpool docks in June. She was built as a landing ship at Levis, Canada in 1945 and has steam propulsion. For a time she was HMS TROUNCER, 4258 tons.

Probably the worst conditions for discharging oil at the new Amlwch single buoy mooring, for pipeline transfer to Stanlow, are when strong northerlies blow. And for the first ever discharge there, these were just the conditions encountered by NORSE QUEEN on 4th April 1977. There was delay in the operation, which was unfortunate for a first-timer and the VLCC brought the balance of her cargo to Tranmere on 12th.

The ferry ROYAL DAFFODIL, sold to Greeks for £55,000 and renamed IOULIS KEAS II reached Piraeus in eleven days under her own power, in early May.

The "Liverpool Echo" has published a photograph of a hulk lying in the Falkland Islands. She is the ancient three masted Liverpool ship JHELM built here in 1849. Her owners are stated to have been Widdicombe and Bell. She arrived at Port Stanley on 18th August 1870 overloaded and in a sinking condition on passage from Callao to Dunkirk.

It was a great shock in April to hear that the Aznar Line were withdrawing MONTE GRANADA and MONTE TOLEDO from the passenger carrying trade, when they only entered it with much acclaim two years ago. About 10,000 booked passengers will have been disappointed, and MONTE GRANADA was the only passenger liner left to Liverpool. She has just completed a record season with 3500 passengers, but evidently Aznar see no viable future in cruises to Spain and Canary Islands.

The "Friends of the Ferries" held an inaugural meeting at Liverpool Playhouse one lunchtime, followed by a public meeting at Birkenhead Town Hall, at which many people enrolled as "friends". On the 9th May it was announced that Councillor Bill Sephton had invited representatives of the six local authorities to a working lunch to consider the future of Mersey ferries, after the bill signifying intent to close them had been placed before Parliament. He asked them to consider continuing the ferries as an amenity and would recommend his council to contribute at least 20%. He said he felt New Brighton had a rosier future ahead. The M.53 means that our resort can compete with Prestatyn and Rhyl for day trippers. He also said that 7000 were still using the ferries daily and that the bill to close the ferries could be withdrawn even now, but providing they still had a boat, one ferry crossing per year would satisfy the law. These remarks were actually reported thus on the radio, and this writer reluctantly withholds comment!

But in July, David Hunt, Conservative MP for Wirral, successfully tabled over thirty amendments to the bill, and talked it out. It is hoped that it has sunk in, in high places that Merseysiders do care about their local amenities, and that whatever the financial climate, a public inquiry is demanded. It may be clever to bulldoze a far reaching measure of this kind through and present the result as a "fait accompli", but it is hardly democratic.

The tug WESTON PANTHER ex MSC PANTHER was lying in East Float, Birkenhead for some months, and sailed on 21st April for work at Arzew, Morocco, the port which exports methane gas. She put in to Brest for repairs and then appeared at Leixoes on 11th May. She arrived Gibraltar on 13th and left next day for Arzew.

Watching the shipping on the Mersey on Saturday 4th June, the German coaster BIJOU passed the Birkenhead entrances as the flood was making, after noon. This smartly painted ship of not more than 200 tons was on passage from Manchester to Bilbao with general cargo and steel. It was on the following evening of Sunday, a particularly boisterous one, that red flares were seen at about nine p.m. by the new British SKIRBECK and the container ship AUSTRALIAN VENTURE. These were estimated to be 10 to 15 miles northeast of Point Lynas. Moelfre lifeboat was launched and a helicopter flew out from Valley R.A.F. SKIRBECK found a lifeboat with the four survivors of BIJOU. Her skipper said that his ship had sunk about two hours previously when her plating opened. His radio was not in order and his first flares were not seen. Then abandonment became necessary and flares were fired from the lifeboat, these being the ones observed. Fortunately there were no casualties. She had taken an unusually long time to reach the position of her loss, but conditions off the Welsh coast were bad, and it was on this day that no landings were possible at Llandudno by the first intended Liverpool boat of the summer season.

What a wonderful day we had on Merseyside on Tuesday, 21st June 1977. The weather was brilliant for the Royal visit of Her Majesty and Prince Philip in connection with the Silver Jubilee celebrations. From New Brighton to Tranmere was anchored a line of vessels to be reviewed by the Royal party on board ROYAL IRIS at teatime. Meantime during the day, there were hourly ferry cruises to view the ships. These were fairly representative of the work of the port, but lacked a modern container ship, or an oil tanker of any size.

The Royal yacht BRITANNIA and her escort HMS TARTAR were moored at the new Stage, and every vantage point was thronged with flag waving sightseers. Wallasey Town Hall steps offered a grandstand view when ROYAL IRIS passed upstream.

"The sunshine sealed the warmth of Merseyside's Jubilee welcome" was the way Radio Merseyside summed up the river pageant. For the record, these were the ships at anchor:-

|                   |                               |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| W.D. SEVEN SEAS   | Westminster Dredging Co.      |
| LADY OF MANN      | Isle of Man S.P.Co.           |
| ROMNEY            | Lamport and Holt cargo liner  |
| EBOE              | Ocean Fleets (Elder Dempster) |
| BOOKER VANGUARD   | Booker Bros.                  |
| GILBERT J.FOWLER  | Manchester Water Authority    |
| BALLYRORY         | J.Kelly, Belfast. Collier     |
| CONSORTIUM I      | Manchester Water Authority    |
| ULSTER PRINCE     | P. & C. Coastal Services      |
| OVERCHURCH        | Mersey Passenger Transp.Exec. |
| MERSEY 41         | Mersey Docks & Harbour Co.    |
| SAMSON            | M.D. & H.Co. Floating Crane   |
| INVENTOR          | T. & J. Harrison Ltd.         |
| BANBURY           | Pacific Steam Navig. Co.      |
| AFAN              | British Transport Commission  |
| CITY OF ST.ALBANS | Ellerman Lines Ltd.           |

AESTUS of M.D. & H.Co. was in charge of marine proceedings. LOYAL CHANCELLOR represented Naval Reserves. Very many small craft decked with bunting were present.

At the evening reception given by Her Majesty in BRITANNIA, guests included The Most Rev. Derek Warlock, Lord and Lady Pilkington, Sir Charles and Lady Groves, Mr. Malcolm Williamson (Master of the Queen's Music) and Mr. & Mrs. Alex Stepney.

N.R.P.

#### WINDERMERE STEAMBOAT MUSEUM

Following the efforts over many years by Mr. George H. Pattinson to collect a number of old steamers of Lake Windermere, this Museum sponsored by the National Trust has come into being. It has been set up by the Windermere Nautical Trust Ltd. established in 1971 to ensure that steam launches could be preserved in perpetuity.

Your editor was introduced to George Pattinson in 1958 by

our member, the late Leslie Speller when we partook of a cruise in ESPERANCE, built at Rutherglen in 1869. She has a typically Victorian style saloon in white enamel with panels picked out in gold.

Hearing that the Museum was officially opened by Prince Charles on 18th May, I was in touch with Comdr.J.E.Taylor, OBE MA, RN, who says "We did indeed have an excellent day for the Royal opening and it all went very well. The Prince clearly enjoyed himself and so did we all. We shall look forward to visits from the members of Liverpool Nautical Research Society either individually or as a party."

The Museum is situated on the Rayrigg Road A.592 which is the road northwards from Newby Bridge, and just beyond Bowness Bay. There is a large car park, a childrens' play area, refreshment kiosk and shop. Opening times - from 1000 daily and 1400 on Sundays, April to October inclusive. There is a moderate charge for admission which includes car parking. Coach parties should contact the Director at Windermere 5565 before arrival.

The steam launch DOLLY dates from 1850. She was salvaged after 60 years on the bed of Lake Ullswater. She has her original engine and none of her hull timbers have had to be replaced.

ESPERANCE is now over 100 years old, as already stated. She was salvaged from the lake bed in 1941. She was built for the great Furness industrialist H.W.Schneider to take him part of the way to business daily. Later, she was used as a hotel ferrying craft.

RAVEN was the cargo ship of the former Furness Railway Company, and carried all manner of goods to and from the settlements around the lake before the building of modern roads. Built in 1871, she was salvaged from the Lake bed in 1955.

BAT was built by Brockbanks of Windermere in 1891. She was steered round the lake by radio control in 1904 with only a stoker on board.

Beatrice Potter's row boat, 1890. Salvaged after lying 35 years on the bed of a tarn above her home at Sawrey.

LADY ELIZABETH, built 1895, salvaged 1955. Her efficient Lune Valley water tube boiler enables steam to be raised from cold in ten minutes.

BRANKSOME, built 1896. For Victorian elegance there is probably nothing to equal her. Her cabin is furnished with embossed velvet upholstery, carpets, marble washhand basin and w.c. Her tea urn boils a gallon of water in ten seconds. Prince Philip embarked in her in 1966.

OTTO dates 1896 and is a powerful steel boat with a speed of 18 knots.

SWALLOW, 1911. Engine by Sissons of Gloucester, speed 12 knots.

Motorboat CANFLY of 1922. Powered by a Rolls Royce engine of 1917 from the RNAS airship SST3. Speed 30 knots. Hull - carvel mahogany. She had a straight drive and no gearbox, so the only means of stopping her, was to stop the engine and wait for her to drift to a halt. For some years she dominated motorboat activities on the Lake.

Yes, there seems plenty to see at this Museum and the cordial invitation to visit, from Comdr. Taylor is much appreciated.

N.R.P.

Drifting in Lakeland shallows.

As one who hangs down-bending from the side  
Of a slow-moving boat, upon the breast  
Of a still water, solacing himself  
With such discoveries as his eye can make  
Beneath him in the bottom of the deep,  
Sees many beautiful sights - weeds, fishes, flowers,  
Grotts, pebbles, roots of trees, and fancies more....

William Wordsworth

#### NAVAL REVIEW AT SPITHEAD

On 28th June 1977, the brilliant sunshine on Merseyside was in contrast to the more sombre conditions down south when the Silver Jubilee Review of the Fleet was held at Spithead. As of right, the Trinity House yacht PATRICIA led Royal yacht BRITANNIA through the lines of anchored ships, each dressed overall and cheering ship as Her Majesty passed.

With television cameras in helicopters and on board the Royal Yacht herself, the whole panorama was wonderfully displayed in colour, lasting almost two hours.



## LANDING STAGE JOTTINGS

The Isle of Man ships commenced using the new concrete Princes Stage on Thursday 21st July when, in the evening MONAS ISLE from Llandudno and MANX MAID from Douglas berthed there. There had been one or two previous trial landings in the days preceding this. It is hoped that the new massive steel booms and their shock absorbing gear will now tether the stage in safety, come winter gales and five knot tides. This Dublin-built stage made of concrete was placed in position on 29th October 1975 but broke adrift before coming into commission, on 20th January 1976. That there is no passenger connection between this stage and the ferry stage, though only a few feet apart, means a long detour along the floating roadway and through the bus terminal for cross-river passengers; perhaps almost half a mile. There has been much angry comment directed against the M.D. & H. Co.

### NEW MEMBER

We are very pleased to welcome to the Society:-

Clement G. Mossop      Philadelphia U.S.A.

### POSTSCRIPT

Paddle steamer WAVERLEY went aground on the Gantock Rocks off Dunoon on Friday evening 15th July, and was holed in four places. She was returning from her usual trip to Loch Goil and a steering gear fault was thought to be the cause. SOUND OF SHUNA and several motorboats transferred the 620 passengers to JUNO, which took them to Gourock for a special train to Glasgow. Tugs FLYING MIST and FLYING DEMON of Clyde Shipping Co. later towed WAVERLEY to Dunoon Pier. She was docked at Garvel, Greenock on 20th and damage was found to be severe. The owners asked for a tender for cost of repair.

\* \* \* \* \*

This Bulletin is the quarterly publication of the Liverpool Nautical Research Society, based at Merseyside County Museums, William Brown Street, Liverpool. Printing is by the Express Typewriting & Duplicating Service, Queen Insurance Buildings, Dale Street, Liverpool. Comment, inquiries, memories and general information is always welcomed by the Editor, N.R.Pugh, 7 Dunbar Road, Hillside, Southport, PR8 4RH, Merseyside.

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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

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B U L L E T I N

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Merseyside County Museum  
William Brown Street  
Liverpool, L3 8EN

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

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Dainty REDGAUNTLET, well remembered yet,  
The splendid ARGUS with her skysail set.  
Stalward DRUMCLIFF, white blocked majestic SIERRAS,  
Divine bright ships, the water's standard bearers.  
They mark our passage as a race of men,  
Earth will not see such ships as those agen.

John Masefield

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Vol. XXI No.4

October - December 1977

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COLLISION IN FIRTH OF FORTH

HMS REWARD, the Royal Navy's oldest sea-going ship in commission, sank in the Firth of Forth on 10th August 1976 following a collision in thick fog with the Singapore-registered cargo ship ASD PLAINSMAN (not PLAINSMAN of Harrison Line).

REWARD, launched at Henry Robb's yard at Leith in 1944 had spent most of her life as an ocean rescue tug. Her yard number was 336, and it may be put on record here that Robb's

turned out seven other rescue tugs during the war years. These were BUSTLER (321), SAMSONIA (322), GROWLER (328), HESPERIA (329), MEDIATOR (335), TURMOIL (337) and WARDEN (338). With twin Atlas Polar diesels driving a single screw, they had a speed of sixteen knots.

After a long and active service, mostly under the blue ensign as an Admiralty support vessel, REWARD went into reserve. She was taken out and refurbished in 1975 to meet a short term requirement for sturdy ships with good sea-keeping qualities to patrol our North Sea oil rigs, until the first of the Navy's new "Island" class of patrol vessels should be ready. In her new role she carried a 40mm gun on her focsle and transferred to the white ensign.

Fortunately there was no loss of life when she went down between the rail and road bridges over the Forth. She settled on an even keel with the cap of her mast only a few feet below the surface. She represented a considerable hazard to shipping using the channel beneath the central span of the Railway Bridge and prompt steps had to be taken to remove her. Risdon Beazley's self-propelled crane barge R.B.BRUNEL was busy at Narvik, but on completion of work there, proceeded to the Forth.

An attempt was to be made to lift the 1630 ton REWARD complete. Two 4" diameter lifting wires, each more than 480 feet long and weighing more than 7 tons, were specially spliced in a period of only five days. Divers arranged messenger wires under the wreck, and these were used to position the slings, each with a nominal breaking strain of 654 tons. Twice there were setbacks when the wires became fouled in the vessel's foremast, part of which had to be cut away to free them. The slings were eventually hove up tight at a dawn low water four days after the R.B.BRUNEL's arrival, and the tide lifted REWARD clear of the bottom. She was then delivered to the scrapyard at St.David's Bay where she will be cut up.

A similar technique was used when the crane barge MAGNUS I lifted the 450 ton RNR Minesweeper HMS FITTLETON from the seabed 160ft down on 4th October 1976 following her collision with the frigate HMS MERMAID on 20th September with the loss of twelve lives.

As recently as five years ago, it would scarcely have been possible to lift vessels of this size by crane from the seabed in one piece. The requirements of North Sea drilling operations have justified the development of floating cranes of this capacity.

R.B.BRUNEL's lift of REWARD may represent a new salvage record for single crane lift, and this within less than a year of her entering service. Her namesake would surely have approved of such virtuosity.

JOHN ROBINSON

The above is an adapted version from the Bulletin of the Association for Industrial Archaeology, which our old friend now edits. Formerly on the Museum staff in Liverpool, John is now at the Science Museum, South Kensington.

\* \* \* \* \*

His eyes are cold blue daylight, his face roughened and red;  
Set on his bridge of shoulders, the wheelhouse of his head.  
He walks the bucking coaster like a wheel set in a groove,  
But lurches on the dry land as though he felt it move.

"The Sea Captain" - Hal Summers

#### SEPTEMBER MEETING

The Republic of Panama and its famous canal benefit from heavy rainfall, but for our first meeting of the new season 1977/78, a rainstorm in the preceding hour may have adversely affected attendance, which was somewhat lower than average. Mr.J.Lingwood, Archivist to the Pacific Steam Navigation Co., was our speaker in the lecture room of the Merseyside Museum's educational block, which was adorned with historical illustrations concerning our subject - "The Panama Canal". Colour transparencies on the projector took up the second part of the evening.

We were not to be regaled with a factual description of the digging of the canal, but more a shipping company employee's impressions of working there. Mr.Lingwood pointed out first of all, that Panama is no pleasant colonial outpost for shipping staffs, where the work is done by the natives under white supervision. Far from it! The whites do the work and the natives sit back! The whites are there to keep the ships moving, and a very taxing life it is under conditions of heat and humidity. The Sahara and Persian Gulf may possibly be hotter places, but here, as experienced by our speaker there is more humidity, with veridigris and mildew quickly forming on clothing left on the peg. Then, there are other troubles, particularly at dusk, when flies and even flying cockroaches become a trial.

But we must consider the early days. When we think of Egypt and the Suez Canal, our thoughts go to Ferdinand de Lesseps. That

canal, opened in 1869, would have been enough to make him famous for all time. In 1888, de Lesseps commenced a scheme for a tide-level canal, the eight mile portion of which remains to this day. Our speaker considered that its failure was a tragedy of money, although the malarial nature of the climate also contributed.

It is of interest to record that Captain George Peacock, the first captain in the P.S.N.C. fleet, and a former lieutenant in HMS HYACINTH surveyed the isthmus, and made a very good job of it. Also of interest is the fact that Ferdinand de Lesseps was entertained in our city on one occasion by the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, and he highly commended Peacock's work. It was this plan which the Americans used when they commenced to dig, but he was never given credit in the States for his concept.

The great French engineer's name is still commemorated here by Lesseps Road in Toxteth.

In 1903, the U.S.A. decided they needed the Canal, and discussed with the Republic of Colombia in whose territory the isthmus was situated, taking over the works of de Lesseps. A treaty was drawn up to annex a strip of land six miles wide, with substantial reward to Colombia. This treaty was approved by the U.S. Senate, but rejected by Colombia. At this point, the people of Panama, afraid that the U.S.A. might choose the alternative route through Nicaragua, rebelled. American warships deterred Colombian troops landing, and U.S.A. recognized the new Republic of Panama. It was not until 1914 that Colombia received cognisance of a claim for compensation, and this was not ratified until 1921.

When the digging started, there was trouble with labour in that unhealthy climate. Irish navvies were recruited, but so many died of yellow fever that it was decided to invite labourers from Jamaica and other West Indian islands, who came over in thousands. Construction was completed in 1913 and the official opening was on 15th August 1914. And now we were given some data about the Canal - that it is 44 miles long, and that its locks are 1000 ft long by 110 ft wide. The Gatun Lake, the highest point of the system, is 85ft above sea level. When built, no V.L.C.'s were in prospect - in fact four ships have been seen locking up together. Normal transit time is 7 to 8 hours. Canal work starts at 7 a.m. and there are no night transits. The average number of ships passing through is 40 per day.

In annual transits, Britain still leads with 1285, then U.S.A. 1064 and Japan 1008. Mr. Lingwood is not inclined to include Liberians, for their flag covers a multitude of nationalities. The largest ship transitting to date is TOKYO BAY of Ocean Fleets, 950ft x 106ft. She had four pilots, two in the bows and one on each wing of the bridge. HMS HOOD passed through but aircraft carriers had been the largest ships through. One U.S. carrier left her aircraft derricks projecting, and at one lock sheared off all the lamp standards!

Probably the greatest achievement in design, is that the various locks are gravity fed by water in the central lake. Ships rise from the Pacific level and descend again to Atlantic level, and vice versa, without the use of any pumps. The heavy rainfall ensures that this system works. There is only one man in the control room for all work, merely operating valves. The water which does run to waste, drives hydro-electric generators and produces all the electric power for the Republic.

The population of Panama Republic in 1950 was 805,000.

Tugs are not normally required, as locos run on rails on each side of the locks and haul the ships through. It is a strange fact that ships cannot nose their way into a lock under their own power, as the pressure of the water pushes them out again. The locos are called "mules" and such was their rugged construction when built in 1914, that they were still running in the 1950's, and still are, with some modifications. A careful watch on the strain of ships' hawsers has to be maintained, as the mules remain on the rails solely by their own weight.

Another strange fact about the canal is the colour of the water originating in the hills and via the Gatun Lake. That which runs through the locks towards the Pacific becomes of a muddy colour, but that which runs towards the Atlantic remains clear.

The Panamanians used to be happy to let the whites get on with the work created by the canal. Periodically a ceremony is held at an imaginary border, when the natives assert their sovereignty by flag-hoisting and band-playing. Until the late 1950's this was a peaceful exercise, but then students made it the occasion for an aggressive "demo" and the Panamanians claim that the time has come for them to control the Canal, and for the whites to move out.

Our speaker is in no doubt that the U.S.A. has been super-efficient in operating the Canal, yet there is this native resentment below the surface. Ex-patriot Americans and Europeans have built up an efficient business community added to appreciably by hard working Chinese immigrants. Mr. Lingwood would hate to contemplate the results of the Americans drawing out. He made it clear that though he has several points of criticism of American ways, he is lost in admiration for their ability to get things done, even to moving mountains, which in Panama they actually did. Our talk took on much topical significance in the light of the present U.S./Panama negotiations.

At the time of the Suez crisis, Americans failed to appreciate the Anglo-French position, believing that nothing comparable could happen to their hold on the Panama Canal. Yet, in twenty years, it has become clear that although the U.S.A. has admirably engineered and maintained the project, the resident country in the end claims control.

Mr. Lingwood spoke from first hand experience of the obviously arduous work of keeping ships from both oceans moving through the isthmus.

After the coffee interval, we were treated to about 80 colour slides of much interest. Some of these were taken on board REINA DEL MAR when Mr. Lingwood made his only transit of the Canal. After working in Panama for some years he visited Peru and was homeward bound, and so made the trip but once.

We saw slides of natives producing handbags from crocodile hides, all that remains of the old Panama City sacked by the Welsh buccaneer Henry Morgan, the colonial type bungalows, and an American church with no glass windows, but screens against the heat. We saw golf links which span two oceans and where it is necessary at one point to drive the ball over the locks!

There was a nice slide of a small patrol ship - R.C.M.P. SAN ROCHE, of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, in the Canal. This ship has circumnavigated the North American continent twice, and has now been preserved. One circuit took a matter of weeks, but the other took six months as she got frozen up in the arctic.

The vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. W.P. Raine, who admitted to having a nodding acquaintance with the Suez Canal in wartime. He was now much more knowledgeable about Panama, and

felt as if he had sailed its waters. Our proposer found this - as we all did - a most enjoyable and engaging talk, so ably presented by Mr. Lingwood.

N.R.P.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the grey of the coming on of night  
She dropped the tug at the Tuskar Light,  
She trimmed her yards and slanted South  
With her royals set and a bone in her mouth.

John Masefield

#### ANOTHER FISHERY WAR

In late September 1977, there was news of the Argentine Republic's 200-mile fishery limit being allegedly violated by "iron curtain" ships. In the area of the Gulf of San Jorge, Patagonia, several large stern trawler factory ships were apprehended thirty miles inside the limit. Nine of them were escorted into Puerto Madryn, but only after some of them attempted to escape. Firing took place, and there were a few casualties. The Argentines were standing no nonsense, although they lost three men in boarding operations, and very strong notes were sent to Moscow. One Bulgarian seaman was injured by shrapnel and had an operation aboard the carrier. Several ships were damaged in the affrays, and one sustained severe damage to propeller and rudder. The Argentines did not use minesweeper and corvette types in this operation, but the cruiser GENERAL BELGRANO ex USS PHOENIX, destroyer SEGUI ex USS HANK and aircraft carrier 25 DE MAYO, built by Lairds in 1945 as HMS VENERABLE.

Detained were AURELIA and OFELIA of Bourgas, Bulgaria, NEREY of Kaliningrad, FRANS GALS of Murmansk, PROKOPYEVSK of Vladivostok, BUSSOL of Murmansk, APATIT of Murmansk, MAGNIT of Murmansk and TEODOR NETTE of Riga. All quite large vessels of 2000 to 5000 tons.

Two years ago AURELIA, based in the Baltic, was fishing Irish waters and OFELIA had trouble with U.S. Coastguards off the North American coast, as reported in this Bulletin. The East European countries certainly place great importance on feeding their people from the sea's bounty.

N.R.P.



# NEW NAMES FOR OLD

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| APAPA PALM         | ex SCHAUENBURG                              |
| ARKLOW BRIDGE      | ex CONSTANCE                                |
| AL KHAIRAT         | ex ST.CLAIR (1960)                          |
| BUCCANEER          | ex ST.NINIAN                                |
| BEDFORDSHIRE       | ex CANADIAN BRIDGE                          |
| BENMHOR            | ex CITY OF COLOMBO                          |
| CAMPAIGNER         | ex RATHGARTH (tug)                          |
| CAMBRIDGESHIRE     | ex MERSEY BRIDGE                            |
| CAST OTTER         | ex DOVREFJELL                               |
| DERBYSHIRE         | ex LIVERPOOL BRIDGE                         |
| DORSETSHIRE        | ex ATLANTIC BRIDGE                          |
| GEORGIA            | ex EBOE                                     |
| GLOUCESTERSHIRE    | ex OCEAN BRIDGE                             |
| GRACECHURCH        | ex CITY OF SPARTA ex SORRENTO (1967)        |
| GEORGIOS K         | ex LOCH CARRON                              |
| GORSETHORN         | ex DIDO                                     |
| HARVEST            | ex GLENOGLE                                 |
| HARLAW             | ex ESQUIMAU ex RANGER AURORA (Tlr)          |
| INISHOWEN HEAD     | ex CAST BEAVER ex INISHOWEN HEAD            |
| JINCHANG           | ex DISCOVERER                               |
| JACQUES            | ex HARDWICKE GRANGE                         |
| KILSYTH            | ex TURCOMAN ex RANGER APOLLO (tlr)          |
| LOCHIEL            | ex NORWEST LAIRD ex LOCHIEL (fl.restaurant) |
| LOCKMA I           | ex MARY M ex YEWFOREST (1958)               |
| LISSAO             | ex LADY MACGOWAN (1952)                     |
| MONIQUE S          | ex NORDERAU                                 |
| MARGARITA L        | ex WINDSOR CASTLE (Lairds 1960)             |
| M. ISTANBUL II     | ex LONDON BRIDGE                            |
| NORTHAMPTONSHIRE   | ex VOLNAY                                   |
| ORIENTAL ENDEAVOUR | ex BRITISH CORMORANT                        |
| ORIENTAL PEACE     | ex BRITISH OSPREY                           |
| POINTER            | ex PRESELI ex ANTWERPEN ex ISARTAL (1970)   |
| PULLWELL VICTOR    | ex CAMPAIGNER (tug 1957)                    |
| SALAMIS            | ex ANINA ex FOSSLAND ex SLEMDAL (1955)      |
| SOLDIER PRINCE     | ex SAILOR PRINCE                            |
| SIAM               | ex DORCASIA                                 |
| SOMERSETSHIRE      | ex AUSTRALIAN BRIDGE                        |
| SHADGAN            | ex PRITISH PROSPECTOR                       |
| SEA SPRITE         | ex BUNGA KENANGA ex BULIMBA (1959)          |
| TARROS ILEX        | ex CHESHIRE VENTURE                         |
| TARROS FIR         | ex CHESHIRE ENDEAVOUR                       |

|                |                        |
|----------------|------------------------|
| TAFFGARTH      | ex LLANWERN (tug)      |
| UNITED VALIANT | ex ATREUS              |
| UNITED VANTAGE | ex PORT LAUNCESTON     |
| VERDALA        | ex SHROPSHIRE          |
| WORTHY         | ex WORTHING ex DULWICH |
| WYEGARTH       | ex ST.WOOLOS (tug)     |
| WUCHANG        | ex NOVELIST            |
| WORCESTERSHIRE | ex ENGLISH BRIDGE      |

## A FORGOTTEN BAND OF LIVERPOOL VOLUNTEERS

Referring to our Hon.Secretary's inquiry in the last issue, the following letter has been received from Mr.F.J.S.Reid, Dalton Road, New Brighton :-

"Dear Mr.Stammers,

Referring to your note about the Mersey Division R.E. Submarine Miners Battalion, I have come across evidence of their activities at New Brighton. My informant, Wm.H.Jones, is an old retired inshore fisherman. His father (W.H.Jones) also a fisherman and a long serving lifeboatman (he manned the old pulling and sailing lifeboat HENRY RICHARDSON) was an R.E. volunteer ranker in the local group round about 1900/1905 under a Capt.Wilson. A few other local fishermen were also R.E. volunteers, he said. He recollects that the unit trained in a drill hall somewhere in either Seacombe or Birkenhead.

They were formed as a coastal defence force, but mainly in mine laying operations. The object was to mine the River entrance between Perch Rock Fort and Bootle foreshore in the event of war. The minefield was to be controlled from Perch Rock fortress. The men were given rifle drill, and route marching led by a military band. They attended battalion athletic competitions and summer training camps as well. A part of their training took place in Fort Perch Rock.

Mr.Jones showed me several photographs of the local section in Uniform taken during annual camp. He said that one site was situated off Claremont Road, near Wallasey Church. Another, off Sea Road was probably on or near the present site of the Municipal Golf Links."

We are most grateful to Mr.Reid for this information.

## MERSEY NOTES

In late August an interesting vessel came to the Mersey to refit in Manchester docks. Painted in shades of red and green, she was the research vessel SHACKLETON ex ARENDAL of 994 tons built in 1954 at Solvesborg. With Cardiff registry and flying the blue ensign she operates for the Natural Environment Research Council.

The new Georges Landing Stage used by the ferries had to be closed in early October to rectify trouble with the mooring booms. Ferries berthed at the south end of the Princes, or what is more commonly known now as the "Isle of Man stage".

At the end of her summer season, BEN MY CHREE entered Manchester Ship Canal on 26th September for No.3 drydock, Manchester, to have bow thruster fitted. It is expected that she will be used next year, more often on the Fleetwood service, where MONAS QUEEN and LADY OF MANN have found this aid so useful.

In September, a much respected figure in Liverpool shipping died at the age of 83. Mr. H.B. Mack was formerly chairman of The Alexandra Towing Company, a director of J.J.Mack & Co., Belfast Steamship Co., Coast Lines Ltd. and other concerns.

WINDSOR CASTLE completed by Cammell Lairds in 1960 and used on the Southampton/Cape mail run, was laid up for disposal in September. With S.A.VAAL making her final sailing, to arrive Southampton on 24th October, there is no longer any regular passenger service to the Cape. Mails and cargo will travel by container service.

160,00 tons of crude oil was piped from the Amlwch single buoy mooring in August, the biggest single shipment so far to reach Stanlow. The ship bringing this oil was BELLAMYA (French) at 275,276 gross tons, one of the biggest ships in service.

The wreck of BIJOU whose loss off Great Ormes Head was reported in our last issue, was located in position 53.33N 04.01W with 20 metres safe clearance for shipping.

When the oil slump occurred a year to two ago, one of our largest oil concerns in Britain, had recently ordered two mammoth tankers in Japan. Now, they were not required. The Japanese accommodatingly agreed to built four general cargo ships in their

place, and Ocean Fleets negotiated a financial arrangement to take these four ships on charter. Whether they ever visit the Mersey is problematical, but if they do, you will know them by the names - MENELAUS, MEMNON, MELAMPUS and MENESTHEUS. Without wishing to confuse the matter, it might be added that ships recently carrying these "M" names, have been absorbed into other Ocean Fleet services with "O" names. Thus once again, the dire shortage of reputable Greek gods is made apparent, and future researchers will be compiling fleet lists with details, such as MACHAON (6) or TANTALUS (5).

For oil rig and fishery protection work, a new type of British patrol vessel has appeared, and HMS KINGFISHER P.260 was seen at Douglas in August. She, with CYGNET, PETREL and SANDPIPER comprise the new "Bird" class which has followed the "Island" class. KINGFISHER was launched in September 1974 by Dunstons of Hessle and is a diesel-propelled steel vessel of 120ft length. Although of only tug size, she is fitted with stabilizers.

N.R.P.

#### OCTOBER MEETING

It was good to see that in spite of economizing on postage with monthly notices of meetings, members had referred to their annual programmes, and we had a good attendance on Thursday 13th. This evening was devoted to Part II of "A lifetime in the Liverpool Pilotage Service" by our member Mr.N.Morrison who had addressed us in March.

The pilot boat owners were a conservative body who resisted the inevitable change to steam propulsion. The matter was considered in 1830, 1833 and 1853 and each time turned down. In the hundred years 1766 to 1866, only six boats had been lost.

But in 1896, two steam cutters were ordered and these were named FRANCIS HENDERSON and LEONARD SPEAR. With three remaining sailing boats, there were five in all, stationed one at Point Lynas, one between Lynas and the North West Lightship, two at the Bar and one in dock. Two days after taking station at Lynas, the FRANCIS HENDERSON put a pilot on board the sailing ship HOLT HILL. The other boats were QUEEN, CRITERION and

GEORGE HOLT. One boat named LEADER was sold to Preston Pilots, but when they put her on the Fleetwood gridiron, she fell over and finished up in Ward's scrapyard. Her mast still stands at the Egerton Club in Preston.

Another boat, QUEEN VICTORIA became Guinness's yacht ENCHANTRESS. DAVID FERNIE which also came out in the 1890's was the tender boat, between the Mersey and the sea stations, and she did very good service until 1937. She did not have the yard on the foremast when built. The reason for this being fitted was that LEONARD SPEAR had a steering gear failure, but managed to reach Point Lynas with sail assistance, and this yard was fitted as a precautionary measure.

1896 also saw the introduction of the "joint stock system" where the pilotage revenue reaching the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board is divided twice monthly between the pilots. This system still exists.

In reporting Mr. Morrison's first talk, it was said that one of the early collectors, John Leece, had his office in Renshaw Street. This should have read Fenwick Street.

Norman Morrison then continued with personal memories of his sea time, always a necessary prelude to joining the pilot service. He sailed in EMPRESS OF INDIA which had been the German PRINZ FREDERICK WILHELM. He did not like her or his next ship ALBANIA, and changed over to the Mediterranean service in BRESCIA in which he was paid £8 per month as A.B. He has clear recollections of Black Sea ports in winter time, where it was so cold in the focsle that firebricks were laid down and with a fire in an oil drum, some warmth was produced at the expense of being kippered by the smoke.

Eventually he came before Capt. E.C. Wheeler, Superintendent of Pilotage and his committee, and boarded his first boat at Princes Stage on 25th April 1923. There were eight boat hands (not called apprentices) and these did all the work of the boat, steering, painting etc. The two most junior acted as pantry boys. There was no watch below in daylight hours, and work alternated with 16 hours one day and 20 the next. Boarding boats used oars of course, and the pay was eight shillings per week rising in two shilling stages to sixteen shillings. All duties on board were carried out by seniority and there was strict routine.

Our speaker mentioned several colourful characters met with in the course of pilotage. There was Harry at Monks Ferry bunkering slip, whence from Albert Dock they proceeded on Thursdays. When the bunkers were almost full, the call would come "how much more will she take?" - and always the reply was "half a wagon twice"!

Bob Worrall saw that the boats were well victualled and pilots were well fed. They might have been up most of the night, and much of the work on board was done by 8 a.m. so that breakfast was eagerly looked forward to, and might be of Irish Stew, curry, etc.

Putting a pilot on board the Dominion liner REGINA was well remembered, and as it was blowing hard the boarding boat used four oars. The imperturbable Charles Cannon was master of the pilot boat, in a snug corner of the bridge singing "Gentle Jesus meek and mild". After that job, came one of Larrinaga's, light ship, and it was at this time that Cannon had a stroke, which ended his service, when close on retirement.

Capt. E.N. Morrison (no relation of our speaker) used to be engaged in surveys carried out by the pilot cutters in Morecambe Bay, the Manx coast and at Holyhead. His boat was drydocked at Herculanum, and of course there was no food on board. He was a sober man, but returning to the boat one night, with a loaf under his arm, he walked over the edge of the drydock and was killed.

Then there was Ellis Holden, whom our speaker put ashore in a punt near Point Lynas, to climb from the beach and gain the road. What happened is not known, but the Anglesey police reported the body and as Mr. Morrison had been the last man to see him, he was called to the grave diggers hut at Llancillian Church. He identified the man and on returning to the ship was asked what Ellis looked like. The reply was "Well, he had a bloody fine pair of brown boots on"!

The introduction of radio telephones aboard the Bar, Formby and Crosby Lightships in 1921 was a great help. Until then, twice daily "pilots on board" reports went to the office by the Bar cutter running up to Formby Lightship, where there was a landline to the shore. Reports were made at 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. The Lynas cutter would use semaphore to the Lynas Lighthouse, which had a landline to the Dock Office. The writer of this

report remembers a landline in use in 1928 when he visited the lighthouse, and witnessed Savage's BEECHFIELD being reported inwards.

"Monkey Island", atop the wheelhouse, was used to semaphore so as to get a clear background and in stormy conditions it was a precarious perch.

It was 1936 before the cutters were fitted with radio telephones, and during the war years they were not allowed to use them except in emergency. They therefore used the directional Aldis lamp a great deal.

It might be of interest here for your reporter to comment that the radio telephone system linking the Dock Office with the Crosby, Formby and Bar Lightships was most efficient. A "ringing up" device was incorporated so that any two of these stations could get into contact, by the actuating of a bell by notes of differing audio frequency. When the Dock Office wished to speak to a lightship, a bell would ring and summon the man on watch to the transmitter. It did go wrong occasionally, and yet as far as this writer is concerned, it was unique. The voices of the lightship masters, like Hewson, Abbott etc. are still remembered.

For bunkering the pilot cutters after the closing of Monks Ferry, it was necessary to go to the West Float conveyor.

The Point Lynas station was closed down during the War. Mr. Morrison again referred to the loss of CHARLES LIVINGSTON at Ainsdale in 1939, a tragedy which he said in his opinion should never have happened.

When war broke out in 1939 and the black-out was imposed, the marine surveyors were busy men. The lights on channel buoys were fitted with hoods, and when Captain Colbeck flew over the Mersey approaches and saw that the light was now being flooded down on to the water, it seemed that the position was worse than before. Captain Harbord was also involved and metal canisters peppered with  $\frac{1}{8}$ th inch holes were fitted over the lights.

Mr. Morrison brought the troopship STRATHAIRD out of Gladstone Dock one night to take up a river anchorage. The Mersey was so full of ships, that it was only off the Pluckington Bank that the anchor could be let go, and he found the river lights extremely difficult to make out.

Our speaker recalled the loaded tanker SHARPSBURG reaching Formby inward, where she met dense fog. In turning back to sea, an empty tanker coming down channel collided with her, the impact fusing the degaussing cables and setting her ablaze. Mr. Morrison managed to board SHARPSBURG and let go her anchor just clear of the channel. With dense fog persisting, it was five hours before the fire services arrived with foam, and meantime one thousand tons of oil had burned.

Speaking of degaussing against the magnetic mine, we learned that the pilot cutters were not themselves encircled with electric cables through which the de-magnetizing current passed. They were each treated at the D.G. range at Cross Quay, Birkenhead, where the hull was de-magnetized from time to time in a process called "wiping".

In proposing the vote of thanks, Mr. W.B. Hallam suggested that the pilot's life had been made easier with the advent of the V.H.F. radio telephone. He congratulated Mr. Morrison on his long service to Liverpool pilotage and thanked him for giving such an excellent account.

N.R.P.

#### BEDTIME STORY

Oh, what fun! Johnny watched the bright round sun  
Going in and coming out; this was all he thought about.  
So he strode on, only think - to the river's very brink,  
Where the bank was high and steep, and the water very deep;  
And the fishes, in a row, stared to see him coming so.  
One step more - oh, sad to tell, headlong in poor Johnny fell,  
And the fishes in dismay, wagged their tails and swam away.  
Luckily, as they passed by, two strong men had heard him cry,  
And with sticks, these two strong men, hooked poor Johnny out  
again.

Johnny never will forget, what it is to be so wet.

Heinrich Hoffman

(hardly Nautical Research

..... oh, I don't know though!)



## GENERAL NEWS ITEMS

The "puffer" is now a sparse breed of vessel, so well known on the Clyde and around West Scotland in former times. But at Husband's Shipyard, Marshwood, Southampton laid up on the mud, is VIC 75 built by Dunstons of Thorne in 1945 - an example in as near original condition as possible. She was completely overhauled in 1962, but a change of policy in her owner's business has left her where she is. She has a vertical coal-fired boiler with a working pressure of 120 lbs/sq.ins. A recent survey showed her to be in good condition. Any offers to get her chugging?

ST.NINIAN was a cargo and passenger ship which braved that turbulent stretch of sea between Aberdeen and the Shetlands. Renamed BUCCANEER and owned in Ecuador, she was aground and refloated in the Galapagos Islands in September.

Now condemned as a total constructive loss is ALOUETTE ex STORK ex HARROGATE, 1583 tons built by James Lamont in 1959. Under the Greek flag she was on fire on a voyage from Rochester to Beirut in March.

Dredger W.D.HOYLE has arrived back in Southampton from Monrovia. W.D.TEST has been working at Lagos.

Smit's ZWARTE ZEE towed the pontoon GIANT II ex TAK 7 from the Persian Gulf to Rotterdam this summer.

The new SMIT HOUSTON left Piraeus on 20th August with the fire-damaged U.S. tanker ROBERT E.LEE in tow. Later, SMIT HOUSTON was handy in October when the Liberian tanker LAMARIA went aground on a coral reef near Bermuda, and POOLZEE was able to join in with this job.

Smit's HUDSON brought the large pontoon MULUS III from Salalah (Oman) to Rotterdam in August.

Other towing news is that Holyhead Salvage Co's AFON WEN ex TASMAN ZEE towed a pontoon from Rotterdam to Venezuela in July. AFON GOCH ex AFON CARADOC ex PLATINA towed the floating crane R.B.BRUNEL and a barge from the Clyde to Scapa in September.

SEA BRISTOLIAN took the German coaster WESTWIND from Hamburg to Piraeus in March, and later towed the 1700 ton RIO BESAYA from the Tyne to Las Palmas.

A long ocean tow commenced at Lisbon in June when the Japanese salvage tug SUMI MARU took the 70,000 ton EXOTIC to Taiwan for scrapping.

In August, finally delivered to Gadani Beach for scrapping by Pakistani breakers were:- SCHIVAGO ex ARGYLLSHIRE (1956), SPALMATORI ENGINEER and OCEAN DUCHESS ex ASIONE ex TEANO (Robbs - 1955).

A new OROYA was launched by Scott-Lithgow in June, for the Furness Withy-managed P.S.N.C. This ship, and a sister to follow represent a marked difference in design to former P.S.N. ships. With BENLAWERS and BANBURY now on charter, it appears that this old established fleet needs additions, possibly because of slow turn-rounds.

For allegedly contravening the E.E.C. ban on herring fishing, the Ulster trawlers MIRACULOUS and REGINA PACIS were escorted to Belfast by HMS STUBBINGTON and SHAVINGTON in late September. After the hosts of trawlers engaged in herring fishing these last few years, far fewer boats have been seen in Manx waters. But from Fraserburgh came RADIANT WAY, DEWY ROSE, WISTERIA and ALERT, and from Peterhead, VISION, SUNDARI, STAR CREST, UGIEVALE II, SHEMARA, VERACIOUS and CONSTANT STAR.

Due to the difficulties of the British fishing fleet now that limited fishing only is allowed off Iceland, three Hull trawlers have sailed for Albany, Western Australia. They will try out the fishing grounds for eight months and return if it is not a paying proposition. The ships are ORSINO, CASSIO and OTHELLO. The latter ran aground shortly after leaving Hull, but was refloated and proceeded.

Prince Mohamed al Faisal of Saudi Arabia, has suggested that paddle wheels be fixed to icebergs to propel them to the arid wastes of his dominions, where water is so scarce. Scientists are not dismissing the project as flippant.

In October 1977, REGINA MAGNA ex BREMEN ex PASTEUR was taken in tow at Piraeus after a three year lay-up, by the new SMITH NEW YORK. Destination was Jeddah, where she is presumably to act as a floating hotel. They cleared Suez on 21st. It was then announced that the great French liner FRANCE had also been bought for a similar purpose at Jeddah. The name of REGINA MAGNA has been changed to SAUDI PHIL I whilst on passage.

For those who use Lloyds Register in research, it seems a pity that in reading ships' signal letters, "O" and "Q" are very difficult to differentiate, in the new books. After writing Lloyds, a reply stated - "As you will probably appreciate we have gone over to computer type-setting, both for the speed of production and the clarity of print. This form of production means that all the type is re-set each year by electronic process during the production of the Register. It therefore follows that the type is not prone to the hard wear that metal is subjected to in normal typesetting methods. Consequently the current Register in general is far easier to read than previous editions. However, to keep the book within two volumes, because it has been increasing in content year by year, we have been forced to reduce the physical size of the type so that we can get more ship entries per page. I accept that there is possible difficulty in differentiating between "O" and "Q" but there is nothing that can be done to overcome this problem." Ah, well, that bowls your editor out and even with a magnifying glass, he is still uncertain of the stumps!

#### WAVERLEY IN "FOREIGN" WATERS

Several of our members sailed in WAVERLEY, the last of the sea-going paddlers, in May 1977, when she came to the Mersey, after spending her whole lifetime on the Clyde. John M. Beveridge made the voyage from Campbeltown to Liverpool at the end of April, and tells the story in the Bulletin of the Paddle Steamer Preservation Society, parts of which are quoted here.

"Around 8.45 a.m. we rounded the Calf of Man, and that meant that she took the seas beam on for a while. We followed the course inside the Calf and the Lighthouse at Chicken Rock. Instead of pitching, she now developed an alarming roll - at times one paddle box would be two thirds submerged in seas, with the other paddle wheel spinning uselessly clear of the water! An extra large swell smashed a cafeteria window at this stage, and the resultant sea water seeped below decks and drenched the Chief Steward lying in his bunk. Some of us were treated to the spectacle of the Chief appearing on deck in flaming red pyjamas, soaked to the skin, muttering oaths under his breath as to the merits - or otherwise - of the ship! Galley crockery was flung from the racks, and needless to say, no cooked breakfasts could be served - it had to be cornflakes and bread.

Lunch was served around 12.30 and consisted of oxtail soup, a delightful ham salad, ice cream and fruit. The galley had not quite recovered sufficiently for a cooked meal.

First contact with Bar pilots was at 1.45 p.m. and just before 3 p.m. WAVERLEY hove to off the Bar to pick up the pilot. Half way up the Mersey channels, we overtook the coaster NORSTAR and her crew were still gaping in amazement at our paddler, as we left them in our wake. We were given the customary salutes from the passing Liverpool ferries OVERCHURCH and ROYAL IRIS. Tug ALBERT closely followed us into our berth. WAVERLEY must have looked a proud sight as she came speeding across the River, basked in glorious sunlight and dressed overall. "Finished with engines" was rung at 4.30 p.m., a quarter of an hour later than estimated. Liverpool's Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress were amongst the first aboard." (end of quote).

WAVERLEY's visit to Liverpool was hailed as a great success. Then, whilst carrying out her busy summer programme on the Clyde, she grounded on the Gantocks on 15th July, through a navigational error. She was holed aft in four places and 40ft of her keel was lifted and twisted. Yet, after only three weeks in the hands of the Clyde Dock Engineering Ltd. she was back in service at the end of August. The Preservation Society's Bulletin "Paddlewheels" has some photographs of the casualty as it happened.

This Society is now working on a project to preserve the former Devon pleasure paddler KINGSWEAR CASTLE.

And whilst on Clyde matters, Calmac's QUEEN MARY has had a successful season, after emerging from lay-up on 14th May - "long may she reign"!

\* \* \* \* \*

#### TROPIC NIGHTFALL

A shoal of flying-fish  
Spurts out like animate spray. The warm breeze wakens;  
And we pass on, forgetting,  
Towards the solemn horizon of bronzed cumulus  
That bounds our brooding sea, gathering gloom  
That, when night falls, will dissipate in flaws  
Of watery lightning, washing the hot sky,  
Cleansing all hearts of heat and restlessness,  
Until, with day, another blue be born.

"Seascape" - Francis Brett Young

## CRUISING FROM THE MERSEY

The vulnerability of Llandudno Pier was one of the talking points for regular contractors this summer, and this was highlighted by SNAEFELL being carried by a sea on to the piling on Tuesday 16th August. She had arrived in the bay to embark several hundred excursionists for Douglas, but damage to her plating and rubber, and broken windows forced her to proceed to Liverpool for temporary repairs in dock. The Douglas trip was cancelled, as was also the sailing from Liverpool to Llandudno that day, option being given these passengers to travel in BEN MY CHREE to Douglas. With SNAEFELL still in dock, the Liverpool/Llandudno sailing was also cancelled on Thursday 18th.

Add to this, that the first Llandudno sailing on 5th June and the last on 4th September were cancelled because of strong winds on the Welsh coast. There was much disappointment and the cost of reaching Liverpool to embark is now so high that intending passengers coming from as far away as Manchester, were certainly not happy to have made wasted journeys. An early announcement on local radio might save passenger's expense.

Still, we did get some good weather, and sunny hours of happy companionship. Your scribe is of the opinion that the traditional dining room service in the Manx ships is out-dated, and that cafeteria type catering would be preferable. After paying a fare of £3.50, few can afford the added luxury of meals costing £2.50, and so we get by with our sandwich packs and thermos flasks!

N.R.P.

## TO THE BREAKER'S YARD

SOLWAY ex EMPIRE ANN (tug)  
PHILLIPPIA  
SAVICK (dredger) (1949)  
HMS TENBY (1957)  
RFA RELIANT ex SOMERSBY  
MALDIVE BUILDER ex CICERO  
HEMITROCHUS ex SAN EMILIANO  
(Lairds 1959)  
UNITED PROGRESS ex BELGULF  
PROGRESS  
ALUCO (1959)  
FESTIVITY ex KOHIMA (1953)

SEA CONDOR ex CEDRIC (1952)  
STRATHLAIRG ex CHAKDINA  
BENDORAN (1956)  
STRATHLAUDER ex PATONGA  
AUTOMEDON ex CYCLOPS  
EBANI  
30 DE NOVIEMBRE ex FELICIE ex  
CITY OF BRISTOL ex SACRAMENTO  
(Lairds 1945)  
POUNENTES ex BRIT. COURAGE  
STRATHLAUDER ex PATONGA  
STRATHNEWTON ex NURMAHAL

## NOVEMBER MEETING

On the tenth of the month, our speaker was Mr.G.Leahy and the subject - "Early 19th Century Liverpool Ships and Shipowners". Whilst Goodison Park and Anfield are at present boasting gates of some forty to fifty thousand, ours was just under forty on a dry and mild evening.

Our Chairman, Dr.Peter Davies, welcomed Mr.Leahy who is studying at the Department of Economic History, Liverpool, and is in his third year for Ph.D. Our chairman recalled that it would be about fifteen years ago that he was himself a post graduate in the same department, and as a new member of our Society spoke on "The Life of Sir Alfred Jones" aboard clubship LANDFALL.

Mr.Leahy has been researching the Liverpool Shipping Registers, particularly noting the prizes which were brought into the port by our privateers, and registered for trading under our national flag. We were supplied with a list showing the number of ships and their tonnage, over the period 1793/1812. These were the times of the Napoleonic wars.

Liverpool was the principal base for privateers, who of course carried "letters of marque". HARRIET brought in the first prize, a French brig, with a cargo of cotton, sugar, coffee and indigo. She made 33 voyages to Barbados. PRINCE OF WALES brought a French prize in to Hoylake, both these prizes having been destined for Bordeaux. DUDGEON captured a prize carrying 730 barrels of rice and cow hides, and also a French "snow" whose cargo was valued at £15,000. DUDGEON was captured by the French, and put into use to prey on British shipping. The 800 ton LA LIBERTE was captured by PILGRIM and her cargo was valued at £190,000. Around this time - 1794 - the press gang was active in Liverpool.

One result of these troublous times was the introduction of the convoy system, where 200 to 300 ships in a group protected by frigates, was commonplace. Convoys might sometimes amount to 500 to 1000 vessels. A few owners, taking into account that the speed of the convoy was the speed of the slowest ship in it, despatched their vessels alone. They relied on speed and good luck to take advantage of better prices gained by independent routeing. "There is nothing new under the sun" will say those who remember our strategy in the 1939/45 war.

In addition to the privateers, men-o-war were disseminated over the oceans to institute a patrol system. Here again we are reminded of modern sea warfare, and the gallant exploits of Captain Walker and his STARLING flotilla. Working from Liverpool a similar type of patrol operation was worked, to destroy U-boats in 1943.

The Liverpool of 1798 gave rapturous welcomes to the returning privateers. One of these ships, in a spasm of over-enthusiasm, fired a saluting gun killing or injuring several townsmen on the dockside. One is tempted to reflect that in these present times of the 1970's, rapturous welcomes are reserved for our victorious local footballers returning from their exploits on many a European "battlefield". Fortunately saluting guns are absent in William Brown Street!

WILLIAM HEATHCOTE, Demerara to Liverpool, was captured by the French in the Irish Channel after a stubborn engagement. She was then re-captured by NAUTILUS in the Bay of Biscay and taken in to Plymouth.

By July 1807, Liverpool's trade was reduced by one quarter, and with the high cost of food, the poor of Merseyside had a hard time. 4000 French prisoners of war were held in Liverpool out of a national total of 30,000. These men busied themselves in making beautiful toys and intricate ship models during their captivity. There were also many British prisoners held in France. In 1811, four Englishmen were discovered aboard a prize, who averred that they had suffered so much in gaol that they offered to serve afloat. Right or wrong, they were brought to British justice and executed for helping the enemy.

Mr. Leahy's talk was full of intricate detail of ships, events, people and the vagaries of who was at war with whom. In the course of his studies he found in Williamson's Advertiser for 20th March 1793 that a brand new vessel named PELICAN was cruising in the Mersey with 200 guests aboard, including shareholders. There was music and jollity when suddenly the ship capsized and sank in ten minutes off Seacombe. Between 70 and 80 souls were lost.

After the coffee interval, there was the usual question time, and Mr. Branigan asked if there was any known corroboration of the PELICAN tragedy from any other source, as he had been unable to confirm it. The reply was in the negative. Our speaker reiterated

a previously made opinion - that privateering was the resource of the weaker power.

Liverpool was quite definitely the premier privateering port. Our chairman interjected here that Liverpool people may not have been the best workmen, but they were second to none as pirates!

The vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. McClelland and carried in the usual manner.

N.R.P.

#### CURTAINS FOR PRINCES LANDING STAGE !

There is now a large gaping void where the famous Princes Landing Stage has been for well over a century. On 10th November 1977 the last remaining portion was severed from its connections with Princes Parade, and towed away to be broken up. An event full of nostalgia

\* \* \* \* \*

Aye, though you coam the blessed earth  
And roam the seven seas,  
But when beside the quiet hearth,  
You cull your memories,  
Then with the books and friends you love,  
You'll find in peace and rest  
The end of travel is to prove -  
That Home is best.

Robert Service

#### SOCIETY NOTES

Our Hon. Secretary wishes it to be known that a school-master of Rossall School, Fleetwood has a gaff-topsail yacht which he has no opportunity of using. She is PLOUGHBOY, built at Arnside in 1908. It may be possible to bring her to Liverpool and if any members are interested in spending some of their spare time on her, would they please contact Mike Stammers at the Museum, Tel. 051-207-0001. Several members showed interest at the November meeting.

Christmas comes but once a year, they say, but to older people, they are no sooner clearing away the tinsel and taking down the streamers than the next one is here. The officers of the Society do hope that all members will live in happy



contentment over the Christmas break, and into a 1978 of ever-diminishing gloom. A Happy Christmas and a Bright New Year!

With the coming into use of the new wing of our Picton Library, the branch libraries at Upper Duke Street and Victoria Street are being closed down, and their contents brought under one roof. Already the Commercial Reference Library has moved to the first floor, and the Technical Library adjoins it, but in the new section. Tables, chairs, lighting, heating are all adequate, not forgetting the very helpful staff. The toilets are now permanently open without having to ask for the key at the reception desk, which was the result of vandalism. During October, much shifting has gone on, and it may be well into 1978 before the whole scheme is fulfilled.

#### EDITOR'S NOTES

The National Trust for Scotland is organizing a UGANDA cruise for 1978. This sailing will be from Glasgow on Monday 26th June terminating at Dundee 6th July. The calls are Rum - to circum-navigate St.Kilda - Reykjavik - Thorshavn - Aalesund. Adult Dormitory fare is £145 with cafeteria eating. Cabin class ranges from £260 to £480. This should be a memorable cruise in one of Britain's last floating palaces! Further details from the editor.

I have to thank our former editor - Stuart Mountfield - for pointing out an error on page 54 of Vol.XXI No.3. The Manchester Ship Canal was officially opened on 1st January 1894, not 1884.

"Old friends are best" is a common saying, but it is always good to make new friends. I have done just that in the diminutive person of John Paget-Tomlinson, aged eleven months. John is as happy as the day is long - a truly engaging infant, who treats life as one big joke. His smile exhibits quite a few teeth already, and Pam and Edward have good reason to be proud. As old friends, we offer them our congratulations.

The number of ships changing their names is prodigious these days, and this applies also to ships going to the breakers, sometimes at an early age. Only a small selection can be covered in a publication such as ours.

Items of maritime interest, comments etc. for inclusion in the "Bulletin" are welcomed either via Merseyside County Museums, or to the editor's home address - 7 Dunbar Road, Hillside, Southport PR8 4RH.

N.R.PUGH