

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

B U L L E T I N

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No season frontiers here: the snow white foam
Expects no dark campaigning of the Spring;
No gold corn trampled; no long-lived-in home
Smoking in ruins, a tear-pictured thing.
Here bitter war has no such weeping; loss
Is borne unseen, and gain goes unrenowned.
The convoy to safe harbour wins; no cross
Marks where the ship was sunk, the sailor drowned.

"The Atlantic" - G. Rostrevor Hamilton

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THE WRECK OF THE MARY ROSE

The French Fleet was off Bembridge in July 1545 in a battle watched by King Henry VIII on shore. GREAT HARRY was being bombarded, when another British ship of the line, MARY ROSE mysteriously heeled over and sank after her first salvo. She had been built in 1509 and adapted for 91 guns in 1536. There, in Spithead she has remained in grey clay and black mud, wonderfully preserved until the present day; disregarded for hundreds of years, yet she is one of the most important wrecks in Europe. Two brothers named Dean found her by chance in 1840, and later Alexander McKee found their chart. In 1966 sonar gear was brought into use with modern

technology, and a great area of the seabed was photographed. An oval declivity was shown up by the cameras, and then the protrusion of wooden beams could be seen round its perimeter.

In 1979, the "MARY ROSE Trust" acquired a diving vessel which costs £50,000 per year to maintain, and she has worked from 5 a.m. to sunset on the project. The diving operations have had to be highly organized, and have used volunteer divers, who have spent perhaps fourteen days of their vacations on the work. It has not been without danger and one life was lost, when a girl became sick under water and choked. So whilst the rewards may be great, the risks are there also.

In the first attempts, the divers found gloomy conditions in the soft mud, MARY ROSE lying at a depth of about 12ft. below this. Portsmouth Fire Brigade loaned hoses for jets of water to move the mud. The wood was found to be as good as new, but all metal bolts had corroded.

This story of the MARY ROSE was the subject of a Television documentary on Wednesday, 29th October 1980 from which this detail is taken.

Andrew Fielding described the divers' work, and said that most land principles of archaeology can be used below the surface. He told how loads of artifacts have been recovered, including a huge quantity of arrows. In fact there were one thousand arrows in one batch, an interesting protractor of slate, a miniature sundial, long bows and a musical instrument like a flute. There were pulley blocks, a gaming board, leather water bottle, heavy guns weighing up to 2½ tons made of bronze, and of course, the bones of the crew.

The recovery of the guns is proving difficult, though we saw the raising and cleaning of one of them. Margaret Rule, a professional archaeologist and diver gave a commentary on the work, and we saw how the operations of the divers could be watched and directed from a TV screen on board the Trust's vessel.

It is crucial to work fast and raise the hull as soon as possible. By the end of 1980 season, five trenches had been driven into the site. The last few days of the 1980 season produced some interesting finds in a barber surgeon's cabin. There were two bone ear scoops, tweezers, razors and two syringes.

It is hoped to raise the hull in the summer of 1982 and

meantime there is much bracing and underpinning to do. When raised, a site has been acquired at Eastney. This wreck demonstrates very clearly what life was like in the mid 16th century.

It is hoped that good weather will favour a resumption of the work in the spring of 1981.

Artifacts come in for various treatment, some for air-drying, some for vacuum-freeze and treatment with polyethylene glycol.

* * * * *

It is a pretty sight to see
The billows doff their caps
In breaking on the beach;
Though this is natural perhaps.

E. V. Rieu

NOVEMBER MEETING

"The Tenth Cruiser Squadron" was the title of our talk by Mr. K. Longbottom on Thursday 13th, fully illustrated with slides. It was good to see again pictures of many of the beautiful liners which graced the seas half a century ago, even if they were in their war paint. Naval architects the world over, seldom produce anything these days to compare with their admirable creations of those times.

The Royal Navy had for long been convinced that war with Germany was inevitable. The Scapa base had been developed and when the 1914 Great War broke out, Britain had 180 cruisers. There had been a Spithead Review that year, which many foreign warships attended, and it gave Germany a fine opportunity to weigh up the opposition.

Lord Fisher believed that the institution of blockades was the best way to cope with German naval might, and during the four years of war, there was an increasing stranglehold in the northern seas. Our forces had to be adequate in the area between the Shetlands and Norway, and seven ageing cruisers were commissioned, including CRESCENT (flag), ROYAL ARTHUR, EDGAR, HAWK and GRAFTON.

Whilst laying down the background to the story, our speaker showed HMS LIVERPOOL in the Mersey at the opening of Gladstone Dock - a four-funnelled cruiser of lesser age than those already mentioned.

Meantime, some German ships were already on the high seas;

the enemy cruiser DRESDEN gave chase to LUSITANIA off New York, and the liner got away. We saw on slides the shell-scarred CARMANIA at Malta, after her successful combat with the three-funnelled CAP TRAFALGAR in southern latitudes.

At first the base of the Tenth Cruiser Squadron was at Kirkwall, but later was moved to Lerwick. HMS HAWK failed to return from a patrol and was presumed torpedoed by a U-boat. Liners were now pressed into service to fill the gap of Germany's access to the world's sea lanes. CEDRIC, OCEANIC, TEUTONIC and CALGARIAN were amongst the first of these. AQUITANIA was only three months old at the start of hostilities, and was converted into an armed merchant cruiser, her luxurious fittings being stripped out. She reached the Mersey Bar but had a collision which forced her to return to Liverpool, and after second thoughts, Admiralty decided not to use her in this work - she would be more useful as a trooper.

White Star's OCEANIC went aground and later foundered off Foula, and this wreck is now being dived on. The Norwegian transatlantic liners KRISTIANIAFJORD and BERGENSFJORD gave a good deal of trouble, in refusing to stop for our patrols.

The German liner BERLIN was converted for mine laying, and at her second attempt to elude the British got clear. She laid the mines off the north Irish coast which caused the loss of HMS AUDACIOUS.

The neutral Norwegian liner STAVANGERFJORD suffered fuel shortage, due to harassment in the blockade and was interned. She eventually became White Star's ARABIC, under which name she made some voyages from Liverpool in the post-war years.

Although the old CRESCENT and EDGAR carried on the work with the liners, conditions were hard in the north latitudes, and gale force winds were responsible for CRESCENT losing a funnel.

There was some coal shortage and crew were not in too good supply when a new Tenth Squadron was formed. This included Booth's HILDEBRAND and AMBROSE, OROPESA, CLAN MACNAUGHTON, VIRGINIAN, OTWAY, DIGBY, EBRO, ANDES, ARANDORA and Fyffes' BAYANO and CHANGUINOLA. Very soon Anchor's COLUMBIA and P.S.N.C.'s ORCOMA were added, with the flagship ALSATIAN of Allen Line. The latter became EMPRESS OF FRANCE after the war - the first liner this writer had ever been on board, at Princes Stage. It happened that he was at school with a boy whose

father worked for C.P.R. She was a very beautiful ship both externally and internally, and no ship subsequently which he saw, approached her elegance.

At the time of the blockade, there were still many wind-jammers trading which proved difficult for boarding parties. Ships did not like having to heave to, under a cruiser's guns and be searched, and so they often gave scant co-operation. Neutral liners, of which the Dutch were prominent, still tried to serve the New York trade.

CLAN MACNAUGHTON disappeared in bad weather.

Several German raiders got out, and MOEWE put a prize crew on board Elder Dempster's APPAM. The U.S.A. interned her, but Admiralty managed to secure her release. After the War, MOEWE became an allied prize, and was converted to a banana carrier for Elders and Fyffes, with the name GREENBRIAR.

The torpedoing of LUSITANIA was a bad mistake by Germany, for it brought the United States into the war on the side of the allies. An agent, Zimmerman had been inciting Mexico to keep the U.S.A. busy, so that they would not declare war on Germany, but his efforts failed.

And just as in World War II, the U.S.A. sent us destroyer escorts which we so badly needed. A large part of the blockade area was now mined, and we won the co-operation of Norway to close the gap.

CEDRIC left the squadron, as she was too large.

Germany now offered to call off the U-boat campaign if the allies stopped the blockade, but this got a negative reply. More liners joined the force, like ORCADES, ANDES, ORIANA and ALCANTARA. By 1916 WARWICK CASTLE, ORVIETO and LEICESTERSHIRE were in the patrol, and dazzle paint became a feature of marine operations.

To cut down on the time taken to inspect ships' papers at sea, the Navicert system was started, where cargo was inspected on shipment and cleared.

By 1915, the Squadron had made 8,000 interceptions, and 1810 ships had been given clearance.

The Tenth Cruiser Squadron had done its arduous task well. In April 1930 there was a reunion held on board EMPRESS OF FRANCE ex ALSATIAN, for those who took part many years earlier in one of those jobs which though so necessary, proved uncomfortable, cold and dangerous.

We thank Mr. Longbottom for reminding us of how useful our merchant fleet has been in backing up the Navy, and taking up arms in times of war.

N.R.P.

This is the thing that puzzles me:
Nothing goes off the rails at sea,
But nothing on the other hand
Ever goes swimmingly on land.

G. Rostrevor Hamilton

GITANA HAS BEEN RAISED

In October 1978, operations began to lift the 54 ton steamer from the bed of Loch Rannoch, where she has lain since January 1882. Funds for the work were hard to come by, but Mr. Ray Keddle, owner of the Wheel Inn, Scone, made it possible. A team of divers from all over Scotland created a record for amateurs in lifting this weight. The cause of her foundering in an exposed winter anchorage in the loch, was when waves smashed the windows and she was flooded. She was built by Seath of Rutherglen for a local estate owner - Major General Alastair MacDonald - and was intended for pleasure cruising.

Work is being pressed ahead to have GITANA ready for the 100th anniversary of her launch, which will be on 7th June 1981.

STEAM VERSUS DIESEL

Our member Alan McClelland has had a letter published in the local press regarding the comparative economics of operating diesel and steam driven ships. Where this country still has abundant coal, oil is surely certain to produce supply difficulties in time, at the prodigious rate it is being used worldwide now.

Mr. McClelland says "that British shipyards are not yet represented in the revival of interest in coal-fired steamships. Past experiments with mechanical stoking give good cause for caution. The Harrison Line, amongst the shrewdest of cargo ship operators, experimented with the use of pulverized coal in their MUSICIAN in 1928, and the new RECORDER was fitted for pulverized fuel.

Unfortunately, savings forecast in bunkering time, trimming

and handling costs were outweighed by larger diseconomies. Few ports abroad could supply suitable small coal in sufficient quantities. Time was lost, even in the home port Liverpool because of a shortage of suitable berths for the type of bunkering operations required. Finally the mechanical stoking arrangements generated excessive noise and dust.

In assessing the comparative merits of different types of mechanical propulsion for ships, even in an energy crisis, it has to be borne in mind that oil provides a fifty percent increase in heat value for the same bunker space over coal, leaving more room for cargo.

When used aboard a diesel engined ship, one ton of oil does the same amount of work as three tons of coal used to fire conventional steam boilers. Granted that boiler and turbine designs are subject to continuing improvement, it is surely significant that several operators of high speed container ships have made economies by reducing service speeds and converting their tonnage from steam turbine to diesel propulsion."

RIVER FERRIES

Is the title of a new book by Nancy Martin giving an excellent overall survey of ferries in England, Scotland and Wales from ancient times to the present day. It is a remarkable piece of distillation, and she includes many obscure river crossings, like the little pontoons once used to carry carts and horses across the rivers of the Norfolk Broads and the strange sea ferry tractor linking Bigbury-on-Sea and Burgh Island in Devon.

Our own Mersey ferries are provided with a long passage, and included are photographs of the old landing stage and ROYAL IRIS. On a slightly depressing note, it is sad to read how many ferries have closed, or are under threat of closure, including our own across the Mersey. There are, for example, very nostalgic photographs of the old Aust ferries, now replaced by the Severn bridge, and the two-funnelled ferries of the Woolwich Free Ferry.

Apart from giving us a tour of all the main ferries, Miss Martin has also written chapters on Licences and Tolls, and the Ferryman. Of the latter, the following verse is quoted:

"Of all the mortals here below
Your drunken boatmen are the worst I know,
I'm here determined, though against my will,
While these and fellows sit and drink their fill.
On Jove to my request let this decree
That these same boatmen ne'er see hell nor heaven,
But with old Charon ever tug the oar,
And neither taste nor swallow one drop more."

This was composed by a disgruntled user of the Helford Ferry in 1891! This book has been produced to the usual high standards of Terence Dalton Ltd - Lavenham - Suffolk, a small publishing house who have given us other excellent books on maritime matters, such as R. Malster's "Wherries and Waterways". At £6.95 this book by Miss Martin (in hardback) is very good value for money.

M.K.S.

CHRISTMAS SOCIAL EVENING - 1980

A fine mild evening graced our annual Social at which about thirty members and friends attended on 11th December at Merseyside Museums.

The President Mr. J. J. Gawne sent a message to our Chairman saying that although his mid-week commitments in London do clash with the Thursday meetings of the Society, he could assure him of continued support in all our activities. Mr. Gawne wished us all a very successful and happy evening.

Mr. Loram chaired the proceedings, supported by past chairmen Peter Davies, Ken Stuttard and Wilfred Raine, to make a quartet.

Several models from the Museum collection were on show, also the model of a Mersey gig boat with lugsails on two masts, recently constructed by Ken Stuttard and showing fine workmanship.

Our Secretary arranged a Mersey Quiz, with old-time photographs of dockland scenery and questions appended to each. This competition was won jointly by Wilfred Raine and Alan Clayton.

The lady members did us very well again, with sausage rolls, pate, crab, various cheeses, and of course mince pies and fruit cake, with red and white wine.

On this occasion there was no film or slide show, but the time passed all too quickly in pleasant conversation. It was

particularly pleasing to have Miss Betty Fearne with us prior to her retirement from the Express Typewriting and Duplicating Service. Over a long period of years she has coped splendidly with the copy material for the Bulletin, made the stencils, attended to mailing and produced many notices, fixture cards and blue illustrated covers. After such a long period of dedicated work, we wished her a long and happy retirement.

N.R.P.

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NEW NAMES FOR OLD

ANNA XYLA	ex PATIANNA ex HALCYON SKIES (1971)
ANDINO	ex ANA ex CRISPIN (1959)
AZURE SEA	ex CALYPSO ex SOUTHERN CROSS
AEOLOS C	ex YALTA ex BERGE SIGLION ex SIGLION (Laird 1966)
AGMAR	ex SIR JOHN SNELL (1955)
AL AMIRAH	ex BOOKER VIKING (1967)
AL SAUDIA	ex ALVA STAR (1970)
ANGELINA S	ex MARYOS HOPE ex BALMARINO ex ARDGARVEL (1965)
ALEXANDERS TRUST	ex LEONOR MARIA ex FALABA (1962)
ALEXANDERS FAITH	ex MAGDA JOSEFINA ex FOURAH BAY (1961)
BRILLIANTE	ex SLEMISH ex BRILLIANT (1958)
BARBER MEMNON	ex MEMNON (1977)
BARBER MENELAUS	ex MENELAUS (1977)
BERMUDA	ex ROSS MALLARD (trlr)
CELTIC CRUSADER	ex SUPREMITY (1970)
CHUJIANG CAREER	ex WILTSHIRE ex WILD CLOVER (1977)
CLARE	ex DUNKWA (1960)
CHERRY BOBS	ex ESSO DOVER
DELPHIC REEFER	ex WILD AVOCET (1972)
FALMOUTH BAY	ex SEATRAN TRENTON ex MANCHESTER VANGUARD
IVANHOE	ex SHANKLIN (1951)
JANE SEA	ex RUDYARD ex BLACKTHORN
JOELLE	ex REGU ex PEGU (1961)
KERAVNOS	ex CORSINI ex HECTOR (tug 1921)
KERVEROS	ex AUGUSTEO ex PAUL CASSIN ex ST 515 (1944)
LUCY MAUD MONTGOMERY	ex STENA DANICA (Canad. ro-ro)
LADY OF MADONA	ex WINCHESTER UNIVERSAL ex WINCHESTER CASTLE ex CLAN RAMSAY (1965)

NEW NAMES FOR OLD (contd)

LEDA	ex RIPON GRANGE ex OROTAVA ex OROTAVA BRIDGE ex OROTAVA (1968)
MAXIMO GOMEZ	ex AUSTRALIND (1978)
MORNING SUN	ex ORBITA (1972)
MED SUN	ex BUTE
MEXICO	ex HASSELBURG ex HOEGH APAPA ex APAPA PALM ex HASSELBURG (1974)
MOBIL ASTRAL	ex PACIFIC STAR (1975)
NORSEA	ex IBEX (P & O)
NEW PANDA	ex DUNELMIA (1977)
PUMA	ex UNION TRADER ex UNION MELBOURNE
PROCYON	ex LINDA CLAUSEN ex CUNARD AMBASSADOR (1972)
RAN	ex C.S.FORESTER (trlr)
RANA 1	ex ROSETHORN ex YEWKYLE ex LAKSA
SHELL CRAFTSMAN	ex ARDROSSAN
STENA SAILER	ex DUNDALK (1975) to Cayman Islands
STRATHCONAN	ex SEATRAN VALLEY FORGE (1978)
TOLMIROS	ex NAPIA ex EMPIRE JESTER (tug 1943)
VILLE D'ORIENT	ex MANCHESTER VIGOUR ex CARGO VIGOUR ex MANCHESTER VIGOUR (1973)
XING KONG	ex TRINITY SPLENDOR ex CLAN MENZIES (1958)

TO BREAKERS

CILICIA	ex Anchor Line, recently Rotterdam Accomm. ship
ELENI M	ex LLANTRISANT (1958)
FEXEL GLORY	ex CITY OF DELHI ex BENEDIN ex CITY OF WINNEPEG
MAYFAIR	ex NAYA ex SELAS ex COSMARIA ex COSMAR ex CAPE GRENVILLE (1949)
GENERAL LAS HERAS	ex PRESIDENTE PERON (Laird 1951)
SPIJKENISSE	ex BANKURA (1960)
PEARL RAINBOW	ex DESPO ex TOULLA ex KING ARTHUR (1953)
SAFINA E NAJAM	ex LA PRIMAVERA (1960)
ZINOVIA	ex LEODAMAS ex PEARL CREEK (1958) Wrecked Red Sea
MITERA STELLA	ex STELLA ex MAYFAIR PRESTIGE ex LONDON PRESTIGE (1954)

SHIP DISPOSALS

DUNSTANBURGH CASTLE, CITY OF LIVERPOOL, CITY OF LONDON,
(all 1970), MANCHESTER CONCEPT ex MANCHESTER PROGRESS,
BALLYLORAN (1958 - to Egypt).

* * * * *

She has flown from the far impossible South,
And strange are the sounds that come out of her mouth;
But the white of her breast and the spread of her wings
Are both surpassingly wonderful things.
Fair are the tropical seas in the noon,
And fair in the glistening path of the moon.
But, oh, dearer to her are the storms of the Horn
Where the grey world-wandering waves are born.

"The Albatross" - E.V. Rieu

MERSEYSIDE SMUGGLING IN TIMES PAST

It is hardly remarkable that many places in North Wirral have a tradition of wrecking and smuggling. In fact such illicit activities were once more or less rife along our coasts.

James Stonehouse, reminiscing about the stories of the looting of wrecks in his "Recollections of Old Liverpool" (1863) described Wirral as being a desperate region in 1750. He mentioned how some inhabitants indulged in sporadic smuggling and pillaging of merchandise cast up from wrecks.

Since much of Mersey's shipping in the early nineteenth century passed through the Rock Channel, wrecks were not uncommon. The City and Port of Liverpool was prosperous, although distress and poverty afflicted many of the working classes. The times being what they were, it was not surprising that longshoremen and others regarded wreckage as providential gifts from the sea.

None the less, authoritative evidence is difficult to discover. The most detailed reports I have read are contained in "The Narrative of the Dreadful Disasters occasioned by the Hurricane which visited Liverpool on January 6th - 7th 1839". It was printed by Egerton Smith and Co, Lord Street. The effects of the storm were overwhelmingly destructive. Dock gates were smashed and scores of flats and coasters sank. Nine vessels were blown ashore at Bootle. Three fine brigs were severely damaged in George's Dock basin, where a schooner sank. The North West Lightship broke away and drifted into the River. A Seacombe ferryboat sank.

Two big New York emigrant packets, ST ANDREW and PENNSYLVANIA, also the British ship LOCKWOODS were totally wrecked on the Burbo and North Banks between Leasowe and Hoylake. Atrocious weather accompanied by breaking seas and fierce hail squalls battered exhausted survivors clinging to the rigging.

Over fifty people perished from LOCKWOOD's crew and passenger complement of 108. Steam tugs, notably VICTORIA, pilot boats and fishing craft put out to the stricken ships. The Magazines lifeboat and a few gig boats were towed astern of the steam vessels. They rendered prompt assistance and rescued many people.

It was also reported that wreckers plundered what the elements spared instead of alleviating the calamities of their fellow creatures. A group of above one hundred were dispersed by police officers and taken into custody.

Several boats belonging to Liverpool men sailed out to the wrecks and crews began to plunder. A detachment of police officers approached in a steam vessel, apprehended several and lodged them in the bridewell. The circumstances probably forced the Government to appoint a Royal Commission to examine and report on the activities of wreckers.

Sixty five years later a steamer was stranded on the Burbo Bank, the wreck of which, very much later was to prove of interest to me. In the 1920's and 1930's I spent many happy hours exploring the guts and channels adjoining Rock Channel in my small sailing boat. A few gaunt iron ribs of a wreck showed above the ribbed sand at low water. They became as familiar to me as the channel buoys.

Describing them years later to an old fisherman, he replied "Why, they are the remains of the Spanish steamer ULLVA wrecked about the turn of the century." After searching through contemporary newspaper files, the story pieced itself together. ULLVA, 650 tons, was bound for Liverpool and grounded on the Burbo Bank during a dense fog on Friday, 9th December 1904. The New Brighton lifeboat QUEEN coxswained by George Robinson took off the crew. The master refused to leave, declaring in broken English "When ship go, I go." It was discovered that the ship's back was broken and with the weather deteriorating, he was rescued three days later as a rising wind and sea pounded the vessel.

Much of the ill-fated ship's cargo consisted of assorted fruit, nuts, brandy and wine. It was destined for the Christmas market and came ashore between New Brighton and Leasowe. The news spread like wildfire and crowds made for the beach.

Some brought pails and earthenware pots. Sacks and pillowcases were stuffed with grapes, oranges and nuts. The more experienced practitioners armed with grapnels, ropes and crow bars waded into the surf and dragged casks ashore, and broached them.

A "bacchanalian orgy ensued" - so it was vividly reported in the national press - "and the sands were stained red with wine". A police officer and coastguard tried to cope, but they were overwhelmed.

Soon wheelbarrows and donkey carts were pressed into service. Rowdy toasts were drunk to the ULLVA in rustic cups fashioned from scooped-out halves of oranges. After nightfall, drunken revellers lay helpless on the sand. Eventually reinforcements arrived and a measure of order restored. However, a lot of merchandise (particularly kegs of brandy) had already been removed and hidden elsewhere or buried in the sand dunes.

During the subsequent court proceedings the shocked Chairman of the bench said - "the drunken scenes he himself had witnessed were against all morality". Several persons were charged, made examples of, and fined. "The Magistrates" he solemnly declared, "had a duty to stop it".

The press, more cheerfully, also commented on the illegal but nonetheless seasonal bounty of Christmas fare. Sympathy was extended to local publicans and shopkeepers, who, it was said "were likely to feel the pinch during the holidays and for some weeks to come".

Finally, I am reminded of the cautionary words of historian Rupert C. Jarvis contained in the Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Historical Society. He concluded that much of what is written in the guise of local history is no more than the free reminiscences of old inhabitants. "Mere records" he remarked "do not improve with the years. However they have the minor disadvantages of disclosing the facts of the case".

F. Reid

MERSEY NOTES

Cliff House, the former home of scores of aged mariners, is to be demolished. As the most conspicuous feature of the Mariners' Home "village" on the Egremont side of the Mersey, it had an imposing 135 ft. clock tower. Any items of historical interest have been placed on permanent loan at the Merseyside Maritime Museum. The building was one of the largest in Wallasey and was opened by the Duke of Edinburgh, who later became King Edward VII, ninety eight years ago. The owners, the Mercantile Marine Service Association say that most of the building has been unused for ten years,

and the decline in the shipping industry and changes in life style reduced the demand for the type of accommodation offered. The premises have been boarded up for the last three years. We are sorry to see them go.

A crowd of "Manx boat" enthusiasts were the mourners at the departure of the next to last "classical" steamer MONAS ISLE on Thursday 30th October at 2.15 p.m. In tow of the Holyhead tug AFONLAS, she was bound for a breaker's yard in Holland. MONAS ISLE will be sadly missed as we see the decline in opportunities for short sea cruising round our coastline. Only MANXMAN now remains with the capacity and amenities for Irish Sea sailing - car ferries, even if pressed into excursion work, lack suitability, as we found when BEN MY CHREE made her once-only trip to Llandudno some years ago. BEECHGARTH towed MONAS ISLE stern first from the Birkenhead entrance, after which AFONLAS took over the sea towage. HOLLYGARTH escorted them to the Mersey Bar and brought back the pilot. MONAS ISLE was a product of Cammell Lairds in 1951, with a good set of steam turbines, teak decks and panelled lounges - we are not likely to see her equal again in these days of plastic and bitumen - not to mention the smell, noise and vibration of the diesel engine. The coastal tow proved a difficult one. Shelter was sought off Fishguard and Plymouth, and Zierikzee was reached on 11th November. The tug AFONLAS was formerly the Thames tug PLATEAU, built by Henry Scarr, Hessle in 1952, of 159 tons. Registered at Beaumaris, she has been owned in Holyhead since 1974.

It came as a great disappointment to many of the "regulars" who have patronized the Llandudno sailings of the I.O.M.S.P.Co to hear of the abandonment of these sailings in 1981. Many of them are pensioners who have enjoyed the chance to sail, and paid the ever-increasing season contract rates. Some will no doubt say goodbye to coastal sea cruising, but the Company will issue books of ten vouchers to sail between Liverpool and Douglas for £64 with a contract for the season of £128. These facilities can also be used between Fleetwood and Douglas and between Llandudno and Douglas, for the latter service is to be maintained. As said so often, it is a great pity that Liverpool did not support the sailings to Llandudno, poorly advertised as they were. At present it seems unlikely that any other operator will run a ship.

The granary at Royal Seaforth Dock had its best turnover in October 1980, of 200,689 tons of grain.

The offices of the Pacific Steam Navigation Co have moved once more, and in the autumn of 1980 the staff moved from Wheelwright House, which was close to the former loading berth at Huskisson Dock, to Royal Liver Buildings. The present loading berth is of course, now at Vittoria Dock, Birkenhead.

And whilst talking of changes of address, the Journal of Commerce offices are now on the first floor of 7 Victoria Street, Liverpool, with telephone number 051-236 4511. "Sea Breezes" office is now situated at 201 Cotton Exchange Building, Old Hall Street. Both these concerns formerly shared offices in Tower Buildings. You will still find Ken Brown and Craig Carter in their respective editorial seats at each address.

The B & I's new LEINSTER was launched at Rushbrook, Cork, on 7th November and cost £22½m compared with £15m for her sistership CONNAGHT in 1979. She will carry 350 cars and 1500 passengers. The former LEINSTER, now rechristened INNISFALLEN was on the Pembroke/Cork route in November. CONNAGHT and MUNSTER then maintained the Liverpool/Dublin service, and the jetfoil CU-NA-MARA was laid up for the winter.

The "Liverpool Echo" recently showed a photograph of an old derelict Mersey ferryboat lying in Husband's Shipyard, Marchwood, Southampton. This photograph was taken by Mr. J. F. Spedding and shows J. FARLEY, minus her funnel, bridge and much of her superstructure. She was built in 1922 and came into service with her sister FRANCIS STOREY, when ferryboats cost about £35,000. Having commuted daily in both vessels, this writer remembers them well, and the sturdiness which the Ailsa Shipbuilding Company put into them. J. FARLEY was used in the last War as an Admiralty tender, returned to ferry service and was sold to Admiralty in 1952 for experimental purposes. In 1953 she was converted at Weymouth for underwater photography. In 1975 she was bought by a London businessman with the intention, it is understood, of having her converted into a Mississippi-type stern-wheeler for cruises on the Thames. This project fell through for lack of money.

We shall not see again any of the I.C.I. motor barges which sailed the Mersey, canals and River Weaver up to Northwich, for they have all been disposed of. There was COMBERBACH, CUDDINGTON, JAMES JACKSON GRUNDY, built by Yarwoods about 1948. MARBURY and MARSTON were built by Pimblotts in 1949. CUDDINGTON will berth in Ellesmere Port Museum, and J.J.G. has gone to Northwich Sea Cadets, both for a nominal £1.

The twin stacked tug CANADA was launched from Mactay's slip

at Bromborough late in October on a midnight tide, and entered Birkenhead for Tower Quay to fit out. She is for The Alexandra Towing Co and as they already have a tug named CANADA ex PEA COCK (1960), the older vessel is now known as CANADA II. Completion of the new tug was rapid and she was on service in the Mersey before the end of the year.

Notices to Mariners in December stated that the Port Radar tide gauge was temporarily inoperative. Shipping was also warned that work was proceeding when weather permitted, on the dispersal of the wreck of EL OSO, mined north westwards of the Mersey Bar at New Year 1940. She was a tanker of H. E. Moss & Co and it was thought at the time that she might have been torpedoed, but Naval records put the loss down to a mine.

The Mersey Docks and Harbour Company were encouraging staff, deemed unnecessary, to leave their employ and were offering special terms for those who chose to go, as at 31st December 1980.

If members were watching Granada TV on 8th December, they would witness interviews with Peter Anderson and Sam Pauls who had found the 60 year old yacht IOMA in someone's back garden in Garston. They decided to restore her and the work has taken 3 years. Only her racing yacht hull remained and they bought three trees at Festiniog for mast, bowsprit and spars, for £23. A haulier wanted £90 for delivery in Garston, but a local welder produced a fitting on the rear of a van, which made it possible to do the transport themselves, even if the police were not particularly happy about it. Another Garston helper, Johnny Cummins, spent 2 weeks planing the spars, and for this work he was rewarded with as much Guinness as he could drink. With seven people on board they at last sailed for Anglesey but the engine failed at Perch Rock. Put to rights, they reached Great Ormes Head in a northeast gale. The dinghy was lost, the bowsprit broke and they were in real trouble. They were glad however that they were well ballasted with 4 tons of old railway lines. They reached Port Dinorwic eventually, pumped the boat out, got into dry clothes and had a meal. One of the men got the first bus home and has not been near since. Sam Pauls admitted to be very frightened, but he said IOMA was a lady who looked after them, and she is looked upon as the "Pride of Garston Docks".

As these notes are typed, we have the threat of a Seamen's strike. Over the New Year festive season, the crews of P & O Liverpool/Belfast ferries took industrial action. After running

this service uneconomically for a few years, P & O decided to cease operations, not only losing money but having the loyalty of crews in question. This caused a sit-in by shocked unionists, and this reporter was heartened to hear a news item broadcast by Radio Merseyside. Their Chris Stocking was interviewing crew members on board ULSTER QUEEN. He asked one of the "sitters" if they had not brought on P & O's decision by their own actions? But then another voice appeared asking if the TV journalist knew he was trespassing in the bar, and on orders from the Captain, would he please proceed ashore. The TV man asked to see the Captain, but this was refused. The voice was that of the Chief Officer, who refused to give his name, and in my view and doubtless many more listeners, exposed the weakness of the crew's case.

N.R.P.

Wind from the west: the storm clouds rise;
The breakers rave: the whirlblasts roar;
The mingled rage of seas and skies
Bursts on the low and lonely shore:
When safety's far, and danger nigh,
Swift feet the readiest aid supply.

Thomas Love Peacock

(and that's why King Canute got his feet wet!)

GENERAL NEWS ITEMS

Sealink are using the new ST ANSELM on Dover cross-channel service, and the ST DAVID, completing at Harland and Wolff's yard, is destined for Holyhead/Dun Laoghaire.

The decision in October of Cunard Line, to register their two Caribbean cruise liners CUNARD PRINCESS and CUNARD COUNTESS in the Bahamas, certainly caused trouble. But who can blame the Company when the National Union of Seamen have pitched their wage and leave demands so high? Wouldn't we all like to have high wages, our keep, good living conditions and aim at one day off for every day at sea? Pricing themselves out of jobs became the norm, when as one example we saw the iron ore ships still arriving at Birkenhead before Messrs Summers closed down, with foreign crews, foreign names and flying flags of convenience, where the same vessels had been British. In October though, it seemed as if

sense was seeping through, for the crew of QUEEN ELIZABETH II repudiated the N.U.S. call to strike and prevent our Queen of the Seas from sailing. In 1939 the British merchant fleet could hold its own in bringing a large proportion of our food to these islands. But not any more - one has only to view the shipping scene in our ports to realize that. We are far too dependant now on the ships and seamen of foreign countries. It would be interesting, and startling, to know what percentage tonnage of grain arrives at Seaforth Granary in British ships.

In November, the Ministry of Defence (Navy) took delivery from Richard Dunstan of two tractor tugs to work in naval dockyards. Their names are ADEPT and GENEVIEVE, and there are two more to complete. HMT ADEPT must not be confused with the Mersey barge tug of same name.

The cruise liner NAVARINO ex GRIPSHOLM, built at Genoa in 1957 completed a 4-day overhaul at Falmouth in November. She then embarked 200 passengers there for a cruise to South Africa and South America. The owners declared themselves happy with the speed with which the ship was attended to.

MORETON BAY and DISCOVERY BAY were in Govan Basin in November, for conversion from steam to diesel propulsion, now that speed levels have been reduced on the Australasian run.

In previous issues, mention was made of RAINBOW WARRIOR of the Greenpeace organization for preserving the environment. She hindered Spanish whale hunting, was intercepted by the Spanish Navy and taken to Ferrol in June. The crew lived on board and a fine of \$140,000 was imposed, which the organization could not raise. Most of the time, Spanish armed guards were on board and the bearing metal on the propeller shaft was removed to prevent her sailing. But at about 8 p.m. on Saturday 8th November, she slipped her moorings. Ferrol being a Navy port, departure was difficult and she was chased by surface craft and helicopters, but in 36 hours was outside Spanish territorial waters, making slowly across the Bay of Biscay to refuel at St Helier, and thence to Amsterdam. Her speed was reduced by marine growth on the hull. To make her escape possible, the Spaniards alleged that bearing metal was somehow smuggled on board for an improvised repair.

Metcalf Motor Coasters Ltd are to carry out sail experiments on board their coaster FIRETHORN, with a view to wind power assisting the diesel engine in favourable conditions.

STENA NORDICA, a Swedish car ferry on the Milford Haven

to Rosslare service of Sealink, had a main engine failure on 18th November when 1½ miles south of Skokholm Island. She asked for 2 tugs when 5 miles west of St Ann's Head, and was berthed at the BP Refinery to disembark passengers. Later she reached Pembroke. She was built at Bremen in 1975, and is of 5429 tons.

The British trawler ST IRENE started to take water and sink in position 52.45N 4.12E at 10 p.m. on Friday, 18th November. ROEBUCK picked up her signal on vhf, saying that the crew of 16 was trying to go into the boats. The crew was rescued by RCN FRASER, the dutch frigates VAN GALEN and VAN KINSBERGEN, with assistance from Dutch lifeboat SUZANNE and helicopter. The trawler was built in Norway in 1966 as HILLERO. Later the casualty was found by the Dutch salvage tug TITAN and towed to YMUIDEN.

To safeguard British interests in the Persian Gulf during the Iran/Iraq war, the Navy augmented the task force there with HMS AVENGER and BIRMINGHAM, and RFA's OLMEDA and FORT AUSTIN.

It has now become possible, as from 17th December 1980, for very large oil tankers to navigate the Suez Canal, whereas they have been having to round the Cape. The first ship through was TEXACO IRELAND of 290,000 tons d.w. Even if the canal dues are very high, the saving in fuel on many voyages makes the use of the canal viable.

In 1931, Earles of Hull completed an interesting lake steamer which is still in existence. She is OLLANTA working on Lake Titicaca, Bolivia. She had to be built up from parts shipped out to Mollendo in the P.S.N.C's LA PAZ. As built, she could carry 1000 tons of cargo, 66 first class and 20 2nd class passengers.

Auctioneers Phillips of London are reported as having the largest item they have ever sold in their 185 year history - the paddler TATTERSHALL CASTLE - now at Victoria Embankment. She was expected to go for £350,000 on 28th January 1981. Financier Harry Childs had saved her from the breakers in 1972 for £27,000 and then spent £500,000 on refurbishing her.

The Journal of Commerce of 3rd December 1980 tells of the iron barque LADY ELIZABETH built in 1879 by R. Thompson Junr of Sunderland for G. C. Karran of Castletown, I.O.M. In 1906 she was sold to Norwegian owners for £3,250. In 1913, when trying to round Cape Horn she was badly damaged and put in to the Falkland Islands. There condemned, she was converted into a coal hulk, and still lies there in sorry state.

In a disturbing report, British Government Inspectors say that a sixth of all tankers at sea pose a danger threat. After the BETELGEUSE tragedy at Whiddy Island, inert gas installations were found to be unserviceable, and there was general negligence in handling dangerous cargo. Though this occurred mostly in "flag of convenience" ships, some British ships were also concerned, and age made no difference.

It was noticed that three former Great Lakes bulkers arrived at Aviles, Spain in mid November for breaking up. They were J. O. MORGAN JUNR of 7694 tons built in 1909, ALVA C. DINKEY of 7702 tons also built 1909, and GOVERNOR MILLER of 8240 tons built in 1938. The last two mentioned were towed across from Quebec by the supply ship CATHY B ex JAMIE B ex NORDIC OFFSHORE.

The two Argentine tankers GENERAL LAS HERAS (Lairds, 1951) and COMODORO RIVADAVIA have been sold to breakers. The latter was built in Holland in 1952. The Laird-built ship was put into service as PRESIDENTE PERON, but the name was later changed when that president fell from grace. In early December they were both being towed to Taiwan by the supply ship ROYAL, when they became parted off the South African coast. There was some difficulty in getting connected up again, and the tug CAUSEWAY SALVOR stood by. During this incident, ROYAL was holed on the propeller blades of one of her charges.

N.R.P.

MOTOR LAUNCH

See how her leaping bows divide
The startled water - on each side.
A flash of foam, a transient wall
Of light, a racing waterfall!
The sun a rainbow radiance flings:
Her body poises between wings
More glossy, rarer in device
Than any bird of paradise.

G. Rostrevor Hamilton

ANOTHER IVANHOE FOR THE CLYDE

The Southsea/Ryde Ferry SHANKLIN has been bought by friends and supporters of the Waverley Steam Packet Co for a reported

£25,000. These owners will call themselves the Firth of Clyde Steam Packet Co and the ship to be named IVANHOE, or PRINCE IVANHOE was brought to Stobcross Quay, Glasgow on 21st November from Southampton. Her Captain for the coastal delivery voyage was David Neill of WAVERLEY. Her programme of excursion sailings between May and September 1981 is being prepared, so that she can back up WAVERLEY. With plenty of beam and open deck space, IVANHOE should be a pleasant ship to sail in. In the spring, WAVERLEY is programmed to go north-about to make cruises between the Rivers Forth and Thames. In the autumn she is to go to Bristol Channel and South Coast. This is very good news in view of the withdrawal of GLEN SANNOX from Clyde cruising, and the already mentioned decrease in the fleet of the Isle of Man Steam Packet Co to five ships.

JANUARY MEETING

Due to an unavoidable change in programme, the April fixture was brought forward and our member Mr. D. P. Branigan came to speak on "The vanished shipyards of the Dee".

It probably started in the early dawn of history when some local inhabitant made a raft or hollowed out a tree trunk to start boatbuilding. The Romans would probably have been the first to construct a boat. They are known to have used barges to transport tiles and pottery down the River Dee, and these would be built locally.

With the passing of the Romans, the Saxons and Vikings moved into the area - wood was handily available from the surrounding forests - so they, too, must have built vessels. Then through the mediaeval period there came a large trade from Chester around our coasts and to the continent. The tools of the shipwright became ever more specialised.

There is evidence that a sailing ship named EXPERIMENT was built at Dawpool about 1700, and this was on the lower reaches of the Dee near Heswall. Then in 1745 Hinks of Chester built HMS SWAN, a small 6-gun ship. There is no record of a Hinks, Ship-builder now, but a man of that name was in the West Indies sugar business. A merchant ship named THREE BROTHERS was built in 1753. Up to this time, the picture is a hazy one until in 1785, registry of ships became compulsory. However, the ships would only be entered in the books of the ports in which they were registered.

which would present a formidable task of research. In the 18th century Craig published a list of ships built in Chester between 1787 and 1808, so some of this work must have been accomplished. The ships range in size from the little cutter DREADNOUGHT of 11 tons to LORD FORBES, ship of 550 tons, but no builders' names are mentioned. The port of Chester is deemed to extend from the city to the Point of Air, including Mostyn, Bagillt, Connahs Quay etc.

To build a wooden ship, all that was required basically was a field handy to the water, and a supply of timber. A saw pit would be dug and heavy labour recruited locally with a few shipwrights to do the skilled work.

In 1790 the name of Peter Jackson appears and there is also a Patrick Troughton, mentioned as builders. Towards the turn of the century, the name of Courtney appears, and his yard was just below the Roodee. In 1795 the press gang was active in Chester, and locked a number of carpenters and shipwrights in the city gaol to await transport. Their colleagues at Courtney's yard used a spar as a battering ram, broke down the door of the gaol and released them.

Over a twenty year period, Courtney had a steady output, his largest ship being the 519 ton NEVIS PLANTER in 1807. He also built the 12-gun brigs CONTRAST and DEFENDER, and the 24 gun sloops CYRUS, LEVANT, MERSEY and EDEN for the Navy between 1804 and 1813. The Science Museum in London has a half block model of EDEN, the only surviving model of Deeside ships.

LEVANT was to have a short but striking career for in February 1815, she fought one of the fiercest actions of the 1812 war. In company with the CYANE, the two 6th raters took on the American CONSTITUTION near Madeira, to keep her from molesting a convoy. Both British ships were captured after a classic frigate action. CONSTITUTION took her prizes into the neutral Portuguese port of St Michaels, but was herself surprised by a British squadron just after sailing. CONSTITUTION and CYANE escaped from the heavy British frigates. LEVANT put back, but was snatched from the port, starting diplomatic arguments.

Courtney went on building until some time in the 1820's when Mulverney took over the yard. And about this time a Mr. Wilson opened another yard and built some early steamers. Where situated and for what period is not clear.

In 1822 LORD MELVILLE appeared (171 tons) and in 1825 LEE (188 tons) but whether Courtney or Wilson were responsible is

not known.

There was also a 231 ton paddler built by a Mr. Hardy in 1822 and used on a cross-channel service to Calais.

Mr. Wilson is known to have built the small paddler ELIZA, which was advertised as carrying passengers from Chester Tower to Ellesmere Port, for Liverpool. It is difficult for us to realise this area being without railways or useable roads.

DAIRYMAID (1827) towed craft up and down the Dee. Then there were ORMOND, MARIA and CYMRIC, but who built them has not been ascertained. They may have been built at Chester or Sandycroft.

In 1855, Wilson built the biggest ship yet, the 1359 ton WINIFRED. She was to have a long life, finally finishing up as a rubber hulk in the Amazon in 1902 - her hull may be there yet.

In the same year, he topped this with ROYAL CHARTER which was intended as a sailing ship, but was bought on the stocks by Gibbs Bright and altered to auxiliary steam power. She was designed by a Liverpool man. The effort was too much for the yard. Financial difficulties arose and the vessel had to be completed by Patterson from Bristol.

ROYAL CHARTER came to grief in October 1859, and it seems questionable whether she was structurally strong enough. She broke in half on grounding, and there were doubts amongst some Victorian naval architects.

The financial troubles soon affected the yard at the Roodee and in the summer of 1857, the workers (in common parlance) requested a "sub" from the Mayor, as they had not been paid for a long time. Then in that autumn a disastrous fire was started by cinders falling from the railway, which ran on a higher level close by. This did a lot of damage and finally in September the yard was bought by Miller and Cox of Liverpool. Nathaniel Cox took the yard over. He was to produce a run of large iron sailing ships - GITANA 1366 tons, 1862; ROBINSON CRUSOE 1163 tons, 1863; ROODEE 1036 tons, 1863; WAYFARER 1321 tons, 1863; NORTH EAST 998 tons, 1863; WEST 998 tons, 1863; CHESHIRE 1233 tons, 1864; TERSICHOE 528 tons, 1864; DELMIRA 338 tons, 1864.

After this burst of activity, the yard seemed to run down until around 1866 it closed, and in 1870 the site was sold to the Gas Company.

The Sandycroft yard was also sold to George Taylor who ran an engineering company, but was not immediately stripped. In an 1862

directory Taylors offered to build steamers of up to 3000 tons, but there is no record that they ever did so.

And now let us look at the other part of Deeside. Down at Queensferry, also known as Kingsferry and High Ferry, James Boydell appears between 1836 and 1840 and John Priest between 1840 and 1848. They turned out sloops, schooners and flats and even a steamer, named SKIMMER in 1839. There were ten vessels from a 53 ton flat to a 246 ton schooner in this period.

Flint shows a large output, starting from 1828, and 35 vessels were built there up to 1863. The names of Michael Parry, William Paton and particularly David Jones and Ferguson, Callum and Baird come forward. David Jones was the principal builder in the 1850's. Then about 1860 the building of the chemical works brought his business to an end. Ferguson and Baird moved upstream to Connahs Quay.

Nearer the sea there was a busy little industry at Talacre where John Dawson was active from 1838 to 1848 building schooners and flats, his biggest the 136 ton FANNY. Mostyn was also fairly busy. Edward Eyton was building schooners from 1838 to 1849. He also built the wooden paddle steamer TALIESIN in 1842.

Then another firm, not originally shipbuilders were busy at Bagillt. This was the site of the Chester Lead Company. Here Sir Edward Walker built schooners, flats and even a small steam lighter called DEEBANK. The yard finished about 1870. Mystery surrounds another builder who came from Wolverhampton by the name of Bishton. Exactly where his yard was has not been traced, but he is known to have built six schooners of 70 to 247 tons between 1855 and 1860.

Ferguson and Baird (Callum or McCallum had vanished from records), left Flint and moved up to Connahs Quay where they set up alongside Coppack's. In 1884 we find the two companies at law over the question of foreshore rights.

KATHLEEN AND MAY is the best known of the schooners turned out by Ferguson and Baird, and they were to stay in business until 1915. They also had a marine slipway at Connahs Quay.

In 1908 Isaac Abdella and Mitchell of Brimscombe in Gloucestershire set up a yard at Queensferry. It was on a site where a Mr. Smith had built steam lighters in the 1880/90's. They built a range of launches, shallow draft vessels, coasters and lighters. The best known were a batch of four early motor coasters for John Summers and Sons, who owned the Shotton steel-

works. They were INDORITA, FLEURITA, ELDORITA and WARITA. The first named worked around the Irish Sea area for 50 years, was laid up at Birkenhead in 1970 and scrapped in 1972. This writer saw FLEURITA doing service as a Naval fresh water carrier at Moville anchorage in 1943/44. They built a small coaster named SIR WILLIAM which became FELITA, but she may have been a First World War casualty as she disappeared from Lloyd's Register. Two coasters built about 1920 were CORNISH TRADER and CORNISH MERCHANT of about 470 tons, which later became CORNISH ROSE and FOWEY ROSE respectively for Richard Hughes and Co., Liverpool. From their yard also came BRIGHTSIDE in 1930 of 476 tons for Donkings of Middlesbrough. The yard began to run down in the 1930's and was extinct before the Second World War. The site today is occupied by the end of the new road bridge.

In 1913 came the last of the yards - Crichtons. They set up at Saltney and were able to keep busy throughout the depression years of the 1920's. They turned out tugs, trawlers, ferries, coasters, lighters and grain elevators. The Records Office at Hawarden has them well documented, with large files of photographs.

This reporter would like to add some of the 45 vessels listed by Lloyds. There was the coastal tanker ALLEGHENY in 1921 for the Anglo American Oil Co; CLIFFVILLE in 1921 (which began life as ISABELETTA) and T.P. TILLING of 1920 of John Monks of Liverpool; MARCITA and JONITA of 1920 for John Summers & Sons; LOUGH FISHER for James Fisher and Co; OSMIUM of 1924 for Imperial Chemical Industries Ltd. Some fine Mersey tugs came from Crichtons - SLOYNE in 1928, HOLM COCK, 1934; HUSKISSON, 1934; COBURG, 1934; NELSON, 1935; and SALTHOUSE, 1935. One of the most interesting vessels was the twin screw passenger ferry and cargo carrier R.H. CARR built in 1927 for Sprostans Ltd., of Demerara. According to Lloyds she has survived to this day, now owned by the Guyana Government and still registered at Georgetown. And some of Crichton-built grain elevators have not yet been scrapped, and as this writer knows, only the best steel was used - that of Colvilles Ltd., the Scottish steelmakers.

Crichton's end came in 1935 and not through lack of orders. In the 30's the shipbuilders of Britain got together and decided that the industry was overcrowded. They raised a fund which was used to buy up and close down shipyards considered by them surplus to requirements.

That was the end of Crichtons and also of all shipbuilding on Deeside.

Denis Branigan said that this record is far from complete and it is surprising that so little documentation has survived from the early companies. The picture can only be put together by ploughing through old local newspapers and shipping registers. On Deeside itself, the industry has been almost forgotten, but perhaps Denis has jerked the Chester Museum into becoming interested in the maritime history of their City.

This was a talk which showed a great deal of painstaking research, and every endeavour has been made to record the results as fully and as accurately as possible.

N.R.P.

* * * * *

The ship went on with solemn face;
To meet the darkness on the deep,
The solemn ship went onward.
I bowed down weary in the place;
For parting tears and present sleep
Had weighed mine eyelids downward.

Mrs. Browning

IN TROUBLED WATERS

Was the title of a film on Granada TV on 16th December, showing dramatically the danger to our coast line, whilst sub standard ships and their sub standard crews, risk massive pollution.

The difficulties in navigating very large crude oil carriers was demonstrated by the well maintained and efficiently crewed TEXACO SWEDEN. As she headed up the English Channel, she was keeping watch on VHF channels 10, 11 and 16 in addition to her normal operator-manned frequency. To demonstrate what can happen in the narrow sea lanes, a main generator failure was simulated. The ship's speed had been 17 knots and this decreased gradually. Captain Jack Walker informed Dover Coastguards of the situation, and that he had no

power. Normally it would take a ship of this vast size six miles to stop. When the speed became 3 knots, he would have to make a decision whether to drop anchor, but in the event was drifting for two hours with two black balls hoisted, to warn "ship not under control".

Viewers were reminded of the TORREY CANYON disaster off Cornwall in 1967, AMOCO CADIZ in 1973 and ELENI V off the coast of Norfolk in the same year, whose pollution cost £3½m to clean up.

Irresponsible ships' crews are still flushing out oily ballast and risking dire penalties if caught. It is usually done in the early evening, and by the time the slick is sighted, the offending ship may be many miles away. It may be two days later before the slick is found.

Greece now has a very large number of ships on all the seas of the world, and they have proved to be the worst offenders, as was testified by Brian Batten, a Lloyds surveyor. We were also told that Masters' certificates can be bought at reasonable cost on the Continent, permitting a man to take control of a ship of any size. One ship was found to be navigating with the equivalent of a schoolboy's atlas.

* * * * *

SOCIETY NOTES

On 12th March, Mr. M. Clarke is to speak to us on "Flats, Keels and Trows" and on 9th April, Dr. P. N. Davies will talk to us on that intriguing character of the shipping industry - "Lord Kylsant". Our last fixture of the season will be the Annual General Meeting on 14th May.

The Officers of the Society are:-

President	- J. J. Gawne
Vice Presidents	- W. P. Raine, Mrs. E. M. Summerfield, N. R. Pugh

Chairman	- R. G. Loram
Vice Chairman	- J. E. Lingwood
Hon. Secretary	- M. K. Stammers
Hon. Asst. Sec.	- Miss G. L. G. Sweetnam
Hon. Treasurer	- T. D. Tozer
Hon. Archivist	- Miss K. Lomas
Council Members	- R. N. Martin
	D. W. Boyes
	K. A. Griffin
	H. M. Hignett and
	K. Stuttard

Inquiries regarding membership should be made to the Hon. Secretary, c/o Merseyside Museums, William Brown Street.

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NEW LIVERPOOL/DOUGLAS CARGO SERVICE BY I.O.M.S.P.Co.

Commencing in May 1981, there is to be a new ro-ro service from Hornby Dock, Liverpool to Douglas, replacing the present container and general cargo service operated by PEVERIL and CONISTER.

A ship will be chartered from P & O Lines and she will sail at 11 p.m. so as to give morning delivery in Douglas. She will probably bear a typical I.O.M.S.P.Co's name, and is now known as NF JAGUAR ex PENDA ex ASD METEOR ex HOLMIA. She was built at Kristiansand in 1971 with a length of 345 and a beam of 52 feet. She has bow thruster and twin controllable pitch propellers. A typical full load would be 45 lorries and 38 cars with accommodation for 12 drivers. The ship has run between Heysham and Belfast and on English Channel services to Havre. She will have a Manx crew but will not carry passengers.

Goods traffic to the Island has been found over the years to be 84% outward and 16% inward. Can she run profitably against MANX VIKING? Manx Line say they have come to stay.

To facilitate vehicle handling, a marshalling area is being levelled between the King Edward Pier and the Old Red Pier.

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

B U L L E T I N

Merseyside County Museum
William Brown Street
Liverpool L3 8EN

Hon.Secretary - M K Stammers, B.A.
Asst.Hon.Sec. - Miss G L G Sweetnam
Editor - N R Pugh

My sweetheart's a sailor, he sails on the sea,
When he comes home he brings presents for me;
Corals from China, silks from Siam,
Parrots and pearls from Seringapatam,
Silver from Mexico, gold from Peru,
Indian feathers from Kalamazoo,
Isn't it lucky for someone like me
To marry a sailor who sails on the sea!

Eleanor Farjeon

Vol.XXV N° 2

April - June 1981

AN EARLY STEAMSHIP COLLISION IN THE MERSEY

In mid-19th century there were few regulations for preventing collisions at sea: no steering and sailing rules, except for some common sense rules for sailing vessels meeting. Trinity House had been asked to study the matter and made a proposal that when two steam vessels were meeting on collision courses, each should alter course to starboard. This was almost immediately adopted by the more responsible shipowners and masters.

In 1846 there was a lively trade between Liverpool and Ireland and emigration to America was in full swing. There were several paddle steamers running regularly across the Irish Sea. The authorities at Liverpool had constructed the Clarence Dock, some distance from the town, specifically to keep the smoky steamers away from the local populace. Also at this time there was a steam ferry service across the Mersey to New Brighton. These steamers berthed at New Brighton pier and bunkered from a coal hulk anchored off the Magazines; this anchorage was also used by sailing vessels awaiting a suitable tide or wind.

The paddle steamer RAMBLER of 250 h.p. owned by the Glasgow and Londonderry Steampacket Co., was due to leave Sligo for Liverpool on Saturday, 30th May 1846. Owing to lack of water, the sailing was delayed for 24 hours and she left at 5 pm on Sunday 31st. According to the mate she had about 300 deck passengers in addition to several cabin passengers. There was some general cargo, but the principal freight was 600 pigs and 14 cattle; some of the pigs and all of the cattle were carried on deck. There could not have been much room to move on the vessel; the stench must have been appalling and the passengers, most of whom were beginning their travel to America, would have been hopefully looking forward to stepping ashore late on Monday night.

RAMBLER took on board a Liverpool pilot (William Davies) from No. 1 boat at 9.20 pm on Monday about three miles west of the North West Lightship and, steaming at 9 knots entered the Mersey via the Rock Channel, passing the Perch Rock and to the eastward of the Riprap buoy a little under an hour later. It was a fine clear night with a light westerly breeze.

Just after passing New Brighton pier by 50 ft the master, Capt. William McAllister, and the pilot saw three lights on the port bow. In the gathering dusk they also saw a plume of smoke from an outward bound steamer. Course was altered to steer close to the Wallasey shore, as had always been intended. When RAMBLER passed Egremont, she would then have swung across the river towards Clarence Dock, to enter about high water at approximately 10.30 pm.

The three lights observed were those of SEA NYMPH, another paddle steamer of 350 h.p. owned by the Ulster Carrying Co. She had been advertised to sail from Clarence Dock at 9.30 pm for Warrenpoint, Newry on Monday 1st June. Due to the number of ships sailing that night she did not clear the dock until 10.20 pm. She steered across the river towards Egremont and turned on a northerly course to pass quite close to the coal hulk off Magazines.

It was then that RAMBLER was seen.

By now the vessels were about a mile apart steaming on a collision course at a joint speed of 18 knots. There were three minutes to take evasive action. But in fact the captain of SEA NYMPH had already ordered the ship to be steered a little closer to the Wallasey shore! This order was countermanded and the engines stopped which caused SEA NYMPH to lose steerage way, and the boiler began to blow off steam; which caused confusion about orders to the helmsmen and engineers.

RAMBLER, drawing ten and a half feet of water had little more than two fathoms under her, and could not go any nearer the shore. Davies, the pilot, had been instructed by the authorities to obey the Trinity House rules. Captain Thomas of SEA NYMPH later said that he was not obliged to obey these rules and decided to ignore them and "keep out of the flood tide".

SEA NYMPH collided stem on to the port bow of RAMBLER, cutting her down to the waterline. The clipper bow pushed RAMBLER's windlass up and over, crushing about a dozen or so passengers, most of whom were killed instantly. In the ensuing panic, a number of passengers got into RAMBLER's boat and attempted to lower it: one fall, slipped and the people were tipped into the river.

After a little hesitation, SEA NYMPH abandoned RAMBLER and returned to Clarence Dock. Fortunately RAMBLER was so close to the shore as to be aground almost immediately. The Magazines lifeboat was launched and saved many people - including three from the up-turned boat. The New Brighton ferry ELIZABETH was anchored for the night nearby and the crew was aroused by the commotion. Steam was raised and she went alongside to take most of the passengers off and over to the Liverpool side. No one on board SEA SYMPH was injured. Less than two dozen people were killed as the result of this accident, but it was only by the greatest of good fortune that several hundred people were saved.

H.M. Hignett

LIVERPOOL MARITIME MUSEUM - PIERHEAD

By the time this Bulletin is circulated the Maritime Museum will have re-opened on 23rd May, and will remain open until 29th November, every day 10.30 am to 5.30 pm. For enquiries, telephone 051-236 1492.

Admission charges... Adults..... 30p
Children, Senior Citizens and Students... 15p
Car parking - all day..... 60p

There are special group admission charges for twenty persons or more, and coach parking.

* * * * *

Faithful above the hideous din
Of many a stormy night,
The lightship did its duty well
And showed its welcome light.
Strange fate! that those who many saved
A sacrifice should be,
Unhelped, unseen, should find a grave
Beneath the treacherous sea.

"The sinking of Daunt Rock Lightship"
1896

* * * * *

FEBRUARY MEETING

Mr. S. Horne of Merseyside Museum's staff came to speak to us on Thursday 12th about "Seashore Life", and especially as displayed by our local estuaries of Mersey, Dee, Ribble and Alt. We were shown excellent colour slides of the flora and fauna which abound in saltmarsh, sand dune and pinewood areas. Our speaker reminded us that we have two major nature reserves, at Ainsdale and Martin Mere.

Forty percent of the Merseyside County area has been built on for industrial and domestic purposes and the remainder is high quality agricultural land. The Mersey may be considered a polluted river and yet huge numbers of birds make these shores their home. Our pintail population represents one quarter of the European total. We take seagulls for granted and in the duck world, in a count over the years 1971-74, a February population was estimated at 27,000 including mallard, teal and widgeon, but not including waders like dunlin and knot. So the nature attraction of Merseyside should not be discounted.

It cost £1½m to retain the Ribble sandmarshes, north of Southport, as a bird sanctuary. Otherwise, as was mentioned at question time, the land would have been protected from the sea by banking, and used for agriculture.

The beautiful fleet-of-wing terns with their black caps have

been increasing in number. This reporter enjoys watching scores of them resting on the grey Mersey as a ferryboat embarks passengers at Woodside or Seacombe. Then once the propellers start revolving, they hover over the wash for the crossing. Edible matter, perhaps shrimps, appears in the foamy turbulence and they dive with excited shrieks. Then they wait once more off the Pierhead for another crossing.

We have redshanks, up to 1,000 pairs, and again a high proportion of the European total. Oyster Catchers too, being larger than Knot can pick their food deeper, with their long scarlet bills. Bearing their name, they do not exist on oysters, but mostly cockles.

At Martin Mere we may see the pink footed geese, which Southport residents see at dawn and dusk, weaving their way across the sky in huge "V" formations. Their cries often set the dogs barking, as they make for fresh feeding ground in perfect formation. Wouldn't we like to know what they were saying to each other in flight? I once saw one detach and fly back, but never a forced landing. Mr. Horne told us that these geese do eat the farmers' carrots and potatoes.

At Martin Mere there are Bewick swans, and over 1,000 shelduck on the Ribble, whilst on the Dee, waders are the most prolific, with approximately 40,000 Dunlin, 40,000 Knot, 20,000 Oyster Catchers and some Curlew. Seals still make Hilbre Island their habitat.

Mr. Horne mentioned that he never expected to address the Liverpool Nautical Research Society, but his talk proved that there is another side to our interest in ships and the sea. It was a reminder that on some of our former sailings to Llandudno, we carried parties of local ornithologists. With all their binoculars trained on one single bird off Formby, I enquired what it was, and was told it was a bar tailed godwit, and sure enough there is such a bird. But one needs a trained eye.

On the Ribble coastline have been seen hen harriers, short eared owls and herons, with foxes still ranging over the marshes.

Of vegetation, spartina grass takes over the marshes and is on the increase. We have seen what this has done at Parkgate. Maram grass grows easily in sand and has the ability to push through sand and create dunes. There are static and mobile dunes, bushes grow on the former under which rabbit colonies thrive. The new breed of rabbits seems immune to myxomatosis. Twenty years ago, this reporter in his regular walks over the dunes at Ainsdale, saw

hundreds of dead rabbits lying about, mostly with grossly swollen heads - a cruel disease. On warm summer days grasshoppers are common, there are voles, field mice and hedgehogs but no badgers. In the wet areas there are many frogs, crested newts and even the natterjack toads with a stripe down the middle of the back. Sand lizards have become scarce and were once caught and sold to pet shops, but are now defended by law.

In the pine plantations, little grows for the light is much diminished, and pine needles rot to make the soil acid. There are squirrels in the pines, and one may see one of our smallest British birds, the gold crest, and wrens. The alders, ferns, mosses, heather and creeping willow make a subject for study on their own.

Thirty members enjoyed this talk, chaired by Mr. R.G. Loram. The announcement was made that Sir Alex Rose will be coming to a small re-opening ceremony of the Maritime Museum.

N.R.P.

WITH GREAT SADNESS

We are deeply sorry to report the deaths of two of the outstanding speakers we have had in recent years. Jack Thomas served the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board for 42 years, ending his career as Stagemaster, Princes Landing Stage. He recounted his experiences in talks to the Society in February 1978 and February 1980, when the votes of thanks were made by Gordon Ditchfield and Alan Clayton respectively. His delivery was very good, and wit was never far from the surface. I am told that members of the Hoylake branch R.N.L.I. turned out in uniform at his funeral, in March.

Norman Morrison had much to tell us, when he spoke on "A lifetime in the Liverpool Pilotage Service" in march, and again in October 1977. On the first occasion, we all enjoyed the evening very much and felt that there was a great deal more about the pilot service we would like to hear. Then in October, when proposing the vote of thanks, Bram Hallam congratulated Norman on his long service to Liverpool pilotage, and thanked him for giving such an excellent account. Here again was a lecturer of clear and decisive speech.

We shall thankfully remember both these gentlemen for letting us record their interesting stories in our Bulletin. In the sadness of our hearts, we are grateful that the recording of their

experiences, which are a facet of local history, have not disappeared with their passing.

And, although not members of our Society, I might mention that two regular patrons of the Liverpool/Llandudno service, now suspended, have died during the winter months. Reg Carson of Bebington was a well-known figure, and it is sad to also record the death of Josie Grice, who was interviewed on board MONAS ISLE for a Radio Merseyside broadcast a couple of years ago. She had been the chief reporter for the Crown Courts in Liverpool. Josie found that cruising along the beautiful North Wales coastline was for her the ideal relaxation. During her long and painful illness, she was dutifully visited by two sailing companions, Rob and Doreen Thompson of Prenton.

We must also put on record the sad death of Alexander Bicket who has died at the age of 96. Father of the present managing director of The Alexandra Towing Company, Mr. H.B. Bicket, he became a director of the Towing company in 1931, chairman and managing director in 1933, and retired in 1967. Under Bicket guidance the company has gone from strength to strength.

N.R.P.

MARCH MEETING

On twelfth March we had the first hint of spring after what seemed a long, damp, chilly winter. Our chairman, Mr. Loram welcomed members to an illustrated talk on "Flats, Keels and Trows" which covered different types of cargo-carrying barges, dumb, wind driven and motorized. Our speaker was Mr. M. Clarke who has certainly spent much time searching out the remains of old vessels in various inland and coastal areas. His aim in the first instance was to discover the origins of what we now call the "narrow boat".

On a blackboard, we saw how the Mersey/Irwell/Weaver area in the northwest was an area possessing canals before the Duke of Bridgewater commenced building his. The Leeds and Liverpool canal was to link up with a Yorkshire network, covering the Trent and Leeds area. Then the Severn and Midland waterways joined up to form a vast transport system.

Our first colour slide showed "box boats" at Worsley, to the westward of Manchester; these craft so-called because they carried coal in boxes. Early boats had a beam of seven feet and this became standard. Bargemen and their families commenced to live on board, due to the increased distances covered. They competed in

their pride to keep their boats spic and span, and wonderful paintwork and artistry was indulged in, on long slow passages. MERAK was a good example of this.

In shipyards, the ribs of a ship are called frames, but in barge building they are referred to as "knees". As an example of repair facilities we saw British Waterways Hayhurst Yard at Northwich, with a barge lifted from the water. A dumb barge named SCORPIO was shown, and she was an example of the square sterned boats only seen in the northwest. We also learned how to tell the difference between a Yorkshire and a Lancashire barge - the former have square chimneys over the cabin, the latter round.

A deep loaded 72ft boat was illustrated, but due to the bends in canals, these can only be used between Liverpool and Manchester. Most boats are of 60ft which can negotiate the full length of the canal.

Mike Clarke believes that the construction of wooden barges demonstrates the ultimate in boat building. They have to operate in very shallow water and if motorized the propeller must be as deep as possible, and the stern must be so shaped as to give good water flow.

MOSDALE was shown as an example of a Mersey flat proper. She was towed from Northwich to the Ellesmere Port boat museum by ICI's now redundant motor barge JAMES JACKSON GRUNDY. The renovation of MOSDALE has been carried out in a colourful scheme of black/red/white/blue. Another barge we saw was DEEDALE on an upper Mersey beach. She is a dumb barge, that is, for towing, and having a very full broad stern would not be suitable for self propulsion.

The River Weaver is a fantastic graveyard of wooden barges and is worth visiting for those interested. Another graveyard is at Widnes where grass grows on the rotting decks of one-time busy cargo carriers.

Yarwoods of Northwich have been builders since about 1873 and turned out many composite boats in wood and iron. GOWANBURN was an example. We also saw a slide of OAKDALE, one of the last barges built on Merseyside.

In demonstrating some of the technicalities of wooden boat building, Mike showed us various slides. GEORGE at Ellesmere Port boat museum has vertical transom planking, against the much more common horizontal. The Galway Bay hooker, of which some still exist, have traditionally been carvel built.

Except for the increasing use of our canal system by pleasure craft, there is not much left on our once busy waterways. Politicians have told us that use could and should be made of them, to take many heavy commodities off the road, yet we see no action to this end. It has been noticed that during the winter the Leeds and Liverpool canal locks above Stanley Dock (Great Howard Street) have been spruced up - but for what reason is unknown, except perhaps to give employment.

The vote of thanks for this interesting lecture was made by Capt. R.N. Martin.

N.R.P.

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Said the shark to the flying fish over the 'phone,
"Will you join me tonight? I am dining alone.
Let me order a nice little dinner for two!
And come as you are, in your shimmering blue."
Said the flying fish: "Fancy remembering me,
And the dress that I wore at the porpoises' tea!"
"How could I forget?" said the shark in his guile:
"I expect you at eight!" and rang off with a smile.
She has powdered her nose; she has put on her things;
She is off with one flap of her luminous wings,
Oh little one, lovely, light-hearted and vain,
The Moon will not shine on your beauty again!

E.V. Rieu

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SEA CLOUD, THE LAST AND LOVELIEST WINDJAMMER

On Tuesday 17th February, BBC2 showed one of a series of short films - "Under Sail". The three masted barque SEA CLOUD was built at Kiel in 1932 for the millionairess Marjorie Hutton, as a palatial yacht. Her original name was HUSSAR, and the great depression was at its height.

She has been found rusting away at Panama, and a consortium of German business men brought her back into action. Although she uses her sails, she also has four diesel engines and can travel at 18 knots. In the summer she cruises in the Baltic, and in winter, the Caribbean with a crew of 55 including 15 cadets. it costs

£35,000 per week to charter her, and all hands are kept busy at sea on her immaculate maintenance. Under sail she averages 13 knots and as we looked aloft to the truck of her 174ft mast, she was shown passing the Azores. She has plenty of auxiliary power, a galley like a hotel kitchen, and a panelled bedroom where it can be truly said "Garbo slept here".

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NEW NAMES FOR OLD

ATLANTIC COMET	ex HOOCREST ex IDA D (1954)
BENWYVIS	ex ALNWICK CASTLE (1974)
BRAVERY	ex LA SIERRA (1966)
BALTIC VENTURE	ex MELVILLE VENTURE
BENDORAN	ex ATLANTIC II
BENVRACKIE	ex ATLANTIC I
BALLYKERN	ex BAXTERGATE (1976)
BONTRADER	ex AMORGOS ex SYDNEY BRIDGE (1970)
CRESSET	ex CRESCENCE
CLARE	ex DUNKWA (1960)
CAPO NOLI	ex LA QUINTA (1969)
CHERRY BUNGA	ex MANCH. CONCEPT ex MANCH. PROGRESS (1967)
CHIOS CLIPPER	ex TROJAN STAR ex NEWCASTLE CLIPPER (1973)
CHIOS PRIDE	ex TUSCAN STAR ex LABRADOR CLIPPER (1972)
CAPE CLEAR	ex CARISLE (1974) (not CARLISLE)
CALIXTO GARCIA	ex AJANA (1976)
CAST KITTIWAKE	ex NORDIC CHALLENGER
CAST HERON	ex NORDIC CHIEFTAIN
CAST CORMORANT	ex NORDIC CLIPPER
CAST RORQUAL	ex NORDIC COMMANDER
CAST NARWHAL	ex NORDIC CONQUEROR
CAST FULMAR	ex NORDIC CRUSADER
DAI TUN SHAN	ex JYTTE SKOU (1966)
EYRARFOSS	ex MERCANDIAN IMPORTER II
ECO GUADIANA	ex CITY OF OPORTO ex TORMES (1970)
ENRIQUETA	ex CLAN GRANT (1962)
GRAINVILLE	ex BATTERSEA (1951)
GOLD STAR	ex ANAT ex SICILIA (1965 - Anchor)
GEODRILL	ex BRIARTHORN ex ANNE ex ANNE BOGELUND (1962)
CAVILAN	ex REYKJAFOSS (1965)

NEW NAMES FOR OLD (contd)

HELMSDALE	ex SAINT RONAN (1966)
HANNAH SPEARING	ex CORNHILL (tug - 1943)
IRVING WILLOW	ex DUNNOSE (tug - 1958)
ISLANDS STAR	ex ALAFOSS ex MERC AMERICA
IRAN HAMMET	ex ARYA MAN ex CLAN FORBES (1961)
JETPUR VICEROY	ex LELA ex EMMA M ex CHANDELEUR ex CIENFUEGOS
JETPUR VICTORY	ex MIMI M ex ELEUTHERA (1959)
KANG DONG	ex OCEANAUT ex IRISBANK (1964)
KERO	ex SEA LUCK ex TACTICIAN (1961)
LIGURIA	ex NEW YORK STAR (1965)
MONSONE UNIVERSAL	ex S A LANGKLOOF (1963)
MAXIMO GOMEZ	ex AUSTRALIND (1978)
NAN TA	ex SCOTSPARK (1969)
PACIFIC HORIZON	ex SUBSEA I
PULLWELL VICTOR	ex CAMPAIGNER (tug - 1957)
RIVER MOY	ex STUBNITZ
STAR MALAYSIA	ex STAR RHODIAN ex STAR ASAHI ex STAR ACADIA (1970 - Lairds)
STAR PHILIPPINES	ex STAR DORIAN ex STAR AMALFI ex IRISH STARDUST (1970)
ST KEVERNE	ex OCEAN CONTENDER (tlr)
VALON	ex AVALON
VELET	ex HAVELET
YUN SHAN	ex SUSANNE SKOU (1967)

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Underneath a skylight I
In my bed o' mornings lie.
Beyond the greeny branch up there
Flows the deep and clear blue air,
So that I almost seem to be
Drowned at the bottom of the sea,
Within the cabin of a ship
Wrecked on a long-forgotten trip.

From "Morning Dream"
Eleanor Farjeon. 1911

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LAXEY TOWING CO.

There have recently been a few fleet changes in the tugs and barges based at Douglas, I.O.M. as kindly reported to us by Mr. S. Carter.

SUNRUSH was sold to Ramsgate owners in December. This small tug took 8 days on the passage having to shelter at Fishguard and making 72 hours actual steaming.

In March 1981, the motor tug SALISBURY was purchased from Avonmouth owners. She is a converted TID class and has a 420 h.p. Ruston and Hornsby diesel engine. At the same time the barge REDCLIFFE, with a 200 ton sea capacity, was purchased and was towed to Douglas in 42 hours.

The fleet now consists of tugs UNION and SALISBURY, and barges BLUE STAR and REDCLIFFE.

The small tug HOPEFUL LAD, which made trips with fishing parties in the summer was lost last October. She was moored outside the UNION one night at South Quay, Douglas, and was found to have sunk. Before anything could be done, the tide fell and UNION sat on the starboard side of the boat and crushed her completely. It is thought that an unknown vessel had struck HOPEFUL LAD during the night. A chartered steel launch tug temporarily replaces her.

APRIL MEETING

On the second day of a Merseyside bus strike, perhaps we were lucky to get even twenty-four members present on 9th. Some Wirral regular attenders were unable to come. It had seemed a week of unhappiness, with striking civil servants much in evidence, railway power failures and the new schedule of Mersey ferry cuts. Wallaseyans must now look upon their last ferry as 9.25 pm from the Liverpool side.

At the present time, all is frustration and woe and it looks as if the cultural life of Liverpool, after work is finished, stands a bleak future whilst we are in the hands of our car-owning administrators!

This reporter arrived at the Museum to hear a talk, much looked forward to, on that intriguing character of the shipping scene in the 1930's - Lord Kysant. Originally to be given in January, it had to be changed to April and unfortunately our

speaker could not be present at this time either.

John Lingwood filled the breach with a talk on the ship losses of the Pacific Steam Navigation Co during its long history. He first spoke of ships in general which disappear without trace, as instanced by the recent DERBYSHIRE disaster. This was not the case though, with the first ship dealt with - CHILE built in 1840. She was a 190ft long wooden paddler built on the Thames and her first captain was George Peacock, ex-RN. She met with an accident on the west coast of South America, and careening was necessary to withdraw the engine in an open roadstead. Six years later, as a reward for saving the ship, Captain Peacock received £200 from the underwriters.

Next, we looked at the two funnelled paddler VALPARAISO, built of iron by Robert Napier. she was not used in trans-Atlantic work, but her duties were with mail and passengers along the Chilean coastline. She was known to have sunk in the Puerto Montt area, and at one time local divers had thought the wreck was being guarded by sea monsters, the giant paddle wheels appearing to them in the depths as octopuses. In more recent times, as already reported in this Bulletin, the wreck has been examined and a quantity of crockery, bearing the name of Stoniers of Liverpool was found. This was on exhibition in their shop window a year or two ago, and was in excellent condition. VALPARAISO was the first ship to be fitted with compound engine, and although a big saving was made in coal fuel, it was ten years before any other company adopted it. LIMA and QUITO were altered for the compound engine. It was smaller in size, and the extra space in the ship meant that more passengers could be carried. She lies at a depth of 150 feet, and naturally our Maritime Museum would like to have her. Possibly there might be some assistance from the Argentine navy. The P.S.N.C. have a photograph of her taken in 1871, and she was lost in 1872.

SANTIAGO was also a paddle steamer which was lost off Cap Pilar, in Magellan Straits. She was outward bound from Europe, and in a storm hit an uncharted reef. She was carrying half-a-million pounds worth of silver bullion, which has not so far been located.

COTOPAXI was built in 1873 by John Elder, who had been foreman at Napier's and broke away to set up his own business. Here again, P.S.N.C. have a photograph of her taken in the Mersey. In fog, she was in collision with the German ship OLYMPIA in Magellan Straits, after calling at Punta Arenas, in 1879. With a 12 x 6ft rent in her side, COTOPAXI was put aground in the only break in a coastline of towering cliffs. Crew and passengers worked cargo, some of

which had to be jettisoned, and steel plates were rivetted over the hole. After hauling on kedge anchors, she was refloated and reached the Pacific only to strike a rock and sink by the stern. She sank in a matter of minutes but 202 people reached Wellington Island, and were picked up next day.

The iron screw steamer TACNA was on her maiden voyage in 1874, having been completed by Lairds of Birkenhead. Carrying a full cargo including cattle, hay and vegetables, she commenced to list when off Los Vilos, Chile. Some cargo was jettisoned but she settled in the water with the list increasing. The captain gave the order to cut away the foremast, but she turned over and 19 were lost. She was said to have been carrying too much weight, and the master was imprisoned by the Chilean government.

Although not recording the loss of ORISSA, those on board this vessel had a terrifying experience. She was moored on an inside berth of the mole at Valparaiso at the time of the great earthquake there. The ship herself trembled, and in the darkness they heard the noise of tumbling buildings and the wailing of trapped people ashore. The quake had been forecast by a Captain Cooper, who also forecast the big quake at San Francisco. This seaman's predictions have been remarkably true, and we were told that the U.S. Government has taken due note of the prediction of another severe quake around San Francisco about 1986!

The "northerners" which can hit Valparaiso harbour were much feared in the last century. P.S.N.C's AREQUIPA of 1889, a steel screw steamer of 2,953 tons built at Barrow, lay at buoys in Valparaiso Bay, but also had a long anchor cable out. A heavy northeasterly swell foretold a possible "norther" and everything was made secure. When the storm arrived, desperate efforts were made to save the ship as heavy water came aboard and smashed hatch covers. These were replaced but finally the sea entered through bunker lids. She sank by the stern and only 20 of the 100 people aboard were saved. One newspaper report said there was criticism in the city, and they were puzzled at how it could happen, when she was not the only ship at moorings.

Time ran out for our talk, but Mr. Lingwood mentioned that the Pacific Steam Navigation Co did not do too badly in World War One. The enemy raider MOEWE was concerned in the losses they then had. In World War Two, the Company was lucky in losing only two ships.

N.R.P.

Smooth and flat, grey, brown and white,
Winter and summer, noon and night,
Tumbling together for a thousand ages,
We ought to be wiser than Eastern sages.
But no doubt we stones are foolish as most,
So we don't say much on our stretch of coast.
Quiet and peaceful we mainly sit,
And when storms come up we grumble a bit.

James Reeves

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TO BREAKERS

AMATHUS ex CASTERBRIDGE ex BULFORD (1968)
BOSTON CONCORD (tlr)
CLAIRE ex FARRINGAY ex EMPIRE FARRINGAY (1944)
CAMDEN ex BIDEFORD (1969)
HMS DUCHESS
EXPRESS APOLLON ex HIBERNIA (1949)
JOSEPH CONRAD (tlr)
MALDIVE VENTURE ex CAVALLO (1951) and lost
PROVIMI STAR ex BRATINI ex BEAVERBANK (1953)
ROSS OTRANTO (tlr)
RESURGENT (RFA) ex CHANGCHOW (1951)
ST GERONTIUS (tlr)
SANIL ex CLAN MACINTOSH (1951)
SCAMMONDEN ex FLORENCESTAN ex THORWALD ex VIGILANTER
ex NOORD (1949)
TWYFORD (salvage)
TEXACO CARDIFF (1958)
HMS ULSTER
WYRE VANGUARD (tlr)
WARRINGTON (veh. carrier)

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WHAT'S IN THE JOURNAL TODAY?

Was the title of a Merseyside Radio feature on Sunday 22nd February (repeated Monday 23rd). It was a dialogue between our old friend Ken Brown, Editor of the "Journal of Commerce" and Reg Brookes. After almost "going to the wall" last year, the 156-year

old Journal is now being published in Liverpool by "The Journal of Commerce (1980) Ltd". It is being carried on by five of the old journalistic staff, supported by three backers, of which two are in the shipowning business. These backers, who shall be nameless have provided share capital and loans.

Ken described how the newspaper had been part of a publishing group, the other publications having nothing to do with ship-ping. The owners were caught up in the "father and mother of a row" with the union, and the Journal was caught in the middle. But of the Journal's ultimate viability, Ken never had a doubt. Nevertheless, the paper had to cease publication, and a stage was reached on a Friday, when type was set up for a headline - "Last issue".

"Did you lose ground?" asked Reg Brookes.

"Undoubtedly" replied Ken. "We lost circulation as people who have to do without the paper for three months, decide to do without it for good". "Then the emergency sheets appeared but now we have got it in tabloid form, and consider it fits handily on our customers' desks".

"What is the competition?"

"Quite stiff. There is one daily and two active weeklies". "We aim to be a national transport daily, and although the Journal is always thought to belong to Liverpool, we try hard not to be too parochial, and to look after our readers in Cardiff, Hull, Newcastle etc."

"Do the fortunes of the Journal mirror the fortunes of Liverpool?"

"Not to any great extent, I think. A large part of our revenue comes from advertising, but it is an interesting thought." "I have been with the Journal for 26 years, having been an engineer fitter on the docks previously." "Had I the aptitude for that work?" "Well, I do not know what my foreman would have said to that, but I definitely had interest. Somehow I always hankered after journalism. I had been in touch with the paper, pointing out errors, and finally became their junior reporter, and so over the years, I have gone on, and nobody has told me yet if I'm satisfactory or not!"

"Did you have any romantic ideas about ships as a schoolboy?"

"Yes, my father was a police constable on the docks and I spent many a Sunday morning at Gladstone Locks watching ships,

whilst father looked after the gate." "Ships might be coming from only Birkenhead, or perhaps from Manila, Zamboanga or Zanzibar - it was the mystique of it all. I remember that at school we did trace the movements of British ships, but from what sources of information I cannot now recall."

"Did you find in your new work any advantage in having had dirty hands on the docks?"

"Oh, undoubtedly, I gained through it, but the state I came home in hardly pleased the wife. I would climb into cylinders to take measurements and emerge covered in oil."

"Has anyone looked down on you for having done this work?"

"No - many thought I was mad to go into journalism, but I'm still here."

"What would you miss in dockland these days?"

"Oh, the Overhead Railway, the 'dockers' umbrella." "If we were going some distance along the docks, we would take the train, but for a short distance and in the rain, we would walk under it. I find it difficult to explain to my kids just what it was; one got a fascinating view of the ships."

"Are we being objective over what has happened?"

"What has happened in Liverpool is the same in all other ports. In our case, ship activity is moving northwards and eventually I can see Princes Dock and others being filled in. This situation is not unique to Liverpool, the Thames, Clyde and ports overseas are similarly affected. Going along on the Overhead Railway, one used to see dozens, even scores of ships, but these would only be like coasters nowadays compared to the huge container ships we see at Seaforth."

"We are ranging about a good deal" said Reg Brookes, "but I suppose you went down to the docks when ships like EMPRESS OF CANADA and EMPRESS OF FRANCE came in for refit."

Says Ken Brown - "Well, you are a bit out of date with your names, because by the time I became a fitter the ships had their names changed to DUCHESSES, and I cut my teeth on them. I was in my element up and down the docks."

"You are a Liverpudlian?"

"Born and bred."

"Do you ever feel despondent at the way things have gone?"

"Maybe I was that weekend, when the Journal was under threat of closure and I might have to move, for I do not want to leave Merseyside. I do not rate Merseyside as bad as some people do. Bad things get amplified. Reporters like bad news, and after all news is news."

"Do you think Merseysiders have contributed to their own problems?"

"One does find on occasion that local people just do not want to help, but Merseysiders are no worse than anyone else." "You mention 'bloody-mindedness' and that's a good phrase, but you cannot change it and it dates back. No doubt labour was badly treated, but certain things will 'not wash' today."

When asked about our airport, Ken thought it a pity that it did not receive sufficient support when shipping was better, but was in no doubt that Liverpool should have an airport, and frequent air traveller as he is, he considered the long haul to Manchester not good enough. He always likes to use our own airport if possible.

"Liverpool was known as a city with men of tremendous vision - what has happened?"

"I'd say it was a story of lost opportunities, and especially in the last ten years, people in authority have looked for the easy way out." "I visit other ports at home and overseas and consider that we have insufficient co-operation between the port authority and the city authority. We should always be working together, but this does not only apply to the maritime scene, but to industry as well."

"Do you think that the Urban Development Corporation will improve things?"

"We should have had it twenty years ago - it is a matter of too little, too late."

And that ended a thirty minute dialogue. This reporter is somewhat older than Ken, and shares his views on the sad demise of the Overhead Railway. We wish well to the five journalists who have kept the Journal going in new offices at 7 Victoria Street, for they did go through a "sticky patch" last year. This reporter would like to see larger and less cluttered type used as progress is made. The present minute type in dock movements is extremely trying to the eyesight, and detracts from anything but essential reference. We hope that the "Ship Sales & Disposals" item by Ken Brown will soon settle down to a fixed

day once again. Come to think of it - I've been reading the Journal for upwards of 60 years, and it would have been a great loss to Liverpool if it had "folded up" through that "father and mother" of a row with the printers' union, in which it was caught up.

N.R.P.

MERSEY NOTES

It was sad to see that the Mariners Home (Cliff House) had been totally demolished by March 1981. Nevertheless we are pleased to see the flagstaff erected on the Pierhead, close to the entrance to the Maritime Museum.

The MPTE ferry WOODCHURCH docked at Birkenhead at 2.15 pm on Wednesday 11th March with cock-a-doodle-do's on her whistle, signalling the end of her Mersey career. OVERCHURCH took the 2.15 pm sailing from Seacombe in her place, just out of dockyard hands. Her decks were unusually clean and new treads had been fitted to upper deck companionways. But the engineroom entrance had received no paint and reflected the lack of maintenance, as do the ferry premises.

The Dukes Dock Sailing Club was featured on Granada TV on 9th March. Mike Griffiths and Eddie Lee have worked for twelve months at Coburg Dock to renovate two old nobbies - POLLY (72 years old) and MERLIN. They are said to be original Morecambe Bay prawners, and will be used for fishing. Both men are ex-seamen. Asked why they did this work, they replied that "this was their heritage, and this is Liverpool". In the disused south dock area, now tidal, they considered that they were thought of as a nuisance by the Dock Authority. At the end of the item, Granada stated that the M.D. & H. Co said that they had given the sailing club favourable treatment.

A new code of practice between tug owners and the M.D. & H.C. stipulates that tugs must be used, if a vessel is warped in Liverpool docks, for more than her own length along a wall.

After some procedural delay, it will be possible to register ships in the Isle of Man by the end of 1981. The Manx people are hopeful that the new law may promote employment for Manx seamen.

Perhaps by the time these notes are read, MERSEY MARINER will have taken up her duties in the Mersey, replacing MERSEY COMPASS and MERSEY 41. She was launched by Robb Caledon, Leith in February costing £4m. She will be leased to M.D. & H.C. by the firm who

have arranged finance - Midland Montague Leasing.

In December 1980, Ocean Fleet's MELAMPUS loaded the largest cargo ever carried to West Africa, at Huskisson Dock. It consisted of 18,400 tons including 498 containers.

Trawler-mother ship MIRANDA which attended British boats on the northern seas has been bought by the Liverpool scrap merchant Fred Oldham. She has been offered for re-sale, but she dates 1942 when built in Sweden as ALBATROSS, later to become DONNA and DOROTHEA. I have been in touch with Mr. Oldham and hope to be able to report her ultimate fate.

In April, the M.D. & H.Co's VIGILANT was busy re-positioning buoys in the Mersey approach channels as stated in a Notice to Mariners No. 5. Alteration in position concerned port hand buoys (red) Q2, Q4, Q6, Q8, Q10 and Q12 with Q14 and Q16 withdrawn. The starboard hand buoys C3, C7, C9, C11, C15, C17, C19, C21 and C23 (green) and Burbo Beacon (black and yellow) have been re-positioned with C25, C27 and C29 withdrawn.

NORSEA ex IBEX left Brocklebank Dock on 2nd January for Rotterdam to take up the Ipswich service. BISON was to be lengthened for the Liverpool/Larne, and BUFFALO to be similarly dealt with for the Fleetwood/Dublin services.

Like most shipowners at the present time, the Ramsey Steamship Co is concerned about the cost of fleet replacement. Their three ships are nevertheless kept busy with cargos of coal, cereals, chippings, cement etc. They are, BEN VARREY, BEN AIN and BEN VEEN.

The Glasgow coaster owners Gardner & Co are operating their new SAINT ORAN built by James W.Cook of Wivenhoe. She is of their flush deck design with forward ramp. In the northeasterly gales after Easter, she had the misfortune to lose an anchor and some cable two miles northwest of the Bar Lanby.

The picket line at Western Ship Repairers Ltd, Birkenhead broke up in February after manning the gates for 2½ years. Union drivers then took transport through and removed machinery. The new HMS LIVERPOOL was allowed to leave the Western drydock in March, and enter Cammell Lairds Wet Basin. After all the trouble already caused by pickets and tugboatmen on launching day, and the destroyer's enforced docking on the Liverpool side, the secretary of the action committee made a magnanimous gesture! Terry McCready said that they had decided not to take action in hindering the transport of the ship from one dock to another,

because "it might cause Lairds to lose vital orders!"

Early in March the NE dolphin at Eastham Locks was demolished, and a red can buoy established. Much timber wreckage was adrift in the Mersey.

It is reported that MONAS ISLE was re-sold to Van Heyghen Freres at Ghent, and arrived there 20th December from Zieriksee.

The new M.D. & H.C. catamaran surveying vessel HM DENHAM is now in commission, completed six weeks ahead of schedule by MacTay's of Bromborough. The christening ceremony was performed by Mrs. Rosemary Fitzpatrick, and the blessing by the Rev. Bob Evans, padre to the Mersey Mission to Seamen.

In the autumn, P & O will make a decision on whether to continue the old established Liverpool/Belfast service which is said not to be paying. The matter was brought to a head in the New Year by a strike of National Union of Seamen crew members.

N.R.P.

FOR DISPOSAL

AHMADU BELLO (1963)
BENARTY (1963)
BALLYLORAN (1958) to Egypt
CLAN ALPINE
DONGA
EGIDIA ex ALEXANDROS B ex AVISFAITH (1962)
ENGLISHMAN (tug)
GEEST TIDE and GEEST CREST (1971/2)
INVENTOR (1964)
LEMBULUS and LABIOSA
LAGANBANK (1978) and NESSBANK (1977)
NAUSICA ex HELEN MILLER (1969)
NNAMDI AZIKIWI (1963)
PARTULA (1959)
SHIRRABANK (1968)

GENERAL NEWS ITEMS

The 52 year old Falmouth tug ST DENYS has become the nucleus of a maritime museum at Falmouth. The Falmouth Towing Company recently purchased the Steel and Bennie tug CRUISER, which has been renamed ST GLUVIAS.

EXPRESS APOLLON ex British Rail's HIBERNIA, built by Harland and Wolff in 1949, has been broken up at Bombay.

Finally declared a total loss is SKYLUCK ex EASTERN PLANET ex WAIMATE built by Robbs of Leith in 1951. In June 1979 she parted her moorings in heavy weather and went ashore on Lamma Island, Hong Kong. The crew was rescued.

The old Humber paddler TATTERSHALL CASTLE was offered for auction in London recently. Mr. Childs, her owner, withdrew the bidding at £30,000. He had paid £27,000 for her, and she has cost him £60,000 in running costs.

HM Customs had a large haul of cannabis when the tug SEA ROVER ex NEPTUNIA ex RODE ZEE was chased in the English Channel by French warships and British Customs launches. She was taken to Newhaven and a number of arrests were made. She was peppered with holes, and had been under observation between Gibraltar and France. Coded R/T messages had led to suspicion. During the chase, the tug broadcast distress calls, and burning packages were dumped in the sea. 5th March.

Mention has been made in the Bulletin of the unpredictable turbulence and wrath of the Pentland Firth - a most dangerous seaway. In mid-March, the Buckie trawler CELERITY (BCK 142) disappeared with her crew of six men in gale conditions. Another trawler, CRYSTAL SEA was following CELERITY at 5 miles distance eastbound. The two ships were in radio contact during the night and up to 5.15 am. But somewhere between Hoy and Dunnet Head she disappeared. Some days later, TYLEANA (BF 223) recovered an empty life-raft, and OIL DRILLER picked up a lifebuoy with CELERITY's markings, north of Peterhead. One thinks back to the loss of Peterhead's TRIDENT a few years ago, when homeward bound from Douglas after the Manx herring season.

The coaster SIMRI ex Robertson's AMBER of 1956 was lost off Sardinia last December.

MALDIVES VICTORY was on a passage in 1980 from Singapore to the Maldive Islands with general cargo, when she went aground near Male, and later sank, with her cargo. The crew was rescued. She was formerly Ellerman's MALATIAN of 1958. She and her sister CATANIAN are well remembered on the Mersey.

Because of dock strikes in March, both Fyffes and the Argentine line "ELMA" were considering leaving Southampton.

French naval aircraft accidentally dropped two marker "bombs" on MARON of Ocean Fleets in the Bay of Biscay on 7th

January. The Navy at Brest expressed extreme regret. A cadet narrowly escaped injury and slight damage was caused. There was a low level pass over the ship, the aircraft then approaching from astern to drop a smoke marker bomb and one containing sea-colouring fluid.

To test the economics of present deep sea trawling, the large Fleetwood boats NAVENA and ARMANA went to sea in January, intent on a £60,000 haul between them. They returned with fish valued at £27,000 and their future was unsure. The expedition was deemed a failure.

Overdue in April was the Greek LESLIE ex ANNA REHDER of 2,411 tons, built at Kiel in 1965. She left Boulogne for Umm Said late in March and was last heard of approaching Finisterre in a south-westerly gale. Lifebuoys bearing her name were picked up. Relatives of crew members chartered a plane to carry out their own search.

The Furness Withy group, now having been taken over by the Chinese C Y Tung group, have disposed of the following, mostly as they have come to the end of their economical life:-

CUMBRIA, JAMAICA PRODUCER, KAYESON, RIVERINA, ROEBUCK, CHILTERN PRINCE, MALVERN PRINCE and DART ATLANTIC.

At Gibraltat in January, there was a collision between The Alexandra Towing Co's DEBEN and GULF FALCON ex CITY OF AUCKLAND. The tug had ten feet of her bulwarks stove in and damage to aluminium lifeboat.

In the shipping difficulties perpetrated by the N.U.S. in January in support of their pay and overtime claim, BOOKER CHALLENGE was affected in the Barbados. Half the crew refused to work normally and were repatriated. The Union then refused to allow the ship to be operated by replacement crew flown out.

A Mr. J. Grimm, oil millionaire, is confident of finding the TITANIC which sank after hitting an iceberg 69 years ago. Approximately 1,500 of her 2,200 passengers were lost and the wreck lies at something like 12,500ft down. He has chartered a research ship to start work early in July 1981 with 36 oceanographers on board.

In fog in early February there was a collision in the Thames in which BLACKTHORN ex EDEN FISHER sank FREDERIKA I, fortunately without loss of life. BLACKTHORN was carrying stone from Arklow and the other ship had scrap metal.

It is hoped to raise HOLLAND I, the Royal Navy's oldest

submarine constructed in 1901 and lost in 1913. Divers have found her near the Eddystone Lighthouse. Her first commander, Captain Blacklock is still alive.

After her escapades in Northern Spain, RAINBOW WARRIOR left Amsterdam in March for the icefields, north of Newfoundland to disrupt the hunting of hooded seals by Canadian hunters. These mammals are in danger of extinction say the "Greenpeace" people. It was later reported that her skipper and two passengers had been put on probation in a Newfoundland court, for squirting green dye on young seals, making their pelts worthless.

N.R.P.

* * * * *

By the seashore I was thinking
As I went, dear heart, of thee,
And a crowd of seagulls flying
Swiftly came across the sea.
Wheeling on their wings and dipping
Went the grey-black birds in flight;
As they wheeled I saw the sunshine
Turn their wings to silver white.

Sir John Morris Jones

* * * * *

OCEAN FLEETS

The May 1981 fleet list for Blue Funnel, Elder Dempster and associated lines is as follows:-

General Cargo and	LAERTES, LYCAON, MELAMPUS, MARON,
Containers.....	MENTOR, MYRMIDON, SHONGA, SHERBRO,
	SOKOTO, SEKONDI, SAPELE,
	BARBER MENELAUS, BARBER MEMNON,
	BARBER MENESTHEUS.

General Cargo only... PATROCLUS, PHRONTIS.

Roll-on/Roll-off..... BARBER PRIAM, BARBER PERSEUS.

Passenger/Cargo..... CENTAUR

Container Ships..... FLINDERS BAY, TOKYO BAY, KOWLOON BAY,
LIVERPOOL BAY, CARDIGAN BAY.

Bulkers..... AJAX, ANCHISES.

Vehicle Carrier..... HELENUS

Oil/Ore..... TANTALUS.

Product Tankers..... CHARON, CYCLOPS, CLYTONEUS.

Liquid Gas Carrier... NESTOR.

The fleet is operating world-wide, but at present only vessels of the "M" and "S" classes are likely to be seen at Liverpool, and there is no loading or discharge at Birkenhead.

MAY MEETING

Following a council meeting of the Society on Thursday, 7th May, the main Annual General Meeting was held at the Museum on 14th. This year, the proceedings seemed less like Budget Day in the Commons than usual, and a certain levity came into our deliberations.

The first item on the agenda was "Apologies for Absence". We only had twenty members present, but felt sure that the replay of the Cup Final on TV had nothing to do with the lack of attendance. Our Hon.Secretary next read the minutes of the 38th AGM which were approved and seconded.

The Chairman's report followed, and Mr. R.G. Loram, at the culmination of his three-year stint, said that he had enjoyed the duties, which were not arduous. He thought the Society was making good progress, and his particular interest was historical and research subjects, like those of Mrs. Yorke on the "Formby Lifeboat", Miss Nancy Ritchie-Noakes on "Jesse Hartley" and Denis Branigan's "Vanished Shipyards of the Dee", to mention but three. The chairman thanked the officers for their support - to Mike Stammers who has got together some very interesting programmes, to Ted Tozer for his work in the treasury, to Kate Lomas for looking after the archives, and to Ray Pugh for all the work he puts into the Bulletin. A vote of thanks was carried by the meeting, and regret was recorded that Miss Lomas is standing down as Hon.Archivist. She is now actively engaged in work at the Maritime Museum, in which we wish her well.

Our Treasurer must have felt some trepidation in rising to make his customary budget statement, for what he had some moments before discovered, was unknown in the experience of Sir Geoffrey Howe, or Denis Healey. Ted had distributed photo copies of the accounts to members, and discovered just before his turn came, that

he had got the balance on the wrong side! This was a reminder of the elderly apocryphal bookkeeper who had laboured for long years, and mystified the office staff by frequently opening a desk drawer, glancing inside and locking it again. Finally, after a lifetime of meticulous accounting, as emulated by Ted, the old man passed away. The drawer was opened with curiosity, and there was a scrap of paper with the words "the credit side is nearest the window!"

Ted had brought all his books in perfect order, and Wilfred Raine rose to have the figures adopted, but demurred over the error in the sheet before him. This developed into an amusing interlude with all sorts of suggestions for getting the balance back on the right side of the paper. Finally we surmounted the impasse and got back to serious business.

With rising inflation (who said it was falling?), and the somewhat steep rise in subscription rates last year, Ted thought that we had got it about right. We would leave subscriptions as they are for we do not wish to debar possible new membership by excessively high rates. We are not profit making, but wish to provide the necessary things on which the Society exists. The increases gave us £80 credit. Membership has remained fairly steady for the last twenty years, and we may obtain some new members from publicity via the Maritime Museum. This would be all to the good, but an extraordinary influx is not expected from this source, as many people make a one-off visit to the Museum, and may not be deeply concerned about maritime history, to the extent of joining.

Ted then turned to our refreshment breaks, and said there might be a misunderstanding somewhere, but the coffee and biscuits were not included in the annual sub. Members are reminded that the charge is tenpence.

There had earlier been a question raised by Mr. Clayton as to why members were not issued with a copy of the accounts prior to the AGM. Because of present postal charges, this would be quite a large expense, but it would seem possible to distribute these copies at the April meeting.

The Council had considered the amount lodged at the bank in a deposit account. It was not the purpose of the Society merely to be able to draw interest from this. One of our duties is the publishing from time to time of Transactions. The Secretary said there was material enough for another issue, but the printing cost would have to be gone into by the Council, before a decision was made. Institutional members like libraries expect this sort of activity from us.

Item 6 concerned the election of officers and council members. Mr. R.G. Loram handed over the chair to Mr. J.E. Lingwood, and Mr. H.M. Hignett was nominated vice chairman, for chairman's office in three years time. The other officers remain substantially the same, with Miss Sweetnam taking on the dual post of Assistant Secretary and Archivist.

Dennis Boyes has resigned from the Council, but remains a member and we much regret his recent serious illness. We offer Mrs. Boyes our sympathy in what has been a trying period. His place has therefore been filled by Doris Watkins, and with Harry Hignett becoming vice chairman, R.G. Loram now takes his place on the Council.

Looking forward to next season, Mike has the following ideas for compiling a programme - "Parkgate and its packets" by Geoffrey Place, "Upper Mersey Ports" by Mr. Starkie, "Barge building" by Don Sattin, "Marine Paintings" by R.G. Loram, "Lamport and Holts" by Ted Tozer, "The Australian Scene" by Edward Paget-Tomlinson, and perhaps a talk on Bidston Observatory.

Ray Pugh made a plea for having some talks in reserve, for prompt offering should scheduled speakers be unable to come. He was mindful of the first talk he gave to the Society many years ago on small naval craft in the last War, spoiled for him by the very indifferent showing of photographs on an epidiascope. Black and white slides could now be prepared to the same end, if desired. Other members may like to prepare illustrated talks, and keep them in store, letting our Secretary know.

The evening ended with a maritime quiz compiled by Jill Sweetnam. Question No. 2 was "When was the issue of rum totally discontinued in the British Navy?" This writer was so upset at a reminder of that dreadful occurrence that the remainder of his questions went unanswered. Surely, this for Britain was the beginning of the end! The year - 1970.

N.R.P.

THE PARLOUS STATE OF COASTAL CRUISING

In "Cruising Monthly", the Bulletin of the Coastal Cruising Association, editor John W. Yunnice of Bedford writes: "1981 is going to be a year of considerable change for coastal cruising. The poor weather of last summer and difficult economic climate have resulted in the withdrawal from cruising of Caledonian MacBrayne, the Isle of Man Steam Packet Co and White Funnel Steamers, leaving no commercial operation of a vessel of any size used purely for cruising anywhere around our coasts in 1981".

"Much good sailing will still be possible, of course,

utilizing car ferry crossings, but for the kind of ship which has been the lifeblood of this Association since its inception we now look to the WAVERLEY organization for the immediate future. Both WAVERLEY and PRINCE IVANHOE will operate extensive schedules during this summer, and it may well be that such operations, supported on a non-profit making basis by enthusiasts and others, are now the only way in which Coastal Cruising as it has been known and enjoyed since the invention of the steam boat can continue.

In July and August WAVERLEY (with her new £40,000 boiler installed), will be making a full programme of Clyde cruises, with PRINCE IVANHOE in those two peak months working in the Bristol Channel.

With the cessation of the Liverpool/North Wales sailings, and the drastic cut back in Mersey ferries, Liverpool has suffered badly and the attraction of the sea for pleasure, and even as a career seems to have departed from the hearts of many Britons.

Due to automation, monetarism and other factors, our populace is to have increased leisure. What will they do with it? Far from being accorded assistance in running fuller patterns of life, we are thwarted by cuts, never to be restored. There is less opportunity to spend this extra leisure healthfully. Our sailing is drastically diminished and public transport, even with soaring costs, is in decline. Are we to sit at home and watch the telly, whilst the sun shines?

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No more shall you speed o'er the Irish Sea,
To give great joy to such as we
Who trod your decks for many a year,
And gained a memory held so dear.
How loathe are we from you to part,
BEN MY CHREE, girl of my heart.

H. Eaton of Anfield on the passing
of BEN MY CHREE (IV) in 1965

SOCIETY NOTES

In spite of the above, we hope all members enjoy happy holidays!

Our member Mr. Alan MacLelland has had an article on "Tramp Ships 1940-1965" published in the "British Shipbuilder".

We hear that the BBC has nominated Mike Stammers, our Hon. Secretary for the "Italia" award for the documentary "The British Seafarer" shown on TV last October. The series may be repeated before long.

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

B U L L E T I N

Merseyside County Museum
William Brown Street
Liverpool L3 8EN

Hon.Secretary - M K Stammers, B.A.
Asst.Hon.Sec. - Miss G L G Sweetnam
Editor - N R Pugh

All tranquil is the mirror of the bay,
Empty the anchorage from shore to shore;
A seagull rides the water where she lay,
The ships are gone, they come not any more.
Smoke rises from the town, not any noise
Save from the gulls that mew about the pier,
The shadows in the water stand at poise,
All different from the day that she was here.

John Masefield

Vol.XXV N°3

July - September 1981

AN ATTEMPT TO ROW ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

Kenneth Kerr was 28 and a teacher at the Royal Naval Submarine School, Gosport. His ambition was to row the Atlantic single handed in the smallest rowing boat ever used for the purpose. He made an attempt in 1979 and failed. A year later on the 21st May 1980, on unpaid leave of absence from the Navy, he left Cornerbrook NF in BASS CONQUEROR and started his crossing.

At about 9.30 am on 13th August 1980, a flare was sighted off

the port bow of Bibby's DORSETSHIRE when 500 miles off the west coast of Ireland, on passage from Baltimore to Sweden. Its source was found to be a small fibre-glass rowing boat and in the boat was just one man - Kenneth Kerr.

He was invited aboard, using the pilot ladder, although as he made his first steps on deck, it was clear that he was very weak. He had to rely on support from crew members. The interest he aroused seemed to bother him, and his main concern was to return to his boat and go his own way. He refused offers of hot food, asking only for some fresh water and provisions. He resisted the Master's advice to give up what seemed a rash venture.

He gave some indications of the trials he had had to endure. In a storm ten days previously his boat had capsized and he lost all his food and water. Whales had shown an alarming interest in his presence. Nevertheless, despite his weakness, and privations he had no desire to stay aboard DORSETSHIRE any longer than necessary. After twenty minutes he left saying "Thank you for your concern Captain and also for your food and water, but like yourself, I must be on my way now".

By late October, his arrival on this side, was hopelessly overdue, and a search was called off. BASS CONQUEROR was recovered by Norwegians in January 1981. By then Kerr was officially declared to be missing, presumed drowned.

Yet mystery surrounds the affair and one would suppose that DORSETSHIRE's people were the last to see him alive. But just when he was supposed lost at sea, a number of sightings of him, one in Edinburgh, were reported to the press.

from "Bibby Gazette" Spring 1981

CHRYSTOPOLIS - A SOUTHPORT WRECK

The Italian steamer CHRYSTOPOLIS, some remains of which still lie westward of the pier, was on passage from Genoa to Liverpool with copper ore. She went aground on Spencer's Bank in February 1918, and her cargo was laboriously carried ashore in carts.

Efforts were made that summer, before the war ended, to re-float her on a high tide. The ship's engines were used, with tug assistance, but she only took the ground again at a higher level of the bank. Later, her back broke and she became a total loss. Her crew of 42 was rescued by Southport lifeboat, when first going aground.

She was a steamer of 2931 tons, built by Irvine & Co, West Hartlepool in 1892 as STRAITS OF DOVER, 314 x 41ft. At the time of her loss she had been requisitioned by the Italian Government. Her port of registry was Palermo.

A BACKWARD GLANCE

In 1979 a list was compiled showing our events in the period 1975-1979. Since that time the Society has had the following lectures and occasions:-

1979	September	Maritime Archives. Mr Gordon Read.
	October	Formby Lifeboat. Mrs B.Yorke.
	November	Chester Boatbuilding. Mr D.Jones.
	December	Christmas Social. Colour slides of Keith Griffin's work. Bremerhaven Maritime Museum. Mr Martin Heighton.
1980	January	Riverside Station. Mr K.Longbottom.
	February	Liverpool Landing Stage. Mr Jack Thomas.
	March	Moving the schooner RESULT. Mr MacCaughan.
	April	Future of Commercial Sail. Capt S.A.Azad.
	May	A.G.M. and Maritime Museum discussion.
	September	Liverpool's Canadian Connections.
		Mr M.K.Stammers.
	October	Jesse Hartley, Dock Engineer,
		Miss N.Ritchie-Noakes.
	November	Tenth Cruiser Squadron. Mr K.Longbottom.
	December	Christmas Social.
1981	January	Vanished shipyards of the Dee. D.P.Branigan.
	February	Seashore Life. Mr S.Horne.
	March	Flats, keels and Trows. Mr M.Clarke.
	April	P.S.N.C. fleet losses. Mr J.E.Lingwood.
	May	A.G.M. Nautical Quiz.

NEW BOOKS

"Mersey and Irwell Navigation to Manchester Ship Canal" by Alfred Hayman is published by the Federation of Bridgewater Cruising Clubs - price 75p. This is a 'must' for all those interested in the waterways of the north west.

Mr Hayman, retired manager of the Bridgewater department of the Manchester Ship Canal has immersed himself in the wealth of Mersey and Irwell archives, held by the Ship Canal Company, and

has produced a new account of this waterway.

It was important to the development of the port of Liverpool because it provided the first water link for goods between the port and the expanding textile industries of inland Manchester. Started in 1720, it took many years to complete. The heyday of its prosperity was in the early 19th century. It was the pioneer of steam tugs and of iron barges, and even ran a passenger service. It competed successfully with the rival Bridgewater Canal and at first with the railways.

In 1844, it was bought out by its rival and entered into a period of slow decline. Much of its route was incorporated in the Manchester Ship Canal, but its remains can still be traced for example, at Old Quay, Runcorn and Howley Quay, Warrington. The Liverpool terminal warehouses survive to the present day in Irwell Street, whilst the dock, (Manchester dock), was filled in in 1929 and its walls now lie beneath the Maritime Museum car park.

M.K.S.

- - - - -

China-going P and O's pass Pau Amma's playground close,
And his Pusat Tasek lies near the track of most BI's
N.Y.K. and N.D.L. know Pau Amma's home as well
As the Fisher of the Sea knows Bens, MM's and Rubattinos.
But (and this is rather queer) A.T.L's can NOT come here;
O & O and D.O.A. must go round another way.
Orient, Anchor, Bibby, Hall never go that way at all.
U.C.S. would have a fit if it found itself on it.
And if Beavers took their cargoes to Penang instead of Lagos,
Or a fat Shaw-Savill bore passengers to Singapore,
Or a White Star were to try a little trip to Sourabaya,
Or a B.S.A. went on past Natal to Cheribon,
Then great Mr Lloyds would come with a wire and drag them
home!

Rudyard Kipling

- - - - -

LLANGOLLEN CANAL.....

and the beauties of the Dee Valley made the theme of a very pleasing film shown on Welsh HTV on 2nd July, with a commentary by Wynford Vaughan Thomas.

Of all the roads into Wales, the canal is the quietest. We

were reminded that the canal system in Britain was the first great civil engineering project attempted up to that time, and involved such famous engineers as Thomas Telford and William Jessop. The canals came before the railways and road network, and provided the most reliable way of transporting goods at that time.

Commencing the journey near the Hurleston Reservoir, Nantwich, the narrow boat CHILTERN navigated the Shropshire Union Canal bound for Llangollen, with Judy a black mongrel keeping a lookout forward. CHILTERN was decorated in the usual way in bright colours, as owned by Charles Hardern and Co. There were shots of the space below, typical of where generations of canal people have been born, christened and lived their lives.

There was the Wrenbury Mill lift bridge, and the floating "canal shop" selling all needs, including decorated jugs and buckets in characteristic colours. Then we saw Willymoor Lock where there is a small pub, but having no road facility, the beer has to be brought across four fields by lorry.

CHILTERN was to pass under 50 bridges and we saw her as a tight fit in the Grindley Brook lock. Llangollen canal opened in 1805. The speed limit is 4 mph, to avoid damage to the banks.

Peat is still being cut at Whixall Moss and here we got our first glimpse of the Welsh hills.

The Ellesmere Tunnel is 87 yards long and presented a new problem to the builders, making it possible to "float through a mountain". the wonderful brickwork of tunnel roofing was a reminder of how canalmen used to "leg" the boats through, by lying on their backs and working the boats along with their feet.

We came to Ceiriog Valley at Chirk with its splendid aqueduct and viaduct - Telford built the former and Robert Stephenson the latter.

Chirk Castle was also a reminder of one of the last fortifications built by Edward I.

One of the greatest sensations of the trip, was sailing on the Pontcysyllte aqueduct, 120ft above the River Dee. The boats sail in a narrow trough of iron and there is no railing on one side, so that it seems that one is sailing through the air. Later on, only an 18 inch depth was guaranteed before we came to Castell Dinas Bran, standing out on an escarpment of the Eglwyseg rocks.

And so we arrived at Llangollen, almost alongside the railway station with steam engines brought back to life, to satisfy those

who wish to preserve some of the former environment. Llangollen is only a short distance from the Horseshoe Pass, and the best time to voyage is early in July - at Eisteddfod time. The film ended on the happy note of a party of international singers, making music as they floated along the beautiful Welsh waterway.

THE BULLETIN IN RETROSPECT

Since the last summary in 1979, in addition to meeting reports and the usual items, we have had:-

- | | | |
|------|----------|---|
| 1979 | Jan-Mar | Raising GITANA
Francis Welch - an old ferryman remembered.
Aftermath of Normandy invasion.
Exeter Maritime Museum. |
| | Apr-June | Pearl Harbour today. |
| | Jul-Sept | Liverpool and Glasgow Salvage Association.
GEORGE HOLT, Liverpool pilot schooner.
Memories by Sir A.H.Bibby.
Castletown Nautical Museum.
Epitaph to Malcolm B.Glasier C.B.E.
Bremerhaven Maritime Museum |
| | Oct-Dec | Welcome for Liverpool Maritime Museum
Explorers of the deep (Cousteau)
Two Runcorn schooners.
Gordon Ellis, marine artist |
| 1980 | Jan-Mar | Church of Our Lady and St Nicholas
Greenwich National Maritime Museum |
| | Apr-June | WAVERLEY's Mersey visit |
| | Jul-Sept | Origin of the catamaran
Opening of Merseyside Maritime Museum.
The C.V. SEA WITCH collision.
Short sea cruising from Liverpool.
Ferries across the Mersey. |
| | Oct-Dec | Further news of GITANA.
The Dalgliesh Line.
The 10th HMS LIVERPOOL.
Loss of Bibby's DERBYSHIRE. |
| 1981 | Jan-Mar | Wreck of MARY ROSE.
Merseyside smuggling in times past. |

We can no longer stay on shore, since we're so deep in debt,
 So a voyage to Greenland we will go, some money for to get.
 Now, when we lay at Liverpool, our good ship for to man,
 'Twas there our names were all wrote down, and we're bound
 for Greenland.
 In eighteen hundred and twenty-four, on March twenty-third,
 We hoisted our colours up to our masthead and for Greenland
 bore away.
 But when we came to Greenland, our good-like ship to moor,
 Oh, then we wished ourselves back again with our friends
 upon the shore.
 Come weigh your anchors, my brave boys, for the winter star
 I see,
 It's time we should leave this cold country and for England
 bear away.
 For Greenland is a barren place, neither light nor day to
 be seen.
 Nought but ice and snow where the whale fish blow, and the
 daylight seldom seen.
 Anon.

ROYAL NAVY CUTS

The following ships are for disposal, following the Government's White Paper in June:-

BLAKE C99	ASHANTI F117	ESKIMO F119
GURKHA F122	LINCOLN F99	LYNX F27
MOHAWK F125	NUBIAN F131	TARTAR F133
ZULU F124	BACCHUS A404	EDDYFIRTH A261
TRIUMPH A108	BULWARK R08	GLASSERTON M1141
ISIS M2010	TENACITY P276	WATERWITCH

MERSEY NOTES

It is interesting to learn that the fog signal on the Trinity House Bar Lanby buoy is controllable from Port Radar, Seaforth.

The tug ARDNEIL formerly working at Ardrossan is now based at Bromborough and in a strong southwest wind left the Mersey on Saturday evening 6th June to assist the coaster LADY HELEN broken down 16 miles NE of Arklow LV. The coaster was on passage from Lisbon and ARDNEIL found her at 3 am next morning 12 miles SW of South Stack. LADY HELEN was safely towed to Glasgow at 7 knots.

8th June was the date fixed for the commencement of seismic tests in the Irish Sea as per Notice to Mariners No. 9 of 5.6.81. The area was fixed as from Barrow in Furness to 53-32½ degrees north, and not within 12 miles of shore. On this evening, KAREN BRAVO was towing a wire 2 miles long with a buoy on the end of it, carrying a radar reflector. The wire was at a depth of 30ft. The ship intended for the work was MANTA, and it was expected that she would operate as from 12th June. Speed 4½ knots. KAREN BRAVO came within two miles of the Bar Lanby at 2125 bst/8th and sighted a vessel likely to cross the wire, at which she fired 4 white rockets as a warning. It was reported that there were several telephone calls to local Coastguards from people on shore. The work continues for two months.

KAREN BRAVO is of 464 tons, with Singapore registry, and built in Holland in 1969. MANTA is of 366 tons, with British registry and built in Holland 1951. MANTA did the test drillings a few years ago off Morpeth Dock wall in connection with the proposed deep water iron ore berth, which, in view of the closing of Shotton Steelworks, came to nothing.

Owing to some trivial industrial action at the Verolme Dockyard, Rushbrook, Cork, the new LEINSTER was not delivered in time to commence B & I's summer schedules. This disappointed and annoyed the Irish owners who expected her to be running with CONNAGHT on the Liverpool-Dublin service, with MUNSTER taking up the new Pembroke-Rosslare run. LEINSTER arrived in the Mersey on Friday, 3rd July, when the new schedules got into their stride.

With B & I's container facility having ceased at Trafalgar Dock some time ago, the traffic is now routed through Fleetwood in TIPPERARY and BUFFALO. WICKLOW, which formerly loaded containers in Liverpool, now runs between Dublin and north European ports.

On Sunday, 12th April, Trinity House WINSTON CHURCHILL was attending the Mersey Bar Lanby float, but left with the fog signal on reduced power.

Before Easter, quite a large dredging programme was carried out in the Mersey channels by W.H.ENDEAVOUR.

"In promoting the first Mersey Festival, Merseyside County Council would like to draw upon historical and contemporary aspects of the part played by the River in the life of the people, and look to a future which will focus attention on the rich possibilities for leisure around and about the Mersey; improve Liverpool's image by the promotion of a

positive side of life here, stimulate the growing tourist trade locally, and arouse the interest of Merseysiders in the activities of the organisations who will take part....."

These words are quoted from "County Extra" - a hand-out. But although the list of supporters included single individuals, the Liverpool Nautical Research Society was not included. To this writer it would seem that whilst the Council has been slow in discovering the potential of the Mersey, they have not heard of a Society formed in 1938 under the Presidency of Lord Derby, with somewhat associated aims!

From Garston, coal has been exported for many years, mostly to Ireland, but with power stations turning to oil, the trade declined. Yet there is still a present and future need for household coal in Erin's Isle, and the bulk of it will be loaded at Garston. A new loading facility giving employment to 250, came into operation on 8th June with Kelly's latest BALLYKERN taking the first cargo to Belfast. Garston Docks will not die for they are now dealing with cross-channel containers, the import of stout and export of lubricating oil.

Across the River, Eastham locks are busy taking half the number of ships entering the Mersey, these being mostly for the lower reaches, Stanlow, Runcorn, Ellesmere Port and Weston Point. Traffic to the port of Manchester has declined, largely due to a new pattern of trade, but not helped by labour troubles.

The dispersal of the EL OSO wreck northwest of the Mersey Bar engaged the attention of SEA SCAN in July. The tanker was mined in January 1940. Small explosive charges caused a leakage of oil, but whether the work was completed is not known.

The Rea tug ELDERGARTH was launched by MacTays, Bromborough in July. She was moved down to low water mark on "skates" for the rising tide to float her off.

Clan Line have no conventional ships remaining, after the sale of the last two - CLAN MACGILLIVRAY and CLAN MACGREGOR built 1962.

The surveying vessel H.M. DENHAM is now in service on the Mersey, operated by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company. Providing stability, she has been designed as a catamaran and built by MacTay's of Bromborough. Her completion was six weeks ahead of schedule. The christening was carried out by Mrs Rosemary Fitzpatrick, and the vessel was blessed by Rev.Bob Evans, padre of the Mersey Mission to Seamen.

The B & I jetfoil CU NA MARA is operating again between Liverpool and Dublin this year. She is not expected to make a profit before 1982, but her load factor last year was 60%.

A cruise from Liverpool to Manchester has been advertised by Co-op Travel, Corporation Street, Manchester, leaving Princes Stage at 11 am on Saturday, 19th September, for passengers to return by rail. The return fare is £9.65. Arrival time in Manchester 1800.

The Liverpool Pilotage Service has said, that with the decline in trade, it cannot see how recruitment can go on. Nevertheless at present, about 150 ships per week use the Mersey. No.2 cutter (EDMUND GARDNER) was built in 1953 and a new cutter would cost £4m. The pilots do a 15-day duty when they are on continuous call at home, and have 6 days off. The point is made that with present day radio, ships can now signal their arrival time in advance.

On 15th June the new grab hopper dredger MERSEY MARINER was christened at the landing stage by Lady Cynthia Page.

It is known that both B & I Line who run the passenger ships to Dublin, and P & O who operate the Belfast service have wanted a riverside berth at Liverpool for some time. This would have great advantages and lead to eventual economies. The initial cost, however, would be in the region of £14m and the Harbour Authority is doubtless in no position to participate. But in June, a new contender arose in Pandoro Line which runs ro-ro ships like BISON between Northwest Alexandra Dock and Larne. One wonders if this would tip the scale if the Government would assist?

On 3rd June came the welcome news that Cammell Lairds had secured a very valuable order for a North Sea oil rig. With only the completions in hand of HMS LIVERPOOL, HMS EDINBURGH, and a Royal Fleet auxiliary, work will be ensured for three years for about 800 men. This type of work is new to Lairds. Asked by a Granada TV commentator if he felt assured of the workers' and their unions' co-operation, Mr Alastair Lambie, the present managing director said that this had been excellent in the last few years, when HMS LIVERPOOL had been launched well ahead of time. Perhaps the memory of what the riggers and tugboatmen did on the day of her launch is only too fresh in our minds. With the whole future of Lairds having been in the balance, the co-operation of all workers, including the ancillary ones is vital.

On Sunday morning 31st May, the motor launch FALKEN berthed at Princes Stage at 9 am and left as escort to the 25ft rowing boat COLLEEN BAWN. The eight oarsmen were from the Leitrim Rowing Club and they were taking part in a charity effort to raise money for the Mentally Handicapped of Ireland. With four rowing and four resting, the destination was to be Wicklow, and the trip was expected to take thirty hours. They were advised to use the main Mersey channel, now that the Rock Channel is unsurveyed and un-buoyed, and to take passage north of Anglesey, rather than attempt Menai Straits. Alas, eleven hours and fifty miles out they were forced to abandon the effort owing to deteriorating weather. The rowers finished the journey to Dun Laoghaire aboard FALKEN.

Mid-June saw a somewhat unexpected re-arrangement of Mersey ferries - MOUNTWOOD maintained the normal forty minute schedules to Seacombe and Woodside, with ROYAL IRIS coming on the Woodside service in peak commuter periods. OVERCHURCH was docked to maintain educational cruises for school children when required. Unfortunately ROYAL IRIS's ageing motors were no longer able to maintain schedules, and she became hopelessly adrift in her efforts at time-keeping. It became obvious that the Transport Authority was not trying to handle traditional weekend summer traffic, which may be thought-provoking.

In July, Lord Thorneycroft stated his opinion that the public is not going to put up with cuts, if there is no sign that the Government's policy is paying off, and relaxation will soon be on the way. On Merseyside, we have the glaring example of closing James Street Station on Sundays and weekday evenings to the detriment of ferry, Isle of Man travellers, and incidentally visitors to the Maritime Museum. It is high time that there were second thoughts about what was fairly recently hailed as one of the busiest stations in the country. James Street Station was closed for a lengthy period and a great deal of money spent on it, only to re-open at times suitable to the Executive - don't the passengers matter any more?

Working out of Bromborough for Unilever, this reporter has known three SAND SWALLOW's. The first was acquired in 1924 to maintain a dredged passage for barges. The second, which was built in 1947, has been sold to an Irish concern, and now we have SAND SWALLOW III on the Mersey. Being twice the size of her predecessor, she has been bought from British Transport Docks, Hull in which port she has worked as OYSTER SAND. She was built in 1966.

The port of Liverpool may be trying to build up a better image of itself, and it is interesting to find that Southampton is not in the good books of some shipowners. The Geest and ELMA lines declared their dissatisfaction with the facilities and poor industrial relations there, and now Dart Containerline have moved to Felixstowe. ABC Containerline threaten to move to Tilbury owing to unreliability of equipment, shortage of gangs etc. A spokesman for the ABC said that if things didn't improve, shipowners would not come to British ports, but use "feeder services" from the Continent, a trend which may have already begun.

N.R.P.

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Of Neptune's empire let us sing,
At whose command the waves obey,
To whom the rivers tribute pay,
 Down high mountains sliding;
To whom the scaly nation yields
Homage for the crystal fields
 Wherein they dwell;
And every sea-god pays a gem,
Yearly out of his watery cell
To deck great Neptune's diadem.

Thomas Campion 1567-1620

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NEW NAMES FOR OLD

AFRICAN DIAMOND	ex CLAN ALPINE (1967)
ARABIAN SEA	ex LINGA
ARABIAN SKY	ex LIMATULA
AMPHION	ex LAGANBANK (1978)
ALKAIOS	ex NESSBANK
AREF	ex BALLYCASTLE ex COWDRAY (1959)
AESAREA	ex CAESAREA (1960)
AEGEAN WAVE	ex PAMPERO UNIVERSAL
	ex SA.DRAKENSTEIN (1964)

NEW NAMES FOR OLD (contd)

APOLLONIA II	ex SAPPHIRE (1966)
ATLAS I	ex CERDIC FERRY (1961)
ATLAS II	ex DORIC FERRY
BENARMIN	ex AUTHOR (1980)
CAPE ELIZABETH	ex SAINT FERGUS (1964)
CHERRY ORIENT	ex HISTORIAN (1968)
CP AMBASSADOR	ex DART ATLANTIC
FOYLEDAL	ex TAFFGARTH ex LLANWERN (tug 1960)
GAFREDO	ex CALAGARIBALDI ex SANTOS STAR ex CONSTABLE (1959)
HELMSDALE	ex SAINT RONAN (1966)
HAE YUNG EASTERN	ex BARON ARDROSSAN (1970)
HAIDA A	ex TITOV VELES ex TERICA (1962)
HURRICANE II	ex JACOB VAN HEEMSKERK (tug 1964)
JAHORINA	ex THOR SCAN ex TIPPERARY (1969)
METRO STAR	ex SHELL REFINER ex HAMBLE (1964)
MERZARIO IONIA	ex STENA IONIA ex ATLANTIC PROSPER
MARI ANNE	ex CLAN GRAHAM (1961)
MANCHESTER CHALLENGE	ex DART AMERICA
NIALED	ex MODAN ex SAINT MODAN (1960)
NOTOS	ex PRA RIVER
NUVOLA ROSSI	ex FLYING FOAM (tug 1962)
OLYMPUS	ex ARTEAGA ex ELYSIA ex HIGHLAND (1963)
PENTA WORLD	ex INVENTOR (1964)
PULLWELL LIMA	ex CRAIGLEITH (tug 1958)
POSEIDON II	ex FLYING MIST (tug 1962)
RANGER I	ex WILLEM BARENDSE (tug 1963)
RONSON	ex AHMADU BELLO (1963)
RONHILL	ex NNAMDI AZIKIWI (1963)
SMIT MANILA	ex SEAFORD ex SEAFORTH CHALLENGER (1973)
SMIT SINGAPORE	ex SMIT LLOYD 101
SEA HAWK	ex MANCHESTER ZEAL ex CARGO ZEAL ex MANCHESTER ZEAL
SIRIUS (USN)	ex LYNESS (RFA) (1967)
SANJOHN BAY	ex BEAVERBANK (1974)
ST GLUVIAS	ex CRUISER ex CLONMEL (tug 1959)
SMIT CYCLONE	ex R.B.BRUNEL ex MAGNUS XI (tug)
TISHPION	ex BRITISH PIONEER (1971)
TAKIS E	ex DILOMA
TZELEPI	ex CHUANACHOM ex STRATHCONAN (1967)

NEW NAMES FOR OLD (contd)

VICTORY I	ex MALVERN PRINCE (1970)
VERNICOS GENEVIEVE	ex CANADA ex PEACOCK (tug 1960)
VERNICOS BARBARA IV	ex COLLINGWOOD ex HEATH COCK (tug 1958)
VERNICOS ALEXIA	ex FORMBY ex WEATHER COCK (tug 1960)
VERNICOS MARTIN	ex GLADSTONE ex FLYING COCK (tug 1960)
VERNICOS GIANNIS	ex MORPETH ex WEST COCK (tug 1958)
VERNICOS MARTHA	ex PORTGARTH ex CASHEL (tug 1959)
YEROTSAKOS	ex DOSINA (1966)

SHIPS FOR DISPOSAL

AL JABARIAH	BORDER SHEPHERD	BORDER CASTLE
BRIT.LIBERTY	BORDER PELE	BRIT.LAUREL
BIRCHBANK	BOSTON BLENHEIM (tlr)	BOSTON BEVERLEY (tlr)
BRITANNIA TEAM	CHILTERN PRINCE	CLOVERBANK
FLEETEANK	GOTHIA TEAM	KAYESON
LABIOSA	MAERSK COMMANDER	MYTILUS
THIRLBY	TEXACO GLOUCESTER	CONISTER

DIVIS (sludge) to Ulster Folk Museum

TO BREAKERS

WORLD GENERAL	WORLD RANGER (1972)	WORLD PRESTIGE
WORLD PRINCESS (1970)	WORLD HERO (1970)	TEXACO ROME
TEXACO SINGAPORE	TEXACO GRT.BRITAIN	CHEVRON MADRID
BRITISH SCIENTIST (1971)	BRITISH INVENTOR	ESSO SCOTIA
LONDON CONFIDENCE (1962)	BREEDER ex BP SPIRIT	STAR OF SUEZ
VALON ex AVALON	SUFFOLK FERRY (1947)	
ARIOS ex MAYMOORE ex PAULINE H ex PEARL (1953)		
EARL LEOFRIC ex HOLYHEAD FERRY ONE (1965)		
EASTERN ENVOY ex BENRATHA ex CITY OF NEWCASTLE (1956)		
IRENE'S GRACE ex BADAGRY PALM (1956)		
LAURA ex ROTHESAY CASTLE (1960)		
MALDIVE SEAFARER ex AEGIS BEAUTY ex FIRBANK (1957)		
NEMA ex SILVER LAKE ex RIEVAULX		
ORLE ex RISNJAK ex COPELAND (1948)		
RIVER KAROON ex RIVER AVOCA ex STEVONIA (1948)		
THALASSITRA ex BALLYLAGAN		
ROSS ALTAIR and ROSS SIRIUS (trlrs)		

To all you ladies now on land, we men at sea indite;
But first would have you understand how hard it is to write:
The Muses now, and Neptune too, we must implore to write to you -
Then if we write not by each post, think not we are unkind;
Nor yet conclude our ships are lost by Dutchmen or by wind:
Our tears we'll send a speedier way, the tide shall bring them
twice a day.

Charles Sackville - Earl of Dorset
1638 - 1706

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GENERAL NEWS ITEMS

Except for nuclear explosions, the biggest explosion ever, could happen on the Thames, and the authorities hope it never will. RICHARD MONTGOMERY sank in 1944 with hundreds of tons of explosives on board, too dangerous to tackle. The wreck is 200 yards from the main channel, 2 miles from Sheerness and 3 miles from a giant oil refinery.

The integration of North Atlantic container traffic is causing bitterness in Canada. Canadian Pacific, Dart and Manchester Liners are concerned. One result has been that Dart has moved from Halifax to Montreal, using C.P.Railway where they have always used Canadian National before.

A previous mention has been made in these pages of the former trawler support vessel MIRANDA, purchased last year by Mr Fred Oldham of Liverpool. The ship has been lying at Hull, and is now the property of a wealthy German who intends to convert her to a private yacht, and the work is expected to be done at Lubeck. She was built in Sweden in 1942 as the sailing vessel ALBATROSS. As recently as 1970 she was bought by the British Department of Trade for £90,000 and converted to support our deep sea fishing fleet. She took part in the "cod war" but once the 200 mile fishing limit was imposed, she was obsolete when our boats were banned from Icelandic waters. Her new owner intends to convert her back to the original sail plan, but will retain her engines.

In July, Felixstowe and Harwich had a "tug day" when the families of tugboatmen were given trips in the boats, including SUN LONDON, DHULIA, EGERTON, SAURIA and ALFRED.

With Sealink disappointed at the late delivery of SAINT DAVID destined for the Holyhead/Dun Laoghaire service this summer, a ship had to be chartered until the promised delivery by Harland & Wolff of the new ship in August. EARL SIWARD ex DOVER was not considered a suitable running mate with SAINT COLUMBA, and so PRINCESSAN DESIREE was chartered for a short period. She can carry 1000 passengers and 270 cars. Meantime EARL SIWARD was switched to the Channel Island route.

Once again lightning struck a large oil tanker, this time HAKUYOH MARU which had just discharged over 8000 tons of crude at Genoa. There was still some oil left in the shore lines and the flash travelled through the pipes into the hull, causing the death of 4 men.

In the North Sea, HMS ALDERNEY on fishery protection, sent a boarding party to the French trawler JEAN MERMOZ, to investigate mesh size, etc. The French skipper locked himself in the wheel-house and made for home at best speed. A chase ensued and although our Navy men were rescued from the fleeing ship, threats were made against them. In court at Grimsby, the French skipper was fined a total on several counts of around £4000.

To make a safer approach to the port of Fleetwood which has an expanding cross-channel trade, thought is being given to divert the River Wyre by some sort of revetment wall. This, it is hoped, will lessen the heavy dredging bill and make possible the extension of loading berths.

The nuclear submarine HMS TRAFALGAR was launched at Barrow in Furness by Vickers on 1st July, the first of a new type, to be followed by TURBULENT and TACTICIAN. The Barrow yard has been given a monopoly of submarine building and plans to have covered building facilities which Cammell Laird already has. Our Mersey yard appears to have very little future in naval building and the experience of the local workforce goes for little, with the administrators in Whitehall. Even as this launch goes on, and the strains of "Rule Britannia" echo across the waters around Walney and mingle with the cheers of Vickers' men, Liverpool dockers hold another one day strike and perpetuate the bad impression of Liverpool in important quarters.

This writer has long held the view that the "media" should never announce shipping casualties without giving the name of the ship involved. "A coaster has sunk off the east coast and survivors are being rescued by helicopter". Immediately, all those

with seafaring relatives who may be in that general area become alarmed. The broadcasting newscasters cause near-panic. Vague information should be withheld - all ships have names or some designation, and until this can be divulged, casualty announcements would be far better postponed.

The search for the wreck of TITANIC is being made by oceanographers on board the American research vessel GYRE. She is of 291 tons built at New Orleans in 1973. The preliminary efforts in July failed.

It is understood that the old established shipping firm of C.T.Bowring & Co, are ceasing business as shipowners. Latterly their fleet has consisted of three bulkers of between 16000 and 18000 tons each:-

CAPULET	built	1972
DESDEMONA	"	1978
TRINCULO	"	1978

All came from the yard of Swan Hunter and Co.

Following the much criticised "Island" class of naval trawler for fishery protection and oil field patrol like GUERNSEY, LINDISFARNE etc., a new generation of ships for this same purpose has been born. Hall Russell of Aberdeen are building two of these 20 knot ships with helicopter pad - their names, LEEDS CASTLE and DUMBARTON CASTLE.

The paddler KINGSWEAR CASTLE is still having preservation work done on board in the River Medway, with a view to future steaming.

MAID OF THE LOCH is still sailing on Loch Lomond this year, in spite of threats last winter to withdraw her. She will traverse the Lake until 29th August.

In Scotland, Calmac had a troubled winter - CLAYMORE ran on rocks off Kerrer in December, IONA's engine blew up on Hogmanay, and PIONEER ran aground off Lochboisdale in March, losing her rudder.

Cruises are being run this summer between Broughty Ferry and Perth by TAY QUEEN ex BRIDLINGTON QUEEN - the first cruises on River Tay for fifty years.

June opened with the launch by the Queen Mother of the carrier HMS ARK ROYAL on the Tyne, but with gloomy remarks by the Navy Minister. He said that the ship might be moth-balled on completion. She is not the "flat-top" of old but has a sloping

ski run over the port bow, for take off.

It was good to see on "Wales Today" TV work proceeding apace on board the former MacBrayne ship KING GEORGE V which has lain in drydock at Cardiff these last few years. She will be towed to the Thames, to take the place of OLD CALEDONIA as floating restaurant, which latter was gutted by fire and scrapped.

The former very popular Clyde river steamer QUEEN MARY has also reached the Thames, for similar duties.

The paddler WAVERLEY was very well received on the east coast early this season. On one cruise 250 intending passengers had to be turned away at Edinburgh, and this in inclement weather.

WAVERLEY was fitted with her new boiler in January. The two funnels were placed on Stobcross Quay. From plans, it was expected that these replacement funnels of 1961/2 were 1.72 tons each, but they turned out to be 4½ tons each. It caused a little embarrassment because the crane sent for the job heeled over and a bigger one had to be used.

On the evening of 28th June the Varne Lightship sustained major damage, losing both masts and lantern plus severe bow damage. The Trinity House vessel MERMAID towed the Lightship to Southampton, and a buoy was substituted in the same position. The motor tug SUZANNE M was towing the Liberian ore carrier ORE METEOR (18,000 tons) from Delfzyl to Split and the towing wire got across the deck of the lightship. This was no ordinary collision but a very startling one.

Mention has been made of the Laxey Towing Co, operating from Douglas, I.O.M. The tugs UNION and SALISBURY have been joined by CABOT, a chartered boat. She was built in 1952 by Hills of Bristol as a tug/tender. When built, she had a B.O.T. certificate for 47 persons and 4 crew. Her passenger saloon has been converted to crew's quarters. During the charter period she is wearing the colours of the former Lamey tugs, black, white and red funnel, with letter "L" now denoting "Laxey".

Fishers of Barrow have embarked on a new aspect in ship-owning - they have ordered a 66,000 ton bulker from British Shipbuilders of Govan.

The liner RANGATIRA of the Union Steamship Co of New Zealand has been used as accommodation ship at Sullom Voe for oil-rig men. She has been there for three years, whence she went to Falmouth in July for conversion to other duties.

Now that N.F. JAGUAR is coping with the I.O.M.S.P.Co ro-ro traffic, PEVERIL is laid up in Liverpool and CONISTER has been sold to Spaniards.

Over in Donegal, a small car ferry was required to link Burtonport with Aranmore, and to take advantage of an Irish Government grant, the ship was built but not the terminals. The vessel lies at Killybegs awaiting the construction of loading slips.

A vessel named BALTICO registered in Hartlepool was in Douglas on Saturday, 1st August. She had been engaged in recovering submarine cable between Wigtown and I.O.M.

There was deep regret amongst Bristol Channel enthusiasts when they learned in early January that P & A Campbell's White Funnel steamers were to cease operations. It is almost impossible to imagine Ilfracombe Harbour without one of their ships present. Both BALMORAL and DEVONIA are laid up in Bristol for sale. BALMORAL is likely to go for scrap as she has been cannibalized for equipment needed in PRINCE IVANHOE. Former members of BALMORAL's crew transferred to the PRINCE.

But before going to press we have the very sad news that PRINCE IVANHOE lies sunk off Port Eynon, Gower Coast. She was on a day trip from Minehead and had landed passengers at Mumbles. She hit a submerged rock, holing her in three places and flooding the engineroom. Her "mayday" call at 3.40 pm on 3rd August was answered by several lifeboats and by helicopters. Capt. David Neill managed to beach her and get the 400 passengers ashore, but one man died of a heart attack. Her first season in coastal cruising was proving very satisfactory, with 50,000 carried since May.

After the sale of CERDIC FERRY and DORIC FERRY to Greeks, GAELIC FERRY is at Tilbury for sale, and the future is in doubt for FREE ENTERPRISE II.

EARL GRANVILLE ex VIKING IV had a fire in the engineroom on passage Southampton to Jersey, 22nd June with 377 on board. She returned to Portsmouth from off St Catherine's Point. Bembridge and Yarmouth lifeboats had been launched and a tug proceeded, but she made harbour under her own power with the fire not completely quenched. Just after this, EARL WILLIAM grounded in Jersey Harbour and sustained damage.

The well known German Hansa Line, which specialised in heavy lift cargo on worldwide routes has ceased trading and sold its fleet.

The Greek liner OLYMPIA which was built in Britain in 1953 visited the Mersey in that year. She has been laid up since 1974 and now Finnish owners have bought her.

On 16th June Pandoro's BUFFALO was on passage from Dublin to Fleetwood, when a ticking sound was heard coming from a container packed with butter. There was a general alert in Fleetwood with people having to evacuate their homes. Bomb disposal men were sent from Liverpool but nothing was found.

SEA PRINCESS ex KUNGSHOLM has been refitted. She will be cruising again in Australian waters this year, but comes to the UK to operate European cruises with ORIANA in 1982. CANBERRA will replace her in Australasian waters for P & O.

N.R.P.

- - - - -

Horses in horsecloths stand in a row
On board the huge ship, that at last lets go:
Whither are they sailing? They do not know,
Nor what for, nor how -
They are horses of war,
And are going to where there is fighting afar;
But they gaze through their eye-holes, unwitting they are,
And that in some wilderness gaunt, and ghast,
Their bones will bleach ere a year has passed
And the item be as "war waste" classed.

Thomas Hardy

(Well, that doesn't happen any more!)

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RACING YACHTS OF THE "J" CLASS

It came as a surprise to this writer to learn from BBC TV on 3rd February that the late Sir Thomas Lipton's "America's Cup" challenger SHAMROCK V survives to this day. Only ten "racing machines" as these large yachts were called, were built about the turn of the century. Tom Sopwith was also a contender, but the Cup never came to Britain.

The yachts were over 80 feet long and required a crew of thirty. Several of these vessels attended King George V's Jubilee Review at Spithead in 1935. Later on, in the war years I was to be reminded of the "J" class, when serving for 3½ years in HMY HINIESTA which had been built in 1902 under the name of TRITON to tow these yachts in the Solent and around the British coast.

In the early 1970's SHAMROCK V was found in a very deteriorated condition and barely seaworthy. But a new owner, prepared to spend money to preserve her, put her into Camper and Nicholson's care at Gosport. Her hull was completely replanked in teak, and one million pounds later she emerged with her length increased from 81ft to 84ft and tonnage from 134 to 150.

In her racing days, the furnishings and fittings were always stripped out, but now the original panelling, including some birds eye maple, has been preserved. There are even gold plated taps in the toilets. Of course she will never race again. She now has twin propellers, low bulwarks topped with stanchions, terylene sails and aluminium spars. The sails, rigging and deck equipment has changed out of all semblance to the old SHAMROCK which would race against His Majesty's BRITANNIA in the 1930's.

SHAMROCK having retained her name, now has the tallest mast of any yacht in the world, for single mast vessels. Her wheel-house has every modern device for safe navigation including a satellite navigation system. A good deal of stainless steel is now used in her fittings of a durability unknown when she was built.

Colin Hazeldine ex R.N. is her present skipper and she will spend most of her cruising time in the Mediterranean. The skipper spoke of one big risk; something to be avoided will be the accidental jibe, as the long boom weighing about one ton would cross the deck, and could cause serious injury. On her spinnaker she has a huge green shamrock leaf.

It is good to know that Camper and Nicholson carried out this notable conversion, and it is a wonder that it has been lacking in publicity. They are the firm who built the present Norwegian Royal Yacht NORGE, seen in Birkenhead not so long ago (ex PHILANTE) and also Sir Richard Fairey's EVADNE remembered so well by this writer after serving over two years in her. Although these builders are not turning out the large motor yachts nowadays, they have turned to the small boat market in a big way. Yet they still retain the expertise to tackle a "J" class preservation job.

N.R.P.

Ye mariners of Spain, bend strongly on your oars,
And bring my love again - for he lies among the Moors!
Ye galleys fairly built, like castles on the sea,
O, great will be your guilt, if ye bring him not to me.
Lift up, lift up your sail and bend upon your oars;
O, lose not the fair gale - for he lies among the Moors!

John Gibson Lockhart's translation
from the Spanish

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IN MEMORY OF SIR WILLIAM HILLARY (1771-1847)

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution has tended the tomb of Sir William Hillary, Bart. in St George's churchyard, Douglas, since 1921. This gentleman was responsible for erecting the "Tower of Refuge" on the Conister Rocks in Douglas Bay. The first stone was laid on 23rd April 1832 and the edifice completed in 1834 at a total cost of £255. Of this, the public subscribed £181 and Sir William himself the remaining £74.

It was mentioned in the Bulletin in 1974 that a plaque in Sir William's memory, overgrown with shrubs and in rather poor condition, existed on a stone wall at Fort Ann, facing Conister Rocks. It so happened that a spare copy of that Bulletin found its way to the RNLI boathouse at Port Erin. The plaque vanished and the gap in the wall was made good. And only in 1981 has the refurbished plaque been discovered - firmly fixed to the front of the Douglas Lifeboathouse. Did it just happen?

THE IRISH HOOKER

The evolution of the Galway hooker was touched on by John Ryan recently on Radio Eireann. At Kinvara one can still see QUEEN OF CONNEMARA, typical of the type. They were not designed, but came through the unending task of refinement to local conditions, and with an inevitability of gradualness.

They were not originally built for pleasure, but it is a nice thought that so many survive. They were of three classes, the "big boat" (aboard mor) 35/40ft long for carrying cargo and

livestock, the medium (off-shore) and the small (inshore). All three types evolved together.

So many Irishmen emigrated to the United States and built boats there, that there are a few hookers to be seen in Boston harbour.

At one time 200 hookers were in use along the Connemara coast between Galway and Slyne Head. They must have made a fine sight with their tanned sails, fortified from the weather by being soaked in an oak liquor. The boats' frames were of oak and as there are practically no trees in the area, much of the oak was retrieved from old wrecks. Planking was with large boards, the keel was of elm, and the mast of pine.

Some of the surviving hookers are over 100 years old and providing timber is renewed, wooden boats last almost indefinitely. John Ryan's first encounter with a hooker, ARK OF CONNEMARA was on a night trip from Inishmaan to Kilronan on Inishmore, for which he paid one shilling during the First World War. It was a very bad crossing from island to island, out there in the Atlantic, and he was convinced that she would be his coffin. But she arrived safely at Kilronan, and John ended with some verse regarding hookers -

"How she rides through the ocean
Like a seagull through the gale".

THE MARITIME MUSEUM

After a winter period of closure, the Maritime Museum was re-opened by Sir Alec Rose with a brief ceremony on Saturday, 23rd May - another blustery day to ruffle the brave array of house-flags. Instead of being flown on the mast atop what we knew as the Pilotage Building, the newly positioned mast from the Egremont Mariners' Home was used to display the Museum's own flag.

On the eve of the opening, BBC TV dealt with the Museum in a "Home Ground" feature. Sir Kenneth Thompson, Richard Foster (Director of Merseyside Museums), and others spoke in anticipation of the venture revitalising the south docks area.

Mike Stammers spoke of the wealth of ship models available for eventual display. Optimistically it was said by one speaker that the Museum could take on the mantle of "international" and be one of the greatest in Europe, slow though progress may be.

Developers of the Albert Dock complex have come and gone; one is still interested on condition that the dock is filled in. Possibly the reclaimed area would then become a vast car park - a nightmare project! If this is the idea, then the whole concept would seem to founder for the water area is essential to the historic theme.

Brian Redhead referred to the Pierhead as the "hub of the City" - but is it to remain so when already we have had the proposal to remove the bus terminal to the old Exchange Station site. The ferry services, now a shadow of what they were, are still used by commuters, tourists and have a leisure purpose.

On the Museum's quayside, the huge anchor from HMS CONWAY takes the eye, as does LIVELY LADY afloat in what was the graving dock, and the boatbuilder's workshop is fascinating. There is ample room for expansion - may Albert Dock remain wet!

EDITOR'S NOTE

We again look forward to a season of interesting talks as planned by our Hon.Secretary, and remembering past seasons we shall not be disappointed.

It is hoped that urban transport by bus, boat and train into and out of Liverpool City centre for evening functions does not deteriorate further. By now, we must all be aggravated by doom, gloom and ever-impending cuts and closures affecting cultural activities. We look to improvement soon. Some of the cuts, like the closure of James Street station must be restored. Our meetings in most cases take place on the second Thursday in each month, September to May inclusive at 7.30 pm but may be subject to alteration.

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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

B U L L E T I N

Merseyside County Museum
William Brown Street
Liverpool L3 8EN

Hon.Secretary - M K Stammers, B.A.
Asst.Hon.Sec. - Miss G L G Sweetnam
Editor - N R Pugh

A wind's in the heart of me, a fire's in my heels,
I am tired of brick and stone and rumbling wagon wheels;
I hunger for the sea's edge, the limits of the land,
Where the wild old Atlantic is shouting on the sand.

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ST KILDA. A BRITISH OUTPOST

August 29th, 1980 was the fiftieth anniversary of the evacuation of St Kilda, the remote group of islands to the west of the Hebrides. From a news letter of the Coastal Cruising Association, the following notes are extracted.

The first steamship to venture to St Kilda was GLEN ALBYN in July 1834. She was owned by landowners and merchants of the Western Highlands, and was 121ft long. Based at Crinan and Oban, this vessel made twice-weekly calls at Staffa and Iona or Skye. Two of her voyages went as far as St Kilda, and miraculously the sea was calm on both occasions. On her first appearance, the islanders who had never seen a steamer before, rushed to tell their minister that a ship on fire was approaching.

But much better documented was the arrival of Thomson and McConnell's VULCAN on 28th July 1838, complete with brass band. The islanders were terrified and took to the hills in alarm.

There were occasional visits over the next forty years, but in 1877 the influx of tourists to Hirta, the largest island, really began. Martin Orme advertised trips to the romantic western isles and lone St Kilda with his DUNARA CASTLE (built 1875), which ship lasted 73 years. She would leave Glasgow every ten days - June to August - amongst most of the islands, and if fine to St Kilda.

John McCallum's LADY AMBROSINE (1874) and later HEBRIDEAN (1881) did similar cruises, so that there might be as many as three in a fortnight. Usually they left on a Monday and Thursday. HEBRIDEAN was replaced in 1898 by the first HEBRIDES, which lasted until 1955, though latterly carrying only cattle and cargo.

David MacBrayne came into the trade too, and for a few years from 1889, the first CLYDESDALE (1862) visited St Kilda on some of her trips from Oban. St Kilda never had a steamer pier, and rowing boats were used for ferrying at one shilling per head.

The influx of tourists changed the character of St Kilda and made a contribution to its eventual evacuation. Money entered the lives of the inhabitants for the first time. They bartered souvenirs, sheepskins, knitwear, birds eggs etc for food, grain, clothing, drink and tobacco. The acquisition of money became necessary to them - they became less self-sufficient, and more dependant on communication with the faraway mainland. Together with health and harvest problems, this made evacuation inevitable.

And so on the 29th August 1930, shortly after 7 am, HMS HAREBELL left with the last 36 islanders. Most of the livestock which could be rounded up went by DUNARA CASTLE, ironically the ship which started the rot 50 years before.

DUNARA CASTLE and HEBRIDES continued to pay visits throughout the 1930's but the opportunity was not renewed after the war. The Scottish National Trust acquired the islands as a bird sanctuary, and have run large ship cruises round St Kilda and organized work parties to restore old buildings. These parties of volunteers travel across in Oban fishing craft. Boreray is the smaller of the two main islands. Since 1957, the larger Hirta has a missile tracking station, administered by the Ministry of Defence, with British army personnel. No coastal passenger ships have visited the islands since 1939, and so it was of great interest that

MacBrayne's COLUMBA made a visit on 6th May 1979. She left Gourock on the previous day with about 300 passengers and cars for Oban, taking eleven hours. After unloading the cars and a few passengers and taking on board some victuals, she set off at 10 pm for St Kilda. Most of the tourists used sleeping bags on the car deck as berthing accommodation was very limited. COLUMBA passed Barra Head at 5 am on a Sunday, and arrived Village Bay, Hirta at 1050 am. Gemini inflatables from the Army base took passengers ashore. She departed at 1215 to circumnavigate each island and finally departed at 1520, with Barra Head abeam at 2035 and arrival Oban 6 am on the Monday. She had a certificate for 281 passengers and 37 crew between Lochboisdale and St Kilda. From Oban to St Kilda is 163 miles.

The rugged grandeur of St Kilda, with cliffs as high as any in Great Britain, has to be experienced to appreciate its unspoiled beauty, way out in the Atlantic. The prolific bird life is, to use that overworked adjective, fantastic. This writer was fortunate to circle the group in 1977 and again in 1978 in the comfort of B.I.'s UGANDA - and no sleeping on a steel car deck! The many thousands of gannets, cormorants, fulmars, shearwaters, etc know that they have a unique home of security. Some years ago, HM The Queen and Prince Philip went ashore there from the Royal Yacht, to visit the garrison of this small part of Britain.

UGANDA will again circle St Kilda on 21st July 1982.

N.R.P.

THE SINKING OF "NELLIE M"

To anyone who has experience of Ireland, north and south, over the last half-century, the murders of Airey Neeve (an adviser to the Government) and then of Lord Mountbatten came as great shocks. But the mindless and disgusting perpetrations of the Irish Republican movement continue, to bring them everlasting shame. In early February, we had a marine incident concerning a valuable ship on her lawful occasions. Fortunately, in this case there was no loss of life.

NELLIE M of Coe and Metcalf Ltd was registered at Liverpool, and on this voyage she was carrying 1200 tons of coal from Blyth to Coleraine, on the River Bann. This river enters the Atlantic in a waste land of sand dunes, where groins have been built seawards to guide coasters in over the sandy bar. Further inland the country is flat - cows wade in the shallows of the Bann, seemingly with ships navigating through farmland, into the small port of Coleraine.

In winter time, the Atlantic swell often precludes a pilot boarding at the entrance; so ships go a few miles out of their way to take a pilot at sheltered Moville, a town of about 450 inhabitants in the Republic - Coleraine being in Ulster.

The weather was bad, and NELLIE M stayed in the shelter of Lough Foyle for a day or two, awaiting a moderation. At 9.30 pm with the engineer on watch in the wheelhouse, a likely enough custom with a small crew, the pilot launch approached. No suspicion was aroused until seven masked and armed men climbed aboard. The crew was watching a thriller on television down below when the messroom door burst open. From the subsequent interviews it would seem that the drama on TV had momentarily bemused the crew into a non-appreciation of their own dilemma. The terrorists said it was the ship they were after and not its crew, planting a bomb near the seacocks, and another to blow the bulkhead between N°2 hold and the engine room. A rubber dinghy containing the crew, but without paddles, was towed out of the tideway, and the men managed to cover the 200 yards to the Moville beach. The motorvan used by the IRA was later found abandoned in woodland at Muff, half way between Moville and Londonderry, and just inside Republican territory.

Before the crew landed, the bombs exploded, and NELLIE M sank by the stern with masts and superstructure above water. All this - within sight of the back garden where Field Marshal Montgomery's mother used to live, and at rather a greater distance but still within sight of Macgilligan Prison in the sand dunes, where detainees are housed. A legal wrangle commenced as to which country, Britain or Republican Ireland, was responsible for clearing or raising the wreck, and making the channel to Derry safe. She seems to be undoubtedly in Eirean territorial waters.

The latest report is that NELLIE M has been raised and taken to Dublin to fit out for another owner.

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I have a young love - a landward lass is she -
And thus she entreated: "O tell me of the sea
That on thy next voyage my thoughts may follow thee."
I took her up a hill and showed her hills green,
One after other, with valleys between:
So green and gentle, I said, are the waves I've seen.....
For she so young is, and tender, I would not have her know
What it is that I go to, when to sea I must go,
Lest she should lie awake and tremble, when the great storm-
winds blow.

SEPTEMBER MEETING

This took place on Thursday 10th at the City Museums when Mr H MacLeish told "The Story of the Submarine". His working life has been spent with Cammell Lairds, commencing as a drawing office apprentice, and now engaged in estimating work on future projects. Altogether Lairds have constructed 58 submarines, but are no longer doing this work for Admiralty. Our speaker has been lecturing for ten years and this is his first visit to our Society.

The idea of underwater existence dates back even to the time of Alexandra the Great in 324 BC. Elephants could walk under water using their trunks to breath, so there is nothing new in the "snorkel" tube.

Watt, the creator of the steam engine, produced a diving suit in 1798, and even before that Bushnel had built the TURTLE a hand driven submarine in America. Power was the difficulty and Fulton used a mast and sail above the surface or alternatively, hand or foot propulsion working a screw.

The American Civil War brought big developments, when the battery made torpedoes possible. The boats were also driven by electricity from batteries when submerged and could make 8 knots, yet with a petrol engine on the surface they only made 7 knots.

In 1879 the Rev George Garratt of Birkenhead designed a steam driven submarine, which he had built by Cochranes at West Float. She was named RESURGAM and had no weaponry. She was lost in a storm off Rhyl on 24th February 1880 and so far has not been located, although not for the want of trying.

By 1900 the British Admiralty had a growing awareness of the American "Holland" submarine. In 1904 the British Navy's first shore base for submarines was developed at Fort Blockhouse, west of Portsmouth.

Mr MacLeish took us through the various classes of submarine as they were developed. The "D" class were the first to be fitted with wireless and served throughout the 1914/18 war. D.4 had a 2-pdr gun and it was in one of these boats that Max Horton negotiated the Dardanelles to torpedo a Turkish warship. Later, as Commander in Chief Western Approaches, Admiral Sir Max Horton took the surrender of the first eight German U-boats in the Ulster port of Lissahally in 1945. He is buried in Liverpool Cathedral.

Cammell Lairds built the first of the "E" class in 1916. In 1924 a "K" class boat sailed out to Colombo and back, which was a

test of endurance. "M" class of the 1920/1930 period were experimental; one had a 12" gun and another was a seaplane carrier. M.3 was a mine layer. X.1 was of 3000 tons displacement and was driven on the surface by twin diesels at 18½ knots. She had 4 x 5.2" guns and was capable of going half round the world. Owing to unreliability of the engines she was scrapped in 1937.

If any one class bore the brunt of the second world war it was the "S" class, and at one time Lairds were turning out one per month. Their speed on the surface was 15 knots, and submerged 10 knots with a diving limit of 200ft.

The story of HMS STORM, one of these "S" class boats built by Cammell Laird has been told in a Penguin paperback of 1952 - "One of our Submarines" by Commander Edward Young, DSO, DSC, and can be highly recommended.

One unit of the "T" class built by Lairds attained tragic notoriety - HMS THETIS. Our speaker worked on board during her construction and the launch took place on 29th June 1938, when the signs of war were increasingly ominous. She left the wet basin on 1st June 1939 for trials in Liverpool Bay with the tug GREBE COCK as escort. The tug had been fitted with radio telephone equipment. The submarine had 103 persons on board, being officers and crew, dockyard men and two caterers.

At 1.30 pm on the fatal day, when 38 miles from Liverpool the pre-dive checks proved o.k. and the order was given to dive in slow time. But when she had gone a few feet, she refused to go further and remained on top. It had to be found if the bow tubes were flooded or dry and a test cock emitted no water spray. At which Lieut Woods gave the order to open the door and this was fatal, as bitumastic paint had sealed the test cock orifice and there was no evidence of a flooded tube. Once the door was opened even a small way, it could not be closed again, and the pressure was too great for the men to handle. There was a shudder when she touched bottom, first at a forty degree angle before she finally settled.

Prior to diving she had radioed Fort Blockhouse as to her intentions. Her length was 270ft and she lay at a depth of 160ft. Those on board the tug became alarmed when she did not surface as programmed. The tug had drifted and the position of the stricken vessel was for a time uncertain. Water and fuel was jettisoned and a marker buoy was sent to the surface. At 4.40 pm an Anson aircraft sighted the buoy.

Meantime HMS BRAZEN arrived, and working from the position of the drifting tug, found the THETIS position. There were two escape hatches in the submarine, and Capt. Orme and Lieut Woods came to the surface and were picked up in a severe state of exhaustion. Then it was arranged for 4 men to try and escape together from the boat, instead of the usual 2. They were all drowned within the chamber, and their bodies withdrawn into the hull. But two more men, Arnold and Shaw, did manage to escape so that only four men survived out of a complement of 103. There was now great tension in the boat as with a normal crew she could maintain sufficient oxygen for 48 hours, but with this number perhaps only 24 hours.

Then the unexpected happened and her stern emerged from the water, with propellers and hydroplanes exposed. The late Capt. Charles Brock, Wreckmaster of the M.D. & H.B. climbed on to the plating, as he described it in a talk given to our Society prior to his death. He asked for permission to cut a hole but this was not given by Admiralty. THETIS began to pivot on her nose which still rested on the sea bottom, and with a tremendous report the 3" cable which held her to M.D. & H.B's VIGILANT snapped and whipped across her deck. The danger to VIGILANT had been acute. The submarine slid gently down, remained for a short time just below the surface, and again sank to the bottom. Nothing could be done to save those inside.

And there the wreck remained that momentous 1939 summer as the war clouds gathered. Small Naval vessels took station there, which were faintly visible from the Great Ormes Head. Two vessels used to guard the spot were HM Yachts RHODORA and EVADNE.

The Newcastle collier ZELO was chartered and fitted with special heavy equipment to raise the wreck, in stages tide after tide. She was eventually beached in Red Wharf Bay, Anglesey in September 1939. The recovery of the bodies was a gruesome act, carried out by coalminers from South Wales. The wreck was later taken round the coast to Holyhead harbour. This reporter heard of a threat in one of Lord Haw-Haw's broadcasts that THETIS would never reach there, but she did. A memorial to the 99 lost was erected in Holyhead in November 1947.

But really there was little wrong with the vessel and in November 1939 Lairds gave her a new identity, and she was sent to sea as HMS THUNDERBOLT. Within 6 weeks she made her first kill - an Italian submarine. Thereafter, she made 7 sinkings by torpedo and 6 by gunfire.

On her 6th Mediterranean patrol, Lieut Comdr Crouch sank an

Italian freighter off Cape St Vito, which was escorted by the corvette CICOGNA. A cat and mouse tussle then ensued and the Italian captain bided his time, and waited for THUNDERBOLT to surface. His extreme patience was rewarded and after 24 depth charges had been used, THUNDERBOLT was seen to fling her stern in the air and she disappeared on 2nd June 1943.

THETIS's first commander, Capt Oram now over 90 years old is said to be still alive in the south of England.

Our talk was divided into two parts, and after the interval Mr MacLeish described the charmed lives of the Laird-built TIGRIS and TRIDENT, when the Germans were marching into Russia.

Now we have the nuclear submarines, with high speed submerged and no noise, and with the marvellous Inertial Navigation System.

We thank Mr MacLeish for the excellence of his slides and the perfection with which he showed them - a most professional performance. Wilfred Raine proposed the vote of thanks, saying that we must all have found the talk most interesting, even if he personally has no love for submarines!

On this occasion, we welcomed our Chairman John Lingwood on commencing his term of office in the Society.

N.R.P.

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The wrecks dissolve above us;
Their dust drops down from afar,
Down to the dark, to the utter dark,
Where the blind white seasnakes are.
There is no sound, no echo of sound,
In the deserts of the deep,
Or the great grey level plains of ooze
Where the shell-burred cables creep.

"Deep Sea Cables"

Rudyard Kipling

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NEW NAMES FOR OLD

AUTAN	ex LABIOSA
AOUNALLAH	ex KAYESON
AEOLIAN STAR	ex STRATHARLICK ex TABARISTAN (1969)
ABULON	ex W.D.TEST
AFTHIROS	ex OLYMPIC GARLAND (1965)
ASNI	ex ACCLIVITY
BRAZIL	ex CAMINITO ex TEWKSBURY (1959)
BENALBANACH	ex EREDINE (1975)
CAST KITTIWAKE	ex NORDIC CHALLENGER ex SIR JOHN HUNTER
COLUMBUS	ex EUROPA ex KUNGSHOLM (1953)
CAST OSPREY	ex ANGLIA TEAM (1972)
DIDO	ex ARMADALE (1970)
DART AMERICANA	ex SEAPAC INDEPENDANCE ex SEATRAN INDEP'CE
DART ATLANTICA	ex SEAPAC CHESAPEAKE ex SEATRAN CHESAPEAKE
DIAMANT MERCHANT	ex DONGA
DART BRITAIN	ex SEAPAC ORISKANY ex SEATRAN ORISKANY (1979)
DART CONTINENT	ex SEAPACK YORKTOWN ex SEATRAN YORKTOWN (1979)
EASTERN SUMMIT	ex MUNCASTER CASTLE (1977)
FIVE LAKES	ex TEXACO GLOUCESTER ex REGENT EAGLE (1959)
FOLGOET	ex BRITISH LIBERTY
FRIENDSHIP	ex CHILTERN PRINCE
FAIRFIELD VISCOUNT	ex BRITISH VISCOUNT ex VICKERS VISCOUNT ex MEATH (1960)
GLOBAL AMBITION	ex DUNSTANBURGH CASTLE (1970)
GOLDEN SEA	ex DOVER UNIVERSAL ex DOVER CASTLE ex CLAN RANALD
GORFLEET	ex STENTOR (tug - 1958)
HAE NAIME	ex BRATHAY FISHER ex CALDERON ex BRATHAY FISHER
JULIA	ex STEYNING ex CLANTON (1965)
KULDIGA	ex GEEST TIDE
LA PALMA	ex LA PERLA
LUSSIN	ex PARTULA (1959)
MIRANDA	ex JAMAICA PRODUCER
MEJILLON	ex W.D.ITCHEN
MOHAMED	ex TROUP HEAD (1971)
MARIBRUNA IV	ex BRITISH LAUREL
MANCHESTER FULMAR	ex CITY OF IPSWICH
MARIVERDA IV	ex BORDER SHEPHERD
METRO STAR	ex SHELL REFINER ex HAMBLE
MANCHESTER CHALLENGE	ex DART AMERICA
NOTOS	ex PRA RIVER
NAVIOS CONQUEROR	ex SEVONIA TEAM
NESTOR C.I.	ex NESTOR (tug - 1959)

NEW NAMES FOR OLD (contd)

NADALENA H	ex PEVERIL (1964)
OCEANIA FREEZER	ex ALAUNIA ex CARDIFF CLIPPER (1973)
ROSA S	ex AL ODAILIAH (1969)
RANGER I	ex WILLEM BARENDSE (tug - 1963)
SEISELLA	ex SOUTHELLA (tlr)
SALVADOR	ex SEA ROVER ex NEPTUNIA ex RODE ZEE (tug - 1949)
SALVENUS	ex OCEAN DISCOVERER (tug - 1978)
SEA RELIANCE	ex BORDABEKOA ex YORKSHIRE ex EASTERN PRINCESS ex YORKSHIRE (1960)
SEA HAWK	ex MANCHESTER ZEAL
TISHPION	ex BRITISH PIONEER (1971)
TANJUNG PANDAN	ex GUNUNG DJATI ex EMPIRE ORWELL ex EMPIRE DOON ex PRETORIA (1936)
UNICEB	ex GLOBE EXPRESS ex BENLAWERS (1970)
VERNICOS GEORGOS	ex VERNICOS GENEVIEVE ex CANADA II ex CANADA ex PEACOCK (1960) tug

THE END OF THE MANX KIPPER?

A few years ago, there would be a short resume of the herring season in these notes, as applicable to the fishing grounds off the Isle of Man. In the mid-1970's scores of Scottish and Ulster boats came south to work this lucrative trade. Few Manx boats took part as most of these are fitted out for clam dredging within the season designated for scallops. The largest part of the herring catch was salted and packed in barrels for export, by Irish labour. Irish buyers, used to the trade, brought their men over from such villages as Passage East in Co Waterford, and I had met some of them over there when on holiday. The work entailed long hours on wet and windswept quays. Much of the fish was loaded into Dutch coasters and fish carriers, still called luggers, and it was said that re-sale in Holland, took the fish to the east of the "iron curtain".

So in late September 1981, I was surprised to find that the small quota imposed by conservancy needs, had been exceeded and the herring season officially closed by 16th. What few Scottish boats came down, had already left, and the previously bustling quays at Port St Mary were bereft of trawlers. I was curious at the scene of desolation after those years when the catch totalled many thousands of tons.

The Ulster trawler BE GRACEFUL, B.232 of Portavogie came

alongside and I looked down on the bloody deck, and the pounds wherein lay a catch entirely of dogfish. Later, the crew were mending nets and I tried to get some understanding of the herring season's failure, with little response. (The name of the vessel intrigued me, as I thought BE GRATEFUL would have been a more suitable name for a fishing boat!)

I wondered if our Common Market partners, so anxious to have free access to our fishing grounds, had compelled such a low quota limit which both our fishermen and theirs had to suffer. Our fishermen are doubtless frustrated and there seems the possibility that in those bumper years, the herring has been over-fished in Manx water. The Marine Biological Station at Port Erin would know, as they constantly monitor the matter with their research vessel CUMA.

Speaking to local people, it was said that Ministry inspectors had been examining fish caught as to size, in the week previous to my visit. Some of the fish were no bigger than ones little finger, and it takes three years for a fish of this size to mature. Also it was noticed that as some of the trawlers approached the harbour an unusual number of gulls followed as small sized fish were dumped. My informant said that formerly herring nets hung like a curtain and the mesh was such, that only the sizeable fish were caught. But now, a cod end net of fine mesh is being used and nothing gets through. There is no doubt that the British fishermen have had a raw deal, but this sort of practice augurs badly for their future. The justification for conservation methods is plain indeed.

And as conservation is of such importance, there has been a good deal of naval activity around the Isle of Man this summer. The following fishery protection ships have been seen in Douglas, Ramsey and Peel - CUXTON, M1125, WALKERTON, M1188, BRERETON, M1113, UPTON, M1187, KIRKLISTON, M1157, BOSSINGTON, M1133, SOBERTON, M1200, KEDLESTON, M1153, and STUBBINGTON, M1204.

On 17th August the naval jetfoil HMS SPEEDY arrived at Douglas and set up a headquarters on the Battery Pier, for a likely stay of seven weeks which was not fulfilled. She came from Portsmouth in eleven hours at a speed of over 40 knots. With helicopter assistance, the fishing position must have been soon discovered, and on or about 16th September, the herring fishery was declared closed.

It is to be hoped that there will be no infringement of the Trade Description Act in fish markets where "Manx" kippers are concerned. The genuine brand could very well disappear for a period of years, until conservation methods encourage cyclic movement of the shoals, as of yore.

N.R.P.

Our business being much the same
At length to Liverpool we came,
And any man alive who'd guess,
By the town's sudden rise, no less;
From a small fishery of late,
Became the darling child of Fate;
So wealthy grown, so full of hurry,
That she eclipses Bristol's glory.

(Anon - 1706)

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MERSEY NOTES

The Editor would like to inform members that he has had his copies of the Bulletin from January 1967 to the present time, bound in three volumes, in navy rexine with gold lettering. A very pleasing job has been executed by our local bookbinder, Thomas Loughran, Mulberry House, Canning Place, Liverpool.

The Mersey Dock and Harbour Board's surveying vessel AESTUS was built in 1950 by Yarwood's of Northwich. She has become redundant on delivery of the motorized catamaran H.M. DENHAM for surveying and depth recording in Liverpool Bay and the approach channels. Acecape Marine Ltd of Liverpool has bought her for surveying, diving and oil exploration work. Captain Peter Denny has had her modified for this work, and she may still be seen in the Mersey. Only a small craft with a gross tonnage of 95, her dimensions are 81½ x 19½ft and she has a speed of 10 knots. She was re-engined in 1973, has been well looked after, so should have a long life.

A sea burial took place in September on board the car ferry LADY OF MANN in the Irish Sea. The ship was stopped, the ensign half masted, and the Captain committed the coffin to the deep. According to Radio Merseyside, a true Liverpoolian on board was heard to say "Ee that were luvly, if they did that for me I'd be proper made up!"

The new tug ELDERGARTH of Rea Towing, and built by the enterprising McTay concern at Bromborough was on trials in the Mersey on 9th September. No doubt we shall eventually hear how it comes about that her port of registry is Westport.

Foreign dredgers are a rarity in the Mersey, but in August

we saw the Danish sand pump hopper PROGRESS working off Cammell Lairds and their entrance. A small blue hulled vessel registered at Aarhus, she has a suction pipe on the port side.

Looking round for crumbs of comfort in the Mersey scene, we have seen that the export of coal is giving renewed life to Garston Docks. Then in August came the news that Rea Bulk Handling Ltd - a subsidiary of the Ocean Transport group - were installing two new 7½ ton grab cranes at the Duke Street end of West Float, Birkenhead. This shows faith in the future of the Birkenhead system after the serious loss of the John Summers' iron ore trade. The cranes which they replace have been in service since 1938.

On the only Co-op charter trip from Liverpool to Manchester this summer - 19th September - our member Gordon Ditchfield noticed BREEDER ex B.P.SPIRIT being broken up on the upper Mersey near Runcorn. She was often seen bunkering Isle of Man vessels as a unit of the fleet of Bowker and King and dates from 1939.

Also noticed on this cruise in OVERCHURCH was a large vessel on the Cammell Laird slipways preparatory to launch. She was the Royal Fleet Auxiliary BAYLEAF.

The news broke on Tuesday, 22nd September that the popular MANXMAN is to be retained in the I.O.M.S.P. fleet in the 1982 season. Many had feared for her demise, but dating from the pre-car ferry era, she is still the largest passenger carrier in the fleet, and one which Lairds can be proud to have built. She has attracted many enthusiasts to sail in her in 1981 thinking that it might be her last season, and they will be delighted, as are also the seagoing personnel in the other ships. Sadly the Liverpool-Llandudno service in which she was so prominent has ceased due to the lack of support of Merseysiders.

The double daily sailings between Liverpool and Douglas ended on Saturday, 26th September, with LADY OF MANN and MONAS QUEEN remaining in service. MANX MAID and the happily reprieved MANXMAN were laid by for the winter in Morpeth Dock, and BEN MY CHREE at Cathcart Street berth. So MANXMAN will sail for her owners again, as she has done since 1955 when Cammell Laird put the third Pametrada turbine into her which gave her a speed of 21 knots. She can carry 2393 passengers and 68 crew. Her shaft horsepower is 8500 at 270 r.p.m. She has been used in the making of sea films on two occasions, latterly as CARPATHIA.

At the end of the 1981 holiday season, the fortunes of B & I Line's trading came under sharp focus. They lost £2.8m Irish pounds last year, and the loss for this year will be about £5m. In

September, the operation of the jetfoil CU NA MARA is in doubt. She cost £6m to build and could not have started to make a profit before 1982. The company may have to make 500 of their staff redundant, and the Cork-Pembroke sailings may cease after only one season. Ships may have to be sold or leased back. On the Liverpool-Dublin route we now have the largest passenger and car carriers ever, in LEINSTER and CONNAGHT. Yet the continuing troubles across the Irish Sea coupled with high prices over there, must influence tourists to stay away. MUNSTER's future must be in grave doubt. Built in Germany, she was intended for a Baltic route, and this writer thought she was quite unsuitable for the Liverpool-Dublin run, having been bought off the stocks. Doubtless, more news anon.

Since the B & I Line pulled out of the container berth at Waterloo Dock, it has been idle, but now a firm called the Pegasus Line is to use the terminal to load containers for Lisbon and Gibraltar.

The ex-Liverpool tugs VERNICOS ALEXIA ex FORMBY ex WEATHER COCK, and VERNICOS BARBARA ex COLLINGWOOD ex HEATH COCK had waited for many weeks of the summer for towage to Greece. On 1st September, VERNICOS GEORGOS ex PEACOCK arrived, and with HORNBY escorting them down channel, the three boats sailed to Port Penrhyn, Bangor. We might have thought that by mid-October they would have reached the Aegean, but were surprised to see all three (on TV) on the rocks in St Brides Bay on 18th October. 8 men were aboard GEORGOS but none on the other two boats in tow. GEORGOS sent an emergency call at midnight on Sunday 18th, with a rope round her screw. Position - one mile west of Solva, St Davids. The anchor was dropped but did not hold and all three went on the rocks to a severe buffeting. The GEORGOS crew was taken off by St Davids lifeboat and a Brawdy helicopter, and that boat was badly holed. Forty gallon drums of diesel fuel, to help the trip were afloat. It was assumed that these famous Cock tugs would replace older tonnage in the Vernicos fleet.

Most people who know their Mersey River well, must have seen the Dutch coaster MARWIT for she has been plying between Runcorn and Londonderry for the last 21½ years, but has now been pensioned off from that job. She carried chlorine gas in pressure tanks to the Du Pont Works, returning to the Canal with latex.

In October, the 80ft Alfred south lock at Birkenhead is being closed as an economy measure. Repair work has been done to the sills of the 100ft north lock, which will be the only

entrance into the Birkenhead system. It would seem that at weekends when fishing and pleasure craft are on the move a much greater volume of water will have to be pumped. No doubt the saving in manpower and maintenance will compensate.

And on matters of Merseyside, could we for a moment break off talking of ships, and think of Bill Shankly who died on 28th September after a heart attack. He was the Scot with the rasping voice who adopted Liverpool as his home, because he believed in its people. He certainly brought our city to the front in the world of football, and blazoned Liverpool's name far and wide. The players to whom he gave golden chances, and all the true supporters of the Club held him in great affection.

Shankly strongly refuted the idea that he retired in 1974; resigned perhaps, but not retired. "I'll not retire" he said "until they bring a box for me!" Another of his quips was "I have no time for men who cannot make decisions - they are only fit to go into politics!"

To him, white was white and black was black, but for all his outspokenness he was well loved. Kindly remembrance is his epitaph, and what can a man ask for more?

N.R.P.

SHIPS TO THE BREAKERS

ANASSA ex ADRASTUS (1953)
BRITISH SCIENTIST (VLCC - 1971)
CHEVRON MADRID ex CALTEX MADRID (1961)
CRISTOFORO COLOMBO
ESSO CAMBRIA (1969)
KALYMNOS ex APOIKIA ex LONDON HARMONY (1958)
NONA MARO ex MARIPATROL ex BRITISH PATROL (1954)
OBESTAIN ex RONSARD (1957)
OLYMPIC ALLIANCE (1970)
OLYMPIC ARCHER (1970)
TEXACO NEW MEXICO (1958)
TEXACO ROME ex CALTEX ROME ex SIDELING HILL (1945)

We'd left New York en'route for Cork
A day and a half at sea,
When Jeremy Tait, our fourteenth mate,
He fastened his eyes on me.
O Jeremy Tait, O fourteenth mate,
I hollers with looks askance,
Full well I wist ye're a hypnotist
So please to remove your glance!
So early and late did Jeremy Tait
That talent of his display,
Which caused the crew, and the Captain too,
Some moments of great annoy.....
Well, we loved J Tait, our fourteenth mate
As an officer brave and true,
But we quite despised being hypnotized
When we had so much work to do.
So we grabbed J Tait, our fourteenth mate
(His eyes being turned away)
By collar and sleeve, and we gave a heave
And chucked him into the spray.....

Reginald Birch

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A CAMEL LAIRD COMPLETION

Destroyer HMS LIVERPOOL left her birthplace and name-port
on Friday night 6th November for Scottish waters.

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OLD SALTS

Was the title of a Granada TV feature shown on Monday 10th
August. It especially concerned Bob Griffin, father of our
council member Keith Griffin, and the interviewer was Roger
Blyth. Bob Griffin is now in his 80's and described how he
sailed in a full rigged ship during the first World War, with a
cargo of anthracite for the River Plate. The name of the ship
was DUDHOPE and she was towed out into the western approaches by
the tug BLAZER. Not very long after the tug left her, a German
submarine was sighted which opened fire. "Why would they attack

a sailing ship?" asked Roger, and the reply was that the Germans suspected that she might be a Q-ship. The crew took to the boats, but the Germans wanted stores from the ship and asked for six men to assist them transport these over to the U-boat, for they were short of supplies.

Three journeys had to be made, and on the last one, bombs were placed on board which exploded after three minutes and the sailing ship sank stern first. The British seamen were able to hoist some sail and with a fair wind reached Milford Haven in four days.

OCTOBER MEETING

Mr D Place came to speak to us on 8th about the "Port of Parkgate" and assumed the possibility that some of us might not know where it is located. However, most of us must have visited Parkgate, on the west shores of the Wirral Peninsula, and found quaint reminders of its former importance, even though the last vessels to trade there, did so in 1815. Our speaker is a teacher at Mostyn House School and a member of the Burton and District Historical Society. His research spans 15 years and he took part in the BBC's "Down Your Way" programme last March.

It is difficult nowadays, looking over from the promenade to the Welsh coast to imagine a great concourse of shipping lying at anchor in deep water, where now there are only mud flats, samphire grass and deep gulleys. Parkgate attained its fame by being one of the English terminals on the sea route to Dublin. Thomas de Quincey wrote his sister in 1800 that he hoped to sail from "Parkgate, near Chester, on or before next Wednesday" and added that the crossing could be dangerous. Sometimes shelter had to be sought in several ports on the way, and the passage could take several weeks, in adverse weather.

Parkgate had been the packet station for Ireland since 1710, and yet the Dee estuary had been silting up since Roman times. The shifting sands were always a nuisance, and as the size of ships increased, the depth of water did not get any greater. A new quay was in use in the 17th century one mile upstream, first of all called Newhaven, and later Neston Quay.

The Lord Lieutenant's yacht used Parkgate on his journeyings to Dublin, and other shipping followed. Cargo was not carried in the yacht, but only official packages for the justices etc. Passengers were carried by official warrant, and if there was space, other passengers might make a deal with the captain - all had to provide

their own victuals. Most of the passengers arrived on horseback. If only a few passengers arrived, the captain might hold the ship back until there were sufficient to satisfy his needs.

The yacht DUBLIN was scrapped in 1753 and a replacement named DORSET of 154 tons was built. She maintained these duties until 1812, when she was sold.

Parkgate was never the only port for Ireland, and Holyhead also had its share of the carrying. Fares paid for the passage went to the respective captains and Wesley, who was an habitual traveller, gave three pieces of advice -

"Never pay until you set sail",

"Never go on board until the Captain does",

"Never put your baggage aboard until you go aboard".

It is an amusing thought to consider what the M.P.T.E. or I.O.M.S.P.C. would think of this practice on their ferries today!

Jonathan Swift used both Parkgate and Holyhead, and of the latter port he wrote in 1727, whilst waiting to sail -

"Lo, here I sit at Holyhead
With muddy ale and mouldy bread,
All Christian vittals stink of fish,
I'm where my enemies would wish.
The Captain swears the seas's too rough,
He has not passengers enough.
And thus the Dean is forced to stay
Till others come to help the pay."

Of course, cargo was also shipped and in 1771 KILDARE ran with general cargo and horses. There was also NON PAREIL which is known to have carried coal and lead from Chester to Dublin. In 1775 there were two wrecks, one being NON PAREIL.

In 1775, two packets came on to the route, KING and QUEEN both of about 100 tons.

In 1787 we know from Chester records that Parkgate had become a resort of elegance and fashion. For twenty years there were 4 sailings each week to Dublin. The cargo of silks and spices on one of the ships was valued at £30,000, which was a very large sum in those days.

QUEEN was wrecked in 1796 and the crew saved. The Parkgate Passenger Co's KING GEORGE was lost at the mouth of the Dee in 1806, when only two months old. 100 lives were lost.

Mr Place described the difficulties of land transport in those days, which are almost inconceivable now. In reaching Holyhead, one would either have to go over the high land of Penmaenmawr, or along a treacherous stretch of beach, for there was no coast road as at present. Some gentle folk went by coach, but most made the journey on horseback.

The Point of Air lighthouse was built by subscription and completed in 1777. A gentleman named Schomberg organized this venture and it was intended to call the lighthouse after him, but became known as the Point of Air.

An amazing quantity of detailed information survives in Chester, outlining departures and arrivals. 42 ships from Dublin, 11 from Newry and 2 from the Isle of Man represented the arrivals at Parkgate in one period. This was the approximate pattern. The commonest imports were hides, glue, cattle and surprisingly dried sheep gut to make whips.

There is a dearth of information on transshipment cargoes, and ships too large to pass Parkgate must have used barges for onward carriage to Chester.

A ship repairing firm was set up, with prices lower than in Liverpool and two packets were built, before the War of Independence.

A most interesting aspect of this talk was concerning the annual immigration of Irish harvesters, hundreds of whom passed through Parkgate, to walk barefoot to London and the south. They had boots which they carried tied round their necks, but these were for special occasions and were not to be worn out! They arrived for haymaking in the southeast, and worked northwards again, returning to Ireland for the potato harvest in October.

Should adverse winds delay their sailing, then there were difficulties for these "vagrants". A month's delay was not uncommon, and it is known that one party was put on a ship four times, unable to get under way. Their long confinement, poor diet and disease took its toll. Special provision was made however, and a "house of correction" was built at Neston to shelter these people. It is still there, our speaker said, and it cost one penny per day to keep them until the wind was fair.

After the coffee interval, there was a question asked about the ferry from Parkgate to Bagillt and Flint. In 1790 this was run by the Ferryhouse Inn, and sailed every day on the tide. People did try and cross the estuary on foot but it was a hazardous opera-

tion, and caused many deaths.

Mr Place concentrated on the maritime scene, and did not mention that well-known event regarding Handel. The composer embarked at Parkgate for the first performance of his "Messiah" in Dublin. Perhaps our thoughts also went to Lord Nelson and his Lady Hamilton.

This was an interesting and informative lecture, and would perhaps stir some of our members to re-visit Parkgate, to sit on the sandstone wall to imagine, in deep water again, the brigs, snows and cutters riding at anchor dependant on wind and tide. And to remember also that around the time of the American War of Independence, the Irish Sea had its privateers and pirates. And so a convoy system was used with a naval vessel awaiting the outward bound ships off Hilbre Island.

Mr Lingwood, our chairman, at the start of the meeting made an announcement in support of the R.N.L.I's Christmas Card and Calendar. The card depicts the launch of the Southport lifeboat in 1896 to assist the flat CANADA, in difficulties on a passage from Fleetwood to Liverpool.

Twenty-nine members attended this meeting, and cordial thanks are extended to Mr Place.

N.R.P.

GENERAL NEWS ITEMS

3rd August was a sad day for those who are trying to maintain some vestige of coastal passenger cruising round Britain. PRINCE IVANHOE ex SHANKLIN was on a day cruise from Minehead and had called at Mumbles, near Swansea. She then proceeded westwards and was off Port Eynon in the Gower Peninsula when she struck rocks in the Helwick Reef. There were 450 passengers on board the pleasure ship, and Captain David Neill, sizing up the situation, grounded the ship on Port Eynon beach with a fatal gash in her side. Mumbles and Tenby lifeboats as well as helicopters proceeded. All the passengers and crew were safely ferried ashore, although one man, after taking photographs from the beach of the stricken ship, had a heart attack and died before reaching hospital. A thorough Department of Trade inquiry will be held into this casualty and the ship is probably a write-off.

The former stern trawler STARELLA, having been recently on seismic work in the Mediterranean, has been taken over by the British Meteorological Office as a weather reporting ship, on the station west of Ireland.

In August, the Panamanian MIRANDA on her first voyage as a cattle carrier, was transporting 1763 heifers from Waterford to Egypt. Unfortunately for these animals the air conditioning and ventilation system on the ship broke down and 746 of them died through carbon monoxide poisoning. The ship had previously been a banana carrier.

Sealink's MAID OF KENT made her last voyage on 2nd October for these owners, between Weymouth and Cherbourg. A turbine steamer of 3920 tons, she was built in 1959 by Denny's of Dumbarton, and will be one of the last turbine cross channel ships of British owners.

The decline of the British merchant fleet continues and although last December, it was thought that the worst was over, 1981 has shown that we have fewer ships at sea, and at the end of 1981, unemployed British seamen are expected to total 5,000. Other nations can run their ships with crew costs half as much as ours, but the N.U.S. continues to make extravagant demands for higher wages.

Seen discharging timber at Victoria Pier, Douglas in September was the 992 ton MELTON CHALLENGER, which might be classed as a large modern coaster. So it was of interest that on 9th October she was in difficulties 140 miles west of Lands End, with a cargo of steel girders for Jacksonville. She had no power or steering in a force nine gale, and smoke in the engineroom made it untenable. There were nine men on board and a helicopter and Nimrod aircraft attended, but the weather moderated somewhat and they hung on waiting for a tug. Next day they were safely berthed at Falmouth quays by the tug HUSKY.

The red hulled HMS ENDURANCE has sailed for another summer season in the Antarctic, but Admiralty intend to "mothball" her on return in May 1982. This is very much to the regret of her captain, as she has watched over possible oil concessions down under, as part of her various duties. She was built as the polar trader ANITA DAN in 1956 at Rendsburg and has a tonnage of 3600. Admiralty purchased her from the J Lauritzen concern of Copenhagen in 1967, and she was converted for her present work by Harland and Wolff Ltd, Belfast. Her speed is 14½ knots and she carries two Wasp helicopters. For her size, she carries quite a large crew, including a small detachment of Royal Marines, and has twelve berths for scientists.

On 25th September, the bulker STAR HONGKONG was on a north-westerly course in mid-Atlantic, when she received a "securitay" call on channel 16 v.h.f. from the ketch FANNY ROSA of Fowey. She had lost her rudder and was in a sinking condition, having left the

Azores for Boston USA. STAR HONGKONG diverted and took the three men aboard, but the yacht sank. These men possibly owe their lives to the VHF radio, and to the fact that the bulker was keeping watch in the great expanse of ocean, where the normal range on channel 16 is only about 20 miles. From what I can gather, FANNY ROSA was being built in South Africa when World War II broke out. Admiralty took her over, and in 1948 she was completed for private use by Thorneycrofts, Southampton.

The Irish registered tanker RATHOWEN has been seen quite often in the Mersey, but in September she was on passage from Tarragona to Oman with a cargo of bitumen and when off the south coast of Sicily reported a leak in the engineroom. The salvage tug SALVAMAR connected with her for towage to Valletta and repairs. The tanker was built in 1965 as LUNA, later to be renamed BELLONA and RATHOWEN.

The new ST DAVID came into service for Sealink on 10th August on the Holyhead/Dun Laoghaire service. She cost £16m, is of 7000 tons and can carry 1000 passengers and 309 cars. Harland and Wolff Ltd were the builders.

The Isle of Man cargo ship PEVERIL was sold to Cyprus Greeks in August. She was built by the Ailsa Company, Troon, in 1964.

The last of the Royal Navy's paddle tugs has been retired at Devonport. She is FAITHFUL, one of seven of the "Director" class, built around 1957 period, with diesel electric drive and a speed of 13 knots. She served at Malta for 4 years and came under the management of the Royal Maritime Auxiliary Service. Her replacement at Devonport is CAPABLE Built by Dunstons.

1981 has been a year of high seas piracy in the East Indies, around Indonesia and the South China Sea. Knives and guns have been used by boarders, who have stalked large vessels in speed boats. The captain of the British 21,000 ton ORIENTAL AMBASSADOR was shot dead. Other vessels concerned have been the 13,000 ton BRITISH BEECH, the LIBERIAN MONARCH of 44,000 tons and CORSICANA of 30,000 tons. Ships have been boarded over the stern whilst travelling at normal speed.

At Avonmouth, tugboatmen, gigboatmen, and lockgatemmen were seriously "on the carpet" and arraigned for their actions, or the lack of them, by a very much annoyed National Seamens Union in August. The ex-Elder Dempster motorship DUMURRA was concerned. Her new owners renamed her FUMURRA, which was easy on the paint-pot, and decided to register her at Douglas, I.O.M. under new Manx law, but the legalities were found not to be practicable

until the end of 1981, and so the ship remained under the "red duster" - plain and without "legs"! She arrived at Avonmouth with rice-bran, and a crew of Filipinos on lower wage rates than for a British crew. The N.U.S. demanded that she be "blackened" and not allowed to move. But at night-time she was able to slip away for Belfast and further discharge.

The new Rea tug ROWANCARTH was launched by McTay's, Bromborough at midnight Thursday 16th October, and docked at Birkenhead for completion. she is similar to ELDERGARTH.

At the end of August it was announced that the German salvage ship STEPHANITURM would be leaving Peterhead in a British effort to raise the gold bullion lost when HMS EDINBURGH was torpedoed north of Murmansk. She was so badly damaged that our own forces subsequently sank her. Built in 1938 the cruiser only survived two years of service. Fifty of the crew were not accounted for. The salvage efforts were most successful and almost £45m in gold bars was recovered, part going to the Soviets, part to the British Government and making Mr Keith Jessop, planner of the venture, a very rich man. STEPHANITURM was back at Peterhead on 16th October.

In October, ALLA EL DEEN ex BALLYLORAN, flying the Cypriot flag was laid up at Birkenhead, presumably owing to financial difficulties. This led to her being offered for sale by tender by the Admiralty Marshal.

Calmac's QUEEN MARY II has arrived in the Thames under tow, to be yet another floating restaurant.

N.R.P.

SHIPS FOR DISPOSAL

ALSATIA ex EDINBURGH CLIPPER (1972)
ANDANIA ex GLASGOW CLIPPER (1972)
ANDRIA ex Teesside clipper (1973)
NAVARINA ex GRIPSHOLM (1957)
BENNEVIS ex BARON DUNMORE (1968)
CRAFTSMAN (1972), BORDER CASTLE and BORDER PELE (1961).
KULPAWN RIVER (1962), and 4-SD.14's dating 1976/1978 -
STRATHDEVON, STRATHDIRK, STRATHDOON, STRATHDUNS.

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Loudens the sea-wind, downward plunge the bows,
Glass-green she takes it, staggers, rolls and checks,
Then sheers, and as she buffets back the blows
There comes a thundering along the decks.

Robert Nichols - 1893

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NOVEMBER MEETING

Over thirty members of the Society met on 12th in the peace and quiet of the educational block of Merseyside's Museum whilst the sit-in strike continued in ULSTER PRINCE and ULSTER QUEEN just down the road in Princes Dock. Our peaceful surroundings must have been in contrast to the stormy Police Federation assembly not so far away, in the aftermath of the Toxteth riots. It was now the turn, somewhat belatedly, for the police, householders and business people to express their feelings on the horrific injuries, the losses sustained and the fear engendered. The so-called under-privileged had already had their say through the "media".

But, could anything be more peaceful than watching graceful craft under full sail on placid waters, or with a bone in their teeth, sailing the wide waters of the outer Thames estuary? Our speaker Mr D Sattin, has been one of our members for some time, but this was his first visit, and he gave us a very full and interesting evening.

The first section of his talk was a commentary on the many fine slides he had brought, both in colour and black and white. After the interval he described the construction of wooden barges in detail. The very angular bilge came as a surprise to this writer, but is doubtless a factor making for the highest carrying capacity on length/breadth ratio.

It is many years since there were sailing flats on the Mersey and there cannot be many people alive today who remember them. Thames sailing barges still hold annual races, of which we saw many photographs. Some of those in evening light were as if they had come from some artist's brush.

The first slide shown was of White's yard where our speaker served his time. There were several photographs of ASHINGTON's launch in 1915 with the owner and several ladies standing on the

hatch cover after she had taken the water. The white hulled SARA was seen driving along in one of the races. NORTHDOWN, the winner of many cups, was seen in Milton Creek, with the Burley Cement works as background.

Mr Sattin has a fondness for WESTMORLAND and we saw her being guided up a creek with a steering wheel rather like the "handle on mother's mangle!" Normally, a barge's crew consists of only two men, or perhaps a man, a boy and a dog. A case is known where a skipper sailed his boat alone.

WESTMORLAND met with misfortune, for she was berthed in the Medway and the skipper went ashore. Whilst he was away, on a falling tide, she sat on a concrete lighter and was a sorry sight. This was just after £5,000 had been spent on her, but I gathered that she was repairable.

In 1895/6 the Thames froze and many barges were trapped in the ice floes - men were reported to have perished of starvation. We saw photographs of the trapped vessels.

A picture of Whitstable harbour showed brigs discharging coal and there were always carts on the beach. Scandinavian brigs arrived with timber.

The Thames barges carried almost anything, even to stacks of hay. the steel-built KITTY with a large star on her topsail looked a fine vessel, but has now been sold down to Chichester. DAWN also appeared a fine craft, and we heard that in navigating the Thames, 96 tacks were necessary between Gravesend and Tower Bridge. A very dirty cargo was mud scooped up from mud holes in the river bed, and used for road making.

SEAGULL was built as an ammunition barge in the first World War, and we saw her with a background of the Northfleet Power Station on the Medway, which will be obsolete before it is completed at a very much escalated cost.

Loaded deep, these boats can carry a surprising amount of sail and reach a speed of about 16 knots, leaving any small yachts standing. A standard practice seems to be to have a dinghy swung outboard in davits on the starboard quarter.

Very often one notices that the dinghy hangs at an angle of 45 degrees, bow up, stern down, as skippers think that with a following wind, they get some help this way!

Mike Stammers and our speaker have sailed together in PHOENICIAN in the Maldon area. Also portrayed on the screen were

LADY DAPHNE with her blue painted deck, CENTAUR of Harwich, EDITH MAY, CONVOY, MIROSA with her long bowsprit, and WILL the biggest of them all. This latter used to be named WILL EVERARD - she is very slow, has OCL printed on her topsail and carries 60 tons of ballast.

There were several questions put to our lecturer. Ken Stuttard asked why the staysail, which we would more likely term a jib, was white when all the other sails were tan. The reason is that this sail is not permanently furled when berthed or anchored, but is taken off the ship and stowed below.

Mr Sattin was sincerely thanked for coming north to give us such an interesting lecture.

Our Chairman, John Lingwood made it known that we had a supply of the "Mermaid" for distribution to members, describing progress at the Maritime Museum.

The season's programme of the Society was forwarded to the recently formed "Ships Monthly" magazine and duly printed. This brought us two visitors from Bradford, Trevor Shaw and Geoffrey Priestly whom we hope enjoyed their evening with us.

For your scribe, Mr Sattin brought two photographs from Sittingbourne showing our old friend KING ORRY lying on the mud at Lynch's Scrapyard, cut down to the rubbing strake - a sad sight indeed.

N.R.P.

DOOM AND GLOOM CORNER

It is not proposed to make this a permanent feature! At the time of going to press little can be said about the continuation of the Liverpool/Belfast ferry. ULSTER PRINCE and ULSTER QUEEN are moored side by side in Princes Dock with crews sitting in. The ships are blamed for not suiting the present trade under P & O management, yet when they were designed and came into use by Coast Lines in the 1960's they were the "last word". One who spoke of their excellence was our late President, Sir Arnet Robinson at one of our meetings in LANDFALL. This link with Ulster has lasted 160 years. By mid-November, the strike had spread to Aberdeen and P & O's Orkney and Shetland packet ST CLAIR and possibly ST MAGNUS.

On the same day that we heard the P & O decision to cease operating the Liverpool ships, came the announcement of the

closing down of Odyssey Works, the engineering part of Ocean Fleets, formed in the halcyon days of the great Blue Funnel Line. This will deposit more experienced artisans and clerical staff into the dole queues.

In our last issue, the sale of the last two conventional Clan Line vessels was mentioned. In the case of CLAN MACGREGOR this was a little premature, and she made her final sad departure from the Mersey on (unlucky) Friday 13th November in Clan colours.

Turning to the ill fated PRINCE IVANHOE, it is reported that large portions of her superstructure have broken away from the wreck at Port Eynon, and could be a danger to holidaymakers next year. Swansea City Council therefore approached the Department of Trade, who said it was not responsible, as there was no pollution. Trinity House replied similarly that they were taking no action, as there was no danger to shipping. The owners said that they were in the hands of the insurance agents - a case of four months inactivity.

BUT - LIFT UP YOUR HEARTS!

MacTay's shipyard at Bromborough is turning out some fine vessels and I hear that premises have been taken on Birkenhead dock estate, for the completion of ships after their launch. The two fine Rea tugs ELDERGARTH and ROWANGARTH have recently followed other notable completions, including The Alexandra Towing Co's CANADA and M.D. & H.Co's surveyor H.M.DENHAM.

SOCIETY NOTES

Although some of us will be meeting at the Christmas Social, this opportunity is taken to wish our "up country" and overseas members who cannot be with us on 10th December, a very Happy Christmas and Bright New Year.

It was a pleasure to see Dr and Mrs Yorke on Television's "Home Ground" on Friday, 16th October, in connection with the history of the former Formby Lifeboat Station. We were treated to some very good R.N.L.I. photography too.

Your Council was sorry to receive the resignation from our deliberations of Dennis Boyes, a member of long standing and a close friend of your editor for almost 50 years. We wish good health and happiness to both Dennis and his good lady Lorn, who shared membership, and thank them for their long and continuous support.

Our Hon Treasurer is still looking for a few annual subscriptions not yet arrived - would those who have not paid for this season, please remedy.

In one London house magazine, it was stated that the summer riots in Liverpool spread across the city! Fortunately this was not so and Toxteth is some distance from the city centre. So if you are not a Merseysider, please do not imagine that we go around dodging petrol bombs! Our dedicated police force would see to that, and here's one who praises them, even if local radio news bulletins seem to lack appreciation. Where would we have been without them in July?

There was mention in our last issue of the possible effects of the "troubles" on evening cultural activities in the city. Add to this the fact that James Street Station is closed on week-day evenings and Sundays, on our much vaunted rail system. Our city has been as safe as any other and long may it stay that way.

And so, with these feelings in mind your editor forwarded copies of the autumn Bulletin to both Michael Heseltine, Minister for the Environment, and to David Hunt, MP for Wirral. Both have kindly acknowledged on House of Commons notepaper, with the former adding "It was kind of you to think of me".

Although at this time, the final figures for attendance at the Merseyside Maritime Museum are not complete, it would look as if the 100,000 mark will be reached for the second season, closing 29th November. It is good to know that through the kind offices of The Alexandra Towing Company, the former I.C.I. motor barge WINCHAM is now to be a floating exhibit, berthed at Princes Dock, until the possibility of a berth in the Canning/Albert system is explored.

In our last issue, mention was made of the work done by Camper and Nicholson Ltd to the former "J" class yacht SHAMROCK of Lipton fame. Mr Jeremy Lines, the firm's Technical Sales Director writes - "I was pleased that you had put in a little piece about SHAMROCK, and you are generally correct, except that the latest refit was actually carried out at our Southampton yard just before it was closed, although she was originally built here at Gosport. The other point I suppose I should make, is that, we did not really increase her length at all except that when the bulwarks were added, before the war, this obviously increased the amount of over-hang forward and aft, so that I would expect her overall length to be more like 130ft."

Editor