

LIVERPOOL NAUTICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

(FOUNDED 1938)

Vol 36, No 1



Summer 1992

BULLETIN



*F.T. Everard's "Grit"
A frequent visitor to the Mersey in the 60's*

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LIVERPOOL NAUTICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

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SOCIETY NOTES

SUBSCRIPTIONS ... NOW DUE

Subs = £7 = are now due if you have not already paid.

At the request of a number of people, members are asked to let the editor have details of their own interests and research projects for publication in BULLETIN. Several members have pointed out that there are often mutual advantages in such a move.

At the same time members should be aware, that although their names and addresses are 'computerised' for the distribution of journal, no other material regarding the members is on the computer.

Members may be pleased to note that one of our members, a Merseysider presently living in the north-east, was playing the F.A. Cup Final at Wembley Stadium last May.

November 1991 meeting

Parkgate and Passenger Shipping to Dublin

by Geoffrey Place

THE FIRST RECORD of a named ship to call at Parkgate was in 1686, and the last ship recorded there was in 1815. In the intervening 130 years, Parkgate specialised in the passenger traffic to Dublin. Throughout that period, passengers for Dublin were also travelling through Holyhead, and latterly were sailing through Liverpool. This paper seeks to show how the passenger traffic at Parkgate compared with that at the other two ports.

Let us first consider where Parkgate is. During a part of the period and certainly from about 1730, the location of Parkgate would have been known to any educated Englishman. As the schoolboy Thomas De Quincey put it in a letter to his sister;

We shall get to Dublin on or before Wednesday night and shall sail by the first Parkgate packet.¹ I suppose you have enough geography to know that Parkgate is situated near Chester on the River Dee, twice as far from Dublin as Holyhead.²

The sea journey between Holyhead and Dublin was in fact 60 miles and between Parkgate and Dublin was 120 miles. However Parkgate was only twelve miles from the inns and civilised comforts of Chester, a convenient place to stay before taking ship. Chester was itself at the end of a road from London which had become an established stage route from as early as the mid 17th century, so that the needs of the traveller to Parkgate were already established.

The introduction of the coach in the early 17th century, the establishment of stage coaches on the principal roads out of London in the middle of that century, and the improvement of roads by the Turnpike Acts, mostly in the 18th Century, all encouraged travel. As the numbers of travellers increased, so the traditional suspicion of travellers began to wane, although as late as 1710 the authorities took fright:

There are Frenchmen and other suspicious persons going beyond the sea without passes from the Pricipal Secretary of state. You are to give orders to the Customs Officers not to suffer any passengers to go beyond the sea without such a pass.³

The result of this order was "the stop of a great number of passengers at Parkgate bound for Ireland". After this the need for passes was abandoned, and the newly-established settlement at Parkgate benefitted from the popularity of travel.

The ship which was recorded at Parkgate in 1686 was a Royal Yacht, the RY "Portsmouth". The very first Royal Yacht, the RY "Mary", a gift to Charles II from the city of Amsterdam, was given by him for the use of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in 1661, and from then until 1832 there was always a Royal Yacht on the Dublin station. The official business for which it was intended did not take up much of its time, and the captain of the Royal Yacht was free to take passengers for his personal profit. Parkgate's first named passenger in 1686 was, however, an official visitor, as Capt. William Wright recorded in the ship's journal:

In the afternoon we went to sea bound for Chester Water to wait for Sir Christopher Porter, Lord Chancellor of Ireland. At 10 in the forenoon we came up to Beerhouse Hole and landed our passengers. ⁴

Chester Water was a name often given to the Dec Estuary, and Beerhouse Hole a deep water anchorage at the north end of Parkgate. The captains of the Royal Yachts had been warned

off Holyhead, as we shall see, and therefore favoured Parkgate. This favour attracted the quality passengers and gave a social cachet at Parkgate, even though most of its passengers were harvest labourers. Here is a description of the RY "Dorset" written in 1762:

The cabin of the yacht is red velvet, with gilt flowers, very grand indeed. As soon as we got upon deck we went down a few steps into a cabin where there were two or three nursery beds for the children and their nurse, there was two doors out of this, one of which led to a closet where the captain slept, and the other into the state cabin which has two beds in it for the Lord Lieutenant and Lady. It is a crimson silk bed. Each man has a small cabin.⁵

Besides the Royal Yacht, the other ships using Parkgate would take passengers, but they were primarily freight vessels and passengers were just another form of freight. There were typically six or so regular traders between Dublin and Parkgate at any one time. When John Wesley travelled on such a ship in 1762 he found that the rest of the freight presented a problem:

The sun shone brightly, the wind was moderate, the sea smooth, and we wanted nothing but room to stir ourselves, the cabin being filled with hops, so that we could not get into it but by climbing over them on our hands and knees.⁶

However, the mixing of passengers and cargo could not go too far, and the Parkgate captains were jealous of their good name. In 1772 they felt obliged to publish the following advertisement:

As the owners and master of several vessels employed during the summer season in the coal trade between Ness and Dublin have of late assumed the title of Parkgate traders, by which device many passengers have been influenced to venture themselves aboard such, to their manifest hazard and our great disrepute, we acquaint the public that we constantly have our respective vessels well found, well manned and in right good sailing order.⁷

This situation, of a Royal Yacht supported by a half dozen merchant vessels carrying passengers, persisted until 1785 when the Parkgate Packet Company was formed.

Consider by contrast the situation of Holyhead, established at the end of the 16th century as the Port Office station for carrying mails across the Irish Sea, but a long way from anywhere; ninety miles from Chester, across country where a guide was necessary and wheeled traffic could not pass. The mail went with the post boys on horseback. Towards the end of the 17th century the Post Office contractor, James Vickers, complained that

The yachts which are ordered to attend his Majesty's service between Dublin, Holyhead and Chester do convey passengers, which were used to be carried in his packets boats, whereby he is a great sufferer.⁸

The yacht captains were ordered to avoid Holyhead unless given specific orders to go there, and Parkgate gained accordingly.

Passengers who were in a hurry and did not want to be bottled up in the Dee Estuary by bad weather, did travel overland to Holyhead and by 1730 the mail boat service was reliable with three ships on the route. The increase in both mail and passengers caused the ships to double to six in 1768 and a seventh was added in 1813.

The chief difficulty to using Holyhead was the road approaches. In 1668 a traveller complained that "I came to Holyhead through the most heathenish country ever any man travelled".⁹ At that time it was virtually impossible to get carriages to Holyhead, and it was not until about 1760 that the roads were sufficiently improved. In 1764 a travel guide summarised the situation thus:

Those who shall take the Chester road, if they have much baggage to carry, and are not fearful of the sea, will find the passage from Parkgate much the easiest and most convenient, as it is very troublesome and expensive getting heavy luggage for ninety miles over the mountainous country, wide and rapid ferry ways of Wales. However, the passage over land is, of late years, made much safer and more convenient by the making of a turnpike road.¹⁰

The ferries over the River Conway and the Menai Straits remained formidable barriers. A traveller in 1780 wrote:

We had the misery of embarking on board another ferry boat, the danger and destruction of horses; and hereabouts they are all ill-contrived and dirty, and to strange horses a service of great hazard, for they are obliged to leap out of, and into, deep water.¹¹

These ferries were not bridged until 1826.

The travel writer in 1760 did not mention Liverpool as a route for the traveller going to Ireland, and it is remarkable that, although individuals did take passage on merchant vessels between Liverpool and Dublin, they did so in small numbers until about 1770. One reason for this was that, for the traveller from the south, Liverpool was hard to reach. the route by road was through Warrington, and the preamble to the 1752 Warrington to Liverpool Turnpike Act stated that,

By reason of many heavy carriages of goods and merchandises passing through, the road is becoming ruinous and almost impassable, especially in the winter season.¹²

Nor was the approach from Wirral much more inviting because of the danger, actual or perceived, of the sailing ferries:

The Mersey I ferried over and was an hour and half in the passage, it is of great breadth and at low water is so deep and salt as the sea almost the waves toss and the rocks great all round and it is as dangerous as the sea.¹³

The tide for passengers at Liverpool seems to have turned with the outbreak of the American War of Independence in 1775 which, unlike earlier wars which had benefitted Liverpool, cut off its American markets:

Our once extensive trade to Africa is at a stand: all commerce with America is at an end Survey our docks; count there the gallant ships laid up and useless.¹⁴

The result was that Liverpool shipowners began to take passenger trade to Ireland seriously for the first time. The first signs of regular Liverpool packets, as recorded in the Dublin newspapers, occur in 1771, and there are lists of passenger packets from 1781.

The end of the war with the American colonies ushered in an economic boom which increased the number of passengers so that there were plenty for all three ports. At Parkgate the Parkgate Packet Company was formed in 1785, providing purpose-built passenger ships.

On Wednesday 22nd September was launched at Parkgate a new vessel called the King, Richard Hammond, commander, burthen about 100 tons, fitted up with very elegant accommodations for the reception of nobility, gentry and others, for their conveyance between Dublin and Parkgate.¹⁵

The Parkgate Packet Company's ships proved very popular and at their peak, in the 1790's, there were five vessels employed, as well as the Royal Yacht "Dorset" and a few regular trading vessels. In 1806, however, disaster struck, when the "King George", a ship newly bought by the Company, was wrecked with the loss of over 100 lives. The Parkgate Packet Company did not recover from the loss, although two independent packet ships kept sailing from Parkgate for some years.

For quite different reasons, Parkgate's days as a port were nearly over. In 1737 the River Dee Company had opened its New Cut, which took the waters of the Dee for five miles below Chester in an artificial channel so that the water emerged on the Welsh side of the estuary instead of the English side as heretofore. For many years the water crossed the estuary to resumed its old channel at Parkgate which was not adversely affected; but gradually, aided by the hand of man, the water adopted a course which followed the Welsh shore. By 1815, when the last ship, the "Bessborough", was recorded at Parkgate, the channel was too shallow for any but fishing boats.

Many of those who travelled through Parkgate were labourers, usually migrant harvesters; but many were vagrants who were being returned to Ireland under the Poor laws. Between 1750 and 1815 an average of 500 vagrants a year were taken to the Neston House of Correction to await a ship. It is the accounts of the House of Correction that give the last glimpse of shipping at Parkgate, for it was in the summer of 1815 that the last vagrant was brought to Parkgate. After that they were diverted to Liverpool.¹⁶

The demise of passenger traffic at Parkgate left the field open to Holyhead and Liverpool: but the introduction of the steamship gave the edge to Liverpool in the early 1820's.

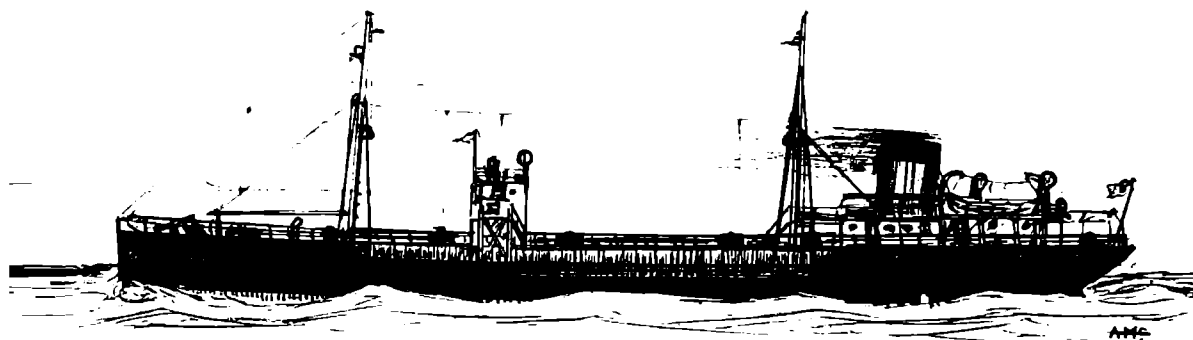
NOTES

1. The subject of this paper is discussed in great detail in "The Rise and Fall of Parkgate: Passenger Port for Ireland, 1686- 1815" by G.W. Place - Ph.D thesis, Liverpool University, 1990.
2. Thomas De Quincey, letter of 3 Sept.1800, in "Memorial" ed. AH Japp 1, (1891) p 36
3. "Calendar Treasury Books" 24 part 2, p 517: PRO. TI/127
4. PRO ADM 51/3943
5. "Correspondence of Josiah Wedgewood (1904) 3, pp5-7
6. John Wesley "Journal" 2nd April 1772
7. CHESTER CHRONICLE 12th November 1772
8. "Calendar Treasury Books" 2, 1696-97 p265
9. "Calendar of State Papers" 1668-9 p5
10. "Hibernia Curiosa" (1768) ed. John Bush. pp 2-3
11. "The Torrington Diaries" ed. C.B. Andrews (1936) 1, p 169
12. F.A.Bailey, "The minutes of the trustees of the turnpike road from Liverpool to Prescott" (in Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire & Cheshire v88 p 163).
13. "The Journeys of Celia Fiennes" ed C. Morris, (1982) p 160
14. Gore's General Advertiser 29th Sept 1775
15. CHESTER CHRONICLE 2nd Sept 1785
16. Ibid 28th July 1815

An Ugly Duckling -----?

by Alan McClelland

A short while ago I was in conversation with a group of folk about the new developments at the East Waterloo Dock. One of those present recollected times before the 2nd World War when ships were to be seen there. His particular memory was of the trunk-decked steam tanker "*Cerinthus*", which at some 5,500 tons dwt was amongst the largest vessels to negotiate East Waterloo's narrow entrance with cargoes for J. Bibby & Sons.



s.s. "*Cerinthus*" - 1930

Built in 1930 by Hawthorn Leslie & Co. at a cost of £80,000 for the Hadley Shipping Co., the "*Cerinthus*" was designed for the carriage of clean spirit, and was fitted with a triple expansion engine because the cost of a diesel engine turned out to be too high. Fixed on a time-charter to the Texas Oil Co., she proved to be extremely reliable in service. On completion of her two year contract with Texas the vessel was employed in the transportation of lubricating oil from the USA and palm oil from West Africa to the United Kingdom, spending only few months laid up on the Tyne in the winter of 1934/5.

Unfortunately she became a war casualty in 1942 whilst on passage from West Africa and many of her crew were lost. Ugly she may have been but she had proved to be a first-rate investment for her owners.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

22nd May 1992, William Brown Street, 1830 hrs

In the absence of the Chairman A.H. McClelland took the chair

Some 30 members attended. Apologies from J.E. Cowden and L. Patterson

The Minutes of the AGM as printed in the BULLETIN Summer 1991 were approved

Chairman's Report

The Chairman was able to report on a generally successful season for the Society. There had been a good cross-section of excellent speakers covering a range of interesting subjects. The "Second Maritime History" was also doing well. Membership numbers were gradually and steadily increasing, with currently over 100 ordinary members and 12 corporate members.

The Chairman urged 'in-house' speakers to come forward; a tradition of the L.N.R.S. has been to use our own members outlining their own research. Reference was made to the work done by the Editor, in all that is involved in putting together the BULLETIN, a publication that has helped much in regenerating the Society since the doldrum years of the '80s.

Secretary's Report

The Secretary referred to the number of items of individual research carried out by members that had reached fruition during the year. The "*magnum opus*" is likely to be Graeme Cubbin's work on the Harrison Line which should be published shortly. The wider awareness of the LNRS continued to grow both nationally and internationally, witness the number of research queries we are getting and also the increasing membership. Part of this may be due to the correspondence carried out through "SEA BREEZES" and also through contacts established by members of the Council.

Treasurer's Report

Speaking to the report the hon. Treasurer referred to the rising costs of the Society, not least postage, requiring an increase in subscriptions. In the ensuing general discussion it was pointed out that the last increase in subscriptions was about 12 years ago. Whilst most members spoke in favour of the increase, the view was expressed that no person having interest, knowledge or expertise to offer should be prevented from joining due to their current particular financial situation. In other words, the Council be empowered to deal sympathetically in such circumstances and, where thought appropriate, vary the 'normal' subscription. With this proviso accepted there was unanimous approval for the Council recommendation that subscriptions for the coming annual season would be:-

| | |
|--|---------|
| All Members (including local, country and sen. citizens) | £ 7 - - |
| Family membership | 10 - - |
| Corporate Membership | 7 - - |
| (the latter to be reviewed next year) | |

Venue and Time of the General Meetings

The Chairman outlined a number of reasons why a change of venue from William Brown Street in the evening to the Education Suite* of the Maritime Museum at midday was desirable.

It was then proposed, seconded and agreed that as from September 17th 1992, all meetings would be held at the Maritime Museum at 1200 noon for the lecture or talk to commence at 1230 and the proceedings to conclude by 1400.

The Chairman read out the list of speakers and subjects for the 1992-93 season, prepared and arranged by G. Cubbin.

* Note: the Education Suite is situated below the Maritime Records Centre at the Maritime Museum.

A.O.B.

Archives

The Society Archivist, A. Rowson, referred to the problems now arising with the LNRS acceptance and storage of archival material currently at the Maritime Museum. The situation is to be reviewed and regulated by discussion with the Museum staff. The Chairman expressed his anxiety to see that Liverpool material is kept locally and not dispersed outside Merseyside to other Museums where it may never be on display.

Membership List

The suggestion from a member that a list of members' names and their particular maritime interests should be circulated to all members received general approval, subject to the proviso that not all members may wish this information to be generally available*. Eventually it was suggested that first a questionnaire should be circulated. To this was added a further suggestion that this should also include a request for potential speakers.

* It should be noted that the names and addresses of all members are held on a computer solely for the purpose of printing address labels for the mailing of the BULLETIN.

Further Research

H. Hignett referred to the contacts made recently with other archives as far afield as Hawaii and California with the idea that we will have information about records and their whereabouts which will be available to our members on request. A temporary list is being prepared.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the members enjoyed a most interesting historical film about the Liverpool Overhead Railway, arranged and shown by member G. Wright.

REVIEW

"JELLA" by Dea Birkett,

Victor Gollanz 1992

£14.99

This book is substantially the description of the passage of an Elder Dempster Lines vessel from Lagos to the UK. The author was able to observe the crew at work and leisure, noting that the vessel, designed to carry 50 or so crew, carried a mere half that number. Although a supernumary passenger, after a little time she became accepted as one of the crew. Although we learn little new but find a feminine/landlubbers view of seafaring in the 1980's never obtained in the usual maritime publications

A book well worth reading.

LIVERPOOL NAUTICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30th APRIL 1992

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

| 1990/91 EXPENDITURE | 1991/92 | 1990/91 | INCOME | 1991/92 |
|--------------------------|---------|---------|----------------------|---------|
| 57.00 "THE BULLETIN" | 57.00 | 382.96 | SUBSCRIPTIONS | 485.46 |
| 47.32 SUNDRY PRINTING | 37.95 | - - | DONATIONS | 15.00 |
| 97.09 POSTAGES | 110.14 | 17.70 | COFFEE/REFRESHMENTS | 26.52 |
| - - TRANSACTIONS | 2613.00 | | SALE OF TRANSACTIONS | 454.85 |
| - - SPEAKERS' EXPENSES | 69.18 | 150.00 | ADV. REVENUE | - - - |
| 30.36 MISCELLANEOUS | 38.47 | 87.46 | MISCELLANEOUS | 14.00 |
| - - | - - | 500.00 | MAR MUS** | - - |
| 50.00 ST. JOHN'S HOSPICE | - - | | | - - |
| 940.43 BALANCE | | | BALANCE | 1929.89 |
| <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> | | <hr/> |
| 1222.20 | 2925.74 | 1222.20 | | 2925.74 |

** From Educational Fund

BALANCE SHEET

| 1990/91 | 1991/92 | 1990/91 | 1991/92 |
|-------------------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|---------|
| £ | £ | £ | £ |
| 127.62 CURRENT A/C BALANCE 30/4/92 | 147.73 | 187.19 CURRENT A/C BALANCE 31/3/91 | 127.62 |
| 2638.77 DEPOSIT A/C BALANCE 30/4/92 | 737.65 | 1570.42 DEPOSIT A/C BALANCE 31/3/91 | 2638.77 |
| | | 68.35 DEPOSIT A/C INTEREST | 48.88 |
| | | 940.43 BALANCE INCOME/EXPEND | - - - |
| - - BALANCE Exp./Inc | 1929.89 | | - - - |
| <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| 2766.39 | 2815.27 | 2766.39 | 2815.27 |
| <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> |


Hon Treasurer

30th April 1992

A short history of the wood ship WALLACE of Liverpool, 762 tons, 139' x 30.8' x 22.6', built St. John, New Brunswick 1840 by Charles Dawson

WALLACE, built of black birch, pine, spruce and oak, was launched on 30 November 1840 at St. John, N.B. by George Thomson, who belonged to a family of shipowners and shipbuilders of Dumfries, Scotland. He had come to Saint John, New Brunswick, Canada in 1816 as master of the brig JESSIE and settled to build ships at L'Etang, a small harbour in the parish of St. George, Charlotte County, New Brunswick's most southerly county.

In about 1826, he moved down the coast to the east side of St. John. His older brother John joined him in 1833 and was followed by his sons and grandsons in carrying on the family firm which owned ships and built up the Thomson fleet. Confusion often arises with the family's surname, which is sometimes spelt with a p, but this belongs to the family with Irish connections who built on the west side of St. John.

"A fine new ship of 700 tons", the newspaper report of the launching said, "with a full length figurehead of Sir William Wallace. Take her altogether she is a noble looking vessel".

WALLACE was sent overseas "by certificate". This was one of the two procedures alternative to registering a vessel in Canada: the Comptroller of Customs issued the certificate under which the vessel sailed direct to her owner's country. Dimensions, tonnage, place and date of launch, builder, owner, agent, destination, and master were all stated on such a certificate. WALLACE's was issued at St. John on 1 December 1840. The other alternative, used 1857-67, was for the vessel to be issued with a Governor's Pass for her export. For vessels built on pure speculation, the new vessel's captain would often be expected to act as her salesman when he arrived in the UK.

Right at the start of her voyage to England, WALLACE struck on the Murr Ledges off Grand Manan Island in the Bay of Fundy. When word came of the disaster, George Thomson, leaving his largest ship PRINCESS ROYAL, 1109 tons, on the stocks, hastened down to Grand Manan in an endeavour to get WALLACE off the ledge if possible. They probably jettisoned much of her cargo of lumber. George Thomson, it was said, over exerted himself in this task and died at Grand Manan on 10 February 1841, aged 54 years. It was said that "he had lived for and with his ships and he died for one of them".

WALLACE was repaired and sent to Liverpool under Captain Maine. There she was surveyed (Survey No. 4209) in Canning Graving Dock on 2 July 1841, and the comprehensive two-page foolscap size report shows how thorough this was. In his general remarks, the surveyor, George Winram, who was assisted by William Pope, stated: "The general appearance of this ship is very good ... I think her worthy of any indulgence the committee may think proper to confer on her but from the quantity of spruce in her, we could not strictly abiding by the rules ourselves recommend more than four years, but as she was launched on 30th November 1840 as per certificate dated St. Johns (sic) Decr. 1st 1840 the owners have every trust that the committee will extend the date of when built to 1841."

The Committee chose to ignore this plea to bend the rules and their Minute dated 20th July 1841 assigned WALLACE A1 classification for four years from the date of build, "if sheathed and yellow-metalled, being done at present". She duly received her A1 Certificate and was finally registered in Liverpool on 7 August 1841.

At this period, Liverpool shipowners were buying considerable numbers of Canadian-built vessels; by the mid 1850's, over 50% of them. WALLACE

was bought by Glen & Anderson. She was some 25% larger than the average size of Liverpool ship at the time. She is shown on the survey report as destined for the "East Indies", a pretty vague term then in use, which appears to have meant India and parts east thereof. When she first appears in Lloyds Register for 1842/3, her maiden voyage is shown as to India with Captain Maine still in command. He is shown as remaining with her for some 5 years, with voyages to India, Port Phillip (Victoria, Australia) and Valparaiso. After that, Captain John Myers, born Newcastle 1821, took over for five years, with voyages to Port Phillip, Callao, Valparaiso and Coquimba.

Because of her short approval time of four years, fairly normal for vessels built in Canada largely of so-called "softwood", we can read in Lloyds Registers after the expiry of this time the amount of repair work that was carried out on her to enable her to satisfy the requirements of the succeeding surveys. That it is not always possible to rely completely on Lloyds Registers is shown from the entries for the years 1852 and 1853 which show "London" as her destination and Capt J. Myers in command. Such a long period of inactivity usually meant that the vessel was laid up waiting for a voyage or perhaps even expecting her end, depending on her age and condition.

I have discovered that much more happened during those years, because it was then that my great grandfather William Kennedy, about whom I have written previously in the Bulletin, joined her. William Kennedy had at this time finished a long spell of some six years as chief mate of the wood ship CHRISTIAN#. He had passed his examination in Glasgow on 15 January 1852, and his master's certificate No. 3375 was issued in Greenock, his home-town, on 23 January. His Register Ticket No. was 184019.

449 tons, owned by Stirling, Gordon, the old-established Glasgow firm trading to the West Indies. Many of their vessels had been built by the famous Greenock shipbuilders Scotts, particularly during the period 1780-1830, and it is felicitous that the great marine artist Robert Salmon had in 1818, during his stay in Greenock from 1811 to 1822, depicted the preparations for her launch in 1818 in two fine paintings.

On 3 March 1852, still owned by Glen & Anderson of Liverpool, WALLACE left London, and still in command of Captain John Myers. His Register Ticket No. was 276193. It is interesting that he had attained his certificate on 26 February 1852, the very day on which he signed the Agreement for this voyage.

WALLACE is shown on the Ship's Agreement for the voyage as bound "from London to Cardiff (presumably for a ballast cargo of coal - note C.D.) thence to San Francisco and any other port in the Pacific Ocean and back to a final port of discharge in the UK. Voyage not to exceed three years".

WALLACE's mate, William Matheson McKay, 28 yrs old, of Dingwall, left the ship at Cardiff, and William Kennedy seems to have been called at short notice to take his place. So, departing from his wife and three young sons at home in Greenock, William joined WALLACE at Cardiff on 22 March, from whence she sailed on 25 March. His wages were to be £6 per month.

After 143 days sailing from Cardiff, WALLACE arrived at Callao on 15 August 1852, and there William Kennedy became captain on 25 August.

WALLACE sailed from Callao 27 September and arrived at San Francisco in the middle of November to signs of utter chaos, with hundreds of abandoned vessels lying rotting at their moorings for want of a freight in the bloated market conditions created in the aftermath of the gold-rush. Many of her sailors absconded and created great replacement

problems for her captain. There he might have seen some of the great clippers of the period straining to get away to the tea-ports of China.

SOVEREIGN OF THE SEAS was there, 103 days from New York. She however sailed back east, via New York, to Liverpool. There she was seen by the great owner of the Black Ball Line, James Baines, who decided she was the type of vessel he required to build up his fleet, and he eventually commissioned four ships from her builder Donald McKay and later bought four more.

Captain Kennedy finally managed to leave San Francisco in early February, arrived in Callao at the end of April and departed at the end of September. He presumably loaded guano at the Chincha Islands, where the Agreement shows that WALLACE called, and her long wait there demonstrates the congestion caused by the enormous demand for the material, with hundreds of ships at a time waiting their turn to load. The discovery of guano, it is said, had given an impetus to trade just at a time of depression in shipping. The import of Peruvian guano into the UK alone reached a peak of 300,000 tons in 1858. William Gibbs & Co. (the London associates of Gibbs, Bright & Co of Bristol and Liverpool) had a monopoly for its import into Britain, and for varying periods also into the British Empire, the USA, and most of Europe.

After a passage home from Callao of just over 100 days, WALLACE was reported "off the port" of Liverpool on 14 January 1854. One of the ships Captain Kennedy might have seen on her way out was the St. John-built ship LAUREL, 808 tons, under her Scottish captain Simon Graham. To be towed into dock by one of the tugs like JOHN BULL would have cost Captain Kennedy about £10, but it seems he had to wait some days for the opportunity, for he did not dock in Princes Dock until 17 January.

After they had been paid off, WALLACE's crew assembled in the hall of the Liverpool Sailors' Home and presented Captain Kennedy with a handsome marine day and night spyglass "as a mark of Esteem for his Gentlemanly conduct to them during a voyage from San Francisco to Liverpool" in the words of the elegant copperplate inscription engraved on it.

This it must be remembered was at a time when the stringent 22 Regulations for Maintaining Discipline in the British Merchant service were still in force. (See back page of LMS BULLETIN for Spring 1989). The spyglass was manufactured by Sewills who were established in Liverpool in 1800 and are still active in the city. A sad sign of the decline of Liverpool as a seaport is that their productions are now probably mainly of interest to collectors, but they still do manufacture a superb marine chronometer.

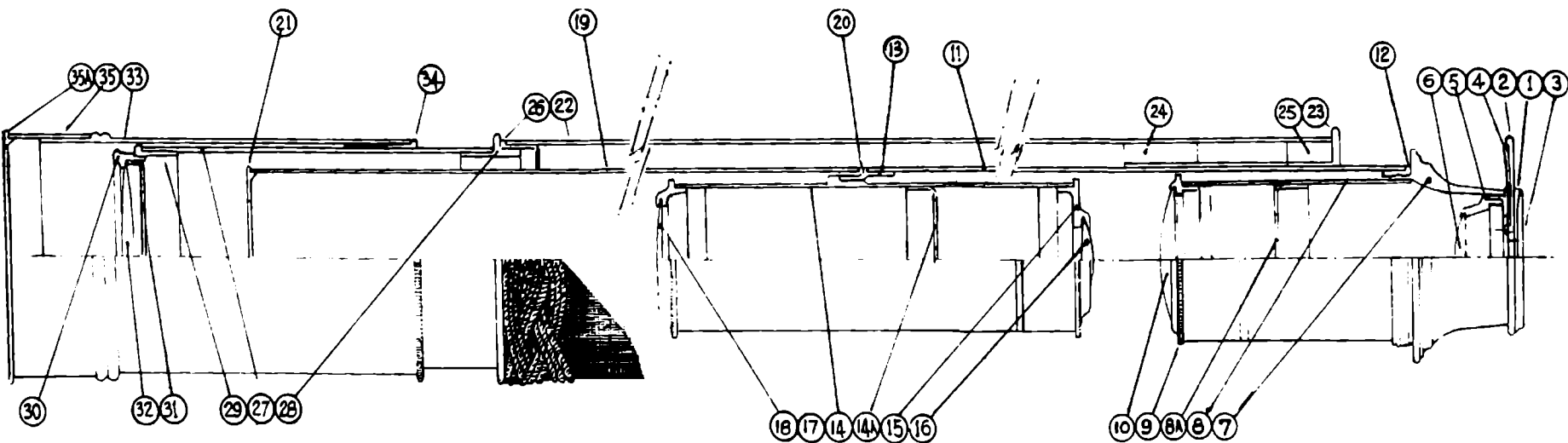
As a proud reminder of his ship, Captain Kennedy had her portrait painted, perhaps by one of the many marine artists working in Liverpool at the time, or perhaps by William Clark in his own Scottish hometown Greenock. The present whereabouts of the portrait is sadly unknown. WALLACE was bought later in 1854 by the renowned Glasgow shipbuilders Alexander Stephens & Son. It is probable that they used her for bringing home shipbuilding timber and other supplies, since they had shortly before disposed of their ship ALEXANDER, previously used in this way. According to Lloyds Register, WALLACE next sailed to Quebec under Captain D. Wilkie that year and to Australia under Captain J. Robb in 1855/6. It is believed that she was then sold to Valparaiso, where she presumably ended her days as a coal hulk or storeship.

Main sources: SAINT JOHN SHIPS & THEIR BUILDERS by Esther Clark Wright, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, 1976.

Ship's Agreements, PRO, London, Ref: B.T. 98/3843, Lloyd's Registers 1842-57.

Captain's Records, PRO, London, Ref: B.T. 122/4 and 124/7.

GREYHOUNDS OF THE SEA by Carl C. Cutler, Wellingborough, 1984.



Sevill Dav and Night Spyglass presented by his crew to Captain William Kennedy, 17 January 1854

SOUTHAMPTON MARITIME MUSEUM

Wool House Town Quay Southampton

THE MUSEUM was established in the Wool House in 1964. The building itself is a scheduled ancient monument with strong maritime connections. Built by the monks of Beaulieu in the 14th century, for the export of wool, later in its career it served as a prison for French sailors who left period graffiti on the beams: two exceptional bone models of French men-of-war are on view on the upper floor.

Because of 19th century land reclamation, Wool House is no longer by the water which makes the building difficult to place in context, and an attempt was made recently to establish a larger waterfront museum. Due to financial constraints, this has been shelved for the time being. Our largest exhibit, the 1930 Thorneycroft-built tug tender *Calshot* will be on view again to the public this Summer: this time at Ocean Village, adjacent to another preserved ship the *Shieldhall*.

Current displays at Wool House cover the development of the docks from the 1840's, and cargo handling, with some information on ship-building, and local ferry and steamer services, while upstairs is a large collection of liner models including the 28ft *Queen Mary*, most of which relate to the period when Southampton was the *Gateway to the World*. The *Titanic* exhibition will be enhanced this Summer for this, the 80th anniversary of her sinking.

The reserve collections accumulated for the new museum, include liner furniture, silver, china and ephemera; film, trade literature and posters; as well as pictures, paintings and models. Ship repair machinery, tools from various maritime trades and eight small craft including a speedboat of 1912 and two examples of our own vernacular vessel the Itchen Ferry are also in store. Our maritime photographic archive includes the A.B.P. collection and the recently-acquired Mitchell collection. Archival material is also held on Furness withy, Vosper-Thorneycroft, Scott-Paine and Camper-Nicholson: there is some material on yacht building and an extensive library. Some Scott-Paine models and related material will be on view at English Heritage Calshot Castle from Easter.

Researchers are welcome to consult the above material by arrangement and copy photographs may be obtained at reasonable rates. Marine paintings not currently required for exhibition are incorporated in our Art Lease Scheme and therefore appear at various venues throughout the City, and a similar scheme operates with models.

Admission Free: Shop: Limited Access for Disabled: No Car Parking

Open Tuesday to Sunday: 10 am to 5 pm: Closed for Lunch

WILSON BROTHERS LTD

Timber Merchants, Bobbin & Shuttle Manufacturers
Shipowners

By Douglas Head

THE COMPANY originated in 1823 in Todmorden on the Lancs/Yorks border when Lawrence Wilson, having learned the trade of bobbin-making, commenced business employing one man and a boy to produce bobbins to meet the demands of a rapidly growing cotton industry. The business quickly grew so that in 1831 more land was purchased and four years later a large new mill was in operation. Lawrence was later joined by three sons, the Company became Lawrence Wilson & Sons - later changed to Wilson Brothers.

In 1860 Lawrence visited Athlone, Co Westmeath and took over the premises known locally as the 'Old Whisky Distillery'. This he equipped with circular saw benches and horizontal and upright band-saws, turning lathes & etc. Before long he was employing between 1000 and 200 men with 70 to 100 horses. Some 7,000 tons of timber passed through the mills annually, most exported to England. The company also manufactured and exported wood wool used to upholstery work.

Two decades later the thriving business enabled the firm to open a works at Garston, the main reason for this being that Garston was the port of discharge for timber cargoes from Ireland. This new venture, constructed and opened on the site of a brickworks in 1892, was known as the Atlas Bobbin Works. In 1902 Garston became the headquarters of the company with the name Wilson Bros, Bobbin Co (1900) Ltd.

Originally the main source of timber used in manufacturing bobbins was Ireland, but timber from the mainland became the most used with small amounts also shipped in from Canada - chiefly birch. About 400 tons of timber per week was used in the manufacture of five or six thousand gross of bobbins: the waste wood put through a carbonisation process producing charcoal, wood acids and various chemical by-products.

Over the years the overseas market for the company's products tailed off, the last large market to be lost being India in 1952. Trade in the home market also declined so that in May 1958 the company was forced to close its doors after 135 years of business.

The company had, over the years, owned a small fleet of ships carrying cargoes of household coal from Garston to the small ports of Ireland such Wicklow, Wexford, Waterford, Bray, Drogheda and Dundalk. The return freight was beech logs. Occasionally the vessels would go to remote lochs on the West Coast of Scotland such as Inner Loch Sween and Loch Broom where they could anchor close to the trees being felled. The trees were then trimmed and rolled into the water and ferried to the vessel in one of its lifeboats to be lifted aboard using the vessel's own winches and derricks.

Wilsons entered the shipowning business in 1898, purchasing the small steamer *Ibis* from Liverpool shipowner William Rowland. In 1901 they purchased another steamer, the *Carlingford Lough* from the Carlingford Lough S.S. Co of Newry. The Company later added three small wooden sailing vessels to the fleet, *Walter J. Cummins*, *Elizabeth Alice* and *Brandon*. The three latter all went to James Crooks of Prescot around 1907. The *Carlingford Lough* went to Liverpool purchasers around 1910 and was wrecked May 12th 1913 on Curachan Island while on passage from Weston Point to Castle Bay, Barra with a cargo of salt.

The *Ibis* was sold to Liverpool owners in 1919 and was wrecked on 16th November 1923 in the Crosby channel outward-bound for Dublin.

In 1916 the steamer *Helen* was purchased and which had a rather short life with the company for on 23rd August 1917 she disappeared when bound from Dublin to Garston with a cargo of timber taking with her the eight man crew. She was last sighted ten miles east of Kish Light, Dublin Bay on 23rd.

Just prior to the end of the 1st W.W. the *Helen* was replaced with the steamer *Glencona*, which served the company until 1st March 1926 when she sank 15 miles NW by N from the Skerries after being abandoned on passage from Garston for Dublin with its cargo of coal on fire.

The company purchased the steamer *Glen Helen* in 1920 and sold her 12 years later to become a sand dredger in South Wales.

In 1921 the 394 tons new-building *Glen Mary* entered the fleet; the only vessel to have been built to the order of the company. Sold in 1930 she continued sailing until 1957 when she was broken up at Port Glasgow. The sale of this ship marked the end of the company's operations as shipowners.

Fleet List

Ibis 1899-1912 Iron screw steamer 169 grt 110.2 x 20.1 x 9ft
ON825542 2-cyl eng and construction by J. Payne, Bristol (1881)

Carlingford Lough 1901-1911 Steel screw steamer 135.7 x 20.1 x 9.4ft
ON98271 245grt 2-cyl eng Ross & Duncan Glasgow cons J.Fullerton P'sley 1891

Helen 1916-1917 st scr str 124 x 22.1 x 9ft 235grt
ON111239 2-cyl eng by Muir & Houston Glsgw, constr. J. Shearer Gl'gow 1900

Glen Helen 1920-1933 st scr str 130.5 x 23.2 x 9.5ft 315grt
ON138873 2-cyl eng and constr. Crabtree Gt Yarm. 1918

Glencona 1918-1926 st scr str 282 grt 125.5 x 22.6 x 8.9ft
ON125436 2-cyl eng and constr by Hepple South Shields

Glen Mary 1921-1930 st scr str 394grt 143.2 x 24.6 x 10.5ft
ON145864 3-cyl eng and constr by Crabtree Gt Yarmouth 1921

Brandon 1902-1907 wood schooner 130grt 88.3 x 19.8 x 11.7ft
ON29880 built by White, Portsmouth 1862

Elizabeth Alice 1902-1907 wood schooner 152grt 96.6 x 22.2 x 12.1ft
ON54546 built Scott, Bowling 1866

Walter J. Cummins 1902-1907 wood brigantine 146grt 91.2 x 23.1 x 11.6ft
ON50850 built Brown Miramachi N.B. 1865

Emrys 1900-1901 wood schooner 94grt 78 x 20.2 x 9.6ft
ON27864 built D. Davis Newquay, Cardiganshire 1859

Steamer managers E.W. Turner
Sailing vsl managers J.C. Hornby

LIVERPOOL NAUTICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

PROGRAMME 1992-1993

| | | |
|------------|----------------------|---|
| 17th Sept | A.H. McClelland | "A Few Tramps of Distinction" |
| 15th Oct | J.A. Billington | "Royal National Lifeboat Institution" |
| 19th Nov | Chris Molesley | "The Art of Ship Modelling" |
| 17th Dec | Christmas Social | incl Nautical Quiz |
| 21st Jan | Rev. Canon K. Peters | "The Work of the Missions to Seamen" |
| 18th Feb | J.E. Cowden | "The National Lines of Ghana and Nigeria" |
| 18th March | Tony Lane | "Society on the Edge; Survivors in Ships' Boats in the Second W.W." |
| 15th April | N.G. Green | "Logistics and the Tall Ships Events" |
| 20th May | A.G.M., | followed by an informal exhibition of Members' Models, Memorabilia, pictures etc. |

All Meetings in the Education Suite of the Merseyside Maritime Museum.

1200 noon. Talks to begin 1230

LOCAL NOTES

The (Oil) rig is back in action about 2 miles off the coast at Ainsdale, near Southport. Not sure what they are looking for - maybe merely checking to see if gas exists. There has been an oil well at Formby with a nodding donkey drawing oil since the 1930's. I wonder if our Southport members are expecting to be 'oil sheiks' shortly. Perhaps the wealthy members from Formby and district will enlighten us.

TALL SHIPS Return

The Tall Ships are visiting Merseyside again beginning 12th August. Our hon Secretary has been appointed liaison officer to one of the vessels, "Sedov" - the largest one (reg. at Riga). This year the number of ships expected to berth in Mersey docks is 80. Most will be berthed in Birkenhead's Vittoria Dock; a few will berth in Canning and Albert Docks on the Liverpool side. Among the many functions will be a spectacular firework display from three sites simultaneously - Perch Rock Battery, small vessels off Seacombe and Albert Dock on Saturday night.

The Grand Parade of Ships will commence at 1400 on Sunday 16th August from the line-up anchorage between Woodside and Bromborough.

The huge crowds in 1984 which lined the river and saturated the north-east Wirral, have caused the authorities to arrange for the Police to take extreme measures to keep the major roads to and from Wallasey free of traffic from 0700 to 1900 on the 16th.

LIVERPOOL NAUTICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

(FOUNDED 1938)

Vol 36, No 2



Autumn 1992

BULLETIN



Upper Mersey Lightvessel
"Arthur Sinclair"
Circa 1903

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Application forms for membership and any other correspondence to:-

**Hon Secretary, L.N.R.S.
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Albert Dock Liverpool L3 4AA**

.....

SOCIETY NOTES

Members interests

David Eccles is researching the history of Larrinaga's. Was pleased with some information obtained from one of the Spanish delegates at the Maritime History Conference (See p ..).

A.J. (Tony) Blackler is interested Fernie's: Fernie Bros., W.J. Fernie, David Fernie, Henry Fernie & Co., Merchant's Trading Co Ltd., Liverpool Shipping Co Ltd

Tony is also interested in Britain S.S. Co (Watts, Watts) London.

John Duffy and Jim Cowden maintain their strong interests in Elder Dempsters.

Harry Hignett is interested in listing the locations of shipping archives, not only in local records offices, but also those in the hands of other institutions commercial companies or private individuals.

If members will let the editor know of any specific interests they have and wish to pursue further, he will print same as above. Other members may be able to assist or even have an allied interest.

LAFONIA

by Sid Lindsay

The Lafone Family are virtually unknown on Merseyside today, and yet they have made an interesting and varied contribution to our heritage. Coming to this country as Huguenot refugees in the early 18th century they were to settle in the Merseyside area where Samuel Lafone, the second son of Alexander and Mary Lafone, was born in 1770 at Mount Pleasant, Liverpool. Nothing of known of his early life or education, but he set up a tannery in Bevington Bush, also trading as a hide & leather merchant. A business man of much vigour, he not only married twice but fathered at least sixteen children !

His eldest son, Samuel Fisher Lafone, the subject of this article and his second son, Alexander Ross Lafone, left their home in West Derby emigrating to Argentina to establish a source of hides to be handled at home by their father's business. Young Samuel's early years saw him as a fairly influential young man in Buenos Aires, but his marriage to the daughter of a local dignitary caused him to be clapped in prison because he was not a Roman Catholic and he had offended the faith. This was eventually resolved and he moved to Montevideo, Uruguay, where, with his brothers, they commenced a 'jerked' meat factory. As a young man whose eye was always open to business, it was not long before young Samuel forged a partnership with General Justo Jose Urquiza, a provincial governor who owned over 300,000 head of cattle. The Lafone's plant for processing meat and hides was so successful, they were buying cattle and land for themselves. They even convinced the local government that they would cull the surplus seals on the Isle de Lobos, probably then the largest seal breeding ground in the South Atlantic.

In 1846 Samuel Lafone completed a deal with the British Government which was to purchase half of East Island of the Falklands, known to this day as Lafonia with the purpose of raising cattle and sheep for wool, hides and meat. For many reasons it was not a success and Samuel's reputation was to suffer, but nevertheless he was responsible for attracting concern in this country to the Falkland Islands. Because of the critical financial position arising from Samuel's activities, the Falkland Islands Trading Company came into being with the Lafones and the Government as shareholders together with some of Lafone's business friends in this country. He was to stay in Uruguay until his death in 1871 at the age of 66 years. The full story of his life is not known but he made lots of money and many enemies. Alexander Ross Lafone returned to live at Thingwall Hall on the Wirral acting as Samuel's agent in the UK.

Samuel's half brother, Alfred, became Member of Parliament for Bermondsey, and the youngest, Henry who had lived at Crosby, became head of the greatest warehousing complex in Southwark - Butler's Wharf Company. During the American Civil War he was a secret agent for the Confederates. Henry's son, Alexander Malins Lafone was awarded the Victoria Cross in Palestine in 1917 aged 47 years, unfortunately he was killed. Alfred had one son who became a Rear Admiral, another son was the Chief Constable of the Metropolitan Police in London.

Samuel Fisher Lafone had assumed responsibility for supplying the settlements on the Falkland Islands via Montevideo, although subsequently the responsibility lay with the Falkland Islands Company. As in the early years much of this work was arranged by charter, the need to ensure regular supplies brought with it a problem in finding ship's at Lafone's convenience. The F.I. Co. did eventually provide a steam packet on regular service between Montevideo and Port Stanley, while smaller vessels plied between the islands. Some of the ships in the company's charge either as service vessels, or later as hulks, carried links with the port of Liverpool and for BULLETIN readers they are of interest.

In 1904 the F.I. Co. purchased the Liverpool pilot schooner No. 10 better known as the "*George Holt*". A fast and superior craft, she was the last sailing vessel built for the Liverpool Pilot Service. On being sold to the F.I. Co she was re-named "*Lafonia*" and used mainly for the inter-islands service. After a number of years useful sailing she was decommissioned and used as a lighter in Port Stanley. Her remains can be detected in the harbour.

The second "*Lafonia*", a steamer built in 1931 continued in service until 1957. Her name was changed in 1936 to make way for the third "*Lafonia*".

The third "*Lafonia*" was formerly the "*Southern Coast*", a fairly familiar sight in Liverpool until 1936. She was built for Samuel Hough & Co Ltd of 25 Water St. Liverpool and two years later in 1913 the firm was merged with the Powell Line and the Bacon Line and four years later reforming as Coast Lines Ltd. As "*Southern Coast*" the ship was engaged on the Liverpool - South Coast - London passenger/cargo service. In 1936 on being purchased by the F.I. Co. she was renamed "*Lafonia*" and placed on the South American/ Falklands service until being requisitioned by the Ministry of Transport to be managed by Elder Dempster Ltd in 1942.

In March 1943 she was involved in a bizarre incident which resulted in her loss. Under Capt M.O.V. Whitfield she left the Thames in ballast bound for the Clyde and sailed in a convoy of two columns sailing in line ahead. The Commodore ship was the leader of the port column and the vice-commodore the starboard column with a distance between the two lines 600 yards and the distance between the ships some 400 yards. Capt. Whitfield had been advised that they were likely to pass a southbound convoy in the vicinity of buoy 20D.

At midnight 25th March the "*Lafonia*" came abeam of buoy 20E on her port side, the convoy speed being about seven knots, and the weather was dark and hazy with a moderate breeze and a heavy swell. On the bridge Capt. Whitfield heard a signal of one long blast; it was now becoming foggy and visibility was down to six hundred yards so "*Lafonia*" began to sound her whistle. Shortly afterwards Capt. Whitfield heard the signal 'Q' sounded in morse on a ship's whistle and knew that such a signal was from the commodore of the southbound convoy. The commodore of the northbound convoy replied with his own 'C' signal. The ships were each showing masthead and port and starboard lights burning dimly. At 00.25hrs on 26th the masthead and port light of what was assumed to be the commodore ship of the southbound convoy was sighted, bearing dead ahead abeam on the port hand of "*Lafonia*" at a distance of about 600-800 yards. The engine-room telegraph was set on 'stand-by' for urgent action if required. At 00.32 a long blast was heard from a ship which appeared to be very close to "*Lafonia*" and bearing from about dead ahead to fine on the port bow. It was not known if the vessel sounding the signal was one of the southbound convoy, or whether it was the northbound vessel immediately ahead of the "*Lafonia*" which had reduced speed and was falling back.

Capt. Whitfield stopped the engines and sounded one long blast in reply. Very shortly afterwards the masthead and port side-lights of a vessel were sighted which subsequently proved to be the Ellerman Wilson steamer "*Como*" (1205 tons), looming out of the fog bearing practically dead ahead of "*Lafonia*" at a distance of about 500 yards. The wheel of "*Lafonia*" was put hard a'starboard and the third officer blew one long blast on the whistle, the "*Como*" responded with one long blast; both signals indicating that the ships would turn to starboard. However Capt. Whitfield realised that the "*Como*" was now swinging to port and not starboard and ordered engines full astern at the same time sounding three short blasts on the whistle. This was answered by the "*Como*" with three short blasts. Very shortly afterwards the vessels collided.

The stern of the "*Como*" struck the "*Lafonia*" on her port side forward by way of the break in the foc'stle head causing the "*Lafonia*" to heel over to starboard, this was accentuated as the ship had started to move to starboard in her avoiding action. The engines were set full ahead with the wheel amidships to prevent "*Lafonia*" swinging round and into the "*Como*"

which would have smashed the former's lifeboats. The engines were then stopped and the whistle signal 'F' sound to indicate that "*Lafonia*" was disabled and required urgent assistance. Emergency lighting was switched on and the steamer "*Monkstone*" came up on the port quarter and stood by. When it became evident that the "*Lafonia*" was in a precarious position all the crew except two of the deck officers, the carpenter, three engineers and the master were sent across to the "*Monkstone*". At 02.30 the "*Lafonia*" began to list at about 30° and No 1 hold was flooded bringing the danger of the bulkheads between No 1 and No 2 holds collapsing. It was decided to leave the ship until daylight as she was rolling sluggishly in the heavy swell and the remainder of the crew were taken aboard the "*Monkstone*" via one of the life-rafts.

The "*Monkstone*" remained in the vicinity until daylight by which time the "*Lafonia*" had disappeared from sight: later a destroyer appeared to advise the "*Monkstone*" that the "*Lafonia*" had sunk in position 55° 21'N 01°22'E, almost in line with Warkworth Harbour.

It was fortunate that the loss of life was more than one person. A native quartermaster, Jim Brown, was sleeping in his bunk in the fo'cstle almost at the point where the impact occurred. He could not be found when the crew mustered for emergency stations and it can only be presumed that the poor unfortunate fell thro' the hole in the ship's side at the time of the collision.

The fourth "*Lafonia*" was built for the Dundee, Perth & London Shipping Company, one of three ships operating a twice-weekly cargo/passenger service between Leith and London.*

LAFONIA (I) Built by Philip & Son Ltd., as Liverpool Pilot vessel No 10, "*George Holt*" 109ft x 21.5ft 78 tons. Commenced service 21st Nov 1892. Purchased by the F.I. Co in 1904 for inter-islands service. Taken out of inter-island service in 1930.

LAFONIA (II) ON 161827 Built 1931 by H. Robb & Co. Leith 165.8ft x 32.7ft 1344grt/768nrt. Re-named FITZROY 1936 when "*Lafonia*" (III) entered service. Vessel operated until 1957.

LAFONIA (III) ON 131348 Built 1911 by Greenock & Grangemouth Dockyard Co Ltd, as "*Dorothy Hough*" for Samuel Hough Ltd of 25, Water St. Liverpool 283.3ft x 36.1ft, 1,872grt/1091nrt. (In 1913 Samuel Hough merged with F.H. Powell & Co. and J. Bacon Ltd to establish Coast Lines.) 1918: re-named "*Southern Coast*". 1936: sold to F.I. Co Ltd to run between South American ports and the Falklands; re-named "*Lafonia*"; converted to burn oil-fuel. 1939: requisitioned by Ministry of Transport; placed under management of Elder Dempster Ltd. 1945: sunk after collision 26th March off Thames Estuary.

LAFONIA (IV) ON 123346 Built 1913 as "*Perth*" by Caledon S'b'dg & Eng Co. Ltd for the Dundee, Perth & London Shipping Co. Ltd 280.2ft x 40.2ft 2259grt/1101nrt 1945: purchased by the F.I. Co Ltd to replace "*Lafonia*" (III) in 1945.

* The D.P.L. Co was incorporated in 1826, and maintained a regular steamer line between Dundee, Leith and the Thames for over a century. After WW2 coastal traffic declined and the firm turned, for a time, to general coast trading even buying a couple of small coasting tankers. The company became a 'shell' company dealing in finance and other interests with backing from the ill-fated Slater-Walker Group and in this capacity acquired the Falklands Island Company in 1972. Both companies were taken over by Charrington Gardner Lockett Co in 1974, and these in turn became subsidiaries of the Coalite Group in 1977. In 1989 in what was almost a bizarre situation Coalite were taken over by Anglo-United who were principally interested in the Group's fuel businesses, and to determine the future of the Falkland Islands Company, proposed the setting up of a trust.

"THE JHELUM : A Victorian Merchant Ship"

by Michael Stammers and John Kearon

The "Jehlum" was a wooden merchant sailing ship, built in Liverpool in 1846, trading chiefly to South America until 1870. In that year she arrived at Stanley in the Falkland in a distressed condition and was abandoned as an hulk. Her hull remains, albeit in a deteriorated condition, and over the past 5 years has been stabilised, measured and recorded by staff of the Merseyside Maritime Museum led by Mike Stammers.

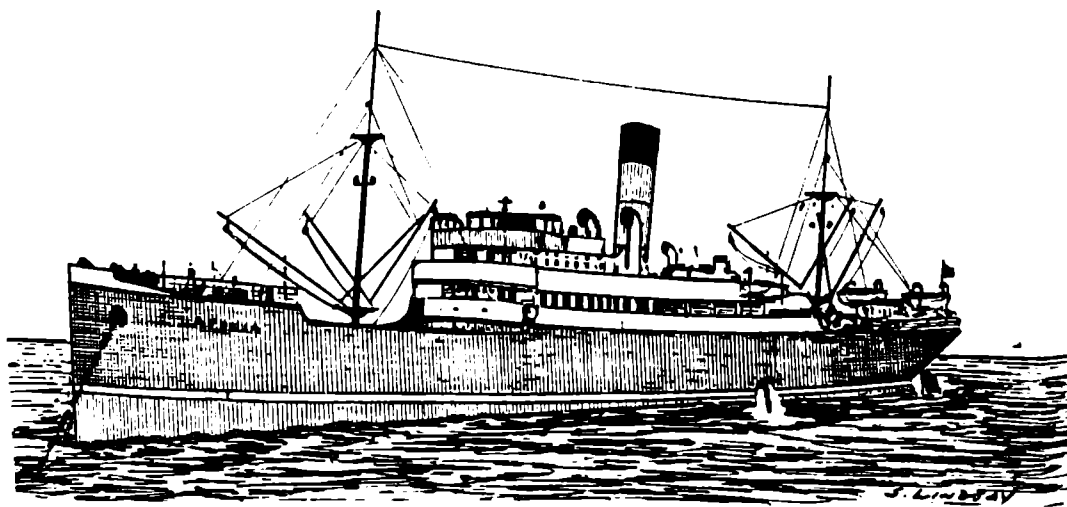
This book is a detailed account of her builders, owners and crews, combined with a summary of her remains. The account is well illustrated by photographs and plans, and the historical section is based on original sources in the U.K. and the Falkland.

Mike is Keeper of the Maritime Museum, and is LNRS President. John Kearon is ship-keeper at the Maritime Museum - a former ship's carpenter; has specialised in the conservation of wooden craft.

160 pp 56 b&w photographs 10" x 7" (248mm x 172mm)

Price £16.99

Allan Sutton Publishing Stroud Gloucestershire GL5 2BU



1937 S.S. " LAFONIA " - ex " SOUTHERN COAST " sunk 1943.

Passage of the Steamer CANADA down
the Rapids of the St Lawrence
(from the "Oswego Palladium" 19th June 1858)

A correspondent of the Buffalo "Commercial" furnishes the following interesting account of the passage of the Great Western steamer CANADA down the rapids of the St Lawrence:

"The following morning at daybreak the CANADA started for Montreal on a voyage deemed by all on board to be of the kind called 'neck or nothing'. The first rapids of importance, the Long Sault, whose length is at least seven miles, are extremely boisterous, the boiling water heaving up from eight to twelve feet high, and presenting a view which, in the middle of the Atlantic after a month of unceasing and lost violent storm, the water passes at an enormous speed. These were passed rapidly, the CANADA minding her helm as easily as a bark canoe obeys the paddle, and travelled, I am informed by a passenger who was on board of her, the seven miles in fifteen minutes.

Thence there is smooth water until arriving at the rapids of the Split Rock, heretofore deemed impassable by any vessel more than two hundred feet in length. This was the most dangerous part of the passage, it being necessary to make a curve almost at right angles, within a space less than the length of the steamer, when she was going at the same enormous speed. - Huge rocks, whose tops are scarcely covered by water, appear on either side of the channel, by the suction becoming entirely uncovered - The skillful pilot, John Rankin, the discoverer of the "Lost

Channel" in the Long Sault Rapids, with the dexterity of a skillful player at billiards making his canon, let the bow of the boat strike the rock forcibly on her starboard side, thereby throwing her stern into the centre of the channel, by the only practicable method, and permitting her to pass through in safety. Next the Cedar Rapids were reached. They were passed at the same rate, the boat striking alike aft and forward, but no substantial injury was sustained. The Lachine Rapids, near Montreal were the next. Here the CANADA again struck. The rocks here are exceedingly bold, and present a rough and jagged surface, but were passed in safety, and in a short space of time the vessel and her bold mariners glided placidly and exaltingly through the butments of the Victoria Bridge.

This adventure will long be celebrated in the annals of the St Lawrence and the Lakes connected with it. Some of the leaps made by this vessel, of 300 ft in length, were six or eight feet in depth. It is regarded as settling the question of an enlargement of the Canadian locks below Lake Ontario. Large vessels, it is proved, can go down the St Lawrence, but they cannot return. An increased value is now given to the steamers now laid up at other ports on Lake Ontario, as it is proved they can be taken to the rivers and sounds of the Atlantic coast."

Local Notes

Oil Exploration in Liverpool Bay

The oil rig which was stationed off Ainsdale beach from June this year has now been moved about 4 miles north and appears to be off Lytham St. Annes. This follows success in finding sufficient energy sources ten miles north of the Dee Estuary. Hamilton Oil Co who hold the rights to the gas, plan to bring it ashore via an installation near Point of Ayr. Local objections to this both on the Welsh and English sides of the Dee have forced a public inquiry; this to the consternation of those who had hopes that Cammell Lairds would be involved in building the gas installation. It seems that without the work Lairds will finally close.

Ceremonies to mark the 40th Anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic

This event will take place on Merseyside late May 1993. Six large naval vessels will berth in the Mersey for a week. Let us hope that the role of the Merchant Navy will take a prominent place in the event. Query: where will the merchant ships/crews come from ? ?

The Summerfield Steamship Co. Ltd

by Roy Fenton

DURING the early years of the First World War merchant shipbuilding was seriously neglected. Most established shipyards - whatever their previous experience - were turned over to naval work, and very few commercial vessels were laid down. With the enormous loss of ships due to submarines and raiders together with the Admiralty's large scale requisition of colliers and other vessels, the result of this short-sighted policy was inevitable, and a serious shortage of merchant ships threatened the country's ability to wage war and even to feed itself. When large-scale merchant shipbuilding was belatedly resumed, building of coasters was still neglected, despite considerable losses suffered amongst this group of ships. For instance, U-boats penetrated the Irish Sea as early as January 1915, where their principal targets were coasters.¹ By 1917 the Government in the name of The Shipping Controller was driven to requisitioning coaster from neutral countries, especially Norway.² Certain yards finally received Government orders for so-called "standard" coasters, but as each yard was instructed to build to one of its existing designs, there was little standardisation.

Few of these new-buildings were delivered by the time of the Armistice, and those companies who had coasters could make excellent profits, or - if they chose - sell them at inflated prices. As prices escalated, coasters - and indeed whole fleets - became objects for speculation. Financiers with little, if any, previous interest in shipping would buy them, trade them for a matter of months or even weeks and reckon to sell them on at a handsome profit. New coastal shipping companies mushroomed, buying older ships or converted warships such as the 'Kil' class patrol boats,³ or placing orders for new vessels - in many cases only to sell these before completion. For some reason Cardiff was a centre for this speculation,⁴ and Liverpool coaster owners were more often to be found selling their ships than ordering new ones.⁵ There were only two coastal shipping companies of any substance established on Merseyside during this period. Thomas Brothers Coasters Ltd., was set up by the son and nephews of William Thomas with a prospectus which waxed lyrical on the profits to be made in the coasting trade. The failure of this company and its successors suggested that this generation had not inherited the business acumen of the justly famous Anglesey-born owner and manager of deep-sea sail and steam.⁶ The other new Liverpool coaster company was more down to earth in its expectations, as befitted the practical shipmaster who was its co-founder, Samuel Summerfield.

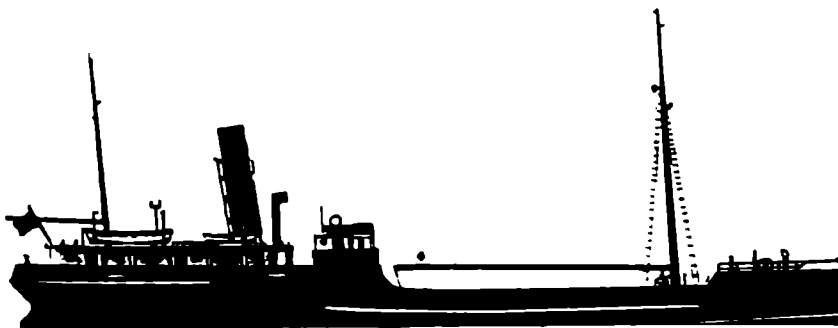
The Summerfield Steamship Co. Ltd was registered in July 1919 to take over contracts for ships which had been placed by Samuel Summerfield and his partner George Henshall.⁷ Samuel Summerfield was a member of a Warrington family that had produced flatmen and seamen for several generations. He was obviously trusted by another of Warrington's hardy sons, William Savage, who gave him command of his steamer *Zillah* in 1895.⁸ Summerfield's partner George Henshall was a provision merchant in Warrington, whilst other subscribers to the company included Dublin coal importer Stephen Kelly. The company took offices at 14 South Castle Street, Liverpool, and its remaining shares were quickly taken up by a wide variety of small subscribers from Lancashire and Cheshire including several Summerfields.

The involvement of a Dublin coal importer indicated the trade for which Summerfield's steamers were intended, and "The Shipbuilder" reporting the delivery of one of the later ships refers to it as being for service between Liverpool and Ireland.⁹ Although meriting a paragraph from this august public-ation, the design of ships could be regarded as something of an anachronism. The *Jessie Summerfield*, delivered in December 1919 by the Ailsa Shipbuilding Co Ltd., had been little more than a repeat of Savage's second *Zillah* which had been built by Ailsa back in 1901. Her length of 143 feet suited her to the coal trade from Liverpool or Garston to Ringsend Basin, Dublin where this was the maximum length which could be accommodated. A small hatch ahead of her foremast was to allow for trimming when carrying a heavy stone cargo, for roadstone from North Wales quarries made a useful

return cargo to the Mersey for ships in the Irish coal trade. This was a pattern of trade which would have been very familiar to Samuel Summerfield during his years with the Zillab fleet.

Trading results during the *Jessie Summerfield*'s first year were good, with profits of almost £5,000 being declared. In anticipation of continuing profits, the company's directors had increased the capital from £70,000 to £120,000 during 1920, but cautious shareholders were slow to take up the extra capital: they were soon to be proved right.

The company's second and third steamers were delivered early in 1921: the *Mary Summerfield* in February and the *Amy Summerfield* in March. The boom of post-war years saw many yards building coasters which had not previously had experience of this type of ship, and the Summerfield pair were built and engined by Day, Summers & Co Ltd. It is not clear whether this Southampton company sub-contracted the building from Ailsa, but they had the use of plans from the Scottish yard, as the two ships were almost identical to the *Jessie Summerfield*. It seems they had been a long time a-building at Southampton: despite the fifteen month gap between the delivery of the *Jessie* and *Amy Summerfield* the price had increased only from £27,500 to £32,900. This suggests that all three orders were placed in 1919: by early 1921 prices were considerably higher. If the *Mary Summerfield* and *Amy Summerfield* had been sold immediately after delivery, as many other coasters were at this time, the shareholders of the Summerfield Steamship Co. Ltd. would have made a handsome profit. But Samuel Summerfield seems to have been more seaman than speculator and his instinct was to continue trading the ships whilst rates remained high. In 1921, however, rates slumped disastrously, and during the company's second year of trading a profit of £5,000 with one ship had been turned into a loss of £10,000 with three.



"Mary Summerfield"

drawn by W.D. Michell

Booms and slumps were nothing new to the coastal trade, and - in hope of better times ahead - losses were covered by mortgages on the ships and personal loans to the company from Captain Samuel Summerfield. But better times did not come and servicing these debts was to mop up the very modest trading profits made in subsequent years. In 1924, for instance, earnings of the three ships exceeded direct costs by just £500. Modest economies were made: in July 1922 the office in Liverpool was given up and the company traded from Henshall's shop in Warrington. This was probably the last time that a sea-going ship was operated from this once-important Mersey port.

Towards the end of 1926 it became obvious to the directors that, with a prolonged coal strike adding to the economic gloom, trade was not going to improve, and disposal of the ships began. In November of that year the *Mary Summerfield* was sold to Dublin coal merchants Wallace Brothers Ltd., who entrusted her management to the Mersey Steamship Co. Ltd. of Liverpool. She was later renamed *Ringwall* and under this name was mined south of the Isle of Man in January 1941.

In January 1927 it was decided to wind up the Summerfield Steamship Co Ltd. and within two months the *Jessie Summerfield* and *Amy Summerfield* were sold to Samuel Summerfield's old firm, Zillah Shipping & Carrying Co Ltd. Having been built more or less to Zillah designs, these ships were well suited to this company's trade, but in the event they kept only the *Amy Summerfield*. She soldiered on until March 1951 when she came to grief at Port Rivals, having just arrived from Liverpool to load stone. The loading jetties at the quarries on the Llyn Peninsular were notoriously exposed and difficult places at which to load and it is a credit to the seamanship of coaster masters and crews that there were not more casualties.

Jessie Summerfield had the longest career of any of the Summerfield ships. She was sold on by Zillah after only five days to another owner well-known in the North Wales stone trade, William Robertson of Glasgow, who renamed her *Morion* - the only time he used this name. Soon after the outbreak of the Second World War she embarked on a series of changes of ownership which put her in the hands of some unlikely-sounding shipowners: the Mohochang Exploration Co Ltd. of Manchester and - less surprisingly - Chatterley-Whitfield Collieries Ltd. of Stoke-on-Trent. The name *Glenbride* which she took in December 1939 gives us a clue to the reasons for these transactions. The Alliance & Dublin Consumer Gas Co. Ltd. were obviously strengthening their fleet, which already included the *Glenageary*, *Glencullen*, and *Glencree*, but in wartime were not allowed to buy British ships for transfer to the Eire flag. The *Glenbride* seems to have been operated under the red ensign on their behalf by a series of intermediaries, only coming under their direct ownership in October 1949. Broken up at Passage West during 1963, she was one of the last steam coasters to trade on the Irish Sea.

The sale of its ships in 1927 probably did little more than cover the outstanding debts of the Summerfield Steamship Co. Ltd., and its shareholders would have made a considerable loss on their investments. Few would be as badly hit as Samuel Summerfield, who was hardly a rich man yet had invested heavily in this brave venture, encouraged his family and associates to do likewise, and had used his own cash to try to keep the company afloat. His company was a sound concern, based on proven if unadventurous technology and a reliable trade, and given better economic circumstances should have prospered modestly. It is chastening to think that had he been willing to sell his assets at the height of the market in early 1921 he could probably have retired on the proceeds.

FLEET LIST

- 1 JESSIE SUMMERFIELD 1919-27 Steel screw steamer 440grt bt Troon 1919
ON 143608
14. 3.27 sold to Zillah Shipping & Carrying Co Ltd (W.A. Savage managers) L'pool
19. 3.27 " " William Robertson Ltd, Glasgow and 14.4.1927 renamed MORION
21.11.39 " " Mohochang Exploration Co Ltd (J. Galbraith of Stephenson Clarke &
Associated Companies, managers) and 8.12.1939 renamed GLENBRIDE
27. 5.42 " " Chatterley Whitfield Collieries Manchester Ltd (J Galbraith manager)
Stoke-on-Trent
18. 2.46 " " Polgarth Steamship Co (James Macmillan manager) London.
20.10.49 " " Alliance & Dublin Consumer Gas Co. Dublin.
31. 9.63 " " Arrived Passage West, Cork for breaking up by Haulbowline Industries Ltd
who commenced work 10.4.1963

- 2 MARY SUMMERFIELD 1921-26 st. scr. str 407grt bt Southampton 1921
ON 143711
8.10.26 sold to Wallace Brothers Ltd., Dublin (Mersey Steamship Co L'pool, managers)
16.10.28 renamed RINGWALL. 1932 Owners became Wallace Brothers, Dublin.
27. 1.41 mined and sunk south of Isle of Man whilst on a voyage from Dublin to Sillioth
in ballast. Crew of eight lost

- 3 AMY SUMMERFIELD 1921-27 st. scr. str 407grt bt Southampton 1921
ON 143718
1927 sold to Zillah Shipping & Carrying Co Ltd (W.A. Savage manager) Liverpool
23. 3.51 wrecked at Llighfaen Pier, Port Rivals, having arrived from Liverpool in ballast

NOTES

- 1 See Ivor Wynne Jones, "U-boat rendezvous at Llandudno" in Maritime Wales, vol 3 (1978) pp82-90. On 30th Jan 1915 U-21 (Lt Hersing) sank three steamers not far off L'pool Bar, the almost new slate carrier *Linda Blanche* (1914/530grt), Howden's collier *Kilcoan* (1905/422) and the North Shields-registered tramp *Ben Cruachan* (1902/3,092grt)
- 2 The author has long been intrigued as to how a number of Norwegian ships came onto the UK registry in 1917, returning to their owners in 1919. Were they bare-boat chartered, or were they requisitioned; and if the latter, how could the Shipping Controller legally take over a neutral country's ships?
- 3 More than fifty of these vessels were sold soon after the war for conversion to merchant vessels. The work involved removing one of the two boilers, although this still left them capable of a good turn of speed providing firemen and fuel were good enough, which was not often the case. The success of the mercantile conversions was limited, partly because they were rather deep for coasting work, and because their bar keels meant that they could not take the ground in tidal ports for fear of capsizing. Captain Owen Spargo's experiences in one of these conversions is delightfully described in "Old Time Steam Coasting" (Albington 1982).
- 4 See David J. Morgan "Boom and Slump - Shipowning at Cardiff 1919-21" in Maritime Wales vol 12 (1989) pp126-151
- 5 Perhaps the best known example is that of Joseph Monks and Co. Ltd who in January 1920 sold nine ships to Kenneth Monroe of Cardiff. These formed the basis of the Monroe Brothers fleet, which itself subsequently moved to Liverpool and became one of the city's best-known coaster fleets. See the author's "Monk's Navy" (Kendal 1981) and "Monroe Brothers, Shipowners" (Kendal 1982).
- 6 For a brief account of William Thomas's success see "Ventures in Sail" by Aled Eames (Caernarvon 1987).
- 7 Details of shareholdings and financial matters are taken from the company's file in the Public Record Office, Kew. Reference BT31/24865/157401.
- 8 The late Peter Norton of Warrington kindly searched local papers for the reports of the launches of Savage's early steamers. This account appears in the Warrington Examiner for Saturday, 1st June 1895.
- 9 "The Shipbuilder" January 1921.

Navigation on the Upper Mersey

by H.M. Hignett

The title refers to the waterways above a line drawn across the River Mersey from Bromborough to immediately above Garston as far as Warrington and the entrance to the Weaver. Ports above Liverpool were small and normally used by river and small coastal craft - mostly flats. The trade was based on two commodities: coal and salt. Of course there were other cargoes but those two made up at least three-quarters of the total.

There was traffic to the Upper Mersey areas in the 17th century: sufficient for pilots to be required; the "Mary" of Lagan (near Dumfries) visited the Mersey in 1696 making for Frodsham to load grain. The ship's accounts show that the master took a pilot from Liverpool to Frodsham at a cost of 19s 6d. In a survey of the dangers to navigation in the Mersey 65 years later the surveyor made specific remarks on the obstructions and inconvenience to flats and lighters making for Warrington and Manchester by the extensive use of fish yards/fixed nets etc extending from the Lancashire shore across to the Sloyne (*BULLETIN* Vol. 34, No 4 Spring 1991, p60). He was concerned that the vessels might become entangled in those fish traps.

Here the river consists of the Narrows from Perch Rock to Tranmere on the Wirral side and from Bootle to Garston on the Lancashire side. The Broads from Garston to the Runcorn Gap, and the Upper River from Runcorn to Warrington.

The Mersey generally has the greater outflow derived from the rainfall of the Pennines; the water flow varies accordingly and the effects are fairly predictable. However there are times when the greater rainfall is in the catchment of the Weaver and the outflow from the latter is stronger: at these times the channel is moved towards the Lancashire shore.

Movement of craft, large and small is affected by the high tides of the Mersey. Storms, adverse winds, and tides not only hazarded vessels but indirectly disturbed the courses of the channels. Barges, flats and coastal vessels took advantage of the tidal currents to move themselves along the waterway; but when tides were low there was no waterway. It was said in 1880 that there were no more than 146 days annually when craft could sail up the Mersey.

Complicating matters was a difficult tidal regime affecting the navigable condition of the estuary, into which flowed rivers large and small: Bollin, Thame, Goyt, Medlock, Irk, Irwell, Glazebrook, Bollin, Sankey Brook, Ditton Brook, Weaver and Goway. all feeding the Mersey. The water outflow should be sufficient to flush out a normal river channel, but the broadening out of the estuary just below the Runcorn Gap allows the speed of the current to fall and at times of high water the meeting of the tidal flow and the fresh waters causes unpredictable changes in the course of the main channels, making navigation difficult. These changes brought the channels so close to the shore as to cause serious erosion in many places, probably contributing to the siltation of the channels.

The Upper Mersey came within the jurisdiction of the Mersey Conservancy (Mersey Conservancy Act 1842) for the purpose of carrying out works to improve the navigation of the Upper Mersey channels by removing rocks, obstructions, deepening channels etc. In 1843 Admiral Fitzroy as the first Acting Conservator of the Mersey reported that he saw several hundreds yards of sand and clay cliffs (on which there had been woods, now nearly all gone), yards of surface with trees standing, and all the soil beneath their roots, to a depth of 20 or 30ft, had recently slid down to the stony beach below, and would soon be washed away. Two decades later the waste continued on both sides of the river probably at the rate of a metre per annum.

Engineering works caused changes in the courses and widths of the Upper Mersey. Docks projecting into the river at the Narrows by Liverpool caused eddy currents which formed the Pluckington Bank. Above Runcorn and below Warrington levees and embankments along the river were built by prisoners from Napoleonic forces. They exist today at Aston Moor, Hempstones Point, Cuerdley Marshes - and Fidlers Ferry. These works affected the waterways between Garston and Runcorn. In the 1840's "cheverals", ancient stone groynes

projecting into the bed of the river, intended for the reclaiming of land from the river, were discovered. The Bridgewater Trustees even built perches on them as navigation marks early in the 19th century. One existed off Garston until the end of the century.

Strangely the river traffic increased, but it was the completion of the Bridgewater Canal from Manchester to Runcorn around 1800 which caused an upsurge of traffic using the Upper Mersey. The Trustees began to mark the channels used by their barges and flats. Similarly the Weaver Navigation Trustees marked the southern side of the river along Frodsham Score.

In 1836 the Bridgewater Trustees erected a lighthouse at Hale Point (the most southerly point of Lancashire). Later two more lighthouses were built and in 1861 a river tug "Rival", was converted to a lightship, and anchored above Garston marking the entrance to the main channel. There were also 48 buoys, 13 perches and 2 large beacons at strategic points on the banks of the Broads for the benefit of their own extensive traffic.

In 1795 the the canal from Chester to the Mersey at Netherpool, now Ellesmere Port, was completed and some 40 years later was taken over by the Shropshire Union Railway & Canal Company who constructed docks on the banks of the Mersey. This company began to mark the approach to the Docks, building a lighthouse there. United Alkali Co. marked the entrance to Ditton Brook with. The river at Runcorn Gap was marked by the operators of the Widnes and West Bank Docks using buoys, and further upstream Crofields and others marked the Upper River to Warrington, at their own expense and without reference to others. This effected a confusing non-uniformity of navigation marks. An highly undesirable state of affairs.

Prior to the year 1857, the Corporation of Liverpool,levied tolls called Town Dues on all goods imported into or exported out of the Port of Liverpool by vessels arriving at, or sailing from, the Port, and the Dues so levied were applied to the Municipal purposes of the Town.

Then in that year the Docks at Liverpool and Birkenhead with their attendant dues were transferred from Liverpool Council to the Mersey Docks & Harbour Board, at that date the amount levied annually as Town Dues was about £150,000, and it was estimated that about 95% of these Dues were paid on the goods carried by the vessels using the Docks of the Board, and about 5% or £7,500 per annum on the goods landed or laden at places upstream from Liverpool.

All vessels entering or leaving the Mersey paid buoying and lighting dues for the cost of buoying, lighting and maintaining the Channels of the Mersey from Liverpool to the Sea, but nothing from those dues was applied to the River above Liverpool, This was borne by the Bridgewater Trustees in whose hands was the greater part of the Up River traffic. The parties interested in the rapidly growing traffic of the upper river complained much of Dock dues being levied on the traffic for the benefit of the Liverpool Docks, their rivals in trade, and in 1860 introduced a Bill into Parliament to require the MD&HB to sell them the Town Dues on the Up River traffic. This Bill decreed that the Upper Mersey Trust be formed. Dues to be levied on all Up-River traffic by the Trustees. The process being applied first in payment of the Interest on the amount borrowed for the purchase of the Dues and then in gradual repayment of the debt.

In 1876, a further sum of £12,000 was paid by these Trustees to the MD&HB for the inclusion in the Up River area of a new Dock constructed by the L&NW Railway Co., at Garston so as to put this new Dock on the same footing as to Docks which existed at Garston at the passing of the Upper Mersey Dues Act, 1860.

The Up River traffic steadily increased so that in 1872 the amount of Town Dues levied in the Up River reached £11,270. By the end of September 1877 the gross amount received by the U.M. Dues Trustees from the formation of the Trust was £199,727, out of which after paying the interest on the amount remaining on the loan and the expenses of the Trust they were able to pay off the last of their Bonds and to declare the Upper River totally free from this impost.

The tonnage of vessels entering the Mersey but not using the Docks of the MD&HB was, in 1861 when the UM Dues Trust was formed, 335,481 tons: and in 1877, when it had accomplished the objects for which it was founded, 554,029 tons. While in the year to 24th June 1891 it amounted to 1,163,477 tons.

Shortly before this Trust came to an end the Bridgewater Trustees, who owned the Bridgewater Navigation running from Runcorn to the interior and the Mersey & Irwell Navigation, on which a large part of the Up River traffic was carried, sold these concerns to persons who founded the Bridgewater Navigation Co. These new purchasers objected to the custom of bearing the expense of buoying and lighting the Broads and Upper River, other interested persons agreed that traffic should be quickly relieved of this burden of over £11,000 per annum. All promoted successfully the Upper Mersey Navigation Act 1876 under which a Commission was constituted to take on the duty of lighting and buoying of the Mersey above Liverpool, empowered to levy dues, and borrow money to carry out the work. Further powers were obtained by an Act in 1879.

The Commission consisted of 16 Commissioners appointed by various bodies, who had interests in the Upper Mersey area and up to nine Commissioners elected by persons or bodies who had over a year been concerned with not less than 2,000 tons carried or conveyed, in vessels navigating the Upper Mersey and liable to pay dues. All revenues were to be devoted to the carrying out of the duties of the Commission, i.e. to provide and maintain buoys, beacons, lighthouses, lightships in the navigable channels of the Upper Mersey. The area was that part of the River Mersey lying above a straight line drawn across the River from the Eastham Ferry, to a position southeast of Garston and Bank Quay in Warrington.

In 1878 the Bridgewater Navigation Company sold their lighthouses, river vessels, lightships, buoys and the attendant stores to the UMNC for an agreed sum of £3,165. They also offered a large room in their Runcorn offices for a nominal sum. The list of the equipment and fitting of the lightship and lighthouse tender "Preston" showing a well fitted vessel. The buoys of the Shropshire Union Canal were bought for £200.

In all there were 145 buoys in operation in 1876, all with 7/8 or 3/4 inch chains and stone anchors:

| | | |
|---------------------------------|----|--------------------|
| Liverpool to Garston | 3 | large hollow buoys |
| Ellesmere Port to Stanlow Point | 2 | " " " |
| Stanlow to Weston Point | 8 | " " " |
| Oglet Channel | 4 | " " " |
| Speke Woods | 1 | " " " |
| Garston - Hale- Weston | 24 | " solid " |
| Weston - Runcorn Rlwy Br. | 11 | " " " |
| " - Old Quay | 10 | " " " |
| In stores/under repair | 68 | |

A lighthouse at Ince, operated jointly by the Bridgewater and Weaver Navigations, taken over by the UMNC in 1876. In 1878 it was decided to discontinue this light and the keeper dismissed. In fact he died before he was dismissed. The House and lighthouse was let to a caretaker for a time. There must have been a shift of the main channel to the Cheshire side for in 1883 the Ince Light house was once again in operation.

By the 1880's four lightvessels were stationed in the Broads each equipped with a lights and fog-bells. They were manned by two men - master and deck-hand (paid 16/= and 10/= per week respectively) with a two crew working system, changing every week

The Mersey & Irwell Navigation and Bridgewater Canals handled considerable traffic even after the opening of the Liverpool to Manchester Railway. The two companies reduced their rates when that railway came into being. Previously they had been paying fabulous dividends to their shareholders sometimes as much as 50%. The Railways employed the same tactic 60 years later when the Manchester Ship Canal began operations lowering their rates to compete with the large scale movement of goods by water.

What of the craft that plied these waters? We are fortunate that we have considerable knowledge of several vessels from the 18th century. One in particular has been measured and

photographed. The "Daresbury", a flat built for the Weaver Navigation Trustees (WNC) in 1772, was only taken out of service in 1950 by British Waterways. Because of her ownership, details of her maintenance, repair and refurbishment are available from the minute-book of the Trustees, from her building until she was set in backwater of the River Weaver near Sutton and allowed fill with silt and decay. Her frames and part of the hull can, with some difficulty, be seen today. One man, Kenneth Rathbone, spent several years measuring, sketching, taking photographs and gathering as much data as possible. From this we have an accurate picture of what we can hope are typical vessels of the day and in a parallel project a model is being built for exhibition in the Boat Museum.

The vessel was built by Samuel Edwards of Northwich for the WNC for £43.1.0. Fittings, cordage, boat etc cost £68.9.8 making a total of £111.10.8d. She was constructed with a length of 47ft 6ins (49ft 6ins overall) and beam of 16ft. In 1795 the WNC accounts show that the vessel carried cargoes between Winsford and Liverpool and between Ravenhead (St. Helens) and Liverpool and Winsford. The Mersey & Irwell Navigation was opened in 1736 with locks measuring 70ft x 16ft: the Sankey Canal locks (built 1757) 68ft x 16ft. We can see that the "Daresbury" was designed for those waterways via the Upper Mersey. Lengthened by 8ft in 1802 still able to use those locks, in the 1850's she was converted into a crane barge, probably as a service craft on the Weaver.

The Old Quay Company (another name for the M&I) made an agreement with the Shropshire Union Canal at Ellesmere Port to operate their river flats on the broad section of that Canal in 1797 two years after it was completed. They were were interested in steam power from the earliest days, giving a donation to a person in Liverpool to develop steam power. This Company was well ahead of the Bridgewater in introducing steam towage on the Mersey estuary.

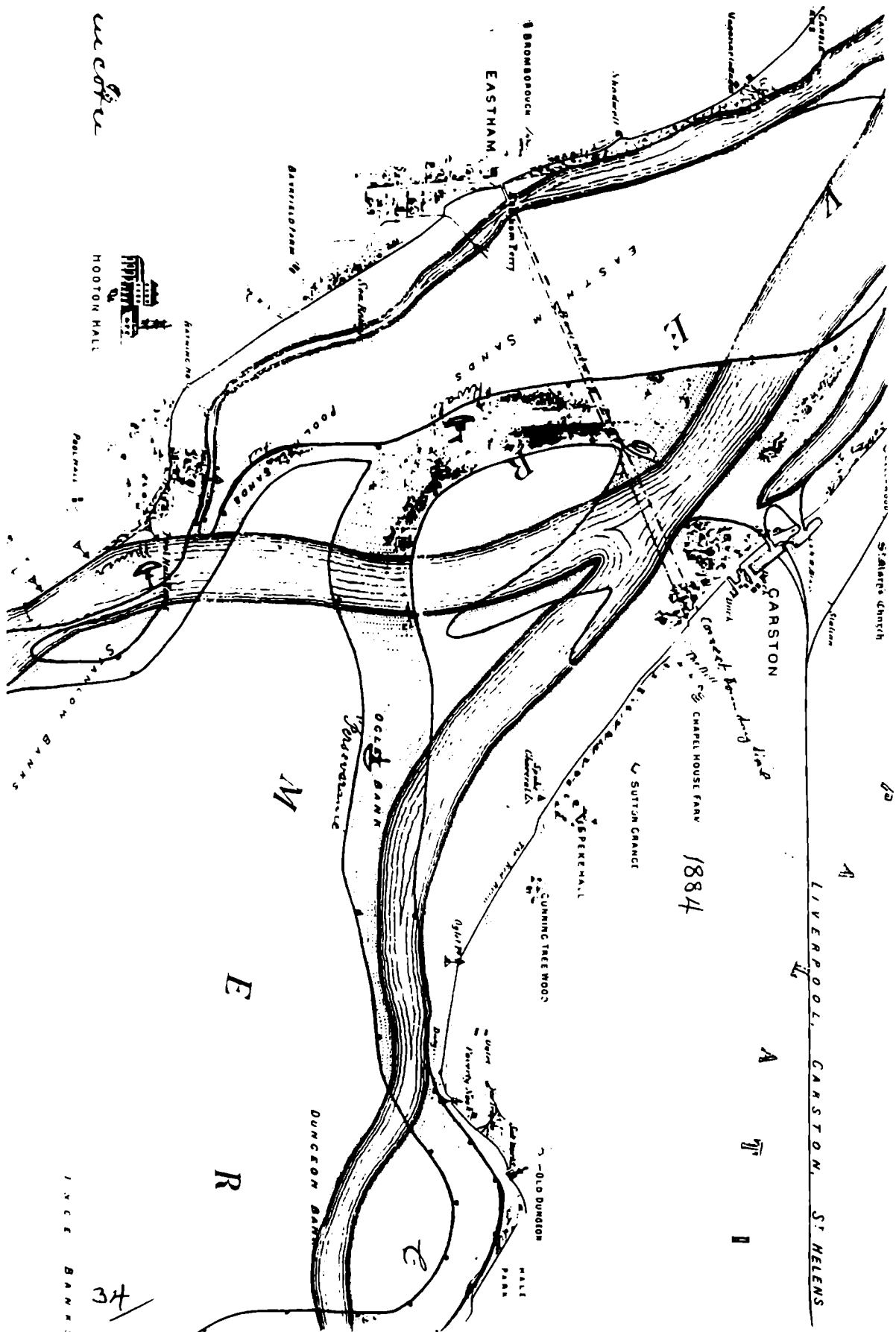
For 50 years the dividends were 50% per annum. Freight charges were comparatively enormous - insufferable. There were delays due to the Navigation Co's neglect of the waterways for some: corn and timber dealers experienced difficulty in getting barges and flats to convey these commodities to and from Manchester. Some had been detained frequently at Liverpool for up to a month for want of suitable vessels. Average time from Liverpool to Manchester was 30 hours. The need to reduce delays in the tidal waters became critical near the end of the 18th century and a survey was commissioned to find out if it was possible to remove some of the shoals. The Old Quay Canal reached Runcorn in 1803 and the first coaster entered Old Quay Docks shortly after.

There was considerable rivalry between the Mersey & Irwell Navigation and the Bridgewater Navigation Trustees especially in the 1820's when the railway between Liverpool and Manchester appeared. Each operated their own fleets of flats and tugs to tow them from Runcorn to Liverpool and vice versa. Both concerns lowered their tariffs and the tonnage carried by both actually increased from 1830 to 1860; but income per ton of freight was low and the M&I, in difficulty by 1836, sold some its river fleet to its rival. The competition is significant when one reads that the traffic passing through the Runcorn Gap during the 7/8 months of effective navigation in 1831 - 7,000 vessels - some would be going to the Sankey Canal and others along the tideway to Warrington but the greatest majority were entering the Old Quay Canal. To handle this traffic some 4 steam tugs were employed.

In 1894 the Manchester Ship Canal opened and much of the barge traffic used the Canal, which provided a speedier and safer passage to the Bridgewater Docks at Runcorn and to the Weaver Navigation. Up River traffic increased little after this and after the 1st World War business rationalisation took its toll. By 1924 the Shropshire Union Canal handed over the docks at Ellesmere Port to the MSC Co. The UMNC continued to operate, but in 1922 removed the lightships and many of the larger buoys. Buoyage and the Hale Light were maintained up to the 2nd W. W. but traffic was confined to a few barge tows and the occasional coaster. West Bank Dock at Widnes declined and closed in 1965. Hale Head Light was discontinued about 1954 and the building was sold. The UMNC was defunct in 1967.

1 Y C E B A N N :

1 Y C E B A N N :



The Swedish barque *ROBERTSFORS* - a story behind the painting,
by Charles Dawson

The Victorians had the saying "every picture tells a story". Perhaps this was not always true, and even when there was a story it could sometimes turn out to be pretty banal anyway. Pictures of ships however often have some worthwhile story lurking inside their frames.

In the collection of the Maritime Museum at Stockholm is stored a painting size 19½" x 29½" (49.5 x 74.5 cm.), signed and dated 1887 by the Liverpool artist William Howard Yorke (e) (1847-1921) of the three-masted Swedish barque *ROBERTSFORS* off the Skerries² on her way into Liverpool. A portrait of the Swedish barque *ARAUNAH* by this artist has already featured in a L.N.R.S. publication³ where mention was made of a number of his paintings existing in Sweden. Of some twenty there now recorded, a few are in private hands, but the others are held in nine of the country's maritime museums. Of the vessels painted, over 75% are barques. About half were built outside Sweden, two of them in Liverpool.

That Swedish-owned vessels in such numbers came to be depicted by a painter in Liverpool over a period of 23 years of his life, from 1872-1895, has an interesting background. Sweden at the end of the 19th century was still a relatively poor country, economically forced to use the last of the smaller sailing craft for her export of timber. It is natural that Yorke should come across these on his excursions into the docks to seek out captains whose ships could be suitable subjects for a portrait. Brunswick Dock, built in the 1830s to cater for the rapidly growing timber trade from Canada and the Baltic, must have been one of his favourite venues. At that time, pit-props were probably the main form of the import from Sweden.

The barque *ROBERTSFORS* of 764 tons was built in 1883 on the N.W. Baltic coast of Sweden at Sikeå. She was called after the nearby small industrial town where she was registered. In Yorke's portrait her hull is painted gleaming white, she is under full sail and flying the Swedish/Norwegian Union flag⁴ and her identifying signal ("number") HROM in the Commercial Code of 1857-1900. It seems that these paintings by Yorke generally show the ship in this way, majestically making her way towards Liverpool with the North Wales coast in the background, so inevitably showing her port side⁵. Yorke was evidently a good salesman who knew how to play on a captain's emotions by depicting his ship making her last important landfall as he makes his final approach to his goal at the end of a successful voyage.

In 1890, three years after Yorke painted her, *ROBERTSFORS* was near Cape Horn when, on the afternoon of 4 August in stiff weather, she came across the Greenock barque *SHALIMAR*⁶, with nineteen men on board, driving in a sinking condition. Captain Lars Brandt of the Swedish ship gave orders for oil to be poured on the waves while his ship's boat was lowered with the help of tackle from her lower yards. In this way, the boat was held away from the vessel's sides to avoid the risk of being smashed to bits.

Six volunteers manned the ship's boat and in their first run rescued half the British crew. During the action dusk began to fall. In the light of flares another run was made and the rest of the crew saved. The captain, who in accordance with tradition was the last to leave his ship, was towed to safety at the end of a rope behind the ship's boat. *SHALIMAR* sank soon afterwards.

The rescue completed, *ROBERTSFORS* struggled on against the westerly storm, carrying a "goosewing", i.e. bottom-reefed topsails on the whole of the windward side. Twenty-seven days after the rescue, she was still at Cape Horn; in the stiff Westerlies, she had not succeeded in the rounding. Victuals began to run out, so Captain Brandt decided to turn about. Not a few Captains have been forced to do this, Captain Bligh being one of the most famous; in 1788 on his expedition with *BOUNTY* to Tahiti, after a thirty day struggle, he gave up and bore away for the Cape of Good Hope. Another vessel that turned about at the Horn, the Scottish four masted iron barque *FALLS OF HALLADALE*, was delayed further on her voyage in 1903/4 from Liverpool to San Francisco to become famous for her record for a vessel of the twentieth century of being overdue at Lloyds: the voyage took her 237 days.

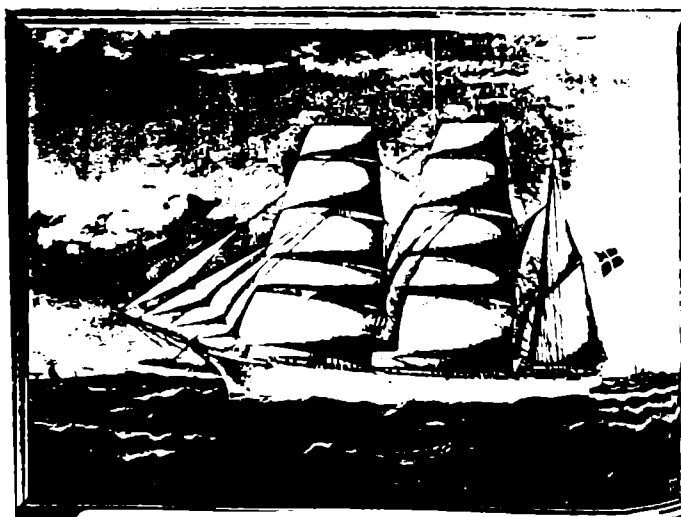
Captain Brandt set his course for Montevideo and after sailing on it for a few days, he found that the wind had shifted to the East, so he had to make the difficult decision to turn back again for the Horn. The east wind held and they reached Valparaíso on 13 September. From Montevideo the voyage had taken 115 days.

Tragically, Captain Brandt had contracted pneumonia during that struggle at the Horn and died in hospital in Valparaíso.

He was posthumously awarded a handsome silver wine tankard made by Waterson & Son of London. Cartouches decorated its sides and the inscription read: "Presented by the British Government to Mr. Lars Erik Brandt, master of the Swedish Barque *ROBERTSFORS* of Sako (sic). In acknowledgement of his humanity and kindness to the shipwrecked crew of the barque *SHALIMAR* of Greenock, whom he rescued at sea on the 4th of August 1890". Each of the members of the lifeboat crew received the Queen Victoria Medal of Honour, and every one of *ROBERTSFORS* crew received an award of £5.



The silver wine tankard presented to Captain Brandt



The Swedish barque *ROBERTSFORS* by William Howard York (c), 1897

Captain Brandt's brother, Olof Gustav Brandt, at the time captain of the Svea steamship *ÆOLUS*, inherited the tankard⁴ and York(e)'s painting. Stockholm's Maritime Museum received both objects in 1956 as a donation from Nils Brandt, Olof Gustav Brandt's son, who left them in his will.

A sad sequel to the story is that the tankard was stolen from the museum some years after it had been on exhibition there. Yorke's painting is held in store with the three other of his paintings owned by the museum, some of them unfortunately in not too good a condition.

Notes:

¹ A. S. Davidson, *MARINE ART & LIVERPOOL*, Wolverhampton, 1986.

² Perhaps a word the Norsemen brought with them to England, c.f. skärgård in modern Swedish.

³ L. N. R. S., 50th anniversary Transactions & Research, 1988.

⁴ The Union between Sweden and Norway was dissolved in 1905.

⁵ It is interesting that for shipyard drawings, it has for two centuries been the convention to draw ships showing their starboard side (*SONG OF THE CLYDE, A History of Clyde Shipbuilding*, by Fred M. Walker, Cambridge, 1984).

⁶ *KISTEFÖRNOJELSE*, the title of Stockholm Maritime Museum's Yearbook for 1979-80, pages 101-2, from which the illustration of the tankard is taken.

This piece appeared in the "*Journal of Commerce*" in 1962
Capt. Chubb was also an outstanding member of the LNRS

MERCHANT NAVY AND ARMY OFFICER

LONG COMMAND WITH IRRAWADDY CO.

ORDERED TO SINK HIS SHIP

A RELIEF master with Eiders & Fyffes at Garston for the last 13 years, Capt. Hugh James Chubb of West Kirby, Cheshire, is to retire next month. For most of his maritime career he served with the Irrawaddy Flotilla Co., commanding many of their notable passenger paddle-steamers operating between Rangoon, Mandalay and Bhamo.

Born at Plymouth on Nov. 16, 1893, Capt. Chubb was educated at Devonport High School and the Liverpool Institute High School before joining the Sierra Shipping Co.'s steamer *Sierra Blanca* as a cadet in May, 1909. He served his time in this steamer which was employed in the South American trade, and on acquiring his second mate's certificate joined the British India Steam Navigation Co. When he was appointed to the *Neuralia* (9,082 gross tons). He subsequently served as fourth, third and second officer in a number of the company's steamers including the *Muttra*, *Bharata*, *Dunera*, *Santhia*, *Taroba*, *Orna* and *Colabaria*.

From January to December, 1915, Capt. Chubb served as third and second officer in a number of ships of the allied Indo-China Steam Navigation Co. During his service in the *Bharata* Capt. Chubb took part in the East African campaign and assisted at the evacuation of Tanganyika.

For a brief period he served as third officer in the Cunard liner *Ascania*, which was later wrecked off Cape Ray in June, 1918.

In 1919, Capt. Chubb went to Burma to take up an appointment with the Irrawaddy Flotilla Co., serving as chief officer of the *Panthay* on the Mandalay cargo service and holding a similar position in the Delta passenger steamers *Nalkban* and *Bandoola*. He was soon appointed to command the last-named vessel.

Capt. Chubb served for 23 years with the Irrawaddy Co., gaining much experience in salvaging grounded craft in narrow reaches of tropical rivers during the period.

HEAVIEST TOWS

In 1931 and 1932 he was responsible for the two heaviest tows ever undertaken on the Irrawaddy river when the dredgers *Margaret*, of the Indo Burma Oil Co., and *Balbus*, of the Burma Oil Co., were towed from Rangoon 650 miles up river to the oilfields.

In 1942 Capt. Chubb was ordered to sink his vessel, the hospital ship *Siam*, at Katha, in upper Burma, to prevent her being operated by the Japanese. He then made his way to India, where he joined the Indian Army as a second lieutenant.

Capt. Chubb served with the Indian Army for the remainder of the war, rising to the rank of major. He was demobilised in September, 1946, but the next month went to Germany with the rank of lieutenant-colonel as a technical assistant to the Central Control Commission at Hamburg, serving until December, 1947.

Columbus 500 Tall Ships Event

12th to 16th August 1992

This event also marked the 500th Anniversary of the arrival of Columbus in what is now termed the West Indies.

Almost ninety vessels arrived in the Mersey as part of the Tall Ships Fleet. The largest was the 'Russian' "*Sedov*" closely followed, in size, by the "*Mir*" also from the Confederation of Independent States. The largest vessels were berthed in Vittoria Dock, Birkenhead. This is a commercial dock and trade and safety were paramount, and precautions were necessary when, because of good passages, some vessels arrived early and could not be immediately accommodated in the dock. However ultimately all vessels were securely berthed and up to 50,000 people per day were paying the entrance fees to visit the ships

65 Liaison officers were appointed to look after the welfare of the ships and their crews. Our hon Sec. John Tebay was given the task of looking after the "*Sedov*". With 200+ crew this was not easy work. Editor Harry Hignett had an easier appointment looking after the British Brig "*Eye Of The Wind*" together with the Latvian "*Bravo*". With 32 and 8 person crews respectively, the work was not so demanding although it was not easy hurrying through the dense crowds around Albert and Canning Docks

The "*Eye of the Wind*" had accompanied the "*Soren Larsen*" another British brig sailing from Australia via Cape Horn and the Falkland Islands. They delivered mail to Pitcairn, Tristan da Cunha, Falklands and Ascension and brought several significant items of construction from the "*Jehlum*" - see elsewhere in this issue about a book shortly to be published on the vessel.

1st INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF MARITIME HISTORY

17th to 21st August at the Merseyside Maritime Museum

Eight LNRS members were among the 80 who attended. The content of the many interesting papers and consequent questions was extremely high.

The work of the LNRS was mentioned several times during the proceedings and a number of our members gleaned further sources of research and information from other participants who came from 15 overseas countries as far afield as Japan and Australia

The assistance of the LNRS in hosting one of the conference members was requested. So Urmas Dresen was pleased to join us in Hartley's 'Pub' for three of the days and enjoyed dinner each evening at members' homes. Curator of the Estonian Maritime Museum (65 staff!) in Tallinn, he was a fine knowledgeable person and has promised a description of his Museum for inclusion in these pages next year.

Oil Exploration in Liverpool Bay

The oil rig which was stationed off Ainsdale beach from June this year has now been moved about 4 miles north and appears to be off Lytham St. Annes. This follows success in finding sufficient energy sources ten miles north of the Dee Estuary. Hamilton Oil Co who hold the rights to the gas, plan to bring it ashore via an installation near Point of Ayr. Local objections to this both on the Welsh and English sides of the Dee have forced a public inquiry. The latter to the consternation of those who had hopes that Cammell Lairds would be involved in building the gas installation. It seems that without the work Lairds will finally close.

Ceremonies to mark the 40th Anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic

This event will take place on Merseyside late May 1993. Six large naval vessels will berth in the Mersey for a week. Let us hope that the role of the Merchant Navy will take a prominent place in the event. Query: where will the merchant ships/crews come from ??

.....

Book Review

"Give a Dock a Good Name"
by Kevin McCaron & Adrian Jarvis

£4.50 Nat. Museums & Galleries on Merseyside and Countywise Ltd

In addition to providing the origins of the names for the individual docks, the authors have written a short article for each explaining the reason for building and the use to which the dock was put.

No index: does not explain the derivation of the word 'dock'

90 b & w illustrations. A5 format

Well written, informative and entertaining

Photographs by
DAVID E. SMITH 1903 - 1990



Garston Old Dock 1926



Towing out of Mersey 1927

| | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| "Sunshine" (ketch) | "Minnie" (schooner) | "Mary & Gertrude" (schooner) |
| for Truro | for Quayle Quay | for Wicklow |

LIVERPOOL NAUTICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

(FOUNDED 1938)

Vol 36, No 3



Winter 1992-3

BULLETIN



"Charles W. Wetmore" MacDougall's Whaleback-design vessel

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SOCIETY NOTES

MEMBERS INTERESTS

Roy Fenton researches British Steam Coasters, their owners and builders, especially those from around the Irish Sea: he is also interested in the history of the Upper Mersey ports.

Derek Blackhurst is researching J.W. Fisher & Co of Liverpool and J.E. Fisher & Co of Swansea together with their managed companies; Mason Shipping Co., W. Mason & Co Ltd, Pickavance Shipping Co, and Broadlake Shipping Co Ltd. Any details, especially photographs of their early steamers, would be most gratefully received

Eddie Blackie is researching the history of ship-repairing on the Mersey. This industry created a tremendous amount of work for a huge, diverse and experienced work force. Will be delighted to hear from any who can furnish him with information.

Olive Williamson is working on the early 19th century Customs Registers for interested friends from the Isle of Man. In passing she is listing and indexing the registrations of early steam vessels.

If members will let the editor know of any specific interests they have and wish to pursue further, he will print same as above. Other members may be able to assist or even have an allied interest.

Sailing Barges on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal

by
Mike Clarke

How many people have looked at the illustration of the Duke of Bridgewater pointing at Barton Aqueduct and been amused at the barges pictured sailing along the canal. It is, however, all too easy to dismiss such drawings as artistic licence. Sailing barges did, in fact, cross the aqueduct, though perhaps not quite as illustrated. It is easy to forget that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries sailing craft little larger than a canal barge traded regularly across the Atlantic. The smaller vessels employed in coastal trade certainly used the wide canals of northern England, even venturing onto the Leeds and Liverpool.

One of the original aims of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal had been to carry goods between the ports of Hull and Liverpool. By the time the canal was completed, in 1816, the Rochdale Canal had opened and provided a quicker route across the Pennines. Instead the Leeds and Liverpool was used to transport goods from the ports to the growing industrial areas of East Lancashire and West Yorkshire.

Lock Dimensions

The original impetus for the canal came from Bradford, those in control there authorising the construction of locks suitable for the keels (the sailing barges of Yorkshire) already using the Aire and Calder Navigation. The Leeds and Liverpool was actually built deeper than the old navigation which was forced to match these developments to combat the threat of the proposed Leeds and Selby Canal.

In Lancashire, where the canal was controlled from Liverpool, the locks were constructed to take flats (the local sailing barges) and so were built just over seventy feet long. (Small coasting vessels on both sides of the Pennines were around fourteen feet in beam so the width of locks was the same.) Narrow boats, built to carry materials during the construction of the canal, were used by the first carriers between Liverpool and Wigan. They were soon superseded by wide boats capable of using the old Douglas Navigation. When that navigation was bypassed in 1780 and 1781, the upper section was built by the Liverpool committee and so had seventy foot locks. However, the Bradford committee were responsible for the lower section which was built with their standard sixty two foot locks. It seems that differences which emerged between the two groups during the promotion of the canal had still not been satisfactorily resolved.



BARTON AQUEDUCT

Yorkshire Keels

As the Lancashire and Yorkshire sections of the canal remained isolated from each other until 1816, the type of boats used developed separately. In Yorkshire goods were carried by keels. They were of clinker construction (the planks overlapping and clenched together with rivets to form a water tight joint) and had full lines which increased carrying capacity. During the eighteenth and nineteenth century cargo was often advertised as carried between West Yorkshire and the ports of Selby and Hull "in one bottom". This meant that only one boat was used for the trip so the goods did not have to be transhipped with a consequent reduction in the chance of damage. As steam power and towage were still in the future, this meant that barges capable of using the Leeds and Liverpool must have been able to sail down the Humber. The mast and sails were probably lifted out on entering the Aire and Calder Navigation or at Leeds, as the restricted dimensions of the canal bridges would not have allowed sailing barges to pass, even with a lowered mast.

Canal barges from off the Leeds and Liverpool continued to work down the Humber to Hull well into the nineteenth century. When the canal company leased its merchandise carrying fleet to a consortium of railway companies in 1850, of the thirty three boats based in Yorkshire, nineteen had hatch covers. Normally the cargoes carried by Leeds and Liverpool barges were covered with tarpaulins stretched over three rails running the length of the hold. The provision of hatch covers would only have been necessary when the boats worked regularly in tidal waters. They gave extra protection to the cargo, not just from the weather, but also from waves breaking over the boat. (A loaded barge could often have less than a foot of freeboard.)

By-traders also worked onto the Humber. In 1856, following a stoppage of the canal at Shipley, William Selby, a boatmaster from Hull, demanded six guineas compensation after his boat *Faith* had been held up for ten days. Even as late as 1878, when boat registration was introduced, three boats were registered at Leeds by Hull owners for use on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal and the Aire and Calder Navigation. The last of these, the *Rose* owned by Newlove and Wilkinson, was only withdrawn from the list in 1909. However, steam tugs had been introduced on the Humber by the mid nineteenth century, so from then many boats may not have needed sails.

Lancashire Flats

In Lancashire, sailing barges also operated on the canal. From its opening in 1742, the Douglas Navigation had been used by barges carrying up to 20 tons. They were moved either by gangs of men or, if the wind was favourable, by square sails, which were also needed when the barge worked to wharves on the Ribble. The mast must have been capable of lowering in order to pass under the bridges on the navigation. Larger flats worked from Sollom or Tarleton, where cargoes brought down the river were transhipped for delivery to ports around the Irish Sea. When the Leeds and Liverpool bypassed the navigation in 1781, some flats were altered to allow them to work on the new canal, and new ones were built at Parbold dockyard for local owners. Swing bridges were provided where roads crossed the new canal. These soon proved troublesome, particularly where the road was heavily used, and many were quickly replaced with stone overbridges. These must have acted as a major deterrent to the use of sailing barges, even when their masts could be lowered.

In the original proposal for the Leeds and Liverpool, it had been expected that there would be a link into the River Mersey and it was specifically mentioned in the 1770 Act. For various reasons, particularly lack of finance and obstruction by Liverpool's Town Council, it was not built until 1846. In the meantime, all traffic between the canal and the docks had to be transhipped twice, once from the canal barge onto a horse drawn wagon, and then into the vessel waiting in the docks. This double handling caused many problems, especially for the lucrative coal export trade where it increased breakage, reducing the quality of the coal. To overcome this, a link with the docks, either by a branch or by a tramway, was often suggested. There was even a proposal, in 1813, for a new coal dock linked to the canal, but this was rejected as the canal company were more intent on completing their main line from Yorkshire which opened in 1816.

The Leigh Branch

Four years later, the branch from Wigan to the Bridgewater Canal at Leigh was completed, linking the Leeds and Liverpool to the rest of the canal system. By using the branch and the Bridgewater Canal, boats loaded with coal from Wigan collieries could reach Runcorn where they were able to lock down into the Mersey. Liverpool Docks were then accessible directly, and traffic soon developed, with Wigan coal advertised as being delivered alongside ships in the docks in one bottom, thus reducing the damage caused by transshipment.

Sailing flats were certainly used in this trade. They may have had lowering masts to enable them to pass under canal bridges, or their masts could have been lifted out at Runcorn to allow them to reach Wigan. Trade started immediately the branch opened, as Pecks, who were tarpaulin merchants in Wigan, were making sails for local barge owners throughout the 1820's. By the mid nineteenth century the trade was well established. When Blundell's Collieries, from Pemberton near Wigan, considered the introduction of steam power for their barges engaged in this trade, the estimated cost per ton of coal delivered was compared with that of their existing sailing barges. Although steam power was tried on the Leeds

and Liverpool in the 1850's, it did not prove successful for almost thirty years. On the tideway from Runcorn to Liverpool, however, rugs were well established by the mid nineteenth century, so there would certainly have been less need for sailing barges after their introduction.

The route to the docks via Runcorn was of great help to the coal merchants, but drastically reduced the distance barges travelled along the Leeds and Liverpool. As tolls were paid for each mile of canal used, this considerably reduced the canal company's income. The obvious answer was to build a branch into the docks. This was finally achieved in 1846 when the canal was linked to the new Stanley Dock. To reach the canal, boats had to pass under Great Howard Street. The bridge provided has limited headroom which would have made it difficult for sailing barges to pass, even when they had a lowering mast. The canal company also introduced a by-law prohibiting the use of sails when moving boats. Thus, although sailing barges did use the canal in Liverpool, they were always towed by horses, despite illustrations to the contrary.

THE LEEDS & LIVERPOOL CANAL

A History and Guide

by Mike Clarke

Carnegie Press 1990

£16.95

BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC

50th Anniversary Celebration

Re-Creation of the Western Approached Command Headquarters

IN LATE 1940 Winston Churchill ordered that the HQ Western Approaches Area Command be moved from Plymouth to the Mersey. In strict secrecy the command centre was installed under Derby House, Rumford Street, Liverpool and began operations on 7th February 1941. The building, part of the Exchange Buildings complex, was in the centre of Liverpool's business community, most of it devoted to marine transport, much of the business under security restrictions. Movement of people in and out would not catch the attention of those not involved in the secret work. Churchill, who had been involved with the naval operations of the 1st World War, knew that the Battle of the Atlantic would develop into a major struggle.

Western Approaches was the World's first combined operations HQ and prototype for all subsequent similar establishments. It was, also, the first British/ American combined operation, when surface and air units of both countries co-operated under unified British command. Admiral Sir Percy Noble oversaw the setting up of H.Q.W.A. first in Plymouth then in Liverpool. In 1942 Admiral Sir Max Horton, a submariner with an already impressive service record, was C-in-C from 1942 to 1945. when he died in 1951 he was buried in Liverpool Cathedral.

HQWA commanded a vast area of Allied sea and air warfare, stretching from below the Equator to the Arctic Circle and from the Mediterranean to Newfoundland. subsidiary ports were Clyde Ports, Londonderry, Greenock, Belfast, Cardiff, Milford Haven and Tobermory. The HQ was base for 15 Group RAF. Coastal Command cooperating with 19 Group, based at Plymouth. Subsidiary air bases were on Merseyside, in Northern Ireland and Scotland. Convoy operations, too were commanded from Derby House. Convoys, (1,300 sailings of Allied Merchantmen in groups of up to 60 ships, escorted by 'screens' of corvettes and other warships plied the Atlantic, with horrendous loss of ships and men), bringing vital food, ammunition and supplies from North America, without which the defence of the UK could not be sustained. Most frightening and onerous of all were Allied convoys to Spitzbergen, Murmansk, Archangel and elsewhere inside the Arctic Circle, invariably in conditions of awesome severity. Proper recognition is yet to be made of these actions, and of those involved in the carnage; the great majority of these were also handled from Derby House.

The HQ co-operated with military, air and naval units and bases in North America, W. Indies and Europe in an intelligence-gathering network. This traffic came to Derby House using state-of-the-art equipment; much sensitive material, brought 'hot' from captured Axis ships and submarines, went to Bletchley Park, national top-secret communications centre where cryptographers toiled, eventually breaking German military codes. Another of the varied activities at Derby House, subordinate to the HQ, was the 'Tactical Unit', another name for another 'first'; the World's first Anti-Submarine Warfare School, where Capt Gilbert Roberts trained 5,000 officers in 'dirty tricks'. This activity was illustrated in by Nicholas Montserrat (of Liverpool) in his book "Cruel Sea".

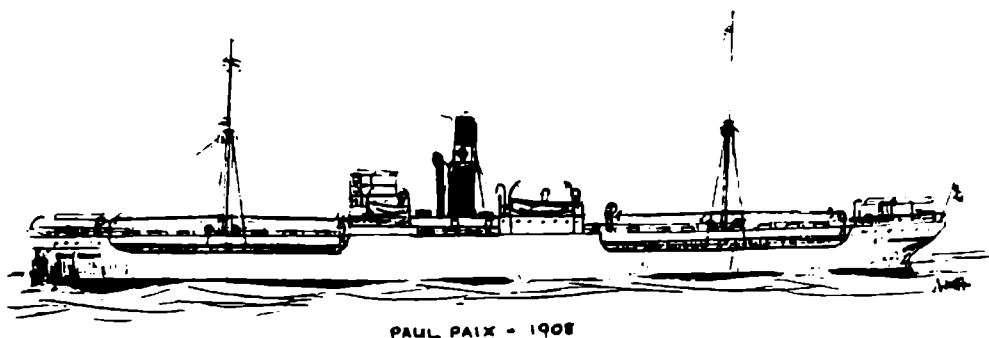
To mark the Anniversary a number of events are planned, more than 50 naval vessels will appear in the Mersey on 30th May 1993. From 26th to 28th May an International Conference will be held at the Merseyside Maritime Museum, organised jointly by the Society for Nautical Research, the Naval Historical Branch (Min. of Defence UK) and the Museum. However marking the event over a longer term will be the Western Approaches Project which is being arranged by the owners of Exchange Buildings who are re-creating the Command Headquarters for public viewing. The Project is planned to be a valuable social and educational resource, a fascinating visitor experience and unique major tourist attraction. Perhaps long overdue in marking the toll of tens of thousands of sevicemen merchant seamen and others who died at sea in World War II.

A FEW TRAMPS OF DISTINCTION

by Alan McClelland

ALTHOUGH for the most part relatively simple, straightforward cargo ships, the detailed design of tramps made considerable calls on the skill of the naval architect and the marine engine builder in the quest for the utmost economy in operation. The latter part of the nineteenth century had witnessed the successful application of the triple-expansion engine to this class of tonnage, and the obvious attractions of economies of scale led to the development of hull forms (most notably the "Turret" deck) which ensured adequate longitudinal as well as transverse strength, whilst providing cargo holds which were as free as possible of internal obstructions to mechanised loading and discharging operations.

At the beginning of this century a high level of interest in improvement was maintained, and several distinctive framing arrangements and hull forms appeared. Of these the most significant in terms of longevity of influence was Joseph Isherwood's longitudinal framing system. In this closely spaced transverse frames were dispensed with in favour of wider spaced members with longitudinal stiffeners. This proved to be a relatively cheap method of construction, and was employed with considerable success in the building not only of dry cargo tonnage but most particularly in tankers. In fact the first ship to be constructed on Isherwood's principles was the trunk deck tanker "*Paul Paix*", launched in 1908 by R. Craggs & Son of Middlesbrough for John P. Lennard & Sons of the same port. Within a year of the appearance of the "*Paul Paix*" the "*Monitoria*" was put into the water by Osborne & Graham of Hylton, Sunderland. As her name well indicates she was first ship of the 'Monitor' type conceived by Arthur Haver, who had achieved distinction by his evolution of MacDougall's cigar-

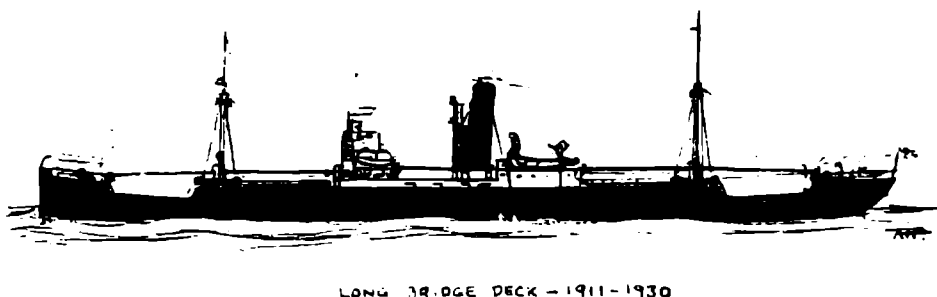


shaped 'whale-back' design into the 'Turret' deck. Completed to the order of the Monitor Shipping Corporation of Newcastle (managed by the Ericsson Shipping Company), the '*Monitoria*' was claimed to have considerable rigidity, to be steady in rough seas, and to be capable of achieving great economy in service because the groove or channel created by the corrugations running along each side of her hull promoted a better flow of water to her propeller and rudder. Over the next twenty-five years the claims made for this hull form were frequently disputed, although more than thirty vessels of the type were completed. Most notable of these were the motorships "*King James*" and "*King Malcom*" of 1925. Bought on the stocks at the yard of D.W. Henderson by the King Line, they had a distinctive six-hatched profile and all their auxiliaries, including deck machinery were powered by electricity. In addition to their corrugations they were constructed with part transverse, part longitudinal framing. Unfortunately this meant that the upper hull "gave" at sea; hull cracks

appeared (the "*King James*", by then the "*Sophoclyve*" was lost in 1960 as a consequence of this fault), and the ships had a propensity to roll heavily until bilge keels were fitted.

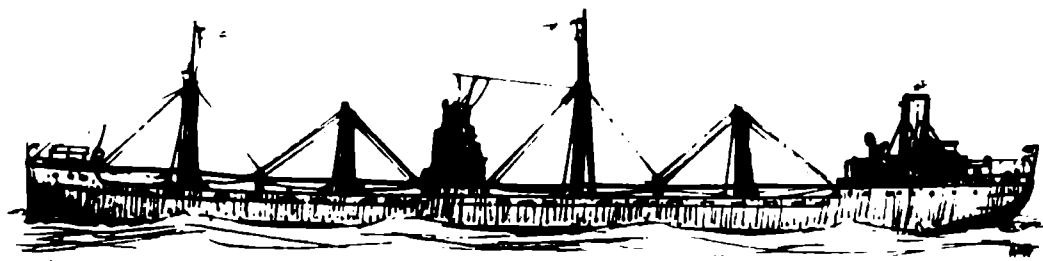


The third ship type of the early part of this century which attracted much attention was the Ayre-Ballard "Arch" deck steamer. Maxwell Ballard (who was brought up in Birkenhead) was the moving spirit in this development. Essentially vessels of the "Arch" form had a longitudinal curve to their hulls such that in profile they appeared to drop or hog towards their bows and sterns. The first "Arch" deck steamer was the "*Edenor*" for the Swedish Edenor Steamship Company. Due to appear from the Osbourne & Graham yard in 1910 she was eventually delivered in 1912. Held to be cheap to construct, with much reliance on longitudinal stringers, the "Arch" form proved attractive to collier owners because its large hatches and pillar-free holds made it self-trimming. Souters ordered a number of the type for their Sheaf Steam Shipping Company, the first being the "*Sheaf Arrow*", built in 1911 at Blyth.



1911 also saw the launch of the long bridge decked steamer "*Levenpool*" from the yard of Ropner & Sons at Stockton-on-Tees for their own account in the name of the Pool Shipping Company. She was the prototype of many similar vessels to come. Amongst her advantages was the provision of more cargo space on a given length without any increase in draught. Under Lloyds' rules of those times she had a length:depth ratio of 14 because she had a full height continuous superstructure covering 70 per cent of her length amidships. Carrying capacity was increased without an increase in nett tonnage which had obvious advantages when dues had to be calculated under British rules. With large cross bunkers, ships of the "*Levenpool*" type proved their worth in the long haul bulk cargo trades between Europe and Australia and the west coast of South America. However it shortly became apparent that the refinement of the spar deck concept into the shelter deck offered even more flexibility and

advantages under tonnage regulations. The ubiquitous shelter decker came to dominate the market for tramp ships as the century wore on, until changed trading conditions brought about the domination of the container ship and the bulk carrier on the World's principal trade routes.



SILURIAN - 1924

It is of general interest to note that the precursor of the modern general purpose bulk carrier appeared in 1924 in the shape of the twin-screw motor vessel "*Silurian*", built by the Blythwood Shipbuilding Company on the Clyde for Owen & Watkin Williams of Cardiff. At the time of her completion she was the largest single-decked motor ship with engines aft in ocean-going service. With a deadweight of 11,000 tons, she had 24 foot-wide hatches and an outfit of 16 five-ton derricks. Proving to large for her owners' business she was sold to the Furness Withy group and was wrecked whilst on passage from the Pacific North West Coast of America as the "*Cynthiana*".

To revert to the shelter decked tramp, the 1920's witnessed the production of many vessels of the type - some powered with diesel engines, others steamers, (some of these with quadruple expansion machinery). With the onset of the shipping crisis of the 1930's the concern for the greatest possible economy reached new heights. The Ayre Brothers of Burntisland launched numbers of steamers (some single decked) with relatively simple triple-expansion engines but remarkably low coal consumption. On the Wear Doxfords and Thompsons produced highly successful "Economy" designs after careful tank testing. In a second phase of development the former launched the "*Kassos*" in 1939 for the Rethymnis & Kulukundis concern. With finer lines at her entrance than earlier models, good sheer, no top-gallant foc'stle and an improved engine of her builders' own manufacture, when loaded the "*Kassos*" could make some 12 knots on 9.5 tons of fuel per day. She provided the model for many ships to come until well after the Second World War. In the same period the Thompson yard was perfecting a design first realised in the steamer "*Embassage*" of 1935 for Hall Brothers of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and culminating in the elements for the "Liberty" ship.

Unfortunately space and time do not permit detailed discussion of the innovative designs of Edmund Hannay Watts for his Britain Steamship Company, Sir Joseph Isherwood's "Arcform" steamers and the striking "Maierform" vessels of the Constantine Shipping Company. Further, choices and arrangement of machinery warrant a paper in their own right! In the period after the Second World War a number of handsome ships appeared, many with arrangements and cargo-handling gear designed to render them attractive to liner companies short of tonnage because of war losses and upset conditions which made the maintenance of their services very difficult. At the same time relatively simple vessels also continued be built, most of them of the shelter-decked type and reaching a final expression in the the most basic version of the Austin & Pickersgill "Liberty" ship replacement - the SD14.

THE SAD VOYAGE OF THE "LELIA"

- *The Blockade Runner that didn't*

by Ian Cook

I HOPE other members of the Society share my fascination with the adventurous exploits of the blockade runners which served the Confederacy in the American Civil War, (or perhaps from a Merseyside point of view, more correctly the War between the States).

Alan McClelland's articles (BULLETIN Vol 33, nos 1, 3 & Vol 35, no 4) have given an insight into the significance of blockade running during the War and the type of vessel employed. However on this occasion I concern myself with just one of the many Liverpool-built blockade running ships of the years 1861-1865. By late 1864 tightening of the Blockade by the northern forces was coupled with losses of ports open to blockade runners, including Mobile Bay. However profits, consequent upon success, were high, as the economic principal of supply and demand dictated, and late in the year yet another purpose-built blockade-runner was built on the Mersey shores.

Launched from the Toxteth yard of William C. Miller & Co. with the name "*Lelia*" the steel paddle steamer was 640 tons gross with dimensions of 252' x 30' x 12'6". Her engines by Fawcett, Preston & Co were rated at a nominal 300 hp and, following successful completion before Xmas, plans were made for her maiden voyage and cargo. Her owners without doubt relished prospects of large profits, bearing in mind those gained by Mr. William Gladstone and the Duke of Westminster associated with the Liverpool-built "*Banshee*", which had returned a 700% profit.

On 5th January 1865 the "*Lelia*" sailed from the Mersey heavily laden with a 700 ton cargo of coal, iron and general merchandise. According to the "ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS" of 28th January, "she would have taken a much more valuable cargo in Bermuda to attempt to run the blockade to Wilmington." Her crew totalled 49 - 20 of whom were engine room staff and several passengers, including Thomas Miller the son of the builder and J.B. Cropper, a Liverpool merchant. Also listed as passengers were a Mr. Robson and Arthur Sinclair, a native of Virginia and a commander in the Confederate Navy. The "*Lelia*" was nominally commanded by Capt Thomas Buxton Skinner. Sinclair would have taken over then the 'protection' of the British ensign would not have made the steamer immune from the attentions of the Federal Navy warships patrolling the Confederate held coast.

On leaving the Mersey the winter weather turned severe and the vessel encountered heavy seas as she headed along the Welsh coast. Heavily laden and already low in the water, the "*Lelia*" was soon in difficulties and this account has been reconstructed using evidence from the few survivors.

When off the Great Orme at 2pm she had been paddling into the teeth of the storm for some four hours. Capt. Skinner, fearing even further deterioration in the weather and with the exposed run to Point Lynas, the immediate prospect, decided to reduce speed whilst bringing the anchors in board.* As the crew struggled to carry out the order in the heaving seas, a huge wave caused the pea of one of the anchors to smash through the deck. While Skinner and the officers were inspecting the damage a yet larger wave washed away the iron covering of a nearby scuttle. With waves continuing to wash over the fore part of the "*Lelia*" she began to fill with water forward and soon the vessel was out of control; unable to answer the helm - possibly the rudder was out of the water. The situation was now very serious: the crew could do little to stop the covers being washed from the forward hatches. As the vessel drifted helplessly in the appalling conditions it was soon obvious that she would sink.

Skinner ordered the four boats to be lowered, but in the confusion and panic things worsened. Commander Sinclair was, with the Liverpool pilot, in the first boat to be lowered: this was swamped as soon as it reached the water. The second and third boats did manage to get away carrying about 30 men. It is not known whether the fourth boat got clear, however Capt Skinner was seen to go down with his ship.

* Anchors those days could not be stowed in the hawse-pipes. Once at sea they were brought inboard over the ship's rail and made secure.

The two boats made for the Northwest Lightship "*Prince*" some 6 miles away. One was dashed against the larger vessel and sank immediately. In all only 12 survivors from the two boats managed to climb aboard the "*Prince*". The lightship fired rockets to warn all vessels of an accident. They were seen by the tug "*Blazer*" which returned to the Mersey and next morning alerted the life-boat crews. The "*Blazer*" set off to return to the scene towing the No 1 life-boat. After passing no 79 buoy the lifeboat was swamped and only four of her 11 crew were picked up by the tug; the remainder lost their lives.

It was a day later when the survivors of the "*Lelia*" were taken off the lightship.

On 31st May 1865 James Wilson, skipper of the Fleetwood fishing vessel "*Elizabeth & Emma*", found Commander Arthur Sinclair's body in his nets some ten miles out to sea. "His skeletal remains were still clothed, even to his cravat held in place by a gold and agate pin. His overcoat was still buttoned up and he had retained his watch in his breast pocket", the "FLEETWOOD CHRONICLE" reported on 9th June 1865. Ironically his watch had stopped as 4.10 - approximately the time the "*Lelia*" sank north of Prestatyn, and led to the identification of the body by Liverpool police as the one which he had bought in Liverpool for the then considerable sum of £40. The watch chain and ornaments were a gift to Sinclair from Mr. Robson who also lost his life on the vessel.

An inquest was opened in the "Steamer Hotel" Fleetwood on 2nd June of the same year, in attendance was Richard Taylor, formerly Paymaster of the C.S.S. "*Florida*", a Confederate warship also built at Miller's yard. Taylor was living in Liverpool at the time, following his release by the Federal authorities. He had been captured a board the "*Florida*" when she had been rammed in the Brazilian port of Bahia. The ramming was a violation of international law and he had to be freed. He informed the committee that he identified the body for the police from the watch, clothing and accompanying documents that related to a £1,300 deposit with Crenshaw & Company of Liverpool. In a subsequent interview with a "FLEETWOOD CHRONICLE" reporter Taylor said that Sinclair had left instructions, in the event of death or capture that £100 be paid from this sum to each of his sons, the remainder to his wife. According to Taylor, Sinclair had run the blockade successfully from Bermuda to Wilmington on several occasions and the deposit was presumably profits from his exploits.

Taylor added that Federal forces had since occupied Norfolk, Virginia and had "ejected Mrs Sinclair and her family from their home with great barbarity".

Capt. Sinclair had lost his previous ship near Bermuda in 1864 and was said by Taylor to have been at the siege of Vicksburg. His funeral took place on 3rd June 1865 in Fleetwood and was attended by his two sons, Arthur jnr and Terry. His gravestone bears the inscription "Sacred to the memory of Captain Arthur Sinclair of Norfolk, Virginia who perished in the wreck of the *Lelia* - January 14th 1865. Not lost but gone before."

In addition to Sinclair, Thomas Miller, Capt. Skinner, Mr Robson, J.B. Cropper and all the officers lost their lives.

At later inquiry, it was recorded that the "*Lelia*" was a well-found ship, but the fact that her four boats were not equipped with rowlocks contributed to the large loss of life.

References:

LNRS papers: box 6, documents 39 & 40 (A.C.Wardle)
"America's Secret War in Welsh Waters" by J.W. Jones

Town Docks Museum Hull

The Hull Literary & Philosophical Society was formed in 1822 and established a Museum which inevitably drew donations of a maritime nature. In 1901 the City Council took the Museum into its care and appointed a professional curator. He rapidly developed a number of specialist museums in addition to the Central Museum (destroyed 1943). These included the birthplace of William Wilberforce, a transport & commercial museum and an archaeological museum. In 1912 Charles Pickering provided a room as a museum for a display of model ships and maritime artifacts and donated a series of models of his firm's first steam trawler. A major collection of whaling relics were provided by Lord Nunburnholme (Charles Wilson, of the Wilson Line). And so the collections grew and after the 2nd W.W. it quickly became clear that a new venue was essential.

The Council acquired the splendid Victorian building (1871) of the redundant Town Docks. This had a magnificent decorated exterior with three domes making a major city landmark and an eminently right location for the maritime collections.

The new museum developed under Edward Paget-Tomlinson well-known for his work on the maritime collections of Liverpool with the present Keeper, Arthur Credland, as assistant. The work had four phases: i) whaling gallery (opened 1975) displays the 40ft-long skeleton of a right whale and other life-size animals, and an array of harpoon guns and contemporary paintings by local artists of the whaling fleets. In an adjacent room are skeletons of smaller whales, a mounted polar bear, a blubber-pot from a South Sea Whaler and a collection of scrimshaw - decorated whales teeth and bones. There are displays illustrating the history of modern factory whaling. ii) Hull's deep-sea fishing industry (opened 1976) gives a chronological account of the North Sea and deep-sea fishing industries of Hull in the 19th and 20th centuries. This is achieved through a large series of ship models including the specially commissioned 12ft scale model of a Hull side-fishing trawler "Boston Seafire", probably the biggest steam trawler model in existence. iii) the story of Hull docks and merchant trade from the 18th century opened in 1978. These display embrace a series of topics, the history of the dock system, navigation and pilotage, inland waterways, the liner companies, tugs and towing as well as the decorative arts of the mariner. There are many fine models including the builders model of the cruiser Humber -built "St George" and vessels of the Wilson Line, once the World's largest privately owned shipping line. The splendid dog figurehead of the ps "Sirius", the first vessel cross the Atlantic entirely under steam is a major feature and the whole gallery is enlivened with samples of marine paintings and ship portraits by artists native to Hull and those of northern Europe, Scandinavia and the Mediterranean.

iv) alas this phase which will illustrate the history of ship-building on the Humber awaits funding.

Special short-term exhibitions have been staged for the centenary of the National Union of Seamen (1887-1987) and the bicentenary of the Hull Trinity House Navigation School (1787-1987).

Admission Free: shop: access for disabled on all levels: multi-story car-parks and meters in the vicinity: Cafe in adjacent Ferens Art Gallery.

Open Monday- Saturday 10am - 5pm. Sunday 1.30 - 4.30pm

An Account of the Smith Shipbuilding Firm of Lancaster and Liverpool

by M Woolfenden Parker

LANCASTER

Shipbuilding in Lancaster is first referred to in 1713 but definite mention of the Smith shipyard is not until 1784/85 when James Smith is named as a Shipbuilder and Freeman of Lancaster. The shipyard was at Mire Croft, Skerton, situated on the north side of the River Lune. The site was noted as a shipyard in 1743 by William Stout, a Quaker and diarist of Lancaster, and is also shown in a painting at Lancaster City Museum. The Smith yard was downstream from the Old Bridge and, therefore, was not hindered by the obstacle of the Scale Ford. This was an advantage over the other main, and larger, yard of Brockbank which was upstream of the bridge and ford. No trace of the Smith's yard now remains. The first record of ships built at James Smith's yard was not until 1787. He built vessels predominantly for the local coastal trade, the West Indian and South American trades and the Africa trade. Altogether 19 vessels are listed as being built between 1787 and 1803.

James Smith died in February 1802 and is buried in the Priory Church graveyard on Castle Hill at Lancaster. His will directed his stepson, Thomas Worthington and a friend, Thomas Jackson, to continue the business 'with the approbation of his wife and for the benefit of his six children'. Eleven ships were built between March 1802 and August 1811. His sons Caleb and James (born 1785 and 1786 respectively) continued shipbuilding after Mrs Smith died in 1810, a further eight vessels being launched. About this time they moved to Liverpool and the yard at Lancaster was taken over by Thomas Worthington and Christopher Ashburner, the latter coming from Ulverston. By 1830 shipbuilding appears to have ceased altogether at Lancaster.

LIVERPOOL

Caleb and James Smith, both in their late twenties or early thirties having moved to Liverpool, set up a shipyard at 5 Baffin Street, a site shown as a shipyard on the seaward side of Queen's Dock on the 1810 map of Liverpool. Possibly they foresaw that Liverpool was becoming the major port in the Northwest or perhaps they felt that the larger shipyard of Brockbanks had most of the trade at Lancaster. They are recorded as building ships at Liverpool from 1817 - mostly brigs and snows at first and then, in 1824, the *REGULATOR* a wooden ship-rigged vessel of 380 tons. In 1825 a wooden paddle steamer, the *JOHN O GAUNT*, with engines by Fawcett Preston, was built for service between Lancaster and Liverpool and in the following years several vessels were built for John Bibby & Company. During this time Caleb and James lived at various addresses in the South Liverpool area. In 1824 a fire burnt the shipyard down, arson being suspected. It coincided with the murder of a sawyer employed at the yard but there is no recorded evidence that the two events were connected!

In 1829 the partnership was dissolved for no apparent reason and James Smith now carried on the business. However, in 1832 the business is in the names of Caleb and James but it is not clear whether this is Caleb the brother or Caleb, James's son. If it were the latter he would only be 14 - 15 years old. In 1836 James Smith died aged only 49 years. In 1837 the shipyard was at 7 Neptune Street under the name of Caleb Smith. Neptune Street ran down to the North Shore where Waterloo Dock would be built later. There does not seem to be any record of vessels being built after 1832 - probably the yard was more involved in repair work by then.

In the 1851 and 1861 Censuses, Caleb (James' son), is shown as a shipwright employing 21 journeymen and 13 apprentices. The yard was now at Bath Place, Bath Street.

By the 1871 Census, Caleb had retired to Birkenhead and his sons, James Adam and Thomas, are entered as shipwrights. In Gore's Directory they are recorded as 'wood and iron shipwrights, boiler and iron mast makers, tank makers, block makers, joiners and shipsmiths', at the yard in Bath Street. James Adam was living in Bootle and was employing 59 men and 23 boys. By 1881 he had also retired to Birkenhead and the yard appeared to be run by Caleb's

third son, another Caleb, possibly with Thomas still in partnership. This Caleb is shown in the Census as living in Toxteth Park and employing 120 men and 30 boys. He still called himself a shipwright in the 1891 Census but I have not found any further information about the yard. My interest in the Smith shipbuilders arises from the fact that the second Caleb was my great grandfather, and the recent finding of a print of the WILLIAM FAWCETT, a 12 bladed paddle steamer of 208 tons. Built and launched by Caleb and James Smith it was engined by Fawcett and Preston and hence named after the well-known marine engineer. The vessel was bought by the Dublin Steam Packet Company and later leased to the Peninsular and Orient Line about 1835 for their service to Gibraltar and Lisbon. She was rather small for the rough Bay of Biscay crossings and by 1838 was running between Lisbon and Madeira. She was generally regarded as the first P & O steamer and paintings of her exist, one by Arthur W Burgess and one by S D Skillet.

Sources of information were Lancaster Reference Library, Lancaster Maritime Museum, Merseyside Maritime Museum and the LNRS archives held there, Lloyds Registers and Gores Directory.

THE SMITH SHIPBUILDERS

James Smith 1737 - 1802

Caleb 1785 - ?

James 1786 - 1836

Caleb 1815 - 1896

James Adam

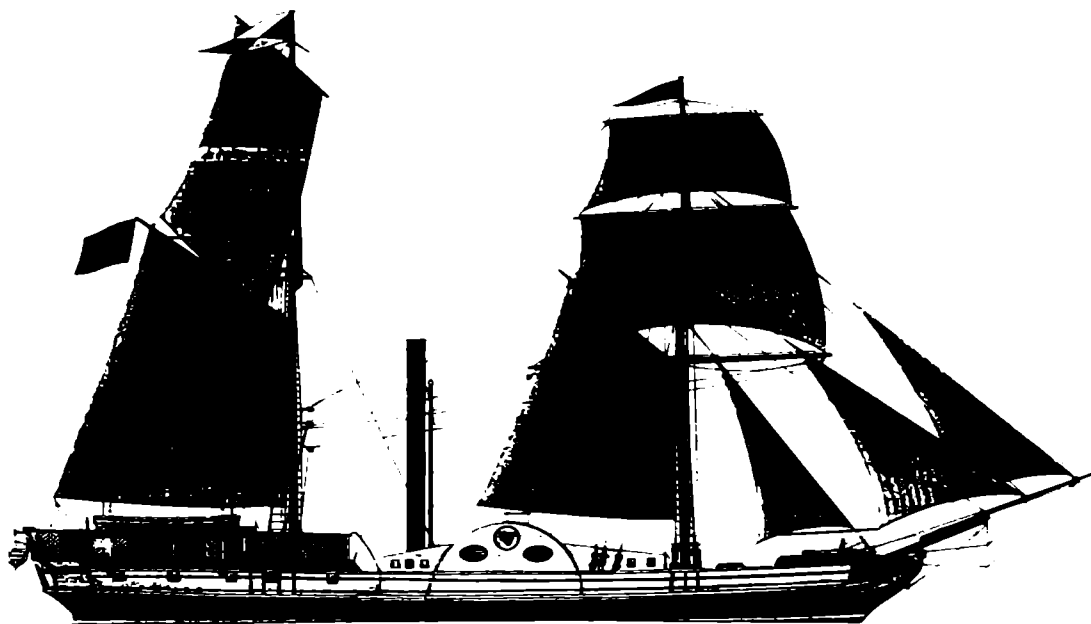
Thomas

Caleb

1843 - ?

1845 - ?

1847 - ?



P.S. WILLIAM FAWCETT
1839. First P & O Vessel.
Built by Caleb Smith, Liverpool.

Vessels built at Skerton, Lancaster by James Smith and Caleb Smith & Company

James Smith:

| Year | Name | Rig | Tons | Owner |
|------|---------------------------|------|------|---|
| 1787 | Brigantine (Name unknown) | | | |
| 1791 | WILLIAM AND HENRY | | | |
| 1792 | NANCY | S | 228 | Thomas Hinde for Jamaica trade |
| 1793 | HARRYS | Bg | 110 | Coastal trade to Workington |
| 1794 | FRIENDSHIP | Sr | 100 | Berwick & Co. Lancaster to Liverpool |
| 1795 | JOHN | S | 271 | Thomas Hinde & Co. Jamaican trade |
| 1795 | JAMES | S | 323 | James France. Jamaican trade |
| 1797 | JUNO | S | 259 | Housman. Lancaster to Martinique |
| 1798 | BRITANNIA | S | 244 | T Jackson. 18 9-pndr guns |
| 1799 | CERES | S | 341 | Housman. 22 guns. Lancaster to Martinique |
| 1799 | LUNE | S | 345 | Worswick. 20 guns. W Indian trade |
| 1800 | INDUSTRY | Gall | 93 | Coasting trade |
| 1800 | ALLIANCE | S | 390 | Wrecked 1802 at Morecambe |
| 1801 | JANE | S | 345 | James Penny. Liverpool Africa trade |
| 1802 | ELIZABETH | Bg | 106 | from Mrs Smiths yard |
| 1803 | THREE BROTHERS | | 14 | Fishing boat |
| 1803 | BEAVER | | 42 | Fishing boat |
| 1803 | MACCLESFIELD | S | 306 | Capt Belcher. Africa trade |
| 1803 | HARMONY | Bn | 123 | T Satterthwaite & Co. Bristol to Portugal |

Caleb Smith & Co:

| | | | | |
|------|----------------|----|-----|--------------------------------------|
| 1808 | BRAGANZA | S | 311 | Danson. 26 guns. Brazilian trade |
| 1810 | LUNE | S | 370 | 18 guns. Proctor & Bond. W Ind trade |
| 1810 | JOHN | S | 358 | Ripley & Jackson |
| 1810 | THOMAS | S | 436 | Atkinson & Willocks. W Indian trade |
| 1811 | PORT ROYAL | S | 410 | Jamaican trade |
| 1811 | JAMES | Bg | 238 | Irving & Co. W Indian trade |
| 1813 | MARY | S | 378 | C Irvine. W Indian trade |
| 1813 | THE BROTHERS | S | 256 | Baltic trade |
| 1813 | MARY AND ELLEN | Bg | 144 | Worrall. Dublin trade |
| 1814 | JAMES | Bg | 317 | W Indian trade |
| 1815 | ALBION | Bg | 279 | W Indian trade |
| 1815 | ALBION | Sr | 114 | Waterford to Preston |
| 1816 | ELIZA | G | 90 | Glasgow trade |
| 1816 | ACTIVE | Bg | 173 | Heyworth. Sold Brazil 1817 |

Built at Liverpool by Caleb & James Smith 1817-1829 and James Smith 1831-1832:

Caleb & James Smith:

| | | | | |
|------|--------------------|----|-----|---|
| 1817 | BERBICE | Sw | 144 | J Croft |
| 1818 | MARY ANN | Sw | 145 | H Beal |
| 1818 | REBECCA | Sw | 215 | S Peek |
| 1819 | COURIER | Bg | 168 | J Halliwell |
| 1819 | ROB ROY | Bg | 169 | J Highfield |
| 1821 | HECTOR | S | 392 | Sandbach, Tinne & Co |
| 1823 | WILSON | Sw | 245 | T Murray. W. Indian trade |
| 1823 | ELLEN JENKINSON | Sr | 162 | J Bibby. Lancaster to Oporto |
| 1823 | CHRISTINA | S | 297 | W Lucas. W Indian trade |
| 1824 | REGULATOR | S | 380 | John Bond of Lancaster for E India |
| 1825 | MARY BIBBY | S | 320 | John Bibby & Co |
| 1825 | JOHN O GAUNT | PS | 97 | Lancaster to Liverpool. 2 engines 50 HP by Fawcett Preston. |
| 1825 | LYDIA | Bg | 277 | P Pattie |
| 1825 | HOPKINSON | S | 396 | W Waterhouse |
| 1826 | EARL OF RODIN | PS | 205 | St Georges S P Co (Liverpool-Dundalk run) |
| 1826 | JOHN ORMEROD | Bg | 137 | Halliwell & Highfield |
| 1826 | BISPHAM | Bg | 214 | John Bibby (wrecked Holyhead Aug 1838) |
| 1826 | AMELIA | Bg | 199 | John Bibby |
| 1827 | PAMNY CONNELL | Sr | 171 | John Bibby |
| 1828 | WILLIAM FAWCETT | PS | 208 | Dublin S P Co. engine 130 HP. Fawcett Preston. Leased to P&O 1835 |
| 1828 | MARGARET HIGHFIELD | Bg | 174 | John Bibby |
| 1829 | HENRY HOYLE | Bg | 207 | John Bibby |

James Smith:

| | | | | |
|------|-----------|----|-----|------------------------|
| 1831 | BARBADIAN | Bk | 245 | Heyes, Litherland & Co |
| 1832 | ARETHUSA | Bk | 214 | Heyes, Litherland & Co |

NOTES ON MARINE NAVIGATION LIGHTS
by Charles Dawson

The green, red and white ships' navigation lights are so familiar to us today, that it is hard to realise that many years passed between the faltering beginnings of this system and its mandatory introduction.

We can read in a long and detailed collision report from Liverpool of 1846¹ that the Sligo-Liverpool steam packet P.S. RAMBLER, Captain William McAllister, had "a light at the funnel head, a red light on the port and a white on the starboard side of the vessel, in front of each paddle-box and facing out to sea". The collision had occurred between her and a vessel called SEA NYMPH which resulted in two deaths.

The report incidentally reveals some further interesting details: 1) Trinity Board rules had been introduced about four years previously* for steamers to keep to "larboard"; 2) this old word, because of its confusion in sound with "starboard", was at last on the way to being fully ousted by "port", which had in fact had a special use for some two centuries**; 3) some segregation of vessels was also in operation on the Mersey: "The Scotch boats keep the other side of the river, while other boats keep the Cheshire side if they see no vessels coming their way".

* Even earlier proposals had been put forward, e.g. the complicated system advocated by Capt. H.M. Denham, Surveyor to Liverpool, which appears in his MERSEY & DEE NAVIGATION, 1840.

** Sir Henry Manwaring's THE SEAMAN'S DICTIONARY published in London in 1644 shows that "port" was always used in conning to prevent any mistakes happening (conning = "directing the steersman to guide the ship in her proper course"). This is confirmed in Dr. William Burney's improved and enlarged version published in London in 1815 of the earlier UNIVERSAL DICTIONARY OF THE MARINES by William Falconer, published in London in 1769, 1771 and 1789.

In 1847, the Admiralty concluded a series of trials of different systems of navigation lights² in an attempt to sort out the confusion. The year 1848 is usually given as the year in which navigation lights became compulsory, but in many aspects regarding safety at sea, recommendations have often been followed carelessly. It appears that not a few disasters seem to be necessary in order to "encourage the others". We can find numerous examples of collisions at sea due to forgetfulness or negligence long after the regulations were supposed to have become compulsory.

The placing of lights could vary with the construction of the vessel as we can see below. An interesting modern variant, that in a way harked back to the old, was the placing of the lights of the Holland America Line's ship ROTTERDAM (V) of 1959 at the head of two stub masts, one atop the deckhouse amidships and one on a span between her two funnels. These funnels were arranged side by side roughly half way between amidships and stern³.

Captain Harry Hignett⁴ gives the Cunarder S.S. AMERICA, 1826 tons of 1848, launched by Steele, Greenock on 13 May 1847, while Bonsor gives the Cunarder S.S. ASIA, 2226 tons, launched by Steele on 31 January 1850, as the first vessel to adopt the system of "a white light at the masthead, a green light on the starboard side and a red light on the port side"⁵.

A system of coloured lights was certainly being used on the West coast of the USA in 1859. When S.S. GOLDEN GATE approached San Francisco on 13 August, she "lit up the sea for miles with the glare of her signal lights of red, green and white"⁶.

The Anchor Line's S.S. ELYSIA, 2733 tons, launched on 28 June 1873 from John Elder & Co's yard, Glasgow, had some novel lighting features, one being two iron 'lighthouses' placed forward of the foremast to enable the lamps to be trimmed from within⁷. The line's ETHIOPIA, launched on 12 August 1873 by A. Stephen & Sons, Glasgow, followed suit⁸.

An obvious deficiency in early lighting systems at sea was their dependence on oil lamps. "Mr. Brine's Patent", a hexagonal lamp, illustrated in Burney's dictionary of 1815 mentioned above, was a laudable early attempt to overcome their unreliability. Normally, unless there was extremely vigorous control of oil-lamps, there was always a danger that a failed lamp would not be noticed until it was too late. We are reminded of this type of tragedy by one of the items on display at the Maritime Museum in Stockholm: the fine model of the Liverpool-registered sailing ship PRINCE OSCAR, 1300 reg. tons, built in 1864 at West Hartlepool for S. Graves of Liverpool. She was lost off Pernambuco in 1894 in a night-time collision with another vessel, presumed to be the four-masted iron barque LORD DOWNSHIRE, 2263 n.r.t., Captain Dunn, which went missing without trace at that time. PRINCE OSCAR was built in 1882 by Harland & Wolff, Belfast - their first four-master - for T. Dixon & Sons of Belfast and she was used mainly in the Californian trade. Both vessels sank immediately, and only six men, all from PRINCE OSCAR, survived. The place where the collision occurred was at one of the major "crossroads" of the sea during the era of the sailing ship, the confluence of the tracks of north and south bound vessels of the time. As misfortune would have it, PRINCE OSCAR's port lantern had failed and this had apparently not been remedied before it was too late.

A reliable system for the generation of electricity on board ship was obviously what was required to finally make sailing at night less hazardous. Sailing ships might have been considered to be at a disadvantage compared with steamships, which had a power source suitable for tapping to convert to electricity, but separate steam generating plants started to be fitted to the later sailing vessels, at first of course for driving winches and steering.

The year 1879 saw the start of experiments with electricity for both lighting and refrigeration on board ship, and progress in both fields continued in parallel. THE TIMES of 27 May 1882 reported the first successful carriage of frozen meat by the Albion Line sailing ship DUNEDIN from New Zealand to London with 5,000 carcasses of mutton, using the plant successfully developed by the Glasgow firm Bell-Coleman.

The first application of marine electric light is believed to have been on board the steam yacht JEANNETTE, ex PANDORA, owned by the adventurous proprietor of the NEW YORK HERALD, Scots-born James Gordon Bennett, although the trial was apparently not very successful. He despatched her at his own expense, but with approval as a national undertaking by special Act of Congress, with an expedition to the North Pole in 1879. Under the command of Lieut. de Long, US Navy, the expedition sailed from San Francisco on 8 July and was last seen on 3 September steaming towards Wrangel Island. Both she and Bennett gave their names to two islands in the eastern Arctic Ocean where she had been crushed by ice and sunk⁹. Her wreckage was found three years later 3000 miles to the west, off Greenland, proving the theory of trans-Arctic drift.

The first British experiments with electric light on board ship, with a Gramme*** generator, were made in 1879 in HMS MINOTAUR and later that year, in the PSNC's S.S. MENDOZA¹⁰, built by Robert Napier & Sons, Glasgow. By December 1879, the Inman Line's CITY OF BERLIN, launched on 27 October 1874 from Caird & Co's yard at Greenock, had been partially fitted with the first interior electric lighting on the North Atlantic and was fitted throughout by 1887 (possibly by Lairds of Birkenhead)¹¹.

*** after Z.T. Gramme, a Belgian scientist (1826-1901), who patented his D.C. generator in 1869.

Just three more examples are given below, taken at random from the records of collisions where vessels did not sight one another until it was too late.

During the night of 26 June 1854, the American extreme clipper TRADE WIND, 245.6' x 42' x 30.2', 2045 tons, built by Jacob Bell at New York in 1851, was sailing towards Liverpool from Mobile with passengers and a cargo of cotton and making good speed in a fresh wind when she collided with the Boston full-rigger OLYMPIA, bound home from Liverpool. It is doubtful if lights were being carried by either vessel. OLYMPIA lost her masts overboard at once. TRADE WIND had her bows stove in and was damaged more or less along her whole length. Both ships were still afloat and in sight of one another next morning, but as OLYMPIA was being abandoned - when one boat capsized - she foundered. TRADE WIND was kept afloat by her cotton cargo until it had swollen so much that it burst open her hull, and she sank too. Fortunately the Belgian barque STADT ANTWERPEN arrived on the scene and picked up the survivors. That particular collision had a happy outcome, at least as far as the saving of human life was concerned. But how many vessels disappeared without trace without the benefit of a rescuing vessel arriving in time?

Only three months later, one of the most ghastly disasters which highlighted the problem of visibility at sea - this case possibly with fog as an added danger - was the collision some 40 miles off Cape Race, Newfoundland, between the American wooden Collins liner P.S. ARCTIC, Captain Luce, bound from Liverpool for New York, and the French steamer VESTA, 200 tons, on 27 September 1854. Ironically VESTA survived, making port under her own power. But for ARCTIC, after having survived two strandings on previous voyages, this fatal third time became a terrible tragedy. She sank only four or five hours after the collision, with the frightful loss of between 285 and 351 - the exact number will never be known - of her 383 passengers and crew. The owner of the line Edward K. Collins lost his wife son and daughter.

On 20th January 1887, the iron ship KAPUNDA, outward bound to Fremantle with 279 passengers, mostly women and children, was rammed and sunk off the Brazilian coast by the iron barque ADA MELMORE, homeward bound with manganese ore from Coquimbo. It was stated that the latter was sailing without lights at the time, and that this was the cause of the disaster. KAPUNDA, like the majority of sailing ships, had only a collision bulkhead forward and sank immediately, taking down with her all but eight of the crew and eight male passengers, not a single female or child being saved. ADA MELMORE was so badly damaged that she also sank a few days later.

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WHALE-BACKS from the Great Lakes

OVER A century ago "*Charles W. Wetmore*", a vessel of highly unusual design, appeared in Liverpool's Princes Dock direct from the Great Lakes bringing a cargo of grain. The design and the reasons which inspired it are, together with the story of the voyage are intriguing and interesting. The ships were whaleback steamers flat-bottomed with the sides of the hull rounded off onto the spar deck. The taper of the hull fore and aft was carried right up to the deck forming a conoidal stem and stern. The main part of the hull was devoid of any sheer and fender strakes ran down the sides to lessen impact damage to the hull-plating in docks or canal locks. The long unobstructed cargo hold was divided into three compartments to which access was gained by means of seven hatches each eight feet square. There were no raised hatch coamings; the covers fitting flush with the deck offered no resistance to seas passing over the ship.

This type of vessel could not easily carry derricks and winches and therefore posed problems. But the greatest problem was the strengthening necessary when a hull was designed to certain dimensions bringing the need for extra strengthening which to some extent defeated the object of the design.

Captain Alexander McDougall owner/manager of the American Steel Barge Company in 1890 at West Superior, Wisconsin, a time when freights were low in a severe recession affecting the Great Lakes area. McDougall needed to build more vessels and find uses for those he was building 'on spec'. With far more tonnage available than the Lakes shipping could then support, his only alternative was to dispatch some of his building to run in 'salt water'.

But first the ships had to sail down the St Lawrence River. Their dimensions 265ft length, beam 38ft and a depth of 24ft would, in theory, permit them to pass through rapids with 10-knot currents between Ontario and Montreal. But it would need extraordinary skills of an extraordinary pilot to accomplish the passage without damage to the hull.

The "*Charles W. Wetmore*" was powered by a 2-cyl compound engine (built by S.F. Hodge, Detroit 1890) 26" & 50" by 42" stroke, giving 725IHP at 75rpm. The two boilers were mounted fore-and-aft apparently to keep their weight along the centre-line of the vessel and reduce the tendency of whaleback form to roll heavily in a seaway. The two boilers were each 10'1" diameter and 12'6" long producing steam at 160psi. The freight capacity was 90,000 bushels of wheat.

McDougall decided to send the "*Joseph L Colby*" down the St Lawrence (a similar vessel (same length but 2ft less beam) and found he was the only person prepared to take on the job as master. The passage was not easy and he was lucky to find a local riverman willing to take a chance. McDougall's autobiography gives some idea as to what was involved "the water so shallow, the channel so narrow that it seemed impossible for that large steamer to pass through the several sections". From the beginning of the Coteau Rapids through the Cedar Rapids to Split Rock over a distance of 14 miles the water surface fell 84ft. "She passed within five feet of shoals that were almost to the water's level and within ten feet of jagged rocks. four times she struck bottom, omnce hard enough to give a decided jar. The Cedar Rapids were seven miles below Coteau and the engine movement signalling apparatus broke. All signals to the engineer had to be given by the steamer's whistle !

On the steamer went, grating the bottom repeatedly. In the Cedars the shoals were plainly in view, but the 'Colby' never struck. She rushed through and headed for the Split Rock Rapid. If the vessel passed safely it meant that the freight-carrying trade of the World was open to this unique Lake Superior craft. A fortune depended on whether or not the steamer ran three rapids safely. With terrific speed the 'Colby' rushed for the narrow entrance between the boulders over which the waves were breaking in every direction. A sharp turn in the current almost pulled the vessel broadside, but another twist of the current righted her and she started through the entrance, through Split Rock and into the Cascades and was safe in the water of

Lake St. Louis. She could now pass through the locks of the Lachine Canal with about 6 inches to spare".

So the 'Colby' arrived safely at Montreal and McDougall returned to Kingston, Ont. to pick up the "*Charles W. Wetmore*". She had loaded 70,000 bushels of wheat at Duluth which was off-loaded at Kingston for the passage through the rapids. After the passage through the rapids, the 'Wetmore' stopped at Montreal to take on board 90,000 bushels of wheat bound for Liverpool.

McDougall writes, "The 'Wetmore' was loaded with wheat. We lightered at Kingston and reloaded at Montreal, packing her as full as an egg. As I looked after the stevedoring, I was the last man out of the hold when the hatches were battened down and ... when in Liverpool, the hatches were opened, we could see she had ridden the seas so gently that my foot tracks showed plainly on the surface of the wheat".

Her bunker capacity would not allow an ocean voyage - 235 tons extra tons of coal were required, so temporary bunkers had to be built on top of the rounded hull.

The Transatlantic voyage was completed without incident. But the appearance of such a strange-looking vessel created quite a sensation. The pressure from the locals was such that the crew collected one shilling from members of the public who wished to be shown over the vessel. In fact by this means a sum of £115 was donated to the Liverpool Sailor's Orphanage.

After discharging her wheat the 'Wetmore' steamed across the Atlantic in ballast to Wilmington, Delaware, where she loaded cargo for Puget Sound on the West Coast. She was to carry a full cargo of equipment to enable a completely new city Everett, to be established in the State of Washington. There was even sufficient materials to build yet another whale-back. This was the "*City of Everett*" 364ft long (launched September 1894) which later sailed across the Pacific to India and returned to the east coast of the USA: the first vessel to make such a passage and the first American vessel to steam pass through the Suez Canal. The "*City of Everett*" continued in service until she foundered in 1923.

This article has been compiled from material in an article printed in the journal of the Toronto Marine Historical Society THE SCANNER vol XXIV no 2 1991. – provided by LNRS member Dan C. McCormick of Massena, N.Y.

For further reading: "The Autobiography of Captain Alexander McDougall" published Gt Lakes Historical Society, USA 1968. "McDougall's Dream": the American Whaleback" John H. Wilterding, published TMHS Toronto 1969

Editorial

apologise for the strange format of the last issue of BULLETIN. I had hoped to include photographs of reasonable standard. This proved to be v. difficult. So in future illustrations other than line drawings will not normally be printed.

LOCAL NOTES

Oil Rigs

The oil exploration rig operated by Hamilton Oil in Liverpool Bay over the past two years has now moved to northern Cardigan Bay where local environmentalists are very active in objecting to its work.

The rig struck a gas/oil reservoir earlier this year when working off Ainsdale. Preliminary results suggest that 3,500 barrels of oil and nearly 80 c.ft of gas will emerge every working day

LLOYD'S LIST in the First and Second World Wars

During the First World War, Lloyd's of London continued, as in peacetime, to record movements and casualties of ocean-going merchant ships worldwide. Initially this information was published as usual in *Lloyd's List* (which is available on microfilm from the Newspaper Library), but from the 1st January 1917 the movements and casualties section was removed bodily from *Lloyd's List* and printed separately, for restricted circulation only, under the title of *Overseas Shipping Intelligence* (the running headline used within *Lloyd's List* at that time for this section of the paper). As soon as the war was over, normal publication within *Lloyd's List* was resumed. On the outbreak of the Second World War, Lloyd's took the same action, commencing from 30th August 1939; and this time the movements and casualties section was given the title *Lloyd's List: Confidential Movements*.

Tight control was kept over the distribution of the daily issues: only authorized bodies received them, and then only on condition that each issue be returned or certified destroyed before the next was issued. Copies of these volumes are therefore extremely rare. As they were never published, not even the British Library received a set. Lloyd's itself retained a full set; which, with the rest of the Lloyd's Marine Collection, was deposited with Guildhall Library in 1979, and has since received heavy use from researchers.

For conservation reasons, it was recently decided that these volumes (four covering 1917-1918, and seven, one for each year, covering 1939-1945) should be microfilmed. By kind permission of Lloyd's, Guildhall Library has been allowed to make copies of these available for sale. It is hoped that sufficient copies will be sold to cover the original costs of microfilming; and Lloyd's have further agreed that any profit over and above this shall be retained by the Guildhall Library for the benefit of the Lloyd's Marine Collection, particularly in order that other rare or unique material in the Collection, such as the *Lloyd's Missing Vessels* books, may be filmed. Copyright in both the *Overseas Shipping Intelligence* and *Lloyd's List: Confidential Movements* remains, of course, the property of Lloyd's.

The price of a complete set, covering 1917-1918 and 1939-1945, will be £470, including VAT. The set of four films for 1917-18 may be purchased separately if required, for £176.25; and the set for 1939-1945 for £305.50. Individual films from the series may also be purchased separately if required for £47 each. These prices do not include postage. Copies can be ordered from the Guildhall Library Bookshop, Aldermanbury, London EC2P 2EJ.

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Note from N.R. Pugh: I visited the Isle of Man for the first time in 7 years recently, crossing in the "*Lady of Man*". Surprised to find the Laxey Towing Company no longer in existence; not enough work for the tug "*Salisbury*" now with Wicklow owners. Bow-thrusters were the main cause with reduced naval visitors another. Capt Steve Carter still mans the pilot boat but is into heavy haulage and crane hire.

Leslie Stephenson, whose Prescott firm published so many books on maritime topics including several of our early Transactions, has retired to Port St. Mary. There I met Capt Vernon McKinley over coffee, and arranged a visit to the bridge of "*Lady of Man*" on my homeward trip. Our old friend Edward Paget Tomlinson came over to join me at Port Erin where we were very well entertained by Capt Jack Ronan, and with him covered most of the Island. His last ship was "*Ben-My-Chree*" and now in semi-retirement he is relief master of the Fishery Protection launch "*Enbarr*". Finally Rich'd Danielson came from Laxey to make a dinner quartet with P-T, Jack Ronan and myself.

In Port Erin one of a band of skin-divers asked if I could identify a coaster they were diving on 5 miles to southwest. Due to the keen observance of member John Duffy we now know that this was the "*Ringwall*" (ex "*Mary Summerfield*"), mined 27-1-41 all crew lost.

Ramsey Steamship Co's "*Ben Ellan*" was loading grain at Douglas.

"*Mersey Mammoth*" brought two pieces of a spherical container (each 250t) into Douglas Harbour

STONE MANGANESE MARINE LTD

compiled by Douglas Head

STONE MANGANESE Marine Ltd one of the World's leading manufacturers of ship's propellers have been involved with such for more than a century. The company occupies a site of 16 acres at Birkenhead adjacent to the docks and major road links, so providing convenient transport facilities for propellers of all sizes to any destination in the World. During the early part of this century there were three propeller manufacturers in the UK - J. Stone of Deptford, Manganese Bronze & Brass Co of Milwall and Bulls Metal & Marine in Glasgow.

Early in 1940 when the German Luftwaife stepped up its bombing programme on London, due to the proximity of the two larger companies the Government decided to move one of the companies to a safer place. It was the Manganese Bronze & Brass Company which was to move to Birkenhead a location near the docks and the railway system. During the War the company produced vast numbers of propellers for the British and Allied naval and merchant vessels, thus playing a vital part in the war effort. After the war the company progressed and two new machine shops were added to the large foundry facilities.

In 1962 the three firms merged to form Stone Manganese Marine Ltd as part of the Stone Platt Group. The new company was rationalised - controllible-pitch propellers were manufactured in London, fixed-pitch propellers were produced at Birkenhead but the Glasgow works ceased production altogether. Under the new management the company continued to expand at Birkenhead but ship-building was declining world-wide.

The propeller industry is almost unique in comparison to modern manufactures in that virtually nothing is added to the original metal, which is bought in, usually as ingots of copper, tin, aluminium and manganese. The whole operation of converting the metal into a propeller is carried out in the works, so that it starts as a number of ingots and leaves the factory as completely finished unit. To convert the ingots into the appropriate alloys, which are usually manganesebronze or a nickel-aluminium bronze, the individual components are melted in a very large electric furnace. Th Birkenhead facility incorporates one of the largest dedicated non-ferrous foundries in the World, with a melting capacity of 150 tonnes. The use of the electric induction furnaces ensures that only metal of the highest quality is produced. Propellers of up to 100 tonnes in finished weight with diameters of eleven metres or more can be supplied.

Nearly all Royal Navy propellers are supplied by S.M.M. or associated companies, many navies abroad also use the company's products. Included among famous merchant vessels fitted with S.M.M. propellers are the passenger and cruise liners "*Q.E. II*", "*Queen Mary*", "*Canberra*", "*Oriana*", "*Sea Princess*", "*Fairsea*", "*Fairwind*" and hundreds of others over the years, including such tragic ones as the "*Lusitania*" (one of the latter on display at the Merseyside Maritime Museum).

With the rapid escalation of oil prices in the 1970's shipowners began to operate their ships at reduced speed to lower costs in terms of fuel consumption. Then in the early eighties many shipowners world-wide fitted their vessels with the Stone Manganese Marine Economy propellers. In 1983 a large propeller - at 64 tonnes and 10.5m one of the World's largest - was ordered from S.M.M by Shell and shipped to Singapore to be fitted to the "*Liotina*" (320k dwt), the first of four economy propellers ordered by Deutsche-Shell. These to effect major fuel economies on their "L" tankers - the other three were "*Lepeta*", "*Leonia*" and "*Lima*". In the same year S.M.M. received orders for five 69-tonne fixed-propellers to be fitted to Lars Krogh and Halfdan Ditlev-Simonsen supertankers were completed. The following year economy propellers were fitted to the seven "ACT" containerships.

In 1985 one of the largest single orders won by the company came from Norway for replacement economy propellers to be fitted to ships owned by A/S Rederiet Odjell and Westfal Larsen & Co A/S. Twelve Polish-built chemical tankers, each about 28,000 dwt were involved - six from each owner. A further order for seven propellers from the Japanese Mitsui Shipyard arrived in the same year.

The Stone Platt Group split up in 1981 when the London Controllable-Pitch Propeller factory was purchased by Vickers engineering group, becoming Stone Vickers, whilst the Birkenhead works was acquired by Langham Industries and retained the name Stone Manganese Marine Ltd, manufacturing fixed-pitch propellers. Today S.M.M. supply their 'Meridian' design propellers to every major ship-building centre World-wide. In 1991, four months after receiving the order, S.M.M. delivered a 75 tonne 'Meridian' type propeller for the VLCC "*Hellespont Paramount*"; the heaviest propeller ever produced at Birkenhead. The casting required 114 tons of metal from the electric melting facility - another record.



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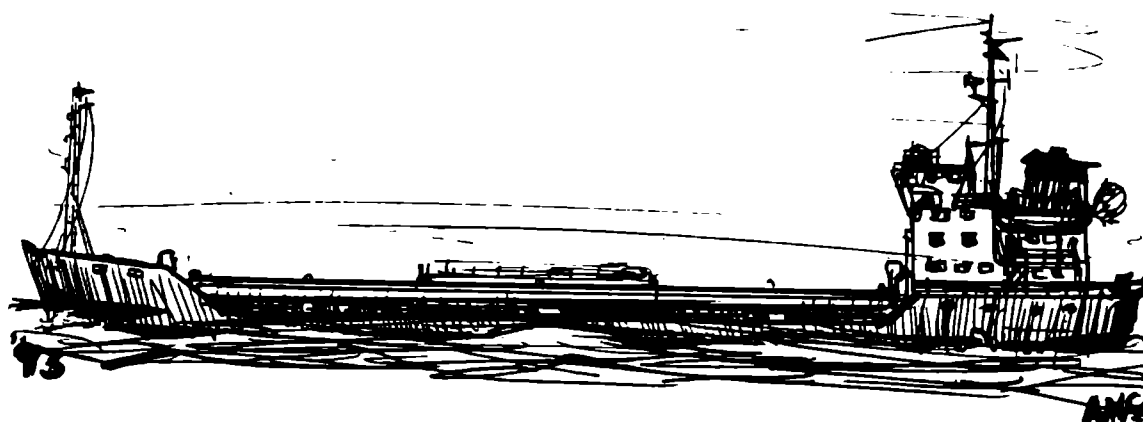
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Spring 1993

BULLETIN



Coastal Tankers do not carry
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SOCIETY NOTES

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM will be held on 20th May. As usual the Council try to keep the business matters relatively short and concise. As Jim Cowden, the present chairman, has completed three years in the office this meeting will have the additional item of electing a new chairman. Following the meeting we will see a couple of films of local maritime interest.

Dr. P.N. Davies, former chairman of the LNRS, has retired as Professor in the Department of History of Liverpool University, although he retains a post as Visiting Professor to a Japanese University.

Three of our members have had books published in the past couple of months. We congratulate A.S. (Sam) Davidson and Jack Dakres - see notices on page.

We also congratulate LNRS member Alan Clayton and architect, who, last year at the age of 79, was awarded a Master's Degree in Urban Renewal at Liverpool Polytechnic (now John Moores University).

MEMBERS INTERESTS

If members will let the editor know of any specific interests they have and wish to pursue further, he will print same as above. Other members may be able to assist or even have an allied interest. New member Clive Guthrie has been working on a list of vessels built by W.J. Yarwoods of Northwich. Has over 90% listed.

THE PORT OF LIVERPOOL & THE BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC

This year, 1993, will be the fiftieth anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic, 1939-1943, with May 1943 as the date when the War with the U-boats in the Atlantic had reached a decisive stage. It was from this date that ship losses, sailing either in convoy or independently, dropped dramatically whilst the destruction of U-boats similarly increased.

The importance of this battle cannot be over-emphasised in as far as the determination of the enemy to cut the very life-lines of this country came, at times, very close to success. Whilst every endeavour to protect Allied shipping was made by naval forces it has to be remembered that, at first, between September 1939 and April 1941 close anti-submarine escort across the Atlantic could only be provided to Longitude 15°W - 19°W and then picked up again between 53½°W - 56°W. Figures of merchant ships lost give some indication of the severity of the campaign, showing a monthly peak of 63 vessels in Oct and 97 in Nov 1940, the latter figure being a combination of sinkings by bomber and U-boats nearly all within 250 miles of NW Ireland

These sinkings accelerated so that in the month of May 1942, 120 British, Allied and Neutral ships were lost from enemy action in the North Atlantic alone. (It is interesting to note here that the number of ships flying the 'Red Duster' currently is less than 600, and falling.) The average monthly figure for that year was 83 vessels. In March 1943 the figure was 82 ships but by May of the same year the numbers had dropped to 34 and afterwards fell away considerably. None of these figures include naval vessels lost in convoy, escort and search- and-kill operations.

At the height of the campaign and because of air attacks on shipping the Ministry of Defence required Coastal Command to concentrate its main strength to "protect the ports on which we specially rely" (Mersey, Clyde and Bristol Channel) and between February and March 1941 Churchill gave absolute priority to Fighter Command to defend the North Western Approaches.

What of Liverpool during these years? The Royal Navy recognised both the strategic position of Liverpool and its port facilities to provide round-the-clock berthing for naval vessels for stores and repairs. The HQ of Western Approaches Command and the Liverpool Sub-command were soon to be established in the basement of Derby House. This was no small fleet to be controlled, eventually comprising, between Liverpool, Greenock and Londonderry, 25 groups of escort vessels totalling 70 destroyers, 18 sloops, 67 corvettes and 10 ex-US coastguard cutters. This force was to employ some 100,000 personnel. Apart from these vessels Liverpool also was to provide facilities for capital ships such as "Rodney", "Barham", "Illustrious", "Hood", "Furious", "Ark Royal", "Ramillies", "Indomitable", "Eagle", "Devonshire", "King George V", and "Duke of York". The port grew to be one of the largest naval bases known in the Empire and the Flotilla Club on West Gladstone Dock known the World over for its cheer and hospitality.

On the civilian side the potential for Liverpool to become the vital UK port in a war had been recognised before the outbreak of hostilities and certain committees and powers were already in place. Nevertheless the transfer of trade from the East and South coast ports was to prove a considerable challenge. The expansion of port facilities to deal not only with the naval vessels but merchantmen in convoys of up to 50 ships at a time, each to be docked, unloaded and quays cleared in time for the next arrivals was to be achieved not only by organisation but by the determination and dedication of all the port workers. At no time was this more evident than during the 68 bombing raids on Merseyside between July 1940 and January 1942 - particularly between September '40 and May '41. In 62 of these raids bombs were dropped on the docks and it is little wonder that in the desperate fight to keep open this life-line of food and war supplies, via the West Coast ports, Churchill was to refer to it as ".... the most dangerous part of our whole front". During this time, seen now now as being the most bitter part of the Battle of the Atlantic, 3,966 people on Merseyside were killed and 3,812 seriously injured. Ten thousand homes were completely destroyed with 184,000 damaged and the area became the most severely attacked in the UK outside London. Despite all this the population continued to get to work with those on the Dock Estate averaging approximately 50,000 daily. Ships continued to be docked, turned round and undocked rapidly and often in the most difficult and hazardous circumstances. Within the total war period the port handled 1,285 inward convoys bringing in essential food and war supplies totalling 75,150,000 tons. Some 18,655,000 tons were sent out to battle fronts all over the World, 73,782 aeroplanes and gliders were landed in the port from ships and over 4,700,000 troops passed through, of which 1,200,000 were American.

Apart from the considerable damage done to the Dock Estate the Mersey Docks & Harbour Board salvage craft gave assistance to 202 vessels, some sunk in dock by bombs or by aircraft or mines at the Bar, in the approach channels or in the River. This does not include vessels within the port environments to which no help was possible. Pilot cutters rescued between 200 and 300 persons and a number of deeds of personal heroism are recorded.

The following list of ship sunk or seriously damaged within the port does not record the outstanding services rendered by ships' crews, salvage workers and NFS firemen, pilots and tugmen; often in circumstances of considerable difficulty and great danger to themselves.

Late 1939: Three vessels, not directly due to war-time exigencies but after shoreside blackout and all navigation lights had been drastically reduced in intensity. "Pegu" ran ashore outside Crosby Channel - lost. "Ionic Star", part of inward convoy, overran Bar in poor visibility, grounded on Mad Wharf - lost. No 1 Pilot Boat, "Charles Livingstone" ran ashore Off Ainsdale - salvaged; but 8 pilots, 8 apprentice pilots and 7 crew lost.

Early 1940: Five vessels sunk at Bar by mines before salvage vessels could reach them.

Feb. Four vessels of an inward convoy ran ashore near Bar in fog
- all refloated by tugs.

| | | |
|----------------|------------|---|
| "Gracia" | 15th Jan. | (S.642grt) Mined at bar. Salvaged; later sunk in Irish Sea |
| "Counsellor" | 9th March | (T&J Harrison) Mined at Bar. Sank |
| "Lady Mostyn" | 23rd July | (coaster) Mined, Askew Spit. Sank |
| "Ousebridge" | 29th July | (S.601 grt) Mined Crosby Channel, broke in two, sank immediately. Crew rescued by pilot boat. |
| "Katanga" | 26th Oct. | Outward, mined. Beached by pilot. Later salvaged. Loaded with military stores. |
| "Dosinia" | | (Shell) Outward. Mined inside Bar. Broke in two. Pilot boat laid alongside; crew of 57 rescued including injured. |
| "Gorsethorn" | Late 1940. | Underwater explosion (mine?) at Bar. Sank |
| "Europa" | 20th Dec. | Bombed and sunk Brocklebank Dock. Refloated and moved to drydock. Bombed again see March 1941. Scrapped. |
| "Poolgarth" | 20th Dec. | (tug) In River off Canning Dock. |
| "Innisfallen" | 21st Dec. | (B&I Ferry) Mined near New Brighton. Sank |
| "Silvio" | 21st Dec. | Bombed Alexandra Dock. Sunk. Scrapped. |
| "Elax" | 22nd Dec. | (Shell) Mined off North Wall. Beached by pilot on Waterloo foreshore. Attacked by bombers, no hits. salvaged. |
| "Catrine" | 21st Dec. | Mined at Bar. Salvaged and docked. |
| "Bifrost" | 22nd Dec. | Bombed(?) Sank in Alfred Dock. Dock run down, vessel patched and salvaged. |
| "Buenos Aires" | 31st Dec. | Mined at Bar, Abandoned. Large pumps put aboard by "Vigilant" and towed into River. Salvaged. |

1941

Two minesweepers lost early in the year

| | | |
|------------------|------------|--|
| "Mancunium" | 15th Jan | (M/c Sludge vsl) Mined at Bar. Sank |
| "Karri" | | (Fishers 350grt) Mined at Bar. Salvaged. |
| "Westmorland" | 29th Jan | (Federal 9,001grt) Mined at Bar. Pumps put on board, vsl docked with name on stern just above water. |
| "Empire Simba" | 4th March | Attacked and damaged in Irish Sea. Towed in with after deck awash. Salvaged. |
| "Ruth" | 4th March | Damaged at Bar. Salvaged. |
| "Mammoth" | 12th March | (MD&HB crane) Bombed and sunk. Later salvaged. Also damaged at same time cranes "Titan", "Hercules" & "Sampson". |
| "Tacoma City" | 13th March | (Reardon Smith) Mined at anchor in River. Sank. |
| "Europa" | | Bombed in dry dock. Scrapped. |
| "Myrmidon" | 14th March | (Bl. Funnel) Sunk by underwater explosion in West West Float. Bombed in later raid whilst refloating. Salvaged. |
| "Ullapool" | | Mined at anchor in River. "Vigilant" and Pilot Boat rescued crew. |
| "Virgo" | April | Sunk by mine. Possibly wreck "F" about 10 miles West of Bar. |
| "Nestos" | April | Went ashore in poor visibility on East Hoyle Bank - well to southward of Bar. |
| "Domino" | April? | (Ellerman Wilson) Bombed and gutted in No. 3, Alexandra Dock. Salvage attempted but eventually scrapped. |
| "Elstree Grange" | April | (Houlder) Bombed and set on fire. Scrapped. |
| "Malakand" | 3/4th May | (Brocklebank) Loaded with high explosive in Rusiksson Dock. Set on fire during air-raid, initially by stray barrage balloon and again by dockside fires. Blew up in early hours after long fire-fight. Most sensational incident on Merseyside. Destroyed whole of No 3 branch and sank two other vessels. Parts of ship's |

plates found 2 1/2 miles away. Fire continued for 72 hours. Only four people killed. Branch subsequently filled in.

| | | |
|----------------------|-----|--|
| "Baron Inchcape" | May | Bombed. Sank by the bows. Salvaged. |
| "Stromboli" | | (376 grt) Bombed. Sank in Huskisson Dock. Scrapped. |
| "Skirmisher" | May | (Cunard tender) Damaged by fire. Salvaged. |
| "Sirius" | May | (Lightship) Sunk in Herculaneum Dock. Scrapped. |
| "Clan MacInnes" | | (Clan Line) Bombed. Sank in Kings Dock. Salvaged. |
| "Mimosa" | | Damaged in Kings Dock at same time as above. Salvaged. |
| "Corbet" | May | (468grt coaster) Set off unexploded bomb when passing Herculaneum Dock. Destroyed. |
| "Bra Kar" | May | Sank in Canada Dock. Raised and off-loaded but then scrapped. |
| "Moscha D Kydoniefs" | May | Set on fire in Harrington Dock. Fire extinguished and eventually towed for re-fit elsewhere. |
| "Nadin" | May | Set on fire in no 3, Alexandra Dock. Circumstances as above. |
| "Salland" | May | Set on fire as above. Saved by Fire Service. Further work by MD&HB salvage team. |
| "Cantal" | May | As above. |
| "Asiatic" | May | As above, Harrington Dock. |
| "Adda" | | Elder Dempster) Severely damaged by fire. Salvaged. |
| "Roxburgh Castle" | | (Union Castle) Sunk by bomb in Alexandra Dock. Complicated salvage operation but vessel eventually dry-docked in Birkenhead. When on blocks the sides split, then unexploded bomb found between stern and dry-dock gates ! Salvaged. |
| "Marton" | | (Kaye & Co 4,969grt) Destroyed by bombing in Langton Dry-dock. |
| "Trentino" | May | Sunk in the Langton sytem. Salvaged. |
| "Talthybius" | May | Survived raids with unexploded bomb in hold and further one in dock shed. |

HMS "Hurricane" June Both badly damaged in a/raid on Gladstone Dock and moved to West Float dry-dock in sinking condition. Returned to service June.

HMS "Viscount" Both destroyers survived

HMS "Maplin" bombs in Canada Dock.

HMS "Adventurer"

"Lobos" (PSNC) Unexploded bomb in no. 5 hold. Survived.

"Silver Sandal" Arrived in port after being set on fire during air attack. NFS extinguished fire. Ship berthed in Birkenhead.

Three destroyers (Unnamed) Damaged in air-raid on Birkenhead

The following vessels were damaged in one way or another but survived after fire services and salvage assistance rendered in dock:

"Leopold 11", "Argos Hill", "Empire Bronze", "Keswick".

"Walwera" (Shaw Savill 10,800grt) Unexploded bomb penetrated three decks in No 6 Hold whilst in Canada Dock. Bomb defused.

"Hornby" (Alex. Towage) Sunk, then salvaged in East Hornby Dock.

"Kyllemount" In sinking condition after raid on Gladstone Dock. Salvaged.

1941 summary Casualties dealt with: 153. Vels Salvaged: 125. Awaiting attention: 16. In one period there were 60 ships damaged in the port and very considerable damage to the dock estate.

1942

The following vessels arrived in the port with damage and requiring assistance:

"Mosfruit" (fire), "Jamaica" (fire), "Clarissa Radcliffe" (sinking condition).
 "John Wise" (hold flooded), "Clan Ross" (making water), "William Daniels" (sank).
 "Lautro" (fire), "Aegeus" (making water), "True Reward" & "Birdlip" &
 "Tai Shan" accident. "Diloma" & "Empire Mist" (accidents). "Silverteak" (fire in engine room), "Empire Rowan" (grounding), "Bonaire" (making water),
 "Lucita" (hull fracture).

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SEVENTY TWO FATEFUL HOURS in the LIFE OF CONVOY S.L. 87 (Slow - Freetown, Sierra Leone to UK)

by J.A Cowden

THIRTEEN SHIPS formed a convoy from Freetown to the United Kingdom, departing 14th September 1941. It is not surprising that most of the thirteen were owned by shipping companies serving West African ports. The convoy formed in to three columns: two column of five ships and one of three.

Forming part of the convoy were:

| | | |
|---------------|-----------|---------------------|
| Edward Blyden | Dixcove | Lafian |
| John Holt | St. Clair | Niceto de Larrinaga |
| Ashby | Fana | Silverbelle |

and four others. The convoy escort consisted of sloops HMS "Bideford" and HMS "Gorleston", corvette HMS "Gardenia" and the Free French "Commandant Duboc". The distance between the columns being three cables (1,800 ft: 550m) by day and five cables (3,000 ft: 915 m) by night; two cables from stem to stern. Three days after departure Freetown the convoy was reduced to eleven vessels, two having been ordered to proceed independently: the remainder re-grouped into four lanes arranged in the two columns of 3 vessels and one of 2.

At this period of the War the Flag officer commanding German U-boats (B.d.U.) was concerned with the loss of supply ships and the diversion of British traffic into the American Security Zone and its concentration into convoys. This had led, in July 1941, to complete failure of the operations of U123, U109 and U66. even the attempt at the end of July to intercept S.L. convoys off the West African Coast with a 'rake' comprising U124, U93 and U94 met with no success. The B.D.U. therefore despatched stronger forces to intercept the S.L. convoys.

Almost the same day the S.L. 87 steamed through the open defence boom protecting Freetown Harbour entrance, the B.d.U. ordered yet another 'Wolf Pack' to put to sea. Accordingly U107 (Gunther Wessler) in his third patrol, in company with U68 (Karl-Friedrich Merten), U103 (Werner Winter), U67 (Gunther Muller-Stockheim), U108 (Klaus Scholtz) and U125 (Ulrich Folkers) departed from their home base of Lorient and headed south bound for the Central Atlantic.

S.L. 87 proceeded with incident until 21st Septemebr, and had reached a position approximately 25°45'N 24°00'W. The Commodore ship being the leading ship in the third column from port. Therefore, the general positioning of the seven ships lost from S.L. 87 were as follows:

| | | | |
|---------------|-------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Column 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| St. Clair (4) | Dixcove (7) | John Holt (5) | Silverbelle (1) |
| X ? ship | X ? ship | Lafian (6) | Edward Blyden (2) |
| X ? ship | X ? ship | Niceto de Larrinaga (3) | |

It was as if both convoy and wolf pack had planned such a rendezvous, for in 25° 45'N 24° 00'W, the four U-boats appeared on the surface in line abreast heading south. U107, first to sight the convoy, noted the strength of the escort with the composition of the convoy and soon reported his findings to the other three. Late on 21st September U68 manoeuvred into position and made an unsuccessful attack. At 0400 hrs the following morning, with a moderate wind and smooth sea, U68 made a second pass at the convoy and torpedoed the "Silverbelle". Immediately three of the escort sheered off to give "Silverbelle" some assistance whilst the remainder of the convoy and their escort continued the voyage. The ship, although sustaining a hit, managed to stay afloat in an upright position, but later sank.

The convoy was under constant pressure from the pack. During the course of the same day U68 unsuccessfully attacked one of the escorts. Again, during the hours of darkness on 21st and daylight on 22nd, U103 with much vigor and determination succesfully scored hits two ships of approximately 5,000 tons each. When U103 made his attack the time was 2142hrs/22nd, the first of his two kills being the "Edward Blyden", being struck by a torpedo by way of number three hatch, the explosion causing her to sheer to port and towards the other ships close by. The second kill proved to be that of the "Niceto de Larrinaga". In addition to the successes achieved by U103, U68 made an unsuccessful attack on an isolated tanker.

Aboard "Edward Blyden" the helm was put hard over to starboard to clear the danger of collision, her position being 27° 36'N 24° 39'W - about 700 miles southwest of the Canary Islands. In the meantime, as the passengers and crew were mustering at their lifeboat stations, a second torpedo struck her on the starboard side under the bridge. Engines were stopped immediately and orders were given to abandon ship. As passengers and crew boarded the lifeboats, Capt Exley and the Senior Radio Officer collected all confidential and secret books, which were then placed in weighted bags and thrown overboard.

"Edward Blyden" was breaking up about the bridge; Capt Exley and the SRO boarded the forward starboard lifeboat and pulled away from the stricken ship. About an hour later all survivors were taken aboard HMS "Bideford" and a roll call showed that there had been no loss of life.

Following these sinkings the convoy re-grouped into two columns. The much depleted convoy was always under constant pressure and the next disaster came at 2030hrs/23rd in 30° 25'N 23° 35W when U67 took aim and scored a kill sending the "St. Clair" to the bottom.

Those aboard the remaining five ships wondered which would be the next victim. It was not too long before they knew. At 0430hrs/24th in 31° 12'N 23° 32'W, with a moderate wind, slight sea, clear passing clouds, a moonless night and visibility of about 1 mile U107 set in for an attack and sank a total of 13,641 tons of shipping. 7,851 tons took account of "John Holt" and the "Lafian" whilst the balance accounted for the "Dixcove".

The latter vessel was hit first of all on her starboard side. The explosion occasioned her to list but shortly afterwards she straightened up. As a result of the explosion no. 1 lifeboat was blown to bits and no. 3 partially damaged. Lifeboats 2 and 4 were successfully launched and 'got away' with all passengers and crew - apart from Capt Jones with the Chief and 2nd Officers and 2nd Engineer - and ordered to stand off. Capt Jones and the three launched no. 3 boat but, finding it unseaworthy, transferred to no. 2 boat. Some four hours later all in no. 2 boat were taken aboard the "Ashby" whilst the remainder, in no. 4. boat, were taken aboard HMS "Gorleston" and "Fana". After a check, the survivors from "Ashby" were transferred to HMS "Gorleston".

The surviving vessels of convoy S.L. 87 and their escorts arrived safely in the UK early October.

The 'Wolf Pack', having caused so much chaos, damage and heartbreak over a seventytwo hour period, recorded in their logs that they had between them been successful in sinking seven merchant ships of some 33,290 tons. At the end of their operation they did not head for home. U103 and U107 headed for an area west of Freetown; U68 for an area around Ascension and St Helena and U 67 for the area around Cape Verde Islands.

One wonders who would be their next victims.

Ships known to have been in Convoy SL 87

| Name | Owners | Built | Year | tons nett |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|------|-----------|
| Silverbelle | Silver Line | Sunderland | 1927 | 3,091 |
| St. Clair | Cie General d'Armaments Maritime | Sunderl'd | 1929 | 2,208 |
| Edward Blyden | Elder Dempster | Glasgow | 1930 | 2,155 |
| Dixcove | Elder Dempster | Dumbarton | 1927 | 1,995 |
| John Holt | John Holt & Co | Birkenhead | 1938 | 2,205 |
| Ashby | Ropner Shipping | Blyth | 1927 | 3,030 |
| Fana | SkibsA/Svilhlem Torskildens Rederi | Oslo | 1939 | 760 |
| Lafian | Elmina & Co (United Africa Co) | Haverton/Tees | 1937 | 2,270 |
| Niceto de Larrinaga | Larrinaga S. Co | Port Glasgow | 1916 | 3,506 |

WIRRAL LIGHTHOUSES in the 18th CENTURY

Extract from the Minute Book of the Point of Ayr Lighthouse Trust

The Trust was established to provide safe navigation into and out of the Dee
It not only maintained and improved the navigation marks, but established a pilotage service

December 1775: Queries made by Mr. Hamilton when he went to survey the Hoylake Lighthouse which he thought necessary to be answered

1) How far Mockbeggar Light is seen at sea; how far Hoylake Light ?

Answer: The Mockbeggar Light 5 Leagues, and the Hoylake four, when the weather is moderately clear, exceedingly so, they may possibly be seen a League or two further

2) How much the diameter of each reflector ?

Answer: Mockbeggar six foot & the Hoylake three

3) Why they prefer Oil to Coals, and which is seen the furthest ?

Answer: As the Hoylake Light is to lead in one direction it could not properly be an open Coal fire, but was covered in, and Mr. Hutchinson could not contrive to get the Smoke draw up to any Funnel without smoking, and it sullied the Glass so much as to destroy the good effect of the light, besides the Blaze was so often out and in, and wink'd and blink'd so much as to be a very unsteady Light, and could not be seen near so far as the oil

4) How many lamps are used in the Hoylake light at one time, & how many threads in each light ?

Answer: Only one Lamp 588 threads agreeable to the sample brought by W. Hamilton

5) How many Quarts of oil used in one night for the Hoylake Light and what kind of Oil ?

Answer: Three Quarts & a Pint for the Light and the House use, there being generally two small lamps in the kitchen, and the Oil is called Sparmacetty, and contracted for in London.

6) How much Cotton used in one week, & how much Hurds ?

Answer: Hoylake Light uses about three quarters of a pound of Cotton, and a pound of common hurds in one week, but the Mockbeggar uses near double that Quantity.

7) How much Coal it took to light it in one night when a coal fire ?

Answer: About 500^d Weight of Coal in one night, or rather more including the kitchen fire.

8) How the Coal Light was secured from the weather ?

Answer: By a Wood roof with a Funnel thro' the Roof leaded

9) What difference in Trouble between attend^g a Coal fire & a Lamp ?

Answer: The Coals are carried up such a height & requires such due attendance to store, blow and feed the Fire, that one man unleß he has a very active wife or a son cannot attend it as it ought to be.

10) What salary & what other allowances for attending the Hoylake light ?

Answer: Nicholas Seed at the Hoylake Light, receives 16 p Ann in cash, £3.10.0 for coals for the house use, and Guinea to his wife every Christmas if no complaint, Appartments to live in, and a stable and shippen for cow & horse; If it be lighted with coals, the £3.10:0 is struck off, and the man takes coals out of the common stock for house use.

11) Whether the Mockbeggar Lighthouse be of the same construction as the Hoylake one, or how different ?

Answer: The same construction except about 15 yards higher. The Diameter of thge Reflector 3 foot wider. The Cotton in the Lamp double the thickeß, and consequently take double the Quantity of oil

12) How is it possible the whole annual Expence of y^e can be £165 ?

Answer: The Mockbeggar and Bidston taking double the Quantity of Cotton and oil to the Hoylake. All the four taken together may possibly be £660 expence anually, but one of the Hoylake lights cannot take near £165 pr annum.

13) How deep the foundation of the Hoylake Lighthouse & whether Clay or Sand ?

Answer: Hoylake Lighthouse is set just below the Green Sword upon Oak stubbs, and stands exceeding well, having not the least settling in the Walls from Top to Bottom, if the Foundation was deeper, it would be in the Quick sands

14) What ground rent paid to Sir John Stanley for Hoylake Lighthouse or whether a consideration given at first ?

Answer: No consideration given at first, but an annual rent of 2 g^r for the Hoylake Lighthouse.

15) How much Land granted round the Lighthouse at Hoylake ?

Answer: No Land was granted round the Lighthouse at Hoylake, except for the outbuildings, but Bidston took in a Garden and paid a Consideration of £40 at first and pays no annual Rent.

16) Where the Bricks were made & where the Line & Timber came from ?

Answer: The Bricks were made about 2 miles off. The Timber all Deal, except Roof, Stairs, Window frames, was had from Liverpoole; the Lime was burn'd at Bidston Mills, and the Limestone brought from Wales.

17) Whether the leading light must be fix'd in Thurstington or Caldy ?

Answer: W Hamilton got some sailors with a spying Glaß, and examin'd as well as they could, where the leading light would fall, and it appears to be in Thurstington Liberty, but uncertain as the weather was heasy. WH made enquiry from a number of Masters of Vessels and pilots, and they all say That as Chester River lies as much between two hills, it generally draws a Fogg down in the Night, sothat the Light will be impossible to be seen, and consequently of no use. They all a greed that one Light upon the Point of Air, one Nun black Buoy at each end of the middle patch, and one d° at each end of Salisbury Bank, and a Land mark at Dawpoole Hill, lineable with the white house under the hill, to be a leading Mark between Salisbury and Bugg, will answer every purpose wanted. That there is no Necceßity to fix a Buoy on the west Spit of Hoyle, there being 9 foot a low water, nor is there any occasion to fix a Buoy on the Bugg as the Vessels will always keep the Salisbury Buoys close on Board, and take the leading Marks at Dawpoole, for he best of the deep between Salisbury and Bugg.

18) To ask the Liverpool pilot whether a light on the Point of Air could mislead him ?

Answer: John Edwards, a Master Pilot, says he never can be misled by the Air Light, for the Bearings between that and the Hoylake Lights vary a little more than a point, yet the Soundings are very different, for going for Chester Bar you have 5, 6 & 7 fathom Water with Sandy Bottom; and going thro' the Horse Channel you have from 12 to 15 Mud bottom. He says that when the wind has blown hard at NNW and he has been in Danger of running upon Hoyle Sands; He has kept the Welch Shore on board and ran over Chester Bar, in which Case if he could have had the Benefit of the Air Light, it would have been of great Service to him.

Estimate of the annual Expence of the Hoylake Lighthouse with Oil made by W. Hamilton

| | £ | s | d |
|---|------|------|------|
| 320 Gall of Oil supposing it is to be bought at the best hand in London 3/5 pr Gall | 56.. | 0.. | 0 |
| 40 ^{lb} of Spun Cotton at 2/3 | 4.. | 10.. | 0 |
| ¼ a hundred of Common Hurds | 0.. | 7.. | 6 |
| Wages including Coals for the house use | 20.. | 0.. | 0 |
| | £ | 80.. | 17 7 |

Expences if lighted with Coal fire

| | | | |
|---|------|------|------|
| Supposing 6 ^{qrs} Coal p Night at 5 ^d | 45.. | 12.. | 6 |
| Candles for the Kitchen Use | 1.. | 10.. | 0 |
| Wages and Coals for the Kitchen Use | 17.. | 0.. | 0 |
| | £ | 64.. | 2..6 |

The Burning of the American Ship "*Harvey Birch*"
by the Confederate warship p.s. "*Nashville*"

by Charles Dawson

IN THE COLLECTION of the Peabody Museum at Salem, Mass, USA can be seen a dramatic oil painting from 1864 by D.McFarlane, the Liverpool marine artist. It is of an event that took place during the American Civil War - the burning by the Confederate warship p.s. "*Nashville*" of the sailing ship "*Harvey Birch*". In its style it is somewhat reminiscent of another painting of the period by a Liverpool artist: W. G. York(e)'s rendering of the "*Emily St. Pierre*" incident from about the same time (reported in the Autumn 1991 BULLETIN). Some further connections with Liverpool demonstrate the importance of the port at that time.

"*Nashville*" was built by Thomas Collyer, New York in 1853 with engines by Novelty Iron Works of the same place. A wooden auxiliary paddle steamer, brigantine rigged, 216' x 34'9" x 22', 1,200 gross, she was built for Spofford & Tileston's New York-Charleston trade. In 1854 she was crossing the Atlantic on a charter for the New York & Havre Steam Navigation Co. (which route went via Southampton) as a temporary replacement for their p.s. "*Humboldt*" which had been lost near Halifax.

Seized by the Confederacy in Charleston at the start of the War, she was to be converted into a commerce raider. Her deck proved too weak to hold the weight of heavy ordnance and since strengthening could not be carried out at Charleston, it was decided to send her to England for the necessary work. She was at the same time to be a vehicle for Confederate propaganda: two commissioners to England, James Mason and John Slidell who had been appointed by the Confederate president, Jefferson Davis, to negotiate the sale of cotton to Britain, were to travel with her. In the end, it was decided that it was less risky to send them by a smaller vessel "*Theodora*" (ex "*Gordon*"). They sailed in her to Cardenas, Cuba, then took a train to Havana where they joined the British Royal Mail liner "*Trent*" only to spark of the heated affair in 8th November 1861 that came to be called after the latter vessel.

Meanwhile "*Nashville*" ironically succeeded in making her way to the UK. It is not clear whether or not work was carried out on her there: is it possible at this early stage in the War that the British authorities would not sanction her conversion. Later they seemed to turn a blind eye to the help given to the Confederacy by British shipyards in the shape of the hundreds of blockade runners they built, some forty of them on Merseyside.

"*Nashville*" captured "*Harvey Birch*" and set her on fire in the English Channel on 19th November 1861. She left British waters in February 1862, touched at Bermuda, then ran the blockade to North Carolina to great jubilation of Confederate supporters.

"*Nashville*" was later sold to John Fraser & Co., the American end of the syndicate that organised much of the blockade running through its Liverpool branch Fraser, Trenholm & Co. Renamed "*Thomas L. Wragg*" in March 1862, she was destroyed by the U.S. monitor "*Montauk*" in February 1863.

The American wooden ship "*Harvey Birch*" 1,482 tons, 196' x 40.6' x 28', was built in Irons & Grinnell of Mystic, Conn. in 1854, for the Liverpool trade, but seems in fact to have spent much if not all of her relatively short life on the New York-San Francisco run. Her owners were J.H. Brower & Co. of New York. She was renamed after Washington's famous patriot spy of Revolutionary days. Her master, William H. Nelson, was said to have been a street waif who was picked up and sent to sea at a very early age, quite likely before he reached his teens.

"*Harvey Birch*" was built with the accent on cargo-carrying capacity rather than speed and so never managed any record run on the San Francisco route. Her times for the first three voyages were:

1855 123 days
1856 139 "
1858 159 "

One of her most memorable voyages was the third of these. With a crew of 28 and carrying some 3,000 tons of general cargo, including 736 tons of coal she left New York drawing 24' 6" aft and 23' 7" forward, so she was pretty heavily laden. Departing 17th April, crossing the Equator 18th May, she made a time of 31 days for the average sailing distance of c. 4,100 nautical miles. She crossed 50° South Atlantic on 27th June and had one of the hardest mid-winter passages experienced by any ship rounding Cape Horn that year.

Capt. Nelson, having been plunged into a life at sea at an early age, had little chance of learning to write refined English, but his breathless staccato style manages to present quite a dramatic picture of the conditions. His log for three separate days during this period when he suffered a series of head gales off the Horn reads exactly as follows:

July 11, 59°35S 71°30W - Comes in with heavy increasing gales from NNW, very heavy sea on. Morning tremendous gale blowing and increasing. Latter part a Hurricane gale blowing in squalls came near losing foretopail by the parting of the weather sheet. tremendous sea running one the heaviest I ever see. At meridian the sun broke through the clouds presenting the wildest scene the imagination could picture. A tremendous cross sea running, the water blowing the scud a flying and to cap the climax a threatening looking squall rising in the west which broke upon us at 30 minutes pm with a force as though it would take all with in its course. The barometer commenced to rise and the wind canted WNW. Wore ship as soon as we could. Fore part moderating gales from WNW. Ends with heavy snow squalls rising in SW but having no effect on the wind.

July 19, 57°40S 78°W - I believe a ship never had such a passage since Lord Anson's time. My ship shows it and feels it, although as good a ship as comes this way.

July 21 The blackest and darkest squall I ever see passed over blowing very heavy with snow and hail. A large ship in company. An American I take her. The times are exciting pulling cotton. He has his match for today and more too.

Owing to the atrocious conditions he experienced, his ship did not cross 50° South Pacific until 24 July, nearly a month after crossing 50° South Atlantic; plain evidence of a tough rounding of the Cape. By way of comparison, the clipper "*Hornet*" had three years earlier made it in a week. "*Harvey Birch*" arrived in San Francisco on 24 September 1858 after her voyage of 159 days from New York.

Both "*Harvey Birch*" and "*Nashville*" had short lives, and both were victims of the War. "*Harvey Birch*" at only eight years old and "*Nashville*", under her second renaming as "*Rattlesnake*", at only ten years old.

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The Portrait of Dodshon Foster of Lancaster

Attributed to Liverpool artist William Tate (1750?-1806) and probably painted in the 1770's - 1780's. Oil on canvas. The only painting of a Lancaster slave merchant known to exist.

DODSHON (or Dodgson) Foster was born in 1730, the third son of a Durham merchant, Robert Foster of Hawthorne. In pursuit of trade he moved to Lancaster and became a Freeman of the borough in 1751/2. He quickly became involved in the town's growing slave trade between Africa and the West Indies and was one of the youngest merchants to take part. Between 1755-58 he was a member of the Lancaster Port Commission.

Foster was helped in his commercial ambitions by marriage, in 1753, into the Birket family of established Lancaster Quaker merchants. They already had West Indies and slave trade links despite the Friends' dislike of slavery on religious and moral grounds. Foster made use of the commercial network based on these family and religious ties. He also entered a partnership with another local Quaker merchant, John Heathcote.

During most of the 1750's the pair owned the Lancaster merchant and slave ships "*Barlborough*" and "*Bold*", and probably had interests in other vessels. The "*Barlborough*" was the first Lancaster vessel to visit Jamaica with slaves, where her cargo of 101 individuals was sold in the Summer of 1753. Further voyages were made in 1754 and 1756. Details of cargoes for the homeward journeys to Lancaster show that the "*Barlborough*" brought back cotton, sugar, rum, logwood, mahogany and ginger.

This particular ship was sold in 1758 and, subsequently, Foster seems to have concentrated on mainstream West Indies trade. The Seven years War (1756-63) probably created the conditions in which extra trade and adequate profits were able to be made on non-slave cargoes. With his father-in-law he owned the ship "*Hawke*" which sailed between the West Indian islands and South Carolina. By this stage Foster had perhaps been able to generate enough wealth to reduce his dependence on the riskier African trade.

Little is known about Foster's later career, although he continued in business. It is suggested that he made sufficient money that he no longer needed to be as heavily involved in trade. He died in 1792. His son, Robert also became a West Indies merchant visiting the islands in 1772. He later joined the Royal Navy and supplied information about the slave trade to the abolitionist, William Wilberforce. Robert inherited the estates of his grandfather, Miles Birket of Hebblethwaite Hall, Yorkshire and Scarthwaite in Lancashire.

N.R. Dalziel, (Lancaster Maritime Museum)

THE LAST OF THE MERSEY PILOT CUTTERS

Sailed September 23rd 1904 for the Falkland Islands

LIVERPOOL has bidden farewell to the last of the old Mersey sailing pilot cutters, which sailed from the Clarence Dock for the Falkland Islands, to take her place on that station for the Falkland Islands Co Ltd. The "*George Holt*" (or as she was known in the service, No 10), was the finest of the splendid fleet of sailing pilot boats which have been suspended by the present steam fleet. She was built by Phillips & Co at Dartmouth in 1892 to the design of Mr. Richardson, Liverpool, and speedily made herself known as the fastest and most successful boat in the service. Previously, and for some time after her advent, the pilots' earnings in respect of each boat were pooled and divided among the pilots allotted to the particular boat, but the "*George Holt*" proved so speedy that she frequently cut out the other boats, and her earnings, and consequently those of the pilots on board, far exceeded those of the other vessels. The result was that a certain amount of dissatisfaction was engendered, and it was finally decided to pool the earnings of all the boats and divide the proceeds amongst all the pilots. Even after the introduction of the steam boats the "*George Holt*" was retained in the pilotage service of the Dock Board as a supplementary boat, so that she has never until recently been out of the service entirely. A short time ago Messrs W. Lowden & Co, Water St. were instructed by the Falkland Islands Co to secure for them a good and serviceable sailing yacht for their trade amongst the islands, and Messrs Lowden were fortunate in securing a boat of the type of the "*George Holt*", which is eminently suited for the work of the company. Port Stanley, the capital of the Falkland Islands is a port of call of some of the intermediate steamers of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company, and the Falklands Islands Company have a fleet of sailing yachts which carry passengers, mails and cargo from Port Stanley to all the other islands of the group, and bring back other cargo for export - this consisting chiefly of wool collected from the numerous farms in the various islands. This is the work in which the "*George Holt*" will now be engaged, and she sailed as stated to begin her work there. Quite a large number of Mersey pilots were at Canning Dock to

see the last of their old favourite, and Captain Fortay, late chief officer of the Liverpool ship "*Lalla Rookh*", who goes out in command of the vessel, must have been pleased with the heartiness of the send-off. The "*George Holt*" is a vessel of 100 tons net register, and as she is a fast sailer she may reach the end of her voyage (a matter of 7,300 miles) in ten or eleven weeks. She has been refitted for her new service by Messrs R.&J. Evans of Liverpool, the midship section being reserved for cargo, while the passenger accommodation is aft; the crew being berthed forward. She is taking out a full general cargo for the islands. Capt. Fortay, on arrival at Port Stanley will hand over the vessel to her new captain and return home. The crew, however, will remain with the "*George Holt*" for two years. She will, in future be known as the "*Lafonia*".

Mr Cobb, the Falkland Islands Company's shipping agents, Dean Brandon and a large company of pilots and others gave her a good send off on Friday the 23rd September, from the Liverpool docks. They followed her on her passage through the docks until the tug was alongside to take her out. Some of the crew gave their friends a rather strange farewell, sending them - verbally at least - to a certain hot world. The tug reported that she cast her off at the usual place and she sailed away with a fair wind. It is a question whether she or the PSNC's "*Panama*" leaving in October 27th will reach the Falklands first. Our old friend, Captain MacLaughlin, had the oversight in the F.I. Co's interests of her being fitted out for her new sphere of duty: he got quite 10 years younger while engaged on her. Her masts have not been cut down, as she has experienced worse weather on the Liverpool bar than she is ever likely to encounter in the islands. She is an exceptionally strong composite schooner of steel 'timbers' with English oak planking. The cabins and saloon are most comfortable and roomy, a very great improvement on the "*Fair Rosamond*", comfortable as she was. She will most likely be the fastest schooner trading in the Falkland Islands. We can but wish her God-speed, good luck and a long, useful career in the Colony.

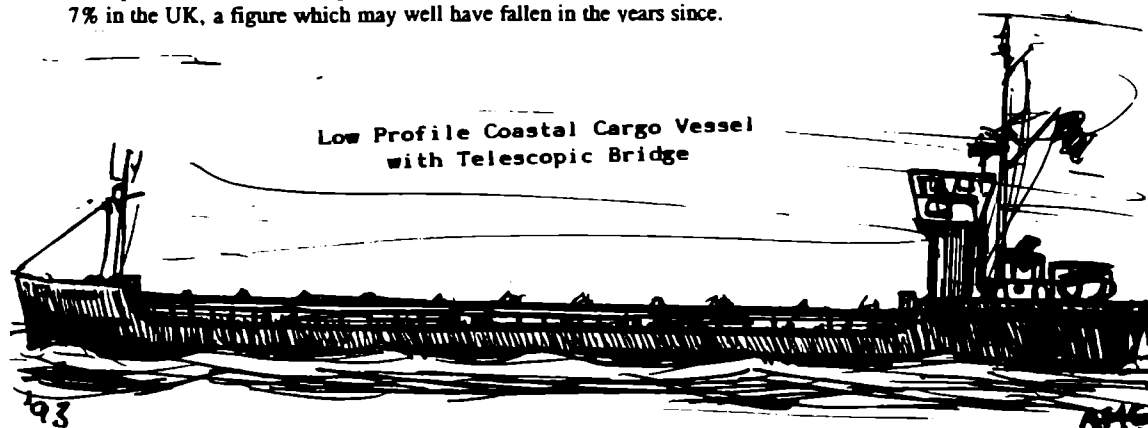
Neglected Waterways of the North West

by Alan McClelland

Recently Steven Norris, the minister responsible for Transport in and around London, asserted, "The Thames is potentially one of London's greatest transport arteries". On Friday, 19th March, the LIVERPOOL ECHO posed the questions, 'Is the Mersey waterfront a unique environmental and leisure amenity or is it an industrial opportunity? In an environmentally conscious age the appeal of an attractive waterfront is obvious. But the Mersey remains, essentially, a working river. Is it realistic to hope for the best of both worlds?'

For a number of reasons the answer to the ECHO's concluding question should be an unequivocal "Yes!" In the first place one of the greatest attractions of the Mersey for visitors and locals alike has been the movement of shipping. Secondly and more importantly, there has been a growing consensus throughout Europe in the last ten years or so that the transport of as much freight as possible should be removed from reliance on heavy goods road vehicles for environmental reasons and because of the astronomical cost of road and motorway development and maintenance. In Britain road maintenance budgets have had to be upwardly revised largely as a consequence of damage caused by lorries. Expenditure is rising by 36 per cent in real terms, with £1.35bn at least, to be spent in the period 1991-94. Lorries adversely affect the residential areas through which they must pass at some stages of their journeys with noise and fumes. The accidents in which they are involved have devastatingly widespread effects. In contrast British coastal and broad gauge waterway shipping requires little capital expenditure to maintain its routes, using existing facilities, and has an excellent safety record with minimal environmental impact.

Unfortunately most of the recent campaigns to reduce reliance on road transport have tended to concentrate on the attractions of the railways, and this in spite of the confusion created by proposals for their privatisation. The vast potential of our coastal seaways and our waterways, particularly in the North West, has been neglected. According to a study published in June 1992 by the UK Chamber of Shipping (*The Case for British Shipping: Safety & the Environment*), it has been estimated that one coastal voyage can cater for as much cargo as 80 or more heavy goods road vehicles. Research carried out for the European Conference of Ministers of Transport in 1990 led to the conclusion that shipping is "an extremely environment-friendly transport mode, compared, for instance, with road haulage." And in the same year it was estimated that the 11m tonnes of freight carried by water in and around London meant 10m fewer lorry trips. Regrettably no comparable studies appear to have been conducted for the North West region. This in spite of the fact that short-sea shipping, comprising as it does ever increasing numbers of low profile vessels capable of both sea and inland waterway navigation, accounts for some 35% of total freight movement between European Community States, and that the Commission has called for "the waterborne modes to be exploited to the full". Proposals for an integrated European transport policy effect this, and it has been suggested that there could well be 100% increase in traffic volume within the Community by the end of the first decade of the next century. Significantly a study by the Transport Studies Group of the then Polytechnic of Central London in 1991 put the amount of freight moved by water in each of France, Germany and Holland at 25%, with just 7% in the UK, a figure which may well have fallen in the years since.



There is obviously a need for a full investigation of the potentialities in and around Great Britain, and particularly in the North West. As matters stand, only the Thames is to be subjected to a study into the development of traffic by the Government. What, with a positive government policy and truly vigorous marketing, might be the future for Liverpool, Birkenhead, Garston, The Manchester Ship Canal, the Weaver and the Dee?

Sailing Fishing Nobbies of the North West

Over the page is the latest of the lines drawings, all drawn to a scale of 3/4in : 1ft (1/16th full size), in the collection of nobby fishing boat lines drawings now in the archives of the Merseyside Maritime Museum.

The full collection so far includes:

| | Year built | Reg No | Builder's yard or location | Last working home port |
|---------------------|------------|-----------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| An Annan Trawl Boat | c.1880 | - | Annan | Annan |
| "Jenny" | 1902 | ? | Marshside | Southport |
| "Provider" | 1904 | LL282 | Gibson's | |
| | | Fleetwood | Barrow | |
| "Genesta" | c.1905 | ? | Wright's | |
| | | Marshside | Southport | |
| "Wild Cherry" | 1905 | PN 34 | Crossfield's | |
| | | Arnside | Preston | |
| "Polly" | 1906 | LL 77 | " " | |
| | | " " | Liverpool | |
| "Samantha" | 1906 | BW 16 | Annan | Barrow |
| ex "Welcome" | | | | |
| "Nora" | 1912 | LR 59 | Crossfield's | |
| | | Arnside | Morecambe | |
| "Christine" | 1917 | ? | " " | |
| | | | " " | Maryport |

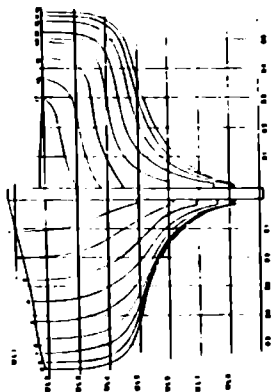
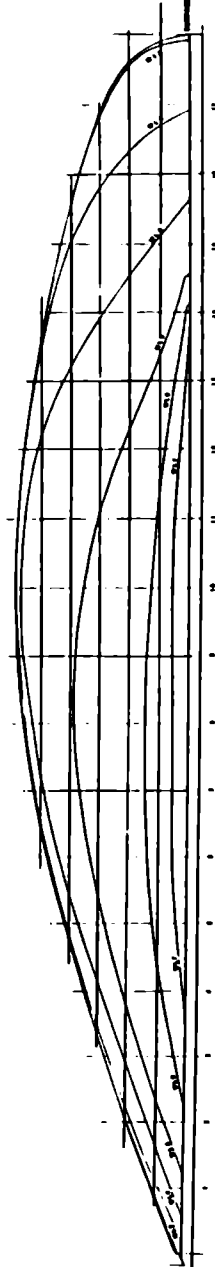
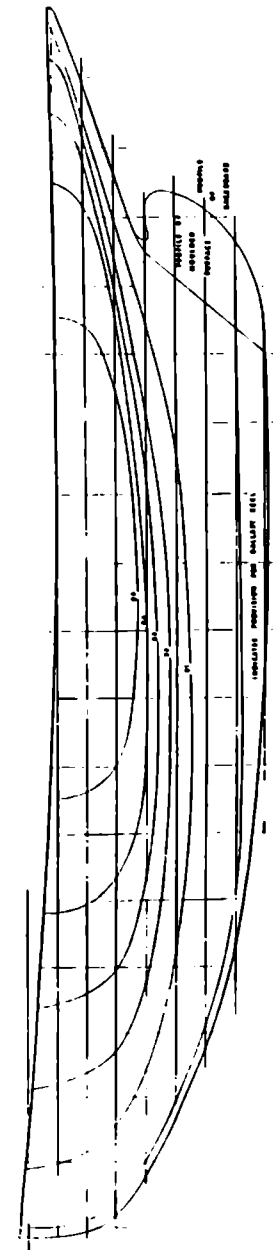
These drawings, the collected works of Nick Miller (a Barrow naval architect) and myself, who have cooperated in either measuring the craft or producing the drawings or both.

Covering a span of some 37 years the craft recorded represent, though not fully, stages in evolution of the type, with variations in size, design and regional practices. Other examples may be added as worthwhile opportunities arise. Meanwhile production of scale drawings of traditional rigging practices, fitting out & etc. is proceeding. For example if anyone asks - how were nobbies ballasted? how to lay a nobby's deck? did nobbies ever have a transom stern, or even a late stern? etc etc; they may now know where to apply those questions. But we are still learning.

For some time now the Maritime Museum has held in the archives a micro-film copy of the Morecambe Fishing Boat Mutual Insurance Co Ltd record book, covering the years 1894 to 1955. It is fascinating to study its pages recording the rise and decline of the Morecambe Bay fishing fleet. And there are so many insights to be inferred. The names of the boats above chart the changing national and social attitudes as the years went by, the family investment, the family links and the pride in their calling. As the son of one of these fishermen was heard to say, *"We knew that we were an elite"*.

L.J. Lloyd member

'GENESTA' of SOUTHPORT c. 1905



'GENESTA'

DESIGNED BY J. H. B. & CO. LTD.
 LONDON & SOUTHPORT
 BUILDERS: J. H. B. & CO. LTD.
 SOUTHPORT

THIS SHIP WAS DESIGNED FOR THE
 LONDON & SOUTHPORT TRADING CO. LTD.
 AND IS NOW IN THE SERVICE OF
 THE LONDON & SOUTHPORT TRADING CO. LTD.

DESIGNED AND BUILT
 BY J. H. B. & CO. LTD.
 SOUTHPORT

THE SHIP WAS DESIGNED FOR THE
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 AND IS NOW IN THE SERVICE OF
 THE LONDON & SOUTHPORT TRADING CO. LTD.

A FEW MANY BUILT VESSELS FROM THE LIVERPOOL CUSTOMS REGISTERS

| YEAR | VESSEL | REFERENCE | MASTER | SHIPBUILDER, PLACE & DETAILS | TONS |
|------|------------|-----------|--------------------|---|------|
| 1835 | AMELIA | v51 #153 | Evan Gill | John Taggart, Ramsey, 31/8/1835 | 23 |
| 1831 | BEE | v47 # 67 | Benjamin King | Douglas, cert #8, 20/5/1829, Londonderry | 23 |
| 1831 | CACIQUE | v47 #139 | Onesiphorus Dagnia | John Winram, Douglas, 15/11/1831 | 171 |
| 1839 | CATHERINE | v55 #174 | Thomas Christian | Built Douglas, 1839, #2 15/2/1839 | 60 |
| 1833 | CESTRIAN | v49 #198 | Robert Easton | John Taggart, Ramsey, 10/10/18331 | 380 |
| 1841 | CESTRIAN | v56 # 3 | Wm. B.R. Barker | John Taggart, Ramsey, 10/10/18331 | 380 |
| 1840 | CLAUDEBANE | v55 # 79 | John Doyle | John Gates, Douglas, 17/3/1840 | 94 |
| 1832 | COLUMBINE | v48 # 91 | Robert Miller | Douglas, cert #56, 22/4/1830 | 176 |
| 1835 | DIAMOND | v51 #129 | James Donaldson | John Taggart, Ramsey, 18/6/1835 | 573 |
| 1836 | DUNCAN | v52 #192 | Pearce Cowley | John Winram, Douglas, 17/6/1836 | 644 |
| 1836 | ELLEN | v51 # 64 | William Ward | John Taggart, Ramsey, 27/1/1836 | 409 |
| 1838 | FENELLA | v54 #139 | Thomas Bodson | John Winram, Douglas, 7/7/1838 | 66 |
| 1837 | HERRING | v53 # 72 | John Brown | John Winram, Douglas, 6/2/1837 | 32 |
| 1831 | HINDLEY | v47 # 83 | Finlay Cook | John Winram, Douglas, 11/7/1831 | 191 |
| 1831 | JULIA | v47 # 82 | James Arthur | John Winram, Douglas, 11/7/1831 | 190 |
| 1835 | LINEN"A | v50 #100 | Alexander Scott | John Taggart, Ramsey, 24/2/1835 | 162 |
| 1838 | LINEN"A | v54 #146 | John Edington | John Taggart, Ramsey, 24/2/1835 | 162 |
| 1835 | LOUSA | v50 #114 | Thomas Bodson | John Winram, Douglas, 27/6/1835 | 152 |
| 1837 | MACKEREL | v53 # 71 | Peter Brown | John Winram, Douglas, 6/3/1837 | 32 |
| 1838 | MAGISTRATE | v53 # 5 | Anthony Allen | Ramsey, #133 15/8/1834 8/1/1838 | 518 |
| 1840 | MAGISTRATE | v56 #228 | William Turner | Ramsey, #133 15/8/1834 8/1/1838 | 518 |
| 1838 | MARION | v54 #142 | Peter Masters | John Winram, Douglas, 11/8/1838 | 148 |
| 1831 | MATILDA | v47 # 18 | Robert Casson | John Winram, Douglas, 26/1/1831 | 214 |
| 1833 | MONA | v49 #189 | Philip Gell | John Winram, Douglas, #167, 22/10/1833, Lpl | 396 |
| 1838 | MONA | v54 #167 | James Glass | John Winram, Douglas, #167, 22/10/1833, Lpl | 396 |
| 1837 | MULLET | v53 #177 | Thomas Harrison | John Winram, Douglas, 2/2/1837 | 32 |
| 1840 | NITH | v55 #121 | William Shaw | John Winram, Douglas, 1/5/1840 | 644 |
| 1835 | ORLEANA | v51 #162 | Alexander Cameron | Douglas 16/4/1835 | 649 |
| 1837 | PALMYRA | v53 #100 | Alexander Croal | John Taggart, Ramsey, 16/1/1837 | 415 |
| 1840 | PALMYRA | v55 #156 | Alexander Croal | John Taggart, Ramsey, 16/1/1837 | 415 |
| 1831 | PANTALOON | v47 # 68 | George Cheveley | Douglas, cert #66, 20/5/1829, Liverpool | 119 |
| 1836 | PANTALOON | v51 # 6 | Anthony Peell | Douglas, cert #66, 20/5/1829, Liverpool | 119 |
| 1833 | PARKFIELD | v48 # 6 | Benjamin Winder | John Winram, Douglas, 9/1/1833 | 496 |
| 1832 | PERU | v48 # 78 | Alexander Scott | John Winram, Douglas, 1/6/1832 | 204 |
| 1832 | RAMSEY | v48 # 75 | Saul Taylor | Joshua Bennett, Ramsey 18/5/1832 | 93 |
| 1832 | RAMSEY | v48 #172 | Edmond Kerr | Joshua Bennett, Ramsey 18/5/1832 | 93 |
| 1832 | RAMSEY | v51 #211 | Corry Danby | Joshua Bennett, Ramsey 18/5/1832 | 93 |
| 1831 | ROSALIND | v47 # 17 | William Prowse | John Winram, Douglas, 26/1/1831 | 125 |
| 1833 | SARAH | v49 #174 | Thomas Corkill | John Taggart, Ramsey, 15/10/1833 | 93 |
| 1841 | SELINA | v56 # 45 | Samuel Lythgoe | Douglas 1839, cert # 19 30/10/1839 | 93 |
| 1837 | STURGEON | v53 #179 | Samuel Bibby | John Winram, Douglas, 17/4/1837 | 32 |
| 1837 | SUPERIOR | v53 # 83 | John Donaldson | B. Cochrane, Ramsey 28/4/1837 | 411 |
| 1832 | TYNWALD | v47 # 66 | John Dickenson | John Winram, Douglas, 13/3/1832 | 202 |
| 1839 | WILLIAM | v54 # 93 | Philip Teare | Built Douglas, 1838, # 13/7/1838, lost | 21 |
| 1840 | WILLIAM | v55 #169 | Daniel Sayle | Built Douglas, 1838, # 13/7/1838, lost | 21 |

prepared by E.O.Williamson, Wednesday 27 January 1993

LOCAL NOTES

Maritime Engineering Exhibition in St. Georges Hall

An exhibition of shipbuilding and associated trades is to be held in St. Georges Hall during November. Entitled **MARTEX NW '93** it is being organised by the Merseyside company, North West Maritime Enterprises. The first of its type to be held in Liverpool it will take advantage of the maritime expertise readily available in the region. The Liverpool Marine Engineers & Naval Architects' Guild is supporting the venture.

Oil Exploration in Liverpool Bay

The oil exploration rig is again stationed off Ainsdale following the success of Hamilton Oil Co. in obtaining planning permission to bring the gas ashore via an installation near Point of Ayr.

In the Autumn last year I saw a faintly familiar vessel entering the Mersey but with what appeared to be a unfamiliar large drilling derrick on the fore-deck.

I learn from N.R. Pugh that the vessel was the "Pholas" then working for Hamilton Oil. As "Elizabeth Bowater" she was a regular visitor to the Mersey for twenty or more years. Ray says the "Pholas" is working in the Gulf of Mexico South of the Mississippi Delta.

Ray, former editor and ex RNVR Wireless operator/technician, keeps in touch with shipping movements using a powerful radio receiver and a vhf scanner.

In 1991 he noted the movements of the German Research vessel "Polarstern" (10,878 gross) managed by Hapag. The latter sent Ray the sailing programme. "Polarstern" reached the North Pole 7th Sept 1991 returning to Bremerhaven for stores etc. She was in the Antarctic in January 1922 and again at home early this year. On 10th March she sent radio signals from 81°N 6°30'E. The vessel certainly moves around.

Via the same medium Ray writes that mooring buoys have been laid in the Mersey off Dukes and Pluckington - presumably in preparation for the Battle of the Atlantic Commemorations.

Book Reviews

SAMUEL WALTERS - Marine Artist (1811-1882)

Fifty Years of Sea, Sail & Steam

by A.S. Davidson

This latest book on marine paintings with a strong Mersey connection, by LNRS member Sam Davidson, is large format (9" x 12") with 160 pages of text illustrated with an outstanding and comprehensive collection of colour photographs together with maps and charts.

*Jones-Sands Publishing
ISBN 0 947764 46 1 (1992)*

*8 Trimley Close Upton, Wirral, England
£38.95 plus p&p (UK)*

Friends of M'side Mar. Mus. may purchase this book from the Museum shop at a 10% discount.

A History of Shipbuilding at Lytham

by Jack M. Dakres

published by the World Ship Society (1992)

£10 net

LNRS Members may purchase the book for £8 including postage direct from Jack at 20 Holmswood Crescent, Barton, Preston, Lancs PR3 5BB (phone 0772 863516)

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by John Shepherd

The IoMSP Turbine Fleet from 1960

well illustrated

Ferry Publications Staplehurst Kent

ISBN 0 9513506 8 4 £ 3.45