The Liverpool Nautical Research Society

(Diamond Jubilee Year : 1938 - 1998)

THE BULLETIN

Editor : John Shepherd

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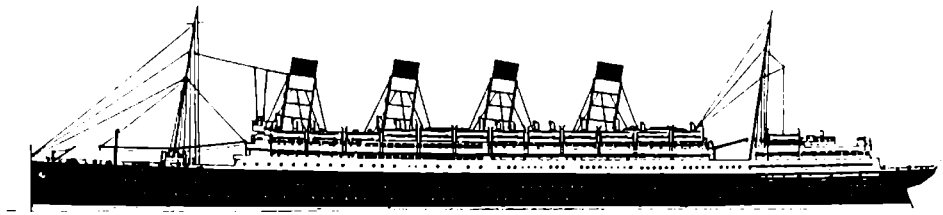


Membership and all Correspondence to : -

Hon. Secretary, L.N.R.S.,
Maritime Archives and Library,
Merseyside Maritime Museum,
Albert Dock,
Liverpool L3 4AA

Forthcoming Meetings

Thursday 17th September
VESSELS OF THE DOCK BOARD FLEET (Gordon Wright)

Thursday 15th October
COASTAL PASSENGER SHIPPING (Malcolm McRonald)

Front Cover : The "Aquitania" of 1914

INTERLUDE IN STEAM

by Commodore Gerald N. Jones

My first voyage to sea in a sailing ship had been a long one, and at the end of it after a few weeks at home I reported to the office of the owners of the **Glenesslin**. I was informed by Mr John Star de Wolf that not one of the company's ships was in home waters. So he said that he would cancel my indentures, and to this I agreed; they were marked "*cancelled by mutual consent*" and signed by Mr de Wolf and myself. I also received the balance of the premium due to me for the few remaining months of my time as an apprentice.

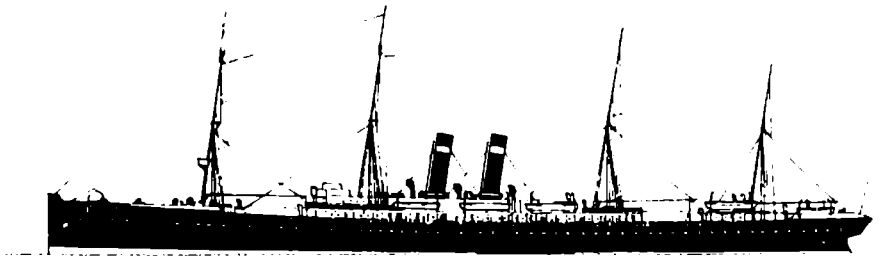
I was now faced with the problem of putting in the remainder of my time for the second mate's certificate. I did not wish to go in a sailing ship for fear of shipping for a longer voyage than anticipated. At this time my brother, after qualifying as a doctor in Edinburgh, had gone to the United States and settled in Philadelphia. Consequently I decided to go and see him and to do this I signed on as an able seaman in the American Line passenger steamer **Westernland**.

This steamer, built in 1883, had a clipper stem and was originally square-rigged on the fore and main-masts, and fore and aft rig on the mizzen and jigger. The yards were struck in the late 1890s, but the jibboom remained. The master of the **Westernland** was Captain Turner and the chief officer was Mr Musgrave; to me they appeared men of high rank and of vast importance. In later years I sailed as an officer with Mr Musgrave in the **Haverford** of the American Line when the White Star Line took over that company, and later still I was with him when he commanded the **Ceramic** in the Australian White Star service.

The **Westernland** was a ship of 5,736 gross tons and carried two classes of passengers, cabin and steerage. She also had good cargo capacity and was quite a popular ship with passengers from Pennsylvania and the Southern States, who travelled at far lower rates than they would have paid in the ships out of New York. But the principal role of the **Westernland** was carrying emigrants and the steerage was packed with hundreds of people who came from Northern and Central Europe.

I joined the **Westernland** the night before sailing at her berth in the West Huskisson Dock, Liverpool. High water being around two in the morning, we went on stations before midnight and, with the aid of tugs, hauled through into the Sandon Basin. The ship was worked out into the Mersey an hour before high tide and went and anchored just to the south of the landing stage. To me it was all strange and tiring; I found the work of handling the heavy hauling lines harder than any work in a sailing ship and, after the ship had come to an anchor, I was told by the bosun that I had an hour's anchor watch

to keep on the fo'c'slehead. By the time that my hour was up it was time for coffee and I sat down in a dreary and crowded fo'c'sle feeling quite out of my element. The seamen were all British, among them some old shellbacks who gave me a very warm and friendly welcome when they knew that I had served in sailing ships. The younger men had spent their few years at sea in the North Atlantic steamers, but they too were friendly. The seamen's fo'c'sle was below the maindeck. Above was an open space under the fo'c'slehead, along both sides of which were the quarters of the deck officers and also their mess-room. The bosun and carpenter, lamp trimmer and quartermasters had their cabins off the main fo'c'sle and the firemen's fo'c'sle was just abaft the seamen's on the same deck level but with a bulkhead separating the two.



The "Westernland" of 1883

There were about ten deck boys who were also packed into the seamen's fo'c'sle; the place was full of humanity and there was no privacy at all. Food was brought down from a galley on the foredeck and, using our own plates, knives, forks and spoons, we took our meat and vegetables out of the mess tins which were fetched from the galley by a couple of the deck boys and placed on the table. The ship went alongside the landing stage at 9.00am and almost as soon as the gangways were on board streams of emigrants began to struggle over them. These men, women and children had been brought down to the landing stage in large brakes drawn by two horses. Poorly clad for the most part and dressed in the garb of peasants from Poland, Russia, Eastern Prussia and other European countries, they were leaving behind them hardship and poverty and had high hopes of a new life.

Liverpool landing stage in 1906 was a scene of intense interest, of novelty and excitement as brake after brake disgorged its load of emigrants. They were hustled aboard and taken by stewards down below, forward and aft, on to dark steerage decks. In these quarters they were crowded in an amazing manner; women and children on some decks and men and older boys on others. These people slept in wire berths, three in a tier one above the other and the numbers in each steerage section would be about 100. I was astonished that so many people could be accommodated in such confined spaces. All

emigrants were on board by noon, and then the cabin passengers arrived in trains from London and various parts of the United Kingdom.

The **Westernland** carried 1,000 steerage passengers and 250 cabin passengers. The cabin-class ships were very popular with people of moderate means and were always well booked up. By three o'clock in the afternoon all the passengers were on board and their baggage had been stowed away. With the aid of tugs, the **Westernland** was hauled away from the landing stage and headed down river. The previous occasion that I had left the Mersey was over three and a half years before in the full rigged **Glenesslin**. Behind me were the years of sailing ship experience and now I was facing new conditions at sea. I disliked the life in a steamer from the beginning, but still I was interested in the routine and duties in force aboard. The **Westernland** had a speed of 11 knots and reached Queenstown the following afternoon. Here the steam tenders brought more passengers out to the ship, mostly young Irishmen and women going out to the States to 'make their fortunes'. During the two hours that the ship lay at anchor in the bay, bumboats crowded alongside and vendors, mostly women, came on board to sell Irish lace and woollen shawls. By early evening the **Westernland** had cleared the harbour and passed Roche's Point before dark. Rounding the Daunt Rock lightship, I saw its red light flashing out across the waters, and was glad when we had passed the Old Head of Kinsale and all the seamen were settled to their regular watches. Since the **Westernland** had left her berth in Huskisson Dock in the early morning of the previous day, I seemed to have been on stations or on watch most of the time, and I was tired and glad to find that it was the port watch below from eight o'clock until midnight.

We were called at one bell and relieved the starboard watch at eight bells. Immediately we were on watch we were sent to scrub the saloon deck. At four bells we had a spell and hot tea, seated at one of the fo'c'sle tables. How the men of the other watch managed to sleep, despite our presence in that general space, I learned for myself; we were always so tired that nothing ever disturbed us. By the end of the watch we had almost washed the ship down fore and aft. By seven in the morning the ship was shining and the decks were white as snow.

Work in a steamer at sea seemed all spit and polish and we were never idle. Then on the third day out the bosun came into the fo'c'sle and said that two men from each watch would be required to work coal from the fore end of No.3 'tween decks along to the cross bunker. An able seaman named Nelson who came from Blackpool asked me if I was prepared to take on the job with him and I agreed. So from then on for four more days my 'watch on deck' was spent below in the 'tween decks shovelling coal into a barrow and wheeling it along to tip into the bunker below. It was hot and dusty and the only light was from a dark smoky lamp, which flickered and cast weird shadows around us. This was a new and hard side of life at sea and yet I was happy

enough for I had a great companion in Nelson. He was a man in his early fifties and had been at sea since he was a boy of eleven. He had sailed in the tea clippers in the late 1860s, and later in the crack colonial passenger and wool carriers. Although he was now in a steamer and had been for about a year, he was dissatisfied and told me that he was going back to sailing ships, though he admitted that the sailing ships of the 1900s were undermanned and very different from those of his early days. To me his advice was to go back into sailing ships as soon as possible and remain in them until I passed for master.

When the task of working coal ended, Nelson and I returned to our regular watch and to keeping look-out on the fo'c'slehead at night, and to washing decks and white paintwork. It was monotonous and uninteresting and the only relief was one day when we sighted a large 4-masted barque under a full spread of sail. We never learned her name but she looked magnificent and I wished that I could have been on board her. Another day the handsome White Star liner **Majestic** overtook and passed the **Westernland**. She looked like a great steam yacht with her long fo'c'slehead and her three tall raking masts.

A few days later the **Westernland** came off the Delaware breakwater and, leaving the light on Cape May well on the starboard side, entered the Delaware River with a pilot on board. The run up to Philadelphia was one of great interest for in 1906 the banks of the Delaware were largely woodland and pasture. As the **Westernland** turned the bend below Chester we saw a large and handsome full-rigged ship which turned out to be the **Tillie E. Starbuck**. Although this fine ship was over twenty years old, she was still kept in prime condition. Nelson was fascinated as he gazed with eager eyes at the big American ship and he turned and said to me: "*I'd like to sail in that ship. She's loaded and must be ready for sailing, probably waiting for a crew. I wonder if they have signed on yet!*" We docked in Philadelphia that afternoon and the same night, when I returned on board after visiting my brother, Nelson came to me and said: "*The Tillie E. Starbuck's crew sign on tomorrow and I'm going in her.*" Nelson was stuffing his belongings into his canvas seabag as he spoke and within a few minutes he was ready for the shore. In 1907 the **Tillie E. Starbuck** was lost off Cape Horn whilst on passage from New York to San Francisco. All hands with the exception of the mate were taken off the sinking ship by the British ship **Cambuskenneth** and landed at Coquimbo, Chile.

The **Westernland's** stay in Philadelphia lasted six days and I enjoyed my evenings ashore in my brother's home, but I was not sorry when sailing day came and we left for Liverpool. It was my first experience of steamers and I was not impressed. I paid off at Liverpool and went home for a few days. But I still had the matter of four months to put in before I could sit the examination for second mate. Consequently, after meeting one of my old **Glenesslin**

shipmates, I decided to follow his example and look for a job as quartermaster in one of Harrison's Calcutta steamers.

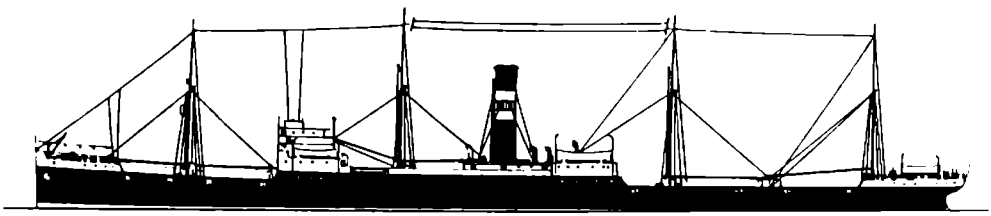
Within a few days I had signed on as quartermaster in the **Huntsman**. This ship was of 7,460 gross tons and had been built by C. Connell and Company of Glasgow in 1904, and was only 18 months off the ways when I joined her in Herculaneum Dock. Her master at that time was Captain H. McKee. I found that the quartermasters lived under the fo'c'slehead, two in a room. The quarters were good and I liked my shipmates. The seamen and firemen, all Lascars, lived aft and were hard working and disciplined. From the beginning I was happy in this very fine cargo steamer. The work was not hard; we kept watch and watch on the bridge - two hours at the wheel and two hours at various tasks around the bridge during the day. This work was done before eight bells in the morning watch, and during the remainder of the day the stand-by quartermaster sewed canvas awnings, mended flags and read the log every two hours. At night-time, when not at the wheel, the quartermaster made the coffee in the galley for the officer of the watch and for his own mate and himself. The food we got was of the best and I am sure that I could not have found any more comfortable steamer afloat than the **Huntsman**. Life in this ship was all new to me and I enjoyed the passage through the Mediterranean and when the ship made fast to the buoys in Port Said everything was fascinating in its novelty. Here bunker coal was taken on board; the coal being brought up out of the barges by Arabs who carried quite small baskets of it on their heads. They ran up the sloping planks that led out of the barges into the side bunker doors and tipped the coal out of the baskets into the bunker, and quickly turning, ran down the plank again for another basketful of coal. It seemed difficult to believe that several hundred tons of coal could be bunkered in the space of a few hours by such primitive means, but the Arab labourers numbered at least 100 and worked at high speed, chanting as they did so. By late afternoon the **Huntsman** was ready to leave the buoys and make the passage through the Canal. A searchlight in a large box was fitted on the stemhead, and two boats were hoisted up at the end of derricks for the passage. Two men came with each boat and others with the light projector. The pilot who came to take the ship through the Canal was British. At the time of which I write - early 1906 - the pilots were mostly either French or British, the Frenchmen being in the majority.

In 1906 the Suez Canal was not nearly as wide as it is now and great care had to be taken with the speed and steering of the ship. During the night we made fast to bollards on the banks for long periods while other ships passed in the opposite direction. The mail steamers had preference and I think we struck a night when several were coming North towards Port Said. It was noon next day when we reached Suez. We landed the pilot, boats and searchlight with their men, and sailed out into the Red Sea.

The **Huntsman** continued the passage to Calcutta without a stop and

in due course we took a Hughli pilot on board out of the new steam pilot cutter which had recently taken over from the brigs - those famous sailing craft which for generations had cruised off Sandheads watching for inward bound ships, putting pilots and their apprentices on board them, and taking them off the outward bounders.

The Hughli pilots were looked upon as the aristocracy of the sea, for they were very highly paid men. Most of them had been cadets in the **Worcester** or **Conway** and after serving their time in sailing ships entered the pilot service as pilot apprentices to become experts with the hand lead, taking soundings in unusually deep water with the ship going at good speed. On arrival at Calcutta the **Huntsman** went into the Kiddapore Dock and discharged her cargo of salt and general. She then began loading gunny bags (jute sacks) and jute in bales. I had quite a good deal of time for going ashore in Calcutta, for we quartermasters kept watch on the gangway by night and day. So in my watch below during daylight I wandered around Calcutta. I visited the bazaars, walked along Chowringhee Road and went into the Marble Bar, the famous and favourite resort of the British soldiers from the barracks.



The "Huntsman" of 1904

The **Huntsman** sailed from Calcutta after a stay of two weeks and went direct to London, at least to the London River, for Harrisons had a discharging berth in the Tilbury docks. From London the ship went round the coast to Liverpool and into the Herculaneum Dock The navigating and engineer officers paid off and signed on again the same day, as did the quartermasters. During the time that the ship lay in the dock I had lodgings ashore and went down to the ship each morning by seven o'clock when all work began; for those were the days when we worked ten hours when in port. I did get one week-end free and went home but the time passed quickly and at the end of three weeks the **Huntsman** was out at sea again bound for Calcutta. The passage out and home varied little, or not at all, from the previous voyage and it was this fact that impressed upon me the monotony of steamer life and all my ideas and dreams were of getting back once again into sail, with the ever changing routine; making or taking in sail; facing up to sudden changes of

wind and weather; trimming the yards and working aloft in fine conditions. Never again can life at sea have the same variety of incidents and experiences since sail has passed from the face of the ocean. ■

from Lloyd's Register, 1905/1906 :

WESTERNLAND Official Number 115352 Call Sign T S N Q
Gross Tonnage : 5,665 Nett Tonnage : 3,584
Built by Laird Brothers at Birkenhead in 1883
Owned by the International Navigation Company Limited
Length : 440′ 0″, Breadth 47′ 2″, registered at Liverpool

HUNTSMAN Official Number 118103 Call Sign V T F S
Steel Screw Four-masted Steamer
Gross Tonnage : 7,460 Nett Tonnage : 4,828
Built by C. Connell & Co. Ltd. at Glasgow in 1904
Owned by The Charente Steamship Company Limited
Length : 470′, Breadth : 57′ 2″, registered at Liverpool
Engines by Dunsmuir & Jackson Ltd., Glasgow

ABOUT THE AUTHOR - COMMODORE GERALD N. JONES

Commodore Gerald N. Jones C.B.E., D.S.O., R.D., R.N.R., was born at Llanarmon, near Ruthin, North Wales on 30th May 1885. It was intended that he would enter the medical profession, but instead, at the age of 16, he became an apprentice, sailing on his first voyage in the full-rigged ship **Glenesslin**. He remained with the **Glenesslin** for over two years and then joined the 4-masted barque **Silberhorn**. He was later an able seaman in the full-rigged ship **Ladye Doris**, and in 1906, after having obtained his second mate's certificate, he joined the barque **Conway Castle**, owned by Robert Thomas and Son of Liverpool.

Later Commodore Jones made a voyage to Port Germein, South Australia, to load grain in the Glasgow owned barque **Marjory Glen**. The cargo took six weeks to load, and the passage home was by way of the Cape of Good Hope to Dublin, where he left to sit for his master's certificate. On obtaining this, Commodore Jones left sail and joined the Blue Funnel liner **Telamon**. In January 1911 he transferred to the White Star Line and served as a junior officer in the **Suevic**. As a member of the Royal Naval Reserve he was mobilised on the outbreak of the First World War and as commanding officer of H.M.S. **Sprightly** he was awarded the D.S.O. in 1917.

Commodore Jones returned to the merchant service in 1919 and while serving as second officer of the **Regina**, he took away a boat to rescue some of the crew of the sinking steamer **Messina**. After the merger of the Cunard and White Star companies in 1934, he sailed in several of the passenger liners and on the outbreak of the Second World War he was again called up to undertake naval duties. For the greater part of the war he served as commodore of convoys and in 1941 was awarded the C.B.E. For a time Commodore Jones was commanding officer of H.M.S. **Attack**, the coastal forces training depôt. He was demobilised in the summer of 1946 and returned to the Cunard White Star Line as chief officer and later staff captain of the **Georgic**. He was afterwards staff captain in the **Aquitania**, **Queen Elizabeth** and **Queen Mary**, and was appointed to command the liner **Ascania** on her first post-war voyage in December 1947.

Commodore Jones retired in January 1949 and died in June 1958.

THE LIVERPOOL NAUTICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

NOTICE BOARD

Members' access to the Maritime Archives and Library on Fridays will resume in September as follows:

SEPTEMBER : FRIDAY 11th, 18th and 25th

OCTOBER : FRIDAY 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th

NOVEMBER : FRIDAY 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Thursday, 17th September
"VESSELS OF THE DOCK BOARD FLEET" - Gordon Wright

Thursday, 15th October
"COASTAL PASSENGER SHIPPING" - Malcolm McRonald

The full Programme of the 1998-1999 Meetings will be included with the September "*Bulletin*".

Meetings are held at 12.30pm in the Education Suite of the Maritime Museum

THE CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

Once again it is my pleasure and privilege to report on the Society's activities since our last A.G.M. on 15th May 1997. Thankfully, the past year has been free of the disputes and controversies with so enlivened the course of the previous year's Agenda!

1. The Monday (now Friday) Facility

The compromise reached with the Museum authorities whereby the Archives and Library would be available to us on 22 Mondays in the year has been a success, and at a Council Meeting in November last year it was decided to renew the agreement for a further twelve months. But we are of course ever mindful of the need for further expansion should the opportunity arise. And, I might add, without abandoning the principle that the Archives and Library should be open to the public on at least five days per week.

However, our arrangement received something of a setback when our ever-amenable helpmate, John Moore, secured a part time post at John Moores University. Well, we are very happy for John, but this commitment took him away from the Archives and Library on Mondays! Consequently, we had to switch to the other 'closed day' - Friday - to exploit our concession. A new schedule was drawn up, and although inconvenient for a number of our Members, it has nevertheless been well-attended, and is greatly appreciated by those who avail themselves of this privilege.

2. Lecture Programme

As always, we are indebted to Ron Dennis for introducing a full range of interesting speakers at our monthly meetings. Only one failed to materialise, and that was due to his having been called upon by the local judiciary to attend Jury duty. Meanwhile, his place was promptly taken by John Shepherd, who, at short notice, gave us fresh insight into the history of the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company. Other Society Members who contributed were Harry Hignett (The American Bureau of Shipping), and David Eccles (The ***Buenaventura*** *Incident). Once again our friend and colleague, Mike Stammers, subjected us to the rigours of his Christmas Quiz, which was won by Member Norman West.*

Another highlight was the visit in January to Cammell Laird's shipyard, a visit which inspired more than one published account in the Spring 'Bulletin'. Later on the Treasurer's Report will reveal how the Society's funds were enhanced by some £50, thanks to a ticket voucher generously donated by the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company, which was raffled at the Christmas meetings to be won by Member Peter Day.

3. Joint Meeting with the World Ship Society

This took place on 4th April 1998 and occupied a full day from 10.00am. It was chaired by Roy Fenton of the World Ship Society, and consisted mainly of a series of talks on the W.S.S. Central Record and other facilities. A description of a British Shipbuilding Database of some 300,000 entries by Dr Ian Buxton of the Department of Marine Technology at the University of Newcastle, was of special interest. The seminar was attended by myself and a substantial number of our Members, several of whom addressed the meeting in their turn. They included our Vice-President, Harry Hignett, on the American Bureau of Shipping; Don Hayman on Modelling Resources and the steam coaster Ophir, his fine model of which was prominently on display; and David Eccles on Researching Larrinagas. Altogether it was a very successful meeting, and should be repeated next year.

4. Historical Society of Lancashire and Cheshire

It was my privilege on 23rd April to represent the Society at the One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary celebration of this venerable Historical Society. After a sherry reception, we filed into the lecture theatre to receive a paper ably presented by Dr Martyn Lynn, of Queen's University, Belfast, on the development of trade between Liverpool and Africa in the Nineteenth Century. It was greatly appreciated by his audience, as evinced by L.N.R.S. Member, Dr Peter Davies, in his vote-of-thanks address.

5. The Office of President of the Society

Soon after A.G.M. last year, the Council decided to invite our distinguished Member, Sam Davidson, to become President of the Society. As you know, the offer was accepted, and so at last the long-vacant office of President was very appropriately filled. Sam is well-known to you all, and both he and his books and papers on Marine Art are attributes of which the Society can be justly proud.

6. Donations

You will see in the Hon. Treasurer's Accounts an item headed "Donations' and recording the considerable sum of £238. These donations are invariably anonymous, but I cannot conclude this Report without expressing, on your behalf, my appreciation of the generosity of those unknown donors. I believe they are all Members of the Society and obviously have its well-being at heart. Among this fraternity are those who, from time to time, make donations in kind to Archive and Library resources, from which we all benefit sooner or later, and for which we are all grateful.

7. "Transactions"

As you know, we are hoping to produce a "Transactions", or similar book, on the theme of 'Liverpool Shipping in the past Sixty Years', to mark our 60th Anniversary as a Society. We would like everyone to have a chance to contribute, but inevitably there must be a selection process which will be initiated in July. Please address your copy to me, or to John Shepherd, by the end of June.

8. Appreciation

Finally, I am resolved to place on record my appreciation of that worthy group of Members who, in various ways, keep the Society moving forward on an even keel from year to year. To John Tebay, our hard-working Hon. Secretary, for whom no task is too formidable; to Sandy Williamson, who keeps the books of account in such good order; to John Shepherd, who, taking great pains, produces 'The Bulletin' at regular intervals; to Mike Jones, my Deputy, who, with great elan, ably fills the gap when I am absent; to Ron Dennis, who arranges for speakers to grace and enlighten our monthly meetings; to Gordon Wright, who organised the Christmas Luncheon at the Blundellsands Hotel, and generally oversees our catering needs; and to all Members who, whether by delivering lectures or by assisting our Museum colleagues in collating or cataloguing material, enhance the good name of the Society. To all I express my heartfelt thanks.

Captain Graeme Cubbin
Chairman of The Liverpool Nautical Research Society

THE "LANCASTRIA'S" ANCHOR

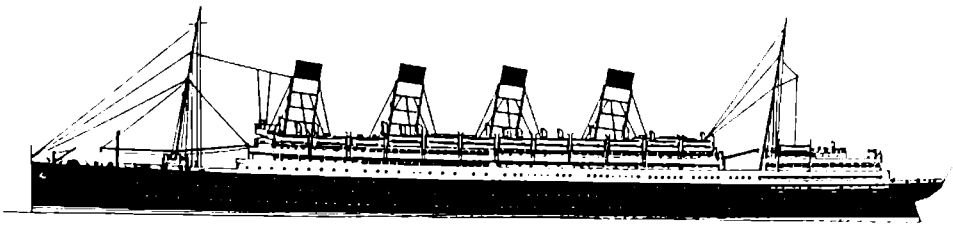
A ten-ton anchor, which was dredged up from the Mersey by the bow anchor of the Cunard liner **Saxonia** shortly before she sailed from Liverpool for Montreal in September 1956, was identified by the Receiver of Wrecks at Liverpool. It belonged to another of the Company's ships, the old **Lancastria**, and was believed to have been lost in 1924. The anchor was traced by means of registration numbers after it had been cleaned at Herculaneum Dock.

No: 2 - THREE MILLION OCEAN MILES - THE "AQUITANIA"

by T.E.Hughes

from : Lloyd's Register, 1922-23 :

Official Number : 135583 Call Sign : J F Q G
Steel Quadruple Screw Steamer
Gross Tonnage : 45,647 Nett Tonnage : 21,466
Built in 1914 by John Brown, Clydebank, Yard No: 409
Owners : The Cunard Steamship Company Limited
Length : 868' 7", Breadth : 97' 0"
4 x Parsons-Brown Steam Turbines, service speed 23 knots, 24 knots max.



On 1st December 1949, the Cunard Liner **Aquitania**, *doyenne* of the North Atlantic and the last four-funnelled liner in the world, arrived at Southampton from Halifax, N.S. Fourteen days later her owners, Cunard - White Star Limited, announced that after full consideration of all the relevant circumstances it had been decided to withdraw the liner from service. Thus for the **Aquitania** a sea career of 35 years, during which she had steamed nearly three million miles and carried nearly 1,200,000 passengers, came to a close.

If in those years she could not lay claim to being the world's fastest or the world's largest liner, the **Aquitania** was to earn her niche in the shipping hall of fame by reason of her remarkable consistency of performance and her proud record of service, not only to her owners, but also to her country in two world wars.

Conceived at the beginning of the 'big-ship' era and when the Atlantic 'Blue Riband' was secure with the **Lusitania** and **Mauretania,** the contract for the construction of the **Aquitania** was placed with the builders, John Brown & Co. Ltd., on 8th December 1910. The events leading up to this decision were explained to the shareholders by Mr Alfred Booth, chairman of the company, at the annual meeting held in Liverpool on 6th April 1911, when he said that

the three guiding principles of the company's policy were "*to weed out from the fleet, even at some immediate sacrifice of traffic, any steamers which could no longer pay their way; to add to the fleet the most suitable steamers that their experience could devise; and to cultivate by every means in their power such relations with competing lines as would enable rates to be maintained at a reasonably profitable level*". The **Aquitania** was designed to run a weekly service with the **Lusitania** and **Mauretania**. There was no Government subsidy and in consequence she needed to have 50% more carrying capacity than the earlier vessels in order to become an economic proposition.

Mr Booth then went on to speak of the docking problem at Liverpool, which was complicated by the fact that although the entrance to the Canada Graving Dock was 94ft in width, and the Canada Dock gates from the river were 100ft wide, there was in fact insufficient depth of water on the sill and confined area in the Canada Basin. Again, the Huskisson Dock entrance was only 90ft in width. The Company had taken its dilemma to the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board and was told that the new Gladstone Dock would be completed shortly before the **Aquitania** was ready for sea. It would be used both as a wet and a dry dock which would appear to be satisfactory until the construction of the whole Gladstone system could be carried out, when the new dock would become the graving dock attached to that system. The Mersey Docks and Harbour Board amended its plans for the new drydock by lengthening it to 1,050ft and widening the entrance to 120ft.

In point of fact the keel of the **Aquitania** was not actually laid until 5th June 1911 as the builders had their own peculiar problems in connection with the facilities at the yard. In constructing the **Aquitania**, John Brown was dealing with a ship of unprecedented weight, height and other abnormal features which demanded special arrangements being made. The same berth was used as that upon which the **Lusitania** had been built five years previously, but owing to the greater size of the **Aquitania**, the ground had to be strengthened and extended. In addition the Clyde had to be widened and deepened and the fitting-out berth adjacent to the slipways dredged.

On Monday 21st April 1913, some 22 months after the keel had been laid, the **Aquitania** was launched, the naming ceremony being performed by the Countess of Derby. Another thirteen months were to pass before the great ship was ready to leave the builder's yard and make the passage down the narrow waters of the Clyde. On the morning of 10th May 1914 - in drizzling rain and a slight mist - the **Aquitania** made her triumphal progress from the fitting-out basin to the Tail of the Bank, preceded by the commodore steamer of the Clyde Navigation Trust and watched from the banks by thousands of spectators. The river passage completed, she made a short run at eight or nine knots before finally coming to anchor.

The next day she took on board 2,000 tons of coal and water ballast to bring her down to a mean draft similar to that on an Atlantic voyage. On 12th

May 1914 she weighed anchor and proceeded on trials. These were completely successful, a speed of 24 knots being reached without effort, after which the **Aquitania** made the coastwise run to Liverpool, where she entered the Gladstone Graving Dock for painting of the underwater hull and final preparations for her maiden voyage to New York. On 30th May 1914, under the command of Captain W.T. Turner, the **Aquitania** left Liverpool direct for New York. The event, which in the natural course of things would have been an occasion for rejoicing, was, however, obscured by tragedy. On the previous day, 29th May, the liner **Empress of Ireland**, proceeding down the St. Lawrence River in thick fog, was in collision with the Norwegian ship Storstad and sank in a few minutes with 1,023 men, women and children being lost. Liverpool was a port in mourning.

Commissioned in early summer, the busy season of the Atlantic passenger year, there was good reason to hope that the **Aquitania** would make an auspicious beginning. However, on 28th June 1914 came the news that the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife had been murdered at Sarajevo. A month later, on 28th July, Austria declared war on Serbia and on 2nd August Germany invaded France, and Russian troops crossed the German border. On 4th August, Great Britain declared war on Germany.

In the agreement with the Government at the time of the building of the **Lusitania** and **Mauretania** in 1903, the whole of the Cunard fleet was in time of war to be placed at the nation's disposal. This arrangement was immediately put into effect. At the beginning of August 1914 the **Aquitania** and **Caronia** (1) were in Liverpool. They were immediately taken over by the Admiralty and fitted out as armed merchant cruisers. Thus, within three months of her entry into Atlantic service, the **Aquitania** was ruthlessly stripped of all her luxurious fittings, hurriedly strengthened, fitted with 6-inch guns and painted an overall grey. Four days after the declaration of war, H.M.S. **Aquitania** left the Mersey on her first patrol.

Her career as an armed merchant cruiser was, however, shortlived. Damaged in a collision with her escort off Anglesey, she returned to Liverpool at the end of September. She was judged to be too large and vulnerable for AMC duties. From then until May 1915 she lay idle until requisitioned for transport purposes, and by August of that year she had carried about 30,000 troops to the Dardanelles. She was then fitted out as a hospital ship, in which capacity she carried no fewer than 25,000 wounded and sick personnel from the Turkish war zone. The **Aquitania** was then laid up at Liverpool throughout 1917.

After the entry of America into the war the **Aquitania** was again taken over for transport service, making nine Atlantic voyages with over 60,000 American troops. Immediately after the war she was employed in repatriation work before being handed back to the Cunard company and refitted for resumption of normal service. Her strenuous service and the diverse roles she

had been called upon to play meant that a considerable reconversion job would be necessary to refit her for the Atlantic service she would be required to maintain. The **Aquitania's** first post war sailing was from Liverpool to New York on 19th February 1919, but after that she transferred to Southampton. In December 1919 the **Aquitania** went to Swan, Hunter and Wigham Richardson at Newcastle for conversion to oil burning. Her bunker capacity was 8,638 tons. At the same time she was fitted with a gyro compass. On 17th July 1920 the **Aquitania** was back on the Southampton - Cherbourg - New York service in company with the **Mauretania** and the 52,000 ton **Berengaria**, the former German liner **Imperator**.

For the **Aquitania** there then began the halcyon years of her career. If her speed did not come within measuring distance of the **Mauretania**, nor her magnificence and size equal the rather garish portentousness of the **Berengaria**, she had a grace and elegance of her own which attracted passengers. It is perhaps a reflection of her intrinsic quality and serenity of service that never did so great a ship make so many ocean passages and provide so little news. A search through newspaper files and press cuttings is in fact remarkable for the absence of references to the ship, so that the odd occasions stand out in sharper relief.

There was, for instance, the stewards' strike of May 1921 when the **Aquitania**, carrying 2,750 passengers - the largest number since before 1914 - and manned by volunteers, for the most part office personnel, left Southampton on time and arrived in New York after making the fastest voyage of her peace-time career. There were also the two occasions when she grounded off Southampton, being later refloated, but not before the press and newsreels had spotlighted her.

During the inter-war years the **Aquitania** was to make 582 Atlantic crossings, steaming 1,746,000 miles and carrying a total of 530,749 passengers. In addition, she was employed during the winter months on luxury cruises from New York to the Mediterranean and South America. These cruising schedules were in themselves an indication that from a business point of view, the North Atlantic was not all plain sailing. One of the biggest problems was the passing by Congress in 1921 of a new immigration law; this made the Dillingham Act of 1917 really effective and seriously reduced immigration. Three years later, in 1924, the law was again revised, and the quota for most countries was again reduced.

Catering for the emigrant traffic to the United States had been an essential feature of the planning of the **Aquitania**. She had been designed to carry no fewer than 1,900 third-class passengers, compared with 698 second-class and 600 first-class, and although certain adjustments had been made, her third-class carrying capacity was still considerable. It was essential that other sources of traffic should be sought, and when in the summer of 1924 the idea of third-class tourist travel was introduced and became immediately

popular, particularly with American students, this new class was installed in the **Aquitania**. By 1931 tourist travel had become so popular that in the seven years since 1924, Cunard ships alone had carried 200,000, of which 42,000 had travelled in 1930. It was decided to abolish the term '*second-class*' and to replace it with '*tourist-class*'.

There followed the years of world-wide economic depression when Atlantic passenger traffic fell to record low levels; the total traffic for all lines in 1932 was little over the 600,000 mark, compared to 2,500,000 in 1913. At the beginning of 1934 came the merger of the Cunard and the White Star lines. The old **Mauretania**, the **Aquitania's** first sea going companion, made her last voyage from New York on 26th September 1934 - the day the **Queen Mary** was launched.

The **Queen Mary** was commissioned on 27th May 1936 and maintained the weekly express service between Southampton, Cherbourg and New York with the **Aquitania** and the **Berengaria**. In 1938 the **Berengaria** was withdrawn and sold for scrap, and the **Aquitania**, the last pre-1914 survivor of the North Atlantic, was left as sole companion to the flagship of the fleet. She was still in good shape, however, and a press report of her annual overhaul in the spring of 1938 concluded : "*Upon re-entering service, the **Aquitania** will make eight crossings of the Atlantic almost without an interval, as her schedule is such that she will never have more than a matter of hours to spare both in Southampton and New York*". She had to achieve 24.87 knots to maintain this schedule.

At the end of 1938 the **Aquitania** completed a further overhaul. Sailing from Southampton on 17th December she made a short Christmas cruise from New York, and from the beginning of 1939 until 10th March she was scheduled for a number of quick turn-round Atlantic voyages which would give her only one day in port at Southampton between voyages. In September 1938, the **Queen Elizabeth** was launched, and it was generally assumed that when she entered service in 1940 the order would be given to the **Aquitania** to "*finish with engines*" for the last time. The outbreak of the Second World War on 3rd September 1939 put an end to any such theorising.

At the time, the **Aquitania** was at New York, whence she sailed for Southampton. In November, she was requisitioned by the Government for transport service and on 29th November she sailed for Halifax, N.S. to embark troops - part, in fact, of the first Canadian contingent. These she safely disembarked at Greenock. She then made another round voyage to Halifax and in March 1940 made the long voyage to Sydney, where she was based for the transportation of troops from Australia to the Middle East. On 23rd November 1941, the **Aquitania** picked up a raft with 26 survivors from the German raider **Kormoran** which had sunk HMAS **Sydney**. Radio silence was maintained and the **Aquitania** was unaware of the loss of the **Sydney**. There were 318 survivors from the **Kormoran**, but 645 had been lost in the **Sydney**.

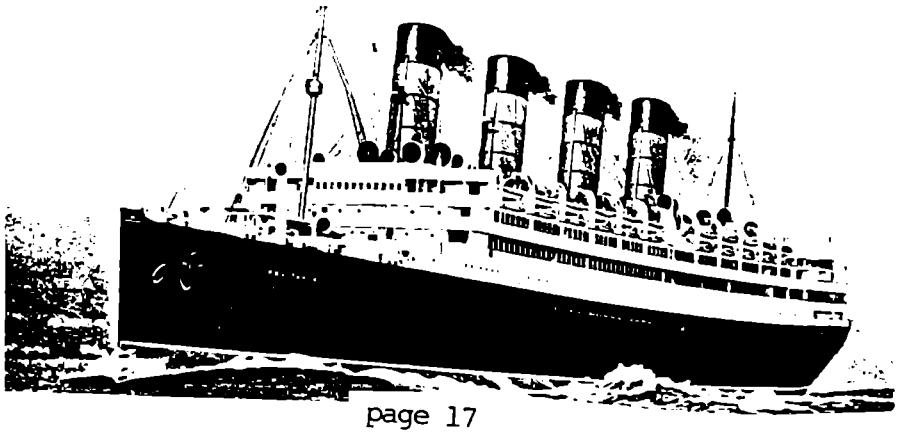
The **Aquitania** subsequently returned to the Clyde and carried American service personnel. From September 1939 to December 1945 she steamed 526,264 miles and carried 384,586 personnel. The **Aquitania** continued in Government service until March 1948, operating between Southampton and Halifax, transporting thousands of Canadian servicemen and their English wives and children back to the Dominion. About this time there were many reports that the Australian Government was interested in the **Aquitania** as a possible emigrant ship. Any doubts about her future were cleared in March 1948 when it was announced that an agreement had been concluded between the Cunard - White Star and the Canadian Government, with the approval of the Ministry of Transport, under which the **Aquitania** would carry settlers and a limited number of commercial passengers to the Dominion.

For her new purpose the liner underwent an austerity refit at Southampton, and on 25th May 1948 began her first voyage in this service to Halifax, N.S. Early in 1949 the agreement was extended for a further period, until on 24th November the **Aquitania**, under the command of Captain R.G.B. Woollatt, began her last voyage from Halifax, berthing at Southampton on 1st December, 1949.

In February 1950 the **Aquitania** was sold to the British Iron and Steel Corporation, and on 19th February she was delivered to the Gareloch by a crew of 250, to be broken up at Faslane.

Way back in 1910, the then chairman of the Cunard Company told shareholders, in describing the meticulous detail that had gone into the design of the **Aquitania**, that it was essential to do so because "*a wrongly planned steamer was wrongly planned for her whole life*". No greater justification of that planning and no greater tribute to the imagination, skill and foresight of those men who, in an almost forgotten age, designed and constructed the **Aquitania** can be found than in her proud and incomparable record of service. ■

The Aquitania on her trials, 12th May, 1914



STRIKE OVER

by L.N.R.S. Member Alan McClelland

Alan McClelland wrote this article 32 years ago on the morning that the 42-day 1966 seamen's strike ended. It originally started life as a radio script for the B.B.C. World Service. It makes very interesting reading in 1998 at a time when the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company is ***finally*** *going ahead with the long awaited and urgently required river berths for the Irish ro-ro traffic.*

Memnon, Apapa, Author, Redstart, resplendent they made their way down the Mersey on the bright Saturday morning of 1st July 1966, just after high tide. They were not the first vessels to clear the Port of Liverpool after the 42-day seamen's strike; I could see others making their way along the Crosby Channel to the Bar. The signing-on of crews had started at midnight, and now the scene in Liverpool Bay was reminiscent of the war years, when vast convoys made their way across the Atlantic to and from the docks lining the Mersey and the Manchester Ship Canal. However, these ships on 1st July 1966 were gleaming in the liveries of their respective owners, not smothered in anonymous grey like their war-time predecessors. They stood out boldly against the haze shrouded Welsh hills as they passed by.

As I swung my binoculars round to the crowded docks upstream, I wondered what sort of future lay ahead for the vast fleet of ships rapidly disengaging itself from Liverpool and all the other ports of the United Kingdom. The British merchant fleet, though still the largest in the world, is being closely challenged both in size and efficiency by several competitors. It has many shortcomings and problems, which may well have been aggravated by the seamen's strike - though they were certainly not created by it. Shipowners and port authorities alike, with certain honourable exceptions, have been slow to accommodate themselves to modern trends in world commerce. In particular far too many of them have been slow to appreciate the significance of economies which result from hauling bulky commodities such as grain and ores in the largest possible ships, and the need to speed up general cargo handling techniques in an age of rapidly increasing costs.

In the evening of the day that the 1966 seamen's strike was called off I had occasion to visit one fairly small dock south of the Pier Head in Liverpool. It contained just four vessels, but they amply illustrated the present state of British dry cargo shipping and provision for seaborne commerce.

Lying alongside the quay nearest to me was a small deep sea bulk-carrier built about twelve years ago - the ss **Cydonia** of 1955, owned the Joseph Robinson & Sons, The Stag Line, and built by J. Readhead & Sons Ltd.

For a variety of reasons she had been fitted with a steam reciprocating engine, which, no matter how low its purchase price, must prove exceedingly costly to run nowadays. She appeared tiny when compared with the gigantic bulk carrier fitting out at Cammell Laird's shipyard across the Mersey for operation by a Norwegian firm. She belongs to a small go-ahead tramp ship concern, noted for the care with which it makes plans for new tonnage. Three or four years ago Robinsons made a thorough investigation of the shipping requirements of the grain trade before ordering a bulk carrier of the largest size capable of serving all the major ports of the U.K. This vessel was the **Ixia**, built by Pickersgills in 1964. Within a very short time of coming into service the new ship arrived at one U.K. port with more than 20,000 tons of Canadian grain There was not a sufficient depth of water alongside the silos to accommodate her!

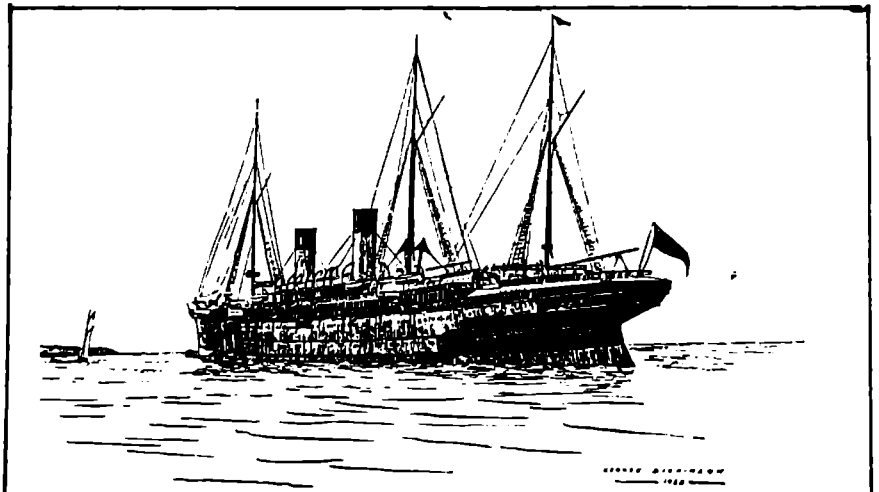
South Canada Branch Dock and the Canada Graving Dock towards the end of the seamen's strike in June, 1966.

The port was Liverpool and the Ixia had to be lightened first at another berth some distance away - a relatively costly and time consuming operation. It is to be hoped that she will soon be able to do the job for which she was designed without unnecessary hindrance and delay.

Ahead of the small bulk carrier on the evening of my visit to the docks there lay a handsome diesel-engined Mediterranean cargo liner built in the 1950s and owned by Moss Hutchison. She looked very spick and span, with clean lines and a rounded bridge front, but her cargo handling gear is a barely refined version of the equipment in use sixty years ago in the era of the horse and cart, and her engine room is situated amidships so that an awkward propeller shaft tunnel obtrudes in two of her four lower holds. As a consequence of the increasing use of containers and pallets in the regular general cargo trades, she is already obsolescent.

Of the other two ships in dock, one was a small Baltic trader belonging to the United Baltic Corporation which incorporates the latest improvements in cargo handling methods in its new tonnage (including drive-on, drive-off facilities for car deliveries), and the other was a fine, really up-to-date Booker liner employed in a South American trade. She represents all that is best in British cargo shipping. Her engines are situated right aft, her holds are served by rapid action slewing derricks and cranes, and her hatchways are so arranged that goods packed in a variety of ways can be manoeuvred through them with minimal difficulty, to be deposited exactly where they are to be stowed.

My brief dockland excursion certainly seemed to underline the fact that some rapid and sweeping changes are required if British shipping is to hold its own against foreign competition. Shipowners, port authorities, traders and trades unions must keep their attitudes and techniques under constant review. ■



The "Teutonic" at Spithead, 1897

CAPTAIN CHARLES CARRIES MOLASSES

by John Fletcher

Many Members will be familiar with the articles written by John Fletcher which appeared in the '*Nautical Magazine*' and '*Sea Breezes*' over the years. John Fletcher's real name was John Pilling, and he died just over eighteen months ago on 14th November, 1996.

John Pilling joined the Royal Navy at an early age, but in 1948 at the age of 20 he left to join the Blue Funnel Line, where he remained until 1971, sailing as chief officer for over twelve years. After being made redundant along with many others, John sailed as master with Kuwait Shipping, Bangladesh Shipping Corporation and Everards until 1983 when ill-health forced his retirement.

Articles in '*The Bulletin*' usually have a strong Liverpool connection, but in this case the link is somewhat tenuous! However, I hope that Members will agree that this article is worthy of a place in the first 48-page '*Bulletin*' - it has always been a particular favourite of mine.

j.s.

Captain Charles's ship, though old-fashioned by modern standards, was what is known as a 'comfortable ship'. Owned by a long established Liverpool company and bearing the name of one of its earliest vessels, she had served as a minelayer through the war years.

After the war she was refitted and sent on foreign service on the American run, and then on the company's three-ship service between the Malay Archipelago and the east coast of Australia.

On this particular voyage the ship had loaded in Singapore and Java, topped up with bunkers in Balikpapan (Borneo), and then steamed through the placid waters of the Flores and Arafura Seas to pick up the Barrier Reef pilot at Thursday Island in the Torres Strait. Usually she was fully loaded with Sydney her first port of call, but in Singapore Captain Charles had heard that a parcel of 1,000 tons of bulk molasses was on offer from Cairns to Melbourne; a short haul with good freight. With this in mind the big deep tank in No.3 hold had been left empty, and a few days after sailing his agents had cabled to say that the cargo was booked.

Sending for the mate, Captain Charles told him the news and said that it was a good job that the tank had been pressure tested in Singapore. The mate checked that the tank only needed a rough clean, and Captain Charles confirmed that there was no Lloyd's survey required for molasses. Steam coils would be required as it would be a heated cargo.

The mate got the bo'sun and his men organised on the cleaning. As the captain had said, only a rough clean was necessary, unlike the very high

standard required for palm oil, latex and most of the other bulk liquids which were carried, but even so, all loose scale, rust, dirt or residue of former cargoes had to be removed from the tank.

During the many years that Captain Charles's company's ships had been trading to the Far East and Australia, they had gained a wealth of experience in the carriage of bulk liquids, and as with other types of cargo, all this knowledge had been compiled to form a standard instruction book. Captain Charles knew the basic elements well enough from his own experience. Briefly stated, they covered two classes of liquid cargo: that which required heating and that which did not. In the latter case the tank was simply prepared and filled, the main point to watch being that it was full, with no possibility of a free surface which could endanger the stability of the ship.

With heated liquids there was more to it, some of them having the loading, carrying and discharging temperatures differing by as much as 45°F. The consequent change in volume in a big tank presented certain problems. A nice balancewas called for, by which the liquid at its lowest temperature on the voyage did not fall dangerously close below the level of the tank top, nor when it was heated to discharge temperature did it expand so as to strain or overflow the tank.

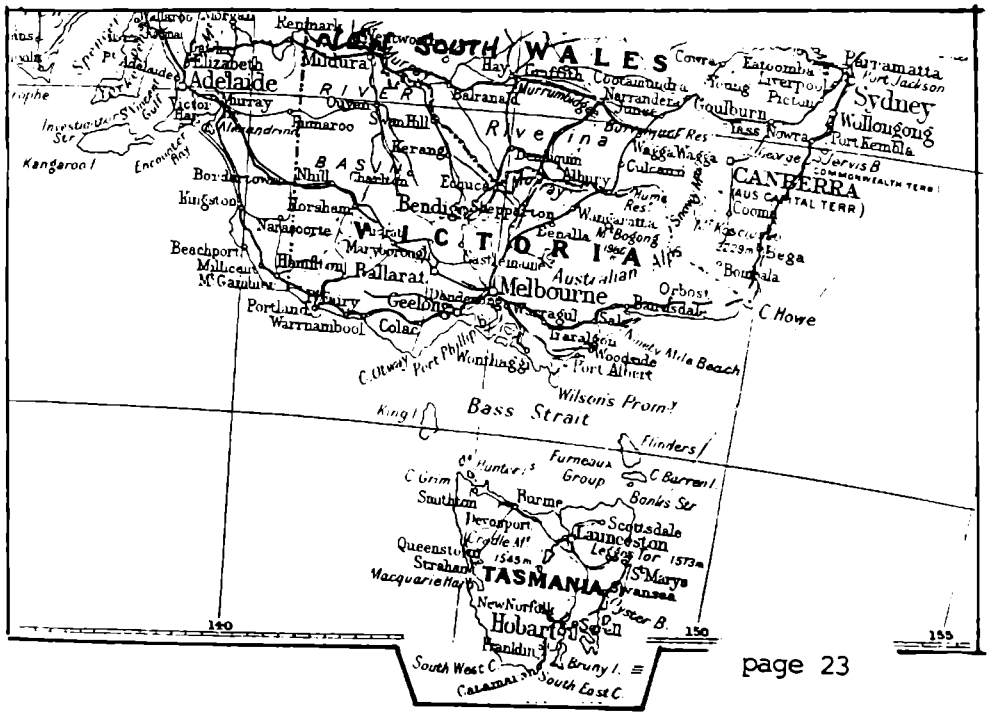
Of course, the company wanted all the freight it could obtain and had taken practical means to ensure that it got it. The coaming of the tank was raised about six inches above the tank top and at each corner of the tank were expansion trunks leading up to ventilators on deck. Thus the liquid could if necessary expand considerably without causing serious stress on the tank lid and manhole joints. In the case of molasses, the temperature was not to exceed 90°F, not to fall below 75°F, and at a point somewhere between 80°F and 85°F fermentation might occur and asphyxiating gases could be given off.

To the seaward of Cairns lay the Grafton Passage, the only way through the Barrier Reef except for the channels at the north and south extremities. The entrance to the harbour itself was almost hidden in a fold of steep green-clad hills. By the time the ship was secured alongside it was early evening and when the mate got back to his room there were three shore-side men waiting for him. They were the agent, the shipper and the engineer in charge of pumping. The only real problem the mate had was in slaking the seemingly perpetual thirst of the pumping engineer and his boys, and ensuring that one of them would be available to stop the pump when he gave the order. All through the night the molasses poured, with the same sense of inevitability as a volcanic lava flow. There was almost a hypnotic fascination in watching the heavy, sweet smelling liquid pour from the pipe and spread itself so slowly that it looked as if the tank would never be full, but by early morning the level was nearly up to the mark which the mate had made. By seven o'clock he was able to report to Captain Charles that the cargo was loaded to his satisfaction and shortly afterwards they were on their way, leaving the sub-tropical warmth of

Northern Queensland for winter in the southern ports. Three-and-a-half days later the ship passed under the famous Sydney Harbour Bridge and docked at Central Wharf where she would spend a further three days discharging. Captain Charles's idea on leaving was to go first to the oil berth at Melbourne, half way up the Yarra River, to discharge the molasses, and then to carry on to the Victoria Dock to the general cargo berth.

A day before arrival at Sydney, however, with a noticeable drop in both air and sea temperatures, the mate had sent one of the cadets to check the temperature of the molasses. Thermometers secured to light chain had been left hanging in the tank so it was a simple matter of hauling them out to take a reading. Half an hour passed before the cadet returned and reported that he couldn't pull up the chain. The combined efforts of the mate and two middies eventually brought the thermometer to view. It read 76°F, and the mate reckoned that the molasses must be as thick as a Lake Maracaibo oil well, and advised Captain Charles that the steam should be cracked open.

After leaving Sydney they had a quiet forty hour run round the coast and first light saw them through Port Phillip Heads and by eight o'clock the ship was moored in Victoria Dock, Melbourne, ready for the waiting day gangs. The agent was on board and confirmed that twilight and night gangs had been ordered so that all being well the discharging of the general cargo would be completed by the next morning. A tanker was on the oil berth at present, but she was due to sail soon after midnight.



Checking the temperature of the molasses, the mate saw that it was 89°F, one degree less than the required pumping temperature, and just into the expansion trunk. During the morning inspection he mentioned this to Captain Charles, who appeared to be very pleased with the way things were working out.

The gangs worked well, and on his final look round the hatches with the third mate, the mate saw that she would easily be finished for the morning. It was a clear, cold night with a touch of frost in the air. He thought how thick the molasses would have been at this temperature without the heating coils and then, one thought leading to another, he walked over to one of the deep tank ventilators and shone his torch down. The beam didn't have far to travel before being reflected from the darkly glinting surface of the molasses, which he saw with some consternation was only about six feet below deck level.

At five o'clock the mate was called, and the second mate told him that the cargo would be all finished for six, and that the molasses had risen further up the ventilator, and that the surface was now only an inch or so below the lip of the ventilator cowl. At half past six the agent came aboard and told Captain Charles that there was some sort of trouble down on the oil berth. The tanker occupying the berth wouldn't be ready to sail for another 24 hours. Captain Charles immediately ordered tugs and a pilot and decided to proceed to Adelaide, despite the mate's misgivings about the molasses. It would, said Captain Charles, be pretty cold in Adelaide and in Burnie, and if the steam was shut off, then the molasses would settle. Furthermore, with the extra thousand tons down below, there would be no stability worries on the run across to Tasmania.

They left the berth shortly afterwards and were well down the river before the mate was relieved on the fo'c'sle head by the second mate. He went to have a look at the deep tank and what he saw sent him up to the bridge in a hurry. The molasses was over the lip of the vents and running into the scuppers in a steady stream of thick dark liquid. Captain Charles decided that if the flow hadn't stopped by the time the pilot was ready to go, then he would anchor off Gellibrand Pile and get the agent out.

An hour later the flow continued and at an increased rate, so Captain Charles brought the ship to anchor and sent off a note with the pilot asking the agent to bring with him a chemist or someone who knew about molasses. He duly arrived, accompanied by two men who he introduced as an industrial chemist and the manager of a Brisbane molasses plant. They all went to No.3 hatch where they were joined by the mate and the chief engineer. In silence they all stared at the unique spectacle presented by the four ventilators spewing molasses in a steady remorseless flow which ran down the scuppers and finally dissolved in the grey waters of Port Phillip Bay.

The chemist told Captain Charles the molasses was '*growing*'. At a certain temperature under certain conditions it could happen. The captain

asked if they had any idea when this '*growing*' might stop. All the steam heat was off the tank now. He was told that a chemical reaction had started - it could stop that evening or maybe the next day.

Captain Charles gave the agent his amended E.T.A. at Adelaide and sailed through the Backstairs Passage, hoping to make the pilot before dark. He was over optimistic, however, and it was after nightfall when they arrived and anchored until morning. The mate reported that the molasses was coming out faster now than when they had left Melbourne. The sailors had been washing it over the side, but once they were alongside, that couldn't go on.

The mate reckoned that there was three days' cargo work at Adelaide. As soon as they were tied up he contacted the chandler and ordered fifty 40-gallon drums. The bo'sun, meanwhile, with typical Chinese ingenuity, had made four lots of chutes to funnel the molasses into the drums and the wharfies derived no end of amusement from the whole fiasco. It was a messy business at best; inevitably some of the molasses spilt and each drum had to be washed before being slung down below and stowed. During the afternoon, as well as '*growing*', the molasses began to erupt. A loud popping noise was heard, followed by a nauseous gas wave which permeated the whole ship.

Captain Charles started to worry about the possibility of the molasses ceasing to '*grow*' and starting to contract. The mate had managed to save about 100 tons in the drums, but a lot had gone over the side as well. There was now less than 900 tons in a 1,000 ton tank. If the molasses contracted, then they would be left with a mighty slack tank. If it had been water it would have been bad enough, but a free surface of molasses in a big 'thwartship tank .... a winter passage across the Bass Strait and Tasman Sea in that condition didn't bear thinking about.

When the ship sailed from Adelaide two days later, a total of 250 drums had been filled with molasses and 20 more empty drums stood on deck for use in their next port, Burnie. When the pilot had gone, the mate took over the watch and checked the course which would take them clear of the Troubridge Shoals and on down the Gulf of St. Vincent. He decided to let the molasses go over the side now that they were back at sea.

Next morning the molasses was still flowing and erupting, but just before noon the mate thought that it had slowed down a little although he had become so mesmerised by it over the last few days that it was difficult to really tell.

At three o'clock that afternoon, the molasses stopped. The mate followed Captain Charles down on to the deck and together they stood by one of the ventilators, looking at it with a certain degree of incredulity. The situation was watched carefully for the remaining fifteen hours of the passage and during the two days the ship lay alongside at Burnie. The level dropped about three feet in the ventilators and remained there, with no eruptions either. At sailing time, and with a fair weather report, Captain Charles decided

that they were going to be lucky. He told the mate that they would not start heating the molasses again until they were inside Port Phillip Heads. If it started to grow again then, it was just too bad! Their luck held and forty hours after leaving Burnie they were tied up alongside the Melbourne oil wharf.

The molasses consignee and the pumping manager boarded right away along with the agent; the consignee going straight up to see Captain Charles while the other two made for the mate's room. The consignee explained that the tanks ashore were completely dry, and also that he was being hard pressed by some of his customers who only bought in 50 or 60 drum lots. The molasses apparently had to settle in the tanks ashore before it could be drummed, and that would take another couple of days.

Captain Charles suggested that he could make 250 drums available, explaining that there had been a slight excess of molasses which the deep tank couldn't hold. If the consignee wanted it, then he was welcome to it, provided he covered the cost of the drums. The captain said that he would arrange for the discharge of the molasses on to the consignee's lorries.

Some three hours later Captain Charles was disturbed by the mate knocking on his door. He explained that the pump had been rigged, but that it would not draw. The pumping manager said that the molasses was too thick, even though there was full steam on the heating coils. The mate's solution was to get the pump running and then lift it clear of the tank lid with one of the derricks; they would then take off the manhole door and lower the pump with the end of the pipe through the manhole. Captain Charles pointed out that with the head on the tank, the 'tween deck would soon be full of molasses. The mate pointed out that there was no cargo in the 'tween deck, and the deck crew had swept it clean. The carpenter had built a sort of cofferdam around the tank coaming so that any spillage could be contained. Captain Charles agreed with the plan and accompanied the mate to the tank top. When they got there the pump hung poised above the manhole door and the third mate, second engineer and the carpenter were down in the 'tween deck. The bo'sun was standing by the winch and two sailors waited in readiness to handle the pipe. Carefully they slackened off the nuts on the manhole door.

There was a hissing noise as the door rose from its seating and thick molasses began to ooze out all round its edges. The carpenter quickly took off the nuts until only four remained. They worked on these until the second engineer shouted a warning. They jumped back just in time as the steel door flew into the air, completely stripping the remaining threads of the holding nuts, and landed in a corner of the 'tween deck. Molasses poured out from the opening and spread over the tank lid. The pump was then lowered and the pipe guided into the manhole. By now the mate and his men were ankle deep in molasses, but the idea had worked and the cargo which had caused so much trouble was finally on its way ashore. Leaving the third mate in charge and setting the sailors to work shovelling the spilt molasses back into the tank, the

mate and second engineer climbed up on deck and got rid of their stained and sodden gear.

Ten days afterwards the old ship was heading north through the reefs. A good cargo had been loaded in Sydney and there remained a brief call at Port Alma in Northern Queensland before she left the Australian coast and steamed westwards to Java and Singapore. Captain Charles and the mate were having a drink together and discussing the events of the preceeding weeks. There was a knock on the door and the radio officer arrived with a message from the Sydney agents :

"Molasses out-turn excellent. Stop. On this basis endeavouring book you 1,000 tons Cairns to Melbourne next southbound voyage" ..... ■

FOG AT THE BAR

The log of the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company's King Orry for Tuesday 13th January and Wednesday 14th January 1959 when the steamer was delayed for twenty-four hours by '*fog at the Bar*'.

Log of Steamship **KING ORRY** Master.

From *Douglas* To *Liverpool* *Tuesday* 13th *January* 19 59

Lights, Headlands, &c., Passed on Passage.	Time	Courses. Stand'd Compass.	Steer'g Compass.	Wind.	Remarks as to Weather, Anchoring, Docking, Detention, &c.
From *Douglas.*	*0902*				*Departed from Douglas with 90 passengers 3 Cars. 145 Mails, and deck traffic*
Head.	*0907*		*ESE.*	*Easterly*	
					11.55. Anchored 1 Mile Outside Bar & 1½ owing to thick fog.
Bar L/Bs.	*0826*	*WSW.*	*14/1/59.*	*ESE*	
Formby	*1150*	*14/1/59*			*Weather. Light ½ Mile Easterly winds sea smooth ½ Good but becoming fog approaching Bar L/Bs*
Crosby	*1212*	"			*WSW. 14/1/59. 8.18pm. Head up and proceeded. 8.58pm Anch owing to dense fog.*
Rock.	*1235*	"			*1140pm Head up and proceeded in approaching.*
					Arrived Liverpool disembarked passengers cars mail etc

Names of Seaman	From	To
On Look-out	*J. Kelly.*	
During Passage	*H. Bowen.*	
Night Watchman	*E. Newby.*	
Regulation Lights exhibited	*As per Regulations*	
Signature	*J. A. Kinley*	Mate

Liverpool 13 02 *South Rock Prince Edge*

Time on Passage	hrs. *28* min. *00*	Distance Run	*75* miles
Received Mails	*0730*	Ship's Draught of Water. Fwd.	ft. *11* in. *0*
Landed Mails	*1330*	Aft	ft. *12* in. *10*
Time of High Water	*1354*	Height ft. *38* in. *7*	
Passed on Passage Co's S.S.	*Manxman*	at *1200*	

THE ROYAL NAVAL VOLUNTEER (WIRELESS) RESERVE

by L.N.R.S. Vice-President Ray Pugh

In 1932, the Admiralty decided that the offer of many enthusiastic radio amateurs ("*hams*") to form an Auxiliary Reserve would provide an excellent opportunity to augment the R.N.V.R. Telegraphist Branch. The offer was accepted and civilian volunteers joined the Royal Naval Wireless Auxiliary Reserve (R.N.W.A.R.). These reservists provided their own equipment and were taught Naval operating procedures, but were not provided with any form of uniform. Since the R.N.W.A.R. had no legal base, members were told that in time of war they must hold themselves in readiness for service ashore or afloat, but they were not subject to general mobilization - their instructions continued somewhat enigmatically with the statement that '*the Admiralty would only "call-up" such members as might be required!*' There was no retainer as with Army Territorials - we served on an entirely voluntary basis, in civilian apparel.

That was the general statement at the start, but now let us look at the personal side. I saw the advertisement in the 'Wireless World' and was enrolled as a Watcher First Class, having proficiency in the morse code, but not being in possession of a wireless amateur transmitter. After a meeting of the eight Merseyside members in 1933 with Commander Mann and Warrant Officer Glastonbury at the Liverpool Adelphi Hotel, I was made Rating-in-Charge for Liverpool. I gave morse practice to those who could attend at my home in Wallasey. At 10.00pm on Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings the Whitehall Naval Transmitter put out morse exercises for our benefit, and the Reserve soon grew to nationwide dimensions.

It became evident that a training centre would be needed for weekly evening practice, and H.M. Office of Works provided a rather dismal room in the Inland Revenue Building in Victoria Street, which in daytime was used by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. Eventually we had to vacate these premises, and were granted space above Aird and Anderson's Tool Shop on Whitechapel.

This was to cause difficulty, as the R.N.V.R. also had a wireless reserve training at H.M.S. **Eaglet** in Salthouse Dock. Captain Elgood of **Eaglet** would not allow R.N.W.A.R. members to train in his ship, as they were not in uniform.

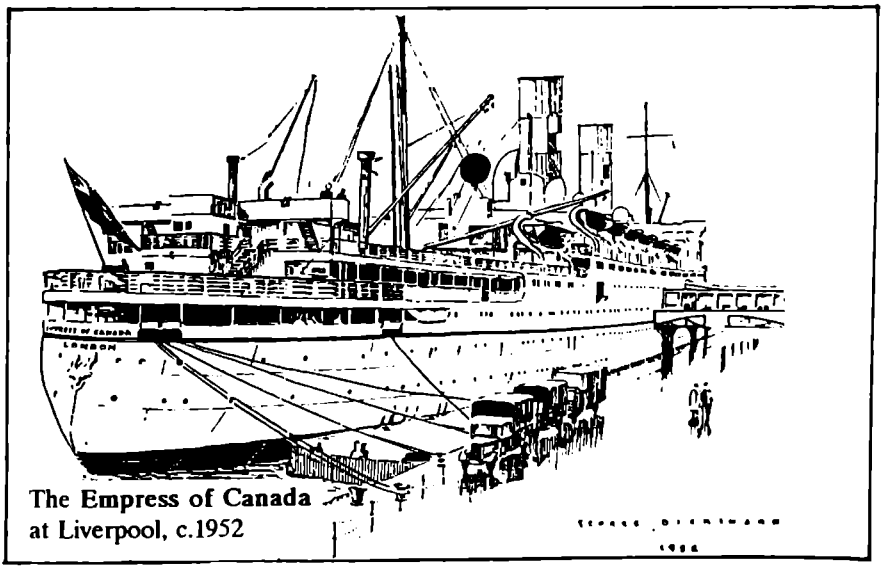
In 1938, war seemed imminent and Liverpool now had two units of eight members each, with Arthur Fielding of Heswall being Rating-in-Charge of the second unit. Also in 1938, the R.N.W.A.R. amalgamated with the R.N.V.R. Wireless section to form the Royal Naval Volunteer (Wireless) Reserve, and a retainer fee was now granted. The minimum joining age was 18. The total membership of some 400 telegraphists nationwide would be useful in

time of war on many types of vessel. In the 1930s there were benefits in being able to take one's holidays afloat in H.M. ships. I was in the light cruiser H.M.S. **Caledon** for the Jubilee Review of King George V in 1935; I attended a wireless course in Portsmouth Barracks Signal School in 1936; I enjoyed a fortnight's cruise in H.M.S. **Newcastle** when we escorted the Royal Family from Stranraer to Belfast in 1937, and in 1938 I spent a week in H.M.S. **Rodney** for Home Fleet exercises in the Channel. In addition, one of the volunteers, Mr W.D. Wills offered holiday cruises from Torquay in his steam yacht **Osprey**. This vessel was renamed **Hiniesta** when commissioned for Naval service in the war at the age of 37 years, and I spent the last three and a half years of the war as her sole P.O. Telegraphist on direction finding research work.

Some Volunteers were called up for the Munich crisis, and received £15 for obeying the call, and I spent two days at Devonport Barracks on board H.M.S. **Drake**. Little did I know then that I would be called up on 16th October 1939 to the same Barracks, getting used to the Navy way of life, and waiting for a 'draft' in January 1940. The war at sea was well under way, and I was living with survivors from the aircraft carrier H.M.S. **Courageous**.

I had four days leave due over New Year, 1940 and returning to Devonport found that I had missed the motor yacht H.M.S. **Rodora** (which was lost in September 1940), and instead I was appointed to the motor yacht H.M.S. **Evadne** at Birkenhead, in which I served for over two years. In peacetime she had belonged to Sir Richard Fairey (Aviation), and she was most useful as a coastal convoy escort.

The R.N.W.A.R. had been a brainwave on someone's part as there were so many trained telegraphists available just when they were needed most.■



The Empress of Canada at Liverpool, c.1952

EDITORIAL

"*The Bulletin*" has been increased to 48 pages for this issue. The additional space will enable two or three longer articles to be included which would encroach too much on the available space in a 32 page edition. It is hoped that 48 page "*Bulletins*" will appear regularly twice a year in the Summer and at Christmas.

Many Members will be aware that this is the Diamond Jubilee Year of the Society. It is hoped to produce a special publication in the Autumn to mark the event. Members should by now have received a circular letter inviting them to contribute to the anniversary publication, but please remember that all articles should be submitted by the end of June so that the 'working-group' can start selecting those to be included.

Articles for publication in "*The Bulletin*" are welcome at any time and should be sent to the Editor at the address in the inside front-cover. An ideal length of article is 3 close-typed A.4 sides, or 5 close-typed A.5 sides.

A reminder has been enclosed with this "*Bulletin*" to the effect that Membership Subscriptions are once again due. The Society's 'year' runs from 1st May to the following 30th April, and it is earnestly requested that all subscriptions be paid by 1st September. An addressed envelope has been enclosed for your convenience.

It is intended to establish a Database of Members' special interests and fields of research. Please refer to the notes on the Subscription renewal slip. It is hoped that most Members will respond, but please note that we shall keep the information on a computer, as is done with Members' names and addresses. The information will be for the use of the Society's officials only, and will not be made available to any other organisation. The Data Protection Act requires the Society to advise you of these facts.

I should like to thank the proof-readers who meticulously go through each issue of "*The Bulletin*" before it is photo-copied for distribution to Members. Thanks are due to the Society's Chairman, Alan McClelland and Malcolm McRonald for undertaking this task and correcting my clumsy constructions and ensuring that I've got the facts right. As many Members will be aware, it is almost impossible to 'proof' one's own work - after reading it through four or five times I see what I want to read, not what is actually printed on the paper!

Thanks are also due to the many Members who send me material for inclusion in *"The Bulletin"*. Please keep the material coming in, whether it is a full-length article, a *'filler'* or a piece of local news.

To conclude at a personal level, may I say how much I have enjoyed editing *"The Bulletin"* over the past year. I have made a great many new friends, many of whom correspond with me regularly. Members' comments are always welcome, and if you have an item which you feel might be suitable for our regular 'Notes and Queries' feature, or wish to have a letter printed, then please write to me. There's always space for Members' contributions.

June, 1998.

BOOK REVIEW

"IRON FIGHTERS, OUTFITTERS AND BOWLER HATTERS"

by George C. O'Hara

ISBN 0 935082105 Price £25.00

The author has a background in shipbuilding. This book makes compulsive reading for the researcher and those merely interested in *'whatever happened to the British shipbuilding industry*?'.

This is a comprehensive account of the decline and fall of the one-time shipbuilder to the world to virtually a cottage industry.

The formation of Upper Clyde Shipbuilders (1968) provides a case study in mismanagement. The directors were politically appointed with only a limited knowledge of shipbuilding and shipping contracts. (One director came from a ladies' garments factory!) An intransigent workforce, political dogma, outside influence and fierce international competition all contributed to the débâcle.

Mr O'Hara has produced a volume of quality and balance with very good photographs of shipyard plant, and of the many ships built in various yards. He also leaves the reader in no doubt about *'whatever happened to the British shipbuilding industry!'*

The book can be obtained from Ellesmere Port library, or from your local library for a small reservation fee.

s. t. h.

WEATHER AND OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES PERMITTING

compiled by John Shepherd

To quote the advertising leaflets, it was indeed a "wonderful day out" when the sea was calm and blue. However, the weather in the Irish Sea can be notoriously bad at any time of the year, and on Wednesday 6th September, 1950, an exceptionally severe gale was blowing. The graphic newspaper accounts on pages 34 and 35 decribe the problems the storm caused to the Liverpool and North Wales Steamship Company and the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company.

Visitors to Llandudno and other North Wales Resorts will find that the sailings and excursions by the Company's Fleet of luxurious pleasure steamers provide one of the premier attractions. The vessels are especially adapted and designed to provide passengers with the utmost comfort.

A steamer provides amenities which no other form of travel can offer, spacious decks, well-equipped dining saloons, delightful bars and comfortable lounges.

Catering on "St. Tudno" and "St. Seiriol" is of a particularly high standard, and excellent meals are obtainable.

Light Teas and Refreshments, etc., are available at popular prices. All vessels are fully licensed.

Children over 3 and under 14 years—Half-Fare.

T.S. "St. Tudno"	2,493 passengers	... 19 knots
T.S. "St. Seiriol"	1,556 passengers	... 18½ knots
M.V. "St. Trillo"	568 passengers	... 12 knots

Souvenir Guide obtainable at Company's office, Pier Gates or on board vessels price 1/-.

SEASON 1957

The Liverpool & North Wales S.S. Co. Ltd.
40 Chapel Street, Liverpool 3.

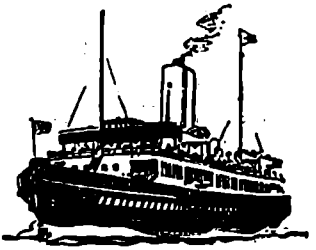
POPULAR HOLIDAY CRUISES

from

LLANDUDNO PIER

by

T.S. "ST. TUDNO" T.S. "ST. SEIRIOL"
M.V "ST. TRILLO"



For Tickets and Further Information apply:
Booking Office, Pier Gates, Llandudno
(Tel: No. 6837)

All tickets are issued and passengers carried subject to the Company's Conditions of Carriage as exhibited at the Company's Offices and on the vessels.

SAILINGS FROM LLANDUDNO PIER (1957)

(weather and other circumstances permitting, subject to alteration without notice)

Leaving	Daily (Suns. Included)	Due Back	Return Fare (including Pier Tolls)
p.m. 1.15	T.S. "St. Tudno" or "St. Seiriol" MENAI BRIDGE (1 hour ashore)	p.m. 5. 0	6/6
	SUNDAYS		
a.m. 10.45	M.V. "St. Trillo" Morning Cruise ...	p.m. 12.15	3/6
p.m. 2.45	Afternoon Cruise ...	p.m. 4.45	4/6
p.m. 7.30	Evening Cruise ...	p.m. 9. 0	3/6
	MONDAYS		
a.m. 10.45	M.V. "St. Trillo" MENAI BRIDGE (3¼ hours ashore) Return 3.45 p.m. by "St. Tudno"	p.m. 5. 0	6/6
p.m. 2.45	Afternoon Cruise ...	p.m. 4.45	4/6
p.m. 6.30	MENAI BRIDGE Circular Tour Out Boat, Return Crosville Bus.	p.m. 10.20 or 10.40	6/6 Children 3/4
	TUESDAYS		
a.m. 10.15	T.S. "St. Seiriol" DOUGLAS (I.O.M.) (about 2¼ hours ashore)	p.m. 8. 0	20/-
a.m. 10.45	M.V. "St. Trillo" MENAI BRIDGE (3¼ hours ashore) Return 3.45 p.m. by "St. Tudno"	p.m. 5. 0	6/6
p.m. 2.45	Afternoon Cruise	p.m. 4.45	4/6
p.m. 6.30	MENAI BRIDGE Circular Tour Out Boat, Return Crosville Bus.	p.m. 10.20 or 10.40	6/6 Children 3/4

Leaving	WEDNESDAYS	Due Back	Return Fare (including Pier Tolls)
a.m. 10.15	T.S. "St. Seiriol" DOUGLAS (I.O.M.) (About 2¼ hours ashore)	p.m. 8. 0	20/-
a.m. 10.45	M.V. "St. Trillo" Morning Cruise ...	p.m. 12.15	3/6
p.m. 2.30	MENAI BRIDGE (About ¼ hour ashore)	p.m. 6. 0	6/6
p.m. 7.30	Evening Cruise ...	p.m. 9. 0	3/6
	THURSDAYS		
a.m. 9.30	T.S. "St. Seiriol" LIVERPOOL (2 hours ashore)	p.m. 4.30	9/-
a.m. 10.45	M.V. "St. Trillo" MENAI BRIDGE (3¼ hours ashore) Return 3.45 p.m. by "St. Tudno"	p.m. 5. 0	6/6
p.m. 2.45	Afternoon Cruise ...	p.m. 4.45	4/6
p.m. 6.30	MENAI BRIDGE Circular Tour Out Boat, Return Crosville Bus.	p.m. 10.20 or 10.40	6/6 Children 3/4
	FRIDAYS		
a.m. 10.45	M.V. "St. Trillo" Morning Cruise ...	p.m. 12.15	3/6
p.m. 2.30	MENAI BRIDGE (About ¼ hour ashore)	p.m. 6. 0	6/6
p.m. 6.30	MENAI BRIDGE Circular Tour Out Boat, Return Crosville Bus.	p.m. 10.20 or 10.40	6/6 Children 3/4

"FOR THE LOVE OF MIKE, DON'T FEED THE SEAGULLS !!!"

Talking with Malcolm McRonald a few weeks ago, the conversation turned, perhaps inevitably, to the **St. Tudno** and **St. Seiriol**. Malcolm reminded me of the St. **Tudno's** last Purser, a voluble Welshman named E.B. Hindley. The Purser was responsible for making the shipboard announcements over the 'tannoy' system, such as warning children not to climb on the ship's rails, or giving notice of the **St. Tudno's** arrival at Llandudno Pier.

Mr Hindley was also concerned about passengers feeding the seagulls, and on one particular busy and harassing day, concluded a seagull warning with the unforgettable words "***for the love of Mike, don't feed the seagulls !!!***"

j.s.

Press Cuttings from the 'Liverpool Daily Post' and 'Liverpool Echo' for Thursday 7th September, 1950.

Surprise 70 m.p.h. gales lash west coast;

Storms maroon passengers, flood roads

SHIPS IN DISTRESS, MANX LIFEBOATS OUT

SUDDEN high winds and heavy rainstorms lashed the North Wales and Isle of Man coasts last night, and lifeboats answered many calls. In the Mersey it was still blowing hard with violent gusts at 4 a.m. to-day.

When the Isle of Man steamer Lady of Man, with 420 aboard, reached Fleetwood early this morning after a six-hour crossing—twice the normal time—three women passengers were taken to hospital. The boat was met at the quayside by an ambulance. The women were treated for cuts from flying glass when windows were smashed by the heavy seas.

Earlier the steamer Viking arrived at Fleetwood more than three hours late on the crossing. Mr W. Ashworth, of Blackpool, who has travelled to and from Douglas from Fleetwood for twenty years, described the trip—his seventy-first this season—as "terrible, one of the worst I have ever experienced."

The Ben My Chree reached Prince's Stage, Liverpool, two hours late. Leaving Douglas at 4 p.m. she soon ran into a gale. Crockery was thrown about, and a man sitting in a chair in the saloon was thrown from his seat. No one was injured.

30-foot waves

Port Erin and Port St. Mary lifeboats were launched yesterday afternoon in answer to a ship's distress signals picked up by Seaforth radio.

The ship—the motor-vessel William Herdman (47 tons) — called for immediate assistance when caught in high seas and a 70 m.p.h. south-westerly gale between Langness and Port St. Mary.

Just before 6 p.m., with 30-foot waves sweeping over the breakwater, the William Herdman was escorted into Port St. Mary harbour by the Port St. Mary lifeboat.

The William Herdman was bound from Holyhead for Port St. Mary with two scientists and a crew of eight aboard. The ship, owned by Liverpool University, is permanently attached to the Marine Biological Station at Port Erin and is engaged on all-the-year round sea research, subsidised by the Manx Government.

HOLIDAY SHIP "MAROONED"

PASSENGERS INJURED

The gale, which flooded many country roads in the Isle of Man, was still sweeping the Manx coast later last night. It prevented the steamer St. Seiriol, which had brought 408 day trippers from Llandudno, from leaving Douglas harbour.

Officials of the steamship company remained on duty at Llandudno pier gates until late last night to deal with inquiries from anxious relatives. Several people stood in the pouring rain waiting for information.

Beds on board

Captain H. Doran (harbourmaster at Douglas) said late last night: "The passengers are remaining on board the St. Seiriol for the night. Beds are being improvised, and the crew are making sure the passengers are all comfortable. Special attention is being paid to the welfare of the children. There is plenty of food."

The St. Seiriol was expected to leave for Llandudno this morning provided the weather had improved sufficiently.

Storm strands400 on holiday island

FOUR HUNDRED passengers were stranded at Douglas, Isle of Man, last night by a 70 m.p.h. gale which prevented the Irish Channel ship St. Seiriol from returning to Llandudno, North Wales.

The passengers were offered accommodation and food for the night in the ship.

Another 500 passengers returning from the Isle of Man stepped wearily ashore from the steamer Viking at Fleetwood after a violent buffeting during the crossing. They were three hours late.

The Lady of Mann took six hours to cross from Douglas to Fleetwood Three women were cut by glass when seas broke windows.

WAVES 30ft. high were sweeping the breakwater at Port Erin (I O M) when two Liverpool University scientists and a crew of five in the 47-tons research ship William Herdman were brought in by the Port St Mary lifeboat.

They had battled two hours to cover four miles.

Anxious relatives and boarding-house owners in Llandudno and other North Wales resorts besieged the North Wales Steamship Co.'s offices at Llandudno last night when the St. Seiriol, 1,500-ton pleasure steamer, with 400 passengers, became storm-bound in Douglas, I.O.M., harbour.

With a 60 m.p.h. gale blowing outside the harbour whipping the waves to house-top height many of the passengers decided to spend the night aboard ship. Some found accommodation on shore.

Passengers were bowled over like ninepins aboard the Manx steamer Viking in one of the worst crossings from Douglas to Fleetwood.

The voyage took over six hours instead of the usual three, and there were many minor casualties. Two firemen were injured while struggling to keep steam up.

Special trains, trams and buses were kept waiting over three hours to take passengers home.

Gale steamer radios: 3 hurt

Trippers stranded

Express Staff Reporter

TWENTY miles off Fleetwood, in the heaviest gales for years, the Isle of Man steamer Lady of Man radioed at midnight: "Stand by to take three injured passengers to hospital."

Earlier, 900 passengers returning from Douglas in the steamer Viking landed three hours late. Many had small injuries from being flung about the decks and cabins.

The Ben My Chree was 2½ hours late at Liverpool.

THE LAUNCH OF THE "KING ORRY" TUESDAY, 11TH MARCH, 1913

by David Handscombe

Monday 10th March 1913 was cold and blustery, and the head office of the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company, located on the quay at Douglas in the former Imperial Hotel, was bustling with people. Since early morning Company officials and their guests had been congregating there in preparation for the passage to Liverpool in order that they could attend the launch of the King Orry on the following day. Berthed alongside the Victoria Pier, waiting to take the morning sailing to Liverpool, was the steamer **Snaefell**. It was appropriate that she should be taking the officials to Liverpool, as she herself had been built by Cammell Laird only three years earlier, and it was as a result of her success as an '*all year round*' steamer that Cammell Laird had once again been commissioned to build a ship for the Manx company.

The **Snaefell** backed out of Douglas harbour shortly after 9.00am. For those who wished to partake, breakfast was served in the first-class dining saloon, although many chose to catch up on a few hours sleep, having left their homes at the crack of dawn in order to catch the sailing. The passage to Liverpool was uneventful and surprisingly comfortable despite the blustery weather and sea swell. The **Snaefell** made good time and was alongside Prince's Landing Stage at 1.15pm. The head of the official party, Mr D. Maitland (Chairman), thanked the master for getting them to Liverpool in such good time and then made a point of personally thanking Mr Ritchie, the Steam Packet's catering manager, for looking after them during the voyage.

The following morning, Tuesday 11th March, started off cloudy and damp, although the blustery wind of the previous day had dropped. By the time that the Steam Packet officials and their guests had arrived at Cammell Laird's shipyard, the Managing Director, Mr G.J. Carter and the Chairman, Mr W.L. Hichen, had already inspected the arrangements for the launch and were satisfied that all was in order. The main aspect that they had checked was the release mechanism that would send the **King Orry** down the slipway. As she had been built up on the stocks, wooden cradles had been positioned between her hull and the slipway, and these were designed to stop her toppling over. As the slipway sloped down towards the Mersey, heavy wooden wedges were inserted into the cradles to stop the **King Orry** taking to the water prematurely. These wedges were now being removed and grease was being applied to the slipway to assist the movement of the ship. All that kept the **King Orry** on the slipway was a heavy hawser, fastened to the cradle under her bow and connected to the release mechanism at the top of the slipway. The release mechanism was fitted with a quick release shackle, known as a '*Slip*', and it was to this that the hawser was attached. The '*Slip*' was fitted with a

small lever which had to be kept under tension as when the lever was released the '*Slip*' would open and free the hawser, allowing the **King Orry** to slide towards the Mersey. At the appropriate moment during the launching ceremony, a workman with a large hammer would knock off the '*Slip*' and if gravity alone failed to move the **King Orry**, then a set of hydraulic rams would give the ship a push in the right direction.

Cammell Laird's shipyard was a hive of activity in 1913 and it was plain to see that these were very prosperous times for the shipbuilding industry. Two large vessels were under construction for the Norske-America Line and once completed they would ply between Norway and America, mostly on the emigrant trade. The first of these two vessels, the **Kristianiafjord** (yard no:784) was nearing completion, while the second, the **Bergensfjord** (yard no:787) like the **King Orry** was ready to be launched. In the southern end of the yard, two large steamers for the P. & O. Company were beginning to take shape. With yard numbers 793 and 794, the **Khiva** and **Kyber** were to be 8,947 ton passenger and cargo liners, destined for the Far East trade routes. Alongside the **King Orry** and also nearing the time when she would be launched was the torpedo boat destoyer HMS **Garland** (yard no:786), which was being built for the Royal Navy. Her low, sleek hull gave her a menacing profile. Not far from the slipway on which the **King Orry** lay was the graving dock in which the Canadian National Railway Company's **Royal George** was undergoing extensive repairs after running aground in the St. Lawrence a few months earlier. In the fitting-out basin, adjacent to the first of the Norske-America liners, lay the new Super Dreadnought HMS **Audacious**. As she neared completion the last of her huge gun turrets, each containing two 13·5 inch guns, was being installed. These huge guns had been manufactured by Vickers, Sons and Maxim at Barrow-in-Furness and it had proved to be a major feat of transportation when the time came to move them down to Birkenhead. Sadly this fine battleship was to become the Royal Navy's first major casualty in the Great War when on 27th October 1914, having only been in service for twelve months, she ran into a German minefield and detonated a mine which blew a massive hole in her stern. Despite repeated attempts to stop the rapid ingress of water, and to put out the fires which had been started by the explosion, all efforts to save her failed. At 9.00pm, less than twelve hours after hitting the mine, there was a large internal explosion and HMS **Audacious** rolled over and sank. Fortunately nearly all of her crew were saved, being picked up by an attendant destroyer. One of the other interesting vessels that could be seen in yard on that March morning in 1913 was the steamer **Doon** (yard no:790) which was being constructed for the carriage of frozen meat from the upper reaches of the River Plate to Buenos Aires for the Royal Mail Line, where her cargo would be transferred to ocean going refrigerated vessels for the passage to the U.K. and Europe.

The **King Orry** had been built on No.6 slipway, and the scene around

this area had changed considerably over the previous few days. Piles of surplus steel plates and rivets had been removed and the towering scaffolding around the hull had been dismantled. The paintwork was now complete and colourful bunting had been draped over both sides of the **King Orry's** bows and around the stern, carefully covering the brass letters which spelt out her name. A large wooden platform had been constructed at the bow, and it would be from here that the officials of both the Steam Packet Company and Cammell Laird would watch the ceremony.

On arrival at the shipyard, the guests had been ushered into the reception hall in the main administration building and had been offered refreshments while the final arrangements for the launch were made. Just before noon, they were invited to proceed down to No.6 slipway, where they were shown to their seats on the grandstand and given a copy of the official programme to commemorate the event. Already in position down both sides of the slipway were dozens of the shipyard workers and their families.

The **King Orry's** '*sponsor*' was Mrs Waid, the wife of Mr W.A.Waid, the deputy chairman of the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company. They were both shown to the raised platform in the centre of the grandstand, placed some five feet in front of the **King Orry's** bow. Mr G. Carter (Managing Director of Cammell Laird) accompanied them and explained the operation of the release mechanism to Mrs Waid, showing her the coloured cord she would cut after she had named the ship. Mrs J.W. Laird, the wife of one of the founders of the shipbuilders, then stepped forward and presented Mrs Waid with a bouquet of flowers. As if specially ordered for the ceremony, the sun suddenly broke through the clouds and bathed the slipway in sunshine. This unexpected change in the weather put the final stamp of approval on the ceremony. At 12.25pm, as the high tide reached its peak, rockets were fired to warn any shipping on the Mersey that the launching was about to take place, and that a wide berth should be given to the slipway. Once the echo of the rockets had died away Mr Carter invited Mrs Waid to officially name the new ship and handed her a pair of ornate scissors, indicating that she should now cut the brightly coloured cord, on which a bottle of champagne was suspended. With a slightly nervous voice, Mrs Waid announced "*I name this ship King Orry, and may God bless all who sail in her*", and at the same time she cut the cord allowing the bottle of champagne to swing against the stem of the ship. As the wine from the smashed bottle ran down the **King Orry's** paintwork, Mr Carter pressed a small bell push which rang a bell below the platform indicating to the workmen waiting there that they should knock off the retaining slip on the release mechanism. With a loud crack that made Mrs Waid jump with surprise, the release mechanism operated and the retaining hawser was freed. Almost immediately the **King Orry** began to slide down the slipway towards the Mersey. At the same time, workers on board quickly pulled up the bunting from around the bows and stern to reveal her brass name letters. Three cheers

were called for and the crowd roared in reply as clouds of rust blew out from beneath the hull as the drag chains began to be pulled along. The **King Orry** gathered speed and slid gracefully down the slipway, entering the River Mersey in a plume of spray before being pulled to a halt some fifty yards out after leaving the slipway, the drag chains having done their job. From the time that the **King Orry** had begun to move to her being stopped in the water, less than a minute had elapsed. As the flood tide slowly drifted her up river, two tugs quickly closed in and brought her under control. After the remains of the wooden cradles that had held her upright on the slipway had been cleared away, she was slowly nudged into the fitting-out basin.

The officials and guests of both companies now adjourned to the spacious Model Room which Cammell Laird had transformed into a banquet hall for the occasion. The room had been decorated with bunting and flags, which set against the starched white linen tablecloths created an attractive setting for the meal that would shortly be served. Taking pride of place in the centre of the room was a large scale model of the **King Orry** which in itself was a work of art. The luncheon was attended by over 150 guests. As the last course was finishing and coffee was being served, the chairman of Cammell Laird, Mr W.L. Hichen, stood up and asked for everybody's attention. He proposed a toast to the "*Success of the King Orry*", which received a round of applause. Continuing, Mr Hichen explained that Cammell Laird had a long association with the Steam Packet Company, and as far back as 1878 they had built the **Mona**, and only a couple of years ago they had completed the **Snaefell**.

Mr Hichen hoped that once the **King Orry** had been delivered, she would meet all of the predictions of his company and every expectation of the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company. He then went on to thank Mrs Waid for performing the naming ceremony so successfully. As a reminder of the occasion, he gave her the ribbon that had encased the bottle of champagne which had been smashed on the **King Orry's** bow, and then asked her to accept a small gold and pearl necklace as a token of appreciation from his company. As Mrs Waid accepted the gift, there was a round of applause. Replying on behalf of the Steam Packet Company, Mr D. Maitland thanked Cammell Laird for launching the ship on time, saying also that he was confident that she would be ready for the Whitsuntide service. If the new **King Orry** was as successful as the **Snaefell**, then Cammell Laird and Company could rest assured that they would receive further orders from the Isle of Man. Mr Maitland then asked Mrs Waid to accept a diamond pendant as a gift from a grateful Steam Packet Board of Directors. As yet another round of applause died down, Mr Maitland informed the guests that this was the third ship owned by the Company that had carried the name **King Orry**. The first had been built in 1842 and had cost £10,000, and the second vessel to bear the name had been completed in 1871 and had given many years' service to the Island's

community. She had only recently been sold out of service and was being broken up in the Dee Estuary in North Wales. Mr Maitland concluded his speech with the toast "*Prosperity to the eminent firm of Cammell Laird and Company*".

As Mr Maitland sat down, Mr Waid took the opportunity to thank both Cammell Laird and the Steam Packet Company for the generous gifts given to his wife and he felt sure that they would remain treasured items and provide a constant reminder of this memorable occasion.

Mr Carter, responding for Cammell Laird, thanked Mr Maitland for his kind remarks. Cammell Laird was very proud of its connections with the Steam Packet Company and was pleased that its workmanship was considered to be of such a high standard that the Manx company sought their expertise again. He said that credit must also be given to everyone who worked within the shipyard, and that the close liaison between the management and the men who actually built the ships obviously paid dividends, as was evident by the amount of work that was underway within the yard. They had several important contracts, not only with other shipping companies, but also with the British Government, and they were doing their utmost to fulfil every requirement of each individual order. Finally, in proposing a toast to the "*Owners' Representatives*", Mr Carter thanked the Steam Packet Company for providing such a good liaison in the form of Captain Keig (*Marine Superintendent*) and Mr Blackburn (*Superintendent Engineer*). Although these two men had the interests of their own company at heart, they had provided tremendous assistance to Cammell Laird, and he wished them good health and prosperity.

Captain Keig acknowledged the tribute, saying that he had served on the first **King Orry** during the 1850s, and he hoped that the new **King Orry** would be as successful as her predecessors and he wished Cammell Laird many years of profitable business.

Mr Blackburn said that he was glad to be able to endorse what Captain Keig had said, and thought that the Steam Packet should have no doubts about adopting the Geared Steam Turbine. The **Viking** had been running for seven years with conventional (*direct-drive*) turbines and had only suffered from minor defects. If the engines which were going to be fitted into the new **King Orry** only suffered from similar minor teething problems, then his company would have no regret about pioneering this type of propulsion system. The Isle of Man Steam Packet Company and Cammell Laird should be proud that the new **King Orry** would be the first vessel to operate out of the Mersey fitted with geared turbines. As the applause from this speech drained away, Mr Hichen offered to conduct a short tour of the Engine and Boiler Shops in order that the machinery which was to be fitted into the **King Orry** might be inspected.

As this gesture signalled the end of the luncheon, those guests who did not wish to inspect the new engines started to leave the banquet hall. The time was now nearly 4 o'clock in the afternoon and a very successful and memorable event drew to a close. The next occasion when they would all meet again would be for the official sea trials which were scheduled for mid-June. ■

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LOCAL NEWS

WIND FARM FOR SEAFORTH

A cluster of electricity generating windmills on the sea wall at the Royal Seaforth Dock is expected to be in operation in 1999.

The Mersey Docks and Harbour Company successfully submitted a bid to the Non-Fossil Purchasing Agency for a 15-year contract to supply 'green' power to the National Grid from six 600 Kilowatt turbines harnessing the winds blowing off the Irish Sea.

Nine months of wind strength tests and a study of ten years of Meteorological Office data for Liverpool preceded the Company's decision to back the £2.7 million scheme.

The development won planning permission on appeal after Sefton Council raised objections. ■

DEE DOCKS RIVAL FOR £35 MILLION MERSEY TERMINALS

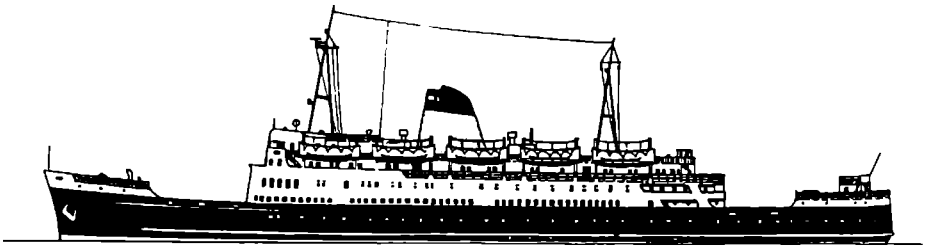
The privately owned Port of Mostyn has begun construction work on a new deep-water berth in the first phase of an ambitious redevelopment which will also include a roll-on, roll-off freight ferry terminal. The proposed terminal will be little more than 15 miles as the crow flies from two similar facilities in the River Mersey which are being developed by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company at a combined cost of £35 million.

The new quay, extending 120 metres into the River Dee, will provide five berths and enable Mostyn to handle ships of up to 30,000 tonnes around the clock. The existing dock, with a severely limited access which is governed by the tide, can only cope with vessels of up to 4,000 tonnes.

Construction of the new quay is being undertaken by Christiani and Nielson. Over 150 steel piles, each of which is almost 100 feet long and weighs 14 tonnes, are being driven into the river bed. At the same time, reclamation work is under way on five acres of land for stevedoring operations. The first phase is due for completion in September 1998. ■

THE "DUKE OF LANCASTER"

A passing reference to the former Heysham - Belfast turbine steamer **Duke of Lancaster** was made in the Spring '*Bulletin*'. Many Members will have seen her at her berth at Llanerch-y-Mor, near Mostyn, in the Dee Estuary. These notes provide a brief history of the ship and describe the ambitious plans for her which were dreamt up almost twenty years ago.



The **Duke of Lancaster** was built at Belfast by Harland and Wolff and was launched on 14th December 1955. Her tonnage was 4,797 gross, 2,274 nett, with a length of 376' 2" and a beam of 57' 4". Two double reduction geared 'PAMETRADA' steam turbines gave her a speed of 21 knots, but on her designed Heysham to Belfast route, only 16 knots were required. She sailed on this route for ten years, but spent the summer of 1966 on three or four-day cruises. In 1967 the **Duke of Lancaster** returned to Heysham after the **Duke of Rothesay** was transferred to Fishguard. In the winter of 1969 the *Duke* was converted into a stern loading car-ferry by Harland & Wolff and remained at Heysham until the route was closed in April 1975.

The **Duke of Lancaster** became relief vessel at Holyhead and made her final passenger sailing from Dun Laoghaire to Holyhead on 9th November 1978. She was then despatched to Barrow to lay up. Suggestions that the *Duke* was under consideration to provide extra summer capacity on the Manx Line Heysham - Douglas service in 1979 (Manx Millenium Year) proved to be unfounded.

In mid-July 1979 it was announced that the **Duke of Lancaster** had been sold to Empirewise Limited of Liverpool and would be used as a leisure centre at Llanerch-y-Mor, Deeside. On 10th August 1979 the *Duke* arrived in the Dee estuary from Barrow in tow of the tugs **Dunheron** and **Afon Las**, and was secured in the small tidal creek where a berth had been dredged out for her. The name was changed to **Duke of Llanerch-y-Mor**.

Ambitious plans were made public. The old ship was to become a £2 million floating leisure centre complex. There would be a 300-bed hotel with

casino, cabaret, exhibition and conference rooms. A hovercraft would link the centre to West Kirby on the Wirral. The **Duke of Llanerch-y-Mor** would, it was claimed, become the main feature of a major development which would include a marina and maritime museum, creating at least 200 jobs.

The reality of the situation was that the local council refused to grant the scheme the necessary permission to go ahead, claiming that fire precautions, access for emergency vehicles and various other points had not met with their expectations. In the early 1980s the *Duke* opened for business as a market, with 140 stalls on the car deck.

In recent years the *Duke* has reverted to her old name of **Duke of Lancaster**. She is closed to the public and vistors are not welcome. Despite the track to the quay at Llanerch-y-Mor being clearly marked 'Public Footpath', there is a guard dog attached to the gangway by a fifty-foot leash. The state of the keel plating must be poor after almost twenty years of lying on the mud. The *Duke* floats on the very highest 32 ft. spring tides, and a barrage of rubble has been constructed around her stern.

The **Duke of Lancaster** is well worth a visit, but watch out for that guard dog! Good photographs can be obtained from the track along the north side of Llanerch-y-Mor creek.

MORE ABOUT THE "ROYAL IRIS"

It was noted in the Spring "*Bulletin*" that the **Royal Iris** is now at a tidal berth at Woolwich, a few yards downstream from the Barrier Gardens Pier at Sergeant's Wharf. She is apparently owned by a Doug Endersby, and has been placed on the market again after failing to secure her future as a showpiece restaurant in the heart of London's rejuvenated docklands.

Mr Endersby, a representative of Northampton-based Portmoor Investments, indicated that his company was no longer prepared to challenge the refusal of planning permission. He told the Merseyside 'Friends of the Ferries' that local people had been delighted at the scheme to convert the **Royal Iris**, but Woolwich planning authority had mounted stiff opposition.

The immediate future of the **Royal Iris** is secure. A Port of London Authority spokesman said dues were being paid and that the vessel was not causing a navigational hazard.

The realistic solution to the problem must be the breaker's yard, as is the case with the **Duke of Lancaster**.

THE "COOGEE"

The **Coogee** incident, when the steamer **Coogee** sailed under the bowsprit of the barque **Fortunato Figari** in dense fog in the Bass Strait at Christmas 1902, was described in detail in the Winter 1997 *Bulletin*, page 86.

L.N.R.S. Member Ron Evans has supplied additional information about the ultimate fate of the **Coogee**. Between 1918 and 1919 the vessel was

taken over by the Royal Australian Navy as minesweper H.M.A.S. Coogee. She was then laid up for eight years and was dismantled at Melbourne in 1927. On 21st February 1928, the hulk was scuttled in the Bass Strait.

LIVERPOOL CRUISE LINER FIASCO

Liverpool's much awaited re-birth as a cruise liner port faced a double fiasco in early May. Hundreds of Merseysiders had their plans for a luxury cruise thrown into chaos just three days before they were due to set sail. The **Apollo** (ex **Empress of Canada**) had not completed her £10 million refit in Greece to the satisfaction of her new operators Direct Holidays, and the cruise due to depart on 2nd May was cancelled.

This follows the incident in mid April when thirty passengers refused to board Direct Holidays' other cruise liner at Liverpool, the **Edinburgh Castle**, after a burst water pipe had flooded a number of cabins. On 25th May the **Edinburgh Castle** was again in trouble and stunned passengers were told that their two-week luxury cruise was cancelled - five hours after boarding the ship. Problems with the vessel's main switchboard were blamed which would necessitate five days of repairs. Passengers had their passage money refunded and were offered a substitute free eight-day cruise leaving Liverpool on 29th May.

Members may recall the fiasco of the Wallasey based Cruise Club of nearly twenty years ago, which did nothing to improve Liverpool's image as a passenger port.

The **Apollo** was launched as the **Empress of Canada** on 10th May 1960 and commenced her maiden voyage from Liverpool for Canadian Pacific on 24th April 1961. After her arrival at Liverpool on 23rd November 1971 the *Empress* was withdrawn, and Canadian Pacific's North Atlantic service ceased after 68 years. The **Empress of Canada** was sold to Carnival Cruise Lines Inc. in January 1972 and renamed **Mardi Gras**.

Direct Holidays' other cruise vessel, the **Edinburgh Castle**, was launched on 21st November 1964 as the **Eugenio C.** for Costa Armatori of Genoa. She was delivered on 22nd August 1966 and placed on the Genoa to Buenos Aires service.

AND FINALLY : 'PAMETRADA' - THE ACRONYM

Reference is made earlier in this feature to the **Duke of Lancaster's** Pametrada steam turbines.

PAMETRADA is the acronym from **P**arsons **A**nd **M**arine **E**ngineering **T**urbine **R**esearch **A**nd **D**evelopment **A**gency. ■

READERS' LETTERS

From : Malcolm McRonald of Heswall, Wirral :

I would refer to Dan McCormick's letter on page 117 of the Spring '*Bulletin*'. It is not strictly true to say that the **Leinster** was the last ferry to be built by the Verolme Shipyard at Cork. After completing the **Leinster** in 1981, Verolme went on to build the Little Island ferry for the River Suir at Waterford, followed by the Strangford ferry for use across Strangford Lough.

The 1993 change of name from **Leinster** to **Isle of Inishmore** was not as a result of the change of route to the Rosslare to Pembroke service. The fact that the two events happened close together was coincidental. The renaming was to bring the **Leinster** into line with the new style introduced by the chartered **Isle of Innisfree** (the result of a competition in travel agents' offices!).

The 1996 third change of name to **Isle of Inishturk** was to free the name **Isle of Inishmore** for the new vessel then building in Holland.

From : L.N.R.S. Member Charles Dawson of Sundbyberg, Sweden :

I read the article by Terry Kavanagh on the **Columbus** quicksilver steamship in the Spring *Bulletin* with great interest. However, I am a bit baffled by the notes on the **Comet**, since the references seem to have mixed up two vessels.

My notes on the Navy's **Comet** [1] show that she was ordered by the Admiralty in 1821, laid down in November of that year, and completed at Deptford Dockyard on 13th July 1822. However, she first appeared in the Navy list in 1828 as "HM Steam Vessel" **Comet**. She was rigged as a two-masted schooner, 115' x 21' 3" x 11' 11", and of 238 tons BM. She had an 80 NHP engine driving 14' diameter paddles. She was recorded as a survey vessel in 1837 and broken up in 1868.

There was a commercial ps **Comet** [2], built by W.Evans of Rotherhithe in 1834 with dimensions 138' x 18' 6" x 9' 8", of 158 tons and with a 70 HP engine. She was first owned by the Gravesend Steam Packet Company, so was obviously a Thames steamer. She changed hands to another London owner, R. Ravenhill, in 1848. This vessel was sold to Leith owners in 1852, when she was shown as being of 101 tons, with 67 tons engine room and slightly altered dimensions. In 1856 the **Comet** moved to Liverpool owners and was shown then as of 148 tons gross, 93 tons nett, and again with slightly altered dimensions. She was wrecked in the Bristol Channel in 1859.

[1] David K. Brown : *Paddle Warships* (London, 1993), 11.
[2] BT 107/64 and /67, London; BT 107/459, Leith and BT 108/46 Liverpool.

From : L.N.R.S. Member Terry Kavanagh of Chester

I have mixed up two vessels named **Comet**. I was led astray by the *Liverpool Standard*, quoted by the *Manchester Guardian*, which referred to "*the first steam vessel of this construction, the Comet, in March 1834.*" I knew something of the **Comet** of 1822 - it is mentioned in an article by F.E. Dean entitled '*Early Steam Warships*', but the correspondence in the *Mechanics Magazine* between Thomas Howard and Wm Symington seemed to confirm that it was a new vessel. Clearly it was having a refit at Rotherhithe, and, in any case, I ought to have written it was '*possible*' that the Royal Navy sold the fictitious new **Comet**.

The *Mechanics Magazine*, which I looked at in Manchester Public Library, is a bit like the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and contains only the odd line or two about the early steamships, mostly gleaned from other sources. The former periodical only becomes useful in the late 1830s and early 1840s when it discusses patents for propellers etc. The indices are not very good.

The sources of information on individual steamships should always be treated with caution! For instance, *Gore's Liverpool Directory* for 1816 refers to a Runcorn steamboat called the **William Peacock**. William Peacock was in fact the master's name, and the steamboat was named the **Elizabeth**, as witness the *Chester Chronicle* of 2nd August 1816.

"On Sale, the Steam Packet Boat ***Elizabeth****. Now employed on the River Mersey between Liverpool and Runcorn, with the best accommodations for passengers, in complete repair; was built at Glasgow and launched in November 1812 ..... Captain Peacock, on board, at the Parade Slip, will shew the vessel ....."*

Letter to "Sea Breezes", April, 1956 :

It seems to be the cry of many old-timers who served in sail that they worked harder than any apprentices of the present day. I wonder if any worked harder than us in the Liverpool pilot service.

We are four on, four off and six to eight regardless of who should be below. The watch below never gets more than 3½ hours' sleep because they are called at one bell. The watch below, too, is often turned to.

Before I began my apprenticeship there was no watch below in the forenoon, so that in 48 hours the boys had only 16 hours off against 32 on deck, and even then were called out during their watch below. I doubt very much if any old timer can beat this.

c/o Pilot Office,
Liverpool,3.

"Mersey Sailor"

The Liverpool Nautical Research Society

(Diamond Jubilee Year : 1938 - 1998)

THE BULLETIN

Editor : John Shepherd

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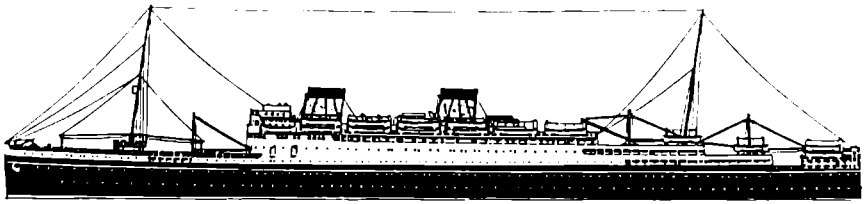

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Forthcoming Meetings

Thursday, 17th September
VESSELS OF THE DOCK BOARD FLEET

Thursday, 15th October
COASTAL PASSENGER SHIPPING (Malcolm McRonald)

Thursday, 19th November
A SHIP MODELLER'S RESEARCHES (D. Hayman)

Front Cover : The "Georgic" in her original form

THE NOTORIOUS IRON SCREW AUXILIARY SCHOONERS "*DIAMOND*" AND "*EMERALD*" OF 1848 - 1849.

by L.N.R.S. Member Terry Kavanagh

"If it would make the heart ache at the sight of the state of deck passengers in [the Irish Sea] paddle steamers, what would it do when beholding them in the deck of a screw [auxiliary] vessel, where the leeward portion of them are washing about in the lee scuppers, night and day, as she heels over under canvas?" - Denham Report, 1849 [1].

The sister vessels **Diamond** and **Emerald** were two of those notorious iron-hulled, screw-auxiliary (three-masted) schooners, trading between Dublin and Liverpool, which figure so prominently in the harrowing Denham Report of 1849. They, and the 116-foot **Pearl** (built 1845), belonged to the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company - a concern which also operated 19 paddle steamers on the Irish lines. The rival Dublin & Liverpool Steamship Co owned the other three screw vessels involved: namely the **Dublin** (146′ x 19′, built at Hull in 1846), the **Liverpool** (116′ x 20′) and the **Waterwitch** (130′ x 21′, built at Dumbarton in 1846), ranging in size from 148 to 211 tons registered burden, and with engines of 28hp maximum.

The **Diamond** and the **Emerald**, each of 300 tons builders' measurement, and with dimensions of 130′ x 20′ x 13′, were launched from Peter Cato and Co's yard at the south-west corner of Brunswick Dock, Liverpool in 1846. Interestingly, the **Diamond**, which came off the stocks after her sister, had a run of between 300 and 400 feet before she reached the water's edge. "*This is considered the greatest run of any vessel ever launched in Liverpool.*"[2] They were built from the plans - and under the direction - of John Grantham of Liverpool (who also designed several other auxiliary screw-steamers, most notably the **Sarah Sands**). Both screw steamers had a pair of 30hp direct-acting engines, with oscillating cylinders of 30ins diameter by 2ft length of stroke, fitted by Fawcett, Preston & Co., after Grantham's patent.[3] The piston rods operated in contrary diagonal positions upon one crank, situated between and above the two cylinders. The crankshaft of the two engines was connected directly to the propeller shaft, without intermediate chains or gearing, and turned a 10ft diameter, three-bladed, Woodcroft increasing-pitch screw propeller - which type of propeller would, its inventor claimed, give greater speed with fewer revolutions, less vibration, and use up the power of the engines better than the common or helical screw.[4]

Certainly the arrangement was firm and compact and the trials were satisfactory. The **Emerald** was tried first with 70 tons of deadweight on board, and afterwards with 120 tons. Her speed, under steam alone, in smooth water, averaged 7¼ knots; and was never less, when going head to wind with a

considerable swell, than 5 knots.

During the [Mersey river] *trials, few opportunities occurred of using her canvas, but enough was seen to show that her speed will be very great with sails. The greatest feat, however, was exhibited in the towing of the Brenda, bark, from the Bell Buoy to the Rock, as certified by the captain, in the following note:-* "I hereby certify that the ship **Brenda**, of which I am commander, was towed by the **Emerald**, screw steamer ..... at the rate of 5 and 5½ knots per hour (*sic*), through the water. The **Brenda** is a full-built ship, barque-rigged, is 28ft beam, 14ft water. Signed, C. Flanders, Master." [5]

As regards the **Diamond**, Grantham himself talked of her screw propeller revolving at a slow rate whilst the deeply laden vessel reached a considerable speed during a voyage between Liverpool and Madeira, when she had variable winds, and there was ample opportunity for experimenting with the engines and machinery.

*"It had been supposed that no assistance was rendered by the engines when the ship was running free under canvas, and that, in fact, there was a loss from dragging the screw through the water; but on stopping the engines, under circumstances favourable for testing this, there was a loss of speed of between 3 and 4 knots per hour (*sic*). The indicator was tried, when the engines were going at a considerable speed, and it proved that the engines were fully doing their duty. The velocity of the propeller was not great, nor did it increase in proportion to the speed of the vessel; this he attributed, in some degree, to the use of Woodcroft's expanding pitch. The consumption of fuel was 8½ cwt per hour on the passage out, and 5 cwt per hour on the homeward voyage."*[6]

The **Diamond** subsequently joined the **Emerald** and the **Pearl** in carrying cargo and livestock between Dublin and Liverpool. Then, in 1848, the Dublin & Liverpool Steamship Company, whose auxiliary vessels, the **Dublin** and the **Liverpool**, had previously been so employed, began conveying deck passengers to Liverpool at one shilling per head; a large number of whom were poor people intent on fleeing the Great Famine. The City of Dublin Company retaliated by admitting shilling '*deckers*' to its own screw steamers. Passengers and cattle were profitable freights which is why the former company purchased an additional vessel, the **Waterwitch**,[7] early in 1849. At peak periods over 300 people would be packed on board, in addition to a full complement of cargo and livestock. In November 1846, the **Dublin** made her first run from the Liffey to the Mersey, deducting an unavoidable delay at the entrance of the latter river, "*in less than eleven hours.*"[8] However, she and the other five screw auxiliaries often took thirty hours for the passage in winter - and there was no shelter of any kind on deck. Indeed, conditions were so bad that the Government set up a committee of enquiry under Captain Denham, R.N., to investigate them.

In his report, Captain Denham recommended (amongst other things) that these screw auxiliaries should not be allowed to carry deck passengers at

all. "*Their steam power is limited, their passage so affected by contrary winds ..... their liability to heel over as a sailing vessel, and their bulwarks being so low, renders them most distressing and unfit for deck passengers; but by professing to carry at one shilling per head, whilst the paddle steamers are charging three shillings; those vessels are availed of by the unwary, who sometimes have to pay four shillings before they land, to purchase such indulgence as going in turn into the engine room, or into the sailors' berths.*"[9]

Captain Denham had gone on board the **Emerald** at Liverpool, after she had been 31 hours on the crossing, with 306 '*deckers*', and later reported that:

"Whatever were the sufferings in general of this 31 hours pent-up mass of sea-sick and cold beings, there was an individual consequence of a most distressing and piteous nature: a woman was delivered of her child in the engine-room, where she took refuge, after being cold and sick on the deck all night. She and her baby were alive on arriving, although her situation had been subject to embarrassment and distraction; and they were carefully conveyed by the dock police to the infirmary, in a hackney coach." [10]

The fate of this mother and baby is not known, but thousands of '*deckers*' faced the prospect of being sent back the way they came by the hard-pressed parochial authorities in Liverpool. The parish overseer or 'pass officer' who gave evidence to the Denham committee, said he was:

"in the habit of inquiring from poor persons who apply to be sent to Ireland, what boat they came in, and am frequently answered, 'the screw boat, but I hope you will not send me back in her, for we were nearly lost coming over, and were two days on the passage.' One woman in particular, who applied a few weeks since, when asked if she would like to go back in the screw boat, begged I would not send her back in that boat, and said that she and her child were nearly starved to death coming over, every article of clothing they had on being completely wet through, and in that state they were exposed on deck the whole night. So earnestly did this woman request that she might not be sent back in the screw boat, that she raised her arms, and would have fallen on her knees, if the officer in attendance had not prevented her."[11]

According to the justices' regulations, none of the poor people returning to Ireland should have been conveyed on the decks in winter. But there was no steerage accommodation in any of the Dublin boats, so the regulations were simply ignored. In December 1848, the above parish overseer called on the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company's agent, and asked him if he would take 'his paupers' back to Dublin at one shilling each, as some of their vessels were bringing the poorer classes over for that fare. The agent replied:

"that his company would take the paupers back to Dublin by the screw boats at one shilling each, if the churchwardens would take the responsibility of sending them by such boats; but neither he nor any of their captains would

sign the magistrates' order, with an undertaking to land them in Dublin." [12]

The agent added that the company would rather do without such business, but they had little option as their rivals had lowered the fare to one shilling a head. (The Dublin & Liverpool Steamship Company representative expressed exactly the same sentiments).

Be that as it may, shipping destitute people back to Ireland was a profitable business, and this *"gave some critics a possible explanation of why, on occasion, the steamship companies carried Irish paupers free of charge to Liverpool."*[13] They came in for more criticism in June 1850, when *"eight Irish steamers were constantly bringing over paupers at sixpence per head, and charging five shillings for their return."*[14] Eventually, parish officials asked the City of Dublin Company agent not to bring poor people over for that fare, if only because the conditions on deck were so deplorable.

Twenty years on, in 1870, the City of Dublin Company owned but one screw schooner - the **Diamond** - which registered 184 net, and 256 gross tons new measurement. And she, like the **Emerald** before her, would soon have her engines removed and be converted into a sailing vessel. Both vessels were then rigged as three masted schooners, although the **Emerald** was later described as a barquentine, and they belonged to Robert Tedcastle of 21 Great Brunswick Street, Dublin. By 1895, the **Diamond** had passed into the ownership of James Tyrrell, Ferrybank, Arklow, County Wicklow.[15] She wasn't one of the better known schooners at that port, which is just as well, considering her notorious past! ■

References

1 *Parliamentary Papers*. Captain Denham's report on passenger accommodation on steamships between Ireland and Liverpool, 1849 (339) LI (hereafter Denham Report), p.5. These remarks were made by the commander of an Irish Sea paddle steamer.

2 *Gore's General Advertiser*, 22nd January 1846

3 AD 1842. No. 9950. John Grantham, *"Description of the Sarah Sands and other steam vessels, fitted with Direct Acting Engines and Screw Propellers, without intermediate gearing"*, Minutes of Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers, vol.6 (1847) pp. 284-5. Another similar, Grantham- designed vessel called the **Nautilus**, also built of iron, by Ditchburne and Mare of London, with a pair of engines of the same type, but with cylinders 33ins diameter, was then running between Liverpool and Lisbon.

4 Bennet Woodcroft, *A Sketch of the Origin and Progress of Steam Navigation* (London 18148) p.116.

5 *Mechanics' Magazine*, vol.45, 22nd August 1846, p.190.

6 Grantham, art. cit. pp. 289-90.

7 *Chester Chronicle*, 9th March 1849

8 *Gore's General Advertiser*, 26th November 1846

9 Denham Report, pp. 10-11

10 Ibid, p.11

11 Ibid, p. 7

12 Ibid, p. 7

13 F. Neal, "*Liverpool, the Irish Steam Ship Companies and the Irish Famine*", p.32. Typescript article, MMM Lib. ref: 514/11/PM. Published in Immigrants and Minorities, Vol. 5, no. 1, March 1986, pp 28-61.

14 *Chester Chronicle*, 15th June 1850

15 *Mercantile Navy List* 1872, 1877, 1886, 1895.

THE LIVERPOOL NAUTICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

NOTICE BOARD

Members' access to the Maritime Archives and Library on Fridays will resume in September as follows:

SEPTEMBER : FRIDAY 11th, 18th and 25th

OCTOBER : FRIDAY 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th

NOVEMBER : FRIDAY 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Thursday, 17th September
"VESSELS OF THE DOCK BOARD FLEET"

Thursday, 15th October
"COASTAL PASSENGER SHIPPING" - Malcolm McRonald

Thursday, 19th November
"A SHIP MODELLER'S RESEARCHES" - D. Hayman

Thursday, 17th December
ANNUAL CHRISTMAS SOCIAL AND QUIZ

Meetings are held at 12.30pm in the Education Suite of the Maritime Museum

THE CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Greasby, Wirral
August, 1998

The Members,
The Liverpool Nautical Research Society.

Dear Friends,

Well, summer seems to have arrived at last - for this week, anyway! One thing about English weather, it's never boring. Imagine the tedium induced by waking up every day to some tropical dawn followed by wall-to-wall sunshine until dusk ..... well, imagine!

Some of you will know that among my several harmless pursuits, I act as a sort of honorary archivist-cum-curator for the little private museum located on the top deck of Mersey Chambers, head office of Messrs Thos. & Jas. Harrison Ltd. It is looking rather bare these days since most of the artefacts and exhibits have been transferred to the Albert Dock to feature in the Harrison Line Exhibition, currently showing at the Merseyside Maritime Museum until the end of August. However, like most of the breed - amateur and professional - I am always on the lookout for something different and interesting to add to the collection. Recently, quite out of the blue, the widow of a ship's captain whom I sailed with forty years ago got in touch. Would I be interested in her husband's old sextant for the Museum? (Evidently our fame had reached the wilds of Cumbria, where she lives). Well, we do already have a couple of sextants, worthy candidates nowadays for the Antiques Road Show, but nevertheless, this one happened to be special.

During the war, my old friend had been called up for service with the R.N.R., in which he served with distinction for the duration. On one occasion his ship, an Ocean Boarding Vessel (O.B.V.), encountered the German tanker **Gedania**, a support vessel serving the growing fleet of German commerce raiders. My friend led the boarding party, and meeting no resistance, the ship was captured intact, and the crew taken prisoner. The ship was subsequently handed over to the Ministry of War Transport, and renamed **Empire Garden**. Meanwhile, stacks of papers and documents were found which no doubt were of inestimable value to the Intelligence services - and my old friend 'found and liberated' the ship's sextant! Made by Platch of Hamburg, it is embossed with the eagle-and-swastika of the Nazi Navy, and also has a micrometer tangent screw at a time in the 'forties when most of us Brits were still squinting at vernier scales! However, it has now found a resting place in Harrisons Museum - the spoils of war!

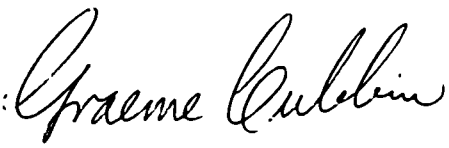
A few days ago, my wife and I had the opportunity to go on a ferry cruise sponsored by the Merseyside Master Mariners Club, of which I am a member. As luck would have it, it fell on one of the best of these belated summer days, and although rather a busman's holiday for most of those taking

part, we were very impressed with the facilities and standard of catering on board. But what impressed me most was the amount of shipping using the River! It was close to high water, and there they were - deep-laden super-tankers bound for Tranmere, container ships bound for Seaforth and Ellesmere Port, and swift modern tugs bustling out to meet them, just as it was of yore! Our ferry rounded the Crosby Light Float to make the return journey, and ships were still heading out, some deep-laden, others flying light in ballast, but all amounting to convincing evidence that the Port's fortunes are once again in the ascendant. Long may it remain so.

Most of you will be aware that this is our Diamond Jubilee year, and that we expect to publish a small book to mark it. Your Editor, with the assistance of a small committee, has been working throughout the summer months selecting a representative array of articles from the dozen or so submitted, editing them, and transferring them to hard disk ready for printing. I think I can promise you a worthy testimonial to research, and the commemoration of our anniversary. I hope it is one which you can all support - even by mail order for those who live out of town!

We are now about to launch into a new season of activity, and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible on Thursday 17th September, when the first talk of the session will be "Vessels of the Dock Board Fleet".

Yours sincerely,



JUST FANCY THAT !!!

The 150th Anniversary of the running of the "Irish Mail" from London to Holyhead took place on 31st July, 1998. Apart from taking the post to Ireland, the "Irish Mail" train carried 'unified' Greenwich Time to Ireland.

Each night an Admiralty messenger from the Royal Observatory at Greenwich would convey an accurate timepiece to Ireland by way of the train to Holyhead, steamer to Kingstown, and thence to Dublin.

Dubliners, and indeed the whole of Ireland, could then set their clocks to what was termed 'London time'.

Despite the development of radio time signals, telegraph and long-distance telephone networks, the tradition continued until brought to an end by World War II. The clock used on the 150th Anniversary was one of the 'regulars' on the run, owned by London clock and watchmakers Charles Frodsham.

THE "AJAX" AT THE DARDANELLES

by Cyril Forbes

I had just arrived home from a voyage to the Far East and ports in the Pacific. The First World War was several months old and I wished to join the Royal Naval Reserve. Consequently, I asked my employers - Alfred Holt & Company - for a reference which was duly handed to me with the question: "*Why do you want to change over?*" My reply was that I wished to play a more active part in the war. I was then recommended to sign on in the company's **Ajax**, a vessel which had been taken over by the Admiralty for war service. At this time I was one of a handful of pursers who my employers had sent on wireless courses, and I had my certificate for wireless telegraphy, as it was then known.

The **Ajax** was lying at the company's own berth in Vittoria Dock, Birkenhead; it was March, 1915. We signed on our crew at the Birkenhead shipping office and sailed for Avonmouth to complete loading with war material. Most of the crew were from Merseyside, and Captain R. Cumming was master.

Having arrived at Alexandria the **Ajax**, along with several other transports, spent a few days loading military stores, coaling and taking on fresh water. At last we sailed for Port Said where we embarked Indian troops. By this time we knew we were to proceed to the Dardanelles which gave rise to an unmistakable atmosphere of tension.

The **Ajax** arrived off Cape Helles late one afternoon to anchor off shore. Warships were firing continuously and my orders were to remain on duty in the wireless room that night as we carried only one operator. At about 2.00am I received a coded message for all troops to disembark. At dawn, the Turkish guns ashore began firing at several transports which were lying closer inshore than we were. It was then decided to transfer wounded Indian and Turkish troops to the **Ajax**, and as a result of this order we proceeded inshore. In our new position we lay between the Allied naval vessels which were firing, and the Turkish shore batteries at this time replying. In a very short time we had taken aboard about half the wounded from ashore in addition to medical personnel, bedding and supplies. Our 'tween decks and superstructure were cleared and mattresses and pillows laid out. Members of our crew made several trips to the beaches in our own lifeboats and brought back many wounded men, amid falling shells. An operating table was soon rigged while the engineers fixed additional clusters of lights. On occasions Turkish shells fell close to the vessel but we escaped damage. Before we could leave, however, the task of discharging had to be completed and for this purpose another transport, the **Umfuli**, made fast alongside and we discharged what remained of our supplies into her.

The Turks must have had us well sighted for when the sun was about to set, the shelling resumed. Soon most of us were under the impression that the ship was on fire and it was with great relief that we discovered that this was not so; steam escaping from damaged pipes at deck level had created the illusion of fire. The master tried desperately to move the **Ajax** out of the line of fire, but with the damaged steam pipes and the fact that we still had one anchor out, this was a difficult task. A British destroyer did her best to shelter us by putting out a smoke screen. With her engines going astern, the **Ajax** dragged her anchor moving towards safety, but not before two of our crew had been killed and several others wounded.

The next morning we signalled that we required a padre on board to carry out the burial services: all our dead were buried at sea. We then proceeded to Alexandria to land the wounded, but were soon at sea again loaded with supplies and bound a second time for the Dardanelles. At about 7.30 one morning I was on wireless watch and had no sooner put on the headphones when I picked up an urgent distress call from the transport **Royal Edward**. She had been torpedoed and was sinking. I was able to take down her position. At the time we were steaming north in the Aegean and I recalled that the **Royal Edward** had passed us the day before: she was a faster ship than the **Ajax**. By 11.00am we were at the scene. The **Royal Edward** had sunk and the sea was dotted with survivors. Several of our lifeboats had been put out of action by shellfire and consequently we were considerably handicapped. The two remaining lifeboats which were undamaged were manned and lowered. Captain Cumming kept the **Ajax** under way to avoid being a sitting target should a submarine arrive on the scene.

A hospital ship was also engaged in picking up survivors and did valuable work rescuing, I believe, about 400. We of the **Ajax** managed to rescue only 49, but we all did our best. Soon our boats were hoisted aboard and we resumed our course for the fighting line, but this time we steered for the new landing at Suvla Bay. The Turks must have taken a very definite dislike to the **Ajax** or perhaps it was because her tall masts and funnel made her a good target - no matter what the reason we received another warm reception and were hit several times, but fortunately there were no casualties.

From Suvla Bay we were ordered to Mudros about 45 miles away where the **Mauretania** had just arrived with a few thousand troops from home. After disembarking, the **Ajax** went alongside her to take off army stores in order that the liner could return home without delay. We had immense pride in the **Ajax** and in the knowledge that she was a Blue Funnel liner, but I am compelled to smile when recalling going alongside the **Mauretania** after much manœuvring. We were looking up at her great bulk towering above us when one of her crew at the rail bawled out: "*Are you alongside for the ashes, mate?*"

Later the submarine E.11 made fast alongside the **Ajax**, after passing

under the mines at the Dardanelles. She entered the Sea of Marmara where she did very good work attacking Turkish shipping. The submarine's navigating officer we knew well as he had been in the Blue Funnel Line before the war.

Soon we were again steaming towards the Dardanelles from Alexandria; the old ship never seemed to spend long in port. It was a glorious day and I was chatting in the wireless cabin with a couple of engineers when I suddenly heard gunfire. As we reached the deck to take a look, up went a column of water alongside. An enemy submarine had placed herself in a wonderfully advantageous position in the sun's rays. The second officer rushed into the wireless room with an S.O.S. I told him that if anything should happen, the code book was under a cushion on the settee.

Our S.O.S. was picked up by a destroyer who asked if we had been hit. I replied: "*Not yet, but maybe any minute!*" An hour later I looked through the porthole and was relieved to see a destroyer guarding us; part of our cargo this voyage consisted of tins of petrol stowed on deck. Later I received a coded wireless message from another vessel and began to feel around for the code book. I searched in vain and then asked if any of the deck officers had seen it. The second officer came along shortly afterwards and asked why I was worrying about it, as he had made sure it was over the side!

During the whole period we spent in the Eastern Mediterranean we carried no armament until homeward bound. We took no part in the evacuation of the Dardanelles as we had received orders for home. And what a welcome sight the Liver Building was as we anchored off the Alfred Entrance, Birkenhead, on 14th January, 1916, just ten months after leaving the Mersey. ■

NOT THE ENGLISH CHANNEL ??? !!!

Many Members will be aware that L.N.R.S. Vice-President Ray Pugh served on board HMY **Evadne** as wireless operator for two years during the Second World War. Normally based at Birkenhead or Holyhead, HMY **Evadne** carried out patrols in the Irish Sea.

One day the commanding officer announced to the ship's company that the next patrol would be in the English Channel. This caused considerable consternation and apprehension, and the news was allowed to sink in for some time before the situation was clarified - the **Evadne** would be heading for the English Channel off the Cumbrian coast!

From the West Coasts of England and Wales Pilot, 10.7

The English Channel is the best navigable channel and the only one which is buoyed. It lies between shoals which extend from the coast between Harrington (54°37'N, 3°34'W) and Dubmill Point, and Workington Bank. This channel has a least depth of 11m as far as Maryport Roads, thence the depths shoal quickly to 5.5m. The depths are subject to rapid and large variations.

SECOND MATE'S EXAMINATION AT LIVERPOOL, 1906

by Commodore Gerald N. Jones

*In the Summer "*Bulletin*", Commodore Jones described the voyages he made in steamships (*Interlude in Steam, *page 1) so that he had sufficient sea-time accumulated to enable him to take his Second Mate's Examinations. In this article Commodore Jones describes the period of time he spent in Liverpool studying for and gaining his Second Mate's Certificate.*

When the **Huntsman** docked in Liverpool I had the necessary sea-time in for sitting my second mate's certificate. But I needed some coaching and accordingly enrolled as a student in Manson, Cleaver and Jackson's School of Navigation in Canning Place. Mr Manson was the principal partner of the School; while he was the son of a shipmaster he had never been at sea himself but was a first-class teacher of mathematics and took the classes in trigonometry. Cleaver had been at sea for a number of years and had served as an officer in the Cunard Line, while Captain Jackson was a true product of the sea and had had command in sail for years; he taught seamanship.

Manson's School was situated three floors up above the '*Homeward Bound*' public house. The school opened at 9.00.am each weekday and at 11.00.am there was a '*smoko*' spell of 15 minutes. During this period we stood on the landing or on the stairs while some went down and slipped into the little snug of the '*Homeward Bound*'. Down there, yarns would be swapped of ships and men, and of ports of the Seven Seas. Generally, there were a few old salts, usually mates from some of the sailing vessels lying in the South end docks. The time passed quickly down in that 'snug harbour'. All the young men studying for second or first mate, or even for master, would forget their studies whilst discussing ships, taking in sail in imaginary gales and spinning hair-raising yarns of peril and adventure at sea.

But after a time the door into the snug would open quietly and Captain Jackson's grizzled face would look in and he would say '*You fellows will never learn seamanship or anything else of value down here*', and shamefacedly the truants would follow the old seadog back up the stairs to the classrooms. Those days at school were full of interest and from the windows we looked across to the Canning and Wapping Docks and watched sailing vessels warping in on the top of the tide, or leaving for long voyages. Canning Place was still a romantic part of Liverpool's shipping district in those days. Leading into it was Park Lane with seamen's boarding houses along its length. There were also seamen's slop shops there and one very interesting establishment, with dingy windows, in which an old man made parallel rulers and brass dividers.

While attending Manson's School I lodged in Upper Parliament Street

in the house of a Welsh widow, a Mrs Parry. Her boarders, or '*guests*' as she liked to call them, were all seafaring men, mostly Nova Scotians. When I first called at 27, Parliament Street, Mrs Parry informed me that she only took in certified masters and mates, but as a special concession, '*because I was Welsh, like herself*', she agreed to take me, but sternly informed me that the terms would be the same as for a shipmaster.

It was in this house that I met Captain Dickson, master of the big four-masted barque **Andorinha**. This famous ship of 3,440 gross tons was built in 1892 by W. Pickersgill & Sons of Sunderland. W.R.Roberts, a Liverpool firm of sailing ship owners, managed the **Andorinha**, but had recently ceased business or had gone into liquidation and the ship had changed ownership. Thus Captain Dickson - in his 70th year - was staying in Liverpool until he had settled the ship's accounts and was then returning to Nova Scotia.

The old shipmaster and I became very friendly and we took walks together while he spun yarns of his long life at sea. Then he helped me with my work for second mate and I learned a great deal of seamanship from him. Once more my determination to remain in sail until I had passed for master was strengthened by Captain Dickson's advice. The old sailor had never served in a steamer and his only experience of them was when he had left a ship in Liverpool and had returned home to Yarmouth, Nova Scotia.

There was one man who was not a seaman staying with Mrs Parry. He was Henry Lovit, a Nova Scotian by birth, who had a ship chandler's business in Liverpool He was the brother of Captain E.H. Lovit, master of de Wolf's four-masted barque **Engelhorn**. This well known sailing vessel had been built in 1889 by the Whitehaven Shipbuilding Company, and was one of the biggest vessels ever built in the Cumberland port.

After a few weeks at Manson's Navigation School, I went across to the Custom House to the examination rooms where I presented my indentures and discharges showing that I had completed four years at sea as a seaman. I paid the fee of one guinea to the clerk at the desk who had looked through my papers and was told to report the following Monday morning at 9 o'clock.

The fateful day arrived and together with about 20 candidates for the examination of masters, first mates and second mates, I was called into the big room. One portion was allocated to prospective masters and another to second mates. Examination papers were handed to the candidates by clerks, and we settled down to study them. At a large desk sat the examiner; this day it was Captain Keating, a man sharp and abrupt in manner, but fair and considerate. The forenoon passed as we worked on the problems of navigation set for us. By midday I had completed the first paper which I took up to the desk and handed to the examiner. I was told to be back by one o'clock. In the afternoon we continued on chartwork and tide problems. This took us to 5.00pm when we were told to be back next day to continue the examination.

Next morning we were examined individually in seamanship by Captain

Lecoustre who questioned me in the work of handling a ship under sail, sending up topgallantmasts, yards and royal yards. Using a model, we wore ship, tacked and took in sail; our knowledge of seamanship was well tested. The third day we again had to appear before Captain Keating who tested the candidates in their knowledge of the Rule of the Road. We were well examined and many puzzling questions were asked, some of which we failed to answer, but by the end of the day I was informed that I had passed for second mate in square-rigged ships.

I had justified four years spent at sea, mostly in sailing ships as an apprentice and A.B., and also A.B. and quartermaster in steamers. I was given a blue paper - a preliminary indication that I had passed. I received the certificate a week later at the office of the Superintendent of the Mercantile Marine Office (Captain Sargent). With that certificate in my hand I at once set off to find a vacancy as second mate in a sailing ship.

I had been told by Mr John Star de Wolf that I would be signed as second mate in the **Silberhorn** when I had passed the examination, so I went to 28, Brunswick Street, only to meet with a great disappointment. Mr de Wolf told me that Captain Hugh Gibson was leaving the **Silberhorn**, and was to be relieved by Captain Warren who was bringing with him a second mate - his late third mate from the **Matterhorn**.

I was told to go to an office in Chapel Street and ask to see Mr Robert Thomas, the owner and manager of a fleet of sailing ships, most of them named after Welsh castles. I soon learned that Mr Thomas wanted a second mate for the three masted barque **Conway Castle**, then discharging guano in Antwerp. Mr Thomas asked to see my second mate's certificate, my indentures and discharges, and after looking through these asked me what wages I expected to receive. I told him that I wanted £5 a month. The old Welsh shipowner protested violently, but I went on "*I'll not sail in your ship as second mate for less than £5 a month. Times are changing and that is the lowest pay of a second mate in square-rigged ships today*". The old man's dark beared waggled with indignation and he lectured me and told me that I was a revolutionary and a danger. "*I expect that you are a member of this Merchant Service Guild*" he hissed, "*a movement that is killing the loyalty of the Merchant Service mates. That attitude will bring ruin to the shipping industry if allowed to dictate to the shipowners*". I decided that it was useless for me to remain, and rose from my chair. I took up my hat and turned to leave the office. "*Thank you, Sir, for listening to me. I regret we cannot agree over wages. Good afternoon.*"

"*Come back! I've not finished with you yet,*" old Mr Thomas cried after me. "*I'll pay you £5 a month if you'll pay your fare to Antwerp. What do you say to that?*"

"*I'll go, Sir, but I want you to pay part of my fare - at least the steamer fare to Antwerp,*" I replied. Mr Thomas rang a hand bell on his desk

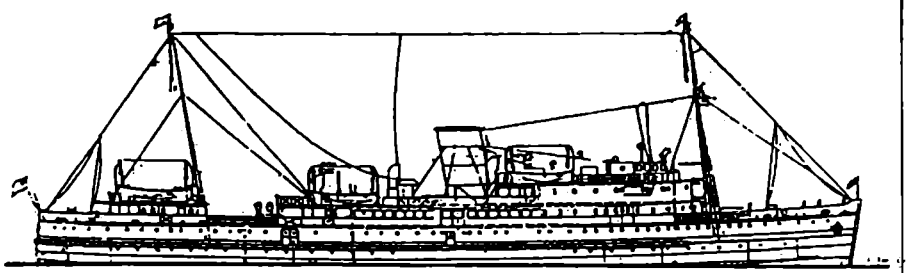
and a clerk came in. "*This is Mr Gerald Jones; give him a letter to Captain Williams of the* **Conway Castle**, *and the amount of the steamer fare from Harwich to Antwerp. Mr Jones will join the ship before the end of the present week*." He then held out his hand to me saying as he did so : "*Be loyal to your captain, your ship and to your employers, too.*" Then he spoke to me in Welsh, and the stern old man had a kindly gleam in his blue eyes as he said : "*Duw ath bendithio di, fy 'machgen.*" (God bless you, my boy).

Thus I was engaged as second mate of the barque **Conway** Castle of 1,660 gross tons, registered in London, but belonging to Robert Thomas & Son of Liverpool and Criccieth, North Wales. She had been built by Pickersgill of Sunderland in 1893 and was constructed of steel.

The following morning I received a letter from Mr de Wolf asking me to call at his office as the vacancy for second mate in the **Silberhorn**, then loading in Liverpool for Sydney, N.S.W., was mine if I would accept it. Mr Blyth, who had been expected to sign as second mate in the ship, had changed his mind and was going on a steamer.

However, I remained loyal to Mr Robert Thomas, and on the following Thursday morning - in October 1906, I left my home in Wales for Antwerp. When I did return home in 1908 I was to learn that the **Silberhorn** had joined the long list of missing ships, and that all on board were lost. ■

THE "TYNWALD" OF 1936



from an original drawing by Ron Evans

The **Tynwald** was built by Vickers Armstrong Ltd. at Barrow and was launched on 16th December 1936. She was an exact sister of the **Fenella**, also launched at Barrow on the same day. The **Tynwald** was the fourth vessel to carry the name in the Isle of Man fleet and had a gross tonnage of 2,376 and a speed of 21½ knots. She cost £203,550. It was possible to identify the two sisters at a distance because the **Fenella** had her bulwarks painted black, and the black paint extended to window level on her shelter deck, whereas the **Tynwald** had white paint in these areas..

THE "*TYNWALD*" AT DUNKIRK

by Geoffrey Kinley

The **Tynwald** (Captain Wilfred Qualtrough), together with her sister ship **Fenella** (Captain Walter Cubbon), unarmed and with their normal peacetime crews, were first sent across to Dunkirk on the evening of Tuesday 28th May, 1940. The Isle of Man Steam Packet vessels had been chosen on account of their large passenger accommodation and pressed into service as personnel carriers to assist in the evacuation.

Dunkirk was already coming under heavy air attack as the advancing German army closed in. The **Fenella** was bombed and effectively sunk while berthed alongside the East Mole at Dunkirk on 29th May with the loss of sixteen of her crew.

The **Tynwald**, however, successfully carried some 1,500 evacuated personnel to Folkestone on 29th May and completed two more return voyages to Dunkirk on Thursday 30th May and Friday 31st May, bringing 3,000 more evacuees. On each occasion she came under heavy and sustained enemy air attack. The Junkers 87 dive-bombers were a particularly serious threat.

By the evening of Friday 31st May / Saturday 1st June, the severity of the German air attacks on the evacuation fleet had compelled the British authorities to confine their efforts to the hours of darkness.

The **Tynwald** was ordered to sail from Folkestone. However, the members of her crew, like those of other personnel vessels, some of them cross-Channel steamers, all of which had been engaged in non-stop sailings, were in a very poor physical and mental state.

They had heroically undergone, without relief, several days of constant enemy air attack, conscious of the fact that large passenger vessels like theirs were large and obvious targets on which the German dive-bombers concentrated. The **Tynwald** did not sail.

In his authoritative book *The Nine Days of Dunkirk* (1959), David Devine, who was there, perhaps best sums up the situation at Folkestone that Friday night / Saturday morning:

"Even endurance has its inevitable limits. The personnel ships had been working now, some of them, for a full week. They were civilian ships - before everything this must be remembered. They were not trained to the necessities of war, nor were they moulded to its disciplines.

Now, as their weariness grew, there were failures. The Tynwald should have sailed from Folkestone at this time. She had completed three hard voyages, bringing away 4,500 men, but on this evening she failed to sail.

Her master stated that his men had been continually on their feet for a week, that his officers were completely exhausted, and that he himself had had only four hours' rest in the whole course of the week and was unfit for further duty.

The ***Ben-my-Chree*** *was in the same condition. Exhaustion was beginning to show amongst the naval vessels as well. It was found possible, in certain circumstances, to put fresh captains aboard.*

With the personnel ships, Admiral Ramsay now took the necessary step of putting a naval commander on board with a party of ten seamen. Relief crews were ordered for the ***Ben-my-Chree*** *and the* ***Tynwald.****"*

Thereafter Admiral Ramsay, who was in overall charge of the evacuatuion, known as Operation Dynamo, decided upon a desperate massed descent on Dunkirk on the evening of Sunday 2nd June 1940, using all large and small evacuation craft.

The **Tynwald** took part in the evening sortie, having embarked a relief crew and naval officer (one Commander Nicholson) and 10 ratings. The veteran Captain Qualtrough had stood down.

However, significantly, several key members of the original Steam Packet crew, who had already endured so much, volunteered to continue. They included John Henry Whiteway, the chief officer, who became acting master; the second officer, Alan Watterson, who became chief officer; the radio officer, Charles Mason; Will Lister, the purser; John Gawne, the carpenter; and Arthur Allen, the donkeyman.

The **Tynwald** left Folkestone at 9.15pm on 2nd June and made a fourth passage to Dunkirk, once again coming under heavy air attack. Nonetheless, the next day she safely brought back a further 1,200 service personnel.

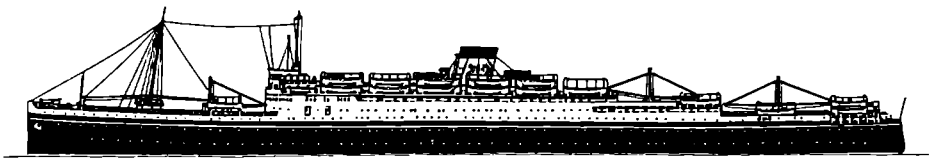
The **Tynwald** apparently made a final fifth voyage to Dunkirk on the evening of Monday 3rd June, with a relief crew, and brought back a further passenger load. In all the **Tynwald** evacuated some 8,000 personnel (according to one authority 8,953), on any view the largest of any personnel vessel engaged in Operation Dynamo.

The Steam Packet volunteers on the fourth voyage were rightly honoured for their bravery. Messrs Whiteway, Watterson and Mason were each awarded the D.S.C.

The full story of the Isle of Man Steam Packet's contribution to the evacuation of Dunkirk, north-west France and the Channel Islands remains to be told, if for no other reason than to rebut the oft-repeated, ill-informed slur that Steam Packet crews failed in their duty at that diffucult time.

The Tynwald took part in the North Africa campaign and was assigned to Operation Torch. In the early hours of 12th November 1942 the Tynwald was torpedoed by the Italian submarine Argo and sank in Bougie Bay. *j.s.*

No: 3 THE "GEORGIC" OF 1931



(The Georgic as she appeared after her re-fit at Belfast, December, 1944)

from Lloyd's Register, 1933 - 34:

GEORGIC Official Number: 162365 Call Sign: L H R F
Steel, twin screw, oil engines
Gross Tonnage: 27,759, Nett Tonnage: 16,839
built in 1932 by Harland & Wolff at Belfast; registered at Liverpool
Owned by The Oceanic Steam Navigation Co. Ltd. (The White Star Line)
Length: 683.6 feet, Breadth: 82.4 feet.

The **Georgic** was launched at Belfast by Harland & Wolff for the White Star Line on 12th November 1931. She was the final ship to be built for the White Star fleet. She differed from her sister - the **Britannic**, completed two years earlier - in a number of respects. The **Georgic** was designed on ambitious lines, with an almost straight stem, cruiser stern and the then fashionable squat funnels with tops parallel with the deck. Unlike her sister, the **Georgic** had a rounded bridge front. Slightly larger than the **Britannic**, her original accommodation was for a total of 1,636 passengers - 479 cabin class, 557 tourist class and 600 third class.

In April 1931 it was reported that construction work on the **Georgic** was to be speeded up in order that she could enter service in May 1932 instead of June, as was originally anticipated. Behind this idea was the fact that some 25,000 Americans were due to visit Dublin to attend the Eucharistic Conference that was to be held there from 22nd June until 29th June. As it turned out, the **Georgic** was not completed until June, and she began her maiden voyage on 25th June when she left Liverpool for New York.

The **Georgic's** forward funnel was a dummy and used as a radio room and engineers' smoke room. She was designed as a cabin-class ship but her passengers had surroundings and comfort equal to those provided in any *de luxe* liner of the day. The **Georgic's** trials took place early in June 1932 and a large party of guests was taken to Belfast to join the ship in the Belfast Steamship Company's motorship **Ulster Monarch** which was specially

chartered for the occasion. The completion of the ship attracted great attention, and in welcoming her to the Mersey for the first time, the Lord Mayor of Liverpool offered his congratulations to the owners. The **Georgic** made the outward passage to New York in rough weather, but even so managed to arrive some 12 hours ahead of schedule. In September 1932 a ball was held on the **Georgic** in Gladstone Dock, Liverpool, in aid of the new headquarters of the British Legion.

In November 1932 the **Georgic's** sailing was brought forward two days in order that she could fit in with the postal arrangements for Christmas mails to the United States. On 11th January 1933 she made her first sailing from Southampton to New York, having been brought in to replace the **Olympic** while that vessel underwent an extensive engine overhaul. Over 2,000 local people visited the **Georgic**, the proceeds being given to local charities.

A record fruit cargo of 51,687 cartons, representing about 3,000 tons, was discharged by the **Georgic** at Liverpool in October 1933. On 10th May 1934 the vessel was amalgamated into the Cunard - White Star fleet. June 1934 saw the ship once again turned into a floating ballroom in aid of the David Lewis Northern Hospital's building fund. During January 1935 there was a small fire among some cotton bales in the **Georgic's** forward hold. On 3rd May she joined the **Britannic** on the London - Southampton - New York service, and was the largest ship to use the Thames, being fractionally larger than the **Dominion Monarch**. In 1939 the **Georgic** reverted to the Liverpool - New York service and made five round trans-Atlantic voyages on commercial service with cargo and passengers, although she was hampered by the fact that Americans had been ordered not to travel in her as she was a belligerent ship. While she was homeward bound on 11th March 1940, the Cunard-White Star Company was informed that she would be taken off commercial service. After discharging a large cargo at Liverpool, the **Georgic** was ordered to the Clyde on 19th April, where she was converted into a troopship for 3,000 men.

At the end of May 1940 the **Georgic** assisted in the evacuation of British troops from Andesfjord and Narvik, and as soon as she had landed these men at Greenock she sailed to assist in the withdrawal from Brest and St. Nazaire. She was under repeated air attack but was fortunate in not being hit; her crew were highly commended by the soldiers she rescued. Between July and September 1940 she made a trooping voyage to Iceland, and another to Halifax, N.S., collecting Canadian troops after landing the evacuees she carried on the westbound voyage. From September 1940 until January 1941 the **Georgic** was employed on a trooping voyage from Liverpool and Glasgow to the Middle East via the Cape, and afterwards trooped from Liverpool to New York and Halifax, and back to the Clyde.

On 22nd May 1941 the **Georgic** left the Clyde under the command of Captain A.C.Greig, O.B.E., R.N.R., with the 50th Northumberland Division for Port Tewfik, Gulf of Suez. She was part of the convoy which had to be left

almost unprotected during the hunt for the **Bismarck**. She arrived safely on 7th July 1941, but a week later on 14th July she was bombed by German aircarft while at anchor off Port Tewfik, with 800 Italian internees on board. Her fuel oil caught fire and the ammunition exploded in the stern area. The **Georgic** was beached on 16th July, half submerged and burnt out. On 14th September it was decided to salvage the vessel and the hulk was raised on 27th October. The hull was plugged, and on 2nd December the **Georgic** was taken in tow by the **Clan Campbell** and the **City of Sydney**. She reached Port Sudan on 14th December where she was made seaworthy.

The **Georgic** left Port Sudan on 5th March 1942 and was towed by T. & J. Harrison's **Recorder**, with the tug **St. Sampson** steering from astern. On the following day, a strong north-westerly gale forced all the ships to heave-to on a northerly heading. The **St. Sampson** was damaged during this manoeuvre and cast off her towline. She drifted away and eventually foundered. Her crew were picked up by the hospital ship **Dorsetshire** which happened to be passing.

Meanwhile, the **Recorder** was joined by the tug **Pauline Moller** and the British India steamer **Haresfield**. Between them, they managed to bring the **Georgic** to Karachi on 31st March, 1942 without any further untoward incidents. The **Georgic** remained at Karachi until 11th December whilst temporary repairs were carried out. She then sailed to Bombay, arriving on 13th December, where she was dry-docked for hull cleaning and further repairs. Finally she loaded 5,000 tons of pig iron ballast and on 20th January 1943 the **Georgic** left Bombay under her own power for Liverpool where she arrived on 1st March, having made the passage at 16 knots. Shortly afterwards she sailed to Belfast but had to anchor in Bangor Bay until 5th July awaiting a berth. After seventeen months the **Georgic** emerged on 12th December 1944 with one funnel and a stump foremast. She was now owned by the Ministry of Transport, with Cunard-White Star as managers. After trials the **Georgic** left Belfast for Liverpool on 16th December 1944.

During 1945 the **Georgic** trooped to Italy, the Middle East and India. On Christmas Day she arrived at Liverpool with troops from the Far East, including General Sir William Slim, C-in-C South East Asia. Early in 1946, the **Georgic** repatriated 5,000 Italian prisoners of war, and a few weeks later she had a smallpox case among some 5,000 Naval and R.A.F. personnel homeward bound from Bombay. A further case developed and both were landed at Suez. In June 1946 on a homeward voyage from Bombay there was trouble between civilian women and service women and this led to the barring of civilians on troopships unless no other transport was available.

In September 1948 the **Georgic** was refitted by Palmers & Co., at Hebburn, for the Australian and New Zealand emigrant trade. She retained her White-Star livery, and could accommodate 1,962 one-class passengers. In January 1949 the **Georgic** made her first sailing on the Liverpool - Suez -

Fremantle - Melbourne - Sydney run with 1,200 'assisted passages'. However, when leaving the landing stage a rope wrapped round one of her propellers and she had to re-dock. During the summers from 1950 until 1954, the **Georgic** was chartered back to Cunard and made seven round voyages to New York each year as a one-class liner. In 1950 she was based at Liverpool, but Southampton was her terminal port from 1951 until 1954.

In the winter of 1954/55 the **Georgic** resumed 'assisted passage' voyages to Australia, and on 16th April 1955 she arrived at Liverpool with troops from Japan. She was then offered for sale, but the Australian Government chartered her for the summer. The **Georgic's** final voyage was from Hong Kong to Liverpool with 800 troops, and she arrived on 19th November 1955. On 11th December she was laid up at Kames Bay, Isle of Bute pending disposal. In January 1956 the **Georgic** was sold for scrapping, and on 1st February arrived at Faslane for demolition by Shipbreaking Industries Ltd. ■

VICTORIA BRIEFLY RULED THE WAVES

In the Winter, 1997 "*Bulletin*" there appeared an article about the four vessels which have carried the name **Princess Victoria** on the Stranraer - Larne route. Alan McClelland has supplied the photograph, reproduced below, of the third **Princess Victoria**, launched on 21st April, 1939:

Her career was short, as she was sunk by a magnetic mine in the Humber on 21st June 1940. An identical vessel, the **Princess Victoria** (4) was launched by Dennys at Dumbarton on 27th August, 1946.

As Members will now be aware, 1998 marks the Sixtieth Anniversary of the founding of the Liverpool Nautical Research Society. These two short articles by Members of the Society take a look at events of sixty years ago.

s.s. "MAMARI"

by L.N.R.S. Member Sheila Cross

In 1939 the ss **Mamari** and her sister ship the **Waimana** (both Shaw Savill vessels) were two of several ships laid up in the Gareloch - waiting. Waiting for what? Rumours of war abounded during that summer. Then, as teenagers, we were surprisingly unconcerned.

My friend's father met us at Glasgow and escorted us to Helensburgh and thence to Rhu. From there a small boat took us out into the loch to reach the **Mamari**. We climbed a perpendicular rope ladder - no problem then climbing aboard! We had the use of the captain's accommodation, while he took the first officer's. It was memorable for me, because it was my 19th birthday.

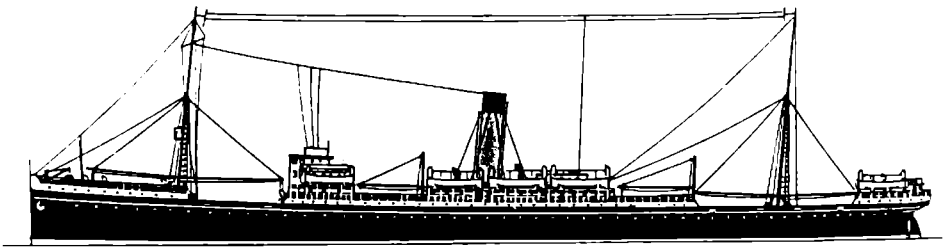
So began a unique holiday. There was a skeleton crew aboard. Each day we were given a packed lunch and a crew member would row us out to one of the banks of the loch. We were surrounded by wonderful walking country. One day we managed to get to the Highland Games at Luss on Loch Lomond. On hot days we would sunbathe on our own private deck and look across to the **Waimana**, but we never boarded her. We had the run of the ship and a wonderful holiday headquarters she made.

Three years before the start of the Great War in 1914 it could be said that shipping, and the prosperity that it brought, was at its zenith. The **Mamari** was launched as the **Zealandic** in 1911, having been built by Harland & Wolff at Belfast. She was a cargo/passenger liner for the joint service of Shaw, Savill & Albion, and the Oceanic Steam Navigation Company, known as the 'White Star'. Her length was 477' and her gross tonnage 7,924. With two four cylinder, quadruple expansion steam engines, the **Zealandic** was capable of 14 knots.

In 1913 the **Zealandic** was chartered by the Western Australian Government for emigrant duties and in 1917 she was requisitioned under the Liner Requisition Scheme and operated on the same route for two years under the Scheme. In 1923, when off Cape Howe, she towed the dismasted sailing vessel **Garthsnaid** into Melbourne and was awarded £6,350 salvage. Three years later, in 1926, the **Zealandic** was transferred to George Thompson's Aberdeen Line and renamed **Mamilius**. She spent six years on the Australian service under this name before she was returned to Shaw Savill in 1932 and was renamed **Mamari**, the third vessel to carry this name.

This brings us back to 1939 - that memorable year! Both the **Mamari** and the **Waimana** were sold to the Admiralty to become '*dummy*' warships. The **Waimana** was camouflaged as HMS **Resolution**, and continued an eventful life until broken up in 1952.

Our **Mamari** was not so lucky. She was converted into a dummy version of the aircraft carrier **Hermes**. However, the real HMS **Hermes** was sunk in the Indian Ocean by Japanese aircraft on 9th April 1941. Two months later the **Mamari** was proceeding to Chatham Dopckyard on 3rd June where she was to be reconverted into a refrigerated cargo ship. On passage she struck the submerged wreck of the mined tanker **Ahamo** in the Wold Channel, off Cromer and she had to be beached. A week later, on 10th June, she was torpedoed by an E-boat and became a total loss. ■



The "Mamari"

A DIFFERENT WORLD

by L.N.R.S. Vice-President, Ray Pugh

It was a different world in shipping in the 1930s. From 1927 to 1936 I was involved with shipping and forwarding. I was mainly concerned with the South American trade, to both the East and West coasts. My principals were G. Gottschalck & Company of Manchester, shipping through their Liverpool agents William Eyre & Nephew of 30 Exchange Street East. At least one ship left Liverpool every Saturday for the River Plate, sometimes two or three. A vast amount of railway track material went to the Argentine.

Two companies vied for speed of delivery at Montevideo - 21 days. They were Donaldsons and Houlders. The other lines took 23 or 24 days. McIvers' ships provided a service up river to Rosario. We had occasional cargo for Asuncion in Paraguay which was subject to transhipment in Buenos Aires into the Mihanovich Line steamers (three funnels) which sometimes went aground on the ever changing shoals of the River Plate.

I made out the Bills of Lading and Certificates of Origin in Spanish (at which I had done well at school). My Spanish also benefited me with the

Uraguayan Consul in South Castle Street, who gave me armchair treatment instead of making me wait at the counter for documents to be authorized. I do not think that my wages ever rose to more than £2 per week.

To Chile and Peru, we shipped in the Pacific Steam Navigation Company's **Orbita, Orduna** and **Reina del Pacifico**. There was a sailing almost every Thursday. The **Orbita** came home on one or two occasions via Cape Horn, but most voyages were made via the Panama Canal.

The sailings from the landing stage of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company liners were grand occasions, and passengers were received on board by the Captain and Officers in full dress uniform in the foyer. I usually managed to go on board on sailing day to deliver 'consignees' mail', having deliberately missed the 'ship's mail' at the Cunard Building offices.

To Guayaquil, Ecuador, we shipped in the Gulf Line steamers, also known as the Nautilus Steamship Company. The ships were the **Apple Branch, Cherry Branch, Maple Branch** and so on. The owning company was Ritsons of Newcastle.

When there was a gap in the P.S.N.C. and Gulf services, we sometimes shipped to New York by Cunard, with transhipment there into the Grace Line steamers such as the **Santa Barbara, Santa Maria** etc.

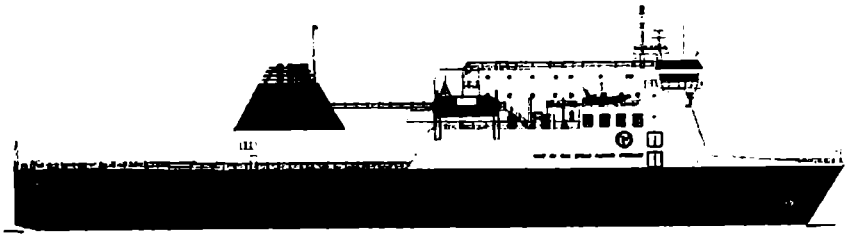
The **Cortona** was one of the Donaldson Line ships that we dealt with a great deal. I mention her particularly because three years into the Second World War, I was in the Navy on board HMS **Hiniesta**. We had left Londonderry for Moville to meet HMS **Egret** to calibrate her Direction Finding gear off Portrush. However we received a signal to cancel that job and to meet the the fleet destroyer HMS **Pathfinder** which was approaching Lough Foyle. She had on board the survivors from the **Cortona** which had been torpedoed in 32°45'North, 24°45'West. We were to transfer the survivors, who had been in open boats for several days, and take them to Londonderry.

One interesting point about the 1930s was that the lines working out of Liverpool were in a 'Conference' and shippers were not allowed to ship by any other than Conference lines, or they would lose the 5% rebate awarded to them for so complying. The Blue Star Line, whose ships loaded in London for South American ports, applied to join the Liverpool Conference, but were not accepted.

When the war ended in 1945 we had lost a major part of our Merchant Navy through U-boats and air attack. Things were never to be the same again. The British Merchant Navy was once the world's main sea carrier, but it has now sunk into oblivion. Young men are not encouraged to take up a sea career and as flags of convenience replace the red ensign, foreign crews replace the British. Some people may say that British seamen have priced themselves out of a job, when the red ensign on the Mersey is so down-graded, but politics have played a big part in this. ■

SHE'S NOT THE GIRL OF EVERYONE'S HEART !

Sea Containers' new vessel for Isle of Man service, the **Ben-my-Chree** (6) arrived at Douglas on 6th July from her builders, van der Giessen - de Noord at Rotterdam. The famous Steam Packet name translates literally from the Manx Gaelic as '*Woman of my Heart*', but the popular translation is '*Girl of my Heart*'.



*The new **Ben-my-Chree**, from an original drawing by Ron Evans*

The new vessel immediately ran into a storm of criticism. The passenger accommodation is open-plan and cramped for a maximum of 500, and there is no separation between the bar, cafeteria and seating areas. Sea Containers' official view is that the new ship '*is a cargo vessel with some accommodation for passengers*' and that the new *Ben* is a '*back-up for the SeaCat*'.

On berthing trials at Liverpool it was found that the **Ben-my-Chree's** stern ramps are too heavy for the pontoon link-span moored at the landing stage and so she will not be able to use Liverpool at all when in service. At Heysham she will only fit No.3 linkspan, which ironically is the old Steam Packet linkspan from the South Edward Pier at Douglas.

Car drivers are not impressed with the open vehicle deck as their cars get a coating of salt spray in all but the calmest conditions. The **King Orry** should have been withdrawn from service on 1st August, but has been retained for the time being and is sailing in tandem with the new vessel. Sea Containers state that they will review the situation at the end of September. *Watch this space !*

NEW PLANS FOR ST. NICHOLAS PLACE

The Society's Vice-President, Ray Pugh, has brought to our attention a propoasal by the Mersey Docks & Harbour Company to convert St. Nicholas Place (i.e. that part of the Pier Head which lies to the north of the Royal Liver Building) into a truck and vehicle park designed to serve the Dublin and Manx sailings from the landing stage; thus excluding a valuable amenity from public

use. Mr Pugh has already lodged a firm protest, and seeks support from like-minded colleagues. His telephone number is 01704-550816, but the chief co-ordinator for the protest initiative is a Mr McKarel, 80 Waterloo Warehouse, Waterloo Road, Liverpool L3 0BQ, telephone 0151-236-0962, should anyone wish to contact him.

It is not considered appropriate at this time for the Society itself to become directly involved in what appears to be a local political matter, since the issues concerned do not have a direct bearing on the functions of the Society.

"HISTORY OF MARINE CHRONOMETERS"

A talk will be given by Mr John Griffiths (Curator, Prescot Museum) at 19.30hrs on Monday 14th September at Prescot Church Hall. The Admission is £1, and this includes light refreshments. Car-parking is available by the Dean House Hotel, Prescot.

IRISH SEA FERRY SERVICES, 1998:

Alan McClelland writes:

"Given the number of public criticisms of recent developments in services to and from Ireland and the Isle of Man, one must ponder whether some ferry operators have allowed themselves to be overwhelmed by essentially short term considerations in their investments in new craft of whatever sort. One questions, for example, if the employment of very high speed units of standard design will be justified mid to long term once their novelty has worn thin. Such units are not only costly to acquire and operate, but are readily susceptible to damage. Further, their operation is all too often curtailed by weather conditions which create few if any problems for vessels with conventional hull forms.

It has never been acceptable that ferry voyage times should be unduly prolonged. It must be acknowledged that there are circumstances in which public demand requires frequent sailings in any given period of time. In such a situation, economic and technical considerations may well dictate that a time-table is best maintained by employing the least number of vessels, provided they can keep up desired service speeds in the widest possible range of sea states, and their means of propulsion are reliable and subject to properly supervised planned maintenance.

The strength of reactions to the entry into service of the **Ben-my-Chree** calls into question the wisdom of purchasing '*off-the-peg*' ships for services with very specific terminal characteristics. The layout of accommodation, and the arrangements for loading and unloading passengers, cars and freight need to be carefully tailored if custom is to be retained, let alone increased."

RESEARCH INTO THE "MARLBOROUGH" MYSTERY

by Forbes Eadie

No vessel has had more exaggerated fiction woven around her fate than the ship **Marlborough** - fiction which when sifted by a nautical researcher proves to be nothing more nor less than the morbid imagination of some irresponsible journalist. Beside me as I write I have a small file of newspaper cuttings, each giving a different version of the same yarn of the finding of the wreck of the lost **Marlborough**. Careful and painstaking research from official records gleaned all the salient features and facts relating to the **Marlborough**.

The **Marlborough** was a full rigged ship, a unit of the famous Shaw Savill and Albion Line. Built in 1876 by Robert Duncan of Port Glasgow, she was an iron vessel of 1,124 tons register. From the date of her launch until her loss, her hull was painted black. The shipping records of the period prove that she was one of the fastest vessels in the New Zealand trade, her average for the outward passage, London to Port Chalmers or Lyttelton, being 88 days and her fourteen homeward passages averaged 81 days, truly remarkable sailing. She shares with the **Otaki** the record of 69 days, 12 hours for the Port Chalmers to London passage.

In 1890 the **Marlborough** loaded a strange cargo for a sailing ship - frozen mutton. At the port of Lyttelton a steam-driven refrigeration plant was installed in her fore 'tween decks. Under the command of Captain W. Herd, with a crew of thirty and one passenger (a refrigeration expert), the **Marlborough** sailed from Lyttelton on 11th January 1890 with a cargo of 68,000 carcasses of frozen mutton, bound for London. When three days out she was sighted by the intercolonial barque **Kentish Lass** and reported '*All Well*'. On 20th January, when some 545 miles to the east of the Auckland Islands, she passed the Greenock ship **Alcinous** of the Golden Fleece Line, and again reported '*All Well*'.

It was estimated that the **Marlborough** would make the passage in from 75 to 85 days. After 110 days there was anxiety, more so when it was found that two ships which had sailed from Auckland two days after the **Marlborough** had left Lyttelton, had safely arrived. When 180 days out, the ominous word '*missing*' was placed alongside her name at Lloyd's on the casualty list. In December 1890, almost a year after her departure from Lyttelton, a court of enquiry, under a magistrate and two nautical assessors was instituted to enquire into the supposed loss of the vessel. The records of the enquiry, now in the archives of the New Zealand Marine Department, show that every care had been taken in the loading of the ship. Lloyd's surveyors gave evidence that every requirement called for by them in the installation of the machinery had been carried out to their entire satisfaction. Evidence was submitted, culled from *The Journal of Commerce*, that no less than seven

vessels arriving at British ports from Australia and New Zealand during the months of February, March and April 1890, had reported vast fields of ice in the high southern latitudes. The ice-fields were met in an area bounded by 45° and 50° South, and between 160° and 110° West. Several of the vessels, according to the reports of their masters, had to leave their great circle courses and run their 'Easting down' in from 35° to 40° South in order to escape from the icefields. Reports from Lloyd's were produced at the inquiry, and showed that in addition to the **Marlborough**, three other vessels were posted missing, insurance having been paid for their total loss. One of these was the **Dunedin**, which sailed from the port of Dunedin on 20th March 1890, also laden with frozen mutton, and never heard of again.

Two months after the sitting of the inquiry, Shaw Savill and Company received a report from the master of the **Alcinous**. The report stated : "*On 23rd January 1890, four days after sighting and signalling your ship **Marlborough**, we fell in with a vast ice-field. On the afternoon of 27th January, a moderate to strong south-westerly gale with fog and drizzling rain set in, and the conditions caused me to alter course to the northward to get round the flank of the ice. We cleared the field twelve hours later. Your ship **Marlborough**, under all sail, was making a similar course to the eastward but heading if anything, slightly more to the southward When she was last sighted on the evening of 23rd January at approximately 9.30pm, the weather was clear with the wind force at Beaufort Scale 7 to 8. I estimated the ice-field to have a latitude distance of approximately 60 miles.*"

In December 1904, the following story appeared in the "*San Francisco Examiner*" :

GREAT SEA MYSTERY EXPLAINED

FINDING OF A GRUESOME WRECK

Captain G. Hadrup, now a resident of our city, has had many very strange experiences during his long seafaring career, but the most sensational story he has to tell is the romantic discovery of the wreck of a famous English ship named **Marlborough** on the bleak and stormy coastline of the notorious Cape Horn. This vessel traded for many years to and from England in the Australian emigrant trade and the cause of her loss has perplexed seamen ever since she sailed on her fatal voyage. But it is best that Captain Hadrup should tell the story in his own way :

"In August 1899, my ship, the **British Isles**, was homeward bound from Lyttelton, New Zealand, to London. We had a very hard and difficult run down through the high latitudes, sighting Cape Horn on 15th August. Three days later we were passing close into the western coast line of Staten Island, hugging the land for shelter. The coves and bays down there are

deep and silent, the sailing difficult and dangerous. It was a weird, wild evening when we sighted the wreck, with the red orb of the westering sun on the distant mountains.

"The stillness was uncanny. We rounded a point and stood into a deep cove, and before us, about a mile across the bay, lay a large sailing ship, high and dry on the beach. Her running gear was flying to the wind, and only the remnants of her rotting canvas fluttered on her rusty yards. We hove to and signalled '*What ship is that?*' but no answer came. We searched the derelict with our glasses, but not a soul could we see, nor a movement of any sort.

"Masts and yards were picked out in green - the green of decay. The vessel, her white painted port hull streaked with rust, lay as if in a cradle among the gravel. I conned my ship into shallow water and anchored about half a mile from the wreck. There being no sign of life, I sent my mate off with four hands to make an investigation. With some difficulty they managed to board the wreck and what they found there and what they saw caused them hastily to return aboard. After receiving the mate's report, I myself went off to make a closer inspection.

"Ropes were hanging from the bowsprit by which we gained access to the deck. The forecastle deck was rotted through, but we managed to gain the spar deck by crossing on the rusted iron beams. In the forecastle we found nine skeletons all lying in bunks. The forward deckhouse contained a kitchen in which were rusted pots and pans, and in a room adjoining we found two more skeletons. Making our way aft warily, in a large mess-room in the after deckhouse we found ten more skeletons, three of them evidently young boys. On the bridge, in a teakwood wheelhouse, nine skeletons were lying on the floor, one of them below the wheel. From the bridge we ascended the poop, the deck of which was dangerous to walk upon.

"Through a companionway we entered the cabin, and there we found the most gruesome sight of all. In a cabin at the stern we found eight skeletons, and from the rags of clothing attached to two of them, and from the long tresses of plaited hair disintegrating from the skulls, we surmised that these would be the captain's wife and daughter. A few remnants of books and charts were strewn about, but despite careful search no trace was found of any of the ship's papers, or any article of value.

"Owing to the dank smell of decay and mould we were glad to leave the cabin and gain fresh air. Reaching the shingle beach, I walked round the wreck. On the bows was the brass lettered name **Marlborough**, and under the rusty counter, also in brass letters, were the words '*Marlborough London*'. We tried to remove the ship's bell from its iron fastenings, but having no tools to detach the rusty bolts we found the task to be impossible. The bell also had the ship's name engraved, together with the port of

registry, and the year of her building, 1879. We were glad to leave the wreck with its dead, and it would be correct for me to say that never in the history of the sea has such a sad and lamentable sight been seen by human eyes."

When I read the cutting from the *San Francisco Examiner* containing the foregoing story I immediately had many doubts as to its authenticity, and having a personal interest in the ship and a member of her complement, a cousin who was a second voyage apprentice, I made determined enquiries everywhere. First of all, I typed out thirty copies of the *Examiner* story. My first query was to the Secretary of Lloyd's in London. I asked that gentleman several questions : *(1)* the name and address of the owners of the **British Isles**. *(2)* In the year 1899 was any report received by Lloyd's of the finding of the wreck of the ship **Marlborough**, in or near the vicinity of Tierra del Fuego? If not *(3)* was any report ever received of the finding of her wreck or the cause of same?

From the Secretary I received a most courteous reply, the following being a *verbatim* copy. "*(1)* The ship **British Isles**, up until the year 1899, was owned by British Shipowners Limited of Liverpool. In the year 1899 she was sold to Thomas Shute and Company, also of Liverpool. *(2)* We have no record of any report being received at this office from a Captain Hadrup or from the ship **British Isles** regarding the finding of the wreck of the ship **Marlborough**. *(3)* The only report ever received regarding the ship **Marlborough** is contained in the file of information concerning her received from the master of the ship **Alcinous**, he having sighted the **Marlborough** on 20th January 1890, nine days after she sailed from the port of Lyttelton for London."

My next quest was to the owners of the **British Isles**, and to both firms I sent a copy of Hadrup's story. I asked the following questions : *(1)* Could the firm supply me with the address of Captain G. Hadrup who claimed he was in command of the **British Isles** in 1899? (2) If he was in command of the ship in the year named, or in other years, did he ever report the sighting and boarding of the wreck of the ship **Marlborough**?

From the managers of both the firms named in the letter received from Lloyd's Secretary I obtained somewhat similar replies. "*(1)* We have never had a master or officer in our employ named Hadrup, or any name similar to Hadrup. *(2)* The copy of the article from the *San Francisco Examiner*, which you sent for our opinion, was brought to our attention a year or more ago. Articles somewhat similar in context have appeared in several British papers, of which we have copies. We are definitely of the opinion that the story is fraudulent, false and entirely untruthful ....."

My next enquiries were made personally. At Wellington, New Zealand, the Under Secretary of Marine allowed me to peruse and make copies of all

the official records in relation to the **Marlborough** which are contained in the archives of the department. At Lyttleton I was permitted to copy the records relating to the **Marlborough** which are in the official files of the Customs department. I found there that Captain W. Herd was in command of the ship when she sailed, that her total crew complement numbered 30, and there was one passenger who was signed on the articles as ordinary seaman at 1s. per month wages. The ship's clearance showed that there were no females in her complement.

The next call was to the Lyttelton harbour-master. With the assistance of one of his clerks a search was made through the arrivals and departures at and from the port for the years 1897 - 1901, but no entry was found of the ship **British Isles** ever having visited Lyttelton during the years mentioned.

My last enquiry was at the offices of the **Marlborough's** owners, Shaw Savill and Company. The manager had a copy of the Hadrup story. He gave me proof that the **Marlborough** never had her hull painted white, but it was black with a white line round it at deck level. He assured me further and showed me a photograph to prove it that the ship did not have a bridge nor a wheelhouse. He suggested that the 'large messroom' described by Hadrup was the after end of the half deck in which four apprentices (including my cousin) had their quarters.

From the many proofs which are here recorded, it must be apparent that Hadrup's story was a gruesome fake. Unfortunately, the story does not end there, as it has been embalmed in the archives of nautical history. In Volume 1, pages 99 and 100 "*Last of the Windjammers*" by Basil Lubbock, an account of Hadrup's yarn has been included. Lubbock states that the master of the **Marlborough** when she was lost was Captain Anderson. This is not so - Captain Anderson was in command from 1876 until 1883. Lubbock is correct in stating that the **Marlborough's** port of registry was Glasgow - not London as stated by Hadrup. ■

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In the interests of accuracy, a proof will be sent to the author for checking, before an article appears in *The Bulletin*.

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The Liverpool Nautical Research Society

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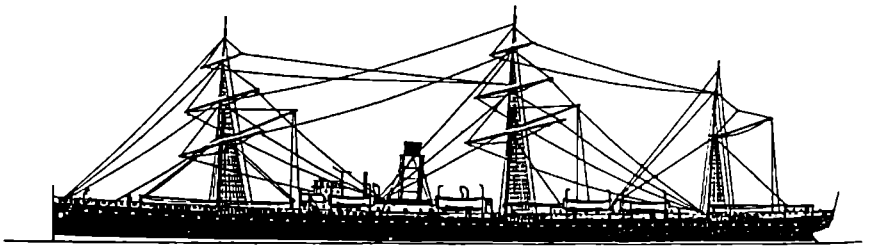

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SERVICES BETWEEN LIVERPOOL AND DUBLIN BY THE CITY OF DUBLIN STEAM PACKET COMPANY

by Malcolm McRonald

After a gap since January 1988, there was widespread welcome for the resumption of direct sailings from Liverpool to Dublin by the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company in 1997. The service was operated by the **Lady of Mann**, and the main 1998 service is being provided by the **SuperSeaCat Two**. There are also plans for a rival service by Merchant Ferries.

The re-introduction of the service between the two cities provides a good opportunity to examine its early history, and in particular the role played by the City of Dublin Steam Packet Co., which was the direct predecessor of the B. & I. Line on the route. The City of Dublin company is much better known for the mail service which it operated between Holyhead and Kingstown (now Dun Laoghaire) between 1850 and 1920, but its Liverpool to Dublin service had a longer history and was the first service operated by the company.

The first steamship sailings between Liverpool and Dublin were made in 1821 by two ships owned by the newly-established St. George Steam Packet Co., the **St. Patrick** and the **St. George**. This was the start of a regular, but seasonal, service between the two ports. The St. George company also served other routes. In addition to passengers, the ships carried livestock, but they had no provision for cargo.

The City of Dublin Steam Packet Co.'s service between Liverpool and Dublin dates from 1824. The Dublin firm of Charles Wye Williams & Company had been established in 1823, and ordered two paddle steamers from a Liverpool shipbuilder, Thomas ('Frigate') Wilson, for a new service between Liverpool and Dublin. These new ships were named **City of Dublin** and **Town of Liverpool**, and the first sailing was made on 20th March 1824. They operated throughout the year and carried passengers, livestock and cargo. A further two newly-built ships, the **Hibernia** and **Britannia**, joined the fleet in 1825. In 1826, the business acquired the Dublin & Liverpool Steam Navigation Co., which had started a competing service towards the end of 1824. It owned three ships, the **Liffey**, the **Mersey** and the **Commerce**. Around this time, the firm was renamed the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company. In addition to Charles Wye Williams, the company's directors included Francis Carleton and Richard Bourne, all of whom were later to be involved in the establishment of P. & O. In 1833, the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company was incorporated by an Act of Parliament.

The fleet was built up rapidly, and consisted of more than twelve ships in 1827. Most of these ships had been built for the company, but a few had been purchased second-hand, including the **Mona**, which was the second vessel built for the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company. She was probably a stop-gap

until a new ship was delivered, as she was soon sold on, to become a tug. In addition to the vessels named above, other vessels in the fleet were the **Leeds** (1826), the **Manchester** (1826), the **Birmingham** (1826), the **Sheffield** (1827) and the **Nottingham** (1827). As the fleet expanded, additional routes were opened up, including Dublin and London, Liverpool and Belfast (1826-1851), Liverpool and Drogheda, Liverpool and Londonderry (1829-1833), Dublin and Belfast, Dublin and Bordeaux, Liverpool and North Wales, Dublin and Fleetwood (1844) and a mail service between Liverpool and Kingstown.

The City of Dublin company suffered occasional casualties and losses in its early days. The **Sheffield** was wrecked at Ballywater in a gale on 30th December 1828, while sailing on the Liverpool-Belfast service. The **Britannia** put into Donaghadee harbour on 11th October 1829 to shelter from a storm, but then sank in the harbour. The **Manchester** went aground near Dublin lighthouse in late November 1829, but got off with little damage and was towed to Dublin; however this was not the happy ending as, within a few days, on 3rd December, she had sunk off the Skerries. The **Leeds** sank at Holyhead after striking a rock on 6th November 1834, but she was raised and returned to service. The **William Huskisson**, which was acquired around 1831, was wrecked on 12th January 1840, while she was on passage between Dublin and Liverpool. The remains of this wooden paddle steamer were found in 1919 during dredging operations at the Burbo Bank in the Mersey. Much of her machinery had disappeared, but her engine bed-plate and her funnel had survived, along with relics of pottery and other items.

The mail service between Liverpool and Kingstown, which was operated separately from the passenger/cargo service between Liverpool and Dublin, commenced operations in 1836. Four new vessels were then built for it, the **Queen Victoria** (1837), the **Duchess of Kent** (1837), the **Royal William** (1837) and the **Royal Adelaide** (1838). The service at first competed with the Admiralty packets on the same route, but an agreement was reached in 1839 under which the Admiralty packets took the morning sailings, and the City of Dublin vessels took the evening sailings. The Admiralty transferred its British terminal to Holyhead in 1848, when the through railway line from Chester to Holyhead was completed, and it took over the whole service in 1849, using four packet vessels. The Government soon realised that the Admiralty service was too costly, so tenders to take over the service were invited from private operators. Two tenders were submitted: one from the Chester & Holyhead Railway Company, which had been taken over by the London & North Western Railway Company in 1848, and one from the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company. Despite much manipulation by the railway company, the contract was awarded to the City of Dublin Steam Packet Co., which it was to retain for the next 70 years. The start of the mail contract in 1850 marks the time when the City of Dublin Co.'s most important service ceased to be the one between Liverpool and Dublin.

The Holyhead mail contract commenced on 1st June 1850. The company bought two of the former Admiralty packets, the **St. Columba** and the **Llewellyn**, and provided two of its own vessels, the **Eblana**, which was transferred from another route, and the **Prince Arthur**, which had been built for the new service. Three of these vessels were later transferred to the Liverpool-Dublin service, but all subsequent mail vessels never deviated from the mail service, and so fall outside the scope of this article.

After the award of the Holyhead mail contract, the City of Dublin Steam Packet Co. continued to operate a service between Liverpool and Dublin with a fleet of secondary steamers. Unlike the Belfast Steamship Co., which operated a relatively small number of vessels on its services, and whose vessel usage was consequently predictable, the City of Dublin company had a large fleet, and the vessels on the service varied over the years. It was possible for there to be long gaps between appearances of a vessel on the service. The vessels operating the service in the summer of 1852 were the **Birmingham** (1826), the **Royal William** (1837), the **Duke of Cambridge** (1837), the **Duchess of Kent** (1837), the **Prince** (1839), the **Princess** (1839), the **Albert** (1845) and the **Roscommon** (1845). In the summer of 1860, the **Birmingham**, the **Duke of Cambridge**, the **Albert** and the **Roscommon** did not feature, but there were three additional vessels, the **Iron Duke** (1844), the **Windsor** (1846) and the **Trafalgar** (1848). In 1861, the **Duke of Cambridge** featured regularly, and both the **Roscommon** and the **Birmingham** re-appeared for the last time. Following the building of new vessels in 1860, three of the former mail packets were transferred to the Liverpool-Dublin service, the **Eblana** (1849) in 1861, the **St. Columba** (1847) in 1863, and the **St. Patrick** (1847, ex **Llewellyn**) in 1865. In 1866, those three had replaced the **Duchess of Kent**, which did not feature after 1863, the **Prince** and the **Princess**. Other vessels on the service in 1866 were the **Iron Duke**, the **Windsor**, the **Royal William** and the **Trafalgar**. The same vessels were used in 1867, with the addition of a new paddle steamer, the **Kildare**. Throughout this period, the frequency of sailings was maintained, with one or more sailings each day except Sunday. A surprising feature of the vessels employed was that no new ships were built for the service until 1867, and the most modern vessel used dated from 1849. By the 1860s the ships on the service were completely outdated and very slow; the absence of new ships demonstrated the neglect by the City of Dublin company of its Liverpool service, compared to its prestigious mail service.

Two of the vessels employed on the Dublin service were lost in the early 1850s. The **Leeds**, which had suffered an earlier sinking in November 1834, suffered heavy weather damage off Point Lynas on 24th January 1852, and was abandoned before she sank. All on board were saved by an American vessel, the **Empire State**. On 15th February 1853, the **Queen Victoria** of 1837, which was sailing from Liverpool to Dublin, ran aground on the Bailey Light Rock, off Howth Head, at the northern end of Dublin Bay. She had been

engulfed by a snowstorm that had completely obscured the lights of the Irish coast. Her engines were put astern to pull her off the rocks, but she sank about twenty yards from the shore as soon as she reached deep water. She had been carrying 120 passengers, only 40 of whom survived. Some of the survivors were rescued by another of the City of Dublin company's vessels, the **Roscommon**, which had come to the aid of the stricken vessel.

A greater emphasis on the Liverpool-Dublin service appeared in the second half of the 1860s, resulting in orders for a series of iron paddle steamers with limited passenger accommodation. The use of Irish counties as names for the company's secondary vessels was introduced in 1867 by the first of these vessels, the **Kildare**. The names of the four Irish provinces were always reserved for the company's mail ships. The **Kildare** had accommodation for 60 first-class passengers, and for some deck passengers. She started her maiden voyage from Liverpool to Dublin on 15th August 1857. She was followed by the **Mullingar** (1868), which was the only vessel not to receive a county name, the **Longford** (1870), the **Leitrim** (1874), the **Cavan** (1876) and the **Mayo** (1880). All these paddle steamers were built at Birkenhead by Lairds, except for the **Mullingar**, which was built at Dublin, with engines supplied by Lairds. The **Mayo** was built without passenger accommodation. These vessels normally took between seven and eight hours to complete a crossing, compared to eleven or twelve hours previously. The **Leitrim** was to enjoy an unusual and extended career. After some years as a passenger and cargo ship, she was downgraded to cattle carrier, still operating between Liverpool and Dublin. On 20th December 1896, she sank with the loss of 75 cattle after being struck by another vessel, the **Nicosian**, while she was berthing at Liverpool in dense fog. She was then laid up until June 1899, when she was sold for breaking up, and much of her was indeed dismantled. However, what was left was then rebuilt as a twin-screw self-propelled grain elevator. She was based at Sharpness, where she remained until 1959. The elevator was then sold for further service at Hull, and left Sharpness on 30th September, towed by a Grimsby tug, the **Lady Cecilia**. She arrived at Hull on 3rd October. After a short period of service at Hull, she was sold for breaking up at Dunston on Tyne, and left Hull under tow on 18th June 1963.

The City of Dublin company acquired the Dublin & Liverpool Traders' Steam Packet Co.Ltd. in the early 1880s, together with its fleet of three screw driven vessels, the **Standard** (1854), the **Star** (1860) and the **Express** (1874). These were the first City of Dublin vessels to use this form of propulsion. A fourth vessel had been ordered by the acquired company, but was delivered to the City of Dublin company in 1884 as the **Belfast**. However, the company remained loyal to the paddle wheel after the acquisition, building two further paddle steamers, the **Meath**, again from Laird's in 1884, and the **Galway** in 1891. The **Galway** was the City of Dublin company's first paddle steamer to be built of steel, and was the first in a series of vessels to be built for the company

at Port Glasgow by Blackwood & Gordon.

The next generation of vessels for the City of Dublin company's Liverpool-Dublin route were built between 1894 and 1903, with six passenger/ cargo screw steamers replacing the five oldest paddle steamers, together with the **Standard** and the **Star**. The names of the new ships - **Louth** (1894), **Wicklow** (1895), **Carlow** (1896), **Kerry** (1897), **Cork** (1899) and **Kilkenny** (1903) followed the Irish county pattern. All six of the ships were built by Blackwood & Gordon, except for the **Kilkenny**, which was built by the Clyde Shipbuilding & Engineering Co., after that company had taken over Blackwood & Gordon's yard in 1900. It is possible to trace the development of passenger accommodation in successive vessels, with the growth of passenger traffic between the two cities. The **Louth** and the **Wicklow** each accommodated 70 first-class passengers in a saloon on the poop deck aft. Above this was a deck house with a smoking room and a lounge. In the forward part of the ship there was a room for cattle dealers, and sheltered accommodation and seating for deck passengers. In the **Carlow** and the **Kerry**, the poop deck house was used to provide cabins for 30 first-class passengers, in addition to the 70 accommodated in the saloon, and so the smoking room was positioned amidships on the bridge deck. The **Cork** had accommodation for 150 first-class passengers, which was achieved by including cabins on the bridge deck, in addition to those on the poop deck, and she retained the smoking room in the midships accommodation. For the first time in this series of ships, separate apartments were provided for male and female steerage passengers. The final vessel in the series, the **Kilkenny**, had first-class accommodation for 154 passengers, but otherwise was similar to the **Cork**. All six vessels had space for 500 head of cattle and general cargo.

The vessels' Liverpool berth was in Clarence Dock, but it was moved to Nelson Dock in July 1903. By the 1880s the service was a single sailing every day, Sundays excepted, in both directions. In July 1902, with five modern vessels in operation, the frequency of the service was increased to twice daily, Sundays excepted, in both directions, throughout the year, with both an overnight and a daytime sailing. The twice daily service lasted until the end of 1908, but it then reverted to once daily, although there were occasional twice daily sailings on busy days in 1909 and 1910. There was also a single ship service between Manchester and Dublin. Although various vessels from the Liverpool service spent time on the Manchester service, the one most frequently employed was the **Wicklow**.

At the outbreak of war in 1914, the company's entire Liverpool fleet of six ships was requisitioned and spent a short period carrying troops across the Irish Sea. They then returned to their normal service, but some of the ships were requisitioned again later. It seems likely that the carriage of passengers on the Liverpool-Dublin service ended after the start of the 1914-18 War, although the ships continued to operate intermittent cargo services when they

were not required by the Government and when there was sufficient traffic. The *nadir* of the service was probably reached in the early months of 1916, when the sole vessel in service was the **Wicklow**, which was making only one round sailing each week, while the **Kerry** and the **Cork** were laid up at Liverpool.

The **Kilkenny** was requisitioned in October 1915, and left Liverpool under sealed orders on 22nd December. While she was still under Government requisition, and was carrying out a Liverpool-Cork sailing, she ran aground on 15th May 1917 at Knockadoon Bay, at Youghal, a short distance north-east of the entrance to Cork harbour. She was then sold to the Great Eastern Railway Company, but remained under Government requisition. During this period, she was chartered to the City of Cork Steam Packet Co. in December 1918, and appeared on the Liverpool-Cork service. From March 1919 she was transferred to the Fishguard-Cork service. In July 1919, she was handed back to the Great Eastern Railway, and was renamed **Frinton**. She was re-built by the railway company before entering service on the route between Harwich and Antwerp, normally as a cargo vessel. In 1920, she was transferred to the Harwich-Rotterdam service. She passed to the London & North Eastern Railway Co. in 1923, when the railway companies were amalgamated. She was sold to Greek owners in 1926, but retained the name **Frinton**, and remained in their service until 22nd April 1941, when she became a war loss.

Later in the war, until August 1918, the **Louth** was employed by the Admiralty under charter between Aberdeen and Bergen. The **Wicklow** was requisitioned as a troopship, and was placed under the management of B. & I. The City of Dublin company's only war loss from its Liverpool fleet was the **Cork**, which was torpedoed by a submarine nine miles off Point Lynas on 26th January 1918 on a sailing from Dublin to Liverpool.

At the end of the war, the company had lost two of its four mail steamers from the Holyhead-Kingstown service, and was in no position to compete effectively with the London & North Western Railway when fresh tenders were submitted. Following the loss of the mail contract, the City of Dublin Steam Packet Co. decided to cease operations. Its trade from Dublin to Liverpool and Manchester was sold to B. & I. in October 1919, together with its four remaining passenger/cargo ships and one cargo ship. By that time, B. & I. had become part of the Coast Lines Group which had ambitious plans for the development of a network of passenger/cargo services across the Irish Sea. The City of Dublin company's trade was merged with that of Tedcastle, McCormick under the B. & I. name on 17th October 1919.

The City of Dublin Steam Packet Co. was wound up in 1924 by an Act of Parliament, one hundred years after it had started its first service. The winding up itself presented constitutional difficulties, since it first had to be established that Westminster, which had passed the Act establishing the company, still had jurisdiction following the passage of the Irish Free State Act.

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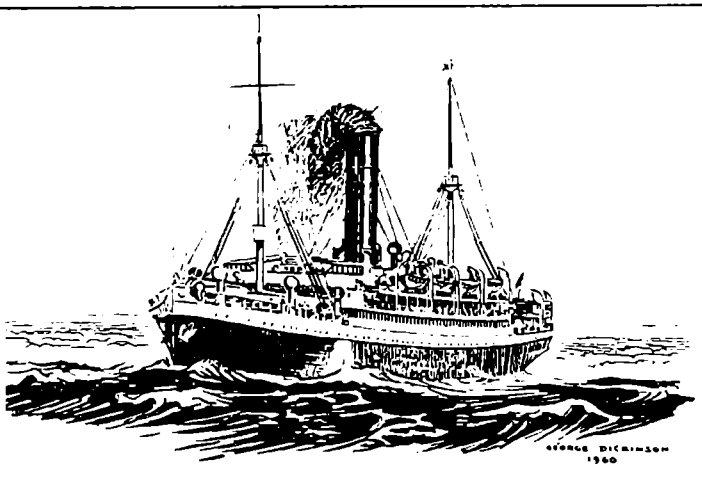


From an original drawing by George Dickinson

Booth liner "Hildebrand" (6,991 gross tons) built for the company's U.K.—Amazon service in 1911

SUPERSEACAT TWO

THE FIRST NINE MONTHS OF OPERATION, MARCH/NOV. 1998

by The Editor

***SuperSeaCat Two** is the second attempt at linking the cities of Liverpool and Dublin with a fast craft. The first attempt using the Boeing jetfoil **Cú na Mara** in 1980 and 1981 was described fully in the Spring, 1998 'Bulletin'.*

The monohull **SuperSeaCat Two** (henceforth referred to as SS2 in this article) arrived in the Mersey for the first time on 29th January 1998 and spent the next six weeks on various trials. The maiden crossings were set for Thurs. 12th March, but a few days earlier SS2 developed engine problems which necessitated spares being flown in from her builders. The ever dependable **Lady of Mann** was placed on stand-by to deputise if necessary.

SS2 is scheduled to make the Liverpool and Dublin crossing in 3 hours and 50 minutes, at a speed of 38 knots. The service is operated by Sea Containers Ferries Scotland, Limited.

In the event SS2 operated the inaugural crossings, leaving Liverpool landing stage at 08.28 (for 08.15) with 391 passengers. (Her capacity is 775 passengers and 175 cars/ light vans). SS2 arrived back at Liverpool at 17.20, about thirty minutes later than the advertised time of 16.50. The first hint that things were not right with the engines occurred two days later on Sat. 14th March when SS2 crossed on three engines at 29 knots, some 9 knots slower than the speed required to maintain schedule. These problems with the engines have recurred repeatedly throughout 1998.

From Fri. 3rd April, SS2 was advertised as running a very demanding schedule. Two round trips a day were to be operated, leaving Liverpool at 08.15 and 18.00, and departing Dublin at 13.00 and 23.00. This meant that the new craft would be at sea for 16 hours a day, every day for six months, leaving little or no time for engine maintenance or bad weather delays. SS2 is restricted to sailing in wave heights of less than 3-metres, and in the experience of the author of this article, can provide an extremely uncomfortable passage in wave heights of just two metres, with many passengers being violently seasick for most of the crossing.

On Sat. 4th April the first major problems arose. SS2 departed from Liverpool at 18.00 on the evening run to Dublin and was about three miles west of the Bar when all her generators and navigational equipment failed. Mersey Radio talked SS2 back into the approach channels and tugs were placed on stand-by off New Brighton. On approaching the landing stage SS2 suffered a total failure, including the emergency lighting, and arrived back at

the stage under tow of two tugs.

The following day all **SS2's** crossings were cancelled and the 'inter-availability' contract with Irish Ferries and Stena Line at Holyhead was tested to the full. Foot passengers were 'bussed' to Holyhead, and car drivers booked on to specific sailings from that port, or on occasion from Stranraer.

Easter 1998 was a difficult time for the new craft due to bad weather in the Irish Sea. On Maundy Thursday 9th April **SS2** lost all her crossings due to wave heights in the Irish Sea exceeding 3-metres, and only one round trip was possible on Good Friday, and this arrived back at Liverpool two hours late. On Sat. 11th April, **SS2** left Liverpool at 08.15, but was forced to turn back off the Skerries due to heavy seas, and arrived back at Liverpool at 11.45. The new craft quickly gained the unenviable nickname of '*Vomit Comet*'.

Intermittent rough weather and engine problems caused several cancellations in May and June. On Tues. 9th June, **SS2** was once again forced to turn back to Liverpool off the Skerries because of high seas. On 23rd and 24th June the craft was withdrawn to Langton Dock for engine repairs. Questions were asked about the wisdom of releasing the **Lady of Mann** on charter to the Azores, instead of retaining her as back-up for **SS2**.

On Tues. 7th July, the *Liverpool Daily Post* recorded that 'Super SeaCat Rides Crest of Wave'. It went on to state that **SS2** had exceeded all expectations and had smashed the 100,000 passenger mark in just three months' service. Hamish Ross, managing director of Sea Containers' Irish Sea operations said: "*We are absolutely delighted at the success of our new SuperSeaCat service on this historic route.*" Just five weeks later on 14th August, the same newspaper reported under the headline 'Cat Flap' that cancellations and delays had blighted the journeys of thousands of intending **SS2** passengers who had been sent to Holyhead for alternative crossings. Hamish Ross issued another statement: "*Over the past few weeks we have had a number of weather cancellations and also some ongoing technical problems which have necessitated the withdrawal of the vessel. It is disappointing, but perhaps not surprising, that a craft at the very leading edge of ferry technology should have some initial teething problems on the technical side. Fast ferries have operating limits which mean they tend to lose more trips to weather than conventional vessels, but of course they also bring tremendous advantages.*"

The 18.00 crossing from Liverpool on Wed. 12 August was operated by the **King Orry**, and on Tues. 18 August the *Liverpool Daily Post* reported 'Anger As Ferry Halted.' It went on: 'Furious ferry passengers were last night trying to get back from Dublin after another SS2 cancellation. Earlier in the day, hundreds of other passengers attempting to use the high-speed crossing from Liverpool were told that they could travel by coach to Holyhead, or **drive to Stranraer** (*250 miles from Liverpool!*) to board other

ferries to Ireland.'

The technical problems continued throughout the first half of September with SS2 losing up to three hours in the course of a working day. On Wed. 16 Sept. SS2 was again withdrawn and the **King Orry** was substituted to maintain the sailings on Fri. 18th, Sat. 19th and Sun. 20th September (with a crossing time of 7½ hours). The new high-speed service hit an all-time low on Thurs. 17th Sept. when SS2 was featured on BBC1's '*Watchdog*' programme. The feature suggested that Sea Containers had misled over 14,000 passengers with advance bookings from November onwards by not telling them that the 'bog-standard' (*sic*) conventional ferry **Lady of Mann** would operate the service if SS2 was stormbound or off for overhaul. The feature continued in '*tabloid*' style to achieve the maximum '*mass appeal*' by interviewing three groups of passengers who had had their travel arrangements wrecked by SS2's problems. Sea Containers responded by saying that they hoped to iron out the technical problems at SS2's January overhaul. They said that SS2 couldn't operate in wave heights of over 3-metres. '*Watchdog*' responded with the Met. Office data which suggested 7 crossings could be lost in November, 11 in December, 12 in January and 12 in February. '*Watchdog*' pointed out that nowhere in the brochure is there a mention about wave height operating limitations. In the six month period from mid-March to mid-September SS2 had lost 11.3% of its scheduled crossings due to bad weather and technical problems. Sea Containers responded by saying that from the beginning of November, the **Lady of Mann** would be on stand-by to cover the sailings in the event of stormy weather.

SS2 returned to service on Tues. 22nd Sept. and had a relatively trouble free run until Sat. 10th October. Bad weather then set in and on 14 days during the remainder of October, all SS2's crossings were cancelled due to wave heights in the Irish Sea in excess of 3-metres. **In the month of October, 56 crossings were cancelled due to the weather - a massive 46.66% of a possible total of 120 crossings.** The **Lady of Mann** was substituted just once - on Tues. 27th October. On the other days of cancellation the *Lady* was required to substitute for **SeaCat Danmark** on services between the Isle of Man and Dublin, Belfast and Liverpool.

A punishing winter schedule has been arranged for SS2. She is to operate a daily round trip to Dublin, leaving Liverpool at 11.00, and returning from Dublin at 16.00. In addition SS2 will operate the winter Liverpool and Douglas services, leaving Liverpool at 21.30 on Thurs., Fri., Sat. and Sun.; returning from Douglas at 07.30 on Fri., Sat., Sun., and Monday.

Given wave heights of over three metres in the Irish Sea and subsequent SS2 cancellations, there is no possibility of the **Lady of Mann** maintaining ***both*** the Liverpool - Dublin and Liverpool - Douglas services. The *Lady* is a very fast ship and a superb seaboat, but there just aren't enough hours in the day! (***The SS2 situation will be updated in the Spring 'Bulletin'***) ■

THE CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Greasby, Wirral,
November, 1998

Dear Friends,

I wish I could say, as the season of Advent comes upon us, that Christmas is well in hand this year. Alas, the reverse is true - trolley-loads of shopping to get through; scores of cards to be written, a Tree to decorate; a small Alp of parcels to wrap - the list is endless! And although the prospects of completion look dim at the moment, I am confident that all will be accomplished, on time, and with panache, thanks mainly to the efforts and gentle goading of my wife! Meanwhile, I console myself with the thought that I am not the only lubberly male in this particular boat!

Since I last wrote to you at the close of the holiday season in September, we have experienced a series of severe autumnal gales accompanied by torrential rain leading to serious flooding in many areas. South Wales was one of those regions which were hit particularly badly, and of course we had to be there during that saturated week enjoying a late holiday. Fortunately, the place where we stayed was on high ground, and suffered no ill effects, but the poor folk in the valleys suffered untold distress and devastation.

Those of you who follow the seafaring tradition may have heard of the Merchant Navy Convoy Memorial, co-ordinated by the Merchant Navy Welfare Board, and situated at the National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas, Staffordshire. It was a privilege for my wife and I to be present at the inauguration and consecration of this very unusual Memorial on 1st October 1998. It did not seem to be a very promising sort of day when our coach, after a few wrong turnings, eventually arrived, rather latish, at that remote corner of Staffordshire, just east of the A38, between the village of Alrewas and the River Trent. Flurries of rain swept across the flat landscape; a muddy field of vast acreage stretched from the car-park to the billowing folds of an enormous marquee, which was, apparently, the Mecca of our pilgrimage. Those who had exercised a little forethought and brought 'wellies', gum-boots, or even overshoes, skipped through the mud without a care; but city shoes were a liability, and ladies' high-heels simply sank! However, having at last safely navigated that barrier reef of viscous turf, we entered the marquee - and the prevailing air of consternation changed at once to one of eager anticipation.

Outside the west wall of the marquee, a troop of bandsmen from the Prince of Wales' Regiment, backs hunched against the chilly north wind, valiantly played stirring tunes to a sympathetic and appreciative audience. Hundreds of guests were already seated, and it was only with difficulty that our party managed to find a few remaining scattered seats.

Soon after midday, the Service of Dedication began, conducted with due solemnity by three Merchant Navy Chaplains representing the Missions to Seamen, the British Sailors' Society and the Apostleship of the Sea. The singing of hymns could be described as hearty; the prayers heartfelt. During the final hymn - inevitably "Eternal Father" - the colour parties braved the elements and marched out to the memorial plinth, above which flew the Red Ensign. Beyond stretched the embryo Arboretum, row upon row of young saplings, 2,535 of them, each one representing a British Merchant ship or Fishing vessel lost during the Second World War. As the trees mature, they will together become a beautiful, awe-inspiring and living monument; transforming the landscape for future generations to admire - and remember.

The Colours were accompanied by the widow of an Engineer Officer who had died in 1982 during the Falklands conflict on board R.F.A. Sir Galahad. It was to this steadfast lady that the honour of unveiling the plaque, and thus marking the moment of inauguration, was granted. A lone bugler sounded the Last Post, and visitors and congregation slowly dispersed to partake of a simple but welcome buffet lunch.

There have been other Red Ensign occasions in recent weeks, such as the unveiling of a Merchant Navy Memorial at the Pier Head on 30th October (which I could not attend), the M.N. Memorial Service in Liverpool Cathedral on Armistice Sunday, and, on 21st November, the Dinner hosted by the Friends of the Merseyside Maritime Museum. All memorable events, but the one that sticks in the mind will always be the Inauguration of the Convoy Arboretum, in spite of the weather and conditions!

Finally, may I now wish you all, you and yours, every happiness during the forthcoming festive season, Good Health, a Merry Christmas, and a Bright and Prosperous New Year!

Yours sincerely,

Graeme Cubbin

THE LIVERPOOL NAUTICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

NOTICE BOARD

MEMBERS' ACCESS TO THE ARCHIVES AND LIBRARY

In recent months, Members' access to the Archives and Library has been on Fridays. The general consensus of opinion is that Monday is a preferable day, so

in 1999 Members' day will revert to MONDAYS as follows:

FEBRUARY	1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd.
MARCH	1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th.
APRIL	12th, 19th and 26th.
MAY	10th, 17th and 24th.
SEPTEMBER	20th and 27th.
OCTOBER	4th, 11th, 18th and 25th.
NOVEMBER	1st, 8th and 15th.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Thursday, 17th December, 1998
ANNUAL CHRISTMAS SOCIAL AND QUIZ

Thursday, 21st January, 1999
"TRAINS TO BOATS FROM PLANES"
(*Norman West*)

Thursday, 18th February, 1999
"HISTORY OF WEST BANK DOCK, WIDNES"
(*A.H. Constable*)

COLD SPELL

by Captain Richard England

from Lloyd's Register, 1946/47:

NELLIE BYWATER Wooden Auxiliary Screw Schooner
Official Number: 69715 Signal Letters: M Q J C
Gross Tonnage: 115 Nett Tonnage: 76
Owner: R.L. England
Built in 1873 by Thomas of Millom
Length: 89.7′ Breadth: 22.2′ Registered at Newry

On a bleak February afternoon in 1947, the bad weather watcher at an 'occasional' coastguard lookout on the North Wales coast focussed his telescope on an object to seaward. A small black schooner with a white sheer-strake showed in the circle of the powerful lens. Under lowers and headsails she was plunging her bows to the hawsepipes into the rough seas as she beat slowly to windward. The schooner was the **Nellie Bywater**, passing the West Constable Buoy, making her way up the Welsh Channel into the Dee estuary, bound for Connah's Quay.

"*Can't take you up today, Captain. There's thick ice up river ... I'll take you into Mostyn, if you like?*" The Chester River pilot shouted the unwelcome news from the little boarding launch which had bobbed its way out to the **Nellie Bywater** from Mostyn, in answer to our International 'G'. "*No thanks, Pilot,*" I called back, "*I'll anchor in Wild Roads until you can take us up to Summers' Jetty.*" The launch circled away and headed back for the shore. Under auxiliary power, the **Nellie Bywater** turned down river to the deeper water of the Roads. A flurry of snow, driven by the strong northeaster, suddenly blotted out the shorelines. For the time being I was too occupied to bother about the consequences of our latest setback; finding the best possible shelter in the appropriately named lower reach of the Dee claimed my full attention.

The N.E. Mostyn buoy showed up ahead and I rang to 'stop'. Colin, the mate, reported seven fathoms of water. "*Let-go!*" There was a splash as the anchor hit the water, followed by the rattle and bang of the cable flying through the hawsepipe. I joined the mate in the bows. "*Give her another shackle, Colin. We're in for another blow. Make ready the other anchor in case we need it.*"

After a cigarette with the mate, I discussed our situation. Things looked pretty grim. This was our fourth Irish Sea crossing since the beginning of the freeze up. Unavoidable delays in port, due to the weather, had swallowed up our meagre earnings, and we were in no position to stand a loss

on our present cargo. By midnight it was blowing a severe gale, accompanied by continuous, blinding snow. The wind, meeting the strong tides of the Dee estuary, set up a vicious, short, steep sea. Three times we veered out extra cable until we had the full scope of five shackles overside. The swirling snowflakes settled in a soft clinging mush on our faces and clothing, despite the icy spray flying in sheets over the bows. I have never known a vessel roll so heavily as the **Nellie Bywater** did that night. Shortly after 1.00 am, she swung athwart wind and tide, lying over her taut cable which sawed up and down her keel and bottom planking in the most alarming manner.

Not long after high water, the **Nellie Bywater** lay more comfortably to her anchor. Gradually the gale moderated. With the exception of an anchor watch, we were able to snatch what sleep was left to us. Another grey, bitterly cold, day dawned. After the night's heavy snowfall, the schooner was a strange but beautiful sight. The glistening white coatings on spars, sails and rigging caused everything to assume massive proportions. The decks were covered by nearly a foot of snow. Our second day in the Roads was the peak of the spring tides. The mate called me on deck and pointed out the big pieces of ice floating past on the ebb. It must be breaking up at last. Log fenders, hatch boards, planks; all the timber we could lay our hands on was utilised to construct a stout barrier around the bows of the **Nellie Bywater** at water level, to protect her from the ice.

Shortly before half-flood, the cable was hove short. It required the help of the engine to break out the anchor from its stubborn hold on the ground. Off Mostyn we were boarded by the river pilot. "*You'll be the first ship up for several weeks, captain,*" he said, "*We must keep clear of the big floes. Tell the mate to warn me when he sees one ahead.*" The passage up river was an anxious time for us all, and the ice sliding along the vessel's sides made the most peculiar and alarming grinding sounds. We reached our destination, Summers' Jetty, without suffering damage beyond that of a badly scored waterline.

Our cargo of scrap was discharged with admirable speed. A powerful electro-magnet picked up great tangled masses of rusty metal in our hold and transferred them to the railway trucks on shore. The mate and I had to be constantly on the alert during working hours, as the stevedores had no regard for a wooden ship's coamings and decks. The discharge was complete in two days and I was greatly relieved when the last lift swung shorewards. Despite all the difficulties, we had just about broken even with the scrap cargo. Across the Dee, at Connah's Quay, a cargo of bricks, tiles and earthenware pipes awaited us for shipment to Belfast.

It was snowing again when we shifted the **Nellie Bywater** to her loading berth at the Quay. Formerly a busy and prosperous schooner port, Connah's Quay had declined until it was barely recognizable as a seaport. A handful of small coasters used it as a conveniently cheap loading point for the

products of the North Wales brickworks. Through neglect, the river front now possessed only a single berth suitable for this purpose, and this we occupied. We were all affected by the 'lost' appearance of the place. Except for a rusty little steam crane poking its jib into the leaden sky and a row of railway trucks containing our cargo which were nearly buried under drifting snow, we might easily have imagined that we were moored at some lonely stretch of river saltings.

I lost no time in calling on my agent at his office over a hardware shop in Connah's Quay's main street. He was very pessimistic about our prospects of loading. "*You've come at a bad time, Captain,*" he said, "*we've been at a standstill here for several weeks. We cannot get water for the crane - all the supply pipes are frozen. In any case, it's impossible to find labour for loading in this terrible weather.*"

"*Then I'll load with our motor winch and my own crew,*" I replied, determined not to be beaten. "*But why can't you arrange to fill the crane boiler from the river, just this once? The water is only brackish.*" My agent agreed to speak to the railway company and to do his best to find labour for the shore work. The following morning we began loading the **Nellie Bywater** using the steam crane and assisted by a full shore gang. The cargo stowage we did ourselves. It snowed almost continuously. The shore gang certainly earned their pay. They were just casual labourers, not dockers; many of them were old schoonermen.

In the hold we worked fast, trying to keep warm. As the trays of bricks were lowered through the open hatch, we built them up to the level of the keelson until the hold was bottomed out with bricks. On this solid foundation we stowed the roofing tiles on edge in rows. In two and a half days, with the bricks and tiles safely in the hold, there remained about 30 tons or so of earthenware pipes to load to complete our cargo. I was beginning to recover something of my cheerfulness and optimism. The arrival of the **Senorita** soon put an end to that. She was a little motorship of about 200 gross tons and owned locally.

My first intimation of trouble was a hail from the deck. Climbing out of the hold, I found the **Senorita's** owner awaiting me. "*My ship's just coming up the river, Captain,*" he said brusquely. "*As you know, a sailing ship has to take second place to a full powered motorship like my* **Senorita**. *Get your old windjammer moved out of the loading berth so that I can get my ship loaded in time on the next tide. I've been put to a great deal of expense in bringing her round light from Liverpool and I can't afford to allow you to hold me up.*"

The audacity of the speech and the manner of its delivery took my breath away. The unfair custom of giving precedence to steam and motorships had died with the advent of the auxiliary engine in schooners. Everywhere, the **Nellie Bywater** was allowed her fair turn. Quietly, I told my visitor: "*Sorry. I can't move yet. We shall be finished cargo by the end of the day, and I'll shift*

as soon as I can after that." We resumed work and finished the last of our cargo in the late afternoon.

The **Senorita** berthed ahead of us. Next day, at high water, her owner re-appeared on the quay. I heard him order Tom, the **Senorita's** master: "*Make a rope fast on that old schooner and tow her out of the way.*" Looking thoroughly uncomfortable, one of the motorship's crew climbed aboard the **Nellie Bywater** and secured a line to our windlass bitts, without any opposition on our part. I waited until the preparations for moving us were complete before speaking. Then I addressed the railway foreman, who was watching the proceedings: "*Will you witness what is happening, Mr Jones? I'll need your testimony when I claim for damage to my schooner. Nobody can move her for at least two tides more. She's drawing 10ft. 6in. and only floats in the bed she's made. There's a three foot bank right round her.*" The **Senorita's** owner ordered his captain to take the rope off the **Nellie Bywater.**

Immediately we had sufficient water, we vacated the loading berth. The **Senorita** was loaded with ample time to spare, and both ships lay ready for sea as soon as the tides would serve. "*Let them get away first, Colin,*" I told the mate, who was standing by the singled-up moorings. However, the even beat of the **Senorita's** motors changed to an unhealthy coughing, slowed and finally stopped. "*We'll do our best to reach Belfast before them, Colin,*" I said, humouring his mood and mindful of those disparanging remarks about our old windjammer. "*Stand by the motor. Are you ready, Pilot? Let-go everything.*" Connah's Quay receded astern. At the best speed obtainable from our little auxiliary, we dropped down river. Then the **Senorita** appeared round a bend astern of us, a bone in her teeth. Speedily she overhauled us and passed us as if we were anchored. The strong north-east wind which was blowing in the upper reaches of the Dee freshened to gale strength as we neared the sea. The only sensible thing to do was to remain in the shelter of the river. Using shore marks, the pilot found us a little hole off Mostyn with just sufficient water to float us at low tide. Here we anchored. Soon we sighted the **Senorita** returning up Wild Roads and she steamed straight into Mostyn.

It blew very hard until the next dawn, easing a little with the daylight. We were fairly comfortable in the hole. Any coasting skipper will appreciate my feelings; the impatience to be on the way countered by the natural caution necessary when in command. That afternoon the **Senorita** left Mostyn, passing very close to the **Nellie Bywater.** Twenty-four hours after the **Senorita's** departure, there was a lift in the heavy clouds to windward. The barometer had risen slightly and, although there was still a high wind, the wireless prophesied an improvement in the Irish Sea. "*Let's go, Colin!*" I said to the mate. Once committed, I was in a hurry. The sails were hoisted and set on the way to the sea under power. We had everything but the topsails set and drawing by the time the Point of Air was abeam.

For the first couple of hours, we had a lee from the land and the sea

was only moderate. Then we began to feel the full force of the big rollers caused by a week of gales. On a reach with her big spread of sail and the engine running to prevent drag from the screw, the **Nellie Bywater** staggered along in a welter of spray. Naturally enough, my thoughts turned to the **Senorita** and her probable whereabouts. I discussed the matter with Colin. "*The sea was much worse than this yesterday, and she didn't look like a good seaboat to me*," he said, "*I expect she's in Douglas.*" Langness light, on the Isle of Man, showed up very faintly at midnight. The log reading indicated that we were about ten miles off Langness Point. The schooner was sailing very fast on a course which should have given her a good offing round the Chickens' Rock. I told the boy to keep a sharp look-out for the Chickens' light and to call me when it was sighted. Some sixth sense warned me of danger and I went back on deck after only a few minutes below. "*Seen anything of the Chickens, yet, son?*" I asked, "*Where's Langness?*" "*I don't know, Sir*", he answered, "*It went out a few minutes ago.*" The obvious explanation for the light's eclipse was fog or snow over the land. Travelling at our present speed, I could not afford to take risks. "*Let her run off a couple of points, Colin, to due West,*" I ordered.

In a few minutes visibility was down to a hundred yards, despite the strong wind. We hauled down the jibs and then tackled the big mainsail. My uneasiness was increased by a change in the schooner's movements. She began to tumble about in the wildest manner. With great difficulty, the mainsail was half lowered but the wind held it stubbornly against the backstays so that we could not budge it.

I waited for one of the violent rolls to ease the strain on the sail. Gazing aloft, I suffered a severe shock. Seemingly right above our fore truck, there appeared a pale incandescence which remained visible for a few seconds and then vanished. After an interminable period, I saw it again. Automatically, I started counting the light's characteristic until it was identified, without any possible doubt, as the Chickens. Clawing my way to the wheelhouse, I yelled to the mate: "*The Chickens, Colin! We're on top of the Chickens! Head her as much as you can to the South.*" None of us will ever forget the next hour. Caught between the run of the heavy seas and the backwash from the Chicken Rock, the **Nellie Bywater** was tossed about like a chip of wood. The rattle and crash of the tiles in the hold could be heard even in that terrible din. The schooner yawed madly and the mate could not hold her. The partly lowered mainsail had to come down.

Inch by inch, the **Nellie Bywater** clawed round the base of the rock, under the great traversing beam of the lighthouse. The keepers were sounding the foghorn. In a curiously detached manner, I observed the vagaries of sound in fog. The reports came from every point of the compass with uncertain volume. At times there were distinct echoes.

With painful slowness, the bearing of the lantern altered. It was with

the most heartfelt relief that we gained a safe offing and steered a course for the lee of the Isle of Man. Headsails and main were hoisted and reset and over a comparatively smooth sea the **Nellie Bywater** thrashed her way up to the Copelands in fine style.

We docked in the Clarendon Dock, Belfast, on the evening tide. We looked for our rival, the **Senorita**, but she was not there and no news had been received of her whereabouts. The next morning, when we stripped the hatches, I expected to find a hold full of broken rubble. To my surprise, I found the cargo practically undamaged. Just after we had completed discharge, the Senorita arrived and berthed astern of us. After leaving Mostyn she had made for the Menai Straits to shelter from the worst of the gale. ■

Editor's Note:

A search of Lloyd's Register revealed no details of the ***Senorita*** *and so I wrote to Roy Fenton to see if he could shed any light on the coaster. Roy replied:*

"Thanks for the copy of Richard England's article and the mystery of the **Senorita**. I think he's 'protecting the guilty' by changing the name subtly. The description fits the little motor ships built for John Summers, which had names ending in -ITA, the survivors of which were sold in 1946/47 (they are listed in my *Cambrian Coasters*). Many were sold abroad, or to owners who were not based locally and were in different trades, such as salvors Risdon Beazley or Harkers of Knottingley. There was no **Senorita**, but it could just be the **Indorita** or **Fleurita** which were sold to Coppacks of Connahs Quay in 1946. This would fit in with her being owned locally, but I cannot see one of the Coppacks taking the heavy handed action described; they themselves had a long association with schooners and were likely agents for the **Nellie Bywater**. The only other possibility is the **Eldorita**, which was sold to Captain Hugh Shaw in 1946. However, she traded largely in the Bristol Channel, and I've met Hugh Shaw who is a gentleman to his fingertips and wouldn't take the action described. In any case, he didn't live locally and would have beem master himself. Most likely, it's either the **Fleurita** or the Indorita." *r.f.* ■

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE SOCIETY'S VICE-PRESIDENT

The Society's Vice-President, Ray Pugh, will be celebrating his 90th birthday on 19th December. Congratulations, Best Wishes, and Many Happy Returns !!!

THE LIVERPOOL MUSTER ROLLS

by Dr. D.J. Pope

Dr Pope visited the Society on 16th April 1998 and spoke on the conditions of seamen employed on Liverpool shipping in the last quarter of the 18th century as revealed by the contemporary muster rolls. In order that a more permanent record can be kept, Dr Pope kindly submitted the following paper for publication by the Society.

The surviving Liverpool Muster Rolls which cover the years 1772 - 1809 and 1812 - 1850, and which are housed in the Public Record Office (BT98/33-89 and 91-104), were compiled in accordance with the requirements of an Act of Parliament of 1747 (20 Geo II c 38) which amended earlier legislation concerning seamen's pensions. The Liverpool Rolls compiled in the 18th century comprise one of the few series which survive from that century, the only other ports for which they still exist from that time being Dartmouth from 1770, Plymouth from 1761, Scarborough for the period 1747-65 and Shields and 'other northern Ports' for the period 1747-50 and from 1768.

The Act of 1747 extended the system of seamen's pensions which had originated in 1695 with the establishment by Royal Bounty of Greenwich Hospital for seamen disabled whilst serving in the Royal Navy. By 1747 the scheme had been broadened to include merchant seamen disabled during service on armed merchantmen during wartime; in addition, by that date provision for those covered by the scheme, included the payment of a pension as an alternative to hospitalisation and the award of pensions to the widows and children of deceased seamen. Under the Act of 1747 these provisions were extended to include all merchant seamen who served on shipping which belonged to English and Welsh ports. Under legislation of 1696, reaffirmed in 1747, the scheme was financed by the deduction of 6d per month from the wages of all seamen, with the exception of apprentices, who served on British vessels, both merchant and naval. The 1747 Act made provision for the foundation of local seamen's hospitals to which local disabled seamen could be sent; it was as a result of this legislation that the Liverpool Seamen's Hospital was built in 1752.

The Act of 1747 obliged the masters or owners of merchant ships to keep 'a Book by way of Muster Roll; in which shall be entered his own Christian and Surname, and the Christian and Surnames of all the Officers, Seamen or other Persons employed in such Ship or Vessel, with the usual Place of their Abode when on Shore; and over and against each Name, the Time when and Place where such Seaman or other Person entered into the Service of such Ship or Vessel; and in what Ship or Vessel he performed his last Voyage.' Before a vessel's departure the keeper of the Muster Roll was to

deliver a duplicate copy to the Seamen's Fund Receiver at the port to which the vessel belonged. The keeper was to continue his own roll during the voyage, recording any discharges, desertions, new crew, injuries and deaths, and on his arrival at the vessel's port of ownership, he was to hand his completed roll together with the amount of the seamen's fund to the local Seamen's Fund Receiver. This duplicate roll was to be sent to the Governors of the Seamen's Fund in London, whilst a new copy was to be kept locally. The system of keeping muster rolls of the the type required by the 1747 Act continued until 1851 when the Seamen's Fund Winding-up Act made them obselete.

The Muster Rolls which are available in the Public Record Office appear to be either the duplicates which were sent to London or the copies of them kept locally. Each roll generally comprises, rather than a book, a printed form, on which are entered the requisite details, usually by a vessel's captain. At the head of each form the following information is given - the name of the port of ownership of the vessel, the date on which the form was completed and payment made, the name and often also the rig of the vessel, the name of its captain and the name of the place from which the vessel had arrived. Beneath this section of the form the details of the crew are provided in columns headed from left to right - 'men's names', 'place of abode', 'time when entered', 'time when discharged, run, slain, killed, drowned, hurt or wounded' and 'number of months and days on board' sub-divided into two columns headed 'M' and 'D'. At the foot of these last two columns the total number of months and days served by all the crew is recorded, with alongside these figures the total amount of money payable into the Seamen's Fund. Each form is signed by the person who completed it, and countersigned by the local Receiver of the Fund. Occasionally a form records the tonnage of a vessel. Each form is numbered in an annual series and bound with other forms into volumes which usually contain all the forms completed in a year, though occasionally for a different length of time.

Regarding the reliability and accuracy of the information contained in the Rolls, it is difficult within the confines of a relatively short article to detail the anomalies, ambiguities and other problems which emerge when studying the forms in detail. It does appear that the information is generally reliable. Evasion of payment was difficult, since a vessel could not be cleared inwards with the Customs until payment was made. Moreover, the local Receiver had a financial interest in ensuring payment since he was entitled to a commission, at Liverpool of 7½%, on the amount of money which he received. Whether captains falsified information on forms is difficult to assess, though it seems unlikely that any such practice was widespread. If a captain omitted from a form a number of crewmen he had taken on board in order to reduce payment to the Seamen's Fund, he was likely to arouse the suspicions of the Receiver, who would have a very good idea of the manning requirements of vessels of different sizes and employed in different trades. One historian of the 17th and

18th century English shipping industry, Ralph Davis, has noted that '*long before the end of the eighteenth century, the payment of the Greenwich Hospital sixpences had evidently come to be regarded as normal and inevitable. The standard reference book which they used,* Steel's Shipmaster's Assistant *(which went through dozens of editions after its first publication in 1787) always contained tables for calculating the "Greenwich Hospital Duty"* '. (Davis, 1956, p. 331).

Though the forms themselves appear to be reliable, at least in general terms, it is not possible to gain from the Muster Rolls a complete record of Liverpool vessels and their crews. Rolls frequently do not exist for vessels which were wrecked or captured in wartime - whether forms for such vessels survived appears to have been a matter of luck.

The information contained in the Muster Rolls can be analysed in a variety of ways. The present writer has extracted from the Liverpool Rolls extensive information for most of the years of the 18th and early 19th centuries for which they survive. The simplest way for present purposes to outline some of the results of this research and to indicate other uses of the information contained in the Muster rolls, is to work across the columns on the forms. As regards the information contained in the first column - men's names - it would be possible with a good deal of effort to trace the careers of individual seamen, although in many cases the duplication of common names would make this difficult, if not impossible. As well as the men's names, this column sometimes includes their positions on board ship such as first or second mate, surgeon, carpenter or cook, and thereby provides evidence of the manning of vessels (this additional information is sometimes contained in the second rather than the first column).

The second column - place of abode - is of limited value; most of the entries in this column are or appear to be Liverpool. Some of the entries clearly refer to the places at which crewmen were taken on board, rather than their places of abode. Many vessels in the Slave and West Indian trades took on crewmen whose places of abode are described as Africa or one of the West Indian islands. Most likely such crewmen had simply left other vessels, either through discharge or desertion, and taken passage home to England on different vessels. On some forms it appears that the captain has provided the name of a place of residence outside Liverpool which was in fact clearly such and even in a number of cases, given the distance of the places from Liverpool, what appears to be a place of birth rather than a place of residence. What emerges from such entries is their wide geographical distribution, throughout the British Isles, other parts of Europe and even further afield. However, the infrequency of such information makes a thorough and complete analysis of places of birth impossible.

From columns 3 and 4 - dates of entry and discharge - an indication of lengths of voyages in different trades can be calculated. The date of entry

appears generally to be the date of sailing, though there are exceptions but these can usually be identified. The following is a summary of the lengths of voyages of Liverpool vessels in different trades which commenced in 1775, 1780, 1788 and 1789 :

AVERAGE LENGTHS OF VOYAGES OF LIVERPOOL VESSELS WHICH SAILED FROM LIVERPOOL IN 1775, 1780, 1788 AND 1789 DISTINGUISHING THE AREAS TO WHICH THEY SAILED

	1775		1780		1788		1789	
	M	D	M	D	M	D	M	D
North Europe (from Flanders northwards)	4	25	6	13	4	7	3	11
South Europe (from France southwards)	4	6	4	18	4	2	3	29
Africa only	9	1	11	1	11	19	8	20
Africa and America (i.e. Slave Trade)	12	25	12	18	13	13	12	4
West Indies (excluding Jamaica)	6	26	7	13	6	3	6	17
Jamaica etc (including Honduras Bay)	9	14	9	12	8	7	8	16
North America	6	23	6	15	6	3	6	23
Whale Fisheries	5	18	5	14	5	17	4	23
Ireland and Isle of Man	2	23	3	20	3	7	2	7
Home Fisheries	5	0	7	21	4	18	3	28
Local Coastal (Wales and N W England)	2	11	2	13	1	26	2	9
Other Coastal	4	0	4	27	3	28	3	0
Cruise			7	1				

From the information contained in the fourth column of the forms it is possible to gain an indication of the fates of and problems faced by seamen. Usually captains recorded not only the dates when seamen left ships but the reasons for their departures, discharge, desertion, death etc. The following is an analysis of the information contained in these columns of the forms of vessels which sailed from Liverpool in the years 1775, 1780, 1788 and 1789:-

FATES OF CREWS EMPLOYED ON LIVERPOOL SHIPS 1775, 1780, 1788 AND 1789

	1775		1780		1788		1789	
	Nos	%age	Nos	%age	Nos	%age	Nos	%age
Crew taken on	5371		5460		7257		6156	
Discharged on voyage	680	12.7	458	8.4	616	8.5	620	10.1
Died	270	5.0	234	4.3	419	5.8	209	3.4
Drowned	34	0.6	54	1.0	46	0.6	49	0.8
Killed	3	0.1	24	0.4	12	0.2	9	0.1
Taken			249	4.6	1	0.0	7	0.1
Run	272	5.1	504	9.2	304	4.2	209	3.4
Impressed	21	0.4	347	6.4			102	1.7
Unspecified	130	2.4	239	4.4	66	0.9	65	1.1
Completed voyage*	3961	73.7	3351	61.4	5793	79.8	4886	79.4

*On same ship as that on which sailed.

Note. These statistics do not include seamen taken on after vessels left Liverpool but only crewmen taken on before vessels commenced their voyages.

Conditions appear to have been harshest in the tropical trades, especially the longer-distance tropical trades, most of the deaths and desertions occurring in these trades:-

NUMBER OF MEN WHO DIED ON VOYAGES OF LIVERPOOL VESSELS 1775, 1780, 1788 AND 1789 DISTINGUISHING THE NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE IN EACH TRADE

	1775		1780		1788		1789	
	Nos	%	Nos	%	Nos	%	Nos	%
North Europe			1	0.4	1	0.2	1	0.5
South Europe					1	0.2		
Africa only	9	3.3	33	14.1	18	4.3	1	0.5
Africa and America	224	83.0	134	57.3	376	89.7	191	91.4
West Indies (excluding Jamaica)	11	4.1	31	13.2	6	1.4	6	2.9
Jamaica etc	11	4.1	32	13.7	6	1.4	5	2.4
North America	11	4.1	1	0.4	3	0.7	4	1.9
Whale Fisheries	4	1.5	1	0.4	8	1.9	1	0.5
Ireland and Isle of Man								
Home Fisheries								
Local Coastal								
Other Coastal								
Cruise			1	0.4				
Total	270		234		419		209	

Note. These statistics do not include seamen taken on after vessels left Liverpool but only crewmen taken on before vessels commenced their voyages.

NUMBER OF MEN WHO RAN ON VOYAGES OF LIVERPOOL VESSELS 1775, 1780, 1788 AND 1789 DISTINGUISHING THE NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE IN EACH TRADE

	1775		1780		1788		1789	
	Nos	%	Nos	%	Nos	%	Nos	%
North Europe	3	1.1	1	0.2	4	1.3	4	1.9
South Europe	4	1.5	2	0.4	9	3.0	1	0.5
Africa only					3	1.0		
Africa and America	172	63.2	130	25.8	159	52.3	113	54.1
West Indies (excluding Jamaica)	27	9.9	93	18.5	15	4.9	17	8.1
Jamaica etc	28	10.3	166	32.9	91	29.9	40	19.1
North America	17	6.2	38	7.5	21	6.9	33	15.8
Whale Fisheries	11	4.0						
Ireland and Isle of Man					2	0.7		
Home Fisheries	4	1.5	1	0.2				
Local Coastal								
Other Coastal	6	2.2	2	0.4			1	0.5
Cruize			71	14.1				
Total	272		504		304		209	

Note. These statistics do not include seamen taken on after vessels left Liverpool but only crewmen taken on before vessels commenced their voyages.

As well as the above another - obvious - use of the muster rolls is to calculate the number of seamen employed in different trades and on different ships; used with other sources, such as the shipping registers, this and other information can be related to variables such as ship's tonnages, though space does not allow for detailed examples here.

NUMBER OF MEN EMPLOYED ON THE VESSELS WHICH SAILED FROM LIVERPOOL IN 1788 DISTINGUISHING THE NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE EMPLOYED IN EACH TRADE AREA

	Num-ber	%age of total
North Europe	960	13.2
South Europe	726	10.0
Africa only	61	0.8
Africa and America	1135	15.6
West Indies (excluding Jamaica)	998	13.8
Jamaica etc	623	8.6
North America	337	4.6
Whale Fisheries	634	8.7
Ireland and Isle of Man	735	10.1
Home Fisheries	38	0.5
Local Coastal	511	7.0
Other Coastal	499	6.9
Total	7257	

AVERAGE CREW SIZES OF LIVERPOOL VESSELS WHICH SAILED FROM LIVERPOOL IN 1775, 1780, 1788 AND 1789 DISTINGUISHING THE AREAS TO WHICH THEY SAILED

	1775	1780	1788	1789
North Europe	10.8	18.3	15.7	17.0
South Europe	7.7	9.6	7.5	8.3
Africa only	25.7	25.8	17.7	18.0
Africa and America	29.7	43.2	29.5	28.1
West Indies (excluding Jamaica)	13.7	37.4	15.0	15.7
Jamaica etc	18.5	48.8	18.0	15.5
North America	12.6	20.6	13.7	12.9
Whale Fisheries	40.9	44.2	47.3	48.0
Ireland and Isle of Man	5.1	4.2	4.8	5.4
Home Fisheries	11.0	4.5	4.4	3.7
Local Coastal	3.0	2.2	2.5	3.0
Other Coastal	8.2	9.5	7.2	7.9
Cruise		79.4		

Note. The higher manning levels in the Slave and other Transatlantic trades in 1780 are a reflection of the outfitting of many vessels in these trades as privateers and letters of marque during the American of Independence.

It is worth noting that for a study of Liverpool shipping in the period covered by the muster rolls, there are available for most of the period the statutory shipping registers, Lloyd's Register of Shipping and local newspapers which can be utilised alongside the muster rolls to provide a detailed picture of Liverpool shipping at this time. The present writer has been working on these and other sources for a number of years and hopes in the near future to publish further on the subject of eighteenth-century Liverpool shipping and trade.

For further information on the seamen's sixpences and the Muster Rolls the following are helpful:-

Stephen D. Behrendt, "The captains in the British slave trade from 1785 to 1807," *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, Vol. 140, 1990, pp. 79-140.

Nicholas Cox, "Sources for maritime history (II): the records of the Registrar-General of Ships and Seamen," *Maritime History*, Vol. 2, No. 2, Sept. 1972, pp. 168-88.

Ralph Davis, "Seamen's sixpences: an index of commercial activity, 1697-1828," *Economica*, New Series, Vol. XXIII, No. 92, Nov. 1956, pp. 328-43.

Ralph Davis, *The rise of the English shipping industry in the 17th and 18th century* (Newton Abbot 1962, new impression 1972).

A CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY

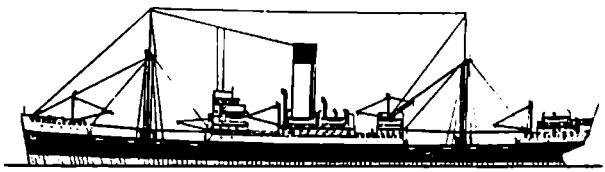
by Jim Cowden

The name **Troilus** first entered the Blue Funnel Line movement records at the start of the Great War when the Newcastle shipyard of Hawthorn Leslie delivered a fine steamer of some 7,572 gross tons, with registered dimensions of 444.02' x 56.03' x 32.00'. Propulsion was provided by a triple expansion engine built by the North Eastern Marine Engineering Company, and this gave the **Troilus** a modest speed of 11 knots.

The **Troilus** had barely made an appearance around the China coast before she was caught up in the hostilities. On 19th October 1914 the **Troilus** was about 25 hours out of Colombo with a general cargo (insured for £130,000), when she was confronted by the German cruiser **Emden** 170 miles to the east of Minicoy Island. The **Troilus** was captured and later sunk, and thus she had the ignominious fate of being the first of the Blue Funnel fleet to be lost during World War 1.

It was to be the Caledon yard at Dundee which delivered the **Troilus** (2) during 1917. This vessel had the misfortune to come within the sights of U-69 on 2nd May 1917 when some 140 miles WNW from Malin Head in position 56°16'N, 11°15'W, and the new ship was torpedoed and sunk.

Scotts of Greenock delivered **Troilus** (3) in 1921 and it is pleasing to note that she did manage to chalk up twenty years plus before her end came. On 1st September 1944 the **Troilus** (3) had reached position 14°10'N, 61°04'E, which put her about half way between Colombo and Suez. The **Troilus** was sailing independently, and had on board 18 passengers, 81 crew and a full cargo of coconut oil, tea and copra. One of the newer and much larger U-boats (U-859) was on patrol in the area and torpedoed the **Troilus**.



*The **Troilus** (3)*

It is coincidental that the **Troilus** (1) was the first Blue Funnel casualty in World War I, and the **Troilus** (3) was the last Blue Funnel casualty

of World War II.

As has been stated, the **Troilus** (3) was sunk on 1st September 1944, but eleven months earlier, in October 1943, the name **Troilus** had already been entered in a U-boat log as having been attacked and sunk.

When researching the Elder Dempster Fleet History with particular reference to the sinking of the **New Columbia** (Captain F. Kent) off the West Coast of Africa, I examined a number of survivors' reports, together with a section of the log book of U-68. This U-boat sighted the **New Columbia** on 31st October 1943 and successfully attacked her at 21.15 hrs. All the crew took to the lifeboats and got away from the sinking ship - no lives were lost.

Shortly afterwards a U-boat displaying the number 739 surfaced. (This was to confuse Allied shipping - this class of U-boat did not come into service until much later in the conflict). The U-boat hailed one of the **New Columbia's** lifeboats in charge of the Chief Officer, Mr W.E. Humphreys, and asked "*What Ship, Cargo, Where Bound?*" For reasons unknown (Mr Humphreys is now deceased), the reply was "*Troilus, bound Lagos with cotton*".

Thus it became 'a case of mistaken identity'. The **New Columbia** (recorded in the log of U-68 as the **Troilus**) sank at 22.00 hrs. The following morning a Sunderland flying-boat sighted the survivors and United Africa's **Conakrian** was diverted and took them all into Lagos. ■

THE TIME WHEN I HELPED TO CRASH m.v. DOLIUS

by Geoff Beech

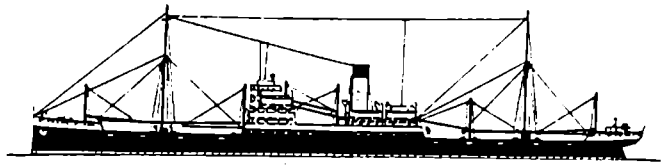
from 'The Blue Funnel Association Newsletter'

I joined Alfred Holt in the mid-summer of 1952 as a junior engineer and worked my first few weeks on the shore gang, eventually being assigned to the **Dolius** for coasting.

My last job before sailing had been to change bearings on a couple of main engine cam followers. The Second Engineer, exasperated about being lumbered with someone brand new (i.e me) instructed that, when the engine started, I was to pass emery cloth between cam and follower to ensure the follower didn't '*stick*' and thus wear a flat on it.

He emphasised, no matter what happened, I was to stick to my post and do just that.

A few minutes after '*stand-by*', the order came from the bridge '*slow ahead*'. The engines were started, and the usual controlled pandemonium ensued. I was experiencing this for the first time - engineers flying around



The Dolius (2)

shutting indicator cocks, sparks, smoke and a cacaphony of sound.

I just concentrated on passing emery paper between cam and follower.

Unbeknown to me, and quite incredibly, the engines were actually running astern. There must have been total consternation on the bridge and the telegraph became more and more strident.

The engineers tried to get more and more out of the engines but, unfortunately, in astern gear.

The poor old **Dolius** gathered way stern first across the dock. She struck the opposite dock wall with the starboard propeller shaft.

The force of the impact pushed the starboard shaft forward, shattered the thrust block, and pushing through the web of the crank on No.8 cylinder, the rotating throw struck it, pitching the entire 'A' frame over at an angle. There was a lot of heavyweight rending of metal.

I picked myself up off the catwalk and assured myself that this was probably the usual engine room carry-on, and continued to stand-by with my bit of emery paper.

It began to dawn on me, looking at the Second's stricken face, that he had stopped worrying about my cam follower bearings.

My first ever voyage to sea had lasted about twenty-five minutes!

We all had to attend the inquiry at India Building. I am not absolutely sure of the penalties handed out. I think it was something like Chief Engineer down to Second, Second down to Third etc. I wasn't demoted as I was already as far down as it was possible to go.

I heard a figure of £40,000 worth of damage caused, but the **Dolius** was scrapped as a result of the incident.

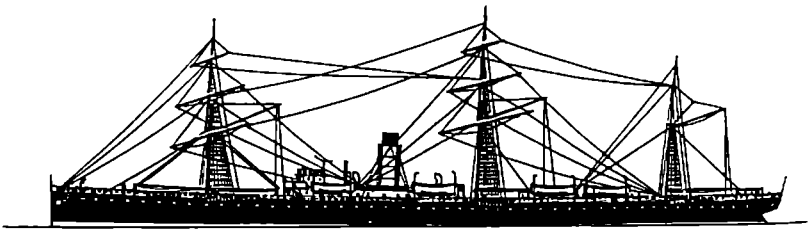
After this affair, all the ships in the Blue Funnel and Glen Line fleets were fitted with a mechanical interlocking device which prevented the engines operating in a direction contrary to that ordered by the telegraph.

Later on I was asked to make another voyage in the **Dolius** - to the scrap yard at Port Talbot. But that's another story ..... ■

No: 4 THE "*PARTHIA*" OF 1870

from Lloyd's Register, 1893:

PARTHIA Official Number: 63797 Signal Letters: W Q M N
Iron Screw Barque
Gross Tonnage: 3,167 Nett Tonnage: 2,035
Length: 360·5' Breadth: 40·4' Depth: 34·3'
Built by Denny & Bros. at Dumbarton in 1870
Owners: The Cunard Steamship Co.Ltd.



The Cunard liner **Parthia** was built by Wm. Denny & Brothers at Dumbarton in 1870, and lasted until 1956, when, as the **Straits Maru**, she was broken up at Osaka.

When the **Parthia** was built, the Cunard Line was in need of a new second-line fleet to meet increasing competition, and it placed orders for four iron screw steamers - two with Denny and two with J. & G. Thomson - which would be equally well suited to the intermediate New York and Boston services. With the **Parthia**, the Cunard Line tried the compound engine for the first time, and found her coal consumption of 44 tons a day very much less than in the other three which had simple engines. The introduction of the compound engine was one of the major turning points in the development of the liner, and led at once to the building of much larger ships. Fuel costs were reduced by about a half, with a corresponding reduction in bunker requirements, and a considerable increase in space available for freight. The **Parthia** was a straight-stemmed barque with a gross tonnage of 3,167, and her sea speed was 12 knots, although she averaged 13.2 on trials. The **Parthia** carried 150 'saloon' passengers, and 1,031 steerage passengers, while her deadweight capacity was 3,140 tons of which nearly 900 was for bunkers when she was fully coaled.

The **Parthia's** keel was laid on 2nd February 1870; she was launched on 10th September, and she sailed on her maiden voyage from Liverpool to

New York on 17th December. The ship was registered in the names of John Burns, John Clelland Burns and Charles MacIver. She cost £94,970 to build.

The **Parthia** ran on both the New York and the Boston services for 13 years, occasionally combining them by calling at Boston when homeward bound from New York, and although never a *flyer*, she was a comfortable and popular ship. In 1874 when leaving New York and steaming parallel to White Star's **Adriatic**, the two ships came too close to each other and the '*venturi*' effect pulled the ships together. The fluke of the **Parthia's** starboard anchor drove through the **Adriatic's** quarter near enough to the water line to make that ship return to New York for repairs.

In 1880 the **Parthia** twice appeared in the news. In March she encountered the 693-ton barque **Mary A. Marshall** of Middlesbrough, with a cargo of pig-iron for Baltimore, partly dismasted and waterlogged. The **Parthia** towed the barque for 36 hours before abandoning her in a sinking condition after taking off the crew. In November, she sighted the Liverpool barque **James Edwards** in a very bad way after losing her rudder in a gale, and the **Parthia's** third officer earned high praise for his boat work in rescuing the crew of 22. In 1881 the **Parthia** made a trooping voyage to Alexandria in connection with the relief of Khartoum, and in 1882 she grounded outside New York whilst avoiding a collision with the C.G.T. liner **St. Germain**. The **Parthia's** 119th and final Cunard voyage was completed in December 1883 after making a run of 9 days 18 hours from Boston to Queenstown. She was then laid up in the Mersey.

As part payment for the record-breakers **Umbria** and **Etruria**, the **Parthia** was transferred in 1884 to Elder's Fairfield Yard whose enterprising chairman Sir William Pearce, Bart, M.P., immediately set about giving her a new lease of life. His original plan was to operate her on a passenger and cattle service between Canada and Glasgow under the management of the Guion Line. The **Parthia** was given new boilers of 150lb pressure instead of the original 60, and a triple-expansion engine. This reduced her daily coal consumption, which had been 47 tons at the end of her Cunard career, to 25 tons.

As soon as the work was completed in the summer of 1885, the old **Parthia** was chartered as a troopship to Egypt in the tragic failure to save General Gordon, and towards the end of that year she undertook another charter taking passengers and cargo to Australia. After discharge she sailed from Sydney to New York, and then from New York to Yokohama via Suez. By that time the Canadian Pacific Railway was approaching Vancouver, and part of its plan was to establish a steamship service to the Far East. To test the market and start a connection, the railway company chartered the **Parthia** and two other ex-Cunarders, the **Batavia** and the **Abyssinia** in February 1887, and retained them until it had secured the mail and auxiliary cruiser subsidy agreement, and had built the three famous clipper-stemmed 'Empresses'.

The **Parthia** sailed for the Canadian Pacific until 1891 when on 20th August she left Vancouver on her 20th and last voyage in the C.P.R. service. She then reverted to the Guion Line, which had been her registered owner since 1889. The **Parthia** returned to the U.K. and was again in the hands of John Elder's Fairfield Yard for a refit and was named **Victoria**. In September 1892 the **Victoria** inaugurated a service between Vancouver, Victoria, Tacoma and the Far East under the flag of the Northern Pacific Steamship Company, operated by Didwell & Company, the well-known China merchants.

The **Victoria** was one of the British ships transferred to the American flag in 1898. During the Spanish - American War she carried troops between San Francisco and the Philippines under the ownership of the North American Mail Company of Tacoma. After the war she was on the trans-Pacific trade again for a short time, and then took gold-seekers and plant up to the Alaskan goldfields.

The year 1901 saw the **Victoria** revert to the North Pacific Steamship Company and three years later, in 1904, she again changed hands. She was sold to the North Western Steamship Company of Seattle for the Alaskan run. Four years later that company was absorbed by the Alaska Steamship Company, and the **Victoria** took up service on the San Francisco - Seattle - Nome (Alaska) service. In 1910 she survived a stranding on Hinchinbrook Island. During the First World War, the **Victoria** earned very large freights on the trans-Pacific run, and some of the profits were used to give her a thorough refit and modernising her accommodation. The work increased her gross tonnage to 3,817, and she then returned to the Alaskan run.

In 1924 the **Victoria** was converted to burn oil fuel. Whilst southbound in 1927 she blew off a cylinder cover and a U.S. Coast Guard cutter towed her into Akutan. The old ship was laid up from 1936 to 1939 due to the cost of meeting new U.S. fire and safety precautions, and she might well have gone to the scrappers then, but for the Second World War. In 1941 the **Victoria's** passenger accommodation was removed and she was operated until 1947 on the Alaska service with war supplies under the control of the War Shipping Administration. She was then returned to her owners who found that her 77-year old hull was still in remarkably good condition, although it was obviously extremely heavy by modern standards. Her 1885 engines and boilers were still standing up to their work.

November, 1950, was an auspicious month for the old ship for her original bell was presented to the Cunard Steamship Company and installed on its new vessel **Parthia**.

Some ships last for a long time, but none can last for ever. On 23rd August 1952 the **Victoria** was laid up at Houghton, Lake Washington, and in 1954 she was sold to the Dulien Steel Products Company, which at once made it clear that it intended to re-sell the vessel. She was quickly re-sold and purchased by the Straits Towage & Salvage Company and converted into a log

carrying barge. At this time the name was changed to **Straits No. 27**. Two years later, in 1956, the **Straits No. 27** was sold to Japanese shipbreakers and renamed **Straits Maru**. The tug **Sudbury** towed her across the Pacific to Osaka where she arrived for demolition on 16th October, 86 years old. ■

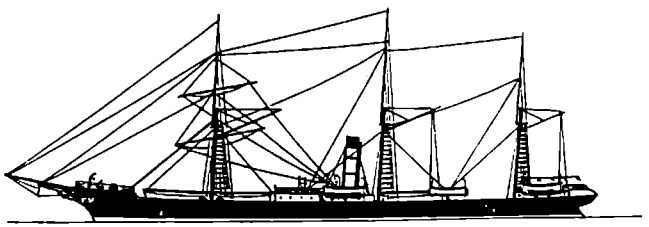
Editor's Note:

In discussing the **Parthia** and her extraordinary career, it is worth recalling that in 1954 on the banks of the River Plate, an old hulk or pontoon, that in its heyday had been the Cunard liner **Hecla**, was broken up at the age of 94!.

Her longevity was even greater than that of the **Parthia**, for she had been built in 1860 by Napier for the Mediterranean service with accommodation for 70 cabin and 800 third-class passengers. She was transferred to the Atlantic and made her first sailing from Liverpool to New York on 16th June 1863 and served the New York and Boston trade until 1881. In 1871 she was lengthened from 276' to 339', and her gross tonnage was thereby increased from 1,785 to 2,421. In 1882 the **Hecla** was sold to Gartland y Cia, Buenos Aires and renamed **Claris**, but does not appear to have been listed in Lloyd's Register of the day. Six years later she went under the Spanish flag as the **Conde de Vilana**, registered at Barcelona. Her next change of name and ownership took her back to Argentine registration, her new name being **Pedro Tercero**, and her owner once again P.A. Gartland. After about three years she was renamed **Tiempo** without any apparent change of ownership, and her last change of name came in 1899 when she became the **Rio Negro** on being purchased by the Argentine Government and for many years served as a pontoon.

However, the old **Parthia** spent more time in sea-going service as opposed to harbour work.

j.s.



The Hecla of 1860

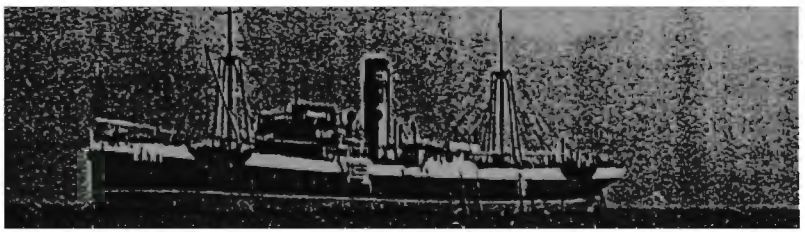
THE STRANDING AND SALVAGE OF THE GREEK FREIGHTER 'EMMY' OFF ABERSOCH, 1940.

by L.N.R.S. Member Ralph Tattersall

As a youngster I was living in Abersoch during the earlier years of World War Two, and 1940 passed for us as it did for much of the country with little happening, except for one interesting incident when a Greek ship called the **Emmy**, a freighter of 3,895 tons, suddenly appeared in St. Tudwal's Roads, Cardigan Bay, on 8th February, seemingly hard aground almost opposite the South Caernarvonshire Yacht Club.

The following facts were kindly provided to me by Stuart Jones, the company secretary of the Liverpool & Glasgow Salvage Association.

On 6th February 1940 his company was engaged by the Ministry of Transport to carry out the necessary rescue and salvage of the stricken freighter **Emmy**, inward bound from New York to Liverpool and stranded on St. Patrick's Causeway, Cardigan Bay. A Lt. Commander Smith was despatched to take charge of operations, and a coaster was immediately chartered which proceeded to the scene in case discharge of the **Emmy's** cargo should be necessary.



The 'Emmy' aground off Abersoch, February, 1940.

Commander Smith reported on 7th February that the Emmy had been abandoned by her crew who were, however, prepared to return, but the only conveyance was apparently the Aberdovey lifeboat which declined to proceed unless indemnified against all risks, and there was nobody on the spot who could give this indemnity. Commdr. Smith was at once authorised by the L. & G.S.A. to sign the indemnity and to proceed aboard with the crew immediately. He reported in the afternoon that the **Emmy** was lying in a very exposed position, but that the Admiralty tug **Superman** had arrived and had succeeded in swinging the bow round from approximately north-east to south-west.

The **Emmy** was found to be leaking in Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 tanks, and Nos. 1 and 2 holds. She was refloated on the evening high tide on 7th February without tug assistance, in a moderate north-westerly gale, and was taken into the shelter of St. Tudwal's Roads off Abersoch.

The L. & G. S. A. had meantime despatched from Liverpool three salvage pumps with heavy ground tackle, cargo discharging gear, and material for effecting temporary repairs, and personnel were diverted from the Association's Swansea base. The chartered coaster had arrived and on 10th February part of the cargo from No. 1 hold was transferred, and pumps were installed in No. 1 hold and in the forepeak. The **Emmy** was refloated on the morning of 12th February and anchored off in deeper water, but again beached on the morning of the 13th as the leakage was not under complete control and the divers were unable to work in the strong north-easterly winds. The balance of the cargo from No. 1 hold was now transferred into the coaster, thus permitting internal access to the source of the leakage.

On 20th February the **Emmy** was refloated and taken to an anchorage where the fracture in way of the forepeak was wedged by a diver. She was still drawing two feet by the head after 195 tons of her total cargo of 6,500 tons had been transferred, and further transfer of cargo proceeded with a view to correcting the trim and sailing for Liverpool.

Naturally, I had been very excited and intrigued by the activity going on around the **Emmy**, and the gossip was put around that she had been torpedoed and afterwards beached to avoid her sinking. As an imaginative twelve-year-old I was only too willing to accept this story. It was almost sixty years before I found out the disappointing (*to me!*) truth - the grounding appeared to have been the result of navigational error, probably due to wartime restrictions on the coastal navigation lights.

Of one thing I am sure: the tobacco leaf which made up part of the cargo in No. 1 hold never found its way anywhere except ashore, helped by some of the locals who had been co-opted to help transfer this desirable cargo into the coaster! I had struck up quite a friendship with Commdr. Smith, and, seeing that I was fascinated by the salvage efforts, he took me on board the **Emmy** to watch the activity.

Commdr. Smith apparently left the Liverpool & Glasgow Salvage Association some time in the 1950s to take over the family optical glass business in the West Midlands, and died about twelve years ago.

The **Emmy** was the *ex* **Triopinar**, *ex* **Wolverton**, and had been built in 1914 by Sir Raylton Dixon & Co. at Middlesbrough, her dimensions being 372·5′ x 52·3′ x 23·9′. She had a three cylinder steam engine by Clark of Sunderland. At the time of her stranding, the **Emmy** was owned by A. Vergottis of London, and her port of registry was Argostoli. ■

THE BOWDLER CHAFFER YARD AT SEACOMBE

Captain John Landels, the Custodian for the Shipbuilding Records of the World Ship Society, has written to the Society for assistance with the Yard Numbers of vessels built at Bowdler Chaffer's Seacombe Shipyard. Some of the Yard Numbers do appear in Liverpool Underwriters and in Lloyd's Register (Shipyard Lists), but Captain Landels is in some doubt as to their authenticity as so few are given.

Can we help? Printed below is a list of the 126 vessels built at Seacombe with the yard numbers where known. If any L.N.R.S. Members can add to the list or correct it, please write to the Editor who will pass the information on to Captain Landels.

A full account of Seacombe Shipbuilding Yards by John S. Rees and E. Cuthbert Woods was included in the Liverpool Nautical Research Society's 'Transactions' Volume IX 1955-61 published in April, 1963.

BOWDLER CHAFFER & Co., Seacombe, Birkenhead

Founded in 1864 by John G. Bowdler and Richard Chaffer. A strike in 1876 forced the temporary closure of the yard with three ships on the stocks. These were completed in 1877 and the yard was finally closed down.
The first three ships were paddle steamers for blockade running sub contracted from Jones Quiggan & Co., Liverpool. This was the main reason for establishing the yard.

Y.N.	Name	Launch	Compld	grt	M	P	T	Original Owners	
1	Stag	01.08.64	1864	465	S	ps		R.Phillips, Liverpool	Blockade Runner
2	Secret	05.10.64	1864	467	S	ps		J.N.Beach, Liverpool	Blockade Runner
3	Swan	17.12.64	1865	470	S	ps		R. Phillips, Liverpool	Blockade Runner
4	Oruro	23.07.64	1864	499	I	sv	Bk	J.B.Walmsley & Co., Liverpool	
	South End		1864	255	I	Landing Stage for Wallasey Local Board of Health			
	Jane Bacon	28.02.65	1865	674	I	ss	C	John Bacon, Liverpool	
	Dione	23.02.65	1865	38	I		Y	Sir J. Ramsden, Barrow	
	Kirkless	12.04.65	1865	375	I	ss	C	Kirkless Hall S.N.Co.Ltd., Liverpool	
	Campeador		1865	293	I	ss	C	J. Anan, Cadiz	
	Amacree			399	I	sv	Bk	(Steamer conversion ex s.s. Roscommon)	
	Swansea	27.07.65	1865	309	I	ss	C	John Bacon, Liverpool	
	Agnes Jack	07.11.65	1865	574	I	ss	C	John Bacon, Liverpool	
14	Alfredo	23.09.65	1865	396	I	sv	Bk	Hawkes Albuzuri & Co., Liverpool	
15	Margaret Longton	09.09.65	1865	458	I	sv	Bk	J. Longton Jnr & Co., Liverpool	
	Bell Hill	01.01.66	1866	500	I	sv	Bk	J.B.Walmsley & Co., Liverpool	
	West of England	30.04.66	1866	609	I	ss	P	Pennington & Hough, Liverpool	
	Jessie Forrest	– .05.66	1866	134	I	sv	Sch	J. Forrest, Liverpool	
	Colchagua	09.08.66	1866	597	I	sv	Bk	Joseph .Steel & Son, Liverpool	
	Lindsay	09.09.66	1866	746	I	ss	C	Alfred Hewlett, Liverpool	
	Globe	20.04.67	1867	736	I	sv	S	W.J.Myers, Sons & Co., Liverpool	
	Sarah Jane	13.06.67	1867	143	I	sv	Sch	W Burnyeat & Co., Whitehaven	
	Rivulet	13.06.67	1867	146	I	sv	Sch	F. & J. Margrove, Liverpool	
	Bristol	22.06.67	1867	576	I	ss	C	John Bacon, Liverpool	
	Lampo	– .07.67	1867	159	I	sv	Sch	Woodhouse & Co., Liverpool	
25	Lancaster	18.09.67	1867	767	I	ss	C	Wigan Coal & Iron Co., Liverpool	
	Cambrian	29.08.67	1867	620	I	sv	S	J.B.Walmsley & Co., Liverpool	
	Mira Flores	– .08.67	1867	500	I	sv	Bk	William Nicol, Liverpool	
	Valdivia	– .10.67	1867	133	I	sv	Sch	R. Brownell, Liverpool	

	Mayflower	31.09.67	1867	53	I	ps	P	Thomas Butler, Liverpool
	Henry E Taylor		1868	129	I	ss	C	Aberystwyth & Cardigan Bay S.P.Co.Ltd.
	Zadok	12.03.68	1868	620	I	sv	Bk	Glynn & Son, Liverpool
	Alcatraz	09.05.68	1868	843	I	sv	S	W. J. Myers, Sons & Co., Liverpool
	Dalton	25.06.68	1868	572	I	sv	Bk	Joseph Steel & Son, Liverpool
	Nereus	– .09.68	1868	1068	I	sv	S	W. J. Myers, Sons & Co., Liverpool
	Zoulla	– .08.68	1868	706	I	ss	C	Glynn & Son, Liverpool
37	Thames	09.04.68	1868	125	I	ps		London North Western Railway Co., London
38	Severn	09.04.68	1868	125	I	ps		London North Western Railway Co., London
39	Mersey	– .04.68	1868	125	I	ps		London North Western Railway Co., London
	Scythia	03.11.68	1868	886	I	sv	S	William Nicol, Liverpool
	Blanche & Louise	05.12.68	1868	581	I	sv	Bk	A.Dom Bordes, Bordeaux
	Cape Clear	27.03.69	1869	853	I	sv	Bk	W.J.Myers, Sons & Co., Liverpool
	Sorata	– .04.69	1869	786	I	sv	S	J.B. Walmsley & Co., Liverpool
	Vancouver	– .06.69	1869	1053	I	sv	Bk	W.J.Myers, Sons & Co., Liverpool
45	Kirkwood	27.02.69	1869	1324	I	sv	S	Joseph Steel & Son, Liverpool
	Fanny	19.04.69	1869	91	I	ss		Isaac Zagnay
	Moratin Nivar	12.06.69	1869	651	I	ss	C	Serapio Acebal & Co., Gijon
	Seymour		1869	110	I	ps	P	Wallasey Local Board
	Calderon	07.08.69	1869	608	I	ss	C	Serapio Acebal & Co., Gijon
	Van Diemen	– .09.69	1869	1107	I	sv	Bk	W.J.Myers, Sons & Co., Liverpool
	Gongora	– .11.69	1869	613	I	ss	C	Serapio Acebal & Co., Gijon
	Limari	– .12.69	1870	967	I	ss	C	Valparaiso S.S.Co., Valparaiso
	Carpio	29.01.70	1870	655	I	ss	C	Serapio Acebal & Co., Gijon
55	Zakynthos	25.09.69	1869	759	I	ss	C	Glynn & Son, Liverpool
	Molina		1870	655	I	ss	C	Jose Roca y Cia., Barcelona
	Valdez		1870	655	I	ss	C	Miguel Saenz y Cia., Seville
60	Leeming	02.04.70	1870	810	I	ss	C	Strong, Reid & Page, Liverpool
61	Winsloe	14.05.70	1870	887	I	ss	C	Strong, Reid & Page, Liverpool
	Spindrift	28.05.70	1870	219	I	sv	Bn	
63	Zaripha	04.06.70	1870	883	I	ss	C	Glynn & Son, Liverpool
64	Copiapo	31.08.70	1870	1337	I	ss	C	G.W.Wood, Liverpool
	Rio Formoso		1870	164	I	ss	C	G.F.Fisher, Manchester
	Gravina	24.09.70	1870	950	I	ss	C	Serapio Acebal y Cia, Gijon
	Velazquez	12.11.70	1870		I	ss		
68	Churruca	10.12.70	1871	905	I	ss	C	Serapio Acebal y Cia., Gijon
69	Taboguilla	– .02.71	1871	154	I	ss	tender	Pacific S.N.Co., Liverpool
70	Zanoni	06.04.71	1871	670	I	ss	C	Glynn & Son, Liverpool
71	Zelini	– .04.71	1871	671	I	ss	C	Glynn & Son, Liverpool
72	Zembra	22.05.71	1871	669	I	ss	C	Glynn & Son, Liverpool
73	Sirex	07.05.71	1871	60	I	sv	Y	Sir H.H.Bacon, Liverpool
74	West	22.07.71	1871	603	I	ss	C	Mersey S.S.Co. (Forward Paton & Co.), Liverpool
75	Tinto	20.05.71	1871	872	I	ss	C	Strong, Reid & Page, Liverpool
76	Syringa	19.07.71	1871	242	I	sv	Bn	Holden Gann & Co., Faversham
	Amelia	01.07.71	1871	935	I	ss	C	Strong, Reid & Page, Liverpool
	Bacchante	– .08.71	1871	65	I	sv	Y	F.W.Woodhouse, Marsala
80	Colon	30.09.71	1871	742	I	ss	C	Serapio Acebal y Cia., Gijon
81	Student	31.10.71	1871	727	I	ss	C	T. & J. Harrison, Liverpool
82	Jurist	28.11.71	1872	726	I	ss	C	T. & J. Harrison, Liverpool
83	Zancla	16.12.71	1872	1089	I	ss	C	Glynn & Son, Liverpool
	Rivera	14.10.71	1871	742	I	ss	C	Jose Roca Y Cia., Barcelona
85	Cid	20.08.72	1872	1700	I	ss	C	Serapio Acebal y Cia., Gijon

	Mercury	24.02.72	1872	303	I	ss	C	Ocean S.S.Co.(Alfred Holt), Liverpool
87	Modwena	06.06.72	1872	227	C	sv	Y	J. & F. Gretion of Burton on Trent
88	Mino	25.05.72	1872	735	I	ss	C	Strong, Reid & Page, Liverpool
	Moratin	20.07.72	1872					
	r/n Juan Cunningham			744	I	ss	C	Scrapio Aceball y Cia., Gijon
	Miguel Saenz	07.09.72	1872	789	I	ss	C	Miguel Saenz y Cia., Seville
	Moratin	03.12.72	1872	744	I	ss	C	Scrapio Aceball y Cia., Gijon
92	Pelayo	19.10.72	1872	1738	I	ss	C	W. Nelson (G.MacAndrew) London
93	Ponce	16.11.72	1872	796	I	ss	C	F.A.de Albizuri, Bilbao
94	Dante	15.02.73	1873	931	I	ss	C	G. MacAndrew, London
95	Petrarch	– .03.73	1873	931	I	ss	C	G. MacAndrew, London
96	Tacna	26.04.73	1873	613	C	ss	C	Pacific S.N.Co., Liverpool
97	Zorilla	12.08.73	1873	1417	I	ss	C	Glynn & Son, Liverpool
98	Zelda	08.10.73	1873	1412	I	ss	C	Glynn & Son, Liverpool
100	Hochung	08.11.73	1873	1130	I	ss	C	W.Keswick (Jardine Matheson), Hong Kong
101	Sunbeam	20.01.74	1874	334	C	ss	Y	Lord Brassey, London
102	Culmore	06.12.73	1874	540	I	ss	C	R.T.Smyth & Co., Liverpool
103	Prado	21.03.74	1874	1014	I	ss	C	Strong Reid & Page, Liverpool
104	Gowy	– .02.74	1874	178	I	np	b	W. Battersby, Liverpool
105	Forth	– .02.74	1874	178	I	np	b	W. Battersby, Liverpool
106	Juno	25.11.74	1874	1513	I	sv	S	Joseph Steel & Son, Liverpool
107	Ballina	17.06.74	1874	265	I	ss	C	C.W.Pollexfen, Liverpool
108	Carmania	16.06.74	1874	729	I	sv	Bk	William Nicol, Liverpool
109	Cyprian	21.09.74	1874	1410	I	ss	C	F. Leyland & Co. Ltd., Liverpool
110	Cyrenian	26.09.74	1874	1408	I	ss	C	F. Leyland & Co. Ltd., Liverpool
111	Cyrene	09.02.75	1875	1058	I	ss	C	Corinthian S.S.Co.Ltd. (R.Nicholson), Liverpool
112	Zante	08.05.75	1875	1574	I	ss	C	Glynn & Son, Liverpool
113	Zeal	04.08.75	1875	1574	I	ss	C	Glynn & Son, Liverpool
114	Cross Hill	06.07.75	1875	1069	I	sv	S	Mayton, Simpson, Liverpool
115	Lord Clive	01.09.75	1875	120	I	ps	tg	Shropshire Union Rly & Canal Co., Chester
116	Luso	02.10.75	1875	999	I	ss	C	Empriza Insulana di Nav., Azores
117	Corso	– .03.76	1876	1106	I	ss	C	Strong Reid & Page, Liverpool
118	Vigilant	25.04.76	1876	269	I	ps	tg	Mersey Docks & Harbour Board, Liverpool
	Tagus	23.09.76	1876	694	I	ss	C	F. Leyland & Co. Ltd., Liverpool
120	Naiad	11.05.76	1876	1076	I	sv	S	J.B.Walmsley & Co., Liverpool
121	Corby	18.10.76	1876	1458	I	sv	S	R. Nicholson & Sons, Liverpool
122	Pleiad	07.09.76	1876	645	I	sv	Bk	James Newton, Liverpool
123	Algerian	04.11.76	1876	1728	I	ss	C	F. Leyland & Co. Ltd., Liverpool
124	Alsatian	– .03.77	1877	1732	I	ss	C	F. Leyland & Co. Ltd., Liverpool
125	Andalusian	14.07.77	1877	1774	I	ss	C	F. Leyland & Co. Ltd., Liverpool
126	Anatolian	08.10.77	1877	1774	I	ss	C	F. Leyland & Co. Ltd., Liverpool

N.B. Doubt exists with regard to the yard numbers and they should be accepted with a degree of caution.

ICE AHOY

by Charles Dawson

Charles Dawson is well known to readers of 'The Bulletin'. Charles lives in Sundbyberg, Sweden, and apart from contributing regularly to the L.N.R.S. 'Bulletin', he writes for 'Longitude' in Sweden, and 'Compass' and 'American Neptune' in the United States. Readers of 'Ships in Focus Record #6' will remember Charles' article on the ***Lancing****, the steamer that became one of the fastest sailers; and in February and August 1998 Charles had articles published in the 'Mariner's Mirror' on two early steamers - the ps* ***Defiance*** *which was the first steamer in Holland, and the Belgian-built ps* ***James Watt****, both of which seem to have baffled previous researchers.*

Icebergs were for a long time a deadly hazard at sea. A really efficient patrol system to help counteract the menace was not devised until after the Titanic disaster of 1912.

The idea of actually exploiting icebergs is more recent. During the Second World War, man-made versions reinforced with wood-chips were proposed by the inventor Geoffrey Nathaniel Pyke for use as aircraft carriers, and Lord Louis Mountbatten and Winston Churchill were very enthusiastic about the idea.

Every now and again, mammoth icebergs release themselves in Antarctica. It is difficult to imagine the immense size that these can reach. The Albion Line's sailing ship **Margaret Galbraith** of Glasgow in 1893 reported encountering one 50 miles long and 1,000 feet high. Calculations show that such monsters contain enough fresh-water to supply large cities for many years. Serious articles have been written and conferences held, so that some day we may see giant icebergs sailing northwards literally as gigantic computer-controlled ice-barques.

Ice as a food preservative has a long history. Even the deep-frozen fish trade has antecedents further back than probably many are aware of. One of its earliest forerunners was set up by an enterprising Scottish merchant, George Dempster (1732-1818) who, after retiring from Parliament in 1790, turned his attention to Scottish agriculture and fisheries. He promoted the formation of a society for the extension and protection of the Scottish fisheries. The society built harbours, quays and storehouses and everything was set for a bright future when war broke out with France and the plans were ruined.

Dempster's innovation that fortunately did outlive him was the art of packing fresh Tay salmon in ice for transport by specially built craft, with an eye mainly on the London market. It is hard to imagine in our pollution-ravaged times that there was then such a surplus of this fish that servants had written into their contracts that they were not to have it at mealtimes more

than twice a week. Today, little seems to be remembered about Dempster's activities; perhaps they came to be overshadowed by the enterprise of a young American merchant Frederick Tudor (1783-1864) who in 1806 inaugurated the export of ice, cut from frozen New England lakes, as a commodity in itself. Against all advice and odds, he sent his first shipment of 130 tons from Boston to Martinique in the brig **Favorite** with the surprising aim of promoting the ice-cream trade in the tropics.

Despite resounding initial losses, not surprisingly due to the melting of the ice on its long voyage south to the customer, Tudor persevered and carried out development work to improve his insulation materials. He even tried coal-dust but finally concluded that white pine sawdust was the best of all. Ironically, Lloyds came to classify '*freezers*', as they were nicknamed, as special fire-risks because it was found that the sawdust, which inevitably became damp, could easily self-ignite.

Tudor's patient efforts nevertheless eventually paid off and after a few years he was able to break even and subsequently to enter new markets. In 1810 he obtained a six-year contract with Cuba, but the trade was somewhat disturbed by the 1812 war with Britain, whose ubiquitous cruisers were always on the lookout for likely prizes to take in West Indian waters. After the peace, trade picked up quickly and the licence was renewed. He then began to add ports in the south-east of the United States to his markets: Charleston in 1817, Savannah in 1818 and New Orleans in 1820.

In 1825 Tudor took on a partner, Nathaniel J. Wyeth (1802-1856) who contributed so much more to business efficiency that they were able to increase profits despite their decision to continually reduce prices to stave off competition. For example, the Charleston ice price in 1817 had been 8·33 cents per pound, but by 1834 it was as low as 1·33 cents per pound.

Wyeth left the business in 1832, lured by '*the call of the wild*'. His efforts to open up Oregon helped to curtail the inroads of the Hudson's Bay Company and led eventually to the Oregon Treaty made with Britain in 1846, by which the territory finally came under the U.S. flag.

In 1833, Tudor extended his service to India when his ship the **Tuscany** loaded 180 tons of ice for Calcutta. Despite its having melted down to 100 tons on arrival, the remainder was sold at a substantial profit.

By 1836, total annual shipments had reached 12,000 tons, and by 1856, 146,000 tons. Tudor had built up such a demand for ice that there was still ample room for the competition, although a new unwelcome threat had appeared in 1850 when the American-Russian Commercial Co. began shipping ice from Alaska. It later broke into the market created by the gold rush to California, sending its first cargo there by the vessel **Consort** in 1853.

In Europe, British trawling-smacks started freezing their cargo with Norwegian ice. To increase efficiency, the Norwegians built chutes down which they could run the blocks of ice from source direct to the loading berths. As

soon as the waiting ships were full, the runways were diverted into heavy well-insulated wooden warehouses, in which the ice could be stored efficiently for several months. As a result, British trawlers were able to begin fishing further away from their usual home grounds. The era of over-fishing had begun.

Tudor died in 1864, but for another decade and a half, until practical ice-making machinery had been successfully developed, the ice-trade was a mainstay of the New England economy. Thanks mainly to the painstaking pioneering work and perseverence of Frederick Tudor, an industry had been created which gave employment to hundreds of men in the harvesting, storing and handling of what had once been a wintertime liability. Even more important, perhaps, was that the ice-trade began just in time to play a significant rôle in saving New England's declining maritime commerce from ruin.

Eighteen years after Tudor's death, the story of ice came back full circle to George Dempster's country, Scotland. In 1882, due to the pioneering efforts of another Scot, William Soltan Davison (1846-1924), the firm of Bell-Coleman of Glasgow had at last perfected the apparatus whereby a ship could be equipped with its own installation for carrying frozen cargoes. '*The Times*' of London carried a leader on 27th May 1882, in which was stated in the elegant language of the period: "*Today we have to record such a triumph over physical difficulties as would have been incredible, and even unimaginable, a very few years ago .....* " It was announcing the arrival from New Zealand of the first full refrigerated cargo - 5,000 carcasses of frozen lamb - in the iron sailing ship **Dunedin** of the Glasgow-based Albion Line, whose **Margaret Galbraith had** reported the monster iceberg in 1893. The **Dunedin** had completed her pioneering voyage in a very respectable 98 days to open yet another new era in the benefits which ice can bestow on mankind. ■

GIANT ICEBERG SETS SAIL FROM THE ANTARCTIC

On 14th October 1998 it was reported that an iceberg twelve times the size of the Isle of Wight had broken off the Antarctic ice shelf. The British Antarctic Survey identified the slab of ice, which measures 94 miles by 19 miles, from an image taken by an American weather satellite. The iceberg, which has broken off the Ronne ice shelf in the Weddell Sea, is four times the size of the last large iceberg to 'calve' in the region.

Since the 1970s, scientists have been able to estimate the area covered by ice each year by studying satellite photographs. There have been dramatic alterations on the iceline: 500 square miles of ice snapped off and floated north from the Larsen shelf in 1996, and in 1995 an iceberg the size of Oxfordshire calved from the Antarctic peninsula.

Scientists disagree about whether this is really a sign of global warming, or simply part of a natural cycle. ■

REPORT ON MEETING

"FROM ST. TUDNO TO MERSEY VIKING"

by Malcolm McRonald - Thurs. 15 Oct. 1998

The Society's Vice-Chairman Mike Jones introduced Malcolm McRonald to an extremely well-attended meeting. Malcolm is a Council member of the Coastal Cruising Association and is Treasurer of the Merseyside Friends of the Ferries.

Malcolm had over two hundred slides to show and so progress was swift. He commenced with the old North Wales favourites **St.Tudno** and **St. Trillo**. The hovercraft which operated the world's first commercial hovercraft service service between Moreton Shore and Rhyl in 1962 was seen, and then it was on to the Scilly Isles vessel **Queen of the Isles** which the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board chartered for occasional cruises following the demise of the **Galatea**.

The Isle of Man steamers featured strongly. The centenary steamer **Lady of Mann** was seen at Llandudno, and the 1946-built **King Orry** making her final passenger sailings from Llandudno Pier. Various views of the other five vessels of the **King Orry** class were shown, followed by the four side-loading car-ferries, the **Lady of Mann** of 1976 being still in service today. Townsend's **Free Enterprise III** which became the Steam Packet's inadequate **Mona's Isle** of 1985 featured next, and then the **Channel Entente** which became the **King Orry** (of 1990) and which coincidentally was sold to Italian buyers on the day of Malcolm's talk. There were shots of **SeaCat Isle of Man** and finally the new **Ben-my-Chree** of 1998.

Moving on to the Irish ferries, the majestic **Ulster Monarch** (1929) and **Ulster Prince** (*ex* **Leinster** of 1938) were seen in early morning light. Malcolm explained that these were 'overnight' vessels, and photographing them in daylight was extremely difficult. The North of Scotland Company's **St. Clair** was seen on relief duty on the Belfast run.

The B. & I. Line's **Munster** of 1948 and her sister the **Leinster** featured with their green hulls, and then the Coast Lines' relief vessels **Irish Coast** (which became the **Apollon XI**), followed by the **Scottish Coast** (which became the **Galaxias** and is still operational today). The first generation of Dublin car-ferries, the **Munster** and **Leinster** came next, and then the **St. Colum I** which appeared on the Belfast route after P. & O. abandoned the service. Finally we saw Norse Irish Ferries' brand-new **Mersey Viking**, one of two sister vessels maintaining the Liverpool to Belfast service today.

All Members present thoroughly enjoyed Malcolm's superbly photographed and often nostalgic slides, and the Vice-Chairman extended him a warm invitation to return again and show us some more of his collection. ■

READERS' LETTERS

from L.N.R.S. Member Anthony J. Higgins of Hatherleigh, Devon.

I was intrigued by the article '*Research into the Marlborough Mystery*' ("*The Bulletin*", Autumn, 1998) it being evident, from the content of the article, that Captain G. Hadrup's story of finding and boarding the wreck of the **Marlborough** was a fabrication. It could very well be that the story, as published in December 1904, was the work of an over-zealous and highly imaginative reporter in need of some ready cash.

Still, the name G. Hadrup deserves a couple of coats of 'looking-at'. I wonder did Forbes Eadie consult records at the Kew P.R.O.?

There is an excellent book published by The Society of Genealogists entitled '*My Ancestor was a Merchant Seaman*' (ISBN 0 901878 73 1) which explains in detail, on pages 27, 28 and 29, how to trace a Master or Mate who held certificates, the registration of which was complusory from 1850 to the present day. ■

IN HONOUR OF SEAFARERS WHO LOST THEIR LIVES

Hundreds of veterans from all over the country gathered in Liverpool on Friday 30th October to witness the unveiling of a memorial to commemorate seafarers who lost their lives in two world wars.

Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott visited the Pier Head to unveil the memorial built as a tribute to those who served under the Red Ensign, and to the thousands who sacrificed their lives for Britain. More than 35,000 men and women from the Merchant Service died in World War II alone.

The sand-coloured memorial is situated by the Mersey in front of the Port of Liverpool Building. It cost £40,000 which was largely met by an anonymous donation of £32,000, with the rest raised by the Liverpool Retired Merchant Seafarers organisation.

The dedication service was led by the four Port Chaplains representing the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Free Churches. The merchant seafarers were the forgotten heroes of the war who suffered far higher casualties in percentage terms than the combined services. More than 190,000 men and women sailed on the merchant ships and around 20,000 were from Liverpool. More than 630 ships never returned to the Mersey, and some 5,000 seafarers from the city lost their lives. ■

CHASE ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

by Terry Kavanagh

This 'Chase Across the Atlantic' was reported in the *Chester Chronicle* of 2nd October 1835, and may be of interest to Members, especially ex-pilots:

"*A New York pilot boat arrived in the Mersey on Saturday 26th September* [1835], *having sailed from that city on 3rd August. She attracted amongst the people of Liverpool considerable curiosity, not only from the fact of so small a craft having traversed the Atlantic with safety, but also on account of the object for which she has visited the port. This pilot boat was engaged at New York for the sum of three thousand dollars to follow the New York packet ship* **Caledonia**, *in order to arrest a Mr Bowen, who had made his escape on board of the latter. The* **Caledonia** *sailed on the 1st August from New York, and arrived at Liverpool on Saturday 19th September. The pilot boat left New York on the 3rd August and arrived on the 26th September, having thus been beaten by the packet ship by five days. The pilot boat had on board an American Marshall, who accompanied her for the purpose of arresting the fugitive. One of the Liverpool papers states that this chase will resolve itself into 'Much Ado About Nothing', as the intention of Mr Bowen to come to Europe was a matter of public notoriety at New York, long before he set sail.*" ■

THE "ALGERIAN'S" CANVAS FUNNEL

One of the final vessels to be built at the Bowdler Chaffer yard at Seacombe was the **Algerian** *for C.F. Leyland & Co. Ltd. of Liverpool.*

In 1904 the Leyland steamer **Algerian** arrived at Liverpool with a canvas funnel! Before the previous voyage the funnel, along with those of several other company steamers, had been lengthened with the idea of securing better combustion due to stronger natural draught. Extra guys were fitted, but in a ship with so small a beam there were doubts as to whether these had sufficient spread to support the lengthened funnel. Crossing the Bay of Biscay, fortunately homeward bound, in a strong south-westerly gale and a very high swell, the **Algerian** was rolling heavily; in one particularly heavy lurch to leeward the weather guy cleats were torn out of the funnel, and clean overboard the whole thing went, level with the fiddley.

There was tremendous difficulty in rigging a dummy, as all the material there was to work with amounted to a few spare shifting boards, old hatches and tarpaulins, but eventually a structure about 6ft high was built which enabled the engineers to keep sufficient steam for a speed of 5 knots.

The smoke and fumes which were continually eddying around the bridge were far from pleasant, and the hands had to take hourly watches standing-by with the hose, as the rising sparks kept setting the dummy funnel on fire. However it did its job and served the **Algerian** well, for the vessel arrived in Liverpool only two days late.

Some 100 miles south-west of the Scillies, the **Algerian** was overtaken by one of the Houston Line steamers which offered assistance. Help was declined, but the Houston steamer was asked to report the **Algerian**. For some reason this was not done, for the first intimation the **Algerian's** owners had of the accident was when the master signalled the South Stack. In those days it was commonly said that steamers engaged in the Western Ocean trade used to report on arrival in port "*Passed four masts and a funnel bound east* (or west, as the case may be), *presumed one of Leyland's*". In the case of the **Algerian**, the Houston Line steamer might, with truth, have reported "*Passed two masts and no funnel, definitely one of Leyland's!*" ■

CHRISTMAS ON THE BAR STATION, 1967

The crew of No. 2 pilot cutter, the ***Edmund Gardner****, take their turkey with them to their station in Liverpool Bay at Christmas, 1967.*

Christmas sometimes can be very remote to those working at sea. But provision was always made for the crews of the Bar Lightship and the pilot boats out on their stations.

AND FINALLY .....

STRUGGLING HEBRIDEAN FARMERS FIND A WAY TO FLEECE FERRY COMPANY

For the crofters of the Hebridean Islands it was the perfect way to fleece a few pounds from Caledonian MacBrayne. It had been a difficult year, 1998, after all. Sheep prices had plummeted and profits were down. They needed something to take their minds off their agricultural woes. A holiday was the perfect answer. But what with the £17·30 per person fare to the mainland and £61 for the car on top of that, a holiday was beyond the budget of the cash- starved crofters.

Then CalMac stepped in with a scheme designed to help the struggling sheep farmers. Since the start of the summer CalMac has allowed island crofters to take sheep to markets on the mainland for just £2·35 per head - the vehicle and the driver go free. So it didn't take long for some islanders to work out that the cheapest way to take a holiday was to take an ovine friend with them. "*There has been some abuse*" said a spokesman for CalMac. "*Certain drivers have been taking one or two sheep in their cars so that they can benefit from what is a very generous discount scheme.*"

The crofters have been taking sheep to Oban on the mainland. When they get there the sheep are left with friends. Then they come back with the sheep in the car and say the price was too low and they did not sell. They've actually just had a holiday and so has the sheep.

"*This was a short-term arrangement for a limited number of islands for a limited period,*" the CalMac spokesman said. "*We are looking at alternatives for next year!*" ■

LAVER'S LIVERPOOL TIDE TABLE, 1999

UPDATED REFERENCE DATA

The basis for the predictions in *Laver's Liverpool Tide Table* has, until now, been observed reference data collected many years ago at Prince's Dock. The tide gauge at Prince's was removed long ago and the main Mersey tide gauge is now at Alfred Dock, Birkenhead.

Gradual changes in the global tidal régime, and to the river itself, have meant that the old data no longer reflect actual conditions and so recordings from the new gauge must now be used. Together these changes have resulted in an *average* +10 minute shift in the time and +0·2 metres in the height of high water predictions. ■

The Liverpool Nautical Research Society

(Founded in 1938)

THE BULLETIN

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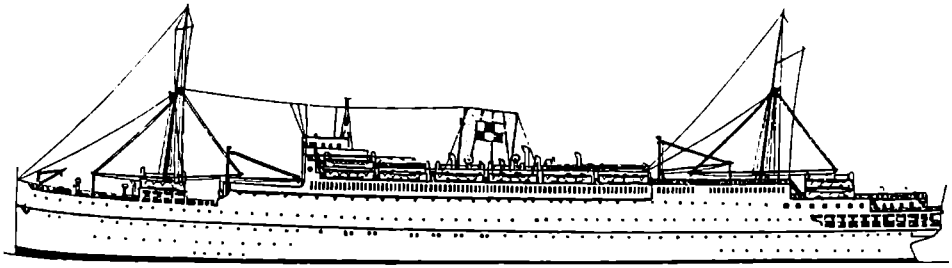

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Forthcoming Meetings:

Thursday, 18th March, 1999
LOST LANDS AND SUNKEN CITIES - MARINE ARCHAEOLOGY
AND FOLK LORE (Dr D.C. Jones)

Thursday, 15th April, 1999
TROPICAL DOCTOR AT SEA (Dr H. Power)

Thursday, 20th May, 1999
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Front Cover : The **Empress of Australia** of 1953

*Regularly throughout the year, the sludge vessels of Manchester and Salford Corporations made the passage down the Manchester Ship Canal to the deposit grounds in Liverpool Bay, beyond the North West Light Float. This article describes such a passage in 1972 seen through the eyes of an officer in the "**Mancunium**", one of the older ships on the run.*

PASSAGE TO THE NORTH WEST

By D.C.Ramwell

One long, one short. The blasts shatter the silence of early morning. After a while a uniformed figure emerges from the small brick office and waves a white handkerchief about his head. A *'thank-you'* blast on the whistle sends him scurrying back to the warmth and, on board, the securing ropes and wires - all except one - are slipped with a speed which speaks of much practice.

Slowly, under the power of her twin Mirrlees engines, the vessel slides along the jetty. *"Give her a check!"* and the strain is taken on the starboard headrope canting the bow to starboard. Now the starboard engine is put astern, the port ahead and soon a barely perceptible upsurge of the bow indicates the nose has taken the soft mud on the bank. The engine revolutions are slowly increased and a musty odour of stagnation rises from the propeller boil tainting the freshness of the dewy mist.

The swing is well under way and looking aft its rate can be judged by the movement of the ensign staff against the background of Barton airport. Just a little too fast perhaps ... ease the port engine ... bump ... the thick protective belting makes contact on the port side with the wooden bullnose that extends from the Barton Lock island ... full astern on the starboard engine ... not coming off the mud quite quickly enough - a touch astern on the port ... *"Heave away for'd"* ... stop the port - ahead the port ...not much room aft now - not much ahead either! *"Let go the headrope."* She's swinging well and the stern is finding deep water in the big lock entrance. She can even be brought astern again; the nearer the point of contact to the ship's fulcrum the better the swing.

At last she's round. The apparent disinterest of a lock gateman indicates that all the timbers have remained in place on the extension - but the wheelman already has her under control as both engines now throb slowly ahead. *"As she goes."* Not that without the words he'd steer her straight into the bank - but the true seaman is a neat creature who works to a pattern whenever possible and this simple dialogue indicates a set stage in a pattern, the end of a manoeuvre, the full stop at the end of a sentence. "As she goes", and the wheelman, officer of the watch and the ship settle down for the short run to Irlam.

On the Irlam Lock island a white light flashes at the side of the big lock. Good - much easier making the big lock, especially first thing Monday morning! Just stop the engines in good time, steer her in, keeping well clear of the gates, and pull her up. She'll take a run to port as she's going in, but she always does and the corrective helm and engine movements maintain the pattern.

There must be some shallow water on the starboard side; whenever it's shallow the stern is attracted to the least water. This attraction varies directly to the speed of the vessel, the depth of the water and the proximity of the stern to the shallows. Was there a formula in *"Danton's Seamanship"*?

Enough daydreaming! Full astern both - line out fore and aft - *"Heave her alongside."* Behind us chains pull the giant gates slowly together and the railings on their walking platforms judder as the gap is closed. Paddles are lifted and the island hut moves slowly upward until it is finally obscured by the oily black wall.

Ahead the gates of the bottom reach crack open as the pressure equalises on both sides. Chains move on massive sheaves and slowly, reluctantly, the two leviathans edge back to their recesses in the lock walls. A megaphone is poked through an open window ashore - *"One coaster and a light tug this side - there's a Liner just leaving Latchford now."* Quite busy. We can meet the tug anywhere - not so the others. *"How long's the coaster been left?"* ..... *"Forty minutes"*. Not bad, we might not even be delayed.

"Let go fore and aft". Lines snake inboard and *"All Clear"* shouted from aft is the signal for the vessel to glide out of the lock - the noise of her engines fading suddenly as she clears the exit. It's hardly worth giving her much headway - once under Irlam viaduct speed will have to be reduced to a crawl. There's an ore boat working on the Irlam steel wharf. Through the viaduct - she can be seen now, rust red grabs dropping hungrily into her holds, lifting the cargo and dropping it ashore to be digested somewhere in the depths of the sprawling conglomeration of smoke and dust in the hinterland.

The mate stands on the fo'c'sle head, chewing an unlit pipe, arms folded on the upper rail, one leg resting on the lower rail, in the universal stance of all mates on fo'c'sle heads when nought else occupies their attention. He has one eye on us, one eye on his own moorings. Our speed, or lack of it, satisfies him and before we are past he pockets his pipe and picks up his cup of tea from the bitts. One long and one short - the outward signal; the coaster should be showing up anytime. The red light on Partington South bank is flashing so there will be at least one ship working with low flash cargo. Again, the telegraphs are eased back and the engines quieten in direct response.

Here's the coaster - couldn't have timed it better. One blast and go to starboard. The tug is right behind him. (As soon as we're out of the way, he will be blowing to overtake). The pilot returns a wave as the vessels pass port to port in the widest part of the canal between Irlam and Latchford.

Cadishead viaduct catches the engine roar for a few seconds, then Partington lies astern. Full canal speed - ease up for Bob's Ferry - then away again. Now the ninety foot cutting, from the Mill Bank to the Warburton high level bridge. Not much can be met here - nothing upwards of a barge or light tug. How deep did Irlam say the Liner was? They didn't.

"Latchford, Latchford. This is Mancunium, Mancunium".

"Good morning Mancunium - over to channel twenty and go ahead ..."

A short conversation reveals the Liner to be 26ft draft. Deep - he'll be wanting the middle. Rounding Rixton now, where the Mersey flows out of the canal. Ahead, on the Latchford straight, the Liner is squatting in the middle of the fairway. Speed is adjusted. The pilots like to meet ships this side of the M6 viaduct. No golfers out this morning - too early. Single columns of smoke spiral lazily upward from the roof tops of Lymm, still sleeping in its cosy niche on the hillside. There's no wind so even if the ship has to hang back she should behave. But she doesn't have to.

Long and a short - let the Liner know we're coming ahead, and from the Liner a long-short-long tells the stern tug *"There's a vessel about to pass me from the opposite direction."* Ease the engines - mustn't go too fast or she'll run to port and the first thing to stop her will be the Liner - not too slow or we'll lose steerage way. *"Stand by fenders."* Tied bundles of cane drop over the sides on lines to absorb the initial shock of impact should she touch. A token gesture - but the first time they're not put out .....

"Steady at that, wheelman - we're just clear." *"Just...."*, a wholly descriptive adjective in this case. He's not giving much. *"O.K. your side, wheelman?"* *"Just."* Hell, not much room - hope she behaves ... have to watch the starboard propeller on the bank.

Now a wall of steel is pouring horizontally past the bridge side window. It's clearing. *"Hard a starboard".* Stop the starboard engine, full ahead on the port. The stern is being dragged to the bank, the bow is trying to fill the 'hole' in the water astern of the Liner and his tugs. Helm and engine work against and finally overcome the fierce couple. The stern moves slowly clear of the starboard bank. *"Wheel amidships"..... "Wheel's amidships" ..... "As she goes" ..... "As she goes".*

Hope we get a clear run down. That pilot didn't give much room. Still at that draft he probably couldn't. He's probably echoing the same sentiments on the bridge of the Liner. They earn their money those pilots ... wonder how they get that **Carchester** through the ninety-foot when she's deep laden.

The white light is flashing by the small lock at Latchford. There's no wind to speak of and no sluicing, so there should be no complications. The small lock is forty-five feet wide - the ship is forty feet wide. Now the twin screws come into their own, shoving and pulling to position two thousand tons for a straight run into the confines of the small lock. She brings up well, the gates close and on the other side of the lower gates the water begins to boil as

the vessel drops to the next and last reach before the open sea. The Mancunium slides ahead as the lower gates snuggle into their recesses. A satisfying *"Nothing to meet"* is shouted from the other side of the lock. The water, though by no means clean, is much fresher now - more brown than oily black. Stop the engines under Latchford viaduct - ahead again as the vertical members on the Knutsford Road Swing Bridge move out of transit and a green light begins to flash. Hurry along - don't keep the road traffic waiting! Here the canal sides are steep, the banks sheer, and this somehow heightens the impression of sailing along a giant ditch.

Through 'The Wide' now. Whoever called it that had either never met a tug job in it, or had a rather cynical turn of mind. It's not bad outward when the vessel can pull well over to starboard, but inward, when meeting one of the big ones, it's a different situation. His length won't let him pull over to starboard too far before his tug has to leave the bow to port to middle in the fairway again. No, inward bound, bilge keels and starboard props are ripe fare for the south bank, "wide" or no.

Through 'The Wide' and Northwich Road Swing Bridge lies safely along the bank, and even as we pass this, the Chester Road Swing Bridge starts to move clear. The Canal will remain narrow now until we reach the Moore Lane Dolphins on the outer side of Moore Lane Swing Bridge. The head yaws from side to side as the vessel gathers way; the ship won't steady despite immediate wheel against the swing. The single plate rudder makes evident its inefficiency in this stretch more than any other. It seems unfair that all the effort expended by the wheelman should be translated into such lethargic movements of the ship's head.

Acton Grange viaduct. Acton Grange wharf - now Moore Lane bridge swings open - past the bridge and finally the dolphins draw abeam. She will steer more easily now - one course will take us almost to the Wiggs Wharf, and there's a comfortable distance between the ship's sides and the bank all the way. Time enough to light a pipe and relax and to discuss the fortunes of United before having to ease back the engines once more to negotiate Old Quay Swing Bridge. The Quarry Hole - difficult to imagine that people actually swim there when the weather is warm - must have brick lined stomachs!

Long and a short. The outward signal warns Old Quay of the vessel's approach but even as we take the bend, the bridge is swinging off. They always give a good swing, but then they haven't the same traffic to contend with; only cars and lorries having business with the small I.C.I. factories on the north bank. The bridgeman waves his signal trumpet. He's got orders for us. *"Hang back at Old Quay for a tug job just passing the lay-by now"*. The engines are stopped, the vessel loses way and off the first of the dolphins lining the estuary wall a touch astern on both brings her gently to a halt.

Not long to wait. Even now the head tug appears in the Runcorn Bridge hole. Its charge lumbers slowly after it, a clanking steaming hulk, under

a 'flag of convenience' now, it remains barely recognizable as a vessel that's seen better days under the 'red duster'. The engines of the stern tug scream astern, struggling to over-ride the sheer awkwardness of the mass it's fastened to.

Both engines slow ahead - the stern tug has cleared the bridge hole. *"Stand by fenders"*. There's plenty of deep water here. Any vessel that can proceed above Ince can tie up at these dolphins. Kill the run with the engines, square her up for the bridge hole - barely 65 feet width beneath the viaduct. For a while now the engines must run slowly ahead so as not to part the moorings of the little grey tanker barges alongside the Runcorn dock wall, nor those of the coasters within the dock itself. Nothing on the lay-by, but a coaster on the Salt Works.

A long and a short well before the bend, though it should be all clear. But it isn't! Stop - full astern both - she's paying off rapidly to starboard - stop the starboard engine - three blasts on the whistle : *"My engines are going full speed astern"* - the head's steadying - full astern both again. The Captain appears on the bridge, his worried look asking the obvious question.

"Not a word of warning, Captain. We were just rounding the bend and there's this coaster backing out of the Weston Docks." He looks around. The engines are stopped. She's holding nicely with plenty of room ahead. He tuts his annoyance, then satisfied that danger is past, descends in steps more measured than those of his ascent. The coaster's completed her swing and is heading outward rapidly.

"Eastham, Eastham. This is Mancunium, Mancunium" ..... Eastham soon know about the maverick from Weston. Weston Mersey Lock: the lock master and his gesticulations convey clearly his opinion of the mental state of the navigator in the vessel ahead. He's right, but, unfortunately, the Manchester Ship Canal does not constitute a compulsory pilotage area. Pilots should be taken, for apart from their knowledge of basic Ship Canal procedure, only experience can teach the hazards of this deceptively tricky stretch of waterway.

There's a dredger working at the Weaver bend. The vessel ahead blows the outward signal (at least he knows that) and the dredger trudges wearily to the estuary bank, hauling on his shore wires and sending up a large ball on a halyard to indicate the clear side. Ease the engines right back and stop to go over his wires. Buckets continue their slow journey round, tipping over at their highest ascent and emptying their contents of thick, grey, sticky mud into a chute that channels it into the barge alongside to splash like spoonfuls of duff in a thick gravy. Must be a monotonous job that. Still, if they want a change, they can always send the buckets round the other way!

Frodsham Score now, the Weaver's well astern. Always a pleasant run along the Score in good weather. Sheep graze on the sea-washed turf; rabbits scurry into and out of burrows in the hard ground of the bank; a skylark

fluttering, like a piece of paper caught in a telegraph wire, sings its happiness across the estuary. The warmth of the sun has consumed the faint mistiness hanging over the water, and the blueness of the sky is reflected on the surface of that water, camouflaging and belying its true colour and pollution.

Ease down again. On the port side Frodsham Pumps suck canal dredgings from a barge and take them ashore and out of sight. We pass: the barges creak as they range alongside the wooden jetty, their ropes stretching and relaxing as we draw abeam and finally clear. Now the "magazines" draws abeam to starboard. A red brick building, its floor raised on brick stilts to a level above high water mark, it was used for storing the explosives that blasted the cutting out of the rock at Ince. Now the cows and sheep use it for shelter during inclement weather. Its prominence as a landmark makes it useful too, for judging the relative position of vessels inward bound when the observing vessel is outward bound between Weston and the Weaver.

The "bottle-neck" now, where the canal narrows to a little over seventy feet. No cynicism in the naming of this point. Wonder why it wasn't blasted to a uniform width when the canal was built. The signal light on the estuary bank isn't on so there's nothing berthed or unberthing at Stanlow - safe to proceed beyond Ince. Have to go slow as from here to Eastham it's virtually one big dock and cargoes being worked include low flash petroleum products, lead based compounds and liquid ammonia.

The change from the flat lush green of the Score to the sprawling mass of tanks and tangled hissing pipes that is the Stanlow complex, is startling in its abruptness. Ince oil berth, Ince coaster berth, Stanlow ferry, then Stanlow Hailing Station. *"Nothing to meet Mancunium"* booms through fixed megaphones above the industrial din.

Past the Stanlow Oil Dock entrance and then Associated Octel. Stuarts Wharf - a good berth to be alongside whilst waiting for the tide or for more favourable weather reports from Mersey Radio. Ships passing have to go easy for Octel astern and Ellesmere Port ahead, so the moorings are rarely overstrained. It was a pity that the developers had to demolish the Canal Tavern for, truth be known, that haven of cheer for many on board enhanced the attraction of the berth more than anything. Ellesmere Port is full - a couple of Russians in - there seems to be one in all the time lately. A 'Clan boat' - he must be going upalong as his masts are struck and his radar scanner platform lies on the monkey island above the bridge.

Now the cutting, and the sweet odour of pine gets stronger as we near Bowaters. A pyramid of timber spars avalanches now and again as an elevated conveyor tips more on to the peak. Bowaters falls astern, Jack's Castle draws on to the port beam, the vessel rounds the bend and is in the home straight.

"Eastham, Eastham - this is Mancunium, Mancunium - we're just passing Jack's Castle now. Over." *"Thank you Mancunium, keep your eye on the small lock signal."* *"Thanks, Eastham, will do."*

Passing the crane berth where vessels are 'cropped' to a suitable height for the journey to Manchester, the ship enters the Eastham Basin. The small lock signal is "on", the engines are stopped and the **Mancunium** drifts easily into the fifty foot gap and brings up easily on her engines as the stern line tightens aft. It doesn't take long to run down - high water is only just over so there won't be much difference between the canal and sea levels. The gates behind are closed and almost as soon the gates ahead crack open.

"*Let go for'd, Let go aft*", and with engines going ahead faster than they ever did in the canal, the **Mancunium** leaves the lock. "*Favour the starboard side, wheelman*". The ebb runs strongly from our starboard quarter to the port bow. E6, the first of the buoys when outward bound, and the engines are put full ahead for the first time since the vessel was last in the Mersey. Full ahead, and as the clutches begin to bite, the 'scream' of their slip diminishes and the needles on the tachometers edge towards maximum revolutions. Slow down for the Dingle mid-river tanker moorings.

Full away again, bring her to starboard at the red and white chequered Pluckington Bank buoy and bring the Duke's buoy and the Liverpool Landing Stage on to the starboard bow. Plenty of masts and funnels sticking above the sheds of the Liverpool dock system. A 'Palm' boat - brings back memories ..... Cammell Laird's over at Birkenhead seems busy - must have a full order book. The Langton wreck buoy slips by to starboard. "*Port wheel*". She steers well in the river and the bow comes round to put the first of the sea channel floats on to the starboard bow - C22 and the start of the Crosby channel. Two loud clangs on a deep toned bell and the Crosby Light Float draws abeam to port and falls rapidly into the wake. Now the narrowest part of the channel - 'Alpha' across to C1. Into the Queens channel - "*Bring her off the reds a bit.*" A strong ebb is setting her to starboard. Formby clangs its single stroke, the Fairway buoy is brought ahead, and a course can at last be set on the magnetic compass.

"*Steer 280*" ..... "*Steady on 280*". The Bar Light float is passed to starboard and for the next half hour there's nothing but open sea and anchored ships between us and the North West Light Float. It can be seen now on the port bow. Ring the engine room: "*Ten minutes more.*" Green lights glow on the converter panel - the valve motors are operational - ease the engine back. The North West is over five minutes astern now. "*Hard a starboard - bring her round to 100.*" Sailors appear on deck - buttons are pressed on the bridge and valves lift in the tanks. The ship rises bodily and in less than ten minutes over 1,400 tons of sewage sludge have poured into the Irish Sea. ■

MANCUNIUM - Official Number 169068
Built in 1946 by Ferguson Brothers (Port Glasgow) Ltd.
Gross Tonnage: 1,390 Nett: 797 Length overall: 80.16m Breadth: 11.60m
Owned by the Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Citizens of the City of Manchester.

A FAMILY TRAGEDY

by L.N.R.S. Member L.A. Leigh

This article has no Liverpool connection other than an appreciation of the excellent facilities available to us in the Merseyside Maritime Museum Archives, and I hope will be of methodological interest also.

My great-uncle Charles Leigh was nearly nineteen when he was drowned at Madras.

I knew practically nothing of my family until I learnt that my great-grandfather was a London surgeon and had a family of three girls and nine boys, the eldest being my grandfather. Retirement gave me the time to investigate further and the Royal College of Surgeons informed me that my great-grandfather had trained at St. George's Hospital in London. The Pupil Register of St. George's revealed that three of his sons also attended there and that one of them had been educated at Epsom College. The College Register showed that five of the boys including Charles, whose brief entry stated that he had become a 'mariner' and 'was drowned at Madras in September 1863'.

A younger brother of these five had gone to the **Conway**, but their records (or those of the **Worcester**) did not produce Charles Leigh. As Arthur's **Conway** record stated that his first ship was to be one of Richard Green's '*Blackwallers*', it seemed logical to assume that Charles had done similarly, but without the benefit of a two year introductory training.

The Public Record Office sources (BT150-Index of Apprentices 1824-1953 and BT158-Births, Marriages and Deaths of Passengers at Sea) revealed nothing. The latter record, compiled from a separate return made with the ship's Official Log Book in accordance with Sect. 273 of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1864 of '*persons other than crew*', often omits crew deaths although provision was made for this on the reverse side of the form.

Meanwhile, other avenues were explored. First the India Office (British Library) and the Madras Record Office in the hope that his body had been recovered and a burial had taken place. Madras had no harbour until 1876, so ships had to lie about half a mile off, cargo and passengers being ferried in local 'masula' boats through the often angry surf - accidental drownings during these sometimes dangerous operations evidently occurred. This line of investigation produced no result other than a bill for a modest 40 Rupees for quite extensive researching. As a visit to Southern India was scheduled, it was agreed that this should be paid in person - the cost of remitting it any other way would have been ridiculous for this charge of less than one pound Sterling.

This was an experience in itself. Time is not of the essence in Madras. The elegant lady sitting at the high desk in charge of the vast reading room

insisted on having the inquiry file produced, then introducung the assistant archivist who had researched, and questioning the whole process. Satisfied that nothing further could be done, she accepted the proffered 40 Rupees which was taken into the inner recesses of the Record Office. I was required to wait over half an hour for a receipt and then was asked to sign a statement that I had received the receipt! British administrative red tape lives on in India and provides work for these kind people.

There was no other choice now but to try and discover the name of the ship from which Charles was drowned - the vital key to obtaining a copy of its Log Book for that voyage which should contain a report of the accident. The other possibility was that the ship was wrecked with consequent loss of life. Either way the initial research would be the same.

Fortunately Green's fleet list can be extracted from Appendix I of Basil Lubbock's '*Blackwall Frigates*' (Glasgow : Brown, Son & Ferguson : 1922 etc). Intermittently over several months long hours were spent in the Merseyside Maritime Museum Archives, firstly to produce a short-list of those ships on the India run for that year from Lloyd's Register. The next step was the laborious scrutiny of Lloyd's Lists over several months (to allow generously for 'communication time elapse') looking for Madras arrivals and departures, and for ship losses. This part of the year is notorious for cyclones in the Bay of Bengal and there are many references to it - eg. in David Bone's '*Broken Stowage*' (London: Duckworth:1915), p258 he says '*In Calcutta towards the end of September the weather takes an unsettled turn, and its vagaries are particularly trying after a lengthy and severe monsoon. The SW monsoon is officially over, but recurs in frequent squalls.*' Lloyd's Lists reported two losses in the area (not Green's vessels though); but significantly, the presence of one of Green's ships off Madras in late September - the **Clarence** (Official Number 20848, built by Pile of Sunderland in 1858, 1104 tons, 198′ x 36·5′ x 22·5′ and carrying 5,309 yards of sail) commanded by Joseph Watson. He was an experienced Master of 40, having qualified in 1853 (London) and obtaining his first command in 1856 (Lloyd's Captains Registers, 1869 in MMM Archives). This just had to be the ship, and indeed it was!

A copy of the Log Book for the voyage ending in 1864 (ex Memorial University of Newfoundland) confirmed from the Crew List that Charles, age 18, had joined the ship on 23rd June 1863 at Poplar as a midshipman, previous ship was the **Clarence**. The ship was in Madras Roads as reported in Lloyd's Lists, but Charles returned safely to London in May 1864. The elation at having discovered the correct ship was dampened somewhat by the prospect of further research (and more expense), and some irritation that the Epsom College Register was inaccurate. However, because Green generally kept his midshipmen in the same ship for their three years in this capacity, it was likely that the **Clarence** voyages ending in 1863 and 1865 would complete the story. And they did, the former from Newfoundland and the latter from the National

Maritime Museum, Greenwich. The first showed Charles joining the ship for the first time ('*not been to sea*' under '*name of last ship*'), and the other that he joined on 16th June 1864 and on 18th September was drowned in Madras Roads:

Sunday, September 18th, 1864:
5pm - Madras Roads - Mr Charles Leigh (Midshipman) whilst pulling round the roadstead in the jolly boat in charge of Mr Lee 4th Officer, whilst shifting from pulling the stroke oar to the bow and getting up on the thwart of the boat, was knocked overboard by a sea striking the blade of his oar. He never rose again to the surface and was drowned, and the body was not recovered.
Signed: Joseph Watson, Commander
Henry Berridge, Chief Officer
Charles Turner, Surgeon.

It is clear from this report that the sea was choppy and strict discipline was lacking. Even as an engineer, two small-boat rules were drummed into me- no smoking and never stand on the thwarts!

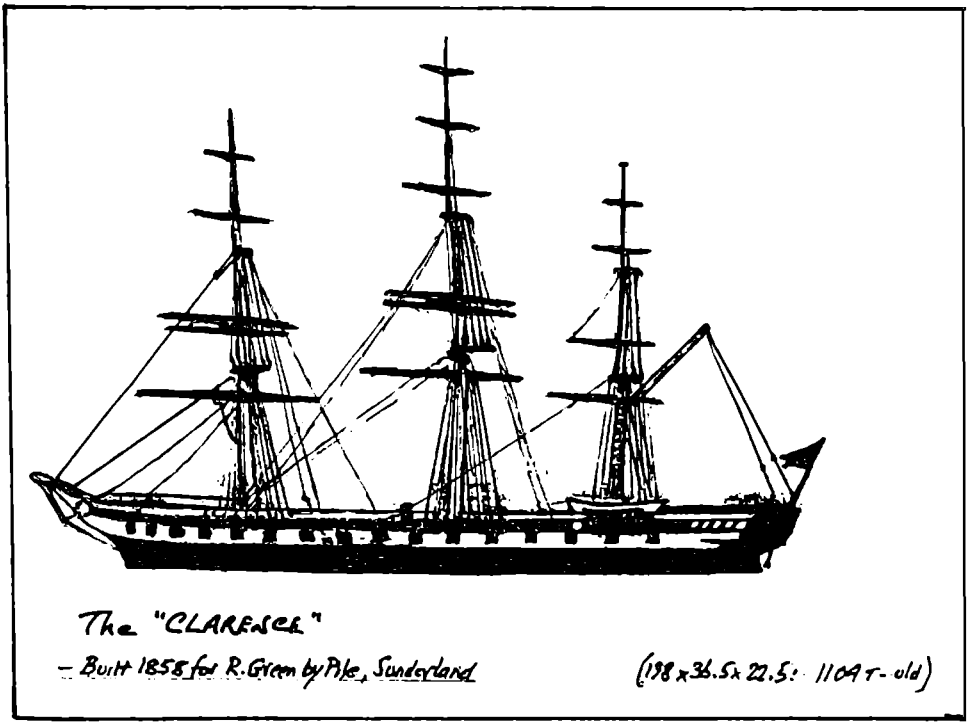
The voyage continued full of incident. Two seamen were left behind in Calcutta to serve twelve weeks hard labour given by the Magistrate for breaking into the ship's liquor store and stealing a case of gin and some bottled ale. After discharging troops and cargo at Calcutta, coolies were embarked for Demerara and on arrival 23 of the crew were sent to hospital with yellow fever symptoms - two died. During the return voyage to London with a cargo of sugar, auctions at the mast were held for the three deceased crew members. The modest possessions of the two seamen realised £3-10s-11d and £4-0s-0d. In contrast the midshipman's kit list read like one of a Naval 'snotty' - 63 'lots' comprising nearly 200 items, evidence of the assertion that Green insisted on a high standard of dress as well as competence from his officers. 4th Officer William Lee bought the cap badge and band for 5/-. The proceeds amounted to a considerable £18-10s-0d.

Another memorable episode in this voyage appears in Lubbock's '*Coolie Ships and Oil Sailers*' (Glasgow : Brown, Son & Ferguson) pp63-69, in which the captain's log of the **Clarence** from 3rd - 16th October 1864 is reproduced, and part of a letter from Captain Joseph Watson describing a cyclone encountered after leaving Madras on 22nd September for Calcutta which was published in the "*Englishman*". This is just after Charles was drowned. This is believed to be a Calcutta publication and the India Office is currently investigating this as it is possible that the beginning of the letter might refer to a previous 'occurrence'.

There is a curious turn to the end of this story. Charles Leigh's younger brother Arthur passed out of the **Conway** in 1864 and the records

show that he was scheduled to join the **Clarence** '*in Mr Green's service*'. In the event, he was drafted to the **Trafalgar**, probably because it was considered inappropriate that a '*sprog*' brother midshipman should be in the same ship as his senior brother. The **Trafalgar** (Master E. Stacpoole) sailed from London two weeks after the **Clarence** in 1864 on the same run, so it is likely that Arthur would have learnt the devastating news of his brother's death on arrival at Madras, or certainly at Calcutta, and perhaps directly from Captain Watson. Although Richard Green died in 1863, the family upheld his high operational standards and his concern for the well-being of his personnel. Perhaps this explains why the standard practice of keeping midshipmen in the same ship for their full three years was breached in Arthur's case. On the **Trafalgar's** return to London in 1865 he was transferred to the **Clarence** for his remaining two years as midshipman in the understanding care of Captain Joseph Watson.

I think that this was an act of compassion. ■



THE MERSEY DOCKS AND HARBOUR BOARD'S TENDER "GALATEA"

by Alfred Locke

The **Galatea** was built at South Shields in 1906 by J.P. Rennoldson & Sons for the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board as a yacht to carry distinguished guests and visiting parties. The **Galatea** also carried out other duties as a buoy tender, fireboat and - very occasionally - towing operations. She replaced an old paddle tender of the same name, formerly the Trinity House vessel **Irene**, built in 1868 and broken up in 1905.

Of 569 gross tons, the **Galatea** was a twin-screw steamer driven by two sets of triple-expansion machinery producing a speed of 10 knots. She was largely fitted out in teak in the large saloon on deck, which had a well overlooking the dining saloon (accommodating 36), extending the full beam of the ship.

On 11th July 1913, with King George V, Queen Mary and the Prince of Wales on board, the **Galatea** was at the opening of the Gladstone Graving Dock which in those days opened directly on to the Mersey. In 1923 she carried the Duke and Duchess of York during a Royal visit to Bootle and four years later, in July 1927, she was again used to carry King George V and Queen Mary at the opening of the Gladstone River Entrance. Almost 22 years later the **Galatea** undertook a similar duty when Princess Elizabeth, accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh, opened the Waterloo Entrance Lock.

During both World Wars, the **Galatea** was used on Admiralty service. From 1914 to 1918 she carried out duties as an examination service and seaward defence vessel, returning to the Board after the War to resume duties as a buoy tender. In 1939 the **Galatea** resumed Admiralty service flying first the blue ensign and then the white ensign. She was renamed **Pygmalion** and was in active use until after the invasion of France when the examination service was modified, and she carried out other Admiralty work in the Irish Sea.

After the War the **Galatea** was refitted on the Mersey and resumed duties with the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, but mainly as a relief ship for the lightvessels. She continued, however, to take guests of the Board on river trips in the summer months.

The **Galatea** was withdrawn from service at the end of 1958 and in March 1959 was purchased by Lieut.-Comdr. G.J. Parry, RD, RNR, (acting on behalf of Wrightson Brothers of Liverpool). It was intended that she would become a floating yacht club and restaurant at Palma, Majorca. As so often happens in these cases, the plans came to nothing, and the **Galatea** was laid up in Herculaneum Dock until October 1959. She was then re-sold to Mr Romaine Roels of Antwerp for conversion to a private yacht.

On 16th October 1959 the Hull tug **Merchantman** arrived at Liverpool to tow the **Galatea** to Antwerp, but persistent strong winds during the whole of the following week prevented her from leaving. By 24th October the weather had moderated sufficiently for the vessels to set out on their voyage, but as they were proceeding down the Mersey estuary another gale warning was received and the tug and tow put back to Trafalgar Dock, Liverpool. There followed one of the worst north-westerly gales for several years which pinned the **Galatea** in dock for a further week, during which the **Merchantman** went out to the aid of the Greek tank **Essar I** - formerly the British **Pass of Leny** - in difficulties off Anglesey. After towing her into the safety of Holyhead harbour the **Merchantman** returned to Liverpool for the **Galatea** and was finally able to leave the Mersey for Antwerp with her tow in fine weather on 30th October, 1959.

from Lloyd's List, Wednesday 30th March, 1949:

PRINCESS OPENS NEW WATERLOO LOCK (Tues.29th.)

Princess Elizabeth, accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh, sailed passed seven miles of cheering crowds on the quays at Liverpool Docks today, after she had performed the ceremony of declaring open the new £1,200,000 deep-water lock at the entrance to West Walerloo Dock.

The Royal visitors walked down to the landing stage where the steam tender **Galatea** was tied up. The **Galatea**, a veteran of more than 40 years, looked spick and span with her new paintwork, spotless decks, re-varnished boats and new ropes; whilst all furniture coverings had been changed to Royal Blue for the occasion.

The **Galatea** cast off from the landing stage at 10.25am. On the bridge stood the Princess and the Duke, who was in naval uniform, and with them were the leading personalities of the Dock Board. The vessel steamed the few hundred yards north from the landing stage to the new entrance to the West Waterloo Dock where, half way along the 450 foot entrance, a broad ribbon spanned the water. A fresh off-shore breeze necessitated a little manoeuvring for the **Galatea** to counteract her drift and enter the lock.

The **Galatea** then proceeded via West Waterloo and Trafalgar docks, through the Salisbury entrance and back into the Mersey. About twenty minutes later she reached the Gladstone Dock where she berthed on the north side to allow the Royal visitors to inspect the port radar station.

The construction of the new lock entrance was first started in 1937, but work was suspended during the war. ■

PROGRAMME.

11-30 a.m. The Royal train will arrive at the Riverside Station where Their Majesties will be received by:—

The High Sheriff (Lt.-Col. Sir James P. Reynolds, Bart., D.S.O., R.A.)	The Right Hon. The Lord Mayor of Liverpool, (Councillor F. C. Bowring)
The Right Hon. The Earl of Derby, K.C., G.C.V.O., C.C.B., P.C.	The Lady Mayoress, (Mrs. E. W. Hope)
The Countess of Derby.	The Right Hon. Sir Archibald T. Salvidge, P.C., K.B.E.
Lt.-General Sir Richard H. K. Butler, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., C.O.C. Western Command.	The Town Clerk of Liverpool, (Mr. Walter Moon)
Commodore Sir Ian Malcolm Bowham-Carter, C.B., O.B.E., Royal Air Force.	The Chief Constable of Liverpool, (Mr. L. D. L. Everett, O.B.E.)

The Chairman of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, (Mr. R. D. Holt).

Mrs. Holt.

The General Manager and Secretary of the Board, (Mr. L. A. P. Warner, C.B.E.)

His Majesty will inspect the Guard of Honour furnished by the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve.

11-35 a.m. The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, accompanied by Sir Archibald Salvidge and the Town Clerk, will leave for St. George's Hall in order to receive Their Majesties on arrival there.

11-40 a.m. Their Majesties will leave the Riverside Station for St. George's Hall.

2-20 p.m. Their Majesties will arrive at No. 7 Bridge, Princes Parade, and will proceed to the Landing Stage where Miss Lois Hunter, Granddaughter of Mr. Thomas Rome, (Chairman of the Board, April 1919-May 1927) will have the honour of presenting a Bouquet to Her Majesty The Queen.

Their Majesties will then embark on the S.S. "Galatea" where they will be received by Mr. Holt, the Chairman of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.

2-25 p.m. The "Galatea" will leave the Landing Stage and proceed down the River to the Gladstone Lock.

The Band of the Training Ship "Indefatigable" will play the National Anthem.

3-5 p.m. The "Galatea" will enter the Gladstone Lock, breaking the ribbon placed across the entrance.

As the "Galatea" passes through the Lock there will be Community singing of two verses of "Rule Britannia," accompanied by the Band of The Lancashire and National Sea Training Homes.

The "Galatea" will proceed Northward through the Gladstone Dock to enable Their Majesties to see in the distance the Gladstone Graving Dock which they opened in 1911, and will then pass up the Branch Dock, No. 1, to a position at the East end thereof.

Whilst the "Galatea" is passing up the Branch Dock there will be Community singing of Elgar's "Land of Hope and Glory," led by the Choir and accompanied by the Band of the 2nd Battalion, The King's Regiment (Liverpool).

This is the programme of events on the occasion of the opening of the Gladstone River Entrance by King George V and Queen Mary on 19th July 1927. The **Galatea** played a major role in the opening ceremony. The photograph shows the **Galatea** approaching the river entrance with the White Star liner **Adriatic** tied up to the river wall and showering the royal party with smuts and soot!

The Royal Train had arrived at Liverpool Riverside Station in the morning, and whilst the opening ceremony was taking place the train was shifted round to Bootle Oriel Road station to take the Royal Party back to London.

3-20 p.m. Their Majesties will disembark and the King will inspect the Guard of Honour furnished by the Royal Naval Reserve.

Their Majesties will proceed to the Royal Dais.

As soon as Their Majesties have taken their places on the Royal Dais there will be Community singing of two verses of the National Anthem, led by the Choir and accompanied by the Band of the 2nd Battalion, The King's Regiment (Liverpool).

God Save the King.

God save our gracious King,
Long live our noble King;
God save the King.
Send him victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us,
God save the King.

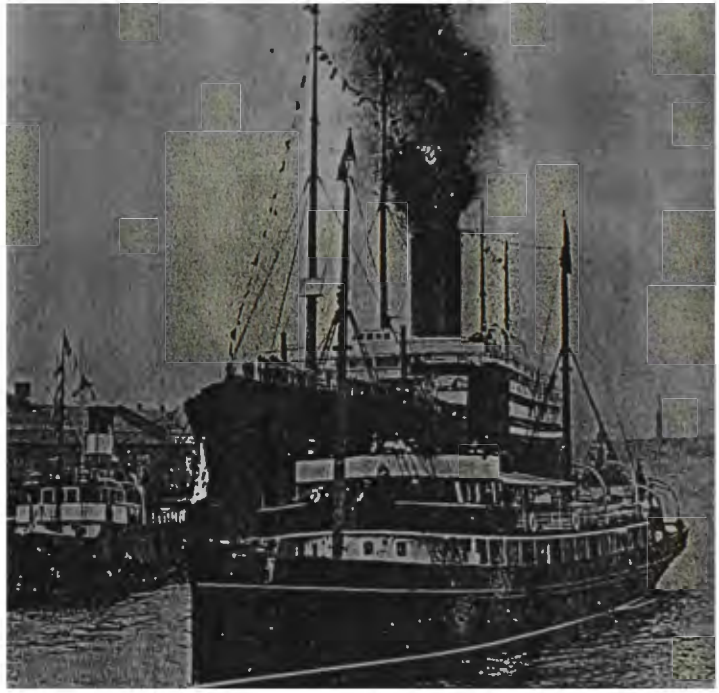
Thy choicest gifts in store
On him be pleased to pour;
Long may he reign.
May he defend our laws,
And ever give us cause
To sing with heart and voice
God save the King.

Mr. Holt will read an Address to His Majesty from the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.

His Majesty will read his reply and then declare the Docks open. This will be followed by a fanfare of trumpets.

3-50 p.m. Their Majesties will leave the Dais to enter their carriage and the first verse of the National Anthem will be sung by all present, led by the Choir and accompanied by the Band of the 2nd Battalion, The King's Regiment (Liverpool).

The Royal Carriage will leave the Dock Estate for Bootle Station by way of the Shore Road Gate.



Greasby, Wirral,
March, 1999

To the Members of the Liverpool Nautical Research Society:

Dear Friends,

In a few weeks, the vernal equinox will herald the approach of a new summer season. As if to underline this welcome prospect the clocks will be advanced one hour, and the chill winds of winter will become but a memory.

But before memory fades too far, let me record here that Christmas 1998 was celebrated with the Society's customary fervour at a Christmas Lunch held once again at the Blundellsands Hotel. Gordon Wright ably supervised the arrangements, and organised the 'Cakes and Wine' meeting on 17th December. This occasion featured a Maritime Quiz, compiled and delivered as usual by our good friend Mike Stammers, Keeper of the Maritime Museum. This contest, as it happened, saddled your Chairman with one of the more onerous decisions of his term of office when two Members, Norman West and Harry Hignett, tied for first place with equal and impressive scores! After due deliberation, I awarded the prize to Harry, on the rather dubious grounds that, after all, Norman had won it outright last year!

A sad event took place at the close of the old year when, on 30th December, our long-serving Member Margaret McKee died after a lengthy illness. Margaret had been a diligent researcher and loyal contributor to the work of the Society, and she will be missed. I attended, on 8th February, a Memorial Eucharist held in her name in the Lady Chapel of Liverpool's Anglican Cathedral, where she had been a guide and member of the Cathedral College of Interpreters. The Service was well attended by a small host of family, friends and former colleagues in the field of education, in which her talents had prospered to the great benefit of her many pupils.

There has been another switch in our closed-day concession at the Archives and Library. It had originated on Mondays, then switched last year to Fridays to accommodate staffing arrangements, and from 1st February this year has reverted to Mondays which, acording to common consensus, is the more convenient day.

Regular monthly meetings have been characterised by good attendance and a succession of able speakers, both from within the

membership and from outside. We look forward to ending our season in style, with two promising lectures by experts in their field, namely Dr D.C. Jones on 'Marine Archaeology' (18th March), and Dr H. Power on 'Tropical Doctor at Sea' (15th April). I trust as many of you as possible will attend these meetings. Incidentally, our Annual General Meeting will take place this year on 20th May.

Sales of our Jubilee Book, "A Nautical Miscellany", proceed with a certain shy diffidence. I hope most of you have a copy by now - if not, hesitate no longer, but place your order now! Those who have read it assure me that they found it to be a 'good read', as well as a useful source of reference.

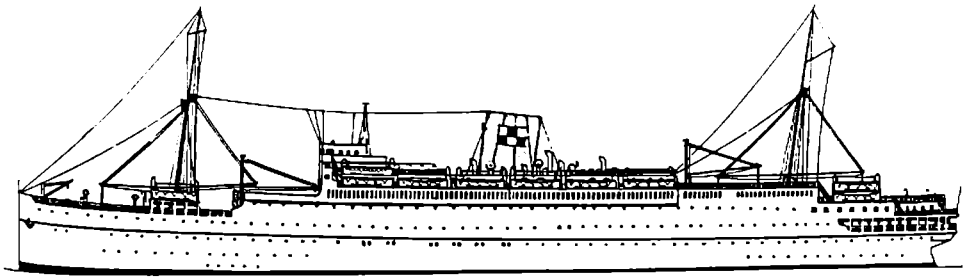
Yours sincerely,

LOOKING BACK .....
The Liverpool & North Wales Steamship Company's legendary paddle steamer La Marguerite embarks passengers at Prince's Landing Stage in the early 1920s for an excursion to Llandudno, Beaumaris, Bangor and Menai Bridge.

No.5 : THE "**EMPRESS OF AUSTRALIA**" OF 1953

From Lloyd's Register, 1955:

EMPRESS OF AUSTRALIA Official Number : 185887
Gross Tonnage : 19,379, Nett Tonnage : 10,296, Summer Deadweight : 6,566
Owners : The Canadian Pacific Railway Company
Managers : Canadian Pacific Steamships Limited. Port of Registry : London
Builders : Cammell, Laird & Co., Birkenhead - 1924
Length : 572' 0" Breadth : 71' 2"
4 steam turbines (single reduction) geared to 2 shafts



Canadian Pacific purchased the **De Grasse** from the French Line in 1953 and renamed her **Empress of Australia (II)**. She was intended as a stop-gap replacement for the burnt-out **Empress of Canada**. The *Canada* had been fully booked for the forthcoming coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, and the purchase of the **De Grasse** (renamed **Empress of Australia** on 24th April 1953) enabled these bookings to be honoured, although the cost was high.

The **De Grasse** was completed by Cammell Laird in 1924 at Birkenhead. She had been laid down as the **Suffren** for the French Line on 23rd March 1920, but was launched as the **De Grasse** on 23rd February 1924. Due to long interruptions to the building work, cancellation of the contract was considered at one stage. Because of ongoing unrest at Cammell Laird, she was towed to St. Nazaire to be completed. Her first trans-Atlantic service was between Le Havre and New York, commencing on 21st August 1924. Between November 1924 and January 1925 she was taken in hand by Penhoet and was given a complete overhaul of her engines and boilers, and later the **De Grasse** proved to be one of the most reliable cabin liners on the North Atlantic, and was used extensively for cruising.

Between September and October 1934, and again from June to September 1935, the **De Grasse** made a certain number of trips between Marseille and New York. On 29th May 1937 she opened a new service from Le

Havre to New York and Boston, via Southampton and Cobh, which lasted until September of that year. A refit took place at Penhoet from 12th September 1937 until 9th June 1938, and the **De Grasse** was then laid up at Le Havre from October 1938 until January 1939 after which she returned to trans-Atlantic service until the outbreak of the Second World War.

During the invasion and occupation of France in the early days of the war, the **De Grasse** was taken over by the Germans and was used as an accommodation ship in the River Gironde, near Bordeaux. She remained under German requisition until 4th June 1942 when she was returned to the French to become a training ship for merchant service apprentices. She was not to escape the ravages of war, however, for during the German withdrawal on 30th August 1944 she was sunk by depth charges exploded by a passing 'E'-boat in shallow water. A year later the **De Grasse** was salved and put in the hands of the Chantiers et Ateliers de Saint-Nazaire-Penhöet for a complete reconditioning. In the course of this refit her interior was entirely rebuilt, and her two original funnels were replaced by one of generous proportions in an effort to modernise her appearance.

On 12th July 1947 the **De Grasse** returned in her new guise to the Le Havre-New York service and had the distinction of re-opening the trans-Atlantic service of the Compagnie Générale Transatlantique. In 1951 she was transferred to the Le Havre-Southampton-West Indies service, being retained on that route until handed over to Canadian Pacific at le Havre on 28th March 1953. She sailed for Liverpool on the same day.

The **De Grasse** arrived at Liverpool on 30th March and she sailed from the Mersey on her first voyage as the **Empress of Australia** on 28th April 1953, bound for Quebec and Montreal. One feature of her refit was the shortening of her masts by 25 feet to allow her to pass under the Quebec Bridge and the Jacques Cartier Bridge at Montreal.

The ship's career for Canadian Pacific was largely uneventful although she did experience one or two passages involving heavy weather damage. One such occasion brought about a bad leak in the stern gland, and a diver had to assist in its repacking whilst the vessel lay afloat at Montreal.

Towards the end of 1955 the **Empress of Australia** was chartered for troop movements between Canada and Europe and it became clear that she would not be returning to Canadian Pacific's trans-Atlantic services on completion of the charter. On 12th December 1955 she arrived at Liverpool and shortly afterwards sailed to the Gareloch to be laid up pending disposal.

When the **Empress of Australia** was advertised for sale it was stated that the had accommodation for 220 first-class passengers and 444 tourist-class passengers, as well as having a deadweight capacity of 6,566 tons. She was purchased on 16th February 1956 by Sicula Oceanica S.p.A. of Palermo, a subsidiary of Fratelli Grimaldi of Naples. Taking delivery of the ship on the Clyde, her new owners renamed her **Venezuela** and placed on the Naples-La

Guaira, Venezuela, service. In 1960 a raked stem was fitted, but on 17th March 1962 she ran aground off Cannes. A month later, on 16th April, she was refloated but was assessed as being beyond economic repair. On 16th August 1962 the **Venezuela** was sold to Soc. Anon. Santa Roslaia, La Spezia, and broken up. ■

JUST FANCY THAT !!!

Many thanks to Charles Dawson for sending in this 'gem' :

The caption (dated 1880) reads: *"In this clever way to increase the distance between the ears, Prof A.M. Mayer helped the mariners of the time to improve the possibilities of contact between ships meeting in thick fog."*

BISCUITS : SHIP AND DOG !

After the two brothers Thomas and James Harrison had founded the shipping line, their brother Richard set up in business as a ships' biscuit manufacturer under the title of Richard Harrison and Company with the object of supplying his brothers' sailing ships with their requirements of this very necessary article of food. They were a good and wholesome food but it was essential if they were to withstand the variable climatic conditions during voyages that they should last from two to three years and that they should be baked very hard. It was the custom, in fact, of some manufacturers to include in the consignments a small metal hammer for breaking them up, while frequently the cook in the galley would soak them overnight.

When Richard Harrison died at an early age, the two brothers Thomas and James decided to send the cashier of the Harrison Line, Henry Wright, to manage their brother's business, and eventually he took over complete control. The firm continued to prosper, supplying ship biscuits, flour and cereal stores to sailing vessels. It maintained its offices in Mersey Chambers, where Thomas and James Harrison also had their headquarters.

In the days of sail, it was necessary for each vessel to store an excess of ships' biscuits, because if the vessel was delayed by gales or other adverse conditions and they ran out of stock at sea, it was only possible to replace by stopping a passing ship. Each ship therefore, on arrival back at her home port, usually had on board half a ton or so of surplus ships' biscuits which it was necessary for the firm to collect from the tanks before refilling with new biscuits.

These returned ships' biscuits were then advertised in various dog magazines and similar journals and came to be greatly appreciated by kennel owners for their dogs. There were neither dog biscuits nor puppy biscuits in those days. With the dwindling of the sailing ship fleets these returned ships' biscuits became scarcer and scarcer and the firm had not sufficient to meet the requirements of dog owners. It was then that Henry Wright decided to make similar biscuits with an inclusion in the dough of dried buffalo flesh. ■

SUPERSEACAT TWO - UPDATE

by The Editor

The first 9 months of operation from March to November 1998 were described in the Winter 'Bulletin'. This short article brings the situation up to date:

The pattern of disrupted **SuperSeaCat Two** (SS2) sailings continued throughout December 1998 with 20 out of a programmed 88 crossings (22·73%) being cancelled due to wave heights in the Irish Sea exceeding three metres. The **Lady of Mann** covered all the cancelled Liverpool and Douglas sailings, but was substituted on the Dublin route just once - on Tuesday 29th December, when she made the one-way passage from Liverpool. It was the intention that the *Lady* would then sail from Dublin to Douglas, but in the event she managed to entangle some chain from a fender in her port propeller and had to be dry-docked at Dublin. On Christmas Eve, SS2 wrecked the travel plans of some 450 Dublin-bound passengers by developing technical problems which delayed her sailing from 11.00 until 12.30, and she then ran into heavy seas off Anglesey which necessitated her returning to Liverpool, having aborted the crossing. What a way to start Christmas!

The New Year week-end Liverpool and Douglas SS2 sailings were a 100% 'wipe-out' due to bad weather. In sheer desperation the IOMSPCo laid on an extra Heysham crossing on the **Ben-my-Chree** on Sunday 3rd January to try and clear some of the backlog - this carried all the stranded cars and 407 passengers, which is an uncomfortably high number for the inadequate new ro-pax vessel. Some 100 or so foot passengers were still stranded on the Island and the company was forced to take the unique action of chartering a Manx Airlines plane to fly these passengers to Liverpool Speke Airport.

Between 31st December and 5th January just two crossings out of a scheduled ten operated on the Liverpool and Dublin route. 88·89% of SS2 crossings were cancelled during this six day period.

The 1998 SS2 operations have lurched from crisis to chaos and from farce to fiasco. **A total of 1,074 crossing were time-tabled for SS2 in 1998. A total of 198 (or 18·44%) were cancelled.**

Thankfully, SS2 was withdrawn for overhaul on 6th January 1999 and retired to Wright & Beyer's Bidston dry-dock to have an '*improved ride control system*' fitted. The service is set to resume on 11th March.

On 14th August, 1998, Hamish Ross, the managing director of Sea Containers' Irish Sea operations said: "*Fast ferries have operating limits which mean they tend to lose more trips to weather than conventional vessels, but of course they also bring tremendous advantages.*" The 70,000 or so intending passengers who had their travel plans wrecked in 1998 by the SS2 fiasco must be wondering just what these advantages are!

By way of conclusion, the following letter appeared in the 'Daily Telegraph' on 25th January 1999. It was written by Diana Hindley of St Laurent en Caux, France:

I and other members of the English Speaking Circle of Rouen lament the passing of the Newhaven - Dieppe ferry link.

All frequent users of the route have watched with incredulity the decline of P&O Stena's service. It seems to have coincided with the introduction of the "fast" catamaran, intended to halve the journey time. It was a disaster, regularly breaking down, being hours late or kept in port by bad weather. P&O blames a fall in passenger numbers, from a million in 1993 to 600,000 last year, for its decision to terminate the service. May I suggest that, if it were to retain the service, using a real ship, the number would soon be back above a million. ■

Haven't I heard this somewhere before ? - j.s.

CORRECTION

Malcolm McRonald writes:

In my article about the City of Dublin Steam Packet Co., I said that it seemed probable that the carriage of passengers between Liverpool and Dublin had ceased during the 1914/18 war. This statement was based on at least one source which stated this as a fact, and on my observations of the low service frequency shown in the Liverpool Dock Registers for 1916.

However, I have now discovered that the steamer **Cork**, which was torpedoed on 26th January 1918 during a sailing from Dublin to Liverpool, was carrying passengers at the time. It therefore seems certain that the carriage of passengers did not cease during the 1914/18 war.

In the interests of accuracy, I should be grateful if you could publish this correction. ■

EXTRACT FROM "*THE CRUEL SEA*"

Lockhart had already been in collision a number of times with the Russian interpreter, a small fiery individual who seemed to regard every request for stores or facilities as yet another example of the top-hatted capitalists milking the simple proletariat. On their last morning, an hour before **Saltash** sailed, a furious and all-embracing row developed.

"*You English*," the interpreter stormed at Lockhart in thunderous accents and with extraordinary venom, "*think we know damn nothing - **but I tell you we know damn all!***" ■

A "FLATS' GRAVEYARD" IN CHESTER

by L.N.R.S. Member Terry Kavanagh

According to the *Chester Standard* of 14th January 1999, plans are afoot to try to maintain the five ex-Shropshire Union Canal Company flats, or barges, that were abandoned over half a century ago in that well-known "flats' graveyard" in the North Basin at Chester's Tower Wharf. Archaeologists from British Waterways uncovered these vessels late last year and are consulting experts from York's Archaeological Trust to see whether there is any way of preserving them. It is hoped that eventually they will be put on permanent display employing techniques similar to those used on Henry VIII's flagship, the **Mary Rose**, after she was brought up from the sea bed in Portsmouth harbour in the early 1980s.

Now it is generally supposed that these flats - which were all bought in, and not built by, the Shropshire Union Company [1] - date back to the 1870s. But records show that the oldest flat in the basin, the **Linnet** with square stern, was launched in 1835 and purchased from the Runcorn shipbuilder, Philip Speakman, for £400.[2] The other square-sterned flat there, the **Herbert**, which came from him as well, in 1872, is probably just as old.[3] As for the remaining (round-sterned) flats, one, the **Coronet**, was built in 1863 and was purchased from the Oulton Lighterage Company seven years later at a cost of £100.[4] The other two, the **John** (costing £480) and the **Onward** (£400), were bought in 1864 and 1869 respectively, from John Smith, a Liverpool flatowner,[5] who also supplied the flat **Mossdale** (then called the **Ruby**) which is preserved at the Ellesmere Port Boat Museum.

At least one of these vessels, namely the **Onward**, began her career under sail. As late as 1881 she was described as a 70 ton sailing (or masted) flat employed in the Mersey river trade between Manchester Basin, Liverpool, and Ellesmere Port, her master being the Chester-born flatman Henry Edge, aged 50.[6] The **John** may well have started life as a sailing flat, too. If so, she had been cut down to a towing barge by early 1883, when she was damaged through coming into contact with a masted flat which had been anchored oposite the Manchester Basin.[7] (Fifteen years on, in July 1898, the **John**, laden with grain, sank in the Mersey. This flat, along with others, was in tow of Nicholson's steam tug, the **Heathcock**, and collided with the Liverpool Tug Company's steam tug **Reaper**, owing to the strong flood tide which was running).

The older flats, the **Linnet** and the **Herbert**, were also involved in several accidents. In 1861, for example, the former vessel was made derelict through colliding with the tug **Brother Jonathan**. She was again damaged in 1899 while in tow of the Manchester Ship Canal Company's steamer **Earl of Ellesmere**. Three years later, in 1902, the **Herbert**, loaded with about 70 tons

of general goods, was seriously damaged by striking the pierhead wall at Eastham Locks. Finally, in 1907, the **Linnet** sprang a leak while lying in Morpeth Dock, Birkenhead, and part of her cargo of galvanized sheets from Burnell's Ironworks, Ellesmere Port, was damaged.

The **Linnet**, of course, was by no means the oldest flat abandoned at Tower Wharf after the Shropshire Union Company ceased carrying in 1921. Several of the flats buried in the larger Dee Basin predate her, but these will be the subject of a further study. ■

Notes and References

1 The fully-decked 45 ton float or lighter, the **Vine**, was built by the Shropshire Union Company in 1879, at a cost of £280. *Chester City Record Office*. CR752/1/1/1.
2 *Ibid*; West Yorkshire Archive Service, Wakefield. C299/223/5.
3 CR752/1/1/1.
4 *Ibid*; SU Minute No 7210 (23/3/1870)
5 CR752/1/1/1; C299/223/5; SU Minute No 6827 (25/8/1869)
6 1881 Census: Wirral Shipping. RG11/3571
7 SU Minute No 14996 (21/2/1883)

THE LIVERPOOL NAUTICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

NOTICE BOARD

Members' Access to the Archives and Library on **Mondays** continues :

MARCH	1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th.
APRIL	12th, 19th and 26th.
MAY	10th, 17th and 24th.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Thursday, 18th March, 1999
"LOST LANDS AND SUNKEN CITIES - MARINE ARCHAEOLOGY AND FOLK LORE" (Dr D.C. Jones)

Thursday, 15th April, 1999
"TROPICAL DOCTOR AT SEA" - Dr H. Power

Thursday, 20th May, 1999
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

READERS' LETTERS

from L.N.R.S. Member G. Holmes of Wallasey

A LOG-JAM ON THE "FLORENCE HOLT"

The article '*Captain Charles Carries Molasses*' in *The Bulletin* (Vol. 42, No 1) brought back memories of an episode which occurred during my own deep-sea career.

In 1961 I was Second Mate on the **Florence Holt** of the Guinea Gulf Line. In April we called at Abidjan. On our arrival the agent informed the captain that there were three heavy lifts for Antwerp in the booked cargo. It turned out that these were three logs with a total weight of over 90 tons!

The **Florence Holt** had two heavy derricks - 75 tons forward and 40 tons aft. As the logs had been in the water for a considerable period, it was decided that the heaviest would have to be stowed on the foredeck - loaded by the 75 ton derrick. Unfortunately this derrick had not been used for over a year and its use meant that every other hatch on the foredeck had to be stopped as the winches were required for steam guys etc. All hands were turned to, the derrick was broken out and the log was loaded on the port side of the foredeck. This monster weighed about 43 tons when put into the water. It was about 50ft long and had a diameter of over 6ft. The core of the tree had rotted due to its immersion and it was possible to insert one's arm up to the shoulder in the hole in the centre.

I was given the job of loading the other two logs - one on each side of the after deck. The 40 ton derrick had been used fairly frequently and was quickly rigged - but it meant than no other derrick on the after deck could be used. The operation of loading the logs and other cargo took four days. Most of this time was taken up breaking out and stowing the two heavy derricks.

We duly sailed and arrived in Antwerp towards the end of May. We docked in the late evening and the majority of the crew were due to be relieved the following day. Accordingly, a 'docking-night party' took place which lasted until the early hours. At about 07.00 I awoke to the sound of steam winches. Going out on deck I was informed by a very hung-over third mate that we had been working cargo since 04.00! I then mentioned that we needed to rig the heavy derricks to unload the large logs. The reply was: '*Go and look on the foredeck*.' I arrived there just in time to see a man with a large chainsaw cutting our *megalog* into manageable chunks!

The freight on these logs was far less than the cost of loading them. As we were the first Guinea Gulf vessel bound for Antwerp to call at Abidjan for several years, I can only assume that someone saw us coming! ■

NOTES AND QUERIES

DUMPING OF SEWAGE SLUDGE IN THE IRISH SEA CEASES

On Tuesday 29th December 1998 the Mersey's last sludge ship, the **Consortium 1**, made her final sailing out to the deposit grounds beyond the North West Light Float. A European directive has outlawed the practice of dumping sewage sludge at sea, and the ships are to be replaced by incineration and recycling plants.

The other two remaining sludge ships operating in UK waters, Thames Water's **Hounslow** and **Bexley**, also ceased operations at the end of 1998. The Mersey service began in 1897.

The **Consortium 1's** fleet mate, the **Gilbert J. Fowler**, has been laid up out of use at the Sandon Dock base for some time.

A new sludge treatment works has opened at Shell Green, Widnes, which has been constructed to ensure compliance with the European Union's Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive.

As for the future of the sludge carriers, it has been suggested that they could finish their days taking fresh water to the some of the smaller islands in the Caribbean - after a good clean, of course! ■

LAUNCH DATES AND YARD NUMBERS

Malcolm McRonald is asking for assistance with some yard numbers and launch dates to complete the data in a book he is writing. Can any Member assist - if so please contact the Editor:

ENNISKILLEN built in 1854 for the North West of Ireland Union Steam Company by Thomas Vernon & Sons of Liverpool. **Launch Date and Yard Number required.**

BLENHEIM built in 1848 for Langtrys & Co by Tod & MacGregor, Meadowside, Glasgow. **Launch Date unknown**; yard no. 50.

WILLIAM McCORMICK (or M'Cormick) built 1853 for the North West of Ireland Union Steam Company by Alexander Stephen & Sons, Kelvinhaugh, Glasgow. **Launch Date unknown**; yard no. 5.

ARBUTUS built in 1854 for nominees of the London & North Western Railway Company by T. Toward, Newcastle on Tyne. **Launch Date and Yard Number unknown.**

EXCELSIOR built in 1855 for a Belfast-based consortium by Coutts & Parkinson, Willington Quay-on-Tyne. Launch date 22.11.1854 - **Yard Number unknown.**

SEMAPHORE built in 1855 for Belfast Steam Ship Company by Alexander Stephen & Sons, Kelvinhaugh, Glasgow. **Launch date unknown**; yard no. 10.

TORCA built in 1875 for J.S. Campbell of Dublin by T. Grendon & Co., of Drogheda, with engines by J. Taylor & Co., of Birkenhead. Launch date 24th March 1875, **yard number unknown**. ■

LOCATION OF SOUTH MERSEY SHIPYARDS

L.N.R.S. Member A.D. Evans of Guildford is seeking information about the exact location of the following shipbuilding yards which were in the Toxteth / Wapping / Brunswick area :
Potters-Roydens, R & J. Evans and John Jones. ■

THE FATE OF THE "WILLIAM GREGSON"

D.H. Walker of Boston, Lincs, has written to the Society asking for information about the fate of the famous red fire boat, the **William Gregson**. Can we help? ■

THE MERCHANT NAVY CONVOY MEMORIAL

In his Chairman's letter in the Winter *Bulletin*, Graeme Cubbin described the inauguration and consecration of the Merchant Navy Convoy Memorial at Alrewas, Staffordshire. Reproduced below is a photograph which Graeme took of the plaque at the Memorial:

WOMEN AND THE SEA NETWORK

The Society has recently received a letter from Ms Jo Stanley, the Co-ordinator of the Women and the Sea Network, enclosing the latest Newsletter.
If any Members would like further information, Ms Stanley can be contacted at:

The Women and the Sea Network,
c/o Research Department,
National Maritime Museum,
Greenwich, London SE10 9NF
E-mail: jo.stanley@dial.pipex.com

MORE ABOUT THE "PRINCESS VICTORIA" (1)

L.N.R.S. Member Ron Evans has supplied some additional details about the Princess Victoria (1), which was mentioned in the Winter, 1997 'Bulletin':

Originally this vessel was to have been ordered from Harland & Wolff, but in 1889 they had too much work in hand, and so the contract was offered to Wm. Denny & Bros. at Dumbarton. The builders were given a free hand over everything except dimensions and price and engaged in extensive tank testing to determine the best hull form. Captain Campbell, who was to command her, supervised her building very closely. Campbell insisted that although the steamer was to be primarily a cattle steamer with some passengers, the fact that cattle were aboard must be concealed from the passengers
The **Princess Victoria** was intended for the Larne - Stranraer run. Price : £46,500 to be paid in four instalments. On trials she was required to make 19 knots between the Cloch and Cumbrae lights, carrying 100 tons deadweight on a 9' draught. Delivery date was to be 31st December, 1889. ■

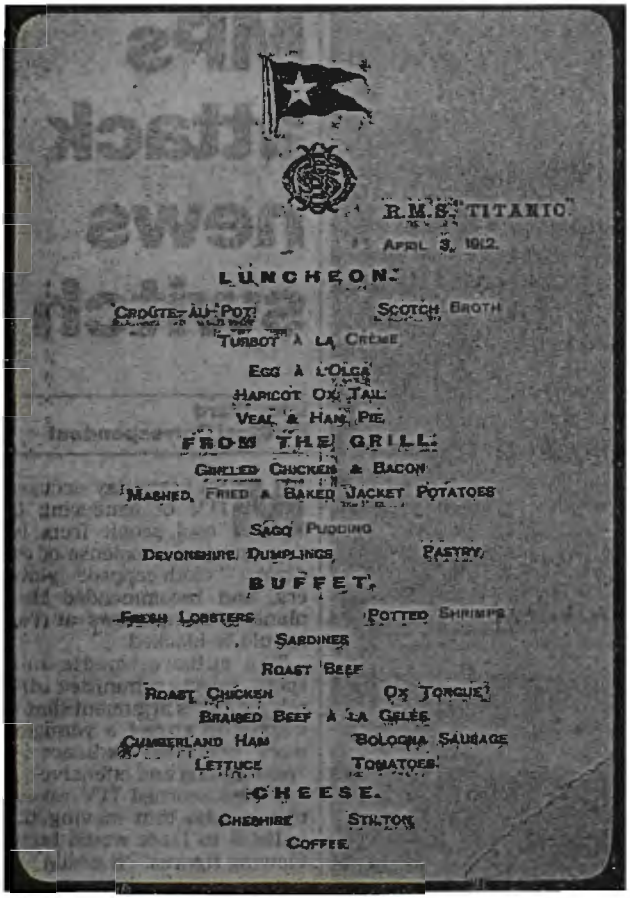
AND FINALLY .....

"TITANIC" FEVER PUSHES UP PRICES TENFOLD

A pair of menus from the **Titanic** were sold for £19,550 a few weeks ago, almost ten times the estimate, as feverish enthusiasm for disaster memorabilia swept through a Christie's auction room.

Also in the sale was a gold pocket watch handed over by a passenger, Albert Caldwell, to a crew member as a bribe to buy him, his wife and his child, a place in a lifeboat.

Memento mori ..... One of the two menus that together fetched nearly £20,000 :



R.M.S. TITANIC

APRIL 9, 1912.

LUNCHEON.

CROÛTE-AU-POT — SCOTCH BROTH

TURBOT À LA CRÈME

EGG À L'OLGA

HARICOT OX TAIL

VEAL & HAM PIE

FROM THE GRILL.

GRILLED CHICKEN & BACON

MASHED, FRIED & BAKED JACKET POTATOES

SAGO PUDDING

DEVONSHIRE DUMPLINGS — PASTRY

BUFFET.

FRESH LOBSTERS — POTTED SHRIMPS

SARDINES

ROAST BEEF

ROAST CHICKEN — OX TONGUE

BRAISED BEEF À LA GELÉE

CUMBERLAND HAM — BOLOGNA SAUSAGE

LETTUCE — TOMATOES

CHEESE.

CHESHIRE — STILTON

COFFEE.