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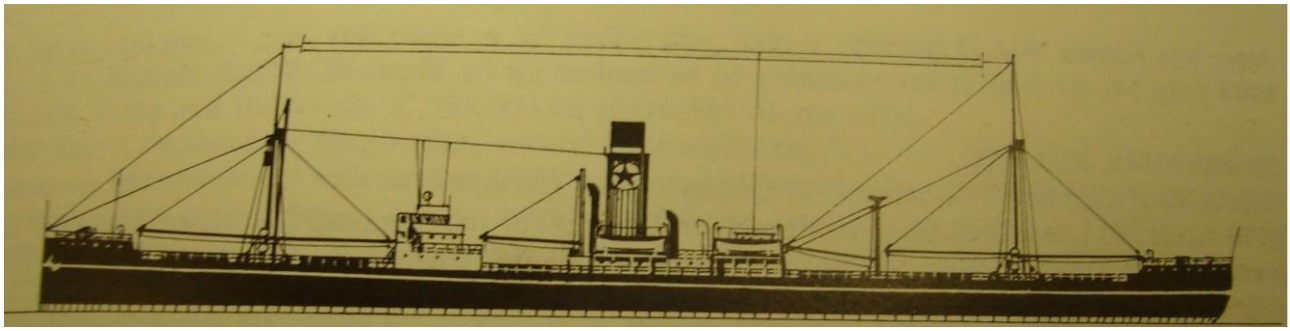

The refrigerated cargo liner ss **Royal Star** was built in Belfast by Workman, Clarke and Co. Her dimensions were 450 x 58.5 x 37.1 feet with a gross tonnage of 7,900 (4,880 net) On 20 April, 1944 she was torpedoed by enemy aircraft and sunk N.E. of Algiers

Brocklebank's **Mahseer** is featured on page 5. Here pictured in 1948, on her maiden voyage

The fully restored classic yacht **Nahlin** at Dartmouth in July 2010.
Is also featured on page 20
Clip taken with owners approval from www,youtube.com/topcamerman

The Liverpool Nautical Research Society

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MEMORIES OF RATS NOXAS

By William Bones

When I mention (occasionally) that for two years, two months, and two days, I sailed in a vessel called **'Saxon Star'**, even men quite senior gaze at me in astonishment—provided, of course, they have not heard it all before.

'The WHAT Star?' they ask, as though I had said I had sailed in Captain Cook's **Endeavour**. They are not aware, these young fellows, that at one time it was customary to name Blue Star Line ships after Trojans and Romans, Vikings and Normans—and Saxons. It was later that ships came to be christened after the place they would trade to: Australia and New Zealand, Melbourne and Auckland etc. With the latest ships the style has changed once more. I suppose the last ship to be named after a tribe (if that is the word) is **Canadian Star**.

But Saxon? The name does indeed have a fine, seafaring ring about it (unlike the names of some box boats I could mention). When one hears **Saxon Star** for the first time, the mind conjures up visions of tall masts, elaborate clipper bows with figure heads, tailboards, gilded scrolls. Yet the last ship of that name was not so ancient, really. She was built in Belfast in 1942 as the **Empire Strength**, along the lines, I have been told, of a pre-war Bank Boat. But, unlike the Bank Boats, she was fully-refrigerated in the modern manner. Unlike most refrigerated ships before her, and many built later, she did not have her cargo spaces lined with brine pipes, but had the brine pipes in the nest in separate compartments, with electric fans to drive the cool air through her cargo.

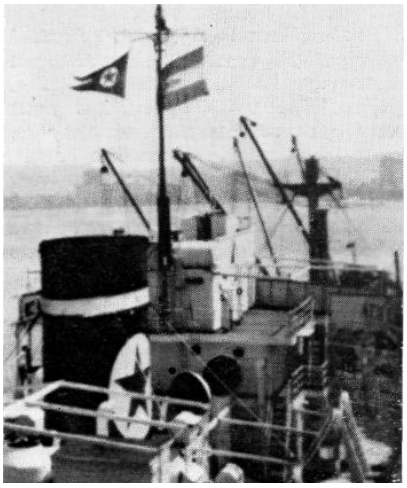
She had five hatches, only one tween deck, two derricks to each hatch, and was what many engineers referred to as a steamship with a main propulsion diesel, for although her main engine was a Harland B and W, all her auxiliaries, steering gear, and cargo winches were driven by steam.

Neat little craft

She was a very neat, trim-looking little craft, of 7355 gross tons, flush decked with a raked plate stem, rounded bridge front, and full cruiser stern.

Far from having tall masts and yards, her two masts were very stumpy, and did not even carry topmasts. Over her bridge she had the wartime signal mast known as a Christmas tree, from which her flags flew bravely, if sootily, as they were very close to the top of her squat funnel. Her decks were of steel, but the bridge deck and the deck below—the Captain's Deck—were covered with black bitumastic. She hurtled around the oceans at twelve knots on a good day, ten or eleven more often, eight or nine quite frequently, and almost nothing in a strong head wind and swell. But she carried her cargoes well, and provided employment for what would now seem an enormous crew, usually about forty-eight men all told

Her navigational gear was simple, consisting of two magnetic compasses, an echo sounder which rarely worked, and a DF set of considerable antiquity and doubtful reliability. No gyro compass, radar, or any of your fancy modern gadgets.



'Saxon Star' at Durban in 1953

At Circular Quay, Sydney, in 1954.
The famous Opera House now occupies this site

Her accommodation, however, was not at all bad for her time, and she even boasted an Officers' smoke room. Air conditioning was provided by round portholes in every cabin, and at least one electric fan per room. The cadets' cabin, which bore over its door the rather quaint sign, 'Apprentices', was situated above somewhere rather hot, and as its one porthole faced aft the cadets usually slept out on deck when in the tropics. This, of course, was very healthy—until the rains came in the middle of one's slumbers.

Pride and joy

Though tiny by modern standards this cabin was our pride and joy. When I joined the ship for the first time, in Salford Dock, Manchester, I was the junior cadet, and my mate went to some pains to lay down for me the very high standard of cleanliness that he expected me to keep it in. Though senior to me, he was a bit younger, and not much bigger. So after a certain amount of discussion on the matter, the work of maintaining these unquestionably excellent standards was shared by us both. I remember him making a truly magnificent job of our small mahogany desk, which he stripped right off to the bare wood and then frenchpolished until it looked better than new. We bought the french polish for it ourselves too.

Our bunks were one above the other, with blue curtains and bunklights which we discovered were made of copper. These, together with other bits of brass in the room, we polished to a brilliant gleam, often in our spare time, especially before entertaining guests in port. The cabin floor was composition, painted red, and I remember a certain Chief Steward becoming incensed when my mate 'found' us a carpet square—but after various altercations we were allowed to keep it.

There were no bars on that ship, no films, no television; yet life at sea seemed to be lived at a much more communal level than it is today. Ships spent longer at sea and longer in port then, and people onboard provided their own entertainment. They spent a lot of time in each other's cabins, yarning, and hobbies were indulged in to a great degree. Socks had to be darned in those days, and mending, together with the ironing of whites, took a lot of one's spare time.

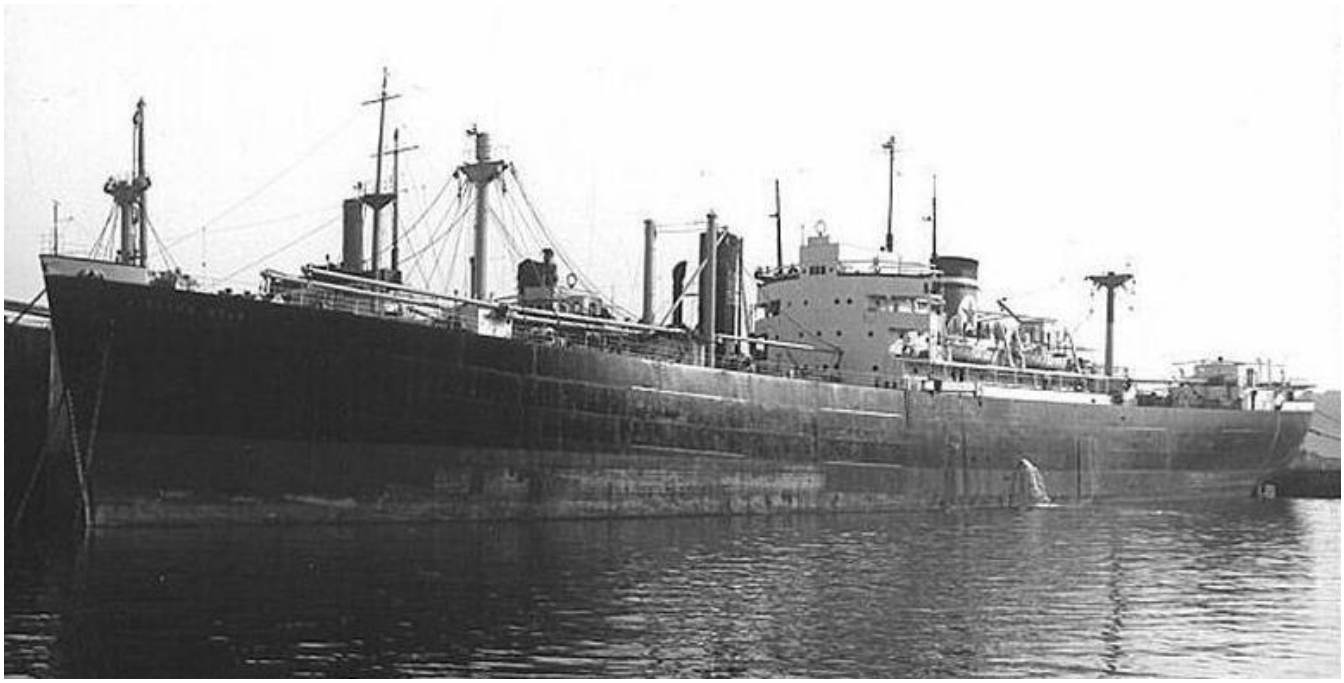
In those balmy days cadets were able to supplement their princely salaries (twelve pounds a month in the second year) by earning overtime at the rate of one and sixpence an hour. Many were the happy, often hilarious, evenings spent cleaning and painting holds, repairing damaged insulation, cleaning bilges, battening-out for future freezer cargoes, and painting cabins and alleyways, for formica bulkheads were practically unheard of. Wads of cotton waste, or a four-inch brush bent on to the end of a bamboo manhelp, were much used, as paint rollers were not then in vogue. They may have been used ashore, but not at sea. These toilsome tasks were not considered drudgery, and we never regarded ourselves as cheap labour. They were a useful form of income, usually undertaken in a light-hearted spirit, and some of the yarns we heard from the sailors whilst working with them made our hair stand on end. In addition, it was part of our education.

Friends for life

I mentioned the entertainment of guests. This was quite a feature of life in port, and I still think our greatest effort in that direction was when we entertained the whole of the Port Curtis Sailing Club of Gladstone, Queensland, to an evening aboard in the cadets' cabin. Cadets in those days were not officially allowed liquor, but this ruling could usually be got around provided discretion was used, and on this occasion our guests were more than generous. I made friends then who are still my friends today. The Port Curtis Sailing Club had made us so welcome, and treated us with so much kindness and hospitality, that we felt we must make an effort to reciprocate, and our party was the result. Happy days!

Saxon Star, as already mentioned, began life in Belfast as the **Empire Strength**, armed with a four-inch gun down aft and numerous anti-aircraft guns besides. Ten years later the guns had long gone, but the magazines for the ammunition were still there, as were the gunners' quarters, with notices on the doors saying that the door must not be shut when the vessel was in a danger zone (in case it jammed shut with the occupants inside). All the cabin doors had crash panels in the lower half, which could be easily kicked out if the occupant were trapped within, and each cabin porthole had a hand-rail outside, to enable a man to haul himself out if necessary. One still came across grey wartime paint here and there, and the compasses were surrounded by elaborate apparatus to shield them from the effects of the degaussing gear, the purpose of which was to

protect the ship from magnetic mines. During the war she voyaged all over the world, but she must have come through unscathed as she is not mentioned in Taffrail's book, Blue Star Line at War (recently republished).



Saxon Star

At a time quite early in her career, she was involved in a collision in Port Phillip, near Melbourne, with an Australian ship called **Iron Monarch**. I have been told that one of the lawyers engaged in the subsequent court case was a brother of Mr (later Sir) Robert Menzies, the distinguished Australian Prime Minister.

Last Voyage

The **Empire Strength** was renamed **Saxon Star** in 1949, the second Blue Star ship to bear the name. Unlike most others given one of the old-fashioned names after the war, hers was not changed until sold out of the Company in 1961. Her twin sister, the **Empire Castle** of 1943, became the **Gothic Star** in 1946, but this was changed to **Nelson Star** in 1947, and again, to **Patagonia Star**, in 1958. (The former **Patagonia Star** reverted to her original name of **Columbia Star** about this time, having been with Lamport & Holt's for a spell in the meantime as the **Dryden**.) The new owner of the old **Saxon Star**, D L Street of Newport, Monmouthshire, named her the **Redbrook**, and she sailed as a general cargo tramp under this name until 1965, when she passed to the Greeks and became the **E Evangelia**. She was wrecked in the Black Sea on 19 October 1968, while on passage in ballast from Rijeka to Contanza. She was declared a total loss.

Though the Company's trade routes in the early fifties were more defined than they are today, she visited several ports off the beaten track. Not many Blue Star ships these days call at Manchester or Middlesbrough, where she loaded.

Tenerife was the port for bunkers, and she would then go out to the Cape, calling at all the ports from Cape Town to Beira. In Beira she loaded copper for Port Kembla, and usually called at the full range of Australian ports, often going on to New Zealand. We called at Galveston in Texas once, and sailed from Hamilton, Bermuda, one Christmas Eve, that fairytale town bright with coloured lights and Christmas trees.

But how does this nostalgic little piece get its title? Well, in the early fifties it was considered humorous to say a name backwards—and seamen are nothing if not humorous.

AN IGNOMINIOUS END

By Captain A.C Sprigings

This extract is taken from the book 'Beyond the Mersey', and is published with the Author's kind permission.

*[Editor's Note: Brocklebank's **Mahseer** was built in 1948 by William Hamilton & Co. 3 Scotch boilers and single reduction turbines gave a speed of 15 knots. With gross registered tonnage of 8,961 her overall length was 508ft. with a beam of 67ft.]*

In October of 1974 my wish was granted and I was given the title of Operations Manager. It was a peculiar title really because it only applied to the 'conventional tonnage'. That is, the residue of the Brocklebank fleet and a few of the Port Line vessels seconded to the Indian trade. Almost as soon as I was appointed a further spate of ship selling took place and things were beginning to look fairly desperate.

In the June of the following year I was required to take a trip to Karachi to supervise the beaching of one of our vessels the S.S. **Mahseer**, which had been sold to the Pakistani breakers for scrap.

This proved to be far more difficult than anyone had been led to believe because firstly it was very late in the season with the south west Monsoon about to start and the Master and crew of the vessel were convinced that they were being sent to their deaths.

I arrived ahead of the ship and spent the first few days discussing how it was to be done and being taken out to see the area in which the beaching would take place. This was known as Gadani Beach and when I arrived there I was amazed to see ninety ships already beached and being slowly cut up into manageable pieces that could be transported to the smelting plant.

This saga began in the Marble Arch Office when I was visited by a

representative of the buyers. He was a very interesting character who unfortunately was an alcoholic and could not conduct his business without several sips from a flask that he carried with him.

I must admit that I was not too sure that we would ever get our money from the sale because one tends to be suspicious of doing business with people who smell strongly of drink at nine o'clock in the morning. Despite these misgivings a deal was struck and the details of the beaching were discussed. It was during one of the meetings, we had three or four, that it was decided that I should go to Karachi to establish an agency to represent owners interests rather than buyers.

As I had mentioned the beaching had been arranged to take place in June and this was considered to be very late in the season because the south west monsoon was becoming well established by that time. Actually I think we had rather hoped to have got her there by the end of May but because of engine trouble she was making a very slow passage from U.K. I arrived out there about three days before the ship and consequently had plenty of time to get things ready. I had long discussions with the pilot who would be doing the job and he was not at all certain that it was possible because of the large swell that had begun. He was a very experienced Sikh and I could see that if he said no, we were going to be in breach of contract. He finally agreed to reserve judgement pending the arrival of the ship and if all was well he would consider trying it.

ss **Mahseer** in the River Hooghly – picture by LNRS Member J Pottinger

The message arrived next day that **Mahseer** had arrived at the anchorage off Karachi and I boarded a launch to go out and discuss details with the Captain.

The journey out in the launch took about thirty minutes and the swell got

steeper and steeper, by the lime we got alongside we were rising and falling so much that one minute we were level with her deck and the next we could see her bilge keel. Probably some twenty five feet of vertical movement as each swell past under us. After carefully judging the timing of the swell I jumped from the launch at the moment when we were level with her deck and fortunately landed on board.

Somewhat shaken by this experience I then had to set about convincing the Captain that it would be quite safe to thrust his ship at the beach without fear of any accident. He was very far from convinced but agreed at least to have a try. The biggest worry was the state of the engine because it was certainly on its last legs and the Chief Engineer could only promise a maximum of 80 revolutions and even that for only a few hours because they were nearly out of fuel oil. Having listened to this tale of woe it was now time for me to try and board the launch once more and get back to the office.

Getting on board was equally exciting and depended very much on the skill of the helmsman, who managed with great dexterity to bring her alongside right on the top of the swell and all I had to do was step across. I shudder to think what would have happened if I had missed my footing at that moment!

The following morning the pilot boarded **Mahseer** and they set off for Gadani Beach, some thirty nine miles up the coast. I waited for a while and then drove up there to be ready for the actual beaching. I had the agent with me and we arrived at this desolate spot in an otherwise featureless desert, to be greeted by a motley array of offices all standing on stilts which kept them from filling up with sand.

We made our way to one of these and after climbing up an old ship's companionway which had obviously been taken from one of the wrecks, entered an office which would have done justice to a place in Dickens. There were a couple of '*Babus*' scratching away at ledgers and most incongruously, every now and then picking up a radio telephone to discuss something with the gang at the waters edge.

We were offered seats in this Office to await the arrival of our ship but as it was so hot we decided to wait outside until she was sighted. I was suddenly aware of great excitement within the office and calls of "Sahib, Sahib, your ship is not coming!" I rushed up the steps and grabbed a radio telephone and called the Captain to ask what was the matter. He replied that the weather was too bad and that he was going back to Karachi.

I was speechless because the weather was certainly not going to improve and the next try would be even worse. But I had not heard the worst because it seemed that the officers and crew were on the brink of mutiny and were refusing to risk their lives. There was no point in remaining at the Beach with the ship having turned tail so I set off for Karachi myself and yet another trip out to the ship.

This time the boarding was not quite so alarming but the reception I got more than made up for this. The Captain had virtually washed his hands of the whole affair and he advised me that none of the officers wanted to be party to another attempt. This was not going to be easy but nevertheless it had to be done because we were under contract to deliver the ship to the beach and the alternative of leaving her at anchor until the change of monsoon, some four months, later was just not feasible.

I therefore asked the Captain to muster all the officers on the boat deck and I would address them and try to allay their fears. This proved easier than I had first thought because most of their fears were groundless and based on the premise that the ship had a keel, something similar to that of a yacht and therefore when she ran onto the Beach she would fall over and they would all be thrown off and drowned in the surf. I could hardly believe that I was hearing this from people who made their living from going to sea. Admittedly the deck officers knew this was not the fact but they were in favour of supporting any action that would prevent them having to try again.

After some fairly tough talking I managed to convince them that all would be well but then the Chief Engineer chimed in with the fact that he was running out of distilled water for the boilers. I suggested that in that case he should put salt water in them because this was a one way trip and it didn't matter what happened to the boilers once we had grounded her.

He was very unhappy about this and was sure that it would be only as a very last resort that he would ever contemplate such drastic action. After what seemed ages I finally got them all to agree to have one final attempt the next morning and taking my leave of them I jumped into the launch and went back to my hotel to await developments.

First thing the following morning I again set off for Gadani Beach to await the arrival of the doomed ship. At about midday, around the point she came, smoke pouring from her funnel. I noted that the swell was much larger than the day before but the wind had also strengthened and was whipping up the sea and making the spume fly.

To ensure that a beaching is successful the vessel must be trimmed as nearly as possible to the angle of the shelve of the beach. This had been done in the case of **Mahseer** but of course it is not possible to allow for the rise and fall created by the swell and this was posing a problem.

As she commenced her final run in a large swell picked her up and she seemed to rush in towards us then suddenly she staggered and slewed sideways across the waves. For an instant I thought we had lost her, but she seemed to shake herself and turn the full 180 degrees until she was pointing out to sea again.

This of course meant that she was now trimmed entirely the wrong way for a shelving beach and in a matter of moments she had grounded with her

stern to the beach. There was not another revolution left in her engine to try and move her again, so there she stayed at least 1000 feet out of position, the wrong way round and completely helpless.

The buyer, who had been witness to the whole episode, was jumping up and down saying that this was simply useless and he was not going to pay, but I reminded him that the contract called for the ship to be beached but it didn't say which way round and therefore he would have to pay. Whilst all this was taking place, over the noise of the surf, I heard another deep booming sound. Looking out to sea I could see that the bow of **Mahseer**, being afloat, was swinging round to starboard and hitting the stern of a large tanker that had been beached next to her. It was a very eerie sound and because of the distance involved, it was possible to see the two ships hitting together before the sound reached us. It was in fact a blessing in disguise because the tanker being the right way round would prove the means of escape for the Officers and crew provided they could jump across each time the two ships met.

I called the Captain on the "Walkie Talkie" and suggested that this would be the way to disembark his Officers and crew, all 68 of them. He was not best pleased by this advice but there was no other possible alternative with the tide still rising. So with great trepidation the escape began. Thinking about it now I realise how lucky we were not to have any serious injuries because once aboard what remained of the tanker they had to make their way up to her bow which was standing about fifty feet above the waters edge. They had then to crawl through into her chain locker and down to where a hole had been cut in the bow plates and then climb down a wire ladder into the water. You can imagine that having assured them all the day before that nothing could go wrong I came in for a lot of stick but as I pointed out 'the best made plans of mice and men gang aft agley'. After all they were all safe even if they were a bit wet!

The final corollary to this tale is even more bizarre because when we had all left the scene, in the middle of the night the high tide proved even higher than the tide we had beached her on and she took off, all on her own and beached herself on a shoal some three miles out to sea! We of course were not aware of this and it was some two years later that I had a visit from the same buyer's representative with a handful of photographs to prove it. He said it had taken them two years to dismantle her on the reef and he was simply wishing to prove that they were not the rogues I had first taken them for!

REMEMBER THOSE DAYS .....

From 1970 and also 1990, these are a sample of events selected from the archives, and published by kind permission of Sea Breezes.

January to March, 1970

In October, whilst on passage from Hull to Portland, Oregon the Royal Mail motorship **Loch Loyal** experienced a major engine room fire which destroyed the port switchboard, main cables and extensively buckled plating in the engine room. The Hamburg-Amerika liner **Thuringia** took off the passengers and all but 12 of the crew; subsequently the fire was extinguished and the crew rejoined the ship, passengers being taken on to Cristobal by the **Thuringia** to continue their journeys. Meanwhile **Loch Loyal** was towed to the Azores by the Dutch tug **Tasman Zee**; and then by another Dutch tug the **Elbe** to Belfast for repair by Harland & Wolff

The **Challey** (2,175 tons gross), a member of the Stephenson, Clarke fleet since she was built in 1957 is a good example of a trunk deck tanker, but has been sold to Italian buyers and is now trading under the new name of **Filiendi.** She was one of S-C's first tankers having being completed by the Grangemouth Dockyard Co. in September, 1957 and has an 8-cylinder Polar oil engine giving a speed of 11 knots.

Liverpool's overseas passenger traffic has suffered a serious blow with the decision of CP Ships to dispose of their passenger liner **Empress of England** (24, 467 gross tons). This reduces the fleet to only the **Empress of Canada** (25,615 gross tons); meaning that only four ships carry significant numbers of overseas passengers from Liverpool. The **Empress of Canada**, Elder Dempster's **Aureol** and the Aznar Lines' **Monte Anaga** and **Monte Umbe**, the two latter serving the Canary Islands.

American Export Isbrandtsen Lines report the sale of the **Constitution** (23,754 gross tons); built in 1951 by the Bethlehem Steel Co., Quincy, Mass., and a twin-screw steam turbine ship having the unusual feature of an attractive counter stern, she has a speed of 22½ knots and is fully air-conditioned. American President Lines have sold their **President Roosevelt** (18,920 gross tons), also to the Chandris Group. The latter was built by the Federal Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Co., of Kearny, NJ. In 1944. Again a twin-screw steam turbine powered vessel her speed is 20 knots; she also is fully air-conditioned and is stabilised by the Flume system.

The former Royal Mail cargo motorship **Escalante** (7,791 gross tons) recently sold to Greek buyers, has not lasted very long under her new owners. Renamed **Manes P**. she was driven aground in stormy weather near St. John, N.B., and after several unsuccessful attempts at refloating, is to be sold for breaking up.

Work is in progress on the new headquarters for the Mersey Division, Royal Naval Reserve, at Princes Half-Tide Dock, Liverpool. The entire project, estimated to cost over £200,000, is scheduled for completion early in 1971. The new headquarters will replace the static drill ship **HMS Eaglet**, a Racehorse Class frigate built in 1918 as **HMS Sir Bevis** and renamed in 1926 as headquarters.

January to March, 1990

For Det Forenede Dampskibs-Selskab, Akties, to give the 134-year old Copenhagen shipping firm its full name, the latter part of 1989 will be a period best forgotten. First the **Tor Britannia**, bound from Harwich to Gothenburg, had trouble with English football supporters, one of whom went over the side and was drowned. Next 79 dogs, through no fault of the company, suffocated in the cases in which they had been consigned. A fire on the **Tor Scandinavia** cost the lives of two passengers. Then whilst outward bound from Hamburg to Harwich and nine miles south of Heligoland, the company's **Hamburg** was in collision with the container ship **Nordic Stream**; although there were Force 9 winds visibility was said to be good. The bows of the **Nordic Stream** penetrated the Mayfair Lounge werein some of **Hamburg's** passengers were awaiting the start of a fancy dress competition. Two British tourists and a German Customs Officer died, and another British passenger was found seriously injured on the foredeck of the **Nordic Stream**

"The Dock" is a maritime museum project telling the story of steel ship building. It will open in Barrow early this year when a notable exhibit will be the bell of the First World War battleship **Vanguard**. Having been built by Vickers at Barrow in 1909, she fought at the Battle of Jutland, but did not suffer any damage or casualties. On 9 July, 1917, whilst at anchor in Scapa Flow she suddenly blew up. Eight hundred and four men lost their lives, only two survived.

From a bell to a propeller, one of the four which drove Blue Riband holder **Lusitania** until her tragic end in 1915 as victim of a torpedo from **U20**. Acquired by Merseyside Maritime Museum, it was due to arrive there from Pembroke Dock under police escort, 82 years after the Cunarder first sailed from Liverpool to New York in September, 1907. The propeller was salvaged in 1982

Over 33 years ago a link with another tragic Cunarder surfaced. On September 5, 1956, the company's **Saxonia**, anchored in the Mersey, made to weigh preparatory to moving to the Landing Stage. As her port anchor came up, so did another one. Both anchors had to be laid out by derrick on the deck of the Mersey Docks & Harbour Board's salvage vessel **Salvor** before they could be disentangled. Cleaning revealed the Lloyd's ID Numbers, which turned out to be those of the **Lancastria.** According to Cunard records she had lost it in the river in 1924!

Following negotiations which to the layman might seem more appropriate to an Eastern Bazaar than Whitehall, the M.O.D. has agreed to sell the withdrawn frigate **Plymouth** to the Warship Preservation Trust for £205,000, and an appeal has been launched to raise the money. A unit of the nine-strong "Rothesay" class of Modified Type-12 first-rate anti submarine frigates, she was built in 1961 at H.M. Dockyard, Devonport. She played an offensive role in the Falklands conflict, shooting down two enemy aircraft and damaging others. The surrender of South Georgia was signed in her wardroom, and she was the first ship to enter San Carlos water.

PROPOSED SUPER LINERS - 1950

By LNRS Member Gordon Bodey

In September 1950 it was announced by Mr Walter Ballard, speaking in Washington, that the company of which he was vice-president, Liberty Liners Inc., had drawn up a proposal to build two super liners, each of 105,000 tons. He stated that the proposal had considerable support from U.S. Government officials and that, *"they* [the company] *had not been discouraged anywhere along the line".* He further stated that the company was awaiting a decision by the Federal Maritime Board on an application filed in July for a $120 million construction subsidy toward the estimated total building cost of $200 million (then about £71,430,000); with Liberty Liners finding the difference. Mr Ballard compared the requested construction subsidy to the cost to the U.S. Government of hiring Cunard's two 'Queens' as troop carriers in WWII, which he stated as $150 million (about £57,143,000). He did not put a cost on the hiring of the two proposed liners for the same purpose.

The two liners were to be 1250ft long, 144ft wide, and have a draught of 34ft. Their cruising speed would be 34 knots, but they would be capable of a top speed of 38 knots. When built they would each be able to accommodate 10,000 passengers in a single class. If built commercially, completion would take three years, but in view of their importance in a defence role, it would be possible with the help of the U.S. Navy to complete them in two years. In fact, Mr Ballard reported, the U.S. Defence Department had studied the plans and was enthusiastic about the project.

Mr Ballard went on to say that the liners could bring about considerable savings in transatlantic fares: with 5,000 passengers on board, a one-way passage would cost $100 (then £36), and the company would still show a profit; with 7,500 passengers the fare could be reduced to $60. He estimated that the number of American tourists visiting Europe would rise rapidly from 400,000 in 1950 to some two million [many of them, apparently, by the new ships] per year, and that the ships could operate without U.S. Government subsidies.

In the event of war the ships could be converted 'overnight', and that each one would be able to carry up to 60,000 troops. He said, *"All we would have to do would be to take the spreads off the beds, and each liner would be able to carry 30,000 troops sleeping in eight-hour shifts. Therefore, it is obvious that by installing double-tiered bunks they could each carry 60,000".*

In addition to their troop-carrying capacity, each ship's recreation spaces would become aircraft hangars capable of holding two hundred fighter aircraft, these being used *en route* to provide air cover, then unloaded in Europe. He envisaged that 2,000 aircraft and 600,000 troops could be ferried to Europe in thirty days.

To facilitate the use of the aircraft on trooping voyages, and subsequently if used as fighting ships in time of war, the funnels would be telescopic, the ventilators removable, and the masts could be lowered, thus providing a flight deck some 800ft

long and 140ft wide. No details were given of life-saving provision for over 60,000 troops and crew in the event of a disaster occurring whilst at sea.

However, another scheme, albeit on a much smaller scale, was already in progress and was to emerge as the ***United States*** less that two years later, having cost some $77 million. Capable of carrying 14,000 troops should the need arise, and able to pass through the Panama Canal, she had a speed of 35 knots and an estimated top speed of 42 knots. Unfortunately, she was already entering obsolescence by the time of her maiden voyage in July 1952 as 'progress' in the form of jet air travel rapidly developed. The ***United States*** was withdrawn from service in 1969 due to commercial considerations.

Although Mr Ballard's innovative and imaginative scheme was not realised, its commercial *raison d'etre* has been amply vindicated in the form of the very numerous, and often very large, cruise liners that now transport passengers by the millions per year.

Sources:
Report in Lloyd's List, 7th September, 1950
'Sail, Steam, and Splendour', B.S. Miller

SOCIETY VISIT TO LIVERPOOL COASTGUARD STATION

By Bill Ogle

Somehow the weather forecast for Thursday 11th November, 2010 was appropriate for a visit to H.M. Coastguard station by 15 members of the society.

Parking on the sea front adjacent to the impressively modern building we were very aware that “southwest veering west gale 8 to storm 10, occasionally violent storm 11” was imminent – in fact conditions in the Irish Sea peaked some 12 hours later with average wind speed of 44 knots and average wave height of 19 feet!

A fascinating introductory talk covered development of the Coast Guard Service from its earliest records in 1822 (although it possibly began some 60 years earlier) with a prime responsibility for the apprehension of smugglers and ship wreckers, through being incorporated in a variety of Governmental Bodies to establishment of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency in 1998. This was followed by a DVD which clearly showed how H.M. Coastguard now operates within the overall responsibilities of the M.C.A.

The specific objectives of HM Coastguard are to:

- respond to requests for assistance from, or for, vessels or persons in distress or potential distress, including those vessels or persons missing at sea or on the coastline
- respond in conjunction with the MCA's Counter-Pollution and Response

Branch to reports of actual or potential threats of maritime pollution;

- use the skills and experience of Coastguard Officers in an accident prevention capacity by providing safety education for professional and recreational mariners, students and children in colleges and schools

The Crosby Station

Members gather...

A visit to the operations room, with its by now salt caked panoramic windows, made clear how “jobs” are handled using the wide range of linked systems to give immediate access to voice contact by radio, mobile phones and landlines; similarly the availability of on–line charts, maps and A.I.S. data. The ability to act in a co-ordinating role with direct access to a range of different Coastguard options, R.N.L.I. resources, air rescue by units of Royal Navy, Royal Air Force, Police and Air Ambulance as well as land based resources such as Police, Ambulance Services, Fire and Rescue Services and a wide range of other organisations is most impressive.

The Crosby Station, one of 21 regional bases, is the co-ordination centre for all Maritime Search and Rescue activity in the Liverpool District. The District extends from the Point of Ayr, North Wales out to some 20 miles south of the Isle of Man, and then to the Mull of Galloway (although the Isle of Man operates a separate and independent Coastguard for its own sea area).

THE WARNING

An elderly gentleman was on the operating table awaiting surgery and had insisted that his son, a renowned surgeon, perform the operation.
As he was being prepped he asked to speak to his son.

"Yes Dad, what is it?"

"Don't be nervous, son; do your best and just remember, if it doesn't go well, if something happens to me ... your mother is going to come and live with you and your wife...."

LELIA

A summary of a paper given to the Society by Chris Michael on Thursday 18th November 2010.

When the Liverpool-built paddle steamer **Lelia** left Liverpool on her maiden voyage on 14 January 1865, there were many men aboard who hoped to make their fortune by running the Union blockade of the Southern States. There were also several passengers aboard who were Confederate Navy personnel. She left as, technically, a British vessel but it was intended to change ownership to the Confederacy as they were crossing the Atlantic. The weather was stormy and the urgency of bringing help to the Confederate cause must have been a factor in deciding to depart. Her construction, loading and departure were observed by Union spies who sent records to Washington.

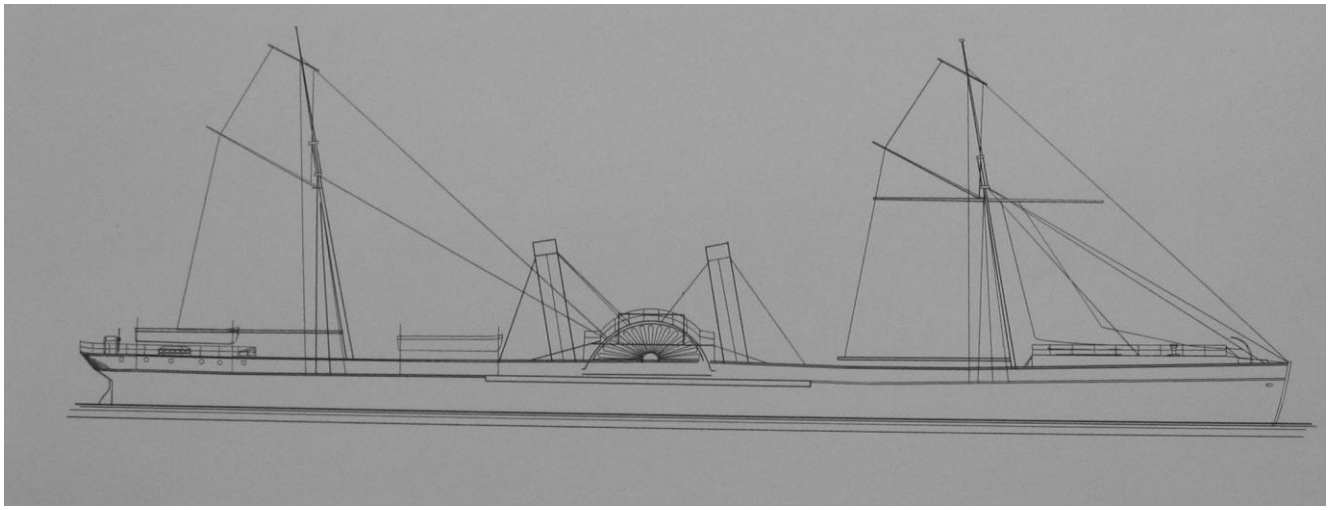
Liverpool was the port of entry for much cotton (going to be processed in the Lancashire mills) and the Confederate shipping agents in Liverpool arranged with local shipbuilders to construct vessels suitable to run the blockade. **Lelia** was a pioneering vessel for her day - steel built by Millers with enormous engines by Fawcett and Preston, giving her a good speed. She was designed as a high speed, shallow draft ship to bring cotton out of the Southern ports, running the blockade to a neutral port such as Bermuda where it is was offloaded for transport to Liverpool.

Miller's shipyard in Toxteth had a record of innovative building. They had built the **Florida** (as she was named when a Confederate Navy vessel) which roamed the seas preying on Union merchant shipping. Miller's built the **Phantom** as a blockade runner: she was the first steel screw ship to cross the Atlantic and was a prototype for what became the basic ship design thereafter. By 1854, the success rate of blockade runners was rapidly declining and many replacements were under construction at Liverpool. In February 1855 the Toxteth shipyard of Jones Quiggin launched four blockade runners on the same day.

Lelia was launched in early 1855 and took on supplies, mainly coal. It was intended to cross the Atlantic mainly under sail, with coal reserved for high speed operations. Her crew had not had time to familiarise themselves with the vessel when she met a NW gale on leaving the shipping channel. She took in water forward and became unmanageable.

She was forced to turn around off the Great Orme and head back to Liverpool. Running downwind, she broached and was down by the head with the holds full of water so the order was given to abandon ship. In the huge waves many were lost in transferring to the ship's boats and then more lives were lost in getting aboard the Northwest Lightship. A further tragedy was the overturning of a Liverpool Lifeboat sent out to help. In total 47 men from the **Lelia** died (12 were saved) and 7 lifeboatmen perished. Among those lost were Confederate Navy

Commander Arthur Sinclair and Thomas Miller (the son of William Miller the shipbuilder). It was intended that Arthur Sinclair should be in command during blockade running, and **Lelia** had been named after the wife of Arthur Sinclair.



css **Lelia** – Rigging Plan

The wreck of the **Lelia** in Liverpool Bay was discovered and identified in 1997 by local amateur diver Chris Michael. He has written a book 'LELIA' (published by Countywise in association with Liverpool Marine Press) which gives full details of the construction, personnel, loss, shipwreck and also much background detail of Liverpool's connection with the Confederate cause. He was also involved in a TV programme in the Wreck Detectives series about the **Lelia** in 2003 which sought to establish whether she was carrying military supplies.

LOOKOUT VERSUS LIGHTS

With acknowledgement to *The Journal of Navigation:*
Some Sidelights on the Dark History of Navigation Lights

Before the middle of the 19th Century, sailing vessels under way at night did not set a light. This paper investigates the reasons for this practice and explains the development of navigation lights which culminated in the requirement for both steamships and sailing vessels to display lights at night.

It is the paradox of the twenty/twenty vision afforded by hindsight that it often obscures the state of knowledge in which the actor under investigation practised his art. Thus, it is very difficult for modern seamen to understand why it was a custom of the sea that sailing ships under way at night did not set a light so that other vessels would not collide with them. A clue to the reason for this custom is to be found in the returns of all vessels belonging to the United Kingdom reported on the books of *Lloyd's* in the years 1816, 1817 and 1818. Of the 1,204 ships

reported wrecked, missing or not heard of in those three years, 230 were wrecked, 109 lost on specified rocks or shoals and 151 stranded; whereas only 14, or approximately 1%, were run down. It is evident that the chance of being run down was only slight compared to the risk of running into some natural danger. The paramount objective was to see rather than be seen. It was vital that nothing should interfere with the night vision of the watch so that they could keep a good lookout. Ships at anchor were from the earliest times expected to show a light but this requirement was entirely consistent with the primacy of lookout over lights, since once a ship came to an anchor the need to keep a vigilant lookout ceased and the only remaining danger for the night was that of being run down in the roadstead.

When courts in England began to try collision cases on their merits, it was invariably decided that vessels under sail were under no necessity whatever to carry lights. Apart from the effect which carrying a light would have on one's own lookout, it was perceived by the Elder Brethren of Trinity House advising the Admiralty Court that there would be a danger to other ships in that such a light might be confused by them for lights on shore or lighthouses.

The advent of the steamship brought a new danger of collision. Ships were no longer constrained to sail together on the ebb and arrive together on the flood; nor were they driven by the same wind so that they were now likely to meet each other from opposite directions at full speed. The more direct course and certain reckoning of steamships meant, too, that they would not heave-to at night for navigational reasons. This increasing risk of collision is evident from the returns of all vessels belong to the United Kingdom reported on the books of *Lloyd's* in the years 1833, 1834 and 1835. Of the 1,690 ships reported wrecked, missing or not heard of in those three years, 49, or approximately 3%, were run down. This represented a three-fold increase in the risk of collision at sea since 1818, though loss from running down still accounted for only a small proportion overall and the principal dangers remained navigational (which a vigilant watch might avoid) and un-seaworthiness.

As early as 1822, a Committee of the House of Commons recommended the precaution of carrying a light. The danger of collision was in that year underscored when, for want of lights, the steam boat **Hercules** ran down the **Catherine Jane** on the Clyde, drowning forty two people. Again on the Clyde, in 1825 the steamer **Ayr** ran down the steam packet **Comet** with the loss of nearly seventy lives. However, the precaution of showing a light was always qualified by the need to mask it from the lookout. For example, in answer to the question: "Are there any regulations on the rivers in America as to the lights that should be carried in steamboats at nights, when it is dark?" Captain Basil Hall replied to the Select Committee on Steam Navigation in 1831: "None that I know of, but I think that every steam boat in America does carry a light under her bowsprit. I think a single light. It is certainly very low down. I never met a steam boat in America that had not a light low down.

That is my impression decidedly. Perhaps it is right to mention why it is so. The helmsman being forward, if there was a light so near him, it would prevent his steering. It is a great object in steering that the helmsman should have no light in his eyes."

Again, the Select Committee on Steam Vessel Accidents (1839) reported that "Mr Shaw, engineer to the City of Dublin Company, Liverpool, introduced a system of night signals in 1834 which has since been adopted by Her Majesty's packets at Liverpool, and by some other owners. This system consists of the exhibition of one white light at the foremast head, visible in clear weather from 8 to 10 miles, one white light attached to the fore-part of the starboard paddle box, which can be seen 4 miles in clear weather, and a third light which is red, attached to the fore part of the larboard paddle box, visible about 3 miles. The three lights can only be seen at one and the same time when right ahead, or nearly so. In any other position before the beam only two are visible, and their colours define the position of the vessel. The mast light is transmitted through a solid glass lens, so shaped and disposed that the light ceases to be visible abaft the beam. The starboard paddle-box light is also transmitted through a solid glass lens, the larboard light through a hollow glass lens containing a red mineral solution. These are placed in houses attached to the paddle-boxes, and the rays are projected at an angle of about 35 degrees with the keel, so as not to dazzle the lookout men on the forecastle."

Mr Shaw submitted a plan of his lights to the Select Committee. The significance of the 35 degree angle to the keel is that the light was projected in this direction so as not to dazzle the look-out men on the forecastle. The objective was that the light would be visible from right ahead to abeam. The paddle box was used to cut off the light from being seen aft. This angle of cut off appears to have been determined by the fairing of the paddle box. It would seem that the practice of showing the side lights to two points abaft the beam entered the seaman's oral tradition in determining how a vessel was heading and was carried on by the Admiralty Regulations in 1848.

The preference for red and white sidelights rather than red and green as proposed by Captain William Davis Evans of the Milford Dunmore East packet service was explained to the 1839 Select Committee on Steam Vessel Accidents by Captain E Chappell RN, who was the superintendent of the squadron of Government steam packets at Milford and Liverpool, as follows: "If coloured lights could be made to give us as strong a light as white light, unquestionably the red light on one side and the blue or green on the other, as proposed by Mr W D Evans, would be preferable, but the light is considerably dimmed by being coloured red, and blue or green are but other names for darkness, particularly where the weather is in the least hazy.

The technical problems of projecting coloured light, particularly green, were overcome by Robert Rettie, a lantern maker of Aberdeen, and his system of lights

was successfully tested in the steam frigate HMS **Comet** off Spithead in November 1845. In correspondence commencing in 1843, Rettie requested the Admiralty to test lanterns which he had devised to indicate the ship's head for the avoidance of collision at sea. It seems that the Admiralty were not easily moved but on 12th July 1845 the lamps were tested at Woolwich and carried on board a naval ship on the River Thames. This lead to the official tests at Spithead. According to Rettie's letters, his system of collision avoidance was that enacted for steam ships in the Admiralty Regulations which became law on 11th July 1848 under powers contained in Act 9 & 10 Vict, c100. Rettie was disappointed in his expectations of being employed by the Admiralty in the implementation of his idea and he was dealt with parsimoniously by the Admiralty in relation to the work he had done. A bitter dispute ensured over expenses in the course of which Rettie wrote on 28th February 1848 to his MP:

"*Now when I showed him my code of signals on the cards, which are also entered at Stationer's Hall, which goes along with the lamps and is necessary to explain them, which signal cards Mr Evans, at the last trial at Woolwich, had copied from mine, and made for himself a plan exactly the same, and which cards I then challenged, and told him that if ever I found any more of them, I should make him pay the penalty of £5 for each copy, which is the legal claim for any piratical usurpation of the Act*."

The adoption of the green light as the starboard sidelight made the sidelights uniquely distinctive and also made the white light available for use on the bowsprit or foremast in conjunction with the higher white light on a mast farther aft. The lower white light was not included in the new Admiralty regulations though it had been in use on some ships as an alternative to sidelights. The disposition of two lights along the length of the ship was not as definitive as the arcs of coloured sidelights in telling how she was heading but two lights so disposed were superior to sidelights in that they immediately signalled a change in the vessel's heading if the lights were perceived to open or close with one another. It was said at the International Marine Conference held in Washington in 1889 that the greatest advantage of such lights on the main mast and foremast respectively "*is that a small change in the course of the steamer approaching end on, or nearly so, is at once and unmistakably indicated*." The result was the adoption of the second white light or ranging light as an optional light for steam vessels in the 1897 Rules.

The proposals of an anonymous *A Skipper* in 1837, that a sailing vessel should show a coloured light so that an approaching vessel would know what tack she was on, became fixed sidelights the same as those of steamships when prescribed by Admiralty regulations in 1858. However, it is interesting to note that the Admiralty had, in fact, intended in 1858 to prescribe red and green lights for sailing vessels which would be fixed to show from right ahead to right astern on the port and starboard sides respectively. This was to meet the concern that sailing ships were in considerable danger of being run down by overtaking steam ships,

though the main motivation in prescribing sidelights for sailing ships was to allow for the abolition of the port-helm/right-rudder rule which was the only possible rule in the absence of sidelights but was itself the cause of many accidents. The Board of Trade objected to this different treatment for the sidelights of sailing vessels on the grounds that the valuable utility of sidelights in determining how a vessel was heading would be lost. The Admiralty acceded to this objection and so the sidelights to be prescribed for sailing vessels were made the same as those for steamships. In the words of the Admiralty Judge, in commenting on the proposed rules, "*the rule as to porting the helm should be relaxed to the extent rendered necessary by the carrying of the lights, the lights becoming the governing principle*."

The port-helm/right-rudder rule remained for steam vessels meeting on opposite course, that is to say, vessels meeting end on or nearly end on. After a period of confusion this was defined in 1868 to mean, at night, the situation where each vessel is in such a position as to see both of the sidelights of the other.

A FITTING MEMORIAL

By Bill Ogle

Mona's Queen was one of three Isle of Man Steam Packet vessels lost in a single day during the Dunkirk evacuation in World War II, and one of her anchors was recovered from the seabed near France last summer. It is now being restored at the Cammell Laird shipyard in Birkenhead, where she was built in 1934. It then will be returned to the Island where it will feature as a war memorial, although there is still some debate as to its final resting place.

The vessel, one of eight Manx Steam Packet ships involved in the operations, was sunk by a mine on her second trip to the beaches; she had already completed one trip back to Dover with twelve hundred troops on board. Steam Packet vessels rescued 25,000 troops, one in fourteen of all the soldiers brought back to Britain.

THE MONDAY FACILITY

Members' access to the Archives and Library at the Merseyside Maritime Museum on Mondays continues as follows:

March	Mondays	7th., 14th., 21st., 28th
April		4th., 11th., 18th.
May		9th, 16th, 23rd

BOOK REVIEW:

TITANIC and LIVERPOOL *By Alan Scarth*

Published by Liverpool University Press & National Museums
Liverpool, 2009 ISBN 978-18463-2229

Titanic's links to Belfast, where she was built, and Southampton, whence she sailed on her only voyage are well known; so why a book on **Titanic** and Liverpool?

Alan Scarth, in this finely researched book, provides the answer. The back cover of the book states "If you had been astern of **Titanic** on that fateful night in 1912, the last word to flash before your eyes as the great ship plunged beneath the waves would have been 'Liverpool' ". **Titanic** was built for the White Star Line which was headquartered in a splendid building in the city whose design was based on that of the London police headquarters, New Scotland Yard. Liverpool was the home port of the company's magnificent passenger liners though **Titanic** never visited what was then England's pre-eminent port.

Scarth provides a concise history of the White Star Line, its relationship to Liverpool and the subsequent move of the transatlantic mail/passenger operations to Southampton which he describes as "bold and pragmatic". The White Star Line had been losing ground to competitors Cunard since 1904, so company President and Managing Director, Bruce Ismay, ordered two liners of "unprecedented size and Luxury" to compete on the Southampton to New York route.

Titanic was ordered from the Belfast shipyard of Harland and Wolff in 1907 and Scarth discusses the rationale behind the design and order of the ship whose keel was laid on 22 March 1909. A considerable proportion of the materials and fittings used in **Titanic** and her sister **Olympic** were provided by Liverpool firms. Items ranging from the ship's telegraph to rope work, navigation charts to galley equipment were sourced or manufactured in Liverpool.

Two chapters of the book provide an insight into the 114 crew members (of 892) who were from Liverpool or had a strong association with the city. Many were key officers and crew of the ship. Although the chapters contain lists of these people these chapters are more than simply a bland recital of names. There are numerous personal histories.

Only a few passengers on that fateful voyage hailed from Liverpool but Scarth suggests that this was not unusual, only 17 of the 954 passengers had a Liverpool connection. One was J. Bruce Ismay himself. As is well-known Ismay survived the sinking although his valet and personal secretary perished.

The book is not about the wreck of **Titanic** per se, but three chapters are devoted to the outward voyage, the sinking and its immediate aftermath. Ismay's appearances at the various inquiries into the disaster are well covered. The news was received with shock in Liverpool. Telegrams bounced around and expressions of

sympathy were received at the company's office. The personnel manifests were held in Southampton and it was some time before personal information was available in Liverpool. Ismay was vilified in the American press, largely suggests Scarth, because of newspaper baron William Randolph Hearst's long held dislike for Ismay. "The (disaster) almost ruined our lives" said Ismay's wife. Ismay retired from the company in 1913.

In the final chapter Scarth looks at the "long shadow" cast by the sinking, including the effects upon the survivors, the company and others such as Captain Lord of SS **Californian** who was castigated by a British inquiry for failing to adequately assist **Titanic**. The wreckage was discovered in 1995. The ship's position appeared to support Lord's estimate of his position but a resultant review of the inquiry a few years later failed to totally reverse the initial findings.

Scarth has drawn extensively upon the archives of the company and paper, archives and artefacts held in the extensive collection of the Merseyside Maritime Museum. Much of this material has not previously been published. The book is extensively illustrated, contains various personnel lists and a detailed index.

Although Southampton suffered far more than any other British port as a result of the disaster and many other ports throughout the world played major roles, Scarth suggests - and in the reviewer's view proves - that the port of Liverpool was central to the **Titanic** story from beginning to end. It is no idle boast that "Titanic and Liverpool" will be required reading for anyone interested in **Titanic** and also for anyone hoping to understand Liverpool's role as the great processing port of Europe and gateway to the US and Canada." *Larry Robins (NZ)*

THE LIVERPOOL NAUTICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The A.G.M. of the Society will be held at 12.30 pm on Thursday, 19th May, 2011 in the Long Room, 2nd Floor, Merseyside Maritime Museum

THE IDEA OF A MARITIME MUSEUM

By Dr. C. Northcote Parkinson (1909 – 1993)

Published in L.N.R.S. Transactions, Volume III, 1946

Introduction by LNRS Vice President Mr H Hignett: Dr. Parkinson studied naval history as an undergraduate and his Ph.D. also related to that subject. During the World War II he was a lecturer at various Army and Naval Staff colleges, and then at Liverpool University from 1946 – 1949, when he was a member of the L.N.R.S
He is also remembered as the author of Parkinson's Law, as an essay in The Economist: stating "Work expands so as to fill the time available for its completion".

In attempting to interest you in the idea of a Maritime Museum in Liverpool, I shall begin by pleading such right as I have to be heard. My first plea is that I am a Lecturer in Maritime History and, so far as I know, the only one in existence. I have a scarcity value, and I mean to make the most of it. More than that, I was, nearly fifteen years ago, one of the late Sir Geoffrey Callender's assistants. When the National Maritime Museum was formed —and before it opened its doors — I constituted fifty per cent of the staff. I knew then — I think I know, now — how a Museum is formed. While, therefore, I concede that you might reasonably have hoped for a paper from one who knew far more, you might also, I maintain, have had to listen to one who knew even less.

Granted so much, you may still doubt whether a newcomer to Liverpool can expect to grasp the complexity of the problems which surround the Shipping Gallery and the Bluecoat School site. But a newcomer's position has its advantages. Such knowledge as I have of Liverpool ends, as I readily admit, round about 1815. Facing a Liverpool audience in the year 1808, say, I should have known, more or less, what topics to avoid. But now I am happily unaware of the toes on which I may trample and the feelings I may outrage. My ignorance, which I have been careful to preserve, although powerless to improve, must be my protection.

What I am discussing is the idea of a Maritime Museum - of a Museum in the abstract. I am in no position to argue the merits of this site or that. Leaving that to the experts, I shall stick to principles. I ask not "where is it to be?" but "what is it to be?" And you will notice that I have partly answered that question - in the very title of my paper. For I have used the word "Museum" and not the term "Shipping Gallery." I never saw the Shipping Gallery and have read only one description of it, apart from the catalogue. Even from that, I should think the name imprecise. Granting, however, that the term "Shipping Gallery" fairly described what Liverpool used to have, I should still maintain that it is not what Liverpool ought to have. What is needed is a Museum.

At this point I may be asked to define my terms. What is a Museum? The word has, for many people, rather gloomy associations. We picture ourselves on a wet Sunday afternoon in November, the bored attendant, the catalogue (2d.), the

lovers disturbed by giggling children at the moment when they thought themselves alone. We visualise all this against a dusty background of skeletons, Zulu weapons, pampas grass and a scale model of the Parthenon. There is that bust of Garibaldi, those roman coins, the blunderbuss, the coaching horn. Overhead the rain falls pitilessly on a grimy skylight and in the next room someone is lecturing as pitilessly on we know not what. We are tired and depressed, and mainly anxious to go home. These visions of ours relate, of course, to some distant period, and (naturally) to some other city. Since our young days things have changed. A Museum is no longer a collection of objects under glass, grimly surveyed by people whose sole care is to prevent their being stolen. A Museum is nowadays a more lively institution.

The change could best be summarised perhaps by saying that a Museum consists primarily today of people rather than things. By people I mean those who frequent it for their use and pleasure. Without all these people, a Museum is dead. Without them, it scarcely exists. Just as a playhouse, with its lights and curtain and scenery, is nothing without players and audience, so is a Museum nothing without its active friends. I would urge you to think of it, first of all, in terms of people. We must, from the start, visualise its public; interested, excited, pleased and entertained. I do not say that things do not matter. I only plead that people matter more.

Does this bring us any nearer to defining a "Museum?" I think it does. Discarding our painful recollections and fixing our attention on Museums that are alive, we might frame a definition on these lines: a centre of public resort for instruction and entertainment, mainly by means of exhibits. Let us assume that this definition will suffice for now. A Maritime Museum would then be a centre of public resort for the instruction and entertainment of those interested in the Sea.

There must be exhibits. What are they to be? Taking Greenwich as our model, we might list the exhibits under these headings: (I) Ship models, (II) Marine paintings, prints, drawings and photographs, (III) Printed books, (IV) Manuscripts, (V) Instruments and (VI) Relics. Those are the obvious categories, but the arrangement would of course, be according to subject and period. The ideal (almost unattainable) would be to show, say, the model of a Liverpool West Indian with, nearby, a painting of the same ship, a portrait of her owner, a page (in facsimile) from her log, a chart pricked out with the routes she normally followed, her actual house-flag and a telescope which her last captain is said to have used. I urge that this is better than scattering these things round the town; the portrait in a gallery, the chart in a library, the telescope in private hands, and the house-flag in a Museum of Local antiquities.

Then there must be books. Let us agree not to rob any existing Library of a single volume. Our Maritime Museum should have a Library just the same. How else could the assistants answer the questions which are hurled daily at every Museum of reputation? When was this ship launched? Which harbour does this painting represent? From what period does this model date? Without a reference library these questions could not be answered. And acquisition of such a library, it is easy,

provided that we all make our Wills. True, we have to die first. But those of us who use Liverpool trams must always feel on the brink of eternity, and act accordingly.

However, we cannot make our bequests because there is no existing body we can name. Every month — every week — our future Museum, is losing the gifts and bequests which it would receive if already established. I know of several, even in the short time I have been in Liverpool. Many present will know of more. And the moral of this is — let's get on with it! Whenever this subject is discussed we tend to get bogged down in arguments about where the museum should be. That is a question for a later stage for no useful purpose can be served by discussing it now. Let the Museum exist before we seek its home. I was with Sir Geoffrey Callander, remember, when the National Maritime Museum was founded, and I can assure you that a Museum must grow underground — probably for years — before it can open its doors. There *must* be a temporary Museum; a storehouse and office. There must be time to accumulate the exhibits and train the staff. It does matter that the Museum, as a corporate body, should be brought in to existence, and with the least delay.

I wonder if I have, so far, gained some measure of agreement? I hope so, because my next point may well arouse opposition. It is this: such a Museum as I have tried to describe should *not* be housed as part of a larger Museum. It is wrong, as I think, to group (in effect) several Museums under one roof. Why? Well, first, because the best Museums are relatively small. True, there is the British Museum, and such a place, on the national scale, is justified. But one thinks with more pleasure of the Musee de Cluny, the Musée des Arts Decoratifs, the Casa d'Ore or the Kirke Collection at York.

Apart from the size, however, considered as a disadvantage in itself, there is a stronger reason for keeping Museums apart; a reason connected with human fatigue. People who have been through a Museum may want a number of things. They may want to sit down. They may want tea. They may even want brandy. What they *don't* want is another Museum. There is nothing, you may say, to prevent them going only to the bit they want to see. But that is not what happens. In practise the seeker after Chinese pottery has to run a gauntlet of stuffed giraffes. And people who like ships are not (as a rule) equally enthusiastic about butterflies, fossils, flint arrow-heads or surrealist art. Perhaps it will be urged that Museums which do not connect can still adjoin. They can. But why should they? *Administrative Convenience*? Of that expression we have heard enough.

My next plea is that our Maritime Museum should be controlled (not necessarily owned by) a body of Trustees, and not preferably by the City of Liverpool as such. My plea is founded on two main considerations. First, I maintain that the scope of the Museum should stretch — and must stretch — far beyond the municipal boundary. Such a Museum should serve the educational needs not only of Liverpool but of Birkenhead, Manchester, Chester and Whitehaven. I will go further than that. The Museum should have the closest connection (just as Liverpool always

had) with Boston, Philadelphia, Halifax and Newfoundland. Were I to choose a name for it I should call it the ATLANTIC MUSEUM. Second, I maintain that the Liverpool Ship-owners are the men without whose support the Museum must fail. I am not asking for their money. I suspect there are enough people doing that. No, what the Museum needs is their support, their archives, their builders' models. One does not expect a firm to make the Museum a gift of, say, the dockyard model of the **Queen Elizabeth**. But in twenty years time, when all up-to-date vessels are being driven by atomic energy — what then? But it would be rash to hand over a firm's treasures to any bodies of Trustees on which the Ship-owners, as such, were not represented.

Since I have the audacity to be appointing the Trustees in all but name, allow me to add one more to the list: the Director of the National Maritime Museum, whoever he may be. It should be made clear from the beginning that we intend no harmful rivalry. Greenwich must always remain the national centre and we would not have it otherwise. In things strictly naval, there would be no competition at all. But should anyone propose that the local collections of models and paintings should go down to Greenwich, I should say "No." Greenwich is too far away. We cannot send our school children there to see what sort of ships their forebears used to sail. But there should be close co-operation and we should not be ashamed to ask advice.

Sometimes I allow myself to dream of what a Maritime Museum here in Liverpool could be. I think its main theme should be the story of transatlantic shipping — it would be the point, as it were, where Liverpool and Boston should be drawn most closely together. The main sections would be three: the age of sail; the age of transition; and the age of steam. But other galleries would be needed, too. In one we should see the growth of Merseyside. In another we might see what an 18th century counting house looked like, with the tall desks. Models would show how a merchantman was laden, and her guns fired. We should see the portraits of 19th century Sea Captains — some of the finest men this country has ever produced — and we should see how a 20th century vessel is built and launched. The Museum should include a restaurant (serving dishes, presumably of burgoo and lobscouse), a cinema, a lecture-room and (for members of this Society) a Club. One room might be a memorial to Nathaniel Hawthorne; a place to which Americans would be especially welcome. In another a floating model would demonstrate exactly how a sailing ship really works. Here and there the building itself would look rather like a ship. Suppose it agreed that such a Museum is desirable, what are the immediate steps to take? The first step is to urge on the City the appointment of Trustees. The second is to begin enrolling the people on whom the future Museum is to rely. This Society is the nucleus but it is not more than that. We must seek more widely the cooperation of the City, the University, the neighbouring Boroughs, the Ship-owners and shipbuilders, together with such societies as this, so that our Museum can ever come into being.

(Editor's note: part only of the Regulations, this extract covers part 1 of 3)

REGULATIONS

TO BE OBSERVED BY THE

CAPTAINS, OFFICERS

AND ENGINEERS

OF THE

STEAM SHIPS

OF THE

Moss Steam Ship Company, Limited

LIVERPOOL.

June, 1920.

GENERAL REGULATIONS.

General to Deck and Engine Departments.

(a) *Captains and all Officers are expected to maintain a courteous and gentlemanly manner at all times towards each other. The use of improper language to be avoided as Officers' example is frequently copied by the Crew.*

(b) *All broken parts of machinery, derricks, gear, etc., are to be retained on board and delivered over to either Marine Superintendent or Superintendent Engineer.*

(c) *No hatches to be taken off without the sanction of the Officer of the Watch, and he is to report to the Captain on the first available opportunity.*

(d) *All Officers and Chief Steward to be addressed with prefix Mr. All other members of the Crew by their surname only.*

(e) *Wives of any members of the Crew are not allowed to live or sleep on board at any port, and are on no account to be accorded a passage (even shifting ports) in the vessels in which their husbands are employed.*

(f) *Gambling is strictly prohibited.*

(g) *Officer of Watch is to look after the trimming of all ventilators and windsail, both for engine and, deck department.*

(h) *No member of the Crew is allowed to carry any description of goods for trading purposes.*

UNIFORM.

The undernoted Uniform, or Standard, Uniform, must be worn be the Captains, Officers, Engineers and Stewards at all times when on duty. If Standard Uniform is worn the Company's Buttons and Badge must be worn.

BLUE CROSS OR SERGE SUIT –

Captain :- Double-breasted Coat, six gilt Company's buttons on each breast. Sleeves mounted with one row of ½-inch gold navy lace with curl, and three rows of ¼-inch navy lace straight round.

Vest to have six gilt Company's buttons. Naval Cap, mounted with black oakleaf band, with one row ½-inch gold buoy lace in centre, Company's badge, large black chinstay, with gold Turk's head's and two Company's buttons.

Chief Officer - Double-breasted Coat, five gilt Company's buttons on each breast. Sleeves mounted with three rows ¼inch gold navy lace, top row with curl. Vest to have six gilt Company's buttons. Naval Cap, mounted with black oakleaf band, Company's badge, small black chinstay, with gold Turk's heads and two Company's buttons.

Second Officer - Double-breasted Coat, five gilt Company's buttons on each breast. Sleeves mounted with two rows of ¼-inch gold navy lace, top row with curl.

Vest and Naval Cap, same as Chief Officer.

Third Officer - Double-breasted Coat, five gilt Company's buttons on each breast. Sleeves mounted with one ¼-inch row gold navy lace, with curl.

Vest and Naval Cap, same as Chief Officer.

Apprentices - Double-breasted Coat, five gilt Company's buttons on each breast.

Vest and Naval Cap, same as Officers.

Chief Engineer - Single-breasted Jacket, with five gilt Company's buttons and three rows black braid, top row with curl. Naval Cap, same as Chief Officer.

Second Engineer - Single-breasted Jacket, with five gilt Company's buttons and two rows black braid, top row with curl. Naval Cap, same as Chief Officer.

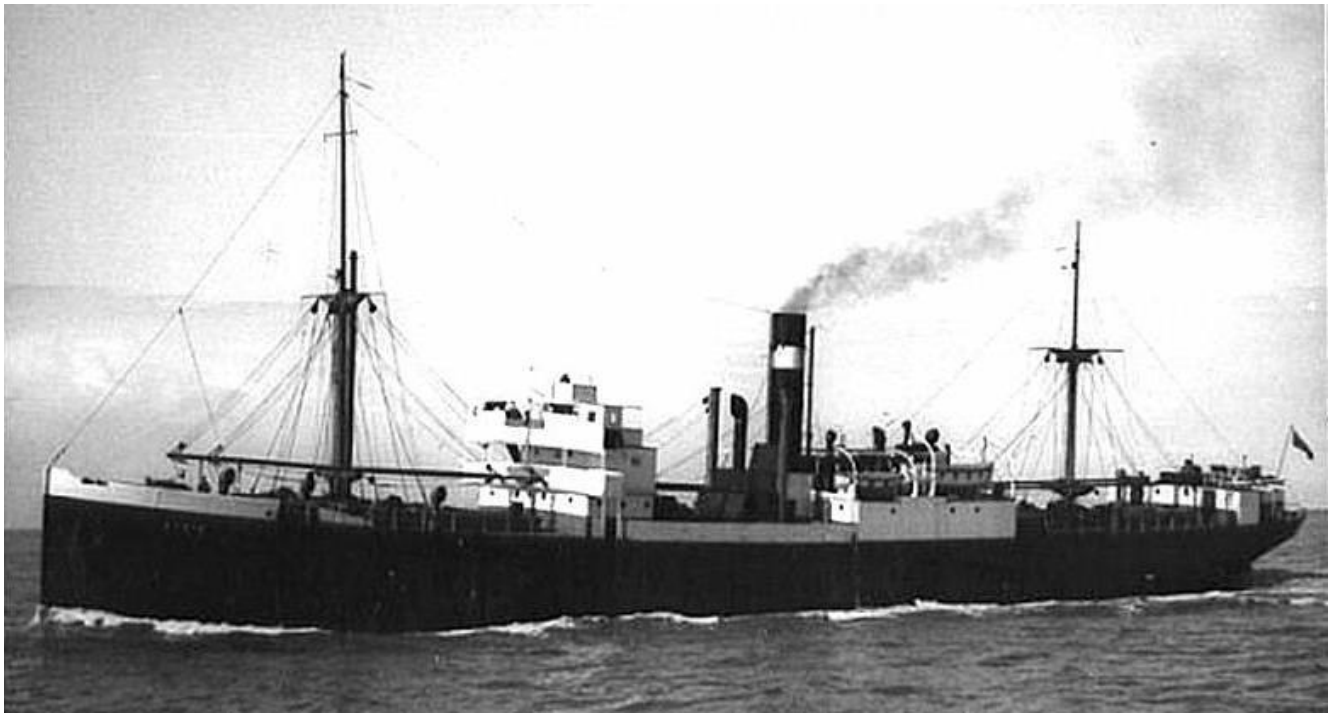
Third and Fourth Engineers - Single-breasted Jacket, with gilt Company's buttons and one row black braid, with curl. Naval Cap, same as Chief Officer.

Chief Steward - Double-breasted Coat to button (four) out-side breast pocket and (two) out cross pockets below. Two side vents 4½-inches deep. Lace to be two rows of ½-inch gold (zig-zag shape) two inches deep on cuff. All buttons to be gilt. Second Steward - Double-breasted coat as above, but with one gold zig-zag lace of ½-inch.

General

Black Ties are part of the Uniform; tie-rings and. pins are not to be worn.

Change of Uniform - Officers and Engineers during hot weather may, in lieu of the Company's prescribed Uniform, wear White Uniform clothes with the Company's distinctive shoulder straps.



SS **Etrib**

At the time this document was first published the **Etrib**, 1,943 grt., was new to the fleet, being built by Swan, Hunters on the Tyne in 1919.

Having loaded a general cargo at Cartagena she sailed from Gibraltar in the Liverpool bound 23 ship convoy HG-84 on 10th June 1942. In an attack off Corunna five Merchant ships were sunk including the **Etrib**. Most of the crew were picked up and subsequently landed at Gourock on 20th June 1942. Sadly 2 crew & 2 gunners were lost.

S.Y. NAHLIN

By Bill Ogle

Several Merseyside projects relating to maritime preservation have not achieved success in recent years, but a different story can be told with regard to **Nahlin**. Many readers will recall her berthed on the river wall at Sandon Dock for some years, being prepared for restoration by Liverpool based G. L. Watson & Co.

Her story is fascinating and begins in 1929 when Lady Yule wished for a steam yacht which could visit every part of the globe. Designed by the renowned G L Watson & Co she is 296ft long with a beam of 36ft, and 1,392 gross tons; she was built by John Brown & Co on the Clyde and launched in 1930. Following several extended cruises which included a circumnavigation, **Nahlin** was made available for charter. King Edward VIII was an early client during the summer of 1936 who cruised the Adriatic. Also on board was Mrs Wallis Simpson, whose presence caused great media interest in the royal romance and ultimately to the abdication crisis.

S.Y. **Nahlin** at Sandon Dock, Liverpool

This publicity also brought **Nahlin** to the attention of King Carl II of Romania who purchased her in 1937 as his private yacht. However he was deposed on the outbreak of World War II, and since she was now away from prying eyes in a remote part of the Danube **Nahlin** survived the war largely intact. By 1988 she was still on the Danube, being used as a floating restaurant, but now in very poor condition

However her attractiveness was still obvious and after fraught and extensive negotiations she was purchased on behalf of clients. Eventually she was floated onto a barge for towage to the U.K. Following asbestos removal and partial stripping out she was brought to Liverpool where the work was completed and detailed specifications for restoration prepared. She was then, again by barge, relocated to Hamburg where the work was completed.

On-line you can now see a number of short videos of
this beautiful ship by searching Youtube for *Nahlin*

TWENTY YEARS ON

By W K Wishart

A forest of cranes at King George V Dock

With the decline of London as the major port for all the well-known lines I thought it would be interesting to take a trip through the docks and compare it with a similar imaginary trip in the 1950s. The 20 years since then have seen remarkable changes in the pattern of shipping and its environs; had I written about the period 30 or 40 years back it would have been a 'journey down memory lane' or purely personal reminiscence.

The docks comprise some 700 acres of static water which reflects, on a bright day, the London and Essex skies; they are the largest area of impounded water in the world. These 'reservoirs of light brimmed daily by the tides of the sun' were dug out by private enterprise to serve all our commercial needs during the last century; should you visit them now you may see them before they are filled in at the end of this century.

Our journey begins in the middle 1950s. I shall try to take you through from the river as we would see it arriving from abroad. For those who have never arrived at the lock gates it should be explained that a blue flag hoisted at the lockside is our signal from the Dock Master that we may enter. We turn in between the pierheads of King George V Dock where the gates from the river are open. Perhaps an assistant Dock Master superintends our vessel as it is made fast.

Marine history

On our left we see the enormous workshops of Harland & Wolff. These were opened in the 1920s, with Government help, as competition to the largest Ship Repair Company on the Thames, R & H Green & Silley Weir. This company was formed from a group of marine engineers, one of which, Lester & Perkins, dated back to the East India Dock Company. On our right, we can see the masts and funnels of ships in Gallions Reach.

The river lock gates are closed, and we slowly rise until the water levels are

equal; depending on the tide we could have to rise by as much as 20 feet. The gates between the lock and King George V Dock are now opened and the cantilever bridge is raised to let us proceed through. Traffic stretches back from either side of the bridge: people press their faces against the road gates, young children on buses run to the front to get a better view. On either side of the dock there are long rows of ships, stem to stern; most of them are busy, with men and machinery about them; quayside cranes stand with jibs luffing and slewing and look from a distance like giant birds feeding.

On our extreme left is the King George V Dock, some 60 acres of water: on the north side bounding the centre road are six two-storey warehouses with verandahs on the upper floors. Taking a peek through an open door we may see an underslung crane moving, like magic, a hogshead of tobacco. On the south side of the dock, there are dolphins (not the performing ones!) each about 30 feet from the main quay and some 500 feet in length, supporting cranes. They were built to help 'lighters' or 'dumb barges' to manoeuvre and speed up the discharge of cargo on either side of the ship. Gangways link the dolphins to the quays.

Ships of all the lines

Loch Garth is in a berth regularly used by Royal Mail Line, possibly discharging lumber, sugar, or grain. Next we see **Dominion Monarch**, the largest motorship regularly using London. She is owned by Shaw Savill Line and is 26,463 dwt. With four Doxford engines, she is a nightmare to the ship repair worker, although lucrative to the contractor. Each engine drives a separate shaft and I can tell you it is a soul-destroying job replacing all those stern tubes.

We can also recognise the funnel of Cunard and find **Alsatia**: this vessel is not a usual 'Cunarder'. However, she is notable for having a real period piece amongst her accommodation. This is an Olde English Bar, complete with every trimming, even to a horseshoe. She is on the New York-London run.

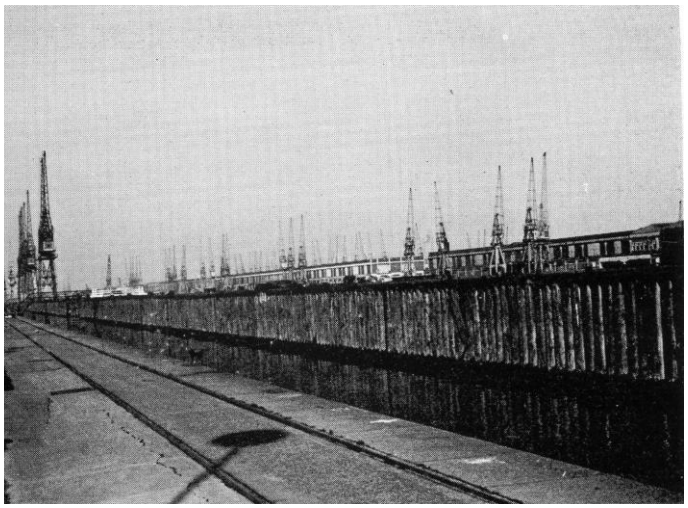
Farther along we see the P & O ships **Soudan** and **Bailor** and beyond them, **Glengyle**, off to the Far East for Glen Line. The Shaw Savill ship **Seuvic** is in drydock.

On the south side we make out the distinctive lavender colour hulls, white superstructure and the brilliant red and black funnel of two Union-Castle ships, **Dunnottar Castle** and **Braemar Castle**, 15,000 and 17,000 tons respectively. One is loading and one is discharging. Next we see the **Port Macquarie** looking like a yacht with her fine lines and single screw. She is no doubt discharging lamb from Canterbury in the South Island of New Zealand. Leaving the King George V Dock we see the Shaw Savill ship **Cymric**, loading and the P & O ship **Singapore** discharging. We have seen a total of twelve ships in this dock.

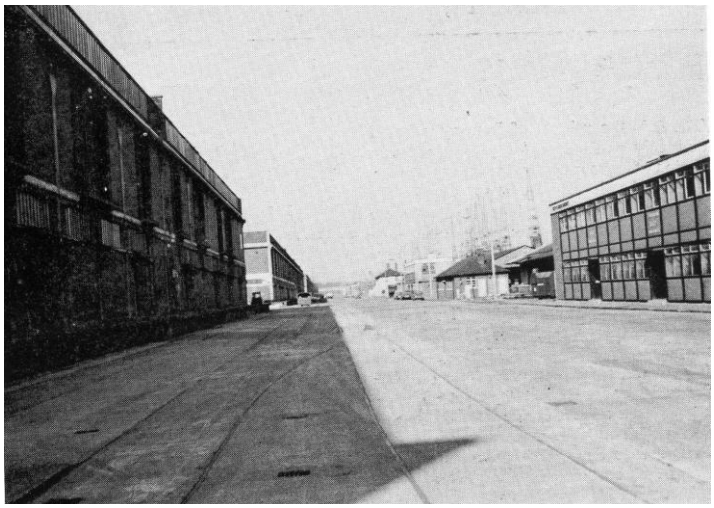
The Royal Albert Dock

We now turn right to proceed through the Adelaide Cutting, after which we can look west down the full length of the Royal Albert Dock, with a quay either side

over one mile in length. I can vouch for this, it's a long walk when the weather is cold and windy. Behind these quays are single storey transit sheds: the only warehouses in the docks are the cold air stores for imported meat.



From No 2 King George Shed the motionless Cranes of Albert Dock are visible behind the warehouse



A view of Centre Road from the Adelaide Cutting. The warehouses on the left house the underslung cranes

As we proceed down the Royal Albert Dock towards Royal Victoria we see the vessels lying alongside the north quay, which has well over 150 quayside cranes: some vessels are two abreast. We pass a vessel flying the Swedish flag: next **Hughli**, a Nourse Line vessel (now Hain-Nourse of P & O General Cargo Division). We then come past one of the 'Leith Yachts', **Bennevis**, owned by Ben Line: these vessels are very distinctive with their grained and varnished woodwork on the superstructure. Next we pass **Mapledell**, owned by Canadian Pacific Line, renamed from **Beaverdell**. The famous black funnel with two white bands distinguishes a BI ship, **Ismailia**; this company, founded by MacKenzie and MacKinnon was known originally as the Calcutta and Burma Steam Navigation Company; it is now part of P & O Group.

Two motorships lie further on; one, **Port Wyndham**, was built during the depressed period of shipping when many apprentices were employed on building, being bound by their indentures; the other vessel is **Rangitane** owned by New Zealand Shipping Company, now also part of P & O Group. NZS Co was founded at Christchurch, New Zealand, in 1873, and started with four small sailing ships. Next we see **Gascony**, possibly from Jamaica, carrying rum and general cargo. Also, a Norwegian boat in from Jamaica, with very clear cut lines and a clean white hull: it's **Northern Lights**, at the banana berth. As a point of interest, we import from Jamaica a colouring matter known as annatto: this is a seed used to colour butter, cheese, and varnishes. South American Indians colour their bodies with it.

Corfu is just out of drydock and awaiting a final coat of paint. Two ships are in dry-dock, **Largs Bay**, and one which is not recognisable. Beyond the drydocks are two

BI ships with general cargo. There is also **Uganda**, painted white and not black, as is usual with BI ships, and now converted to an educational vessel. Her sistership, **Kenya**, has since been sold. We see **Clan MacBean** loading, no doubt for South Africa, Another BI ship, **Padana**, is unloading a mixture of general cargo from East Africa. **Taranaki** (Shaw Savill Line) is unloading meat, dairy produce, and wool from New Zealand; lying aft of her is another Shaw Savill vessel, **Gallic**. The masts and funnels previously mentioned in Gallions Reach, are now identified as **Drina** (Royal Mail), **American Forwarder** (United States Line), and **Mastita**. Twenty-one ships we have seen in this dock alone.

We have now reached the western end of Royal Albert Dock. Beyond is the Connaught Passage spanned by the swing bridge; on the right, the modern Co-op flour mills can be seen on the skyline.

And so to 1975

The approach roads to the docks were practically empty, it is December 1975—'twenty years on'. The lock gates are rarely opened now, in fact they may close for three months to allow renewal of the gates. Gallions Reach is now the London Marina, a haven for small boats and widely used. The bascules of the road bridge are still prominent, but the bridge rarely causes any traffic hold-ups. The volume of traffic has dropped enormously with the diminishing dock work and the factory closures.

We look across the King George V Dock, where a few months ago oil tankers were laid up, no longer required owing to the Middle East problems. They have since gone, probably to be sold. The P & O building at No 2 berth is permanently closed—even the dock gate is permanently closed. Other empty offices are slipping into dreadful disrepair. The Port Line Office is used to store container couplings.

Grass grows in places where one would never have thought it possible. As our footsteps echo on the cobble stones, the years roll back, revealing childhood details clearly etched on the retina of memory: the Indians walking around with their 'Castela Pots' or little tins, trying to ride bicycles, buying up old sewing machines . .

Wartime project

The only vessel on the far side of King George V Dock is **Clan Ramsay** at No 4 berth. Only ten dockside cranes are evident, all quite still. The centre road between King George V Dock and Royal Albert Dock is empty: only the Shaw Savill office is still open. At No 7 berth King George V is **Sugar Corsair** and at No 9 **Braila**, a small foreign ship. Standing on the 'Knuckle', we recall the strange-looking containers erected there during the war, which later turned out to be reservoirs for the PLUTO project.

As we continue into the Royal Albert Docks, not a crane is moving its jib: only about 20 cranes remain on either side of the dock. At No 13 shed lies **Adventurer**, owned by the T & J Harrison Shipping Company: this vessel shipped an

unusually heavy lift—a 133-ton generator for Cape Town. And at No 21 shed the Glen Line vessel **Glenogle** (recently in the headlines over alleged poisonous cargo).

A large area of still black water; no lighters; the 'giant birds' are motionless. The weak December sun is mirrored in the still water. Not a sound: no chugging of the launches towing the lighters; no trucks whizzing along the quays like bumper cars at a fun fair. A tranquil sight for the camera lens, but not to anyone who had known the docks 20 years ago.

We move down to the Royal Victoria Dock with its swing bridge, alleged to be the widest in England. The only vessel visible here is **Aryt** of Arabia at the Co-op mills, which have now closed down. The new berth, built just inside the 'Vic', was for the American Lines ships. It has the largest unique transit shed in the UK. Built with no internal pillars, the roof was designed to allow complete freedom of movement inside. Previously, this site was used during the war to build tank landing craft, virtually the prototype for our modern Ro-Ro and container vessels, which arrived in their present sophisticated form in about 1967/9. These craft were used after the war by a number of small shipping companies, taking exports from the UK to the Continent and the Mediterranean.

Dilapidated

Apart from work being carried out in connection with building the new Silvertown barrier, there is nothing else in the docks. Most of the well-known offices in the 'Vic' have closed down and are looking very dilapidated. Grass is everywhere; vermin abound in the few remaining habitable buildings. The large meat berth in which BSL had some interest and which caused many problems in the 1960s is empty, its escalators poised outwards over the water, monuments to a declining trade.

And so the journey ends, with six vessels reflecting the decline in trade of our largest terminal port. It is arguable that this picture changes every day, but the number still remains small.

As I related this to a colleague in the Dock, he told how in the Surrey Commercial Docks, a single Customs Office remains open for the occasional yacht. Grass and beautiful wild flowers now grow there, and a wide variety of unusual birds wing their way through them, a poignant reminder of a distant past.

I hope you have enjoyed this travelogue. Perhaps, as a sequel to this story, we could look at the next twenty years. People would maybe say I am pessimistic, but I do not think I was over the past twenty years.

Editor's note: and what did the future hold?
These pictures say it all!

Above – can this really be the locks now?

Below – an aircraft landing at London City Airport.
Could anyone have imagined that?

A RACE TO THE WIRE

An Old Hand at Morse Code beats txt msgrs

Dotty and old-fashioned means of communication can still be the best: Morse code has seen off the challenge of the text message in a contest pitting the best in 19th-century technology against its 21st-century successor. The race to transmit a simple message, staged by an Australian museum, was won - at a dash - by a 93-year-old telegraph operator who tapped it out using the simple system which was devised by Samuel Morse in 1832 and was the mainstay of maritime communication up until 1997.

Gordon Hill, who learnt to use the technique in 1927 when he joined the Australian Post Office, easily defeated his 13-year-old rival, Brittany Devlin, who was armed with a mobile phone and a rich vocabulary of text message shorthand. Mr Hill, whose messages were transcribed by another telegraph veteran, Jack Gibson, 82, then repeated the feat against three other children and teenagers with mobile phones.

In the competition, at the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney, Mr Hill and his rivals were asked to transmit a line selected at random from an advertisement in a teenage magazine. It read: "Hey, girlfriend, you can text all your best pals to tell them where you are going and what you are wearing." While the telegraphist tapped out the line in full, to be deciphered by Mr Gibson, Miss Devlin employed text slang to save time. She keyed: "hey gf u can txt ur best pals 2 tel them wot u r doing, where ur going and wot u r wearing." Just 90 seconds after Mr Hill began transmitting, Mr Gibson had received the message and written it down correctly. It took another 18 seconds for Miss Devlin's message to reach the mobile phone belonging to her friend.

Mr Hill said that he was impressed by modern technology, even though his clunky telegraph machine emerged on top in three further contests. Text messaging, he said, had even been predicted by one of his colleagues in 1961. "An engineer told me the day would come when we would be able to send messages without wires," he said. Miss Devlin said that she had two years of texting experience. "I send about three messages a day," she said. "I used to send lots more but I ran out of credit."

WHISKY FOR ALL

The Merseyside Maritime Museum has an exhibition to mark the 70th anniversary of the stranding of the SS **Politician** and the true story behind 'Whisky Galore'

Until 27 March 2011 there is a showcase on the 2nd floor featuring a whisky bottle from the wreck; and in the basement until 8 May 2011.

Visitors can also enjoy a Scottish themed menu in the Maritime Dining Rooms.