## The Liverpool Nautical Research Society (Founded in 1938)

# THE BULLETIN

Volume 58 No.1, June, 2014



SS **Captain Cook** in Wellington Harbour See page 18 Courtesy F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand

J G Payne	Page	1
A Melling		4
W A Ogle		5
H M Hignett		7
Nautilus Telegraph		11
The Editor		13
The Editor		16
A J Barratt		18
G Bodey		25
Captain G Cubbin		32
MNA Circular		39
H M Hignett		41
	J G Payne A Melling W A Ogle H M Hignett Nautilus Telegraph The Editor The Editor A J Barratt G Bodey Captain G Cubbin MNA Circular H M Hignett	J G PaynePageA MellingW A OgleH M HignettNautilus TelegraphThe EditorThe EditorA J BarrattG BodeyCaptain G CubbinMNA CircularH M Hignett



Pamir

See page 4

Courtesy de.wikepdia



ss **Canadian** from a painting by William Clarke (1855) Courtesy Wikemedia Commons See page 6

# The Liverpool Nautical Research Society

President Mr. William J. Pape II



Vice-Presidents: Captains G. Cubbin Mr. H.M. Hignett

Chairman: Captain R. Settle

Vice Chairman: Mr. W.G. Williamson

Council:

Mr. I.Duckett (Talks Secretary), Mr. D.K.C.Eccles, Mr. B. Groombridge, Ms. D.Littler (Representative N.M.L.), Mr. W.A.Ogle (Editor), Mr. J.P. Stokoe.

Honorary Officers: Secretary: Mr. A. Melling

Treasurer: Mr. V. Finn

Web site:

www.liverpoolnauticalresearchsociety.org

<u>Contact details</u>: The Liverpool Nautical Research Society Maritime Archives and Library Merseyside Maritime Museum Albert Dock Liverpool L3 4AQ United Kingdom.

info@liverpoolnauticalresearchsociety.org

### The Family Company Wins by Mr J G Payne, United Towing and Humber Tugs

The following is the text of a speech made in Grimsby Town Hall on 5 December 1975 at a dinner given by United Towing and Humber Tugs (The author was Chairman of the company, and the Wilbraham family majority shareholders). It was originally published in the Blue Star 'Gangway'

At a time when I suspect we are all scratching to keep our head above water or more definitively when we are trying to retain in our businesses a positive cash flow it is probably worth once again having a look at the basic elements which make a shipping company's profit and loss account good, bad or indifferent.

On 1 April 1974 I gave the Reginald Grout Memorial lecture in the City of London and the subject was 'British Liner Shipping: Future Prospects and Problems'. I then said British Liner Shipping should have three principal objectives – these were:

- that if we were to remain in business that we account on a replacement cost depreciation basis
- next, that we must continue to improve the efficiency of our ports and transport network
- and last, that we must work closer than ever with our customers.

These remarks were made at a time of economic boom—it does however seem to me that the remarks have even more force at a time of economic decline.

I do not intend to dwell on accounting problems tonight as Mr Sandiland and others are tending to give us all mental indigestion at the moment, nor do I intend to talk about customer relations, despite the importance of good customer relations. It seems appropriate whilst here on Humberside to simply state the essentials of a good port from a shipowner's point of view.

I make no apologies for stating the obvious because we tend to live in an era when the obvious or the truth, if you like, is clouded by other issues, at worst political issues or a genuine fear of the truth.

Costs of ships and equipment escalate at a rate hitherto unknown—here may I illustrate that container ships which were delivered to us in 1969 should have cost us about four million pounds, will probably end up costing us eight million pounds because of the declining value of the pound and similar ships to be delivered in 1977 will probably leave us no change out of twenty–five million pounds.

With tugs, supply boats, ferries, tramps, bulk carriers all costing two or three times the amount they would have done five to ten years ago the one thing that shipowners are all looking for more than ever before is maximum utilisation of their assets. Ships at sea make money, ships in port cost money. In other words we all want our ships in and out of port in the shortest possible space of time. What, therefore, apart from an efficient tug service, makes a port work—probably three or four things only:

- the right equipment, there is nothing more soul destroying than the wrong equipment
- the right amount of space in which to operate
- good management
- and last but not least, the desire on the part of the men to work.

Funnily enough, good management and good men working in harmony can overcome poor equipment and a shortage of space—therefore one must put the men in the port and their attitude to the job in hand as the essential ingredient of a successful port.

What creates harmony in a management/ men relationship? Much has been written by so-called experts on this subject. To me the essential factors are:

- an identifiable, accessible and respected boss who is not a faceless wonder
- and men who desire to work and are willing to accept that some disciplines are necessary for a job to be done efficiently.

Many of you will say 'what about the Trade Unions in all this?' Their role to me is a complementary one. The Unions should ensure that the men get a fair deal and protect the individual against bad management. Unions should negotiate agreements on behalf of the men—if that is necessary. But having negotiated an agreement, I do believe the Unions have a very real and ultimate responsibility of making sure that their members abide by that agreement. If an agreement simply becomes a basis for further negotiation then in simple terms 'all is lost'. Nothing will ever work efficiently on that basis. I do not accept however that Unions are essential, if for no other reason than that a Union which cannot or will not control its members is probably our worst enemy today. Unions require good management just as business requires good management. Might I liken a Union which has lost control of its members to business management which has lost control of its costs. The end result is chaotic.

No doubt many of you will be sitting here tonight saying 'easier said than done', and I agree—most things are easier said than done. But has not the time arrived when each and every one of us, whether we be manager or clerk, director or crane driver, chairman or office boy, should ask ourselves one simple question—are we worth the money in our take home pay?— are we giving a day's work for a day's pay? If not, what is stopping us—is it indifferent management, lack of leadership, an undisciplined work force or the mistaken belief that 'she'll be right', to coin an Australian expression. One thing is certain, nothing will ever be right unless a lot of the nonsense which goes on at the present moment is very firmly sat on in all places in our society. We all have a responsibility in this regard and all I simply suggest is that unless we all discharge that responsibility we are not playing our part.

Gentlemen, if I sound like a politician I apologise. The simple fact is that good ports employ good men who do not tolerate nonsense. Men and management working in harmony dispose of nonsense quicker than any Union agreement, work procedure or terms of reference. We can have all the pieces of paper we like in the world, but none will ever be able to replace that very essential ingredient in life—all of us working as a team together. Nobody in the company which employs me works for me, I hope they all work with me for the company.

May I just say one thing in conclusion, not with the deliberate intention of embarrassing Mr Wilbraham. My remarks are addressed to those who work with him. I have only known Mr Wilbraham about two years. During that period a friendship has grown up between us based on, I believe, mutual respect—for my part it is based on respect and admiration. Your companies, Tony, are essentially family companies where the boss is anything but a faceless wonder—I too work for a family company, but have had the opportunity to work in other environments. There is no comparison between working with a family company and working in other broader-based companies. The family company wins every time. This country was essentially built on family companies and it is in these great family companies that one observes the complete lack of nonsense. I consider myself privileged to work in a family company and also to be associated with other family companies such as yours.

On behalf of all your guests may I not only once again say thank you, but also wish you personally, your family, and all your staff who work with you, every success for the future—thank you.

# Nautical Trivia Quiz

- 1. How many certificates are required to be a qualified Master these days?
- 2. There is a passenger ship now 63 years old, that potentially all seafarers have seen and certainly have heard of, what was her name and her current name?
- 3. What is the longest recorded launching of an ocean going ship, how long did it take and where did this occur?
- 4. Harland and Wolff's Belfast shipyard has two massive cranes, what are their names?
- 5. The third ship of the the trio built for the White Star Line in the early 20th century, never actually carried fare paying passengers, what became of her?
- 6. Who were Wilcox and Anderson? and name a ship from their company.

# Book Review Submitted by L.N.R.S. Member Tony Melling

Liverpool Docks Through Time by Ian Collard Amberley Publishing 2011 96 pages; paperback £14.99 ISBN 978-1-4456-0414-5.

The Liverpool dock system provides the most vivid visual evidence of the decline of the port as a centre for handling general cargo. In 1874, nearly 20,000 ships carried just less than seven million tons of cargo, across over 30 docks. Ironically, by 1984, 9 million tonnes of cargo was carried on far fewer ships and concentrated in the Seaforth Container Terminal.

This transformation in the use of the Liverpool docks is visually captured by Ian Collard in this book. In his introduction, he charts the history of the port from King John to the impending upgrade of the Seaforth Container Terminal. The rest of the book is devoted to a photographic comparison (two to a page) of each of the major docks in their heyday and how they look now. The bulk of the historical shots are taken from the 1960s and the author devotes most of the captions to the history of the ships that appear in them. Although this work purports to chart 'the early years through the massive expansion of the nineteenth century', its photographic account is in geographic rather than historical sequence, beginning with the Gladstone Dock in the north (why not Seaforth?) to the Herculaneum Dock in the south.

As a visual record of cargo ships of the sixties in vibrant docks that are now largely redundant, this book makes a valid point. It is more difficult to establish what else the author is trying to say. The images capture a particular phase of dock use and not its broader history. The photographs are undated and are not organised in chapters. There are other limitations. The development of the dock system; the concentration of specific shipping lines to particular docks; the geographic zoning of certain types of cargo; the sequencing of dock images in chronological sequence; these aspects would have made the subject much more intelligible to the general reader.

THE MONDAY FACILITY				
Members' access	Members' access to the Archives and Library at the			
Merseyside Maritime Mu	seum on Mo	ondays continues as follows:		
June	Mondays	2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th		
July 7th, 14th, 21s		7th, 14th, 21st, 28th		
August 4th, 11th, 18th				

# Remember Those Days ......

Following conversations with a number of members the selected dates featured here will change to commencing 1947 (first available postwar copies) and from 1960 and will continue to show a sample of events selected from the archives, and published by kind permission of Sea Breezes.

#### April to June, 1947

Ask a variety of mariners "what is the origin of port your helm" and they will tell you the same story. That originally the rudder, as a 'steering oar' was fitted to the 'right hand side' and so a ship berthed with the other side to the quay, this becoming known as the port side. Hence the right side of the ship came to be called in Old English the steorbord or "steering side" and since the steersman had to turn his back, more or less, to the left side, that side was called the baecbord. Steorbord remains in modern English as starboard, but, except in isolated dialectal use, baecbord has been replaced. By the end of the fourteenth century laddeborde had come into use. Ladde- is usually traced to Old English hladan "to load " or " to put cargo on board a ship," and laddeborde is therefore assumed to have meant the "loading side," which, because of the steering-oar on the starboard guarter, would have been next to the dock. Finally, in 1844, there was an Admiralty order saying "The word Port is frequently substituted for the word larboard, and, as the distinction between starboard and port is so much more marked than that between starboard and larboard, it is their Lordships' direction that the word larboard shall no longer be used".

Assisting the ladies of ex-King Zog's (the former King of Albania) entourage when they sailed in February from Liverpool for Port Said in the Ellerman liner **City of Exeter** was Stewardess Miss C.C. Mustarde, who has been 33 years with the company and who served continuously at sea in two world wars.

Surprisingly two sailing ships were in deep water commission during the recent war. Firstly **Pamir**, who was seized as a prize in two World Wars. During World War I she was impounded in the Canary Islands, and did not return to Hamburg until 1920. In that same year she was handed over to Italy as war reparation, but the Italian government was unable to find a deep-water sailing ship crew, so she was laid up in the Gulf of Naples. In 1924 the F. Laeisz Company bought her back and put her into service in the nitrate trade again. Finally, in 1931, she was sold to the Finnish shipping company of Gustaf Erikson. During World War II she was seized as a prize of war by the New Zealand government in 1941 while in port at Wellington and made ten commercial voyages under the New Zealand flag. She escaped the war unscathed, and was returned to the Erikson Line The other was the **Lawhill**, sailing under the South African flag during the war, then sold to private companies of South Africa and used for several voyages to Argentina with coal and returning with a cargo of wheat. Her last long voyage, in 1947/8 was from Lourenço Margues to Port Victoria (South Australia) in ballast, returning to Beira, Mozambique, with a cargo of wheat.

#### April to June 1960

A public appeal to citizens for donations for Vancouver's new Maritime Museum has been made by the director, Tom Wylie. Books of a nautical nature, charts and maps, ship parts, old photographs, diaries, log books and ship models are required to form the basis of a comprehensive maritime collection. Wylie points out that a museum is not created in a day and that such preliminary work is necessary to build a collection worthy of our maritime heritage. The museum now has a technician on its staff and appointment of a curator only awaits confirmation by the City Board of Administration.

Twice during the last 20 years or so American Shipowners have found themselves with whole fleets of standard-type vessels all reaching the end of their useful lives more or less simultaneously, and have had to face the task of replacing them with modern ships in order to maintain efficient sea communications. This circumstance has, of course, resulted from the tremendous shipbuilding programmes carried out by the United States in both world wars. At present several American owners are actively engaged in replacing their entire fleets and currently on her maiden voyage from US Gulf ports to the Mediterranean area is the first of 53 new cargo liners to be built for Lykes Bros. Steamship Co Inc., New Orleans. Constructed by Ingalls Shipbuilding Corporation, Pascagoula, Miss., the new vessel is the James Lykes, of some 9,000 gross tons. With a length of 495 ft. and beam of 69 ft. she is the result of years of study to determine the essential characteristics of the most suitable ship for the company's six trade routes covering most of the world.

One of the most interesting events in the sale and purchase field recently has been the disposal by Canadian Pacific Steamships, Ltd. of the two good class "Empire "-type turbine cargo vessels **Beaverburn** and **Beaverlodge** to Ben Line Steamers, Ltd., Leith. The two vessels have been renamed **Bennachie** and **Benhiant** respectively

Advent of a new Cunarder usually arouses widespread interest so when the new dual-purpose cargo liner **Andania** (6,950 gross tons) sailed from the Clyde on May 3 and from her home port of Liverpool on May 12 on her maiden voyage to the Gulf of Mexico she attracted considerable attention. Built at Port Glasgow by Wm. Hamilton and Co. she is the first of the company's ships to be designed for either the Gulf of Mexico or St. Lawrence Seaway trades, and also for navigation of the Manchester Ship Canal. Both her topmasts are telescopic, her radar mast is hinged and the funnel top removable.

With the opening of the 1960 St. Lawrence Seaway navigational season Cunard have again chartered German tonnage for their Great Lakes service, but in the case of two vessels operating from London the company have revived traditional names. The two vessels are the **Auguste Schulte** (770 gross tons), which has been renamed **Veria**, and the **Wiedenborstel** (1,380 gross tons), which has become the **Caria**. Both are motorships, built in 1952 and 1953.

## The Loss of the s.s. **Canadian** By L.N.R.S. Vice President Harry Hignett

In 1870 a major Parliamentary Select Committee Inquiry into Pilotage was instituted by Joseph Chamberlain, specifically to look at the principle of compulsory pilotage. The evidence given and sought was massive. All the important figures in contemporary shipping appeared in front of the Committee. Charles Maclver, the senior partner in the Cunard Line, was in Malta but wrote a long letter to the Committee in which he confirmed that his ideas were the same as his senior master, Commodore C.H.E. Judkins. Alongside Judkins' evidence was that of Captain William Ballantine, senior master in the Allan Line (later CPR), then the principal steamship line between Britain and Canada. Both Captains were in full support for the retention of compulsory pilotage. Making on average at least eleven voyages yearly across the Atlantic with difficult pilotage at each end of the run each had plenty of pilotage experience. Ballantine's experiences were over a longer pilotage route than Judkins'; Allan Line vessels spent over 24 hours in St. Lawrence waters both inward and outward each trip. The following story illustrates the point.

Captain William Ballantine threw himself fully clothed on to the berth in his cabin. He would finally be able to catch a few winks before the s.s. **Canadian** docked in Quebec; for the past few days, he had barely shut an eye. It was just past midnight on 1st June 1857. A thick, stubborn fog lay over the St. Lawrence estuary, making those waters with a reputation for being treacherous even in good weather even more hazardous. The slow cautious speed lengthened the passage of the **Canadian**. Ever watchful for the safety of the vessel and its passengers, the master had remained on the bridge for hours on end, personally overseeing the ship's progress.

There was an unusual problem when navigating these waters: the proximity of the North Magnetic Pole. The variation of the compass changes much more rapidly in contrast to when a vessel is around the Equator. In the 1850's the effect of iron and steel on a magnetic compass was known and understood but the measurement of the effect was haphazard. Steaming at ten or eleven knots, even over an hour, could alter the variation by as much as seven degrees. Careful watch on the courses steered by reference to shore features was necessary. In reduced visibility the dangers were much greater.

When the weather cleared and a St. Lawrence pilot had boarded at Bic, Ballantine took his long-deserved break with a light heart. He had been below for no more than ten minutes when the ship shuddered, tilted to port side and became still. There was no doubt in the Captain's mind as he jumped to his feet and ran towards the bridge they had run aground.

The **Canadian** was the Montreal Ocean Steamship Company's first steamer. The Company was founded in 1854 by the Allan family and a handful of wealthy Montreal businessmen. The chairman, Hugh Allan, was a man of daring and vision who had won a lucrative contract with the Government of Canada to transport mail between Liverpool and Quebec and Montreal in summer and to Portland, Maine, in winter: the American city had been linked to Montreal by rail since 1852. An important clause in the contract was that the mails were to be delivered within a certain time. In the next twenty years this would be criticised as leading to dangerous speeds in hazardous waters.

Launched on July 13th, 1854, by William Denny & Brothers, in Dumbarton, barque-rigged for auxiliary sailing, the **Canadian** was 1,764 tons gross. The iron hull 277 ft long and with a 33 ft beam featured a single propeller powered by a two-cylinder steam engine to give10 knots.

The first two-funnelled propeller liner to navigate the North Atlantic, she made her maiden voyage on September 16th, destined for Quebec. The small, comfortable cabins accommodated 80 first-class passengers and there were dormitories for 350 steerage passengers. The 58-foot salon doubled as a dining room and was considered luxurious for the times: the warmth and comfort endowed by the cathedral-like carved wainscoting, mirrors, lavish velvet, and paintings by renowned artists were admired by all.

The sailing pattern of the **Canadian** had barely begun when it was abruptly interrupted by the Crimean War embroiling some of the larger countries in Europe. The British Admiralty urgently needed transportation for troops, and requisitioned the liners of the major shipping companies under British flag. But the Allan Line forged ahead and built three new ships, which joined the **Canadian** as soon as the war was over.

On May 7th, 1856, now having slightly modified accommodation, the **Canadian** resumed regular service on the St. Lawrence. The Allan Line was now providing scheduled services with simultaneous departures from both sides of the Atlantic every fortnight. However, the season ended for the **Canadian** on Sunday, November 4th. The ship ran aground on Ile Blanche, an island facing Cacouna on the south shore of the St. Lawrence. The passengers and the mails were transferred to the steamer **Advance** and taken to Quebec. The vessel was recovered a few days later, luckily with mere minor damages.

During the inquiry conducted by Trinity House in Quebec, the St. Lawrence pilot, Francois Gaudreau, aged 34, from Cap Saint Ignace, was found guilty of negligence and his piloting licence suspended for one year. But about eight months later the **Canadian** was wrecked in a similar accident.

8

On 20th May 1857, the **Canadian** left Liverpool for Quebec City with 117 first class passengers and 250 steerage passengers on board, her holds full of cargo and including a large number of bags of mail from Europe. Towards the end of an eleven-day Atlantic crossing, three days of dense fog ensured that Captain Ballantine left the bridge for very brief periods. An experienced and cautious seaman, he reduced speed and navigated by dead reckoning through the Straits of Belle IIe. Passing Matane, Sunday, 31st May, the fog finally cleared and the **Canadian** resumed normal cruising speed along the St. Lawrence.

Just off Ile Saint-Barnabé, the ship slowed to allow a small schooner to come alongside for the St. Lawrence River pilot Jean-Léon Roy to board the vessel then resumed its course along the south side of the St. Lawrence estuary. In the waters off Bic, near the pilot station, Ballantine handed over to the pilot, but not without first having assured himself that Roy was sober and alert. The sky was clear and the waters calm.

Early in the evening the **Canadian** stopped again briefly near Brandy Pot Islands to hand the latest news from Europe to a boatman, to be taken directly to the telegraph at Riviere-du-Loup for transmission to Quebec. As the evening fell, the passengers enjoyed a blazing sunset against the backdrop of the Laurentian mountains. The **Canadian**, with a following tide, cruised smoothly at eleven and half knots; and those on board felt confident of regaining some of the time lost in the fog.

At midnight, Joseph Dutton, the first mate relieved the second mate on the bridge just as the ship passed the **Brilliant**, a lightship positioned at the northeast entry to the Saint-Rock Traverse (since 1830). Midway between the **Brilliant** and the lighthouse at Pilier de Pierre whose light is visible from afar, Ballantine went up to the bridge to check that all was correct concerning the ship's speed and position. The pilot stated that he would navigate by sight rather than by compass. In the current conditions the Captain raised no objection but ordered the pilot to let the first mate know if he changed his mind and left the bridge, hoping to catch a few hours of sleep before entering the narrows approaching Quebec.

Dutton kept his eyes on the flashing light on Pilier de Pierre towards which the **Canadian** was steaming. Since 1843, a lighthouse erected on Pilier de Pierre, a small rocky island in the waters just off Saint-Jean-Port-Joli, had guided ships travelling in the south channel of the St. Lawrence. Barely visible at high tide a jagged rocky reef, shown on charts as Algernon Rock, lay some cable lengths to the south.

Dutton was not happy that the ship's movements were correct and possibly dangerous. He commented that he had never been so far north while steaming along the south channel. In reaction to Dutton's remarks, the pilot swung the vessel's head a few points to port but quickly resumed his original course. Less than two minutes later the ship struck. The ship shuddered as the bow lifted out of the water, first heeling to port. The way then came off the ship which listed to starboard.

Dutton, dazed and bewildered, was too shaken to react. Ballantine rushed to the telegraph moving the handle to 'stop'. He could see the reality – the bow of his ship was perched on Algernon Rock, the stern remained in free water. Just a few minutes of slack water remained and with the ebbing tide, the **Canadian** would be in danger of sinking stern first, or worse, of capsizing on its starboard side. After exchanging a few harsh words with the pilot, he ordered all passengers on deck and the lifeboats swung out on their davits whilst vain attempts were made to free the vessel using the engines.

The **Eden**, a passing vessel on passage from London for Quebec, heard the ships' whistle and remained in the vicinity, ready to intervene. Meanwhile, on the South Shore, news of the tragic event spread quickly and the steamer **Providence** arrived from L'Islet to assist the shipwrecked victims. First-class and mail bags were prudently transferred to the passengers best accommodation on board the **Providence** while steerage passengers had to endure the bare accommodation on the **Eden**. The two ships promptly made for Quebec for the four hours passage.

As soon as the news of the plight of the **Canadian** reached Quebec, the **Queen Victoria**, a brand-new, powerful steam-powered tug (494t), was dispatched to the **Canadian**. However all attempts to free the liner were in vain. The **Queen Victoria** headed back to Quebec City hauling a barge loaded with 100 tons of merchandise lifted from the holds in an effort to lighten the vessel, as well as passengers' luggage and furniture from the ship's main lounge. On 5th June a Quebec contractor, and his mining team arrived on the site to dynamite the rock still holding the **Canadian**.

Work progressed well for a time but high winds began moving the hull. Jolted from the rock by the storm, the stricken vessel ship slid backwards, the stern sinking in 30 ft of water. With only the bows emerging above the water, the **Canadian** was declared a total loss and all hopes of salvaging the vessel were abandoned.

On 14th July 1857, Jean-Léon Roy, the St. Lawrence pilot involved in the accident, appeared before Trinity House of Quebec. During his testimony, Mr. Roy made the following simple but surprising statement: "I acknowledge having run the ship aground. The night was clear. I do not understand what happened. However, if the light, which is a revolving light, had been working properly, the accident would never have occurred." Allegations to the effect that the light was defective were strongly denied by the ship's captain and first mate. Having heard the testimonies of Ballantine and the first mate, the tribunal ordered the

immediate dismissal of Mr. Roy, who was found solely responsible for the loss of the **Canadian**.

It must be said though, the punishment could have been harsh, in that steamers were not so numerous and the pilots did not have enough experience in handling comparatively large ships moving at speeds of over ten knots.

I understand that Ballantine was later Marine Superintendent of the Allan Line.

#### Marine Radio Museum Faces Closure from the Nautilus Telegraph

It is with great sadness that I have to report that the Marine Radio Museum at Fort Perch Rock is under threat. The owners have requested that the Marine Radio Museum Society at Fort Perch Rock pay a rent of £200 per month as from 1st March, 2014. The society has not got the funds to pay this rent. Therefore it is probable that the wireless room and the Wireless Room and the Memory Room will no longer be manned or maintained by the society and, possibly, the website will close.

The Wireless Room had on display, a Marconi Marine radio console; a Kelvin Hughes radio console, radio equipment belonging to the **Lady of Mann**; two telex printers ex Portishead Radio; several examples of Navtex; Decca Navigators and multiple handbooks and manuals.

The Memory Room contains historic photographs, displays of various valves, transistors, a portable radio set, several lifeboat radio sets, and a historic chart from the film 'The Cruel Sea', upon which are marked the sites of many merchant ships sink by U-boats in the North Atlantic.

In the cafe is a memorial plaque of all the IMR radio officers killed during WW2, and a memorial plaque of the crew lost when mv Derbyshire sank in the Pacific.

A host of former radio officers have contributed to the building/ maintaining of the rooms including Stan McNally, Bill Cross, Bob Bunker, Graham Mitchell, David Wiggins, Willie Williamson, Andy Forbes, Mike Gouldbourne, Mike Ridehaulgh, John Hudson, myself and many, many more whose names I have forgotten – apologies for that.

The society built a replica Titanic wireless room as close as we could to the original on the ship. Many favourable comments were made by members of the public and ex radio officers, and it was reported to be the best exhibit in Liverpool during the Titanic centenary events.

To all those who have supported, visited and helped us, we thank you. We hope other museums flourish after our demise.

Clive Evans



Micoperi 7000 - the largest crane barge in the world (capable of lifting 14,000 tons). Here shown under tow to Rotterdam Author's picture



A twin-shank Bruce anchor, having the fluke angle changed prior to being re-deployed. Author's picture

#### Anchor Handling and Towage in the North Sea A precis of the presentation on Thursday, 20th February, 2014 The Editor

An impressive "full house" comprising 33 members and 6 visitors gathered for this fascinating presentation by Society Member Captain Don Watt.

On completion of his apprenticeship with Alfred Holt and Company, Don served a further twenty years with that renowned organisation before the changes of the early/ mid 1970s, as in so many cases, caused a necessary and dramatic career change. This time to the fledging North Sea oil industry of 1975, and what Don described as the fastest/steepest learning curve ever known.

Posted as Chief Officer for acclimatisation purposes Don witnessed the rapid growth and expansion in that extremely harsh environment.



Maersk Challenger - the 'dream machine'

Following the initial finds of gas fields the situation had been transformed in December 1969, when Phillips Petroleum discovered oil at Ekofisk, in Norwegian waters in the central North Sea. The same month, Amoco discovered the Montrose Field about 217 km (135 miles) east of Aberdeen. The discovery of Ekofisk prompted B.P. to drill what turned out to be a dry hole in May 1970, but this was followed by the discovery of the giant Forties Oil Field in October 1970. New discoveries followed in rapid succession: the giant Brent east of Shetland and the Frigg gas field, the Piper oilfield was discovered in 1973 and the Statfjord and the Ninian Fields in 1974. The inner Moray Firth Beatrice Field was discovered in 1976 becoming the only oil field in the North Sea named after a woman. After the 1973 oil crisis, the oil price had quadrupled. The 1979 oil crisis caused another tripling. So clearly Don arrived at an extremely dramatic and busy phase of the developments.

Volatile weather conditions in Europe's North Sea have made drilling particularly hazardous, claiming many lives. The exploration of the North Sea has been a story of continually pushing the edges of the technology of exploitation (in terms of what can be produced) and later the technologies of discovery and evaluation. In parallel with this the rigs became ever larger as working depths increased in the more remote fields and consequently the supply vessels, especially those designed to deal with anchor handling were subject to massive change. This can be illustrated by their propulsive power. Originally specified as brake horse power the oil companies realised that this was being eroded due to increasing take-off by shaft driven auxiliaries, and bollard pull became the more indicative measure. This measure doubled during Don's time in the industry, to figures approaching 200 tons.

[Editors's note: To illustrate the scale of some operations the **Micoperi 7000** (pictured under tow) is a multipurpose offshore oil platform installation vessel able to install very large oil production platform decks (known as integrated decks) as well as the decks' supporting structures (known as jackets) using its two very large fully revolving cranes. It can also support the offshore completion of the platform by providing hotel and workshop facilities for large construction crews. Saturation Diving facilities support subsea connection work. The vessel's size and semi-submersible form allow it to operate in worse weather conditions than smaller and conventionally shaped vessels. Each crane has a 140-metre-long boom fitted with 4 hooks, and is capable of lifting up to 7,000 tonnes at 40 m lift radius using the main hook. The 2nd Auxiliary hook can be deployed to a water depth of 450 m. The two cranes are capable of a tandem lift of 14,000 tonnes and are each fitted with 15,600 hp engines].

Don served in the offshore oil industry for nineteen years, seventeen of them as Master. His last command was **Maersk Challenger**, one of the latest class of Maersk anchor handling tug supply vessels

His talk was fully illustrated by many pictures showing the hazardous nature of work such as locating, attaching and picking up an anchor – which generally meant more than 24 hours of constant manoeuvring by the master, and then manhandling it onto the working deck! There were also many anecdotes like the pressures imposed when towing a massive oil rig through busy shipping lanes and estuary approaches; or the nature of an environment which could lead to a continuous series of Force 10 gales over a period of several weeks on constant duty.

Classification: DNV + 1A1 Tug and Supply Vessel, SF, EO, Ice C, Oil Rec.D Dimensions: Length o.a.: 76.40 m Length p.p.: 66.00 m Breadth, moulded: 17.60 m Depth, moulded: 9.00 m Draft max: 6.09 m Tonnage - Deadweight: Gross tonnage: 2887 GT Deadweight: 2746 tonnes Net tonnage: 866 NT **Deck Load Capacities:** Deck load: 1600 tonnes Deck strength: 5 tonnes/sqm Deck length: 42.2 m Deck width: 15.0 m Free deck area: 633 sqm Liquid Tanks Fuel oil, Drill/Ballast water, Potable water Mud/Bulk Tanks: Oil based mud, Heavy brine, Light brine, Base oil, Bulk Chain Lockers: 2x133 cbm., 13,215 ft 3" chain Deck Machinery: Anchor Windlass 17 mt pull Anchor chain length: Starboard 750 metres Port 220 metres **Tugger Winches** 2 Capstans 2 2 Cranes: **Towing Anchor Handling:** Winch: with one towing drum and two work drums. Cable lifters: 2 Pennant Wire Reels 2 Towing Wire Reel 1 Stern roller:4 m x 2.75 m SWL 350 mt.; Sharkjaw: 2 x Karm Fork; Chain chaser 1; Grapple 1

Propulsion: Main engines: 4 x 3600 BHP B&W Propellers: 2 x controllable pitch Nozzles: 2 x Kort nozzles Rudders: 2 x Spade type: Bow: 2 Thrusters: Stern:1 Bollard pull: 173 mt Generators: Diesel 2x280 KVA 1x160 KVA 2 x 2640 KW Shaft **Bridge Equipment** Manoeuvring Positions: 2 on bridge, 1 fore and 1 aft Joystick; Radar, 2; Gyro; Speed Log; Echo Sounder; Magnetic Compass; Navigator; Navtex 2; Autopilot; GPS Navigator; SSB Radio with telex and phone; VHF 2; Satellite Communication, Standard A and Standard C; STC telex and phone; Direction Finder; Cell Net Telephone; GMDSS Accommodation (fully airconditioned) 16 x single cabins 1 x 3 berth 1 x 2 berth - 1 smoke room Recreation - 1 mess room Safety/Firefighting: To Solas and DMA regs Rescue boat: Seabear 23 EPIRB: 2 pcs Heli Winch: Portable Foam Post, Extinguishers **Rescue Equipment:** 2x Rescue Baskets; 2 x Scrambling Nets; 4 x Rescue Hooks; 1 x Diving Ladders; 2 x Travel wire; 12 x Line Throwing Apparatus; 3 x Suits for Surface **Swimmers** Survivor Accommodation for 20

#### Port of Liverpool Bill Ogle

The Port Freight Statistics (Provisional Report for 2012) published by the Department for Transport makes interesting reading in terms of millions of tons handled as well as thousands of containers:

Busiest ports	Million tonnes	Containers
	(millions)	(thousands)
Grimsby & Immingham	60.1	91
London	43.7	390
Milford Haven	39.8	-
Southampton	38.1	886
Tees and Hartlepool	34.0	146
Liverpool	32.9	385
Felixstowe	26.3	2,044
Forth	25.3	155

Readers may be unaware that Liverpool is ranked 6th in tonnage and 4th in numbers of containers, yet still continues to develop and expand its operations. Known as Liverpool2, the construction of a new deep-water terminal began in June, 2013 and the planned completed date is 2015. The new terminal which will have the capacity to simultaneously handle two 13,500TEU post-panamax sized vessels is being developed by Peel Ports, which also owns and operates the Port of Liverpool and the Manchester Ship Canal. Total investment in the terminal project is expected to reach £300m

The new terminal will generate more than 5,000 jobs and will add 600,000TEU capacity to the port's current capacity of 1.5 million TEU. It will provide the quickest and cheapest route to major markets and will be the best connected container terminal in the country, with ten motorways located within ten miles.

The project will involve the construction of an 854m quay wall, in-filling works, dredging of a new berthing pocket measuring 16.5m deep and 62m wide adjacent to the quay wall, and dredging of the approach channel about 8m below chart datum. The new terminal will be equipped with eight quay cranes, supported by 53 shore-based tugs and trailers, and 27 rail mounted gantries. The quay cranes will be capable of operating at wind speeds above 50mph.

The location will be on West Gladstone wall adjacent to the Gladstone locks, in the triangular area running towards the location of the old radar tower (see picture opposite).



Fireworks to mark commencement of the development on 6th June, 2013 Picture courtesy Norman West



Courtesy Wikepedia Commons (Peter Craine)

Location of new berths

# THE NEW LIFE FLEET

A review of the presentation given to the March meeting of the MoT's polyglot fleet which carried Assisted Emigrants to a "new life" after 1945 By LNRS member Tony Barratt

The Second World War resulted in nearly 50 million deaths, 35 million wounded and 3 million missing persons. 25 to 30 million more people had also been the victims of concentration camps, deportation or other acts of hardship.

The cost in financial terms was also considerable. Britain had spent 3,000 billion pounds and was to experience severe financial hardship for many years. The Commonwealth Dominions, after being full partners in the conflict wished to use the peace to develop their national status and to do this they needed to increase their populations. It was therefore in the interest of both the British and Dominion Governments to reintroduce an Assisted Passages Scheme.

Initially there was no shortage of volunteers who wanted to get away from an austere Britain which retained the rationing of some goods until the early 1950s. Following the end of the War rationing had became even more extensive with bread being added to the list of rationed products.

Australia developed two assisted passage schemes. A free scheme for those who had been in the armed services in 1938 and had served in them throughout the war, together with their families whilst the other scheme required a payment of £10 for each adult over 19 years of age and £5 for those aged 14 to 18 years. Younger children went free. The cost of the schemes was shared by the two governments. Some passengers even got their £10 paid for them by charitable organisations. New Zealand, Canada and South Africa also introduced similar schemes but those to Canada and South Africa lasted for much shorter periods and served many fewer people. The Australian schemes were implemented on 31<sup>st</sup> March 1947

The enormous number of 1,106,566 people used the Australian scheme between 1947 and 1972, while over the same period 76,515 assisted people emigrated to New Zealand. To South Africa about 30,000 had travelled by 1949 when the Scheme closed, with a smaller number going to Canada. Although emigration to both countries continued by sea into the nineteen sixties, this was by scheduled services and without governmental assistance.

The conditions on many of the vessels used for assisted emigrants, particularly in the early years, were somewhat "Spartan", but efforts were made to make the voyage more enjoyable. Lectures and talks were given on the new homeland and social events were organised by both the ship's company and passengers. Any teachers emigrating were identified and were allocated to providing "educational" activities for the children on board. This could include painting, handicrafts and the encouragement of musical skills.

Ongoing rationing meant passengers had few changes of clothes. Due to



H.M.T. Empire Clyde

Author's collection

limited laundry facilities on the ships and transiting the tropics there was much aggravation due to washing hanging in the multi berth cabins and in the passage ways. The sexes had clearly defined sleeping areas in separate parts of the ship.

Because of the number of passengers, meals usually had to be served in first and second sittings. The food was sometimes served by waiters who had

individual tables allocated to their care. Some of the tables could hold up to twenty diners. Even though the budget for the meals could be as low as 5/- per day (25p) some passengers found the food too rich for pallets which had endured rationing for so many years and requests were received for plainer food. One complaint concerned the

too frequent availability of ice cream! There was a different menu each day. On the last night of the voyage a celebratory meal was served, which included a glass of wine, Antipodean, of course. All meals were included in the fare, but drinks in the bar had to be paid for when ordered.

Due to shortages of crew, passengers might be invited to help with mundane tasks such as dish washing for which they might



H.M.S. Cheshire

Author's collection

be paid 10/- (50p) per shift. However, as this was more than the wage of a regular crew member it could cause dissent, although the income was no doubt attractive to those passengers who did the work.

In previous migration schemes it was customary to take up accommodation on the regular ships serving the route or to make use of ships provided by entrepreneurs, often for quick profit. However, after the Second World War normal shipping operations were to remain disrupted for several years, while the considerable ship losses were made good. Problems were not helped as many suitable ships were retained on Government Service, some as late as 1948 and then needed restoration. This meant a new fleet had to be found to supplement those ships that were available.

This supplementary fleet was created by utilising a group of vessels which

were somewhat past their prime. Most had seen arduous war service, a number having been badly damaged. At any other time they would have been scrapped, indeed some had already been declared as a "Constructive Total Loss", but the needs of the early post-war economy meant that great efforts were taken to repair them and return them to service

Most of the earmarked ships entered service between 1947 and 1950. The Orient liner **Ormonde** took the first departure in 1947; she was soon followed in the Australian service by the liners **Ranch**i and **Chiteral** of the P & O Company, **Somersetshire** and **Dorsetshire** of the Bibby Line, the **Amarapora** of P Henderson & Company and the Anchor Line's **Cameronia**, all in 1948. The following year saw the **Georgic** owned by the MoT and managed by the Cunard – White Star Line enter service, the **Asturias**, also owned by the MoT but was managed by the Royal Mail Line, and two more Bibby liners the **Oxfordshire** and the **Cheshire** followed. The last ship to be commissioned to join the Australian service was the **New Australia**, owned by the MoT but managed by Shaw Savill and Albion Lines, this was in August 1950.

This fleet was supplemented by the P&O liners **Mooltan** and **Majola** on a full time basis and the Australian coastal liner **Kanimbla** for one trip, when on the return voyage from bringing the crew of the new Australian aircraft carrier, **HMAS Sydney** to the UK. On some return voyages to the UK the **Mooltan** and **Majola** carried fare paying passengers for P&O whilst other vessels might carry troops or Dutch refugees from Indonesia. At least initially the **Amarapora** and the **Oxfordshire** were sub-chartered by the International Refugee Organization (IRO) and mainly carried displaced persons from various continental countries.

As the initial surge in emigration declined, or commercial vessels became available, the size of the MoT emigrant fleet was reduced and most of these ships were sold for breaking up or reverted to full time trooping.

In parallel the New Zealand Government also arranged with the MoT to carry emigrants to their shores. The former Royal Mail liner Atlantis left London on the 30<sup>th</sup>, November 1948 and continued her solo mission until 1952. She was then replaced by another MoT vessel, the **Empire Brent**, which was renamed, appropriately, **Captain Cook**. Even though the new vessel was able to carry more passengers even more berths were needed and the **Amarapora** was transferred from IRO voyages and renamed **Captain Hobson**.

By 1955 only the Georgic, New Australia, Captain Cook and Captain Hobson remained, and this quartet was reduced in 1956 when the Georgic was withdrawn. The New Australia served her namesake until September 1957. The Captain Hobson remained on the New Zealand service until 1958 and the Captain Cook until February 1960, thus ending the MoT's service.

Emigrants henceforth were carried by either regular British liner companies or one of the Italian (and later Greek) vessels which had been chartered to replace the MoT vessels. In total the MoT fleet totalled fourteen ships, all with varied histories. Details of the principal events in the careers of the ships:

Vessel	Built Ow	ner	Intended rou	te Builder	Dimensi	ionsTonsl	Knots
Asturias	1925 Roy	al Mail SN	UK-River Plate	Harland & Wolff	655x78	22,071	16
Built as mo	torship but re-engined steam turbines after eight years due to poor service speed					speed	
1939 - 43	Served as a	n armed merc	hant cruiser				
1943	Torpedoed	, towed to Free	town, where she	lay awash for eight	een month	IS	
1945 - 49	Purchased	by MoWT and	rebuilt at Belfast				
1949 - 53	Emigrant se	ervice					
1953	Prior to bei	ng broken up	at Faslane, serve	d as stage set for fil	m "A Night	t to Remem	ıber"
Cameronia	1919 Anc	hor Line	UK – USA	Beardmore	575x70	16,365	16.5
1940 - 45	Served as	troopship. To	ook part in N Af	rican Landings (da	amaged) a	ind Norma	undy
1945	Anchor Lir	ne decide not	to re-enter Atl	antic passenger tr	ade due t	o war loss	es
1948 - 53	Emigrant s	service, made	11 voyages				
1953 – 57	Renamed	Empire Clyd	e and served as	troopship			
1957	Broken up	at Newport					
				1	1		
Cheshire	1927 Bibb	oy Line	UK – Burma	Fairfield SB & Eng	483x60	10,552	15.0
1927	First Bibby	Line diesel ب	powered passen	iger ship – Covere	d half a m	illion mile	es
1939 - 43	Converted	to armed m	erchant cruiser.	During this time	she was t	orpedoed	twice
1943 - 48	Troopship	and retained	l on Governmer	nt service			
1949 - 53	Due to dee	cline in Burm	a trade she was	chartered to MoT	for emig	rant servio	e
1953 - 57	Reverted to trooping, before being broken up at Newport						
Chiteral	1925 P&	O Steam Nav	UK – Australia	Alex Stephen&Son	526x70	15,248	16.0
1939 - 44	Converted	to armed me	erchant cruiser.	Duties included pi	cking up	survivors	of her
	fleet mate, the AMC, HMS Rawalpindi						
1944 - 48	Troopship and retained on Government service						
1949 - 53	Emigrant service with some return voyages carrying passengers for P&O.						
	Then broken up at Dalmuir.						
Dorsetshir	<b>e</b> 1920	Bibby Line	UK – Burma	Harland & Wolff	468x57	7,445	12.0
1920	With sister	rship, <b>Somer</b> s	<b>setshire</b> she wa	as the first pure ca	rgo ship l	built for	
	Bibby Line. Intended service did not materialise so they were chartered out						
1927	Converted	to troopship					

Vessel	Built Owner Intended route Builder DimensionsTonsKnots					
1939 - 45	Converted to Hospital Ship No23. Bombed on three occasions					
1948 - 52	Used as emigrant ship					
1952	Used as accommodation ship at Aden while refinery was being built					
1952 - 54	Trooping. Then broken up at Newport					
Georgic	1931 White Star Line UK – USA Harland&Wolff 712X82 27,759 18.0					
1934	Ownership transferred to Cunard White Star Line as part of the Kylsant collapse/					
	Queen Mary Agreement					
1940	Operated as a troopship and assisted in evacuations of Norway and Western					
	France. Then taking troops to Egypt via S Africa.					
1941	Bombed at Port Tewfik. Massive salvage exercise at Port Tewfik, then Port Sudan,					
	Karachi and Bombay					
1943	Returned to UK for rebuilding. Sold to MoWT & rebuilt as a troopship at Belfast.					
	(Still with some of her decks distorted)					
1945 - 48	Engaged on trooping					
1949 - 55	Emigrant service, although undertook a few trans-Atlantic voyages for Cunard.					
1956	Broken up at Faslane					
New Austra	lia 1931 Furness Withy N.Y-Bermuda Vickers Armstrong 590x84 22,575 21.0					
1934	Rescued 71 passengers from the burning Morro Castle					
1939 - 46	Became a troopship					
1947	Caught fire just as her major refit was completed, and so seriously damaged that					
	breaking up was considered.					
1948	Bought by MoT and put under Shaw Savill management. Scale of rebuild much					
	critised. Cost £3m and 3,000 tons of scarce steel used					
1950 – 57	Emigrant service, then sold to Greek owner. Broken up mainly due to UK					
	currency controls					
Ormonde	1917 Orient Line UK-Australia John Brown & Co. 600x66 14,853 18.0					
1913	Ordered, completion delayed by war					
1919	Following post war refit entered service with the Orient Line					
1939 - 46	Troopship					
1947	Released and refitted by Cammell Laird.					
1947 - 52	Emigrant service, then broken up at Dalmuir					
Ranchi	1925P & O Steam NavUK - AustraliaHawthorne Leslie548x7116,97416.0					

Vessel	Built OwnerIntended routeBuilderDimensionsTonsKnots					
1939 - 43	Served as armed merchant cruiser					
1943 - 47	Government service mainly as a troopship. (1945 Planned to use her as a					
	blockship during the Malayan Campaign)					
1947 - 53	Emigrants outbound P&O passengers homeward. Then broken up at Newport					
Somersetsh	nire 1921 Bibby Line UK – Burma Harland & Wolff 468x57 7,456 12.0					
	Early career same a Dorsetshire, becoming Hospital Ship No25					
1941	Underwent eleven hour bombardment at Tobruk					
1942	Torpedoed and abandoned but re-boarded when she did not sink					
1944 - 48	Transferred to Pacific/Far East fleets					
1948 - 53	Emigrant service. Following engine problems used as a troopship, until broken					
	up in 1954 at Barrow					
Oxfordshire	e 1912 Bibby Line UK – Burma Harland & Wolff 474x55 8,648 14.0					
1914 - 19	Hospital ship worldwide service					
1919 - 39	Employed on Bibby's UK - Burma service					
1939 - 48	Requisitioned as Hospital Ship No 6, including service with the USN 7th Fleet.					
1949 - 50	IRO service					
1951 - 58	In the pilgrim trade, then broken up at Karachi					
Atlantis	1913Royal Mail SN Co.UK-River PlateHarland & Wolff590x5715,62017.0					
1914 - 19	Launched as Andes, and then Armed merchant cruiser HMS Andes					
1929 - 39	Operated as cruise ship Atlantis					
1939 - 45	Became Hospital Ship No 33					
1948 - 52	Purchased by MoT for the emigrant service then broken up on the Clyde.					
Captain Co	ok 1924 Donaldson Line UK – Canada Fairfield SB & Eng 538x66 15,468 15.0					
	Ex Letitia and sister to the ill-fated Athenia					
1939 - 41	Served as armed merchant cruiser					
1941 - 44	Operated as troopship					
1944 - 46	Became a Canadian hospital Ship					
1946	Donaldson sold vessel to MoT as had decided to operate a much reduced					
	N Atlantic passenger service. Renamed Empire Brent					
1946	Collided with and sank the coaster <b>Stormont</b> in the Mersey					
1952	After carrying out other government voyages entered emigrant fleet service,					
	following withdrawal of the Atlantis					

Vessel	Built Owner Intended route Builder DimensionsTonsKnots					
1952	Renamed Captain Cook for New Zealand emigrant service, she also undertook					
	some trans-Atlantic voyages as well as trooping and Dutch refugee voyages.					
1960	Withdrawn and broken up at Inverkeithing					
Captain Ho	bson 1920 Brit & Burmese SN UK – Burma Wm Denny & Bros 465x59 8,084 14.0					
	Ex Amarapoora					
1939 - 46	Converted to a hospital ship (Number not known). Spent 3 years at Scapa Flow					
	and then at landings in North Africa, Italy and the Far East					
1946 - 51	Purchased by MoT and with hospital facilities used by IRO					
1952	Designated as an emigrant ship for New Zealand service and renamed but					
	undertook a significant number of trooping voyages					
1959	Broken up in Japan					
Vessels ch	nartered to the Ministry of Transport					
Mooltan	1923 P & O Steam Nav UK - Australia Harland & Wolff 625x73 20,847 16.0					
1939 - 41	Served as armed merchant cruiser					
1941 - 48	Operated as troopship					
1948 - 54	Served as emigrant ship outwards and P&O ship homewards					
1954	Broken up					
Majola	1923 P & O Steam Nav UK - Australia Harland & Wolff 625x73 20,847 16.0					
1939 - 41	Served as armed merchant cruiser					
1941 - 48	Operated as a troopship					
1948 - 54	Served as emigrant ship outwards and P&O ship homewards					
1954	Broken up					
Kanimbla	1935McIliwraith, McEacharn Co.AustraliaHarland & Wolff468x6610,98519.0					
1939 - 48	Served as armed merchant cruiser then a troopship mainly in the Pacific					
1948	One emigrant voyage when returning from UK to Australia					
1973	Broken up					

## Some Notes on Liverpool Shipping and Communications in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century by LNRS member Gordon Bodey

In 1850 the offices of David and Charles Maclver, and of the British and North American Steampacket Company (subsequently the Cunard Steamship Co.), were located at the corner of Rumford and Water Streets, Liverpool. At the opening of 1850 the company's fleet in service was advertised as:

Vessel	Tonnage	Horsepower	Speed (knots)
Caledonia	1,150	740	9
Cambria	1,422	1,040	9¼
Hibernia	1,422	1,040	9¼
America	1,825	1,200	10¼
Niagara	1,825	1,200	10¼
Canada	1,825	1,200	10¼
Europa	1,825	1,200	10¼

All the above steamers were wooden built and paddle propelled. The last vessel built of wood for the Cunard company was the **Arabia** of 1852; the first iron one was the **Persia**, built in 1856. The last paddle-driven steamer, the **Scotia**, was built in 1862; and the company's first screw steamer, the **China**, was also built in 1862.

In the 1850s opinions were strongly divided on the issue of 'paddle versus screw' propulsion. In 1850 (as managers) Richardson Bros. & Co., founded the Liverpool & Philadelphia S.S. Co. One of the three partners of the firm, William Inman, firmly believed that the paddlers' days were numbered, and the company (known as the Inman Line) commenced business in 1850 with the iron-hulled screw steamer **City of Glasgow**, running between Liverpool and Philadelphia. By 1857 it was officially the New York and Philadelphia S.S. Co., and its service ran between Liverpool and New York.

In April 1852 the comparative performances of Inman's **City of Manchester** and the above **Niagara** showed the **Niagara's** to be very inferior to Inman's vessel. However, the paddle proponents put the result down as an abnormality that could not be repeated. But soon time was to prove Inman right.

It was also Inman who proved carrying steerage passengers, i.e. emigrants, in such vessels was practical and profitable – even to supplying them with cooked meals, until then an unheard of luxury. By 1857 the Inman Line was reportedly carrying one third of the transatlantic passenger traffic. [Later, in the **City of Brussels** (the first ship to cross the Atlantic in under eight days), he was to provide steward service to steerage passengers.]

All the above Cunard vessels, except the **Caledonia** (which sailed only to Boston), sailed between Liverpool and New York. The average outward passage to New York was generally  $13\frac{1}{2}$  days, although in 1849 the **Canada** made the shortest passage – 11 days; she also made the longest –  $14\frac{1}{2}$  days. Homeward, the shortest passage was also by the **Canada** –  $11\frac{1}{2}$  days; and the longest was 17 days, by the **Hibernia**.

Passenger numbers to America on the above Cunard ships were generally very low: in 1849 the total number carried during the course of forty-three voyages (Boston & New York voyages combined) was 3,217 – an average of 75 per voyage (Persia could carry 350 passengers). Homeward, the average was 67.

No steerage passengers were carried on Cunard ships in the early 1850s, and of the recorded 152,826 emigrants who sailed from Liverpool in 1849, the over-whelming majority left for America, and nearly all did so in sailing ships of the Train, Tapscott, and other sailing ship lines.

Although the Cunard Co. was the pre-eminent transatlantic line, it was not long without competition. In 1850, besides Inman, Edward Knight Collins entered the fray with a fleet of four ships and an annual subsidy of \$858,000 from the U.S. government. The first Collins liner, the **Atlantic**, arrived in Liverpool from New York on 10 May 1850, and sailed for New York on 29 May. Within two years the Collins liners were carrying twice as many passengers as Cunard's were.

Initially, the Collins fleet comprised the four paddle-driven ships Atlantic, Arctic, Baltic and Pacific. The Arctic and the Pacific were lost at sea: the Arctic (Captain Luce) bound for New York from Liverpool was in collision with the small French steamer Vesta, off Cape Race on 27 September 1854. Some 278 lives were lost, including Collins's wife, son, and daughter. Eightyseven people were rescued. The Collins vessel did not have watertight bulkheads, the Vesta did.

The **Pacific**, also bound for New York from Liverpool, disappeared in January 1856 with 288 people on board, and was presumed to have hit an iceberg. Collins's captains had a reputation for running their ships at the highest possible speeds, regardless of weather conditions.

The line did not survive long thereafter. Collins's mail subsidy was halved, he went bankrupt, and his two remaining ships were sold at auction on 1 April 1858.

Although the passenger liners attracted the headlines and the public's attention, the commercial wealth of Liverpool was founded on, and sustained by, the vast armada of cargo ships that used the port. In 1849, a total of 4,042

vessels were entered inward, and 4,751 outward, of which only a small fraction were passenger liners.

The means of communicating information at this time were not only meagre, but also primitive. Land line telegraphs (often only one terminal per town centre)<sup>1</sup> were in operation between major cities and towns, but not accessible over most of the British hinterland. The first undersea electric telegraph cable (between Dover and France) began operating in 1850. On 10 August 1858 a transatlantic cable service was inaugurated, but the cable broke on 3 September 1858. It was not successfully reconnected until 1 September 1866.

Information about the arrival of ships bound inward to Liverpool was of vital importance to the owners, insurers, merchants, Customs officials, and the consignees of the cargoes they carried. Of the last, none was more important in the 1850s than cotton. At that time, Liverpool handled and traded 53% of all cotton imports to Europe. It was also a major percentage of the total cargo that the port handled.

In order to acquire the earliest possible information of ship arrivals off Anglesey, a line of semaphore signalling stations operated between Holyhead mountain and the Tower, then situated on the site of the present Tower Buildings in Liverpool. The stations (from Holyhead) were at Cefndu, Point Lynas, Puffin Island, Orme's Head, Llysfaen, Voryd, Voel Nant (north Wales coast), Hilbre Island and Bidston (Wirral) – a distance of seventy-two miles. A message could be relayed from Holyhead to Liverpool in five minutes. However, if visibility was poor around just one station, which could happen frequently, the whole system did not function, and no information reached Liverpool.

The system commenced operating on 26 October 1827; the American ship **Napoleon** (Captain C.J. Smith) being the first vessel signalled inward. She was a new, copper sheathed vessel of 550 tons burthen belonging to A. Thompson of New York. The last semaphore message was sent on 24 November 1860 when an electric telegraph came into operation over the route. [An electric telegraph line along Liverpool docks had become operational on 19 July].

Detailed news and information from America was always eagerly awaited, and was contained in the mails, periodicals, and newspapers carried to Liverpool from New York on the Cunard ships, as well as those of other lines.

When a ship was expected to reach the Mersey bar some hours ahead of high tide a tender (for Cunard steamers, the Satellite)\* carrying representatives of businesses and the leading provincial and London papers, left the George's landing stage to meet the ship at the bar, regardless of the weather. Those aboard the tender took with them local newspapers, and mail from office and home for the captain and passengers. In return, they each took back a news parcel to Liverpool for speedy onward delivery to other parts of the UK.

\*Satellite (Captain Parry): an iron-built paddle steamer completed in 1848. She was 108.6 ft long x 18.7 ft wide x 9.6 ft deep. Grt. 157, speed 8 knots. She could carry 600 passengers and their luggage. Liners had to embark and disembark passengers in mid-river until 1 September 1857 when the landing stage at Prince's Pier opened.

On the tender's return trip, the most important information would be copied from the newspapers or other dispatches on to pieces of paper. These would then be wrapped around a stone carried for the purpose. Runners on the landing stage awaited the arrival of the tender. When it arrived within throwing distance, the stones would be hurled ashore to be caught, hopefully, by its intended recipient (failure to do so would result in vital seconds being lost). When caught, the runner ran to the only telegraph terminal, in Dale Street, 400 yards away, in the hope of being the first to reach it and transmit the papers' information<sup>2</sup> – in most cases to London or Manchester.

Sometimes a ship would be very late arriving, and if no intelligence had been received via the semaphore the tender, having gone out on spec, would have a very long wait – sometimes in particularly bad conditions. On occasions, boarding the liner proved impossible and the tender's party had to return empty handed.

Inward bound Cunard vessels usually (weather permitting) reached the Mersey on Sunday. On passing New Brighton lighthouse they fired a gun, which could be heard all over the town, to announce their arrival. If this occurred during the church service at St Nicholas's at the Pier Head, some members of the congregation (specifically cotton brokers and merchants) would sidle out and make their way to the Exchange Newsroom. This was a few hundred yards up from the church behind the Town Hall. It was open for an hour on Sunday for subscribers to peruse the American commercial newspapers when they arrived.

The minister at this time was the Rev. Dr Hugh M'Niele, a man of very narrow and strict religious views. Eventually, realising why some of his flock departed halfway through his sermon, he admonished them and requested that they desist from doing so in future. Some did not.

Two of the newspapers brought back from America were the New York Courier and Enquirer, and the New York Shipping List. A cotton broker's apprentice had to peruse these on board the returning tender to glean all the relevant market and cotton crop news, and write it out as a summary. As any formal work was prohibited on Sunday, the apprentice had to rise at 4 a.m. on Monday, make copies of the summary, address one to each of the broker's spinning clients in Burnley, Blackburn, or elsewhere, then take them to the newly opened Tithebarn St. Station (Exchange Station from 1888) and see them off on the 6 a.m. train.

Life then, of course, wasn't all work and no play. Mr Robert Rankin, a noted Liverpool business man, when asked by a lady friend if there were any holidays in his firm, replied, "Oh, yes, we have from seven o'clock on Saturday evening until eight o'clock on Monday morning, all the year round."<sup>3</sup> And he wasn't joking.

Newspapers were not published daily in Liverpool at this time. The stamp duty, 'the tax on knowledge', made them unaffordable for ordinary working people: the 5d price of the Mercury would be equivalent to about £1.40p now. However, there were several penny newsrooms where, for the payment of one penny, a variety of local, provincial, and leading London papers could be read. (The tax was repealed in 1861 bringing the price of popular newspapers down to one penny.)

Liverpool had eight newspapers, seven of which published an issue on one day per week, and one, the Mercury, that published an issue twice per week. The figures below represent the daily average circulation over the three year period 1848/50 taken from the Stamp Office returns. The Mercury figure is the combined total of both days.

Day	Paper	Price	Circulation
Monday	Albion	5d (2p)	3,134
Tuesday	Standard	5d (2p)	1,852
Tuesday &	Moreury	41/d (1.75p)	12 260
Friday	Mercury	4/20 (1·75P)	12,209
Wednesday	Courier	5d (2p)	2,984
Thursday	Times	5d (2p)	1,500
Saturday	Journal	4½d (1·75p)	7,730
Saturday	Mail	5d (2p)	3,147
Saturday	Chronicle	4½d (1.75p)	2,230

In addition to the above there were two commercial papers: Gore's Advertiser, issued on Mondays, and Myer's Mercantile Gazette, issued on Thursdays.

Travel to outlying areas of Merseyside, Deeside and North Wales prior to mid-century had been by stagecoach, canal barge or boat, but many places were now served by the railway. However, it was not until mid-1848 that the line from Chester to Bangor was completed, and for a little while afterwards some travellers still preferred the older forms of travel.

One such journey was to take the boat across the Mersey from Liverpool to Rock Ferry, then a stagecoach across the Wirral to Parkgate, and thence by boat across the Dee to Bagillt. From Bagillt coach services operated to places inland. There was also a steamer service from Prince's Pier in Liverpool to Mostyn on the north Wales coast, calling at Hoylake on the Wirral. A steamer service also went from George's Pier in Liverpool to Runcorn about 15 miles up river. There, passengers transferred to the 'swift' packets on the Bridgewater Canal to travel on to Altrincham and other places. One of the steamers was the **Countess of Ellesmere**, still operating the service to Runcorn into the 1850s.

From 1845 onward Liverpool was beset with great social problems, the nature and reasons for which are outside the subject of this article.<sup>4</sup> In addition, 1855 was a year of grave economic problems, which were made the more difficult by it being the worst winter in living memory – so cold that the Mersey froze during February preventing the inward passage of ships.

Nevertheless, it was during this period that innovations in communications, travel and mechanical invention were not only becoming commonplace, but were being accepted without the shock impact hitherto. The 'modern' world was getting into its stride.

Endnotes:

- <sup>1</sup>A form of electric telegraph using five needles was the first transmitting device demonstrated in Britain. This pioneering device was invented by Charles Wheatstone and W. Fothergill Cooke and appeared in 1837, but was too expensive to be practical. However, they went on to perfect a single needle version that was practical and which came into use in 1845.
- <sup>2</sup>Telegraphing in 1850 was a very expensive luxury. To send a telegram message up to twenty words from Liverpool to Manchester cost 2 shillings & 6 pence (12½p) – almost £9 at today's values; and to London, 8 shillings & 6 pence (42½p), or £29.75 at today's values.
- <sup>3</sup>He was the man who, during a fashion among apprentices to grow moustaches, was asked by one of his own for permission to do so. He said it was permissible, but not during office hours.
- <sup>4</sup>For a very comprehensive account of the social problems, and criminality then rife in Liverpool, including that affecting the vast number of would-be emigrants and seamen passing through the port, the excellent book The Liverpool Underworld – Crime in the City, 1750–1900, by Michael Macilwee is recommended reading.

Acknowledgement and Sources consulted:

#### Annals of Liverpool

Encyclopaedia Britannica

Gleanings and Reminiscences (published 1905) by Thomas Ellison, a sometime member of the Liverpool Cotton Exchange.

Liverpool, Sir N. Pevsner, Ed. Joseph Sharples

Lloyds Registers

Merchant Fleets, Duncan Hawes

Sail, Steam and Splendour, Byron S. Miller

#### It's Lonely at the Top MNA CIRCULAR November 2013

In March 1963 the minutes of a meeting at Blue Funnel noted that containers were probably not required substantially for 10 years. Later that year the head of cargo handling argued that 3,000 miles was the limit for viable containerisation. Meanwhile Malcolm Maclean was setting up Sealand.

Although this sounds like management myopia, in the 1960s things were not as clear as they look with hindsight. Liner shipping was being crushed by the massive cost of handling a mix of small parcels, unit loads and minor bulks like forest products. Palletisation, containerisation, ro-ros and LASH all offered potential solutions and dealing with cargoes that would not fit into containers was a big worry. In the end containers swallowed the containerisable cargo and the rest ended in specialist carriers. But it was a massive change.

Fortunately these seminal turning points don't happen often – companies are lucky (or unlucky) to hit one in a lifetime. But when they happen, the decisions are agonising. The misjudgements made by Blue Funnel illustrate three points. Firstly when companies arrive at the crossroads, the track ahead is not clear because there is no track – they have to make it. Secondly containerisation needed a new organisation and capital investment which made the existing system obsolete. How many chairmen can cope with that? Thirdly, being biggest does not help. Blue Funnel had a cargo liner fleet to worry about. Much easier to be Mr Maclean with a blank sheet of paper.

Today container companies, with a fleet of 5,137 ships worth \$100 billion, are still struggling with the track ahead. The business is maturing and in 2009 trade declined for the first time. And despite its key role in the global economy, liner companies suffer from patchy returns from asset heavy balance sheets. The current strategy is to grow out of trouble by investing in much bigger ships. The average size of containership delivered has edged up over the years, from less than 1000 TEU in the early 1970s to 3300 TEU in 2006. Since then there has been a great leap to 6600 TEU and the biggest ship has jumped from 8,400 TEU to 18,270 TEU. Meanwhile trade which grew at 10% pa in the last decade has edged back to 4–7% pa.

So, as Blue Funnel found 50 years ago, it's tough at the top. In the end they set up the OCL consortium with three other liner companies, made some highly speculative bulk shipping investments, and gradually faded away. Is there a moral to the story? Well, in interesting times, shipping businesses should worry less about ships and focus on the basic reason why they're there – better, cheaper transport. Of course ships are part, but not the heart, of that strategy. Source: Clarksons

#### The Longest Day A Maritime Royal Occasion by LNRS Vice President, Captain G. Cubbin

[Editor's note: This article was written at the time and has not previously been published]

The chronicle of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's visit to Merseyside on 21<sup>st</sup> June, 1977, has been exhaustively written by many distinguished journalists and commentators. The event provided front page coverage in the local press for several days before, during and after the occasion and I do not propose to repeat the many anecdotes which have already been fully documented. However,



mv Inventor

Photo courtesy Sea Breezes

the record would not be complete without some account of how sundry persons at Mersey Chambers<sup>1</sup> contributed to the event, and in particular to the Royal Review of Shipping on the Mersey.

Months previously, when the idea of a Review of Shipping was first mooted, the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company assumed responsibility for organising the event. A high-powered Committee was formed comprising representatives from all walks of shipping-life on Merseyside, including the Liverpool Steamship Owners Association, Merseyside Passenger Transport Executive, the Towing Companies, and even local Yacht Clubs. The Committee was chaired by Captain Lebesque, of The Mersey Docks and Harbour Co., and Harrison Line was represented by the Marine Superintendent, Captain R.H. Douglas.

It was decided by Management at a very early stage that, come what may, a Harrison Line vessel would take part in the Review, but it was only a week or two before the event that a ship could be named with any precision. At first, it was to be **Magician**, but circumstances brought about a change in her sailing, and she was obliged to proceed to London at the critical time. The next available choice was **Inventor**, then discharging at Manchester. She completed on 14<sup>th</sup> June, a week before the Review, after which there began a frantic search for a lay-by berth where certain essential tasks designed to enhance her appearance could be carried out. She was painted overall in the traditional Harrison Line colours, so well known throughout many ports in the world. Visitors to the ship were "warned not to stand still too long in the same place, or they, too, would painted"! White upper-works gleamed; an immaculate rosepink fringe appeared along her waterline; and although a suggestion was made to beeswax the black topsides – "like the Royal Yacht!" – was regretfully turned down as being too time consuming, nevertheless her plates shone black and glossy, like the hide of a seal.

To Captain Tony Billington<sup>2</sup> was assigned the onerous task of "dressing" the ship overall, sorting out and arranging streamers of multi-coloured flags and bunting which, like nothing else, give a ship that festive air reserved for great occasions. In the days when ships had regular masts conventionally stepped in their traditional places it was a comparatively simple matter to dress ship. But masts are superfluous encumbrances in modern ships, and their places have been usurped by ungainly Stulcken derricks<sup>3</sup> and stumpy signal masts, which do not lend themselves readily to the rigging of extra halyards and dressing wires. However, Captain Billington and his team overcame all problems, and to their lasting credit, **Inventor** was promptly dressed overall at 0800 hours on the morning of the Review.

Finally, to complete the picture, a selection of Harrison Line containers, resplendent in white, with bright red lettering, were placed conspicuously on the forward hatches.

Of course there were other ships taking part in the Review – about 40 in all, including Yachts, Ferries, and Tugs – and each one was assigned an anchorage between Gladstone Lock and Tranmere. The main deep-water anchorages were allotted to the larger vessels, from Lady of Mann at the north end of the line to City of St Albans in the south. Between them would lie Romney, Eboe, Booker Vanguard, Ulster Prince and Banbury, while Inventor was slated to occupy anchorage No. 12, opposite the Pier Head.

Contingents of Harrison Line shore staff selected to attend the Review divided into three main groups. The first group would occupy twenty places on Gladstone Lock which the M.D. & H. Co.<sup>4</sup> had allotted to the Company. It was here that Her Majesty would embark on board the M.P.T.E.<sup>5</sup> Cruise Vessel **Royal Iris** to review the ships , Mr. L.C. Booth<sup>6</sup> the Personnel Manager was given the task of selection, and he adopted a method by drawing lots – probably the fairest means which could be devised in the circumstances. The second group, about fifty strong, was invited to go on board **Inventor**. These, too, selected by lottery, with the notable exception of Mr. Brian<sup>7</sup> and his party, whose "droit du
seigneur" on this occasion was unquestioned. The third and smallest group consisted of Mr. & Mrs. P.S. Wilson<sup>8</sup>, to whom had been accorded the singular honour of embarking on **Royal Iris** and meeting Her Majesty in person.

Towards midnight on 20th June, the port began to stir as ships prepared to leave their berths and proceed to their allotted anchorages. Soon the main locks giving access to the River at Gladstone, Langton and Alfred were in full scale operation, and by 0400 hours on the 21<sup>st</sup> most ships were on station, with a few vacancies still to be filled by vessels arriving from sea.

The day of the Review dawned bright and clear – a cliché perhaps, but this in itself was remarkable, as the weather during the weeks prior to the Royal Visit had been dull, cool, and wet. In fact, Her Majesty's earlier tours of London and the South had taken place in chilly, inclement weather, and I am sure she was delighted to find that the sun could shine on Merseyside!

As the sun rose higher, commuters on the Mersey Ferries were treated to an impressive sight. Alongside the new Landing Stage in the shadow of the Pier Head buildings lay the Royal Yacht **Britannia** and her consort, H.M.S. **Tartar**. Throughout the 4-mile stretch of river from Tranmere to Seaforth a fleet of ships lay at anchor, new paintwork gleaming, and gaily coloured bunting fluttering from stem to stern. Moreover the unanimous opinion was heard expressed on all sides (with only a hint of prejudice from partisan ranks ) that **Inventor** was undoubtedly the handsomest of all!

Nevertheless, there is no doubt that among the groups of older onlookers there would be many who gazed upon that impressive panorama of ships with mixed feelings, tinged with nostalgia. They would see among this fleet of modern utilitarian workhorses the ghosts of those ocean thoroughbreds which graced the seas in days gone by, before the jet airliner introduced a new concept of cheap, fast travel. The sight of those former regular visitors to the Mersey- Mauretania, Caronia, Empress of Scotland, Aureol and the 'Duchess' liners – would have added such lustre to even this impressive cavalcade of ships.

At 10.30 the first contingent of **Inventor** – bound pilgrims left for the old Princes Landing Stage. There they were met by Captain G.W. Allen<sup>9</sup> and escorted to the waiting tugs **Nelson** and **Trafalgar**, whose owners, the Alexandra Towing Company, had been assigned to ferry-duties for the occasion. To comply with DOT<sup>10</sup> rules only twelve passengers could be carried at one time but they were carried free of charge.

Meanwhile, those denizens of Mersey Chambers left behind to carry on the business of shipping had an excellent view, from the windows on the west side, of **Britannia** and **Tartar** at the Pier Head. Sailors could be seen moving about the decks, officers being piped ashore; and the sight of the red carpet being rolled down the gangway provoked quite a stir. Crowds of people, anxious to get a good "spec", were gathering expectantly at the Pier Head. And overhead, the sun was shining.

Miss Betty Warburton<sup>11</sup> who embarked in **Trafalgar** with Mr Brian's party, was delighted to pass close to the Royal Yacht. The tug circled **Inventor** for a critical (and rewarding) appraisal before approaching the gangway. The river was calm, and, with a firm helping hand from Tony Billington, no difficulties were encountered whilst boarding. The party was met by Captain Bill Ashton<sup>12</sup>, who made all welcome, and gave them the run of the ship. Earlier, some concern had been expressed as to how the visitors would put in the time. Some six or seven hours must elapse before the Queen's arrival on the river, and it was assumed that a certain degree of boredom would set in. To alleviate the tedium deck-games and a film-show were arranged, but it soon became clear that there would be no need for concern in this direction. There was enough activity going on both ashore and afloat to quell even the most devastating state of ennui, and the combination of unprecedented fine weather, unaccustomed surroundings, and genial hosts would ensure that the visitors would have a day to remember.

At 13.00 hours a meal was served. This took the form of a buffet luncheon elegantly set out in the dining-saloon under the direction of Mr. Frank Ashley<sup>13</sup>. Tables creaked under an assortment of viands and dishes in such variety as could never be surpassed at any hotel in the North-West. Mrs. Betty Bathgate<sup>14</sup> had only one word to describe it – "super", she said. The reminiscent gleam in her eye next morning told the rest!

The afternoon was enlivened by courtesy-calls from various visiting craft. Captain Billington's R.N.L.I. comrades came alongside in the New Brighton inshore lifeboat, and were highly gratified to receive hospitality in the form of beer and sandwiches. An ancient, but well turned-out out tug boat approached. Could it be ....? Yes, indeed it was! – The Steam Tug **Kerne** with owner-skipper Bob Adam<sup>15</sup> at the wheel, tugging at the whistle lanyard in a raucous salute. Kerne is the only vessel owned by what must be the smallest shipping company on Merseyside, the North Western Steamship Co. Ltd., and it seemed a fitting occasion for this, the smallest, to thus greet representatives of one of the largest.

At two o'clock, the guests of the Harbour Company made their way to Gladstone Lock, and joined the throng waiting for Her Majesty to board the **Royal Iris.** By now, it was generally known that the Queen's progress through St. Helens and Liverpool was running late, Not, it was clear, through any technical hitches, but the Queen's obvious enjoyment of the spectacular displays presented for her entertainment en-route, and the spontaneous warmth with which the citizens of Merseyside had taken her to their hearts, tended to tempt her to linger longer than her tour organisers had anticipated.

Appreciating the reasons for the delay, and informed up to the minute by pocket radios tuned to Radio City commentators stationed along the route, the waiting crowds readily maintained their good humour, and the brilliant, fine weather continued to foster a festive atmosphere.

Meanwhile, at Seacombe Landing Stage, an august assembly was boarding the cruise-ferry, **Royal Iris**. Civic dignitaries mingled with City business leaders and county gentry. Soon the little vessel was almost as packed as the crowds at Pier Head and Gladstone Lock. On the upper deck the dais which had been erected for the Royal Party was surrounded by their hosts from the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company and City leaders.

And so afternoon drew into evening, On board **Inventor** afternoon tea was served on deck, with elegant little cakes and sandwiches. Conditions on Gladstone lock were far from elegant but, nevertheless, they were borne with cheerful stoicism by the eager crowd. Good humour prevailed also on board the crowded **Royal Iris** where city fathers, captains of industry, and leaders of commerce alike were glad of a drink of water by way of refreshment – though perhaps it was fortunate that the lavish cuisine enjoyed by **Inventor**'s guests was out of sight, and therefore out of mind , at this time!

**Royal Iris** backed promptly into Gladstone Lock at 15.00 hours, on the top of high water, and tied up to await the Queen's arrival, now delayed at least one hour, according to the radio. There was even some gloomy talk about the programme having to be cut short to make up time, but the Royal Party, apparently, would have none of it.

At last, the patience of the crowds was rewarded as the swelling murmur of cheering announced the Queen's imminent arrival.

Radiant in a peach-coloured coat she arrived on the lock, accompanied by Prince Philip, and stepped on board **Royal Iris**. Mr J.D.M. Forbes of the Liverpool Ship-Owners Association, and Mr. John Page, Chairman of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company introduced the Queen to her influential and loyal subjects. Mike Lawson-Smith<sup>16</sup>, waiting patiently on the lock, was able to take some very good photographs, "mostly of her back view", he added ruefully.

The introductions complete, **Royal Iris**, preceded by the Pilot-tender **Puffin**, slipped her moorings and headed out into the river to be greeted by a fanfare of whistles and sirens from the anchored vessels. This fanfare, code-named 'Operation Trumpet' was to be a carefully controlled orchestration consisting of 'five four-second blasts, with a two-second interval between each blast', the signal to begin being given on VHF Radio by the control-officer on board the Survey-Tender **Aestus**. In the event, most vessels conformed to the score, but one or two virtuoso performances by certain dissidents only served to add piquancy to the work.

By this time, all ships were lying to the ebb, heading south, and as **Royal Isis** rounded **Lady of Mann**, the rear ship of the line, a burst of cheering broke out on both banks of the River. The sun was shining brightly, and people on the Wirral shore, with the sun behind them, had an excellent view of the Royal progress. As the Queen, elevated on her dais where all could see her, passed each ship, she waved her hand and ensigns dipped in salute. Passing **Inventor** at 1825 hours precisely, Her Majesty waved to the jubilant ship's company lining the rails. Mr. Brian, standing on **Inventor**'s " bridge raised his bull-horn to his lips, and in time honoured fashion, called for:

"Three Cheers for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth – hip, hip .... !"

The response, quick and on cue, was warm and sincere. Unbelievable feats of dexterity were achieved by many, as they cheered, waved, peered through binoculars, and focussed cameras in rapid succession while **Royal Iris** coasted down the starboard side and rounded the bow. Then came an almighty stampede as all hands changed sides and repeated the routine– cheers, waves, binoculars, cameras while **Royal Iris** passed along the port side on her way to the Pier Head Landing Stage, where the Royal Yacht awaited her arrival.

Some semblance of calm descended upon the River as the tugs fussed their way out to the anchored ships to embark the visitors and ferry them ashore. Soon the ships dispersed, and tugs and ferries resumed their normal business. The last visitors descended **Inventor**'s gangway, then preparations were made to weigh anchor, and soon the ship proceeded to Glasgow to resume her commercial role.

It would not be unreasonable to assume that such an event involving so many ships and thousands of people would not pass without its moments of drama. Only minutes after the Queen in **Royal Iris** had passed Seacombe Landing Stage a disabled cabin-cruiser was seen on the verge of disaster, sweeping down towards the Stage on the powerful ebb-tide, and in imminent danger of being swept under the bows of the ferry-boat **Woodchurch** berthed alongside. The four men on board were powerless to avert a tragedy reminiscent of the fatal accident which overtook the yacht **Lady Irene** in similar circumstances nearly two years ago.

Fortunately, two patrolmen in their inflatable dinghy saw their plight and deliberately rammed the cabin-cruiser amidships, holding her up against the tide, clear of the ferry-boat, and edging her towards the stage until she was close enough for lines to be thrown ashore.

In another incident a venturesome canoeist was rescued by the New Brighton Inshore Lifeboat after his canoe capsized in the Mersey. He was landed unharmed at New Brighton.

Later that evening crowds still lingering at Pier Head witnessed the arrival of some 250 celebrities invited by the Queen to a special reception on board **Britannia**, now flood-lit overall and bedecked with gay awnings and coloured lights for this new event.

After the reception, Her Majesty and Prince Philip were taken to Lime Street Station, where the Royal Train waited to continue the Jubilee Tour of the United Kingdom, this time to North Wales.

Towards midnight, the Royal Yacht **Britannia** cast off her moorings, and, still floodlit, sailed on a rising tide to rendezvous with the Royal Party off the North Wales coast. As she swept majestically down-river, the strains of the

Royal Marine Band playing on her quarter-deck floated across the river. Latenight watchers at the Pier Head and along the line of docks watched her go, and were moved to recognise the music of that contemporary, nostalgic and haunting melody, "Sailing." Merseyside's Jubilee Day, the longest day of the year, was over, and long will it live in the memories of all who had the privilege of taking part.

> Mersey Chambers Liverpool July, 1977.

References

- 1. Mersey Chambers. Harrison Line head office in Covent Garden, Liverpool
- 2. Captain Tony Billington. On Marine Superintendent's staff.
- 3. Stulcken Derricks. Heavy Lift system designed and installed in West Germany. **Inventor**'s Stulcken was designed to lift 150 tons.
- 4. M.D. & H.C. Mersey Docks. & Harbour Company
- 5. M.P.T.E. Merseyside Passenger Transport Executive.
- 6. Mr L.C. Booth. Personnel Manager, Office staff.
- 7. Mr Brian. Brian Watson, part-owner and former Chairman of Harrison Line.
- 8. Mr P. S. Wilson. Chairman of Harrison Line
- 9. Captain G.W. Allen. Assistant Marine Superintendent
- 10.D.O.T. Department of Trade
- 11.Miss Betty Warburton. Confidential Secretary to the Chairman
- 12.Captain Bill Ashton. Master of M.V. Inventor
- 13.Mr Frank Ashley. Catering Superintendent
- 14.Mrs Betty Bathgate. Secretary to the Marine Superintendent
- 15.Bob Adam. Supervisor Container Control
- 16.Mike Lawson-Smith. In charge of supply and correction of marine charts.

Classified as a Heavy Lift Cargo Vessel, **Inventor** was built at Charles Connell & Company Scotstoun and completed 1964. Details are:-

Yard no: 502Length: 493 feetBeam: 63 feetDraft: 29 feet1Main propulsion: Sulzer Oil 2SA 8 cyl.12,600 bhpFrom 1964 to 1981 she was operated by Charente S.S Co Ltd (T & J Harrison)Liverpool. Then sold to Penta World Private Ltd Singapore, but was laid up atSingapore in 1982 and finally scrapped at Kaohsiung in May, 1985

### Report on Shipbuilding and Trading 2013 MNA Circular

Numbers speak for themselves sometimes, as is the case with the staggering number of vessels ordered and traded during 2013. According to shipbroker data from Intermodal, more than 2,000 ships have been ordered in shipyards, while over 1,500 ships have been traded in the second hand market. According to Intermodal's analysis, "to many in the industry 2013 has been the turning point in the market where the absolute bottom of the cycle was reached and passed. The truth is that from the very start of the year we had good omens pointing to a change in conditions. The start of all this seemed to have been initially brought about by the increased activity that was triggered early on in the year by the continuous drop in value of the Japanese Yen, and more directly by the change in investor perception regarding the level that secondhand and newbuilding prices had reached. This increased activity in the dry bulk market started to gradually build up and in turn creating more buying interest and pushing prices upwards".

Intermodal's Research Analyst, Mr. George Lazaridis noted that "with all this we have managed to see a stellar year in terms of activity, with secondhand sale and purchase activity reaching over 1,500 in number which is considerable improvement compared to the 1,223 that took place in 2012 and the 1,154 in 2011. From this total for 2013, around a quarter were made by Greek buyers, followed by the Chinese which had less than a third of what Greek buyers managed. What makes this even more extraordinary is that these Greek purchases were made in the backdrop of a troubled ship financing sector especially when it comes to Greek banks which faced complete restructuring half way through the year, leaving them with limited resources for use to further support secondhand purchases. One of the biggest transitions in this regard has been the extent to which we have seen private equity funds turning their attention towards shipping and stepping up to fill part of the financing void that has been created these past couple of years", he noted.

Meanwhile, there was also a similar development in the new building market, where despite the limited activity of new orders made during 2012, the past 12 months we have seen a dramatic turn around with most shipbuilders' orderbooks filling up until early 2016 delivery. The total number of new orders reached over 2,000 units for the main four ship types (i.e Dry Bulkers, Tankers, Containers and Gas Carriers), which is a considerable increase compared to the respective 881 noted in 2012. In terms of which shipbuilding nation took the leading role, this year was the chance for Chinese shipbuilders to retake the reigns and receive almost 40% of all the new orders placed. In comparison South Korean and Japanese shipbuilders both received around 16% each of all the new orders placed. In respect to buyers, Greek and Japanese owners were closely tied first place in terms of volume of new orders made, although Greeks overall made orders for larger vessels", Lazaridis said. He added that "taking into consideration what we had seen throughout 2013, it looks as though there is much to look forward to for the next 12 months. The market players look to be considerably more optimistic than a year back and with limited new deliveries scheduled for this year when compared to previous years, it looks that there is a possibility that the balance between supply and demand may well be even better this year. With much of the worst now seeming to be well behind us it is a matter of how owners will find new and novel ways to fund the opportunities that they find and if they prove to be profitable ventures, will that eventually change the perception amongst traditional ship financing banks allowing them to re-enter the scene and pull the market into even better prospects", he concluded.

Source : Nikos Roussanoglou, Hellenic Shipping News Worldwide

# Answers to Nautical Trivia Quiz on page 3

- 1. A minimum of 16 including Master Class 1 Unlimited; ranging from GMDSS radio communications certificate, through electronic charts system certificate, and marine evacuation systems certificate to name just a few.
- 2. The **Stockholm**, which was in collision with the **Andrea Doria**, she sailed under the East German flag as **Volkfreundshaft** (International Friendship), then South African flag as **Arkona**, then **Astoria** in 2002 and **Saga Pearl II**, plus 7 other names, presently as the **Athena**.
- 3. **Great Eastern**, took ninety days from 3rd November 1857 to 31st January 1858 at Millwall.
- 4. Goliath (erected in 1969) and Samson (erected in1976)
- 5. She was commissioned as HMHS **Britannic**, whilst at Galipolli/Dardenelles struck a mine and sank with the loss of 30 lives.
- 6. The founders of P&O, The Canberra, Himalaya etc

### An Old Man of the Sea Submitted by L.N.R.S. Member Harry Hignett

The following piece from Lloyd's List January 1898 reminded me of barmen in Shaw Savill. In the 1950's there was a standing joke that the barmen were always the oldest members of the crew on any of our ships. They had made so much money from tips and somewhat irregular dealings on the quiet that they were unable to retire – their "fiddles" would come into the open. Those that did retire before 65 seemed to do so to help a friend or relative who had difficulty in managing a hostelry

When the **Etruria** arrived at the landing stage at Liverpool on Saturday morning she brought to these shores from America a veritable "old man of the sea" in the person of George Paynter, who for a period of 48 years has sailed the ocean in good weather and bad, and who has now spent 45 years in the service of the Cunard Company. Paynter is known all over the civilised world, and has long been an interesting study to ocean-goers. Though 75 years of age, he is still hale, hearty, and jovial. Paynter is the man who has charge of the wines and liquors on the **Etruria**. He joined the steamer when she went into commission in 1885, and has been with her ever since.



Etruria (Note aux. sails) Photo Wikepedia

No one who has ever crossed the Atlantic on the **Etruria** is apt to forget Paynter. If they don't remember him by name they will remember him as the under-sized old man with the rolling gait and the merry round face which is so good an index to the man's whole character. They will remember

him, too, as the good-natured old man

who spent so much time walking around the decks and visiting state-rooms to try and alleviate the sufferings of seasick people from his own private stock of remedies; and if ever they talked to him they will recall him as the old man who had so many yarns with which to cheer up the unhappy. Paynter has in a measure made up his mind to quit the sea. It has taken him five years to reach this conclusion, and he says that there is nothing certain about it even now. "It isn't easy, my boy," he said the other day. "to think of the old ship going out without you for the first time since she was built. I have said to myself many a time in these last five years that I'd quit, but always weaken when I see the boys getting ready for the trip, and my locker stays in the old place." With the arrival of the **Etruria** on Saturday in Liverpool, Paynter has established an extraordinary record, for he has crossed and re-crossed the Atlantic 804 times.

### The Liverpool Nautical Research Society (Founded in 1938)

# THE BULLETIN

Volume 58 No.2, September, 2014



RMS Mauretania in white paint, sometime in the 1930s

Chairman's Annual Report	R. Settle	Page	1
Statement of Accounts to April 2014	B. Groombridge		3
Minutes of Annual General Meeting	J.P. Stokoe		4
Remember those days	W.A. Ogle		7
The Four-masted Full Rigged Ship Liverpool	D. White		9
Hext Rogers Collection, Merseyside Maritime Museum	I. Duckett		12
Book Review			17
A Fateful Telegram	W.G. Williamson		19
Society Presentations Schedule 2014 - 2015	I. Duckett		24
A Voyage in the <b>Ulysses</b> - Part 1	A. Melling		26
The Denny Ship Model Experimental Tank	D. White		32
The Occult	N.S. Swindells		35
Passenger Numbers on Atlantic Liners (1905)	H.M. Hignett		39

9\_ SEP 1910 Form No. 4.-100.-17.8.09 Deld. Date CONI International Marine Communication Co., Ltd., WATERGATE HOUSE, YORK BUILDINGS, ADELPHI, LONDON, W.C. The Marconi JNIA. 9" SEP 1910 OFFICE. No. 190\_ CHARGES TO PAY. Handed in at . Total Captain Steamer Dow To Mais

The Fateful Telegram

#### Wikimedia Commons

See page 19



`Enjoying the Mediterranean'

'A Century of Sea Travel' Courtesy the Author See page 26

### The Liverpool Nautical Research Society



President Mr. William J. Pape II

Vice-Presidents: Captain G. Cubbin, Mr. H.M. Hignett

Chairman:

Captain R. Settle

Vice Chairman: Mr. W.G. Williamson

Council: Mr. I.Duckett (Talks Secretary), Mr. B. Groombridge, Ms. D.Littler (Representing N.M.L.), Mr. W.A.Ogle (Editor), Mr. J.P. Stokoe

Honorary Officers: Secretary: Mr. A. Melling Treasurer: Mr. V. Finn

Web site: www.liverpoolnauticalresearchsociety.org

<u>Contact details</u>: The Liverpool Nautical Research Society Maritime Archives and Library Merseyside Maritime Museum Albert Dock Liverpool L3 4AQ United Kingdom.

info@liverpoolnauticalresearchsociety.org

# Chairman's Annual Report to May 15th 2014

### 1. <u>The Membership Roll</u>

- 1.1. This is steady at 187 individual members although this is a reduction from last year's figure. In addition there are four institutions/ libraries which receive 'The Bulletin'.
- 1.2. It is with regret that I have to inform the Society that 4 members have 'crossed the bar' since the last AGM. These were: The Reverend Ian Morris, Mr J Partington, Mr G Lloyd and Mr C Guest. We should pause to remember them.
- 1.3. On a brighter note we have welcomed six new members to the Society namely:

Tim Brunsden, Vincent Finn, John Forest, Rob Rothwell, Bill Bowley and Professor Ian Stanistreet

1.4. Alan McClelland was awarded Honorary Life Membership of the Society.

#### 2. Meetings

- 2.1. Up until April's talk this season's attendance at the eight monthly meetings has been 295 or an average of 42. Last year's figure was 290 so we seem to be maintaining the status quo.
- 2.2. You will be aware that our talks are advertised to the general public in the museum foyer and we continue to attract Maritime Museum visitors down here. Whether these are a product of the inclement weather last winter or not is another thing.
- 2.3. Members of the Society attended in November the Liverpool Conference organised by the WSS at the Crosby Seafarers Centre.
- 2.4. In December coincidently with the monthly meeting we had a Christmas Social and a Book Sale.
- 2.5. In March members attended the Annual History Fair at Birkenhead Town Hall

### 3. Changes to Council

3.1. Our Treasurer, Barry Groombridge, is stepping down from post after this meeting. His financial report today will be his final one after six years service. I'm sure that I speak for the whole Society and say how grateful we are for the diligent and conscientious way he tackled his duties on our behalf over the last six years.

We have not seen the last of Barry though, as he has agreed to remain as a council member with special responsibility for the Elder Dempster Lottery Fund application. Can I ask you to join me to express our thanks in the time honoured fashion? Vin Finn has kindly volunteered to succeed Barry and has already been having induction/handover sessions; so a hopefully seamless transfer of duties will occur.

- 3.2. Dr. Eric Long has informed Council that he wishes to relinquish his post as he is spending more time away from the UK and can no longer devote the time he would wish to the service of the society. Our thanks to Eric for his past contributions and we wish him well.
- 3.3. Finally, as per the constitution David White, Vice Chair and past Chair is also standing down and we thank Willie Williamson for volunteering to becoming the next Vice Chair. David is standing down from Council but will continue to be involved with fielding the various requests for information.
- 3.4. That is not all that is changing on Council. Our long serving Secretary John Stokoe told Council last May that it was his intention to stand down at this AGM in order to conduct some maritime research of his own. John has served and administered the Society in an exemplary fashion for some 12 years now and his wide and varied role had to be carefully examined in order not to scare away likely replacements.

John has been the primary point of contact with Mr Bill Pape and instrumental in Mr Pape agreeing to accept the position of Honorary President of the Liverpool Nautical Research Society on the retirement of then President, Sam Davidson.

Personally I will forever be grateful to John for his support to me as Chairman.

John has kindly agreed to remain on Council for continuity and will remain our primary point of contact with the Honorary President.

I am sure we will value his contributions to the smooth running of the society for some time yet.

It remains for me to present John with a very small token of our gratitude for all his hard work.

Despite a daunting job description (provided by John) we are able to welcome our new Secretary, Tony Melling, to Council. He has a hard act to follow.

### 4. <u>New Technology</u>

- 4.1. During the year the society has purchased a laptop PC to support our speakers and their presentations.
- 4.2. We also bought a public address system to try and negate the awful acoustics down here and various safety related items to reduce the hazards presented by the trailing leads from the new technology.
- 4.3. I trust you all find that the outlay has been worthwhile.

	Acc	counts for t	he year to 4	íth April, 2	014	
			•/			
Opening Bank	and Cash bala	nce				1,145
Opening Payment in advance (Stamps)				677		
Income	Subscriptions				2,835	
	Donations				431	
	Sale of Books				52	
	Catering				52	
	Total					3,370
Expenses	Museum Roon	n Hire/ Magazir	nes		703	
	Printing "The l	Bulletin"			1,102	
	Distributing -	"The Bulletin"			607	
	Computer/ PA	System			458	
	Xmas Lunch				110	
	Treasurer- Sta	ationery/ Postag	ge		60	
	Secretary- Sta	tionery/ Postag	je		384	
	Speaker- expe	enses			317	
	Bank Charges				20	
	Car Stickers				229	3,990
	deduct- Paym	ents in advance	e – Stamps		150	150
Net Current Fu	unds					1,052
Made up:						
Closing Curre	nt Account Ban	k balance			1,025	
Cash in Hand					27	1,052
Deposit Accou	int balance yea	r end				4,531
Total Society Funds at year end				5,583		
Signed		Barry	Groombridge		Treasurer	
Examined by			J. Olin			
			F. Malloy			
All Bank accou	ints are held wi	ith Santander U	K plc		15th	April, 2014

### MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING The Liverpool Nautical Research Society held at Merseyside Maritime Museum on 15th May, 2014

Present: The Chairman plus 30 Members and 4 Visitors as recorded in the Attendance register

Chairman Bob Settle opened the AGM by extending a warm welcome to all those present. Members had received their copy of the 2013 AGM Minutes which had been issued by post at that time. However additional copies were available at today's Meeting and these were accepted as a correct record as proposed by Arthur Jennion and seconded by Tony Barratt.

Bob Settle moved on to read out his Annual Report of activities and key considerations since his election to office in May 2013. Bob was happy to extend sincere thanks to all those who had assisted in ensuring the smooth running of all aspects of Society business. In pursuing this, Bob welcomed by name the six new Members who had joined the Society and wished then a happy and worthwhile association. He also paid tribute to four of our members who had passed away during this period. Our monthly presentations continue to attract a good following with an average attendance of forty two . He indicated that Council had harnessed more in the way of technology to enhance the monthly talks with the latest acquisition being a portable sound system. From many comments received this had been money well spent.

Barry Groombridge presented his final Financial Report before stepping down as Hon Treasurer. Once again the figures demonstrated a small surplus over the previous year. All income irrespective of either being donated or accrued through Society activity had helped considerably in balancing the books. Barry was once again mindful of the generous stance shown by our President William J Pape who, although considerably distanced from our local activities, continues to maintain a keen eye on all of our activities and considerations and for this we are most grateful. Through further prudent measures Barry was pleased to confirm that the subscription would continue at the same level. Barry went on to acknowledge the assistance given by Jack Olin and Fergie Molloy in auditing the accounts which are to be published within the September issue of 'The Bulletin'. David White proposed that the Report be accepted which was seconded by Willie Williamson In turning attention to Council composition Bob Settle announced a number of changes that would now be taking place. Treasurer Barry Groombridge and Secretary John Stokoe are now stepping down from office after six and twelve years dedicated service respectively. Both have agreed to remain as active Council Members in relation to specific purposes at this moment in time. Their places are taken up by Vin Finn and Tony Melling respectively. David White will now stand down as Vice-Chairman to be succeeded by Willie Williamson. Dr Eric Long will also leave Council although is happy to be called upon should his expertise needed. Members accepted the changes that were announced.

lan Duckett provided Members with a taste of the topics to be included in the forthcoming season of talks which he has been able to organise and which will commence in September.

There was one specific additional item of business to report. Secretary John Stokoe shared with those present, particularly those who take advantage of the Maritime Archive Library, a message of much concern. We have been advised that due to budgetary constraint, cuts are to be applied to the level of service to be offered in the future. Whilst it is reassuring to note that the Archive will not be closing completely and that some form of public provision would be preserved, it would certainly not be on the scale that we have enjoyed to date. We may also find that the 'Monday Facility' may have to be shifted to an alternative weekday and offer just part day provision. Rest assured that Council will be making our concerns known to Museum managers who are directing the restructure and we shall draw attention to the need to preserve this aspect of Merseyside's maritime heritage. At this early stage those Members who have views, ideas or suggestions are requested to share these with any of our Council Members who will be closely monitoring the situation.

As the Meeting drew to its close long-standing Member Captain Michael Jones asked those present to show their appreciation for all the work which had been undertaken by Council members over this past year. Chairman Bob Settle then closed the meeting and looked forward to resumption of events in September. JPS/May 2014

### Tracking Ocean Currents, 1950s Style (from Shipbuilding and Shipping Record, 10<sup>th</sup> August 1954)

There has been such an outcry in this country about oil pollution that one might have expected the National Institute of Oceanography to have been inundated with the 'drift cards' dropped into the Atlantic by RAF Coastal Command in May, 1954. Cards have been returned from Iceland, Ireland and France, but by the end of July 1954 none from any part of the UK. The Institute says, cautiously, that it is not unreasonable to suppose that some of the cards are by now very close to these shores, or have already stranded and lie waiting to be found.

What is the explanation of the small response to the request to return the cards? It may be that in spite of all precautions, many of the plastic envelopes containing the cards have sunk without trace. It may be that the seasonal changes in the speed and direction of the ocean currents which it is desired to study are trickier than anticipated. It may even be that the promised half-crown reward to the person returning the drift card as directed was not a sufficiently large bait, although it is not unreasonable to suppose that children, in particular, would be eager to get a little extra pocket money. However, school holidays are in progress, and the harvest may yet be fruitful. It will be a pity if an experiment planned with care, and obviously at no small expense, should prove a failure.

The Clan Line, in its staff magazine The Clansman, refers to a novel marine advertising scheme which it helped to 'float'. Guinness Exports Limited of Liverpool asked the Clan Line to carry 19,000 stout bottles out to sea and to heave them overboard at selected points in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Each bottle was empty except for a circular offering a memento to the finder who returned the form with information about the time and place of finding.

The **Stirlingshire**, **Clan Forbes**, **Clan Macintyre** and **Clan Macintosh** were the ships chosen to co-operate in this bright advertising venture, which along with determining the rate and flow of ocean currents, was also designed to test a new type of bottle sealing.

### Liverpool Nautical Research Society Index of Published Articles

An Index of all the main articles published in the Society's publications between May 1938 and March 2014 is available on a labelled CD. It is set out in clear table form under the headings: title, author, date of publication, and the publication in which the article appeared.

If a ship is the subject of an article its name appears as the article's title; if a ship otherwise features in an article it is noted under its name as a crossreference. The cost of the CD is £2 with all receipts going to Society funds.

### Remember Those Days ......

From the 1940s and also 1960s, this is a sample of events selected from the archives, and published by kind permission of Sea Breezes

#### July to September, 1947

With the present severe shortage of tonnage the re-building of the Brocklebank liner Mahsud is a major success; she was mined in Gibraltar harbour in May 1943 and beached in shallow waters; the engine-room was totally wrecked and the boiler-room flooded such that the authorities deemed her a total loss. However her owners decided upon salvage, and the ship was subsequently raised. After some strengthening work to prepare her for the tow, she lay in Gibraltar for the next two years. Meanwhile a new engine was ordered for her from David Rowan and Co., Ltd., and eventually she was towed from Gibraltar to the Clyde. Hull repairs were undertaken by Alexander Stephen and Sons Ltd. and consisted of building practically a new bottom into the ship. When this work was sufficiently advanced, installation of the new engine was begun. Similar to the original, this is the largest reciprocating engine built since the war. The two double-ended and one single-ended boilers were completely retubed and fitted with new combustion chambers. Additionally the Mahsud has also been provided with new auxiliary machinery and other rearrangements were made during reconstruction. Built in Port Glasgow in 1917, and then early in March, 1918, she left New York with a full cargo and joined a convoy of about 30 steamers, escorted by an American cruiser. However when the rudder stock broke and the rudder was lost in heavy weather, Mahsud fell out of the convoy and was left to her own resources. The U.S. cruiser **New Orleans** attempted to tow her to Halifax, but little progress was made. With the assistance of H.M. sloop **Gladiolus** she was eventually towed East to Queenstown on April 5. From there tugs took her to Swansea where her cargo was discharged. In May, 1932, the Mahsud rescued a number of the passengers and crew of the French motorship **Georges Philippar**, which was destroyed by fire in the Red Sea. Her master at that time was decorated by the French Government for his services.

Liverpool Education Committee plans to encourage interest in local history and geography by converting the ferry steamer **Royal Daffodil II** into a floating class-room two or three afternoons a week during the summer. Schoolchildren will then sail up and down the River Mersey, making notes as teachers point out features along the docks.

The Belgian motor-car ferry London-Istanbul had been the only ship ready to revive the Ostend packet service to England, but the motor-ship Prince Baudouin is now reconditioned and the London-Istanbul has been relieved. Built by Cockerills in 1913 as the 1,366-ton 24-knot turbine packet Ville de Liege, in 1936 she was rebuilt as a motor-car ferry and renamed London-Istanbul. She was in Ostend when the Germans overran Belgium in 1940, but escaped, and, after a spell as hospital depot at Calais, she served for the remainder of the war as a British hospital ship. She was the first to get back to Belgium, packed with returning refugees, and then spent some time repatriating British troops from the Western Front.

#### July to September, 1960

The Soviet Union, which already has an atomic-powered icebreaker at sea, took delivery of the world's largest conventionally powered icebreaker recently. The 15,340-ton **Moskva**, whose diesel-electric engines develop 22,000 h.p., was built by the Wärtsilä Company's Sanviken Docks at Helsinki and will be based at Murmansk. A second Moskva-class icebreaker, the **Leningrad** is to be delivered in 1962 by Wärtsilä. A third is called for in the Soviet-Finnish five-year trade agreement, but the order has not been placed. These ships will be used to keep Russia's north-east channel open during the navigational season.

Since the end of World War II signs pointing to the disappearance of the big have gradually multiplied. Although two specially designed troopship troopships, the **Nevasa** and **Oxfordshire**, each of some 20,000 gross tons have been commissioned, a considerable number of older vessels have been sold, and with the use of large aircraft for troop movements increasing every year, there is a steadily diminishing need for the full-time trooper. The recent sale by the Ministry of Transport of the twin-screw steam turbine troopship Empire Fowey (19,116 gross tons) to Pakistani buyers has once more emphasised this trend and has reduced the fleet of permanent troopers to five. The Empire Fowey was built at Hamburg in 1935 by Blohm and Voss as the Potsdam for the fast Far Eastern passenger service of the Norddeutscher Lloyd, Bremen. In her original form she had a gross tonnage of 17,528, with excellent accommodation for 227 first and 166 tourist-class passengers, and in company with the Gneisenau (18,160 gross tons) and Scharnhorst (18,184 gross tons), also delivered in 1935, she maintained a regular service from Continental ports to the Far East, with a passenger call at Southampton. Four Benson drum-type boilers supplied steam at a pressure of 1,150 lb. per sq. in. to a twin-screw turbo-electric machinery installation developing 26,000 s.h.p. which gave a speed of 21 knots. Of this notable trio, only the Potsdam survived the Second World War, and at the end of hostilities she was among the ships assigned to the United Kingdom by the Tripartite Commission. Taken over by the then Ministry of War Transport, the vessel was placed under the management of the P. and O. Steam Navigation Company, adapted for service as a troop transport and renamed Empire Fowey. Almost as soon as the ship came into service trouble was experienced with her propelling machinery. It was found that her Benson boilers, an experiment by the German builders, could not be satisfactorily maintained in service, and the **Empire Fowey** had to be laid-up at Rosyth, on the Firth of Forth, in November 1946.

The U.S.N.S. **Golden Eagle** operated by the American Military Sea Transportation Service is fitted with two huge amber arrows fixed to the forward rail of her flying bridge. These arrows illuminated by twentyeight 100-watt bulbs, are used to indicate a change in course to any oncoming vessel. The new system is being tried out for avoiding collisions at sea, a system that has been used on automobiles for years—turn signals.

8

### The Four-Masted Full-Rigged Ship Liverpool A summary of a presentation made to the Society on 17 April, 2014 by L.N.R.S. Member David White

Though early steamships were very useful, their inefficient use of bunkers severely limited their operations on the long-haul ocean routes of the world, thus the age of the sailing ship overlapped the introduction of steamships by a full century. With the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, owners and builders of sailing vessels were forced to innovate in order to remain competitive. In the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, sailing vessels were being designed and built that would remain competitive with the increasingly economical steamers well into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

This particular narrative began when a model of a four-masted full-rigged ship appeared in the window of a local law firm, the plaque stating "Full Rigger **Liverpool** 1878". An accompanying note from the model builder mentioned that she was based on **County of Caithness** and suitably modified. Research provided me with a photograph of **County of Caithness**, a fine four-masted barque built 1876, thus it was likely that the model-builder had simply modified the aft-most mast (the jigger) to carry square sails and also changed the bowsprit/jib-boom arrangement to a one-piece spike jib-boom.

Having searched various registers, there were two **Liverpools** which possibly fitted the bill, built in 1882 and 1889. At this stage, it is necessary to dispel any thoughts of clipper ships. These were large powerful slab-sided flat-bottomed bulk carriers, with either iron or steel hulls, with iron masts and wire rigging, and donkey boilers to power steam winches. Their cargo capacity was many times greater than that of the fast slim-hulled clippers of earlier in the century.

The first of these two possibilities was built on the Clyde in late 1882 by Dobies at Glasgow for W Price of Liverpool. Of just over 2,000 grt, in January 1883 she sailed on her maiden voyage from the Clyde bound for Buenos Aires. After dropping her tug off Rathlin Island she was never heard of again. The Board of Trade Inquiry decided that there was no evidence to show how she was lost.

Various records describe her as a four-masted sailing ship but there was no evidence to show whether or not she was a fully square-rigged ship. In view of her very short life, I was unable to trace any photographs or paintings of her and resigned myself to having come to a dead end. However, earlier this year the State Library of Victoria yielded a superb photograph of her at anchor in the Clyde off Greenock prior to departure. What the photograph did prove is that she was a four masted barque, not a full-rigged ship.

The second possible vessel, of 3,400 grt, was built at Port Glasgow by Russells for R W Leyland of Liverpool in 1889. Because she enjoyed a useful



Showing Liverpool's estimated track



Liverpool shown at the Mersey Bar

Picture courtesy E. Walker

working life, there are a number of photographs and splendid paintings available, all of which greatly simplified my research. Here indeed is a four-masted full-rigged ship!

Her maiden voyage took her under tow from the Clyde and around Lands End, berthing in London's Southwest India Dock on 31<sup>st</sup> January 1889 to load. Six weeks later she cleared the Thames and arrived in Melbourne on 9<sup>th</sup> June, a presentable and typical passage of ninety days. There she loaded a cargo of wool, wheat and flour for Calcutta. On arrival in Calcutta on 19<sup>th</sup> September, she loaded the cargo for which she had been designed and built – 26,000 bales of jute for Dundee. The Dundee jute industry was at its peak and, with her deadweight tonnage close to 6,000 tons, steamers simply could not compete. This established her trading pattern for some years; whatever general cargo was available outbound (far better than sailing in ballast) then loading a capacity cargo of jute for Dundee.

She is known to have visited the Mersey at least once in her career, as early in 1894 after discharging at Dundee she came around to Birkenhead to load and is on record as having demolished a telegraph post with her jib-boom at the entrance to Alfred Basin.

On 25<sup>th</sup> February 1902 she was running down-Channel from Antwerp with 6,112 tons of general cargo bound San Francisco when she came to grief in thick fog on the rocky north coast of Alderney. With all sails set, she ran aground below Fort Les Homeaux Florains, breaking her back. Unlike her predecessor, there was no loss of life and much of the cargo was salvaged. At the subsequent Inquiry, though there was some criticism of her Master, he was acquitted of actual culpable default.

Returning to the model in the window, it is rather sad to relate that she lacks the amidships deckhouse and flying bridge of **Liverpool.** Despite the name on the model, she is exactly what her builder described her as – a modified **County of Caithness**. Nevertheless, the research was gripping and gave me a much enhanced understanding of the big bulk carriers in the final decades of deepwater sail

Sources and Acknowledgements: Cheshire Law Associates Dundee Central Library Edward D Walker Illustrated Catalogue of Marine Paintings (Anthony Tibbles) Lloyds Lists Lloyds Register R A Wilson State Library of Victoria UK Hydrographic Office

### The Hext Rogers Collection, Merseyside Maritime Museum. A Summary of the presentation to the Society on May 15th, 2014 by L.N.R.S. Member Ian Duckett

The Hext Rogers collection, held by the Merseyside Maritime Museum, consists of sixteen pen and ink drawings, some in colour, of World War 2 convoys and includes over 600 images of the ships that sailed in those particular convoys.

They were drawn by Commodore Hext Rogers RNR whilst he was acting as the Convoy Commodore for the sixteen convoys. Each ship is shown in its position in the convoy formation and each drawing has a brief comment about the weather or the eventual outcome of the convoy.



**Glenorchy** in Capetown, 1941

I stumbled across the drawings when I was researching my father's war time service as Extra Second Engineer on the MV **Glenorchy**, a twin screw, 18 knot motor ship, built for the Glen Line in 1939, the Glen Line being a subsidiary of Alfred Holt & Co (Blue Funnel Line). I knew that **Glenorchy** had taken part in a major troop convoy, WS11, which took troops and material round the Cape to the Middle East in August 1941 and, whilst in the Museum's Battle of the Atlantic Gallery, I saw a notice that said two drawing were on show covering convoys OB330 and WS11.

The OB330 drawing, pictured overleaf, was there but that for WS11 was not!

#### OB330 left Liverpool on the 2 June 1941 and consisted of 39 ships.

June 1941

Commodore Rogers's comment says 'Uneventful till convoy dispersed – several ships sunk on the Canadian side of the Atlantic'.

After asking a member of the Museum staff to check that I was not missing the obvious, for I was the first person to raise any comment about the missing drawing since the gallery opened in 1993, I was put in touch with Rebecca Watkin, Curator of Ship Models and Drawings, and she kindly arranged for me to see the original sixteen drawings in the collection.

#### The convoys covered are:

OB10, HX7, OB47, OB87, HX23, OBG168, SL38, OB199, OB231, SL55, HX107, OB302, HX123, OB330, HX136 and WS11.

Significantly, there is no drawing for convoy HX72 (Halifax – Liverpool, September 1940), which was almost certainly Hext Roger's most difficult convoy of the war.

This convoy was involved in a twelve hour battle with three top U Boat aces: Prien in **U47**, Schepke in **U100** and Kretschmer in **U99**. The only escort, the armed merchant cruiser, HMS Jervis Bay, was called away from the convoy and from 22 degrees west the convoy had no escort. Eleven ships, carrying over 100,000 tons of cargo and 45,000 tons of fuel oil, were sunk.

One month later the **Jervis Bay** was sunk by the battle-cruiser **Admiral Scheer** and her Captain, Capt E.F. Fegen RN, was awarded a posthumous VC for his actions in trying to defend that later convoy.

A particularly good example of the drawings is that for HX107, see below:

Left B. 2. 4 H.X. 107

HX107 comments: 'Met a hurricane and the whole convoy was dispersed. Some ships were sunk returning independently'.

The ship shown at the foot of the drawing is the **Javanese Prince**, even though she was not part of HX107 but the vessel in which Hext Rogers had sailed out to Halifax. the missing drawing of WS11 was in the collection (see below). WS11 (the letters WS are said to stand for a 'Winston Special' convoy) was a large troop convoy carrying some 24,430 troops destined for the Middle East, including a large contingent for Iraq, another large contingent for India plus a group for the Far East together with equipment for the build-up of the Desert Army. It consisted of ten large liners:

Orantes, Oranto, Empress of Australia, Scythia, Viceroy of India, Duchess of York, Largs Bay, Mooltan, Abosso and Northumberland.

plus eight fast cargo ships:

Glenorchy, Glaucus, Barrister, Kina II, Bhutan, City of Edinburgh, City of Manchester, and Manchester Progress

The total tonnage of the eighteen ships was nearly 180,000 tons.



**Glenorchy** is shown second from the left on the bottom row. Comments: 'Uneventful despite several aircraft alarms early in the voyage

There was a large close naval escort, including a designated rescue ship, H.M.S. **Guardian** and an ocean escort that included the battle-cruiser H.M.S. **Repulse** en-route to the Far East.

Off the East African coast the convoy split, part continuing to Aden/Suez and part carrying on to Bombay. This latter section included the **Glenorchy** and **City of Edinburgh** but these two ships split again and, independently called at Basra before, in **Glenorchy**'s case, she continued independently to the Far East.

The Indian section, under the ocean escort of H.M.S. **Glasgow**, was numbered WS11X but this convoy should not be confused with the Malta convoy WS11X, code-named 'Operation Halberd', which also took place in late September, 1941 although, possibly, the numbering was actually designed to confuse the enemy.

It is perhaps, ironic that **Glenorchy** was eventually sunk in the most famous Malta Convoy of the war, 'Operation Pedestal' in August 1942, although, by that time, my father had left her for another Blue Funnel ship, the **Peisander**. This ship with my father on board, was herself sunk in the North Atlantic in May



Rear Admiral Hugh Hext Rogers MVO OBE RN (1883 – 1955)

1942 by **U653**, fortunately without loss of life.

Rear Admiral Hugh Hext Rogers MVO OBE RN was born in Cornwall in 1883. He served during WW1 in HMS Vanguard and HMS Birmingham and was promoted to Commander in 1916. After the war, he served as Executive Officer in HMS **Renown**, this appointment included the Prince of Wales's tour of Canada and Australasia. He was the Commander at Dartmouth in 1921/23, before being promoted to Captain in 1924. Appointments then included command of the 4<sup>th</sup> Destroyer Flotilla and the training establishment HMS Ganges. He was Admiral promoted Rear his to on retirement in 1935.

In 1939 he was recalled to serve as a Commodore RNR and served from 1939 to 1942 in this role. In 1942 he was appointed Flag Officer Harwich (HMS **Badger**) and finally returned to the retired list in 1944.

WS11 was, in fact, Hext Roger's last convoy command and followed a particularly difficult convoy HX136. This was a fast convoy from Halifax to Liverpool, which spent thirteen days in company with a slow convoy SC36, a total of 88/89 ships travelling at only 6.5 knots, primarily because of shortage of escorts.

Hext Rogers wrote a long and detailed paper to the Admiralty about the difficulties of controlling this convoy, his major points being:

1. There was great difficulty in manoeuvring fast and slow ships together.

2.Large vessels were often out of control at slow speeds.

3.Slow vessels made considerable smoke when trying to maintain station.

The paper was intended to be constructive but, may be, it was the reason why, after his next convoy, WS11, Hext Rogers was transferred to a shore appointment.

In retirement, Hugh Hext Rogers lived in his native Cornwall, where he died in 1955.

## Book Review

The Rise and fall of a Maritime Underdog Tramp Ships: An Illustrated History Roy Fenton Seaforth Publishing £30 ISBN 978 18483 21588

Tramp ships, notes author Roy Fenton, are regarded either as the lowest form of shipping life or over-romanticised. The truth may lie somewhere in between, but his book does a grand job in demonstrating the diversity and significance of tramp shipping and its rise and fall throughout the 20th century.



A trustee of the World Ship Society, Mr Fenton is a good authority on the subject, and he has produced a book of admirable clarity and depth which leaves few stones unturned in its explanations and analysis – fully addressing the fundamentals such as the operating and ownership models, as well as the vessel designs and power plants.

It also looks at the crewing aspects of the tramp trades – noting the 'snobbery, that placed such ships low on the maritime hierarchy. But, as Mr Fenton points out, tramp ships offered great opportunities for developing skills and experience –

especially for younger seafarers.

Liberally illustrated with more than 300 photographs, the book traces the evolution of the tramp ship from the British east coast coal trades to the role defined by Mr Fenton of 'roaming the oceans in search of paying cargoes'. It also shows how foreign competition began to challenge the U.K.'s dominance – although Mr Fenton challenges the received wisdom that British owners were slow to invest in motor ship technology in the inter-war period.

This excellent book benefits from fine indexing and an extensive bibliography for those interested in further reading, and concludes with a look at the way in which traditional tramp ships were edged out by more specialised vessels – despite a few valiant vessel designs 'whose ancestry can be traced back to the basic, ocean-going cargo ships developed by British builders and owners a century before'.

# Eating in the UK in the Fifties

Pasta had not been invented. Curry was a surname A takeaway was a mathematical problem. A pizza was something to do with a leaning tower. Bananas and oranges only appeared at Christmas time Crisps were plain; the only choice was to put the salt on or not. A Chinese chippy was a foreign carpenter. A Big Mac was what we wore when it was raining. Coffee was Camp, and came in a bottle. Fish didn't have fingers in those days. Eating raw fish was called poverty, not sushi. None of us had ever heard of yoghurt. Healthy food consisted of anything edible. Cooking outside was called camping. Sugar enjoyed a good press in those days. Prunes were medicinal. Surprisingly, muesli was readily available, it was called cattle feed.

The one thing that we never ever had on our tables .. was elbows!

# Nautical Trivia Quiz

- 1. What was the operational name of the North African invasion in 1942?
- 2. Who was C.Y. Tung?
- 3. Sir Robert Ropner, founded the Ropner Shipping Company. Where was he born? Where was the original office?
- 4. John Ellerman (II) was a world authority on what? besides being chairman of Ellermans.
- 5. Marcus Samuel started a shipping company to handle liquid cargoes, what was its name
- 6. How did the word "Halcyon" and its meaning enter the English language?

Answers on page 37

### A Fateful Telegram By W.G.Williamson

On the 9<sup>th</sup> September 1910 Captain Daniel Dow was in command of the RMS **Caronia** (call sign MRA) on a routine voyage from New York to Fishguard and Liverpool when a telegram was received on board. This telegram is now held in the Archives of the Merseyside Maritime Museum and was from a Mr. Dodd, Cunard's Marine Superintendent in Liverpool. Its contents were to drastically interfere with any plans Captain Dow had of a spot of leave. This is what it said:

Service

Captain Dow Steamer Caronia Crookhaven = Turner sick be prepared pass over command to Potter at Fishguard you will proceed from Fishguard to Queenstown to take command of Mauretania acknowledge receipt = Dodd

Note the no-nonsense "you will" in this telegram, no polite "will you?" or "you are requested to" that would be the more mealy-mouthed tone used by human resources departments today.

Dodd also sent the following telegram from the Central Post Office in Liverpool to Dow's wife at 1.16 pm.

Mrs Dow 4 Harlech Road Blundellsands. Captain Dow takes command of Mauretania at Queenstown and will not be coming to Liverpool will you arrange for necessary clothes be put on board Mauretania tomorrow Saturday. Dodd.

This telegram arrived at Blundellsands at 1.24 pm.

Mr. Potter the **Caronia**'s chief officer took command from Captain Dow for the short trip to Liverpool while the **Mauretania** sailed from Liverpool to Queenstown (Cobh) with Superintendent Dodd in command.

At Fishguard the normal situation was for incoming liners to anchor off the harbour and transfer their passengers ashore by tender. According to a railway company publicity brochure, "Commodious steam tenders meet all liners on arrival at Fishguard and convey passengers to the landing quay." In order to manage this effectively, the liner would ring a bell five minutes before the tender was ready. Passengers were encouraged not to wait around in companionways and entrances and avoid congestion. Two tenders, the **Great Southern** and the **Francis Drake** were also used to take mail and baggage ashore.

The Fishguard & Rosslare Railway Company operated a fast passenger ferry service across a short sea-route (54 nautical miles) from Britain to Ireland. This allowed passengers to board westbound liners at Queenstown Ireland. In

1910 four ferries were used on this service, the **St. Andrew, St. David, St. George** and the **St. Patrick.** Presumably Dow travelled to Queenstown on one of the four ferries mentioned above where he joined the **Mauretania** with



Captain Dow

minimum delay

The Mauretania with Captain Dow in command duly sailed on what was voyage. become historic to an Carrying 486 1<sup>st</sup> Class, 430 2<sup>nd</sup> Class and 1100 3<sup>rd</sup> Class passengers she was to make the crossing from Daunts Rock, Queenstown to the Ambrose Channel lightship (2,784 nautical miles) in record time. She arrived in New York on the 15th September 1910. During this crossing of the Western Ocean the Mauretania broke her own record by 10 minutes, making the passage in 4 days 10 hours and 41 minutes. This gave her an average speed of 26.06 knots (48.26 km/h) and one particular day she attained a speed of 27.04 knots.

Captain Dow was inundated with telegrams of congratulations from officials and friends ashore and from fellow captains at sea. Many of these

telegrams still exist and 100 years later it is interesting to read the hand written originals. Stations sending and receiving these telegrams can be identified by their call signs and in some cases the initials of the operator on duty can also be identified. For example on the 15<sup>th</sup> September 1910 as the **Mauretania** was approaching New York she received the following two telegrams. The first was handed in at New York and transmitted by the radio station at Sagaponak, N.Y., call sign MSK.

Captain Dow Mauretania = congratulations weather conditions has all favourable give her an extra turn for a new record = Chas P. Sumner (The Cunard agent in New York). This telegram had been initialled by WD.

The second telegram was from the Camparia (MCA) a day out of New York, it reads:

To Captain Dow Mauretania = heartiest congratulations: best wishes for all records: keep her going = Lawler Purser RMS Camparia

Even his German counterpart of the Hamburg-America Line was impressed with the swift passage of the **Mauretania** as this telegram of the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1910 shows.

From Kaiserin Auguste Victoria (DDA) to Captain Dow ss Mauretania = best congratulations: had fine weather since leaving to 37 W clear moderate SW winds raining and foggy – position 45.5 N 49.14 W bon voyage. Compliments Ruser (Capt).

24<sup>th</sup> September 1910 MSG from Oceanic. Captain Dow Mauretania hearty congratulations and thanks: light NE winds in channel: light southerly from Fastnet inclined to freshen since four this morning fine and clear weather regards. Haddock (Captain)

This Marconigram again has the initials WD in the "charges" section.

From previous research it was known that wireless operator William Davies had sailed on the **Mauretania** for many years. William or "Billy" Davies as he was more commonly known was rather famous. He was listed as Marconi operator number one in the Marconi International Marine Company's records. He joined the company on the 4<sup>th</sup> June 1902 and retired in 30<sup>th</sup> June 1953. He was awarded an MBE for his services to marine radio. Billy was a Liverpool man, he lived in the Waterloo district of the city and he died in Walton Hospital in 1957 aged 80. He had been a GPO telegraphist before going to sea.

10<sup>th</sup> October 1910 Marconigram from Carpathia (MPA) to Carmania (MAA) Captain Dow Carmania = How do record breaker; congratulations: what do you think of the Irish now: pleasant time and good luck; any news = Smith

Captain Smith was in command of **Carpathia** and later more famously in command of the **Titanic**. Captain Dow was born in Castle Bellingham, County Louth in 1860. He was proud of his Irish roots and he was affectionately known by his crew as "Paddy" Dow. He started his career as an apprentice with Brocklebank's, later joining Cunard in 1888. He retired in 1919 after 43 years at sea.

While Captain Dow received all the accolades it should be remembered that this record was achieved through much teamwork especially by the ships engine room staff. The vessel carried 33 engineering officers, 204 firemen, 120 trimmers and 33 greasers all supervised by the Chief Engineer, a Mr. Kendall. It says a lot for the management skills of the engineers and a lot of hard physical work particularly by the stokers and trimmers that this record was achieved.

The **Mauretania**'s builders, Swan, Hunter & Wigham Richardson of Wallsend, had estimated that her daily coal consumption to be 1,000 tons. This quantity was required to fuel the 23 double ended boilers and two single ended boilers. She had a total of 192 furnaces. On her maiden voyage however she

daily consumed 856 tons on the westbound leg and 917 tons on the return crossing. The consumption figures for the record breaking voyage are not known. However, information from engine room log indicates that on a voyage from New York to Cherbourg between 23<sup>rd</sup> and the 29<sup>th</sup> May 1920 she expended an average of 820.1 tons of coal per day (24 hrs). This works out at 137 tons of coal per 4 hour watch. Therefore with an average of 68 stokers per watch and 40 trimmers per watch each stoker shifted about 2 tons of coal per watch while the trimmers averaged 3.4 tons per watch. With this amount of coal being burnt it meant that a great deal of ash was produced and its disposal was carried out using automatic ash ejectors. It took about 10 to 15 minutes each watch to dispose the ash overboard.

During this period of history the social standing of stokers was very low. This description of the stoker was written in a US newspaper of 1890.

"His hopes are circumscribed by the stoke hold. He has no horizon whereon he may paint dream pictures of a better future. He may not aspire to anything beyond the kindred occupation of a leading stoker, once a fireman always a fireman. The limitations of his life, devoid of domestic influences, have

doubtless helped to brutalize him. A man without a vista is not likely to have a high standard of morality. Few in authority on shipboard had a good word to say for the stoker of the past, who spent his leisure ashore in drinking and brawling."

This statement published in the "Daily Sketch" of Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> October 1910 is not much better. "A ships fireman is often regarded as a sorry-formyself sort of person with very little idea beyond shovelling coal." This is a rather harsh judgement of men doing what was recognised at the time as



A `resting' stoker

one of the hardest physical jobs in existence. Actually a highly skilled job to keep the boilers fed with coal, clear of clinker etc in a very hot and dirty environment. Contemporary newspaper accounts reveal that stokers were very interested in winning the Blue Ribband for the fastest Atlantic crossing and this was their sole topic of conversation. The**Mauretania**'s record breaking crossing proves that these "sorry" persons were very proud of their prowess with a shovel.

In the 1900s holding the Blue Riband for the fastest crossing of the Atlantic was the cause of great rivalry between individual shipping companies and major maritime nations. Captain Dow was obviously a very capable seaman for he had achieved speed records before on the **Carmania, Caronia** and the

Lucitania. The unexpected telegram received by Captain Dow not only allowed him to set a record which was held for 20 years but also another personal record. Between his time on the **Caronia** and his abrupt transfer to the **Mauretania** meant that he had crossed the Atlantic three times in three weeks, quite an achievement for 1910.

References:

Liverpool Maritime Museum D/DOW/Scrapbook 1 Liverpool Maritime Museum D/CUN/4/8/9 and D/CUN/4/8/11 Liverpool Maritime Museum Mauretania 311.WAR.OS Majesty At Sea J.H. Shaum and W. Flayhart

### Tidal Power in 1895

The famous Irish Mail 'Province' steamer **Leinster** operated on the Holyhead-Kingstown service for almost 40 years. After a period of lay-up at Belfast a scheme was dreamt up for her in 1895 to harness the tides of Strangford Lough, and provide electricity for the town of Portaferry. A thousand years ago, raiding Vikings had discovered the tidal stream which they called the 'Strang-Fiord'.

Twice a day the large lough, more than fifty square miles of it, fills up and empties itself through the narrow half-mile channel at Portaferry. It was suggested that the **Leinster's** machinery could be removed with the exception of the crankshaft and the paddles, and these could be geared up to dynamos to generate electricity. The hull would be anchored in the middle of the fairway, right in the tide-rip, and free to swing. The paddles would drive the shaft.

The scheme came to nothing and the power of Strangford still flows, unharnessed, out to sea.

THE MONDAY FACILITY					
Members' access to the Archives and Library at the Merseyside Maritime Museum on Mondays continues as follows:					
September Mondays	1 <sup>st.</sup> , 8 <sup>th.</sup> , 15 <sup>th.</sup> , 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 29 <sup>th</sup>				
October	6 <sup>th.</sup> , 13 <sup>th.</sup> , 20 <sup>th</sup> , 27 <sup>th</sup>				
November	3 <sup>rd</sup> , 10 <sup>th.</sup> , 17 <sup>th.</sup> , 24 <sup>th.</sup>				
December	1 <sup>st</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> , 15 <sup>th</sup>				
Please note that some off these later dates may be subject of revision. Members are advised to check with					
Council Members or the web site for further information.					

# Liverpool Nautical Research Society Presentations for the 2014 – 2015 Season Ian Duckett, Talks Secretary

Sept 18 <sup>th</sup> Cruis	ing Experiences	In the Antarctic	By Captain Derrick Kemp
-----------------------------	-----------------	------------------	-------------------------

Derrick Kemp is the recently retired master of the cruise ship **Discovery** and in this talk he outlines some of the drama and excitement of sailing in a very challenging environment.

Oct 9<sup>th</sup> 'The Red Dragon on Merseyside - Some of Liverpool's Welsh Shipowners' By David Jenkins

> During the latter half of the 19th century, Welshmen became prominent amongst the ranks of Liverpool's shipowners, with the vast majority of them coming from the coastal areas of North Wales. Predominantly sailing shipowners, they operated their ships in the world wide tramping trades. Most went out of business just before or during World War 1.

Nov 20th 'Abnormal loads, heavy lifts – a surveyor's viewpoint

By Gordon Line

This talk looks at the problems of loading abnormal or heavy lift cargoes in the modern era of Health and Safety and Risk Management.

Dec 18<sup>th</sup> 'Staysails, Stunsails and Baggy Wrinkles' By Elfyn Hughes

A light hearted Christmas stroll through the maze of a tall ship's rigging.

Jan 15<sup>th</sup> 'Measuring and Predicting the Ocean Tide' By Philip Woodworth

Liverpool is a centre of expertise in Oceanography. This lecture looks at the progress in understanding the ocean tides, important for geophysical research and for practical applications such as safer navigation. The lecture will also look at some other areas of research carried out at the National Oceanography Centre including the long term changes in global mean sea level due to climate change.

#### Feb 19<sup>th</sup> 'The North Atlantic Mail Ships 1800 – 1868' By Graham Booth

The lecture looks at the rise and fall of the American merchant marine as a mail carrier during this period. The talk is illustrated with actual examples of the letters that were carried, mainly between Liverpool and New York.

Mar 19th 'Two and a half centuries of Mersey pilotage' By Geoff. Topp

As the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Liverpool Pilot Service approaches, in 2016, it seems a fitting time to voyage through the pilotage years from then to now. This talk will cover the establishment and development of the Liverpool Pilot Service, its pilot boats and its pilots from 1766 to the present day.

Apl 16th'A Rather Unusual Submarine 'By David White

From time to time, feasibility studies have been undertaken to investigate the viability of a merchant submarine, only to come to naught for both technical and commercial reasons. This presentation looks at two rare vessels which did make it into commercial service.

May 21<sup>th</sup> 'Visions of life on board – Selling the British Merchant Marine 1870–1970' By Professor Nick White/David Clampin

> An analysis of shipping poster and other advertising material with the focus being the emergence of the cruise market and the increasing need to establish the distinctive nature of life on board as a space of new possibilities and boundaries.
# A Voyage in the **Ulysses** by L.N.R.S. Member Tony Melling

In this first of three articles, we set the scene for an idyllic cruise aboard the Blue Funnel ship **Ulysses** to Australia by understanding the economic and social conditions of 1932, when she set sail from Liverpool. We also discuss the conditions onboard and what the voyage cost in real terms.

Episode 1 – "The Blue Funnel Line: fast passenger vessels – combining the friendly comfort of a home – the services and cuisine of the best of hotels – the acme of safety afloat – the utmost regularity"



ss Ulysses

From Ocean Archives, courtesy National Museums Liverpool

The uplifting hyperbole and beguiling scenery of steamship advertising in the 1930s was indeed tempting to the privileged few. To travel first class in a cargo ship to Australia was a privileged verv experience. Normal life meant the Slump, lower living standards, poverty and social unrest. Taking a long voyage at a reduced cost whilst experiencing unique а itinerary was indeed an

idyllic alternative. This account draws from the diary of a male passenger who experienced this first hand. First of all, let us place the voyage in its 1932 context.

## Conditions in the Early 1930s

The economies of the industrialised world were still struggling to shake off the shackles of the Great Depression. In Britain in 1932, unemployment represented 25% of the adult workforce and was 30% in northern areas reliant on heavy industry. Public sector wages were cut by 10% and 200,000 unemployed men were sent to work camps. Millions were forced to use soup kitchens against the strains of Bing Crosby's international hit "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?" In September, the National Hunger March left Glasgow to prick the conscience of the establishment. In London, the coalition government of



Ulysses Cruise Brochure

Ocean Archives, courtesy N.M.L.

Ramsey McDonald had re-established trade barriers on 1 March, at the very time when international trade and industrial growth needed to be accelerated. It

was indeed going to be a long slog. Agatha Christie fans were transported from this national sacrifice by the escapism of the newly published Hercule Poirot mystery, Peril at End House.<sup>1</sup>

Escapist transportation of a more exotic character was in similar difficulty. The Depression devastated passenger as well as cargo travel. "Passenger trades did



badly in the Slump, and throughout the inter-war years generally never fulfilled their pre-war promise. Fares on Blue Funnel passenger services showed no tendency to rise, and in fact the trend was downwards..."<sup>2</sup> A first class single fare from the UK to Sydney cost £81 in 1913. In 1938, the same ticket cost only £78. Shipping lines searched desperately to supplement their income in any way

they could, amidst becalmed trading conditions. Those with first class passenger accommodation like Blue Funnel seized their opportunity.

In an attempt to make full use of otherwise empty space, Blue Funnel, like other shipping lines, began to develop well advertised cruises. Especially successful were the **Ulysses** cruises, started in 1932, which for a cost of £135 took passengers on a few months venture to Australia which included visits to the coral islands of the Great Barrier Reef in motor launches.<sup>3</sup>

Economic conditions were difficult but there was still sufficient demand to make these round trip voyages popular. **Ulysses** sailed on a total of five Australian cruises between August 1932 and January 1935<sup>4</sup>, until international trade had sufficiently recovered for the company to revert to more conventional cargo voyages (supplemented by emigrant passenger demand).

**Ulysses** focused on the original cargo trade route, with port diversions made to take account of the 'cruise' character of the voyage. All passengers enjoyed an excellent single class service during the four months away. She sailed from Liverpool, calling at Marseilles en route to Port Said and the Suez Canal. Crossing the Indian Ocean to Colombo, **Ulysses** sailed on through the Straits of Malacca to Sumatra, Java and Northern Australia. An exploration of the Great Barrier Reef was then followed by calls at the major Australian ports, before turning west for the long voyage home. South African stops at Durban and Cape Town were the final expeditions before the three week voyage to London. This first cruise left Liverpool on 27 August 1932 and returned to London on 2 January 1933, a marathon odyssey through exotic and rarely visited locations<sup>5</sup>. A journey of a lifetime indeed for those lucky enough to afford it; but what of the ship itself?

### The Facilities Onboard

**Ulysses** was the fourth ship of the line to carry the name. She was built in Belfast by Workman, Clark and launched in October 1913. Her sister ship **Nestor** had been launched in May. **Ulysses** had a gross registered tonnage of 14,626 and was 580 ft. long, with a beam of 68 ft. Both ships were introduced to the Liverpool – Brisbane service because of its growing popularity. Each ship cost £250,000 to build<sup>6</sup> (equivalent to £14,250,000<sup>7</sup> in today's values) and was designed to accommodate up to 350 single class passengers. This was reduced after successive upgrades in passenger comfort: to 250 in 1926 and to 175 in 1935. By the time of its 1932 cruise, **Ulysses'** capacity was around 240 passengers, all designated as first class. Her owners, Ocean Steam Ship Company, introduced a monthly service and ordered two ships that exceeded the capacity of their three predecessors by almost 4,500 GRT<sup>8</sup>. Indeed it was said that **Ulysses** carried the tallest funnel in the Merchant Navy! At the time of the voyage she was commanded by Captain D.T. Williams, who was authorised to carry 320 adults for 120 days. The passenger list records 132 passengers

who embarked at Liverpool, so accommodation facilities would have been ample.

The passenger accommodation on board **Ulysses** was situated on three decks. From the top, the Boat Deck provided 11 cabins, the Smoking Room, Bar,



Cabin 'DeLuxe', Ulysses, Ocean Archives, Courtesy NML

and Lounge. The Promenade Deck 40 had cabins, bathrooms and Drawing Room. The Upper Deck housed 92 cabins, doctor, bathrooms and hairdresser; and the lower decks accommodated the Room, Nursery Dining and other passenger facilities. An interesting convention was that a considerable number of the 143 cabins, 62 were single berths; or 'cots' to use the contemporary term. This indicates the privacy conventions and the appeal of independent travel of the time. It is plausible that the company deliberately left some cabins

unoccupied. This enabled additional storage to be made available for passenger possessions in predefined areas.

The brochure advertising the **Ulysses** cruise lists voyage fees based on the type of cabin chosen. These ranged from £135 to an equivalent of £200 for the per person most exclusive berths. There were only four of the latter (and the only en-suite cabins available)<sup>9</sup>. These prices seem incredible value for a first class cruise to Antipodes four the lasting months. In many ways they were, especially when one considers how well passengers treated in the various were exotic locations they encountered. Sea travel by the



Two cot Cabin, Ulysses, Ocean Archives, Courtesy NML

European middle class was still sufficiently rare to imbue each of them with a sense of celebrity they encountered abroad. This was especially so in countries like Australia that only occasionally received visits from compatriots of the 'mother country'. This of course was when air travel was difficult, especially east of India. A voyage on this scale really did promise adventure and exploration.

## What was the Real Cost?

On the other hand, one has to evaluate these cruise prices against modern values to appreciate their true cost. The cheapest single cabin ticket was £135, or £7,690 in today's values. The remaining 50 single cabins were priced up to £150. The majority of the double cabins were fixed at the same equivalent cost per passenger of around £140 (£16,000 for two). The most expensive berths on the Promenade Deck were four 'Cabin De Luxe', which at £350 each equated to nearly £20,000 in today's values. That only left the most exclusive accommodation at £400 per 'Suite'; four Boat Deck cabins sleeping two each and as the most forward, enjoying panoramic views. For an equivalent cost today of £11,400 per person, two Suites shared a bathroom in the corridor, which was the most private it got! But one might also consider that a unique experience such as this would be reasonable value at £700 a week.

It is important to bear in mind that all cabins had sinks only; bathrooms were shared amongst several cabins. **Ulysses** remained essentially a cargo ship with comfortable passenger accommodation. It never aspired to match the passenger liners of Cunard or P. and O. To many travellers this only enhanced its romantic appeal. In contrast, the elite liner SS **Normandie** embarked on a 21 day cruise between New York and Rio De Janeiro in 1938. Individual prices ranged from \$395 to \$8,600, confining this experience to only the very rich, for a much shorter cruise<sup>10</sup>.

With voyage prices costing between £135 to £200 each, how did they compare to alternative goods in 1932? The Morris Minor, Britain's 'first £100 car' had been launched in 1931. Its slightly more comfortable relation, the Austin Saloon cost the price of a **Ulysses** single cabin at £135. The average house price was £540, or £310,000 in today's values (Metroland would be amazed to see today's rampant property inflation). On the other hand, the average wage at £3 per week was considerably below modern earnings in real terms. This priced even a Blue Funnel cruise beyond the reach of all but the most affluent middle class.

## The Diary of a Ulysses Passenger 11

In recapturing the experiences of this **Ulysses** voyage, we have this account from a passenger about whom we know very little. We can only assume his identity from a few clues drawn from 'The Diary of a **Ulysses** Passenger', privately printed by the Blue Funnel Line some time afterwards. We know from this account that the author is 60 years old, has brought his wife Mildred and

another companion Joan and leaves behind a son James, married to Winifred. We know that they are comfortably middle class, regularly enjoying long voyages over the years. A study of the passenger list from the National Archives lists 132 passengers. The identity of our observer is most plausibly Robert Allen, aged 60 and retired, his wife Charlotte, aged 55, and their unmarried daughter, Barbara, aged 28. The party lived in Northwich, Cheshire.

This remarkable account reveals remote places as they appeared over eighty years ago. Of equal value to today's reader is what it reveals about the social values of the time. The diarist hardly comments about Europe's reduced condition or social unrest at home. His attitude to the lesser developed countries visited is condescending to the point of racism. To Robert, the Great Depression has failed to undermine Britain's Imperial prestige. He makes use of his company contacts to give his companions an entrée to privileged tours and locations. This implies he occupied a senior position with a shipping agency or import/export company before retirement. Robert enthusiastically engages in all the social and sporting activities onboard; commendable for a sixty-year old. The more strenuous pursuits ashore (such as swimming, surfing, or mountaintrekking) seem confined to the company of male friends or more resilient females like his regular travelling companion, daughter Barbara. To protect the innocent, Robert changed the names of fellow passengers who featured in his account, wisely so, since some descriptions are rather uncomplimentary!

In the next instalment, The Diary of a **Ulysses** Passenger reveals the sights and sounds of the journey from Liverpool to Bali, recreating cultures and customs now changed forever.

## References

- <sup>1</sup> 1932, in the United Kingdom. wikepedia.org.uk
- <sup>2</sup> Falkus, Malcolm, The Blue Funnel Legend, London, Macmillan, 1990, p.222.
- <sup>3</sup> Falkus, Malcolm, The Blue Funnel Legend, p.223.
- <sup>4</sup> Morris, Ian, Private research papers
- <sup>5</sup> Morris, Ian, Ibid.
- <sup>6</sup> Clarkson J., Harvey B., Fenton, R., Blue Funnel Line, Preston, Ships in Focus, 1998, p.50.
- <sup>7</sup> www.measuringworth.com for this and subsequent comparative valuations.
- <sup>8</sup> Morris, Ian, gross registered tonnage (GRT) is a measure of space, not weight. 1 GRT is equivalent to 100 cubic ft. Deadweight tonnage is a combination of cargo plus fuel (in this case, coal). Ulysses' deadweight was 16,300 tons, which gives some idea of her carrying capacity. I am indebted to Ian Morris for this information.
- <sup>9</sup> A Voyage in the **Ulysses**, Ocean Archives, Merseyside Maritime Museum, for these and the following passenger rates
- <sup>10</sup> Kludas, Great Passenger Ships of the World Vol. 1, 1858–1912, Wellingborough, Patrick Stephens, 1986.
- <sup>11</sup> The Diary of a **Ulysses** Passenger, The Blue Funnel Line, India Buildings, Liverpool, 1933, Ocean Archives, Merseyside Maritime Museum.

# The Denny Ship Model Experiment Tank by LNRS Member David White

In 1871 William Froude started building a model tank at Chelston Cross near Torquay, with the first experiments taking place on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1872. By 1875 he had established a formulae to determine the resistance of a vessel from the results of a model of the vessel. This encouraged William Denny to send to Froude the lines and progressive trial results of the single screw steamer **Merkara** for tank testing. The results compared so well that Denny was convinced that tank testing was the way forward and in 1881 persuaded the other partners of the firm that it would be commercially advantageous to have their own tank.

The architect engaged was the Greenock-born John Crawford, who went on to design the tanks at Clydebank and Nagasaki. The recording truck or carriage for towing the models was designed and supplied by Kelso & Co, electricians and model-makers of Glasgow. In 1884 McDowalls of Johnstone supplied the wax model cutting machine, based on Froude's design, at a cost of £600. The completed tank and apparatus cost about £6,000.

The tank was originally 73 metres long, 6.7 metres wide and 2.75 metres deep, having a uniform rectangular cross-section, with an additional 18 metres long dock at the north end and a 16.5 metres one at the south end.

The tank's first superintendent was Frank Purvis (later taking up the Chair of Naval Architecture at Tokyo University) and with his assistant, Edwin Mumford, they ran the first model test on 21<sup>st</sup> February 1883.

Denny defined the function of the tank as "To determine with commercially acceptable accuracy the power required to achieve the contract speed, and to reduce that power for any installation to a minimum." In honour of William Froude, Denny dedicated the façade of the building to Froude's memory.

In 1924, the south end of the tank building, including the cell room and generators and the propeller moulding and casting room, was destroyed by fire. The opportunity was then taken to extend the deep water section of the tank by 16.5 metres, making it 94.5 metres long, and move the suspension links supporting the Burma teak gangway further out to give a clear walkway on each side of the rail track.

The tank staff of about seventeen comprised experimenters, girl analysts and tracers, model makers and mechanics. The tank was purchased by Vickers– Armstrong in May 1964 and in 1975 a wind tunnel was added to the tank's facilities. In July 1977 the tank passed into the hands of British Shipbuilders. In 1983, the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich instigated a scheme to save the tank for posterity. With financial assistance from various bodies, the tank was purchased in 1984 by the Scottish Maritime Museum for £50,000 and suitably converted for public access.

The narrow gauge railway (40" or 1016mm) is suspended from the roof about 0.5 metres above the water level and is cambered to suit the earth's curvature. Originally the truck was towed by an endless wire rope worked by two 4HP stationary Tangye steam engines. In 1908 steam gave way to electricity in the form of a 130-cell battery powering an 8HP motor. The carriage could reach 366 metres per minute (13.6MPH) but the maximum continuous speed was 305 meters/min. In 1939 a catapult was fitted to provide rapid acceleration over the first 15 metres to give 22.7 MPH. A Froude-type screw propeller dynamometer measured the thrust and torque of a single propeller. In 1909 this was altered so that up to four propellers could be utilised simultaneously. In 1955 the electrical mains supply was changed from DC to AC. Finally, a computer was mounted on the carriage and programmed to drive the model at the required speeds and to record the data.

In 1887 the tank installed its first wave maker, consisting of a broad wooden board hinged at its lower end. Man-power was the energy source and



the movement was timed by the beat on a drum, akin to a Roman slave galley! By 1935 a series of power driven wave makers of the vertical plunger type had been fitted, and a more sophisticated wave maker was later installed by the University in 1996. Robertson Buchanan of Glasgow patented the first feathering paddle wheel in 1813. In the early days of the tank, much attention was given to paddle wheel design and many self-propelled models fitted with radial, fixed and feathering paddles were tested. The float area, immersion and location of the wave profile were all examined. One result of this work was the placing of an order with Denny by the Belgian Government in 1887 for two 20.5 knot paddle steamers. A total of fourteen models and seven pairs of paddle wheels were investigated and on completion these two vessels were the fastest in the world apart from torpedo boats.

All model test tanks have a standard model which is run periodically to ensure that results are constant. The Denny tank has a double-ended brass one, made in 1930, and the resistance curve for this can be seen in the drawing office.

Over the years, the tank has seen many experiments, not just with ships but with submarines, anti-mine paravane cutters, **Shamrock II** and **III** (Sir Thomas Liptons unsuccessful challengers for the America's Cup races in 1901 and 1903), the 52-knot hydrofoil **MTB 109** for the Admiralty in 1942, assisting Harland & Wolff in designing the bulbous bow for **Canberra** in 1960 and finally the Denny Hovercraft in 1961.

In 1988 the University of Strathclyde first used the Denny tank to carry out experiments. Having access to such a unique facility proved extremely useful for student projects. The true potential of the test basin was recognised in 1996 when the decision was made to invest in modern data collection equipment, a state-of-the-art motion capture system, a new controllable wave maker and an absorbing beach. This modernisation opened the door for a number of research and commercial testing projects as well as undergraduate and postgraduate student projects. Due to financial restraints the University withdrew from the tank in 2006. Today the tank is part of the Scottish Maritime Museum and a visit is highly recommended. Do not miss the very large model of the hull of Q3, Cunard's projected 75,000 grt four-screw replacement for the two Queens but abandoned in favour of the smaller Q4 (Queen Elizabeth 2).

Though well-known as shipbuilders, Dennys was an extremely innovative company, having built the first turbine-powered merchant ship in the world (**King Edward**, 1901), a helicopter (1913), fitted Denny-Brown stabilisers to the passenger ferry **Isle of Sark** (1938), built **Royal Iris** (1950) for Wallasey Corporation, and developed the D2 fixed-skirt hovercraft in the early 1960s. If further evidence of innovation is required, consider the 1888 paddle steamer **Lucy Ashton**, stripped down in 1950 and fitted with four jet engines!

Acknowledgements: Anne Hoben Scottish Maritime Museum

# THE OCCULT

#### by L.N.R.S. Member Norman S. Swindells

Life at sea can sometimes be a little boring even if the number of consecutive days spent on a run can be quite small, as is usual with passenger ships. I remember a time when I was sailing on Liverpool's famous old veteran **Britannic** and in January 1950 we were on a cruise from New York to Madeira, the Canaries and then a cluster of Mediterranean ports, our passengers being all American.

Our first stop after New York was some six days away at Madeira and four of us on the 8–12 watch decided that to do something different, for these six days, we would after each night watch, for a bit of fun, meet in my cabin and mess about with a séance, none of us incidentally with any belief in the spirit world. The first night we sat around the coffee table with hands on hands and feet on feet so none of us could cheat.

We then started to ask questions with the request "if you are here would you knock on the table once for yes and twice for no". After about an hour with no reaction we were about to give up when suddenly we started to get answers. Each of us thought one or more of us was cheating but still carried on. The next night the Spirit? immediately started knocking on the table and after a while to bring in some variation we asked "would you tilt the table once for yes and twice for no". Immediately the table started rocking when giving answers.

The third night, getting even more adventurous, we asked "if it would lift the table once for yes and twice for no", which happened quite quickly and by the end of the session the table was lifting about a foot high in answer to each question. Whilst still suspecting each other we were quite enjoying ourselves and on the fourth night after the usual preamble, including table lifting, asked if it would do something unusual in the cabin so we could be sure the spirit was definitely with us. The only light we had kept on in the cabin was the bed reading light and even this we covered with a towel so the minimum light only was available, contributing to the ghostly effect. Immediately we asked the question the towel over the bed light burst into flames which of course could have occurred any time as it was a foolish thing to do. Nevertheless it gave us food for thought, although still not convincing us of the spirit world.

The following night we started as usual with the simple questions then we again asked it to do something unusual. On this occasion we heard and felt a somewhat sinister breeze moving within the cabin and then something happening around the washbasin, with toothbrushes and glasses being interfered with, then suddenly both taps were turned on with water issuing from them. By this time even the most sceptical of us began to wonder if maybe there was something in this spirit thing. We never did find out for the last night at sea prior to arrival in Madeira when our last scheduled séance took place, after the usual preliminaries one of us asked "if you are here, to prove it, will you appear" I'm not sure who was first but there was a rush to kick the table over and put on the cabin main lights and it was the last time we ever conducted any séances. It may be that there is something about the stillness of an ocean that attracts spirits, "who knows" but certainly none of these four normally down to earth engineers had any intention of finding out.

After this experience it was my intention never again to mess around with the occult but rather than me bother with it, for some reason it pursued me. On this occasion it happened on my last trip to sea. I was just short of three months watch-keeping time onboard a steamship, prior to sitting my Combined Chief Engineers certificate, when I would swallow the anchor (loads of jobs in those



#### ss Selector

days) and that grand old company, Harrison Line, provided the ship, which was a wartime built Fort boat, purchased by them and given a good Harrison name **Selector**. I picked up **Selector** in Middlesbrough and we proceeded round the North of Scotland to our home town, Liverpool. Our crew were all West Indian, mainly from Barbados and the previous Leading Hand went off on leave, his place being taken by a tall, physically strong and fit, Barbadian who was a regular Harrison Leading Hand. Now the West Indies is famous for its fantastic weather but the only place one associates with the occult is perhaps, Haiti, noted for its Voodoo, Zombies (Living Dead) and other weird things.

I soon found out that for those who still believed in such things there were the odd witchdoctors still around and that our new man against his will was involved with one in Barbados. It appeared that whilst he was on his last leave he had become the lover of the wife of another Harrison seaman and when the latter found out he went to the witchdoctor and had a curse put on our new crew leader. According to other members of the crew, who regarded it as nonsense, such a curse only works if the one receiving the curse believes it,

Courtesy www.clydesite.co.uk

which unfortunately our new arrival did. Our voyage was to South and East Africa with first stop Cape Town which took about 28 days and it was sad to see over this period of time a strong young man gradually deteriorate, going from some 14 stone plus of muscle, to a 9 stone something skinny weakling a combination of eating virtually nothing and by apparently being in terror for his life. We never found out what the end result was because on arrival in Cape Town, he deserted the ship.

I'm sure after reading of my trials and tribulations, you too will want nothing to do with the occult.

The **Selector** was built as the **Empire Service** in 1943 by Lithgows, Port Glasgow, Yard No 982 for the Ministry of War Transport. Bought and renamed by T. & J. Harrison in 1945, she was operated by them until 1960 when sold to Margalante Cia Nav S.A Panama and renamed **Margalenta**. She was scrapped at Hirao, Japan the following year

# The Laws for Bureaucrats

- 1. When in charge ponder
- 2. When in trouble delegate
- 3. When in doubt mumble.

Answers to Nautical Trivia Quiz on page 18

- 1. Operation Torch
- 2. The owner of Orient Overseas Container Line (OOCL), and of the RMS **Queen Elizabeth** which had become the **Seawise University.**
- 3. Germany and Cardiff
- 4. Rodents
- 5. Shell Transport and Trading Co.
- 6. Halcyon days are days of light winds and sunshine

## Just Fancy That Anecdotes from Earlier Bulletins

At Sea on the Sabbath

The Burns Line's first steamer, the **Glasgow**, built in 1828 and of 280 tons, made her first voyage from the Clyde to the Mersey in March, 1829. A year later a sister ship, the **Ailsa Craig**, of almost identical proportions, was also placed on the station.

Unexpected difficulties arose and had to be overcome. Friday was the most suitable sailing day from an economic viewpoint, but not from that of superstitious sailors. To sail on a Saturday would mean breaking the Sabbath, to which George Burns was equally averse. Further, the company's Liverpool agent, Mr Mathie, pointed out that the Friday sailing would not synchronise with the canal traffic. In desperation he pointed out that it would be better to sail on Saturday and to provide chaplains, in which case every objection would be satisfied. To his consternation, Burns took the suggestion seriously and went so far as to say that he and his brother would share the whole expense of the experiment. The wits of the Broomielaw jeered at Captain Hepburn and his 'steam chapel', but the custom became firmly established and remained in place until 1843 when the secession of the Free Church from the Established Church of Scotland created such a dearth of ministers that ships' chaplains could no longer be obtained.

## Millennium Cruise on the Royal Daffodil

Members of the LNRS with £200 each to spare may have considered the idea of seeing in the new Millennium on board Mersey Ferries' newly revamped **Royal Daffodil** (formerly the **Overchurch**). Just 250 tickets at £200 per head were available for a cruise leaving Woodside at 8.30pm on New Year's Eve, and returning at 2am on New Year's Day.

A spokesman for Mersey Ferries said: "Mersey Ferries is offering a cruising entertainment giving a magical window into the next millennium in the heart of a magical city". Wow!!!

Not surprisingly the cruise was cancelled due to lack of interest.

Liverpool to Menai Bridge for Under 4p !!!

In 1931, a first-class season ticket for the **St Tudno** or **St Seiriol** was available for  $\pounds 4-15-0d$ . (or  $\pounds 4.75$ ). Some 120 round trips from Liverpool to Llandudno and Menai Bridge could be made in the course of a Season, running from mid-May to mid-September. This averaged out at just under 4p per trip (8 old pence in real money !!! ) In 1997 a day-excursion from Liverpool to Douglas cost  $\pounds 34$  for one trip.

## Passengers on Atlantic Liners from a report published in 1905, and submitted by L.N.R.S. Member Harry Hignett

In view of the occurrence of the St. Louis Exhibition in 1904 and the attraction it afforded to visitors generally combined with the fact that there was almost throughout the entire year a war of rates for steerage passengers on Atlantic liners, it is surprising that the official records of the passengers landed at New York during the past year show a decrease of 8½ per cent when compared with the number in the preceding year. Steerage rates were down to £2 – in some cases even less – and yet the number of steerage passengers is 11 per cent less. This is largely due to the vigilance with which the port authorities at New York investigate the status of immigrants, so as to determine whether they are likely to become satisfactory citizens, and not to involve maintenance on the part of the State. Without such an investigation the rate war might have considerably added to the number of alien paupers in the States, who sooner or later would have involved a charge upon the rates. The figures are therefore pronounced evidence of the success of the American method of preventing undesirable immigration. The figures for 1903 were exceptionally favourable alike as regards cabin and steerage passengers, the numbers being in excess of those recorded for many years, but the decrease even on these results is still strikina.

In all 735,187 passengers were landed at New York, and the number of arrivals of ships engaged in this in passenger service was 967. Of the total number of passengers, about 78 per cent were conveyed in the steerage, and about 9 per cent in the first and 13 per cent in the second cabins. In the previous year 80 per cent were steerage passengers, so that it will be seen that the cheap rates resulting from the serious disagreement amongst the steamship companies had little or no effect in increasing the number of immigrants into America. Perhaps the feature of our analysis of the table, prepared by Mr.W.C. Moore, the landing agent at Ellis Island, is the distinct decrease in passengers by the liners sailing from Northern Europe, and the increase in the steerage voyagers from Mediterranean ports. In this increase the German lines have not participated to the same extent as in previous years. The British lines, on the other hand, improved their position, largely owing to the incursion of the Cunard Line into the Mediterranean, which was one of the causes of difference between the companies. The Cunard Company have an arrangement with the Austro-Hungarian Government to run steamers from Fiume, and in 1904 these steamers carried over 24,000 emigrants, giving, with those in the saloon, an average population for each ship of 1,225, the highest recorded by any of Mediterranean lines this year. In effect the German companies have carried

nearly 39,000 fewer steerage passengers while the British lines have carried 32,000 more.

			1904				1903		
	Line	1st	2nd	Steer.	Comb.	1st	2nd	Steer.	Comb.
Original	Expanded**								
Data*									
NDL	Norddeutscher Lloyd	15,414	21,684	98,449	135,547	15,98	33 20,948	119,079	156,010
HAPAG	Hapag-Lloyd	9,830	14,353	96,140	120,323	9,28	4 14,681	114,458	138,423
White *	White Star Line	13,130	10,942	58,260	82,332	12,50	9,855	45,705	68,123
Cunard	Cunard Steamship Company	6,575	13,249	63,027	82,851	6,58	2 11,866	33,716	52,164
Red *	Red Star Line	2,933	6,505	39,148	48,586	2,59	7 6,369	54,726	63,692
French	Cie. Gle. Transatlantique	4,556	6,905	34,684	46,145	4,02	3 7,479	51,454	62,956
American	The American Line	4,206	4,729	28,316	37,251	4,47	0 6,090	16,081	26,641
Holland	Holland America Line	3,027	5,140	25,633	33,800	3,07	2 5,398	36,761	45,231
Anchor	Anchor Line	1,833	6,065	28,047	35,945	2,10	5 6,828	38,564	47,497
ATL	Atlantic Transport Line	3,654		90	3,744	3,62	1	6	3,627
Scandivia	Scandivia	665	1,549	19,509	21,723	75	6 1,915	14,642	17,313
La Veloce	La Veloce Nav. Italiana a Vapore	673		18,885	19,558	78	2 15	31,148	31,945
Italian	Italia Societa di Navigazione	421	909	17,320	18,650	43	2 1,124	27,379	28,935
Fabre	abre Cie. Gen. de Nav a Vapeur Cyprien Fabre 111 0			17,257	17,368	19	4	25,124	25,318
Prince	Prince Line	84	2	8,081	8,167	g	4	16,519	16,613
Spanish	Compania Transatlantica	370	245	4,383	4,998	23	9 170	5,654	6,063
Austria	Unione Austriaca Company	62	54	4,338	4,454				0
Allan State	Allan Line	304	1,301	2,362	3,967	29	6 1,638	1,686	3,620
Scandia	Scandinavian America Line		4	1,577	1,581				0
Empreza	Empreza Maritima Brazileira	18		409	427				0
Ital/Barbds	Italia Società di Nav. a Vapore	259		398	657	6	9 66	232	387
Portugese	Transportes Maritimos do Estado	8		26	34	5	3	1,804	1,857
		68,022	93,636	566,33	728,108	67,23	94,442	634,738	796,415

Note: \* Indicates company names given on original report \*\* Indicates what is thought to be the full title

The returns of first and second-class passengers by the principal lines only differ slightly from those of the previous year; the number travelling in first cabin was 900 more, and in the second cabin 55 more.

We give in the above table the totals for the important lines. The first place is again taken by the German Lloyd, who have conveyed in all 135,547 passengers in eighty-nine ships sailing from Bremen, and thirty-two from Mediterranean ports. This total is about 20,000 less than in the previous year, and 3,000 less than in 1902, but it exceeds the total of 1901. This company alone carried 17.2 per cent of all the steerage passengers landed at New York, 23.1 of all the second-class passengers, and 22.4 per cent of the first-class passengers, a result which, although slightly less than the previous year, is a notable one, and shows that the three high-speed steamers of this company, the Kaiser Wilhelm II, the Kronprinz Friedrich, and the Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse along with the large intermediate ships, continue to be popular. The second place is taken by the Hamburg-American Company, who have conveyed in all 120,323 passengers in the 84 arrivals from Hamburg and the 27 arrivals from the Mediterranean ports. In this case there is a decrease of over 18,000



ss Kaiser Wilhelm II

Picture from Wikimedia Commons

passengers, as compared with the previous year. This company is responsible for 16.4 per cent of all the passengers landed, although their proportion of first and second-cabin passengers is considerably less than that of the North German Lloyd. Of their passengers about 80 per cent were steerage, 12 per cent second class, and 8 percent first class. The White Star Company again takes third place, with a total of 82,332 passengers. During the year the White Star ships made two voyages from the Mediterranean but nearly all the passengers were taken on the Liverpool liners, which made 94 voyages. Of the total of 82,332, about 70 per cent were steerage, 13 per cent second class, and the remainder first class passengers. Cunard takes fourth place, with a total of 72,851 passengers, about 20,000 more than in the previous year.

As for average number of passengers per steamer, we took occasion a year ago to refer to the steady development in the average population of Atlantic liners, and there is this year little falling off. We then pointed out that it was only in this century that the average in any case exceeded 1,000. In 1901 the North German Lloyd were alone in this position, their average being 1,130; in 1902 they were joined by their neighbours of Hamburg, while in 1903 there were seven lines with a higher average than 1,000. This year, however, there are only three the Hamburg-American, the Cunard, and the North German Lloyd. The Hamburg American steamers running from the North German port made 84 trips, and took an average of 1,256 passengers. The Cunard liners from Fiume made 21 voyages, and took an average of 1,225 passengers; the North German Lloyd liners from Bremen made 89 voyages, and took an average of 1,201.

# The Liverpool Nautical Research Society (Founded in 1938)

# THE BULLETIN

Volume 58 No.3, December, 2014



Euterpe at anchor

Courtesy State Library of Victoria

See page 6

A Voyage Not Completed	J. Bell	Page	1
Remember those days	The Editor		5
A Voyage in the <b>Ulysses</b> – Part 2	A. Melling		7
Cruising Experiences in the Antarctic	The Editor		13
The Ship That Would Not Float	M.R. Bouquet		16
The Battle of Palau Aur	D. C. White		18
An Early Steamship Collision	H.M. Hignett		23
The Dry Docks at Ellesmere Port	J.A. Huxley		25
Side Lights on the Slave Trade	G.E. Cooper		31
Abandoning Ship	Medical Research Council		35
Correspondence	The Editor		36
Heraclides – Wrecked at Crosby	M.K. Stammers		38
A Dutch Conversion	Sea Breezes		41



Ulysses in a Tropical Paradise

Ocean Archives, Courtesy N.M.L. Page 7



Daniel Adamson on the Manchester Ship Canal (1981) Courtesy Daniel Adamson Preservation Society See page 25

# The Liverpool Nautical Research Society Council:



President Mr. William J. Pape II

Vice-Presidents: Captain G. Cubbin Mr. H.M. Hignett

Chairman: Captain R. Settle

Vice Chairman: Mr. W.G. Williamson

Mr. I.Duckett (Talks Secretary), Mr. B. Groombridge, Ms. D.Littler (Representing N.M.L.), Mr. W.A.Ogle (Bulletin Editor), Mr. J.P. Stokoe

Honorary Officers: Secretary: Mr. A. Melling Treasurer: Mr. V. Finn

Web site:

www.liverpoolnauticalresearchsociety.org

<u>Contact details</u>: The Liverpool Nautical Research Society Maritime Archives and Library Merseyside Maritime Museum Albert Dock Liverpool L3 4AQ United Kingdom.

info@liverpoolnauticalresearchsociety.org

## A Voyage Not Completed by James Bell Submitted by the late David Eccles

This is an account of an almost forgotten family event, of but little significance to other families or persons not directly involved, which took place during August, 1940.

The Motor Vessel **Empire Merchant**, carrying 9 passengers, of which 6 were children, including Meryl and Nigel Reid, was torpedoed and sunk whilst on passage to Jamaica. The rescue of the lifeboat bearing the children and some of the survivors was chronicled in the Press, but the whole event was not recounted due to reasons of then wartime security. In order to give as complete a description as possible, the story contains information obtained from both British and German sources. These include the Public Record Office at Kew, London and the Maritime Museum at Liverpool.

The ship was launched in 1938 by the firm Deutsche Werft AG., at Hamburg, Germany for Reederei F. Laeize GmbH. of Hamburg, who named her **Pomona.** The owners traded under the name Afrikanischer Frucht Cie. AG. and their Agents were Kaye, Son & Co. of London, who chartered the ship to transport bananas for the West indies Fruit Growers Association.

The 4,864 gross registered ton **Pomona** had a length of 398.6 ft. and was 52.7 ft. wide. Her 6 cylinder, 2 stroke diesel engine, built by M.A.N. at Nuremberg, enabled a service speed of 16 knots. Her hull was painted grey, with stone coloured superstructure, her funnel blue with a black top. There was accommodation for 12 passengers. With her diesel powered main engine and powerful generating sets she was described as a 'noisy' ship.

On 1st September, 1939 **Pomona** was berthed at "B" Shed, West India Dock, London. On 15th September, 1939 the Prize Court, sitting in London, awarded ownership of the vessel to the Ministry of Shipping, thus making her a British war prize. Re-named as **Empire Merchant** her Official Number was 167377 and in Lloyd's Registry as No.73889, registered in London, her Agents being Kaye, Son & Co., as previously engaged. She was immediately fitted with de-gaussing coils and armed with 2 guns, a 4 inch and a 12 pounder.

That which subsequent events proved to be the last voyage of the mv **Empire Merchant** began at Avonmouth, Bristol on Wednesday, 14th August, 1940. She set out for Kingston, Jamaica carrying some 200 tons of general cargo and mails plus 9 passengers. Her normal complement comprised her Master, Captain B. W. Smith and a crew of 44, which was supplemented by 2 Gunners. The ship was not part of any convoy, her speed being considered her best protection from submarines. This was in no way an unusual decision which was generally proven satisfactory. Mooring ropes were cast off at 1500 hrs British Summer Time and the pilot was discharged in Barry Roads at 1700 hrs. The planned route took the ship northwards, through St. George's Channel and the North Channel, round the north of Ireland to the Fairway Buoy, off the Clyde swept channel by Sanda Island. The route was maintained as far as a point off the Innistrahull Light, where a course of 269, due West, was set, The weather was fine and the normal speed of 16 knots maintained, steering to zig-zag pattern No. 30. During the small hours of Friday, 16th August, a course correction was effected, as necessary to compensate for a slight compass error.

The Second Officer, Mr G.M. Reay, had barely taken over his watch at 0800, when at 0824 B.S.T. that day, with the vessel at a position  $55^{\circ} 23'$  N and  $13^{\circ} 24'$ W, it shuddered under the impact of an explosion, followed by a second shock some 30 seconds later.

The first torpedo had penetrated the after hold (No. 4) at a location approximately 70 ft. from the stern on the starboard side, with the second



impact a little forward of the first. This hold only contained a few Mail bags and was otherwise empty.

The alarms were sounded as the ship took on an immediate list to starboard and quickly began to settle by the stern. The boats were ready swung out and Captain Smith gave the order for them to be cleared away,

following which he joined the First Officer, Mr G.H. Sloan, together with the Junior Officer and the Radio Operator, who was transmitting SOS details, reporting the submarine attack and position of the ship.

Many of the crew were new to the ship and were uncertain of the route to their proper boat stations. The Captain redirected them and returned to the bridge, by which time the main deck was awash on the starboard side and the stern gun was no longer visible. The crews of both of the port side boats had gone across to take to the starboard boats, as due to the list, the boats on the port side could not be freed.

The Second Officer reported that he had all the women and children safely in his boat and the First Officer was in charge of the other boat. The Captain gathered the confidential books and papers into a weighted sack, threw them overboard and watched them sink. He then locked away the Wireless Transmission code book, ordered the Radio Operator to leave the ship and saw him jump into a boat, whereupon he, himself entered the water and swam a short distance to the other boat.

A crew member then appeared on the deck of the ship, apparently delayed by collecting some of his gear and the Captain shouted for him to jump and be picked up by one of the boats. He was duly taken on board a third boat, which had been released from the port side thanks to the Herculean efforts of two crew members, B. Foster (A.B.) and W. Galbraith (O.S.). They had managed to release the boat and lower it down the port side of the ship, which was listing heavily to starboard. Although slightly damaged at the starboard rubbing strake this boat enabled a better distribution of the survivors. (This action was praised by Captain Smith in his subsequent report to the Admiralty.)

By this time the ship was heeling over and the German submarine, so far unidentified, had surfaced with gun crew at the ready. (It reported its action, recording the position to be identical to that notified in the SOS, but timed at 0927 hrs. Central European Summer Time.) The three men in its conning tower watched as the **Empire Merchant** gave up her struggle to stay afloat. She turned over on her side, bow clear of the water and sank by the stern, her bow finally pointing vertically upwards, then slipping from sight, all within some 15 minutes since the first torpedo struck. The mid–grey, cleanly painted submarine then submerged without any contact or gesture, leaving the three boats amidst the floating wreckage to fend for themselves.

The weather was moderate, overcast and the westerly wind at about Force 5. The First Officer transferred into the newly arrived port side boat, along with the Fourth and Fifth Engineer Officers, two Able Seamen plus 4 further crew members who were transferred from the Second Officer's boat, to a total of 11 persons. The Second Officer's boat now contained 22 persons, which included the women and children whilst the Captain's boat, which also carried the Chief and Second Engineers, held a total of 18 persons.

At about 1045 hrs a Sunderland flying boat arrived and it dropped 3 depth charges. It circled the scene for some considerable time and did eventually manage to land on the heavy swell. The sea was too rough for any rescue attempt and the aircraft's starboard float was broken off before it again became airborne, remaining overhead until 1400 hrs. Further aircraft were sighted that day but the boats continued afore the westerly wind, with worsening sea conditions and they periodically lost contact with each other. The children kept up their spirits and Meryl Reid had them all singing during a quieter spell during the afternoon.

Conditions were even worse on Saturday, 17th and despite sighting further aircraft they were unable to attract any attention. The boats had to heave-to using their sea anchors that evening as the sea was so rough. The Captain's boat drifted away and by 1600 hrs contact was lost. It rained heavily during the night which calmed the sea a little and the other two boats did catch sight of each other from time to time.

On Sunday, 18th, the Second Officer's boat sighted a neutral steamer at approximately 0300 hrs. Four of their remaining eight red flares were burnt off, which were seen and the ship stopped, allowing the boat to draw near. She was flying an illuminated Yugoslavian flag, and was identified as the ss **Supertar**; discussion ensued as to how far they were from land. A distance of 18 miles was

quoted, which subsequently proved to be nearly 80. However, at daybreak the reluctant Yugoslav Captain saw their predicament and took them all on board at a position some 56°N and 9°W. They were kindly received and made comfortable. Although bound for Buenos Aires the ship took them by Londonderry, where they were transferred to an armed trawler and taken ashore.

Despite their sighting of another Sunderland, plus other aircraft and a convoy, Captain Smith's boat was not spotted again until about 1700 hrs on Sunday, 18th, when they attracted the attention of an aircraft by means of a bright blue pyjama jacket attached to a boat hook. The aircraft circled and signalled by Aldis lamp, to the effect that a tug was on its way. It marked the location with a Very light and departed. The open boat had sailed some 168 miles by the time the Admiralty tug, H.M.S. **Salvonia** arrived to pick them up and it eventually landed them all at Greenock.

Meanwhile, Mr Sloan's boat had been picked up at 0930 hrs on Sunday, 18th by a convoy escort vessel, H.M.S. **Warwick**, which then resumed its convoy duties in radio silence and eventually conveyed these survivors to Liverpool, arriving at 0630 hrs on the following Friday, 23rd August.

The protagonist in this event proved to be the German submarine **U-100**. This was originally **U-70** when built in 1939 by the Germaniawerft shipyard at Kiel. It was of the Type VII C, of 800 tons, having two 1500 bhp. diesel engines built by the shipyard, which gave it a surface speed of 17 knots in calm water. When electrically powered whilst submerged its speed was 7.6 knots. The design, Type VII, originated in 1936. The submarine **U-100** was only ever under the command of Joachim Schepke, who had previously commanded **U-3** and **U-19**. He held the rank of Lieutenant at the time of this incident, but became a Lt. Commander and was decorated with the Knights Cross with Oakleaves.

As a member of a 'Wolf Pack' just south of the Faroe islands which was engaging the Clyde bound convoy HX 112, on 14th March, 1941, **U-100** was detected on the surface by means of a special radar device fitted to the escort vessel H.M.S. **Vanoc**, commanded by Donald Macintyre. Caught unawares, the submarine was rammed and it sank so rapidly that only the men in the conning tower survived and Schepke was drowned.

The escort vessels of the Halifax to U.K. convoy HX112, aided by aircraft, were particularly successful during mid-March, 1941, bringing about an end to the careers of two other U-boat aces. Gunther Prien, (of H.M.S. **Royal Oak** notoriety) had sunk 28 ships before he was killed when U-47 was destroyed. Otto Kretschmer, who had sunk 44 ships in U-99, was captured. He later became an Admiral in the Federal German Navy.

[It is interesting to note that the mv **Empire Merchant** and the Yugoslav ss **Supertar** both sailed independently from the Bristol Channel on August 14th, 1940 DKCE]

# Remember Those Days ......

From the 1940s and also 1960s, this is a sample of events selected from the archives, and published by kind permission of Sea Breezes

#### **October to December, 1947**

One day in 1942 when the **Queen Mary** was steaming alone some 200 miles north of Bermuda, the look-outs reported an open boat, in which were survivors of a torpedoed ship. Steaming alone the **Queen Mary** was unable to stop, but she sent out a signal and the survivors were eventually picked up and landed at Bermuda. Mr Johnson was chief purser on board **Queen Mary** at the time and the incident was reported to him. He later learned, in a letter from his wife, that among the survivors was his elder son Lieut. Vivian Johnson, R.N.R. After he been been safely landed, Lieut. Johnson wrote telling his mother about his adventure. In the letter he said that he saw "my ever useful father going by in that palatial palace of his."

Following demolition Egremont pier – on the westerly bank of the Mersey – a local landmark disappears. The history of the ferry goes back as far as 1828, when land was purchased at Egremont by John Askew, Liverpool Harbour Master, who later bought two steamers for the service. By 1838 the three brothers Coulbourn owned and personally directed all three ferries. In 1845, just prior to the death of all three of the Coulbourn brothers – incidentally all died within a week of each other – the local parish council sought and obtained powers to acquire the various ferries. The pier just demolished was smashed in May, 1932, when the oil tanker **British Commander**, 6,895 tons, was carried away by the heavy tide against the ferry bridge which, with part of the pier, collapsed. The pier was again damaged on May 13, 1941, when the coaster **Newlands** struck it just behind the stage.

Perhaps the best known of all the South Coast paddlers is the Denny-built **Laguna Belle**, which is to be broken up in Holland, having been sold for £1,500. She was the famous **Southend Belle**, built at Dumbarton and saw service as a minesweeper during the First World War, based initially at Harwich and then Liverpool from 1917, and was sold on her return to the then owner of Clacton Pier, and became the **Laguna Belle**, for a special non-stop service to Clacton. In 1939 she was overhauled, modernised and re-boilered and soon afterwards bought by the General Steam Navigation Company.

Of the bigger ships that are ending their days many will regret the passing of the Lamport & Holt motor-ship **Leighton**, one of the first three diesel-driven ships which they built in 1921. She was a very useful ship of just under 7,500 tons, with twin-screws and diesels of 4,000 bhp for a speed of rather less than 11 knots. Motorship technique has gone ahead vastly since her day, and as she has been laid up in the Gareloch for some time before her sale, the cost of reconditioning her would obviously have been a big problem.

### **October to December, 1960**

Another sale to Far Eastern buyers has involved the Brocklebank cargo liner **Markhor**, built at Port Glasgow in 1929 by Wm. Hamilton and Co. Ltd. Typical of the type of vessel favoured by these owners between the wars, her propelling machinery consists of three steam turbines connected to a single-screw shaft through single-reduction gearing, and when completed gave her a speed of  $13^{1}/_{4}$  knots in loaded condition. During an uneventful career under the Brocklebank house flag she has served on all the trade routes operated by the company; the commissioning of modern tonnage, however, has brought about her redundancy and she has now been sold to buyers reported to be the Winner Shipping and Transport Co. Ltd., Hong Kong for a price of about £87,500, with survey due in a year's time. The **Markhor** completed her last voyage at Calcutta on June 15 and she was later handed over to her new owners at that port.

A spate of tanker sales has been a recent feature of the United Kingdom ship-breaking market. Among the ships disposed of are the Shell motor tanker **Dorcasia** (8,083 gross tons), dating from 1938 and allocated to Shipbreaking Industries, Ltd., Faslane for demolition, the Swedish motor tanker **Cleopatra** (6,658 gross tons), built by the Gotaverken yard in 1933, which has gone to Troon for scrap, and the war-built steam tanker **Esso Appalachee**, laid-up at Falmouth, which at the time of writing, has not been allocated to any particular yard. The last-named, was completed in April 1942 by the Furness Shipbuilding Ltd. Engineering Co. Ltd., Haverton-Hill-on-Tees, as the **Empire Dickens**.

In recent years Liverpool has enjoyed a spate of anniversaries: 1957–58 saw the centenaries of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, the Liverpool Steam Ship Owners' Association, and the same year the 750th anniversary of the granting to Liverpool by King John of the Charter which was to start off on its road to modern greatness.

Restoration of the barque **Star of India**, originally the British full-rigged ship **Euterpe**, has commenced and is being handled by the Maritime Museum Association of San Diego, California. The vessel was built at Ramsey, Isle of Man 1863, for Wakefield, Nash and Company of Liverpool; this firm also owned the Ramsey-built iron ship **Ramsey** and possibly the **Eurydice** and **Erato**, which came from the same yard. About 1867 the **Euterpe** was sold to David Brown, then to Brown and Bowden, then back to David Brown, who owned her until 1871, when she was sold to Shaw Savill and Company.

A drifting bottle which had been 60 years in the sea was hauled up in their net by Skipper John Sinclair and the crew of the Wick fishing boat **Boy Peter**. Inside the bottle, used for determining sea currents was an official card dated 1900. It asked the finder to post it when it was picked up. The reward offered was 1s. [10 pence]

# A Voyage in the Ulysses - Part 2 by L.N.R.S. Member Tony Melling

In this second instalment of a passenger's account of a return voyage to Australia and back, aboard the Blue Funnel ship Ulysses in 1932, we follow the journey from Birkenhead to Bali.

<u>1. Birkenhead to Colombo:</u> Friday 26 August – Tuesday 20 September 1932: '*The masseur gave me hell, but did me good.*'

Friday, August 26th, 1932. - ...Arrived Liverpool 11.15. Had Turkish bath to alleviate lumbago.... Arrived on board at 6.15. Lay out in the most divine deck chairs on top deck, watching the shipping and discussed the affairs of the world...Was not at all impressed by our fellow-passengers - to me they appeared most unenterprising....<sup>1</sup>

As **Ulysses** eased out of Birkenhead Docks the following morning, Robert becomes more positive: "At last!!! said I, we are well away, and Joan [Barbara] did not miss her train or lose her luggage..."and by the evening the cuisine also impresses: "The food is excellent, and far in excess of our modest requirements; all going 'slow and cautious-like' for the moment at any rate". Robert becomes rather intrigued later:

Met an old bachelor who has had many cruises with this line during the last four years - to Japan, New Zealand, Fiji, Honolulu, etc., all very cheap and good - must get particulars from him for future use. To bed at 12.0 p.m. and slept like a top.<sup>2</sup>

In terms of deck sports Robert could be over-confident, particularly as he had never played quoits before. Witness the following echoes of Bertie Wooster:

Sunday, August 28th. - ....My opponent was Miss Rosabel Cobbett. The score quickly reached 14-0 in my favour - so I pointed out to Rosabel quite kindly that her methods were wrong and showed her what I considered the best way of discharging the rope thing. She was quite sensible about it and tried my way with disastrous results. She then went back to her own method and beat me 21-19. A rather embarrassing incident I thought - difficult to get away with dignity. There is more in these games than meets the eye at the first encounter.<sup>3</sup>

The writer seems preoccupied with personal appearance and good health: *Tuesday, August 30th. - Bathed and donned one of my tropical suits for the first time. Quite a success - admiring glances shot across the deck as I walked up and down and down and up as one usually does on these cruises if one desires to preserve one's figure and keep one's liver functioning efficiently.*<sup>4</sup>

A week after leaving Liverpool the ship calls at Marseilles before leaving the French coast for Port Said. By now increasing temperatures prompt reduced clothing. Robert also comments on unfair practices:

Tuesday, September 6th. - ... Amusing incident at breakfast this morning - a young man came down to breakfast ...in silk tennis shirt and white flannels. Captain sent round word asking him to put on his jacket and observe the conventions. At the

next table sat a young lady with two thin straps across her bare back and the minimum of covering over her virgin bosom. Why these distinctions? The equality of the sexes is a myth.<sup>5</sup>



Diary Illustration, Ocean Archives

Courtesy National Museums, Liverpool

The arrival of **Ulysses** at the Suez Canal reminds him of the decline of an Egyptian civilisation once greater "...than we enjoy today. How much longer will ours last? Will the fact that we are gradually getting more and more democratic make our eventual fall more gradual?"<sup>6</sup> An interesting relationship between democracy and power that China would now disagree with.

By the following Saturday, the ship is sailing through the Red Sea in extreme weather conditions, prompting many passengers to sleep on deck:

Saturday, September 10th. - ....Terribly hot, 117 degrees F. registered in one of the men's forward cabins....When I awoke this morning, the hollows in my shoulder blades were full of water.<sup>7</sup>

On the following day, Robert's bulldog spirit is a reproach to any passenger complaining of the heat: "Here we are all groaning after three days in the Red Sea with everything money and science can supply to reduce our discomfort. We must be degenerating."<sup>8</sup>

By Tuesday, September 13th the head-winds in the Indian Ocean bring blessed relief and the resumption of normal entertainments. On Sunday, 18th September after five quiet days in the Indian Ocean, our writer reports:



'Crossing the Line' Certificate

Courtesy Ocean Archives, N.M.L.

Last night we had a 'head-dress' dance. Nothing very exciting in the way of decoration. I went as a small boy in James' old cricket cap, and later painted on some eyebrows and turned it into George Robey as 'Bindle'. Looking forward to seeing land again.<sup>9</sup>

Ulysses arrives at Colombo, Ceylon (Sri Lanka) at 5.30 a.m. on 20 September.

2. <u>Colombo to Surabaya (Java)</u>: Tuesday 20 September–Wednesday 5 October: '*The Malay is always happy - they say the happiest race on earth.*'

The day's stopover in Colombo provides Robert's circle with company courtesies involving a tour of the area:

*Mr.* Leonard, the head of U.P.U. Ceylon Ltd., arriving on board at 8.00 a.m. sent in his card. I received him in my dressing-gown in the saloon, and he very kindly placed a very comfortable car with his assistant in attendance at our disposal for the day.<sup>10</sup>

The party enjoyed the beautiful sights of Colombo, including bathing and refreshments - except for Robert's wife, Mildred [Charlotte]:

After lunch we drove back through groves of coconut palms, rice fields, etc., to the wharf, and shipped Mildred back to the **Ulysses** rather tired out. Picked up Dean at the Galle Face Hotel and drove out to the golf links.<sup>11</sup>



Diary Illustration, Ocean Archives Courtesy National Museums, Liverpool

The passage between Colombo and Penang is marked on board by the performance of a thrilling play promoted in advance by the diarist himself:

Then we had the Prize-giving Concert commencing with the play 'In Port', performed by Professor Warren as the escaped convict, myself as the judge, and Dean as the butler. Profiting by my son's persistent lectures on the value of publicity, I drew up the following advertisement in large, red and black type and had it posted well in advance of the show.<sup>12</sup>

On arrival at Penang – "a beautiful little island" – "...a Mr. Farmer, manager of U.P.U., Penang, had come on board to receive us.....with all sorts of suggestions for seeing the various attractions of the island in the most comfortable way." This included a visit to a private bathing club:

....a little sandy cove backed by lovely palms with comfortable dressing-rooms fitted with every luxury, including fresh-water shower baths. Here we disrobed and plunged into the deep, blue water. Oh! the joy of that first plunge!<sup>13</sup>

This is followed by a visit to a Chinese Temple and the ascent of Western Hill, 2,400 feet high by means of a "funicular railway, and at the summit we found an attractive tea pagoda and a most ravishing view of the island and the mainland..." Robert has formed his view of the Malayan culture quite firmly by this point:

The Malay is always happy....He takes no interest in politics - his wants are few - he owns a bit of land and a buffalo, which he turns into his paddy (rice) field to churn up the soil into a quagmire. He sows his rice, then he gets a long string and suspends a few kerosene tins from it - ties one end to a pole and the other to his or his wife's big toe,...as birds appear in the offing....thus rattling the kerosene tins, while lying on his back in the shade. That is his day's work. His clothes cost him about 10/- a year. What a life!<sup>14</sup>

**Ulysses** arrives at Singapore on Tuesday 27 September at 6.30 a.m. and the group, after admiring the hygiene, colour and symmetrical layout of the town, take advantage of the obligatory company vehicle and chauffeur. A session at the Bathing Club is followed by a round of golf, before returning to the ship to change, ready for the Raffles Hotel for 8.15 p.m. According to Robert:

A perfect dancing floor and excellent band - ideal conditions and very good partners - a very pleasant evening. The next morning, Mildred, Joan and I drove out to Johore in Archer's new car, which he had brought out in the ship with him. A lovely drive on the Great North Road, which extends right up to Siam and resembles one of our arterial roads at home..<sup>15</sup>.

That evening, a dinner and dance has again been arranged on behalf of the ship at the Raffles Hotel. The local men complain of a shortage of eligible women and appeal for as many **Ulysses** females as possible to fill the gap. A local guide discounts this, stating there are equal numbers of Singaporean females, leading our diarist to complain:

It is quite evident that the men are out for anything fresh that may come along, and do not appreciate the home product. Although a male myself, I do hope that the next generation will result in a real shortage of girls, and that they will get a bit of their own back. <sup>16</sup>

After Singapore, **Ulysses** travels along the coast of Java, calling at Batavia for two days (which included a visit on board the Australian Navy ship **Canberra**); and at Cheribon for only six hours, which still allowed for a visit...

to a famous bathing pool in the hills...fed by spring water, well shaded by trees and fitted with dressing rooms and diving boards, etc....The pool was full of fish some of them two to three feet long - but they were quite tame and did not disturb themselves at all...<sup>17</sup>

Then on to Samarang in the early hours of Tuesday 4 October for only a few hours, before moving further along the Java coast to Surabaya the following day.

3. <u>Surabaya to Great Barrier Reef</u>: Wednesday 5 October-Sunday 16 October 'People are journeying all over the world to stay in Bali, especially artists'.

The most significant experience for the travellers in Surabaya was an ascent of over 9,000 feet to Mount Bromo, a live volcano. The party leave the ship in three cars at 3 p.m. and drive to Tosari, a hill station 7,000 feet up. After a short

sleep, they are called at 2.30 a.m. and make the remaining ascent on ponies. After climbing for two hours, dawn breaks:

....at 5.15 we arrived at the edge of the old crater just in time to see the finest sunrise I've ever witnessed. First we had the whole sky changing from starlight, through silver-grey to a glorious pink, and then the sun made its appearance behind the hills twenty miles away - a great disc of boiling yellow gold, changing at intervals to a ball of mercury... but the most beautiful part of it was the glorious colouring of the surrounding hills as the sun gradually rose above the horizon.<sup>18</sup>

After visiting the edge of volcanic craters, one of which resembles "an inferno", the group make their way back down to the Tosari hotel at 10.30 a.m. They return just in time before the ship departs at 5.15 p.m.

Friday, October 6th - Ever since Singapore, the rumour has being round that we might visit the famous island of Bali. This would be the first English ship to anchor outside the island. Visitors usually take small steamers from Surabaya...but we hear the captain of the '**Ulysses**' could use his discretion...everyone was agog for days to hear his final decision.<sup>19</sup>

In the final instalment of The Diary of a **Ulysses** Passenger, we will witness the beauties of Bali, the wonders of the Great Barrier Reef, and the warm welcome Australia provided.

### References

<sup>1</sup> The Diary of a **Ulysses** Passenger, The Blue Funnel Line, India Buildings, Liverpool, 1933, p.3.

- <sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 5
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid, pp. 5/6
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid, p. 7
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid, p. 10
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid, p. 11
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid, p. 12
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid, p. 13
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid, pp. 14/15
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid, p. 15
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid, p. 16
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid, p. 18
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid, p. 20
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid, p. 22
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid, p. 23
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid, p. 24
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid, p. 27
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid, p. 31
  <sup>19</sup> Ibid, p. 33

## Cruising Experiences in the Antarctic by Captain Derrick Kemp Precis of the presentation on 18th September, 2014 by The Editor

Growing up in South Africa Derrick took his initial maritime training at the Academy General Botha before joining Ellerman and Papayanni line's **City of Oxford** in Cape Town in February 1959 the beginning of a 50 year career concluding when he retired as Master of the cruise liner m.v. **Discovery** 

[Editor's note: The ship began operation in 1972 with Flagship Cruises, under the name **Island Venture.** In 1974, she was sold to P&O's Princess Cruises and operated as part of the Princess fleet until 1999, when she was sold on to Hyundai Merchant Marine of South Korea. Renamed **Hyundai Pungak** her role was to transport South Korean pilgrims to religious sites in North Korea. After a brief stint as the **Platinum**, the ship went through a major refit between 2001 and 2003; since then she has been sailing as **Discovery** under the care of the cruise company Voyages of Discovery (part of the All Leisure Group Plc) cruising out of Harwich and Liverpool. Voyages of Discovery sells these cruises predominately to the British, American, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand and South African markets. For the most part **Discovery** can be found in the Baltic, Scandinavia, the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea, and North Africa, in the months April–September, and in South America, Antarctica, the Indian Ocean, India, and the Mediterranean, in the months October–March (Spring and Summer in the Southern Hemisphere).

The ship is 554 ft. long and 81 ft. beam, originally measured 19,910 GRT and was built at Nordseewerke, Germany. As modified by Discovery Cruises, her current gross tonnage as 20,186, top speed is 18 knots and passenger capacity as 698. Propulsion is by four Fiat medium speed diesel engines with a combined power output of 18,000 shaft horsepower. The engines are individually clutched and geared in pairs to each of the two shafts which drive controllable pitch propellers. This arrangement enables one or more engines to be shut down and de-clutched as required].

Passengers are normally flown out to Buenos Aires, and then a further two-hour flight to Ushuaia which is the capital of the Argentine province of Tierra del Fuego and the southernmost city in the world. The first day aboard would include a comprehensive briefing regarding trips ashore covering not only rigid safety standards but also strict environmental regulations. (Captain Kemp observed that the yachting community are exempt from this and litter is becoming more obvious, one landing beach and warm freshwater pool has actually been fenced-off to prevent further damage). Passengers are issued with distinctive red survival parkas and colour coded identity badges which splits them to five distinct groups of one hundred. For Antarctic cruising passengers numbers are limited to 500 which is dictated by the arrangements for ferrying them ashore (by the on-board fleet of seven Zodiacs) in small manageable groups, hence the colour coding. They are also introduced to their Team



The general route followed by **Discovery** 

Leaders who will be responsible for them once the Zodiacs are boarded. as well as the 'Penguin Police' who carry out crowd control duties once ashore. The Zodiacs carry up to twelve passengers per trip and maintain medical supplies, thermal blankets, water and food to sustain that number for twelve hours should they be unable to return to the ship.

The voyage begins with departure from Ushuaia and then a pilotage passage for the length of Beagle Straight. The pilot is put ashore but the ship also carries an ice-pilot who is available to advise the master as required. He also takes the night watch when in proximity to ice. Thereafter the voyage

follows its planned itinerary, but this is often amended in response to dramatic weather the changes for which the region is so well known; additionally, although passengers are not made aware of the fact, there could be as many as twelve liners making the passages during same the season. Masters confer to ensure they all remain out-of-sight but

in the event of accidents help is

not far away. The destinations can



**Discovery** standing off Note ice `growlers' in bay and low level gangway

hardly be called ports as they are, at best scientific research stations or attractive locations which also demonstrate the local wild life. Generally the route would pass Cape Horn (but no closer than three miles is permitted) and then crossing the infamous Drake Passage to Wild Point on Elephant Island. This was 'home' to the majority of the Shackleton party whilst he and a small crew made the impossible journey to South Georgia from where a successful rescue was made. Interestingly the only commemoration on Elephant Island is to the tug boat master who made the rescue!

Next visit is to Hope Bay on the northeastern tip of the Antarctic Peninsular; from here the scenery is filled with icebergs, penguins and seals.

One tale related by Captain Kemp referred to an elderly wheelchair bound lady passenger, who was fulfilling a lifelong ambition to see Antarctica. It was determined that, with some help, she could do better than that. So without prior notice she was wrapped in her parka, the wheelchair was carefully transported down the gangway and securely lashed into a Zodiac, and off she went for a closer view; but yet more awaited for the Zodiac was beached, she and wheelchair were carefully transported ashore, and her feet were placed on the Antarctic ground

Icebergs are a constant feature and Zodiac trips for closer inspection are a regular attraction; but the 'Kemp Rule' is that **Discovery** remains at least two ship lengths away. The voyage continues overnight to Paradise Harbour, home to a Chilean Air Force research station; then on the Gerlache Straight and the Lemaire Channel, although this is frequently ice bound (and **Discovery** is NOT ice strengthened). From here the return stages begin via Deception Island (which is a volcanic crater incorporating the warm freshwater pool mentioned earlier), Half Moon Island which houses the Argentinian base called Camara. Weather permitting passengers would be put ashore at all of these locations and, since water depths generally preclude anchoring, the ship would be manoeuvring to maintain position throughout. From here the ship returns across Drake Passage, the Beagle Channel and into Ushuaia.

Captain Kemp explained how control of all activities within the jurisdiction of the Antarctic Treaty is becoming increasingly stringent, and additionally increasing tensions between Chile, Argentina and the U.K. have resulted in the withdrawal of bunkering facilities at Ushuaia. As a result cruises such as those operated by **Discovery** are now no longer feasible and these passages are operated less frequently.

THE MONDAY FACILITY								
Members' access to the Archives and Library at the Merseyside Maritime Museum on Mondays continues as follows:								
December	Mondays	1 <sup>st.</sup> , 8 <sup>th.</sup> , 15 <sup>th.</sup> ,						
January		5 <sup>th.</sup> , 12 <sup>th.</sup> , 19 <sup>th.</sup> , 26 <sup>th</sup>						
February		2 <sup>nd</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> , 16 <sup>th</sup> , 23 <sup>rd</sup> ,						
March		2 <sup>nd</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> , 16 <sup>th</sup> , 23 <sup>rd</sup> , 30 <sup>th</sup>						

## The Ship that would not float by Michael R. Bouquet

Early in February 1874 the sailing vessel **Margaret Jane**, owned by Mr. J. Fisher of Barrow, fell in with the wooden American barque **Gabrielle**, 300 miles to the west of Cape Clear. The **Gabrielle**, a vessel of 414 tons built in the United States in 1854, was nearly on her beam ends. She had sand ballast on board, but there was water in her hold, her hatches and boats were gone and no one was on board.

The master of the **Margaret Jane** put some men on board her who, by exertions which have gone unrecorded, brought the **Gabrielle** safely into Milford Haven arriving there on February 15.

At Milford the derelict **Gabrielle** was bought for £500 by Mr. Fisher, who had her placed in the graving dock, where no apparent defects were discovered. She arrived at Barrow on April 14, and was placed on the gridiron for examination. During this examination her copper was stripped off and replaced and some minor repairs executed. The **Gabrielle** came off the gridiron and loading began with a cargo of steel rails. She had had 240 tons put in when she began to leak. A few tons of her cargo were discharged, the top strake of copper was taken off and the underlying seams were re-caulked. The **Gabrielle** then had her loading completed, taking in 294 tons in all. Almost immediately the leak re-started The cargo was discharged and the **Gabrielle** was once again placed on the gridiron. Most of her copper was stripped from her and she was then sent to Amlwch for repairs.

At Amlwch the rest of her copper was stripped and she underwent repairs for a four years' classification in the U.S. Lloyd's. Six knees were extended from the floor to the lower deck beams and several hanging knees exchanged for iron ones. Extra fastening were placed at bows and stern. The **Gabrielle** was bored in about 290 places and all the bolts were fastened and clinched. Finally the barque was re-caulked from keel to gunwale.

Thus repaired the **Gabrielle** returned to Barrow where she loaded steel rails for New York, sailing on July 16th. The next news which reached her exasperated owner came on the 23rd, when she was reported putting in to Belfast Lough leaking badly. Once again **Gabrielle** entered a graving dock at Belfast. Here a leak was discovered 12 ft. from the sternpost on the starboard side about 12 inches in length. There were also symptoms of straining both fore and aft. Repairs were obviously going to be lengthy, so the **Gabrielle**'s crew were paid off. The keel was re-bolted from stem to stern with  $1^{1}/_{4}$  inch bolts and re-bolted where she had strained with  $^{3}/_{4}$  inch bolts right through, clinched from new straps one on each quarter and bow. The **Gabrielle** was fitted with a new bowsprit and with new bilge keelsons 12 inch x 13 inch, extending for 90 ft. of the vessel's length, bolted and clinched. The main pump was renewed and a windmill pump fitted. Once again the entire caulking was renewed. Finally the interior of the vessel was watered. No leak was apparent, so she was undocked, and her cargo was loaded. It was the third time that the steel rails had been placed in her hold.

On September 4 the **Gabrielle s**ailed from Belfast under the command of Captain Lewis Wigley and with a crew of 10. On September 10, after experiencing head winds in the Irish Sea, she anchored in Milford Haven. She had carried away some of her main topmast rigging, but she was making no water. It seemed that the trouble was cured.

The **Gabrielle** sailed from Milford on September 14. On the 23rd it began to blow hard from the S.W. with a heavy sea. At about 4 p.m. on that day, after Captain Wigley had shortened sail to lower topsails, he went down into the hold to see to the securing of two rails that were rattling about and appeared to be in danger of breaking adrift. The vessel was labouring heavily and down there in the darkness of the hold Captain Wigley was dismayed to find that there was a great deal of water In the bottom of the ship. The windmill pump was set going, and the water kept down to 2 ft. until 9 p.m. By then, as the labouring of the vessel increased, so did the leak. The master and the carpenter discovered that water was pouring in along the keelson. Captain Wigley ordered as much sail to be set as was safely possible and bore up the nearest land.

Through the night those 10 men struggled at the pumps, standing in the waist of the ship with seas breaking over them. By 5 a.m. they were completely exhausted and it was plain that they were unable to control the leak. After breakfast the water was still increasing, and the crew asked the master to prepare a boat for launching. A distress signal was hoisted and the longboat made ready. At 9 a.m. a sail was sighted bearing down upon them. It was the French barque **Marie** of St. Malo, Captain F. Gugnen. She came close up to the **Gabrielle**, and Captain Wigley asked for his crew to be received on board. The longboat was hoisted out and the **Gabrielle**'s crew went aboard the Frenchman. Captain Wigley later returned to the **Gabrielle** but found that she was fast settling. Later that morning the **Gabrielle** went down, head foremost. Her position was 39 deg. 59 min. N, 14 deg. 52 min. W.

Captain Wigley and his crew were landed safely at Madeira from the **Marie** on October 2. For his services Capt. Gugnen was awarded a watch and chain, value £30, by the Board of Trade. From the sighting of the **Gabrielle** by the **Margaret Jane** to the landing of her survivors from the **Marie** was just eight months. Mr. James Fisher's comments upon this sorry story have not been recorded, but by the time it was all over he probably wished that the **Margaret Jane** had left the derelict Gabrielle to founder in the North Atlantic.
## The Battle of Palau Aur Submitted by L.N.R.S. Member David White

Old Singapore Hands will recall with affection the group of islands 30–50 miles north of Horsborough Light off the east coast of Johore, chief of which are Pulau Tioman, the big one with the distinctive twin peaks, known as the "Asses Ears" [below] (or, to local fishermen, the "Dragon's Horns" in reference to an ancient fable), Pulau Aur, the small round dumpy one and Pulau Tinggi, with its distinctive conical shape like a coolie hat.



In the late 1950s Pioman Tioman was a location for the film "South Pacific" and in our time the area was used for fleet exercises, Captain D's inspections plus the occasional banyan on a truly tropic isle.

But did you know that the area was once the site of a significant naval battle ? Not the fracas that followed that disastrous banyan when Stokes and the Bunting buried the beer in

the sand "to keep it cool" !!! , then could not find it again ... No, this was a real sea fight in which the Brits saw off the French on 14–16 February 1804, about 18 months before Trafalgar.

So why is this battle not mentioned in the popular annals of our naval history ? Possibly because the Royal Navy was not involved ...

The victory was won by the merchant service by ships of the East India Company. The Honourable East India Company, also known as "John Company", had a monopoly on British trade with India and China, dating from its charter granted by Queen Elizabeth I in 1600. Relations between the RN and John Company were at best strained. Conditions of service for officers and men were much better aboard Company ships: more generous and comfortable living space, regular wages, no flogging, opportunities to carry private/personal cargo and a certificate that gave immunity from the press gang when on shore. Unfortunately this immunity did not extend to being at sea and many a homeward bound Indiamen lost many of its best hands to impressment on a warship when making landfall in the Channel.

Unemployed Lieutenants RN without ships would compete for berths in the Company; regular wages and private trading being a greater incentive than glory after a few months on the beach. At that time the risks to merchant shipping from piracy and privateering were serious in many waters and John Company's response was to arm its ships and to build them so they resembled warships; the famous "Blackwall frigates", with rigs and sail plans similar to warships, a few light calibre guns, plus dummy guns, both full size wooden models and wooden muzzles, known as "Quakers", positioned at dummy gun ports painted on the ships' sides [pictured right, with some idle rigging].

In lanuarv 1804 the Company had assembled in Canton a fleet of sixteen twelvehundred ton Indiamen bound for London, together with eleven smaller vessels bound for India; all loaded with cargoes of tea, silk, porcelain and other exotic goods, valued at over £8million [£596 million in today's values]. As was common Company practice, this fleet was not escorted by warships. It relied on its own resources for defence against pirates and privateers.

However Britain had been at war with Revolutionary France, and later Napoleon, for many years, despite the fragile short term Peace of Amiens in 1804. The RN Blockade of



Continental Europe had disrupted French trade with its overseas possessions and Napoleon was eager for some counter-stroke. A powerful commerce raiding squadron comprising the 74-gun ship of the line **Marengo**, two heavy frigates **Sémillante** and **Belle Poule**, the corvette **Berceau** and a Dutch brig **Aventurier**, had been despatched to the East Indies under the experienced Rear Admiral



Commodore Nathaniel Dance From Wikipedia Commons

Charles Alexandre Léon Durand de Linois. Intelligence about the composition and value of the Canton Fleet had been gathered through Dutch, French and Portugese traders in China and Batavia (now Java), so Admiral de Linois assembled his force at Pulau Aur, a suitable position from which to ambush the Canton Fleet as it approached the Malacca Straits. [N.B. At this time Singapore was still a tiger-infested swampy island of no significance. It would not be bought by Sir Stamford Raffles until 1819.]

The Company fleet was commanded by Commodore Nathaniel Dance aboard the **Earl Camden**. He was an experienced officer who had been in John Company's service since he first went to sea aged 11. He had previously made 13 voyages to India, one to the Mediterranean and one to the West Indies. On one voyage to India he and his ship had been captured by French and Spanish ships and he spent six months on parole in Spain. Ultimately he served the Company for forty five years, seventeen as Captain and Commodore.

The Company too had intelligence sources and in addition to the habitual hazard of pirates all the way from Hong Kong to Singapore to the west and Bugis to the east, was aware that de Linois' raiding force had entered the South China Sea. Dis-information had been spread among the merchant community, possibly assisted by a few greased palms, that three of the Indiamen were actually 64-gun navy battleships.

Commodore Dance also had at his disposal a significant amount of relevant expertise on RN tactical practices; a naval lieutenant was taking passage in his ship and at least three of his captains had previously served in the Royal Navy. He resolved that if de Linois should appear, he could bluff him that the convoy was strongly armed and protected, and so hopefully minimise any losses.

Accordingly when the French squadron was sighted, the larger Indiamen hoisted the Royal Navy ensign, while the rest of the convoy hoisted the gridiron flag of the East India Company. The "pretend battleships" formed the traditional naval line of battle, and placed themselves between the convoy and the enemy.

Aware that every telescope on the French ships would be watching them, deck cargo was struck below to give the appearance of decks being cleared for action, dummy wooden guns were run out and officers were instructed to wear their blue topcoats to resemble RN uniforms.

The convoy did not panic or scatter, as a collection of merchant ships might be expected to do in the face of a powerful raiding squadron, but remained in formation, protected by the screen of the three pretend battleships. All of this gave de Linois cause for thought. If the opposing force really did have three line of battle ships, he would be outnumbered and outgunned, and no matter how valuable the prizes waiting to be taken, his ships would inevitably suffer damage. He was far from the nearest French base, Isle de France, (Mauritius) in the Indian Ocean, that could offer him repair facilities. Loss of yards or topmasts would render him vulnerable to storm damage or further naval action, so caution would be the prudent course of action.

He therefore shadowed the convoy though the night, expecting that some of the ships might try to slip away, as would have been expected of merchant ships. But next morning they were all still there and, when he tried some long rage shots and attempted to cut off the rear merchantmen, not only was fire returned, but the "protecting battleships", the East Indiamen **Royal George**, **Ganges** and the Commodore's ship, **Earl Camden**, reversed course to close him, as if seeking action, as would have been expected of an aggressive Royal Navy.

After forty five minutes of close range, but rather ineffectual, gunfire, (the Indiamen only had light 8-pound guns not the 32 pounders carried by the RN), de Linois was convinced that he was facing a superior force of warships, so he broke off the action. Commodore Dance then reinforced his bluff by ordering his "battleships" to chase the French across the South China Sea for a further two hours before resuming their original course to take them into the straits.

Without detracting from Commodore Dance's achievement in saving an extremely valuable cargo, de Linois was not so much defeated as deceived. Dance's bravado had wrought a psychological victory over de Linois.

In London the achievement of a convoy of merchantmen not only escaping without loss from a French squadron, but going so far as to attack, drive off, and then pursue their would-be predators, was widely hailed as a signal victory.

To Napoleon's fury, he learned of this reverse through his spies in London where the news broke to jubilant crowds. He wrote "... the conduct of Admiral Linois is miserable ... Tell him that he showed a lack of moral courage – the courage I value most in a leader ... Also tell him that I hope he will have done something for the honour of the flag before he returns to France ...". Such encouragement finally broke the Admiral's spirit.

Commodore Dance was rightly praised for his action. Had it failed, the loss of eight million pounds of cargo, plus the value of so many ships, would have broken the East India Company and probably the insurance market of Lloyds with it. The knock on effect of the loss of these pillars of the national economy would have been enormous; potentially de-railing the war effort against Napoleon and the future history of Europe. From a strategic viewpoint, the engagement at Pulau Aur could be argued to rank alongside Trafalgar.

King George III knighted the Commodore and awarded him an annual pension of £500 [£34,000 today]. The Bombay Insurance Society awarded him £5,000 [£338,000 today] plus plate worth 200 Guineas. The Company awarded him a ceremonial sword worth £100 and a silver vase.

Other captains received sums of £1,000 and £500, plus swords and plate to recognise their parts in the action. The Company also distributed £50,000 among the officers and men of the Canton Fleet, with ordinary seamen receiving £6 [£400 today].

RN reaction was muted. Vice Admiral Rainer, C in C of the East Indies Station, commented on the "fortunate escape made by the China Fleet" as a "most extraordinary circumstance". Sour grapes, some might think ...

These days those islands are enjoying a tourist boom, part of the vibrant and buoyant economy of Malaysia. Pulau Tioman boasts several de luxe airconditioned hotels, of international standard, with regular ferry and air connections with Mersing and Singapore. Most of the tourism is concentrated on the north west edge of the "teardrop" shape of the island; an area not frequented by the RN in times past. Pulau Tinggi and Pulau Aur are more geared to the backpacker and diving enthusiast, but all still retain their charm as largely unspoiled classical tropical islands.

Perhaps it would be appropriate for us old Singapore hands on the 14<sup>th</sup> February this year, the two hundred and tenth anniversary of the battle of Pulau Aur, to raise a glass of Tiger Beer to the memory of Commodore Sir Nathanial Dance.

With thanks and acknowledgements to:

Commander Steven Maffeo USNR

The Ton Class Association

"Most Secret and Confidential – Intelligence in the Age of Nelson"

plus supporting information from Wikipedia and the Malaysian Tourist Board.

# Nautical Trivia Quiz

- 1. What was the operational name of the North African invasion in 1942?
- 2. An alleged hangover cure is a Prairie Oyster, what are the ingredients?
- 3. The Rama Indians of the Caribbean called European ships when they arrived from across the Atlantic, what?
- 4. Who wrote "Winnie the Pooh"?
- 5. Greenland with 836,000 sq.miles is the second largest Island in the world, which island is the tenth largest?
- 6. Where is the remotest inhabited island in the world?
- 7. Liverpool as we all know, is a great port but, a) what local port did it displace, and b) which port was its greatest rival?
- 8. In the early days of submarines, what safety procedure was used to ascertain the habitability after time spent submerged?
- 9. What British shipping company held 50% of United Baltic Company?
- 10. East Asiatic Company was the first shipping company in the world to do what?

#### An Early Steamship Collision in the Mersey First published 1981 By Member Harry Hignett

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

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

The picture below of **Rambler** is possibly the earliest depiction of a steam vessel on Liverpool docks.



The paddle steamer **Rambler** of 250h.p. owned by the Glasgow and Londonderry Steam Packet Company, was due to leave Sligo for Liverpool on Saturday, 30th May, 1846. Owing to lack of water, the sailing was delayed for 24 hours and she left at 5.00 p.m. on Sunday 31st. According to the mate she had about 300 deck passengers in addition to several cabin passengers. There was some general cargo, but the principal freight was 600 pigs and 14 cattle; some of the pigs and all of the cattle were carried on deck. There could not have been much room to move on the vessel; the stench must have been appalling and the passengers, most of whom were beginning their travel to America, would have been hopefully looking forward to stepping ashore late on Monday night.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### The Manchester Dry Docks at Ellesmere Port and the **Daniel Adamson**'s refit of 1953 by L.N.R.S. Member John Huxley

[Editor's note: John is also a long-standing member of the Daniel Adamson Preservation Society and here reminisces on the part that apprentices played in the refit and the running of the yard.]

During the early months of 1953 the **Daniel Adamson** berthed at the Ellesmere Port ship repair yard of the Manchester Dry Dock Co. The firm had received a contract to dry-dock the vessel, overhaul the engines and pumps, refurbish the passenger accommodation and also fit a new boiler.

The history of this yard goes back to the construction of the Manchester Ship Canal which commenced in 1887. A Newcastle man, George Renwick, saw an opportunity for a suitable ship repair facilities to be sited on the new canal at Modewheel and Ellesmere Port.

There were and still are various ways of removing a floating vessel from its natural environment to dry land, the first were used in Greco times (220 BC). Probably the first, in local waters, was to ground the vessel on the beach and let the tide retreat. Then there was the "slip" which involved hauling the vessel up an incline. One was built and still exists at the premises of the Shropshire Union Canal Company, the Boat Museum at Ellesmere Port, and later lifting onto land.

As ships increased in size two other systems became more common, the graving dock, which is basically a basin dug out of the shore, lined with concrete and with a gate at one end. The dock is filled with water, the vessel floated in, the gate shut and the water pumped out leaving the vessel high and dry. The second is a floating dry-dock, usually "U" shaped, constructed as a series of tanks which can be flooded sinking the dock, floating the vessel into position and then pumping out the water thereby raising the vessel above the original water level. This type of dock was commonly known as a "pontoon" and they are very much in use today, some capable of lifting cargo ships of over 100,000 tons, the largest oil drilling rigs and some of the largest passenger ships now afloat.

Before the official opening of the canal in 1894 ocean going vessels had already been accommodated at a temporary berth(s) near Weston Point, Runcorn/Saltport. George Renwick, to satisfy the demands of these ship owners opened the Ellesmere Port subsidiary in 1893, siting a floating pontoon dock in an "arm" cut into the bank on the bend between Stuarts Wharf and the cement works, 300ft. long it could take ships up to 4,000 tons and had been transferred from the Admiralty in Scapa Flow. About this time the design of a tug to be named **Ralph Brocklebank** was on the drawing boards of various ship building companies, eventually to be built by the Tranmere Bay Development Company for the Shropshire Union Canal Company. The vessel later to be renamed **Daniel Adamson** when purchased by the Manchester Ship Canal Co. in the 1920s.

The main operation at the yard was ship repair but at least four coasters were constructed in the 1920's and all four had long lives. The **Ben Sayr** of 1920, lost in 1938, **Mia** of 1932 scrapped as the **Ben Varry** in 1957, the **Doris Thomes** of 1934 scrapped as **Ben Ain** in 1963 and the **Penstone** of 1926 lost in 1963, All of about 260 tons they were typical coastal vessels of that era.

The company had over 50 years experience of this type of contract to carry out work to refurbish the **Daniel Adamson** when she arrived in 1953. The length of the time it took to complete the contract indicated that the return to service was not considered critical. For some weeks the work was carried out on an ad hoc basis, depending on more urgent work.

The Ellesmere Port works of the Manchester Dry Docks were known locally as the "pontoon" and most of the ship repair workers were local men including apprentices.

In the late '40s and early '50s the working hours were very different from the present time. Starting time was 0730 until 1730 plus 4 hours on a Saturday. There was an hour for lunch and two (apparently) unpaid breaks of 15 minutes morning and afternoon. Later on, Saturdays were to become paid overtime if worked, much to the dismay of the management. Discipline was severe and the timekeeper would appear elated as he shut the gate dead on 0730 even if he could see the hard riding cyclist only a matter of yards off down the cinder track leading from what is now known as Oil Sites Road. The offender had to return at 1300 to clock on having lost half a days pay.

"Apprentice" is today a much mentioned word and is used in a highly political way, The present type of training is essential for the future of the British economy but is today heavily biased towards classroom learning with emphasis on Health and Safety rather than the old method of "on the job" experience. This was a proven method of training, which led to a greater personal assurance as responsibility was given to the lads early in their careers as they were very often assigned jobs on their own. It is worth noting that as in many work places of the era, the boys, for there were very few girls involved in ship repair in the 1950s, had to supply all their own working clothes and "hobnailed" boots, gloves and head gear (no safety hats available so you wore a peaked cap to stop your head being damaged by hard objects) The boiler suits could become impregnated with oil to such an extent that they became a fire hazard, most lads went home in their boiler suits as they were rain proof due to the oil.

Depending on the economic situation and therefore workloads there were normally between 8 to 10 apprenticed marine engine fitters but there were also apprentice boilermakers, joiners, shipwrights, coppersmiths and turners. Subjected to an excellent grounding in marine engineering at all levels these lads were crucial to the running of the yard, assisting in the maintenance of all types of vessels, the operation of the floating dock, the removal of ships funnels at Eastham and most of all making the tea.

The ships involved in the dry-docking process which in the main was required on a annual basis for all vessels by the Board of Trade, or one of its various departmental name changes, included in addition to the tugs of the Ship Canal, coastal tankers of various companies including Esso and Shell. Harkers oil barges, Coopers sand carriers and Coast Line cargo vessels. Voyage repairs afloat for Esso, Shell, RFA and various foreign crude oil carriers at Stanlow and from 1953 at the new Queen Elizabeth II oil dock at Eastham were also part of the work load. There were a number of Liverpool steam tugs which were part of the towing scene on the canal also using the facilities available adding to the selection of experience available. There were also the Ship Canal bucket dredgers named after the local rivers i.e. **Gowy** and **Irwell**, Both spent a long period under major

refurbishment in the early '50s.

Quite a large selection of the coastal ships used the canal at that time and many laid alongside the adjacent Stuart Wharf awaiting cargoes and were also a source of work for the yard, as was the ships being worked at Bowaters and Ellesmere Port docks.

Typical dry docking normally included sea valve overhaul, boiler inspection, tail shaft and propeller inspection and hull cleaning and re-painting. Tendering for the work was keen as there were many similar repair yards along the Mersey banks. But there were often emergency dockings after a tug's propeller had been damaged after contact with a more solid object than the cast iron of the blades. Very few tug crews admitted that the hull had been close to the bank for obvious reasons. it should also be noted that in the '50s the canal was very busy and the tugs paid a major part in the operation. All the towage was carried out during daylight hours as in those days there were no navigation lights along the canal. It was only in the late '50s that the lower section up to Stanlow had fixed navigation lights installed. How the canal worked during the war must have taken some organising.

Among the jobs assigned to the lads was the manning of the dry dock. When a ship was to be docked much of this work was carried on out of normal hours and the overtime was a valuable source of extra money. The method of sinking the floating dock was simply opening, in the right order, a series of valves to allow the tanks to flood and thereby to sink to the correct draught to allow the vessel to enter. In the winter it was without doubt one of the coldest spots on Merseyside. There was only a small wooden hut built in the 1890s with large gaps in the plank joints, regularly stuffed with rolled up paper to exclude the northerly breeze, in which to shelter. Snow and ice could cause problems keeping your feet when the dock was down at one end to take on a vessel that was well down by the stern but hobnailed boots tended to make it a little more

sure footed. On the other hand there could be no better place in the world (OK, in Ellesmere Port!) to be standing at the end of the dock as dawn broke on a spring morning looking out over the Mersey with the sandbanks exposed, flocks of all sorts of birds. Perhaps a few flats being towed up the Mersey on the tide to the locks at Runcorn and on occasion the vessel responsible for their navigation lights, the wooden hulled Jesse Wallwork. A glance towards Stanlow and a smudge of smoke indicated a ship on the way towards Eastham. As the vessel approached the profile indicated a tug and the bow wave would shine brightly in the morning sun as it sent a wave up onto the banks, either the MSC **Arrrow** or **Archer** or perhaps the **Bison** or the **Badger**, as the tugs approached the bend into which the dry dock was berthed, the bow wave gradually diminished as the helmsman slowed the engine to prevent any problems for the sunken dry dock. As the tug came closer the man at the large wooden wheel could be clearly seen, large tea mug in hand. A wave from the dock and he would raise the mug in salute and a jangle of the engine telegraph rang out then a large clang as the fireman opened the furnace doors. A puff of black smoke rose into the clear air and the wake boiled white as the engineer increased the engine revolutions and sped off to Eastham. A sight rarely seen these days but quite possible when the "Danny" returns to service.

Another rather odd job carried out by the apprentices was to assist in the removal of the tops of ships' funnels and, on occasions, the top-masts of ships which were to transit the canal to Manchester so that they could clear the various bridges on route. This work was centred under the massive crane installed at Eastham in the late 1940s, previously a set of sheerlegs had served the job. The lads helped to release the bolts in the funnel flange, spaded off the steam or air to the whistle, rigged the lifting gear and the erection of the scaffolding. Health and Safety regulations were unheard of in those days and often meant working from a single planked scaffold erected around the funnel. This work was carried out at any time of the day mainly to meet the tide times. It was a dangerous job needing a good head for heights with some odd climbing duties required to reach the flanges, clips and wires but it was a very lucrative earner. Well known shipping companies using this service were Harrisons, Brocklebanks, Stricks and Shell. Lykes Lines and American Lines vessels required the whole funnel to be removed and landed at Eastham, and they looked very odd passing along the upper reaches of the canal. City Line ships used other contractors and Manchester Liner ships were designed with funnels that were short enough to clear the bridges.

So what would have been the input of the apprentices into the refurbishment of the **Daniel Adamson** during the period that she was to lay alongside a very ancient wooden jetty? It is difficult to assess except to anticipate that all of the lads would have been involved in some way. The funnel, bridge, boiler, engine room casing and engines had been landed onto the quay. The engines were placed on wooden blocks waterproofed by scaffolding and

tarpaulins enabling the maintenance to continue in all weathers with easy access. The main reason to remove the casings was to enable the old boiler to be scrapped and the newly built boiler brought around the coast from the Clyde, constructed by Kincaids and off loaded by the funnel crane at Eastham. The **Danny** was eventually towed to Eastham to have the new boiler positioned into the hull. Within this work programme all the lads must have had a hand except they had nothing to do with the passenger accommodation refurbishment. In fact they were banned from the area, which was contracted to Heaton Tabbs, and what a beautiful outcome resulted.

After all various pieces of equipment had been re-installed the new boiler was hydraulically tested and inspected by the insurance company's surveyor and then when steam was raised and the pumps, generator and main engines run to the satisfaction of the Ship Canal's engineer. On completion the **Daniel Adamson** now in immaculate condition moved back to Runcorn to prepare to return to service.



The crane at Eastham that was used to remove funnels and masts from ships transiting the canal past Runcorn. This was used to install the current boiler in the **Danny**  So what happened to the apprentices? Of course they moved on to other work in the yard. Those completing their training had to leave as National Service was awaiting all young men in the 1950s. However, there were two other alternatives. The first was to join the Merchant Navy, with the mechanical fitters joining as engineer officers. However some developed health problems which meant that they would fail the medical for the services i.e. eyes, hearing or the favourite flat feet.

National Service meant up to two years duty which, in those days could have been in Korea, Kenya, where the Mau Mau were active. Also the Suez invasion and Berlin, where many local servicemen were guarding the German prisoners in Spandau Prison. On the other hand those choosing the sea qoing option had to stay in that employment until they were 26 to avoid National Service. This meant a 7 days a week schedule with a starting daily rate of pay of about £1 2s a day, however this was considerably more that the services paid.

Some returned to the yard but the trade patterns were changing throughout the world and the canal was badly effected.

The larger vessels were too big to transit the canal, tonnage figures dropped alarmingly and the Ellesmere Port yard was run down and eventually closed in 1967, The pontoon itself was sold to a firm on the banks of the Dee at Connah's Quay and towed away for scrapping.

Now in 2014 as we continue with the restoration project we must aim to ensure that the finished job is similar and in some areas better than the refurbished vessel that went back into service in 1955, And here I add my personal praise and thanks to all our members who helped in so many different ways to achieve today's progress in restoring the **Daniel Adamson**.

## A Major Liverpool Event

Billed as the *Three Queens, One Magnificent City* spectacular, more than a million spectators are expected to attend when the Cunard flagship **Queen Mary 2**, 150,000 gross tons, will be joined by her fleet mates **Queen Victoria** and **Queen Elizabeth** in the Mersey on May 25, 2015. Together the trio will stage a stunning salute to Cunard's spiritual home on the 175th anniversary of the company being founded by Samuel Cunard here in 1840.

Managing the navigation of ships the size of the Cunard Queens in the Mersey is challenging and requires meticulous and detailed planning, and a ship simulator is being utilised to carefully choreograph the ship movements; participating in this planning are senior Cunard Officers together with senior officials from the Liverpool Pilotage Service and the Port of Liverpool. The intention is to spread the spectacular event as far along the river as possible from the north off Crosby and New Brighton southwards to points off Albert Dock and Woodside.

With the unique backdrop of Liverpool's world-famous waterfront and the capacity on both sides of the Mersey to accommodate tens of thousands of spectators, Cunard believe this will be a most spectacular gathering of the Three Queens; and are excited by the prospect of bringing the Fleet to its spiritual home.

#### Side Lights on the Slave Trade by Guy E. Cooper First published in the Mariner's Mirror, Volume 7, 1921

In 1788 Mr. Alexander Falconbridge, Surgeon, remarked that the African slave trade in which he had been driven by necessity to earn his living, had always been held in detestation by all good men, and it was then more particularly engaging the attention of the nation. The great movement which ended in Abolition was, in fact, commencing, and it seems probable that the case of Gregson v. Gilbert argued before the Court of Kings Bench, on May 22nd, 1783, had a considerable share in amusing public interest. The case was originally tried at the Guildhall, Liverpool, when a verdict for the plaintiff had been found, and it came before the King's Bench on an application for a new trial. In the report the facts are only briefly recited, but even so, they shed some light on that trade which was the basis of the prosperity of Liverpool and Bristol; a trade which, employing hundreds of ships and thousands of seamen, had a close connection with many topics dealt with by our Society.

The case arose out of a voyage of the slave ship **Zong**, from the Guinea coast to Jamaica, and the plaintiff was her owner, Alderman Gregson, of Liverpool, a partner in the great firm of Watt and Gregson. How many slaves were on board when she left the coast is nowhere stated, but as, being foul and leaky, the ship took fifteen weeks to do a passage normally completed in six, many of them must have died. The normal death-rate was from twenty to thirty percent of the negroes embarked, but this was probably exceeded during the prolonged voyage of the **Zong**, as through some blunder less water had been taken in than was intended. The slaves remaining alive were sickly and therefore reduced in value by the time a landfall was made at Tobago, but the **Zong**'s Captain - who disgraced the honoured name of Collingwood - being, as the defendants not unreasonably maintained, both ignorant and negligent, made no attempt to replenish his stores, but pressed on for Jamaica. On sighting that island the blundering Collingwood made a disastrous error. He mistook it for Hispaniola, and ran down so far to leeward that when the state of affairs was realised, only one day's supply of water at an allowance of two quarts a head, was left on board. There were, in fact, three butts of good water and two and a half butts of sour water. It was reckoned that it was impossible to beat to Jamaica in less than three weeks or a month.

Faced with this situation, the captain took counsel with his officers, and they resorted to the horrible expedient of hurling 150 of the sickly but still living slaves, men, women and children into the shark-infested sea. The Solicitor-General (Lee) who appeared for Gregson, made the edifying reflection on this massacre that "as it had been decided that a portion of our fellow creatures may become the subject of property this was only a throwing over of

31

goods." Even the sacrifice made was insufficient for, during the remainder of the voyage 60 negroes died, while 40, "through thirst and frenzy occasioned thereby, threw themselves overboard," and there were 30 lying dead about the deck when the unhappy vessel arrived at last at Jamaica. Had it not been for heavy rains which supplied enough water for eleven days, it seems that all on board might have succumbed before reaching port, and the ship have drifted derelict with her cargo of dead

This was the case for Gregson, who brought the action against a firm of underwriters to recover the value of the 150 slaves thrown overboard on the ground that they had been lost owing to "perils of the sea." The legal details need not detain us, but it must be mentioned that the underwriters denied all the essential facts alleged by the plaintiff They maintained bluntly that as a result of the long voyage and the incompetence of the captain the slaves were so sickly that they were unlikely to sell well and the wretched 150 were thrown overboard in the hope of obtaining their full value from the insurance. It was alleged by the defence that there was no real shortage of water as it was the rainy season and that even after the rain had fallen slaves had been thrown over alive.

The great Lord Mansfield gave it as his opinion that it was an uncommon case, and ordered a new trial. His remarks make it clear that he thought there was a terrible probability about the underwriters' allegations, and from brief mention in Mr. Gomer Williams "History of the Liverpool Privateers and Slave Trade", it appears that at the second trial it was decided that the slaves been thrown overboard unnecessarily in order to defraud the underwriters.

No one seems to have considered that there was anything criminal in such a slaughter, and Mr. Gregson remained an Alderman of Liverpool, but the facts revealed were sufficiently atrocious to shock even eighteenth century complacency. As a result of this case two statutes were passed to prevent abuses in the conduct of the Slave Trade. The first (30 Geo. III. c.33) prohibited the insurance of slaves, except against certain definite risks, while the second (34 Geo. III. c.80) forbade the throwing overboard of living slaves under any circumstances whatever.

That these acts were not altogether ideal may be seen from the case of Tatham v. Hodgson, in 1796. This related to the voyage of a vessel from the Cameroons to Grenada, with 168 slaves on board. Before leaving the coast she had anchored in such shoal water that on a heavy swell setting in she struck several times and disabled her rudder, but none the less the captain decided to continue the voyage, which lasted six months and eight days, instead of the usual six to nine weeks. The ship was not victualled for such a long trip, so that the slaves had to be fed on Indian corn, "which was an improper food for them," and when at last a landfall was made at Barbadoes, only 40 negroes remained alive. The court decided that in these circumstances the owner could not recover from the underwriters as it was evidently considered the voyage should never

have been undertaken with the ship in a damaged condition and with insufficient provisions. Lord Kenyon referring to one of the statutes mentioned above remarked: "This Act of Parliament being founded in humanity we ought not on any account to put such a construction on it as to render it useless even if its expressions were doubtful," and it seems evident that by that time a considerable body of opinion was keenly critical of the abuses of the slave trade, even if it was not prepared to sanction its abolition.

Mr. Hannay, in his "Sea Trader", has remarked that the crews of the slavers as distinguished from the numerous officers were always abominably treated, and that it was to the interest of the owners that they should die or desert. In particular, the Liverpool merchants amassed their huge fortunes bv undermanning their vessels and underpaying and underfeeding their crews profitable devices not unknown to a later age. It was mentioned in the case of the **Zong** that seven seamen out of seventeen on board had died after arrival at Jamaica, and the proportion though high, was not abnormal. It was natural that the best men, whether officers or seamen, steered clear of the trade if they could and the majority of those employed in it were either callous ruffians or dim-witted fools. The remarkable thing is that none of those concerned seem to have realised that humanity would have been paying from even a business point of view. Every one of the wretched creatures crammed in the foetid holds who died represented a loss to the merchants, and it would seem to have been good policy to ship fewer slaves while taking greater care of their health. It may be remembered that the "Slaver's Log of 1700," published in January, 1920, showed that on that voyage 206 slaves died out of 452 shipped. Such a proportion was not uncommon a century later, but a greed and grossness characteristic of the mercantile mind hindered any reform.

There is a very natural tendency for many people to feel a certain dislike of the Abolitionists and the movement which they led. The very word seems to have a connection with self-righteousness, false humanitarianism and that sentimental philanthropy which sets its eyes on the ends of the earth while callous to suffering nearer home; and it is but a step from suspicion of the remedy to toleration of the disease, After all, one thinks, there may have been a good deal to say on the other side. But I do not think that any can study the actual facts without becoming convinced that if there was a case for slavery as a disagreeable necessity there was none for the slave trade. The morality which could send 150 human beings to inevitable, hideous death and look upon it as an ordinary commercial transaction makes it easy to understand what the author of Declaration of Independence meant when he said, in a similar connection, that he trembled for his country when he remembered that God was just.

### More recently... The Editor

The Centre for Contemporary Ministry (CCM), an educational charity based in Bedfordshire, which had historic links with the Wilberforce family had carried out in-depth research into the work of the Abolitionists. They determined to mount a major exhibition of slavery past and present in honour of the work of



The **Kaskelot** representing the **Zong**. Courtesy Wikimedia Commons

Wilberforce and the 'Clapham Group' of Abolitionists, and initially talked about making a model of a slave ship to give visible evidence of the horrible conditions endured by the slaves on their two months voyage across the Atlantic from Africa to Caribbean islands: however the the opportunity arose for them to charter a full-sized similar "replica". And in March, 2007 their ship sailed up the Thames, escorted by H.M.S. Cumberland, and moored adjacent to Tower Bridge for the two-week duration of the commemorative event.

The ship they chose was the Kaskelot,

originally a traditional Baltic Trader and one of the largest remaining wooden ships in commission. She was built in 1948 by J. Ring-Andersen for the Royal Greenland Trading Company and brought supplies to remote coastal settlements in East Greenland. During the 1960s, **Kaskelot** worked as a support vessel for fisheries in the Faroe Islands.

She was purchased by Square Sail, UK in 1981 and converted to replicate a traditional three masted Barque with double topsail, going on to feature in many TV and film productions, including Return to Treasure Island, The Three Musketeers, David Copperfield and Shackleton. The current owners purchased her in 2013, undertook an extensive refit at T.Nielsen in Gloucester, and she is now undertaking charter and commercial work around the UK.

Her specification is:
Displacement: 450 tons
Length: 153 ft (47 m) o/a; 121 ft (37 m) on deck
Beam: 28 ft (8.5 m); Draught: 12 ft (3.7 m)
Propulsion: 1 × B&W Alpha 404 375 hp (280 kW) diesel engine, 1 shaft
Sail plan: 3-masted barque; 9,500 sq ft (880 m2) sail area
Capacity: 12 passengers; Crew: 18

## Abandoning Ship

**Wireless message and equipment.** Find out if an SOS has been sent out from the ship, and if an answer has been received. See that the ship's portable wireless transmitter and receiving set are taken into a boat. Remember that they can easily be damaged if dropped; therefore *pass* them into the boat; if you have to drop them, they are less likely to be damaged if dropped into the water, they are buoyant and, for a time at any rate, will remain watertight.

**Instruments, nautical tables and charts**. Take your sextant and nautical tables with you in the lifeboat. Special waterproof charts of the oceans of the world are being issued, showing details of the prevailing winds and currents like those given in the American Hydrographical Charts. If you already have yours, take them with you.

**Clothing** Take waterproof clothing (oilskins, seaman's protective suit, anti-gas cape, or mackintosh) and gather up any extra warm clothing, blankets or Duffel coats. Experience has shown only too often that unnecessary suffering has been caused by lack of clothing when in a boat. Even in the Tropics it may feel bitterly cold at night. It is better to carry too much clothing than too little, for it will protect you not only against the cold, but also against the sun. Do not imagine that the weight of this extra clothing will be a danger to you in the water. Modern lifebelts will support a person in the water fully dressed and wearing sea boots. Carry a pair of dry socks in your pocket, in a waterproof package.

**Extra water**. *Water is more important than food*; it is of such great importance that you should **make every effort** to take extra water with you. Improvise containers wherever possible; 40 gallon oil drums can be used; they are easily cleaned and sterilised by steam in the engine room; they should be painted white; *half-filled* with drinking water and stowed on the upper deck ready to float off or be rolled overboard. Fill and take with you water-bottles or similar containers (preferably not of glass). Masters who have appreciated the paramount importance of an adequate water supply have succeeded in improvising stowage for as much as 120 gallons per boat.

**Food.** You are unlikely to need more food than is stored in the lifeboat, and no extra food should be taken at the expense of extra water and extra clothing. Extra water is of much greater value than extra food.

**Release of life-saving appliances** All life-saving appliances should be released, even if they are not needed immediately. The water and stores they contain are valuable and may be picked up later. Gear should be transferred from boats which are damaged or cannot be lowered.

**Going overboard.** If you do not get away in a boat, go over the lower side if the ship has listed. If you go over the upper side you will be in danger of being badly hurt by barnacles and marine growths, and of fracturing your ankles by hitting your heels against the bilge keel. When the lower side of the listed vessel happens also to be the weather side take care to avoid being washed back on board, and in this case, if possible, take to the water from the bow or stern, whichever is the lower.

Extract on 'Abandoning Ship".....taken from 'A guide to the Preservation of Life at Sea after Shipwreck'. Issued by the Medical Research Council, 1943. The Editor

26 August, 2014

The item about tracking ocean currents in the September 2014 Bulletin, triggered some memories.

I spent my career at the Government Fisheries Research Laboratory here in Lowestoft. In my early years I was closely involved in the work they were doing in releasing drift bottles to attempt to define ocean surface currents. Between the wars such bottles had been extensively used in the North Sea, released from the Laboratory's own vessel or, more usually, from the many, then manned, light vessels around our coasts.

When I became involved, in the early 1960s, bottles of the type shown in the enclosed photo were being prepared for use in the waters between Iceland and Greenland in an attempt to identify surface ocean currents. They had to be put together by hand, the return cards put inside, ballasted with lead shot, sealed and the wire and drogue attached. They were designed to float just below the water surface with the drogue providing drag so they would move with the surface current and not the stormy wave tops.

I do not recall what the returns were, but I suspect that being released so far from sparsely populated lands there would not have been too many. I do know that one was found in the early 1970s on a small island in the Bahama group by an American family on holiday there. They were from Long Island, New York and I still correspond with them.

Glass bottles were relatively expensive in both money and time to construct them. Also people did smash them on beaches to get the contents, not ideal. Bottles were ideal for gauging surface drift but not for bottom drift, so in the late 1950s our Laboratory developed the Woodhead Sea Bed Drifter (see opposite). While they had to be put together it was an infinitely quicker job compared to drift bottles and it could be done at sea on research ships.

In the last 40 years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century many 1000's were released by my Laboratory as well as countless 1000's released by Laboratories world wide. In coastal waters the returns could be large and gave a good approximation of bottom drift. To get them to the bottom they were bundled together with soluble string (taking careful note of the serial numbers), the bundle was weighted with a bag of stones and thrown overboard. The soluble string would dissolve releasing the weight and the drifters which were then free to drift.

Incidentally, my Laboratory did not use drift cards, that seemed to be the preserve of The National Institute of Oceanography, then at Wormley in Surrey and others.

Stuart Jones

Lowestoft, Suffolk



Conventional 'surface drift' bottle



The 'Woodhead sea-bed drifter'

Pictures courtesy Stuart Jones

#### Heraclides - Wrecked at Crosby - 1902 M.K. Stammers First published in the Bulletin Volume 28, 1974

Liverpool Museum was able to buy a fine builder's model in 1970, of R. P. Houston's steamer **Heraclides**. This model was restored and put on display in the Port of Liverpool Gallery, and its acquisition was due to some sharp observation by our members Captain Chubb and Mr.D.Branigan.

The original **Heraclides** was an iron steamer of 2,788 tons gross, 320 ft. x 40 ft, built at the Pallion yard of Messrs. Boolds and Shearer of Sunderland in 1886. Just recently, the interesting story of her grounding on Crosby beach in 1902 has come to light again.

On 16th October, 1902, Heraclides sailed out of Liverpool in ballast, bound for Glasgow. She was only lightly ballasted and drew 9 feet, 4 inches forward and seventeen feet, six inches aft. The lack of ballast was one of the main reasons for her stranding as the Court of Inquiry later revealed. As she drew out of the docks and into the River, the weather was fine and clear with fresh south-westerly wind. When she reached the more open water of the channel, the weather became squally. Her pilot decided to take the weather side of the channel. This, of course, contravened Article 25 of the Rule of the Road:- "In narrow channels every steam vessel shall, when it is safe and practical, keep to that side of the fairway or mid-channel which lies on the starboard side of such a vessel". Heraclides sailed on this wrong side until she reached No. 4 buoy, when she had the Crosby light vessel on her starboard bow. The pilot's intention was to try and pass to windward of the lightship. However, before this manoeuvre could be accomplished, a heavy squall hit the ship, and with her high freeboard trapping the full force of the wind, she was forced to leeward, under the stern of the lightship. She then refused to answer her helm and was in great danger of going aground.

The crew attempted to let go the only anchor available for instant use, but the cable jammed on the windlass after only six fathoms had been let go. So, at the mercy of the wind and tide, **Heraclides** went ashore on Taylor's Bank on the starboard side of the channel. By 11.10 p.m. she was well aground and distress rockets were sent up. These were spotted by the coastguards, and the New Brighton and Formby Lifeboats were both launched. It took the New Brighton sailing lifeboat one hour and twenty minutes to arrive on the scene, under tow from a steam tug.

The Formby Lifeboat arrived a little later – her crew having already made one rescue in the preceding twenty-four hours. This casualty was the schooner **Maria Sophie** which had been blown ashore off Hightown Battery, the crew of four having been taken off and brought ashore. Most of the crew of the grounded **Heraclides** was taken off by the New Brighton boat, and the Formby boat took off the last fourteen, as it seemed likely that she would break up. The transfer of men to lifeboats was a very difficult operation in the heavy seas and some received bad bruises as they tumbled from their ship into the lifeboats tossing alongside. The lifeboats stood by for two hours, and as the tide ebbed, they too occasionally touched ground on the bank.

At 1.30 a.m. the Master and Chief Engineer inspected the damage in the engine room. The main steampipe was fractured, the boiler had shifted two inches, the stokehold plates were opening up as the bulkheads buckled, and the propellor shaft was out of alignment; there seemed to be all the signs that she had broken her back. And so she was finally abandoned at 5.30 a.m. The two lifeboats headed back to their stations after the weary vigil. Both arrived at about 8 a.m. The survivors in the Formby boat were taken to the Railway Hotel, and given hot coffee and rum to thaw out the bitter cold of that long night. Meanwhile, at New Brighton, Mrs. Kirkham of Eaton Villa took charge of the twenty five men landed there and provided them with breakfast, and there was a big roaring kitchen fire to dry their clothes. The men had not been allowed to take their kitbags in the lifeboat. They only had the clothes in which they stood. Mrs. Kirkham sent for a doctor to attend the Chief Steward who had badly hurt his leg whilst jumping into the lifeboat. Two days later, the Liverpool Daily Post carried a note of thanks from the crew to the lifeboatmen and to Mrs. Kirkham.

At about 9.30 a.m. on the same morning as the rescue took place (17<sup>th</sup> October), Heraclides floated off Taylor's Bank on the top of high water, and drifted ashore at Crosby Point, her bow pointing to the shore. It was still believed that her back was broken; She was taken over by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board to be dealt with as an obstruction. A thorough inspection revealed that her hull was intact if somewhat buckled, and the same evening, Captain Young of the Liverpool and Glasgow Salvage Association went out to inspect her. He found that the hull was resting across a ridge of sand. Some sixty feet of the forward end overhung the ridge and the sternpost was broken. He thought he could get her off on the next spring tide, and the excavation of a channel to assist the refloating was considered.

The first salvage attempt was made by the famous **Ranger** assisted by tugs. The sea was still high and there was great difficulty in getting the towline aboard. Consequently it was well past high tide before they started, and the **Heraclides** did not budge. Over the next two days the weather got worse, making work impossible, with seas breaking over the ship. At low tide on 23<sup>rd</sup> October, a salvage crew got aboard. They refilled some of the ballast tanks, and sent down the topmasts to prevent the ship from knocking herself to pieces. With an improvement in the weather the next day, **Ranger** laid out extra anchors, and at low tide work was commenced digging a channel by hand. All the Dock Board dredgers had too deep a draught to approach. A light draught

suction dredger was improvised, the shallow draught steamer **Faraday** took on board a large steam pump. One hundred tons of coal was moved from amidships to a forward hold, to improve the chances of floating off the stern, which was becoming embedded in the sand. 350 tons of coal was shovelled through holes cut in her side plating, and when possible the channel was dug out.

All this hard work went on until 30<sup>th</sup> October. A second effort to refloat was started and soon abandoned when the depth of water on the bank at high tide was found to be only ten feet and six inches. A third attempt was made on 31<sup>st</sup> and the tugs **Blazer, Hotspur** and **Pathfinder** pulled **Heraclides** off the bank and into deep water. She was then towed back to Liverpool for repair.

Heraclides carried on in the Houston service until 1907. On 25<sup>th</sup> October of that year she went ashore (in fog) on rocks eight miles north of Ichaboe Island, south west Africa. Off what is now Namibia. This time, she was not so lucky, as her two forward holds filled rapidly. The passengers and crew taking to the lifeboats and getting safely ashore. In the next few days there were several abortive attempts to warp her off, but she could not be moved. Finally on 29<sup>th</sup> October, the master decided to abandon her, a sad end for a well built and useful ship.

## Answers to Nautical Trivia Quiz on page 22

- 1. Operation Torch
- 2. 1) Yolk of egg, covered with Brandy and Worcester Sauce. 2) Port Wine, Worcester Sauce, pepper, mustard, and an unbroken yolk of an egg.
- 3. The "Great Canoe".
- 4. A.A. Milne.
- 5. Great Britain at 80,823 sq miles is 10th largest!
- 6. Tristan de Cunha, just 38 sq. miles in area nearest inhabited land is St. Helena 1500 miles away.
- 7. Liverpool displaced Chester as the dominant port in the area, and its rival was Bristol.
- 8. The RN used a mouse in a wire cage suspended in the vicinity of the engine room also used in mines but were too hard to see so Canaries were used up until 1970's.
- 9. Andrew Weir the other 50% was the East Asiatic Company a Danish company.
- 10. They built the m.s. **Selandia**, the first ocean going diesel motor ship, engines by Burmeister and Wain of Copenhagen.

#### A Dutch Conversion First published in Sea Breezes 1956

In May last year the passenger and vehicular ferry **Haringvliet** began to operate a service between Hellevoetsluis and Middelharnis, Holland, and was



found to behave extremely well in an area beset by strong tidal currents and with the added complication of narrow harbour entrances. This is not surprising, for the **Haringvliet** is well used to strong tideways; she is in fact the old Wallasey ferry **Royal Iris II**, originally a coal-fired steamer built in 1932 by Harland and Wolff Ltd., at Glasgow.

The **Royal Iris II** which from 1947 to 1950 became the **Royal Iris** and in the latter year was renamed **St. Hilary** before a new diesel electric ferry called **Royal Iris** entered the fleet, was sold by her owners, Wallasey Corporation, in February 1956, to Stolk N.V., of Holland and partially dismantled at Hendrik-Ido-

Ambacht, near Dordrecht, in the autumn of 1956. The hulk, together with steering gear and rudders however, was soon after bought by the Provincial Government of South Holland.

At the Verschure N.V. dockyard at Amsterdam the old **St. Hilary** was fitted with two 550 h.p. oil engines of German make (Deutz) and additional equipment. She was given a new main deck suitable for carrying



40 vehicles, a superstructure containing accommodation for about 60 passengers and a promenade with a bridge above.

Photographs of the **Haringvliet** reproduced in connection with this article are by courtesy of the owners, the Provinciale Waterstaat in Zuid-Holland.

[Editor's note.

Does her new stern remind anyone of another Mersey ferry? Perhaps Royal Iris of 1950.]

## The Liverpool Nautical Research Society (Founded in 1938)

# THE BULLETIN

Volume 58 No.4, March, 2015



The ship **Maryborough**, courtesy State Library of Queensland. Was one of the Black Ball Line vessels taken over by Thomas Williams (Page 11)

Society Relocates for Talks Programme	I. Duckett	Page	1
Liverpool Seamen's Orphan Institution	L. Gidman		2
Remember Those Days	The Editor		5
The History of Steam Navigation	J. Kennedy		7
The Red Dragon on Merseyside	Dr. D. Jenkins		11
A Voyage in the <b>Ulysses</b> – Part 3	A. Melling		13
Sailing into Conflict	S.W. Swain		18
M.V. Clifford J. Rogers	G. Bodey		22
Predicting the Ocean Tide	P.L. Woodworth		25
A Unique Series of Disasters	W.A. Ogle		29
Book Review	A. Melling		32
The River Dee and Shipping	H.M. Hignett		33
To Calcutta in the 1950s	J. Pottinger		37
Vintage Protection & Indemnity Insurance	G. Holmes		40



The 'Roberts' tide prediction machine (see page 25) made in 1906 and formerly owned by Bidston Observatory.



**Ulysses** moored off Capetown

Ocean Archives, courtesy National Museums Liverpool See page 13

## The Liverpool Nautical Research Society



President Mr. William J. Pape II

Vice-Presidents: Captain G. Cubbin Mr. H.M. Hignett

Chairman: Captain R. Settle

Vice Chairman: Mr. W.G. Williamson

Council:

Mr. I. Duckett (Talks Secretary), Mr. B. Groombridge, Ms. S. Starkey (Representing M.M.M.), Mr. W.A. Ogle (Bulletin Editor), Mr. J.P. Stokoe

Honorary Officers: Secretary: Mr. A. Melling Treasurer: Mr. V. Finn

Web site:

www.liverpoolnauticalresearchsociety.org

<u>Contact details</u>: The Liverpool Nautical Research Society Maritime Archives and Library Merseyside Maritime Museum Albert Dock Liverpool L3 4AQ United Kingdom.

info@liverpoolnauticalresearchsociety.org

## Society Relocates for Talks Programme Ian Duckett, Talks Secretary

For some 30 years the annual programme of nine lecture presentations arranged by the Society has been held at the Merseyside Maritime Museum, indeed virtually since the Museum opened and the series formed one of the cornerstones of our relationship with the Museum.

Council were, therefore, most surprised to be advised, 'out of the blue', last November, that, in order to hopefully increase the use of the basement room used as our venue, by school groups, we were to be required to run our talks from 3.30 pm and vacate the building by 4.55 pm. These times were clearly impractical but despite efforts on our part, we were unable to agree any alternative arrangement with the Museum.

We, therefore, explored other venues and, after due consideration, arranged to hold the talks for January 2015, and beyond, in the library of the prestigious Athenaeum Club, in Liverpool city centre.

The talks still commence with refreshments at 1200 noon and the dress code remains as smart casual.

The inaugural lecture at the Athenaeum was a great success. We were made most welcome by the Club's staff and our members reported complete satisfaction with new arrangements although the absence of chocolate biscuits was noted by some! Not only are the facilities more comfortable but access by public transport is easier and you don't have to contend with windy dockside walks!

The total cost to the Society is similar and, going forward, it is hoped that light lunches will be available for members at the Club if they so wish. The pictures below give some idea of the comfortable surroundings.



Members gather for the talk



Phillip Woodworth speaking

As Talks Secretary (ian@ianduckett.freeserve.co.uk) I am always keen to hear from members who might like to give a talk on topics that would be of interest.

#### The Royal Liverpool Seamen's Orphan Institution Linda Gidman, Chief Executive, The Royal Liverpool Seamen's Orphan Institution Submitted by LNRS Member Harry Hignett

It is 147 years, 1868 to be exact, since a group of Liverpool ship-owners led by James Beazley sponsored a project to provide an Institution to cater for the large numbers of orphaned children of deceased Merseyside seamen. The sponsors of the project had for some time been concerned how best to help the widows and families of Merseyside men lost at sea or who had died as a result of an accident or through natural causes. To put the orphan situation into perspective records show that in 1866 the number of seamen serving on British Merchant vessels totalled 196,371 and the staggering number of 4,886 of these died during the year – 2,390 by drowning!

The overall project was such an outstanding success that in 1869 the Liverpool Seamen's Orphan Institution came into being and a temporary building in Duke Street Liverpool was commissioned to house the first children.

On April 7th 1870 a meeting of the Liverpool Town Council approved a resolution under which a gift of 7,000 square yards of land at the North East side of Newsham Park should be given to the Committee to enable them to construct a Seamen's Orphan Institution, which was in due course opened on September 30th 1874, the ceremony being performed by the Duke of Edinburgh, the fourth son of Queen Victoria.

From the outset, emphasis was given to education and besides catering for over 300 resident children the Institution also provided outdoor relief for a further 500. In those days the income to support the Institution came mainly from subscriptions and donations including ship and shore collection boxes and public concerts.

The First World War brought problems. Loss of income, due to little revenue from the vessels which were requisitioned or lost by enemy action, and a big falling off in passenger traffic on the North Atlantic. Inevitably, there was an increase in the number of children, to a maximum of over 1,000 assisted during the year 1918.

Royal appreciation of the work was shown from time to time by visits to the Orphanage as follows.-

- 1886: Her Majesty Queen Victoria, the Duke of Connaught and Princess Beatrice,
- 1892: The Duke of Connaught
- 1921: Her Majesty Queen Mary and the Princess Royal
- 1937: H.M. King George VI and Queen Elizabeth

The Institution was granted Royal Patronage by Queen Victoria in 1886 and from 1937 to 2002 the Institution was honoured by the Patronage of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. The title 'Royal' was bestowed in 1921 by His Majesty King George V.

The years were marked by continuing and steady progress as recorded in the Annual Reports and at the Annual General Meetings which continued to be held in the Liverpool Town Hall and presided over by the Lord Mayor then in office. The orphanage thrived over the years until the outbreak of the Second World War when for safety's sake, the children were evacuated to Frankby, Merseyside.



The Newsham Park Building

Courtesy Wikipedia Commons

The end of the war brought problems relating to the return of the children to Newsham Park which had suffered considerable bomb damage. Under the new 1944 Education Act, it was no longer permissible for children under 11 years of age and children over that age to attend the same school. Taking all the various problems and difficulties into consideration and after lengthy discussion the permanent closure of the orphanage took place in July 1949 and the resident children were resettled in other suitable establishments.

Now was the time to look to the future for The Royal Liverpool Seamen's Orphan Institution. Not a departure, but a continuation of the aims of the Founders merely adapted to meet the changing conditions of life in the post war years.

Today the administrative work of the Institution is conducted from offices in Liverpool by two permanent staff and it is here that that the Trustees hold their meetings when the progress of the children is discussed, approval given to proposed grants, financial aspects considered and plans formulated to implement still further the purpose of the Institution. The staff of the Institution consists of the Secretary and her Assistant who put into practice the decisions taken at the regular committee meetings.

As well as her office duties, the Secretary pays regular visits to the families throughout the UK and some of the more local mothers and children occasionally call into the Liverpool office. It might be to advise a change in their circumstances, to make a special request, or just for a little advice. Whatever the request, whether by telephone, personal call or by post, a mother will always receive a sympathetic hearing from the Secretary and staff.

Each family is reviewed every 12 months; a review form is sent to the mother who gives details of the family's current financial situation. Each year the committee are delighted to learn of the many educational attainments, the passes and acceptances for Universities and Colleges. The reports received of Degrees and other notable academic successes achieved encourage all those involved with the Institution, and are noted in the yearly Report and Accounts.

It has become clear that despite the benefits available from government payments there is, and probably always will be, a need for the Institution in helping to resolve the fears and anxieties of widows suddenly confronted with the task of bringing up families without adequate financial resources and the Institution's aims remain the same:- to support the children of deceased British seamen by way of monthly grants, payable via the mother, for all educational needs.

The Institution has voyaged a long way since that day in August 1869 when, as a result of the generosity of ship-owners and merchants, and support from the general public, the temporary home at 128 Duke Street opened its doors to the first group of children. And also since that memorable day in September 1874 when the Duke of Edinburgh formally opened the new orphanage in Newsham Park Liverpool.

Over the past 145 years, working conditions at sea, and social conditions on shore have improved beyond recognition, but amidst all the changes, there stands one irrefutable fact, which will never change.

The death through illness or accident of a seafaring family man, whether it took place on board a sailing ship in 1869 or on board a computer controlled ship of present day, means that overnight a wife becomes a widow, confronted with the task of bringing up a fatherless family.

Just as the Founders of the Royal Liverpool Seamen's Orphan Institution took immediate steps to assist families most in need of help, so today do their successors. The objectives laid down in 1869 remain the same but the scope has been widened so that today's children may share with others more fortunate the educational opportunities so prominent a feature of the family way of life in the UK today.

## Remember Those Days ......

A sample from the archives, and published by kind permission of Sea Breezes.

#### January to March, 1948

Coast Lines Ltd., will have three new passenger ships in service between Britain and Ireland during the next holiday season. They are the **Innisfallen**, recently launched on the Clyde, and the **Munster** together with the **Leinster**, now nearing completion in Belfast. The **Munster** entered the Fishguard–Cork service in January, where she will remain until her sister–ship, the **Leinster**, is ready, probably in April, when the two ships will go on to the Liverpool–Dublin route. By that time it is expected that the **Innisfallen** will be ready to take up her sailings between Fishguard and Cork. The Liverpool–Belfast run will continue to be operated by the **Ulster Monarch** and **Ulster Prince**.

A ship which recently discharged scrap iron at Newcastle (N.S.W.) steel works by electro-magnet cranes became charged with magnetism, causing a serious deflection of her compasses. Fortunately, the deviation carried the ship away from land. Had her head pointed in the opposite direction when she discharged, the magnetism might have been reversed, and the ship imperilled, since poor visibility was experienced soon after she had left port. Steering was difficult and she followed an erratic course moving farther away from the mainland as she travelled what was thought to be south. The deviation was found to have reached 125 degrees on the steering compass.

The question of salving war wrecks, and whether they are worth repairing when they are salved or only fit for the scrappers, is constantly being reviewed, particularly with the steel industry's insistent demand for scrap metal.The most important ships being discussed in that way are the Italian **Guilio Cesare** and **Duilio**. Eighteen months ago it was suggested that their salvage was quite impossible; they were constructive total losses which were handed over to the Ministry which had requisitioned them, but now that the situation is very different there is talk of salving them in spite of the difficulties of deep water.

Built in 1913 the British India Co. vessel **Nevasa** is to be broken up. At a recent lunch on board the owners invited a number of guests and former officers of the vessel. In the words of the company chairman "they were there to bid farewell to an old lady who has served the Government and the Company well". One man who could not be present – Quartermaster Frank Huntley, B.E.M., who during the past 34 years had never missed a single voyage of the **Nevasa**. Sadly, after a short illness, he had died in hospital a few weeks before the event. His record of service is probable unique in the Merchant Navy, for he was at the helm on **Nevasa**'s last voyage into Southampton on December 11 – at the age of 75. Frank Huntley first went to sea as an apprentice in 1887, in sail, and was one of the survivors of the **Mohegan** disaster of 1897 when that ship struck the Manacles and 107 of her passengers and crew perished.

#### January to March, 1961

The Lunenburg shipyard of Smith and Rhuland are to build a replica of the **Bounty** to feature in a new film of the famous "Mutiny on the Bounty " brought about through the conduct of Capt. William Bligh. The original ship was 85 ft. overall compared to the replica's 118 ft. One of the main differences as regards the old and new is seen on the lower deck which houses an engine-room and other mechanical equipment. Four hundred thousand board feet of wood were used in the construction, and most of this was hand-tooled. M-G-M stated that the replica was to be an exact copy of the original in regard to exterior construction, but all interior fittings were to be modern. For example, the ship is fitted with two 300 h.p. oil-engines, the latest navigational aids, nine staterooms for officers, 22 berths for crew, and a 21-ft. cutter, an exact replica of the small craft in which Bligh and his companions were set adrift. The ship will have a cruising radius of 5,000 miles. Exterior fittings such as the guns, scroll, carvings and figurehead used on the hull and transom and other items, replicas of the past, were supplied by M-G-M. The figurehead is 5 ft. in height, depicting an English lady wearing a yellow and green riding habit. The superstructure and figurehead have been so constructed that they will be interchangeable when the vessel is given the lines of a British frigate.

Mr. A. D. Cochran, Operating Superintendent, LMR, Lime Street Station, Liverpool has kindly supplied papers dealing with his grandfather's part in building the first British submarine. Constructed at Birkenhead in the late 'seventies by the firm of Cochran and Company following trials with a working model built for the inventor, the Rev. George William Garrett, B.A. It was Mr. Cochran's grandfather, J. T. Cochran, who was responsible for building the **Resurgam** as she was called in 1878, a craft 40 ft. long with a beam of 9 ft. and of 30 tons displacement. Her ends were virtually two cones whose bases joined opposite ends of a central cylindrical section on top of which was a conning tower or escape hatch. The inventor got his idea from an incident during the Russo-Turkish war when a Russian torpedo boat became entangled in a series of chains put out by an ironclad. This prompted Garrett to consider a craft able to attack a target after moving under such an obstruction. Almost immediately he began experiments towards the purification of foul air in confined spaces and exhibited a diving dress in London in which he imprisoned himself for two hours, maintaining life by purifying his own breath. He then moved about under water without any tubes supplying air from above

An 800-lb. iron stock anchor, 7ft. 10in. long and 4ft. 6in. between flukes was dragged up from the bottom of Gibraltar Bay by the passenger liner **Independence** as she was leaving Algeciras for Palme de Mallorca on a recent cruise. Covered with a 3in. coat of sea-growth, experts in New York are determining if the anchor has been on the ocean floor for a few years or whether it dates back to the era of the Battle of Trafalgar. Anchors of this type have been in use in the Mediterranean for several centuries.

#### The History of Steam Navigation. John Kennedy From the book under this title, published in 1903 submitted by The Editor

There is not a more fascinating page in history than that which tells of the growth of the Mercantile Steam Navies of the World. It is a record of the triumphs of Science and Art in Marine Architecture; of bold enterprises not always carried to a successful financial issue; of deeds of "derring do" as romantic as the older stories of the Vikings. It is a page brightened by stories of true heroism, where men have bravely faced death, not in the lust of battle, but in calm devotion to duty, or in unflinching determination to save the lives of those weaker than themselves.

It is not possible, nor would it answer any useful purpose, to discuss fully the various claims which have been put forward for the honour of having invented the first Marine Steam Engine. It will be sufficient to refer briefly to the inventors, or alleged inventors, prior to the year 1800.

In the Appendix to Senor Navarette's "History of the Four Voyages of Columbus," are copies of certain documents which the historian vouches to be authentic extracts from the series of Spanish Records preserved at Simancas. These documents narrate "that in the month of May or June, 1543, Blasco de Garay, a naval captain in the service of the Emperor Charles V, conducted at Barcelona a series of experiments upon the applicability to ships of a certain propulsive force, which he alleges he had himself discovered. De Garay describes the mechanism he employed as consisting of two wheels, one attached to either extremity of a movable axis which traversed the vessel's waist, and was connected with a large caldron of boiling water. The experiments, it is alleged, were conducted in the presence of several persons of high birth, deputed by the Emperor to witness them, and amongst whom were many naval commanders. It is further alleged that De Garay succeeded in taking to sea a vessel of two hundred tons burthen, without the aid of sail or oar, and that her speed was about one league per hour.

Rear Admiral Geo. Preble, U.S.N., author of a "History of Steam Navigation", gives the names of several persons who have searched the documents referred to, none of whom have been able to trace any mention of steam. He, therefore, concludes that the account of De Garay's invention is a Spanish legend.

Denis Papin, who was driven from France by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and was elected Fellow of the Royal Society in 1681, describes, in 1690, a steam cylinder in which a piston descends by atmospheric pressure, and, as one of its uses, he mentions the propulsion of ships by paddle wheels. Towards the close of the 17th century, or the beginning of the 18th, Papin made the

acquaintance of Thomas Savory, one of the most ingenious men of his times, and of Thomas Newcomen, a working blacksmith, of Devon. Savory designed a marine engine, which was greatly improved by Newcomen in 1705, and was used by Papin to propel a steamboat on the Fulda.

Thirty years later (1736), Jonathan Hulls, of Berwick-on-Tweed, received a patent for the first steamboat of which there is any authentic record from George II, which recited as follows :

Whereas our trusty and well-beloved Jonathan Hulls hath by his petition humbly represented unto our most dearly beloved Consort, the Queen, that he hath, with much labour and with great expense, invented and formed a machine for towing ships and vessels out of, or into any harbour or river, against wind or tide, or in a calm, which the petitioner apprehends may be of great service to our Royal Party and merchant ships, and to boats and other vessels, of which the petitioner hath made oath that he is the sole inventor, as by affidavit to his said petition annexed. Know ye, therefore, that we, of our special grace, hath given and granted to the said Jonathan Hulls our special license, full power, sole privilege and authority during the term of fourteen years, and he shall lawfully make use of the same for carrying ships and other vessels out to sea, or into any harbour or river.

In witness whereof we have caused these our letters to be made patent.

(Witness) CAROLINE, Queen of Great Britain, &c. Given by right of Privy Seal at Westminster, this 21st day of December, 1736.

In the description of his invention, Hulls states that, in his opinion, it would not be practicable to place his machine on anything but a tow-boat, as it would take up too much room for other goods to be carried on the same vessel with it, and it could not be used in a storm, or when the waves are very raging. Hulls' vessel is stated to have been a stern-wheeler, a type of steamboat which is now extensively used for navigating shallow rivers in the Southern States of America and in India. The steam tow-boat brought its inventor nothing but ridicule, and he died in London in almost destitute circumstances.

Next in chronological sequence come the Abbe Arnal and the Marquis de Jouffroy, of France, who, in 1781, made experiments to show the practicability of applying steam power to vessels.

Two years later (1783), a Mr. Fitch tried a species of steam boiler on board a small nine-ton vessel on the Delaware River in America, propelling the vessel by paddles. In 1787 he built another boat, 45ft. by 12ft., and fitted her with a 12inch cylinder engine. With this vessel he is reported to have made the trip from Philadelphia to Burlington at an average rate of seven miles per hour. In 1790 he completed another and a larger boat. But all his plans failed, and, like Hulls, his contemporaries deemed him to be crazy. He died in 1798.

At about this period (1780 to 1788) there resided in Edinburgh a banker, of aristocratic birth and connection. Patrick Miller, the banker referred to, was a man of an active and ingenious mind, and, having realised a large fortune by banking, he used it as a means of enabling him to work out schemes for the benefit of the public. Having purchased an estate in the beautiful valley of the Nith, from which he derived the title of Laird of Dalswinton, he retired thither to solve the problem of navigating a vessel by some more certain means than oars and sails. He had (prior to this) exhibited a triple-hull vessel at Leith, having rotatory paddles in the two interspaces, driven by a crank and wrought by four men. He determined one day to try its powers against a fast sailing Customs Wherry over a distance of some six or seven miles to the harbour of Leith. He beat his opponent by several minutes, and was very well satisfied with the result. His boys' tutor, a Mr. Taylor, who had taken his turn at the crank, and realised how violent was the necessary exertion, was convinced that without a more staying power than manual labour the invention would prove practically useless. He stated his objections to Mr. Miller, and they had frequent discussions on the subject. At length, one day, Taylor said "Mr. Miller, I can suggest no power equal to the steam engine, or so applicable to your purpose". The result of this suggestion was that Mr. Miller decided to fit up a new double boat, which he had recently placed on the lake at Dalswinton for the amusement of his family. Taylor made the necessary arrangements under the direction of an ingenious mechanic named William Symington. The engine was a very small one, having four-inch brass cylinders, made by George Watt, brassfounder, Edinburgh.

On the 14th October, 1788, several hundreds of people assembled on the banks of Dalswinton Loch to witness the trial trip of the twin steamboat, which was entirely successful. Mr. Miller was so pleased with the success of the experiment that he resolved to repeat it on a larger scale.

The following year he fitted a twin vessel 60 feet long, belonging to himself, with an engine of 18in. cylinders. This vessel steamed at the rate of seven miles an hour on the Forth and Clyde Canal, in the presence of a vast multitude of spectators. It had been Mr. Miller's wish to try a third experiment with a third vessel, in which he should venture out on to the ocean, and attempt a passage from Leith to London. Unfortunately, he became dissatisfied with Symington, and, being vexed at the cost of fitting up the second vessel, which was much greater than he anticipated. as well as by a miscalculation, through which the machinery was made too heavy for the hulls, he hesitated to make further trial.

Taylor being poor, and a scholar, not a mechanician, could do nothing without Mr. Miller's assistance. Symington was the only one of the three who persevered. He deserves credit for having done so, but not for the manner in which he did it, for without any communication with Messrs. Miller and Taylor, the true inventors, he took out a patent for the construction of steamboats in
1801. Through the interest of Lord Dundas, he was able, in 1803, to fit up a new steamboat for the Forth and Clyde Canal Co., and this vessel, called the **Charlotte Dundas**, was tried in towing a couple of barges upon the canal with entire success, except in one respect, which was that the agitation of the water by the paddles was found to wash down the banks in an alarming manner.

For this reason the Canal Co. resolved to give up the project, and the vessel was, therefore, laid aside. It lay on the bank at Lock 16 for many years, generally looked on, of course, as a monument of misdirected ingenuity, but, as we shall presently see, it did not lie there altogether in vain.

Meantime Symington had been in communication with the Duke of Bridgewater, with the object of introducing steam towage on the Bridgewater Canal, and had actually received a trial order, when, unfortunately, the Duke died, and the project was closed. Here Symington vanishes likewise from the active part of this history. Miller died in 1815, a comparatively poor man, having exhausted his fortune by improvements and experiments. It has been stated by his son that he spent fully £30,000 in projects of a purely public nature. Taylor died in 1824, in straitened circumstances, leaving a widow and daughters, to whom the Government granted a pension of £50 a year.

The experiments at Carron, in 1789, had been witnessed by a young man named Henry Bell, a working mason originally, as it appears, afterwards a humble kind of engineer in Glasgow, and later an hotel proprietor at Helensburgh. Bell never lost sight of the idea, and when Symington ceased experimenting in 1803 he took up the project. At the same time an ingenious American named Fulton comes into the field. He, in company with Bell, visited the **Charlotte Dundas** in 1803, and Bell gave to Fulton drawings of the machinery which he (Bell) had obtained, partly from Mr. Miller and partly from Symington."

MONDAY MEETINGS					
Members meet at the Archives and Library of the Merseyside Maritime Museum on Mondays as follows:					
March	Mondays	2 <sup>nd</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> , 16 <sup>th</sup> , 23 <sup>rd</sup> , 30 <sup>th</sup>			
April		13 <sup>th</sup> , 20 <sup>th</sup> , 27 <sup>th</sup>			
May		11 <sup>th</sup> , 18 <sup>th</sup>			
lune		1 <sup>st</sup> . 8 <sup>th</sup> . 15 <sup>th</sup> . 22 <sup>nd</sup> . 29 <sup>th</sup>			

The Red Dragon on Merseyside Some of Liverpool's Welsh shipowners. from a talk to the Society on 9 October, 2014 by Dr David Jenkins, National Museum of Wales

'Liverpool – the capital of north Wales' is a well-worn phrase, but it does reflect the associations that have long-existed between the great Merseyside city and north Wales. With the advent of the Industrial Revolution, these associations



The barque **Gwydyn Castle** Courtesy National Museum Wales

became increasingly important as raw materials from north Wales found their way to the northwest of England by sea – copper ore, limestone and most especially slate. Going by sea from Liverpool was also the most convenient way of getting to north Wales, and early steamships services were in existence from the 1820s onwards.

It was during the latter half of the nineteenth century that Welsh became prominent in Liverpool's ship-owning circles, and this was in no small part due to Liverpool's famous Black Ball Line and its chief founder James Baines. As early as the 1840s Baines had ordered new ships from yards, especially at Pwllheli, yards which could supply ships at cheaper prices and with more prompt delivery than the

busy yards on Merseyside. There were

also a considerable number of Welsh masters on the Black Ball Line ships – a veritable 'Taffia'! – and this was chiefly due to the influence of Baines' marine superintendent, Captain Thomas Williams of Llandwrog near Caernarfon.

When Baines got into serious financial difficulties in the 1860s, Williams took advantage of his former boss's troubles and found financial backing to acquire no fewer than fourteen Black Ball ships. He was soon followed by others, perhaps the foremost of whom was William Thomas from Llanrhuddlad near Holyhead. Thomas had moved to Liverpool in his teens to work as an office boy, but he rose to be the owner of a remarkable fleet of both sailing vessels and steamers before his death in 1917, and he also served a number of terms as



Wm Thomas as Mayor of Bootle Courtesy National Museums

mayor of Bootle, where he made his home. Robert Thomas, originally of Criccieth, was another prominent owner of sailing ships at the port, and although he did not found the company, the Carmarthen-born Alfred Jones was the man behind the spectacular growth of the Elder Dempster in the latter half of the nineteenth century. And Welshmen did not just own deep-sea ships - Richard Hughes from Gronant in Flintshire was the man behind 'the Rose boats', Liverpool's biggest coaster fleet

Many of the Welsh-founded companies folded with the deaths of their owners during the second decade of the twentieth century, but the Welsh influence in Liverpool's shipping circles did not disappear. The famous 'Blue Funnel Line' – Alfred Holt & Co. – acquired the nickname 'the Welsh navy', partly because Laurence Holt had a holiday home near Pwllheli which acted as a notable recruiting centre when Mr. Holt was in residence there. Probably the last notable Welshman in Liverpool shipping was the late Captain Gwyn Pari–Huws who served with both Brocklebanks and Elder Dempster before retiring as fleet operations director of Ocean Fleets in 1984, bringing to an end an age in which the Welsh had been a notable element in the great Merseyside port's commercial life.

# Nautical Trivia Quiz

- 1. Which religious order owns two passenger ships.
- 2. Which large White Star line ship never carried a fare paying passenger and never crossed the Atlantic?
- 3. What is the memorial on "Battleship Row" in Pearl Harbour called?
- 4. How did Carnival Line funnel colours come about?
- 5. The "**Mission Santa Ynez**" was scrapped in 2010, the last of some 500 built, what was she?
- 6. The liner **France**, which became the **Norway**, was launched by whom?
- 7. Blue Funnel had two ships which were manned by "Midshipmen", what were their names?
- 8. The collective noun for a group of Turtles is called -

a) a bale, b) a turn c) a shell?

Answers on page .....31

# A Voyage in the Ulysses by L.N.R.S. Member Tony Melling

<u>Episode 3</u> In the final instalment of The Diary of a Ulysses Passenger, we witness the beauties of Bali, the wonders of the Great Barrier Reef, and the warm welcome Australia provided to the visitors onboard Ulysses.

Bali was an even more exotic paradise in 1932. At the eastern tip of Java and 150 miles long, the island coastline rises steeply out of the sea to over 10,000 feet. It was therefore an unsafe anchorage, which increased its isolation. The population of over one million were ruled as a Dutch colony. Our diarist provides a detailed account of the cultural, ethnic and religious character of the Balinese, including matchmaking:

The marriage customs are interesting. Polygamy is the rule, and a man must make love to the girl of his choice sometimes for ages, then he runs away with her for five days and she consents to marry him and is returned to her parents, who then arrange a marriage ceremony...If the woman at the last moment refuses to marry he kills her and gets ten years' penal servitude. Is it worth it? This is the only crime known in Bali.<sup>1</sup>

The ship arrives at Buleleng at early morning on 7th October, but because of water depth close to the shore manages to drop anchor only at 9.30 a.m. in 100 fathoms. The party then travelled ashore by launch "and found twenty-five very luxurious cars waiting for us," before being transported to a height of over 4,000 feet to the site of the island's three main volcanoes. "The luxuriance of everything was remarkable...at the foot of the volcanoes was an extensive bright green lake. It really was a magnificent spectacle..." During the descent on their return Robert was moved by the 'native' beauty: "these ladies, naked to the waist with their superb figures, handsome faces and proud and graceful carriage. They were utterly unconscious of their lack of raiment and took very little notice of the European visitors."<sup>2</sup>

The travellers spent just one day on Bali but were captivated by its beauty and idyllic seclusion. After Bali, **Ulysses** was a week at sea before reaching Thursday Island on Thursday, 13 October. Robert comments that since arriving in the Pacific, "we have been looking out for the picture you see on Smiths' bookstall advertising Mr. Stacpoole's novel, the Blue Lagoon..." and have so far been disappointed. Thursday Island changed all that.

The various shades of green and blue in the sea were superb and made one gasp from the sheer joy of it. It seems impossible to imagine that anything more beautiful can exist on this mortal earth of ours, and yet they say that the Barrier Reef is still finer.<sup>3</sup>

The island was an important pearl fishing centre. Its population of 1500 were a mix of European and Japanese; the latter the more proficient pearl fishers. Visits to the Barrier Reef were arranged for early the following morning. Robert was rather underwhelmed by the experience. After reporting at the gangway at 5 a.m. to ensure he had a launch seat, "I.. stood there sentinel by myself for a considerable time, and was finally joined by the Warrens and



Diary Illustration Ocean Archives Courtesy National Museums, Liverpool

was clearly magical.

there we waited for two blessed hours before the launch arrived." The party were then taken to a small outcrop of grey coral, landed and explored the island, "packing up pieces of coral and shells for a time" before returning to the launches. An unsuccessful attempt to then attract sharks with raw meat as bait produced seasickness.

Elizabeth (Elizabeth does not miss much), and

As a matter of fact, owing to my disturbed night, no breakfast, and a most unpleasant swell, I was by this time feeling extremely uncomfortable and would have given anything to throw the damned line overboard. I wasn't feeling like wrestling with a sardine, let alone a shark.<sup>4</sup>

While many of the passengers and ship's company, Captain Williams included, took to the warm shallow water around the coral fully clothed up to their waists, our observer recuperates alone: "I reclined on board trying to get my internal organs in order before lunch."

Leaving Thursday Island **Ulysses** travelled south along the Barrier Reef, exploring tiny isolated coral islands and mooring from time to time to allow exploration. The experience

It is a curious sensation wandering about on one of these minute islands with no other land in sight - nothing but the blue Pacific Ocean on all sides. You can understand the feelings of a castaway and it gives one a feeling of security to see the good ship **Ulysses** standing out boldly in the offing.<sup>5</sup>

On Monday, 17 October Ulysses reached Cairns on the coast of Queensland, Australia.

4. <u>Cairns to Perth, Western Australia</u>: Monday 17 October – Tuesday 25 November

In common with every Australian port visited, Cairns affords the travellers a civic reception by the Lord Mayor and Council.

They one and all lauded up the attractions and commercial possibilities of this

pioneer township and urged us to send out more settlers - with capital if possible, to help to develop this unusually productive soil<sup>6</sup>.

A visit to Barron Falls by train ("arranged by Messrs. Cooks") also reveals the natural hazards of farming.

Within a yard of the path we saw specimens of a stinging plant like a large heart-shaped nettle. Our guide had seen a horse die in a quarter of an hour after falling into a bush of this plant.

The ship's band booked the Trocadero Dance Hall for a dance that evening:

The etiquette was very like that at the Tower at Blackpool. The young



Courtesy National Museums, Liverpool

men asked our girls to dance, and after each dance returned them to us and bowed themselves awkwardly away.

Ulysses moved on to Palm Island, used as an Aboriginal reservation: These natives are under the special protection of the Government. They are said to be the lowest form of human life existent. They are very lazy and not much use as labourers. The Government wish to prevent intermarriage with whites as far as possible, as the results are disastrous.<sup>7</sup>

Hitler's accession as German Chancellor was only months away. This seems a grim foretaste of where such racial values could lead to.

At Brisbane, the visitors were again feted on their arrival:

Wednesday, October 26th - Crowds of ladies appeared on the wharf at 9.30 and literally buried the ship in the most lovely flowers...The Lord Mayor spoke very sensibly. He fully realised the difficulties they were fighting at the moment and refused to be unduly optimistic while the country was up to its ears in debt.<sup>8</sup>

Sydney Harbour Bridge had been opened only on 19th March of that year. Ulysses arrives on Wednesday, November 2nd and Sidney has mixed feelings. Sydney Harbour is all that it was painted by the greatest enthusiasts. It is an enormous natural harbour with its many little bays and innumerable beaches - its beautifully wooded banks covered with well-built houses - and there in the middle of it stretched the famous bridge...Personally I think it spoils one of the most beautiful stretches of water I've ever seen.<sup>9</sup>



Diary Illustration Ocean Archives Courtesy National Museums, Liverpool

After sailing on to Melbourne, the diarist is struck by the cultural contrast.

Thursday, November 10th. - Arrived Melbourne at 7.0 a.m. Had a short reception at the Town Hall...In the evening we were invited to a dance given in our honour by the English Speaking Union - a very pleasant evening - the people very much more English in speech and manner than their countrymen at Sydney, Brisbane, etc.<sup>10</sup>

The England cricket team had just arrived for what later became known as the infamous 'Bodyline' series, in which England triumphed 4–1 with the use of bowling specifically designed to neutralise the batting prowess of Don Bradman. Our

observer had seen him make an effortless 238 runs in a local match at Sydney only days before. There was little indication at Melbourne of the international furore which would later engulf the England team.

After lunch we adjourned to the cricket ground and saw the match between Victoria and England from the members' stand. The English team was very bad. They are being too well entertained - they will have to smarten up if they want to get back the "ashes". Voce bowled well, also Allen.<sup>11</sup>

At Adelaide, on Monday November 17th the officers and crew of the **Ulysses** beat an **Orontes** team to win the silver cup at cricket. Robert was very proud: "It was a great triumph as the **Orontes** team had 350 against our 150 men to pick their team from". **Ulysses** then sailed on to Freemantle on November 25th.

I took the tram to Perth - seventeen miles off and joined a very merry luncheon party given by the captain of the ship to about fifteen of us at the Esplanade Hotel.

Ulysses left Freemantle and Australia on 27th November, accompanied by the now obligatory adieu: "...crowds of people came to see us off, and there was the usual display of flowers and streamers". 5. Perth to London: 27 November - 2 January 1933

'Who were the couple seen descending from the hospital deck at 1.30 a.m.?'

**Ulysses** began the 11 day passage to Durban whilst the passengers kept themselves busy.

Good-bye cocktails every night for the last ten days - in connection with people leaving the ship at South Africa...Arrived Durban Wednesday, December 7th, in the early morning. Went on shore and bathed in the swimming-bath for a time, then into the sea and did some surfing..<sup>12</sup>

The arrival at Capetown by sea was particularly stunning:

What a glorious view one gets on approaching Capetown with the Table Mountain and the Lion's Head standing up proudly behind the town...Not even Sydney Harbour, of which they are so proud, can compare with it for one moment. <sup>13</sup>

A new cable elevator had recently been installed to carry sightseers the exciting journey to the top of Table Mountain –

4,340 feet in six minutes, a thrilling journey. All the sensations of flying without the risk...The view from the top in that marvellously clear air is just heavenly. You could see the waves breaking over the Cape of Good Hope thirty miles away..<sup>14</sup>.

Apart from a brief stop at Las Palmas, there only remained the three week sea passage to London, taken up with parting festivities. Jealous passengers pressured the captain to observe strict protocol.

The great question of the "dance" days was: "Will the young officers be asked down?" The captain much worried - unattractive middle-aged passengers annoyed at lack of enthusiasm among the young girls to dance with them when young officers were present - evidently been complaining to the captain.<sup>15</sup>

There was a brief diversion of onboard gossip:

Who were the couple seen descending from the hospital deck at 1.30 a.m.? The first serious scandal of the cruise. Still it helped to keep things alive during those twenty-one days at sea.<sup>16</sup>

This only added to the memorable achievement of this unique **Ulysses** cruise, treasured by those fortunate to experience it:

We finally reached London safe and sound after the most interesting four months we had any of us spent in our lives. We had seen some of the most glorious scenery in the world and met any number of interesting people and made many friends whom we trust we shall see a good deal more of.<sup>17</sup>

#### References

<sup>1</sup> The Diary of a Ulysses Passenger, The Blue Funnel Line, India Buildings, Liverpool, Ocean Archives, Merseyside Maritime Museum, pp. 35/36

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 37	<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 46	<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 58
<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 39	<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 47	<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 59
<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 41	<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 50	<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 60
<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 42	<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 52/53	<sup>15</sup> Ibid., pp. 61/62
<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 43	<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 53	<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 62
		<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p.

## Sailing into Conflict By S W Swain

In June 1939 I embarked on the **Fresno Star** for my second voyage to the North Pacific coast of America via the Panama Canal. We left North Shields on the 13th, soon settling down to the business of getting the ship to all the ports of call on schedule — not an easy task for she was an old-time coal-burner. Fortunately the majority of the engineer officers were experienced in coal-firing and Tyneside provided, in the main, an experienced crew of coal firemen.

The passage outwards following the normal pattern, topping up coal bunkers at Kingston, Jamaica, but at the Panama Canal a snag occurred. An elderly lady en route to Vancouver was occupying the only spare cabin in the officers' accommodation and since canal dues were governed by the cubic capacity of the vessel and the type of cargo or service, with passenger ships attracting much higher rates, the authorities were claiming the higher dues.

The cost difference must have been considerable because Captain Palmer, with the concurrence of the agents, had no alternative but to arrange the disembarkation of the frail old lady and her baggage and send her on by train through the canal zone. That might have been quite an adventure for a younger person but it was no fun for someone of advanced years and we were all very upset to put her to so much worry and inconvenience.

We retrieved our trans-shipped passenger at the other side of the canal and continued towards Vancouver, calling at San Pedro and San Francisco. I had the chance to explore Hollywood — then at its zenith — and even managed to see the newly released epic Gone with the Wind.

New Westminster, our terminal port, gave me the impression that we had arrived in China rather than British Columbia because Chinese shops and businesses dominated the dock area. I was able to make a number of visits to Vancouver itself, taking a memorable trip on an old tramcar which had been converted into an observation car. Homeward bound we sailed into Puget Sound, calling at Tacoma and Seattle in Washington, then celebrating 50 years of statehood. The Tacoma Narrows bridge, at that time the third-longest suspension bridge in the USA, was of graceful construction and a novel experience to walk over. The centre span of 2800 feet was supported by towers 425 feet high. The bridge was known locally as 'Galloping Gertie' and motorists felt rather uncomfortable negotiating the rolling and rippling roadway in breezy weather. Engineers tried various methods to stop the motion of the bridge, including extra cables, but on the morning of 7 November 1940 the deck started moving in a steady vertical oscillation. The bridge had been designed to withstand winds never recorded on Puget Sound - gusts of up to 122 miles per hour — but in fact started 'galloping' when gusts of only 35 miles per hour hit it from the side.

At ten o'clock the concerned highways department closed the bridge to traffic and with winds topping 40 miles per hour the deck of the bridge began to twist wildly from side to side. At 11 o'clock a 600-foot length of the main span tore loose from the suspenders and plunged into the swift, cold waters 190 feet below.

The entire disaster was filmed and stunned bridge engineers were able to study the momentous collapse. It was concluded that the combination of solid web plate girders with a solid floor, which prevented the passage of even low velocity winds, together with the high flexibility of the structure, made the bridge susceptible to vertical undulations which tended to change into twisting motions. A replacement bridge did not open until 1950 and was built thicker and wider, using deeper, truss-like girders which allowed the winds to pass through.



#### ss Fresno Star

#### Courtesy BlueStar.org

Our next port of call was Portland, Oregon, which entailed a long pilotage in the Columbia River. Standby duties in the engine room, in addition to normal watches, limited my observation of river passages, but I do remember with pleasure the overpowering, refreshing smell of the pine woods flowing down the engine and stokehold ventilators — some compensation for our confinement in the steamy, noisy mechanical environment. Timber in its various forms was the cargo to be shipped from this area. And no wonder, for wood was to be seen everywhere, with countless sawmills, mountains of

sawdust and all the local houses built of wood — and fire hydrants placed every hundred yards.

After a short stay at Portland we proceeded to San Francisco and a chance to visit the Golden Gate International Exposition. I was also able to exchange my Emerson radio for a model with an ultra short wave band, able to receive BBC news broadcasts about the growing crisis in far off Europe.

We were on our final leg to Panama, south of San Pedro, when one of our firemen developed symptoms of appendicitis, diagnosed by numerous wireless messages exchanged between our second officer and doctors in a British-American company's plantation in Guatemala. Concluding that an operation appeared urgent we needed to proceed directly to the nearest anchorage, where arrangements could be made to collect the patient and transport him to the company's hospital inland, was some 300 miles south of our current position. Our average speed fully loaded was only some 10 to 11 knots.

There was no need to convey to the ship's company that getting the **Fresno Star** to this anchorage as quickly as possible was of paramount importance in saving the life of our crew member. The next 24 hours was an experience to be remembered in the engine room and stokehold. I wondered if the old **Fresno** had ever gone so fast in her life, for an average speed of 13 knots was maintained — not bad for a 20-year-old ship. One fireman working two fires instead of four made a big difference to the boilers output, the problem being in the engine room accepting the increased steam flow without lifting the safety valves. These higher than normal revolutions on the main and auxiliary engines brought out the skills of the double-banked greasers. Oiling the twin triple expansion engines was done by hand-feeding the oil into cups on the cross heads, normally a skilled job — and at the increased revs even greater accuracy was called for.

All this frenetic action was maintained under tropical conditions and the humidity and temperature condition down below became very uncomfortable. There was also an increased demand for steam for the refrigeration compressors, working at full power to maintain below-freezing temperatures in cargo spaces surrounded by warm sea and air. Above in my cabin the normally tolerable noise and vibration level was increased to such an extent that I had to wedge my water decanter and glasses to stop them rattling so I could get some sleep.

We reached our rendezvous some hours ahead of the first radioed ETA, but a launch was waiting to pick up the patient who was rushed away with many shouts of 'Good luck, see you on the Tyne'. We heard later that a successful operation had resulted in his recovery.

Our passage to and through the Panama Canal was completed by the end of August 1939 and we were put to an anchorage awaiting sailing orders. In the meantime the **Fresno Star** was prepared for the seemingly inevitable war by being painted grey, obliterating her distinctive Blue Star Line colours. We set sail for home on 3 September — the day war was declared — and the next night, after I had completed my watch, I tuned into the BBC on my radio and heard that the **Athenia** had been torpedoed. The ensuing 12-day passage was mentally horrendous.

We, down below the water line, were very conscious of sound transmission through water. How I wished I had adjusted that port main engine bottom end bearing a little tighter to reduce its thumping. On the other hand it would then have presented a real problem of overheating during our emergency high speed run to save our appendicitis patient.

There we were, pounding along between 10 and 11 knots and knowing that our faithful reciprocating engines were broadcasting our presence to the U-boats which were already sinking ships around and ahead of us. Little comfort was gained knowing that our only armament was a revolver and rifle kept by the 'old man' in case of mutiny!

A large tanker on the same course as us, a few hours ahead, was sunk. Later that night, as we passed near her last radioed position, we could smell the fuel oil on the sea all around us.

We arrived safely at Liverpool on 15 September 1939. We had sailed in peace and returned to a Europe at war...

<b>Fresno Star</b> was built	by Barclay, Curle	& Co. Ltd., Glasgow
Dimensions:	449 x 58 x 37 fe	eet
Tonnage:	Gross: 7998	Net: 5020
Propulsion:	Two triple expan	nsion steam engines, 7000 IHP - 13 knot,
	twin screws	

She was laid down as the **War Apollo** for the Shipping Controller, but launched on 12th July 1919 (Yard No. 572) as **Woodarra** for British India Steam Navigation Co. Ltd., and completed in November, 1919. Thirty nine cadets could be accommodated (closed as a Merchant Navy cadet training ship in 1929) and she had 369,800 cu feet of refrigerated space. She ran aground at Long Island in 1921, then a fire broke out in her No 3 hold in 1923 and she was blown off the wharf at Port Kembla in 1926.

In August 1929 she was purchased by Blue Star Line (1920) Ltd. and renamed Fresno Star

She was scrapped at Inverkeithing in July, 1947

## M.V. Clifford J. Rogers World's First True Container Ship by LNRS Member Gordon Bodey

It has previously been reported (L.N.R.S. Bulletin, Volume 56, No. 3, December, 2012) that the converted T-2 tanker **Ideal X** ushered in the era of containerisation of ships' cargoes; likewise, M.V. **Kooringa** of Associated Steam-ships Melbourne (this was a fully containerised ship, but it only went into service in May 1964), and two coasters of DFDS in 1950. The containers carried by the DFDS ships were, in effect, only large wooden packing cases.

The accolade properly belongs to a ship called **Clifford J. Rogers**<sup>1</sup>, which was purpose-built for carrying freight pre-loaded in Customs-sealed and padlocked steel containers (then known as 'caissons')<sup>2</sup>, and stowed below deck. This was a link in the intermodal method of freight transport; the others being railroad flatbeds and low-loader road trucks.



The **Clifford J. Rogers** loading containers at Skagway, AK Picture courtesy Boerries Burkhardt

She was launched on 16 May 1955, four months after her keel was laid at the Montreal yard of Canadian Vickers Ltd. as Hull No. 265. In October 1955 she was completed for British Yukon Ocean Services of Vancouver (operated as White Pass & Yukon Route Co.). She was 335ft 5in. long overall x 48ft 1in. breadth x 24ft 6in. deep, and had a maximum draught of 17ft 9½in. Gross tonnage was 3000, net 2195, and summer dwt 4005. Her two holds were serviced by four hatchways. She was powered by two Vee 12–cylinder Mirrlees engines situated aft and geared to a single shaft giving her a service speed of 11<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> knots, and 13 knots maximum.

Her inaugural voyage pre-dated that of the **Ideal X** by some five months. Prior to the inaugural voyage a trial container packed with large rolls of paper was dispatched from Vancouver to Skagway on another ship in mid-November 1955. This commodity was chosen for the trial because it was notoriously prone to crushing and creasing en route when stowed in a ship's hold in the conventional manner of the time.

On arrival at Skagway the container was off-loaded onto a White Pass railroad flatbed for its 110-mile onward journey to Whitehorse. There, the initial anticipation turned to consternation when the container's doors could not be opened – they were wedged together. Eventually, a blow torch provided the answer and the container's contents were found to be in perfect condition.

These first containers were almost cube shaped being 8ft x 8ft x 7ft, and held about five tons of goods. Apart from their (by present-day standards) restricted capacity, they also had to be loaded and unloaded using the ship's conventional derricks. However, they were seen as the future for freight shipping to the Yukon in order to:

- Eliminate unnecessary freight handling and paperwork
- Provide protection at all seasons for perishable commodities
- Minimise damage and pilfering
- Provide versatility of cargoes handled
- Make cargo transportation profitable, and
- Provide the people of the Yukon with goods and amenities taken for granted in more southerly areas of the country.

At 03.47 on 29 November 1955, the **Clifford J. Rogers** cast off and sailed from Vancouver for Skagway with her first consignment of containerised freight. Generally, she carried 128 containers: two abreast down the centre line, three tiers high. Outward from Vancouver the space on either side was used for palletised cargo and that which could not be containerised; homeward, it was loaded with palletised zinc and lead concentrates.

She was to continue in service<sup>3</sup> until superseded in September 1965 by the larger, and technically more advanced, Canadian Vickers-built – Hull No. 284 – M.V. **Frank H. Brown** (6,900 tons dwt). The containers by this time were 25x8x8ft and had a capacity of 25 tons. This ship also had an onboard gantry crane for handling the containers, and the quayside was now equipped with mobile straddle carriers.

It is most unlikely that these pioneer container advocates envisaged that their innovative method of freight transport, which had been devised to suit local needs and conditions, would within a generation have been adopted universally, rendering obsolete a cargo-carrying regime that had operated virtually unchanged from time immemorial. In excess of 90% of non-bulk cargoes are now transported in containers.

## End notes:

<sup>1</sup>Named for Clifford J. Rogers(1887–1970), president of White Pass, and built at a reported cost of \$8 million

<sup>2</sup>Between 1951 and 1955 White Pass freight was carried between Vancouver and Skagway by Canadian Pacific Railway's **Yukon Princess**. However, C.P.R. declined to carry containerised freight, hence White Pass's decision to have the **Clifford J. Rogers** built.

<sup>3</sup>Sold to Marine Commerce of London in 1966, then to Greek owner Lampsis Navigation Ltd. in 1969 and renamed **Lampsis** (reg. Monrovia). In 1972 renamed **Drosia** under same owner. On Thursday, 11 December 1975, en route to New York from Jamaica with a cargo of sugar, she foundered at 35°26´N, 74°34´W (some 60 miles ENE of Cape Hatteras, NC). Captain V. Theodorou, her master, reported that one of the hatch covers ruptured (two were steel and two wooden) flooding a hold. She sank in four minutes. Eight of the crew were reported lost, and seventeen saved.

<u>Sources</u>: Lloyd's Registers and Casualty Returns Montreal Herald, 17 May 1955 White Pass Container Route News, March 1969 Wikipedia Yukon Museum

# Maybe?

The greens keeper replied, "Oh, yes, that's a group of blind fire-fighters. They all lost their sight saving our clubhouse from a fire last year, so we always let them play for free anytime."

The group was silent for a moment. Then:

- the vicar said, "That's so sad. I think I will say a special prayer for them tonight."
- the doctor said, "Good idea. And I'm going to call my optician pal and see if there's anything he can do for them."
- the engineer said, "So why can't they play at night?"

# Predicting the Ocean Tide

A summary of the presentation made to the Society on 15 January, 2015 by Philip L. Woodworth of the National Oceanography Centre.

Knowledge of how the ocean tide changes from day to day is vitally important for many practical and scientific reasons. For example, coastal engineers need to know what the highest tides might be at a particular location so that they can design defences to protect homes from flooding. Oceanographers need information on many aspects of the tide so as to understand the physical environment of the ocean, its biology and chemistry.

However, the most obvious application of knowledge of the tide for a major port like Liverpool is in the production of tide tables. These are lists of predicted heights and times of high and low waters (usually two of each per day) and they enable mariners to know how much water there will be under the keel of a ship as it enters or leaves a dock. Such tables are often summarised in newspapers and diaries, so providing important information for many other coastal users (e.g. when best to go fishing, or when it is safe to walk to Hilbre Island).

This short article mentions the important role Liverpool has played in developing methods for predicting the tide and in the production of tide tables.

The story can start in 1770 when the brothers Richard and George Holden published the first high-quality, publicly-accessible tide tables in the UK. These Liverpool tables were a vast improvement on what was available before, and they continued to be produced by different family members for almost 100 years, with the 'Holden Almanack and Tide Table' published by different owners for a further century.

Richard and George were not 'scientists'. Richard was a Liverpool schoolmaster and George a curate at a remote location on the Lancashire-Yorkshire border. However, they do appear to have been connected with people who could convey new ideas in tidal theory and provide data to refine those ideas, and then Richard was good enough a mathematician to convert those ideas into practical tables. One of the key people involved was the astronomer James Ferguson FRS, who visited Liverpool many times to give talks on scientific subjects. He would have known of the work of Daniel Bernoulli some years before who had demonstrated the principle of producing tide tables for locations like Liverpool (or Brest in his case) where there are two high tides a day. A second key person was William Hutchinson, the famous Liverpool privateer and dockmaster, who provided the Holdens with his first years of measurements of heights and times of high water from which they could finetune their methods. Hutchinson was a friend of Richard Holden and James Ferguson, so ideas about tides will have got around.

TI	DF	TA	RII	7
11.	DE	1 1 1	DLI	-,
She	wing the	(Solar)	TIMES of	_
HI	G H	W	TTE	R,
and a	AN	DALS	0	
The	HEIGH	ITS of t	he TIDE	s,
	A 1	TH	E OV OLOT	
CUST	L I V I	ERPO	OL;	s,
For	the 3	YEAI	R 1781.	
Some N	New Aftr Which will	wıтя onomical l be very ufeful	PROBLEM	ıs,
The Wor Gentle	Publ fhipful the men of th of LI	ifhed by Order MAYOR, e COMMO FERPO	BAILIFFS, N-COUNCI OL.	and L
Calcula	ted by the And	Rev. Mr his SO	G. HOLDI N,	EN,
According	to the The	ory of the lat	te MrR. HoL	DEN.
	To be	continued Yes	wh.]	***
Then halt i	et them their	Bounds, which	they shall not p PSAL. civ.	afs. v. g.
PRINTE	D AND	SOLD BY	J. SIBBA	LD.
1000000	(Pris	Sbille	R.)	

Cover page of the 1781 Holden tables, the earliest surviving set, from the British Library

7 A J D. F Firft Qr. 2 Lat Qr. 17	N 1	U A.	Full New	Y, Mos	17 D. 1	81. н. м 8 5	1M. 8M	Clock bef.	
DAYS.   M			prn.	Ev	en.	Hei	ghts	Sun.	
	-	H.	M.	H.	M	2.	I.	М.	1
Monday [	1	3	3	3	24	13	0	4	
Tueiday	2	3	47	4	11	12	4	ś	
Wednefday	3	4	37	5	4	11	9		
Thuriday	4	5	34	6	6	11	8		1
Friday	5	6	38	7	10	11	10	6	Ł
Saturday	6	7	44	8	13	12	6		1
SUNDAY	7	8	41	9	7	13	5	7	
Monday	8	9	31	9	55	14	5		
Tueiday	9	10	18	10	40	15	5	8	1
Wedneiday	10	11	2	11	24	16	5		1
Thurlday	11	11	45			17	4		1
Friday	12	0	7	0	28	18	0	9	
Saturday	13	0	50	1	13	18	3		1
SUNDAY	14	1	36	1	59	18	1		ŧ.
Monday	15	2	22	2	46	17	0	10	ł.
Tueiday	10	3	11	3	37	10	8		1
Wedneiday	17	4	4	4	34	15	0		
Thuriday	18	5	4	5	37	14	0	11	
Friday	19	6	11	0	50	13	8		
Saturday .	20	17	27	8	5	13	5		
SUNDAT	21	8	39	9	9	13	10	12	
Monday	22	9	37	10	3	14	4		
Tueiday	23	10	28	10	50	14	11		1
Wednelday	24	11	10	11	29	15	0		
Thuriday	25	11	48	-		10	9	13	1
Friday	20	0	5	0	24	10	2		
Saturday	27	0	41	0	57	16	2		
SUNDAY	28	1	14	1	30	15	10		1
Monday	25	1	40	2	3	15	4		
Tuelday	30	2	19	2	36	14	7		1
Wedneiday	131	2	54	- 3	12	113	8	14	1

Example for January 1781 showing the predicted times of high water, and one height for the period between 0600 and 1800. The format of the tables was basically the same for a century.

In the Bernoulli method, which the Holdens adapted, the only thing you need to know is where the Moon will be in the sky at a particular time. (The ocean tide depends on both the Moon and the Sun, the role of the Moon being approximately twice as important as the Sun, but knowledge of where the Sun is in the sky is more straightforward.) The final key component for the Holdens to make their predictions was the start of publication of the Nautical Almanac under the direction of the 5<sup>th</sup> Astronomer Royal Neville Maskelyne. As is well-known, the Nautical Almanac was published primarily for the purpose of

navigation at sea using the method of 'lunar distances'. However, the tables of lunar and solar parameters contained in the 1767 and subsequent editions were in an ideal form for application to Bernoulli's method, and, once the Holden technique had been established, the Almanac was the only source of information required for the ongoing computation of the tide prediction tables.

Although Richard Holden was the mathematician of the family, the routine production of the tables was made by his brother Rev. George Holden. He was succeeded by his son and grandson, all called George and similarly ordained. After 1865, when grandson George died, the tables continued to be published by other people for over another century up to 1974, and to anyone who bought them they would have looked functionally the same. However, by the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Bernoulli/Holden method was no longer the most accurate, and the different people (notably Arthur Doodson mentioned below) who took over the computation of the 'Holden' predictions used much improved methods.

In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the British Association for the Advancement of Science coordinated major studies into better ways to measure, understand and predict the ocean tide. Important scientists in that work included Sir George Darwin FRS (the son of Charles Darwin) and William Thomson (later Lord Kelvin). This work centered on the development of the 'harmonic method' in which, instead of having one Moon and one Sun, one imagined having many 100s of moons and suns (or 'satellites') which altogether simulated the more complicated aspects of the tide due to irregularities in the lunar and solar orbits. The Moon's orbit around the Earth, and the Earth's around the Sun, are far from being simple circles and the complexity in the orbits leads to complexity in the tides.

A major advantage of the harmonic method is that it could be applied to the design of machines for simulating the tide. They were called Tide Prediction Machines (TPMs), or Kelvin machines, and were essentially sophisticated clocklike devices, or what we would now call analogue computers. Only 25 or so (plus prototypes) were ever constructed, most in Britain and several with links to Bidston Observatory. In fact, the construction of all the middle 20<sup>th</sup> century British ones was supervised at Bidston by Arthur Doodson FRS, although most were made in London (only one actually in Liverpool to my knowledge).

Bidston Observatory was the location of the Liverpool Tidal Institute (LTI). The Institute had been established at Liverpool University in 1919 under the Directorship of Joseph Proudman FRS, and it had moved to Bidston in 1929 when it became the Liverpool Observatory and Tidal Institute (LOTI). Proudman was a professor of applied mathematics, and then later of oceanography, at Liverpool University. He was an eminent tidal theorist, while his close colleague Arthur Doodson applied himself primarily to more practical aspects of devising methods for tidal predictions. Proudman, Doodson and David Cartwright were the three Fellows of the Royal Society in Bidston's history. The LOTI went through several changes of name, and eventually became the Proudman Oceanography Laboratory (POL). In 2004, POL moved from Bidston to a new building on the university campus in Liverpool, and in 2010 became a component of the National Oceanography Centre.

TPMs were used for tidal predictions up to the 1960s, primarily at Bidston but also in several other countries. Throughout this time, LOTI was responsible for the provision of predictions at many locations around the world, including the predictions for important events such as D–Day. After the 1960s, these elegant machines rapidly became museum pieces as programs for tidal predictions based on the harmonic method were readily developed for use on digital computers. Happily, most of the TPMs constructed through the years are now on display in museums around the world, including at the Science Museum in London where the first of Kelvin's machines can be seen. Two machines are kept in Liverpool and will be put on display later this year.

Tidal predictions for the UK today are produced using the same harmonic methods by two main organisations: the National Oceanography Centre in Liverpool and the UK Hydrographic Office in Taunton. The web site for the former (www.ntslf.org) gives predictions for locations around the UK for the next 28 days, and also lists the highest and lowest tides to be expected each year until 2026. Many countries now produce their own tables although both NOC and UKHO would probably claim to produce the most reliable ones given their accumulated experience with the subject.

Some suggestions for further reading are given below. The first two references are available freely by emailing plw@noc.ac.uk.

Two of the tide prediction machines that were operated at Bidston (the 'Roberts' machine and the later 'Doodson-Légé' machine) are being refurbished by the Museum and will be put on display in the National Oceanography Centre building in Brownlow Street in Liverpool later in this year (2015).

## Further Reading

- 1. Woodworth, P.L. 2002. Three Georges and one Richard Holden: the Liverpool tide table makers. Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 151, 19–51.
- 2. Woodworth, P.L. 2003. Some further biographical details of the Holden tide table makers. Proudman Oceanographic Laboratory Report No. 58. 20pp.
- 3. Cartwright, D.E. Tides: a scientific history. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1999. 292pp.
- 4. Pugh, D.T. and Woodworth, P.L. 2014. Sea-level science: Understanding tides, surges, tsunamis and mean sea-level changes. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN 9781107028197. 408pp.
- 5. Jones, J.E. 1999. From Astronomy to Oceanography a brief history of Bidston Observatory. Available from www.noc.ac.uk/f/content/downloads/ 2011/proudman-history.pdf.

## A Unique Series of Disasters First published in Sea Breezes in 1961 Submitted by The Editor

Major casualties at sea seem to have a tendency to occur, figuratively speaking, in waves. Often a bad casualty is quickly followed by another of an equally serious nature, so that the marine insurance market suffers a heavy blow and underwriters begin to wonder why they chose to enter such a profession. In the closing weeks of 1960 an unfortunate period began, bringing a series of total losses at sea which lasted into the New Year and involved some very large and heavily insured ships. Even more unfortunate was the fact that in some instances heavy loss of life occurred and it may well be of some significance that tankers, two of them big vessels of the supertanker class, predominated in the casualties.

December 1960 was only just a week old when news came of the loss of one of the largest merchant ships in the world—the Liberian flag ore-oil carrier **Sinclair Petrolore** (35,477 gross tons), owned by Universe Tankships, Inc., Monrovia, one of the Ludwig group of companies. She was on a voyage from Mena-al-Ahmadi in the Persian Gulf to Philadelphia with a cargo of oil, when on December 6, in the South Atlantic in a position about 300 miles off the coast of Brazil, an explosion occurred on board followed by fire. Soon afterwards the enormous vessel, which had a deadweight capacity of 56,089 tons, sank and 48 of her crew of 50 were picked up by the Panamanian T2 tanker **Mary Ellen Conway.** The total insured value of the hull of the **Sinclair Petrolore** was \$8,125,000 (about £2.8 million), shared between the London and American markets. Of the London proportion both Lloyd's and the various marine insurance companies were involved.

The **Sinclair Petrolore** was completed in 1955 by the National Bulk Carriers Kure Shipyard Division, Kure, Japan. Designed as a self-unloading ore-oil carrier, she carried a very large ore unloading boom which made her readily identifiable at sea. She spent most of her short career as a tanker, however, and on her maiden voyage at the end of 1955 made headlines by lifting the largest cargo of crude oil carried up to that time, loading a total of 51,330 tons at Mena-al-Ahmadi for Santos

A year later, during the Suez affair, the ship was diverted to the United Kingdom with a cargo of 52,368 tons of oil, which was allocated eventually to the Esso refinery at Fawley. Her arrival there presented some unusual problems for, with a draft of 40 ft., she only had a clearance of 3ft. 2in. at high water when alongside the Fawley jetty. By achieving a particularly fast rate of discharge it was just possible to keep her clear of the bottom as the tide fell.

She returned to Southampton with another cargo of 52,856 tons in 1957, but was thereafter mainly engaged on the run from the Persian Gulf to Santos or Philadelphia, via the Cape, returning through the Suez Canal. She did however, make a further voyage to Fawley with a cargo of 48,336 tons of oil in August of last year. Loss of the **Sinclair Petrolore**, which was a single screw steam-turbine vessel, is the biggest tanker loss so far recorded; the previous biggest loss in this class was the **World Splendour**, one of the Niarchos group tankers. She had a deadweight of 40,100 tons and sank In the Mediterranean in 1957 after an explosion and fire.

A week after this disaster there occurred an even worse calamity insofar as three ships were involved, with considerable loss of life. On the morning of December 14, in the Bosporus, near Istanbul, the Greek turbine tanker **World Harmony** (20,992 gross tons) on a voyage from Piraeus to the Russian Black Sea port of Novorossisk, collided with the Yugoslav tanker **Perar Zoranic** (17,830 gross tons), bound from Tuapse to Hamburg with petrol and benzine. Fire broke out in both ships, followed by explosions; locked together the two tankers drifted on to the Turkish steamer **Tarsus** (9,451 gross tons), anchored nearby, setting her on fire also. The fire swept through all three ships, and the death roll resulting from the triple collision mounted to 52, including some members of the Turkish Customs who were on board the **Tarsus**. All the ships were practically gutted and the movement of shipping in the Bosporus was suspended for some days.

Dating from 1954, the **World Harmony** was built by the Vickers-Armstrong yard at Walker-on-Tyne and was owned by the World Tankers Corporation, one of the Niarchos group of companies. The **Petar Zoranic** was virtually a new ship, having been built in 1960 to the order of the Jugoslavenska Tankerska Plov while the third ship involved, the **Tarsus**, was originally the American Export liner **Exochorda**, built in 1931 by the New York Shipbuilding Company, Camden, New Jersey. A turbine steamer, she was sold to the Turkish Denizcilik Bankasi organisation in 1948

Reflecting upon the loss of three big tankers in a single week, the words of the chairman of the Liverpool Underwriters' Association at their annual general meeting held in February provided food for serious thought on the subject of the supertanker. Referring to these casualties he said that one could not help wondering whether the size of tankers had not advanced in two respects beyond the margin of safety – their fire hazard and their unwieldiness navigationally. When it is realised that tankers in excess of 100,000 tons deadweight are now an accomplished fact it is perhaps not unreasonable to ask whether the line should now be drawn somewhere in the matter of large hulk oil carriers.

At the turn of the year the story of disaster and tragedy at sea continued with news of fire on board the Indian steamer **Indian Navigator** outward bound from Liverpool to Calcutta. Some 60 miles from the Scilly Isles on December 31 a violent explosion occurred in No. 4 hold affecting the engine-room and No. 5 hold and resulting in an extensive fire which spread to all the accommodation. The ship had to be abandoned, the crew being picked up by the Blue Funnel liner **Menestheus** and the Holland-America liner **Dalerdyk**; one member of the crew was lost during the transfer.

The **Indian Navigator** continued to drift, still burning, and on January 1, the **Indian Success**, one of the same company's ships arrived on the scene. She succeeded in putting a boarding party of 13 men on board the burning vessel with a view to extinguishing the pockets of fire remaining and preparing for towage to the nearest port. The operation appeared to be going well when there was another unexpected explosion and the **Indian Navigator** suddenly sank.

Although an extensive search was made by the **Indian Success**, four tugs and R.A.F. aircraft, no trace was found of the salvage party, who were eventually presumed to have gone down with the ship.

Owned by the Indian Steamship Co. Ltd., Calcutta, the Indian Navigator (7,660 gross tons) was originally the U.S.S.R. Victory, built in 1944 by the California Shipbuilding Corporation, Los Angeles. One of the many Victory-type standard ships, she was a single screw turbine steamer, and was one of several similar ships bought by the Indian Steamship Co. Ltd., shortly after it was formed in 1947. Prior to hoisting the Indian flag she was of course owned by the United States Maritime Administration, although one news agency message, reporting the story of the casualty, described her as "the former Russian steamer Victory". Further comment on that masterpiece of reporting is unnecessary.

Answers to the Nautical Trivia Quiz on page 12

- 1. The Lutheran Mission, they had **Rita** and **Umboi**, running around New Britain.
- 2. The Britannic, sister-ship to the **Titanic** and **Olympic**, requisitioned as a hospital ship in WWI, struck a mine near Mudros in the Mediterranean on 21st November 1916.
- 3. The USS **Arizona** Memorial, which is over but not touching the final resting place of USS **Arizona**.
- 4. Their first ship was the **Empress of Canada**, so only a slight change of Canadian Pacific funnel colours was used to create the Carnival Line colours.
- 5. She was the last T2 still going, there were 5 versions, and they lasted well beyond their use by date, up to 60+ years from a building in 1944.
- 6. Madame Yvonne de Galle, wife of Charles de Galle, then President of France
- 7. Calchas and Diomed
- 8. (a) a bale of turtles.

# Book Review Liverpool: A History of 'The Great Port' Adrian larvis

Liverpool History Press – 2014 280 pages 170 colour and black and white photographs, maps and Illustrations. Paperback. ISBN 978-0-9573833-1-9. £14.99 (£9.99 to LNRS members. Contact Ron Jones: ron@rja-mpl.com or Tel: 0151 637 1122).

In producing this re-appraisal of the history of the port of Liverpool, Adrian Jarvis has put his extensive academic research and deep local knowledge to extremely good use. This book covers the 300 years between 1672 (when land was first acquired to begin the long process of conversion to dock use) and 1972 (when the old Mersey Docks and Harbour Board was wound up). It is a fascinating tale of impressive growth to majestic supremacy, sad decline almost to extinction and steady recovery from the 1980s to the present.



The author has performed a valuable service in avoiding well-worn local themes and bravely concentrating on more prosaic areas of port history well-hidden but utterly deserving of independent analysis. It is not a history of Liverpool. The slave trade is mercifully avoided, as is the detail of labour disputes and local politics. Social history is addressed only it touches dockside as on communities. their commercial and industrial activities. Adrian has mined the extensive but arcane archives of the old Mersey Docks and Harbour Board and revealed a series of remarkable 'killer facts'.

One is the constant difficulty the MDHB had in achieving strategic planning in the face of rapid technological change, amidst the pressures from

shipowners, Liverpool Council and various government agencies. The launching of bigger and bigger ships, with their increased cargoes and passenger traffic forced ports into a constantly reactive process to modernise existing docks and build new ones, along with their attendant handling and transportation facilities. The Board constantly found itself between the 'rock' of shipping line demands and the 'hard place' of raising capital for new dock development (on the financial markets), whilst maintaining revenue to sustain port operations. Another 'killer fact' is that the Dock Engineer spent nearly all of the port's capital funds and 75% of its annual revenue in these rounds of remorseless modernisation. Yet another finding is that whilst the Board was secretive in much of its commercial activities, it operated almost free of corruption. Particularly revealing is the way the big shipping lines (at the expense of other port users) would minimise the 'official' net registered tonnage capacities of their ships to avoid port charges. Jarvis reveals for example, that when the superliners **Mauretania** (1) and **Lusitania** went into the service, total port dues paid by Cunard to the MDHB went down, not up!

Adrian Jarvis has succeeded superbly in producing a history of the Port of Liverpool that combines painstaking research, operational insight and good humour with an independent perspective. The book is attractively presented and features stunning photographs and illustrations. It is strongly recommended to anyone interested in the underlying truth of the Port of Liverpool's story.

## The River Dee and Shipping. By LNRS Member Harry Hignett

Shipping traffic to Chester and the Dee estuary, although not regularly well documented, was always troublesome due mainly to the silting of the waterway. There are references to the port of Chester in archaeology studies and a grave-stone in the Grosvenor Museum (thought to be late fourth century) dedicated to the death of a Naval officer who lost his life in the river- his body was not found.

In the 12th century wine was being imported to Chester from Gascoigne. The evidence comes in the Chester Pipe Rolls, listing the import of wines at Chester. The charters mentioned in the Rolls state that pilotage must be paid by the shipowner or charterer but the local pilotage i.e. the Dee at Chester, must be paid by the cargo owners. The cost of local pilots could not be forecast. The arrival port in the estuary was "Red Bank of Westchester" which appears to be Dawpoole, near Thurstaston. The red cliffs are visible there today.

In the "Chester Chronicles" columns there are references to William Griffiths of Heswall who was owner and master of a ship regularly trading from the Dee to Beaumaris and North Wales and occasionally Dublin in the 1660's.

Almost a hundred years later, in the account books of John Glegg of Irby, we have information on Dee shipping. Glegg, a local wealthy landowner, was licensed by the Bishop of Chester as a notary public. His function as such was to prepare and take statements from the public for legal purposes, including taking statements from shipmasters known nowadays as 'protests'.

In the past two centuries it was customary for the master of any ship to swear a protest in front of a notary public, usually to cover any incidents or difficulties the ship may have had during the passage. Items of maritime interest appear regarding Glegg's business dealing:

### 1761

for the ship Roger and Ann

June 11	for $\frac{1}{2}$ barrel of beer value	3shi	illings
22	½ "" of ale	16	"
24	½ "" of beer	3	"
30	1/2 ""	3	"
July 6	7 half barrels beer	£11	
21	3 half """"	9	"
Aug 3	quarter brl ale 2 hf brls beer	14	"
Sept 3	quarter brl ale	8	"
Nov 9	to <b>Roger and Ann</b> at the Rock House	6	"
14	6 and half barrels beer	18	"

## 1762 April 5th

Margaret Welden, now Jones, mother of John Welden on board **Entrepide** at taking the Havana, he rec'd the first payment of the plunder money £2.17s. 9d. (Havana probably refers to the Cuban city that was attacked by a British fleet in that year).

## 1763 July 8th

John Smith of Hoolse (Hoylake?) had about a month's pay due to him from the **Laurel** when he was removed (pressed?) to the **Bedford** which was in June 1762. She went to Newfoundland and he was wounded on board her, rec'd all pay due in the **Bedford**. Sent to Mr Abraham Harman, Shadwell, London.

There were 'protests' from fifty masters – 44 ships are mentioned. The ships averaged between 60 and 70 tons some as low as 15 tons: most making short trips across the estuary to Flint, Holywell or to Beaumaris, North Wales and Dublin, occasionally to London, one making a voyage to the Baltic. The largest vessel, **Bostock**, was 160 tons.

The cargoes consisted of cloth from Bagillt and from North Wales copper ore, oysters, oats, and wheat. There were wide varieties of cargoes; groceries, flour, malt, sugar, porter and molasses from London and Bristol and Wenscot [wainscot] boards from Baltic ports.

Navigation into the Dee was increasingly difficult. Although the ships mentioned are based at Heswall, Parkgate, Dawpoole, Helbree Island also appear. One protest gives an idea as to the ship-movements of the area at that time:

### 1765 November 2nd

Hugh Edwards Master of the ship called the **Sea Horse** of Blewmorris burthen about 18 tuns appeared before John Glegg Notary Publick in Great Neston and desired an act of protest and said the said vessel was loden [at] Chester with merchants goods with salt, sugar flour and coles and bound for Blewmorris and that he saild from Chester the 31st October last and got to Helbree on the same night and the 1st October and the wind was very high at the West and the sea run very high and going into Helbree pool and she sunk in the pool and on the 1st October they got her up at Highwater Mark. On searching her they found a hole in her and many of her timers broken by reason whereof he fears her cargo is damaged John Glegg Hugh Edwards Notary Publick

Captain Moses Jenkins of the **Nancy** reported a journey from Greenfield Marsh in Wales which ended in tragedy (p. 72). He recorded that: "the wind blew, so hard that it split the sail into several peeces tho' it was a fresh sail. Then he hoist her jeb and that also split and after that he hoist her mainsail to bring her head to the sea and the mainsail gave way and then he let go his anchor with a whole cable at length but that did not bring her too and then he drove upon the sand banks and about 12 the sea run very high and the wind blew a storm and the sea made a highway over her and carryed away the cabbin scuttle and staved in the main hatches covered with a new tarpolin and immediately the said slo[o]pe sunck, he being then at the pump and the said vessel now lyes on a bank opposite Oldfield or thereabouts and this appearer says his wife and daughter and one of his men are drown[ed]."

Crew problems appear when David Ferrers, Master of the **Henry and Providence**, for example, protested on 10 December 1767 that:

"Michael MacBraid was hired as Mate of the said ship to proceed with her on her said voyage and that the said Mate absconded and was absent from the said ship on the fifth day of this instant and continued absent until the tenth of this instant notwithstanding this appearer requested and desired him to return to, the said ship and to mind his business and he still refused and this appearer says he has hired John Bleckellear in his room to proceed on the said voyage as mate thereof."

Another Master, Thomas Tompson of the **Good Intent** had to deal with three awkward members of his crew. He had on board "nine including himself" and "he unmoored the said vessel intending to proceed on his said voyage with a fair wind and then three of his men to wit John Fenley, John Bansley and John Tornbull refused to proceed on the said voyage without he wold hire another man and then he mored the said ship again at Dawpoole where she now lyes and this appearer says that nine men was his usual complement. He was forced to protest against them for:

"all losses costs detriments and damages all ready sustained or which shall or may happen to the said ship., . or her cargo for on account of her not proceed on her voyage to be all had or recovered at time or place as of right shall apertain,"

A more unusual incident concerned with an unruly crew is recorded on 16 July 1765 when Englefield Lloyd of the **Venus**:

"intimated, protested declared and said that the said ship being at Parkgate ready to sail on her said voiage the wind being then fair Peter Jackson, John Hart, John Edwards, Robert Jones, Francis Smedley and Charles Moulson came on board the ship or vessel and then and there by force and violence took the said ship or vessel from this appearer and his ships crew and got her under sail and proceeded with her up Chester river and by means and reason thereof hindered and prevented the said appearer and his ship crew from proceeding on his voyage with the said ship and cargo".

Sometimes it was not the men's character but their technical proficiency that was lacking and two unreliable pilots are cited, one of whom was George Norman. He was taken on board the **Northern Lass** by Captain Robert Hudson in August 1764. Hudson stated that he "desired the pilot to get out the largest Anchor but he refused saying that the Anchor that was got out was sufficient". The Captain went ashore for the night and came on deck again to find "the vessel nearer shore than when he left her" and reported that "she now makes much water and is damaged". The captain claimed that "her being put on shore was occasioned by the fault of the pilot not getting out the big anchor and keeping the men up, for the little anchor came home when the tide came about the vessel and tried to get her of the next tide it then blowing very fresh at West and then she drove higher on shore".

Other difficulties are recorded. There was the failure to load the ship on 19 April 1764. Andrew Munro Wilson of the **Swift** reported that his ship:

"arrived at Dawpoole on the sixth instant about six in the morning and that no lead has been brought to the said vessel or sloop as yet notwithstanding this appearer applied to Mr. Thomas Ward of Hadless according to the directions given him at or upon the eleventh instant, who told this appearer that he wold load him with all speed but has not sent any lead to the said sloop or vessel as yet."

He went on to claim demurrage and other costs sustained as a result.

Sometimes the ship itself was inadequate for the conditions it had to meet. In November 1762 the **Judea** of Dundalk sailed from Baggilt to Parkgate "to get the said vessels leeks stopped", but on the journey:

"the wind being slack, this appearer found he cold not get over the Banks to Parkgate and he brought the vessel to an anchor in deep water. When the Tide fell she took the ground and sanded herself deeply and the next flood she sprung a leek and the ships crew pumped her hard and got her free from water and they were going to set sail and by force of the tide she strained and they cold not free her again from water, and there sank and now lies there and this appearer fears she'll be lost."

Not even in harbour was a ship safe from danger, as is shown by the entry on 12 October 1764, when Antoney Murphey protested that his ship **Mary Ann**:

"lies in Dawpoole road bound for Wexford and while she lay there on Saturday last another ship, Captain Patrick Brown, Master lay the middle of the bank."

#### An after-note

About 1950 I had to take some papers to the office of a notary public in Fremantle, W.A. Whilst waiting in the office the master of a tramp ship called in with his wife to swear a 'protest'. While the master was in the inner office his wife chatted to a clerk saying that this was her first voyage at sea and said that she was relieved to find the trip had been remarkable pleasant with hardly a ripple on the sea. But, after she had left the office, it was noticed that the master's protest swore that the ship had encountered severe weather on passage.

# To Calcutta in the 1950's by L.N.R.S. Member James Pottinger

Given the transformation worked by containerisation and the current handling of bulk cargoes it is interesting to compare a round voyage to India in the 1950s.

Checking back in my diary on a list of ports visited on a single foreign voyage starting in June 1957 gives a graphic picture of the type of the then pattern of cargo movements and shipping environment common to that era.

The example used, can be fairly representative of the trading patterns common to that of most cargo liner companies, was Voyage 94 on T.& J. Brocklebank's SS **Maihar**, a ship completed as far back as 1917 by Russell & Co at Port Glasgow but considerably refurbished by Alexander Stephen at Glasgow in 1956–7.

Our first loading port was Middlesbrough, arriving on 3rd June 1957, departing on 7th and arriving at Antwerp on 8th. Here cargo worked around the clock and we left on 10th, arriving at London late on same day. Where things were a little more leisurely as it took until 19th to complete loading for the deep sea voyage.

First port of call was at the North African port of Ceuta for bunkers. This short stay took from late on 24th until early next day. We arrived at Port Said on the 2nd July; completing the canal transit and clearing Suez next evening after having anchored in the Great Bitter Lake for nearly five hours to allow the northbound convoy to pass.

Next was two days spent in Massawa, from the 7th to the 9th, a truly hell hole of a place, stinking hot without any redeeming features as far as could be ascertained. The Yellow Fever inoculation at London, received with some gloom it has to be said, prior to departure always prefaced a call at this port. Some relief was gained at next port of call Assab, the short stay being from 10th to the 13th. With the berth being fairly open and exposed, a welcome breeze wafted through the ship in contrast to the previous port.

Unfortunately it was here that the 5th Engineer Officer's collection of goldfish expired! Quite possibly this was due to tainted sand taken from a nearby beach to add to the mix at the bottom of the tank. A sad event as all watch keepers used to check when coming off watch in rough weather to see that all was well.

It was only a short hop to next port of call, Djibouti, arriving there on same evening as we left Assab, with departure next evening.



ss Maihar

On then to Aden, arriving on 15th, shifting ship on two occasions and full bunkering and water replenishment, before leaving on 17th. The passage across the Indian Ocean to Colombo was interrupted by a breakdown on 22nd which lasted almost six hours before getting under way again. Being the monsoon season we were fully exposed to the full fury of the weather, and at the mercy of the wind on the beam. With the accommodation amidships being right out to the ship's side, we were taking seas right over the boat deck.

Colombo was reached on the 26th, and we shifted ship from anchorage to berth on the 2nd August, and again on the 4th, before eventually leaving on the 7th. Our arrival at anchorage at Madras on 9th was followed by a move to the berth on next day, and moving yet again next day, finally leaving on the same evening.

We arrived at Sandheads Hooghly River pilot station on 14th, and joined a large number of ships at anchor waiting for clearance to proceed up to Calcutta, there being congestion and other delays at the port. There seemed to be little prior warning of the imminent arrival of the pilot vessel bearing authority to proceed, which appeared to arrive alongside a ship at short notice.

As noted we were in the monsoon season and so had to have the engine ready at all times and remain on sea watches. There was the need to shift ship twice due to stress of weather, one being due to a ship lying ahead dragging her anchor and coming dangerously close, obviously with engines not available.

It was not until the 31st of August that we finally took on the pilot and started moving up the Hooghly to Calcutta, arriving at the river buoys next day. Being in the bore tide season we had to use our own mooring chains to connect fore and aft to the river buoys. There was a need for the main engine being on standby for an hour on 7th and the 8th whilst the surge of the tide passed down and back up river. Such was the force of the tide that the ship was bodily lifted on each occasion. Relief came on the 9th when we moved into Kidderpore Dock and tied up at the buoys in the dock, moving to another set of buoys on the 19th and finally to quay on the 21st. Our stay at Calcutta, now referred to as Kolkata, lasted until the 27th September. From there a short passage took us to Khulna, arriving at anchor next day. This was quite a long stay, taking us up to the 18th October, whilst a procession of barges brought our cargo alongside.

We then went back to Colombo, arriving on 23rd October, anchoring and taking bunkers until berthing on 26th. Finally leaving on 1st November for passage to Aden, arriving there on 9th November. It was a short stay only for taking on board 1,242 tons of oil fuel bunkers before leaving same day to arrive at Port Sudan on 12th, and staying until the 14th.

I noted the Blue Funnel pilgrim ship **Tyndareus** was lying next to us when we were anchored in the port, and the sight of us jumping into our hidden swimming pool set down flush into the boat deck aft of the funnel occasioned some surprise to her passengers. The outward appearance of the 1917 vintage **Maihar** belied the inclusion of such an amenity!

We arrived at Suez on 17th and started the canal passage next morning, clearing Port Said early next morning after the usual convoy halt in the Great Bitter Lake. We could see the lights of Malta as we passed on the 22nd and were abreast Gibraltar on 26th. With a favourable tide we sped through the straits at 12.5 knots, a contrast to our more stately 10.5 knots.

The voyage ended at London on Sunday 1st December.

By my reckoning in a voyage taking 26 weeks, we spent no less than 130 days in port, including the 18 days when lying at Sandheads, but excluding canal passages. These figures reveal that reveal only slightly over 28% was spent on actual passage at sea.

The inordinate time spent in port was due to a variety of causes; no evening or seven day cargo working, port congestion and delays, poor and inefficient cargo handling methods, and the obvious disadvantage of carrying a multitude and large variety of cargo parcels.

## Vintage Protection & Indemnity Insurance Submitted by LNRS Member Geoff. Holmes

By definition a magazine issued by a marine underwriter (The Swedish Club which is a leading marine mutual insurer, headquartered in Gothenburg, Sweden) has to be a depressing parade of disasters. As we cannot bear to leave our reader on the last page without cheering him up, we have run a wine advisory service since the first edition of the magazine in 1969 in the hope that the wine will act as a pick me up.

The fact that this service is in Swedish does not mean that Swedish members need more cheering up than others. As we explained in the previous number, it is only a practical consequence of the fact that our choice of wine is restricted to products available in the Swedish government liquor shops and cannot therefore always be applied internationally.

However, the wine advisory service does not constitute the only contact with wine in The Swedish Club. To avoid any embarrassing misunderstandings, we hasten to point out that what we have in mind is wine as it appears in our claim files.

To limit the issue further we will disregard all cases where damage – whether falling under the Hull or P&I policy – has been caused by excessive use of wine. Through the years we have had enough cases of loss of, or damage to, the wine itself to illustrate any known aspect of the carrier's liability. Space available does not allow us to save more than one of these cases from oblivion.

A wine-tanker insured with The Swedish Club for P&I carried red wine from Algeria to a Black Sea port. When the tank lids were opened prior to discharging the receivers claimed that the wine had a smell of petroleum. Samples were drawn and analysed. The result confirmed the charge. Discharging was stopped and the ship arrested. All attempts to release her against a guarantee failed. When the ship had been lying idle for three weeks a representative of the Club went to Moscow together with a lawyer and a representative of the shipowner. After one week of negotiations the ship was released.

In the meantime we investigated the possible cause of the

contamination. The tanks had been recently coated. The ship had not carried any petroleum products for a very long time. Her tanks seemed to have been clean enough. We soon found out, however, that the vineyards in Algeria were situated high up in the Atlas mountains. The wine had been brought to the port of loading in road tankers. When they had emptied their loads into a shore tank, from which loading was going on, they returned to the mountains to fetch more wine. But was there not a need for oil up in the mountains? Was it not a shame to let the lorries return empty? Wine one way and oil the other – well, if our suspicion was correct that somebody along the line made a side profit, then the end result would be just what we had found on board the ship.

The answer to our question would be easy to find. During loading in Algeria a considerable number of samples had been drawn on the ship's behalf from the loading tank, from the pipelines and on different levels in the ship's tanks. In all there were about 50 sealed samples in one litre bottles on board the ship. Once she had been released from the arrest we would have the samples analysed and the proof secured that this was a pre-shipment damage for which the ship would not be responsible.

Therefore, when our problems in Russia had been solved and discharging completed, we hastened to the ship's first port of call to retrieve the samples. Imagine our disappointment when we found that all the samples had been consumed by a thirsty mate on the way out! Obviously he did not see the difference between tasting and testing the samples.

Without proof the shipowner was a sitting duck when the claim was filed some months later. Even if we managed to negotiate a compromise settlement the amount was considerable. In fact the price per litre undoubtedly placed the bottles consumed by the mate among the most expensive vintage wines ever.

What do we learn from this?

• That according to all laws the ship owner needs proof from the ship to escape liability.

• That the ship should leave the legal considerations in general and testing of samples in particular to the experts.

• That the most expensive wine does not always taste best.

With the last conclusion we are back where we started – at The Swedish Club wine advisory service. We do not know what became of our unfortunate contaminated red wine. We sincerely hope it did never bless any dinner table. However, dear reader, beware if you find a bottle labelled:

Chateau Malheur d'Assurance 1969 - Vin Rouge Malplace.

One thing is for sure, it would never be recommended in our wine advisory service