The Liverpool Nautical Research Society
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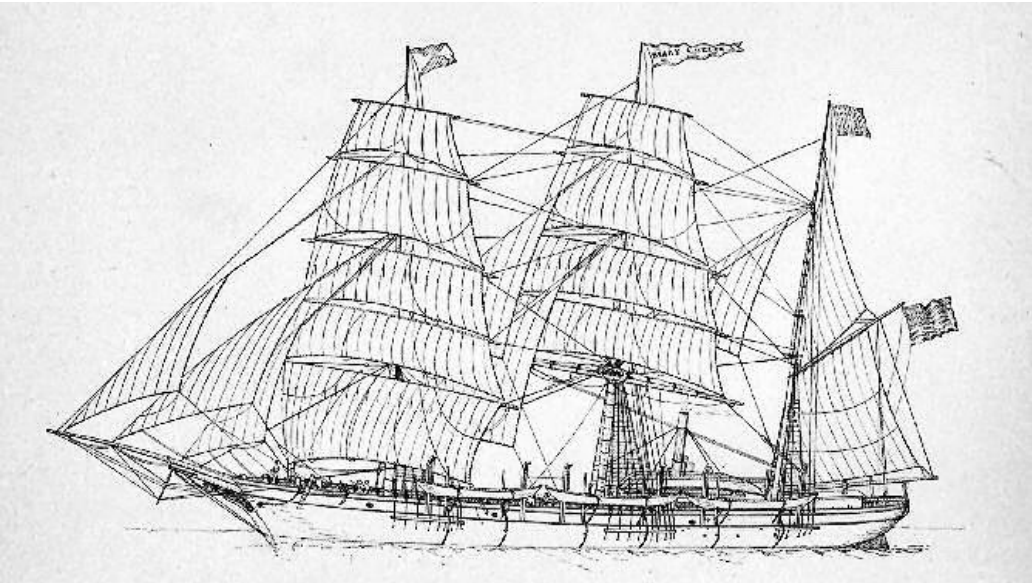

Steam whaling bark **Mary & Helen**, New Bedford, Mass. Wikimedia Commons Page 31

SS **Pacific** (1849) pictured rescuing the crew of the barque **Jesse Stevens** 1852
Courtesy Wikimedia See page 3

Discovery (arriving Liverpool), showing the clear area aft used for the evacuation
Courtesy Wikimedia See page 22

The Liverpool Nautical Research Society

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Liverpool Nautical Research Society
Schedule of talks for the 2017 - 2017 Season

Ian Duckett, Talks Secretary

September 15th ‘The Sinking of RMS **Tayleur**:
The Lost Story of Liverpool’s Victorian **Titanic** ’
By Gill Hoffs

Both the **Tayleur** and the **Titanic** were operated by the White Star Line. Both were heralded as the most splendid ships of their time and both sank in tragic circumstances on their maiden voyage, the **Tayleur** some 60 years before the **Titanic**. Author Gill Hoffs recounts the story of the **Tayleur**.’

October 20th ‘Liverpool and West Africa:
The twilight years of a very individual trade
By John Goble

British sea trade with West Africa was principally identified with Liverpool. It began during the era of slavery and eventually produced the formation of several new African nations. This presentation illustrates the special nature of the trade and offers some explanation as to its eventual and possibly premature collapse.’

November 17th ‘General Average and its application with regard to the explosion on board the **CMA Djakarta**
By Gordon Line

This is the story of an explosion aboard the **CMA Djakarta** and the presentation describes the concept of General Average followed by an account of the explosion, the salvage operation by Smit Tak and the work then carried out by marine surveyors in Malta and Croatia.’

December 15th ‘A visual account of the construction of the RMS **Queen Elizabeth 2’**
By Brian Price

Brian Price served at sea for 44 years, mainly with Cunard and was the longest serving Cruise Director aboard the QE2. This presentation uses Cunard official slides and was put together with the help of navigating, engineer and electrical officers, who served aboard her, for delivery to her on board passengers.’

January 19th

'The Establishment v Pirate Radio Ships'
By David White

Many members will have lived through the evolution of public radio broadcasting in this country without realising what drove developments. This talk, which could be sub-titled "A History of Radio Broadcasting in less than 45 minutes" is intended to clarify what happened, and why, from the earliest shaky start to the present day'

February 16th

'The Port of Montreal and the Top Hat and Gold Headed Cane Award'
By Captain Peter Woods

This is the story of the 1990 award by the Port of Montreal to Canadian Pacific Master, Peter Woods, whose ship the **Canmar Venture** was the first ocean going commercial vessel to dock in the port that year.'

March 16th

'Shackleton's Last Great Journey'
By Shaun Lewis

In August 1914, Shackleton and his men set out for the Antarctic, on-board the **Endurance**, with the aim of completing the first crossing of the continent. Sadly their ship was trapped and destroyed by the ice leaving the party marooned thousands of miles from home. This talk will outline how the men survived a ten month ordeal and how they were ultimately rescued '

April 20th

'Chinese Seamen in the Allied Merchant Fleets during WW2 '
By Yvonne Foley

Chinese seamen sailed in all the major allied merchant fleets during the second world war and, in the British Merchant Navy, there were over 20,000 Chinese crew, many sailing out of Liverpool. Paid significantly less than other seamen, after the war their pay was cut and the majority were forced out of their adopted country '

May 18th

'The Siege and Rescue of Malta during World War 2'
By Danny Marks

Our speaker, a retired RN Engineer Officer, is a native of Malta and lived through the war years on the island. His talk is thus a very personal account of the siege, with emphasis on the relief convoys that saved the island from capitulation. The talk incorporates some fascinating archive film footage'

Some Thoughts on the Loss of the **Pacific**

by L.N.R.S. Member Harry Hignett

It is not always known that over the last three-quarters of a century members of the LNRS have produced more than 250 books. They are also raising many issues of on-going research.

One such is the discovery of a 1856 wreck that had puzzled many historians. The loss was the **Pacific,** a large transatlantic liner and paddle steamer which had disappeared after departing from Liverpool. She left Liverpool three days in advance of the maiden voyage of the **Persia** the first iron steamer of the Cunard Line: an invitation to a race. When the **Persia a**rrived in New York there was no information of the **Pacific.** It was assumed that the **Pacific** had struck an ice-berg and perished. In fact the **Persia** herself struck an ice-berg on the way across.

In 1989 Society members Jack Smart and Peter Day were diving professionally recovering items from the wreck of the **Royal Charter** in Red Wharf Bay, Anglesey. A local fisherman told them that they frequently had nets damaged by an apparently unknown and unmarked wreck half way between Anglesey and the Isle of Man. Jack and Peter spent some time investigating, sounding suggested areas and promptly made a full survey.

The wreck was found in deep water that allowed divers only 30 minutes duration and only at Low Water Spring tides over a couple of days. They also found another wreck perhaps 3 miles away. The measurements of the two were compared and when placed together indicated a large single vessel probably a paddle steamer. There were large amounts of coal around the wrecks, a notable amount of crockery and a large heap of copper wire reels were found. After Peter and Jack researched the Merseyside Archives it was seen that the wreck could be that of the **Pacific.** The Liverpool Dock books where the **Pacific l**oaded, listed material entering and leaving the docks, amongst which were copper reels and also crockery date-marked 1855. At that time a considerable quantity of copper wire was used for communications for the new rail network and new urban areas.

Recovered crockery from wreck site

It was almost certain that the wrecks were of the **Pacific.** The agents for the Collins Line were Brown Brothers of New York: William Brown an important Liverpool business man was also a partner. Jack & Peter contacted Brown Brothers of New York and leaned that they still owned the wrecks and were

given sole permission to recover material from the wrecks. From a conversation with a 2nd officer of an Irish Sea ferry they learned that a couple of small boats were assisting people diving over the wrecks. Their enquiries brought about the identity of the group of divers on the wrecks, and they contacted the divers through the Merseyside Museum and Liverpool University Department of History. These interlopers claimed they were diving on the wreck of the **Ocean Monarch** (which sank in 1843). And when a crate of crockery from the **Pacific w**as offered for sale in New York, Brown Brothers demanded it be returned to the UK: a crate of smashed crockery arrived in Liverpool.

In 1995 during a paper read by Professor Edward Sloan, of a New England university, on the American Collins Line he said the **Pacific** had an unknown fate. Members of the LNRS were very pleased to enlighten him.

From the 1980's discovery it is assumed that an explosion on the **Pacific** off Anglesey caused the wreck – it is strange that no indication, wreckage or bodies, appeared at the time

As late as 1970 the following appeared in Hocking's Disasters at Sea 1840 – 1962

Pacific

Collins Line; 1849; William Brown, New York; 2,860 tons: 282 x 45 x 31·5, 800 n.h.p.; 13 knots; side lever engines.

The **Pacific** was one of the four famous wooden paddle steamers, the **Atlantic, Arctic, Baltic** and **Pacific**, with which Mr. E. K. Collins of New York commenced the Collins Line, as an American rival to the Cunard Line, in 1850.

The **Pacific** created a name for herself in May 1851, when she crossed from New York to Liverpool in nine days 20 hours ten minutes. During 1852 the Collins Line put up an average of 11 days 22 hours on the westbound passage for all four ships, an achievement which won it much patronage.

The **Pacific** left Liverpool on January 23rd, 1856, with 186 persons on board, of whom 145 were passengers and 41 crew. She was never heard of again, nor was any wreckage, message or other token of her washed up in the ensuing years.

This was the second of the four ships to be lost, the **Arctic** having been lost in a collision two years previously.

A side issue of the wreck brings information of a secret and illegal arrangement between Charles MacIver manager of the Cunard line and Collins owner of the **Pacific.** They agreed to pool the income of the freight and passenger fares and share all equally, Collins taking the passengers and Cunard the cargoes. William Brown of Brown, Shipley & Co, Liverpool agents of the **Pacific** was party to the arrangement. Brown was also a partner in Brown Brothers of New York, the insurers of the vessel.

Remember Those Days .....

A sample from the archives, and published by kind permission of Sea Breezes.
April to June, 1949

Formally opened by Vice Admiral Cedric S. Holland, C.B. in September 1948, Merseyside Master Mariner's clubship **Landfall**, a converted Canadian-built L.C.T., has now become a permanent part of the Mersey waterfront and a popular rendezvous for club members. Last month Sir Robert Burton-Chadwick, Bart., the founder and first Deputy Master of the Honourable Company of Master Mariners, was installed as President of the club, and Commander the Hon. F.H. Cripps, D.S.O., D.L., who had been President since 1946, as the clubship's first Master. Objects of the club are to provide and maintain a clubhouse in which master mariners in the port can meet their friends and shipmates in a social atmosphere, and to provide daily lunches at which lady guests will be welcomed. The **Landfall'**s amenities include a restaurant with a seating capacity for 60 persons, a bar, a foyer and main lounge, reading and committee rooms, sleeping accommodation for 5 persons, and cloakroom and toilet facilities.
For the first time since the outbreak of the Second World War a Canadian Pacific trans-Atlantic liner is wearing the Blue Ensign. The ship is the 20,000 ton **Empress of France**, on board of which her Commander, Captain B. Grant, Chief officer, First officer, Second officer and three Able Seamen comprise the liner's complement of Naval Reserve members. Another Canadian Pacific liner, the **Empress of Australia**, has flown the Blue Ensign for a short period since 1939 but she is not engaged on the North Atlantic commercial service; being requisitioned by the Ministry of Transport and employed as a troopship.

On February 22, in the library at Lloyd's, Mr R.W. Mortleman presented Captain John Kennedy, lately master of the coasting steamer **Helen Craig**, with a silver salver and a tea service in recognition of his long and outstanding service. Captain Kennedy went to sea in 1883 and in 1893 he joined the **Helen Craig** as an able seaman, and after serving ten years was appointed mate. Fifteen years later he was appointed master, and served continuously in that capacity until he retired last Christmas. His service of fifty-six years in one ship is believed to be a record. Mr Mortleman said that in both the First and Second World Wars Captain Kennedy was in the thick of the struggle. In 1944 he was awarded the M.B.E. for his war service. [Editor's note: Although initially designed as a private leisure steamer the 400 ton **Helen Craig w**as launched at Belfast in 1890 and plied the Belfast - Preston route continually from then to 1959 when sold for scrapping at Cork. She used her original boiler and engine throughout.]

After her arrival in New York from Trieste on April 14 last, the U.S. Maritime Commission decided to lay-up the **Atenas** and thereafter to offer her for sale for breaking up. This has happened to all the pre-war fleet of the United Fruit Company which the War Shipping Administration requisitioned. Two weeks later the **Atenas** was towed from her New York pier and taken 20 miles up the Hudson River, where she will lie until sold.

April to June, 1962

The largest ship to be built in New Zealand, the cargo-passenger vessel **Wairua** recently entered service between the southland port of Bluff and Stewart Island. Of 750 tons displacement, 150ft., long by 31ft. beam and 14ft. draft she carries 300 passengers at a speed of 12 knots. On occasion she may also operate the lighthouse service or run as far south as Campbell Island.

Recent sale of the **Devonshire** leaves British India's **Nevasa** and Bibby Line's **Oxfordshire** as the sole permanent troopships operating under the British flag. Yet even their future is in doubt as a recent Government report recommended their charters be terminated to enable the use of air transport in all cases. It is difficult to forecast what other use could be found for such large ships.

Owned by Associated Humber Lines, the **Fountains Abbey** was on her regular weekly passage to Hull, when fire broke out in number 1 hatch, during a strong gale. The crew were driven back by dense white smoke and fumes, leading to the decision to abandon ship some 67 miles off Spurn Head. Eighteen crew members were picked up by the trawler **John O'Hough**, but two injured men could not be brought onboard and the lifeboat drifted away; later to be found by a Norwegian vessel, both men having died in the meantime. Eventually the master, Captain F.W. Wooler, and radio officer were taken off by the trawler **Boston Spitfire**. By now the ship was well alight below the bridge structure, with red hot decks. After three days, and burnt out from stem to stern, **Fountains Abbey** was taken in tow, and subsequently broken up at Bruges.

Cross-channel services had been a monopoly of the national railway companies and so Townsend Brothers Ferries Ltd. accepted a major challenge when in 1930 when they purchased the minesweeper H.M.S. **Ford** (built at Port Glasgow in 1919 with triple expansion engines by Ailsa Shipbuilding, Troon) and renamed her **Forde** for conversion to a passenger and car ferry for the Dover - Calais route. She operated until the outbreak of war and afterwards recommenced her old route. But by 1949 she needed replacement and so the former 'River'-class frigate H.M.S. **Halladale** (1,370 gross tons and built by Inglis at Glasgow in 1944) was purchased and converted by the Cork Dockyard Co., at Rushbrooke at a cost of £77,000. With provision for 388 first-class passengers and 60 cars she entered service in April, 1950 - since when she has carried nearly a million passengers and more than 250,000 cars. In 1960, with cross channel demand constantly increasing it was time for her to be replaced.

Her replacement is to be the **Free Enterprise** which will carry up to 850 passengers and 130 cars. Powered by two 12-cylinder Smit-M.A.N. oil engines and cruising at 20 knots, she will have enhanced manoeuvrability from twin rudders fitted directly in the propellor wake, together with a bow rudder and $3^{1}/_{2}$ ton bow thrust unit to facilitate berthing.

Amco Voyager's Last Cruise

By Captain C. Jackson

First printed in 'Blue Star Gangway'

At lunch time on Sunday 3 May, 1987, whilst the **Southland Star** was in the Pacific on passage from Los Angeles to Auckland, the second officer sighted a large container vessel ahead of us. As we approached he was able to ascertain that she was stopped and we could see that her port lifeboat was missing, the davits were turned out, and the falls hung limp in the water.

We altered course and took a wide circle round the ship, looking for signs of her pitching and rolling in the long low swell that was running. Having established that she was in fact afloat and had not been abandoned as a consequence of encountering some hitherto unknown reef, we came closer for a better view.

We attempted to establish contact by calling on the VHF radio, aldis lamp and blowing the whistle, but there was no sign of life on board. Soon we were close enough to read **Amco Voyager**, New York on the stern and we relayed this name, together with the position and a description of the ship, to the US Coastguard in Honolulu, with a request for information about her. Captain Owen of Blueport ACT, Wellington, was also contacted and received a similar request.

Whilst awaiting replies we reduced speed and made several circles around the derelict in an attempt to find some clue to her apparent abandonment. She was 'light ship', upright, and had no excess of trim whilst the red boot-topping was heavily fouled with marine growth, suggesting that she had been at sea for some considerable time.

The stem appeared to have suffered some slight damage and the starboard bridge wing was buckled, but there were no other outward signs of damage or fire. The port anchor had been removed and the cable led through the centre Panama lead, and eyes of mooring ropes peeped through the other Panama leads on each side of the foc'sle.

Mooring ropes, heavy with weed from long immersion, trailed astern, and both pilot ladders hung to the water's edge. The forward accommodation block had once born the logo of Seatrain Lines, but this had been painted out and the metal plates which had given the tall white funnels its distinctive colours had been removed and were propped up against its base.

Given these clues one did not have to be particularly alert to conclude that **Amco Voyager** had been under tow and was probably making that last sad journey to the breaker's yard when fate intervened to prolong her life. There was something quite eerie about this large ship, deserted and alone on the ocean; the sight of the empty boatfalls moving to and fro in the lazy swell was particularly chilling. Many of the doors to the accommodation had been left open as if the crew had left in haste and one wondered if the abandonment had been desperate — even a matter of life and death.

Eventually the US Coastguard called us back and told us that their Search and Rescue Centre in San Francisco were aware that the ship had been abandoned, although they asked us for confirmation of the position, as she was a long way from their last sighting. Subsequent calculations suggested that she had in fact drifted some 3,144 miles.

The Coastguard were not able to tell us anything else about the ship or the circumstances of her abandonment, but before long Captain Owen was in touch with the following information: **Amco Voyager** was a 1020 TEU steam turbine container ship of 13,487 tons gross which in 1985-86 was listed as belonging to Idomeneous Corporation of New York. She had begun life in 1944 as the **General J.H. McRae** and sailed for 31 years under that name. In 1975 she became the **Transhawii**, being renamed the **Aguadilla** seven years later. She took her final name in 1985.

She was sold to Taiwanese shipbreakers and left New York on 8 October 1986 in a tandem tow with a sister ship, **Amco Trader**. The tug towing the two old ships was the Liberian-registered **Schnooturm**, a vessel of some 1700 tons, and the trio were bound for Kaohsiung.

On 2 December the tug suffered an engine room fire and had to be abandoned; another tug, the **Panama Chief**, found the casualty and one of her charges, but the **Voyager** sailed on alone and had apparently remained unseen since she was last reported in February. Given the most up to date information, we were able to calculate that she had in fact drifted 3,546 miles at an average speed of 0.97 knots.

We sailed off into the bright Pacific afternoon leaving **Amco Voyager** to continue on her lonely voyage westwards. All shipping in the area was warned of her presence and, if no one salves her, the chances are that she should have another 1000 miles or so of peaceful drifting before she ends her days on some coral reef in the Western Pacific.

MONDAY MEETINGS

Members meet at the Archives and Library of the
Merseyside Maritime Museum on Mondays as follows:

June	Mondays	6th, 13th., 20th, 27th
July		4th, 11th, 18th, 25th
August		1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd,
September		5th, 12th, 19th, 26th

Francis Metallic Life-boat Company

by L.N.R.S. Member Bill Ogle

This edition of the Bulletin contained an article relating to the loss in 1856 of the steamer **Pacific**, and the picture on the frontispiece is of a lithograph which depicts her engaged in the rescue of the crew of a foundering ship. The caption reads "United States Mail Steam Ship (Collins Line) **Pacific** [Captain L. Blye] rescuing the crew of the barque **Jesse Stevens** by means of Francis metallic life boat, during a heavy gale December 4th 1852 in Lat. 48^{0}N x Long. 40^{0}W. Reference to a metallic life boat as early as 1852 seemed surprising, and worthy of further investigation.

Quickly establishing that a pamphlet, together with several attachment has been digitised by Google from the library of Harvard University

This is a copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online. It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain.

The summary of the project follows this introduction. The attachment Directions for using the Life-Saving Apparatus is reprinted on page 28 of this edition and for ease of reading it has now been converted to our normal font. The full pamphlet and the attachment which lists some 65 testimonials as to their beneficial use will be available as a link from the Society web site (www.liverpoolnauticalresearchsociety.org). As will the further attachments, "An Expedition to Explore the Dead Sea and River Jordan", and the final attachment, "The Steamboat Law".

Joseph Francis (1801 - 1893) was born in Boston, Massachusetts, and grew up hearing about the frequent shipwrecks in Boston Harbour and other seaports of the north-eastern United States. With the increase in ship travel during the nineteenth century, the occurrence of shipwrecks had also multiplied. Francis observed that the most dangerous part of an ocean crossing was when approaching the shoreline because the ship's navigator had to negotiate an unfamiliar and often unmarked harbour. Tragically, during heavy weather, rescue vessels were as likely to fall victim to rocks and waves as the foundering ship. The heavy wood lifeboats in use at the time could easily capsize or be smashed against the shore.

On reaching adulthood, Francis began experimenting with different boat designs, trying to devise a lifeboat for such circumstances. He came up with the idea of using corrugated iron to give his boats a lighter but stronger hull. The ribbing of corrugated sheet iron gave it the rigidity needed to survive the elements. Although metal had been corrugated by hand hammering for thousands of years, Francis had to figure out how to mass produce ribbed sheet metal in the shape of boat hulls to make his boat feasible.

In 1847 he realised that the only way forward was by use of the hydraulic press, comprising a fixed upper die and a movable lower die which pressed iron sheets into the desired corrugated hull shape. These corrugated hulls would prove to be stronger and lighter than their wooden counterparts. He designed the necessary dies which were ordered from the Novelty Iron Works in New York City. However Francis also had to design a hydraulic press capable of several hundred tons of pressure to stamp out his metal boat.

Horatio Allen, a partner of the Novelty Iron Works, became interested in the project and, while investigating Francis and his business, Francis had realised that he needed some form of association with the Novelty iron Works because he needed money and the type of equipment the company could provide. Agreement was reached for a division of costs, facilities and profits, although Francis retained full management control of his operation.

Francis's initial metal work was on his open lifeboat and for this he received financial support from Congress, the New York Board of Underwriters, and the Humane Society to install his boats at coastal stations along the Atlantic seaboard. Francis's first corrugated boats were open surf boats which rode high on the waves. He later invented a series of life cars, (an 1850 version of today's fully enclosed boats). A line was shot by cannon to the distressed ship, which was then attached to the life cars carried by the vessel; having loaded four passengers and secured the hatch, the boat was pulled ashore, discharged its human cargo and then was re-sealed to be pulled back to the ship for the next run. The most renowned rescue involving the life cars occurred in January of 1850. The **Ayrshire** was wrecked in a terrible snow storm off the New Jersey coast; two hundred people were safely brought ashore on the life cars.

In parallel with these developments the open lifeboat for shipboard use was proving most successful, in these cases they were provided with additional buoyancy from air tight tanks fitted at bow and stern as well as under the thwarts and their use was quickly adopted for U.S. ships. The Collins Line of express passenger ships, for example, adopted Francis lifeboats for its opulent ocean steamers in the 1850s. When the **Arctic** sank with great loss of life in 1854—but its patented metallic lifeboats survived—the company ordered more Francis boats for its remaining ships. Fortunately for the crew of the barque **Jesse Stevens** they were carried on the **Pacific.**

There is some evidence that the company also operated from Hamburg and from Liverpool, presumably as a sales facility rather than manufacturing;

Francis also donated models of dies, and this sample copper sheet formed on them, to the Smithsonian in 1885.

however any clarification has proved difficult to obtain. After his success with the lifeboats, Francis went on to invent a military vessel called an amphibious duck. Francis' lifeboats and life cars remained in use into the late 1800s, being phased out as newer boats were invented.

In 1890 the United States Congress conveyed a gold medal (the highest medal ever granted by Congress) to Joseph Francis. Through his work with lifeboats, Francis had saved thousands of lives around the world. Besides this Congressional honour, Francis also received medals from The Franklin Institute; Ferdinand III, King of the Two Scillies; and the European Lifesaving Society. He was also knighted by Napoleon III of France and given the knighthood of St. Stanislaus of Russia. Internationally known and recognised at home as the father of the United States Lifesaving Service, because of him, countless lives were saved, and during one short four-year period (1850-1854), more than 2,100 passengers were rescued by his invention.

The life-car used in the **Ayrshire** wreck was donated to the Smithsonian Institution by Joseph Francis in 1885. Dimensions are 22ft. x 9ft. x 3ft.

See www.si.edu

The Steam Yacht **Rovenska**

A presentation to the Society on 21st April, 2016
By L.N.R.S. Member W.G.Williamson

The steam yacht **Rovenska** was designed by Messrs. Cox and King who were a notable company of naval architects based in London. The company was famous for their design of luxury steam and motor yachts and their other activities included acting as yacht brokers, auctioneers and builders.

The yacht was built by Ramage and Ferguson Company at their Leith Yard in 1904. This shipyard had a well deserved reputation for building elegant yachts and the **Rovenska** (Yard No. 192) was no exception. The vessel was launched on 27th March 1904 and completed in May the same year.

Ship details:

Steel construction

Length overall:	221 ft 1.5 in
Bridge length:	198 ft
Length between perpendiculars:	184 ft 10 in
Waterline length:	184 ft
Beam:	27 ft 3 in
Freeboard:	17 ft
Draught:	16 ft 4 in
Tonnage	632.81 gross, 244 net
Engine:	Ramage & Ferguson Triple expansion steam, 3-cylinders (16"+ 26"+ 42" x 27" stroke) 127 nominal HP 1000 IHP
Boilers:	Two coal-fired 180 psi, built by Ramage and Ferguson
Speed:	12 - 15½ knots
Fuel capacity:	normally carried enough coal for a 10 to 12 day cruise
Fuel consumption:	about 12 tons per day

The first owners:

The **Rovenska** was originally built for Archduchess Maria Theresa of Austria and her husband Archduke Karl Stephan. The Archduchess named the yacht after an area in Croatia where the Archduke had a luxurious villa on the Adriatic island of Losinj where he particularly liked to visit. The couple enjoyed using the imperial yacht and made many short cruises in the Adriatic, plus several long voyages including trips to St Petersburg and Spain with their six children. For example, it is known that on the 15th April 1909 the **Rovenska** was

in Venice for the Archduke invited the German Emperor, Wilhelm II and his wife on board and a tour was made of the Grand Canal.

These voyages led to a shipboard romance for the eldest daughter, Archduchess Eleonora, who fell in love with Lieut. Alfons von Kloss who commanded the Austrian Imperial yacht for four years. The young lady told her parents that she would rather spend her life as a single woman if she could not marry Alfons. Giving up all her rights to the Austrian succession the couple were married on 9th January 1913. Their 40 year marriage ended when Baron von Kloss died in 1953. They had eight children.

Sir Max Leonard Waechter, the second owner:

In late 1909 the vessel was put up for sale and on the 13th June 1910 was purchased by Sir Max Waechter, for £26,000. The **Rovenska** was then registered in London under the British flag for the first time as her name appears as number 52 in the register for 1910 and her official number was 129101.

Max Waechter had been born at Stettin in Germany but aged 22 settled in England and was naturalised in 1865. He was a senior partner in Messrs Bessler Waechter and Company of London, Liverpool, Glasgow and Newcastle. This company dealt in a number of commodities such as metals and chemicals and they also had interests in export market, mainly coke and firebricks.

Sir Max held a number of directorships in several steamship companies and with the Consolidated Petroleum Company. Having an abiding passion for European peace and on familiar terms with a lot of European royalty he wanted a vessel, reputed to be one of the largest and best of her class ever built, to entertain his influential acquaintances. Lavish parties were held on board and Waechter used the vessel to have discussions with heads of state, diplomats etc. Sir Max lived in Richmond Surrey and was a member of the Royal Thames Yacht Club and Royal Harwich Yacht Club.

In his three years ownership of **Rovenska** this very successful and talented businessman is known to have made two major voyages. One was to the Adriatic and the Black Sea and the other to the North Sea. The former was documented by one Sigmund Munz, who was ordered by Waechter “not to be sea sick” and to wear a blue sailing suit. Munz noted that when they sailed from Fiume (present day Rijeka, Croatia), Waechter’s wife, five passengers and twenty-nine crew including four officers were on board. Lavish parties were held on board where Waechter could hold confidential discussions with his influential guests in complete privacy. Similarly when the North Sea cruise was made, ports in Norway, Denmark and Germany were visited. During this cruise Waechter hosted or was entertained by King Haakon VII of Norway, King Christian X of Denmark and Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany.

In 1913 the **Rovenska** was sold to the Russians for c£25,000 but perhaps the sale collapsed, and Gustavus Harry Fradelle Pratt, one of the original owners of Cox and King, the company which had designed the yacht, bought her in 1914. Very little is known about his period of ownership but it is possible that he bought the yacht as an investment. The Summary of Ownership in the Certificate of British Registry shows that he owned the yacht from the 14th January 1914 till the 16th September 1917 when ownership was taken over by

Francis Gordon Pratt. He was the son of Gustavus and he got possession of the ship on the death of his father (14th October 1917). Francis was sole executor of his fathers will. A mortgage of £16,000 was taken out with London and South Western Bank Ltd, 170 Fenchurch St, London and Francis relinquished ownership on 8th June 1918.

The next owner is listed as a Miss Hėlene Doris Rees (spinster) of 55 Campton Hill Court, Kensington, London and she held ownership till the 7th October 1918. The final owner shown under the British Registry was Thomas Bowen Rees, of 14 Edward Law Street, Athens, Greece who owned her till the 11th June 1919 when she was bought by Marconi who registered her as the **Elettra** in Italy and the British registry was closed.

It should be noted that the overlap of dates between private ownership and listed Admiralty service can be explained. When the Admiralty requisitioned the yacht they did not buy it, merely used it for their own purposes under the terms of Defence of the Realm Act of 8th August 1914. The act states (in part),

…..on condition that the Owners of such ships and vessels so requisitioned shall receive payment for their use and for services rendered during their employment in Government service……

Therefore the owner is perfectly entitled to sell the vessel even though it will not be physically handed over to the new owner until the Admiralty relinquishes it from their service.

Admiralty service 1915 to 1919:

After the outbreak of the First World War the **Rovenska** was requisitioned by the Admiralty on the 14th April 1915 for service with the Royal Navy. She was converted to an auxiliary patrol vessel and fitted with two 12 pound guns, her pendant number was 071. She served as an Auxiliary Patrol Group Leader and certainly was involved in anti submarine patrolling around the UK. Details of her Admiralty service are held in the National Archive, Kew in London. The ship was equipped with wireless for records show that an Arthur Richmond Z/2393 from Burnley who joined the RNVR Merseyside Division in 1916, was a telegraphist on the **Rovenska** from 11th September 1917 to 12th February 1919 when he was demobbed

Lieutenant Commander Francis F. Tower, OBE, RNVR was aged 55 in 1914 and although a gentlemen of leisure with no previous naval experience he volunteered for naval duty. He gained experience on a steam yacht with the Dover Auxiliary Patrol and was promoted. As Commander Tower RNR (1918) he acted as an assistant to the Captain-in-Charge of Auxiliary Patrol Area XIV based at Falmouth, between April 1915 and November 1917. In this capacity he was engaged on escort duties to the Mediterranean on the **Rovenska** in 1916 and 1917.

An incident that the **Rovenska** was involved in took place on the 19th August 1915 in a position about 28 miles NNW of Bishop Rock. At 7 a.m. the German U-boat **U-38** forced the collier **Restormel** to stop by firing two shells.

Attempts to escape came to nothing so the 19 crew abandoned ship and **U-38** fired a torpedo into No 2 hold.

Later at about 9 a.m. the **U-38** headed for the **Baron Erskine** outward bound from Avonmouth to New Orleans and fired a warning shot. The **Baron Erskine** immediately went to all out maximum speed heading for the safety of Lands End and meanwhile broadcasting an SOS. She was pursued and the shelling continued until the wireless aerial was brought down. The vessel then stopped, the crew abandoned ship and **U-38** fired six more shells into the hull.

The **Rovenska** happened to be in the vicinity and, on hearing the firing, steamed up to position and discovered the **Baron Erskine** still afloat and the U-boat on the surface astern of her. Although at long distance the yacht immediately opened fire but her shots fell well short of her target. Disregarding this shellfire, the U-boat then leisurely torpedoed the **Baron Erskine** and observing that ship's fate was sealed, reopened fire at the **Restormel** which was still afloat. **U-38** then torpedoed and sank this vessel. The **Rovenska** continued with her attack but her shellfire never quite reached the **U-38 w**hich made off and submerged as soon as the **Restormel** began to sink. Thwarted in her attempts to sink the U-boat all **Rovenska** could now do was to rescue the crews of the two ships and land them safely at Penzance.

The **Rovenska** was decommissioned on 30th March 1919 and put up for sale by public auction at Southampton.

Purchased by Marconi:

Guglielo Marconi bought the yacht at a public auction for £21,000 in 1919 and his company agreed to subsidise some of the cost. At some point early in 1919 the yacht was brought to Birkenhead for dry docking and a general overhaul after her war service. An item about the **Rovenska** in the Birkenhead News of Saturday 26th of April 1919 is of interest.

"This vessel is in dry dock at Birkenhead, but the Admiralty have not yet been able to make final arrangements for her overhaul after government service. Her new owner Signor Marconi who has bought her from the government intends fitting her up in first class style."

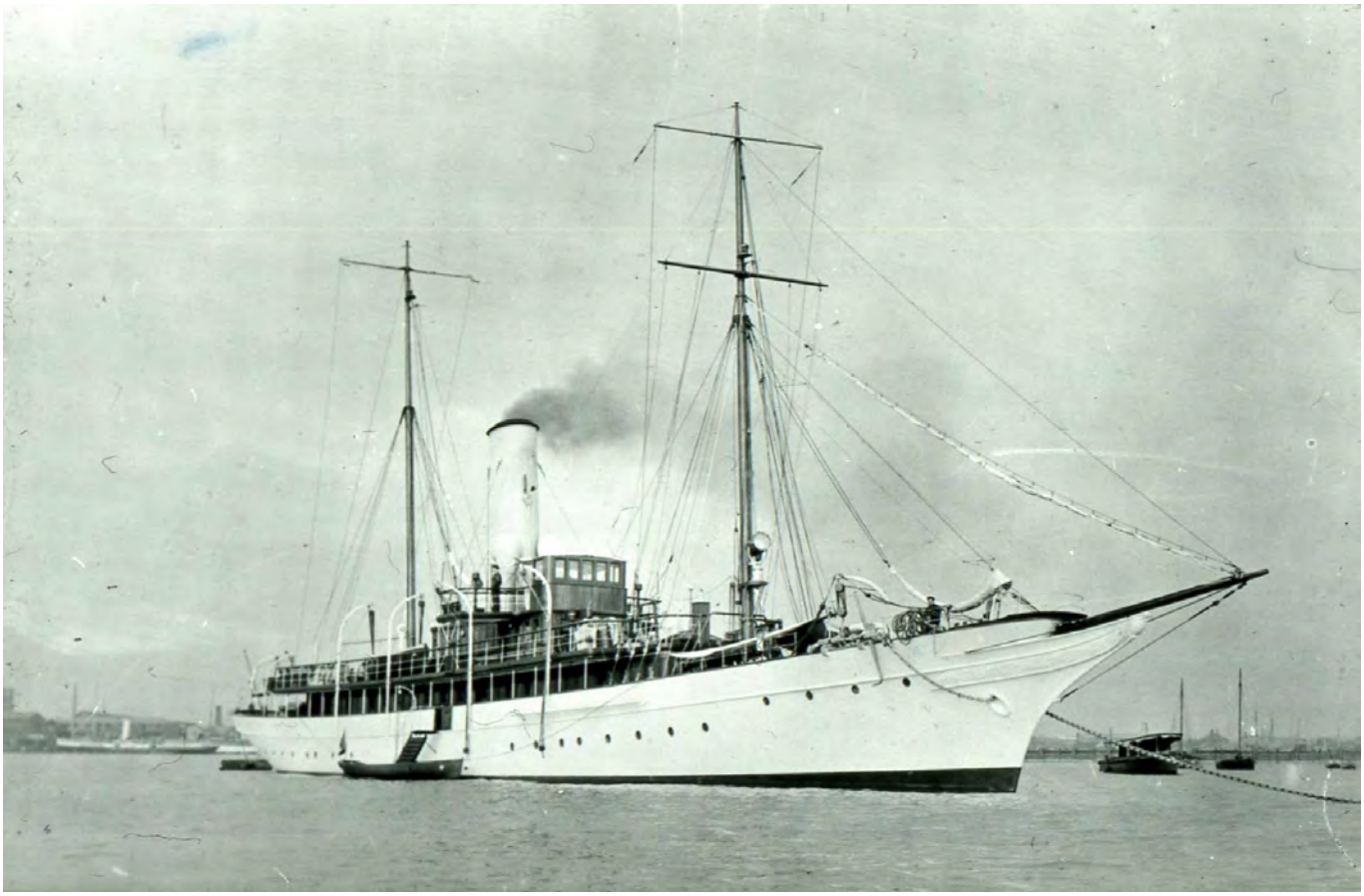
The refit took considerable time for a photograph of the **Rovenska** in the wet basin of Cammell Lairds is dated 18th November 1919. This photo held in the Wirral Archives shows the clean white lines of the newly painted vessel but obviously with further work still to be done. The vessel was in Cammell Lairds for ten months from April 1919 to January 1920.

It is likely that it was the cost of restoration work to the decks and external fittings that the Admiralty and Marconi were in discussions over. It is known that Marconi's assistant, George S. Kemp was in Birkenhead looking after the work on the yacht. Marconi described Kemp as his "first assistant and valued collaborator and friend." They first met in 1896 when Kemp, a former Royal Navy electrical and torpedo instructor, was working in the Post Office laboratory.

He became devoted to Marconi and took part in many famous experiments until Marconi died

The precise nature of the work undertaken on the vessel is not known as no records exist. However it is likely that the guns would have been removed together with ammunition magazines, minesweeping gear such as paravanes etc. The hull and external steelwork would have been scraped and repainted for it is on record that she was in "A" dry dock at Cammell Lairds. The engines would have been given a thorough overhaul and the boiler tubes repaired or renewed. However it appears that the internal cabins, the saloon etc had survived their wartime activities more or less intact. The same could not be said for her decks and the wheelhouse which apparently required urgent attention.

Kemp's diary records that new topmasts were fitted to the existing masts to improve the overall height of the masts to 89 feet. This was done to improve the efficiency of the aerial system but it also had the effect of giving the yacht an appearance of greater speed than she actually had.



Elettra on the Mersey Author's picture

Kemp was staying in the Woodside Hotel, for he sent letters to Marconi from there. For instance, in a letter dated Wednesday 14th January 1920 he reports that the steam trial had not been carried out as the condensers were filled "with shell fish of some kind." This prevented him from carrying out tests as per the intended programme as the dynamo could not be run. He notes that

batteries had been received and placed in lead lined boxes and therefore the emergency transmitter could be tested. He also notes that he had received signals on the "magnetic" (magnetic detector) which proved the aerial and its associated trunking was functioning correctly.

A Mr. Nasbet of Cammell Lairds, probably a ship manager, informed Kemp that on Friday 16th January 1920 the vessel would be taken into the river for compass adjusting. On her return she would be berthed in Birkenhead Docks and Kemp proposed sleeping on board from that time and wait for Marconi's arrival on board.

It was evident that the yacht was now close to completion of her refit and on the 15th January 1920 a Mr J.T. Williams arrived on board as the Wireless Operator for the trip to Southampton. Williams was the operator of the s.s. **Imperator** but was ordered to the **Rovenska** by the Marconi office in Water Street, Liverpool. The manager described him as being, "a very good man" and Kemp was to use him for "duties as required."

In another letter dated 27th January 1920 and headed Birkenhead Docks, Kemp notes that Marconi has a cold and wishes him a speedy recovery but urges him to come to Birkenhead even if he has to stay in bed on the yacht. He reports that his sons took a weather report from Seaforth radio station at 10 pm. This in effect was a gale warning announcing south-westerly gales. Kemp showed this report to the Captain and Chief Officer and notes that the forecast gale will prevent the ship sailing the following day. Kemp then goes on to report on some technical issues before pleading again for Marconi to arrive in order to make as he puts it, *A Grand Final Inspection from you*.

On the 29th January 1920 the yacht commenced her passage to Southampton. However due to a very severe gale the vessel could not round the Skerries and therefore she returned to the Mersey. This storm which lasted 12 hours caused damage, the crews' quarters were flooded and other water damage was sustained to the saloon and alleyways.

From Kemp's diary it is known that the yacht was anchored off New Brighton on the 31st January and remained there until the 4th February 1920 when she resumed her voyage to Southampton.

In a letter headed "At anchor in the Mersey," Kemp writes about various defects noted. He begins by observing that he had been supplying the captain with "all the weather reports together with copies of telegrams from Marconi." He went on to state that Mr Nasbet would send men the following day to make good some defects and that Nasbet agreed that some of these defects were due to his men "not doing what they came on board to do."

It appears the defects were found as the result of the **Elettra** pounding heavily during the twelve hour storm. Water appears to have entered the staterooms because shutters on the windows had not been secured. However the main reason for this damage to the state rooms was caused by water that flooded through from the vestibule where the decks were not properly caulked.

Water leaked through the seams on the outside deck due to the stressing of the ship in the heavy seas. Kemp suggested having washboards fitted to the doors and he arranged with the captain and chief mate to lock these doors in addition to securing them from the sea.

An item in the Liverpool Echo reported a blizzard blowing on the 28th January 1920 allegedly the worst storm experienced in 50 years. Exceptionally high winds were blowing along the north Wales coast and there were reports of train carriages swaying about in 75 mph winds. Train drivers were unable to see ahead because of the heavy snow and many telegraph and telephone wires were brought down.

Marconi renamed the yacht **Elettra** and it had cabins for himself and his wife plus three guest cabins, four bathrooms, an "oak study" and of course a light and airy dining room. Detailed ship plans held in the Bodleian Library and drawn by G.L. Watsons & Co, naval architects of Glasgow, show there was a cabin for a "maid". In reality this was a bedroom for Marconi's daughter Elettra.

Marconi's main reason for acquiring this yacht was to use it as a floating laboratory where he could work at peace free from the distractions of running his business. **Elettra** arrived at the River Itchen on the 6th February 1920 and placed in the hands of the famous yacht company of Camper and Nicholson. That company estimated that the work to be undertaken would take six weeks. It is not know what this work entailed although it was probably cosmetic. Kemp and his sons, Colin and Leslie, installed a 3 kW CW transmitter and made adjustments to the aerial system. Kemp also made many recordings of high-speed Morse messages coming from the Tuckerton wireless station in America and from the French station located in the Eiffel Tower in Paris.

By July 1920 the vessel, now restored to its former pre-war glory, was in London. Marconi had engaged an experienced Italian Naval officer, Commander Raffaelle Lauro to command the yacht and in July of 1920 she sailed for Naples arriving there in August.

Later the vessel was moved to La Spezia to be fitted with an 8 kW transmitter and an extensive aerial system and of course the wireless laboratory that Marconi so desired. He hired a crew of 31 men mostly from the Sorrento area and by all accounts they were a loyal and happy bunch of men. The **Rovenska** was then registered on the Italian Shipping Register under her new name of **Elettra** on the 27th October 1921 in the maritime district of Genoa (serial number 956). The final transition to the Italian flag was formalised on 21 December 1921.

It is known that in 1923 Marconi approached the ship and yacht building company of Camper and Nicholsons Ltd, of Southampton to convert the vessel from coal to oil. This company produced drawings etc of the work required for this conversion and suggested that the improvements would give the yacht a range of 3,960 miles at 11 knots. They also suggested that the conversion work would take between 4 and 5 months to complete and the cost would be £5,300.

Marconi made the following quotation to a newspaper reporter in New York.

"I was born to be a sailor," he said. "I never feel so well as when I am at sea. I like the sea not only because it takes me away from all troubles on land, but because it's the sea. I can meditate, study and experiment at my will."

He conducted many radio experiments when on board the **Elettra**. These experiments have been well documented elsewhere so will not form part of this narrative. As with previous wealthy owners Marconi used the yacht for entertaining various dignitaries and he had photographs of his guests hanging in the grand saloon. These included; King George V and Queen Mary, the King and Queen of Italy, King Alfonso of Spain and Benito Mussolini the Italian dictator.

All this entertaining didn't come cheap. During a court case in London in November 1927 it was revealed that "expenses" to a value of £8,000 were incurred in connection with the yacht (**Elettra**). In response to a question asked about the lavish entertainment etc the answer given was that "serious business" was conducted on board the vessel.

In 1927 Marconi had his first of four heart attacks that kept him weak and confined to care in Rome for a number of years. Recovering in 1933, he took a round-the-world trip with his wife. Marconi continued to experiment with radio technology in Italy until his death from heart failure in Rome on July 20th 1937. After his death David Davies, a wealthy American, tried to buy the vessel for £200,000 but Marconi's executors refused this offer and instead sold the vessel to the Italian Government. To ensure its preservation the Italian Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications paid £820,000 for the yacht on the 8th December 1938.

The vessel was to be given a major refit to bring her back to pristine condition but before this could be completed Italy was at war. The vessel was moved to Trieste where she was thought to be safe. She arrived at Trieste on 9th June 1940 and was under the custody of the shipping company S.p.A. Navigation, Italy until the 8th of September 1943.

Note. *In July 1928 Marconi had offered the yacht to Lord Auckland for £20,000. This was Frederick Eden, 6th Baron Auckland (1895–1941). He was a Flying Officer in the RAFVR, and was Assistant to the Air Attaché to Paris in 1940. He was killed in an air raid on London on 16 April 1941, aged 46.*

Elettra with the Kriegsmarine;

The German Navy requisitioned the **Elettra** and armed her with five machine guns, one 15 mm and four 20 mm in two twin turrets. The yacht had the Kriegsmarine pendant number G-107 assigned to her, but later this changed to NA-6. The Italians protested at this action to no avail, however permission was granted to put ashore radio equipment and materials used by Marconi during his experiments. This was due in no small part to the tacit

support of a Kapitän Zimmermann, the German Naval captain who commanded the ship and who was well aware of their historical importance.

The Kriegsmarine used **Elettra i**n the Adriatic as an element of the 2nd Geleit Flottille (2nd Escort Flotilla) to patrol the Dalmatian coast. This flotilla consisted of the following ships.

Küstenfrachter (Coastal freighter)
G 101 **Nazario Sauro** (later transferred to Croatian Navy)
G 102 **Jadera** (later transferred to Croatian Navy)
G103 **Grado**
G 104 **Salvore**
G 106 **San Giorgio**
G 107 **Elettra**

Elettra's Fate:

Late on the night of January 21st 1944, a German MTB with auxiliary patrol yacht **Elettra** left the anchorage near Zadar, Yugoslavia. In the morning the **Elettra** was sighted by Allied reconnaissance planes and was repeatedly machine-gunned. At about 1300 hours, three fighter bombers attacked the yacht and she was shrouded in a cloud of smoke. Although damaged the **Elettra** was still afloat and was able to reach port at Valle di Diclo. A German military report stated that a big plume of smoke was visible coming from Valle di Diclo where the burning **Elettra** was finally run aground. The ship was abandoned and became a burnt out wreck stranded in a shallow bay and here it remained for years under the control of the Yugoslavian government.

In 1962 Marshal Tito returned the wreck to the Italian Government, the hull was refloated and towed to a shipyard near Trieste. Plans to restore the yacht to her former glory came to nothing, mainly through inertia and lack of money. Therefore in 1977 the hull was cut into several pieces and transported to various museums etc throughout Italy. See list below

- Roma-Piana del Fucino (Telespazio): stern and propeller
- Roma - Museo Poste a Telecomunicazioni:dynamo and boilers
- Pontecchio Marconi Villa Griffone sede Fondaz. Marconi: cross section
- Milano (Museo Naz. Scienza a Tecnica): on-board equipment
- Venezia Museo storico: propulsion plant
- Trieste (museo del mare): two anchors
- Padriciano (Trieste): propeller shafts
- nel castello di San Giusto, mainmast
- Trieste (Arsenale San Marco): bow
- Santa Margherita Lig.: (Villa Durazzo): keel
- Mestre (VE) - Palazzo Belle Poste: section of hull
- Muggia - at the "Fameja muiesana": part of ship
- Sidney (Australia) (Circolo Marconi): small cross section of hull

References:
Wirral Archives
Bodleian Library, Oxford
Marconi, My Beloved by Christina Marconi
Imperial War Museum, London
Merseyside Maritime Museum Library
Birkenhead Library
Prof. Brian Cotton and Southampton Library
Phil Davis, Lairdside Maritime Centre, Birkenhead

"Dundee Courier" of 10th November 1927

For an excellent reference work on Elettra (in Italian) see: http://www.cherini.eu/pdf/Elettra.pdf

See also:

http://www.radiomarconi.com/marconi/elettra2/elettra.html

Groans....

"Lexiphile" is a word used to describe those that have a love for words, such as you can tune a piano, but you can't tuna fish, or:

To write with a broken pencil is . . . pointless.

When fish are in schools, they sometimes . . . take debate.

A thief who stole a calendar. . . got twelve months.

The batteries were given out . . . free of charge.

A dentist and a manicurist married . . . They fought tooth and nail.

A will is a . . . dead giveaway.

With her marriage, she got a new name . . . and a dress.

A boiled egg is . . . hard to beat.

When you've seen one shopping centre . . . you've seen a mall.

Police were called to where a three-year-old was . . . resisting a rest.

The fellow whose whole left side was cut off? . . . He's all right now.

A bicycle can't stand alone . . . it is two tyred.

When a clock is hungry . . . it goes back four seconds

The guy who fell onto an upholstery machine . . . was fully recovered.

He had a photographic memory . . . which was never developed.

Those who get too big for their britches will be . . . exposed in the end.

When she saw her first strands of gray hair. . . she thought she'd dye.

Acupuncture . . . a jab well done.

Helicopter Evacuation at Sea

by the Editor, summarising the talk given to the Society
by Captain Derrick Kemp on February 18, 2016

Captain Derrick Kemp began his sea career at the South African Training Ship General Botha in Cape Town, and then joined Ellerman and Hall Lines of Liverpool. On achievement of his Master's Certificate he transferred to the South African Marine Corporation as third officer. During his 26 years with Safmarine he served aboard a variety of the ships in the fleet, cargo passenger, refrigerated, heavy lift, container and the cadet ship. Derrick was promoted to Master in 1973 aboard the **S.A. Merchant**. During his sea career of 52 years he has travelled the world and his knowledge of cruising is to be admired. Finally he served on mv **Discovery** for Voyages of Discovery until he retired in 2011.

During this time he was involved with several helicopter evacuations, but the subject of this talk involved **Discovery** whilst on passage from the Balearic Islands to Almeria in south eastern Spain. In the early hours a passenger was diagnosed by the ship's doctor as having experienced a heart attack, and shoreside treatment was recommended.

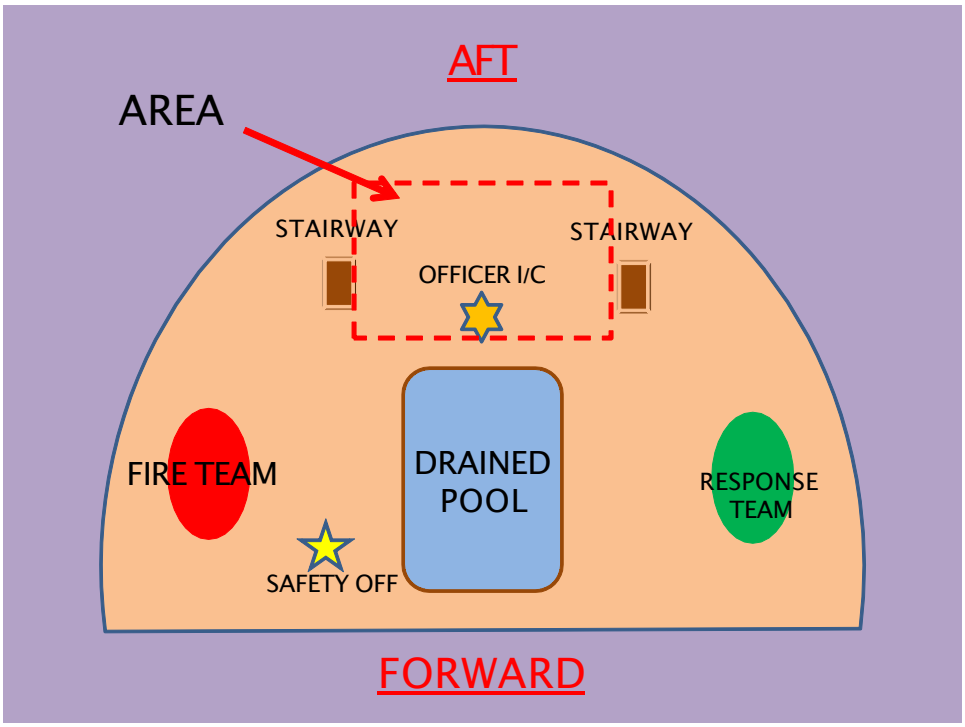
Contact was made with the nearest Regional Coordination Centre and, after consideration of the patient's condition and that **Discovery** was at that time out of helicopter range from the coast, she was requested to divert toward Alicante to close the range.

Every helicopter evacuation at sea is different, and each presents its own problems. Communications between pilot and ship are critical at all times. Whilst operations at night, or under poor weather conditions, require the utmost caution. So careful preparation is a key requirement and knowing what to expect and how to prepare for an extremely time sensitive operation is often rewarded by the saving of a life. The process does however entail an accepted procedure which includes:

1. When requesting assistance:
   - have ready and provide the search and rescue (SAR) coordinator with an accurate position, speed, course, weather conditions (ceiling, visibility, wind direction and speed as well as sea state).
   - as full a medical description of the patient's condition including their degree of mobility
2. Preparation for helicopter arrival:
   - provide continuous radio watch on the agreed frequency. This to be given by a specific officer, with a writer to hand so an accurate log is maintained.
   - select and clear the hoist area, normally at the stern, and ensure the removal of all loose gear, awnings, rigging, booms and radio antenna (ensuring the main system is unaffected). If swimming pool

is adjacent then this should be drained, or water will be dramatically removed by downdraft from the rotor.

- for a night-time hoist the area should be well illuminated, but do not shine any lights toward the helicopter. To identify your ship shine a searchlight vertically until pilot has made visual identification.
- advise SAR of hoist location so pilot can make the correct final approach
- be aware of high noise levels under the helicopter and arrange clear hand signals among the crew who will be assisting.



3. Prepare the patient:
   - attach a tag giving details of any medication administered
   - prepare a soft sided bag to include medical notes and record, identification (passport, driving license etc.) and personal items.
   - if possible the patient should wear a life jacket, and be moved close to hoist area as helicopter approaches
   - liaise with SAR to decide form of rescue device to be used
4. Hoist operations:
   - as helicopter approaches liaise to establish an appropriate course and speed, generally steer a steady course with wind c. 30^0 off the port bow and reduce speed to 7 – 8 knots as helicopter can then make the hoist with better control. The pilot will give any final instructions after seeing the ship and any obstructions in the hoist area.

- frequently a weighted trail line will be dropped, a crew member can control this line which will then guide the rescuer to the deck. On no account should this line be attached to the ship.
- the rescue device will then be dropped, on a separate cable but guided down the trail line, the device may have picked up a static electrical charge from the helicopter and so must be allowed to touch the deck before being handled by any crew member.
- if the patient can be brought to the rescue device then they should be. If not the device should be detached from the hoist and taken to the patient; meanwhile the helicopter will reel-in the hoist line and stand off. The patient should be securely strapped in, face upwards with hands also secured, the carry bag attached; and the lift can then be made.
- finally the helicopter will cast off the trail line, which may be recovered.

Happily Derrick was able to report that the patient made a full recovery.

Following his retirement Derrick can now frequently be found giving his fascinating talks to passengers on cruise liners. Recently he gave this talk and at the end a passenger approached to thank him for the talk and state that he was the passenger in question, back again to enjoy his cruises.

There is film of the helicopter evacuation in bad weather off Iceland from the mv **Skalva** (5,974 gross tons; built 1985 in Japan as **Paleisgracht** for Dutch owners, renamed when bought by the Lithuaninan Shipping Co. in 2004. Please copy this link:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=TQTYhgNwEz0

Also film of the same event from a second helicopter on scene.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6vzsY_nML8

That's not my job

There is a story told about four people named Somebody, Everybody, Anybody and Nobody. There was one important job to be done. Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about it because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it. Nobody realised that Everybody wouldn’t do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.

Scale of Provisions in 1946 under the Merchant Shipping Act

Scale of provisions required by Section 25 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1906, as amended by the Merchant Shipping (Seamen's Provisions) Order, 1945, and by the Merchant Shipping (Seamen's Provisions) (Amendment) Order, 1946

To be allowed and served out to the crew during the voyage, except in cases in which the crew furnish their own provisions.

Article	Allowance per week	Article	Allowance per week
Water	28 quarts	Sugar	1lb 5 oz
Soft bread	7 lbs	Milk } Condensed } or Dried	$9^{1}/_{3}$ ozs 4 ozs
Fresh meat (Incl.fresh offal or sausage)	4 lbs 11 ozs	Milk for Cooking } Condensed } or Dried	$4\ ^{7}/_{8}$ ozs 2 ozs
Smoked Ham or Bacon	3 ozs	Tea	3 ozs
Fresh Fish	1 lb 8 ozs	Butter	$10^{1}/_{2}$ ozs
Eggs	2 No.	Suet	2 ozs
Potatoes	7 lbs	Dried Fruits	5 ozs
Dried or Compressed Vegetables	8 ozs	Cooking Fat (other than Suet or Margerine	4 ozs
Split Peas	4 ozs	Marmalade, Jam or Syrup	8 ozs
Green Peas, Haricot Beans or Butter Beans	1 lb 4 ozs	Cheese	4 ozs
Flour	2 lbs	Pickles	$^{1}/_{4}$ pint
Rice	6 ozs	Onions	8 ozs
Oatmeal, Rolled Oats or similar cereal	6 ozs	Fine Salt	2 ozs
Coffee (with not more than 25% Chicory) or	2 ozs	Mustard Pepper	$^{1}/_{4}$ oz $^{1}/_{4}$ oz
Cocoa or Chocolate	3 ozs	Curry Powder	$^{1}/_{4}$ oz

Note: There is no entitlement under the above scale to additional quantities of butter, sugar, margarine, suet or cooking fat for use in the preparation of meals

Conditions and Exceptions in Applying Scale

1. General - The issue of provisions referred in the above scale shall be reasonably distributed throughout the week; and in the case of water, soft bread, meat and potatoes the issue shall be approximately equal each day.
2. Bread - The issue of soft bread under the scale shall not be required:-
   (a) in a ship of less than 1,000 tons gross registered tonnage; or
   (b) if rough weather or illness, or absence of cook, or force majeur renders the making of bread impracticable; but where soft bread is not issued, an equivalent amount of biscuit stored in sealed tins shall be issued instead.
3. Meat - The term "Meat" includes "Pork". The weight of fresh meat is the weight, including fat, and bone, before preparation for cooking. When fresh meat is not available, salt or preserved meat may be substituted in the proportion of $^{3}/_{4}$ lb of salt meat or $^{1}/_{2}$ lb of preserved meat for $^{1}/_{2}$ lb of fresh meat.

   Fresh offal and fresh sausage count as the equivalent of fresh meat. Other sausage counts as preserved meat.

   Note: In ships with no refrigerator it is undesirable that reliance should be placed on fresh meat keeping in good condition for more than 15 days from the date on which it is taken on board.
4. Smoked Ham or Bacon - If smoked ham or bacon is not procurable at reasonable cost, dried fish or kippers, tinned salmon, herrings, pilchards or sardines shall be substituted in the proportion of $2^{1}/_{4}$ lbs of dried fish or $1^{1}/_{2}$ lbs of kippers or tinned fish to 1 lb of smoked ham or bacon.
5. Fish - The weight of fresh fish is the gross weight before preparation for cooking.

   Dried fish or kippers, tinned salmon, herrings, pilchards or sardines may be substituted for fresh fish in the proportion of $1^{1}/_{3}$ ozs of dried fish or 1 oz of kippers or tinned fish to 2 ozs of fresh fish.
6. Eggs - Not less than four eggs, fresh or preserved in shell, shall be issued during the first fortnight of any voyage starting from a port within home trade limits.

   Two eggs for each week thereafter should be issued if obtainable at a reasonable price and if there are facilities for keeping them. Dried fish or kipper, tinned salmon, herrings, pilchards or sardines may be taken as equivalent to eggs in the proportion of $13^{1}/_{2}$ ozs of dried fish or 9 ozs of kippers or tinned fish to eight eggs.
7. Potatoes - Fresh potatoes (when procurable in a sound condition) must be issued for at least the first eight weeks of the voyage in the case of every ship leaving a port within the home trade limits, at any time between the last day of September and the first day of May, and at any other time when they can be procured at a reasonable cost.

   When fresh potatoes are not so issued, an equal amount of rice, yams, sweet potatoes or vegetables preserved in tins or an equivalent amount of dried or compressed potatoes or dried or compressed vegetables in the proportion of 1 lb to 6 lbs of fresh potatoes, or fresh bread in the proportion of 1 lb of bread to 1 lb of fresh potatoes, must be issued in their place.
8. Rice - If rice is not procurable then semolina may be carried as a substitute.

9. Dried milk - Dried milk may only be issued in lieu of condensed milk where the conditions on board are such as to enable it to be kept in good condition, in a cool, dry place, for the period during which it may be required.
10. Vegetables - Fresh vegetables should be supplied as often as possible when they can be procured at a reasonable cost and are not likely to be injurious to health.

    On each day when 1/2 lb of fresh vegetables (or vegetables preserved in tins) is supplied, these are to be regarded for the purposes of the scale as the equivalent to one day's supply of dried or compressed vegetables and of green peas, haricot or butter beans
11. Dried fruits - Dried fruits issued under the above scale must be raisins, sultanas, currants, figs, prunes, apples, pears, peaches, apricots or dates.
12. Onions - The onions to be issued under the above scale must be fresh store or dried onions when in season; and when fresh, store or dried onions are not in season, an equivalent amount of onions or other vegetables, preserved or in tins, or an equivalent amount of dried or compressed onions or other vegetables in the proportion of 1 oz to 1/2 lb of fresh onions must be issued.
13. The stokehold hands are to receive sufficient oatmeal and one quart of water extra daily while under steam.

    Note: In any case where tinned provisions are issued, the weight thereof shall be calculated exclusive of the container.

Substitutes and Equivalents - Not to be Used Without Reasonable Cause

Salt meat	1/2 lb	To be considered equal to 1lb fresh meat
Preserved meat	1/2 lb	
Coffee	2 ozs	To be considered equal
Cocoa or Chocolate	1 3/4	
Tea	1/2 oz	
Flour	1 lb	To be considered equal
Biscuit	1 lb	
Rice	1 lb	
Oatmeal, Rolled Oats or	1 lb	
Split peas	1/2 lb	To be considered equal when issued with meat rations
Flour	3/4 lb	
Green peas, Haricot or Butter	1/2 lb	
Rice	3/4 lb	

Marmalade	1 lb	To be considered equal
Jam	1 lb	
Syrup	1 lb	
Butter	1/2 lb	To be considered equal
Cheese	3/4 lb	
Condensed Milk	9 1/2	To be considered equal
Dried Milk	4 ozs	
Mustard		To be considered equal
Curry powder		

REGULATIONS FOR MAINTAINING DISCIPLINE SANCTIONED BY THE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT IN PURSUANCE OF SECTION 114 (2) OF THE MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894

DIRECTIONS

for using the

LIFE-SAVING APPARATUS,

installed at the several surf boat stations on the
Coast of Long Island and Fisher's Island, New York; Watch Hill
Rhode Island; and along the coast.

TO THROW A LINE WITH A SHOT AND MORTAR

First wipe the chamber and bore of the mortar clean, and clear the vent with the priming-wire, then raise the muzzle and put in the powder, measured by filling the top of the canister; wipe the shot clean, and place it in the mortar, with the eye up, taking great care to keep the SPIRAL turns in the wire which is attached to it, for on the sand, until the bed of the mortar lies level. This gives the piece twenty degrees elevation, and is the best angle for throwing 350 yards.

Point the mortar in line with the weather rail, if the vessel lies head on, and the wind along the beach, but for the main mast if the wind is blowing on shore.

Make the line fast to the wire, and lay 20 or 30 yards of it in front of the mortar, or to the water’s edge; put in a quick match and fire, taking care to stand by the side of the mortar, and not behind it.

The box with the line should be placed eight or ten yards in front, and about two yards aside.

TO PREPARE THE SMALL LINE.

Coil it from one pin to the opposite one on the coiling frame, until there is one turn on each pin, then cross it in the same manner, and continue to do so until the whole is coiled, and take care to keep it slack enough to slip off the pins when you turn them down into the box, which will require three persons, As care must be taken to have all the line leave the pins at the same time as near as possible.

There are two shots of Rocket line, each 310 yards long; and if the stranded vessel is at a greater distance than 300 yards from the beach, both lines must be bent together, and one table-spoonful of powder added to the charge, with a piece of thin paper laid over it, and the shot put in while the muzzle is up, as much of the force is lost if the powder is not kept in the chamber of the piece. Much care should be taken to have the end of the small line made fast before turning it off the pins into the box, or both shot and line may he lost.

TO USE A ROCKET.

Point the range so as to be in line with the mast heads, and for the weather side of the vessel; secure the crotch and range well in the sand; secure the rocket to the staff with the small wire, then place it in the range. Bend on the small line, and place the box in which it is coiled directly behind the range; put the quick match in the vent of the rocket, and touch it with your match.

TO SEND A HAWSER AND LIFE-CAR.

The small line having been thrown to the vessel, bend on the hauling-line, and when the persons on board the ship get hold of it, reeve the end of the hawser through the rings of the Metallic Life-car, and secure the end to the small line, and let them haul the hawser on board; then put on your tackles and haul it tight, and make use of the small line for hauling the Car off and on. Should the cold be severe, it would be better to send a person from the shore to the ship, in the Life-car; he holding the door down himself by the handle on the under side, as he could manage matters more promptly than persons suffering from exposure.

TO USE THE MATCH ROPE.

Let it be well lighted, and it will then burn at the rate of about three inches per hour. If there is any objection to standing beside the mortar when it is fired, some powder may be moistened in the hand, and worked into a stiff paste, which will stick to the top of the quick match, and will burn a sufficient time to allow the person who fires it to go from the piece.

When the mortar is not in use, the chamber should be kept filled with oil, and the bore to be oiled at least once a month.

The Powder Canister should be kept with the top carefully screwed on, and the tin boxes containing the Rockets, &c., be kept closed.

If the apparatus be used at night, a blue light should be burned before firing, so that the persons on board the ship can see what you are preparing to do. This light can be held in the hand, and in such position as best to show the apparatus. It Is to be lighted by taking off the tin cap, and striking the top against any hard substance.

Very respectfully yours,

Joseph Noyes,

Lt. U.S.R. Service.

The persons who are entrusted with the care of the of the Life Saving Apparatus are particularly requested not to permit any of the articles to be used or expended except for the preservation of life and property from shipwreck.

Walter R. Jones, President.
Bache M'Evers, Vice President.
John D. Jones, Secretary.
Robert C. Goodhue, Treasurer.

TO REPAIR METALLIC BOATS.

This is a simple operation, for if by repeated bending back or forth the bottom is cracked or broken, place a piece of wood over the inside, and nail through from the outside, having first put paint or flannel between.

A piece of common sheet-iron or tin may be applied to a hole punched through a boat. A nail sharpened answers for a punch, and common nails for rivets. If bruised or bent by concussion, apply a common hammer or mallet to knock it to place. Such temporary means to repair may be resorted to at sea, or where machines are not at hand.

Any common sheet-iron or tin-worker can repair as well as the manufacturer of the boat. Metal boats can be placed in the hottest place as by exposure to heat for months or years as the paint becomes hard and durable.

MV **Balmoral**

Submitted by LNRS Member Dick Clague

The **Balmoral** has just been named as the National Historic Ships "UK Flagship of the Year 2016", will be visiting the Irish Sea in July and September with sailings from Liverpool and Llandudno. The full timetable is available at:

www.whitefunnel.co.uk

where bookings can also be made – or by phone on 0117 525 6200.

On Monday 11 July she will sail from Liverpool (IOMSPC terminal) and round Anglesey and on Monday 19th September she will operate the first Liverpool – Mostyn passenger sailing in recent memory – can any LNRS member confirm the actual date of the last such sailing?? (P&O operated some in the opposite direction relatively recently).

Lost 19th Century Whaling Fleet Found

by The Editor

The American whaling fleet, after steadily growing for 50 years, reached its all-time peak of 199 ships in 1858. Just two years later and before the Civil War, the fleet had dropped to 167. The war cut into whaling temporarily, but only 105 whaling ships returned to sea in 1866, the first full year of peace.

In late June 1871, forty of these whaling ships passed north through Bering Strait, hunting bowhead whales. By August the vessels had passed as far as Point Belcher, near Wainwright, Alaska, before a stationary high weather system, parked over northeast Siberia, reversed the normal wind pattern and pushed the pack ice toward the Alaskan coast. Seven ships were able to escape to the south, but thirty three others were trapped. Within two weeks the pack had tightened around the vessels, crushing four ships. The vessels were spread out in a long line, some 60 miles south of Point Franklin.

Vessels caught in the ice

Published in the Boston Globe, April 15, 1911
Picture courtesy Wikimedia

On September 12, 1871, the captains of the 33 trapped ships convened aboard the **Champion** to consider their options for saving the 1,219 officers, crew, and in some cases, families. Although, their situation was dire, there was some small glimmer of hope for rescue by seven 'escaped' ships.

However, to save such a large party, the rescuing whale ships had to jettison their precious cargoes of whale oil, bone and their expensive whaling gear to make room for the survivors. The total loss was valued at over $1,600,000 ($31.6 million in today's dollars). The survivors evacuated in small whaleboats with a three-month supply of provisions, crossed 70 miles of ocean, and were eventually able to reach the rescue ships. Amazingly, there were no casualties. The seven whalers that escaped - **Europa, Arctic, Progress, Lagoda, Daniel Webster, Midas**, and **Chance** - were able to sail safely out of the Arctic and back to Honolulu, where hundreds of native Hawaiian whalers aboard the

stranded vessels lived, while others sailed on to San Francisco, New Bedford and other cities.

In 1872 the bark **Minerva** was discovered intact and subsequently salvaged, but the rest were crushed in the ice, sank, or were stripped of wood by the local Inupiat.

The lost vessels (courtesy Wikipedia) were:

Vessel	Homeport	Captain	Notes
Bark Roman	New Bedford	Jared Jernegan?	Crushed in the ice Sept. 7, 1871.
Bark Concordia	New Bedford	Robert Jones	Abandoned and lost. Wreck burned by local Inuit.
Ship Gay Head	New Bedford	William H. Kelley	Abandoned and lost. Wreck burned by local Inuit.
Bark George	New Bedford	Abraham Osborn	Abandoned and lost.
Ship John Wells	New Bedford	Aaron Dean	Abandoned and lost.
Bark Massachusetts	New Bedford	West Mitchell	Abandoned and wrecked. One lone sailor remained with the wreck through the winter.
Bark J.D. Thompson	New London, Conn.	Capt. Allen	Abandoned and lost.
Ship Contest	New Bedford	Leander C. Owen	Abandoned and lost.
Bark Emily Morgan	New Bedford	Benjamin Dexter	Abandoned and lost. (Wreck later found ashore.)
Ship Champion	Edgartown, Mass.	Henry Pease	Abandoned and lost. (Wreck later found ashore.)
Bark Henry Taber	New Bedford	Timothy C. Packard	Abandoned and lost.
Bark Elizabeth Swift	New Bedford	George W. Bliven	Abandoned and lost.
Ship Florida	New Bedford	D. R. Fraser	Abandoned and lost. Wreck burned by local Inuit.
Bark Oliver Crocker	New Bedford	James H. Fisher	Abandoned and lost.
Bark Navy	New Bedford	George F. Bouldry	Abandoned and lost.
Ship Reindeer	New Bedford	B. F. Loveland	Abandoned and lost. (Sunken wreck found, 1872.)
Bark Seneca	New Bedford	Edmund Kelley	Abandoned and lost. (Beached wreck found, 1872.)
Bark George Howland	New Bedford	James H. Knowles	Abandoned and lost.
Bark Fanny	New Bedford	Lewis W. Williams	Abandoned and lost.
Bark Carlotta	San Francisco	E. Everett Smith	Abandoned and lost.
Bark Paiea or Paia	Honolulu, Hawaii		Abandoned and lost.
Bark Monticello	New London, Conn.	Thomas W. Williams	Abandoned and lost.
Brig Kohola	Honolulu, Hawaii	Alexander Almy	Abandoned and lost. (Wreck later found ashore.)
Bark Eugenia	New Bedford	Daniel B. Nye	Abandoned and lost.
Ship Julian	Honolulu, Hawaii	John Heppingstone	Abandoned and lost.
Bark Awashonks	New Bedford	Ariel Norton	Crushed in the ice Sept. 8, 1871
Bark Thomas Dickason	New Bedford	Valentine Lewis	Abandoned and lost. (Wreck found, 1872.)
Bark Minerva	New Bedford	Hezekiah Allen	Abandoned. Discovered intact in 1872; manned and taken south.
Ship William Rotch	New Bedford	Cromwell Morslander	Abandoned and lost.
Brig Victoria	San Francisco	Capt. Redfield	Abandoned and lost.
Ship Mary	Edgartown	Edward P. Herendeen	Abandoned and lost.
Brig Comet	Honolulu	Joseph D. Sylvia	Crushed in the ice, Sept. 2, 1871

Now archaeologists have discovered the battered hulls of two of these ships nearly 144 years after their sinking. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) says the shipwrecks were first discovered back in September, 2015 when a team of archaeologists from the Maritime Heritage Program in NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries searched a 30-mile stretch of coastline nearshore in the Chukchi Sea, near Wainwright, Alaska.

Previous searches for the ships had already found traces of gear salvaged from the wrecks by the locals, as well as scattered timbers stranded high on the isolated beaches stretching from Wainwright to Point Franklin.

Using sonar and sensing technology, the team was able to plot the outline of the flattened hulls. The site also revealed anchors, fasteners, ballast and brick-lined pots used to render whale blubber into oil.

It is thought that the wrecks were pressed against a submerged sand bar some 100 yards offshore. Working from first-hand accounts of the loss of the fleet, the ice opened the hulls to the sea and tore away the upper portions of the ships, scattering their timbers on the beach, while the lower hulls, weighted down with ballast, and in some cases still anchored, stayed in place against the sand bar.

That long ago!

submitted by H.M. Hignett

The Fourth Officer of Shaw Savill vessels had the allotted task, on port stations, to see that the ladder for the Pilot, and the accommodation ladder, were in place and secure.

In 1949, there was a very dry and hot summer. Arriving home from Australia the C**eramic** steamed up the Thames: as usual we were all on port stations. We had the Thames Pilot on board from Gravesend and things were going well. About midnight, I went down to the saloon deck to check that the accommodation ladder was rigged and turned out ... but not lowered. Two Quartermasters had that in hand, but, as I approached, one of them pointed to the white deckhouse and said "Look at those dirty condensation runs," adding "That section was only painted two days ago".

The usual condensation was, this time, unusual ... with large quarter-inch brown drops on the white paint with some of them separating into three colours, green, red and blue. A finger run over them caused a dark smear on the paintwork. This meant very little at the time. Two or three hours later, we

berthed in one of the Royal Docks after pushing our way impatiently, albeit carefully, through possibly fifty barges left to float unmoored and unattended around the dock. The Third Officer had a twisted ankle so I was the first to use the lowered accommodation ladder on the way to read the arrival draft. After walking through what seemed an unusually large group of people meeting the ship, I spotted a telephone box near the stern and decided to make a quick call home. I had no sooner made a connection with my father when the door opened and I turned to find a large, probably suspicious, Alsatian dog facing me with a similar large policeman attached. "Are you the Fourth Officer?" he demanded. "Mr. Hignett?" I nodded. "You are to report to the Captain's room immediately."

I had only made a couple of voyages with the company and the first was as Fifth Officer so I knew that I wasn't being invited to share the Old Man's 'docking bottle'. On the way up I remember thinking that I might be looking at a Second Mate's job on a coaster after a couple of weeks on my pay-off money.

The door of the Captain's room was wide open and, as I entered, I was confronted by a semi-circle of important looking people most of whom I had never seen before. I was invited to sit down ... now I knew I was in trouble ... a kangaroo court.

The Chief Marine Superintendent Captain A.E. (Alfie) Lockhart spoke first. "Mr. Hignett. on the way up the river did you notice anything unusual regarding the paintwork?" I answered in the affirmative.

"When did you first notice the change?" I explained that the Quartermasters had drawn my attention to the smears earlier.

"But when?" Alfie persisted. I had not made a note of where. "Was it, say, around Dagenham?" I still couldn't say. One of the others spoke.

"There appears to have been a gas in or on the river damaging our paintwork". I wasn't dismissed but expected to listen to and note their discussion. Sitting quietly, I noted that I was the only one without a drink and looked hard at one nearby ... a whisky. The person in a light grey suit sitting there was amused and indicated that I should take it, and the Old Man nodded in amusement. I made short work of the drink. The man turned out to be one of the Union Castle superintendents. I was dismissed to face an inquisition. *What the Hell - Who the hell, Why the Hell and How the Hell* from the Chief and Second Mates as to the reasons for my absence from the Bridge while the routine work of the end-of-voyage procedure was ongoing.

The following day I travelled by bus to the Woolwich Ferry, passing the Union Castle cargo berth quite near one of the bridges. The beautiful light mauve had changed to vivid red, green and pink patches !

A week or so later I learned that the problem had nothing to do with the Ford factory at Dagenham. The lack of fresh water flowing in to the Thames had caused a build up of the noxious gases.

Maid of the Loch

First contract in historic rebuild signed
From the M.N.A. Circular 31st March 2016

The first contract to be let in the £5.5 million project to rebuild the Maid of the Loch, Loch Lomond's Paddle Steamer, was signed on Monday 22 February 2016. The contract has been awarded to OSD-IMT Ltd., of Dundee, and is for marine consultancy services. OSD will provide the necessary naval architecture, engineering, structure, and outfitting expertise to produce all the required calculations, drawings, and designs to ensure that the rebuild meets all regulatory requirements. John Beveridge, Founder of the Loch Lomond Steamship Company, the charity that owns the Maid, said "This is a landmark event for us. It is almost exactly 20 years since the charity took ownership of the Maid, and we are now able to start work on returning this unique ship back into steam operating condition. It is hugely exciting for everyone and our thanks for all the wonderful support we have had. This is a major investment for Loch Lomond".

Maid of the Loch at Balloch Pier Wikimedia Commons

Managing Director of OSD-IMT Ltd., Neil Patterson, said "We are pleased to be able to support the Loch Lomond Steamship Company with this exciting and challenging project, and look forward to assisting them in returning **Maid of the Loch** to operation". **Maid of the Loch** is the last paddle steamer built in Britain, in 1953, and she sailed on the loch until 1981, carrying such notable

people such as Queen Elizabeth II (on two occasions) and Queen Salote of Tonga. She lay neglected and deteriorating at Balloch until rescued by the charity in 1996. Since 2001 the Maid has been a 2 star visitor attraction in VisitScotland's quality assurance scheme and open to the public every day in summer, drawing around 15,000 visitor each year. Dr Mike Cantlay, Chairman of VisitScotland, said "I am absolutely delighted that the project to rebuild the historic **Maid of the Loch** can now go full steam ahead; it is fantastic news for tourism in the region. As the last paddle steamer built in Britain, as well as the last in a long line of Loch Lomond steamers, the ship is an important part of Scotland's maritime heritage.

She already draws a significant number of visitors every year but the refurbishment works to restore her to her former full glory as an operational paddle steamer will mean that she'll become a superb, first-class attraction, offering a greatly enhanced quality of visitor experience. During this Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design 2016, we are highlighting and celebrating examples of Scotland's rich engineering legacy as well as icons of innovation across many fields. The **Maid of the Loch** is certainly one of those so I am very much looking forward to seeing the completion of this exciting restoration project. Last year **Maid of the Loch** was awarded a Stage 1 pass by the Heritage Lottery Fund, worth £230,400, which allows this professional work to be carried out. HLF have promised a further £3.8 million if the charity can raise the balance of £1.7 million. "Of course, the **Maid** is not just an historic steamship", added John Beveridge. "She represents jobs, training, and added-value for visitors, and will be an icon for Loch Lomond. A refurbished **Maid of the Loch** will embrace 21st century safety and comfort, with 20th century Scottish engineering, using 19th century technology. How brilliant will that be?"

Maid of the Loch details:

Type:	Paddle steamer
Tonnage:	555 grt
Length:	191 feet
Beam:	28.1 feet
Draught:	4 ft 6 in
Power:	900ihp
Engine:	Compound diagonal engines by Rankin & Blackmore, Greenock
Speed:	13.75 knots
Capacity:	Passengers: 1000

The Architecture of India Buildings

As published in the Newsletter of The Ocean Nestorian Association

And reprinted by kind permission of their editor and the author Irene Murphy, who worked in the Naval Architects Department. This article highlights details which may not have been appreciated by those who worked there or just visited.

The first India Buildings was erected in I834 by George Holt, father of Alfred Holt of the Holt shipping family, and it was designed by the architect Joseph Franklin. Alfred Holt and his brother Philip launched the Ocean Steamship Co. in I865 and their first ship of the Blue Funnel Line, the **Agamemnon** sailed from Liverpool to China in I866. It appears to have been called India Buildings because, in I834, the remainder of the East India Company monopoly was abolished and Liverpool merchants could trade freely with the Far East.

In the 1920's, it was decided to demolish the original building to make way for a much larger building, four times the size. A competition was held and five designs were judged by Giles Gilbert Scott. The winning design was by architects Arnold Thornley & Herbert Rowse.

The new building was designed so that it could be converted into a warehouse if necessary, since such a huge provision of offices was considered highly speculative at the time. Construction began in 1924 and it was built in two halves to enable work on the first half to be completed before demolishing the original building three years later. Completed in I932 at a cost of £1,250,000 plus £35,000 for fittings, the design was typical of American office designs of the time. Herbert Rowse was influenced by his extensive travels in North America. Professor Charles Reilly of the Liverpool School of Architecture wrote at the time 'The building would not disgrace Fifth Avenue New York; indeed it would sit there very happily and those who know most of modern architecture will know that this is very high praise.'

During the May blitz of 1941, India Buildings was nearly burnt down. Reconstruction began five years later, with the original architect Herbert Rowse supervising the restoration. However, it was not until 1958 that the

reconstruction was completed. The cost of this work was £1,260,000, which was just £10,000 more than the original cost of the whole building in 1932.

The building consists of nine storeys together with a basement, and it is built around two light-wells. The two upper storeys are recessed. It is a steel-framed building, clad in Portland stone, with rustication to the ground and mezzanine floors, whilst the upper storeys are in refined ashlar (large rectangular masonry blocks]. An arcade of shops was built during the reconstruction, which was not part of the original design.

The front elevation in Water Street has three arched entrances, whilst the rear entrance in Brunswick Street has just one arch. Within each of these arches there are several circular, flower—like stone carvings. Above these arches there are keystones decorated with cherubs‘ heads. Balconies with balustrades are positioned above the entrance and at either side of the building.

At the front of the Water Street entrance there are four bronzed lamps, which were modelled on lamps at the Strozzi palace in Florence. Bronze work was undertaken by the Bromsgrove Guild, who were responsible for all the bronze and ironwork throughout India Buildings.

High up above the entrances, below the top floor windows, there is a crest carved with a figure of Poseidon kneeling in a scallop shell supported by two reclining Tritons, and all are carrying swords (Sculpture by Edward C. Thomson). The Tritons are Mermen, Triton being one of the sons of Poseidon and Amphritrite in Greek mythology is reflected in the naming of all their ships after Greek gods in Homers epic stories of the Iliad and the Odyssey.

Further sculptures along Fenwick Street include keystones of carved cherubs' heads and also rectangular panels displaying pairs of eagles and pairs of crowned heads, possibly of Poseidon.

Lloyds Bank originally occupied the Fenwick Street side of India Buildings and above the outer two doors to the bank in Fenwick Street are displayed cornucopias. The design contains symmetrical goat nymphs holding goats‘ horns overflowing with tumbling coins (Horns of plenty). Thus this would be seen as a sign of prosperity and desire for plenty for the Liverpool merchants and the people of the city of Liverpool.

As mentioned above, an arcade of shops was built during the reconstruction. The shop fronts were cast in bronze and this was the work again of the Bromsgrove Guild. A further example of their work is

the doorway leading to the former Post Office, which has an intricate ironwork design.

The interior walls of the arcade are faced with Travertine marble, which is a white coloured polished limestone. There is a vaulted ceiling throughout the arcade in a rich array of colours and designs. In the centre of the arcade there is an atrium and this is approached through two Ionic columns with volutes (scrolls) at the capitals. Three short open stairways lead up to the doorways to the atrium.

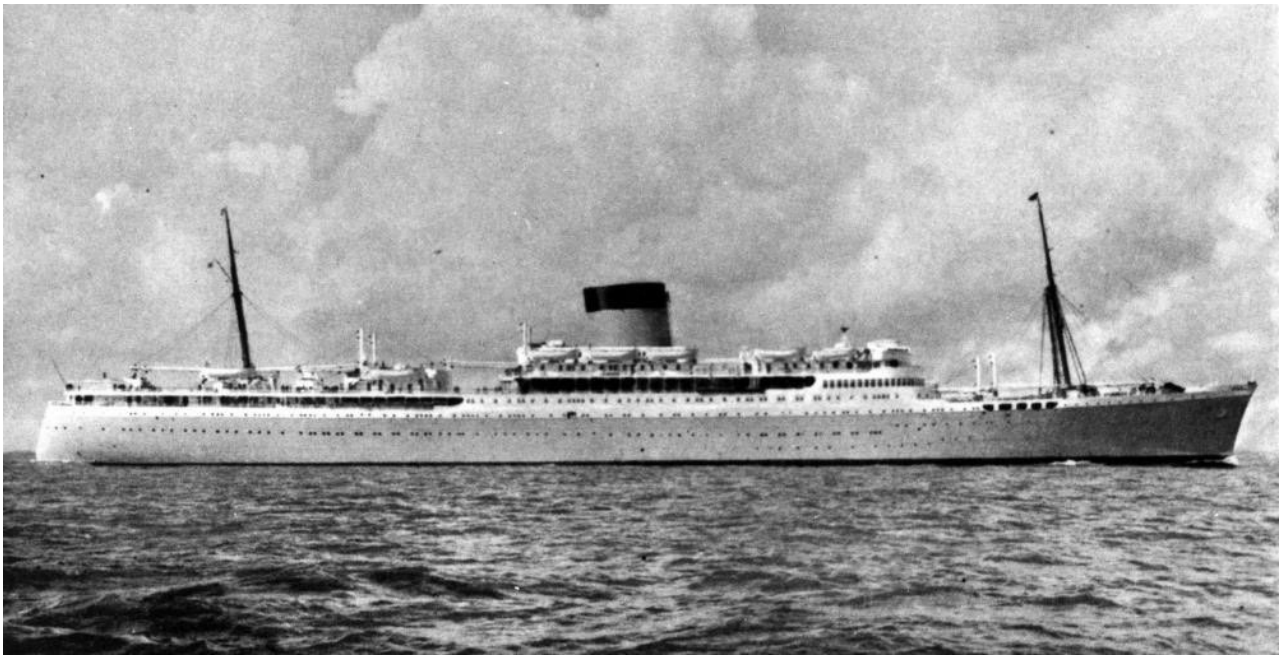
Irene concludes that the finer details of India Buildings and its many outstanding features came to be appreciated further during her recent course of study into the Architecture of Liverpool.

The One From Nowhere

by Captain W.S. Byles
from the Nautical Adviser

Ever since the ss **Waratah** was lost without trace, having sailed from Durban to Capetown with 200 souls on board on 26th July, 1909 (and for ought I know before that), Cape coastal waters have been suspect, and especially in the vicinity of Port St. Johns. For there was a report that she had been "spoken" and reported "All Well" off Port Shepstone. The year is important - she had a morse lamp, but no W/T.

Very well, then, let us get down to the facts of the matter. I will deal first with the weather and my ship, the **Edinburgh Castle,**



mv **Edinburgh Castle** Courtesy Wikimedia
Picture is held by the John Oxley Library, University of Queensland

The weather at the time was a strong S.W. wind and a heavy S.W. swell, but the **Edinburgh Castle**, being 750 feet long and lacking only 1,400 tons of

30,000 gross tonnage, was such that these conditions presented no serious problem. As she dipped to the swell she was spraying forward a little, and (on the big ones) shovelling up a little water through the hawse pipes. The reputation of the coast, however, my previous experiences, and my desire to avoid damage of any sort, decided me to abandon the benefit of the Agulhas current, put up with a later arrival, and close the coast. For the benefit of those who have no experience of the coast, I should state here that in soundings of 100 fathoms or less, the heavy swell is much less steep and has a longer fetch, so although you may keep the benefit of "Full Speed" or near it, you have to sacrifice the help of the current which can be as much as 4 knots, but in which you may find you have to heave to should the swell become too steep. The further to ensure that no untoward incident should occur I took a knot off her speed, and to close the coast I had the swell "cosily" on the bow instead of driving into it "Head-on". Under these circumstances she was very comfortable for three-quarters of an hour or so. The fetch (distance between one wave top and the next) was about 150 feet and the ship was pitching and scending about 10 to 15 degrees to the horizontal. And then it happened. Suddenly, having scended normally, the fetch to the next wave top appeared to be double the normal, about 300 feet, so that when she pitched she charged, as it were, a hole in the ocean at an angle of 30 degrees or more shovelling the next wave on board to a height of 15 or 20 feet, before she could recover as she was "out of step".

It was a hot night and so that the passenger accommodation might get some air the steel doors at the after end of the foredeck had been left open, and due to an oversight this was not passed on to the bridge, so that not only was the foredeck swept with a wall of water which unseated the insurance wire reel which damaged a winch in its travel, and the athwartships rails and the ladder to the well deck swept away, but a great quantity of water flooded into the passenger accommodation.

The lessons to be learned are two-fold. Firstly, that whatever the weather prevailing, the forward steel doors must always be shut and remain shut on passage from Durban to East London because when this happens there will be no warning. The waves are no higher than their fellows, and in perspective the "hole" is not visible until the ship is about to fall into it! Secondly, that this is out of keeping with the weather prevailing at the time and such a thing could happen in conditions of little or no wind at all.

Inevitably one wonders about the cause of such irregularity and I call to mind that some years ago when the late Captain J.C. Brown, R.D., R.N.R., was Commodore of the Fleet and in **Pretoria Castle** he reported having discovered a fissure in the ocean bed somewhere off St. Johns. It was clearly shown on the echo sounder paper. He was in deep water at the time and possibly the report did not receive the attention it deserved.

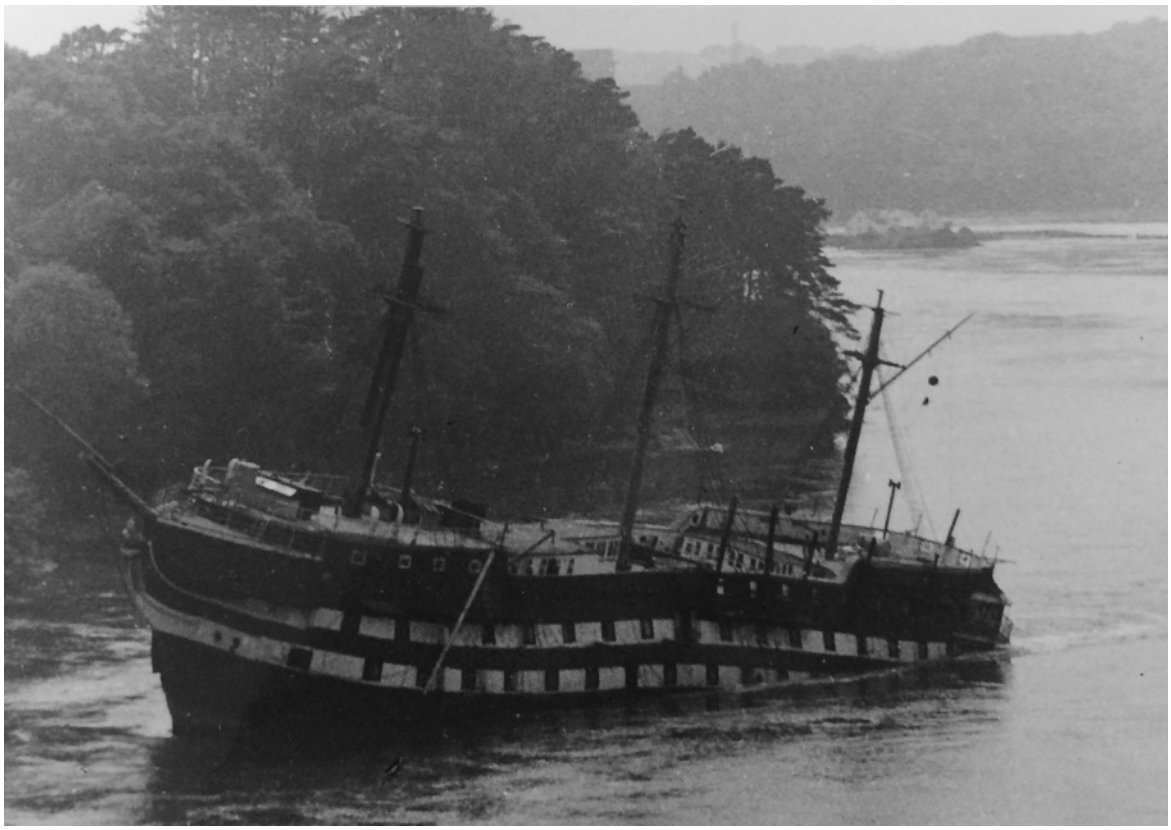
The Liverpool Nautical Research Society
(Founded in 1938)

THE BULLETIN

Volume 60 No.2, September, 2016

ss Gothic in Hobart February, 1954 during the Royal Tour Courtesy Reuben Goossens

Pamir See page 7 Courtesy de.wikepdia



H.M.S. **Conway** aground at Menai, 1953 See page 25
Courtesy Merseyside Maritime Museum

The Liverpool Nautical Research Society

Web site: www.liverpoolnauticalresearchsociety.org

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Merseyside Maritime Museum
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Liverpool L3 4AQ
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Annual General Meeting
Chairman's Annual Report, May, 2016

The Society has enjoyed another successful year and members continue to report their satisfaction with our meetings venue at the Liverpool Athenaeum Club, in terms of facilities as well as being a convenient location

Membership
Seven new members have joined during the year so that we now have 190 core members, 3 corporate and 1 'ex officio' member (the Maritime Museum Archive).

Attendance
Our attendance figures at talks remain at an average of 38/40, and attendance is restricted to Society members only, to comply with fire regulations for the Athenaeum. However a small number of invited guests is acceptable. We pay for refreshments and I would like to thank Fergie Molloy and Jack Olin for manning the coffee table to see everyone pays their £1.

The Monday facility
The Monday research facility continues to be well supported despite the library now also being open to the public on that day. For the benefit of new members this takes place in the Archives of the Merseyside Maritime Museum and any LNRS member is welcome, and despite the reduced number of library and archive staff our relationship with them remains strong.

Finances
Our Treasurer will be giving a financial report and the financial position is healthy but is constantly under review. We have purchased a lightweight wireless microphone following complaints that some speakers could not be heard properly, which has proved successful with no further complaints.

Christmas lunch
A Christmas lunch was held in the Athenaeum and was very popular. We hope to repeat the event this year.

Talks programme
We have had a full programme of talks on a range of maritime topics. I would like to thank Ian Duckett for his work as the Talks Secretary, it is not an easy task.

Bulletin
The Bulletin continues to do well under the editorship of Bill Ogle and a wide range of subject matter is covered. The Bulletins are our “Crown Jewels” being a vital link with our members, particularly those overseas. Bill would welcome any contributions from members.

Enquiries from the public:
In January 2016 David White stood down from dealing with enquiries after doing this job for a number of years. We were fortunate enough to have Fergy Molloy and John Coates take over answering enquiries sent in to the society. I would like to thank them on behalf of the society for taking on this role.

Projects
Members continue to be involved in a number of projects, in particular;

- cataloguing of the photo archive by Alec Hampson, Gordon Wright and Joe Austin who are involved with this.
- when LNRS member Geoff Caldecott moved to Spain he donated a collection of 292 books and numerous files for disposal. 143 books went into the LNRS book sale (This raised a good deal of money) plus the others went to various good homes. My thanks to David White who assisted in this matter.

Committee
The committee has met four times during the year, and I would like to thank all members for their work.

Secretary	Tony Melling
Treasurer	Vincent Finn
Talks Secretary	Ian Duckett
Editor	Bill Ogle
Museum Rep.	Sarah Starkey

This year marks the end of the Vice Chairman, Capt. Bob Settle's term of office. I would like to thank Bob for his contribution to the running of the Society. I'm happy to report that our long standing member John Stokoe has agreed to stand for the post of Vice Chairman.

In conclusion I want to report that the Society continues in good form and we look forward to another successful year.

Accounts for the Year To April, 2016

Opening Bank and Cash Balance			£1,963
INCOME	Subscriptions	2649	
	Donations	428	
	Catering	187	
	Sale of books/ Index CD	90	
	Payments – MM Discount Group	20	
	D. White * (Chq. for Christmas)	32	
TOTAL			3,406
EXPENDITURE	Bulletin – printing	1,067	
	Bulletin – binding	109	
	J.S. Expenses (Bulletin Distrib'n)	641	
	W.O. Expenses (ditto)	32	
	Athenaeum Room hire	675	
	Catering	225	
	Xmas lunch	118	
	Speaker's presentations etc.	155	
	Domain name registration	58	
	Microphone for PA system	35	
	Bank Charges	20	
	Refund to D. White (see * above)	32	
TOTAL			3,167
NET CURRENT FUNDS	Current account balance	1,945	
	Cash in hand– Hon Secretary	156	
	– Hon Treasurer	101	
TOTAL			2,202
	Deposit account balance	4,554	
TOTAL Society funds at year end			6,756

Signed *Vincent Finn*

Examined by *J. Austin* *G. Wright*

All Bank Accounts are held with Santander U.K. plc 14th April, 2016

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

held at the Athenaeum Club Liverpool, on 19th May 2016

* Present: The Chairman plus 39 members and 3 Guests.

* Welcome and Apologies: The Chairman Willie Williamson welcomed all present. Apologies had been received from The President and 3 members, as noted in the Attendance Register. John Stokoe briefly reported on the President, Bill Pape's continued interest in all LNRS matters and passed on his best wishes to all members.

* Acceptance and Matters Arising 21st May 2015: The Minutes of last year's AGM had been published in the September 2015 Bulletin. Copies were available for members present at this meeting. The minutes were accepted as a true record as proposed by Don Watt and seconded by Tony Barratt.

* Matters Arising: The Chairman indicated that all matters arising would be covered by agenda items.

* Chairman's Report: Willie Williamson reported that 7 new members had been recruited and the overall membership now stood at 194, comprising 190 core, 3 corporate and 1 ex officio member. Our attendance at monthly talks has indeed been helped by our relocation to the Athenaeum. The average total is 38/40, despite its restriction to members only because of safety issues. WW reinforced the continued use of the Archive and Library at the Merseyside Maritime Museum on a Monday and stressed that all members were still most welcome; sharing this with the public has not hindered the facility. As the Treasurer will reveal, the Society finances are healthy but kept under regular review. The success of the Christmas lunch at this club was recognised and it is hoped to repeat this occasion. The Talks Programme is complete for 2016/2017 and Ian Duckett is thanked for his efforts in this capacity. The Bulletin continues to prosper under the editorship of Bill Ogle and is the 'crown jewels' of the LNRS. A vital link with members far and wide. Contributions from members are always most welcome.
Since David White relinquished the management of public enquiries, this has been kindly taken up by Fergie Molloy and John Coates. These run to up to 2 a week with occasional peaks and WW thanked these two Members for their unstinting support. The ongoing project of reorganisation of the Photograph Archive continues. Monday attendees Alex Hampson, Gordon Wright and Joe Austin continue this valuable task. LNRS member Geoff Caldecott kindly donated 292 publications to the society before his relocation to Spain in October 2015. An LNRS book sale realised £80 for its funds and David White is thanked for his support in this. Council has met on a quarterly basis and continues to administer society operations throughout the year. Thanks should be given to serving officers in this work. This AGM marks the end of Bob Settle's term of

office and the Chairman thanked him for his contribution over the last four years. His successor John Stokoe was welcomed back to Council as an experienced and committed servant of the LNRS.

* Treasurer's Report and Approval of Accounts to 2nd April 2016: Vin Finn presented his first report as Treasurer and copies of the Accounts were made available to members present. He advised that the cash balance of the Society had increased over the last 12 months from £6,499 to £6,756, an increase of £257. The main source of income has been subscriptions £2,649 and donations of £428. The main items of expenditure were Bulletin costs of £1,817 and room hire of £675. The move to the Athenaeum had incurred an extra cost of some £19 per meeting. With no significant increase in postage anticipated in the coming months it had been decided to hold subscriptions at their present level for the next 12 months. A full copy of the Accounts will be published in the September 2016 Bulletin. The Meeting unanimously approved the accounts as presented.

* Talks Programme 2016 – 2017: Ian Duckett advised that a full programme had been organised with a wide variety of topics, to be delivered by a mixture of members and guest speakers. This will be included in the next Bulletin. He advised that next year's lectures would continue to be held at 1.00 pm, with coffee available at 12.30pm.

* Election of Officers: The Secretary Tony Melling announced the following were nominated for office: Chairman Willie Williamson, Vice-Chairman John Stokoe, Honorary Secretary Tony Melling, Honorary Treasurer Vin Finn, Talks Secretary Ian Duckett, and Bulletin/Website Editor Bill Ogle.
The motion to elect the above was proposed by Alex Hampson and seconded by Don Watt and approved unanimously by the members present.

*Date of next AGM – To be held at the Athenaeum, on 18 May 2017, at 1.00pm

MONDAY MEETINGS

Members meet at the Archives and Library of the
Merseyside Maritime Museum on Mondays as follows:

September	Mondays	5th, 12th., 19th., 26th
October		3rd., 10th., 17th., 24th, 31st
November		7th., 14th., 21st., 28th.
December		5th, 12th, 19th

The 'Laziest Person' Story of All Time

MNA Circular, February, 2015

In answer to the question: "what is the laziest thing you've ever done?" Not surprisingly one story by far takes the cake. Here it is:

I was once on a US military ship, having breakfast in the wardroom when the Operations Officer (OPS) walks in. This guy was the definition of NOT a morning person; he's still half asleep, bleary eyed… basically a zombie with a bagel. He sits down across from me to eat his bagel and is just barely conscious. My back is to the outboard side of the ship, and the morning sun is blazing in one of the portholes putting a big bright circle of light right on his barely conscious face. He's squinting and chewing and basically just remembering how to be alive for today. It's painful to watch.

But then zombie-OPS stops chewing, slowly picks up the phone, and dials the bridge. In his well-known I'm-still-totally-asleep voice, he says "heeeey. It's OPS. Could you… shift our barpat… yeah, one six five. Thanks." And puts the phone down. And then he just sits there. Squinting. Waiting. And then, ever so slowly, I realise that that big blazing spot of sun has begun to slide off the zombie's face and onto the bulkhead behind him. After a moment it clears his face and he blinks slowly a few times and the brilliant beauty of what I've just witnessed begins to overwhelm me. By ordering the bridge to adjust the ship's back-and-forth patrol by about 15 degrees, he's changed our course just enough to reposition the sun off of his face. He's literally just redirected thousands of tons of steel and hundreds of people so that he could get the sun out of his eyes while he eats his bagel. I am in awe.

He slowly picks up his bagel and for a moment I'm terrified at the thought that his own genius may escape him, that he may never appreciate the epic brilliance of his laziness (since he's not going to wake up for another hour). But between his next bites he pauses, looks at me, and gives me the faintest, sly grin, before returning to gnaw slowly on his zombie bagel.

Now it seems this story has been making the rounds on the internet lately, so it's hard to tell where exactly it originated or if it's even true, but who are we to question a good yarn.

Remember Those Days .....

A sample from the archives, and published by kind permission of Sea Breezes.
July to September, 1949

Two square-rigged vessels have left Port Victoria for Britain with cargoes of wheat; the steel four-masted barques **Pamir** and **Passat**. The **Pamir** (2,799 tons) sailed on May 28 with 60,000 bags of wheat, and the **Passat** (3,137 tons) left on June 1, carrying 56,000 bags. Both vessels were built - in 1905 and 1911 respectively - for Laeisz's "Flying P" Line and they are now owned by the Gustaf Erikson Shipping Company, of Mariehamn, Finland. The two vessels are the only entrants in what will probably be the last of the "grain races" to Falmouth.

Two very well known Italian liners, the **Saturnia** and the **Conte Grande**, are in the news, the former having returned to service and the latter being scheduled to return in July after a very long reconditioning. The **Saturnia** was built at Monfalcone in 1925 for the Cosulich Line which was the old Austrian Lloyd's successor. A twin-screw motorship of 23,940 tons, whose construction was something of an experiment, she was given two 10,000-b.h.p. Burmeister and Wain diesels for a service speed of 19 knots and had accommodation for 279 first-class, 257 second-class, 309 "economical second-class" and 1,352 emigrants, in addition to 4,600 tons of cargo, about half of which was refrigerated. A feature of her design was the fitting of runways on the upper deck for four aircraft for the benefit of passengers wanting to get ashore quickly, although they do appear never to have been carried. She was put on the New York service in 1928; running almost exclusively on that service until the outbreak of war.

A ship which the Italians have not succeeded in returning to service, is the **Piemonte**, built as the Canadian Pacific cabin liner **Minnedosa** of 1917. She was built by Barclay, Curle and Company, her gross tonnage was 13,972, and the triple-screw combination engine layout by Harland and Wolff, two four-cylinder triple-expansion engines and a low pressure turbine supplied by five double-ended boilers. Initially she was employed repatriating Canadian troops before going on to the service for which she was designed. In 1924 she was badly damaged when rammed by a Dutch steamer whilst alongside at Antwerp, and at the end of 1925 was sent to the Tyne and thoroughly modernised. In 1931 she was laid up at Glasgow and in 1935 placed on the sale list for scrapping. With her sister, the **Melita**, she was sold to Italian shipbreakers and towed to Genoa, but the Italian Government stepped in and commissioned her as the troopship **Piemonte** under the management of the Italia Line for the Abyssinian War. She was later used on commercial service to East Africa under the Lloyd Triestino flag. In November 1942 she was torpedoed near Messina and badly damaged. Subsequently she was hit by several Allied bombs during the "softening" operations which preceded the invasion of Sicily and went down in shallow water, settling on her starboard side, half submerged, and although was raised recently she proved fit only for the scrappers.

Chatham Dockyard, established in 1547 as a storehouse for materials used in the preservation of ships' hulls, added a ropery about 1719. Since then all ropes for the Royal Navy (excluding synthetic), have been made there. Each main floor consists of one long room measuring 373 yards, believed to be the longest in Europe. Here new rigging for H.M.S. **Victory** has recently been completed. The ropery – believed to be the oldest in the world – uses manilla from the Philippines, sisal from Kenya and Tanganyika, and a small amount of coir from Ceylon. The hemp arrives in bales of up to 5 cwt. before being combed, drawn and spun into threads, which are then wound onto bobbins for the actual process of ropemaking on machines, many of which are over 100 years old. Just under 100 staff work in the ropery producing about 100 ropes daily, varying from $^{5}/_{8}$ in. to 24 in. circumference. Total production is about 35 tons of rope per week.

The fleet of 241 ships operated on three oceans and the Great Lakes by the Department of Transport will henceforth be called the Canadian Coast Guard, it was announced recently. Under a new colour scheme the ships will have a red boot-topping and white superstructure. Funnels will be white with a red maple leaf insignia. At present the fleet includes ten ice breakers and seven buoy vessels capable of ice breaking; eight ships designed for Arctic service; eleven lighthouse and buoy ships; weather ships; lightships; a Great Lakes research ship; shallow draft vessels for the Mackenzie River; St. Lawrence Seaway survey vessels, shore based life boats, and over 180 Arctic landing craft.

Up to December 1960 the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board had used sand pumps for more than 70 years, and in recent times owned three vessels of this type – the **Leviathan, Hilbre Island** and **Hoyle**. With steeply rising costs the board commissioned the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research to fully investigate conditions in the estuary. They advocated the use of trailing suction dredgers, and in December 1960 the new **W.D. Mersey** (2,860 gross tons, owned by the Westminster Dredging Co., of London) began work on contract to M.D.H.B. However it became impossible to combine the new method of work with that of the old sand pumps and they were withdrawn from service and laid up. By February of this year it became clear that **W.D. Mersey** was producing such good results that the older vessels were offered for sale.

The registration certificate of the first ship to be listed in the Port of Vancouver (in December 1897), appropriately called the **Alpha**, has been presented to the Vancouver Maritime Museum by the registrar of shipping. Since that time more than 10,000 vessels have been listed. **Alpha** was a side-wheel steamer 81.5 ft. long by 23 ft. beam of 105 gross tons, was built to carry farm produce from the Fraser river round to Vancouver; but in September 1891, carrying a cargo of potatoes and hay, a spark from her funnel set fire to the hay and she quickly burned to the waterline. The charred wreck was beached at Kitsilano.

Trawler tragedy

by W.G.Williamson

Deep sea fishing has always been a particularly dangerous occupation and many trawlers have been lost at sea over the years. In many cases it was severe weather conditions which were the main cause of such losses. Added to the normal perils of the sea, fishing during the years of the Second World War had the added danger of the risk of being intercepted by enemy naval forces. In the years after the Second World War the hazards had only slightly decreased for the risk from mines was still a problem.

It was a request for information about a trawler that sank off the coast of Iceland in the 1940s, possibly in March 1947, that led to research into the story of the **Loch Hope**. The correspondent was trying to trace a Radio Officer Conrad Burnett of South Shields who may have sent an SOS about that time.

Investigations into trawler losses in 1947 revealed two incidents that seemed to fit the limited information given in the original request. The first was the Fleetwood steam trawler **Dhoon** (FD54) that was wrecked off Iceland with the loss of three men.

The second loss seemed more promising. It was another Fleetwood trawler called the **Princess Marie-José** (FD12). She went down on the 11th June 1947 when they trawled up a mine in their nets which then exploded. One man died and seventeen survivors (including eight injured) were picked up by the trawler **Urka** (FD289) and landed at Seydisfjord. Further research revealed that at the time of her sinking the trawler was actually named the **Loch Hope** (H220) and not the **Princess Marie-José**.

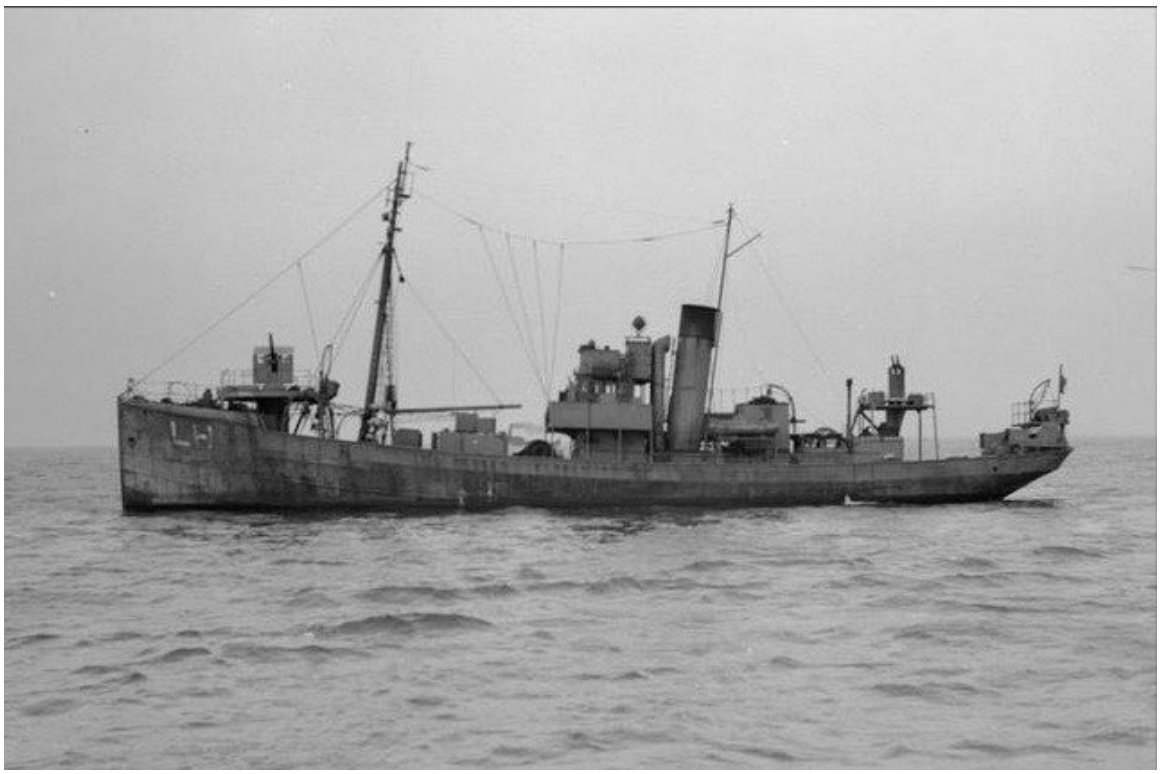
Most of the information about this event comes from various newspaper reports from June 1947. Brief details of the event were released to newspapers via Reuters after Wick Radio had received a Lloyds message from the British trawler **Goth** (H211). They had reported the loss of the **Loch Hope** and that one man was missing. Further research revealed the name of the man who was killed as Arthur Cattle. His name appears on the Hull and East Riding war memorial website.

The skipper and thirteen of the crew of the **Loch Hope** travelled home from Iceland by various means after their rescue. The skipper, Mr. A Butler, got a passage home in the trawler **Jupiter** while the crew came back to the UK by regular mail steamer. Three other men, W. Neve the 3rd Hand, W. Fall and E. Jenkinson (both deckhands) remained in hospital in Iceland. They eventually arrived home on the 27th June 1947 after flying from Reykjavik to Prestwick then by train from Glasgow to Hull.

Neve gave an interview to the Hull Daily Mail which gives the best description of the incident. He was still suffering from back injuries when he recorded his experiences. "*None of us actually saw the mine. We were fishing shortly*

before nine o'clock at night and the trawl was being hauled when a terrific explosion occurred. The next I remember was was being picked up by the cook and taken aft. Some of us were leaning over the ship's side when the explosion occurred. I was told afterwards that the ship's side was buckled and the deck for'ard was forced up. Luckily the Fleetwood trawler ***Urka*** *was about 400 yards away. She came alongside and we were able to jump on board with assistance. The* ***Loch Hope*** *sank within nine minutes of the explosion.*

We were well treated by the crew of the ***Urka*** *and we have a lot to thank them for. They landed us at Seydisfjord seven hours later and we were admitted to hospital. We were given penicillin for eight days and nurses and staff were most attentive to us while we were there*."



As H.M.T. **Loch Hope** during World War 1 Picture IWM Non Commercial Licence

A member of the crew whom Neve singled out for special praise is Tommy Beech the cook. "*He was very cool and did wonderful work and everyone is full of praise for him*." he said.

Neve was luckier than he could have imagined, for if it had not been for unusual coincidences, the **Urka** would not have been in the area at the time of the explosion as the following story relates.

Skipper Harry Brunton (36) from Fleetwood was in command of the steam trawler **Urka** when it left port at the end of May 1947 bound for the Icelandic fishing grounds. However the ship's cook took ill so Brunton put into a Scottish port and got a replacement cook sent up from Fleetwood. The **Urka** then sailed

with the replacement cook and all went well until he got badly scalded necessitating a return to port for medical attention. This second cook was landed ashore and a third cook was put on board and finally they were off to Icelandic fishing grounds. When they were about 70 miles south of Iceland and within sight of the **Loch Hope** she had the mine explode and began to sink. Skipper Brunton rescued all the crew of the stricken trawler and landed them in Seydisfjord as previously noted.

The **Urka** continued fishing but then received a message transmitted via Wick Radio saying Brunton's mother had died so the trawler immediately diverted to Stornoway. On arrival there, the Brunton family had chartered a plane to bring skipper Brunton to Fleetwood to attend the funeral which had been delayed until his arrival. It is also worth noting that Brunton's brother Frank, also a skipper, had been lost at sea when his trawler was rammed by a naval vessel off the east coast of Scotland in 1940.

A related story about the **Loch Hope** appeared in the Aberdeen Journal a couple of days later. The **Loch Hope** sailed from Aberdeen for several years before the war and at that time figured in a "ghost ship" incident.

The story was recalled to a reporter in the Press and Journal last night by the former owner Mr. John C. Robertson, 37 Abegeldie Road, Aberdeen. Mr Robertson bought her at Fleetwood as the **Princess Marie-José** and rechristened her **Feughside** and sailed in her as skipper.

Some men who were familiar with the **Feughside** declared that they had seen her one night in the gloaming off the coast of Argyllshire about the Sound of Islay. "*Actually at that time I was on board her fishing in the North Sea*." said Mr. Robertson, "*There was talk at the time about the west coast incident being a mirage or something of that kind*."

Mr Robertson sold the **Feughside** at the beginning of the war to the Loch Fishing Company of Hull. Subsequently she went into battle dress under the Admiralty, from whose service she was released last year. Then she came into the service of Messrs A. & M. Smith of Aberdeen and Hull. Since last November under her third name she fished from Hull under management of the Loch Fishing Co.

Wick Radio which received the Lloyds message about the **Loch Hope** was probably the most remote of all the UK Coast Radio Stations. It was in a prime location to give radio coverage not only for the home water fishing grounds but also for the distant and middle water fleets. These fleets sailed from Hull, Grimsby, Fleetwood and Aberdeen and needed to keep in communication with their owners back home. Wick radio used the marine WT (Morse) High Frequency band to communicate with ships.

The traditional fishing grounds for these fleets were the Norwegian coast, Bear Island, Spitzbergen, Iceland, the Faroes, Greenland and Newfoundland. Wick was also equipped with radiotelophony (RT or speech) and special remote controlled equipment facilitated communication with trawlers in these areas.

It is also worth noting that the trawler **Goth** mentioned in this story was herself lost the following year. She disappeared in a fierce storm off the North Cape of Iceland in December, 1948 and all 21 men on board were lost. Fifty years later the Icelandic trawler **Helga** trawled up the funnel of the lost ship.

S.T. Princess Marie-José FD12/Loch Hope (H220)

Technical details
Official Number: 136234
Yard Number: 314
Completed: 1915
Gross Tonnage: 274
Net Tonnage: 109
Length: 125.4 ft
Breadth: 22.7 ft
Depth: 12.2 ft
Engine: 80nhp T.3-cyl by C. D. Holmes & Co Ltd, Hull
Built: Cook, Welton & Gemmell Ltd, Beverley
Launched 17.12.1914

Brief history

Fishing until May 1915 when requisitioned by the Admiratly for war service. Fitted out as a minesweeper (One 12pdr, one 7.5" A/S Howitzer) (Ad.No.1770). Fitted as Leader. : Operating between Orkney and Shetland as a decoy trawler (Lt Cantlie RN) towing/and in company with HM S/M C.27 (Lt Cdr Dobson).
To the east of Fair Isle, shelled by U-boat (U.23) which C-27 stalked and subsequently sank in position 58°55N/00°14W; twenty four dead, ten survivors. Note 1920: President of the Prize Court awarded £170 to officers and men to share with HM S/M C.27 in respect of action in sinking U-boat (U.23).
1919: Returned to owner at Hull.
1920: Sold to The Sun Steam Trawling Co Ltd, Hull (James W. Armitage, Fleetwood, manager).
1934: Registered at Aberdeen as **Feughside** (A114).
1939: Sold to Loch Fishing Co of Hull Ltd, Hull.
1939: Registered at Hull as **Loch Hope** (H220).
1940: Requisitioned for war service as an auxiliary patrol vessel (P.No.4.97) (Hire rate £85.10.0d/month).
10.8.1945: Sold to A. & M. Smith, Hull.
1945: Returned to owner.
1947: Sunk

Baltic Post 1960s

Harry Hignett

It was mere chance that over perhaps over a five year period I had piloted a particular small Swedish ship between Eastham and Manchester on several occasions. As usual there were a couple passages during poor visibility or high winds, and traffic hold ups that were extended over more than 5-6 hours. And so the ship's master Olaf Laverl and I became quite friendly.

At the end of an inward passage I asked if he had any postage stamps for the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association. I was abruptly answered No!

I though no more about the idea until about 18 months later. When, at the end of an inward passage, we moored in Manchester docks, and in the captain's cabin chatted while a heavy thunderstorm played out. I then asked the captain if he had any used stamps. This brought a sudden outburst from him, a raging temper. "You should remember I told you - I do not keep stamps!"

Embarrassed, I apologised and stood up to leave, preparing for a long walk in a torrent of rain. However, Olaf apologised, asked me to stay and gave reasons for the outburst.

He was Estonian and when Russians took over the country, he and his brother escaped to Sweden. Olaf became a seaman and ultimately master and part owner of the ship. Their only contact with their mother in Estonia was by letter via Switzerland. His brother Matvei continued his electrical studies at a Swedish university and worked as an electrical transmission engineer for a large electrical company. But although their letters to Switzerland took sometimes two weeks, their mother was able to send letters by local fishermen, contacting Swedish fishermen who mailed the letters at their Swedish home port. Any postmarks could indicate where the letters were posted and allow communist officialdom to stop such activity. So Olaf destroyed any used stamps. I asked Olaf if there was any risk of detection. He said that there were four services working over there: navy, coast guard, police and politicians all involved in smuggling : mainly tobacco and spirits & etc. and too busy watching each other.

A couple of years later Matvei was seconded to work for a large similar concern in Finland which was about to begin a project building large power stations near Leningrad. He then travelled between a Finnish border town and Leningrad every day, six days a week. He explained the work to Olaf and mentioned that he had also assisted British Secret Service agents while doing so.

Was this the Matvei Gordievsky who was suddenly ordered back to Moscow in May 1985, taken to a KGB safe house outside Moscow, drugged and interrogated for some five hours by Soviet counter intelligence? After that he was released, and told he would never work overseas again. Although he was suspected of espionage for a foreign power, for some reason his superiors

decided to stall. In June 1985 he was joined by his wife and two children in Moscow.

Although he almost certainly remained under KGB surveillance, Gordievsky managed to send a covert signal to MI6 about his situation, and they activated an elaborate escape plan which had been in place for many years, ready for just such an emergency.

On 19 July 1985, Gordievsky went for his usual jog, but instead managed to evade his KGB tails and boarded a train for the Finnish border, where he was met by a British embassy car and, lying in the boot, was smuggled across the border and flown to England via Norway. Soviet authorities subsequently sentenced Gordievsky to death *in absentia*, for treason, a sentence never rescinded by post-Soviet Russian authorities.

His wife and children - on holiday in Azerbaijan at the time of his escape - finally joined him in the U.K. six years later, after extensive lobbying by the British Government, and the personal intervention of Margaret Thatcher during her meetings with Gorbachev.

Round the Horn

On a London Transport 'Routemaster' bus

The **Queen Mary** left Southampton on 31st October 1967 for the 40-day, 14,559 mile voyage to Long Beach, California. She had on board 1,093 passengers and as an economy measure she ran on just two of her quadruple screws, restricting her speed to 20 knots. This meant she used only 550 tons of fuel a day — instead of 1,100 tons.

Before leaving Southampton, two London Transport 'Routemaster' double deck buses had been stowed on the main deck aft - these would be used to transport visitors to the **Queen Mary** at Long Beach.

As the **Queen Mary** approached Cape Horn a number of passengers boarded these buses for the decidedly novel experience of 'Rounding the Horn' on a London Transport bus. The ship's printers produced a certificate to authenticate the occasion and the proceeds of the charge made for the 'Cape Horn Trips' were given to an orphanage in Valparaiso. The 'Horn' did not live up to its fearsome reputation for bad weather — as the **Queen Mary** sailed round it was cloudy and clear with a moderate north-east wind and slight swell.

The **Queen Mary** finally arrived at Long Beach on 9th December 1967. Shortly afterwards her propellers were disconnected from the engines and henceforward the old ship was classified as a building.

Readers' Letters

From L.N.R.S. Member N.S. Swindells, Sutton, Surrey

Just a note to say that for me you excelled yourself with the June edition of the Bulletin which had a truly memorable selections of articles, a special one for me being that on the **Pacific**. I have in the past given many lectures on the history of North Atlantic passenger services and when discussing the American Collins Line attributed their final demise to the loss of two of their liners **Arctic** and **Pacific**, the latter without trace. Now thanks to the Bulletin I finally know exactly what happened to her.

Also of special interest to me was the article on India Buildings by Ms Irene Murphy and she may be interested in the following. My early sea service (commencing 1949) was as an Engineer Officer onboard Cunard's MV **Britannic** and as you would guess I thus spent a lot of time in and out of New York and got to know it pretty well. One building which was quite close to our Merchant Navy Officers Club was that belonging to the famous (at that time) Harry Conover Model Agency, the subject of the Hollywood film "Cover Girl" which featured Gene Kelly and Rita Hayworth. As we often passed this building we noticed it had a similar frontage to India Buildings but above the entrance had metallic lettering with the words "Through These Portals Pass The Most Beautiful Girls In The World". As a few of us, including me, had girl friends who worked in India Buildings we always thought that India Buildings should have similar lettering replacing "In The World" with "In Liverpool".

Incidentally I married my India Buildings girl friend and when I left the sea my first shore job was with Elder Dempster Lines Superintendents department (part of the Ocean Group) stationed, believe it or not in, India Buildings.

and from L.N.R.S. Member S. Kennedy, Hightown, Merseyside

The " Scale of Provisions" article in the current Bulletin makes fascinating reading. The precision of the detail was most impressive: alternatives were suggested as and when difficult circumstances arose.

Similar thought clearly went into the allocation of wages, at an earlier time, as may be seen from the rather poor copy of the Half-Yearly Agreement and Home-Trade Articles (Ed. - sadly inadequate for copying here) with reference to a trip on the I**domeneus** in 1915. The extra five shillings per week for "war risk", though welcome, seems rather less than generous these days.

When recording actual trips, however, brevity appears to be the guide. The copy of a page from my father's Discharge book shows a six month voyage on the **Idomeneus** simply as Birkenhead-Java-Liverpool.

It is good for us to remember the Merchant Navy continuing its work during war-time.

Mauritania & Aquitania

from the magazine *Engineering* 6/05/1904

The 25-knot Cunard Atlantic Liners

Submitted by Member H.M. Hignett

The contract has now been definitely arranged and signed for the construction of the two high-speed Atlantic liners, for which provision was made in the agreement between the Government and the Cunard Company, the Government, to put it briefly, practically guaranteeing interest on the money - about 2½ million sterling - required for building the two vessels, on condition that they will be at the disposal of the Admiralty and other departments for merchant cruisers and other maritime service.

Very considerable interest has been taken in the negotiations, principally owing to the fact that a speed of 25 knots is to be maintained. This involved great size; the dimensions are now fixed at 760 ft. of length and 88 ft. of beam, so that the displacement, even although no cargo be carried, will be between 32,000 tons and 33,000 tons when the vessel leaves Liverpool. To get the speed, between 66,000 and 70,000 horse-power will require to be developed, and a measure of the cost of the engine power is afforded by the fact that the coal consumption will exceed 1000 tons per day.

But not alone in size and speed do the vessels mark a great advance: the adoption of the Parsons steam-turbine as the prime mover will invest them with great interest. We have already given general particulars of the turbine machinery, but it may here be stated that there will be four shafts, each with one powerful go-ahead turbine, the high-pressure units being on the side shafts, so as to enable the shaft to be as near the shell of the ship as possible, while the low-pressure units will be on the inside shafts. These latter will extend much further aft than the wing shafts, and the propellers will take the place of the ordinary twin screws, with the deadwood of the ship between them cut away. The lines of the ship aft will be specially fine, so that although the wing propellers are well forward from the stern, the blades will not project beyond the vertical line of the hull. We understand that the turbines are being so proportioned as to enable the revolutions to be 140 per minute, so that the propellers will be of sufficient size to ensure efficiency in a heavy Atlantic seaway. The inner shafts will also be fitted with go-astern turbines Howden's system of draught will be adopted in connection with the cylindrical boilers, which will be divided into three separate units, and thus there will be three funnels with an additional 'dummy' funnel to enhance the appearance.

It goes without saying that the Cunard Company, with their great experience and desire to please their patrons, will see to it that the vessels are perfect from the habitable, as well as from the mechanical and structural, standpoints. As has been anticipated for some months now, one vessel will be

built by Messrs. John Brown and Co., at their Clydebank works, where so many high-speed vessels have been created, and the other by Messrs. Swan and Hunter, the machinery for the latter being by the Wallsend Slipway and Engineering Company, also on the Tyne.

Olympic (left) and **Mauretania** (right) at Southampton in April, 1935 awaiting their final voyage to the breakers yard.

Mauretania departed July, 1935 for Rosyth, and was scrapped. **Olympic** departed in September, 1935 for Jarrow where her superstructure was demolished before being towed to Inverkeithing for final demolition

And here arises another story.

H.M. Hignett

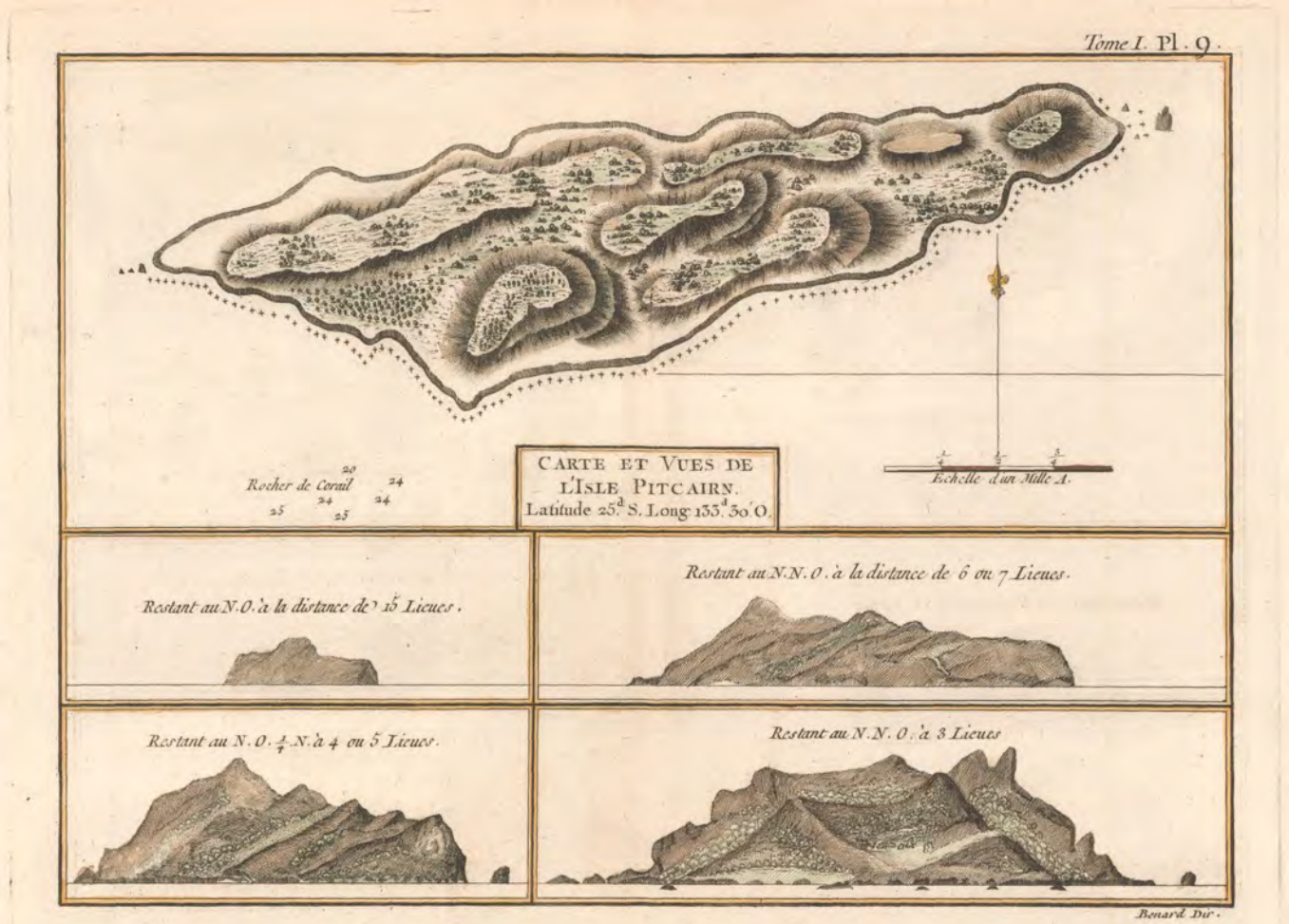
In 1941, I left school ... of the twelve teachers, eight of the males were called into the forces. School thus became almost non-existent and I found that as a telegraph messenger I would have the opportunity of visiting ships in the docks regularly. So I became one. Late in 1942, I delivered a telegram to the Chief Officer of the **Ceramic** in Gladstone Dock, Liverpool. I handed the telegram to him and waited to see if there was an answer. He merely shook his head without looking up. I returned to the office. Late in 1954 as Second Officer of the **Akaroa** one day prior to sailing for Hamburg, the officers and shore staff sat for lunch at the large centre table in the dining room. Amid the general chat, Captain Tommy Marsden, the Cargo Superintendent, remarked on his luck when he was taken hurriedly off the **Ceramic** .... the ship was torpedoed with the loss of 655 people ... there was only one survivor. At the table he stated, “I could have kissed that telegram boy when I read the telegram”. He was really taken aback and there were some amused titters, when I retorted “You didn't even give the beggar a tip!”

An Island in the Sun

from Blue Star "Gangway"

Pitcairn Island, a tiny spot in the vastness of the South Pacific, must be one of the most isolated places on earth. The following article provides a fascinating glimpse of life in this remote colony.

The page from 'Hawkesworth's Voyages' which attracted Fletcher Christian to the uninhabited island of Pitcairn



Map of Pitcairn Island, by expedition of James Cook Wikimedia Commons

When I arrived at Pitcairn Island in November 1980 as the only passenger in the refrigerated vessel, the **Pecan**, owned and operated by Salem Reefer Services of Hamburg, and chartered by the P & O Steamship Co, she was carrying a full cargo of 8,000 tonnes of butter from New Zealand to Avonmouth. None of the five German officers or 24 Filipino crew had visited this island previously and when we were met off the Western Harbour by the longboats and boarded by Tom Christian, Radio Officer and unofficial pilot, Captain Johannes Kwapil was quite happy to let him guide us past Bounty Bay, where it was

blowing hard, to an alternate anchorage off Down Rope, the red cliff on the south-eastern coast of the island.

During the next eight hours, 31 tonnes of general cargo and 47 bags of mail were ferried to the landing in Bounty Bay, about 1½ miles away, whilst the ship lay quietly in a gentle swell. As a welcome guest in the hospitable home of the magistrate, Ivan Christian, and his wife and family in Adamstown, I found it easy to pursue my interest in the island's shipping, their methods of navigation and the renowned longboats, and during the ensuing 70 days I was able to make the close acquaintance of all 51 islanders, together with the ten expatriates in temporary residence there.

The story of the mutiny on the Bounty has best been told, I think, by Richard Hough in 'Captain Bligh and Mr Christian' (published by Hutchinson in 1972) and is too well known to need repeating here. Naturally, I found it fascinating to meet and talk with people who still bear the names famous in Pitcairn's early history like Brown, Christian, Clark, Warren and Young.

It was Andrew Young, the father of my hostess, a widower and pensioner of 83, incredibly active for his age, who reminded me how Fletcher Christian, master's mate, with nine mutineers, six Tahitian men, and 12 Tahitian women, had found this island and taken refuge there, after burning their vessel in the bay named after her.

For the next 18 years the islanders continued to live in isolation, until the American sealer **Topaz**, under Captain Mayhew Folger, of Boston, Mass, called by and discovered their secret. After that, British naval vessels visited the island several times, one bearing a royal pardon for John Adams, the sole male survivor of the original group, who had established a model and deeply religious community in the settlement.

In 1831 all the 86 inhabitants were removed to Tahiti but returned the following year on account of deaths amongst their number from disease. Twenty-five years later the British Government transferred the population of 194 to Norfolk Island, where many decided to remain. However, during the following eight years 16 people and another four families opted to return to their former home and by 1839 there were 43 people of six families, who constituted the basis of the present population.

Early this century ships began to call, and when the Panama Canal was opened in 1914 the island found itself on the direct shipping route to and from New Zealand. Liners carried hundreds of passengers eager for souvenirs and the traffic increased to one ship every week, in both directions, although of course it is much diminished nowadays.

Several of the younger Pitcairners had up-to-date Admiralty charts, and it was Brian Young, aged 26, boatman and tractor driver, with the dark complexion of his Polynesian ancestry, who told me that the Pitcairn Islands Dependency is a group of four small islands lying 1,200 nautical

miles east-south-east of Tahiti.

'Like the others,' he said, 'Pitcairn is of volcanic origin, but it is the only inhabited island of the group. The others are Oeno Island, 75 miles north-east, Henderson Island, 105 miles east-north-east, and Ducie Island, 293 miles east.'

But it was in the home of my host that I learned most about the island - from Steven, aged 33, the fourth child and youngest son of Ivan, and only member of his family who had remained on Pitcairn. He told me that this was the smallest island of the group, with an area of only 18 square miles, although it had the most fertile soil and most luxuriant vegetation. The whole island,' said Steven, 'is covered with tropical trees and plants, bush and grass, fruit trees and family gardens.'

In a latitude of 25 degrees South, the climate was equable, with mean monthly temperatures ranging from 66°F in August to 75°F in February. The average annual rainfall was 80 inches but that was not spread evenly throughout the year and it seemed as if I had arrived at the start of the season of heavy rains in November and December.

The prevailing wind is a moderate easterly, but on several occasions during my stay our old wooden house shook to its foundations as south-easterly gales swept over the island and bent the tall palms.

The settlement of Adamstown occupies about 60 acres of parkland on a plateau 300 feet or so above sea level, and there I was welcomed into the homes of the islanders who were all happy to tell me their own particular family histories and the names of their many relatives living abroad.

Ours was a typical household and although they spoke to each other in their own idiom - a form of English with Polynesian intonation and turns of phrase - both Ivan, a quiet, courteous man then completing his second term as magistrate, and Dobrey, his wife, used pure English when they talked with me.

In addition to his other duties as engineer, radiographer, dental mechanic, and councillor, Steve was also coxswain on No 1 longboat, in complete charge once the boat had left the shelter of the harbour. Olive, his wife, was 26 years old, and the official typist to the Island Secretary; she willingly co-operated with her mother-in-law in the running of the household and was kept busy caring for her own three small boys and a baby girl of two.

Amongst the supplies brought by each scheduled vessel from New Zealand is a consignment of fresh stock for the cooperative store which keeps a wide variety of merchandise at a mark-up of 25 per cent above New Zealand retail prices - although Olive assured me that food from their gardens and fish from the sea was sufficient for their basic needs.

The islanders' limited monetary requirements are met from two sources: first, from wages paid for part-time work for the Administration, such as engineer, electrician, tractor driver, roadman, forester, cleaner, typist, groundsman, rubbish collector and librarian; and secondly, from the sale of handicrafts to passing ships and overseas customers.

Ben Christian, Island Secretary, showed me a standard price list of available items which included wooden models of fish, birds and the Bounty as well as vases, walking-sticks, basketware and hand-painted leaves, not to mention the famous postage stamps in various combinations. Exports were limited to fruit, vegetables and handicrafts, whilst imports consisted of building materials, clothing, food, machinery, medicines, bicycles and motorbikes.

There had been no ship-calls the previous month but during the remainder of November I observed with keen interest the arrival of seven overseas vessels. They were the **Essi Gina**, a bulk chemical tanker from Ellesmere Port to New Zealand, the **Antwerpen**, from Auckland to Europe, the **Samoan Reefer**, from Ecuador with bananas for New Zealand, the **Australian Exporter**, bound for the USA, and the **Anco Sceptre**, en route for New Zealand.

There was also a German vessel from Europe which passed close by and upon being intercepted by the longboats stopped to trade, and the French frigate **Protet** from Tahiti on a two-day courtesy visit. The islanders were entertained on board that vessel, and many of her complement of 16 officers and 111 crew came ashore to visit the people.

At the end of November the island's monthly news-sheet printed an article by the editor, the Education Officer from New Zealand, which gives a revealing indication of the variety of shipping which calls at Pitcairn.

The most pleasing aspect of shipping,' he wrote, 'has been the great improvement in supply ship contacts, which have been at regular intervals, every three months. Since November 1979, the following supply ships have called: **Townsville Star, Waitangi, Taupo, Snowflake, Pecan**. Once more the southbound ships have been a very vital link in the island's communication, taking mail and bringing flour and mail from England.

'Over the past 12 months we have had some very interesting callers, for example: **Lindblad Explorer**, an American cruise ship, **Romance**, an old and faithful brigantine with a young crew, **Hatsutori Maru No 5**, a South Pacific research vessel, **Stena Constructor**, designed for patrolling sea oil-fields, **Esmeralda**, a Chilean naval cadet training barque, and **Taiyo**, a 94-foot brigantine carrying the John Barrow commemorative expedition which stayed for 18 days.

'Normally three or four yachts visit this island every year, but during the past 12 months we have had no less than 12, some with a

crew of six. The following shows the nationality of ships, including yachts, which have called at Pitcairn in the past year: American 4; Australian 2; Belgian 2; British 5; Chilean 1; Danish 1; French 1; German 6; Japanese 1; New Zealand 1.'

In December 1980 there were only two arrivals: the 57-foot ketch **Kebir**, from Tahiti, with a crew of three, and a three-man film unit from Australia come to make a documentary feature about the descendants of the Bounty. The **Kebir** also brought a doctor from Papeete, by arrangement with the Auckland administration and the French Authorities in Tahiti, to diagnose and treat a young islander suffering from an ailment which had proved to be beyond the skill of the island nurse. She sailed again the following day, carrying the patient with the doctor in attendance, for Mangareva Atoll, 300 miles away, from where they would be flown to hospital in Papeete.

The other vessel which called in that month was en route from Ecuador to New Zealand and made an unscheduled call in order to give her crew a Christmas treat by a sight of the island and an opportunity to meet some of its people. Early in January the ketch **Kebir** returned with the young islander fully recovered after an operation; she left again for Tahiti with the film crew and myself, taking the only opportunity of leaving Pitcairn which had occurred for 70 days.

Campania - 65 years without Loss of Life

[From Lloyds List, October, 1904]

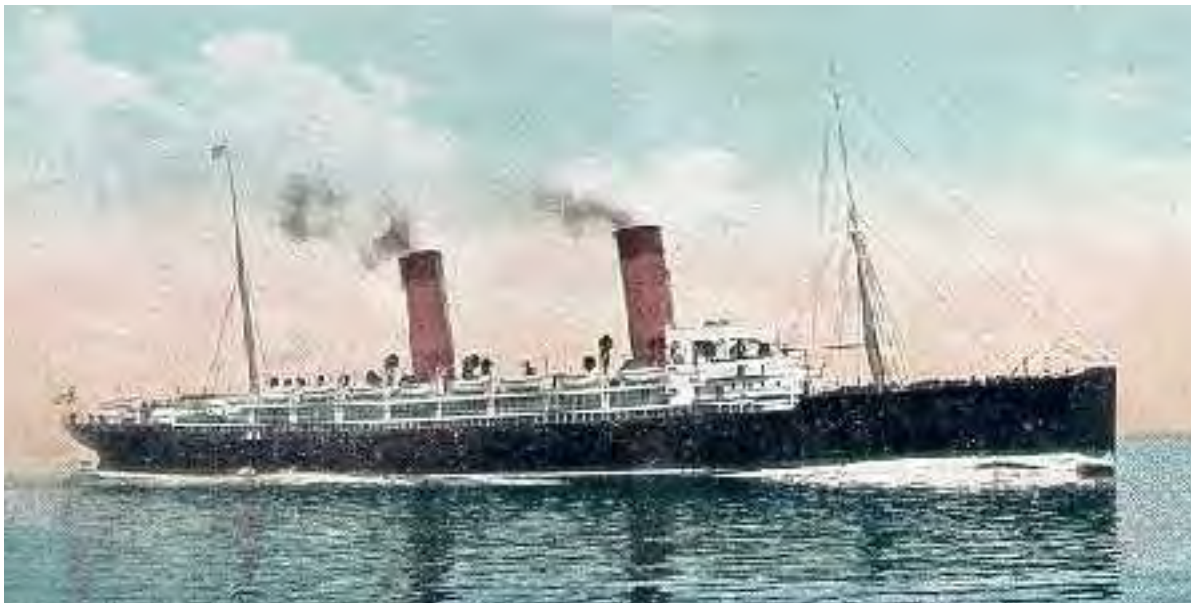
Struck by a tremendous wave in mid-Atlantic last Wednesday, five steerage passengers were swept overboard from the Cunard liner **Campania**, and drowned. One was injured, it is feared fatally, half a dozen hurt seriously, while a score of others were badly bruised. Never before in its proud history of 65 years has this world-renowned passenger line lost the life of a single passenger, so that the axiom. “It is safer aboard a Cunarder than on land,” has come to be accepted by experienced travellers on both sides of the Atlantic.

It was one of the saddest tales of the ocean which the passengers of the **Campania** on their arrival here yesterday had to unfold. Making good headway on Wednesday, despite a heavy quartering sea, the vessel was running under conditions which were not very unpleasant. It was just after dinner and the sun was shining. Possibly some 200 men, women and children chatting and playing on the steerage deck. Even the roughest sea, has small fears for these great Atlantic liners, and the **Campania** many a time has forged her way through more tumultuous waters than those of Wednesday without mishap.

Captain Warr, one of the most experienced officers of the Cunard line, was on the bridge. This was his first trip across the Atlantic in command of the **Campania**, and he was naturally desirous of leaving no precaution forgotten calculated to secure the safety of over 1,500 souls aboard ship.

One of the passengers present on the upper deck just before the disaster, says that the vessel was certainly pitching and tossing somewhat, but there was no great discomfort. Then, unexpected even by weather-wise sailors, a great wave suddenly rose up over the port rail and landed with a roar and a swirl of water on the iron deck. It seemed, to quote one of the passengers, as if the sea in a moment of vicious rage had up-risen "to smack us with all its strength".

In a moment the long stretch of the promenade was changed to a green and angry torrent filled with struggling and screaming men and women. Some thousands of tons of green Atlantic had been slammed down without warning



R.M.S. **Campania** was built by Fairfield at Govan in 1903
12950 grt, 4974 nrt, Length 601 feet Beam 65 feet
Picture courtesy www.clydesite.co.uk

upon the deck, and the scene which followed baffled description. A few seconds before children had been playing about the deck, women were engaged in sewing, and lively chatter was ringing throughout the port side of the vessel above the roar of the waves, as they beat against the starboard side of the ship with regularity and force. The entire scene was transformed so quickly that few appreciated their danger until it was upon them: The vessel rose as the giant wave swept down it, then staggered like a drunken man. She was pitched far over on her port side but still arose and shook herself like a dog before plunging into the swell. The steerage passengers were simply deluged and they were part of the sea for a few terrible moments. Strangled and stunned by the

pressure of water, they were dashed against the stanchions, carried by the swirl of the wave against the railings, and swept with irresistible force from one end of the deck to the other, 200 of them struggling with all their might to keep their heads above the water, which receded none too quickly and left the deck waist deep.

When the water at last subsided it was seen that an open grating in the steerage deck rail had been torn down, and through this aperture five passengers had been swept to their doom. Precisely how many was unknown until hours afterwards.

True to the tradition of the Cunard Line, the Campania's crew rushed immediately to the rescue of the steerage passengers, the men plunging into the water, which was still several feet deep on the main deck, and shouting to the people to be quiet, all the time getting about as fast as possible and dragging to safety those who were in danger of being washed overboard.

There were heroes also among the stewards and steerage themselves. One snatched up a baby while being carried along by the current and struggled with it to safety. Another caught a woman by the hair, and at the risk of his own life held her until the danger was past.

Dr. Francis Verdon, the **Campania**'s doctor, was on the scene, almost as quickly as the stewards and seamen. Assisted by Dr. Neville Bradley, of London, Dr. Carl B. Davis, of Chicago, Dr. James Brady, of Rochester, Dr. O. K. Fleming and other physicians, he quickly set about the work of examining the injured people. One of the steerage passengers, saved by two of **Campania**'s sailors, had £4,000 in his pockets. He said he was travelling with a friend who was too poor to take a cabin passage, and he had decided to come over in the steerage.

When the water had all poured back into the sea the **Campania** was at least a mile beyond the point where the five passengers had been washed overboard. Tremendous seas were still running and a heavy wind was blowing, conditions that made any attempt at rescue out of the question. Captain Warr never lost his head. He coolly ordered the doors to be closed, and locked and with the first cabin passengers secured, the crew were able to care for the steerage passengers

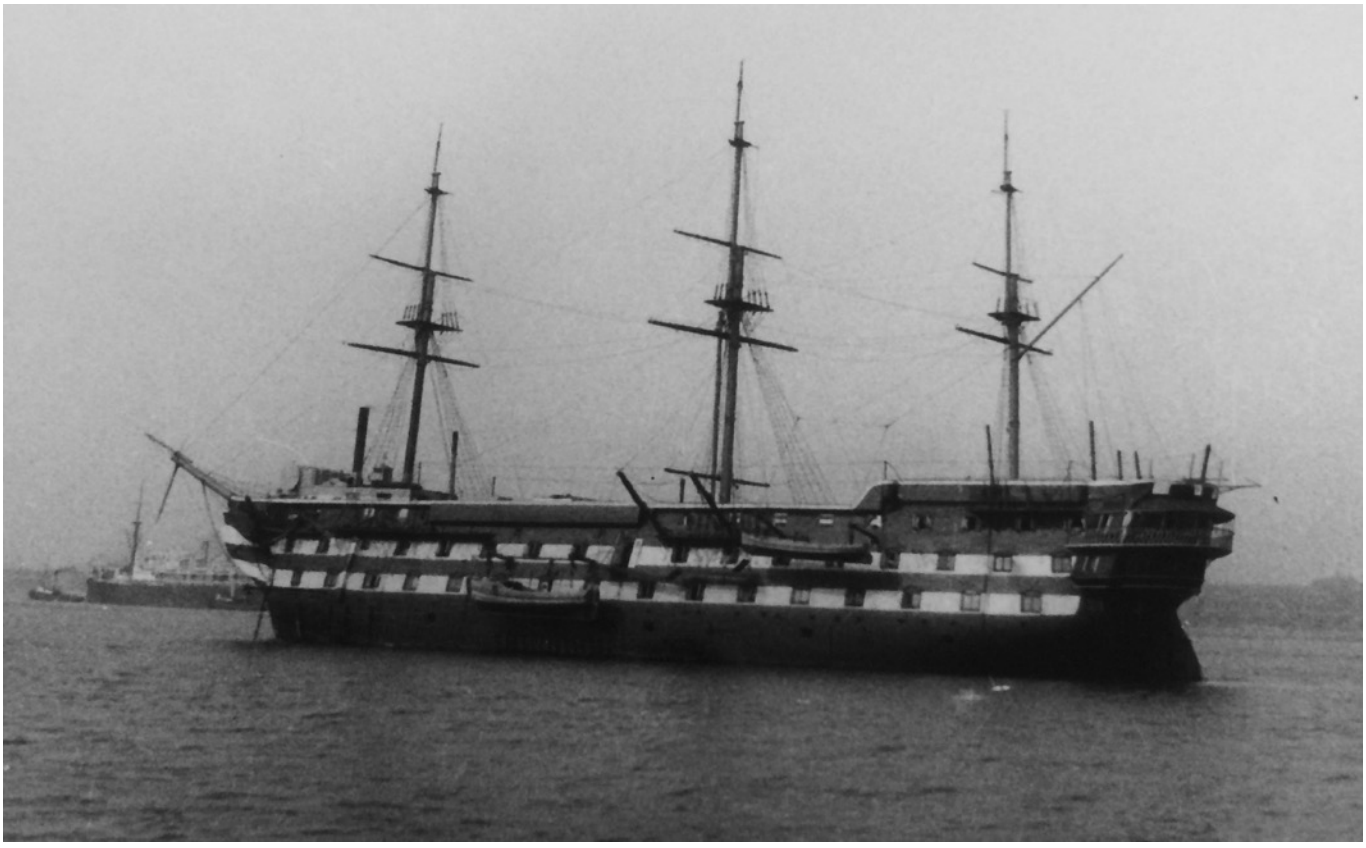
The death-dealing wave curled as high as the ship's funnels and the vessel's officers say that the sea was the highest they have ever seen. The second officer, Mr. Peel, who was on the bridge at the time was caught under the descending wave and knocked unconscious.

A wireless message received on Friday prepared the authorities here for the sad news.

Further thoughts on the loss of H.M.S. **Conway**

As published in the September and November (2013) editions of the Newsletter of The Ocean Nestorian Association

*And reprinted by kind permission of their editor and the author Ron Grisdale (who added:- Captain Fred. Brown was on the **Dongarth** for the move, although his regular tug was the **Grassgarth**, which had a far greater bollard pull. Fred later emigrated to New Zealand. On a trip home, he asked me for a copy of this report. His only comment was — "Too many chiefs".)*



Conway in happier times, on the Mersey Can anyone identify the ship ahead of her? Picture courtesy Merseyside Maritime Museum

To write about Conway's grounding and her subsequent declared constructive total loss more than 40 years after the event is difficult. No longer are any of the active participants[1] around and the only records are the report dated 16th April, 1953. The Committee[2] was provided with nautical expertise by Captain G. Ayre, Captain A.G. Peterkin, and The Blue Funnel Line's Nautical Adviser, Captain James Nelson, who was present for part of the time. They heard accounts from:-

Captain Eric Hewitt, Captain Superintendent, HMS **Conway**.

R.J. Jones, Menai Strait[3] Pilot.

Captain Fred. Durrant, Marine Manager, Rea Towing Company.

F.A. Brown, Tug-Master, **Dongarth**.

F. Cooper, Tug-Master, **Minegarth**

None of The **Conway's** officers were called. However, there was no formal Ministry of Shipping Inquiry (now DTI) or Admiralty Inquiry. In fact Captain Hewitt told the writer that when he reported the ship's loss to the Admiralty they more of less replied that as they had had nothing to do with her for the last seventy-seven years, they were not interested. Apart from quoted comments by Captain Hewitt's son, Michael, and author‘s notes, as indicated, all the material has been taken from the above mentioned reports.

Captain Eric Hewitt, **Conway's** Captain Superintendent, began planning **Conway's** eastward passage through the Swellies in 1952. Taking the ship for dry docking at Birkenhead was to be a two stage operation, but the passage through the Swellies would be the most intricate part. During the 1953 Easter holidays she would be shifted from her Plas Newydd mooring back to her Glyn Garth mooring, west of Bangor Pier. There she was to spend the summer term before being towed to the West Float dry dock at Birkenhead. Captain Hewitt was aboard **Conway** under Captain Goddard's command, when she made her westward passage on 13th April 1949 with 14 cadets aboard. However, in order to thoroughly familiarise himself with the eastbound project he made several passages through the Swellies in the ship's motor launch at high and slack waters and also observed the tides from the shore. He then checked the times in **Conway‘s** launch going at $4^{1}/_{2}$ knots with Captain Durrant, and the Blue Funnel Line's Choice Liverpool pilot, James Miller, accompanying him. Shifting a vessel of **Conway's** size and draught was an extremely difficult operation. In fact, she was the largest and deepest draught vessel ever to pass through the Swellies. A serious complication for a deep draught vessel navigating the Swellies is that slack water occurs about one and half hours before High Water. Adding to the complication is the so called Cheese Rock (Carreg Caws), about a ship’s length east of the Britannia Tubular Bridge, with depth of 4ft. over it at Low Water Springs. The spring rise is about 20' 6” giving a depth of 24' 6" at High Water, but only 22' at the start of slack water, which on a spring tide lasts 15 to 20 minutes. Clearly by entering the Swellies early there was a risk of striking the rock, while entering too late meant meeting the west going stream in increasing strength.

Furthermore, **Conway** was a "dead" ship without either steering gear or engine power, so completely dependent on tugs. Then her spare anchors[4] had been incorporated in the new moorings laid off Plas Newydd by Captain Goddard, and there were no replacements that could be let—go in an emergency.

For technical and scientific tidal information Dr. A.T. Doodson, CBE, DSc, FRS, Director of The Liverpool Observatory and Tidal Institute at Bidston, was consulted.

W.H. Dickie[5], The Conway Committee‘s Honorary Superintendent Shipwright, asked The Rea Towing Company (where Alfred Holts was the

majority shareholder) for two tugs, with one tug master who had been involved in the April 1949 west—bound tow. As it happened Rea was able to allocate the two tug—masters who had been employed in 1949. According to Hewitt's son, Michael, both Hewitt and the Senior Menai Strait Pilot, Richard Jones, considered that three tugs were needed. The Committee records that Pilot Jones asked for three tugs. But Michael Hewitt says he understood from his father that, in rejecting the request for three tugs, Dickie argued he arranged hundreds of tows a year and enquired 'how many tows Hewitt organised'[6]?

On 24th March 1953 W.H. Dickie met Captain F.J. Durrant, Captain Duff, Rea's Supervisory Tug-Master, and Mr James Miller to discuss the operation. Mr Miller, who, incidentally, was an Old Conway (1925—1927), was to be the liaison between **Conway**, Menai Strait pilots and tugs. On the 30th March 1953 the party, with the exception of Dickie, went to the Strait for further discussions with Captain Hewitt, Captain Rees Thomas, Caernarfon Harbour Master, and the Menai Strait pilots. Tuesday 14th April 1953 would be the second day of three successive days of spring tides, and this day was fixed for the tow depending, of course, on suitable weather. Captain Rees Thomas, basing his times on Caernarfon Bar, recommended passing under the Britannia Tubular Bridge at 0925. From 0925 he estimated there would be a slack water of 10 to 15 minutes. From his own observations at the Tubular Bridge, however, Captain Hewitt noted that the slack water started 10 minutes before the times given by Captain Rees Thomas. He therefore intended arriving at the Tubular Bridge at 0920 in order to have five minutes[7] in hand.

The time of Slack Water in the Swellies is normally taken as 2 hours before High Water Liverpool[8]. 14th April 1953 HW Liverpool 1120: HW Menai Bridge 1053.

The Sub-Committee's Report states that the Admiralty Chart of the Menai Strait (No. 1464.) referred to at the time contained the following information about the tide in the Swellies.

> "Between the bridges the stream runs to the SW for $6^{1}/_{2}$ hours, from 1 hour before HW at Menai to $1^{3}/_{4}$ hours before LW; and to the NE for $5^{1}/_{4}$ hours from $1^{3}/_{4}$ hours before LW to 1 hour before HW
> 7 To 8 knots at Springs: 5 knots at Neaps.
> Slack Water $^{1}/_{4}$ hour at Springs, $^{1}/_{2}$ hour at Neaps."

Then: 14th April 1953	HW Menai Bridge	1053
Less:		0100
Slack ends:		0953
Less:		0015
Slack starts:		0938
Slack		0015
Therefore Slack Water		0938 To 0953[9].

The afternoon before the tow, about one hour before low water, (Monday 13th April 1953,) Captain Hewitt took the tug masters F.A. Brown (**Dongarth)** and F. Cooper (**Minegarth**) through the Swellies aboard **Conway**'s motor launch. He showed them the three extra buoys he had laid and those hazards that were uncovered at Low Water. Afterwards Captain Hewitt held a meeting aboard C**onway** with Pilot Miller, Captain Durrant, Captain Duff, the two tug masters, and Mr Pope the Marconi Marine Radio Representative. **Minegarth** would make fast with her stern to **Conway**'s stern. The question of **Minegarth** remaining made fast astern throughout the tow or needing to slip and assist **Dongarth** forward after clearing the Swellies was discussed. It was deemed essential to keep **Minegarth** astern to steer **Conway** through the Swellies. Questioned whether or not **Dongarth** was powerful enough to tow **Conway** against a 4 knot tide with **Minegarth** pulling astern - Rea's team considered that she had. The time of passing each point was planned. The Menai Strait pilots were piloting several ships a week drawing up to 15 feet draught through the Swellies at 1 hour before the HW Slack in order to berth on the last of the east going flood at Caernarfon. For some unaccountable reason they were not invited to the meeting, and such a comment is made in the Sub-Committee Report. The only time they were consulted was when, a fortnight earlier, with Captain Durrant, Captain Duff and Mr Miller, the two pilots went down to the waters edge, and watched the tide turn.

It was estimated that the 9 cables passage through the Swellies from the Britannia Tubular Bridge to the Menai Suspension Bridge could be made at 4 knots and take approximately 15 minutes. The tow should clear the Swellies, and pass under the Suspension Bridge at 0935 and not later than 0940. By the time the tow arrived at the Suspension Bridge it was estimated that the west going stream would have started and attained a rate of 4 knots[10]. The rate was based on Captain Hewitt's and Mr Miller's observations and confirmed, according to Captain Durrant, by the Senior Menai Strait Pilot Richard Jones[11] and the Junior Strait pilot, his son John. They were the same two pilots who had advised when the ship moved to her Plas Newydd moorings from Bangor in April 1949. Under Mr Pope's supervision the "walkie-talkies" between the ship and tugs were tested and found to be satisfactory.

Tuesday morning l4th April 1953, the conditions for the tow seemed ideal the day opening with a light NW breeze, fine and clear. Captain Hewitt gave **Conway‘**s draught as Fwd 19‘ 6" Aft 20’ 0". Her displacement was 4,300 tons. However, at the inquiry Pilot Jones gave the draught as Fwd 21' O" Aft 21‘ 10". Surprisingly no one questioned this discrepancy of 1‘ 10" in **Conway’**s declared maximum draught, particularly as it was the critical factor in assessing the earliest time when there would be sufficient under keel clearance over Cheese Rock.

Captain Hewitt was in command aboard **Conway** with the Senior Menai Strait Pilot, Richard Jones, also aboard to advise, and Liverpool Pilot James Miller stationed on the forecastle head. Mr Miller transmitted Captain Hewitt's orders and Pilot Jones's advice to the tugs by "walkie—talkie". However, there were difficulties communicating with the stern tug. Aboard **Conway** they could transmit to the stern tug but not receive, so whistle and simple semaphore signals were arranged.

The tugs were made fast, **Dongarth** (F.A. Brown) with Junior Strait Pilot John Jones aboard, forward; **Minegarth** (F. Cooper) with Captain Duff aboard aft, and **Conway** slipped her moorings at 0815. She was moved underway with comparatively little effort from the tugs. Durrant's report states that the tugs kept her stopped off Pwlfanog, west of the Britannia Tubular Bridge, from approximately 0845 to 0915.

Conway's bow passed under the Britannia Tubular Bridge at 0923. Captain Hewitt drew Senior Pilot Richard Jones's attention to being 3 minutes late. The pilot answered that they were early rather then late. Whether this was his navigational opinion or early on the basis of the timetable planned (without the pilots being present) is not stated. However, Durrant told the Committee that a Menai Strait pilot stationed under the Tubular Bridge noted that the 15 minutes slack water did not occur and the West going stream started at 0920.

Price's Point Beacon was abeam to starboard at 0935, 12 minutes after passing the Tubular Bridge (0923) and Pilot Jones asked for more power. With Swelly Rock Beacon (less than $^{1}/_{2}$ cable past Price's Point Beacon) abeam to port, which is approximately the halfway point between the bridges, the wind increased and veered. At the inquiry some said it veered NE others NW, and, in answer to questions from the Committee, Pilot Jones thought the conditions abnormal. But in 12 minutes **Conway** had made good only half a mile over the ground at a speed of $2^{1}/_{2}$ knots. At this point Pilot Jones suggested to Captain Hewitt that **Conway** should be taken back through the Swellies stern first. Captain Hewitt decided against this and at the inquiry Captain Durrant, Captain Duff and the two tug—masters all agreed that under the prevailing conditions such action would have been impossible. Why they considered it impossible was not questioned. As the tow was not making headway, by reversing direction the west going stream would have provided the motive power. After all, apart from being the other way around, **Conway** was in similar situation as when she had been towed west in 1949.

Conway was not now moving and with the pilot's concurrence at approximately 1015 the stern tug was let go. Although **Minegarth** could steam at 10 knots, after letting go, despite steaming at full speed, at first she actually dropped about 400 feet astern, though, of course, she had to execute a 18O° turn.

Conway aground at Menai, July, 1953 Courtesy Merseyside Maritime Museum

Captain Duff said that with such a strong tide the tug could not get under the **Conway**'s port bow to either pass or receive a line from her. Therefore he decided to go ahead of the forward tug and tow in line ahead. Such an unusual procedure is fraught with danger, and was clearly a desperate measure. She passed a new 6" rope to **Dongarth** and **Dongarth** passed her new 8" rope to **Minegarth.** With the two tugs towing in tandem **Dongarth**, with taut lines to **Minegarth** ahead and an equally taut line to **Conway** astern, found her manoeuvrability seriously restricted.

Captain Durrant followed the operation in **Conway'**s launch until she passed under the Tubular Bridge, and watched the final stage of the operation from the Suspension Bridge. Among the many spectators on the Suspension Bridge was the Blue Funnel Line Marine Superintendent Captain E.A.P. Gepp. At 0940 Captain Durrant observed **Conway** sheering to port and starboard and the strong North Westerly breeze on her port side gradually pushing her towards the Caernarfon shore. **Dongarth** was towing at full speed but making no headway against the tide. Carefully watching the seaweed floating under the bridge, although 100 feet above the Strait, he estimated the tide to be flowing at least 8 to l0 knots.

From 0923 to 1010 **Conway** had made good 6 cables over the ground, barely half a knot. The Committee Report stated that clearly something unusual was happening. Perhaps a strong under current, which is known to occur in the

channel, or that there was little if any stand of tide. At some time between 1020 and 1030, abreast Platters Rocks, an exceptionally strong eddy caused **Conway** to take a violent sheer to starboard and she went ashore. This caused the lines between the two tugs to slacken momentarily and retighten instantly. The 6" rope parted. However, the 8" rope held and the tugs remained connected until the end of the operation

NOTES

1. Chief Officer G.A.B. King was seconded to the **Conway** from British Petroleum for 12 months (1952- 1953). Being the Ship's Second Officer, he was stationed aft in the sick bay in charge of the after mooring party. The heel of the mizzen mast passed through the sick bay, and **Minegarth'**s towing wire was secured by nine or ten turns around the mizzen mast. After a successful career with BP, King retired as chief executive BP Tankers and was awarded the CBE. He was not, however, called to the Sub- Committee Inquiry.
   There were also 17 cadets aboard, who are, no doubt, still around.
2. Sub-Committee:-
   Chairman Brian Heathcote (Assistant Manager, Alfred Holt)
   L.O'Brien Harding [Partner Bibby Line)
   Alfred Wilson (MMSA General Secretary)
   Captain G. Ayre (Port of Liverpool Harbour Master)
   Captain A.G. Peterkin, OBE (Retired Harrison Line Master and Liverpool Pilotage Committee Nautical Adviser).
   Illness prevented Lord Norbury (Conway about 1908-1910,) International Paints Merseyside Manager, from attending the Sub-Committee inquiry.
3. Until the New Pilotage Act effective 1st October 1988, Menai Strait pilots were licensed by Trinity House.
4. The anchors that were used to moor **Conway** have been retrieved from the Strait. One is now at the Caernarfon Museum and the other at the Merseyside Museum at Liverpool's Albert Dock.
5. Dickie had joined Alfred Holt from Tyneside shipbuilder Hawthorn Leslie as assistant superintendent shipwright in 1920, and worked closely with Lawrence Holt. He had no university training, and never lost his Geordie accent. Nonetheless he was extremely competent and in 1944 Lawrence Holt, Alfred Holt & Company's Senior Manager appointed him one of the company's Managers. Dickie's department was responsible for all hull repairs and dry dockings, which in most shipping companies were dealt with by the marine and engineer superintendents.

6. G.A.B. King comments that one can only wonder what would Dickie have said if Hewitt asked how many tows he had arranged for "dead" wooden battleships.

7. The time of High Water Slack in the Swellies is generally taken as being two hours before High Water Liverpool, and this agrees with Captain Hewitt's timing based on his own observations. On the day in question HW Liverpool was 1120.

8. Liverpool 13th April l953:-

LW	0513	0.7‘	HW	1035	29.5’
LW	1741	0.7‘	HW	2302	29.9‘

Liverpool l4th April 1953

LW	0601	0.0	HW	112O	30.8’
LW	1828	0.7'	HW	2344	29.9’

9. The Sub—Committee stated that Captain Hewitt, and apparently everyone else, had correctly timed the beginning of the Slack as being 0920, that is 18 minutes earlier than that given by the advice on the chart, and had expected the west going stream to have started by the time the ship was planned to have reached the Suspension Bridge, 0940 (at the latest). That is 13 minutes before the end of Slack according to the chart. It is surprising they used this information as a basis for confirming the timing's correctness.

They might have referred to it for comparison, but the people involved had clearly used much more accurate information. It is also of note that the current edition of the chart does not give this information at all.

10. In order to average 4 knots, the tow needed to pass under the Tubular Bridge at about 6 knots if it expected to encounter a 4 knots adverse stream at the Suspension Bridge. Clearly towing at 4 knots against a 4 knots stream no headway would be made

11. Richard Jones‘s 25 years old great grandson, (Richard John Jones), like the five family generations before him, is currently (1997) training to be a Menai Strait pilot.

The Menai Straight lies between Anglesey and mainland North Wales.
The length is some 16 miles and the width varies between 1,300ft. and 3,600ft.
Differential tides at the two ends cause very strong currents to flow in both directions at different times, creating dangerous conditions. One of the most dangerous areas of the strait is known as the Swellies between the two bridges.

Royal Tour 1953/54

by W.G.Williamson

Shortly after the end of the Second World War, the Shaw Savill company built seven vessels with similar hulls, twin screw steam turbines with maximum speed 18 knots carrying refrigerated cargo. One of them was the **Gothic** that could carry 85 passengers and had a design speed of 20 knots. In July 1951, the ship had been chosen to be the Royal Yacht for a tour of Australia and New Zealand and conversion work was carried out at Cammell Lairds on Merseyside. This included repainting the entire ship in white, apart from the funnel which retained the Shaw Savill colours of buff with a black top. This particular tour was cancelled due to the death of King George VI. After this first five month refit in Birkenhead, the royal suites were sealed off from the rest of the passenger accommodation. Most of the furniture for the royal apartments was put into storage in Cammell Lairds. The **Gothic** then returned to commercial service but with her passenger capacity limited to 52 passengers. The government paid Shaw Savill a holding fee of £125,000 to retain her as a future Royal Yacht as required.

Later it was decided that the ship would be used for the Royal tour of Australia and New Zealand in 1954 by the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh. The ship therefore returned to Cammell Lairds, Birkenhead for dry docking and refurbishment for the Royal Party. She arrived on the 18th August 1953 and remained until the 13th October 1953. She then went to Greenock where she spent a week on the Clyde carrying out radio tests and other essential testing of equipment.

Why was the **Gothic** chosen for this task? The Royal Yacht **Britannia** was not yet completed and the other vessel considered, the battleship HMS **Vanguard**, had too deep a draught to enter some of the Australian and New Zealand ports. The **Gothic** had the necessary capacity to carry the royal party plus a Royal Navy complement which included seamen, signallers and technical staff plus a Royal Marine band. For example three WREN officers were on board to handle all the cypher work.

It was recognised that the normal commercial wireless room equipment on the **Gothic** would be insufficient to meet the communication needs of the tour. With members of the Queen's Household and Royal Navy staff on board, diplomatic and naval traffic would be high throughout the period of the tour. The Dundee Courier carried a report in which it stated that there was more than 100 people in the Royal party. It must also be mentioned that press interest in the tour was massive and their coverage would be extensive. The press considered it essential to be able to transmit photographs from the ship by radio back to their offices. This had never been done before. The BBC also required use of the airwaves for two “live” broadcasts back to their London

studios every day. (Godfrey Talbot, a well known BBC commentator and his assistant named Goves sailed with the ship). Reporters from Reuters, Exchange Telegraph, The Times and Australian newspapers were also on board.

The **Gothic** was of course already fitted with a full complement of radio equipment by the Marconi International Marine Company to comply with requirements under the existing Radio Regulations. It was decided therefore that the additional equipment would be installed in the vessel while she was in dry dock at Cammell Lairds.

This extra equipment was sourced and installed by the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Co Ltd (MWT). At the heart of this extra equipment was a high power transmitter, the SWB11, which the company had designed as a land-based installation for long distance point to point communication. It was considered the perfect transmitter to meet the communication requirements of the Royal tour.

Consequently this equipment was installed on board the Gothic by one of MWT's engineers a Mr. A. J. Corbett, who also sailed with the ship during the tour. It was the first time a transmitter of this power had been fitted to a merchant vessel. The transmitter was versatile, being able to handle Morse telegraphy, radiotelephony and it could also deal with picture transmissions, i.e. fascimile.

Obviously for two way communication, a receiver is required. In this instance three were used, one was used for monitoring and transmission checking while the second was used as a general traffic receiver. The third was used by the BBC for their specific requirements during commentaries.

Some modifications had to be made for the tour. For example the main transmitter being so powerful generated lots of heat when transmitting. It was therefore housed in a separate compartment equipped with special ventilation and heat dissipation systems i.e. air conditioning. This room was originally a childrens play room and located just forward of the funnel. This transmitter was remotely controlled from the forward wireless room apart from frequency changing which was done manually. When used for telephony the set could be modulated from any of the several BBC commentary booths.

The **Gothic's** normal radio room was located on the starboard side of the bridge deck and originally fitted with Marconi Marine Oceanspan transmitter. This was replaced by a Worldspan transmitter specially adapted to transmit high speed WT. This was used for the normal traffic from the ship but could be used to handle overflow press when the new unit was in use for high priority traffic. Three receivers were in use, a Mercury and two Electras. A Marconi Yeoman receiver already installed was retained for the tour. Aerial splitter arrangements were specially made for the **Gothic**. This allowed any or all receivers to be operated from the main receiving aerial. Built in receiver protection systems automatically protected the receivers when transmitters were in use. Heavy duty insulators were fitted to the main mast rigging to reduce induced EMFs when

the transmitter was operating. Warning lights were fitted to the base of the mainmast which flashed to warn the crew that shocks and sparks could be expected.

In his book Royal Standard Red Ensign, the **Gothic'**s Master, David Aitchinson (apparently his nick name in the company was "Dismal Dave") devotes just two paragraphs to radio matters. "When transmitting, the SWB 11 electrified the after end of the ship. In spite of large insulators it was dangerous to touch anything connected with the mainmast. We had some trying moments, as when the winches were electrified and we were unable to take in the ropes prior to leaving port, which event SWB11 was to broadcast to the world."

Former Manchester Ship Canal pilot Harry Hignett was a navigating officer with Shaw Savill and wrote the following account of his association with the **Gothic** during the dry docking.

*I was to be a temporary Relieving Officer for half a year. This meant anything from a coasting voyage as Third or Second or Chief Officer or standing by as Relieving Officer on vessels in dock anywhere but London. I was instructed to join the **Gothic** in Cammell Lairds, Birkenhead. She was to prepare to take up her sailing as Royal Yacht carrying the Royal Party to Australia, Fiji and New Zealand.*

*The **Gothic** went immediately into the dry dock nearest to Cammell Laird's floating basin, and within 12 hours rested on the blocks. In dry-dock the **Gothic** was shut down electrically with a supply from the shore, no heating or cooking apparatus to be used. The ship was closed down overnight and I left every evening after walking the whole ship with a security guard usually about 2100 hours.*

*The equipment fitted to the **Gothic** was ordered by the Admiralty. The normal radio equipment was completely inadequate and therefore enhanced with a 6 kW HF transmitter. Whenever this was in action there were problems. The whole of the ship's rigging became alive and was inclined to spark. Anyone touching the rails could receive a shock. I understood that a number of the deck crew would be stationed around the vessel to warn anyone to 'stand clear' whenever the transmitter was to be used. The radio was tested one afternoon, just after a rain shower. No. 2 starboard derrick was in its normal position on its cradle on the forepart of the bridge deck. When the transmitter opened up, there was quite a spark between the end of the derrick and the bridge deck housing. One of the security men picked up a loose hatch wedge and thrust it between the derrick and the housing. There was an immediate cloud of steam and then smoke and someone ashore shouted "FIRE". In three minutes there were two fire engine units alongside, prepared to douse everything in sight. There was no fire, only a slightly charred wedge!*

This response by the fire brigade was no fluke as this article from the Birkenhead News of Wednesday 9th September 1953 headed," Firemens test dash to Royal ship" shows.

*Six machines of the Birkenhead Fire Brigade raced to Cammell Lairds shipyard on Monday after receiving a call "fire on the **Gothic**," the liner which will take the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh on the Australian tour in November. It was a test call, although the men did not know it and was part of the careful plan to ensure that every precaution*

*is taken for the well being of the **Gothic**. She is of 15,902 tons and has come to Birkenhead to be fitted for the Royal cruise.*
Later on Monday the test was repeated.

*Mr. A.R.G. Wray the Chief Officer of the brigade said that every day each oncoming watch has a fifteen minute lecture about the liner. A diagram is used to illustrate the talk so that every fireman will have an intimate knowledge of the layout of the vessel. The test runs will continue at intervals while the **Gothic** is in Birkenhead.*

*Other vessels were also in Cammell Lairds at this time as the repair yard was very busy. These vessels included HM submarine **Upstart**, the tanker **Badapur**, the short sea trader **Ousel**, the dredger **W.D.52** and the **Delta**.*

*After leaving the dry dock the **Gothic** was moved to the wet basin for the final days of her refit. The wet basin was busy and contained the **Ark Royal**, **Esso Oxford** and two new tankers, the **British Crusader** and the **Hemidonax**. Altogether the **Gothic** was in Cammell Lairds for eight weeks before sailing to the Clyde for pre tour tests. On the 13th October 1953 she left Lairds and the weather report for that day gave a moderate NW to W wind with occasional rain, some fog patches but otherwise poor or moderate visibility. The pre tour trials proved successful, the vessel anchored off Greenock each evening and the **Gothic** returned to Liverpool on the 21st October to get a final "touching up" and to load some heavy cargo before sailing to London.*

On direct orders from the Queen, the **Gothic** carried 6,300 tons of general cargo and on the 10th November 1953 she sailed from London for Kingston, Jamaica. It was here that the Royal Party joined the ship. After transiting the Panama Canal her ports of call included Suva, Tonga, Auckland, Wellington, Sydney, Hobart, Melbourne then some other ports and then Freemantle, Cocas Islands, Colombo then Aden. The Queen then flew from Aden to Tunisia using a BOAC "Argonaut" aircraft finally picking up the new Royal Yacht **Britannia** in Malta for the return to UK.

On 26th Feb 1953 the Portsmouth Evening News reported that the figure of £450,000 was set aside for charter of the vessel and for adapting and preparing her for the tour. This sum was part of the Naval Estimates. When this tour was postponed the adaptions already made were retained and in the next year's estimates, £415,000 was allocated for extra work and for chartering of the ship. The Australian government contributed £200,000 to costs of the tour while receipts from cargo was estimated to be £125,000.

Report in Sydney Morning Herald for Sat 28th November 1953 reported that: An AWA (Amalgamated Wireless Australia) spokesman said yesterday that it was the first time a 7 kW transmitter had been installed in a merchant vessel. Because of limited space available to accommodate the type of aerial needed to absorb this high power, Marconi designed a super-efficient aerial system.

The article went on to say that for the duration of **Gothic'**s stay in Australia, Amalgamated Wireless engineers would be responsible for maintenance of her radio equipment.

The Marconi staff

Four Marconi Radio Officers were on board the **Gothic** for the tour. The Chief RO was C.H. Roberts (Charlie) who later became a senior man in Marconi Marine being the Depot Manager at Lowestoft and Newcastle. 2nd RO was A.J. Cade. The 3rd RO M. D. J. Pilgrim (Don) became a service engineer at Marconi's Southampton Depot. The 4th RO was D.C. Clayton.

Rumour says that after the tour the surplus Marconi gear ended up in Riversdale College in Liverpool but this has not been proved.

Given that all this high powered equipment had been installed it would be of interest to know how it performed during the tour. Fortunately, Charlie Roberts the Chief RO gave his impressions of the voyage which was published in the Marconi Mariner (Nov/Dec 1953 edition). This article is too long to reproduce in full here. Roberts starts off by noting that although ten days were spent in the Clyde for wireless trials, it was on the outward voyage from London to Kingston that things "settled down". He notes that the Worldspan with its small twin inverted "L" type aerial did, as he put it, "reach out". This aerial was 138 feet in length and had a height of 112 feet above the waterline. Due to flag requirements, an aerial strung between the masts was not allowed. He noted that with the ship dressed over all and when leaving or entering port it became difficult to clear traffic with no aerial.

Apart from that difficulty he states that they had no problems in clearing traffic to Portishead Radio even when well out into the Pacific Ocean. Press messages for London and Australia had strict deadlines so the **Gothic**'s ROs would communicate with the RCA stations of Chatham and San Francisco for daylight traffic. Awaru gave them quote, "a wonderful night time service". This was augmented by traffic through Sydney. Roberts seemed particularly keen on the All-Empire cheap Presse rate of a penny a word from any Commonwealth station to anywhere in the Commonwealth via Cable and Wireless or its equivalents.

Conditions in the wireless room could become uncomfortable when temperatures rose over 100°. Despite the transmitter casing becoming very hot the equipment kept working. He writes that the Worldspan was often busy for hours with the **Gothic** and Naval traffic.

After leaving Ceylon they were using Portishead once again with little difficulty. They did encounter some problems in not being able to keep schedules on occasion. This was due to the receiving frequencies being sequestered for official purposes. They also had occasions when the receiving station had difficulty in reading them, a change of frequency would have cured this problem, but again official traffic precluded this. Roberts is very effusive to all the coast station staff his team worked throughout the tour and he records that they gave him every help possible.

Roberts was invited to dine with the Queen on two occasions during the tour and notes that the members of his team were each given a special medallion struck for the tour for their work during the voyage.

The RN communication party

This was led by Commander R.R.B. Mackenzie M.B.E., R.N. and consisted of a Chief Petty Officer, three leading telegraphists and three telegraphists. There were also three leading signallers plus a signaller under the eye of a Chief Yeoman of Signals.

The RN cypher party

Lt. Cdr. N.E.F. Dalrymple-Hamilton M.B.E., D.S.C., R.N. was in charge of the cypher party that consisted of three WRNS officers.

The telegraphists and the signallers worked a four watch system throughout each 24 hour period. Some details of their experiences were published in a RN amateur radio society publication and summarised below.

Several RT contacts daily with London and Barbados. Later with Fiji, Wellington, Sydney and Melbourne. Daily radio picture transmission to any of the above stations were made. There were several routine scheduled contacts with Whitehall for exchange of traffic and press.

The main transmitter compartment was described as "cramped" and the set was running almost continuously under the loving hands of Mr. Corbett, the Chief Tel, and L/Tel Sanders.

They transmitted over 78 pictures on the outward trip using a Muirhead "Belin" picture transmitter. The writer went on to note that when the main transmitter was operating anything metallic in the after part of the ship became energised. He related the story about Godfrey Talbot who was broadcasting from the poop deck below the aerials while the transmitter was blasting away and to his chagrin, the steel band of his headphones grew "quite hot."

Given that in todays maritime industry a ships radar is in operation 24 hours a day, a newspaper report from the Sunderland Daily Echo and Shipping Gazette of 23rd April 1954 is of interest.

> *Approaching Aden, the watches on the* ***Gothic*** *were doubled as a very violent tropical thunderstorm broke over the ship. Heavy lightning with thunder started at 6 am and the torrent of rain blotted out the four escorting ships. It was reported that given the prevailing weather conditions it was considered prudent to switch on the radar*.

Some Gothic firsts

- Most photographed MN ship in the world during the 1953/54 tour.
- Only merchant ship to be used as a Royal Yacht.
- Her Master Capt. David Aitchinson given a knighthood at an investiture on board. (KCVO)

The Overseas Telecommunications Commission (OTC) was established by Australia in August 1946. It has had various name changes since but now Telstra Corporation Limited

An interesting note from their website giving a brief history includes:

*6 December 1953: Melbourne facsimile section received the first-ever picture for publication from a ship at sea (the Royal yacht **Gothic** en route to Fiji).*
***Note**: The fact that the SWB11X was the first time a land based transmitter had been put on a merchant ship is a bit suspect. In January 1945 the Cunard liner ss **Franconia** was berthed in Liverpool docks and over a ten day period the ships smokeroom was converted into an additional wireless room. Two Marconi type SWB 18 transmitters were installed, no mean feat as each individually weighed a ton and the hull had to be cut with oxy-acetelene torches to get them on board. The **Franconia** then sailed for Crimea where she was used as a communications and headquarters ship by Winston Churchill and the British delegation at the Yalta Conference.*

Reference sources:

Marconi Mariners of 1953/54
Shaw Savill's Magnificent Seven, by Andrew Bell and Murray Robinson
Mr. Harry Hignett, ex Manchester pilot
Portsmouth Evening News 26th Feb 1953
Royal Standard Red Ensign by David Aitchinson
rnars.org.uk
Wirral Archives

Stabilisers for all

From a letter received at the Cunard Line passenger department in 1959:

"I would prefer to sail in the **Carinthia**, and if you will be good enough to let me know if stabilisers apply to the whole of this vessel (tourist accommodation as well as first class), and if I can take my cat on this vessel, then I shall be very pleased to make a firm booking"

Strange but True....

The ss **Warrimoo** was a passenger ship built in 1892 by Swan Hunter, Wallsend. She was purchased by the Union Steam Ship Company Limited and sailed the Pacific, based in New Zealand. She sank following a collision with a warship on the 18th of May, 1918.

On December 30, 1899, in the mid-Pacific and as she was making her way from Vancouver to Australia. Just before midnight, the navigator and the captain realised that they were in a remarkable place at a remarkable time. They're approaching the intersection of the equator and the International Date Line.

The captain changes course. He has to hit the target at exactly the right moment. And at the stroke of midnight. The bow of the ship was in the 20th century, the stern in the 19th. The bow was in the Southern Hemisphere, and stern in the Northern Hemisphere. The bow was in summer, the stern in winter. The ship was straddling two hemispheres, two seasons, two years and two centuries at the same moment!

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 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.

Gin and General Average

In January 1950 a motorship, disabled by reason of water having entered her fuel tanks, used the last bottle of gin on board in an unsuccessful endeavour to start her engines. Enterprising though this novel form of priming may be, the question arises as to who is liable to pay for the bottle of gin. Alcoholic liquors are not so expensive on the high seas as they are on shore, unless, in the case of this particular motorship, the owner placed a scarcity value on his precious bottle and, as it were, blackmailed the master or chief engineer before he would consent to the consumption of his inflammable spirit in so unaccustomed a manner.

The question of who meets the bill, be it large or small, appears to depend on whether the vessel was in peril at the time the sacrifice was made. If she was, then beyond all question the act of injecting the gin into the cylinders was '*an extraordinary sacrifice intentionally and reasonably made for the purpose of preserving from peril the property involved*', and as such, a general average act. In such circumstances ship, freight and cargo would share in making good the sacrifice in proportion to their arrived values, and the underwriters on these various interests would pay the claim, after proper adjustment — unless, of course, the shipowner elected to buy the owner of the bottle of gin another, in replacement, in order to preserve an unblemished insurance record!

Shipping and Shipping Record, 12th January, 1950

General Average : A term in marine insurance for the adjustment of a loss when cargo belonging to one or more owners has been sacrificed for the safety of the whole, whereby the amount of the loss is shared by all who have shipped cargo in the vessel. There are strict rules which bind a claim for General Average: the loss must have been voluntary and not accidental, must not have been caused by any fault of the owner claiming General Average, must have been necessary and successful in saving the remainder of the cargo, and must have been made by the master of the ship.

The Liverpool Nautical Research Society
(Founded in 1938)

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T.S. **Queen Mary** returns to the Clyde, 2016 Courtesy Wikimedia Commons

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Liverpool docks in 1900

Used with permission of Verlag Karl Baedeker GMBH.

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The Liverpool Nautical Research Society

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The River Dee 1937

Ex Mariners Mariner vol XXVII

Submitted by H.M. Hignett

The popular theory that the Dee ports declined as a result of the silting up of the estuary can be accepted only if the achievement of human industry is ignored, and from that standpoint the history of the two estuaries, Dee and Mersey, is worthy of closer study. The Roman occupation of Cheshire, and their settlement at Deva, or Chester city, was of deeper significance than that of mere military settlement. Along both banks of the Dee are numerous evidences of Roman occupation, and the estuary and its industries had an important bearing upon this concentration. In the Cheshire hinterland, agriculture flourished. Salt was worked richly in Cheshire, probably before their arrival, and the Roman settlements at Nantwich, Northwich and elsewhere bear testimony to how fully they availed themselves of this useful trade which, together with the proximity of lead and copper deposits, afforded an industrial background to their activities. These industries required methods of transportation, and the solution lay in using the waters of the upper Dee and of the estuary, ample timber for the building of suitable vessels being readily available from nearby Cheshire forests.

While thus absorbed over a period of years, it is quite comprehensible that the Romans overlooked the possibilities of the Mersey estuary and any advantages it might have held over that of the Dee, and this finds confirmation in the fact that the Roman crossing lay as high as Stretford. The conquest of Lancashire by Julius Agricole, 78-80, involved a march northwards through the entire length of the country, but his crossing of the Mersey at Stretford caused him to side-step completely the lower reaches of the river and its estuary. Not one of the places he mentions on this part of the coastline bears the slightest resemblance to many of the names now known to us. This, also, would point to the probability that the Romans failed to discover the Mersey's uses, although there are evidences of Roman settlement on the Mersey side of the Wirral peninsular. Further, with such industrial wealth available to them within and around the Dee area, what need or inducement for development of an estuary where, in fact, the aboriginal population was numerically at a minimum? Thus, there exists a most interesting avenue for exploration in endeavouring to associate the military occupation of Chester and its environs with that of its contemporary industries, and from that standpoint reconsideration of all Roman 'finds' in Chester and the county is desirable.

In the old days, the Dee could be navigated up to Chester, but the constant silting of sand blocked the channel, and as early as the fifteenth century it really ceased to be a port, a quay having to be constructed a few miles down the river, the cost of which was defrayed by collections from the English churches. At the

end of the seventeenth century, a speculator named Evan Jones offered to make the Dee fully navigable up to the Roodee, stipulating that he should pay to the Crown for recovered lands and receive duties on mineral cargoes – an offer which was not accepted. In 1698 Francis Gell proposed another scheme for navigation of the river, and several years later Acts were passed enabling the Corporation to reopen Chester as a port, a channel being cut and over a thousand acres of land recovered. Despite this improvement, Chester and its little satellite ports such as Parkgate declined, while the Mersey ports developed remarkably.

The silted Dee estuary at Parkgate Wikimedia

Liverpool probably owes its early recognition to King John who readily perceived its value as a point for embarkation of troops for Ireland, Wales and Scotland, and built a castle on the bank of the Mersey. For two or three centuries Liverpool held the status of a small seaport, and was regarded officially, and from a Customs standpoint, as a mere creek of the port of Chester. Successive monarchs down to William of Orange used the Mersey port for troop movements and in the seventeenth century Liverpool merchants succeeded in obtaining separation for Chester. Under the lead of Sir Thomas

Johnson (who may be regarded as the father of modern Liverpool) the first wet dock was constructed, and thenceforward the port made steady progress in to that unrivalled development which is familiar to all students of mercantile history. Nevertheless, one salient feature in that development is the often overlooked, a picture of the silting up of the Dee was never in the mind of Liverpool ship-owners, merchants and ordinary citizens. Danger of a similar trend in the physical condition of the Mersey is always present, but the enthusiasm of all who recognise that the river is the Liverpudlian's livelihood have prevented the city from following the maritime fate of Chester. Liverpool retains mastery of the Mersey, and it is not generally known that within forty-seven years (1890-1937) about 550,000 tons of sand have been removed by dredger from the Queen's Channel, Crosby Channel, and the Bar, in addition to huge quantities dredged annually from the inner waters of the Mersey. This is a prodigious work. It continues in times of war and peace, and is the price which Liverpudlian mercants pay for mercantile progress.

Thus the maritime value of the Mersey estuary has been retained solely by human enterprise and energy. Possibly, a similar energy might have saved the Dee ports, but it must be realised that, in the eighteenth century, Chester was already an ancient city, imbued with tradition and a conservative outlook. Liverpool on the other hand, was just emerging under the guidance of Johnson and other Whig merchants whose perspicacity and culture brooked no obstacles to constructive progress – and the modern dredging of millions of tons of Mersey sand is no more prodigious than the successful attempt of Sir Thomas Johnson and his handful of fellow merchants to construct a large wet dock two hundred years ago with but a few pounds in the municipal coffers and the slender prospect of being refunded by dock dues, for this the first real dock of its kind in the world!

To attribute the decline of the Dee ports entirely to the silting up of that estuary, therefore, would mean eliminating completely an important factor, i.e. lack of that great natural force, human enterprise.

Arthur C. Wardle (1937) Founder member of LNRS

In 1877, one Katherine Ledoux published a slim volume called '<u>Ocean Notes</u> <u>for Ladies'</u>. Readers were advised to dress sensibly and respectably:

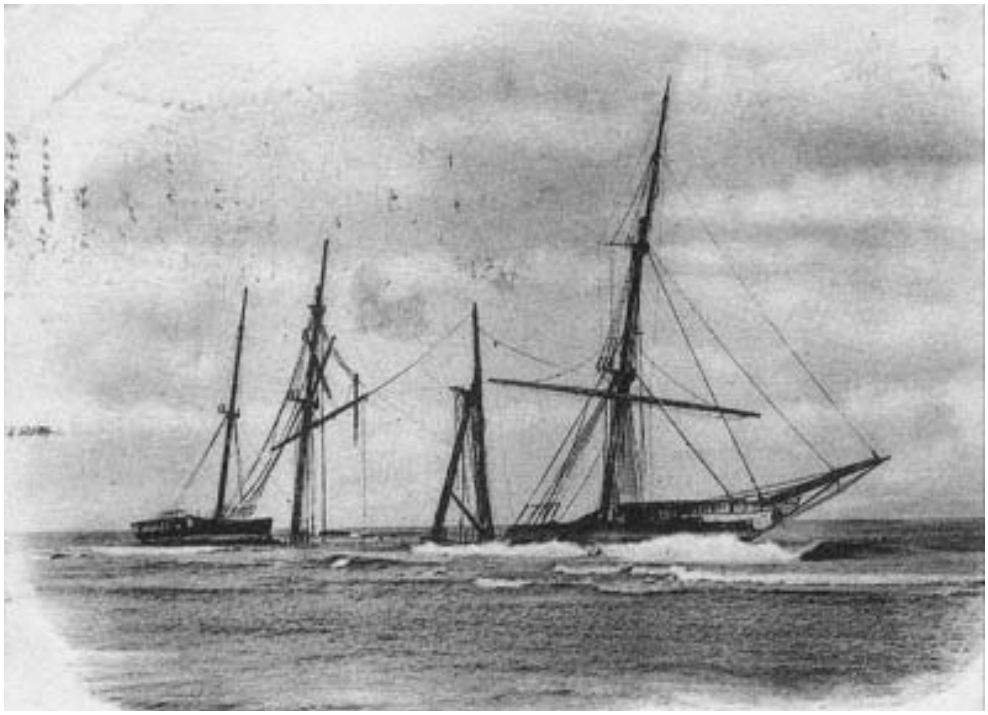
"Accidents, too, and loss of life are possible at sea, and I have always felt that a body washed ashore in good clothes would receive more respect and kinder care than if dressed in those fit only for the rag bag"!

Book Review

Sindia, the Final Voyage by Harry A Wenzel

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 19th Century, sailing vessels were being designed and built to remain competitive with the increasingly economical steamers well into the 20th Century.

Sindia was one such vessel, a four-masted barque of 3,000 tons, with steel hull, wire rigging, steam winches to handle the heavier lifting operations involved, and with cargo capacity many times greater than only a few decades earlier. Built in Belfast by Harland & Wolff in 1887, she operated successfully for Brocklebanks until 1900 then was sold to the Anglo-American Oil Company (London) to carry case oil around the world. The following year she came to grief off Atlantic City, New Jersey, on a voyage from Kobe to New York.



Wreck of the **Sindia** USGenWeb Archives

It is not always easy to splice together into one account the result of extensive nautical research together with some fiction. The author has done a commendable job in bringing together two very different sources into a coherent and seamless whole. The book is a very good read and the report of the inquiry into her stranding on the coast of New Jersey in 1901 is absolutely gripping.

(Available from Amazon £13.60)

Remember Those Days .....

A sample from the archives, and published by kind permission of Sea Breezes.
October to December, 1949

Designed for the Marseilles - Saigon service of the Messageries Maritimes, the **La Marseillaise**, the first big liner completed in France since 1939 began her maiden voyage in August. She was originally laid down in June 1939 at the yard of Chantiers Navals de la Ciotat. Her construction proceeded slowly during the first months of the war, and ceased after the Armistice of June 1940. At that time the vessel, which had not been given a name and which, hitherto, had been known as hull no. 161, was christened **Marechal Petain**, and she was launched as such in June 1944. After the liberation of France, the Chantiers de la Ciotat had more urgent work to perform than to complete a de luxe liner, and it was only in August 1946 that the liner, renamed **La Marseillaise**, was towed back to La Ciotat from the Étang de Berre, west of Marseilles, where she had been laid up since June 1944.

The courage and initiative of Mr F.S.D. Mole, second engineer of the Shaw, Savill and Albion liner **Mataroa**, whose efforts saved the ship, her passengers and cargo from serious damage by fire, were rewarded at a recent ceremony aboard the liner in the Royal Albert Dock, London, when Mr Basil Sanderson, chairman of the company, presented Lloyd's Silver Medal and a cheque for £250. Two voyages previously in the **Mataroa**, Mr Mole was faced with a difficult, dangerous position, and showed courage, initiative and intelligence of an outstanding character which probably saved the ship. Owing to a union nut parting, hot oil spread over one of the boilers and flames from 20ft. to 30ft. high were emitted. Mr Mole ran to the stokehold, turned off the supply valve to the affected furnace and prepared the fire engine for use. Mr Mole had later said that "he was only doing his duty".

The Isle of Man Steam Packet Company's 45 year-old vessel **Manxman**, which has been laid-up at Barrow-in-Furness since February, when she was released from Government service, has been sold for breaking up. One of the first cross-channel turbine steamers she was built at Barrow for the Midland Railway Company in 1904, and most of her early service was spent on the company's Heysham - Douglas route. During the First World War she served as a seaplane-carrier. She was purchased from the Admiralty by the I.O.M.S.P.C in 1920 and commenced to operate the double-daily service between Liverpool and Douglas. Converted to oil-burning in 1921, she continued as "crack" ship of the fleet until displaced by **Ben-my-Chree** in 1927. Requisitioned again in 1939, **Manxman** served as a troop transport and took part in the Dunkirk evacuation. Subsequently taken over by the Admiralty and renamed **Caduceus**, she served as a radar training ship, making several appearances in Manx waters while working in conjunction with the war-time radar station on Douglas Head. Then for about two years she carried military personnel, repatriated prisoners of war and European volunteer workers on the Harwich - Hook of Holland route.

October to December, 1962

A relic of the old days of salmon fishing on the British Columbia coast, before the advent of power boats, has been presented to the Vancouver Maritime Museum. It is a Rivers Inlet skiff, 27 ft. long by 6 ft. 6 ins.beam, which was restored by a group at Good Hope cannery, at Rivers Inlet, of the Anglo B.C. Packaging Co. Ltd.

Cunarders will be making 49 westbound and eastbound calls at Cobh in 1963. Sailings between Greenock and North America will total 25 during the year. **Sylvania** will make 11 of the Cobh calls in each direction whilst the freshly converted **Saxonia** and **Ivernia** will be making a combined 21, whilst **Carinthia** will make a total of 22 round trips from the Clyde.

Raising the 17th century warship **Vasa** is a most remarkable achievement. On August 10th, 1628, the newly built vessel left her Stockholm fitting out berth, and sank within minutes; it seems that she was struck by a moderate wind gust, heeled over, and shipping water through the open gun ports, sank immediately. Several recovery attempts were made but she was finally abandoned in 1683. In 1956 divers established the identity of the wreck and ceaseless efforts were made leading to her successful recovery in April, 1961.

Familiar to many the Mersey ferry steamers **St. Hilary** and **Claughton** have both gone to Belgian scrappers. The former was originally **Royal Daffodil II**, completed in July 1934 by Cammell Laird to replace the famous **Royal Daffodil**, of Zeebrugge fame, which had been sold to the New Medway Steam Packet the previous year. She was an improved version of **Royal Iris II**, which came from Harland & Wolff at Govan. With the outbreak of the Second World War, **Royal Daffodil II** carried on with her cross-river sailings, but in the early hours of May 8, 1941, she was hit by a bomb while lying alongside Seacombe landing stage during one of the many enemy air attacks on Merseyside. Although the damage was not severe, she began to take on water and sank alongside the stage. Salvage work, taking 13 months, was difficult, but she was eventually raised and partially refitted by Grayson, Rollo and Clover Docks. After the war she re-opened Wallasey ferries' river cruises, for which service she was fully refitted.

After being idle in the river Blackwater since June of last year, the experimental gas-turbine tanker **Auris** has been sold to the British Iron and Steel Corporation (Salvage) Ltd., and allocated to Hughes Bolckow, for breaking at Blyth. Built in 1948 by Hawthorn, Leslie at Hebburn, as a conventional diesel-electric tanker, this power plant was replaced some ten years later by a 5,500 h.p. gas turbine from British Thomson-Houston together with an hydraulic transmission/ reversing unit designed by Pametrada. The whole of the conversion work was carried out by Cammell Laird and the ship then used for a variety of experimental voyages to assess the merits of gas turbine propulsion. In late 1959 the owners stated that the new unit had performed well at sea, its high capital cost was not offset by lower maintenance costs or other virtues, and planned trials for larger vessels were cancelled. **Auris** continued in service, mainly coastwise, until June, 1960, when she was sent to lay-up in the Blackwater.

Mr. Kemp and Marconi's Yacht

By L.N.R.S. Member W.G.Williamson

Editor's note: this supplementary article provides further information relating to the conversion carried out by Cammell Laird in 1919, following her release from Admiralty service.

When hostilities with Germany were over following the armistice that ended the First World War, many private steam yachts that had been requisitioned for naval service were released from Admiralty duty. HMS **Rovenska,** pendant number 071, was one such yacht that had been hard-used as an auxiliary patrol vessel during the four years of the conflict. Fitted with two 12 pound guns she had been involved in anti submarine patrolling and convoy escort duties around the UK as an Auxiliary Patrol Group Leader.

Now with no further need for her services, HMS **Rovenska** was decommissioned on 30th March 1919 and put up for sale by public auction at Southampton. She caught the eye of Guglielmo Marconi, the great wireless pioneer and experimenter who wanted it as a floating wireless laboratory. Marconi's bid of £21,000 was successful and it is known that his company agreed to subsidise some of this outlay. Thus it came about that this lovely steam yacht with graceful lines, originally built for Archduchess Maria Theresa of Austria in 1904, arrived in Birkenhead for dry docking and a general overhaul a few weeks after her purchase.

The precise nature of the work undertaken on the vessel is not known as no records of Cammell Lairds repair work exist in the Wirral Archives. However it is likely that the work consisted of removing all naval armaments, gun mountings, magazines and any minesweeping gear. The hull and external steelwork would have been scraped and repainted for it is on record that she was in "A" dry dock at Cammell Lairds. The engines would have been given a thorough overhaul and the boiler tubes repaired or renewed. However it appears that the internal cabins, the saloon etc, had survived their wartime activities more or less intact. The same could not be said for her decks and in particular, the wheelhouse, which apparently required urgent attention.

Towards the end of the ten months the yacht was in Cammell Lairds, Marconi sent his most trusted assistant, George Kemp, to oversee the work on the yacht. It is Kemp's diaries and letters, now held in the Bodleian Library in Oxford, that give an insight into some aspects of the refit and installation of the wireless equipment.

Marconi described Kemp as his "first assistant and valued collaborator and friend." They first met in 1896 when Kemp, a former Royal Navy electrical and torpedo instructor, was working in the Post Office laboratory. He became devoted to Marconi and took part in many famous experiments until Marconi

died. It should also be mentioned that Kemp's two sons, Colin and Leslie, also worked for the Marconi Company as wireless engineers.

By early December 1919, the major work on the **Rovenska** was nearly complete and the vessel was nearing the point of departure. At this time Kemp was working in London heavily involved with administrative work relating to the yacht. For example on the 10th December, Kemp was arranging for flags and wireless gear for the yacht and he was also arranging for the yacht to leave Liverpool for Southampton.

Thus Kemp's diary reveals that new topmasts were fitted to the existing masts to increase their overall height to 89 feet. This was done to improve the efficiency of the aerial system but it also had the added effect of giving the yacht an appearance of greater speed than she actually had.

On 12th December 1919 Mr. Kemp was in Chelmsford (where the Marconi company had its head office) and he arranged with a Mr Eddington for a ½ kW wireless transmitter to be sent to **Rovenska**. The following day Kemp writes to his sons Leslie and Colin to be ready to go to Birkenhead to equip the **Rovenska** with transmitting and receiving equipment and to take charge for the voyage to Southampton. They departed soon after for Birkenhead with a case full of wireless equipment for the yacht.

On 15th December 1919 Kemp ordered up a transmitter cabinet plus aerial equipment for the yacht from the Liverpool depot. From information in George Kemp's diary it is known that the ½ kW transmitter for the **Rovenska** was supplied to the ship as a second-hand item from the Marconi depot in Liverpool, (7 Oriel Chambers, 14 Water Street, Liverpool) and it was thoroughly tested before it was put on board. However when the equipment arrived on board, Kemp had to arrange for one inch to be cut off the transmitter cabinet so that it would fit through the yacht's saloon door.

On 2nd January 1920 Kemp obtained an Admiralty inventory and a Cammell Lairds inventory from the Chief Officer of the yacht. These inventories apparently listed everything on board except for silver etc which was being kept safe at a Captain Facer's house at 1 Thornbury Avenue, Southampton. Who this Captain Facer was or his relationship to Marconi is unknown. Kemp left Paddington station on the midnight train for Birkenhead. He arrived in Birkenhead at eight o'clock in the next morning, booked into the Woodside Hotel and was given room 11. He went onboard the yacht for the first time and arranged with Messrs Davis, Nasbet and Rora (Cammell Laird employees) for 100 Amp mains supply to be put on board. He met the new Captain, Paulo Lauro (who didn't speak English) for the first time and mustered stores and checked these against inventories. Capt. Lauro was an Italian Naval officer who had a distinguished war career and was hired by Marconi.

On 5th January 1920 Kemp spent the day unpacking cases of equipment and noting that some items, such as the spreaders for the aerials were missing.

He chased this up and also had a meeting with Mr Nasbet regarding the 100 Amp mains supply. He later left for London by train.

On 8th January 1920 Kemp met with Mr Francis Gordon Pratt of Cox and King, renowned naval architects and designers of the **Rovenska,** in London and made arrangements to coal the ship. He also agreed with Marconi to sail the yacht to Southampton on Wednesday 14th January. It is worth noting that Francis Pratt was a previous owner of the **Rovenska.**

Monday 12th January 1920 and the tireless Mr. Kemp arrived back at Woodside at 4.15 pm and once again booked into the Woodside Hotel. The yacht had been bunkering and on boarding Kemp found that only a ton of coal was left to be put on board. The planned schedule was that the yacht was to be taken out of wet basin for steam trials in Mersey (on Wednesday 14th). Kemp received a phone call from Mr. Pereira, Manager of Liverpool depot, who informed him that wireless gear would be delivered on board at 11 am the next day.

A letter from Arthur E Moore of the Marconi Co. Ship Equipment department still exists. This informed Kemp that arrangements had been made for the dispatch of the ½ kW transmitter cabinet and a receiver. Moore also mentioned that he has no enamelled wire but was sending 7/22 copper wire as a replacement. He noted there were no accumulators in stock but was expecting some to be delivered between 0930 and 1000 hours the following day. Such was the tedious, mundane, but necessary detail involved in dry dockings and refitting equipment on ships.

13th January 1920 (Tuesday) riggers fitted yards and halyards for the aerials. Kemp's sons constructed two 150 ft long aerials with crosses of bamboo and with four wires on each aerial. A motor generator and cabinet were placed on board, the saloon door had to be taken off for this. Aerial insulators were fitted to the teak lead-out trunking which was designed by Kemp. The next morning he hoisted the aerials himself. Twelve accumulators (batteries) arrived in a horse-drawn trolley and were put on board. These batteries were placed in a lead lined box and this enabled the emergency transmitter to be tested and it was found to be working satisfactorily. Both main and emergency transmitters were now working. Steam trials which had been scheduled were cancelled because the yachts condensers were full of some type of shell fish and therefore the dynamo could not be run.

A couple of days later Kemp left Woodside Hotel and slept in a cabin on the yacht. A Wireless Operator, Mr J.T. Williams arrived on board in the afternoon for the trip to Southampton.

Williams had delivered a hand written letter from Mr. Pereira, the Manager of the Marconi's Liverpool office. This informed Kemp that Williams had been told to report to him for "duties as required." The note went on to say that Williams was currently attached to the **Imperator a**nd was a very good man.

Kemp notes in his diary that both the magnetic and crystal detector receivers were in operation.

Note. **Imperator** was in Gladstone dry dock for some weeks. This ship was originally built for the Hamburg America Line in 1912, and was handed over to the Cunard Company as war reparations at the end of the First World War.

16th January 1920 saw more installation of the wireless equipment which was now virtually complete so more testing was carried out. Checking of the inventories continued.

Finally, on Saturday 17th January 1920, the yacht left the wet basin and went out into the Mersey for compass adjusting and returned to a berth in Birkenhead Docks. The wireless operator received signals from various coast stations, including Cullercoats. A gale warning was received from the Admiralty, and this proved that he receiver was in good working order.

The following Monday the transmitter was tested with Seaforth Radio (GLV) who reported their signals, “very good”. This was hardly a surprising result as the distance from Birkenhead to the Seaforth station was about 6 or 7 miles. However the operator would be pleased that he had got a response as it proved the transmitter and the enhanced aerial system were functioning properly. More equipment tests were carried out the following day.

22nd January 1920 The receivers were tested again this time at a longer range. Time signals to check the chronometer were received from Eiffel Tower. The **Rovenska** was re-named **Elettra** and as she was now registered in Italy her new call sign was ICCM. This information was confirmed in a letter from Marconi to Kemp dated 21st January 1920 which still exists. The next day the yacht's searchlight was overhauled by Kemp and he also did some administrative work.

On the 27th January 1920 Kemp made reference to a motor generator in the “Telefunken Wireless Room” on the boat deck and the following day “cleaned it up” to be ready for the operator the following morning. He reported that the wind shifted to NE and vessel was enveloped in fog.

Finally after about ten months in dry dock, on 29th January 1920 the **Elettra** left her berth in Birkenhead about 1.30 pm and went into the lock with a pilot (a Capt. Anderson) in charge. Two tugs were used to assist with the passage into the river which happened about 3.30 pm. The pilot disembarked **Elettra** at 5.45 pm.

The passage to Southampton commenced in clear visibility and moderate seas and a good speed of 12.5 knots was being made. However a weather report had been received that a southerly gale was approaching and by 7 pm the sea state had increased and the yacht was experiencing exceptionally heavy pitching. By 9 pm when abeam of the Skerries the vessel was in a full gale and having great difficulty in making headway. The decision was taken by Captain Lauro to return to the Mersey. This ferocious gale, which lasted 12 hours,

caused considerable damage. The crew quarters in the foc's'cle were flooded and there was other water damage to the saloon and passageways.

Note: Severe gales were reported in the area throughout January 1920. For example, an item in the Liverpool Echo reported a blizzard blowing on 28th January 1920 allegedly the worst storm experienced in 50 years. Exceptionally high winds were blowing along the North Wales coast and there were reports of train carriages swaying about in 75 mph winds. Train drivers were unable to see ahead because of the heavy snow and many telegraph and telephone wires were brought down throughout the northwest.

By 31st January 1920 after her ordeal, the **Elettra** was reported safely at anchor off New Brighton. A tug took the Chief Officer ashore to organise repairs etc. A fair bit of damage caused by the storm required a considerable amount of remedial work over the next few days by Cammell Laird staff.

The brief diary entry for Monday, 2nd February 1920 stated, "At anchor in the Mersey" repairing storm damage. Wireless operator Williams went ashore to collect more clothes and to post letters etc.

Tuesday was spent anchored off New Brighton and most repairs were completed. It had rained steadily most of the day but by 9.30 pm the weather had improved and the decision was taken that **Elettra** would sail the following day. Thus on Wednesday 4th February 1920, **Elettra** resumed her voyage to Southampton at 11 am. Kemp notes that the 2nd officer had missed the boat! Good progress was made and by 4.30 pm **Elettra** was passing Holyhead. Kemp sent Marconi a telegram via Seaforth Radio saying all was well on board and by 10 pm that evening the ship was making ten knots and was abreast of Fishguard.

By Thursday 5th February with visibility about ten miles the **Elettra** was still making good progress and so by 12.30 am she was rounding the Lands End peninsula. Kemp sent Marconi another telegram saying they would arrive at Southampton the following day. When off Plymouth a gale warning was received indicating a south-easterly gale was expected between Torquay and Galway Bay.

The following day, (6th February) the yacht was in the vicinity of the Needles but in poor visibility due to dense fog. Eventually she was able to pick up a pilot who took the vessel to Hyde where they anchored about 11.00 am. At 2 pm another pilot arrived on board to take the **Elettra** to the River Itchen to the Camper and Nicholson's yard. Marconi came on board to discuss various repairs and modifications etc and took Kemp and his sons by car to their homes in Southampton and then he was driven back to London.

9th February 1920 Marconi brought his wife on board to inspect the ship. Camper and Nicholson estimated that repairs and other renovations required would take about six weeks. It is believed that this work was mostly of a cosmetic nature as Marconi wanted his yacht to be as luxurious as possible. A decision was taken to install a 3 kW CW transmitter.

13th February 1920 The leak in the cabin and the stateroom caused by the horrendous gale off Skerries was finally detected and repaired.

It appears that the refit in Cammell Lairds was at Admiralty expense and to bring the vessel back to her original pre-war civilian condition. Marconi, as the new owner, then contracted with Camper and Nicholson to refurbish the staterooms etc. to the very highest standards of luxury and opulence. He required this in order to impress and entertain important guests on board, including royalty and statesmen, who formed part of his social circle. Of course such events were also used to enhance his business contacts and influence legislation relating to maritime wireless regulations. Thus ended a major refit on a vessel which in the next fifteen years or so was to achieve international fame due to the many famous experiments conducted by its owner, Guglielmo Marconi, "the father of radio."

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They also serve……

by L.N.R.S. Member Glyn L Evans

When war broke out in 1914, there were many men and women in Britain who wished to serve their Country but whose conscience precluded their participation in killing their fellow man, however just the cause. One such person was Gwilym Pari Huws, the son of a Welsh Independent minister in Dolgellau, who was studying Classics at Bangor University. In 1916, with around 200 other students, mainly from theological colleges in Wales, he joined the Royal Army Medical Corps as No. 81853 Private G Pari Huws. The 23 year old medic kept a small diary, written in his native Welsh, of events during his RAMC service.

The students had expressed a wish to serve together as a cohesive unit but, as the war became global, they were posted wherever their services were in demand. While many travelled to Salonica aboard HS **Essequibo**, Private Pari Huws, separated from his fellow students, found himself aboard HS **Warilda**. In

Private Pari Huws

one letter to his parents, he wrote, "We left Malta last Saturday (Sept 30th 1916) with a load of wounded which we took up to Lemnos, where we put them on board the **Britannic**. While there I met two boys from our old company on their way to Mesopotamia. They said the rest of the company had gone to France. During the trip I was on night duty, having sole charge of 86 patients (three wards.) From Lemnos we went to Salonika and loaded again on Thursday."

An entry in that diary for 18 April 1917 records "**Donegal** and **Lanfranc** torpedoed, parade on quay at 12.15am. We unloaded those saved from **Donegal** and **Lanfranc**; some of us working through until 6am." These two hospital ships were on passage from Le Havre to Southampton. HS **Donegal** was carrying 639 casualties, one medical officer and four stretcher bearers. 11 crew members and 29 patients were lost. HS **Lanfranc** had 387 patients on board including 27 German officers and 140 German other ranks. When she sank, 22 British and 18 German patients were lost.

In February 1918 HS **Warilda** was hit by a torpedo that failed to explode. On 23 March 1918, the diary of Private Pari Huws records HS **Warilda**, having sailed from Le Havre at 11am, in collision with another vessel, as a result of which six people died. This was the ss **Petit Gaudet** off the Isle of Wight. The hospital ship reached Southampton and commenced disembarking patients the following afternoon. That such incidents occurred is no small wonder considering that, between late 1916 and August 1918, this hospital ship made over one hundred and eighty trips from Le Havre to Southampton carrying around eighty thousand casualties.

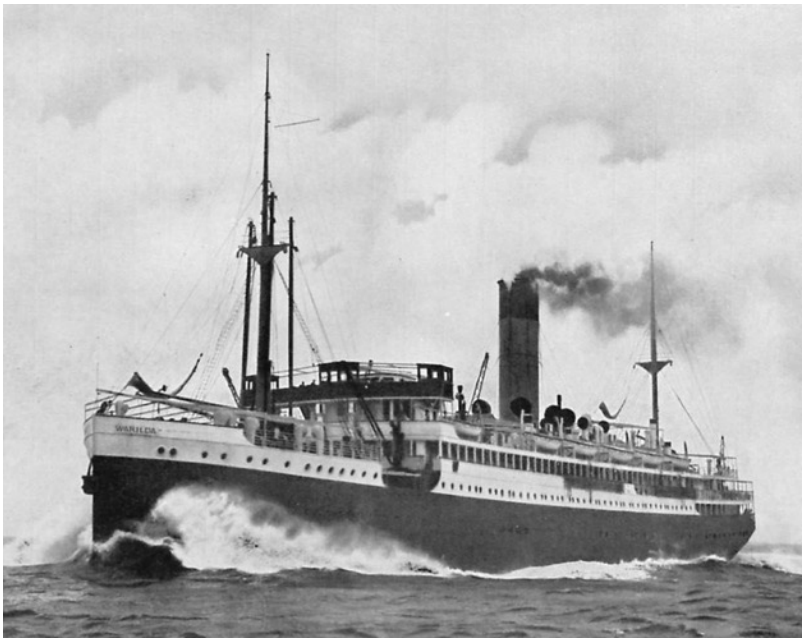
It was following the German Government's introduction of unrestricted naval warfare on 1st February 1917 that these hospital ships, clearly identified by their white painted hulls, broad green stripe and red crosses, became, to the German U-boat commanders, "legitimate" targets. As more of these ships were sunk and casualties mounted, their conspicuous colours were over-painted either by the ubiquitous naval grey or with the new-fangled dazzle paint schemes.

Perhaps it was almost inevitable then that an announcement should eventually be made by the Secretary to the Admiralty stating, "The homeward bound ambulance transport **Warilda**, Captain James Sim, master, was torpedoed

and sunk on 3rd August. The following are missing presumed drowned; 2 Military Officers, 1 Commandant Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps, 112 other ranks, 1 US other ranks, 1 ship's officer, 6 crew. Total 123. The next of kin are being informed."

Private Pari Huws' diary for 3 August 1918 reads "Struck by a torpedo about 1.45am. Dreadful – many lives lost. Went on the **P45**. To the rest chambers, had breakfast and lunch there. To **Sammy** in the afternoon. Up to rest camp after tea. Got clothing etc. 123 lost." The loss of so many servicemen is attributed to the fact that the damage caused by the explosion prevented the rescuers, despite their gallant efforts, from reaching the long rows of those patients who were in a ward in close proximity to where the torpedo struck. One witness said "The torpedo crashed into the engine room on the starboard side, and most of the casualties occurred in what was known as "I" ward where ninety to one hundred men were drowned by the in-rush of water."

The torpedo from **UC-49** had struck the starboard propeller. The port engine could not be shut down as the engine room had been flooded, all the crew there killed and the steering gear blown away. **Warilda** continued to move in a circle at around 15 knot and the lifeboats could not be lowered until she ran out of steam. Even then, in the darkness, 19 were lost from capsized lifeboats. From a complement of six hundred sick and wounded, eighty-nine nursing staff and a crew of one hundred and twenty the death toll could have been much greater and bears testament to the dedication of both crew and medical personnel.



H.M.A.T. **Warilda**

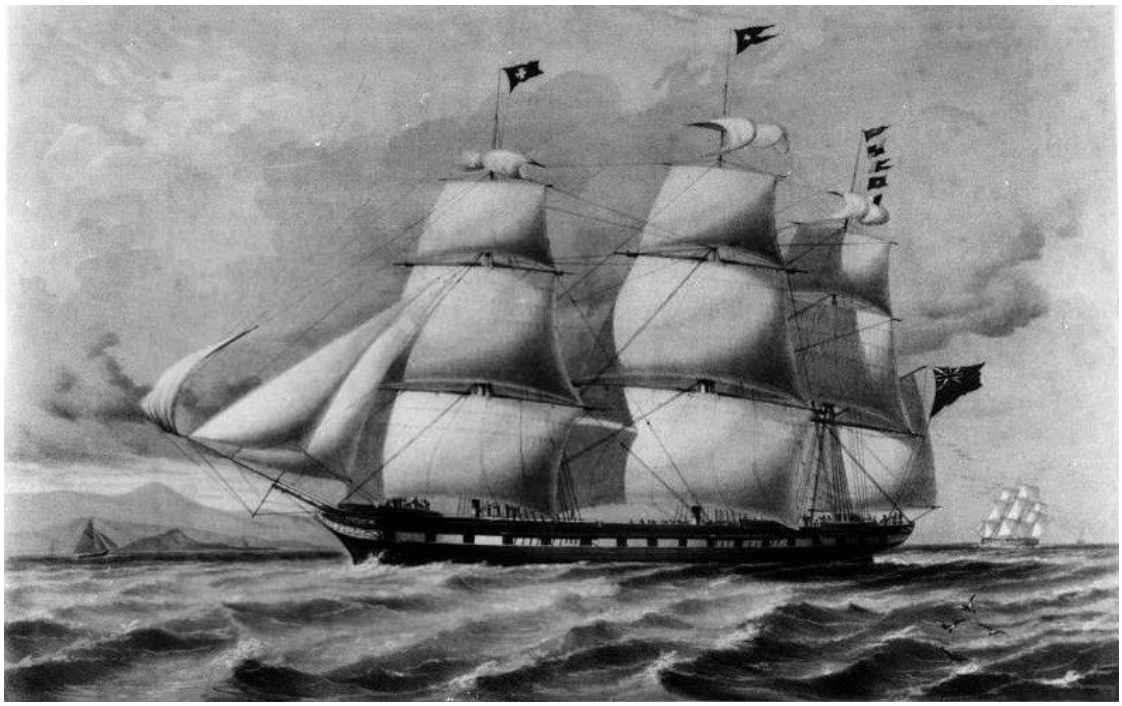
RAMC Private G Pari Huws counted himself fortunate to have survived and sent a telegram to his parents. "HUGHES IDRIS TERRACE DOLGELLEY AM QUITE SAFE SHIP SUNK GWILYM." After demobilisation, Gwilym Pari Huws studied medicine at Liverpool, becoming a GP in North Wales and was later appointed Assistant Surgeon-in-Chief for North Wales. He died in 1974 aged 81.

With thanks to Sian Pari Huws (grand-daughter of GPH) for information and telegram. Thanks also to author, Stephen McGreal, whose excellent book "The War on Hospital Ships 1914 – 1918" tells the full story.

The 'Victorian **Titanic**'

a summary of the talk given to the Society on 15 September, 2016
by Gill Hoffs

The Australian Gold Rush of the 1850s prompted a surge of interest and investment in emigrant ships in Britain, and led to the Bank Quay Foundry in Warrington building an iron-hulled vessel about 40 times bigger than the boats normally seen on the Mersey at that time. The **Tayleur**, 1,979 tons burden and the largest merchant sailing ship in the world at that time, launched at Warrington on 4th October 1853 and was towed by three tugs down the Mersey to Liverpool for fitting out.



An artists impression of the **Tayleur** Courtesy Wikimedia Commons

Named for the owner of the foundry, the ship was owned by Charles Moore & Co., and run by the (first) White Star Line. Although the **Tayleur** was initially advertised as leaving for Melbourne on 20th November, then again in December, it wasn't until 19th January 1854 that the ship actually left Liverpool with approximately 700 people on board. 48 hours later, the **Tayleur** wrecked against an Irish cliff.

Tayleur rightly deserved the appellation of "Clipper ship" given to her in contemporary accounts. Indeed, she was so described by the charterers, Pilkington and Wilson's White Star Line, in a current advertisement for her maiden voyage, as "The magnificent new clipper-ship **Tayleur**". There are many comparisons to be made among many of the vessels of the period which were thus described, particularly among the extreme clippers then being built in the shipyards of the eastern seaboard of the United States, the lines of many of which are extant.

The ship was still being fitted out a matter of hours before they left port. Once at sea, with poor visibility and dreadful weather adding to the usual problems of a new vessel in open water for the first time, the passengers and crew gradually realised that no two compasses agreed. Sea-sickness confined many to their berths, and Captain Noble remained at his post, worried and alert, throughout the ship's short maiden voyage.

Sailors at the time were aware that iron affected compasses but not quite sure how, or how to compensate for this in order to ensure an accurate reading. The **Tayleur** was meant to be sailing south but was actually heading west, and at lunchtime on Saturday 21st January 1854 the ship was nearing the coast of Dublin. Witnesses describe seeing the island of Lambay rising "like a mountain from the sea" with "rocks black as death". They were heading straight for it. Half an hour later, despite dropping both anchors (their chains reportedly "snapped like carrots") and hacking at the sails with axes, the incoming tide swept the ship towards the cliffs of Lambay, impaling the iron hull on the rocks there.

The **Tayleur** had five supposedly watertight compartments, contributing to its reputation as one of the safest ships afloat. Unfortunately by bringing the ship in lengthways instead of head-on, enough of these compartments were breached to allow the water to pour in, sinking the **Tayleur** not long after the waves pulled the ship off the rocks.

During the inquiry, it was determined that her crew of 71 had only 37 trained seamen amongst them, and of these, ten could not speak English. It was reported in newspaper accounts that many of the crew were seeking free passage to Australia, most of the crew were able to survive.

The death rate was horrific. Despite the first few survivors being able to literally jump from the deck to the rocks, then scramble up the cliffs to safety, more than half the people on board perished. The passenger list went down with the ship, so it is impossible to state with any certainty exactly how many died there, but records show only 290 survived. Clothing was a factor. This was the age of the crinoline, tiny buttons, tight-laced corsets, up to 16 heavy petticoats, and while these outfits were heavy when dry they proved deadly when wet. Out of over 100 women on board, only three lived, and at least two of these were wearing nightshifts. Of seventy children on board, three survived. 284 men escaped the wreck – at least 59% lived compared to less than 3% of the women and 4% of the children. This was not remarked upon by the press of the time.

A surviving passenger alerted the coastguard station on the island. This passenger and four coast guards launched the coastguard galley and upon reaching the wreck, they found the last survivor, William Vivers, who had climbed to the tops of the rigging, and had spent 14 hours there. He was rescued by the coastguards. On 2 March 1854, George Finlay, the chief boatman, was awarded a silver medal for this rescue.

At a time when there were an average of three or four shipwrecks reported daily in British and Irish waters alone, the tragedy of the **Tayleur** still made headlines around the world. There was clearly some kind of cover-up at the four inquiries into the disaster. Captain Noble was blamed for not having taken

soundings measuring the depth of the water to establish his position when the compasses failed, and journalists later revealed that there had been serious concerns raised regarding the safety of the ship before she even left port, although these were silenced. Compass problems due to the placing of an iron river steamer on the deck after the compasses had been swung and the absence of a mast head compass placed at a distance from the iron hull were significant factors. The rudder was undersized for her tonnage, so that she was unable to tack around the island. The rigging was also faulty; the ropes had not been properly stretched, so that they became slack, making it nearly impossible to control the sails.

No one considered the possibility that Noble's judgment was affected, not only by going 48 hours without sleep before the sinking as he struggled to lead his incompetent crew, but by his fall from the forecastle two weeks before. The speaker believes the accident may have caused him a traumatic brain injury which, combined with stress and exhaustion, could have clouded his thinking.

He was cleared of significant wrongdoing and went on to captain more White Star Line ships before dying age 35 in Liverpool while waiting for his vessel to ready for sailing. He continued to be renowned for his courtesy and kindness to passengers, but struggled to cope with the guilt associated with such a tragedy. His decency was noteworthy at the time, especially in comparison to a fellow captain who sailed from Liverpool a few months prior and attempted to murder the hundreds of passengers in his care when his ship, the **William and Mary**, wrecked in the Bahamas. Noble truly cared about his passengers and crew, and, in the end, it killed him.

More details can be found regarding the Tayleur wreck and cover-up in **"The Sinking of RMS Tayleur: The Lost Story of the 'Victorian Titanic'"** (Pen & Sword, 2014, 2015), and the attempted mass murder in the Bahamas in **"The Lost Story of the William and Mary: The Cowardice of Captain Stinson"** (new from Pen & Sword). Two ships, two mysterious wrecks, two very different captains … and both sailed out of Liverpool.

MONDAY MEETINGS

Members meet at the Archives and Library of the Merseyside Maritime Museum on Mondays as follows:

December	Mondays	5th., 12th., 19th.
January		9th., 16th., 23rd., 30th
February		6th., 13th., 20th., 27th
March		6th., 13th., 20th., 27th

Christmas at Sea

by L.N.R.S. Member Elfyn Hughes

The original intention for this talk was to describe what Christmas 1944 was like for my late father and his ship, **Dorrien Rose**; where they were, what cargo she was carrying, who the crew were and what conditions were like in the ports they were in over the Christmas period – it didn't quite work out that way. It became, to misquote Jack Hawkins in the opening scene of "The Cruel Sea", the story of one small ship and of one man.

It is still a work in progress and there are many gaps still to fill in.

One Small Ship

The ship was SS **Dorrien Rose**, a steam coaster built for Richard Hughes and Co of Liverpool. She would never win any beauty contests but her vital statistics were as follows:

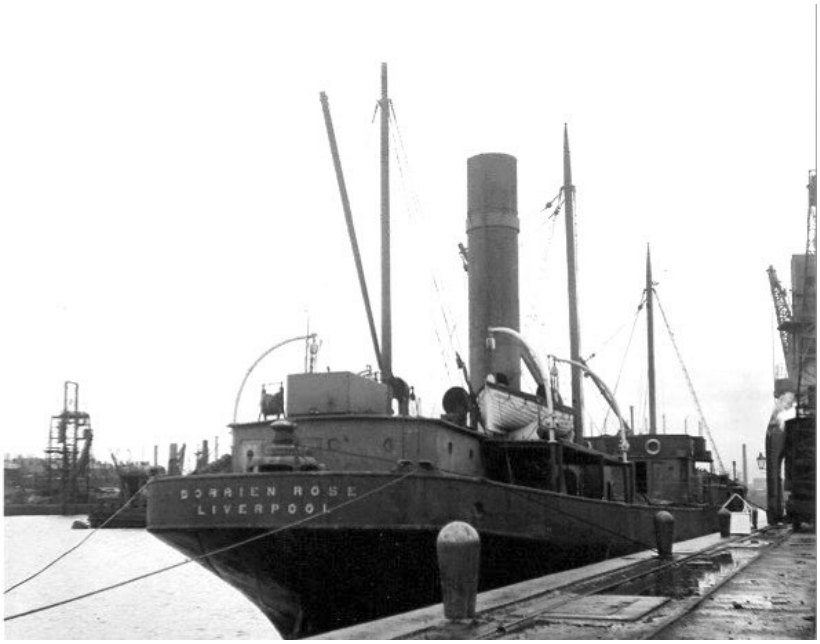
Builder – Fullarton & Co, Paisley, Merksworth Works Yard no 270
Engine Builder – Ross & Duncan, Glasgow.
Launch Date – 21 September 1922
Completion Date – November 1922
1-screw. Machinery aft. 3-Cyl. (17,27.5 & 45 inch dia.; 33 inch stroke)
Steam pressure 180lb./inch^2 156 Nominal Horse Power.
Type – Single screw steam coaster
Gross Tonnage – 1039
Nett Tonnage – 563
Length – 210.4 feet
Beam – 33.2 feet
Speed – 11 knots
Official Number – 145985
Call Sign – MLDW

She carried out her trade all over the UK and near continent through the twenties and the depression years of the thirties, and after several changes of ownership and name changes she was eventually scrapped at Hammond Lane Foundry Ltd., Dublin in November 1959.

Early in 1940 she was taken up by Government as a store ship for the BEF, but that was overtaken by events. Her record card for May 1940 shows her as being taken up for General Service, Military Stores on the 20th May. This is a simple statement that doesn't tell the full story.

Dorrien Rose was anchored in The Downs on 25th May 1940, awaiting orders – one account states that she had a cargo of stores in her holds and petrol in cans on deck. In the event, she was ordered to proceed to Dunkirk, and

left the Downs on 27th May. Captain Thompson did not know the situation around Dunkirk, or that he and **Dorrien Rose** were about to become part of possibly the greatest troop evacuation in history – Operation Dynamo.



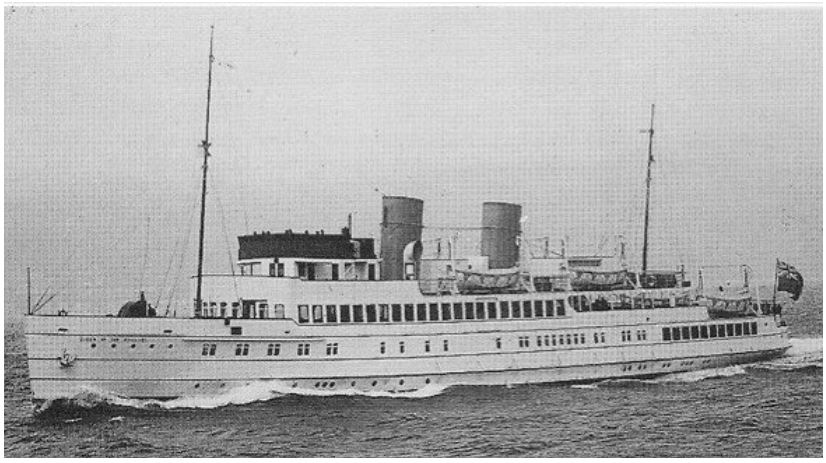
German forces were closing in on the area of NW France, French forces in Lille were surrounded and British, French and Belgian forces were falling back on the canal around Dunkirk.

As Captain Thompson approached Dunkirk on that May evening 75 years ago he was greeted with the sight of the town under a pall of black smoke rising from burning oil storage tanks. He decided to reverse course, anchor, and wait for daylight to make another approach.

Dawn revealed a scene of almost unimaginable activity. Against the backdrop of the burning town, Allied Naval and Merchant ships were heading in and out of the port while overhead the German air force was constantly attacking the ships, the town and the retreating troops. **Dorrien Rose** herself came under aerial attack at about 0430.

As **Dorrien Rose** proceeded toward Dunkirk she either received a Mayday call from MV **Queen of the Channel**, or saw her being attacked, the reports vary.

Queen of the Channel was a cross channel ferry belonging to London & Southend Continental Shipping Company which was managed by the New Medway Steam Packet Company. She had left Dunkirk with 900+ troops on board but was attacked by a German bomber about 10 miles north of Ostend. Although she did not receive a direct hit a near miss broke her back and she started to sink. Captain Thompson took **Dorrien Rose** alongside bow to bow and transferred everyone including their equipment – an operation that took 35 minutes during which “not a single



person even got their feet wet". Captain Thompson also took four lifeboats in tow just in case they were needed, two of which were subsequently lost.

Dorrien Rose, now with almost a thousand men on board – her normal complement being 12 or 13 – set off for Dover at about 0530. During the trip back to Dover the ship came under air attack several times, but, in Captain Thompson's words, "we were now heavily armed having taken on board several machine gun companies". The troops and the ship's company had the satisfaction of seeing one of their attackers shot down in flames with its crew having to parachute into the channel. She arrived in Dover mid-afternoon on 28th May and landed the troops, then took on stores and water and left again for Dunkirk during the afternoon of 29th May. During the trip across she hit a submerged object which caused some flooding in the engine room and delayed her arrival in Dunkirk until 0700 30th May, having come under fire from an enemy surface craft at about 0400.

By now the approach was even more hazardous, the channel littered with debris and sunken or damaged vessels and under almost constant air attack. Lacking any firm orders, Captain Thompson took it upon himself to enter Dunkirk, and was waved alongside a damaged wall. The ship remained alongside for over two hours taking on troops, landing some of her cargo and handing out food and other supplies. The Chief Engineer and the engine room crew spent the time carrying out essential repairs and making sure the tired engine and boiler were capable of their best speed when they eventually left; during the whole time they could feel the effects of near misses as the enemy airforce took its toll on the town and dock area.

Dorrien Rose left with about 640 troops aboard and according to the bosun, Paddy McFadden, the channel was a nightmare, buoys were missing and the fairway was littered with wrecks. He said that it was the first time he had left Dunkirk without having to round up the crew from the bars and cafes around the port! She came under aerial attack again while leaving the port and suffered two near misses.

The troops were landed at Folkestone and the vessel anchored outside while some essential engine room repairs were carried out. The crew worked all night trying to carry out these repairs. During the night, while she was at anchor, the German airforce dropped several magnetic mines around the anchorage. The crew watched the next morning as Royal Navy minesweepers exploded them.

It proved impossible to repair the engine and boiler to enable her to return to Dunkirk so she stayed at Folkestone until temporary repairs were made that allowed her to limp off to Newhaven on Saturday, 1st June 1940. She left Newhaven under tow for the Thames. She was repaired in London, where the work was finished by 27th July.

Dorrien Rose is probably unique in that all the ship's company, including the RN Gunner, were honoured.

A fuller account of Do**rrien Rose**'s involvement in Operation Dynamo can be found in "British Coasters 1939-1945" (HMSO). This important little book is now sadly long out of print but my friend, shipmate and drinking companion Jim Slavin kindly lent me his copy.

The final tally of decorations and honours reads as follows:

Murphy, Bernard	- Chief Engineer - DSC
O'Hanlon, Terence	- Mate - DSC
Thompson, William	- Captain - DSC
Steward, James	- Second Engineer - MiD
Barnett, William Charles	- Ordinary Seaman - DSM
Gibson, Adolphus Augustus	- Fireman - DSM
O'Rawe, John Joseph	- Able Seaman - DSM
Watson, Tom Wilson	- Able Seaman RN - DSM
Barnett, Clifford Thomas	- Ordinary Seaman MiD
Barnett, Thomas Henry	- Cook - MiD
Khan, Ali	- Fireman - MiD
McFadden, Paddy	- Boatswain - MiD
Mohand, Abdul	- Fireman - MiD
Upperton, James	- Able Seaman - MiD

She returned to coastal service all around UK and is listed as being part of several convoys up and down East coast, through Pentland Firth to Loch Ewe and in the Irish sea – anywhere she was needed she went.

Dorrien Rose left Garston 15th January 1942 bound for Ayr with a full cargo of coal. The weather was rain showers, wind SE 6-7. She went aground off Tara Point, on the coast of Northern Ireland not far from the entrance to the Strangford Loch. According to her record card the cargo was jettisoned and she sustained significant damage. Her stern frame was broken and her bottom corrugated. Had it been peace time she would probably have been scrapped but this was 1942 and all bottoms, corrugated or not, were desperately needed.

She was refloated in early May and was towed into Strangford Loch and from there to the Clyde where she was repaired. She left Glasgow, bound for Workington on 24th July but had to return on 29th July for more work to be done.

To give some indication of how busy these little ships were at this time and the enormous strain it must have put on her crews, she left Glasgow on 9th August for Loch Ewe and over the next few weeks her voyage record card places her in Kirkwall, Methill, London, Methill again, Belfast, back to the Clyde for two days of repairs and eventually Liverpool on 24th September and then Garston on 25th September 1942 – where we will leave her for the time being.

One Man

Captain William Hughes MN, Gwilym to friends and family, and known as Spike to his shipmates. He was born on 22nd July 1915 and died in March 1982. Information on his early life is scarce but I know that he attended Penysarn Primary School, the same school that I attended some years later. I also know that he worked in a local grocery shop for a while.

He went to Gravesend Sea School sometime in 1932 and from there joined SS **Vernon City** (O.No 161612, Reardon Smith) as Deck Boy on 24th November 1932. He must have liked her because he stayed in her for a total of 6 trips, eventually signing off with the rating of "Sailor" on 11th June 1936.

He then signed on MV **Accra** (O.No 149595, Elder Dempster) on 26 August 1936 as AB and did two trips in her, signing off on 28th November 1936.

This is when some of the gaps begin, possibly due to shortage of work due to the depression or possibly because he went to work in coasters. Discharge books were not used in Home Trade vessels until 1939, and some of his paper discharges may be missing.

The next record I have of him is as Bosun in **Wild Rose**, where he served from July 1937 until December 1938

He next appears in my records as Second Mate in **Sodality** from November to December 1939 and then as Mate in **Spirality** between December 1939 and 16 January 1941. The date of 16 January 1941 is specific – **Spirality** was in collision in Ipswich and ended up lying on her side in 20 feet of water and submerged at high water. She was eventually salvaged and later formed part of the invasion fleet of 1944. The significance of the date lies in the fact that when the ship sank, the crew were signed off and their pay stopped!!

He probably came ashore to study at this time because he passed the examination for Master of a Home Trade Passenger Ship on 26th May 1941. Being an incurable romantic he had his Certificate of Competency issued at the port of Amlwch on 6th June 1941 – my parents' wedding day.

With the ink hardly dry on both Wedding and Master's Certificates, he joined **Kyle Queen** in July 1941 as Mate with **Spirality** given as his last ship. I have no photograph of **Kyle Queen** but I do have a copy of her crew agreement for this time and it shows how parochial these small coasters were in those days. Nearly half the crew lived within three or four miles of Penysarn and Amlwch, the home of the Master, Captain Tom Owen, and my father. This meant that they would have spoken Welsh amongst themselves – the problem with multi-lingual crews is not new!

Kyle Queen was employed mostly in the Irish Sea and Bristol Channel and being a fairly small ship called in some of the small ports around this area, for example she made several trips between Preston, Silloth and Liverpool. She was sheltering in Ramsey Bay 16/17th October 1941, and arrived in Workington on the 18th October, leaving on 19th October 1941 bound for Cork. She came under air attack on 20th October, arriving in Cork on 21st October and

remaining there until 4 November. She arrived in Barry on 6th November and is shown as being repaired in the Bristol Channel from 12th November until 20th December 1941 – possibly as a result of damage sustained in the air attack – a possible area for further study. He left **Kyle Queen** on 8th May 1942, after which there is a three month gap in my records.

We left **Dorrien Rose** loading in Garston, now the small ship and the man come together. He signed on **Dorrien Rose** as Mate in Garston on 26 September 1942 and traded all over the Irish Sea, East Coast and Bristol Channel, sometimes under Government charter and in several convoys. Hague's Convoy database has been a particularly useful source of information.

He signed off as Mate in Port Talbot on 2 February 1942 and immediately signed back on as Master for one trip. It had taken nine years from being a first trip deck boy in a Cardiff tramp to being appointed Master of a Liverpool coaster, he was 26 years old.

After this trip he reverted to Mate but was appointed Master sometime in March/April 1944 and remained as Master until July 1946, when he joined Coast Lines, where he spent the rest of his seagoing career.

There is another gap in the records between April and October 1944, the only reference in his Discharge Summary is "COMNO see R53" This period coincides with **Dorrien Rose** being taken up for Government service, her voyage record card shows her as being "On Special Service" from 28th April 1944 until she was released in November 1944. This particular special service was, of course, the D-Day landings. According to the Hague Convoy database she was in at least six ETC convoys from Southend to the invasion beaches between June and August 1944 and at least two WDC convoys to Dieppe in September, the first of these being WDC2 that arrived in Dieppe on 7/8th September 1994 just a week after the town had been liberated by Canadian troops.

She was in Barry 27th November 1944 having been released from Government service. She left Barry about 28th November but put back for repairs. These took place between 29th November and 5th December. She left Barry again on 7th December and probably joined a convoy as she is shown as arriving in Dieppe on 13th December where more repairs were carried out.

This talk was titled Christmas at Sea and it is fitting that **Dorrien Rose** and my late father be placed in the context of that last Christmas of the war by mentioning some of the events that took place around that time and the conditions that the people of Britain were living under.

On 15th December 1944, while **Dorrien Rose** was in Dieppe being repaired, a small plane took off from RAF Twinwood Farm near Bedford. On board were the pilot and Captain Glenn Miller USAF…..

On 16th December German forces attacked through the Ardennes, in what was to become known as the Battle of the Bulge, the last frantic attempt by German land forces to stem the inexorable allied tide.

Dorrien Rose left Dieppe and anchored in the Downs on 21st December and berthed in Gravesend on 22nd December.

On Christmas Eve specially modified HE-111 Heinkel bombers (I/KG53 squadron) flying over the North Sea launched 45 V1 Flying Bombs (Doodlebugs) from off the Lincolnshire coast at Mablethorpe. The target was Manchester. This was the only time Northern England came under attack by V1 flying bombs.

Dorrien Rose left Gravesend on 28th December for Cardiff, arriving there on 31st December. This was probably the most joyless Christmas of the war. After the Allied Normandy invasion in June, and the rapid advance of Allied forces through France, people had hoped once more that it might be 'all over by Christmas'. But the news from Europe was of death and destruction, despite Allied successes, and in mid-December the Germans had launched the Ardennes Offensive, in which many thousands of combatants had died on both sides.

Despite the Christmas Eve V1 horrors, the threat from conventional aircraft was virtually past, and with it the need for the blackout. As a result, that Christmas the churches were allowed to light their stained-glass windows for the first time for four years.

The Ministry of Food announced Christmas treats - an extra $1^{1}/_{2}$ pounds of sugar, 8 pennyworth (3.5p) of meat, and half a pound of sweets. Woman magazine for 9 December advised: 'One of the nicest presents to give (or to receive) is a half-pound of home-made sweets', and the book Rag-Bag Toys had instructions for making gifts such as a 'Chubby pink pig from an old vest', or a doll made from 'old stockings'.

Alcohol was at its scarcest that Christmas; one indicator showing this is the fact that, of the half million inhabitants of Kensington, Hammersmith, Fulham and Chelsea, in London, only one person was arrested that year for drunkenness over the holiday. (BBC – People's war)

Rations for one person in 1943 were:

3 pints of milk
3 $^{1}/_{4}$lb - 1lb meat
1 egg a week or 1 packet of dried eggs (equal to 12) every 2 months
3 to 4 oz cheese
4 oz combined of bacon or ham
2 oz tea, loose leaf
8 oz sugar
2 oz butter
2 oz cooking fat

During my rummaging in the National Archives I noted that several crew agreements were annotated "crew to provide own provisions". I wondered at the time how this system worked; rationing was in force and ration books were

generally tied to a particular shop or area – so how would the crews be able to buy provisions – another subject for further study!

Dorrien Rose left Cardiff on 6 January 1945, and arrived in Plymouth on 8th January. She left Plymouth on 9th January, arrived Granville on 12th January, leaving again on 14th January for Cardiff, where she underwent more repairs that lasted until 2nd February. She continued to plod around the coast and the near continent for almost the whole of 1945, sometimes in convoy.

Dorrien Rose's voyage record card continues until January 1946 where she is shown as doing a trip from Cardiff to Barry on 14th January. She had been released back to the owners in October 1945.

This is still a Work in Progress and I would be grateful for any help or advice on where to go next.

Proper Medals

At the end of my talk to the LNRS on 17th December 2015 I asked for the indulgence of the members for a few minutes.

My late father, Captain William Hughes, served in coasters throughout the Second World War and was awarded the 1939-45 Medal, the 1939-45 Star and the Atlantic Star. According to a letter from the MCA the medals were issued on 25 October 1950. I was eight years old at the time and I have a vague childhood memory of them arriving in the post.

There was no fanfare, no red carpet, no visit to the Palace, only the postman on his normal round delivering a small box made of thick cardboard – a member informed me that it is not done that way anymore, nowadays campaign medals come in a jiffy bag!

Sometime later, probably when I was in my early teens, in a conversation with my mother the subject of my father's medals came up and I dismissed them as "not being proper medals, only the ones that everyone got", what my son would describe as what you would get if you turned up. I was wrong, the medals were most certainly not given to everyone but, in a way, my son was right, they were given to the ones who turned up.

Now, over seventy years on, we have forgotten what it meant to turn up – it meant many hours peering through tired eyes hoping to spot the enemy before they saw you, but knowing that even if you saw them first there was very little that you could do about it. It meant hours down an engine room trying to coax the last ounce of speed out of old clapped out engines, all the time keeping an eye on the engine room steps and wondering if you would be able to get that far when the explosion came. It meant sleeping fully dressed with a life jacket close at hand and the door propped open so that it wouldn't jam. It meant coming home from the carnage of an Atlantic or Arctic convoy, spending a few days with friends and family – without pay of course – and then going back and doing it again and again for six long weary years.

They turned up in their thousands, 185,000 according to some figures, out of which over 30,000 were killed, a loss rate higher than all the allied armed forces with the possible exception of Bomber Command Aircrew. And yet they were not regarded as combatants – indeed it was not until 2000 that MN veterans marched with the Red Ensign in the annual Remembrance Day parade past the Cenotaph.

Perhaps John Masefield put it best:

You were salvation to the army lost,
Trapped, but for you, upon the Dunkirk beach;
Death barred the way to Russia, but you crosst;
To Crete and Malta, but you succoured each.

Unrecognised, you put us in your debt;
Unthanked, you enter, or escape, the grave;
Whether your land remember or forget
You saved the land, or died to try to save.

(John Masefield — To All Seafarers. Last two verses only quoted. The poem in full is printed on the opening page of "Merchantmen at War, The Official Story of Merchant Navy: 1939 — 1944, Ministry of Information)

In tribute, not just to my late father, but to all the other tens of thousands who turned up, these medals were, and indeed still are, very much "proper" medals.

Acknowledgements and References:

Mersey Maritime Museum

The National Archives

Imperial War Museum

Richard Hughes & Co – Douglas Head LNRS,1991

Mersey Rovers – Roy Fenton WSS

Coastal Convoys 1939–1945 – Nick Hewitt

The Ships That Saved an Army – R Plummer

British Coasters 1939 – 1945 (Ministry of Information)

Hugh McLean of Fort William

Convoyweb (Hague Convoy database)

Photoships.co.uk

7seasvessels.com

Early Steamship Collisions in the Mersey

by L.N.R.S. Member Harry Hignett

Actions were brought by the owners, masters and crews of the steam tugs **Enterprise** and **Stormcock, t**o recover salvage for services rendered to the steamship **Kenmare,** of Cork. According to the statements of claims, the **Enterprise** is a steam paddle-tug of 157 tons gross register, fitted with disconnecting engines of 600-horse power actual, and carries a crew of eight hands all told. The **Stormcock** is a steam tug of 215 tons gross register, with engines of 750-horse power actual, and carries a crew of 11 hands. At about 2.15 p.m. on January 24, 1894 (?), the wind being a strong gale from the north-west and the tide half flood, the **Kenmare**, which runs regularly in the City of Cork Steam Packet Company's service between Liverpool and Cork and which was then bound up river to the Liverpool landing-stage with passengers, general cargo and live stock, came into collision with the steamship **Optic**, whilst turning in the river. The **Optic** was lying at anchor a little to the southward of the George's Stage, and her anchor chain became foul of the **Kenmare's** propeller. Both vessels then drifted up stream with the tide, the **Optic** dragging her anchor. The **Stormcock** at once proceeded to their assistance, and a little later was ordered to lay hold of the **Kenmare** forward, there being great danger of the vessels fouling several ships at anchor. The **Stormcock** at once passed her hawser on to the **Kenmare'**s port bow, but whilst she was so doing the steamship collided with her, and did her considerable damage. After the hawser was got tight the **Stormcock** went full speed ahead to the northward, and as the **Kenmare** was still held by the anchor chain of the **Optic**, which vessel had slipped her anchor and gone away, she had to be pulled round across the wind and tide. In the meantime the **Enterprise** had come up, and had made fast on the starboard bow of the **Kenmare**. After the steamship had been got partly round she continued to drift broadside on with the wind and tide, dragging the **Optic**'s cable and anchor, and came into contact with a schooner, to which some damage was done, and then fell across the bows of the steam tug **Knight Templar**. The master of the **Kenmare** then ordered the **Stormcock** to let go the bow and make fast aft, which was done at considerable risk, and the **Kenmare** was cleared from the **Knight Templar**. Shortly after this was done both tugs were ordered to slow down in order that the **Kenmare** might get up her own anchor, which had been let go. In doing so she fouled it with the chain of the schooner, which had remained entangled with the **Kenmare.** By the time that the anchor had been freed the **Kenmare** and the schooner, still entangled, had drifted with the tugs into the Sloyne and the **Kenmare** ran great risk of fouling the Cunard liner **Lucania** and other vessels, and was only prevented from doing so through the efforts of the plaintiffs. At about 4 p.m., the tide having slackened a good deal, the tugs kept the **Kenmare**

in position whilst the **Optic'**s anchor was swept for and got up and then they towed the vessel to a berth at the Prince's Landing-stage. The **Kenmare** was still unable to use her propeller, and at the request of her master the two tugs stood by during the night, and on the following morning took the vessel into dock. The plaintiffs contended that by reason of their services, which were rendered with great promptitude and despatch, the **Kenmare** and her crew and passengers were rescued from a position of imminent peril and taken into a place of safety. Both tugs suffered damage by collision. Moreover, owing to the force of the gale and tide the **Kenmare** was in the greatest danger of seriously damaging the schooner and the **Knight Templar**, and other vessels, particularly the **Lucania**. The value of the **Enterprise** was £4,000, and of the **Stormcock** £6,000. The **Kenmare** is a screw steamship of 449 tons net and 1,346 tons gross register, fitted with engines of 450-horse power nominal, and carries a crew of 23 hands all told. The case for her owners, the defendants, was that at about 2.15 p.m. on the day in question, the wind being a fresh gale with squalls, and the tide half flood, of a force of about three knots, the **Kenmare** whilst turning round to go alongside the Prince's Landing-stage, was struck by a squall, and, being unable to answer her helm, drove up river and with her propeller fouled the chain cable of the **Optic.** The services which were then rendered by the plaintiffs were well performed, and consisted in endeavouring, without success, to turn the **Kenmare'**s head down the river, to keep her clear of vessels at anchor, and in holding her in position while the **Optic**'s anchor was clear, and then towing her a distance of about 1½ miles. It was denied that the tug sustained damage, or that the **Kenmare** was in danger of colliding with the **Lucania** or any vessel higher up the river. If she was in danger of driving on to any vessels other than the **Knight Templar** and the schooner **Four Brothers,** they were able to and did in fact keep clear of her. The value of the **Kenmare** was £28,OOO, of her cargo £6,400, and of her freight at risk £80, making altogether £34,480.

It was agreed between the solicitors for the respective parties that the Court should, at the same time, award the plaintiffs salvage remuneration, if any were deemed to be due, for services rendered to the schooner **Four Brothers**, the value of which was agreed at £700.

The Court awarded the **Enterprise** £720, and the **Stormcock** £600.

The President, in delivering judgment, said;- *In this case a very useful service to my mind was well performed. The service in one way is of a rather peculiar kind. The view of the Elder Brethren, and in which I entirely agree, is that the risk run was not much to the vessel itself as it was to other vessels which she might have damaged if she had drifted up the river and come into collision with them and for which she would probably have had to pay. Although that makes a difference as to the way in which the service was to be regarded, it makes no difference as regards the risk which was incurred, and from which the vessel was protected to a great extent by the action of these tugs. Now the circumstances in one way are rather peculiar. To my mind one of*

*the main features is the difficulty and danger in which the **Kenmare** found herself after she had come into collision with the **Optic** and carried away her chain, which fouled her propeller, rendering her propeller thereby useless, and the vessel practically helpless. Furthermore the chain which was hanging from her propeller was not unlikely to foul the moorings of other vessels. That was the position in which she found herself, drifting up stream with tide and wind both adverse. The tide was certainly strong at the time and the wind something like a gale, and beyond all question there were strong squalls, for the captain's letter throws a good deal of light on the weather, for he speaks of his vessel being struck by a squall and brought into collision with the **Optic** by reason of that, and she was drifting up broadside and likely to come in contact with any vessel that might be in her way. She did come in contact with some, and although we did not hear very much of other vessels being in the way, I cannot help thinking there was substantial risk to vessels with which she might have come in contact. The tugs got hold of her and endeavoured to turn her head. The Elder Brethren tell me that in all probability it would have been better if the tugs in the first instance had towed to stern, and so got her stern to tide, but did not do so, and the result was she got athwart the tide, the worst possible position for drifting. However, sooner or later that was remedied, and the vessel was got into a position in which she could have dropped her anchor, and from that moment the risk practically ended. That leads me to stress that there was one vessel with regard to which special stress has been laid, and that is the **Lucania**. I don't regard that as of first-rate importance. I think it fair to say there was a risk to the **Lucania,** the pilot evidently thought so - the risk being of the **Lucania** swinging across the river and swinging on to the **Kenmare.** But on the other hand it seems more likely to suppose that the **Kenmare** would have succeeded in drifting past her. I am not impressed by the observation that if there had been any risk the **Lucania** would have done something. Perhaps she would, but then she saw the **Kenmare** had two tugs in attendance upon her which it might be fairly supposed would get her clear of the **Lucania.** These are the main elements in the case. I attach little importance to what happened after the vessel was brought to anchor. When she was taken to the stage and then into dock the next morning. Technically, I think they were salvage services rather than towage, because they were part and parcel of the whole service and consequently the result of what had happened. It is not necessary, however, to consider that, because if they were salvage services they were salvage services of the most ordinary kind. As regards the damage done to the two vessels, that I take into consideration. The damage to the **Enterprise** is put down at £136 plus the demurrage during the time these repairs were executed. The **Stormcock p**uts her damage at £24:10s., and claims five days' demurrage, which seems a long period to execute that amount of repairs, but that is accounted for by the weather preventing men working part of the time. There is an extra item as regards the **Enterprise** with regard to the **Four Brothers**. It is a small matter, but I think there was a salvage service, in as much as the **Stormcock** held up the **Four Brothers**, and the **Enterprise** enabled the **Kenmare** to get clear. It is a small matter, and considering the value of the **Four Brothers** is only £790, it is obvious it is not a matter to which very great weight is to be attached. I ought perhaps in passing, to say, although very valuable service was rendered by the wreckage boat, which freed the*

*propeller of the **Kenmare**, it is a just observation to say the wreckage boat was enabled to perform that service by reason of the tugs holding the **Kenmare** enabling the wreckage boat to get the chain away in the way she did. As regards the tugs, this was very useful service. They did not themselves encounter any serious danger at all and they were there ready to tow. But that is an observation which to some extent cuts both ways, because powerful tugs like these are kept up for the express purpose of doing work of this kind, and it is by reason of there being such tugs kept up for such purpose there are plenty about. All these are ordinary observations which occur when one has to deal with services rendered by powerful tugs. Taking all these matters into consideration, the conclusion to which I have come with the assistance of the Trinity Masters is that the total sum to be awarded to the **Enterprise** should be the sum of £721. and to the **Stormcock** the sum of £600. In arriving at the these figures I do not forget the superior strength of the **Stormcock**, but there are other elements to be considered - the extra salvage to the **Four Brothers** and the greater amount of damage done to the **Enterprise**.*

R.M.S. Lucania (1893 - 1909) Courtesy Wikimedia

From the 'Oban Times', 2nd May, 2002:

A scientific report before the European Commission recommending that animals should not be transported by sea-going ferries if the wind is above 24mph has been branded as 'meddlesome, irrelevant and totally superfluous'.

If taken on board, the suggestion by the Scientific Steering Committee on Animal Welfare would mean that it is fine to send humans to sea in Force 5 and above conditions, but not animals!

Cunard Remembered

by Society Member Patricia Britland Horne

In the early 1950s, I left school at 15 and went on to Machin and Harper secretarial college. At the age of 16 I started my first job with the Cunard Steamship Company. I had always loved ships but joining that company started off a love of ships which exists to this day. My father used to take me on the Overhead Railway every weekend to see the ships. The Cunard was a very good company to work for and even though I was based in the typing pool I occasionally was 'invited' to work for one of the exceptionally well-dressed gentlemen upstairs. This was a treat because the two typing pools were below street level while upstairs had the splendid view over the river, and the ships.

We worked a five and a half-day week in those days. To get to the typing pool the girls had to walk through dozens of dockers, usually waiting for work and/or wages. There was never a problem with this, as the men were very respectful.

On a Saturday afternoon the Bills of Lading were taken down to whichever Cunard ship was moored and as it was a Saturday afternoon volunteers were requested, I don't think I ever missed a Saturday afternoon. Watching passengers arrive by taxi and walking up the gangway was quite an interesting experience. One could feel the excitement, the noisy bustling quayside and porters carrying a lot of luggage was marvellous to a 16/17 year old. Some passengers were very well dressed and quite glamorous but many were clearly less well off.

I thought it was wonderful looking up at these enormous ships moored at the stage. Of course I wanted to go aboard, but was always met at the foot of the gangway to hand over the Bills. My chance came when the **Ascania** moored mid river because there was a strike of the stewards; perhaps she had missed her sailing date. An exciting thing happened one late afternoon during the strike. A rather handsome gentleman came in to see the supervisor. After he left, our supervisor asked how many of us would be prepared to leave early the next morning to work on **Ascania** for two days. There wasn't exactly a stampede!

We had to be down at the Cunard Building very early and we were taken out by tender from which we had a very shaky ladder to climb to a 'hole' in the side of the ship! We had had strict instructions to wear trousers!

We were met by an attractive uniformed lady, who gave us some idea of what we were expected to do. It was quite vague. Whilst on board we were supposed to tidy and clean the cabins, gangways etc., I'm sorry to say that we were rather lax. It was a very beautiful ship and some of the passengers were rather good fun. Most of them preferred to tidy their cabins themselves. We

went back home each night and were called for, I think by taxi, very early on each of the two mornings

Sadly (for us) the strike ended abruptly; all the stewards were dismissed but a lot asked for their jobs back and were, I believe, successful. The ships left at about 3pm on Saturday but only once, after handing over the documents, did I wait to see a liner leave. Friends were leaving to live in Richmond, Ontario. The family went on board but I refused their invitation as I felt it was a family affair. After they had disembarked we watched their ship until it was out of sight, and of course, over the years have lost touch.

Sea Breezes Index

the Editor

Over recent years Society members have been working to update and expand the index to ships' names as reported in the magazine Sea Breezes.

The index now includes all ship names within the period 1918 to 1982, in alphabetical order with each indicating the Volume/s in which reference is made and the relevant page numbers.

The task has been immense and the index now has some 48,000 entries and runs to over 1600 pages. For ease of handling it has been printed out into five separate volumes now available in the Archives at Merseyside Maritime Museum. Also available is a searchable file on the departmental computer.

Fresh Paint Job for the Queen Mary

MNA Circular, September 2016

Restoration work has started on iconic steamship TS **Queen Mary**, which is in the process of being transformed into one of the U.K.'s largest interactive maritime exhibits. Regarded as the vanguard of 1930s Scottish engineering, **Queen Mary** was built in 1933 and is the last of its class in the world. Now the 252-foot vessel is set to become a visitor attraction which will make a major social contribution to the City of Glasgow.

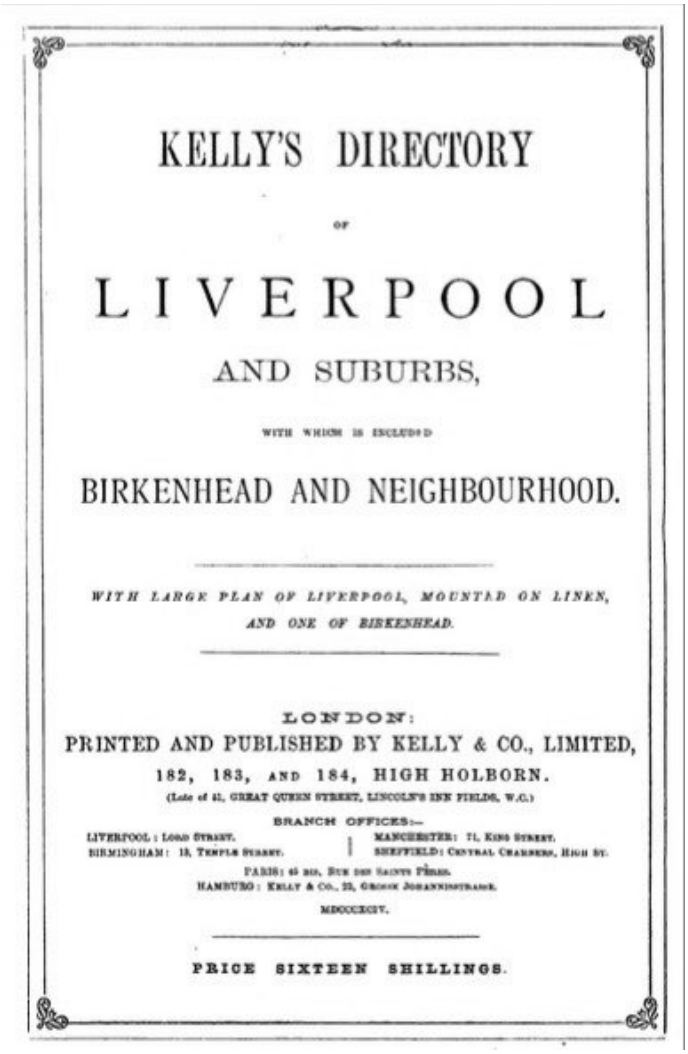
As part of the vessel's transformation, specialist coatings supplied by AkzoNobel's International brand are being applied to the ship at dry dock in Greenock. When the work is complete, she will be berthed on the River Clyde at the heart of Glasgow's Finnieston hub, where visitors will then be able to experience the heritage, design and culture of the art deco 1930s. *The paint on any ship serves more than just a cosmetic purpose, it is essential to protect the vessel from salt water and the weather*, explained Iain Sim, trustee of the Friends of TS Queen Mary Charity, who saved the vessel from being scrapped in 2015. The **Queen Mary** is a legacy of Scotland's great shipbuilding industry and will be a world class example of maritime heritage conservation, TS **Queen Mary** can continue to be enjoyed and admired in all her glory and help to inspire future generations for many years to come.

The freshly repainted T.S. **Queen Mary** Wikimedia

Kelly's Directory, Liverpool, 1894

the Editor

Kelly's Directory was a trade directory in the United Kingdom that listed all businesses and tradespeople in a particular County, city or town, as well as a general directory of postal addresses of local gentry, landowners, charities, and other facilities.The originator of the directory was Frederic Festus Kelly. In 1835 or 1836 he became chief inspector of letter-carriers for the inland or general post office, and took over publication of the Post Office London Directory, whose copyright was in private hands despite its semi-official association with the post office, and which Kelly had to purchase from the widow of his predecessor. He founded Kelly & Co. and which, in 1897, became Kelly's Directories Ltd, and continued to produce County Directories, which are now an important source for historical and family history research until the mid-1970's. That for Liverpool, dated 1894 which ran to an impressive 795 pages, included a description of the churches within the town, the schools and colleges, public buildings and railways. It also gave details of the docks as seen at that time:-



KELLY'S DIRECTORY

OF

LIVERPOOL

AND SUBURBS,

WITH WHICH IS INCLUDED

BIRKENHEAD AND NEIGHBOURHOOD.

WITH LARGE PLAN OF LIVERPOOL, MOUNTED ON LINEN, AND ONE OF BIRKENHEAD.

LONDON:
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Front cover of the 1894 Directory

<u>The Mersey and the Docks</u>

The docks, which constitute the principal feature in Liverpool, extend along the river margin on the Liverpool shore for a distance of over six miles, and on the Birkenhead or Cheshire shore from Woodside to Seacombe, a distance of one mile, and stretch inland for at least two miles. The docks on the Cheshire side of the river were originally constructed and vested in a separate trust to that of the Liverpool Docks, but by an Act of Parliament passed in 1857, the docks at Liverpool and Birkenhead were amalgamated and vested in one public trust, called the "Mersey Docks and Harbour Board." Some idea of the extent of these docks may be formed from the following statement :-

The water area of the docks and basins on the Liverpool side of the river amounts to 381 acres, with $25^{1}/_{2}$ miles of quayage; while those on the Cheshire shore have a Water area of $164^{1}/_{2}$ acres, and $9^{1}/_{2}$ miles of quayage, or in all $545^{1}/_{2}$ acres of water area, and 35 miles of quayage. In addition there are 23 graving docks for the repairing of vessels, with an aggregate length of floor of 14,500 feet. The following particulars refer to the docks at Liverpool only ;-

The first in order, commencing at the northern extremity of the estate is:-

HORNBY DOCK, which with its branch has a quayage of one mile; the north quay of this dock is used by the timber trade, for the purposes of which a large area of land to the north of the dock is laid out. The west quays of the dock and branch are provided with sheds 95 feet wide; and the south and east quays with sheds each 125 feet wide. This dock was opened for use in January, 1884.

The ALEXANDRA DOCK, with its three branches, has quayage of $2^{1}/_{4}$ miles,and is chiefly used by the largest class of steamships trading to the United States and the East Indies: it was opened for partial use in 1880, and formally opened in September, 1881, by T.R.H. the Prince and Princess of Wales; the Quays are provided with extensive sheds of from 80 feet to 95 feet; on the east quays of nos. 1 and 2 branch docks grain-elevators have been erected to work in connection with warehouses on the east side of Regent Road, to which the grain is conveyed by means of bands.

LANGTON BRANCH DOCK, this dock has a quayage of 671 yards. A capacious shed, erected on its north quay, is principally used by vessels in the North American trade. The southern is for the greater part reserved for the repairing of vessels in connection with the adjoining graving docks, and for putting on board steamers, boilers and other heavy machinery, for which purpose a hydraulic crane capable of making a lift of 100 tons has been erected. On the same quay a convenient shed has been erected for the convenience of the tinplate trade.

LANGTON DOCK has a quayage of 1,322 yards, and is used for purposes similar to those of the branch dock: its western quay is covered by a shed 80 feet in width. On the northern quay is a double-storied shed 95 feet wide, equipped with hydraulic cranes and other machinery. On the quay between this dock and the Brocklebank Dock, a shed the full width of the quay has been erected. Leading out of the east end of this dock are two graving docks, each 948 feet in length, constructed of cement concrete and coped with granite. The approach to the foregoing docks is by means of two entrances opening from the Canada basin, each 65 feet in width and having their sills placed at 12 feet below the datum, thus giving a depth at water over the sills varying from 22 feet on the lowest neap tides to 33 feet on spring tides.

BROCKLEBANK DOCK, opened in 1862, and enlarged in 1871, has a quayage of 1,002 yards. This dock is used as an auxiliary dock for the working of the Carriers' docks and as a timber dock, in the same way as the Canada dock. It has two locks on its west side leading from the Canada basin, enabling small craft to enter it at different states of the tide; in all, seven passages lead to and from this dock, with 14 pairs of gates. Its masonry is of a very substantial kind, the whole being coped with granite. On the West quay there is a commodious shed extending to the East quay of the Langton Dock.

NORTH CARRIERS' DOCK, opened in 1862, has a quayage of 641 yards, This dock is principally appropriated to the mahogany trade and inland carrying business, and is lined with durable stone, coped with granite.

SOUTH CARRIERS' DOCK has a quayage of 615 yards, This dock is appropriated to the inland carrying trade: at its east end is a warehouse in the occupation of the Manchester Ship Canal Company, partly erected on stone piers rising from the bottom of the dock, between which barges may pass, receive and discharge cargo direct into the warehouse.

CANADA TIDAL BASIN, as enlarged under the Act of 1873, has a quayage of 846 yards; it is provided with an elaborate system of sluices for maintaining a sufficient depth of water, so as to enable, vessels of the largest class and draught to enter the adjacent docks on any tide. From either pier head timber jetties project into the river so as to facilitate the docking of vessels. This basin forms the deep-water approach to the magnificent Langton, Alexandra and Hornby system of new docks to the northward, and also to the Canada and Brocklebank Docks.

CANADA DOCK, opened in the year 1858, has a quayage of 1,272 yards: the east quay of this dock is appropriated to the timber trade, the west side being used by steamers trading to America; and there are 10 large yards with spacious offices for the use of timber merchants: at the northern end leading from the Canada basin is a lock 498 feet long and 100 feet in width.

HUSKISSON DOCK, opened in 1852, has a quayage of 939 yards, and is principally appropriated to steam vessels in the Mediterranean trade: on the west side of this dock are spacious sheds and workshops, partly occupied by the Cunard Steam Ship Company.

HUSKISSON BRANCH DOCK, No. 1, opened in 1861, lies east of the Huskisson dock, with open communication, and has a quayage of 910 yards. This dock is exclusively appropriated to the above-named steam trade, and has capacious closed sheds on all its quays.

HUSKISSON BRANCH DOCK, No. 2, north of No. 1, opened in 1872, has a quayage of 800 yards, and is appropriated to the Brazil, River Plate and Havana steam trade, having capacious closed sheds on the north and south quays.

HUSKISSON LOCKS, two in number, 80 feet and 45 feet wide respectively, were opened in 1851, and form the southern entrances to the Huskisson dock, leading out from the Sandon tidal basin: the 8o feet lock can be used as a graving dock when required. The 8o feet lock is in course of alteration as part of the general scheme of such improvements referred to below.

Works for the improvement of the Canada, Huskisson and adjoining docks, were begun in 1891, and are now (1894) in hand. Those include the construction of a new branch dock on the east side of Canada dock, which itself is to be extended southward and connected by a passage 90 feet in width with the Huskisson dock; the lengthening and deepening of Canada Lock; the formation of a new large half-tide dock on the site of the Sandon Basin and Wellington half-tide dock, with deep-water entrances from the river; and the construction of a graving dock on the site of Huskisson 45 feet lock, and they will provide deep water in the Canada, Huskisson and adjoining docks for the largest class of vessels.

SANDON DOCK is one of a series for which an Act of Parliament was obtained in 1844, embracing the whole of the docks south of this to the Clarence dock, and has a quayage of 867 yards: this dock is principally appropriated to the use of vessels under repair, the whole of its north side being occupied by entrances leading into six large graving or dry docks; the south quay is used for the discharge of ships' cargoes, and the east quay for repairs only; on the east side of this dock is a steam crane, capable of lifting 50 tons ; and on the north steam masting shears of 20 ton power: railways are laid on the east quay of this dock, connecting it with all the great trunk lines of the country: to the west of this dock is the Sandon tidal basin, which has quayage of 702 yards: this basin serves as a river entrance to the Huskisson dock and locks, Sandon dock, Wellington and its half-tide dock, and tho other docks to the south.

WELLINGTON DOCK has a quayage of 820 yards: this dock is principally appropriated to the use of steam vessels in the Mediterranean trade; on its east quay is a high-level railway with hydraulic cranes for the loading of coal: the north and south quays have capacious closed sheds for the protection of goods in transit.

WELLINGTON DOCK HALF-TIDE DOCK has a quayage of 400 yards, and is used as an auxiliary to the Wellington and other docks to the south: and on the south side is a 15 ton crane: this dock has a double entrance on the north side, leading from Sandon tidal basin.

BRAMLEY-MOORE DOCK has a quayage of 935 yards: this dock is principally appropriated to the use of vessels loading coal at the high- level railway; on the east quay of this dock is a continuation of the high-level railway at the Wellington dock, and on the north quay is an important extension of the same railway occupying the whole of the quay; several compartments in the lower

portion of the structure are now occupied as refrigerating stores for meat imported from South America. A considerable portion of the space under the High Level Coal Railway on the East side of this dock is occupied by the electric machinery for supplying the current to work the trains on the Liverpool Overhead Railway: on the south quay are sheds partially closed.

NELSON DOCK, with a quayage of 803 yards, is appropriated to steam vessels trading to Hamburg, Hull, South Wales, Holland, Ireland and the Mediterranean and to such as are engaged in general foreign trade; its quays are surrounded with capacious closed sheds.

SALISBURY DOCK has a quayage of 406 yards: this dock is entered directly from the river by a double entrance, with a central pier on which is a clock tower about 100 feet in height; there is a lock passage leading from the river into this dock, for the use of river and canal barges passing to and from the Leeds and Liverpool Canal by a series of locks to the eastward: this dock is principally used as an auxiliary to the several adjacent docks, there being seven passages leading out of it: on the north-west quay of this dock is a 7 ton crane for the use of coasting or any other vessels: the length of quay in which this crane is situated is 240 feet.

COLLINGWOOD DOCK has a quayage of 553 yards; this dock is principally appropriated to the accommodation of the coasting trade, and also serves as a passage to the Stanley dock lying eastward of it.

STANLEY DOCK has a quayage of 753 yards: this dock has its north and south quays covered with substantial fireproof warehouses, five stories above quay level, with vaults below the quays, and a perfect series of hydraulic machinery for the discharge of merchandise from the ship in the dock to the several warehouse floors; there is, in addition, a complete system of railway communication connecting these warehouses with the main lines of railways having termini in the port, while a chain of locks forms a communication with the Leeds and Liverpool canal.

CLARENCE GRAVING DOCK BASIN has a quayage of 291 yards: this basin is used as a receptacle for vessels passing to and from the graving or dry docks adjoining, or as a passage from Clarence to Salisbury dock, and on its west side is a gridiron 313 feet long and 25 feet wide for vessels requiring trifling repairs; the graving docks are two in number, being 45 feet wide at entrance and above 740 feet long.

CLARENCE DOCK opened in 1830, has a quayage of 914 yards: this dock is exclusively appropriated to the accommodation of steam vessels in the coasting and Irish trade. To the westward of this dock is the Clarence half-tide dock, with an entrance to the river; and quayage 635 yards: this half-tide dock is used more as a passage to the adjacent docks than as a dock for the accommodation of vessels; but it has on the north side a crane capable of lifting 30 tons. The

whole of the quays of the dock, and a large part of those of the half-tide dock, are covered with sheds to protect the goods.

TRAFALGAR DOCK (opened in 1836) and its lock have a quayage of 1,020 yards: this dock is exclusively appropriated in the purposes of the steam coasting trade and its quays are covered with spacious sheds.

VICTORIA DOCK, opened in 1836, has a quayage of 755 yards: this dock is appropriated to the general trade of the port. The surrounding quays are provided with capacious sheds.

WEST WATERLOO DOCK has a quayage of 533 yards: it has entrances leading from the Prince's Half-tide and Victoria docks. The original Waterloo dock was opened in 1834; and the present dock, as re-constructed, in 1868.

EAST WATERLOO DOCK has a quayage of 506 yards: this dock is appropriated to the grain trade, and is surrounded on three sides by substantial fireproof warehouses containing 5 floors above the quay, supplied with the most approved machinery for the conditioning and delivery of grain.

PRINCE'S HALF-TIDE DOCK, with a quayage of 429 yards, is constructed on the original site of the Prince's tidal basin. Its river entrance has three passages, two of 65 feet each, and a centre passage, 32 feet wide, to serve as a lock for small river craft. This dock serves as an approach to the Prince's Dock on the south and the Waterloo and other docks to the north; it has sheds on its south and east quays.

The Board has Parliamentary power to make a jetty at the south side of the entrances to this dock, in connection with an extension of the landing stage, and alterations to the west quay of the Prince's Dock.

PRINCE'S DOCK: has a quayage of 1,178 yards. This dock is appropriated to the general trade of the port, and is associated with a large export trade; along the west side are spacious closed sheds, for the security of merchandise in transit; the rest of its quays are also provided with large sheds, as well as cranes and appliances: the sides and one end of the dock are enclosed by a wall with gateways, and on the westside of the boundary wall, adjoining the river, is a marine parade and a landing stage. The first stone of this dock was laid in May, 1816, and the dock opened to shipping in July, 1821. A graving dock, 277 feet in length, has been constructed, leading out of the south end of this dock, and was opened 1875

GEORGE'S DOCK, authorised by Act of Parliament in 1761, and begun in 1767, has a quayage of 645 yards, This dock is appropriated to the general trade of the port, its east and west quays being provided with sheds for the protection of goods. The entrance to this dock is from the south by way of the "George's Dock Passage," leading from the Canning Dock. To the west of this dock are public baths, with a marine parade in front of them, next to the river. The dock

was widened in 1799. In 1749 there was a fort mounting 14 guns on the site of this dock opposite St. Nicholas church.

GEORGE'S FERRY BASIN, constructed about 1770, has a quayage of 160 yards, with an incline for the convenience of landing and shipping goods to and from vessels in the river. This basin was constructed as a place of shelter, and for the use of river boats, and is still used for these purposes.

MANCHESTER DOCK AND CHESTER TIDAL BASIN have together a quayage of 627 lineal yards. This dock and basin are exclusively appropriated to the carrying trade, the north side of the dock being occupied by the Shropshire Union Railway Company, and the south side by the Great Western Railway Company. The east end of the dock has a warehouse or shed carried on piled jetties projecting into the dock, so that barges can load and discharge under shelter. The basin is chiefly used by the general carrying trade. The dock and basin have a complete system of sheds, warehouses, offices and other appliances distinct from any other dock, and the whole is enclosed within boundary walls.

CANNING DOCK, originally known as the " Old Dry Dock," and formerly leading to the Old Dock, now forming the site of the Custom House, has a quayage of 585 yards. The east quay of this dock is appropriated to the coasting and inland carrying trades, and a shed on the west quay is occupied by a Steam Fisheries Company as a receiving place for their fish. Its east quay is covered with a shed throughout its length. This dock was used as a tidal dock from about 1700 to 1811, when it was converted into a wet dock with gates. Two graving or dry docks branch out of it on its western quay. A considerable part of this dock was rebuilt in 1842. The level of the sill of the Old Dock has been retained, and is the standard from which tidal and other levels are computed.

CANNING HALF-TIDE DOCK: has a quayage of 429 yards. This dock is the feeder to the Albert, Canning, Salthouse, and Canning graving docks, and has two entrances from the river, with a centre pier, on the side of which, facing the river, are figures cut in granite to show the height of tide above the standard level of the port. This dock was originally a tidal basin, and was altered into a wet dock in 1844.

ALBERT DOCK has a quayage of 885 yards: this dock is surrounded with ranges of fire-proof warehouses of five floors, with vaults below the quays, and provided with efficient hydraulic appliances for unloading cargo and warehousing general produce: the total superficial area of these five floors, with quays and vaults, is about 24 acres: this dock is exclusively appropriated to the import trade for the most valuable description of merchandise from the East Indies, China and South America, and was opened by H.R.H. Prince Consort, July 30, 1846.

SALTHOUSE DOCK, with a quayage of 784 yards, is exclusively appropriated to the export trade, principally to the East and West Indies and South America, in connection with the Albert Dock, with which it is in communication. The quays surrounding it are covered with sheds: the Act to build this dock was obtained in 1734; it was altered and nearly rebuilt in 1844, and was afterwards enlarged in 1855.

WAPPING DOCK, opened in 1855, has a quayage of 815 yards: the trade of this dock is both import and export, and somewhat of a miscellaneous character: on the east quay there is a stack of fire-proof warehouses, extending the whole length of the dock, and fitted with an admirable system of hydraulic machinery for the removal of goods: on the west quay of this dock is a fine shed, 90 feet span with closed ends, covering the whole space between this and the east side of the King's dock.

WAPPING BASIN, opened in 1855, has a quayage oF 454 yards; a fine enclosed shed has been erected on the east quay for the protection of goods in the course of shipment.

DUKE'S DOCK belongs to the Manchester Ship Canal Company and is wholly devoted to the inland carrying trade of their Bridgewater Canal undertakings; it is connected with Wapping Basin, and has a passage into the river.

THE KING'S DOCK, authorised by Act of Parliament in 1784, and opened in 1788, has a quayage of 875 yards, and is appropriated to the general trade of the port, both foreign and coastwise: its western quay is covered by an open shed from end to end, and westward, towards the river, are extensive warehouses used for the storage and banding of tobacco: considerable quantities of agricultural produce by coasting vessels is discharged on the north quay of this dock.

QUEEN'S HALF-TIDE DOCK has a quayage of 445 yards, and is an auxiliary to the Queen's, King's, and Wapping Docks and the Queen's Graving or Dry Docks, two in number, which branch out from its south side: there are two river entrances to this dock, one 70 feet, and fixed large masting shears, with a sweep of about 60 feet from the centre, and capable of lifting a weight of 20 tons: on the north quay is a closed shed: a marine parade, called the "King's Parade," extends from the north side of this dock to the northern end of the tobacco warehouses: this dock was originally a tidal basin, serving as an entrance to the King and Queen's docks, and was opened in 1788, but altered into a wet dock, and reopened to trade in 1856.

QUEEN'S DOCK has a quayage of 1,214 yards and is appropriated to the general trade of the port, with sheds on the east, north and west sides: this dock communicates at its north end with the Wapping Dock, and at the south end with the Coburg: the Act authorising its construction was obtained in 1784; the northernmost portion for about half its present length being first formed and

opened for shipping in 1796: a further Act of Parliament was obtained in 1811, for Its southern extension, and it was completed and reopened to the trade of the port in 1816; the quays on both sides of the new portion were constructed as timber slips for the convenience of the then timber trade of the port; these quays were filled up in 1834 to the usual level, and the dock was subsequently deepened and the entrances enlarged and re-opened for shipping in 1856. Its eastern quay was raised in 1891, and the whole of the space lying between it and the line of Chaloner and Sefton streets, including the street called East Side. Queen's Dock, has been absorbed to form a wide enclosed shed.

TRAFFORD DOCK AND BASIN are situated to the west of Queen's Dock and north of Coburg dock, and have an entrance from the river.

COBURG DOCK, which has a quayage of 1,053 yards, is appropriated to the general trade of the port, the north side being principally occupied by steam vessels in the African trade, while part of the south quay is appropriated to steam vessels trading to Spain and Portugal; on the east side is an hydraulic crane capable of lifting 25 tons for the shipment. of machinery and other heavy goods: on the north and south sides are closed sheds for the security of goods in transit: the Act to build this dock was obtained 1811; it was first constructed as a tidal basin, with a small wet dock to the eastward, called the Union dock, connecting with the Queen's and Brunswick docks, and was converted into a wet dock in 1840, with entrance gates 70 feet, in width: in 1858 the Coburg and Union were made into one, since called the "Coburg dock."

Between the west end of this dock and the river a set of powerful pumps has been established, which by delivering water into the Coburg dock from the river make good the losses due to leakage, lockage, &c. in the group of docks from Brunswick to George's inclusive, in which the water is impounded over low neap tides, and so maintained at such level as to afford full draught at all times for the largest vessels using them. Such deep draughted vessels enter or leave these docks by way of the Union Dock serving as a lock, and the chain of docks to Herculaneum Dock, all of which have sills laid at low level. Vessels of moderate draught enter the group of docks referred to by the ordinary river entrances, whose sills are much higher than those of the newer Herculaneum group.

BRUNSWICK DOCK, authorised by Act of Parliament in 1811, and opened in 1832, has a quayage of 1,074 yards part of the west quay of this dock is exclusively appropriated to the timber trade; its eastern quay and part of the western quay have ranges of closed sheds; while on the north quay is also an open shed for the shelter of goods in the progress of shipment: branching out from the south end of this dock are two fine graving docks for the repair of vessels. Brunswick Branch leading out of this dock on its eastern margin, is a

small dock having an area of about one acre, with a quayage of 450 yards, constructed for the convenience of river craft.

BRUNSWICK HALF-TIDE DOCK, opened in 1832, has a quayage of 491 yards: this dock, serving as a passage to the Brunswick dock, has a river entrance and a shed on its north quay.

SOUTH FERRY TIDAL BASIN, built about 1830, has a quayage of 205 yards: this basin is principally used as place of shelter for fishing boats and other small river craft, and has a slipway on its north side for the convenience of boats passing to and from ships in the river; the other portion of its quays is occupied by the authorities of the docks, this being the principal dockyard for effecting such repairs as are required in maintaining the docks and works of the estate; attached to the dockyard are a dining hall and reading rooms for the use of the workmen employed there: the Offices of the engineers of the Mersey Dock Estate are located in a block of buildings near the centre of the yard, and dwelling houses have been erected at the ends of the yard for the principal foreman and chief clerk.

THE UNION DOCK on the east side of Brunswick graving docks, has a quayage of 361 yards. This dock forms the connecting link between the Brunswick and adjoining old docks to the northward and the new Toxteth, Harrington and Herculaneum docks to the southward. It serves during spring tides as an ordinary passage, and during neap tides as a lock between the natural deep water group and the old Brunswick - George's shallow group, since improved by the impounding and pumping system, described under the heading of Coburg Dock.

THE TOXTETH DOCK, which occupies the site of the old Toxteth Dock, and land to the south of it, has a quayage of 1,134 yards. On its west quay is an extensive closed shed about 150 feet wide, and on the east quay is a fire-proof double storied shed, 95 feet wide, and provided with quick-working cranes for the discharge of cargo into the shed. This dock has passages each 60 feet wide, to the Union and Harrington docks, and also an independent river entrance 50 feet wide.

HARRINGTON DOCK, has a quayage of 1,023 yards, its main passages being 60 feet wide; it was opened for traffic In July, 1833, and is in use for general trade purposes: on the west quay is an extensive closed shed 144 feet wide, and on the east quay is a double storied shed, 95 feet wide, and provided with quick working cranes similar to those on the east quay of Toxteth dock; this dock also has an independent entrance from the river by a lock 22 feet wide, suitable for river craft.

HERCULANEUM DOCK and branch are the southernmost of the existing Liverpool docks: the dock in its original state was opened in 1866, the sills at that time being at the level of 8 feet below the datum; under the powers of the Act of

1873 it was considerably enlarged and deepened and the branch constructed, and was re-opened after those alterations in May, 1881; and the quayage is 1,173 yards; the river entrances, two in number, are 80 and 60 feet wide respectively, the sills of both being laid at the low level of 12 feet below the datum, so that this dock serves as a deep water approach to the important docks immediately north of it, as well as to the older Brunswick - George's group further north, whose direct entrances from the river are only available for shallow-draft vessels; on the south side of the dock three important graving docks have been constructed, each over 750 feet long, with entrances 60 feet wide.

At this dock is situated the largest petroleum magazine in the world, capable of holding 60,000 barrels; it is divided into 60 compartments, each capable of storing 1,000 barrels, and being cut out of the solid rock is both fire and damp proof. A group of depots for petroleum in bulk has also been erected on land south of this dock. There are four cylindrical tanks, of capacities varying from 2,000 to 3,000 tons, the total capacity being 9,500 tons. Each tank is surrounded by a concrete moat, capable of containing the whole contents of the tank, so that the safety of the adjoining property is secured in case of accident. Ships carrying the oil in bulk are berthed on the west quay of Herculaneum branch dock, and discharge the oil by their own pumps into the tanks, from which it is filled into barrels or bulk trucks as desired and sent off by road or rail, all conveniences being provided for that purpose. The works in this district, authorised under the Act of 1873, and completed in 1891, form a range of docks only second in importance to the new North End system, and constitute a most important addition to the accommodation of the port.

In connection with the system of docks, there is a double line of railway, about 6 miles in length, running from north to south, on the eastern margin of the dock quays, with branches to the various railway companies' goods stations, as well as round several of the docks. An overhead railway, extending along the whole line of docks, and of which a separate account is given elsewhere, was constructed during 1891-2, and forms a convenient and rapid means of communication between the several parts of the docks estate and the portions of the city contiguous thereto. On and near the dock quays are sundry buildings, such as residences for dock-masters, customs' depots, police stations, pilots' offices, traffic managers' offices, and others for the convenience of the port, all these being connected by a complete system of electric telegraph communication with the custom house, dock offices and exchange, continued through various stations along the coast to Holyhead.

Along the whole line of docks there is a continuous broad road, with intersecting streets leading to other main thoroughfares of the town. A convenient parade, available for the use of the general public, extends along the river.

Menelaus

by H.M. Hignett

There were six divisions of eight youths in the Outward Bound School, at Aberdovey, in December 1943, taking instructions on seamanship and training in athletics. I was in Foretop with seven others. One third of that month's intake were cadets from H.M.S. **Conway**. Others were from youth clubs and social organisations around the U.K. Among them were Martin Attlee (son of the then deputy prime minister), Gerald Balfour (grandson of Lord Balfour, former prime minister) and another youth nephew of Ramsay MacDonald former prime minister: all 'Conway' cadets.

Attlee was a shy youth and tended to avoid mixing in groups in the common rooms. Over the following years I occasionally met him as an apprentice near India buildings (the Alfred Holt HQ) in Water St. passing with a nod and a smile.

A couple of years later I was on the **Duchess of Bedford** in Halifax N.S. in 26th July 1945 and ahead of us alongside the quay was the Blue Funnel liner **Menelaus**. One morning we heard that Churchill, as Prime Minister, had been superseded by Clement Attlee. Very shortly We saw a large crowd around the Menelaus ' gangway and then heard the local radio state that Martin Attlee was in Halifax.

That day Chief Officer Watt decided to lower the starboard side boats to the water. This because in Canada Dock a few months earlier the boats had been lowered to the water and 20 minutes later they were all full of water. The hull seams had dried somewhat and needed a full week to become watertight. So now in Halifax the boats' hulls were being further tested.

As a QM I was instructed to accompany the lamptrimmer to use a boat to clean up and re-paint the lower draft marks, the other boats were used be use by the deck crowd for touching up rust- marks along the vessel's side. Lamps and I were busy checking the marks when we heard calling between our crew and a boat from the **Menelaus**. I looked up and saw Martin A in a boat nearby. I called hello and let him know of our amusement at his situation. He let us know that he was not amused. We suggested he make his way ashore per our boat. After few moments of thought he shouted he would try. Half an hour later he appeared wearing a dungaree jacket and crossed to our boat. It was meal time so I showed him to our gangway. We left the '**Bedford**' together and made our way round the crowd at his ship' gangway. He boarded a tram for the city centre, I made for the park where a few of our crew were playing football.

I understand that when he returned to the **Menelaus** he was stopped by two Royal Canadian Mounted Police. A couple of the free nearby shouted that he was crew member The Second Mate came down to 'certify' him. And an angry Chief Officer met him as he reached the deck!

But what can you say to the son of a Primer Minister ?

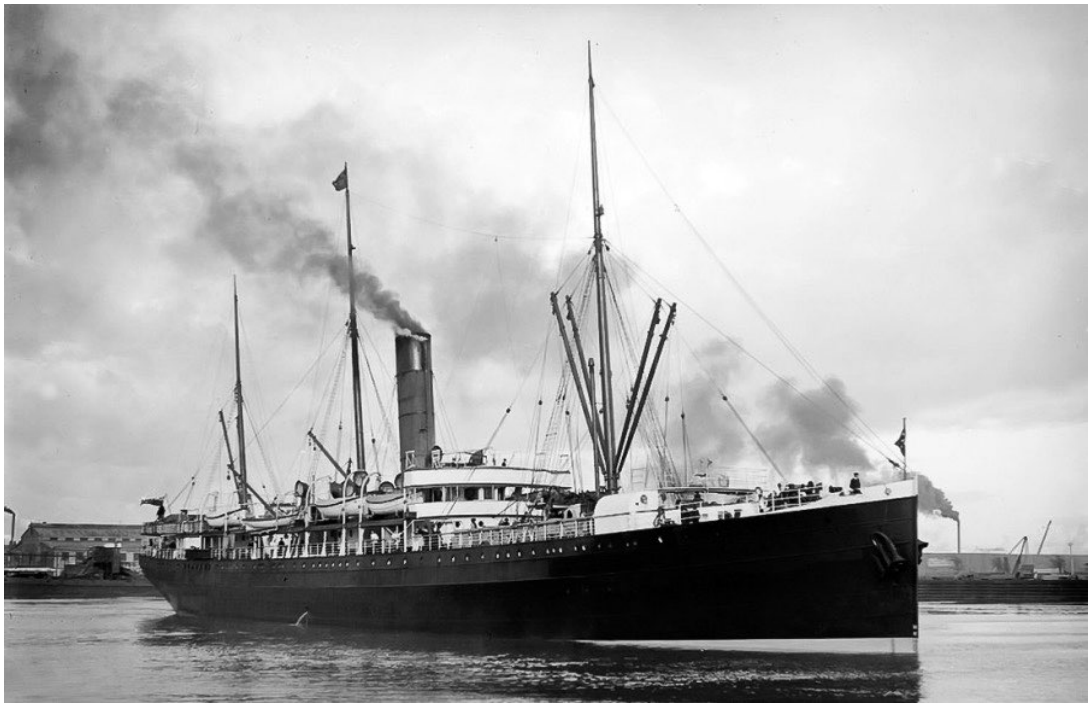
The Liverpool Nautical Research Society
(Founded in 1938)

THE BULLETIN

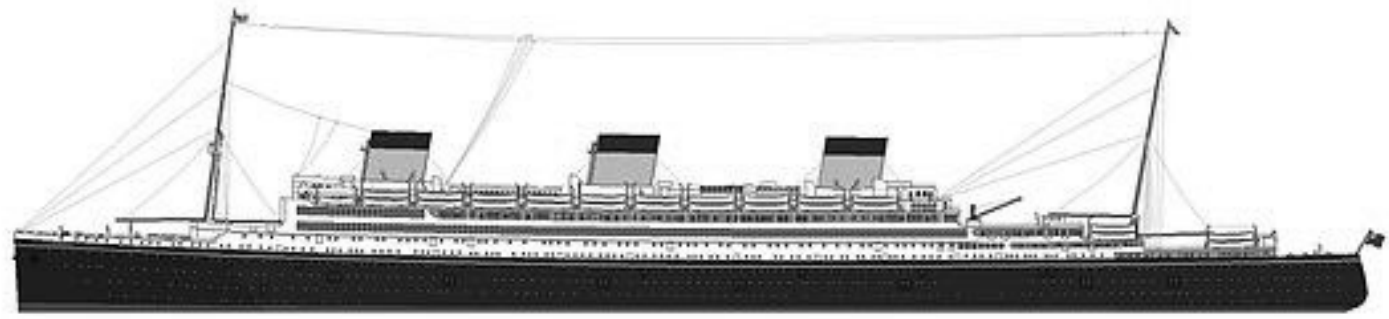
Volume 60 No.4, March, 2017

Belem at Sanary-sur-Mer, 2003 Picture from Wikimedia Commons

CMA Djakarta under tow, approaching Malta. See page 13



ss **Warrimoo** Courtesy TyneBuiltShips See page 26



Construction of RMMV **Oceanic** was abandoned in July, 1929 Wikimedia See page 2

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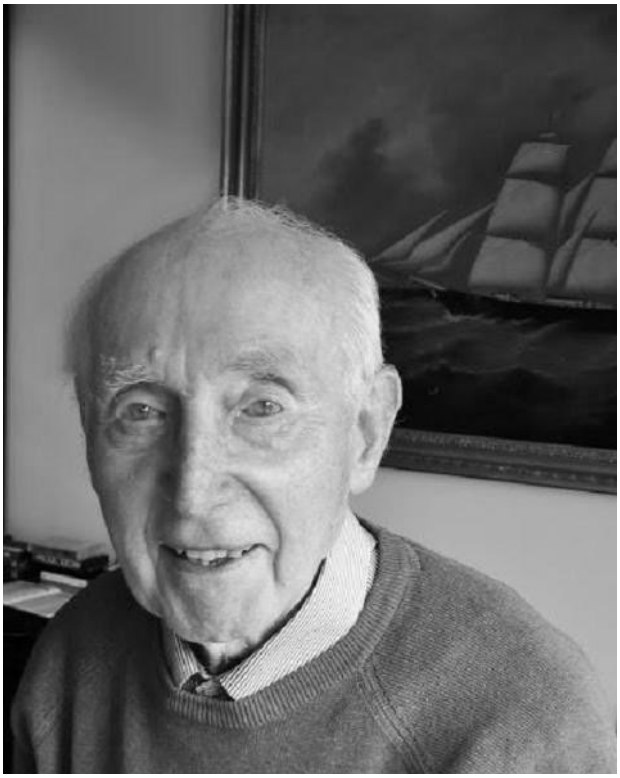
OBITUARY

Mr. A.S. (Sam) Davidson

We regret to advise of the death, on Christmas Eve, of Mr Sam Davidson at the age of 97 years. Mr Davidson was a Consultant ENT Surgeon to the Wirral group of hospitals and in the latter part of his career Postgraduate Dean to the Mersey Region at the time that Postgraduate Centres were being set up in the hospitals.



Sam's fascination for the maritime world stemmed from his boyhood recollections of the busy Mersey estuary. A keen amateur sailor, Sam cruised various areas of the British coast especially the Irish Sea and the Clyde. These experiences, coupled with a fondness for antiques, bred an early interest in maritime pictures that deepened and blossomed. It wasn't just a question of looking at pictures of sailing ships, Sam was able to read so much into each artwork that each was in effect relating a story to him. Following his retirement this expertise was further developed to the extent that he wrote five books on this subject as well as being an expert contributor to many more. He was Hon. Consultant on Marine Paintings at the Merseyside Maritime Museum, and as his reputation spread he was regularly called upon for his expert personal opinion.

Those of you who over the years have had the pleasure of listening to one of Sam Davidson's fascinating presentations, sharing his love of marine art, will have some inkling of the man. He also arranged for the visit by Society members to the Liverpool Athenaeum Club, which proved instrumental in the recent relocation of our talks venue from the Maritime Museum.

The Society is extremely proud to have had the benefit of Sam's Presidency for over sixteen years (to 2013), as well as his involvement as a committed Member for many years beforehand. When Sam was offered the opportunity to serve as President, the then Chairman Graeme Cubbin wrote 'the Society feels that the benefits of your knowledge, wisdom and experience would be dispensed willingly and in full measure whenever sound advice is needed'. Without doubt, Sam has fulfilled every word of Graeme's view of some twenty years ago.....and most certainly, even more.

Remember Those Days .....

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

January to March, 1950

The death of Mr. Arthur C. Wardle in November, 1949 was reported. Aged 58, he was a fellow of the Royal Historical Society and honorary archivist of the Liverpool Nautical Research Society, of which he was a founder. Formerly hon. secretary of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, he carried out extensive research work dealing with the growth of Liverpool and Merseyside generally, with particular emphasis on the shipping aspect. Mr. Wardle was the author of two books - "Benjamin Bowring and His Descendants" and "Steam Conquers the Pacific". Latterly he had been engaged on completing a history of the Mersey ferry services.

The machinery for the White Star Line's still-born **Oceanic** would have been unique if completed, and was described at a lecture in 1943 by the chief technical engineer of Harland and Wolff Ltd. in the 15th Thomas Lowe Gray Lecture to the Institution of Mechanical Engineers. Quadruple screws would have been driven by electric motors, the power for which was to have been provided by no less than 47 diesel generators developing combined 200,000 h.p. Such an arrangement would have minimised machinery space head room and allow a system of continuous overhaul, so eliminating docking for machinery maintenance. The frontispiece shows an artist's impression of her; the keel was laid in June, 1928 but following disagreement over power plant design and the Depression, work was abandoned in July 1929 and the hull dismantled.

The **Scillonian** is coming to the end of her days on the Penzance - Scilly service, to be replaced by a bigger and faster ship. During nearly 25 years of hard service she has proved a wonderful vessel. Built by the Ailsa Shipbuilding Company, Troon, she is a 429 gross tons, single screw steamer with a triple expansion engine for a speed of 13 knots.

The 193rd annual court of governors of the Marine Society has reported for the year 1949 that the society helped nearly 300 boys to go to sea, by bursaries to reduce their fees at a pre-sea training establishment or giving them a grant towards their sea outfit of clothing or paying the premium or surety which some shipping companies require. Of the 252 boys helped who went to the merchant navy, 135 had passed satisfactorily through a course at the Outward Bound Sea School, Aberdovey, and another 25 boys had successfully completed the four weeks' course at the London School of Nautical Cookery. The president also said that there was an increasing demand for some deep-sea sail training to be included in the curriculum for cadets before they joined the Merchant Navy, but that the expense entailed would result in imposing an even heavier burden on parents. It was a request of this kind that prompted the committee to help the Outward Bound Sea School by purchasing, fitting out and chartering to them for a nominal sum the auxiliary ketch **Warspite.**

January to March, 1963

The largest vessel ever to enter the Mersey, the Liberian tanker **Frisia**, 85,569 tons deadweight, owned by Universe Tankships Inc., berthed at the Tranmere Oil Terminal in November. On voyage charter to Shell, she brought 81,355 tons of Kuwait oil, the largest cargo of this type ever brought to the U.K.

It is a sad fact that in recent years the number of passenger liners regularly sailing from the port of Liverpool has been steadily declining. Today for instance only two passenger liners of the Cunard Steamship Company sail regularly from the port. There are three 'Empress" liners maintaining the Canadian Pacific service to Canada, three Elder Dempster mail liners to West Africa, while passenger services to South America are represented by the Pacific Steam Navigation Company's **Reine del Mar** and the Booth liners **Anselm** and **Hubert.** That, together with the fine motorships operating the Anchor Line's Indian service and certain ships of the Blue Funnel Line carrying more than the customary 12 passengers, just about summarises the passenger services that still sail from Liverpool, a port that at the turn of the century could claim to be one of the busiest ocean passenger terminals in the world.

Many were sad and indeed dismayed at the news which broke early in November that the Liverpool and North Wales Steamship Co. Ltd. was to cease operations. For 141 years the company and its predecessors had operated services between the Mersey and the North Wales coast and the popular passenger steamers **St. Tudno** and **St. Seriol**, which latterly sailed from Liverpool to Llandudno and Menai Bridge each summer season are undoubtably going to be sadly missed. After a succession of bad seasons, the sight of **St. Seriol** laid up in Birkenhead throughout last summer, was clearly the beginning of the end. Towards the end of October she was sold to the Belgian breakers Van Heyghen Freres, Ghent and left the Mersey in tow of the Dutch tug **Ebro** on November 13. **St. Seriol**, 1,586 gross tons, was built by the Fairfield Shipbuilding and Engineering Co. Ltd., Govan and completed in 1931.

Since the inauguration by Lykes Bros. Steamship Co. Inc. in 1958 of a shipbuilding programme aimed at replacing every ship in the company's fleet over a period of 13 years, 14 new ships have been delivered with 9 more in various stages of construction. In addition, tenders have just been opened covering the building of the first four of a class of 12 ships of a new design, to be known as the Lykes "Far East Clippers". All of the original fleet however, since they are of wartime standard design, could be said to be approaching the end of their useful lives simultaneously and are facing block obsolescence. Between 1955 and 1957 the only development which occurred in the Lykes fleet was that the company undertook operation of the free-piston gas turbine ship **William Patterson** under a general agency agreement with the U.S. Maritime Administration, one of four 'Liberty' ships selected for experimental engine replacement. She operated on trans-Atlantic voyages but, after the necessary data was obtained, she was laid up as this propulsion system was not considered an improvement. [Ed. note: a similar date and experience to that of Shell's gas turbine powered **Auris** which operated 1955 to 1960].

Liverpool and West Africa : twilight of an individual trade

a summary of the talk given to the Society on 20th October, 2016

by John Goble

British sea trade with West Africa has been principally associated with Liverpool since the 18th Century and it was always an individual one. In 1965 it was at its post-war zenith yet it had all but disappeared just a quarter century later along with some well-known British and West African shipping companies. What made it such a distinctive trade and why did it so suddenly decline ?

The trade's notable features were the very large number of ports served, the security and cargo care challenges, the draught limitations of the creek ports and the continuing employment of the famous Kroomen to assist in the working of the ship along the coast.

The U.K. West Africa Lines (UKWAL) conference offered calls (for either unloading or loading or both) of varying frequency at just over forty ports in the NE Atlantic islands and the African seaboard from Morocco to Angola. A typical voyage itinerary that visited both sides of the Equator might visit 22 ports in 80 days with just 34 of those days spent at sea. The West African climate was challenging, especially during the lengthy rainy seasons but the principal problem was the short sea passage of only 8-10 days between Europe and the first or last port on the Coast. This meant that the ambient temperatures of the cargo spaces and the ship's surroundings needed to be very quickly equalised. To achieve this, ventilation of the under deck compartments was totally restricted southbound and actively encouraged northbound if the inevitable condensation (termed 'sweat') was not to damage the cargoes.

Security of the cargo was a constant preoccupation. Southbound, they were very prone to pilferage, a process that sadly began in Liverpool's docks. Initially this was minor crime but as the countries of West Africa succumbed to civil disorder it grew to become both organised and routinely violent. The ship itself later became the focus of criminal attention. Thefts of mooring ropes, stores, light fittings and even firefighting and lifesaving equipment meant that anything of value not immediately required was kept under lock and key. Travel barriers were important on a coast that had very few natural ports. The ship's dimensions were governed by the limitations on length and draught imposed by the creeks of the Niger Delta whilst the many anchorage ports were strewn with underwater obstacles. In response to many of these restrictions it was no surprise that the employment of Kroomen to assist in the working of the ship formed a vital element of the voyage. Kru, or Kroomen, had been helping to work ships along the Coast since the sailing-ship era but, after the achievement of independence by the former colonial territories, new labour laws restricted their use to deck maintenance work. However their cargo-handling skills were still sharp enough to allow them to often tidy up or generally improve work

supplied to the ship by many of these new indigenous contractors. When not attacking that old enemy, rust, they tended the many changes of derrick rig and generally kept the working areas clean and tidy. This allowed the regular sailors to maintain their usual harbour tasks such as overside painting uninterrupted.

Outward cargoes to West Africa from Liverpool always comprised large tonnages of small white linen bags of Cheshire salt. Guinness, whether bottled or in bulk tanks was another staple. The historic skills of the port's stevedores were vital to provide the tight, but efficiently separated cargo by destination and stowage of a comprehensive range of manufactured products. Inward cargoes were principally of tropical timbers in many formats ranging from wet logs straight from the forest to boxed manufactured furniture parts. Cocoa, vegetable oils and rubber were the next most important elements in a long list that ended with hides, hooves and horns. The latter were habitually infested with tropical pests that were eagerly identified on their arrival in Liverpool by a large Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries deputation from their Bromborough base.

Unfortunately the era of West African independence was only a few years old when the first military coup, in the largest and most prosperous country, Nigeria, took place in 1965. Crude oil had become the country's principal export earner, agriculture suffered as rural populations headed for cities and the new nation's wealth was inefficiently and unfairly distributed. Ghana also suffered economic mismanagement and even the former French colonies, always more directly controlled from Paris, seemed to be following the same path. For ships loading in Liverpool this instability along the entire length of West Africa was reflected in greatly reduced cargo destination offerings. A sharp drop in cargo volume was also caused by the continuing poor exporting record of British manufacturing. Salt and Guinness continued to sell well but both the range of cargo items and the number of traditional British customers were soon in decline. The introduction of the sea container was delayed by about a decade after other ocean routes since the cargoes and the ports of the West African trade were either ill-suited or ill-prepared for this significant change. It was the early 1980s before UKWAL members owned ships with any designed container capacity. Even when they did, the ship types chosen were intended for the initial 8-foot high ocean container whose ISO standard by then had risen 6 inches. This caused a loss of under deck capacity, spaces that were still required for significant volumes of non-containerised cargo.

By the late 1980s, the considerable capital requirements for these new ships and the dismal prospect of making significant profits in a contracting market were signalling that withdrawals from the trade were inevitable. Elder Dempsters, now fully integrated into the Ocean Group, had the largest loss of vessels from the UKWAL Conference. Ocean was concentrating on other sea trades and had entered the bulk carrier and large tanker market. Palm Line's ultimate owner, Unilever, was seeking to abandon its vertical integration model

of owning the whole supply chain whilst its principal subsidiary, United Africa Company, was struggling to remain profitable ashore in West African countries. Different problems also faced their government-owned partners. The Nigerian Government did allocate the capital for a very large fleet replacement programme. However the poor handling of revenues and internal corruptions and inefficiencies meant that most of these ships were soon in discreet lay-up in Nigeria or were avoiding all European ports where they might fall into the hands of the Admiralty Marshal acting to obtain overdue debt repayments. Ghana's fleet fell to just four vessels since their government was also being forced into severe economic restraints.

Today's still important sea trade to West Africa from Liverpool is practically invisible, carried in anonymous containers on unfamiliar ships. Whilst the slave trade of Liverpool ships and merchants is still actively remembered with shame, the far greater peaceful sea commerce that both built and supported the conventional economies of 'the Coast' is being allowed to fade from public memory. Thankfully the LNRS is now an active participant in the 'Homeward Bound' project that seeks to correct that shortcoming in our maritime history.

Elder Dempster's **OBUASI** sailing up the Congo

Elder Dempster's **SWEDRU** loading logs, anchored off Sinoe in Liberia

MONDAY MEETINGS

Members meet at the Archives and Library of the Merseyside Maritime Museum on Mondays as follows:

March	Mondays	6th, 13th, 20th, 27th
April		3rd, 10th, 24th
May		8th, 15th, 22nd
June		5th, 12th, 19th, 26th

OBITUARY

Mr. J.E. (Jim) Cowden

It is with sadness that we advise of the death, on November 14 at the age of 86 years of Mr. James Cowden. He had been enthusiastically interested in all things maritime from his childhood in Liverpool. He joined Elder Dempster as a Junior in 1944 and, four years later, transferred to the sea-going staff. He served aboard ships trading on most of the Company's routes, as well as spells on secondment to Head Office and to West African and Continental agencies. His service afloat, as Purser, included time aboard all three post-war mail ships and he had the distinction of being one of only two persons to serve on both the maiden and final voyage of the Royal Mail motorship **Apapa**. He also sailed under four Commodores of Elder Dempster Lines.

Following his seagoing service he was appointed Assistant Secretary of the United Kingdom, West Africa Lines Conference, of which Elder Dempster Lines, Guinea Gulf Line and Palm Line, were the sole British members. Jim retired in 1983 after almost 40 years continuous service.

He has written many articles on ships and shipping for nautical journals included *Sea Breezes*, the Elder Dempster house journal *Sea*, Palm Line's *Bulletin*, and for the Canadian Nautical Research Society. He was also a regular contributor to the Elder Dempster Pensioners Newsletter, and also, on behalf of Ocean Transport and Trading plc. dealt with enquiries they received concerning their fleet past and present. Jim was also author of two books:

The Course I Steered 1939 - 1948 (Published privately)
The Price of Peace (Elder Dempster 1939 - 1945)

and also co-author, with fellow Society member John Duffy of *The Elder Dempster Fleet History 1852–1985*. Mallett and Bell. The largest fleet history of its type at that time.

Jim became a member of the Society in 1983 and quickly became a regular and major contributor, serving as a Council member for many years and Chairman from 1987 to 1996. He gave numerous talks to the Society, and between 1983 and 2010 had a total of twenty-eight articles published in our Bulletin.

M.V. **Llangibby Castle**

by Glyn L Evans

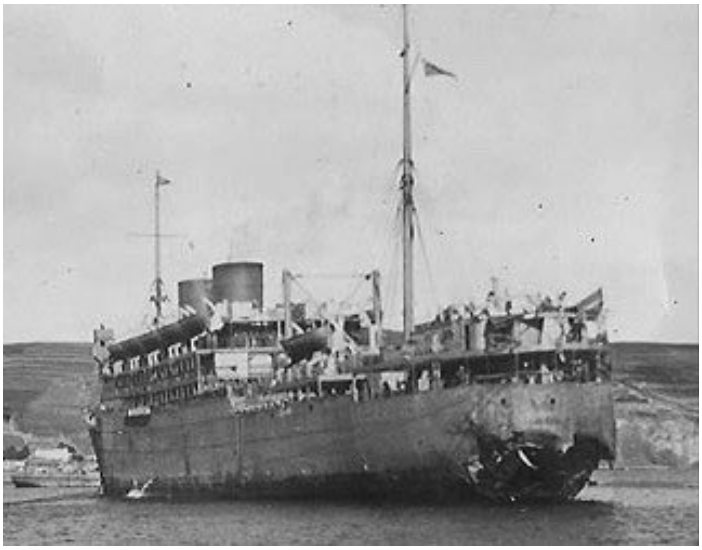
Many heraldic devices, animal, human and mythological, have been used as supporters of armorial shields and crests; perhaps the best known as a supporting two-some being the Lion and the Unicorn. In maritime heraldry, not unnaturally, we find sea creatures featured, notably dolphins, mermaids, Father Neptune and, in the case of the arms of The Honourable Company of Master Mariners, seahorses. A device or supporter in heraldic terms is said to be "proper" when shown in natural colour or form, often a symbolic reference to an episode in the bearer's history. An example of this appears in the coat of arms of Baroness Margaret Thatcher, an overt reference to the part played by the Royal and Merchant Navy during the battle for the Falkland Islands – a defining episode during her term of office as British Prime Minister.

On a scale less grand, and not subject to the strictures of the College of Arms, are the house flags of shipping companies that, along with their distinctive funnel markings, make a vessel's ownership instantly recognisable. With many passengers wishing to acquire a souvenir of their stay on board, it was becoming a costly business for the ship-owner, as the ship's supply of crested crockery and cutlery was having to be topped up at the end of each voyage. To remove, or at least, to reduce the temptation through the provision of a cheaper alternative, shipping companies began to offer purpose-made crested souvenirs for sale on board, often in the form of a pin badge or brooch featuring the Company's house flag and the ship's name. As a good luck measure, these might be mounted on a horseshoe or supported on another such symbol, a wishbone. Into my possession has lately come one such badge, that of the Union Castle Line's motor vessel **Llangibby Castle**. Above the ship's name is the Company house flag, both supported on a wishbone, which set me to wondering if that particular supporter upheld its promise.

Built at Harland & Wolff's Govan yard, Glasgow in 1929, **Llangibby Castle** sailed on Union Castle Line's Round Africa service until July 1940 when she was requisitioned as a troop transport, initially on much the same run. Having survived the threat of the U-boat infested waters of the Western Approaches, it was to be in port that her luck would first be put to the test. During the night bombing of Merseyside on 20th, 21st and 22nd December 1940 one ship, **Silvio**, was sunk and nineteen others seriously damaged, including **Llangibby Castle**. From the same raids, mines in the River Mersey claimed **Innisfallen** as a total loss and five other ships were damaged. Worse was yet to come.

On 16th January 1942, **Llangibby Castle**, under her master, Ronald Frederick Bayer, in Convoy WS-15, was torpedoed north of the Azores, in position 46.04 North 19.06 West. Taking advantage of a strong south-westerly gale and heavy seas, Lieutenant-Commander Siegfried von Forstner's attack in **U-402** caused serious damage to the ship's stern, blowing away her rudder and the after gun but, amazingly, leaving the twin propellers intact and operational. Twenty six men on board were killed in the attack and a further four wounded. At a reduced speed of 9 knots (her service speed was 14.5 knots) and fighting off attacks by German aircraft, she reached the safety of Horta in the Azores. There, under Portugal's neutrality laws, she was allowed fourteen days to effect temporary repairs before, with 1,500 troops still on board, she set sail for Gibraltar.

For this five day voyage **Llangibby Castle** was escorted by a tug and three Royal Navy destroyers, HMS **Westcott**, HMS **Croome** and HMS **Exmoor.** Despite being shadowed by U-boats, she survived the voyage, arriving under tow of the tug at Gibraltar where the troops must have been most grateful to disembark. One of the shadowing U-boats was not so lucky; **U-581** (Pfeifer) was sunk by HMS **Westcott** under Commander I. H. Bockett-Pugh RN. Bockett-Pugh joined the Royal Navy in 1918 and, from October 1940 to February 1941, had been in command of the Grimsby class sloop HMS **Wellington**. For his services during the war, which included close escort to the Pedestal Convoy, he was awarded the DSO with two bars and was also mentioned in despatches. **Llangibby Castle**, after two months at Gibraltar and still rudderless, left under escort for the UK as part of a slow convoy for the Clyde. On her safe arrival there she had sailed a total of 3,400 miles in her damaged condition, relying on her engines alone for



Showing damage to stern, and without rudder

steering. For this feat of seamanship her master, R F Bayer, was awarded the CBE, while her Chief Officer and Chief Engineer were both awarded the OBE.

Following repairs on the Clyde, **Llangibby Castle** continued to ply her trade as a troop transport, riding her luck until 8th November 1942 when, taking part in Operation Torch, the Allied landings in North Africa, she was hit by an 8" shell from a Vichy French shore battery off Oran, which killed the ship's First Electrician, N H Moore. In 1943 at Gibraltar, during preparations for the Italian landings, her bow was damaged, necessitating her return to the UK for repairs. The opportunity was taken then to convert her to a Landing Craft Infantry (LCI) in which role, on 6th June 1944, she landed Canadian troops at Corseilles. Ten of her eighteen landing craft were swamped on returning from the beaches with the loss of twelve men. She went on to land troops at Omaha and Utah beaches and at Le Havre, in all over seventy crossings and carrying over 100,000 troops.

Llangibby Castle was converted back to a troop transport in 1945 for duties in the Far East, then in 1946 made three repatriation voyages with West Indian troops from Burma and India. Finally, in 1947, she was returned to Union Castle Line and, after a refit, resumed her normal round Africa service. One passenger on a subsequent voyage, perhaps not sporting his lucky wishbone pin badge, was Robert McGowan Barrington-Ward, Editor of The Times newspaper, who died on board the ship in 1948 at Dar-es-Salaam. In June 1954 **Llangibby Castle** was sold for breaking up at Newport in the County of Monmouthshire; ironic perhaps since, on the day of her launch twenty five years earlier, she had taken her name from Llangybi Castle, whose ruins lie just fifteen miles away from Newport, in that same County.

Llangibby Castle in better times.

A Visual Account of the Construction of S.S. Queen Elizabeth 2

A Summary of the Talk to the Society on 15 December, 2016 by Brian Price

by the Editor

Brian Price served at sea for 44 years, mainly with Cunard, and was the longest serving Cruise Director aboard the QE2. This presentation used Cunard official slides and was put together with the help of navigating, engineer and electrical officers, who served aboard her, for delivery to her on-board passengers.

The **QE2** herself needs little introduction and is probably the most “written about” ship known. Originally designated Q4 (a previous ship design Q3 had been abandoned due to falling passenger revenues on the North Atlantic), she was to be a three-class liner. However, looking to s.s. **France**, designs were changed to make Q4 a two-class liner that could be modified into a single-class cruise ship; transatlantic line voyages in the summer would be two-class, while warmer water cruises in the winter would be single-class.

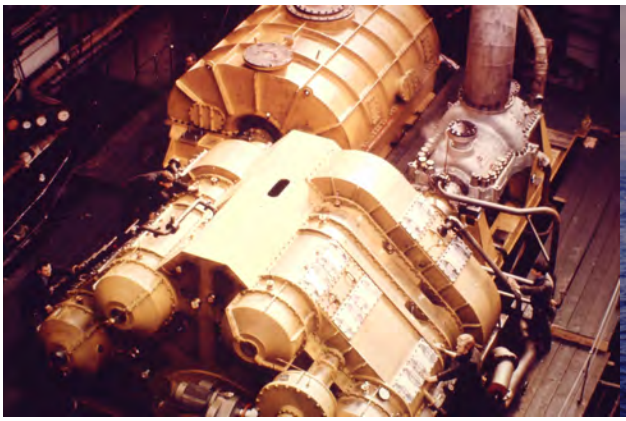
Queen Elizabeth 2 was ordered in 1964 from John Brown and Company (Upper Clyde Shipbuilders), Clydebank, her keel was laid down on 5 July 1965, as hull number 736, and she was launched by H.M. Queen Elizabeth II on 20 September, 1967. Completed, she commenced sea trials on 26 November, 1968 and, after a shakedown cruise to Las Palmas, sailed on her maiden voyage from Southampton to New York on 2 May, 1969.

With her dimensions of a length of 963 ft., beam 105 ft. and draft 32 ft. her gross tonnage was 70,327. With a total of 9 decks she could carry some 1,800 passengers and a crew of 1,000. Initially she was powered by a steam turbine propulsion system utilising three Foster Wheeler E.S.D II boilers, which provided steam for the two Brown-Pametrada turbines. The turbines were rated with a maximum power output figure of 110,000 shaft horsepower (normally operating at 94,000 hp) and were coupled to two six-bladed fixed-pitch propellers.

During a major refit at Bremerhaven in 1986 to 1987, the entire steam plant was removed and replaced by diesel-electric configuration. She was fitted with nine MAN L58/64 nine-cylinder, medium-speed diesel engines, each weighing approximately 120 tons, and each engine driving a generator. This electrical plant, in addition to powering the ship's auxiliary and hotel services through transformers, drove the two main propulsion motors, one on each propeller shaft. These motors were nine metres in diameter and weighed more than 400 tons each. The ship's service speed of 28.5 knots (52.8 km/h) was maintained using only seven of the diesel-electric sets. Her maximum power output was now increased by 20,000 to 130,000 s.h.p. Using the same Bunker C fuel, the new configuration yielded a 35% fuel saving over the previous system. During the re-engining process, her funnel was replaced by a wider one to accommodate the exhaust pipes for the diesel engines. The original fixed-pitch propellers were replaced with variable-pitch.

That iconic bow

The 'yacht like' hull awaiting launch day



One of the turbine sets; high pressure rear right, low pressure rear left and reduction gearing to front.

Trials in the Clyde in November 1968, note the original funnel colouring

Her extremely eventful career is well documented elsewhere and 1996 during her twentieth world cruise she completed her four millionth mile and had sailed the equivalent of 185 times around the planet and had carried over two million passengers. In 2004 she became Cunard's longest serving express liner, surpassing the RMS **Aquitania**'s 35 years, and the following year became the longest serving Cunarder ever, surpassing the RMS **Scythia**'s record.

However In June 2007 it was announced by Cunard that **QE2** had been purchased by the Dubai investment company Istithmar. Her retirement in part was forced by the oncoming implementation of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) regulations, which would have forced large and expensive structural changes to have been implemented to the ship. Her final voyage from Southampton to Dubai began on 11 November 2008, arriving on 26 November in a flotilla of 60 smaller

vessels, led by MY **Dubai**, the personal yacht of Sheikh Mohammed, ruler of Dubai. She was greeted with a fly-past from an Emirates Airbus A380 jet and a huge fireworks display, while thousands of people gathered at the Mina Rashid, waving the flags of the United Kingdom and the United Arab Emirates. Since her arrival in Dubai **QE2** has remained moored at Port Rashid. Shortly after her final passengers were disembarked, she was moved forward to the cargo area of the port, to free up the passenger terminal for other cruise vessels.

Within months the Global Economic Crisis of 2008 hit, throughout the world many plans were delayed and abandoned and **QE2** herself has remained moored at Port Rashid awaiting a decision on her future. For the first four years she was maintained in a seaworthy condition generating her own power; each of her nine diesel generators were turned over and used to power the ship in rotation. A live-in crew of approximately 50 maintained her to a high standard because Istithmar were considering plans which may have involved the ship sailing to an alternative location under her own power.

During the ensuing years there have been rumours of alternative plans and her possible relocation to ports as diverse as Cape Town, London, Singapore, Clydebank, Japan, Liverpool and Fremantle. She still remains berthed at Port Mina Rashid in Dubai and, in summer 2016 her lifeboats were lowered and stored nearby, the lifeboat davits also removed. There is still no clarity as to her future.

General Average and its application with regard to the explosion on board the **CMA Djakarta**

From a presentation to the Society on the 17 November 2016
by LNRS member Gordon Line
Summarised by the Editor

Former Master Mariner and retired Marine Surveyor, Gordon Line, told a fascinating story of an explosion on board the container ship **CMA Djakarta** and how the application of the ancient maritime principle of 'General Average' was applied to the various losses sustained.

General Average is a legal principle of maritime law which has been traced back to writings in Rhodes dated 800 B.C. It occurs when a voluntary sacrifice is made to safeguard the vessel, cargo or crew from a common peril, such as – grounding, stranding, fire, explosion, shift of cargo, collision, heavy weather or mechanical breakdown. The first codification of modern General Average was the York–Antwerp Rules of 1890.

If a sacrifice and subsequent salvage operation is successful (and to avoid quarrelling that would waste valuable time), there arose the equitable practice

whereby all the merchants whose cargo was landed in a safe and sound condition would be called upon to contribute a portion of the value of their goods to those who had suffered loss.

CMA Djakarta was built at the Viktor Lenak Shipyard in Rijeka, Croatia for CMA CGM S.A., the French container and shipping company which is the third largest container company in the world, her keel being laid in 1998. The vessel was constructed as a geared container vessel, with five hatches and holds forward of the accomodation and engine room; her specification being:

IMO No.	9143245
Gross tonnage	23,897
Deadweight	30,241
Length overall	188.05m.
Service speed	14 knots (max. 16 knots)
Gear	3 x 45 tonne (SWL) cranes
Capacity	836t.e.u. below deck, 1,266 on deck (2,102 comb)

Her maiden voyage commenced at the Marshaslok Container Terminal (Malta), which is the Mediterranean hub port for the line. Thereafter the vessel commenced a westbound transit of the world, passing through Europe, eastern ports of North America, South America, the west coast of North America, the Far East and Asia; planning to complete the voyage back in Malta. Following her transit of the Suez Canal, the vessel called in at the Damietta Container Terminal (Egypt, to the west of Port Said) for planned container operations. There were 944 containers on board the vessel at this time. She departed that port in the early hours of 9th July, bound for Marshaslok. Late in the evening of the same day, the lookout on the forecastle head reported smelling smoke. Shortly thereafter there was a large explosion on deck at the forward end of No. 5 hold, followed by fire. The ship's crew immediately commenced fighting the fire.

With the continued expansion of the fire and further explosions on No. 4 and 5 hatches - and after several hours of fire fighting - the crew were forced back into the accomodation. By this time the paint on the front of the accomodation block was blistering and plastic mouldings on the inner side of the steelwork were melting. At this juncture the flames were recorded as being about 150 feet (47 metres) high. At this point the Master sent out a distress message, shut the vessel down and abandoned ship.

The crew were picked up the following day by a passing Italian destroyer bound for Haifa. The vessel was then adrift in the Mediterranean Sea, at the mercy of the fire, wind and current approximately 100 nautical miles west of Alexandria.

We now turn to the Smit Tak Salvage Company, a Dutch company based in Rotterdam, who have interests in transportation, heavy lift work, terminals and best known for their world-wide salvage expertise.

Alongside in Valetta showing views from the monkey island
To port and to starboard

The so called "leaning tower of Pisa".

A view from No. 4 hold

←

and from inboard

→

The same containers secured for passage to Croatia. Note that they do not bend when lowered

Jumbled containers on the starboard side of No. 5

All of the above pictures are courtesy Gordon Line

At 0200 hours on 10th July, 1999 the on-duty personnel in Rotterdam heard the distress message from the **CMA Djakarta** and immediately deployed a salvage team with fire-fighting equipment to Sitia, Crete, which they estimated was close to where the casualty was drifting. Two days later the ship was reported to have drifted aground about two miles off the Egyptian coast near Mat Madrook, approximately 100 nautical miles west of Alexandria.

On day 4, the Smit Tak team located and boarded the vessel; immediately commencing fire-fighting operations. The Egyptian authorities were also at the scene dropping water onto the vessel from a helicopter.

By this time Smit Tak had been in contact with the vessel owners and signed a Lloyd's Open Form Salvage Agreement (No cure - No pay) with them, despite the involvement of the Egyptians. The ship's manifest was obtained from the owners (albeit not complete), when it was discovered that there was Aluminium Phosphate in containers stowed on No. 1 hatch. This is a hazardous substance - IMCO 5.1, which could explode in contact with water. The Egyptians were stopped from further dumping of water onto the vessel.

Over the next five days the Smit Tak team continued their fire fighting operations and on the ninth day succeeded in extinguishing all of the fires which embraced Nos. 3, 4 and 5 holds. Whilst onboard the vessel it was found that the centre hatch cover on No. 5 had totally collapsed into the hold - and bilge soundings confirmed the presence of copious quantities of water in these holds. Furthermore the fuel tanks beneath had been ruptured. The bilge soundings also confirmed the presence of fire fighting water in hold Nos. 2 and 3. In view of the presence of oil in at least one of the holds, it was not possible, for environmental reasons, to pump out any of the holds.

It was then planned to tow the vessel initially to Malta to undertake limited discharge of sound containers and undertake a survey of both the vessel and other containers. The vessel would then return to Rijeka to complete repairs. But the Egyptian authorities had other ideas and arrested the vessel; and it was another four weeks before she was released, after the owners had paid them in excess of US$ 2 million!!!

Prior to arrival of the vessel at Malta it had been agreed with the Maltese authorities that all sound containers could be discharged and forwarded on. However, damaged containers, their cargoes and other fire damaged and extraneous matter could be temporarily landed for inspection, but then reloaded for subsequent disposal in Croatia. As for the fire fighting water, the arrangements were for this to be pumped out of the holds for processing on arrival at Malta. These were fully understandable requirements from the Maltese, because, as an island, high volumes of "imported waste material" could not be accepted. Numerous surveyors eagerly awaited the vessel's arrival, ready to commence their work. Whilst waiting, it should be said that the good food and Hopleaf Bitter took the edge off the delay. Several days later the vessel was towed to Valetta Shipyard where discharge operations were undertaken.

By September all container and vessel surveys had been completed, and the damaged containers and other extraneous matter had been loaded back into the vessel's holds. Prior to the tow to Rijeka, the "leaning tower of Pisa" containers were lowered onto their sides and secured across No. 5 for safety purposes.

Once alongside at Rijeka, the damaged containers were discharged and, following evaluation of their contents and condition, were removed to a landfill site. During this operation one container said to contain "empty gas cylinders", on inspection the surveyors were horrified to discover that the cylinders actually contained "flammable gas" (IMDG 2.3). Had this exploded it is highly likely that the vessel would have sunk, with untold environmental consequences. Needless to say the cargo insurers did not pay out on this particular consignment.

In the opinion of the fire expert surveyor, the most likely cause of the original explosion was a container of Calcium Hypochloride (IMDG 4.1 - Flammable Solid) in powder form - Bleaching Powder to us. This had been shipped in 45 gallon drums with removable lids; it is the contention of the fire expert that there was a powder residue on the outside of the drums and the natural vibration of the ship at sea resulted in the powder becoming heated, and then igniting. As there were neighbouring containers of paper, rubber, timber, plastic, cloth etc., and more critically Flammable Liquids (IMDG 3) just a few bays away, it was inevitable that the inferno developed as it did.

And what became of the **CMA Djakarta**? At completion of the salvage operation in Rijeka, the vessel entered the same dry-dock in which she was built less than one year previously. Here No. 4 and 5 holds were cropped out and replaced with a new hull section. Following refurbishment, the vessel returned to long time charter with CMA/CGM under the name **Classica**.

[Ed. Note:- in early 2016, still named **Classica** but now under the flag of Antigua Barbuda, she arrived at Alang for scrapping.]

Just a few!

- Venison for dinner again. Oh dear!
- I tried to catch some fog, but I mist
- They told me I had Type A blood, but it was a Typo
- I know a guy who's addicted to brake fluid, he says he can stop any time
- Why were the Indians here first. They had reservations
- I didn't like my beard at first. Then it grew on me

Fantôme II

by the Editor

The square rigger **Belem** was built by Chantiers Dubigeon at Nantes (Chantenay-sur-Loire), launched on 10 June, 1896, and commenced her maiden voyage on 31 July, 1896 to Montevideo and Belém, Brasil - after which port she was originally named. She operated as an unpowered square rigged cargo ship, transporting sugar from the West Indies, cocoa, and coffee from Brazil and French Guiana to Nantes, France.

In 1914 she was bought by Hugh Grosvenor, 2nd Duke of Westminster, who converted her to his private luxurious pleasure yacht, complete with two auxiliary Bolinder Diesel engines 300 HP each.

Sold again, in 1922, she became the property of the beer baron Sir Arthur Ernest Guinness, who renamed her the **Fantôme II** (French spelling), which name he had used for previous yachts. After further modifications to her rig, Guinness took the **Fantôme II** on a great cruise in 1923 with his daughters Aileen, Maureen, and Oonagh. They sailed around the world via the Panama and Suez Canals including a visit to Spitsbergen. During her approach to Yokohama harbour while sailing the Pacific Ocean the barque managed to escape another catastrophe - an earthquake which destroyed the harbour and parts of Yokohama city. On the outbreak of war in 1939, the **Fantôme II** was laid up in the roads of Cowes, Isle of Wight.

Fantôme II pictured during her world cruise

In 1951, the charitable foundation of Count Vittorio Cini, a Venetian senator, decided to create a centre intended to care for some 500 orphans of sailors, and to provide a school to offer them a general education and a training in the skills of the seaman. The Italian Navy offered the **Scilla**, an old gunboat (built 1876, and laid up since 1904) to the centre, but she was too timeworn to serve as training ship. After extensive searching, the foundation discovered the **Fantôme II,** laid up and for sale. So again she changed ownership and nationality and left for Venice where she was renamed **Giorgio-Cini** in memory of Vittorio Cini's son, killed in a plane crash in August, 1949.

Once more she underwent considerable alteration; the rigging was changed from that of a barque to a barquentine. On the deck, a big wheelhouse was built (its remains are visible on the current spardeck). The tweendeck was modified to accommodate sixty children.

Throughout the year, the **Giorgio-Cini** cruised mainly in the Adriatic Sea. On board, young men, 12 to 16 years old discovered life at sea and the sailor's work in an almost military atmosphere. By 1965, the **Giorgio-Cini** was considered too old to continue operations as a training ship in a satisfactory and safe manner. She was replaced by a vessel donated by the Italian Navy.

So, once more, she was laid up. This time at the quay on the Venetian island of San Giorgio Maggiore, the seat of the Foundation. She served temporarily as a boarding school.

In 1972, the vessel was given up free of charge by the Foundation to the Italian Military Police (the Carabinieris) who wished to have a prestigious vessel and who were ready to make the necessary investment in the old ship. The **Giorgi-Cini** left for the shipyard, Cantieri Navali e pharmacy Meccaniche di Venezia (CNOMV). Both Bollinder engines dating from the First World War were replaced by two 300-horse power Fiat engines. The rigging was restored into a full-rigged one and the wooden top masts was changed for steel masts. Sadly in 1976, the Carabinieris had exhausted their available funds and the ship became the property of the shipyard, in lieu of unpaid invoices of the yard, who hoped to resell her to cover their losses.

In 1977, a Venetian surgeon, Renato Gambier, told his French friend, the doctor Luc-Olivier Gosse, that the **Giorgio-Cini** was for sale. M. Gosse, a lover of the things of the sea, had discovered the ship during holidays in Venice in 1970. He asked and obtained permission of the Foundation Cini to visit the beautiful ship at San Giorgo, later saying: "suddenly I discovered on the bulkhead a coppered frame round as a porthole, protecting a painting executed straight on the panel. The drawing, a bit naive, represented a three-masted vessel. In its top a name "Belem", lower down another name, "Nantes". I was on board one of the last ocean-going sailing ships of the French merchant navy."

Having news of the pending sale, Luc-Olivier Gosse immediately called the Association pour la Sauvegarde et la Conservation des Anciens Navires Français (Association for the Safeguarding and Preservation of former French ships) created by Jean-Pierre Debbane, Jean Randier and Bernard Tarazzi. On October 30th, 1977, a delegation of the association came to visit the **Giorgio-Cini** in the yard at Venice and to meet the director of the shipyard, Antonio Marceglia. The selling price, 5 million francs, discouraged somewhat the members of the French delegation, but at their return, they began to search for financial backing. The Ministry of Defence promised a grant as well as the Ministry of Transport and the Secrétariat Général à la Marine Marchande (General Secretariat to the Merchant Navy). It was far from being enough. An appeal for donations was launched to the general public, but was unsuccessful.

At the same time, a Venetian association was founded with the aim of buying back the **Giorgio-Cini** which had become a much appreciated part of the landscape of the laguna. It was a serious competition for the Frenchmen, especially since an Italian bank declared itself ready to finance the project.

It was not until 1979, that the so awaited patron made his appearance: the Union Nationale des Caisses d'Épargne (National Union of Savings banks of France) and two men, Jérôme Pichard, the delegate general of the Union, and Mr. de Maulde, the director of Treasury.

On January 27th, 1979, Jérôme Pichard, Luc-Olivier Gosse, Jean-Pierre Debbane and the engineer Kerlerent went to the shipyard in Venice. A long negotiation began with Antonio Marceglia at the conclusion of which the price was lowered by 500,000 francs. So, the **Giorgio-Cini** is sold for 4.5 million francs. A combined team from the French Navy and the Direction des Constructions et Armes Navales (DCAN) examined the condition of the ship. Some additional work on the hull was arranged for at the shipyard and the name changed, from the **Giorgio Cini**, to the **Belem** of Nantes once again. On August 15th, 1979 she was back at sea, under tow by the French Navy's tugboat, the **Actif**, commanded by Captain Nivault, her destination, Toulon; arriving ten days later.

On September 5th, the deep sea tug the **Éléphant** towed her to Brest, arriving on September 17th. At the Pointe Saint Mathieu she joined the training schooners of the Navy, the **Étoile** and her sister ship the **Belle-Poule** (replicas of French sailing fishing boats used in the distant Icelandic waters), the cutter **Mutin** and the launch of the maritime admiral-prefect of Brest. The **Belem** was again safe and secure in the natural harbour.

To secure the future of the vessel, a foundation trust was established in March, 1980. It was chaired by Jérôme Pichard, delegate general of the Union Nationale des Caisses d'Épargne of France (UNCEF). Its Trustees were recruited among the various bodies ready to contribute to the protection of the ship (UNCEF, Ministries, Navy, etc.). The UNCEF donated her to the new Foundation.

The Navy, which had sent a technical mission to Venice and which had arranged and funded her return to Brest, were very keen to expand their fleet by such prestigious newcomer as the **Belem**. They planned that, during summer months, she would be leased by the Caisses d'Épargne to welcome civil trainees. But the initial cost estimate of about 6 million francs far exceeded their budget. Without giving up its participation in the Foundation, the French Navy had to accept a more modest role. (It will participate for a long period in the constitution of her crew by allocating two sailors from the National Service. The end of the mandatory military service has terminated this practice.)

The Foundation made the brave decision that the **Belem** be prepared to resume her sail training career, rather than to become a museum ship permanently alongside a quay. This was a hazardous and expensive choice on which everyone now congratulates them! And so began a long and complex programme of work, ending in February, 1981 when the task was complete.

The French Navy provided a graving dock in the Arsenal, and work began on May 5th, 1981, supervised by Jean Randier, the famous French tall ship specialist with a team from the Ateliers de La Perrière. They proceeded with

replacing the wooden masts with steel, removing the old ballast (3,800 pigs of cast iron and thirty tons of concrete in the bow for which it was necessary to use pneumatic drills). After 4 months, it was decided to transfer her to Paris where the rehabilitation program would be pursued. Such a public location was intended to increase awareness within the general public and especially the public authorities which could free the capital necessary for the completion of the project.

So on September 8th, 1981 the **Belem** was again on the move, towed by the tug **Efficace** to the capital, where she was moored at the quai de Suffren, close to the Eiffel tower, on September 14th. The new masts had arrived a short time later, by train.

The new location was an immediate success, very much helped by the press and Parisians were visiting in large numbers at weekends to view the **Belem**. During weekdays, it was tourists and school classes. A small museum was fitted out in the tween deck. As the works continued at this location she remained open to the public. Modifications included subdivision by new bulkheads with watertight doors, a sprinkler system for fire fighting and updating of the rigging, caulking, etc. The completed ship would meet the safety standards required by the French Merchant Navy and the Veritas office before being able to sail again.

The ship remained in Paris for four years and welcomed almost a half-million guests. An army of volunteers helped during the works which also included the addition of access to the tween deck on both sides and an unattractive but necessary cockpit was built on the poop. This replaced the Italian cockpit dating from the time the ship was rigged as a barquentine, which was removed by the Venitian shipyard during restoration of the rigging to a three-masted barque. It was re-located back towards the skylight with its two benches, one of the rare pieces on the bridge of the original of the ship in 1896.

In 1985, the **Belem** sailed to her home port, Nantes; and the following year crossed the Atlantic Ocean to New York, where she participated in celebrations marking the centenary of the Statue of the Liberty. 1987 was her first season of service as sail training ship and, for nine months of each year welcomes trainees curious to discover the reality of life aboard a tall ship. She also gives the opportunity for a wider audience to dream a little!

Operation of the ship, the crew and supplies are entrusted by the Foundation to the Société Morbihanaise and Nantaise de Navigation (Nantes College of Navigation). In 1996, the **Belem** celebrated her centenary, and in 2002 the **Belem** retraced her maiden voyage of 1896 to the city in Brazil which gave her her name. In 2016 she participated in the Tall Ships events at Antwerp, Lisbon, Cadiz and Corunna.

At the time of this edition going to print she is coming to the end of her winter lay-up at Bordeaux.

Current specifications of the **Belem**

Hull:

Construction	riveted steel, 11mm thickness
Length	51 m plus 7m. bowsprit
Waterline length	48m.
Beam	8.80m
Moulded depth	4.60m
Draft	3.60m
Displacement	750 tons
Ballast in hull	4,500 pig irons of 50 kg each

Rigging

Masts	steel (lower mast and topmast).
Main mast	height above waterline line 34 m.
Yards	lower in steel, top gallant and royal yards in wood.
Running rigging	220 sections, 4,500m in polyamid rope
Rigging blocks	250 mixed single, double and triple

Sails

Number of sails	22
Sail area	1000m^2 (excluding storm sail)

Propulsion and equipment

Main engines	2 diesel, John Deere 6135AFM, 575 HP each (installed February 2013)
Propellers	2 four-blade
Generators.	3 off
Fuel capacity	40 tons.
Cruising range	4,000 nautical miles or 24 days at 7 knots
Fresh water storage	20 tons, with production of 3 tons/day by diolyzer.
Deck machinery	Electric windlass, 3 hydraulic capstans (one small on each bridge wing to hoist upper yards, one large on poop, to heave hawsers during mooring operations).

Performance

Max. speed engine	8 to 9 knots.
Max. speed with sails	11 to 12 knots; 75° abeam wind capability.

Time to set all sails in good	weather conditions	30 to 40 minutes
Time to heave tight all sails	good weather conditions	50 to 60 mins.
Time to complete a tack	15 to 20 minutes depending on wind conditions.	

Normal Crew

16 men	1 captain, 1 chief officer, 2 lieutenants, 1 chief engineer, 2 cooks, 1 boatswain, 1 carpenter, 7 yardmen
Max. trainees	48 (in three watches of 16).

Rescue of XSV Birdham (M2785)

by W.G.Williamson

Early in July 1967 I had just finished my exam for the BOT Radar Maintenance Certificate, my leave was about up and I had applied to the Marconi company to get a job ashore. I received a telegram from Marconi's Glasgow office and when I phoned them they wanted me to be the Radio Officer on an iron ore ship going down to west Africa. I point blank refused to join this ship and asked, “What about my shore job?” Of course the Glasgow office knew nothing and referred me to Chelmsford Head Office. I also threatened to resign if they forced me to take the ore carrier. However on returning home, the Glasgow Office asked me if I would take a new ship out on trials on the Clyde for a couple of days. This I was very happy to do.

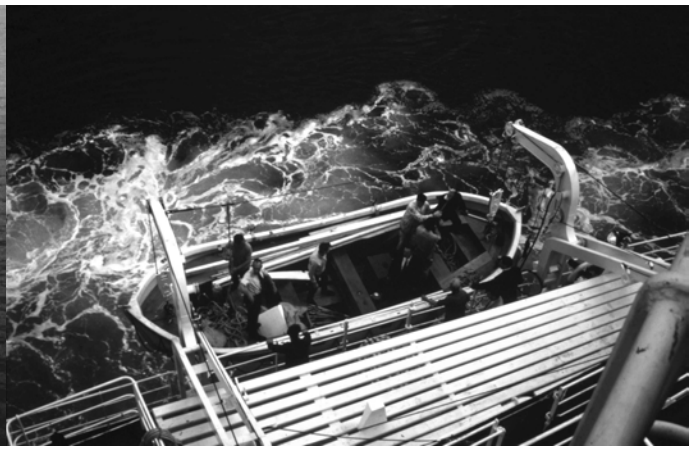
That is how I came to join the **Gallic Bridge** at the shipyard in Greenock. She was a large bulk carrier built for the Denholm Line. Once on board I found the radio room full of “modern” equipment which was unfamiliar to me. However there were two Marconi technicians on board so I was not overly disturbed. I soon found out that no accommodation had been assigned to the Radio Officer and I had nowhere to sleep. The solution was easy, a camp bed placed in the radio room that proved to be quite snug.

The trials went well as far as I remember. We calibrated the direction finder then carried out anchoring trials, maximum turning circle etc and of course the usual speed trials over the measured mile off Arran. Towards the end of these trials someone came into the radio room to tell me that a small minesweeper had been sighted which appeared to be on fire. I was ordered to inform the authorities ashore of this situation and that the **Gallic Bridge** was going to assist. Therefore I flashed up the Crusader transmitter and called Oban Radio sending out an urgency message prefacing it with the PAN PAN signal. I got an immediate response and gave Oban all the relevant information.

We headed for the stricken vessel and it didn't take long to reach her. As there was a lull in the communication, and as the radio room was manned by Dave Bonathan and Archie McLean (the Marconi technicians) I popped outside to take a few, very quick, photos. During this process I had to pass through the bridge which was full of shipyard officials and the representatives of the shipping company as well as the pilot etc. I estimated about 30 odd people on the bridge, some wearing bowler hats.

Once outside I could see a small ship with quite thick smoke coming from a couple of places on the port side and towards the stern. In the meantime a volunteer crew launched a lifeboat from our ship carrying fire extinguishers etc and set off for the minesweeper. Once alongside they assisted with fire fighting but more importantly they took off the crew. Looking at my photograph I spotted that none of the lifeboat crew was wearing a life jacket, something which would not be tolerated nowadays.

While this was going on I was asked to switch to a different RT frequency so that I could talk directly with the naval authorities in Greenock. Once contact had been established with the RN authorities I was able to give an updated situation report. During another communication lull, I was suddenly contacted by Oban Radio who told me that the Scottish Daily Express was trying to get a quote from the captain or anyone else on board. I went on the bridge and in a loud voice asked if anyone would speak to the press. The least offensive response to this request was along the lines of, "Tell them to "f*** off!" Having conveyed this information to Oban, but using more diplomatic language, Oban asked me if I would like to give a comment. I politely declined.



My next recollection of events was the minesweeper's crew being brought aboard the **Gallic Bridge.** I distinctly remember the minesweeper skipper coming into the radio room to report to the officer at Greenock Naval HQ. The poor chap was obviously in shock but managed to give a reasonable account of events on his ship. I also seem to remember that one of the crew was a woman. During all this activity I didn't get the name of the minesweeper.

What I do recall was a helicopter (a Dragonfly) with Daily Express very visible on its side coming out and photographing our ship and the minesweeper and making such a racket that you could hardly hear. With the minesweeper's crew safely on our ship we returned to the Tail of the Bank where we anchored and tenders came out to take everyone ashore. The RN officer at Greenock asked me for the address of the shipowner so that the Navy could sent them a "thank you" letter. I informed him that as the ship was on trials it was still legally owned by the shipyard and perhaps a letter to them rather than the owners would be appropriate. With a "thanks for your help," we broke off the communication and immediately after I informed Oban that the emergency was over. The really good news about this incident was that it occurred in sheltered waters on a flat calm day with excellent visibility. Thankfully none of the minesweeper's crew were injured or lost.

You might ask, what happened to all the “do not talk to the press” stuff? Well, as we approached the jetty to disembark the tender at Greenock, I noticed it was full of newspaper reporters and cameramen. The bowler-hatted brigade who were quick to kick me off the bridge were equally as quick to describe in great detail how they, at great risk to themselves, had saved the day. It was only the following morning, back home reading the newspapers that I found out that we had rescued the **Birdham**. I was more interested in a telegram that had arrived informing me that I had been appointed to the shore staff at Marconi's Liverpool Depot.

I had more or less forgotten about this incident until my friend David White gave a presentation on minesweepers when he showed an illustration of a Ham class inshore minesweeper. Of course I immediately recognised it as being similar to the one our ship had rescued. This in turn led to me digging out some old slides which I scanned. I also researched the **Birdham** story and found that she was part of the RNXS (Royal Naval Auxiliary Service). This was a part-time service manned by civilians. She had suffered the fire when returning to the Clyde from a training exercise.

This happened off Lochranza on the Island of Arran and the Campbeltown lifeboat was alerted. The lifeboat then called in to Lochranza take the part-time Arran Fire Brigade on board. They had all been out on the golf course enjoying the sunny weather! I also learned that the RN had sent out a helicopter, so maybe my memory of the Daily Express chopper was wrong.

I was delighted to learn that the skipper of the **Birdham**, Ian Crosbie, was later awarded an MBE for Gallantry. The London Gazette for July 1968 reads as follows:

Ian CROSBIE, Section Naval Auxiliary Officer, R.N. Auxiliary Service.

*Mr. Crosbie was Skipper of the XSV **Birdham** during a training cruise when an electrical fire started in the engine room. Mr. Crosbie called a ship to his assistance and this vessel took off those members of **Birdham's** crew who were not required to fight the fire. Mr. Crosbie and four crew members then continued for four hours fighting the fire which was finally brought under control. The **Birdham** was then taken in tow and brought into Greenock eight hours after the fire had started. Mr. Crosbie displayed considerable courage in his handling of the fire in XSV **Birdham**, which is a wooden ship and where there was a serious danger of fuel explosion. He put himself at risk, saved his ship and brought the vessel safely to port.*

I now realise that the man I had assumed was the skipper must have been one of the crew. Memories of events that happened nearly fifty years ago are a bit hazy, but I'm still quite proud of the small part I played in the rescue. The **Birdham** was repaired and continued in use with the RNXS until these craft were replaced.

Gallic Bridge was 37,419grt., 75,305dwt Length 805ft., beam 106ft. & draft 45ft. She was broken up at Alang in May, 1987

The passenger steamer ss **Warrimoo**

The Editor

The passenger steamer SS **Warrimoo** was quietly knifing her way through the waters of the mid-Pacific on passage from Vancouver to Australia. The navigator had just finished working out a star fix and brought the master, Captain John Phillips, the result.

The **Warrimoo**'s position was LAT 0º 31' N and LON 179º 30' W. The date was 31 December 1899. "Know what this means?" First Mate Payton broke in, "We're only a few miles from the intersection of the Equator and the International Date Line".

Captain Phillips was prankish enough to take full advantage of the opportunity for achieving the navigational freak of a lifetime. He called his officers to the bridge to double check the ships position. He then changed course slightly so as to bear directly on his mark. Then he adjusted the engine speed. The calm weather & clear night worked in his favour.

At midnight the **Warrimoo** lay on the Equator at exactly the point where it crossed the International Date Line! The consequences of this bizarre position were many:

- the bow of the ship was in the Southern Hemisphere in the middle of summer. The stern was in the Northern Hemisphere in the middle of winter.
- The date in the aft part of the ship was 31 December 1899. Forward it was 1 January 1900.
- This ship was therefore not only in two different days, two different months, two different years, two different seasons but in two different centuries, all at the same time.

Another news item concerning the **Warrimoo** was that Mark Twain, in dire financial circumstances, together with his wife Olivia, daughter Clara and their friends Major and Mrs. Pond, sailed aboard her from Victoria, BC to Australia, departing August 23, 1895 on the opening leg of his around-the-world tour, during which he wrote "Following the Equator." Pre-empting events of four years later he describes crossing the international dateline:

While we were crossing the 180th meridian it was Sunday in the stern of the ship where my family were, and Tuesday in the bow where I was. They were there eating the half of a fresh apple on the 8th, and I was at the same time eating the other half of it on the 10th–and I could notice how stale it was, already. The family were the same age that they were when I had left them five minutes before, but I was a day older now than I was then. The day they were living in stretched behind them half way round the globe, across the Pacific Ocean and America and Europe; the day I was living in stretched in front of me around the other half to meet it.

The author on board **Warrimoo**

Along about the moment that we were crossing the Great Meridian a child was born in the steerage, and now there is no way to tell which day it was born on. The nurse thinks it was Sunday, the surgeon thinks it was Tuesday. The child will never know its own birthday. It will always be choosing first one and then the other, and will never be able to make up its mind permanently. This will breed vacillation and uncertainty in its opinions about religion, and politics, and business, and sweethearts, and everything, and will undermine its principles, and rot them away, and make the poor thing characterless, and its success in life impossible.

Warrimoo was lost on 7th May, 1918 after a collision with the French destroyer **Catapulte** and resultant explosion of depth charges when 12 miles SW of La Gallite, on a voyage from Bizerta to Marseille with troops

She was built by C.S. Swan & Hunter, Wallsend and completed July 1892:

Dimensions	3,326 grt; 2,076 nrt; 345.0 x 42.2 x 25.1ft
Engines	Triple exp. 33, 53 & 85ins. bores x 54ins stroke, 722nhp
Engines by	Wallsend Slipway & Engineering Co Ltd, Wallsend
Propulsion	Single screw, 14.5knots

50th anniversary of the Six-Day War in 1967.

On 1 June 2017, there will be a reunion of former seafarers who were on the ships stranded in the Suez Canal between 1967 and 1975 to commemorate this anniversary. The event will be at the Merseyside Maritime Museum in Liverpool.

If you were on one of the ships that were trapped in the Great Bitter Lake, and would be interested in attending the event, or if you know others who were there, please pass on the details of the event to them.

For further information please contact Cath Senker at:

www.cathsenker.co.uk

The Establishment versus the Pirate Radio Ships

A summary of an illustrated talk given to the Society on 19th January 2107 by L.N.R.S. member David White

In 1922, the British government awarded a monopoly broadcasting licence to a single company, the British Broadcasting Company, whose shares were owned by British and American electrical companies. Although in theory the BBC could have sold sponsored airtime, it attempted to gain its revenue by selling its own brand of licensed radio receivers manufactured by the member companies of the BBC. This arrangement lasted until 1927, when the broadcasting licence of the original BBC was allowed to lapse. The assets of the former commercial company (including the General Manager, John Reith) were then transferred to a new non-commercial British Broadcasting Corporation, which operated under a charter from the Crown. With increasing numbers of listeners to the radio, this gave the Corporation a monopoly and the Government full control of future broadcasting in the UK for the next 47 years.

Although the Government could control what was broadcast in this country, it could not stop listeners tuning in to high-powered foreign stations. A former RAF captain and entrepreneur, Leonard F. Plugge set up his own International Broadcasting Company. The IBC began leasing time on a number of transmitters in continental Europe and then reselling it as sponsored English-language programming with advertising aimed at audiences in Britain. Plugge successfully demonstrated that State monopolies such as that of the BBC could be broken, and other parties became attracted to the idea of creating new commercial radio stations specifically for this purpose. In the 1920s and 1930s, IBC tapped into the demand for music by arranging for several foreign stations to broadcast music programmes aimed at listeners in the UK.

In the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg during 1924, Francois Anen built a 100-watt transmitter to broadcast military music to listeners in Luxembourg. Anen was inspired by the activities of Captain Plugge, who was using transmitters licensed in other countries to broadcast English-language radio programmes to Britain. Anen was a member of the Luxembourg Society for Radio Studies (La Société Luxembourgeoise d'Etudes Radiophoniques) which acted as a pressure group to persuade the Luxembourg government to issue them a commercial broadcasting licence. In December 1929 this licence was awarded to the Society, which in turn created the Luxembourg Broadcasting Company (Compagnie Luxembourgeoise de Radiodiffusion) to be identified on the air as Radio Luxembourg. Capital was raised, decent transmission equipment was installed, and in May 1932 Radio Luxembourg began test transmissions directed at Britain. The Luxembourg government were not signatories to the 1926 Geneva convention on frequency allocations so the reaction of the British government was hostile, especially as the long-wave band

used radiated a signal far superior to anything previously received from outside the country. The British government accused Radio Luxembourg of pirating frequencies allocated to other countries and the complaints caused Radio Luxembourg to keep shifting its frequency. In January 1934 a new international agreement, the Lucerne Convention, was implemented and again the Luxembourg government refused to sign. Shortly afterwards Radio Luxembourg started a regular schedule of English-language radio transmissions using a new 200 kW transmitter on 230 kHz (1304 metres) in the long-wave band. The service was leased to Radio Publicity (London) Ltd from where the advertising revenue was organised and where the English-language programmes were made and recorded.

In the years from 1934 to 1939 the English language service of Radio Luxembourg gained a large audience in the UK with sponsored programming aired from noon until midnight on Sundays and at various times during the rest of the week. Up to half of Britons listened to it during the week, preferring Luxembourg's light music and variety programmes to the BBC and even more so on weekends when the BBC followed the "Reith Sunday" schedule of only serious and religious programmes. By 1938, Luxembourg programmes, paid for by British advertisers, had a larger share of Sunday listeners than did the BBC.

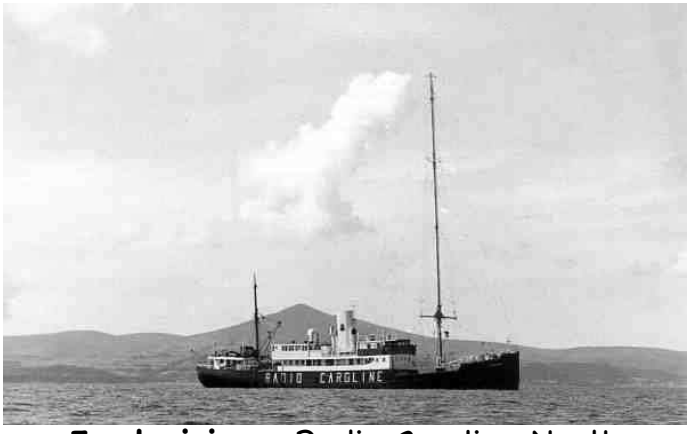
The BBC and successive British governments continued to oppose the competition, citing Radio Luxembourg's use of an unauthorised frequency. As the station was prohibited from using GPO telephone lines to broadcast from London, the English-language programmes were recorded in the London studios and flown to Luxembourg. From May 1938 to September 1939 a de Havilland Dragon Rapide DH89 christened ‘The Luxembourg Listener’ and operated by Olley Air Services made a twice-weekly return trip from Croydon to Luxembourg carrying taped programmes, records and passengers. Despite official opposition, by 1938 many British companies advertised on Radio Luxembourg and fellow European broadcaster Radio Normandy. In September 1939 the Luxembourg government closed down the radio station in an effort to protect the neutrality of the country. The station and its transmitters were taken over by the invading German forces in 1940, and were used for English-language propaganda broadcasts by William Joyce (Lord Haw-Haw). When Allied forces took over Luxembourg in September 1944, the station was transferred to US Army control and used for propaganda purposes for the remainder of the war.

By the start of the 1950s, sponsorship of the English service had begun to grow once more and the English service of Radio Luxembourg moved in July 1951 from long wave to the medium frequency of 1440 kHz (208 metres). The controversy over the station's broadcasting frequencies had been resolved with the 1948 Copenhagen Plan, which this time the Luxembourg government did sign. The 1440 kHz (208 metres) signal could be received satisfactorily in the United Kingdom only after dark, with the assistance of the ionosphere. In the

1950s, the BBC grudgingly introduced Saturday Club but popular music was generally considered unsuitable for BBC listeners. Even as late as 1964, it was impossible to hear recordings of little-known popular-music artists on the BBC.

It was equally impossible to hear new artists on Radio Luxembourg. Their air time was booked by the large record companies such as Decca, HMV and Philips, who wanted to promote records which would sell in big numbers and make money. This meant playing new records by established artists, and not risking failure by new or lesser-known performers. Though for very different reasons, Radio Luxembourg had joined the BBC as part of the Establishment! Despite the revolution in popular music, the music industry remained ignored by the two major broadcasters.

It was common knowledge in the London music world that from 1958 an offshore broadcasting station, Radio Mercur, had been operating in the North Sea, targeting radio audiences in Denmark and southern Sweden from the mv **Cheeta.** To Ronan O'Rahilly, a music producer, the solution was obvious. Start your own station! Provided the vessel remained outside territorial waters, the relevant laws were those of the flag state of the vessel. O'Rahilly bought the **Fredericia** and took her to Greenore in Ireland, where she was fitted out for broadcasting. Another vessel, the **Mi Amigo**, and owned by Australian, Alan Crawford also went to Greenore for a refit.



Fredericia as Radio Caroline North off Ramsey, Isle of Man

Fredericia was a former Baltic ferry, built in 1929 in Frederikshavn, Denmark and appears to have led an unremarkable life when operated by DFDS. The **Mi Amigo** had led a rather more interesting life. Built in Kiel in 1921 as the three-masted schooner **Margarethe**, in 1927 she became the **Olga**, then was requisitioned by the Kriegsmarine and served as an auxiliary vessel between 1941 and 1943. In 1960 she had a further name change to **Bon Jour** under the Nicaragua flag and broadcast Radio Nord for a short period. Thrown off the Nicaragua register, she became the **Magda Maria** registered in Panama and did a return Atlantic crossing to Galveston. Disreputable she may have been, but she became very much a survivor throughout most of the offshore broadcasting days.

Fredericia, now registered in Panama, was first on location, anchoring off the Essex coast and commenced broadcasting as Radio Caroline on 1506 kHz (199 metres) on 29th March 1964. Soon after, **Mi Amigo** anchored near to her and started broadcasting as Radio Atlanta on an adjacent frequency. Two ships in near proximity, broadcasting pop music on adjacent frequencies and targeting the same audience in southeast England was less than ideal. The

situation was resolved in July 1964 when O'Rahilly and Crawford merged their operations. **Fredericia** moved to the Irish Sea near the Isle of Man to become Caroline North while **Mi Amigo** stayed off Essex and became Caroline South. Both stations were very successful and were soon joined by other radio ships plus stations based on disused defensive sea forts around the UK coast.

Though disapproving of them, the UK government found it difficult to control these new stations but, when the owner of one radio station housed on a fort in the Thames estuary was shot and killed in an argument over ownership, action appeared to be required and the illegal stations were silenced with the introduction of the Marine Broadcasting Offences Act (MEBO) in 1967. One by one, most of the ship stations closed, but both of the Carolines remained, being serviced from Holland. The office was moved from London to Holland and the ships were serviced from Holland. Income fell, as advertisers were reluctant to be seen to contravene MEBO and in March 1968 Caroline went bust and both vessels were towed into Holland by Dutch creditors.

In 1970 a new vessel appeared off the Essex coast, broadcasting as Radio North Sea International. The **Mebo II** was originally a 630 tons Dutch cargo vessel, **Silvretta**, built in 1948. In 1969 she was renamed and converted into an offshore radio station and appeared to be reasonably well financed. The UK government ensured that the new broadcaster was heavily jammed, and despite frequent changes of transmission frequency the station could not operate satisfactorily and soon moved further east towards the Dutch coast.

In May 1972, the Dutch creditors sold both Radio Caroline vessels. **Fredericia** went to the scrapyard. **Mi Amigo** was bought for £2,400 with the declared intention that she would be towed back to Essex and opened to the public as a Museum to Free Radio. In the event, she anchored off Scheveningen and Radio Caroline was soon back on the air. She had a number of aerial failures as well as numerous anchor failures but was never off the air for long and was soon joined by others. Having moved east to avoid the heavy jamming, **Mebo II** was broadcasting from international waters four miles off Scheveningen. Also in the vicinity was Radio Veronica (operating initially from the former **Borkum Riff** lightship of 1911 on the Guatemala register then from the 1949-built **Norderney**, formerly the German trawler Paul Muller), Capital Radio (**King David**, the only vessel on the Liechenstein register) and Radio Atlantis (initially from **Mi Amigo** then from **Janine/Janeine/Jeaniane** - three different spellings appeared on her hull, in her wheelhouse and on her QSL cards). Holland did not have an equivalent of MEBO and all of these stations - and many more - were openly serviced out of Ijmuiden. It is not possible to accurately identify how many stations there were. Some came and went, some changed their identities and frequencies at intervals, some hosted more than one station at a time. Rivalry was rife, with sabotage, fights, boarding parties, even bomb attacks.

Having twice sent a war ship to calm down the more extreme behaviour, even the Dutch ran out of patience. In May 1974, the Dutch introduced their

own version of MEBO. **Mi Amigo** moved to a new anchorage in the Knock Deep and continued to be serviced from Spain. The system worked but only at considerable financial cost. Most of the others simply disappeared. While this cat-and-mouse drama was being played out in the North Sea, legal changes were occurring in the UK, including the introduction of commercial broadcasting from 1974, all of which contributed to reducing income for Caroline.

For the last ship still on station, maintenance did not exist and **Mi Amigo** appears to have lived on borrowed time and cement boxes. She broke her anchor cable on more than one occasion, until in March 1980 she went aground on the Long Sands off the Kent coast and foundered, a total loss.

O'Rahilly did not give up. Looking around for a suitable vessel, he found the former Grimsby trawler **Ross Revenge** working as a tug around the scrapyard at Cairnryan. Built in Bremerhaven in 1960 for Icelandic owners, the **Freyr** had an ice-strengthened hull. After her sale to Ross, she went on to set a number of records, including the world record of 3,000 kits worth £75,500. A major refit in Santander for O'Rahilly included the installation of dedicated diesel generators to power new transmitters, a 330-foot mast, and 300 tons of concrete ballast in the hull. Radio Caroline resumed broadcasting on 963 kHz (311 metres) in August 1983 from the now Panamanian-flagged vessel **Ross Revenge** from **Mi Amigo**'s old location off Essex. She was soon joined by the Panama-flag mv **Communicator**, broadcasting as Laser on 558 kHz (537 metres). Laser's American-style snappy production took much of Caroline's audience, together with much of her income.

Ross Revenge with original aerial mast

The Department of Trade chartered the **Dioptric Surveyor**, anchored close to both **Ross Revenge** and **Communicator,** to monitor the tenders servicing the ships. Despite mockery and jibes about spy ships by the DJs, this had a fatal effect on the **Communicator** and, suffering from a lack of stores and spares, she eventually withdrew from the area and was impounded on arrival in port. Overnight, Caroline's radio engineers retuned their transmitter and commenced broadcasting on Laser's 558 kHz (537 metres), scooping up many Laser listeners in the process.

In June 1987, the new Territorial Sea Act became law, extending territorial waters from three to twelve miles. **Ross Revenge** moved to a new position at South Falls Head, beyond the new limit but very exposed to weather and passing commercial traffic. She weathered Michael Fish's hurricane in October 1987 but her aerial mast supports had been damaged. The following month, during a lesser blow, her 330-foot mast went over the side, badly damaging the deck-mounted lead-in insulator.

She could not return to port for a replacement mast to be fitted and various jury rigs proved to be inadequate. In due course, a more permanent rig came into service, using two towers assembled on board from 20-foot sections. This proved to be a reasonably effective compromise but she was unable to continue with her contract to broadcast Radio Monique. Financial difficulties increased and transmissions ceased in November 1990.

Once broadcasting ended, the **Ross Revenge** remained at anchor. With no broadcasts there was no income. Supporters ashore raised funds for modest amounts of food and water. Fuel was supplied in small quantities, but sufficient only to run a small generator. A skeleton crew remained on board in some squalor but were becoming more and more demoralised. While pondering her future, nature took a hand and in November 1991 she broke her anchor cable and went aground on the Goodwins. Retrieved by tugs, she was taken into Dover. Her condition was such that she was prohibited from going anywhere. Eventually she received clearance to be moved to the River Blackwater and since then has made brief appearances at Clacton, Southend, Bradwell, Burnham, Rochester, Queensborough and London Docklands as a museum. This was followed by a protracted stay in Tilbury, being maintained by a group of enthusiasts. She has made a number of broadcasts under the auspices of a Restricted Service Licence and can still be heard on the Internet. In the summer of 2014, and once more under the Red Ensign, **Ross Revenge** moved back to a mooring on the River Blackwater as a museum, though it is difficult to see how she can welcome visitors in that location.

For one month in the early summer of 2014, Radio Caroline was broadcasting on 87.8 MHz FM under a Restricted Service Licence from the former Bar Light Vessel **Planet** in Liverpool's Canning Dock.

What became of Radio Luxembourg, the Station of the Stars? The closure of the offshore broadcasters failed to stem the loss of Radio Luxembourg listeners. The introduction of commercial radio stations from 1974 was the beginning of the end. The English service on 208 metres closed at the end of 1991. The old 208 metres (1440 kHz) is presently used by a German heavy metal rock music service.

Extract from "Sea Dogs of Today" by A.J. Villiers

[Published 1932 by Harrap & Co.]

Then there is the story of the **Primrose Hill,** an English four-masted barque. She was on a voyage from Rio to Tacoma round the Horn, when smallpox broke out aboard, and in a few days almost everybody was down with it. The bo's'n had been taken ashore with it before leaving Rio, and the rest of the crew were cautioned against visiting him.

Two of them went to see him, however - Rio was a place where one could do almost anything in those days, provided it was bad - and the upshot of it was that they carried the horrible scourge to sea with them. It waited until they were just round the Horn before breaking out.

Captain Joseph Wilson, a Harrington man, and his two mates, the only navigators in the ship, were stricken down on the same day. There was scarcely an A.B. left fit to work, and as the days passed they began to die, one after another. The position of the **Primrose Hill** was then desperate. Off the pitch of the Horn - though past the worst of it - with her crew down with smallpox, her master and her mates helpless with the same disease, many of her sails blown out, and a not very reliable crew in her forecastle, things looked bad. But Captain Wilson was accompanied by his wife, who had been at sea with him for many years.

She was unaffected by the malady, and she now took charge. First she had trouble with a few of the crew who could still walk. A committee of them, consisting of two, came aft, seeing that the officers were no longer coming on the poop, and finding Mrs Wilson in charge asked her what she was going to do. They said that she ought to put into the nearest port. She answered that she would not put into any port while her husband was alive. It was his duty to take the ship to Tacoma in time to keep her charter, and if it could be done she would carry on.

The **Primrose Hill** was then a long way from any port, but the worst of the disease had been conquered. Mrs Wilson considered that if she could get the ship to any port she could get her to Tacoma.

"You men go for'ard again," she said. They went.

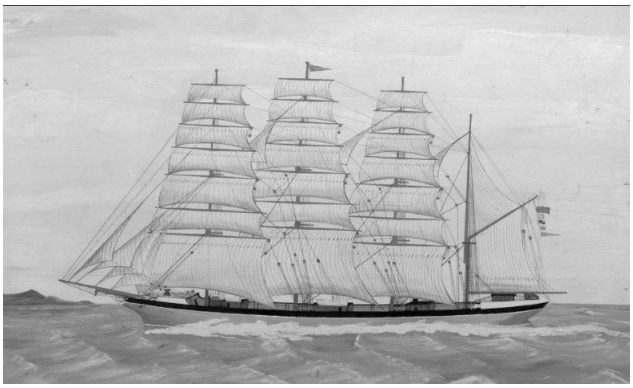
She chose from the crew two of the best of them as temporary officers, nursed her husband, the mates, and all the others who were down, and kept the **Primrose Hill** on her course. The men, realising her character, obeyed her orders implicitly, and the winds were for the most part favourable.

She had a very young baby with her, and just as things were straightening themselves out a little this also contracted the smallpox. With worries enough to madden her before, Mrs Wilson was now bowed down with anxiety for the child. For four days she never left the deck except to tend the sick, for the weather was bad again and there was ice about.

Still she kept the ship on her course, and gradually the Primrose Hill came to kinder latitudes and the master, officers, and crew mended again. Not another one of them died after the fatalities of the disease's first horrible grip.

So at last the ship came to Tacoma and kept her charter, and if some of the sailors had not begun to talk no one might ever have known of Mrs Wilson's bravery. Woman - real, fine, noble woman - had a real place in the wind-ships of old ; she was nurse and comfort aft, and sometimes for'ard too, and if at times unwilling masters brought their brawling shrews with them the good that good women did outweighed the bad examples.

But on the bridge in steam, woman is rarely found to-day, unless she be a passenger. Perhaps one reason is that the steamers bring the husbands home more frequently and surely, and it is no longer necessary for the master mariner's wife to accompany her husband to sea if she wishes to be with him more than a month in every four years. And Women have not yet shown themselves suited to a sea career, though they have gone far in most walks of life that were previously considered solely the domain of man. There are women on deck in several of the Russian steamers which come into London, and one at least of them has a woman third mate. The chief mate of the Soviete sail-training ship **Tovarisch** used to be a woman. There is a Norwegian woman with a coasting master's ticket, and Finnish tramps sometimes carry women sea-cooks.



The barque **Primrose Hill**
Holyhead Maritime Museum (Art UK)

But I would like to see the woman who would go through a real apprenticeship in a Cape Horn windjammer and stick to the sea as her profession. Our stowaway of the **Herzogin Cecilia** was aloft only once on the whole voyage, and then only as far as the cro-jack yard. (It wasn't her fault; the skipper wouldn't allow her to go aloft.) She could not steer the ship because she had not the strength to hold the wheel.

She washed dishes and cleaned brass, and the youngsters in the fo'c'sle were pleased, considering that was the woman's place. Young women now fly aeroplanes alone across the world, ride racehorses, race speedboats, lead expeditions, and run businesses. Maybe the shades of ten thousand Victorian ladies, now safely in their graves, are tormented with the thought that if only this independence stuff had come in time they might have tasted the loveliness of windjammers. The modern girl would go in a square-rigger gladly, if only to write a book about it or have newspapers bid for the 'serial rights'; but the windjammers are all but gone, and she must find other excitements.

And so, one regrets to add, must the boys.

This is how *Fairplay*, in its issue of February I891, reported the incident:
"The four-masted ship Primrose Hill sailed last summer from Dundee to Rio with coal, Captain Wilson being in command. The ship left Rio in ballast for Tacoma, and as she arrived at the latter place two days before the end of last month her owners obtained Is. 3d. per ton more for freight than they would have done at the commencement of the year, rates having fallen to that extent. The owners were also saved about £350 through the heroism of the captain's wife, who refused to take the vessel out of her course to the nearest port, Valparaiso. It is the intention of the owners suitably to reward such gallant conduct, and no doubt the underwriters will do likewise. Nearly all the hands, and Captain Wilson, being struck down with smallpox, Mrs Wilson took command and navigated the ship to her destination.

Her conduct was that of a true heroine, and she has been highly lauded in the American papers."

Footnote: the **Primrose Hill** was lost off the Isle of Anglesey on December 28th, 1900; there was only one survivor (sadly that was not Captain Wilson who was still in command). The disaster was fully researched by the late David Eccles, and reported in the Bulletin of March, 2006.

John Henry Cox

An Englishman Contracted to Harass the Russians as a Swedish Naval Officer!
Submitted by Member Charles Dawson
First published in the Mariner's Mirror, January, 2010

John Henry Cox was born c.1750, the son of a rich jewellery merchant in London. His father's specialty was clocks and automata designed as bribes to Chinese mandarins who were in control of the native merchants with whom Europeans were obliged to deal in trade negotiations in Canton. He even published a work on his activity. When his father died towards the end of the 1770s, Cox turned to the East India Company for permission to stay in China for three years in order to sell the residue of his father's stock of clocks, and ostensibly "for his health's sake". In May 1780 he was given permission to stay for two years and February 1781 saw him installed at Canton as a merchant, but privately and not under the control of the company. When the two years had passed, he applied for a year's extension, which was granted because of his "good bearing" and because he had been of special help to certain company chiefs. Cox then found it advantageous to move to Macao, where he was in association with a Scot, John Reid – who from 1779 had been Austrian Consul and a naturalised Austrian subject – together with another Englishman Daniel Beale, Prussian Consul. All of their subterfuges were, of course, aimed at bypassing the East India Company's restrictive regulations.

In 1784 Cox branched out and sent a ship up to the N.W. coast of America with a cargo of iron, knives, nails etc which he could use as barter for furs and skins. He operated on the West coast of Vancouver Island, especially Nootka Sound. Business went so well, that Cox and his associates founded the Bengal Fur Society in Calcutta and continued their activity into the following years. This led to Lord Cornwallis, Bengal's General Governor, in 1787 complaining to the East India Company about their conduct, all to no avail. By this time, the United States had joined in the fray, sending two vessels to the extreme northwest coast of America; Boston merchants struck medals as evidence of their activity to celebrate the sailing in September 1787 of the **Columbia** and **Lady Washington**. The British Admiralty had in 1772 issued similar medals (struck by Matthew Boulton) featuring **Resolution** and **Adventure** and celebrating James Cook's second voyage. Cox, at this stage, having already considerably overstayed his welcome, thought it wise to disappear to England for a spell but was soon back with newly-hatched plans. This time, his idea was apparently to see whether he could exploit the Russo-Swedish War of 1788-1790. He paid a visit first to Gothenburg, where he made good use of the services of the Swedish East India Company's representatives there, William Chalmers, Lars Gotheen and J.A. Sandberg. Through these men he was able to make contact with Baron Erik Ruuth who was Gustav III's (the Swedish King's) Secretary of State for Commerce and Finance.

The king was apparently very enthusiastic about Cox's quite fantastic proposal which was in effect to put his brig **Mercury**, newly-purchased from the renowned shipbuilder Marmaduke Stalkartt, Deptford, at the disposal of Sweden and with her to act as a privateer to raid both the eastern Russian coasts and their North American fur and skin establishments, for which Sweden would earn ten percent of the prizes. The last page of the king's instructions is signed Gustaf by the king at Ghiöteborg (Gothenburg) 11 November 1788 and refers to his authorisation to Captain John Henry Cox of the Swedish naval brig **Gustav den Tredie**, (**Gustav III**), **Mercury**'s cover-name.

The Thames was still suffering under extreme weather conditions that winter, with the river frozen, and **Mercury** was not able to leave Gravesend on her prospective long voyage before 26 February 1789, but under English colours, as her destination was to be kept secret. Cox had provided himself with a chronometer made by William Hughes of Holborn and had it set to GMT in the mathematical school in Christ's Hospital, the headmaster of which was William Wales, who had sailed as astronomer in Captain Cook's second voyage from 1772-5. Cox had originally intended taking the route via Cape Horn, but on account of the late departure decided to change this plan and take the route via the Cape of Good Hope. Lieut. George Mortimer of the Marines wrote an account of the voyage. Unfortunately he records almost no details of the ship's crew but does mention the death of the ship's cook Thomas Smith on 8 October 1789. He also mentions that Cox had invited a number of his friends, making it sound

almost like a rich man's yacht cruise. On 25 March they sailed from Tenerife, crossed the Line in 20 degrees West and on 28 April they were passing Tristan da Cunha. Just about then, Captain William Bligh of HMS **Bounty** and the loyal members of the crew were being forced into the long boat by the mutineers led by Fletcher Christian. On 29 May **Mercury** reached their first objective, Amsterdam Island in the Roaring Forties, half way between Africa and Australia, discovered in 1522 by del Cano during his circumnavigation. Here they procured 1,000 seal skins and several barrels of oil. Mortimer believed that **Mercury** was probably the first English vessel to visit the island. He refers to Alexander Dalrymple's Account of the Discoveries Made in the S. Pacific Ocean, (London, 1767), which deals with the island, and states that the account by the Dutchman Willem de Vlamimgh, first to land on the island, in 1696, though short, was tolerably accurate. On 8 July **Mercury** was anchoring in a bay on the east coast of Van Diemen's Land, now Tasmania, for wood and water, and Cox named it Oyster Bay, a name that still holds. He also charted Maria Island and Marion Bay there.

They reached Tahiti on 13 August and anchored in Matavai Bay, where **Bounty** had lain for many months. Although some of the mutineers had remained, it was assumed that they lay hidden while **Mercury** was there. Mortimer communicated the intelligence to the Admiralty in respect of the probable destination of the Bounty mutineers, "as it is hoped will enable Captain Edwards of the **Pandora** frigate to bring them to that condign punishment they so justly merit". Captain Edwards' name appears on the list of subscribers to Mortimer's book.

They stayed at Hawaii for only the couple of days between 23 and 25 September. On 27 October they were anchored in an inlet on Unalaska Island, one of the Fox Islands group and found that the natives had no furs to trade. Even the Russians were living in such a state of destitution that Cox felt compelled to supply them with provisions, so there was no question of taking prizes and no 10% for King Gustav.

One of the Russians they met was a seaman named Gerasim Pribilof, who three years earlier had made an exploratory cruise in the Bering Sea and had discovered two islands about 180 miles to the north and westward of Unalaska, which he named St. Paul and St. George Islands, on which were large numbers of fur seals. These islands, together with two islets have since their discovery been known as the Pribilof Islands.

They stayed about two weeks, which seemed long enough for the United States to name one of the Alaskan rivers Coxe, using the spelling of his name that he seems to have used when referring to his Swedish assignment. It seems in fact that Cox only took the brig there as a gesture of fulfilling the contract with the Swedish king. Apparently he had considered returning at a more suitable time, but the Russian-Swedish Treaty of Värälä signed on 14 August 1790 precluded any such plans. If Cox had gone prowling further afield round

the North Pacific, he might have found unexpected and surprising opposition: the Russian Empress Catherine II had commissioned an expedition to carry out exploration work in the far east of Siberia and the Bering Sea. In charge of the Expedition was an Englishman in the Russian Naval Service, Commodore Joseph Billings, who was alerted regarding Cox's presence, but far too late, for by that time Cox was back in Macao, where he anchored on 27 December 1789, careful to advertise the appearance of “the Swedish armed brig **Gustavus III** commanded by Captain John Henry Cox of the Swedish Royal Navy”. He lost no time in writing a report to the Directors of the Swedish East India Co on 4 January 1790.

Port Cox, a bay south of Nootka on Vancouver Island, and Cox’s Channel, a sound in the north part of Charlotte Islands are named after Cox. According to the record in the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS), the nation's official geographic names repository of the US Board of Geographic Names, the mouth of the Coxe River, (note spelling) where it empties into Katlian Bay is at 57 degrees, 10 minutes, 24 seconds N latitude & 135 degrees, 16 minutes, 37 seconds W longitude. The source, or where the stream begins, is at 57 degrees, 11 minutes, 41 seconds N latitude & 135 degrees, 11 minutes, 58 seconds W longitude.

Cox appears to have intended to use the Swedish contract more as a talisman with which to confound the East India Company rather than wreak any damage on the Russians. Some evidence of this lies in the fact Mortimer's account has no mention of any gun drill, something that ought to have been a necessary part of the operation; only once does Mortimer mention even airing their powder.

Excessive speculation drove Reid into bankruptcy. He therefore closed the Austrian Consulate and left China. Cox's partnership however with Daniel Beale and his younger brother Thomas continued, at any rate under the combined name, during Cox's long period away from Canton. There were further successful voyages to northwest America, always under the Portuguese flag. However, in later years, competition from Spanish ships began to have effect. After his return to Canton, Cox was quickly in business again in Macao.

It was at the end of September 1791 that Cox sailed **Mercury** up the river to Canton’s outer port Whampoa. The Honourable East India Company did not welcome him; on the contrary it threatened Cox in every way, refusing to allow him right of residence because it was considered that he, English citizen that he was, had broken the company's "sacred" monopoly. Nonetheless, Cox raised a Prussian flag and landed exuding disrespectful protests.

Cox did not live long enough to really enjoy the fortune he had amassed and died at quite a young age, on 5 October 1791 and was buried the following day on French Island. This lay within sight of the ships moored at Whampoa, and was where all foreigners who died at Canton, or on board ships there, were interred at the end of the 18th century.

Be Prepared

The travel warning due to snowfall and bad road conditions suggested that anyone travelling during this period should ensure they have the following:

Shovel

Blankets or sleeping bag

Extra clothing including hat and gloves

24 hours worth of food

De-icer

Rock Salt

Flashlight with spare batteries

Road Flares or Reflective Triangles

Full fuel can

First Aid Kit

Booster cables

I looked like a complete idiot on the bus this morning!

and did you hear about the cross-eyed teacher who lost her job because she couldn't control her pupils? Or.....

Broken pencils are pointless.

What do you call a dinosaur with an extensive vocabulary? A thesaurus

I dropped out of communism class because of lousy Marx

I got a job at a bakery because I kneaded dough

Velcro - what a rip off!

Don't worry about old age; it doesn't last.

The **Rumney** and the ***Frigorifique***

submitted by H.M. Hignett

Rumney, a collier was on her regular voyage from Cardiff with coal to the French Biscay port Rochefort. The **Frigorifique** had left Passajes (Spain) for Rouen, with iron work, fruit, leather and general goods and was passing Ushant. They collided on 19th March, 1884, in fog.

Rumney struck the **Frigorifique**, just abaft the bridge on the port side. The steering gear of the Frenchman was fitted along the upper deck each side of the ship. When the **Rumney's** bow drove four feet into the hull and a similar distance below the water-line, the steering gear jammed hard over to starboard. The French crew, all eight, considered their ship to be sinking and abandoned their vessel by lifeboat. But the engines were still running at half speed ahead. However, they were able to board the English vessel, which by now had been brought up and after inspection of the vessel forward, found to be seaworthy.

However, to the horror of all, out of the fog came the **Frigorifique** at half speed, and, before any evading action could be taken, she struck the **Rumney** on the starboard side. The crew of the French vessel in their haste had left the rudder hard over. Now the **Rumney** was herself severely damaged and, with her bulk cargo, sank very quickly.

Both crews transferred to the **Frigorifique**, but after climbing aboard found she was also sinking. An hour later they again took to the lifeboats. After a very worrying eight hours, the fog lifted allowing them to make their way to a safe landing on a very rocky Brittany coast.

An impression of the s.s. **Frigorifique**

The **Frigorifique** was the former Elder Dempster steamer Eboe:
210 x 29ft. 750 gross tons 523 net
Built Thomas Royden, Liverpool 1869

The **Rumney** built Sunderland 1870 209.8 x 27.3 ft. 653 gross 487 net

Following an action in the Admiralty Division, brought by the owners of the steamship **Rumney** against the owners of the French vessel, the President, in giving judgement, said that the Elder Brethren were unable to say, as a matter of seamanship, that there was negligence on either side. He (the leaned Judge) found that neither side had discharged the onus of proving negligence on the other, and he therefore pronounced against both the claim and the counter claim, leaving each party to bear its own costs.

[Editor's note: Following installation of refrigeration chambers the **Frigorifique**, in 1877, carried the first shipment of frozen mutton from Argentina to France. Hence her new name when she transferred to French ownership. This successfully proved the concept of bulk long distance refrigeration capability, but not the economic case. The first truly viable shipment being by the **Dunedin**, from New Zealand, in 1882.]