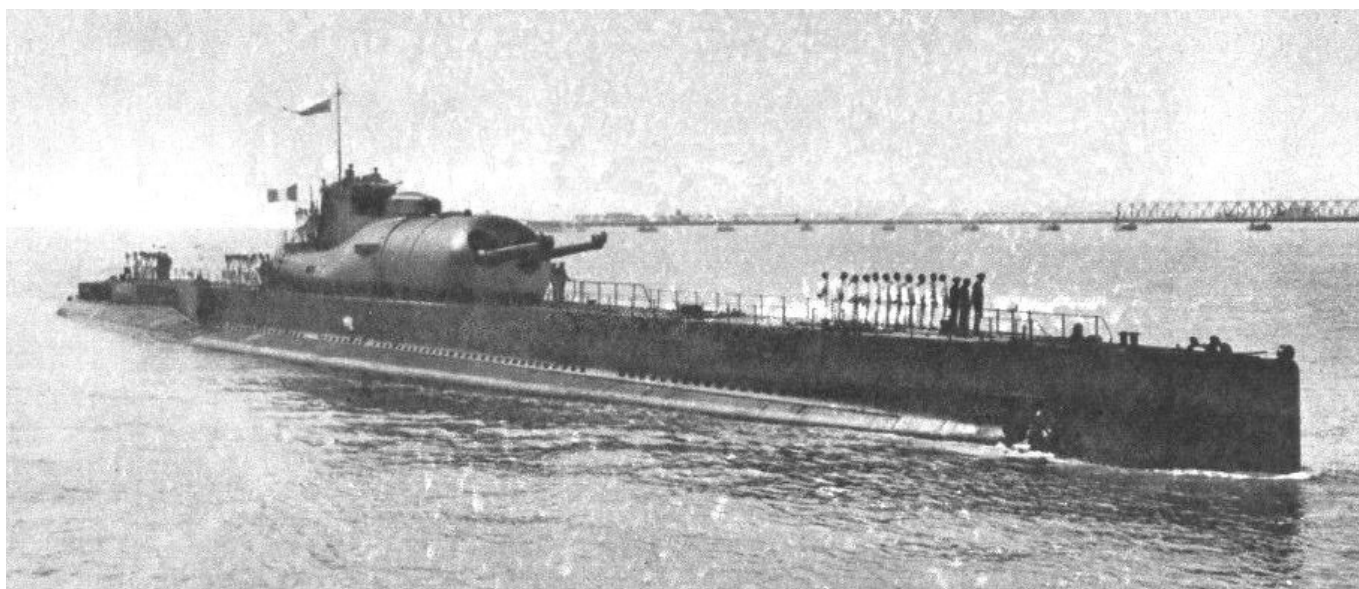


The Liverpool Nautical Research Society
(Founded in 1938)

THE BULLETIN

Volume 61 No.1, June, 2017



The French "cruiser submarine" **Surcouf** (1934 - 42) pictured in 1935 See page 4
Courtesy Wikimedia Commons

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ss **Pereire** as built

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Picture courtesy Norway Heritage at www.norwayheritage.com/

LiverpoolNautical Research Society

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Liverpool Nautical Research Society

Schedule of talks for the 2017 – 2018 season

Ian Duckett, Talks Secretary

September 21st: 'Liverpool Pilots at War'

By Ben Whittaker

Ben Whittaker is the Curator of Maritime History and Technology at the Merseyside Maritime Museum. In this talk he will look at the largely unknown activity of the Liverpool pilot service during two world wars '

October 19th: 'From Birkenhead to Basra –

A story of two Lairds built paddle steamers '

By John Edmondson

In 1836, the British Government ordered two vessels that were to be used by an expedition to test the feasibility of using the Euphrates river as a means of carrying mails and personnel to India. This talk tells the story of the expedition that was under the command of Col Frank Chesney R.A.

November 16th : 'Girdle around the World – the golden age of Cable Ships'

By Stephen Jones

From Brunel's **Great Eastern** to the ships of today, submarine cable laying shows a history of vision, bravery and, occasionally, hope over experience. This talk will look at the past, present and future technology and demands involved in laying the world's cable network.

December 14th: 'Life after Blue Funnel'

By Don Watt

Don Watt, Master Mariner, LNRS member and Master Raconteur offers a nautical miscellany and a touch of Midas to accompany the mince pies '

- | | | |
|----------|--------------------|---|
| January | 18 th : | <p>‘Weakness in strength:
the downside of British Naval Power 1803 – 1815’
By Charles Esdaile</p> <p>Professor of History at the University of Liverpool, Charles Esdaile, is an expert on the Peninsular War of 1808 – 1814, in this talk he gives a new perspective on the Battle of Trafalgar’.</p> |
| February | 15 th : | <p>‘Recent and future developments at the Port of Liverpool’
By Stephen Carr</p> <p>Stephen Carr is the Head of Commercial Strategy and Planning for Peel Ports. He will review the £400m investment in the new Liverpool2 container port, which opened in November 2016, and other major port initiatives such as ‘Cargo200’.</p> |
| March | 15 th | <p>‘The dramatic story of the sinking of H.M.S. Thetis’
By Chris Allan</p> <p>H.M.S. Thetis was a T-class submarine, built at Cammell Laird between 1936 and 1938. Tragically she sank, whilst on sea trials on the 1st June 1938, with the loss of 99 lives. This talk looks at the many different factors that led to her loss. Subsequently raised and renamed H.M.S.Thunderbolt she was lost with all hands on the 14 March 1943.</p> |
| April | 19 th | <p>‘The History of the Bibby Line’
By Christina Spencer</p> <p>Christina Spencer is the archivist for the Bibby Line Group and her talk encompasses a story of love, murder, deceit but above all a tale of survival and resilience in ship owning for over 200 years ’</p> |
| May | 17 th | <p>‘The Battle of the Atlantic revisited’
By Tom Cunningham</p> <p>Our speaker, a retired Commander (E) RNR and LNRS member, will discuss the strategies of the Axis and Allied powers before and during the battle. The talk will cover the technological advances of the period, the American contribution and the role played by Western Approaches Command with its HQ in Derby Square Liverpool’</p> |

Remember Those Days

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

April to June, 1950

The Thames waterbus service for the 1950 season was opened on April 26 at Charing Cross Pier by Mrs. Attlee, wife of the Prime Minister, who then made a trip in the latest craft of the fleet. Built at Shepperton by the Walton Yacht Works Ltd., and named **Festival**, the vessel is 85ft long x 17ft. 6in. beam and can carry over 250 passengers, mostly under cover. As in previous years, the service operates daily between Putney and Greenwich, with a number of intermediate stops, between 10.00a.m. and 8.00p.m., and a weekday rush-period service between Putney and Charing Cross from 8.00a.m. to 10a.m.

Last July St. Pierre and Miquelon issued a 500F "Christmas" stamp depicting the famous French submarine **Surcouf** which in her day was the largest submarine in the world. France was one of the pioneers in submarine construction and in the **Surcouf** was concentrated the experience gained from many experimental types. It can be said that the **Surcouf** herself was an experiment not likely to be repeated. She was practically a submersible cruiser, armed with two 8-inch guns as well as two 37mm anti-aircraft and four machine guns. She carried two torpedo tubes in the bow, four revolving in pairs forward of the conning tower and four abaft of it. Surface propulsion was from two Sulzer oil engines of 7,600 h.p. giving a surface speed of 18 knots, her submerged speed was 10 knots from electric motors of 3,400 h.p. She was built for a cruising range of 12,000 miles. Displacing 2,880 tons afloat and 4,304 tons submerged, she carried a crew of 150. Her trials included a cruise of 5,000 miles from Cherbourg to Agadir, Dakar and Conakry in November 1932 and submergence for a period of 60 hours. Additional features included that she carried a small seaplane for spotting purposes and was the first submarine able to fire torpedoes from practically any angle.

Shipowners have been passing through a prolonged period of difficulty to varying degrees over the last few years; poor freight rates, too many ships, rising operating costs being the key factors affecting the traditional maritime nations. The British tramp owner has perhaps had more than his fair share of these difficulties, and more than one name has disappeared altogether from the ranks whilst others have had many of their ships laid up. However one company is not prepared to simply wait and hope that conditions will improve. At the Annual General Meeting of Court Line Ltd., London, chairman the Hon. J.P. Philips pointed out that part of their fleet was having difficulty in competing with the 'super tramp' of 12 – 15,000 tons deadweight with a speed of up to 17 knots as well as the bulk carrier of 15,000 tons deadweight. Both of these are vastly more economical carriers per ton mile than the 10,000 ton deadweight tramp and are tending to further drive down freight rates.

April to June, 1963

An historic steam engine, veteran of 78 years' service on the Mersey, is to be preserved by the Liverpool City Museum and will eventually be available for display in the projected Maritime Museum to be situated at the Pier Head. The engine, which has been driving the Mersey steam barge **Bengal**, is of the two-cylinder compound type with two 9¹/₂ inch cylinders and a 12 inch stroke. It dates from 1885 when it was built by W.E. Bates, of Northwich, and it has been "rescued" from the hands of Thos. W. Ward Ltd., who recently bought the **Bengal** for breaking up, by Mr. E.W. Paget-Tomlinson, the Museum's Curator of Shipping.

The sailing ships and small craft collection at the Science Museum, South Kensington, London, has been completely redesigned to form the first of the galleries to be opened in the new Centre Block. The architecture of the gallery is interesting in that there are two levels, the upper one being similar to the deck of a ship. This upper floor design makes acceptable an otherwise rather low headroom. The sailing ship models have been divided into groups arranged according to period, but for small craft the variety is so great that they have been grouped geographically.

Little more than 12 years have passed since the term "supertanker" became common parlance in maritime circles. Among the first ships to be placed in this category were the four Shell tankers **Velletia**, **Velutina**, **Verena** and **VolSELLa**, completed between 1950 and 1952, which, since they were so much larger than the average tanker in service at that time, were described as supertankers. Looking back, those four ships, having a gross tonnage of just over 18,600 and a deadweight of 28,000 tons, seem mere coasters when compared with some of the giants in service today. During the intervening years deadweight tonnages of tankers have steadily risen and vessels of 40,000 and 50,000 tons deadweight have become almost commonplace. When the turbine tanker **Manhattan** (65,740 gross tons) was completed last year for the Manhatten Tankers Company Inc., of Wilmington, Delaware she had the distinction of being the world's largest tanker, with a deadweight of 106,568 tons. Now even this fantastic figure has been surpassed by Japan which has commissioned the **Nissho Maru**, an enormous bulk oil carrier of 74,868 gross tons and a deadweight of 132,334 tons. The **Nissho Maru**, which has an overall length of 955 ft., a breadth (moulded) of 141 ft., a depth (moulded) of 72 ft. 10 in. and a loaded draft of 54 ft. 2 in., was built by the Sasebo Heavy Industries Co. Ltd., of Tokyo for the Idemitsu Kosan Company, one of Japan's leading petroleum firms. Instead of being built on a normal slipway she took shape in a 1,115 ft. long drydock at the builders' shipyard at Sasebo City and was launched by flooding the drydock on July 10 last year. After fitting out and undergoing successful trials, during which she attained a speed of 17.19 knots fully laden, she was handed over to her owners on October 7 and is now trading between Japan and the Persian Gulf. Costing about £5 million to build, some 30,000 tons of steel were used in her construction.

Important Announcement: Brand New Website!

Council are very pleased to announce that the Liverpool Nautical Research Society has a brand new website. We have felt for some time that the old website was very limited and lacked some crucial design features, and the Society is most grateful for our President Bill Pape's kind contribution in supporting this project. Whilst the new website retains the same address at: www.liverpoolnauticalresearchsociety.org, it is much more attractive, accessible and informative than the old. Society business, regular events and news items will be up to date features. Below is a sample, please visit your new website often, enjoy it and tell us what you think!



The Liverpool Nautical Research Society,
Maritime Archives and Library,
Merseyside Maritime Museum,
Albert Dock, Liverpool L3 4AQ UK

LIVERPOOL NAUTICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

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We are delighted to welcome you aboard our web site, and hope you enjoy the visit.

The Society was founded in 1938 to promote interest in maritime history and provide a forum for research, communication, collation of

information and recollection. [Read more about our origins.](#)

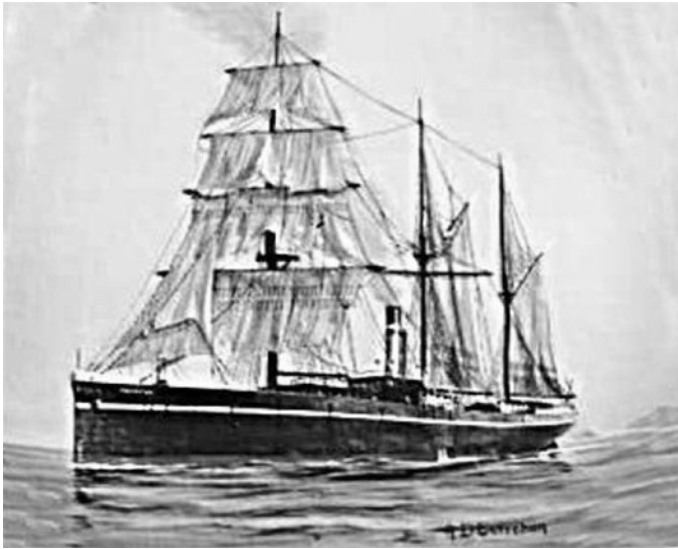
Members pursue research for themselves, the Society, the Merseyside Maritime Museum or in response to enquiries from the general public or they simply meet up to share experiences. Much of this activity is carried out in a friendly atmosphere at the weekly sessions. These are held in the Archives Section at the Merseyside Maritime Museum. [See EVENTS page.](#)

Presentations on a range of maritime subjects are given monthly (between September and May) by specialist speakers and members. [See EVENTS page.](#)

Members also receive the quarterly Bulletin in which articles and papers of significance by members and others are published. Lloyds List has described the Bulletin as "hugely readable", and the editorial team strive to maintain this reputation. [See BULLETIN page.](#)

About half of our core membership is from Merseyside and the surrounding area, with others located across the U.K., the Continent with many residing as far away as Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the U.S.A.

Corrections



The astute reader will have noticed that the paragraph alignment on the back page of the March Bulletin seemed somewhat strange. It was indeed because somehow a picture ‘disappeared’ at some point between proof reading and printing. It was of the French owned **Frigorifique** which was an unsuccessful pioneer of ocean going refrigeration when she carried a cargo of frozen mutton from Argentina to France.

Burial at sea

Last year a request for information was received by a local archivist. It was from a member of the public regarding her mother who had died during a homeward voyage from Aden on one of Bibby’s troopships, and was buried at sea.

The enquirer asked if there was any information as to where the sea burial had occurred. The ship’s name was known, and the log obtained. Sure enough there was the entry, and the latitude and longitude were noted and passed on to an astute LNRS member; in turn he was able using modern technology, ECDIS, to give the lady a print out of the relevant electronic chart showing the exact position of her mother’s burial.

Armed with this information the enquirer booked a cruise which would pass close to the vicinity, and was able to request the ship’s master to deviate to the specific site.

A wreath was then cast on the sea.

Strange, but true...

The Editor

This happened in 1942 aboard the H.N.L.M.S. **Abraham Crijnsen**, the last Dutch warship standing after the Battle of the Java Sea. Originally planning to escape to Australia with three other warships, the then-stranded minesweeper had to make the voyage alone and unprotected.

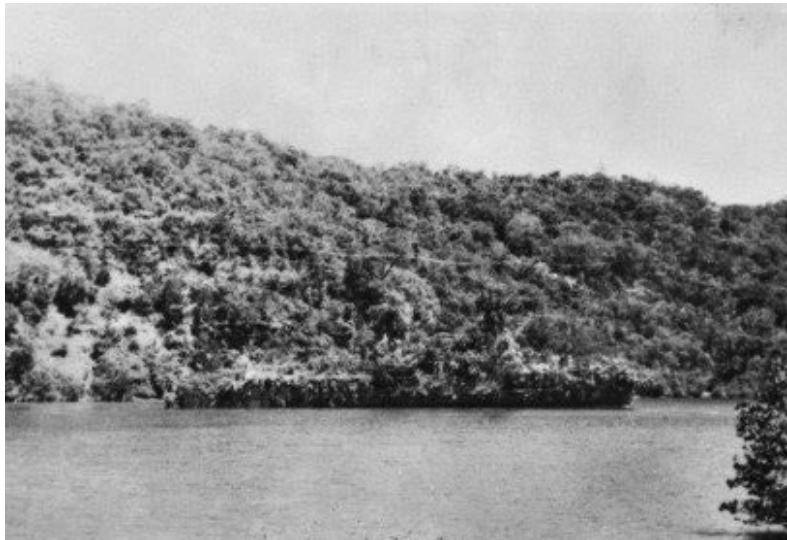
With a maximum speed of 15 knots and very few guns, boasting only a single 3-inch gun and two Oerlikon 20 mm canons, she made a sitting duck for the Japanese bombers that circled above.

Knowing their only chance of survival was to make it to the Allies Down Under, the **Crijnsen's** 45 crew members frantically brainstormed ways to make the retreat undetected. The winning idea? Turn the ship into an island.

But the **Abraham Crijnsen** was strapped for time, resources and alternative means of escape, automatically making the island idea the best idea. So now it was time to put the plan into action.

The crew went ashore to nearby islands and cut down as many trees as they could carry back onto the deck. Then the timber was arranged to look like a jungle canopy, covering as much square footage as possible. Any leftover parts of the ship were painted to look like rocks and cliff faces.

But there was still the problem of the Japanese noticing a mysterious moving island and wondering what would happen if they shot at it. Because of this, the crew figured the best means of convincing the Axis powers that they were an island was to truly be an island: by not moving at all during daylight hours.



Would you have spotted her? Photo Wikimedia

During daylight they would anchor the ship near other islands, then cover as much ocean as they could once night fell praying the Japanese wouldn't notice a disappearing and reappearing island amongst the nearly 18,000 existing islands in Indonesia. And, as luck would have it, they didn't. The **Crijnsen** managed to go undetected by Japanese planes and avoid the destroyer that sank the other Dutch warships, surviving the eight-day journey to Australia and reuniting with Allied forces.

Sometimes in life, the person with the so-crazy-it-just-might-work ideas hits one out of the park and saves the day.

R.M.S. QUEEN MARY

Engineering Staff Structure and Responsibilities

by Mr. E. Cross and first published in the Bulletin of Autumn 1988

This article shows each Engineer's rank and respective responsibilities. It was not always strictly followed but was subject to sufficient certificated Engineers, and the training required for the un-certificated.

The Chief Engineer was in complete charge of the machinery spaces, drawing information from his Senior Second Engineers and staff regarding the daily running of the plant and advising the Captain with regard to fuel and water stocks. Entertaining passengers was also included in his brief. This paragraph is, of course, a simplification of his duties.

The Staff Chief Engineer was responsible for engineering staff and Hotel Services to the passengers and crew such as air conditioning etc. He also shared the entertaining duties with the Chief Engineer.

Three Senior Second Engineers, each was in complete charge of the staff and machinery spaces on his particular watch. They were aptly named 'walking seconds' as they usually visited each machinery compartment (all eleven of them!) along the entire ship's length several times each watch. They would collect repair work lists from the engineers in charge of each compartment before the end of the voyage.

Three Intermediate Second Engineers, each was in charge of the forward engine room – being regarded as the senior one – where they varied the minor changes in revolutions of the two outboard engines as per instructions from the bridge. These were relayed by telephone to numbers 2 and 4 boiler rooms supplying steam to these engines, and also the after engine room.

Three Junior Second Engineers, each was in charge of the after engine room housing the two inboard engines. They received instructions from the forward engine room as stated above, and relayed them to numbers 3 and 5 boiler rooms supplying steam to them. Of course both engine rooms had separate telegraph systems for each engine, operated from the bridge.

Three Senior Third Engineers, each was in charge of the forward generating room housing three steam turbo-generators, supplying the electrical load of the ship, excluding the main propulsion auxiliaries.

Three Intermediate Third Engineers, each was in charge of the after generating room housing four turbo-generators supplying the electrical load of the main propulsion auxiliaries.

Three Junior Third Engineers, these engineers were the 'chemists' of the ship, in charge of the boiler feed-water treatment. They operated a lime plant to remove temporary hardness and a base exchange plant to remove permanent

hardness. Southampton water had a hardness of about 12 degrees, so both plants were operating. New York's softer water had about $2\frac{1}{2}$ degrees hardness, so only the base exchange plant was used. Each Engineer took samples from one-third of the twenty-seven boilers and analysed them by a series of chemical tests. These readings were then logged and the required 'dose' of chemicals prepared, to restore normal conditions for the feed water content for each particular boiler. They were responsible for all the water tanks in the ship – reserve feed, domestic and drinking water. They also took oxygen tests of the feed water each voyage.

Three Senior Fourth Engineers, as the chart shows these Engineers worked day-work duties and their responsibilities were divided as follows:-

1st Senior Fourth, assisted in the Chief's office with clerical work such as staff watch rotas, repair lists, leave lists, logs and correspondence for both Chiefs.

2nd Senior Fourth, supervised the work required in the Hotel services – kitchens etc., supervised the operation of the 'Carrier' air conditioning plant for the main public rooms and normal ventilation and heating system of the passenger and crew accommodation.

3rd Senior Fourth, was the deck engineer responsible for the twenty-four lifeboat diesel engines, ship's sirens and windlasses. He also assisted where necessary in repairing defects in kitchen auxiliaries under supervision of the Hotel Services Engineer.

Three Intermediate Fourth Engineers, controlled the oil fuel system of the ship. They pumped the oil fuel required by the five boiler rooms, about one thousand tons per day, from the oil fuel storage tanks, which lined both sides of the ship, into the ready use or 'settling tanks'. There any water present settled, and was drawn off before changing over to a full tank. One watch changed Nos. 1, 2 and 3 boiler rooms, the next watch changed over Nos. 4 and 5 and this cycle continued till the end of the voyage. While each partially empty settling tank was being refilled the steam, or electric, transfer pumps were being run simultaneously. Other tanks, when empty, would later be refilled with sea water for ballast purposes. Soundings of all oil fuel tanks were taken at the end of every watch and the consumption per watch and per day calculated.

Three Junior Fourth Engineers, in charge of No. 2 boiler room which, together with No. 4 boiler room supplied steam to the two outer engines in the forward engine room. No. 2 boiler room was regarded as the senior one of the two, because fine adjustments to the steam pressure were made there as necessary. Each boiler room contained six water tube boilers so as to give a steady steam supply, effect efficient combustion and ensure that the feed water supply was constant. The boilers were of the Yarrow type, being side-fired with seven burners each. Under steady steaming conditions the Engineer on watch instructed the firemen to clean and replace the fourteen burner tips of his 'own'

two boilers. Superheater and air heater soot-blowers were operated each night. Every voyage a fire drill was carried out in each boiler room.

Three Senior Fifth Engineers, in charge of No. 3 boiler room which, together with No. 5, supplied steam to the two inner engines of the after engine room. No. 3 was the senior boiler room, and the Engineer's duties were as above.

Three Intermediate Fifth Engineers, in charge of No. 4 boiler room, the junior one. They kept as steady a steam supply as possible, but left the final adjustment of steam pressure to the Engineer in charge of No. 2 boiler room.

Three Junior Fifth Engineers, in charge of No. 5 boiler room, again the junior one. They kept steady steam conditions, the final adjustments of steam pressure being made by the Engineer in charge of No. 3 boiler room.

Three Senior Sixth Engineers, kept watches in the steering gear compartment, housing the telemotors which controlled the rudder movement as the ship answered the helm. This was the after most compartment above the rudder and very noisy – a most unpleasant place to be in bad weather, as the ship pitched and yawed.

Three Intermediate Sixth Engineers, were in charge of No. 1 boiler room, housing the three 'Scotch' type boilers, which supplied steam to the forward or Hotel Services generating room.

Three Junior Sixth Engineers, who assisted their respective Senior Seconds, who were in charge of the forward engine room. They controlled the four steam-turbo feed pumps, two normally in use, which supplied feed water to the boiler of Nos. 2 and 4 boiler rooms. They answered the telephones to and from the bridge and boiler rooms. They also took hourly readings of the two revolution counters, then worked out the hourly average and also the average for the four hour watch.

Three Senior Seventh Engineers, assisted their respective Junior Seconds in the after engine room. Duties as above. They controlled the steam turbo feed pumps which supplied feed water to the boilers of Nos. 3 and 5 boiler rooms.

Three Intermediate Seventh Engineers, were in charge of the lubricating oil system of the two outboard sets of engines in the forward engine room. They checked the oil temperatures of the turbine and pinion bearings of the four turbines which comprise each set, along with the oil sprayers to each of the four pinions of the gear wheels. Each set of engines had its own separate forced lubrication system, which also lubricated the bearings and thrust pads of each "Mitchell" thrust block. Water separators were run continuously to extract any water present in the lubricating oil. Samples of oil were taken each voyage and a series of chemical tests carried out to ensure purity. These Engineers also assisted the Platform Seconds of the watch, as required.

Three Junior Seventh Engineers, were in charge of the lubricating oil system of the two inboard engines in the after engine room, with duties as above.

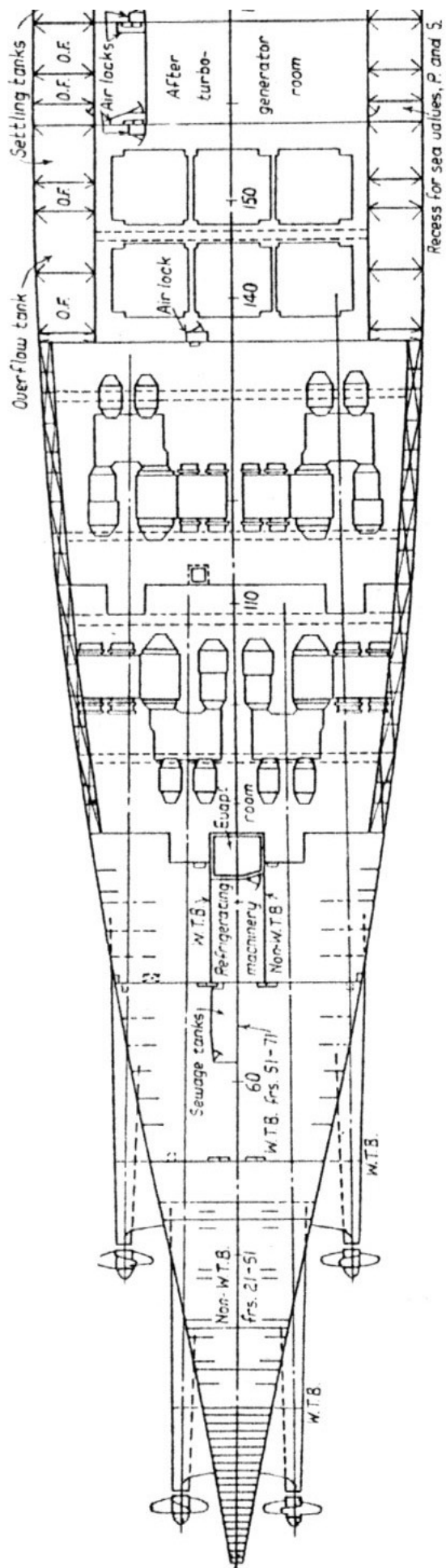
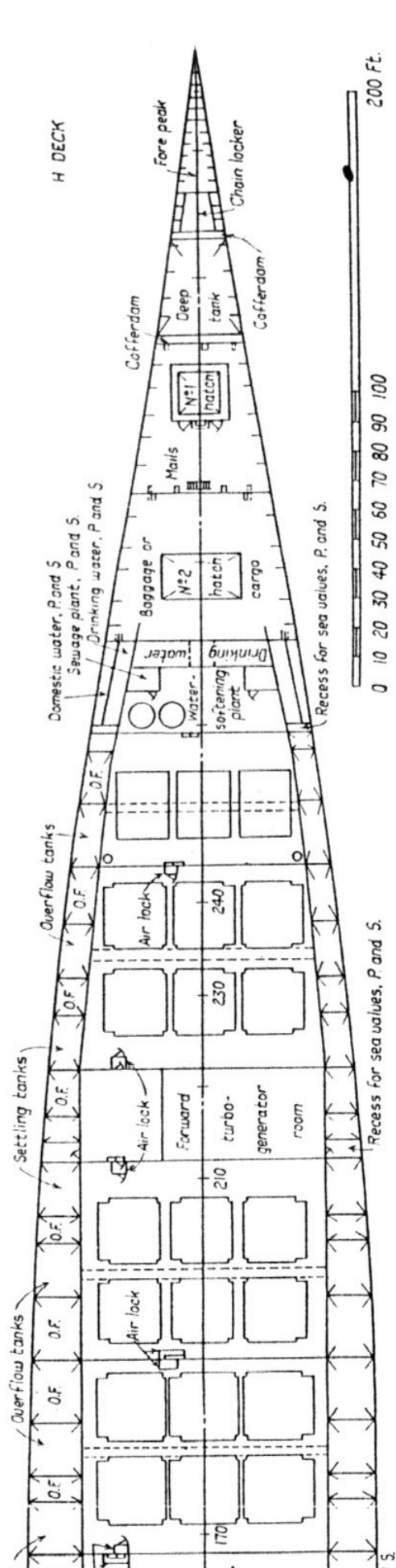
Three Senior Eighth Engineers, were watchkeepers who assisted the Hotel Services Engineer, monitored the temperatures and relative humidity of the main public rooms and adjusted the speeds of the supply and extraction fans accordingly. They helped to run the “Carrier” air conditioning plant to these rooms, as was required. They were responsible for complying with any passenger’s requests regarding ventilation.

Three Intermediate Eighth Engineers, were in charge of the “tunnels”, the compartments which housed the propellor shafts. They supervised the shafts’ bearings and plunger block temperatures and their lubrication. They also monitored the sea water ingress from the large shaft glands, tightened them as necessary and pumped the sea water overboard.

Three Junior Eighth Engineers, who were known as “Floating Engineers” were useful on each watch, in the workshop, to help in any emergency or to relieve other Engineers when necessary. In this way they gained helpful experience for later promotion. As a “Floating Engineer”, one amusing job I had to supervise was in one of the funnels. To prevent soot deposits from falling on passengers, the boiler uptake gases were washed with sprays of sea water in soot collectors situated inside the funnel. An electric pump in the boiler room pumped the sea water into a circular manifold pipe, located above each soot collector, to which rubber tubes were attached. The resulting sulphuric acid-laden sea water was then discharged overboard. Mussels grew in this manifold pipe to quite a large size, choking the orifices of the rubber tube. The job was to disconnect the manifold pipe and remove these unwelcome stowaways!

Fog stand-by at sea. Fog was a particular problem on the North Atlantic especially near the Canadian coast. A staff rota was drawn up so as to maintain two extra Engineers in each engine room in case of emergency. The rota covered the four hours following each watch so that, having done one such duty, one would have several off. Some lasted only a few minutes, the ship passing through a small fog bank, others for the entire four hours. As one had to use two lifts to reach the engine room, it sometimes happened that the fog stand-by was of such duration one arrived too late to “sign-in” at the engine room platform. In this case the stand-by duty did not count! Such was the sense of responsibility in those days that these conditions were accepted without any extra pay.

Entering port. On approaching a port, prior to picking up the pilot, more intensive stand-by conditions prevailed. All Engineers were called out to double-man the machinery spaces. On stopping to pick up the pilot, the ‘time of arrival’ was telephoned down from the bridge to both engine rooms, then the



two revolution counter readings were immediately taken, and so the total revolutions of the complete voyage calculated. The stand-bys up the rivers Solent and Hudson were somewhat lengthy and the normal full ahead revolutions, which applied at sea, were reduced to 100. Further adjustments were made by varying the settings of the manoeuvring valves to give the corresponding steam pressure for half speed, dead slow and stop. A double ring on the engine room telegraph of 'Finished with Engines' denoted the end of the stand by. Before receiving this order there was always a waiting period of roughly twenty minutes after the final engine movement while the ship, although alongside the quay, was being satisfactorily secured. Sometimes the Deck Officer would forget to ring this final instruction, and two-thirds of the entire engineering staff would be kept waiting. Thereafter one always felt uneasy! The cost of running such a great engineering plant, and boilers, must have been considerable. The Staff Chief Engineer was expected to deal with this!

On arrival in port. The ship having been secured and the stand-by ended, the staff in charge of the watch commenced shut down of the plant:

Engine room. The manoeuvring valves of all four engines were tightly closed. The turning gear of each engine engaged so as to lock their propeller shafts, and the turbines connected to them, in a stationary position. The auxiliary plant associated with the four main condensers was then shut down. As this was all electric, the electrical load on the main generating room switchboard began to fall away. So if three turbo-generators were running there, the Engineer in charge considered shutting one down.

Boiler room. The shutting down of the twenty-four boilers in the four main boiler rooms took place simultaneously with the shutting down of the engine rooms, each boiler being filled with feed water to the "full gauge glass" condition, the burners withdrawn and the forced draught fans stopped. The steam pressure was allowed to fall back and the air-lock doors opened. By this time very little electrical load remained of the main propulsion auxiliary plant, and the two remaining generators of the main generating room would be shut down after transferring this remaining electrical load to the hotel services generator room. Thus the main generator room was shut down altogether. The passengers then going ashore, the hotel services electrical load for cooking, lighting and ventilation was dramatically reduced as the kitchens were shut down, together with the stopping of deck machinery, air conditioning plants, lifts and sanitary services meant that only one generator would be required in the forward, or hotel services generator room. Also only one "Scotch" boiler would be required in No. 1 boiler room to supply that steam. That drop in electrical load was quite rapid and, if three generators were running, the two not required would be shut down in quick succession.

Port conditions. After the shut down of plant was completed the rest of the arrival day was generally regarded as off duty time. However, in New York, where the time in port was only about three days, the 'estimated time of arrival' was naturally keenly noted, an early arrival being much preferred! Some very short turn-about in New York, on the other hand, could be expected if the ship was delayed by fog or bad weather.

Port watches were arranged for Engineers manning:

1. water softening plant
2. oil transfers
3. forward or hotel services generator room
4. No. 1 boiler room

these twelve Engineers remaining on their usual sea watches.

The remaining Engineers could revert to daywork duties the day after arrival day, each to the compartment which he would man at sea.

Work lists would have been compiled and work designated to each Engineer by the 'Walking Seconds'. Cunard only employed shore fitters for any particular heavy or major work necessary, their own Engineers performing the lighter, routine repairs themselves. Typical work would have been attending to various boiler leaks, boiler gauge glass renewals, the testing of the main condensers for leaks with an ultra-violet ray lamp, supervising the cleaning of all boiler tips and the oil fuel pump strainers. The water softening Engineers were engaged in filling reserve feed, domestic and drinking water tanks, opening the air cocks on the boilers as they cooled down and dosing them with the chemical solutions prepared beforehand to establish stable conditions of the feed water in each boiler.

Even as the tugs moved away, the first oil fuel barges came alongside. Her oil delivery and steam supply pipes were secured and approximately 5,000 tons of warm fuel oil was pumped into the oil fuel storage tanks, which line the ship on each side, being controlled by the oil transfer Engineer at the rate of 200/300 tons per hour. Especially before the pound was devalued from 4 dollars to 2 dollars 80 cents, it was usual to top up all the oil fuel storage tanks again immediately before sailing, so as to take away every available ton.

The Engineers in both hotel services and main generator rooms carried out any necessary repair on the idle generators, as did the Engineers of No. 1 boiler room.

The bulk of the repair work was expected to be completed during this second day in port, perhaps the only full working day, and the remainder completed by noon on the third day, so as to give the Engineers a half-day off duty if possible, the sea watches starting again at midnight that night.

At this time the main engine circulating pumps and auxiliary plant were started up and steam admitted to the main engines to begin warming them through, being periodically turned by the turning gear - maintaining 15"

vacuum on the main condensers. To supply this electrical power the first generator would already have been on load in the main generator room. Steam raising would already have been commenced by lighting up the two wing fires of each of the twenty four boilers and, being of the Yarrow water-tube type, steam raising was carried out safely and rapidly until full pressure was reached in several hours. As the hotel services electrical load was increased prior to the passengers embarking, extra generators were “run-up” as necessary.

The Captain carried out an inspection of the ship during the morning of sailing day and the Engineers presented themselves in the main corridor of ‘D’ deck. The Captain did not inspect the Engineers’ quarters, nor the machinery spaces, but left the inspection of these compartments to the Chief Engineer.

Following this inspection the Captain conducted a crew boat drill at 11.00 a.m. Several lifeboats at random were lowered and their diesel engines started by the deck Engineer. The three ship’s sirens were then tested – a familiar sound to New Yorkers, as they could be heard at a distance of ten miles!

Next the Chief Engineer conducted a trial of each of the four engines. The 15” vacuum was raised to maximum and the turning gear disengaged prior to giving each engine a ‘kick’ ahead via the steam manoeuvring valve, and stopping it immediately afterwards with a little astern steam, to instructions from the bridge.

Leaving port, the same conditions applied as for the stand-by on arrival. As the order rang on the engine room telegraphs the Engineers of the previous watch took up their positions. Cunard ships always docked bow first in port. At Pier 90, New York, even with the help of tugs, a prolonged “Full Astern” movement of some minutes duration, was needed to clear the berth.

Although 50% of full power only was available at the astern turbines, the sudden contrast from a minimum to a maximum steam flow, as many as 168 burners at the main boilers were ignited was a problem, of the operation having to be performed without producing smoke – and a possible fine to the company. This operation was compounded by a sudden stop being ordered, as the tugs slew the ship till she was parallel to the river. This part of the job over, there followed a fairly leisurely run down the Hudson river at the usual 100 r.p.m. to Ambrose light vessel, where the Pilot disembarked. The revolution counter reading of each engine was taken which, together with the time, signified the start of another voyage.

The above pattern was also followed when leaving Southampton. Of course routine calls were also made at Cherbourg and Halifax, Nova Scotia, where no river manoeuvring was involved. There the “stand bys” were of relatively short duration. Steam was maintained on all boilers for the short periods, (roughly two hours) in those ports.

Engineer Officers, Staff structure – R.M.S. Queen Mary			
Duty Time key: D = Days W = Watchkeeping			
No.	Rank	Duty time	Responsibility
1	Chief Engineer	D	Total for all main machinery; advises Captain re oil fuel & water stocks etc.; entertaining etc.
1	Staff Chief Engineer	D	For staff matters, hotel services, air conditioning etc., entertaining
3	Senior 2nd 1st 8 - 12 watch) 2nd 12 - 4 watch) 3rd 4 - 8 watch)	W	Complete for all machinery and staff on his watch
3	Intermediate 2nd 1st 8 - 12 watch) 2nd 12 - 4 watch) 3rd 4 - 8 watch)	W	For forward engine room during his watch
3	Junior 2nd 1st 8 - 12 watch) 2nd 12 - 4 watch) 3rd 4 - 8 watch)	W	For after engine room during his watch
	and continuing in the same order as above		
3	Senior 3rd	W	For forward generator room
3	Intermediate 3rd	W	For after generator room
3	Junior 3rd	W	Water softening plant
1	Senior 4th - 1st	D	For Chief's Office
1	Senior 4th - 2nd	D	For hotel services
1	Senior 4th - 3rd	D	For deck work
3	Intermediate 4th	W	For oil fuel
3	Junior 4th	W	No. 2 boiler room
3	Senior 5th	W	No. 3 boiler room
3	Intermediate 5th	W	No. 4 boiler room
3	Junior 5th	W	No. 5 boiler room
3	Senior 6th	W	For the steering gear
3	Intermediate 6th	W	For No. 1 boiler room
3	Junior 6th	W	For feed pumps, forward engine room
3	Senior 7th	W	For feed pumps, after engine room
3	Intermediate 7th	W	For lub. oil system, forward eng. room
3	Junior 7th	W	For lub. oil system, after engine room
3	Senior 8th	W	For the air conditioning
3	Intermediate 8th	W	For the shaft tunnels
3	Junior 8th (Floating)	W	As required - repairs, relieving etc.
65	Engineers in total		

The Amazing Grace of John Newton

by L.N.R.S. Member H.M. Hignett

John Newton, son of a shipmaster, was born in Wapping, London, 1725. His mother died when he was eight and three years later he made his first trip to sea as ship's-boy with his father, a strict disciplinarian. He came into close contact with the rough crew on the ship and, being of a rebellious nature, found an outlet from the tight bounds applied by his father by taking up coarse language and ideas of the lower deck.

In 1744, returning from a voyage to the Mediterranean, he was forced into the Navy by the press-gang. With his own seafaring experience and some influence exerted by his father, Newton was promoted to midshipman. However, shortly after being appointed to H.M.S. **Harwich** at Plymouth, he jumped ship to continue his association with a rather lovely young girl he had met near Gravesend. After a few hours ashore he was recaptured, returned to the ship, flogged with the 'cat o' nine tails' and reduced to ordinary seaman.

Slave Trader.

H.M.S. **Harwich** sailed for Madeira a few days later. His expectancy of five years overseas with the Navy was relieved at Funchal: he was able to persuade the master of a ship anchored there (an acquaintance of his father) to exchange one of his crew for John. So he became a member of the crew of a slave trader.

On his second voyage in the vessel he was offered a job ashore as assistant to a slave master on the African Coast. Within a few months he took ill with fever and on recovery had an argument with his employer, only to find himself too ill and weak to avoid being chained and penned in with the slaves. Oddly enough, the slaves were to help him recover his health, and one even managed to smuggle a letter to a ship anchored offshore, to be delivered to his father.

Through his father's efforts Newton was able to get a passage on a vessel loading African timber for Liverpool. This was the **Greyhound**, which encountered a violent storm in the Atlantic during which several of the crew were washed overboard, and he spent several days manning the pumps. Fortunately, the wood cargo gave a certain amount of buoyancy and, although the bad weather lasted 27 days, the ship limped into Londonderry after two months at sea.

This incident caused Newton to turn for a time to religion. On arrival in London he found his father had sailed a few days earlier to take the post of Governor of Fort York on Hudson's Bay. He was never to see his father again, for the latter drowned in a boating accident three days before he left Fort York at the end of his term.

First Command

A couple of years later, in 1750 and now married, Newton obtained his first command – a Liverpool owned slaving vessel. He did not see any conflict between his religion and slavery. Four years in the slave trade made him sufficiently prosperous to leave the sea and live in his father's house. It was at this time he met the Methodists John Wesley and the fiery orator George Whitefield.

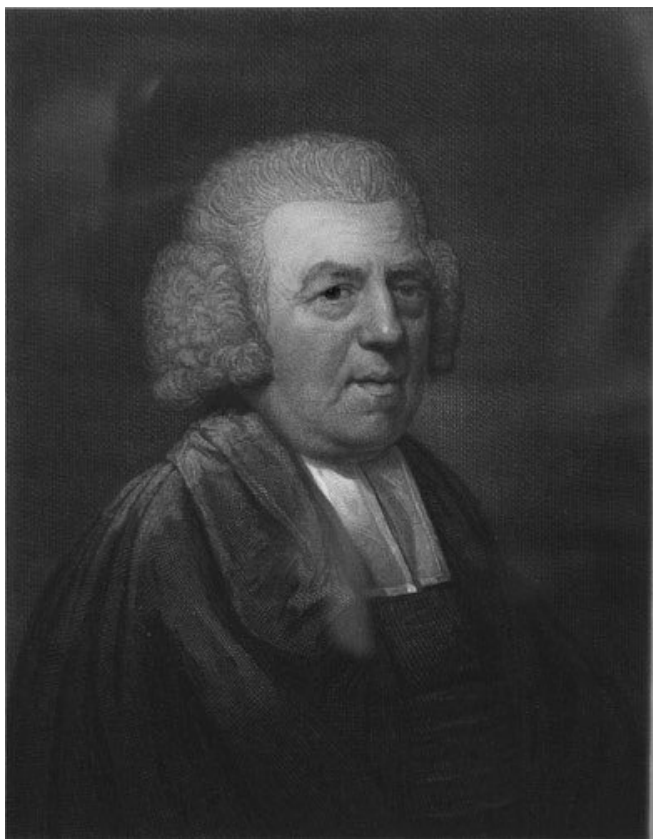
By 1756 Newton and his wife were in Liverpool where he applied for a minor post in the Customs and Revenue Service. A friend of his father used influence in an attempt to get him the job he had applied for, but he was turned down. Then, to his surprise, a couple of months later he was appointed Chief Officer of Customs in the port, with a staff of over 50 under him.

Ordination

Eight years in this post were enough for Newton and he began to look for a post as a Church of England minister. In fact, he was turned down by three

bishops who were somewhat worried about his friendship with the Wesleyans. Finally he was ordained Vicar of Olney in Buckinghamshire (Olney's chief claim to fame, until then, was the annual pancake race which had been held on Shrove Tuesday for over 500 years),

The village of Olney was not the liveliest of places, but William Cowper, the poet, lived there and he and Newton formed a firm friendship. Cowper encouraged the new Vicar to write religious verse. The verses became hymns such as 'How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds,' 'Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken' and 'Be Still My Heart', which are the best known of the 'Olney Hymns.' But the most famous hymn written by Newton only became really so in the past 15 years – 'Amazing'Grace'. It is still a well-



John Newton in his later years

The Cowper and Newton Museum

played 'pop' song to this day

From 1780 to 1807 Newton was vicar of a church in Lombard Street in the city of London where he took part in the long campaign to abolish slavery, which battle lasted for over two decades.

The Bill to abolish slavery was finally passed in March, 1807. John Newton died on 21st December of that same year, aged 82.

Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound)
That sav'd a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears reliev'd;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believ'd!

Thro' many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promis'd good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease;
I shall possess, within the veil,
A life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine;
But God, who call'd me here below,
Will be forever mine.

John Newton, *Olney Hymns*, 1779

MONDAY MEETINGS

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

June	Mondays	5 th , 12 th , 19 th , 26 th
July		3 rd , 10 th , 17 th , 24 th , 31 st
August		7 th , 14 th , 21 st
September		4 th , 11 th , 18 th , 25 th

The Port of Montreal and the Top Hat and Gold Headed Cane Award

a talk on February 16th, 2017 by L.N.R.S. Member Captain Peter Woods
An interpretation by the editor

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

The first colonists arrived on the shores of the St. Lawrence River, and it was thanks to the port that old Ville-Marie grew into the thriving international metropolis of modern-day Montreal (Montréal).

As the fur trade expanded the first port facilities were built. Instead of landing on muddy river banks, merchants built temporary wooden docks along the shore. In spite of being over 1,000 miles from the sea the port continued to develop and in 1809 the **Accommodation** became the first steamship to offer regular service between Montreal and Quebec City, and the official opening of the Lachine Canal in 1825 made it possible to sail up the St. Lawrence to the Great Lakes. By 1922 Montreal had become the most important grain port in the world.

With the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway in 1959, ocean-going vessels

could now reach the Great Lakes without stopping in Montreal and the port experienced a significant drop in activity. However, the advent of containerisation led to construction of a new port facility, located further east of what became known as the Old Port. This historic district is now managed by The Old Port of Montréal Corporation, charged with enhancing the Old Port's recreational, tourism and cultural infrastructure and The Old Port



The new container port

now welcomes six million visitors annually.

The Canadian Pacific Steamship Company was established in the late 19th century and until after World War II, the company was Canada's largest operator of Atlantic and Pacific steamships. In the 1960s the company moved to a model of container shipping from passenger, freight and mail service; during this period it underwent several re-branding exercises, eventually becoming a part of the Canadian Pacific Ltd. conglomerate.

The Gold-Headed Cane is awarded to the captain of the first ocean-going vessel to reach the Port of Montreal at the start of each new year. Although year-round navigation to and from the port began in 1964, the Gold-Headed Cane is a reminder of a period when Montreal's maritime links with the outside world were interrupted during the long winter months because of ice in the St. Lawrence River. Long ago, the arrival of the first ship inspiring symbolised a



"Ice Shove" in Montreal c1870



So thick you could build a railroad

All pictures Courtesy Musee McCord Museum



Or even a roadway, c 1892



"Batture" ice below Quebec Bridge

return to life. Montrealers would gather on the docks and cheer when it came into view, happy that communication and trade with the Old World once again had been re-established. They knew that the ship was carrying the food they craved and the latest fashions from London and Paris. Best of all, delivery of mail accumulated during the off-season meant news at last from the rest of the world. During the first years of the tradition, the award was a top hat. It was replaced by a Gold-Headed Cane, to reflect period tastes, in about 1880. Today's trophy is an elegant, smooth and straight ceremonial cane made of hardwood, finished with a dark-brown varnish. The 14-karat Gold Head is crowned with a relief Canadian coat-of-arms coloured with inlaid enamel. An inscription around the side reads: "Presented by the Port of Montreal to

(captain's name), Master of the (ship's name), the first ocean-going vessel in the port in (year)." The recognition that accompanies the Gold-Headed Cane makes it a prize coveted by ships' captains from a growing number of countries.

By 1970, with the winner being decided by hours or even minutes, it became necessary to formulate a set of rules, thus:-

- The winner of the award shall be the first vessel to cross the northern boundary of Montreal Harbour after 0000 hours January 1st.
- The northern boundary of Montreal harbour lies concurrently with the upstream boundary of the Harbour of Sorel, as shown on Canadian Hydrographic Chart No. 1338, the official navigation chart for the area.
- The vessel in order to qualify, must arrive directly from overseas without any intermediate port of call on the Canadian eastern seaboard or the east coast of the United States north of the 30th parallel.
- A vessel shall not qualify when:
 - Exceeding speed limits anywhere in the St. Lawrence River, including those imposed from time to time by the Department of Transport (or today by the Canadian Coast Guard).
 - Berthing at a St Lawrence River port for the purposes of loading and/or unloading cargo
 - Berthing or anchoring in the Sorel area for any reason prior to entering Montreal harbour
 - Reducing speed below the normal running speed between Quebec City and the boundary of Montreal harbour in order to qualify.

As late as 1959, the first ship into the harbour didn't dock until April 1, but in subsequent years the arrival dates were becoming earlier. There were a few March arrivals and even one on February 28.

The difference was a new and concerted effort by the federal government to keep the river open, and not just to encourage navigation. In 1962, Canadian Coast Guard icebreakers began tackling the ice in earnest. At the same time, better navigational aids were introduced to mark the shipping channel, and ships with reinforced hulls came into service.

Nevertheless, the first ship that year — the **Helga Dan**, as it happened — couldn't get through to Montreal until March 12. And two years later, despite relatively mild temperatures, her January 4 landing would surely not have been possible without the help of two icebreakers, the **Ernest Lapointe** and the **d'Iberville**, during a week-long struggle with the ice in Lac St. Pierre.



The 1990 awards ceremony

Since then, however, such has become the skill of the Coast Guard and, of course, the men and women who sail the merchant ships themselves, that January 1 arrivals are now routine.

And so to 1990 when the m.v. **Canmar Venture**, commanded by our speaker won the prestigious award by arriving at 14:44 on January 1.

In 2002 the closeness of the 'rivals' and the need for clear rules was demonstrated when **Canmar Glory**

reached the Canadian gateway at 00:29 on January 1st, beating a friendly rival from Cast by 3.8 miles, and a OOCL ship trailing two miles further behind.

Why have a Gold-Headed Cane?

This occasion, which is symbolic of winter navigation, also provides an opportunity to recall and pay tribute to master mariners, who, by their skill and sound judgement combined with a touch of daring, brought their ships upriver under difficult ice conditions in years past to open the navigation season.

The effort and ability of Canadians who made winter navigation possible with advanced technology must be recognised and continue to be recognised.

These were the people who made it possible to commercialise the St. Lawrence River to its full potential in the economic interests of Montreal, Quebec, and in fact all of Canada.

(General Manager Dominic Taddeo, January 1990).

From the MNA Circular, 12th February, 2017

A Nazi submarine has been discovered by German researchers off the coast of the Azores in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, according to a report.

As stated in the recent **Llanbibby Castle** article (L.N.R.S. Bulletin, March 2017, page 9) the **U-581** was tasked with tracking the British troop carrier **Llangibby Castle** in February 1942, but it failed the mission and was sunk by the British destroyer H.M.S. **Westcott** before it could finish the job.

Rather than surrender the ship to the British, the captain let the submarine sink while the Nazi crewmen tried to escape, according to the report. Four Nazis were killed and 41 were taken prisoner. One officer miraculously escaped after swimming four miles to land.

It was originally found back in September but researchers from the German Rebikodd Niggeler Foundation are withholding the exact location. They hope to make a documentary about its discovery.

Faithful unto Death

by Glyn L Evans

During the 1914 – 1918 War, hundreds of thousands of horses were required not only to haul heavy artillery and supply wagons but also as mounts for cavalry troopers and mounted infantry. The supply of horses from the UK was quickly exhausted, many being quite unsuited to the prevailing battlefield conditions. In 1914 the Allied troops had 53,000 horses at the Western Front. By November 1918 this number stood at around 500,000. During the period between, 484,000 horses and mules were lost, while 725,216 were treated for various illnesses, disease and wounds by the British Army Veterinary Corps. To cope with the losses and the huge demand, it became necessary to import horses and mules in great numbers from overseas, mainly from the USA and Canada, Australia and New Zealand.



Horse being unloaded Wikimedia Commons

Once on board ship, usually having been loaded by sling, the animals were placed in stalls to prevent harm from the violent pitching and rolling of the vessel. Despite the best efforts of the men who looked after them, many horses suffered from shipping fever, a form of pneumonia, and other diseases arising from long periods confined in cramped conditions.

Added to these dangers were those of shipwreck and loss by enemy action. Some idea of the scale of the problems of transporting horses by sea in wartime will be gained by the fact that in 1917 over 94,000 horses were shipped from the USA and Canada to Europe, of which approximately 3,300 were lost at sea. Over 2,700 of these perished when the transporting ship was sunk by gunfire, mine or torpedo. Just four examples follow:–

- **Royal Edward** with her crew plus 1,367 soldiers and their horses, having sailed from Avonmouth, was torpedoed by **UB-14** in the Aegean Sea on 13 August 1915 with the loss of over 900 men and all the horses.
- **Mount Temple** left Montreal for Brest on 3 December 1916 with 710 horses on board. She was caught 1,200 miles north of the Azores by the German commerce raider **Moewe** which, after removing all passengers and crew, sank the **Mount Royal** with the resulting loss of all the horses.

- **Georgic** was another ship to fall victim to **Moewe** in the same year, being sunk off Cape Race with the loss of 1,200 horses.
- **Armenian** was caught by the German submarine **U-24** off Trevose Head, Cornwall on 28 June 1915. After a failed attempt to escape, the crew was allowed to abandon ship and the **Armenian** was torpedoed and sank. Twenty-nine members of the crew were lost in the sinking, along with the ship's cargo of 1,400 mules.



Horses stabled on board ss **Samland** (1918)

At the cessation of hostilities many animals were killed due to age or illness with the younger ones going to the slaughterhouses to feed a near-starving population and a large number of prisoners of war. Repatriation of 11,000 Australian horses was not possible due to quarantine regulations and some of these went on to serve in the Middle East. Troops who had served with horses felt their losses very badly and several horse memorials

were subsequently set up. The one at St Jude's on the Hill at Hampstead bears the inscription "Most obediently and often most painfully they died....faithful unto death."

Understanding Engineers:

The graduate with an engineering degree asks, "How does it work?"

The graduate with a science degree asks, "Why does it work?"

The graduate with an accounting degree asks, "How much will it cost?"

The graduate with an arts degree asks, "Do you want fries with that?"

Pereire, the steamer that became one of the fastest sailing ships

By LNRS Member Charles Dawson

It may appear strange that a steamer which had her engines removed and began trading under sail alone would, in her new guise, actually be able to reach speeds greater than she did previously. It was certainly true of the sailing ship **Lancing**, Clyde-built in the 1860s as the French steamer **Pereire** and converted after some fourteen years on the transatlantic passenger run to a four-masted square-rigger sailing the great oceans of the world. How could an ex-steamer sail so well? There has been some speculation regarding the effects of such a conversion. Basil Lubbock pointed to the change in shape of a ship's stern with the propeller void filled in. Perhaps a simple explanation is the somewhat higher length/breadth ratio of steamships at the particular period when such conversions were being carried out.

Her owners, the French Compagnie Générale Transatlantique named her **Pereire** in honour of their founder, reflecting the prestige that was hoped for in the fight for supremacy in the important transatlantic passenger, freight and mail service. The immediate targets were to beat the crossing times of the Cunard liners, including PS **Scotia**, their last fling in paddle propulsion, and also the American packet ship the wooden PS **Vanderbilt**.

France at that time had little experience in the building of large iron vessels, or of their engines, so it was almost inevitable that the order should be placed in Scotland, the premier shipbuilding country of Europe at that time. She was designed by Sir William Pearce and built by the pioneering Robert Napier & Son of Govan on the River Clyde. **Pereire** was launched there on 4 November 1865, the ceremony being performed by the wife of John, one of the two sons in the business. She was an iron screw steamer, 369' x 43.4' x 29', 3,014 gross register tons, with three-masted barque rig, complete with clipper bow and figurehead, naturally enough of CGT's founder. She was fitted with engines with 2 x 45" and 2 x 84" diameter cylinders x 48" stroke. Her original four-bladed Griffiths screw was designed to give her a speed of 14.5 knots.

Pereire arrived in France in 1866 and on her trials outside Cherbourg she showed promise of matching all expectations, when she reached a speed of 15.3 knots. Reflecting the air of confidence, great festivities were held prior to her departure at the end of the month. She took 9 days 4 hours for her maiden crossing from Havre to New York, a day slower than PS **Scotia**. She never did quite match up to her top-notch rivals, but she was not lacking in sturdiness as she showed in 1869 when she weathered a tremendous storm four days away from her home port Brest. In 1872-3, a third pair of cylinders was added to her engine by her builders, such being a normal "compounding" procedure at the time as a fuel improvement measure. At the same time a second funnel was

added and her original propeller was replaced by a four-bladed one of Hirsch type.

Steam to Sail

In 1881 when she was in Goletta harbour, Tunis, fire broke out in her and she was temporarily sunk by torpedo to avoid endangering nearby vessels. She was soon raised, refurbished and put back into service, but at the end of 1887, after grounding near St Nazaire, her owners decided to part with her and she was sold "as is" to A E Kinnear & Co of London. Her machinery was taken out and after a long and exacting salvage operation in the summer of 1888 she was towed to Blyth Dockyard Co Ltd in NE England for conversion. It was said to have nearly ruined the company.

On 5 February 1889 she left Blyth, majestically transformed into the four-masted ship **Lancing**, called after the Sussex village. She was fitted with three new masts and bowsprit, while the old foremast became her mizzen. Her new masts, like the great Forth Bridge just being completed, were in the up-and-coming constructional material steel. For her sails, **Lancing** required three miles of yard-wide canvas. Her sharp lines and slenderness were especially noticeable in dry dock. One criticism that the purist might make was her unduly short bowsprit, sufficient to take only two jibs. Now after 22 years as a steamer, she was ready to set out on her new career that was to last nearly twice as long again and was eventually to bring her renown among a new band of admirers, the lovers of the big windjammers.

Her water-ballast tanks, still rather unusual at that time for a sailing ship, were of great value from the point of view of both economy and safety; especially in port, time could be saved because there was no need to manhandle ballast.

On her first voyage as a sailing ship, **Lancing** left London for Australia on 5 March 1889 with a cargo of 1,800 tons of cement, arriving in Melbourne in 108 days, about average for the big grain windjammers of later years. Her captain George Alfred Hatfield, a real Blue-Nose skipper, who had supervised her conversion, had, together with other Canadian and English backers, a financial interest in her, and Mrs Hatfield had a hand in planning the interior decoration of the cabins. Even the petty officer's quarters were said to be luxurious. For the next four or so years, she worked the jute route between India and Dundee with the odd call at New York. None of her passages were noteworthy, so that profits were small and she was consequently laid up in Liverpool for a time, her fate hanging in the balance.

British to Norwegian

She was bought in 1893 by Johan Bryde of Sandefjord, Norway. Although she still had some Canadian backing, she sailed for the Bryde company under the Norwegian flag, her first voyage under their ownership being from Barry to Batavia, which she reached in 90 days, a reasonable start to her new career. On the way to Calcutta, fever broke out on board and two sailors died and were

buried at sea. After three years she reverted to the red ensign, having been bought by Frank Ross of Quebec. At the end of 1896 she was chartered for a couple of months by an American syndicate searching for Aztec treasure in Peru. If they found anything, they did not divulge details.

From 1895 to 1901 **Lancing** was sailing regularly, either under the red ensign or Norwegian flag, on the trans-Pacific route, and her times showed remarkable consistency, averaging about sixty days between San Francisco and east Australian ports. The Norwegian Captain A Raastad in 1895 sailed Newcastle-San Francisco in 56 days and two years later, Captain Hatfield sailed Frisco-Sydney in 54 days.



Lancing

Courtesy State Library of Queensland

The Norwegians took over completely, and for good, in 1901, when she was bought for £6,300 by J Johanson & Co, and became their largest vessel. A strange coincidence was that their second largest vessel, the four-masted barque **Theodor** was none other than the converted ex-Cunarder SS **China**, which had also been built by Napiers and had been one of **Pereire's** most serious transatlantic rivals. Even another old rival, PS **Vanderbilt** became the square rigger **Three Brothers**. She ended her life as the Anchor Line's coal-hulk at Gibraltar, and survived to the ripe old age of 63.

With the Norwegians now fully in charge of **Lancing**, her final and really her greatest time had begun. Lubbock remarks, with some justification, that he could find no exceptional passages under the red ensign and that the Norwegians seemed finally to have got the hang

of her. He also points out that she could not have been easy to handle with her great length and heavy yards, but the Norwegian skipper obviously learned how to exploit her in the open ocean where she was said to be able to bowl along in even a moderate breeze.

Slow coach to record breaker

From 1901 to 1914, New Caledonia became a regular port of call for the profitable bulk cargoes – up to over 3000 tons – of nickel and chromium ores, and in 1915, saltpetre from Chile. During this period, **Lancing** had one of her

most inspired and inspiring captains, Nils Bull Melsom, who between 1903 and 1914 served the longest unbroken period of any of her skippers. Already in 1904 he sailed his ship in 79 days from St John NB to Melbourne and in 1908 his 64 days from Lands End to Melbourne ranks among the fastest half-dozen times on the run. This is a staggering feat, since most of the other records were by specially built and maintained clippers. The only other fast voyages down under were the swan songs of the big grain windjammers; in 1933/4, the two Laeisz P-Line four-masted barques **Priwall** and **Padua** clocked 66 days from Hamburg to the Spencer Gulf, South Australia.

Captain Melsom's next feat was a time of 44 days from Montevideo to New Caledonia in 1911, a great inspiration to his mate Oscar Olufsen who served under him for a number of years and later, after Melsom had retired during the First World War, became **Lancing's** most renowned skipper. In 1917 she made her best day's run of 366 miles – beating **Cutty Sark's** record by three miles – en route from Kristiansand, Norway, to Matane on the St Lawrence, Canada. An average of 18 knots in a watch was the maximum speed she attained during this run, beating the 15.3 knots she had clocked on her trials as a steamship.

Captain Olufsen's last great achievement was his record for the transatlantic crossing made in the middle of the First World War: 12 days 21 hours from Ambrose Light to Muckle Flugga, from 1–14 February 1916. For the final stage of this crossing, the time of 6 days 18 hours has been quoted in various ways, at times even for the complete voyage. A careful calculation from her positions at noon on 7 and 8 February shows this to be her time from a point on the Newfoundland Grand Banks, at Latitude 44'13' N, Longitude 48_47'W, to Muckle Flugga, the island with Britain's farthest north light, off the Shetland Islands. Only the clipper **Red Jacket's** crossing in January 1854 of 12 days from Sandy Hook to Bell Buoy outside Liverpool was faster, and there were only two other large sailing ships that have crossed from New York in less than 13 days. For a whole week during her crossing, **Lancing** logged 2,129 miles, at an average speed of nearly 13 knots, and few other sailing ships have done that either. That this record was no fluke is shown by Captain Olufsen's other wartime transatlantic times: Halifax – Glasgow in 1916, 15 days; Quebec – Greenock in 1916, 15 days; St Anne des Monts – Queenstown in 1917, 12 days.

In 1918, Captain Olufsen was bound for Melbourne. After leaving Glasgow on 1 March, he had to heave to in the Irish Sea. When they were weighing anchor, the carpenter Carl Sommer was lost overboard. From Belfast, Santos was reached in a rather slow 59 days, but from there to Melbourne **Lancing** took only 47½ days. In Melbourne, the captain became ill and was rushed to hospital but recovered sufficiently to take her from Melbourne homeward bound on 29 August. During the morning of 16 September, the captain complained of feeling ill again, so much so that he feared 'he might die'. That evening tragedy

happened: Captain Olufsen was lost overboard without anyone having seen how it occurred.

The mate Mauritz Mathiassen took over and his times for the stages of her return voyage were: Melbourne–Barbados 69 days – New Orleans 16 days – Queenstown 28 days. The final leg was completed in the worst weather that had up till then been recorded in the log-book. Whichever skipper was in charge after that, **Lancing** still produced some fine times. In 1919 Mathiassen sailed Cape Chat – Ardrossan in 16 days and from St Anne to the same Scottish port in 15 days. In 1920, Captain P D Pedersen took her from Lamlash to Montevideo in 41 days, and in 1923 she could still cross the Atlantic in 15 days, under Captain A Larsen. What an achievement for a ship then 58 years old.

Lancing was reported overdue only twice in all her long life, and on those occasions she came in not many days after the report was issued. She maintained her first class rating unbroken from 1901. That she was still a sturdy ship she was able to show in 1921 on her return voyage from Santos under Captain Pedersen, when she survived first a grounding at Murray's Anchorage, Bermuda, and then, fully loaded with Canadian timber, a collision with an ice-floe off the Newfoundland Banks.

Lancing's last voyages were spent in bringing timber from Canada to Scotland, but between the end of 1922 and the beginning of 1924 there were occasions when freights were so poor that she was laid up in the Clyde. She sailed again for Canada on 14 May 1924 under her last captain, P Hansen, who coaxed 58 miles from her in a watch and covered 283 miles in a day. **Lancing** sailed from Ardrossan to Canada for the last time on 4 August 1924. Her return crossing was as dramatic as anything she had ever experienced, with hurricanes harrying her nearly all the way. It took her 34 days. She was sold at the end of 1924 to breakers in Genoa. She was towed to the Tuskar Light and sailed the rest of the way to Italy. Final proof of her quality was that even as scrap, she fetched £6,250, only £50 below the price she had been bought for in 1901 – and this in the days before galloping inflation.

It could have happened!

In the late 1970s, the commander of a French Navy ship visiting Liverpool, failing to see the funny side of being allocated, for his arrival, the tugs **Nelson** and **Trafalgar**, made it clear that he required different tugs for departure. He got them – **Wellington** and **Waterloo**.

(Alexander Towing...2, French Navy....0)

Mersey Bar Lightship **Planet** is Sold

From M.N.A. Circular, 19 April 2017

News from Chantelle Seaborn, Canal & River Trust North West Manager, that C. & R.T. has finally sold the Mersey Bar light vessel **Planet**, after seizing it in lieu of £10,000 unpaid mooring debts over four years at Canning Dock, Strand, Liverpool. Ms Seaborn said **Planet** has been sold to someone who plans its restoration prior to resale. There were no offers from potential Liverpool-based buyers. The new owner has no plans to return **Planet** to Liverpool or Merseyside and the lightship currently remains 'in store' at C. & R.T.'s Sharpness Dock, Gloucester.

Planet's former owner Alan Roberts claims he has since paid off the £10,000 debt. The cost of removing Planet from Liverpool to Gloucester is alleged to have been £56,000.



Planet being prepared for passage south

Wrap Up Lads !!

Her Majesty's cruiser nosed into her Grand Harbour berth at Malta. It was a manoeuvre well carried out. In a very few minutes a chain cable led to the forward buoy; heavy wires to the stern buoy. His responsibility nearly over, the captain gave last instructions: "Tell them aft to 'middle' the stern wires, secure them on the bitts, stow away spare gear, 'square off' the quarterdeck and finish."

The telephone rating, only newly recruited but very keen, digested his captain's order. Picking up his instrument, he passed the message without a moment's hesitation: "Wrap up, lads!" he said concisely and authoritatively.

Early New York Shipwrecks

by L.N.R.S. Member H.M. Hignett

Although much attention was paid by New York's artists, poets, newspapermen and everyday citizens to the deaths of hundreds of passengers by sudden drowning on the American ship **Bristol** (Captain McKown) and by agonisingly slow freezing on the deck of the American barque **Mexico** (Capt. Winslow), the tragedy went from the biggest event in the winter of 1836 and 37, to near-oblivion by spring. Had this been, say, a steamboat disaster with 215 New Yorkers dying, things might have been different; but most of the victims aboard the **Bristol** and the **Mexico** were immigrants—mostly poor Irish Catholics—and sailors, many of them black. The same New Yorkers who were aroused by the news stories now seemed eager to move past the tragedy and ignore the underlying conditions that led to the disaster.

The **Bristol** was an American ship nearly new, manned by a crew of 16 officers and men, having 100 passengers, about 90 of whom were in steerage. She sailed from Liverpool, October 16th, 1836, and arrived off the Hook, November 20th. Not succeeding in obtaining a pilot, she was driven, on the 21st, by a violent gale, upon the Rockaway shoals, a half a mile from the shore. The roughness of the sea rendered it impracticable to afford any assistance from the land, till after midnight of the 22nd, when a boat from the shore succeeded, at imminent peril, in rescuing 32 individuals from a watery grave. Of course 84 perished, of whom 3 were cabin passengers, and the residue emigrants and seamen.

The **Mexico** was an American Barque of 300 tons, manned by a crew of 12 men including officers, and having on board 112 steerage passengers, as ascertained from her papers, certified by the Collector at Liverpool. She left Liverpool October 23rd, 1836 only a week after the **Bristol**, but did not arrive off the Hook till the 31st of December. Not being able to find a pilot, she stood off to sea; but on returning to the Hook on the 2nd. of January and attempting to enter the Bay, she was driven on Hempstead Beach, about 10 miles east of the spot where the **Bristol** had been wrecked. The weather being intensely cold, and the waves constantly breaking over the vessel, most of the passengers and crew perished in the succeeding night. On the following day, a boat from the shore succeeded in reaching the vessel, and rescued the captain, 4 passengers, and 3 of the crew, who dropped from the bowsprit. The boat was unable to return, and the few survivors were necessarily left to their fate. The whole number that perished was 116. On the 11th of January 43 bodies were buried at the place where the monument is erected, and several others that were afterwards recovered. This monument was funded partly by the money found upon the bodies. A few of the bodies were recognised and taken by friends for burial elsewhere.

The whole number that perished from these two vessels only 7 weeks apart, was 200.

The **Mexico's** owner and its passenger broker had violated the *American Passengers Act of 1835* by not providing sufficient food for its passengers. As a result, the immigrants were literally starving by the sixtieth day of the sixty nine-day voyage. Yet no one raised a protest. News reports also showed that both shipowners had put their passengers in danger by overloading their ships with cargo and providing lifeboats only for the crew, not for the passengers. No action was taken against the owners. Eyewitnesses had seen the captain of the **Mexico** and some of his crewmen leap into the first and only rescue boat, leaving the women and children behind to die. No action was taken against the captain.

Other eyewitnesses reported that on New Year's Day, when the **Mexico** was standing off the entrance to New York Harbour, the harbour pilots were not at their offshore posts. Instead, they were in downtown Manhattan, drunk from their New Year's Eve celebrations of the night before, and idly eating sandwiches. It was also suggested that the pilots had earlier that summer destroyed a signal station at Sandy Hook. That station had been installed to monitor whether the pilots were on station. The accusations against the pilots went nowhere. There was a brief judicial inquiry of the pilots' dereliction of duty; but their defence was accepted, that the deaths of 215 people were due to "acts of God." The charges were dismissed.

The single successful prosecution had nothing at all to do with the deaths of hundreds of immigrants; it had to do solely with the theft of some of the **Bristol's** cargo that had washed up on shore. A few Long Islanders had mistakenly believed that the rule of "Findins' Keepins" applied. Those robbers were sent to prison. Meanwhile, no one bothered to find out who had chopped off the fingers and earlobes of drowned immigrants to get at gold rings and jewellery.

The wrecks of the **Bristol** and the **Mexico** demonstrated that, in 1836 and 37, cargo was more important than immigrants' lives or property, at least as far as businessmen, marine insurers, legislators, prosecutors, and civic leaders were concerned. After all, cargo—unlike immigrant passengers—had to be carefully handled, loaded and unloaded, and properly stored, to prevent damage; and cargo also had to be insured. On the other hand, the treatment of immigrant passengers meant nothing to the merchant shippers and captains. The passengers paid their fare, walked onto the ship, were mostly on their own while aboard, and walked off the ship. Their fares belonged to the shipowner whether the

passengers reached New York City or ended up as frozen corpses in a Long Island barn.

Some changes did come about. For example, the corrupt New York pilot system was overhauled and the Ambrose lightship was put back on station in the New York Bight. But these changes were not made because of the deaths of 215 immigrants. Instead, they came about because New York merchant shippers were outraged over the rise in cargo insurance rates after the wrecks of the **Bristol** and **Mexico**, and wanted safer passage for their ships and cargoes.

The callous attitude toward immigrants began in England. Passenger brokers for the **Mexico**—Fitzhugh and Caleb Grimshaw of London—had a name for the passengers they crowded onto the steerage decks of their ships. They called them “white cargo.” This term was a play on words. Decades before, the Liverpool brokers had dealt in “black ivory,” meaning the slave-trade. In fact the firm of Fitzhugh and C. Grimshaw worked out of Goree Piazas in Liverpool, the very place where the slave-traders had operated, only trade was no longer in “black ivory,” but in “white cargo.”

I was aware of New Yorkers’ callous attitude toward immigrants once the Irish potato famines pushed the flood gates of immigration open in the mid-1840s. I had also heard about the “INNA” posters (“Irish Need Not Apply”) that went up in the 1850s and 60s in New York. But I was surprised to find that in the mid-1830s, almost 10 years before the Great Famine, such discrimination was already institutional, was directed to all poor immigrants, and particularly to poor Irish immigrants. But in the mid-1830s, wasn’t the U.S. short of workers to build railroads and canals, and thus eager to get immigrants? Weren’t they welcome?

Frank Welsh in his book, *The Four Nations*, writes that pre-famine Irish emigrants had much better opportunities to flourish in the British Empire than they had in the U.S. His study of employment patterns in North America and Australia before the famine demonstrates that the Irish in Canada and Australia achieved a greater degree of success, and did so sooner, than they did in the U.S. On May 22, 1836, for example, just months before the **Bristol** and the **Mexico** set sail on their last voyages, New York City’s largest newspaper, *The New York Sunday Morning News*, printed an anti-immigration editorial entitled “European Emigrants.” That editorial is a distant echo of views held by many in the U.S. today. Indeed, the 1836 editorial could be read aloud on many of today’s radio talk shows, with just a few substitutions such as “illegal aliens” for “emigrants,” “Latin America” for “old world,” and “Mexico and Central America” for “England and Ireland.”

Lawyer Story of the Year (possibly of the decade and century!)

This allegedly took place in Charlotte, North Carolina. A lawyer purchased a box of very rare and expensive cigars, then insured them against, among other things, fire. Within a month, having smoked his entire stockpile of these great cigars, the lawyer filed a claim against the insurance company. In his claim, the lawyer stated the cigars were lost "in a series of small fires." The insurance company refused to pay, citing the obvious reason, that the man had consumed the cigars in the normal fashion. The lawyer sued – and WON! (Stay with me.)

Delivering the ruling, the judge agreed with the insurance company that the claim was frivolous. The judge stated nevertheless, that the lawyer held a policy from the company, in which it had warranted that the cigars were insurable and also guaranteed that it would insure them against fire, without defining what is considered to be unacceptable 'fire' and was obligated to pay the claim. Rather than endure lengthy and costly appeal process, the insurance company accepted the ruling and paid \$15,000 to the lawyer for his loss of the cigars that perished in the 'fires'. NOW FOR THE BEST PART...

After the lawyer cashed the cheque, the insurance company had him arrested on 24 counts of ARSON!!! With his own insurance claim and testimony from the previous case being used against him, the lawyer was convicted of intentionally burning his insured property and was sentenced to 24 months in jail and a \$24,000 fine. This story won First Place in last year's Criminal Lawyers Award contest. However, and sadly, there is no such award nor contest

Rice Pudding on the Menu at Port Erin

On the night of 1st November 1999 the Coastal Container Line's **Coastal Breeze** was on passage from Liverpool to Dublin in heavy weather and lost four 20ft containers overboard. One of these subsequently stranded at Bradda Head, Port Erin, Isle of Man, and the contents, a consignment of Ambrosia Creamed Rice, washed up on the local beaches. The local coastguard advised the public that taking goods from the container was illegal, and anything removed should be handed to the police. The pupils at King William's College soon began complaining about a surfeit of rice pudding!

The Saga of Seaforth

Anon

Five mighty gantry cranes
Working with a roar
One acquired a crumbled gear
Then there were four

Four blue gantry cranes
Standing near the sea
One blew a fuse then
There were three

Three tatty gantry cranes
Loading boxes red and blue
One needed some new lamps
Then there were two

Two hard pushed gantry cranes
Travelling with a lurch
Everyone wondering which would be
The next to fall off the perch

Then there would be but
One sorry gantry crane
Striving all alone
Someone pushed the safety tit
And all hands went home

THE ENDURANCE EXPEDITION

a summary of the talk given to the Society on March 16, 2017
by Shaun Lewis

On 8 August 1914, Shackleton and his men left the UK onboard the **Endurance** bound for the Antarctic. The expedition team's objective was to be the first to cross the Antarctic continent, starting on the Weddell Sea coast, visiting the Pole and finishing on the Ross Sea coast.

The **Endurance** called at South Georgia. There, the whalers warned that the floating pack ice in the Weddell Sea seemed particularly bad that year and the sea was showing signs of freezing over earlier than normal. Unfortunately, the whalers' predictions proved accurate. In January 1915, just 80 miles or one



The sea routes of **Endurance**, the **James Caird**, and **Aurora** (to lay the overland supply depot route by the Ross Sea Party), and the planned overland route of the Weddell Sea Party led by Ernest Shackleton on his trans-Antarctic expedition of 1914–15:

- Voyage of **Endurance**
- Drift of **Endurance** in pack ice
- Sea ice drift after **Endurance** sinks
- Voyage of the **James Caird**
- Planned trans-Antarctic route
- Voyage of **Aurora** to Antarctica
- Retreat of **Aurora**
- Supply depot route

Picture courtesy Wikimedia Commons

good day's sailing from Vahsel Bay, the ship was immobilised by the ice. Despite many sterling efforts to cut themselves free of the ice by hand and clear a path to more open water, by the end of January 1915 it became obvious that the ship and her crew were frozen in for the coming winter. On 22 February the ship drifted to 77 degrees south, the furthest south the expedition was to attain. The navigator repeatedly tried to establish wireless contact with the Falklands, the nearest wireless station, but to no avail. The World was not expecting to hear from Shackleton's party for two years, nobody knew their plight or whereabouts and a world war was raging. There was no prospect of rescue.

By June 1915 it was mid-winter and the temperatures had dropped to the minus 30s degrees centigrade. The ship had drifted 670 miles since being trapped and hopes were raised that they might soon reach open water, but after several gales, the wind compacted the ice ever tighter and the enormous pressure was unsustainable. The pack ice rose up under the pressure and piled huge blocks, up to fifteen feet high and weighing many tons, up and around the ship. Shackleton was forced to order his men to make preparations to abandon ship at short notice.

Throughout September the little ship was pounded and squeezed by the ice. In October, a huge pressure wave lifted her entirely out of the water and dropped her onto the ice at a 30 degree angle. Later in the month a similar shock was too much for the poor **Endurance** and she started leaking badly. The men worked frantically to save their ship. Shackleton ordered the lifeboats and

IMMENSE ATTRACTION.
TOWN HALL, BURTON-ON-TRENT
 THE BURTON-ON-TRENT MUNICIPAL OFFICERS' GUILD
 has arranged with THE LECTURE AGENCY, Ltd., of London, for
SIR ERNEST SHACKLETON
 TO GIVE HIS **C.V.O., F.R.G.S.**
LECTURE
 ENTITLED:
"THE SOUTH POLE"
THURSDAY, NOV. 21 at 8
 In addition to giving a popular account of his own South Polar Expedition Sir Ernest will describe and explain the Expeditions under Capt. Scott and Capt. Amundsen.
 The Lecture will be fully illustrated from PHOTOGRAPHS and some very striking KINEMATOGRAPH FILMS taken during the Expedition.
 THE CHAIR WILL BE TAKEN BY
GEORGE T. LYNAM, Esq., M.Inst. C.E.
 (President of the Guild.)
 RESERVED SEATS, 3/- (Family Tickets to admit four), 10/-; UNRESERVED, 2/- & 1/-
 Early Doors open at 7.30 p.m. for Ticket-holders only. Ordinary Doors open at 7.45. Lasting at 9.30 p.m.
 PLAN OF HALL & Tickets now ready at HORNE, THOMPSON & Co.'s Music Warehouse, 184 & 185 Station St., Burton-on-Trent. Telephone No. 471. Tickets may also be had from members of the Guild, or from WAUDE THOMPSON, Guild Box Secretary, TOWN HALL, BURTON-ON-TRENT.
 Late Cars will be run to Ashby

Endurance final sinking, November 1915



Pictures courtesy Wikimedia Commons



Launching the James Caird 24 April 1916



Shackleton's grave in Grytviken, South Georgia.

sledges to be loaded onto the ice. For 24 hours they worked the pumps, but the pressure of the ice built up again and, finally, the ship was beaten. Her keel was ripped out, the decks broke upwards and the water poured in. At 5pm on 27 October 1915, Shackleton gave the order to abandon ship.

The men were now marooned on the ice, 210 miles from the nearest land and 1,200 miles from the nearest human habitation. Shackleton calmly told his men that with the ship and the stores gone, they would go home. The men salvaged what supplies and material they could and prepared to go home on foot and by lifeboat. Only items essential for survival were retained and stored in two lifeboats. The boats were mounted on sledge runners and the plan was that they would march 200 miles north-west to an old whaling station on the tip of the Antarctic Peninsular.

However, the boats with their sledges, weighed over a ton apiece and after only three days of heavy toil, they had covered barely a mile and a half. It had proved impossible to drag the lifeboats through the snow and ice. There was nothing more to be done, but to pitch camp on the ice, wait for the ice to break up and then sail to Paulet Island, off the Palmer Peninsular, where Shackleton knew there to be plenty of supplies in a former Swedish expedition's hut. The men settled into a new life of waiting for the ice to break up whilst they were carried further north.

They retrieved a third lifeboat from their earlier camp and adapted the boats to provide more shelter against the Antarctic elements, ready for the day when they would head for the safety of the Palmer Peninsular. They had managed to salvage 3 tons of essential stores such as fuel and food. Whilst they were able to salvage tinned food from the flooded ship, they were unable to recover sufficient flour and sugar to maintain a balanced diet of carbohydrates. Frank Hurley, the expedition's photographer, managed to recover the negative plates of his photographic record of the expedition. He persuaded Shackleton that, notwithstanding the disaster and need to save on weight, some photographic evidence of the doomed expedition should be saved.

Shackleton's men were to remain marooned on the ice for over 5 months as they could not launch the boats until the ice broke up. They began to despair as winter set in once again and the supplies of food and precious blubber began to run out. Without blubber they could not heat food. As the rations were cut and the number of hot meals reduced, the men's bodies were unable to generate sufficient heat to protect them from the cold. The situation worsened when, after passing within 70 miles of Paulet Island, they realised that the current would soon take them not north-west, but north, beyond the northern tip of the Antarctic and out to the open sea. Finally, on 9 April 1916, their ice floe broke up and the party found themselves surrounded by open water. They took to the boats and headed for land. Fifteen months after first being trapped in the ice, they were now free.

For seven days the men rowed across the open sea in their quest for a landfall. All the time they were exposed to the elements, constantly wet through and forced to dodge towering icebergs. The lack of physical conditioning and carbohydrates over the previous months rendered them

quickly exhausted. Constant rain and snow squalls not only made life extremely uncomfortable, but also rendered navigation by sextant almost impossible. Overnight, ice built up over the boats, inside and outside. This had to be hacked off in the morning. A gale sprang up and some of the men, fifteen months after last being at sea, were seasick. The waves crashing over the helmsmen of each of the boats, froze their clothes solid as it immersed them. The constant immersion in salt water caused painful boils which erupted in a grey, gooey mess. Their only food was raw seal meat or uncooked pemmican. After three days they ran out of water. More than half the men were insane with thirst and exhaustion. It was imperative that they made a landfall quickly. Shackleton took advantage of the gale-force winds from the south, to head north for Elephant Island, even though it meant facing the South Atlantic waves.

Two days later, and for the first time in 497 days, they were finally able to step onto dry land. The men were totally exhausted and completely demoralised.

They were at last safe, with an ample supply of wildlife to provide fresh meat, but the island offered no shelter, stank of penguin guano and, most importantly, was off the main routes of the whaling vessels. There was no hope of rescue. Shackleton responded by setting off with five others in the lifeboat, **James Caird**, to cross 800 miles of the South Atlantic in winter and to seek help from the whaling station in Grytviken, South Georgia. This voyage would be ten times the distance the men had just suffered over seven days. It would take them through 80mph winds and 60 foot high Cape Horn rollers. A one degree error in course would mean missing South Georgia by fifteen miles and yet, navigation would be done using a pocket compass.

The conditions for the voyage across the South Atlantic were appalling. Three men worked watch and watch about on deck. There they endured continual immersion every three or four minutes by water and spray whilst those off watch tried to rest in the bottom of the boat. Navigation was extremely difficult. Even on the few occasions that the sun could be observed, the boat was tossed about so much that it was nigh impossible to take an accurate sight with the sextant. Ice was a continual problem.

After a week at sea, a strong gale blew up and lasted 48 hours to create monstrous waves. All told, the men faced ten days of these gales on the voyage. They were soaked to the bone, frostbitten, suffered swollen limbs and, wherever the skin came into contact with their frozen or salt-water-drenched clothing, they were badly chafed. They were still wearing the same wet clothes they had donned seven months earlier. After fourteen days at sea, they could not be sure of their position to within ten miles, such had been the difficulties of navigation. They had only seen the sun four times. If they continued on their course they might miss South Georgia completely. They altered course into the wind and more to the south, for the western and uninhabited side of South Georgia.

The following day they sighted land, and none too soon, as their water supply had now run out. All the men were suffering from raging thirst. They calculated that the nearest whaling station was 150 miles by sea on the other coast, but without water they would not make it. Accordingly, Shackleton planned to make their landfall in daylight the following day. However, that night, on 8 May 1916, whilst only eighteen miles offshore, a fearful gale blew up and it developed into a full-scale hurricane, driving them onto the outlying rocks of the island. The men battled against the wind and sea to haul the little lifeboat off the lee shore. Finally, on 10 May and after five attempts, they successfully negotiated the rocky reef to land in King Haakon Bay. They were lucky. A 500 ton steamer had foundered with the loss of all hands in the same hurricane. The sixteen day voyage of the **James Caird** is rightly acknowledged as one of the greatest small boat journeys in history.

The following day Shackleton recognised that it would be impossible for him and his men to sail around the coast to the nearest whaling station at Stromness. Neither the lifeboat nor the men were capable of making the journey along such a treacherous coastline in such awful weather. Instead, he and two volunteers set out on the perilous journey through uncharted mountains and crevasses to cross the 10,000 feet-high snow-capped mountains to reach Stromness overland.

They had no maps, no mountaineering equipment or clothing and no knowledge of the terrain or route to follow. They carried no tent nor sleeping bags, but enough food for three days. After 36 hours of hard marching and several scrapes, they walked into Stromness to sound the alarm. The whalers they had last seen seventeen months before did not recognise the emaciated, frost-bitten, soot-blackened tramps who walked into the whaling station. When they did, several of the hard-bitten whalers burst into tears. Just a few hours later, a terrible blizzard struck the mountain tops. Had Shackleton and his two partners remained in the mountains that night, they would certainly have perished.

However, whilst the three men were now safe, their colleagues were not. It was to take another 3½ months before the Chilean Navy rescued the men marooned on Elephant island. To Shackleton's intense relief, every single member of the marooned party was still alive.

So, finally, ended an epic tale of endurance and outstanding leadership. It was not until 1958 that the 2,158 mile crossing was successfully achieved, by Sir Vivian Fuchs and Sir Edmund Hillary, and using diesel-driven tractors. The first crossing on foot was much later, in 1993, and completed by Sir Rannulph Fiennes and Dr Mark Stroud using the best available of modern kit.

The Liverpool Nautical Research Society
(Founded in 1938)

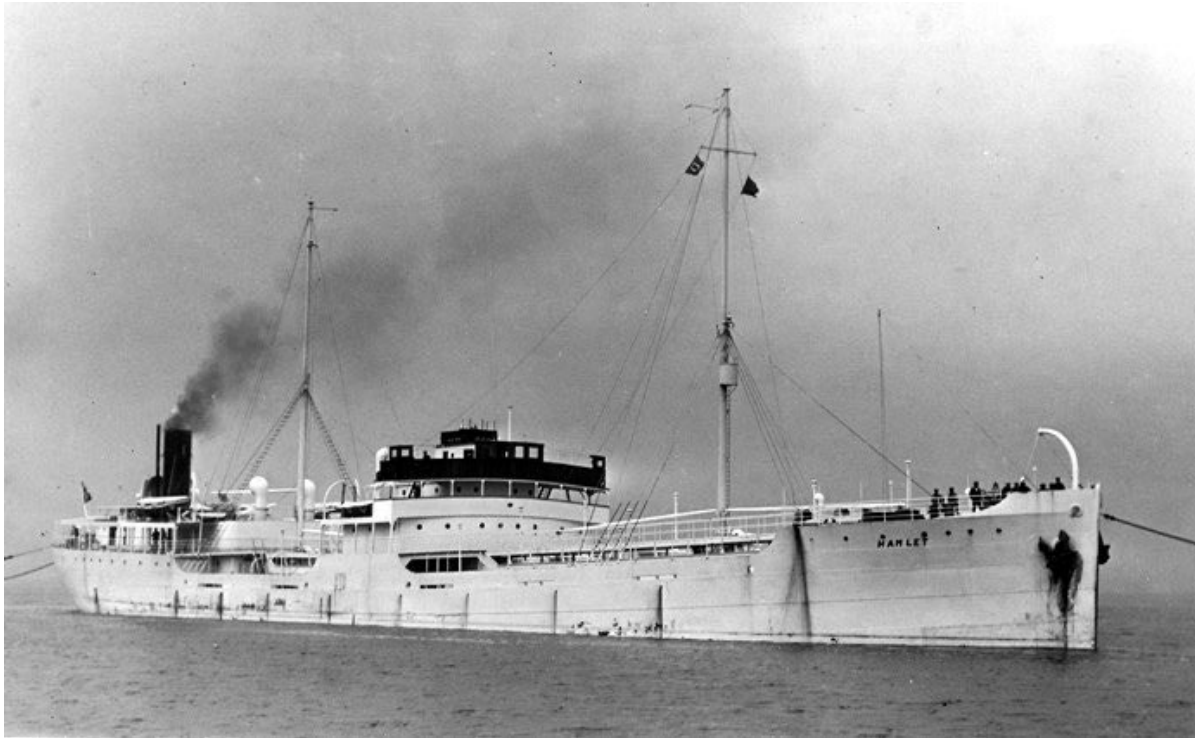
THE BULLETIN

Volume 61 No.2, September, 2017



The severely damaged tanker **Ohio** limps into Valletta Harbour See page 24 Wikimedia

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M.T. **Hamlet**, built 1916 and dismantled 1956

See page 7



The four-masted barque **Primrose Hill** pictured in Bristol Docks. See page 38
Picture held by the John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland

LiverpoolNautical Research Society



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Subscription Payments by Standing Order

To assist the Society in administration of the collection of annual subscriptions we will be offering members the facility to pay by Banker's Standing Order. This significant improvement will mean that Members will no longer need to remember to post the annual payment and, where the offer is taken up, the Society will not need to send reminders.

The Society will be grateful if Members take up this opportunity by completing and forwarding to their own bank the application which will be included with the December Bulletin.

We are currently considering how best this facility can be offered to overseas members.

Our New Look Website

Some ten years or so ago the Society embarked a major initiative to upgrade its website. Through this we began complementing the content of the ever popular 'Bulletin' with further details of events and articles for quick on-line reference. Target readership was aimed both for existing Members and also its ability to reach out hoping to attract potential Members having interest in pursuing nautical research. As a result, we were able to welcome many new members who would otherwise have been unaware of our existence.

Since the early part of this year a small working group has been actively involved with a new initiative to not only revise and refresh the existing site but primarily to establish and develop a brand new approach. In doing so we have been fortunate to have harnessed the expertise and enthusiastic support of Liverpool based Sandbox Digital. The new website was launched at the end of May and we were able to share this news with those Members who attended our AGM and final presentation of the season. This is our first opportunity of alerting those of you outside this area as to what is now available if you have an on-line facility.

Feedback to date has been very positive with everyone agreeing that this is a great improvement on the previous site. Of course, to take advantage you do need a computer or smart phone with an internet feature and, from all accounts, this will enable a large number of Members to tune in. Do try it out and this being the case then please contact us via the website with your views and ideas or suggestions for future consideration. See us at:

www.liverpoolnauticalresearchsociety.org

Annual General Meeting

Chairman's Annual Report, May, 2017

Once again the society has had a good year and membership continues to remain at a stable level,

Membership

We currently have 196 core members, 3 corporate and 1 'ex officio' member, (Sarah Starkey of the Maritime Museum Archive). Over the last over two years we have welcomed 33 new members, which is very heartening. It is possible that our move to the the Athenaeum with its central location has been a spur to recruitment.

Attendance

Our attendance figures for our monthly talks has remained at a steady level. The average attendance has been 45. I would remind members that attendance is not open to the public and has to be restricted to society members only, to comply with fire regulations for the Athenaeum. However a small number of invited guests is acceptable. I would also remind you that from September we will be meeting at twelve noon with each talk starting at 1230.

The Monday facility

The Monday research facility continues to be well supported despite the library now being open to the public. For the benefit of new members this facility takes place in the library of the Merseyside Maritime Museum at 10 a.m. each Monday. Any LNRS member is welcome to come along. Our relationship with the library and archive staff remains strong.

Finances

Our Treasurer, Vin. Finn, will be giving his annual financial report. However the society's council receives regular reports on the financial position. Your council took the decision to hire professional help in order to improve our web site for a modest cost. I can report that the society's finances are healthy .

Christmas lunch

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

Talks programme

We have had a full programme of talks throughout the 2016/17 season. Our talks secretary Ian Duckett has arranged speakers on a diverse range of maritime themes. I would like to thank him for his work in this regard and already know he has put forward another excellent programme for our next session.

Bulletin

The Bulletin continues to be the popular newsletter it always has been. Members have commented to me on how much they enjoy reading it. My thanks therefore to Bill Ogle our editor for another successful year of publication. As you know The Bulletin has an eclectic mix of maritime stories and Bill will be happy to receive articles from members for consideration in future publication.

The website

The council decided that the website was a bit “tired” and needed revamping. A small sub group was set up to look into this and offer suggestions. The help of professional web designer was sought and this has proved successful. A fresh website and layout was produced with more pictorial content and the text will be updated from time to time. The site will be up and running tomorrow. (19th May 2017). Members should note that the web address will NOT CHANGE. I would like to put on record that the society is grateful to our President, Bill Pape for his generous donation to offset costs associated with the new website. Bill also sends his regards and best wishes to all members.

Enquiries from the public

Enquiries from the public vary greatly from month to month. My thanks to Fergie Molloy and John Coates taking on this work throughout the year.

Projects

Bill Ogle has finished his indexing of ships mentioned in Sea Breezes between 1909 – 1982. This is a monumental piece of work and Bill deserves a lot of credit for completing this project which has taken him years of effort.

Cataloguing of the Keith Lewis Photographic Record continues and my thanks to Alec Hampson, Gordon Wright and Joe Austin who are involved with this.

John Stokoe and others are currently working on the Ocean Fleet Records including Elder Dempster records.

Committee

The committee has met regularly during the year. I would like to thank all the committee for their work:–

Vice Chairman **John Stokoe**; Secretary **Tony Melling**; Treasurer **Vincent Finn**; Talks Secretary **Ian Duckett**; Editor **Bill Ogle** and **Sarah Starkey** representing the Maritime Museum.

Today marks the end of my period of being Chairman. I have enjoyed the role over the last two years and I thank members for their support during this time. I am not completely disappearing for I shall be Vice Chairman during the next season. John Stokoe will be taking over as Chairman and I know he will do a splendid job.

Finally 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, 2017

(Previous year's figures in brackets)

Opening Bank and Cash Balance		2017	2016	6,756
Income	Subscriptions	2,800	2,650	
	Donations	502	428	
	Refreshments	161	187	
	Sale of books	33	80	
	Member's Payment (MMM Grp. Discount)	70		
	* C. Loughran (Xmas Dinner cheque)	34		
	Deposit Account Interest	23		
	TOTAL			3,623
Expenditure				
	Bulletin – Printing	1,111	1,067	
	– Distribution	638	641	
	Athenaeum – Room Hire	675	675	
	– Refreshments	320	225	
	– Xmas Lunch	115	118	
	Speaker's Presentations/Refreshments	183	155	
	Donation to S.S.A.F.A.	50		
	Nat'l Museums L'pool (re Grp. Discount)	70		
	Web-site Hosting Fee	43		
	Expenses – Hon. Secretary	158		
	– Hon. Treasurer	46		
	"Sea Breezes" Index, Printing	175		
	Acting Secretary's Expenses	41		
	Sandbox Digital (Website Development)	250		
	Athenaeum (re: * above)	34		
	Bank Charges	30	20	
	TOTAL			3,939
TOTAL SOCIETY FUNDS AT YEAR END :				6,440
Made up of:				
	Closing CURRENT Account Balance	1,706		
	“ DEPOSIT “ “	4,577		
	Cash in Hand – Hon. Secretary	103		
	– Hon. Treasurer	54		
	TOTAL			6,440

Signed: *V. Finn*

Examined by: *J. Coates* *J.P. Stokoe*

All Bank Accounts are held with Santander U.K. plc.,

14th April, 2017

Society Annual General Meeting - Minutes

held at the Athenaeum Club Liverpool, on 18th May 2017

- * Present: The Chairman plus 48 members and 5 guests.
- * Welcome and Apologies: The Chairman Willie Williamson welcomed all present. Apologies had been received from David White, as noted in the Attendance Register.
- * Acceptance and Matters Arising 19th May 2016: The Minutes of last year's AGM were published in the September 2016 Bulletin. Copies were available for members present at this meeting. The Minutes were accepted as a true record as proposed by Alex Hampson and seconded by Don Watt.
- * Matters Arising: The Chairman indicated that all matters arising would be covered by agenda items.
- * Chairman's Annual Report: Willie Williamson read out his Annual Report, which revealed a secure and very active level of Society operations. A copy is shown on page 1 of this Bulletin.
- * Financial Report and Approval of Accounts to 30th April 2017: Vincent Finn presented the Treasurer's Report, which shows a total closing balance of £6,440 compared to £6,756 at the same point last year, a decrease of £316. The main items of expenditure were Bulletin costs (£1,749), Athenaeum room hire (£675) and initial website development cost of £250. Main sources of Income derived from Subscriptions (£2,800) an increase of £150, and Donations of £502, an increase of £74. Vin Finn was commended for the quality of the reports and the insight they bring. It was agreed that the present subscription rates will remain for the foreseeable future. Colleagues were provided with the report and a copy is included with the AGM report. The Treasurer's Report was put to the AGM for approval, was proposed by Arthur Jennion and seconded by Bill Ogle. It was accepted as a true record by the AGM.
- * Talks Programme 2017 – 2018: Ian Duckett advised that a full programme had been organised for next year with a wide variety of topics, to be delivered by a mixture of members and guest speakers. This Programme has been included in the June Bulletin, which members will receive shortly. He advised that next year talks would commence at 12.30 pm, with refreshments at 12.00 pm.
- * Election of Officers to the Council: The Secretary Tony Melling announced the following have been nominated for office for the coming year:

Chairman	John Stokoe,
Vice-Chairman	Willie Williamson,
Honorary Secretary	Tony Melling,
Honorary Treasurer	Vincent Finn,
Programme Secretary	Ian Duckett,
Bulletin/Website Editor	Bill Ogle.

Since Willie having now completed his two year service as Chairman is reverting to Vice-Chairman for a year, he was congratulated and thanked by Tony Melling on behalf of the whole membership for his very committed and enthusiastic period of office. John Stokoe was warmly welcomed as the new Chairman.

The motion to elect all of the above was proposed by Andy Forbes and seconded by Cedric Loughran. The nominations were approved unanimously by the members present.

*Date of next AGM – To be held at the Athenaeum, Liverpool on 17 May 2018, at 12.15 pm.

MONDAY MEETINGS

An important statement has been issued by National Museums Liverpool:

“As part of the new Sea Galleries development at Merseyside Maritime Museum, National Museums Liverpool is creating an improved Maritime Archives research centre.

The improved Archive facilities will open in Spring 2018. They will offer an enhanced public space providing information about archive material relating to Liverpool shipping and seafarers, as well as improved research facilities for visitors accessing National Museums Liverpool’s Maritime Archives and Library.

To enable this work to take place, Maritime Archives and Library will need to temporarily close to the public from 1 September 2017 until spring 2018, and during this time we will be unable to accommodate researchers or answer enquiries.”

The Halifax Explosion 6th December 1917

by L.N.R.S. Member W.A. Ogle

In the harbour of Halifax, Nova Scotia, the most devastating manmade explosion in the pre-atomic age occurred when the **Mont Blanc**, a French munitions ship, exploded 20 minutes after colliding with another vessel.

As World War I raged in Europe, the port city of Halifax bustled with ships carrying troops, relief supplies, and munitions across the Atlantic Ocean. On the morning of December 6, the Norwegian vessel **Imo** left her mooring in Halifax harbour for New York City. At the same time, the French freighter **Mont Blanc**, its cargo hold packed with highly explosive munitions: 2,300 tons of picric acid, 200 tons of TNT, 35 tons of high octane gasoline, and 10 tons of gun cotton was forging through the harbour's narrows to join a military convoy that would escort her across the Atlantic.

At approximately 0845 the two ships collided, setting the picric acid ablaze. The **Mont Blanc** was propelled toward the shore by the collision, and the crew rapidly abandoned ship, attempting without success to alert the harbour of the peril of the burning ship. Spectators gathered along the waterfront to witness the spectacle of the blazing ship, which minutes later brushed by a harbour pier, setting it ablaze. The Halifax Fire Department responded quickly and was positioning its engine next to the nearest hydrant when the **Mont Blanc** exploded at 0905 in a blinding white flash.



A view across the devastated neighbourhood after the explosion, looking toward the Dartmouth side of the harbour.

The steamship **Imo**, can be seen aground on the far side.

Picture Wikimedia Commons

The massive explosion killed more than 1,800 people, injured another 9,000, including blinding 200, and destroyed almost the entire north end of the city of Halifax, including more than 1,600 homes. The resulting shock wave shattered windows 50 miles away, and the sound of the explosion could be heard hundreds of miles away.

The event is remembered annually by the citizens of Halifax.

The Dragon and the Liverbird

Chinese seamen in World War II

A summary of the presentation to the Society on April 20th, 2017

by Charles and Yvonne Foley

In the Second World War both Alfred Holt and Anglo-Saxon Petroleum based their Chinese Seamen's Reserve Pools in Liverpool. This meant that at the start of the War there were up to 20,000 Chinese seamen based in the city. These men earned little more than a third of the pay of a British rating and had no entitlement to the War Risk Bonus given to the British. Increasing discontent with their situation led to a growing militancy amongst the Chinese. This culminated in a long strike in 1942 and for the rest of the conflict they were branded as troublemakers by the shipowners and by the Government. With the end of hostilities they determined to get rid of those they saw as a problem. The Chinese were forced out. But many left behind them their partners and their children. Few were ever to see their husbands and fathers again.

A recipe for trouble. At the beginning of the War Holt's recruited its men mainly from Hong Kong and Shanghai. Anglo-Saxon got its seamen predominantly from Singapore. Both companies offered two-year contracts with Holt's paying a basic of £4.13.9 (£4.69) and Anglo-Saxon £5.15.0 (£5.75) per month. In contrast, the basic pay under National Maritime Board rates for a British seaman was £12. 12. 6 (£12.62).

As the War went on, casualties mounted in the merchant fleet. By September 1940 about 100 Chinese seamen had been killed in British ships. But although the War Risk Bonus paid to British seamen had steadily increased from the earliest days of the War, Chinese seamen had no such entitlement. What they received was at the discretion of the shipowners and highly variable.

But poor pay was not the only cause of grievance amongst Chinese crews on British ships. Violence against Chinese seamen by their white officers seemed to have been growing. In 1942 the Chinese Ambassador, Wellington Koo, in a letter to the Minister of War Transport, Lord Leathers, felt compelled to protest at the number of deaths amongst Chinese seamen on British ships. Relations with the Chinese were poor and getting worse.

The Government's own actions were also adding to the sense of grievance and frustration amongst the men. Routinely, disputes were being settled by force. A long running disagreement that began in September 1940 was brought to an end in April 1941 with men being imprisoned and then deported.

A sense of mutual antipathy had been established. The Chinese were regarded as troublemakers and they, in turn, were growing ever more embittered at their treatment.

Strike. With the entry of Japan into the War in December 1941 and the invasion of both Hong Kong and Singapore, the option of simply deporting the Chinese had gone. It also meant that they were now firmly based in the UK and faced with UK costs. And this on a wage that was only a fraction of the pay received by European seamen.

Soon men who were paid off after completing their contract were refusing to re-engage. Their ships could not be sailed without them. The men were in a strong position. And they were getting organised. By this point they had two unions representing them.

The strike stayed solid from February to April 1942 as the employers and the UK Government refused to negotiate with either union. They would only talk to the Chinese Government officials, people in whom the men were said to have little confidence.

For the men the key issue was equality of treatment. The focus was the War Risk Bonus. And the bitterness of the dispute was not helped when the Liverpool police broke up a union meeting, violence broke out and several Chinese were imprisoned.

The strike only came to an end when, under the London Agreement of April 1942, the men were given the same War Risk pay as the British – £10 per month. They also got a £2 per month flat increase in their pay. However, at the end of 1942 British seamen were awarded a further increase in pay. The Chinese were not to be offered anything else until 1944 when they got a further £1.2.0 (£1.10) per month.

Almost inevitably 1943 saw desertions by Chinese seamen from British ships in New York increase significantly. British officials in New York reported that low pay and bad treatment was exacerbating the situation. Men were refusing to sail. They were walking off ships and their reputation as being difficult to deal with was now firmly established.

The War ends: Chinese pay is slashed. From the early years of the War, British shipowners had become ever more concerned about their likely competitive position when peace came. They were worried about the new vessels operated by the neutral Swedes. But their main cause of anxiety was the Americans. They would not recognise the restrictions on competition that the British shipowners' cartel had enjoyed before the War.

Faced with this situation, Holts wanted to cut costs and deal with the militancy of their Chinese crews. They wanted to get rid of the men who had sailed with them during the War and, one imagines, most especially all those who had caused them problems.

At the end of the conflict wages for Chinese seamen were cut. The War Risk money was removed from the Chinese but not the increase they had obtained late in the War. The War Risk Bonus was, however, kept for the British seamen.

Butterfield and Swire, Holt's agents in China, wrote to the Holt head office explaining that trouble was inevitable. That trouble began when Chinese crews in Sydney, Australia struck at the end of 1946. Rates were now so low that it became impossible to recruit skilled men and quartermasters in Shanghai. Men in Shanghai could not support their families. Nor could seamen in Hong Kong. Back in the UK the Government was taking action to remove the Chinese.

Government action. At a meeting at the Home Office on 19th October 1945 the Government decided to remove the Chinese seamen from Britain. They were said to be an undesirable element in Liverpool. Perhaps of more relevance, the authorities in the city wanted the accommodation occupied by the Chinese.

Deportation was not a legal option. Simply, the men's landing conditions were altered so that they would be required to leave by a certain specified date. Those who did not leave could then be rounded up by the Police.

The Home Office files show that 800 had been repatriated by 23rd March 1946 of whom 231 had to be 'rounded up'. By 11th July 1946 a total of 1,362 men, including the 800, had been repatriated. Fifteen had been rounded up in a two-day search at the end of this period. It seems that by the middle of 1946 the men had gone.

The men go back. The men from Hong Kong and Singapore went back to the devastation caused by the Japanese. Unemployment was high and pay was low. But just getting back was a problem for those from the Mainland. At the beginning of 1946 Shanghai men were being held in Singapore and Hong Kong because of the shortage of ships going on to that city. We have some verbal evidence that some men jumped ship in each of these ports.

When the men did get back to Shanghai, they were faced with unemployment rates of 25% or more and by rampant inflation. By the end of 1947, given Holt's low pay rates, Shanghai men were flocking to the China Merchants line. Although Holts had increased pay by 50% earlier that year, they still remained uncompetitive.

Shanghai men were also joining such Shanghai-owned lines as Y.K. Pao and H.H. Tung. Between 1946 and 1949 many moved to Hong Kong with these shipping magnates. High unemployment amongst seamen in Hong Kong in 1948 would surely have meant that men who had jobs with Shanghai lines would have remained with them.

The Chinese Seamen's Union, the Kuomintang but apparently a Communist infiltrated union, also transferred to Hong Kong. Its officials then resurfaced in 1947 as representatives of the Hong Kong Seamen's Union. A sign painted on the wall of a building in Jordan Road, Kowloon still shows where those offices used to be.

Married men – forced repatriation. Many of the seamen who left Liverpool were undoubtedly happy to go home. But for hundreds of Chinese seamen it meant leaving their wives and their children. This presented the Government with a problem that they never fully solved. The consequent muddle and confusion led to the break up of hundreds of families.

Initially, the Home Office instructed that deportation orders were not to be made against men with British born wives. They were not to be included in the first list of those to go. They were to be reported on individually. Then it was decided that these men were still to be told that they must leave by a specified date but that their cases would be investigated. However, they were not to be given any indication that a man married to a British born woman had the right to remain in the UK.

The only concession afforded to the married couples at this stage was that

the men were not to be made to leave on the first ship due out on the 10th December 1945. However, Crew Agreements now in the National Archives show that ships were leaving before this date carrying men being repatriated.

Nevertheless pressure was being exerted on the married men to force them out of the country. Memos in the



A Wedding in Liverpool at the time

Home Office files of 1945 show that they were to be discouraged from taking up shore employment and were not to be allowed 'to land for discharge for that purpose.'

If the men could not get jobs ashore, could they get seagoing jobs that would enable them to keep their families? Holts were exerting pressure to prevent this. The company remained determined to keep its labour costs as low as it could. Chinese seamen could not get jobs at British pay rates. By now British officials were becoming disturbed at what was happening.

J. R. Garstang, the Immigration Officer at Liverpool, protested that men were being forced to sign on ships under a new Chinese Agreement or be paid nothing. Men could not support their families on these pay rates and it was forcing the wives to go to China with their families, where, as we have already seen, the rates offered would not allow them to live either.

This was, as S.E. Dudley of the Home Office stated, ‘...reinforced repatriation..’ By this stage the Chinese Pool managers were placing off pay all Chinese seamen married to British born women who refused to be repatriated or to sign on vessels for discharge in the Far East.

Government officials were arguing that no Chinese seamen married to a British born woman had at any time been forcibly repatriated. But it seems that the effect of official action and inaction combined with the behaviour of the Shipping Federation had achieved the same result.

The problem of the men and their wives began to get lost in bureaucracy and further confusion. In a note to file C. Parkinson of the Home Office wrote that ‘satisfactory’ Chinese seamen married to British born women should be allowed to take shore employment. However, the matter was not seen as being worth action at other than the lower levels of the system. Parkinson suggested that the decision should be left to the Immigration Officer at Liverpool. But no action was taken on this and the file was archived. The issue was consigned to official oblivion.

The women and their children. In August 1946 an article appeared in the national newspaper the “News Chronicle” reporting on a meeting led by a Mrs. Lee protesting that 150 women married to Chinese men had been left destitute in Liverpool. This article said that each of the women had an average of three children. An article in the local newspaper the ‘Liverpool ‘Echo’ of 19th August 1946 reported on the same meeting. This article stated that there were 300 women. Some of these women were said to have six or seven children. Obviously indicative of long-term relationships and showing that there may have been anywhere up to a thousand children.

So far we have found no further official information on the women but we do have information from interviews with some of their now somewhat elderly children.

Their stories show that many of the women thought that they had been deserted. Some had their children adopted or placed in children’s homes. Others worked at two or more jobs in an attempt to keep their families together.

It seems that some of the men did get back. In the early 1950s some did return, perhaps those who were working for Hong Kong based shipping lines. But by then it was too late. Their wives had remarried.

Why did it happen? Racism was evident in the merchant navy from the early years of the twentieth century. Approximately 6,000 Chinese seamen had served in the British merchant fleet in World War I. They had faced demands from the National Sailor’s and Firemen’s Union that they be dismissed and after that War they too had been forced out of the UK.

Social class was also a factor. In the Government papers there are several references to the social class of the seamen's wives. There are clear indications that this is of relevance to the decision being made.

The British shipowners' fear of competition and Holts' desire to maintain its cheap source of labour were also factors.

A number of the Chinese seamen were union men and, moreover, members of a Communist union. Increased tension with the Soviet Union at the end of the War would not have helped their case. Chinese publications show that men with union connections were blackballed when they got back to their home ports. They could not get a ship back to the UK.

Officials and politicians may have been afraid of the possibility of high unemployment after the War. This had occurred after World War One. And it is not unusual as high levels of Government spending are cut back and large numbers of discharged servicemen come on to the labour market.

We know that the City of Liverpool wanted the housing occupied by the men, and the women and their husbands had little political influence. In relatively small numbers and in a devastated Britain they were never going to be seen as a priority.

Today



After over 60 years Liverpool now has a memorial to the men and to their wives. It sits with the other memorials to the merchant navy at the Pierhead. In English and in Chinese it informs those who read it of the contribution made by the Chinese seamen in both World Wars. It also tells of an incident that, until now, has remained only in the memories of those who were affected by it.

Why is Greenwich the London place to visit?

by LNRS Member Tony Melling

When friends and colleagues were enjoying our recent talk on the fate of Chinese seaman, I had to be in London. Whilst there I took the Thames ferry down to Greenwich, birthplace of Henry VIII, Mary Tudor and Elizabeth I. I was astounded by what I found: a World Heritage Site that in this case totally deserves the title. In one area is combined:



Prince Frederick's Barge (1732) at the National Maritime Museum

- The world's largest maritime museum
- Wren's stunning Old Royal Naval College, which includes the Painted Hall, Chapel, and the Queen's House (by Inigo Jones).
- The Royal Observatory
- The Planetarium
- The **Cutty Sark**
- Greenwich Park

A far too brief morning visit did scant justice to all of this. The National Maritime Museum had to be the focus; four floors of inspirational stories from Britain's seafaring past housed in what was once a school for sailors' children. Space is limited to expand on its full wealth of maritime treasures; the most memorable are therefore:

- Maritime London: the evolution of the capital's trading achievements.
- Jutland 1916: the devastating human outcome of this most inconclusive of naval battles.
- Turner's Battle of Trafalgar: using Turner's painting as the focal point
- Prince Frederick's Barge: superbly restored and so accessible that the closest detail is clearly seen.
- Nelson, Navy, Nation: the Admiral's outstanding leadership qualities and ingenious naval strategy set in the context of the resources and men at his disposal
- Nelson's Uniforms: including those worn at the Battle of the Nile and Trafalgar. In particular, there is a memorable display of the blood stained stockings and breeches cut from Nelson after he was fatally wounded.
- Traders: impressive and very colourful account of the imperialist achievements of the East India Company.
- Ship Simulator: a hands-on recreation of how to steer a ship, or a reminder of how it once felt!

There were several more maritime themes superbly presented, all available totally free. Well worth the ferry fare!

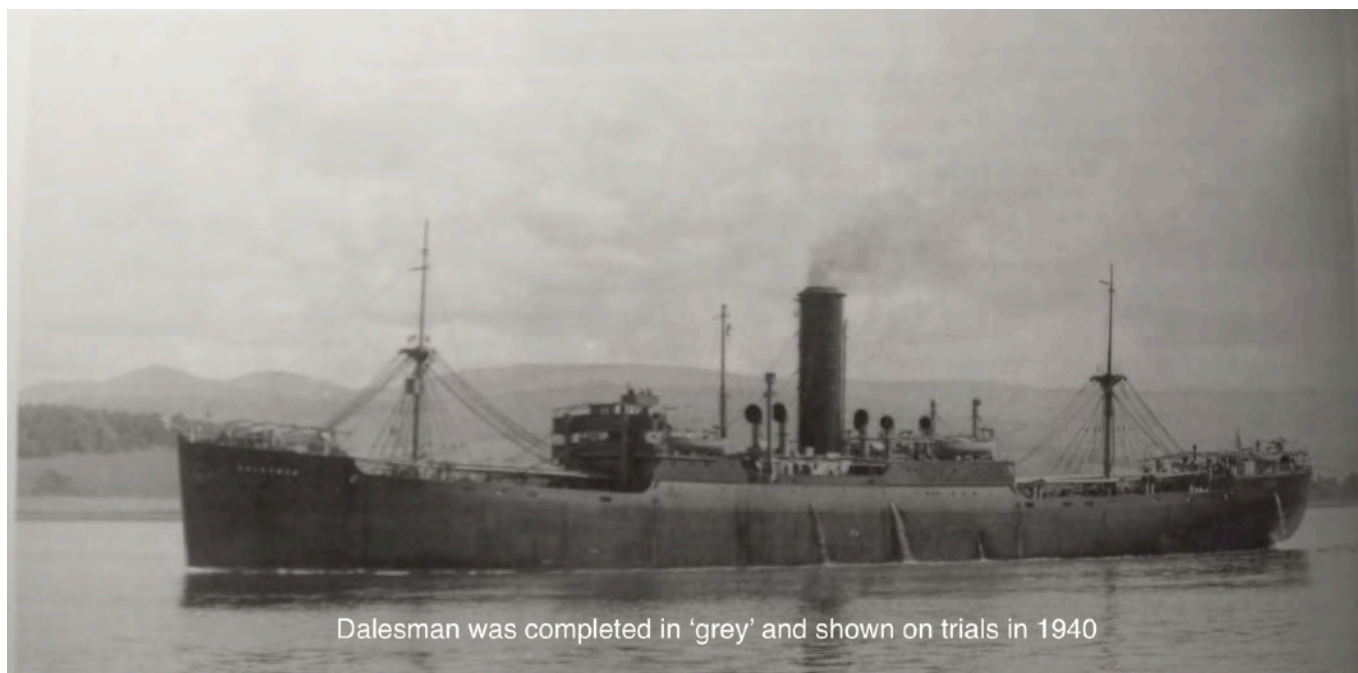
Dalesman Resurgent

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

I was fortunate enough to obtain a copy of a "Crete War Diary" written by Thomas Burke who was the Third Radio Officer on the ss **Dalesman** in 1941. His account of the loss of the ship led me to do further research into the history of this Harrison Line ship.

The **Dalesman** was built by Lithgows Ltd, Port Glasgow at their Kingston Yard and was launched on the 26th March 1940 and completed a few months later. She sailed from Glasgow on the 9th July 1940 for Liverpool and it was from there she commenced her maiden voyage to the West Indies on the 20th July 1940. She had been delivered at a cost of £186,000 and, as will become evident, had an eventful and interesting war.

Under the command of her master, Captain D. Flynn she sailed from the Clyde to join Convoy OB187. This convoy consisted of 41 merchant ships with two escorts and the ships dispersed at 53° 43' N 23°30' W on 25th July 1940. The **Dalesman** visited the following ports; Barbados, Trinidad, Curacao, Baranquilla, Cartagena, Colon, Cristobal and Bermuda. Her cargo on this return



voyage included, steel, resin, cotton and lumber. She sailed up the east coast of America to join up with the homeward convoy BHX75 arriving in Liverpool on 7th October 1940. On this voyage she had a total crew of 53 comprising of 1 Master, 3 officers, 1 carpenter, 6 stewards and cooks, a bosun, a lamptrimmer, 7 ABs, 3 OS and deckboy, 5 engineers, 3 engine room ratings, 15 firemen and trimmers, 2 radio officers, 1 cadet, 1 purser, 1 deck hand and one mess room steward.

On her second voyage the **Dalesman** sailed from the Mersey 31st October 1940 for the Gulf ports. She was part of convoy OB237 consisting of 36 ships which again dispersed once out of range of the U-boats. She sailed independently to Galveston, Houston, and New Orleans where she loaded a cargo of TNT, steel billets and other general cargo. For her return trip back to Manchester she was unescorted, sailing independently as she had a service speed of 15 knots. She finally arrived in Manchester on 20th December 1940 where she discharged. The officers and engineers who were on this voyage were the same as on previous voyage apart from the third mate. During her time in port she was caught up in the Manchester blitz and was hit by incendiaries and the crew were kept busy fighting fires on board and also in the sheds ashore. Manchester docks were described as a shambles.

The **Dalesman** then loaded in Birkenhead with supplies for the Eighth Army. This cargo included ammunition, shells, explosives, aeroplanes, a tank transporter and a spare barrel for a 16" gun for a Navy monitor. The latter weighed 80 tons and was carried as deck cargo and occupied most of the foredeck. The **Dalesman** also carried two MTBs for the Navy as deck cargo. They were stowed on the after end of No. 4 hatch. The crews of these MTBs were also embarked. The cargo was estimated to be worth over £1 million.

She sailed from Birkenhead on the 22nd January 1941 to join a convoy of 47 ships. While in port she had a “near miss” during a bombing raid on Birkenhead. During these air raids the ship was forbidden to fire its own guns as it apparently interfered with the shore based ack ack. Part of her cargo was offloaded at Port Said while the remainder was discharged in Alexandria.

Thomas Burke had signed on the **Dalesman** as 3rd R.O. in Liverpool in early February 1941 for a voyage that would eventually take them to Crete. At this period of the war Germany had invaded France, the Italian army had invaded Greece so the whole of the Mediterranean was under axis control. Supplies to the armies fighting in North Africa were forced to take the long voyage round Africa to reach the eastern Mediterranean.

Thus for her third voyage the **Dalesman** sailed in convoy WS6A for Freetown. Sections of this convoy had left Avonmouth, Liverpool and the Clyde with all these sections joining off the island of Oversay in the Outer Hebrides on the 9th February 1941 for the voyage south. Departing Freetown on the 8th March, the convoy was given the new designation WS6 for the passage to Capetown and Durban. These WS convoys became known as “Winston Specials.” This particular convoy also contained a second Harrison ship the **Logician**.

It is not known if the **Dalesman** was a ‘good feeder’ or not but according to the testimony of Robert Ashton, the Engineers Steward, the Chief Steward was known to the crew as “Split apple Gardner” or “Half a kipper Gardner.” In addition to her normal crew she also carried a complement of 18 DEMS gunners for this trip.

The **Dalesman** was in a minor collision and sustained some damage, possibly while anchored at Durban, but this was soon repaired. She then sailed up the east coast of Africa in Convoy WS6D escorted by the cruiser H.M.S. **Cornwall**. Once the convoy reached Perim Island the escort withdrew and the ships sailed up the Red Sea independently to Suez. She arrived at the southern entrance to the canal on the 25th April for the canal transit. Part of her cargo was offloaded at Port Said while the remainder was discharged in Alexandria where she arrived on the 29th of April and remained in port for the next twelve days.

In a letter home, Thomas writes that the ship is likely to continue her voyage with a passage to India. However the hand written voyage card is interesting for it notes reallocated to S.T.A.G. 6. Special M.T. section. What these abbreviations mean are lost in the mists of time, however it is known that the Royal Navy had a requirement to transport thousands of tons of supplies to Crete at this period of the war.

It is likely that the **Dalesman** and **Logician** were required for this effort for it is known that the **Dalesman**’s cargo contained lorries, ammunition, AA guns, munitions, (including mines) and lots of food and sailed for Crete on the 10th May 1941. All this cargo was successfully discharged despite the ship being hit. Due to aerial attacks by the Luftwaffe, many ships were forced to turn back so

only a tenth of the supplies reached Crete. This was because in early May the Germans had new airfields built in Greece and had assembled a large air fleet. This included 280 long-range bombers, 150 dive-bombers, 90 Bf 109s, 90 Bf 110s and 40 reconnaissance aircraft along with 530 Ju 52 transport aircraft and 100 gliders for the invasion of Crete.

Both Harrison ships sailed from Alexandria on the 10th May 1941 for Suda Bay which the Royal Navy used as a refuelling base in Crete. They anchored in Suda Bay at 2 a.m. on the 13th May as two other ships were already alongside the small jetty. These were the **Nieu Amsterdam** and the Ellerman Wilson Lines cargo ship **Volo** loaded with high explosives. The **Dalesman's** Radio Officers were ordered to keep continuous wireless watch whilst at anchor, an unusual arrangement but given the situation a wise one. At about 6 p.m. that evening both Harrison ships were attacked by German and Italian aircraft. The **Dalesman** took a direct hit from a 500 lb bomb dropped by a Stuka (Ju87) that penetrated number four hold and exploded in the double bottom. The keel plates were burst open by the force of the explosion causing water to rush in and she sank in 9 fathoms of water. This quote is from Thomas Burke's Crete diary,

"At 4 pm I went on watch and at about 5.35 when I was looking forward to being relieved for my tea I heard a terrific racket of all sorts of ack-ack fire through my headphones. A multiple pom pom nearby was most persistent. Then there was the whistling of planes and bombs. It was hard to tell which was which as it was a dive bombing attack. One particular loud and frightening whistle appeared to be heading for us, getting louder and louder then there was a shock and I shot off the chair some inches and back into it again. I had by this time switched off the receiver but preferred to keep the phones on on account of the racket. I went to the door and looked out. Clouds of smoke were coming from the after hatch and the crew whose quarters were aft came dashing out through the smoke, making for the life boats. Almost immediately Mr Double i.e. the senior operator appeared and told me to get off to my cabin and collect what I could as orders had been given to abandon ship."

The testimony of 3rd Mate Bill Ashton is also interesting,

"On the after deck there was a lorry with a soldier asleep in the cab. The bomb came down at teatime and went right through the lorry right through the steel deck through the 'tween decks where it missed all the sticky bombs that were in the wings. Right through into the lower hold where there was 800 tons of Bofor ammunition. It cut through 20 feet of this ammunition and continued through the double bottom and blew up on the bottom plating. It burst all the bottom of the ship out at No 5 and No 4 hatch, the deep tank and the engine room."

The **Dalesman** sank by the stern a few minutes after being hit but she settled on an even keel and, since the bay was shallow, the upper decks stayed clear. The crew got off via lifeboats and from tugs and tenders which came to their rescue. As there was no accommodation for them ashore they boarded the

Logician where they were given a meal. The officers slept in the **Logician's** saloon that night.

The attack on the **Dalesman** was observed by G.H. Milburn, Chief Steward of the **Logician**,

*"The **Logician** was shaken by 'near misses' the **Dalesman** was hit aft while discharging, the bomb going through her open hatch and through the ships bottom. The **Dalesman** settled in the bottom of the bay but still looked as if she was afloat. The troops continued to discharge her through the air attacks next day and the days that followed."*

Thomas was one of the crew who volunteered to return to the **Dalesman** the following day to help unload the ship. During the next three days as much munitions were salvaged as possible using steam from a trawler moored alongside the **Dalesman** to provide power for her winches. Due to the continuing bombing and strafing raids the ship was eventually abandoned . At one point a breeze sprung up and as Thomas describes,

*"a large tanker of 11 or 12,000 tons dragged her anchor and was heading our way. This Maersk tanker hit the **Dalesman** and continued to do so, scaring everyone as they thought their cargo of ammunition might explode."*

This tanker was identified as the **Eleonora Maersk**.

The **Dalesman** lay abandoned in Suda Bay for nearly three years and it appears that the ship was under the control of the Italian State as "war booty." However when the Germans seized control of Italy on the 8th September 1943 they took control of all Italian merchant ships. These ships were forcibly leased to Mittelmeer Reederei GmbH, Berlin (also known as MMR) a consortium of 11 German shipping companies and this included the **Dalesman**. The purpose of the company was "to take over and manage the entire ship space, which can be registered in the Mediterranean for German purposes". This company can be considered the German equivalent of the UK Ministry of War Transport.

In the late summer of 1944, allied aerial reconnaissance revealed that the **Dalesman** had been salvaged by the Germans. After refloating and refitting she was named **Pluto** by MMR and used as a troopship running between northern Italy and Yugoslavian ports.

In February 1945 the Royal Navy's 28th flotilla based at Ancona, Italy was equipped with brand new Vosper class MTBs. All were fitted with new radar equipment and on their second patrol on February 7th 1945, MTB/MGBs 404, 406, and 407 picked up a small convoy about 2,000 yards away on their radars. The enemy fired first and MTB 407 was struck below the water line and had to withdraw. However the other two boats fired their torpedoes and scored two hits with accompanying explosions and heavy flames. The two British boats departed with high speed and then met up with the damaged boat 407 and escorted her back to Ancona. The two MTBs then returned to the battle site, only to find the last remaining enemy ship had entered the harbour of Parenzo (now Porec,

Croatia) and there was nothing further they could do. They did however contact the RAF who sent planes to attack the vessel in the harbour. They hit their target in the number four hold and she listed over and blocked the jetty. This vessel turned out to be the **Dalesman/Pluto** and thus for the second time in her career she was sunk in shallow water by a bomb in No. 4 hold.

The **Pluto** was just one of 21 enemy ships sunk or disabled by MTB 406 under the command of T/Lt. John Ernest Harley Collins, RNVR, MBE. For these actions the 6ft 6in "Tiny Tim" Collins was awarded the DSC and Bar.

The **Pluto** was raised and towed to Trieste where she remained until the Allied forces invaded Trieste in May 1945. The ship was salvaged by the Royal Navy and taken into a dry dock, she became the property of the Ministry of War Transport (MOWT).

On the 1st August 1945 the MOWT formally asked Harrisons to manage the vessel and indicating that she had been torpedoed by the RN and had sustained damage in No. 2 hold. She was officially handed over to the MOWT and renamed **Empire Wily** on 25th August 1945.

Harrisons sent a small team out to the vessel consisting of a Chief Engineer, a 2nd Engineer and a Chief Officer to supervise the repair work at the Trieste drydock.

Mr.W.P. Cook, the Chief Engineer reported that the vessel had left drydock in Trieste on 14th October 1945 and had been refloated. He estimated repair work would take at least six months before the ship could return to dry dock. The propeller and shaft had been removed for repair, the stern tube being blanked off. He reported that, "The work in the engine room and boiler rooms is proceeding very slowly, the workers having a decided objection to putting in a decent day's work." Eventually the **Empire Wily** left Trieste on the 11th August 1946 for Oran. The voyage record card shows she arrived Melilla on 14th August and arrived back in the UK at Manchester on the 2nd September 1946.

A newspaper article from the Liverpool Post of 30th August 1946 relating to her return to the Mersey is illuminating. "She presents an interesting appearance just now with her Harrison Line funnel and general design, but with obviously German ventilators and derrick posts, visible evidence of the refit undergone in 1944".

It is probable that she spent the next few months being further repaired in Manchester for she left there on the 1st November 1946. The **Empire Wily** was returned to T & J Harrisons ownership on the 4th November 1946 and reverted to her original name. The **Dalesman** was bought from the MOWT for £230,000 on the 5th November 1946 by the Charente Steam Ship Co. She was insured with the Liverpool and London Steamship Protection and Indemnity Association Ltd. A letter from Harrison's states that the wireless equipment is on rental from MIMCo and lists a main transmitter, auto alarm and portable lifeboat set. Her radio call sign was changed to GQGL.

The **Dalesman** sailed from Liverpool on 23rd November 1946 on her first post war voyage. Her destination was Barbados, and she arrived there on the 6th December and at Trinidad on the 16th December. In 1947 she made at least two voyages to Calcutta with stops at Colombo and at Rangoon. On the 9th of March 1948 after loading at Middlesborough and London, the **Dalesman** sailed on a voyage round Africa This was almost identical to her earlier fateful voyage to Crete. She called at, Freetown, Port Elizabeth, Durban, Beira, Mombasa and returned back to the UK via the Suez Canal. An interesting item of cargo carried by the **Dalesman** on this voyage was the 74 inch mirror for the Radcliffe Telescope at Pretoria, South Africa. For a time it was one of the largest telescopes in the southern hemisphere. The following account is taken from "The History of the Radcliffe Telescope" by I.S. Glass, "The mirror was shipped in February 1948 on the ss **Dalesman**. It was stowed comfortably between decks, surrounded by bags of sugar with pressed fibre board on top, so it would have a comfortable and friendly journey. It arrived at Durban harbour on April 14th, nearly three weeks late, having been unable to enter harbour for some time due to a gale. "

Harrisons sold the the **Dalesman** to Van Heyghen Frères S.A. Belgium for £49,500 and she arrived in Ghent, Belgium for scrapping on the 15th September 1959. That was the end of the **Dalesman**, a resurgent **Dalesman**, sunk twice by bombing and torpedoed once yet somehow managed to survive the war. A fine ship that refused to be beaten and managed to have successfully completed fourteen years of commercial life post war despite her various setbacks.

References:

Daily Telegraph 29 Oct 2012

Harrisons of Liverpool by Graeme Cubbin

Library, Liverpool Maritime Museum

U-boat web site

Clyde-built web site

Imperial War Museum Archives

Note: A builders model of the **Dalesman** was sold in 2003 for a cost of £9,400. It was part of the Harrison Line Collection and sold by Bonhams of New Street, London.

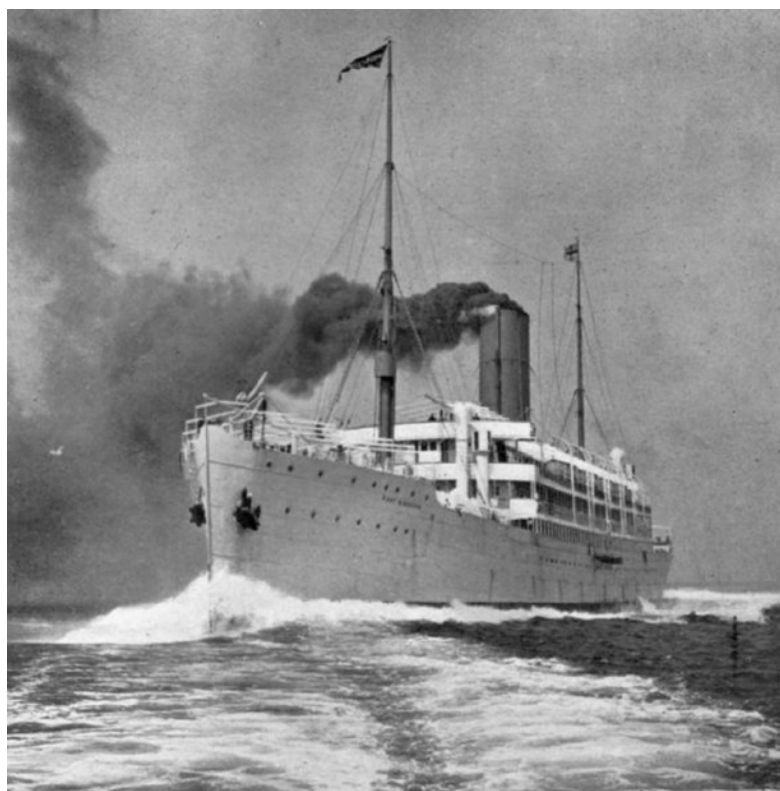
A letter posted in Montserrat for delivery by sea on the ss **Dalesman** in 1958 is available for sale on the web, price \$20.

Influenza - the Silent Killer

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

The crowded environment on board the troopships of World War I, along with the lack of adequate isolation facilities led, in some instances, to the outbreak of pandemic influenza, often with fatal results. His Majesty's New Zealand Transport troop ship **Tahiti** provides an example of this problem. She was built in 1904 by Alexander Stephen & Sons Ltd., Glasgow as the **Port Kingston** and served on the London - West Indies fruit trade for a subsidiary company of Elder Dempster. She was repaired following damage by earthquake in Jamaica in 1907, laid up in 1910 then acquired by the Union SS Company of New Zealand for their NZ - Tahiti - San Francisco trade. She was at that point renamed **Tahiti** and served that route until being converted into a troop transport at the outbreak of war, taking military personnel to France and Gallipoli

HMNZT **Tahiti** made numerous trips transporting reinforcements and



Tahiti in her original service as RMS **Port Kingston**

Wikimedia Commons

supplies from New Zealand to Europe and bringing home New Zealand troops, including those wounded during the Dardanelles campaign. During this time she was fortunate to survive two separate U-boat attacks. On 4 July 1918 **Tahiti** left New Zealand for England with the 40th Reinforcements, a unit consisting largely of infantry replacements. **Tahiti** was to join a convoy at Freetown, Sierra Leone, but, on reaching Freetown, reports of disease ashore led to all ships in the convoy being quarantined in port.

A conference aboard H.M.S. **Mantua** was attended by captains and wireless operators from all ships in the convoy. The

Mantua had experienced an influenza outbreak on board two days after leaving the United Kingdom on 1 August 1918. **Tahiti**, after having been re-supplied by local workers, [another possible source of infection with the new pandemic influenza strain] left Freetown on 26 August 1918 as part of a homeward bound convoy.

On the day of sailing, influenza patients began to be admitted to the on-board hospital, and over the next few weeks of the voyage, influenza developed in up to 1,000 of the 1,217 persons on board. When **Tahiti** reached Plymouth, England, on 10 September 1918 a total of 68 men had died with a further 8 men and one nurse to later die of influenza after landing. **Tahiti**, the worst affected of the ships in the convoy, was referred to as the death ship, and a Court of Enquiry investigated the outbreak.

The Enquiry report showed that an estimated 800 men were sick on the peak day of the outbreak and the overall mortality rate was 68.9 persons per 1,000 on board. One of the main reasons for the high mortality rate in this outbreak was given as the poor ventilation systems on board **Tahiti**. The system of closing portholes at night and during danger periods [bad weather and reports of U-boats in the area] resulted in insufficient ventilation in sleeping quarters, usually overcrowded cabins. Originally designed for the carriage of 650 passengers and crew, **Tahiti**, with a total of 1,217 persons on board, was no more crowded than most troop ships, such crowding being caused by shipping shortages at that time. This led to the placing of as many troops as possible on each available ship.

The Report went on to highlight the fact that isolation measures such as clearing deck space for temporary hospitals were inadequate because the number of patients exceeded the capacity of the existing on-board hospital. In addition, the medical and nursing staff were overwhelmed by the mass casualty event, many of them being incapacitated by illness when they were most needed.

Unlike some of her enforced passengers, **Tahiti** survived the war and returned to her previous trading. In 1927 she collided with the Sydney Harbour ferry **Greycliffe** which sank with the loss of 39 people. **Tahiti**'s end came in August 1930 when her propeller shaft fractured resulting in a gradual flooding of compartments leading to her sinking two days later, fortunately without loss of life.

Understanding Engineers:

Two engineering students were walking across a university campus when one said, "Where did you get such a great bike?"

The second engineer replied, "Well, I was walking along yesterday, minding my own business, when a beautiful woman rode up on this bike, threw it to the ground, took off all her clothes and said, "Take what you want."

The first engineer nodded approvingly and said, "Good choice; the clothes probably wouldn't have fitted you anyway."

The Second Siege of Malta (1940 - 1942)

A summary of the talk given by Danny Marks on 18th May, 2017

On many previous presentations the speaker has been asked why is the title 'The second Siege of Malta' followed inevitably by so 'What was the First Siege?' A brief reference to the year 1565 which marked the first siege is therefore necessary. Throughout history, because of its strategic position, commanding the main channel through which all shipping between the east and west Mediterranean must pass, and because of its deep and sheltered harbours, without a tide, Malta was occupied through the ages by whoever commanded the Mediterranean Sea. These included the Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Greeks, Moors, Arabs, Romans, Napoleon and, eventually, the British who, under Lord Nelson, were asked by its inhabitants to protect them against the repressive Napoleon.

In 1565, at the height of the Ottoman Empire's power and influence, the Turks dominated the eastern end of the Mediterranean. They decided to extend their power by capturing Malta while, at the same time, driving their old enemies, the Knights of St. John, from the island. In the spring of that year, Solymon the Magnificent, Sultan of Turkey, despatched one of the largest invasion fleets in history against the island of Malta. Two hundred ships and forty thousand men came sweeping out of the Levant to subdue the Christian bastion. The siege which followed was a classic in the history of warfare.

The attack occurred when most of Eastern Europe lay in Turkish hands and when every day brought news of fresh reverses to the rulers of Christian Europe. It was not so many years before that the Sultan had driven the Knights out of their island fortress of Rhodes. Now, only a few hundred knights and a few thousand Maltese fighting men, under La Vallette, Grand Master of the Order, stood between the Sultan and mastery of the Mediterranean. Fierce fighting took place, and after over five months, when the Turks were starved of food and water, the Maltese cut off the securing ropes of many of their ships and set them on fire, forcing them to retreat. When the Turkish forces at last withdrew, defeated, the Ottoman power had suffered an immense reverse. In the long war between East and West, the Great Siege of Malta proved one of the turning points of history. Almost a century later, the famous French writer, Voltaire, remarked, 'Nothing is better known than the siege of Malta'.

As soon as the Knights arrived in Malta, they anticipated that the Turks would come after them so they set about fortifying the main harbours to combat an invasion. Those of you who have been to Malta will have seen some of the bastions and fortifications built by the knights in the Grand Harbour.

Just as the defeat of the Turks by the Knights signalled the beginning of the end of the Ottoman Empire, so the successful outcome of the second siege,

between 1940 and 1942, triggered the defeat of Rommel in the African Desert and the beginning of the Allies' assault on mainland Europe.

When war was declared, on the 3rd of September, 1939, Malta was happily positioned far from the area of likely intense hostilities, and almost dead centre in the friendly Mediterranean. The entire coastline was either neutral or under Allied influence. The British and French were joint guardians of the sea. The job of the French was to look after the western end, with a heavy naval concentration at Toulon, and the British, the east with a concentration of heavy naval units at Alexandria, with Malta as the attacking base for submarines and fast surface units.

The entry of Italy into the war, on the 10th of June, 1940, and the totally unforeseen capitulation of France, 15 days later, entirely changed the situation. The whole Mediterranean strategy collapsed and Malta was immediately placed in a precarious position. Before even declaring War, Mussolini ordered his Airforce to attack Malta, where I was at the age of 14.

We were completely unprepared, especially as Mussolini had declared that Italy would remain neutral. There were only 16 Bofors anti-aircraft guns and 3 Gloster Gladiators fighters, known as Faith, Hope and Charity, to defend the island. During the first attacks, much damage and casualties were experienced, but the few guns and the 3 Gladiators were enough to terrify the ineffective Italian Airforce. As the defences were strengthened, the Italians gave up.

In November 1940, the situation changed again. Aircraft from the British aircraft carrier **Illustrious** attacked the port of Taranto, destroying a large part of the Italian navy. The Germans decided that they could no longer trust the Italians to take control of the Mediterranean, and hundreds of Stuka dive-bombers, Messerschmitts and Junker 88s were sent to Southern Italy where they immediately set upon the **Illustrious** and her supporting task force. She arrived in Malta, badly damaged with 165 of her crew dead and many others wounded.

This is where I came in. On that very day, the 16 January, 1941, I joined as an apprentice in The Royal Naval Dockyard. I was given a tool-box which I proudly placed on a designated workbench. At about 3 in the afternoon, the air-raid sirens sounded and we retreated to the shelters. The Germans had come to finish off the **Illustrious** while she was undergoing emergency repairs. About 400 planes descended on Malta dropping hundreds of bombs, devastating a large part of the dockyard and the surrounding cities. When I emerged from the shelter, my tool-box had disappeared. The workshop had been demolished and, where the workbench had stood, there was a large crater and a heap of twisted metal. That was the beginning of 2 years of relentless bombing. The island became the most bombed 95 square miles of the war. There was destruction everywhere. The Grand Harbour was littered with wrecks. But miraculously, **Illustrious**, after temporary repairs, escaped via Suez.

As the Germans occupied Greece and Crete, and controlled the Eastern Mediterranean, the fleet at Alexandria was withdrawn, Malta was isolated and

became the only base for attacking the supply lines to Rommel and for attacks on Southern Europe. Efforts to bring supplies to the island failed time and time again. Food, fuel and ammunition were running out. But it was essential that Malta be saved. Churchill sent a message to the Admiralty from Moscow where he was meeting Stalin. It read, 'Malta must be saved at all costs.' Submarines broke the siege from time to time bringing just enough supplies to keep us ticking over. Aircraft carriers flew Hurricanes and Spitfires specially fitted with spare fuel tanks only to be destroyed on landing. Many young pilots were killed but many survived to find that there were no aircraft to fly. At one time there were only 5 serviceable Hurricanes with about 160 pilots. They took it in turn to fly these 5 planes on a 24 hour schedule. Several abortive attempts were made to get convoys through. Two convoys from Alexandria were so fiercely attacked



Operation Pedestal, three R.N. carriers Photograph taken from the after end of H.M.S. **Victorious**’ flight deck showing H.M.S. **Indomitable** and H.M.S. **Eagle**.

Picture from Wikimedia

that they had to turn back. On one occasion three ships got through to be sunk on arrival in Grand Harbour.

After two years, when it was clear that Rommel could only be defeated if Malta was saved, and with only 14 days to go before Malta would be forced to surrender, a convoy of fourteen of the fastest merchant ships and tankers available to America and Britain assembled at the Clyde estuary. One of the tankers was the famous American tanker **Ohio** which was lent to Britain



Rochester
Castle



Clan Ferguson



Deucalion



Waimarama



Dorset



Melbourne Star



Port
Chalmers



Empire
Hope



Brisbane
Star



Ohio



Almeria
Lykes



Wairangi



Santa Elisa



Glenorchy

Operation 'Pedestal' – Convoy Formation

following a special request by Winston Churchill to President Roosevelt. Under a mantle of total secrecy they set sail for Gibraltar where, in the last minute, they were told that they were heading for Malta to relieve the island. The convoy was protected by the strongest naval escort formed during the war, consisting of 2 battleships, 4 aircraft carriers, 13 cruisers, 40 destroyers and 12 submarines. It was known as 'Operation Pedestal'. When the convoy was within 200 miles of Malta, the Germans and Italians, using 800 aircraft, began their assault. The Aircraft Carrier, **Eagle** and the cruisers **Nigeria** and **Manchester** were sunk and another aircraft carrier HMS **Indomitable** was put out of action. One after the other, the merchant ships were hit.

At this point a film was shown, fortunately it is freely available for us all to see on Youtube at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=teTilxRereg>

[Editor's note: strongly recommended viewing}

The film shows the famous tanker **Ohio** entering Grand Harbour after having been hit several times including 2 dive bombers crashing on her decks. The story of the miraculous survival of this famous ship has been told, in books and documentaries several times over. Admiral Lewin, the main commentator in the film, was a midshipman on one of the escorting destroyers. He was later responsible for overall control of the Falklands War.

As soon as the **Ohio** berthed alongside I, with my instructor, was one of many dockyard staff who boarded her to start connecting emergency pumps to pump her oil cargo to the shore storages before the Germans came to sink her. They didn't, but sadly the ship was eventually towed outside the harbour and sunk.

The memory of those 2 years will never be forgotten, nor will the excitement and jubilation which followed the siege and the build up to the invasion of Southern Italy and Sicily. Several thousand American and British servicemen arrived on the island and visits were made by King George VI as well as Churchill and Roosevelt, when every inhabitant turned out to cheer them. Combined Service Chiefs, including Eisenhower, Montgomery and other famous Generals were to be seen daily, travelling in their jeeps as they inspected the troops. Every inch of coastline was occupied by warships and landing craft and hundreds of ships anchored outside the harbour for as far as the eye could see. Hourly, by day and by night, the continuous drone of aircraft engines could be heard as flyers left and returned on missions over southern Italy.

On April 17, 1942, the Times of Malta printed the news that King George VI had taken the unprecedented step of awarding the entire island the George Cross, with the citation, 'to bear witness to a heroism that will long be famous in history'. When visiting Malta on December 8th, 1943 President Roosevelt announced that he had a little token– a scroll– a citation– from the President of the United States, speaking in behalf of all the people of the United States. And then read:

"In the name of the people of the United States of America, I salute the Island of Malta, its people and defenders, who, in the cause of freedom and justice and decency throughout the world, have rendered valorous service far above and beyond the call of duty.

"Under repeated fire from the skies, Malta stood alone, but unafraid in the centre of the sea, one tiny bright flame in the darkness—a beacon of hope for the clearer days which have come.

"Malta's bright story of human fortitude and courage will be read by posterity with wonder and with gratitude through all the ages.

"What was done in this Island maintains the highest traditions of gallant men and women who from the beginning of time have lived and died to preserve civilisation for all mankind.

"Dated December 7, 1943.

Signed FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT."

Malta, a smudge in the Mediterranean just 17 miles by nine, had become the target for a furious air assault by Axis forces. In one 12 hour period, from March 20th to 21st, more than 1,000 bombs weighing nearly 300 tons were dropped on the tiny Allied airfield at Ta Qali. In April, 6,728 tons of bombs fell on Malta. To put this in perspective, Coventry was destroyed by 260 tons of

bombs and London received 18,000 tons in the Blitz. During the first three



m.v. **Brisbane Star** moored at Valetta

months of 1942, according to RAF official historians, 151 daylight enemy sorties were carried out over Britain. By contrast, during the same period the Luftwaffe made 1,700 raids on the island. In March and April alone, Malta withstood twice the tonnage of bombs that fell on London during the whole of the worst 12 months of the Blitz. 'It was a siege of annihilation', wrote war correspondent Alan Moorhead. One after another all the great sieges were eclipsed. Malta became the most bombed place on earth, a desolation of craters and rubble.

Although the medal boosted morale, the island was still under siege, and starving. One soldier

recalled a daily diet of 3 boiled sweets, half a sardine and a spoonful of jam. Virtually every animal on the island had been eaten, water supplies were erratic, disease was rife and a large portion of the population was homeless. But the island not only survived, it became the base for forces that cut supplies to the Axis troops in North Africa, then for those that invaded Sicily.

When the noise of guns and aircraft eventually receded, we began the task of rebuilding the island. It took a long time to return to normal. At the end of it all, it was hard to realise what we had lived through, and how much the little island of Malta had contributed to a crucial period of the Second World War.



m.v. **Dorset** under attack, she was sunk later that day

Wikimedia

The Liverpool Hurricane of January, 1839 - Part 1

by L.N.R.S member Vin Finn

Extracts from " The Liverpool Courier ", Wednesday, 9th January, 1839.

SEVERE AND DESTRUCTIVE HURRICANE.

On Sunday night (6th) and during the whole of Monday morning, this town and its vicinity were visited by one of the most awful and destructive hurricanes that has occurred within the memory of the oldest inhabitant. The effects of this fearful visitation have been felt far and wide, but we have not yet been able to learn to what distance its influence has extended. All around our own district the devastation has been dreadful.

The destruction to the marine, it is feared, will have been exceedingly great on the surrounding coasts, though the intelligence on that subject is not yet very ample. Many vessels have been sunk in the river and in the docks, and not less than fifteen are now lying ashore at Bootle Bay. For a considerable time previous to Monday (7th), a number of vessels had been wind-bound in our port. During the last mentioned day, there was a pretty fresh breeze from the south-east. The glass continued to fall from an early hour in the morning, but, notwithstanding this indication of rough weather several outward bound vessels took advantage of the easterly direction of the wind, and put out to sea. About eleven o'clock at night, the wind gradually veered round to the south-west and increased in violence till about mid-night when it became a fierce gale. The wind continued to get more and more westerly, till about one o'clock, when it stood due west. As it approached the last named point it still augmented in fury, and shortly after one it was a complete hurricane, to describe the violence of which would be impossible. It continued to blow in this furious manner during the whole of the dark hours; if anything rather increasing than diminishing in violence. From two to five o'clock the gusts were tremendous, and it was during those three hours that most of the damage was done.

In every dock the damage has been enormous, from the vessels pitching violently against each other, and thus staving in their bows and sterns. On the river and the adjacent coasts the disasters have been numerous and awful, as our marine intelligence will make manifest. Many vessels in the river, utterly helpless, were driven about at the mercy of the tempest. About half-past three o'clock on Monday morning, the schooner **Foxdale**, of Douglas, bound for Flint, drove from two anchors into the river. She afterwards drifted into Victoria Dock, where she sunk. The crew were saved with great difficulty. Shortly afterwards the smack **Charlotte**, with salt, sunk opposite the Clarence dock pier. There were three persons on board at the time. Of these, two, John Jones and Robert Roberts, were drowned. A young man, son of Jones, was saved by the exertions of the police on station.

The galliot **Anna Agatha**, of Rotterdam, having lost her rudder and bowsprit, was deserted by her crew, who managed to get on shore. One of them was picked up by a police-officer, who took him to the station at Clarence Dock. He told Inspector Atherton that he had managed to get ashore from the vessel above named. The inspector, with two officers, went in search of her, and found that she had drifted into the North Graving Dock-basin, though the man had insisted she must have sunk. She had not one of the crew on board. Several flatmen and boatmen assisted the officers in mooring her securely, and the inspector left her in charge of the Constables. He afterwards found the remainder of the crew in the dock-master's hut. They informed him that the vessel and the other man were lost. They were informed of the safe position in which she was moored, and sent on board.

At half-past two o'clock, the sliding-gate at the north end of the Prince's Dock was with part of the wall, blown down. Hugh Parry, a dock gateman, was blown into the water, and would probably have been drowned had not police officer (Number 421) thrown him a life-buoy which kept him afloat till he was taken out. A landing-waiter's hut, at Waterloo Dock, was blown away. The Camera Obscura, on the George's Pier was blown away.

The landing-bridge, which was moored off the last named pier, was sunk at the mouth of the basin. The **Admiral**, Seacombe ferry steam-boat sunk near the Prince's Pier, and only a small part of her topmast could be seen. The Runcorn steamer **Eclipse** went down near George's Pierhead. The fireman, it is said was drowned. The **Duke of Bridgewater**, another Runcorn steamer, was wrecked under the wall of the Brunswick Dock Pier. Several flats sunk in the Brunswick Half-tide Basin, in the King's Dock Basin, and at the King's Dock Pier. A fishing-boat swamped near the latter place, and another in the Queen's Dock, where many vessels lost their spars. At Cornhill, the Woodside steamer **Ribble** came alongside a total wreck, and another schooner **Harriet**, of Lancaster, ran ashore with considerable damage.

The gale continued during a great part of Monday to blow with extreme violence. At daylight not less than fifteen vessels, many of them large ships and brigs, were ashore in Bootle Bay, within the short space of a mile. Several vessels, which were at anchor in the Bay, rode out the gale till about eight o'clock, when one or two of them dragged their anchors, and could, with difficulty, be kept from running on the lee shore.

The shore presented a melancholy appearance. The New York packet-ship **Oxford**, which, on Sunday afternoon, anchored in gallant trim off Seaforth, was lying almost a wreck on the sands. Her cargo is valuable. Her Majesty's steamer **Redwing** was stranded. Lieutenant Reid, her commander, stated, that so overpowering was the hurricane, that with three anchors out, and his full power of steam on, one of his cables snapped, and his vessel dragged before the wind, till at last he was obliged to let them slip to avoid running foul of the **Oxford**. The wind then drove his vessel on her beam-ends, and being unable to get her

head to windward, with all the power he could put on, she was driven sideways on shore.

The following vessels were also on shore in Bootle Bay : the **Jarrow**, **Elisha**, **Alexandria**, **Harlequin**, **Pearl**, **Atlas** and **Fortune**.

At George's Pierhead, at two o'clock, the sight was most melancholy. At least twenty masts and yards, apparently belonging to flats, with torn sails affixed to them, were floating close to the Pier, whilst hundreds of passive and awestruck spectators thronged every part. The cattle-slip Basin, which has always afforded moorings for about 30 or 40 boats, presented a most melancholy spectacle. The violence with which the boats had been jolted against each other by the wind and waves, had broken everyone up into mere planks, which completely covered the surface of the water in the basin. Four small brigs, moored on the south side, had been jolted with such violence against the wall, as to chip off the edge large pieces of stone a foot thick, damaging the whole length of the south edge of the basin. The stern of one brig moored there was completely knocked to pieces against the bow of her neighbouring vessel, exposing the whole of her after cabin.

The fine New York packet **Cambridge**, which was to have sailed on Monday, drifted in the morning from her moorings in the river. She was perilously situated at the south end of the Prince's Pier, with her stern near the shore. She had two anchors ahead, but, great fears were entertained, that, being so near to the pier, (the ground near which is shallow and rocky), she would ground abaft when the tide retired. This apprehension, however, was happily not realised; and by dint of good seamanship in bracing up the yards in the teeth of the wind, and other appliances, she rode out the tide without damage. On the rise of the evening tide, her condition (from her proximity to the quay) appeared to be yet more perilous, but she stood her ground to the great satisfaction of numerous spectators. The large sum of £1,000, we understand, was offered to any steam-vessel that would tow her off. The gale was, however, so strong, that none of even the powerful steam tugs of the port accepted of the proffer. We lament to add, that, about half-past three in the afternoon, eight men, riggers, who put off in a boat to render their assistance, were capsized, and four of their number drowned close to the quay, in the view of numerous distressed spectators, who could afford them no assistance.

About two o'clock, p.m. the **N.W. Light Ship**, which had drifted from her moorings, came into the river, and anchored safely under Seacombe.

There is no ship news along the Telegraph line, owing to the Telegraph at Bidston station having been blown down in the storm. Of the vessels that sailed on Sunday, the **Ruby**, the **Majestic**, and the **Mary Bibby** returned safely into port.

From nine to ten o'clock on Monday night the wind considerably abated. About eleven a fresh gale came on, which continued with some violence

throughout the night, accompanied by hail and occasional thunder and lightning.

During the whole of yesterday the weather was stormy, the wind blowing a strong gale from the west, and bringing with it occasional heavy showers of hail. About two o'clock in the afternoon the river presented a not less boisterous appearance than it had done on the preceding day. The clouds still looked wild and lowering. Several of the ferry steamers were performing their customary trips with not more passengers, however, than necessity urged to cross the river. The **N.W. Floating Light**, whose absence will cause considerable danger to the incoming craft, still lay at anchor opposite Woodside. The **Cambridge**, whose safety was so much doubted on the preceding day, and which was subsequently in some peril near the Seacombe slip, had found safe anchorage opposite the baths, and was riding gallantly in the turbulent stream. Along the margin of the wall still lay the wrecks of a flat and of the **Eclipse** Runcorn steamer apparently so much damaged that they will not be again fit for duty. A Preston brig had also shared a similar fate. The floating landing pier flanked the north end of this string of wrecks, the waves beating over the water-logged hull. She will, however, be easily restored to her former state of usefulness. The water in the small landing basin was covered with fragments of boards and splinters of wood, several of which were the remnants of the Camera Obscura, which recently stood on the pier. A brig, the **Jane**, of this port, was seen making her way up the river, nearly under bare poles. She soon passed into the basin amid the cheers of hundreds of spectators, who hailed the weather-beaten mariners back to port. She and another small vessel, the **Sally**, put out to sea together on Sunday last. When she brought up in the basin it was seen that her larboard bulwarks had been carried away, and her sails, torn to shreds by the violence of the tempest, were hanging about her like ribbons, sufficiently indicative of the weather she had endured.

Throughout the whole of yesterday the utmost anxiety prevailed to learn the fate of several of the vessels which sailed on Sunday, of which no intelligence had been heard. In the course of the afternoon the following vessels which had weathered the storm, and put back, arrived safely in port:— The **Lynx**, bound for Lisbon, the **Jane**, for Bristol, the **Hope**, for Bristol, the **Sally**, for Whitehaven, the **Hardware**, for Lisbon, and the **Lion**, for Glasgow. The utmost anxiety prevailed in consequence of a report that four large vessels were aground, and in great peril on the banks. Captain Forsyth, of the **Lynx**, stated, that he had passed a fine large ship, with painted ports, and a full length figurehead, supposed to be the **Crusader**, for Bombay. He did not state that she was in any danger.

As the evening advanced more certain intelligence was obtained respecting the four vessels above mentioned. The captain of the **Hardware** reported having seen the **St. Andrew**, New York packet, which sailed on Sunday last, on the Burbo Sands, with both anchors down, the sea beating heavily. The **Hardware**

came in through the Formby channel, where all the buoys were adrift. Near the Rock Lighthouse they passed a steamer with a pilot-boat in tow. Subsequently the steamer, **Mountaineer**, brought in several of the passengers and crew of the **St. Andrew**, and at a still later hour the **Victoria**, steam-tug boat, brought in the captain, the remaining passengers, and more crew.

A report was prevalent at an early hour in the evening that the **Pennsylvania**, New York packet-ship, which also sailed on Monday, had gone to pieces. About eight o'clock, however, the masters of **No.1**, and **No. 8**, Pilot boats, who had been out with the **Victoria** steam-tug, brought further intelligence of the **Pennsylvania**, which proved the fallacy of the former report. The **Victoria** had brought thirty-three passengers from the New York ship **Lockwoods**, which was aground on the banks, with a heavy sea making over her. They left fifty passengers still on board. The **Pennsylvania** had run about half-a-mile to the east of the **Lockwoods**, with several of the crew in the rigging. Another vessel, with painted ports, apparently an American, was seen on the north bank. The steamer **Avon** (the Dublin mail due on Monday) was seen going into Beaumaris to repair.

It was rumoured last night that the roadstead of the Menai Bridge had been destroyed by the storm, the chains having been left hanging to the supporters, uninjured. Passengers were crossing the strait in boats.

The **Brighton**, of Bombay, was seen in a helpless condition yesterday morning, in the New Channel, near the Middle Patch Buoy. Mr. Atherton, of New Brighton, sent the Liverpool Seacombe steamer to the wreck for the crew, who were visible in the rigging. She succeeded, in conjunction with the Magazine Life-boat, in saving the captain and such of the crew as remained on board. The crew, on Monday, had made a raft. Fourteen of them got on it and have not since been heard of.

At a late hour we heard that Captain Nye, of the **Independence**, had just returned from Leasowe. He saw a passenger, Mr. Thompson, of New York, who had been saved from the **Pennsylvania**. This gentleman reported that himself and the other three passengers, with the mate and five of the seamen, left the ship in one of her boats. When some distance from the shore the boat swamped, and all except himself (Mr. Thompson) were drowned. He attributes his safety to the fact of his having had a life-preserver round his body. He left the captain and the remainder of the crew in the rigging, and, as assistance had been sent to them, it was confidently hoped they would be saved.

Coroner's Inquests.

The following inquests were held yesterday before P. F. Currie Esq., coroner: On John Jones, master of the sloop **Conway**, sunk during the gale; and on the body of a boy unknown picked up on Monday evening in one of the docks.

Second Edition, Courier Office, Wednesday, January 9th, Twelve o'clock.

The worst fears respecting the ill fated ships mentioned in the latest of our yesterday's news are unhappily confirmed. The New York packets **Pennsylvania** and **St. Andrew** are total wrecks, and the **Lockwoods**, a British ship, with passengers for New York, is in a similar condition.

The **Victoria** steam-tug, assisted by the Life-boat, has made every exertion to save as many as possible of the seamen and passengers from the wrecks. They succeeded in saving a considerable number from the **Lockwoods** and **St. Andrew**, but in the latter vessel, from 80 to 100 souls were left last night. Amongst those preserved was an infant only eighteen months old, whose father and mother were left on board. The **Pennsylvania** is lying in the surf with her hull nearly covered by the sea. The captain, crew, and passengers are in the rigging, and have been there since last night, the water making a breach over her.

Last night at a late hour Mr. Arthur, the active and intrepid manager of the Steam-tug boats, caused the fuel of the **Victoria** to be increased, and went out to the vicinity of the wrecks, to see what assistance could be rendered. Unfortunately, the night was dreadfully severe; a boisterous and piercing wind, with a keen frost, snow, thunder, and lightning combined to augment the sufferings of the poor creatures who were so entirely exposed to the wrath of the elements. It was evident that if the vessels kept together till morning, many of the sufferers must perish from cold.

This morning at seven o'clock those on board the **Victoria** and a large steamer, inward bound from Dublin, saw the **Pennsylvania** and the **Lockwoods**, but could not render the crews and passengers any assistance. The latter were seen in the rigging, and their cries are described as most heartrending. The **Victoria** was at anchor about half a mile from the wrecks, waiting the return of daylight to renew her efforts to rescue as many as possible of the survivors. Up to this hour no intelligence of the success of these endeavours has reached us.

- The **St. Andrew** has beaten over the banks, and is on the main shore.
- The **Crusader**, from Bombay, is on the shore at Blackpool. The crew has been saved, but the ship, it is feared, is a wreck.
- The **Edward**, from Dundee, is a total wreck on the Hoyle Bank. Crew saved.
- The **Davies**, from the port of Wexford, and the **Arion**, from Bangor, are wrecked at Blackpool.
- The **Ann Paley**, from Lisbon, is on shore near the Ribble; three of the crew supposed to be lost.
- There is a large vessel on shore near Clarke's Wharf, supposed to be the **Yeoman**, for Demerara.
- The **Victoria**, from Charleston, is on shore off Leasowe.
- Pilot boat **No. 6**, outside, has received considerable damage, and one man believed to be lost.

- The **Avon**, Post Office steamer, from Dublin, arrived at seven o'clock this morning, all safe.
- The **Anixibia**, from Naples, is on shore, near Holyhead. Crew saved.

The cotton, per **Brighton**, from Bombay, is washing on shore at New Brighton, and floating in the river. Several bales have been landed at Monk's Ferry, marked diamond J, with N and D at the right-hand upper and lower angles, and diamond J.

Another steam-tug boat the **Hero** has been sent outside of the wrecks.

Third Edition, Courier Office, January 9th, Half-past One.

We have just learned that one of the steam-tug boats has returned, bringing the survivors from the wrecks.

Captain Smith, of the **Pennsylvania**, the first and second mates, about seven of the crew, and four of the passengers have all perished. Twenty-six have been saved. Many were left dead in the rigging.

The captain, and about fifty of the crew and passengers of the **Lockwoods** have been saved. All the survivors on board the ill-fated vessel having been brought away except one man. The wife of this person was in a dying state, and he refused to quit her. The sight on board was most heart-rending. Men, women, and children were lying dead over the sides, or hanging lifeless in the rigging, having perished from the severity of the weather.

The following is the best account we have been able to collect of the number of persons saved by the Steam-Tug boats:

On Tuesday, 8th January:- from the **St. Andrew**, 23;
from the **Lockwoods**, 33.

This day, 9th January:- from the **Pennsylvania**, 26;
from the **Lockwoods**, 22.

This makes a total of 104 saved by the Steam-Tug boats from the three ships. Between forty and fifty persons are said to have perished in the **Lockwoods**.

The following intelligence has just reached us from Bangor. The hurricane was felt with awful effect. The fine Menai Bridge is all in tatters, with all the chains broken except the top ones. All the road wood-work is torn or blown off. It is impossible to pass over the bridge.

Brocklebank's Marwarri (1935)

From Sea Breezes June 1963

Thos. and Jno. Brocklebank, Ltd., of Liverpool, has sold the oldest ship in their fleet, the steamer **Marwarri** (8091 gross tons and remembered as the More Worry) was completed by Wm. Hamilton and Co., Ltd., Port Glasgow in July 1935 at a build cost of £167,000. The second ship of the name, the **Marwarri** represented a very big step forward when compared with earlier Brocklebank ships; she was an oil-burning turbine steamer with a speed of 14 knots and was the first in the fleet to have a small amount of refrigerated space.



Shortly after the outbreak of the Second World War, the **Marwarri** had the doubtful distinction of being one of the first magnetic mine casualties. The ship had arrived at Avonmouth on September 3, 1939, where preparations were made to mount a gun aft. While at Avonmouth however she was requisitioned and sent to Cardiff where she was fitted out for carrying motor transport. A 22-

pounder was fitted at Cardiff and the ship then proceeded to Newport where she was fitted with a 4.7 in. before sailing for Belfast to collect 120 tons of A.A. stores.

The Convoy System had started by October 5 and the **Marwarri**, returning from Belfast to Newport on that date was about three and a half miles south of the Scarweather Lightship at 6.10 a.m. when a violent explosion occurred in the vicinity of Nos., 4 and 5 holds. The engines stopped, all the lights went out and the ship listed to starboard.

Thinking his ship had been torpedoed, the master ordered all the boats into the water and then sailed over to the lightship and asked for a signal to be sent for tug assistance. The **Marwarri** was later beached at Mumbles and ten days later was pumped dry and towed to drydock at Swansea. The effect of the mine explosion was as if the ship had been lifted up and literally shaken. There was no hole in the hull, but all cast iron was broken and the fractures allowed water to enter the holds. All the wood in the chartroom was shaken off the steel frame and the main turbine shaft was bent. The ship had to be completely re-engined before she was fit for sea again.

The **Marwarri** also played a considerable part as a transport in the D-Day operations on the Normandy coast. The day before D-Day she docked at Tilbury and the following day began loading transport for the 51st Highland Division, the men embarked the following day and in the afternoon of 7th May **Marwarri** departed Tilbury for the anchorage off Southend. It was the early hours of 9th May before she could depart for the Normandy beaches. Ordered to 'Gold'

beach where she anchored close to H.M.S. **Belfast**, whose 6-inch guns were firing steady salvos into the dust and smoke ashore. Eventually the landing craft arrived but it was necessary for the ship's crew to discharge the trucks themselves, troops then departed with the particular vehicle to which they were attached. The work was halted during darkness, but then the air attacks began. By the next afternoon **Marwarri** had discharged all 185 vehicles and 570 troops. So the days passed with **Marwarri** making a total of seven trips to the beaches before being routed to Birkenhead and resuming her normal work, and coming through the remainder of the war without serious mishap. In the post-war era she served the Brocklebank Line well, operating on all the company's regular services and has now been sold to shipbreakers at Hong Kong for just over £13 per ton on the light displacement. She will be delivered this month

Further thoughts on the loss of the **Primrose Hill**

by L.N.R.S. Member David White

The late David Eccles carried out much detailed and meticulous research into the loss at Christmas 1900 of the four-masted barque **Primrose Hill** on the coast of Anglesey. In David's two talks to the Society, and his article in the Bulletin of March 2006, it was apparent that he was very aware of apparent deficiencies in the manning of the vessel at the time of her loss. When re-reading David's article with this specific aspect in mind, we note:

As it was anticipated that the ship would be ready to sail on Christmas Eve, Captain Wilson informed the Mercantile Marine Office on 19th December 1900 that he wished to engage a full crew, preferably Scandinavian, the following day. Liverpool was a steamship port and it was very difficult to obtain experienced sailing ship crew, and so it was not until 24th December that the complete crew was signed on.

*Before the **Primrose Hill** sailed from Liverpool, Captain Wilson wrote a letter to the Journal of Commerce complaining that Board of Trade officials had not allowed him to use a man he knew off Castle Street who could supply experienced Scandinavian crew. He was told he had to abide by the Merchant Shipping Act, even though there were no suitably experienced men available at the Shipping Office.*

A formal investigation into the loss of the **Primrose Hill** and 33 lives was held at Liverpool County Court on 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 10th April 1901 before W J Stewart assisted by Captain Anderson, Commander Caborne CB RNR and Rear-Admiral Boyes. David noted the following relevant extracts from the report of the investigation:

Concerning the manning of the vessel, Mr William Price the managing owner told the Court that he appointed the master and supplied the apprentices but he left it to the master to appoint his officers and to engage the crew.

When the superintendent of the Mercantile Marine Office was questioned about the letter which had appeared in the Journal of Commerce, he told the Court that his staff had given Captain Wilson every assistance to engage a Scandinavian crew but there was not a sufficient number available on the first day to complete the crew. When the **Primrose Hill** sailed she carried a first officer, third officer, boatswain, carpenter, thirteen able-seamen, two ordinary seamen, twelve apprentices, cook and steward; making a total of thirty-four including Captain Wilson.

In answer to the question as to whether the crew of the **Primrose Hill** was numerous enough, strong enough and capable enough to prevent the ship from drifting ashore, the Court answered "No". By referring to the Articles of Agreement, the Court established that the master and mate were the only certificated men on board. There was no second mate, but a Norwegian, Kristian Ness, who signed on as boatswain was intended to act as second mate, but without a British certificate. The third mate, John Lloyd, was aged 21 and held no certificate.

In 1896, an Act of Parliament recommended that three quarters of the crew of every sailing vessel should be "individually effective", ie should have had a minimum of four years experience before the mast. A vessel of 2,300 tons should carry 24 effective hands as a minimum, of which 21 should be "individually effective". The **Primrose Hill** did carry this number but five of the apprentices and one ordinary seaman had never been to sea before and the other ordinary seaman had no sail experience. Four of the remaining apprentices had served less than fourteen months at sea. The Court noted that all the able-seamen had "NP" after their names which indicated that no proof of service to be rated AB was produced when they signed on, as required by the Merchant Shipping Act. The Court was advised that this frequently happened at Liverpool. However, there was no evidence to satisfy the Court that the ship's loss was caused by an inexperienced crew.

The Court found that no blame should be attached to the ship's manager, Mr William Price, but it considered that he should have insisted on signing-on a more adequate crew, having regard to the fact that twelve apprentices were carried, of whom five had never been to sea before.

The Court announced its conclusion on 10th April, 1901. The verdict of the Court was that the loss of the **Primrose Hill** was due to the vessel not having set sufficient sail to carry her clear of the land after the towrope parted. The loss of life was due to the ship breaking up so rapidly after she struck the rocks.

There the matter rested until 6th May, when the following exchange occurred in Parliament as recorded in Hansard:

Mr. Michael Joyce M.P. (Limerick City)

I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been directed to the Board of Trade inquiry at Liverpool on the 3rd, 6th, and 11th April last, into the loss of the sailing ship **Primrose Hill**, when the evidence proved that this vessel was unseaworthy in consequence of being inefficiently manned; whether his attention has been drawn to that part of the evidence which proved that thirteen men were engaged as able seamen, not one of whom was able to satisfy the deputy superintendent of the Mercantile Marine Office, in whose presence the crew was signed on, that they were able seamen in accordance with the 126th section of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894; whether the Board of Trade will issue orders to superintendents and deputy superintendents of Mercantile Marine Offices not to accept for entry on any ships articles of agreement as able seamen any person who is unable to produce a record of four years service at sea in accordance with the section of the Act of Parliament; whether, seeing that thirty-four (sic) lives were lost in the **Primrose Hill** in consequence of her not being efficiently manned, and thereby being unseaworthy, the Board of Trade intend to prosecute Mr William Price, the managing owner of this vessel; and whether he can state if the owner has paid any compensation to the relatives of the men who lost their lives in this vessel.

Mr. Gerald Balfour M.P. (Leeds Central and President of the Board of Trade)

My attention has been called to the case to which the Hon. Member refers. I am not prepared to discuss the effect of the evidence, and although the court of inquiry expressed the opinion that the crew of the vessel was not adequate, it also found that there was no evidence to satisfy it that the loss of the vessel was due to such inadequacy. I am informed that the crew, both in number and effective rating, did not fall short of the general practice in similar ships, and that the manning of the vessel was not such as to render it unseaworthy. The court found that none of the A.B.'s proved their claim to be so rated; but rating is a question for the master. All that superintendents can do in the matter was done in this case, namely, to put the letters N.P. (not proved) after each man's name, in accordance with the Board of Trade instructions. I am advised that there are no grounds for a prosecution under the Merchant Shipping Act in this case. In reply to the last paragraph of the question I am informed by the owners of the **Primrose Hill** that they have not paid any compensation to the relatives of the men lost, and would resist any claim of the kind if made.

Mr. Joyce

Arising out of the answer of the Right Hon. Gentleman, am I to infer that the lives of seamen are of such little moment—

Mr. Speaker

Order, order! That is an argumentative question.

Mr. Joyce

I will put a further question down.

Mr. William Redmond M.P. (East Clare)

Arising out of the Right Hon. Gentleman's answer, may I ask whether it would be possible for the Board of Trade in future to take such steps as will render it impossible for ships to go to sea without having on board an adequate number of men who have proved that they are A.B. seamen.

Mr. Gerald Balfour

That depends upon what is meant by adequate. I think there would be considerable difficulty in showing in every case whether a crew consisted of a certain number of A.B. seamen.

Mr. William Redmond

May I ask if the Right Hon. Gentleman is in a position to say that a proper proportion of the crew of the **Primrose Hill** had proved to the satisfaction of the Board of Trade that they were A.B. seamen.

Mr. Gerald Balfour

I am not aware of any rule on the subject, but the twelve men who were on board this vessel were not proved to be A.B. seamen.

Mr. William Redmond

May I ask whether, in view of the fact that on board this ship there was not a single man who had proved himself to be an A.B. seaman, the Board of Trade will take steps to render it impossible for a ship to go to sea without a certain number of men who have proved that they are A.B. seamen.

Mr. Gerald Balfour

I very much doubt if it is possible for me to give such an undertaking.

Mr. William Redmond

Then I beg to give notice that in consequence of the unsatisfactory condition of this matter, I will at the earliest possible opportunity call attention to the practice of sending ships to sea without being properly manned by A.B. seamen.

Sources:

The Loss of the **Primrose Hill** (DKC Eccles, LNRS Bulletin April 2006)

The Report and Annex of the Court of Enquiry, 1901, BoT Wreck Reports

Hansard HC Deb 06 May 1901 vol 93 cc 752–4 752

Balfour, Gerald, William (BLFR871GW). A Cambridge Alumni Database.

Footnote

Many years ago, a cynic wrote:

"The BoT is rarely active but when it is the activity is rarely in the interests of seafarers"

The Liverpool Nautical Research Society
(Founded in 1938)

THE BULLETIN

Volume 61 No.3, December, 2017



Loss of the **Pennsylvania**; the **Lockwoods**; the **Saint Andrew**, and the **Victoria**, during the Hurricane in January, 1839 See page 15
National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London and Wikimedia Commons

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Improved Arrangements for Payment of Subscriptions

In the last issue of '**The Bulletin**' you will hopefully recall the report of our intention to introduce a Banker's Standing Order as a much more simplified method of administering the annual subscription process. It is a subject that has been with the Council for quite some time, and as discussions have developed, we have endeavoured to refine the arrangements that will apply. We have also incorporated consultation with some of our Members inviting their feedback and are now in a position to move forward and implement.

As such, I would urge you to give favourable consideration to joining the scheme. Acceptance on your part will certainly go a long way towards smoothing out the annual payment process..... which seems to come around so quickly!. Included with this issue you will find a **Standing Order Form** which I do hope you will decide to complete facilitating a payment to occur each March on a date of your choosing .

It is important to note that, once completed, the form should be passed to your bank or building society, whichever is the case and **not** returned to the Society.

This approach will be appropriate only for payments from U.K. banks, and is very costly for our non-U.K. residents. For these members we are continuing to seek the best method for payment, and will advise on the outcome.

Your full cooperation will be very much appreciated.

Thank you

John Stokoe, Chairman

Please note that the Archives Section at Maritime Museum

REMAINS CLOSED

until Spring next year

H. Watson & Co.

Submitted with additional material by L.N.R.S. Member H.M. Hignett

Based on notes from former LNRS Member A.J. (Tony) Cromby

Director of H. Watson & Co.

Quite recently I was puzzled to find amongst my morning mail an envelope from G.Knoeller of Essen addressed simply to "the Watson Line" Manchester. I could hardly contain my curiosity yet mentally thanked the G.P.O. for delivering unto us ships documents under the Watson Line banner. Unfortunately, the documents referred to the **Orlock Head** a time – chartered vessel and not a Watson-owned vessel. Nevertheless, a Bill of Lading issued at Genoa for Manchester 8th April 1916 had finally arrived in Manchester after 70 years. The reason for the delay was stark and factual. On passage to Manchester the **Orlock Head** was challenged by a German U-boat 65 miles SE of Barcelona on 12th April 1916. The crew and documents were taken aboard the submarine then the vessel was swiftly sunk. A history is necessary.

It was in 1893 that Herbert John Watson left his employers, J. & R. Young & Co. of Glasgow along with Alexander C. Ramsey to form Herbert Watson & Co. The company took offices in old Brazennose Street and old man Watson and his six members of staff started the precarious and speculative business of acting as ship's agent within the Port. The original Arrivals Book, which is currently preserved in the present-day offices at Manchester Liners House, shows that the first vessel to trade to the company's agency in Manchester was the steamship **Beryl** (122 tons net) which arrived on the 30th December, 1893, the year prior to the canal officially being opened. The Arrivals Book of that day is written in old copperplate handwriting by, we understand, a man called William Ferris Merchant, later managing director of the company and well known in shipping circles throughout the World.

Who can imagine his excitement and trepidation whilst awaiting the arrival of the **Beryl** on that cold Winter's day 30th December 1893. Among the first vessels to trade to Manchester was a small coaster named **Clutha** and hearsay has it that when Herbert Watson was asked for a telegraphic address for the company, this vessel happened to be on the top of his list of vessels in port; hence the telegraph address which is still used to this day. On the other hand, the use of the Gaelic for Clyde, may have had some significance to a staunch Glaswegian.

In the very early days of the firm through the energy of our founder Herbert John Watson and the efforts of certain fruit interests at Manchester we began running a service from Spanish ports by taking vessels on voyage- and time-charter.

The fruit interests of Manchester opened their own offices in Valencia and in those days the Spanish fruit exporters controlled the general shipping situation

– there were no societies and no Government control. In consequence, these shippers kept in touch with their own agents in this country and arranged shipments of fruit to ports like London which was the main port, with Liverpool second, followed by Hull, Manchester and so on. In order to make Manchester attractive, the fruit interests here collaborated in making advances to the shippers and packers out in Valencia, a practice carried on for many years.

In the first few years of operation, sailing vessels employed included **Zoe** carrying timber from Wexford, **Fanny Scot** with ore from Bilbao, **Bato II** and **Mercur** with full cargoes of logwood from Laguna, adding flavour of a bygone age. By the end of 1897 the **Thirlmere I** built for Thirlmere Steamship Co, and **Alagonia** for Palatine Shipping Company were being managed by Watsons, as a result of Mr. Watson's part interest in the vessels. Early clients from an Agency point of view up to the turn of the Century included:

<u>Vessel</u>	<u>Arrival</u>	<u>Cargo</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Owner</u>
Carlingford Lough	10.09.94		Newry	Barton	J. Fisher
Lowmoor	15.02.03	Wheat	Karachi	Mcr.	W. Runciman
Ben Cruachan	18.02.03	Ore	Rio	Mcr.	G. Morrison

and also, vessels for A. Coker, Brostrom, and Glynn.

The first meeting of the Watson Steamship Company took place in July 1902 leading to the appointment of Herbert Watson & Co. as Managers of the Company. By this time the shipping interests must have been very impressed with H. Watson & Co. and their venture into ship-owning, since applications for shares were received from G. Morrison, of Glasgow and Henry Coe, of Genoa.

Following a few successful seasons of chartering vessels, an agreement was sealed between the Company and the North of England Fruit Brokers Ltd. Trading could now go ahead in real earnest and charters were drawn up for 4 steamers to cover the coming shipping season. Obviously, the fruit was only one of the many specialised trades but being perishable it was very demanding and simply had to be done properly.

The season as it was known, October to June, involved the following:

From:

Valencia	oranges	melons
Almeria	grapes	oranges
Barcelona	grapes	oranges
Cartagena	grapes	oranges
Malaga	grapes	oranges
Burriana	onions	tomatoes

From: Castellon, Messina, Catania, Milazza and Palermo:
lemons, lemon peel, lemon juice, citrate of lime, oranges & essences.

The ports of Marseilles, Genoa, and Leghorn were served also for cargo such as Oil, Hemp, Talc, Marble, Hides, Cotton goods etc,. The vessels concerned, **Stadt Schleswig, Stanton, Nordstrand** and **Allie**, were fixed for 3 voyages with options of up to three more at an average £350 per month.

It is probably not widely known that the company were originally ship owners and it was in 1897 that the Watson Line was formed and the first vessel to visit Manchester was the s.s. **Thirlmere** on the 26th November 1897. The record shows that this vessel had loaded a cargo of cotton and pig iron at Brunswick. The business ultimately developed to such an extent that Mr. Watson, with ship-owning ambitions, started the Watson Steamship Company in 1902. In developing the Watson Line Service, operations began with Marseilles and the West Mediterranean ports, Genoa, Massa di Carrara (for marble), Leghorn, Naples and the Sicilian ports. Watsons were never members of the Conference and constantly fought the Cunard, Ellerman, Glynn and MacAndrews services for traffic with great success.

It was about this time that Mr. Watson had completed his tour of France and Italy interviewing and appointing agents as listed: Genoa, Henry Coe; Leghorn, W. Meiklereid; Messina, G. Sacca Di Fco; Palermo, V. Adelfio; and Marseilles, A. Violle. After much deliberation the travelling expenses of Mr. Watson were finally approved and the princely sum of £37 would be reimbursed.

H. Watson & Co. as managers now reported that the new steamer on order, **Delamere**, was making good progress and would be ready for November. The following month the Company seal was affixed to letters to the Registrar of Shipping recording ownership. The **Delamere**, built by A. Roger of Port Glasgow for £18,000, was immediately positioned for the fruit trade and arrived at Manchester with a full cargo of fruit from Spain on 24th December 1902. She departed with a full load of pitch to Cette.

By February of 1903 a total of 9 Steamers had delivered fruit cargoes at Manchester landing 89,415 cases in addition to general cargo. A decision was taken to pursue this liner trade despite the current debit balance of £199 showing in the books. Later that year the outward trade from Manchester was growing, and, in order to reduce the risks of over-chartering a further vessel of their own was thought necessary. Such arrangements were agreed with the principals Northern Fruit Brokers Ltd., who normally shared half the risks in chartered vessels' voyage results.

Probably, as a result of still being in the red, a resolution was passed in June 1904 that no free passages in our vessels were to be given. Mr. Watson then visited Germany and amongst various owners seems to have struck a particularly good arrangement with H.C. Horn of Schleswig which resulted in a flow of 'Horn' vessels during the ensuing season. Events took a tough turn when the North of England Fruit Brokers negotiated improved terms which meant that they would now only be liable for the first £150 of any voyage loss up to a maximum of £300, which was previously double. By 1906 business was so

intense at Manchester that it became necessary to keep the experienced Captain Wearing ashore from the **Thirlmere** to act as ‘Overlooker’ at the docks.

The Company was now in profit and in September acquired the Palatine Shipping Company whose principal asset was the **Thirlmere II**. The original **Thirlmere**, built for the Thirlmere Steamship Company, was sold in 1899 and the other vessel under Watson’s management for Palatine, the **Alagonia**, was sold in 1903. Watson Steamship Company fleet now consisted of **Delamere** and **Thirlmere II**. With four vessels running for the company on time-charter, a contract was placed with A. Roger of Port Glasgow for the **Ellesmere**.

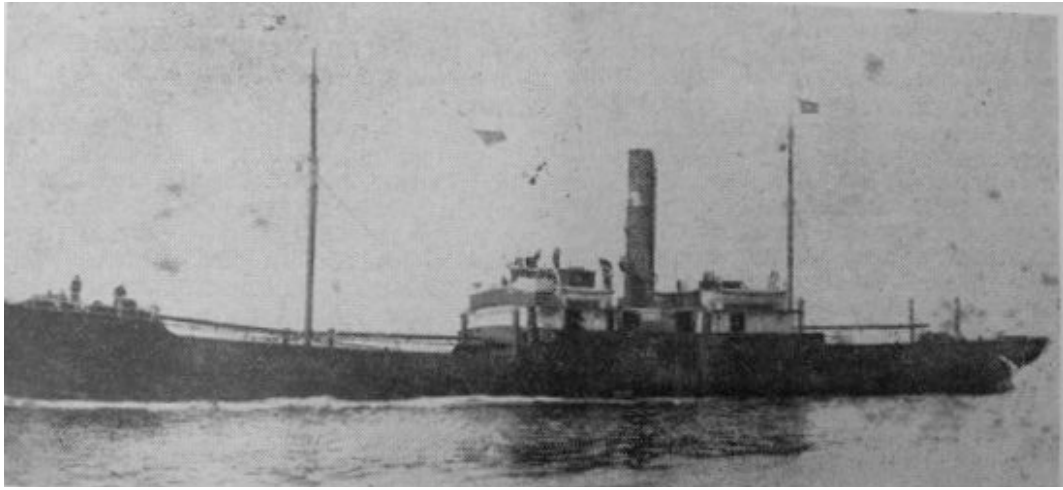
So called modern attempts to legally maximise carrying capacity were highlighted in this eventful year with Mr. Watson’s decision to spend £226 on repairs and alterations in order to benefit from the new freeboard rules that would give the **Delamere** a larger carrying capacity.

At the end of 1906 the **Ellesmere** was duly registered in the Port of Manchester for the Company.

At the outbreak of the First World War the British Government foresaw that under war conditions, British supplies of butter drawn mainly from the Netherlands and Denmark, would be in danger. Government, therefore, asked Mr. Lever (of Lever Brothers) to undertake the manufacture of margarine as a substitute for butter. The latter immediately threw himself into the task with characteristic energy. The exigencies of war caused the Conference to be suspended and Lever, finding the flow of materials from West Africa interrupted through scarcity of shipping space, decided to set up his own ship-owning company. He knew full well that, with Conference suspended, he would be faced with a fight on his hands as had happened in 1896. Lever therefore, wishing to acquire a “ready-made” fleet, had a meeting with the Manchester-based firm H. Watson & Co. which controlled eight vessels with names derived from tiny hamlets in Cheshire and Shropshire.

This small fleet, whose tonnages ranged from 1,251 to 2,293 was purchased and merged into the Bromport Steamship Company — named after Bromborough Port, a town in the Wirral, which like Port Sunlight, was dominated by Lever Bros. — with a white star, the letters BSCL and a central ‘L’ (for Lever), making up its flag.

The Bromport Steamship Company Ltd was incorporated on 29 April 1916, and vested in the Niger Company Ltd. and finally transferred to Lever Bros Ltd. for amalgamation with Speedy Prompt Delivery [SPD Ltd] in 1934. The war at sea was entering its most savage phase with Britain facing starvation and Germany about to embark on its policy of unrestricted warfare. In two years the Bromport Line lost half its fleet: **Colemere**, **Eskmere**, **Redesmere**, and **Delamere**.



ss Delamere

Fleet List, partial:-

Vessel	Built	Tonnage	Length	Beam	Draft
Delamere	1902	1103/ 678	224.7	x 34.4	x 14.1
Delamere	1915	1525/ ????	267.4	x 38.7	x 16.7
Colemere	1915	2115/1138	303.6	x 44.7	x 18.3
Ellesmere	1902	1170/ 729	244.6	x 36.0	x 16.0
Eskmere	1906				
Flaxmere	1915	1524/ 877	267.3	x 38.8	x 16.7
Linmere	1913	1579/	267.3	x 38.8	x 16.7
Oakmere	1910	1251/	245	x 36	x 15.9
Redesmere	1911	2123/ 1323	290	x 42.7	x 19.5
Thirlmere 1	1897	1851/ 1157	280	x 40	x 18.2
Thirlmere 2	1903				
Alagonia	1895	2699/ 1725	309.7	x 42.6	x 20.5
OrlockHead	1913	1945/ 1186	283.2	x 40.1	x 18.5
Carlingford Lough	1894	2157/ 1363	286.3	x 37.2	x 24.2
Lowmoor	1902	3976/ 2560	336.5	x 46.5	x 25.7
Ben Cruachan	1903	3092/ 1978	273.5	x 38.2	x 21.9
Allie	1899	1098/ 683	233.6	x 33.1	x 14.6
Nordstrand	1893	857/ 557	210.3	x 33.1	x 16.7
Stadt Schleswig	1902	1103/ 678	219.4	x 33.3	x 13.7
Stanton	1899	1097/ 682	212.0	x 35.1	x 14.3
Beryl					
Clutha					
Bato II	1878	?? / 250	129.5	X 23.0	X 11.7
Zoe	1876	765/ ???	187.9	x 30.8	x 18.8

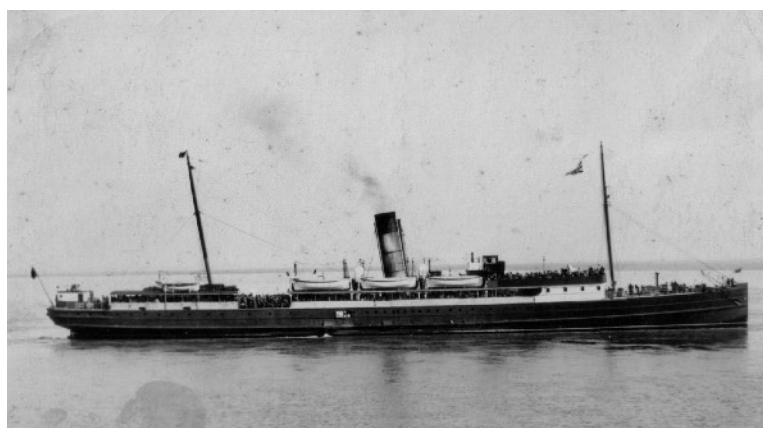
Dunkirk, May 1940

by L.N.R.S. Member W.A. Ogle

The year 2017, following release of the blockbuster film of the year under this same title, has seen a resurgence of press coverage regarding this unique operation. Once again due recognition is given to the heroic achievement of the “Little Ships” and the Royal Navy. However, there has been little reported regarding the contribution of the Merchant Navy; this article looks in particular at the involvement of vessels of the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company.

Founded in 1830, and now (2017) the longest continually operating passenger service in the world, the Steam Packet entered World War 2 with a very mixed fleet of sixteen steamers. The three cargo steamers: **Peveril**, **Conister** and **Cushag** (Captain W. Squires from 1929 to 1943) were retained to maintain the vital link to the island. Passenger sailings were covered by the **Rushen Castle**, **Snaefell** and **Victoria**. Initially the passenger service continued on the prime Douglas – Liverpool route but, on 20th December 1940 the

Victoria (Capt. J.J.Keig) detonated two mines in her wake, then on 27th detonated a further mine which left her disabled. After repair the **Victoria** was requisitioned and relocated to the Firth of Forth as a target vessel. On 28th December the passenger service was transferred to Fleetwood for the remainder of the war.



The **Rushen Castle** (1898) was the oldest vessel in the fleet in 1939

Meanwhile the **King Orry**, **Manx Maid** and **Mona's Isle** were converted into armed boarding

vessels. The remaining eight passenger steamers all became personnel carriers engaged in cross-channel duties.

The contribution made by the Steam Packet towards the evacuation from northern France was highly significant, but disastrous for many of its crew and ships. In all ten of their vessels took part. The total number of troops evacuated from Dunkirk is put at 338,226; and of these 24,669 were brought out on the eight of the company steamers which took part in the operation. Highly significant at over 7% or 1 in 14! However in just one day, 29th May, 1940, the company lost three of its steamers in just twenty hours. The **Mona's Queen** at 0530, the **Fenella** at 1700 and at about 2100 the **King Orry** was bombed, sinking shortly after 0200.

The fleet as at September, 1939 comprised:

Vessel	Built	Details	Disposal
Rushen Castle	1898	Twin screw, built by Vickers (Barrow) for Joint Railway Companies, acquired 1928. 5,520 h.p., 17.5 knots. Length 97.8m x beam 11.3m. 1,052 passengers	Towed to Ghent for demolition, 1947
Manxman	1904	Triple screw, direct drive turbines, built by Vickers (Barrow) for Midland Railway Co., acquired 1920. 6,300s.h.p. 22 knots. Length 103.9m x beam 13.1m., 2,020 passengers	Broken up at Preston 1949
Viking	1905	Triple screw, direct drive turbines, built by Armstrong Whitworth (Newcastle) 10,000 s.h.p. 22.5 knots Length 110m x beam 12.8m 2,000 passengers	Broken up at Barrow 1954
Mona's Isle	1905	Triple screw, direct drive turbines, built by Denny (Dumbarton) for South Eastern & Chatham Rly. Co., acquired 1920. 7,500s.h.p. 21 knots Length 96.9m x beam 12.2m 1,479 passengers	Towed to Milford Haven for demolition, 1948
Snaefell	1906	Triple screw, direct drive turbines, built by Fairfield (Govan) for G. & J. Burns, acquired 1920. 6,500s.h.p. 21 knots Length 99.2m x 12m. 1,700 passengers	Sold 1945, scrapped 1948
Victoria	1907	Triple screw, direct drive turbines, built by Denny (Dumbarton) for South Eastern & Chatham Rly. Co., acquired 1928. 7,500s.h.p. 21 knots. Length 98.2m x 12.2. 1,536 passengers	Towed to Barrow for demolition 1957
Cushag	1908	Single screw, cargo, built by George Brown (Greenock) for J. Waterson (Co. Antrim), acquired 1920. 350i.h.p. 10 knots. Length 39.6m x 6.7m	Sold 1943 to T. Dougal, Stornoway, broken up at Grangemouth 1957
Manx Maid	1910	Triple screw, direct drive turbines, built by Cammell Laird, Birkenhead for London and SW Rly Co., acquired 1923. 6,500s.h.p. 20 knots. Length 90.8m x 11.9m 1,470 passengers	Broken up Barrow 1950

King Orry	1913	Twin screw geared turbines built by Cammell Laird, Birkenhead. 9,400s.h.p. 20.8 knots Length 95.4m x 13.1m 1,600 passengers	Bombed and sunk at Dunkirk, 30.05.1940
Conister	1921	Single screw, cargo, built by Goole Shipbuilding Co. for Gillie & Blair (Newcastle); acquired 1932 430i.h.p. 10 knots	Broken up at Dalmuir, 1965
Ben-my-Chree	1927	Twin screw geared turbines built by Cammell Laird, Birkenhead. 10,300s.h.p. 22.5 knots Length 111.6m x 14m 2,586 passengers	Towed to Ghent for demolition, 1965
Peveril	1929	Single screw, cargo, built by Cammell Laird, Birkenhead. 12knots Length 64.9m x beam 10.5m	Broken up, Glasson Dock, 1964
Lady of Mann	1930	Twin screw geared turbines built by Vickers, Barrow 11,500s.h.p. 22.5 knots Length 113.1m x 15.3m 2,873 passengers	Towed to Dalmuir for demolition, 1971
Mona's Queen	1934	Twin screw geared turbines built by Cammell Laird, Birkenhead. 8,500s.h.p. 21.5 knots Length 106.7m x 14.6m 2,486 passengers	Mined and sunk at Dunkirk 29.05.1940
Fenella	1936	Twin screw geared turbines built by Vickers, Barrow 8,500s.h.p. 21 knots Length 95.9m x 14m 1,968 passengers	Sunk by air attack at Dunkirk 29.05.1940
Tynwald	1936	Twin screw geared turbines built by Vickers, Barrow 8,500s.h.p. 21.5 knots Length 95.9m x 14m 1,968 passengers	Torpedoed and sunk at Bougie, Algeria, 12.11.1942

The evacuation from Dunkirk was coded Operation Dynamo and lasted from 26th May, 1940 to 4th June. Involvement by Steam Packet vessels began when **Mona's Isle**, the first ship to leave Dover, succeeded in bringing out 2,634 troops in two round trips.

On 29th May, the **Manxman** was one of ten personnel ships which together took off 14,760 troops from the East Pier. She returned to Dunkirk on the morning of 2 June, when the operation was getting near its close, and embarked 177 troops. In all, **Manxman** evacuated 2,394 men. That day, 29th May, was however to prove of major significance to the company.

The **Mona's Queen**, which on 22nd May had been the last ship to leave Boulogne carrying 2,000 troops, was approaching Dunkirk at 0530 under the

command of relief master Captain A. Holkham when, about a mile off the port, she detonated a magnetic mine; with her back broken she quickly sank with the loss of twenty four lives.

At 1700 hours that same day the **Fenella** had berthed alongside the stone



R.M.S. **Fenella** (1936) arriving at Douglas.
Her similarity with the post-war vessels is clear, especially with the bulwarks painted white.

jetty, and had already loaded some 650 troops. As a result of heavy bombs landing on the jetty large sections of heavy stone blocks were blown onto the ship's side, causing major damage and flooding of the engine room. She quickly settled on an even keel. Coincidentally the Liverpool & North Wales Steamship Co.'s **St. Seriol** was able to take off survivors. Her master, Captain J.W. Cubbon, was rescued off the beaches after being blown up again on the **Crested Eagle**. He then served on various commands throughout the war.

The **King Orry** carried some armament as an Armed Boarding Vessel and, under the command of Cdr. J. Elliot RNR, was sent to Dunkirk where she embarked 1,131 soldiers. The ship cast off and made for Dover in the early hours of 27th May. Shore batteries at Calais opened up on her, and succeeded in inflicting some damage, and there were casualties aboard. However, she was able to continue to Dover, where she docked just before noon. She returned to Dunkirk in the late afternoon of 29th May when, at sunset, the **King Orry** was bombed and critically damaged. Ordered to clear the harbour and approaches and with her engine room flooded, she sank at 0200 hours the next day.

The company had lost three of its steamers in just twenty hours.

Meanwhile the **Lady of Mann**, Captain T.C. Woods took 4,262 men back to Dover with four trips. She remained for six hours in Dunkirk harbour on 31st May, despite having been damaged by shellfire from shore batteries on her approach and being bombed by enemy aircraft. She was back at Dunkirk in the early hours of 1st June and took off 1,500 casualties. The following day, 2nd June, she again steamed into Dunkirk but was ordered back for lack of troops, as by this time the evacuation was drawing towards its close. She picked up 18 French soldiers from a small boat on her way back and landed them in England. On the night of 3rd June, she made her last trip to the shattered harbour. She berthed alongside the East Pier at a little after midnight on the morning of 4th

June, and left for England after embarking another 1,244 troops in little over an hour. Later that afternoon, Operation Dynamo ended.

She later operated in the evacuations from Le Havre, (on one occasion carrying some 5,000 troops) where she, together with the **Manx Maid**, was one of the last three ships to leave that port; followed by Cherbourg and then Brest. On 17th June, 1940 as she was carrying a full complement out of Brest, the Cunard liner **Lancastria** was heavily bombed and sank in just twenty minutes (she had embarked an unknown number of evacuees but estimates range from 4,000 up to 9,000). Although ordered by his naval escort to keep steaming Captain Woods stopped the '**The Lady**' to pick up survivors. When she returned to Douglas in March, 1946 he remarked that he had taken her to war in 1939, and had brought her back in one piece.

The **Tynwald**, initially under the command of Captain J.H. Whiteway, and then Captain W.A. Qualtrough, had the distinction of embarking more troops than any other company vessel. She made her first mission to the shattered port on 28th May, and was one of ten personnel ships that lifted a total of 14,760 troops from the eastern mole the following day. The same day, her sister ship **Fenella** was lost.

In the late evening of 30th May, **Tynwald** was one of four personnel vessels back at the mole and withdrew 1,153 troops. On 2nd June, she made her third trip and embarked 1,200 troops, leaving for Dover in the early morning of 3rd June.

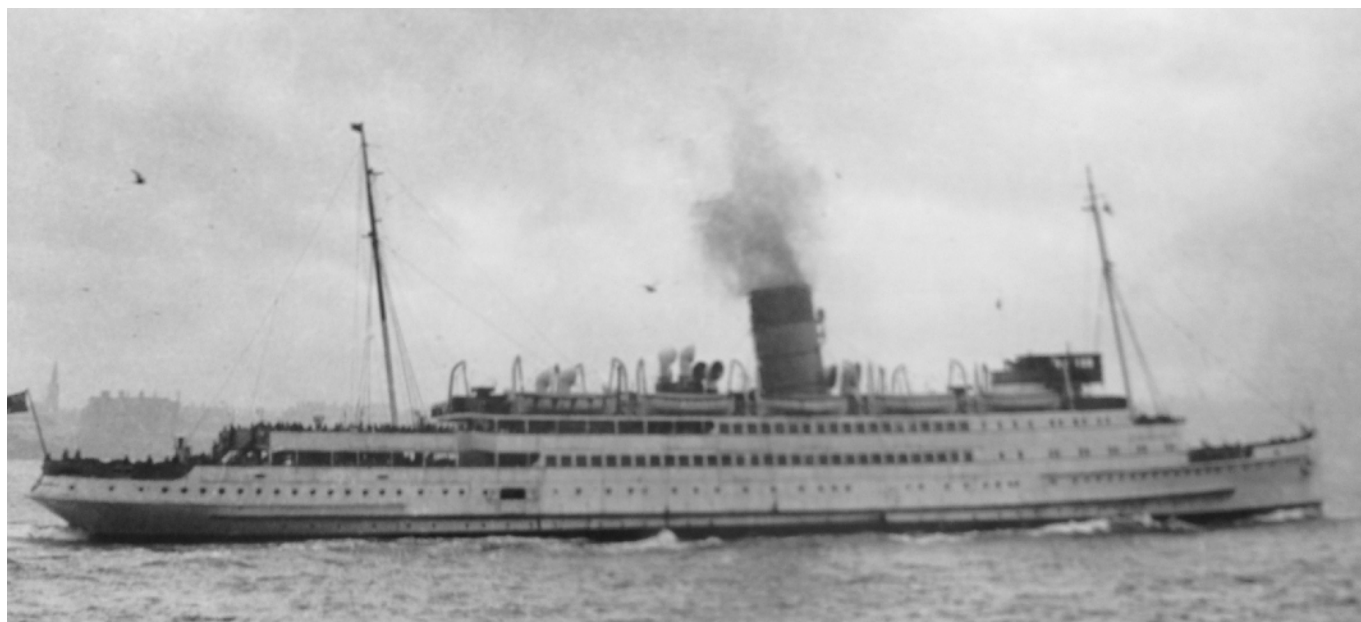
The last day of the operation was 4th June; shortly after 1400 hours, the Admiralty announced that Operation Dynamo was over. By then **Tynwald** had already left the eastern mole after her fourth trip. She was the last ship to leave, landing 3,000 French troops in England later that day. Her total in the operation is officially given as 8,953 troops. (Amongst the highest by any single ship, the General Steam Navigation Co.'s **Royal Daffodil** is credited with some 9,500 in seven trips).

The **Ben-my-Chree**, whose master was Commodore G. Woods, made two successful trips to Dunkirk, and rescued a total of 4,095 troops. Departing Folkstone for her third foray '**The Ben**' was involved in a collision off Folkstone on the night of 2nd June, which removed her from the rest of the operation. Captain T.E. Cain managed to take the damaged ship to Birkenhead for repair.

Operation Aerial commenced two weeks after Dunkirk, this time dealing with evacuation from Le Havre, Cherbourg and Brest. On one passage the **Manx Maid**, Captain J.H. Kerruish, embarked 3,000 at Brest (twice her normal capacity).

The **Manxman**, Captain P.B. Cowley, was the final troopship to leave Cherbourg, just as the Germans were entering the port area. Rommel is reported to have called her "that cheeky two-funnelled steamer."

The **Viking** which, although bomb damaged had taken part in the evacuations from Le Havre and Cherbourg, was despatched to St. Peter Port,



RMS **Lady of Mann** in pre-war livery. Showing her elegant counter stern. Many believe that she and the **Ben-my-Chree** were the finest looking cross-channel steamers. Wikimedia

arriving at 0400 hours on 21st June, 1940 prior to the German invasion of the Channel Islands. She then embarked some 1,800 children aged from four to seventeen for passage to Weymouth. Reluctant to sail in the dark because as a coal burner her funnels tended to “light up at night” and ordered to delay departure until a naval escort was in attendance her master, Captain P.J. (Ginger) Bridson was concerned at the lack of food available for his young charges. His solution, it is said, was to break open the lifeboat emergency rations and share out the barley sugar sweets!

The remaining vessels which had already seen such sterling service saw out their own wars in a range of theatres and roles.

In 1941 the **Tynwald** was converted to an auxiliary anti-aircraft cruiser, becoming unrecognisable with her superstructure removed and rebuilt; as **H.M.S Tynwald** she took part in the North Africa campaign assigned to Operation Torch. Whilst at anchor in Bougie Bay, about 100 miles east of Algiers, she was torpedoed by an Italian submarine in the early hours of 12th November, 1942. She was the Company’s fourth and final war loss.

The **Mona’s Isle** joined the Rosyth Command after re-fitting as an A.A. guardship in the Firth of Forth.

The **Ben-my-Chree** served as a troop transport from 1941 to 1944, often sailing as far north as Iceland. In January 1944 she was at North Shields for conversion into an Infantry Landing Craft, carrying six landing craft. After this she repositioned to the Channel for exercises leading up to D-Day; on 6th June she was at Omaha Beach as headquarters ship for the 514th Assault Flotilla.

From August 1941 the **Lady of Mann** also continued her troop transport duties, mainly between Invergordon, Aberdeen and Lerwick to the Faroe Islands

through to April 1944, a war career which was so strangely similar to that of the **Ben-my-Chree**, and probably no other two ships were in each other's company on so many occasions. Both '**The Lady**' and '**The Ben**' routinely demonstrated their qualities as fine sea boats in the most adverse weather, and it was not uncommon for them to have to await their naval escorts, it being too rough for them to proceed at their speed.

At times she was also engaged ferrying troops and air force personnel from the RMS **Queen Mary**, which served throughout the war as a troop transport ship. '**The Queen**' would arrive in Belfast from Canada or the United States, turn around quickly and set off again westwards. '**The Lady**', was one of several vessels that serviced the big Cunarder, taking troops on the final leg of their sea voyage to Greenock.

In 1944 she underwent the same conversion as '**The Ben**' and served on D-Day as headquarters ship for the 512th Assault Flotilla at Juno Beach.

In turn the **Victoria** was present at the D-Day landings at Arromanches, and subsequently landed American troops at Utah Beach.

On the cessation of hostilities the ships made their way back to Douglas following restoration of their normal passenger facilities but, in the main, they remained in service for only a few years until the **King Orry** class were brought into service.

Many Awards were granted in respect of these actions, including:-

Tynwald	Mason	Charles Powell	Radio Officer	DSC
	Watterson	Allan	Second Officer	DSC
	Whiteway	John Henry	Captain	DSC
	Gribben	Thomas	Seaman	DSM
	Allen	Arthur James	Donkeyman	MID
	Gawne	John	Carpenter	MID
	Lister	William Edward	Purser	MID
Lady of Mann	Patterson	William	Gunner	DSM
	Woods	Thomas	Captain	MID
Manxman	Cowley	Philip Basil	Captain	MID
	Ferguson	John	Third Engineer	MID
	Quirk	Sidney Manning	Second Engineer	MID
Mona's Queen	Duggan	Radcliffe	Captain	DSC
	Ambler	Ernest Harry	Radio Officer	DSC
	Watterson	Eggerton	Boatswain	DSM

Footnote: following the Dunkirk evacuation and for some years after the war there were persistent rumours that the **Fenella** had actually been raised by the occupying forces and, with new engines fitted, brought back into service under the name **Reval**. Much later, the belief grew that she had been taken over by the Russians, following the collapse of Germany.

F. B. O'Friel has arrived at what is probably the authentic version after help from a correspondent who searched the Kriegsmarine files at Freiburg. From the papers unearthed, it seems certain that the wrecked **Fenella** was eventually removed piecemeal from the harbour as scrap. The Germans had classified her as Wreck No. 11. Near her had been Wreck No. 8, the steamer **Bawtry**, (Captain S.G. Barnes – Bawtry Steamship Company Ltd., London) was raised in March 1941, and was later repaired at Antwerp and declared a 'prize of war'. She was taken over by a Kiel shipping firm in 1943 under the name of **Rival**, only to be completely destroyed in the massive RAF air raid on Hamburg on the night of 31st December 1944.

Following the efforts of the late Captain Andrew Douglas and subsequently Captain Hamish Ross (both of the Steam Packet), the starboard anchor from the **Mona's Queen**, which had become detached during the sinking and therefore did not form part of the War Grave, was raised by a French salvage vessel on 29 May 2010 (70th anniversary of her sinking). There was a 12-gun salute from H.M.S. **Monmouth** as a crane lifted the anchor from the seabed to a French salvage vessel.

Transported by road to Cammell Laird at Birkenhead, where the **Mona's Queen** was built in 1934, the anchor was fully restored and then returned to the Isle of Man.



On 29 May 2012, a memorial featuring the restored anchor was dedicated during a ceremony at Kallow Point in Port St. Mary attended by representatives of local and national government, the Lieutenant Governor, the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company and the French Navy. This now fittingly commemorates the tragic events of 72 years earlier.

Key features of the design show the anchor supported in its resting place upon a piece of stone reclaimed from the ledges at Kallow Point, and orientated such that the anchor is pointing directly towards Dunkirk. A nautical compass and local stones beneath the anchor provide a real sense of the anchor "coming home".

The Liverpool Hurricane of January, 1839 - Part 2

by L.N.R.S member Vin Finn

One week later:

Extract from "The Liverpool Courier , Wednesday, 16th January, 1839.

THE LATE HURRICANE. In the three editions of our paper published last week we gave full and ample details of the effects of this awful visitation in Liverpool and its vicinity, and we have this week the melancholy duty of narrating its disastrous results in the river and on the coast.

The whole of the sand banks and the beach on the north end of the Wirral peninsula, from the Rock Point to Hilbre Island, have, since Tuesday week, presented a lamentable spectacle of the effects of the storm. On Thursday the five fine ships, the **Brighton**, **Pennsylvania**, **Lockwoods**, **St. Andrew**, and **Victoria**, were seen aground in various positions, and exposed to the beating of breakers. The **Victoria** was stranded on the main, a little below Mockbeggar Lighthouse, and, should the weather remain moderate, she may possibly be got off, after the cargo is discharged. The others will be, or are, total wrecks; much of their cargoes are already washed out, and with fragments of other smaller vessels and portions of their contents, are strewn along the whole line of the coast. In Hoylake several small craft are thrown up, and others wrecked, including amongst the latter a schooner and two flats, one of which is bottom up. The beach was full of wreckage, and most of the small boats destroyed. The larboard side of the **Brighton** was beaten out, and portions of it driven on shore at Hoylake. Many of the bales of cotton, with which she was laden, were washed out of her, and some of them were picked up on the shore, a small reward being offered for the recovery of each package. The situation of this vessel (on the northeast of the North Bank) was such that it was difficult, and often impossible, to approach her either by a row-boat or a steamer, while the wind remained high. The spot is not far from that on which is still visible a portion of the cranks, boilers and other iron work of the **Superb**, a steam vessel, wrecked there some years ago. A considerable portion, however, of the cargo, tackle, &c, have since been got off, in of course a damaged state. From the other large vessels on the banks some of the cargo has also been saved, but in a similar condition. Steam-boats are employed for its conveyance, when they have water to reach the wrecks.

Notwithstanding the dreadful visitation of the storm, and the appalling loss of life, some wretches have been found to have gone to the wrecks and carried off a considerable quantity of property. Some of them have been taken before magistrates at Birkenhead, and others brought to Liverpool, and will be dealt with according to their deserts.

The fine hotel known as the Leasowe Castle, (on the sea-shore between Wallasey village and Hoylake) has, since the hurricane, been the scene of great

and melancholy interest. The situation of the hotel, immediately to the south of the fatal banks by which the entrance to our harbour is perplexed and endangered, has long rendered it a place of refuge to the survivors from shipwrecks, and of anxious and fearful resort for those apprehensive of finding amongst bodies washed up, or brought on shore, the pallid remains of some valued friend or affectionate relative. On no former occasion were these painful feelings more strongly excited, or amongst a greater number of visitors at the Castle, than at the present time. From Tuesday – when it became known that the fate of hundreds of men, women, and children, in the stranded vessels, was pending by a fearfully-slender tenure – up to Sunday, an unusual number of persons, in vehicles, on horseback, and on foot, continued to pass from the several ferries on the Mersey to the Castle, many actuated by curiosity (and several being relatives of parties in the wrecked vessels) to learn the worst, and, if needful to do the last offices of humanity to their departed friends.

The Liverpool police were early on the alert, not only on the Lancashire shore, adjacent to the town, but on the Cheshire coast. No fewer than thirty constables were stationed along the Leasowe shore, for the rescue or preservation of life and property, besides twelve who were placed, as soon as possible, on board the stranded ships. The exertions of Mr. Whitty, Mr. Dowling, and indeed all connected with the police establishment, have been most arduous, praiseworthy, and highly efficient.

On Thursday, it being known that an inquisition would be held at the Castle, on the bodies picked up on the immediate shore, the visitors were numerous from the neighbouring country, as well as from Liverpool, Manchester, and other places; and amongst the vehicles from Woodside appeared a hearse, for (we believe) the conveyance to Manchester of the body of a gentleman who was there well known. The coffin soon after followed, in a cart, from Wallasey, attended by the maker and the clerk of the church of that village. The interior of the Castle was crowded in almost every apartment, and many visitors sauntered about in the pleasure-grounds, or strolled on the shore below, viewing the scene of the devastation which there presented itself.

In one of the outbuildings lay the bodies of three of the sufferers out of the ship **Pennsylvania**, and in an apartment in the house lay the body of another. Those in the stable were in the wet clothing in which they had been picked up. One was the body of Mr. Edward Lamb Parsons, a merchant of New York, of tall, slender make, fashionably dressed. On his person lay a small Indian rubber, or Macintosh life-preserver, found in his breast, the cloth sewed in tubes, but apparently not inflated, and too small to be efficient had it been so. On this gentleman was found considerable property. Another body was that of Mr. Suitor, (also a cabin passenger) a fine looking young man of dark complexion, with whiskers. The other was the body of the mate, Mr. Blydenburgh, a stout man, in seafaring garb, and boots. All of them had evidently availed themselves of their warmest clothing as a protection from the cold.

The body in the house, that of Mr. Douglas (also a cabin passenger) was stripped, but covered with a blanket, attempts having been made to restore animation.

Marine Intelligence, Wednesday, January 9.

- The **Hardware**, hence for Lisbon, and the **Lion**, hence for Glasgow, with loss of sails, and the **Lynx**, hence for Lisbon, have put back.
- The **Harvest Home**, hence for St. Thomas's, is wrecked on Mad Wharf. The carpenter and one man were saved. It is feared the remainder of the crew are drowned.
- The **Monkey**, hence for Gibraltar, is wrecked, near Formby. Three men were drowned.
- The **Victoria**, from Charleston to this port, is on shore, near Leasowe Castle, and ebbs dry.
- The **Ward**, from St. John's, N. B., is anchored off the Northwest Buoy, with loss of yards.
- The **John Airey**, from Leghorn to this port, is on shore, near Whitehaven. The captain, his wife, and two of the crew, were drowned: cargo discharging into lighters.
- The brig **Sarah**, of London, is on shore, near Formby Point
- The **Jane**, hence for Bristol, has put back, with loss of sails and leaky, having struck on Taylor's Bank coming in.
- A brig and schooner were driven on shore on Formby Point this morning.
- The **Victoria**, steam-tug has arrived, with twenty-six persons from the **Pennsylvania**, and twenty-two from the **Lockwoods**.
- Captain Smith and the second mate of the **Pennsylvania** were washed overboard yesterday, and drowned. Two men were left in the main, and one in the mizen top, all dead.
- About thirty persons were lying on the poop of the **Lockwoods**, all dead, and several drowned in the cabin.
- The whole of the survivors, except two who refused to leave the **Lockwoods**, have been brought on shore from both vessels, by the **Victoria**.

Blackpool, January 8

- The **Denis**, from Liverpool to Wexford, is on shore, near this, with loss of sails, &c.
- The **Arion**, from Shoreham, is also on shore here.
- The **Crusader** must go to pieces if the weather continues as at present. The ship is nearly covered at half-tide.

Heysham, near Lancaster, January 8

- The **Alert**, from Liverpool to Sligo, is on shore, off this place, and, it is feared, will go to pieces.

- The **Mona Castle**, from the Isle of Man, is on shore, near this: cargo discharging.
- The **Yeoman**, from Liverpool to Demerara, which sailed on Sunday, is on Lancaster Sands: cargo washing out; masts standing. No account of the crew.

Thursday, January 10

- The **N.W. Light ship** was replaced at her station yesterday.
- The man and woman left on board the **Lockwoods**, yesterday, were afterwards saved, and taken to Hoylake.
- The **Robert Lovely**, of Whitehaven, capsized at the quay, and lies in a very dangerous position.
- The **Jane and Alice** and the **Elizabeth**, both grain laden, for this port, drove from their fastenings at the quay, and have suffered damage.
- The **Amity**, of Douglas, also grain laden, for this port, was driven on shore from her anchorage, and lost anchor and chain.
- The **Antigua**, from Marseilles for this port, drove a considerable distance, and grounds at low water.

Friday, January 11.

- The **Everton**, from Odessa, is on shore at Formby. Four of the crew saved.

Saturday, January 12.

- The **Henry Leeds**, from Savannah, at this port; sailed on the 19th of December. On 5th, 6th, and 7th instant, experienced heavy gales from west southwest to north northwest.
- The **Ebenezer**, from Seville for this port, at Holyhead, with loss of bulwarks.
- The **Dinah**, from Carnarvon for this port, is on shore, near Beaumaris.
- The **Eclipse**, (steamer,) of this port, is on shore at Carnarvon, with considerable damage.

Monday, January 14.

- The wreck of the **Brighton**, on shore, near Burbo, has been brought into the river.

Extract from "The Liverpool Mercury." Friday, January, 11.

Twenty-three bodies taken from the wreck of the **Lockwoods** were brought to Liverpool last evening and deposited in the Workhouse. Inquests will be held upon them today. Four bodies remain entangled in the rigging of the vessel, which lies on the North Bank.

A Sting in the Tale. Extract from "The Liverpool Mercury", 3rd May, 1839.

The **Lockwoods'** passengers who sailed from this port in January last, on the day of the memorable storm. With the vessel becoming a total wreck off the Hoyle many passengers perished. The majority of those who were saved embarked on board the **Robert Isaacs**, on the twenty-first of January, from this port to New York, and after enduring unparalleled hardships, and being knocked about for upwards of ten weeks in the Atlantic, with death almost hourly staring them in the face, were landed again in Liverpool, without reaching their destination.

Radio Officer James Gordon Melville Turner

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

The United Kingdom declared war on Germany on the 3rd September 1939 and later that evening the **Athenia** was torpedoed and sunk by U-30. Thus began the Battle of the Atlantic.

Three days later off the coast of Portugal, about a hundred miles northwest of Cape St Vincent, the ss **Manaar**/GSCM (Thomas & John Brocklebank Ltd), was going about her lawful occasions in international waters. She was outward bound from Liverpool to Calcutta and Rangoon, carrying general cargo, including agricultural and government stores. Although the crew would have been well aware that the war had started it is likely that they would have felt in no immediate danger. Their equanimity was quickly shattered, when, at 0600 hours on 6th September 1939 the **Manaar** received fire from a surfaced but unknown U-boat. The **Manaar's** Master, Mr. Campbell Shaw, ordered the defensive gun, located on the **Manaar's** stern to open fire on the U-boat and further ordered an SOS to be transmitted.

The Radio Officer on this particular voyage was James Gordon Melville Turner and he immediately began broadcasting his SOS, giving details of the ships name and position. This action appears to have infuriated the U-boat captain and he in turn ordered further action from his gun crew. The return fire was accurate and at least five hits were scored on the **Manaar** causing severe damage and killing seven of her crew. Other crewmen were injured but despite this RO Turner continued to transmit his SOS. After about twenty minutes or so the decision was taken to abandon ship as the shelling continued.

Four lifeboats were successfully lowered but some of the survivors in these boats sustained injuries from shrapnel from the U-boats gunfire. Radio Officer Turner was still on board and some of the men in the lifeboat shouted for him to get off the stricken ship but this he refused to do. As will be seen from the official citation, Turner had assisted two injured native crew members to the boats. For this unselfish action he was awarded the Empire Gallantry Medal.

Published in the The London Gazette of 13th October 1939 was the following citation;

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the Award of the Medal of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, for Gallantry, to the undermentioned:

James Gordon Melville Turner, Radio Officer, S.S. "Manaar" (Messrs. T. & J. Brocklebank).

When the S.S. **Manaar** was attacked by an enemy submarine there was no summons to stop. About ten shots were fired before the ship was abandoned after twenty or thirty minutes. Three shells were fired, one of which took away the fore part of the wheelhouse and probably the wireless aerial. Rapid shrapnel followed. Some of the men in the boats were injured by gunfire.

The Radio Officer was inadvertently left behind in the ship with two members of the native crew, one severely wounded and the other injured. His shipmates called to him to come down and join them in the Master's boat, but he refused to leave the ship until the two other members of the crew could be rescued. He tried to lower a lifeboat, but the falls jammed and then suddenly ran out, so that the boat crashed into the water and filled. He carried the severely wounded Lascar to another boat, and was about to lower it when the boat was blown to pieces, with the wounded man inside. He then swam out to the waterlogged boat and pulled her alongside. The injured Lascar then went down the rope into the boat, which was cut adrift, and joined the Master's boat. All this was done under fire.

For his humanitarian action on the **Manaar**, Turner was also awarded The Lloyd's War Medal for Bravery at Sea and he was presented with a gold medal from the Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society. Turner's Empire Gallantry Medal was subsequently exchanged to a George Cross in 1943. He was one of only five MN personnel to receive this prestigious award during the Second World War.

According to the log of **U-38** (Kapitänleutnant Heinrich Liebe), at 07.20 hours, fired a G7a torpedo that detonated prematurely at about 400 metres distance. Ten minutes later, a second torpedo was fired which hit the **Manaar** midships below her bridge. This was followed by a second torpedo that hit roughly the same place. As both these torpedos did not seem to have much effect, a third torpedo was fired. This was too much for the tough old **Manaar** which finally broke in two and sank at 07.44 hours.

Thus the **Manaar** was the first British cargo ship to to be attacked and sunk by a U-boat. She also had the distinction of being the first cargo ship to return fire on a U-boat during the war.

Turner's determination to keep sending out an SOS had its rewards. His distress was picked up by neutral ships and the **Manaar's** survivors in the lifeboats were rescued 24 hours later. Responding to the SOS indicating "grave and imminent danger" and needing "immediate assistance", three merchant ships took decisive action in the fine traditions of the sea. The merchant ships involved with this rescue were, the **Mars** (Dutch), the **Carvalho Araujo** (Portuguese) and the **Castelbianco** (Italian).

The following extract is from the Daily Telegraph of 9th September 1939.

*“Survivors of the **Manaar** have been landed at Lisbon by the Portuguese steamer **Carvalho Araujo**. They state that the vessel was torpedoed without warning. Five of the crew were wounded and two have since died.*

All the men rescued were in an exhausted condition. Some wearing only trousers, others pyjamas, and some without boots. They had been without food for 24 hours when they were picked up.

With the men landed at Lisbon from another vessel previously, 63 men have now been accounted for out of a crew of 88 Indians and 17 British.

*The Italian steamer **Castello Bianco**, it is learned, has found one of the lifeboats and rescued 23 men. One lifeboat believed to have 17 men in it, is still missing.*

As the last boat was leaving the freighter the submarine opened fire”.

A graphic description of the torpedoing was given by Mr Thomas Jones, a petty officer, whose home is in Carnarvon, North Wales.

Lying in bed in hospital, he told how the captain gave the order to abandon the ship after the submarine's first torpedo struck the **Manaar** amidships.

“We launched only four lifeboats on the port side – the side away from the submarine,” he said, “but the ship swung round and we found ourselves staring straight at the submarine under a shower of shrapnel from the submarine's gun, while one torpedo after another was hitting her.”

Mr Jones stated that he thought that the fifth torpedo broke the **Manaar** in two.

Another account states that the **Manaar** was attacked by four submarines.

One account of this action suggests that Turner was accidentally left in the Radio Room as the ship was abandoned. This was to become a fairly common oversight as

more British ships were attacked by raiders and U-boats. It became such a problem that the Radio Officers Union wrote to the Minister for Shipping concerning such events. In the reply from his department to the ROU the Shipping Ministry made reference to Ministry of Shipping Notice No. M182. They indicated that a new



and stronger “Notice” was due to be issued shortly. However they noted that a section from Notice No. M182 and dated March, 1940 contains following:-

“(9) WARNING OF SHIP's CREW –

Special arrangements should be made for warning all members of the crew that a ship is due to be abandoned. This is particularly important in the case of engine-room and Wireless Operators who may have to remain on duty until the last moment.

James Turner continued at sea for some years and in 1941 he was appointed 1st RO on the ss **Lustrous**, a tanker of 6,156 grt. owned by Moss & Co. (Lustrous Steamship Co. Ltd) which set off, in ballast, from Loch Ewe to Curacao on 13th February 1941. The **Lustrous**, which was sailing independently, was intercepted a few days later by the German battlecruiser **Scharnhorst**. The enemy ship shelled and sank the tanker in position 47° 12' North 40° 13 West.



Unfortunately James Turner sustained severe injuries during this attack and in the process he lost a leg. The entire crew of the **Lustrous** survived the sinking but became “guests of the Kriegsmarine.” Turner became POW number 90534 and spent the rest of the war in Milag Nord until repatriated home by British troops in April 1945.

The other two operators captured from the **Lustrous** were 2nd RO O.C. Williams (POW No 88009) and 3rd RO T. Porter (POW No 89110)

Having survived the war it is sad to report that Turner died in unfortunate circumstances. An horrific rail crash caused by poor track maintenance at Hither Green on Sunday 5th November 1967 left 49 people dead and many injured. James Turner was one of those killed. He was living in Staplecross, Sussex with his wife and two children at the time of his death. He was aged 60.

Name	Manaar	Lustrous
Call Sign	GSCM	GKWN
Official Number	140530	149646
Gross tons	7,000	6,156
Year built	1917	1927
Builder	C. Connell & Co. Ltd. Glasgow	Palmer's Shipbuilding Newcastle-upon-Tyne
Owners	T & J Brocklebank Ltd.	H. E. Moss & Co.
Port of Registry	Liverpool	Liverpool

The **U-38** under the command of Kapitänleutnant Heinrich Liebe was very successful. During nine patrols she sank over 34 enemy merchant ships and damaged one thus becoming one of the most successful U-boats in World War II. She was eventually scuttled by her crew on 5 May 1945.

In August 1944, the much decorated Liebe was transferred to the staff of the Commander-in-Chief of Submarines and was promoted to Fregattenkapitän. He survived the war and died in July 1997 aged 89.

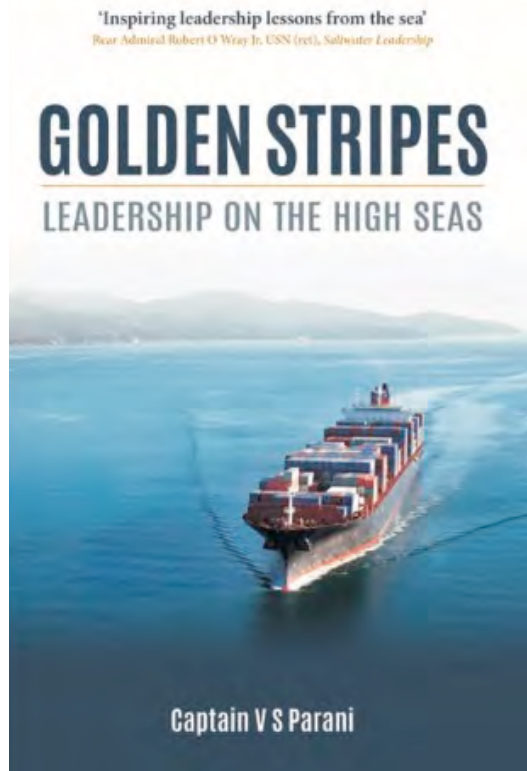
Book Review

Golden Stripes: Leadership on the High Seas by Captain V.S. Parani

Whittles Publishing Ltd., 2017. 196 pages. ISBN 978-184995-314-6.
Hardback. £18.99

Captain Parani certainly has a promising head of steam behind him in this handbook on maritime leadership. An executive with a multinational shipping company, he became a captain at the age of 29 with the Mediterranean Shipping Company and later held senior roles in Hong Kong and Cyprus. He is a Fellow of the Nautical Institute, a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Surveyors, a Chartered Marine Technologist and provides five pages of advance tributes as a book preface! This is clearly pitched as a training manual for decision-making at sea and claims to be: "The first-ever leadership book by a merchant-mariner,

for all mariners". Parani argues that his successful career and professional experience proves to him at least, that: "Leadership is an art, a skill, a discipline, and a mindset, all of which can be learned, and improved with practice."



The author's intellectual approach is a variation on the acclaimed leadership model of John Adair, with his Individual-Team-Task structure. Parani also divides his analysis into three sections: "Lead With Expertise"; "Lead Yourself"; and "Lead Your Team". His writing style is direct, fresh and enthusiastic and punctuated with relevant anecdotes from his merchant navy career, as well as quotations from historic literary icons on leadership themes. In his first section (Leading With Expertise), Parani emphasises the initial requirement is to acquire professional

knowledge and apply thorough training acquired, to the best of one's ability. He quotes Joseph Conrad: "the attainment of proficiency, the pushing of your skill with attention to the most delicate shades of excellence, is a matter of vital concern."

In the second section (Lead Yourself) the author pinpoints the crucial importance of personal drive, in leadership at sea. This motivation from within, draws from and reinforces individual self-confidence and establishes decisiveness in critical pressurised situations, where significant human and

material resources hang on its success. Here he distinguishes professional knowledge from the inner drive: "Expertise tells us what to do, how to do it, and why it needs to be done, but motivation is what makes us want to do it." In this section focusing on individual courage, he appropriately suggests that maritime leaders should regularly consult and draw inspiration from successful and courageous examples from history. Sources as diverse as accounts of Sir Ernest Shackleton to movies of bravery and survival at sea, such as Captain Phillips and Unbroken, Parani suggests, provide inspirational examples of leadership, of accepting the challenge with inner resolve and dignity.

In the final section; Lead Your Team, the author breaks down the relationship between the leader and the team into the following elements: communication; putting your team and the ship first; listening to advice and guidance from the team; celebrating and rewarding success; delegation; rigorous coaching of individuals and groups; and learning the strengths and weaknesses of each and every member of the team. Such components of good teamwork can be easily gleaned from any reliable leadership manual; what makes this account persuasive is its reinforcement with valid examples of each point from the author's considerable maritime experience. The book's concluding advice claims that "Each of us has enormous potential within us to be a great leader. You don't have to accept your life as it is; go full ahead and lead your life." Captain Parani has successfully blended experience and theory into a work of maritime leadership, hailed already as a persuasive teaching manual. It deserves to be widely read.

Threepenny Troops From the Liverpool Echo (1984)

During the Elizabethan wars, some of the citizens of little Liverpool must have been very unhappy when ordered to billet troops en-route to Ireland.

They were allowed 3d ahead for each meal and 4d a day for the feed of each horse. Unfortunately the cash was not always forthcoming and people who pleaded that provisions were in short supply often found that the troops had a habit of helping themselves.

Local shipmasters fared better, having contracts with the Earl of Essex for transporting troops across the Irish Sea for an average of £1 a man, with an allowance of two shillings for food during the voyage.

Life goes on.

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

While many vessels belonging to British and Allied shipowners were taken up by the Government between 1914 and 1918 for use as Hospital Ships and Troopships, the majority continued to trade worldwide as before. They carried exports from the UK which brought in revenue to enable Britain to continue the fight against Germany. They also carried imports of much needed food and all the other supplies required to keep an island nation alive.

These ships and their civilian crews faced the same dangers as those faced by ships taken up by the Government; the mines and torpedoes, the surface raiders and the ever present perils of the seas. One such ship was the **Otaki** built in 1907, of 7,420 grt and owned by the New Zealand Shipping Company. She was a cargo (mainly foodstuffs) carrier and, for her protection, had been given a 4.7inch gun, mounted on her stern, and two Royal Navy gunners to man it. **Otaki** carried a crew of seventy under her master, the 39 year old Scotsman, Captain Archibald Bissett-Smith. On 10th March 1917, his ship was unfortunate enough to be sighted off the Azores by the German commerce raider **Moewe**.

Built in 1914, **Moewe** was heavily armed with guns, mines and torpedoes, manned by a highly trained naval crew of 235 and had enjoyed considerable success in her belligerent role, roaming the shipping lanes and sinking Allied shipping. Intent on making **Otaki** her next victim, **Moewe** opened fire, only to have fire returned almost shell for shell. However, in such an uneven contest, **Otaki** eventually sank with her ensign still flying, her Captain and five of her crew dead. The remaining crew were taken aboard the badly damaged **Moewe** and made prisoners for the remainder of the war.

Only after the **Otaki** survivors were eventually released, did the full heroism of her captain and crew become fully known. In 1919, the King awarded Captain A. Bissett-Smith a posthumous Victoria Cross "For Valour." This was made possible by retrospectively giving the civilian Captain the status of temporary lieutenant in the RNR; several other crew members also received awards or were Mentioned in Despatches.



Captain A. Bissett-Smith V.C.

Liverpool Pilots in War

A summary of the presentation to the Society on 21st September, 2017
by Ben Whittaker, Curator of Maritime History & Technology, Merseyside
Maritime Museum.

In the recent Maritime Museum exhibition 'In Safe Hands' there was a section about the wartime service of the Liverpool Pilots: 'The Story of the Liverpool Pilots'. Because of limitations of space, it was only possible to include some of the stories that had been collected, and in relatively brief detail. I can share more of their fascinating history here.

Liverpool's people, ships and the port played a crucial role in the First World War as it was a key strategic port, and hundreds of convoys sailed to and from the city. People perhaps are more aware of this in relation to the Second World War, perhaps not quite so much within a First World War context. Those convoys kept Britain supplied with food and munitions essential for the war effort. Liverpool also acted as a main hub for the movement of thousands of troops from around the British Empire, Canada and the U.S.A, to battlefronts across the world. At Cammell Laird in Birkenhead, many ships were repaired and built including battleships and destroyers. Ships were also dazzle painted in Liverpool docks. Numerous Liverpool ships were requisitioned by the British Government for wartime service as troop ships, hospital ships, and armed merchant cruisers.

All this activity and the port's importance meant that shipping in the port was targeted by German submarines (U-Boats). Liverpool's merchant seafarers found themselves on the front line. They faced the threat of attack each time they sailed to and from the city. The front line was not just in the trenches of Belgium and France, but a few miles away in Liverpool Bay where U-boats were lying in wait.

So you can see from what I have just described how important ships were to the First World War, and how much of this was connected to Liverpool, and so consequently how important the role of the Liverpool pilots was – to ensure the safe movement and passage of troops, munitions, fuel and supplies, and new and repaired ships.

There was a lot of pressure. Pilotage was already a demanding job, but these demands were greatly enhanced by the unprecedented temporary war-time conditions.

The activity in the port meant that the river and Bay were frequently more crowded with ships than the pilots were used to, making ship manoeuvres all the more challenging and dangerous. Pilots had to guide shipping with the river front blacked out, and most navigation aids removed. Ships' lights were reduced and means of communication severely limited. Flammable materials such as fuel or munitions could be on board. And also, at all times, there was the extra

threat of attack from German U-boats, and their torpedoes and mines. I think mentally the pressure must have taken its toll on some pilots, not just pilots but pilot boat masters and crew, to be working and operating under those circumstances, and the strain and stress involved.

The pilots and Pilot Service did lobby for a monthly war bonus to reflect the increased risk in their job. The government would not spare the funds, which meant that shipping lines objected because the only way to cover the increase costs would be to increase pilotage dues – so they would in effect be paying the bonus. From looking at the dock board archive in the museum collections, I don't think the pilots were successful. Here are a few stories to illustrate why the pilots thought they were due a special bonus.

H.L. Williams and SS **Barrister**

In 1918, pilot Hugh L. Williams was in his late forties, and an appropriated pilot for the Harrison Line. On 19th September, 1918, he was on board Harrison Line ship SS **Barrister**, which was bound initially for Glasgow and then for the West Indies with a general cargo and mail. It is believed that Hugh planned to stay on board to Glasgow as this was safer than stopping the ship to disembark at the Mersey Bar.(Point Lynas station being discontinued for the duration of the war as German submarines often mined that area and would linger nearby).

Whatever the truth was, it did not make any difference as the ship was torpedoed nine miles from Chicken Rock near the Isle of Man by **UB64**. Thirty lives were lost and the handful of survivors included Hugh the pilot. He clung onto a piece of driftwood with two others and after a few hours they were picked up by a passing ship.

Hugh received the torpedo badge awarded during the First World War to those (not in the Royal Navy) who had survived U-boat sinkings. Hugh survived the war and retired from the Pilot Service in 1923. Incidentally, this was the third Harrison ship named SS **Barrister**, the second was also sunk by a German torpedo in 1917, six miles south of Waterford.

J.W. Pass and SS **Cambank**

Earlier in the war, SS **Cambank** was on route to Garston from Southern Spain with a cargo of copper and metal. On 20th February 1915, she appears to have taken on a Liverpool pilot J.W. Pass off Point Lynas, which is interesting as supposedly the Point Lynas station was suspended during the war. Perhaps it had not been enforced yet or for some reason an exception or alteration was made, or it was not an overall suspension.

SS **Cambank** was torpedoed by **U30** without warning. There is an account of the incident in the Yorkshire Post from February 22nd, 1915:

*“About 10 miles east of Point Lynas both Capt. Prescott and Pilot Pass saw the periscope of a submarine rise out of the water about 300 yards away; and almost simultaneously detected indications of a torpedo racing towards them. The **Cambank**'s helm was put hard over at once, but she answered sluggishly, and*

before she could deviate from her course the torpedo struck amidships, sending tons of water on board and shattering the vessel, which broke in two, and began to sink."

It continues:

"Survivors who have reached Liverpool state that when the pilot, Mr Pass, was taken on board he communicated the information that a submarine had been seen in the Anglesey waters. Captain Prescott, fearing danger, thereupon ordered the ship's boats to be got ready for lowering. Hardly had this been done when the submarine appeared from beneath the waves."

Four men were killed in the attack; the remainder of the crew survived in the lifeboats, including J.W. Pass. They were eventually towed into Amlych Harbour.

J.W. Pass retired from the Liverpool Pilot Service in 1918. He was 62 at the time of the **Cambank** incident, and was first licensed all the way back in 1874! So he was of the generation of pilots that saw the transition from sail to steam and served during the Great War.

The **Alfred H. Read** Disaster.

One of the worst disasters to befall the Liverpool Pilots Service was the sinking of the **Alfred H. Read** which had been released for use by the Examination Service to screen ships at the Mersey Bar before they were allowed to enter the port, although she was still used to embark/disembark pilots. At around 3:15 in the morning on December 28th, 1917, she struck a mine. Pilot boat No.3 **Queen Victoria** was in the vicinity, and heard and saw the explosion and then no lights from the **Alfred Read**. They hastened to the spot but by that time the **Alfred Read** had sunk, only part of the mast was visible above the water. They picked up three survivors – a radio operator and two pilot apprentices, one of whom died shortly after. 39 men had died, including 19 pilots and eight apprentices, six crew and six Admiralty staff.

The pilots had their own benevolent fund – used for instances where a pilot died in service, so they could provide some money to the pilot's widow and family. Such a huge disaster like this and the financial implication was such that there was not the funds to cover all those affected. But in a mark of the respect to which the pilot service was held locally (although not enough for a war bonus it would seem), over £5,000 pounds was raised from local ship owners which allowed everyone to receive assistance.

On board the **Queen Victoria** pilot boat that night was apprentice pilot Jack Currie. Jack sent a telegraph to his wife later that day letting her know that there had been an accident but that he was ok. We will hear more about Jack a little later.

In the First World War, there were around 2,000 pilots serving in UK ports. 86 men were lost from pilot services, including 53 licensed pilots. Because of the **Alfred H. Read** disaster, there were more pilots lost in Liverpool than any other UK pilotage district.

Rowland Buckney

At the outbreak of the war, Rowland was an apprentice pilot aged 18, and also a member of the RNVR (Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve) mobilised in 1916. He served on several Royal Navy ships, including the warship H.M.S. **Terror** during the famous Zeebrugge Raid in April 1918, which of course featured the Mersey ferries **Iris** and **Daffodil**. Rowland returned to the Pilot Service in 1919 becoming a qualified pilot in 1923 and serving until his retirement in 1960.

The Pals

In 1914, four apprentice pilots enlisted together in one of the local Pals regiments – the 17th Battalion of the Liverpool Kings Regiment. They were Harold Yates, George Abernethy, Harry Amey, and Jack Currie. In November 1915, the Battalion was sent to the Somme.

How Jack came to be back in the service later in the war will soon be revealed, for he was a prolific letter writer, and his family have a trove of letters written by Jack to his wife Sarah, who he called Lal. They give a fascinating insight into the daily life that Jack and the other apprentice pilots encountered in the trenches.

On the 12th October 1916, Jack was badly wounded in the arm by enemy machine gun fire, which fractured his shoulder, and he was sent back to the UK to recover at Fazakerley Hospital. It was classed as a permanent 40% disability. In a letter to Lal written in September 1917, he describes his injury:

“...It shows the old fracture now joined up alright, and also the arm bone joined up to the shoulder. The doctor says I will always have a weak shoulder and never be able to go to sea again.”

Well of course we know he did – and he sent the telegraph to his wife from the **Queen Victoria** pilot boat on the night of the **Alfred H. Read** disaster. The rigorous nature of crewing a pilot boat, and later as a pilot the need to clamber up ladders on the sides of ships, makes it incredible that he re-joined the service with the disability in his arm.

George Abernethy

One of Jack Currie's pals was George Abernethy. George wrote in 1916 when Jack was recovering from his shoulder wound:

“I was pleased to learn from W.H. that you were in dear old blighty and hope that you are not badly damaged and that with a long spell at home you will be ok. I was sorry I did not see you going out but I was late getting back to our lines.”

“No doubt you knew by the looks of things when you left we had had another bad knock. Well in spite of it all we are in again and have been a few days, but it is a little left of the old place and pretty cushy.”

“I am hoping to hear some good news from you soon and will now conclude.”

It's clear that George was an exceptional man – he was awarded two medals for bravery. The first was the Military Medal. These were the most common of the medals issues for bravery and were not recorded in the same

way as others, so it is not known for sure what it was awarded for. His surviving family think that it was during a battle in area of the Somme called Trones Wood, where he rescued a man and helped him back to the British Lines. Apparently he later met the man in Birkenhead after the war!

George was also awarded the prestigious DCM – the Distinguished Conduct Medal. These awards were more rare than the Military Medal and are recorded in Kings Regiment records which state that the medal was awarded for:

“...conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. He was in charge of the signallers, and went out continually under heavy shell and machine-gun fire to repair the lines. On one occasion he went forward through an enemy barrage to repair a cable, remaining in the open about two hours during an enemy attack and in their full view.”

George survived the war, including a spell in Russia, and returned to the Pilot Service.

The Thetis

H.M.S. **Thetis** was undergoing sea trials in Liverpool Bay, after being built locally in Cammell Laird. Due to a fault in her torpedo tubes, after diving she failed to resurface leading to the loss of 99 men, including Liverpool pilot, Norman Wilcox. The tragic thing is that Norman was not there in an official capacity; he was invited along, according to his brother William Wilcox, who was interviewed by the museum in 2000.

All the factors that made Liverpool so important in the First World War, but also so dangerous for the pilots, were repeated in the Second World War. But on an even greater, more challenging level.

Liverpool was UK's main transatlantic convoy port, and from early 1941 the headquarters of Western Approaches Command directing the Battle of the Atlantic. Liverpool was also a major naval base, with escort ships, destroyers, corvettes, sloops, minesweepers all based here, and Cammell Lairds was a major centre for naval ship repair as well as ship building. Over 100 warships were built, one every 20 days at its height. Over 100 war ships and 2,000 merchant ships were repaired here. Over 20,000 people were involved in ship repair here during the war. There were over 1,200 convoys that visited Liverpool during the war. So you can see how important shipping in Liverpool was again, and therefore how important the role of the pilots was to ensure safe passage.

Again, the river and much of the Bay was blacked out with much reduced navigational aids, and there was the constant threat from U-Boats, mines and enemy bombing raids. Pilotage was designated a reserved occupation – again illustrating its importance. So we don't have the tales of pilots joining the forces that we have from the 1st world war. Although we know that one Apprentice

pilot slipped the net – Allan Ellis joined the RAF and was commissioned with wings and served as an instructor in flight navigation.

The largest convoys consisted of over 60 ships. There are extracts from ship logs that still survive from some of the serving pilot boats (not in the museum archives but in private hands) that show how most ships in a convoy would be given a pilot. The process of transferring 60 pilots to 60 ships in a period of a few hours must have been a nerve wracking and dangerous time.

A.H. Wilcox

Pilot Andrew Wilcox was related to Norman Wilcox who was lost on the **Thetis**. He served as a pilot in the First World War, and during the Second World War was the Admiralty pilot for the port, meaning that if there was a major warship moving in Liverpool or in and out of docks, then he was probably on it. For this he was awarded the OBE, which is displayed in the museum's Battle of the Atlantic gallery.

George Abernethy

George Abernethy – the decorated Kings Regiment Sergeant from the First World War was on board ss **Ullapool** during a night air raid on 13th March 1941, when she detonated a mine just off the Liverpool landing stage. George survived, ending up in the river and managed to climb into a punt from pilot boat No. 4 **William M. Clarke**, which also saved 10 of the **Ullapool** crew. When he was landed at Princes Landing Stage, the driver of the ambulance by coincidence was the wife of another Liverpool pilot.

The tanker ss **Dossinia** struck a mine near to the Mersey Bar and William Leitch, Master of pilot boat No.4 **William M. Clarke**, managed to get his ship alongside, Pilots and apprentices boarded and saved most of the crew. Pilots Harry Kinley and John Snowball rescued an injured man from the engine room. Leitch and Snowball received awards from the Liverpool Shipwreck & Humane Society.

The ss **Ousebridge** was lead ship in an outward bound convoy; when she struck a mine in the Queens Channel and sank. Pilot boat no.3 **James H. Beazley** picked up 46 of the crew. Apprentices Michael Dobson, John Parr and Patrick Crafter were amongst the pilot punt crews involved.

The Charles Livingston disaster

As with the First World War and the **Alfred H. Read**, the pilot service again suffered a major disaster. On 26 November 1939 at around 3:30am, the pilot boat no.1 **Charles Livingston** ran aground in a storm off Ainsdale beach near Southport. In the blackout conditions enforced during wartime, the Captain and crew had completely lost their bearings – thinking they were off the North Wales coast between the Bar light vessel and Ormes Head, in water plenty deep enough. Once they ran aground, the storm grew even worse, hurricane force storms developed and the heavy seas swept over the ship. Lifeboats and

salvage boat were launched to assist, but went to where the Charles Livingston thought it was, not where it really was – at Ainsdale. Although the ship was spotted from the beach from Ainsdale Lido, a number of mistakes and miscommunications meant that it was not until midday that lifeboats arrived. By this time, the ship had been flooded and partially broken up by the waves, and most of the crew washed overboard, some still clinging desperately to the rigging.

Eight pilots, eight apprentice pilots and seven crew members lost their lives. This included Jack Currie, who served with the Kings Regiment in the First World War and re-joined the Pilot Service with a partial disability. At the last minute he had swapped shifts with his friend (and also First World War veteran) Harry Amey, taking his place on the pilot ship.

Only ten men survived, including one of the two Masters, Captain Bibby. Captain Bibby was blamed for the disaster – he was on duty when the ship ran aground. His license was not renewed and he resigned from the service. It's an odd coincidence that the worst disasters in the history of the service have occurred to the No.1 pilot boat – **Alfred Read, Charles Livingston** and in 1833 no1 boat **Good Intent** – which in an echo of 1939 – was driven onto Formby beach with the loss of 13 lives.

William Maude and Edmund Drew

At the museum we don't just collect objects and archives; we collect memories through first hand oral history recording. There are a handful of retired Liverpool pilots who took part in the Second World War as apprentice pilots, and I was privileged to meet and talk to two of them when undertaking research for the Liverpool pilot's exhibition.

The first was William (Bill) Maude, 94 now, he joined the service in 1939 serving in Atlantic convoys on Merchant Navy ships in 1940–1941, which he says “were rather fun”. He then served the rest of the war as a boat hand on No. 4 boat **William M. Clarke**. This is my favourite quote from him:

“So many ships came in, what a scene it was on the river. I remember a multitude of ships – ships of all types, a sight never to be seen in Liverpool again.”

Edmund Drew also gained experience in the Merchant Navy, and went in convoy to Japan on the Bibby ship **Herefordshire**. From September 1944 he served as a boat hand on no.2 boat **Walter J Chambers**. This quote describes one of his memories from V.E. Day, 8th May 1945:

“We were in Birkenhead at the time, and we all went up to the pubs in Woodside, having drinks, and in each of the pilot boats there were always red distress flares, and we had one of these each and were firing them up into the air!”

It is important that we remember the contribution and sacrifice of all those Liverpool pilots and apprentices who served in the world wars. Fittingly, there is now a memorial at New Brighton to those who lost their lives in the **Alfred H. Read** and **Charles Livingston** disasters.

Radio Four is Wonderful!

Ships in distress have always welcomed the power of prayer, but the situation off Britain's North Sea coast took things a bit too far on 26th February, 2004.

Coastguards found themselves tuned inescapably into BBC's 'Thought for the Day' — along with 'Farming Today', 'Book of the Week' and other soothing material — when a clumsy crewman on a cargo ship jammed the emergency frequency with Radio 4 for five hours.

Nudging a handset button to 'on' without noticing, the freighter **Victress** served up the whole of the morning's 'Today' programme, as well as features on Sierra Leone and an underground bunker in the north London suburb of Dollis Hill. To make matters worse, the ship's watch — whose desultory chit-chat could also be heard on the frequency — were apparently not listening themselves: appeals to them to switch the set off, put out by Radio 4 at the coastguard's request, were ignored.

"This sort of thing has happened occasionally before, but never for this long," said Colin Tomlinson, district operations manager for Great Yarmouth coastguard, who finally had to launch a lifeboat to intervene. The RNLI crew from Wells-next-the-Sea tracked the radio signals to the **Victress**, some 10 miles off Norfolk, arriving just as a reading of Gabriel Garcia Marquez's autobiography was getting into its stride.

"The signal was being carried on four of our aerials, effectively blocking any other emergency call," said Mr Tomlinson, whose only slight relief came when the shipping forecast was helpfully broadcast at 5.36 a.m. *"The problem started shortly after 5.00 a.m. and went on until just after 9.00 a.m. when the lifeboat found the **Victress** and alerted the crew."* !!!

Understanding Engineers

To the optimist, the glass is half-full.

To the pessimist, the glass is half-empty.

To the engineer, the glass is twice as big as it needs to be.

From Birkenhead to Basra

A Story of two Lairds Built Paddle Steamers

Presented to the Society on 19 October, 2017 by John Edmondson

Honorary Research Associate, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew

This précis by Bulletin Editor W.A. Ogle

In 1836 Colonel Francis Rawson Chesney, a British army officer in the Royal Artillery, led an expedition to test the proposition that large iron vessels could successfully navigate the river Euphrates from southern Turkey to the Persian Gulf. Botanical specimens were processed by John Lindley and made available to Antonio Bertoloni of Bologna, who described a number of new

species from the material. A partial catalogue of this material has been compiled, noting the location of type specimens, and the collections have been localised as far as possible given the scanty evidence from the labels.



Colonel Chesney Wikimedia

For centuries the territories of the Ottoman Empire, successor to the Byzantine Empire and ruled from Constantinople (Istanbul), extended southwards from Anatolia into Mesopotamia, Arabia, Palestine, and Egypt. The Ottoman rulers were disinclined to sponsor or facilitate the exploration of their territories.

Sailing ships travelling between Europe and India in the early nineteenth century were obliged to follow a lengthy route via the Cape of Good Hope. Various seaborne and overland routes were investigated by European Imperial powers, and the introduction of steam-powered vessels opened up the possibility of using either the Red Sea or the Persian Gulf to shorten journey times. Due to the mistaken belief that there was a sizeable difference in sea levels between the Mediterranean and the Gulf of Suez, the attractions of using the river Euphrates as a short-cut seemed obvious.

In 1835 the British government gave Captain Chesney the task of transporting two paddle steamers overland from the Gulf of Antioch via the valley of the river Asi (formerly Orontes) to a point on the river Euphrates (Shatt al-Furat) just south of the town of Birecik (formerly Bir). Here they were to be assembled, tested, launched, and propelled down the river to its mouth at the Shatt al-Arab. A young surgeon and geologist, William Francis Ainsworth (1807–1896) was appointed as naturalist to the expedition, but a meeting between the

British Consul in Baghdad and the Austrian naturalist Johann Wilhelm Helfer (1810–1840) and his German wife Pauline (nee Des Granges 1797–1871) led to them joining the expedition and assisting with the collection of natural history specimens (principally plants and insects) “in consideration of a free passage down the river”.

The ships, to be named **Euphrates** and **Tigris**, were built by Cammell Laird at Birkenhead and were amongst the very first paddle steamers to be built at that yard since they had built their first iron ship – the paddle steamer **Lady Lansdowne** – only two years earlier. However they were not launched into the Mersey at Wallasey Pool, the original location of the yard, rather their components were loaded onto the **George Canning** which left Liverpool on 10 February 1835 and stopped off in Malta in March before arriving at the Bay of Antioch (Antakya) at the beginning of April. The task of transporting them overland to a suitable launch site on the river Euphrates proved immensely more difficult than had been planned, as it was soon discovered that the river Asi was not navigable. [Surprisingly these were not the first ‘kit built’ ships from Lairds because in 1834 the **John Randolph** was shipped to the Savannah River in U.S.A. and riveted together on the river bank!]

Chesney’s second in command was Lieutenant Henry Blosse Lynch who had served as the formal interpreter to the Commodore of the Navy and also to the Gulf squadron, whose ships measured and mapped the Persian Gulf and Arabian coast. He spent time traveling around in Arabia and through that was able to develop the position of the director of communications with Arab tribes and their ‘shaykhs’. He had charge of landing the British delegation at the Gulf of Antioch and assembly of the two steamers, brought from England. However the work was carried out by Cammell Laird staff who travelled with the expedition, and some of whom then remained to serve as engineers on the two steamers. The transportation and assembly took a full year to complete which delayed the start of the voyage until March 1836. The expedition was then ready to commence what was to be the first navigation of the Euphrates by steamship, from Birecik to the Persian Gulf, a total distance of 1,400 kilometres.

After several weeks spent steaming through Syria, causing astonishment to tribespeople along the route, the expedition almost ended in disaster when one of the vessels, the smaller paddle steamer **Tigris**, was wrecked and sank during a hurricane and sandstorm at As Salihyah. As well as significant loss of life, this may also have caused the loss of some specimens gathered from along the route. Lynch commanded the **Tigris** until her sinking, from which he escaped although losing his brother Robert. He then returned home in August/September 1836, traveling via Mosul, Iraq and Trabzon, Turkey.

The remaining vessel, the **Euphrates**, successfully completed the voyage to Basra and later sailed across the Persian Gulf to Bushehr. The team later undertook survey work on some of the other navigable rivers of southern Iraq



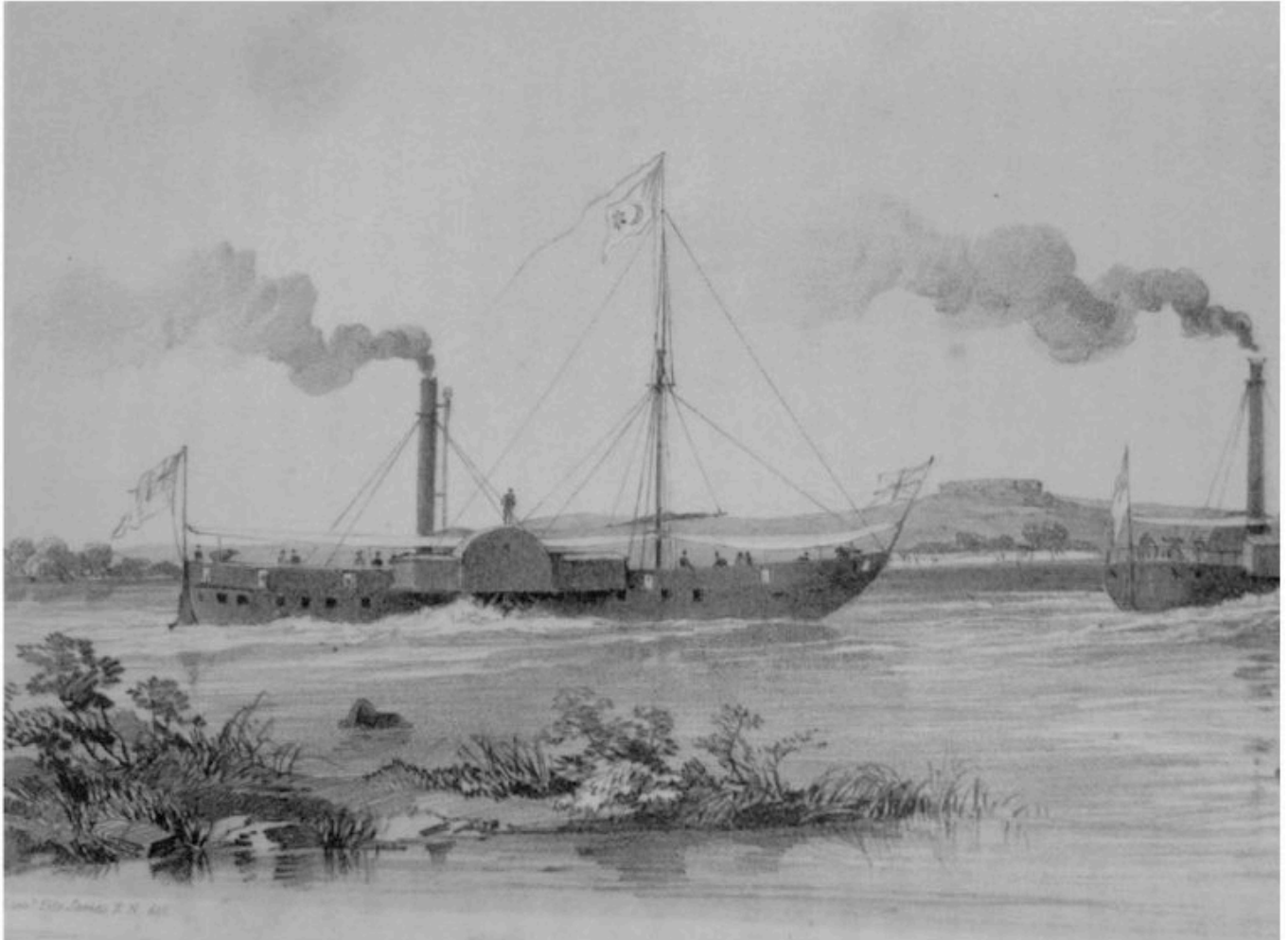
The first caravan preparing to leave Amelia Depot near the mouth of the river Orontes.
 Courtesy of the Athenæum Library, Liverpool

and Iran, but in the absence of the Helpers (who departed from Bushehr for India) there is no evidence that further botanical collections were made.

Chesney had vigorously promoted the route as a feasible alternative to a Suez crossing having previously explored the area on land and by raft in 1831. But ultimately the building of the Suez Canal, and railway developments through Syria and Iraq, rendered the scheme redundant. In addition to the principal objective of opening up a new route for steamers carrying light freight such as passengers and mail, the political aspects of securing cooperation from the Ottoman and Egyptian rulers and assisting economic development and geographical aims surveying the river and its hinterland, there were also purely scientific ones.

The attention of the expedition was not to be confined exclusively to the steam communication. Observations were to be directed to the interesting field which Mesopotamia opened up to the learned world. These, with the addition of the time unavoidably consumed in erecting the steamers, and their subsequent descent, would give sufficient opportunity for the gentlemen taking the departments of geology, botany, and ichthyology, &c., to make the necessary examinations in that celebrated part of the world.

No record has survived of the collectors of individual specimens during the expedition. As far as the plants are concerned, following the style of the printed herbarium labels, it has been the custom to cite these specimens as having been collected by Col. F.R. Chesney; but a reading of his reports and of contemporary diaries makes it clear that he was only peripherally involved in the gathering of natural history material.



The paddle steamers **Euphrates** and **Tigris**.

Courtesy of the Athenæum Library, Liverpool

Following his return to England in August 1837, Chesney negotiated a fee for writing an account of the expedition from the British Treasury, the East India Company and the Board of Control. In a letter to the Treasury dated 9 September 1838 he stated:

"The enclosed papers will make known to the Right Hon. the Lords of the Treasury the nature of the work now in progress to give to the public the Scientific and other information collected during the late expedition to the Euphrates. ...

Before I returned to England, the Plants were entrusted to Dr. Lindley and the Animals, Insects &c. to the Zoological Society with an understanding that these branches would be prepared for the Appendix to any work that might appear on the part of the Expedition. I believe Dr. Lindley has completed his task and sent it to

the India Board, from whence it will be forwarded to me in the same way when completed”.

The reference to John Lindley (1799–1865), at that time Professor of Botany at University College London, confirms his role as curator of the botanical collections, although it does not explain how Bertoloni came to be involved. No trace of any such report has been found in the British Library, and it appears that Lindley’s role was mainly to sort, label, and distribute herbarium specimens to various institutions, possibly with the assistance of the Medico-Botanical Society of London.

Chesney may perhaps be credited with shooting some of the birds whose skins are preserved in the Natural History Museum at Tring, but the evidence presented here indicates that the principal collector of natural history material was Johann W. Helfer, assisted by his wife Pauline and the geologist and ethnographer William F. Ainsworth. As the couple’s presence on the expedition was as passengers rather than team members, credit may have been withheld to avert criticism of the appointed naturalists, whose training had been focused more on medicine than botany, ornithology, and entomology. There are scarcely any mentions of Ainsworth in a botanical context, whereas J.W. Helfer is frequently described as being active in collecting natural history specimens. He wrote in his diary:

“The natives came near me without fear. When they saw me digging up plants (Leontodon tuberosus) and I told them in answer to their questions that it was for medicine, they laughed, dug one up themselves and ate them, and said, ‘That is not medicine, it produces neither vomiting nor purging’.”

This excerpt also serves to demonstrate that Dr Helfer, unlike Col. Chesney, had some command of Arabic.

Colonel Chesney (1789–1872), previously a Captain in the Royal Artillery, was promoted to the rank of Colonel on a temporary basis while he was leading the Euphrates Expedition, although he subsequently attained the rank of General. Of Scots ancestry, his father served in the British Army during the American War of Independence under Lord Rawdon, later Marquess of Hastings; hence his son’s middle name. Born in County Down, Northern Ireland, he trained at the military academy in Woolwich. He was an early advocate of a Suez Canal, for which he was credited as instigator by Ferdinand de Lesseps, although it was Thomas L. Peacock, a staff member of the East India Company’s headquarters in London, who developed the original proposals. Chesney became fixated on the idea that the Euphrates would provide a shorter route to India than either the Red Sea or the Cape route. He floated down the lower part of the Euphrates on a raft in 1831 on an initial reconnaissance. With the support of the board of the East India Company, he succeeded in getting the British Government to finance the two-year expedition, which along with its principal aims was partly devoted to scientific research. His subsequent career was spent partly in Hong Kong, and

he retired to Kilkeel in Northern Ireland after participating in negotiations and surveys for a proposed railway through the Euphrates valley.

The original purpose of the research was to try to pin point the countries in which the plant collections were made, in order to clarify the status of the Euphrates Expedition records in relation to the flora of Iraq. Although this was partially successful, for specimens bearing named localities, there is no proof that the higher numbers (with one exception) were actually collected in Iraq. As the expedition progressed downstream, relations with the people they encountered became more fractious, allowing fewer opportunities for botanising onshore. This, plus the loss of notes in the wreck of the **Tigris**, and the onward travel of the Helpers to India at the end of the first phase of the voyage on 7 July 1836, may help to explain why so many of the specimens were not labelled with precise collection sites.

Principal localities in Iraq, Syria and Turkey where the expedition recorded the collection of plants

Locality	Modern Equivalent	Date	Lat. / Long.
Babylon	Bābil	? May, 1836	32° 27'N, 44° 32'E
Bamboudseh (Bambüge)	Manbij	1 April, 1836	36° 31'N, 37° 57'E
Gorluk	Gürçay	Late March, 1836	36° 52'N, 38° 01'E
Port William	Suboyu (near Birecik)	March, 1836	37° 00'N, 37° 57'E
Sedjim Kale	Qala'at an-Najim	29 - 30 March, 1836	36° 33'N, 38° 15'E
Sedjour river (mouth of)	Nahr Sajūr	25 - 27 March, 1836	36° 39'N, 38° 04'E

The location of Bambüge (formerly the classical city of Hierapolis) was first pinpointed by the Chesney expedition. Helfer described it as a “tent village”, its location lay close to another classical site, Barbalissos or Bālis, near the modern town of Meskeneh (35° 57'N, 38° 04'E)

The Flying P Liners

by L.N.R.S. Member W.A Ogle

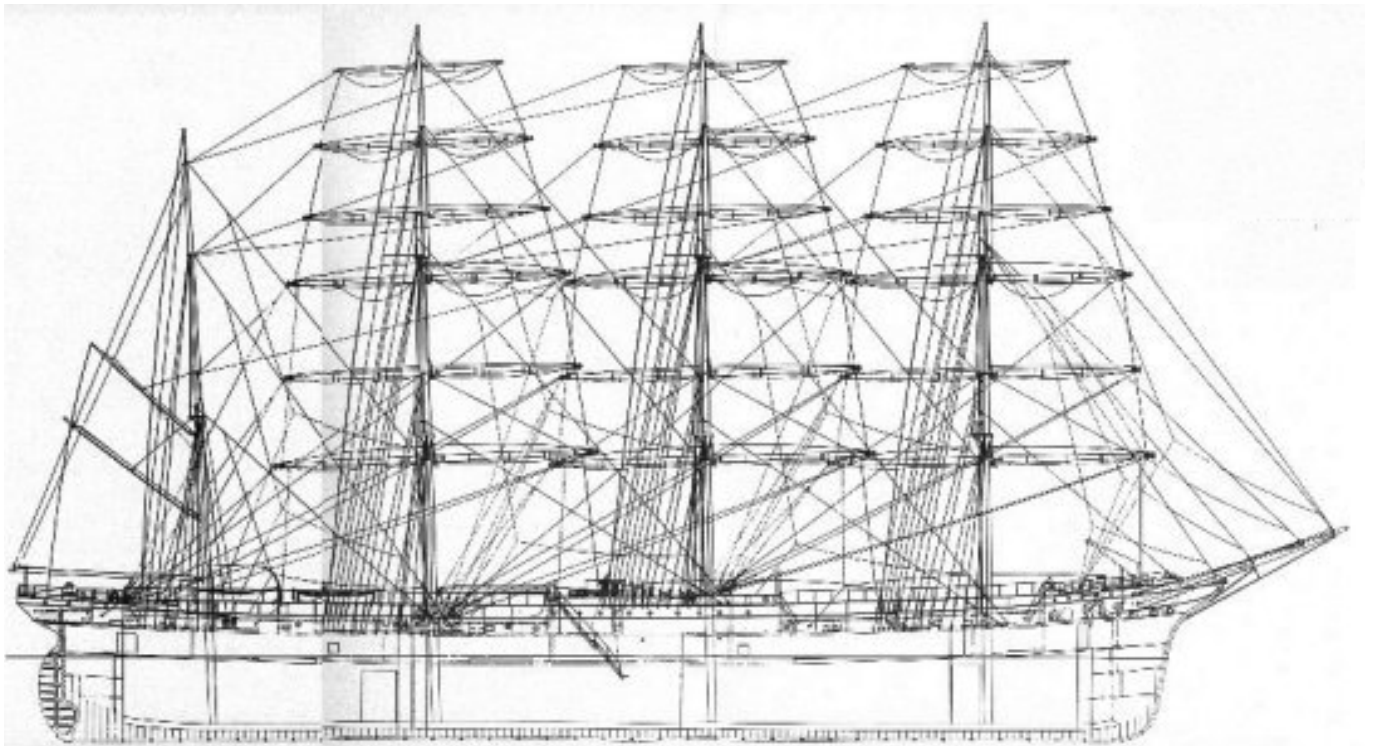
One of the most famous remaining square-rigged merchant sailing vessels has arrived back in home waters. The **Peking** is now at the Peters-Werft at Wewelsfleth near Hamburg where she will undergo a major refit to become a museum vessel in that port. She will be restored to her 1927 condition as one of the so-called “Flying-P-Liners”, sailing vessels of the F. Laeisz company, all starting with a “P” in their names.

She is a steel-hulled four-masted sailing only barque and was one of the last generation of windjammers used in the nitrate trade and wheat trade around Cape Horn. Built in 1911 by Blohm & Voss, Hamburg her dimensions are 322ft.3ins. x 47ft.2ins. x 26ft.5ins., with a tonnage of 3,100 gross and 2,883 net. She is a sister ship to the same owner's **Passat** built in the same year.

Peking was made famous by the sail training pioneer Irving Johnson; his footage filmed on board during a passage around Cape Horn in 1929 shocked experienced Cape Horn veterans and landsmen alike at the extreme conditions experienced. [See this at : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icnjC_gJOLQ]. She made this trip around the Cape to Chile 34 times.

Peking was in Valparaíso at the outbreak of World War I, and awarded to Italy as war reparations. She was sold back to the original owners, the Laeisz brothers in 1923, and continued in the nitrate trade until traffic through the Panama Canal proved quicker and more economical.

In 1932, she was sold for £6,250 to Shaftesbury Homes and first towed to



Four-masted barque - rigging plan

Greenhithe, renamed **Arethusa II** and moored alongside the existing **Arethusa I**. In July 1933, she was moved to a new permanent mooring off Upnor on the River Medway, where she served as a children's home and training school. She was officially "opened" by HRH Prince George on 25 July 1933. During World War II she served in the Royal Navy as **H.M.S. Pekin**.

She was retired in 1974 and sold to Jack Aron as **Peking**, for the South Street Seaport Museum in New York City, where she was moored until 2016.

However, the Seaport NYC did not see the **Peking** as part of its long-term operational plans, and was planning to send her to the scrap yard.

[The Seaport Museum will however retain the recently refurbished **Wavertree**; this three-masted, full-rigged ship was built in Southampton for the Liverpool company R.W. Leyland & Company.]

In November 2015 the 'Maritim Foundation' purchased the **Peking** for US \$100, to be a feature at the new planned, German Port Museum at the Schuppen 52 Pier, in Hamburg. She was taken to Caddell Dry Dock, Staten Island to spend the winter and in July, 2017 was loaded on the semi-submersible heavy-lift ship **Combi Dock III** for the Atlantic passage, arriving on July 30, and on August 2, 2017, was transferred to Peters werft at Wewelsfleth for a 3 years restoration programme.

Three other Flying P-Liners still exist today:

- the **Pommern** is a museum ship in Mariehamn, Finland.
- the **Passat** is a museum ship in Travemünde, Germany.
- the **Padua** is the only ship still active: she is today a school ship and sails as the **Kruzenshtern** under Russian flag.

The fourth of this class was the ill-fated **Pamir** which, by 1957 and despite being used as a sail-training ship for the German merchant navy cadets, was said to be in a rapidly deteriorating and dangerous condition. She sailed from Buenos Aires for Hamburg with a cargo of grain with a regular crew of 35 plus 51 cadets. On 21 September, 1957 she was caught in Hurricane Carrie and soon listed severely to port. She sent distress signals before capsizing at 13:03 local time, and sinking after drifting keel-up for 30 minutes some 600 nautical miles west-southwest of the Azores. Despite a nine-day search for survivors by the United States Coast Guard only four crewmen and two cadets were rescued alive, from two of the lifeboats. It was reported that many of the 86 men aboard had managed to reach the boats, but most died in the next three days.

The Laeisz company was established by Ferdinand Laeisz in 1824 as a hat manufacturer. Expansion to overseas markets enabled him to purchase in 1839 the brig **Carl**, named after his son, who joined the firm as partner in 1852. 1857 the first new vessel was commissioned, a wooden barque named **Pudel** after Carl's wife Sophie.

After 1861 all new-build vessels were christened with names starting with a "P". Carl Laeisz's credo was "*My ships can and must perform fast voyages*" and so they became famous as "Flying P-Liners".

The Laeisz shipping company still exists, operating a major fleet of container ships, bulk carriers, gas and car carriers as well as research vessels for the German government. Most carry P-names. MV **Peene Ore** the company's flagship of 322,000 dwt is the largest vessel flying the German flag.

The key that could have saved **Titanic**.

MNA Circular, September 2017

Ten years ago, a small iron key, thought to have secured the binoculars for the **Titanic**'s crow's nest, was sold for £90,000 at an auction in Wiltshire. The key had been accidentally taken off the ship before she sailed, leaving the binoculars locked away. In an enquiry after the **Titanic** sank, one of the lookouts said they could have prevented it from hitting the iceberg, which caused the tragedy. International maritime charity Sailors' Society received the key as a donation in the 1980s and sold it to a Chinese businessman in 2007 – the proceeds from the sale of the key are still helping to fund its education programme. Sailors' Society CEO Stuart Rivers said: "We're very glad that more than a century on we are able to make so much good come out of something from such a tragic event. The money we raised from the sale has been changing the lives of students around the world by giving them the opportunity of an education." The key never made the **Titanic**'s fateful maiden voyage from Southampton to New York in April 1912, because it was inside the pocket of second officer David Blair. Blair was due to sail with the ship, but was replaced at the last minute, crucially forgetting to hand over the key when he disembarked. One of the **Titanic**'s lookouts, Fred Fleet, later told an enquiry that the binoculars could have saved the ship and the lives of the 1,522 lost.

Blair kept the key, passing it onto his daughter Nancy, who in turn donated it to Sailors' Society in the 1980s. The charity's education programme offers grants and bursaries to help aspiring seafarers achieve careers at sea, and to those from seafaring families who are unable to afford an education.

In fact, one of the crew who died on the night **Titanic** sank, Scarborough-born James Paul Moody, was a former pupil of the King Edward VII Nautical School for 'hardy and heroic sons of the sea' – a school founded by the charity. Moody, the **Titanic**'s sixth officer, had successfully passed through the King Edward VII Nautical School less than a year before the **Titanic** was lost, achieving his master's certificate on 26 April 1911. Moody's last actions were poignantly recalled by Geoffrey Marcus in *The Maiden Voyage*. "Moody therefore stayed with the ship to the end and was the means of saving many a life that would otherwise have been lost." In the Church of St. Martin on the Hill, Scarborough, a plaque bearing James' name reads, "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give to thee a crown of life".

David Blair continued his career at sea after the tragedy and was decorated with a silver medal for gallantry from King George V and a bronze medal for gallantry from the Royal Humane Society in 1913, having dived into the sea attempting to rescue a colleague who had jumped overboard from the **Majestic**. Although the ship's rescue boat reached Blair's shipmate first, he was commended for his bravery.

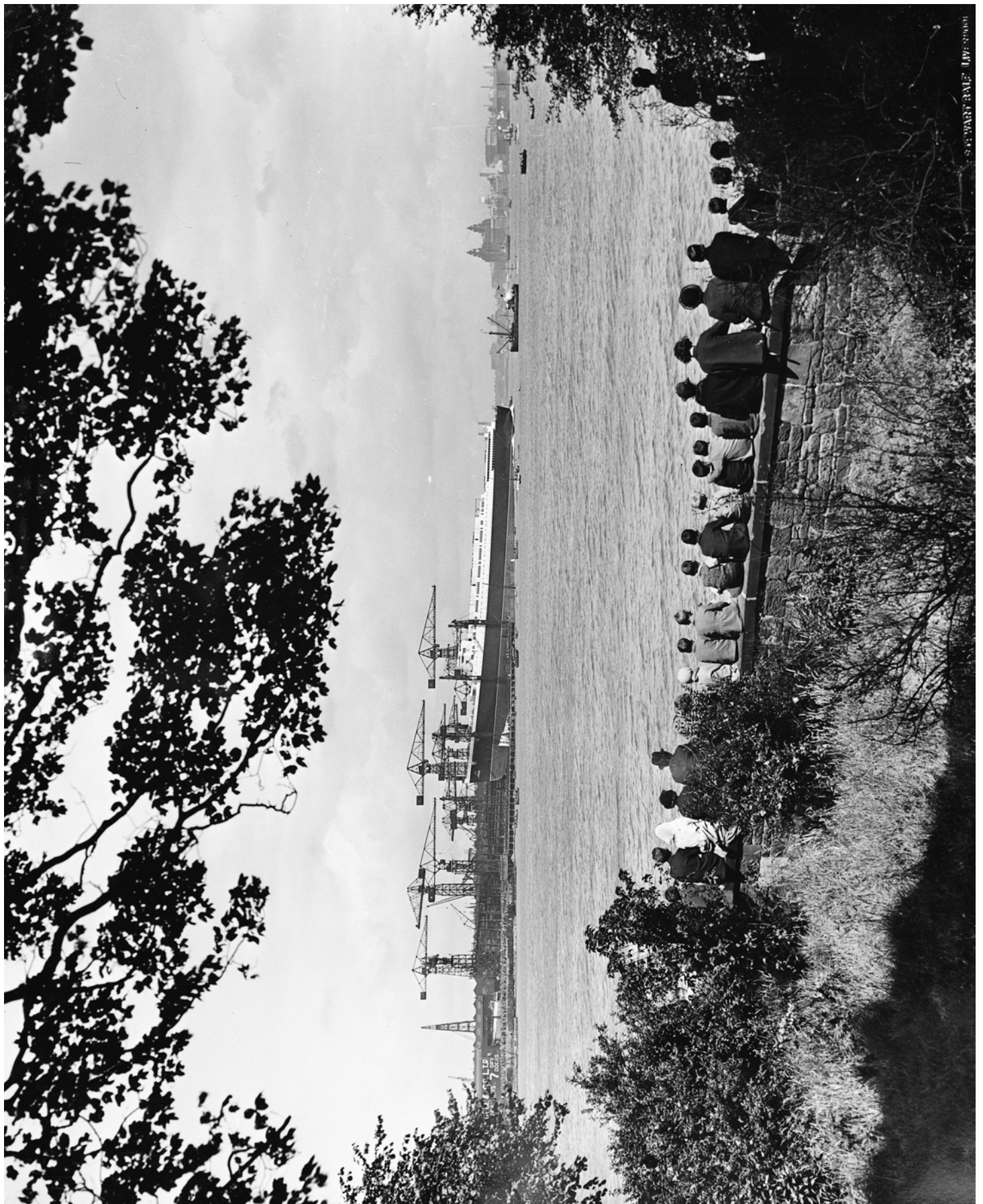


LIVERPOOL

NAUTICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

80TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION: 1938-2018

PART ONE OF FOUR



STEWART BALE 146-2000

Cunard's R.M.S. **Mauretania** was launched from Cammell Lairds on 28 July, 1938.

This was at the same time that the Society was being established,
the inaugural meeting being held on 11 April, 1938.

Picture from the Stewart Bale Collection held at the Merseyside Maritime Museum, and
used by arrangement with National Museums Liverpool

THE BULLETIN

Volume 61 No. 4

March, 2018

80TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION: 1938-2018

This is the first of four special commemorative editions of the Bulletin which, in addition to the routine contents, will also contain a share of the original papers presented to the Society between May, 1938 and March, 1944.

These fascinating articles contain a wide range of well researched subject matter and it has been decided that they should, for the first time, be re-published to mark this special occasion. Accommodating them requires that these be “bumper” editions of 60 pages, rather than the normal 44. Full details of the origins of the Society are published on our web site.

This 80th Anniversary Initiative has been generously supported by our President Mr. William J. Pape II, and I’m sure all members would wish to join in expressing our thanks for enabling this occasion to be marked in such an appropriate manner.

www.liverpoolnauticalresearchsociety.org).

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Editor's Note: following this introductory article about the **Mauretania** we are pleased to re-issue the first of a series where, during this commemorative year, we will reprint all of the original presentations given to the Society between 1938 and 1944. They have only recently become available because they are archived separately at the Liverpool Records Office, not the Merseyside Maritime Museum where the rest of our records are kept.

The year 1938 saw a number of notable maritime events, one such being the launch of the Cunarder RMS **Mauretania**, see frontispiece.

R.M.S. Mauretania

by LNRS Member W.A. Ogle

The order for the second **Mauretania** was placed in June, 1936 with Cammell Laird of Birkenhead. She was to be the largest ship built in England at that time. She was also the first new ship delivered to the recently combined Cunard White Star Line. Laid down on 24 May 1937 as Yard Number 1029, the medium sized Cunarder was launched on 28 July 1938 by Lady Bates, wife of the Cunard White Star chairman. She was named **Mauretania** to honour the previous record breaking **Mauretania** which had been retired in 1935. At the launching ceremony on 28 July, 1938 Lady Bates said: *"This is a red letter day, not only for me but for Merseyside. The launch of the largest ship that has ever been built in England. I hope that like her namesake she may work her way into the affections of all who have to do with her on both sides of the Atlantic. To the ship and all who serve or sail in her I wish all good fortune. I name you **Mauretania**."* A crowd of about 40,000 people had assembled to witness the launch, while many more, each paying two shillings (10p) crowded the decks of four Mersey ferry steamers to view the spectacle.

The new ship was designed for the London to New York service and was the largest vessel ever to navigate the River Thames and use the Royal Docks. She was also intended to stand in for one of the **Queens** during maintenance.

The new liner had a tonnage of 35,739 gross, an overall length of 772 feet and a beam of 89 feet with an exterior design similar to R.M.S. **Queen Elizabeth** (whose overall length was 1,031 feet). Powered by two sets of Parsons single reduction-gearred steam turbines giving 42,000 shaft horsepower and driving twin propellers, her service speed was 23 knots with a maximum of 26 knots.

Mauretania sailed on her maiden voyage from Liverpool to New York on 17 June 1939 and, after remaining in New York for a week, she returned to Southampton via Cherbourg on 30 June 1939. From August she was switched to the London-New York service where she supplemented **Britannic** and **Georgic**.

On 11 August 1939 she left on her final pre-war voyage to New York. On her return she was requisitioned by the government. **Mauretania** was armed with two 6-inch guns and some smaller weapons, painted in battle-ship grey, and then despatched to America at the end of December 1939.

For three months the ship lay idle in New York, docked alongside RMS **Queen Elizabeth**, RMS **Queen Mary**, and the French Line's SS **Normandie**, until it was decided to use her as a troopship. On 20 March 1940 she sailed from New York to Sydney, via Panama, to be converted for her new role. She endured a tense voyage out to Australia via Bilbao, San Francisco and Honolulu. The conversion work was carried out in April at the Cockatoo Island Dockyard and in May she left Sydney as part of one of the greatest convoys ever mustered for the transport of troops. With her were **Queen Mary**, **Aquitania**, **Empress of Britain**, **Empress of Canada**, **Empress of Japan**, and **Andes**. This convoy, coded US3, was known as the "Million Dollar Convoy".

During the early stages of the war the ship transported Australian troops to Suez, India and Singapore but later she mainly served in the North Atlantic. During the course of her war duties, first criss-crossing the Indian Ocean, then working the Atlantic with American and Canadian troops she finally served in the Pacific. One of her wartime voyages, of 28,662 nautical miles, took her right around the world, taking just 82 days to complete. During this epic voyage she established a speed record for the crossing time from Fremantle, Australia to Durban, South Africa. The 4,000-mile distance was covered at an average speed of 21.06 knots. During the Second World War she travelled 540,000 miles and carried over 340,000 troops. **Mauretania** was not designed to be an exceptionally fast ship and during six years of war duty, her engines had received little attention but still achieved a remarkable turn of speed when, in 1945, she made the passage from Bombay to the UK via the Cape, averaging 23.4 knots.

After the war ended, **Mauretania** made several further voyages for the government repatriating troops. This mainly took the ship to Canada and Singapore. She took the first dedicated sailing of British war brides and their children being patriated to Canada to join their husbands, landing at Halifax, Nova Scotia in February 1946. On 2 September 1946 she returned to Liverpool, was released from government service and immediately went into Gladstone Dock to be reconditioned by Cammell Laird & Co. for return to Cunard White Star service.

After a complete overhaul and refurbishment, **Mauretania** made her first post-war Atlantic crossing to New York, departing on 26 April 1947. After using Liverpool as her home port for the first two voyages she was thereafter based at Southampton. Later that year **Mauretania** began to be used as a cruise ship during the winter months to the West Indies and the Caribbean. These so-called 'dollar earning cruises' assisted the shattered British economy. In

1948 **Mauretania** was used to return home the Wright Brothers historic first aircraft, The **Flyer** of 1903, where it had been on loan to the Science Museum since 1928. During the next decade she served on the Southampton to New York route during the summer months and operated on cruises from New York during the winter months.

By 1962, **Mauretania** was facing competition from more modern ships and was losing money. In October the ship was painted pale green, like **Caronia** (the famed Green Goddess), and 28 March 1963 she began a new Mediterranean service calling at New York, Cannes, Genoa and Naples. After an unsuccessful year she reverted to cruising from New York to the West Indies. Her final voyage was a Mediterranean cruise which left New York on 15 September 1965. On her return to Southampton, **Mauretania** would be withdrawn from service and sold. She left Southampton on 20 November, 1965 for her final voyage, and arrived at Thos W Ward's shipbreaking yard in Inverkeithing, Fife, in Scotland.

Who were the Authors of these First Papers?

by the Editor

We do know, or have managed to find, varying amounts of information with regard to those people whom we consider to be the 'founding fathers' of the Society. In fact it was three of these seven individuals [Captain E.A. Woods, Mr. William Stewart Rees and Mr. Arthur C. Wardle] who established the first small group from which the Society soon sprang. The full details of the origins are recorded on our web site:- www.liverpoolnauticalresearchsociety.org

Arthur C. Wardle (1891-1949). Born in Toxteth in 1891, Arthur Wardle remained an ardent Unitarian throughout his life. A self-educated historian, he served with the 1st Cheshire Battalion during World War 1. Between the wars he became Export Manager to C.T. Bowring & Co., the well-known shipowners and served a period in their Newfoundland office at St. John's, N.B. It was during this period that his first two books were written, *Benjamin Bowring and His Descendants* and *Steam Conquers the Pacific*, the latter being subsequently translated into Spanish.

As Founder Secretary of the Society, Arthur Wardle also served as Archivist, Chairman and Treasurer. At the outbreak of World War 2, Arthur Wardle began his involvement with youth work that was continued by his junior officers for some seven years after his death.

He wrote on the early Liverpool Customs collectors, the collection itself, privateers, early steamships, Liverpool's first dock and the King's ship **Liverpool**. He was also elected a member of the Institute of Export and of the Society for

Nautical Research. In 1948, the symposium *The Trade Winds* was published (edited by Doctor C. Northcote-Parkinson), a book with which Wardle was closely associated. A further book entitled *A History of the Mersey Ferries*, was unfortunately incomplete at the time of the author's death in 1949. Sydney Jeffery in the *Liverpool Daily Post* (November 1949) wrote that the life of A.C. Wardle, "Albeit of only 58 years duration, was a shining example of how much can be achieved by patient diligence and perfectionism".

Captain Ernest Alfred Woods (1883 - 1946). Ernest Woods started his career in Elder Dempster's Liverpool office in 1899 under Sir Alfred Lewis Jones. However, he soon tired of office life and, at the age of 15, went to sea, serving his apprenticeship with Henry Fernie & Co. In 1904 he served on his first steamer, the **Morazan**. In 1905 he joined R.P. Houston & Co. as 3rd Officer in the steamship **Horatius**. In 1912 he gained his Masters Certificate and joined the Irrawaddy Flotilla Co. as 2nd Officer on the paddle steamer **Kerenni**.

He served with the Irrawaddy Flotilla Co. for twenty five years being stationed at Rangoon. He was given command of the steamship **Syriam** in 1916 and subsequently commanded many Flotilla ships including the stern wheelers **Tiddim** and **Amyen**, the paddle steamers **Mandalay**, **China**, **Panthay** and **Ananda**, and the Royal Mail steamers **Japan** and **Ceylon**. **Ananda** was his last command and he retired on reaching the age limit of 55 in 1938 to settle in Wallasey.

Captain Woods devoted a lifetime to sailing ship research and in 1949, after his death, there was a well informed chapter on the White Star sailing packets, in the new volume of the Lancashire and Cheshire Historical Society, of which he was a member. Almost as soon as he arrived on Merseyside he was in touch with Arthur Wardle and others with the idea of forming a Research Society and in April 1938, with Arthur Wardle and William Stewart Rees and a number of others who had teamed up, the Society was founded. He was an original member of the Flag Circle having a great interest and knowledge of flags and flag signals as used at sea. Amongst the many records that he left is a collection of notes on James Baines, the Liverpool ship owner, and seven volumes containing brief details of thousands of sailing ships.

William Stewart Rees (1876-1948). William Stewart Rees was well known as the Manager of the Anchor Line for many years. He commenced his business career with the Anchor Line in 1890. After many years experience with matters relating to the payment by the firm of Customs and Dock dues, he was transferred to the Passenger Department, eventually becoming Passenger Manager. In 1929 he was appointed Assistant Manager of the Liverpool office. Brocklebanks had, in 1912, purchased four Anchor Line ships, along with the Calcutta Conference rights of the Anchor Line and the two companies had subsequently shared an Office in the Liver Buildings. In 1931 the Anchor Line

discontinued their Liverpool office and William Stewart Rees joined the staff of T. & J. Brocklebank, with whom he remained until his death. He had served the Anchor Line for over 40 years.

Between 1910 and 1920 he collected data concerning the Anchor Line (Henderson Brothers) Ltd. Later he was keenly interested in collecting the facts preparatory to the writing, by Mr John Frederick Gibson, of the history of the Brocklebank Line. Of his efforts in this connection, Colonel Denis H. Bates M.C., T.D., Chairman of the Brocklebank Line, wrote in the preface to the history, "Except for the diligence and enthusiasm of Willie Rees I doubt whether this story would ever have been set out". The history was published in two volumes in 1953.

On 11th April 1938, William Stewart Rees, in association with Arthur C. Wardle, Captain E.A. Woods and others, presided over the inaugural meeting of the Liverpool Nautical Research Society. He went on to make a valued contribution to the aims of the Society with the numerous papers he read at the meetings. In addition to the work already mentioned he was also closely involved with the compilation of a complete list of over 250 vessels built between 1825 and 1893 by the famous firm of Thomas Royden & Sons. The list subsequently appeared in the history of the firm written and privately circulated by Sir Ernest B. Royden, Bart. in 1953. William Stewart Rees died after a short illness in 1948.

E.W. Argyle Not much is known other than that for 30 years he wrote monthly articles in *Sea Breezes* entitled "Ships on Stamps"

William McQuie Mather (1898 - 1963). William McQuie Mather, a member of the Society for Nautical Research since its foundation, died in Ramsey, Isle of Man, on 24 July 1963. He was born in Liverpool in 1898, and had hoped to serve in the Royal Navy. Unhappily ill-health precluded this career, although during the 1914-18 war he became a wireless operator in the Merchant Service, being engaged on the North Atlantic convoys.

After the war he entered the family business, but his real interest lay in maritime history, where he made an outstanding contribution, particularly by his studies of early nineteenth-century naval and merchant shipping. Apart from his scholarship, he was a very fine craftsman, and his model of H.M.S. **Victory**, to a scale of 1:96, remains as a monument to his skill. The fully rigged model took him ten years to build.

B. W. Bathe Again not much is known but he is thought to have been a Scientist at the Science Museum, Kensington and later at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich (about the time of its opening in 1937).

B.J. Herrington Is thought to have been a Customs Official based on Tyneside, transferring to Merseyside in about 1942 when he took the senior position of the Liverpool Customs Waterguard Superintendent.

TRANSACTIONS OF
THE LIVERPOOL NAUTICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

President:

The Earl of Derby, K.G., P.C., G.C.B., G.C.V.O., J.P.

Volume I.

No: I.

EARLY LIVERPOOL VESSELS AND TRADE

A Paper read to The Liverpool Nautical Research Society
on 11th May, 1938,
by

Mr. Arthur C. Wardle.

To submit this paper as a comprehensive survey of Liverpool ships of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries would be presumptuous. It is merely the chronological arrangement of a few notes taken whilst engaged in other research, and now put forward in the hope that they might form an elementary basis for the more exhaustive study which the Society must ultimately undertake if its records are to be complete.

Although for several centuries Liverpool was regarded as a creek of the port of Chester, its maritime advantages were earlier recognised by King John, who built a military stronghold above the Pool and granted, in 1207, the little town its first charter. During the next two hundred years, with the exception of occasional references to the transport of troops to Ireland, the records contain little evidence of the number or type of vessels owned or built on the Mersey. Robert Dunne, writing from Carlisle on 29th March, 1548, to the Lord Protector, refers to his search for ships for transport purposes: "*I viewed also the creeks and havens thereabouts for boats and crayers for conveying the victuals and found fourteen between 7 and 15 tons, and others of greater burthen belonging to Liverpool*". From this, we may assume that the Mersey ships, even at that date, were the largest on the north west coast of England.

It is to the Liverpool Town Books, however, that we must look for the earliest recorded local vessels. In 1558, the port boasted thirteen merchant ships, including one of 100 tons and one of 50 tons, and among the entries for 1565 is the following list of locally—owned ships, with their tonnages and owners:—

Eagle	Robert Corbett, owner	40 tons	12 men	1 boy
George	John & Thomas Winstanley	36 "	10 "	
Saviour	Thomas Uttyn	30 "	8 "	
Bartholomew	Wm. Lawrence	16 "	6 "	
Falcon	George Ashton	16 "	6 "	
Mighull	Ed. Nicholson & John Williamson	20 "	7 "	
Sondaye	Wm. Walker & Tho. Mason	15 "	5 "	
Maria George	Thomas Fisher & Rd. Baker	15 "	5 "	
Peter	Peter Starkie	12 "	5 "	
Swallow	Thomas Batyswell	3 "	3 "	
Good Luck	Thomas Bradshaw	6 "	3 "	
Elizabeth	Nicholas Richardson	12 "		
Migell, Wallazie	Gilb. Dobb & Jas. Robinson	14 "		
John, Wallazie	John Aynesdale	24 "	8 "	
Lark, Wallazie	H & R Young	8 "	3 "	

In December of that year a dreadful storm overtook the Queen's ship **Sagar**, which sailed from Liverpool on the 22nd, with Sir Henry Sidney on board, for Ireland. This vessel was escorted by the **George**, of Liverpool, and "*Thomas Uttyn and his bark; Edward Nicholson and John Williamson and their bark; William Walker and Thomas Mason and their bark; Mr. Corbet's bark; Nicho. Ricson and that small bark called Mr. Corbett's small bark*" and the Recorder goes on to pray for their safe arrival.

Seven years later, the Liverpool fleet had increased to sixteen ships, one of 40 tons and three of 30 tons. According to the records for 1571 and 1572, bonds for discharge were issued to the following Liverpool vessels:—

1571	18 Jan.	Bartholomew	Nicholas Bound	Master
1572	19 Jun.	Trinitie	Robt. Laurence	"
1572	8 May	Gud Lucke	Robt. Laurence	"
1572	8 July	Luke	John Corbett	"
1572	11 July	Saviour	Thomas Uttyn	"
1572	8 July	Elsabeth	Thomas Bastwell	"
1572	26 March	Swanne	John Winstanley	"

In February of the following year, the **Swann**, of Liverpool, "*Edmund Laurence, mayster under God*", was wrecked on the Irish Coast and, in the quaint language of the period, the Recorder relates how "*the good marchaunt mayster, John Armetaije, of Farnley Tyes, in the county of Yorck, alias clothier; wyth his riche stocks from Liverpool to Knockfergus and other cutes gentelmen (blank) Hughies of (blank) after shipwrecks came to land and fell amongst the rebell kernes and were there most villounously murdered, slayne, and cut to pieces as the vilyst kind of fleshe contrarie to the pleasure and will of God, I am not able to penne it, but by voyce of the countrie and comunitie of Irische and Englische tonges uncertain, but to trewe, the mor pitie etc*".

The ship or bark **George**, first recorded in 1565, was still afloat ten years later, for in 1574, we have an echo of the Earl of Essex's expedition to Ireland. The Recorder refers to "*some of the soldiers dying upon the seas aboard the ships and barques. Some got direct to Liverpool by the **George** of Liverpool Thomas Winstanley, captain*".

On St. George's day, 1577, the little town received a visit from Henry, Earl of Derby, whilst en route to the Isle Of Man. He was honoured with a procession, religious service and a military display and then embarked in the **Edward**, "*Mr.*

Tarbocke's Ship", which sailed accompanied by the **Michael** and the **Bee** of Liverpool, the **Elizabeth** of Aulte, and the **Good Luck**, of Douglas.

A note of early Liverpool shipbuilding is made by Mr. R. Stewart-Brown, who refers to Miles Fell, a Liverpool Yeoman, having built a bark which he named the **Fell**. She was of 160 tons burthen, and he therefore applied at the Admiralty Court for the bounty then offered for the construction of ships of over 100 tons.

The Town Books contain much information concerning cargoes carried by these small local vessels, which traded principally to Ireland and the north west coast of England. Baines, in his History of Liverpool, devotes several pages to this trade, which included the shipment of coals from the Mersey, and I have extracted the following list of Liverpool—owned vessels of 1586, with their masters:—

Strange	18 tons	John Strong	Master
Michael	16 "	Evans Thomas	"
Marie	6 "	Richard Johnson	"
Elizabeth	10 "	Robt. Pemberton	"
Hope	34 "	Cuthbert Lawrence	"
Golden Gray	19 "	Robert Kettle	"
Little Michael		John Williamson	"
Little Margaret	12 "	Henry Shaw	"
Peter, of Wallazie	16 "	James Johnson	"
Edward	10 "	William Blackmore	"
Great Margaret	10 "	John Robinson	"
Michael	16 "	Richard Gyneson	"
Michael	16 "	John Williamson	"
Marygold	20 "	-	

The **Strange** is mentioned in an entry, April 13th, 1581, in the Town Books: "*Rauffe Serocold of Manchester gave four marks to the town to be allowed to make his best market for his train oil and iron which came to Liverpool in the good ship the barque **Straunge***". This period is noteworthy as recording one of the earliest letters of marque, granted to the Liverpool ship **Relief**, 20 tons, owned by Giles Brookes and Benjamin Mainwaring, Liverpool merchants. She was armed with 10 cast pieces and victualled for six months. Her master was Humphrey Brooke, who brought the news to London, in August 1586, of the readiness of part of the Spanish Armada. The earliest news of the preparations for this invasion of England, however, was attested in July of that year, before the mayor of Weymouth, by Nicholas Abraham, a Liverpool merchant, and John Lambert, a shipman, of that town. Liverpool men and vessels were evidently actively involved

in the Elizabethan intelligence system, for among contemporary State Papers is a letter dated 19th September, 1588, written from St. Jean de Luz by Edward Palmer, a Priest, to Secretary Walsingham, giving information as to how the Spaniards had received news of the disaster which overtook the invincible Armada. This lengthy despatch was carried to England on a Liverpool ship by Thomas Wofull, a servant of Lord Derby.

Another letter of marque was the Liverpool ship **Frances**, of 90 tons, for which a bond was given in 1590, and an indication of the trade in which other Liverpool ships were employed is given in a letter dated 5th July, 1593, written by Giles Brooke, mayor of Liverpool to John Fytton, mayor of Chester, announcing that six vessels had been stayed at Liverpool for the transporting of half "*of the 1,200 soldiers now ordered to cross from Liverpool or Chester to Dublin*". Local records contain many references to the numbers of soldiers almost continuously encamped during these years on the Heath, where St. George's Hall now stands, whilst they awaited embarkation or favourable winds.

Records of early seventeenth century local shipping are very meagre. The Moore Deeds contain several interesting references, one document being a certificate granted to Henry Mullenax, owner of the ship **Gift of God** of Liverpool, for frames of timber sent by the mayor of Chester to Londonderry. Other documents, dated April/May 1633 mention two Liverpool vessels, the **Phenix**, (Bryan Blundell, owner) and the **Trinitie**, (Gilb. Balshay, owner.) In that year, local shipping was troubled by pirates. A letter contained in the Cowper MSS reports: "*A new pirate has come upon the coast of Ireland who took one Tarleton's ship of Liverpool, it and in her goods to the value of £300. He has pillaged two Dutch ships, one he set on fire. It burned a day and a night in view of the whole country near Dublin, to their grief and shame. This Biscayan Spanish rogue outbraves the two Kingdoms, undoes the poor merchant and spoils many an honest gentleman. I hope my Lord will hasten to clear the coast of this pilfering villain, and other the like, else all trade and commerce between the two kingdoms is spoiled.*" Another letter, dated May 20th, 1633, addressed to Viscount Wentworth, evidently relates to the same marauder: "*Here lies a pirate in the mouth of this bay of Dublin that takes all that comes. He took a bark of Liverpool worth £400 yesterday, in which was a trunk of damask and other linens of your Lordship. He fought with a Dutchman the day before. He hath taken divers vessels on this coast.*"

Among the State Papers of Charles the First's reign is the record of an examination of Thomas Browne and others, taken on 30th March, 1636, concerning the misconduct of Anthony Lownes, press-master, and the mayor of Liverpool in discharging seamen pressed for the King's service and pressing in their places the examiners who had never been to sea before. This is one of the earliest references to the press-gang in Liverpool.

Documents calendared by the Historical MSS Commission (Appendix to 5th Report) include several receipts signed in 1641, for the transportation of horses and men to Ireland. The following Liverpool vessels and their masters are therein named:-

Anne	Richard Williamson and partner Brian Mercer.
Edward	William Johnson
Swan	Richard Harrison
Mary	William Rimmer
Hopewell	Thomas Andowe.

Another document, dated 1642, is an examination of William Lorting, mariner, who came out of Bordeaux in the **George**, of Liverpool. The Lortings or Lurtings appear frequently in local annals as a seagoing family. One, Thomas Lurting, born at Liverpool in 1629, was impressed into the King's service in 1646 and served in the wars against the Irish, Dutch and Spaniards. In his autobiography: "The Fighting Sailor turned peaceable Christian manifested in the convincement and conversion of Thomas Lurting", published in 1710, he gives a graphic account of a sea—fight under Admiral Blake at Santa Cruz against the Spaniards. Lurting came under the influence of the Quakers, and at the time of his conversion to that faith he was boatswain's mate on the **Bristol** frigate. After restoration of Charles the Second, Lurting was several times impressed but refused to do the King's work or eat the King's victuals. Once, after five days fasting, he was put ashore. Lurting became mate of a ship captured in 1663, by an Algerine pirate, but the British sailors, following Lurting's instructions, managed to turn the tables and make the Turks their prisoners. Instead of selling the pirates for slaves, as they had the opportunity to do, they put them ashore not far from an Algerine town. The pirates marvelled so greatly at this unexpected treatment that both captives and ex-captives took an affectionate farewell of each other. This narrative was written, dated, and signed at Liverpool in 1680, and is printed in George Fox's "To the Great Turk and His King at Algiers".

The Moore Deeds contain a copy of a petition dated 15th June, 1644, to Prince Rupert, from the seamen of Liverpool, to which the following names are appended: Richard Harrison, Thomas Thompson, John Sutton, Gilbert Richardson, Richard Norris, Thomas Abraham of Formby and Ellis Rymer, of Ansdale.

The seventeenth century witnessed Liverpool's entry into the West Indian trade and into commerce with the American plantations. In 1649, the Common Council, being troubled with an abnormal number of vagrants, ordered all beggars in the town to be shipped off to the Barbadoes. Another early reference to the West Indies is contained in A Cavalier's Note Book, wherein William Blundell

writes, under dated 12th September, 1666: "*I did engage with my cousin Henry Blundell of Ince Esq. to join £40 with him as an adventure to the Barbadoes in the good ship the **Antelope** of Liverpole. The **Antelope** went from Leverpoole, September 15 towards Barbadoes, 1666. August 19, 1667. The **Antelope** returned to Leverpoole from the Barbadoes.*"

Baines, in his History of Liverpool, refers to an early policy of marine insurance, on "*Captain Tarleton's good ship the **Ann and Sarah**, by which she is insured to Barbadoes and home again for a premium of four per cent on the ship and cargo.*"

Blome, writing in 1673, mentions the town's eminent merchants and tradesmen, whose trade and traffic, especially into the West Indies, makes it famous: "its scituation affording in greater plenty and at reasonabler rates than most parts of England such exported commodities proper for the West Indies; as likewise a quicker return for such imported commodities, by reason of the sugar-bakers and great manufactures of cottens in the adjacent parts, etc" Among the local merchants prominently engaged in this trade was Thomas Johnson who, with Richard Norris, has provided posterity with a remarkable picture of the shipping and commerce of those days in a collection of letters contained in the Norris Papers, housed at the Picton Library, Liverpool. A letter dated Barbadoes, 11th July, 1692, states that 20 years previously there was a constant trade between Barbadoes and Liverpool "*from whence came nails and all sorts of ironware, cheese, butter in pots, all sorts of sadlery ware, jeans, best white bermillions, Manchester wares, Scotts cloaths, flannels, woolseys, Kendall cottons etc.*" At that time Johnson and Morris appear to have been joint owners of the ships **Charity**, **Blessing** and **Mercy**, and among the Norris Papers is a bill of lading for a cargo shipped per the **Mercy**, which reads as under:-

*"Shipped by the Grace of God in good order and well conditioned by John Mead & Thomas Wood in and upon the good ship called the **Mercy** of Leverpoole, whereof is Master under God for this present Voyage, Timothy Smalshaw, and now riding at anchor in the Bay of Cadiz and by God's Grace bound for Leverpoole, to say two hundred barrills, two @ gage Sixty barrills, foure @ gage of Raisins of the Sun, one frayle fruit, three pipes of Malaga wine, three pypes of oyle, fifty barrils of Anchoves & tenn butts Sherry Wine being marked and numbered as in the Margent, and are to be delivered in the like good order and well conditioned at the aforesaid Port of Leverpoole (the danger of the Seas only excepted) unto Messrs. Thomas Johnson & Compne or to there Assigns, he or they paying Freight for the said Goods according to agreement with Primage and Average accustomed. In witness thereof, the Master and Purser of the said Ship hath affirmed to 3 Bills of Lading, all of this tenor and date, the one of which*

3 bills being accomplished, the other 2 to stand void. And so God send the good ship to her desired Port in safety. Amen.

*Dated in Cadiz ye 5 March, 1695, a.d.
sgd. Timothy Smalshaw."*

By the close of the century, Liverpool merchants were driving a lucrative trade with the American plantations of Virginia, Maryland and the Carolinas; and their ships, in addition to freighting tobacco and English manufactured goods, were engaged in the transport of young apprentices to serve in the Plantations.

Local municipal records contain several lists of these apprentices or servants, as they are described, and the names of the ships which transported them. A list of the vessels and their masters is appended:

Ann & Sarah	John Marshall	Master,	for	Virginia
Submission	Thomas Seacomb	"	"	Virginia
Formby	Wm. Leivesley	"	"	Virginia
Loyalty	Henry Brown	"	"	Virginia
Irish Lawrell	Wm. Middleton	"	"	Newfoundland
Yorkshire Lawrell	Edward Tarleton	"	"	Newfoundland
Planter	John Runner	"	"	Newfoundland
Virginia Mercheant	Edward Ball	"	"	Newfoundland
Experiment	Cavaliero Christian	"	"	Pennsylvania
Elizabeth	Gilbert Leivesley	"	"	Virginia and Maryland
Elizabeth & Juliet	Wm. Part	"	"	Virginia
Eleanor	Nich. Reynolds	"	"	Virginia
Elizabeth & Ann	Wm. Benn	"	"	Montserrat
Ann & Sarah	Henry Smith	"	"	Virginia

In the year 1700, however, the ventures of Liverpool shipowners and merchants were diverted to a more sinister transportation of human beings. The following transcription of a document contained in the Norris Papers is probably the earliest recorded evidence of Liverpool's association with the slave trade:—

*"Leverpole, ye 10. 8. 1700. Mr. Tho. Brownbell & Mr. Jno Murray, Gentlm.
Ye being Capt & supercargoe of ye good ship ye **Blessing** by gods grace
bound for Guinea, our Ordrs to ye are as follows. Wee Ordr ye with ye first
fair Wind & weather yt presents to make ye best of ye way to King—sail in ye
Kingdom of Ireland where apply y selfe to Mr. Arthur Izeik Merchnt there who
will ship on board such provisions & other necessarys as ye shall want for yr*

intended Voyage & if ye find wee have omitted anything in our Ordrs to him ye may take anything yt shall be necessary for ye Voyage. Make all dispatch there ye well can & ye will ye first wind & weather make ye best of ye way to ye coast of Guinea where make to ye Windermost pt of ye gold coast so you will have opportunity of ye whole coast to trade in, where dispose of whatt of ye Cargo is most proper & purchase whatt Slaves ye can if you find no Encouragement on ye gold coast goe directly for Wida, where if ye find Encouragement dispose of all yr Cargoe & slave ye ship to her full reach if ye can, and of any remaindr be left lay it out in teeth and dust as you have opportunity ye will quickly find weather, ye can do ye business on ye gold coast & Wida. If ye find ye cant sell only such goods of Yo cargoe as will be improper for Angola & make ye haste, if ye can down to Angola where ye Doctor is well acquainted & who will inform ye whatt goods most proper for yt place when ye arrive at Angola dispose of ye remaindr of ye cargoe there and slave ye ship to her full reach as she will conveniently carrye, I hope there ye will slave ye ship, easy A whatt shall remain over and above slaveing ye Shlp lay out in teeth wch are there reasonable & when ye have disposed of ye cargoe & slaved ye ship make ye best of ye way to ye West Indies. If yo slave at ye gold coast & Wida touch at Barbadoes where if ye find ye marketts reasonable good sell there, if dull goe down to Leewrd to wch Island ye shall see convenient where dispose of yr Negroes in our best advantage and with ye produce load yr ship with sugr Cottons Gingers if to be had — wth all remaining over and above loading your own Ship invest in ye same commodities take freight for England to London ot this place. Wherever ye sell ye slaves & load sugar dispatch your own ship as soon as possible and make ye best of ye way hone & whatt effects of ours ye cant stay to be freighted home leave in ye hands of some honest man in ye Island where ye load, if at Barbadoes apply to Mr. Moor, at Antegua, att Monseratt, Mr. Chancey, att Nevis, Solomon Isarell, but if ye goe down to Angola where ye are there laden make ye best of ye way directly to Jamaica where whatt slaves ye purchased on ye Gold coast will sell well & ye Angola slaves will turn to good acct att Carthagena, where if ye see convenient send Mr. Murray and ye Dr. down with a pell thither where there never fails of a good price. When ye have disposed of all ye slaves relode ye ship with Sugr Cottons Ginger & Indigoe & whatt ye have over & above ye loading bring hom in Weighty pieces of eight for att Carthagena whatt Negroes y dispose of will be for good pcs of 8 so if whatever is over ye loading bring home in ye specie & if you should have occasion for any assistance or to leave any concerns behind ye in Jamaica apply yr selfe to Mr. Holsted merchant there. When ye have loaded ye ship make ye best of ye way homeward but call at Kingsaile

for Ordrs. Ye concern wee here intrust ye with is very considerable & will require all ye care and diligence to manage it to ye best advantage both of ye selfe, consult together with ye Dr. who is ye only man ye have to trust to to assist ye in ye trading in ye Country & ye management there I should doubt not will doe good service. Read over yr Invoice frequently if you may be better acquainted wth yr goods. Wee have not limited you to any place only if ye cant do ye business on ye gold coast & Wida, to goe to Angola your ship wee think not proper to goe into ye Bight. Wee leave ye whole management of ye concern to you & hope ye Lord will direct ye for ye best.

Be cautious of speaking with any shipps at sea for ye seas are dangerous. Endeavour to keep all ye men sober for intemperance in ye hot Country may destroy ye men and goe ruin yr Voyage. Lett everything be managed to our best advantage pray be good husband let nothing be embezeld. We cannot pretend to give ye directions of all ye Management of our affairs in Guinea but reffer itt to ye and ye Doctor who hath been there before & shipt on purpose for ye design. Pray be diligent & carefull & prudent in all our affairs & be assured Yr diligence shall not goe unrewarded. We committ ye to Ye care & protection of ye Almighty who wee hope will preserve ye from all Dangers & Crown all our endeavours wth success & bring ye home with safety which shall be ye constant prayr of

Gent. Yr Loveing Friends.

Be sure make all ye despatch ye can through ye course of ye whole voyage, take such Notice of all ye Methods of Management of ye trade on ye Coast, yt may be able to inform us truly in all things Materiall in ye Trade wch will be yr own profitt as well as our advantage — write from all places where ye can have convenience of sending.”

TRANSACTIONS OF
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President:

The Earl of Derby, K.G.,P.C.,G.C.B.,G.C.V.O.,J.P.

Volume I.

No. 2

JAMES BAINES

A Paper read to The Liverpool Nautical Research Society
on 26th October, 1938.

by

Captain E. A. Woods

On Sunday, October 25th 1812, William Baines, schoolmaster was married to Miss Mary Picton, confectioner, of Richmond Row at St. Thomas' Church. William Baines was later a sugar refiner and had his works at 6, Jackson Lane.

His wife opened a confectioner's shop at 85 Duke Street. William Baines was a very delicate man, suffering from chest trouble, and died at the early age of 37 on the 17th of June, 1829, being buried in St. James' cemetery. He left his wife with a young family of one girl and three boys. One son, James Baines, the subject of this paper, was born on October 26th 1823 over the shop.

After William's death his wife carried on the shop at 12, Duke Street, opposite St. Mark's Church, and the sugar refinery, in partnership with a Mr. Rigby, at Belle Vue, Derby Road, Bootle. Just before his death William Baines had taken a house at 1 Rathbone Street, and his wife and children lived here until 1848.

Another of the sons, William, is mentioned in the Directory of 1841 as being a molasses merchant living at 1 Rathbone Street. He was an elder brother of James. Of the other brother nothing is known.

In 1837 Mrs. Baines was appointed confectioner in Liverpool to Her Royal Highness Princess Victoria. Lord Sandon presented a handsome cake, forwarded to him by Mrs. Baines, to Her Royal Highness on the anniversary of her birthday.

Mrs. Baines had taken a house in Rodney Street and turned it into a first-class boarding house, with her daughter assisting her. A Mr John Grant Morris, clerk in a coal merchant's office, boarded with her and married her daughter Mary, in August 1835 at Trinity Church. Mr Morris opened his own coal business, and was Mayor of Liverpool in 1866/7, living at Allerton Priory during the 80s. James Baines, according to his own account, started to serve his time as an engineer when he left school, but he did not like the dirty work and having to get up in the morning and he soon gave up this employment. He then entered the office of his uncle Richard at 2 Wellington Buildings, Poole Lane, who was a shipbroker. In the Directory for 1843 James is described as a gentleman living at 1 Rathbone Street.

In 1845 he commenced, in partnership with a Mr. John Hamilton, as a merchant and shipbroker. This partnership was soon dissolved and in 1847 he became a partner of John Carter as a shipbroker at 3 India Buildings.

By 1848 Carter and Baines owned three ships. **Charles Brownell** a ship of 390 tons, **General Sale** a barque of 351 tons, and **Sisters** a barque of 744 tons. These vessels were in the Valparaiso and China trades. On February 18th of that year they were advertising vessels for Boston, New Orleans, Ceylon, Valparaiso, and Rio, for which ships they were brokers.

On the 4th of May, 1848 an advertisement appeared in the paper that "*On Tuesday last at Altcar, Mr. James Baines, of this town, was married to Anne, eldest daughter of the late John Browne, Esq., of Netherton.*" By September of

that year he was advertising the barque **Lady of the Lake** for Bombay, in conjunction with Rankin, Gilmour & Co.

After his marriage Baines took up his residence in Holly Street, Fairfield, with his office still at 3 India Buildings. He also seems to have carried on his father's business as a sugar refiner, as he appears in the papers of 1849 as sugar refiner and shipbroker, with his works at 6 Jackson Lane, formerly his father's works.

In 1851 he was living at 19 Upper Canning Street, with his office at Commercial Bank Buildings, 6 Cook Street.

By this time he was working on his own as a shipbroker and had also commenced to buy ships. In 1850 he owned the three ships **Cleopatra**, **Maria** and **Express**. All these vessels were Canadian built and in 1851 he bought the **Flora McDonald**, also Canadian-built.

The year 1852 was a momentous one for the Port of Liverpool. Gold had been discovered in large quantities in Australia, and Gibbs Bright & Co's Eagle Line **Albatross** brought the first consignment of gold, £50,000 worth, into the Mersey on August 31st of that year. With the arrival of this ship and cargo the shipowners of Liverpool began to wake up to the fact that there was a new opening for trade and emigrants. Until 1851 the tide of emigration which had flowed towards the United States and British North America. But, after the discovery of gold and the abolition of penal labour and transportation of criminals to Australia, a larger number of emigrants began to take ship for Australia and New Zealand. On July 3rd 1852 it was reported in the Melbourne papers that two men had taken 56 pounds weight of gold from three buckets of "stuff". It was no wonder that Australia attracted emigrants in their thousands.

The flow of emigrants from Northern England and the large imports of gold soon roused the merchants of Liverpool, and more ships were called for to cope with the increased traffic. Shipbuilders of New Brunswick and the other seaboard states of Canada turned out ships in their hundreds from the shipbuilding yards which sprang up, literally in a night. Some were built up small creeks and in many places which had to be first cleared of vegetation. They were sailed across to England, full of timber and consigned to agents who sold them as quickly as they arrived. Edward Oliver and Henry Fernie were two of the best known agents for the sale of soft wood ships from Canada. Edward Oliver failed in 1854, but Henry Fernie founded the well-known firm of Henry Fernie & Sons, of Rumford Street the last representative of which died in 1933.

Some of the New Brunswick and Nova Scotia shipbuilders eventually retired from building and, coming over to Liverpool, set up as shipowners. W. & R. Wright and Edmund F. Roberts and William Roberts, sons of David Roberts, being two of the most noted builders who eventually owned large fleets in Liverpool.

The impression has become widespread that practically all the wood ships came from the United States. The famous four magnificent sisters **Lightning**, **James Baines**, **Donald MacKay** and **Champion of the Seas**, built by Donald McKay at East Boston, Mass., for James Baines, have, not unnaturally, fostered the idea that all the fast ships came from the United States seaboard. New Brunswick and Nova Scotia can claim, however, as many fast and beautiful clippers as overcame from the States during the 50s of the last century.

The first ship of the White Star Line was a St. John ship, and the phenomenal rise of the Black Ball Line started with the purchase of the **Marco Polo**, the work of a British North American yard, and a small yard at that.

These wood shipbuilders flourished in the 50s and 60s of last century, but now, alas, their glory has departed and the yards, which once rang to the sound of mallet and saw, and the cheers of the workmen when a new ship was launched - which happened very frequently - are now left to the gulls and the melancholy peculiar to all deserted hives of industry.

Although Donald McKay built his most famous ships in Boston, he was a Nova Scotian, grandson of a British Army Officer. His wonderful ships have overshadowed those of most of his contemporaries and they certainly made the renown of the Black Ball Line of Australian Packets. To the one person who had heard of Pilkington and Wilson and their famous **White Star** and **Red Jacket**, a hundred have heard of **Marco Polo** and **Lightning**. Even the name of the Black Ball Line has been handed down to posterity in that well-known chantey "*Hurrah for the Black Ball Line.*"

The term "publicity agent" had not been heard of in Baines' time, in fact it is quite a modern innovation in shipping circles. But both James Baines and his noted captain, James Nicol Forbes, belonged to a class who loved to be in the limelight, and who took all precautions that they were 'well forward' when there was any chance of being heard or of showing themselves.

There is no doubt that the decade 1851 to 1860 was a very prosperous one for the Port of Liverpool. Many well-known ship owning firms were founded during that period, and existing ones made their fortunes in the attempt to supply transport for the rush of emigrants to the new Golconda.

During 1852, 36,253 emigrants left Liverpool for Australia. On the 31st of December 1857 the tonnage registered in Liverpool was 936,022 tons, and in 1858 it had increased to 953,955 tons. In 1857 the vessels entering the port were 4,528, with a tonnage of 2,329,928 tons. Vessels cleared outward were 5,003 with a tonnage of 2,535,952 tons. Liverpool ships carried three quarters of the emigrants from the United Kingdom to Australia and New Zealand.

In 1857 155,647 emigrants left Liverpool out of 212,875 from all ports of the Kingdom.

The first announcement of James in business for himself appears in Gore's General Advertiser on March 9th 1848:-

FOR HONG KONG, CALCUTTA & BOMBAY
For fine goods only.
Positively first ship after the "Robert Pulsford",
having all her weight and rough freight on board
and the bulk of her cargo in course of shipment.
Loading West side of Salthouse Dock.
The Splendid Ship "Guisachan",
Workington-built, P. Ord, Master
474 tons, A1 at Lloyds for 12 years,
coppered and a most superior conveyance for goods and passengers

For freight, etc., apply to:-
Potter Bros., Merchants, or to
James Baines, 3 India Buildings.

On April 27th the same advertisement appeared with G.B. Wainwright of 15, Rumford Place as broker instead of Potter Bros. Baines' first advertisement as a shipowner appeared in the Advertiser for February 1852, as follows:-

Under contract to the Commissioners
To be despatched from Birkenhead on the 14th April
For Portland Bay, Australia.
The splendid ship "Flora MacDonald".
A1 at Lloyds, 674 tons registered,
copper fastened and newly coppered,
sails remarkable fast and has
splendid accommodation for cabin passengers.

For freight and passage apply to:-
James Baines & Co., 6 Cook Street.

On May 20th of the same year appears another advertisement with Messrs. Pilkington and Wilson, later of White Star fame, as loading brokers:-

New Liverpool Line of Australian Packets.

"Maria"J.N. Forbes (who has had much experience in the trade)

"Bhurtpoor"...Geo. Bainbridge

"Northumberland".....J. B. Smith

"Argo"C. Mills

For freight and passage apply to:-
Pilkington & Wilson.
James Baines.

On the same day, May 20th appeared an advertisement of **Marco Polo** which he had just bought:-

Under engagement to sail on 21st June.

For Melbourne and Port Phillip.

The splendid new frigate built ship

"Marco Polo"

J. N. Forbes, Commander.

Is the largest vessel ever despatched from Liverpool
to Australia and is expected to sail
as fast as any ship afloat.

Carries two surgeons and has vacancies for a few naval cadets

The **Marco Polo** was bought in June 1852, James Baines holding 32 Shares and T.M. MacKay, shipbuilder of Liverpool, and Captain James Nicol Forbes the remainder.

The partners with Baines in the Black Ball Line were Mr. Taylor and Mr. Thomas Millar MacKay later of the firm of T.M. MacKay & Co., of London, Mr. Samuel Robert Graves, a shipowner and Member of Parliament for Liverpool ("Shipping Telegraph" 28/8/1863) and Mr. T. Harrison, shipowner of Liverpool and African trader.

Captain James Nicol Forbes was appointed commander of her, being transferred from the **Maria**, in which ship he was relieved by Captain W. Jackson. Born in Aberdeen in 1821, Forbes was one of the finest publicity agents that Baines could have chosen. Like Baines he loved the limelight and knew the value of stunts. At the end of his first voyage in the Marco Polo to Melbourne he brought his Ship into the Mersey with a canvas placard between the masts with "THE FASTEST SHIP IN THE WORLD" painted on it. The round passage had been made in 5 months and 21 days - quickest on record and something to be proud of.

It was no wonder that Forbes, with his boastful nature, announced to his owner and passengers on the start of his second voyage that he intended to astonish God Almighty as he had just astonished the world.

In 1851 Baines moved his residence to Peel Terrace, Canning Street, living at number 19, where his four children were born. There were three daughters and a son. The daughters were Mary Esther, who later married a Mr. Ellison, a lumber merchant of Vancouver, and finally settled out there; Annie, his second daughter, born on the 11th of August 1855, Captain J.N. Forbes being her godfather, married Mr. H.J.B. Armstrong, the vicar of Broughton near Chester, who was appointed Vicar of St. Andrews in Eccles, in 1879. On August 21st 1857 a son was born to Mrs. Baines and was christened James Picton Baines.

James Picton Baines died at Eccles of asthma and chest trouble on the 16th of July 1877. Edith, the youngest daughter, was born in 1862. She was trained at Guy's Hospital, London, as a nurse and she died of chest trouble and dropsy at the age of 43

in January 1905.

In 1870 Baines gave up his house in Canning Street and went to live at Elm Lodge in Princes Park, where he kept a large staff of servants, 5 maids, a coachman and a groom. He treated his servants very well, sending them to the theatre once a week in turn. Baines had a riding ground made at the back of his house and each of his children had a horse, a riding master being engaged to teach them riding every week.

On the 22nd of August 1872 Mrs. Baines died, and left £1,000 to each of her daughters, the money being so tied up that Baines could not touch it. In 1875 Baines moved to 244 Upper Parliament Street, and the following year to 71 Bedford Street.

By this time his business had taken a downward curve. Starting with one vessel in 1850 he rapidly rose to be the largest shipowner and charterer in Liverpool. In November 1857 the Liverpool Borough Bank failed for over £4,000,000, but Baines was so well established by that time, he was able to weather the financial crisis of that year.

By 1858 he owned 86 ships and had over 4,000 men in his employ. In 1865 he owned 65 ships and had many others on charter. I have traced over 260 ships as having sailed under his flag between the years 1850 and 1876. In the latter year he only owned one ship, the **Cavour**.

There was an old established banking firm of Israel Barned & Co., in Liverpool. When Israel Barned died he left his banking business to his kinsmen, the Mozley family. They failed in May 1866 and brought down many large firms in the crash. This was also the beginning of the end of Baines and his Black Ball Line.

In February 1868 Baines stopped payment of bills due to Gibbs, Bright & Co., amounting to £18,750. These bills had been guaranteed by Baines's Banking Company. Gibbs Bright took the Bank to Court and claimed for the amount from them, but an agreement was arrived at between Gibbs Bright and Baines and the liquidators of Baines's Bank.

Baines struggled along, taking in Mr. Taylor, of the firm of T.M, MacKay & Co, as partner in 1868.

After the death of his wife, Baines and his family went to live at Eccles, near Manchester, for a time, his two elder daughters taking up teaching as a profession, until they were married in 1879, when Baines gave up keeping house. Two of his maids were cousins of Mrs. Isbister, wife of William Isbister, a dockgateman. Through one of them he was introduced to Mr. Isbister and he arranged with him to take a house, Baines being responsible for half the rent and all the taxes. He went to live with the Isbisters at 24 Dexter Street, Toxteth Park, in October 1880, but soon after that date they moved to 24 Nile Street, off St. James Road.

Baines sold his last ship, the **Seraphina**, in 1882 and after that he worked as a shipbroker in a small way. Mr. Kellock, of the firm C. W. Kellock & Co., often put a little business in his way, He became interested in the ship **Three Brothers**, owned by the City of Liverpool Ship Co., of 3 Cable Street. Several men shared with him in this ship, but he eventually appears to have been done out of his share of the profits. The case was taken to Court, but Baines failed to get any redress. This distressed him so much that he was ill for some time after.

Baines never drank during the day nor during business hours. He did not smoke, but was a great reader. For weeks after this last failure he sat in the evenings at home with his books. He gradually recovered and about 1886 he persuaded Mr. Cohen, of Lewis's of Ranelagh Street, to buy the **Great Eastern**, which had just so come to Liverpool. Mr. Cohen paid £15,000 for her and she was moored in the Sloyne as a show ship. A wine bar was installed and a roaring business was done, people preferring to pay a shilling entrance fee to see the **Great Eastern** and her wine bar, than to go to New Brighton. When the time came round for the licence to be renewed, the hotel people at Eastham complained that she was ruining their business, and the licence of the **Great Eastern** was cancelled. A friend of Baines, a Mr. Worsley, a cotton merchant of Manchester, wanted to run the show on the same lines, but Baines advised him not to. A Greek merchant of Liverpool offered £5,000 more for the ship, but Mr. Worsley was determined to run the show. Naturally it failed, with no wine bar for the great attraction.

At the beginning of 1889 James Baines fell ill of cyrrhosis of the liver, and he was nursed by Mrs. Isbister, who was a nurse by profession, his daughter, Mrs. Armstrong, and his cousin Miss Shaw.

All his daughters were present at his death, which happened on the 8th of March 1889 at 24 Nile Street. His nephew, T. Case Morris of "Beechwood", Grassendale, attended to the funeral arrangements, which were carried out by Lee's of Basnett Street, and he was interred in Smithdown Road Cemetery on the 15th of March in the same grave as his wife and son. His daughter, Edith, was also buried in the same grave in 1905.

Thus passed the most famous shipowner of his day.

A small fair man with red hair, very energetic and talkative, and of a very generous nature, James Baines stood about five feet three or four, and always wore a frock coat, stock collar and bow tie. Sir William Forwood stated in his book that Baines never appeared to be able to buy a hat sufficiently large enough for his big head, and he also remarks that he was always active and pushing. Mrs. Isbister said that he was very generous. Baines himself used to say that there was no one more eager to make money than he was, but when he did it went very quickly. Mr. Isbister, with whom Baines lived in 1860, said that, whenever the conversation of the dock men turned to shipowners, men who had known Baines said the money used to fly like shells among them.

He owned in the later 50's the finest clipper passenger ships in the world, the four sisters, **James Baines, Lightning, Champion of the Seas** and **Donald MacKay** being, perhaps, the best known.

A great deal has been published about Baines dying in poverty and in a common lodging house. He did neither, nor did he ever receive charity from friends. His brother-in-law, Mr. Morris, occasionally paid his doctor's bills for him.

It has also been stated that the reason for Baines' failure was that he never went in for iron ships, but persisted in keeping to the wood clippers of Canada. This again is wrong, as he owned several iron ships and even went in for steamers. Baines himself told the Isbistors that the reason for his failure was the crash of Barned's Bank in 1866. It says a great deal for his business ability that, even after that, he was able to carry on in the Australian passenger trade against great competition.

His ships were splendidly fitted up for the conveyance of passengers. They were taken up by the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners to take out Government emigrants to Australia and New Zealand. His three clippers, **James Baines, Lightning** and **Champion of the Seas** were taken over by the Government to carry troops to India during the Mutiny, as being the fastest ships

to be obtained, and Queen Victoria visited them while at Portsmouth and highly praised them.

As early as 1855 Baines owned steamers and on February 8th of that year he advertised his powerful steamer **Vestal** as about to be despatched to Balaklava for the conveyance of parcels, also taking parcels for the military hospitals at Malta and Scutari. In 1859 he joined with Gibbs Bright & Co., in an amalgamation of their two lines, the Black Ball and Eagle Lines. This amalgamation was dissolved soon after the failure of Baines's Bank in 1866.

In the ordinary passenger ship to Australia of the 40's and 50's the conditions of life in the steerage were wretched. Sleeping berths were huddled together, necessitating climbing over one another to get to an inside bunk. There was no privacy, no washing accommodation except at the common tap, no saloon or seating accommodation except on the hatchways. The food was brought round in tin buckets, and junks of beef and pork were forked out by the steward and placed in the passengers' pannikins, and in the same way potatoes and duff were served out.

But in Baines' ships this system was gradually changed and better conditions were enforced. The lower holds were used for cargo and provisions. The lower 'tween decks were divided into three sections, the after end for single women, amidships married people, with single men right forward. The main deck was fitted in the same manner, with the seamen's forecastle right forward in the bows on that deck. The captain's and officers' cabins were on the spar deck, from which deck two large companionways led down to the main deck for passengers' use.

Daily rations to each passenger were:-

8 oz. of biscuit, 6 oz. of flour, 3 oz. of oatmeal, and three quarts of water. On Saturday they received 6 oz. of beef. Three times a week they had 6 oz. of pork and 6 oz. of preserved meat. Four times a week 2 oz. of raisins, 1½ oz. of suet, ¼ oz. of tea and 2 oz. of treacle. ¼ pint of peas three times a week, 4 oz. of rice twice a week, ½ oz. of coffee three times a week, with 4 oz. of sugar three times a week, and 2 oz. butter twice a week. They also received weekly a gill of mixed pickles, ½ oz. of mustard, 2 oz. of salt and ½ oz. of pepper.

Women received the same as men, children between 1 and 14 years of age half this amount, and infants under one year 1 quart of water daily, but no rations.

For first class passengers the poop was used as a ladies cabin with the dining saloon on deck forward of the poop. Berths in separate staterooms were on the after part of the main deck.

The ceiling of the saloon was in maple with pilasters panelled with silvered glass, coins of various countries being amongst the decorations. Saloon doors were panelled in stained glass, bearing figures of commerce and industry. In the centre of the saloon was a table made of thick plate glass, to give light to the dormitories below.

The above is a description of the saloon of the **Marco Polo** and would fit most of the passenger ships of that day.

All "Black Ballers" had a black painted hull, the whole of the inside being painted white. Their waterways were blue, with their masts white, mastheads and yards being black. Their stunsail booms were bright with black ends.

Baines' ships carried surgeons and some of them even had chaplains. He also carried naval cadets and German brass bands. One of the main items in his advertisement was that they all had chess, backgammon and draught boards for the amusement of passengers.

In 1857 Baines was advertising:-

"Steam under 60 days eclipsed.", and stated that the **Marco Polo** arrived in Liverpool 8 days before the **Royal Charter**. The **Sir W.F. Williams** also beat the **Royal Charter** by 15 days, and the **Joseph Tarratt** beat the steamer **Istamboul** from London by 5 days.

His ships were always making records. The **Marco Polo** made the first in 1852 in her round voyage of 5 months and 21 days. The **Lightning** made the passage from Melbourne to Liverpool in 63 days, and Liverpool to Melbourne and back in 5 months and 8 days.

In 1857 the **Commodore Perry** made the record to Sydney 72^{1/2} days, and in that year Baines advertised his interest in steam to Australia for the first time on June 4th. He was agent for the European and Australia Royal Mail Co's powerful steamers, calling at Plymouth for mails.

On the evening of December 20th 1859 there was landed on the wharf at Geelong from the **Lightning** a shipment of game consigned to Mr. Thames Austin, of Barwen Park. There were 56 partridges, 4 hares, and 26 wild rabbits. On the following day they were forwarded to their destination. Little did Mr. Austin think what a curse those rabbits would become to Australia!

On April 12th, 1864, he was advertising the s.s. **Pennsylvania** from Liverpool to New York, and was acting as 3rd Class passenger agent for the British & North American Royal Mail Company (later Cunard Line), and the National Steam Navigation Company.

A regular shipping notice of Baines was headed:-

"BLACK BALL LINE OF AUSTRALIAN PACKETS"

and proceeded as follows:-

This Line, since its establishment, has conveyed more passengers to Australia than any other in the Kingdom. The fastest passages on record have been made by the following vessels:

Lightning63 days from Melbourne.

Ocean Chief.....72 days to Melbourne

Marco Polo74 days to Melbourne

Indian QueenRound voyage 6 months and 10 days.

All owned by the Proprietors of the above Line and regularly established sailing between Liverpool and Melbourne.

Forwarding passengers to Adelaide, Geelong, Sydney and Launceston at ship's expense.

Carried a full band of music, as well as chess, backgammon and draught boards for the amusement of passengers.

All passengers and luggage landed on the wharf.

An average cargo home from Melbourne consisted of bales of wool, pig iron, bones and horns, copper ore, casks of tallow and the inevitable boxes of specie. The passenger rates were to Sydney, Saloon £60 and £65; 2nd Cabin £55; 3rd Cabin £25, and Steerage £18.

The first public mention of the "Black Ball Line" was by advertisement of June 3rd, 1852. Where Baines got his flag has never been discovered. It caused a lot of trouble for a time with the Black Ball Line of Packets from New York, who even asked Baines to change his flag.

The Liverpool papers all gave long obituary notices after his death. One stated that after the failure of Baines's Bank Mr. Baines always worked hard keeping his head up, and though he did not retrieve his lost position, yet none could say that he ever did a shabby trick.

The "Courier" said it was a matter of regret that the prosperity that Mr. James Baines enjoyed in earlier life did not pursue him in later years. His genius and business capacity remained with him to the close, and his advice and experience were sought for and utilised by more prosperous members of the mercantile community, but with little personal advantage to himself. He never took any part in political or other public matters. It went on to say that he was keenly intelligent and urbane in manner, generous to the point of lavishness when he had the means, and that he was popular with all who possessed his personal acquaintance.

TRANSACTIONS OF
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No. 3

Liverpool Pilots and Pilot Boats from Early Times.

A Paper read to the Liverpool Nautical Research Society

on 5th January, 1939

by
John S. Rees
(of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board)

Gentlemen,

I purpose giving a talk on Liverpool Pilots and Pilot boats from early times and I am only able to do this owing to the kindness of Sir Lionel Warner, General Manager of the Dock Board, who allowed me to search the records in the possession of the Board. I am also indebted to my brother who picked up much information on this subject.

The story of the Mersey Pilotage Service has never been written or told but so far as shipping has been responsible for the advancement of the port, the Mersey Pilots may justly claim to have contributed a fair share.

It is not unreasonable to assume that the earliest pilotage was carried out by local fishermen, who combined their fishing activities with that of conducting vessels, when their services were required, into and out of the Port. The experience they gained, relative to tides, currents, shoals and deeps, as they pursued their calling as fishermen, would fit them for their part-time occupation as pilots.

That they were interested in the fishing industry in the year 1755 is borne out by the reference made to them in connection with a scheme, which was proposed in that year, whereby the oyster beds situated in the Kyle Lake were to be developed with a view to supplying the surrounding districts with oysters at a reasonable price. The scheme was opposed by the Mayor of Liverpool, merchant traders, masters of ships of the Port of Liverpool and the Pilots, on the grounds that it was the only anchorage in the neighbourhood fit for His Majesty's Navy and if for that reason only, it was undesirable to extend the oyster beds.

It was further pointed out that the pilot boats, when not engaged attending to vessels, dredged for oysters in the Lake; efforts in that direction contributing very largely to the Pilots livelihood and if they were deprived of the means of supplementing their earnings in that way, pilotage rates would have to be increased, but happily the scheme did not materialise.

It requires but little imagination to understand how anxiously the master of a vessel, who was a stranger to the Port would seek advice and assistance from someone with local knowledge as he approached the harbour, which was hemmed in by dangerous sandbanks and it would be necessary to pick up his guide before the danger was reached, some ten to fifteen miles outside the Port.

In rough weather when assistance would be most needed, the chances of obtaining it would be doubtful, as the fishing-pilot boats were only small and for their own safety would have to seek shelter.

Liverpool was by no means the first Port to have a system of regularised pilotage. It is believed that the Trinity House of Hull was established in 1369, and

incorporated in the reign of Henry VIII (1541) and a number of other ports had organised Pilotage before a system was adopted on the Mersey.

It appears that during the year 1764, 18 vessels were stranded at the entrance to the Mersey and more than 75 persons perished, including a number of Pilots.

The casualties were due either to a ship being without a Pilot, or if she had one on board, to his ignorance, and the loss sustained by the Port in consequence of the strandings amounted to over £18,000, a very considerable sum in those days. Although shipping was of a not inconsiderable volume, the pilots were unlicensed and not responsible to any authority. Competition amongst them was characterised by its keenness, the most enterprising and venturesome securing the greater part of the work. On occasions their boats sailed west of the Skerries Light to intercept vessels and there board them, each boat acting independently of the others for its own gain.

In the same year (1764), seventy four vessels left the Mersey for Africa, the slave trade then being in full swing, and no less than one hundred and forty one vessels sailed for America. Liverpool had become the second port in the United Kingdom.

The serious loss of life and property just referred to may have been the culminating factors which led to the passing of the first Liverpool Pilotage Act in the year of the reign of George III, 1766, for the better regulation of Pilots for the conducting of vessels into and out of the Port of Liverpool.

The preamble to the Act stated that "*the Entrance into the Port of Liverpool is very dangerous without a skilful pilot, and many ships and lives have of late years been lost owing to the negligence and ignorance of persons taking upon them to conduct ships and vessels into and out of the said Port,*" it further stated "*a proper Regulation of the Pilots at the said Port and the ascertaining of their rates or prices would tend greatly to promote and encourage trade and navigation and be a publick utility.*"

Under the provisions of the Act, the Mayor, Aldermen, Bailiffs and Common Council Men of the Borough and Corporation of Liverpool for the time being, together with twenty-nine Merchants, eighteen Mariners and late Commanders of vessels were appointed Commissioners for carrying the Act into execution.

The Commissioners were empowered to appoint thirteen of their number, residing within the Borough of Liverpool to be a Committee, and also to choose and appoint a Clerk of the Committee.

Every person appointed to the Committee was required to acknowledge his acceptance of the trust and to take a formal oath that he would impartially examine and enquire into the capacity and skill of every person who should offer himself to be admitted as a pilot within the Port of Liverpool before him, and

without fear or favour perform all the duties devolving upon him by his appointment.

With regard to the taking of oaths, it was a common practice in olden times for functions of a public or official character to be performed under oath, but whether as time went on the custom lost its significance and an oath was taken more or less as a mere matter of form, is uncertain.

In view of the primary object of the Act, it was but natural that the first duty imposed upon the members of the Committee was to ensure for themselves that only competent persons were authorised to act as pilots.

The Committee were to grant licences and it was enacted that any person acting as a pilot not duly licensed from and after the 25th day of July, 1766, would be fined the sum of Ten Pounds and particular attention of pilots, ferrymen and seamen was drawn by public notice to this enactment.

The Act laid down the rates of pilotage for different services rendered, the basis of the charge being the vessel's draught of water.

To obtain the maximum rate: a Pilot had to render his services from the Great Orme's Head, the pilot boat on duty cruising to the westward of the Head, in the vicinity of Beaumaris Bay, an old practice of cruising to the westward of Point Lynas, or even as far as Point Lynas being at this time discountenanced by the Committee.

Prior to this Act it is unlikely that there was any uniformity of rates, the sum that a master of a vessel would be asked to pay no doubt depending upon the exigencies of the moment and the competition between the pilots themselves, the master of the vessel being of course at liberty to please himself as to whether or not he accepted the services of a pilot.

Under the Act, a master or other person having command of a vessel in the coasting trade was permitted to pilot his own vessel but no other inward-bound vessel was exempt if a pilot offered his services.

To exclude coasting vessels from the obligation to employ a pilot was expedient. They were very numerous and the number of pilots who had been licensed would be inadequate to deal with all vessels using the Port. Alien vessels and vessels foreign trading had first to be provided for; masters of coasting vessels no doubt being well qualified to perform their own pilotage by reason of their frequent visits to the port.

The Act provided for a greater pilotage rate to be levied in the winter than in the summer, and alien vessels a higher rate than British vessels, inasmuch as the draught of water of foreign vessels was usually little in proportion to their tonnage. Possibly there were other reasons as well.

Offences by pilots, punishable by pecuniary penalties levied by this Act were to be heard by a Justice of the Peace and if the accused was convicted of the

offence and the pecuniary penalty imposed was not forthcoming, he was committed to the house of correction or common goal of the Town of Liverpool, there to be kept to hard labour until the pecuniary penalty was paid, but for not longer than three months.

If the fine was paid the informer received one half of the same, and the Pilot Committee the other half, to be applied to the relief of poor pilots.

Half the cost of obtaining this first Liverpool Pilotage Act was defrayed by the Corporation and the other half was charged to the Trade Duty.

The task the first Pilot Committee had before them was of a most onerous nature and the attendant responsibilities could not be over estimated.

As has already been stated, the primary duty which confronted them was to license competent and only competent persons to pilot vessels using the Port of Liverpool and also to establish a system of law and order where previously a haphazard state of affairs had existed and above all, to use every endeavour to prevent a repetition of the disasters of the year 1764.

It is not recorded how many of the former unlicensed pilots failed to satisfy the Committee in 1766, that they were competent to carry out their duties efficiently, but over fifty licenses were granted; some to journeymen and others to apprentices.

The number of instances of pilots being reprimanded or deprived of their licenses provides ample evidence of the difficulties which the committee had to face.

Each pilot boat had its own company of pilots attached to it and every boat's company participated in the earnings of their particular boat to the exclusion of other pilots.

Under the regularised system the boats were to take the various stations in proper turn and to board only vessels requiring pilots within the limits of the station on which a boat was for the time being engaged, but nevertheless the arrangement was not always observed nor did the masters refrain from sailing their boats west of the Skerries Lighthouse to board ships, with the result that the Committee had to take disciplinary action and impose heavy penalties on the offenders in order to restrain them.

In the year 1766 there were nine pilot boats; small craft of about 30 tons burthen and some 36 feet in length with a beam more than a third of the length. They were painted a light yellow with a white boot top. These boats had not been constructed to any particular design or with any special regard to suitability, the masters, who were the owners building to suit themselves, some boats being more efficient than others.

The attention of the Committee was drawn to the varying type of craft employed and it was suggested that models or drawings of proposed new boats should be approved by the Committee before they were built.

In the year 1767, the number of boats was increased to ten.

It was not until the year 1770 that the actual names of any of the pilot boats are disclosed, when No. 4 proved to be the **Two Brothers** and No. 10 the **Prudence**.

The year 1770 was a most disastrous one for this newly established Service, three pilot boats being wrecked resulting in the loss of twenty-eight persons, the greater number being pilots.

No. 4 pilot boat the **Two Brothers**, was lost at eight o'clock at night on the 7th November on Hoyle Bank near the Swash Buoy, eleven pilots, ten passengers - two of whom were women - and a boy being drowned. Two pilots and a male passenger were the only survivors, being saved in the punt. The passengers were returning from outward bound vessels, it being quite customary for the pilot boats to bring back to Liverpool friends of the passengers or crews of ships outward bound.

On the same day, No. 1 pilot boat (name unknown), with five pilots on board, was reported "missing", and was not heard of again and on the 7th of December of that unfortunate year the **Prudence**, No. 10 boat, the most recently acquired was wrecked off Conway with the loss of the master. The master was one of the three survivors from the **Two Brothers** when she was lost the previous month.

Amongst the names which have been found of the early pilot boats are the **Polly, Betty, Alice, Nelly, Kitty, Happy Return, William, Isaac** and **Friends Goodwill**.

The **Happy Return**, No. 4, 33 tons burthen was built in 1771 to replace the **Two Brothers**. The others are all mentioned during the ten years 1771 - 81. It is surmised that the **Nelly** was built or acquired to replace the boat of the corresponding number (No. 1) which was lost at the end of the year 1770.

The **Polly, Alice, William** and **Friends Goodwill** may possibly have been in the Service in the year 1766. In 1789 another **Friends Goodwill** was built.

The **Polly** (No. 7), drifted on the rocks on the East Mouse about November 1787 and was wrecked and replaced by the **Liver** the following year.

The **Kitty** (No. 2) appears in 1786 and the **Nancy** (No. 1) in 1789. These particular boats were not in the Pilotage Service before the years 1781 and 1786 respectively, but the **Nancy** was built in 1768 and was therefore by no means a new boat when she became a pilot boat.

The **Betty** (No. 3), built in 1773 was sunk on the 3rd December, 1773, when boarding a brig from Bristol, the crew being saved by the brig. She appears to have been raised and she was lost on 31st December, 1778 in Hoyle Lake, when

six persons were drowned. The accident was caused by a vessel named the **Neptune** driving from her anchorage and fouling the pilot boat, damaging her to such an extent that she sank. There is no evidence of another No. 3 boat until the early part of 1788, when another **Betty** appears. In 1789, the second **Happy Return**, 46 tons, was built.

In addition to those already mentioned, there were the **Prince of Wales** (No. 8), built in 1788, the **Earl of Liverpool** (No.3), in 1798, and the **Good Intent** (No. 1), in 1800.

At the end of 1821 another **Happy Return** was building, and on the 5th December 1822 she was driven ashore on Salisbury Bank, River Dee, the second master and two boys being drowned. One of the boys clung to the rigging for some hours before he perished. The pilot boat appears to have been salvaged, and was in the Service until 1849.

It is worthy or note that from 1771 until 1849 the Pilotage Service possessed a **Happy Return**, the last one being 53 tons burthen. The next No 4 was called the **Auspicious**, of 49 tons burthen, and she was new in the Service in 1849.

In May 1799, an additional boat No 9 named the **Liver**, 42 tons, built in 1796, entered the Service and in the following year, 1800, the pilot boat fleet consisted of the undermentioned sloops:-

- No. 1. Good Intent
- No. 2. Kitty
- No. 3. Earl of Liverpool
- No. 4. Happy Return
- No. 5. Isaac
- No. 7. Friends Goodwill
- No. 8. Prince of Wales
- No. 9. Liver

It will be obvious that these small pilot boats had in rough weather to find shelter as soon as possible and it was customary for those cruising in the vicinity of the Orme's Head, to do so in Beaumaris Bay but the lack of a suitable rendezvous or depot where they could refit and store in this locality when necessary, gave rise to much concern.

With a view to a remedy, in the year 1766 the Pilot Committee approached Sir Hugh Williams of Baron Hill, Beaumaris, the owner of Priestholm Island (Puffin Island), with the hope that this Island might be leased to them for the use of the Liverpool Pilot boats but difficulties at once presented themselves, for at the time the Island could not be leased.

During the negotiations the owner pointed out that the rights regarding the rabbits and puffins were reserved for separate tenants and in the event of the pilots occupying the Island the Pilotage Committee would be required to make themselves responsible for any damage which might be done to the tenants' interests.

As the scheme submitted to Sir Hugh provided for extensive improvements at the Committee's expense, the absence of a lease negated such expenditure so the matter seems to have been postponed.

Twenty years before there was any authorised pilotage, it was the custom for pilot boats to lie in Amlwch Harbour, waiting to board vessels when they approached, and the practice was to some extent but for another reason indulged in after a regularised system was inaugurated. The pilot boat waiting in the vicinity of Point Lynas preparatory to taking the boarding station, when the boat on turn immediately in front of her had boarded all her pilots was at times beached there when wind, tide and other circumstances permitted, which action afforded the crew a rest from what would otherwise have been constant vigilance and activity manoeuvring the boat in the open sea. But what was a relief to the pilots proved to be an annoyance to a certain cleric residing in Amlwch, who regarded the presence of the pilot boats in the harbour as a trespass and who wrote informing the Pilot Committee that the pilot boats were being moored above high water mark. He requested that he should be paid the sum of half a guinea per annum as compensation, to which the Committee in a facetious frame of mind replied that although they were conversant in maritime affairs, they were at a loss to understand how boats of a great draught of water could be run up above high water mark. With regard to his claim for recompense, it would be necessary for him to produce evidence that he was entitled to collect tonnage rates from vessels using Amlwch Creek. They very much doubted he would be able to do so, adding that had the harbour been one from which the pilot boats could get to sea with northerly winds steps would have been taken when the Liverpool Pilotage Act of 1766, was under consideration, to empower the Pilot Committee to develop the harbour so that the pilot boats could remain there afloat at low water.

In the year 1772, further representations were made by a deputation which waited upon Sir Hugh Williams, concerning Priestholm Islands.

The Committee intimated that with a lease for a number of years they were prepared to erect buildings for the use of the pilots or alternatively, to pay six per cent per annum upon any sum that Sir Hugh would expend on the required buildings if he were so disposed. The Committee would undertake to build a pier for the use of the pilot boats, and to maintain a light on the Island every night, which they claimed would be useful to the trade of Beaumaris and to all ships that passed that way. (As far back as 1748, a suggestion had been made that the

tower on Priestholm Island, the ruins of St. Seriol Chapel, should be converted into a lighthouse.)

In support of the request they went on to say "*When Sir, you consider that this application divested of any private selfish motive is for public good, and that we in our present capacity are supplicants for a body of men, truly valueable, (though faulty), that many of them have large families, entirely dependent upon their industry and preservation, by which in other fatal year as that of 1770, would make truly deplorable, which in some degree (with due respect to the Divine Being) is in your power to prevent,*" but the difficulties seem to have been insuperable and the negotiations failed.

Some years later the possibilities of finding a suitable rendezvous in some other locality were explored, for on the 14th April, 1779 four gentlemen, two of whom were members of the Pilot Committee started on horseback from Liverpool with this object before them.

Briefly, they inspected the coast of Anglesea from Moelfra Bay to Bull Bay, and decided that the south side of the first bay on the east side of Point Lynas, about 400 yards from the Point was the best suited for the purpose in view and there and then it was designated "Pilots Harbour" and ale was procured and they drank to its success, Subsequently a notice to mariners was issued, stating that "Pilots will be stationed at the Point of Lynas, the N.E. point of the Island of Anglesea, and the N.W. point of Beaumaris Bay."

A house painted white is built on the Point for the pilots, with a flagstaff, and two small reflecting lamp lights, lighted in the upper windows by night, one facing N.W. and the other East; also two mooring buoys in the Bay for the pilots' sailing boats to ride.

Turning back to the year 1767, the Pilot Committee at this time held their Board Meetings once a month in Litherland Alley (Off South Castle Street).

In 1775, the Pilot Office was situated in anything but salubrious environments, being under the same roof as the Tower Gaol (Prison Weint) in Water Street and it is not unlikely that it was in the same premises in 1766.

In view of the fact that the Gaol and the Pilot Office shared the same building, there can be no question that all the pilots were familiar with the external appearance of the "house of correction", and records show that some of them were in possession of what may be described as "inside information" having been detained therein. The first official chart of the Mersey came into existence in the year 1693, but it was not until the year 1738 that the first comprehensive chart of the River Mersey and Liverpool Bay was printed. Samuel Fearon a Liverpool mariner and shipwright, and John Eyes, a surveyor produced the chart, assisted by commanders of vessels and three of the best pilots.

Fearon and Eyes, impressed by the serious losses of ships which had occurred, owing to the charts and sailing directions to the Mersey being so false and defective made an actual survey of the river and channels in 1736-37.

Samuel Fearon pays a high tribute to the three pilots who were employed in the work, Edward Sedden, Edmund Sumner and Samuel Alcock, in the following terms:-

"They have been pilots for this Port for many years: Whose fortune ever it be to take any of these three, will find them sober, skilful and industrious, and that no imposition or exorbitant demands are required by them from strangers and others."

That these three pilots of two centuries ago were associated with this important survey and bore characters worthy of special praise has been the means of recording the names of three of the pilots of that early period which otherwise would have remained unknown.

In the year 1767, John Eyes again surveyed Liverpool Bay.

At this time there were four lighthouses, the upper and lower Leasowe, (sometimes referred to as the Mockbeggar or Morton Lights) and the upper and lower Hoylake, all designated "Lamplights" in the chart.

All these lighthouses were established in the year 1763 and a Lightman appointed to each.

The upper Leasowe Lighthouse, 300 yards above high water mark was very superior to the others. It was a round stone tower, 118 ft. high, the light being visible at a distance of 14 miles, and was the first Lighthouse to have reflectors fitted. The idea of fixing reflectors was conceived by Captain William Hutchinson, who was one of the first Liverpool Pilotage Commissioners and continued in that capacity for about 33 years. He died in February, 1801.

The Lower Leasowe Lighthouse was a wooden structure and in 1770 was undermined by the sea and became unservicable.

The Hoylake Light was 55ft. above high water and was visible 13 miles, and the Lower Light, 1200 ft seaward of it, was, like the lower Leasowe Light, also constructed of wood.

In 1771, the Bidston Lighthouse on Bidston Hill was erected. It was a stone tower, 55ft. high, 300 ft. above sea level and the light was visible 23 miles.

From the instances which have been given of disasters to the Pilot Boats, attended by serious loss of life, we gather that the calling of a Pilot in those early days was of a most hazardous character, but in spite of this fact there were some of those hardy "salts" who sought adventure further afield, for on the 2nd November 1779 one of them was deprived of his licence for deserting the Service and joining the privateer **Enterprise**, and on the 12th December 1780 three other

Pilots were similarly dealt with for becoming members of the crew of the privateer **Hypocrite**.

In 1797, when the first Liverpool Pilotage Act had been in operation for thirty-one years, it was repealed and in the light of experience and to keep pace with the growing demands of progress, the second Liverpool Pilotage Act was passed.

Some of the provisions of the former Act had become obsolete and others were incompetent.

The system whereby the pilotage earnings of each boat were reserved exclusively for the benefit of the particular pilots attached to the boat tended to the boarding of unlicensed persons, when all her licensed pilots had been boarded, with the object of swelling the particular boat's earnings, which was of course reflected in a loss to another boat. The system was also conducive to great indifference, even neglect, on the part of the masters of the boats to board coasting or small vessels, these vessels being less attractive from an earnings point of view than the larger or foreign trading vessels, and these offences had become so prevalent that heavy fines had to be imposed as a deterrent.

It was customary for any fine imposed on the master of a pilot boat or other person to be paid by the crew proportionately. Such a practice resulted in the innocent being punished and the guilty escaping the full penalty, which was the intention of the Committee to inflict. However in December, 1828 the Committee put a stop to this anomaly.

The 1797 Act made it lawful, after a majority of the licensed pilots agreed to have a joint stock of all their earnings for the benefit of the whole and in view of the probable good which might arise from it, particularly to vessels in the coasting trade. The system was established but after it had been in operation for less than five months, owing to complaints from a number of merchants and masters of ships that the public service was less well performed than under the former system the joint stock arrangement was discontinued, and the old system reverted to. Between the years 1766 and 1800 more than 50 pilots or apprentices were drowned or killed whilst carrying out their duties.

In February, 1821 No. 9 Pilot Boat (**Liver**) had the misfortune to collide with and carry away the Rock Perch. The pilot boat had been obliged to slip her cable in Hoylake owing to a heavy gale of wind and was running round the Rock for shelter in the Mersey when the accident happened. The night was extremely dark and although all on board were anxiously looking out for the Perch they failed to observe it. The cost of replacing it was considerable and the master of the pilot boat was held liable for this expense. However the Dock Trustees (who were responsible for the maintenance of the Perch) did not press for payment.

The Perch had on numerous occasions been knocked down by vessels on dark nights or in misty weather, but it would seem that it was only after it had

been overrun by those who were best able to know its exact position that the Pilot Committee were moved to take action, for after the incident just referred to they at once made an appeal to the Dock Trustees to erect a lighthouse on a small scale and do away with the Perch. It was not until 1827 that the actual construction of this lighthouse was commenced. The light was first illuminated on 1st March, 1830.

Liverpool Pilotage Act, 1824.

On 24th May 1824 the Liverpool Pilotage Act of 1797 was repealed, and the third and last local Pilotage Act came into operation.

The constitution of the Commissioners and Pilot Committee remained the same as it was in the first Act of 1766.

In 1830, the Committee considered that the employment of a steam pilot boat would be advantageous to the public and a benefit to the pilots generally, and recommended that she should be held as a Joint Stock Company by all the pilots.

The proposal was to hire a steam boat in the first instance as an experiment.

The matter was still under consideration in 1831, but the majority of the pilots were opposed to the idea and the scheme was not proceeded with.

On Friday, 29th November, 1833, during a most destructive storm, No. 1 pilot boat, the **Good Intent**, 52 tons burthen, was wrecked off Formby.

During the height of the gale on the previous evening the pilot boat took a heavy lurch and shipped a sea which washed her punt off the deck and thrust it into the belly of the sail tearing a hole in the canvas, the sail thus damaged was soon blown to rags by the wind, making the vessel unmanageable. Several of the crew lashed themselves to the rigging, whilst others endeavoured to keep a footing on the deck. Being entirely at the mercy of the wind and waves she was driven on the Formby beach, when out of the crew of 22 only 13 were saved, the master being one of those who perished.

After the loss of the **Good Intent**, the proposal to build a steam pilot boat was renewed and it was recommended that 10% of the gross receipts from pilotage should be set aside for the building or purchase of such a boat, and a percentage annually contributed for her maintenance. The pilots were invited to apply for shares but only a minority responded. The Committee then signified their willingness to grant a licence to those pilots who were in favour of the scheme, the steam pilot boat to be for their exclusive benefit. The majority of the pilots then supported the proposal, but the master pilots who owned the pilot boats opposed the idea.

In the meantime, the owners of the wrecked pilot boat proceeded to build a new sailing boat, and in the early part of 1835 the idea of a steam pilot boat was abandoned.

In the year 1832 great indignation was aroused, when a clause was introduced into an Act to amend the laws relating to Customs then before Parliament; which clause was designed to make it obligatory for pilot boats and fishing boats employed on the coasts of Great Britain to be painted black.

The Committee pointed out that for over fifty years the Liverpool pilot boats had been distinguished from other vessels by being painted light yellow with white bottoms, and great advantage had been derived from this arrangement, for no vessel could mistake them nor could any vessel imitate them for a sinister purpose without detection, and viewed with alarm the destruction of the long established distinguishing characteristics of the pilot boats. They foresaw mistakes arising with serious consequences, and the likelihood of the new measure acting as a cloak to smugglers who would no doubt adopt the paint proposed to be made general.

The Government however looked at the matter from a different angle and had another view. The new measure was the sequel to reports of smuggling and black was considered to be the most easily discernible at sea and pilot boats not being excluded from those ships which might be guilty of carrying contraband goods, were to come within the scope of the Act.

However, it is pleasing to record that having regard to the fact that there were no imputations against the Liverpool Pilots, the Mersey pilot boats were allowed to retain their unusual appearance, which practice continued for another thirty years without alteration.

A singular coincidence occurred in 1836 when the pilot of the brig **Euphemia**, which sailed from Liverpool, was unable to be taken on board the pilot boat and he was carried away. After being at sea for some time the brig fell in with H.M.S. **Thunderer** in the Atlantic, who took the pilot on board on the 28th December.

Shortly afterwards, the **Thunderer** fell in with the barque **Greenbow**, and she had her pilot still on board. He too was transferred to the **Thunderer**.

His Majesty's ship was bound to Plymouth where the pilots were landed on 7th January, 1837.

On the 6th January, 1839 a dreadful hurricane visited Liverpool and took toll of both large and small vessels. No. 8 Pilot Boat, the **Irlam**, lost her master who was steering the boat, when he was washed overboard, the remainder of the crew being below for safety. The pilot boat lost her main boom, bowsprit and one side of her bulwarks.

During the same storm, the tug **Victoria** succeeded in saving the lives of the passengers and crews from several vessels wrecked off the Port, a number of pilots being rewarded for meritorious conduct assisting on board the tug.

From 1766 to 1854 the powers of the Liverpool Pilotage Commissioners were prescribed by successive Acts of Parliament but in the latter year the Merchant

Shipping Act superseded the last local Act of 1824, and laid down the general principles governing all pilotage in the United Kingdom.

This Act empowered each local authority to frame bye-laws, subject to confirmation by Parliament to deal with the particular needs of the district.

Under the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act the master or mate of any ship could apply to any Pilotage Authority to be examined to pilot the ship of which he was master or mate of any one or more ships belonging to the same owner.

The Pilot Committee looked upon this part of the Act with disfavour and resentment and were very averse to the granting of licences to persons who had not in accordance with long-standing practice served in a pilot boat. The Committee were very stubborn and none of these certificates were issued by the Liverpool Pilotage Authority until after 1858.

Coming events cast their shadows before, and the mental disturbance caused to the Pilot Committee by the Merchant Shipping Act had hardly subsided when the shadow of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Act 1857 was plainly discernible.

This Act was designed, as well as for other purposes, to transfer the powers of the Liverpool Pilotage Commissioners to the Dock Board. The Pilot Committee made arrangements for a vigorous protest to Parliament against that part of the Bill which concerned pilotage, which they regarded as a most unjust attempt to deprive them of a responsibility which time had proved they were fully capable of undertaking.

They contended that for over 90 years the constitution of the Committee had not materially altered. Since 1766, under their guidance and administration the Service had developed from a very humble commencement to one they considered second to none. However, on second thoughts and with great reluctance, they refrained from carrying out their intentions.

On the 1st January, 1858 the powers previously vested in the Pilotage Commissioners were vested in the Mersey Docks & Harbour Board, but as heretofore the pilot boats belonged to the pilot-boat owners, no change having been made in this respect.

On the 9th January, 1866, during a very heavy gale from W.N.W., Nos. 3 and 8 pilot boats were on the Inner Stations. A disabled vessel hove in sight, with all her yards on her foremast carried away, and she was running before the wind under her main topsails.

Seeing the crippled state of the vessel and that it was impossible to put a pilot on board, No. 3 boat signalled to her to follow and then led the way over the Bar, bringing the ship into Port in safety. After No. 3 boat, **The Duke** had left the station as just described, a crowd of vessels appeared running for the Port, all displaying the signal for a pilot.

No. 8 boat the **Pride of Liverpool** immediately hoisted the signal for them to heave to, and spoke them all to direct them as to the order in which they were to proceed when there was sufficient water for them. No. 8 hoisted the signal "Follow me" and ran before them over the Bar, leading them up the Crosby Channel, into Port in safety. The number thus led in by No. 8 boat was 12. Their value was over half a million pounds, the pilotage paid to the boat being only £68. One of the vessels had lost her foretopmast, another had her topsails blown away. The latter fell in with a steam tug just before they saw the pilot boat. The tug asked £500 to tow her into Port, which was afterwards reduced to £100, but the captain of the ship, finding he could follow the pilot boat declined the tug's services.

Some of the vessels concerned were:-

s.s.	Athenian	Barque	Harriot
Bk.	Richard Cobden (Foretopmast gone)	Ship	Transit
Ship	Maud	Ship	West Riding
Bktne.	Persia	Ship	Zoroaster
Ship	Lord Dufferin (Topsails blown away)		

This incident was the subject of a picture painted by Samuel Walters. It was presented by the Liverpool Pilots Association to Samuel R. Graves, M.P., and in January 1931 by his Executors to the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.

This picture must not be confused with the one painted by Witham depicting No. 2 Pilot Boat, the **Leader**, leading vessels over the bar on the 8th February, 1881.

In 1881, the Dock Board by an Act of Parliament obtained powers to purchase the entire fleet of the Liverpool Pilot Boats. They were still chiefly owned by the master-pilots and superannuated master-pilots. For more than half a century trouble had existed between the owners and the other pilots who were not so fortunate. The purchase of the boats was a concession reluctantly made by the Dock Board after repeated efforts to get the owners and the non-owners to settle their disputes amicably.

During the days of the cutters, particularly the early days, stormy weather was their greatest enemy and accounted for a number of them, but as ship construction developed and pilot boats, in common with other craft, became more seaworthy, the danger of collision was most to be feared, as the following accidents illustrate:-

On the 10th March, 1881, No. 3 Pilot Boat, **The Duke**, was sunk in the Mersey after colliding with the London & North Western Railway Co's. **Mud Hopper A**. She was raised and reconditioned and carried on as a pilot boat until 1885, when she was withdrawn from the Service and the **Mersey** No. 11 boat was renumbered "3" and she was sunk by the s.s. **Landana**, belonging to the African

Steam Co., on the 2nd December, 1885, 2 miles S.W. by S. from the Bar Ship, one Pilot being drowned. The old **Duke** was then commissioned again and remained in the service until 1894

On the 25th February, 1882, the **Guide** No.9 Pilot Boat, which was built at Ramsey in 1862, was sunk after being in collision with the s.s. **Mariner**, a Harrison liner, about 2 miles, W.N.W., from the Bar Lightship, with the loss of one Pilot.

On the 13th May, 1888, at 2.30 a.m. No. 5 Pilot Boat, the **Victoria & Albert** was run down by the barque **Governor** and sunk about 3½ miles W.N.W. from the Bar Lightship, one Pilot losing his life.

On the 26th February, 1890, at 2.30 a.m. No.8 Pilot Boat, the **Pride of Liverpool** when in the act of supplying the s.s. **Rydal Water** with a Pilot, was run into by her and sunk 6 miles east of Point Lynas, fortunately without any loss of life.

The replacement of this boat had to be considered and once again the advisability of introducing a steam Pilot Boat was examined.

It was considered by some of the Pilots that the advantages derived by vessels driven by steam when proceeding on a voyage would be negated in the case of a steam Pilot Boat when she had to remain in a limited area, particularly during a north-west gale in Liverpool Bay. They apprehended that the discomforts and difficulties experienced in the sailing boats under such conditions would with a steam Pilot Boat be multiplied.

However, the idea of a steam Pilot Boat was turned down as it was in 1830 and 1835, and as a temporary measure the schooner-yacht **Glorianna**, built at West Cowes in 1852 was purchased.

In 1891, of the 9 boats in the Service, 5 of them were over 50 years old, and the Board decided to build another sailing boat; she was named the **George Holt**, a composite vessel built at Dartmouth in 1892, 78 tons, 109 ft. in length overall, 21½ ft. beam, and she proved herself to be a very superior vessel.

On the 10th November 1891, when in the Crosby Channel No I. Pilot Boat, the **Queen**, sank after being in collision with the s.s. **Sailor Prince**, no lives being lost. She was raised on the 14th November, and resumed her duties until 1897, when with other sailing Pilot Boats she was withdrawn from the Service.

On the 17th March, 1895, No 4. Pilot Boat, the **Auspicious**, when lying to an anchor in a fog at the Bar, was sunk by the s.s. **Dynamic** without any loss of life.

In the same year on the 7th December, No.5 Pilot Boat, the **Criterion** collided with the s.s **Cambroman** off Point Lynas, and the Pilots and the crew fearing that she would founder, abandoned her in one of her punts. This punt with 16 persons in her was adrift for seven hours before she was picked up. The Pilot Boat did not sink and was picked up by the tug **Challenger** and towed to Liverpool.

The following year, on the 26th January, No. 6 Pilot Boat the **S.R.Graves** was sunk by the s.s. **Moorhen** in the vicinity of the N.W.Lightship, without loss of life.

In the early months of 1896, it was decided to build two steam Pilot Boats, and to work a combined steam and sail boat service.

Two steam Pilot Boats were constructed at Port Glasgow, the **Francis Henderson** and the **Leonard Spear** each was of 275 tons, gross, 24ft beam and 128ft in length.

On the 26th October, 1896, the first Liverpool Steam Pilot Boat sailed for the Point Lynas Station, and the first vessel that she boarded was the sailing ship **Holt Hill**, 2259 tons, from San Francisco.

The Service was then maintained with two steam and three sailing Pilot Boats. In 1898, two more steam Pilot Boats were built, and with the exception of the **George Holt**, No. 10, which was retained for making the surveys of adjacent Ports, all the sailing Pilot Boats were withdrawn.

In 1904, the **George Holt**, the last of 61 sailing pilot boats was sold. She was purchased by the Falkland Island Co., and renamed **Lafonia**, trading round those islands until she became a general goods lighter, and in 1933 she was a hulk in Stanley Harbour, Falkland Islands.

The passing of this schooner out of the Pilotage Service was another milestone in the history of the Service. For one hundred and thirty years the Pilotage Service had been maintained with sailing boats, which had been of two types.

The earliest boats were 30 to 40 tons burthen, sloop rigged, some with square sterns, they were without bulwarks, just open decked with a cockpit aft, from where they were navigated, and for protection they had quarter cloths, which were painted red with a white border. The entrance to the living accomodation was from the cockpit and was under the foredeck. About 1835, they commenced to build these sloops with bulwarks.

The next type were schooners, introduced in the year 1852; they were over 50 tons burthen, considerably longer with much superior accomodation and fifty years ago these trim schooners with the number of the boat painted conspicuously on their white sails were objects of general interest as they sailed into and out of the Mersey.

Great as were the traditions of the Liverpool Pilotage Service before the European War, this war enhanced them. When the "Call to Arms" was sounded in 1914, the Liverpool Pilots and Apprentices alike were soon represented in the Air, Land and Sea Forces, and the decorations which were won by some of those men testify to the excellent manner in which they acquitted themselves.

In 1913, the s.s. **Alfred H. Read**, a much improved type of steam Pilot Boat was built, followed at intervals by three other steam Pilot Boats of similar design,

During the Great War, heavy responsibilities rested upon the shoulders of the pilots of this port. The work they were called upon to perform was in a danger zone but at all times they were ready and willing to render their services,

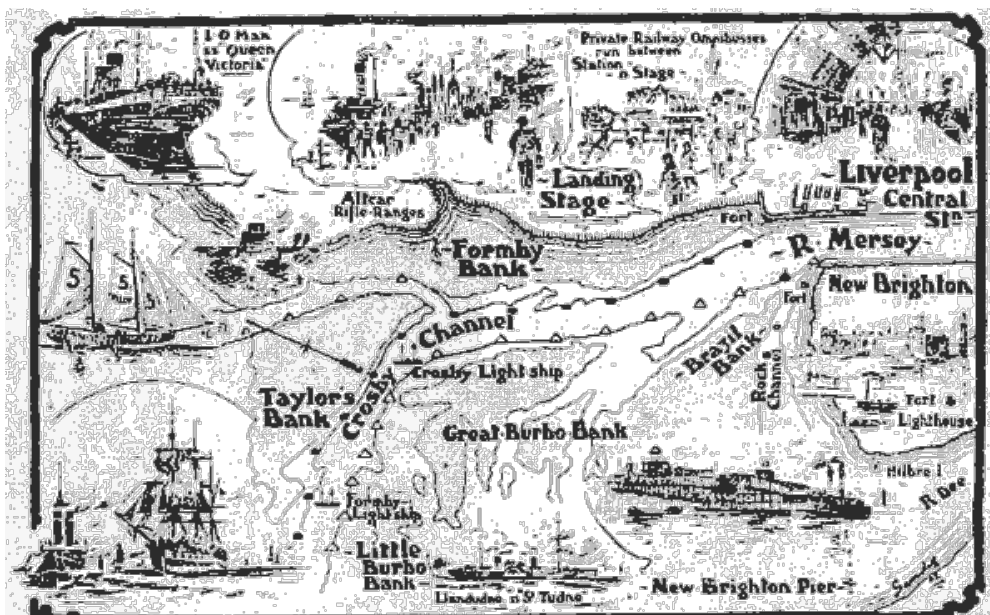
In the early hours of the morning of the 28th December, 1917 the Service suffered one of the greatest disasters that has ever befallen it, when No.1 Pilot Boat, the **Alfred H. Read** (one of the last new boats) struck a mine on the Bar Station, and sank in a few minutes, and out of 41 souls on board, only two were saved, 19 Pilots and 8 apprentices making the supreme sacrifice. Tho Service accepted this terrible loss with that stoicism which has been one of its characteristics from earliest times.

It only remains for me to mention the last new Pilot Boat, built in 1936. She is named the **William M. Clarke**, 579 tons gross, 170 ft. in length and 30 ft. beam.

She is the last word in pilot boat construction and is the longest and best equipped pilot boat in the United Kingdom, if not in the world, and the Service to which she belongs, second to none in organisation and efficiency, is justly proud of her.

From early times the names of prominent Liverpool shipowners have been associated with the Pilotage Service of the port. Two of the best known were Thomas Brocklebank and John Bibby, who as far back as 1824 were Pilotage Commissioners and became members of the Pilotage Committee.

Thomas Brocklebank resigned in 1832, but in 1838 he was again serving on the Committee, and it seems appropriate that 100 years later a descendant of his - Sir Thomas A.L. Brocklebank, Bart. - should be Chairman of the Pilotage Committee.



A novel chart of the Mersey estuary

from Wikimedia

mv **Balmoral** - update

by the Editor

As owners of the mv **Balmoral** the mv Balmoral Fund Ltd. issued a statement in December 2017 to advise that **Balmoral** will be unable to sail in 2018, but will remain at her Bristol berth and still be available for onboard activities.

This has been brought about by two issues raised by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA):-

- that the long accepted practice of repairs to hull damage by the use of “Doubled Plates” can no longer be used; and any existing repairs by this method will need to be removed and a full replacement inserted.
- for some time the MCA has stated that “substantial and costly improvements would need to be made to the crew accommodation before the 2019 season”.

The cost for these works is included in the current Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid for £3.75 million and there has been indication from HLF that feedback on progress of the bid can be expected in March, 2018.

The expectation was that the hull work could be done in twelve months time but the MCA will not renew the passenger certificate without this being completed, and so, unfortunately, **Balmoral** cannot sail for the forthcoming 2018 season.

For further details see www.mvbalmoral.org.uk

Girdle Around the World

The Golden Age of Cable Ships

A presentation to the Society on 16th November, 2017 by Steven Jones

Summarised by L.N.R.S Member W.A. Ogle

Steven introduced himself as a former Navigation Officer who is an 8th generation seafarer but now engaged in consultancy work surrounding maritime safety, security and crisis management. Much of his early seagoing career was with the cable-laying ships of Cable and Wireless.

Contrary to popular belief international telephone and data traffic does not generally utilise satellite communications. Not only because of high cost but that they also offer very limited bandwidth. In fact one fibre optic cable can process as much as every traditional satellite in operation; so the use of cable persists and they handle 98% of transocean traffic.

The first successful cable transmissions were on land and closely followed the introduction of morse code for the transfer of messages and information. The first viable sea cable was laid across the English Channel in 1850 by the paddle steamer **Goliath**. It was a single copper strand covered by gutta percha. This not only tended to float was also regarded as a delicacy by some fish. As a result it lasted only a few hours! It was replaced by a relatively longer lasting cable using more strands and more rubber. This led an American merchant, Cyrus West Field to seek support for an Atlantic cable in 1854, and in July 1858 the operation began.

Using two American and two British vessels (**Agamemnon**, **Valorous**, **Niagara** and **Gorgon**) each pair started from its “home” side of the ocean and they met up in the middle. The completed cable was nearly 2,000 miles in length and lay at a depth of often more than two miles. On August 16th, President Buchanan and Queen Victoria exchanged messages, but by September it had ceased functioning.

It wasn't until the arrival in 1866 of Brunel's **Great Eastern** that sufficient capacity existed to build a cable large and strong enough to be regarded as the first permanent telegraph line across the Atlantic.

The Hooper's Telegraph Works Ltd was established by William Hooper in 1870 to manufacture and lay submarine communications cable. The company's first order was for a 2,300 nautical mile cable linking Vladivostock with Hong Kong, via Shanghai. The company also laid cable for the Western and Brazilian Telegraph Company. The company commissioned the C. S. **Hooper**, then the world's second largest, and first purpose built cable laying vessel. Due to the haste with which the ship was required, she was assembled in just 100 days. With a length of 338ft., beam 55 and depth 35ft. and 4,935 g.r.t., she was built in 1873 by C. Mitchell & Co., Newcastle. She could carry almost 89,000 cubic feet of rolled cable lines in her three cable line tanks and her single compound engine gave a speed of 10¹/₂ knots. She continued laying cable for a number of owners and with various names until 1912 when she was converted to a bulk oil tanker. She continued in this trade for a further eight years before becoming a static refuelling ship at Southampton, and was finally dismantled in 1936.

The advent of “instant” communication became a huge commercial hit because it coincided with an explosion of activity surrounding the industrial revolution, and the demand was particularly strong across the North Atlantic. The resultant cable laying boom meant that by the year 1900, there were already over 130,000 miles (200,000 km) of cable under the sea. It was also of great geopolitical importance since Empires and expansionists needed communications and so more cables meant more ships and constantly developing technology.

Great Britain was leading the charge to cable because of the vital need for effectively connecting the Empire, and massive companies developed through

acquisitions and mergers. Imperial and International Communications merged with Marconi in the 1930s, and this organisation was renamed Cable and Wireless in 1934, later becoming Cable and Wireless International whilst the General Post Office, later British Telecom, dealt with U.K. land and short-sea activity.

Following World War 2, during which the Cable Ships had continued their normal peacetime operations plus an additional task of deliberately cutting cables of the Axis powers, the U.K. based companies were nationalised and in 1956 the first transatlantic phone cable (TAT-1) was laid.

From 1980 the pace of development quickened again when Cable and Wireless was privatised to rapidly become a pioneer on the global stage, laying:

- In 1988 the first transatlantic fibre optic cable (TAT-8)
- in 1989 the first private transatlantic fibre optic cable (PTAT)
- 1990 saw the first transpacific fibre optic (NPC)
- 1992 C & W were first to plough unarmoured cable over a distance of 1,000 km. in one continuous operation; between Brunei and Singapore
- in 1994 they were first to post-lay bury to a depth of 2,000 metres (Pacific Rim West)
- 1995 first to bury cable to 10 metres and 4 metres in rock (APCN)
- during the mid-1990s C & W laid the Europe to Asia legs of FLAG - fibre optic link around the globe. A total length of 15,120 nautical miles
- 1997 saw installation of the first dedicated internet cable between U.S. and U.K., Gemini South
- in 2003 they achieved the deepest water ploughing at a depth of 1,699 metres on the Svalbard system installed within 1,350 km. of the Arctic Circle

However C & W were facing increasing competition throughout this period. In 1986 the U.S. long distance industry was de-regulated, new companies appeared with equal access to the market. Also by now the internet and on-line entertainment was becoming a major player, and traditional companies became lost in a web of specialists.

In 2001 C & W embarked upon an ambitious programme of acquisitions but, as is often the case, overreached itself and needed to divest some of these companies. The records show that the company went from a peak value of £38 billion to £4 bn!

The ships themselves have changed dramatically over time. Initially converted paddle steamers such as the small **Goliath** progressing to the “ahead-of-her-time” **Great Eastern**. Then, as with merchant ships, the appearance of cable ships reached an aesthetic peak in the 1950s. By then they were traditionally white with a yacht-like appearance, carrying a large crew and benefitting from long stays in port whilst cable was loaded. They were known as



happy ships with first class accommodation and a good social atmosphere. The fleet comprised a mixture of station ships, based at a particular location for local repair and maintenance of cables, and those engaged in long distance laying when the next job would be in a different part of the world.

The key change in design has been to transfer the cable sheaves from the bow to the stern; this is possible because developments such as G.P.S. and Dynamic Positioning mean that control 'by line of sight' from the watch officers is no longer required and led to the advantage of a long run of main deck for setting up the cable prior to lowering. Other significant developments are:

- the development of 'ploughing-in' cable at vulnerable locations
- increased power of main engines and manoeuvrability through the shift to diesel electric with fixed pitch propellers and thrusters
- the link to shoreside cables is eased because some cable ships can now put themselves aground much closer to the connection point

The political and commercial interests and needs surrounding cable laying becomes ever more complex; as the world shrinks many issues become more complex and the planning for new cables, and even maintenance of existing, can be extremely protracted.

The basic principles of safe and secure laying have remained constant. During laying the degree of 'slack' must be managed carefully and is dictated by

the topography of the sea bed - lay too tight and the cable can be snapped, too slack results in snarl on the sea bed and wasted cable. Cable & Wireless were known as the 'masters of slack', even developing new software and management systems to retain this title.

Most new cable is of the fibre-optic type which can be seen as 'pipes' that can carry data as beam of light. The simplest is called single-mode where the thin core about 5-10 microns diameter. Such cables send information over about 100 km (60 miles), after which Repeaters are fitted to amplify the signal for the next stage. These Repeaters are built into the cable prior to loading to the tanks on board. Cables weigh some 1.4 tonnes per km for deep-sea; heavier and better protected cables are needed for shallow water.

After being laid, cable can suffer accidental damage in a number of ways, from ships anchors, fishing by trawling, earthquakes, hurricanes, tidal waves and even wild life such as conger eels and sharks. There is also increasing concern about possible terrorism or piracy/ ransom attack.

After more than 150 years of cable laying, 94% of unused cables are still lying on the seabed together with an estimated 72,000 repeaters. It is now becoming financially attractive to seek recovery of such expensive material, so we now begin see use of a cable recovery vessel.

'MAREA' is a 4,000 mile transatlantic communications cable being laid between Virginia and Bilbao, owned and funded by Microsoft and Facebook. It is being managed by Telxius, a subsidiary of Spanish owned Telefonica. It finished being laid across the Atlantic in September 2017, and is scheduled to go into service in early 2018. It has a maximum throughput of 160 terabits per second, making it the fastest transatlantic cable. This means that more than 500 bits are carried in each millimetre of cable length. Microsoft claims that it has the capacity equivalent to streaming 71 million HD videos at the same time, or 16 million times faster than an average home internet connection. The cable is composed of an eight fibre-optic thread bundle about the size of a garden hose.

In parallel the JUPITER cable system of the same capacity and approximately 9,000 miles in length is being laid across the Pacific. Eventually this will connect to MAREA to form a round-the-world link. The JUPITER system is financed largely by Amazon and Facebook and is scheduled to be ready for service by early 2020, the year of the Tokyo Olympics.

Offshore power generation and undersea power transmission is another rapidly developing and growing side of cable laying particularly within and from offshore wind farms, which are now being planned for ever more remote areas.

In conclusion Steven said that cable ships allow things to happen, and they help make the impossible, possible.

Maritime History North

M.H.N. have given advance notice of their Spring Conference to be held at the recently re-furbished and re-opened Western Approaches Museum (Rumford Street, Exchange Flags, Liverpool L2 8SZ).

This all-day event will be held on Friday, 25th May, 2018 and is to be jointly operated with the Merseyside Maritime Museum, The Western Approaches Museum and the Society for Nautical Research.

A panel of distinguished speakers will explore the role of the key people from the Royal and Merchant Navies and Coastal Command who fought at sea and in the air and of the impact of the Battle of the Atlantic on the City of Liverpool.

Vice Admiral Gretton will describe the Monument to all those who lost their lives in the Battle which is to be erected near the Pier Head. Speakers will include:

Professor E J Grove FRHistS FSNR

Vice Admiral M Gretton CB CVO

Captain Patrick Walker CBE RN

Captain Iain Moffatt DL RD RNR

John Cairns of the Coastal Command and Maritime Air Trust

Steven Jones FRSA

Further details and ticketing information are available from:-

www.liverpoolwarmuseum.co.uk

From the Rolls Royce Staff Magazine

Scientists at Rolls Royce built a gun specifically to launch dead chickens at the windshields of airliners and military jets. The idea was to simulate the frequent incidents of collisions with airborne fowl to test the strength of the windshields.

American engineers heard about the gun and were eager to test it on the windshields of their new high speed trains. Arrangements were made, and a gun was sent to them. When the gun was fired, the engineers stood shocked as the chicken shot out of the barrel, crashed into the shatterproof shield, smashed it to smithereens, blasted through the control console, snapped the engineer's back-rest in two and embedded itself in the back wall of the cabin.

Horried they sent Rolls Royce the disastrous results of the experiment, along with the designs of the windshield and begged the British scientists for suggestions.

The response was a one-line memo: "Defrost the Bloody chicken FIRST."

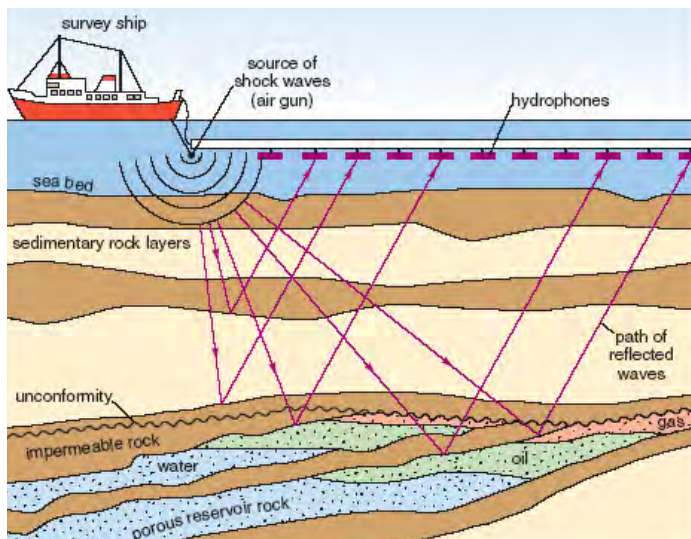
Life After Blue Funnel

A talk given to the society on 14 December, 2017

by L.N.R.S. Member Captain Don Watt, summarised by the Editor

Joining Alfred Holt & Co. in 1956 Don enjoyed the benefits of the heyday of the cargo/passenger liners for the next ten years whilst working through to achievement of his Master's Certificate. However the pending advent of the 'isations (palletisation, unitisation and containerisation) made the future look increasingly bleak. So off to the rapidly developing North Sea offshore oil industry went the intrepid Don. Initially posted as Chief Officer for acclimatisation purposes where he witnessed the rapid business growth and expansion. After the 1973 oil crisis, the oil price had quadrupled. The 1979 oil crisis caused another tripling. So clearly this was an extremely dramatic and busy phase of the developments.

Subsequently he transferred to the **Oil Hunter**, a seismic survey ship described as "the worst job you could have", towing a two mile long submerged cable (much to the frustration of other vessels wishing to cross close astern!) which incorporated sensors at regular intervals. Air guns (port and starboard) were fired every minute and the sensors recorded the resultant sound waves. Sleep was a rare luxury.

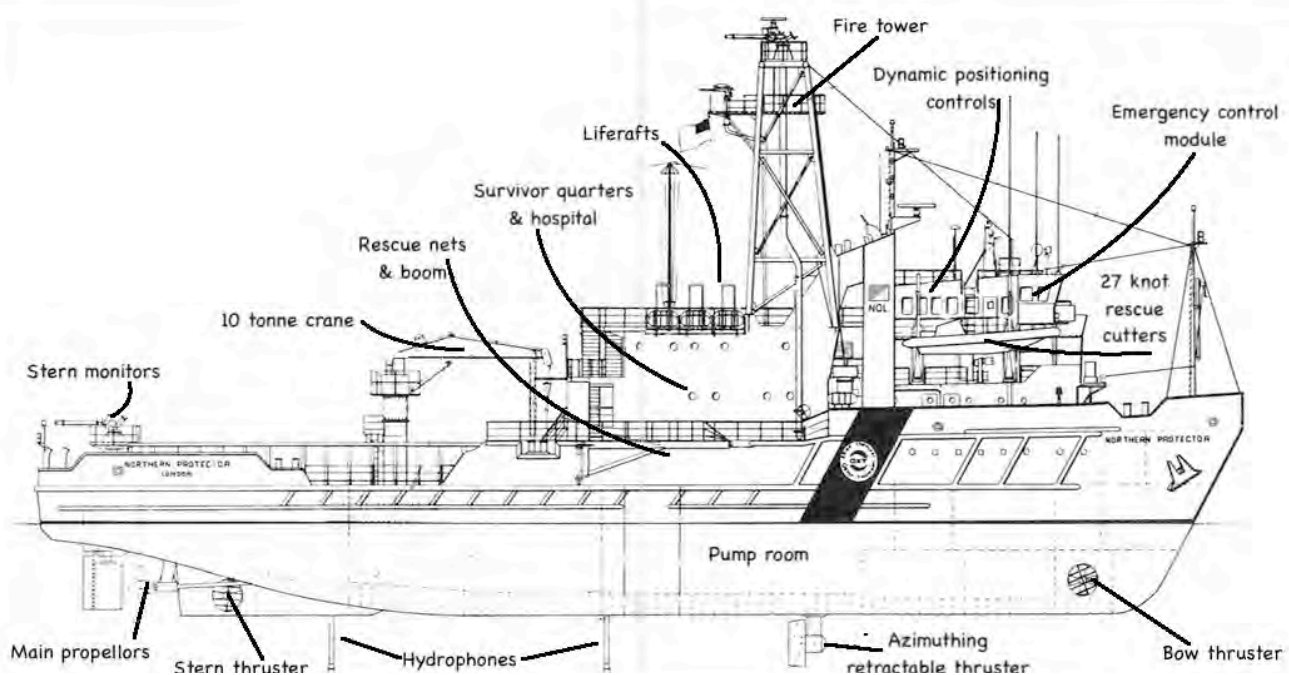


In 1978 Don joined the Norwegian owned Bugge Supply Ships, a company whose earlier whaling experience would prove invaluable in the building of vessels capable of dealing with the inhospitable North Sea. They also managed Intersub, a joint venture with Northern Offshore, operating a fleet of submersible 'mother ships' named Intersub1 through to Intersub 5 using Perry submarines PC1201 and PC1202,

both were capable of operating to depths of 1,000 feet. Type 01 was used for inspection, sampling and photographic work. Type 02, in addition to the two operating crew, carried an additional two divers who worked under saturation conditions for up to thirty days, breathing a mixture of oxygen and helium, who could lock out to work at depths of up to 700 feet.

Don recalled that one of the biggest snags associated with submarine operations was that divers and operational management wanted to maximise 'bottom time'. With his responsibility was for the safety of all on board, and recognising the speed with which North Sea weather conditions could deteriorate

to the point where recovery of the submersible became overly hazardous, the master was frequently required to make the unpopular yet frequent recall decision.



Rapid intervention vessel (R.I.V.) **Northern Protector**

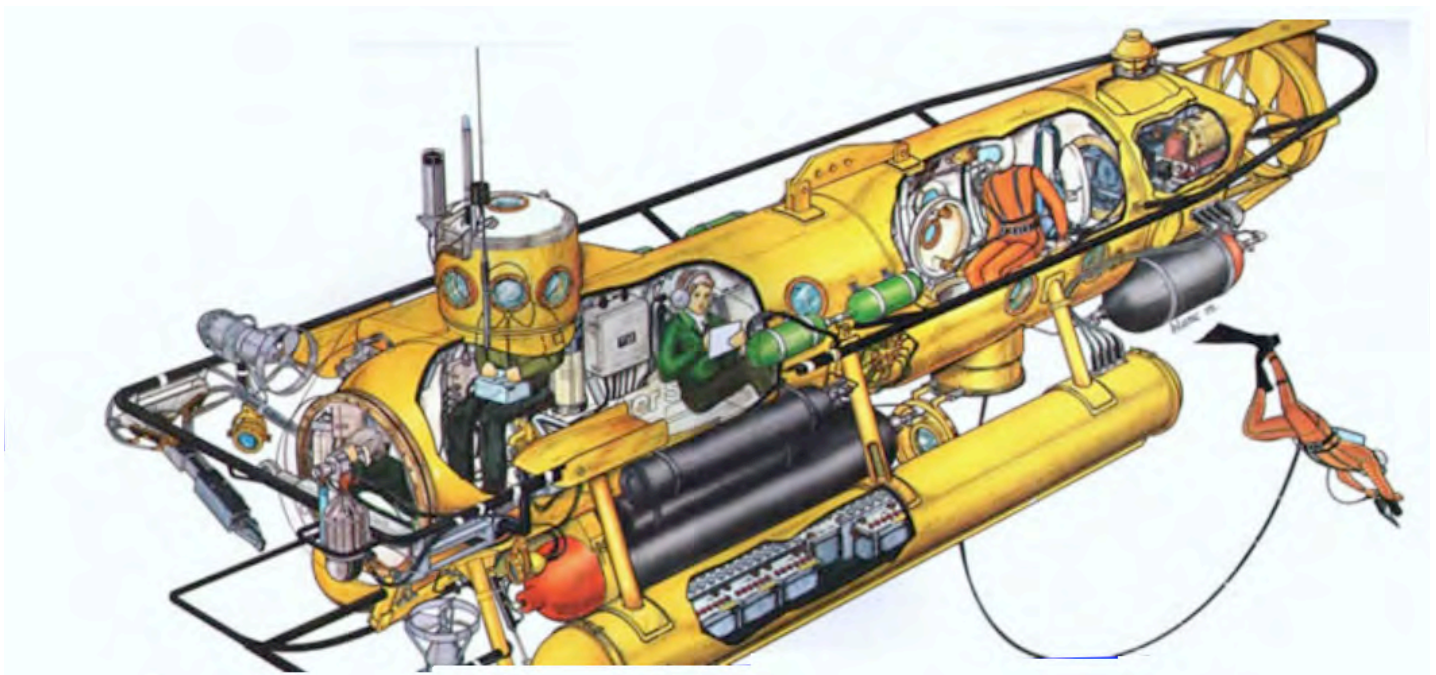
Outline specification of **Northern Protector**:

Dimensions:	loa-207ft.; beam-45ft.; draft-17ft.; 1,500 grt.; 600 nrt.
Main engines	2 x Wichmann; 4,200 bhp; 2 x v.p. propellers; 13.4 knots
Rudders	- 2 Becker type
Thrusters	- Bow Brunvoll 700 h.p. Stern Brunvell 600 h.p. Midships KaMeWa 2 x 1,200 h.p., azimuthing fixed pitch, retractable
Generators	Delco 2 x 105 kw; 1 x 145 kw
Deck machinery	Capstans - 2; Tugger winch - 1; Windlass - 1
Anchor and chain	2 x 1590 kg. and one spare anchor; 2 x 33 shackles (c 900 metres on each) of 34 mm chain
Communication	Skanti SSB M.F./ H.F. Radio; SRA V.H.F. Radio Telephone; Aeronautical D.F.; V.H.F./F.M. equipment for platform communication; U.H.F. for control of platforms firefighting/evacuation; Marine Detection Finder; Aeronautical Beacon; Public Address System; Hand portable; Teleprinter; FAX Receiver.
Navigational	2 x Furuno radars; 1 x Furuno echo sounder; 1 x Decca Navigator; Tokyo Keiki autopilot; 1 x magnetic compass; 1 x Tokyo Keiki Gyrolot
Dynamic Positioning	System has a calculated capability of holding the vessel in 37 knot winds, with 3.9 m high waves and an adverse surface current of 1.5 knots.

Don then stood by the conversion of **Sea Topaz** to a Rapid Intervention Vessel and renamed **Northern Protector** at the Van der Giessan yard, and after only six months took her to Bremerhaven for further conversion to provide capacity for 1,000ft./ 12 men, operating saturation diving.

By now these vessels were on charter to the U.S. based Occidental Oil, but unfortunately all was not well with Northern Offshore's finances and Don received a telephone call whilst on station to state that, due to unpaid accounts, this would be the final permitted call! Following acceptance of guarantees from Occidental Oil to Don at an offshore meeting which made satisfactory arrangements for payment of salaries, leave, provisions and reliefs, the vessel was able to stay at sea for the next nine months - reliefs being carried out by helicopter.

On her eventual return to Aberdeen, the vessel was arrested, tradition being maintained by touching the mast with the Warrant prior to display in the accomodation. The crew remained on board under the protection of a Maritime Lien until the vessel, her charter and her crew were taken over at auction by the Maersk Co. of London; with another name change to **Maersk Defender**.



The Perry PC1202 submarine

Shortly after this a member of the dive team, one Keith Jessop, approached Don with an unusual proposition. Jessop was born in 1933 in Keighley, the illegitimate son of a penniless Yorkshire mill-worker, who had left school without a single qualification. After service in the Royal Marines he returned to Keighley, married and went back to working in the mill by day, while supplementing his income by giving driving lessons at night. Introduced to the

pastime by a friend he developed the hobby of diving in the nearby River Lune, then progressing to deeper water of the estuary. Further experience lead him to salvage scrap metal from shallow-water wrecks off the coast of Scotland, using primitive home made equipment. Jessop learned to deep-dive during further risky recoveries in treacherous waters, ultimately becoming professionally trained and highly experienced in deep-sea diving. Over a successful career he worked on hundreds of wrecks around the world.

With a real gift for research, burrowing in files and archives and gleaning information from trawler skippers and lobstermen, Jessop could tell when official documents were hiding more than they revealed. He began pestering the Salvage Association for recovery rights to some of the wrecks it administered. Eventually, perhaps more in the hope of some peace than in expectation that Jessop would succeed, the clerk to the Association wrote on a piece of paper, "**Johanna Thorden, Swona**", and told him "Find it or don't come back".

The **Johanna Thorden** had sunk in the treacherous tidal waters of the Pentland Firth. No other salvage team would go near, but Jessop successfully did.

Jessop's proposition was that Don take command of the dive-support vessel **Stephaniturm** for a secret project. This was, in fact, to seek recovery, on a no-cure-no pay salvage deal, of gold ingots from the wreck of H.M.S. **Edinburgh**. Don is still pondering!

H.M.S. **Edinburgh**, a sister ship to H.M.S. **Belfast** - now restored in London, was the escort flagship of returning Convoy QP 11, comprising seventeen merchant ships which left Murmansk on 28 April 1942. On 30 April as she was steaming, unescorted several miles ahead of the convoy, the German submarine **U-456** fired a torpedo, hitting her just forward of the bomb room containing the gold. The ship began to list heavily, but was prevented from sinking. Soon after, **U-456** put a second torpedo into **Edinburgh's** stern, which destroyed her port rudder and propellers.

Edinburgh was taken in tow, and tried to return to Murmansk but was again attacked when a further torpedo struck amidships, exactly opposite the first torpedo hit. She was now held together only by the deck plating and keel, which was likely to fail at any time, so the crew abandoned ship. The 58 men killed in the attack were left on board; H.M.S. **Gossamer** took off 440 men and H.M.S. **Harrier** about 400 more. **Harrier** tried to scuttle **Edinburgh** with 4 inch gunfire, but 20 shots did not sink her. Depth charges dropped alongside also failed. Finally, H.M.S. **Foresight** sank **Edinburgh** with her last torpedo.

The gold, which amounted to some 4.5 tonnes with a 1942 value of £1.5million (in 2017 terms this would be £64,157,579), was in fact an interim payment by Russia for the supply of war material and military equipment from the Western Allies. In total the ship had 465 gold ingots in 93 wooden boxes. In 1954

the British Government offered the salvage rights of H.M.S. **Edinburgh** to the British salvage company, Risdon Beazley Ltd., but the project was put on hold due to strained political relations with the Soviet Union. In 1957, the wreck was designated a war grave, which further complicated any recovery attempts because of the limitations in salvage techniques of the era. In the late 1970s, the British government became increasingly anxious to recover the gold; not only because of its value but also because there was a growing concern that the wreck might be looted by unscrupulous salvagers or by the Soviet Union.

In the early 1980s seasoned diver Jessop's company won a contract to attempt recovery. Cutting into the wreck by divers working at the then extreme limit of 800 ft., was deemed more appropriate for a war grave than the traditional 'smash and grab' explosives-oriented methods. A consortium of specialist companies for the project was then formed, Wharton Williams as managers.

Contact was made with the wreck in August, 1981 and the first ingot recovered on 16 September. By 7 October, 431 of the 465 ingots had been recovered, but a Force 10-11 storm forced the cessation of the diving operation. A further 29 bars were brought up in 1986 by the consortium, bringing the total to 460, leaving five unaccounted for. The salvaged gold which was discharged at Murmansk was held under extreme security since the agreed allocation was to be 45% to the Consortium, 37% to Russia and 18% to the U.K.; particularly difficult because the bars were not all of equal weight, having a range of 2 kilos. The 'trusting' Russians insisted on accompanying the vessel back to Peterhead where, decompression being completed, they could inspect the chambers and the bell to ensure no ingots had been 'over-carried'.

However, the triumph of the **Edinburgh** operation was soon soured. A book published by a writer who had accompanied the expedition claimed that the divers had desecrated the War Grave. This was a charge that, as a proud ex-Royal Marine, Jessop found particularly offensive – and that an official of the Salvage Association had been bribed to secure the contract. In 1984 Jessop went on trial at the Old Bailey charged with conspiring to contravene the Official Secrets Act and with conspiracy to defraud the unsuccessful bidders for the **Edinburgh** contract. The case collapsed and he was acquitted on all charges, but his reputation had been tarnished. He believed to his dying day that he had been the victim of a conspiracy and left Britain to live abroad. Never a quitter, at the time of his death he was negotiating with the Spanish Government to recover the gold from the Spanish Galleons!

In closing, Don explained that he has always, and still now, looks to the future with keen anticipation; in fact his mantra is "To change your horizon you just have to move your feet