

L I V E R P O O L     N A U T I C A L  
R E S E A R C H     S O C I E T Y

Morn on the waters, and purple and bright  
Bursts on the billows the flushing of light  
O'er the glad waves, like a child of the sun,  
See, the tall vessel goes gallantly on.

Thomas Kibble Hervey

NEWS, NOTES AND QUERIES

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Vol.XIV (New Series) No.1

JANUARY-MARCH 1970

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PERSONALITIES

On 29th November 1969, the Commodore of the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company made his last trip to Douglas on retirement. Captain L. Callow had served the Manx ships for forty-six years and became one of the most popular skippers in their service. He took to the sea at the age of fifteen in coastal schooners.

His war service included the evacuation of the rear-guard from Cherbourg in 1940, when the former MANXMAN was the last British ship to leave the port. He was also in this ship at the evacuation of St.Malo and in trooping duties in the VIKING and the former BEN MY CHREE, including trips to the invasion beaches of Normandy in 1944. Our good wishes to Captain Callow for health and prosperity in retirement.

Many of our members will have grateful memories of that cheerful little Welsh seaman Captain Dop, and it is with sadness that I have to record his death in Wallasey early in January 1970 at the age of 74. As master of ST.TUDNO until 1963, he saw the suspension of the daily summer services to the North Wales coast and Menai Straits. Aboard the ST.SEIRIOL he brought from Dunkirk in 1940, a large contingent of the B.E.F. and although bombed, brought the ship out without damage or loss. This epic occasion was the subject of a plaque in the vessel when she once more inaugurated the Llandudno and Menai Straits sailings after the war under his command.

N.R.P.

#### NOVEMBER MEETING

At the Society's November meeting, members heard a talk entitled "The Ropewalks of Liverpool" by two talented and attractive students of Christ's College, Liverpool. Miss J. Tallon and Mrs. Bamford told of their researches into the ropemaking industry of Liverpool.

First they spoke of their method of research. This involved the examination of maps of the City of various dates, starting with Chadwick's map of 1725. From these maps they were able to compile lists of all the ropewalks in the City. They also used Gore's Liverpool Directory which started in 1766. The techniques of rope making were investigated, and this took them on a visit to the Hugh Lewis Ropeworks at Prescott.

Ropewalks first developed very near to the docks where there was a high demand for their products. As the city expanded during the eighteenth century, they were pushed to the fringes of the city, such as the area around Lime Street, and immediately north of Wapping Dock. This was because rope-making required large areas of land. As the city expanded in the early nineteenth century, the pressure on the ropewalks

was ever increasing, and by 1852 there were none in the immediate vicinity of the docks and the city centre. They all moved to what were then outlying villages, like Wavertree.

Originally all rope was handmade. The hemp threads had to be laboriously hand spun by a man walking backwards down the ropewalk, pulling the thread from a bundle of combed hemp fixed around his waist. The finished threads were then twisted into ropes. This was also a hand process. With the expansion of the port of Liverpool in the nineteenth century there was an increased demand for rope, and to cope with this, machinery was introduced. Many small firms became limited companies in order to get the capital to invest in the new machines. In recent years many firms have closed or amalgamated, so that only British Ropes Ltd. at Kirkdale, and Hugh Lewis at Prescott still make ropes in the Liverpool area. The ropes of traditional materials like hemp and manilla are now in strong competition with nylon ropes.

After coffee, there was a lively discussion on ropemaking with questions on such matters as the origins of the raw materials, the introduction of steel rope, rope sizes, and left-hand and right-hand laid ropes for different purposes.

The vote of thanks was proposed by Captain Cummings, who humorously remarked how pleasant it would be if these attractive young ladies could shepherd members over some of the old rope making sites. Mr. Davidson seconded, and the vote was carried with acclamation.

M.K.S.

#### NEW BRIGHTON

The ferry service will run during the holiday season of 1970 much as it did last year.

Perch Rock Battery will be open at Easter as a tourist attraction, under new ownership.

## OF OUR REMAINING PASSENGER LINERS

EMPRESS OF CANADA due to leave New York in mid-January on a cruise to the Caribbean made maritime history. Four-fifths of her crew said they would not permit the ship to sail under her master, Capt. Jeavons. The matter was declared to be an industrial dispute, and was largely concerned with shore leave for the crew when the ship arrives back in England in May.

Captain Denham was flown out and took command of the ship which left on time for the cruise.

On the day following the above report, Canadian Pacific announced that EMPRESS OF ENGLAND would be offered for sale, leaving EMPRESS OF CANADA their only remaining liner. So in the coming months, C.P.R. crews will have something more serious to consider than shore leave.

Nevertheless, within four days of this news, the purchase was announced of EMPRESS OF ENGLAND by the Shaw Savill Line for delivery in April. As a one class ship, she will be used in their round-the-world service. It is good to think that here is a fine vessel which will remain under the British flag. Although redundant on the North Atlantic owing to cheap air fares in the jumbo jets, may she find new popularity in this different sphere.

Except for the occasional visits of educational cruise liners like UGANDA and NEVASA, the Mersey will have only one EMPRESS and the AUREOL as its remaining regulars at Princes Stage.

## CAPTAIN LORD OF THE CALIFORNIAN

Mr. Leslie Harrison, General Secretary of the Mercantile Marine Service Association, and a member of this Society, has forwarded detailed reports of two petitions on behalf of Captain Lord, to the President of the Board of Trade in 1965 and 1968. The Editor will be pleased to loan these to any interested members, and it is hoped that we may add them to the archives of the Society.

## DECEMBER MEETING

At the Society's December Meeting, Capt.E.J.Priestley gave a talk on H.M.S. ELTHAM, an 18th century frigate. The speaker described how, in his researches on the royal palace of Eltham he had come across the logbooks of the ship H.M.S. ELTHAM from 1736 to 1750 in the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. ELTHAM was a fifth rate, two-deck frigate, built in 1707 at Portsmouth. Her complement was about 250, although there were discrepancies in the numbers recorded in the logs.

Between 1736 and 1750 the vessel had a very active career. In the first years she made voyages to Newfoundland, Genoa and Minorca. In 1740 she was given a refit and sent to America, and in 1741 took part in the bombardment of the French colonial settlement of St.Catherines in the West Indies. 1743 saw her back in England refitting, and in the next year she went back to the West Indies station. The important French fortress of Louisburg in Nova Scotia was taken by the Royal Navy in 1744 - ELTHAM taking a notable part in the attack which included a fight with the 62-gun French ship LA VIGILANTE.

Later in the year she sailed with French prisoners on board for Boston and from there to England with a convoy. She was sent to Aberdeen to stop French ships from landing troops and supplies for the Jacobite Rising led by Bonnie Prince Charlie. When the rebellion failed ELTHAM was sent out to search for the fleeing leader amongst the western isles. She carried the famous Flora MacDonald and twenty-three "other evidences" to Leith. From there she sailed to Spithead for another refit.

Early in 1747 she sailed for India arriving at Fort St. Davids, Madras, after a voyage of ten months. Whilst out there she had the misfortune to lose her rudder and so could not assist in the pursuit of the French fleet. Later she took part in Admiral Boscawen's unsuccessful siege of the French colony at Pondicherry.

With the end of the war with France and Spain, ELTHAM sailed for home early in 1749 and in 1750 was laid up. In 1763, after a survey, she was scrapped after a long and interesting career.

The logs showed the terrible conditions of life at sea in the 18th century. Food could be quite varied but there were many references to it going bad. There were many deaths amongst the seamen, mainly due to disease. A high proportion of those wounded in action died because medical knowledge was poor and also there was no surgeon on board. The punishments were extremely harsh. Desertion was regarded as a worse crime than mutiny. For desertion a sailor would be whipped from ship to ship, for mutiny he would receive sixty lashes. Many seamen were forcibly impressed and many were taken off inward bound merchantmen.

After coffee, there was a discussion on the conditions of the Navy in the 18th century. Interesting points were raised about the origin of hammocks, and naval politics.

The vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. Coney, seconded by Mr. Tozer and carried with acclamation.

M.K.S.

#### QUERY

Mr. B.E. Hillsdon of 72 Marlborough Road, Ashford, Middlesex is interested in vessels built by I.J. Abdela and Mitchell Ltd. - Queensferry, and has listed 32 ships and 36 barges built there. These include six built between 1913 and 1920 for Messrs. John Summers and Sons - Shotton - named CARITA, FLEURITA, FELITA, WARITA, INDORITA and ELDORITA. From other builders in the same period John Summers took INNISHOWEN, LEWES CASTLE, RED HAND, JONITA, MARCITA, POLITA and MAURITA. Have any of our readers recollections of the Abdela yard and its output?

It has been possible to supply the enquirer with photographs of ALFRED MASON ex WARITA, MARCITA and INDORITA.

## NEW NAMES FOR OLD

ANTONIA XILAS	ex BRETWALDA
ARTEAGA	ex ELYSIA ex HIGHLAND
B.A.P. PALACIOS	ex H.M.S. DIANA
DANSBORG	ex KINDVIK
DIMITRIOS G	ex CARDIFFBROOK
FANEROMENI	ex ELENKO ex FAIR LADY ex LOCH ETIVE ex LANCASTERBROOK
GALAXIAS	ex SCOTTISH COAST
IKARIA	ex BROOKMOUNT
LOCH RYAN	ex PACIFIC ENVOY
MIRNA	ex COLEBROOKE
MARGIO	ex BARON INVERFORTH
MERCHANT	ex SCYTHIA
MANES P	ex ESCALANTE
MALTA FAITH	ex SOUTRA
MARIA THAN	ex CARDIGANBROOK
OAKLAND STAR	ex KLAVDIA
PACIFIC EXPLORER	ex OROPESA
RAMAIDA	ex STREAM FISHER
SPYROS G	ex KAPTA MATHIOS ex REDSTART
SINERGASIA	ex GEORGE CALLITSIS ex MONKSVILLE ex EBONY
SAINT ANGUS	ex MILO
SCHOLAR	ex SAMARIA
STAVROULA XII	ex FRANCOIS BUISMAN
SANAGA	ex YEWDAL
THEO KLETOS	ex ALMERIAN
WHITETHORN	ex HERO

## CONGRATULATIONS

to - Captain John Cummings on his retirement, as  
Principal Officer of the Marine Survey Office here.

to - Mr. & Mrs. Coney on the occasion of their Golden  
Wedding in February

## JANUARY MEETING

On 8th January 1970 the Society heard a paper by Mr. E.W. Paget-Tomlinson on the "Bibby Line". Our speaker had been asked by Messrs. Bibby to write a history of the company, which is to be published shortly. For this work, he had been allowed access to the Bibby archives and to Customs Registers.

The Bibby Line's history can be divided into four parts: the early ownership of sailing vessels, the Mediterranean trade with steamships until 1873, the development of the Burma trade 1889 - 1965, and from 1965 the growth of chartering and the building of bulk carriers in association with other companies.

The founder was John Bibby, a younger son of an Eccleston farmer who was sent to make his fortune in Liverpool. In 1801, with William Hall, he established a ship broking business. By 1805, in conjunction with John Highfield he owned shares in seven small vessels in the coasting and Irish trades, and by 1807, the partnership was running regular sailings from Parkgate to Dublin. Many of the early ships were prizes, but in 1812 the first new ship was built. In 1821 the partnership with Highfield ceased, but John Bibby continued to expand his business interests. Besides ship-owning, these included copper smelting and selling iron goods. Bibby ships took part in the Mediterranean trade in the 1820's and 1830's, and a few sailed to Bombay.

In 1840 John Bibby died and of his four sons, James managed the shipowning side of the business. The fleet at this time had a great variety of vessels - many secondhand. However, by the late '40's the Bibbys were actively considering investing in steamships, and in 1850 joined a consortium of Liverpool shipowners to promote the Liverpool-Mediterranean Screw Steam Shipping Company.



In 1851, Bibbys themselves took delivery of three steamers for the Portuguese and Mediterranean trade. In 1858 the opening of the railway from Alexandria to Suez brought a vast increase in trade passing from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea, and Bibby's provided a regular service for the Peninsular and Oriental Company to Alexandria which was to bring in good profits.

As a result, new ships were ordered from the new firm of Harlands of Belfast and sailing ships largely disappeared from the Bibby fleet List. In the 1860's the familiar pink funnel replaced the earlier yellow funnel. The trade to Egypt was increased by the expansion of the cotton trade, when other supplies were cut off by the American Civil War.

In 1869 this thriving trade ceased abruptly with the opening of the Suez Canal which ended the need for transshipment. Bibbys were left with superfluous tonnage which a junior partner, Frederick Leyland, proposed to use to open a service between Liverpool and Boston. James Bibby opposed this scheme, but in 1873 Leyland bought out James Bibby and the Bibbys left the shipowning business until 1889. In that year two new ships were built and run as tramp steamers, until it was decided to enter the Burma trade. In 1890 there was a monthly service with passenger accommodation. British manufactured goods were carried outwards, and minerals, teak, rubber and tea brought back. The fleet all had the characteristic Bibby four masts and tall funnels. They were popular ships with passengers because of their special "L" shaped cabins which enabled every stateroom to have its own porthole - very necessary in the tropics.

The Bibby ships usually berthed at Birkenhead, and at Colombo and Rangoon it was quite usual to unload the cargo into lighters because of the lack of wharves.

In the Boer War, Bibbys carried troops. This was to begin a long association with the Army which lasted through the two World Wars until 1962. After the first World War, motor ships were first used in the Bibby fleet. The trade depression caused the extension of services to other English and European ports in order to collect adequate cargoes.

In the second World War, the fleet again served as troopships and auxiliary merchant cruisers. But the war left the fleet in a poor state to resume normal trading. Moreover conditions were not easy. The passenger trade had all but disappeared and the closure of the Suez Canal in 1956, and the depression in shipping in 1959 meant that the Company had a rough passage in the 50's. However, Bibbys still had long term contracts for trooping from the Government.

By the 1960's with the end of sea trooping and the decline of the Burma trade, Bibbys decided to look to new fields of shipowning. In 1965 when the passenger service ended, a few new ships were built for long term charter work. Bibbys also co-operated with other British companies in the Seabridge Consortium to build and run very large bulk carriers. This policy has been very successful. The firm have also gone in for chartering liquid petroleum gas tankers and car carriers, but they have yet to enter the container ship market.

The fifth generation of Bibbys now controls a fleet much larger than before - one million tons at work or on order.

After coffee there was interesting discussion which touched on, amongst other things, the business organization and financing arrangements of the Bibby fleet. A vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. McManus and seconded by Dr. P.N. Davies, and carried with acclamation.

M.K.S.

## ISLE OF MAN STEAM PACKET COMPANY

The sailing arrangements for the 1970 season are as usual inviting, with the following services:-

Liverpool to Douglas  
Liverpool to Llandudno  
Douglas to Llandudno  
Douglas to Belfast via Ramsey  
Douglas to Dublin  
Douglas to Ardrossan  
Douglas to Heysham

The interesting feature this year is the series of 2-hour cruises along the north Anglesey coast, connecting with many of the Liverpool sailings. The fare to Llandudno is 25/- excursion, and the cruise an additional 10/-. The company have a most detailed selection of brochures, available at the Brunswick Street office, or travel agents.

### MERSEY NOTES

In December, the Iranian motorvessel ARYA MAN loaded in Alfred Dock for the Persian Gulf. She will be remembered as the former CLAN FORBES. These Teheran owners will soon be taking delivery of some new cargo vessels, and the profile of one of these, ARYA NAZ, was shown in the shipping press. Six are being built at Hoboken, Belgium and will have 200-ton Stulcken derricks.

The Holyhead Salvage Co's tug AFON GOCH arrived in the Mersey on 9th December having an agreement with the Van der Tak Company to assist in the wreck lifting operations. However, Liverpool tugboat men refused to let her participate in the work and things became so unpleasant that AFON GOCH sailed away to her base, after the Liverpool men had put the matter to the Transport and General Workers Union. There were veiled threats that Liverpool tugs may not be welcome at Holyhead in the future. The tug was built at Hamburg in 1939 as HENGST and later became SCHELDE VIII.

On Saturday afternoon, 13th December, the German container coaster METRIC left Runcorn for Rotterdam. She had become very much a part of the Mersey scene with fast passages and turn-round on the route. But this was to be her last voyage, as in the darkness of the following morning, when 25 miles northeast of Tuskar Rock in gale force winds, her cargo shifted and she listed to over forty degrees. At 9.30 a.m. she was abandoned by her seven men, two women and a boy of five years old. The Finnish VEGA also outward bound from the Canal, rescued all the survivors, though helicopters, a Shackleton aircraft and several other ships took part. METRIC later sank.

The bulk carrier IRISH STAR was on trials 3/1/70.

Shipping movements disclose that TAIPOOSHAN ex APAPA, the Elder Dempster liner fresh in our memory, is now making voyages between Hong Kong and Singapore.

SCOTTISH COAST laid up in Morpeth Dock these last two winters, but used during the past summer by Burns, Laird, was sold in November and moved up to West Float, where her name was changed to GALAXIAS. She sailed for Piraeus on 30th November.

It is sad to note that the Clyde Steamship Co. have now withdrawn their old established Liverpool/Waterford service. Since the TUSKAR was sold, the chartered SARSFIELD has maintained the sailings, but they finally decided to pull out. Their former loading berth at Waterloo Dock was required under the new scheme to provide B. & I. with roll-on/roll-off facilities nearer the city centre. Clyde had already moved to Nelson Dock. This means the end of Clyde in the coasting trade, where once they were so prominent, but it does not mean that Waterford is lacking in traffic, now mostly carried in containers. That the trade has undergone great change cannot be denied.

On 12th December the Portuguese salvage tug PRAIA GRANDE arrived in the Mersey from Devonport with H.M.S. DIANA in tow. The tug later berthed at Princes Stage. DIANA is being refitted by Cammell Laird for use by the Peruvian Navy.

On 9th December the mighty Dutch wreck lifting craft TAKLIFT 1 arrived at Princes Stage and was the object of interested gaze all that week. On 10th a floating dock of Manchester Dry Dock Co. left the Mersey. A massive black structure, her river towage was by Alexandra tugs. At the same time the pale green super tanker BERGE BERGESEN was passing inward to Tranmere.

Just after a fall of snow on Saturday, 3rd January, a visit was made to Birkenhead North and to No.3 graving dock. There, a German barge named MULUS I had on its deck the rock cutting dredger PORT SUNLIGHT owned by Westminster Dredging Co. and registered at Toronto. As well as the PORT SUNLIGHT, various pontoons and large diameter piping were loaded, and work proceeded to prepare this huge parcel for passage under tow to West Africa. The tug to be used was VARIUS III, a former stern loading trawler named KAP WALLOE, then waiting in Egerton Dock. The firm engaged in this contract was Ulrich Harms of Hamburg, who last year raised the sunken CRESSINGTON, as previously reported. MULUS I was purposely sunk in dock so that the dredger could sail over her. Then the barge was raised to cradle the dredger - quite an impressive sight, and worth the journey on such a raw day.

21st December - SILVERHAWK, a chemical carrier whose completion was much delayed at Lairds yard, on account of contractors failing to supply stainless steel tubing to time, sailed for Australia via Rotterdam.

The former Cunard cargo liners SCYTHIA and SAMARIA have now become T.J.Harrison's MERCHANT and SCHOLAR respectively, and are making their debut on the West Indies services.

The Canadian tug IRVING BIRCH arrived in the Mersey, 8th January, having towed the Liberian tanker ALKIS from Halifax N.S. for repairs by Barclay Curle & Co., Scotstoun. BRACKENGARTH took over the tow at the Mersey Bar and safely delivered the tanker, averaging nine knots in bad south-easterly conditions.

As a result of work by TAKLIFT I, 800 tons of scrap from the wrecked OUSEL lay at Egerton Dock in mid January. Much Tranmere mud was apparent. Of some cotton bales landed after 13 years immersion, it was said that the internal cotton was in quite good condition.

Ellerman Papayanni Lines are instituting a new class of 500 ton container ships on their Liverpool/Oporto service, until recently served by the chartered Norwegian vessel ESTREMADURIAN. The first of the new British vessels is named MINHO with a speed of 17 knots. The second of this "river" class will be named TAGUS, and the third TORMES.

The new Rea tug HOLLYGARTH arrived in the Mersey a day or two before Christmas and has since been busily engaged in river work, mostly with tankers.

On Sunday, 25th January, British Transport Commission's DUKE OF ROTHESAY arrived in the north docks for overhaul.

The German-built B. & I. Line container vessels TIPPERARY and KILDARE are busy on the Liverpool/Dublin service. With regard to ocean container services, the Mersey is at last coming into its own with trans-Atlantic types like ATLANTIC CAUSEWAY and her sisterships; also AMERICAN LANCER, AMERICAN LARK etc. This augurs well for the new Seaforth Dock.

As relief ship on the Liverpool/Belfast night service, ST. CLAIR arrived from Aberdeen on 10th February. For this passage she had on board a party of about forty members of the Coastal Cruising Association and World Ship Society.

The early days of February saw the sale of two well known ships of the Coast Lines group. COLEBROOKE ex LAIRDSMOOR took the new name of MIRNA and sailed for her new home port of Rijeka, Yugo Slavia. When the Stranraer/Larne ferry PRINCESS VICTORIA was lost in the North Channel on 31st January 1953 with about 130 drowned, LAIRDSMOOR although carrying cattle made valiant efforts at rescue in very heavy seas. The other vessel sold was her sister ship BROOKMOUNT ex LAIRDSBEN, which sailed as the Panamanian IKARIA. It seems that the familiar funnel of J.J. Mack & Co. has now disappeared from the Coast Lines fleet.

A warning was issued to shipping on 8th February of large floating baulks of timber in the mouth of the River Dee, dangerous to navigation. These had been washed away by the abnormally high tides from the large floating dock of Manchester Ship Canal Company, being demolished at Mostyn.

N.R.P.

#### SUNDRY NEWS ITEMS

On 6th December the French wooden trawler KERICK of Lorient went off course and was swept on to the rocks at Brownstown Head, Co. Waterford. She was proceeding from the herring grounds and the sea was calm. Seven of her crew climbed the cliffs, helped to safety by a rescue team despatched by car from Dunmore East, whilst the local lifeboat took off the skipper and engineer. Next day the trawler capsized and became a total wreck.

Early in November British Rail's ISLE OF ELY was on the Dublin/Holyhead cargo service. In the early weeks of 1970 CAMBRIA was relieving on the Belfast/Heysham service.

At the Board of Trade enquiry into the loss by stranding of the coastal tanker HEMSLEY I near Padstow last May, the Captain and Chief Officer were found to be at fault. After many years bunkering service in the Mersey, the ship was on passage to breakers in Belgium.

## NEW MEMBER

Mr. G.R. Weir

West Kirby

whom we are very pleased to welcome to the Society.

## SOCIETY ACTIVITIES

February 12th was the occasion of a fascinating talk by Dr. P.N. Davies on his recent visit to West Africa, in connection with the history of Elder Dempster Lines on which he is engaged. We were treated to prolific illustration by colour slides. A full report will appear in our next issue.

On Thursday, 12th March, members of the Society were introduced to the new Planetarium at Liverpool Museum by our Chairman, Mr. Peter Welsh. We sat comfortably viewing the wonders of the heavens as projected on the domed ceiling. The remainder of the evening was spent in the Coffee Bar in informal conversation and examining marine objects, drawings and photographs brought along by members. Mr. Paget-Tomlinson read a paper on the now defunct Holme Line of Maryport, compiled by our Lighthouse member, Mr. D.G. Sythes.

A full report of this pleasant evening will appear in our next issue.

Our April meeting will be to hear a talk by Mr. R.G. Loran on Deep Sea Diving (illustrated).

Editor.

The Editor wishes to notify a change of address as from Saturday, 7th March 1970 to :-

7 Dunbar Road,  
Hillside,  
Southport.



L I V E R P O O L    N A U T I C A L  
R E S E A R C H    S O C I E T Y

They saw the cables loosened,  
    They saw the gangways cleared,  
They heard the women weeping,  
    They heard the men that cheered.  
Far off, far off, the tumult  
    Faded and died away,  
And all alone the sea wind  
    Came singing up the Bay.

Henry Newbolt.

NEWS, NOTES AND QUERIES

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April-June 1970

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ARRIVAL OF THE MIGHTY MELO

The long awaited arrival of one of the 200,000 ton tankers was postponed owing to northwesterly gales from Thursday 19th to Saturday 21st February 1970. Merseysiders made this a great occasion and both banks of the River were crowded with sightseers.

We on the Alfred Locks under grey skies and with intermittent rain sighted MELO's bunting over Seacombe Ferry at 1220. The gaily decked tugs BRACKENGARTH and HOLLYGARTH had left Woodside an hour or so earlier for rendezvous off New Brighton. Very slowly the mammoth vessel of such scant beauty but of such huge proportions approached her berth. It was a silent arrival. SNAEFFELL, in whistling for her berth on Princes Stage, might have set other ships going, but all remained silent, as if in sheer awe.

VIGILANT had led the way up River, AESTUS had patrolled the approach, and on a 28ft. tide with blustery west winds, Pilot Megginson took his charge alongside without trouble. MELO had lightened into the 70,000 ton DRUPA in Dundrum Bay, and her draught marks midships now read 45ft.

It was about 1300 when she berthed, yet such was the rate of round-the-clock pumping, that she sailed from North Tranmere at noon next day Sunday on her way back to the Persian Gulf.

The "Liverpool Daily Post" said the event has "shown that Merseysiders still love a river spectacle. It was one of the biggest turn-outs in years, and demonstrated also that the river can be a bond rather than a division between the communities on either bank. The MELO reminded us that we are all Merseysiders".

Ship dimensions are usually quoted in feet, but in talking of such a monster I prefer to say she was 350 yards by 32 yards beam. There is little beauty in these gigantic barges, and the BULFORD which arrived a week later had no charm at all. They are utilitarian carriers of crude oil supplying more economically our vast appetite for petrol and other products.

MELO was the first of the giants, of which we shall see many more.

N.R.P.

## TO CROSS THE MERSEY

From 1st May the adult fare between Birkenhead Woodside and Liverpool is sixpence single, but curiously the new list of charges lays down a fare of ninepence if he is accompanied by a dog, pram or bathchair. If accompanied by truck, wheelbarrow or handcart the charge is now 2/-.

The charge from Birkenhead Hamilton Square to Liverpool James Street is now two shillings return by rail. No hand-carts, please!

## FEBRUARY MEETING

On Thursday, 12th February 1970, Doctor Peter Davies, a member of the Council gave the Society a very interesting account of his voyage to West Africa last year. This was part of his research work into the history of Elder Dempster Lines Ltd. His superb slides taken on the voyage were much appreciated.

Dr.Davies sailed from London in the Elder Dempster F-class ship FALABA (7,700 gross tons, built 1962). Later in his expedition, he transferred to DARU, and then to AUREOL (14,000 gross tons, built 1948). He also enjoyed a flight to Northern Nigeria.

The FALABA carried a mixed cargo including machinery, foodstuffs, textiles and motor vehicles and made calls at many different ports along the West African coast. The first was Freetown in Sierra Leone which is considered to have the finest natural harbour in the world. It also has very good berths and unloading facilities at the new Queen Elizabeth wharf. The ship visited Victoria which is the exact opposite of Freetown - this is one of the few places left on the Coast where vessels have to anchor in the roadsteads to discharge their cargoes. Goods are ferried ashore in surf boats.

Tema, the modern port of Ghana was another call on the FALABA's route. Here the old surf boats had been replaced by a spacious artificial harbour with deepwater berths. Dr.Davies expeditions took him south of the Gulf of Guinea. He called at the ports of Luanda and Lobito in Portuguese Angola. The latter was the terminus of the famous Benguela Railway which still has steam locomotives. He commented favourably on the pleasant Portuguese atmosphere of these two ports which contrasted with the somewhat seedy conditions at the ports of Boma and Matadi in the now-independent Belgian Congo. Matadi was some eighty miles up the Congo River; the cranes were decrepit, the streets unpaved and everywhere seemed overgrown and neglected.

The Congolese authorities did not allow photography, but the speaker managed to buy postcards to illustrate this part of his journey.

Whilst aboard DARU, Dr.Davies called at many other interesting ports like Sapele. This is a Nigerian inland port far from the sea. DARU had difficulty in navigating the narrow channel to the wharf at Sapele and in turning round for the return trip down river. The main export was hardwood. Logs cut in the forest upstream were formed into rafts and floated down. They were stored afloat in the river to await export. Some were taken to the local sawmills and converted into long rolls of veneer.

Dr.Davies flight took him to Kano in Northern Nigeria and there he re-discovered the airfield built by Elder Dempsters in 1936. He sailed from Lagos for England in the flagship of the Line, the AUREOL. In the Bay of Biscay she encountered the old British paddle tug EPPLETON HALL, which had been sold to an American maritime museum and was on her delivery voyage to the United States west coast. The tug had run out of fuel and the crew had rigged up sails to assist her passage until help arrived, and a very curious sight she looked!

Dr.Davies slides were very well received, and the vote of thanks was heartily endorsed by all members present.

M.K.S.

WITH GREAT SORROW

A familiar and respected figure has departed from our ranks, who gave the Society his support for more than twenty-eight years, right up to the most recent meetings. Nigel W. Kennedy passed away in his sleep on 2nd April 1970.

He will be remembered by us chiefly as an expert on early steam navigation and his book "Records of the Early Steamships"

was published in 1933. His father was also a writer whose book "Steam Navigation" was published in 1903.

Nigel was a keen model maker, and amongst others, constructed models of the Wallasey ferry LISCARD, of 1858; the ELIZABETH of 1815, the first steamer to enter the Mersey, and the Tranmere ferry ETNA of 1817 with engines by Fawcett Preston. The last two models are in the Liverpool Museum.

On the subject of steam, he read three papers to the Society in January 1946; December 1946 and twenty years later, on 21st April 1966. All three papers were about the early steamships, and frequently their connection with Liverpool. He showed how British steam vessels made more and more adventurous voyages as the nineteenth century advanced. Steamers reached France in 1816, the Baltic in 1818 and Portugal in 1820. The ELIZABETH reached the Mersey from the Clyde in June 1815 and the first crossing from Holyhead to Dublin was in 1816 by BRITANNIA.

Nigel Kennedy had another fascinating hobby, far removed from ships. He was a Fellow of the Gemmological Association of Great Britain, and had one of the finest private collections of precious stones in the country.

One can only marvel at the knowledge required to become an authority on gemstones, as it covered such abstruse subjects as mineralogy, crystallography and geology. For pure research he studied the inclusions in the stones - the mysterious occurrences of minute crystals of other minerals within them.

However, where Nigel will be most missed is in the field of education. For many years he was instructor in Gemmology at the Liverpool School of Art and there are, both in the jewellery trade and outside it, a lot of people who owe their knowledge or diplomas to his kindly and yet authoritative approach to this most difficult subject.

Notwithstanding his two main hobbies, perhaps Nigel

Kennedy was best known as an engineer, and in 1963 he gave the Society a fine paper entitled "Some Unorthodox Techniques in Marine Engineering". He was an expert in the use of dry ice, or solid carbon dioxide to shrink metals, and was called upon to assist some of the largest engineering firms with repairs to heavy machinery. He related an instance where the Elder Dempster liner ABA sustained a fractured crankshaft. It was necessary to insert a pin. This was machined slightly oversize, shrunk by dry ice and inserted to form a tight fit.

During question time after lectures, Nigel frequently rose to enquire, or to impart his thoughts.

The service and interment was at St. Andrews Church, Lower Bebington on 6th April and the Society was represented at the funeral by Mr. Ronald Summerfield.

N.R.P.

#### MARCH MEETING

The Society held a Members' evening on 12th March in the Museum's new Coffee Bar. The large number of members present saw an exhibition of recent additions to the Museum's maritime collection, and members' own paintings and nautical treasures.

The paintings brought along by Mr. K.A. Griffin, the marine artist, attracted great attention.

One of the highlights of the evening was a show in the new Planetarium. This machinery was worked by Mr. P.J. Welsh, our Chairman. The demonstration showed how effectively the Zeiss projector could simulate the night sky over Liverpool and other places in the world. Individual constellations could be pointed out, planets could be made to appear and

there were all kinds of devices to guide us round the heavens - in all, a remarkable show.

Mr. E.W. Paget-Tomlinson read a paper on the long defunct Holme Line of Maryport compiled by one of our country members Mr. D.G. Sythes. This traced the development of the ship-owning business of the Hine family from 1873 to their closure in 1911. Hines began by owning sailing ships mainly with the suffix "Holme" in the Australian trade. They were all handsome vessels and started as full rigged ships but were soon cut down to barques. The BRIER HOLME built in 1876, 921 tons gross, was especially well found with superbly made teak brassbound deck fittings and elaborate embossed glass in the skylights of the saloon.

Hines also owned steamers, and by 1883 there were about 23 vessels in their fleet, 11 steamers and 12 sailing ships. This figure included small coasting steamers and schooners. Hines ships played an important role in the coal, iron and steel export trade of Maryport which was at its peak in the 1880's and 1890's. The steamer ALNE HOLME of 1036 gross tons was the first vessel to enter the newly completed Senhouse Dock at Maryport on 27th May 1884.

In 1887 Hines entered the liner trade when they began a regular service from Maryport to Montreal. The main cargo was steel rails, but their steamers FERN HOLME, THORN HOLME and WEST CUMBERLAND were all fitted with passenger accommodation. The first class fare was £16 return! By 1906 the Holme Line was declining - there were only 9 ships left. 2 vessels were lost in the following year and the last two sailing ships were sold in 1908. The firm continued to trade with its remaining steamers until the last survivor - FOREST HOLME was disposed of in 1911.

The Holme Line was one of many small companies to go out of business just before the First World War.

This paper was greatly appreciated by members and was a

# NEW NAMES FOR OLD

AGIOS ANTONIOS	ex CYPRIAN MED ex MANCHESTER PIONEER
BALTIC ORE	ex SHEAF WEAR
BERMUDIAN	ex GATCOMBE (tug)
BAP FERRE	ex HMS DECOY
CABINDA	ex HOLMSIDE
CLIMPING	ex CAMBERWELL
FEROCIA	ex NOACH
FILOTHEI	ex CITY OF JOHANNESBURG
FEDERAL HOUSTON	ex TUSCANY
FLETCHING	ex EWELL
GEORGE	ex RATHLIN HEAD
HISTORIC COLOCOTRONIS	ex HOEGH LANCE
JULIANA	ex LUCELLUM
KIM GUAN	ex KING FISH ex CHOPIN ex AKASSA ex CHOPIN
	ex RADJA MAS ex PLADDA
MEROPI	ex WAVENEY ex WAVENEY STAR ex ORIENT
MACHARDA	ex ANDANIA
MARIANNA	ex RAMON DE LARRINAGA
NORWEST LAIRD	ex LOCHIEL
NISOS DELOS	ex WARDEN (tug)
NISOS MYKONOS	ex EXPERT (tug)
ORCA	ex CLEARWATER (tug)
NEREIDE	ex BORDER HUNTER
OCEAN MONARCH	ex EMPRESS OF ENGLAND
PACIFIC ENVOY	ex LOCH RYAN
PACIFIC RANGER	ex OROYA ex ARABIC
RAMAIDA	ex STREAM FISHER ex EMPIRE JUDY
SHUN HING	ex COROMANDEL
SIROCO	ex IRON ORE
STALO	ex JALAGOVIND
SOYNION	ex CAMMELL LAIRD ex ROYAL ULSTERMAN
TEXACO DURHAM	ex REGENT FALCON



## THE YEARS HAVE FLOWN

In these days of radio and television, many stories are recorded of the sailing ships of the eighteenth century but little is really known of the men who built and sailed these vessels, on what were very long and dangerous voyages. Fortunately some are still able to recall the actual facts as passed on from father to son. Of this breed of men was one William Ellyott, who built the brig CORMORANT on the north bank of the Mersey River around the year 1740. Then as master he took the brig to Sierra Leone, West Africa, with two sons and two nephews as officers and some twenty crew, and with a full cargo of slaves - men, women and children.

The CORMORANT sailed to the Caribbean Islands and having sold the slaves at quite a profit, the skipper loaded the brig with tropical fruit, and sailed up the east coast of America to Salem, Massachusetts. The fruit having been sold, furs were obtained by barter with knives and small tools from settlers on the coast of Virginia. The long voyage back to Cork, Ireland, was interrupted by Customs officers in a Custom guard cutter. A running fight ensued but Capt. William Ellyott opened fire with a cannonade over the stern and beat off the attack. The CORMORANT then sailed away from Cork which actually was the home port of the Captain.

On reaching Liverpool the brig was sold and Captain Ellyott and his officers and crew then marched away to York. Here they settled to rest in a coaching inn situated in "Coney" Street, and in order to avoid arrest, Capt. Ellyott at once changed his name to Coney, and later having used up their money, it was decided to split up. The two sons marched off to London River and found other ships for work. The two nephews made their way to Bristol and entered the coastguard service. The leader, no longer a Captain, found work as seaman on the DUKE OF ARGYLE and later became a foremast seaman on the AFRICAN under Captain John Newton. Both

of these vessels were slavers and on the next voyage, when embarking slaves, the crew of the longboat asked Coney to lead them in mutiny. Coney would have none of this, and at once returned to the ship and reported the men. They, of course, would be flogged as usual in these cases, and were then put in irons. Coney was at once made First Mate and later was sent ashore again to obtain more slaves.

The Captain, John Newton became aware of Coney as a navigator having skippered his own brig. He was an expert at navigation by the stars. The largest number of slaves were taken on any voyage, and landfall was made quickly on Antigua, which meant a huge profit, as few of the slaves died en route. Coney ended up wealthy enough to retire and his son followed on as skipper of another ship. Slavery was becoming very difficult because of the British crown putting down this traffic, and further voyages were then made to the Black Sea. This skipper was my great great grandfather and he trained his son William Frederick Coney (born 1820), and he became chief engineer on the VECTIS which carried Miss Florence Nightingale to the Crimea. VECTIS, a paddle wheel steamer was caught in a very severe storm soon after leaving the London River, and the starboard paddle wheel was smashed. Grandfather managed to make a jury rig paddle and VECTIS reached Portland. Repairs were made and the voyage was continued.

On the return from the Crimea, Miss Florence Nightingale, who had many wealthy women amongst her nursing staff, handed to my father a bag of golden sovereigns as a "thank you" for saving their lives and this enabled my grandfather to leave this sea life. Strange again was the end of this voyage, because the Chief Stewardess was my grandmother, and owing to her being pregnant it was found necessary to anchor outside Newhaven harbour in Sussex, and grandma was carried on to the quay and my father was born in the Harbour Master's office on the end of the quay by the side of the lighthouse.

Very close to this spot, there has been constructed a new lighthouse which will be "sunk" on to the bed of the sea and take the place of the Royal Sovereign Light-ship. The base of this construction is 1,000 tons and the tower will be 100 ft. above high water mark when completed.

Strange again when my grandfather used to embark in Bristol he became very friendly with the famous shipbuilder Mr. I.K. Brunel, who built the GREAT BRITAIN and the GREAT EASTERN, and undoubtedly some of these ship drawings were made on the dining room table in the home of grandfather at Sutton, Surrey. At this town he became chief engineer at the Waterworks and also at the Gas Works.

It is now quite easy for you to see how interested I am in the project to bring back the GREAT BRITAIN to Bristol from the creek in the Falkland Islands where the hulk of this once fine ship has been cradled on a sandbank. My wife and I hope to be "on hand" when at long last she is towed into the dock where she was built. We hope to walk, where once my grandfather walked on board.

H. V. CONEY

#### SALVAGE OF THE GREAT BRITAIN

Early in May comes the exciting news that GREAT BRITAIN cradled on the huge barge MULUS III has reached Monte Video in tow of VARIUS II. The old ship, launched in 1843, has lain wrecked in the Falkland Islands and there were doubts that she would ever reach Britain. The Hamburg firm of Ulrich Harms, now so well known on the Mersey, have done a fine salvage job in cradling the old ship aboard the barge.

It may be remembered that MULUS III loaded a consignment of heavy piping in Birkenhead and was towed to West Africa by VARIUS II about Christmas time. The two vessels then proceeded to the Falklands. It is assumed that their destination is Avonmouth, and that Mr. & Mrs. Coney will have their wish after all.

## THE LIVERPOOL AND NORTH WALES STEAMSHIP CO.

What memories this title evokes! Lazy summer afternoons at Menai Bridge, tea at the Victoria, then the leisurely voyage back through the Straits amidst hordes of yachts around Beaumaris, and catching the cool sea breeze off Puffin Island. It all seems like yesterday.

May I set this scene for making a correction regarding Captain Dop, in our last issue.

No other person than Frank C. Thornley, who wrote the history of this Company, put me right on some points where I had strayed, as we stood on windswept Princes Stage recently.

For the record, Captain Dop retired in 1960 from sea-going, and became Pier Master at Llandudno. Captain Pritchard took over ST.TUDNO until the last season of the Company in 1962. Incidentally, ST.SEIRIOL was towed away from Birkenhead in November 1962 and ST.TUDNO in April 1963 - both to Continental breakers.

Frank Thornley also told me something of the epic voyages of ST.SEIRIOL from besieged Dunkirk in 1940. The ship was under constant bombing and machine-gun attacks, one near miss lifting her bodily. On one crossing she picked up survivors from the burning CRESTED EAGLE - the former well-known Thames excursion steamer.

Of ST.TUDNO and her post-war sailings, does anyone else besides the writer remember the records presumably played by "Sparks" in his boatdeck cabin? If the ship sported a signature tune, surely it was the "Dream of Olwen" which fitted the leisurely scene so admirably.

N.R.P.

## APRIL MEETING

On Thursday, April 9th, Mr. R.G. Loram - a professional diver and a member of the Society talked about deep sea diving. He brought with him a complete diver's suit together with an underwater telephone, a face mask for skin diving and many pictures of historic diving gear.

Diving has been in the news recently because of projects such as the exploitation of North Sea gas. It was also becoming an increasingly popular sport and an important tool for the nautical archaeologist. Down the years there had been an urge to improve diving apparatus so that man could descend deeper and deeper into the oceans. Diving shared many of the problems of space exploration - a lack of atmosphere, weightlessness, orientation and communication. There was also the extra problem of working under pressure; for every 33ft. of descent, pressure increased 14.7 lbs. per sq. inch. The divers air supply had to be set at the same pressure as that outside. This created problems of de-compression when it came to surfacing again.

The oldest way of diving was simply by holding your breath underwater. Pearls and sponges were still gathered by divers without breathing apparatus in the Persian Gulf. The experienced divers could go down as much as 75ft. and stay down for up to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  minutes.

In the 16th and 17th centuries inventors began to try and lengthen the time spent underwater by means of diving suits of leather with a strengthened tube up to the surface for the air supply. Attempts to devise a system of air regeneration failed because of the ignorance of carbon dioxide in the air exhaled from the lungs. In the 18th century attempts were made to develop a face pump to pump air down the tube to the diver. The breakthrough was made by Siebe - a German instrument maker living in England. He developed the closed diving dress supplied with air from an efficient force pump to the helmet. There was a non return

outlet valve on the helmet to get rid of the exhaled air. Siebe's was the basis of all modern diving suits.

Among its first successes was the breaking up of the sunken ROYAL GEORGE in the 1840's by the Royal Engineers. The cumbersome enclosed suit has been largely replaced by a simple facemask connected to an oxygen bottle strapped on the diver's back. Today it was also possible to make diving sets which could regenerate the air supply.

Diving bells were another method of getting underwater. They were used with some success in the 17th century - for example, there was a fruitful inspection of the Armada galleon wrecked at Tobermory. In the late 18th century, John Smeaton devised a bell in the form of an iron box supplied by air from force pumps on the surface. Today it was possible for diving bells to go down to 600ft. and deeper. They were also being developed as "space stations" for working divers.

Mr.Loram's talk was much appreciated and after coffee he answered many interesting questions. It was possible to see in clear water on a bright day down to a depth of 75ft. But in the Mersey artificial light and a good sense of touch were essential. The Scottish lochs were the darkest waters of all. A  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  knot tide is the fastest in which it is possible for a diver to work. When asked about the plans to salve the wrecks of TITANIC and ANDREA DORIA, Mr.Loram considered that salvage was feasible but the great costs would not justify the rewards of raising such wrecks.

Mr.Weir proposed the vote of thanks and this was seconded by Mr.Tapson, and was carried with great acclamation.

This meeting was attended by a distinguished overseas member of the Society - Dr.E.C.Wright of St.John, New Brunswick, Canada. She had come to England to investigate the history of sailing ships built in New Brunswick and sold to English owners in the mid-19th century. We are pleased to report that several members were able to assist her enquiries into Liverpool ships bought from New Brunswick.

N.K.S.

## QUERY

Mr. Colin Howard of 8 Silverdale Avenue, Chadderton, Oldham, enquires if any member has information about the following vessel:-

Screw brig ABBOTSFORD of Liverpool.  
1700 tons approx. Wrecked 1875 on  
Wylfa Head, Anglesey. Owners at the  
time - International Navigation Co.

## MERSEY NOTES

Rea's small motor tug INCEGARTH which was laid up for a year or two in Morpeth Tongue, was being fitted out at Easter as one of the scallop dredging vessels based on Port St. Mary, I.O.M.

Three visits of British aircraft carriers to Princes Landing Stage can be reported. HMS EAGLE came on 27th February and so many people came to her "open days" that even with extra time allowed, many went home again disappointed. HMS ALBION arrived on 8th May during the Mersey tug strike, then in its third week. HM tug AGILE came from Pembroke to assist with berthing, the carrier's own small landing craft handling the shore lines. At this time, we also had in dock the Norwegian frigate OSLO, the French destroyer KERSAINT and HMS AJAX. This was a four-day visit to mark the end of the Battle of the Atlantic 25 years ago. HMS ARK ROYAL is to visit the Mersey - her birthplace - at the end of June.

On 4th May QUEEN OF THE ISLES arrived to act once more as yacht to the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, giving cruises both coastwise and through the dock system to port users. An unhappy flavour though here, for the tug mens strike continued, bringing unemployment to over two thousand dockers, forcing vessels to anchor at the Bar to await berths or being diverted to other ports. The loss to ship repair firms was also serious, and one wonders what next can occur to damage the prestige of the port of Liverpool. It was noted that

the dockgatememen rejected a call to strike in sympathy by three votes to one, and so the docking of ships is still possible.

In late April, the Ferry Strike gave the dockyard an opportunity to take in hand some of the Wallasey and Birkenhead fleets for a change of funnel colours under the new Public Transport Authority. And so instead of the distinctive red and black, or white and black, we now have a standard primrose with blue top. The strike inconvenienced commuters for more than a week, until the ferrymen were awarded a large proportion of the wage increase they sought. One is left wondering - "need it have happened?"

On Saturday, 25th April, I watched the Phillipine owned ship ZAMBOANGA and then the Liberian EXEMPLAR enter the Alfred Locks in a thunder shower. The co-operation of shore gangs, gig boats, ships' crews and winchmen, and of course the Mersey Pilots, was good to watch even in such damp and dreary conditions. The motor boats brought ropes ashore from quite a long distance, one on either bow. Walkie-talkies were used on bridge, focsle and poop. It is surprising what can be done when the need arises, and one considers the school of thought which views lavish tug assistance as an expensive luxury. Indeed, as the fitting of bow thrusters becomes more general, some of the tug's duties will diminish.

The Brazilian tanker AGUA GRANDE towed by the Yugo Slavian tug JUNAK reached Cammell Lairds for damage repairs after an extensive fire, on 7.3.70.

Although Merseyside had heard of the financial troubles at Cammell Laird's shipyard, it came as a bombshell in early May to realize that the yard was in danger of having to close. A Government loan of four million pounds has staved off the present emergency.



Unhappily again, the Cammell Laird-built IRISH STAR, reported on trials in January, had to have one of her engines removed and returned to makers. In May she has still not been handed over to her owners.

On 6th February, LAIRDSFIELD of the Coast Lines Group capsized just after leaving Middlesbrough for Cork with steel. An unavailing search for survivors was made by Redcar and Teesmouth lifeboats, the Tees Pilot boat, a helicopter and HMS BILDESTON.

On 9th March in fog and freezing temperature, the Manx steamer SNAEFELL left Princes Landing Stage for Douglas on the normal daily service. Almost immediately, in taking avoiding action with a large vessel in her path, which had anchored in the fog, SNAEFELL gained sternway and crashed into the landing stage near the floating roadway. The plating below the rubber was badly buckled and she had to be taken out of service, her running mate MANX MAID then making a daily sailing in both directions.

The Mersey Docks and Harbour Board had a loss on the past year's working of well over one million pounds. The cutting back of the Landing Stage because of dwindling use by liners has been in the writer's mind for some time. The whole structure is due for renewal in the near future and is already a big drain on the Board's funds. A shortened version of the present stage is probably visualized, catering for less frequent liner berthing and for Manx steamers. A puzzling remark at the Board's meeting, as reported, was that it might be necessary to site the ferry berths elsewhere. As one who walks the landing stage almost daily and can traverse its length in seven minutes with a favourable breeze, I shall be sorry indeed when we no longer have this bracing promenade for healthful exercise in lunchtimes.

The small white painted surveying craft HMS WOODLARK was in Princes Dock on 16th April. She was built as the minesweeper YAXHAM.

MALCOLM MILLER, youth training schooner, arrived in Egerton Dock from Holyhead on 8th May. On this cruise she had an all-girl crew. The ship was dressed overall and open for inspection.

STELLA MARINA, delayed with engine trouble in Norway, was not ready to take over the summer service between Fleetwood and Douglas. McBrayne's LOCHIEL has been acquired to maintain the service, and renamed NORWEST LAIRD. She was built by Denny's, 1939.

OCEAN MONARCH left the Mersey at 3.30 p.m. on Saturday 11th April, in the immaculate livery of Shaw Savill, her new owners. As EMPRESS OF ENGLAND her recent Canadian Pacific colours had not pleased most ship enthusiasts - to my way of thinking, and this is where opinion comes into it - there was no dignity or appeal in the green and blue circles and triangles that C.P. ships adopted. But here was this fine product of Vickers looking more majestic than she had ever done, leaving us, probably for ever. She had a clean white hull and superstructure, buff and black funnel and emerald green waterline. The sun shone and her smoke rose vertically travelling above her as she paled into the mist down channel.

N.R.P.

#### FISHERY PROTECTION

On 24th April HMS BELTON brought the Belgian green-hulled trawler LUCALI of Ostend into Princes Dock. The skipper was fined £300 for illegal fishing in the Irish Sea.

Four days later BELTON apprehended the Irish trawler FATHER MURPHY seven miles inside British fishing limits off Wigtown Bay, Kirkcudbright. The skipper Michael Doran of Howth was fined £200 at Fleetwood whence the trawler was escorted. His fishing gear worth £220 was confiscated and he was ordered to pay £20 costs.

## NEW MEMBERS (Local)

B. Chilton Esq.	Liverpool
C. Dixon Esq.	Southport
Mr. & Mrs. Colin Howard	Chadderton
D. G. Owen Esq.	Crosby
J. C. Rathbone Esq.	Liverpool

Whom we are very pleased to welcome to the Society.

## RESIGNATIONS

Sir John M. Brocklebank	Cunard S.S.Co.
W.H. Eastwood Esq., B.Eng.	AINA Hightown
Mr. & Dr. L. Gibson	Hoylake
R. Quilliam Esq.	Bebington
R.A. Stephenson Esq., M.Eng.	MICE West Kirby
Derek S. Wright Esq.	Birkdale

Whom we thank for past support.

## THE TUG STRIKE

With two days spring holiday in hand, I spent very pleasant afternoons at the Birkenhead entrances on 11th/12th May. The Pakistani MANSOOR ex MUJAHID ex THOR ex FRITZ THYSEN of the East Bengal Steamship Co. arrived from Dundee light and entered without tugs, and additionally without gig boat assistance or shore riggers. Office staff handled the mooring ropes.

Next day the office staff of Vogt and Maguire Ltd. attended on the Chilean LEBU and got her away to sea with destination Valparaiso. This was a smoothly organized accomplishment, obviously recognized by the Chileans who lowered a crate of bottled beer for the young clerks, and gave three long blasts on the whistle as the ship squared up to stem the flood tide off Alfred Locks.

I understand the prize for handling without tugs should go to the Kuwaiti AL JABARIAH, which sailed from the Mersey

to her berth in Bidston Dock without putting a rope ashore.  
The secret? Bow-thruster, and lack of strong winds.

N.R.P.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - BRIEF REPORT

Our annual meeting was held in the Coffee Bar of Liverpool Museums at 7.30 p.m. on Thursday 14th May. The usual business was transacted and the Council were voted back in office "en bloc" under the Chairmanship of Mr.P.J.Welsh, with Hon.Sec. M.K.Stammers and Hon.Treas. T.D.Tozer.

The ordinary subscription for local membership remains at one pound per annum, but it was decided that owing to decimalization coming within the next season, man and wife membership should become 28/- instead of 27/6d. One or two members suggested that the figure might be rounded down instead of up, but Mr.Coney thought it was easily worth 30/-!

There are new thoughts on ship visits during the summer - the Secretary is to have a young assistant - there is a possibility of publishing Transactions once more if the price of photo-litho permits.

Our cash position and membership figures are in a healthy condition. We heard a few details of the talks planned for next season, a project for a Social Evening before Christmas with refreshments, and a visit to HMS EAGLET before she is scrapped combined with a Naval lecture for the occasion.

After the interval we had a film about Viking ships, some colour slides of Mersey Ferries in new and old colours by this writer. Also slides showing the MULUS and VARIUS type vessels which are bringing home the old GREAT BRITAIN from the Falkland Islands.

Gordon Ditchfield showed us his colour slides of the wreck of HEMSLEY I on the north Cornish coast last year, and outlined the ship's history and fate.

Any correspondence concerning News, Notes and Queries, short articles or items of marine news should be addressed:-

N.R.Pugh, 7 Dunbar Road, Hillside, Southport.

L I V E R P O O L     N A U T I C A L  
R E S E A R C H     S O C I E T Y

Be well assured, though wave and wind  
    Have mightier blows in store,  
That we who keep the watch assigned  
    Must stand to it the more;  
And as our streaming bows dismiss  
    Each billow's baulked career,  
Sing, welcome Fate's discourtesy  
    Whereby it is made clear  
How in all time of our distress,  
    As in our triumph too,  
The game is more than the player of the game,  
    And the ship is more than the crew!

Rudyard Kipling  
"Fringes of the Fleet"

NEWS, NOTES AND QUERIES

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HOMEcoming OF THE GREAT BRITAIN

This autumn number is predominantly concerned with the successful salvage of GREAT BRITAIN, and her passage home to the dock where she was built at Bristol.

As reported previously, our member Mr. H.V. Coney looked forward to visiting the old ship, and this he was able to achieve, as related overleaf.

Most readers will have seen the splendid documentary shown on two occasions on B.B.C. Television, and an effort has been made to give on succeeding pages, the narrative of this item.

N.R.P.

## SALVAGE OF THE GREAT BRITAIN

The news given in our previous edition that the now famous tug VARIUS II was making good progress and had reached Monte Video, came to many lovers of ships, as a pleasant surprise. Few seamen had expected that the work of lifting and towing the old ship could be dealt with so expeditiously.

My wife and I had noted every reference to this item in press or on radio, and we were ready to travel to Bristol. We left Liverpool on 3rd July and at 7-30 that evening we were standing alongside the pontoon MULUS III and the GREAT BRITAIN in Avonmouth Dock. No time had been lost in submerging the pontoon to allow the old ship to float once more in Jefferies Dock.

Of this moment, my wife and I had talked for a very long time, and I just could not find words to say, when in the evening sunshine, I was able to study the lovely curves of the bows of this once elegant vessel. Having been deeply submerged for many years, the lower plating and timbers were thickly encrusted with barnacles and various other marine growth. The bowsprit and figurehead had been broken off short, but the upper plating of the bows was in very good condition.

Timbers had been placed in position in the spring of 1887, when the engines and main boilers were removed, and to some extent had compensated for the weight. Amidships on the starboard side, the now-famous crack in the plate had closed to a great extent, having matted the lower part of the crack. The salvage engineers were pleased to find their efforts assisted, because when on an even keel on the pontoon, the old ship had helped herself to straighten her back, so to speak. The strip plates which had been fitted snapped together.

I wasted no time after witnessing the towing of the ship from Avonmouth to Bristol Town Dock on 5th July, in obtaining

the special permit from Messrs. Charles Hill and Sons, to go aboard GREAT BRITAIN.

On Wednesday, 8th July, I climbed the ladder to the lower deck after producing my permit for examination by the police officer in charge of security. Then I was handed over to a young seaman, a Falkland Islander, who guided me for my own safety.

A great deal of the deck timbers were "soft" to say the least. The young man had been engaged for some months in preparing the ship for the journey to England, and Bristol in particular. He obtained an electric torch and we descended into the Rudder Stem Bulkhead Cavity, about five feet square and fitted with a steel ladder of eight rungs. This would give access to the propeller shaft, for oiling and inspection and for the pintle of the rudder stem. This to me, was a very important item of discovery, because I have for some months argued that the GREAT BRITAIN did not "down funnel and up screw" during suitable sailing weather. There was certainly no space for the six-blade screw to be lifted, and indeed to disengage the clutch and to re-engage this very heavy piece of equipment would require lifting tackle and crew to deal with it. Furthermore when the propeller shaft had been removed, the actual sternpost had simply been cut away, and "straight" plating fitted.

During my tour of the ship I looked down on a gang of men, under expert supervision, lifting plates and timbers above the double bottom. When the covers were removed the actual design of the double bottom was seen for the first time for at least 100 years. This was below the position of the engine room.

The whole of the decks below had been removed from the forward half of the ship, when she had been used as a wool store. This enabled me to study the complete ribbing of the hull.

The design of embedding the bowsprit and the stem give the complete answer to those who wonder how a ship could stand up to terrific weather and exposure for a century. This is the perfect tribute to Mr. I.K. Brunel, and should encourage every Britisher to back the GREAT BRITAIN Project Committee to rebuild this really remarkable vessel.

My wife and I will return to Bristol again, to report on the progress of the above effort. This will mean that the decks will be renewed, there will be a specimen cabin as used by passengers, and if possible a mock-up of the type of engine with which she was first equipped.

H.V. CONEY

Our member expresses his great delight and satisfaction at a mission primarily so successful, largely due to the kindest assistance given by Messrs. Charles Hill and Sons. To be greeted with "So glad you were able to come" was as good as "Welcome" on the mat. All praise too for the guide who saw that Mr. Coney came to no harm. The sketches he made will no doubt be shown to us at a future meeting.

#### RECOLLECTIONS OF A BUSY LIFE

was the title of a book published in 1910 written by Sir William B. Forwood, J.P. Our member Fred Henry pinpoints the following extract:-

"Our home at Seaforth commanded a very beautiful marine view. I remember seeing the GREAT BRITAIN sail, and the same night she was stranded on the coast of Ireland. For years the GREAT BRITAIN was regarded as one of the wonders of the world. She was considered to be such a leviathan that people said she would never pay, and I believe she never did; her tonnage was under 4000. She remained the largest ship afloat for many years.



The GREAT BRITAIN went ashore in Dundrum Bay on 22nd September 1846 and was refloated and towed to Liverpool 25th August 1847. She remained for some time in the North Atlantic trade and subsequently was converted into a 4-masted sailing ship. Her final use was as a coal hulk at the Falkland Islands".

## GREAT BRITAIN DOCUMENTARY

A fascinating feature on B.B.C. Television has told the story of I.K. Brunel's GREAT BRITAIN.

One hundred and twenty-six years ago the famous engineer and shipbuilder designed this second ship for service between Britain and North America, and she was to be the largest and fastest yet conceived. She was built in a special drydock at Bristol, her tonnage about 3,000 and her length 322 ft. - rather similar dimensions to the present KING ORRY.

Her launch on 19th July 1843 was a gala day in Bristol and guests paid a guinea to watch, and attend a banquet afterwards. Prince Albert was in a pagoda on the quayside, and when the ship became waterborne and tugs about to take her in charge, one of the ropes broke and the lady who was to christen the ship dropped the bottle of champagne into the water. Prince Albert saved the day by seizing a spare bottle and hurling it against the ship's side from a distance of twenty feet. Her launch was the occasion for another misfortune, for the ship was five feet wider than the lock entrance and it took six months to release her.

Her main engine weighed 340 tons and the engine-room was 117 ft. long. There was an enclosed promenade deck where passengers could exercise in any weather. There were staterooms for 360 passengers and the dining room was considered to be sumptuous for those times.

The ship had six masts, actually the largest wooden masts

ever put into a ship, and she had one funnel. There is in existence an actual photograph taken of her when she was built.

Instead of paddle wheels, she had a screw propeller weighing 4 tons, with 6 blades, 16 ft. diameter.

In January 1845 she set sail from Bristol for London with many important passengers, and met the full force of a gale, but managed  $12\frac{1}{2}$  knots at 19 revolutions. She stayed 5 months in the Thames, and then came to Liverpool to commence the service to New York.

Unfortunately the logbook of the first voyage has been lost, but it is known that she covered the 3,300 miles in 14 days 21 hours, burning 70/80 tons of coal per day at an average speed of 9 knots. When she reached New York she was the first vessel ever to make an ocean passage with screw propeller. She had the misfortune on subsequent voyages to shed propeller blades and once came home with only one blade left. Her six masts were reduced to five and she got a new propeller, but voyage 5 was disastrous for she went aground at Dundrum, and she was left unprotected both from the populace and the weather on an exposed beach. Brunel had a faggot breakwater built which protected his brain-child through the winter storms.

In the spring, she was salvaged, but her owners went bankrupt and she was acquired by Gibbs, Bright & Co. to run between Liverpool and Australia with 730 passengers. In 1852 she set sail for the Antipodes, and whether piracy was expected or not, she carried six heavy guns, arms and ammunition for 100 men. She took 82 days to Melbourne after running short of coal and as this was in excess of estimate, modifications were made to her boilers. At this time, she became a three-master.

In 1855 she carried many troops to the Crimea and in 1857 a large number to quell the Indian Mutiny.

The ship printed its own newspaper and made 32 trips to Australia after which she was laid up in Liverpool for 5 years.

In 1882 she was converted to a sailing ship and for some reason her iron hull was sheathed in wood. Then in 1886 she commenced a voyage to San Francisco but was damaged in trying to round Cape Horn, and turned back for the Falkland Islands. Here, the Falkland Islands Company acquired her and she was made a hulk for coal and wool at Port Stanley. Openings were cut in her side for ease of loading, but after 47 years more, she was considered of no further use and towed round to Sparrows Cove where holes were cut in her stern, so that she settled down on a sandbank presumably to end her days. Much of her decking was missing, yet her winches still remained and one heavy yard swung aloft.

This was the state of her in 1968, when HMS ENDURANCE (A 171) made a survey of the ship and her environment, with the assistance of Dr. Corlett, a Basingstoke naval architect. There was a wide crack in her side and divers examined the hull. Then the Bahamas millionaire and financier Jack Hayward saw a letter in the "Times" followed by a leading article which aroused his interest. Others concerned were Dr. David Owen and Richard Gould Adams, and a committee was formed to plan the return of the ship.

In March 1970, pontoon MULUS III and tug VARIUS II arrived in the Falklands after delivering a heavy cargo of piping in West Africa, which had been loaded at Birkenhead in December 1969.

The T.V. item showed Lord Strathcona being interviewed on board the tug, which incidentally is a converted stern-trawler. There were fifteen men in the German ships together with five Southampton salvage men. The first job was patching the deck and then holes in the ship's sides. Royal Marines, stationed in the dependancy, in frogmen's suits tackled the holes with sheets of plywood over which cement was used.

Leslie O'Neill was responsible for floating, but first the three masts and one 105 ft. yard had to be lowered. What looked to be very lightweight sheerlegs were used. In withdrawing the mizzen mast whole, the base proved to be rotten and the cameras showed the mast crashing down, demolishing the deckhouse which had been made habitable. The two remaining masts were sawn above deck level to obviate further incidents. It was said that if the heavy yard had fallen, whilst cutting away with oxy-acetylene burners, the whole salvage operation would have been in vain. It did appear that considerable danger was risked.

Up to this point, work had proceeded for only one week. Mattresses were used to plug the large crack in the hull, so that when the ship floated the crack would close, and receive more permanent attention in the form of plating and strapping.

Preparations were now made to pump GREAT BRITAIN clear of water, and whilst this went on, the great disappearing trick was achieved - the MULUS had to be sunk on the sea bed. The correct place for this had been surveyed by HMS ENDURANCE. Gently and firmly the barge took the bottom with tall metal poles projecting from the water. The question now was - would GREAT BRITAIN float on the morrow?

Well, she did, and seemed to take the salvors by surprise as she withdrew herself from the engulfing sand and mud. The ensign of the Falkland Islands was run up at the stern and small tugs pulled and nudged her between the poles marking the barge. Inches mattered, but in 24 hours work the barge was raised, slowly to correct any list, and secure the old ship. Carefully all tanks were checked and a German engineer reported "swimming safely - no list".

And so on 14th April the flotilla left Sparrow Cove for Port Stanley. Many had said the feat could not be accomplished, some said it should not be done, but it had taken four weeks, with ten days more at Port Stanley for final preparations for the ocean voyage. The weather had been the biggest threat,

but now GREAT BRITAIN was actually welded to the MULUS and about to commence Voyage 47 after a period of 86 years.

N.R.P.

#### NEW NAMES FOR OLD

The following changes within the Ocean Management Group come from Geoffrey White:-

DARDANUS	ex GLENGARRY
DEUCALION	ex GLENGYLE
GLENROY	ex DEMODOCUS
GLENBEG	ex DIOMED
GLENFRUIN	ex DOLIUS
GLENLOCHY	ex ANTENOR
ORESTES	ex GLENAFFRIC ex NESTOR
PREMIUS	ex GLENORCHY ex PRIAM (1942)

In consequence of the present operation of "Lamey" and "Cock" tugs by the Alexandra Towing Co. the following name changes are being made:-

CANADA	ex PEA COCK
COBURG	ex ALFRED LAMEY
COLLINGWOOD	ex HEATH COCK
FORMBY	ex WEATHER COCK
GLADSTONE	ex FLYING COCK
HUSKISSON	ex JAMES LAMEY
HORNBY	ex J. H. LAMEY
MORPETH	ex WEST COCK
SALTHOUSE	ex B. C. LAMEY
SLOYNE	ex FIGHTING COCK
WAPPING	ex WILLIAM LAMEY
WELLINGTON	ex GAME COCK V.

## Other changes:-

ANCO KNIGHT	ex ATHELKNIGHT
BENCAIRN	ex CITY OF BRISBANE
CHERRYWOOD	ex SILVERCRAG
ERATINI	ex BEAVERBANK
J. I. WINDSOR	ex ALCYONE
JALAGIRIJA	ex ROSEWOOD
KOSTANTIS FOTINOS	ex DARINIAN
LAMBROS M. FATIS	ex LA HORTENSIA
LILY M	ex LOUIS L.D.
LANK SINHA	ex MALDIVE EXPLORER ex MATURATA
MILADY	ex GITTE GINGE
MANIPUR	ex IVERNIA (lengthened 80ft
MARCO	ex KAPTOMARCO ex CITY OF CHICAGO
MIKRASIATIS	ex BORDER LASS
NETTUNO	ex BORDER SENTINEL
NEMEO	ex BORDER FUSILIER
REDTHORN	ex ORANMORE
RINOULA	ex MERCIAN
SAINT ANDREAS	ex SOUTHWARK
SOLEK	ex HOEGH SILVERSPRAY
SPYRO	ex KAPTOSPYRO ex CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
VENUS (Gr)	ex BENHIAANT ex BEAVERLODGE
	ex ZEALANDIC ex BLACK PRINCE
	ex EMPIRE REGENT
ZIRA	ex ASTRONOMER

## OLD TIMERS

Sandpump vessel PEAKDALE ex PRINSES JULIANA has gone to the breakers. Built 1910 she worked for many years for Manchester Ship Canal Company then for Richard Abel & Sons.

Coppack Brothers' INDORITA lies in Egerton Dock these many months - an alsation dog standing guard on board.

In June the tug LILIAS of Liverpool was seen at the breakers yard at Passage West, Co.Cork. She will be remembered as JAMES LAMEY, and since 1966 has been working on a dock scheme with the SLOYNE at Belfast. Also at Passage was the trawler LORD WAVELL.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

At the Annual General Meeting in May, an assistant to our Secretary, Mr. M.K. Stammers, was elected. He is Mr. John Robinson of the Liverpool Museums staff, whom we welcome to the post.

The first meeting of the 1970-71 season will be on Thursday, 8th October - the subject to be announced shortly. A special Social Evening is being planned for Thursday, 17th December, which will be additional to the usual monthly fixture.

The Museums have acquired on permanent loan from Messrs. T. J. Brocklebank Ltd., a set of Lloyds Registers (complete) from 1834 to 1969. It is hoped to exhibit some other recent acquisitions at the first meeting.

## MEMORIES OF THE DAYS OF SAIL

Our member, Mr. G.A. Kiddie, of Southport, was once an apprentice in the 4-masted barque WANDERER made famous in the writings of John Masefield.

Mr. Kiddie related some of his experiences to me recently and recalled how he met the poet, was invited to his home, and still treasures a presentation copy of the WANDERER verses. He does not, however, consider she is really the subject for glorification. "For how" asks Mr. Kiddie "can you glorify a ship which killed her master and severely injured a dozen of the crew shortly after leaving Liverpool?" This was in 1886 when she arrived in Cork Harbour dismasted after encountering an 85 mph gale.

Our member has his memories and photographs which have inspired him to paint in water colour. After viewing some of his work, I am hoping that our Secretary will soon find an opportunity to put on show at one of our meetings this colourful presentation of windjammer days.

There is an amusing study of the crew, once the ship is under tow up the Mersey after a long voyage, preparing for shore-side. Another of some of the watch hauling on the sheets with our old friend heaving at the rope's end; also a study of the one-time penal settlement of Fernando Noronha. Here is fine work "hid beneath a bushel".

There are not a lot of Cape Horners left, but at 86 Mr. Kiddie still keeps a diary. He reckons this habit stemmed from writing up the abstract log at sea long ago.

N.R.P.

#### ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

The sinking of HMS CAPTAIN with the loss of 472 officers and men on the night of 6/7th September 1870 was a great Victorian naval tragedy. But it has also been described as one of the foremost landmarks in the history of naval architecture.

The CAPTAIN was the brainchild of a brilliant Naval officer, Captain Cowper Coles. Her constructions represented Coles' success in finally persuading the Admiralty to have such a ship built after a decade of arguing. By the use of the press, learned societies, and any other form of propaganda he could use, Coles finally achieved his objective.

The original idea for a low freeboard, sea-going turret ship stemmed initially from the design work for armoured gun-carrying rafts on which Coles had been engaged during the Crimean War. The War ended before any of these rafts were built. Coles had, however, continued to develop the idea until it finally evolved into the armoured turret ship. By 1860 he was reading papers to learned societies on his designs.



Coles design of turret was taken up and used by both British and foreign navies, but he could not convince their Lordships to build a sea-going turret ship. Part of the trouble was that engines were not regarded as sufficiently reliable to enable sails to be dispensed with on ocean passages, and sails and turrets did not go together very well. Finally the Navy did build a sea-going turret ship, HMS MONARCH. But the design did not agree with Coles' views. He considered her freeboard of fourteen foot too great, the forecastle and poop interfered with all-round fire, and it took far too long to clear away the mass of rigging which her sails involved when clearing for action.

At last, in 1867, the Admiralty gave away in the face of popular opinion and allowed Coles to have a ship built to his design. Coles selected Lairds of Birkenhead to build the vessel.

CAPTAIN was "launched" from No.3 Dry Dock, Monks Ferry, in which she had been built on 27th March 1869 and proceeded under her own power to Alfred Dock to complete the work of fitting out. She was an armoured, low freeboard, turret ship with a displacement of 4272 tons. She was 320ft. long with a beam of  $53\frac{1}{2}$  ft. Her designed freeboard was eight feet six inches. Lairds however had modified the design, adding a forecastle and poop and sundry other items increasing the displacement so that the actual freeboard on completion was six feet six inches. The vessel was armed with four 25 ton guns in two turrets.

In addition to her engines which developed 5,400 h.p. on twin screws, she was also rigged on three masts. In order to work the sails clear of the turrets a flying deck was provided. Speed in clearing for action was obtained by the use of tubular iron struts in place of rope shrouds. On trials she developed a speed of  $14\frac{1}{4}$  knots.

At this date stability calculations had only just come into use and were still apt to be regarded as mathematical

curiosities with little practical application. Lairds worked out stability curves for the CAPTAIN but as she had not been "inclined" they did not know the true position of the ship's centre of gravity and had to use an assumed one. They wrote to the Admiralty suggesting that as the vessel was of a new type an inclining experiment should be carried out to get the correct information. They were informed that this test could be left till later as it was necessary to get on with the acceptance trials.

The CAPTAIN was commissioned early in 1870 under the command of Capt. Hugh Burgoyne, V.C. During the spring and early summer she finished her fitting out in the dockyard and did two shakedown cruises. Coles went on both these cruises. The vessel behaved well in all conditions of trim and it looked as if she was going to be a great success. At the end of July the inclining experiment was finally carried out, and in August the CAPTAIN joined the Channel fleet. Capt. Coles went with her.

In the meantime, the construction department were working out the ship's stability in the light of the information obtained from the inclining experiment. This revealed that whilst the vessel had a small range of stability, and whilst she might be safe under bare masts, it could be dangerous to carry sail in bad weather. Instructions on this matter were drafted to pass on to the commanding officer.

Early in September the Channel and Mediterranean Fleets combined for exercises in the Bay of Biscay area. On 6th September they were off Cape Finisterre. It was a windy day with a southwest wind increasing to gale force as night fell. Admiral Milne ordered the vessels to keep station under reefed topsails during the night, steam only to be used in the event of an emergency. The CAPTAIN was under fore and main topsails with two reefs in.

At fifteen minutes after midnight a severe squall

struck the squadron. Some ships lost canvas, others managed to take it off. On board CAPTAIN, however, the results were fatal. Despite all efforts to let fly sheets and get sail off, the ship heeled steadily and inexorably to starboard until she finally capsized. There had been no time to call the watch below, so the only survivors were from those on deck. Both Capt. Burgoyne and Capt. Coles were lost. The only surviving officer was Mr. May the Gunner who had come on deck at midnight to inspect the turret securing chains. Together with seventeen men, he succeeded in scrambling from the water into a launch, which not having been lashed down, floated off when the ship sank. Actually eighteen men got into the launch, but one was washed overboard almost immediately. Despite being short of equipment they managed to reach the Spanish coast by the morning.

The remainder of the squadron were unaware of CAPTAIN's fate, and it was not until daybreak that her absence was noted. After ascertaining that no ship in the squadron had news of the CAPTAIN the Admiral ordered a search. It did not last long. Within the hour HERCULES came upon floating wreckage. Pieces picked up included the end of the jibboom with a sailor's black silk scarf knotted through the sheaf hole. No trace of survivors was found. MONARCH was despatched inshore with the hope that some might have landed. She rejoined the following day bringing back Mr. May and the seventeen seamen, the sole survivors.

When the news reached England, after the first shock the reaction was to seek out who was responsible. The same public opinion that had forced the Admiralty into allowing the ship to be built, now demanded to know why they had allowed an unsafe ship to be placed in service. To follow all the political can-passing and dodging which took place at the court martial, at inquiries, in Parliament and in the columns of the press would fill a large tome.

Very briefly the position was that the Controller of the Navy, Sir Spencer Robinson, who was responsible for the supply

of ships and his Chief Constructor, Reed, had accepted the vessel reluctantly. Reed had resigned in August 1870 to take up private practice. He was succeeded by Barnaby, who although he had worked out the CAPTAIN's stability had not appreciated the full significance of the curves, and no hurry was made to get the instructions to Capt. Burgoyne. Capt. Coles had gone down with the ship. Although he was a clever and ingenious sailor he was not a trained naval architect.

Lairds of course, only built the ship to Cole's design, although if their request for an inclining experiment had been agreed to, the true situation might have been realized in time to avert the catastrophe. The First Lord of the Admiralty, Mr. Childers, had been a supporter of Coles. Now, apart from his professional worries he had a personal blow. He had arranged the transfer of his midshipman son to the CAPTAIN for the last voyage.

However, the real root of all this trouble lay in the fact that nobody had previously realized the importance of the information given by the stability calculations. From this date onwards, stability became a top priority job.

There is a memorial to HMS CAPTAIN in St. Paul's Cathedral, but her real memorial surely lies in the thorough check which is given today to every ship's stability before she is allowed to go to sea.

D. P. BRANIGAN

#### ITEM OF TOWING NEWS

The Alexandra Towing Company's tug MARGAM has been renamed RILLAND, and is working at Terneuzen, Holland for the same owners as SCHOTLAND ex ANITA LAMEY. (Note from W.B. Hallam).

## MERSEY NOTES

An interesting visitor to Garston on 4th July from Archangel with a deck cargo of timber was the small Norwegian motorvessel RAMSNES, built at Trondheim in 1916. Now registered at Egersund she has borne the names KNOLL, MIRVA, AKANBAHRA and FAGER.

In July, LADY OF MANN made several excursions between Douglas and Llandudno, including a special Tynwald Day occasion. Possibly she is the largest vessel ever to berth at the North Wales Pier. This old ship was rather early in being laid up at Barrow for the winter - on Monday 24th August - and the 1971 season is expected to be her last. She will be missed for her large carrying capacity, her sonorous whistle and handsome profile.

British Rail's CAMBRIA arrived at Cammell Lairds for repairs after being damaged at Heysham in the mid-August gale.

Sunday 5th July was one of those perfect bright, sunny days which beckon some of us to sail the sea. And so it was aboard SNAEFELL that we embarked either for Llandudno or for the onward cruise to Point Lynas. Amongst the regular weekend seafarers were Mr. & Mrs. Hill, Frank Thornley, Keith P. Lewis, Gordon Ditchfield and your scribe. We passed the 205,000 ton MYSIA in Queens Channel, the far-from handsome container ship ATLANTIC STAR further out, and an ominous oil slick off Hightown. These cruises are well worth patronizing and it is good to witness their popularity. There are still those not completely wedded to their cars for all occasions. Long may we be able to sail the sea in our leisure hours, free of frayed nerves and exhaust fumes, and thanks to the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company.

July 15th - The Start of the Union-supported Dock Strike.

July 21st - R.F.A. RELIANT arrived Birkenhead for refit.

July 26th - Forty passengers were brought ashore by Fleetwood lifeboat after NORWEST LAIRD, inward bound from Douglas, went ashore close to Fleetwood harbour.

July 6th - Sloop NIGERIA arrived Birkenhead for refit.

On this date, the four British ships trapped in the Suez Canal were abandoned by their maintenance crews on owners' orders, as they are in an area of gunfire. The owners have not, however, given up hope of getting AGAPENOR, MELAMPUS, SCOTTISH STAR and PORT INVERCARGIL out.

31st August - The day Nelson turned in his grave - when the Navy Board of the Defence Council decreed the end of the Navy's rum ration. Each matelot will now be able to purchase a daily ration of three 12-oz cans of beer. Your scribe is too overcome to make further comment!

30th May - SPYROS L ex Ellerman Wilson's ANGELO was in Morpeth Dock from Boulogne.

VOLKESFREUNDSCHAFT, a German cruise liner with about two hundred passengers called at Douglas from Leith, and then proceeded to St. Peter Port in early June. She will be better known as the STOCKHOLM which collided with and sank the Italian liner ANDREA DORIA near New York, some years ago.

It is interesting to note that in the quest for sand and gravel, HOVERINGHAM IV, NORLEADER, NORWEST and MERSTONE are pumping off the coast of North Wales.

At the end of May came the end of the tug strike on the terms offered by the owners five weeks previously. Like the ferry strike, this one should not have occurred, involving as it did eventually the riggers and gig boat men. During the period of the strike, with co-operation between

ships' officers, pilots, dock masters and shipping office staffs, the ships came and went, and were not held to ransom.

In early June came the welcome news that Shaw Savill are to operate SOUTHERN CROSS in several winter cruises from the Mersey.

Our older readers who remember Wallasey Dock as the busy wartime trawler base, crammed with patrol and minesweeping trawlers, yachts and the Naval accommodation ship WESTERN ISLES, might be surprised if they saw it now. The dock lies derelict, except that it is more or less a settling tank for water pumped from the Mersey to maintain the level of the Birkenhead system, and in parts is very shallow indeed. No vessels have entered for many years. The nearby clock tower whose spire was removed by a German bomb in 1940 stands with the time of the explosion still showing on the old clock face.

6th June. The 100ft. North Alfred Lock was closed for gate repairs and should reopen in three months time. Should traffic demand it, the caisson can be removed temporarily.

The widespread use of VHF telephony has revolutionized the berthing of ships. The pilot on the bridge of a ship being docked can speak directly to the dockmaster, to his tugs, and to officers at bow and stern of his ship. Small wonder that there is now so little use for the whistle on these occasions.

In the severe northwesterly gale of Sunday 16th August, Llandudno sailings were cancelled, MANX MAID unable to dock at Ardrossan went on to Greenock, and BEN MY CHREE took six hours on the Liverpool to Douglas run.

"No boats to New Brighton today - go to Seacombe and get a No.1 bus" is the notice which greets holidaymakers on Liverpool Landing Stage. This isn't what the customers came for - they want the traditional sail, and this natural urge is going to be difficult to stifle. The MPTA are now content

to keep the ferryboats idle or sailing the river empty, when the silting prevents landing at New Brighton. No longer the cruises towards Eastham to keep the boats occupied. And never can the landing stages have been so decrepid. All the toilets on Georges Stage have been boarded up. Are we seeing the assassination of all Mersey ferry services?

#### GENERAL NOTES

In July the cruise liner FULVIA ex OSLOFJORD was lost by fire near Teneriffe. All passengers and crew were safely taken off, mostly by the French ANCERVILLE.

It was with deep regret that I learned of the death of Douglas Kinghorn, in the spring, who was formerly General Manager of the Liverpool & Glasgow Salvage Association. I had visited him at Easter, and he had enjoyed 31 years of retirement on the hillside above Port St. Mary immersed in his gardening, fishing and snooker at Port Erin's British Legion Club.

The Irish Naval corvettes MACHA and CLIONA are now considered fit only for the breakers. The third vessel MAEV is still on fishery protection work. They were all British Flower class corvettes.

N.R.P.

Any items of News, any Notes or Queries, please, to the Editor, N.R. Pugh, 7 Dunbar Road, Hillside, Southport.



L I V E R P O O L     N A U T I C A L  
R E S E A R C H     S O C I E T Y

Don't you take no sail off 'er, the Old Man said,  
Wind an' sea rampagin' fit to wake the dead.  
Thrashing through the forties in the sleet an' hail,  
Runnin' down the eastin' under all plain sail.  
She's loggin' seventeen an' she's liftin' to it grand,  
So I'm going below for a stretch off the land.  
An' if it gets any worse Mister, you can come an' call me,  
But - don't you take no sail off 'er, said the Old Man,  
Said 'e!

C. Fox Smith.

NEWS, NOTES AND QUERIES

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A SOUTHPORT PLEASURE STEAMER

These days, when the five fathom line is six miles from shore, it is difficult to imagine that pleasure steamers at one time sailed from Southport Pier with passengers to other coastal resorts. In summer, the pier was busy with yachts and pleasure steamers at the seaward end.

One such steamer, which had a very short season was CYGNUS, a handsome iron paddler with a graceful clipper bow and the figurehead of a swan. Her dimensions were 182 x 21.4 x 9.7 ft. and she was of 250 gross tons. Built by J. Henderson & Sons, Renfrew she was launched in 1854 to run a service between Harwich and Antwerp. Later she was purchased by the Weymouth and Channel Island Steam Packet Co. commencing to work the Guernsey and Jersey route in 1857, on which service she remained until purchased by a Southport man in 1890. Her master was Henry

Bamber of Lytham who came to her from the paddle steamer CLIFTON (at £2.10.0 per week)

With a crew of 16 she left Liverpool for Southport on 21st May 1890 and on 25th made a day excursion to Douglas returning the same day. This was repeated the following day, but on the next two days she made daily return trips to Llandudno. Her next seven sailings were from Preston to Llandudno and back, then with a break of eight trips from Southport to Llandudno and back, she returned to her Preston sailings until 13th August when she sailed again from Southport and back, but this was the end of her career. On 16th August she was seized by a Mr. Constant and taken to Birkenhead on account of her mortgagee and by 22nd August all her crew with the exception of her master were discharged, and the ship laid up. In all, she made fourteen sailings from Southport.

Her owner was stated to be one Thomas Holden, 22 Knowsley Road Southport. Her subsequent career was not without interest. Purchased in 1891 by D. McBrayne for the Western Highland service, her name was changed to BRIGADIER, her figurehead was removed and replaced by one of a soldier in red and gold. Sailing to the Hebrides she was lost off Rodel, Isle of Harris on 7th December 1896.

F.J. HENRY

#### NOVEMBER MEETING

The subject was "T. & J. Brocklebank Ltd. - past, present and future", and our speaker was Mr. J. Jacks. Brocklebanks can be traced back in its origins to 1741 when Daniel Brocklebank was born in the Cumberland village which is now Torpenhow. He served an apprenticeship in one of the Whitehaven shipyards and in 1769 married a Whitehaven girl. His great ambition was to be a shipbuilder, and in 1770 he emigrated to New England, then a British colony, taking with him a party of Whitehaven carpenters and shipwrights.

Things did not go well for Daniel, and in 1775 he returned home in his own ship CASTOR, which was the fifth and last ship he built over there.

By the end of 1793 the Brocklebank yard, which was one of seven in Whitehaven, had completed eleven ships including two full rigged ships.

Daniel's two sons Thomas and John appear to have concentrated on the business side of the firm. They sold Jamaica rum and sugar, Madeira wines, West Indian cottons, port and sherry. Ships taking coal to America would return with mahogany and other woods for the use of the shipwrights.

Captain Daniel Brocklebank died at his Whitehaven home in 1801, having built 26 vessels there. The sons were now faced with great difficulties and had to struggle against the tide of war. These were the years before Trafalgar. By the end of 1805, four ships were owned by the company for trading purposes, and the shipyard and ropery were maintained.

In 1813 the PRINCESS CHARLOTTE was launched. Larger than any vessel they had previously built, and entirely of oak, she carried the flag into the Bay of Bengal for the first time and her voyage made a profit in excess of £10,000.

The port of Liverpool was coming into its own by 1819 and Thomas shared an office in our port, leaving John to carry on the business in Whitehaven. Liverpool was prosperous - new docks were being completed.

The Brocklebank story is a long one, and is fully set out in a bi-centenary supplement to the "Journal of Commerce", so no attempt will be made here to record it in detail. To describe the services to the Nation of the Brocklebank fleet in two World Wars this century would need a large volume.

Mr. Jacks brought us to the present day, and the challenge of containerization by showing a film "Portrait of a Port" issued by the Port of New York Authority. This showed how New York has adapted itself to the new technique, which has developed so rapidly. We were forced to consider our own Seaforth scheme, now only half completed, and the limitations of the Gladstone Dock container berth, where ships are not allowed to remain more than sixteen hours.

Since 1968, there has been a closer partnership between

Cunard - Brocklebank, now a part of the A.C.L. consortium with the French Line, Holland-America and Swedish America lines. Cunard-Brocklebank also manage Moss Tankers. Things in shipping are happening very rapidly; generally port facilities lag behind ship development. Although our speaker believes that there will always be the need for the conventional "break-bulk" ships, his Company have on order at present eight giant bulk carriers.

Shipping is no longer a trade on its own, but part of a transport system. Everything is getting larger, faster and more mechanized to reduce overall costs. Mr. Jacks pointed to the models of Brocklebank ships beside him - very little change in outward appearance in the first sixty years of this century - but now very remarkable change, and in the next five or ten years we are in for exciting developments.

After the coffee interval, the meeting was continued with a lively question time. In reference to the concept of larger and perhaps more novel forms of transport, Mr. Coney asked the speaker if the "Lash" ship was economical, or in modern parlance, was it a viable proposition? Mr. Jacks replied that as far as he was aware, the first "Lash" ship ACADIA FOREST had so far been very successful and others were being built. This type of transport requires a barge system at each end of the voyage, and this had been achieved in operating between the Mississippi and the Rhine, with what are, in effect, floatable containers.

Mr. Hill enquired about the age-old question as to why, unique amongst shipping companies, Brocklebanks wore their houseflag at the foremast. This, said our speaker, has never been thoroughly explained, although when ships were reported from the signal station at Bidston Hill, a plain blue and white flag at the foremast would be easily identifiable. The company's archives have been scoured on this point without avail. Mr. Hallam remembered as a small boy seeing a Brocklebank ship in the Mersey and asking his grand-father why the houseflag was flown thus, to receive the reply "because they are the oldest shipping line to use the Mersey".

Mr. MacDonald enquired about the joint company of Cunard-Brocklebank formed in 1968, and asked what has happened to

Brocklebank ships, when we see so few of them in the Mersey these days. Mr. Jacks put this down to the changing pattern of trade. Now that goods are being carried in the large A.C.L. ships, there is no Gulf/UK service, and outward loading to Calcutta takes place at Middlesbrough London and Continental ports.

Mr. Brian Smith asked if there was any future for the port of Liverpool. Mr. Jacks thought that with 50% of industry within reach of Liverpool, the port had advantages, but must develop to retain the trade. New motorways make other ports, often smaller than Liverpool, viable.

The Chairman here intervened to say that obviously this interesting discussion could go on all night. He called on Mr. Hallam to propose the vote of thanks, which called forth tributes and reminiscences. It does not seem so long ago that Brocklebank's Birkenhead cargo was delivered to Canning Dock for passage across the River by the two immaculate steam barges - before the opening of the Mersey Tunnel.

Mr. Brian Smith seconded the vote of thanks, remarking that our speaker, in his enthusiasm for the present and future of Cunard-Brocklebank, showed abundantly that he is one of the seemingly few men in shipping or in business life generally, who really love their work.

Our Chairman, Peter Welsh, in closing the meeting, also paid tribute to Mr. Jack's cheerful outlook in an industry which is undergoing such rapid change. This was an interesting and heartening evening.

N.R.P.

## ROYAL NAVY NEWS

On Monday 9th November, a collision occurred in the Mediterranean between HMS ARK ROYAL and a Russian destroyer. The aircraft carrier was launching aircraft at the time when the prying Soviet ship came too close. Several of the destroyer's crew were swept into the sea, and two were said to be missing. There was little damage to the ARK.

On Sunday 8th November one of HM Minesweepers on Fishery patrol duly in the Irish Sea intercepted the Irish container coaster OWENRO in Carlingford Lough at 6 a.m. The coaster, owned by a subsidiary of Limerick Steamship Co. was on her normal run between Preston and Greenore. An armed party of five Navy men mustered all the crew of ten on deck, searched the ship and delayed her for one hour.

On the same day, considerable gun running activity was discovered on the Irish border.

The Royal Navy has decided to cash-in on the paraphernalia linked with the now obsolete rum ration. Tot measures, funnels, grog tubs will all be disposed of - what a glittering array of polished brass and copper!

#### LOCAL HISTORY PAMPHLET

"The Steamship GREAT BRITAIN" is the title of a booklet issued by the Bristol branch of the Historical Association. A reprint has been produced to coincide with the return of the old ship. The author is our member Grahame Farr, and he tells the story up to her arrival in Sparrow Cove in 1937. The booklet has several illustrations, numerous historical notes and suggestions for further reading.

Two letters of a Victorian schoolboy William Prideaux describe in detail the launch, and also the final freeing of the vessel from her imprisoning dock where the gates were too narrow. He wrote to his brother - "I do not know for what part of the world she is destined, but certain it is she has bid goodbye to Bristol for ever, and will most likely make Liverpool her resting place in future". How was Master Prideaux to know what fate had in store?

This booklet is priced at four shillings, plus fivepence postage, and can be obtained from Mr. Peter Harris, 74 Bell Barn Road, Stoke Bishop, Bristol BS9 2DG.

# NEW NAMES FOR OLD

AELIOS	ex NORTH SANDS
AFON WEN	ex ROSEGARTH (tug)
AFON GEFNI	ex APPEGARTH (tug)
ADAMANDIOS	ex RICHARD DE LARRINAGA
ATLANTIS	ex PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT
ALIAKMON POWER	ex IRISH ASH
AGHIOS LAZAROS	ex VILLEGAS
CLEOPATRA	ex WANDERER
CUBATERN	ex EUROCHEMIST ex FOSNA
CAPETAN CHRISTOS P	ex MALTASIAN ex CITY OF NORWICH ex MALTASIAN
DARDANUS	ex GLENGARRY ex EMPIRE HUMBER ex HANSA ex MEERSBURG ex GLENGARRY
ESTRELLA PATAGONICA	ex VOLUTA
ELNI	ex INNISCARRA
GEORGIOS T.	ex IVINGHOE BEACON
ILKON NIKI	ex MANCHESTER FAME
ILKON TAK	ex MANCHESTER FAITH
KALEMYO	ex FORTUNE VICTORY ex EBRO
KALEWA	ex NINGPO ex ESSEQUIBO
KAPTAYANNI	ex BRIGHTON
LADY HYACINTH	ex BALLYEDWARD
MARGARET	ex PAPAROA
MAHINDA	ex IRON BARQUE
NIVES	ex VIVES
NIKE	ex SCHERPENDRECHT ex HEREFORD BEACON
MANCHESTER MERIT	ex CATALINA DEL MAR
OMOA	ex CHANGUINOLA
ONSHUN	ex ARABIA
PANETOLIKON	ex INGLETON
PANTAZIS CAIAS	ex CROWBOROUGH BEACON
SAN ANTONIO	ex CYPRIAN MED ex MANCHESTER PIONEER
SANDRA	ex RIALTO
SALAMAT	ex WARKWORTH
VASSILIKI METHENITIS	ex ARBITRATOR
ZAIRA	ex ASTRONOMER (correction)
ZENIT	ex SAILOR PRINCE ex VELARDE
BALLYMORE	ex BEEDING

## LOSS OF THE PUFFER MOONLIGHT

Seen in the Mersey several times of late, MOONLIGHT ex PAULLGATE a small motor coaster of the "puffer" type, was built at Hull in 1961. She was owned by Ross and Marshall Ltd., of Greenock with dimensions 118 x 25 ft.

After arriving at Runcorn with a cargo of stone chippings from Stornoway early in September, she loaded salt for Carrickfergus and sailed on 8th September 1970. The afternoon boat to Douglas overtook her in Crosby Channel, but progress must have been slow and after a rapid deterioration in the weather with squalls from the northwest, a distress call was received from her at 6 a.m. BST next day. The position was given as five miles north of Chicken Rock, she had a list of 45 degrees and a liferaft was being prepared. Port Erin lifeboat was launched at 6.24 BST, HM Tug REWARD proceeded into the area and a Shackleton aircraft assisted. At 1015 the Port Erin boat picked up a large empty liferaft with hood, which had been sighted by the aircraft. The seas were about twenty feet high and this dinghy was not recovered, but another one was sighted of a smaller type. In this, were two survivors lying in the bottom, the other two members of the crew having been drowned. There seems to have been no time to launch the ship's own lifeboat, as the ship heeled over quickly and for a short time floated bottom up. I was able to hear the story from members of the lifeboat crew a few days after the tragedy, and as they, of course, had never seen the ship, they were interested to have copies of photographs taken of MOONLIGHT in the Mersey.

Special tributes were paid in the Manx press to the very gallant efforts of the Port Erin crew, under their Coxsn Dennis Maddrell. Local people who watched for the return of the lifeboat at 1 p.m. said there were times when she was totally invisible in the troughs, and that conditions were very bad.

N.R.P.



## EARLY TANKERS

Early this year the 253,000 ton tanker ESSO NORTHUMBRIA left the Tyne, with the good wishes of 200,000 Tynesiders who had turned out to see the 1,143 ft mammoth negotiate the bends of the Tyne on her way to the North Sea.

ESSO NORTHUMBRIA is to date the largest tanker, or indeed ship, to be built in a British yard and she is one of a long line of tankers which have been built at Tyneside yards.

The transport of oil by sea is just over a hundred years old. The Anglo-American business was started in 1860 when an enterprising Pittsburger brought American petroleum in small quantities to this country, nineteen years before Rumania started to export oil; and twenty-six years before the first cargo of Russian oil was shipped from Batoum to this country.

Mr. James Young in 1849 took out the first patents for the manufacture of paraffin oil for illuminating purposes, following on the lines of Luther Attwood, a chemist. He obtained his first supplies from Derbyshire shale. In 1860 and again in 1861 he visited America, and there he obtained a penny per gallon royalty on whatever crude oil his American agents produced from shale.

The two industries, the production of shale oil in Great Britain, and of mineral oil in America commenced simultaneously the need for these oils was felt the more seriously owing to the shortage of sperm whale oil, which first showed itself about 1860.

In 1861 five barrels of American oil were shipped in a general cargo vessel, being in the nature of a sample.

On November 12th 1861 Messrs. Peter Wright & Sons of Philadelphia chartered from Edmund A. Sander & Co., the ELIZABETH WATTS, a brig of 224 tons, and loaded her with a cargo of oil in barrels for London, the rate being eight shillings per

barrel and five per cent primage. The brig, after much difficulty, safely landed her cargo at a London wharf.

This successful example in oversea transport of oil was rapidly and extensively followed, as the figures show. In 1862 shipments from Philadelphia amounted to 2,664,280 gallons; 1863, 4,686,174 gallons; 1864, 7,666,025 gallons, whilst exports from all U.S. ports in 1864 amounted to 31,745,687 gallons.

The problem confronting the shippers of mineral oil was how to ship it in greater quantities by a more efficient and less costly method than by barrels in a sailing ship. It was on the Tyne that the most successful method was first thought of by the building of a vessel to carry oil in bulk.

On August 1st 1863, there was launched from the yard of Rogerson of St. Peters, Newcastle upon Tyne, an iron sailing vessel designed to carry petroleum in bulk, "without the aid of casks". This vessel named ATLANTIC was separated into compartments by sheet iron partitions. She was 148 ft long, 28½ ft beam and 16'9" in depth.

Many wooden sailing vessels up to 1878 were adapted to carry oil in bulk, but probably the first vessel to be fitted with iron tanks for the transport of oil was the CHARLES - she carried oil from America to Europe from 1869 until 1872, her capacity being 794 tons. Fitted with tanks arranged in rows at the bottom of the hold and in the tween decks totalling 59 in all. She was worked on the separate tank system, so there were no pipe connections.

The pioneer oil steamer was undoubtedly the VADERLAND of 2,748 tons, built at Jarrow by Palmer's for the Red Star Steamship Co. of Antwerp. There is some doubt if she ever did carry any oil in her tanks, as her owners were afraid that if it were known it would deter passengers from booking passages in her.

In the 1880's tankers were filling the order books of the shipyards. The Black Sea Steam Navigation Co. had given orders for the building of a fleet of steamers in Sweden and England, each steamer to be fitted with petroleum tanks with a total capacity of 1,500 tons per trip. Also in 1885 an ordinary cargo steamer the FERGUSONS, built by Bartram and Haswell at Sunderland, was converted to a tank steamer by Messrs. Craggs & Son of Middlesbrough. She was the first steam tanker to run from this country to Batoum and America for oil, which she did for three years before she was destroyed by fire after an explosion at Rouen in 1889

It was a German who conceived the idea that the hull should serve as a receptacle for bulk oil. This was Heinrich Riedemann of Bremen. He placed an order with Armstrong, Mitchell & Co. at Walker-on-Tyne for the constructions of the first real oil tanker, the GLUCKAUF.

This vessel was built from a design of Henry F. Swan, and was 2,307 tons gross, 300 ft long, with a speed of eleven knots. She was launched in 1885 and discharged her first cargo in July 1886 at Geestmunde. Riedemann subsequently ordered further vessels, the VORWARTS, GUT HEIL, WILLKOMMEN, ENERGIE and the MINSTER MAYBACK. In design these ships were almost sisters to GLUCKAUF, the machinery was aft, with a very long poop, and a well deck forward about one third the length of the ship. As was the custom in early steamers, she crossed yards on the foremast, and was rigged fore and aft on the main and mizzen.

The BAKUIN was the first British owned tanker, built by W. Gray & Co., at West Hartlepool for Alfred Stuart in 1886. This vessel had a cellular bottom, the crown of which formed the bottom of the oil tanks. Above the cellular bottom, to the height of the tween decks, the oil extended to the sides. Her engines were aft, and a double bulkhead was fitted before the boiler space, and another at the fore end of the foremost oil compartment. She could also carry oils of different

qualities by an additional pair of adjacent transverse bulkheads. She was electrically lighted, and could discharge her cargo of 1,950 tons in 12 hours. Cabin heating and cooking was by steam, but nevertheless she was destroyed by fire when in the floating dock at Callao Bay, Peru, in September 1902.

In 1886 Messrs. Lane and Macandrew brought a bulk cargo of petroleum to the Thames in the PETROLEA. On arrival she was moored in the Regents Canal Dock, and a pipeline was made beneath the streets from the dockside to the Atlantic Wharf. This marked the start of the bulk oil trade in this country, which has grown and expanded to the proportions we all know today. ESSO NORTHUMBRIA is another of the long line of tankers which have grown in size over the years, and which in turn will be eclipsed by vessels of even greater proportions as the world's demand for crude oil grows and the route through the Suez Canal remains closed.

D. G. SYTHES

## MANX JOTTINGS

At Castletown, a lofty jib crane towers above the container jetty in the inner harbour. The sea link is with Glasson Dock, near Lancaster, and one of the vessels used is TOWER DUCHESS.

Port Erin Marine Biological Station was erected in 1902 and taken over by Liverpool University in 1919.

William Milner - of the famous safe firm - had a tower built on Bradda Head in 1871 as a mark of esteem for the people of Port Erin. It is perpetually open to the public free of charge, for the magnificent view obtained.

## MERSEY NOTES

The B. & I. container ship TIPPERARY lost overboard in severe weather in September a tank containing sixteen tons of medicinal paraffin. This was located by the Trinity House tender ARGUS near North Stack. Too heavy for lifting with her gear, the tank was towed to Holyhead where the contents were transferred to a road tanker and eventually re-shipped.

In laying up the Manx passenger ships for the winter, LADY OF MANN went to Barrow on 24th August, and leaving the two car ferries BEN MY CHREE and MANX MAID, the remainder docked at Birkenhead. SNAEFFELL entered on 1st, TYNWALD on 5th, KING ORRY on 8th, MONAS ISLE on 12th and MANXMAN on 19th September respectively.

The coaster EVDELOS ex MOUNTSTEWART ex ESSEX COAST on passage under the Panamanian flag from Beirut to Shoreham and Manchester, was drifting with rudder trouble off the north coast of Crete on 28th October. She will be remembered as a former Coast Lines vessel. After providing the casualty with fresh water, the Greek tug ATLAS towed her to Malta for repairs. The tug was formerly Smit's GELE ZEE.

The change of names of our former "Lamey" and "Cock" tugs on their take-over by Alexandra Towing was executed promptly. The alteration of funnel colours seems to have given more trouble, and primarily was the subject of adverse criticism on the waterfront. However, by the end of October a much more pleasing scheme was adopted and the "Cock" tugs now look very smart in the modified painting. We wonder what happened to all those masthead weather cocks associated for so long with these craft.

The twin uptakes of the Lamey boats still lack smartness, or as being identified with Alexandra's. The writer would like to see the typical white band added to the stacks to bring the whole fleet into conformity.

OCEAN MONARCH ex EMPRESS OF ENGLAND is spending seven months at Birkenhead in a big conversion job. Mr. W.R. Russell, chairman of Shaw Savill has said that it was realized when buying the ship early in 1970 that changes would be needed if she was to fit into the Shaw Savill pattern of operations. Thoughts about conversion followed the pattern of the all-passenger ships SOUTHERN CROSS and NORTHERN STAR.

The total passenger accommodation is being increased by 400 to 1,400 all tourist class, mostly by the removal of cargo space. There will be a new lido and swimming pool. Like the other two ships, OCEAN MONARCH is to have a "Tavern". Well over 1,000 tons of steel will be used in the conversion before she sails in the spring of 1971. This information was gleaned from Furness Withy's Staff Newsletters.

The crisis in the financial position of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board continues to cause anxiety within the local shipping industry. With an estimated loss of £3 million on the year's working, and the Board's reserves tied up in new port projects, the future seems very dark. The Board can no longer raise fresh cash by issuing more bonds.

In reference to the story of HMS CAPTAIN's tragic end one hundred years ago, as told by Mr. Branigan in our last issue, I have a note from Mr. W.G.H. Jones of Upton. He writes to say that a flag from HMS CAPTAIN used to be situated in Woodchurch Parish Church, but was removed some years ago.

It is reported in the shipping press that Hovercraft Norwest Ltd. are soon to announce the commencement of a hovercraft service between Liverpool and Eastham, with a capacity of 88 passengers per trip.

The tug MARTIN OLDFIELD ex EDITH LAMEY towed the old sandpump dredger PEAKDALE from the Mersey on Sunday, 30th August, for a breaker's yard at Dalmuir.

Following the occasion when the arrival of the 205,000 ton MELO evoked so much interest on the Mersey, we have had visits from this class of vessel, and they have become an accustomed part of the Mersey scene. Those seen at Tranmere include MARTICIA (built in Holland), MYRIA, MITRA, MELANIA, MACOMA, and MYRTEA.

SAINT BRANDAN is a coaster of the Gardner fleet, often seen in the Mersey. On the evening of 8th September she reported a fire in the engine room, when crossing the mouth of Bristol Channel on passage from Liverpool to Antwerp, and intending to call at Falmouth for bunkers. She was carrying a 140 ton electrical stator. In less than an hour the crew abandoned ship and were all taken aboard the French trawler HENRI CALIOC'H. The Destroyer HMS CAVALIER located the coaster and towed her to Pembroke Jetty (September 11th). Subsequently, the Alexandra Towing's MUMBLES took her to Antwerp to deliver the stator, where it is presumed the fire damage will be repaired.

A ship which went to Shanghai breakers in October was LAVRENTIOS, previously better known as the PACIFIC UNITY, operating on the Furness service between Manchester and the U.S. Pacific coast. Apparently cargo for these ports is now carried jointly by British and Dutch flag vessels from Hull and London.

The Mersey tugs COBURG and HUSKISSON (ex ALFRED and JAMES LAMEY respectively) sailed for Portsmouth in October to assist the salvage of the tanker PACIFIC GLORY, which had been in collision with the ALLEGRO off St. Catherines Point. PACIFIC GLORY was beached near the Isle of Wight, lightened in Lyme Bay and thence towed to Rotterdam.

Towards the end of October a firm named Dredging

Investigations Ltd. of Bromborough set up a mobile office at North Alfred Lock. At the same time, a small barge with gantry worked along a line of marker buoys between Morpeth and Alfred entrances. A motor launch was in attendance. The location of the former Wallasey Cattle Stage may yet be an unloading point for giant ore carriers.

On 23rd October the tug HOLLYGARTH went to Morecambe Bay to assist the wooden motor coaster LUNE VENTURE, which had been berthed in Morpeth Dock for several weeks. The tug assisted the coaster with her pumping power. LUNE VENTURE ex PAKEFIELD is owned by Sea Disposals Ltd. and is based at Glasson Dock. She was built in 1945 by Rowhedge Ironworks as a fishing vessel.

On 14th November the Greek freighter SALAMAT sailed from Birkenhead in ballast. She entered port as Dalglish's WARKWORTH and changed her name and funnel colours here. Over quite a number of seasons she has been engaged in bringing grain from Port Churchill in the short open season, and is no stranger to us. It is an interesting study to refer to an atlas just to understand what the navigation entails. Her departure was not so smartly accomplished, as the stern tug's hawser could not be freed when the time came to cast off. The scouse imprecations on board SALTHOUSE mingled with Greek swear words from above, and an urgent call from the pilot, livened things up immensely. Meantime the bow tug held her to the flood, and the Greeks had to haul in everything, until they got sorted out and gave the Northender his tow rope back for which he waited alongside. SALAMAT then departed.

The chilly breezes that blow across Alfred entrances can be unpleasant for riggers awaiting the arrival of a vessel. Especially is this so in the small hours, and it is amazing that so little has been done in past times to give them shelter. The south lock is bleak with just one decayed shanty of a hut, with sacking over what were once windows.



And so a request has been made for some form of shelter, but the Dock Board have not come forward, say the local press. But now, two very fine new huts lie on skids at South Alfred, apparently awaiting their sites. They are indeed commodious, even having coat hooks. It is believed that the shipping companies using Birkenhead regularly have made this Christmas gift to the riggers.

In mid-November the Furness Withy group announce a cutting back of their group fleet by 23 vessels. The largest ships to be disposed of will be the cruise liner ANDES, and the passenger ships AKAROA, ARAWA, and ARANDA. The fleets affected will be those of Furness Withy, Houlder Bros., Royal Mail Lines, Pacific Steam Navigation Co. and Shaw Savill.

N.R.P.

#### NAUTICAL VERSE

Your Editor some few months ago, in searching round for suitable poetry with which to launch issues of News, Notes and Queries, was very warmly assisted by our President, Sir Arnet Robinson. Copies of Miss C. Fox Smith's "Full Sail" and also of Rudyard Kipling's "Fringes of the Fleet" were taken on loan from Sir Arnet's library, and read with great pleasure and appreciation

Some of our readers may not know how closely Liverpool is bound up with Miss Fox Smith's works, so I take this opportunity of quoting in needful brevity:-

"See you in Liverpool"

The hatches are on, sonny, and the cargo's all stowed;  
Time to say "So long" now, time to take the road;  
Pals we've been an' good pals, drunk and took our fun -  
An' I'll meet you in Liverpool some day, my son!

All roads lead to Rome, sonny, so the sayin' goes;  
But the long road, the salt road, the road a ship knows,  
'ull lead a man to the Bar Light afore his time is done -  
And I'll see you in Liverpool some day, my son!

All the bells 'ull ring, sonny, all the crews'll cheer,  
Watchin' of us goin', droppin' down the tier,  
Shakin' of her topsail reefs out one by one -  
An' we'll all meet in Liverpool one day, my son!

It might be a year, sonny, it might be two or three,  
But the salt road's a long road for chaps like you an' me;  
But fair weather or foul weather, good luck or bad,  
I'll meet you in Liverpool some day, my lad!

I have commenced this number with "What the old man  
said" and now there is:-

"They cheered her from the waterside, they watched her from  
the shore  
Drop swiftly down the Mersey tide till she was seen no  
more,  
Still stately swaying, tall and proud, her tower of sail  
grew dim,  
And faded like a summer cloud beyond the far sea rim."

and this poem ends :-

Long turned their logbooks final page! Far southward now  
no more,  
Their royals dared the Forties' rage, as they were wont  
of yore,  
No more, no more from Salthouse Dock for lands of gold  
they clear,  
Or homeward welcome off the Rock the tugboat with a cheer.

Rudyard Kipling wrote of the fishing fleet turned to  
minesweeping in the 1914 War :-

"Dawn off the Foreland - the young flood making  
Jumbled and short and steep -  
Black in the hollows and bright where it's breaking -  
Awkward water to sweep.  
"Mines reported in the fairway,  
"Warn all traffic and detain.  
'sent up Unity, Claribel, Assyrian, Stormcock and  
Golden Gain"

Dusk off the Foreland - the last light going  
And the traffic crowding through,  
And five damned trawlers with their syreens blowing  
Heading the whole review!

"Sweep completed in the fairway.

"No more mines remain.

"Sent back Unity, Claribel, Assyrian, Stormcock and  
Golden Gain."

## THE MANX HERRING FISHERY

The autumn season of 1970 must surely have seen the record for herring caught off the Isle of Man. In late September, Douglas and Port St. Mary harbours were crammed with trawlers bringing in immense catches. Dutch and Norwegian luggers and coasters brought in new barrels, for the greater part of this sea harvest goes to the Continental countries.

As usual, the southern Ireland packers and coopers worked very long hours on the open brine-drenched quays in all weathers, the same men coming over year after year. As baskets of slippery silver fish are hauled from the trawlers' fish rooms, they are tipped into a long trough and liberally mixed with salt. Then ungutted, they are tipped into barrels and quickly wheeled away for coopering and stacking for the next coaster. This year, they were also packed in strong polythene bags of about one cwt. each, and stowed on top of the barrels. This is a scene of great animation, colour, pleasant sea smell, coupled with the creak of winches and blocks, Irishmen's songs and the urgent orders and instructions of the fish buyers. Nearly all the trawlers hail from Scottish ports like Fraserburgh, Peterhead, Inverness and Buckie, with a few from Belfast area, Kilkeel and Newcastle, so the conversation is not easy to understand.

The names of some of the trawlers seen this year are:-

DAYSPRING, MORNING DAWN, RAMBLER ROSE, STROMA, SHARON VALE, ROSEBLOOM, WELCOME, CONSTANT FRIEND, ORCADES, KATHLEEN ANNE, VALHALLA, and the Dutch luggers WIEBOLD BOHMER, NOORSTAD, VOORAAN & WODAN.

I mused on whether the latter vessel had a disgruntled seaman, for above the black letters of her name on the focsl, was a cartoon-like figure of a man in red paint, designated "Kapiteine". This was painted over in grey next day!

N.R.P.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Owing to indisposition we regret that the talk to have been given by Captain Cummings on 10th December will not be given on that date. A film may be substituted. We all hope that Captain Cummings is soon in good health again.

Arrangements are being made for our Social Evening on 17th December, and our Chairman will announce details at the next meeting on 10th.

It is hoped to display paintings by Mr. G.A. Kiddie at our Social Evening on 17th December.

The report of our October Meeting has unavoidably had to be left over until the next issue of N. N. & Q.

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