

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

Now landsmen all, whoever you may be,
If you want to rise to the top of the tree,
If your soul isn't fettered to an office stool,
Be careful to be guided by this golden rule -
Stick close to your desks and never go to sea
And you all may be Rulers of the Queen's Navee.

W.S.Gilbert.

NEWS, NOTES AND QUERIES

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CALF OF MAN LIGHTHOUSE

This modern lighthouse was placed in operation on 24th July 1968, the 600 tons of various material for its construction having been transported to the site entirely by helicopter over a lengthy period. The loads were delivered by road to high ground at Cregneish, from whence the helicopters made the flight of about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles without the need to climb.

The public may visit the lighthouse during the summer months by boarding the motor launch SUNBEAM at 2 p.m. daily at a cost of 10/- return. From the landing place at Calf Sound, there is a bumpy mile or so of rough track in a landrover - there being no surfaced road. When half way, one comes quite unexpectedly on the house of the Warden of the Bird Sanctuary, with its garden. One can buy books here on Manx flora and ornithology. Postcards and Calf of Man postage stamps can be bought which, when used with a normal postage stamp, can be franked and posted on the island.

The landrover ends its rough ride in a courtyard. The buildings are on ground level except for the lamphouse which is but three storeys high. The effective height above sea level is 306ft. and there is a flash of .4 secs every 15 seconds. This is a revolving light, obstructed on a bearing of 010 to 094 degrees, and visible for 17 miles. The power is 2,200,000 candles. There is a Tyfon fog horn which sounds for $2\frac{1}{2}$ secs. every 45 seconds when necessary. The premises are well designed and maintained by the Northern Lighthouse Board, Edinburgh, and there is an air of cleanliness - bright colours predominating. Polished aluminium stairways lead to the lamphouse, and immediately below is the control room with neat grey panels and electronic gear. There is a V.H.F. telephone link with Langness Lighthouse, and telephone calls can be made to anywhere in the Post Office system.

The engine room provides the necessary electric power and compressed air, and houses a monitor which records the performance of the fog signal emitted from a separate small building sited a short distance away. There is a workshop with lathe. The living quarters are particularly attractive in such a remote location. Coffee is offered to visitors. The water supply on the island is from wells, and this has proved adequate even in times of drought, though with careful useage.

The new lighthouse is sited midway between the two now derelict lighthouses constructed in 1818. These were in use until a powerful lighthouse was built on the Chicken Rock, started in 1875 and completed 1879. With a height of 122ft this light was visible 16 miles. The difficulties of constructing this lighthouse on a sea-swept rock must have been immense. 800 square feet of rock is above sea level at low water, but at high water only the tower rises above the waves. It was therefore fortunate for the keepers, when the lighthouse was gutted by fire in 1960, that the tide was out, and their rescue could be effected from the rocks. Chicken Rock now has an automatic minor light.

N.R.P.

MUSEUM NEWS

Edward Paget-Tomlinson wrote regularly for News, Notes and Queries on his work at the Museum. As his successor, I feel it is important to keep members of the Society in touch. Much of the time in the past two years has been spent on the preparation of the new Land Transport Gallery in the basement of the extension of the Museum. Besides this, the shipping collection has undergone a considerable upheaval. The old store at Hemans Street, Bootle, has been emptied after fourteen years of occupation. All the models, pictures and relics have been removed to a store much closer to the Museum. Considerable sorting and cleaning has been necessary and the work is as yet not complete. A large collection of documents and plans has been acquired in the last two years and these require to be catalogued.

The model collection has been increased by some interesting specimens, for example, a builders model of the Houston steamer HERACLIDES of 1886. This model was spotted by Captain Chubb, a well-known member of the Society, in an auction sale at West Kirby. Through his timely warning, the Museum was able to buy the HERACLIDES. She has been fully restored by the Museum. Another important acquisition is the model of the Bibby liner STAFFORDSHIRE of 1929. I feel she is particularly important as being the only representative of that historic line in the collection. She has all the features of the Bibby ships in their heyday, including the four tall masts. She has been deposited on permanent loan by Messrs. Bibby, and is now on display in the lower basement, outside the Lecture Theatre.

Regular visitors to the Museum will also notice that we have changed the Cunard liner model which stands just outside the History of Liverpool Gallery. The cargo liner PARTHIA has been replaced by a model of CARONIA - Cunard's cruising liner with the unique green hull.

The most important work at present is the preparation of the new History of Liverpool gallery. This is due to open in the second half of this year. It will contain a section on the history of the Port, and also the work of the Bidston Observatory and Tidal Institute. Our Chairman Mr. Peter Welsh is currently engaged on the restoration of the fine telescope from Bidston. This will be an important feature of the gallery.

The History of the Port section will have, as a centre-piece, a huge glass showcase, approximately forty-eight feet long. This will house a series of ship models illustrating some of the important Liverpool trades and developments in shipping. Amongst them will be such old favourites as the clipper FLYING CLOUD of one era, and the tanker ATHELPRINCE of another. The model of BERENGARIA (ex-IMPERATOR) will also be properly displayed for the first time. At present she is undergoing a complete refit at Bassett Lowke's works in Northampton. She is the most spectacular model in the collection, being almost twenty feet long!

The conservancy services of the port will be covered. For example of the model of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board's suction dredger LEVIATHAN will represent the dredging work in the port, and for pilotage, there will be models of the first steam pilot cutter FRANCIS HENDERSON, and one of the latest - the diesel electric EDMUND GARDNER (Pilot No.2). There will be about forty different ship models on show, together with the incomparable collection of French prisoner-of-war models which will be displayed in a small gallery of their own. There will also be documents, pictures and photographs for all the background material. I hope that our visitors will find this new display interesting and exciting. It will compensate to a small extent for the lack of progress on the Maritime Museum project.

M.K.S.

FROM FURNESS WITHY NEWSLETTER

"Off the mouth of the Tyne a liner collided with a local trawler. No serious damage was done but as the vessel backed off it hit the trawler again. 'Are you still afloat?' the liner's captain shouted through the fog. The trawler skipper yelled back 'So far - do you want to try again?'"

OCTOBER MEETING

The Society met on 8th October 1970 to hear a paper from Mr. Neil Cossons, Deputy Director of Liverpool Museums, entitled "The Port of Bristol". The speaker admitted at the outset the difficulty of summarizing in the limited time available a history which extends over one thousand years, but it was important to go back nevertheless to Roman times to trace the port's genesis as an important bridging point on the River Avon, and as a naval base from which the occupation forces policed the rebellious territories on the northern shore of the Bristol Channel.

Bristol rose to a position of prominence as the second port of the kingdom in the Middle Ages, and the enterprise of its merchants in promoting exploration of the New World in the sixteenth century, was repaid when the port obtained the lion's share in the triangular traffic to West Africa and America, carrying slaves to the plantations and returning with sugar and tobacco. Thus were many fortunes made, and the Georgian splendours of Clifton architecture remain as a monument to the prosperity and taste of the merchants who undertook the promotion of these voyages.

Soon however, Bristol's enterprise gave way to complacency, and the port's failure to keep ahead of trends in shipping practice led to its gradual eclipse by other ports handling the colonial traffic, principally London and Liverpool. Decline set in as early as 1750, and the hesitant steps at improving the port instituted by the Bristol Dock

Company early in the last century secured only a temporary reprieve.

This episode of the port's history was vividly illustrated with slides of some of the many industrial monuments of this era which remain. The foresight and skill of even such notable engineers as William Jessop and I.K.Brunel was powerless to reverse the effects of the port's isolated position beyond the confines of the Clifton Gorge, which feature had ensured the security of the port in more war-like times. The very survival of so many of these relics of Victorian engineering, invaluable as they are to the industrial archaeologist, show how little change the wharves have undergone since those days.

With the imminent closure of the City Docks, the transfer of the port's facilities to Avonmouth and Portishead, recommended by Brunel but not initiated until after his death, will be complete, and no more cargoes will sweep around the Horseshoe Bend and under Brunel's inimitable Suspension Bridge over the Clifton Gorge. His exasperated dismissal of the port as "fit only for the Irish packet trade" will be finally justified.

A spirited discussion followed Mr. Cosson's paper, and members were particularly interested in his first-hand observations on the S.S.GREAT BRITAIN and proposals for her restoration. Other points raised included the possible effect on Bristol of the proposed Severn Barrage Scheme, and the steps taken by Bristol Museum to preserve relics of the port's part.

Mr.W.P.Raine rose to propose a vote of thanks to the Speaker for his enthralling talk, combining authoritative scholarship with fascinating anecdote. This was seconded by Captain Cummings who congratulated Mr.Cossons on his lucid coverage of a wide subject, and on the excellence of his illustrations which helped to weave a continuous thread of history down to our own times. This was carried with acclamation.

NAME CHANGES

ALGERIAN	ex WESTEREEMS
ACTUARI	ex CITY OF DUBLIN
BERNARD	ex ROSSINI
BENEFACTOR	ex ION
BER SEA	ex MANCHESTER COMMERCE
BENVANNOCH	ex CITY OF WINCHESTER
BELA	ex ARDUITY ex EMPIRE TEDSON
CITY OF DELHI	ex BENEDIN ex CITY OF WINNIPEG
CITY OF MONTREAL	ex CITY OF GLASGOW
CITY OF OTTAWA	ex CITY OF SYDNEY
CITY OF TORONTO	ex CITY OF EASTBOURNE
CITY OF NEWCASTLE	ex BENRATHA
DEEPSEA MINER	ex TIMBER ONE ex BRESCIA ex HICKORY ISLE
DAMAN	ex APPLELEAF ex GEORGE LYRAS
DIRPHYS II	ex BARON MINTO
EUROPEAN SKY	ex CAROLINE H ex DURHAMBROOK
GLENDALOUGH	ex MEADOW COURT ex ARDROSSMORE
	ex IRISH ELM
GEMINI EXPORTER	ex MANCHESTER EXPORTER ex CAIRNDHU
INDIAN TRIBUNE	ex CLAN MACGOWAN
JOHN J	ex PASS OF KILDRUMMY
LANKA RANI	ex FINNAMORE VALLEY
MALDIVE IMPORTER	ex ARIOSTO ex KIRKHAM ABBEY
MALDIVE EXPORTER	ex ANGELO ex BYLAND ABBEY
MALDIVE AMBASSADOR	ex FORESTER
MALDIVE ENVOY	ex ZEALAND
MALDIVE BUILDER	ex CICERO
MANCHESTER QUEST	ex MANCHESTER MILLER
MANIA	ex GEMMA ex ARENDAL ex CANDIDA
	ex JEF DE SMELDT ex MERGANSER (1962)
NEPTUNE AMBER	ex SCOTIA (1966)
NEA TIHI	ex FLORA N ex LYCIA
OCEAN EMPRESS	ex ROLLO
OLD CALEDONIA	ex CALEDONIA (paddler)
REDTHORN	ex ORANMORE
STOLT STUART	ex STUART PRINCE
SCOTTISH WASA	ex IRON CROWN

Cont. over

S. NICOLAOU
SINERGASIA

30 NOVEMBER

ex MAGGA DAN
ex WICKLOW ex DURHAM COAST ex ULSTER
CHIEFTAIN ex HEBRIDEAN COAST
ex VALERIAN COAST ex SANDHILL
ex FELICIE ex CITY OF BRISTOL
ex SACRAMENTO (Lairds 1945)

SOCIETY SOCIAL

This new event in the Society's calendar was held on Thursday, 17th December, and proved to be very successful. There was an exhibition of delightful watercolour paintings of sailing ships by Mr. G.A. Kiddie of Southport, arranged by Mr. Gordon Kiddie Junr. and Mr. N.R. Pugh. These paintings featured amongst other subjects, the four master WANDERER aboard which Mr. Kiddie served. She was built by Potters of Liverpool in 1886, and is the ship of which John Masefield wrote. Other members brought interesting pictures and paintings.

All our thanks go to Miss Susan Welsh, daughter of the Chairman, for the excellent refreshments prepared, and her helpers.

After the repast, Mr. John Robinson, Assistant Hon. Secretary, introduced a colour film about the Port of Bristol, past, present and future. In this film, called "Bristol Fashion" there were many fascinating shots of the old port and the beautiful old buildings still standing in the city. The present day work of the port was well filmed, from the moment a ship picked up her pilot off the Breaksea Lightvessel to her arrival at Avonmouth, Portishead or Bristol Docks, and the discharge of her cargo. All this complemented Mr. Cosson's lecture to the Society in October.

To round off our first Christmas Social, sherry was served to warm us on our way home. Mr. Ronald Summerfield closed the meeting by thanking our Chairman, Mr. Peter Welsh, and his helpers for organizing such a pleasant event - one which we hope will be repeated.

M.K.S.

EMPRESS OF CANADA

The Furness group Staff Letter says there have been reports in the press that Furness Withy or Shaw Savill are negotiating for the purchase of this liner. C.P.R. are unhappy that these rumours persist, and have been assured that they are not emanating from any members of the Furness group.

ECHO OF THE MOONLIGHT TRAGEDY

A spare copy of our last issue of News, Notes and Queries with a report on the loss of this coaster was forwarded to the Coxswain of Port Erin Lifeboat, Dennis Maddrell B.E.M. This was kindly acknowledged as making "very interesting reading".

An announcement appeared in the press that for "outstanding seamanship and courage" Mr. Maddrell is to receive a bronze medal of the R.N.L.I. and the crew and station mechanic will get framed certificates as well as a monetary award.

The search for the men on the liferaft lasted seven hours in the teeth of a gale. Mr. Maddrell's hands were injured as he attempted to keep a grip on the wheel of the lifeboat.

OBITUARY

A fine Hebridean seaman passed away in October 1970. Lieut-Commander Donald McKillop R.N.R. had been in retirement at Southampton for some years. He was well known in the sphere of steam and motor yachts, and had been skipper of Sopwith's large PHILANTE, which as the NORGE, was the Norwegian Royal Yacht after the last War. The writer served under his command (1944/45) and much deplores his passing.

N.R.P.

WITHDRAWAL OF 23 SHIPS

After a review of the Furness Withy group's activities, and having regard to steeply rising costs and wages, it has

been decided to withdraw from service the following vessels in 1971 :-

ANDES, ARAWA, AKAROA, ARANDA, PACIFIC STRONGHOLD, PACIFIC ENVOY, PACIFIC RELIANCE, PACIFIC NORTHWEST, BLACK PRINCE, WESTERN PRINCE, SOUTHERN PRINCE, AFRICAN PRINCE, LANCASTRIAN PRINCE, PICARDY, THESSALY, ALBANY, LOMBARDY, CHANDELEUR, ELEUTHERA, SOMERS ISLE, MYSTIC, ROWANMORE, and LOCH LOYAL.

NEW FARE DETAILS. ISLE OF MAN STEAM PACKET CO.

The following is a comparison of fares for last year and this year:-

	1970		1971	
	<u>Single</u>	<u>Return</u>	<u>Single</u>	<u>Return</u>
Liverpool to Douglas	2.50	4.25	2.75	5.50
Liverpool to Llandudno	1.00	1.75	1.15	2.30
Llandudno to Douglas	2.00	3.50	2.40	4.70
Ardrossan to Douglas	2.75	4.50	2.60	5.20
Heysham, Belfast & Dublin to Douglas	2.50	4.25	2.60	5.20
<u>Midweek Return</u>				
Liverpool to Douglas		3.75		5.00
Heysham to Douglas		3.75		4.70
<u>Day Excursions</u>				
Liverpool to Douglas		1.50		2.20
Liverpool to Llandudno		1.25		1.70
Douglas to Llandudno		1.50		2.00
Heysham to Douglas		1.70		2.00
Ardrossan to Douglas				2.00
Belfast/Dublin to Douglas		1.50		2.00
<u>Two hour afternoon cruises from Llandudno</u>				
(if booked from Liverpool)		.38		.50
(if booked from Llandudno)		.50		.70

It is interesting to note that the long Ardrossan/Douglas trip is now cheaper than Liverpool/Douglas - why, after all these years? The Ardrossan single fare is reduced.

For Liverpooldlians, the steep increases are a great blow especially to the older folk who have supported these sailings for many years. It seems to be assumed - and the I.O.M.S.P.C.

are not alone in this - that we have all had substantial pay rises. Those on fixed incomes, or have suffered redundancy through no fault of their own, are staggered by the size of these increased charges.

Here is one of the "come-overs" who will not be seen on board nearly as much in 1971 !

N.R.P.

SAILINGS TO MANCHESTER - M.V. EGREMONT

Here is an opportunity for a cruise where the fare has not risen so steeply since last year, and for 1971 stands at £1.60. Sailings are planned from Liverpool at approximately 10.30 a.m. on Saturdays 24th April, 8th May, 4th September and 18th September arriving Pomona Dock, Manchester about 5.30 p.m. Return by rail.

The following sailings start from Manchester at 9 a.m. Saturdays 15th May and 26th June, and Sundays 25th April, 9th May, 5th September and 19th September arriving New Brighton at about 4 p.m. Return by rail, which is included in above fares. Accommodation is limited. Reservation is recommended for which please write to:-

Co-op Travel,
Corporation Street,
Manchester M60 4ES.

DECEMBER MEETING

Captain Cummings, a member of the Society and the Speaker for the meeting on 10th December was unfortunately indisposed. All members present at the meeting wished him a speedy recovery. Dr. Peter Davies very kindly agreed to talk to the Society on the subject of "Marine Archaeology" in place of Captain Cummings.

Dr. Davies began by briefly outlining the development of diving techniques from the first divers who simply held their breath underwater, to the development of the first diving suit in 1837 and to the submarine escape apparatus of 1915. Then came "frogmen" with equipment for regenerating their air supply, and finally the development of equipment by the French where the diver carried his own air supply in

special cylinders, and the exhaled air was allowed to escape from the sides of his face mask. This system gave increased mobility and made it possible to dive deeper.

In the 1950's diving became a popular sport and many groups and individuals attained a high level of skill.

There were many underwater occupations, such as fishing and assisting the police, but an increasing number of divers were turning to the exploration of wrecks. It was important that this kind of exploration was on a systematic basis so that valuable historical evidence was not lost. Indiscriminate removal of objects from wrecks for souvenirs destroyed vital evidence. In 1964, the Committee for Marine Archaeology was set up to deal with this new situation. Clubs or groups register any wrecks they may discover with the Committee who in turn can tell other clubs, so that there is no "poaching". If a particularly valuable wreck were discovered, the Committee might be able to provide technical and financial assistance for its investigation.

The excavation of wrecks uses similar techniques to those of land-based archaeology - systematic excavation, recording all levels and features of the site, and analysis of all materials found on the site. Problems are much increased by such factors as depth of water, currents and tides, and underwater visibility. These problems were re-emphasized by the film of the work on the Spanish galleon, SANTA MARIA DE LA ROSA.

Doctor Davies went on to describe some examples of recent underwater exploration, which he illustrated with slides and a film. The discovery of the galleon was especially exciting. SANTA MARIA DE LA ROSA was a unit of the Spanish Armada against England in 1588. On the return voyage to Spain, she had anchored in Great Blasket Sound on the west coast of Ireland. Her last anchor failed to hold her and she hit an uncharted rock and sank in deep water. There was only one survivor, the son of the pilot, and his story was taken down by local officials. The document is preserved in the British Museum Library. An eye-witness report of the sinking by an

English agent has also survived. Thus there is considerable documentary evidence for the wreck.

The problem of finding the wreck was a considerable one; Great Blasket Sound is a large area of water with treacherous currents.

A system of searches by teams of divers strung out along a line over an area marked out by buoys was devised. This enabled the exploration team to know exactly which areas of the sea bed they had searched. At last, an anchor with a broken stock was discovered. The only anchor left in the SANTA MARIA was known to be broken from the contemporary accounts of the wreck. The anchor was an important clue to the exact position of the ship. The site, when eventually located, proved to be a small mound scarcely noticeable from the surrounding sea bed. The site had a covering of stone ballast, beneath which some of the frames of the ship had survived. From these it was possible to reconstruct her main dimensions.

The most significant find was a pewter plate marked with an officer's name, Matuta, who was known to be on board from the documents in the British Museum. This plate confirmed that it was the wreck of SANTA MARIA DE LA ROSA. Cannon balls were found, but no cannon. Analysis of the cannon balls showed that they contained pieces of stone, slag or scrap iron. This meant that they would shatter on impact rather than penetrate the hull of an enemy ship. It should be remembered that no English ships were sunk by gunfire from the Armada. Also, Grenville in the REVENGE was hopelessly outnumbered when she fought the Spanish off the Azores. But the REVENGE was not sunk, she was captured by boarding, only to sink some days after her capture.

Experiments are being carried on to try to simulate the effects of these inferior Spanish cannon balls on timbers of similar dimensions to those of the English ships. There is also to be an expedition to the Azores next year to search for the REVENGE.

Dr. Davies showed many slides of work on the SANTA MARIA

and other wrecks. There was also an excellent short colour film made by the B.B.C. on SANTA MARIA.

After coffee, there was a long discussion on the guns and shot used by the Armada and their relative effects on enemy ships. Our speaker emphasized how quickly and badly the Armada had been prepared.

Many of the vessels were short of provisions and had small quantities of poor quality powder and shot. Many of the crews had little experience. Vessels had been conscripted from the Mediterranean - the galleasses for example - and were not designed for such fiercely stormy waters as the seas to the north and west of Scotland and Ireland.

Discussion touched on other important underwater sites, such as the discovery of MARY ROSE in the Solent. It was hoped to locate the wreck of REVENGE with the sweep technique developed for finding SANTA MARIA.

Mr. Stoddart proposed the vote of thanks, which was seconded by Mr. Coney and carried unanimously.

M.K.S.

JANUARY MEETING

Divisional Officer R.Owens was unable to give his lecture on "Fire fighting in the Port of Liverpool" because of the Firemens' pay dispute. Society member Mr. W.B.Hallam kindly stepped into the breach and delivered an excellent paper entitled "Over the Water". Mr. Hallam explained that the term "Over the Water" had often been used in rather a patronizing way by native Liverpudlians to refer to the "less fortunate" who lived in Birkenhead and Wallasey, on the Cheshire bank of the Mersey. He himself had come from "over the water".

During the first years of his working life he had travelled across the Mersey aboard the ferry steamers owned by Birkenhead Corporation. He had discovered that theirs was a fascinating story, going back to one of the first steamers to ply the Mersey - the Tranmere/Liverpool ferry ETNA of 1817. Steam ferries speeded up communication between the sides of the River and made a vital contribution to the growth of Birkenhead.

Indeed, so important was the ferry to Birkenhead that in 1842 the town commissioners took over the ferry rights from Woodside to Liverpool. The earlier steamers had no protection for their passengers. The first to be provided with a deck cabin was the CHESHIRE of 1863.

Up to 1886 the ferry had no rivals, but in that year the Mersey Railway tunnel was opened and provided stiff competition to the ferries. However, the ferry still carried all the wheeled vehicles crossing the river.

In 1880 the first luggage boats, OXTON and BEBINGTON, went into service. They had twin screws fore and aft, instead of the usual paddles, and also hydraulic gangways. They had only the most minimal of superstructure amidships in order to carry as many vehicles as possible. In 1890 the MERSEY became the first passenger vessel to have twin screws instead of paddles. However the ferry BIRKENHEAD built at Scott's yard, Kinghorn, some four years later, reverted to paddles. She became the White Star tender GALLIC in 1907.

In 1897 Birkenhead Corporation took over the New Ferry service and in 1899 the Rock Ferry service. The twin screw steamers LANCASHIRE and CLAUGHTON arrived on the Mersey. They had two sets of four-cylinder triple expansion engines. This became standard practice in subsequent steamers. CLAUGHTON was chartered to carry the Liverpool City Councillors to the opening of the Gladstone Graving Dock in 1913.

In 1930 CLAUGHTON suffered a severe collision, and was scrapped. Her sister ship LANCASHIRE was sold in 1929 to the Galway Harbour Commissioners. She did good work in the Second World War in rescuing the crews of torpedoed ships, and was finally scrapped in 1948.

Another luggage boat was completed in 1906 and was to have been named Liverpool, but it was found that she was too low for the landing stages, and she had to be sent back to her builders for modifications. When she started work properly in 1908, she was re-named PRENTON. The last vessel ordered before the outbreak of the First World War was the STORETON in 1910. She was designed for the Rock Ferry service to replace the old

FIREFLY. With the electrification of the Mersey Railway and the coming of the Birkenhead Tramways, the Rock Ferry service was not a paying proposition. However, it was subsidized from the receipts from Woodside ferry, and was carried on until 1939.

In 1941 STORETON was sold to the Leith Salvage and Towage Co. and converted into a salvage vessel. She was scrapped in 1951. Mr. Hallam showed an interesting colour slide of STORETON pictured by the famous Wallasey artist Sam Brown, crossing the Mersey on a rough day. He also showed black and white slides of the old training ships CONWAY, AKBAR and INDEFATIGABLE which used to be moored south of Rock Ferry Stage.

After the First World War, four large luggage boats were built. They had been planned in 1913 but not laid down. They were needed to cope with the increasing vehicular traffic. However, when the Mersey Tunnel was opened in 1934, the luggage service was reduced to one steamer, which was withdrawn at the beginning of the Second World War. Between 1925 and 1933, five passenger steamers were brought into service. These were the first Birkenhead ferries to have the promenade deck extended to the full width of the hull. Of the five, UPTON was slightly smaller and designed for the Rock Ferry service. This route was still popular with Liverpool cyclists making excursions to the Wirral and North Wales. In 1939 she was requisitioned for use as a tender for work in the Mersey estuary. In 1946 she was sold to the Southampton, Isle of Wight and South of England Royal Mail Steam Packet Co. Ltd. (Red Funnel Line) for whom she became an excursion steamer. She retained her name until scrapped in 1953.

The passenger ferries CLAUGHTON and THURSTASTON of 1930 acted as tenders in the Mersey to the "Strength through Joy" cruises of the German liner STUTTGART in the '30's. They were not sold until 1964. The last steam ferry was BIDSTON, built by Lairds in 1933. In 1960 she was chartered by the Cork Harbour Commissioners. There was no new construction for 27 years. In 1960 and 1961 two diesel engined ferries MOUNTWOOD and WOODCHURCH were built by Phillip and Son of Dartmouth. A third ship, OVERCHURCH, was delivered by Lairds in 1962. These three vessels are now responsible for the service between

Woodside and Liverpool and are run by the Merseyside Passenger Transport Authority. In its wisdom the Board has seen fit to paint their familiar red and black funnels in a rather unpleasant combination of primrose yellow and blue.

After coffee, there was a great deal of discussion over this interesting lecture. Points raised included the different sets of engines used in the ferries. Mr. Hallam said the first ferries had oscillatory engines, but later on triple expansion engines were the norm. It had been rumoured that a Birkenhead ferry had sailed out to Australia for work in Sydney Harbour. Mr. Hallam said this was not correct - the only ferry that had "gone foreign" was the little FIREFLY of the Rock Ferry service, and she had sailed to Rio de Janeiro.

The declining standards of the ferry service were regretted by all present. The Birkenhead ferries did not have their upper decks extended to the sides until long after this feature was standard in Wallasey ferries. It was said that IRIS and DAFFODIL were selected for the raid on Zeebrugge because their wide upperdecks would give the landing parties easy access to the moles.

The vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. D.W. Boyes, seconded by Mr. N.R. Pugh, and was carried with acclamation.

M.K.S.

MERSEY NOTES

Cammell Lairds launched only three ships in 1970. These were the chemical tanker SILVEREAGLE, 6360 tons, STARWORTH, a bulk carrier of 29,020 tons and C.P. VOYAGEUR, container ship of 16,969 tons. Lairds look forward to the launching of two more C.P. container ships in 1971, and the commissioning of the nuclear submarine H.M.S. CONQUEROR.

It was a matter for regret that the Mersey lost the contract for the overhaul of EMPRESS OF CANADA this winter. The work was completed at Southampton on 21st November in time for her winter cruising programme.

INDORITA of Coppack Brothers, and formerly of J. Summers and Sons, Shotton has been purchased for breaking up. She has

lasted 50 years and was recently laid up in Egerton Dock.

TITAN is the name chosen for Ocean Fleet's giant tanker launched in Sweden before Christmas, of 227,000 tons.

C.P. TRADER was launched by Cammell Laird & Co. on Thursday, 28th January at noon, on a thirty foot tide. She will run between London, Rotterdam & Quebec.

Pilotage on the Mersey virtually ceased on 26/1/71 when pilots attended a meeting in Birmingham claiming an increase of one fifth in their remuneration. Nos. 1 & 2 Pilot cutters were moored together at Princes Stage. The dockers, riggers, tugboatmen, ferrymen and now pilots - is it any wonder the ships have gone elsewhere?

Early in December 1970, the Swansea coaster GERA and an attendant tug named DAGGER of Newhaven, started sampling the bed of the Mersey off Morpeth Dock in connection with the proposed iron ore berth. A black lighted conical buoy was placed about 200 yards S.E. of Alfred Lock to mark the workings. On 16th January whilst leaving Birkenhead stern-first, the Norwegian tanker ANINA fouled the buoy and extinguished the light. Drilling vessel and buoy were removed a few days later, presumably on completion of the investigations.

At Fox's Cove, Padstow, explosives have been used to dispose of the wrecked oiler HEMSLEY I.

VACUUM PIONEER, a well-known steam tanker of the coastal variety, which ran mostly between Birkenhead and the Thames is being scrapped. She was built in 1952.

For only the second time in ten years, the Christmas cheer for the Bar lightship PLANET was put aboard in fine weather, and the party who embarked in the Alexandra tug NELSON were able to step aboard to exchange greetings.

ARDSHIEL of Trident Tankers Ltd. berthed at Tranmere on 14th January. Of 215,000 tons she is our largest to date, though she had lightened part of her cargo in French waters.

In January the single fare between Liverpool and Seacombe

was increased from 4np to 5np and for summer sailings to New Brighton the fare will be 10np single and 20np return. The single fare to Birkenhead Woodside remains at 2½np.

On Saturday 9th January MANX MAID had pump trouble which prevented her sailing for Douglas with the mails and a small number of passengers at 11 a.m. MANXMAN arrived from Douglas about 1 p.m. and it was arranged for her to take the MAID's sailing. But first MANXMAN required fuel which was aboard ADRIAN M, in dock and unable to reach the river through a fault with Waterloo Dock Gates. MANXMAN arrived Douglas 9.30 p.m.

The white ensign will be lowered for the last time at a ceremonial sunset on board H.M.S. EAGLET on 24th March at Salthouse Dock. Society members are visiting the old ship on Saturday 27th February. The new R.N.R. headquarters on Princes Dock wall are to be opened on 29th March, having cost £200,000 to build.

OF GENERAL INTEREST

QUEEN ELIZABETH II and EMPRESS OF CANADA took part in the rescue of cruise passengers from the stranded and burning French liner ANTILLES in the Caribbean in January 1971.

The Aran Islands ferry GALWAY BAY ex CALSHOT was impounded at Galway on 21st November for debts due to the dockyard.

The GREAT BRITAIN. In the first five months since her arrival at Bristol 145,000 people have visited the old ship. "The sentiments of virtually everyone is that Bristol is the right place for GREAT BRITAIN" said Mr. Gould-Adams, sponsor of the preservation fund. But people wanted to know where she was finally to berth before deciding whether or not to give their money. The suggested alternative berth is near London's Tower Bridge.

The Eire Government have purchased three corvettes from

the British Ministry of Defence for fishery protection and coastal patrol duties, for £600,000. All three will be delivered by March 1971, and replace MACHA, CLIONA and MAEV which were former British Flower class corvettes.

An illustrated colour holiday brochure is obtainable free from travel agents - "Horizon, Cruising with Chandris". It details cruises from Mediterranean ports of ROMANTICA, REGINA, ROMANZA, CARINA, FIORITA, FANTASIA and FIESTA. There is an interesting photograph of the last named, which we once knew as MONAS QUEEN.

Herring season at Dunmore East, Co. Waterford. Prior to Christmas, 100 boats were working 6 days per week, 24 hours per day. In the six weeks landings have totalled 47,000 crans with a value of £375,000. The weight of the total catch last year was 27,000 tons. Almost all the catch goes to the Continent, and there is virtually a Dutch monopoly as the luggers arrive full of empty barrels and return home deep laden. The operation is now called "Klondyking" and this season's catch may total £1½ million.

Two large British Rail container ships have appeared on Irish Sea routes. Both were built at Cork on the lines of the SEAFREIGHTLINER type. They are BRYAN BAROIME (pronounced BRYAN BAROO) and RHODRI MAWR, called after famous Irish and Welsh Kings of old. At present they are working Heysham/Belfast.

N.R.P.

SOCIETY NEWS IN BRIEF

It is with regret that Mr. E. W. Paget-Tomlinson is withdrawing as our Chairman-elect, owing to his coming removal to the Lake District. From the Council we are losing Mrs. Summerfield (formerly Miss Hope) now domiciled in the Isle of Man. Both have done fine work for the Society, and we shall miss them as regular attenders.

Prospective members should note that our annual subscription for adults remains at £1.00 p.a. Any correspondence regarding News, Notes and Queries should be sent to Mr. N. R. Pugh, 7 Dunbar Road, Hillside, Southport. (Editor).

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

"The Navy is very old and very wise.
Much of her wisdom is on record
And available for reference;
But more of it works in the unconscious blood
Of those who serve her.
She has a thousand years of experience,
And can find precedent or parallel
For any situation that the force of the weather
Or the malice of the Queen's enemies
May bring about".

Rudyard Kipling

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April-June 1971

THE ROYAL NAVY AND THE RESERVES

Kipling's prose quoted above puts into words the inmost feelings of all who have at any time served in the Senior Service. The Society's recent visit to H.M.S. EAGLET reminded us of the volunteer's role in Britain's defence. It is almost 33 years since the Munich crisis and a partial mobilization of the fleet, but when the crunch came in 1939, Reserve officers and ratings obeyed their call-up notices, and returned to the Service to carry on the life they knew in former times. It seemed that nothing had been forgotten of naval tradition between the two wars.

The 1939 mobilization of the Fleet demonstrated how rich was our country in reservists who had not lost their zest for service in the Navy, and could carry on the code as if there had been no break.

Men recalled after a long period of years, to serve once more under the white ensign were surely priceless. The men with the know-how, and I think particularly here of the chief and petty officers, who knew what the Navy was all about, and simply carried on. In truth something "worked in the unconscious blood of those who serve" as Kipling so aptly wrote. They had in the meantime been clerks, miners, postmen, jacks-of-all-trades, the salt of the earth.

In 1918, there was a large demobilization from the main Naval Barracks at Portsmouth, Devonport and Chatham - yet twenty-one years later, back came many of them - our line unbroken.

The white ensign fluttered in the breeze from more and more halyards, the hammocks were again lashed and stowed, and "up spirits" was piped daily. Much had changed in the intervening years, and much has changed since, but let us not forget the Reserves and what they have contributed towards Britain's freedom.

In HMS MERSEY, our city has its own sea-going vessel for training purposes, now berthing in Princes Dock. Daily, we can see the white ensign flying from the conspicuous position on Princes River Wall, where has been built the brand new "stone frigate" - EAGLET.

The opening ceremony was performed on Sunday 2nd May in glorious weather by Vice Admiral Sir Gilbert Stephenson. Our Society extends best wishes to the new establishment, and good fortune to all who serve.

N.R.P.

MERSEY NOTES

The term - "the China boats" - used by Merseysiders in familiar reference to Blue Funnel ships, will not suit for Ocean Fleets' first mighty tanker TITAN. With a tonnage of 227,000 deadweight, she commenced her maiden voyage in March to Captetown and the Persian Gulf. Built in Sweden, she is commanded by Captain Paterson, formerly of Elder Dempsters.

It seems only a short time since the tugs ALISON HOWARD, ELIZABETH HOWARD, LADY HOWARD and AMANDA HOWARD were brought into service to tow the barges of rock from Anglesey Quarries at Penmon to Seaforth for the new dock. Yet the work for which the first three were specially built, having been completed, the ALISON has been shipped out to the Persian Gulf.

Ocean Fleet's PROMETHEUS sailed from Birkenhead for Rotterdam and the Far East on Monday 8th February. In her chartroom were three quite small pieces of apparatus installed for evaluation, which give the ship's position in relation to satellites in orbit above the earth. There are five of these. A computer is fed with information regarding the ship's speed, height of aerial etc. and at any moment, a sheet of paper is typed with her latitude and longitude in degrees, minutes and seconds. When the writer was shown an example of this procedure and allowed to press the button of enquiry, out came our position in Vittoria Dock, at zero speed (moored). It was uncanny and I have to admit I understood little about it, but nuclear submarines have used the method to navigate under polar ice, and QUEEN ELIZABETH II has it. As one young officer remarked "... and after all the time I've spent in learning the sextant!"

Reverting to our Secretary's notes on Museum projects, the "History of the Port" display is scheduled for July. At the end of April, the carpenters are busily at work, and covered in cellophane is the mighty model of BERENGARIA, which has been shipped over from New York and renovated by Bassett, Lowke's.

For many years John Kelly & Co's fleet has been occupied in coal carrying, but reflecting the greater use of oil by Ulster Power Stations and industry, these well known coasters have sought other cargoes. BALLYHILL carried salt from Runcorn to Warrenpoint in February. BALLYLORAN also loaded salt there in March, and stone at Llandulas for Nordenham, with a return cargo to Limerick. BALLYRUSH has

had a few cargoes from Gdansk to Limerick.

The twin stack hopper barges W.D.TEST and W.D.ITCHEN were working in Lairds Wet basin in April, and taking spoil to the sea dumping grounds.

The German cargo ship HINRICH OLDENDORFF which sailed from the south docks on 17th April, lay at Princes Stage on 18/19th after one of the crew was found dead on board.

A meeting of the Coastal Cruising Association took place in the Committee Room of the Mersey Mission to Seamen on Saturday, 13th March. A representative number of our ardent civilian sailors was present and enjoyed one of Bram Hallam's illustrated talks, about our smaller sized cruising vessels, past, and to a much lesser degree, present. By the time these notes are printed, the Association will have partaken of the special cruise on 15th May of BALMORAL from Liverpool to Llandudno and the Menai Straits.

Cunard announced in March that they were intending to man their cruise liners FRANCONIA and CARMANIA with Greek personnel. The loss in operating these ships last year cancelled out the small profit earned by QUEEN ELIZABETH II.

Early in the year, it was a surprise to see BISON laid up in Princes Dock, after quite a hectic shuttle service with the BUFFALO, daily between Liverpool and Belfast. In her place the German roll-on/roll-off ship DONAUTAL has been chartered by Belfast Steamship Co. now under the aegis of P.O. Lines.

On 15th April LANDFALL was given a new berth in Salthouse Dock. We have many happy memories of her as the former meeting place of our Society. She is now used as a restaurant and night club.

For many years the Dock Board have issued free of charge, permits to take photographs or sketch on the dock estate, with certain limitations. Now a passport type permit will be issued

for a fee of £1 p.a. Applications should be made to the Secretary's Office.

With a bright, sunny Easter the Mersey ferries did a much greater trade than in recent years. It was a pity that the Merseyside Passenger Executive did not rise better to the occasion. One, and sometimes two boats operated the Woodside service with the reserve boat in dock. One boat operated to Seacombe, with sometimes two boats to New Brighton, except when ROYAL IRIS was withdrawn for cruising, due to the silting at New Brighton, which is still with us, the service terminated in the late afternoon on all days. The half hearted way in which the M.P.T.E. go about running the ferries is lamentable for holiday caterers and all those interested in the resort. EGREMONT having completed a refit, remained in dock over the holiday. One ponders the thought of the closure of the ferries, and all those thousands wanting the traditional sail on the Mersey, and not a tunnel bus ride at holiday times. One feels that this craving will be served in some way, and a Mersey devoid of boats for the trippers is unthinkable.

Berthed one day early in March at Princes Stage was the Research trawler JOHN MURRAY, based at Plymouth. She was built by Mitchisons of Glasgow in 1963 as the NOBLESSE and is operated by the Natural Environment Research Council.

At the R.N.L.I. Port of Liverpool and District Branch Annual Meeting in April, Sir Arnet Robinson reported a record number of lifeboat launchings during 1970. These totalled 2,633 with 2,376 lives saved round the coasts of Britain. Sir Arnet, as Vice-President of the Institution, stressed the need for greater fund-raising efforts owing to inflation.

The German coaster ARGO was ashore a short distance west of Hilbre Island on 27/4/71 whilst on passage from Mostyn to Birkenhead, but she refloated undamaged on the next tide.

N.R.P.

ITEMS OF GENERAL NEWS

At the official inquiry in April 1971 into the capsizing of the coaster LAIRDSFIELD just after she had left Middlesbrough in February 1970, the charterers, Messrs. John S. Braid & Son of Glasgow, were heavily censured. The casualty, in which all the crew of ten, lost their lives, was found to be due to the faulty way in which 250 tons of steel plate was loaded on top of steel columns. This firm were ordered to pay £3,000, and the shipowners Messrs. Burns Laird Lines Ltd. £750 for not providing the captain with the latest stability data for his ship. Captain Purvis, who lost his life, came in for some censure for not working out the stability position before sailing, but his wife contested at the inquiry that he was in any way to blame.

On 21st April, the I.R.A., familiarly known in Ireland as the "illegal organization" claimed to have blown up two H.M. Motor Launches at Baltimore, Co. Cork, and were to resist the arrival of the mothership HECATE. These British vessels had been sent on hydrographic duties at the request of the Dublin Government.

The launches were named STORK and PUFFIN. On 22nd, HMS HECATE was anchored off Baltimore and recovered part of one of the launches, one rating being injured in the operation. Meantime eight I.R.A. suspects were held, in gaol without charge, Garda activity having been intense in the previous forty-eight hours. There were demonstrations against the detentions outside Cork Gaol.

A company has been formed by Dublin and Galway businessmen to keep the GALWAY BAY running on the Aran Islands service this summer. It looks as if she has two, and possibly three years to run with the C.I.E. mailboat NAOMH EANNA. It will be remembered that GALWAY BAY was impounded in November for non payment of dockyard charges.

In January/February several coasters were dry-docked at Penzance for survey, including CAMBRIAN COAST, TERRIER and YEWMOUNT. The small ports are certainly coming into their own these days.

N.R.P.

NEW NAMES FOR OLD

AEGIS GLORY	ex MAKRANA
ASPIDOFOROS	ex IRON HORSE
AGHIOS LAZAROS	ex VILLEGAS
ALDO CERCONI	ex GLEDDOCH
BENCAIRN	ex CITY OF BRISBANE
DYNABULKER	ex BALLYLAGAN
DERWENT	ex PERSIC
EUROPEAN SKY	ex CAROLINE H ex DURHAMBROOK
FROMA	ex AROMA ex BULWARK ex ANGLIAN
GRAND STATE	ex JOHN W.HILL ex MARGARET BOWATER
GRAND TRADER	ex VAINQUEUR JOSE ex SARAH BOWATER
HOLIDAY PRINCESS	ex STELLA MARINA
KINNAIRD CASTLE	ex S.A.SCIENTIST ex CLAN ROSS
KILCREA	ex FRITZ RAABE ex MARIA ALTHOFT
MARIA B	ex BLACK PRINCE
MALDIVE MAIL	ex AFRICAN PRINCE
MALDIVE SAILOR	ex BRAMBER
MALDIVE TRANSPORT	ex DUNELMIA
MANIPUR	ex IVERNIA
MAYO	ex HIBERNIAN ENTERPRISE
NEPTUNE AMBER	ex SCOTIA (1966)
RATHGAR	ex PASS OF KILDRUMMY
SEBASTIANO	ex DEERWOOD
TRE ARDDUR	ex HAMPTON FERRY
XENY	ex GOTHIC PRINCE
URSA	ex VERDAGUER

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Our Hon.Treasurer, Mr.T.D.Tozer, is mindful that there are still some subscriptions outstanding for the present season. Remittances can be forwarded to Mr.Tozer, c/o The Liverpool Museums, William Brown Street, Liverpool 3.

THE END OF A LIBERTY SHIP

The following note appears as a recent Lloyds Register entry:- "PATRAIC SKY ex DOVE ex GLENIFFER ex TALTHYBIUS ex SAMARKAND ex PETER COOPER, built in U.S.A. 1943 and scrapped at Split, 1971". Not bad for a ship whose expected life was about three years.

THE NAVY'S TOT

The Seafarers' Education Service recently organized a competition for the best poems from Merchant Seamen. Bill Reid, chief engineer of the Hobart registered ship KOOTARA won ten pounds for the following. He must surely be an R.N.R. man to write so feelingly of the rum issue, which has disappeared.

The Three-Badger's Lament.

The news is appalling; decidedly galling,
And should we believe it or not?
Alas for our humour, it's no idle rumour,
They'll soon do away with the tot.

The elderly rating requires lubricating,
Just hear him bewailing his lot -
"It's me passport to Heaven each day at eleven,
They can't do away with me tot".

"There's no doubt about it - I can't live without it,
The one consolation I've got
Is that life-giving nectar, my guard, my protector,
Oh, don't do away with me tot".

"Deprive me of leave, take the hook off me sleeve,
For me badges I don't give a jot,
I'll gladly do penance for all first lieutenants
Who don't do away with the tot".

"Six months in Fleet tankers, or fourteen days jankers,
I'll take all they give me, the lot.
I don't mind being slaughtered, or 'ung, drawn and quartered,
But don't do away with me tot".

But in spite of his pleading, the Powers are unheeding,
And do as they feel that they ought.
So toll the ship's bell in a funeral knell,
And sound the "Last Post" for the tot.

MANX FARE INCREASES

Fred Henry, resident in Ainsdale, and always in step with affairs in his native Manxland, writes regarding the note in our last issue on Isle of Man fares:-

"It must be remembered that like all of us, the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company are faced with continually rising costs and prices. Despite stringent control, a much higher cost of wages and salaries, the doubling of the price of fuel oil to what it was in December 1969, the increased cost of overhauls, insurances and general overheads led the directors to decide in August 1970 that fares would have to be increased in the coming year.

"However, after the new fare structure had been agreed, the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board levied a very large increase in passenger tax, as well as increased dues on vessels in Liverpool, and this left no alternative but a further review. In consequence, Liverpool fares are higher than those charged from other ports.

"Another problem, is the condition of Liverpool Landing Stage which requires considerable renovation. The Dock Board have made it plain that they require assurances of sufficient revenue to justify the heavy cost involved. The normal season's services will be operated in 1971, but new arrangements must be made for the continuation of these services through new landing facilities after this year.

"The Company have been in consultation with British Rail over a proposed reopening of Fleetwood, for Douglas excursion work, and if B.R. can have Wyre Dock ready by July, there is a hope that Steam Packet ships can again sail from Fleetwood.

"Other Company news is that the afternoon cruises from Llandudno were successful, 20,000 passengers being carried. There were also evening cruises from Douglas to the Calf of Man and to Ramsey Bay. Queen's Pier, Ramsey is no longer available to the Company's steamers, and this will affect the

HMS EAGLET

If a theme pervades the pages of these notes, as it did last year regarding the wonderful salvage of the GREAT BRITAIN, then the theme of these present notes is "The Navy and its Reserves" - in good times and bad.

Society members made a farewell visit to HMS EAGLET at 2 p.m. on Saturday, 27th February, conducted by our Assistant Secretary and serving RNVR Officer John Roberts. Although the fixture was announced at the previous meeting, it was unfortunate that the postal strike precluded confirmation.

We had an inspection of the old ship, whose silverware was on show. At 3.30 p.m. by the kindness of C.P.O. Fred Dalton and his good lady, we were served with tea and biscuits in the Wardroom.

We saw the rifle range on the bilges and inspected decorations and many old photographs. The bar for ratings, with its recruiting posters showed a difference in approach from years ago. The assembly hall, built on deck, was large enough for drill or for dances and social occasions.

It was over thirty years since our member Dennis Boyes, and your editor, did evening wireless training on board, but she looked very little changed. We never aspired in those days to ever having tea in the wardroom. This was an occasion of nostalgia and one we would not care to have missed, even if we imagined we saw again the shapes of one or two old friends, like C.P.O. Bowey, no longer with us.

EAGLET was built at the end of World War One as the Race-horse-class minesweeper SIR BEVIS. She never fired a gun in

anger, and was launched too late for hostilities. Sharp at both ends, flush-decked and symmetrical in profile as to superstructure, masts, funnels and even anchors, it would be very difficult at a distance to tell which way she was steaming.

At the start of World War Two she became an important unit in Naval communications, and had her masts heightened to carry aerials less shielded by the adjoining warehouses, until the radio station for the port was moved elsewhere.

But meantime, she had been an important link in putting into action the air raid sirens, on information received of approaching enemy bombers, before radar became of practical use in the early stages. For of course, as well as land observers, we did have the little ships spread out across the sea.

So, if this proud ship never fired a shot in anger, she was like those, who in Milton's words, "also serve, who only stand and wait". She had great uses, and witnessed the training of thousands of volunteers. She lay in Salthouse Dock many nights, lit up by the flickering orange glow of a hundred fires, amid the drone of the enemy hordes, the whistle and crunch of bombs, and devastating shrapnel.

On 13th April, EAGLET was towed from Salthouse Dock across the Mersey by two tugs of the Alexandra Towing Company, to the Morpeth Tongue, there to be broken up. We shall see her dismantled, until her reduced shell is towed away for final disposal - but for many, memories of her will never die!

Farewell, old EAGLET!

N.R.P.

SHELL'S "M" CLASS SUPER TANKERS

By the courtesy of Shell Tankers (U.K.) Ltd., the following details are given of the "M" class, which have been brought into service to date. All the vessels are of turbine propulsion, and are all within the range of 192,000 to 209,000 tons summer deadweight. The length comes between 1050 and 1077 ft. and the beam between 144 and 155 ft.

The majority of this class, have now discharged part cargoes at Tranmere, commencing with MELO in February 1970.

MUREX	Flag - British, built at Kiel, Germany	1968
MYSIA	ditto in Japan	1969
MYTILUS	ditto in Japan	1969
MITRA	ditto at Odense, Denmark	1969
MELANIA	ditto at Amsterdam	1969
MELO	ditto in Japan	1969
MEGARA	ditto in Japan	1968
MEDORA	ditto in Japan	1968
MARISA	ditto in Japan	1968
MARINULA	ditto at Odense, Denmark	1968
MACTRA	ditto at Kiel, Germany	1969
MANGELIA	ditto in Japan	1968
MARTICIA	ditto at Amsterdam	1970
META	ditto in Japan	1968
MYSELLA	ditto at Amsterdam	1970
MYRINA	German at Belfast	1968
MIRALDA	French at St.Nazaire	1968
MAGDALA	French at St.Nazaire	1968
MACOMA	Dutch in Japan	1968
METULA	Dutch in Japan	1968

BRITISH RAIL'S IRISH SERVICES

Repairs now being made to the fire-damaged Britannia Tubular Bridge over Menai Straits will reinstate Holyhead as British Rail's major port for the Irish passenger and goods traffic. Heysham became a busy port following the severing of rail connection between London and Holyhead, but unfortunately for the Lancashire port, this looks like being short lived.

FEBRUARY MEETING

Commander R.R.Richardson, in giving the Society a paper on "The Thames Navigation Service", commenced by saying that some twelve years ago he was transferred from the Royal Navy to inaugurate the Navigation Service on that part of the River Thames controlled by the Port of London Authority. The basic idea of the Navigation Service was to inform all ships where they were to berth and at what time. The lines of communication required modernizing and regularizing and in 1954 the Government extended the outer line of London's port to Foulness Point - now so much in the news as the site of our projected largest airport. This was done to prevent foreigners occupying forts and sites which were then outside territorial waters. We know all too well how pirate broadcasters were able to establish themselves in this area.

The Navigation Service was given full rights of shipping movements on the Thames. They arranged for frequent surveys and for the dredging of new channels. Unlike the Mersey, where the Dock Board have maintained buoyage, this had been Trinity House responsibility on the Thames in the past. Commander Richardson was not sparing in his praise of the port of Liverpool, or of his faith in its future, once Seaforth comes into use.

As with most older ports, London commenced building its docks in the city centre, and as vessels were built with deeper draughts and wider beams so the docks gradually moved down towards the sea, thus taking advantage of the depth of water and wider dock entrances. The older London docks are already in process of being closed, part of the area being scheduled as a yacht marina.

There has been a considerable increase in the use of oil tank barges for taking petrol to West London. This relieves pressure on road tankers, but at the same time, it does increase the danger to other river users.

Apart from river traffic a large measure of danger comes from driftwood and other objects. A large amount of money is spent in keeping the river clear of flotsam. It can be particularly dangerous to yachts and high-speed motor launches, such as those used by the Metropolitan Police. The Police have a considerable organization on the river in maintaining law and order in its various aspects. Human bodies are frequently recovered by the Police during their travels. A large number of vessels discharge cargo at river quays, and these require constant supervision.

During his paper, Commander Richardson arranged for a large number of slides to be shown on the screen; all the slides shown were of his taking. The slides included views of all the various dock systems, including all important buildings connected with shipping, grain silos, oil installations, timber yards and the new container berths at Tilbury.

Views were shown of the radar and telephone installations used by the Thames Navigation Service. Some of these are sited in isolated spots along the Thames foreshore and on elevated buildings and hills within close proximity. We saw the Operations Room in the Administrative Centre, and altogether a great deal of information was given in a very full evening. The tidal gauges operating electrically from the Shivering Sands were also shown on the screen.

Commander Richardson explained in detail the necessity to have vessels very much under control whilst moving in the river. This is particularly necessary with oil tankers where considerable danger can arise when vessels enter territorial waters without sufficient equipment, or equipment that is no longer operative. Pilots have reported being on modern vessels with so little workable equipment that considerable risk has been involved in bringing them into port. Should any of the super-tankers be involved in an accident, the result could well be catastrophic over a very wide area. With large amounts of crude oil floating in an estuary like the Thames, power stations and sewage plants could very well be put out of action which could result in whole communities being paralyzed.

Because of the length of his paper, the coffee break was curtailed, and when our closing time arrived, the vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. E.M.McManus and seconded very briefly by Mr. T.D. Tozer. It was quite obvious to all who attended, that Commander Richardson had very much more we should all like to have heard, but the clock prevailed. Perhaps we may be privileged to have more in the future.

T.D.T.

MARCH MEETING

On 11th March, Mr. John Robinson, Assistant Secretary of the Society gave a very interesting illustrated talk on his trip to the Seychelles from Durban. He sailed with five others in a large ketch-rigged trimaran of somewhat doubtful construction. Their route took them first up the east coast of Africa, and they called at Beira, where the remains of an old iron sailing ship were still to be seen, and at the small port of Antonio Enes on the Mozambique border. Here, the local chief of police was carried out to the trimaran in an old sedan chair. His four bearers had to wade through thick black mud to reach the yacht.

The crew's diet was at first rather bizarre, consisting mainly of mouldy bread which had to be fried, and tinned fig jam. The price of fresh meat was exorbitant. However, when they set out from the coast they were able to catch bonito - a type of tunny fish - which made a delicious addition to their fare. The first one caught itself by getting entangled in the log line. Navigation was rather haphazard, and on one occasion a member of the crew was sent ashore by surf-board, with a chart to check their position.

The Seychelles are a group of granite islands - in fact the peaks of huge undersea mountains, in the middle of the Indian Ocean, well away from the main shipping routes. There are about 700 islands, and only the largest ones are

inhabited. They were first discovered in the seventeenth century, and the French established spice growing plantations in rivalry with the Dutch colonies - in Java and Sumatra - and they were eventually ceded to Britain in 1814. They are extremely fertile, and many of the inhabitants are still subsistence farmers and fishermen. Copra, vanilla and cinnamon are exported. It is a very unspoiled, unsophisticated part of the world but the situation is changing rapidly. The Americans have erected a satellite tracking station and imported all the trappings of urban living as well.

A call was made at the Camores Islands where the "living fossil" fish - the Coelocanth - is occasionally caught, and from there they sailed to Mahe, the main island with Victoria, the capital of the group. Brocklebank and British India ships call here to load copra etc. Most of the inter-island trading is carried on by small wooden sailing schooners, and these are still built by the old hand methods without any drawings. One slide showed two men sawing out the planking for a schooner using a pit saw - a practice that died out in England about fifty years ago.

Mr. Robinson outlined the life and work of the people, and showed some of the improvements being made in such things as houses and roads. There was also a magnificent miniature cast iron "Big Ben" at the main crossroads in the capital. Our speaker left the trimaran in the Seychelles and was to have travelled back to Europe in either a Danish expedition ship, or concrete built yacht. But both these plans fell through and he travelled to Bombay in the British India steamship KARANJA, as a deck passenger.

After coffee, there was a discussion on the problems of steering trimarans, especially in heavy seas, and on the seamanship of the Seychelles fishermen, who know their own island waters, but get completely lost out of sight of land. It also emerged that the Seychelles have no income tax and no rates. There is very little crime, so it is small wonder

that General Gordon who visited the islands in the nineteenth century thought they must have been the site of the Garden of Eden. He also thought that the enormous palms bearing cocoanuts often weighing over one hundredweight, had sprung from the Tree of Knowledge.

The vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. B. Chiltern and seconded by Mr.B.Smith, and carried with acclamation.

It is also pleasant to record that our President, Sir Arnet Robinson, attended this meeting.

M.K.Stammers

INLAND WATERWAYS MUSEUM

Mr. E. Paget-Tomlinson gave the Society at our March meeting details of the projected Waterways Museum for the Northwest. The idea has the support of the Runcorn Development Corporation. A site has been found at Preston Brook, and an architect has been engaged to design a building to span one of the canal arms. It is hoped to collect examples of canal craft, and keep them afloat. So far, a horse-drawn narrowboat, a Mersey flat and a canal icebreaker have been collected.

M.K.Stammers

MAGAZINE EXPLOSIONS IN NAVAL VESSELS

The announcement that the Ministry of Defence intend to start removing the wreck of H.M.S. NATAL in the Cromarty Firth recalls not only a disaster of World War I, but also a number of related tragedies.

During the earlier part of this century there was a steady succession of explosions due to spontaneous combustion in magazines. This trouble started with the introduction of cordite. When gunpowder was the sole explosive on board ships, magazine explosion only resulted from fires, or direct carelessness. The smokeless propellants introduced about 1890, differed from old gunpowder in that they were not mechanical mixtures of inorganic substances, but chemical compounds of organic origin and subject to chemical change. The French type was a nitro-cellulose based compound, the British was nitro-glycerine based. These were the two varieties in use by the world's navies.

They soon demonstrated the danger which could arise from their chemical instability. The first classic magazine explosion was that of the MAINE in Havana in 1898. Due to the political atmosphere and lack of any previous experience, it was not at first recognized as such. How this episode became the triggering off point of the Spanish-American War is a well known historical fact.

The first recognized case of spontaneous ignition occurred when the Japanese battleship MIKASA, Togo's flagship during the Russo-Japanese War, blew up in Sasebo dockyard in 1906, just after peace had been declared. She sank in shallow water, and so could be raised and repaired. A thorough examination left no doubt as to the cause of the trouble. The Japanese passed on their findings to the Royal Navy, but no public announcements were made.

A short while before the MIKASA blew up, the Brazilian Navy lost the small battleship AQUIDABAN with heavy loss of life in a similar type explosion. There was a disastrous explosion in Toulon in March 1907 when the French battleship JENA blew up in drydock. As a consequence of this tragedy, the French Navy carried out a series of experiments which demonstrated the danger which could arise from propellant powders of this type if they became unstable due to bad storage or age. As a consequence of this the world's navies organized controlled cooling for magazines, and got rid of old stock.

In 1908 the Japanese cruiser MATSUSHIMA, in service as a training ship, blew up and sank off the Pescadores. A large number of the cadets on board were lost.

In September 1911 the French suffered another explosion, again in Toulon, when the battleship LIBERTE blew up. Investigation revealed the cause as old powder and as a consequence it was ordered that no propellants of this nitro cellulose type over four years old were to be kept in service.

Up to the outbreak of the First World War, the Royal Navy had no serious trouble of this type - the Germans had also kept clear. The first wartime casualty of this nature was when the German light cruiser KARLSRUHE blew up in November 1914. After a successful raiding cruise, she was approaching the West Indies for further activities when the disaster occurred. In the same month, H.M.S. BULWARK, a pre-dreadnought battleship, blew up off Sheerness just after she had finished shipping ammunition. There were only twelve survivors.

The minelayer PRINCESS IRENE which blew up off Port Victoria in May 1915 is a doubtful case. She had just picked up her full cargo of mines, so accidental detonation cannot be ruled out. There were no survivors.

The NATAL was lost in December 1915 in Cromarty Firth. She had just completed a refit and many of her crew were on leave, otherwise the loss of life would have been greater. The worst blow the Fleet suffered was the loss of the dreadnought VANGUARD in Scapa Flow on the night of 9th July 1917. The ship just went in a great sheet of flame, taking 800 officers and men down with her. One or two men were picked up. Ninety-four were lucky being away at a concert on another vessel at the time.

During the same period the Italians lost two battleships, the LEONARDO DA VINCI and the BENEDETTO BRIN, and the Russians the EMPRESS MARIA, but there is some doubt whether sabotage featured in these cases.

The loss of the Japanese battleship KAWACHI and armoured cruiser TSUKUBA in 1918 and 1917 respectively were quite definitely caused by spontaneous magazine explosions.

Finally the last case in 1918 came when the monitor GLATTON took fire in her magazine in Dover Harbour in September of that year. To avoid danger to the packed shipping in the harbour, she was torpedoed and sunk. Her wreck was removed in 1925/6. It proved a hazardous job as the explosives in her were in a very temperamental state by that time. Magazine explosions of this type have been extremely rare since. So the destruction of the NATAL wreck will put a final full-stop to the end of a tragic chapter of naval history.

D.G.BRANIGAN

RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

A few notes may not come amiss on the difference brought about in ship communication, with the advancement of electronics. Relative to our port, there are three main means of radio communication:-

The 500 kcs waveband for ships carrying radio operators, with a range of several hundred miles.

The 2,000 kcs waveband for coasters, trawlers, pilots etc. Speech range say 100 miles.

The 156 mcs waveband for local speech. Range up to ten miles, and known as V.H.F. (very high frequency).

The ranges mentioned are only nominal and change with conditions.

Taking the 500 kcs channel first, the larger ocean-going vessels in general carry one or more radio officers, and keep specified watches. On approaching or leaving Liverpool, they make their position known in morse to Anglesey Radio, which is one of Britain's Post Office maintained coast radio stations.

Until some years ago, Seaforth Barracks housed the radio station handling Liverpool's traffic, but so as to be in a better position to intercept signals a location was found near Amlwch. The same callsign in morse is used as at Seaforth, G L V.

Regarding the Isle of Man passenger ships, these carry one operator and messages are cleared through Port Office Stations ashore. Those on the west coast are Lands End, Ilfracombe, Anglesey, and Port Patrick. The Irish Post Office maintain coast stations at Valentia and Malin Head.

The trawler band, on the other hand, is for speech, and generally operated by skippers and mates of small craft. The calling up wave is 2,182 kcs and here again Anglesey Radio handles messages for the shore. Such is the amount of traffic, that as soon as contact is made, either to the shore or to another ship, a shift to another channel must be made, to minimize interference. Many coasters use 2,246 kcs for chatting to each other, and 2,301 kcs is used by Mersey pilots for interchange of information. These frequencies are governed by switched or plug-in quartz crystals to ensure accuracy of transmission. Just as in morse, where 500 kcs is used to pass distress messages (S O S), so on the trawler band 2,182 kcs is used for the same purpose, but in speech the codeword "Mayday" is used. A lesser category of distress is indicated by X X X in morse, or "Pan" in speech.

It has always to be remembered that a ship in difficulties may be trying to send a distress call whilst many other ships are transmitting. And so, on the 500 kcs morse wave, all operators stop sending at 15 to 18 and 45 to 48 minutes past each hour. If you go in the radio room on board ship, you will find that the clock has these periods marked on the dial in red. Similarly on the 2,182 kcs speech band, there is a "silence period" from 00 to 03 and 30 to 33 minutes past the hour.

The trawler band as it is called, also has lifeboats, and coastguards, tugs and yachts using it. Lighthouses and light-ships may also be heard.

The VHF telephony band is on frequencies near 156 mc/s for short distance speech. Although the aerial is only a rod of some two feet long, the receiver is quite complex; working on low power, communication is generally up to ten miles, but due to screening, sometimes considerably less. Mersey pilots take small "walkie-talkies" with them to converse with the shore or with tugs. Tugs find VHF most valuable, as not only are they in constant touch with their offices for taking orders, but they can exchange information with other tugs, speak to officers on board the ships they are handling, or seek information from dockmasters. VHF radio has revolutionized the docking of ships for officers in charge of berthing parties at bow and stern, are in touch with the bridge. Mersey Radio, with a transmitter radiating from Gladstone Dock, communicates with vessels in the approaches, and issues warnings for instance of the exact position of super tankers traversing Mersey channels. Mersey radio on VHF can make contact with the Bar Pilot Boat and also the Bar Lightship. The pilot boat cruising off Point Lynas is not in touch with Liverpool direct by VHF channels and must use the trawler band.

Because of its reliability the pilot launches PUFFIN and PETREL use VHF where practicable in their communications, but otherwise speak on trawler band. It should be remembered that this type of VHF radio is also used by taxi operators in moving vehicles about the city. Reliability over short range.

The fleets of many owners have fixed times for communicating with each other. John Kelly's coasters have a nightly schedule at 2230 BST on 2246 kcs when each unit signals its position, Robertson's Gem Line make similar calls at 2200 BST on 2301 kcs. Ramsey Steamships come on at 2145 BST on 2301 kcs.

Naturally, there is a great deal more to the radio communications picture than can be included in such a short article as this. Every endeavour would be made to answer any points which readers may like to raise.

N.R.P.

FISHERIES AND THE COMMON MARKET

A feature broadcast by Radio Eireann gave comments on the likely effects on the Irish Fishing Industry if the Republic joined E.E.C. Alan Glanville, a well known fisherman at Dunmore East, gave a very gloomy outlook if foreign boats are allowed to fish within what are now territorial waters. He foresaw the complete annihilation of the herring shoals within two years, also of lobsters and crayfish.

The Norwegians, Germans, Dutch, Belgians and French having overfished their own waters, are only too anxious to expand what they are already doing off our western seaboard. In the Irish Sea, soles are being cleaned up by dragging heavy chains across their feeding grounds, followed by a fine mesh trawl net. Under the noses of the British fishery authorities - according to Mr. Glanville - the soles are landed and packed in containers for fast shipment to the Continent.

Two visiting fishermen from Castletownbere confirmed these views on the disaster which faced Irish fishermen, and said they would do all in their power to prevent it.

The aspect seems grim for all inshore fishermen round these islands. Just one slight note of hilarity in the proceedings however, for when asked if he agreed with the remarks already expressed, one of the Co.Cork men repeated several times that "he did agree teetotally"!

RANDOM JOTTINGS

Fishing boat THREE BROTHERS (BS 189) owned by a Mr. Maddocks, was sunk at New Brighton south moorings by sandpump ERIC COOPER, after midnight 26/4/71. Fortunately no lives were lost, as happened a few years ago when a yacht was sunk by another dredger at these moorings.

The Hoveringham and Cooper ships take sand from the vicinity of New Brighton Pier daily, and whilst they come in close enough to foul yacht moorings, no benefit from their pumping accrues as to the shoals which hamper the ferry service.

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Any correspondence regarding News, Notes and Queries should be sent to the Editor, Mr.N.R.Pugh, 7 Dunbar Road, Hillside, Southport.

MAY MEETING

The 29th Annual General Meeting of the Society was held in the Coffee Bar of Liverpool Museum on Thursday, 13th May 1971. The Society remains in healthy condition as to membership and finance.

Mr. Peter Welsh continues his very able Chairmanship for another season, with Mr. K. Stuttard now our Vice-Chairman. Two new members of the Council voted to office were Miss Susan Welsh, daughter of the Chairman, and Mr. L. Reid, who had notified his willingness to serve.

In appreciation of his successful term as previous Chairman, and for his valuable work for the Society, Mr. Wilfred P. Raine was appointed a Vice-President.

Mr. J. C. Robinson becomes Archivist as well as Assistant Secretary.

The Society's thanks go out to three former officers who did yeoman service over a long period - Mrs. R. B. Summerfield, Mr. E. W. Paget-Tomlinson and Mr. A. N. Ryan. For reasons of changed domicile and other commitments, although no longer gracing our Council meetings, we are glad of their continued membership and interest.

In spite of increased postal rates and other charges, our Hon. Treasurer, Mr. T. D. Tozer, stood firm in his stand for no increase in members' subscriptions, standing at £1. It was agreed, however, that members whose subscriptions are two seasons or more in arrears at 31st August 1971, shall be deemed to have resigned. Should any member falling in this category wish to retain his membership, he should write to Mr. Tozer at once, c/o Liverpool Museums, William Brown Street, Liverpool 3.

Mr. M. K. Stammers, Hon. Secretary, outlined programme plans for next season, including "The Brunel Story" by Mr. H. Coney, and "Bidston Observatory" by Mr. P. Welsh.

A new issue of "Transactions" is envisaged in memory of Mr. Foster-Petrie, and covered by his generous bequest.

A donation of £10 is being made to Liverpool Archaeological Society to assist in a survey of our dockland as in 1850 compared to the present time.

N.R.P.

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

The Liverpool Museums
William Brown Street
Liverpool 3.

Hon.Secretary - M.K.Stammers, B.A.

It is a pleasure for to sit at ease
Upon the land, and safely for to see
How other folks are tossed on the seas
That with the blustering winds turmoiled be.

Lucretius

NEWS, NOTES AND QUERIES

Vol. XV (New Series) No.3

July-September 1971

THE MARINERS' HOME

The clock tower amongst the trees on the Egremont shore of the Mersey is a well known landmark, and is the dominating feature of Cliff House within the confines of the Mariners Park Estate. The care of aged seafaring men and their dependants has been looked after for many years by the Mercantile Marine Service Association. It was with great pleasure that I accepted the invitation of Mr.Leslie Harrison, their Secretary, to visit this great establishment one afternoon in June. Though a Wallaseyan by birth, I had never been within the confines of the Park previously. There are grass lined roads of small dwelling houses, and bungalows, a veritable garden village within the Borough of Wallasey.

Since 1880, seventy-three houses and bungalows have been erected as a result of legacies and donations. These residences are primarily for the use of retired M.N. shipmasters and senior officers who through misfortune, professional hazard or economic circumstances have been unable to make fully adequate plans for retirement. Cliff House was founded in 1882 by William Cliff, a Liverpool merchant, in memory of his daughter. At one time it provided accommodation for aged M.N. seamen of all ranks, being bachelors or widowers. Now it is to become a residential club for elderly shipmasters or senior officers, who would otherwise live alone in retirement.

Gibson House built in 1906, and just across Maddocks Road, provides accommodation for forty widows of M.N. shipmasters and officers, in their own individual bed-sitters, with their own furniture.

Then there is the John Davies Memorial Infirmary, erected in 1937 to the memory of a Liverpool Underwriter of that name. This caters for the sick and infirm residents of the "Park".

Nautilus House, the office block of the Association is a building only completed four years ago, at the Manor Lane end of the Park. In mounting the main stairway, one sees the roll of honour, and I spotted at once the illustrious name of the late Captain George Ayre, who brought such a tang of the sea to our Society's council and general meetings.

A very fine apartment is the Boardroom, and Mr. Harrison is justly proud of the planning which went into the entire building.

A cause very dear to Leslie Harrison, as Secretary of the M.M.S.A. is to clear the name of Captain Stanley Lord of the CALIFORNIAN, in view of certain fairly recent fiction about the loss of TITANIC. It was therefore of great interest to me to hear recordings of the voice of Captain Lord, on tape, speaking not very long before his death. I also saw much of the documentary evidence of the case, which has been collected from many sources.

The Association publishes quarterly a very informative

magazine called the "M.M.S.A. Reporter" on general matters of maritime interest and the activities of the Association.

N.R.P.

NAPHTHA IN THE MERSEY

The port of Liverpool was closed for several hours on Sunday 13th June when half a million gallons of naptha leaked from a tank at the Esso Depot, Dingle, into the river. In an area two miles square, there was danger of the fumes causing an explosion, and householders were asked not to light their fires, ovens or to smoke. One or two ferry sailings were cancelled when odd passengers refused to obey the ban on smoking. Odd is the operative word here.

From the nautical point of view, it was the day when our proud Manx ships were in disarray. The T.T. crowds were returning home, and already MANXMAN and KING ORRY were approaching the port, and so anchored at the Bar before noon. These, and four more ships to follow were then diverted to Ardrossan from Douglas, and British Rail alerted. How galling it must have been to be almost in sight of home, and then face a long sea and rail journey. Add to this, that if you had wanted to send a telegram home, unless you had a telephone number, this could not be done as telegrams are no longer delivered by hand on Sundays!

But fortunately, thanks to the great efforts made on shore to deal with a dangerous situation almost certainly caused by vandals, it was possible to reopen the port (except for Garston Channel) by 1 p.m. The Manx boats were then diverted to Liverpool once more.

In the early afternoon, with the ebb tide about to set in, Hoylake Lifeboat issued vocal warning to those on north Wirral beaches and in small craft in the Rock Channel area.

* * * * *

JUNE CANAL CRUISE

Members of the Society boarded the narrowboat LAPWING at Weston Point, Runcorn, on Saturday 5th June. We were lucky with the weather, for although not favoured with the warm sunshine of previous days, it kept dry, cloudy and pleasant.

Our boat was built in 1912 and was one of the earliest motor barges. Her length is 70 ft. by 7 ft. beam. She is built with steel sides and elm bottom. We left Weston Point Docks at 10.30 proceeding up the industrialized Weston Canal, passing the Castner Kellner Works of Imperial Chemical Industries, thence joining the River Weaver with its rural atmosphere. We passed under the Dutton Viaduct built by Robert Stephenson - this is where the main railway line from London to Liverpool, and Glasgow traverses the river.

Thence maintaining our interest, we came to the first of two fast rising locks - Dutton which rose 9'4" and Saltersford 7'6". Between these two locks is the electric swing bridge at Acton Bridge carrying the main Warrington - Tarporley road. The chief industry on the Weaver is the I.C.I. soda ash works. A few of I.C.I.'s motor barges were seen moored alongside, but we were not fortunate enough to see any foreign coasters. Winnington is the furthest point upstream for trade. Years ago industry extended as far as Winsford, but with rationalization these works have been demolished.

Perhaps the highlight of LAPWING's journey was the rise in the Anderton Boat Lift, built in 1874 by the Weaver Navigation and made as a link with the Trent and Mersey Canal. The lift is electrically powered and has proved a success, but little commercial traffic uses it in these days. When the top was reached, a left turn led into the Trent and Mersey Canal, and we were now at our furthest point from Runcorn. The canal was much more narrow and

tortuous than the Weaver, and now only used by pleasure craft. The stretch of canal we covered is of particular interest because of passing through three tunnels, the first two being relatively close to each other, at Barnton and Saltersford, the third being the longest at Preston Brook, much nearer Runcorn.

On the canal some pleasant country was passed, which would make one think we were more remote from Runcorn than in fact we were. A heron was seen digging into the muddy bank with its long beak.

After passing through Preston Brook Tunnel we came to the Dutton Stop Lock, built with the intention of retaining Trent and Mersey water, so that it could not be poached by the Bridgewater Canal. Proceeding along this latter stretch, we passed the urban sprawl of Runcorn, leaving all the pleasant countryside behind. We arrived at Runcorn amidst about 200 boats for which a rally had been arranged for that weekend.

So ended a pleasant day in the Cheshire canal country and our thanks go to John Robinson for making the travel arrangements, etc.

Gordon Ditchfield.

TUG VERSATILITY

In the collision in the English Channel between PACIFIC GLORY and ALLEGRO last October, Alexandra Towing Co's NORTH ISLE and BROCKENHURST were in constant attendance on PACIFIC GLORY to prevent her going ashore at Ventnor. Food was passed to the tugs by R.N. vessels and crews could not be relieved. After four days, they returned to Southampton completely exhausted. Meantime HUSKISSON and COBURG left Liverpool on 28th October for the area. They were in attendance to spray detergent in case of oil leakage, and accompanied the Dutch tugs taking PACIFIC GLORY westwards to Lyme Bay and thence to Holland. Their absence from the Mersey was of three weeks duration.

THE LOSS OF THE MIRACLE - 1847

In the summer of 1968, our member Mr. A.S.Davidson showed me a painting which he had recently acquired and cleaned up. His hobby is collecting and restoring old paintings dealing with maritime scenes, at which he is adept. It is a task calling for skill and patience.

This particular painting was of a nineteenth century sailing ship, which Mr.Davidson had managed to identify as the MIRACLE, a vessel which was owned in the 1840's by a Liverpool Timber Merchant, Hilton Halhead, who had a timber yard at Brunswick Dock.

Looking further into the history of the MIRACLE, there came to light the story of a long-forgotten tragedy. MIRACLE had been built in Canada in 1841. At this time it was quite common practice to have a soft wood vessel built in Canada, near the source of the timber, and then sailed across to the British Isles with a cargo of timber. The cargo paid for the delivery voyage, so to speak. There were quite a number of Canadian built ships owned in Liverpool, generally employed in the timber trade. They would take what cargo they could get for the outward voyage to Canada and in those days, before the existence of the Marine branch of the Board of Trade, they could load up with emigrants if they so wished.

When the MIRACLE sailed for Canada in the spring of 1847 she was carrying 400 emigrants, which was quite a large number considering that she was only of 647 tons. What it was like in the hold in bad weather, with the hatches closed, is difficult to imagine. There was no B.O.T. to be awkward about passengers' numbers or living conditions.

The voyage across the Atlantic was relatively uneventful until the night of the 19th May 1847 when the vessel was entering the Gulf of St.Lawrence. In heavy weather, after dark, she ran ashore on the Magdalen Islands. The vessel struck heavily and the masts went overboard with the shock.

The master, Captain Elliott realized that the vessel was doomed and started to get his passengers ashore as quickly as possible. Under the circumstances this was managed very efficiently, but unfortunately two of the boats struck the rocks during these operations, and seventy people were drowned.

Once ashore a camp was set up with what could be salvaged. The nearest habitable land was Prince Edward Island, over fifty miles to the south, so help was some time in arriving. In the meantime a fever epidemic broke out amongst the wretched emigrants, with the result that twenty more died before assistance arrived. The survivors finally reached Pictou on the mainland on 29th May. All things considered Captain Elliott had done very well under difficult circumstances.

D.P.Branigan

ROCK CHANNEL BUOYS REMOVED

In May, the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board vessel SALVOR removed the Rock Channel and Horse Channel buoys as an economy measure. Although the "Rock" was the original way into the Mersey, it has gone into dis-use of recent years, particularly since ST.TUDNO and ST.SEIRIOL ceased running to North Wales. Forty or fifty years ago the Rock Channel was regularly used by coasters, as well as the North Wales passenger steamers, and the fleet of motor barges of Messrs. John Summers & Sons was always in evidence.

SHELL'S "M" CLASS SUPER TANKERS

In addition to the ships listed in our last issue, the following is in service and has visited Trannere :-

MYRTEA Flag - French, built at St.Nazaire 1970
1065 x 155ft. Registered at Verdon. Turbine.

PROPHETIC MUSE

"Liverpool, 1930"

John Masefield

The dockyards of the ancient days are filled
With roads and buildings : of the ships that were
Not any lift their glory to the air;
The singing of their coming-in is stilled.
All has become much greater than of old,
Man has advanced in mastery afar,
The soul of man is conquering his star,
Mud has been changed for granite, dross for gold.
Oh Capital, whose highway is the sea,
I think of forty years hence, when your spires
Will flame with beauty's intellectual fires,
And what your sons imagine now, will be.

MERSEY NOTES

On Monday 21st June, the P.S.N.C. cargo liner KENUTA left the Mersey in tow of Alexandra Towing Co's MUMBLES for Antwerp, and the breakers yard.

It was also MUMBLES which towed the unfinished C.P. TRADER from Cammell Laird's basin to Verolme's Rushbrooke Yard near Cork for completion. Shortly after this unfortunate and unprecedented event, the boiler makers returned to work. C.P. TRADER was on trials off the South Irish coast before the end of June, and was handed over without returning to the Mersey.

H.M.S. EAGLET was towed from Morpeth Tongue on 25th May, and laid on Garston beach for dismantling.

On Thursday 27th May, the Shell tanker VELUTINA left the Mersey for Rotterdam in tow of the Dutch tug UTRECHT. In 1951 when new, her class represented the largest British tankers. She is reported to be now a floating workshop at Rotterdam.

In mid-June the Arab Republican ABU SIMBEL collided with Woodside Cattle Stage, causing some damage. The ferry MOUNTWOOD got a line aboard and towed her clear.

As the CHESTER, Ellerman's CITY OF CHESTER left Langton Lock on 12th June for Oslo. She has now assumed Panamanian registry as the CHESTERFIELD.

Many of the ships of Stephenson Clark and Cory Brothers, built for the East Coast coal trade, have been to the Mersey this year, bringing grain from the Continent. These include GOSPORT, WORTHING ex DULWICH, CLIMPING ex CAMBERWELL, SHOREHAM, EMSWORTH, CORBURN, CORSEA. CORNISHBROOK, WORCESTERBROOK and several more of Comben Longstaff's have also been prominent in the grain trade.

INDIAN SECURITY was leaving Langton Lock, deep laden for Persian Gulf ports on a wet and overcast Friday evening, 11th June when she came into collision with the inward bound Italian MONREALE. With a gash into No.1 hold on the starboard side, tugs berthed the Indian ship at Rock Ferry tank cleaning berth, and next day, down by the head, tugs took her into Gladstone Dock, with SALVOR standing by. Little damaged, the MONREALE berthed with her grain cargo at Birkenhead. Repair work was given to Liverpool firms.

On the New Brighton station of R.N.L.I. in June was the Reserve Lifeboat CONSTANCE & CRAWFORD CONYBEARE.

The Peoples Republic of China are the owners of a smart freighter which has visited the Mersey twice in recent months. She is known in Lloyds Register as QUELIN but her hull markings show GUILIN, registered in Canton. She was formerly the German GOLDENFELS (1954) and her crew are enthusiastic table tennis players, as a medium for friendship.

LA PEROUSE a blue motor yacht, on the lines of a trawler, registered at Dublin spent some weeks of last winter in Egerton Dock. On 14th June she was making water and had engine failure west of Kinnaird Head. The Buckie lifeboat was able to beach her.

H.M. Submarine OTTER arrived 24th June for refit at Cammell Laird's yard. The all-black shape was relieved only by the white jerseys of the berthing party on the forward casing. She was accompanied up stream by the tugs COLLINGWOOD and WAPPING, but made a smart starboard turn and sailed into the wet basin in seamanlike fashion.

A fine looking Russian vessel entered Eastham Locks for Ellesmere Port on 23rd June named ZENIT. Built at Rostock in 1961 she is described in Lloyds Register as a training ship. She is painted white overall.

Tenders were invited in the early summer for a major up-grading job on ROYAL IRIS. To eliminate the fish and chips and pop group image, she is to have a restaurant with carpetted bars and lounges. This is presumably for 1972 season.

The Italian ship WARRINGTON, owned by Grimaldi & Co., of Palermo which carries export motor cars from Garston to Mediterranean ports, was formerly FORT ST. PIERRE. She was built in 1956 in France.

The Laird-built nuclear submarine CONQUEROR sailed on trials on 24th July - an oppressive tide-time with thundery showers. There is a great likeness to a whale in the hull design of her class.

The Irish Government are financing B. & I. Line with \$3 million, partly towards the new terminals, and also to buy out and terminate B. & I's agency agreement with Coast Lines.

On 21st June WICKLOW the first of two cellular container vessels was launched at Rushbrooke, Cork, to come into service in November between Liverpool and Dublin. Of 4,000 tons, a running mate is under construction at the same yard. The \$22½ million scheme at Victoria Dock, Liverpool embraces 17 acres for eventual use by both the passenger and cargo

vessels of B. & I. In a year it is expected to handle 75,000 containers, 750,000 passengers and 100,000 cars.

The Gardner coaster SAINT BLANE sailed from Eastham in ballast 20th July for Antwerp to be handed over. She has gone to Pakistani owners who are to sail her to the Persian Gulf.

The Alexandra tug TRAFALGAR sailed for Southampton 20th July.

During the Society's coming season which opens on 9th September, we hope that Dr. Peter Davies will speak to us about the wreck discovered on the Skerries off Anglesey, which has yielded ten 17th century cannon.

The Russian container vessel F.GAYLIS has instituted a service between Liverpool and Riga.

In connection with Liverpool's Annual Show, the American Fleet Escort USS PATTERSON DE 1061 was at Princes Stage in mid July, and open to the public. Of 3,011 tons displacement she is turbine driven on one shaft for a speed in excess of 27 knots. She is armed with one 5" gun, and provision for guided weaponry. There is a helicopter and she carries a crew of 220 men.

The British Transport dredger CRESSINGTON, sunk by HANNES KNUPPEL 24/6/69 and later raised, is being fitted out at Birkenhead as the W.D.CRESSINGTON for Westminster Dredging Co.

Cammell Laird's luck with good weather held for the launch on 24th May of the GAZANA, a 22,000 ton chemical tanker for P. & O. Lines. Many school children watched the launch. The ex-Cock tugs of Alexandra Towing were used to take the new ship in hand.

A notice was issued to shipping in early July that WHITETHORN (ex HERO) was drilling half way between the Mersey Bar and the Chicken Rock, in main traffic lane.

FORMER COAST LINES' VESSELS

A few years ago the MERSEY COAST of 918 tons passed into the ownership of a Mr.D.Kontozannis, and her port of registry became Piraeus. She had been built in Holland in 1938 for Coast Lines Ltd. This Greek owner must have liked the name, for he did not change it and she has traded around the Mediterranean ever since.

However, on 26th May 1971 she turned up at Karachi and left there for the Persian Gulf. On 31st, she sent out a distress call when 115 miles west of Karachi, with engine room flooded, pumps not working and ship in danger of sinking. A Pakistani naval vessel located her, provided fuel, and pumped out the water. MERSEY COAST's master said that he would make his own way back to Karachi, but she did not arrive. On 7th June fears were expressed for her safety and on the 8th, she was reported aground 9 miles southeast of Ormara. One seaman died at this time, and on 9th the remaining three men were rescued by naval craft. The possibilities of salvage were being considered, but on 15th July it was reported that the vessel had been abandoned.

Another ship to reach the casualty list was the CHARALAMBOS ex TAY ex WESTERN COAST now under the Panamanian flag. Of 782 tons she was built at Goole in 1951. On July 1st 1971, whilst on passage from Israel to the U.K. she called in at Famagusta. Plywood bundles of cargo were being moved when the stability of the ship was upset and she took a list of thirty degrees. Some of the cargo got wet, but on the same day the Cyprus courts detained the ship for unpaid debts.

BRITISH RAIL SERVICES TO IRELAND

During the summer, the Holyhead/Dun Laoghaire service has been augmented by DOVER and LORD WARDEN. CALEDONIAN PRINCESS has worked Fishguard/Rosslare.

NEW NAMES FOR OLD

ADVOCATE	ex NURJEHAN
AL QAWI	ex ALISON HOWARD
AL HANED	ex ELIZABETH HOWARD
ARKLOW BAY	ex FALLOWFIELD ex MEDUSA
AEGIS LEGEND	ex MAWANA
AEGIS DIGNITY	ex ORESTES ex GLENAFFRIC ex NESTOR
AEGIS MYTH	ex THESEUS
AEGIS HONOUR	ex PACIFIC STRONGHOLD
AEGIS LOYAL	ex LOCH LOYAL
AEGIS POWER	ex PACIFIC NORTHWEST
AEGIS STRENGTH	ex PACIFIC ENVOY
BERGE SIGLION	ex SIGLION
BALLYWALTER	ex STEYNING
BALLYROBERT	ex ARDINGLY
CORK	ex KILKENNY
CLIO	ex MANCHESTER MERCHANT (1951)
CRESCO	ex GLOUCESTERSHIRE ex CINGALESE PRINCE
CAMILLA WESTON	ex CROUCH
C.P. EXPLORER	ex BEAVERPINE
CHESHIRE COAST	ex SPARTAN PRINCE ex MALABAR ex CHESHIRE COAST
CITY OF LEEDS	ex CITY OF OTTAWA
CITY OF OTTAWA	ex CITY OF SYDNEY
DALRIADA	ex STENA TRAILER
EXETER	ex WINCHESTER (B.R.)
FORTUITY	ex BORDER REGIMENT
FERNMOOR	ex STREAMBANK
GLENDA	ex ROCHESTER CASTLE (1937)
GRETCHEN WESTON	ex DEBEN
HOEGH TRAVELLER	ex ARANDA ex ARAGON
KORA	ex HANNES KNUPPEL (correction)
KAVO YERAKAS	ex CITY OF MANCHESTER
LORRAINE D	ex CAMBRIAN COAST
MALDIVE ENSIGN	ex CAVALLO
MALDIVE VENTURE	ex TRENTINO
MALDIVE FREEDOM	ex CASTILIAN
OCEAN ENDEAVOUR	ex CAPE RODNEY
OCEAN TRADER	ex ANCO QUEEN ex ATHELQUEEN

POSTRUNNER ex SAGA STATE ex ANCO STATE ex BEREAN
 PU GOR ex AZURE COAST ex MANCHESTER REGIMENT (1947)
 SAALETAL ex THULE
 STOLT TUDOR ex TUDOR PRINCE
 GULF PLANET ex SAINT BLANE
 SENTINEL ex MONARCH (cable ship)
 SAGEORGE ex HAYLING
 TIHA ex VARGAS
 WENDUYNE ex APSLEYHALL
 WARRINGTON ex FOR ST.PIERRE
 WORTHING ex DULWICH
 WAMBIRI ex STASHIP I ex PARTHIA
 30 de NOVIEMBRE ex FELICIE ex CITY OF BRISTOL
 ex SACRAMENTO (1945)
 BEROONA ex MEDIA

TWO QUERIES

We have an enquiry as to whether any member has information concerning a ship named HAMON of 188 tons nett register, official number 19775. She was built at Jersey C.I. and launched 19th September 1853. She was registered at Liverpool in 1861 and owned by a Capt. John Hamon. Any information would be gratefully received by Mr.Stanley R.Hamon, 56 De Quetteville's, Court Ann Street, St.Helier, Jersey C.I.

Mr.J.Whitehead of "Veronica", New Road, Wootton, I.O.W. is interested in obtaining photographs or photographs of paintings of the sailing ship WAVERTREE ex SOUTHGATE now being preserved in the U.S.A. In particular, details of the figurehead are required, also any information about her masters, several of whom came from Liverpool.

CLYDE VETERAN

OLD CALEDONIA ex CALEDONIA the paddler now retired from service on the Clyde lay in Arnott Young's shipbreaking yard in June. An option was taken by an English buyer to make a floating restaurant of her.

THE MARITIME MUSEUM

Ship-minded people on Merseyside have long had good reason for despondency at the non-fulfilment of our Liverpool Maritime Museum. The models remain in store, we had an excellent curator designate, we had a site at Mann Island - and then we hadn't.

It was therefore with renewed hope and pleasure that we heard our Vice President Mr. Tom Hume, ever a protagonist of the scheme, say in an interview on Radio Merseyside on 18th February 1971, that the site at Mann Island had been re-acquired.

Following this, on 17th July, Sir John Nicholson, Chairman of Ocean Steam Ship Co., in opening the new Port of Liverpool Gallery at the Museum, announced a gift of £30,000 towards a maritime museum in the city.

This welcome and generous gift is in commemoration of Ocean Steam's centenary in 1965, and emanates from a fund donated by the Holt family. Surely, we are on the way at last!

From the work that went into the Transport Exhibition at William Brown Street, and now the Port of Liverpool Gallery, we know that Mr. Hume has a dedicated band of men, who would tackle this much larger project with characteristic zest if given the chance.

Liverpool's proud past deserves this recognition.

N.R.F.

GENERAL NEWS

Ulrich Harms Salvage Company of Hamburg have sold the three tugs VARIUS I, II and III to Hanseatische Hochseefischerei of Bremerhaven. Originally stern fishing trawlers, they have returned to the fishing industry. VARIUS II will be remembered for her part in bringing the GREAT BRITAIN home.

The Burns Laird car ferry LION was out of service for one week in late June owing to gear box trouble. Isle of Man Steam Packet ships were chartered to assist on the Ardrossan/Belfast route, but coach parties had to travel via Stranraer/Larne.

SEAWISE UNIVERSITY ex QUEEN ELIZABETH finally reached Hong Kong on 15th July after many vicissitudes on her long passage from Florida.

AILSA PRINCESS is in service between Stranraer and Larne. Built at Venice, she is of similar dimensions to her running mate ANTRIM PRINCESS which was built on the Tyne. In the first week, the new ship took three hours to cross on one engine, and then had trouble with the car doors.

COMMANDO CARRIER AT LIVERPOOL

HMS BULWARK was moored at Princes Stage from 2nd to 6th July and was open to the public. She was built by Harland & Wolff Ltd. at Belfast, completed in 1954 and converted to her present role in 1960. She carries 16 helicopters and four landing craft, has a speed of 28 knots and accommodation for 1,937 men. Another Commando Carrier of like purpose is HMS ALBION.

MEMBERSHIP

The Liverpool Nautical Research Society welcomes new members and the ordinary subscription is £1 p.a. From September to May, there will be meetings once each month (except January). A Christmas Social Evening is planned. "News, Notes and Queries" is mailed to members quarterly, containing reports of lectures, Museum Notes, Mersey Notes and items of maritime interest.

Editor of News, Notes & Queries:-

N.R.Pugh,

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Hillside, Southport, Lancs.

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

The Liverpool Museums
William Brown Street
Liverpool, 3

Hon. Secretary - M.K.Stammers, B.A.

When the cabin port-holes are dark and green
Because of the seas outside;
When the ship goes 'wop' (with a wiggle between)
And the steward falls into the soup-tureen,
And the trunks begin to slide;
When Nursey lies on the floor in a heap,
And Mummie tells you to let her sleep,
And you aren't waked or washed or dressed,
Why, then you will know (if you haven't guessed)
You're "fifty north and forty west!"

Rudyard Kipling

NEWS, NOTES AND QUERIES

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FAREWELL - AND HAIL !

From midnight - 31st July 1971 - the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board ceased to exist, and was replaced by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company.

This was not a happy ending for a body that had served Liverpool - and Merseyside - for more than a century. But the contribution of the Board over so many years should not be totally obliterated by the financial crisis which has overshadowed these last nine months.

The structure of the Board and the way it operated was suited to the conditions during most of its life; it ran the Port during the days of the great trans-Atlantic liners, through to the huge Seaforth development. In fact, the Board's difficulties arose out of the scope of its future planning and the capital investment this involved.

The passing of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board - and the title itself has the ring of a more gracious age - marks the end of an era. But for Liverpool the traumatic events which led to the end of the Board and the establishment of a statutory Company could be the prelude to a viable and vigorous future. The opportunity is there; it has not been bought cheaply. Many people with money invested in the Board - perhaps their life savings - have had to make sacrifices.

And there is still a long way to go before the Port will be out of its difficulties. But if the lessons of the past have been learned - at all levels - Liverpool can survive and grow.

LIVERPOOL DAILY POST

MUSEUM NOTES

The new Port of Liverpool Gallery was opened on 16th July by Sir John Nicholson, and it seems to be well received by our many visitors. But this has not left the shipping department without any work. Far from it - there is an enormous backlog of sorting, cataloguing cleaning and restoration of all the many objects and models that remain in store. And we are still adding to the collection.

We have been busy cataloguing a fine collection of photographs of dock construction and installations dating as far back as the 1870's. These are on permanent loan from the Dock Company. They include an excellent set of pictures of work on the Langton and Alexandra Docks in the late 1870's.

Another interesting gift, is a set of shipwrights' woodworking tools from Mr. J. Lightfoot of Huyton.

Mr. Lightfoot was trained as a boat builder; before the second world war, he worked mainly at Garston. After war service in the Royal Navy, he worked for the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board and was especially concerned with the repair and construction of lock gates. Adrian Jarvis (Assistant Keeper of Shipping) has made a very interesting tape recording of Mr. Lightfoot's reminiscences.

A major problem has been the bronze guns from the wreck of the Royal Yacht MARY. These are at present undergoing treatment to extract the salt they have absorbed in their three hundred years beneath the waves. It is hoped to display them as soon as possible; but as yet they are not stable enough to be taken out of their tanks of fresh water. Their final resting place has not been resolved, but it is to be hoped that some at least will be allowed to remain in Liverpool for all time.

Colour postcards of many of the models in the Port of Liverpool Gallery are now on sale at the Museum Shop. They include the four-masted barque CALIFORNIA (1890), the GREAT BRITAIN (1843) and the steam tug NORTH COCK (1903). It is hoped to publish a picture of BERENGARIA very shortly. Price 3p each.

M. K. S.

STEAMER PEEL CASTLE ASHORE. 1924.

The following comes from the Liverpool Daily Post's own correspondent, in the issue of 9th June 1924:-

Douglas, Sunday. The steamer PEEL CASTLE which left Liverpool at midnight with some 500 passengers aboard, was stranded yesterday morning right in the centre of Douglas Bay opposite the Palace. It was about 5.30 a.m. when the mishap occurred, and there was a dense mist at the time. As soon as the news spread, thousands of people gathered along the shore. The sea was perfectly calm and the vessel could hardly have found a more comfortable cradle in which to lie. One or two hundred yards further north there was a ridge of low rocks, which would have been awkward for the ship. When PEEL CASTLE went ashore she was steaming very slowly.

Very little alarm seemed to prevail. The passengers spent the morning strolling about the deck or leaning over the rail to watch the shore. By nine o'clock the mist had cleared away, and as the tide turned and began to flow, all eyes were fixed on the marooned steamer.

The little FENELLA which had crossed from Liverpool almost at the same time as the PEEL CASTLE, now took up her position a cables length away. She threw out her anchor and sent a tow rope on board. Later on, when the tide had made half way, FENELLA began to tow and at ten minutes past one, PEEL CASTLE began to slide slowly and gradually off her sandy bed. When fully clear the FENELLA cast her off, and PEEL CASTLE slowly made her way under her own steam to Douglas inner harbour where the passengers were safely landed.

The first passengers got ashore at twenty minutes to two. They looked as cheerful as the usual holiday crowd and were met by thousands of people. They said they did not know the boat had run ashore, she took the ground so smoothly. It was not till the boat tried to back off that they realized she was aground. The PEEL CASTLE has been carefully examined by engineers in the inner harbour.

The vessel is not leaking and beyond two or three bent stanchions she seems no worse for the mishap. She is proceeding to the Birkenhead Graving Dock for a Lloyds survey, but it is hoped she will be ready for sea next Saturday.

H.R.HILL

GENERAL NEWS

The trawler DINAS left Fleetwood on 17th September for Icelandic waters, but had a severe engineroom fire after departure. Of 19 crew, 5 died. British Rail's DUKE OF ARGYLL gave assistance, and ten survivors were landed from the research trawler CLIONE. STARELLA towed DINAS back to port with four men still aboard.

British Rail's HAMPTON FERRY had her name changed to TRE-ARDDUR during the summer, and was towed from Faslane to Piraeus in July by FAIRPLAY XII.

NEW NAMES FOR OLD

AEGIS FABLE	ex NELEUS
AEGIS COURAGE	ex TELEMACHUS ex TEIRESIAS
AL QADER	ex LADY HOWARD (tug)
AGHIOS GEORGIOS	ex CROFTER
ANGUS EXPRESS	ex HOLLAND EXPRESS ex IJSTROOM
ATLANTIC OCEAN	ex ARYA FAR ex CLAN FINLAY
BRIGHTLING	ex CORBRAE
BYZANTINE MONARCH	ex SCOTTISH MONARCH
CAPTAIN COSTAS	ex WELLINGTON ex GAME COCK V (tug)
CAPTAIN NICOS	ex SLOYNE ex FIGHTING COCK (tug)
ETHEL B	ex HARFRY ex TANA
GRIBBIN HEAD	ex INGLEBY CROSS (tug)
ISLAND CEMENT	ex LOGNA
JOYA MCCANCE	ex BEAUVAL
KOREAN CHALLENGER	ex MANCHESTER RENOWN
KOREAN WINNER	ex MANCHESTER CITY
KAVO AKRITAS	ex BENVORLICH
MEDITERRANEAN ISLAND	ex CITY OF PORT ELIZABETH
MEDITERRANEAN SKY	ex CITY OF YORK
MEDITERRANEAN DOLPHIN	ex CITY OF DURBAN
MEDITERRANEAN SEA	ex CITY OF EXETER
NABULK	ex DYNABULKER ex BALLYLAGAN
ORATOR	ex STOLT ORATOR ex ORATOR
SOTORIOS	ex PIPER (tug)
SAFANIOURIAS	ex SINGULARITY
ST MARGARET	ex JOYA MCCANCE
SAGA SAILOR	ex SUNSEA ex FARSEA
VRYSI	ex CLAN MACDOUGALL
YEWKYLE	ex LAKSA

SMIT INTERNATIONALE SLEEPDIENST

In 1965/66 the two ocean tugs ZWARTE ZEE and WITTE ZEE were put into commission. Both were built at Kinderdyk, of 1539 tons, 254 x 42ft, 9,000 hp.

Between 1968/71, three twin-stackers RODE ZEE, NOORDZEE and POOLZEE came into use. These are of 1312 tons, 225 x 41ft. and although of smaller dimensions the power has been increased to 11,000 hp.

MANX PASSENGER FLEET

At the end of the 1971 Summer Season, with the fine old LADY OF MANN withdrawn from service, and the new replacement to be named MONAS QUEEN not yet launched the fleet of the Isle of Man Steam Packet Co. consists of seven ships :-

BEN MY CHREE, Capt. McMeiken, 2762 tons, built 1966,
344 x 53ft. 2 turbines. 9500 shp.

MANX MAID, Capt. Kissack, 2724 tons, built 1962,
344 x 53ft. 2 turbines. 9500 shp.

MANXMAN, Capt. H.N. Kinley, 2495 tons, built 1955,
345 x 50ft. 2 turbines. 9000 shp.

MONAS ISLE, Capt. Kennaugh, 2491 tons, built 1951,
345 x 47ft. 4 turbines. 9350 shp.

SNAEFELL, Capt. J.R. Kinley, 2489 tons, built 1948,
345 x 47ft. 4 turbines. 8500 shp.

TYNWALD, Capt. Quirk, 2487 tons, built 1947,
345 x 47ft. 4 turbines. 8500 shp.

KING ORRY, Capt. Collister, 2485 tons, built 1946,
345 x 47ft. 4 turbines. 8500 shp.

It is interesting to note that all seven were built by Cammell Laird's shipyards at Birkenhead. The first two named are car-ferries for side loading.

LADY OF MANN came from Vickers, Barrow and the new MONAS QUEEN will come from Ailsa, Troon. It will be interesting to see if the new diesel driven ship gives, especially in matters of vibration, performance approaching the smooth running of the turbine driven units. The new ship will be watched with interest for she is a break with precedent.

N.R.P.

SEPTEMBER MEETING

Our member Mr. H.V. Coney gave the first paper of the new season to the Society on 9th September, in the Lecture Theatre of the Museum. He entitled it "The Brunel Story" and told of his life-long admiration for both father and son. Papers and notebooks of I. K. Brunel had once belonged to his family and these were of great interest to him when young.

Mark Brunel, the senior, was born near Rouen. Although his family were farming folk, he was keen on a career at sea, and was apprenticed as a shipwright at St.Nazaire. He also studied in Paris. His Royalist sympathies at the time of the French Revolution caused him to flee to America. He undertook important surveying work, for example on the route of a canal to link the Great Lakes with the River Hudson. He also tried to find support for his ideas of mechanizing the making of ships' blocks, without success. In 1799 he sailed for England and put his block making scheme to the Admiralty, who accepted it and set him up in a workshop at Portsea. The machines he built were so successful that they continued to be used until the 1940's.

Isambard Kingdom Brunel, his son, was born in 1806 and proved to be even more gifted as an engineer than his talented father. However, Brunel Senior continued his brilliant career of invention. His best remembered project was the construction of a tunnel beneath the River Thames, something never attempted before. There were enormous problems, and time and again the tunnel workings were flooded. One of I.K. Brunel's first professional tasks was to assist his father in the building of this tunnel. During the work, he was badly hurt and was sent to Bristol to convalesce. Here he viewed the famous Avon Gorge and dreamed of spanning it by a bridge. The famous Clifton Suspension Bridge was his design, but its construction was not completed until after his death.

On the strength of his drawings he was offered the post

of Chief Engineer for the Great Western Railway, from London to Bristol. This was despite the fact that he had received no instruction in railway construction. He decided to build the Great Western track to a gauge of 7ft, a broad gauge compared to the usual 4'8 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". This broad gauge made it possible to use larger and more powerful locomotives.

As an extension of the Great Western, it was decided to link Bristol with New York by steamship, and it was Brunel again who designed the ships. His first was the GREAT WESTERN, a wooden paddle steamer. She performed satisfactorily, but her heavy fuel consumption was a problem. It was decided to build a much larger vessel, capable of carrying not only enough bunkers but also a big payload of cargo and passengers.

Brunel designed a vessel which was much larger than any existing one, and had her constructed in a new material - wrought iron - instead of wood. She was fitted with a set of inverted "V" engines which drove a screw propeller - not paddles. This truly revolutionary vessel was GREAT BRITAIN. Fortunately this ship has been saved.

After a long career first as a steamship, and subsequently as a sailing ship, and a coal and wool store, she was salvaged, lifted on to an enormous pontoon and towed back to the drydock in which she was built at Bristol. Mr. Coney was amongst those fortunate people who saw her arrive at Bristol. He was able to go on board soon after she docked. A remarkable testament to the soundness of Brunel's work was the fact that the original pumps were still in working condition.

Brunel's third and last ship was GREAT EASTERN, a monster vessel designed to steam out to Australia via the Cape of Good Hope without stopping for fuel. She suffered many disasters. At her launch in 1858, the crowds got in the

way of the men working the winches, and the great ship was jammed on the launching ways. It took several months hard work to release her. She was put on the North Atlantic passenger run, a route for which she was not designed, and was not a success. Her best work was in laying two telegraphic cables across the Atlantic. At the time, there was no other ship capable of undertaking this work. At the first attempt the cable snapped two thirds of the way across. But on the second attempt, not only was the second cable laid, but the first one was recovered, spliced and put into service.

Although Brunel is especially associated with Bristol and the Great Western Railway, he also designed the ironwork of the first floating landing stage at Liverpool in 1837. GREAT BRITAIN spent most of her working life sailing out of Liverpool, and GREAT EASTERN ended her days as an exhibition ship for Lewis's of Liverpool, and was broken up at Tranmere.

At question time, Brunel's projected atmospheric railway was mentioned. Mr. Coney said this railway did not fail on mechanical grounds, but because of problems with the leather used to seal the vacuum tube. In particular, rats gnawed at the leather causing a loss of vacuum. Brunel also had to abandon his early attempts at propeller design. The blades of his six-bladed straight propeller bent too easily and he devised a two-bladed propeller with curved blades which was much more successful. He almost discovered the principle of cavitation and designed a type of variable pitch propeller in 1853.

A vote of thanks to Mr. Coney was proposed by Mr. K. Stuttard, seconded by Mr. T. D. Tozer and carried with acclamation.

M.K.S.

THE LOSS OF THE ELLAN VANNIN

During the course of its history, the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company has been remarkably free of casualties. The only serious one in peacetime was the loss of ELLAN VANNIN with all on board, near the Bar Lightship in December 1909.

The vessel was built as the paddle steamer MONAS ISLE in 1860 by Tod and McGregor, she was of 342 tons gross with dimensions 199 x 22ft. With compound engine of 600 hp she was capable of 12 knots.

In 1883 she went to Barrow for a complete overhaul which involved her conversion to twin screw propulsion. At the same time, her name was changed to ELLAN VANNIN and she had a passenger and safety certificate for 313 souls, plus livestock and cargo.

At 1.15 a.m. on the morning of 3rd December 1909 she sailed from Ramsey for Liverpool with 14 passengers, 21 crew, some sheep and pigs and sixty tons of vegetable produce. The weather was not too bad at the time of sailing, although the barometer was beginning to fall. Her master, Captain James Teare of Douglas, with eighteen years experience of the run behind him, hazarded the opinion that he did not expect unusually bad weather, but there might be snow about.

ELLAN VANNIN was due at Liverpool at 8 a.m. and she had always kept good time. By 6 a.m. that morning the weather at the bar was exceptionally bad. The wind was gusting up to force eleven, nearly hurricane strength, and the sea was heaped and tumultuous. The master of the Belfast steamer HEROIC considered it was the worst he had known on the Bar, with seas which he estimated at twenty-four feet high.

When the Isle of Man boat did not berth at the expected time, it was assumed that she had been delayed by the weather, but as the morning wore on with no sign of her, anxiety began

to mount. At midday fears were confirmed when wreckage found near Taylor's Bank was brought in, and included some of ELLAN VANNIN's mail-bags.

Later that day, the vessel herself was located by the Dock Board tender VIGILANT, which had gone out to inspect reported damage to a buoy. About one thousand yards from the buoy, in a direct line with the lightship she came across the mastheads of the sunken steamer. Divers later confirmed the identification.

The time of the disaster was fixed by two things. At 6.45 a.m. the lookout on the Bar Lightship reported he had seen a green starboard light in a position agreeing with that of the wreck. The light had disappeared and although an intense look-out was kept on that bearing nothing more was seen. And a day after the tragedy the saloon clock was picked up on Crosby beach. It had stopped at 6.50.

The Inquiry was held in the following March. The question was how this tragic event occurred. Divers who examined the wreck found that the vessel was sitting upright with her stern buried about 13ft in the sea-bed. The bow had broken off in the way of the chain locker and fallen over to port. From the nature of the fracture the divers considered that there was a hole in the port side of the bow.

After going over all the evidence, the Court rejected the theory that ELLAN VANNIN had been in collision. There was little traffic in the area at the time, and any vessel hitting her that hard would have been damaged herself. A message in a bottle, picked up on the beach a few days later, to the effect that "ELLAN VANNIN was sinking after a collision" was regarded as a hoax. They also decided that she had not been in collision with any wreckage or buoy.

It was finally decided that the disaster had resulted from the vessel being swept by a heavy sea which carried away the after companionway, thereby causing her to founder from

swamping. She had gone down stern first which accounted for the stern being so deeply embedded. The stresses and strains on the bow section due to this method of sinking in bad weather caused the plating at the bow to fracture, as the vessel settled on the bottom.

One thing which was not explained however, was the fact that the lifeboat davits on both sides, had been prepared for turning out, the starboard davits having the guys set up. The boat chocks had also been freed ready for dropping. The port side boat was missing, apparently swept away. If there was time to start turning boats out, why no distress signals? As the lightship was keeping an intense lookout in that area, they could not have gone unobserved.

The wreck was subsequently reduced to a depth which would render it safe for traffic.

Just what did happen to cause the sinking of ELLAN VANNIN will go down as yet another sea mystery.

D.P.BRANIGAN

OCTOBER MEETING

"Fire fighting in the Port of Liverpool" was the theme of a visit by our members to Bankhall Fire Station, Liverpool on Thursday, 14th October. This fire station is well sited in relation to the north docks and is of modern design.

Assistant Chief Officer R. Owen made the arrangements for our visit, and we were transported in a Fire Brigade bus from our Museum headquarters. In a lecture room adjoining the firemen's recreation space, we heard a very engrossing lecture by Mr. Owen on the fighting of ship fires. This was very well illustrated with slides.

Our speaker explained the use of the special foam now

produced to deal with deep-seated fires in ships' holds. He told us that new methods of using foam had relieved the fire service of some of the anxiety attending a fire in a ship. Pumping large quantities of water into a ship had always presented great difficulties with stability.

We saw illustrations of the Ocean Fleet's ship PYRRHUS on fire a few years ago, when plastic material from Hong Kong burnt for a day and a night. Three times the firemen had to abandon the ship. She listed heavily against the quay, but when holes were burnt in her plating to release water, she swung over to list just as heavily the other way. But in the end, with great perseverance the ship was saved, sailed under her own power to Middlesbrough for repairs, and is still a useful unit of the Blue Funnel fleet. This was only one instance in the list of ship fires in the last few years.

Difficulties with the captain of a Russian ship on fire in the south end docks, might easily have forced the burning ship to be towed out of the dock system, for the services of the firemen were not accepted.

The Russian crew did not appear at first to understand any English, but the firemen were ordered out of the hold where there was smouldering cotton in bales. The firemen had their duty to perform and were reluctant to leave, until the mechanical hatch covers commenced to close over them. The Captain locked himself in his cabin, until the ship's agent made the position clear and a different mood prevailed. The Russians ended by being far more amenable. The ship was saved, but the cargo was in a sorry state.

We were shown the equipment of the station, and split up into small groups for this purpose. I do not think any of us descended by the slippery pole, but some brave souls ascended on the platform of the Schnorkel into the dark sky above Derby Road, including Messrs. Coney, Tozer and Miss Welsh.

We inspected the Operations vehicle, the Casualty and

Rescue vehicle and the mobile canteen, which attends fires, as well as different forms of fire engine. Twice, we heard over the loudspeaker system a strident female voice, calling out engines to fires, either actual or bogus.

Unfortunately, time passed so quickly that we had no opportunity of viewing a film, and were conducted to the fire officers' quarters for tea and biscuits to complete what had been a most enjoyable evening. Our Chairman, Mr. P.J. Welsh, cordially thanked Asst.Chief Officer Owen for giving us such a splendid time.

N.R.P.

A SAD RETIREMENT

Since the last issue of News, Notes and Queries, there has been another loss to the Merseyside shipping scene, with the retirement of the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company's LADY OF MANN. She left Liverpool on Saturday 14th August, bound for Douglas, made a final sailing to Ardrossan, returning on the Sunday with her whistle blowing from the Point of Ayr until she reached Douglas Head. After a day in port, she left on Tuesday at 5 p.m. bound for Barrow.

On Thursday 12th August, a final cruise to the Calf of Mann was, because of drizzle, mist and choppy seas, not a holidaymaker's outing, but there were sufficient Manx folk, including ex-officers and crew to make this trip an occasion.

Captain Tom Corteen had with him three former masters of the LADY, Captains Wood, Callow and Kinley, and the Chief Engineer Mr. K. Convery had four of his predecessors on board. One A.B. - Jack Carine - had been on her first sailing in 1930, returning to her this year for service until her retirement.

The man with the longest continuous service on board was 3rd Engineer John Shields of Fleetwood, who had spent twenty-two years with the ship.

Without the usual maintenance crew on board, and with but a watchman, LADY OF MANN stays in Barrow, but whether she has entirely finished with the Company depends on the unlikely event of the MONAS QUEEN, the new car ferry now building at Troon and due to join the fleet in April next, not being ready for service by then.

A final epitaph for our stately old steamer could be "They don't build ships like this any more".

FRED HENRY

Postscript

Flags were flown at half mast on BEN MY CHREE on 27th October, in respect for ex-Commodore Tom Woods who died at the age of 91. He was master of the LADY OF MANN for a long period including her war service. When he brought her into Douglas at the end of hostilities, in her grey paint, with a boom and hammer projecting from her bows for exploding acoustic mines, he is reported to have said "Here she is - I've brought her back in one piece!"

EDITOR

MANX HERRING HARVEST. 1971.

Once again very large catches of herring were made east of Langness in September and October, for landing at Douglas, Port St.Mary and Peel.

From Kilkeel area came PATHFINDER, SEA FULMAR, FIDELIS and BE READY. From Stornoway came HIGHLAND CHIEFTAIN, and from Lossiemouth STARDUST and ACHATES. Then from Buckie came the white hulled ARDELLE and also CRIMOND. Fraserburgh was represented by MYSTIC, DAYSPRING, STRATHYRE, AZAREEL, WINNER and FAITHFUL. These are but a few of the vessels participating.

In Douglas was the large Dutch fish transport ALBATROS of Scheveningen, taking a cargo at Battery Pier. Norwegian coasters were also loading. The Dutch ship BISCAYA took cargoes from Port St.Mary for the Continent, and the usual

Irish salters and coopers were working on the quay. Extra space for barrels is being used on a corner of Port St.Mary golf links.

SCALLOP FLEET

Although some Manx boats participate in the herring fishery, they are primarily concerned with dredging for scallops. The preparation of the shellfish for market can be seen at the new depot of Messrs. Croft on Port St.Mary quay. The boats fitted for this specialized work include DEINING, MANX CLOVER, MAUREEN PATRICIA, DAWN MAID, PEEP O' DAWN, REBENA ANN, FENELLA ANN, JAN ERNA, VERVINE, MASAI WARRIOR and ZULU WARRIOR.

N.R.P.

HOLIDAY CRUISING

A very good customer of British Rail is Gordon Ditchfield, and whilst in Falmouth in July he saw laid up there WELLINGTON STAR, PORT BURNIE, MASIRAH, MATHURA, MANGLA, CHANDELEUR and ELEUTHERA. In August he was cruising on the Clyde for a week, mostly in QUEEN MARY II whose wonderful condition and cleanliness for her age were outstanding,

In Loch Long, Gordon saw the Steel and Bennie tugs STRONGBOW, CHIEFTAIN and VANGUARD in Cory colours. Also seen were the puffers ANZAC, SPARTAN and LADY MORVEN.

Shaw Savill's SUEVIC was laid up at Rothesay whilst GEESTIDE was on the measured mile.

In October, he was on the Thames and inspected HMS BELFAST, recently arrived.

From another source, I hear that the Greek cruise liner QUEEN FREDERICIA is laid up at Dartmouth.

COMMISSIONING OF COURAGEOUS

The wife of Commander R.G.Fry R.N. sliced the commissioning cake with her husband's sword at the handing over ceremony at Vickers Dockyard, Barrow in Furness on Saturday 16th October.

This was a stirring occasion for many relatives of crew members, and also for invited ex-RN personnel, some of whom had travelled long distances to be present. A gentleman now aged 72 had been aboard the former COURAGEOUS at her commissioning in 1915 as a light battle cruiser. Other guests had been survivors of the same ship, when after conversion to aircraft carrier, she was torpedoed by U-29 in the Western Approaches on 17th September 1939.

The half hour service of blessing and dedication was carried through with typical Naval precision. Below our red, white and blue stand the crew were mustered to right and left. In the centre was a small covered dais for the Captain, and three chaplains. There were two bands, and the submarine's officers with swords, were lined up facing the stand. To the rear was the black shape of COURAGEOUS, with two R.M. buglers on the casing ready to sound the Alert, and a signalman waiting for the National Anthem as his cue to hoist the colours for the first time.

With a submerged displacement of 4,500 tons and three decks, airy and well lit, she was something different in Naval craft, and can navigate for very long distances submerged, thanks to S.I.N.S. (Ships' Inertial Navigation System). She is now an active unit of the Fleet - we wish her well, wherever duty calls.

N.R.P.

IRISH SEA DRAMA. 1947.

ELIE PARK was a small schooner built at Barrow in 1879, and at the time of her loss was registered in Cork. She sailed from Douglas I.O.M. on Monday night 10th November 1947 with a cargo of scrap iron for Connahs Quay. There were four in the crew - the skipper was Nils Henrik Ammersboll (32) of Bristol, the mate was named Gerald (19) and came from Southern Ireland, seaman Noel Burns (19) of Bangor C.D. and the cook was named John Quinn (19).

When twenty-five miles southeast of Douglas Head, the schooner met heavy weather. The wind was southwest, gale force, and in the darkness ELIE PARK took a heavy list. At 5 a.m. the

ship sprung a leak, and the crew took turns at the pump for an hour and a half, but suddenly the schooner heeled right over and the crew were flung into the sea. The skipper and Gerald clung to the wheelhouse top. Burns was holding on to other wreckage, and drifted away. After a time, the mate disappeared; possibly the intense cold gave him cramp. No distress signal having been made, the position was extremely grave.

The Tuesday morning boat from Douglas to Liverpool was KING ORRY, completed by Cammell Laird in the previous year. The gale had still not blown itself out. Chief Officer John D.Craine takes up the story - "I was on the bridge at about 10.45 a.m. twenty miles out of Douglas, when I saw something bob up out of the trough of the waves about a quarter of a mile away. Visibility was very bad but I made the object out as a few planks. Then an arm waved and I realized that there was a man on them. I informed Captain Cubbon and he immediately changed course". A volunteer crew manned the ship's motorboat, and with a struggle managed to get seaman Burns safely aboard. He was very exhausted and could not have held on much longer. He said he had been clinging to the wreckage for four hours.

The motorboat was taken inboard again with the intention of searching the area for any other possible survivors. Three quarters of a mile away, the skipper was holding on to the top of the wheelhouse, which had broken away when the schooner sank. The motorboat was soon re-lowered and brought him back. Mr.Craine said "it was very fortunate that we saw the first man otherwise we should not have looked for the second". "With the sea and visibility as bad as they were, we would not have had a chance in a thousand of seeing them if we had been a quarter of a mile off the course we were following".

KING ORRY had spent two hours in the rescue, and had sent a radio message to Liverpool "Will be late, trying to rescue man on raft" which was the first news of the drama ashore.

The two rescued men, wearing only dungarees when picked

up, were given cabins and an ambulance met the ship to take them to the Northern Hospital.

There, Captain Ammersboll, looking wan and still suffering from the effects of his ordeal, said "As I clung on, the minutes seemed like hours. I was becoming completely numbed. Then I heard Burns shouting and saw the KING ORRY heading towards us. After circling round us for some time we were picked up".

Extracted from a "Daily Post" report and submitted by Mr. H.R. Hill.

MERSEY NOTES

The R.N.L.I. lifeboat NORMAN CORLETT, resumed her station at New Brighton on 12th September, replacing a reserve boat.

John Kelly Ltd. have sold the three coasters BALLYLUMFORD, BALLYMONEY and BALLYMENA for demolition on the Clyde.

The outer 100ft gates at Birkenhead's Alfred Locks have been replaced by MAMMOTH (floating crane) in September, after repair lasting four months.

As will be noted in "New names for old" we have lost two well known tugs. GAME COCK V and FIGHTING COCK were completed by Cammell Laird in 1952 and launched on the same tide. They attended at the launch of ARK ROYAL in 1953, and many other launches. When "Cock Tugs" were taken over by the Alexandra Towing Company in 1970, they became the WELLINGTON and SLOVNE respectively. And now these two tugs, very much the Mersey twins, have suffered the fate of redundancy and sailed for Piraeus on 13th October as CAPTAIN COSTAS and CAPTAIN NICOS.

In early October, Cammell Laird's launched the 34,000 ton bulk carrier LETCHWORTH for January delivery. That's only three months hence - hope springs eternal - and we want no more C.P. TRADERS !

The fine warm September was certainly appreciated by all those "regulars" who patronize what is left of our week-end cruising opportunities. But what haste is seen to lay up the Isle of Man ships for the winter ! LADY OF MANN went to Barrow on 17th August, and at Birkenhead, TYNWALD followed on 31st, then KING ORRY on 10th September, SNAEFELL on 11th, MONAS ISLE on 15th and MANXMAN on 20th. This left the two car ferries MANX MAID and BEN MY CHREE to cope with a six-day motor cycle trial contingent and plenty of late holiday-makers with more than the usual number of vehicles.

OCEAN MONARCH ex EMPRESS OF ENGLAND, left Cammell Laird's wet basin on Sunday 5th September to moor for a week at the Rock Ferry Tank Cleaning Berth. Now owned by Shaw Savill Lines, it had taken twelve months to convert her solely for passenger carrying. With the NORTHERN STAR as her running mate, she is replacing the SOUTHERN CROSS. On the contract for this major overhaul, Cammell Laird are reported to have lost more than one million pounds.

Research work has taken place in the Irish Sea during the summer into the speed and direction of sea currents. The trawler JOHN MURRAY has been engaged in this work, attending to buoyed meters, and has been seen at Princes Stage on numerous occasions.

The steam tug KERNE, so well known as a barge tug on the Mersey has been acquired by a preservation group, after being made redundant. On Sunday afternoon 10th October, she steamed bravely from Wellington Dock, Liverpool to Morpeth Dock, Birkenhead. Quite a number of well-wishers of the scheme assembled at Alfred Lock to see her enter, but she was kept waiting in the Mersey whilst the new sand pump HOVERING-HAM V was locked down. I was told that a Harrison Line captain was bringing her across, and that the group was the same that has acquired the fine steam loco, which was lying in a shed on the Dock estate. How fine that the young are not letting steam be forgotten in this age of the more economic but smelly, noisy and dithering diesel.

APPELSIDER of Newcastle was a tug which berthed at Princes Stage in September in Messrs. Howard's colours. Her sphere of activity is not known.

The Laird-built nuclear submarine CONQUEROR arrived back from trials on Saturday 4th September and was assisted into the wet basin by tug COLLINGWOOD, whilst five other tugs stood by in escort.

MANX MAID arrived from Douglas on 29th September flying the flag of the Lieutenant Governor at the foremast peak, as is customary when he travels to the mainland.

The large dumb barge TORSK has been taken out of service by Rea Limited after fifty years on the Mersey. Built at Blackwall in 1905, it is considered that she was built to carry coal bunkers for the Dreadnought type battle-ships of the period.

Although quite large programmes of school educational cruises were carried out this summer on the ferries ROYAL DAFFODIL and ROYAL IRIS, 1971 has been a very poor year for "Sailing on the Mersey". The New Brighton service was curtailed to a ghost of its former self. The Merseyside Passenger Transport Authority continued to show no initiative as regards cruises towards Eastham when New Brighton was inaccessible, through siltation. Visitors have therefore been deprived of opportunities to see the upper reaches, Tranmere Oil berths and Cammell Lairds shipyard. The scope of Royal Iris cruises are too limited and she no longer pokes her blunt nose past the Battery. A very large amount of money is being spent on improving this vessel's image into a plushy restaurant to be moored at Georges Stage. Evidently this is considered a better investment than having the sand removed from under New Brighton Stage, and providing facilities for holidaymakers. And in October, up go the notices of final closure for New Brighton Ferry.

The port of Fleetwood was opened again on 25th August

for summer sailings to Douglas, after a period of eleven years. Liverpool will therefore lose the near-monopoly of holiday traffice from the mainland in 1972

The motor tug ALFRED was launched at Hessle for the Alexandra Towing Company on Tuesday 2nd November.

"Closed to the public permanently" was scrawled on a blackboard on the police gate leading to Princes Stage on 2nd November. In white chalk, this hardly looked like an edict from the M. D. & H. Co. Although the plans have not yet been published, work on the new berthing for the ferries, and also on the berths for Manx steamers will have to be started soon. The large loan from the Manx Government has assured this latter.

"Change and decay in all around I see" - are the words of an old hymn, and aptly sum up my view of Georges Stage, where the lack of maintenance over the last few years is so apparent. For months, the Birkenhead ferries have been unable to moor at their normal gangways, as the heavy timber facings collapsed into the Mersey one by one. The structure works, groans, creaks and bangs and much of the window glass has gone - this time not through the efforts of vandals.

What have been called the "pneumonia sheds" now leak badly, and with poor ferry services, passengers have longer to wait. The toilets were boarded up long ago. There are none either on Woodside or Seacombe Ferry premises - those on the boats being a downright disgrace. New berthing cannot come soon enough, with some amelioration of the shocking passenger conditions and it is to be hoped that Georges Stage weathers any really severe winter storms, combined with high tides. One bright aspect - the buffet still dispenses hot soup!

N.R.P.

GLASSON DOCK

In the late 18th century the port of Lancaster enjoyed a growing trade with America and the West Indies especially in the import of cotton for the expanding textile industry of Lancashire. The tidal estuary of the River Lune was always a navigational problem for the sailing ships coming up to the quays at Lancaster, and cargoes were sometimes discharged at Sunderland Point, at the mouth of the estuary. Sunderland Point's trade declined with the development of Glasson.

Construction of quays was undertaken as a result of two Acts in 1738 and 1749. In 1791 work was completed on an enclosed dock for twenty-five large merchant ships. Much more development took place with the opening of the Lancaster canal from Kendal to Preston in 1819. A lock was built to allow seagoing vessels to pass from the dock into a large freshwater basin, connected directly to the canal. In most cases cargo was trans-shipped into barges, but occasionally small coasting vessels were towed up the canal even to Kendal or Preston. Glasson flourished until about the 1850's, when railways, and the new ports of Fleetwood and Morecambe deprived it of much of its trade.

Today the barges no longer find their way up the canal, although there is still one afloat, in the freshwater basin, doing duty as a cafe. But, the port is reviving, probably at the expense of one of its old rivals - Liverpool. Late in October 1971 there were no less than four small coasters in dock. Three were carrying containers for the Ronagency's service to Castletown I.O.M., and the Danish motorcoaster PETER SIF was unloading cement. At the container depot there was great activity to get the ships discharged and loaded for the next tide. Several large new grain stores were under construction, and huge piles of scrap iron and steel indicated a sizeable scrap export trade.

The drydock built in 1837, recently used for demolishing small ships, has been filled in to provide more space

for storage sheds. There were many fine yachts laid up in the freshwater basin, and several medium sized trawlers. A very forlorn sight was the now defunct Northwest Hovercraft Co's ship NORTHWEST LAIRD ex LOCHIEL. She is now moored in the River alongside the quay, and looks only fit for the breaker's yard.

The main purpose of my visit to Glasston was to inspect the Morecambe "nobby" DAY STAR. She is probably the oldest of her type, being built by Crosfields at Arnside in 1894. Although she has been a working boat all her life, she is still in sound condition. It is hoped that the Museum will be able to buy and restore her in the near future.

M.K.S.

SOCIETY NOTES

Last year's premiere of a Christmas Social Event provided a pleasant opportunity for conversation, refreshments and a colour film show. The Council have decided to repeat the occasion this year on Thursday evening 9th December when no doubt our Secretary will have something interesting for our entertainment. We are hoping for a really good attendance.

In January, there will be no evening fixture, but one on a Saturday afternoon is a possibility. If so, then members will receive notification.

The cost of membership of Liverpool Nautical Research Society remains at one pound per year, covering a number of winter lectures, and the mailing of News, Notes and Queries quarterly. Applications and any correspondence should be sent to the Hon.Secretary, c/o Liverpool Museums, William Brown Street, Liverpool 3.

On 13th February next, our Chairman, Mr.P.J.Welsh, will give an illustrated talk entitled "The Liverpool Observatory".

On 9th March, our Hon.Secretary, Mr.M.K.Stammers, will speak on "Liverpool Shipping and the Boer War".

We welcome interested visitors to our meetings.

N.R.PUGH
Editor N.N.& Q.