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LIVERPOOL - ITS SHIPS AND THEIR OWNERS A CENTURY AGO

by

W. Stewart Rees,

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In 1838, the population of Liverpool and its suburbs was about 270,000. There were fourteen docks, viz. Clarence and half-tide dock (the most northerly and constructed for steamers) Trafalgar, Victoria, Waterloo, Princes, Georges, Canning, Salthouse, Kings, Queens, and half-tide dock, and also the Brunswick and half-tide dock (the most southerly used by the timber ships) and a number of Dry Basins. The Docks were the property of the Town and vested by Act of Parliament in the Mayor, Aldermen, Bailiffs and Common Council of Liverpool under the name of the Trustees of the Docks and Harbour of Liverpool. The Old Dock had been filled up and the erection of the present Custom House was commenced on its site in 1828 but that imposing building, which cost £245,000, was not completed until 1839.

The entrances to the Mersey were the old Rock Channel (the original entrance to the Port) and the Formby Channel. As far back as 1813, the North West Light Ship had been placed in position, and in 1830 the Rock Perch Lighthouse, now known as New Brighton Lighthouse, was completed, but it was not until 1836 that the Formby Lightship was moored in that Channel. A paragraph taken from Gore's Advertiser, April 1840, just before the Crosby Lightship (or Floating Light, as these vessels

were called) was placed at her anchorage throws light on the earlier conditions of the Port:-

"The Rock Light, the intended Crosby, and the Formby floating Light being nearly in line with Victoria Channel, will enable vessels to enter or leave the port at about any hour of the Night thus affording means of access and egress, particularly valuable to her Majesty's Mail Packets as well as to American and other Packets sailing on fixed days, and to the shipping generally, whether sailing vessels or vessels navigated by steam, as the port may be said to be open almost every hour of the twenty-four".

In 1838 there were 11 Pilot Boats in commission, all sailing cutters of about 50 tons each, under the direction of the Pilots Committee, on which were many of the principal merchants and shipowners. Lloyd's Register for that year gives the names of just over 300 firms or individuals with some 600 ships registered at Liverpool - 150 of whom owned only one ship each! The actual number of ships belonging to the port considerably exceeded that figure, as in February 1836, Gore's Newspaper stated that 1,000 ships belonging to Liverpool merchants were then engaged in the foreign trade.

Thos. & Jno, Brocklebank, the largest shipowners, had a fleet of some 43 ships, trading to India, the Far East, South America, etc.

John Bibby and Co's flag was flying over 18 vessels, principally engaged in the Mediterranean and Portugese trades. Shipowners shewn as having six or more vessels were:- in the General Trades, Duncan Gibb, 9 ships:- Robinson 7; Chas. Chaloner & Co. 6; H. C. Chapman, 6; Sir John Tobin 5; while his brother Thos. Tobin had 4 ships in the West African trade, where also Hamilton Jackson & Co. had 11, and Isaac Bold 7 vessels, and in the South American trade, John Worrall & Co. were employing 9 vessels and Charles Tayleur Sons & Co. 7. In those days shipowners were often described in the directories as merchants, or merchants and shipbrokers, because the former shipped part or, in some instances, full cargoes of their own in the vessels. The outward cargo was sold, and with the proceeds foreign produce was purchased for the homeward voyage. Quite a number of firms acted as loading brokers for other shipowners "on commission", and so it is found that more ships were being handled by individuals or Firms than actually belonged to them, while others were purely shipbrokers and did not own any vessels. Here is a typical advertisement taken from Gore's Liverpool Advertiser of 24th May, 1838:-

To sale on the 5th June
For BATAVIA and CANTON
The frigate built ship JOHN O'GAUNT
John Robertson, Commander.
Burthen per register 449 tons. For
freight or passage, having a full Poop
and very superior cabin accommodation,
apply to Messrs. John Gladstone and Co.,
or to BOLD and STARKEY.

If the registers could be produced, it would be found that in many instances the owners' friends and others were interested in the ships - such as the shipbuilders, sailmakers, ship shore merchants etc. and the 64 shares were divided between them, although the "ship's husband" as he was termed would hold the greater proportion. At that time there were no "conferences", and owners were free to send their ships into whichever trade offered the best results, and so a vessel might make one voyage to America or Canada, and the next to India or the Far East.

The Mersey shipbuilders and engineers had a great reputation, and quite a number of the early P. & O. steamers were launched at Liverpool. In 1838, there were more than a dozen ship builders, the principal firms being Wm. & Thomas Wilson, whose yard was at the North end of the Town, while Humble and Milcrest, Thomas Royden, Peter Chaloner Sons & Co. had yards at the south end of Liverpool, together with Robert Clarke and Sons, Matthew Clover & Co., Jackson Gordon and Co., Charles Grayson and Co., J. Dawson & Co. and others; while on the Birkenhead side were the yards

of Lairds, Robert Russell & Sons, and Seddon and Leadley. The leading engineers were Fawcett Preston and Co., George Forrester & Co., Mather Dixon & Co., and Thomas Vernon & Co., all with works in Liverpool. No statistics are available pertaining to ships built on the Mersey in 1838, but at least 14 vessels were launched, including 5 steamers.

It is of interest to note that the places of residence of some of the early shipowners whose names are known to the present generation:-

Thomas Brocklebank	Mount Pleasant
James Moss	"
Robert Benson	Lodge Lane
Isaac Bold	Duke Street
John Bibby	Linacre Marsh
David Behrend	Upper Parliament Street
Charles Bahr	Colquitt Street
The Croppers	Dingle Bank
Robertson Gladstone	Abercromby Square
E. D. Glynn	Grove Street
Charles Horsfall	Netherfield Road
David & Chas McIver	Roscommon Street - Aigburth
Samual Sandbach	Aigburth
John Tinne	"
Sir John Tobin	Liscard Hall, Cheshire
John Glynn	Liscard, Cheshire.
Benjamin Bowring	Bridge Street, Birkenhead.

The shipbuilders and engineers' choice of residence was as varied as the shipowners:-

Peter Chaloner, Wm. R. Preston and Robert Russell had their homes at Aigburth. Robert Clarke, at St. James Place. Mathew Clover, St. George's Street, William Fawcett, Lydia Ann Street. George Forrester, Lord Nelson Street, Michael Humble, Kirkdale. Thomas Milcrest, Kent Square, Thos. Royden, Bedford Street. Wm. Wilson, Stanhope Street. Thomas Wilson, Everton. John Laird, Cathcart Street, Birkenhead.

Mention might be made of the fact that the first vessel constructed of Iron on the Mersey was a barge of 50 tons launched at Birkenhead by Lairds in 1829 for use in Ireland, while the first "ship" built of the same material on the Liverpool side was the IRONSIDE of 264 tons, constructed by Gordon Jackson & Co. and launched from their yard on 18th October 1838 for Nathan Cairns of Liverpool, from whence she sailed for Rio on 14th November.

Gore's Advertiser for 1838 contains a monthly return of the number of vessels "Reported at the Liverpool Custom House" and the countries from whence they arrived, from which the following particulars have been abstracted, shewing approximate totals for the year:-

<u>From</u>	<u>Ships</u>	<u>Tonnage</u>	<u>Average Tons.</u>
Africa	63	15312	243
China and East Indies	97	53008	392
West Indies	202	51707	256
South America	234	54755	234
British America	361	174528	483
Australia	9	2668	296
United States of America	239	381938	455
Mediterranean	258	43030	166
Portugal	71	8671	122
Europe including France, Spain, Germany, etc.	819	124684	152
TOTAL FOREIGN TRADE	2953	895 301	303
Coastwise including Ireland and Isle of Man	10537	1,172,542	111
TOTAL ALL TRADES	13490	2,067,843	153

From the same newspapers of that year the following details have been taken from the ships "entered outwards" to Foreign Ports. Under the heading "Africa" are the names of 94 vessels, from which 28 ships for the islands off the African Coast and the Cape of Good Hope must be deducted. The largest vessel in the trade was 731 tons and the smallest 98 tons. Average size, 278 tons. Hamilton Jackson & Co. had 11 ships, Charles Horsfall Son & Co. 8 ships, and Sir John Tobin, Thos, Tobin and Isaac Bold all had sailings

China comes next with 20 vessels, the largest was the "JOHN BULL", 647 tons, owned by Geo. Kendall of Liverpool and just launched by Thos. Royden, and smallest 218, with an average of 397 tons. W. & J. Tyrer had 7 departures for China, while Brocklebanks had 1 sailing that year.

Then follows the East Indies, which includes India, Batavia, Singapore, etc., and the Ships total 127, of which 44 went to Calcutta the largest 583 tons, smallest 214, with an average of 369 tons. Tyrers had 11 sailings, Bold & Starkey 10 and Brocklebanks 7. 41 Ships went to Bombay, largest 794, smallest 274, and average 488 tons. Bold & Starkey had 6 departures, Tyrers 5, Brocklebanks 3 and Bibby 1. 19 Ships went to Batavia, average 358 tons, and 10 to Singapore of 323 tons; there were also 13 vessels to other ports.

The Entries to the West Indies numbered 291 - largest Ship 992, smallest 23 and the average 250 tons. The principal Firms engaged in this trade were, J. Poole & Co., 39 departures, Imrie & Tomlinson 31, Ashley Bros. 23, W. Rose & Co. 22, also Sandbach Tinne & Co. 7, G. Booker & Co 5, Bibby 3 and Gladstone 2.

For South America there were 222 ships. Only 26 Ships sailed round Cape Horn to the West Coast. Tyrers had 8 sailings and Brocklebanks 3 - largest 375, smallest 142 and average 222 tons. The other 196 Ships went to the East Coast - largest 878 tons, smallest 75, average 247 tons. Tyrers came first with 32 sailings, Imrie & Tomlinson, Ashley Bros. and Cotesworth & Smith each 22, J. Poole & Co., 3, Bahr Behrend & Co. 5, Brocklebanks 4 and Cropper Benson & Co. 2.

Under the heading British America are the names of 272 ships, of which 36 sailed to Newfoundland - the largest to latter country 266, smallest 55 tons only, and average 137. Graham & Taylor 12 sailings, E. W. Bulley & Co. 4, Brocklebanks 1. To the other British America ports (excluding Newfoundland), there were 236 vessels - largest 972 tons, smallest 73, average 483. Gibbs Bright & Co. were top with 24 departures, Cannon Miller & Co. 22, Duncan Gibb 20, Wildes Pickersgill & Co. 18, J. Poole & Co. 7, C. Chaloner & Co 5, Gladstone 1.

Next in the list comes New South Wales, which includes Australia - there were only 30 ships - largest 706 tons, smallest 81, average size 388. Cotesworth & Smith had 6 sailings.

In the United States trade were 697 vessels, divided between the ports as follows:-

New York	198 Ships	Philadelphia	51 Ships
New Orleans	125 "	Mobile	36 "
Boston	77 "	Savannah	35 "
Charleston	55 "	Baltimore	27 "

and to other ports 93 ships.

New York had the largest vessels - the American Packet Ships, some of which were 1,000 tons, while the average size of all the Liverpool New York vessels was 550 tons.

To the other United States ports, the 499 ships averaged 452 tons. The most important firms in the American trade were:- W. & J. Brown (agent for the Dramatic Line) 98 sailings; Baring Brothers & Co. (Agents for Black Ball Line) 94 sailings; Humphreys and Biddle 44; Wildes Pickersgill & Co. (Agents for Swallow Tail Line) 35; Focke & Boulton 31, Hughes Cowie & Co. 24, Ingleby & Browne 23, T. & J. Sands (Agents for Red Star Line) 13, and Rathbone Brothers 3 sailings.

-1-

Naturally "Europe" had the largest list of vessels, a total of 1214, but included therein are 456 ships to the Mediterranean, and as 89 of these were under 100 tons the average is only 139 tons - the largest 529 tons and the smallest 50 tons. The principal firms in the Mediterranean Trade were Bahr Behrend & Co., 101 sailings; J. Moss & Co. 52; J. Bibby & Co. 43; G. Yates 37; Haskayne Chapple & Co. 31, Vianna & Jones 31; Cotesworth & Smith 15; J. Glynn & Sons 14 sailings. Of the remaining 758 ships to North Continental ports, Russia, Norway, etc. also Portugal (73 ships sailed for Oporto and Lisbon) the largest was 851 tons and the smallest only 30 tons, average 159 tons, and the leading firms were Bahr Behrend and Co. with 392 departures, G. C. Weber & Co. 105, Campbell and Rudd 34, J. Glynn & Sons, 16, Brocklebank 6, Bibby 14, Vianna & Jones, 13; Cotesworth & Smith, 11; but the last three firms' sailings were all to Portugal, they being the principal firms in that trade. The total of these vessels entered outwards for foreign ports during the year numbered 2967, with an aggregate of 759,462 tons, the average size being 255 tons and which represented 57 sailings per week or eight per day, all sailing vessels except in the New York trade, where two paddle steamers were running during the latter part of 1838. There is no "return" for the outward coastwise trade, but assuming the numbers were identical with the inward arrivals, the total both in and out coastwise and Foreign would be approximately 27,000 vessels, and brings us to the surprising average movement of 74 ships leaving or entering the port of Liverpool every day of the year. Another interesting fact is that there were some 80 steamers employed in the Coasting trade in 1838, many of them running to Ireland, and between that country and Liverpool there was also a very large number of small sailing craft engaged. With so many vessels using the port, quite apart from the loading and discharge of cargoes there must have been very considerable activity going on, besides new ships building, there were replacements of masts, riggings, sails, drydocking for overhauls and repairs, sheathing etc. while many of the New American and Canadian built ships on their first arrival here had their bottoms coppered.

In connection with the first steam service across the Atlantic, it is not possible to avoid reference to the British & American S.N. Company, of London, formed with a capital of £1,000,000, of which Mr. McGregor Laird was Secretary. This Company had ordered a wooden paddle steamer of about 2,000 tons, to be named the "BRITISH QUEEN" which was building in London for the Atlantic trade. Knowing that Liverpool and Bristol were preparing schemes for a service and, as London was desirous of being "first in the field" they chartered the wooden P.S. "SIRIUS" of Dublin, 470 tons, register and 730 tons burthen belonging to the St. George Steam Packet Co. built by Menzies of Leith in 1837, with engines of 320 horse-power, supplied by Wingate & Co., of Whiteinch, Glasgow. Her boiler pressure was 15 lbs and vessel's dimensions were length 178.4, breadth 25.8, depth in hold 13.5. She had one funnel and three masts, average speed 9 knots, and cost £27,000.

It is also necessary to mention the wooden P.S. "GREAT WESTERN" of Bristol, 679 tons register and 1340 tons, burthen, belonging to The Great Western S.N. Co. of Bristol, where she had been constructed by Patterson in 1837, while her engines of 450 h.p. were made by Mawdsley Son & Field, of London. Boiler pressure was 15 lbs. She had one funnel and 4 masts. Her length was 207.1 breadth 31.8 and depth in hold 23.1. Average speed 10 knots, while her cost was £60,000.

The "SIRIUS", commanded by Lieut. Richard Roberts R.N. left London on 28th March 1838 for Cork to take on board passengers who travelled from Liverpool by the p.s. "OCEAN" (also owned by the St. George's Company) and after embarking them, she sailed from the Irish Port on 4th April, with 94 passengers. Close behind her, the "GREAT WESTERN", in charge of Lieut. James Hosken R.N., but with only 7 passengers, left Bristol on 8th April. Strange to state, both vessels arrived at New York on the same day, namely Monday 23rd April, the "SIRIUS" early in the morning after a passage of under 19 days, but without any fuel remaining, having consumed 453 tons of coal and also 43 barrels of resin - the daily consumption having been 24 tons. During the first part of the voyage she met with strong head winds which interfered with her progress. The "GREAT WESTERN" steamed into New York in the afternoon after a passage of 15 days. She had used practically the same quantity of fuel, namely 450 tons, a daily consumption

of 30 tons. Needless to say, both vessels received a tremendous reception. These two steamers left New York on the 1st and 7th May respectively, the "GREAT WESTERN" having 66 passengers, and she arrived at Bristol in 14 days.

The next steam vessel to come under consideration is of particular interest, as she was entirely a Liverpool production. The wooden paddle steamer "ROYAL WILLIAM" registered at Dublin was launched on 31st May 1836 by W & T. Wilson at their yard at Liverpool. She registered 403 tons and was of 617 tons burthen, with length 172.5, breadth 24.6 and depth in hold 16.6. Her engines were of 276 H.P., made by Fawcett Preston & Co., Liverpool, but her boiler pressure was only 8 lbs, and her average speed 10 knots. She was owned by the City of Dublin Steam Packet Co., the directors of which were the moving spirits in the formation of the Transatlantic Steam Ship Co. of Liverpool, which had a capital of £500,000. The managing committee consisted of Harold Littledale, Rodney Street, of the firm of T. & H. Littledale, brokers; Joseph C. Ewart, Aigburth, of Ewart Myers & Co; and Thomas Booth, Hope Street, of Thos. Booth & Co., Corn merchants - all leading Liverpool business men. The Managing Directors were Charles Wye Williams, of Liverpool, and F. Carleton, of Dublin. The "ROYAL WILLIAM" was chartered by the Transatlantic Company and placed on the American service - She was an exceptional vessel, having been, at the suggestion of C. W. Williams, subdivided by iron bulkheads. She had one funnel and two masts, and under command of Lieut. W. Swainson R.N., sailed from Liverpool on a summer evening - 5th July, 1838, when she had a great send-off. Bound for New York direct, she carried 32 passengers, and although experiencing adverse winds at the start she reached her destination on 25th July after a passage of under 19 days and was the first steamer to cross the Atlantic from Liverpool. According to a letter written at the time by James C. Shaw, Marine Manager of the Transatlantic Company, the "ROYAL WILLIAM"'s total consumption of fuel was 351 tons, 2 cwts, 2 quarters, and she arrived with sufficient to steam another 600 miles. Her daily consumption was 18 tons and she covered the whole distance at an average of 2 cts, 11 lbs per mile or 6 lbs 4 ozs per H.P. per hour - a result unprecedented! She left New York on 4th August with 35 passengers and reached Liverpool on 19th August, in 14½ days. She sailed from the Mersey on a second trip on 20th September with 67 passengers.

During the summer of 1838 the American packet lines were employing 20 ships on the Liverpool-New York service. The "Old Line", better known as the "Black Ball" Line, had two sailings per month - on the 1st and 16th - the smallest of their eight vessels being the "ORPHEUS" 575 tons, and the largest the "CAMBRIDGE" of 850 tons. The "Red Star" Line sailed on 8th of the month, with four ships - the smallest being the "SHEFFIELD" 578 tons, the largest the "ST. ANDREW", 660 tons. The "New" or "Dramatic" Line, sailing on the 16th, had four of the largest ships in the trade:-

"SHAKESPEARE"	800 tons	"SHERIDAN"	1012 tons
"GARRICK"	1004 tons	"SIDDONS"	1014 tons.

and finally the "Swallow Tail" Line, sailing on the 24th, had four ships - the "GEORGE WASHINGTON" and "ROSCOE" each 600 tons, the "INDEPENDENCE" 730 tons, and "PENNSYLVANIA" 808 tons.

The next steam sailing from the Mersey was another wooden vessel, the paddle steamer "LIVERPOOL" of 559 tons register and 1150 tons burthen; length 212.9. breadth 28.5, depth in hold 19.3, and just completed. She was a Mersey production, launched on 14th October, 1837 by Humble & Milcrest, Liverpool, with engines of 464 H.P. by Geo. Forrester & Co. another first-class firm of Engineers belonging to the Port. With an average speed of 9 knots this vessel cost £45,000 and was owned by a well-known Merseyside shipowner, Sir John Tobin, who had been mayor of Liverpool, and he sold her to the Trans-atlantic Company. She had two funnels and three masts. Leaving the Mersey on 20th October 1838, in charge of Lieut. R. J. Fayerer R.N. she met with a succession of gales and put back to Cork ten days later, and after supplementing coal, she sailed from that port on 6th November, arriving at New York on 23rd after a passage from Ireland of under 14 days. The homeward run was made in 14 days 10 hours, arriving Liverpool 21st December, having used on the

eastbound voyage 445 tons 9 cwts coal, her daily consumption being 30 tons 14 cwts 2 qrs 25 lbs per mile or 6 lbs per H.P. per hour. The "ROYAL WILLIAM" had taken the 4th sailing from Liverpool, leaving the Mersey on 15th December.

From the foregoing, it will be seen how the Liverpool-New York service began. What happened to these pioneer steamers? The "SIRIUS", on her return from a second Atlantic trip, went back to the service of her owners, the St. George's Co. which later became the Cork Steam Packet Company. On 16th June 1847, while on voyage from Dublin to Cork, the "SIRIUS", in a dense fog, ran ashore in Ballycotton Bay and eventually went to pieces. Twelve passengers and two of the crew were drowned, owing to capsizing of one of the boats. Her figure head - a dog representing the Dog Star "Sirius" - came into possession of Sir Edward Bates who presented it to his father-in-law Thomas Thompson, of Hessle, near Hull, and it is now in the Hull Museum.

The "GREAT WESTERN" was sold to the Royal Mail Steam Packet Co. in 1847 for £25,000 and remained in their ownership until broken up in 1858. The "ROYAL WILLIAM" went back to the Dublin Company early in 1839 and for many years was employed on their Cross Channel Services. It is stated that she eventually became a coal bulk, and some say she was finally used as a landing stage at Dublin, but her name is in Lloyd's Register for 1885 as still owned by the Dublin Company - 49 years after she was built and she was then broken up. The "LIVERPOOL" continued sailing across the Atlantic until 1840 and early in the following year was sold to the P. & O. Line of London, who are said to have lengthened her and she was renamed the "GREAT LIVERPOOL", being engaged between Southampton and Alexandria until 4th April 1846, when she was wrecked off Cape Finisterre.

A request for Tenders by the British Government in October 1838 for a steam service to carry the North American mails brought Sir Samuel Cunard over from Halifax, and it is stated that he sailed to this port by the paddle steamer "LIVERPOOL". His tender was accepted and in conjunction with Robert Napier, the celebrated Clyde Engineer, George Burns of Glasgow, and David M'Iver of Liverpool, the British and North American Royal Mail Steam Packet Company (now the famous Cunard Line) was formed with a capital of £270,000 and in May 1839, a seven years contract was signed with the Government for a payment of £60,000 per annum, and on 12th July, Samuel Cunard sailed from Portsmouth for New York by the New p.s. "BRITISH QUEEN".

Now for a glance at the "coming" shipowners. Thomas Harrison commenced his apprenticeship with Samuel Brown Sons & Co of this town in 1830, while his brother James, seven years younger, started his apprenticeship with the same firm in 1837. In 1839, the former at the age of 24 years went into partnership with Geo. Brown under the title of George Brown and Harrison, and when James joined that firm in 1848 it became Brown and Harrisons but on the death of George Brown in 1853, the present designation of Thos. & Jas. Harrison was adopted.

Born in Liverpool in 1823, James Baines had just commenced his business career as an apprentice engineer, but he did not care for that profession and so in 1845 the shipbroking partnership of Hamilton and Baines commenced and two years later the firm became Carter and Baines. In 1849, however, under the title of James Baines & Co. he was buying vessels and extending his operations and with the finding of gold in Australia and the rush of emigrants to that part of the world in 1852, he advertised his service from this port as the "LIVERPOOL BLACK BALL LINE" of Australian Packets. Eventually Baines controlled an extensive fleet and owned some of the largest, finest and fastest ships in the world, including the MARCO POLO, LIGHTNING, CHAMPION OF THE SEAS, JAMES BAINES and DONALD MACKAY. Bank failures and other misfortunes came his way and finally he was once again only a shipbroker in a small way of business, with not a ship flying his flag.

Wm. J. Lamport served his time with Gibbs, Bright and Co., and George Holt who had gained shipping experience in the office of T. & J. Brocklebank, started in business together in 1845, the former being 30 years of age, and the latter 20 years, and so the Lamport and Holt Line

1845

was founded.

In the same year John Pilkington, aged 25, and Henry Threlfall Wilson aged 20, founded the firm of Pilkington and Wilson, and in 1852, they advertised their ships as belonging to the "LIVERPOOL WHITE STAR LINE" of Australian Packets. Four years later, Pilkington retired and James Chambers, whose family came from Cumberland and whose sister had married Wilson, joined the firm, which became as H. T. Wilson and Chambers. When they sold the White Star Line and its Flag, it is said for £1,000 to Thomas Henry Ismay in 1867, Chambers left the firm and started on his own account and his business is still existing in Liverpool to-day as James Chambers and Company. Another Liverpool shipowner to be - Frederick Leyland - was only 17 years of age, so it was some time before he started his career in the office of John Bibby & Sons - and you will remember he bought out the Bibby interests and took over their shipping business in 1873, changing the name to the "Leyland" Line. Edward Bates (afterward Sir Edwards) was a merchant in India a hundred years ago and it was not until 1848 that he came to Liverpool, opened an office, and very quickly a large fleet of ships was flying his flag, while he developed an extensive business both as shipowner and merchant, trading all over the world - his first service being from Liverpool to Bombay. Alfred Holt, brother of George, started life in the cotton trade, but in 1850 when 21 years old he bought some small coasting steamers and it is said, in one of them the funnel required attention and the engineer finding some paint amongst the stores, applied a coat - ever since the funnels of the Holt Steamers have carried that conspicuous and distinguishing blue colour. He commenced a service to the West Indies in 1855, but in 1863 the business, and also that of Leech Harrison and Forwood and Imrie and Tomlinson were merged into a new company known as the West India and Pacific Line. In 1865, Holt inaugurated his service to China, the steamers then having to travel by way of the Cape of Good Hope.

Last, but not least, the son of a Maryport shipbuilder, Thomas Henry Ismay was in 1838 celebrating his first birthday, and little did his parents or anyone contemplate the name he was to make for himself in the shipping world. He served his time with Imrie Tomlinson of this port, and his fellow-apprentice was Wm. Imrie who was destined to become Ismay's partner. Ismay started business in 1857 with Philip Nelson under the style of Nelson and Ismay, but in 1862 they separated and, taking over most of the ships, Ismay designated his firm Thos. H. Ismay & Co. until 1870, when Imrie became a partner and thus was established the well-known firm of Ismay, Imrie & Co. owners of the celebrated "White Star Line" of Steamers.

It is very noticeable the youthful age of most of these individuals when they commenced business on their own accounts, and who were to make such a name for themselves as shipowners.

Finally, in our mind's eye, we can go back a hundred years and see the Mersey, after a spell of contrary winds, with some hundreds of ships of all sizes and rig, making their way to the sea, the River dotted with white wings, the sails gleaming in the sunlight - a stirring picture! And so, Liverpool of a century ago, after this momentary glimpse, fades away from our sight into the past.
