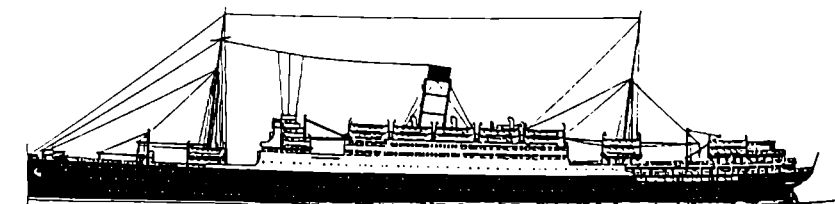


*The Liverpool Nautical Research Society*  
(Founded 1938)

THE BULLETIN

*Editor : John Shepherd*

Volume 41, Number 4, Spring, 1998



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# The Liverpool Nautical Research Society

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## ***Forthcoming Meetings***

*Thursday, 19th March 1998*

Safety at Sea, A Brief History of Government Involvement (D.J.Pickup)

*Thursday 16th April 1998*

Conditions of Seamen employed on Liverpool Shipping in the last quarter of  
the 18th Century (Dr.D.J.Pope)

*Thursday, 21st May, 1998*

Annual General Meeting

Front Cover: The "Samaria" of 1921 - article on page 104.

## HOUND OF THE SEA

by L.N.R.S. Member P.J.H. Tebay

It was the short note in the Winter "*Bulletin*" referring to the proposed SuperSeaCat service between Liverpool and Dublin that reminded me of a much earlier jet-propelled craft on the same run.

On 13th February 1980 a Boeing Jetfoil, to be named *Cú na Mara* (*Hound of the Sea*), arrived in Gladstone Dock on the deck of the *Antonia Johnson*. Built in Seattle and intended for the B. & I. Line, she was to carry 250 passengers on a 3¼ hour passage between Liverpool and Dublin at approximately 45 knots.

Foreknowledge of the B. & I.'s plans had resulted by November 1979 in meetings between representatives of the Port and Pilotage Authorities and senior B. & I. staff, when safety and practical operational aspects were discussed. Prior to the *Cú na Mara* coming into service, there were to be at least six weeks of working-up trials and crew training. Initially, an American bridge team of captain and engineer would instruct a small number of selected B. & I. masters and mates until they were officially qualified to operate the craft. Amongst the port's requirements would be the employment of a Liverpool Pilot when navigating the River and Mersey channels. The pilots to be used would have to be current members of the Pilotage and Examination Committees and would report back on any potential problems whilst in the pilotage area.

B. & I. also suggested that, before the jetfoil arrived, a small team should travel to Brighton to have a look at a similar craft then running a service to Dieppe. This team consisted of Captain G. Barry (B. & I. Commodore), Captain J. Devaney (Superintendent, Dublin), Captain A. Jones, (B. & I., Liverpool), and Pilots Tebay and Webber. Arriving at the Brighton Marina, I think it is fair to say that, considering the craft was intended to carry 250 passengers across the Irish Sea, she looked a mite small - actually 99 feet long with the foils up, and 30 feet beam - and she was moving gently in the sheltered waters. Whilst manoeuvring when sailing or berthing, the jetfoil did so in displacement mode (i.e. floating on the hull), and with a vectored jet aft and a small bow thrust forward she could turn in her own length. Displacement speed was about 10 knots. In this trim, and once out into a slight swell, she tended to roll uncomfortably, probably due to her flattish hull and light draft. However, as she swiftly accelerated past 30 knots with the foils down, she rose up and became pleasantly steady, the twin 4,500 hp gas turbine engines drawing in water at the leading edge of the engine pod and ejecting it with great force through the rear jets. Despite the speed of 43 knots, and with her hull clear of the water, she did not appear to make a broad or high wash, and from a passenger seat on the upper of two decks it was like being in a low flying

aircraft as we skimmed the waves. This sensation was encouraged by the seating layout being similar to a wide-bodied jet, plus the use of aviation terminology such as 'take-off' or 'landing'. On the bridge ('cockpit'?) the instruments were grouped in a semi-circle around the two command seats.

Arriving at Dieppe, the captain kept the power on as we entered the harbour, and if it was intended to impress, it certainly induced some palpitation in this observer! However, once he '*lifted the handles*' the power fell off and, dropping back into displacement mode, she lost way immediately. Apart from this excitement, it was a pleasant and comfortable passage both ways. From a navigational point of view, we noted how quickly the crossing situations built up with the traffic in the Channel, and how it involved some re-interpretation as to the visual assessments on radar.

In the third week of February 1980 the Mersey trials and training began. If the **Cú na Mara** was in Liverpool, she would be berthed in the Waterloo system. Joining time for those required was around 07.30, and the craft would be in the river by 08.30. With Langton abeam she would be up on the foils and passing the Rock at 43 knots through the water. Initially at this speed it took some time in adjusting as to how quickly we closed with other vessels. The same applied for the other port users! The **Cú na Mara** seldom needed more than 5° of helm for course alterations, and on Crosby bend it could be made on a continuous gentle swing. When overtaking on Crosby bend one had to be careful not to swing wide as at 70 feet per second the jetfoil could readily be over towards the inward side of the channel. To give other port users some forewarning of the jetfoil's presence, she carried a flashing strobe light above the bridge, and Mersey Radio would report her passing way-points on open broadcasts. It has to be remembered that, apart from some naval vessels or specialised small craft, few if any port users had experience of a speed more than three times the average, especially in a winding channel. Whilst in an emergency the **Cú na Mara** could come off the foils and thereby bring up very quickly (actually five seconds from full speed), she would then need a clear, straight stretch to take off again. It was interesting to note that despite her manoeuvrability previously referred to, because of her transfer distance at full speed, she took as big a radius to turn 180° off Prince's Stage as one of the much larger conventional ferries. The **Cú na Mara's** Liverpool berth was to be Prince's Stage, and at Dublin a purpose-built berth and airport-type lounge had been built at the Custom House Quay. Thus the attraction to passengers would be city centre to city centre in 3¼ hours.

Apart from the River and Bar Light Vessel shake-down trips, the runs to Dublin also started in February 1980. As it was neither practical nor desirable to discharge (or pick up) the pilot at the Bar, he would carry on for the passage to Dublin, and then return with the jetfoil, provided that this return was on the same or the next day. In good weather it was quite a novelty to be passing the Lynas pilot station in a little over 1¼ hours after leaving the

stage! With reasonable weather the trip was a pleasure, but if the sea and swell started to increase beyond 4 - 5 feet, it became less comfortable. Whilst not rolling or pitching, there would be an element of slamming or jerkiness and as the tops of the seas hit the bottom of the exposed hull it made an unsettling noise. A limit of 10 feet (3 metres) wave height had been imposed. What did help towards 'level flight' was the Automatic Control System whereby two sensors forward assessed the oncoming waves and adjusted the water-flaps on the foils accordingly. A further factor was the facility for the captain to regulate the depths of the foils themselves, thereby regulating the height of the hull above sea level. On one trip from Dublin something went wrong and we started to 'porpoise' - that was not at all pleasant and we had to 'land' whilst the fault was rectified. Fortunately the passenger seats had seatbelts! On the humorous side was the astonishment registered by seagulls as they made their customary 'laid-back' take off from near the bows, and then suddenly realised that they weren't going to make it!

Before the *Cú na Mara* entered passenger service, a river and channel trip was arranged for all available pilots to give them an idea of operational parameters and the high approach speeds.

Throughout the trial trips four Liverpool pilots were employed, individually, on the *Cú na Mara*, but such was the efficiency and experience of the B. & I. masters and mates that there was no problem in extending their pilotage exemption certificates to cover the jetfoil.

Full passenger services commenced on 25th April 1980, but inevitably the Irish Sea had plenty of weather tricks to play. As a result trips were cancelled to an unacceptable degree, and unreliability of service is a quick commercial killer. After the summer season of 1981 the jetfoil service was wound up. I understand that the *Cú na Mara* was sold to the Japanese and renamed *Ginga*, which sounds not an unreasonable name for a hound! ■



## THE "CÚ NA MARA" AND OTHER JETFOILS

*by Malcolm McDonald*

After completing her trials and crew training, the **Cú na Mara** entered service on 25th April 1980. She was based at Dublin, and made either one or two round sailings to Liverpool each day. Her scheduled passage time was 3½ hours, which allowed two round sailings to be carried out without resorting to night-time arrivals or departures. There were many opportunities for day trips from Dublin, with up to nine hours in Liverpool, but no realistic opportunities in the opposite direction as, on the days when there were two round trips, the vessel was in Dublin for only 50 minutes after completing her morning sailing from Liverpool.

The service continued until 3rd November 1980, when it was withdrawn for the winter, despite earlier hints that it might become a year-round service. There is little doubt that the weather played some part in this decision; on 22nd October the **Cú na Mara** was forced to abandon her crossing to Liverpool after making three attempts to leave Dublin. Overall she made 90% of her scheduled crossings, but a 10% failure rate must have caused problems for many passengers. The weather was not the only cause of the jetfoil's problems: she was off service for ten days from 3rd July after striking the **Manxman**, which was berthed at the landing stage, on the evening of 2nd July 1980. She suffered substantial damage and engineers from Boeing were flown over to assist with the repairs. In contrast, the **Manxman** was undamaged.

During the winter of 1980/81, Boeing carried out modifications to the **Cú na Mara** to improve her fuel economy and her bad weather performance. Following these modifications, she was chartered to the Belgian RTM organisation for two months to carry out crew training and familiarisation, before the introduction of a jetfoil service between Ostend and Dover. Before opening the 1981 service, the **Cú na Mara** called at Douglas, Isle of Man, on 4th May to assess its potential as a storm port.

The 1981 season started on 8th May, and followed a similar pattern to the previous year. The improvements made by Boeing allowed the scheduled crossing time to be reduced to 3¼ hours, and one of the eastbound crossings on the first day was completed in the record time of 2 hours 50 minutes. The service was scheduled to operate only until 5th October, which suggests that the numbers carried during the last month of service in 1980 had been poor. During the 1981 season, the **Cú na Mara** was twice withdrawn from service because of mechanical problems.

There were signs that increasing numbers of passengers were using the jetfoil service, with around 75,000 tickets sold in 1981. This was similar to the

number sold in 1980, when there had been a longer season. However, the B. & I. Line was suffering huge losses, and was required by its owner, the Irish Government, to take steps to improve its financial performance. After a full review, the company decided to withdraw the jetfoil service at the end of the 1981 season. The withdrawal did not succeed in stemming B. & I.'s losses, and it was not until some years later, following the closure of the Swansea - Cork car ferry service, and the full transfer of the Dublin car ferry service's British terminal from Liverpool to Holyhead, that B. & I. returned to profit.

After her withdrawal, the **Cú na Mara** went to the Irish port of Arklow to lay up. She was advertised for sale at a price around £6.6 million, similar to her original cost to B. & I. She remained at Arklow until January 1985, when she was sold to a Japanese company for around £5 million. The **Cú na Mara** was handed over in mid-January and was renamed **Ginga**.

The **Ginga's** owners were Sado Kishen Kaisha, a Japanese company which operates ferry services from the main Japanese island of Honshu to the small island of Sado-shima, off the west coast of Honshu. Sado is a little larger than the Isle of Man, and the company operates services on three routes from mainland ports to the island, using a fleet of four car ferries and four jetfoils. The principal route is from Niigata, on Honshu, to Ryōtsu, on Sado island. This is served by three jetfoils, which take one hour for the 36 mile crossing. During the peak summer season there are eleven jetfoil crossings per day in each direction; during January and February this falls to three crossings which can be maintained by two jetfoils. The **Ginga** (ex **Cú na Mara**) is still in service today.

B. & I. was one of a number of operators to introduce jetfoils in northern European waters. Most of these were no more successful than B. & I. Following a trial with a chartered craft between London and Zeebrugge, P. & O. introduced a service between London and Ostend in February 1980, using two jetfoils. This service lasted barely more than six months. Seajet Ferries' service between Brighton and Dieppe, which started in April 1979, suffered numerous weather cancellations during the winter of 1979/80, in addition to mechanical failures, but the final blow came in August 1980, when French fishermen blockaded every Northern French port. Seajet Ferries missed fifteen days of crossings and never resumed the service. Seajet International, which attempted a Newhaven - Dieppe service in 1982 by chartering one of the two jetfoils laid up since the closure of the P. & O. service, lasted barely one month. The Royal Navy carried out trials with a jetfoil, HMS **Speedy**, in a variety of coastal and offshore roles, including fishery protection, but she was not a success, so she was withdrawn in 1982 and placed on the disposal list.

The only long-lasting North European jetfoil service was the RTM route between Ostend and Dover. The British terminal was transferred to Ramsgate in February 1994, but otherwise the same two craft remained in service on the route until 1997. It is significant that RTM was a state-owned

organisation, which had been making heavy losses for some years. In view of the experience of other jetfoil operators, it is likely that RTM's two jetfoils contributed to these losses. RTM was shut down by the Belgian Government and the service by the two Belgian jetfoils was due to end on 28th February 1997, but their final week was disrupted by cancellations caused by bad weather.

Common themes of the jetfoil failures have been the lack of fuel economy, poor mechanical reliability, and an inability to operate in all winter conditions around the British Isles. The failure to develop a larger vessel, which could have carried cars, and so improved the financial performance of the craft, probably contributed to their early demise. It seems that B. & I.'s experiment, which could have transformed sea travel between Liverpool and Dublin, was doomed to failure from the start. It is good to see that the *Cú na Mara* has found a service on a shorter route, where her future is more certain.

It may be of interest to add that the *Cú na Mara* was one of two jetfoils in which the B. & I. Line was interested. An option was taken out on a second craft, which would have operated between Belfast and Glasgow, but this option was never taken up, probably because of experience with the first craft. ■

#### WORLD SHIP SOCIETY

##### *CENTRAL RECORD AND RESEARCHERS' MEETING, 1998*

It is the turn of the north-west of England to host the Central Record and Researchers' Meeting, which has been held at intervals of a year to eighteen months since 1994. The date is Saturday 4th April 1998, and the venue is the Education Suite of the Merseyside Maritime Museum, Albert Dock, Liverpool. As in previous years, the meeting will begin by covering a certain amount of Central Record business and other matters of interest to researchers and the Central Record team. There will then be a number of short presentations from those attending, covering aspects of their own research with the emphasis on the methods they have used. The meeting will start at 10.00am, and continue until about 5.00pm, with a generous break at lunchtime, as one of the meeting's purposes is to allow those interested in research to get together and exchange ideas.

The meeting, which is relatively informal, is open to all WSS members, and we have also extended an invitation to our friends in the Liverpool Nautical Research Society. We will be asking for a small donation (£1) from those attending to go towards the cost of room hire. There is no need to reserve a place at the meeting, but anyone who has queries should get in touch with Roy Fenton direct. ■



## THIRD CLASS FARE - ONCE UPON A TIME

by T.A. Porter

In the first week of December 1909 I decided that I was fed up with the monotony of sailing out of Panama to Guayaquil, with no social life at either end, and decided to return to Liverpool and try another company. A shipmate of mine had the same idea and together we left Panama for Colon and obtained second-class berths in the Hapag-Lloyd liner **Prinz August Wilhelm** at \$45, plus \$4 head tax into the United States.

We arrived in New York on a Tuesday evening at about 6.30pm. The immigration officials were very exacting in their enquiries about our plans for the future, but we succeeded in convincing them that we were anxious to get home after three years' absence. We were then allowed to go ashore.

After a night in the new sailors' home in Jane Street we went down to the Cunard Pier at the foot of West 14th Street. Neither of us had booked a passage, but we had been assured that this was not necessary and soon we found out why. At the entrance to the pier we saw a long line of men stretching almost across the roadway who, we discovered, were all prospective third-class passengers. We joined the line and in due course arrived at a narrow kiosk, something like a sentry box with a covered front. There was an aperture just big enough to put your hand through. Mine went through with £5-10s in English money.

A voice said : "*Say, the fare is \$33.25 and I want another sovereign*". Not having any argument ready I put down the extra pound and was handed something like a railway ticket. With my companion I followed the men in front until we reached the gangway of the **Campania**, something like a crew's gangway, and just wide enough for one person. We boarded on the port side of the ship and heard a steward reciting : "*Third-class passengers the other side.*" To reach the starboard side we crossed the fiddley just at the time the fires were being cleaned. This was a surprise to both of us but we accepted it as part and parcel of third-class.

Outside the fiddley door was another steward who directed the stream of men to the third-class entrance and here we descended to the deck below and again to the next deck where we found ourselves in an alleyway formed on one side by the ship's side and on the other by the partitions of the sleeping accommodation which could be removed or built up according to the number of passengers carried.

A steward indicated a doorway which opened on to a short alleyway between four 'shelves'. Each 'shelf' had iron bars spaced about 24 inches apart and in each space along the shelf were a straw mattress, pillow and blanket. There were twenty men in this area with their heads about three feet away from their neighbours' and their feet against the partition. Another steward

kept up the monotonous chant : "*pick a berth, gentlemen*". We both deposited our bags into a space and struggled back against the stream of oncoming men to the upper deck. In 1909 if a man had no more than the third-class fare there was no chance of his living with his wife on the passage. The rule was men forward, women aft.

On the upper deck they were just casting off, and for some time we were occupied with the sights of New York. At noon a bell rang for lunch and we searched for the dining compartment. We were directed to the place where we had picked our berths and found that the eating place was in the alleyway. A table not much more than 18 inches wide was fastened to the ship's side by chains and supported by galvanised iron rods let into holes in the deck. Long forms were placed at the table. After we had secured places at this table the steward came along with a stack of plates and passed them down the table from one end. Another steward handed out knives, forks and spoons; there was no table cloth.

The bill of fare was similar to that given to the 'black gang' of the average tramp steamer of the period, and just about as appetising. Friday's breakfast was potatoes (boiled in their jackets), salt fish, bread, margarine and tea with brown sugar and weak condensed milk. For breakfast on Sunday and Thursday we each had a boiled egg, and this was followed by pork for dinner and beef and pickles for tea.

By that first tea-time on sailing day it was already dark and the **Campania** was well out into the Atlantic and beginning to take the seas over her. On the upper deck a long seat was fixed to the side of the accommodation parallel to the rail and there were several hardy souls sitting out. Just before 9.00pm however, seas were breaking over the deck and I have a recollection of passing the **Majestic** which was driving into the weather and shipping green water over the forecastle.

At exactly 9.00pm the master-at-arms came along and in a loud voice ordered all women off the deck. Husbands and wives bade each other '*good-night*'. It was freezing and very wet as we went below. Up to that time we had seen little of our fellow sleepers. But we found them all on their mattresses and smoking as if they had been paid to do so, despite "No Smoking" notices. The air was thick. At about 11.00pm everyone decided to call it a day and it was then that we found that a 'donkey's breakfast' left much to be desired. At 6.00am my companion and I arose and went to the wash-place which we had previously noted as being on the deck above that on which we slept. We were not the first but fortunately there were only a few ahead of us. There were three metal 'tip-up' basins, three roller towels and five toilets for 200 passengers. Shaving was an art, even to sea-going men.

We secured two seats on the form for breakfast. When the plates had been given out, a steward advanced along the form behind the passengers with a long-spouted enamel jug filled with oatmeal porridge which he served out

using each passenger's shoulder as a fulcrum. That which struck the plate you retained, and the remainder you wiped off your clothes. At 9.00am everyone was ordered on deck and the third-class steward saw to it that no one came below again until noon.

It was annoying to see the greasers pass you on their way to the fo'c'sle bearing plates of ham and eggs when you recalled that your breakfast had been kipper or herring. For three days the weather was vile which demonstrated perfectly what it was like to be aboard a ship making 20 knots without cabin, lounge, smokeroom or any other form of shelter. We stood packed like sardines on a wet deck watching 300ft of promenade deck looking like a half-tide rock.

Sunday was a brighter day however and 30 or so Welsh miners standing on top of the after hatch sang hymns for about an hour; this was the only diversion of the whole week's voyage. The **Campania** certainly had speed but she had been built in 1893 and the ideas of that year were still unchanged in her, sixteen years on.

We called at Queenstown and Fishguard and reached Liverpool Landing Stage at 5.30pm on Wednesday. There were no formalities as to who you were. A gangway was shipped and everyone trooped ashore to go whither they pleased.

About two years later I crossed the Atlantic as a second-class passenger in the **Campania**. What a difference! There were four men in one cabin, but the ship was packed in all three classes. The comfort of the lounge, smoke-room and dining saloon however prompted the notion that no such thing as 'third-class' existed.

I sometimes used to think that very few designers of ships really knew what the North Atlantic was like. Even during my second-class crossing in the June before the coronation of King George V, there were three days when no one in any class was permitted to go out on deck. Whenever the **Campania** shipped a sea it just rolled along her whole length and flopped over aft. I wonder how many of us remember the Allan liner **Pomeranian** whose bridge, with her master and another officer, was swept overboard? ■

#### Editor's Note :

*The Pomeranian was built in 1882 by Earle's Shipbuilding & Engineering Company of Hull. She was built as the Grecian Monarch for the Monarch Line (The Royal Exchange Shipping Company). In 1887 she was acquired by the Allan Line and renamed Pomeranian. In 1889 she took up the Glasgow - Montreal route and in February 1893 she ran into a severe storm. A huge wave carried away the bridge, charthouse and fore-deck saloon, killing twelve people. The Pomeranian had to return to Glasgow for repairs.*

j.s.

## THE CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

*Greasby, Wirral,  
March, 1998*

Dear Friends,

As I write, there is a promising hint of Spring in the air; in fact it seems to have been there for several weeks already, and may even be said to have begun (far fetched though it may seem) on 15th January, a day of bright sunshine and gentle breezes, and the day on which a party of L.N.R.S. Members, some 30-strong, visited Cammell Laird's shipyard at the invitation of our good friend, Mr Linton Roberts.

On arrival at the yard gates in Campbeltown Road we were escorted to a well-appointed reception centre and served with coffee. Linton then gave us a brief talk on the progress made at the Yard since the parent-company took over two years ago. The catalogue of achievements was impressive. One recalls with awe the sense of gloom which descended on Merseyside when news of the closure of Cammell Laird became public knowledge. It was only partially lifted when, a couple of years later, word got around that a new group was about to take over and revive the Yard. The sceptical view prevailed that there was little chance of outsiders succeeding where Lairds had failed. Well, the evidence of success was all around us, as we saw during a conducted tour of the site, with its wet basin, dry docks, and workshops humming with every activity known to shipyard practice.

There was an air of dynamism about management and workforce which was almost palpable. Gone were the old demarcation disputes which so bedevilled the old working practices. In their place was a desire simply "to get on with the job!". The installation of new dock gates at Nos 6 and 7 Dry Docks had eliminated one obvious source of dereliction. But the prime exhibit was the sight of the drill-ship *Peregrine VII* sitting in two halves in No.5 Dry Dock, in the lee of the old Birkenhead Priory, undergoing conversion and lengthening by installing a new 100-foot section amidships!

The tour lasted about one hour, and, on our return to the reception centre, we found that a welcoming buffet had been prepared in our absence, to which we proceeded to do full justice! Altogether, a most memorable excursion.

A month earlier we had rounded off the old year in style, with a splendid Christmas Lunch at the Blundellsands Hotel, organised by that

indefatigable Member, Gordon Wright. Our "*Cakes and Wine*" meeting on the 18th December (for which, once again, we owe our thanks to Gordon and his wife), was marked by the traditional Christmas Quiz, compiled and conducted by Mike Stammers. I do not know what the prevailing opinion may be, but to me the questions seem to get more difficult every year! However, this debatable issue did not deter our current champion, Norman West, from amassing a highly respectable score, and carrying off the prize. And I think that we are all agreed that there must be no debasing of standards!

That, of course, was the month we raffled a voucher presented by the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company for a round trip for two to the Island. The raffle raised £50 towards Society funds, and the lucky winner was our worthy Member, Peter Day of Anglesey.

I think I had better call a halt there. Our enterprising Editor jealously guards the space available in *The Bulletin*, and I would be loath to encroach too far on his generosity. However, he hopes to be more expansive in the next issue which he plans to enlarge by 50%! I understand that he is presently floating on quite a large pool of material, but I know that he would more than welcome suitable original articles from Members at any time.

The switch of our concessionary facility from Monday to Friday began earlier this month, and seems to be progressing smoothly. Most Members seem to have adapted favourably to the change, but we do commiserate with those who find the new regime inconvenient.

Yours sincerely

*Graeme Cubbin*



*The "Aquitania" will be the subject of the lead article in the next 'Bulletin' which will be sent out to Members in mid-June.*

## PIONEERING THE AMAZON

In a Booth Line management note of the early 1920s, it is observed that following the Great War, it was no longer viable to continue the short cruises to Spain and Portugal. Looking for a new area of business, Booth Line decided that the Amazon offered a little known but intensely interesting destination for the travelling public, and beginning in 1922 six-week cruises were operated with the **Hildebrand**. Among the many eminent people who enjoyed an Amazon cruise was Sir Edward Elgar, who kept a journal in late 1923. The **Hildebrand** was joined for a short period in 1931-32 by the **Hilary** on the cruise run. ■

### GENERAL INFORMATION.

WIRELESS MESSAGES sent between England and Steamers of the BOOTH LINE, via following Stations, are charged for as under:—

Seaforth, Fishguard, Land's End, Niton -	11d. per word.
Rugby (world-wide range) - - - - -	1s. 6d. ..
Ushant Havre - - - - -	10½d. ..
Finisterre, Vigo - - - - -	11½d. ..
Lavadôres, Monsanto (Portugal) - - -	11½d. ..
Madeira Marconi - - - - -	1s. 8d. ..
Between Ship and Ship - - - - -	8d. ..

Telegrams to be addressed—Name of Passenger.  
Name of Ship.  
Name of W/T Station—radio.

Specimen:—"Williams, steamer Hildebrand, Landsendradio."

MEALS IN THE SALOON will be served at the following times:—

#### Between LIVERPOOL and LISBON.

BREAKFAST - - - - -	from 8. 0 to 9.30 a.m.
LUNCHEON - - - - -	at 1. 0 p.m.
AFTERNOON TEA - - - - -	at 4.30 p.m.
DINNER - - - - -	at 7. 0 p.m.

#### Between LISBON and BRAZIL.

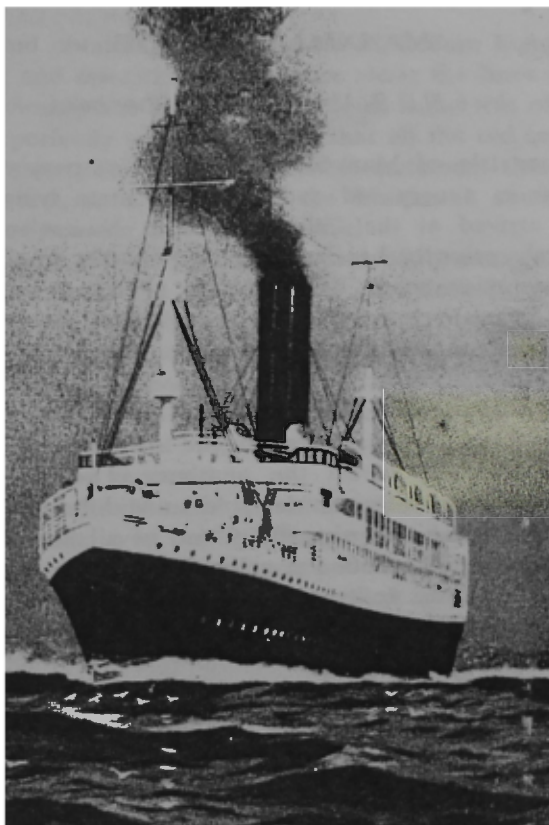
BREAKFAST - - - - -	from 8. 0 to 9.30 a.m.
LUNCHEON - - - - -	at 12.30 p.m.
AFTERNOON TEA - - - - -	at 4. 0 p.m.
DINNER- - - - -	at 7. 0 p.m.

THE SMOKING ROOM BAR is closed at 11 p.m.

SEATS AT TABLE.—Application may be made at any of the Chief Offices, or to the Head Saloon Steward on board the Steamer on day of Sailing.

DECK CHAIRS for use on the voyage can be hired on board the Steamers.

THE SURGEON is authorised to make a charge for treating 1st Class Passengers at their request for any illness not originating on board the ship. In the case of sickness contracted on board no charge will be made and medicine will be provided free.



**R.M.S. HILDEBRAND,**

7,000 TONS.

From LIVERPOOL, 16th JULY, 1929,

FOR

Leixões (Oporto), Lisbon, Madeira,  
Pará and Manaos.

**The Booth Steamship Co. Ltd.**

London Office : 11, ADELPHI TERRACE, STRAND, W.C.2.

Head Office : CUNARD BUILDING, LIVERPOOL.

Telegraphic Addresses : " LUSIAD, WESTRAND, LONDON."

" BOOTH, LIVERPOOL."

## “MANXMAN” UPDATE

*by L.N.R.S. Member John Shepherd*

The former Isle of Man Steam Packet Company's turbine steamer **Manxman** is now in a very sad and neglected state lying in the port of Sunderland. She arrived at the Pallion Yard in November 1997 with two shortened masts, a section of her bow cut away and a smoke-blackened hull following an alleged arson attack. Still, it seems, there are backers prepared to put more money into her and Dundee and Great Yarmouth have been rumoured as possible future destinations.

The **Manxman** completed her last passenger sailing for the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company on 4th September 1982 and one month later she steamed to Preston Dock, having been bought for static use there by Marda (Squash) Ltd. She did not attract the numbers of visitors that had been envisaged, and in the mid 1980s she was sold to Midnite Entertainments Ltd. At this time the **Manxman** was virtually gutted of all her original passenger accommodation and the old wooden panelling and fittings were burnt on the quayside at Preston. She was refitted as a floating nightclub with bars, discos and fast-food counters. Internally, very little remained of the old **Manxman**, apart from the engine room, which remained wonderfully intact and lovingly cared for by the ship's caretaker, Jim Long of Preston.

In 1990 the **Manxman** closed for business at Preston as her berth was required for the future development of the quays. She was refused a berth to operate as a nightclub at Lancaster and in November she was towed round to Liverpool, arriving in the Waterloo Dock on 6th November. In 1991 she opened for business as the **Manxman Princess** but was not a financial success and closed after a couple of years. Midnite Entertainments seemed determined to pour more money into her, and on 16th April 1994 the old steamer left the Mersey under tow for Hull where it was planned to berth her in the disused Ruscador Dry Dock. On arrival it was found that the **Manxman** was too large to fit in the dock and a notch had to be cut out of her bows to accommodate her.

With amazing lack of foresight, Midnite Entertainments had not secured an entertainments licence for her, and this was subsequently refused by magistrates in November 1994. Without the late night drinks licence, the **Manxman** was once again unprofitable and she was left to deteriorate further. Huge debts accumulated and a High Court Warrant was served on her. In July 1996 the London based Pacific Maritime Group (of which Midnite Entertainments was a subsidiary) announced a £1.5 million plan to take the **Manxman** to Granton at Edinburgh. This subsequently came to nothing and in September 1996 it was reported that a Dr Edmund Carus was interested in “*preserving the unique high pressure turbine vessel for the nation*”. Dr Carus's

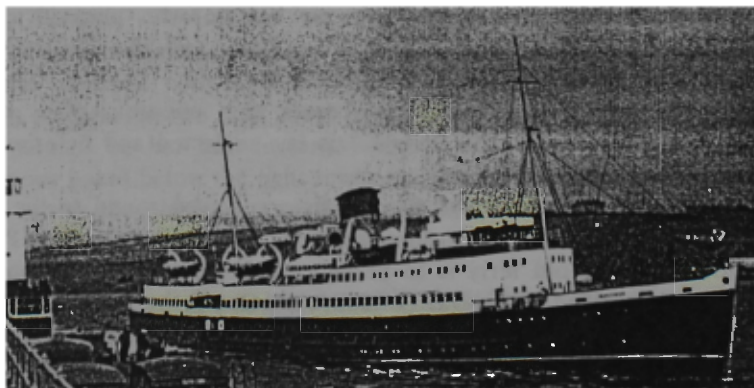


scheme involved obtaining cash from the Millenium Fund or in the form of a Lottery Grant and operating the steamer along the lines of the **Waverley**. Dr. Carus had obviously not done his homework as he was of the opinion that the engines were perfectly serviceable, and that all the old internal woodwork was in store at Preston. The only half-sensible statement that Dr Carus made was to the effect that, as a last resort, the **Manxman** could be scuttled off the Manx coast and become a divers' paradise!

In August 1997 the **Manxman** was badly damaged in an alleged arson attack. The fire broke out in the after shelter deck bar, which was the old 3rd class ladies' room until the introduction of the single class system in 1967. Ironically this was the one room in the ship which had retained some of its identity - much of the old woodwork was still in place. The room was gutted by the fire and elsewhere much vandalism has taken place - all the Steam Packet frosted glass windows have been smashed and all her fittings such as the bridge telegraphs have been removed.

A month after the fire the **Manxman** was towed to Sunderland by the tug **T.H.Dev** and arrived on 12th September. As she was proceeding up river on 17th September, her foremast clipped the Wearmouth Bridge and the top fifteen feet or so of the mast were bent back at an angle of about 45 degrees. This necessitated a return to the Corporation Quay below the bridge. Both masts were then shortened and in November 1997 the **Manxman** was berthed up the River Wear at Pallion Engineering Limited.

On the Isle of Man itself there is still interest in the **Manxman**, and tourism minister David Cretney was criticised for '*dragging his feet*' over the possible purchase of the old Steam Packet vessel for £30,000 for use as a proposed T.T. museum. How much more dignified it would have been if the **Manxman** had gone to the breakers' yard in 1982. ■



The **Manxman** arrives at Peel in the early 1960s after having been diverted from Douglas due to an easterly gale.

## NOTE AND QUERIES

### **SEQUEL TO THE "PRINCESS VICTORIA" DISASTER - ALMOST ...**

The loss of the **Princess Victoria** on 31st January 1953 was dealt with in the Winter "*Bulletin*". Thirty years later there was almost another disaster on the same route. The Stranraer-Larne ferry **Antrim Princess** hit the national headlines when an engine room fire disabled her in gale force conditions off Island Magee, Co. Antrim. The ship had left Larne at 10.30am on 9th December 1983 on her regular sailing to Stranraer. With 60 knot gusts blowing, the North Channel was at its nastiest, and 25 minutes out from Larne an engine room fire caused the vessel to lose all power and she began to drift towards rocks, then some four miles distant.

Five R.A.F. helicopters from Leuchars and Lossiemouth and three RN Sea Kings from HMS **Gannet** at Prestwick were immediately scrambled, and the first were on the scene within 15 minutes. The 108 passengers were told to assemble in the first-class lounge where lifejackets were issued. They were then airlifted to safety from the open area at the after end of the boat deck. In quite appalling conditions, in which it was impossible to launch any lifeboats, all passengers and 31 crew were airlifted ashore to Larne.

The **Antrim Princess** later regained power on one engine, but the Naval tug **Rollicker** stood by in an attempt to tow her into Belfast Lough - a feat which was accomplished on the following day. The **Antrim Princess** had drifted to within half-a-mile of the coast, but fortunately her anchors held.

In 1985 the **Antrim Princess** joined the fleet of the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company as the **Tynwald**, and maintained the Heysham - Douglas route until 1990.

### **THE "ROYAL IRIS"**

Many Members will recall that the **Royal Iris** left the Mersey on 11th August 1993 under tow of the tug **Vanguard**, and bound for Cardiff. She had been sold to Hertfordshire-based Parkways Leisure who planned to spend £300,000 on refurbishing the former Wallasey ferry, and give her a new lease of life as a floating nightclub and restaurant.

As so often happens in these cases, the ambitious plans came to nothing and for four years the **Royal Iris** lay neglected and deteriorating at Cardiff.

In late August 1997 the **Royal Iris** was towed round to the Thames and is now berthed a few yards downstream of the Barrier Gardens Pier. It is understood that the old ferry is to be converted for use as a pub/restaurant, possibly to be berthed in central London. At present the *Iris* is in very poor external condition.

The truth of the matter is that the **Royal Iris** is just another name in a long list of failures. This list includes such well known vessels as the **Manxman** (now at Sunderland) and the **Duke of Lancaster**, still in the Dee estuary.

## **DOUBLE HIGH WATER AT LIVERPOOL ?**

Liverpool now, apparently, has a 'double high water', not quite in the same league as Southampton, though! Mersey Radio is now using the Admiralty Tide Tables when it broadcasts 'situation reports', at two hours before high water. The Admiralty Tide Tables vary by some eight to fourteen minutes from the predictions made by the Proudman Oceanographic Laboratory at Bidston and used in Laver's Tables. Can any Member explain this anomaly?

## **CUNARD'S LAST SCHEDULED SAILING FROM LIVERPOOL**

It is now just over 30 years since the last scheduled sailing of a Cunarder from Liverpool. On Saturday 31st January 1968 the **Franconia** left Prince's Stage at 2.45pm on a direct sailing to Bermuda and then on to New York. The *Liverpool Daily Post* reported the departure :

*"The sunshine liner **Franconia** is the last Cunard passenger ship to sail from Liverpool. She left the landing stage in grand style on Saturday to lively music playing from a band on deck. Passengers threw colourful streamers and balloons, and a large crowd cheered as the cruise liner - gleaming after a refit - moved away.*

*The **Franconia** is to carry out an eleven-month tour as a dollar earner. She begins a series of cruises from New York in early February, and on 11th April opens a regular service between New York and Bermuda. She is expected to earn around \$6million for Britain.*

*A spokesman for Cunard said that it looked as if the **Franconia** was their last passenger ship to leave Liverpool.*

*The 180 passengers would be fully entertained during the voyage to the United States. On board were seven professional cabaret entertainers, nine musicians and a cruise staff of seven who would be responsible for entertainment. Last word was from Captain Phillip Read, the **Franconia's** master, who said "We are all looking forward to being in the sun after this cold winter!"*

## **THE LIGHTSHIP "PLANET"**

The Bar Lightship **Planet** was withdrawn from station in September 1971 and replaced with a 'LANBY' buoy. Berthed alongside the historic warships in Birkenhead's East Float is a lightship named the **Planet**, and with 'BAR' painted on her hull in large white letters. This vessel also carries a conspicuous board below the light tower marked 'CHANNEL'.

Is this the old Liverpool Bar Lightship **Planet**, and can any Member explain what happened to her between 1971 and her arrival back in Birkenhead a few years ago?

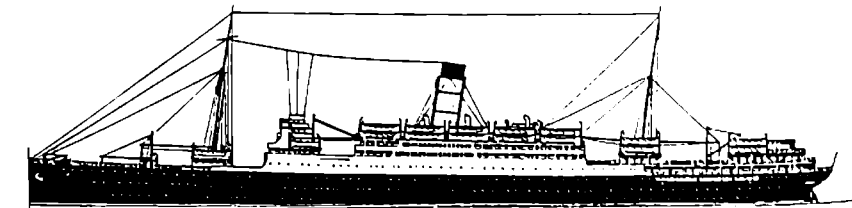
## **AND FINALLY ..... ON THE LIVERPOOL BUSES !**

How many Members remember the single-deck Seaforth to Dingle No. 1 route buses in the early '60s which had two large doors, one by the driver and the other towards the rear, and carried the unforgettable instruction (or was it an observation?) which read "*Passengers alight both ends*"! ■

## THE FORGOTTEN LINERS OF LIVERPOOL

### No: 1 : The "SAMARIA" OF 1921

*This is the first of what is intended as a regular feature in 'The Bulletin' - a short and accurate account of the careers of some of "The Forgotten Liners of Liverpool".*



The **Samaria** was built and engined by Cammell Laird at Birkenhead and was launched on 27th November, 1920. She was the second vessel to be so named in the Cunard fleet. At 19,597grt, 11,834nett, the **Samaria** was at the time the largest liner ever built on Merseyside, and the launch naturally attracted much attention. The launching ceremony was performed by Mrs J.H.Beazley, the wife of one of the Cunard Line Directors, at a time when labour conditions were interfering considerably with shipbuilding output, and the **Samaria** was delayed for six months on the slipway and cost an additional quarter of a million pounds.

The **Samaria** was 623'9" in overall length, the moulded breadth being 73'6". Propelling machinery was Brown-Curtis turbines of the latest type, driving twin screws through double reduction gearing for a speed of 16 knots. She could carry 9,200 tons deadweight. The **Samaria** ran her trials in Liverpool Bay on 8th April 1922 and began her maiden voyage to Boston on 19th April. The final cost of the **Samaria** was reputed to be just about as much as for the first **Mauretania** - a ship of nearly twice her gross tonnage!

According to the original schedule, the **Samaria** should have left Liverpool on 26th April for New York, but owing to the delayed completion of the **Laconia** by a shipyard strike at Swan, Hunter & Wigham Richardson, Wallsend, the Birkenhead-built vessel had her destination changed to Boston, and her sailing date advanced by a few days. In June 1922 the new **Samaria** was forced to return to Liverpool with engine trouble.

In July 1922 it was announced that the **Samaria** would make a round-the-world cruise, eastabout, organised by Thos. Cook & Son, starting on 20th January 1923. However, the **Samaria** was detained at Liverpool with gearing trouble and it was not until 24th January that she left for New York where she embarked 400 passengers for the world cruise. One attraction for

the American tourist was the prospect of a week being available to 'do' India. The **Samaria** eventually ended her cruise on arrival back in New York in June 1923, and a further luxury cruise, under the auspices of Cooks, was arranged leaving New York on 26th January 1924. The **Samaria** had the distinction of being the first Cunarder to transit the Panama Canal.

The next time the **Samaria** came into the news was in August 1926, when on a Saturday evening outside New York she narrowly missed being in collision with the Anchor Line vessel **Cameronia**. In dense fog the two ships came to within six feet of each other, and the **Cameronia's** log line was carried away by the **Samaria**.

In January 1928 the **Samaria** left Liverpool for Boston and New York, and her sailing marked the departure for the third successive week of a Cunarder bound for pleasure cruises from New York. She left New York on 28th January for a 30-day cruise to the Caribbean, the first of three such cruises. On 14th July 1928 the **Samaria** left New York for Galway carrying the "Mayo Men's Association of New York" on their annual pilgrimage to Croagh Patrick - Ireland's holy mountain. It was noted at the time that she was the first 20,000 ton liner to call at Galway, and while she was there she embarked pilgrims on their way to Lourdes.

During the years prior to the Second World War the **Samaria** became a popular ship on the trans-Atlantic run from Liverpool, and after the outbreak of war she was taken over for service as a troopship and made voyages to many parts of the world. On 16th December 1939 the **Samaria** left Liverpool for New York but had to put back after striking her escorting warship. After the end of hostilities she carried many thousands of returning troops to Canada, plus wives and children. Her passengers during the immediate post-war years included many displaced persons. These voyages were mainly made from Cuxhaven to Quebec or Halifax, often via Le Havre. In 1950 the **Samaria** made a series of voyages from London to Quebec, carrying one class of passengers at fares slightly higher than tourist. It was an innovation, though only temporary, for passengers to board the ship at London.

In the Autumn of 1950 the **Samaria** was taken in hand for a long overdue refit, and re-entered service when she sailed from Liverpool to Quebec on 14th June 1951 with accommodation for 250 first-class and 650 tourist-class passengers. In 1952 the **Samaria** grounded near Quebec. Her draft was almost that of the depth of the St. Lawrence, and it should be remembered that she was designed for New York or Boston, not the Canadian service. The following year, in 1953, the **Samaria** represented Cunard among the 260 vessels at the Coronation Naval Review at Spithead.

The **Samaria** completed her last trans-Atlantic voyage at Southampton on 3rd December 1955. The British Iron & Steel Corporation bought her and she left Southampton on 26th January 1956, and arrived at Inverkeithing for breaking up the following day.

## MERSEY FERRY USED TO CARRY RAILWAY CARRIAGES TO DUBLIN

*by Malcolm McDonald*

A photograph in the '*Railway Gazette*', dated 25th June 1926, showed two Pullman railway cars for Ireland being loaded at Birkenhead on to a vessel which appeared to be a luggage boat from the Birkenhead ferry service. The photograph showed one car already on the vessel, and another being lifted on board by a crane. The bogies had been removed from the cars, and one set was on the quay. The text accompanying the photograph referred to four cars. It was not clear whether the luggage boat had been used to trans-ship the Pullman cars to a seagoing vessel, or had herself crossed to Dublin. An investigation of the minutes of the Birkenhead Ferries Committee around that period did not mention any reference to a charter associated with the event.

The Liverpool Dock Registers held by the Merseyside Maritime Museum confirm that railway carriages were carried to Ireland in 1926 by a luggage boat, and show that she made two such sailings. The vessel in question was the **Old Oxtan**, which had been built as the **Oxtan** in 1879. She was the first luggage boat ever to be built for service on the Mersey. She took her second name in 1925, to free the name **Oxtan** for a new luggage boat being built by Cammell Laird, and was sold for breaking up after the new vessel had entered service.

It appears that the **Old Oxtan** had been delivered to the breakers before the charter was arranged. She returned from New Ferry to Princes Dock, Liverpool, on 16th June 1926, and then crossed over to Birkenhead docks. She loaded her cargo at Cavendish Quay, in the West Float. The Dock Register describes her cargo as 'railway carriages', but the photograph shows that they were two Pullman cars. The **Old Oxtan** departed for Dublin on 19th June 1926, and was back at Cavendish Quay on 23rd June to load more 'railway carriages', which must have been the remaining two Pullman cars. She left on the following day for her second crossing to Dublin, and was back at Cavendish Quay on 29th June. Her agents for the two crossings were E.J. Hughes & Co., but on her departure on 30th June, her agents had been changed to Robert Smith & Sons, who were local shipbreakers. The **Old Oxtan's** destination was Tranmere Beach, which implies that she was to be broken up there.

The reason for the lack of any reference to the voyages in the minutes of the Ferries Committee appears to be that the ship had already been sold by the Corporation, which was therefore not involved in the arrangement.

It appears from the dates that the photograph in question was taken with the first two Pullman cars to be delivered. As the **Old Oxtan** did not arrive back at Birkenhead for her second load until 23rd June, it would hardly

have been possible for any photograph taken then, or more likely on 24th June, to appear in a magazine dated 25th June.

The Mersey ferry **Mountwood** crossed to Dublin in June 1996 to act as a tender to the visiting U.S. aircraft carrier, **John F. Kennedy**. It was reported that she was the first Mersey ferry ever to sail over to Dublin from Liverpool. In fact her sailing happened just after the 70th anniversary of the first crossings between the two ports by a Mersey ferry.

I am grateful to the Board of the Trustees of the National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside for making the Dock Registers in the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Archives available to me, and to David Le Mare for his help in finding the relevant Registers. ■

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### THE CAPTAIN LORD PAPERS

In December 1997, the Merseyside Maritime Museum received the final instalment of the papers of Leslie Harrison, who was General Secretary of the Mercantile Marine Service Association from 1956 until 1985. Leslie Harrison's papers related to the case of the **Californian**.

Mr Harrison died in April 1997. From 1958 to 1997 he waged a single-minded campaign to vindicate the name of the master of that vessel, Captain Lord, who was charged, by implication, with having failed to go to the rescue of the **Titanic**.

Leslie Harrison was thoroughly convinced of the justice of the cause he espoused, particularly since the well-known film, *A Night to Remember*, portrayed Captain Lord as a less than caring commander. Leslie Harrison wrote indefatigably to politicians and other authorities, to survivors and writers; in fact to anybody who wrote about the subject or could possibly add to the evidence. He produced at least three full-length books based on his findings. Finally, in 1992, the case was re-examined by the Ministry of Transport, but the results were not as clearly in Captain Lord's favour as he had hoped, and right up to his death, he was finalising his latest publication on the subject.

The recently received material includes letters from confidence tricksters claiming to be **Titanic** or **Californian** crew! It includes correspondence with well-known **Titanic** authors, such as Walter Lord and also with J.B.Priestley, and the text of a poem '*The Titanic*' by Dr E.J. Pratt, probably Newfoundland's most distinguished poet. ■

## BOOK REVIEWS

### *THE HISTORY OF THE SHIP*

by Richard Woodman, 1997

Published by Conway Maritime Press, 352 pages, illustrated

ISBN 0 85177 721 X

There have been many 'Histories of the Ship', some good and some downright '*scissors and paste jobs*'. Richard Woodman's new book must be among the most wide-ranging and comprehensive. In twenty chapters he covers the very earliest - a dugout canoe dating back to 6300BC - to the latest specialist ships of the hi-tech offshore industries. Even in 352 pages (many of them carrying full page pictures) this is a formidable act of compression. In the wrong hands, this could have become a turgid recital of facts; but Richard Woodman is a writer of distinction. His Nathaniel Drinkwater historical novels about naval adventures in the Napoleonic wars and his other works based on his own experience have been acclaimed, and he brings his novelist's skills to a narrative that is readable and at the same time authoritative. He exploits his wide experience as a professional seafarer (first as an officer with Blue Funnel and latterly as Commander with Trinity House). As a result he offers all kinds of insights on the ancient craft of the practical mariner and is admirably clear about complex modern developments, for example, in electronic navigation. This clarity is only obscured in one place where the explanation of the fundamental navigational concept of the PZX triangle would have been helped by a diagram. He has no illusions about ships and does not come out all romantic about tall ships : "*Seamen were not bedazzled by their ships, though they may have acknowledged a loyalty to them which was more to do with shared experience and mutual reliance than any false amatory emotion*".

The book deals not only with the technology of ships but also with their social history. For example, the development of the three-masted carrack and caravel enabled the Europeans to explore, colonise and trade to other parts of the globe, while they enriched Europe at the same time as they carried diseases to native populations, causing wholesale epidemics. Richard Woodman also emphasises the ordinary seaman's low social position and the quest for profit that sought and continues to seek through the employment of third world crews to keep their wages to a minimum. He also includes such startling anecdotes as Lady Astor's proposal as first woman M.P. that all merchant seamen should wear yellow armbands as potential carriers of venereal disease!

Much of the focus of the book is inevitably on European and especially British initiatives in naval and mercantile affairs in the 18th and 19th centuries. However, the author does cover developments in other civilisations and, for example, affirms that the junks of the Chinese Empire were far in advance, in terms of structure and windward performance, of their 15th and 16th century



European counterparts.

The work is well illustrated throughout with a high proportion in colour. They match and amplify the text and it is good to have plenty of full page pictures. The paintings particularly benefit from this lay-out. There are a few typographical errors, for example, on page 139 *Britannia* is spelt correctly and incorrectly in the same paragraph. All told, this is a handsome, readable volume, often thought-provoking and an excellent introduction to one of *'the human race's greatest ventures'*. ■

M.K.S

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## MERSEY MARINERS

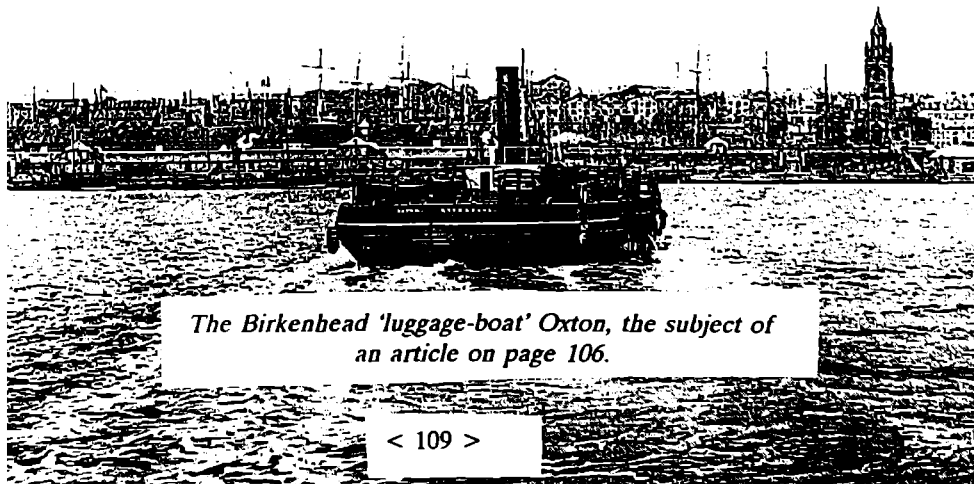
*by the Rev'd. Canon Bob Evans*

This is the story of seafarers during the past two centuries. From sail to steam, the notorious boarding houses and the crimps, the extortion, the poverty, the unforgiving sea: all these are vividly described. The courage of men, the complex mix of nationalities and the cheapness of life add colour to the scene. Against all this is the remarkable saga of the welfare organisations and societies which evolved to combat and overcome the problems. That story continues today.

Readers of Bob's first book *'A Dog Collar on the Docks'* will quickly recognise that the author is closely involved in this story and is well placed to bring it alive for us.

The Mersey Mission to Seamen has sponsored this book and it can be purchased by visitors to the Mersey Mission to Seamen at Colonsay House, 20 Crosby Road South, Seaforth, Liverpool L22 1RQ, or from :  
Len and Ann Holder, "Hatherwood", 41 Grange Road, Heswall, Wirral L60 7RY  
The price of the book is £7.00 plus £1.50 post and packing. ■

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*The Birkenhead 'luggage-boat' Oxton, the subject of an article on page 106.*

## THE "EMPRESS OF AUSTRALIA" AND THE JAPANESE EARTHQUAKE OF 1st SEPTEMBER, 1923

by John P. Light

The **Empress of Australia** was a steamer of 21,883 gross tons, with a length of 589.9ft and a beam of 72.5ft. She was launched on 20th December 1913 for the Hamburg-Amerika Line by the Vulcan-Werke shipyard at Stettin and named **Admiral von Tirpitz**, but this was shortened to **Tirpitz** in February 1914. She was ceded to Britain after the First World War and was purchased by the Canadian Pacific Company early in 1921, to be taken over at Immingham on 25th July of that year. On 20th August she returned to Vulcan-Werke for a refit of the engines, having been renamed **Empress of China**, and in early 1922 she went to John Brown & Co., Clydebank, for her passenger accommodation to be renovated. On 2nd June 1922 the vessel was renamed **Empress of Australia** and she left the Clyde on 16th June to take up her Pacific service, sailing out via the Panama Canal. At 17 knots her speed was far inferior to that of her consorts, and in consequence she had a somewhat unbalancing effect on this service.

The **Empress of Australia** '*bit the headlines*' for the magnificent work she executed when the great earthquake hit Japan in 1923, causing the loss of more than 100,000 lives and the destruction of half a million homes. It was nearly noon on Saturday 1st September when the first great shock was experienced, and at the time the **Empress of Australia**, moored to the mole at Yokohama, was preparing to cast off and continue her voyage to Vancouver with some 2,000 passengers on board. Assembled on the mole were many members of the British community, waving and shouting '*goodbye*' to their friends on the liner. Suddenly the mole reared its back in the air '*like a giant caterpillar*' as one survivor described it. Just as suddenly it subsided, then reared again and disintegrated. In thirty seconds, Yokohama was destroyed. When the mole broke into pieces, a number of the people on it were flung in wild heaps into the water. Almost at the same time the warehouses on the dockside toppled over; the concrete sea wall surged backwards and forwards and then collapsed; and '*tsunami*' tidal waves swept the harbour picking up the living and the dead and piling them high on the promenade. The **Empress of Australia** was very violently shaken and virtually lifted away from the mole.

When the worst of the earthquake seemed to be over, Captain S. Robinson, Master of the **Empress**, took her back to what remained of the mole and attempted to embark a considerable number of the terrified people. Other vessels in the harbour, among them the P. & O. liner **Dongola**, the Messageries Maritimes liner **André Lebon**, and the United States Shipping Board's **President Jefferson**, also set about the perilous work of rescue. A violent gale, almost approaching the force of a typhoon in its intensity

succeeded the earthquake, pinning the **Empress of Australia** against the remains of the mole, where she was in imminent danger from the many fires which had broken out amongst the debris that had been the sheds and their contents.

Lifeboats were lowered, manned by all hands available, and sent to pick up survivors. Search and stretcher parties for the injured were also organised from among those of the ship's company who could be spared, and passengers who had volunteered for the work. Later, to add to the horror of the situation, cascades of oil from the burst tanks behind the naval dockyard began to flow into the harbour and ignited. This new peril to the *Empress* made it essential to get away from the vicinity at once. To do this the **Empress of Australia** had to go astern, and while carrying out this manoeuvre her port propeller was put out of action by picking up the anchor and chain of the United States Steel Products Company's cargo ship **Steel Navigator**, which was lying astern. Suddenly, out of the smoke from the many fires loomed the **Lyons Maru**, dragging her anchor and out of control. She struck the *Empress* aft and then swung away. Following her came a lighter piled high with timber, and as soon as it was alongside the **Empress of Australia**, the **Lyons Maru** again swung in towards her, but the lighter, acting as a fender, prevented any serious damage being done. With his starboard engine, and the assistance of the **Steel Navigator**, Captain Robinson was able to get away from the mole and proceeded, stern first, to what appeared to be a place of comparative safety, where he anchored.

Soon afterwards the burning oil again approached the ship and a further move had to be made. Captain Robinson therefore weighed anchor, and with the starboard engine drove his ship at full speed across the path of the flames and up to windward of them, but the burning oil continued to drift in the direction of the **Empress of Australia**. The situation was indeed grave, and the non-maneuvrability of the liner, with over 2,000 people on board, was causing the gravest concern to her master. In desperation, Captain Robinson sent out an S.O.S., and it was answered by the Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Company's tanker **Iris**, which lay in safety outside the harbour, with the reply : "*I'll come in and try and help you, but remember I'm full of oil*". The **Iris** managed to pull the *Empress's* bows round sufficiently to enable Captain Robinson to draw clear of the danger zone and literally wriggle out of the harbour. Once outside, the anchor was again let go and the work of rescue continued, and then the **Empress of Australia** proceeded to Kobe where her hull was examined by a diver who found a length of 2¼" chain cable round the port propeller shaft.

Later, in the course of an interview relating to the catastrophe, Major Brackley, then Air Advisor to the Japanese Imperial Navy, said : "*It would be impossible adequately to praise the services of Captain Robinson and the officers and crew of the **Empress of Australia** in that terrible situation*". ■

## VISIT TO CAMELL LAIRD'S SHIPYARD

by *L.N.R.S. Member Norman West*

On Thursday, 15th January 1998, some thirty Members of the Society were privileged to be invited to visit Cammell Laird's shipyard.

On arrival at 12 noon at the main gate in Campbeltown Road, Members were greeted by the Project Manager, Linton Roberts, and taken to the Boardroom where they heard a short talk about the Company whilst refreshments were served.

Members were then fitted with protective headgear before starting the yard tour. We were joined by another guide - John Taylor - who is an estimator with Cammell Laird, but who is probably better known for his work as Company historian.

The first area to be visited was the fitting-out basin where there were three vessels. The first to be seen was the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company's **King Orry**, a passenger/ro-ro ferry, which was in for annual overhaul and general repairs. This is probably her last visit to the yard as a new purpose-built vessel, the **Ben-my-Chree** (6) will make the *Orry* surplus to requirements in August, 1998. A noticeable change to the **King Orry** was the change from a white to a blue hull, to fall into line with the parent company's corporate colours (Sea Containers).

A second vessel seen was the Norse **Lagan** which was laid up after drydocking in Canada Graving Dock. Her former Liverpool to Belfast route is now being operated by the new vessels **Mersey Viking** and **Lagan Viking**.

The third vessel in the fitting-out basin was a new tanker for J. Fisher Tankships. She was over on the south-west side and her name was not visible, but I feel sure that she was the **Galway Fisher**. She is one of a group of four clean products tankers ordered from the Qiuxin Shipyard in China, with tonnages of 3,368 gross, 3,627 deadweight. The first two are the **Forth Fisher** and the **Galway Fisher**, and they will be followed by the **Solent Fisher** and the **Milford Fisher**. Although the **Galway Fisher** is a new vessel, Cammell Laird are bringing her up to the standard required by her owners, which a U.K. yard would have done as basic! Our guide informed us that her owners were able to complete her at a lower price this way, even though additional work was being carried out on her.

From the fitting out basin we next visited No.7 Dry Dock which had two vessels in. The first vessel, the **Blue Sky**, had been a fish factory ship which had subsequently been converted to a container vessel. This current refit was to convert her to a seismic vessel and she was to be renamed **Austral Horizon**.

The second vessel seen in No.7 Dry Dock was the **Simon Labrador**, which was formerly the **Seaway Labrador**, a research seismographic survey

vessel, which was receiving a seismic upgrade and overhaul. She is to be renamed **Labrador Horizon**. No.7 Dry Dock was recommissioned in December 1997 after having been out of use for many years.

From here we moved to No.6 Dry Dock, which had been recommissioned in November 1997. In dock here was the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company's freight ro-ro vessel **Belard**, receiving an overhaul before being sold to Scandinavian interests.

The final area visited was No.5 Dry Dock in which the **Peregrine VII** was having a major rebuild. She was previously the **Deepsea Worker**. Built in 1971 as a drilling ship, she was converted in 1994 to a salvage vessel. Her method of salvage was to drop a 200-ton grab on to a vessel on the seabed and rip up parts of the vessel and her cargo. The **Peregrine VII** is presently being converted into a Dynamically Positioned Drill Ship for Falcon Drilling Company, Inc., of Houston. The rebuild involves lengthening the vessel by 32 metres, widening by 5 metres and fitting blister tanks (sponsons on the sides). It is interesting to note that after the original hull was split, it was separated by sliding the two halves on sliding ways. This eliminated the need to flood the dock in order to part the vessel. Some 4,000 tons of new steel are being used in the rebuild, and new propulsion and steering units are being fitted.

After the tour we returned to the Boardroom where Members enjoyed a fine buffet lunch. We took the opportunity to ask our very knowledgeable guides more about Cammell Laird. We were all very impressed by what we had seen. There is an able, dedicated and flexible workforce. Cammell Laird has invested heavily in the site with upgrades to cranes, dredging of the wet basin and river entrance and recommissioning of disused dry docks with new dockgates being installed.

We all wish Cammell Laird every success for the future and hope that we may see them launching new ships down the slipways again very soon.

*Editor's Note:*

*Mention is made of the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company's freight vessel **Belard**. Members will be aware that **Belard** is not a traditional IOMSPCo name, and may be interested as to how it came about.*

*The **Belard** was taken on charter from Pandoro for the North Sea operations of the Steam Packet's subsidiary, Mannin Line, in November 1993. Pandoro had previously been operating the vessel across the North Channel between Belfast and Ardrossan and with startling originality had named the vessel by taking the first three letters of each terminal port, and combining them, hence **BEL**fast and **ARD**rossan giving the unusual name **Belard**.*

*The possibilities of such a system of naming ships are endless. Do Members have any suggestions ?*

j.s.

## THE "COLUMBUS" QUICKSILVER STEAMSHIP

by L.N.R.S. Member Terry Kavanagh

Most books on the history of steam navigation give a dramatic account of the 'race' across the Atlantic between the diminutive wooden paddler *Sirius* of the St. George Steam Packet Company and Brunel's *Great Western* in 1838. But another steamship that was intended to cross the Western Ocean, from Liverpool to New York, earlier that year - the experimental "quicksilver" engined *Columbus* - seldom gets a mention.

This is a pity because her "quicksilver" or "vapour-engine", which was the invention of Thomas Howard of London, who obtained a patent (no. 6339) for it in 1832, showed the greatest novelty and ingenuity.<sup>1</sup> Instead of generating steam in an ordinary boiler, it was produced instantly by injecting small quantities of water on a heated iron 'pan' containing 3½ inches of mercury. Mercury's boiling point being so high meant that it could be kept at a temperature of from 300 to 400 degrees celsius by using a mixture of coke and anthracite (which emitted no smoke). After the high pressure steam had worked the piston it was condensed by a jet of fresh water and then led through cooling pipes and the process repeated. In this way a considerable amount of fuel, space and weight could be saved.

At the time, Howard's "quicksilver-engine" attracted a great deal of attention in naval as well as mercantile circles. It was given a series of trials in the Royal Navy's 232 ton Rotherhithe-built steamship *Comet* of 1834, driving two 40hp engines and "*its (early) performances are very favourably spoken of*".<sup>2</sup> Then, in March 1835 the *Comet* steamed from London to Ramsgate, and afterwards from Woolwich to Falmouth, and returned again, and then went to Lisbon. Here disaster struck :

*"The Comet, which had left Lisbon, was obliged to put back with her machinery out of order. The plates immediately in contact with the heated quicksilver had burst, and rendered her unmanageable."*<sup>3</sup>

Owing in part to this failure, and partly to other unfavourable accidents - the most serious defect of this invention was that the mercury tended to leak out of its container and then adversely affected the health of the engineers<sup>4</sup> - the Admiralty decided to abandon further trials and to leave the project in Howard's hands.<sup>5</sup>

What happened next? Howard ordered new ¾ inch-thick iron plates from the Coalbrookdale Company in Shropshire and then fitted them in his own 102 ton paddle steamer *Vesta*, which was launched at All Saints, Poplar, Middlesex in 1835. The following year his steam packet was running daily to or from London and Southend and Sheerness.<sup>6</sup> By the summer of 1837, however, she had been placed on a shorter route, as evidenced by the report that "*the half-hour steamer plying between London and Westminster Bridges emits no*

*smoke, being worked by quicksilver*".<sup>7</sup> In all, the **Vesta** had sailed about 8,000 accident-free miles on the Thames - or so Howard claimed - when her quicksilver apparatus was removed and put in the **Columbus**.<sup>8</sup>

The 325 ton **Columbus** measured 145ft keel, 21½ft beam, with 13½ft depth of hold, and was purpose built for the Atlantic crossing by Fletcher and Fearnell at Poplar in 1837. She was equipped with two 55hp engines, having cylinders 40in diameter by 42in stroke, and carried two low funnels, three masts and a schooner rig. The vessel was also fitted with Morgan's patent feathering paddle wheels of 17½ feet diameter, which had variable angle paddle blades moved by eccentrics so as to emerge from the water at a fine angle and thus not retard the forward motion of the vessel. She maintained an average speed of 10 knots on her voyage round to Liverpool in March 1838, and her fuel consumption - three tons of mixed coke and anthracite per day - was only a quarter of that of other steamers of equal power and tonnage.<sup>9</sup>

Interestingly, the **Columbus**, with Captain Daniel Green in command, had further (smoke-free) trials at Liverpool, which "*excited much curiosity*" among observers. On one trial trip, in late April 1838, the **Columbus** steamed down the Mersey from the Trafalgar Dock and round the Bar Lightship "*with a highly respectable party of gentlemen on board*".<sup>10</sup> And, three days later,

*"the vessel made an experimental trip to Dublin, and was seventeen hours on her passage, having a strong head wind part of the way. She arrived back at Liverpool in 15½ hours. At Holyhead, she fell in with the Mermaid steamer, from Waterford, and slightly gained upon her"*.<sup>11</sup>

However, the **Columbus** was never put to the test in the North Atlantic as a serious explosion caused the abandonment of the enterprise.<sup>12</sup>

The **Columbus** was subsequently converted into a sailing vessel, being rigged as a three-masted barque initially, and then became a full-rigged ship. This London registered vessel, which stood A1 at Lloyds, belonged to W. Newall & Co., merchants, and traded between Liverpool and Pernambuco. In 1853 the **Columbus** was sold to Thomas Harrison, a merchant in Liverpool (her new port of registry, item 437/1853). Less than three years afterwards she was 'condemned as unseaworthy' at Tenerife - an undignified end to what had been a very bold and novel experiment.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup> The earliest known reference to this engine is in the Gentleman's Magazine, vol. 96, part 1 (1826), page 549, which states (amongst other things) that "*the saving of stowage will be very considerable, and a ton of quicksilver will be sufficient for propelling a vessel to India and back again with 140 horse power*".

<sup>2</sup> *Mechanics Magazine*, vol. 21, 1834, pp 410-11, and vol. 22, 1835, p. 432. The Admiralty meant to try a paddle wheel invented by William Symington at the same time. But on Howard's pointing out "*the inconvenience and uncertainty of trial likely to result to both parties by this arrangement*", the Navy abandoned the idea, and the wheel was subsequently tested on another steamer (*Ibid.* vol 25, pp 362-63). Symington was not best pleased by the decision, inasmuch as he had been "*put to so much expense and inconvenience before I could even get the wheel tried with the vessel, the Alban, for which it had not been constructed*" (*Ibid.* p.393).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol 23, 1835, p.143.

<sup>4</sup> *Liverpool Mercury*, 16th March, 1838.

<sup>5</sup> *Mechanics Magazine*, vol. 28, 1838, p.363. It appears the Admiralty sold the **Comet**, as a steamer of that name built at Rotherhithe in 1834, and belonging to the Star Steam Boat Co., was later used for passenger service on the Thames between London and Gravesend. See H. Parker and Frank. C. Bowen, *Mail and Passenger Steamships of the Nineteenth Century*, London, 1928, p.79.

<sup>6</sup> *Mechanics Magazine*, vol.26, 1836, p.60.

<sup>7</sup> *Liverpool Mercury*, 2nd June 1837.

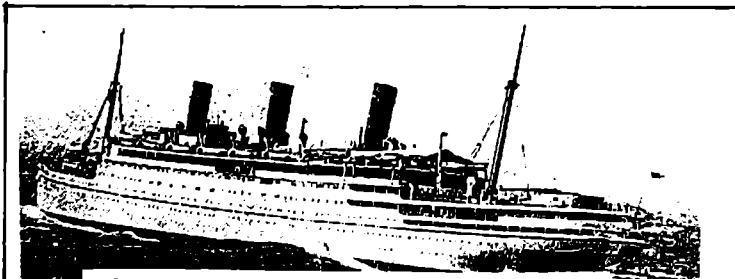
<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 4th May 1838. The **Vesta** was converted into a conventional paddle steamer, and apparently remained on the River Thames for another nine years or so. Then she was sold to Edward Lloyd Mostyn, of Mostyn in the Dee estuary, and employed on the Liverpool run for the next twelve months (Flintshire Record Office, Hawarden. S/1. Item 8/1847). The **Vesta** was re-registered at Liverpool in 1848 (Item 199/1848), having been purchased by one Robert Collett Dalglish, Esq. Two years later the **Vesta** returned to the London River.

<sup>9</sup> *Manchester Guardian*, 2nd May 1838, quoting *Liverpool Standard*. A print of the **Columbus** appears as Plate XXXVIII, in Parker & Bowen, *op. cit.*MMM Library, Ref: 311 PAR/R.

<sup>10</sup> *Chester Chronicle*, 4th May 1838.

<sup>11</sup> *Manchester Guardian*, 2nd May 1838.

<sup>12</sup> D.Tyler, *Steam Conquers the Atlantic*, New York, 1939, p.62.



The "Empress of Australia" in heavy weather.  
See articles on pages 110 and 120.



## READERS' LETTERS

*From L.N.R.S. Member Dan C. McCormick of Massena, N.Y., USA :*

A new ferry service from the mainland to Prince Edward Island began operating in July 1997 using the m.v. **Madeleine**, and is part of the tourism development strategy for the many small islands in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, following the opening of a bridge linking Prince Edward Island to the mainland. Some minor modifications were required to meet safety regulations and a new ferry terminal costing \$C 30 million was constructed. The name **Madeleine** is taken from the small coaster used on the same run prior to 1986.

The **Madeleine** is no stranger to the Mersey, having been built as the **Leinster**, the second of two sister ships for the B. & I. Line. She was built for the Liverpool to Dublin service to Waterloo Lock dimensions with a beam of 18.6 metres. The **Leinster** was the last seagoing car-ferry built by the Verolme Shipyard at Cork and entered service in 1981.

The **Leinster** was given a major rebuild in 1986 with some 286 passenger berths being removed to be replaced with open lounges, and in 1988 the B. & I. left Liverpool in favour of Holyhead. Five years later the vessel was renamed **Isle of Inishmore** and placed on the Rosslare to Pembroke run, and in 1996 there was a further change of name to **Isle of Inishturk**.

The **Madeleine** is now a mixture between a cruise liner and a ferry accommodating up to 1,200 passengers, 225 cars and 20 tractor trailers. Maxium speed is 20½ knots, and the hull is certified to Ice Class 3. Manoeuvring is by two controllable-pitch propellers and bow thruster. Reservations by passengers are no longer required, and there are no more long waiting periods on the dockside.

*From L.N.R.S. Member Charles Dawson of Sundbyberg, Sweden:*

Having noted that Olive Williamson has been compiling a database of early Liverpool steamers from the Customs Registers, I thought it might be of interest to comment on some of those I have called "*the steamers that never were*". In other words, those that were not registered for one or other reason. The most interesting perhaps are those built at Liverpool shipyards for overseas owners.

Under a second category come those that were originally Liverpool built or owned, but were later 'sold foreign'. Very few of these have more than the cursory note on the Register : "*Register closed - vessel sold to foreign owners*" or suchlike. I have found that it is a challenging quest to attempt to winkle out the history of some of these vessels. There are some interesting stories behind them such as that of PS **Telica**. This Liverpool built ship was the second steamship to arrive on the west coast of South America after

Thomas Cochrane's PS **Rising Star** in 1822. The **Telica** was a wooden paddle steamer, built by Hunter (*sic*\*) & Hurry, <sup>1</sup> Liverpool in 1824, of oak with fir deck planking, at a cost of £6,500. Recorded dimensions <sup>2</sup>: 92'10" bp x 17'6", 134 tons OM, 81 tons as a steamer; two 25 HP engines with iron boiler by Fawcett & Co. Optimum speed 8½ knots. The following sailing notice appeared in Liverpool newspapers on 19th November 1824:

#### SOUTH AMERICA

For passengers only, for VALPARAISO and LIMA

The Steam-Boat TELICA

She is a remarkably strong, well-built vessel, has excellent accommodation for passengers, and is intended to sail on the 10th of December, - apply  
J. BROTHERSTON & CO.

Such high-flown advertising seems to have been the norm of the day, irrespective of the actual standard of the vessel.

The **Telica** was built of wood and rigged as a galliot. Under the command of a Captain McClune, she finally cleared from the Mersey on 27th January 1825 bound under canvas for the coast of Chile, where her paddle wheels were mounted. There she plied as a passenger steamer on the Callao - Valparaiso service.

There is little detailed evidence of her further voyaging along the west coast of South America, but Liverpool newspapers of the time recorded the sad story of the disaster that befell her at Guayaquil. She had sailed under the command of a Captain Gibbs for Lima, some 600 miles to the south, but after having been at sea for some time, he was obliged to return for more fuel on more than one occasion. The story after that varied a little, depending on who had reported the event.

A passenger report<sup>3</sup> said that on 10th October 1825, he and four others who had gone ashore heard a tremendous explosion from the **Telica** and immediately returned to hear that Mr Metrovitch, the owner of the steamboat, (an Italian according to another source<sup>4</sup>), had set fire to the powder magazine, having only a few minutes previously departed from the passengers at the dinner table. It was said that he had invested his whole fortune in the boat - \$50,000 was quoted - and had gone crazy because he could not make ends meet with her. He himself, together with the captain and five passengers were killed, three other persons were injured and one was missing. One survivor of the crew was a Thomas Jump, believed to have been a Liverpool man.

Part of the after section of the deck was blown away, but the engines and a greater part of the hull were not affected and she was patched up. There still being no profitable employment for her on the South American coast, she was despatched to Bengal under sail, arriving at Calcutta in April 1827. She

was offered unsuccessfully to the government for a price of 130,000 rupees.

Failing to sell her to the government or to find any other purchaser, the agents used her for a time as a tug on the Hooghly where she acquitted herself quite well. In March 1829, the *Telica* was at last sold to the Bombay Government for 61,000 rupees. She therefore appears early on the list of steamers in India<sup>5</sup>, even though she did not remain one for long. She had a bad trip round to Bombay and arrived in need of considerable repairs, so much so that the government expressed displeasure at her condition. Her engines were removed and she was fitted out as a sailing yacht for the use of the governor. Perhaps the governor played a part in expressing the government's displeasure? After a few years she was sold out of the service and disappeared from the register.

Steamships appeared for a third time in South America in 1840. A forty year old American, William Wheelwright, the son of a master mariner hailing from Lincolnshire, had at last seen his dream come true: the paddle steamers *Chile* and *Peru*, the first steamers of the embryonic Pacific Steam Navigation Company, which he had helped to found, arrived together at Valparaiso on 16th October 1840, ready to start their west coast service. If it had not been for unforeseen delays in obtaining the Royal Charter, even these two ships would have been Liverpool built.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> C.A.Gibson-Hill, "Steamers employed in Eastern Waters, 1819 - 1839" (*Journal of the Malayan Branch, Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol XXVII Pt.1, 1954)  
\* 'Hunter' should apparently read 'Humble': there was a shipbuilder Humble & Hurry at Liverpool. They built, for example, the *Etna* in 1826 which became the little HMS *Kite* at Bermuda.

\* Arthur C. Wardle reported that the *Telica* was built by Mottershead & Hayes of Liverpool.

<sup>2</sup> G.A. Prinsep, *An Account of Steam Vessels and of Proceedings Connected with Steam Navigation in British India*, (Government Gazette Press, Calcutta, 1830), 23 and App. A.

<sup>3</sup> *Liverpool Times*, 14th February 1826

<sup>4</sup> *Liverpool Commercial Chronicle*, 8th April 1826

<sup>5</sup> See L.N.R.S. *Bulletin*, Winter, 1990 for others

<sup>6</sup> Duncan Haws, P.S.N.C., (Burwash, 1986), 14, Orders had been placed with Thomas Wilson & Co., but the delay led to their cancellation and the ships being built in London.

***Letters for inclusion in "The Bulletin" are always welcome. It may be that you have something to add to a published article; or perhaps you have come across something which you feel is of interest to readers. Please write to The Editor at the address on the inside front cover.***

## MORE ABOUT THE "EMPRESS OF AUSTRALIA"

The **Empress of Australia** was involved in an unusual incident in the Mersey on 7th May 1946 when, laden with troops, she was inward bound from Bombay. With the objective of coming to anchor, the *Empress* was proceeding up river with the intention of passing between the buoy marking the wreck of the **Tacoma City** (which had been sunk off Cammell Laird's on 13th March 1941, after striking a mine dropped from an enemy aircraft) and the Donaldson liner **Letitia**, anchored to the southward, and then rounding up to the flood tide. However, as Lamport & Holt's **Debrett** was also anchored to the southward of the **Letitia**, the *Empress* proceeded further up river before swinging round.

When passing to the westward of the **Debrett**, the **Empress of Australia**, with her decreasing way, sheered to port, due to a large number of troops moving over to one side of the vessel and causing a heel of about seven degrees. The starboard anchor was then let go, in order to check the sheer, but the port bow of the *Empress* came into contact with the port quarter of the **Debrett**, and the two vessels fell alongside each other. The **Empress of Australia** backed clear and began to heave in her anchor.

It was then found that the anchors of the two ships had fouled which caused the **Debrett** to be dragged up river. Five of the Alexandra Towing Company's tugs, and two belonging to the Liverpool Screw Towing and Ligherage Company were quickly on the scene, and their joint operations enabled the **Debrett** to slip her cable and proceed northwards. Four tugs were engaged for about an hour before they succeeded in rounding up the **Empress of Australia** on the flood tide.

In the subsequent claims for salvage services, it was contended on behalf of the tugs' owners that the **Empress of Australia** had grounded aft, and but for the assistance of the tugs, the liner would have got into a very serious situation, and in addition to sustaining damage to herself, would have caused damage to other property. Counsel for the Canadian Pacific admitted that the services of the tugs were promptly and efficiently rendered, but denied that the ship was ever aground or in a position of serious danger, because the use of the engines was available, and the other anchor could have been let go if required.

In the course of his judgement, the president, Mr Justice Pilcher, said that it was undoubtedly a difficult operation for the tugs, and was accompanied by some risk. He found, however, that the **Empress of Australia** was never aground, a fact that was established by the soundings of the 1946 Mersey chart, and the fact that the anchor of the **Debrett** was later picked up from a position 900 feet out from the river wall. For their services, the tugs were awarded the following amounts : **Trafalgar** £500, **Morpeth** £500, **Crosby** £800, **Egerton** £500, **Nelson** £700, **Holm Cock** £600 and **Storm Cock** £600. ■