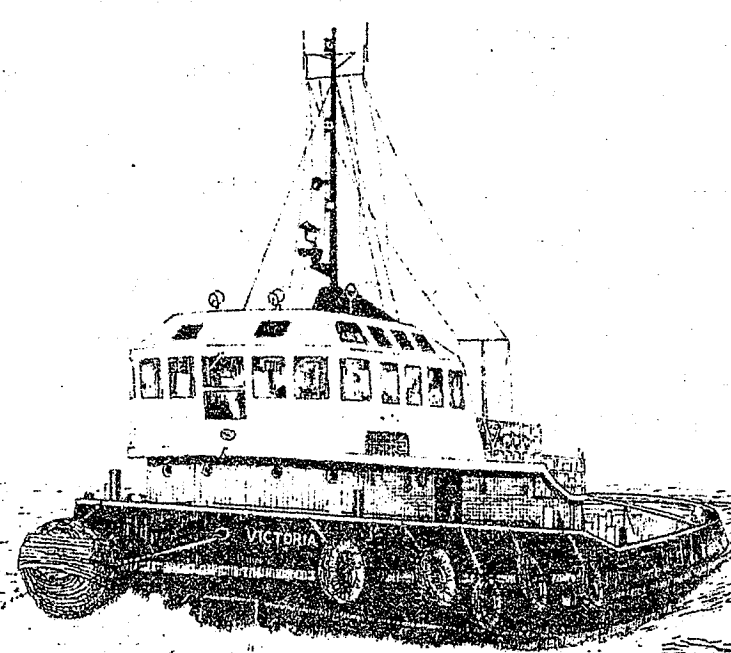
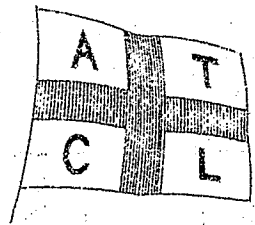
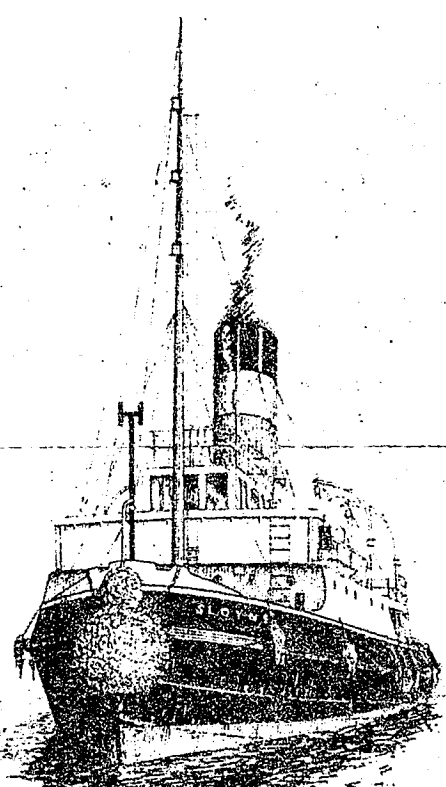
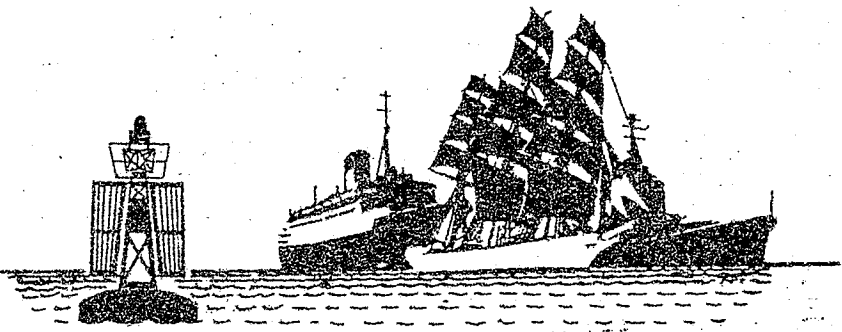


BLACK JACK

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH
WORLD SHIP SOCIETY



1978 CHRISTMAS ISSUE
FEATURING HISTORY OF ALEXANDRA TUGS AT SOUTHAMPTON

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WE WISH A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS FOR 1979

Unless advised otherwise all meetings are to be held in Lecture Room B, Nuffield Theatre Building, University of Southampton. Meetings commence at 7-30 pm. All meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month EXCEPT those in April and May which are to be held on MONDAYS - note well!!

- Tues 9 January — "Day Summers Yard" - a talk by Adrian Rance, Senior Keeper (Museums), City of Southampton
- Tues 13 February "Venice" - David Oldham
- Tues 13 March Members Mini-talks
- ** Sat 24 March Annual Branch Dinner - see below
- MONDAY 9 April } "Coast to Coast" - a two-part talk by Mr Ron Flewitt
- MONDAY 14 May }
- Tues 12 June "Marine Salvage" - to be confirmed
- Tues 10 July Branch Slide Competition for 1978 slides
- Tues 14 August Film Evening
- Tues 11 September Collectors Evening - your collection - whatever!
- Tues 9 October Branch AGM - plus supporting programme
- Tues 13 November The RNLI - a talk on the latest developments
- Tues 11 December Bill Mitchell will conduct another of his quiz evenings

** The ANNUAL BRANCH DINNER will be held on 24 March 1979 at the Merchant Navy Hotel, Southampton (where many members enjoyed an excellent dinner last year) and will commence at 7.00 for 7.30pm. The menu will be available in the New Year and the cost is expected to be around £4.00 per person. We look forward to seeing as many as possible at this annual social occasion, so mark the date in your diary and pass your name to David Hornsby.

This quarter's cover: Alexandra Towing Co
left: SLOYNE of 1928 top right: houseflag - white ground, red cross, blue lettering
lower right: VICTORIA of 1972

drawings by Nigel V Robinson

The Alexandra Towing Co Ltd., has grown to be one of the largest towage concerns in Britain. In its history it has acquired many of the familiar named companies and tugs in several British ports and the Alexandra funnel colours can be seen in the Mersey, the Thames, South Wales, the East Coast and at Southampton, but this article really only concerns the Alexandra tugs at the southern port.

ALEXANDRA TUGS
AT
SOUTHAMPTON

Text: W H Mitchell

Drawings: Nigel V Robinson

The origins of the Alexandra Towing Company Limited of Liverpool date back to 1887, in that year being established to take over the towing concern of George Bell Cowl, formed in 1882 and which had run into financial difficulties.

Of the five Cowl tugs acquired, four had names with the prefix 'Flying', a style which is traceable in the Alexandra fleet. In those days the large liners used Liverpool and Alexandra, building up its own fleet of tugs was entrusted with contracts of towage for the large liners of Cunard and Oceanic Steam Navigation Company (the White Star Line). New tugs began to take the names of the Liverpool docks system. The first tug built was the Alexandra in 1888, the second was the Hornby of 1890. At the turn of the century a further boost was given when the financier J Pierpoint Morgan formed the International Mercantile Marine Company with the combination of many shipping companies and Alexandra placed orders for new tugs for the additional towage envisaged. In 1908 the W & T Jolliffe concern of Liverpool was purchased with its six-tug fleet.

Southwards

The White Star Line moved to Southampton in 1907 and in 1919, immediately after the end of World War I, Cunard also moved to the southern port and with them came the Alexandra Towing Company, opening an office at 9 Canute Road (previously occupied by the Southampton, Isle of Wight and South of England RMS Co Ltd) to administer and operate a fleet of five tugs - Flying Kestrel, Gladstone, Herculaneum, Wallasey and Harrington - all transferred from Liverpool. The new Alexandra and William Poulson, built in 1917 were also placed initially at Southampton, although the former later moved to Swansea.

Tenders

For many years liners had been anchoring in Cowes Roads or Motherbank, off Ryde, using tenders to convey passengers and mails to and from the docks thus effecting a great saving in port dues and the Southampton, Isle of Wight Company had two such vessels employed, the Albert Edward with a passenger certificate for 267 and Vulcan (272) in this work.

In 1913, owing to increasing passenger traffic and more liners calling in Cowes Roads, No 50 berth was converted to a tender station. A rail platform with awning was built and the quayside shed, originally built in 1905 and mainly used for continental cargoes, was turned into a refreshment room, baggage room and customs examination hall. The station was put into use on 20 July 1914, just fifteen days prior to the outbreak of war. The only tenders to use the station before the war were those with passengers for Hamburg-America Line's President Lincoln, Hamburg-South America Line's Cap Finisterre and the Woermann Line's Adolph Woermann and Luise Woermann. The last tender was for the Union-Castle's Galeka on 5 August 1914. During the war the station was turned into a gun repair depot for the Army Ordnance Corps. After the war Cunard used it as a store and then it was used by contractors when the new Floating Dock was being placed in position between No 50 berth and the Town Quay. Later it was returned to a tender station.

(In 1937 Southampton became principal British Marine Air Terminal and Imperial Airways inaugurated their Empire flying-boat services, using No 50 berth as the passenger terminal with the maintenance base at Hythe. In 1948, B O A C re-opened the terminal but in 1950 reverted to land-planes and left Aquila Airways to carry on a service to Madeira for a short time. The old tender station later became the HQ of the area organisation of the RNVR - HMS Wessex. But that is another story

The Romsey(s)

Just after World War I ended another tender was required to work from Southampton as the postwar shipping boomed and in 1922 the twin-screw tug Rollcall was purchased. She had been constructed for naval work and was now reconstructed, losing one of her two funnels in the process. She was renamed Romsey and given a passenger certificate for 1,014. She worked with the Flying Kestrel (826 passengers) until 1929 when she was sold to France.

Note: The Rollcall was one of the 'Recall'-class of twin-funnelled, ocean-going tugs built for the Admiralty and completed 1918-19. They were 1,400 tons displacement, 175 ft bp x 34 ft breadth. Engines were reciprocating, developing 2,400 ihp, driving twin-screws and giving 14 knots. Two were built locally, Retort by Day, Summers & Co and Roysterer by Thornycroft. Others were Resolve and Respond by Ayrshire Dockyard Co; Rollicker and Rollcall by Ferguson Bros, Port Glasgow. The Rollicker was with the Nigerian Government at Lagos from 1922-1934 when she was reacquired by the Admiralty.

Another Romsey, also built by Ferguson Bros, took her place in 1930 and served the company for 32 years. Her passenger certificate was for 620. She assisted at the launching of the Queen Mary at Clydebank in 1934 and was in the tug fleet that took the new liner down the Clyde in 1936. A model of this tender is in the Southampton Maritime Museum.

Southampton S S Co Ltd.

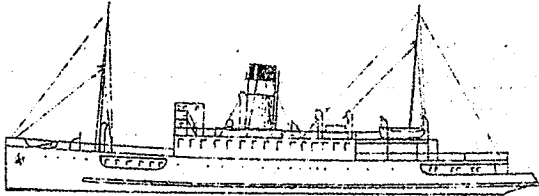
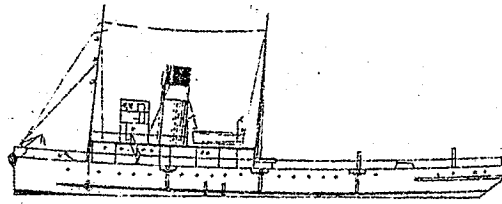
In 1931 an interesting ship arrived at Southampton also for tender work. She was appropriately named Greetings and was owned by a one-ship concern, Southampton SS Co Ltd., jointly owned by Norddeutscher Lloyd and Hamburg-America Line, being managed by the Alexandra Co and wearing their funnel colouring, although she had a white hull. She had been built by Nuske & Co AG, Stettin in 1914 as the Gruessgott and had the distinction of being Norddeutscher Lloyd's largest remaining ship at the end of World War I. She worked at Bremen until 1931 when she was refitted, including the removal of one of her two funnels, and then moved to Southampton. She became a well known ship in the Solent, tendering the Norddeutscher Lloyd's Bremen and Europa and the French Line's Normandie and when war came again she worked at Milford Haven and the Clyde, returning to the southern port in 1945. She was laid up in the Inner Dock for some time, looking not quite as attractive as she had done pre-war and in 1946 was sold to Societe Cherbourgeoise de Rem. & de Sauv., Cherbourg as the La Bretonniere, serving at Cherbourg until the 'Queens' departed from that port. She was sold for breaking up in 1970. The Greetings was a twin-screw ship, 206 ft bp x 41 ft breadth, 984 gross tons and driven by triple expansion engines.

Postwar

All Alexandra tugs were withdrawn from Southampton at the start of World War II and were based on the west coast but returned to Southampton in 1946. A Ministry of Transport tug, Empire Teak was acquired in 1950 and, renamed Brambles, was sent to Southampton to replace the William Poulson which was transferred to Swansea and renamed Neath. At the end of that year there were

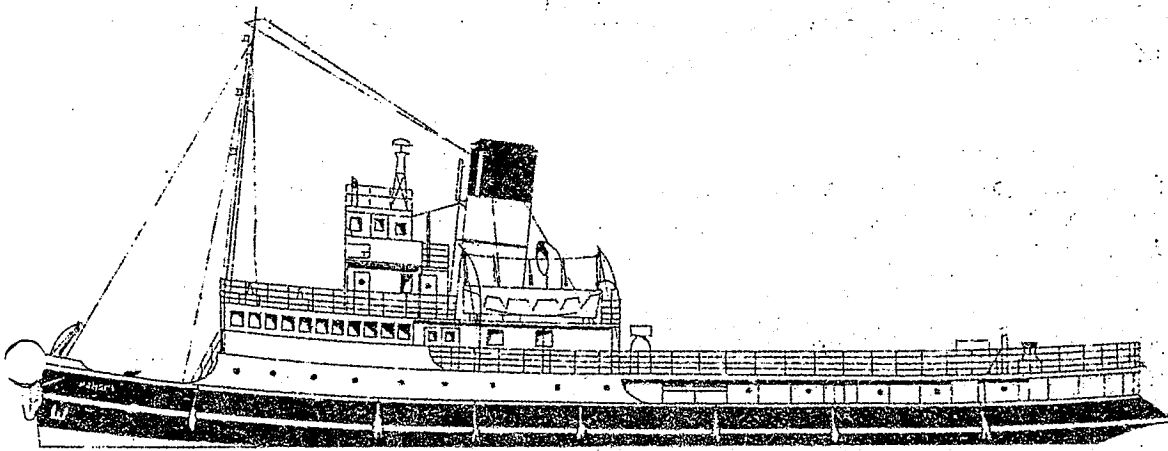
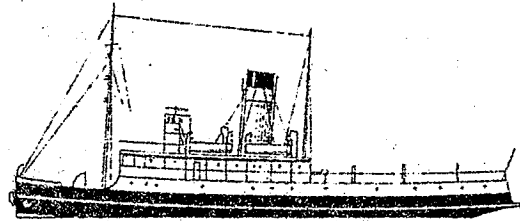
ALEXANDRA TENDERS

FLYING KESTREL
1913



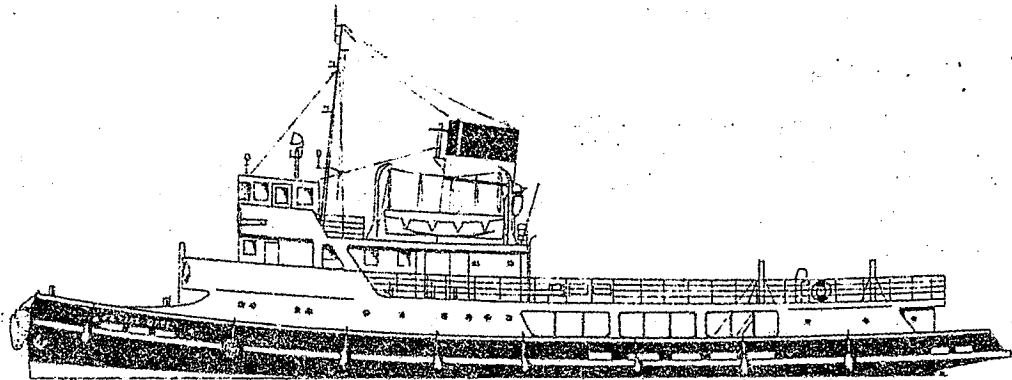
GREETINGS
1914

ROMSEY
1918



ROMSEY
1930

FLYING BREEZE
1938



five tugs at the southern port - Brambles (1942), Hornby (1936), Romsey (1930), Sloyne (1928) and Wellington (1926).

Cochranes turned out three tugs in 1951, Canada, Formby and Gladstone and the last named was quickly moved to Southampton in June 1952. In that year the Flying Kestrel was also moved from Liverpool to Southampton. Another tug of wartime build, she was originally the Empire Mascot and became Metal Industries' Metinda IV before joining the Alexandra fleet in 1949. In May 1956 the tugs at Southampton were Brambles, Canada, Flying Kestrel, Gladstone, Romsey, Sloyne and Wellington.

Northenders

Alexandra's first 'North' tugs came out in 1956, North Light and North Rock and it is perhaps not widely known that they were named from the fact that the Alexandra Company's origins were at the north end of Liverpool Docks. The first motor tugs of the company were also 'North' named - the North Isle in 1958 and North Loch 1959, both these tugs moving to Southampton in 1962 in place of Wellington and Sloyne.

In 1962 the Romsey had reached the age of 32 years and she was replaced by a vessel purchased from the BP Tanker Co, the BP Protector. Built in 1938 as the Zurmand for the Petroleum SS Co, she spent many years at Abadan and was renamed in 1955. She was converted by Scott & Sons (her builders) at Bowling and became Flying Breeze in 1962.

A contract for six motor tugs was placed in 1964, three with Yarwood, Northwich and three with Dunston of Hessle, the latter all earmarked for Southampton. The first, perpetuating the name of Romsey, entered the fleet in July 1964 followed by Brockenhurst and Ventnor.

At the end of 1966 another company was taken over, this being the Liverpool Screw Towing Company with twelve tugs and eighteen months later, in July 1968 the J H Lamey Ltd fleet of seven tugs was acquired.

Tanker Casualty

In October 1970 the Alexandra tugs were called to a major disaster when, on the 23rd the Liberian motor tanker Pacific Glory (42,777g 1966) of Oceanic Tankers Inc (part of the C Y Tung group) on a voyage Bonny to Rotterdam, collided six miles off St Catherines Point, Isle of Wight with the motor tanker Allegro (46,401g 1967) of Petroleum Marine Carriers Corp, Liberia which was on a voyage from Marsa el Brega and which continued on to her destination port of Fawley. The Pacific Glory caught on fire and grounded. The Southampton-based tugs North Isle, North Loch and Brockenhurst were sent to assist her with Ventnor and Romsey in support. With her stern in the sand-bank and bow held by the first three tugs she blazed furiously. The possibility of a major oil leak caused so much concern that the Liverpool-based tugs Huskisson and Coburg, both of the Alexandra fleet, were sent south to spray detergents. However, after lightening, with part cargo discharged to the Shell tanker Halia (11,910g 1958) which sailed for Rotterdam, the Pacific Glory was refloated on 7 November and was towed to Tor Bay where she anchored some 2 miles off Hope's Nose on the 8th. She was later towed to Schiedam for repairs.

mid 'seventies

In January 1975, control of London Tugs Ltd was obtained. This organisation had been established in 1969 and consisted itself of the fleets of W H J Alexander (Sun Tugs) Ltd, and Ship Towage (London) Ltd - itself formed in 1950 by the merger of Wm Watkins Ltd, Elliott Steam Tug Co Ltd and Gamecock Tugs Ltd.

The North Isle was posted to Gibraltar in 1975, being replaced at Southampton by Coburg (ex Alfred Lamey) from Liverpool. In 1976 Ionia, from London, operated at Southampton for a short while. In 1978, in order to provide a more powerful tug, Victoria was moved from Swansea/Port Talbot and Coburg

returned to the Mersey. At the end of August 1978 Cherry, formerly Rea's Cherrygarth, was transferred from Liverpool to take the place of Ower, which was broken up on the Itchen following trouble with her machinery.

Towards the end of 1978 the Southampton fleet comprised:

Brockenhurst, Cherry, North Loch, Romsey, Ventnor and Victoria

Details of Southampton-based tugs (I), (II), (III) after name indicates first, second, third etc, of that name in entire Alexandra fleet

Date arrived at
Southampton

1919 Flying Kestrel (III) (tender) 700gt Eng: Triple expansion (826 pass)

4.1913: completed by J T Eltringham & Co, South Shields.
1913-14: winter tender service at Monaco. 1914-19:
Served with fleet at Scapa Flow. 1919: transferred to
Southampton. 1939-45: served at Liverpool and Gourock.
1948: broken up at Birkenhead.

1919 Gladstone (III) 214gt Eng: Compound 2cyl

7.1916: completed by J Cran & Co, Leith. 1916-19: on
naval service. 1919 onwards: principally at
Southampton. 1950: renamed Langland for service at
Swansea. 6.1963: broken up at Briton Ferry.

1919 Harrington 149gt Eng: C 2cyl

9.1903: completed by J T Eltringham & Co, South Shields.
1919: to Southampton. 1925(circa): to Liverpool.
1959: broken up at Briton Ferry.

1919 Herculeaneum (II) 192gt Eng: C 2cyl

3.1909: completed by J Cran & Co, Leith.
1919: to Southampton. 1922(circa): to Liverpool.
10.1961: broken up at Passage West.

1919 Wallasey 149gt Eng: C 2cyl

.1903: completed by J T Eltringham & Co, South Shields.
1919: to Southampton. 1924(circa): to Liverpool.
1953: renamed Cambrian for service at Port Talbot.
1959: broken up at Briton Ferry.

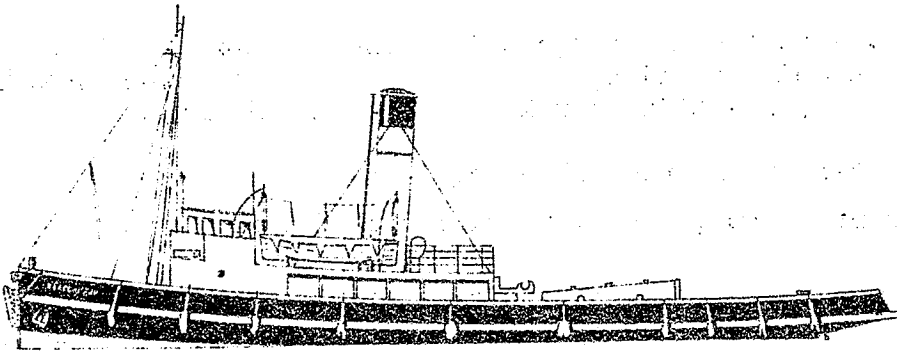
1919 William Poulson 219gt Eng: C 2cyl

3.1917: completed by J Cran & Co, Leith.
1919: to Southampton. 1939-45: served at Liverpool.
1945: returned to Southampton. 12.1945: in collision
with troopship Highland Monarch (14,139g 1928) off
Dockhead, Southampton. Sank. Salvaged and repaired.
1951: renamed Neath for service at Swansea.
1962: broken up at Passage West.

Note: named after first Chairman of the company.

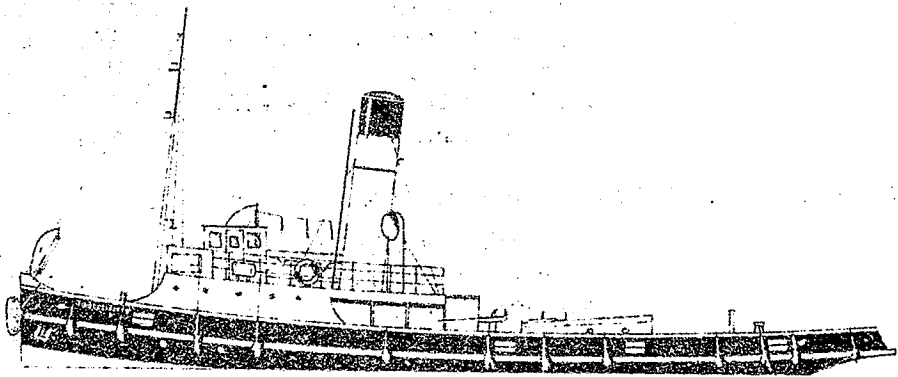
1919 Alexandra (III) 215gt Eng: C 2cyl

3.1917: completed by J Cran & Co, Leith.
1919: to Southampton. 1929(circa): to Liverpool.
1946: to Swansea. 7.1962: broken up at Briton Ferry.



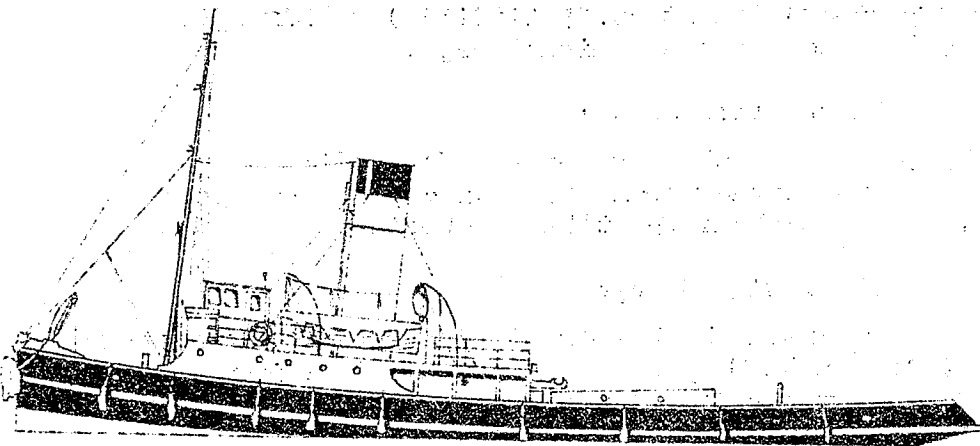
HERCULANEUM

1909



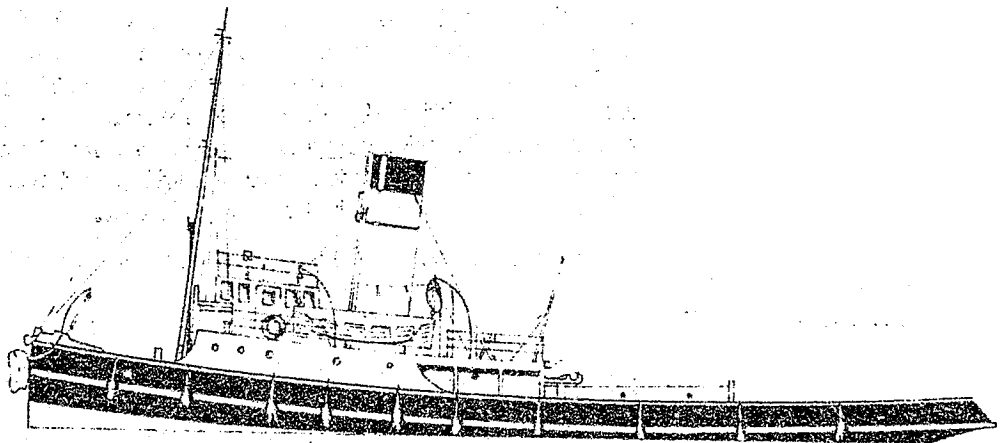
BROCKENHURST

1913



WELLINGTON

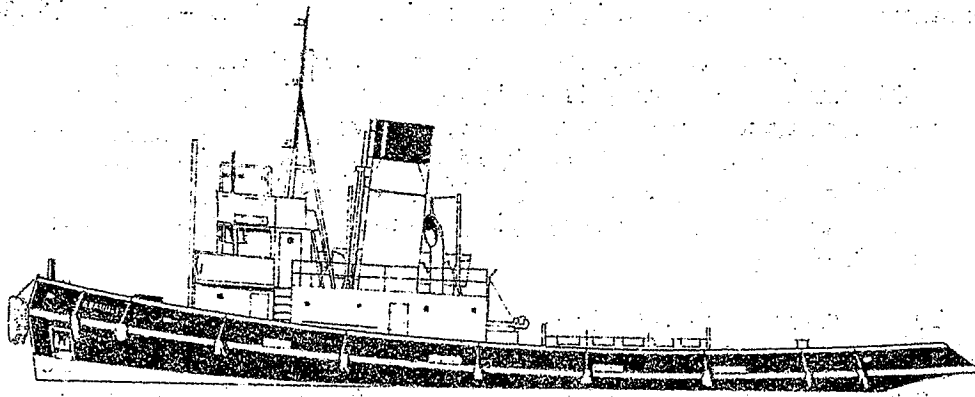
1926



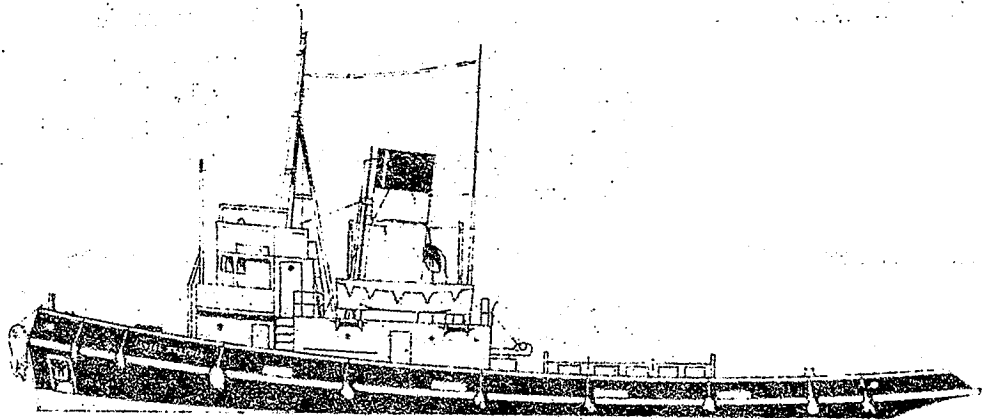
SLOYNE

1928

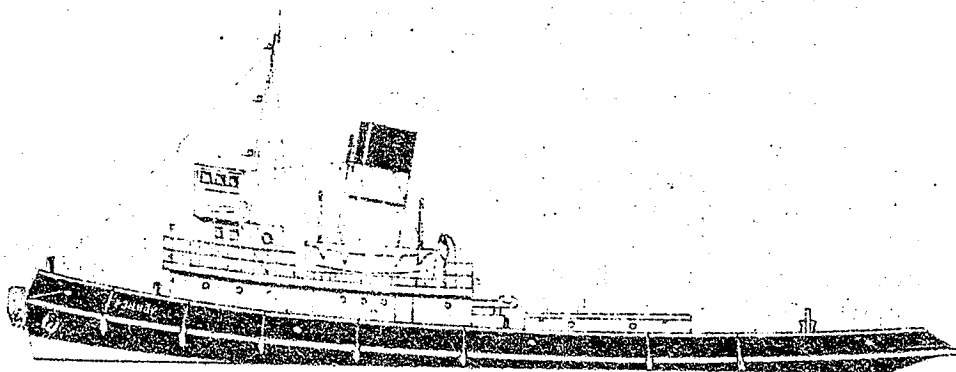
- 1922 Romsey (I) (tender) 889gt Eng: triple expansion twin-screw (1014 pass)
 .1918: completed by Ferguson Bros, Port Glasgow as Rollcall. 1922: acquired by Alexandra Towing Co and reconstructed as a tender for service at Southampton. 1929: sold to CGT (French Line). Renamed Minotaure for service at Le Havre. 9.8.1944: scuttled by Germans at St Malo. Salved. 1958: sold to Belgium. 1959: broken up at Bruges.
- 1923 Brockenhurst (I) 211gt Eng: C 2cyl
 8.1913: completed by J Cran & Co, Leith as Gladstone. 3.1914: sold to Russian Government. Renamed Salvage Steamer No 2. Renamed Kersoness. Worked in Black Sea. 1923: reacquired by Alexandra Towing Co. Refitted, renamed Brockenhurst for service at Southampton. 1936 (circa): to Liverpool. 1946: to Swansea. 1964: broken up at Cardiff.
- 1928 Wellington (II) 285gt Eng: triple expansion
 9.1926: completed by J Cran & Co, Leith. 1928: to Southampton from Liverpool. 1939: to Liverpool. 26.9.1940: damaged by aircraft bombs. 1946: to Southampton. 4.1961: to Liverpool. 6.1964: broken up at Troon.
- 1928 Sloyne (II) 300gt Eng: triple expansion
 10.1928: completed by J Crichton & Co, Saltney, Chester but machinery installed at Birkenhead. 1928: to Southampton. 1939: to Liverpool. 1946: to Southampton. 13.5.1962: to Swansea. 1966: sold to Chas Brand & Co, London, renamed Lavinia and used for work on new Belfast drydock. 1970: broken up at Passage West.
 Note: as built had two masts and a cowl top to funnel.
- 1930 Romsey (II) (tender) 509gt Eng: C 4cyl twin screw (620 passengers)
 2.1930: completed by Ferguson Bros, Ltd, Port Glasgow. 1930: to Southampton. 16.1.1941: struck mine 51.41N 05.09W, near Milford Haven. Repaired. To Clyde tender fleet. 5.9.1942: run-down and sunk by Lairdsburn in Clyde. Salved and 8.1943: returned to service (527grt). 1945: to Southampton. 22.11.1962: left Southampton in tow of tug Marinia for breaking up at Sheerness.
- 1946 Hornby (III) 201gt Eng: triple expansion.
 9.1936: completed by Cochrane & Sons Ltd, Hull. 1936: to Liverpool. 4.5.1941: Damaged by aircraft bombs at Liverpool. 1946: to Southampton. 6.1952: to Liverpool. 1963: modernised. 1967: sold to Liverpool Screw Towing Co and renamed North Cock. 1968: sold to Northern Slipway Co. Resold to W H Arnott Young & Co. 1.7.1968: left Liverpool for Dalmar in tow. Broken up.
- 1950 Brambles 242gt Eng: triple expansion
 4.1942: completed by Henry Scarr Ltd, Hessle as Empire Teak for the Ministry of War Transport. 1950: acquired by Alexandra Towing Co and renamed Brambles. To Southampton. 1969: sold to Northern Slipway Ltd, Dublin. 1971: scrapped Newport, Mon.



GRAMBLIS
1942



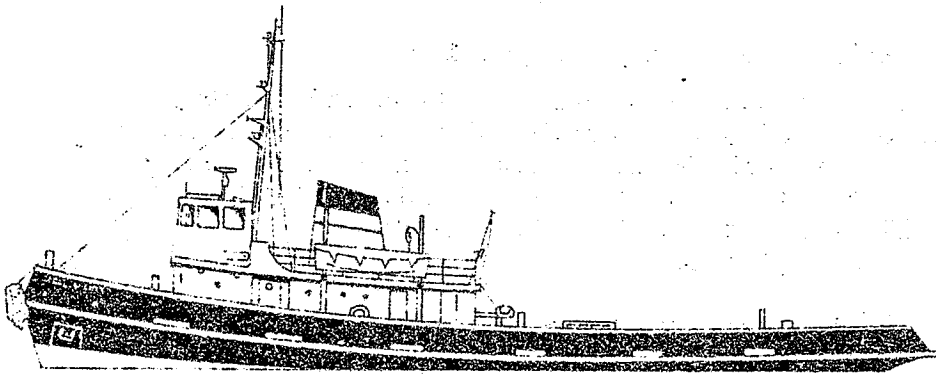
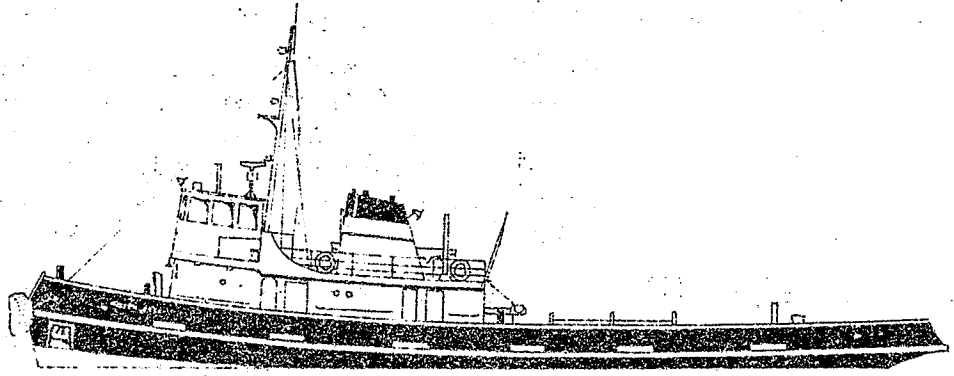
FLYING KESTREL
1943



CANADA
FORMBY
GLADSTONE
1951

- 1952 Flying Kestrel (IV) 244gt Eng: triple expansion
 5.1943: completed by Henry Scarr Ltd, Hessle as Empire Mascot for Ministry of War Transport. 1947: acquired by Metal Industries Ltd. Renamed Metinda IV. 1948: acquired by Alexandra Towing Co. Renamed Flying Kestrel. To Liverpool. 1952: to Southampton. 1966: to Swansea. 1969: broken up at Passage West.
- 1952 Gladstone (IV) 237gt Eng: triple expansion
 9.1951: completed by Cochrane & Sons Ltd, Selby. To Liverpool. 6.1952: to Southampton. 1960: to Liverpool. Converted to oil-firing, mast and funnel reduced in height. 196 : returned to Southampton. 1968: sold to Soc Anon Italiana Lavori Edili Maritimi, Palermo. Renamed Archimede S.
- 1956 Canada (II) 237gt Eng: triple expansion
 7.1951: completed by Cochrane & Sons Ltd, Selby. To Liverpool. 5.1956: to Southampton. 1960: to Liverpool. Converted to oil-firing, mast and funnel reduced in height. 196 : returned to Southampton. 1969: sold to Fratelli Barretta fu Domenica, Italy. Renamed Strepitoso.
- 1960 Formby (II) 237gt Eng: triple expansion
 7.1951: completed by Cochrane & Sons Ltd, Selby. To Liverpool. 1960: converted to oil-firing, mast and funnel reduced in height. 196 : to Southampton. 1968: to Swansea. 1969: sold to Fratelli Barretta fu Domenica, Italy. Renamed Poderoso.
- 1961 Flying Breeze (III) (tender) 360gt Eng: triple expansion (250 pass)
 2.1938: completed by Scott & Sons, Bowling as Zurmand for Petroleum SS Co Ltd. 1938: to Abadan. 1955: acquired by BP Tanker Co. Renamed BP Protector. 1961: acquired by Alexandra Towing Co. Converted by Scott & Sons to a tender. (460gt). Renamed Flying Breeze. 1962: to Southampton. 5.1968: sold to Tsavlis Ltd, Piraeus. Renamed Nisos Thira and left Southampton in tow of Nisos Rodos (ex Admiralty tug Earner, built 1943).
- 1962 North Isle 200gt Eng: oil, 8cyl Crossley
 4.1959: completed by W J Yarwood & Sons, Northwich. 4.2.1962: to Southampton from Liverpool. 21.9.1975: left Southampton for station at Gibraltar.
- 1962 * North Loch 200gt Eng: oil, 8cyl Crossley
 8.1959: completed by W J Yarwood & Sons, Northwich. 12.5.1962: to Southampton from Liverpool.
- 1964 * Romsey (III) 173gt Eng: oil, 8cyl Crossley
 7.1964: completed by R Dunston (Hessle) Ltd. To Southampton.
- 1964 * Brockenhurst (II) 173gt Eng: oil, 8cyl Crossley
 11.1964: completed by R Dunston (Hessle) Ltd. To Southampton.

NORTH ISLE
NORTH LOCH
1959



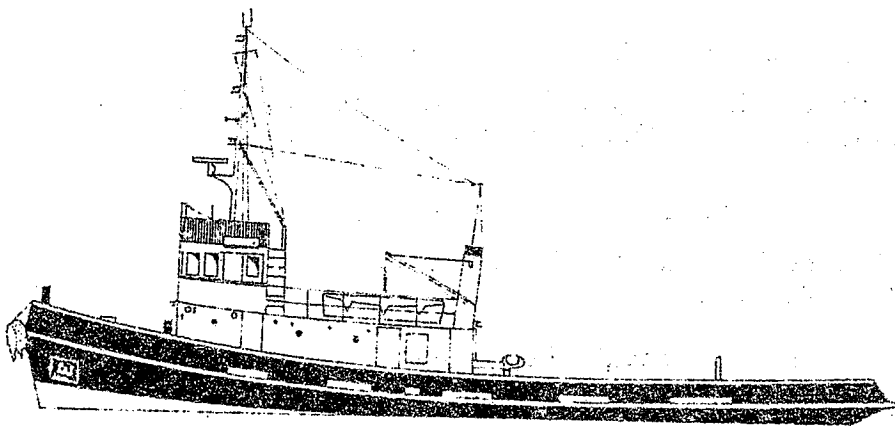
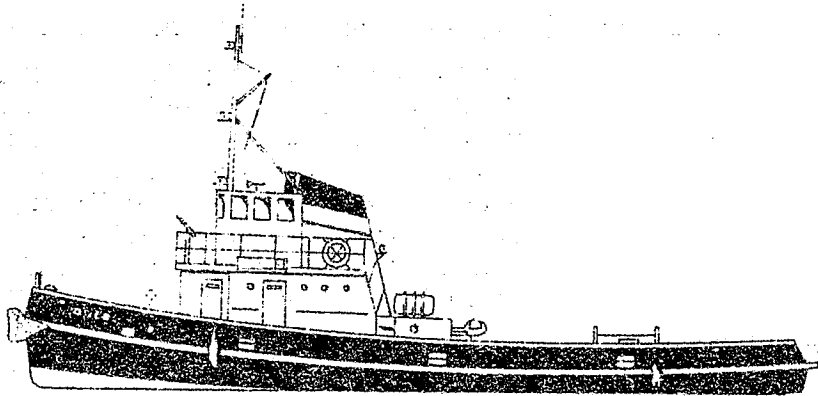
BROCKENHURST
ROMSEY

1964

VENTNOR

1965

OWER
1944



COBURG

1967

old southampton callers

The UNITED STATES (1848)

by John S. Lindsay

The auxiliary iron screw steamer SARAH SANDS of 1,400 tons gross register was built by Hodgson & Co., Liverpool, in 1846. She was designed to run on the England - Australia route, but before she could enter this service was chartered by the American-owned Red Cross Line. Her first sailing under their flag was on the 20th January 1847, from Liverpool to New York. Her success on this route decided the rival - famous Black Ball Line, noted for their fast sailing packets - to place a competitive steamer on the route, but not owning a suitable steamer at this point of time, their attention was drawn to a 1,904 tons gross register wooden paddle steamer UNITED STATES, being built in the yard of William H. Webb of New York and primarily designed to run on the New York - New Orleans service. Negotiations were duly concluded and the purchase made.

Completed in 1848, the UNITED STATES made her first Atlantic voyage from New York to Liverpool on the 8th April in fourteen days and had the distinction of being the first full powered American built ship on that route. On the completion of her return voyage to New York on the 31st May, she was transferred to the New York - Southampton - Havre route on which she made four round voyages as an independent steamer, the first being on the 10th June 1848 and the last on the 8th January 1849, arriving back at New York on the 5th February.

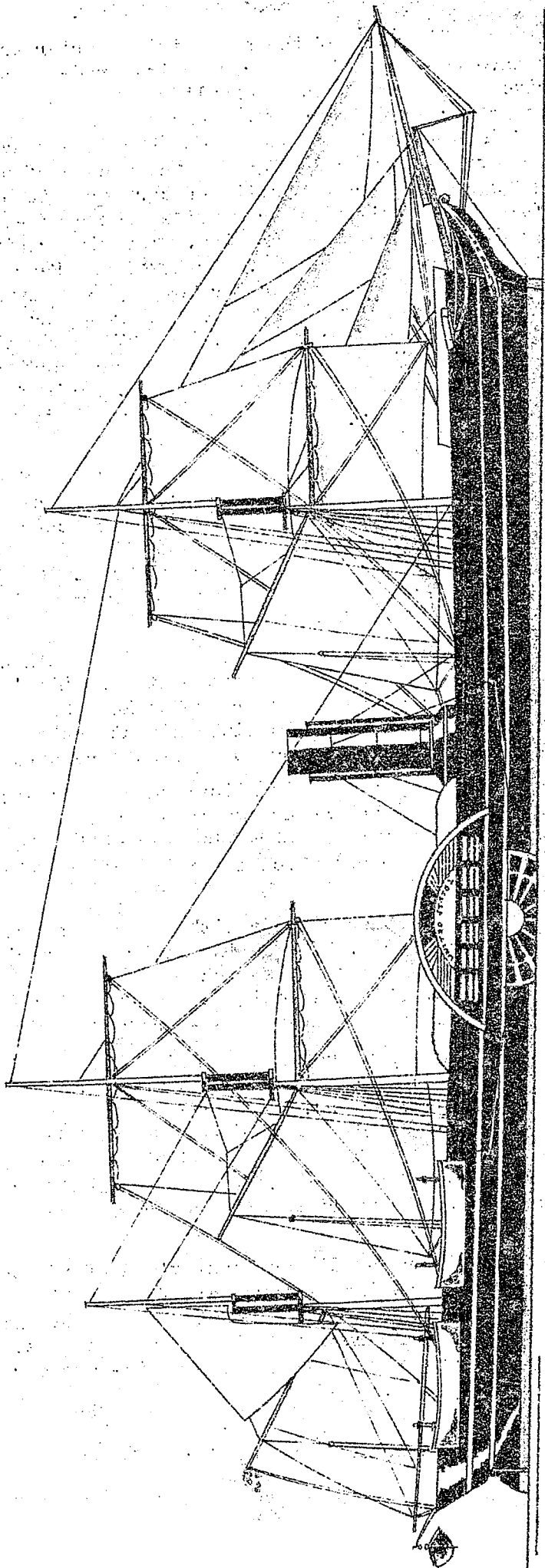
With the formation of the North German Confederation Navy and its establishment in 1849 under the command of Admiral Brommy, this newly formed body was on the lookout for suitable ships. They purchased the UNITED STATES, renamed her HANSA and, converted to a warship, she became the Admiral's flagship, serving in this role for three years until the new Navy was duly disbanded. Her consort, the frigate ERZHERZOG JOHANN - ex Cunarder ACADIA - together with the HANSA were purchased by the Bremen firms of W.A. Fritz & Co. and Karl Lehmkuhl, who refitted them as merchantmen and placed them in service between Bremen and New York to run in opposition to the American owned Ocean Line's WASHINGTON and HERMAN. The HANSA retained her name, but the ERZHERZOG JOHANN changed to GERMANIA. The service began on the 3rd August 1853 by the GERMANIA to be followed at the end of the month by the HANSA. Both ships maintained a fairly regular service for over a year, making a call either at Falmouth or Southampton on the return journey.

With the outbreak of the Crimean War both ships were chartered early in 1855 by the British Government for use as transports, after which they returned to Bremen. The HANSA made one more voyage on the North Atlantic in April 1857 before proceeding to Southampton the following October to become a troopship with the East India Company for service during the Indian Mutiny.

Upon her return she was chartered by the newly formed Galway Line for service on the proposed Galway - New York route. She was inspected at Southampton on the 29th May 1858 by a large company of officials and guests and sailed for Galway. On entering the harbour she had the misfortune to strike a rock, but fortunately the damage was not serious and she was able to enter her new service on time. She sailed on the 19th June with eleven passengers and a small amount of letter mail. However, her troubles were not over for in mid-Atlantic she fractured a piston and had to make the remainder of the voyage on one cylinder, arriving at Halifax after a voyage of twelve days instead of the eight days so optimistically forecast by the newly formed company. Temporary repairs were carried out before continuing her voyage to New York.

Her end came while moored at the Deptford Docks, London, where she was destroyed by fire on the 23rd July 1862.

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UNITED STATES (1848)

JOHN S. LINDJAY

Container ships and car carriers take up much of the notes this quarter and no less than eleven first-time callers have been here in the car moving trade. The newly-built Le Mans (4,153g 1978) arrived 4 September with Renault cars and is a different design and much larger than her predecessors which call here nearly every other day. All are owned by A.T.A Walon, of Boulogne. On 28 August Johnson Line's Avesta (16,886g 1978), ending her maiden voyage, arrived right in the middle of a dock strike. The latest Johnson ship, she is a purpose-built car carrier with a capacity for 5,800 motor cars or a 3,700/425 truck mix. After an idle week at 35-6 she eventually loaded 1,500 cars for the West coast of America. Two sisterships loaded cars for the USA in late October - Suzukasan Maru (14,132g 1978) and Pearl Ace (12,344g 1978), owned by Mitsui-OSK and Pearl Car Carrier Company of Panama respectively. Two other vessels of their class, Olive Ace and Orange Ace called earlier in the year. Another new ship, Asian Highway (14,369g 1978) loaded for the USA in mid-August. Her owners are Koyo Shosen KK and for a new car carrier she looks more streamlined than the usual square-bulky looking ships. Again for the USA was the Panamanian-flag Regent Cedar (10,626g 1973, owned by Regent Shipping Ltd., of Hong Kong and one of the C.L.Pao group.

Several vessels have arrived with Datsun cars and the most interesting of these were two new sisterships, examples of the unusual in modern tonnage. They were Scan Carriers Boogabilla and Tourcoing (both 22,300g 1978). After discharge they went on to Gothenburg to operate a service to Australia and New Zealand. Claimed to be two of the largest ro-ro ships they each have a capacity for 1,700 TEUs. Both are fitted with an angled stern ramp which has a clear width of 12 metres and a length of 53 metres.

After being lengthened by 27.36m at Rendsburg, Swedish America Line's Atlantic Premier arrived back at the port. She had started Atlantic Container Line's Europe-Canada service from Southampton earlier this year as the Mont Royal and also, after undergoing the same lengthening, the Wallenius ship Atlantic Prelude arrived in August. Formerly the Montmorency, she had not called here before.

In the Norasia service Shoei Kaiun KK have had two identical ships discharging containers - Georgia Rainbow (15,773g 1977) and Pennsylvania Rainbow (15776g 1978) and an unusual import was 73 containers of tea and sugar from Mauritius in the Norwegian America Line's Tanafjord (1976, 7565g) which is employed in their Scandinavia East Africa Line service.

There has been a flurry of activity in the banana trade with several imports coming in Cie Generale Maritime's Pointe Madame (1973, 6561g), the Liberian Favorita (1969, 8425g) owned in Switzerland and the newly-built Honduran Rio Cuyamel (1978, 7848g). Constructed in Poland, she is of the same design as nearly all the Soviet reefers seen here of late. Her owners are Empresa Hondurena de Vapores.

The large salvage tug Statesman I (1167g) spent several weeks at 27 berth in August/September, being repainted in the colours of her new owners, Selco Salvage Co of Singapore, under her new name of Salvanguard. Constructed in Japan in 1966 she was originally the Alice L Moran (Moran Towing Co Inc), but after charter to the United Towing Company of Hull, was bought by them in 1973 and renamed Statesman.

Then, because there was a Harrison ship of that name, she was renamed Statesman I. She spent some time in Icelandic waters in support of British trawlers during the fishing dispute.

Another vessel to change names while in port was Risdon Beazley's Ashford. She was built in 1964 at Bremerhaven as a stern trawling factory ship for the Pickenpack Fishing concern of Hamburg and named Hans Pickenpack. Bought in 1974 by Ulrich Harms & Co., Hamburg she was converted to a salvage ship and renamed Taurus. As such she arrived at the Town Quay in October and changed names mid-November.

In the South American service Blue Star Line's Queensland Star (9920g 1957) (ex Brasilia Star '77, ex Queensland Star '72) spent several weeks in port and eventually was renamed Brasilia Star again before sailing for South America.